He sendeth the springs into the valleys, Which run among the hills.
Psalm 104:10
Springtime

It is the time of year that when the thoughts of most readers turn to spring. Winter has worn out its welcome and they are ready for the warmth to return. White snow on the ground will give way to green grass. Thick coats will be hung up in favor of lighter jackets, even if it is still a bit too cold to wear something thinner. The sun will rise a little sooner and linger longer before setting. The bare trees will soon have buds, and flowers will start to come up.

For many, activities will also shift. Idle equipment will be put to work sowing seed in hopes of a good harvest. Quick trips outside will change into long hours laboring under the sun. The sluggishness of winter will be replaced with the busyness of spring.

The beautiful hymn “Great is Thy Faithfulness” came to mind while considering this (see pg. 45). Verse two of that hymn speaks of the seasons and the courses of the planets, noting that they "join with all nature in manifold witness, to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love."

So as the winter turns to spring, let us rejoice in the faithfulness, mercy, and love of the Father. He has faithfully brought us through the winter into the spring. For "great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!" Amen!

In Christian love,
Rick and Michelle Kaisner, Silver Lining Editors
Beginning with Faith/Allegiance

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith . . . ”

In his second letter, the Apostle Peter lays out for us the breathtaking truth that God rescues us from corruption and shares with us his divine nature. “And besides this,” or, “because of this,” we are to be diligent to grow in our Christian walk. That walk, according to 2 Peter 1:5, begins with faith.

The word faith is one of several terms that are so familiar to Christians that we may not spend enough time thinking about their meaning. As we learned during the 2021 Brotherhood Conference, the Greek word that is usually translated into English as “faith” has a depth of meaning beyond trust and belief, two words that we often use to define the word faith.

The Greek word (pistis) usually translated as “faith” was often used in a military and political setting. A person would “give pístis” to a general or king. This meant he was promising to take his side in any situation. For this reason, scholars who study the ancient Greek language have described giving pístis—having faith in someone—as pledging allegiance to a leader.

Understanding faith as allegiance can be particularly useful in our Christian context. We follow Jesus, whose title is Christ, which means “anointed one” or “king.” The Apostle Paul, who wrote often of faith, also liked to identify Jesus with this title. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” To have faith in him—to “give pístis” to Jesus—is to pledge our allegiance to Jesus our King. We conform our interests to his. We side with him in conversations and disputes. We lay down the weapons of hatred and division and shame and violence and pick up the armor of God with the aim of fighting the battles of the Lord. In other words, we live in his Kingdom and serve his way in his army.

This means that exercising faith begins with an individual granting his or her allegiance to Jesus Christ. But in doing so, that individual moves into his Kingdom, a community of fellow citizens who have cast their lot with Jesus Christ, and it is within that Kingdom that we live out our calling as his followers. In other words, we grant allegiance individually but exercise it collectively. It is impossible to join Jesus’ army without, well, joining his army! Our “mutual faith” provides comfort to us together.

This shared faith gives us patience with each other. Standing firm in our common faith—pledging our allegiance to the same Lord—enables us to work alongside each other with respect and esteem.

Walking in faith in the Kingdom of Christ Jesus blesses us and others in so many ways.

What else defines pístis/faith? James gives us a clue in the second chapter of his epistle when he wrote that “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” Paul writes that the fruit of the Spirit—the presence and power of God which we receive upon exercising faith—includes faith (pistis). It is probably better to translate that word faithfulness: exercising faith through the Spirit bears the fruit of faithfulness. It would be a strange thing indeed to pledge allegiance to a king and then join the army of his enemy! Rather, we join the battle on our King’s side. Faithfulness means we stay on that side, even if it seems we are feeble soldiers. There were three “mighty men” in King David’s army who were the epitome of strength, bravery, and skill, and another thirty who were right behind those three in their valor. They were joined by

— Please turn to pg. 53
Sermon by Bro. Tim Lehman,
Taylor, MO — April 11, 2021

Ezekiel 28:1-19 & 1 Peter 5:5-11

Greetings. Today, it’s good for me to be here, to worship corporately with you. Each one of us is coming and listening through a different experience in this week, in our own lives, and as I look out, I know some are maybe more public than others. If this was a very energizing and grace-filled week for you, then you have anticipation and you felt God’s presence. Others had different experiences, whether mentally or physically, but I pray that, today as we get to be in God’s word, we can be reminded of God’s faithfulness. I see those of you who suffered from fire this week on Wednesday night. Amber and I talked, and it was very reminiscent of what Kent and Jan experienced after a Wednesday night fire at their facility and just to have the testimony of where God can work in a tragedy like that.

I’m thankful for this morning as we were singing downstairs because it took me back to part of my week. One of the last songs we got to sing was I Love to Tell the Story. It took me back. I would have been in my early 20s, so a young Christian believer, living by myself in Kansas City at the time. I had been emotionally spent from that weekend and a little bit discouraged and really tired. It’s just one of those flat experiences, a time I was thinking, ‘What even is the point?’ I was fairly discouraged. That song came to mind, so I just started singing it in my mind. “I love to tell the story; t’will be my theme in glory. I love to tell the story of Jesus and his love.” I found myself starting to repeat it and even started singing it out loud as I was driving. I began saying to myself that, as I go back into the workforce, back into the marketplace, I need to be that witness, and all of the sudden, the Spirit started filling me, saying, “I will be with you to strengthen you.”

Amber can attest that this week was like that. Mentally, I was really checked out and exhausted by the end of the week, but being able to be back here in the word this weekend, I’m being recharged. May it be a blessing today for each one of us that we have this word and we get to fellowship.

Let’s open the word. We’re in the book of Ezekiel. In the Old Testament, it’s Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, if you’re trying to find that. Ezekiel chapter 28 is open. Ezekiel gives a lot. God’s using him to prophesy to his people and also to the surrounding nations. So, if you look at the chapters before, in 26, he’s hitting Moab and Ammon, and in 27, he’s talking against Tyre. In 28, he’s going to speak specifically against the king of Tyre.

Some of you are may be familiar with this chapter, but I ask you, as we read this, think of the sin that is your greatest temptation. What is it? I want you to think about that as we go through this. Ezekiel 28 has always stood out to me because it identifies what really is the root of every sin known to man. Whatever came to your mind, ask yourself if the root is found in what we will read and in what God was speaking through Ezekiel here to the king of Tyre. Let’s begin in verse 1.

So, you can pick up that Tyre was a very successful city, right there on the port, and they did their fair share of persecuting Israel. It was very wealthy and proud, but God was speaking into the city of the king and saying, “Oh king, you said you are a god, and everything you see around you – all the riches, your wisdom – you are attributing to yourself. You think you’re wiser than Daniel. You think all the wisdom you’ve gotten, all these riches you have, all this trafficking, all your success is because of you and how great you are, and you’re vaunting yourself up to say, ‘I am God. I am a god.’ You’re elevating yourself.”
Then God is saying, “Oh, how you are mistaken. You have put yourself first and broken God’s first commandment of ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me.’ You are mistaken and because of that pride and arrogance that you hold, you’re going to be brought low, and you are going to be humbled in such a way by the people that are going to come and destroy you. Are you really going to try to say, ‘Yeah, I’m a god’?”

The people will say, “Uh, you’re about ready to die, and we’ve completely destroyed you. We don’t want to be part of your god.”

As we look at our lives here and the treasures God gives, in what do we put our trust? Where do we look when we say, ‘No, I don’t have any other gods before God’?

God is asking, “Is that really how you live? Is your heart fully devoted to me? Do you love me with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind? Or are there riches that get ahead of me? Is there beauty – how you look – that gets ahead of me? Or maybe your occupation, a hobby, some other pleasure, whatever that may be? What are you doing?”

We’re vaunting ourselves above God in our pride because we start relying upon ourselves. We start looking at ourselves and saying, ‘This is what I want’ or ‘This is what I have accomplished. I have no need of God.’

These next verses are what we’re more familiar with where it says, ‘Who is behind that attitude? Who is the author or the motivator that provides and pushes that pride within us to be contrary to what God desires?’ God desires humility and a humbleness from those he has created. So, here’s probably a passage that most clearly is trying to show the people who Satan is. I know I’ve taught on this in Sunday school.

Let’s keep reading here, a few verses, as we think about who is the source from where Satan came and even how you picture Satan. What does he look like? How does he work? Verse 11 says, “Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” (vv.11-12) Talk about a description of someone! To say you seal that up means you are encompassing anything about that subject. That is complete. So, from the descriptions here, it’s clear that it can’t be a man because of the imagery. We’ll see that it is Satan to whom God is referring. He’s saying, “Satan, you seal up the sum of wisdom and beauty.” Lest we think that he is some evil-looking being, God says Satan is full of wisdom and full of beauty.

He says, “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thy iniquities, by thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.” (vv.13-19)

— Please turn to pg. 54
Ministry Program Updates

God is Working to Plant Churches  
Church Establishment Committee

Moses. Elijah. Peter. Paul. As we read the Bible today, we get a front row seat to see how God worked in the lives of the prophets and apostles. Within HarvestCall, the Church Establishment Committee (CEC) is privileged to see first-hand how God is working both nationally and internationally within our churches today. Many times as the brothers and sisters will testify, their prayers reflect a mixture of supplication and praise. And, there is awareness that there are many prayer warriors behind the scenes praying for God’s work and will to be done.

Recently, the CEC, which has cross cultural representation from brothers and sisters in Jamaica, Mexico, Japan and US, reflected on some of the happenings throughout the past year and the rich conversations that have occurred. As one brother said, “walking alongside one another, we see first-hand the different cultural perspectives and challenges within each area. This brings a ‘realness’ and an urgency to what we are working on.” One example of this is developing the Cross-Cultural Church Planting Framework for use with those that engage with HarvestCall.

Hearing from those with “feet on the ground” and understanding the various cultural challenges first hand has been invaluable to the Committee.

To gain insights in cross cultural church planting, conversations were held with nearly a dozen MEBSH (Mission Evangélique Baptiste du Sud d’Haiti) pastors who have planted over 400 churches in Haiti, the RGGMI (Rural Gospel Medical Mission of India) board responsible for the oversight of the continued expansion of the gospel in parts of India, and the brethren involved in the planting and establishment of the churches in Japan. Special focus was understanding key learnings in establishing churches, ways to engage the community and overcome cultural challenges. (More information on Japan key learnings can be found in the 2021 HC Summer Newsletter). By yearend, the initial draft of the Framework had been reviewed by HarvestCall’s Spiritual Oversight Committee with the direction to move forward and “learn together”.

In parallel, work was going on in each region to further plant the churches in Barra Vieja, Ixtlán

Supporting Our Missionaries through Reentry  
Missionary Support

Over the last two years, our church has welcomed home approximately 60 men, women, and children serving on the mission field through HarvestCall.

This transition after service is commonly known as “reentry.” By definition, reentry is a transition back into one’s home culture after living for a time in another. The reasons someone comes off the mission field are varied, and each individual’s emotional journey through this move is different. While it is impossible to capture all of the nuances of reentry, here are some things to keep in mind the next time you interact and pray for a returned missionary:

- Some returns are planned out, as a missionary may feel the Lord calling them back Stateside. Examples of this could be retirement or marriage. Other situations may require a sudden and unexpected departure, like when a natural disaster or unrest in a country require a quick exit. The amount of emotional and physical preparation in these scenarios is quite different. Regardless of how someone comes off the field, it is important to remember that their work is not done, rather they are being “recommissioned” and it may take them some time to reintegrate back into their local community.
and Magdalena, Mexico and encouraging the E3 gathering in Jamaica to move forward with planting a Deaf Church.

**Big Prayer Requests**

In advance of each CEC monthly meeting, Committee members were asked for updates and prayer requests from their areas of representation. One sister commented that “asking for these prayer requests ‘makes it real’, and assists believers in the locations to know there is a body of believers praying and caring for them.” Additionally, another Committee member expressed that being part of the CEC call has enabled him to “travel” to the U.S. and outside all in one night. He misses the opportunities to travel and interact with various churches; being on the Committee has enabled him to interact with the larger body of believers.

Throughout the year, no location was exempt from COVID-19. Prayers were requested for health and protection for the E3 ministry, Jamaica, Japan, Ixtlán, and Magdalena due to ups and downs of church and other community closures. Comments were made, “COVID-19 cases have really picked up, but thankfully the church families have been healthy.” Prayers for protection were also requested due to the violence in the Magdalena community as drug cartels fought for territory, along with opportunities to share the gospel during those fearful times. Yet, prayers of praise also resounded as the Elder Body gave unanimous support to move forward with establishing a Deaf Church in Jamaica under the Ordained Leadership of Bro. Blake (Sis. Tashi) Widmer. Approval was also given to ordain deacons Makoto (Sis. Anna) and Akihiro Ito (Sis. Carrie) in Japan.

Throughout the year, there were other blessed teaching times as the CEC reviewed a new cross-cultural Bible study, attended IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) training and discussed the HarvestCall teachings – Clarity of the Gospel, Centrality of the Church, and Ministry of Reconciliation. Through attendance at Proclaim & Serve, many wonderful ideas were gleaned from the brotherhood as the CEC led brainstorming discussions to “Foster a Culture of Evangelism and Discipleship” within our churches. — *Please turn to pg. 53*

- Missionaries may regularly hear phrases like “I bet you are glad to be home” as they attend church or family gatherings. However, “being home” can bring a mix of emotions as they grieve the relationships and life they’ve left behind.
- Normal tasks, such as going to the grocery store, can feel overwhelming as they are exposed to so many choices for a simple item they would have been thankful to have received on the field. They may find themselves missing the simplicity of their previous country.
- Sometimes a missionary can feel disconnected from their friends and family, feeling like nobody can understand their experiences. Are there ways we as family and friends can slow down and be willing to listen to them without judgment?
- In Acts 14:27, Paul and Barnabas return from their missionary journey and share their experiences with the church- “And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.” Are there ways our churches can invite missionaries to share their experiences on the field?

Reentry can be a difficult time of transition for people, so let’s remember those returning from the field in our prayers. By reaching out and walking alongside of them, we can illustrate what it truly means to support each other as the Body of Christ. –*by Amber Miller*
“Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.” This quote is attributed to several different people and is a well-known idea that is often considered by management teams trying to boost the output of their companies. For the output or product to be better, something in the current system needs to be revamped, added, or removed. Part of what is interesting about this quote is it can also be applied on an individual level. “Every [belief] system is perfectly designed to get the results [or behaviors] it gets.” You may have heard of certain high-profile Christian teachers (or even other Christians you may know) who have been caught in serious moral failures. And maybe, in response to the news, you have heard someone say something like, “They didn’t live up to their faith.” The reality, however, may go much deeper. The truth is that what those individuals came to believe at their cores about what they thought was good for them became painfully obvious through their actions. The same is true for you and me — our lives are governed by our beliefs.

Jesus, of course, taught this in his Sermon on the Mount, “Ye shall know them by their fruits…Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” (Matt. 7:16-18) And again, in Matthew 23:26, “… Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.” (Matt. 23:26) Perhaps some people, like the teachers of the law, even think they believe something that they may not actually believe. Their beliefs are borne out by their actions.

Considering this, how do we as followers of Jesus approach our calling to make other followers of Jesus?

First, we must intend to come alongside others to help them identify the deep-seated beliefs they have which keep them from full confidence in Jesus. As believers, we can encourage and help others see Jesus as the most well-informed person about reality; that He is the Creator and Sustainer of all. And then, we must carry this intention through to its completion.

As we prayerfully and wisely carry out this work in tandem with the Spirit of God, believers should avoid the temptation to manage people’s behaviors. Our aim should not be to get people to behave a certain way;...
our aim should be to help people genuinely believe a certain way which naturally results in Godly behavior.

How might we do this?
A good method for doing this would be to study the way Jesus interacted with his close followers in the New Testament - when disciple-making was at its best. People were enticed to change their beliefs (repent) and fully rely on Jesus as he proclaimed and demonstrated the Kingdom of God (Matt. 4:23). Through Jesus, people were offered an entrance into a life that revealed what reality really is like, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” (John 1:4)

The message that was carried made Jesus real and intimately involved in lives of people right where they were. We won’t be successful if we try to force people into right belief by merely stating Christian dogma. We must gently help others see what they genuinely do believe about life and help them to be honest about it. And then we may draw them to right belief in the same way Jesus and his close followers did — through proclaiming the Kingdom of God and backing up that proclamation with our deeds. Consider how Jesus made disciples through his teaching as well as his meeting of practical needs of those around him – feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, receiving the outcasts. God’s action was shown to be available to humankind right where they are. We too can help lead people into fuller confidence in Jesus if we teach God’s Kingdom and, when joined with meeting their present needs, practically make it real to them wherever they are.

ACCFS has numerous resources to assist someone as they interact with and help others. Our relationships can range from formal mentoring situations to the informal, encouraging conversations we hold nearly every day. Resources, discussion aids, and sample accountability questions can be found on our website at www.accounseling.org/mentoring. In addition, our Mentor Training presentations can give practical skills regarding helping others. If you would like more information, please contact ACCFS at (309)263-5536.
If you are anything like us here at LifePoints, spring could not come soon enough! We have endured quite a winter already, and the arrival of garden catalogs entreats some of us to start planning for spring. If you aren’t a gardener, then perhaps the rare days of sunshine and warmth have made you simply long for spending time outdoors. Vacation planning is beginning. Preparations are being made for mission trips. Applications are being sent in for schools or jobs. Amidst the dead of winter, we are anticipating the coming of spring.

Why is it that we so eagerly look forward to what the future holds? Our LifePoints residents do the same – they anticipate weekly visits from special family members; they want to tell everyone about upcoming holidays and birthdays; they can’t wait to go out for a weekend home with the family. The residents look forward to even the small things, like snack time and the activities planned for each evening. They know, just as we know, that there is something to hope for.

As Christians, we hope for more than just things of this world. Our souls ache for heaven and the day we will see the Lord seated on his throne. We do not know everything that we will experience there, just as we do not know what each springtime will hold. But we have seen springs in the past, and we have seen God work in our lives and in the lives of others, and we trust in him and in his Word. Just as we all hope for spring while continuing to work through winter, believers are living in the present while projecting into the future we have in heaven.

Praise God for his promises, for his love for all his children, for his saving grace, and for the hope he has given us of a new and greater future!

Gateway Woods Apostolic Christian Children’s Home
Emily Fischer - Communications Administrative Assistant

When you think about missionaries or the mission field in general, what is the first thing that comes to mind? Do you picture a village full of primitive huts in the middle of nowhere? Do you imagine foreign cultures, languages, and lands? Do you picture the missionaries as the only white-skinned people around?

Most do. Most don’t picture small town America. They don’t picture teenagers who grew up in the States. They don’t think about the tumultuous homes that those teens grew up in, whether because of trauma, abuse, neglect, drugs, alcohol – or all of the above. They don’t think that those teens (who very well may be sitting in a classroom next to their own teen) could possibly live in America their whole lives and not hear the saving grace of the Gospel message.

According to Merriam-Webster, a missionary is a person undertaking a mission and especially a religious mission.

As Christians, what is our mission? To spread the Gospel unto all nations, right? The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19). If you’re a Christian, you’re a missionary – and our very own nation needs missionaries spreading the Good News.

Gateway Woods is just one way to be a domestic missionary, to pour into those like the aforementioned teenagers. And while Indiana may seem like a foreign land to some, it’s probably
not so different from your hometown. We do have lake effect weather and Amish buggies galore, but there’s no new language to learn and you don’t even need a passport to come visit.

In fact, we invite you to come visit. Come fellowship with and encourage our domestic missionaries who are on the front lines every day. Come connect with the teens that may have not heard of the Gospel until coming into contact with Gateway. Come be a part of a mission field that is white for the harvest – it just needs some willing reapers with an eternal perspective.

If you want to schedule a visit, contact Chad.Kaeb@gatewaywoods.org or at 260.627.0220

News:
• We plan to host our Annual Rep Meeting on March 5. We look forward to greeting those who can attend this event.
• Bro. Jon Ringger is leaving Gateway Woods after 9 years of service. We are thankful for his time as a Houseparent and the Communications Coordinator.
• If you would like to seize a great opportunity to impact the lives of the youth, consider applying to be the Summer Volunteer Coordinator for 2022. Contact Bro. Keith Schambach at keith.schambach@gatewaywoods.org for more information.
• If you would like to gain some real-life classroom experience while impacting our residents, consider applying to be the Summer Education Intern. Contact Bro. Brock Williamson at brock.williamson@gatewaywoods.org for more information.
• If you would like to work directly with residents as you plant and harvest bountiful gifts from the garden, consider applying to be the GW Farms Summer Intern. Contact Bro. Eric Bahler at gwfarms@gatewaywoods.org for more information.
• 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, Communications Coordinator, Communications Administrative Assistant, GW Farms Assistant, 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.org 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.

Arizona, Phoenix
Marge Lindenbaum
“Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.” Gen 25:1-2

Until about the third time I studied Genesis, I never realized that many of the enemies of the Israelites were also Abraham’s descendants. Ismael, of course, was at odds with Isaac from the time Isaac was born. And Jacob and Esau’s struggles are well-recorded. After Sarah died,
Abraham re-married and had six more boys. Apparently, there were even more sons born by his concubines, and they were given gifts and sent away from his son, Isaac. Abraham left everything he had to Isaac. Isaac lived by the well, Lahai-roi. This is the place Hagar met God and was told she would have a son and name him Ishmael (Gen 16:10-14). Ishmael settled in the area “from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt” Gen. 25:18. God promised to bless Ishmael and make him a great nation (Gen. 17:20-21). He made it clear, however, the covenant promise belonged to Isaac (Gen. 21:12). Rather than living as brothers, these men and their descendants have been enemies through the ages!

Some scholars are of the opinion modern Saudi Arabia consists of the descendants of Ishmael, who had 12 sons who were princes over nations (Gen. 25:16). Saudi Arabia has princes that rule over certain regions even to this day. Mohammed claimed to be a descendant of Ishmael, according to the Quran. Most of the other inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula also claim to be descendants of Abraham. It certainly could be true, based on the account in Genesis.

Isaac was the child of the promise, and rightfully received the inheritance. Jacob and Esau were two nations and two manner of people, and the elder (Esau) was destined to serve the younger (Jacob) (Gen. 25:23). All the things God laid out in Genesis came to pass exactly as predicted. The book of Genesis establishes beyond question that God is sovereign, and his chosen people are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The rest of the Old Testament records the resentment and ongoing hatred of the child of promise, even to this day. The recent peace accords in the Middle East are truly historic and it remains to be seen how long-lasting they might be. We find in Ezekiel 38-39 those nations will not join with the nations that attack Israel modern Russia, Iran and Turkey (along with a number of smaller nations), nor will they come to Israel’s aid. God alone will save Israel in that battle. The attack will come from the North of Israel, and we may be seeing the beginning of the buildup toward it now. So many things are falling into place to fulfill (literally) the prophecies of ancient times that have not yet come to pass. Isaiah 17 describes the destruction of Damascus, which we may also see in the very near future. We can’t know the timing, but we can know the times and seasons. Wars and rumors of war, lawlessness, love waxing cold, pestilences, earthquakes and false prophets, all growing in our world today, indicating we are in the end times. Are you ready?

“Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. ... But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Matt 24:4,13

It has been a busy time here in the desert. We have food-packing and a fellowship breakfast every week and are very grateful for the help of our winter visitors with all our undertakings. We were privileged to host the HarvestCall board at the end of January and pray they were blessed as they undertake to bless others. A couple weeks later, our Sunday school treated us to a pancake breakfast and silent auction. This is always a fun and beneficial event, and we are happy to be able to hold it again. We had a number of visiting ministers, whose service we appreciate so much. These included Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO), Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS), Bro. Isaac Wofford (Sis. Rachel, Washington, IL), Elder Bro. Bob Dotterer (Sis. Laura, Sardis, OH), Bro. Matt Knapp (Sis. Dana, Peachtree City, GA), Bro. Jeff Leman (Sis. Val, Bluffton North, IN), Bro. John Grimm (Sis. Julie, Columbus, OH), Bro. Mike Kaisner (Sis. Mindy, Peoria, IL), and Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS).

Bro. Victor Krstec continues to battle his way back to good health, and Bro. Dave and Sis. Louann Klopfenstein are grateful for the many prayers that were offered on her behalf. We understand the surgery to address her pain went forward and was successful. Praise the Lord!
Arizona, Prescott

Autumn Rokey

Prescott was blessed to travel to Phoenix for ACYF in February. Our middle and high school kids joined Altadena, San Diego and Phoenix for a weekend of fellowship focused on God as our refuge.

“When Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus, but when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.” Matt. 14:29-30

Although Peter started to sink because he doubted, he also was the only one to step out in faith onto the water towards Jesus. Jesus calls out for us join him and is there to hold us up when we doubt.

Thankful for visiting minister Bro. Todd Witzig (Sis. Nicole, Gridley, IL).

Arizona, Tucson

Dean and Jackie Knobloch

“There shall be showers of blessing: This is the promise of love; There shall be seasons refreshing, Sent from the Savior above. Showers of blessing, Showers of blessing we need: Mercy-drops round us a falling, But for the showers we plead.” There Shall Be Showers of Blessing, Hymns of Zion, #564

The Tucson church has been showered with amazing blessings this past month. We appreciate the Word brought to us by Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL), Bro Mike Grimm (Sis. Amber, San Diego, CA), Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Peoria, IL) and Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Sis. Michelle, Philadelphia, PA). Each of their messages were a blessing and we appreciate their efforts.

God has led our congregation in seeking help in ministering to the Tucson church. We are humbled to have two brothers added to our pulpit ministry. Bro Duane Wulf (Sis. Ann) and Bro. David Zimmerman (Sis. Anna) were voted into that ministry. We know that where God guides, he provides.

We continue to lift up in prayer those who are having health issues. We know a praying church is a healthy church because we all need the prayers of those we love.

Arizona, Willcox

Annie Wulf

We are thankful for our Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) for coming to be with us and serving Holy Communion. It is always good to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us and the oneness we feel with him.

Bro. Ben also reminded us about holy living by reading the Memorandum with us.

We enjoyed having Bro. Keith Hinrichsen (Phoenix, AZ) here and sharing the Word with us in mid-February. We also enjoyed having visiting brethren from across the land and we extend a warm welcome to all who would like to join us in worship.

California, Los Angeles/Altadena

Kali Sauder

I was recently asked the question, “If God answered all the prayers you prayed in the last week with a resounding yes, what would happen?” Apart from seasons of dire circumstances or challenging relationships, times I am pushed into deeper dependency on God’s intervention, often my prayers are small or few. I was challenged to pray bigger, more specific requests. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray like he prayed, he said, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Matt. 6:10. If we truly have the resources of heaven accessible to us through prayer, wouldn’t we long to join heaven’s reality of all God’s goodness, provision, peace, steadfastness, and grace, with our own reality and our circumstances, our families, our churches, our cities, our nation, and our world?

We may ask for healing, guidance, or help in situations that have made their way to our prayer list, and it is wonderful to hold each other up in prayer. But I often find myself focusing on what I want, how I think the situation should resolve, and as a result praying too small. Of course, God wants to hear our hearts, but this question challenged me to pray in agreement with what God would want to happen, for his
kingdom to come. We see this in the prayers recorded in the Bible. While Paul was intimately aware of the specific struggles facing a church he was writing to, his prayers for them are eternal-perspective, kingdom-come kinds of prayers.

“…making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power…” Eph. 1:16-19

This month we gathered with the family and friends of Joyce Foster to celebrate her “glorious inheritance” even as we grieve in hope at our separation. Joyce grew up in and began her walk of faith in Altadena church, but only recently returned to worshiping with us more regularly. May all her loved ones be given the spirit of wisdom and understanding in the knowledge of him and know the hope of his calling and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

California, San Diego
Sarah Fulop

It feels like yesterday, I was counting down to ushering in the new year. A new year with new goals, new possibilities, and new areas to grow. The blind optimism quickly faded with harsh work deadlines, getting sick and bipolar weather patterns. The last two weeks I simmered in frustration toward unmet expectations and my “lack of progress” realizing that March was just around the corner.

Preparing to write this article, I started to look back at the weekly church announcements. Sermon topics on “Walking with God”, “Trusting in the Lord”, and the faithfulness of patriarchs like Enoch and Noah in our weekly church study of the book of Genesis pricked my heart. So often I get wrapped up in my own whirlwind of problems when God is gently whispering to put my trust and faith in him.

In our monthly men’s/women’s Bible study, Sis. Janelle Brewer shared AC Central’s tips on managing stress in life. Over and over, resources and the scriptures tell us to love God’s word, keep our mind firmly fixed on him and not be overly burdened with the cares of life. We are to bring our worries, stress, and burdens to Jesus.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Pet 5:7

Whether we need to set boundaries or build the daily discipline of communing and mediating with God, take heart because Jesus is there to grant us comfort and peace.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." Isa. 26:3

Thank you, Sis. Janelle for your encouragement as well as your service on the HarvestCall committee. This month our church came together to show Christ’s love by packaging sack lunches for a local homeless shelter and making Valentine grams for the nursing home across the street. I am not sure who enjoyed the experience more: the kids playing with stickers and stamps or the residents receiving the bags of socks and little chocolates. Thank you to all who gave their time and a small cup of water in Christ’s name.

We kept our youth in our prayers as they traveled to Phoenix for much needed fellowship with our California and Arizona bi-annual ACYF. What better way to manage the stress of life than to reconnect with fellow believers and be immersed in the endless energy of teenagers!

We wish all of you a blessed month and continue to pray that Christ renews our hearts and minds as we strive to serve him daily.

Connecticut, Rockville
Heidi Beutel, Kim Schneider

Brad and Amanda Bahler, along with Stella, Christian, and Ava, all are excited and thankful as they welcome Thea Mae into their lives and hearts.

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of John Probus. Our congregation will miss his presence and his eager
willingness to lend a helping hand to all.

We rejoice with Ethan Moser (Bro. Jon and Sis. Angie) as he begins to seek the Lord in repentance.

**District of Columbia, Washington**

**Henrietta Meyer**

As our temperatures ranged from 17 to almost 70 degrees this week, we have many reasons to give thanks; warm clothes and warm homes. We are also warmed by the Word.

This month our ministers were Elder Bro. Ben Wiegand (Philadelphia, PA) and Bro. Mark Leuthold (Lester, IA).

If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C. area for vacation or business, please contact Sis. Henrietta Meyer at 703.217.0576, hmeyer2831@gmail.com for assistance, to let us know how many to expect for Sunday services and to find out when and where services are to be held.

**Florida, Fort Lauderdale**

**Renee Mangold**

We were grateful to have several visiting ministers this past month. Our prayers for blessings for their efforts go out to Bro. Dan Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford IN), Bro. Joel Troxel (Sis. Amy, LaCrosse, IN), Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN), Bro. Rick Kaisner (Sis. Michelle, Chicago, IL), and Elder Bro. Dan Pfister (Sis. Sherry, Bluffton North, IN).

Our counseling Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Francesville, IN) blessed us with a beautiful Communion service as we remembered the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was again a wonderful chance to search our hearts and align our paths with God’s will for our lives.

Bro. Chad and Sis. Christie Kaeb (Leo, IN) blessed us with a ministry update on Gateway Woods. It is a privilege to support this ministry where we see the mighty hand of God bringing help and hope to those who hurt so much. We continue in prayer for the children and families, as well as the staff and leadership.

In the winter months, we are blessed to gather for our monthly church supper; an evening of great food, fellowship and singing God’s praises was enjoyed by all attending.

**Florida, Fort Myers**

**Addison Steidinger, Carrie Steidinger**

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac." Heb. 11:17

“Sometimes obedience can feel impossible. Do you desire God and his way and his promises more than anything, and do you believe that he can and will honor your faith and obedience by being unashamed to call himself your God, and to use all his wisdom and power and love to turn the path of obedience into the path of life and joy? Will you trust him today? God is worthy and God is able." (Solid Joys Devotional)

Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA) and Elder Bro. Jay Luthi (Sis. Jane, Lamont, KS) ministered to us this month.

**Florida, Sarasota**

**Becky Funk**

Along with joys in life, we experience sadness and sorrow, especially when we lose those we love. We extend our deepest sympathy to Bro. Art Keller for the loss of his son, Mike. We also extend sympathy to John and Biserka Krstec and their family on the loss of their son, Leo. Many prayers being said for our dear ones. May God’s comfort and grace be plentiful.

We held our annual Sunday school fundraiser on February 12 at the Fellowship Hall. We enjoyed a sit-down dinner, silent auction and bake sale. Thanks to all for helping raise money to send our Bible Class students to visit the Jamaica Deaf village. These trips have always been such a blessing in the past. The evening was a wonderful time of fellowship.

We welcomed visiting ministers Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna, Rockville, CT), Bro. Fred Funk (Sis. Dianne, Morton, IL), Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Sis. Karen, Croghan-Naumburg, NY), Bro. Trent Gasser (Sis. Molly, Akron, OH) and Bro. Drew Schmidgall (Sis. Lanna, Morris, MN). We feel so fortunate to have so many brothers visit our congregation and preach the Word to us.
We have been meeting each Tuesday to make comforters for HarvestCall.

“Sometimes Life is so hard you can only do the next thing. Whatever that is, just do the next thing. God will meet you there.” (Elisabeth Elliot)

Haiti, Les Cayes
Mike and Susie Walder

Greetings! Our God is a God of great love who still performs powerful miracles. The Kurt and Julie Schrock family recently experienced a personal miracle after three of them suffered a high fall onto concrete and were spared. While Bro. Kurt and 8-yr. old Kylie had immediate serious injuries, the youngest, Nathaniel, was basically unharmed. Many prayers were offered as local missionaries gathered that evening and then as the request went around the world.

By God’s grace, Kylie made significant improvement in Haiti in the first few days without the medical intervention that she needed. It was a difficult road back to the U.S., but the family continually felt God’s mercy and goodness through that process, as the diagnosis was made that their full recovery could be expected. What Satan meant only for evil, God has brought so much good.

We give God all the glory and keep praying that their recovery would be swift. May God continue to comfort and heal the entire family, and may he provide for the Construction Department as they operate without the Schrock’s for a time.

Everyone is thankful that the airports in Port-au-Prince are still functioning well in spite of the gang warfare close by. There are three flights a day now to Les Cayes. The Walders are currently on home assignment in Ohio, but they were able to visit Haiti for several weeks to see their children and stay engaged with their ministry partners in the Child Sponsorship office. The Good Vision Dairy has appreciated a few visitors including ministering Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Christine, Francesville, IN). The farm is expecting a group of board members at the end of February.

Did you know? Since the major earthquake last August, south Haiti has experienced over 1,000 aftershocks! When we were visiting, there were two a distance away one morning that measured 5.4 and 5.6. We sat still at our desks while everything shook, but many of the workers who had lost their homes last August ran quickly out of the building. We saw children screaming and running out of the schools onto the streets, and all schools were then closed for the day. Later in the week we experienced another first...an aftershock while at the beach.

The aftershocks continue to be nearly daily reminders of the trauma many experienced last year. Many Haitians continue to sleep outside at night. This may be the way that God is reminding the people that he is God. Many in Haiti fear the power of Satan but need to remember whom they should really fear: the coming Judge and conquering King.

“God judgeth the righteous, And God is angry with the wicked every day.” Psa. 7:11

Illinois, Belvidere
Darcy Steffen

The Chicago Botanic Garden hosted the Orchid Show last weekend, and I am so thankful I was able to go. How I wish I could share color pictures here, but it was breathtaking, to say the least. What shocked me the most was how many varieties of orchids there are; not just different colors, but orchids that don’t even look like orchids. God’s artistry and attention to detail was really on display. I realized that even though these flowers varied, they all require the same type of care: avoid direct sunlight, don’t overwater, roots need to be able to breathe, etc. God has created each of us with varying personalities and talents, but we all require the same care in terms of our Christian walk. Are we setting ourselves up for healthy spiritual growth through good environments, daily prayer, and Bible reading?

This month we had our annual business meeting. We are thankful for all the behind the scenes work
that is done to make our church building operable!

Our local church has had the opportunity to create healthy growing environments as we spend time together outside our normal worship services. Some of the young adults and children went ice skating at our local outdoor rink on a Sunday afternoon, and then the church had a meal at Bro. Jordan and Sis. Shayla Steffen’s house afterwards. We have also started a rotating potluck, so we look forward to the blessings that will bring.

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Duane and Sis. Bonnie Rocke stop through on a recent Wednesday evening on their way home from central Illinois. Bro. Duane led us in a Bible study outlining and discussing the work of the Holy Spirit through the assigning of spiritual gifts.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Eph 4:11-13

Illinois, Bloomington
Kendra Fehr, Lauren Zimmerman

Ben and Kimberly Diller have been blessed by the birth of their precious son, Wyatt Allen Diller. Grandparents are Bill and Jeanette Diller of Normal and Bro. Sam and Sis. Teri Wenger.

We also rejoice with Will Leman, son of Bro. Darin and Sis. Jessica, as he has given his heart to the Lord.

So often there is also sorrow mixed with joy. Sadly, Marvin Bachtold of Fairbury passed away. He is the father of Sis. Melodee Rabe (Bro. Adrian) and grandfather to Emma, Jayden, Jesse, Kylie, Levi, and Tessa Rabe.

“For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; And plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.” Psalm 86:5

Illinois, Bradford
Becky Endress, Lena Stoller

“When we all work together, How happy we’ll be.”

We are thankful for those willing to carry out the necessary church duties. Bro. John Joos (Sis. Elise) replaces Bro. Troy Pyles (Sis. Heather) as the newest Trustee. Bro. Philip Nenadov (Sis. Donna) is taking on the role of Usher, as Bro. Tim Ringger (Sis. Wendy) has completed his term.

“When we all pray together, How happy we’ll be.”

Sis. Marilyn Nenadov is in the hospital, due to complications from COVID-19. We pray for a full and speedy recovery.

We also pray for God’s blessing on Bro. Tim, Sis. Wendy, Tucker and Barrett Ringger as they welcomed Dawson James into their family on February 6. Bro. Bill and Sis. Karen Ringger and Roger and June Schulz are the thankful grandparents.

“When we all read together, How happy we’ll be.”

Gathering around the Word every week is a privilege. We were thankful for various visiting ministers sharing the Word with us; Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL), Bro. Jeff Bahler (Sis. Heidi, Wolcott, IN), Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL) and Bro. Nathan Rassi (Sis. Michelle, St. Louis, MO).

“When we all sing together, How happy we’ll be”

Many of the visiting ministers had come to help on our church building project so we were thankful for the opportunity to have an all-church singing with our guests. We are grateful for the many willing hands and hearts, both locally and from afar, that have labored on our church building. The progress that has been made would not have been possible without each one’s contribution.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Karen Ringger reached a milestone as they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. No matter if it is a marriage or a church body, when we all work, sing, read and pray together, truly how happy we can be!

The song quoted throughout the article may be a children’s song, but it has application to each of us, no matter the age. May we continue to strive to live and work together under one master for his glory and honor.
“When your work is my work, and our work is God’s work, When we all work together, How happy we’ll be.”
When We All Work Together, The Children’s Harp, #74

Illinois, Champaign
Aaron Walder
We extend special thanks to our visiting ministers this month, Bro. Neil Stoller (Sis. Luann, Princeville, IL) and Elder Bro. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy, Gridley, IL). We are grateful for their willing service.

The young group hosted a Valentine’s Day baby-sitting event for the Sunday school students. Each family was surely thankful.

On a Sunday evening, we enjoyed learning about Gateway Woods and available opportunities to serve and support as presented by Bro. Jon Ringger, as well as Bro. Kirk and Sis. Jeana Steidinger, all from Gateway Woods. Bro. Harlan Kupferschmid and Bro. Dawson Finch, who served over the summer, also spoke.

On January 26, Bennett Clay arrived to bless the home of Bro. Phil and Sis. Leah Dreste and big sister Karis. May God richly bless this dear family as they raise their children to love the Lord.

“O, my God, I bow before Thee: Now in me Thy work fulfill! By Thy Spirit’s bount’ring o’er me Sanctify my heart and will. Let me not be lost forever, But reborn of Thee, O Saviour; May I, child-like, Thee adore, Learn to love Thee more and more.”
The New Birth of Water and Spirit, Zion’s Harp, #187

Illinois, Chicago
Diana Eisenmann
In January we held our annual business meeting. We are grateful for all those who have served and continue to serve our church family in various roles. We also had a Women of the Word event and discussed how to share about the Bible with unbelievers.

Bro. Greg Rassi (Sis. Carla) retired from the ministry at the end of January. In February we held a celebration to commemorate this occasion and thank Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla for forty years of faithfully sharing the Word and ministering to our church in so many ways.

Illinois, Cissna Park
Denise Kaeb, Lou Ann Kaeb
“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 13:35

As we celebrated Valentine’s Day this month, I had to think that love is much bigger than between sweethearts. The love Christ has for us, the love we have for him, and then the love we have for one another as a body of Christ. That love for one another is how we will be identified by those around us.

We are thankful for the love we felt as Bro. John Grimm (Sis. Julie, Columbus, OH) and Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL) ministered to us, and we pray they felt love and support from our congregation.

We enjoyed a Revolving Potluck meal and singing and trust that love flowed freely from each of us as we fellowshipped and raised our voices in love to God.

Because we have such a love and concern for our friends, we have begun a monthly Bible class for them. We trust that God’s presence and blessing can be felt.

Our Topical Bible Presentation was led by Bro. Dan Walder. He gave us a very timely update on our educational system and the ways parents can lead their children through a secular system. All of the words spoken were from a source of great love for our children that they be led in a way of truth.

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” 1 John 4:7
Illinois, Congerville

Tory Currier, Krista Wieland

Sis. Nancy Knapp passed from this life into eternity. We extend sympathy to her husband, Bro. Jerry, and their family.

Bro. Lloyd Moser (Fairbury, IL) also passed away. He was the grandfather of our Sis. Corin Stickling (Bro. Brandon).

We are thankful to share that Bro. Kurt and Sis. Julie Schrock’s family is recovering well after several from their family were in a serious accident while serving as missionaries in Haiti.

"I need the prayers of those I love,
While trav'ling o'er life's rugged way,
That I may true and faithful be,
And live for Jesus every day."

I Need The Prayers,
Hymns of Zion, #201

Thank you to each one who has prayed for this precious family during this challenging time.

Illinois, Elgin

Amy Gasser

Our annual business meeting was held on Wednesday, January 19. Bro. Mark Gasser has completed his six-year term as a Church Trustee. We thank him for his years of service. Bro. Mark Wewetzer was selected as the new Trustee.

Bro. Jason Dotterer (Sis. Lynn, Forrest, IL) conducted an all-church topical presentation on Wednesday, January 26. He spoke on our Church’s Guiding Principles B and C.

We received word that Sis. Dena Weiss passed away in Sabetha KS. She was the wife of Bro. Calvin Weiss (dec.) and sister-in-law to Bro. Paul Weiss. The funeral was on February 14 in Sabetha.

Sis. DeLores Kellenberger passed away on February 13. Surviving are her children: Sis. DeAnne Cox (Bro. Bob, Elgin IL) and Bro. Daryle Kellenberger (Sonia, Elgin, IL); four grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and a great-great-grandson. Bro. Dean Steffen (Sis. Carol, Belvidere, IL) conducted the service.

Note of Thanks:
We would like to sincerely thank each one of you for all your love and kindness to us in the passing of our mom. We were especially comforted in the ministry of singing to her. May God richly bless you!

The family of Bro. Frank and Sis. Lois Schock

Illinois, Eureka

Debra Blunier, Lavonne Schumacher

As I write, the snow is gently falling, appearing so fresh and pure, like that of a newborn babe making its entrance into an unfamiliar, new world. Greyson Scott was joyfully welcomed on February 4 by Bro. Harrison, Sis. Andrea, Shelby and McKenna Frank. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Scott and Sis. Elaine Frank and Bro. Jim and Sis. Sandy Knobloch (West Bend, IA).

Our only visiting minister this month was Bro. Arlen Leman (Sis. Denise, Forrest, IL). We were thankful for his timely message.

“There is coming a day when no heartaches shall come, No more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye; all is peace forevermore on that happy golden shore, What a day glorious day that will be. What a day that will be when my Jesus I shall see, And I look upon His face, the One who saved me by His grace; When He takes me by the hand, and leads me through the promised land, What a day, glorious day that will be.”

What a Day that Will Be,
Gospel Hymns, #831

January 29 was the final day on earth for Sis. Nancy Knapp (Bro. Jerry, Congerville, IL). Our sympathy is extended to her children and grandchildren that are a part of our congregation: Bro. Steve (Sis. Lori) and Sis. Beth Blunier (Bro. Dean) as well as her brother and sister-in-law Bro. Bob and Sis. Jean Knapp.

Bro. Bob Schumacher was carried by the angels to the land of rest on February 9. He leaves behind his dear wife, Sis. Charlene, as well as six children: Bro. Dave (Sis. Julie, Washington, IL), Bro. Dan (Sis. Heidi, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Dennis (Sis. Jill), Bro. Dale (Sis. Lavonne), Sis. Deb Beer (Elder Bro. Randy,
Our hearts are aching with the sudden passing of our Bro. Bill Schmidgall’s wife, Sis. Anna, and yet we anticipate the time of reuniting one day. God was so good to give Bro. Bill and their children, Sis. Alicia Steidinger (Bro. Kyle), Sis. Janelle Rassi (Bro. Darl) and Sis. Kristin Zehr (Bro. Blake), the experience of standing on Holy Ground as they spent the last few moments with their precious wife and mother. We also pray for Bro. Ed Teubel (Sis. Melanie) and Bro. Nathan Teubel (Sis. Jennifer), who are siblings to Sis. Anna. Also grieving a loss are Bro. Harve Schieler (Sis. Jan) and Sis. Sandy Stoller (Bro. Dale) with the passing of their brother, Duane Schieler. Our Bro. Lloyd Moser also went to be with Jesus. He leaves behind his wife, Sis. Martha (Washington, IL), his children, Sis. Marsha Fehr (Bro. Nathan), Sis. Bonnie Wagenbach (Bro. Jerry, Mediapolis, IA), Sis. Janis Fehr (Bro. Randall), Sis. Julia Moser (Bro. Doug, dec.), Bro. Kevin Moser (Sis. Kara), Sally Fehr (Les) and Bro. Jeff Moser (Sis. Sara), and siblings, Keith Moser (Nita), Sis. Sharon Kelson (Bro. Bud, dec.), Sis. Colleen Walter (Bro. Richard, dec.).

We pray for Sis. Mary Beth Maurer as she was a surgical patient. May God provide healing as is his will.

We rejoice with Ashley Young (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Bev) as she has felt the need to seek the Lord in repentance. Praise God that he is still calling souls and extending his grace to surrender!

On February 11, we gathered together for a topical presentation on Our Guiding Principles.

It’s a special privilege to receive exhortations for our spiritual life.

It’s always a blessing to have visitors. We have had several visiting ministers this month: Bro. Robert Hermann (Sis. Mary, Princeville, IL), Bro. David Lanz (Sis. Tami, Mediapolis, IA), Bro. Bill Wettstein (Sis. Heidi, Eureka, IL), Bro. Isaac Wofford (Sis. Rachel, Washington, IL), Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea, Remington, IN) and Bro. Alan Schambach (Sis. Sarah, Remington, IL).

Note of thanks:

We want to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for all the many prayers, support, and deeds of kindness shown to us during our time of loss. Please continue to pray. May God richly bless each of you.

In Christian love, The Bill Schmidgall Family

Illinois, Forrest

Jessica Edwards, Marsha Lanz

In one of our sermons recently it was mentioned that “life is a journey.” That reminded me of a plaque I saw onetime titled Living Life:

“Life is not a race – but indeed a journey. Be honest. Work hard. Be choosy. Say “thank you”, “I love you”, and “great job” to someone each day. Go to church, take time for prayer. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. Let
your handshake mean more than pen and paper. Love your life and what you’ve been given, it is not accidental – search for your purpose and do it as best you can. Dreaming does matter. It allows you to become that which you aspire to be. Laugh often. Appreciate the little things in life and enjoy them. Some of the best things really are free. Do not worry, less wrinkles are more becoming. Forgive, it frees the soul. Take time for yourself—plan for longevity. Recognize the special people you’ve been blessed to know. Live for today, enjoy the moment.” (Bonnie Mohr)

We were thankful to hear the testimonies and witness the baptism of Bro. Tristan Zimmerman (Bro. Adam and Sis. Rachel), Bro. Carson Leman (Bro. Arlen and Sis. Denise), Sis. Lily Eisenmann (Bro. Dan and Sis. Abby), and Sis. Kylee Mueller (Bro. Jay and Sis. Jolene). We pray they will feel the Spirits presence and guidance every moment of their journey. We thank Elder Bro. Craig Martin (Sis. Terri, Princeville, IL) and Elder Bro. Rick Plattner (Sis. Mary, Fairbury, IL) for aiding with the weekend.

We are thankful for Kyle Leman (Bro. Ben and Sis. Lori) who has purposed in his journey to answer the call of God. Our prayers are with him as he takes this most important step.

On February 6, Bro. Matt Edwards and Sis. Jessica Gerber were united in marriage. We rejoice with them and pray God’s blessing upon them as they walk their journey of life together. We thank Elder Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL) as well as visiting ministers Bro. Zach Anderson (Sis. Karla, Congerville, IL), Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, Bloomfield, IA) and Bro. Michael Schneider (Sis. Jodi, Junction, OH) for sharing in this special weekend.

Our prayers and sympathy go out to those who have had a loved one’s journey of life come to an end; Sis. Marsha Lanz (Bro. Mike), Bro. Ted Bachtold (Sis. Teresa), and Sis. Paula Kelson (Bro. Nate) in the passing of their father, Marvin Bachtold; Sis. LaVerne Aberle, Bro. Bryan Aberle (Sis. Lisa), and Bro. Marcus Aberle in the passing of their son and brother, James Aberle; as well as Sis Deb Roth (Bro. Ken) in the passing of her father, Bro. Jim Byrd (Sis. Sara, Roanoke, IL). May all these dear ones feel God’s comforting arms in this difficult time and in those moments of their journey when they remember the precious memories of their loved one.

We want to thank visiting ministers, Bro. Chad Leman (Sis. Kim, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL), Bro. Scott Wegman (Sis. Dawn, Taylor, MO), and Bro. James Schneider (Sis. Tonya, Silverton, OR) for blessing us in our journey by sharing the Word with us.

As we journey on, may we truly be thankful for that free gift of salvation and let our lights shine to the dark and sinful world we live in!

**Note of Thanks:**
I would like to thank all who sent me cards for my 80th birthday. I appreciate all the prayers, love and kind words of expression you gave to me. Each card was special. May God bless each of you for your love to me.

In Jesus’ love and mine,
Elmer Lanz

**Illinois, Goodfield**

*Amy Hinrichsen, Judy Knapp*

Winter can seem long, and the days can get dreary at times. Just like winter, in the midst of tough seasons whether physical, mental, or spiritual, God is faithful, and he is there with us always!

We rejoice with Bro. Jason and Sis. Abby Schick as they welcomed a baby girl, Kara Grace on January 31! Big brother Steven is glad to have a new playmate! Thankful grandparents are Bro. Warren and Sis. Cindy Edelman (Forrest, IL) and Bro. Dave and Sis. Ann Zobrist.

Our Goodfield church is so thankful to have a new minister. After diligent prayer by the whole church, Bro. Ty and Sis. Brenna Tauer were given strong support to serve in the pulpit ministry. We are thankful to see the Holy Spirit working in our church and to experience peace through this new minister process. We had a confirmation vote and
service for them on Wednesday, February 9. Elder Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL), Elder Bro. Tim Funk (Sis. Debbie, Peoria, IL) and Elder Bro. Mark Streitmatter (Sis. Sara, Bloomington, IL) were with us for the encouraging evening.

Our dear Sis. Whitney Wiegand (Bro. Brad and Sis. Karen) recently had brain surgery to help stop seizures that she has been battling for quite some time. Whitney’s surgery went well. She’s still pretty worn out and is resting as much as she can. The doctors don’t have any major concerns at this time. We pray for her to have complete healing.

Sis. Christy Wiegand experienced a fall since her cancer diagnosis in January. She’s had a rough go, but can feel the love of Jesus surrounding her and the power of prayer holding her together and giving her peace. Please continue to lift her up in prayer; for her to have complete healing and for continued peace and strength through it all.

Sis. Deb Steffen (Bro. Dirk) recently lost her mother, Sis. Nancy Knapp (Bro. Jerry, Congerville, IL). We are prayerful for the Knapp family during this time.

Bro. Dan Schumacher (Sis. Heidi) recently lost his father, Bro. Bob Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL). Our prayers are with the whole Schumacher family.

Sis. Jan Wiegand (Bro. Roy) also lost her mother, Sis. Carolyn Bolliger (Bro. Harlan, Tremont, IL). We are prayerful for her and her family as well.

Visiting ministers this month were Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill, Roanoke, IL), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS), and Bro. Craig Stickling (Sis. Jackie, Peoria, IL). We appreciate their willingness to serve and minister to us.

We enjoyed a special Wednesday evening recently when Bro. Barry and Sis. Joyce Kloter of Goodfield, shared their testimony of how they gave their lives to Christ and how Christ has worked in their lives as a married couple. It was very encouraging to our church family.

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 8:38-39

Illinois, Gridley
Perry Klopfenstein

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Jim Lavallier, who lost his mother, Irene Lavallier, (Chenoa, IL) on January 27. We also offer sympathy to Bro. Brant Rushton who lost his father, Kevin Rushton, (Oro Valley, AZ).

Bro. Randy Mogler (Sis. Evie, Washington, IL) spoke here on Wednesday, February 9, on the topic “God Is Worthy of Worship.” We thank him for his labors.

Bro. Henry Finck moved from his Gridley residence to an assisted living facility in Bloomington-Normal.

On Saturday, February 5, the Gridley congregation hosted the Illinois elder/minister meeting. Our prayers are that counseling together can be of benefit to the spiritual well-being of the churches.

We seem to be living in turbulent times, with much uncertainty. We can be thankful for the truths of the Word that form a firm foundation for us, as we seek peace and stability. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and he grants grace to the humble. May we find grace to submit to, and obey, his unchanging word. The Lord said, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matt. 28:20

Illinois, Morton
Annette Tanner

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;” Isa. 1:18

We were blessed to have Elder Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend, IN) share the Gospel with us on January 30.

Our deepest sympathy goes to three families who have said farewell to a dear loved one. Sis. Anna Marie Reutter, (Roanoke, IL), passed into eternity on January 16. She was the grandmother of our
Sis. Alexa Zeller (Bro. Cody). January 18, Sis. Dorothy Witzig (Bro. Harold, dec.) met her Savior Jesus Christ. She is survived by five children: Ann Troyer (William), Scott Witzig (Darci), Bro. Phil Witzig (Sis. Cindi), Gwen Stuber (Roger, Tremont, IL), and Cindy Gomez (Will, Athens, WI). Also surviving are her five sisters: Lydia Clark, Marlene Galbraith, Marge Gingerich (Robert), Sis. Judy Springer and Carolyn Isbell (Jim). February 9, Bro. Robert “Bob” Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL) received his Heavenly reward. Among his many survivors are his daughter Sis. Dawn Tanner (Bro. Brian) of our Morton congregation. May God be their comforter in the days ahead.

We thank our Morton ministers, as they lead us through the book of Acts during our Sunday afternoon service.

Our Family Worship Night had to be canceled because of a heavy snow storm. As we go through the storms of life, the beautiful pure white of the snow-covered earth reminds us that our soul can be as white as the snow when we turn our lives over to God.

"Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole; I want Thee forever to live in my soul; Break down every idol, cast out every foe; Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Lady Jesus, look down from Thy throne in the skies, And help me to make a complete sacrifice; I give up myself, and whatever I know-- Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Lord Jesus, for this I most humbly entreat, I wait, blessed Lord, at Thy crucified feet; By faith, for my cleansing, I see Thy blood flow-- Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 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, Hymns of Zion #210"

Illinois, Peoria
Bonnie Bach, Crystal Wettstein

“When the storms of life are raging, Tempests wild on sea and land. I will seek a place of refuge In the shadow of God’s hand.” Here in central Illinois we have experienced some severe winter storms. Just as we seek shelter from the elements, may we seek God in times of trials that come into our lives. There are many in our church who have experienced sickness. We pray they can feel God’s loving hand hiding them!

“Enemies may strive to injure, Satan all his arts employ; He will turn what seems to harm me Into everlasting joy.”

Bro. Ryan Hoerr (Sis. Joy, Princeville, IL) brought us words of life this month. We appreciate all the dear ministering brothers who break the bread of life with us and serve us in so many other ways!

Our hearts rejoice that Justin Deemie is seeking the Lord and wanting to change his life through repentance.

Valentine’s Day was on a Monday and what a fitting time for two young couples to serve us a special lunch. The brothers gave the sisters a break and took over the noon duties, such a nice loving gift!

“So, while here the cross I’m bearing, Meeting storms and billows wild, Jesus, for my soul is caring, Naught can harm His Father’s child. He will hide me, He will hide me, Where no harm can e’er betide me; He will hide me, safely hide me. In the shadow of His hand,”

He Will Hide Me, Gospel Hymns, #119

Illinois, Princeville
Ruth Herrmann, Cherie White

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

We look forward in anticipation to the season of Spring, a time of new life.

It was a blessing to have Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI) among us to share the gospel of good news. May God continue to be with our ministering brethren on the pulpit that the truth can continue to be spoken drawing all men to God.

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

Bro. Larry and Sis. Tiffany Martin welcome another grandchild, Lucy Rose born on February 2 to Bro. Tim and Sis. Brittany Schwind (Roanoke, IL). May God’s blessings be with them!

Our newly elected Sunday school teachers who will start in August are Bro. Seth Kieser (Sis. Samantha), Bro. Braden Streitmatter (Sis. Lydia), Sis. Molly Christ and Sis. Julie Hanson (Bro. Jared).

Illinois, Roanoke

Judy Sauder, Barb Schwind

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

This was the theme for the inspirational Ladies Coffee, held on January 22 at the Fellowship Hall. Thanks to all who had a part in this.

We extend our love and sympathy to those in our church family who have experienced loss. Bro. Steve Wiegand (Sis. Mary Ellen, Goodfield, IL) passed away January 16. He was a brother-in-law to Bro. Gene Hangartner (Sis. Evelyn).

Louise Maher (Chuck, Peoria, IL), passed away January 16. She was a sister-in-law to Bro. Dan Maher (Sis. Kim).

Richard Styner (Roanoke, IL) went to his eternal home on January 30. He was the father of Sis. Michaleen Braker (Bro. Marv).

Bro. Bob Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL) went to be with the Lord on February 9. He was a brother-in-law to Sis. Jane Schumacher.

Bro. Jim Byrd passed away February 16. His survivors include his wife, Sis. Sara; daughter, Sis. Deb Roth (Bro. Ken, Forrest, IL); sons: Steve (Colleen, Forrest, IL); Brad (Barb) and Matt (Marlise) both of Washburn, IL; 19 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. Bro. Jim was a kind man who served as one of our ministers for many years. Years ago, Bro. Jim was seriously burned in an accident at work. He bore his injuries graciously and used this difficult trial to share Jesus with others.

We thank Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO) for ministering to us on January 19. The Bible Class went skiing in Wisconsin on January 29.

Our upcoming church remodel is projected to begin May 12 and to be completed around the end of June, Lord willing. During that time, we plan to hold Wednesday evening and Sunday morning church services at the Fellowship Hall. We hope to be able to assemble back in church on July 3.

We rejoice with Ben and Brittany Hodel, who have surrendered their lives to Jesus. Samantha Bertschi (Bro. Sam and Sis. Marjorie), Amanda Durand (Tom and Sis. Marsha), Wyatt Gerber (Bro. Cory and Sis. Gini), and Gabby Yordy (Bro. Scott and Sis. Mandy) have professed peace with God and man and are looking forward to giving their testimonies and being baptized on April 2-3.
We have begun a Bible study on James. Elder Bro. Frank (Sis. Kathy) spoke on James 1:1-12 on January 30. Bro. Frank taught that in the Greek language faith is a noun and a verb. Faith is more than a mental exercise. It has an action component. By faith Abel sacrificed, Noah built, and Abraham moved. Their actions showed they loved and trusted God. Bro. Frank encouraged us to have patience and choose joy in the midst of trials and to press into Jesus, focusing on him, not the problem, and depending on his strength, not in ourselves or worldly things. Bro. Nate Hodel (Sis. Jamie) taught from James 1:13-27 on February 6. Bro. Nate reminded us that God never tempts us to sin, and his leading always aligns with the Word. It is Satan who tempts us to sin, draws us away from God by various lusts, or causes us to give up hope in the midst of trials. The “fix” is to draw nigh to God and be in the Word. Bro. Nate encouraged us to be quick to hear (listen and understand others), slow to speak (think before speaking), and slow to wrath (don’t let anger destroy your witness). On February 13, Bro. Jonathan Hodel (Sis. Megan) continued our study with James 2. Bro. Jonathan encouraged us to look through the lens of Jesus on how we treat others. He instructed us to not show partiality based on factors like wealth, fame, political party, intellectual abilities, social status, dress, traditions, or family name. We should display a merciful mindset, glorify God by loving others, and keep the gospel as a main priority as we do good works.

We pray for a safe return home for Zach Mangold (Bro. Matt and Sis. Jennifer) and all those closely linked to the crisis between Russia and the Ukraine and for a peaceful resolution to the situation. We appreciate all those who are serving our country.

Sweet little babies have blessed our church families. Renna Sage was born to Bro. Trent and Sis. Mindy Koch (Tremont, IL) on January 26. Grandparents are Bro. John and Sis. Jill Bradle. Grandparents Tom and Sis. Marsha Durand welcomed their first grandchild, Oaklynn Abigail, born to Jack and Brittney Jones of Peoria, IL, on February 1. Bro. Tim, Sis. Brittany, Harper, and Addy Schwind welcomed Lucy Rose on February 2. Grandparents are Bro. Larry and Sis. Tiffany Martin (Princeville, IL) and Sis. Rita Schwind.

On February 5 there was a family praise and worship evening at the Cannery in Eureka.

Bro. Marv and Sis. Ila Pfister celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on February 17. We are thankful for their faithful example of love and commitment.

We pray for those with difficult health situations and those who are healing: Sis. Wendy Blunier (Bro. Ray), Sis. Pat Sauder, Sherry Maxwell, daughter of Sis. Faye Blunier (Bro. Wally), Andy Wettstein (Rebekah), Lane Martin (Bro. Jesse and Sis. Jenny), Bro. Mel Hohulin, Sis. Lynne Hohulin, Sis. Kim Luginbuhl (Bro. Andy), Bro Fred Janssen (Sis. Cheri), and Bro. Dave Schwind (Sis. Barb).

Our first-grade granddaughter, Cece, began piano lessons a few months ago. Her piano teacher set a goal for her to practice 100 minutes each week. If she does this, Cece chooses a prize from the prize box. “Grandma, do I have my 100 minutes in yet?” The prize keeps Cece motivated to practice. I, too, need to keep my eye on the prize. Sometimes life gets challenging and we get weary, discouraged, or distracted, but the prize for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus deserves our all.

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philip. 3:13-14

Illinois, Tremont

Debbie Aberle, Lucy Kaiser

“Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so; Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so!”

Jesus Loves Me, Hymns of Zion, #176
We are rejoicing with two families that have welcomed little girls into their home this month.
Bro. Ron and Sis. Liz Wagenbach are excited to have another granddaughter, Sylvie Rose, born to David and Taylor Wagenbach (Morton, IL). Bro. Trent, Sis. Mindy, and Arlo Koch are thrilled to welcome home Renna Sage. Bro. Earl and Sis. Marsha Koch are her grandparents.

We extend our sympathies to the families of Sis. Carolyn Bolliger and Bro. Dick Miller at their passing. Sis. Carolyn’s children are Pat McKey (John, Gridley, IL), Sis. Jan Wiegand (Bro. Roy, Goodfield, IL), Bro. Tom (Sis. Jane), Sandy Bedwell (Sam), and Sis. Sheila. She is also survived by her brother, Bro. Dan Koch (Sis. Carol). Bro. Dick is survived by his wife, Cindy and their children Jason (Ashley) and Jillyn. We pray that God will comfort and sustain these two families as they grieve.

First, our Washington church lost our dear Bro. Lloyd Moser (Sis. Martha). What an inspiration he was to those who knew him! Very few people have gone through the losses of close, young, loved ones and health issues that Bro. Lloyd had experienced. Yet he could still say he was thankful and blessed. What an example to those of us left behind!

The others that passed away were close relatives to our brothers and sisters in Washington: Sis. Patricia Knapp’s mother, Sis. Nancy Knapp (Bro. Jerry, Congerville, IL); Sis. Karen Scholl’s mother, Sis. Arlene (Princeville, IL); Sis. Barb Slagel’s (Bro. Tim) sister, Sis. Anna Schmidgall (Bro. Bill, Fairbury, IL); and Bro. Dave Schumacher’s (Sis. Julie) dad, Bro. Bob Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL). Rejoicing in the lost one’s victory but mourning the loss and the empty spots they left!

“Now reposing, calmly closing
To the world thy weary eyes!
Friends are weeping,
Thou art reaping
Rest from toil, beyond the skies.”
Go to Slumber, Hymns of Zion, #254
Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam) was hospitalized for back surgery. Thus far he has had a smooth, successful recovery in answer to prayer!

We were exhorted this month to be about our Father’s business. What a transforming goal! It affects how we think about our families, work, church, disagreements, leisure - all of life. It makes the difference between a self-serving mindset and a servant mindset. Easy? Not at all! But what an exciting challenge as we strive to be more like Jesus!

Our love and prayers have been with Bro. Micah and Sis. Rozanna Rauch and Bro. Andy and Sis. Hannah Kaehr since the loss of their dear grandmother, Sis. Bonnie Gerber (Bluffton North, IN). Bro. Allen and Sis. Susan Stoller, mourn the passing of her father, Theodore Pacala. Sis. Evelyn Gerber bid farewell to her sister-in-law, Audrey Paxon. Steve Hunt, brother to Sis. Angela Pfister (Bro. Tim) unexpectedly entered eternity. We pray that God will comfort each one!

Many of our loved ones have experienced health challenges. Some of them are Bill Tonner (Susan), Sis. Lyn Steffen (Bro. Tom), Sis. Donna Hollopeter (Bro. Joe), Bro. Jeff Isch (Sis. Karen) and Bro. Aaron Gerber (Sis. Cassie). We continue to bring them before our loving Heavenly Father. Our prayers are also with Bro. Denny and Sis. Kathy Meyer as they recently moved to Indianapolis after spending most of their married life in Bluffton.

We welcome Bro. Danny, Sis. Sarah, Summer, Sawyer, Tucker

Illinois, Washington
Lillian Pfaffmann
“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” Rom. 12:15
This seems to be the theme this month!
Little Peyton Marie Teubel was born to Bro. Noah and Sis. Jessica, and was welcomed by her siblings, Sawyer, Lauren, and Dustin, as well. Another little blessing added to the family!
Interestingly, there have been numerous deaths these past weeks.

Indianapolis, Washington
Suzie Fiechter, Liana Reinhard, Olivia Steffen
“...I must be about my Father’s business...” Luke 2:49

Illinois, Washington
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We welcome Bro. Danny, Sis. Sarah, Summer, Sawyer, Tucker
and Tanner Bertsch home! They have served at Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Finn, Haiti for the past two and a half years.

The 3rd-5th graders spent the past month attending a scripture song class on Sunday mornings. They shared their music with us after our morning service on February 13. The Word of God set to music often stays in our memories for life. We pray that it will bear fruit for his glory! Also, our middle school and high school students enjoyed a ski trip.

Bro. Kole Meyer spoke to us on a Sunday evening about the “Fundamentals of Christian Living”.

We enjoyed having Bro. Doug and Sis. Lillian Wagenbach (San Diego, CA) with us for two weeks, as they stayed with their Bluffton family.

As Bro. Austin and Sis. Rachel Smith transition to new duties, we lift them up in prayer. Bro. Austin is the new executive director of our Christian Care Retirement Facility. We praise God for providing!


Indiana, Bluffton North

Deanna Brinneman, Rosemary Mouncey

“Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.” Prov. 18:22

The engagement of Bro. Dylan Markley (Bro. Matt and Sis. Lisa) to Sis. Malerie Strahm (Bro. Mike and Sis. Diane, Bern, KS) was announced on February 13.

“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.” Rom. 12:13

We are pulling together as a church family, in preparation to host the Midwinter Conference scheduled for March 8-11. It is our privilege to live this verse out on behalf of our church leadership, who strive so diligently to discern God’s leading in these perilous times.

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

Sis. Bonnie Gerber (Bro. Bob, dec.) 97, passed away at Christian Care Retirement Community on February 2. Survivors include Sis. Jan Campbell (Michael, Leo, IN), Sis. Kathy Rauch (Bro. Jerry), a sister Ann Baumgartner (Bluffton, IN), 5 grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren. We sympathize with the family in their temporary parting from their mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. There are a lot of precious memories and great anticipation for a wonderful reunion in Heaven, but the parting is painful.

We have several brethren we are holding up in prayer; Bro. Dan Kieser (Sis. Lora) is struggling in the hospital with a serious blood infection and an aorta that needs repaired; Sis. Diane Mason has been diagnosed with breast cancer, and Bro. Rod Gerber is undergoing intense radiation for bone cancer. Sis. Ann Hollingsworth (Bro. Mike) is in a lot of pain as she anxiously awaits extensive surgery on her shoulder. Bro. Steve Longenberger (Sis. Kathy) is recovering from a knee replacement. Our Sis. Susan Maynard, who is such a trooper for the Lord, is recovering from a dental procedure which will take some time to heal. We treasure the faithfulness of our church body in praying for each other and helping to carry each other’s burdens.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philip. 4:6

Indiana, Francesville

Jacki Huber, Connie Linback

This month we have less news than normal to report, but we thank God for his faithfulness in every situation, small or large, noteworthy as news or not.

“Because his compassions fail not” Lam. 3:22

Our prayers have been with Bro. Dale Ward, Diane Carson (daughter of Sis. Donna Wuetrich) and others who have had health concerns.

Loving sympathy is extended to Virgil and Sharon Von Tobel.
We rejoice with Bro. Daniel and Sis. Kaylin Bollier at the birth of Everlee Mae, born February 3. She is welcomed by her big sisters, Adalee and Brynlee and also grandparents, Bro. Jerry and Sis. Doreen Leuthold and Bro. Ron and Sis. Edie Bollier.

It was a blessing to have Bro. Fred Witzig (Sis. Nancy, Washington, IL) visit and preach the Word to us. Bro. Fred and Sis. Nancy had lived here before moving to Washington, so it seemed like a homecoming to have them back.

Our home brothers have started studies in Hebrews and Deuteronomy, as well as continuing our Psalms study. Psalm 100 was one recently studied.

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

Our middle and high school students went on a Winter Retreat to Michigan recently. The Lord was faithful in providing safety in travel (on snowy and icy roads) as well as spiritual encouragement and fellowship time together. The theme was “Who are You Following?” We are thankful for all those who planned, chaperoned, spoke, and took part in counseling and mentoring this weekend.

Indiana, LaCrosse
Meagan Frank, Sharla Messner

We wish to thank Elder Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi, South Bend, IN) and Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN) for helping Elder Bro. Curt Frank (Sis. Lyla) as our church chose a new minister for the pulpit. Bro. Brad Frank was chosen as our new minister and our prayers are with Bro. Brad and Sis. Meagan and their children as they take on this new role in our congregation.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Psa. 23:4

Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers go to our Bro. Kurt Bachtold on the loss of his father Marvin Bachtold (Mary, Fairbury, IL). We also wish to keep Rosie Moser (Wayne) in our prayers as she has had a recent hospital stay. Rosie is now home, but she is very weak.

Sis. Ruth Elcock joyfully welcomes a new granddaughter Elise Wren Culver! Thankful parents are Seth and Emily Culver and siblings Isaac, Jonah, and Addy.

Many thanks to our other visiting minister this month, Elder Bro. Lucas Frank (Sis. Crystal, Detroit, MI), for his labors on the pulpit.

Indiana, Leo
Leanne Fischer, Jan Beer

“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through
Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” 2 Cor. 5:18-19

Elder Bro. Lynn Stieglitz, Bro. Tim Wiegand and Bro. Jon Gerst have met with several black pastors over the course of the last eighteen months. Church members were asked to complete an online survey on the topic of racial understanding and reconciliation in the anticipation of an evening presentation soon concerning this topic. We are also continuing to learn about Afghans who have recently settled in our area. It is such a blessing to send missionaries out into the world. Sometimes the opposite happens, and we can reach out to those who are brought to our area from far off lands.

Not only can we reach out to those outside our church, but sometimes the blessing is in spending special times with members of our own church and forging stronger relationships. The annual ski retreat weekend occurred on February 4-6. As a special time of purpose and mentorship, the theme, Learning to Lean, encouraged everyone to depend on God.

The angels join us in rejoicing that we have new converts who have chosen to follow Jesus and want to walk in fellowship with us. Miles Steffan (Bro. Jarod and Sis. Molly), Kaleigh Schambach (Bro. Keith and Sis. Emily), Jack Weigand (Bro. Tim and Sis. Christa), Kara Slagel (Bro. Kurt and Sis. Kristen), Hannah Suvar (Bro. Paul and Sis. Nichole), Kasee Stoller (Bro. Tim and Sis. Kari) have decided to walk each day with the Lord. They join other dear converts who have made public their faith in the blood of Jesus for salvation, Jayla Huber (Bro. Jason and Sis. Joy), Bella Wenninger (Bro. Brian and Sis. Mackenzie), Lauren Schwab (currently living with her sister, Bro. Eric and Sis. Stephanie Bahler).

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Bro. Clint Schumacher (Sis. Sydnee) and his family on the loss of his grandpa, Bro. Bob Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL). Sis. Charlene is a great-aunt to Bro. Tim Wiegand (Sis. Christa). Bro. Tim Wiegand’s grandmother, Sis. Carolyn Bolliger, (Tremont, IL) also passed away. We rejoice in their victory, yet weep with those who weep.

Bro. Steve Scheitlin shared with us praise and thanksgiving for answered prayer for his son, Phillip, who has been in a lot of pain from hip dysplasia. He requested prayer about both the location of the surgery and the scheduling of the surgery. Both prayers were answered, and Phillip is scheduled for surgery in Fort Wayne on March 21.

Bro. Byron Schrock (Sis. Mary) had COVID-19 and spent time in the hospital this month. His oxygen levels plummeted, requiring a second admission to the hospital. He is in a rehab facility at this time. We join with Mary in praying that he will regain his strength and be able to return home soon. She has expressed her thankfulness for prayer partners, and how she felt those prayers as Byron began his physical therapy.

Sis. Christine Locher (Bro. Leonard, dec.) fell on black ice, breaking and dislocating her left ankle. She had surgery on the ankle. Thankfully she did exceptionally well, did not need a cast, and was placed directly in a walking boot. At present, she has had her staples removed and is now able to put weight on it. She is in a rehab facility until she can fully use her foot and is able to safely walk. We continue to pray for total healing and the complete use of her ankle. Her daughter, Sis. Wendy Williamson (Bro. Jason) has kept us apprised of her progress and told us how thankful Christine is for our prayers on her behalf.

Our church remodel has entered into a new and challenging phase. The first plan was that the dining room and Sunday school rooms would be completed, then the Fellowship Center, assembly room and nursery. Supply chain problems delayed the completion of the first phase, and the second phase could not be delayed any longer. The Sunday school area can be used, but the dining room cannot. We are currently meeting
for church services in our Fellowship Center. Sunday school meets during our first service followed by a beverage only break, then the second service. Our first service begins at 9:30 a.m., the second at 11:00 a.m. with dismissal by noon.

**Indiana, Milford**  
_Alyssa Beer, Anne Wilson_  
We were thankful to have visiting minister Bro. Mark Reinhard (Sis. Angie, Bluffton, IN) bring the Word to our congregation this past month. Jared and Justin Beer (Bro. Marc and Sis. Jodi) started repenting and we rejoice with them and their family! It’s always encouraging to witness the Lord still changing hearts.  
"I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify Thy name for evermore." Psa. 86:12

**Indiana, Remington**  
_Jenni Honegger, Marcella Tyler_  
Bro. Isaac Wofford (Sis. Rachel, Washington, IL) visited us on a Wednesday evening to deliver a talk entitled, “The Glory of Women”, which was very encouraging and challenging. In the current culture which tries to twist and devalue godly womanhood, hearing from the Word of God on this issue was very timely. May God bless Bro. Isaac for his extensive study and willingness to share with us!

Our congregation was invited to Fairbury for worship and a meal, and many of us made the trip to visit. It was a blessed time of fellowship for all who attended! Many thanks to the Fairbury brothers and sisters for their kind hospitality and invitation.

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

Daylight savings time is a great reminder that in our spiritual walk, we never want to “fall back.” We always want to “spring forward.” We look forward to the first blooms of springtime and “that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” (Titus 2:13) whichever comes first, preferably both!

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Cor. 15:58

**Indiana, Valparaiso**  
_Sherry Meiss_  
"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom 12:1-2

Continue to pray for Bro. Bob Hoerr, Sis. Sherry Meiss and our congregation. If you plan to be in the area we are always ready to greet you with his love.

**Indiana, West Lafayette**  
_Abbie Gramm_  
Though some winter storms impeded some gatherings this month, we were blessed to be able to host several visiting speakers. Bro. Isaac Funk (Peach Tree City, GA) shared virtually with us about discipleship. Bro. Clint Bahler (Indianapolis, IN) spoke about “Perfection and Comparison”. Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Milford, IN) covered “I am Inadequate”.

We are also pleased to welcome Sis. Natalia Bartos (Apostolic Christian Church Nazarene, Windsor, Ontario), who has been married to Bro. Aaron Adrian. We wish them the best at the beginning of this new life stage.

Taking inspiration from our topics this month, take a moment to pause and reflect on the narratives that run through your head. What stories do you tell yourself about yourself and about others? Are those stories enabling you to love your brother or to put up walls of comparison and a critical spirit? Has that gotten in the way of your worship? May we truly embrace loving our neighbor as ourselves and affirm the God-given identity in our brothers and sisters in Christ.
Indiana, Wolcott
Brittany Gerber, Luann Gerber
We are thankful that Marie Blume (Bro. Derek and Sis. Theresa) has proclaimed peace in her heart with God and man and is looking forward to baptism in the near future.

Iowa, Bloomfield
Kendra Wettstein
We were thankful to have Bro. Nathan Wiegand (Sis. Laura, Goodfield, IL) with us to minister the Word the weekend we hosted the Burlington, Mediapolis, and Garden Grove Bible Classes. The students arrived Sunday morning and spent the day attending church and fellowshipping. Thanks to all who assisted in this effort.

Sis. Carol Wettstein and Sis. DeAnn Wuthrich both underwent surgery and are healing well. We are thankful they can once again attend church and God has worked his healing hand upon them.

We sympathize with Sis. MaryJane Knapp (Bro. Harold) as she laid her brother, Bro. Bob Schumacher (Sis. Charlene, Eureka, IL), to rest. Our thoughts and prayers are with her during this time.

We, with the angels, rejoice over the news of Blake and Whitney Wettstein starting their repentance.

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

Sis. Jackie Wettstein has taken a new job and will be moving to Taylor, MO. We wish her well, and she will be missed.

Iowa, Burlington
Elaine Eisenmann, Angela Steiner
A sermon we heard recently on Luke 12 spoke so much of God’s loving care to us in the midst of everyday life. Our tasks and duties can consume us, and worries of the future can eat away our peace. But he gently reminds us in verse 31 to “Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Some of our brethren have new responsibilities in the church. Bro. Leroy Wulf was elected for Trustee, and Bro. Joseph Steiner was selected as our Usher. Sis. Carol Bonnesen now has duties on the Kitchen Committee, and Sis. Elaine Eisenmann was chosen as a Silver Lining writer. Lastly, we gave our support for Bro. Daniel Steiner to assist on the Duplex Committee Board. We give each of these individuals our prayers as they serve the kingdom of God in this way.

February 2 was a very special day for Tom and Emily Eisenmann as they were married in Isla Mujeres, Mexico. Congratulations to Sis. Elaine Eisenmann (Bro. Paul, dec.) on the marriage of her son and the gaining of a daughter!

We also extend well wishes to Bro. Jacob and Sis. Harmony Schulz (Bro. Gary and Sis. Melody Schulz and Bro. Verle and Sis. Christa Sauder, Morris, MN) as they held a local wedding reception on February 6. We pray that both couples will lay up treasure in heaven as they establish homes and intertwine their lives together.

Our church family is thrilled to welcome a tiny miracle, Gracie Rose, born to Bro. Mahlon and Sis. Angela Steiner on January 30. May God care for their little family as he cares for the lilies of the field and give them wisdom as new parents.

Since Bro. Mahlon and Sis. Angela were home with a new baby, Bro. Blake and Sis. Josie Wulf kindly took their place and traveled with the Bible Class to Bloomfield, IA. Thank you to the Bloomfield Sunday school and congregation for welcoming our students.

May we all continue to thank God for the loving care that knows the number of hairs on our head! Let our actions show our thanksgiving by seeking him first in everything we do!

Iowa, Elgin
Maria Rocke
Bro. Charles and Sis. Sue Schneider are blessed to have another precious grandson. Braden Lucas was born January 28 to Brad and Laura Schneider. May God bless this little one and his family.

Iowa, Garden Grove
Laura Funk
Greetings from south central Iowa.

We thank the Bloomfield potluck group for sharing/serving lunch and worshiping with us. We
served a soup supper to them in the evening.

Visiting ministers sharing with us this month include Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, Bloomfield, IA), Bro. Justin Isch (Sis. Liz, Lamont, KS) and Bro. Tyler Joos (Sis. Tonya, Bradford, IL). We thank all those who come spend their time and talents with Garden Grove.

The Memorandum was shared by Bro. Brad Funk this month. A lot of thoughts to consider and re-consider.

In a Daily Devotional book I have, this was an encouragement one day:

“Never be afraid of a challenge. It’s I, (God) who initiates the challenge in your life to add to your faith!” (Marie Chapian)

Iowa, Iowa City

Diana Butikofer

Our thoughts and prayers are with Nathan and Maria Sneath following the death of his father, Alan Kenniker, of Ellenton, FL. May they feel our love and prayers during this time.

My thoughts turn to the anticipation I feel as Easter nears. As much as I love Christmas and celebrating the birth of my Savior, it is His resurrection that really holds the key to our hope as believers in Christ. For without Christ’s resurrection from the grave, His birth and death would have no meaning: No joy, no victory.

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 15:55-57

A very blessed Easter to each of you!

Iowa, Lester

Kristi Knobloch, Lois Mogler


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

We appreciate visiting ministers Bro. Bill Wettstein (Sis. Heidi, Eureka, IL), Bro. Brett Kellenberger (Sis. Rosanna, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Paul Kilgus (Sis. Carmen, Fairbury, IL) who made the effort to travel here. We are thankful for faithful brethren that visit and our home brothers who willingly stand before us and bring forth God’s word.

We extend sympathy to Bro. Dale Knobloch (Sis. Mary Ellen, dec.) who lost his sister, Sis. Dena Weiss (Sabetha, KS). Dale is the last remaining sibling of eleven children.

“One by one their seats were emptied,
One by one they went away,
Now the family is parted,
Will it be complete one day?”
Will the Circle Be Unbroken,
Hymns of Zion, #222

Hospital patients have been Sis. Delores Metzger (Bro. Paul), Bro. Bill Metzger, (Sis. Charlotte) and Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther). There are others that are undergoing continued treatments. We lift them up in prayer and ask for God’s healing and strength for each one.

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 1:2

Iowa, Mediapolis

Laura Kuntz, Janet Lanz

“Faith is not the absence of feeling uncertainty. Faith is going forward through the uncertainty.”

I came across this sentiment recently. I do not know who wrote it, but I do know that God caused me to read it right at a time when I really needed to hear that message. He is so good and faithful about encouraging us in both small and big ways as we walk life’s pathway!

At our annual church business meeting, the following positions were filled: Bro. Brent Frank, Church Trustee; Bro. Mitch Schulz, Fellowship Center Trustee; Bro. Ross Lanz, Cemetery Trustee; Bro. Kevin Frank, Usher; Sis. Autumn Lanz and Sis. JoAnn Steiner, Kitchen Committee; Sis. Heidi Schmidgall, HarvestCall Sewing Committee; Sis. Kyrstin Wagenbach, Silver Lining Correspondent; and Bro. Ryan and Sis. Heidi Frank, HarvestCall Representatives.
We want to thank both our outgoing and incoming brothers and sisters for their willingness to serve!

God has blessed Bro. Nate, Sis. Lucy, and Layla Frank with a sweet new baby to love, Iris Lu. Bro. Curt and Sis. Kathy Frank and Bro. Dave and Sis. Nancy Wulf (Morris, MN) are Iris’s grandparents.

We rejoiced to witness the baptisms of Bro. Sam Lanz (Bro. Keith and Sis. Tonya), Bro. Jesse Massner (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Lois), and Sis. Tammy Sharp (Gary) this month. We are thankful for all three of them, and pray that these words from I Cor. 15:58 will be made manifest in their lives:

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Sandy Schutte (Alto, MI) in the passing of her husband, Bro. Steve Schutte. Sis. Sandy was one of our cooks during the World Relief clean-up and rebuilding efforts following the Oakville flood in 2008. She and Bro. Steve have had a special place in our hearts ever since that time. Sis. Abi Steiner (Bro. Joel) has our condolences in the loss of her aunt, Sis. Anna Schmidgall (Bro. Bill, Fairbury, IL). Our sympathy is also extended to Sis. Bonnie Wagenbach, (Bro. Jerry Jr.) and their family, as well as Sis. Heidi Sharp (Bro. Nathan) in the death of their father and grandfather, Bro. Lloyd Moser (Sis. Martha, Washington, IL, formerly of Fairbury, IL). Our prayers are with all of these families.

Our Bible Class students and teachers enjoyed a blessed Sunday in Bloomfield, IA with the Bloomfield, Burlington, and Garden Grove Bible Classes. We thank Bloomfield for their hospitality, and are thankful for Christian friendships.

We appreciated Bro. Dave Lanz presenting the topic, “In the World but not of the World” on a recent Wednesday night. We were also blessed to have visiting ministers Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL), Bro. Phil Schulz (Sis. Kelli, Burlington, IA), and Bro. Grant Hermann (Sis. Hannah, Princeville, IL) with us this month. Thank you for sharing God’s Word with us!

Iowa, West Bend
Erica Knobloch, Karen Schmidt

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die;…a time to weep, of their father and grandfather, Bro. Lloyd Moser (Sis. Martha, Washington, IL, formerly of Fairbury, IL). Our prayers are with all of these families.

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

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Brad Strahm (Sis. Michelle, Bern, KS) and Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA) here to share the Memorandum with us. We appreciated the teachings and encouragement. We also were inspired by other visiting ministers Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN), Bro. Joel Putt (Sis. Wendy, Remington, IN), and Bro. Dave Lanz (Sis. Tami, Mediapolis, IA) this month.

Rich Banwart spent some time in the hospital and we are thankful he is back home.

We bid a final farewell to Sis. Lela Banwart as God chose to take her home to be forever with the Lord. Our prayers go out to her family. Her quiet and meek nature will be missed in our congregation.

Japan, Shioda & Tokyo
Anna Inoue, Rachel Witzig

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Philip. 4:6

We have many reasons to be thankful and prayerful. This past month with the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases in Japan, Tokyo church postponed Bible study gatherings for the community and once again modified Sundays to only have morning service. While we miss the fellowship of lunch and afternoon singing services, we are grateful for all who can still gather in person. It is a blessing to connect via Skype for those who cannot attend in person, but we look forward to when we can once again resume our usual worship format. Until that time comes, we continue to thank God for his blessings.

Kansas, Bern
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and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;...He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." Ecc. 3:1-2, 4, 11

We rejoice with Sis. Malerie Strahm (Bro. Mike and Sis. Diane) and Bro. Dylan Markley (Bro. Matthew and Sis. Lisa, Bluffton North, IN) at the announcement of their engagement.

Bro. Leroy Meyer (Sis. Helen) has won his victory and passed into eternity on February 11. We will greatly miss his smile and words of wisdom.

Bro. Joe and Sis. Kathy Rokey are excited to welcome another granddaughter, Sophie Kathryn Anela, born to Mike and Tara Garcia.

Kansas, Kiowa
Janice Bahr, Millie Frieden

So, how does Sunday morning go at your house? Do you get up at the crack of dawn and go outside to view the magnificent handiwork of a brand new Lord’s Day? Do you wearyly reach for the alarm clock and hit snooze for another seven minutes before you have to get up and get breakfast for the family and hurry everyone into their good clothes? Or is your heart filled with joy that finally, after a long six days, Sunday is here again! Sunday: synonymous with the Lord’s Day, first day of the week, Church Day. Church! What exactly does that word imply to you? Church isn’t just one good choice among many. Church, properly understood, is the body of Christ, the gathering of believers in a specific place. And as such, it is a place where we all belong. We are all equally sinful before God and equally in need of a Savior. Church isn’t just a place you go to. It’s not a place that you go to feel better about yourself. It’s not entertainment with loud bands and flashing lights. Its purpose is not to give you ten easy steps to fix your marriage. Church is the gathering of believers to receive what God has come to give in his son, Jesus.

Jesus himself said, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matt 18:20. When we come together as the body of Christ, the church, we confess our sins. Then, having confessed our brokenness and need, we hear those great and unfathomable words of forgiveness. We hear that, though our sins are many, and we in no way deserve grace, that God in Jesus has forgiven us. We hear God’s word spoken to us as Scripture is read. We sing songs and hymns praising and proclaiming what Jesus has done for us. We hear sermons that proclaim the good news of forgiveness in Jesus.

Don’t give up and don’t give in to those outside voices that tell you how much more important sleep, schoolwork, band, sports, or anything else may be than church. Instead, “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised; And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 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 10:23-25.
We have been so thankful for the visiting ministers who have given of themselves to make the trip to Kiowa to share God’s Word with us. Those dear ones ministering to us have been Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS), Bro. Clint Dotterer (Sis. Rebecca, Denver, CO), and Bro. Brett Kellenberger (Sis. Rosanne and family, Sabetha, KS). We not only appreciated the expounded Word of God, but also the fellowship of like ones of faith. We welcome anyone who wishes to come to Kiowa, whether you are a minister or not; we would love to have you!

We have received news that Glen and Sis. Donna Piper have recently moved from their home in Kiowa to an assisted living facility in Pratt, KS. We wish them many blessings in their new home and will certainly miss having them attend church services with us.

Several in our congregation have endured COVID-19 recently but are now back home and back to church. There are a few who have so far escaped COVID-19 and are still able to go to and fro with no indication of illness. Praise God for that!

Kansas, Lamont
Maria Luthi

Our church is grateful for our visiting ministers this month, Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) and Bro. Larry Bahr (Ft. Scott, KS). It was a blessing to hear the Word brought forth through them.

We had an opportunity to rejoice with Sis. Marie Luthi in the purchase of her home and enjoyed a housewarming singing together. We pray God blesses and continues to keep her in his care. There have been many other needs for which our church has been prayerful and it is a comfort to trust them to our kind Father in Heaven. We were recently exhorted during a sermon on Job that God is always at work and is sovereignly in control, even when we can’t see it and it doesn’t make sense to us. What an encouragement that is to meditate on!

Kansas, Sabetha
Miranda Grimm, Leanna Hartter

Greetings to all in the name of Jesus.

We pray for comfort for the family of Sis. Dena Weiss as she passed into eternity this past month.

We rejoice with Bro. Will and Sis. Mariah Eisenbise and Boe as they welcome Ree Lavone. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Dave and Sis. Shari Eisenbise and Bro. Faron and Sis. Jana Strahm (Bern, KS). Bro. Logan and Sis. Tabitha Fehr, Owen and Sawyer are thankful for the safe arrival of Evelyn Kimber. Grandparents are Bro. Todd and Sis. Cynthia Fehr and Bro. Jeff and Sis. Kim Baumgartner (Bern, KS).

Christian fellowship is such a blessing, as was felt by all who were able to attend the all-church potluck and soup packaging this month.

Mexico, Ixtlán
Ruth Gerber

“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” John 4:23

God seeks worshipers, and we are thankful for those he has gathered in Ixtlan and also thankful to once again be able to gather physically.

It was a blessing to have Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan Heinold (Washington, IL) back with us for a visit this past month. It was also a blessing to have their daughter, Sis. Sue Plattner (Bro. Darren, Champaign, IL). It was a time of sweet fellowship and remembering the many years they gave to this church and this town. Elder Bro. Mike Leman (Sis. Deb, Denver, CO) was also with us for a few days and we are thankful for his labors and direction.

We were saddened but comforted in the passing of Sis. Lidia Rosas, whose health had been declining for the past several months. She is survived by 9 children and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren, many of whom she brought to church over the years. We pray that God will draw many in her family to worship him in spirit and in truth.

Sis. Mely Garcia was hospitalized this month, but we are thankful to hear she is recovering and witnessing to God’s care.
We rejoice with Sis. Berta de Gonzalez (Bro. Javier, dec.) as she got to meet a new grandson, Emiliano Kaeb, born to Bro. Ben and Sis. Gloria (Alto, MI). Also rejoicing are the Kaeb grandparents (Bro. Curt and Sis. Luanne) and big sister, Luanna. May God bless this dear family as they bring up their children in the true worship of God.

**Mexico, Magdalena**

*Laura Aviña*

In December, Bro. Jason Grassi (Sis. Geo), Bro. Adam Kaeb (Sis. Belinda), Bro. Julián Nuñez (Sis. Laura), and Bro. Denver Slagel (Sis. Katie) joined Bro. Todd Stoller (Sis. Zoë) and Bro. Jonathan Aupperle (Sis. Bere) in teaching God’s word during our church services. We appreciate their willingness to serve in this way.

We enjoyed visitors from Cissna Park this month and thank them for their time with us. We also appreciate Bro. Carlos and Sis. Marty Bahler (Gridley, IL) who will be worshiping with us for a couple months this winter.

Recently, we began studying the book of Mark. Mark gets right to the point as he states, “Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” *Mark 1:1.* For him, no other genealogy is needed, and he goes on to prove Christ’s deity through his actions.

This Sunday, we read of the leper who came to Jesus and said, “If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.” *Mark 1:40.* Jesus did not hesitate to touch him, in spite of all the Levitical laws forbidding it. In the same way, we can come to him with our sin, and he does not hesitate to touch us and heal us!

**Michigan, Alto**

*Michelle Oesch*

> “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” *Eccl. 12:7*

> “Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; For in thee do I trust: Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; For I lift up my soul unto Thee.” *Ps. 143:8*

Our hearts were saddened at the recent loss of Steve Schutte (Sis. Sandy). His passing is a huge loss to his family and all who knew him! He will always be remembered for his humor and laugh. He was a dairy and crop farmer who will be missed by many in the community. Our prayers for comfort are with his wife Sandy and their three boys; Steven, Mark, and Tim (Kristen), and three grandchildren.

Many came out on a cold winter’s evening for a dinner, singing and taffy pull. It was so much fun for the children and adults who got in on pulling taffy, it made for some laughs as they worked together, and the taffy was yummy! Bro. Joshua Martinez (Sis. Keyna, South Bend, IN) recently visited and ministered the Word to us. Praying a blessing on them for being willing servants!

We rejoice with Bro. Ben and Sis. Gloria Kaeb as they welcome little Emiliano Nicolas into their family! Big sister Luanna is excited to have a little brother!

Bro. Marvin Blough and Sis. Renee Steffen were back in church Sunday after many months of sickness. They both have proclaimed God’s miraculous healing hand on their lives after feeling so close to the end!

**Michigan, Bay City**

*Sarah Knochel*

We continue to pray for Sis. Edie Wieland and Bro. Morris Wieland as they are facing challenges with their health. We pray that God would continue to provide healing according to his will.

We rejoice with Rick and Sis. Joan Long as they welcomed another grandchild, Maren Elizabeth. Thankful family members are Jake and Lauren and older brother, James.

**Michigan, Detroit**

*Krista Wieland*

Greetings of love to all of you! Hopefully this finds you well and accident free! We have had a lot of snow lately. It is beautiful to look at, however, when walking on it, it turns into more than beauty; white fluffy snow of innocence covers sinister slippery ice. More than once I remembered this too late as I found myself looking up at the sky yelling for the dog to come back. The sad thing is, it
didn’t just happen once either. How like our spiritual lives, I am reminded. The Bible talks about sin that is hidden by outer appearances of glimmering beauty. The Bible also encourages us that it contains teachings, encouragement, or guardrails, for our benefit. In my example, even ice and snow have simple guardrails like snow boots, spreading salt, and being more careful when walking the dog.

We appreciated having visiting ministers; Bro. Michael Schneider (Sis. Jodi, Junction, OH) and Bro. Chet Manz (Sis. Jennifer, Toledo, OH). We would like to thank them both.

We were happy to hear of the expressed peace and readiness for baptism of: Logan Frank (Elder Bro. Lucas and Sis. Crystal), Trevor Rauhe (Bro. Jason and Sis. Carrie), and Caden Bahr (Bro. Scott and Sis. Jamie).

We want to extend sympathy to Sis. Crystal Frank (Elder Bro. Lucas) in the death of her grandfather, Bro. Nelson Ramsier (Rittman, OH). Paxton Williams’ father passed away in Florida. Please keep them in your prayers.

**Minnesota, Minneapolis**

Brenda Messner, Renee Messner

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 1:2

What a blessing to have visiting ministers: Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Art Mueller (Sis. Marlene, Belvidere, IL) with us to proclaim God’s holy word on Sunday, February 6. In John chapter 13, after the Passover supper, Jesus, knowing what was to come, washed the disciples’ feet. Such an act of love, even washing the feet of Judas who would soon betray him! A true example of how love requires sacrifice.

It was reported at our annual business meeting, that in 2021 we had: no births, deaths, or marriages, and two baptisms. We thank Bro. Doug Messner and Bro. Will Flickinger, as they will assume Trustee positions and Bro. Seth Edelman, as our HarvestCall Chair. We appreciate and are grateful to all who reported information on the financial summary.

We pray that our Father give us his spirit of wisdom, to help us understand the brokenness around us, that we may be a light to those who are hurting, grieving a loved one, or facing an illness. To God be the glory in all things.

**Minnesota, Morris**

Peg Wellendorf, Brianna Wulf

"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.”

Unity, Zion’s Harp, #237

We were blessed to witness the union of two dear souls as they became one in the Lord. Bro. Jacob Schulz (Bro. Gary and Sis. Melody, Burlington, IA and the late Sis. Karen Schulz) and Sis. Harmony Sauder (Bro. Verle and Sis. Christa) gave their vows before a cloud of witnesses. We wish them God’s blessings on their marriage! Also, being used that day on the pulpit were Bro. Philip Schulz (Sis. Kelly, Burlington, IA) and Bro. Seth Hartter (Sis. Brenda, Burlington, IA). We appreciated their labors in the service of the Lord!

We welcomed another little one into our congregation this month with open arms. Brock Alvin was born to Bro. Kurt and Sis. Savannah Wulf and is being well loved by his many siblings. May he one day be a servant of the Lord!

We were privileged to have the Bread of Life broken with us by Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA) and Elder Bro. Ted Witzig Jr. (Sis. Donna, Morton, IL). Elder Bro. Ted also shared a presentation with us Saturday evening about parenting and hurt/healing. It definitely gave us food for thought! We are thankful that these brothers were willing to be used on our behalf.

**Minnesota, Morris North**

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

On January 29 many in our congregation were able to attend the "Healing and Forgiveness" presentation by Elder Bro. Ted Witzig, Jr (Morton, IL) from ACCFS held at the Morris country Fellowship Hall. The Morris country church invited our congregation to Bro. Ted’s presentation. We are thankful for Jesus’ grace and forgiveness.
We try to keep our Sunday school activities going through the winter and were able to continue the tradition of an evening of skating on February 11. It is fun to see 3-year-olds skating together with grandparents. There was ‘a little lunch’ for all who attended.

We ask for your prayers as we have begun the process of voting for another minister. Last month as a congregation we voted to move forward with putting someone in the ministry. For anyone reading this, you probably know that the devil continues his assault on the peace of our congregation during this time. Please pray for us, specifically for peace and discernment as we seek to select a minister to proclaim Christ.

Lastly, we are looking forward to the time when the snowbirds return in the spring. Many members of our congregation travel south for the winter, and they are missed during the long, cold winter. By the time you are reading this they will likely be back and joining us to worship Jesus. We pray for their safe return home again, just as we all seek to return safely home someday.

Our prayers are with Sis. Julie Schmidt (Bro. Nick) as she is starting treatment for breast cancer. We are thankful Sis. Bernadine Messner and Idabelle Witt are home and feeling better after their hospital stay.

We had an Invite-a-Friend Weekend February 5-6. It was exciting to see all the guests that joined us for the weekend. Bro. Wes Moser (Sis. Esther, Lester, IA) was our visiting minister.

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Georgia Messner in the loss of her sister, Shirley Witty (St. Peter, MN).

Elder Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karen Moser, (Morris, MN) surprised us with a visit Sunday morning. They were flying out of the Minneapolis airport Sunday afternoon, so they chose Winthrop to be a little closer.

Missouri, Kansas City

Betty Sinn

The fresh blanket of snow that fell in Kansas City this week reminded us that winter is not quite over. As we patiently wait for spring, may we be reminded of the patience we also have in waiting on the return of our Lord:

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:7-8

Visiting ministers that have shared the word with us recently were Elder Bro. Doug Schock (Bloomfield, IA) and Bro. Matt Saurer (Sis. Marty, Minneapolis, MN). We are thankful for their willing service to our congregation.

We held our annual meeting on Sunday, January 30. Elected were: Bro. Ned Kellenberger (Sunday school), Bro. Joe Fehr (Trustee), and Sis. Jamie Marti (Food Committee). We are thankful to have those in our small church willing to serve.

We rejoice with Ashtyn Kellenberger (Bro. Galen and Sis. Shannon) as she begins her walk with the Lord. May she feel the love and prayers of the church in the weeks ahead.

We enjoyed a church potluck recently on a Sunday evening.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3

Missouri, Lamar

Leah Rokey

Greetings of love from Lamar!

Over the past month we have been blessed by the service of ministering brothers, including Bro. David Huette (Sis. Susan, Tremont, IL), Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Tamara, Wolcott, IN), and Elder Bro. Bruce Frank (Sis. Bonita, Cisna Park, IL). We also enjoyed fellowship with those who traveled with them and our other visitors.

Our prayers are with those who are sick, hurting, and grieving. May God comfort each of you in this spring season.
Missouri, St. Louis
Michelle Rassi

Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO) faithfully served the St. Louis church for many years as our loving, servant shepherd. We had a special dinner, singing, and sharing of memories to thank them and show our appreciation as they retire from this role.

We had many visitors this month including ministers. We are thankful for the truth proclaimed by Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Sis. Jan, Taylor, MO), Bro. Tim Lehman (Sis. Amber, Taylor, MO), Bro. Grant Hermann (Sis. Hannah, Princeville, IL), Bro. Robert Hermann (Sis. Mary, Princeville, IL), and Bro. Matthew Kaisner (Sis. Jodi, Fairbury, IL).

For HarvestCall night this month we assembled birthday bags to be given out at a food pantry and Valentine’s Day bags for a residential pregnancy-crisis center.

Bro. Landon, Sis. Hannah, and Cora Wuethrich are excited and thankful to welcome Conrad Lee into their home on Valentine’s Day. Rejoicing grandparents in our church are Elder Bro. Chris and Sis. Carla Wuethrich.

Missouri, Taylor
Tami Pflum, Kristen Wegman

This month has seen many cold and windy days for our little community, but we have had a few days here and there to remind us that spring is just around the corner.

We are so thankful for all the visitors we had this past month, including visiting minister Bro. Tom Bolliger (Sis. Jane, Tremont, IL).

This month our dear Sis. Kathy Haab (Bro. Paul) was hospitalized, followed by a brief stay in the nursing home. She is now home and recuperating. Mitchell Sutter (Ashley) was also in the hospital this past month.

We continue to keep both of them, their families, and their caretakers in our prayers.

We celebrated the marriage of Bro. Aaron Adrian (Bro. Rusty and Sis. Amy, West Lafayette, IN) and Sis. Natalia Bartos (Bro. Zlatan and Sis. Marja, Windsor, Ontario) on January 29, with a reception in their honor. What a joy to welcome them to the United States as a family unit. We will continue to keep them and their future in the hands of the one who has everything under control as they make their home in the West Lafayette area.

Our prayers are with the Knapp family as they said goodbye to Sis. Nancy Knapp (Bro. Jerry, Congerville, IL), the sister-in-law of our dear Sis. Phyllis Knapp. Many years ago, Bro. Jerry and Sis. Nancy and their family called Taylor "home". Nancy will be missed dearly by all who knew her.

We recently had our annual elections for the Food Committee and Trustees. Bro. Don Grimm (Sis. Tricia) and Sis. Lisa Massner (Bro. Chad) have finished their terms and are handing over their positions to Bro. Greg Snyder (Sis. Kara) and Sis. Dawn Wegman (Bro. Scott). We are so thankful for the years that Bro. Don and Sis. Lisa have put into their tasks and are excited to see what this next season of life will bring for all of us.

New York, Croghan/Naumburg
Anna Stoller

"Each day I’ll do
A golden deed,
By helping those
Who are in need,
My life on earth
Is but a span,
And so I’ll do
The best I can.
Life’s evening sun
Is sinking low,
A few more days
And I must go
To meet the deeds
That I have done,
Where there will be
No setting sun."
A Beautiful Life, Hymns of Zion, #139

Greetings from New York! Our congregation recently sang this song to the tune of “He Leadeth Me” and I really appreciated the depth the different tune gave the words. May we all be striving to do “the best I can” as we look for opportunities to serve those around us.

We were thankful visiting brothers braved the winter weather this January to come visit and bring us fellowship. They were from the Akron, Rittman, and Smithville, Ohio churches. They were a blessing to have!
Little Kaylee (foster daughter of Sis. Hope Graves) was unexpectedly placed with a relative. She had been with Sis. Hope since birth. Her sweet smile will be missed by Sis. Hope, Eli, and Isaac Graves, and our church family. May God who takes care of all his children, continue to be with and bless her.

Sis. Polly Farney has spent time in the hospital and is currently at home. We wish her God’s nearness and grace.

Ohio, Akron
Abigail Schar, Lindsay Graf

As we reflect this past month, we are thankful for his continued grace and mercy.

We are thankful for the safe arrival of little Jeremy Donald on February 12 to the home of Bro. Matthew and Sis. Rebecca Stoller, Megan, Emily, Clara and Joanna. His grandparents are Bro. Kenneth and Sis. Lori Stoller (Rittman, OH) and Steve and Arliss Pamer.

We rejoice with Sarah Indermuhle (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Carol) as she has found peace with God and man. We look forward to her baptism along with Jenna Gasser on March 20.

After recent surgery and rehabilitation, we are thankful that Sis. Audrey Graf is on the road to recovery.

It was a blessing to come together as a church and work for the Lord at our recent HarvestCall family work night.

Ohio, Columbus
Julia Grimm

On Saturday, January 15, Elder Bro. Mark Masters read the Fall 2021 Memorandum to our congregation. He also shared the Word with the church the next day. Other visiting brothers who shared our pulpit this month were Bro. Adam Uhler (Sis. Ann, Smithville, OH), Bro. Marvin Hartzler (Sis. Sue, Rittman, OH), Bro. Bryon Palitto (Sis. Lisa, Akron, OH), and Bro. Seth Beard (Sis. Faith, Sardis, OH). As always, we are grateful for our visitors and encourage any reading this to come assemble with our congregation.

The annual business meeting was held on January 16. We are thankful for the following brothers and sisters who were willing to serve our congregation in a variety of roles: Sunday school substitute-Sis. Julie Grimm; Silver Lining Reporter-Sis. Julia Grimm; Trustee-Bro. Scott Germann; Kitchen Committee-Sis. Lexi Reimer; Usher-Sound System-Bro. Tim McMillan; and Sunday school Superintendent-Bro. Scott Germann. As one of the brothers noted in the meeting, whether or not we are working in a formal role in the church, we all perform important tasks that are necessary for the functioning of the church, especially so in a small congregation!

At the meeting, it was announced that we have decided to move our lunch period back to a 45-minute lunch period with singing starting at 12:15 p.m. instead of 12:30 p.m. Pulpit time will now be 12:30 p.m.

Ohio, Junction
Karen Schlatter

We rejoice with Lynelle Schneider (Bro. Michael and Sis. Jodi) as she was announced for peace and looks forward to giving her testimony of faith along with being baptized soon. Our prayers are that many more will see the need to turn to the Lord in repentance.

Bro. Dave Manz is home again after several weeks of hospitalization due to complications with his heart. Our prayers are that he will continue to heal.

Bro. Aric Mericle (Sis. Jessica) had both his mother and grandmother in the hospital recently. Also, Sis. Laurie Schlatter’s (Bro. Dennis) mother, Sis. Iva Stoller (Latty, OH), recently fell and had surgery for a partial hip replacement. We are thankful for the healing that occurs. We take it for granted, but it truly is a miracle how often healing restores a person back to a healthy life once again.

I have enjoyed singing this song many times but when I actually sat back and read the words, it touched my heart in a completely different way.

“Jesus is standing in Pilate’s hall
Friendless, forsaken,
betrayed by all:
Hearken! What meaneth
the sudden call!
What will you do with Jesus?
Jesus is standing on trial still,
You can be false to
Him if you will,
You can be faithful
thro’ good or ill:
What will you do with Jesus?
Will you evade Him
as Pilate tried?
Or will you choose Him,
what’er betide?
Vainly you struggle
from Him to hide:
What will you do with Jesus?
Will you, like Peter,
your Lord deny?
Or will you scorn from
His foes to fly,
Daring for Jesus to live or die?
What will you do with Jesus?
"Jesus, I give Thee my heart today!
Jesus, I’ll follow Thee all the way,
Gladly obeying Thee!"
will you say:
"This will I do with Jesus!"
Chorus: What will you
do with Jesus?
Neutral you cannot be;
Someday your heart
will be asking,
“What will He do with me?”
What Will You Do With Jesus?
Tabernacle Hymns, #308

The words in the chorus,
“neutral you cannot be” made me
stop and think. How often have
I tried to remain neutral about a
situation when it would have been
better for me to openly take a stand?
We are not called to an easy life
when we make a decision to serve
Jesus. We need to be willing to face
anything when we stand up for him.

Ohio, Latty
Angie Klopfenstein,
Wendy Stoller

“But if we walk in the light, as he
is in the light, we have fellowship
one with another, and the blood
of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth
us from all sin.” I John 1:7

“And let us consider one
another to provoke unto love
and good works;” Heb. 10:24

We were blessed this month
by many opportunities to live out
these verses of fellowshipping and
encouraging each other to greater
love and good works. Before our
first Sunday singing this month,
we had an all-church potluck. It
is always a blessing to spend extra
time together in conversation and
praise to God.

Another blessing of fellowship
and growth this month came
through hosting ACCFS for the
2022 Cultivating Connections
marriage conference. The topic
was Renewing Your Marriage. We
were reminded of how God renews
us from a life of sin and how we
can be renewed to greater love
toward God and our spouses. It
was refreshing to be able to learn
together and gather more tools for
our marital toolboxes. Also, it was
a wonderful opportunity to spend
extra time with our church family
preparing for and then enjoying
the weekend.

We have two sets of first-
time grandparents in Latty. On
February 16, Ruby Janel was born
to Ryan and Kristen Whitman.
Ruby’s grandparents are Bro.
Eli and Sis. Janel Schlatter. On
January 30, Gracie Rose was born
to Bro. Mahlon and Sis. Angela
Steiner (Burlington, IA). Gracie’s
grandparents are Bro. Jerry and
Sis. Cherry Klopfenstein.

Ohio, Mansfield
Katie Miller

It was inspiring to hear how
the Lord has worked in the lives
of Peter, Natasha, Luke, and
Nicole Boronka as they shared
their testimonies of faith. We
are grateful to welcome them to
our congregation as brothers and
sisters through our Lord Jesus.

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Steiner (Burlington, IA). Gracie’s
grandparents are Bro. Jerry and
Sis. Cherry Klopfenstein.

Ohio, Rittman
Mardel Dotterer, Julie Steiner

“He established for His
church a token,
That His covenant might
ne’er be broken,
This His holy Sacrifice and feast,
For His own, from sin
and death released.”
Communion Hymn,
Zion’s Harp, #26

We came together as a
congregation to partake of Holy
Communion on February 12,
with visiting Elder Bro. Tony
Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH) and Elder Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) assisting our Elder Bro. Wayne Hartzler. It was a very blessed weekend as we shared this special sacrament. Bro. Randy Gasser (Sis. Sue, Detroit, MI) also was a visiting minister on Sunday. Then on Sunday evening, we had an all-church potluck and singing at the Fellowship Hall. We want to thank our visiting ministers and their wives for their time and service to our congregation.

We rejoice with new converts Joel Hartzler (Bro. Dan and Sis. Jennifer) and Madalyn Baltic (Bro. Milan and Sis. Amy). We wish them God’s grace and peace in their new walk of faith.

Thankful grandparents this month include Bro. Ken and Sis. Lori Stoller for the safe arrival of Jeremy Donald Stoller on February 12 to the home of Bro. Matt and Sis. Rebecca (Akron, OH) and big sisters Megan, Emily, Clara, and Joanna. Bro. Eric and Sis. Erika Graf welcomed granddaughter Caroline Elaine Kuenzi born to Bro. Derrick and Sis. Adeline Kuenzi (Silverton, OR) on February 3. Little Caroline is also welcomed by her big brother Lawrence.

Several in our congregation are experiencing health concerns. Among those who appreciate our prayers are Harold Bauman, Sis. Sandra Franks, Sis. Jeanie Stoller, and Sis. Kathleen Shane. How thankful we are that our Heavenly Father knows our every need, whether it be health, safety, relationships, financial, spiritual, or needs we don’t even think of for ourselves and for those we love and have fellowship with.

Our prayers are with several families that have lost loved ones this past month. Our sincere sympathy is extended to the family of Bro. Nelson Ramsier who passed away on February 15. Surviving are his sons, Bro. Dave (Sis. Dottie, Smithville, OH), Bro. Steve (Sis. Karen), Fred (Sheila, Sterling, OH), Dan (Deb, Seville, OH), and Gene Howard (Kim, Sterling, OH), his sister Sis. Marie Gasser and sister-in-law, Barb Ramsier.

We also extend sympathy to Sis. Ruth Steiner (Bro. Ron), Sis. Karen Riggenbach, and Sis. Ellen Gasser (Bro. Jerry) on the loss of their sister-in-law, Thelma Riggenbach.

Bro. Dale Stoller passed away on February 16. Surviving are his children, Bro. Gregory (Sis. Joy), Sis. Kathy Ault (Bro. Dave, Smithville, OH), Bro. Gary (Sis. Michelle), and Bro. Tony (Sis. Cherie). Bro. Dale’s surviving siblings are Bro. Fred of our Rittman congregation and Bro. Andy, Bro. Bob (Sis. Eileen), Sis. Carolyn Stoller and Sis. Elma Stoller of our Smithville congregation. Sympathy is also extended to in-laws Sis. Luzelda Stoller, Sis. Luella Stoller (Smithville, OH), Sis. Marge Stoller, Bro. Bob Widmer, and Sis. Sandra Franks (Bro. Denny). May each of these dear families feel God’s peace and comfort.

We wish Bro. Miklos and Sis. Aranka Bozzay God’s blessings as they are planning to move to California and be members of the San Diego church.

“Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go”
Anywhere With Jesus, Hymn of Zion, #179

Ohio, Sardis
Matt and Dawn Brake
“Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.” Micah 7:7
“I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me.” Psa. 77:1
“Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Jer. 31:3

To know that our almighty God listens to us and loves us is almost beyond our comprehension. The truth that our eternal, all-powerful, perfect, omniscient Father cares about us in a personal way changes everything. He hears us when we cry to him and he loves us with an everlasting love – a love that only God is capable of. And to think that he has chosen to draw us to him while we were still in our sin. We could not have submitted to him in repentance unless he drew us to him first. Praise the Lord!

The truth that God hears and loves each of us has been a comfort to our congregation this past month. There has been a tremendous amount of grief
and calling out to God as we said goodbye to our Bro. Rob Figel after an intense battle with cancer. Our hearts are broken for his wife, Sis. Angie, his mother, Sis. Paula Figel, and his brothers, Bro. Andy Figel and Dave Figel (Christy). Yet we rejoice that Rob’s victory is won through our Lord Jesus Christ! It was such a blessing and encouragement to follow along Rob and Angie’s journey on CaringBridge, and to hear their testimony of how God worked his miracles in their life over the past couple years even in the midst of pain and suffering. We ask God to provide his fatherly comfort and healing for each one grieving.

We also said goodbye to our dear friend Clara Stalder. Clara worshiped with us for many years until she was physically not able. She was so sweet and encouraging to everyone who knew her. Her family loved her dearly and we pray that God would continue to touch their lives.

We praise God for his care for those who have had surgery. Sis. Joy Indermuhle (Bro. Dana) underwent surgery facing uncertainties with what the outcome would look like. We are so thankful that so far, her recovery is going as hoped and prayed for. Also, Bro. Ed Beard (Sis. Dee) underwent surgery and is currently recovering. We ask God for healing and thank him that he has promised to provide for them both as recovery may take some time.

Thank you to the brothers who organized and held our annual business meeting. We also thank those who have been willing to serve and who have finished their terms in various positions: Bro. Milan Indermuhle, Sis. Renee Blough, and Bro. Anthony Amos. Those who are filling open terms include: Bro. Eric Hartzler as Trustee, Sis. Cheryl Indermuhle as Kitchen Committee, and Bro. Dan Fisher as Usher. It is wonderful to see the body of Christ work together using the talents given each one to bring glory to his name!

**Ohio, Smithville**

**Sharon Gasser, Marcy Stoller**

We were thankful to have Bro. Brian Wenniger (Sis. Mackenzie, Leo, IN) visit our congregation.


Sis. Gail Riggenbach (Bro. Don) had a recent hospital stay and we pray for her healing.

**Ohio, Toledo**

**Brooke Harmon, Sharon Rager**

As the winter season continues on, we are looking forward to spring and the blessings of new life and opportunity that comes with it. We have felt the blessings of God and are thankful for his continued faithfulness in our Toledo congregation. Recently, Elder Bro. John Jackson (Sis. Peggy, Bay City, MI) came to assist with reading the Memorandum and then graciously stayed for Sunday. We appreciated Bro. John’s willingness to help and enjoyed hearing the Memorandum read. There were many thought-provoking questions that were shared in the letter, and I hope they will be further discussed by our brethren throughout our congregations as we all continue to grow together towards God’s vision of what the church should look like and how it should function.

We have a number of our brethren who spend a portion of the winter in warmer weather down south, and we look forward to them rejoining our fellowship soon.

**Oregon, Portland**

**Louisa Gallup**

On January 22, Bill Cooper of Redmond, OR, passed away at the age of 63, while in the hospital battling COVID-19. He was preceded in death by his parents Bro. Ray and Sis. Ginny Cooper. He is survived by his wife Janet, his brothers Ken (Linda), Don (Shirley), David and Gary (Diane), his nieces and nephews and his aunt Sis. Connie Steffen (Bro. Garth, dec).

Our sympathies and prayers go out to Janet and the Cooper family. May the Lord give them comfort and peace during this time of loss.

Elder Bro. Bruce and Sis. Elizabeth Endress (Bradford, IL)
visited us recently. We were truly blessed that Sunday with Bro. Bruce’s sermons and the fellowship we had. May the Lord bless this dear couple for their willingness to serve and support us.

**Oregon, Silverton**

**Lorraine Kuenzi, Teresa Sinn**

Bro. Mark Tribbett’s (Sis. Anne-Marie) father, Howard (Jackie), passed away recently. Bro. Mark and his family would appreciate your continued prayers of support during this time of loss.

Four souls were baptized into the family of God the weekend of January 30. Elder Bro. Brent Walder (Sis. Naomi, Rockville, CT), as well as Bro. Mark Roth (Sis. Tammy, Congerville, IL), joined us for the weekend as we listened to and celebrated the rebirth of Sis. Jordanna Folia (Bro. Peter and Sis. Elizabeth), Bro. Jerome Kuenzi (Bro. Harvey and Sis. Jennifer), Bro. Andrew Roth (Bro. Jim and Sis. Deb) and Sis. Carissa Hari (Bro. Ryan and Sis. Regina). We appreciate the efforts of the visiting ministers and pray for God’s blessings on you and your families!

January 25, Bro. Josh and Sis. Tresa Hansen welcomed their ninth child; a boy, Silas Quinn. Grandparents are Bro. Loren and Sis. Marlene Dettwyler and Bro. Tim and Carol Hansen.

February 3, Bro. Derrick and Sis. Adeline Kuenzi welcomed their second child; a girl, Caroline Elaine. Grandparents are Bro. Eric and Sis. Erika Graf (Rittman, OH), and Bro. Art and Sis. Mary Beth Kuenzi. Bro. Jason and Sis. Colette Snook welcomed their second granddaughter, Shayne Kathryn. Parents are Sam and Shalyse Kuschnick.

The Lord continues to richly bless our congregation! Eliza Kuenzi (Bro. Chris and Sis. Mary), Jayna Metz (Bro. Joel and Sis. Laura) and Riley Sinn (Bro. Tom and Sis. Edith) have expressed their desire to serve the Lord and surrender their lives to him! Please pray for grace and that Jesus would be ever near to them.

Please pray for Sis. Elsie Sinn (Bro. Mark) and Sis Carolyn Bolliger (Bro. Ben) as they mourn the unexpected loss of their sister and niece, Sis. Anna Schmidgall (Bro. Bill, Fairbury, IL). We’re thankful to know that God has sent us his Holy Spirit to comfort us in times such as these!

**Pennsylvania, Philadelphia**

**Laura Isch**

"This new being now arises,
Having died with Christ before;
What in Adam’s fall had perished
Christ the Saviour did restore.
Dearest child, we bid thee welcome
In our blessed brotherhood;
From the wild tree thou art grafted
On this holy tree and root."

_The New Birth From Above, Zions Harp, #34_

We are so thankful to report that Sis. Lydia Isch (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Linda) was baptized on February 20 and received into the brotherhood as a sister in Christ! We rejoice with Sis. Lydia and her family!

We appreciated Elder Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) being with us to share the Word and to share in this baptism weekend. May God bless him for his labors.

Our prayers are with Sis. Norma Luginbuhl (Bro. Daryl) as she has spent some time in the hospital this month. May each one of us feel the Father’s nearness as we journey onto our heavenly home.

**Texas, Austin/Bastrop**

**Candy Meiss**

“We are so thankful to report that Sis. Lydia Isch (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Linda) was baptized on February 20 and received into the brotherhood as a sister in Christ! We rejoice with Sis. Lydia and her family!

We appreciated Elder Bro. Todd Graf (Sis. Lydia, Akron, OH) being with us to share the Word and to share in this baptism weekend. May God bless him for his labors.

Our prayers are with Sis. Norma Luginbuhl (Bro. Daryl) as she has spent some time in the hospital this month. May each one of us feel the Father’s nearness as we journey onto our heavenly home.”
Our church has decided to evaluate our present church building for additions/improvements that are needed to accommodate our growth and improve our church building.

“Greetings to our faithful brethren,
Heart and voice we do employ; Wishing them the Father’s nearness, Tho’ their lot be woe or joy, There’s a blessing in the greeting, Given in the Saviour’s name.”
ChristianGreetings, Zion’s Harp, #255

Please notify one of our ministers, Bro. Jim Meiss or Bro. Dennis Rassi, if you plan to attend so that we can plan lunch accordingly.

**Vermont, Clarendon**

**Sarah Wagenbach**

We wish to thank those from Rockville, CT who have supported us this past month. Bro. Jon Zahner (Sis. Amy) and Bro. Jeff Gerber (Sis. Carole) served us in the ministry and we wish them God’s blessings for their efforts for us. We also wish to thank those brothers and sisters from Rockville who helped build a new pulpit for our church and make improvements to our sound system, including getting us set up on AC Central. We wish for all to be richly blessed for all the hours that were put into these projects.

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**Great is The Faithfulness**

by Thomas O. Chisolm  
arr. by William M. Runyan

Great is thy faithfulness,  
O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with thee.  
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;  
As thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Chorus:  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!
The News and Notices section of The Silver Lining provides a way for qualifying non-profit entities to make the brotherhood aware of church-related events, opportunities, needs, and services that would be of special interest to Apostolic Christian Church of America members and regular attendees. Email us at editor@acsilverlining.org for a copy of our advertising policy, which specifies who may advertise, sizes, file formats and deadlines.

**News and Notices**

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**2022 APOTSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH SERVICES**

**Clyde Park, Montana**

Saturday June 25th
Clyde Park Community Center
3:00 to 5:00 pm Registration and Fellowship
5:00 Evening Meal
Hymn Singing in Evening

For further information or to provide a count of those planning to attend by June 10th 2022, please contact one of the following Bros.

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

**From Silverton**
Greg Wackerle 503-873-7463 gregwackerle@msn.com or 503-779-8803

Accommodations available in or near Livingston, MT
Yellowstone River Inn & Suites (406-222-4400) has a block of rooms available under Apostolic Christian or Bob Metzger
There are a number of campgrounds and rental homes in the area.

It is helpful if those attending can bring their own; Bibles, Zion’s Harps, and Hymn’s of Zion
Free will donations serve to cover meal costs and facility expenses
A day tour of the area may be organized for those interested on Friday June 24th

Online registration link https://bit.ly/3H5uiI8
Register to Attend ALive 2022

Planning is underway for the Athens, Alabama congregation to host ALive 2022 over the Memorial Day weekend, May 27 – 30!

We’re looking forward to spending another year at the Vision retreat center in Huntsville, AL (www.visionministry.org) as we create and cultivate cross-generational relationships through fellowship, worship, and teaching centered on the gospel. Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein (West Lafayette, IN), Bro. Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI) and Bro. Matthew Moore (Athens, AL) plan to speak at this year’s event on the theme of Provision/Protection/Purpose centered on the scriptures in Romans 8:28-29. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Register to attend ALive 2022 and view other details about the weekend by visiting the website at www.ALiveAlabama.com or the Facebook page @ALiveAlabama. If you would like more information, send an e-mail to info@alivealabama.com. Additionally, sign up to receive future updates about ALive by subscribing to our email list on our website.

As the Committee continues planning for this year’s event, they ask for your prayers that ALive 2022 can be an uplifting event where relationships can be strengthened, the body is unified and above all that God is glorified.

NEW MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

Vulnerable youth like Rosie are waiting on YOU to make a move. By signing up to be a monthly giver, you can be all the difference they need.

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Scan the QR code or visit: gatewaywoods.org/sowers-of-hope for more info and to start sowing seeds today!
We Need Your Help! Do you have Silver Lining issues from 1951 & 1952

Staff has been working to make all Silver Lining issues available to the Brotherhood from the time of conception of this beloved magazine. However, our filing system is missing all issues from the years 1951 and 1952. If anyone has copies of the Silver Lining from these years, can you send them to:

Onward Media | Attn: The Silver Lining 651 E Peoria St., Goodfield, IL 61742

Questions can be directed to Rachel at rschrock@onwardmedia.org. Your help is greatly appreciated.
Missionary Service Opportunities

in Haiti, Jamaica and Mexico

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

ASSISTANT FARM MANAGER
As the Dairy program continues to grow, HarvestCall is seeking a full-time missionary to assist in the efforts at Good Vision Farm.
- Torbeck, Haiti

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

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

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

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

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

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

For additional details for these exciting and worthy service opportunities contact:
Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
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If possible, I prefer:

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Phone: 309-266-6080
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Beginning with Faith/Allegiance

— **Continued from pg. 3**

thousands of others, some of whom must have swung their swords clumsily in comparison, shot their arrows too high, and grew tired in the battle. But they stayed with David. They were faithful to their King. David rewarded them with the spoils of war.

Understanding faith/pistis as giving allegiance and demonstrating faithfulness does not mean that we are incorrect to associate the faith with belief and trust. It would make little sense to follow someone we do not believe or trust. Faith as belief and trust is what motivates us to pledge our allegiance to Jesus Christ and follow him in faithfulness.

Of course, what we are talking about here is faith in Jesus. Faith apart from Jesus is at best useless and at worst idolatry. It is not the giving of allegiance that makes a difference, but the giving of allegiance to Jesus Christ specifically. Only Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross and resurrection from the dead can atone for our sins and bring us new life, eternally enjoyed with God himself. If faith is the starting point to a life of growth, only faith in Jesus makes that growth possible. As Paul says, "for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 

The Book of Revelation is in large part a warning to take heed of which king we are faithful to: the true King Jesus or any of the many false lords who desire our allegiance.

When we build on the foundation of Jesus Christ by believing he alone is good and true enough to trust in, we give him our allegiance, enter his kingdom alongside our fellow citizens, and begin a life of faithfulness, diligently adding to our “faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.” In other words, through Jesus Christ, and him alone, can we partake of God’s divine nature. What a wonderful Savior and Lord, deserving of the fullness of our faith!

**Endnotes**

1. 2 Peter 1:5  
2. Galatians 3:26  
3. Romans 1:12  
4. Romans 14:1  
5. 2 Corinthians 1:24  
6. James 2:26  
7. Galatians 5:22  
8. 2 Samuel 23  
9. 1 Samuel 30  
10. 1 Corinthians 3:11  
11. 2 Peter 1:5-7

God is Working to Plant Churches

— **Continued from pg. 7**

**What’s Ahead for CEC?**

For 2022, the Committee anticipates focusing on 1) supporting regional church bolstering & planting committee initiatives and 2) continuing to work on the Cross-Cultural Church Planting Framework through providing updates on lessons learned, additional benchmarking and application to U.S. plants that involve different cultures. They will also continue to communicate about church planting/bolstering efforts and help train individuals interested in being used in these endeavors. E-mail CEC@HarvestCall.org if you would like additional information.

For those of you who have been prayer warriors, “thank you”! Your prayers are making a difference. In seeing the challenges ahead, the Committee asks for your continued prayers that God would continue to give the increase to the work underway to plant/establish churches.
— Continued from pg. 5

Why don’t we sing a hymn, and maybe we’ll think about a couple of those things before we go to the New Testament. Let’s sing #186 Humility (Zion’s Harp). Remember when we studied that passage in 1 Peter that says ‘God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.’

Meekness is the noblest virtue, every Christian’s armor bright.

It adorns the youthful member and the aged with its might.

So, humility isn’t just for some. It’s for the young and also the old. In verse 2, we think about what humility looks like.

Behold, Jesus, he was humble; he exalted not himself.

He was gracious, loving, gentle, asked no honor and no wealth.

As we think about somebody who really could be in a position to be prideful and that should be exalted, that was Christ. Jesus Christ, who was God and yet came to earth as man, in that earthly sense, he showed humility. He didn’t exalt himself even though he had every reason to.

In him dwelt no vain ambition, nor a boasting disposition.

So, he calls to me and thee: learn humility from me.

Jesus said, “I’m here on earth. It’s not to take the glory from my father, God the Father, but it’s to point others to God.” His purpose here on earth was not to rule this earth, but it was about how we point others to God. Let’s sing as you choose from hymn #186.

So, let’s think about Satan here just a little bit and how to recognize who is our enemy. The first contrast I would go back to is when I was in Sun school. I’d ask the kids initially, “How would you describe Satan? Give me a picture of how you visualize Satan.” Most of the time, their descriptions were like pictures you see, and they’d say they think he’s pretty easy to see.

The reality is that is exactly how Satan wants us to see him. Satan wants us to see him as this guy with a pitchfork, having a red face, being a sinister person. Satan’s thinking, ‘If that’s how people see me, great’ because he knows he’s an angel of light. He’s thinking, ‘I’m a deceiver, and I camouflage, moving about in such a way that what they’re looking for is different than what I make myself. They’re just looking for something egregious, but there are so many different ways I can work my way in to get a hold of a young mind or an old mind, whatever that may be.’

We see that God is even describing who is Satan, that he was full of wisdom. We read there that he was full of beauty. He was in the garden, and do you see his covering with all these stones, precious stones?

Do you see what it also says about Satan’s position? He was a cherub. Do we know what a cherub is? A cherub is an angel that specifically stands guard, and if you think about the mercy seat, there were two cherubs covering it. It’s about God’s presence, and the cherubs were guarding it. God created Satan, or Lucifer, whatever you want to say, as a created being very wonderful, very perfect. I think that’s something we can’t forget: Satan was created.

In the past couple days, I’ve gotten to spend a bit of time with my son, just him and me. We’ve talked about a lot of different topics, some with a kind of spiritual aspect to them, including where he is in his Christian life. One of the questions I asked him was — and I’m asking you now - who is the opposite of God?

Maybe ‘what’ is the opposite of God? He thought about it and said, “Satan.” I said, “No. Satan opposes God, but for somebody to be opposite of God, they have to be equal with God. God is self-existent. God has always been. There is no one equal or even comparable to God, so let us never try to put Satan up on an equal level with God. If you want an opposite of Satan, it’s more like Michael the archangel or Gabriel. Some other angel would be the opposite of Satan because we read in scripture where those angels contended or fought with each other.

When we think of who is worthy of our worship and who
should we follow, let’s focus on the sovereignty of God and not put Satan too high up. Yes, Satan is an enemy, and he is the opposite of good. He is evil, but he is not the opposite of God. We don’t want to confuse those two ideas. That’s the point I was trying to get to with my son. There is God and God alone, and only he is at the top with everything else below him. Yes, Satan opposes God, but God created everything and everyone including Satan.

We recognize that God created him. God created him perfectly. He’s beautiful. He’s described as that angel of light – maybe I already said that. We also have him as the roaring lion, but we remember that God created him. We remember his iniquity and what it was that caused Satan’s fall.

It is exactly what he got the king of Tyre to fall by, and it’s the same tactic he’s been using from the beginning of time. When the king of Tyre was saying, ‘I am a God’, it’s like the first temptation that Satan used.

If you go back to Genesis, how did he say that to Eve? When she was saying, ‘we aren’t supposed to eat of that fruit’, Satan said, “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Gen 3:5). He’s like, “Eve, don’t you want to be as wise as God? Don’t you want to be a god? Don’t you want to be somebody? Do you really want to be under somebody?”

We can even go to Jesus as an example. Jesus was tempted, right? When he was out in the wilderness, I think it was the last temptation Satan used where he took him up on the high mountain. Satan said, “Look at all these kingdoms.” Here, we know that God allows Satan to be over many kingdoms, so Satan is like, “Look and behold, all these kingdoms are under my power, and if you bow down to me, I’ll give them all to you.” It’s kind of an interesting proposition knowing who he was talking to, but Satan was saying ‘you want to be a god over everything and you want to have control, I’ll just give them to you.’ Jesus’ response has always been one that’s encouraging to me. Jesus was like, “Well, number one, I’m already over all the kingdoms because I’m God, right? There’s no one equal to me so why do I need to bow down to you to get those?” The specific way he responded was “Thou shalt worship no other than God.”

It’s the same for us. We need that reminder that there is none besides God. We need to be willing to stand fast and not fall into that temptation of wanting to be somebody for our own purpose. I think there’s a distinction that we have to make of wanting to be a god versus being like God. To be like God isn’t wrong depending on what our motive is. That’s something we preach; we preach about being Christ-like. When we say I want to be like God, it’s not from the standpoint of wanting his power and to have control, but that I want to be pure like God. I think like in that song, Humility, I want to be holy. I want to be forgiving. I want to be gracious. I want to be forgiving. I desire that God-likeness that is good, and that is what we all desire versus wanting to be a god.

In thinking about Satan’s corruption, this may be familiar. In Isaiah 14, you can see how Satan fell, his desires, and what he was. If you want an easy way to remember that: cutting 28 (of Ezekiel) in half equals 14 (in Isaiah). Satan’s fall in Isaiah 14:12 is where we see how Satan’s pride caused his fall. It’s referred to as the five “I wills”.

God, here in the midst of a prophecy against Babylon, another great being, says, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” (vv.12-14) That was Satan’s.
— Continued from pg. 55

attitude. He was perfect in who he was created to be and in what his role was to be, but he says, “You know, I want to be God. I want to be in charge.” There’s a phrase I remember Bro Dave saying: “There is a God, and you’re not him.”

I want us to recognize that Satan couldn’t accept that. “I want to be exalted. I want to be the one that’s above.” Then, the focus was on him. For each one of us, when you think about your temptation – whatever it is that tempts you most, what focuses you on ‘what do I want’ instead of on what God wants – what does God say there? Because of Satan and his attitude, God says, “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.” (vv.15-19)

When we pull off the face of whatever deception Satan is trying to use to get to us, it’s kind of like, ‘Really? I was tempted or deceived by THAT?’ That’s where it’s important we don’t put Satan far above where he’s supposed to be because, when we see him and recognize him for who is, we’re going to see that it’s just so blatantly obvious, and there is nothing to fear.

I was thinking about this this morning as my son and I were sitting in our duck blind. We were turkey hunting where we’re obviously trying to deceive a gobbler to come into the clearing. We have one intent – to kill, to steal, destroy, and harvest. By the way, we didn’t see a thing this morning. It was quiet, but as I was looking out there, I was thinking that we do everything to try to get that gobbler to think there’s a hen because we’re appealing to his God-given sexual reproductive drive. What can I do to try to entice him? When that gobbler comes in, he finds the decoy, and he’s like, “Oh, yeah.” He comes in puffing up his chest really big. I just have to imagine as that gobbler comes in trying to seem really big, especially if you have a hen decoy, and he’s like, “There she is!” and struts around trying to get her attention. She’s not even really moving, so he’s trying to get bigger, spreading his feathers, and he’ll peck on her only to realize: “Really? It’s a piece of plastic! I was pulled in by… [explosive sound] and it’s all over. Satan wants to do the same thing. He’s thinking, ‘I want to try to exploit that weakness’ – whatever our weak point is. He knows the weak point for each one of us, knows whatever gets our focus, our minds, off of God who is the only authority worthy of our worship and the only one we’ll give an account of how we lived.

We just have a few minutes. Why don’t we turn to 1 Peter which we’ve covered, but I want to think about that humility and pride. Turn to 1 Peter 5. In the New Testament, that’s Hebrews, James, and then you’ll come to Peter. If you remember from our study, he’s coming off of exhorting about how we live under authority and those that are above us. Then in verse 5, he says, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”

So, first, how do we live? How do we combat Satan? How do we go with that truth greater is he that is in you and me than he that is in the world? How do we believe that ‘greater is God that is within me than Satan that is in the world that’s going around’?
In verse 6, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” You know our desire to do well, to do great, is a God-given desire. I think we’re all born with that desire to be excellent, to have excellence in our lives, but under the control of God. God says, “I’ve made you perfect. I’ve prepared works for you, and I want you to do them well. I want you to desire that but under my authority. It’s not about you. It’s not about how you look, but it is to point others to me and to glorify me.”

“Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God” – submit to God and God’s authority in our lives that he – that God “may exalt you in due time” – in that proper time. That humility can bring a lot of things to our mind, and that’s where Peter says, “Cast all your care” – another translation would be ‘cast all your anxieties’ – “upon him because he cares for you.”

You may be thinking, ‘How does that work?’ Just cast them before God and say, “I don’t know.” It’s okay to say, “Lord, help me. I know this area is a temptation for me, a weakness of mine.” This is called prayer for one to verbalize it, to admit it, to acknowledge that.

He says, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.” (v.8-11)

This message is of how we combat Satan, how we fight that temptation, how we fight that temptation of pride, the root of pride that is behind so much of what Satan uses to tempt us. We’ve got to be rooted. We’ve got to be looking to who God is. Am I looking to Jesus Christ? Am I being steadfast in the faith recognizing that this isn’t just about me?

As I look around, there are other brethren all over the world that are tempted in the same way we are. Satan is going around after every one of you here just as he’s coming after me, so never let Satan try to say, “You’re the only one that’s struggling with this. Yep, you’re the only one, so you might as well give up.” I say, “Really, Satan, that’s all you’ve got?” Just pull off his mask and say, “That’s the dumbest logic I’ve ever heard. I’m going to stand fast in the faith. Who is God? There is no one besides God. He has always been. He’s self-existent. Nobody created God. God has always been. Satan, you were created. There’s nothing that you can do other than that which God allows you, so I’m going to live for God. I’m going to live to give him the glory and dominion. I’m going to live for the glory of God and recognize that only God has dominion over everything, especially over my life, because of this promise here, because of Jesus Christ who endured all of that. After Jesus had suffered a while, he’ll make me perfect. He’ll make me complete. He will establish me. I can be established. I can be strengthened, and I can be settled that the only way is if we’re fixed on Jesus Christ.”

Is that where you are today? Are you fixed on Jesus Christ? So, whether Satan comes as this roaring lion or master deceiver that looks very beautiful, very subtle, very smooth, just say, “No, I’m satisfied in Christ Jesus. I can be humble, and I can be content in who God has created me to be. I can trust God that he will equip me and strengthen me in all ways that I need. That is life. That is true life. That is eternal life, so I’m going to live under the dominion of God to glorify him.”
In the years 1980-1984, a church history was put together of all the congregations listed under the Apostolic Christian Church of America and of the churches in Japan and Canada. These files are still in existence. In skimming these file cabinets one morning, I pulled out the “Latty, Ohio” file folder. An article caught my eye, and I decided to publish it in “Remembering.” It is the history of Elder Bro. George Sinn of the Latty congregation.

History of Elder Brother George Sinn
Written by Carl Sinn, November 1980

George Sinn was born November 15, 1900 in Iroquois County, Illinois, near Cissna Park. In the year of 1916, he, along with his parents, brothers and sisters, moved to Ohio and settled on a farm southwest of Latty.

During the year of 1920, there were seven deaths in the church because of the flu. However, there were also 34 souls who were converted. Among this group was Bro. George and five of his sisters.

On February 20, 1927, he was united in marriage to Clara Zeltwanger, also from Latty. They had four children, Bros. Carl, Ray, Walter, and Sis. Minnie, all of which lived within a few miles of their parents.

On August 2, 1942, Bro. George was chosen into the ministry. Then, on November 25, 1951, he was ordained as an Elder. Bro. Dave Mangold, Bro. Otto Ramseyer, Bro. Eli Dotterer, and Bro. Sam Aeschliman were present for this service. He was the first Elder ordained from the Latty church. Bro. George also served the church of Junction, Ohio and for a number of years he also had the oversight of the Alto, Michigan church. He had a great love for the Church and willingly sounded the warning that the body of believers would hold fast so the generations to come may have the same faith.

Due to failing health, he asked to be relieved of his duties. His wishes were granted on October 24, 1971 when Bro. Loren Stoller was ordained Elder.

Bro. George was engaged in farming until his retirement.

Mansfield, Ohio - Silver Lining, May, 1978
This article was in the Mansfield, Ohio, section. Author unknown)

THE MAN JESUS CHRIST — Do you know Him who is called the Christ? Christ is the divine being whom the Father sent into this world to lift fallen man from his estate. Christ is the Son of God, the Son of man, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the anointed Saviour, the Prince of peace, the Redeemer, the second Adam, and the Word, veiled in the flesh.

Do you know him as your Saviour, or is His precious name only of nominal importance to you? The theme of the Bible you possess centers on Jesus Christ. Your earthly and spiritual life is dependent upon Him. By reading and in childlike trust and faith look to Him in prayer, and then you shall learn to know Him and His wondrous love.

What man or earthly wisdom can not impart to you will be revealed to you by the Father, Himself. For we are not born by the will of man nor by the will of the flesh; but by the revelation of Christ the Lord. Strive to learn to know Him now if you wish to share with Him in His rapture and glory.

-by Perry A. Klopfenstein
Has “Started Repenting” Stopped?

“Lord, please help me to repent when I grow up.” I often repeated this prayer as a child, learning from my parents and Sunday school teachers, even when I didn’t fully comprehend it. It stuck with me into my teenage years as one of the few prayers I remember praying regularly. In church it seemed to me every sermon was about repentance (my inward guilt and conviction probably amplified that), and it wasn’t unusual for a brother to give off a hymn like “Repent Ye” to drive the message home. When we heard someone had “started repenting”, even those of us who weren’t yet converted understood that it was an intensive process that led to a complete change of life.

Recently as I pondered these things, I started to wonder how much I am teaching my children about repentance. How often do we preach about it, or talk about repentance in conversations with unbelievers? Was there more value in the term “repenting” than I thought? While I realize that phrases like “started repenting” can lose their meaning over time and may be difficult for those outside AC church circles to understand, there must have been a reason our forefathers in the faith chose that expression to describe the beginning of the Christian experience. Do more modern expressions like “Accepting Christ” or “Giving your life to Jesus” really communicate the same thing as repenting?

These questions drove me to study the doctrine of repentance in the New Testament. John the Baptist preached repentance and called people to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance (Mt. 3:2, 8, 11). Jesus’ first message was “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt. 4:17). He came to call “sinners to repentance” (Mt. 9:13).


Why does this matter? What’s at stake if repentance is left out of our gospel message? We will be leaving out one of the foundational principles of the doctrine of Christ (Heb. 6:1). Imagine a convert trying to build a solid life of faith without beginning with a true repentance! Or think about our own children. Would we be satisfied with hearing a shallow profession of faith, or do we pray for the godly sorrow that works repentance to salvation (2 Cor. 7:9-11)? Each of us desire to be a part of God’s work in the world, but if the gospel we share in our outreach and mission work doesn’t include repentance, we will be working at cross-purposes with the goodness and longsuffering of God that leads people to repentance (Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

So, what do we do about it? I want to challenge each one of us to hold on to the biblical teaching of repentance for the next generation, especially as we take the gospel into other cultures. Someone’s salvation might depend on it.

-by Matt Gerber
He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.
Psalm 147:16