But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Amos 5:24
The intimacy of our relationship with God can wax and wane over time, even if we are maintaining a daily discipline of Bible reading and prayer. We can be encouraged to know though, that when we find that God seems distant, He has not moved. His love for us is everlasting and His nature unchanging. We must examine our own hearts and habits to determine if we have moved away from Him.

How about you? **What have you learned about ways to keep your daily time in the Word and prayer from getting stale?** That’s our next special topic. Please take some time to help others with your helpful insights and tips to keep one’s devotions fresh and meaningful.

Send your contributions answering that question to features@acsilverlining.org by Mar. 16. Please keep them to no more than 600 words. This section will be published in May.

In Christian love,
Jeff Grimm and Greg Lehman, Counseling Elders

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Who Is My Neighbor?

“But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?”

“And who is my neighbor?”, asked a certain lawyer of Christ. As we consider our purpose to ‘love as Jesus loves’, the answer to this question gives us great insight into what true Christ-like love entails.

The scripture tells us the lawyer was seeking to justify himself as he asked this question, so we could assume he was seeking affirmation in whom he chose to love – or not love. When Christ answered the lawyer’s question with the parable of the good Samaritan, we see He had something quite different in mind.

So, one might ask, whom do I think my neighbor is? It seems clear from Christ’s teaching in this parable that “our neighbor” is anyone we encounter who needs our love. If we’re honest with ourselves, most of us will acknowledge that some people are much easier for us to love than others. However, does this give us the right to pick and choose who our neighbor(s) might be, or who ‘deserves’ our love?

In the account of the Good Samaritan, a priest and a Levite were the first to happen upon the unfortunate victim. Both of these men would have been versed in the law of Moses and no doubt knew the second commandment by heart, “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.” In addition, they both had the duty of teaching the people this truth. We who live in the New Testament age are even more accountable than they. The apostle Peter reminds us that we have a similar duty, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (God’s possession); that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

Jesus pointedly used a Samaritan as the one who eventually came to the aid of the wounded man even though the relationship between the Samaritans and the Jews had ranged from prejudice to open animosity for centuries. The Old Law tells us that we are not to “avenge, nor bear any grudge” against our neighbor. Jesus raised the standard even higher, “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: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”

The Samaritan in this parable certainly exemplified the Lord’s commandment in spite of any relational difficulties that might have occurred in the past.

We read further in the account of the good Samaritan that the man who was abused by the thieves was left by them as being “half dead”. The priest and Levite apparently considered him as good as dead, for they both avoided the stricken man, walking on the other side of the road as they passed by him, perhaps to allay their own guilt at not helping him. Do we ever avoid showing love to someone because we consider their situation as being inconvenient, or too difficult for us, or even hopeless? We might presume that they somehow deserve their condition because they are mired in sin and have made poor choices in life. This parable contains the only occurrence of the term “half dead” in the entire Bible ‒perhaps to show us that we should consider no one as being truly hopeless. God alone knows the heart. ‘Half dead’ is still alive! The ones we consider as such may very well need our love the most.

The Samaritan in this parable embodied other scriptural precepts as well. The implication of the parable is that the Samaritan and the wounded man did not know each other. The Word instructs us to “Love ye therefore the stranger (foreigner): for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Has the Spirit ever prompted us to approach a total stranger who appears in need?

— Please turn to pg. 61
Welcome to God’s house. We just sang the song *Communion with God* (Zion’s Harp 239). We come to church to fellowship together, and we think about the purpose that we’re here. Isn’t it to commune with God? We’ll talk to God. We’ll talk to God in prayer. We’ll listen to God as we read from his word. We sing together; I love to sing, and the hymns are just encouraging. It is a God that we want to be close to all the time.

Have you ever gone anywhere without God? Sometimes we kind of forget. We can’t escape God. “God is ever present,” we sing in another hymn. (Zion’s Harp 68) He’s there, but sometimes we feel a little distant from him, and we come today to just encourage that closeness, that communion, and to remember that we wish to have him with us always. May he be with us today as we consider his words.

Let’s begin our service today here in the second book of the Kings – 2 Kings 2. It’s a very familiar scripture about Elisha and Elijah and the transition from Elijah to Elisha. It’s part of life, isn’t it? I had the chance to have a little visit with a sister in the back, and we just talked about how life goes and passes, she a hundred years, and me 71. Where did it go, and how does it happen? It’s been that way always: we’re born, we live, we die. And then a new generation, obviously, takes over. Here’s when it was time for a transition, a very special one, so we’ll read about what happened.

Again, it’s a familiar account but it’s good to be reminded, isn’t it? It’s good to be reminded that God’s always there. It’s good to be reminded that God continues. Things change in this earth, things pass, and things happen. The power of God is clearly shown with the parting of the waters, of Elijah and then Elisha, both. God’s power is not limited, not limited in any way. I often put God in a box that is too small, but God is not limited, and I need to understand that. I need to have the faith to believe that totally, to believe that God can do anything he wants to do and will do and that he has reasons for doing whatever it is that he does do.

Why was it that Elijah grew old and needed to be taken away? I don’t know. That was God’s plan. Elijah knew that, and he shared that. They were worried about it, weren’t they? “What are you going to do? You know that your master’s going to be gone?” “Yes, I know. I know,” he said, “I know.” So, Elisha was just waiting. Maybe we’ll come back to it, but one more thought: when he knew that his master was going and his master said, “what can I do for you?” (these are my words), Elisha said, “I need a double portion of your spirit. I would like to have a double portion of your spirit.” I don’t know what he was expecting him to ask, but that’s what he asked for, and Elijah said, “it’s a hard question. I can’t do that, but God can, and if you see me when I depart, it will happen, but if not, it won’t. It’s not really something I can do.” But it was granted.

He did see him go. He took that mantle and smote the waters like Elijah did, and the waters parted, and what was the result of that? Those that had observed it around him said, “Oh, he’s got the spirit of Elijah; it’s continuing on. It’s continuing on.” Sometimes we go through life and see those that we love and trust and go to for counsel grow old, and then they die. I was at a funeral yesterday. That’s life. That’s life, but God continues, and that Holy Spirit continues. We don’t have to wonder, “will God still be there?” God will still be there. God will still be there, and he’s still God. He can do as he chooses.
Let’s sing together. I’ve opened to 137: Our Love Shall Not Diminish (Zion’s Harp). Elisha’s love didn’t disappear when Elijah was gone. Our love for God, this song says, will not diminish.

Our love shall not diminish
Nor fade nor wane away;
Bind us till life we finish
And in the grave we lay.

It acknowledges that life will end but our love should always continue.

Our love will not diminish;
It is the Lord’s command
And free us from all blemish,
Before our God to stand.

I’ll read the last verse:

Pure love leads to perfection,
Joy of our soul and guide,
Gives us true satisfaction,
And leads to heaven’s light.

We’ve opened here to St. Luke’s gospel, chapter 10. There’s a lot of red letters, so that’s comforting and encouraging as it’s the words of Jesus Christ, our Savior. It’s a pretty long chapter. Let’s just begin at the beginning and maybe not read the whole chapter. “The mission of the 70” is the subheading in this Bible.

We’ll stop there at verse 24, at least for now. As I think about the two scriptures we read about Elisha and Elijah and then about the sending of the 70, I ask the question, “what are we here for? What did God put you here for?” I know I’ve said this many times, but I say it again, that God did not place anyone on the earth just to take up space and breathe air; he’s got plenty of both. He put us here because he wants us to honor him and glorify him and further his work on this earth. That’s why we’re here. That’s why Elisha the prophet was there. He took the place of Elijah when it was time for him to leave, and we all have our own little purpose, whatever that is. Sometimes we wonder about it. I’ve shared this before, but as my father grew older, he would say to me from time to time, “Wayne, why am I still here?” And I’d say to him, “I don’t know, Dad, but if God was done with you, he would take you to heaven.” He had a purpose here.

As Jesus sent out those 70, two by two, to go and tell the story (we’ll come back to this), he said you need to go and say, “The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. The kingdom of God is here.” Do you see it? Have you embraced it? Is it important to you? It’s everything. That’s the message he was sending.

Elijah was a powerful prophet and was taken up to heaven by this miracle in this whirlwind. I don’t know, but I wonder sometimes if we could witness something like Elisha did when Elijah disappeared in that chariot of fire with those horses of fire, would it strengthen our faith even more? Do we believe it even happened? It’s recorded here. It’s from God, and God is not limited, as I mentioned earlier. It says here, in the very first verse we read in 2 Kings, “And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind…” (2 Kings 2:1) When the Lord would take up Elijah. When the Lord will take up you, and when he’ll take up me, we’re going to go. We’re going to go. Life will be ended. The book will be closed; the record will be in place, and what’s important is that we’re ready. It’s obvious to me from what we read here, that Elijah was ready. He knew what was coming. He was prepared to meet his Lord. That’s the most wonderful position we can be in, isn’t it? Are we ready? Am I ready? Are you ready? Or do we have a few things that really could use some work? We always have things we can work on; I’m not talking about being perfect in that sense, but are we ready if Christ comes? If God chooses to come tonight – if he sends Christ back to return tonight – are you ready? Are you ready? If he chooses to remain for many, many years, are you ready for that? Do you have what you need? I know we don’t have all we need.

— Please turn to pg. 62
Ministry Program Updates

An Improving Situation in Haiti  
*Caribbean Committee*

*The smell of burning tires hung over the area.*

Disabled vehicles and fires blocked the roadways in strategic locations, preventing vehicular traffic on the roads. Groups of protesters marched in the streets. In areas where vehicles could travel, there were reports of armed gangs stopping traffic and robbing people trying to pass makeshift checkpoints. Many operating businesses were vandalized and threats to vendors and shop owners slowly brought commerce in Haiti to a standstill. Fuel became scarce, and people were unable to travel to purchase food and basic necessities. Law enforcement was spread thin and largely ineffective. It was simply too dangerous to travel on Haitian roadways.

This was the situation in southern Haiti in October, 2019. Protesters were demonstrating against the government of Haiti, accusing officials of corruption and making demands for the president to resign. Haitians were frustrated at the inability or unwillingness of government to effectively address problems they face, such as short supplies of fuel, at inflated prices. There were suspicious losses in a national infrastructure fund. Inflation was rampant, and the people’s purchasing power, already at meager levels, dwindled as the situation deteriorated. National strikes were organized by opposition groups, and in late 2019, many banks, businesses, and schools were forced to close.

Most demonstrations were concentrated in urban areas, including Port au Prince and Les Cayes. Many of the visiting HarvestCall teams in early 2019 were cancelled due to the unrest. Thankfully, much of the scheduled work continued, due in part to Haitian employees taking leadership roles to continue the work. Later in the year, the situation had deteriorated and incoming shipments of supplies and material for HarvestCall ministries stopped. Shortages of fuel and supplies became worse, and HarvestCall missionary travel was severely restricted because of the danger on roads. Travel between Cayes and Port-au-Prince was made by commuter plane, as vehicular traffic was blocked, or dangerous when it was passable. The decision was made for most missionary families to return to the United States until the situation improved. A small group of missionaries remained at each HarvestCall ministry, and in late 2019, many banks, businesses, and schools had re-opened, and fuel is again being delivered to a state of calm. Businesses have re-opened, schools have re-opened, and fuel is again being delivered to areas where vehicles could travel, there were reports of armed gangs stopping traffic and robbing people trying to pass makeshift checkpoints. Many operating businesses were vandalized and threats to vendors and shop owners slowly brought commerce in Haiti to a standstill. Fuel became scarce, and people were unable to travel to purchase food and basic necessities. Law enforcement was spread thin and largely ineffective. It was simply too dangerous to travel on Haitian roadways.

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...And the Lord Supplies all our Need! Phil 4:19  
*Haiti Dairy Program*

It is truly amazing how good our God is! When Bro. Les and Sis. Christine Kaeb moved down to Haiti in September 2015, the dairy farm consisted of just a community well and bare ground. But God called a brother who built dairy farms in the U.S., and God used Les’ skills to build Good Vision Farm.

Then, it became apparent that growing crops for feed in Haitian soil was a challenge. And God called Bro. Daryl and Sis. Debbie Knobloch from the Bradford area. Daryl’s agronomy expertise has been such a benefit, and Debbie’s skills in accounting have been put to use as well.

In Spring of 2019, cows were milked in the new milking center, and milk is now being pasteurized, bottled and sold. Most of this milk comes from local farmers’ cows, and the local farmers are being paid for the milk their cows produce. How thankful we are that even during the tumultuous times that Haiti has gone through, many orphan children continue to receive fresh, nutritious milk, thanks to God’s blessings on this farm and the donations of sponsors, who pay for the milk.

But it was clear that someone with animal care and dairy farming expertise was still needed at the farm. In...
United States until the situation improved. A small group of missionaries remained at each HarvestCall mission location to keep essential activities going.

Thankfully, by the end of 2019, the situation had improved and the nation was again returning to a state of calm. Businesses have re-opened, schools have re-opened, and fuel is again being delivered to filling stations throughout Haiti. Missionary families are returning from the United States to their Haitian missions. Shipments are again arriving. Some visiting work teams have been permitted to travel to Haiti again. Although contentious issues remain, there is cautious optimism that the Haitian situation will continue to improve.

Prayer and financial support is needed for the ministries now more than ever and we thank the brotherhood for their support during this difficult time. Continue to pray for the Haitian people, that the opposing factions in and out of government could resolve their differences peacefully. The people of Haiti have suffered greatly throughout their history. They have been exploited, abused, and subjected to corrupted religious practices in the form of voodoo. Pray that the true gospel of the saving grace of Jesus could take root in men’s hearts, that his Kingdom could be advanced in Haiti. Pray for the HarvestCall missionaries, especially for their physical safety, wisdom to discern the challenging situations they face, and the courage to proclaim Christ to a materially poor nation desperately needing the gospel!

Pray that the true gospel of the saving grace of Jesus could take root in men’s hearts, that his Kingdom could be advanced in Haiti.

– by Rod Wieland

November, a missionary couple from Rittman, Ohio, Bro. Eric and Sis. Melanie Stoller, arrived to serve at the farm. Eric and Melanie have been dairy farmers for many years. Each time they visited Good Vision Farm in the past, there was a tug in their hearts. Their testimony of feeling called by God to serve was received with joy. Once again, God continues to provide for the needs at Good Vision Farm.

As these missionaries demonstrate daily Christian living among the people, the gospel is shared in such a clear simple way. Lives are being transformed, Bible studies are taking place, and the needed nutrition that milk provides for child development is making a difference, while Haitian farmers are benefitting from a steady milk market. And God continues to provide every step of the way! – by LuAnn Troxel
Emotions: What Good are they?

There are few things in life that possess as much power as emotions. The Scriptures are filled with examples of individuals exhibiting powerful emotions, and these emotions seem to affect their actions. We see similar influence in our own lives. The same event viewed through different emotional lenses will lead to very different experiences. Though emotions have incredible influence in our lives, they are often quite confusing. If you pay attention you will likely hear or say something like: “I don’t know why I feel …”, “I should feel …”, or “How do you feel about …” Bring up the topic of emotions and you will likely get a wide variety of responses. Some see tremendous value in emotions while others see them as unhelpful or irrelevant. Whether we realize it or not, we tend to approach topics with preconceived beliefs and can have a negative characterization of those who disagree with us. Unfortunately, this can lead to attacking or misrepresenting other perspectives and keep us from learning from these perspectives.

Our statements, or lack thereof, reveal our beliefs about emotions. Consider the beliefs each of the following statements communicate about emotions:

- I should just stop worrying.
- I need to be strong.
- You always seem so steady.
- They are so emotional.

The first statement seems to indicate emotions are like a light bulb which can easily be turned on or off with the flick of a switch. Depending on your personality and life experience this may ring accurate or may be totally foreign. The other statements likewise hold inherent beliefs about the emotions within them. The goal is not to consider the validity of the above statements but to evaluate our own beliefs about emotions. We tend to have beliefs about emotions that we do not realize we hold and therefore never consider. Often, emotions are either overemphasized or minimized, and these tendencies can have a very real impact on our life.

Have you ever wondered why you did or did not do something? Emotions are likely at least part of the answer. As powerful as emotions can be, they often are the unidentified agent working behind the scene. One way to think of emotions is to see them as something that helps inform us. The challenge is knowing how much to rely on these emotions as a helpful source of information. Consider the drastic difference in the following three beliefs about
emotions: 1) emotions are truth, 2) emotions can provide helpful insight, and 3) emotions are useless.

The first perspective will lead to emotions ruling and guiding our life. Emotions, no matter how clear or powerful, are not the ultimate source of truth. For example, there are many times in life when our emotions don't fit the situation. This might be feeling sad when the circumstances seem to call for rejoicing or feeling very intense emotion when the circumstance seems to warrant a minimal emotional reaction. The third perspective will likely lead to ignoring or even villainizing emotions which can easily lead to relational disconnection or relationships dominated by the Works of the Flesh rather than Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23).

When we hold very black and white beliefs about emotions, we can jump to conclusions which may or may not be accurate. As the second perspective above states, believing emotions can provide helpful insight allows us to consider emotions while also not giving them too much importance. Slowing down and allowing ourselves to identify, experience, consider, and learn from emotions can be helpful for ongoing sanctification. By allowing ourselves to consider the emotions which are in play, we might have a greater capacity to connect with others and share God’s message with them. However, by not allowing these emotions to hold too much importance, we will be better able to allow the truth of the Scriptures to guide our thoughts and actions rather than emotions.

Whether we minimize or over-emphasize emotions, we can live as if emotions reveal truth without even realizing it. When fear shows up, we can run or hide without considering if there is significant danger. When we feel anger, we can lash out and feel justified rather than considering if there was a wrong that justified anger or if we just wanted others to be more like us. Emotions that rule will lead to ongoing pain and potential stagnation. However, if we can appropriately open ourselves to our emotions and identify and learn from them, they can provide helpful insight. For example, knowing you are prone to fear can allow you to recognize and have a healthy level of distrust toward your emotions the next time you are fearful. Knowing you tend to be easily angry can help you be more aware of this emotion and the lies that might be feeding your anger. Thus, emotions kept in the right perspective can add color to life and insight into our ongoing need for transformation. Let emotions fulfill the role that God intended them to fulfill without giving them control of our life, bringing all of our life into subjection to the truth of the Scriptures (Heb. 4:12).

ACCFS has numerous resources to assist someone who is going through a wide range of hurts and emotions, from the pain of loss to worry, loneliness, anger, stress, and others. Each resource, either created by or reviewed by ACCFS staff, can assist in identifying the challenges of these powerful emotions and in bringing our thinking into obedience to God’s Word. For these resources, please visit our website at www.accounseling.org/category/hurtsandemotions.
It is probably safe to say that many of us take our health for granted. However, from time to time we are given reminders of how tenuous our position of health and wellness really is. Perhaps that reminder comes to us by way of a diagnosis given to a loved one or an acquaintance. Or maybe we spend a day or two under the weather ourselves and are reminded how weak we really are. Here at LifePoints, that reminder came this January when we had an outbreak of illness at Timber Ridge. It came on fast, with many residents exhibiting symptoms and several of them testing positive for Influenza on the same day. Some of our staff became ill as well. We had experienced an Influenza outbreak a few years ago, and knew to react quickly. Timber Ridge residents were treated proactively, and staff who were working at Timber Ridge took extra precautions to limit the spread of the virus. Visiting by families and from the community was discouraged, activities were cancelled, and all of our residents stayed home from their day programs and work for a couple of days.

Thankfully God provided healing, there were no additional cases, the treatment worked and those who had been ill are returning to health. The virus did not spread to any of our other facilities, and although this flu season is not yet over, we made it through this outbreak without any serious complications. We are very thankful for all of you who continue to pray for us, and appreciate the consideration from those of you who changed your plans because of this outbreak.

Through this experience, we are reminded again that we are not the ones who are in control. It causes us to reflect that while our own plans should be made, they must then be held loosely and left to God. We can be at peace with that because we have His assurance that He has our best interest in mind.

There is not room here to expound much on that, but it would be good for each of us to remember what Jesus says when He tells us to “consider the ravens” and “consider the lilies” and then “seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Luke 12:22-32). If we meditate on that message and take it to God in prayer, we begin to realize the amazing opportunity we have to live our lives free from anxiety and worry. It is pretty incredible what we can learn from a little flu bug!

Gateway Woods Apostolic Christian Children’s Home
Tim and Jenny Sauder — Former Administrator

Dear friends from across the country and over the years,

We are excited to tell you that our album of original songs, Strong Trees Grow Slow, is available on CD and digital download. Some of you had this music decades ago in the LP and cassette era. If you want to stir your heart and stimulate some memories or bless someone you love with a musical gift, consider this re-mastered version available now, 40 years after its original release.

We were grateful and pleased that Strong Trees, a contemporary Christian folk album with lush vocals and instruments, was well received and sold a lot of copies within our circle of friends and church connections. That includes many of you. Hopefully, you’ll respond again OR want to hear it for the first time.

As you know, we were privileged to serve in ministry at Gateway Woods Family Services for decades. All glory goes to God and all reproduction costs for the CDs have been covered. So 100% your gift, of any amount, goes to troubled children and families and the music will come to you.
Ways to give and receive Strong Trees:
1. Send a donation to Gateway and mention the CD in the memo.
2. Go to: gatewaywoods.org/strongtrees and donate on-line, any amount.
3. Download Strong Trees Grow Slow through any of a number of music services: Spotify, Apple Music, Google Play, iTunes, Amazon, Deezer, Tidal, iHeartRadio, Napster, MediaNet, etc. Lyrics are at: Apple Music and iTunes.
4. Contact Tim directly at: 260.402.3832 or tim.sauder@icloud.com

News:
Our Annual Rep Meeting is on Saturday March 7. If you are interested in attending please visit gatewaywoods.org/repmeeting and RSVP no later than February 21.

We currently have these openings at Gateway Woods: Teacher, Illinois Adoption Case Manager, and Houseparent Couples. For more information, please see our ad in this month’s edition of The Silver Lining or visit the Careers page on our website at gatewaywoods.org/careers.

We are searching for a Summer Volunteer Coordinator for 2020. Please contact Bro. Keith Schambach at keith.schambach@gatewaywoods.org for more information. This is a great opportunity to impact the lives of the children on our campus!

We are also searching for our Summer Education Intern. Please contact Bro. Brock Williamson at brock.williamson@gatewaywoods.org for more information.

We have a summer internship opportunity in Gateway Farms. This is a great opportunity to work directly with residents as you plant and harvest bountiful gifts from the garden. Please contact Bro. Eric and Sis. Marissa Bahler at gwfarms@gatewaywoods.org for more information.

You are an important advocate to help us spread the word about God’s work at Gateway Woods. Please continue to lift us up in prayer, check our website gatewaywoods.org and our Facebook page at facebook.com/gatewaywoods often for updates, and make sure that you are on our mailing list. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact us at 888.443.4283 or send an email to info@gatewaywoods.org. Finally, if you would like to receive a monthly email detailing how the work at Gateway Woods is bringing help and healing to those in need, please consider joining our Restoring Hope email list. You can do so at gatewaywoods.org/newsletter or by emailing jon.ringger@gatewaywoods.org.

Alabama, Athens
Kristy Moore
Greetings from the South! We would like to thank all who have served our small congregation on the pulpit the past few months, especially over the holidays. We would also like to thank those of you who took time to stop in as you were passing through to your final destinations. We were beyond blessed by all! We covet your prayers for Sis. Clarann Lynn and Sis. Carolyn Lewis as they continue their fight with cancer.

We are preparing for our second year of ALive over Memorial Day Weekend, and look forward to seeing all of you who will be there. Registration will be open on February 1. Please see Athens’ AC Church website at http://www.athensacchurch.org/alive for more information on the event and registration.

As always, we would love to have y’all visit, even if you’re traveling through for the evening! For our guest house accommodations, please call Sis. Rebekah Klaus at 815.674.5411.
Arizona, Phoenix
Marge Lindenbaum

“I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine” Song of Solomon 6:3

A friend of mine used to say, “Count on me to disappoint you”. He was an alcoholic, aware of his shortcomings and wanted no one to think he was going to change his lifestyle or affections for them. Still, his girlfriend adored him and would have done almost anything to save him from himself. His statement caught my attention. Unmet expectations are some of the most difficult things to deal with. I would have rather said, “Count on me, knowing I will do whatever I can to NOT disappoint you”. But it made me aware of my own condition – in many ways just like him. Not always, but eventually, in some way, I am going to come up short of what is expected of me. We are all like him, incapable of meeting everyone else’s expectations, or even one person’s expectations. We are fallen, vile beings and because we share this condition, we are unable to save each other, or even ourselves. We so badly need a Valentine to come and save us.

We have a Valentine who cherishes us and loves us with the purest of love that is unconditional and unending. He is affectionate, loyal, trustworthy, honest, appreciative, patient, wise and knowledgeable and wants nothing more than to satisfy us. He is compassionate, forgiving, righteous, just, selfless, peaceful, kind, hard-working, humble, supportive and faithful. He is bold and fun! He is always available and is a good listener – in fact, He wants to interact with us in close and intimate communion. He understands exactly what we mean, even if we don’t say it correctly. He doesn’t care if we become angry or don’t understand or trust Him. He cares if we cheat though, because He is jealous, knowing no one else can provide for us as richly and completely. He wants us to know Him intimately. He loves to laugh and wants laughter to be a major part of our life together. He is a king who was willing to leave the kingdom for us, live the life of a pauper and even die a cruel death for us, with no thought of recompense, just for the chance to know us and spend eternity with us. His love is the only love that can save us from ourselves.

In the Song of Solomon, we have a beautiful vision of requited love, beautiful, complete and honest. It is such a potent depiction of love it can make us uncomfortable. This is the example of the love available to every person. We can be in such a relationship with this Valentine, forever.

In the book of the prophet Hosea, we have another example of the love of this Valentine, but this time the love is unrequited, repeatedly disregarded and thrown back into the face of the Valentine. Yet he was faithful and continued to love and pursue his lover/wife. This is a good picture of how our Valentine responds to our imperfections and indiscretions.

The Bible is filled with illustrations of the way God loves us. We may tend to take it for granted because we are so often exposed to it. More often, though, I think we just don’t understand or accept what an amazing, perfect, holy and available gift we are given in the person of Jesus. Or maybe we don’t believe it applies to us, that we are not worth it, and He made a mistake. Of course, He doesn’t make mistakes. His love is real, and in His eyes, you are worth every bit of sacrifice required to save you and bring you into relation with Him. If you don’t know Him yet, turn to Him now and let Him show you that you are, indeed, His beloved.

“...that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height.” Eph 3:17-18

The time is again flying by as our church family prepares for upcoming events. We are looking forward to the Sunday School Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction and the ACYF trip in February. Then we have the privilege of hosting the Elder Conference in March. And we continue to welcome back many more of our winter visitors. As always, we are particularly grateful for the visiting ministers who are so willing to serve us while they are visiting. We enjoyed services by Bro. Rick Kaisner (Sis. Michelle, Chicago, IL), Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern KS), Bro. Brent Kellenberger (Sis.
Beth, Kansas City, MO), and Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein (Sis. Suzanne, West Lafayette, IN). Thank you all for your beautiful delivery of the Word to us. Our Young Group hosted a large group of visitors at the Invite held here in January. What a blessing to see the future church materializing and continuing our tradition of gathering from far and near to get to know each other and to praise our Lord. There were greetings from all over the country! Thank you to everyone who made the effort to travel or to host for this blessed weekend. I pray our church will continue to grow in number and especially in Spirit. We send you all our love and greetings, and again invite you to come visit us in the desert.

Arizona, Prescott
Autumn Rokey

We are excited to announce the newest addition to our church family! Bro. Richard and Sis. Audrey Manz welcomed Evelynn Vera Manz into this world on January 6.

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works.” Psalms 139:14

Thankful for visiting ministers Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda) from Philadelphia, PA and Elder Bro. Lynn Fletcher (Sis. Ronda) from Bluffton, IN.

Arizona, Tucson
Dean and Jackie Knobloch

God has once again blessed us with visiting ministers to teach His Word. We are thankful for Bro. Mitch Fehr (Sis. Abbie, Morris, MN) and Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Morris North, MN) for bringing us the Word.

We welcome back several of our winter visitors and are thankful for their support to our small congregation.

We continue to pray for Bro. Bob and Sis. Carole Haas and Bro. Gene and Karen Denick as they face health issues.

Please contact Bro. Dean Knobloch if you are visiting our area and need accommodations.

California, San Diego
Lillian Wagenbach

We enjoyed a special Bible study Wednesday evening as we listened to Bro. Hermann Glueck (Goodfield, IL) give his testimony and journey of faith on how he dealt with cancer. It was inspiring and gave those of us listening a greater appreciation for dealing with whatever life hands us and to find God in it, whether good or bad.

It is such a joy when a small congregation has young people that want to be a part of God’s family. Andrew Grimm (Bro. Mike and Sis. Amber) has expressed a desire to repent and follow Jesus. We’re thankful for God’s continued mercy.

Occasional services are planned for the dessert during the winter months. Call to Verify.

California, Los Angeles/Altadena
Kali Sauder

With great joy we welcome Grace Madeline to our church family, born to Bro. Mark and Sis. Hoa Wong. Throughout the difficult pregnancy, we have prayed for this dear family and celebrated each victory along the journey. What a vivid example of “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm 30:5). And what joy, to finally hold a sweet baby, long prayed for!

Welcoming the glad news, that very morning in church we read from John 1, “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace… grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (verses 16-18). Sweet Grace comes into this broken world, just as Jesus came into this world, declaring the love of the Father, made known in grace and truth, in a very tangible way! Praise God for his faithfulness to show himself to us!

Colorado, Denver
Tess Leman

During the holidays, our Sundays tend to be scarce as many travel back “home” to be with family. We thank the Lord for the safe journeys and return of our sweet church family. As the new year begins, it feels good to be back together again!

We share in the joy that Luke Zarkovacki (Bro. George and Sis. Lily) is at peace with God and is looking forward to baptism. We are thankful that the Lord is faithful in bringing souls close to Him!
Sis. Brooke Zarkovacki (Bro. Mike and Sis. Rose) and Bro. Seth Knapp (Bro. Matt and Sis. Dana) of Peachtree City, GA, joyfully announced their engagement. We wish them God’s direction, peace and joy as they prepare to become one in the Lord!

Connecticut, Rockville
Julie Bauman, Heidi Beutel
We were blessed to have Bro. Adam Luginbuhl (Sis. Jami, Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Todd Sinn (Sis. Janet, Latty, OH) visit this past month and share God’s word. We pray they will be blessed and rewarded for their efforts.

Bro. David and Sis. Marla Moser, along with big brother Trenton, welcomed Olivia Renee into their hearts and home. Grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Jan Moser and Bro. Todd and Sis. Janet Sinn from Latty, OH.

We rejoice that a heavenly victory has been won for Bro. Everett Gerber. We would like to extend our support and love to his wife, Sis. Nancy, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and many friends.

The Gerber family would like to extend a thank you to all for the thoughts, prayers and cards received.

District of Columbia, Washington
Henrietta Meyer
This month we again did not have caretakers, however we are looking forward to some of our former caretakers returning in the coming months. We would also enjoy getting to know other brethren from across the country as they come to be a part of our congregation for a month. There are still some months available in 2020. 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 dkgsteffen@gmail.com or 302.540.6574.

Our ministers this month were Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Joni, Rittman, OH) and Bro. Dan Pfister (Sis. Sherry, Bluffton, IN). Other visitors were from Akron, OH and Princeville, IL. We are thankful for visitors and for them letting us know they are coming.

This month we welcomed Will Feucht from Princeville. He is doing an internship out here this semester. We hope to get to know him better.

If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. area for vacation or business, please contact Sis. Henrietta Meyer at 703.904.8301 or hmeyer2831@gmail.com for assistance and to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services.

Florida, Fort Lauderdale
Renee Mangold
We were grateful to have three visiting ministers this past month. Visiting and sharing God’s word were Bro. Jeff Gerber (Sis. Carole, Rockville, CT), Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN), and Bro. Stephen Baner (Sis. Donnalou, Gridley, IL). We pray they will be blessed.

“I thank my God upon everyone remembrance of you. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:” Philippians 1:3-6

Florida, Fort Myers
Mary Masters, Terri Young
Once again, Christmas is over and the New Year has begun. This year has been a transition year for me from the snowy holidays of the northwest to the sunny blue skies of Florida. Did it feel like Christmas? I sheepishly remember saying to someone that I really didn’t do Christmas this year. Didn’t do Christmas?! What was I thinking? Christmas is done, Christ has been born, has risen and we celebrate His birth, life and resurrection. That is Christmas! That is what we celebrate with grateful hearts, and we worship the One who is Christmas! God reminded me again that it is not cards, gifts, food and even family gatherings (although that is a precious part of the season), it is Jesus Christ, the newborn baby and risen Lord and Redeemer. I hope each one of you were able to celebrate Him, along with family and loved ones, and enjoy a very blessed Christmas season. Now we can look to 2020 with grateful hearts and praise on our lips. There
will be joys, sorrows, sickness, pain and miracles. Through it all we are so blessed to have a church family to rejoice and laugh with and to support and cry with.

Sunday, January 5 was our hymn sing at the nursing home with Bro. Vic and Sis. Dottie Beer. It is heartwarming to see Sis. Dottie and many of the residents singing along with a twinkle in their eyes! The words of these beautiful and ageless hymns are implanted in our hearts and minds.

We have started our Wednesday evening services at the beginning of January. It is so nice to have a midweek time to come together to receive encouragement and encourage one another that we might finish the week strong!

We were blessed to have visiting ministers, Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda) and Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy) both from Tremont, IL, Bro. Tom Bahler (Sis. Lanae, Rockville, CT) and Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL). Thank you for your faithful teaching.

We extend our prayers and sympathy to Sis. Peg Gudeman (Bro. Dale) in the passing of her father in Morris, MN, Bro. Larry Bruellman (Sis. Teresa) whose mother passed away in West Bend, IA, and to Sis. Virginia Schock (Bro. Norm) as her sister from Colorado passed away. We pray for God’s nearness and comfort to each one of them in their loss.

**The New Beginnings**

We have hit the ground running as we start 2020! School for the moms has started up again and it is a time of organizing (not enough) hours in the day and priorities as they juggle class and homework, taking care of and teaching their little ones, cooking (or learning to cook) and learning to trust a God they never knew before. Do you ever just want change to happen overnight? That is a frequent temptation for me and a test of patience. You can’t make somebody embrace change. I know it is no different for many of you teaching your own children. How much easier to do it for them or tell them the right way, to clear all of the obstacles from their path to make it less work for them (and you!). It is a slow process on the journey to change and if we take away their hardships, we rob them of their important life lessons. And so, we listen, offer advice, show by example and spend much time on our knees as God changes and prunes us in the process.

You know what I love the most about this ministry? It’s when a mom comes over and wants to pray or read devotions together or just share her heart. That is what I envisioned when I came here. But in between those precious moments, there are hurt feelings, crying children, failed goals, angry emotions and hard life lessons. It’s all just a part of the journey.

We started the new year off with a fun day and (of course) delicious food on January 1 at Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary Masters’ home. Their adopted daughter and TNB’s Executive Director, Nadege Borgat, has accepted a new position in another organization and left us at the end of December. We wish her well and are thankful for the many years she served at TNB. Sis. Mary has stepped in and taken on many of the projects of TNB, including preparing and organizing for the annual benefit dinner in February. I have also stepped in to work some hours in the office to take over some community outreach programs and some day to day projects for TNB. About that time, we received extra mentor help and we were blessed to have Bro. Tim and Sis. Traci Beer (Mansfield, OH) and their children, Trina and Tanner here on site with us for a couple of weeks as they helped with painting and other projects at our Community Center duplex. We loved having your family here with us! Also, Bro. Mike and Sis. Claudia Thomas (Valparaiso, IN) have joined us for three months and will be helping out with some day to day activities and mentoring on site. Thank you all for your service. God’s timing is perfect!

Our graduated mom, Lina, accepted a job in Cape Coral as a certified Medical Assistant, and will be moving into her own place. She and Aiden will be missed but we hope to continue to see them at times and are hopeful they will continue to come to church.

Arzu is weeks into her nursing program and growing in grace and faith. She is an encouragement to us all as she seeks God’s will in her life.

Janice has made some very positive changes recently as she
wants to step up and be an example to the new moms and accept more responsibility here in our community.

Our brand-new mom, Araceli, is weeks into school and needs much support in just handling her daily activities and now with school added, will need our love, patience and prayers. Like many of the moms, she had a very rough childhood and was never taught how to do life herself, let alone teach her children the way. We are seeing gradual improvement as the children settle into a safe and loving environment and Araceli begins to respond to the love and wonderful opportunity she now has.

We hope to see many of you at the 2020 Gala for The New Beginnings on February 8. We appreciate all of your support, prayers and generous financial giving to the fundraiser and to the TNB ministry in general. It encourages us so much when we see that you believe in what the Lord is doing here in the souls of these young women and children. Thank you so much and may God bless each one of you!

“O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.” 1 Chron. 16:34

Florida, Sarasota

Sandra Kaeb

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.” Psalms 116:15.

Our prayers are with Sis. Carol Koehl as her uncle, Bro. Carl Graf of Akron, OH, passed from this life. On December 31, Bro. Ben Barth also passed from this life, leaving behind one brother in Morton, IL, and one sister-in-law of Springfield, IL, along with several nephews. He lived in Florida for over 40 years and accepted Christ as his personal Saviour in 2013. We were saddened to hear the passing of Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart, Champion IL and Bro. Everett Gerber of Rockville, CT. These two brothers and their wives wintered many years in Sarasota and shared God’s precious word with us over the pulpit. Prayers are with the families of all these loved ones. May God be their comforter.

It’s always a joy to see loved ones we haven’t seen in awhile. This month our pulpit was blessed by Bro. Eric Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL), Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy, Tremont, IL), Bro. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Austin/Bastrop, TX), Bro. Rich Martin (Sis. Jackie, Gridley IL), and Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Sis. Sharon, Bay City, MI). May God reward them for sharing God’s word with us.

On January 8 we held our business meeting. For a small church everyone is needed and it is a blessing to see the body of Christ working together. For those who continued in their position, new ones coming in and those whose term expired, may God reward you for your service and willing hearts.

Georgia, Peachtree City

Lexi Knapp

New Year, New Mercies.

Recently, I have been thinking of God’s wisdom in giving us “fresh starts.” We get to wake up to a new day every morning. Our lives are split into weeks, months, and years. As this new year starts, I praise God for his mile markers, for these “new” seasons He puts into our lives to reevaluate where our walks with Him are. However, as seasons shift and years change, He remains constant and His mercies are new every single morning!

We have seen God’s overwhelming faithfulness at work in the life of Bro. Seth Knapp (Bro. Matt and Sis. Dana) in his engagement to Sis. Brooke Zarkovacki (Bro. Mike and Sis. Rose) from Denver, CO. We praise God for His beautiful timing and answer to prayers as He has knit their lives and hearts together towards Him!

Likewise, we have seen the faithfulness of God in new life. First time parents Bro. Derek and Sis. Naomi Stoller welcome sweet Miriam Jane into their family. We are thankful for health of both mom and baby, and pray that God would continue to be ever-present during this new season. We also rejoice with new grandparents Bro. Phillip and Sis. Lana Steidinger and Bro. Bryan and Sis. Kara Stoller (Fairbury, IL.)

We also welcome Bro. Todd and Sis. Karen Feller (Valparaiso, IN), who have just moved to the area, to our congregation. We are so thankful to have them worshipping and living alongside us all!

Finally, we are thankful that Chip Fehr has been announced for
baptism and we look forward to that in February. What a privilege to watch the work of God and the transformation of the Gospel in people’s lives!

Although it has been awhile, we had the privilege of celebrating Christmas and having our Christmas program. It is always a sweet time as a church to come together and watch many groups of multiple ages proclaim the message of Christ’s birth!

We also extend our thanks to visiting ministers Bro. Eric Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL) and Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA). We appreciate their service to us!

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 call ahead! (Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser 678.416.6586 or Bro. Matt Knapp 815.674.1498). For additional information, visit our website at www.ptcacchurch.org.

Haiti, Bonne Fin - Hospital Lumiere
Rick and Komari Aberle

Christian greetings from Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Fin. This past month has brought many blessings as we continue to have peace and calm in Haiti. Our missionary team has been able to return to the hospital, for which we are grateful. This past month, Sis. Komari Aberle, Bro. Brett and Sis. Laura Herrmann, Bro. Lucas and Sis. Raya Nussbaum, Bro. Danny and Sis. Sarah Bertsch and their families, Sis. Trinity Walder and Ruth Feucht all were able to return to the mission here.

We were thankful to receive some visitors over the holidays to spend time with our missionary family, as well as work on various projects here. In early January, several members of our Board of Directors traveled to visit the hospital. We are planning to have a medical team come this next month as well.

Again, we give thanks to God for returning a measure of peace to Haiti.

Haiti, Les Cayes
Mike and Susie Walder

Greetings from Haiti! We are thankful for three teams that have already blessed us since the first of the year. An Ohio construction team came to assist with building several church roofs. Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Croghan, NY) and Bro. Ron Palitto (Akron, OH) also shared the word with us. A team was here to help complete the new Dairy office, and an Apostolic Water Aid team was here to maintain the well drilling rigs. We thank these teams for coming to serve and we look forward to the arrival of others soon.

Thanks to everyone who is working extra through the winter months to prepare relief items for shipping overseas. Your labors of love are impacting the lives of many around the world, including the Haitians here. May God bless you!

We are so thankful for safe travels we’ve experienced and the real sense of normalcy that has returned here. Although the Lord regards nations as only a drop in a bucket, His mercy is great. He continues to place the fatherless in families, defends the poor, the powerless and the widows. His mercy is over all His creation and His truth extends to all generations. I enjoy seeing this wonderful theme as I read through the Psalms every morning.

Illinois, Belvidere
Darcy Steffen

We are currently working on a large woodworking project for a client, and I can’t help but notice the similarities between creating with wood and the journey of our spiritual lives. The wood comes to us as a raw board and initially goes through the planer multiple times to get it to the proper depth. We then send it through the table saw to cut it to our desired width. Next comes sanding and gluing, and possibly some grain filling. We sand and stain and spray a coat of finish. The wood faces yet another round with the sander. Finally, the piece emerges smooth and sleek with the beautiful grain shining through. Our lives are so much like this process. We go through so many tests and trials as the Master Craftsman shapes and molds us into His image, preparing us to be His perfect bride who is without spot or wrinkle. After so many steps, I am thrilled to see the finished product! It is so easy
to be bowed under the weight of our trials, but can we be excited about seeing the end result? Let’s just look back and see how far we have come!

Many in our congregation are going through very difficult trials right now, and we ask for your prayers for them. Please pray for Bro. Bill Schifferer (Sis. Lana) as he is in much pain, but is not a candidate for surgery at this time. Please also continue to pray for Bro. Brian Anliker (Sis. Peg) as they face each day through the trials of chronic illness.

We are so thankful for the great love and support we feel from our elders. We pray their time together in Chicago at the Elder Forums was a glory to God and an encouragement to each of them. We thank our Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN) and Elder Bro. Craig Martin (Princeville, IL) for stopping through on their way to the forums to share the Memorandum with us.

Illinois, Bloomington-Normal
Sara Anliker, Kinsey Dotterer

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” Proverbs 20:11, 27

What wonderful truth to ponder as the holiday season comes to an end. We enter the new year with hope and wonderful expectation of all that God will have for us. Our church family has embarked on the second half of the Bible study, Evangelism. We are learning and discussing the privilege we have as believers to further Christ’s work together in our daily walk.

We were blessed by our visiting ministers this month as they brought the Word of God to us. Thank you to Bro. Eric Strassheim (Sis. Jodi, Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Tim Wiegand (Sis. Christa, Leo, IN), and Bro. Kirk Plattner (Sis. Keri, West Lafayette, IN). May God continue to use them in a mighty way.

We celebrate with Erica Schmidt (Bro. Rod and Sis. Cindy Schmidt) as she has announced her desire to become a member of the church body. We celebrated the life of Bro. Dennis Davis as he is now home with the Lord and free of the bondage of cancer. We continue to lift up Sis. Kathy and her family as they continue to fight the good fight of faith in his absence.

We go forward into this new year “searching all the inward parts of the belly” by the strength and hope given us through the Holy Spirit.

May God bless you and keep you!

Illinois, Bradford
Becky Endress, Lena Stoller

Our church welcomes Jeff Knobloch who recently moved from Arizona to Galva, IL for employment. We are pleased to have him assembling with us and hope it will soon feel like home.

Just before Christmas, many of us traveled to Mediapolis, IA to mourn with Sis. Rosalie Wiegand the loss of her father, Bro. Al Wiegand (Sis. Martha). He so enjoyed spreading his love of music by gifting gospel CDs wherever he went. Maybe you have one.

“When I’ve gone the last mile of the way,
I will rest at the close of the day;
And I know there are joys that await me,
When I’ve gone the last mile of the way.”
Johnson Oatman Jr (1908)

On January 1, Sis. Jamie Joos (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jenny) moved to Orange County, Texas for the winter as a ‘long termer’ on the HarvestCall work project.

What a lovely way to spend a winter evening, to sit and listen as two young women told of their repentance and conversion experiences! Sis. Ana Joos (Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jenny) and Sis. Elizabeth Dietz (Bro. Barry and Sis. Rachel) are our new sisters in Christ. Sis. Ana, who came from Guatemala as a young girl, told us, “I heard of Jesus. But I didn’t know He could change my life!” Elder Bro. Dan Moser (Sis. Anne, Elgin, IL) helped our Elder Bro. Bruce Endress with this work.

Ministering Bro. John Grimm (Sis. Julie, Columbus, OH), Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI), Bro. Neil Stoller (Sis. Luann, Princeville, IL) and Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL) visited and shared God’s word during the past month. Thank you!
We also thank Sis. Lana Wiegand (Bro. Ernie) for the time and effort spent in writing our news for the Silver Lining. May God bless her and her young family. Going forward, we are happy to welcome Sis. Lena Stoller (Bro. Loren) in her place.

Illinois, Champaign
Brent Young

Sis. Kirbi Eckerty shared her testimony and was baptized into the body of Christ and into our local church family. We are so thankful for our God that reveals Himself and for souls that still seek Him.

We are also grateful to our recent visiting ministers, including Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL), Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL), Neil Stoller (Sis. Luann, Princeville, IL), and Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL). Bro. Jeff has agreed to serve as our counseling elder during this time of transition and we are deeply grateful for his and Sis. Ruth’s willingness to support us in this way.

We also extend our sincere thanks to all those from our other churches who assisted with the funeral for Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart. It was a true “bearing of one another’s burdens” and allowed for those who desired to attend the service that opportunity. This would be a good tradition to continue in any of our churches, large or small.

New life has brought great joy to our church family! Bro. Corey and Sis. Michelle Rudin, along with big brother Denver, welcomed Noah Edward, and Bro. Joel and Sis. Mindy Stickling, along with big brothers Leo, Abe, and Tate, welcomed Tessa Jo. Little Tessa had an extended stay in the hospital in Peoria and we are praising God that she is now home.

The joy brought by a newborn is only exceeded by the joy of the born again! We are rejoicing with Addie Waibel (Bro. Brian and Sis. Wendy) in her recent full surrender to Jesus in repentance.

We had opportunity to extend well wishes to Bro. Ned Kellenberger as he prepared to move to Singapore for a job opportunity. We wish Bro. Ned all the best in this new endeavor and it reminds us again that our omnipresent God occupies the full circle of the Earth.

We have welcomed several new arrivals into our church family. Bro. Steve and Sis. Bonnie Kaeb recently made Champaign their home church, Bro. John and Sis. Cheryl Knobloch moved to the area and will be attending often, and Bro. Timothy Rassi has graduated and joined our thriving group of working singles.

Illinois, Chicago
Diana Eisenmann

Chicago hosted the annual Elder Forums which brought several visitors including Elder Bro. Steve Ringger (Bluffton North, IN), Bro. Brent Walder (Rockville, CT), and Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Denver, CO). We appreciate that they were able to join us for Sunday services and share the Word.

Bro. Fred Sollberger has agreed to serve a new term on the Stewardship Planning Team, and Bro. Matthew Rassi will serve a second term. We thank Bro. Joe Darlington for completing his term on the SPT.

Bro. Carl Graf (Akron, OH) passed away in December. He was the grandfather of Bro. Ryan Graf (Sis. Leah). We pray for God’s peace and comfort for the family.

We rejoice to announce the engagement of Bro. Joe Darlington and Sis. Ashley Bollier (Indianapolis, IN). Their parents are Jerry and Sis. Sandy Darlington of Belvidere and Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie Bollier of Indianapolis.

Illinois, Cissna Park
Denise Kaeb, Joan Rudin

How precious it is to worship and fellowship with brethren of like faith. We were recently blessed with groups of visitors from LaCrosse, Remington and Wolcott, IN. We thank ministering Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Ned Bahler (Sis. Anna, Fairbury, IL) for serving us. Also “home” for Christmas day services was Bro. Josh Walder (Sis. Tina, Congerville, IL) who shared God’s word with us from the pulpit. Thank you, ministering brothers, for being willing to continually feed the flock.

Our annual church business meeting was conducted by our Elder Bro. Tom Stock in January.
How thankful we are for each brother and sister willing to use their God-given gifts to support our church family in many diverse ways. We are thankful for the peaceful unity we can experience as we transition from last year into the coming year.

Several local grandparents are enjoying new little additions to their families. Bro. Adam and Sis. Belinda Kaeb (Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Denise Kaeb, and Bro. Bruce and Sis. Bonita Frank) welcome little Owen James into their home in Magdalena, Mexico. Bro. Corey and Sis. Michelle Rudin (Bro. Arlyn and Sis. LaNae Rudin) and little Denver from Champaign church welcome Noah Edward into their family. Wishing each one God’s rich blessings.

We are thankful that a local group from Cissna could again enjoy the gift of serving on the annual trip to Magdalena, Mexico. We are thankful that, after spending some time in the hospital, Bro. Sid Kaufmann (Sis. Sandy) is able to assemble with us again.

Note of Thanks

Sis Wanda Maul (the late Bro. Bill Maul) and family would like to thank the many who remembered them with prayers, gifts, cards, love and concern during their time at Rochester, MN as well as before and since. Your support has been a great blessing. Thank you also for the condolences (as well as cards and prayers) in the loss of Bro. Bill’s mother, Elizabeth Maul. (Inadvertently, the funeral of Bro. Bill was not recorded. If anyone happens to have recorded it via phone line, please let us know.)

Illinois, Congerville

Mary Knapp, Erica Steffen

The joy of Christmas was evident as our Sunday school students brought forth the sweet, old story. We pray they and their teachers will be blessed for the many efforts put forth. Although the Christmas season is long past, may the kind and loving Spirit of Christmas be evident in our lives each day.

We rejoice with Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Zobrist, as their son, Bro. Nate Zobrist (Goodfield) is engaged to Sis. Tabitha Koch (Bro. Dirk and Sis. Erika, Tremont, IL). May they feel God’s presence as they begin this new chapter in their lives.

Note of Thanks

My appreciation and thanks for all the prayers, love, cards, and phone calls for my 90th birthday. I have felt the comfort of the Holy Spirit working. I pray that God will bless each one and all.

In Christ's love and mine,
Andy Virkler

Illinois, Eureka

Debra Blunier, Lavonne Schumacher

No matter how gray the day may seem to be, we know there’s a silver lining – and it’s not just reading this publication (though that’s an idea for bringing sunshine to the day!). Beyond the day that we see, and the circumstances that we face, there’s a brighter tomorrow coming. If we hold fast to our faith and serve God all our days, He has promised us an eternal home where no evil or gray days will ever come. What a fantastic long-term forecast!

We were thankful to have visiting ministers bringing us the Word, including Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN), Bro. Kent Getz, (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA), Bro. Don Manz (Sis. Connie, Junction, OH), Elder Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH), Bro. Kevin Schrock (Sis. Rachel, Congerville, IL), Bro. Jay Steffen (Sis. Melinda, Congerville, IL), and Bro. Paul Kilgus (Sis. Carmen, Fairbury, IL). God richly blesses us in all who serve us (and Him) on the pulpit.
A sweet little bundle arrived right on Christmas Day, when Alaya Jane was born to Bro. Eli and Sis. Larissa Cottrell. Grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Gloria Cottrell and Bro. Mike and Sis. Jody Bahler, Wolcott, IN.

Another sweet baby girl, Wren Taylor, arrived January 3 to Bro. Tyler and Sis. Tiffany Knapp. She was welcomed home by sisters Autumn, Madison, and Hadley, and brother Beckett. Grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Lori Knapp, and Dave and Dianne Eastman of Eureka.

Our sincere sympathy goes to Sis. Dorothy Schmidgall and all her family on the death of her husband, Bro. Marvin Schmidgall, on December 29. Bro. Marvin served as a Eureka minister for 32 years, and we will long remember his faithful service and heartfelt sermons. He was the father of Paul (Kris) Schmidgall of Washington, IL, Sis. Kary (Bro. Mike) Schmidgall and Bro. Mike (Sis. Dianne) Schmidgall, all of Eureka, Mark (Lisa) Schmidgall of Roanoke, IL, and Jayne (Dwayne) Schock of Elgin, IL.

Wonderful news came to us this month when we learned that Natalie Meiss is seeking the Lord in repentance. She is the daughter of Elder Bro. Trent and Sis. Lucy Meiss. She will have our support and prayers.

Our prayers and support also go to Bro. Brent and Trudy Blunier as they face a very hard time with his medical challenges. Certainly “every day is a gift,” as their blog says.

**Illinois, Fairbury**

**Kati Meiss, Trish Steidinger**

“Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world…”

Royce Evan was born to Bro. Thane and Sis. Myrna Zehr. Welcoming Royce home is big sister, Nora, and grandparents, Bro. Jeff and Sis. Sara Moser and Bro. Quinn and Sis. Joan Zehr. We pray for God’s blessings on this little family.

We had several visiting ministers over the Christmas and New Year’s holidays. We thank Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora, West Bend, IA), Bro. Matt Knapp (Sis. Dana, Peachtree City, GA), Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie, Minneapolis, MN), Bro. Brian Waibel (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL) and Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL) for serving our congregation.

We had our eyes opened to the joys and struggles of serving as missionaries when Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Walder spent an evening with us speaking on the HarvestCall Child Sponsorship program in Haiti. Our hearts were stirred to hear of their many experiences. Surely God has been with them and protected them and we sincerely pray that will continue as they continue to serve.

Our thoughts are with Bro. Dave Wiegand (Sis. Ethel) and Kinley Gudeman (Bro. Shannon and Sis. Brianna) as they recently spent time in the hospital. We also pray for continued healing for Sis. Jan Bachtold (Bro. Herb) after her recent knee surgery.

Our prayers are with the loved ones of Sis. Alma Bolliger, who was laid to rest. May God comfort her children, Bro. Mark (Ruby), Brian (Nancy), Bruce (Lisa) and

**Note of Thanks**

I wish to thank everyone for the beautiful cards I received for my 90th birthday. It was very much appreciated. May God bless you all!

In Christian Love, Helen Fehr

**Illinois, Forrest**

**Carissa Knapp, Marsha Lanz**

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God…” 1 John 3:1

We rejoice with Nolan Zimmerman (Bro. Adam and Sis. Rachel) and Reuben Mueller (Bro. Ron and Sis. Vicki) as they begin their repentance. May they feel our Heavenly Father’s nearness as they turn their hearts toward Him.

Sharing of God’s love with us this month were Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Michael Schneider (Sis. Jodi, Junction, OH), Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO), Bro. Mark Klaus (Sis. Rebekah, Athens, AL), Bro. Clint Dotterer (Sis. Rebecca, Denver, CO) and Bro. Leland Plattner (Sis. Mary, Zapata, TX).

Our thoughts are with Bro. Dave Wiegand (Sis. Ethel) and Kinley Gudeman (Bro. Shannon and Sis. Brianna) as they recently spent time in the hospital. We also pray for continued healing for Sis. Jan Bachtold (Bro. Herb) after her recent knee surgery.

Our prayers are with the loved ones of Sis. Alma Bolliger, who was laid to rest. May God comfort her children, Bro. Mark (Ruby), Brian (Nancy), Bruce (Lisa) and
Joyce (Scott) Rudin. We also sorrow with Sis. Tamra Bachman in the loss of her husband, Keith, after a prolonged illness. May God wrap His arms around her and their children, Ashley (Robert) Bohm, Brendan (Amanda) and Kyle (Amanda).

We thank Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Walder for sharing with us about the HarvestCall Child Sponsorship program. We were reminded how much the small things can make an impact on the lives of others, especially when God gives the increase.

We recently held our annual business meeting, where responsibilities changed hands and church matters were discussed. May we continue to encourage and pray for one another as we work together to bring honor and glory to God.

Illinois, Goodfield
Amy Hinrichsen, Judy Knapp

Greetings of love as we begin a new year and a new decade! What is our vision for 2020? This question was asked of us at our New Year’s Eve service. 20/20 is considered perfect vision so may we all try for perfect vision in 2020. We know that we will never be perfect but it is surely a vision to strive for as we wend our way Heavenward!

We appreciate our ministers and thank them for their labors of love on our behalf as we make this journey together. Bro. Rick Kaisner (Sis. Michelle, Chicago, IL) was our only visiting minister this month and we thank him for sharing God’s word with us on January 5.

Sometimes big blessings come in small packages and we are happy to announce another new baby has joined our church family. Foster Grey was born to Bro. Adam and Sis. Maribeth Rocke and joins excited siblings, Fiona, Donovan, Dawson, and Dallas. Foster’s loving grandparents are Mike and Peggy Moens and Bro. Mark and Sis. Connie Rocke. We listed four new babies last month and have several more coming soon. It is such a blessing to welcome these little ones!

We also rejoice with new spiritual birth as we have two new converts to report this month. Andrew Grimm, son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Amber, has surrendered his heart to Jesus and even though they are now in San Diego, we have a very special connection to this dear family so we rejoice with them. Bradley Glueck also feels the need to surrender his heart to Jesus and we are so very thankful for him. He is the son of George and Pauline Glueck and brother to Sis. Sabrina and Doug, who is awaiting baptism in a few weeks. We are thankful God is still calling souls to the foot of the cross.

We are blessed to announce two engagements this month. Our dear Sis. Sabrina Glueck, daughter of George and Pauline Glueck, will marry Bro. Cole Zeller, son of Bro. Willie and Sis. Dannelle Zeller from Morton, IL. Sis. Taylor Wiegand is engaged to Bro. Drew Gerber from Bluffton, IN. Sis. Taylor is the daughter of Bro. Kevin and Sis. Lindsay Wiegand and Bro. Drew is the son of Bro. Chad and Sis. Jami Gerber from Bluffton, IN. It is such a blessing when new Christ-centered homes are being established and we wish both couples God’s richest blessings as they begin this journey together.

Our Sis. Connie (Bro. Rick) Gerber is thankful for a very successful cancer surgery and is recuperating at home now. Sis. Joy (Bro. Jim) Hohulin is back at the nursing home after a brief hospital stay and we lift her up in prayer as she struggles with significant health concerns. We are so thankful that our dear Jackie Hohulin, daughter of Bro. Jim and Sis. Joy Hohulin, has moved to LifePoints and pray that she will adjust quickly to her new “home”. Sis. Verna Hartter is back in the nursing home after a brief hospital stay and we lift her up in prayer as she transitions into hospice care. There are many others that had surgeries or medical situations and we pray that God will hear prayers and answer as He sees fit.

Our dear Sis. Wilma Knapp has passed away and her funeral was held on January 4. Our love and sympathy to her dear children and grandchildren.

February 12 was our annual “Pizza” hymn sing as we gathered and had pizza together and then lifted our voices in praise to our great God. What a blessing to gather together, young and old, to fellowship and praise God.
Illinois, Gridley

Perry Klopfenstein

Sis. Randi Lowery is to be married to Bro. Jeremy Schaffer. Both are of our Gridley congregation. She is the daughter of Lisa Lowery of Chatsworth, and the late Randy Lowery. His parents are Bro. Kevin and Sis. Martha Schaffer (Forrest, IL.) We wish this couple God’s blessings as time unfolds.

Bro. Steve Stortz had knee replacement surgery on January 6, and is recovering. Sis. Linda Zimmerman had foot surgery. Sis. Wilma Kuntz fractured her left arm and is at Heritage Manor in El Paso, and hopes to return home.

Bro. Brandon Emch, (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO) was a visiting minister here on December 29. We thank him for his efforts.

In 2019, our Gridley congregation had 12 baptisms, 4 weddings, and 4 deaths. Time goes on, and we have our joys and sorrows. Yet, in everything, God is ever present. We trust in Him.

Owen Michael was born to Bro. Johnny and Sis. Shelby Wellwood. Grandparents are Jim and Jackie Wellwood, Gridley, and Ryan and Laurie Steidinger, Fairbury. May God be with these parents in training up this dear infant.

Four souls were taken into the fold on January 19. Bro. Dustin and Sis. Kari Slagel, Bro. Ethan Slagel, and Sis. Haven Slagel. May God be with them in this new walk of faith. Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser, (Sis. Sue, Peachtree City, GA), was here for the occasion.

Illinois, Morton

Julie Bahr, Annette Tanner

We thank Bro. Jonathan Hodel (Sis. Megan, Roanoke, IL) for sharing God’s Word with us on December 29.

Bro. Benjamin Barth (Sarasota, FL) entered his Heavenly Home on December 24. He is a brother of our Bro. Richard Barth.

December 22 we were excited to hear the engagement announced of our Bro. Cole Zeller to Sis. Sabrina Glueck (Goodfield, IL). Their parents are Bro. Will and Sis. Dannelle Zeller and George and Pauline Glueck. We wish this young couple God’s blessings as they prepare for their wedding and life together.

We welcome Bro. Drew and Sis. Amanda Leman and their children Will, Miles and Simone who are now worshiping with us. We pray they feel our love for them and soon feel at home in our Morton church family.

We say farewell to Bro. Timothy Rassi, son of Bro. Andrew and Sis. Sandy Rassi, as he is now making Champaign, IL his home church. We hope he comes back to visit often.

Sunday afternoon January 12 was our Family Recognition Service to introduce the three new babies born to Morton families in 2019. Bro. Andrew Rassi encouraged us from Deuteronomy Chapter 6. He gave us three ways to teach our children in the way they should go. No. 1 - Be a model as to how to seek God. No. 2 - Teach them God’s Word and saturate their minds in the truth. No. 3 - Share our testimony of the power of God and what He has done in our lives.

The evening of January 11 many enjoyed a pizza supper followed by our first hymn sing of the New Year. We thank the Bible Class for singing songs related to Christ’s crucifixion.

As we think of February as being the month of love, let us love others as God loves us.

The love of God is greater far Than tongue or pen can ever tell; It goes beyond the highest star, And reaches to the lowest hell. The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win; His erring child He reconciled, And pardoned from his sin. Oh, love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forevermore endure - The saints, and angels’ song. The Love of God, Hymns of Zion/Tabernacle Hymns, #289

Illinois, Peoria

Bonnie Bach, Crystal Wettstein

As I write this news article, it is a cold, snowy winter evening. I am thinking how wonderful to have a warm home and plenty of food to eat! Yet it is an even greater blessing that I can freely share God’s love with others! Truly God has blessed us! I pray that in 2020 I will be more thankful.

Due to winter weather forecasts, the annual Bible Class pancake supper was held a day early. It was well attended and enjoyed by all.
Two sisters and a brother have new responsibilities as Sunday school teachers. They are Sis. Aubrey Leuthold, Sis. Sarah Reinhard, and Bro. Brett Hoerr. Bro. Steve Leuthold is our new church trustee. May God be with each one as they serve in our church family.

Our thoughts of sympathy are with Bro. Bob Rumbold (Sis. Marge) in the passing of his brother Roger. Bro. Dave Beutel’s (Sis. Lanae) grandfather, Bro. Everett Gerber (Rockville, CT), recently passed into eternity. Sis. Cheryl Grassi (late Bro. John) traveled to New York to attend the funeral of her mother-in-law. We wish God’s comforting nearness for these dear ones! As we say good bye on earth, it reminds us how quickly time passes. May we use it wisely!

**Illinois, Princeville**

**Melinda Christ, Cherie White**

On Christmas Day, God gave two precious love gifts as Clint and Jessica Martin gave birth to twin babies, Nathan Joseph and Liv Eileen. Siblings welcoming them home are Connor, Joshua and Eliza. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Craig and Sis. Terri Martin and Joe and Janine Aimone. May they feel God’s nearness as they raise their children.

Visiting on Christmas was Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO) who reminded us of the lineage of Jesus Christ.

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

**The Babe of Bethlehem, Hymns of Zion, #36**

Also serving us on our pulpit in January was Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jackie, Peoria, IL). God bless these brothers for sharing the Word with us.

We rejoice as Kendra Wagenbach (Bro. Troy and Sis. June) has turned her back on Satan to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. It is always refreshing to hear the news of another soul beginning their walk with Him.

It was wonderful to have Bro. Brett, Sis. Laura Herrmann and family with us as they were in the United States for a short time. May God bless them as they have returned to Haiti, and may He continue to guide them in His work.

Our annual business meeting was held January 8. May God bless the efforts of those that are retiring from their positions and for those that are assuming new roles.

Several have been hospitalized, Bro. Ray Wagenbach (Sis. Betty), Sis. Michelle Martin (Bro. Andy) and Bro. Gene Siebenthal (Sis. Kay).

May God provide comfort to Sis. Dianne Knobloch (Bro. Marvin) and Sis. Lorane Martin as we heard the news of the death of their brother, Edward Grimm (Donna, West Bend, IA). Also bearing sorrow is Pat Yager as her step-daughter, Denise Perry has also passed from this life.

**Note of thanks:**

Thank you for your prayers, visits, cards, and kind deeds shown to our dear mother. May God bless you for your love and kindness. The family of Eleanor Baer

**Illinois, Roanoke**

**Judy Sauder, Barb Schwind**

Bro. Jon and Sis. Jessi Schwind welcomed a baby daughter, Sadie Grace, on December 19. Her older sisters and brother are Cece, Elsie, and Jack, and her thankful grandparents are Bill and Janet Rosecrans of Brimfield, IL, and Bro. Dave and Sis. Barb Schwind. Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise Knepp became grandparents again with the birth of Philippa Rose on January 4. Her parents are Ryan and Taryn Knepp of Fitchburg, WI. We rejoice with these dear families and pray for God’s blessing on them as they raise their children in the ways of the Lord.

Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Tamara, Wolcott, IN) was our guest minister on December 22. Bro. Ben Lindberg (Sis. Anneliese, Taylor, MO) served us on the pulpit on December 29. On January 5, Bro. Matt Oesch (Sis. Shelli, Alto, MI) was our visiting minister. We thank these brothers for faithfully serving us.

On December 22 we said farewell to Sis. Joy Hinrichsen and Bro. Drew and Sis. Amanda Leman and their children Will, Miles, and Simone. Sis. Joy will be worshipping with the Champaign, IL, church, and the Lemans plan to attend the Morton, IL, church. We have appreciated having Sis. Joy and the Leman family in our fellowship for these many years.
We know they will be welcomed in their new church homes and that they will be a blessing there also. May our Lord richly bless Sis. Joy and Bro. Drew and Sis. Amanda and their children as they make this transition and in the years to come.

Sis. Laura Fehr traveled to visit her sister, Sis. Rachel Fehr, who is a teacher in the UAE. We pray for safe travels and that this would be a time of fellowship and blessing for these two sisters as they spend time together.

Keith (Connie) Hohulin of Cumming, GA, passed away on December 6. There was a memorial service held on January 11 in Illinois because his mother, Sis. Marie, was unable to travel to Georgia to attend his funeral. Keith’s brothers, Bro. Mike Hohulin (Sis. Faye, Ft. Lauderdale, FL) and retired minister Bro. Tim Hohulin (Sis. Cathy, Bloomington, IL) had the services. Bro. Marvin (Sis. Dorothy) Schmidgall of Eureka, IL, went to be with the Lord on December 29. He was a brother-in-law to Sis. Betty Hodel and Sis. Doris Hodel. We extend our love and deepest sympathy to these dear families in their loss and ask for our Lord’s comfort upon them.

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death;” Phil. 3:10.

We had a special New Year’s Eve service reflecting on God’s faithfulness over the past year and throughout our lives. We prayed for the Lord’s guidance in the New Year, for salvation for the lost, that we would love as Jesus loves, and that we would have unity in the body of Christ. It was a beautiful evening of worship.

Our high school Bible Class and their teachers went to the Peoria County Jail on January 5 to help with services there. What a blessing to share the good news of Jesus with others!

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,” Prov. 1:7.

On January 5, our afternoon service was devoted to the first of several Bible studies on Proverbs. This one was entitled “The Purpose of Proverbs” from Prov. 1: 1-7 and was led by Bro. Matt Feucht (Sis. Jennifer). Some of Bro. Matt’s points were: God’s will is practical and applies to all aspects of life. Life in God’s will is a happy life. Life in God’s will is a useful life. Life in God’s will doesn’t just happen; we need to be disciplined to seek and pursue it. And, this life is available to all who pursue it. We thank Bro. Matt for his exhortations. It will be a blessing for our church to delve into the wisdom that is contained in the book of Proverbs.

Our annual HarvestCall Family Night was January 8 at our Fellowship Hall. We had a blessed evening of filling kits with needed supplies to be sent to HarvestCall project sites in Haiti and Jamaica.

We welcome Margi Hodel, who has been worshipping with us, to our church. We hope she feels “at home” here.

“This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:24.

January 11 was our Ladies’ Coffee at the fellowship hall. The theme was “A Birthday Celebration”. We recalled favorite birthday traditions and also remembered our spiritual birthdays when we answered the Lord’s call to follow Him. We thank all those involved who helped make it a blessed morning of fellowship and encouragement among the women of our church.

Charity Feucht, Destyne King, and Dalton Logan have testified that they are at peace with God and man. We look forward to their testimonies baptisms February 15-16. We are so thankful for God’s redeeming work in the hearts of young men and women.

We continue to lift up Bro. Dave (Sis. Barb) Schwind, Bro. Bob Zimmerman, and Bro. Wally (Sis. Marilyn) Leman in prayer for our Lord’s healing, strength, peace, and nearness as they deal with health issues.

Illinois, Tremont
Debbie Aberle, Anita Koch

Greetings of love, and may God bless all of you in this new year with His love and grace!

We are always happy to welcome Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae, Minneapolis, MN) back home. Bro. Dewayne left us with this thought: “If we really believe that the Word of God is truth, it will change our life.” Bro. David Huette followed with “the output of our spiritual life is in
direct proportion to the input of the Word of Truth.”

Congratulations to Bro. Jason and Sis. Anita Koch on the arrival of Jordan Daniel. Little Jamie is excited to have a little brother. Bro. Dan and Sis. Julie Koch and Elder Bro. Bill and Sis. Emily Schlatter (Junction, OH) are his thankful grandparents. Bro. Clayton and Sis. Whitney Steidinger are thrilled to welcome their little son, Huxley Jon into their hearts and home. Grandparents Bro. Jon and Sis. Rebekah Wagenbach and Bro. Rick and Sis. Kim Steidinger (Taylor, MO) are also rejoicing!

We are excited to share four engagements! Bro. Dale and Sis. Susan Glueck are happy to announce the upcoming weddings of their two girls: Amelia is engaged to Patrick Marino (Bloomington, IL) and Chloe is engaged to Will Brock (Pekin, IL.) Wendy Wagenbach has announced her engagement to Randy Fuller (Washington, IL.) Wendy’s parents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Wagenbach. Todd and Stacey Prather are looking forward to the wedding and union of their son Benny to Autumn Van Natta (Tremont, IL.) May God bless these couples with joy and happiness as they plan for, and look forward to, their lives together.

We express our sympathy to those who have said goodbye to their loved ones in recent weeks. Judy (Bob) Mooney’s brother Glenn Moser, Bro. Norman Frank (brother to Sis. Ruth Pflederer), and Dean Massner, uncle to Sis. Dawn (Bro. Tim) Schaefer have all entered into eternity. May God bless you with precious memories to cherish.

Sis. Jenna (Bro. David) Baer and Sis. Sandy (Bro. Ken) Dill had surgeries. Bro. Elmon (Sis. Janice) Koch spent some time in the hospital. We are very thankful for God’s protection for Bro. Tim and Sis. Candi Aberle as they were hit head on in a horrific auto accident. May God bless all mentioned with His love and blessing of healing.

**Illinois, Washington**

**Lydia Pfaffmann**

*Another year is dawning,*  
*Dear Master, let it be,*  
*In working or in waiting,*  
*Another year for Thee.*  
*Another Year is Dawning, Hymns of Zion, #150*

We’re thankful that Sis. Marge Feucht, who had been hospitalized with heart-related problems, is home and doing well!

A sweet little girl, Kayla Anne, was born to Michael and Katie Rasmussen on December 29. What a precious bundle of joy!

Answered prayers! Ben Fritz, son of Bro. Phil and Sis. Jessica, began his repentance, surrendering his heart and life to his Savior!

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Mark Klaus (Sis. Rebekah, Athens, AL), Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy, West Bend, IA), and Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL). May our Lord bless them for being willing to serve us on the pulpit!

**Indiana, Bluffton**

Suzie Fiechter, Liana Reinhard,  
Olivia Steffen

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.” 2 Timothy 4:2

It is after much prayer and seeking out God’s will that we believe God has called Bro. Brent and Sis. Allison Kaehr to the pulpit ministry. We are thankful for God’s faithfulness in providing men willing to lead and serve our church in this capacity. Our prayers are with their family as they begin this new season of their lives. Additionally, we rejoice with them on the repentance of their son, Travis Kaehr.

Our church has also had two other converts this month. Maxton Pfister (Bro. Vince and Sis. Brandy) and Brett Drayer (Bro. Joel and Sis. Erin) have both given their hearts to the Lord.

Other reasons to rejoice recently included the wedding of Sis. April Neuenschwander (Bro. Rex and Sis. Becky) to Bro. Colton Frauhiger (Lana and Ben Sprunger, and BJ Frauhiger). Bro. Samuel Kaehr (Bro. Jon and Sis. Juli) is engaged to Sis. Erika Gerber (Bro. Alan and Sis. Joli). Bro. Chad and Sis. Jami Gerber are thankful for the engagement of their son, Bro. Drew, to Sis. Taylor Wiegand (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Lindsay) of Goodfield, IL.

We appreciate the visiting ministers that came “home” for the holidays to be with family. Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Joe Gerber (Sis. Heidi, Champaign, IL) served us on the pulpit.

This January, the 3rd-5th grade Sunday school students have the opportunity to attend a new scripture song class. Also, many of our church members are participating in a church-wide bible study. It is a great way to connect with a variety of people!

Our prayers were with our Elder. Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda), as he attended the elder forums in Chicago, IL. We appreciate our Elder Body as they seek God’s will for our churches.

Bro. John Reinhard (Sis. Pam) presented the topic of “Resilience” on a Sunday evening. It was helpful to learn how to make it through trials and return to a new normal.

Sympathy was extended to Bro. Mike Meade (Sis. Mary Dean) on the passing of his brother, Pat Meade. We are also praying for the family of Jeff Bailey as he passed away. He leaves behind his wife, Karen, and family members, Bro. Rob Parker (Sis. Sierra, Leo, IN), Teresa (Chris) Garner and Sis. Marlene (Bro. Dean) Vanhorn.

Charles (Linda) Isch remains in Houston, Texas for a stem cell transplant. He hopes to return home for recovery. Sis. Jamie Rinkenberger (Bro. Luke) is recovering well after surgery for thyroid cancer. She will begin other treatment in a few months. It was a blessing to support the family of Bro. Matt Kachr (Sis. Olivia) through a pancake and sausage breakfast. We are prayerful for them as he battles cancer.

May we honor the Lord and walk in His footsteps in 2020.

Indiana, Bluffton North

Rhonda Maller, Tiffani Schladenhauffen

“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.” Luke 2:20

These shepherds could not keep the good news of Jesus to themselves, so we want to be like them in 2020 and go out and tell all of what Jesus has done in our lives.

Our Sunday school shared with us in song, the good news of Jesus' birth in our annual Christmas Program. The story never grows old and the songs of the season help us to keep our focus on the Christ child. As we see our youth presenting the Christmas story in song we realize how much we have to be thankful for!

With children being off from school on Christmas break, there were a couple of family activities planned. A family ice skating afternoon and a family roller skating evening were both great opportunities for our families to fellowship together.

A churchwide Bible study is being organized again this year. We are using the study “Old Testament Characters” provided by AC Publications. In the past all that have participated in the churchwide Bible study have been blessed by it, and it promotes spiritual growth, unity, and fellowship.

As we closed out the year at our New Year’s Eve services, we were challenged that as we go into the new year to remember that Christ died in our place and to keep our focus on Him.

Indiana, Francesville

Jacki Huber, Connie Linback

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

On New Year’s Eve, many gathered to praise the Lord for His faithfulness, and reflected on how we are representing Christ in our relationships with others.

We rejoice with Bro. Ben and Sis. Deana Cook as their son Isaiah has been announced as having peace with God, and is looking forward to baptism.

Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) and Bro. Dan Leman (Sis. Tess, Denver, CO) blessed us by sharing God’s word with us recently.

Our prayers have gone out for Bro. Harold and Sis. Maxine Gutwein as they were both hospitalized recently. They have expressed their thankfulness for the church family, and that they miss the Sarasota, FL. church, where they normally spend their winters!

We continue to hold up in prayer for healing, Bro. Edison Gutwein (Sis. Chrisann), Bro. Wayne Putt (Sis. Paulette), Bro. Herb Cook (Sis. Suzanne), and Sis. Vanessa Murray (John and Sis. Jessica)
Our sympathy is extended to Jon Clevenger and his children in the passing of Jon’s dear wife, Sis. Diane, also to Bro. Dale and Sis. Peg Gudeman with the passing of Peg’s father, retired ministering Bro. Harold Gramm (Sis. Ila) of Morris, MN.

**Indiana, Indianapolis**

**Edie Bollier, Kaylin Bollier**

The first Sunday in December many from our congregation were able to spend the day at the Women’s Prison sharing the gospel in song and testimonies as well as sharing gifts with the inmates.

The Christmas program was a delightful reminder of the wonder of Jesus coming to earth and His fulfillment of prophecy. We also had many grandparents visiting that day.

We always appreciate our visiting ministers. Bro. Justin Koch (Sis. Marcia, Washington, IL), Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL), and Bro. Jeff Niehouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) were with us recently.

We were all very saddened by the sudden decline and passing of our dear Elder Bro. Wayne Banwart. We rejoice with him in his victory. Our sympathy and prayers are with his children Bro. Aaron and Sis. Kara Klopfenstein and Bro. Neil and Sis. Leann Banwart and their children.

Our church was blessed to have three young men give their testimonies and get baptized. They were Noah and Adrian Schafer (Bro. Luke and Sis. Andria) and Landon Strassheim (Bro. Eric and Sis. Jodi). Grandparents Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi) of South Bend ministered to us that weekend. Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Kristine) of Haiti visited their new granddaughter and shared the Word as well over the holidays. We rejoice with Sis. Ashley Bollier (Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie) on her engagement to Bro. Joe Darlington of Chicago. His parents are Jerry and Sis. Sandy Darlington of Belvidere. We wish them God’s blessings in their life together.

**Indiana, LaCrosse**

**Megan Frank, Julie Rocke**

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4.

It’s a beautiful thought that God himself will wipe away all tears. We rejoice in the midst of earthly sorrow as our dear Sis. Connie Knoblock was released from this life on January 3, 2020 and entered an eternity of peace and joy. No more pain. No more death. No more sorrow. She fought a good fight, holding fast to faith in God, living in the peace that He gives through salvation in Jesus Christ. She is missed by many family members and by our entire church family.

Bro. Gene and Sis Evie Heinold have welcomed not one, but two precious baby granddaughters into their family. Jordan and Julie Willcox of Arizona welcomed their first-born, Colette Elizabeth. Vaila Dawn was born to Bro. Travis and Sis. Kathy Knoblock (Lester, IA).

**Indiana, Leo**

**Jan Beer**

All of our visiting ministers for this reporting period came to Leo on December 22! The Oliver and Emma Stieglitz Family holiday gathering brought blessing to us in the form of ministers to speak the Truth: Bro. Greg Stieglitz (Sis. Jill, Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI), and Bro. Justin Koch (Sis. Marsha, Washington, IL). We appreciate their faithful service to ministering the Gospel.

Also on December 22, there was the engagement announcement of Connor Beer (Bro. Joe and Sis. Heather) to Adrienna Atkins (Kevin and Janet) of Cecil, OH. We pray God’s blessing on this young couple as they seek to establish a God-honoring life together.

The birth of a healthy grandson is reason to rejoice! Liam Erendil Huber was born on January 3 to Bro. Paul and Sis. Talitha Huber of West Lafayette, IN. Local grandparents are Bro. Paul and Sis. Leann Fischer. May God bless this little family.

“Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.”

*Psalm 82:3*
Bro. Andrew and Sis. Corrie Schlatter have fulfilled this charge with their foster son, Isaiah Jones, a past Gateway Woods resident. Isaiah graduated from Leo High School in December and was leaving for training to be a Marine on January 5. On January 4, Bro. Andrew and Sis. Corrie hosted a great graduation/farewell party for him. As a church family, we celebrated Isaiah’s graduation and expressed our love and prayerful support to him as he prepares to serve our nation.

Another young man in our church family just finished his training for the Marines! Kyler Donaghy, son of Bro. Ryan and Sis. Bethany, was home for the holidays after completing his training in San Diego, CA. It was wonderful to see Kyler again and to celebrate his commitment to serving in the United States military. May God be honored by the life of both of these fine young men.

For an extended time, the weather in northern Indiana has been gray, gloomy, damp and dull. Sunday, January 5, our Bro. Brace Wieland spoke about the vitamin deficiency that can happen because of lack of sunshine in the winter. He was quick to inform us that there is NO spiritual lack of light, based on Romans 19 and Ephesians 6. We thank Bro. Brace and all our home ministers for reminding us of God’s provision in a way in which we can easily relate.

In the last few months, God has taken several fathers of our church family from this life. This month, Bro. Rob Parker’s (Sis. Sierra) stepfather, Jeff Bailey, 59, passed away in FL on January 2, with visitation and funeral at a Bluffton, IN memorial chapel. Then, on January 10, Sis. Marsha Schietlin’s (Bro. Steve) father, Bro. Darl Stoller (Latty, OH) completed his earthly pilgrimage. Our prayers and love are with all these families as they adjust to their loss.

Sis. Cheri Blunier (Bro. Bill) has suffered a wrist injury. We are praying for a speedy recovery for her.

Our annual business meeting was conducted on January 12. Our appreciation goes to all who have served their term and to all who have taken on the responsibility. The orderly operation of a church body can only happen when its members willingly use their God-given talent for the good of all.

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1 Peter 4:10

Indiana, Milford
Heidi Beer, Carol Haab

We were thankful for Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Bill Wettstein (Sis. Heidi, Eureka, IL) and Bro. John Cottrell (Sis. Gloria, Eureka, IL) for serving our congregation this past month.

We continue to be prayerful for those who are struggling with hospitalizations and extended illnesses. Illness can stop us in our tracks and make us thankful for things we once took for granted. What Satan intends for harm may God use for good.

Indiana, Remington
Jenni Honegger, Marcella Tyler

We rejoice with the angels that another precious child of God has sought the Lord for her salvation! Natalie Weerts (Bro. Dan and Sis. Denise) recently began her repentance and we ask that you pray for her as she learns what it means to walk with the Lord. We are so thankful and amazed that even in this evil world and time, God continues to extend His grace and call sinners to Himself!

We ask for your prayers for Sis. Diane Waibel (Bro. Gene) as she mourns the loss of her brother, Harry Schwier, Jr. May the Lord comfort her as only He can.

In addition to our annual New Year’s Eve worship service, we recently held our annual business meeting. Those two events may not seem connected, but I think they are. It’s just that time of year where it’s natural to reflect back on the year past and look forward to the year to come, whether it be in a spiritual sense or an earthly sense. How did we do in achieving our goals for the past year and what new goals do we need to make for the year ahead? How do these goals help us fulfill our ultimate purpose in becoming more like Jesus? May each one who served in the past year and each one who looks forward to serving in the coming year feel the nearness of God and be filled with a desire to serve for His glory.
Indiana, South Bend
Joshua Martinez

“For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.” Psalm 91:11

We prayed for Bro. Jason and Sis. Jessica Isch who were on a three-week medical work team in Guatemala. After a busy holiday travel season, our church is once again full of joyful song and conversation. No matter where we are, there is no place like home, and there will be no place like the eternal home that Jesus has prepared for us.

“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.” Psalm 27:4

Indiana, Valparaiso
Sherry Meiss

Our verse for the month is: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” Joshua 1:8

We were blessed with a very motivating New Year’s Eve exhortation given to us by Bro. Tim Bucher. Let us be the person that knows Christ and strives to know him better. By spending more time in His word and less time on things that consume too much of our time while not providing significant benefits. We need to keep our eye on the prize being Christ Jesus, and through discipline we will receive a crown that will last forever.

On Wednesday evenings we have had an evangelism Bible study. The last week we were reminded in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, that our ministry is to reconcile the lost to Christ! Let them know He no longer counts our sins against us and gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. “Come back to God!”

Sis. Connie Knobloch from the LaCrosse Church peacefully passed into eternity on January 3. Though she will be missed here on earth we can be assured she is no longer in pain and we will get to see her again.

Let us keep praying for Bro. Bob and Sis. Marguerite Hoerr, Sis. Carol Bucher, Drew and Diane McClanahan, and Diane Moser. Little Liam Braham, grandson to Bro. Joe and Sis. Jackie Feller had surgery and it was a success. Thanks to you all for your prayers!

Indiana, West Lafayette
Libby Wahl

We rejoice convert Jake Bowerman has expressed peace with God and man and desires baptism. His testimony and baptism are scheduled for February 9. Our appreciation, as always, to visiting ministers Elder Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton, IN), Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) and Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Tamara, Wolcott, IN) for their servant hearts’ example of commitment to the Word.

New arrivals to our congregation due to employment are Bro. Garrett Herrmann, Princeville, IL and Sis. Julie Lantz, Rittman, OH. Also new since last fall (he slipped in quietly) is Bro. Jerod Keiser, Bluffton, IN who is pursuing continuing education at Purdue. We are blessed and pray the encouragement goes both ways.


To rejoice is to be full of joy. Joy and happiness are wonderful feelings to experience, but are very different. Joy is more consistent and is cultivated internally. It comes when we make peace with God, with who we are and why we are here. Happiness tends to be externally triggered and is based on other people, things, places and events. So whereas happiness can vary even within a 24 hour day, joy can abide in the heart.

Note: Bro. Randy and Sis. Mara Leman request ongoing prayer for their youngest daughter, Sis. Sarah, who has been battling chronic illness for a couple of years and is now receiving a few months of specialized care at an Oldsmar, FL treatment facility.
Indiana, Wolcott

Teresa Earney, Luann Gerber

“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. II Timothy 1:5

Happy New Year! At the beginning of 2020, we were encouraged to keep the faith, pass the faith on to each generation and to keep an eternal perspective. There are a lot of things going on in our lives and the lives of those around us that can distract and discourage us. These things pale in comparison to what is waiting for all that are living a life for Christ. Eternal life in Heaven!

Bro. Doug Harmon (Sis. Lanna, Toledo, OH) very willingly helped on the pulpit this month. With all the family gatherings over the holiday time, we’ve been blessed with many guests. Thank you to all who have made the effort to come our direction.

The Wolcott and Remington congregations have begun HarvestCall family nights for the months of January and February. We meet each Monday evening for a light meal, a short presentation to “Proclaim Christ and Serve Others”, and service projects. Also, for these two months, we have a day each week where we meet for HarvestCall sewing.

We have a new convert! Erica Reinhard, daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Sherice, has made a commitment to repentance and to follow Jesus. The song, “I need the prayers of those I love, while trav’ling o’er life’s rugged way. That I may true and faithful be, And live for Jesus every day” is a good reminder to be prayerful for our converts and each other.

Iowa, Bloomfield

Kendra Schlatter

We were grateful to have visiting ministers Bro. Kent Wiegand (Sis. Lanae, Goodfield, IL) and Elder Bro. Gerry Hertzel (Sis. Ellen, Sabetha, KS). We appreciate their efforts in traveling to come minister to us.

We grieve with the family of a dear soul who went on to her reward. Sis. DeAnn Wuthrich’s (Bro. Roger) mother, Sis. Adele Bruellman (Bro. Harley, West Bend, IA), was called home on January 7. Sis. Adele was also grandmother to Sis. Stacy Joos (Bro. Andy), Sis. Kendra Meyer (Bro. Tad), and Brent and Erica Wuthrich.

Our prayers continue to be with Sis. Charlotte Teubel (Bro. Paul) as she has been experiencing some health issues.

Iowa, Burlington

Marilyn Anderson, Elaine Eisenmann

Our congregation welcomed Bro. Ray and Sis. Alice Defenbaugh into our fold the evening of December 18, after hearing their testimonies.

We thank Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie) as well as Bro. Tom Lanz (Sis. Mary) and Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie), all of Mediapolis, for their service to us this past month.

Sis. Lois Wiegand and Sis. Elaine Eisenmann’s brother-in-law, Bro. Al Wiegand (Sis. Martha, Mediapolis), passed away December 19. We lift these families up in prayer.

Bro. Dean Massner, son of Sis. Ada Massner (and late Bro. Earl) passed away December 29. Our love and sympathy to all the family who so diligently helped with care for Bro. Dean these past several years: Bro. Dean’s sister, Sis. Carol Bonnesen (Joe), his brothers Lyle (Deb) and Dennis (Sis. Gail, West Bend, IA). We miss Dean, but are happy he attained his heavenly goal where he can walk again!

We have a number of our church family who have health issues and we pray God is near each one.

Iowa, Elgin

Maria Rocke

Greetings of love from snowy Elgin! For our January monthly all-church potluck, the hosts creatively selected Bible verses that included the term “snow” in them, and the discussions that surrounded each verse sparked interest and insightfulness. One that stuck out to me was:

“Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” Job 38: 22-23

God was questioning and reminding Job of His own omnipotence and power. We haven’t
seen the storehouses of these natural wonders, nor do we have any control over when they fall. Snow, in all its beauty, can be protective for plants, shrubs and even animals against the “trouble” of the bitterest cold. Hail, in all its fury, is destructive and was used of God, as in one account found in Joshua, to destroy the enemy. When we seem to have lost control of a circumstance, we soon realize that we were never really the one in power to begin with. God has storehouses of magnificence that He can and will use on our behalf, if we can find it in our hearts to TRUST in Him!

We’re thankful for the willingness of Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) and elder Bro. Wayne Grimm (Sis. Rose, West Bend, IA) to serve our congregation from the pulpit. May God bless them!

Iowa, Garden Grove
Laura Funk

Greetings from negative temps and bitterly cold wind chills of southern Iowa. The weather changes quickly here, so stay overnight if you didn’t like the weather today!

Visiting our congregation this month was Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora, West Bend, IA). We were asked several thought provoking questions. Are we thankful for our calling to the Lord? Does my attitude bring glory to God? Am I identified in Christ or do I identify myself?

God sent us a beautiful blanket of white snow. I think of the song Whiter Than Snow. Am I, are you washed Whiter Than Snow? Hymns of Zion # 210

Iowa, Iowa City
Diana Butikofer

We thank Bro. Joshua Martinez (Sis. Keyna, South Bend, IN), Bro. Jon Pratt (Sis. Sharon, Valparaiso, IN), and Bro. Joel Troxel (Sis. Amy, LaCrosse, IN) for visiting and sharing the Word of God this month. May they be blessed for their service to us.

Iowa, Lester
Kristi Knobloch, Audrey Metzger

With the hustle and bustle of the holidays and as we spent time with loved ones, it’s easy to forget to take the time to reflect on God’s mercy and blessings He’s freely given to us. With thanksgiving, we reflected as a congregation on the joy of seventeen babies being born and nine baptisms that occurred in the last year. With sorrow, we remembered the seven deaths that have left emptiness in families.

Visiting ministers that were with us over the holidays were Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Sis. Clara, Bloomfield, IA), Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL), Bro. Josh Walder (Sis. Tina, Congerville IL), Bro. Mark Schmidgall (Sis. Sally, Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Larry Bahr (Sis. Julie, Fort Scott, KS), Bro. Philip Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA) and Bro. Dave Lanz (Sis. Tami, Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Fred Funk (Sis. Diane, Morton, IL) shared God’s word with us on a Wednesday evening.

Bro. Travis and Sis. Kathy Knoblock were blessed with another precious daughter. Vaila Dawn was born December 27 and welcomed home by loving sisters, Sis. Tyra, Sis. Kiana, Sis. Dayra, Sis. Bryna, Luca, Alexa and Rayna. She is also loved by grandparents Bro. Rog and Sis. Jan Knoblock and Bro. Gene and Sis. Evie Heinold (LaCrosse, IN).

Bro. Jerome Hartter was hospitalized for surgery. We hope he can be relieved of pain and will regain strength in the days to come. Continued prayers go out to those who battle lengthy illnesses and ailments of the body.

We welcome Sis. Natalie Sinn (Bro. Gary and Sis. Paulette) from Latty, OH as she spends several weeks here for her schooling. We hope she will experience some of the same things her mom did growing up in Lester. Our prayers go with Bro. Garth and Sis. Kinzi Knobloch as they relocate to Arizona and take their place in the Tuscon congregation due to a job change. Knowing that where God guides, He provides, helps us have faith as He directs our lives.

Sis. Connie Knobloch of the LaCrosse, IN congregation passed away after a long battle with cancer. God was faithful to her as she served Him through life. She grew up in Lester and our sympathy goes to her siblings Kathryn Knobloch of Sioux Falls, SD, Kelvin (Marion) Knobloch of Niantic IL, Tom (Jeri) Knobloch of Madison, KS, Levi Knobloch of Redwood Falls, MN and Bro. Denis (Sis. Jackie) Knobloch of McAllen, TX. Her
funeral was in LaCrosse with burial here in Lester. We also extend our sympathy to Deb Larson (Jerry) as her mother, Sis. Adele Bruelman (Bro. Harley) of West Bend, IA passed away. Sis. Adele was a sister to Sis. Erma Gerber (Bro. Bill). Bro. Rick Moser (Lori) and family also bid farewell to their mother-in-law and grandmother, Violet Luthi of Missouri. Our sympathy is extended to them and Sis. Vera Knobloch as she is a sister-in-law to Violet. May God provide for each family with memories of their faithful and loving mothers, grandmothers and sisters.

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Matthew 8:40

Our HarvestCall projects have begun for the year in our new facility and on Sunday, January 19 we dedicated the building during our afternoon service. Our prayer is that it can be a blessing for all.

Iowa, Mediapolis
Janet Lanz, Tami Lanz

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die....” Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

This seems to be an appropriate verse as we begin a new decade here in Mediapolis, for we have seen the joy of birth and the tears of sorrow this month. We are reminded that all of us are held in God’s hands and He alone dictates life and breath.

Baby Axton Don Sharp made his grand entrance into the world on Christmas Eve. This blessed little bundle was placed into the waiting arms of his parents, Bro. Nathan and Sis. Heidi Sharp. Grandparents who are thankful for his safe arrival are, Gary and Tammy Sharp and Bro. Randall and Sis. Janis Fehr of Fairbury, IL.

Another precious baby was also welcomed into the hearts and home of Bro. Bill and Sis. Vienna Massner. Russell Kelly Massner arrived safely and is the newest grandchild of Bro. Monte and Sis. Kelly Lanz and Bro. Chuck and Sis. Lois Massner. We pray God’s blessings on these two families as they enjoy their first born babes.

We bade farewell on December 22 to an old soldier of the cross, Bro. Albert Wiegand, who was known by many as he shared his ministry of gospel music. His passing leaves a void for his family, but they are thankful he could be released to walk the streets of gold. Bro. Al was married in 1952 in Lacrosse, IN to Sis. Aldene Bucher until the time of her passing in 1972. Seven children were born to this union: Michelle (Craig) Wagenbach of Clarendon Hills, IL; April (Dennis) Miller of Leawood, KS; Diana Ifft of Santa Clarita, CA; Brenda (Tom) Pryor of Kansas City, MO; Georgia (Tim) Pflederer of Tremont, IL; Jacqueline (Dwayne) Shinault of St Paul, TX; Jay (Lorri) Wiegand of Lafayette, IN. Bro. Al then married Sis. Martha Steiner in Oakville, IA in 1974. They had three children: Ted (Carrie) Wiegand of Mt. Pleasant, IA; Sis. Sharla Wiegand of Burlington, IA; Sis. Rosalie Wiegand of Bradford, IL. Survivors include his wife, Sis. Martha, ten children, 26 grandchildren, and 22 great-grandchildren.

Less than two weeks later, we gathered again to say farewell to another pillar of our church, Bro. Norman Frank. The Lord blessed Bro. Norman with the talent of construction and he used this gift to aid in many church building projects in his lifetime. Bro. Norm and Sis. Mary Ann had recently relocated to an assisted living facility, but his passing came as a surprise to us and we miss him. Those left to grieve his passing are his wife and two children: Carol Kuntz of Mediapolis, IA and Cory Frank of Oakville, IA.

Two days later, many of us gathered in the Burlington church to attend the funeral service of Bro. Dean Massner. Although Bro. Dean attended the Burlington church in later years, we fondly remember him growing up and becoming converted here in Mediapolis. Bro. Dean had many physical limitations which began in childhood and increased as he grew older. We will remember him as bearing his affliction patiently and cheerfully. He was blessed with a mother and siblings who were a wonderful example of helping a loved one carry their infirmities. They were dedicated to his care for many years. We are thankful Bro.
Dean has been able to shed his earthly body and can now stroll heaven's streets unhindered. He leaves behind his mother, Sis. Ada, as well as his siblings: Bro. Dennis (Sis. Gail, West Bend, IA), Sis. Carol Bonneseen (Joseph, Burlington, IA) and Lyle (Debra) of Morning Sun, IA.

We will miss these three brothers’ presence among us. Listening to the funeral services is such a good reminder to keep our spiritual lenses polished and focused on the heavenly goal of being with our Savior eternally.

Visiting ministers this month for Christmas and the various funerals were Bro. Brett Lanz (Sis. Renee, Rittman, OH), Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA). We pray God’s blessing upon them for laboring on our behalf.

Iowa, West Bend

Jenny Banwart, Karen Schmidt

We appreciate the ministry of our visitors, Bro. Dallas Massner (Sis. Christy, Burlington, IA) and Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, Bloomfield, IA). May God bless them for their labors of love.

Sis. Adele Bruellman was called to her eternal reward. We pray that God will be near her husband, Bro. Harley, during this time, along with their children, Sis. Cheryl Morrow (Dave), Mavis Ann McGuire (Jeff, Council Bluffs, IA), Bro. Dave Bruellman (Sis. Yvonne), Sis. DeAnn Wuthrich (Bro. Roger, Bloomfield, IA), Deb Larson (Jerry, Larchwood, IA), and Bro. Larry Bruellman (Sis. Teresa, Fr. Meyers, FL).

Our sympathy goes to Arlo Grimm (Marilyn), Bro. Eli Jr. Grimm (Sis. Margaret) and Sis. Carole Fehr (Bro. Larry) in the loss of their brother, Edward Grimm (Donna). We also grieve with Jerry and Joy Metzger in the loss of their granddaughter, Ella Marie German (Andy and Paige German, Alcester, SD). May each one feel the Holy Spirit’s comforting presence.

As I look out the window at a beautiful white snowy day, Psalm 51:7 comes to mind: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” May we always feel the cleansing of our Lord!

Japan, Tokyo

Anna Inoue, Marie Inoue

Since the last issue we have been blessed with meaningful church Christmas and New Year events. First of all, the children sang with strong melodious voices the song, “Gloria,” easy to sing in Japanese and English. They had a flannel graph story of the birth of Jesus as they recited Bible portions. Even the smallest child could put a little sheep on the board. Children made stables from sticks they had collected after our big typhoon.

We all enjoyed an evening meal following the program, and thanked the Lord for another opportunity to remember the greatest gift ever given.

Our New Year’s was especially blessed as we learned anew, “to love as Jesus loved.” Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy, Washington, IL) asked the question of how we react when a new person enters our assembly. Sometimes they are not dressed as we are, and sometimes their skin is a different color. How do we make them feel at home? He gave some examples of what is done in their home church. Sis. Rachel was thrilled to be with her parents on their first visit to Japan.

We appreciate all our visiting and local ministers as they labor Sunday after Sunday. May the Lord bless them richly and provide for them.

Kansas, Bern

Sheri Edelman, Rita Menold

This month we celebrated Christ’s birth, always remembering His death on the cross for our sins when He was a man. Elder Bro. Wayne Hartzler (Sis. Camille, Rittman, OH) and Bro. Aaron Luthi (Sis. Maria, Lamont, KS) joined us in worshipping our King! Thank you!

Bro. Travis and Sis. Leah Rokey were married December 29 in Sabetha. The parents are Bro. Todd and Sis. Sheila Rokey and Bro. Jared and Sis. Carla Metzger (Sabetha, KS). Our church is happy to welcome Sis. Leah to our congregation! We wish God’s richest blessings on this marriage!

We thank Bro. Jerry Meeks (Sis. Christy, Sabetha, KS) for ministering the word to us in January.

Our annual business meeting was held in January. We thank those
who served this past year and those who will be serving in this next year. When we all work together it is a blessing to God.

Kansas, Ft. Scott

Maria Bahr

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians 4:9

Paul’s gentle reminder to the church at Philippi to put into practice what they had learned with the promise of God’s peace to follow is a message that touched our local church. We were recently blessed with visiting minister Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Sis. Donna, Morton, IL) and with visiting brothers and sisters from Lamar, MO, and Kansas City, MO, including Elder Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Sis. Karen).

Bro. Ted presented “Encouraging One Another Through Transitions,” an uplifting message in navigating the sometimes difficult life transitions that we may not have welcomed. Bro. Ted emphasized, instead of a visceral reactionary response to stress or trauma, we should “respond” thoughtfully with the Spirit's guidance. As he reminded us, although navigating difficult life transitions is not easy, God is already there and is faithful to guide us through.

In similar fashion, Susanna Wesley mentored her soon-to-be-evangelist son John in a letter dated 1725, when she advised him to respond vs. react and make good life choices: “Take this rule: whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off your relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself” (“Susanna Wesley on Practical Christian Living”).

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:8

Kansas, Kiowa

Janice Bahr, Millie Frieden

God will make a way where there seems to be no way.
He works in ways we cannot see,
He will make a way for me.
He will be my guide, hold me closely to His side.
With love and strength for each new day, He will make a way.
By a roadway in the wilderness, He’ll lead me and rivers in the desert will I see.
Heaven and Earth will fade, but His word will still remain.
And He will do something new today.
Oh, God will make a way, where there seems to be no way.
He works in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me.

This song was written by Don Moen, and the music is lovely while the words are beautiful. How many times do we wonder which way to turn and God just works everything out, or maybe even at the last minute opens a door to show us His way if we let go and let God. He is our Guide and holds us closely to His side. He is our love and strength for each new day, and though Heaven and Earth will pass away, His word will still remain. Why He loves us enough to care about us, I do not know, but I am so thankful that He does, and sincerely pray for the Faith and Trust to leave everything to Him, for He will always make a way.

We pray that the Lord will put His healing hand on all of our loved ones who have been ill this month (and there have been quite a few) especially our dear Sis. Marie Tucker, who had several hospital stays, and bring us together again in worship.

We had the privilege of having Bro. Joe Klotzle (Sis. Sue, Altadena, CA), in our midst one Sunday this month and thank him for lending himself to share the gospel with our congregation. It was a blessed day for all of us.

We wish to give a special thank you to everyone who takes the time to share in services at the rest home, Wednesday evening services, first of the month singing and caroling. A group of us went to Alva to carol at a private home and at another rest home later in the month after the caroling in Kiowa. The singing is so pretty when there are more to join in.
Another year is dawning, Dear Master, let it be, in working or in waiting, another year with Thee. Another year is dawning, Dear Master let it be, on earth, or else in Heaven another year for Thee. Another Year is Dawning, Hymns of Zion #150

It’s hard to believe 2019 has ended and 2020 is here, but as this beautiful song says; it doesn’t matter what the day, the month, or the year. As long as we walk with our Lord God and Holy Spirit, we will have blessings unimaginable and joy and peace beyond belief. We celebrated on New Year’s Eve with services and then had fellowship until midnight to see the New Year in. As we start this New Year, may we remember I Thessalonians 5:18: “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Allison Stewart (Bro. Kelly and Sis Jenny) graduated from college at the semester and is ready for the next step in her life. It is our prayer that God will be her guide, direction, and best friend as she makes her life choices. We extend our deepest Sympathy to Sis. Darcy Kisling (Bro. Kent) and family at the passing of her Mother, June Lahey of Moscow, Ks. May God be their comfort and peace during this difficult time.

Kansas, Lamont
Maria Luthi

As we embark on a new year – 2020 – it reminds us of new beginnings. We as humans seem to really like this idea of starting fresh. Many make resolutions or decide to try something new. This all has a spiritual origin in reminding us that we all have a need to be made new by Christ.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17

We hunger to be made new because we need to be made new. It’s so humbling and encouraging to be reminded also that, “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22-23.

Our church held both Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve services to worship our Savior during the holiday season. We have also begun listening to the 2019 Conference recordings on Wednesday nights during the month of January. Bro. Glen Anliker is in our prayers as he was hospitalized with influenza. We extend our sympathy to Bro. Jacob and Sis. Krystal Knobloch and Bro. Nathan Knobloch in the passing of their aunt, Sis. Connie Knobloch.

Kansas, Sabetha
Leanna Hartter, Whitney Hartter

We always appreciate our visiting ministers and were thankful to have Bro. Kaleb Beyer (Sis. Angela, Washington, IL) share God’s word with us this month.

Bro. Travis Rokey (Bro. Todd and Sis. Sheila, Bern, KS) was united in marriage to Sis. Leah Metzger (Bro. Jared and Sis. Carla) on December 29. Bro. Troy Metzger (Sis. Gwen, Lester, IA), Bro. Seth Hartter (Sis. Brenda, Burlington, IA), Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Sis. Christy, Morris North, MN) and Bro. Scott Aberle (Sis. Dorine, Washington, IL) were here to minister on this special weekend.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Cheri Metzger, Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne), Sawyer Fehr (Bro. Logan and Sis. Tabitha), and Ida Grimm (Bro. Ted and Sis. Miranda). We are thankful they are all home and recovering.

We rejoice with Bro. Rod and Sis. Arlene Grimm as they welcomed a new granddaughter, Bailee Marie Grimm. Bailee’s parents are Bro. Lafe and Sis. Kristen (Morris, MN). Sis. Linda Bailey also welcomed a great grandson, Knox Bailey, son of Landon and Andrea.

Our annual business meeting was held on January 14. We thank those that have served in the past year and our prayers are with those who were elected for the year ahead. We all play an important role in the body of Christ whether we serve in an elected position or not.

Thus Thy prayer to God the Father, Its fulfillment shall behold, When all those whom Thou has chosen in His love He would enfold. As Thou
art with them untied, they also as one should be. In true love should serve each other, finding joy in unity. The Fellowship of the Saints, Zion’s Harp, #33 vs. 7

**Mexico, Ixtlán**  
**Ruth Gerber**

“...I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself...” Isaiah 44:24

“Alone...by myself...” He doesn’t need help even with the greatest things in creation. It’s a good reminder to help us stay humble and acknowledge His work when we see it.

Our Sunday school had a very nice Christmas program for us this past December. All the girls of the primary class held a doll as they sang about baby Jesus. We know they won’t soon forget that. Another memorable sight was that of the boys in the older class filling an entire bench. That is always encouraging for our small church. Numbers aren’t the bottom line, but we are reminded that God gives the increase.

It was with much excitement that we witnessed the marriage of our Sis. Gloria Gonzalez (the late Bro. Javier and Sis. Berta) to Bro. Ben Kaeb (Bro. Curt and Sis. Luanne) from Alto, MI. What a blessing to see how God not only spreads the earth abroad by Himself, but also brings lives together for His own glory. We wish them God’s blessings even as we know we will miss Sis. Gloria.

Many visitors, family and friends were with us for the occasion and it was a blessing to fellowship. We are also thankful for the ministering brothers that shared in the services, Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO) Bro. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Dianne, Bastrop, TX) and Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI). The gospel message and the love of God was shared throughout the day.

**México, Magdalena**  
**Laura Aviña**

Our Sunday school and choir brought us a program about Jesus’ birth on December 22. We also celebrated Christmas with our church family that day as many individuals brought tamales to share during the fellowship hour.

The Cisna Park work team blessed us this January and we were thankful for the fellowship of many dear grandparent figures. Bro. Bruce and Sis. Bonita Frank and Bro. Hartzel and Sis. Denise Kaeb were here to welcome their new grandson, Owen James Kaeb, born on December 26 to Bro. Adam and Sis. Belinda Kaeb. May God bless this family as they teach their little son the ways of Jesus!

Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce Eland (Iowa City, IA) and Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannie Kauffman (Cisna Park, IL) who were here with the work team, also participate in the CVE grandparent program. We are thankful Bro. Larry and Sis. Jeannie will be staying for four weeks and appreciate their loving support.

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL) and Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cisna Park, IL).

After many travels over the holidays, we are thankful to have our brothers and sisters back home again. We also wish to welcome Sis. Arika Nuest (Latty, OH) who has come to spend a year supporting in child care at CVE.

**Michigan, Alto**  
**Heidi Kaeb, Renee Steffen**

“A brand New Year we once again start, not unlike new mercies given each day. Our Father is faithful to ever provide as He guides us along the way. It’s often encouraged to make resolutions that we’ll keep throughout the New Year. But in reality we should awake every morn with the desire to keep our hearts pure and clear.” - ibG.res

We want to thank Bro. Bill Waibel (Sis. Carol, Bay City, MI) for worshipping with us and sharing the Word at Thanksgiving.

Our congregation has experienced many blessings in December as we celebrated the birth of Jesus our Savior. On a Saturday afternoon, many of us participated in a live nativity featuring shepherds, animals, wise men, angels, and a stable with Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. Our prayer is that the message of Jesus...
Christ as Lord and Savior reached the ears and hearts of all who came. The next weekend our Sunday school presented a Christmas program with the theme "Name above all names". From age three to seventeen, the youth proclaimed through Scripture and songs that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah who came to dwell among us and give His life for us.

Elder Bro. Ted Steffen and his family traveled to Germany to celebrate Christmas with their daughter and her family. We prayed for safety and blessings on this dear family, and rejoiced that they had this time together. We're also prayerful for our "snowbird" couples who leave at varying times and enjoy a reprieve from the Michigan winter. May God protect and guide them and bring us back together in the spring.

There are several in our church family who have lost loved ones recently. We extend our sympathy and prayers to: Jason Sixberry and his family in the loss of his stepfather, Paul Johnson, Sis. Bekah Plattner in the loss of her grandmother, Sis. Helen Hoffmann (Bloomington, IL), and to Bro. Ned Stoller in the loss of his grandmother, Sis. Eleanor Baer (Eureka, IL).

Many prayers were lifted for the wedding of Bro. Ben Kaeb and Sis. Gloria Gonzalez in Ixtlan, MX. We are thankful for safe travels for the families who attended, and for the beautiful blessing of their new marriage.

Those with surgery and health issues are also on our minds and in our prayers. Tom Barry, Angie Sixberry, Elaine Wingeier, and Bro. Howard Plattner. May God comfort, sustain, and heal according to His will.

Sis. Gina Blough is also lifted up in prayer as she spends six weeks in North Carolina for training that will equip her as she prepares to move to Kenya.

Michigan, Bay City
Sarah Knochel

We are thankful for the goodness of God in our lives and praise Him for the mercy He shows us. We pray that this year will be filled with purpose and that God would be glorified in all of our efforts.

Bro. Jesse Bedolla (Sis. Bonnie, Detroit, MI) and Bro. Nathan Hodel (Sis. Jamie, Roanoke, IL) spent part of their Christmas with their Bay City families and we appreciate the ministry they provided to our congregation.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4

Our hearts are saddened with the passing of our dear Sis. Marlene McNally. We especially pray for her husband, Lyle and her daughters, Karen Middleton (Bill) and Marcia.

Our annual business meeting was held on January 8. We are thankful for the brothers and sisters willing to serve and care for the physical needs of our church. Bro. Alan Schlatter (Vick) was elected to a trustee term and Sis. Cheryl Schmidt (Mike) was elected to the kitchen committee.

Michigan, Detroit
Krista Wieland

I recently read that smiling as soon as you look in the mirror or get dressed in the morning makes your day better. Not easier, necessarily, but better. I’m going to try it! I do know that at work many times an uncooperative or noncompliant patient will respond better to smiles. I also know that telling a patient you like their smile makes people smile more. It’s a win win situation. I’m ashamed to say that somehow it’s harder to smile at home sometimes. Isn’t that awful? I’m not fake at work. Smiles come naturally. But at home I’m more serious and don’t smile as much. Hmmm. I’ll have to ponder that one. It is probably fair to say that smiles at home make other people feel better too. So I have a new goal: smile at home more. We all have a lot to smile about when we think about the love Christ has for us!

Our sympathy and prayers go out to our Bro. Nate Smith (Sis. Ann) in the passing of his father, Ron Smith, from Kansas City.

I have had no seizures in six months and am able to drive again! I want to thank my church family here for driving me places during the past six months and thank all who prayed for our family.

Our high school kids here have exams this week which is
an added stress to what they already face at times. Our freshman daughter is bombarded with things that I never had to deal with. Then there are things that haven’t changed since I was in school. Kids are mean to other kids! Let’s remember to cover our kids in prayer as they go to school or wherever they are. Prayer is powerful!

Minnesota, Minneapolis
Brenda Messner, Renee Messner
Greetings from the Minnesota tundra!
Many schools had the first cancellation or early dismissal of the new year, due to blizzard conditions. Following 2 days of intense cold, wind and drifting snow, God gave us an amazing, peaceful view of radiant sun dogs in the sky! His power, grace and mercy, surround us. We just need to yield to His control and honor Him with awe, as our Creator.

Our love, sympathy and prayers encircle our converts, Erika and Will Flickinger and her family. On January 3, they attended her beloved grandpa, Harold Gramm’s funeral, in Morris, MN. Those of us, who have been around awhile, remember Bro. Harold and dear Sis. Ila. They frequently visited, as he ministered God’s holy word, at our previous Minneapolis church location. We are grateful for his godly legacy, and after a long life, rejoice that he’s in his glory with Jesus.

We gladly welcomed a new soul into our blessed faith on January 12. Sis. Rose Dill (Bro. Dewayne and Sis. LaRae) submitted her will and professed Jesus, as her Lord and Savior, and was baptized. Thankfully, Bro. Brian Waibel (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL), Bro. Alan Schambach (Sis. Sarah, Remington, IN), and Bro. Glen Steiner (Sis. Rachel, Winthrop, MN), were with us, to help deliver God’s precious word and share in this special day. We praise God for her and pray for His will in her life.

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 5:10-11

Minnesota, Morris
Ashley Knobloch, Brianna Wulf
In 2019, our congregation had 10 births, 5 deaths, 1 baptism, 3 weddings, and 2 converts. As another year comes to a close let us remember what Christ has done for us and count our many blessings.

When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost, Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done. Count Your Blessings, Hymns of Zion #116

We were thankful to have visiting ministers this past month; Bro. Kevin Wulf (Sis. Annie, Tucson, AZ) and Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Saberth, KS). May God bless them for their labors.

Our hearts rejoice as a dear soul started repenting! Tess Steiner (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill) has begun on this pathway. We pray for her and wish her God’s continued grace.

“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.” Luke 15:10

Bro. Lafe and Sis. Kristen Grimm were blessed with a precious baby girl, Bailee Marie. She is welcomed home by her siblings; Bria, Bryn, Cohen, and Luis. Thankful grandparents are Merle and Jean Spohr (Morris, MN) and Bro. Rod and Sis. Arlene Grimm (Sabetha, KS).

These cold winter months bring on many sicknesses and poor health for the young and old. We pray a special prayer for those who are suffering. Little Cecilia Gramm (Bro. Taylor and Sis. Tanya) was hospitalized this past month. Also, we pray for God’s healing hand on Oliver Furrer (Bro. Ben and Sis. Kristi) after needing surgery. May God be with them all through this time!

Minnesota, Morris North
Kay Feuchtenberger, Natalie Feuchtenberger
"For thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy." Psalm 61:3

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:7

As we enter a new year, a new decade, it is so good to lean...
on the promise of God’s love to us always. We truly rely on His angels camping round about us and His sheltering love in the hard times as well as the easier times.

Our Bro. Harold Gramm leaned on God’s promises for many, many years and now is reaping the rewards of his faith. We continue to hold Sis. Ila, her children and their families in our prayers as they walk this season without Bro. Harold beside them.

We thank our visiting ministers for spending time with us. Your sharing the Word and fellowship enriches our faith journey. Thanks to Bro. Matt Wulf, (Morris, MN), Bro. Clark Stoller, (Sis. Cindy, Gridley IL) and Elder Bro. Paul Messner, (Sis. Jan, Winthrop, MN) for serving us.

We were blessed to celebrate our Sis. Mabel Zeltwanger’s 90th birthday with her. We are thankful for her steadfast faith and godly example.

Our prayers continue for Steve Jipson, brother to Sis. Lori Fehr, as he battles cancer.

May we all be more aware of our reliance on God’s goodness and promises as we walk each day, through the good and the hard times.

**Minnesota, Winthrop**

*Julie Schmidt, Ginny Stoll*

_The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;_  
_The Lord make His face shine upon thee,_  
_And be gracious unto thee,_  
_(Genesis 8:22)_  

Just as there are seasons in a year, there are seasons in life. On January 17, we mourned with our Sis. Diane Smith and her family at the funeral for her husband, Ron Smith. We are praying that Christ is near to their hearts to comfort them during this time of grief and transition.

We appreciated the message that Bro. Ted Witzig (Sis. Donna, Morton, IL) shared with us on January 18 about Christian Friendship. As he encouraged us to create healthy relationships, he referenced a verse that he had learned as a child, which we could all put to memory.

_“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32_

We are thankful for visiting ministers that have shared with us from the Word; Bro. Quinton Snyder (Sis. Heather, Taylor, MO) and Bro. Ryan Kellenberger (Sis. Adrienne, Fort Scott, KS), Bro. Dave Hartter (Beth, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Ted Witzig (Sis Donna, Morton, IL).

**Missouri, Kansas City**

*Katy Frantz*

For some reason winter seems extra dark and cold, but after this season comes the promise of spring! The Bible tells us that after Noah came out of the ark God said in his heart:  
_“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” (Genesis 8:22)_

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Ron Isch (Sis. Jane, Lamont, KS) and Bro. Dave Huette (Sis. Susan, Tremont, IL). We are very thankful for their servant hearts to come share the gospel with us and for those who came with them to bless our church.

We appreciate the fellowship of several couples who have
guest-served lunch. We want to thank Bro. Monte and Sis. Linda Maus for serving church lunch to us in December and Bro. Don and Sis. Aleta Banwart with assistance from Bro. Judd for serving in January.

We enjoyed a mutual blessing by sharing the gift of song with the residents of Maple Senior Center in Lamar.

Missouri, St. Louis

Victoria Eberhardt

Happy New Year to all. What a wonderful season of thanksgiving and celebration we just experienced. Our God is so good. We had so many visitors, family and travelers through the area this season and we just appreciate having our sanctuary full.

Missouri, Taylor

Lori Marquart, Tami Pflum

Thank you to Bro. Todd Witzig (Sis. Nicole, Gridley, IL) for ministering to us this month. We deeply appreciate each one who travels to share the Word with us, but also are so thankful for our home ministers who faithfully preach and teach each week, and willingly give of themselves in so many other ways.

Elder Bro. Kent Heimer and the ministers hosted three “Brother Meetings” this month, in an effort to assess areas where we are doing well, as well as those we could improve as a church family. What a blessing to be able to hold open forum meetings like this that are peaceful, encouraging, and beneficial for the Body as a whole.

This month we had several hospital patients, including: Sis. Lois Sutter (Bro. James, dec.), Bro. Donnie Hoerr (Sis. Elaine), and Bro. Marvin Wiegand (Sis. Joann). Those undergoing surgery were Bro. Brad Gehring (Sis. Ellen) and Greg Haab (Bro. Paul and Sis. Kathy). Also, we are lifting Sis. Rachel Sutter (Bro. Jimmy) up in prayer as she recovers from a fall and is awaiting surgery at this time.

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained
Too deeply for mirth or song,
As the burdens press, and the cares distress,
And the way grows weary and long?

(Chorus)
Oh, yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.

Does Jesus care when I’ve said “goodbye”
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks—
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?

(Chorus)
Oh, yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.

Does Jesus Care?, Tabernacle Hymns, #99

Although the events of this life sometimes overwhelm the heart and leave us with unanswered questions, what a comfort to know that Jesus sees, cares, and is moved by our pain! On Christmas Day, Kasey (Augsburg) Hess, granddaughter of Irene Riney (Gene, dec.) and a very beloved niece to Bro. Jim and Sis. Sally Gottman, was killed in a tragic accident. We continue to pray for Kasey’s husband, Mackenzie, their three young daughters, and the Riney family as they deal with this incredible loss.

Nina Davis (Jerry, dec.), beloved mother of Sis. Kay (Bro. Richard) Sutter and Sis. Kris (Bro. Jim) Sutter, went home to be with the Lord after a valiant battle with cancer. Nina will be dearly missed by all who knew her, including her children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren who are part of our church family.

We rejoice with first-time grandparents, Bro. Rick and Sis. Kim Steidinger, who are thankful for the safe arrival of a precious little grandson, Huxley Jon, born to Bro. Clayton and Sis. Whitney Steidinger (Tremont, IL). Maternal grandparents are Bro. Jon and Sis. Rebekah Wagenbach (Tremont, IL).

January 15 was our annual business meeting. New positions announced were: Bro. Chad Massner (Sis. Lisa) as Trustee and Sis. Charlotte Hoerr (Bro. Brent) on food committee. A sincere “Thank You” to those whose terms ended, and to all who continue to serve in any way to help make our church run smoothly. Each job, no matter how big or small, how visible or not, is necessary and needed.
New York, Croghan/Naumburg

Karen Farney

We are thankful to God for a dear sister who traveled from Rockville, CT to come and serve us lunch and to fellowship with us. We are thankful good weather made it possible for her to travel. On Sunday December 23, our Sunday school presented their Christmas program. It’s such a blessing to hear the Christmas message from them, the birth of our Lord and Savior.

While we pray, and while we plead, While you see your soul’s deep need,
While your Father calls you home, will you not, my brother, come? Chorus
Why not now? Why not now?
Why not come to Jesus now?
Why not now? Why not now?
Why not come to Jesus now?
Why Not Now?, Gospel Hymns #428

We rejoice with Vincent Farney, at the age of 94 he felt the need of a Savior in his life and to be born again out of water and spirit. On December 28 he gave his testimony and was baptized at his home with a few witnesses to share in the Blessing of God.

As the new year is upon us, we pray for the Lord’s love, mercy and blessings, for His church that it may grow and prosper.

Ohio, Akron

Joelle Indermuhle

As we start a new year, our prayers are with those who have been called to fill the church positions in varying capacities. We also want to remember to pray for our elders and ministers who continually serve us year after year.

“I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” 1 Timothy 2:8

Ariel Hann (Tim and Sis. Liz) spent time in the hospital this month. We are thankful she is home and recovering now.

Ohio, Columbus

Nancy Banks

We wish our friends from far and near a Happy and Blessed New Year. As we begin the New Year, our Sunday school students were fortunate to use their newly remodeled classrooms. We are thankful for the many brethren from our church, or surrounding churches, who helped complete this project in any way.

After suffering head injuries in a farm accident, Elijah Leonard (Larry and Emily) has returned home and will be convalescing for a couple of months. Many prayers from area churches and community members were offered for his healing, and we sincerely thank each and every one.

Several ministers visited Columbus during the holiday season including Bro. Bryon Palitto (Sis. Lisa, Akron, OH), Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Jonell, Rittman, OH), Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Suzanne, Rittman, OH) Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH) and Bro. Brian Huber (Sis. Jacki, Francesville, IN). We thank them all for their labors in the Lord’s name.

Ohio, Junction

Karen Schlatter

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:” Isaiah 55:6.

This verse stuck out to me as a reminder that now is the time to seek the Lord. As we begin a new year, may we always be reminded of the need to seek and serve Him each day.

Welcoming new grandchildren into their family circles are Elder Bro. Bill and Sis. Emily Schlatter with a new grandson born on December 24 to Bro. Jason and Sis. Anita Koch from Tremont, IL. His name is Jordan Daniel. Bro. Russell and Sis. Vera Manz welcomed a new granddaughter, Evelynn Vera, born on January 7 to their son Bro. Richard and Sis. Audrey Manz from Prescott, AZ. Many blessings to these young parents as they raise their children.

Our sympathy is extended to Sis. Laurie Schlatter (Bro. Dennis)
as her father Bro. Darl Stoller from the Latty, OH congregation passed away on January 10. May she and her siblings and their extended families feel the Lord’s comfort at this time in their great loss.

Visiting ministers are always welcome. We were thankful to have Bro. Chet Manz (Sis. Jenny) and Bro. Matt Manz (Sis. Deanna, Toledo, OH) visit us recently. Bro. Trent Gasser (Sis. Molly, Akron, OH) was home to visit over the Christmas/New Year’s holidays and shared in the ministry.

The annual business meeting was held in early January with two brothers being elected for positions. Bro. Russ Manz was elected to serve as the HarvestCall Representative and Bro. Will Manz was elected to serve as the LifePoints Representative. We appreciate their willingness to serve and thank Bro. Fred Manz and Bro. Andy Manz for the years they served in these positions.

The weekend of January 18-19 was the testimony and baptism of Matthew Monti. It was a blessing to hear him share his spiritual journey. We wish him the Lord’s nearness and grace as he continues to walk with Him each day.

Josh and Daniele Porter and children have been worshiping with us for over a year. Daniele began her repentance several months ago and was recently announced for peace. We pray that she will continue to feel the guidance and direction of the Lord as she anticipates baptism and throughout her life.

Ohio, Latty
Angie Klopfenstein,
Carmen Stoller
“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22-23

Greetings of love and blessings to you for 2020! As we begin a new year, we are so thankful for His new mercies every morning! At our annual business meeting, we reviewed our year. In 2019, Latty had 5 new babies, 4 deaths, 1 wedding, and 10 baptisms. We currently have 4 converts.

We would like to support those with new offices this year. They include: Bro. Jerry Klopfenstein (Sis. Cherry) and Bro. Caleb Stoller (Sis. Mindy) as Sunday school teachers, Sis. Karen Sinn and Sis. Kendra Stoller (Bro. Ben) for kitchen committee, Bro. Terry Offerle (Sis. Pat) as Country Villa trustee, and Bro. Tobin Hartzler (Sis. Ashley) as church/fellowship hall trustee. May God bless each and every part of our body as we serve the Lord together.

We are so thankful that Sam Rager (Bro. Eric and Sis. Sherri) was announced as having peace with God and man. May the Lord richly bless him as he awaits baptism.

Bro. Darl Stoller has finished his fight of faith. May God provide comfort to his wife, Sis. Iva, and their children: Sis. Marsha Scheitlin (Bro. Steve), Cyndee Leichty (Brian), Sis. Laurie Schlatter (Bro. Dennis), and Bro. Kirk Stoller (Sis. Eileen). Our sympathy and prayers are also with Bro. Chris and Sis. Sara Hattan with the passing of his mother, Ann Hattan.

Our prayers go with Sis. Arika Nuest as she transitions to CVE in Magdalena, MX. May God bless and provide for her in her new role.

Thank you to Bro. David Maibach (Sis. Larisa, Smithville, OH), Bro. Marvin Hartzler (Sis. Sue, Rittman, OH), Bro. Brian Wenninger (Sis. Mackenzie, Leo, IN), and Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Susie, Rittman, OH) for ministering the Word to us.

Ohio, Mansfield
Katie Miller
We are so thankful for Alana Boliantz (Zachary) as she seeks God in repentance. The surrendering of a life to the Lord is a wonderful miracle made possible through His grace! “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” Ephesians 2:8. We are prayerful for Alana as she embraces the gift of salvation.

Another gift of God is the opportunity to worship Him together and edify one another through the Spirit. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Bro. Matt Manz (Sis. Deanna, Toledo, OH) for sharing the Word with us on Christmas Day.

Rick Foss (Sis. Susan) had recent surgery, and we desire for him a smooth recovery.
Ohio, Rittman
Maria Beery, Julie Steiner

A new year is upon us. In our Sunday school, we took a four week break following the Christmas program. Now, we are starting back into Sunday school. Many children, precious souls, come every Sunday to learn more about the Lord. We ask for His blessing, and offer a special thanks to our superintendents, and our 50+ Sunday school teachers.

Our Sis. Julie Lanz (Bro. Vern and Sis. Deanna) has moved to West Lafayette, IN. As she has joyfully served God here, we trust that Sis. Julie will be a blessing there.

Bro. John Nussbaum’s (Sis. Cynthia) father passed away this past month. We extend our sympathy to their family in this time of loss. Also, we wish God’s comfort for Sis. Ruth Beery who has spent time in the hospital.

During the past month we have received many visiting ministers. Thank you for being willing to serve; Elder Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH), Bro. Nathan Rassi (Sis. Michelle, St. Louis, MO), Bro. Nathaniel Ramsey (Sis. April, Mansfield, OH), Bro. Matt Feucht (Sis. Jennifer, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Chet Manz (Sis. Jenny, Toledo, OH), Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea, Remington, IN), and Bro. Curt Walter (Sis. Elizabeth, Mansfield, OH).


A new year. Whether this is the beginning of our life, the middle of our life, or near the ending of our life, God has given us this day. Let us rejoice, be glad, and spend it in service of Him.

Ohio, Sardis
Renee Blough, Doris Miller

If you have visited our area you will know it is a river valley with foothills on either side. When driving along a ridge on State Route 255 on the way to the Sardis church, you can see perhaps five miles out over the valleys to the horizon. On New Years’ Eve, retired ministering Bro. Bill Brake was inspired to share with us that this landscape, which he has seen many times in his life, had new meaning to him recently. Whatever the scene is that we each see on a daily basis, it is One little speck on the One earth in God’s One great creation. If we take this revelation a step further a list can be made of the “One” events that are so important to our Christian walk of life. One birth of Jesus Christ our One Saviour (in One place at One point in time to One virgin) fulfilling One great promise. One miraculous conception. One miraculous birth proclaimed by angels. One sacrificial death on the cross. One resurrection from the dead. One ascension into Heaven. One plan for salvation. One Holy Bible. One Holy Spirit. How blessed we are to have One omnipotent God. God is able to start with “One” and spread the message throughout the whole world.

Ohio Smithville
Connie Maletich, Millie Stoller

Visiting ministers this month include Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI) and Bro. Bob Riggenbach (Sis. Lorie, Rittman, OH). We appreciate the efforts of these brothers and their families as they give of themselves for the work of God’s kingdom.

Bro. Neil and Sis. Anna Stoller welcomed Denton Scott into their arms and hearts. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Millie Stoller and Bro. Jerry and Sis. Martha Bauman (Rittman, OH) are thankful for another grandchild to love.

Bro. Dinold and Sis. Karla Gabriel were united in marriage in Silverton OR. Sis. Karla is the daughter of Bro. Loren and Sis.
Marlene Dettwyler (Silverton, OR). As a church we are happy to welcome Sis. Karla and wish this young couple many blessings.

The engagement of Bro. Greg Bachman and Sis. Natalie Indermuhle was announced. We rejoice with them and with their parents, Scott and Ruth Bachman and Bro. Scott and Sis. Patty Indermuhle.

Boyd Nieman spent some time in the hospital recently. We pray for his continued recovery.

Ohio, Toledo
Brooke Harmon, Rebekah Witzig

2020… seeing and saying what year we are now in is still foreign to me. 2019 is now history and a new decade has begun. January has once again taken over here in Toledo, OH. Winter is a season in which we look forward to potholes in our streets growing larger until at last they become craters giving us a wonderful reason to buy new tires! Time marches on with regard to no man and as time moves along things change. Political power switches hands, laws are created and revised, technological advances occur, and nations experience unrest. During these seasons of change I have found incredible comfort in the fact that I serve a loving and gracious God who never changes. The truths written in His Word will never diminish in value or be less true with time.

Perhaps one of the most incredible truths is found in Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Earlier in the chapter, Paul states that we were dead in sin. Not just unworthy of salvation but utterly incapable of earning it. Grace is a testament to the pure goodness of God. It is the willingness of God to provide a way for me to be saved. It is an incredible and underserved gift. Simply saying it is God’s help so that I can live an overcoming life, is not appreciating the entire meaning of this word. While grace is given to bring about sanctification, it is more often used in scripture to reference the reconciliation of sinful humans to God. He is the cause of my salvation, justification, and sanctification. In my human state I will never fully understand or grasp the incredible grace of God. It thrills my soul to know that there will always be more to discover about my awesome Creator.

“Grace is the first and last moving cause of salvation; and faith, essential as it is, is only an important part of the machinery which grace employs. We are saved ‘through faith,’ but salvation is ‘by grace.’” Charles Spurgeon

Bro. Trent and Sis. Bekah Witzig welcomed another baby boy into their family. Finn Lee was an unbeatable Christmas present, promoting Jackson to big brother. Our continued prayers have been with Sis. Teresa Rywalski as she continues to recover at a rehab facility from a prolonged hospital stay. Lastly we want to thank Bro Mark Ramsier (Sis. Alice, Sardis, OH) and Bro. Andy Fetzer (Sis. Elizabeth, Smithville, OH) for making the effort to visit and minister to us in Toledo. The support we receive from other congregations is always so encouraging and very much appreciated!

Ontario, Kitchener
Roselynn Metzger

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” Jer. 29:11

Greetings to one and all! We pray you have felt God’s nearness this month and during the Christmas Season. We were blessed with visitors again this month! On Christmas Eve, Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI) shared the Christmas story with us and the following weekend, Bro. Matthew Steffen (Sis. Deanna, Princeville, IL) brought the word to us. On January 4, we enjoyed a meal and singing with our church family and Bro. Randy and Sis. Sue Gasser (Detroit, MI) who also served as our minister on Sunday. Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) traveled to be with us on January 12. A heartfelt thank you to all who made an effort to be with us this month! Your love and support are such an encouragement to our congregation.

We are excited to share that Bro. Elmer Gingrich (Sis. Alma) has been called, and has faith and peace to take the role as a minister for our congregation. The
installation service is scheduled for February 2. We appreciate your prayers during this time of transition as we seek to do God’s will. In these times of change we learn to increasingly trust God and let Him do the work. When we can’t see into the future, we hold onto the truth that He can. Blessings to you this month!

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” Romans 8:17

**Oregon, Portland**

*Louisa Gallup*

We are thankful that those who traveled over the Christmas and holiday season, are safely home again.

Visiting ministers this past month were Elder Bro. John Wiegand (Sis. Jane), Bro. Ron Jones (Sis. Liz) and Bro. James Schneider (Sis. Tonya), all from the Silverton, OR congregation.

It was the first time Bro. James delivered a sermon to us since he started in the ministry recently. We surely are blessed to have him serve us from the pulpit. We wish he and Sis. Tonya the Lord’s blessings of guidance and strength with this new responsibility.

As always, we appreciate each and every one who makes the effort to come and worship with us.

**Oregon, Silverton**

*Lorraine Kuenzi, Teresa Sinn*

Bro. Bob Kuenzi (Sis. Linda) recently fell and fractured his knee. Bro. Bob and his family would appreciate your prayers for healing and wisdom as this is bringing about significant change in their lives.

Bro. Lynn Kuenzi (Sis. Marilyn) has been struggling with health issues and has been in the hospital. Please pray for support and comfort for him and his family during this time.

Holly Kuenzi (Bro. Aden and Sis. Becky) moved to Kansas City, KS, for schooling. We send our love with her and pray for guidance in this new phase of life.

Bro. Derrick and Sis. Adeline Kuenzi welcomed their first baby on January 1, Lawrence Thomas. Grandparents are Bro. Eric and Sis. Erika Graf from Rittman, OH and Bro. Art and Sis. Mary Beth Kuenzi.

Bro. Evan Schmdigall’s (Sis. Emily) grandfather, Bro. Marvin Schmidgall (Sis. Dorothy), recently passed away. Services were held in Eureka, IL. We are prayerful for the family as they travel through this time of grief together.

January 5 our congregation was blessed to witness the wedding of Sis. Karla Dettwyler to Bro. Dinold Gabriel from Smithville, OH. We appreciate the visitors who joined us for this special day, and are especially thankful to retired Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH) for sharing the wedding service with us. We were reminded that love covers long distances and many cultures. We will surely miss Sis. Karla and are prayerful for this transition in both of their lives.

William Sinn (Bro. Kenton and Sis. Alicen) recently broke his arm. We are thankful he is recovering quickly!

Bro. Myron Kuenzi (Sis. Teresa) recently had a hip replacement and would appreciate prayers for a quick and full recovery.

Bro. Harvey and Sis. Jennifer Kuenzi and family are thankful for and would appreciate your ongoing prayers as their son Morgan, continues to struggle with seizures and epileptic spasms and has recently been in the hospital.

Bro. Jake Johnson will be serving on work teams in Texas for the next few months with plans to return in the spring.

As we enter this new year, let’s resolve to draw closer to our Savior and be a shining light for Him!

**Pennsylvania, Philadelphia**

*Laura Isch*

“And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new...” Rev. 21:15

I love the newness and freshness that January brings! With another year comes new opportunities, new goals, and fresh starts. How much better to remember that our God is a God of redeemed lives, forgiven pasts, and new beginnings!

We enjoyed having Bro. Dana Indermuhle (Sis. Joy, Sardis, OH) with us this month. May God bless him for his willingness to share the Word with us.
Tennessee, Nashville
Mike Fritz

We are thankful to God for His Living Word and for our recent visiting ministers who brought it to us; Bro. Byron Stoller (Sis. Carol, Gridley, IL) and Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Peachtree City, GA). Also, we are thankful for the fellowship of brethren and friends who visited us from Francesville and Remington, IN; Washington, IL; Iowa City, IA; and Philadelphia, PA.

If you are traveling to or through the Nashville area, please plan to fellowship and worship with us. We meet for worship every Sunday. Please contact us ahead of time to confirm our schedule. Contacts are Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica Fritz, 615.866.5543, fritzmb.family@gmail.com; Bro. Jeff and Sis. Cynde Stoller, 309.530.5760, cyndelynnstoller@gmail.com; or Bro. Jordan and Sis. Emily Fritz, 615.852.9109, jordanmfritz@gmail.com.

Texas, Austin/Bastrop
Candy Meiss

We send our love and greetings from Austin/Bastrop!

“As long as we live, we parents will always have our children on our minds and hearts. Even after they become adults, we will forever be concerned for their safety, well-being, relationship with God, and success in all they do, from their work to their health, to their friends, to their marriage relationship, to the raising of their children. Because we don’t know exactly what is going on in their lives, we need a way to pray that will cover them and bring us peace in the process.” This is a quote from the book “The Power of PRAYING for Your Adult Children” by Stormie Omartian. One of our adult children gave us the book for Christmas and it has been a blessing to add to my daily devotions. I believe these prayers have already had a positive impact on the lives of each of our adult children. When we take our concerns to the Lord, trusting that God hears our prayers and answers them on behalf of our children, our prayers will have the power to effect change in their lives. Who among us doesn’t want that?

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, he heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” I John 5:14-15

We are thankful for our visiting ministers. This month we were blessed by our Bro. Dan Koch (Sis. Julie, Tremont, IL), Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI), and Bro. Brian Waibel (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL). We were encouraged to prepare for communion by our ministering brothers during the communion exhortation. It has been a blessing to have a day designated for each member in our local church to pray for in the month leading up to communion.

“Great is Thy faithfulness, great is Thy faithfulness morning by morning new mercies I see and all I have needed Thy hand hath provided, Great is Thy Faithfulness Lord unto me.”

Great is Thy Faithfulness, Heavenly Highway Hymns, #113

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, Dallas-Ft. Worth
Sheena Pelsy

The Dallas church was thankful to gather together once again after a long break. Visiting minister Bro. Jim Meiss (Sis. Candi, Austin/Bastrop, TX) joined us for the first service of the year. Bro. Jim opened up to Numbers 24 and read about Balaam and Balak and shared how Balaam knew what his purpose and use for God was, but in the end turned from God and gave bad advice. Instead of giving the counsel of God, he caused a stumbling block for the Israelites which led to death. Bro. Jim’s message reminded us that we are all given gifts and a purpose from God, but how we use them in a world where we are surrounded by evil is critical. It is important to recognize what our motives are when using our gifts. In every situation, are we trying to gain credit for ourselves

February 2020    SILVER LINING    47
or are we giving the credit to our Lord? As believers we can be thankful the Holy Spirit that dwells in us guides and directs our actions for God’s glory.

Services are being held every 2nd and 4th Sunday. If you plan to visit or want to call ahead to verify services, call Bro. Adam Graf (330.590.7086).

Texas, McAllen
MaryKate Mecidor
The McAllen church is grateful for the many brothers and sisters who have visited and shared God’s word with us these past months. Special thanks to Bro. Michael Schneider (Sis. Jodi, Junction, OH), Bro. Ted Witzig Jr. (Sis. Donna, Morton, IL), Bro. Randy Mogler (Sis. Evie, Washington, IL) and Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sis. Alice, Sardis, OH) who were with us during September. In October we held services with Bro. Tyler Joos (Sis. Tonya, Bradford, IL) and Bro. George Gal (Sis. Tina, Akron, OH). In November we welcomed Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI) and Bro. Jason Dotterer (Sis. Lynn, Forrest, IL). Finally, in December Bro Greg Fehr (Sis Denise, West Bend, IA) and Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL) were able to join us. We enjoyed the time of fellowship spent with you and your families.

We would also like to welcome anyone coming to the South Texas 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 Robers Mecidor (239) 281-2120 or you may access www.harvestcall.org to view the updated minister rotation schedule. Sunday services are held at 10:30 and 12:30 at The Wyndham Garden Hotel, 1921 South 10th St. Take the 10th Street Exit off I-83 and go 1 ½ blocks south. Please see the ministers’ directory for local contact information.

Texas, Zapata
Mary Platter
We are always very thankful for visiting ministers. Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis Nancy, Forrest, IL) spent an evening with us as they were traveling home from McAllen.

We are anticipating an invite-a-guest weekend in February and look forward to a blessed weekend. Zapata is along the Rio Grande River which borders Mexico. We welcome anyone that wishes to come to Zapata to visit and worship with us. We were blessed with families that came over the holiday season.

Vermont, Clarendon
Nathan Reutter
We enjoyed the Christmas program this month. It was filled with song, scripture, excited and somewhat nervous children. It was so encouraging on many levels. The children participated well, the singing was uplifting, and it brought us all a little closer to our Saviour Jesus.

A New Year’s resolution for me this year is meant to set me a little nearer my Saviour on a more regular basis. I wish to become more ardent and fervent in my prayer life. A little pamphlet by John Bunyan, What True Prayer Is, defines it thus: "Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God has promised or according to His Word, for the good of the Church, with submission in faith to the will of God." The rest of the pamphlet describes in detail what this means. It has been a pleasure reading it, and encourages me to be deeper and more intentional in my prayer life.

Visiting ministers this month included our Ordained Deacon Bro. Brent Walder (Sis. Naomi), Bro. Jon Zahner (Sis. Amy), and Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna), all of Rockville, CT. They inspired us to a greater faithfulness to our God in a loving and encouraging way. We appreciated having our retired Deacon, Bro. Warren Zahner and his wife Sis. Bonnie with us this past month, who came up with their son, Bro. Jon and his family. God be with you and bless you and cause His face to shine upon you in 2020.
The News and Notices section of The Silver Lining provides a way for qualifying non-profit entities to make the brotherhood aware of church-related events, opportunities, needs, and services that would be of special interest to Apostolic Christian Church of America members and regular attendees. Email us at editor@acsilverlining.org for a copy of our advertising policy, which specifies who may advertise, sizes, file formats and deadlines.

News and Notices

AC Central: a growing hub of Apostolic Christian Content

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Light from the Word

Now available by downloadable PDF at 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).

SAVE THE DATE -- AC Medical Fellowship Committee Biennial Meeting for 2020

AC Medical Fellowship meeting is scheduled for Saturday April 18, 2020 in Goodfield, IL at the Fellowship Hall.
Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. and presentations at 8:30 a.m. and will continue until ~7:00 p.m. with a light breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Spouses are welcome.
If you are on the HarvestCall Health Care Provider registry, you will receive an email in a few months with a formal invitation and registration form. There will also be a Facebook posting.
Oppportunity to Serve - Resident Caretaker Needed
Rochester Christian Guesthouse - Rochester, Minnesota

Due to the pending relocation of the current caretakers at the Guesthouse, an opportunity to serve is available starting in the Spring of 2020.

The position is part-time and on an as-needed basis, similar to hosting guests occasionally overnight in our own homes. It is an ideal ministry for a family, young couple, or empty-nesters, who would enjoy relocating to Rochester for a time, and whose regular employment would accommodate it.

If an opportunity to serve those from our denomination who are in Rochester seeking medical treatment at the Mayo Clinic is of interest, the Guesthouse Board would like to hear from you.

The general arrangements and responsibilities are as follows:
• Commitment length of 3-5 years is preferred, but any length will be considered.
• The upper two floors of the residential home are available for use by the caretaker family, under a favorable financial arrangement.
• The bottom floor of the home has three private rooms that are available for those connected to our denomination to use, on a free-will-offering basis.
• The caretaker duties in general are as follows:
• scheduling appointments for use of the Guesthouse facility
• answering any questions or concerns
• cleaning of the Guesthouse facility
• buying supplies: cleaning, paper, coffee, sometimes food, and parking passes
• paying bills for services and supplies used by the Guesthouse
• if needed, providing rides to medical appointments at the area clinics or hospitals
• Seeking to be hospitable including hosting guests occasional for meals or evening dialog, and providing a listening ear for guests that desire fellowship or empathy

Further details and a full description of the opportunity, history, and mission of the Guesthouse can be provided by sending an email to: cmschmidt4@yahoo.com or by calling Bro. Clint Schmidt, Board Chairman, at (612) 280-3818. Additional information is available on the Minneapolis congregation’s website at www.minneapolisacchurch.org/guesthouse.

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Christian Guesthouse and Worship Services in Rochester, MN
Accommodations for Mayo Clinic outpatients and families – two locations:
1. Guesthouse - Three bedrooms with private baths, laundry, kitchen and family room area.
2. Near St. Mary’s Hospital - two bedroom apartment within a 12 unit building.

Guesthouse Accommodations:
For information and reservations, contact caretakers:
Bro. Randy and Sis. Brittaney Lehman
4733 Birdie Lane NW, Rochester, MN 55901
Phone: (507) 288-0072

Mid-week Services:
(3rd Wednesday in Rochester area)
For information, contact:
Bro. Jim and Sis. Deb Tilbury
Phone: (507) 281-2875
Registration is now open for ALive2020

The Athens, Alabama congregation is busily planning a wonderful weekend full of “Hope” for ALive2020. You can now register online for the event that will be held during Memorial Day weekend, May 23-25, 2020, at The Vision in Huntsville, AL.

Throughout the weekend, “Hope” will be the overarching theme. Come learn more about this topic from various brothers who will speak on having Hope in God during struggles when we don’t understand “why” and how to encourage others who are going through tough times. Additionally, they will talk about our Hope as believers for heaven.

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Romans 15:13

The Athens congregation invites all to join them for a blessed weekend full of fellowship, worship, food, fun and encouragement. Find out more details about the weekend (and register) on our website at www.ALiveAlabama.com, on Facebook @ALiveAlabama or send an email to info@alivealabama.com.

The Vision (www.visionministry.org) is a 300+ acre Christian retreat, camp, lodge, and event facility with walking/ hiking trails, fishing and swimming. Additionally, for kids, there is a vintage playground, Gaga Ball pit, game room and many other activities.

The Athens congregation looks forward to seeing you at ALive 2020.
Haiti Teams - Les Cayes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>YEAR 2020</th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>CAPACITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 2-9</td>
<td>Haiti Ag / SEED and Haiti Dairy / Torbeck</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent Hodel</td>
<td>309-231-7467</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:htfi94@gmail.com">htfi94@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 6-13</td>
<td>Haiti Trade Schools / Les Cayes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Getz</td>
<td>574-870-5046</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:andy@getzitdone.com">andy@getzitdone.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 6-13</td>
<td>Water Aid / Les Cayes</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rich Kuntz</td>
<td>815-848-2420</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:rrkuntz60@gmail.com">rrkuntz60@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 25-30</td>
<td>Haiti Support / Les Cayes</td>
<td>HC-CC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jon Zeller</td>
<td>309-266-9009</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jzeller1972@gmail.com">jzeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 30-Apr 6</td>
<td>Maintenance / Les Cayes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jon Zeller</td>
<td>309-266-9009</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:jzeller1972@gmail.com">jzeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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Haiti Medical / Dental Teams

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<tr>
<td>Mar 14-21</td>
<td>SCOA Orthopedic</td>
<td>FULL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 18-25</td>
<td>Continuing Nursing Education</td>
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<td>Apr 18-25</td>
<td>Urology</td>
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<td>May 16-23</td>
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<td>Sept 12-19</td>
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<td>Oct 3-10</td>
<td>Urology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 3-10</td>
<td>Continuing Nursing Education</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Oct 24-31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 14-21</td>
<td>SCOA Orthopedic</td>
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COORDINATOR FOR ALL HAITI MEDICAL TEAMS:
Komari Aberle  Email: komarick@sbcglobal.net | Phone: 785.284.2950
Other dates and teams are possible. Please contact Sis. Komari Aberle to discuss possible dates and focuses not listed.

Mexico Medical / Dental Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 2020</th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>CAPACITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May (TBD)</td>
<td>Juarez</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd and Teresa Earney</td>
<td>260-273-9528</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:tearney@adamswells.com">tearney@adamswells.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mexico Construction Teams

QUESTIONS FOR MEXICO TEAMS:
Reynosa: Kevin & Sadie Gerber  Phone: 260-417-5272  kevgerber@yahoo.com
Magdalena: Email CVEmexico@gmail.com

Jamaica Teams

QUESTIONS FOR JAMAICA TEAMS:
May 22-30  CCCD - JDV | 40
Mark Lindberg  815-641-9065 | Email: Lindbma@hotmail.com
If you are interested in sponsoring a work team to Jamaica contact Loren Dettwyler at lmdettwyler@gmail.com

PROCLAIM CHRIST & SERVE OTHERS

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 HarvestCall projects in southern Haiti. Upcoming trips are as follows: Sept. 26-30, 2020

To learn more, contact:
Rich Bertschi at 309.467.2351 or hospitallumiere@harvestcall.org
Rick Wuethrich at 219.863.4163 or rick@wuethrichfarms.com

Jamaica Awareness Tour

If you would like to meet the missionaries and see the ministries of CCCD, Deaf Can! Coffee, and En Gedi House in person, but do not have the desire to participate on a short-term team, please consider our new Awareness Tour. This is a quick trip that gives interested parties the opportunity to meet our missionary families, learn more about our Jamaica ministry as well as other outreach supported by HarvestCall. The trip will be over a weekend and include worshiping with a deaf congregation.

To learn more, Email or Call: Kent Mogler at 612-360-4361 or moglerkent@gmail.com
Haiti, Bonne Fin
Construction Teams

The Hospital Lumiere renovation program continues to restore and improve the facility to an environment that honors God and provides an atmosphere that contributes to the wellbeing of the hospital staff, our patients and their families.

Hospital Lumiere has an ongoing need for maintenance and/or construction teams and especially for skilled electricians. Rather than listing predetermined dates and asking people to fit into them, if a team, or individual, is interested in coming, they should contact the Hospital Administrator to discuss possible dates and available projects.

To learn more, contact:
Hospital Administrator Bro. Rick Aberle
Phone: 011-509-4222-1004 or
Email: komarick@sbcglobal.net

MISSIONARY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

The Hospital Lumiere team is presently seeking candidates for missionary service in a variety of roles that will fit your calling, interests and experience. Singles, Couples and Families of all ages are encouraged to prayerfully consider full time missionary service supporting the ministry and outreach in Bonne Fin, Haiti.

There are many service and ministry opportunities at HL. The most important qualification is that the brother and/or sister is called by God to serve at the hospital. The service opportunity and placement will be developed to match the candidate's interest and experience. Potential service roles for non-medical candidates:

- Business office management
- Finance and Accounting
- Hospital Administration
- Facilities Operations and/or Maintenance
- Hospital Operations (non-medical)
- Hospital Technical Support
- Information Technology Support
- Missionary School Teacher or Teacher Aid
- Campus and Hospitality Management
- Missionary Support

Qualifications and Requirements:
- Member in good standing within the Apostolic Christian Church of America
- A servant heart, willingness to serve those in need
- Desire to engage as ambassadors of Christ with the Haitian staff at HL and the surrounding Bonne Fin community
- Relocate to Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Fin, Haiti
- Learn Haitian Creole (French language fluency is also beneficial)

For additional details for these exciting and worthy service opportunities contact Tom Hitz.
Email: tchitz@sbcglobal.net or
Phone: 734.635.4112

If you are interested in Medical service, please review the Medical Professional Advertisement.
Seeking caregivers, single or married, willing to provide a Christ-centered family-like home for children who have been removed from their biological families. A caregivers qualifications include: Member in good-standing; dedication and love for children and young people; good communication, teamwork and conflict management skills; openness to learn, self-motivation and flexibility; ability to speak or willingness to learn Spanish.

A caregivers responsibilities include: Providing spiritual leadership and training for the children; provide for the daily physical, social and emotional needs of the children; continual pursuit of personal emotional and spiritual growth; continual professional growth as a caregiver; administer discipline in love and using biblical principles in accordance with CVE policies; grow in cultural knowledge and sensitivity.

Terms of Service
- Live on the CVE campus in the homes of the children being cared for.
- Language, culture and caregiver training will be provided.

Candidate selection, preparation, training, sending and supporting will be conducted using HarvestCall’s established Outreach Policies and Procedures.

For more information on CVE positions, contact: Keith Beyer. Email: CVEmexico@gmail.com, or Phone: 260-627-0525

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CAREGIVER ASSISTANT OPENING
at Casa Vida Y Esperanza; Magdalena, MX

Seeking caregiver assistants, single or married, willing to support a caregiver in our Christ-centered family-like homes for children who have been pulled from their homes due to circumstances out of their control. A caregiver assistant qualifications include: Member in good-standing; dedication and love for children and young people; good communication, teamwork and conflict management skills; openness to learn, self-motivation and flexibility; ability to speak or willingness to learn Spanish.

A caregiver assistant responsibilities include:
Support or provide spiritual leadership and training for the children; support the caregiver in providing for the daily physical, social and emotional needs of the children; continual pursuit of personal emotional and spiritual growth; continual professional growth as an assistant; administer discipline in love and using biblical principles in accordance with CVE policies; grow in cultural knowledge and sensitivity.

Terms of Service
• Live on or near the CVE campus, may include living in the home of the children being cared for
• Language, culture and caregiver training will be provided.

Candidate selection, preparation, training, sending and supporting will be conducted using HarvestCall’s established Outreach Policies and Procedures.

SHORT-TERM MISSIONARY OPENING at Casa Vida Y Esperanza; Magdalena, MX

Seeking short-term missionaries willing to live and serve at CVE for one year to support a variety of activities around campus.

Short-Term missionary qualifications include: Member in good-standing; dedication and love for children and young people; good communication, teamwork and conflict management skills; openness to learn, self-motivation and flexibility; ability to speak or willingness to learn Spanish.

The responsibilities could include: Support the caregiver in providing care for children; accounting support; drive church and/or school routes; prepare meals and support meal prep for work teams; work with livestock; teach work related skills to the children.

Terms of Service
• Housing provided on or near the CVE campus
• Language and culture training provided

Candidate selection, preparation, training, sending and supporting will be conducted using HarvestCall’s established Outreach Policies and Procedures and the CVE Short Term Missionary Procedures.

For more information on CVE positions, contact: Keith Beyer.
Email: CVEmexico@gmail.com, or Phone: 260-627-0525
Hospital Lumiere - Bonne Fin, Haiti

FACILITIES MANAGER
OPENING at Hospital Lumiere, Haiti

The Hospital Lumiere team is presently seeking candidates for missionary service as Facilities Manager. Singles, Couples and Families of all ages are encouraged to prayerfully consider full time missionary service supporting the Hospital Lumiere ministry and outreach in Bonne Fin, Haiti.

General Duties and Responsibilities for the Facilities Manager:
• Manage Hospital and Campus Facilities maintenance and upkeep
• Manage Hospital Carpenter/Cabinet shop
• Manage Hospital and Campus vehicle fleet and maintenance
• Manage and Supervise the Hospital and Campus Electrical system (Solar, Diesel Generators and Hydro-electric generation and distribution)
• Plan and Manage construction and renovation projects. Supervise and coordinate Haitian staff and US volunteer teams.
• Manage and supervise Haitian facilities, maintenance, mechanic, electrical and construction staff.

Qualifications and Requirements:
• Member in good standing within the Apostolic Christian Church of America
• A servant heart, willingness to serve those in need
• Desire to engage as ambassadors of Christ with the Haitian staff at HL and the surrounding Bonne Fin community
• Relocate to Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Fin, Haiti
• Learn Haitian Creole (French language fluency is also beneficial)
• Background/experience with facilities, electrical, plumbing and mechanical skills is preferred

For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact Tom Hitz.
Email: tchitz@sbcglobal.net or Phone: 734.635.4112

Missionary School - Bonne Fin, Haiti

TEACHER OPPORTUNITY

Hospital Lumiere, Bonne Fin, Haiti is presently seeking a teacher and teacher aid for missionary children. These positions involve full-time teaching in the multi-level classroom setting of the Bonne Fin Missionary School on the Hospital Lumiere compound. The missionary role is expected to start during the summer of 2020. These are full time missionary positions with a service term of one school year. There is opportunity to extend the term of service.

Teacher qualifications include being a member in good standing of the Apostolic Christian Church, a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree, preferably in the field of Education or Child Development, ability to communicate effectively with students, parents and visitors to the school, a nurturing and caring attitude toward children, and a heart and desire to serve others through service to Jesus Christ.

Teacher Aid qualifications include being a member in good standing of the Apostolic Christian Church, a minimum of a High School Diploma, a Bachelor’s degree preferred, preferably in the field of Education or Child Development, ability to communicate effectively with the teacher, students, parents and visitors to the school, a nurturing and caring attitude toward children, and a heart and desire to serve others through service to Jesus Christ.

For additional details for this exciting and worthy position contact Tom Hitz.
Email: tchitz@sbcglobal.net or Phone: 734.635.4112
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And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.
Isaiah 54:13

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Loving as Jesus Loves

— Continued from pg. 3

Philip, one of the seven deacons, responded in this way with the result that a stranger and foreigner found his salvation, "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him…Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 6 "

On the other hand, our neighbor could literally be next door to us and still need our love. Sometimes a form of prejudice hinders our love when we think we know someone “a little too well”. Even Christ was subjected to these unjust feelings: “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. 7” Familiarity may breed contempt in the world but it should be the opposite with believers. When considering the many applications of loving our neighbor, our Christian brothers and sisters remain a high priority, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. 8 ” The Apostle Paul reinforces this teaching, “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 9 ”

Perhaps we all have experiences in which we or someone else has given or otherwise shown love to a person and they do not respond in the manner we expected. Or perhaps we later discover they were even being deceptive regarding their true need. Instead of becoming bitter over these experiences, let us remember Jesus’ commandment to “love one another as I have loved you” clearly indicates that true love will often involve sacrifice or even disappointment on the giver’s part. Despite the sometimes-difficult nature of love, Jesus stresses just how critical it is that we openly and deeply love one another. He pointedly tells the disciples that love is the primary evidence that we are His followers. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 10"

Based on these and many other scriptures, it befits us as Christians to err in the direction of being loving and merciful. “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. 11 ”

Endnotes
1 Luke 10:29
2 Leviticus 19:18
3 1 Peter 2:9
4 Luke 6:35
5 Deuteronomy 10:19
6 Acts 8:29-37
7 Mark 6:3-4
8 Galatians 6:10
9 Hebrews 6:10
10 John 13:35
11 Philippians 2:1-5
Monthly Sermon, continued

Continued from pg. 5

Daily we need God’s grace. Daily we need his strength, and we need to recognize that, but we also need to recognize that God’s love will never diminish.

I love that song we sing that speaks of our love for God, but God’s love for us will never diminish. It’s always there, and through the ages, it’s been there. People rejected God. People went their own way, like the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah, God’s chosen people – the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. What did they do? They rejected God. Did God leave them? There were severe consequences for many that rejected him, but God never left them. His love reached out, and it reaches out today. He continues to reach out, and we can have a small part in that.

That’s a lesson I think we can learn from the mission of the 70; we can have a small part in that. What’s really important that we share with our families, with our children, with our neighbors, with those that don’t know God? What’s the thing we can share? "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (Luke 10:9) I love that verse. It’s here today for you. Are you ready? Am I ready?

It was clear – I know I’m repeating myself a little bit here, but it’s interesting to me – that several times as we read through this Old Testament chapter, there were those that came and said, “Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day?” (2 Kings 2:3) Do you know what’s coming, Elisha? Elijah’s going to disappear; God’s coming to take him. It seems they were worried about that what was going to happen, thinking ‘what about our future?’ I’ve had the experience to go through life, and my mother was a great encourager; that’s just kind of her nature, and then one day God just took her away. My wife was a great encourager; one day she was gone. What’s going to happen? I wondered that when my mother left. I wondered that when my wife left, but you know what? God’s love doesn’t change. God is good, and he always will be, so we need to concentrate not so much on ‘how am I – how am I – going to deal with this or that?’ We need to concentrate on ‘what can I do for the Lord while I’m still here?’ Why am I here? Can I fulfill that purpose in some way? Can I pick up the mantle? Can I carry it on? Can I leave some legacy or something that’s helpful for people to come? And what can be more helpful than that verse, “The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.” (Luke 10:9) Unto you: unto to those that we deal with, unto those we meet with, unto those that we work with, etc. I think there is nothing more important, but they were concerned. The sons of the prophets were concerned, saying, “do you know that the Lord will take away your master from the head today?” What did Elisha say to them? “Yeah, I’m scared. Yeah, I can’t possibly do anything”? No. He simply says here, I know. “Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.” (2 Kings 2:3) Hold ye your peace; it will be okay. We will continue on.

Then, as we read these various places that Elijah was going to go, Elisha wanted to get the last assurance from Elijah. When Elijah said he’s going to Jericho, Elisha said, “I’m going with you.” When he said, “I’m going over Jordan,” he said, “I’m going with you.” The two went together, and so on.

Then, of course, the miracles that took place are just a reminder of what God can do. Why are there so many miracles in the OT? I think one of the reasons was to help us understand first of all that God is all powerful. There’s nothing he can’t do. Those waters of Jordan were divided here when he took off his mantle and struck the waters. Why? So that you and I would know that God can do that. God can do whatever he wants to do. It should give us solace. It should give us consolation. It should help us to understand in God,
we’re safe. Today, we sing this hymn ‘Anywhere With Jesus I Can Safely Go.’ (Hymns of Zion 179) Anywhere. I think that was what Elisha was thinking. Anywhere with God; Jesus wasn’t here yet, obviously, in 2 Kings. With God’s power, Elisha knew he could continue on.

He wasn’t really worried, but he was concerned a little, wasn’t he, about having the full measure of the spirit of God, which is what he relied on, what he wanted to go through. That’s what we need to rely on. So, when Elijah comes to him and said, “What do you want?”, he answered, “What I want is a double portion of the Spirit.” He didn’t ask for physical strength. He didn’t ask for lots of riches. He didn’t ask for an army of people to be with him to provide his every need. He said, “I need a double portion of your spirit. I need to know God will give me double of that spirit.” Elisha said, “I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.” (2 Kings 2:9) He wanted the spirit of Elijah, and he wanted a double portion, because he recognized his own weakness, and he knew that with the power of the Spirit, he could do that.

We read those two things: one that says, “Without thee I can do nothing,” and then the other, that says, “but through Christ I can do all things.” (John 15:5, Phil 4:13) It hasn’t changed, has it? If we think we can do something of ourselves, we’re going to miserably fail, but if we understand we “can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,” (Phil 4:13) we can be successful. So it’s just a matter of do we really know who God is? Do we really trust in him? Do we really ask for and demand this Holy Spirit which is here today working with us? When Christ left, he said, “I’m going to heaven, but I’m going to send this Holy Spirit.” I don’t know that I personally know that well enough or trust in it as much as I should. It’s what we have, what we have to understand, and what we have to use. It will lead us home. It will convict us. It will comfort us. It will show us. It will come and speak to us when we’re straying away from God, “You need to return to God; return again to the shadow under his wing. Don’t get so far away that you’re not protected any longer.”

Then Elisha gets the mantle; he divides the water, and he goes back. He does this miracle, which is pretty interesting to me, because the minute the city came – they’re coming to Elisha, because Elijah is gone, as the new replacement – they said, “Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.” (2 Kings 2:19) The water was sour. Have you ever thought about what would happen if the water turned sour? I had the privilege once of spending a week on an little island in Hawaii, called Kahoʻolawe, where all the water turned sour. They had dug wells years ago. They had raised cattle when they lived there. All the water turned salty or sour. Nothing was left; there were no people or animals. Nothing could survive. So, here they come to him, – this replacement, Elisha – and he says, “Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein.” (vs 20)

I’m not sure that it was salty, but it certainly was sour for whatever reason. He puts this salt in, and he goes to the spring and casts it in. He says, “Thus saith the LORD.” (vs 21) He didn’t say, “I have this power because I’m Elisha, and I have the mantle of Elijah so I can do anything.” No, he said, “Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day.” (vs 21-22)

Upto this day. There shall not be from henceforth any more death or barren land. So again, “the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.” (vs 22)

— Please turn to pg. 64
Monthy Sermon, continued

— Continued from pg. 63

It’s the goodness of God. It’s the power of God. It’s God hearing and providing back in 2 Kings time. That same God hasn’t changed today. He’s hearing. He’s providing, maybe not always in the time frame we want, maybe not always in the way that we want. But his power is not at all limited.

Let’s think in the remaining time about the mission of the 70. I think about your mission and mine: we are here to be laborers in God’s harvest. That’s why we’re here. He says to them, as he points these 70 to go out, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.” (Luke 10:2)

Then he says, “Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.” (vs 3) So did he say unto them, “You need to till land, and you need to grow lots of crops” or “You need to build up a big business”? No, he didn’t say that. He said, “the labourers are few.” What’s important is we need laborers. The harvest is great but the labourers are few; I send you forth and as lambs among wolves.

It may not be easy. A while back, someone was talking to me about their job, and they needed to visit with some people because they were in the sales field. The first ten people they talked to said, “No.” “No.” “No.” They slammed their receiver down or hung up. It was pretty discouraging. Jesus says, “I’m going to send you forth as lambs among wolves.” So, we’re going to be rejected sometimes. People won’t always understand what we’re trying to share with them.

So, what does he say? “Make sure you have all good supplies along”? No, he says, “Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.” (vs 4) Just go, and I’ll be with you. I’ll provide for you even though it may be hard. Think of the prophets. Many of the prophets were rejected over and over again. Does that mean they were failures? No. If they were preaching God’s word, sharing God’s word, going out as laborers into the harvest, they were successful. They did what God wanted them to do. We can’t of our own power change the heart of our neighbor, but we can show him what God has done for us and let God change his heart, if he can and if he will.

But it doesn’t always happen; we know that. That should not discourage us or say that we’re going to give up. That should not say that we’re going to quit. If we can go take this simple message “the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you,” (vs 11) we’ve done our part. That doesn’t mean we shouldn’t continue or follow up sometimes, but we just need to do our part. In fact, as these 70 went, he said, Go into the city,” and he said, “if they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you.” (Luke 10:10-11) He says, “Tell them they missed the point. Tell them it applies to them,” because he further says after they were rejected, they should tell the people, “notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.” (vs 11) If they rejected them, he said, “Leave the city; shake off the dust of your feet, but remind them ‘that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.’” The message didn’t change whether it was accepted and followed or whether it was totally rejected. The message is the same: the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Then he said that famous statement, at least to me it is, “It will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom and for Gomorrah than for you.” Why is that? Sodom and Gomorrah were very evil cities, weren’t they? All kinds of evil. They were so evil, that God came and finally destroyed them by fire, but he said, “It’s going to be more tolerable for those people in that day than for you” – speaking to the people that rejected the 70 – “because you’ve heard the truth.
You’ve heard the word.” They didn’t have that same prophet, and Christ is here today. So, we want to leave that message. If we’ve heard the message but not responded to it, we’re worse off; though not really worse off because it’s the same end, isn’t it? It says, it shall be more tolerable for those people that lived in that evil, evil city. He didn’t say it was right. He didn’t say that they would be angels in heaven. But he says, “I understand more why they rejected than for you;” in other words, what is the excuse that any of us have for not wanting and desiring to send the message that the kingdom of God is come today for you. Again, we do our part. We trust God for the rest. He says, “If the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.” (vs 13) So, that’s why it’s more tolerable in that day.

“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me.” (vs 16) Again, if we are rejected when we try to help someone, do we take it personally? He says to those 70, “He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.” (vs 16) That’s God himself. We take the message. We hope that it can be planted. We hope that it can grow. We plant. God waters, and the plant will grow; but, again, we shouldn’t be totally discouraged even though it can be discouraging. If we’re sending the right message, we’re fulfilling what God is sending us for.

Also, it’s interesting about the 70, because he gave them special powers. This is the beginning of the gospel message for many people. They didn’t understand it. They didn’t know it, so he gave them special powers of healing and other things like that. They were elated. It says in verse 17, “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.” They were thankful for their power. What did Jesus say to them? Oh, he says, “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” (vs 20) There are many things that bring us pleasure, I guess, joy in this life, but nothing can or should compare to the fact that our names are written in heaven. God may have blessed us as he blessed me in my work, in caring and providing what I needed in this life way more than I deserve. I’m thankful for that – and we need to be thankful for those things, – but that’s not where the real joy, the deep joy, lies. The deep joy lies in knowing that our names are written in the book of heaven, knowing that we’re ready when our turn comes, and understanding when we’re gone, there’ll be others to take over, like there was for Elijah with Elisha. It’s been like that all through the ages.

Then Jesus says, “I thank thee…that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” (vs 21) Later, it says, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.” (vs 24) You know, when life is going really good and when success seems abundant and when the golden spoon seems to be in the hand, that’s when sometimes God gets forgotten, isn’t it? We live in a rich nation. We visited Wed evening a little about Deuteronomy where it talks about living in houses we didn’t build and drinking water from wells we didn’t dig. That’s where we are – we’re provided for bountifully in this nation, for the most part, and the encouragement is to not let that distract us from our trust in God, from knowing who God is, and from sharing the message he wants to give to all mankind.
This is the second in a series of four reports on the missionary journeys taken by Samuel Froehlich in Switzerland to both gauge and build support for a new church denomination. In essence, he set out on his own to “test the waters.” That is, to see if souls would respond to preaching from the Bible. The “Pastor Bost” referred to in this article was Pastor Ami Bost who also had left the state church, and baptized Samuel Froehlich, although later Bost returned to the state church. This writing is taken from pages 45-47 in “Apostolic Christian Church History, Volume I,” by Herman Reugger.

Second Missionary Journey in the Canton Berne

As it seemed impossible to be active further in Aargau, Froehlich once more turned to Pastor Bost at Geneva: “I have been declared scott-free, in Aargau I was arrested and banned. Where shall I go?” In the mission field he felt himself a beginner and novice. He would like to go with Paul to learn of him “how with simplicity and shrewdness the Gospel might best be spread.”

The new constitution gave religious freedom and freedom of conscience. When Froehlich appealed to it before the officials, he was told he may believe what he chooses, but he cannot convey it to others.


On the following Sunday, he spoke in a nearby village and also instructed children. He experienced, however, that just among those, who apparently were well grounded in the Gospel, strong contradiction arose. “More and more I see that one cannot take too much for granted with the people, in order not to build on strange ground, “ he wrote, “but that it is always better first to lay the right foundation and then to build farther the more certainly.

In Lauterbrunnen he met a believing pastor, who on that account also expected his deposition and with whom he held meetings in the area, which were richly blessed.

On August 4, 1832, the two evangelists marched, overtaken by a heavy rain on the way, over Wengernalp to Grindelwald, a stretch of eight hours. An Alpine swing-fest was just being held and Froehlich addressed a word of warning to a modest number of less eager hearers.

On the way to Interlaken, the next day, Froehlich broke down as a result of a feverish cold. He must remain in Gsteig over night, but conducted a meeting in spite of his condition. He experienced what he had frequently experienced before: as long as he is speaking, he feels well; as soon as he stops his strength forsakes him.

The next morning he arose, very sick. But as he was not permitted to stay there, he dragged himself to Unterseen, in order to go Thun from there, by ship. Von Goumoens, frightened by his ghastly appearance, sent him at once to a Christian doctor in Berne, Dr. Niehans, Enge, where he finds new strength after fourteen days.


Editors note: The third and fourth missionary journeys will be carried in the next two issues of the Silver Lining.

-by Perry A. Klopfenstein
The Light of Hope

A Word from The Word - Redeem / Redemption

The word “redeem” and its noun form “redemption” are central to the Scriptural theme of salvation. Several passages uniquely associate this concept with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ:

“In whom we have redemption through his [Jesus’] blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:14

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” 1 Peter 1:18-19

There are two Greek root words used in the N. T. to mean “redeem” or “redemption.” One is luo, which means “to loosen” and the other is agorazo, which means “to buy from the marketplace.” Both words are very descriptive and necessary to understand the meaning of “redeem.”

**Luo** – When souls are redeemed, the forces that bound them to lives of sin are “loosened” and they are free to enjoy a new liberty in Christ.

**Agorazo** – The “marketplace” is a metaphor for the sinful condition of unregenerate souls. Through His atoning death on Calvary, Jesus “bought” our freedom and He becomes our new owner.

In order to understand the meaning of “redemption” in the Scriptures, here are four concepts that can be applied to all who have been “redeemed:”

**Our ransom has been paid**

A “ransom” is a payment to gain the release of those held in captivity. The result is freedom for the captives and a change in their ownership. Jesus’ sacrifice was the ransom price.

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:28

“Ye are bought with a price;” 1 Corinthians 7:23a

**We are freed from bondage**

Unredeemed souls are prisoners of Satan because of their sinful condition. But Jesus’ sacrifice has broken their chains and opened their prison doors.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised,” Luke 4:18

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Romans 8:21

**Our ownership has changed**

Redeemed souls are no longer captive prisoners of Satan; they have become adopted children of God. Since Jesus’ blood paid the redemption price, we now “belong” to Him.

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, . . . To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Galatians 3-7

**We are no longer under the law**

Redeemed souls are no longer under the “law of sin and death” but have come under the “law of love in Christ Jesus.” The penalty for the former law is eternal death; the blessing of the latter is eternal life.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:” Galatians 3:13

-by Ron Heiniger
Holy love, bright flame from heaven,
Only to pure hearts revealed,...
Pure and Holy Love,
Zion's Harp, #72