"While the waters roll let the weary soul hear the call the forth freely goes."
Continuing to Learn

As summer winds down, many noted that children have returned to school. For many, it is a time of excitement as they begin a new year. Especially for the younger students, the enthusiasm comes out in their smiles as they head off to school. After reviewing what may have been forgotten in the summer vacation, they soon move on to new and more challenging subjects. Like sponges, they quickly learn and expand.

One thing we have found true in life is that we never stop learning. This is especially true when we study the Word. There are times we need to review what we may have forgotten. More often we are challenged to a higher calling and "new" subjects. The Word is living and fresh, always ready to reveal a truth that may be new to us. Do we have the excitement and enthusiasm of a new student, anxious and ready to soak up the teachings from the Father? Let us all be sponges, ready to be filled.

In Christian love,
Rick and Michelle Kaisner, Silver Lining Editors
Peaceful Living empowered by the Holy Spirit

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

We see God’s value in each individual and joyfully reflect Jesus’ peaceful spirit. (Guiding Principle F)

One of the most difficult passages in the Bible can be found in 1 Peter 2: Here the Apostle instructed the Church to obey various authorities. The reason had nothing to do with their individual rights, personal well-being, or political or social agenda. Rather, they were to submit “for the Lord’s sake.” Submission to authority as an expression of the Lord’s peacefulness is a matter of Christian witness.

By the time Peter’s letter was written (likely AD 60s), the Church had grown to span the Mediterranean and had attracted quite a bit of attention, not all of it favorable. Unbelievers accused Christians of all sorts of misbehavior. In response, Christians were to silence accusers by their law-abiding conduct. This wasn’t Peter’s personal preference, but rather, “So is the will of God.” Christians had been freed from sin by God to become his own servants, or perhaps more accurately translated, “slaves.”

They were to “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.” This could not have been easy living in an immoral, ungodly, pagan empire ruled by the infamous Emperor Nero. Persecution of Christians broke out periodically and so a major theme of 1st Peter is the problem of Christian suffering of injustice. To obey and honor civil authorities in such times must have been horribly difficult.

Peter’s next instruction was even harder. In verse 18, Peter instructed slaves to submit respectfully to their masters, “not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward,” or unjust. Let’s not miss the magnitude of this instruction: slaves were to submit and show respect to unjust masters. Peter did not encourage them to revolt, rebel, escape, or protest. Peter’s teaching runs completely against the grain of modern western culture and human nature. Was Peter not sanctioning injustice by turning a blind eye to the suffering of slaves? This offends our sense of justice, truth, and goodness.

We could remind ourselves that for slaves to rebel against their masters was nearly suicidal, and to escape very difficult, so submission was a matter of survival. We could point to the way that other Scriptures work against slavery, and to the fact that historically Christianity has been a major force for emancipation and human rights around the world. These are all good points to make but making them while reading 1 Peter 2 shortchanges Peter’s teaching, for Peter was after something else.

In verses 19 and 20, the Apostle commends those who suffer injustice “for conscience toward God,” or, “out of awareness of God.” Peter wanted slaves to submit not because he was unaware of basic principles of justice, but because he was aware of God. When Christians, mindful of God, patiently do good and suffer for it, this is “acceptable with God.” In fact, the instruction is even harder. Peter says, “for even hereunto were ye called.” Yes, we are called to this.

Why? Why would God, speaking through Peter, teach such a thing? Peter tells us: “because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.” Jesus “…bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” Jesus suffered an injustice that is unfathomably worse than anything we could imagine: Jesus, God in the flesh, who had no sin of his own and was free to do whatever he

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Good morning and greetings. We always acknowledge that preaching is a miracle of God. It’s not a prepared mental exercise; God uses our mind, but what comes out the mouth and through the microphone is only half the work that gets done. There’s another body of work that’s being done in preparing the soil. God does that independently of the speaker. I think it’s pretty clear that, as Jesus is explaining this to his disciples, it’s the scattering of the word for which we’re responsible, but he says, “just be forewarned. It’s going to fall on a few different kinds of soils, and what kind of soil it falls on will determine what it produces.” So, I just encourage you, every time we come here and assemble as a body of believers, don’t just pray for those who speak, but pray for those who hear. Pray that God would soften and prepare hearts to be receptive. It’s his work to soften our hearts.

Let’s open up together this morning in the Psalms. Psalm 105 is before me.

Before we read Psalm 105, I just want to recognize for a moment that about two-thirds of the psalms, about 60ish psalms, are lament psalms. A lament psalm follows a pretty consistent pattern of three or four steps, and it begins with the lament. It is a human looking up to God and saying, “God, it’s a mess. It’s really bad. I want to articulate what’s bad and how bad it is.” That’s where lament psalms begin. We should first just take heart that God wants to hear that. There will be times in life when there are intrusions and disruptions, upheaval and suffering, and it is God’s heart that he wants to hear that. That’s not to be corked or bottled or pushed down. He welcomes that to be expressed, but he doesn’t want it to stop there. If you just stop there, that’s just murmurings. God’s pretty consistent on what he thinks of murmuring.

In the second phase of the lament psalm is the remembering. It’s the articulation of saying, “God, in the past, you have done this. I remember your faithfulness in the past. I remember your character of who you are.” The third aspect of the lament psalm is the ‘ask’.

If you look at these lament psalms, it’s really an interesting pattern because it doesn’t tend to reflect our nature. The lament phase is long – lots of sentences articulating how bad it is. The remembering section is also long – articulating the thoughts in clear, good adjectives and verbs of who God is and what he’s like and what he’s done. Then the “ask” is typically very short.

Let it encourage you as the Psalms really help us talk to this invisible God. Part of it is lament, and it’s just a healthy way to think about how you dialog with God. He wants to hear you in full sentences, with good words, descriptive of how bad it is. Then he wants to hear your remembering how good he’s been and how good his character is. At the end of that, it’s okay to make an ‘ask’. I always say that because Psalm 105 is a recounting of remembering. It’s a lot of remembering going on and giving God acknowledgment of what he did historically.

One of my favorite chapters in the Bible is Nehemiah 9. It’s the chapter that helped me understand I don’t hang by a thread with God. As a young believer, I spent decades feeling like this perpetual disappointment to God and wondering if I was saved, wondering if he would have patience for me, who I was and all the mess ups. Nehemiah
9 is the very tail end of all Old Testament history. It’s not the end of the Old Testament, but it’s the end of the chronological narratives, so as Nehemiah writes chapter 9, he has the full rearview mirror of what has happened and God’s faithfulness with his children in times past. We capture some of that in Psalm 105. Let’s read together.

Marcia and I are going through the Bible chronologically. We’ve just walked through all of this and the amazement of how God faithfully keeps his word. Not only is he able to take the nations and just raise and diminish them, he also takes people who are hardhearted and brings them to brokenness. It didn’t surprise me that God was faithful to his covenant. What surprised me, in going through the Bible, is when someone mentioned that God made a covenant. Maybe this was a surprise to you too.

All of this is mentioned very early on here. Verse 8: “He hath remembered his covenant for ever”, and Verse 9: “Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac.” I don’t know if you ever wonder about these things, but what instigated God to make a covenant? Why did he make a covenant with Noah? Why did he make a covenant with Abraham? It is part of God’s nature to make covenants, and there’s no sense of fairness or balance to his covenants. They are so lopsided.

When he made the covenant to Abraham, he had him cut the animals in half. They would cut animals in half, and the two parties who are making the covenant would walk between the animals that are cut in two. The implication is ‘if you breach contract, or if you breach contract, let this happen to you.’ That’s the signature authority of a covenant. That’s the demonstrative way of showing the seriousness of entering into a covenant with somebody. Where was Abraham when the covenant was made? Abraham is parked off to the side in a trance. God himself walks between the animals, and he says, “Let this happen to me if I breach the covenant.” What we read in Psalm 105 and what we see historically is that God makes covenants, and God keeps covenants.

I remember when we were going through Genesis, and someone made this statement – it surprised me – “God makes a covenant with Noah because he needs to protect him from all the rain, from all the animals, and from himself.” One thing I never thought about is that God needed to protect Noah from God. Right? After this flood, God doesn’t seem very friendly. We get to see what happens when the wrath of God unleashes.

We need his covenants that we might know that we live under his own protection. He protects us from him. It’s very important whenever we come to him that we are in awareness of his holiness and what it takes to be qualified to come into his presence. There’s a sense of ‘I might as well be burned up in coming into his presence as to be received by him.’ It’s what you get when Nehemiah goes before the king of Babylon and when Esther goes before the king – just this sense that ‘I may die. This is a risky approach.” It’s only when we come back to “God, you said…” and that’s what Nehemiah’s prayer was when he comes before God first before going to the king, “God, you said that if you scatter your people but they turn back to you, you will gather us back, and so, on what you said, I’m going to come into your presence. On what you’ve declared me to be, on what you’ve declared for us, I’m going to come into your presence. On what you’ve declared me to be, on what you’ve declared for us, I’m going to come into your presence.” It’s healthy to have that sense of awe before God, but also to rest that the reason we can come into his presence is not because we’re good. It’s because we’ve been made good. It’s because there’s something imputed onto us; something’s been removed, and something’s been added. My sin has been removed. His righteousness has been added, and as such, I stand qualified to come into his presence.

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Ministry Program Updates

There is More to the Story that Matters!

I remember a conversation I had in 2019 with a co-worker here in San Diego. He knew that our family had moved from Illinois to southern California the year before and wanted to know more about it, as he had lived in San Diego his entire life. During our visit, he expressed that he was very fearful to ever live in the Midwest because it’s too dangerous there.

At first, I was taken aback by this. Many in the Midwest view California as the more dangerous place to live because of the wildfires and earthquakes that show up on the network news feeds. As I asked him to “tell me more of the story”, he admitted that he never had the need to travel outside of California, and the only context he had of the Midwest was tornado week on the Weather Channel. He was under the impression that every home in the Midwest was damaged by a tornado or thunderstorm on a regular basis.

We laughed together about how both California and the Midwest can be unfairly judged with false assumptions. Our discussion then turned to how easy it is for all of us to make judgments about people or situations based on limited information or understanding without knowing the whole story.

So how does this relate to us as Christians? As we live out the great commission in our local communities and in missions around the world, we rub shoulders with many from a different culture, perspective, or worldview. Our human/broken nature loves to figure out everything and everybody as soon as we possibly can, which unfortunately can end up doing more harm than good. Instead of listening, we can fill in assumptions based on stereotypes about a person’s background. Here are some examples where we can rush to judgment about a person or group, mistakenly thinking we understand them better than we do:

1. Going into the mission field in a foreign country or region, where cultural practices are much more different than we think they are. There is more to the story that matters.
2. Talking with someone who has opposite life experiences give some validation why they struggle to get along with, not knowing there are unresolved past hurts or misunderstandings.
3. A fellow brother or sister in church that we recently lost their job and had serious health place of business, only to find out later the customer
4. The need to travel outside of California, and the only context he had of the Midwest was tornado week on the Weather Channel. He was under the impression that every home in the Midwest was damaged by a tornado or thunderstorm on a regular basis.

We remembered that there are 3 stories to any and schedule, it gave our Haitian workers (known as “bosses”) the opportunity to develop their skills and function without the skilled labor and support from the States. God has used the “famine” to turn barrenness into blessing as our bosses have become actively engaged in every aspect of our ministry.

One may wonder if this change of direction has in some ways reduced the need of outside involvement. Our Haitian bosses think differently. While the need for our expertise has seemingly diminished, the need for participation from our churches has actually increased!

Our bosses desire the Christian fellowship and support from our brothers and sisters on the teams. The pastors and members of the churches have expressed that they have been blessed to work
political views, when often the other person’s life experiences give some validation why they believe what they do. *There is more to the story that matters.*

3. Being frustrated about an upset customer in our place of business, only to find out later the customer recently lost their job and had serious health problems. *There is more to the story that matters.*

4. A fellow brother or sister in church that we struggle to get along with, not knowing there are unresolved past hurts or misunderstandings causing the tension. *There is more to the story that matters.*

5. Moving to a different church in a new geographical region and assuming the brethren there will think exactly the same as you. *There is more to the story that matters.*

Every relationship that we have is an opportunity to share the love of Christ. But the reality of life is that we constantly communicate with incomplete information. We are flawed human beings and often do not see the entire picture. So how do we communicate effectively?

We remember that there are 3 stories to any relationship or situation:

1. My story
2. The other person’s story
3. God’s story

When we only view people through the lens of our story, we lose our effectiveness when working with them, even if we are right! But when we learn someone’s story the way God wants us to, we grow in our empathy, understanding, and wisdom.

2 Peter 3:18 says “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”. When we grow in grace, God humbles us, and helps us desire to understand more of the other person’s story, all while resting in God’s divine story. Listening, loving, and learning as we go.

There is more to the story that matters.

*b* – *by Mike Grimm*

alongside brothers and sisters from the United States and they desire for you to come. They wish us to share our time, our talents, our spiritual gifts, and Christian love with them. As many over the years have attested, when we freely give out of our abundance, we will always be out-given.

This next team season (November 2021-May 2022), we’re asking for three more churches to sponsor a team to support the work of the Construction Department in Les Cayes, Haiti. These teams are made up of willing workers that desire to encourage and be encouraged by the Haitian believers – the poor of the world but rich in faith. This work continues to be a tremendous blessing and testimony to the churches and the communities in which we serve.

We are flawed human beings and often do not see the entire picture. So how do we communicate effectively?

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There is more to the story that matters.

*– by Mike Grimm*

**Requirements for a Sponsoring Church and Team:**

- A team consisting of a leader and at least three additional participants from your congregation (4-9 participants per team)
- The sponsoring church(es) are asked to take a collection to help offset the material cost of the church roofs.
- Participants will be required to make an 8-day commitment (includes travel)
- Participants will need a current passport
- Participants need a willing heart and a ready mind. Specialized skills are not a requirement.

For more information about sponsoring a project, e-mail mebshconst.dept@gmail.com.

*–by Isaac & Brittany Steiner / Kurt & Julie Schrock*
During this past year many of us found ourselves simmering with stress and frustration. Perhaps these emotions even boiled over into unhealthy expressions of anger. News headlines and social media platforms seemed filled with examples. I found myself weary to see yet another outburst – it was exhausting. I longed for something different. Yet, I also found myself irritated with how quick I was to react to my own family while in close quarters or while engaging in conversation with someone over a controversial topic.

Considering these experiences, it can be easy to make inaccurate inferences about anger, what it is and what purpose it has in our lives – such that we seek to avoid it all together or, as culture is encouraging, embrace sinful expressions of anger as good. However, we are called as believers to seek ways to acknowledge and express anger at the right things and in a healthy and healing manner while guarding against the temptation to abuse this emotional response in our lives (Ephesians 4:26, 31). This can be uncomfortable and scary yet worth the journey as it deepens an awareness of ourselves and our connection with others, including God.

Anger is Normal
God created male and female in His image. One aspect of image-bearing is the experience and expression of emotions. It is important to remember, in and of themselves, emotions are not good or bad. Emotions serve a purpose and give energy to act or behave in our world. For example, when I feel sad, it is a way of recognizing something has been lost and it is helpful to seek comfort from others. Anger is one of many emotions you and I experience. Anger can vary in degree and intensity. For example, one may feel annoyance or one may feel violent rage. While each are a type of anger, the felt experience and expression of such anger is vastly different from individual to individual.

God’s Anger
Anger is an attribute of God, a part of His nature. Therefore, as a completely holy and righteous God, anger in and of itself, cannot be bad. However, a couple differences exist between God and us regarding anger and his expressions in Scripture. First, God is perfectly controlled which means God never acted out of control or without perfect understanding for the perfect purpose of his anger. In other words, he has never been controlled by anger but rather always has been in complete control when he experienced it. Secondly, God knows all things. This means God has never been wrong. God does not have “perceptions” – he only has perfect knowledge of what others did or are doing, thinking, and feeling. Thirdly, when God expresses anger it is always consistent with his love and mercy. Otherwise, he would cease from being a loving God. This is difficult for us to wrap our minds around, yet true.

The reality is when God expresses anger in Scripture he is doing so for injustices or evil or as a response to Israel’s constant betrayal of their covenant (Judges 2:12-14, 10:6-7 or 2 Kings 13:2-3). He deeply desires relationship and it pains him when things stand in the way of this relationship. While he is slow to anger (Neh. 9:17), he does express it. In his anger, God often turns people over to what they want or what they have chosen – ruin and death (sin) – but this is not his heart.

Our Anger
The Bible never criticizes the anger of God but has plenty to say about the destructiveness of anger often expressed by humans – Proverbs 29:22 “An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.” We see unhealthy expressions of anger that stir up strife in ourselves, our church, community, and our nation. Anger can arise from several places – 1) we have limited facts and get angry
over issues that seem “wrong” (not moral absolutes) but which we would view differently if we had perfect knowledge, 2) sinful self-interest is not met, 3) we feel threats to things we value which often leads to misinterpreting actions of others, and 4) injustice and evil done to innocent victims. Unlike God, we are limited in our perceptions and knowledge. Furthermore, when we do experience anger, we have difficulty with self-control - Proverbs 16:32 “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” Realities like these can lead to unhealthy and sinful expressions of anger. This does not mean we should avoid anger altogether. Rather, by God’s grace, we should be willing to accept our own limitations as humans and learn from this emotion and our response.

**Redemptive Responses**

Considering the realities above, experiencing and expressing anger is not comfortable. However, remember anger is not the issue, rather how anger is expressed. Anger is an emotion which provides us each with helpful information about our heart and relationships. The very purpose of emotions is to move us in some way – thus suppression often makes emotions worse and more intense which can lead to more unhealthy or sinful expression. Thus, we would do well to cautiously lean into and seek to find ways to respond to anger in a healthy and Godly manner while “putting away” its inappropriate forms (Eph. 4:31). This is a lifelong process.

Here are a few ways to support healthy responses when we experience anger:

- Pause, take a few deep breaths, and create some distance between you and what is upsetting you.
- Consider changing your surroundings by going on a walk or getting fresh air.
- Read / Pray through Psalms that express anger or journal about your anger.
- Consider ways to accept and release anger appropriately—music, hot shower, exercise.
- Seek to challenge and let go of unrealistic standards or expectations for yourself and others.
- Seek to identify and share the emotions underneath anger (i.e., fear, sadness) with others.
- Be quick to apologize when needed.

**Experiencing and expressing anger is not comfortable.**

**However, remember anger is not the issue, rather how anger is expressed.**

In conclusion, experiencing and expressing anger is not new. While our tendency may be to avoid anger all together, God calls us to be salt and light to a lost world (Matthew 5:13-16). Is it possible one aspect of being a preserving and truth-loving agent of Jesus is by displaying a different and appropriate response to anger? Perhaps the self-control which a believer can demonstrate through the power of the Spirit will be a witness to others of the life-changing power available to all through Jesus.

Relationships affect every facet of our lives and maintaining God-honoring relationships throughout our life can be a challenge. ACCFS has developed numerous resources to assist individuals and the church family in the areas of boundaries, communication, conflict/forgiveness, and other aspects of healthy relationships. These resources are found on our website at www.accounseling.org/relationships. If you would like more information, please contact ACCFS at (309)263-5536 or info@accounseling.org.
A little boy took the lunch his mom packed and went out to the mountain, excited to listen to a speaker so many were exclaiming about. When the disciples following Jesus realized there were 5,000 hungry men in addition to women and children there was more than a little concern! Upon hearing about the need, the precious child offered up his meager lunch of 5 loaves and 2 fishes from his lunch pail. Jesus blessed the offering and there was more than enough with some to spare.

This could easily be the story of the 2021 Gateway Woods Hybrid Auction. But first, let’s recap:

• 2019 was the Auction as most of us have known it - with great weather, lots of donated items, and you, as generous bidders, made it a wonderful turnout.
• 2020 was not a typical Auction. With COVID-19 concerns, the Auction was moved to an online format – a sad situation for those of us longing for AC fellowship. But again, the Lord blessed the Auction, through you, with a record-breaking year.
• 2021 rolled in and an excited, yet cautious, Auction Committee prayerfully made the decision to have an in-person Auction alongside an online one which became the first Gateway Woods Hybrid Auction.

August 4-6, you bid against other supporters online from coast-to-coast to try to snag one of the 224 Online Silent Auction items. As those items closed on Friday night, your excitement was palpable as it was building for the In-Person Auction day ahead.

The morning of Saturday, August 7, 2021 dawned with peace and beauty as cars started rolling into the field to park. Sausage was frying, the Gateway Choir sang beautifully, inspirational speakers described exciting new happenings on campus, the sights and sounds of friends and family greeting each other with hugs and laughter started ringing.

The only blip on an otherwise perfect day was a thunderstorm that decided to roll through with high winds and lots of hard rain. Attendees willingly took shelter in the houses and gym until the storm passed through, some brave souls standing on guard to save tents, auction items, and equipment from damage. After a brief 20-minute reprieve, right back to bidding in the tents everyone went! Praise God for his provision of safety!

The total at of the end of the first Hybrid Auction was a record of $827,000, the combination of online and in-person!

Just like the little boy who so willingly shared his lunch, YOUR generosity, the supporters of Gateway Woods, was multiplied over and over that Saturday. What a blessing to witness as the Father meets our needs through you, the body of Christ!

We look forward to seeing you again the first week of August 2022 for another Hybrid Auction!

News:

• Sis. Jill Rager from Leo is helping out at the Gateway Woods School this semester. Please pray for the transition into her new role.
• Our Annual Hog & Jog 5k Run/Walk is scheduled for October 16. If you would like to come out and support Gateway while getting some exercise. Register at: https://gatewaywoods.org/events/hog-jog
• 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 a Teacher, Houseparent Couple, and 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.

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.

Arizona, Phoenix

Marge Lindenbaum

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Rom. 8:26

It is September and I am thinking of my mom and dad. How I would love to discuss with them things happening in our world. Some day! Meanwhile, we have a better counselor to consult, and I find myself going to him often. Possibly the highest privilege we enjoy as children of God is the privilege of prayer. To be able to not only approach the God of all creation but to be invited to walk alongside him and fellowship with him is a remarkable thing! While I know he is sovereign and all the things we are observing in our world are by his hand and under his control, in day-to-day life, it seems some things might be getting “by” him. I do believe that is why he told us what will happen at the end of the age, and the time of the end - so we will know these things are not a surprise to the one who wrote the story, and knows the end from the beginning. When considering the atrocities being carried out in this world, it is sometimes hard to find words to even express my longings for the people involved. My words, and even my thoughts and imaginations, are completely inadequate. I don’t understand why evil is allowed to flourish as we sit by powerless (a fairly common theme in Psalms). Then I am prompted to remember two things. (1) The most powerful weapon available to man is at my disposal. I don’t really even need to know how to deploy it. Everything necessary is provided - my longing, divine wisdom from the Holy Spirit to interpret, carry and intercede, the price that was paid to allow access. I only need to call upon his name and he does the rest. I am confident both my parents would tell me we need to pray. And pray and pray. Come boldly and make our requests known. The promise and my experience is that an answer will be given, not in my time, not in my way, but in the best possible way from the omniscient, gracious and merciful Father. Which leads me to (2) God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy and compassion on whom he will have compassion. (Rom. 9:15). We are not called to understand the mysteries, but to pray and to tell others about the love God has for them. If we can spread the message of the unspeakable gift and sacrifice made to open the way for us imperfect mortals to know him personally, we can lighten the darkness. If we are still here, there are still souls that can be saved. We can pray for those we can’t physically reach and tell those around us the good news of the gospel.

“What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,” Rom. 9:22-23

We continue to enjoy numerous storms bringing much-needed rain
to our valley. Our young folks are back in school, in person, and we are getting used to a somewhat more normal routine than has been the case for some time.

Our brother Victor Krstk underwent a scheduled surgery and contracted COVID-19. He is in the hospital as this is being written, and we ask you to join us in praying for his full recovery.

Our Women’s Bible study will be a study of the Sermon on the Mount. Our prayer is that we can continue looking up and reaching out as we await the Lord’s call to meet him in the air!

Arizona, Prescott
Autumn Rokey

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” Gal. 5:22-23

May we continue to seek God, press into his word and live out the fruit of the Spirit in our daily lives.

Thankful for visiting ministers Bro. Jeff Wiegand (Sis. Janel, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Keith Hinrichsen (Sis. Tammy, Phoenix, AZ) and Elder Bro. Herbie Knochel (Sis. Laurie, Phoenix, AZ) for coming to preach this last month.

Arizona, Tucson
Dean and Jackie Knobloch

Greetings to all, across the lands. Just as the rains have refreshed our desert so has the word of God refreshed our souls. We were blessed with three visiting brothers to preach God’s word: Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Peoria, IL) Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Jim Zollinger (Sis. Tresa, Silverton, OR). We thank each of them for their efforts.

Our congregation has been praying and fasting for direction in how God would like us to serve as a body of believers and to serve our communities with greater purpose. Please pray for God’s will in our future endeavors!

California, Los Angeles/Altadena
Kali Sauder

“But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 19:14

With the return of the school year comes the start of a new Sunday school year. As always, it is a blessing to see little children coming to Jesus, learning about him, learning to know him through teachers called to pour into them weekly. It is not just in formal Sunday school lessons, but our church family is abundantly blessed as we welcome the little children into weekly worship with us. My son, age 2, is at a particularly difficult stage for me to be able to enjoy or glean much from the sermon. Keeping him occupied and quiet takes most of my attention, but that does not mean there is not a rich blessing for me—and others—when he is in the sanctuary for the service. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven belongs to these little ones, and just when we are feeling frustrated with how challenging church is with young kids, they remind us. While traveling this summer, we visited Roanoke, IL, a church with a much larger sanctuary than ours at home in Altadena. The congregational singing echoed off the high ceiling. My rambunctious toddler, once he realized his voice would also echo loudly, quickly joined in, not with the words or notes of the song of course, but with a joyful noise! I believe, and many others commented later, he was truly singing from his heart unto the Lord. God must have smiled, after all, he created these little ones and must revel in their pure hearts, their endless curiosity, their absolute delight in discovery.

Just a few weeks ago in Altadena on a Sunday morning, in between songs, the youngest attendee chirped from the back row, “Jesus!” The song leader accurately guessed her meaning and led us all in singing “Jesus Loves Me” next, with smiles all around.

The intergenerational aspect of our fellowship is such a gift. May we never forget; may our gracious Father always remind us of that.

“Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.” Psa. 78:1-4
California, San Diego  
Sarah Fulop  
We love and appreciate the elderly that attend church in San Diego and pray for them on a regular basis as different health issues come up. Outlook on life can be affected by our health and whether people care about us or not. So thankful for each one! We lift up Heidi Ludwig in prayer as she faces serious health issues.  

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Cor 12:9  

Our thoughts are with Bro. Mathew Fulop as he prepares to attend college on the east coast. We love this young man as a part of our small church family and pray for him as he gets used to living in a different part of the US. There will be some lonely hours of missing home and all that is familiar in San Diego, but also opportunities for more fellowship as he attends the Rockville, CT church. We will miss you Mathew!  

We also think of our Sunday school kids as they head back to school this week. Oh the fun and anticipation of getting ready for school! But probably not as exciting as anticipating summer vacation after a long school year.  

The Fulop family has been in our thoughts this past week as they attended the wedding of Bro. Todd Gasser and Sis. Desiree Sin. We pray for all involved as they go through life transitions.  

Colorado, Denver  
Jenna Hartter, Rebekah Stoller  
We said goodbye to Sis. Alexandra Wiegand (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Naomi) and Sophia Dotterer (Bro. Clint and Sis. Rebecca) as they headed off to college this month. Alexandra is starting at Wichita State University and Sophia is moving to Texas to spend some time working before starting at Texas A&M. We are praying for them through this time of transition. We also have welcomed Sis. Mary Fischer from Ft. Scott, KS for a short time as she does a medical internship in the area.  

We have had many visiting ministers sharing our pulpit in the last month. In July, ministering Bro. Jim Koehl (Sis. Hildegard, Morris, MN), Bro. Dale Frank (Sis. Christine, Mediapolis, IA), and Bro. Sam Manz (Sis. Shelby, Junction, OH) visited. In August, we had ministering Bro. Brad Gudeman (Sis. Teresa) and Bro. Tyler Joos (Sis. Tonya) both from Bradford, IL., and Bro. Matt Knapp (Peachtree City, GA).  

Florida, Fort Lauderdale  
Renee Mangold  
We were thankful for several visiting ministers this past month, Bro. Darren Plattner (Sis. Sue, Champaign, IL), Bro. Tom Bolliger (Sis. Jane, Tremont, IL), Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna, Rockville, CT) and Bro. Fred Funk (Sis. Diane, Morton, IL). We pray for a blessing on them for their willingness to serve.  

We appreciated the video access to the General Conference for those of us that are more geographically remote. We certainly felt the power of God’s Spirit and Word.  

There are so many to lift up in prayer in these times of unrest. We are praying for the people and ministries in Haiti affected by the recent earthquake, the soldiers and innocents in Afghanistan and those who continue to be plagued with illness across the world. May our Lord and Savior’s will be done and may we continue our steadfast faith and belief that his is the perfect plan in all things.
It has been a quiet month here in Fort Myers. We have enjoyed visitors, as many have made south Florida their vacation destination.

Becky Funk

“…Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” Josh. 1:9

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

Our Elder Bro. Jeff Streitmatter read the Memorandum on August 1.

We began our Sunday school on August 1. It was so nice to see all the kids being blessed by our Sunday school teachers and learning about Jesus.

Our church began a Bible study called Sharing the Gospel. We began our study on August 15.

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Prov. 3:5-6

We are so thankful for the many teachings that were given this past month. We appreciated having Bro. Jerry Bauman (Sis. Martha, Rittman, OH), share God’s word with us recently. May God bless them for their labor of love.

We welcome Sis. Hope Young, Bro. Quinton Young along with Bro. Brent Feichter to our congregation. May they feel God’s nearness, peace and hope as they embark on this new chapter of life.

We pray for Bro. Wynn Waldbeser who is now attending Middle GA University. We will look forward to his return visits.

“O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.” Psa. 34:3

The Lord gives. He is such a great giver, and we cannot outgive him! He is the Lord, and he knows exactly what we need and just at the right time.

Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Walder have the joy of receiving a new son in their family circle as their daughter, Sis. Trinity, is engaged to Bro. Joab Telusma from Les Cayes, Haiti, and Bluffton, IN. Joab is employed with the HarvestCall Construction Department under MEBSH, and has also been working in the Bluffton area for the past several summers. He is well-known by many visitors since he is a gifted translator for work teams and for those attending Haitian church. The couple plans to make their home in Haiti following their wedding in Smithville, OH, in September. We wish them many rich blessings and God’s provision for whatever adventures are ahead.

The Lord also takes away. He is the Lord, and he knows that the hard times of loss and despair will drive us closer to him.

On the morning of August 14, a strong earthquake with many aftershocks shook all of south Haiti, causing heavy damage and loss of life. Many families became instantly homeless and many also lost loved ones. While most of the HarvestCall structures in Les Cayes and the dairy farm were spared, parts of Hospital Lumiere were not, causing critical-care functions to be suspended. We pray that the response our brotherhood and the world have to this need will truly glorify our sovereign God!

We are thankful for the safety of all the missionaries that were in country at the time. May they feel our prayers in the weeks and months ahead as they share compassion in many forms to their neighbors in distress, and more importantly, as they explain that this powerful God who can move mountains also has the power to save their souls.
exhibit hope and an unwavering conviction that God will always be our refuge and strength, especially in the most tumultuous of times.

Please keep Sis. Charity Oswald (Bro. Jeremy), daughter of Bro. Dean and Sis. Carol Steffen, in your prayers as she has recently undergone an extensive hip surgery.

We are so happy to welcome two more people to our little church! Dr. Guy’s 9 year old son Niels has come to live with him. He left his mother and siblings in Haiti, so please pray for his transition. We would also like to welcome Richard Phiri as he has moved here from Leo, IN to attend college.

It is always a joy to welcome our brothers, sisters, and friends from Elgin. They came to support us on a recent Wednesday evening, and we are grateful for the ministering brothers who preached the Word: Elder Bro. Dan Moser (Sis. Anne) and Bro. Greg Schambach (Sis. Heather). Bro. Greg reminded us that God is always faithful in keeping his promises and we can be so grateful that we have Jesus who doesn’t just come in with a magic wand and wipe away all our problems, but that he loves us so much that he humbles himself to come into our suffering with us.

Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Minneapolis, MN) recently visited us as well. May God’s richest blessings be poured out on our dear Elder body for the love they have for us, both as they recently met together at the conference, as well as all they do for us throughout the year.

**Illinois, Bloomington**

**Kinsey Dotterer, Lauren Zimmerman**

We rejoice in the engagement of Bro. Klint Edelman (Bro. Alan and Sis. Wendy) to Sis. Ella Stettner (Bro. Graig and Sis. Corinne, Bluffton North, IN).

Scott and Sis. Erin Martin would like to announce the engagement of their daughter Rebekah to Brennen Street. Brennen’s parents are Jason Sr. and Maureen Street.

Bro. Tory and Sis. Wendy Zimmerman announced the engagement of their son Tyrel to Jadyn Stephens (Clint and Crissy Stephens of Fairbury, IL).

Bro. Doug and Sis. Jean Greiner are happy to announce the engagement of their son Brett to Taylor Metzger. Taylor’s parents are Gina and Bud Keim and Barry and Amber Metzger, all from Sabetha, KS.

Jenna Kieser and Lily Kieser have given their hearts to the Lord. The church rejoices along with their parents; Bro. Duane and Sis. Alissa.

We also rejoice that J’Riah Johnson and Layla Kaeb (Bro. Clint and Sis. Jami Kaeb) have given their hearts to the Lord. J’Riah is living with Bro. Clint and Sis. Jami Kaeb.


Brynn Nicole Huber was welcomed home by Bro. Dustin and Sis. Brittany and siblings Beckem and Jordyn on August 3. Grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Debbie Huber and Bro. Rich and Sis Gale Kiefer.

Zachary and Melissa Langford and big sisters Ella and Sofie welcomed home Rose Ellen on August 9. Grandparents are Bro. Paul and Sis. Karen Kieser and Don and Tamra Langford.

We are thankful for Bro. Arlan Miller (Gridley, IL) who came to share with us on our Selah Worship night about “What’s Your Family Balance?”. We learned questions to ask ourselves when deciding what our individual families will be involved in. This was a good topic in preparation for the school year starting soon. We pray for our students and their parents as school starts again and as we navigate the changes it will bring.

**Illinois, Bradford**

**Becky Endress, Lena Stoller**

August 15 marked the first day of the new Sunday school year. Whether it is a child’s first year or last year, we pray that the seeds planted in Sunday school and at home can grow into fruit for God’s glory.

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Heb. 10:25

Since the noon hour fellowship can seem so short, we are always thankful for other opportunities
to spend time together as a church family. Many were able to gather for an all-church potluck and singing on July 24. The past year didn’t allow for gatherings like this, so we appreciate it all the more.

We thank Bro. Nathan Rassi (Sis. Michelle, St. Louis, MO) for his willingness to share the Word with us this past month.

A hearty welcome to Bro. Walt and Sis. Lynda Beery (Rittman, OH). Bro. Walt is serving as general contractor for the church expansion project we have begun. We’re going to enjoy having them in our church family during his tenure. They will stay with their daughter, Sis. Leah and Bro. Tyler Endress and their children.

**Illinois, Champaign**

**Brent Young**

Many from our congregation attended the wedding of our Bro. Joe Metz (Bro. Daren and Sis. Rita, Gridley, IL) and Sis. Claire Berchtold (Bro. David and Sis. Leann, Princeville, IL). We wish them God’s richest blessings and look forward to having them as part of our church family.

We were blessed with a visit from the Mediapolis, IA singles group. It was a surprise for us and them, since only the drivers knew the destination when they departed home. On a summer Sunday with many of our home folks traveling, they added wonderfully to our singing, fellowship, and worship.

Our landscaping maintenance crew, along with volunteers, once again spent an evening sprucing up the church grounds. During our 2012 remodel, we took opportunity to improve the landscaping significantly and it is always striking upon arrival! Our building sits in a residential neighborhood, and we trust the grounds are a blessing to the neighbors as well.

Bill and Donna Erickson, directors of International Friendship Inc. (IFI) presented to our church regarding their organization and how our young group has been involved. IFI partners with local churches to extend hospitality and friendship to international students here at the University of Illinois. God truly has brought those from the uttermost parts right to our back door and IFI allows for enriching experiences and evangelism opportunities.

**Illinois, Chicago**

**Diana Eisenmann**

We appreciated our visiting ministers from the past month: Bro. Andrew Rassi (Sis. Sandy, Morton, IL), Bro. Nathan Rassi (Sis. Michelle, St. Louis, MO), and Bro. Justin Moser (Sis. Robin, Altadena, CA).

The annual Sunday school teacher and minister meeting was held in July in preparation for Sunday school resuming in August. In August we had our first monthly singing since March 2020; another pandemic-related milestone. Our hope is to continue with an all-church singing on the first Wednesday of each month, as has been our tradition for many years.

The Women of the Word weeknight event in August was a meal prep night. We enjoyed fellowship while assembling meals for each attendee to take home and share with family or neighbors and friends in the community.

We extend thanks to the Elgin church family for hosting the Elgin-Chicago potluck; we appreciate their warm welcome to all who were able to attend.

Sis. Rachel Sauder moved to Dallas, TX in August for her Bible translation training. We will miss having her in Chicago but are thankful for her willingness to do this important work.

**Illinois, Cissna Park**

**Denise Kaeb, Lou Ann Kaeb**

We were blessed this month by Bro. Neil Stoller (Sis. Luann and their children, Princeville, IL) for making Cissna Park a stop on their vacation schedule. We so appreciated his exhortation on wisdom and understanding. We hope you had a restful vacation and don’t hesitate to visit again!

We also appreciated Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea and their children, Remington, IN) for joining us and sharing the Word with us! Thank you Bro. Dana, for encouraging us to look to God for our hope and salvation!

We, as a congregation, have been seeking God’s will for leadership in our church, and God has been faithful in directing us. During our brotherhood conference, Bro. Bruce Frank, along with his wife, Sis. Bonita, received full support to
be ordained as Elder in the work. I, personally, was humbled during this time, as it was made evident the love and commitment each of our ministers have, first to God and his will, and for our congregation. We are looking forward to Bro. Bruce’s ordination on August 29. Rest assured, Bro. Bruce and Sis. Bonita, each of us are praying for you! Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Karol, a thank you is not adequate words to express our feelings as you begin this next chapter on your journey of faith. As our congregation begins a new chapter, I am reminded of the lyrics of the hymn, Unity.

"Thus united And in concord Let us walk the path of life; Hand in hand, O may love bind us For each other's welfare strive. Thus it is our Saviour's pleasure, As His footprints plainly show. May God's love, our greatest treasure, Richly ev'ry heart bestow. With the love of God inspired, There is joy for us on earth; May the Spirit, we've acquired, Grant us blessing, peace and mirth." Unity, Zions Harp, #237

**Illinois, Congerville**
**Mary Knapp, Krista Wieland**

“Oh and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.” 1 Cor. 11:24

Our church family gathered to share Holy Communion. We thank our Bro. Zach Anderson (Sis. Karla) and Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL) for serving.

We also thank visiting ministers who served on the pulpit, Bro. Justin Isch (Sis. Liz, Lamont, KS), Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA), Bro. Kevin Fehr (Sis. Lonnie, West Bend, IA) and Bro. John Rowell (Sis. Nelda, Tremont, IL).

We are thankful to share that David Bliss has surrendered his heart to the Lord in repentance. We wish him God’s grace and blessings.

Bro. Kurt and Sis. Julie Schrock shared a Haiti ministry update with our church family. May God continue to bless and provide for them and their young family as they serve him.

**Illinois, Elgin**
**Amy Gasser**

Our VBS was held during the week of July 19. We thank the visiting ministers who spoke to the Bible Class, including Bro. Andy Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL), Bro. Andrew Rassi (Morton, IL), and Bro. Mark Lindberg (Chicago, IL). On Tuesday evening, Sis. Pauli Schambach (Bro. Todd) shared her personal testimony. On Sunday afternoon, there was a VBS program at the Fellowship Center. The Sunday school picnic was also held that afternoon at the Fellowship Center to conclude the week of VBS.

Bro. Lynwood Schambach (Sis. Jamie) has completed his term in Sunday school. Bro. Matt Schambach (Sis. Renee) was selected for a six-year term.

We thank Bro. Rick Kaisner (Sis. Michelle, Chicago, IL) for ministering to us on a recent Sunday, following the morning service at Highland Oaks.

On Sunday, August 15, we appreciated the services of Elder Bro. Brad Eisenmann (Sis. Cindy, Chicago, IL). That afternoon, there was a potluck supper at the Fellowship Center, and we enjoyed having a few couples from the Chicago and Belvidere congregations join us.

Following the potluck, there was a farewell singing for Bro. Larry and Sis. Liz Moore, who plan to relocate to Ft. Wayne, IN to be closer to their daughter’s family, and they will assemble with the Indianapolis congregation. We will miss them but wish them God’s blessings.

July 24 was the wedding date of Austin Lodge and Jen Eberhardy in Menomonie Falls, WI. Their parents are Dave and Lori Lodge and Joe and Angie Eberhardy (Menomonie Falls, WI). Taylor Kellenberger and Mackenzie Morris were married on August 13 in Wisconsin. Their parents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Debbie Kellenberger and Joe and Marily Mukite of Elgin.

We are thankful for Jadin Humbracht (Bro. Eric and Sis. Erica) and Keegan Schambach (Bro. Lynwood and Sis. Jamie), who have begun their repentance.

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

August 1 was the wedding day of Sis. Malea Cottrell (Bro. Brent and Sis. Darla) and Bro. Carson Zollinger (Bro. Jim and Sis. Tresa,
Silverton, OR). We were thankful for the many visitors that shared the day with us! We appreciated the labors of Bro. Jeremy Leman (Sis. Shara, Forrest, IL) and Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL) as they ministered to us in the morning. Our Bro. John Cottrell and Bro. Jim Zollinger (Sis. Tresa, Silverton, OR) shared the wedding service in the afternoon.

As our Elders recently gathered together in Rittman, OH, we know that many prayers were offered on their behalf. We are so thankful for their willingness to serve in these challenging times in history. May God be with each one and give them grace and wisdom.

August 7-8 was a special weekend for Bro. Doug and Sis. LoriJean Wood as they gave their testimony of faith and were baptized into our church body. Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL) assisted Bro. Trent in this work. We thank Bro. Nate Hodel (Sis. Jamie, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL) for their efforts in the ministry that Sunday.

We also appreciated the labors of ministering Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty, Elgin, IA) and Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) this month. May God bless each one for their willingness to preach the truth to our congregation.

In a recent sermon, we were reminded that sometimes God has placed a cross in our lives for the furtherance of his kingdom. A statement like that gives us courage to bear it willingly and cheerfully.

“The Christian’s robe
and badge of love
It is the cross of Christ.
And he who knows
the worth thereof
Will bear it without sighs.
We bear it but a little while,
A pledge of things to come,
Of garments glorious and white
In that eternal home.”

*The Christian’s Cross,* Zion’s Harp, #252

**Illinois, Fairbury**

**Kati Meiss, Trish Steidinger**

We were thankful to hear the testimonies of our new Bro. Owen Moser (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Sara) and Sis. Carla Kilgus (Bro. Paul and Sis. Carmen). It was so encouraging to hear how God has worked in their hearts! We had several visiting ministers here for the baptisms. Elder Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL), Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL), Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA), Bro. Gerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Mediapolis, IA) and Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott, IN). We were privileged a couple weeks later to have Bro. Barry Dietz (Sis. Rachel, Bradford, IL) and Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Dianna, Iowa City, IA) share God’s message with us. We thank each of these brothers for their efforts and willingness to let God speak through them.

Prayer is a beautiful opportunity and privilege. We are thankful God answered our prayers and sent his spirit of love and unity among our Elder brethren, providing for them as they gathered for the conference. God is good and we praise him for his faithfulness!

We are so encouraged when a soul answers God’s call of repentance. We pray for Ellie Leman (Bro. Chad and Sis. Kim), Kyla Rassi (Bro. Darl and Sis. Janelle), and Keith Moser (Nita). We stand in awe as we watch God work his beautiful miracle of conversion within their hearts.

We are thankful to hear the engagement of Sis. Reena Moser (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara) to Bro. Levi Kaeb of Forrest, IL (the late Bro. Eldon and the late Sis. Stephanie). We wish them God’s blessings as they prepare for marriage.

**Illinois, Forrest**

**Jessica Gerber, Marsha Lanz**

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Eph. 3:20-21

God’s ways and timing are so often above our human understanding that all we can do is stand in amazement with thankful hearts!

Joy and excitement entered the household of Bro. Benton and Sis. Erica Kaeb as they welcomed Trey and Kya into their hearts and home. Bro. Arlen and Sis. Denise Leman along with Bro. Jacob (Sis. Hannah), Chase, Jayna, Carson, and Lily welcome little Emrie Grace into
their family. Thankful grandparents are Jim and Rita Bahler and Bro. Jerry and Sis. Kathy Leman (Eureka, IL). May God grant both families grace and wisdom as they raise these precious little ones.

We were thankful to welcome Bro. Ed Schrof (Sharon) as a brother-in-faith after his testimony and baptism. What an encouragement to hear and be reminded of God’s faithfulness.

Bro. Levi Kaeb (late Bro. Eldon and late Sis. Stephanie) is engaged to Sis. Reena Moser (Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara, Fairbury, IL). We wish them God’s blessings as they take this step in faith.

On August 8, Sis. Heidi Edelman (Warren and Sis. Cindy) and Bro. Joe Lavalier (Bro. Jim and Sis. Jeannette, Gridley, IL) were united in holy matrimony. May God be with them as they establish their home on his Word. We thank Elder Bro. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy) as well as ministering Bro. Arlen Miller (Sis. Katie) both from Gridley, IL for helping with the special day.

We also thank visiting ministers Bro. Denny Fulop (Sis. Allison, San Diego, CA) and Bro. George Gal (Sis. Tina, Akron, OH) for sharing God’s word with us this past month.

We bid farewell to Bro. Tyler, Sis. Ruth and little Taya Edelman as they make the move to Bastrop, TX. May they continue to feel God’s nearness as they settle in their new home.

Our prayers go out to Sis. Donna Edelman who has spent time in the hospital.

Illinois, Goodfield
Amy Hinrichsen, Judy Knapp

“The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.” Zeph. 3:17

The angels are rejoicing that Karly Wiegand has surrendered her heart to the Lord in repentance. Karly is the daughter of Bro. Kevin and Sis. Lindsay Wiegand. We are thankful the Lord is mighty and will save us from our sins. Praise God for the gift of salvation!

We are very thankful to announce that Claire, Larisa, and Anna Wiegand and Sophia Meister are at peace with God and man and are ready for baptism. Claire and Larisa are daughters of Bro. Erik and Sis. Carrie Wiegand. Anna is a daughter of Bro. Nathan and Sis. Laura Wiegand. Sophia is the daughter of Bro. Dan and Sis. Susan Meister.

Our VBS took place the end of July! The theme for the week for our kids was “God’s Big Backyard.” There was a lot of enthusiasm all week long as the kids learned about how to serve others and serving Christ. We had adult VBS on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights. The speakers were Bro. Nathan Hodel (Sis. Jamie, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Kevin Knapp (Sis. Dixie, Bloomington, IL), and Bro. Tim Wiegand (Sis. Christa, Leo, IN), and the singing groups were Living Waters, The Hartman Family, and the Sunday school students. It was an inspiring week!

Sis. Erin Davis was home in July and gave an update on what is going on at the EnGedi House in Jamaica where she and her daughter Neiah live. We were glad to have her visit and share how God is working in Jamaica.

Bro. Jesse and Sis. Tiffany Ruegsegger’s foster son, Cai returned home recently to his biological dad and mom. Our prayers are with Cai, his parents, and Jesse and Tiffany through this difficult, but redemptive transition.

We were blessed to have Bro Virgil Kaeb (Sis. Suellen, Sarasota, FL) visit and share the word with us this past month as well as Bro. Chad Leman (Sis. Kim, Fairbury, IL) who had a Wednesday night, topical Bible study.

We are thankful that the summer Elder conference went well and are thankful to all our Elders for shepherding our churches across the land.

As summertime comes to a close and kids start back to school, we wish all the kids and teachers the best in this new school year and for God’s continued hand to guide them through.

Illinois, Gridley
Perry Klopfenstein

Bro. Jacob Schlif married Sis. Mary Leman (formerly of Bluffton, Indiana). He is the son of Bro. Jake and Sis. Amy Schlif. Her parents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Val Leman (Bluffton North, IN). We offer our best wishes to this new union of hearts.

A son, their firstborn child, was born to Bro. Kyle and Sis. Katrina Reinhard. He was named Roy Wendell. Grandparents are Bro. Clark and Sis. Cindy Stoller, and Bro. Roger and Sis. Maureen Reinhard, (Bluffton North, IN). May the Lord bless this little boy.

An opportunity to meet a newly-married couple of the Phoenix, AZ congregation, Bro. Daniel and Sis. Lexi Knochel, was held in the fellowship hall after church on August 15. She is the daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Peg Stoller and his parents are Elder Bro. Herbie and Sis. Laurie Knochel (Phoenix, AZ).

On Wednesday evening, August 18, we heard an interesting report of church work done at a school in Jamaica for the deaf. Bro. Seth and Sis. Andreen Kaeb explained their involvement in the work of salvation and education in that nation. Bro. Seth is a native of Gridley. Sis. Andreen is from Jamaica and is deaf.

Illinois, Morton

Annette Tanner

“...If God be for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31

We began our month by celebrating the marriage of our Sis. Tori Sauder to Bro. Eric Hartter, (Washington, IL) on July 18. Their parents are Bro. Todd and Sis. Wendy Sauder and Bro. Chris and Sis. Jill Hartter, (Washington, IL). Bro. Joe Klotzle (Sis. Sue, Altadena, CA) and Bro. Doug Wagenbach (Sis. Lillian, San Diego, CA), uncles of the groom, brought us teachings from God’s word during the morning service. Our Deacon Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue) and Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL) had the wedding service. Elder Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr. (Sis. Donna), uncle of the bride, led them in their vows. We wish this young couple God’s blessings as they take up their place in the Washington congregation.

The week of July 26-30 was our VBS. The theme for the three year olds through eighth grade was “Time Lab-Discovering Jesus from Eternity Past to Eternity Future”. The Bible Class and adults were blessed with five nights of visiting ministers speaking on the theme “Faith Over Fear”. A very timely topic for the times we are living in. We were encouraged Monday by Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL) with the topic “Do Not Be Anxious”; Tuesday - Bro. David Prevo (Sis. Tara, Bloomington, IL) “Take Time to be Holy”; Wednesday - Bro. Jedd Rocke (Sis. Marsha, Goodfield, IL) “Stand Firm in the Truth; Thursday - Bro. Caleb Schafer (Sis. Laura, Indianapolis, IN) “Finding Peace in Jesus” and Friday - Bro. Benjamin Lindberg (Sis. Anneliese, Taylor, MO) “This World Is Not Our Home”. We thank these brothers for the time spent preparing their presentations and traveling to be with us during this special week.

Our sympathy is extended to two dear families whose loved one passed away. Viola “Vi” Huette (Bro. Ray, dec.) was called home just a few days before her 100th birthday which was August 4. She is survived by her daughter Janet Woodrow (Rob, Green Valley, IL). Bro. Dave Beutel (Sis. Eunie, Tremont, IL) entered Heaven on August 7. Among his many survivors are his granddaughter Sis. Carol Roecker (Bro. Fred) of our Morton church family.

We thank the Rittman, OH congregation for hosting the Elder and General Conferences held the first week in August. We are thankful for modern technology which allowed us to watch the Friday Conference as eight Elder brothers expounded on II Peter 1:5-7.

August 8 we were excited to hear the engagement announced of our Sis. Hallie Stoller to Bro. Alex Heinold, (Washington, IL). Their parents are Bro. Jeff and Sis. Stacey Stoller, and Bro. Thad and Sis. Elizabeth Heinold (Washington, IL). May God bless them as they plan their future together.

August 11 was our Family Worship Night. We enjoyed seeing pictures and hearing the experiences of our Bible Class and parents, as they shared how they served the Lord on their mission trip to Sunset Gap, TN, the week of August 2. Then on Saturday, August 7 they volunteered at the Gateway Woods auction. May
they always remember God’s provision, and how they were blessed by helping others.

We pray for all of those in Haiti who are affected by the recent hurricane. May God be their strength during this time of recovery.

We also pray for our young people as they start back to school whether they be in preschool or all the way through college. May they remember the teachings from the Bible which they hear in Sunday school or from the pulpit, while they deal with the evils around them.

As we were reminded by our VBS speakers, in our life here on earth with its challenges, faith is the victory.

“Encamped along the hills of light,
Ye Christian soldiers, rise.
And press the battle ere the night
Shall veil the glowing skies.
Against the foe in vales below
Let all our strength be hurled;
Faith is the victory, we know,
That overcomes the world.
His banner over us is love,
Our sword the word of God;
We tread the road the saints above
With shouts of triumph trod.
By faith, they like a whirlwind’s breath,
Swept on over ev’ry field;
The faith by which they conquered Death
Is still our shining shield.
Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory!
Oh, glorious victory,
That overcomes the world."
Faith Is the Victory,
Tabernacle Hymns #112

**Illinois, Peoria**

**Bonnie Bach, Crystal Wettstein**

We have been enjoying summer days and outdoor activities. As we spend time in God’s creation, we marvel at his handiwork! What we can experience shows us the genius of our Lord and creator! We were recently reminded of the intricacy of the human body as we shared family night. Bro. Ryan Funk, an Ear, Nose, Throat doctor, presented a talk on “The Scent of Worship”. With pictures he showed us some of the many things that occur for us to smell and then ways to help us worship this great God. May we strive to truly love and worship our dear Jesus!

“For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ...” 2 Cor. 2:15

The young group and others of our church family spent a day outdoors in Indiana then worshipped with the brethren at Indianapolis on Sunday. It is a blessing to be able to be together!

Sis. Sadie Rumbold (Bro. Gregg and Sis. Heather) and Bro. Colton Yergler (Bro. Shawn and Sis. Mindy, Bluffton North, IN) were united in holy matrimony. Sharing the day with us were ministering brothers, Bro. Ryan Bertsch (Sis. Jessica, Bluffton North, IN) and Elder Bro. Lynn Fiechter (Sis. Ronda, Bluffton, IN). We wish the new couple many blessings.

Before morning services, we are joining together in song to practice hymns from the new hymnal. Some will take a while to learn, but we want to be able to sing beautifully for Jesus.

In this time of so much unrest and worry I think of the words:

“What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Ev’ry-thing to God in pray’r!”
What A Friend, Hymns of Zion, #161

It is a comfort to know we have a friend who is strong enough to bear our burdens and go with us in whatever lies ahead!

**Illinois, Princeville**

**Ruth Herrmann, Cherie White**

“...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” Rom 10:15

Both retired Elder Bro. Jim Plattner (Sis. Marlene) and Bro. Matt Steffen (Sis. Deanna) have retired from their weekly rotation on our Princeville pulpit. May God richly bless their many years of proclaiming the gospel to us.

“Speak the gospel of salvation Boldly in the wilderness!”
The Watchmen’s Call, Zion’s Harp, #112

It was made evident to our congregation to place two new brothers into the ministry. May God gently lead both Bro. Robert Herrmann (Sis. Mary) and Bro. Grant Herrmann (Sis. Hannah) and families into this beautiful opportunity to serve us in this way. We thank Elder Bro. Bruce Endress (Sis. Elizabeth, Bradford, IL) and Elder Bro.
Tim Funk (Sis. Debra, Peoria, IL) in this work.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice…” Rom 12:15

On July 25, Bro. Joe Metz (Champaign, IL) was joined to Sis. Claire Berchtold in holy matrimony. Parents are Bro. Daren and Sis. Rita Metz (Gridley, IL) and Bro. David and Sis. Leann Berchtold. It was very touching that Joe’s father conducted the wedding ceremony. We thank him and Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo, IN), Bro. Brett Lanz (Sis. Renee, Rittman, OH) and Bro. Chris Laukhuf (Sis. Rachel, Latty, OH) who shared in the services.

What a joy to experience the General Brotherhood Conference held in Rittman, OH whether it was in-person or virtually. What a precious heritage we enjoy! It was good to be reminded so lovingly to apply the building blocks of faith in our daily living.

“In days of youth seek ye the Lord…” Youth, Hymns of Zion, #135.

We welcome Bro. Michael Herrmann (Bro. Robert and Sis. Mary) and Sis. Madison Blunier (Bro. Darin and Sis. Keri) who were baptized into the fold of Jesus Christ on August 1. Thankful that Bro. Isaac Wofford (Sis. Rachel, Washington, IL) was with us to share in the day. Just two weeks later on August 15 three more souls were added. We rejoice with Sis. Elise Herrmann (Bro. Dean and Sis. Dawn), Sis. Cassie Berchtold (Bro. David and Sis. Leann) and Sis. Libby Martin (Bro. Larry and Sis. Tiffany). Assisting was Bro. Jeff Neihouser (Sis. Sue, Morton, IL) and sharing in the service was Bro. Jeff Leman (Sis. Val, Bluffton North, IN) and Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO).

May God’s healing hand be upon Sis. Gladys Martin (Bro. Ed), Bro. Sam Martin (Sis. Mary), Sis. Martha Kay Regier (Bro. Dana) and Sis. Elaine Wagenbach (Bro. Lawrence, dec.) who had surgery or health issues.

We welcome Lilly Olgerfelt, an exchange student from Sweden, who is staying with Bro. Brian and Sis. Renee Wieland and family. May she feel the love of Jesus from our church family.

“…weep with them that weep.” Rom 12:15

Bro. Virgil Graf passed away leaving his dear wife, Sis. Marilyn and his daughters Sis. Elaine Graf (Altadena, CA) and Sis. Carol Blunier (Bro. Doug) and family. May God provide grace and comfort to fill the void in their hearts. Many participated in the service including Elder Bro. Tom Klotzle (Sis. Jody) and Bro. Joe Klotzle (Sis. Sue) both from Altadena, CA; Elder Bro. Bob Dotterer (Sis. Laura, Sardis, OH) and Bro. Mark Dotterer (Sis. Kate, Eureka, IL). Sis. Loretta Rumbold’s son-in-law and Sis. Connie Christ’s (Bro. Kurt) brother-in-law Steve Loudenburg passed away. Our sympathies to this dear family.

On August 15 Sunday school restarted after a short break. “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord”. Psalms 127:3. So thankful we can gather again as a group of teachers, young adults and children to learn more about Jesus and how we may please him.

Note of thanks:
I would like to thank you for all the love, cards and gifts for my birthday. What a blessing!

Sis. Bernice Streitmatter

**Illinois, Roanoke**

**Judy Sauder, Barb Schwind**

"Ancient words, ever true, Changing me and changing you. We have come with open hearts. O let the ancient words impart." Ancient Words, by Michael W. Smith

As the children and young adults of our church family head back to school, may they cling to “ancient words” of the Bible to change their hearts and give them direction. This was one of the beautiful, inspiring songs shared by the Prairie Choristers during the Song Worship Program of hymn singing and Scripture reading on August 4.

On July 18, Rod, Debbie, and Katie Wray of Les Cayes, Haiti shared about their ministry to 1500-2000 youth in Renault, including a weekly Sunday school program and the distribution of Manna Packs.

Our prayers are with families who have lost loved ones. Sis. LaVerne Butikofer (Bro. Albert, Elgin, IA) passed away on June 22. She was a sister-in-law to Sis. Marge Fischer, Sis. Pat Fischer, and Sis. Sara Byrd (Bro. Jim). On July 22, Marjorie Zeltwanger went to her eternal home, followed by her husband, Harold Zeltwanger, on
July 30. They lived in Mishawaka, IN. They were a sister and brother-in-law to Sis. Ila Pfister (Bro. Marv).

We said farewell to Bro. Daniel and Sis. Larissa Stoller and their children Alexis, Taelyn, and Brooks, who have moved to Georgia for his employment. May the Lord bless them as they serve him in their new location.

We thank our visiting ministers: Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO), Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Tamara, Wolcott, IN), and Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL).

On July 30, Mary Beth Knapp (Sis. Carol) married Chris Schmidgall (Goodfield, IL), son of Bro. Mike and Sis. Kary (Eureka, IL). On July 31, Kaylea Blunier (Bro. Ray and Sis. Wendy) married Tyler Dedrick of Chicago, IL. May the Lord be near each of these dear couples.

We rejoice that Theo Bertschi (Bro. Stephen and Sis. Susan) has begun his walk with the Lord.

Elder Bro. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy) gave a brief summary of the topics discussed at the recent Brotherhood Conference in Rittman, OH, on August 11.

We are praying for the earthquake victims in Haiti, the people of Afghanistan, and for those in our church who are facing health challenges: Tom Durand (Sis. Marsha), Sis. Mary Bradle (Bro. Bob), Sis. Kim Luginbuhl (Bro. Andy) and her sister Aimee Meinhold, Sis. Carol Feucht (Bro. Randy), Todd Schupp who is the father of Sarah Dominique (Steevens), Cheri Snider, sister-in-law to Margi Hodel (Kyle), and Bro. Dave Schwind (Sis. Barb).

A few months ago, an older sibling hurt our little grandson's feelings. Jack (not quite 3) ran, crying, to the opening where the desk chair sits. Sixteen month old Sadie, ran in after him, put her little arms around him and gave him a big hug. Jack soon had a smile, comforted by Sadie’s love. One of my high school friends posted this on Facebook: When you have a friend that’s going through a personal storm, instead of being a weatherman and spreading the news, try being an umbrella and cover them with love. Sadie was an umbrella to Jack. May we all be umbrellas to others!

**Illinois, Tremont**

**Debbie Aberle, Lucy Kaiser**

"At Thy feet, O Lord, we linger; Speak to us in accents clear! Let us hear Thy word so tender Eagerly with godly fear. Teach us follow Thy example; Teach us to devote our time; This so short a time, though ample For eternity sublime." Tho Hast Words of Life, Zion's Harp, #203

We are thankful that the Word was spoken clearly to us through Bro. Joe Gerber (Sis. Heidi, Champaign, IL) and Bro. Keith Hinrichsen (Sis. Tammy, Phoenix, AZ) as they visited and ministered to our congregation.

Bro. Jesse, Sis. Lucy, and Jason Kaiser welcomed home another baby boy, Travis Daniel. His grandparents, Bro. Tim and Sis. Ruth Kaiser and Bro. Marv and Sis. Paula Wagenbach are thankful for his safe arrival.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Nelda Rowell (Bro. John) at the passing of her brother, Bro. Leon Kuntz (Mediapolis, IA). Bro. Leon was also an uncle to Bro. Mark Moser (Sis. Colleen) and Bro. Matt Moser (Sis. Aimee). We pray that they all feel God’s comfort in their time of sorrow. We rejoice that Bro. Dave Beutel has won the victory and is able to walk again on the streets of gold! Our prayers are with his family that he left behind including his wife, Sis. Eunice and his children, Sis. Sally Koch (Bro. Roger), Bro. Roger (Sis. JoAnn), Sis. Janice Sauder (Bro. Howard), and Bro. Dean (Sis. Karen). Our sympathies also go out to his siblings Bro. Alvin (Sis. Carol), Sis. Ruth Koch, Annette Schambach, and Bro. Fred (Sis. Jeanette).

We pray for strength and healing for Sis. Charity Oswald (Bro. Jeremy) as she undergoes surgery and faces a long recovery. May the Lord wrap his loving arms around their family.

**Illinois, Washington**

**Lillian Pfaffmann**

We all believe in guardian angels, don’t we? Bro. Tate and Sis. Tamara Wyss were in a 2-vehicle, (car/semi-truck) accident, which by looking at the car afterwards one would have thought no one could have come out alive! Prayers were answered and they are both home from the hospital now recuperating.
Praise the Lord a soul has surrendered to Jesus! Cliff Leman (Bro. Herb and Sis. Lori), started his repentance this week. What rejoicing there must be in Heaven as well as in their home! If only more souls would see the “handwriting on the wall” and decide to follow him, as the time appears to be short before our Savior’s return!

“Haste and seek your soul’s salvation,

Heed the word of God today!

Haste to flee His condemnation;
Seek the straight and narrow way.

Evil are the worldly pleasures,
Leading to eternal fire;
Seek the everlasting treasure,

Ere the day of grace expire.”

Repent Ye!, Zions Harp, #52

Another engagement!! Bro. Alex Heinold was announced to Sis. Hallie Stoller (Morton, IL). Their parents are Bro. Thad and Sis. Elizabeth Heinold and Bro. Jeff and Sis. Stacy Stoller (Morton, IL). May the Lord be in their midst as they plan their lives together!

Our visiting minister this month was Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS). Elders present for the ordination service of Bro. Kaleb Beyer (Sis. Angie) for deacon here in Washington were Elder Bro. Trent Meiss (Sis. Lucy, Eureka, IL), Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL), and Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Sis. Debbie, Peoria, IL). We pray the Lord will bless them for their labors and that Bro. Kaleb will feel the Lord’s guidance, grace, and comforting presence as he assumes his new responsibilities in our congregation.

Bro. Joe Tabor (Sis. Abby) was hospitalized and is now thankful to be home recovering!

Indiana, Bluffton

Suzie Fiechter, Liana Reinhard, Olivia Steffen

I admire the Christians in other countries who are killed because of their faith. I am in awe of how those who are persecuted count it a privilege to suffer for his name. One of them said,” We are going to die of something. It may as well be for Christ.” I want to have such a strong faith, yet I often grumble at discomfort or inconveniences. Missionary and author, Elizabeth Elliot, wrote, “Is the distinction between living for Christ and dying for Him, after all, so great? Is not the second the logical conclusion of the first? Furthermore, to live for God is to “die daily”, as the apostle Paul put it. It is to lose everything that we may gain Christ. It is in thus laying down our lives that we find them.”

“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” Matt. 16:24-25.

So, are we not all called to a life of death? The cross is an instrument of death, and we are to take it up daily. It speaks to me about death to self: my desires, my goals, my time, my plans, my comforts. All of “me” is to be nailed to the cross. Practically speaking, Christ is to be in charge of all of my life. My thoughts and opinions and desires do not matter. What God wants is what matters. That’s a huge battle, a huge mind shift! May God give us grace!

We are thrilled to have Bro. Danny, Sis. Sarah, Summer, Sawyer, Tucker and Tanner Bertsch home on furlough from Haiti. We are praying with them about where God desires them to go in the future.

Bro. Joab Telusma announced his engagement to Sis. Trinity Walder (Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie, Smithville, OH/Les Cayes, Haiti). May God guide them as they blend cultures as well as families and personalities!

Bro. Colton Yergler (Bro. Shawn and Sis. Mindy) and Sis. Sadie Rumbold (Bro. Gregg and Sis. Heather, Peoria, IL) were united in marriage. We pray that Sis. Sadie can feel a loving welcome to Bluffton!

Christian Endeavor was held on August 14-15 for our Indiana high school students. It’s been a blessing for decades, and many friendships have been made that last into adulthood. God bless all the teachers that give of their time and resources!

Our prayers have been with our Elders as they gathered for the Conference. We are so blessed with Godly leadership and so thankful for their many sacrifices for us!

Bro. Gary Garmon has been such an inspiration to us as he patiently endured many physical afflictions during his life. He now walks the streets of gold. Our love and sympathy go to his dear wife, Sis. Deb.
It was a blessing to have Bro. Brian Weninger (Sis. McKenzie, Leo, IN) minister to us.

Our prayers continue for Bro. Aaron Gerber (Sis. Cassie) as he battles cancer. Bro. Mitch Bertsch sustained many fractures in a car accident. We’re so thankful that God spared his life and that he is recovering.

Bro. Todd and Sis. Shelly Baller are rejoicing with the addition of two grandchildren. Bexley Jude was born to Bro. Damon and Sis. Kylie Gerber (Bluffton North, IN) and Eve LuAnn was born to Jackson and Whitney Lambert. Bro. Caleb and Sis. Whitney Schwalbach welcome Eugene Lyle to their family. Bro. Brent and Sis. Allison Kaehr and Jim and Tina Schwalbach are the grandparents. God has given little Blakely Jo to Bro. Shane, Sis. Kaitlin, Charley, Jace and Saige Fiechter. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Doug and Sis. Jill Fiechter and Bro. Brent and Sis. Rachelle Tonner.

Repentance is such a beautiful word! It signals an end and a beginning, a sorrow and a rejoicing. A life of sin is ending, along with appropriate sorrow for grieving our Holy God. Yet there is such rejoicing with the turning to God and beginning of a walk with him! Riley and Zander Frauhiger are in the midst of that experience. They are the children of Bro. Krent and Sis. Liz Frauhiger. We are so thankful!

**Indiana, Bluffton North**

**Deanna Brinneman, Rhonda Maller**

“I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Luke 5:32.

We are thankful to have more converts this month. Mike and Ann Hollingsworth, Morgan Kaehr (Bro. Greg and Sis. Amy), and Perla and Milli Leman (Bro. Adam and Sis. Jenna) have recognized a need for repentance and a desire to be baptized and join our fellowship. We rejoice with their families!

Bluffton North was also blessed with weddings this month. On July 25, Sis. Payton Beeks (Bro. John and Sis. Laura) was united in marriage to Bro. Tanner Bowen (Mike and Sharice). On August 8, Bro. Colton Yergler (Bro. Shawn and Sis. Mindy) exchanged vows with Sis. Sadie Rumbold (Bro. Gregg and Sis. Heather, Peoria, IL). On August 14, Sis. Mary Leman (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Val) was united in marriage to Bro. Jacob Schlipf (Gridley, IL). We are praying these couples will have blessed marriages and seek Jesus first in all things.

We continue to pray for those battling health issues. Sis. Leota Reinhard, Bro. Rod Gerber, Bro. Richard Stoller (Arlene), and Sis. Tundy Rauch (Bro. Jadon) have spent time in the hospital this month and have ongoing prayer needs.

“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.” Matt. 9:35.

On August 14-15, our Sunday school students participated in Christian Endeavor, hosted by Bluffton Country. It is an event that requires many willing hands to ensure a successful weekend. Many thanks to Bluffton North volunteers and our Sunday school superintendents, Bro. Graig and Sis. Corinne Stettner, and Bro. Tad and Sis. Steph Baumgartner for their hard work during the weekend.

Our love and prayers go to our missionaries and the residents of Haiti after their devastating earthquake and tropical storm.

**Indiana, Francesville**

**Jacki Huber, Connie Linback**

As I listened to a sermon on the AC Central App recently, these words were spoken: “May we make God big in our lives and make ourselves small.”

“And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.” Isa. 12:4

May we find joy in giving praise to the Lord by sharing the good things he has done for us with one another, and in this way “make God big!”

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, Bro. Ross Huber (Bro. Gene and Sis. Sherri) and Sis. Emmy Stieglitz (Bro. Greg and Sis. Lisa, Indianapolis, IN) exchanged wedding vows in Indianapolis. We rejoice with them and wish them God’s rich blessings in their lives together.

(Sis. Sandi) and Sis. Lisa Pedigo, as they have each had various health concerns.

While we continue to pray for our loved ones who assemble with us. We have also had the people of Haiti and Mexico in our prayers recently with news of the earthquake in Haiti, and unrest in Mexico, specifically in the Magdalena area. What a comfort to know that God can span the miles, and that distance makes no difference to him!

It has been a joy to have Kasey and Amy Swails and their children Noah, Merek, Elyah and Elkyanah (Elly) assemble with us. They moved to Winamac, IN recently from Phoenix, AZ. Bro. Gene and Sis. Barb Huber are grandparents to Amy (Emch) Swails. We welcome them with open arms!

Thanks to ministering Bro. Neal Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette, IN), Bro. Jason Huber (Sis. Joy, Leo, IN), and Bro. Art Mueller (Sis. Marlene, Belvidere, IL) for sharing inspired pulpit ministry this past month.

The high school Bible Class has been active this summer! At the end of July, they spent close to a week in Clarkston, GA working with an organization called “Friends of Refugees”. The students enjoyed spending time with refugee children at a day camp. The Bible Class also enjoyed a weekend in Bluffton, IN where Christian Endeavor was held. May the lessons and fellowship shared at these special times enrich each person involved. Many thanks to all the teachers and parents who gave of their time to assist in these activities.

Indiana, Indianapolis

**Edie Bollier, Valerie Kipfer**

_“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 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 rejoice as more dear souls have begun their walk with Jesus. Jude Schaefer (Bro. Luke and Sis. Andria), Liliana Schaefer (Bro. Caleb and Sis. Laura) and Elias Graham (Bro. Ben and Sis. Suzanne) have decided to follow the Lord and make him the center of their lives. May God guide them as they develop a deeper relationship with him.

Many friends and family gathered on August 1 for the wedding of Sis. Emmy Stieglitz (Bro. Greg and Sis. Lisa) and Bro. Ross Huber (Bro. Gene and Sis. Sherri, Francesville, IN). We wish them God’s blessings as they begin their lives together.

There have been a number of visiting ministers this month. The Peoria, IL Bible Class included a stop in Indianapolis as part of their weekend trip, so we were excited to see the big Peoria bus pull up on Sunday morning with about 50 extra people with which to worship. Thank you to Bro. Mike Kaisner (Sis. Mindy) and Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jacki), both from Peoria, IL for bringing the message to us. Additional visiting ministers this month were Bro. Steve Stieglitz (Sis. Jane, Leo, IN), Bro. Makito Inoue (Sis. Anna, Tokyo, Japan) and Bro. Alan Schambach (Sis. Sarah, Remington, IN). It has been a blessing to have a lot of visitors this month—the joys of Christian fellowship!

On Wednesday evening, August 11, our regular pizza dinner night was followed by a presentation by Bro. Makito and Sis. Anna Inoue and family on “Life in Japan”. It was so interesting to learn more about the churches in Japan and the brethren there.

We continue to pray for Bro. Bert and Sis. Karen Aeschliman’s grandson, Drew Aeschliman (Jason and Lauren) as he is undergoing chemotherapy. We bring their family to the Lord in prayer that they feel the his presence in their daily lives.

_“Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my Salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.” Psa. 25:4-5_

School has started, and kids of all ages are back in classes. The college bound students have headed to campus and are settling into school routine. May they remember that the Lord guides and protects them wherever they are and that he is ever near.

Indiana, LaCrosse

**Meagan Frank, Sharla Messner**

_“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!” Psa. 31:19_
There are many times, as I contemplate the events of the world around me, that I become overwhelmed by God’s magnitude, and by how much he has given me. One of those many blessings is our beautiful church family, and the fellowship we share. This month we had our annual Fellowship Weekend, and we enjoyed several visitors from multiple congregations. Among them were Bro. Andrew and Sis. Rachel Klumpp (Bradford, IL) and Bro. Dan and Sis. Deb Stoller (Remington, IN). We thank them for ministering God’s word to us.

“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.” Psa. 31:24

Indiana, Leo
Leanne Fischer

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Gal 5:22-23

This verse was the theme of Family Pizza night which is normally scheduled for the third Wednesday evening of each month. After a long pandemic-driven break, July 21 was the first. After supper, we gathered in the assembly room and Bro. Jeff Waibel expounded on the fruit of the spirit. Then he split everyone into groups and each group was to demonstrate the fruit of the spirit that they were assigned.

On July 23 we received news from Elder Bro Lynn Stieglitz about Bro. Gary Garman. Gary worshiped with us for many years before moving to Bluffton with his wife, Sis. Deb. Gary dealt with disability and pain, but he always greeted you with a sweet smile and a cheerful word. The note read, in part, “With a little sadness, but a lot of rejoicing, I pass on a message Sis. Deb Garman forwarded from Gary. ‘I just got to heaven. Couldn’t ask for a better view. There’s room for you here too. Make sure you come and see me.’” In the note Lynn went on to share, “Last night, Leonda and I, had a wonderful evening with Gary and Deb. We shared scripture, served Communion and sang hymns together. Gary was alert and engaged and participated in the evening. Less than 20 hours later, I was surprised, but blessed to receive Deb’s text. God is good.” At the side of the believer’s grave is rejoicing, and we are thankful to think of Gary holding Jesus’s hand and suffering no pain as they walk together.

Summer is an enjoyable time to visit family, and we were blessed with visiting ministers. Bro. David Sceggel (Sis. Stephanie, Peoria, IL) spoke to us on July 25. He asked us where the church is growing the most. (Iran, through women who share the gospel over tea in their homes). The second place he mentioned was Afghanistan where the same thing has been happening. (Iran, through women who share the gospel over tea in their homes). The second place he mentioned was Afghanistan where the same thing has been happening. As we know God uses all things for good. We also know that Satan is most active where the gospel is being spread. Elder Bro. Lynn reminded us that as Afghanistan falls swiftly to the Taliban, we need to be prayerful for God’s people there. May the gospel bear much fruit despite persecution. For our second service Bro. Bill Schick (Sis. Joan, Peoria, IL) shared about his cancer journey, as well as time in ministry in Mexico. He and his wife also ministered at Gateway Woods, so we enjoyed having them back “home”. We were also asked to pray for CVE as danger has increased in the area by the actions of drug cartels. Bro. Matt Feucht (Sis. Jennifer, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Nate Ramsey (Sis. April, Mansfield, OH) ministered to us on August 8. Bro. Matt shared some of his struggles while working in the medical field during COVID-19, and how God provided grace and understanding during a very difficult time. Bro. Nate read in Exodus about how God provided manna for each day to the Israelites, and how he will provide for us at the right time and way.

The Gateway Woods Auction also brings many visitors. Ministering Bro. Matt Knapp (Sis. Dana, Peachtree City, GA) has been a faithful auction participant, and we look forward to his visit on Sunday. Many times he inspires us to reach out and minister to others. This year he spoke about God’s majesty and greatness. Bro. Scott Aberle (Sis. Dorine, Washington, IL) emphasized that the same majestic, almighty God who can hold the oceans of the world in the palm of his hand, also wants a personal relationship with each one of us. August 15 our Bro. Brian Wenniger (Sis. Mackenzie) opened the morning service sharing news about the earthquake in Haiti, three people struggling with COVID-19,
and the murder of a young woman who was an employee of the business of our Elder Bro. Lynn.

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of war: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation... and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” Matthew 24:6-8

Only God knows when the end is nigh but when our hearts are heavy, we say, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Rev. 22:20.

On July 25 our CARE group met to make cinnamon rolls for the Gateway Woods Auction. They were quickly sold-out auction morning. We would like to thank Bluffton for hosting Christian Endeavor for our high school students the weekend of August 14-15. May truths learned be indelibly printed on hearts.

Bro. Jordan Pfister, Sunday School Superintendent, has decided to bring back the tradition of the Sunday school children singing several songs for those leaving the assembly room and eating lunch before they are dismissed.

August 15 we enjoyed our second Family Sing since COVID-19. It was a somewhat sad occasion as we met to say farewell to the Bro. Luke and Sis. Shari Tucker family. They are moving to the Smithfield area. Two of their three daughters sang a song for us about how beautiful the body of Christ is. We rejoice that despite separations here, we will enjoy an eternity of fellowship. Sis. Emily Wiegand has moved here from our church in Philadelphia, PA. She will be teaching at the Gateway Woods school. Thank you, Sis. Emily, for answering the call to share your time and talents.

August 18 we enjoyed a presentation by Bro. Nathan Muell and his wife, Sis. Rachael for Pizza Night. They were Houseparents for five years before entering the mission field. He enthusiastically shared about their ministry to the Maliyali people. They had previously shared about the cornerstones of literacy and language that were needed to present the gospel to the Maliyali people. Literacy and language are in place, and he asked us to pray for translation and teaching. They are in the process of translating the Holy Bible into the Lalywali language. Next year they will be able to teach. Nathan mentioned that for many missionaries the time of teaching the gospel is when they experience the most difficulties and opposition. Rachael shared about their family life in Papua New Guinea, and shared a story of a sick Lalywali woman, a dear friend. Nothing seemed to be helping. A medical man landed by helicopter unexpectedly and told them that he had IV’s and fluids in another village. Nathan and his coworkers, through God’s strength were able to run/walk/fall to the village and bring back supplies that saved her life. Nathan was so exhausted by the time that he got back that he fell down by some pigs and fell asleep. In more awake moments he wondered if a pig might roll over on him. He would rather be martyred for the gospel than an accidental death by pig. Neither happened. Go to leoacchurch.org/PreviousSermons.asp to hear the whole story.

Indiana, Milford

Heidi Beer, Anne Wilson

We have so much to be thankful for this month as we added another family to our Milford church. Bro. Rudy and Sis. Rosario Troxel moved from the Belvidere, IL congregation earlier this month to join us. They have four children Nathan, Maryana, Olivia, and Nolan. We are so excited to have them! There is a renewed feeling of how extremely blessed we are to gather together freely each Sunday. The plight of our brothers and sisters in Christ and the severe persecution they are experiencing in the Middle East has weighed on my heart daily. Heaven seems sweeter each and every day.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Tim. 1:7

Indiana, Remington

Jenni Honeyger, Marcella Tyler

We were encouraged this month with several visiting ministers: Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott, IN), Bro. Stan Schambach (Sis. Norma, Prescott, AZ), Bro. Dan Cargill (Sis. Stephanie, Prescott, AZ), Bro. Brian Waelb (Sis. Wendy, Champaign, IL), Bro. Andrew Klump (Sis. Rachel, Bradford, IL), and Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Mediapolis, IA). Bro.
Ned Bahler (Sis. Anna, Fairbury, IL) was here for our Topical Bible Study on “Our Changing World, A New Currency on the Horizon.”

First time parents, Bro. Kenny and Sis. Sophie Graf welcome Edie Ann into their lives and home. Thankful Grandparents are Bro. Jason and Sis. Sara Getz and Bro. Todd and Sis. Lydia Graf (Akron, OH). May God richly bless Bro. Kenny and Sis. Sophie as they raise Edie to know and love God as they do.

Our sympathy goes out to Bro. Walter Bahler (Sis. Esther) in the death of his sister, Edith Kaufman (Ben, dec.). May he feel the love and prayers of the church at this time.

Our church rejoices with Amalee Scheitlin (Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Amanda) as she has begun her walk with Jesus.

Bro. Austin Schneider (Bro. Greg and Sis. Heidi) announced his engagement to Sis. Samantha Sinn (Bro. Dean and Sis. Heidi, Silverton, OR). God bless their families as they prepare and look forward to their wedding day.

By the time this article comes out, our students will be back in school, from Pre-K to college. We pray for their learning experience and safety all around as we continue to deal with the COVID-19 virus.

We want to welcome back Sam Getz (Bro. Jason and Sis. Sara), Bro. Troy Honegger (Bro. Loren and Sis. Jenni), Isaac Bahler (Bro. Tim and Sis. Lynette) and Rustin Schambauch (Bro. Alan and Sis. Sarah) as they return from their summer internships. We pray they were able to learn much from their work experiences and made new friends in the churches they attended while there that will last for years to come.

We are so blessed and thankful to have church families scattered throughout our country to welcome our children when we send them out into the world as they grow up and leave the nest. It is such a comfort to know they have the opportunity to bloom and share their love for Jesus with those of like mind and faith.

**Note of thanks:**

Thank you to each who remembered me in prayer, with cards, gifts and phone calls at the time of my surgery and during recovery. God Bless You!

Bro. Ken Schneider

**Indiana, South Bend**

**Joshua Martinez**

“And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” Luke 1:47

As a new Sunday school year begins, we thank outgoing teachers Sis. Bethany Kupferschmid (Bro. Garrett) and Sis. Becky Langhofer (Bro. Brad) for their faithful service in teaching our youth for the last 2 years. Our prayerful support is with Sis. Rachel Langhofer (Bro. Craig) and Sis. Jessica Isch (Bro. Jason) who are our new Sunday school teachers. On August 8, we enjoyed a short, informal presentation by Bro. Kurt Schrock (Sis. Julie) on their service with HarvestCall/Construction Department in Les Cayes, Haiti. Our prayers are with them and their children, as their plans to return to Haiti are on hold due to the recent devastating earthquake. We also pray for our college students starting a new year: Bro. Ben Lester (Bro. Ed and Sis. Tricia), Sam and Kenneth Schlatter (Bro. Otto and Sis. DeAnn) and Cassie and Jasmine Gramm (Bro. Larry and Sis. Melinda). On August 15, we received wonderful news! Cassie Gramm (Bro. Larry and Sis. Melinda) and our dear friend Sterling Goins have each begun their repentance! We lift them up in prayer and offer our support as they begin their spiritual journey of faith! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

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

**Indiana, West Lafayette**

**Abbie Gramm**

The beginning of our month was marked with some losses: Sis. Verna Furrer, Sis. Evelyn Lehman, and Sis. Nancy Christopher all went to be with their Lord. We also said farewell and best wishes to Sis. Hope Young as she relocates to Atlanta, GA.

We had some new additions to our church family. Daughter Etta Mae was born to Keith and Amber Farrington, first time parents. Daughter Reev Elouine joined Bro. Drew, Sis. Taryn, and Brae Schumacher’s family. Congratulations to these families! This month marked the beginning of Sunday school. There has definitely been a renewed fervor as we are returning to some of the routines we missed out on during...
COVID-19 restrictions including object lessons, whole Sunday school singing, and announcements.

We held a discipleship workshop which consisted of a speaker, panel, and discussion. Those who attended felt it was a beneficial opportunity to reflect, brainstorm, and connect with fellow members on how to better support one another as well as new believers.

Bro. Justin Moser (Sis. Robin, Altadena, CA) visited and shared a Sunday service with us. Bro. Blake and Sis. Tashi Widmer (Kingston, Jamaica) were also able to come and share ministry updates for CCCD and Deaf Can!. We always appreciate the opportunity to fellowship with them and learn more about what is happening in Jamaica. Blessings to them, to our Jamaican brothers and sisters in Christian faith, and upon the work God is doing there.

In all these things, and many more, including recent events in Afghanistan, Haiti, and globally with COVID-19, we strive to remember in prayer. When our hearts are heavy and when our hearts rejoice, God is there.

In closing, “Lord, we praise you that you are ultimately good and faithful. Forgive us for our blindness and self-absorption. Thank you for not leaving us as we are. Open our eyes to see your hand and feel your heart for the lowly, sick, and foreigner. Grant us openness and a spirit to serve those around us, getting outside of our own bubble. May you be glorified in all these things. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen”.

**Iowa, Bloomfield**

**Kendra Wettstein**

We have been thankful for our visitors this summer. We appreciated Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS) being willing to come and share the Word of Life this past month.

This Word which gives us life here also provides us hope in death. Sis. Christy Wiegand (Bro. Daryl and family) has been in our prayers as her grandfather Bro. David Beutel (Tremont, IL) passed away this month.

We rejoice with Jeremy and Natalie Yoakum as they were joined in marriage this past month. Bro. Gene and Sis. Lana Joos and Rick and Melissa Yoakum are their parents. We wish them God’s blessings as they begin their life together.

We are thankful for the Rittman congregation for hosting the conference and we are thankful to join together on Wednesday evenings to listen to the recordings.

We are prayerful for our children in the upcoming school year. May they remember the teachings from home in the year that lies before them.

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

**Iowa, Burlington**

**Marilyn Anderson, Angela Steiner**

“Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;…”

Be Still, My Soul, Hymns of Zion #191

That inspired hymn is so encouraging. It can speak to so many of our mountains and valleys in life. It’s an invitation to pause, reflect, worship the Lord and remind ourselves of the simple truth that he is always with us!

Sis. Elaine Eisenmann’s granddaughter, Lydia Eisenmann, took a 2nd grade teaching job in Maricopa, AZ. We are mindful of her parents, Matt and Monica, as they say goodbye to a now-grown child. Our hope is that Lydia will remember her home church and come back to visit often.

We surround our Sis. Elizabeth Schumacher and her children, Bro. Mike Jr. and Dan and RuthAnn Schock and family, as they “bear patiently the cross of grief and pain,” with the passing of Bro. Mike Schumacher Sr. Sis. Elizabeth and Bro. Mike Jr. gave so much love and extended care to him. We pray that they can be comforted knowing that “in every change, he faithful will remain.”

Thank you to Bro. Glen Steiner (Sis. Rachel, Winthrop, MN) for coming and sharing the Word with us, both Sunday morning and afternoon. It goes without question that it takes effort to be poured out in service; may God bless you.

As a church family, we prayed for our Elder brothers as they met
in Rittman, OH for the Annual Brotherhood Conference. This year, there was extra support and prayers lifting up our minister, Bro. Dallas Massner (Sis. Christy), as he was interviewed for Ordained Deacon.

Following the conference, our church family witnessed the first ordination in the history of the Burlington church. As we were exhorted during the service, we will continue to pray for them as they begin this new journey.

Elder Bro. Jon Schmidall (Sis. Julie, Mediapolis, IA) was assisted in this special work by Elder Bro. Bruce Endress (Sis. Elizabeth, Bradford, IL), Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL) and Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Sis. Clara, Bloomfield, IA). Bro. Darren Massner (Sis. Twila, West Bend, IA) came to serve and share in the day, along with several other visiting ministers that were among the congregation. A very heartfelt thank you to all of these brothers for their time and effort on our behalf! It was a touching evening, and we were so thankful to feel the Spirit present and working. We find peaceful joy in the words, “Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake...To guide the future as He has the past.”

Lastly, our Sunday school has resumed for the new term. We give our prayerful support to our teachers as they strive to instill beautiful truth in our children’s souls.

Iowa, Elgin
Maria Rocke

“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” 1 John 4:2-4

We lift up those suffering around the world in prayer during this time of unrest. May God give all his children peace through the reassurance of his Word.

Among our visitors this month were ministering Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA) and Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora, West Bend, IA). God’s blessings on them for willingly sharing the gospel with us.

Iowa, Garden Grove
Laura Funk

Greetings from south central Iowa where the weather has been hot and dry. The Lord has blest our garden with an abundance of produce which we are enjoying now and in the winter months.

Visitors who shared our pulpit this month were Bro. Doug Moser (Morris North, MN), Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy, West Bend, IA), and Bro. Nathan Wiegand (Sis. Laura, Goodfield, IL). We have also enjoyed fellowship with many visitors.

We share our sympathy with Thelma Hofmann whose son, Ron passed away at 54 years of age. He is survived by his wife and two sons. We pray God’s nearness to Thelma and their family as this is the third family member they have laid to rest in the recent years.

“O, Saviour, help, and lead the way To heaven’s gates, this child, I pray. When sorrows no more burden me, I’ll praise Thee in eternity!”

The Image of Christ, Zion’s Harp, #164

Iowa, Iowa City
Diana Butikofer

Bro. Jon Pratt (Sis. Sharon, Valparaiso, IN) and Bro. Joel Troxel (Sis. Amy, LaCrosse, IN) visited and shared the Holy Word with us this month. May they be blessed for their efforts.

We held a farewell singing for Sis. Anelyse Gerst, as she is moving to Nashville, TN. We will certainly miss her but trust the Lord will bless her as she follows His will for her.

Thanks and our Lord’s blessings to the Rittman congregation for their hospitality during the Brotherhood Conference and to the Elder brothers for their love and care for all of us.

Iowa, Lester
Kristi Knobloch, Lois Mogler

Several families have had some happy additions. Kayla and Edgar Ramos, Lillian, and Nathaniel welcome Jonathon into their family circle. His grandparents are Bro. Jerome and Sis. Jana Metzger. Bro. Joe and Sis. Esther Barber, Charles, Zoey, and Ella welcome
Maya Jean. Her grandparents are Mike and Sis. Donna Barber. Bro. Chet and Sis. Cassie Mogler finalized the adoption of their two foster children Lloyd and Hope on August 2. Brecken, Lily, Poppy, Daphne, and Kalvin are excited for their new siblings. Bro. Tom and Sis. Deb Metzger and Bro. Brian and Sis. Beverly Mogler are their grandparents.

Jason Knueven is home after a long tour of duty. Sis. Trela and their children Kiersten, Treyven and Jaxon are grateful for his safe return. We also welcome Jacey Larson, niece of Bro. Justin and Sis. Jodie Metzger, who is spending time in their home and assembling with us.

Bro. Tom Bahler (Sis. Lanae, Rockville, CT) was our visiting minister on July 25. We appreciate his willingness to bring forth the Word. Our prayers were with our home ministers and Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue) as they traveled to the conference in Rittman. May these brothers be blessed for their labors.

Those who have spent time in the hospital are Sis. Coralee Knoblock (Bro. Chuck), Bro. Marvin Metzger (Joleen), Sis. Joyce Metzger (Bro. Glen) and little Calder Doorneweerd (Cody and Shay). We’re thankful each one is back home.

Notes of thanks:
A special than you to friends and relatives for all the cards, prayers, flowers, and deeds of kindness for my 100th birthday.
Elsie Leuthold

Notes of thanks:
Sincere thanks for the many ways you remembered me during my hospitalization, recovery and 87th birthday with the beautiful cards, letters, visits, flowers, and prayers. Thanks for your encouragement! God’s richest blessings to all of you.
Sis. Ruth Nester

Iowa, Mediapolis
Laura Kuntz, Janet Lanz
It was such a blessing to listen to the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Bro. Clay Buster (Jessica), Sis. Larae Steiner (Bro. Randy and Sis. Shayla), and Bro. Kevin Gerst (Selena). Each one came to the Lord in a different season of life, and it was inspiring to hear how Jesus has transformed each of their lives. We were thankful to have Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cissna Park, IL) and Bro. Phil Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA) with us for this blessed occasion.

Joy is often mingled with sadness in this life, and the very next day following the baptisms, we laid to rest Bro. Leon Kuntz, only a few months after we bid his wife, Sis. Doris, farewell for the last time. We could never have imagined when 2021 began that Bro. Leon and Sis. Doris would no longer be in our midst by mid-year. We miss their presence here, but know they are delighting in the presence of our Lord in the heavenly realms, having shed the sorrows they bore in this life.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Ed and Sis. Patty Stoller in the loss of Ed’s brother, Earl Stoller.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” 3 John 4

 Surely this is the thought upon the hearts of Bro. Dave and Sis. Stefanie Stoller, as their son, Brett, has come to the Lord in repentance. May God give him much grace as he learns to walk in Jesus’s ways.

God has blessed the home of Trevor, Allison, and Emery Massner with sweet little Macey Marie. Bro. Troy and Sis. Joni Massner, Jeff Klenk, and Beth Hines are Macey’s grandparents.

Our love, support, and prayers are with Bro. Dave and Sis. Tami Lanz and family, as Bro. Dave was ordained as deacon on August 15. We have faith that God will give Bro. Dave wisdom and courage, and provide for him and his family as he assumes greater leadership responsibilities. We appreciate their willingness to serve our church in this way. Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Sis. Clara, Bloomfield, IA), Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL), Elder Bro. Bruce Endress (Sis. Elizabeth, Bradford, IL), and Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA) were with us for this occasion, and we appreciate their efforts on our behalf. Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora, West Bend, IA) and Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA) were also with us on this day.
We are praying for our school and college students as they embark on a new school year. We pray that they will have a good year of learning, and even more importantly, that God will protect them and help them to grow in wisdom and truth! We face many hard issues and concerns in our society today, and we all need God’s grace and guidance to know how to think and act, so we can reflect Jesus’ light in this dark world.

Iowa, West Bend
Jenny Banwart, Karen Schmidt

Our prayers go out to Sis. Julie Zaugg (Darrell) and Otis Fehr (Bro. Kent and Sis. Joleen) as they have spent time in the hospital. We pray God will continue to heal them.

Rejoicing in a precious little girl are Bro. Trevor and Sis. Brooke Fehr in the arrival of Oaklynn Brooke. Excited grandparents are Bro. Mark and Sis. Janet Fehr and Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karen Schmidt.

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla, LaCrosse, IN), Bro. Nathan Walder (Sis. Denise, Cissna Park, IL), our Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA), Elder Bro. Lowell Moser (Sis. Karen, Morris, MN) and Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Mediapolis, IA) bring forth God’s word to us. We are thankful and prayerful for Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise) as he received support to become our Ordained Deacon, Lord willing, after being interviewed next March. May God provide for all who serve our congregations.

Japan, Shioda & Tokyo
Anna Inoue, Carrie Ito, Rachel Witzig

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim. 2:15

By the grace of God, our prayers were answered, and we in the Tokyo congregation were thankful to welcome children from English classes and Sunday school to a three-day English VBS. We worked together with local church members and friends to present the gospel through games, songs, and crafts. Our topic was The Heart of Jesus, and we told the children stories of Jesus as our Friend, Jesus as our Lord, and Jesus as our Savior.

We are thankful that not only children but also many of their parents attended the Bible school. Upon hearing a story of Jesus’ miracles, one woman asked, “What other superpowers does Jesus have?” We prayerfully trust that the Spirit will water the seeds that were planted during VBS, leading both children and parents alike to seek, and ultimately embrace, the truth of Jesus Christ.

Kansas, Bern
Leigha Rokey, Rita Menold

The summer has flown by and now the kiddos are back to school once again! We also have many going to college in a few different places this year. Several back to Kansas State in Manhattan, Washburn in Topeka, and a couple moved to Wichita. We are sad to see them leave, but pray they shine the light of Jesus in the corner he has called them. What a blessing it is to see the children grow up and follow Jesus in these next steps of life.

Our Sunday school students and teachers had a few weeks break before we start up another Sunday school term. We are so thankful for this mission to plant and water seeds of hope into young lives, as well as grow in our own spiritual understanding as teachers.

We are praising Jesus that Cole Meyer (Bro. Richard and Sis. Joni) has seen his need for a savior and has answered the call to follow the Lord.

We want to thank Bro. Jerry Meeks (Sis. Christy, Sabertha, KS) for sharing the gospel message with us this month.

Kansas, Ft. Scott
Janelle Wuthrich

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. Rom. 13:11

Recently, it seems that the events of the world around us are becoming increasingly chaotic. As our hearts go out to those affected by the earthquake in Haiti, the unrest in Afghanistan, fires or flooding, we know that these things have
been prophesied and that no matter how bad it seems, God is still on the throne. Even so, Lord Jesus, come!

Our congregation is blessed to have Matthew Lester (Garden Grove, IA) assembling with us as he attends school nearby. We are so thankful for his attendance as well as the visits from his family.

We had an unexpected blessing when Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Sis. Christy and family, Morris North, MN) joined us for services on their way home from vacation. We truly appreciated the efforts and his willingness to share the Word with us.

Several young members from Bern and Sabetha joined us last weekend for our Sunday evening hymn sing on their way home from spending the day in Lamar. Along with several from the Lamar congregation, they more than doubled our numbers and the singing was beautiful. We wish to thank all those who took the extra time to spend the evening with us. It was truly a blessing!

Bro. Jerry Bahr, Sis. Teresa Bahr, and Sis. Janelle Wuthrich were recently re-elected as Sunday school teachers, and we wish to thank them for their continued service.

As many are returning to school this fall, we pray that God’s provision and guidance will be with all the students, teachers and parents throughout this coming school year.

**Kansas, Kiowa**

**Janice Bahr, Millie Frieden**

"It’s that time of year again! Anxious mamas giving their babies one last hug and kiss as they drop them off for their first day at the river. WHERE? The RIVER? No way would a mom do such a thing; maybe drop that precious child off for their first day of fourth grade; or College; or Kindergarten; or maybe even Day Care. But no mother in her right mind would drop off her beloved child at a river where eminent danger and harm lurked at every ripple. Or would she? The Hebrew mother, Jochebed, took great pains to provide her child with safety and security as she lovingly gave him one last kiss and carefully laid him in the basket, carrying it down to the river Nile’s edge where she placed it in amongst the tall reeds. “And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink.” Ex. 2:3.

She would certainly have pleaded to God above for his watchfulness over this child; she would have prayed for her baby to be happy and not cry for his Mommy; she would have prayed exceedingly for faith and courage for herself to bravely release this child of hers into the clutches and dangers of the world. And just as this Hebrew mother of old trusted God to care for her baby, we mothers of this present day must also place our trust and faith in God to care for our children as we drop them off at their first day of a new adventure! And yes, we just know that as Moses’s mother turned away to go back without her little one by her side, she would have shed tears. Probably many tears. But what a great plan our Heavenly Father had in mind for this child who began his great adventure that day! Likewise, we must have faith to allow our children to begin their great adventures in life as well trusting in the almighty to protect, to guide, and to surround our precious offspring with his undying love and mercy!"

Written by Millie Frieden, copyrighted.

With that introduction we want to wish all school students a very successful year and one with many blessings, hopefully without the complications of COVID-19 this year. We have children in our local public schools as well as several attending institutions of higher learning. May God be your guide and counselor!

Visiting ministers this past month were Bro. Ryan Hoerr (Sis. Joy, Princeville, IL) and Bro. Brad Stoller (Sis. Amanda, Eureka, IL). We are very appreciative for them sharing the gospel with us.

We have had many of our congregation absent due to summer vacations and travel. Now that school is back in session, we hope to have a full house once again on Sundays. We welcome anyone to come worship with us!
Kansas, Lamont
Maria Luthi

Greetings from Lamont! School is back in session and we are prayerful for all of our students as they learn and grow this year. Sunday school has also resumed, which is always a blessing to our young people and something they look forward to. Our prayers are with all of our teachers as they guide these tender hearts. Bro. Victor Edelman and Sis. Alex Kraft were our two new teachers taking responsibility this year. Several of our Bible Class students traveled with sponsors to volunteer at the Gateway Woods Auction in Leo. They had a wonderful time and were amazed at the generosity displayed.

We are thankful to Bro. Jay Steffen (Sis. Melinda, Congerville, IL) for bringing us the Word this month. We have also been lifting up our Elders as they gathered for the annual Brotherhood Conference.

While working in the garden last week, I couldn’t help but notice a large, brilliant sunflower. The surrounding landscape was a bleak brown, parched, and bedraggled after many days of blistering, August winds, yet here was this huge bloom, tipped fully toward the eastern sun, flaming with spectacular golden petals against the hazy sky. I had to smile at the contrast! Even in the toughest of circumstances, we too can thrive, defying all odds, if we will only lift our face to the Son!

Kansas, Sabetha
Leanna Hartter, Whitney Hartter

Greetings of love from our Sabetha congregation!

We gathered the last Sunday evening of July for an all-church potluck and singing. It was a blessing to be together!

We extend our love and prayers to Bro. Jesse Hartter (Sis. Brianna) as he spent some time in the hospital this month. Praying God will provide a quick recovery!

With summer coming to a close, we think of the students and teachers returning to school. May the Lord protect and bless each one this school year. Also, a special thanks for this past year’s Sunday school teachers. We appreciate all the time and effort put into teaching young hearts the truths from God’s word. We also want to extend our prayers and support to the new teachers going into Sunday school this year.

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 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

Kansas, Wichita
Niklaus and Sara Schrader

As summer comes to a close, and school is starting, we lift our students up in prayer. There are many deceptive and ungodly teachings in our schools and colleges today. We ultimately pray that they can not be deceived by the “truth” that the world offers, but that they can stand firm in the truth that God teaches. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to, “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

We joyfully welcome three college students to our congregation: Bro. Brandon Rokey, Sis. Kenzie Meyer, and Sis. Alex Wiegeand. We pray that God will guide and direct them in this new season of their life.

We had the privilege of singing for the residents at the Regent Assisted Living, where Bro. Roger and Bertie Reimchisel reside. It was a blessing to praise God with those who have lived for him their whole lives.

We continue to lift up those who are dealing with health issues in our congregation: Bro. Glen Funk and family and Bro. Roger and Bertie Reimchisel.

Mexico, Ixtlán
Ruth Gerber

“But if any man love God, the same is known of him.” 1 Cor. 8:3

What a comfort to think that we are known of God! So is everyone that loves him!
A little more than 30 years ago, Sis. Carmen de Cervantes came to know and love the Savior. She didn’t know how to read, but she learned to love the Lord and then learned to read his Word. She was baptized at the dam on the north side of town – the first adult baptism in Ixtlan. And praise the Lord, she was followed by others and the church in Ixtlan has slowly grown. Now, after a battle with COVID-19, Sis. Carmen has gone to be with her Lord. We are thankful for the memories of her loving smile, the countless ways she served, and for the legacy of faith she left for her church and family.

Sis. Carmen was preceded in death by her husband, Manuel Cervantes, and her oldest daughter, Carmela (Jesús García). Her surviving children are Bro. Jose (Sis. Cathy) of Tecate, Sis. Teresa de Navarro (Alfonso), Sergio (Rosa), Bro. Rogelio (Sis. Fernanda) of Morelia, Sis. Maria, Bro. Armando, Gabriel (Sis. Adriana) and Sis. Ana.

Sis. Berta de Gonzalez and her family are also mourning the loss of her brother, Ramiro Carrillo (Lupita). Their children are Lupita and Francisco. We pray for the Lord’s merciful hand on this family and on our town as the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise.

Due to the health risks at this time, we are going back to virtual services for the next few weeks. Thank the Lord for the technology that makes that possible and for his faithful care in every change.

México, Magdalena
Laura Aviña

This past month our church services have centered around vision, purpose and mission. What do we want to see in the future? Why is that important to us? What will we do now to move towards that? All these questions have been thought-provoking as we have pondered what God sees in our church and what he would like to see. Revelation 2-3 gave us some insight into what God sees in a church and where he asks us to grow.

During mid-July, we experienced a week of numerous shootings and increased violence. Church services were canceled one Sunday and two Wednesdays. We are thankful that the violence has calmed down and praise God that we are all safe and well.

Summer is coming to a close. We thank the volunteers who spent about six weeks with us during their time serving at Casa Vida y Esperanza. For the first time since March 2020, many students in our area will be attending school in person. We pray that the teachers and students can have a smooth transition and also that God would empower them as they strive to fill in the gaps from last year.

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Rev. 3:5

Michigan, Alto
Heidi Kaeb, Michelle Oesch

Our prayers and sympathy are with Bro. Ed and Sis. Julie Sanders and family in the passing of Ed’s mom, Gloria Crumbach.

We said goodbye for now to Sis. Virginia Rocke as she returns to LaCrosse, IN after finishing her college journey in Michigan. We have been so blessed by her friendly and loving presence and we’ll miss her. We’re prayerful for Ivy Stoller as she leaves for college in the Upper Peninsula and we hope she’s able to come back home frequently. Amidst these farewells, we were blessed to welcome back Sis. Ellie Stoller from a five month internship and Chris Tomic from his summer harvest work.

Thank you to Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jacki, Peoria, IL), Bro. Myron Knobloch (Lester, IA), and Bro. Kent Levy (Sis. Holly, Morton, IL) for sharing Sunday worship with us this month and preaching out of God’s word.

Michigan, Bay City
Sarah Knochel

We had two visiting ministers in early August. We are thankful Bro. Nathan Hodel (Sis. Jamie, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, Bloomfield, IA) and Elder Bro. Brad Strahm (Sis. Michelle, Bern, KS) included Bay City in their summer travel plans.
The return to school is imminent. Our prayer is that God will be with our youth, that they may be shielded from any harm or evil.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3:5-6

Michigan, Detroit
Krista Wieland

Greetings to all of you! I want to extend sympathy to all who have family or friends who have suffered heartache from the earthquake in Haiti. After hearing about this catastrophic event, it’s easy to say we are praying for all those affected, and we are, but we know we cannot palpate the depth of pain and rebuilding they are going through and my prayer is “Help them, God.” As well as praying for hope, perseverance and salvation for people in Haiti at this time, let’s remember to help people’s pressing urgent needs like food, clothing, missionary funding and supplies. We are called to support those in pain, and support needs to start with basic needs as well as prayer. A member of our church family, Bro. Tom Hitz (Sis. Cindy), was in Haiti at the time of the earthquake. He kindly shared a picture presentation from his recent trip to Israel. The gathering was also in thanks and appreciation of Bro. Dewayne Dill (Sis. LaRae) as he retired from the ministry.

In the coming week, we must also bid goodbye to Bro. Ben, Sis. Suzy Dill and their dear boys, Asher, Toby and Gabriel. God has called them to relocate to Fort Wayne, IN where they will be worshipping in the Leo, IN church. Our Sunday school has been blessed with Bro. Ben’s love and guidance. We will miss their willingness to help and attendance in our small body of believers! Our love and prayers go with them all.

We are grateful for Bro. John Berglund (Sis. Debbie) as he takes over the role of Treasurer. May we be prayerful as God guides and directs him in this duty.

We ask for prayers of healing for Marcus Evans (Nikki) as he recuperates from hip replacement surgery.

We offer up prayers for those in Haiti needing shelter and recovering from the earthquake as well as for those affected by the distressing news in Afghanistan and around the world. Our heavenly Father knows each and every need.

Dear Lord, help us to have faith and submit to your will in all things.

"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world

Speaking about prayer makes us think of our own local answered prayers as two more young people, Ashlyn Wieland (Bro. Andy and Sis. Krista) and Alexa Wieland (Bro. Steve and the late Sis. Tiffany) have asked to make a public desire to the church to repent and begin a new, personal relationship with the Christ who died for them.

A heartfelt thank you to all who organized, taught class, and the many volunteers at our yearly VBS. It was a wonderful time and a huge Christian memory maker for all who attended.

Also, a big thank you to Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo, IN) who came with topical presentations and was our special VBS guest speaker. Other visiting ministers this month to thank were Bro. Jason Dotterer (Sis. Lynn, Forrest, IL), Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy, West Bend IA), and Bro. Eric Strassheim (Sis. Jodi, Indianapolis, IN).

Minnesota, Minneapolis
Brenda Messner, Renee Messner

Greetings in our Lord and Savior’s name Jesus!

By God’s grace the seasons change and so does life. A farewell potluck was held for Bro. Joe Dill as he moved to Ithaca, New York, to pursue a graduate degree from Cornell University. He kindly shared a picture presentation from his recent trip to Israel. The gathering was also in thanks and
ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16:32-33

Minnesota, Morris
Peg Wellendorf, Brianna Wulf

“In sorrow and pain Thy trust do retain In Jesus the merciful Saviour. When burdened with care, When though wouldst despair, Then call on thy loving Redeemer. He’ll lighten the load, And level the road And bear thee on hands of compassion.”

The Best Refuge, Zion’s Harp, #46

Our prayers have been with Sis. Pam Fehr (Bro. Paul Jr.) and her family at the loss of her father, Alvin Gilyard, (Rapid City, SD). May God provide comfort to those who call upon him in times of sorrow and pain.

With joy we welcomed little Kenna Roy Wulf to our congregation! Thankful parents are our converts Craigan and Bobbie Wulf. Their girls Ivy, Ella, and Addie are excited about their new little sister. We wish them blessings and wisdom as they raise their family!

We appreciate the many visitors we’ve had this past month as more normal travel has resumed. We were especially blessed to have willing servants bring forth the Word. Bro. Darren Fehr (Sis. Nora, West Bend, IA), Bro. Richard Manz (Sis. Audrey, Prescott, AZ), and Bro. Todd Stoller (Sis. Pam, Latty, OH) were willing to be used on our behalf. May God be their rich rewarder!

“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.” Psalm 128:1-2

Minnesota, Morris North

Greetings in Jesus!

We were reminded of Acts 14:23 when during this year’s Annual brotherhood conference Bro. Damon Knobloch (Sis. Stephanie) received support for being appointed our local Elder. In his youth, Bro. Damon grew up and became a member of the Lester, IA church. He then went to Minneapolis during his years in college and was there when he and Sis. Stephanie were married. She was originally from Winthrop, MN. They moved to the Morris area in 2005. We appreciate the supportive relationships with the regional churches for their ordination.

Also, in addition to the small weekly Bible studies that we have at our church, our fall Bible Study that we do together as a whole congregation will be ‘Drawn to Jesus’ by Bro. Dennis Kauffman (Bloomington, IL). We are excited to have something heart-warming as the days turn colder. We thank you for your continued prayers for our congregation as we grow together.

Minnesota, Winthrop
Ginny Stoll, Dixie Messner

We were privileged to have Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Christine, Francesville, IN) stop for a visit on their way out west for their vacation. Bro. Les did a presentation Sunday evening on the dairy program in Haiti. Our congregation was touched to hear of the earthquake in Haiti, especially after his presentation. Our prayers are with the people that are hurting there and especially our missionaries.

Little Cort Carl Knobloch came into this world July 25. His loving parents are Bro. Keegan and Sis. Callie. Grandparents are Bro. Lance and Sis. Kristi Knobloch (Lester, IA) and Bro. Eric and Sis. Kim Koehl (Morris, MN). It is so good to see another new baby coming to church.

Several of our congregation were able to help with some outside cleanup work at Bro. Ed and Sis Ginny Stoll’s place. It was a blessing to work together to help them! They continue to need prayers as Sis. Ginny’s health is still a great concern.

As we start this week, we are starting VBS. It is so good to see the children and teachers working together, talking about God and having fun!

Missouri, Kansas City
Randy Kellenberger

Our convert, Ryan Braker, has found peace with his Savior, and we look forward to his
approaching testimony and baptism. The work our Lord brings about in changing a spiritual heart from the darkness of sin to the light of peace and forgiveness never ceases to amaze and inspire the observers!

Our Kansas City congregation went to virtual church services on August 8 and 15 due to a widespread outbreak of the COVID-19 virus delta variant in the Kansas City area and within our church congregation. We are thankful to be back to in-person services, but a number are still recovering from the virus.

We are mindful and prayerful for the Christians and many others in Afghanistan whose lives are currently in danger due to a change in the government in that country. We also continue to pray for the country of Haiti.

Missouri, Lamar

Leah Rokey

Greetings of love from Lamar!

Our congregation has been blessed by many visitors! Visiting ministers from this past month include Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL), Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS), and Bro. Neil Widmer (Sis. Kris, West Lafayette, IN). The Bern and Sabetha young groups also blessed us with their fellowship for a day of worship.

We appreciate the efforts of our Rittman brethren to host the Elder Conference. We were thankful for the opportunity to gather at the Fellowship Hall and view the Conference.

We are thankful Bro. Alfred Banwart (Sis. Carolyn) is home from the hospital and recovering well!

Missouri, St. Louis

Michelle Rassi

We decided to try “Summer Sunday school” this year for the first time. The students really enjoyed learning about the “I am” statements of Jesus from the book of John. Likewise, the regular Sunday school teachers enjoyed their break as other members filled in to teach.

We want to thank the Rittman church for hosting the Brotherhood Conference. It was a blessing for those that were able to go or view it online.

Bro. Chris and Sis. Carla Wuethrich are rejoicing with the birth of a new grandchild. Bro. Levi and Sis. Kyann Wuethrich (Smithville, OH), along with big sister Solvi, welcomed Carlee Ruth into their home.

Missouri, Taylor

Eleanor Yackley

An all-church potluck and singing was held at the Fellowship Center on Sunday, July 22. It was such a blessing to spend time together again enjoying a bountiful meal and singing praises.

Sis. Deb Sutter suffered a broken leg bone and had surgery. She is recovering at home. Please continue to pray for her recovery.

We heard the testimonies of Jacob Gehring and Cassidy Edelman on Saturday evening, July 31, and witnessed their baptisms on Sunday, August 1. We welcome Bro. Jacob and Sis. Cassidy into the Taylor church family!

Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kimberly, St. Louis, MO) and Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN) served us from the pulpit on Sunday, August 1 prior to the baptisms. Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS) was also here for the weekend.

Bro. Chad Huber (Sis. Pam, Francesville, IN) presented our Wednesday evening Bible Study on August 4 about the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

On Sunday, August 8, the series of lessons on Revelation was begun with Bro. Ben Lindberg presenting Revelation 1. Bro. Scott Wegman presented Revelation 2-3 on Sunday, August 15.

Bruce Ogelat has made known his wish to serve the Lord as a member of the Taylor congregation. We rejoice with him and will be praying for him.

Several in our congregation have been ill. We have been praying for their recovery and that the virus will not afflict others.

New York, Croghan/Naumburg

Anna Stoller

Greetings from New York!

Our church was blessed to host the European Committee Meeting in July. Saturday evening, we
enjoyed a carry-in dinner and slideshow presentation. It was a blessing to have the visitors and to learn more about the European churches and their needs.

We extend thanks to visiting minister Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna, Rockville, CT) for serving us recently. We appreciate his willingness to bring us God’s word.

Many were able to gather August 7 at a park for our annual Sunday school picnic. It was a joy to watch the older and younger enjoy the beautiful afternoon together. May God continue to bless our teachers and students as they learn and grow together.

Our annual business meeting was July 30. We’re thankful for those serving and prayerful for those with new responsibilities.

**Note of Thanks**

I would like to thank all who thought of me in any way, especially in prayer, for my recent surgery and recovery. May God richly bless you for your love and concern.

“For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.” Luke 1:49

Karen Farney

**Ohio, Akron**

**Joelle Indermuhle**

We were thankful to hear of the safe arrival of little Nathan James, born to Bro. Steven and Sis. Melissa Greenbank on July 26. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Glen and Sis. Joan Greenbank and Bro. Peter and Sis. Elvira Ordogh.

It’s been a blessing to have many visiting ministers this past month. Sharing the Word with us over the pulpit were Bro. Doug Wagenbach (Sis. Lillian, San Diego, CA), Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN), Bro. Dana Indermuhle (Sis. Joy, Sardis, OH), Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL), Bro. Adrian Strahm (Sis. Harriet, Bern, KS) and Elder Bro. Wayne Hartzler (Sis. Camille, Rittman, OH).

We are thankful that Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia) has been approved to serve as our new Elder. The ordination service is planned for August 22. Our prayers are with Bro. Todd and Sis. Lydia and their children as they step into this new role. We are also grateful for the many years of service from Bro. Dave and Sis. Barb Graf. May we all be willing to be used in God’s service as we are moved and led by his Spirit.

"Oh, if we are ever ready To serve Jesus day by day, Sacrifice our soul and body, Bear each burden by the way, We shall fear, Nothing here, For the Lord is always near." Self-Sacrifice, Zions Harp #159

**Ohio, Columbus**

**Nancy Banks**

This has been a very interesting summer for Ohio weather. Some are concerned about the lack of rain and others are bothered by too much moisture. We can cultivate the ground, plant the seeds, and apply the fertilizer to expect a harvest. Drought, flooding or insects can severely impact the outcome of that harvest. The same can be said for our spiritual lives. We must ready our hearts and minds (cultivate), read God’s word (plant the seeds) and let our lights shine if we want to fulfill our purpose here on earth as his servants. Family tragedies, loss of income or sickness can make achieving those goals very difficult. Yet God is good through it all and he will give us the strength to weather the storms. Let his name be praised for all things.

We were blessed with many visiting ministers this month. Thankful for these brothers who have come from near and far. We welcomed Bro. Kevin Banwart (Sis. Sandy, West Bend, IA), Bro. Marvin Zollinger (Sis. Pam, Smithville, OH), Bro. Dallas Massner (Sis. Christy, Burlington, IA), Bro. Trent Gasser (Sis. Molly, Akron, OH) Bro. David Maibach (Sis. Larisa, Smithville, OH), Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA), Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea, Remington, OH) and Bro. Nate Ramsey (Sis. April, Mansfield, OH).

**Ohio, Junction**

**Karen Schlatter**

Our congregation enjoyed a potluck and singing for Bro. Don and Sis. Connie Manz as a way to thank them for their
service as he ministered many years over the pulpit.

We are thankful for Katie Stoller (Bro. Neil and Sis. Sandy) who was announced for peace. We look forward to her testimony and baptism.

Bro. Matt Miller (Sis. Wendy, Latty, OH) and Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Jonell, Rittman, OH) were visiting ministers recently. We are always appreciative of their willingness to come and serve us as they share God’s word.

Bro. Aric and Sis. Jessica Mericle welcomed a baby boy on August 12. His sisters Rebeka, Natalie, and Harper, as well as grandmother Sis. Virginia Manz, are also excited to welcome Grady Martin.

Our sympathy goes to Heather Manz (Kevin) and their family in the passing of her grandmother, Edith Kaufmann.

Jonathon Reinhard (Bro. Doug and Sis. Elizabeth) and Kyla Butikofer (Bro. Jim and Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) announced their engagement and a marriage planned for October 9. We wish them God’s richest blessings.

Many thanks to Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL) for sharing the wonderful Word of Life with us this month.

We held an appreciation dinner for retired Elder Bro. John and Sis. Marcia Laukhuf for the many years of service they gave to our church during the time he served as Elder. May they be blessed.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Marissa English. She is the daughter of Marlise and Dewey Darby and the granddaughter of Sis. Elaine Stoller (Bro. Willis, dec.). May the Holy Spirit comfort the family during this time of loss.

Ohio, Latty
Angie Klopfenstein, Carmen Stoller

Greetings of love! We are thankful that Riley Stoller, (Bro. Todd and Sis. Pam) has made a decision to repent of his sins and live for Jesus. We pray God will provide him the needed grace and mercy as he learns to serve our great God.

Many thanks to Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL) for sharing the wonderful Word of Life with us this month.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psa. 51:7-10

We are grateful for Allie Blevins (Laurence and Erica), Emily Dawson (Bro. Ed and Sis. Judy), and Hannah Beer (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Tammy) who have found grace to answer God’s call of repentance. We pray for them as they seek the Lord and allow him to purify their hearts.

Katrina Beer (Bro. Tim and Sis. Traci), Peter Dawson (Bro. Ed and Sis. Judy), and Thomas Beer (Bro. Tim and Sis. Traci) have experienced peace that fills a cleansed heart and mind. What a gift of the Holy Spirit! We look forward to their upcoming baptisms.

As autumn comes, we think of our youth who have begun another school year. We were blessed to see many junior high and high school-age students from across Ohio at the annual Youth Fellowship Day. Thanks to those who labored throughout the weekend, and thanks to all who traveled to Mansfield, including Elder Bro. Dave Graf (Sis. Barb, Akron, OH) who had the message Sunday morning.

“Lord Jesus, Thou seest I patiently wait, Come now, and within me a new heart create; To those who have sought Thee, Thou never saidst No”
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

*Whiter Than Snow,*
*Hymns of Zion # 210*

We had sweet fellowship when our local Single Group hosted All-Ohio Weekend. Wherever we are in life, God is looking for us to bear the fruit of the Spirit for his kingdom. May we pray for one another in this endeavor.

We appreciate Bro. Tim Ramsier (Sis. Joni, Rittman, OH) and Bro. Bryon Palitto (Sis. Lisa, Akron, OH) sharing with us the inspired word of God.

Sis. Kelly Beard has been in our thoughts as she relocates to the Apostolic Christian Village Home in Rittman, OH. We continue to remember Sis. Ruth Domka as she has also relocated to the Home. Though miles separate us, let us continue to communicate our love to one another.

**Ohio, Rittman**

*Mardel Dotterer, Julie Steiner*

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another…” Malachi 3:16

Our congregation was so privileged to host the General Conference on Friday, August 6. Although the actual physical attendance was not as many persons as in previous years, the spiritual blessings were in abundance. One older sister in our church related to me that the topics were like a Bible Study starting with faith and then adding on the virtues as we grow in Christ. It was a wonderful blessing to be able to host the Elders and their wives the days before the conference, and then the added fellowship on Friday. May we never take our spiritual heritage for granted.

As we have been encouraged as a congregation, may we now reach out, comfort, and encourage others who are experiencing loss and difficulties. We extend sympathy to Bro. Dale Maibach (Sis. Dixie) on the passing of his brother, Joe Maibach.

Our hearts are also very saddened at the untimely passing of our Bro. Eric Steiner. We express our deepest sympathy to his wife, Sis. Tricia, and three daughters, Sis. Braelyn, Sis. Brystal, and Bronwyn. Bro. Eric also leaves behind his mother, Sis. Carole Steiner and four brothers: Bro. Kurt (Robin, Smithville, OH), Bro. Dwight, Bro. Brent (Sis. Andrea), and Bro. Ryan (Sis. Julie). May God grant his comfort and peace to these dear families.

Hospital patients included Bro. Richard Miller, Bro Stan Winkler (Sis. Margaret), and Sis. Rachel Snyder (Jeff). Our prayers are also with those who have ongoing health concerns.

We are happy to announce the engagement of Sis. Tori Ingold and Bro. Austin Dotterer (Smithville, OH), Bro. Doug and Sis. Joanna Ingold and Bro. Steve and Sis. Amy Dotterer (Smithville, OH) are their parents.

Bro. Jim and Sis. Pat Rufener were blessed with another granddaughter as Karlee Ruth was born on August 5 to Bro. Levi and Sis. Kyann Wuethrich and big sister Solvi. (Smithville, OH)

We welcome home Bro. Jon and Sis. Kaitlin Maibach after living and attending church in the Prescott, AZ area.

We appreciated our visiting ministers for the month including Bro. Leland Plattner (Sis. Mary, Zapata, TX), Bro. Josh Walder (Sis. Tina, Congerville, IL), and Bro. Chet Manz (Sis. Jenny, Toledo, OH). May God bless them for their efforts.

**Ohio, Sardis**

*Renee Blough, Doris Miller*

We were blessed to experience an evening of Organized Potlucks in homes Sunday, July 18. It truly is a foretaste of heaven when we spend time fellowshipping with those who love our Lord.

Many sincere prayers have risen to the Father on behalf of Bro. Robert Figel (Sis. Angie), Stephanie Alrutz Wolfe (Cody) and Sis. Terry Zollinger (Bro. Gary) as they have been spending extended time in hospitals. We trust God will restore them for many years in his service.

Youth Fellowship Day in Mansfield has been something
for our youth (Grades 7-12) to anticipate and experience! May God continue to propagate the seeds that are sown in these young lives.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6

We were blessed to have ministering Bro. Marvin Zollinger (Sis. Pam, Smithville, OH) on August 1 for services. From the later part of Mark 6, the Spirit brought out that, just as the loaves and fishes were multiplied for the natural body, the spiritual message was blessed and God continues to bless our faith, prayers and trust in him.

Continuing then into the dinner hour and evening, many more came to thank our dear retired Elder Bro. Ken Indermuhle (Sis. Linda) for their 48 years of service in the ministry and 24 years as Elder in the Sardis church. We appreciated the many loving thoughts and thankfulness that came forth from our Sardis ministers and Elder Bro. Bob Dotterer, as well as others who joined them in reminiscing about their interactions with Ken over many years. Those making special efforts to join us were Retired Elder Bro. Andy Stoller, (Smithville, OH), and Retired Elder Bro. Art Ingold (Sis. Bonnie, Rittman, OH), Elder Bro. Vic Bauman (Sis. Brenda, Smithville, OH), Elder Bro. Wayne Hartzler (Sis. Camille, Rittman, OH). Many of Ken and Linda’s close relatives and friends also came to spend time with them and our entire Sardis church family as we rejoiced in their many blessings! They were reminded that retirement is not ‘quitting’ but just ‘shifting gears’ in the service of our Lord. We wish them many years of good health and ‘family time’ as well. May we all continue to care for the ‘sheep’ that come into our lives or cross our paths as we look to the shepherd and wend our way toward heaven.

Ohio, Smithville
Connie Maletich, Marcy Stoller

This month, ACCFS held a Mentoring seminar led by Bro. Arlan Miller, Sis. Katie Miller, and Sis. Kathy Knochel. We were also blessed with extra visitors and fellowship during the summer Brotherhood Conference held at our neighboring congregation of Rittman.

We were thankful for visiting ministers Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL), Bro. Dave Lanz (Sis. Tami, Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Christine, Francesville, IN), and Bro. Damon Knobloch (Sis. Stephanie, Morris North, MN).

Our engagements this month were Bro. Austin Dotterer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Amy) to Sis. Tori Ingold (Bro. Doug and Sis. Joanna, Rittman, OH) and Sis. Trinity Walder (Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie, Smithville, OH and Les Cayes, Haiti) to Bro. Joab Telusma (Bluffton, IN and Les Cayes, Haiti).

Celebrating weddings this month were Bro. Joel and Sis. Allison Kipfer (parents are Bro. Jon and Sis. Suzanne, Rittman, OH, and Mirko and Mary Gavrilovic, Brunswick Hills, OH) and Bro. Todd and Sis. Desiree Gasser (parents are Bro. Ken and Sis. SueEllen Maibach and the late Greg Gasser, and Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith Sinn, Silverton, OR).


Sis. Lorene Blough (Bro. Elmer, dec.) and Zion Maibach (Bro. Matt and Sis. Jessica), both endured a recent hospital stay.

Ohio, Toledo
Anne Baumann, Brooke Harmon

For most of my Christian life my Bible reading method has been less than ideal. Often, I would open at random and read whatever my eyes landed on looking for a quick “pick me up” verse or something inspiring to carry with me into my day. This
type of scattered reading made me feel like I was doing my part as a Christian but following years of unorganized reading I found myself struggling in my view of God and had some confused views about vital concepts like justification and sanctification. My self-focused form of Bible reading often resulted in me taking verses out of context and developing an overall feeling that the Bible was a book written to me. Most definitely the Scripture was written for me but not specifically to me. The primary purpose of the Word is not to function as an instruction manual or rulebook for me to follow but rather is a beautiful painting in which God is revealing himself to me and showing me who we really are as humans. As I read, I should be looking for what the passage is telling me about God’s character and his plan as opposed to simple applications for my life.

When studying the Word, it’s good to look at entire books of the Bible instead of specific chapters. Especially the New Testament as it is composed of numerous letters with chapters and verses added many years after the original manuscripts were penned. Personally, I like to print out a book/letter (double-spaced and with wide margins) on copy paper. This enables me to easily write notes, circle reoccurring words/ideas, and connect thoughts. Once I have a good copy of the Scripture I plan on studying I do a little research into the background. Who wrote it? Who was it written to? What is the style of the letter? And so on. Once I feel like I have a good grasp on the intended audience and their culture the following steps then guide me. Good study start with a focus on comprehension: what does the text say? This involves repetitive reading, often the entire book in one sitting, as I familiarize myself with the book I am studying. Second is interpretation: what does the text mean? Here is where Bible dictionaries and commentaries might come out after I attempt to interpret on my own with the help of the Holy Spirit. Cross-referencing can also be incredibly valuable. Last is application: how should it change me? My tendency is to want to jump straight to application as it satiates my desire for instant gratification, but I need to be careful I don’t enforce the narrative that the Bible is about me. For good exegesis I need to hear with the ears of the intended audience before I hear it with my own. I also need to consider their perspective before my own. Lastly I must constantly remind myself that the Bible is about GOD! My tendency should be to always look at what the text is telling me about Him and ask God centered questions first, not as an afterthought.

No text in Scripture should be read in isolation. Ideally we should know the chapters surrounding it and always be looking for how the text fits into the main narrative of the Bible. Jesus said that the Bible was about him. If we have a hard time determining how a text fits with a certain passage we’re reading, that can be a good indication that more study would be beneficial. Romans 12 talks about the process of renewing our minds, which can, in turn, transform our hearts. Sound Bible study can help achieve this renewal! We cannot love what we do not know so let’s engage our minds and learn more and more about our Creator and his amazing Word.

We were thankful to have Elder Brother Bro. Dan Kilgus (Sis. Jenna, Remington, IN) worship with us on a recent Sunday. The willingness of our visitors to pitch in and contribute to our Sunday worship is greatly appreciated! Bro. Anthony and Sis. Anne Baumann recently moved from our Toledo congregation to Smithville as Anthony pursues further education. Their absence is already missed but we are so thankful for the years we’ve had with them in Toledo.

Sis. Connie Sancraint recently had surgery on her knee and is at home recovering. She has been thankful for the prayers of the church, and continues to be in need of them as she continues her recovery efforts.
Our youth group enjoyed time together with their fellow Ohio and Michigan youth groups during a recent weekend in Mansfield, OH. Their time building friendships were encouraging to them, and we appreciate the efforts of the organizers who have kept this weekend together for so many years.

Ontario, Kitchener
RoseLynn Metzger

“O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.” Isa. 25:1

Greetings of love in Jesus’s name! Take a few minutes to think back to when you first accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior. Maybe that was last week, maybe 10 years ago, maybe 50. Now fast forward and think about today and all the time between welcoming Jesus into your heart and where he has placed you today. We can soon see that God never let us down, never left us, never went back on a promise. He has always been a good God, lovingly watching out for his children. In the verse above we see that God was good in the past and therefore, we praise him! But just as much as he was good in the past, he is good today! We can rest in this confidence. The same God that Isaiah wrote about is the same God we serve today, and he isn’t about to change! He is still as loving, merciful, and great as he was back then. Again, let’s look back on our walk with Christ and be encouraged by his faithfulness. I encourage you, if you are questioning God’s faithfulness and are hesitant to take a step of faith and give him your life, please know Jesus is waiting with open arms to welcome you home, and he will never ever leave you.

This month has truly been a blessing! A highlight for our congregation being our first VBS. This event had been in the planning process for a very long time. We were originally planning on having a HarvestCall team come and help us run it, but that wasn’t possible due to closed borders. We decided to still go ahead with it, and we trusted God would provide. He did! We had 3 days of VBS, working through our theme TEACH, and finished our week with a Sunday school picnic and VBS program, all of which brought many smiles, games, singing and of course, learning about God. Seeing how God orchestrated the entire event was incredibly humbling and encouraging. We will not forget VBS 2021 for a very long time and are already excited for next year!

Our visiting ministers this month were Bro. Jerry Isch (Sis. Linda, Philadelphia, PA), Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH), and Bro. Brad Gudeman (Sis. Teresa, Bradford, IL). We were able to have a few midweek services this month. On July 28, Bro. Chad Leman (Sis. Kim, Fairbury, IL) joined us for an in-person midweek service. It was such a blessing to have a second brother stand on the pulpit, the first time in over 15 months! A warm thank you to each of you for joining and for the extra visitors that joined online as well! We couldn’t do it without you! Since the Canadian/American borders are still closed, we welcome you to ‘visit’ us on our Zoom calls! We meet Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, and please reach out to Sis. Alma Gingrich (elmeralma4@gmail.com) for the link details.

Wishing you Gods nearness in this coming month!

“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.” Psa. 37:5

Oregon, Portland
Louisa Gallup

Bro. Mark and Sis. Laura Lindberg (Chicago, IL) blessed us with their visit a few weeks ago. We thank Bro. Mark for his sermons. May the Lord bless them for their willingness to travel here and serve. Some of us were able to have a pleasant time of fellowship with them after services.

We are grateful for the labors of the Elder body as they met for the General Conference earlier this month. We anticipate listening to the recordings in the coming weeks and receiving a blessing from it.
Bro. Ilija and Sis. Nada Gavrilovic and two of their children contracted COVID-19 while visiting family in California. Sis. Nada was hospitalized for a time. Our prayers for them continue as the virus is running its course. At the time of this writing, they are all doing better.

On August 11, after a second stroke and hospitalization, Randy Plummer (Linda, Woodburn, OR) passed away at 72 years of age. He was Camie Knecht’s (Ken) father. We will certainly keep this family in our prayers as they mourn the loss of their loved one. May the Lord be with them and bless them with peace and comfort in the coming months.

Oregon, Silverton

Lorraine Kuenzi, Teresa Sinn

Shane and Kelly Kuenzi welcomed their first child, Thomas William, on August 3. Grandparents are William and Liz Crowley from the Portland, OR area and Bro. Art and Sis. Mary Beth Kuenzi.

Our congregation was blessed to listen to and witness the testimonies and baptisms of Sis. Carol Schurter, Sis. Ashley Schurter (Jason and Sis. Carol) and Sis. Lanah Metz (Bro. Joel and Sis. Laura). God continues to provide abundantly for each one of us, and it’s a blessing to hear how he specifically works in our individual lives.

Our friends Tim and Lisa Schurter have committed their lives to the Lord and begun their repentance journey. We praise God for his work and pray for them and their family as they begin their journey of faith.

Please pray for continued strength and healing for Sis. Alice Metz (Bro. Eldon) as she recovers from some time spent in the hospital due to internal bleeding.

Thank you to Bro. Brett and Sis. Rosanna Kellenberger (Sabetha, KS) for visiting us and sharing the gospel! We appreciate your visits and pray for God’s blessings on you and your family.

Bro. Carson Zollinger (Bro. Jim and Sis. Tresa) and Sis. Malea Cottrell (Bro. Brent and Sis. Darla, Eureka, IL), were married this month. We are thankful to be welcoming them as a couple into our congregation!

Many of us were blessed to witness the wedding of Bro. Todd Gasser (Bro. Ken and Sis. Sue Ellen Maibach, Smithville, OH), to Sis. Desiree Sinn (Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith) on August 14. We have been encouraged to see God work in their lives and pray for his continued blessings and guidance.

Bro. Denny and Sis. Allison Fulop (San Diego, CA) joined our congregation for the wedding and shared the gospel with us over the weekend. We thank you for your service and pray for God’s grace as you continue to serve him!

We congratulate Audrey Kuenzi (Bro. Todd and Sis. Melissa) and Zach Nelson as they were married August 14 as well. We pray for God to direct them as they embark on this new life journey!

We are happy to share that Sis. Samantha Sinn (Bro. Dean and Sis. Heidi) is engaged to Bro. Austin Schneider (Bro. Greg and Sis. Heidi, Remington, IN). Our prayer is for God to shine through them as a couple and that their love grows strong in him!

Kylie Dettwyler (Bro. Travis and Sis. Tammy) and Claire Kuenzi (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Lana) have surrendered their lives to the Lord! It’s such a blessing to see this growth in our congregation, and we pray God will provide for them abundantly as they step forward in faith.

Our congregation is praying fervently for Sis. Lydianne Metzger (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Koreen) as she’s working in Haiti during these uncertain times. We are thankful we serve a sovereign God and trust he will take care of his own.

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

Laura Isch

“So pray ye now, and never cease your praying
Unto the Lord, and in your prayer endure;
For, brother, now there can be no delaying!
Well for him who in Jesus stands secure!
Although a thousand arrows fall around you,
Your enemy shall nevermore confound you.”

The Armor of God,
Zion’s Harp, #115

This month, we enjoyed a presentation on the Armor of God.
from our Sunday school students as they finished a week of VBS. May we all remember to keep the shield of faith against the fiery darts of the enemy! He is faithful who has promised to help us!

We enjoyed having Bro. Jon Zahner (Sis. Amy, Rockville, CT) and his family with us this month. We appreciated Bro. Jon being willing to share the Word of Truth with us.

We wish Sis. Cami Wiegand (Elder Bro. Ben and Sis. Michelle) well as she will be attending Rockville, CT while she attends school in Connecticut. We will miss her and wish her the Lord’s nearness and guidance.

Tennessee, Nashville

Mike Fritz

We heartily welcome Sis. Anelyse Gerst, who has recently moved to the area for employment. We pray the Lord will guide her in this new phase in her life and use her mightily for his kingdom.

We appreciate the willingness of ministering brothers to visit us to bring God’s Living Word. Our recent visiting ministers have been Bro. Clint Bahler (Sis. Alesa, Indianapolis, IN) and Bro. Erik Givens (Sis. Debbie, Princeville, IL). We were also blessed by the fellowship of visitors from Princeville, IL; Indianapolis, IN; Iowa City, IA; and Philadelphia, PA.

We continue to meet for worship at an alternate location while determining whether to repair our church building. When you plan to visit, please contact us to verify where we are meeting that Sunday. Contacts are Bro. Jordan and Sis. Emily Fritz, 615.852.1490, jordanfritz@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, Dallas-Ft. Worth

Sheena Pelsy

“I cannot tell how precious
The Saviour is to me,
Since I have Him accepted,
And He hath made me free;
I cannot tell His goodness,
Enough to satisfy;
And if you’ll only take Him,
You’ll see the reason why,
I cannot tell how precious
The Saviour is to me;
I only can entreat you To
come, and taste and see.”

—I Cannot Tell How Precious,
Hymns of Zion, #51

The Dallas church was so grateful to have Bro. Gregg Rumbold (Sis. Heather, Peoria, IL) join us for services. Bro. Gregg preached on many topics including prayer, patience, and praise in the Lord. In Psalm 34, we read of how David praised God for the experiences of the Lord’s goodness in his life. David also encourages others to trust in God and seek him in good and bad times. David was fleeing for his life, yet he trusted God would provide because he had tasted and seen the Lord’s goodness and nothing else compared to that. When we taste and see, like David, we desire to seek after the Lord knowing it is by his grace we are saved and by his strength alone we can carry on in all circumstances of life. Because we know the goodness of God and the importance of having Jesus Christ in our hearts, we have a desire to share this wonderful gift with others, so that they too can taste and see!

“O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.” Psa. 34:8

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

Vermont, Clarendon

Sarah Wagenbach

With the warmer summer months, we have enjoyed visitors, both those vacationing and those on the minister rotation. We have been blessed by the time of fellowship during the weekend, both during Sunday worship and in enjoying God’s creation together. Ministering brothers that were here this month were: Bro. Dan Walder (Sis. Pam, Cissna Park, IL), Bro. Todd Sinn (Sis. Janet, Latty, OH), and Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL). We are so blessed to be part of a brotherhood where we can feel God’s love for each other even though we may not know each other well.
Building Up One Another in Faith

The fact that we, as believers in the Lord, exist in brotherhood supports the doctrine that we are to build up and strengthen one another as we strive each day to bring glory and honor to his name.

Individually, we are built up by his grace (Acts 20:32). We are to walk faithfully in his ways, “rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving” (Colossians 2:7).

In considering “building up one another,” one must remember that we as believers can become weak and vulnerable. We are in battle, daily, with the forces of darkness and spiritual decline. We live in spiritual peril wherein a raging enemy strives to undermine our faith in God.

Thus, it is to our advantage to live in brotherhood as “members one of another” (Romans 12:5). From brotherhood we gain added protection through spiritual insight, added strength because there is strength in numbers, added support in the form of encouragement, and added caution that we can do his good pleasure (Philippians 2:12-13). Our duty as a fellow-believer in Christ is to fortify, to edify (Romans 14:19) and to build each other in faith. Our lifestyle and our overall daily motivation should be to please God and strengthen each other (Romans 15:2-3).

We, as fellow-believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, should realize that to “build up” is to indeed fortify each other in faith and doctrine. We help each other when we provide support that will strengthen our resolve to fight the good fight, to emphasize and better understand our beliefs, and to assist one another in maintaining them by God’s grace.

We must strive to be equally yoked together, pulling in the same doctrinal direction. As we do so, we encourage one another to be diligent and to inspire one another in a common outlook and purpose. As we give a consistent witness to the world, it strengthens each believer, and it strengthens the witness we are seeking to portray.

The biblical concept of believers building up one another is manifested in Acts 20:32, “And now, brethren, I commend you to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

The first requirement for building up is not to tear down. We have an enemy who seeks to overthrow our faith and who will use a variety of subtle, hard-to-detect tactics. Among his strategies of deception are the traits of individualism, self-assertion, and cultural diversity. In this, Satan belittles the biblical concepts of humility, submission, and obedience. When worldly patterns of individualism and self-assertion begin to emerge in the household of faith, upbuilding is undermined. Unity and self-denial are the teachings we find in the Bible, not self-will, self-indulgence and such like.

Because we are waging a spiritual battle with the corrupt forces of darkness, we must labor diligently...
to strengthen and build up one another, so each of us might become a more effective soldier for the Lord.

We build up each other in faith when we uphold common viewpoints pertaining to faith and life. Believers are instructed in the Word to be “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (I Corinthians 1:10). The prophet, Amos, posed the question, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

As we strive to remain united in common beliefs, if some brethren take exception to those beliefs, it begins to create division. It causes heartache for those who try to uphold the faith. Spiritual independence and variance can cause offense, wherein a brother or sister is made weak causing the opposite effect of edification and building up.

The scripture for strengthening one another finds root in the verse that teaches us to please our neighbor for his good to edification (Romans 15:2). Even in our strongest state, as we believers are weak (II Corinthians 12:10). We need daily strength, both from God’s Spirit and in the form of encouragement from God’s children. We are to exhort (encourage) one another “and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

Again, because we are weak, we need the advice found in Hebrews 2:1, “Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip.” Our faith and our doctrine are important, and we should encourage one another in these beliefs.

Among the more practical aspects of upbuilding are friendliness and personal warmth. We should show these traits to each member of the body. In I Timothy 5:21, we read that we are not to prefer one before another, but we are to accord the same love and godly affection to each brother and sister in faith. To show respect of persons is sin (James 2:7) and can drag down, rather than build up, a fellow-believer.

In everyday life when we receive encouragement from others in earthly tasks, we are heartened and feel a sense of being built up in our endeavors. In our spiritual life, when we are encouraged in matters of faith and godly living, and upbuild one another in faith, we are helping our fellow believers along the road to the glories of Heaven, which is our goal.

We should not underestimate the value of encouraging, exhorting, and up-building one another. As we exercise these qualities toward one another, we do it unto Christ (Matthew 25:40). That is why we should love one another with a pure heart fervently (I Peter 1:22).

Pleasing Others for Their Edification

The idea of pleasing others for their edification covers a wide range of activities and brings to mind many different thoughts. The concept is simple enough for the most newly born to begin practicing, and difficult enough to drive the most mature and seasoned believer to his knees. The immediate rewards for pleasing others can be as small as a casual thank you, or as far reaching as a life-changing repentance. And, of course, we have no assurance of an immediate reward at all. Indeed, for the well disciplined believer, there should be no thought of reward, other than the satisfaction which comes from pleasing the Lord.

To gain a deeper understanding of the subject before us, a thorough definition of the word "edification" is in order. It refers to the process of spiritual growth or spiritual strengthening. To "edify" means to make one stronger in the things of the Lord. It also refers to building up, to instructing and improving, especially for good example.

The benchmark scripture of our study is surely “Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification” (Romans 15:2). Here the Apostle Paul focuses the teachings of previous messages of following the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another.

This verse challenges the efforts of a Christian to be greater because the requirements seem to be a little higher. Now we are reminded that we must give up our own pleasure in order to please our neighbor, but this is where the demands of the scripture jostle hard against the selfish desires of human nature with friction as the likely result. Do we have sufficient grace in our lives to lubricate that friction? We who have put on Christ are now given opportunity to show just how
much we appreciate what Christ has done for us by how willing we are to please others. Can we forebear with others or yield to their wishes at those trying moments when our desires clash with those around us?

Understanding that we are always to edify or strengthen each other spiritually is really a cornerstone of our faith. All through the epistles, the theme recurs. “Let all things be done unto edifying” (1 Corinthians 14:26). “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Not everything that is lawful is edifying (1 Corinthians 10:23). Knowledge tends to cause pride, but it is charity that edifies (1 Corinthians 8:1).

These scriptures all set the tone for a life of sacrificial yielding of self. But this tone reaches its highest pitch when the extra qualification “to please his neighbor” is added. This is where man’s natural pride is most likely to come to the forefront because often we do not like to think that our neighbor has a right to interfere in our personal decisions. Those of us who are reared in a democratic society may, without realizing it, have accepted the notion that large areas of our lives are outside the proper domain of churchly influence. This is one of the chief reasons why church discipline and close brotherly concern one for another are so hard for some to accept. To those unfamiliar with the scriptural foundation for these practices, accountability to each other will seem like a license for busybodies in other men’s matters. The scriptures, however, allow for no such confusion of purpose. In 1 Peter 4:15, a busybody is denounced on the same plane as a murderer or a thief.

In recent years, an increased emphasis has been placed on asserting our rights as individuals and being “true” to ourselves. Increased emphasis is placed on teaching that we should all “assert our rights” and “be true to ourselves.” Acceptance of these concepts will bring us headlong into collision with our text “Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification.”

In this teaching there are two distinct areas of emphasis which can be overlooked in a casual reading. First, in using the word “neighbor”, the Apostle points out the great likelihood that the person we must please may not be our Christian brother or sister. This neighbor might be a very disagreeable person - one we would rather avoid as much as possible. It could be someone who delights in finding and broadcasting every real or imaginary fault in us, and it is almost certain that at some point in our lives, we will have extended contact with someone who makes it a point to belittle those things we hold dear. This type of person will scoff and scorn at every attempt to help himself come to a positive attitude toward the faith we love so much. Here, in our time, is the patience of the saints. This is where we must bite our tongue and suffer some of these indignities in silence. But there comes a time in such relationships that we must call to mind the other area of emphasis - let us please our neighbor for his good to edification. Perhaps after much longsuffering, there comes that point when we can no longer please our neighbor and have it be for his good. At this point, there can be no more attempt at merely pleasing our neighbor, if what pleases him is to get us to participate in activities that are unacceptable for believers. We have applications of Old Testament teachings dressed up in their New Testament exhortations. “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit” (Proverbs 26:4-5). Through a proper understanding of our text and by God’s gracious Spirit, we may understand when and where we answer a fool according to his folly, not by cleverly conceived one-line put downs, but rather, “For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men” (1 Peter 2:15). “But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Hebrews 13:16).

These last verses show us that a consistent practice of good works and good communications will enable us to fulfill our scriptural obligations of self-denial and pleasing our neighbor for his good to edification.

**Mutual Esteem**

SATAN HOPES to destroy the church from within using two specific threats: a return to man-centered “friendship with the world” (James
4:4) and a man-centered focus on religion rather than Christ and his Word (Matthew 23:23). Both threats stem from a self-centered outlook, which Paul calls carnality. “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8: 5-6). “Carnal” literally means “fleshly,” and further study of Scripture’s use of the word leads to an inescapable conclusion: in everything we do, we either serve self or God.

The most practical way to serve God is to serve others. Understanding the meaning of “carnal” reveals why. In serving others, we don’t serve ourselves, which, by definition, means we avoid carnality and draw near to God. Christ vividly illustrates this in Matthew 25:40: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Paul also decries carnality in delivering the same instruction: “…use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13). Christ exemplified this at the Last Supper when he washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:5).

In seeking to show Christ’s love to all men, we should particularly serve our brothers and sisters in Christ. “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10). We cannot wholeheartedly follow this instruction unless we mutually esteem one another.

To esteem one another is obedience to biblical instruction and reflects understanding of biblical truth. We “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), so no one has the right to place himself above another. Furthermore, as Christians, we are “members one of another” as one body of Christ (Romans 12:5). “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). Therefore, we must not think of ourselves “more highly than [we] ought to think” (Romans 12:3), for we are all created equally in God’s image for the purpose of bringing praise unto him (Isaiah 43:21, Revelation 4:11).

This understanding engenders a characteristic prerequisite to mutual esteem, which is humility. Philippians 2:3-8 identifies the essence (what is it?), practice (how do we demonstrate it?), and source of humility.

The essence of humility is esteeming others – both God and man – better than oneself. “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3). We practice humility by placing others’ needs above our own priorities and desires. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:4). This is contrary to our carnal nature, which always seeks to please itself and which, without Christ, we are powerless to overcome. Paul lamented this struggle, writing, “For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do…O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:19, 24).

Our Deliverer and the only source of true humility is the One who defeated death and sin, Jesus Christ. Philippians 2:5-8 reads: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

As one with God, Christ was equal with God and the only man justified in exalting himself above his brethren, yet he chose to humble himself before his Father and his fellow man in obedience and love. This is the ultimate demonstration of mutual esteem, and only with the mind of Christ are we able to emulate it.

Humility and mutual esteem are both heart conditions resulting from and demonstrated by submission. The Greek word for submission is hypotasso, which literally means to rank under. Among those to whom the Bible instructs us to submit are church leaders (Hebrews 13:17), elders (1 Peter 5:5), wives to husbands (Ephesians 5:22), husbands to wives (1 Peter 3:7), and of course, God (James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:6).
In addition, the Bible repeatedly instructs us to submit to each other (Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 5:21, 1 Corinthians 16:16). This is also against our carnal nature and only possible with the mind of Christ. In Romans 14, Paul essentially instructs us to take responsibility for choices impacting each other's spiritual walk, submitting to the needs of a weaker brother and sacrificing our personal liberties to avoid putting “a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in [our] brother’s way” (Romans 14:13). This is mutual esteem in action, exercising our obligation to “follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another” (Romans 14:19). Forgiveness is one of the highest forms of mutual esteem. “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32). Remember that we, who are least worthy of forgiveness, have been forgiven by he who is least obligated to forgive. We must do likewise. “If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye” (Colossians 3:13).

We will always have some differences in areas where the Word does not give specific direction (Romans 14), but we serve the same God and have salvation in the same Christ. It is this common faith in Christ and the entire counsel of his Word that unifies us (Acts 20:27; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Contending with each other is not contending for the faith. Let us, therefore, choose to “forbear one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2) and “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

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**Wonderful Peace**  
by: W. D. Cornell  
Tabernacle Hymns, #149

1. Far away in the depths  
   of my spirit tonight  
   Rolls a melody sweeter than psalm;  
   In celestial strains it unceasingly falls  
   O’er my soul like an infinite calm.

2. What a treasure I have in  
   this wonderful peace,  
   Buried deep in the heart of my soul;  
   So secure that no power can mine it away,  
   While the years of eternity roll.

3. I am resting tonight in  
   this wonderful peace,  
   Resting sweetly in Jesus’ control;  
   For I’m kept from all danger  
   by night and by day,  
   And His glory is flooding my soul.

4. And methinks when I rise  
   to that City of peace,  
   Where the Author of peace I shall see,  
   That one strain of the song  
   which the ransomed will sing,  
   In that heavenly kingdom shall be:

5. Ah! soul, are you here  
   without comfort or rest,  
   Marching down the rough pathway of time?  
   Make Jesus your friend ere the  
   shadows grow dark;  
   Oh, accept this sweet peace so sublime.

Chorus:

Peace! Peace! wonderful peace,  
Coming down from the Father above;  
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray,  
In fathomless billows of love.
Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6
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- Fatted Calf - Magdalena, Mexico

**YOUTH TRAINING COORDINATOR**
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- Fatted Calf - Magdalena, Mexico

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Hospital Lumiere - Bonne Fin, Haiti

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LOCAL AUCTION REPRESENTATIVES

- **Bluffton, IN** – Leon & Pat Gerber
  leongerber249@gmail.com or 260-273-3811
- **Eureka, IL** – Colin & Kyla Knapp
  kylajoknapp@gmail.com – 309-712-6323
- **Forrest, IL** – Ted & Teresa Bachtold
  tbachtold@route24.net or 815-848-0706
- **Goodfield, IL** – Jill & Greg Wagner
  wagner73@juno.com
- **Mediapolis, IA** – Joel & Abigail Steiner
  Jts@hpct.com – 515-441-2797
- **Morton, IL** – Michael & Tami Leman
  Mleman@lemanauto.com 309-988-6035
- **Princeville, IL** – Carol Martin
  carolmartin1126@gmail.com or 309-337-0031
- **Rittman, OH** – Alice Widmer
  awidmer0818@gmail.com or 330-464-7402
- **Sabetha, KS** – Don Plattner
  nekspromos@gmail.com or 785-532-9206
- **Silverton, OR** – Evan & Emily Schmidgall
  schmidgall.emily@gmail.com or 503-871-4286
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HarvestCall Team Schedule - Haiti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Team Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Leader/Church - Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Oct 1-8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Oct 8-15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Dec 3-10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Lane Gerber <a href="mailto:lane.gerber@gmail.com">lane.gerber@gmail.com</a> 260-241-4099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Jan 7-14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Akron, OH n/a</td>
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<td>Les Cayes</td>
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<td>Jan 21-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Feb 4-11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Silverton, OR Harvey Kuenzi <a href="mailto:hkoanoak@msn.com">hkoanoak@msn.com</a> 503-932-3128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Feb 18-25</td>
<td>TBD (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Communion</td>
<td>April 2-9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Maintenance</td>
<td>April 9-16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>April 23-29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>Apr 29- M 6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>MEBSH/Haiti Support</td>
<td>May 6-13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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wished, voluntarily and meekly died on the cross for our sins in order to reconcile us to God. Now we, as his followers made free by Jesus, voluntarily suffer injustice in order to bear witness to this tremendous love of Jesus. We do not resist evil but turn the other cheek. We give up our cloak to the person who just sued us for our coat, and we go the extra mile. We love our enemies and pray for them, and instead of returning evil for evil, we do good to those who mistreat us.

This is what motivates us to, “See God’s value in each individual and joyfully reflect Jesus’ peaceful spirit.” Each individual” includes all those who, in the words of Peter, are “as sheep going astray” who need the healing power of Jesus’s blood on the cross. Who would need reconciliation and peace more than those who commit gross injustice against God’s people?

In the presence of God, because of Jesus’s sacrifice, we are willing to take the lesser part and do not seek vengeance, trusting in God’s provision and providence. We speak the truth in love. We live peaceable, nonviolent lives. We respect and pray for others while using discretion if engaging in societal issues or political discourse. We are willing to lay aside our own desires for the spiritual welfare of others.

One might protest: will this not mean the end of the Church? No, it is the beginning of the church. Historians of the Church in the first three centuries point to exactly this kind of sacrificial suffering as crucial to its phenomenal growth. The Church insisted on godly, just behavior among its own but patiently and famously suffered the injustices unbelievers committed against them. One second-century Christian who recognized the evangelistic power of nonviolence wrote, “When [unbelievers] hear from us that God says, ‘It is no credit to you if you love those who love you, but it is a credit to you if you love your enemies and those who hate you,’ when they hear these things, they marvel at such extraordinary goodness.” Justin Martyr (AD 100s) described how the Holy Spirit transformed even the worst of sinners into children of God who loved their enemies, even to the point of martyrdom. Such suffering of injustices worked to the advantage of the Gospel, for, he wrote, “the more such things happen, the more do others in larger numbers become faithful, and worshipers of God through the name of Jesus.”

Brothers and sisters, this is our calling, because this is the work of our Lord Jesus Christ, who himself did what he now asks of us. It is extremely challenging, but we must stand with our brothers and sisters of the Early Church, our fellow peacemakers and children of God, who testified that by the power of the Spirit, we can value even the lives of our enemies, love them, and seek their good as peacemakers. With them we can proclaim, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Endnotes

1 Hebrews 12:14
2 References from 1 Peter 2 omitted from endnotes
3 Guiding Principle F
6 Peter 1:3-5
Let’s sing together #208, Praise Ye the Lord (Zion’s Harp).

Let’s open up into the book of Galatians. Let’s do Chapter 5 starting at the beginning.

I’ll just stop reading there at verse 19 because we get into more familiar passages of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. This is a very special book. I think it was close to ten years ago that there was a lot of dissension in our church back home, and the estimate I frequently use is that I spent 85 hours at Cracker Barrel meeting with brothers. It became painful because we spent 95% of our time disagreeing on 3% of the content. We just continued to butt heads on these few little nuances of God’s sovereignty and predestination and those sorts of things.

I finally just paused and said, “Brothers, we won’t be able to continue. We don’t have enough bank account to just keep butting heads.” Then, I asked, “Can we just get together, and you pick any book of the Bible – I don’t care which one – to just go through together? I’ll get a few older brothers, you gather those you want, and let’s come together to go into a book of the Bible with the intended purpose of just seeking what is on the author’s heart, what is he teaching.”

They chose the book of Galatians, and little did I know how transformative it would be to me personally. It is through that six month of studying this book that the conviction deepened in my heart of just how much it is on God’s heart that we understand we have been imputed with a righteousness not of our own, a righteousness from God by faith.

The word justification is the verb form of righteousness – we have been ‘righteousness-ed’. That alone qualifies us to come into God’s presence. It resolved so much tension that I had described earlier about feeling inadequate, about feeling like a disappointment. I finally had solid ground to stand on that I stood before God perfectly righteous.

I just ask you: do you live there? Do you live in a sense of sonship? Do you live in a sense of assurance that it is God who has ‘righteousness-ed’ you, and that, and that alone, qualifies you to come into his presence?

A second thing that I learned in going through the first four chapters of Galatians is that our flesh does not like that. Our flesh despises the notion that we are wholly dependent on what somebody has done for us. The flesh would like to say, “I contributed to this. I messed up. I deserved to pay the price. I’ll pay the price so that it has some sense of fairness and balance to it.” That’s what the flesh likes. We all struggle with what he’s talking about in Galatians 5. We all struggle with living in the flesh. We all can relate to the things in Romans 7. “The things I don’t want to do, I do. The things I do want to do, I can’t do. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” I live in this body of death that keeps pulling me in directions I don’t want to go. So, when the Judaizers came in and spoke with these Galatian believers who were struggling with living in the flesh, it’s not surprising they listened.

It would be hard to summarize the first four chapters of the book of Galatians, but in a nutshell, the first thing that Paul has to do is establish credibility because his credibility has been weakened. He has been attacked personally. His character has been attacked. He’s got to first say, “The gospel came to me from Jesus Christ personally. I received the gospel by direct revelation; I did not consult with humans.” That’s a pretty tall and stark claim, but he claims it. Then he goes on, tells the story of the circumcision of Titus and...
these four vignettes of little anecdotes of what he did to try to re-establish his credibility. In chapter 3, he goes on as a lawyer and starts talking about the precedence of what came first, by faith or by law. He establishes and goes clear back to Genesis 15 that God made Abraham righteous by faith. Long before Moses, 400 years before Moses, ever showed up on the scene, the whole idea of justification by faith has already been established in father Abraham.

Chapter 3 is legal, and in chapter 4, he gets relational. He uses his own relationship with the Galatian believers and calls them to acknowledge that they have been made sons. He appeals to the truth and tries to equip the Galatians with truth thinking. He ends with Hagar and Sarah. He makes these really strong statements. He gets forceful.

When he’s talking about “don’t get entangled again”, he’s not talking about getting entangled in sin. He says, “Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (v1), and he’s referring back to the law. Don’t get entangled again with the law because if you do – if you go back to a thinking of fairness and a thinking that the flesh prefers – he says in verse 4, “Christ is become of no effect to you.” He makes these really strong statements. If you go back to the method of being balanced with God, you’re back to the law, and the fact that Christ died, was raised again, and is alive now is become meaningless. Christ is become of no effect to you.

Then, he makes another statement that we typically associate with sinning. He says, “You are fallen from grace.” The way you fall from grace is not to sin; the way you fall from grace is in saying, “I don’t need Christ. I’m going to go back to a system of fairness where I pay, I do the contribution, and God owes me.” When you do that, Christ has become of no effect, and you’re fallen from grace.

There’s more language about the Judaizers themselves and then culmination in verse 12: “I would they were even cut off which trouble you.”

I can sense there’s tension in the audience when I say, “We’ve been called unto liberty. We are free to sin.” Don’t take that to mean that you can sin without consequences or without damage. Sin is horribly damaging. Sin is horribly painful to relationships of your closest people around you. The damage of sin is hard to overestimate, but God has established us and has paid for our sin to the point that we stand in liberty before him as ones who have been ‘righteousness-ed’. We need to be rock solid on that. But we need to be sobered by the fight that does exist as we walk in the flesh.
He says in verse 13, “Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Do you see? You’ve been called unto liberty; you have choice. You can use your liberty to sin. You can use your liberty to become unselfishly capable of serving other people. The potential is there for both. “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (v14). He talks about the benefits of choosing to use your liberty to become unselfishly able to serve others. You can love your neighbor as yourself. It affects human relationships. This all is about living life on earth now. Then he contrasts that with, “if you choose to serve the flesh, this is what it looks like.” “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another” (v15). It’s ugly when you have Christians in a church who are being led of the flesh rather than the spirit. There will be dissension and biting, devouring of each other. It becomes really unpleasant to go to church when there is flesh-ledness by believers.

So, God calls us to come out into the light, to be confident in what he’s done, to be confessing with our sin. The word says, “As we walk in the light, then we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ continues to cleanse us from sin as we walk in the light.” The battle’s articulated in verses 16-17. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” He’s saying, “I just encourage you, Galatian believer. I understand why the Judaizers had access to your hearts. You’re struggling with your sin, and it seemed like they had a reasonable solution to how you overcome this war that goes on inside your body. I’m just saying it’s the wrong way to win the war. Here’s the right way to win the war. ‘This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.’”

You can’t beat the flesh by fighting the flesh. You only beat the flesh by submitting to the Spirit, by hearing the Holy Spirit speak to you in the context of God’s word, by hearkening, listening, hearing what he says, and then putting it into practice. That’s the essence of following after the Spirit. When we do that, there’s hope. There’s joy. There’s the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It’s a battle.

I just encourage all of us today, walk away with a renewed conviction of what qualifies us before God, and as we get bumped and injured by flesh-led people or whether we do the bumping ourselves, understand there is a hopeful path out of that. We have to first come to God, understand what qualifies us to come to God, and invite his Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts. Then, we’ll enjoy the battle. “God, you knew this, right?”

I always say this, if Marcia had a clue what she was getting into when we became engaged. She did not come into our engagement with her eyes wide open, and it’s not to say she wasn’t thinking; she had no way of knowing what it was going to be like to live with a flesh-led man. Understand this, God does not enter into our relationship that way. God enters into our relationship with his eyes wide open. He knows it all. Decades before it happens, and he says, “Yes, walk in the Spirit.”
Remembering Our Spiritual Heritage

This historical series of our denomination has focused on the origin and development of the church in Switzerland, and the August centered on the first two churches in upstate New York at Croghan and Naumburg. This edition provides a look at the next area of development, at Sardis, Ohio.

The American Church - Sardis, Ohio
The next area of church activity (in America) occurred in the hills of the Ohio Valley in Southeastern Ohio. Tucked almost unnoticed between the banks of the Ohio River and the hills to the immediate west is the hamlet of Sardis, Ohio. In 1848, several families of Swiss origin landed near this town.

Arriving first in New York and then in Pittsburgh, they boarded a flat boat for the trip down the Ohio River. As this European party approached the area near Sardis, they very likely marveled at the hills and valleys to the west which reminded them of their native Switzerland. They might have decided to stop at Sardis and make this their home or they could very possibly have hit a sandbar at the area called Duffy, and were forced to stop. Perhaps being weary from weeks of travel on the ocean and then a spartan trip on a flat boat, they made a decision, with lifelong implications, to settle in the Duffy-Sardis area. In any case, they settled in the hills near Sardis, and immediately a church was founded.

Joseph Bella
An instrumental leader of the Sardis congregation was Joseph Bella, a single man, who was their first Elder. He lived initially in the Sardis area, but spent a lot of time traveling to the newly-established American churches — nurturing, counseling, and giving both support and direction.

While in the Sardis area, he lived in a small house next to Isaac Gehring’s home. The small Bella dwelling consisted of a woodshed “lean-to” on one side and a two-room, two-story section on the other. Bella repaired watches for his livelihood in one room and slept in the other. A large portion of his time was devoted to the Lord’s work, in shepherding the small flock at Sardis as well as traveling to other developing churches in the United States. (Editors note: Bro. Joseph Bella was a strong and effective force as the American churches were being established).

Isaac Gehring
Isaac Gehring is thought to have been the leader of the small band of believers who came to America. Born in 1819 in Switzerland, he was twenty-nine years old when he came to America. The date he was selected as a minister is not known. He was ordained as Elder in 1868 and served until his death in 1896 at the age of seventy-seven. He is assumed to have associated with Samuel Froehlich and to have been under his direction and influence with respect to matters of faith.

Church Building
The early believers built their first church in approximately 1850. In the early 1850’s, their log church caught fire and was completely destroyed. Issac Gehring added a room to his home, and services were held there for several years. By 1875, a new one-story building, (without a basement), was built on a hill in order that the assembly would be “as near as possible to God.”

New Martinsville, West Virginia
The New Martinsville congregation, at one time a thriving church, began to diminish shortly after the turn of the century (1900). Primarily for economic reasons, most of its members moved elsewhere. Services were terminated in the late 1950’s. In 1966, an annual memorial service was started. Many visitors from other Apostolic Christian churches in the United States gather for worship services once each year, usually in June.

-by Perry A. Klopfenstein
The Light of Hope

Follow Me

In our journey of faith, one of the greatest blessings is fellowship with other believers in the body of Christ. We can share in joys and sorrows as we labor together in the vineyard of the Lord. God equips each of his children with unique abilities and talents. He also calls us to serve him and ultimately to glorify his name.

Serving together is wonderful especially when we love as Jesus loved. Sometimes, however, we can get distracted by looking at where others have been placed rather than continuing to serve with our whole hearts.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.” John 21:15

When Peter answered that he loved Jesus more than these, he probably had little idea of what the future held and how much he would suffer for Jesus’ sake. Earlier in John’s account, Peter had confessed that he was prepared to even die with Jesus but that he would never deny knowing him. Soon afterwards, Peter did deny that he even knew Jesus. Perhaps the shame still lingered. Jesus asked Peter again a second and a third time if he loved him.

“He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” John 21:16-17

Jesus goes on to describe the way in which Peter would glorify God through his own death for the sake of his belief in Christ. Right after this tender moment, Peter turned and asked about John.

“Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?” John 21:21

Isn’t that human nature? To look around and to wonder, “Lord, what about him? What about her? You’ve asked me to….but what about them?”

Jesus response to Peter was quite clear.

“Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.” John 21:22

What encouragement to “stay the course” to do what God has called without looking around and wondering about everyone else. In an age of social media and interconnectedness, we can see a lot about other people’s lives. Unfortunately, the pictures and information posted often paints an incomplete picture of their lives and can also lead to distraction from our personal calling. How can we serve Jesus better? How can we be effective where has has called us? It can be easy to fall into the temptation to compare our calling with that of someone else. But if God has planned that they remain until he returns, what is that to us? We must follow Jesus, no matter what it may cost us, even if we cannot see why. Jesus has asked us to follow him. Are we following with our whole heart?

“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. 3:15

-by Anna Inoue
From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD'S name is to be praised.

Psalm 113:3