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And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good...

Genesis 1:31
New Growth

As spring is upon us, new life begins to grow around us. On the third day, God ordained that the earth would bring forth seed and then to bear fruit (Genesis 1). With the fall of man, that growth became more difficult, and man would have to work harder for the fruit (Genesis 3). Nature reminds us of this each spring as new life grows up with weeds also growing just as quickly. We must work the soil to keep the weeds down and nurture the beautiful plants.

It is the same in our spiritual lives. God planted the seed within our heart. When it is well watered and nurtured, the seed of faith grows and yields fruit. However, we are warned that weeds and thistles will also grow up, and they threaten to choke out the growing faith (Matthew 13 and Mark 4). As with the plants we see in nature, we need to work hard to keep down the weeds that choke out our faith.

May God give us the wisdom and grace to nurture our faith.

In Christian love,
Rick and Michelle Kaisner, Silver Lining Editors
Christ’s love is our foundation and motivation

The wise man built his house upon the rock
And the rains came tumbling down!
The rains came down and the floods came up
And the house on the rock stood firm.¹

This was a favorite song for many of us as children, probably because we could easily picture a wise old man cozy in his well-built house while a less-prepared fellow scrambled to collect his soggy belongings at the collapse of his own house. It was such a clear image of foundations – and it instilled at a young age the importance of building on a good one. Our church guiding principles start with this same reminder: Jesus Christ’s love for us is the foundation and motivation for everything we do (Guiding Principle A). There is a lot packed into this short phrase. As we seek to better understand our heart and this guiding principle, let’s consider the foundation on which we are built, how we represent and are motivated by our foundation builder, and how we maintain our foundation.

Let’s start with our foundation, our bedrock. A foundation needs to be solid and deep so that which is built on top won’t be shaken if winds, waves, political turmoil, or social unrest come about.² As a body and as individual believers in God’s family, we want to be founded upon Christ’s love.³ This is the only bedrock that will withstand the wiles of the world. The past year has posed circumstances and challenges that many of us have not seen in our lifetimes. We were asked by governments to cancel plans and wear face coverings. We were exposed to political division in national media but also in our social media and within families. We were confronted with more social unrest than has been seen in America in many years. For many, it was a year of emotional extremes, isolation – both physical and emotional, loneliness, and questioning.

For the body of Christ, though we too were accountable to adjust our lives and social habits, we didn’t face the same existential confusion and despair. Jesus Christ and his love for us was the same in 2020 as it was two thousand years ago and as it will be two thousand years from now.⁴ Our confidence – but also our lives, our beliefs, our system of judgment, and how we interpret the world – is based on this unshakable love.

When a new house is being built, there is often a sign in the front yard displaying the name of the construction company credited with the building. The sign serves as an advertisement, pointing future customers to the firm, but also as an indicator of character, anchoring the new build in the firm’s reputation for good or bad quality work, quick or slow construction, loud or respectful crews, farmhouse or nouveau style. The Word tells us that we are ambassadors for Christ, so we can picture ourselves walking this earth with a similar sign above our head: “Still in Progress / In Construction by Jesus.”⁵ We are his representative, everywhere we go and in every interaction; we are his living “advertisement” pointing people to the good quality work they see in us or painting a picture contradictory to what Jesus stands for.

In our role as ambassador or representative, we are to be reconciled to God so we can represent the righteousness of God to the world.⁶ In any interaction, but especially the tough ones, what comes out of us reflects the foundation on

— Please turn to pg. 58
Greetings this morning. I think we’re getting better with reading people’s facial expressions with just their eyes. It’s still a bit of a challenge. When you’re trying to communicate nonverbally and trying to understand what people are thinking or feeling, it’s hard, and – I don’t know if anybody else feels the same way – sometimes just the ability to smile at somebody can change the dynamic of a conversation. When that smile is covered up, how do make somebody know that you’re feeling positive towards them, that you want them to feel better? I don’t know the answer to that, but it’s a new challenge to overcome.

We were talking this week a little bit about things that people have going on in their lives, and there’s a lot of things you don’t know. We don’t know. We talked about how sometimes on Sunday morning you put your mask on to come to church, but that’s not a new thing, is it? Some of us have been putting masks on to go to church for a lot of years. Let’s forget the mask. Let’s be open. It’s really hard to read people’s facial expressions when they’re wearing a mask. It’s really hard to know how somebody feels inside when they’re wearing a mask. It’s really hard for me to make somebody understand how I feel – am I smiling? Am I frowning? Am I crying? – if I’m wearing a mask. But if we don’t know each other, if we don’t know what’s going on in somebody’s life, we’re missing out on an opportunity to share Christ with them. So, maybe we’re facing an additional challenge right now because it’s hard to share. It’s maybe harder to connect with people. Let’s try harder. Let’s make an extra effort to maybe put into words some of the thoughts that are going through our head and share with somebody. See what happens. God will bless it.

Let’s read just a few verses that came to me this morning out of Psalm 119. There are a lot of verses in Psalm 119; let’s read just a short section here starting at verse 65.

One of the things that somebody pointed out to me quite a few years ago is Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, and as many of you know, it’s got 176 verses. Every single one of those verses mentions the word of God. It mentions his law, his precepts, his commandments, and his word, and it is expressing thankfulness that we have the word of God. It talks about what the word of God will do in the life of a person who believes and follows it. So, just these few verses that we’ve read this morning talk about the change that the word of God can make in our lives, and it can change both how we approach life and the way that we respond to the things that happen to us, to the experiences we have.

It starts with “Thou hast dealt well with thy servant” (v. 65). God has dealt well with us. Regardless of how complicated or confusing or hard life might be in the moment, God deals well with us. In the grand scheme of things, God deals well with us. He intends well for us. He loves us.

The verse that spoke to me this morning was verse 71, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.” That’s a mouthful for somebody to say or for somebody to write that down: it is good that I have been afflicted. I am glad that hard things happen in my life. Do we believe that? Can we say that? Do we understand that when the hard things happen in our lives that that is good, and why? Why is that good? It’s good so that we might learn God’s statutes.

We think of statues as Section A, Subsection 1, Part D.3 that says “Thou shalt not have a deck larger than 143 sq ft in this HOA.” But that’s not God’s statutes. God’s statutes, his laws, his rules, order the universe.
They determine how everything works, and it is by experiencing – here it says, “affliction” – the hard things in life that we understand how God works.

I witnessed a miracle this week. The details largely aren’t mine to share. It’s not my story to tell, so I’ll tell just the part that I observed, and what I observed was somebody going through an incredibly difficult time in their life. One person was involved in a situation that is desperate, seemingly beyond hope, and in what appeared to be a completely random placement, totally a coincidence, somebody else was in the room that has experienced that exact same situation and has gotten to a point where they have seen victory and hope and life and moved on beyond the desperation of the situation. As we sat together for a few minutes, a life was changed. An outlook on life was changed because what seemed like a hopeless, helpless future turned into “there is hope” because somebody else has been through this hopeless, helpless situation and has found hope. Like I said, the details are amazing but they don’t matter. The point being God takes our afflictions and he uses them to, not only teach us but to use us to make changes in lives of others. If we’re wearing a mask – not a cloth one, but an emotional one – we take away that opportunity for God to use us.

Here we are today, a group of believers, a group of people here this morning that have almost completely, I think, committed our lives to serving God and being a child of his and to being used in his service. Sometimes, we experience these really hard things, and we say, “what’s that all about? I thought God loved me.” He does. He has dealt well with us.

Let’s sing a song: I didn’t have one in mind, but it opened to #169 A Blessed Man (Zion’s Harp). Let’s sing that one together.

We’re going to continue with pulling on this thread just a little bit, and we’ll see where the Spirit leads. Let’s read a few verses in Romans 5.

Verse 6 is the end of a sentence so let’s stop there for now. We picked up right in the middle of a thought here with this chapter break. Maybe it would’ve been more appropriate to start back a few verses to understand what the ‘therefore’ is talking about because it’s obviously the continuation of a thought.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 1). We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That is an incredible statement this morning. We have peace. How many people can say that today? Of the 7,000,000,000 and some people that live on the earth today, how many can say ‘we have peace’? Of the 40 some people in this room, how many of us can say ‘we have peace’? I pray to God that every single one of us can say we have peace because we have been redeemed through our Lord Jesus Christ. I was going to ask a question, but it’s a statement for me. I do not appreciate nearly enough the fact that I have peace through my Lord Jesus Christ.

It seems like everybody that I have come in contact with in the past week, outside of my fellow believers, is searching for peace. How many conversations have you had in the past week that very rapidly devolved into how terrible the state of society is today or how hopeless the political situation is or how messed up the government’s actions on the topic of the day is or how confused the schools are about how they’re handling things now? Pick your topic. How many times in the course of a week do we end up in conversations where it’s just lamenting what a mess we’re in. If you don’t find yourself in those conversations, I commend you. People are starving for peace, and we have it through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, here we are today at peace, living in peace, at peace with God. Peace with our brothers and sisters. Peace with the lost world around us, and peace with ourselves. We’re there, right? We’re in that state. We have an enemy that is desperate to rip

— Please turn to pg. 59
Ministry Program Updates

Colegio Verdad y Vida (Truth and Life School)
Mexico Committee

“Colegio Verdad y Vida” is the school located on the Casa Vida y Esperanza campus in Magdalena, Sonora, MX. It offers classes for primary and secondary school. In Mexico, primary school is 1st-6th grade and secondary school is 7th-9th grade. Currently, there are two HarvestCall-supported staff employed at the school and fourteen teachers and tutors from the Magdalena community. There are thirty-six students studying in primary school and eighteen in secondary school.

In order to provide a quality education, the school administration has prioritized keeping classes small with a maximum of ten students. Also, teachers receive significant training on how to work with children with special needs and work with wounded children in ways that help them heal and grow. Tutors are available to meet with children who are struggling academically and give them one-on-one attention. The school is committed to offering students the best opportunity possible of living in an abundant and meaningful way.

In March of 2020, classes were closed due to COVID-19, and after spring break, they reconvened through technological means. At first, teachers only sent and received assignments from the students. However as it became apparent school would be virtual for quite some time, they began to use Google Classroom, allowing the teachers to give virtual lessons and the students to tune in on video. This system has been working well for the school since August.

One of the challenges has been supervising the students from a distance. Their attention, participation, and behavior is difficult to manage from the other side of a screen. There can be issues with the internet as well, either because a family is struggling to pay for it or because the service is poor. However, internet service can also be used as an excuse for not attending class and it can be tough for the teacher to determine whether the student is telling the truth or not.

In spite of the difficulties, it has been encouraging to see interest in the school continue.

Come see what God has Done in Zambia! Child Sponsorship Committee

For Child Sponsorship and our sponsored students, normal school was seriously disrupted in 2020, leading to unprecedented education challenges. At the Lifesong School in Zambia, instead of traditional classroom routines, teachers implemented extra homework assignments, weekend mentoring, and an extended semester.

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the extraordinary effort of school administrators, faculty, and students resulted in 29 students graduating “on time” – Psalm 66:5 says: “Come and see what our God has done, what awesome miracles he performs for people.”

Unlike the U.S., where the school year runs from August to May, the school year in Zambia runs from January to December. When Lifesong School began in 2007 at a small church in the local village, the students from that first year and were determined to finish well. Many of them would be the first students in their families to graduate secondary school.

In the month of December, and took their exams. The school administrators hoped they would be able to meet the requirements to graduate. And they did!

Praise God for His Goodness

So even with the daunting disruption of the pandemic, the extraordinary effort of school administrators, faculty, and students resulted in 29 students graduating “on time” – Psalm 66:5 says: “Come and see what our God has done, what awesome miracles he performs for people.”

Thank you for your prayers and support!

So, 29 students graduating received any post-secondary school education or training for employment. So even with the daunting disruption of COVID-19, these students pressed forward, finished their final two years and were determined to finish well. Many of them would be the first students in their families to graduate secondary school.

This month, the school is excited to have a full class of 1st graders and their largest 7th grade class yet. That being said, the new students from last year and this coming year have never attended school onsite. This work to develop a healthy learning environment. We could be challenging as administration and teachers would appreciate prayers that a healthy school culture continue to keep Christ central in all we teach and do.

December 2020. They worked very hard over the months – like so many schools around the world – with a maximum of ten students. Also, teachers receive significant training on how to work with children with special needs and work with wounded children in ways that help them heal and grow. Tutors are available to meet with children who are struggling academically and give them one-on-one attention. The school is committed to offering students the best opportunity possible of living in an abundant and meaningful way.

In March of 2020, classes were closed due to COVID-19, and after spring break, they reconvened through technological means. At first, teachers only sent and received assignments from the students. However as it became apparent school would be virtual for quite some time, they began to use Google Classroom, allowing the teachers to give virtual lessons and the students to tune in on video. This system has been working well for the school since August.

One of the challenges has been supervising the students from a distance. Their attention, participation, and behavior is difficult to manage from the other side of a screen. There can be issues with the internet as well, either because a family is struggling to pay for it or because the service is poor. However, internet service can also be used as an excuse for not attending class and it can be tough for the teacher to determine whether the student is telling the truth or not.

In spite of the difficulties, it has been encouraging to see interest in the school continue.
to grow. During our enrollment period at CVV we found an increased interest from parents from the immediate neighborhood and the mining families in the community. In general, these communities have families who take their children’s education seriously, but may not have the funds for a for-profit private school. Some local psychologists have also begun to recommend Colegio Verdad y Vida to families of children with special needs such as ADD, ADHD, and autism.

Last spring, the Mexican government established a stoplight system to monitor the level of COVID-19 cases in each state and determine which organizations could operate and on what level. There are four colors in the stoplight - red, orange, yellow and green. The state of Sonora is currently in yellow and authorities have said that it must reach green in order to have school in-person again. We don’t know when this may occur, but hopefully sometime this year.

As we look ahead toward the 2021-2022 school year, the school is excited to have a full class of 1st graders and their largest 7th grade class yet. That being said, the new students from last year and this coming school year have never attended school onsite. This could be challenging as administration and teachers work to develop a healthy learning environment. We would appreciate prayers that a healthy school culture can be reestablished and that as a school, we can continue to keep Christ central in all we teach and do. Thank you for your prayers and support!

– by Laura Aviña

runs from January to December. When Lifesong School closed in late March and stayed closed for months – like so many schools around the world – school leaders wondered how they would ever be able to catch up the lost time. Would students be ready for government exams in December?

Lifesong School began in 2007 at a small church in the local village. The students from that first class were now grade 12 students set to graduate in December 2020. They worked very hard over the years and were determined to finish well. Many of them would be the first students in their families to graduate secondary school.

So even with the daunting disruption of COVID-19, these students pressed forward, finished the month of December, and took their exams. School administrators hoped they would be able to meet the requirements to graduate. And they did!

Praise God for His Goodness
The needs of this country – and specifically the children of Zambia – are big. Most children lack adequate access to nutrition, water, housing, and education. Less than 20% of the population has completed primary school, and less than 5% have received any post-secondary school education or training for employment. So, 29 students graduating from Lifesong School during the coronavirus pandemic is something to celebrate!

– by Ken Rinkenberger

April 2021 SILVER LINING 7
The marriage relationship provides both the opportunity to serve like Christ and also react out of our humanness. One moment we feel grounded, connected, enjoying fellowship and the next day something happens and we experience intense negative emotions, frustration, and disconnection. These can be painful moments, but they are also moments to grow in understanding of both our self and our spouse.

Cycles
God’s creation is filled with cycles or patterns. We see this in creation — “And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.” (Genesis 2:2). God was “working” or in creation mode for six days and on the seventh he rested. Likewise, life is filled with seasons. Consider Ecclesiastes 3 – “To every thing there is a season.”
Cycles and seasons have a few things in common — they are predictable, circular, and cycles need to be understood in context. Predictable means there is an expected pattern — day follows night. Circular implies the impact does not solely flow just from one direction. And finally, cycles are best understood within the context of the bigger picture.

Cycles in Marriage
What do cycles have to do with marriage? Often couples get caught in negative and predictable cycles which can drive disconnection rather than connection. Consider this example: Sunday mornings can be difficult for Bob and Mary. Mary would like help with the kids and cleaning up before leaving for church. Mary really appreciates Bob’s help as Sunday mornings are stressful. Bob really wants to please Mary but feels like he never cleans up to meet Mary’s expectations. So, Bob gets frustrated and heads out to the garage for some quiet moments before church — just to clear his mind. Mary gets hurt and irritated to find out that Bob is in the garage…when she needs help. Thus, Mary finds herself pursuing Bob to the garage and is critical of Bob. Mary is afraid they will be late for church and really needs Bob’s help.

Thus begins an illustration of a marital cycle. In this relationship Bob withdraws when there is tension in the relationship. Bob makes this move to “protect” the interactions from getting too heated and moves away from a place where he “feels” like he fails or experiences negative emotions.

Mary, on the other hand, tends to pursue in the relationship and experiences pain when she feels disconnection and does not feel seen or heard by Bob. Mary seeks to soothe this pain by pursuing Bob to get on the same page, get understanding, and to be seen. In this manner, the couple takes familiar stances in their relationship and engages in a predictable cycle – Bob withdraws and Mary pursues.

Next, there is a circular pattern to their interaction — Mary is pursuing in response to Bob’s withdrawing or pulling away. Bob on the other hand is withdrawing in response to Mary’s pursuit. Their own behavior is influenced by their spouse’s behavior. The more Mary pursues, the more Bob withdraws — and around and around they go. Unfortunately, when this negative cycle plays out, both feel even more frustrated and disconnected because their own move unintentionally
leads to reducing emotional safety in the relationship. Finally, the last point of a cycle is that it makes sense in context. Other couples/individuals may respond or react differently, however, this is how Bob and Mary interact and respond in their relationship. And rather than comparing their interactions with other couples, it is most helpful for them to consider and accept the reality of their interactions in their life. left coping on her own with the feelings of loneliness and perhaps the thought she is not wanted. This is extremely painful and isolating. At times Mary becomes reactive and critical in hopes of getting connection.

What are Bob and Mary then to do? First, they need to begin to recognize when this cycle plays out in their relationship, in this case often on Sunday mornings. Secondly, it will be helpful for one of them to label it when it happens — “We’re caught in our cycle” — doing so in a non-blaming way. Next, it will be vital to understand their behaviors (withdraw/pursue) in context of the relationship and the feelings and thoughts they have that lead to such behaviors. Finally, they should move toward acknowledging and validating each other’s experiences. For Mary, this may mean — “It makes sense you would pull away when you feel like you never get it right.” For Bob, this may mean — “It makes sense you get critical and react out of the pain of not being seen or wanted by me.” In this manner, their marriage begins to communicate understanding and shared acceptance of the bigger story. This leads to a great example of increasing safety, vulnerability and deepening connection — and is a great step in portraying a Gospel marriage.

**Working through Cycles**

Now that cycles are identified, how do couples counteract these destructive patterns? The first step is to identify the emotions and responses which each person is feeling. When a negative cycle takes over, Bob feels like he can never please Mary and internalizes being a failure. Bob copes with the distressing emotions from such experiences by withdrawing — to “clear his mind” and perhaps to prevent escalation. Mary, on the other hand, feels like she can never depend on Bob. Mary is ACCFS has recently released Keys to a Healthy Marriage, a bible study written by ACCFS staff focused on strengthening and encouraging marriage relationships. This ten lesson study includes teaching, discussion questions, and activities based on common themes in marriages. Please visit our website at www.accounseling.org/biblestudies to find this study and other resources we offer. If you have questions or would like more information, please call our office at 309-263-5536.
DESPITE ENDURING many challenges due to COVID-19, our small churches have witnessed “bright spots” this past year that can only be attributed to God’s faithfulness! In this article, we share the journey of four of our small churches — Prescott, AZ; Wichita, KS; Kitchener, ON; and Lamar, MO — that are working to bolster their congregations through sharing the gospel in their communities. They encourage brethren nationally to prayerfully seek God’s will to join them in these endeavors. Below, each church shares stories of how God’s message of salvation continued in their churches and communities despite the obstacles of COVID-19.

**Prescott**
In Prescott, three new people from the community started attending church services after witnessing the Godly example of a new family who recently moved to the area. The father was working outside with his kids. A neighbor observed and was quite impressed with a family who was “doing things together.” After they talked a while, the topic of church came up, and the Apostolic Christian Church was mentioned. The couple checked out our beliefs and doctrine on the Internet and began coming almost immediately AND, they brought another friend with them. Additionally, in this same family, their oldest daughter reached out and invited a high school friend who had never been to church in her life.

Over the past few years, two families have moved to the Prescott area and have been a "bright spot" as they became involved in church roles including Sunday school teachers and church trustee. Now, however, one of the couples feels called to move back to their home congregation.

Additionally, COVID-19 was definitely stressful on everyone and had a major influence on church growth this past year. Several of the older members either moved or became residents of a local senior complex with restricted access to come to church. The congregation is thankful, however, that they have now resumed normal in-person Sunday services with lunch. They are also enjoying hosting visitors from various churches, which they dearly appreciate.

**Wichita**
Wichita is the newest congregation that began bolstering efforts in late 2020. A nine person Bolstering Committee was formed consisting of brothers and sisters from Wichita and the neighboring churches of Lamont and Kiowa, KS and from HarvestCall’s Bolstering Committee. The Committee has been meeting “virtually” for several months. To date, Ministering Bro. Bruce Frank (Cissna Park, IL) has led a bolstering training presentation, and the congregation has discussed both its current needs and the needs of the church community.
Despite the challenges of COVID-19 hindering in-person worship services over the past several months, the church is now open and holding one service. The Bolstering Committee looks forward to meeting with the Wichita congregation in the next couple of months as services continue to resume to more normal and COVID-19 restrictions allow.

**Kitchener**

In Kitchener, the brethren have experienced blessings and challenges through this time as well. In the early part of 2020, they primarily met through Zoom capabilities. A “bright spot” occurred as they found that various people from the community have also been listening in to the services. Under normal circumstances, this may not have happened, and the congregation has had a front row seat in witnessing God’s power during difficult situations. The brothers and sisters have enjoyed listening to various visiting ministers through Zoom. Due to the size of their congregation in relation to their building, they have been able to all meet together for much of 2020. The exception was for the month of January and February in 2021 when government restrictions placed a gathering limit of 10 or fewer in the building. At this writing, the border remains closed to travel between the US and Canada, and the congregation would appreciate your prayers that they could resume in-person fellowship with their brethren in the US.

**Lamar**

The Lamar congregation is very thankful for the “bright spot” of integrating two new couples into their church family—one relocating from Bern, KS and the other couple from Ft. Scott, KS. This has allowed for the restructuring of duties to reduce the load on some of the more seasoned brethren over the past few months.

Like Prescott, Wichita and Kitchener, the COVID-19 situation also caused challenges for Lamar. Through Zoom technology, however, the church was able to join the Lamont, KS congregation for virtual mid-week services. This was a great blessing for both churches as they spent time in singing, ministry under the Word and fellowship after the services. They are thankful to report that at this writing, normal in person services have resumed. And, they are looking forward to minister rotations beginning again.

**The Call to Go**

All of these small churches invite you to prayerfully consider exploring their community and congregation as an option for your future. If you feel God’s direction to move forward, talk with your elder, and then contact Sis. Amber Miller at HarvestCall to find out more specific information. For those who have prayerfully considered relocation in the past to support a small church, the Bolstering Committee thanks you for searching and seeking God’s will and direction for your life.
Apostolic Christian
LifePoints
www.aclifepoints.org
@aclifepoints on Facebook or Instagram
Ashlyn Gramm-Mission
Communication Coordinator

As we have been preparing to celebrate LifePoints’ 50th anniversary this year, we have been going through our history and noting important dates. On October 1, 1971, the home opened under the name Apostolic Christian Home for the Handicapped, and the first two residents moved in. In May 1978, the south end of our largest facility, Timber Ridge, was added in order to serve more individuals in the church and in the community. Oakwood Estate opened in 1988 as our first sixteen-bed home, and Linden Estate followed in 1994. It was also in 1994 when LifePoints’ first Administrator, Bro. Robert Knobloch, retired and was succeeded by Bro. Ron Messner. We began to open smaller homes within the town of Morton as a part of the CILA program (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) in 1990.

Most of these important dates in our history are full of excitement, change, and growth. March 15, 2020, was not an exciting day in our history, but it was one which brought about more change than we could have imagined. It was the day in which we closed our doors to visitors at all of our facilities due to COVID-19. Home visits were canceled. Outings and traveling to day program facilities were postponed indefinitely. Family conversations had to be conducted over the phone, socially distant outside, or through video calls. The Gospel Sing became an entirely virtual event. Testing, wearing masks, and temperature check-ins became the norm for staff. It felt like everything had changed.

But as we have written about before, throughout this past year, we have been incredibly blessed. Staff have worked tirelessly to keep residents healthy and with spirits lifted. We have experienced many cases of COVID-19 among residents and staff, but there has been recovery and healing. Our church family and community have been incredibly supportive through it all. We also have another celebratory date to add to our history. On April 2, 2021, just over one year since we closed our doors to visitors, all LifePoints residents will able to resume visits to their family homes. We are still needing to exercise caution and follow COVID-19 protocols, but we are rejoicing with all of the sweet reunions that are to come.

Throughout LifePoints’ fifty years of history, our mission has remained the same. Wording and phrasing may have changed, but our heart for “Serving according to God’s purpose” has remained steadfast in all that we do here at LifePoints. May he continue to be glorified in each and every date we record as a part of our LifePoints history.

Gateway Woods Apostolic Christian Children’s Home
Hope Fischer — 2020 GW Farms Summer Assistant

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." 2 Cor. 1:3-5

I was extremely privileged to hold the Gateway Farms summer assistant position last summer. It is a truly unique position among the jobs at Gateway Woods. As part of a vocational program, you’re working alongside the residents, much like a co-worker position. You aren’t their houseparent, their employer, their teacher, a fellow resident, or a volunteer. You have a slight authority over
them, but in a way that’s different than the other employees at Gateway. The relationships I found myself building was not peer-to-peer or boss/employee, but rather one of mentorship and camaraderie. Working right alongside them and experiencing the same things. Getting caught in the rain, forgetting sunscreen, transplanting pepper plants in sync to music, creating inside jokes, and swimming in the creek after a hard day’s work were some of my favorite bonding moments we shared.

I quickly realized that my position was not to tell them what to do, keep them on track with their treatment plan, or be their counselor. My place in their lives was simply to make their journeys a little easier, to lend an unbiased ear, helping them feel a little less alone and a little more understood. Working every day with the farmers and spending evenings with them and the volunteers opened up a relationship that held countless and consistent opportunities. Early on, it became a daily prayer of mine that I would see the opportunities as they came, and redeem the short, short time that was available to me.

One-on-one time with the farmers was my favorite. Sometimes that was a whole morning spent picking strawberries, or a half an hour planting flowers, or a short walk to the workshop to grab the shovel we forgot. As much or as little time we had in those moments, it was all an opportunity to further the relationship.

I was so humbled to realize that God had long been equipping me to be a place of kindness and comfort to these teenagers. The compassion and grace that was shown to me as I was growing up by my teachers, family, friends, and most of all God, wasn’t wasted. It was the God of all comfort, whom I had been growing in love with for many years, that gave me the tools to comfort the kids I had the privilege to work with all summer. Those tools being: the comfort he himself extended to me, and the kindness that has long been modeled to me.

We are not meant to keep God’s blessings to ourselves, but pour them out onto others, and plant seeds (in my case, figurative and literal), hoping and praying they fall on fertile soil and someone waters it further down the road, all the while trusting that God is giving the increase. I’m supremely thankful that working at Gateway Farms the summer of 2020 provided me with that unspeakable gift.

**News:**
- If you want to make a Kingdom impact by sowing seeds of hope for an eternal harvest, visit gatewaywoods.org/sowers-of-hope to learn more about our newly launched monthly giving program. Sign up today to receive a special gift as a reminder to be praying for the youth you are impacting.
- We are currently looking for an Assistant Houseparent. 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 2021. 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. This is a great opportunity to gain some experience while impacting our residents!
- We are looking for our GW Farms Summer Intern. This is a great opportunity to work directly with residents as you plant and harvest bountiful gifts from the garden. Please contact Bro. Eric 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 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

Lisa Aschliman, Kristy Moore

“But the Lord’s plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken.” Psa. 33:11

We were thankful to have the Memorandum read to us and are humbled by the love the elder body has for the church and the care they show in guiding us through difficult times. We put our trust in God and lean not on our own understanding.

The weekend of March 6, we were given Communion by Elder Bro. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy, Gridley, IL) and Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Peach Tree City, GA). After the Communion service we voted for minister for our church and on Sunday it was announced that we would be putting in two ministers! Bro. Matthew Moore (Sis. Kristy) and Bro. Nathan Robbins (Sis. Brenda). We are so thrilled to have these new ministers and we just pray for God’s grace and mercy to go with them.

Plans are in the works for the Athens, Alabama congregation to host ALive 2021 over the Memorial Day weekend, May 29–31! Should circumstances arise that would require cancellation, a decision will be made by April 15. Registration is ongoing, so mark your calendars because our limit is 200 people. Please see the website at www.ALiveAlabama.com for more information.

We ask for continued prayers for Sis. Carolyn Lewis and Sis. Clarann Lynn as they endure their battles with cancer.

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 3:18

If you are passing through our area and need a place to stay for the evening, please call Sis. Rebekah Klaus at 815.674.5411 for our guest house accommodations.

Arizona, Phoenix

Marge Lindenbaum

“All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.” Matt. 21:4-5

Prior to the celebration Resurrection Day, it is a good exercise to walk with Jesus through his final week as a mortal. The beginning passages are Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12. I like to spend each day reading and imagining myself with him as he prepared his followers for their new normal. Set aside plenty of time, there is much to read and consider. It seems the group’s “base camp” is at Bethany. Other places they frequent are the Mount of Olives and the temple. Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday is clearly a disruption to a city that is bustling with travelers and preparation for Passover. Jesus is worshiped and exalted as the savior by the people. After this, he goes to the Mount of Olives and weeps over Jerusalem. He makes his way to the temple and addresses the injustice and greed that is rampant there. Then he spends the rest of the day healing everyone who came to him. He returns to Bethany for the night. On Monday, he returns to Jerusalem, curses the fig tree for having no fruit, and returns to the temple. He responds to attacks from the leadership and spends the day teaching – emphasizing the prophecies he was fulfilling before their eyes. They did not believe, only grew in their hatred of him. On Tuesday, the disciples are surprised the cursed fig tree is withered. They return to the temple and may have taken a tour – at least they admire it and speak about it. Jesus predicts the complete destruction of the temple. He speaks of end times in the Olivet Discourse on the return trip to Bethany. The
Sanhedrin were furious with Jesus and conspired with Judas to kill him. Throughout this week, over and over, Jesus spoke to them from the scriptures, proving he fulfilled them and demonstrating the Truth of his Deity. If you have a reference Bible, look at the OT references as you read his teachings. It was not the message they were seeking. On Wednesday, preparation for the group’s celebration of Passover begins, the upper room is made ready and when the Feast day begins at sundown, the Lord institutes the Last Supper (Passover feast without a lamb?). The group retires to the Garden where they sing and have a prayer together. Then Jesus removes himself to pray and angels minister to him. Judas betrays him with a kiss and he is arrested. His trials last through the night; first before the chief priests, then the full Sanhedrin, then he is taken before Pilate, then Herod, then back to Pilate. Jesus is crucified on Thursday morning, Passover, at 9:00 am. At noon, all sorts of strange things start to occur, and at 3:00 pm he gives up the ghost, at the time most of Jerusalem is preparing their lambs for the evening feast meal. My understanding is the day following Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:4-6), and in this year those days fell on our Thursday and Friday. The day following that was Saturday, the Jews’ regular Sabbath. So, Jesus’ body was placed in the tomb on Thursday afternoon, and lay in the grave through the rest of the day Thursday, and Friday and Saturday on our calendar (three nights and three days). On Sunday, God the Father raised him from the dead, fulfilling the plan that was laid from the foundation of the world. Death is defeated! The grave is overcome! He is risen! Hallelujah!

“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.” Luke 24:44

Several visiting ministers blessed us in sharing the Word this past month. These included Bro. Jim Meiss (Sis. Candy, Austin/Bastrop, TX), Elder Bro. Doug Shock, (Sis. Clara, Bloomfield, IA), Elder Bro. Ted Steffen (Sis. Sandra, Alto, MI) and Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Sis. Dixie, Gridley, IL). We mourn with Bro. Phil Stoller in the passing of his mother. Bro. Daniel Knochel was able to return to church and is making remarkable progress in his healing. We praise the Lord and thank him and all the prayer warriors who have been lifting him and his loved ones up to the throne. Our God is able! We are happy to continue to welcome more visitors as things continue to open up in our state and we look forward to continuing to move toward our customary worship process. May we all experience the marvelous redemptive power of the Resurrection, on Easter and all year long.

Arizona, Prescott
Autumn Rokey

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” Rev. 1:8

With the passage of time, new seasons, new years, and new stages in life we can be so thankful for our God who was, is, and will always be there for us.

Thankful for visiting minister Bro. Andrew Klump (Sis. Rachel, Bradford IL).

Arizona, Tucson
Dean and Jackie Knobloch

Once again, we are gathering in person for Sunday services. I have often heard the phrase “there’s light at the end of the tunnel.” I do believe our eyes should be on the true light, Jesus Christ.

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” John 8:12

We were blessed to have Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) visit our congregation and preach the Holy Word. We are thankful for all our visitors who have joined us this winter.

California, Los Angeles/Altadena
Kali Sauder

We were able to gather on the hillside, lifting our eyes to the Author and Finisher of our faith, and the faith of our Sis. Adela Chavez. Alongside
the family, we lifted our voices singing Amazing Grace. “When we’ve been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun, we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise, than when we first begun.” Amazing Grace, Tabernacle Hymns #313

What comfort to imagine her, “bright shining as the sun”, singing his praise! “Amazing grace! how sweet the sound, that sav’d a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.”

The words of this timeless hymn have always declared such a beautiful testimony of Christ’s salvation.

Now, we rejoice with our Bro. Jacob Klotzle as he follows the Lord’s leading and steps into an opportunity to share that testimony through a full time position at Hume Lake Christian Camp several hours north. While we miss his enthusiasm in our weekly fellowship, we praise God for this calling and “an open door...to speak the mystery of Christ.” Col. 4:3.

Jacob, we support you in prayer!

We continue meeting in a hybrid format, some online and some gathering in person in the church parking lot. God has been faithful over the past year since our regular way of worship and fellowship was disrupted, and we give him all the glory for the ways we have continued to grow and support each other as the body of Christ. Things may not be as we would choose them, but the truth is that the Spirit is not bound by the details of how we worship. Instead, we continue to worship the Father in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23), in him there is no shadow due to change.

California, San Diego
Sarah Fulop

After one of the driest Februaries in San Diego’s history, rainstorms have turned the hills and valleys green. Spring is in the air! It’s a fresh breath of air after a difficult year in our church and country.

March 14 was a bittersweet day. Sharing a birthday with her grandfather Bro. Dennis Fulop, my niece turned one. One year-ago we had little warning of two loses in our church family, Sis. Lizzie Gasser (Smithville, OH, my sister and daughter to Bro. Dennis and Sis. Joy Fulop) and Jason Michal (Justin Michal’s father), and the long COVID-19 pandemic that will forever shape our world.

March marks one year of walking through grief and shifting expectations of the future we thought we would have. Through it all, we learned about God’s unfailing love and the incredible power of the body of Christ. Words cannot express our gratitude at the thousands of prayers uttered on behalf of our family and church. While we may never understand why, we rest assured that:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Rom. 8:28.

Weeping comes in the night, but joy comes in the morning. We rejoice in the work God has been doing in the lives of Brandon Petrovic (Bro. Phillip and Sis. Tasha Petrovic) and Andrew Grimm (Bro. Mike and Amber Grimm) and look forward to a public baptism of faith later this year.

As county restrictions are softening, we are also thankful for the ability to resume services inside church. While we are still only holding one morning service on Sundays, it is such a joy to hear the sanctuary echoing with sounds of worship. We pray for grace and patience with county guidelines while transitioning back to normal services.

Our prayers are with Justin Michal in his three-month work rotation in Jordan. While we miss him in our fellowship, we trust God is protecting him and using him for his good in this season.

We wish you all a spirit driven month. May we all cling to our Father in our daily toil and remember:

"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. 6:9

Colorado, Denver
Jenna Hartter, Rebekah Stoller

“This is the wish from all my heart For you, my loving comrades; In our alliance may the Lord Be felt in blessed nearness. The power of His cross and blood Unites us in true brotherhood.” Heart’s Wish, Hymns of Zion, #173
The theme for our Sunday school this past month was unity, prompting good reflection for students and learners of all ages. We are so thankful for the love of Christ that draws us together and is the reason for the wonderful fellowship we enjoy as a body.

We are also thankful to hear that Bro. Nathan and Sis Mary Hoffman have decided to stay and worship with us in Denver for another year. We are blessed by their family’s participation in our fellowship and welcome them to make Denver home for as long as God wills.

Connecticut, Rockville
Heidi Beutel, Kim Schneider

We rejoice with Bro. Rob Bahler (Bro. Tom and Sis. LaNae) and Sis. Leah Steiner (Morris, MN., Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill) as they joined hands and hearts. We wish them many blessings together, with the Lord as their guide.

Our prayers are with Ken Boynton (Sis. Jan) as he recovers from a recent surgery.

Teagan Carlson (Bro. Ben and Sis. Christie) is now home from the hospital. Our thoughts and prayers are continually with her family as they navigate the days ahead.

District of Columbia, Washington
Henrietta Meyer

We are getting our first taste of spring weather this week. By the time you read this the cherry blossoms will be past their peek and we will be looking at the second round of spring flowers.

This month our visiting (virtual) ministers were Bro. Joe Sprunger (Indianapolis, IN) and Elder Bro. John Wiegand (Silverton, OR).

At our annual business meeting, Bro. Barry Steffen became chairman of the Trustees and Sis. Henrietta Meyer was reelected to the Trustees. It was also decided we will move ahead with looking for a location to meet in person for services twice a month beginning mid-to-late summer.

While we have yet to meet in person, we want to welcome Abhijeet Baghel and Sis. Ellie Stoller to our congregation. Abi has moved here from Bloomington, IL by way of northern California. Sis. Ellie is from Alto, MI, here for an internship.

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, to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services and to find out if, when and where services are to be held.

Florida, Fort Lauderdale
Renee Mangold

We were grateful to have several visiting ministers this past month. Visiting were Bro. Matt Oesch (Sis. Shelli, Alto, MI); Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN); Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL) and Bro. Paul Zimmerman (Sis. Loretta, Forrest, IL). We pray for a blessing on these families for their service.

Sis. Bonnie Troxel’s mom, Ruth Getzen, has recently moved to the Ft. Lauderdale area. We are delighted to have her worship with us. Welcome!

Ft. Lauderdale sermons are now on AC Central. Our thanks to those that worked on getting this in place.

Ft. Lauderdale church, with guidance from ACCFS, has gone through a church assessment process. Bro. Arlan and Sis. Katie Miller, as part of ACCFS, were incredibly helpful and instrumental in facilitating and guiding us through the process.

The survey results were helpful in providing insight, clarity, and guidance. The consensus was that the results were positive, the church is generally healthy, well appreciated, and valued, with a desire to see it grow. There is a priority on immediate actions that can be addressed with current resources. Other initiatives will also be clarified and started as we have the capacity and God’s direction.

A common theme at this time is that church growth, from both within and outside the AC church, is better fitted through direct personal relationships than starting new programs. A desire to be more intentional, supportive, and accountable regarding church growth was also expressed. We are deeply humbled and extremely grateful to God for the Holy Spirit’s leading and for his grace and tender mercy.

Note of Thanks:
My thanks to those that have reached out to me and prayed for
me as I heal from surgery to fix a broken foot. I miss gathering with all of you and hope to see you again once I’m able.

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” 1 John 3:14

Sis. Renee Mangold

Florida, Fort Myers
Addison Steidinger, Carrie Steidinger

“Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Tim. 2:1

“Christ has grace without measure in himself, but he hath not retained if for himself. Grace, whether its work be to pardon, to cleanse, to preserve, to strengthen, to enlighten, to quicken, or to restore, is ever to be had from him freely and without price; nor is there one form of the work of grace which he has not bestowed upon his people. Let us make daily use of our riches, and ever repair to him as to our own Lord in covenant, taking from him the supply of all we need with as much boldness as men take money from their own purse.” Spurgeon, Morning and Evening

On the evening of February 27, we enjoyed a night of worship at church as Kindred Spirit sang for us. It was a blessing to our church family as they shared their God-given talents.

Many thanks to Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) and Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy, Tremont, IL) for leading us in worship this month.

Florida, Sarasota
Sandra Kaeb

We are thankful that Bro. Glenn Ott (Sis. Mardell) has been able to come home from the hospital after his lung transplant. Our prayers are continuing for him and his dear wife for a full recovery.

We are saddened to hear the passing of Bro. Eugene Bachman (Sis. Kathryn, Rittman OH). They have spent many winters in Sarasota and he will be dearly missed. Our prayers are with Sis. Kathryn and the family.

Elder Bro. Jeff Streitmatter shared the testimonies of Bro. Eugene and Sis. Helen Gal, and now they are members of the Sarasota church. Praying they will continue to feel our love for them.

Prayers were with our elder brothers as they gathered at the Fellowship Hall in Goodfield, IL for the Midwinter Elder Conference. Plus, an extra blessing on the Congerville church for hosting it.

Haiti, Bonne Fin - Hospital Lumiere
Rick and Komari Aberle

May the blessings and peace of our Lord Jesus be with you! God continues to see to the needs of the mission at Bonne Fin. Please continue in prayer for us as we move forward in seeking God’s direction for the future of the mission.

In March, we bade farewell to Sis. Carrie Stoller as she ended her service here at Bonne Fin. Sis. Carrie began her service in 2017 and served faithfully as Director of Nursing here. Please be prayerful for Sis. Carrie as she re-integrates into life in the US and as part of the Latty, OH, congregation. May God’s grace and blessings be with her!

The country of Haiti continues to be challenged by political unrest, especially in Port-au-Prince. However, despite this and restrictions of travel with COVID-19, we’ve been able to travel ourselves and also receive some visitors. Bro. Rick Aberle was able to travel to Florida for a few days and spend time with his wife, Sis. Komari. The Bertsch family received a welcome visit from their parents, Bro. Brent and Sis. Marge Hodel (Roanoke, IL).

We are so thankful that Bro. Brett and Sis. Laura Herrmann and their family, Bryce, Joni, Char and Weston, were able to return to Bonne Fin for a visit for over two weeks in February. They were joined by their parents, Bro. Marvin and Sis. Lavonne Herrmann (Princeville, IL) for a part of their visit. It was again, with sadness, that we said farewell to dear members of our team.

Bro. Brandon and Sis. Katelyn Kaehr (Bluffton, IN), here on a short-term assignment, left for a couple weeks in the US and plan to return in late March to resume their support of the mission. March also brought us a visiting surgical resident, Sis. Christy Stoller. She will be spending a week with us working with our staff surgeons in serving patients in the hospital.

What a blessing it always is to gather together in worship! In late
February, we were able to gather at Good Vision Farm in Torbeck for church service. Bro. Art Mueller, (Belvidere, IL) shared the Word with us.

**Haiti, Les Cayes**

**Mike and Susie Walder**

We are thankful for all the recent visitors who braved new COVID-19 testing requirements coming and going. The many programs in Haiti are certainly blessed by your faithful support and prayers.

The Good Vision dairy farm welcomed their board members, as well as a fence-building and electrical team this past month. The visitors included Bro. Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL) and Bro. Les Kaeb (Francesville, IN) who shared from the Word one Sunday afternoon. A nice-sized group enjoyed a noon meal together, followed by a time of singing and worship on the upstairs porch overlooking the countryside.

The missionaries at the dairy farm were also very thankful for God’s provision as they welcomed new additions to the farm…a shipment of cattle from Ohio. Their safe arrival after flying and traveling across country on two cattle trucks was certainly a wonderful answer to a lot of planning and prayers.

Another Apostolic Water Aid (AWA) team has just arrived and their assistance will be a blessing to the Haitian workers here. Thanks for all your work.

We are especially grateful for God’s mercies as we welcomed Sis. Deanna Beyer back to church. She is healing after her recent sickness. Please continue to pray for her. We are also thankful to have Bro. Sam and Sis. Betty Bachtold back home as they spent the winter farther south.

We rejoice with Bro. Karl and Mitzi Braun as they welcome a new grandchild! Wyatt Eugene was born to Jamie and Alyssa La Haie.

**Illinois, Belvidere**

**Darcy Steffen**

Years ago, a co-worker of mine gave me some snowdrops to plant that she had brought over with her from Bulgaria. They have since multiplied and can be seen popping up this time of year in my English garden. What I love most about these delicate white flowers, aside from their loveliness and delightful grape-like scent, is the fact that these tiny plants will push through even the snows of March. They are not afraid of a little cold and ice, and they persevere because they know warmer, brighter days are coming. They give me an immense amount of hope every time I see them. It is a vivid reminder that the snows and cold of life will not last forever, and that life-giving warmth is ahead.

Our local body was very thankful to finally be able to participate in Holy Communion after multiple cancellations. We thank our Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN) for sharing that with us. It was a very special time for us, as we went through a line and verbally greeted one another, expressing our love and thankfulness for each other in the roles we all play within the church.

We are especially grateful for God’s mercies as we welcomed Sis. Deanna Beyer back to church. She is healing after her recent sickness. Please continue to pray for her. We are also thankful to have Bro. Sam and Sis. Betty Bachtold back home as they spent the winter farther south.

We rejoice with Bro. Karl and Mitzi Braun as they welcome a new grandchild! Wyatt Eugene was born to Jamie and Alyssa La Haie.

**Illinois, Bloomington**

**Kinsey Dotterer, Lauren Zimmerman**

We celebrate in joy with Bro. Shane and Sis. Megan Martin at the birth of their son Spencer Jude. He was welcomed home by older brothers Preston, Ezra,
and Cooper. Grandparents are Bro. Alan and Sis. Janice Martin (Princeville, IL), Jack and Christy Pardo (Grand Rapids, MI), and Laura Pardo (Holland, MI).

We mourn with Bro. Adam Maurer upon the death of his wife Sis. Margaret. Our prayers are with him during this time of loss.

As a church body we are diving into the book of Acts for our second service on Sundays. We have found it to be a great blessing thus far!

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

Illinois, Bradford
Becky Endress, Lena Stoller

As our reopening continues, we have been enjoying some group projects. One beautiful snowy Sunday afternoon, Bro. Steve and Sis. Betsy Endress hosted a sledding party and taffy pull for Sunday school students in grades 3-12. In February, the pre-K and kindergarten children enjoyed a valentine party planned by their teachers Sis. Elise Joos and Sis. Donna Nenadov. On a Friday evening, all ages gathered for HarvestCall Family Night to prepare Easter dinner baskets for local families, decorate Easter gift bags for nursing home residents, fill weekend meal bags for a local school, and tie comforters for eastern Europe. Thanks to our committee (Bro. Loren and Sis. Lena Stoller, Bro. Wendell Stahl and sons, Sis. Roseann Stahl and Sis. Rosalie Wiegand) for organizing and directing these activities. On a recent Saturday, brothers and sisters gathered for our annual church housecleaning. It always feels so good to see a sparkling clean church house afterward! Again, our trustees, cleaning ladies, and kitchen committee were at work facilitating this.

We are thankful to report a new convert. Kaitlyn Nenadov, (Bro. Philip and Sis. Donna Nenadov), has recently begun her repentance.

“The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” Psa. 34:18

We offer best wishes to Mikaela Endress, (Bro. Bill and Sis. Renee Endress), who recently announced her engagement to Jonathan Roth, (Doug and Mikala Roth, Fort Wayne, IN). They are planning an October wedding.

Sis. Bonnie Kieser was hospitalized for surgery. She is thankful and blessed to be back home at Skylines and recovering well.

Illinois, Champaign
Brent Young

"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Psa. 127:3

We rejoice with Bro. Calvin and Sis. Bethany Teubel upon the arrival of Oakley Clark, little sister to Piper, Oscar, Penny, and Lilyana.

We are grateful to Bro. Kaleb Beyer (Sis. Angela, Washington, IL) and our Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL) for visiting and sharing Sunday morning messages.

We have recently added a second service back into our Sunday schedule. Our pulpit times are now 9:30 a.m. (along with Sunday school) and 11:00 a.m., with both services available on Youtube and AC Central.

Illinois, Chicago
Diana Eisenmann

In March we resumed two in-person Sunday services with a modified schedule. We are very thankful for each step forward and for additional time for worship and fellowship with our church family. Many other activities continue to be held online for now. In the past month we’ve enjoyed an online Bible study, Women of the Word event, and our twice-monthly Guiding Principles discussions.

We rejoice with Diana Halfer on the birth of her first grandchild! Luke Christopher was born on March 3 to Chris and Deanna Halfer. We wish them much joy and God’s blessings on their family.

Sis. Bernice Knapp (Congerville, IL) passed away in early March. She was the grandmother of Sis. Michelle Kaisner (Bro. Rick). We pray for peace and comfort during their time of mourning.

Illinois, Cissna Park
Denise Kaeb, Lou Ann Kaeb

Bro. Bruce Frank had our second topical Bible presentation of the winter. His talk was on the life of Elijah. Thanks, Bro. Bruce
for the time you took to prepare the message.

We rejoice with Bro. Max and Sis. Beth Kaeb of our congregation and Ruth Duarte (Magdalena, MX) in the birth of their granddaughter, Paisley Ruth Kaeb. We pray for grace and wisdom for Jared and Betza as they raise their sweet daughter!

One thing we have missed very much during the past year, as we were encouraged not to travel, is the blessing of visiting ministers. We were very thankful this past month to have several assemble with us. Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) shared the Word with us March 7. The next weekend Elder Bro. Trent Meiss (Sis. Luci, Eureka, IL) shared the Memorandum with our Elder Bro. Tom Stock on Saturday evening and Communion Exhortation on Sunday. On Sunday, Bro. Dana Neiman (Sis. Lea, Remington, IN) also spent the day with us. We thank these brothers for serving us and ask for God to bless them.

After listening to an online singing this past weekend, one song just filled my heart with praise.

“My life’s best delight and pleasure,
Is yon heaven, God’s own throne!
And my greatest prize and treasure,
Is my Saviour, God’s own Son.
All that fills my heart with joy,
Waits in glory there on high.”

The Greatest Joy, Hymns of Zion, #78

May we go forward with joy and praise in our hearts, keeping our focus on Heaven and not this earth.

Illinois, Congerville
Mary Knapp, Krista Wieland

On March 4, our Sis. Bernice “Bernie” Knapp passed from this life into eternity. Her dear husband, Bro. Willis “Bake” preceded her in death last August, and we can only imagine their joyful reunion, never again to be separated. Even as we rejoice for her sake, we mourn with her family, as we will all miss her stable presence and gentle smile.

It was our congregation’s privilege to host the Midwinter Elder Conference this month. Although things were slightly different than normal, we trust that all who attended and served will be blessed. We continue to hold our dear Shepherd brothers up in prayer, that they can continue to sound the warnings in this dark world.

Bro. Gerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Mediapolis, IA) recently spent a Sunday with us, and we are thankful for his labor on our behalf.

We rejoice with our convert Joseph Anderson (Jon and Cyndee) as he has professed peace with God and man, and is looking forward to baptism, Lord willing, in May. As we watch the world begin to burst with new life, how thankful our hearts should be at the opportunity we have to also ‘become new’ in Christ. Even if our conversion happened many years ago, let us never lose the awe in this miracle of regeneration through our Lord’s sacrifice.

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

Illinois, Elgin
Amy Gasser

On February 27-28, we gathered to hear the testimony and witness the baptism of Alyssa Moser (Elder Bro. Dan and Sis. Anne). Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Sis. Deb, Peoria, IL) came to assist Bro. Dan. Bro. Nathan Walder (Sis. Denise, Cissna Park, IL), also visited that weekend, and we thank these brothers for their services.

We also want to thank Bro. Fred Witzig (Washington, IL), who conducted an all-church topical presentation on Wednesday evening, March 3, entitled “Jesus in the Book of Revelation.”

We extend sympathy to Kenda Martin (Tony) in the passing of her mother, Pat Pfaffinger (Marengo, IL) on February 19, and to the family of Bro. Bob Weiss (Eleanor), who passed away on February 27. His visitation and funeral were held on March 6. Surviving are his wife, his daughters, Sis. Beth Moore (Bro. Larry) and Sis. Gail Wonneberg, and other family members. May God comfort these families during this time of loss.

We were thankful to hear of the wedding engagement of Bro. David Kellenberger (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Debbie) to Sis. Alissa Wiegand (Bro. Don and Sis. Jane, Eureka, IL). We wish them God’s blessings as they plan for a June 6 wedding.

It is a blessing to return to having two regular services on Sundays with a packaged lunch and time of fellowship between services. It is another step toward getting back to “normal”!
**Note of Thanks:**

The family of Bro. Robert Weiss wishes to thank you for the beautiful cards, prayers, and sympathy extended to us at his passing. It brings strength and comfort during this sad time.

**Illinois, Eureka**  
**Debra Blunier, Lavonne Schumacher**  

Spring is so welcome, and this year it seems especially so, as we gradually return to more “normal” ways of life. Singing in church without recorded singing and sharing noon church lunch, though with modifications to keep us all safer, have been deeply appreciated. Our dear ones at the Eureka Home have a bit more freedom, are able to leave their rooms for meals and a little fellowship, and even cautiously to have a visitor or to go out to be with family. This makes our hearts glad as well. Best of all, some have been able to come to church during our early service, and this means so much after an entire year of only listening. We are so joyful to see them again!

We appreciated the Communion Exhortation shared with us by our Elder Bro. Trent Meiss. We give thanks as we look forward to celebrating Communion March 27, Lord willing. Also Lord willing, our Easter Program is planned for March 24, and the children are busy practicing their songs and memory verses.

Our hearts go out to the family of Sis. Lois Stoller (Bro. Lyle, dec.). She passed away February 25, and we will miss her steady example and encouraging faith. She was the sister of Sis. Friedora Wiegand (Dale).

Sis. Arletta Martin (Bro. Louie, dec.), Bro. Chad Zimmerman (Sis. Angie), and Sis. Friedora Wiegand (Dale) were recently hospitalized but are back home recovering. Bro. Brent Cottrell (Sis. Darla) and Sis. Ashley Knecht (Bro. David) had medical emergencies also, and we are very thankful they are also back home and feeling better. Others in our church family had vehicle accidents, but escaped serious injury; we are reminded that life is so fragile, and that God is always watching over us.

March 7 was an especially joyful Sunday, as we had two wedding announcements. Sis. Alissa Wiegand and Bro. David Kellenberger (Elgin, IL), have faith that God has led them together. Her parents are Bro. Don and Sis. Jane Wiegand, while his are Bro. Chuck and Sis. Debbie Kellenberger. Also being led of God to walk life together are Sis. Malea Cottrell and Bro. Carson Zollinger (Silverton, OR). Her parents are Bro. Brent and Sis. Darla Cottrell, and his are Bro. Jim and Sis. Tresa Zollinger. We wish both couples God’s blessings as they follow his leading.

Also, we thank Bro. Jim Zollinger for ministering to us. We appreciate visiting ministers very much, as well as each of our Eureka ministers, and uphold them in prayer.

The Eureka Home Benefit Drive-Through Brunch and Silent Auction was a great success on March 6, raising even more than last year’s benefit. Many thanks go to all who worked hard to make it flow so well, and thanks to all who attended and contributed. Our greatest thanks to God who makes all our giving and sharing possible!

**Note of Thanks:**

I want to thank all who sent cards, phone calls, and gifts for my 90th birthday. It was greatly appreciated! May God bless you!  
Sis. Helen Knecht

**Illinois, Fairbury**  
**Kati Meiss, Trish Steidinger**  

We are so very thankful to see some normalcy come back to our Sundays and Wednesday evenings in church! Our heavenly Father is so good in blessing us and reminding us of his faithfulness!

We were so blessed to experience a weekend of testimonies and baptisms in February! We welcomed Sis. Stella Moser (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara), Sis. Mya Roth (Bro. Nick and Sis. Lori), Bro. Ty Welborn (Bro. Nick and Sis. Lori Roth and the late Bro. Chad Welborn) and Bro. Dan Mullen (Sis. Mary Etta) into our family of believers.

We rejoice with Bro. Caleb and Sis. Shea Hartman on the birth of their baby son, Hayden Eli. Grateful grandparents are Bro. Kevin and Sis. Denise Kilgus (Forrest, IL) and Bro. Ryan and Sis. Lori Hartman.

Special thanks go to Bro. Zach Anderson (Sis. Karla,
Congerville, IL), Bro. Todd Sinn (Sis. Janet, Latty, OH), Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Seth Hartter (Sis. Brenda, Burlington, IA), Bro. Jeremy Leman (Sis. Shara, Forrest, IL) and Bro. Dan Walder (Sis. Pam, Cissna Park, IL) for ministering the Word to us over the past month. May the Lord bless each one.

The engagement of Sis. Kelly Waldbeser (Jim and Sis. Renae) to Bro. Colin Klopfenstein (Bro. Leon and Sis. Deb, Latty, OH) was announced. We wish them God’s nearness as they seek to become one in the Lord.

Those undergoing surgery or spending time in the hospital recently are Sis. Juanita Walter (Bro. Jim), Bro. Ray Slagel (Sis. Gladys) and Sis. Darlene Steidinger (Bro. Eldon). We pray for the Lord’s healing on these dear ones.

As spring has recently arrived, the following Bible verses come to mind:

“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come…” Song of Sol. 2:11-12

We, here in the Midwest, rejoice to think of warmer weather, green grass and budding trees, tender flowers and melodic birdsong! God’s creation is so beautiful! He has made all things well!

Illinois, Forrest
Jessica Gerber, Marsha Lanz

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psa. 51:10

With spring on the horizon, we are reminded of the One who can truly make all things new. We rejoiced to witness the baptism of Benton and Erica Kaeb and Elise Dotterer (Bro. Jason and Sis. Lynn). We thank Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO) for his help during that special weekend. We also thank Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO) and Bro. Michael Schneider (Sis. Jodi, Junction, OH) for being willing to share God’s Word with us.

Our prayers are with Bro. Herb Bachtold (Sis. Jan) as he recovers from knee surgery. May God continue to grant healing.

We rejoice with Bro. Tyler and Sis. Ruth Edelman as they welcome little Taya Nicole into their home. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Karl and Sis. Bethany Edelman and Bro. Ryan and Sis. Lori Hartman (Fairbury, IL).

Our love and prayers are extended to the family of Sis. Lillie Ann Moore at her passing. May God surround her family with his loving arms during their time of sorrow.

Illinois, Goodfield
Amy Hinrichsen, Judy Knapp

“The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.” Nah. 1:7

What comforting words as I sit down to write this months article, remembering that it was just one year ago that we began COVID-19! What a year of unknowns we have had! Makes one wonder what normal life will be like or if we will ever see normal again. Thankfully, we can be assured that the Word of God will never change. We have been assembling in a modified format but are hoping to get back to a more normal look for services very soon.

We are thankful to Bro. Mark Wettstein (Sis. Karen, Lamar, MO) for visiting us one Sunday this month and hope they will be able to visit again soon.

Our Bro. Jeff Wiegand (Sis. Janel) shared Communion Exhortation with us on March 7 as we look forward to sharing Communion after Good Friday service. Bro. Jeff was also given support at the recent elder meetings to step into the role of ordained deacon for our congregation. Lord willing, his ordination will be on Sunday, March 21.

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.” Psa. 32:8

Praising God for Joel Rinkenberger, as he is asking Jesus to instruct and guide him in repentance. Joel is the son of Bro. Linc and Sis. Catrina Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN), and the brother of our Sis. Hannah Grimm (Bro. Matt). We wish him God’s richest blessings on this journey. Zach and Amelia Zobrist have also asked to have membership in our Goodfield congregation. Both have gone through a conversion and been baptized so they will be given an opportunity to share their testimony with the church on March 27. Zach is the son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Zobrist (Congerville, IL) and Amelia’s parents are Russ and Carey.
A warm welcome to Zach and Amelia and their children. We rejoice with Sis. Saige Anderson and Sis. Kassidy Post as they gave their testimonies and became our sisters in the Lord on March 14. Sis. Saige is the daughter of Anna Anderson and Sis. Kassidy is the daughter of Bro. Greg and Sis. Missy Post.

“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.” Rev 21:4

Many of our loved ones have been in the hospital or had surgery and we continue to lift them all up in prayer. We don’t always hear about everything, but our prayer is always that God will provide for any who are sick or troubled in any way. Those asking for prayer are Sis. Betty Wiegand who fell and broke her hip and is now at the nursing home recuperating, Bro. Tony Monfre (Sis. Deonne) who is in the hospital, Sis. Marilyn Blunier (Bro. Mel) who had back surgery in Arizona and Mark Friedrich who had a heart attack in Florida, but is doing much better now. Our dear Bro. Martin Rumbold (Sis. Marti) asked for prayer for his dad, Bro. Rol Rumbold (Sis. Carol, Roanoke, IL), who became ill on the way home from Florida. We are happy to report that he is thankful to be home and doing well.

Sis. Mildred Knapp (retired Elder Bro. Wes) has received her reward, as she passed very unexpectedly from this life into eternity. Her funeral was on February 22 and we extend our love and sympathy to Bro. Wes and the children, Sis. DonnaLou Baner (Bro. Steph, Gridley, IL), Shari Eastman (Doug), Chuck Knapp (Jennifer) and their families. Sis. Millie was such a quiet, Godly example and will be missed by all. Bro. Sam Hohulin (Sis. Sandy, dec.) is mourning the loss of his son, Scott from California. Steve and Shawn will also miss their brother as will his two loving daughters. Our love, sympathies and prayers go out to this dear family.

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

A new baby is such a bright spot in our lives. Bro. Tyler and Sis. Jackie Rocke are experiencing this with the birth of their first child, Brixton Pierce, born March 13. The little lad is the first grandchild for Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth Feucht (Washington, IL) and the second grandchild for Bro. Jedd and Sis. Marsha Rocke.

Note of Thanks:

The family of Sis. Mildred Knapp would like to thank everyone for their deeds of kindness, memorials, cards, prayers, and love shared in the sudden passing of our dear wife and mother. May God bless all of you! Bro. Wes Knapp, Bro. Steph and Sis. DonnaLou Baner and family, Doug and Shari Eastman and family, Chuck and Jennifer Knapp and family.

Illinois, Gridley

Perry Klopfenstein

We offer our sympathies to Sis. DonnaLou Baner over the loss of her mother, Sis. Mildred Knapp, (retired Elder Bro. Wes, Goodfield, IL). Our sympathies are extended as well to Sis. Carla Stoller (Bro. Curt) on the loss of her brother, Kevin Knapp (Cave Creek, AZ). We also offer sympathy to Bro. Lyle and Bro. David Wettstein, whose sister, Sis. Lois Stoller, (Eureka, IL) died.

Our sisters had an evening of encouragement on March 8 under the theme of “Bloom Over Gloom,” with the motive of finding joy in life’s disappointment(s).

Nicholas Charron (Brian Charron and Sis. Deanna Peden) was married to Hope Witkowski (Tina Oaks, Gridley, IL) on February 19. We offer our sincere wishes for happiness.

Bro. Clark Stoller gave a Topical Bible Presentation on Wednesday, March 10, on “We Seek To Be Like Jesus.”

Like all communities, we too are dealing with all the nuances and uncertainties of COVID-19. The phrase comes to mind, “This too shall pass.” We can read in 1 Chron. 28:20, “…fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

Illinois, Morton

Annette Tanner

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” Psa. 127:3

February 28, Bro. Kent Levy (Sis. Holly) conducted our Family Recognition Service introducing the four new baby girls born in 2020 to families in our Morton
congregation. We as parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and all in our church family have a responsibility to share God’s love with these little ones, now and in the years ahead.

We extend our sympathy to the family of Sis. Mildred Knapp (retired Elder Bro. Wes, Goodfield, IL) who entered Heaven on February 18. Her surviving siblings in our Morton church are Bro. Ray “Sonny” Frank, Jr (Sis. Shirley, dec.), Sis. Marilyn Clark (Bro. Don) and Dee Taylor (Bro. George).

We thank our elder brothers, who recently met at the Midwinter Elder Conference, for all of the time spent not only at the conference, but for the many months of preparation ahead of meeting in person. We wish them and their families God’s richest blessings for the love and concern they have for all of us as they serve the Lord in a special way.

Our Elder Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Sis. Donna) spoke at our March Family Worship Night on the topic “Jesus Says” - “Thirst No More”. Jesus had a divine appointment with the Samaritan woman at the well, so he could teach her about “living water”. We need to be aware of the divine appointments God sets up for us as we go about our daily life. Many times God puts us in situations where we are at the “right place” at the “right time” even when we think everything is going wrong. May we always be willing and able by God’s grace to share our faith in Jesus Christ with those we come in contact with.

“There’s a fountain free,
’Tis for you and me,
Let us haste, O haste to the brink;
’Tis a fount of love
From the Source above,
And he bids us all freely drink
Theres a living stream
With a crystal gleam,
From the throne of life now it flows;
While the waters roll
Let the weary soul
Hear the call that forth freely goes.
Theres a living well
And its waters swell,
And eternal life they can give,
And we joyful sing,
Ever spring, O spring,
As we haste to drink and to live.
There’s a rock that’s cleft
And no soul is left,
That may not its pure waters share;
’Tis for you and me,
And its stream I see,
Let us hasten joyfully there
To the fountain free?
Will you come?
’Tis for you and me
Thirsty soul
Hear the welcome call,
‘Tis a fountain open for all.”

Free Waters, Gospel Hymns #770

Illinois, Peoria
Bonnie Bach, Crystal Wettstein

“The Lord, He is my shepherd true,
Who leadeth me securely
On pleasant pastures to and fro
With joys and blessings surely.
He leads me to the fount of life
My soul to comfort and revive.”

The Faithful Shepherd, Jesus Christ, Zion’s Harp #116

We have appreciated the blessings of assembling for 2 services again as we gradually move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic. Bro. Brad Bauer (Sis. Sandy, Tucson, AZ) brought us teachings from God’s Word on March 7.

The ministering brothers and their wives provided us with one week of daily devotions, Discerning the Times based on Psalm 23. What a blessing to find encouraging words in our email each day!

Staff of ACCFS presented an informative program, Stewarding Your Sexuality, for our church including all ages from junior high to all adults. We are thankful that there are brothers and sisters who use their talents to help others.

Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jacki) was ordained as deacon on March 14. Elder Bro. Mark Streitmatter (Sis. Sara, Bloomington, IL) and Elder Bro. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy, Roanoke, IL) assisted our Elder Bro. Tim Funk in this work. May God be with Bro. Craig and Sis. Jacki as they assume new responsibilities.

Prayers go forth for those of our congregation who are suffering illness. We have the promise that our Shepherd will not forsake us but be with us to the end!

Illinois, Princeville
Melinda Christ, Cherie White

One year to the very weekend, our congregation started back to normal church service times and a modified cafeteria lunch between services. How precious is the time of fellowship we share over the
lunch hour. We are thankful each week to see a few more return that we haven’t seen for a long time.

“There are friendships
that we cherish,
In our daily walk of life.
Friends with whom we
meet and labor,
In our earthly toil and strife.
Friends among the aged
and youthful,
Friends that live from us apart.
Friends of higher rank and station.
Find a place within my heart.”
Christian Friendship,
Hymns of Zion #91

Our heart is saddened with the passing of Sis. Bernice Knapp, (Congerville, IL) a sister to Sis. Virginia Streitmatter (Bro. Alfred, dec.). May the Lord comfort and provide strength to Sis. Virginia.

“Lo children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” Psa. 127:3

Many grandparents are enjoying another newborn in their families. Winslow Grace was born to Bro. Brice and Sis. Alisha Knapp (Washington, IL) on February 21. Happy grandparents are Bro. Keith and Sis. Lisa Knobloch. Spencer Jude was born on February 24 to Bro. Shane and Sis. Megan Martin (Bloomington, IL). Thankful grandparents are Bro. Alan and Sis. Janice Martin. Collins Lee was born to Mitch and Lindsay Hartzler on February 25. Blessed grandparents are Bro.Alpha and Sis. Vicki Hartzler. Bro. Robert and Sis. Mary Herrmann gave birth to baby Adah Mae on March 4. Robert, Gabriel, Shiloh, Asher, Imri, Malachi welcome their new baby sister to their family circle.

On March 14 we heard the engagement of Bro. Todd Herrmann, (Bro. Dean and Sis. Dawn Herrmann) to Sis. Lydia Pfaffmann, (Bro. Rob and Sis. Lillian Pfaffmann, Washington, IL). May God be with them as they prepare for their union and become one in Christ.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Ray Wagenbach (Sis. Betty) as he has been placed on Hospice care at Apostolic Christian Skylines. May they feel the peace and nearness of our Lord Jesus.

Illinois, Roanoke
Judy Sauder, Barb Schwind

Elder Bro. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy) led our topical Bible study “Deceit and Lies” on February 21. There are many instances in the Bible of people lying and being deceitful. The answer to dealing with lies and deceit is to be like Joseph when dealing with his brothers. He lovingly confronted his brothers with the truth. Bro. Matt Feucht (Sis. Jennifer) presented a Bible study “Are you who you say you are?” on March 7. Bro. Matt encouraged us to live authentic, gospel-centered lives that show our real selves to God and others. “…for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.” Matt. 10:26. We thank these brothers for their convicting and timely messages.

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.” Gen. 2:18

Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan Sauder celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on February 27. We wish them God’s rich blessings on this special milestone and throughout the coming years. Their granddaughter, Sis. Elly Sauder (Bro. Brad and Sis. Jill), was united in marriage to Bro. Colt Rinkenberger (Bro. Linc and Sis. Catrina, Bluffton, IN), on February 28. In conducting the marriage service, Bro. Nate Hodel (Sis. Jamie) compared marriage to a duet. Sis. Elly taught piano lessons to Bro. Nate and Sis. Jamie’s children. Sis. Elly would sometimes play duets with her students. Marriage is like a duet in that each person must first learn his own part. In marriage each partner must first develop their own relationship with the Lord. And like playing a duet, marriage takes active listening and communication so that there is a richer, fuller sound or relationship than when one is playing alone or acting independently. Another similarity in playing a duet and marriage is that they both require practice and continued work to establish and maintain musical harmony and harmony in the relationship. Sis. Elly’s grandfather, retired Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Sis. Kathy), led Bro. Colt and Sis. Elly in taking their vows. May God richly bless this dear young couple as they journey through life together. What a special weekend for this family and for our entire church!

Our yearly church cleaning was held this month. We thank all those who faithfully take care
of the assets that the Lord has 
entrusted to us.

We heartily welcome 
Bro. Josh Moser home from 
Antarctica! We have missed his 
presence in our assembly and pray 
for God’s blessings upon him as 
he spends time with friends and 
family once again.

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

On March 3, our Scripture 
Memory students presented a 
program in song of the Bible verses 
they have learned this year. What 
a blessing for our youth to be 
hiding God’s word in their hearts! 
We thank all those who help with 
this very worthwhile activity.

We want to extend our love 
and deepest sympathy to Sis. Lynn 
Getz (Bro. John) and Sis. Janet 
Leman (Bro. Ben) in the passing 
of their dear mother, Sis. Bernice 
Knapp (Congerville, IL), on 
March 4. May our Lord comfort 
this dear family in their loss.

On March 7, as a service 
project, our Bible Class assisted 
with serving our modified church 
lunch. We thank them for their 
willingness to help our church.

David Bertschi (Bro. Sam and 
Sis. Marjorie), Dexter Hodel (Bro. 
Jonathan and Sis. Megan), and 
Brock Martin (Bro. Chad and Sis. 
Brenda) have all professed peace with 
God and man. They are looking 
forward to sharing their testimonies 
and being baptized on May 1-2, 
Lord willing. We are so thankful for 
the Lord’s redeeming work in the 
hearts of these young men.

Bro. Bob Zimmerman 
celebrated his 90th birthday on 
March 20. We pray for God’s 
blessings on Bro. Bob as he 
reaches this special milestone and 
throughout the coming years.

We want to lift up Bro. Rol 
Rumbold (Sis. Carol), Bro. Les 
Luginbuhl (Sis. Judy), Crystal 
Getz, Sis. Anna Marie Reutter, and 
Bro. Dave Schwind (Sis. Barb) 
in prayer as they deal with health 
issues. May our Lord grant them 
healing and strength. What a 
privilege to bring our loved ones 
before God’s throne, knowing he 
hears and answers prayer.

Illinois, Tremont

Debbie Aberle, Lucy Kaiser

“Rejoice with them that do 
rejoice, ...” Romans 12:15

Bro. Corbin and Sis. Esther 
Steiner welcomed Juli Ann into 
their hearts and home, grandparents 
are Bro. Todd and Sis. Val Steiner. 
Laina Allen (Chris and Sis. Sheri) 
and Isaias Lucho are rejoicing in 
the safe arrival of Christian Daniel 
Lucho. Bro. Chuck and Sis. Cathy 
Koch are thankful for another 
grandson to love, Rhett Michael 
Stoller (Derek and Elsie, Gridley, 
IL). William and Brittany Beutel, 
Savannah and Kolten welcomed 
Jaedynn Lanae; her grandparents are 
Bro. Fred and Sis. Jeannette Beutel, 
and Bro. Earl and Sis. Marsha Koch. 
Abel Dewayne Koch has blessed 
the lives of Bro. Dale and Sis. Meg 
Koch; Maria, Hanna, Eva, David, 
and Johnathan are his excited 
siblings. Thankful grandparents are 
Bro. David T. and Sis. June Koch.

“... and weep with them 
that weep.” Romans 12:15

Our prayers have been with 
those who have said goodbye to 
loved ones. Our sympathy to Bro. 
Todd and Sis. Beth Stuber and 
family in the loss of her father, 
Robert Emich (Akron, OH), Sis. 
Janelle Gottier spent precious hours 
with her aunt Sis. Betty Gottier 
(Rockville, CT), Sis. Rosie Frank 
will miss her sister-in-law Sis.

Mildred Knapp (Goodfield, IL). 
Precious memories are cherished 
by siblings Sis. Wilma Bliss (Bro. 
Floyd), Bro. Glenn Dill (Sis. 
Marilyn), Sis. Sandy Dill, and 
Sis. Barbara Wagenbach with 
the loss of Sis. Margaret Maurer 
(Bloomington, IL) Sis. Helen 
Woerner of our congregation 
passed on into eternity, and we, 
with her sister Sis. Mary Sauder 
(retired Elder Bro. Steve) rejoiced in 
his victory. Our prayers were with 
Chris Allen (Sis. Sheri) and family 
in the loss of his father, Bill Allen.

“Then Peter said unto them,
Repent, and be baptized every one of 
you in the name of Jesus Christ for the 
remission of sins, and ye shall receive 
the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38

We were blessed to hear the 
testimonies of our new sisters-in-
faith Sarah Koch (Bro. Dirk and 
Sis. Erika) and Tonya Koch (Bro. 
Earl and Sis. Marsha.) A special 
thank you to Elder Bro. John 
Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS) and 
Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, 
Bloomfield, IA) who served us so 
willingly and shared in our joy.

Bro. Tim Aberle (Sis. Candi) 
submitted to shoulder surgery and
our best wishes for healing are with him. We are thankful that family members are now able to visit their loved ones at Restmor. We have missed their occasional visits to our church and being able to sing for them.

Bro. Russ and Sis. Terrie Ehnle are excited to announce the engagement of their son, Connor to Alyssa Pridemore (St. Joseph, IL), daughter of Steve and Beverly Pridemore.

**Illinois, Washington**  
*Lillian Pfaffmann*

Our Washington church is blessed with babies and children! Our latest addition is Timothy Alexander Barth, born March 2, to Bro. Trent and Sis. Heather. His 4 brothers, Caleb, Silas, Daniel, and Benjamin, have added him to their “team”.

Putting another wedding on the calendar!! Believing the Lord has drawn their lives together, Sis. Lydia Pfaffmann was announced to Bro. Todd Herrmann (Princeville, IL). Their parents are Bro. Robert and Sis. Lily Pfaffmann and Bro. Dean and Sis. Dawn Herrmann (Princeville, IL). May they feel his presence and blessing as they plan their life together!

As we live from day-to-day in the political/social atmosphere that is present, we should sense the need to keep our focus on what is most important in our lives, “walking” with Jesus. How easy it is to focus on life on Earth versus his reason for our existence, which is living for and in obedience to him!

**Indiana, Bluffton**  
*Suzie Fiechter, Liana Reinhard, Olivia Steffen*

“As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him.” Ps. 18:30

What a blessing it was to have baptisms and testimonies the weekend of March 6-7! We welcome new members Sis. Morgan Pulver (Bro. Chris and Sis. Kara), Bro. William Fiechter (Elder Bro. Lynn and Sis. Ronda), and Sis. Ciera Hamilton (Matt and Jackie).

We rejoiced at the announcement of Joel Rinkenberger’s (Bro. Linc and Sis. Catrina) repentance. He is currently living in Goodfield, IL with his sister, and we are prayerful for him! Their family was also blessed with the wedding of Bro. Colt Rinkenberger to Sis. Elly Sauder (Roanoke, IL). We welcome Sis. Elly as they make Bluffton their home.

Bro. Eric Steffen (Sis. Marcia) received news of remission from cancer. We praise God for his healing and provision!

Little Juli Ann was born to Bro. Corbin and Sis. Esther Steiner of Tremont, IL. Local grandparents are Bro. Jon and Sis. Juli Kaehr. Bro. Josh, Sis. Jackie, Benson and Halle Fiechter welcomed Hudson Lee into their family! His grandparents are Bro. Brad and Sis. Lynn Fiechter. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Rhonda Gerber welcome their new granddaughter, Adalynn Renee Keller, born to Justen, Hope and Noel. Also, Bro. Doug and Sis. Ruby Gerber rejoice with the birth of Juliet Ruth. Her parents are Jon and Grace McDillon. Every baby is a precious gift from God; we praise him for new life!

Our prayers are with Bro. Andrew Eisenmann (Bro. John and Sis. Trudy) and all others involved in a vehicle accident that included a fatality. May God grant them strength as only he can.

The engagement of Bro. Logan Macklin (Bro. Ron and Sis. LaNae) to Sis. Ciera Hamilton (Matt and Jackie) was announced. May the Lord lead and guide them in his perfect way!

**Indiana, Bluffton North**  
*Deanna Brinneman, Rhonda Maller*

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:34-35

Sharing our love within and without the church can make a powerful impact, especially now when there is so much discord in our nation. We pray for all our congregations, that we can individually and as one family show love to each other and our neighbor.

We continue to pray for those in our congregation who are battling cancer and other ongoing health issues. Prayers also for Sis. Cindy Shorb (Bro. Brett), who was recently admitted to the hospital. We are so thankful that we serve a God who hears our prayers and holds us in the palm of his hand.
We pray especially for the family of Bro. Frank Ifer, 81, who passed on to eternal glory on March 14, just seven weeks after his wife Ruth passed away. Our hearts go out to his son Kurt Ifer (Angie) and daughter Kara Frank (Foss). Frank is also survived by eight grandchildren, Aerika Campbell, Naomi Derengowski (Drew), Josef Ifer, Hank Ifer, Pete Ifer, Ava Frank, Meryl Frank, and Celia Frank; along with four great-grandchildren and one on the way. They find comfort in knowing they will be reunited with Dad and Mom someday but losing both parents so close is hard. As you read this, please take a moment to pray for them.

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

Speaking of prayer, Bro. Joe and Sis. Lisa Leman hosted two nights of prayer recently. Those who attended learned more about Nepal and joined in strategic prayer. Nepal is where Bro. Joe and Sis. Lisa served as missionaries and hope to return in the future.

Bro. Adam and Sis. Jenna Leman, who have been serving at CVE, also appreciate prayers. They, with their children, Fe, Tadeo, Perla, Leo, Mili, Violet, Willow, and Judah, are moving to Bluffton. Reentry into the US brings many decisions, adjustments, and goodbyes to wade through. We welcome them with open arms and uplift them in prayer.

Our students remain active. The seniors are preparing for their mission trip, the high school students are involved in SOS, and our junior high enjoy Active. The local Apostolic Christian homeschool group recently put on a play at Kingdom Academy, and the entire Sunday school is practicing for our Easter program. The excitement of our youth is invigorating.

“Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.” Psa. 127:3

Speaking of rejoicing, we praise God with Bro. Dan and Sis. Sherry Pfister, who announced the engagement of their son, Bro. Ben Pfister (Indianapolis, IN) to Sis. Ashlyn Waldbeser, (Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue Waldbeser, Peachtree City, GA).

Many blessings to all from Bluffton North.

Indiana, Francesville

Jacki Huber, Connie Linback

Greetings of love to each of you!

This past week we were reminded that winter is not finished with us yet; troubling weather, disasters, unrest, financial hardship. All these events cause us to rethink the priorities of our lives.

Truly, “Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.” Psa. 57:1

We were blessed this month with Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb, Remington, IN) speaking to us of Biblical Eschatology (final events of humanity) in the book of Revelation.


We are praying for healing for Sis. Norma Pfledderer, who recently had surgery.

The elders expressed thanks for prayers offered for the conference this past week.

In the Sunday afternoon service, we were reminded to search our hearts and minds as we look forward to having Communion following our Good Friday service. Lord willing, we may be able to have Easter Sunrise Service this April.

Indiana, Indianapolis

Edie Bollier

The first flowers of spring have arrived! It is always so exciting to see them pushing up through the ground! How can they have the strength to do that? Only God could make them. It reminds me of an old Sunday school song. “Oh, who can make a flower? I’m sure I can’t, can you? Oh, who can make a flower? No one but God, tis true!” This is just one small sign of spring!

“The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (dove) is heard in our land;” Song of Sol. 2:12

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo, IN) visit and bring us the Word.

Our ministers have been continuing the Sermon on the
Mount. It has been challenging to hear Jesus’ teachings and apply them to our lives. We do not want to be hearers only but doers of the Word.

Bro. Ben Pfister announced his engagement to Sis. Ashlyn Waldbeser, (Peachtree City, GA). Their parents are Bro. Dan and Sis. Sherry Pfister (Bluffton North, IN) and Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Sue Waldbeser, (Peachtree City, GA). We wish them much joy as they plan their lives together!

Indiana, LaCrosse

Meagan Frank, Sharla Messner

“When pure and upright hearts,
By flames of love ignited
Are by the bond of faith
More firmly yet united
The light of hope beams forth
In radiance far and nigh,
Invites us to partake
The blessings from on high”
The Union of Hearts,
Zion’s Harp, #79

On a sunny, snowy day in February, we witnessed the wedding vows of Bro. Reid Schneider and Sis. Haley Linder in Latty, Ohio. We rejoice with their parents, Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jeannie Schneider, and James and Sis. Jane Linder (Latty, OH), and heartily welcome Sis. Haley into our LaCrosse church family!

On that same weekend, Bro. Joshua Martinez (Sis. Keyna, South Bend, IN) blessed our small gathering in LaCrosse by ministering God’s Word from the pulpit. Many thanks to him and his family for being with us!

We would also like to thank Elder Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Sis. Cindy, Chicago, IL) for joining Elder Bro. Curt on a Wednesday evening to read the Memorandum. We were convicted and inspired to search our hearts, to rightly divide the word of truth, and look with hope to the coming of our Lord.

That same promise of hope brings light amidst the darkness of suffering and loss in this life. Our prayers are with the family of Sis. Gwen Bucher (Valparaiso, IN) as she was recently laid to rest. Sis. Gwen held a special place in many hearts in LaCrosse, including the roles of sister and aunt, and will be greatly missed. There are others close to our hearts that have recently suffered illness or injury, and we pray for each one.

We are looking forward to the Easter season and rejoicing in the One who makes all things new!

Indiana, Leo

Jan Beer

With the introduction of the vaccine for COVID-19, it seems like restrictions are becoming more relaxed in our county. We are still holding Sunday worship services at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. and Sunday school at 10 a.m., but more and more folks are choosing to attend both services rather than picking one. We still register online to assure that we are within the attendance guidelines set by the governor. For those with existing medical conditions or other issues, it is a huge blessing that services are still available via audio or video. One “silver lining” I have noticed is a deeper, more vibrant appreciation for fellowship with people we meet in church. The babies and young people seem to have grown so much during our time of separation. It is a joy to reconnect with everyone. Apparently, the adage that “absence makes the heart grow fonder” is true. God has been faithful to provide for us once again.

Friday evening, March 5, our Young Group helped host a video event by Voice of the Martyrs entitled, Imprisoned for Christ. For those who were not able to be present, we were able to connect to it from our homes. Three formerly imprisoned Christians gave testimony of their experience and were interviewed by a moderator. It was a heart-stirring, God-glorifying, humbling event. God’s grace made it possible for these men to overcome the power of Satan, but it certainly was not easy, nor enjoyable. The need to continue to pray fervently for our imprisoned brethren all over the world was impressed deeply on our hearts. This visual event provided a profound reminder.

Jayla Huber, daughter of Bro. Jason and Sis. Joy, has made public her desire to walk in fellowship with us as she has accepted the atoning blood of Jesus and wants to live according to his plan. We rejoice with her and her entire family and look forward to walking alongside her.

It was announced that our traditional Sunday school Easter program will not be
happening on Palm Sunday this year. Instead, plans are being made for it to be presented mid-May, so it can be done free of COVID-19 restrictions! It may possibly prolong our attention to how vitally important Easter’s significance is to us. May God be honored and glorified in the preparation and presentation of the truth of Easter by our Sunday school children.

Indiana, Milford
Heidi Beer, Anne Wilson

The warmer weather and sunny days of late have brought glimpses of spring. As tiny new buds form and the birds begin to sing again, it’s a wonderful example that God does indeed make all things new. Just like the old dark days of winter change to the sun-filled days of spring, he reminds us that “…if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Cor. 5:17

Our thoughts and prayers have been with Sis. Paula Haab who had surgery earlier this month. Praise God she is recovering well, and we continue to pray for complete healing in the days to come.

May you all be blessed in this coming Easter season!

Indiana, Remington
Jenni Honegger, Marcella Tyler

We are thankful and overjoyed that Sis. Chloe Getz (Bro. Jason and Sis. Sara) married Bro. Caleb Furrer (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Pam, Wolcott, IN) this month! It was a beautiful wedding, and we pray that God will bless Bro. Caleb and Sis. Chloe with many years of love and serving the Lord together. Elder Bro. Greg Lehman (Sis. Mary Beth, Wolcott, IN) was on the pulpit to help with the wedding. We always appreciate Bro. Greg’s insight and passion about sharing the Word!

We bid farewell to Bro. Grant Knobloch (Bro. Neil and Sis. June) as he has moved to Iowa for work. We wish him well and pray that the Lord will continue to guide him during this next step in his life’s journey!

We are continuing to pray for Sis. Lori Scheitlin (Bro. Rolyce) as she has had additional surgery on her elbow. Please join us in praying for her healing.

We are thankful that we have taken another step towards normalcy in our worship services this month. We are once again having Sunday school and morning service, lunch and fellowship, and an afternoon service. Although the lunch is in a slightly different format than usual, it was still such a blessing to be able to hear Elder Bro. Dan Kilgus say, “Would a brother please offer himself for the lunch prayer?” once again after a year of not hearing it. We pray that things continue to improve.

We eagerly look forward to Easter and remembering the Lord’s death and resurrection together, especially since we celebrated Easter quarantined in our homes last year. I think we are all anticipating a revitalizing rebirth after a year of struggle and uncertainty!

Indiana, South Bend
Joshua Martinez

“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” Isa. 61:11

We would like to thank Bro. Ed and Sis. Tricia Lester for organizing a fun bowling afternoon on February 21 for our Sunday school students.

Our fervent prayers in March were for all the families in our congregation affected by the COVID-19 virus, especially Bro. Bob Beebe (Sis. Sue) who at the time of this writing continues to struggle with pulmonary issues.

We are thankful that our friend, Sterling Goins, has been released from National Guard duties and we look forward to seeing him at church more often.

We are also happy for the return of spring and thoughts of renewal, Easter and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a beautiful time of the year. Every season has its blessings. Every day is a blessed day and a new chance to revive our hope.

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

Indiana, Valparaiso
Sherry Meiss

Our verse for the month is: “And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” Luke 9:51
The Wednesday night bible study has been on focusing, and preparing our hearts for Easter. The study is on Jesus and his life leading up to his crucifixion. What a powerful time in our Christian lives.

We have mixed emotions announcing that our Sis. Gwen Bucher went home to be with our Lord on March 11. Though we are saddened for ourselves that she has left this earth, we are thankful that she is where she wanted to be, home with her Lord.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Ps. 116:15.

Sis. Gwen E. Bucher, was born December 11, 1938 in LaCrosse to Bro. Aaron Heinold (Sis. Emma (Marti) LaCrosse, IN). After losing her mother at age 13, she was raised by Sis. Grace Heinold (Eisenman) LaCrosse, IN), whom she considered her mother. She made her career in the Kouts School System as a Kindergarten Teacher. Gwen enjoyed reading and spending time with her 18 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren. She married Bro. Donald Bucher on March 2, 1958 (LaCrosse, IN), who preceded her in death in 1972. She is survived by their children: Dean Bucher (Patty, Valparaiso, IN), Dick Bucher, (Tracy, LaCrosse, IN), Dewey Bucher (Teri, LaCrosse, IN), Dale Bucher (Tricia, Wanatah, IN), Amy Paarleburg (James, Rolling Prairie, IN); and siblings: Bro. Marshall Heinold (Sis. Jan, Washington, IL), Sis. Eula Mogler (Bro. Art, West Bend, IA), Bro. Gene Heinold (Sis. Eve, LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Glen Heinold (Sis. Sandy, LaCrosse, IN), and Sis. Emily Schlatter (Bro. Bill, Junction, OH). Our thoughts and prayers are with this family, and we look forward to the day we all can meet again.

Keep praying for Sis. Leona Bucher, her granddaughter, Tina Moser, and her daughter Diane Moser; Sis. Dawn Ailes’s brother-in-law Drew McClanahan, and the families of these loved ones. Don’t forget to pray for each other.

Indiana, West Lafayette

Abbie Gramm

This month brought the annual business meeting and elections for new church positions. We also confirmed Bro. Chad and Sis. Claudia (Gonzalez Carrillo) Aeschliman, Bro. Blair and Sis. Natalie (Hoerr) Neihouser, and their families into the pulpit ministry. We are thankful for the energy and love felt during the minister selection process and are prayerful for their families’ transition ahead.

Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) visited for the confirmation Sunday and shared some thoughts on the life of Joseph and from Psalm 23:1. We often view life as a chess game, constantly analyzing our next move, trying to maintain control of the situation. How much more joy, contentment, and peace will we find in surrendering to God’s control and providence? How much more love will we have when we are willing to lay down our lives and interests for the sake of another, following the example of Christ? May we continue to walk moment by moment with our friend, Jesus Christ.

Bro. Nick Waibel (Sis. Sandra, Francesville, IN), and Bro. Regg Beer (Sis. Bev, Milford, IN) came to share with Purdue Young Group on their ongoing series.


We rejoice with Dane and Cecilia Harper with the announcement of their decision to begin walking with Jesus as their Savior.

Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein shared about the Midwinter Elder Conference proceedings. Prayers for our elders who have had significantly more strain in the last year given the circumstances.

Indiana, Wolcott

Brittany Gerber, Luann Gerber

We were thankful to be able to gather with our Remington congregation to celebrate the wedding of our Bro. Caleb Furrer (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Pam) to Sis. Chloe Getz (Bro. Jason and Sis. Sara, Remington, IN) on February 28.

Isaac Lehman, (Bro. Rob and Sis. Beckie) had the opportunity to move to a home in Morton this month. He has been such a blessing to our Wolcott church and we are going to miss him dearly!
**Iowa, Bloomfield**  
**Kendra Wettstein**  
We were thankful to have Bro. Sam Schlatter (Sis. Linda, Junction, OH) and Bro. Larry Bahr (Ft. Scott, KS) as visiting ministers this past month. We appreciate them allowing the Holy Spirit to work through them.

We rejoice to hear Natalie Joos (Bro. Gene and Sis. Lana) is engaged to Jeremy Yoakum. We look forward to their wedding.

We are thankful to hear of two souls who have felt the need to turn to the Lord in repentance. We wish Joel (Bro. Brad and Sis. Laura, Garden Grove, IA) and Olivia Funk (Bro. Virgil and Sis. Katrina Knobloch). God’s grace as they die off the old man and put on the new man.

As we get older, we find there are always changes. Sis. Wilma Teubel is experiencing one of these as she has moved to assisted living in Ottumwa. May she feel God’s nearness as she adjusts. In every change he faithful will remain.

Our prayers continue to be with Bro. Joel and Sis. Shirley Wuthrich as Bro. Joel continues to walk the last mile of the way.

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**Iowa, Garden Grove**  
**Laura Funk**  
Greetings from south central Iowa! The snow and ice have gone. Today is sunny, windy and cool! It is also the first day of spring. Some flowers are coming up and trees are budding.

Bro. Tim Lehman (Sis. Amber, Taylor, MO) and Bro. Mark Dotterer (Sis. Kate, Eureka, IL) and families visited Garden Grove over the past month. We appreciated the visitors that accompanied them.

Our congregation is moving forward in opening up after COVID-19. We look forward to increased fellowship.

We were unable to have a Christmas program so we are looking forward to an Easter program celebrating Jesus’ death and resurrection.

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**Iowa, Iowa City**  
**Diana Butikofer**  
We are thankful to Bro. Art Mueller (Sis. Marlene, Belvidere, IL), Bro. Phil Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA), and Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL) for sharing the Word with us this month by Zoom or in person. We pray the Lord will bless them for their efforts.

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**Iowa, Lester**  
**Kristi Knobloch, Lois Mogler**  
“Jesus is the Shepherd; Guess who I am!”

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**Iowa, Burlington**  
**Marilyn Anderson, Angela Steiner**  
“...crucified with Christ, it leads to either pride or despair. Let’s stop, ponder and ask ourselves, “Are we looking to marriage, parent/grandparenthood, jobs, relationships, or even our busy schedules to fulfill us?” Sometimes, as we do our daily tasks, we forget that God is working in us and teaching us through our duties, even if they feel mundane. We can ask him to transform our mindset from, “what am I getting out of this?” to “how can God be blessed?” We are living an earthly life with a kingdom purpose, and we can only be satisfied when Christ is our all!

We lifted up in prayer our many elder brothers as they met for the Midwinter Elder Conference. May God grant them grace, wisdom, and discernment to make healthy decisions for the body of Christ, that he may be glorified and live within us!

Our Burlington church family has been seeking God’s will and direction in prayer that he may provide a deacon for a shepherd’s role. We are so thankful and humbled by our brothers that continuously, selflessly give of their time and attention to the ministry. Our prayer is that Christ will richly bless them for their efforts and give them strength for each day.

We are always so blessed to see visiting family and friends that join us for a day of worship! Thank you to those that made an effort to travel recently, and we look forward to more in the future.

As we carry on in our daily lives, may we remember that we are crucified with Christ, and it is he who lives in and fulfills our hearts.
Such a lovely secret, I’m His little lamb!”

I’m His Little Lamb, The Children’s Harp #14


Bro. Thad Indermuhle and Sis. Dayra Knoblock were married on March 7. Both of their parents, Bro. Dana and Sis. Joy Indermuhle (Sardis, OH) and Bro. Travis and Sis. Kathy Knoblock, welcome this new couple to their families. During the wedding service, Bro. Dana spoke with a father’s heart that God blesses us and provides for our children in response to the many prayers we have offered up for them.

Also, here for the wedding were ministering brothers; retired Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda, Sardis, OH), Bro. Seth Beard (Sis. Faith, Sardis, OH), Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA), Bro. Josh Walder (Sis. Tina, Congerville, IL), Bro. Andrew Klumpp (Sis. Rachel, Bradford, IL) and Bro. Kevin Fehr (Sis. Lonnie, West Bend, IA).

Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS) spent a Sunday sharing God’s word with us also.

There are always dear ones needing prayers and support as they battle various illnesses and afflictions. Linda Metzger (Charlie) recently had surgery and is recuperating at home. Sis. Gail Hartter (Bro. Jerome) seeks further treatment for her ongoing battle with cancer. Our prayers for little Bryson Bosch (Bro. Brent and Sis. Priscilla) are that his sight can be restored after an accident and surgeries to heal the injury to his eye.

“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” Isa. 61:11

Iowa, Mediapolis
Laura Kuntz, Janet Lanz

Spring! A time for new beginnings! The cold winds have given way to warmer days, and the tender shoots become brave enough to make their appearance. There is life all around us, awakening to the promise of a new start.

As the Easter season has so recently passed, we have been reminded of how much of himself the Lord has invested in us. May we treasure the day he personally called us to walk with him, and may we humbly and cheerfully be his salt and light until we ourselves can touch those beautiful nail-scarred hands and feet.

We are thankful for the birth of Josie Claire Steiner. She is welcomed home by big brother Carson and her parents, Bro. Daniel and Sis. Claire (Burlington, IA). Thankful grandparents are Bro. Regan and Sis. Tricia Lanz. May the Lord watch over this little family as they raise their children in his ways.

A large group of all ages from our congregation traveled down to Florida to join the HarvestCall rebuilding efforts. We are thankful for the traveling mercies of the Lord and for their safety while working. What a blessing and honor it is to serve others. They returned home with many good memories, friendships, and spiritual blessings.

Surely the angels are rejoicing as another lost soul has turned his heart towards home. Sam Lanz (Bro. Keith and Sis. Tonya) has made the most important decision of his life, and we pray he can use God’s grace to build a firm foundation.

We appreciate Bro. Jerry Wagenbach presenting us with the topical: Building a Spiritual House. There were many good teachings to apply to our spiritual life to keep it strong and sturdy against the onslaughts of evil.

We are rejoicing with Amanda Massner (Bro. Aaron and Sis. Luann Schmidgall) as she became one in Christ with Chris Day. We pray that they can feel God’s nearness as they blend their hearts and lives together.

Springtime also brings spring cleaning to our church and fellowship center. This year especially, since we have been apart so much, we dry mopped, scrubbed, and vacuumed with gusto, reveling in the joy of being together and working with our loved ones again.
Iowa, West Bend

Jenny Banwart, Karen Schmidt

Bringing God’s Word to us this past month were Bro. Aaron Frank (Sis. Sharla, Elgin, IA) and Bro. Nathan Walder (Sis. Denise, Cissna Park, IL). We appreciate the teachings they shared with us from God’s Holy Word.

We welcome Bro. Benjamin Koehl (Bro. Eric and Sis. Kim, Morris, MN), Erica Walder (Bro. Nathan and Sis. Denise, Cissna Park, IL) and Bro. Caleb Schrock (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Rachel, Congerville, IL) to our church family. May they each feel God’s nearness as they follow His guiding and take up residence in our area.

We wish many blessings to two families who welcomed baby girls this month. Bro. Jordan and Sis. Erica Knobloch are thankful for the safe arrival of Taya Lynn. Jaden, Landon and Kylan are very excited to have a baby sister! Grandparents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Janet Fehr and Bro. Jim and Sis. Sandy Knobloch. Bro. Nathan and Sis. Sierra Grimm welcomed their firstborn, Teegan Marie. Bro. Jordan and Sis. Ann Grimm and Bro. Clint and Sis. Magdalena Schmidt (Winthrop, MN) are the thankful grandparents.

Rejoicing in God’s leading, Sis. Abigail Zaugg (Bro. David and Sis. Melissa) is engaged to Bro. Joel Schar (Bro. Tim and Sis. Joanne, Akron, OH). We wish Bro. Joel and Sis. Abigail many blessings as they are joined as one in Christ.

Our prayers go out to Bro. Leonard Anliker and Sis. Becky Virkl as they have spent time in the hospital. May God be near and provide for them.

“When a Christian dies, Precious is the prize.”

The Death of a Christian, Hymns of Zion #248

We extend sympathy to Bro. Art and Sis. Eula Mogler in the passing of Sis. Eula’s sister, Sis. Gwen Bucher (Valparaiso, IN).

Japan, Shioda & Tokyo

Anna Inoue, Marie Inoue, Carrie Ito

As winter draws to a close it is wonderful to see signs of spring, mainly early flowers and cherry blossoms. We are most thankful for the Easter season, remembering the death and glorious resurrection of our Saviour. Recently 2 of our elder brethren from a setting in the U.S., encouraged us to read through 2 books of the New Testament: Acts to look for places that point to the resurrection of Jesus, and Revelation to take note that the book exalts Christ as our Lord and Saviour. May we draw nearer to Jesus this Easter season.

Sis. Hideko Kido who lives in Kyushu has a son who is very ill. She would appreciate our prayers for him.

Kansas, Bern

Leigha Rokey, Rita Menold

Greetings! It’s been a quiet month for us here in Bern. Although there isn’t much news to report, we know that God is still at work in the hearts of each of us. We are each being called, used, and stretched perhaps in a different capacity, but we trust that we will recognize the work that God is doing in our lives. We are held to a high calling in Christ!

We have some happy and thankful grandparents in our congregation! Bro. Richard and Sis. Joni Meyer are thankful for the arrival of a new grandson, Krae Douglas, born to Bro. Taylor and Sis. Allie Meyer (Silvertown, OR). Bro. John and Sis. Lori Baumgartner welcomed another granddaughter! Joanna Lorraine was born to Bro. Aaron and Sis. Maria Luthi (Lamont, KS). As their families continue to grow in number, our prayer is that they will also grow in love and grace!

Kansas, Kiowa

Janice Bahr, Millie Frieden

“When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.
Though satan should buffet, tho’ trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
And, Lord, haste the day when
the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trump shall resound and
the Lord shall descend,
"Even so"—it is well with my soul.
It is well with my soul, it is
well, it is well with my soul.

It Is Well With My Soul,
Hymns of Zion #55

This beautiful hymn was written by Horatio G. Spafford after very tragic circumstances happened to his family. He and his wife, Anna, lost their 4 year old son to scarlet fever in the 1870’s, then lost everything material in the Chicago fire a year later. After all the sadness, Horatio decided to take his wife and 4 young daughters on a holiday to England. Horatio could not go at the last minute, but encouraged his wife to sail without him, and he would come later. In November 1873, Anna and the girls boarded the ship Ville De Havre. Four days into the trip, the ship collided with the Loch Earn, (an iron hulled vessel), and sank in less than 12 minutes, taking the lives of 226 passengers. It was the worst disaster in naval history until the Titanic sank 40 years later. Several days later when the survivors reached Cardiff, Wales, Horatio received a brief six-word telegram from his wife, Anna: “Saved Alone What Shall I Do?” Horatio boarded a ship to join his wife, and en route wrote this hymn. He believes his 4 young girls and his son are safe with God. Though devastated, Anna heard a soft voice saying to her. “You were saved for a purpose”. It is incredible to think such encouraging and uplifting words were born from the depths of such unimaginable sorrow. It is an example of truly inspiring faith and trust in the Lord.

Perhaps that is why this hymn, like no other, demonstrates the power our God has to comfort our weary souls when the darkest tragedies overtake us.

It saddens us to report that our precious sister, Sis. Shirley Nelson, has moved to Tulsa, OK. to be near her son Todd and his wife Lara. We will truly miss her faithful, loving, joyful presence here in the Kiowa church, but pray the Lord will bless her as she takes this new step in her life. I know that Todd is happy she is nearer to him. If anyone would care to drop her a card once in a while, her address is: Shirley Nelson 4134 E. 31st St. Oklahoma Methodist Manor #PH1 Tulsa, OK. 74135.

We had the pleasure of having two visiting ministers share weekends with us this past month: Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy) along with Bro. Ben Leman (Sis. Lori, and family), both from Forrest, IL. shared a Saturday evening and Sunday with us, and then Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS) shared another weekend with us. We were truly blessed and thank them all for lending themselves to fellowship and share God’s Word with us. Our Prayers are with Burton Smith (Sis. Jan), who had a medical emergency recently, and ended up in Wichita, Ks. where he is still in the hospital at this posting. May God be with them both and grant his healing touch.

Kansas, Lamont
Maria Luthi

As the promise of spring, new life, and warmth begins to realize it brings happiness to our hearts and reminds us of the new life our Lord has in store for us!

“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.” Rev 21:5

We extend thanks to Bro. Cory Metzger (Sis. Jodi, Wichita, KS) for helping to serve Holy Communion and ministering the Word to us, and to Bro. John Baumgartner (Sis. Lori, Bern, KS) for also sharing the Word this month.

We continue to weep with those who weep. Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Mara Jean Edelman, Bro. Victor Edelman (Sis. Hope), and Sis. Dora Hines (Tony) and their families as they grieve the passing of their brother and uncle, Jake Strahm, (Magnolia, TX). Our prayers are with Jake’s family.

There is also rejoicing this month as Bro. Aaron and Sis. Maria Luthi and siblings Kiah, Leora, and Eli welcomed Joanna Lorraine into their family. Grandparents are Elder Bro. Jay and Sis. Jane Luthi and Bro. John and Sis. Lori Baumgartner (Bern, KS.)
Greetings of love from Sabetha!

We enjoyed gathering for an all-church singing at our fellowship center on February 21. What a blessing to praise God together!

Our single group hosted a single group invite this month. It was wonderful to have our church filled up! The singing was so beautiful and uplifting!

As Easter approaches, we are reminded of Christ’s suffering and resurrection. May we remember his great love for us and rejoice in his wonderful plan of salvation.

“O Thou resurrected Savior!
Look down upon Thy friends with favor
Who dwell yet in this earthly vale!
Come, Belov’d, that we may meet Thee,
And when in joy and love we greet Thee,
Thy glory unto us reveal!
O blessed shall all be
Who are by faith in Thee Resurrected.
All who from death To life are brought,
Sustain their faith, O Son of God!”
Christ, The Resurrected,
Zion’s Harp, #60

We were saddened by Sis. Maria Pimentel’s passing, but we know she is in a better place and no longer with physical ailments. She was preceded by her husband, Bro. Samuel Gutierrez, just four months before. They are survived by two daughters, Raquel and Margarita, and one son, Samuel Jr.

We continue to unite for church on Sunday mornings at Bro. Denver and Sis. Katie Slagel’s house in town. Thankfully, the CVE children have received permission to leave campus for worship services, so they have joined us as well. We are looking for a more permanent location in town for our church services and ask for prayers for wisdom and direction in that process.

Increased violence has arisen between the drug gangs in this area over the past few weeks. Please join us in praying for the families and individuals involved in and/or affected by the gangs and the shootings. We know each person is precious in the sight of God and pray that he would reach down and touch the hearts and lives of these people.

I read Psalm 9 this morning. Verse 18 reads, “For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.” Many times, when we think of the poor, we think of material poverty. When I think of the poor, I think of powerlessness. Although every person has the power of choice, the poor have fewer resources to support those choices. Resources can be support systems, healthy relationships, education, understanding of the Gospel, or material goods. This verse tells us that God does not forget. He sees. The expectations, the dreams, the hope of the poor will not perish forever. Verse 10 reads, “And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.” God offers us the unlimited resources of his love, his presence, his hope, and his truth. Anyone of us can come to him and find spiritual riches beyond our comprehension!
precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ did for our salvation. All the
details of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, the horror of what he
got through leading up to his crucifixion and death, and glory of
his resurrection are so intense and yet so beautiful.

“They all walked away,
nothing to say
They’d just lost their dearest friend
All that He said, now He was dead
So this was the way it would end.
The dreams they had dreamed
Were not what they’d seemed
Now that He was dead and gone
The garden, the jail,
The hammer, the nail
How could a night be so long?
Then came the morning!
Night turned into day
The stone was rolled away
Hope rose with the dawn
Then came the morning!
Shadows vanished before the sun
Death had lost and life had won
For morning had come”

Then Came The Morning
by Bill Gaither

Many in our church are
experiencing physical trials and tests. Our prayers ascend to the
Father on their behalf.

Sis. Ellie Stoller (Bro. Ned and
Sis. Heidi) has moved to Virginia
for the next six months for her
college internship. We pray that
God will watch over and protect
her and that she would draw
strength and guidance from him.

Michigan, Bay City
Sarah Knochel

Our thoughts and prayers
are with those who mourned the
passing of family members in
the last few weeks. We pray for
Sis. Debbie Knochel (Bro. Jack)
with the passing of her mother,
Maureen Robinson. Our thoughts
and prayers are also with Bro.
Brian Wieland (Sis. Charlene) and
Dan Wieland in the passing of
their brother John.

We continue to keep Sis. Betty
Wieland in our thoughts and
prayers as she spent time in the
hospital. We pray that God will
stand by her and strengthen her
through her illness.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my soul shall be joyful in my
God; for he hath clothed me with
the garments of salvation, he
hath covered me with the robe of
righteousness, ...For as the earth
bringeth forth her bud, and as the
garden causeth the things that are
sown in it to spring forth; so the
Lord God will cause righteousness
and praise to spring forth before
all the nations.” Isaiah 61:10-11

Just as the seasons change
and we see signs of renewal and
refreshing, may we continue to
thank and worship God for the
provisions he grants and the joy he
brings to our lives.

Michigan, Detroit
Krista Wieland

Greetings to all! It has been
beautiful outside here! Our family
has a puppy who cannot get
enough of the sun. Too bad this
(I admit) spoiled city poodle does
not want to go inside, no matter
how long she has been outside.
This is why she is on a leash at
times. She reminds me of a kid
who does not recognize when
“no” means “no”. Sometimes
when called, our puppy stays
right where she is. Sometimes she
does acknowledge being called
and stubbornly runs the other
direction because she knows she
can outrun us. Then again, are we
much different? Do we come when
the Holy Spirit calls us? Or do we
remain just where we are or run
the opposite direction because she knows she
can outrun us. Then again, are we
much different? Do we come when
the Holy Spirit calls us? Or do we
remain just where we are or run
the opposite direction? I imagine
we all as imperfect humans have
done our share of each. We do not
have a leash on and sometimes we
have to learn the hard way that
God can always “outrun” us. God
has such a loving long arm. As
parents or authority figures, we try
our best to make good decisions
for our young children (or pets…).
So how much more does a perfect, loving God always want what is best for His children?

Our prayers continue to be with Sis. Kristen Hitz as she continues to experience health challenges. We are also prayerful as Sis. Bonnie Allen (Bro. Pat) is recovering from a recent surgery.

John Wieland passed away this past weekend. He is the first cousin to Bro. Dana Knochel and Mark Wieland. Our prayers are with them and their families.

Kim Smith’s father passed away last week, and we are keeping her family in thought and prayer also.

We are happy to again be able to have a monthly midweek church service at our independent living facility, Woodpointe.

We are also thankful for Elder Bro. Mark and Elder Bro. Lucas’s safe return from Goodfield where the Midwinter Elder Conference was held.

We rejoice to announce that BJ and Zach Blume (Bro. Brian and Sis. Cherise) have experienced God’s conversion and have an expression of peace and desire to be baptized. We also are rejoicing as Elyanna Blume, their younger sister, would like to make her walk with the Lord known to our church family. We know that there is joy in heaven for each sinner that repents and we as a church family rejoice as well.

Bro. Ned and Sis. Alyssa Troxel have felt God’s direction to support our small church in Bastrop, TX for a time. We are thankful that prayers know no miles although we will miss their family greatly.

**Minnesota, Morris**

**Peg Wellendorf, Brianna Wulf**

We are grateful for the many blessings received over the past month. All glory to God for the peace that resides in the heart of our friend Stacy Nohl. Encouragement in her walk to serve the Lord is on our hearts. We ask that the Lord continue to bless her journey to baptism.

We enjoyed abundant blessings on Sunday, March 14 as Bro. Rob and Sis. Leah Bahler were joined in marriage. This joyful event was ours to celebrate along with their parents, Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill Steiner and Bro. Tom and Sis. Lanae Bahler, (Rockville, CT). It was uplifting to gather, sing praises to God and to fellowship with faith-filled members of the brotherhood. Most profound was witnessing two people join their hearts as one with God. We trust that God will bless their marriage with happiness and a love for him that grows daily.

“This union of our hearts
Shall stand through
grace in Jesus.”

_The Union of Hearts,
Zion’s Harp, #79_

Visiting ministers throughout the weekend: Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna, Rockville, CT), Bro. Tom Bahler (Sis. Lanae, Rockville, CT), Bro. Kevin Wulf (Sis. Annie, Tucson, AZ), Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN), Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Sis. Christy, Morris North, MN), and Bro. Damon Knobloch (Sis. Stephanie, Morris North, MN). What a blessing to receive God’s word and love from brothers and sisters far and near. Thank you for being present and for ministering to us.

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;... And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” Col. 3:12,15

**Minnesota, Morris North**

Greetings in Jesus. With the easing of the pandemic restrictions our Sunday school children have been able to do some of our annual winter events. Our Friday night of Sunday school ice skating together has always been a blessing because it draws more children from the Morris community. The Sunday school downhill skiing is also enjoyable. Face coverings and social distancing are easier when the temperature is cold, and they need a face covering anyway. Lastly, Sunday school bowling is always fun, except for the scoring. It would be more of a biblical lesson if every child ended with a perfect score, as a result of Jesus.

Many in our congregation were able to participate in this year’s HarvestCall 2021 Winter Rebuilding Project in Marianna, Florida. They especially enjoyed the sharing nights and hearing the testimonies of Jesus and his mercy. The work, fellowship and outreach were enjoyed by all who went, and they encouraged others to consider serving Jesus in this way in the future.
We continued our new tradition of video-recording a song service for the purposes of sharing with our local assisted living homes and apartments. The elderly have really been impacted by the isolation and loneliness from the pandemic. Making a video with our children was a way for us to sing as a blessing to those that we have not been able to visit in person.

In closing, we would ask that any of you reading this would pray for God’s direction as we will be voting on a local elder. We want Jesus to be glorified in our little congregation and we appreciate your prayers.

“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” Rom. 11:36

Missouri, Winthrop
Ginny Stoll, Dixie Messner

A few of our older widows have turned 90 in the last several months and, as the years go by, challenges come along. We are especially thankful that Sis. Dorothy Jacobson was not seriously injured after her fall.

Bro. Tim Schmidt (Liz) and Sis. Bethany Messner (Bro. David) both had surgery this last month. We are thankful for God’s healing hand for them.

We are thankful Bro. Darrel and Darlene Schmidt have been able to move to an assisted living. It is always hard to move out of your own home and rely on others.

Last month, we were able to announce our friend, Sam Miller’s peace and now his wife, Sandy, has professed her peace with God and man as well. We are thankful they can look forward to baptism together.

Missouri, Lamar
Leah Rokey

We once again have been abundantly blessed by the goodness of God and the service of fellow believers in Christ! We enjoyed the fellowship of many visitors this month, including several visiting ministers and their families. We trust God will bless Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cissna Park, IL), Bro. Ryan Kellenberger (Sis. Adrienne, Ft. Scott, KS), Bro. Matt Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL), and Bro. Philip Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA) for their service on the pulpit. Our monthly potluck was an enjoyable time for each of us and we appreciate the effort made by our Ft. Scott brethren to fellowship with us. Our congregation is grateful for the opportunity to have Wednesday evening services with Lamont, KS via Zoom.

It is a blessing to experience God’s gift of healing and we are thankful that Sis. Karen Wettstein (Bro. Mark) has recovered well following surgery.

Missouri, St. Louis
Michelle Rassi

For our March HarvestCall night we assembled 200 first aid kits for Mexico. The phrase “many hands make light work” comes to mind. The children enthusiastically worked and the project was quickly finished.

There is a small group of couples that are doing a marriage study together and it has been a great blessing!

As COVID-19 restrictions lessen, we are thankful to move toward a more “normal” fellowship on Sundays. The children’s joy was wonderful to witness this past Sunday as they all gathered (for the first time in a year) at the front of the sanctuary to sing together before the afternoon service. May we all strive to show that JOY of the LORD.

Missouri, Taylor
Lori Marquart, Tami Pflum

Our ministers often remind us what a blessing it is to hear the sounds of a baby’s cry in our assembly room, serving as evidence our church family continues to grow. In light of that, we rejoice with Bro. Dallas “Tate” and Sis. Becca Haerr on the recent birth of their sweet little Emry Rose, born February 3. She is loved and adored by older siblings, Jackson and Ella, and grandparents Bro. Shon and Sis. Peg Haerr and Bro. Tom and Sis. Jane Bolliger (Tremont, IL).

It is always good to see our “snowbirds” once again, after a winter away and we warmly welcome each one back home. We also recently have had some who haven’t been able to gather for many months re-assemble with us. What a joy to see their faces and hear their voices as we worship together once again.

We extend gratitude and appreciation to our visiting ministers this month. Bro. Todd
Witzig (Sis. Nicole, Gridley, IL) ministered to us while visiting family and Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jackie, Peoria, IL) graciously traveled here for our monthly Wednesday evening Bible study, in which he brought to life Paul’s third missionary journey, including the story of Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos. Aquila and Priscilla were merely tentmakers whereas, according to Acts 18:24, Apollos was considered “an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures”. However, the tentmakers recognized that while Apollos was preaching John’s gospel, he did not yet know the full gospel according to Christ. Therefore “…when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took [Apollos] unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” Acts 18:26. They could have used the excuse, “Who are we to teach him? We are only tentmakers!” But they were willing to obey God’s call and be used. Likewise, he desires to use each of us in spite of our limitations and weaknesses. I recently had my own “But I’m just a tentmaker!” experience when I was asked to do something that seemed rather daunting. Just a day before Bro. Craig’s Bible study, Satan was attacking hard and relentlessly pointing out my own inability and weakness. Then I received an encouraging message from a dear sister, with a quote reminding me, “There is someone waiting on you to say yes to what God has called you to.” (Tracie Braylock, Proverbs 31 Ministries). What a challenge, to recognize the importance of saying, “Yes” when God calls us, no matter how inadequate or inferior we may feel! We can read later in Acts and Corinthians that Apollos went on to be an influential leader in the early church, after being instructed by Aquila and Priscilla. Never underestimate what God can do when we are faithful to plant and water, leaving the increase to him!

New York, Croghan/ Naumburg
Karen Farney
“When they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.” Acts 15:30-31

On March 7, for our afternoon service we read the Memorandum. So thankful for the guidance the elder body has for us as we journey through this life. Our prayers were with them as they gathered March 10-12, in person or virtual. We appreciate all they do for the continuation of our faith.

Ohio, Columbus
Nancy Banks
Greetings to all from Columbus! We are so thankful for the visiting ministers we have been blessed with this month. Our visitors include: Bro. Bryon Palitto (Sis. Lisa, Akron, OH), Bro. Tom Hill (Sis. Elaine, Rittman, OH), Bro. David Maibach (Sis. Larisa, Smithville, OH) and Bro. Trent Gasser (Sis. Molly, Akron, OH). We thank each and every one for making the effort to travel and share God’s word with us.

Ohio, Akron
Joelle Indermuhle
With joy we heard the news of the engagement of Bro. Joel Schar (Bro. Tim and Sis. Joanne) and Sis. Abigail Zaugg (Bro. David and Sis. Melissa, West Bend, IA). May God bless them as they plan their future together.

We are also thankful to Bro. John and Sis. Heather Rassi and their family (Tremont, IL) for worshipping with us and for Bro. John’s willingness to be used in ministering from the Word of Life.

Rejoicing in the birth of a grandson are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Carol Indermuhle as Daniel Lloyd joined the family of Matthew and Rachael Steiner on March 12. His adoring older siblings are Miriam, Caleb, Abigail, Naomi, and Anna.
dark clump and for the first time ever, we were staring at a bald eagle munching on something in the corn stubble. My husband claimed that he never thought he would see an eagle on the farm in his lifetime. What a thrill for us both! We were thankful for the opportunity to watch him and have learned again to take time to marvel at his wondrous creations.

Ohio, Junction
Karen Schlatter

An interesting story I read recently about Robert Robinson, the author of the hymn, “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” Years after he had written the hymn, he was heard humming it to himself. A woman who was near him asked him what he thought of the hymn he was humming. He reportedly replied to her, “Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then.” As you read the words, let them sink deeply into your heart and realize that each day we have a decision to make on Who we will serve.

“Come, Thou Fount of ev’ry blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount - I’m fixed upon it
Mount of Thy redeeming love.
O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I’m constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wand’ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here’s my heart, O take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above.”
Come, Thou Fount,
Tabernacle Hymns #298

The engagement and upcoming marriage of Sis. Abigail Schrenk (Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda) to Bro. James Fairchild (Walter and Jill) was announced recently. They are planning a wedding on Easter Sunday. We are thankful for them and wish them the Lord’s richest blessings.

We are rejoicing with Elyse Manz (Bro. Sam and Sis. Shelby) as she has made the decision to turn to the Lord in repentance. May she be encouraged to grow strong in her faith in the Lord Jesus.

Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Emily Schlatter (Bro. Bill) in the passing of her sister, Sis. Gwen Bucher (Valparaiso, IN). Our thoughts and prayers are with the Heinold/Bucher family at this time.

Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cisna Park, IL) visited us and shared from the Word of Life. May the Lord bless him for his efforts.

We welcome back Bro. Steve Manz who has lived in Arizona for the past several years.

A correction to the news article in the March 2021 article. I had listed Bro. Andy and Sis. Laura Manz’s new baby as Ella Elizabeth but her name is Emma Elizabeth.

Our prayers continue to be with Bro. Kyle Schlatter (Sis. Casey) as he struggles with health issues. May the Lord grant him strength and courage for each day.

Ohio, Latty
Angie Klopfenstein,
Carmen Stoller

“Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” Psa. 51:2

During the first week of March, we all worked together to clean our church and fellowship hall. It is so nice to accomplish a task together and keep God’s house in good order.

We rejoice with Miriam Sinn (Bro. Tim and Sis. Marlene) as she has found peace with God and man. Levi Manz (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Jennifer) has also found peace. May God continue to give each of them grace to build on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Bro. Colin Klopfenstein (Bro. Leon and Sis. Deb) is engaged to Sis. Kelly Waldbeser (Jim and Sis. Renae, Fairbury, IL). We pray for this couple as they prepare for joining their hearts together in service to God.

On February 21, Bro. Reid Schneider (Bro. Calvin and Sis. Jeannie, LaCrosse, IN) and Sis. Haley Linder (Jim and Sis. Jane) were united in marriage. We wish them God’s richest blessings as they serve him together.

Thank you to Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb, Remington, IN) and Bro. Matt Steffen (Sis. Deanna, Princeville, IL) for ministering the Word to us.
Ohio, Mansfield
Katie Miller
This past month many in our church family were affected by hospitalizations, surgeries, or new health diagnosis. Our thoughts have been with the following and their families: Sis. Bev Keever (Clair), Sis. Joni Beer, Bro. Joel Beer (Sis. Sue), Bro. Dave Sauder (Sis. Joy), Sis. Ruth Domka, Sis. Jeannine Masters (Bro. Mark), Sis. Elizabeth Walter (Bro. Curt), and Sis. Kelly Beard.

“Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” Psa. 42:8

May we continue in prayer for each other. May we also take hold of God’s promises and continue believing.

We express sincere thanks to Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI) for visiting and ministering to us.

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” Prov. 4:23

We ask the Lord’s blessing upon the work accomplished in his name during our annual HarvestCall days. May the people who receive these labors feel the care and warmth of God’s love.

“Seeds of goodness we are sowing In the hearts of man today. Bless it, Lord, that it may prosper, And bear fruit for harvest day. Hasten gladly to the labor. Consecrate to God your heart. Say this day unto your Saviour, “Lord I’ll gladly do my part.””

Ohio, Rittman
Mardel Doterer, Julie Steiner
Greetings of love from Rittman. Our Bro. Walter Baltic is celebrating his 100th birthday this month!

So thankful for God’s work in the hearts and minds of our friends. Josh Zollinger (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Pam, Smithville, OH) has turned to God in repentance. We wish him much grace.

Many of our loved ones have spent time in the hospital recently, including Bro. Miklos Bozzay (Sis. Aranka), Sis. Delores Bauman (Marion), Sis. Kathryn Bachman, Bro. Jerry Gasser (Sis. Ellen), Sis. Ruth Steiner (Bro. Ron), and Bro. Dale Pelfrey (Sis. Beth). May God grant healing and strength during these trying times.

Bro. Eugene Bachman passed away this past month, leaving his dear wife, Sis. Kathryn, children Larry Bachman (Donna, Forrest, IL), Linda Hartzler (Dave, Sterling, OH), Judy Musselman (Orrville, OH), Greg Bachman (Val, Tennessee), Pam Miller (Travis, Sterling, OH), Jolene Mastnick (Nate, Chillicothe, OH), and many grandchildren and extended family. Bro. Novko and Sis. Julie Atanasov’s mother Sofija Atanasov passed away recently. May God be with each family during this time of grieving.

Special thanks to Elder Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH) for spending a Sunday with us this past month.

Five children are welcomed into families here at Rittman or connected with Rittman. Evelyn Elizabeth Bauman was born on February 20 to Bro. Jared and Sis. Erika Bauman. Big brother Oliver and Grandma Sis. Nancy Bauman welcome this gift. Aaron and Abigail Schar were blessed with firstborn son Zane Robert Schar, on February 24. His grandparents are Bro. Rowen and Sis. Judy Schar, and Keith and Regina Winkler. In Lester, IA, Judson David Knoblock was born to Bro. Ken and Sis. Jolene Knoblock, on March 1. His grandparents here are Bro. Rock and Sis. Wanda Hilty. A new son was born to Bro. Jeff and Sis. Naomi Miller. Colson James Miller, born March 10, is welcomed by siblings Alayna, Jaron, Carmen, and Noelle, and by Grandma Sis. Sharon Rupp.

On March 11, David Lloyd Steiner was born to Matthew and Rachael Steiner. His is welcomed by siblings Miriam, Caleb, Abigail, Naomi and Anna, as well as grandparents here, Bro. Matt and Sis. Gail Steiner.

Many predict 2021 will be a better year. Has it been? As baptized Christians, created by God, and gifted with the Holy Spirit, may we not just try to make 2021 a better year, instead let’s make each day a better day.

Ohio, Sardis
Renee Blough, Doris Miller
“Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.” Prov. 18:22
Bro. Thad Indermuhle (Bro. Dana and Sis. Joy) and Sis. Dayra Knoblock (Bro. Travis and Sis. Kathy, Lester, IA) were united in marriage on March 7. They currently reside in South Dakota for schooling. We look forward to their visits and wish them many blessings.

Angel Reese (foster daughter of Bro. Eric and Sis. Jami Hartzler) desires to have the Lord in her life and we rejoice that she has confessed a need for repentance. May she feel the love and support of the brotherhood!

In life we face many unknowns. The biblical truths we know through faith give us strength in unknown times.

“I know that my Redeemer lives, And ever prays for me; A token of His love He gives, A pledge of liberty.”

I Know That My Redeemer Lives, Hymns of Zion, #253

Bro. Rob Figel (Sis. Angie) is receiving treatment at the James Cancer Center. We lift them up in prayer often and appreciate staying updated via Caringbridge.

Another song uplifts us when the future is unknown:

“He holds the key of all unknown, And I am glad; If other hands should hold the key, Or, if He trusted it to me, I might be sad, I might be sad.”

He Holds the Key, Gospel Hymns #399

Ohio, Smithville
Connie Maletich, Marcy Stoller

We are happy to report that Matt and Kelsey Ballard are our new converts this month. It is a special joy to a congregation to know that God is still calling and drawing souls.

Bro. Owen and Sis. Carissa Stoller, along with big brother Tucker, welcomed Wesley Robert into their family. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Millie Stoller and Bro. Bob and Sis. Lorie Riggenbach (Rittman, OH).

Bro. Ken and Sis. SueEllen Maibach (late Bro. Greg Gasser) are thankful for the arrival of another granddaughter born to Jon and Bethany Rufener. Emilia Elizabeth is also welcomed by big sister Samara.

Sis. Eileen Stoller (Bro. Bob) grieves the loss of her brother-in-law, Bro. Eugene Bachman (Sis. Kathryn, Rittman, OH).

Bro. Harvey Landis (Stephanie) spent some time in the hospital recently. We continue to pray for healing.

“The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.” Nah 1:7

Our visiting minister, Bro. Denny Fulop (Sis. Allison, San Diego, CA) spoke on these words of truth. May God bless those who preach the word so faithfully to us.

As Christians, it is important for us to recognize that the Holy Spirit has given each one of us spiritual gift(s). Our individual gifts may change and grow throughout our walk with Christ, as the Spirit decides. As a church, we can find unity in diversity only in Christ Jesus. We believe that “as the body is one, and hath many members, all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” 1 Cor 12:12. This incredible unity is realized as every believer is united with Christ, and as a result, united with one another because “by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.” 1 Cor 12:13. Union with Christ is a theme that fills the pages of scripture and points to the incredible truth of what it means to
be “in Christ.” As a basic principle, union with Christ can be defined and seen in scripture as “what is true of Christ becomes true of us.” We have been crucified because he was crucified; we have been buried because he was buried; we are dead to sin because he “died unto sin once” Rom 6:10; we are quickened or made alive because he is alive; we are heirs of God because he is the heir; we are righteous only because he is righteous; we are seated with him spiritually in heavenly places because he is seated at the Father’s right hand; and we will one day physically appear with him in glory as he will appear in glory. This union with Christ binds all of us believers together and we can truly worship God for “the unsearchable riches of Christ!” Eph 3:8.

In light of these spiritual truths, our God-given spiritual gifts need to be put to use! We are called to not be ignorant concerning spiritual gifts likely because the goal is immense. The goal and purpose of these gifts is “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph 4:12-13.

Be encouraged! All this is possible only because it is “God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philip. 2:13.

As for Toledo, after many months, we are looking forward to beginning regular church services and Sunday school in our new church building. We have been blessed beyond what we could have imagined by our immediate and extended church family for the constant support, both physically and prayerfully. Bro. Dana Indermuhle (Sis. Joy, Sardis, OH) visited us while also providing some of his skills for our new church building. We continue to lean on the Holy Spirit as he leads us, grows us and unifies us in Christ.

Oregon, Portland
Louisa Gallup

We trust Easter was a blessed and peaceful day for everyone. May those who lost loved ones in the past year, find comfort in the promise Easter reminds us of.

Our sincere gratitude to the local HarvestCall woodcutting team in helping us during the aftermath of the recent ice storm. It had caused a lot of damage on our church’s property. Thankfully, the main building was untouched.

Our heartfelt prayers go out to Bob Quick, the brother of Sis. Barb Moser (Bro. Ray, dec.) who has been hospitalized with serious health issues recently and is now in the hospital again, with pneumonia. May the Lord be near unto him and his family during this trial.

Camie Knecht (Ken) had knee surgery recently and is recuperating at home. We wish her God’s healing touch and a successful recovery.

Oregon, Silverton
Lorraine Kuenzi, Teresa Sinn

Our Congregation is growing! Bro. Tyler and Sis. Amy Kuenzi welcomed their sixth child on February 20, Lincoln Jon. Grandparents are Bro. Dean and Sis. Jackie Knobloch (Tucson, AZ), and Bro. Terry and Sis. Ann Kuenzi.

Bro. Taylor and Sis. Allie Meyer welcomed their second child on March 1, Krae Douglas. Grandparents are Douglas and Keil’An Kuenzi (Stayton, OR), and Bro. Richard and Sis. Joni Meyer (Bern, KS).

Bro. Dakota and Sis. Christina Koenig welcomed their second child on March 6, Abby Angela. Grandparents are Robin and Dawn Koenig and Bro. Richard and Sis. Linda Sinn.

Logan and Naomi Kuenzi welcomed their first child on March 14, Aubrie Jane. Grandparents are Bro. Brian and Sis. Annaleise Wagenbach (San Diego, CA).

We are happy to share the engagement of Bro. Carson Zollinger (Bro. Jim and Sis. Tresa) to Sis. Malea Cottrell (Bro. Brent and Sis. Darla, Eureka, IL). We pray for God’s blessings on them as they grow together in Christ!

Bro. Tim Hansen (Carol) recently had shoulder surgery and Bro. Loren Dettwyler (Sis.
Marlene) recently had back surgery. Please pray for a swift and complete recovery!

Note of Thanks:

The Family of Lynn Kuenzi would like to share our sincere thank you to all of our church family for the outpouring of prayers, messages and condolences at the passing of our dad, husband, and grandpa. It is at times like these that the family of God becomes dearer and dearer. May each of you be blessed for the care you showed to our family.

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Laura Isch

"Meet today in social union,  
Spend the hour in sweet communion  
As in seasons past,  
Christian friendship is a treasure,  
Pure in nature, rich in measure,  
Filling us with heavenly pleasure,  
While the moments last,  
While the moments last."

Meeting and Parting,  
Hymns of Zion, #53

It was such a blessing to be able to gather in person again! We are thankful for good health in our church and the times we can now spend together in the sanctuary worshiping together. May God bless each one as we look forward to the Easter season and remember our Lord’s death and resurrection.

Tennessee, Nashville

Mike Fritz

God has provided for us richly through his Word and his Spirit. We have been blessed by our recent visiting ministers: Bro. Marvin Zollinger (Sis. Pam, Smithville, OH), Bro. Kent Wiegand (Sis. Lanae, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea, Remington, IN), and Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL). We are also thankful for the fellowship of visitors from Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fairbury and Goodfield, IL; LaCrosse, Remington, and Wolcott, IN; and Philadelphia, PA.

We continue to meet for worship at an alternate location while repairs are being made to our church building. When you plan to visit, please contact us to learn where we are meeting that Sunday. Contacts are Bro. Jordan and Sis. Emily Fritz, 615.852.1490, jordanmfritz@gmail.com; Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Jillian Bradbury, 765.993.8917, jeremy.bradbury1975@gmail.com; or Bro. Jeremiah Stoller, 615.761.7033, jeremiahleestoller32@gmail.com.

Texas, Austin/Bastrop

Candy Meiss

Greetings from the Austin/Bastrop church of Texas. We are so thankful for these beautiful sunny days bringing new life to our trees and plants after the "snowmageddon" we experienced last month. During that week, millions in Texas lost power for days, the water was not safe to drink, and medical workers spent days at the hospital, unable to get home safely with no relief because staff could not come to relieve them.

On a personal note, I was stuck at the hospital 30 miles from my home having worked 30 hours straight with no relief coming in. Dr. John Loyd, Chief, Division of Neonatology and the lead doctor of our group learned about the situation and drove his truck to pick up an NNP who had to walk half a mile on the ice and snow with linens, blankets and food to last for days to get to a road that he could safely drive to. He drove her into work so that I could go home. Thankful that my husband was able to pick me up and going about 5 miles/hr, we made it safely home on Sunday, Valentine’s Day. Our neighbors surprised us with a wonderful steak dinner that was ready when we arrived home.

Tuesday morning, Dr. Loyd drove back to our home to pick me up to relieve the same NNP that had taken over for me on Sunday. Once I arrived at the hospital, I worked about 48hrs until another NNP came in. I was so thankful that I felt God’s presence with me as I was the only NNP to oversee the care of all the newborns and attend deliveries of those babies who were at an increased risk of requiring resuscitation. I knew that no one could make it to the hospital to help me.

Our hospital is a level 2 NICU so normally we do not keep babies that are less than 32 weeks gestation and smaller than 3 pounds. Those babies are transported out to a higher level of care. The transport team was not available due to the storm in the entire state of Texas for that week.
The hospital had very little food as food could not be delivered to the hospital and the kitchen crew could not come in. We had to bring in our own linen/towels since the place that cleans our hospital linens did not have water. Many of the hospital rooms did not have heat so our mothers/babies were sent home very early after their delivery when there were windows of time that it was safe to drive.

Water lines were busted from the freeze which required a couple of hospitals to divert their patients to our hospital, increasing the workload to already exhausted resources. Some nurses stayed the entire week, sleeping in patient rooms that were empty and sharing the room with a person that worked the opposite shift. Some hospitals required that you put your “human waste” in bags with solidify to dispose of it properly since the toilets could not be used.

Many homes were flooded due to frozen pipes. Most of the trees and plants were frozen and when the sun came out and the snow/ice melted we noticed that they were all brown and appeared dead. Each day we are surprised and excited to see new growth on some of the trees and plants. We are thankful for each one. There is always hope! When we think that there’s no way, in Jesus name, we find the strength to press on.

“We are blessed by hearing the pure Word by the Holy Spirit’s inspiration as Elder Bro. Gerry Hertz (Sis. Ellen, Sabatha, KS) and Bro. Leland Plattner (Zapata, TX) shared Communion with us. We are so thankful for their continued desire to serve us. We also appreciate visiting ministers Bro. Earl Berry (Sis. Susie, Rittman, OH), Bro. Isaac Wofford (Sis. Rachel, Washington, IL), Bro. Brian Waibel (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL) and Bro. Jeff Leman (Sis. Val, Bluffton North, IN).

In the midst of the "snowmageddon", we welcomed little Corey Christopher Hartzler on February 17. Our church family, his parents Bro. Scott and Sis. Rachel Hartzler, along with their four children, Summer, Lexi, Jesse, and John Grady are all rejoicing and excited to welcome a new brother into their family.

Texas, Dallas-Ft. Worth
Sheena Pelsy

Love and greetings from the Dallas church! We were so blessed to have Bro. Dennis Rassi (Sis. Diane, Austin, TX) come up for our church services. After being apart for so long due to the snowstorm last month and some of us traveling the months before, it was a blessing to have the church family come together once again.

As we gathered to hear the Word of God, Bro. Dennis reminded us that even though it has been a difficult and challenging year, God is still with us. While preaching in the afternoon, Bro. Dennis read from Joshua 6:1-8, 22-27 where Jericho was compassed and taken. The battle they fought was different than usual battle plans. They did not have to fight on their own or use their own strength, but instead fought with God’s plan and God’s strength. Joshua and his men were only able to overcome Jericho because of God. What a grand example of how powerful our actions and faith can be when we fully trust and obey God even when his plans don’t make sense to us. We serve a powerful and mighty God who will fight for us in our time of need.

Services are being held every 2nd and 4th Sunday. If you plan to visit or want to call ahead to verify services, call Bro. Rodney Pelsy, 219.204.3106.

Vermont, Clarendon
Sarah Wagenbach

Our visiting ministers this month were Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl) and Bro. Brent Walder (Sis. Naomi) both of Rockville, CT. We are grateful for the love and support we feel from them. We are thankful for the warming of the Earth and the lengthening of days and rejoice in God’s beautiful creation.
PERHAPS YOU’VE heard something along the lines of “the church must be central.” It is often used in conversations about missions. But it is not always clear what is meant by this phrase. Let’s look at this topic for the purpose of improving clarity and encouraging discussion.

What is a Church?
The Greek word for church is “ekklesia” and means a calling out or a gathering/assembly. The New Testament uses this word in a global sense as all of the redeemed of God that have been bought with the blood of Christ (Eph 1:22; 5:25) and to refer to the local gathering together of believers (Matt 18:17; Gal 1:2). It is appropriate to say that God speaks throughout the scripture of churches being assemblies that make up the global Church.

When the phrase “centrality of the church” is used in the context of Apostolic Christian missions, it refers specifically to the local church. There, we must have a common understanding of what is a local church. Are there requirements for a building, certain number of people, liturgical structure, or other items? Biblically, we can define a local church as a fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ committed to gathering regularly for biblical purposes under recognized spiritual leadership.

This Definition Consists of Four Areas:
• Believers in Jesus Christ – those gathering together are the redeemed of God through Jesus Christ. He has purchased all believers with his blood and the church is considered his bride (Acts 20:28; Eph 5:25; Rev 19:7-9)
• Committed to gathering regularly – church means a gathering and we see the disciples gathering together consistently on the 1st day of the week (Acts 20:7)
• Biblical Purposes – the purpose of gathering includes, but is not limited to, reading, teaching, and preaching the scriptures (1 Tim 4:13), prayer (Acts 12:5), and performing the sacraments of baptism and communion (1 Cor 11:20; 12:3).
• Recognized Spiritual Leadership – it is necessary to have leaders appointed that are responsible for the care, teaching, and equipping of the believers (Eph 4:11-16)

Why does Church need to be Central?
Next, we need to determine what it means for a church to be central. When a church is central it is the focal point and not on the periphery. In Ephesians 3:9-21, Paul states that the church is not only putting God’s glory on display in the world (verse 21) but also to the angelic realm (verse 10). The reason that the church is central is because it is God’s
The scriptures demonstrate the centrality of the church through the words of Jesus and living the gospel is that churches are planted where they make disciples, baptize, and teach people to live lives of obedience to Christ. We have been recipients of this in the Apostolic Christian Church. The gospel was proclaimed in Europe, churches were planted, men were sent to America, the gospel was proclaimed, and churches were planted. We then had the gospel shared with us through the local church!

Lastly, we see the church as central in the Epistles and the book of Revelation. Paul tells Timothy that the household of God is the church of the living God which is the pillar and ground of truth. Paul addressed his writing to the churches in his Epistles and John addressed the 7 churches in Revelation 2 & 3. Finally, the book of Revelation looks at the church as the bride of Christ (Rev 19:7-11).

**Applying this to our Local and International Missions**

Since the church is central to the gospel being communicated across the world, it makes sense for outreaches of our local churches and also HarvestCall ministries (which are beyond the capacity of the local church) to focus on:

- Ensuring all ministries we are engaged in support the local church and that the church is the primary means for preaching to the lost and discipling new believers.
- Evangelizing for the purpose of making disciples who observe all Christ commanded.
- Fulfilling the Great Commission with the focus on growing existing church or planting new ones.

As HarvestCall seeks to apply this principle, we expect to see the following in the future:

- Active planting of Apostolic Christian Churches in the USA and other regions
- HarvestCall ministries working together with local churches to reach out to the community with the gospel.
- Some missionaries will be ordained and sent as spiritual leaders
- Where HarvestCall has an existing foreign ministry that has been working with an approved established local church, our missionaries will actively work with that church to effectively support local evangelism and discipleship.

God desires the church to be central to all ministries! May we all be actively thinking through and praying for how the ministries we are involved in keep the church central. May it rekindle our desire for planting churches for the purpose that God will display his glory throughout the earth! **Matt Knapp serves as Executive Director for HarvestCall.**
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

Be sure to download the latest update to get the newest features

Check Google Play or the App Store

Help us shape the future of AC Central.
Submit feedback and vote for suggested features at accentral.userecho.com

Want to support new feature development?
Donations for AC Central are appreciated and are currently routed through HarvestCall. Write AC Central on your check memo or choose it when making an online donation at harvestcall.org

2021
APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH SERVICES
Clyde Park, Montana

Saturday June 26th
Clyde Park Community Center
3:00 to 5:00 pm Registration and Fellowship
5:00 Evening Meal
Hymn Singing in Evening

For further information or to provide a count of those planning to attend by June 10th 2021, please contact one of the following Bros.

From Lester
Wes Moser 712-395-2025 wesmoser58@gmail.com
Bob Metzger 712-478-4647 bobmetz@alliancecom.net
or 612-963-0089 (mobil)

From Silverton
Greg Wackerle 503-873-7463 gregwackerle@msn.com
or 503-779-9803

Sunday June 27th
Clyde Park Community Center
Church Services
10:15 am and 12:30 pm

Accommodations available in or near Livingston, MT
Fairfield Inn (406-222-4914) will have a block of rooms available under Apostolic Christian or Bob Metzger

There are a number of campgrounds and rental homes in the area.

It is helpful if those attending can bring their own; Bibles, Zion’s Harps, and Hymn’s of Zion
Free will donations serve to cover meal costs and facility expenses
A day tour of the area may be organized for those interested on Friday June 25th
Introducing the Apostolic Christian Bookstore

Formerly AC Publications, the online and brick-and-mortar store in Goodfield is now known simply as the AC Bookstore.

Visit us online or in person to find enriching resources that support the church and its members. Numerous new products have been added, such as children’s books, gift items, cards, headcoverings. More new items are on the way.

And as always, the Bookstore is a great source for Bibles, songbooks, Bible studies, church history books, Sunday School materials, and much more.

Online anytime at acbookstore.org

In person at 651 East Peoria St., Goodfield, IL 61742 (currently mornings only)
MISSIONARY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

in Haiti, Jamaica and Mexico

HOSPITALITY MANAGER
This position will be responsible to receive and accommodate teams and other travelers at the Guest House. The Hospitality Manager will work closely with Haitian staff who assist in the operations of the guest house. - Les Cayes, Haiti

MECHANIC
This position would support the HarvestCall Construction, Well Drilling, Dairy, and Hospital Lumiere projects. They will be responsible to help maintain the vehicles, generators, and construction equipment. - Les Cayes, Haiti

DISCIPLESHP & CHILDCARE
Engaged in discipling relationships as part of a healthy body of local believers. This role will specifically be alongside Sis. Erin Davis and the care of young children at En Gedi house. - Mandeville, Jamaica

DEAF DISCIPLESHP
Engaged in discipling relationships as part of a healthy body of local believers. This role will specifically be alongside the ministry of Deaf Can Coffee and the E3 fellowship gathering. - Kingston, Jamaica

BUSINESS DISCIPLESHP
To proclaim Christ and serve others through the avenue of community interaction, using the business marketplace as the primary vehicle of ministry. Discipleship through relationships with other employees and the community. - Fatted Calf, Magdalena, Mexico

YOUTH TRAINING COORDINATOR
To proclaim Christ and serve others through the avenue of community interaction, using agricultural education as the primary vehicle of ministry. This role will be responsible for leading EXPO Esperanza and the Fatted Calf intern program. - Fatted Calf, Magdalena, Mexico

ACCOUNTING-HR DISCIPLESHP
General accounting and administration, reach out and engage with local people, value and adapt to Mexican culture, and share the love and hope of Jesus Christ as a part of their daily lives. - CVE, Magdalena, Mexico

You can find full role descriptions at harvestcall.org/missionary-openings or the Job Postings section of AC Central.

For additional details for these exciting and worthy service opportunities contact:
Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
**2021 Team Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magdalena: Congerville, IL</td>
<td>May 28- June 3, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena: Washington, IL</td>
<td>June 11 - 17, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena: Detroit MI &amp; Lamont, KS</td>
<td>June 25 - July 1, 2021</td>
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Questions about teams to Magdalena?
Contact: Adam Kaeb - operationscve@gmail.com

### Jamaica

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>CCCD - JDV</td>
<td>June 4-12, 2021 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Lindberg</td>
<td>815-641-9065 <a href="mailto:lindma@hotmail.com">lindma@hotmail.com</a></td>
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*If you are interested in sponsoring a team to Jamaica, contact Loren Dettwyler

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**COUNTRY DIRECTOR**

**OPENING at the**

**HarvestCall Administrative Office**

**West Lafayette, Indiana**

Here is an opportunity to put your management experience, leadership skills and communications abilities to good use guiding missions within the USA as part of the HarvestCall staff.

This a full-time, paid position that can be performed either at the West Lafayette, IN office or remotely. The brother or sister will report to the Executive Director and collaborate with the HarvestCall’s management team to lead ministries in the USA, and potentially in other countries, with a focus on God being glorified through the proclamation of the gospel.

A heart for church planting and a desire to enhance local church outreaches is required.

A complete job description with detailed duties and desired qualifications is on the HarvestCall website: www.harvestcall.org/country-director

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**Bible Distribution: Sharing His Word in Love**

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

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

Apostolic Christian Church
Bible Distribution
651 E. Peoria Street,
Goodfield, IL 61742
Phone: 309-965-2141
Email: bibriledistribution@acbookstore.org

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**Used Bible, Bible Story Book, and Song Book Distribution**

Used Bibles, Bible Story Books,
Hymns of Zion, Zion's Harp,
Gospel Hymns, and Tabernacle Hymns are needed.

**AC Bookstore is now the collection center for your donated books.**

651 E. Peoria St, Goodfield, IL 61742

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**Light from the Word**

*Now available by downloadable PDF at www.acbookstore.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).

This year "Hope" will be the overarching theme for the weekend. Ministering brothers Brad Metz (Bloomington, IL), Kirk Plattner (West Lafayette, IN) and Mark Klaus (Athens, AL) will speak on what is hope, how we can have hope for today and the future, and how believers can put hope into action.

The weekend event will be held at The Vision (www.visionministry.org), a beautiful 300+ acre Christian Retreat facility nestled in the side of a small mountain near Huntsville, AL. The facility includes a stunning lodge where we will also have worship. Additionally, enjoy hiking trails and walking around a lake. There is also playground equipment for children and so much more.

To view a schedule of events and other weekend details, visit www.ALiveAlabama.com. You can also find out information by visiting our Facebook page @ALiveAlabama or send an e-mail to info@alivealabama.com.

The Athens congregation and ALive Committee look forward to seeing you at ALive 2021!
SPONSORSHIP: Giving Children Hope for the Future

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

The goal of this program is to provide an education so these children can learn life skills to enable them to become more productive adults. In addition, its purpose is to present a spiritual opportunity to be exposed to the gospel message and eventually be called to serve our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

Isaiah 54:13

To Sponsor a Child or School

Fill out this form and send to the office. You’ll be assigned a student or school and sent further information. Learn more about child sponsorship, including costs, at: harvestcall.org/child-sponsorship

Name _________________________

Mr.  Mrs.  Miss

Spouse _________________________

Address _________________________

City ____________St ___ Zip _____

Home Ph ________________________

Cell Ph ________________________

Email _________________________

Please check preference:

 Haiti Student  Jamaica
 Haiti School  Guatemala
 Mexico  Zambia

 Wherever needed

If possible, I prefer:

 Boy – Age ______
 Girl – Age ______
 No Preference

Send to:
HarvestCall Child Sponsorship
PO Box 36
Morton, IL 61550
Phone: 309-266-6080
Fax: 309-266-5281
Email: childsponsorship@harvestcall.org

Another way to pray for our missionaries.

Download HarvestCall’s one-page document listing all those serving. It includes prayer ideas and is appropriate for posting on your refrigerator or church bulletin board.

Visit: www.harvestcall.org/our-missionaries
Jesus the True Vine [1501]
This Bible Study focuses on John 15:1-8 and is intended for a general audience. It may be used for self-study or with a group. The desired outcome is a deeper understanding of the union of Christ and His church. Price: $4.50

Communication in Marriage [1502]
This is a Bible Study that is designed specifically for use by engaged or married couples. It is divided into seven segments each of which could be used for a unique study period. The purpose is to understand the scriptural directives and Biblical principles of effective communication that contribute significantly to a successful marriage. Price: $4.50

Who Jesus Is [1503]
This Bible Study is for general use and is designed to encourage self-study by each participant as well as discussion within a group. The desired outcome is a deeper understanding of the character and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, the impact of His life on each of us, and how we can exemplify Him in our walk of life. Price: $4.50

The Second Greatest Commandment [1504]
This Bible study seeks to illuminate our understanding of Bible teachings about interpersonal relationships. Price: $4.50

The Hand of God in the Life of Joseph [1505]
The story of Joseph is perhaps one of the best known and loved stories in the Old Testament. Herein we catch glimpses of God’s will and purpose exemplified in the life of Joseph. We see the hand of God in the life of Joseph, which demonstrates how God’s goodness is active in the lives of his people. Price: $4.50

Romans [1515] Price: $10.00
Romans has been a special inspiration for generations. It is said by many to be the most complete work of the doctrine of salvation by grace. This study will walk through the book of Romans and examine the character of God, His plan of salvation, and His expectations of our response to Him. Romans has an easy-to-understand message, yet we can plumb the depths of its truths and never fully comprehend it.

Additional Titles
- Church Establishment [1507] Price: $4.50
- Loving as One in Christ [1514] Price: $10.00
- The Word of God [1511] Price: $4.50
- Living in Christian Community [1513] Price: $4.50

For additional information and ordering visit www.acpublications.org
Apostolic Christian Publications - 651 East Peoria St., Goodfield, IL 61742
Are you looking for more purpose in your life?

There is an abundance of hurting children and families in need of help. Come find fulfillment walking alongside them as they experience hope restored at Gateway Woods. Find joy as you share the Gospel with those in need of a Savior and be humbled as He shapes your life while doing so.

We currently need an **Assistant Houseparent**. Will you be the beautiful feet that come and labor to share Christ?

For more information:
gatewaywoods.org/careers
888-443-4283
Continued Articles

Loving as Jesus Loves

— Continued from pg. 3

whom we are built. Like a glass of milk that spills out milk when bumped, our words or actions will spill out a reflection of what is in our heart when we’re “bumped.” Our hope is that we reflect Christ’s love – his patience, his compassion, his grace – and thus act as upright ambassadors of his message and good name.

This role, this calling to reflect Christ’s love to the world, is motivating to us as well. We remember stories at our grandma’s knees hearing of God’s provision during periods of deep sorrow. We can recount endless times ourselves where God’s love anchored us through tough times. We live surrounded by kindhearted people who have poured out Christ-like love every time we’ve been in need. We feel blessed beyond measure when we consider this experience, and our hearts yearn for others to know of his wondrous love and care. Each day can be seen as an opportunity to represent and share this love with others, so more can know of our foundation builder and the wonderful life possible with him.

However, even with good intent, maintaining our foundation and witness can be hard. For anyone who grew up in the Pacific Northwest, a frequent school lesson was tectonic plates. We learned about the movement of plates in the earth’s core that often resulted in beautiful rock formations and craters, but could also collide to cause damaging earthquakes. To withstand this risk, houses are required to be built on a solid, earthquake-resistant foundation. After initial construction, the homeowner has a job to keep their house in good repair. But would a few weeds in the front yard change the integrity of the house? Or a section of cracked siding? Perhaps one or two of the repairs could be neglected and the structural foundation of our house would remain the same. We may still feel “earthquake ready.”

Satan likes us to measure our heart’s readiness against extremes, as it is hard not to rate ourselves among the ‘prepared’ when there are only two options. “Of course,” we would stand up for our faith when tested. “Of course,” we wouldn’t renounce Christ, we think. More often than not we are sent incremental tests rather than extremes. He sends us needy neighbors at inopportune times, children that don’t listen and are easy to snap back at, and years like the present, in which complaining against authority is in vogue.

Our minds may classify our responses to situations like these as “small repairs” that need to be made some day, areas for improvement but certainly not structurally impacting the readiness of our house. However, the “small” actions make up our days and weeks and years – they reflect who we are and are an opportunity to take stock of how we are doing. We are to be “grounded and settled” in Christ, “not moved away from the gospel”, and anchored on that “ancient landmark, which [our] fathers have set.”

As wise homeowners, let’s make continual inspection of our house and quickly work through the repairs, ensuring our spiritual building remains strong and unshaken.

Endnotes

1 Matthew 7:24-27
2 Luke 6:48-49
3 Colossians 3:17
4 Romans 8:39, Isaiah 49:16
5 2 Corinthians 5:20
6 2 Corinthians 5:20-21
7 Colossians 1:22-23, Proverbs 22:28
that away from us and that is doing everything within his considerable power to destroy our peace. We shouldn’t underestimate that, and we shouldn’t feel ashamed when he attacks us. We should feel assured that, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we can hang on to peace.

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (v. 2) That’s a confusing sentence to me. Through Jesus Christ and through faith in Jesus Christ we have obtained grace from God, and we can stand in that. That should cause us to have hope, and hope should cause us to rejoice. So, we can rejoice today that we stand, that we have hope, and that there’s hope in that situation I was talking about before we broke to sing. There was a situation – there is a situation – that is desperate. I don’t what other word to use for that. Desperate situations lead to despair, and when we find ourselves in desperate situations, the one thing we need is hope. The one thing that will keep us from despair is hope, and where do we find hope? We find hope because we stand in grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

There was probably a time in my life – I shouldn’t say probably – there was a time in my life as a young believer that my understanding of how that all worked is I follow Christ, I have faith in him, and now I have hope that my desperate situations will be fixed. That’s what hope means. That’s what hope meant to me as a young immature believer. My desperate situation would be fixed, and how fixed my situations got was just in proportion to how strong my faith was. But if we reread, I think, a deeper understanding of this would help us to understand that that’s not the statutes of God. That’s not how he has organized the universe. That’s not how it works. It isn’t ‘have enough faith and our desperate situation gets fixed’. It is our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ that allows us to rejoice in hope because whether or not this situation gets fixed the way that I would like to see it fixed or the way that I would define fixed is irrelevant. That isn’t what matters. What matters is that I stand in grace and in peace with my Lord Jesus Christ. So, I think the next couple of verses walk us through that.

“But we glory in tribulations also” (v. 3). Speaking of mouthfuls, that’s a mouthful. Do we glory in tribulations? That is not normal. That is the opposite of a natural response. We glory in tribulations also. Why? Why would we glory in tribulations? When something hard happens in my life, why would I be happy about that? Why would I rejoice in that? Why would I take glory in the hard thing that’s happening in my life? Because I know that tribulation worketh patience and patience, experience, and experience, back to hope. So, if I understand what this is saying, I know that when something hard happens in my life, I should embrace it because I know that that is going to be an experience in my life that I can look back on because it will increase my hope. It will give me hope.

Let’s stop looking at ourselves for a moment. There’s probably some study out there saying we spend 98% of our time thinking about ourselves. I don’t know. I just made that up, just picked a number, but let’s stop thinking about ourselves for a moment and think about somebody else that went through something difficult in their life. Pick a historical figure or somebody that you know personally that, at some point in the past, went through a trial, a challenge, a tribulation, and I think with a little bit of third-person vision, we can see that it was that

— Please turn to pg. 60
trial, that challenge, that made
them into who they were. Almost
invariably, it made them a better
person. That depends a lot on if
they trusted in God through that
trial or challenge.

It’s one of these truths of life
that it’s the hard stuff that makes
you grow, and yet, what percent
of our energy, our effort, and our
resources do we spend trying to
avoid the hard stuff? For me, it’s
just about all. Paul, here in this
chapter, challenges us to turn
that on its head and says don’t
run from those hard things but
embrace them, glory in them,
because it’s going to change you.
It’s going to give you hope. It’s
going to make you a better
person. That depends a lot on if
they trusted in God through that
trial or challenge.

“But then, after you’ve been
through it, or maybe before it’s
even over, what do you do with
it? Our tendency as humans,
much of the time, is that when
we go through something hard,
depending on the nature of it, we
want to just forget it. We want to
move on. A lot of times – again,
depending on what the nature of it
is – we just want to stuff it inside.
We prefer that nobody ever knew.
We want to put on our mask
and go to church. We want to do
that because we might very well
be ashamed of what it is that we
went through. Paul says, “Don’t
be ashamed.” The fact that you
experienced tribulation, and that
tribulation worked patience and
that patience worked experience
and that experience worked hope
in your life, means that now you
no longer need to be ashamed
of that tribulation. You have
experienced a tribulation that
worked hope in your life.

Don’t be ashamed of it, but
what should you do with it? You
should let “the love of God Shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (v. 5) “The love of God shed abroad” sounds to me like it gets spread out. It gets shared. We all
know God loves us. God loves me.
I experienced that. I feel it. I know
it to be true. What do I do with
that love? I should shed it abroad.

There’s plenty to go around so
don’t hoard it. Shed it abroad.

We say, “Yeah, I know. We’ve
been taught that since we were
two. Love everybody and so on
and so forth.” But why is that
verse right here next to this one
about tribulation working hope in
our lives? I think it’s saying that
a way to shed abroad God’s love
is to share with others how God’s
peace and his love worked in our
life as we navigated tribulation.

It’s on my mind because I saw it
this week. Right? This miracle
that I saw was somebody who
had been through tribulation,
still going through it, – some
of these stories aren’t done until
we breathe our last breath – was
willing to not be ashamed but was
willing to say, “I’ve experienced
this, and it has worked hope in
my life.” I can stand right here,
right now, and I can tell you that
God’s love was shed abroad. God’s
love was shared and spread out
and multiplied and grew because
of one person willing to not be
ashamed of tribulation.

So, what are we going to
do with the hard stuff in our
lives? I think we can go back
to Psalms and say, “Well, God
allows me to experience this hard
stuff so that I can understand
his statutes better. I can get to
know God better. I can more
fully understand how God works.
It can draw me closer to him.”

Then, we can take that hard stuff and not be ashamed of it. Instead, we can take off the mask and use it to spread God’s love abroad.

There is a world that is desperate for peace, and if we put on a face of “I’ve got it all figured out and everything in my life just goes right on time; if you were just as smart as I am, your life would be better too”, that’s not going to help a person who is desperate for peace. If we are willing to say, “I’m a broken, flawed human, and I’ve experienced tribulation, but I am at peace in spite of it”, we are sharing God’s love. We can say, “In spite of an enemy that wants to tear us all down, destroy everything good, and separate us all from God, I am at peace, and here’s why. In my life, this is what worked. Jesus Christ worked in my life, and he brought me to this point where I have hope.”

Some of us have been talking about this as we work through this Bible study. It’s not hope, as in ‘I hope I get an ice cream cone.’ It’s hope that we can, with 100% confidence, know that it’s good. How did it say it back in Psalms? God has dealt well with us. God deals well with us. He loves us, and that love can be shed abroad and shared and can change our lives and everybody’s lives around us.

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**Creation**

Hymns of Zion, #207

*All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small. All things wise and wonderful the Lord God made them all.*

*Each little flow’r that opens, each little bird that sings, He made their glowing colors, He made their tiny wings.*

*The rich man in the castle, the poor man at the gate, God made them high or lowly, and ordered their estate.*

*The purple headed mountain, the river flowing by. The sunset and the morning which brighten up the sky.*

*He gave us eyes to see them and lips that we might tell. How great is God Almighty who has made all things well.*
The origins of our church denomination in Switzerland in the early 1800s continues. Excerpts are taken from “Our Heritage of Faith,” a booklet available for use in our Sunday School classes. It was first published in 1990. This historical data is considered important as it comprises a record of the God-led account of the work of Bro. Samuel Froehlich, who left the state church, and went out and preached “from scratch,” and God’s work was manifested, to our benefit.

Disagreement - Between Froehlich and the State Church

Infant baptism was a practice Samuel Froehlich could no longer accept. According to the baptismal liturgy of the state church, the infant’s sponsors were asked five questions regarding the infant’s beliefs and intentions. Froehlich’s reaction to this was without compromise: “This play with holy things I could no longer carry on, in my conviction.” Thus, he became a proponent of believer’s baptism based on the candidate’s faith, rather than as an infant or at the time of the age of confirmation.

Departure From the State Church

The confrontations between Froehlich and the state church culminated with his dismissal from the church on June 4, 1831. Samuel Froehlich had stood resolutely by his convictions. He dared to preach the truth, even if it displeased the church council or his peers in the clergy.

Being close to God but without a church affiliation, Froehlich awaited further direction from God. His first opportunity for Christian service came from a congregation in Wilhelmshofen in Turttemberg, Germany that had separated from the state church. However, this church was not entirely receptive to his doctrine because it adhered to the practice of infant baptism.

Tutoring

During this time Froehlich served several families as a tutor. Being highly educated and fluent in several languages, as well as possessing a brilliant mind, Froehlich was ideally suited for tutoring. It was also at this time that he met and preached among groups of Mennonites in the area.

The Baptism of Samuel Froehlich

In February, 1832, Froehlich was baptized by sprinkling at the hands of Pastor Ami Bost in Geneva (who, too, had left the state church). Although baptized by sprinkling, Froehlich later came to endorse the practice of baptism by immersion. He required that persons who had been baptized as infants, or by sprinkling without ever being truly converted, be re-baptized by immersion.

Missionary Journey

Even before he was baptized, Froehlich was in a quandary concerning his service for the Lord. Beginning in April, 1831 he set out to “test the waters” in various areas of Switzerland in an effort to measure the potential reaction to his preaching. He thus traveled extensively in areas where he was welcome. The first missionary journey was made into canton Thurgau in April, 1831.

It was during a journey to the Geibel (near Langnau) that he met Christian Gerber, a Mennonite minister. Gerber sought to instill new life into the congregation because he saw how lukewarm conditions were in the old Mennonite churches. About 60 members left the Mennonite Church, and together with a similar number who left the Reformed Church they organized a new congregation of some 120 members. This newly-established church constituted a significant beginning of the Froehlich movement in Europe.

Editors note: The next issue will include details on the personal and family life of Samuel Froehlich.

-by Perry A. Klopfenstein
Standing on the Promises

God knows we are prone to doubts in life. He understands us. That is why there are over 7,000 direct promises to men in the Bible. And nothing he has promised has ever been broken.

God cannot lie, he cannot make a mistake or change his mind. He is God and he has proven his faithfulness. While our doubts fly in the face of who he is and what he stands for, he understands us. While our doubts show plainly that we do not fully trust his promises, he is the same yesterday, today and forever. Yes, God will keep all his promises!

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither is he a man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” Num. 23:19

In the Old Testament days God appeared personally to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to make covenants with them. He blessed Moses with signs and wonders to prove he was a covenant-keeping God, and he made promises to King David that his kingdom would never end.

God went further and backed up his covenants with specific signs or tokens such as the rainbow or the tablets of stone with the ten commandments on them.

All the promises of God then were pointing to and culminating in the promise of a Savior; the New Covenant through the blood of Christ, and the coming and eternal kingdom of God. The birth, miracles, teaching, as well as the death and resurrection of Jesus, were all direct fulfillments of around 300 promises of God.

“For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us was not yes and no, but in him was yes. For all the promises of God in him are yes, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” 2 Cor. 19:20

If you had seen Jesus with your own eyes, would you have believed him? Many people saw Jesus alive and still had their specific doubts. His family and his hometown crowd certainly didn't believe. Many came to him asking the same manner of question that John the Baptist himself asked: “Art thou he that should come or do we look for another?” Matt. 11:3.

Jesus always reassured the questioner although he marveled at the unbelief at the same time.

Once a man brought his son who was possessed with an evil spirit, and Jesus said, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes.” The man’s honest answer is just as appropriate for us as it was for him: “Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.” Mark 9:24.

Jesus rewarded the man’s faith and used the occasion to bring glory to God through the deliverance.

Thomas is remembered for his doubt of the resurrection. Jesus knew all about Thomas’ doubts. And he showed up just so Thomas could be sure.

Jesus didn’t put him down. He said to him, “Come closer. See for yourself. Stop doubting and believe.” That was when Jesus also said, “Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe.” John 20:29.

It’s still our wonderful opportunity today, to not only believe, but to also stand on the promises of God!

“For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” 2 Tim. 1:12

-by Mike Walder
The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.

Lamentations 3:25