

The Silver Lining



*Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields;
for they are white already to harvest.*

July 1997

"ALWAYS PUT JESUS FIRST"

Sermon by Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich of Phoenix, AZ

II Corinthians 2:1-3:6

This is quite a first statement here and I am not sure in myself exactly it. I mean, I think there is a lot of ideas of what he is talking about here, and it may be what we think it is and it may not. But, the topic is still good for us to consider even if we don't know the exact circumstances.

It says, "But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness." (II Cor. 2:1). Do you ever have to do that?

Well, we are all human and we all have a choice—really and truly! We can be happy about our situation or satisfied or content, whatever you want to call it, or we can be downright upset or someplace in between.

Here Paul reminds us that he determined that he would not come in heaviness. Happiness and heaviness are contagious. Who would you rather be around? What is more healthily contagious: heaviness or happiness? Here he had a difficult situation, maybe a number of difficult situations to deal with in the church, but he said that he was going to come in happiness with the thought and the best thought toward them.

You and I have that same choice whether we are dealing with people in the work place or at church or wherever it is, or the man who comes to the door to sell us something, or those graded phone calls we get at dinner time.

We have the opportunity to deal with people in kindness, with respect, with a thought in our mind that they are worthwhile that Christ died for them; or we can pick some opposite view, and that is how we deal with people.

Here Paul knew that without ever taking Psychology 101, or all the many other things that are

available today, he said, "For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all." (II Cor. 2:2-3)

What was his joy? That people would walk in faith! I really believe here that he was wise enough to know you get what you expect. He expected them to be faithful. He expected them to be human. He expected that they would have faults and failings, but the bottom line was he expected that they would be trying to follow their Lord.

He also knew what the greatest joy in life was—that he could walk with his Lord one day at a time, and that he could encourage others to walk with the Lord one day at a time.

"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you." (II Cor. 2:4). Now it is no secret to me that I understand that a little better than I did ten years ago. If you are a parent, you understand that statement better than you did before you were a parent.

Sometimes there is discipline that needs to be given in the church, in the world, in the home, and nobody enjoys that less than the person whose responsibility it is to do it. But, if it is done in love with the sincere desire for both the soul that is being disciplined and for those round about, then it can have a wonderful and a good end.

"But if any have caused grief, he

hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

"Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him." (II Cor. 2:5-8).

Now I am very grateful (I always am) that I didn't pick this chapter, but that we can, each one of us, apply it to our hearts this morning and then move on. Here I think that is what he is asking the people to do as well. There is nothing (well, there probably is) but there are probably few things more detrimental in our lives if we don't forgive and move on.

What if God would hold us in account for every thing that we have ever done that wasn't exactly right that we had tried to repent for? Or what if He would say, "I forgive you but I remember back on such and such a date in 1986..." He doesn't do that, does He? He says that those sins that we repent

Sermon continued on page 46

The Silver Lining (Vol. 51, #6)

RR 2 Box 50 Roanoke, IL 61561

USPS 496780

Published Monthly By The Apostolic
Christian Church of America

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SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

The Silver Lining

RR2 Box 50, Roanoke, IL, 61561

309-923-7513 (phone) 309-923-7359 (fax)

Periodical postage paid at Roanoke, IL 61561, and additional offices. The subscription rate is a donation. Send zip number with address. Remember to send changes of address. Send both old and new addresses (with both zips). Postmaster send address changes to:

The Silver Lining

RR2 Box 50, Roanoke, IL 61561

*"The entrance of thy words
giveth light; it giveth under-
standing unto the simple."
(Ps. 119:130)*

July 1997

Light From The Word



Writings based
on God's Word

Freedom Through the Faith of Our Fathers

The nature of man strives for freedom. The spirit of man also yearns to be free. The nature and the spirit are often in conflict with one another. Until man's nature is brought under control, is converted and becomes submissive to the will of God, this conflict will continue.

The freedom that is sought by the nature of man is freedom from restraint, freedom from political control and freedom to do as the flesh desires. History records many examples of triumph and tragedy as the nature of man strives for this kind of freedom.

The Old Testament records many instances of the bondage of man to man. Many scriptural references are made that explain the treatment to be accorded to those in bondage. In the New Testament, we also find references that instruct "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col. 4:1).

We are truly blessed to live in a land where we are free from the bondage of men and where we are free to live somewhat as we choose. However, political freedom is only temporary; at best, it will last a life time, and at its worst it can be terribly deceitful. If taken to its extreme, it leads to anarchy, which is the worst kind of bondage, and it can be taken away by those whose goal is to conquer and rule over other men.

Spiritual freedom, on the other hand, lasts throughout eternity and can not be taken from us by man. There are, however, many barriers that we must overcome to attain spiritual freedom.

Perhaps one of the greatest barriers to spiritual freedom is the difficulty that man has in trying to separate political from spiritual freedom. As Jesus was speaking to a group of Jews, He told them "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Their response was "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man" (Jn. 8:32 & 33). They failed to recognize that Jesus' mission was not talking about freedom of the natural man. His mission was to provide spiritual freedom from Satan's oppression.

Today, mankind is still confused. The desire for unrestrained freedom often causes us to fight against the wrong enemy.

Misplaced priorities cause many to think that if they can be free to do as they please that this will bring them happiness. Happiness comes to those who avoid sin. "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth" (Ro. 14:22). Thus they fail to recognize the true source of bondage. As Jesus continued his conversation with the Jews, He explained to them where real bondage originates. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn. 8:34). Just as men resist the truth today, the Jews resisted it in Christ's day. After continuing the discussion for some time, the Jews "...took up stones to cast at him..." (Jn. 8:59).

The Bible tells us very clearly how we can gain true liberty and how we can gain our spiritual freedom. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36). It is only through the Son of God and through faith in His shed blood that we have any hope for freedom from sin. "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sin" (Matt. 26:28). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro. 5:1).

Just as we must be careful that political freedom does not get out of control, we must also be careful that our spiritual freedom does not lose perspective. "For, brethren ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Ga. 5:13).

We have much liberty in Christ. But the liberty that we have is a liberty to escape the desire to do those things that appeal to the nature of man. We do not have the liberty in Christ to engage in sin and escape the responsibility that comes with sin. If we think that liberty in Christ frees us from restraint, we are willingly being ignorant of scriptural warnings. "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak" (1 Cor. 8:9). We must be careful that we not cause others to fall if we hide behind liberty in Christ. Finally we must also be careful that this liberty not be used in a way that would cause us to mistreat others. "...And not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servant of God" (1 Pet.

2:16).

Freedom is a privilege that carries a heavy responsibility. We must hold fast to the faith lest we be the generation that allows Satan to deceive us and cause confusion and eternal condemnation for generations to come.

This year is a special year in the history of freedom for those of us who enjoy the faith espoused by the Apostolic Christian Church. In 1847, 150 years ago, Bro. Samuel Froelich sent Bro. Benedict Weyeneth to America in response to a request from Joseph Virkler, an Amish Mennonite farmer from Lewis County, New York who had requested help from Bro. Froelich in settling some spiritual difficulties that had arisen among the believers in his area of New York.

It was from that request that the churches in Croghan and Naumburg had their beginning. It is also from that request that the Apostolic Christian faith had its beginning in America. Over the past 150 years, many servants have devoted their lives to preserve the faith that allows us to have liberty in Christ Jesus.

We have a special faith based upon the Word of God, a simple faith that separates us from the world. It is only by the grace of God that those who went before us could have the faith, courage and foresight to realize that if they did not hold fast to the faith that was given to them, we would not have the opportunity to escape the bondage of sin.

Likewise, we must realize that our children and grandchildren will only have what we preserve for them. In Deuteronomy 6 we read of the importance of teaching our children the Lord's commandments. We are instructed of the seriousness of holding fast to the faith lest it bring reproach for generations to come. "...For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Deut. 8:9).

The faith of our fathers has provided a foundation that many generations of God's children have used to build their house of faith. Only by the grace of God can this faith be preserved for those who come after us.

An editorial committee of elder brothers is preparing articles for this section of the Silver Lining to address some of the special needs of our times. Suggestions for subjects are welcome and can be sent to: Silver Lining Editorials, RR 2 Box 50, Roanoke, IL 61561.



APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN

Mission Committee

... The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9:37-38

Brothers from European Board Visit East Europe -- A Special Report --

The European Board

The World Relief and Mission Committees are structured in a way that matters pertaining to specific areas are handled by Boards who are answerable to them. Affairs in Europe are administered by the European Board, whose active members are Bros. Nate Steffen, Chairman, Gene Marti, Phil Stettner, Leon Graf, Louis Bikadi, and Gene Lehman. These brothers confer with one another regularly by conference call, and in person when possible.

Visits to countries are essential

From time to time it becomes necessary to visit the various countries in which we work. It is our policy that official visits must receive authorization from the entire board. Last year a group visited Yugoslavia, and this was reported to our brethren in these pages. Some months ago, a trip for the purpose of meeting with brethren from Ukraine and Romania was authorized by the European Board. Bros. Nate Steffen, Phil Stettner, and Gene Lehman were given approval to make this trip, which took place in late May and early June.

Cooperation with Breidenbach

Elder Ernst Pfister and the Breidenbach, Germany church which he serves have been very active in assisting the Ukrainian churches with material aid for many years. His late father, Rudolph, was known on the East European borders by officials as "Rudybachy," which is a token of

respect. Bro. Ernst was our driver throughout the trip. We have assisted the Breidenbach church in building a new facility. In spite of the fact that a large indebtedness remains on this church, the congregation continues to send material aid to Ukraine as well as other East European lands on a continuing basis.

Arrival in Europe

The brethren flew to Frankfurt, Germany, and were taken to Breidenbach on May 23 by the Pfister family. They remained there over the weekend, and enjoyed a singing on Saturday evening plus church on Sunday. They departed for their journey from Pfister's home at 6:00 AM on Monday, driving to Budapest, Hungary, where they spent Monday night.

Meeting in Budapest

On Monday evening, they met with Hungarian Elder Janos Pap, plus Minister Janos Namenji, concerning the Predji family in Ukraine whose home was badly damaged by an explosion. The husband, Grisha Predji, died as a result of burns, and several of his 13 children are still coping with burn injuries. The subject of their needs was the purpose of the meeting. Sergaii, their 20 year old son, was flown to Cleveland, Ohio, where 7 surgeons, including brethren from the "Sister Church" have volunteered their services at no charge. The Cleveland Clinic intends to appeal for public support for hospital costs. It is hoped that there will be little cost to our brotherhood as a result of this care.

The seven year old daughter, Alina, was taken to Budapest and examined. Further treatment in Hungary will probably result from this. This has been a learning experience for us all, and it was agreed that in the event of

such a misfortune in the future, assistance will be sought in Hungary or elsewhere in Europe rather than in the US.

It was learned that in cases such as this tragedy, funds should be sent through official channels rather than directly to the family. It causes problems when large sums of money are sent to individuals. Therefore, we encourage our brethren to give through local channels when such situations come up.

Arrival in Arad, Romania

Early Tuesday morning, the group set forth in Bro. Ernst's van for Arad, Romania, which they reached in mid-afternoon. Border crossings are much more simple than in the past, and little time was lost for this. After supper at the home of Elder Lazi Augustinov, the group went to the Arad church. There was a singing while we awaited the Ukrainian brothers who had attended a funeral in Romania.

After their arrival and the usual exchange of Christian greetings, the evening was closed in prayer, and the various persons sent to their overnight accommodations. The loving Romanian brethren shared the best they had with us. We were able to enjoy a good night's rest.

Meeting with Ukrainians

On Wednesday, May 28, meetings began in the Arad church with the brethren from Ukraine. Because of a chain of circumstances, it worked out on this trip that the American brethren did not go into the country of Ukraine. Two elders and ten deacons came instead to Arad, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was truly felt. The brothers met with Elder Peter Karcia alone for several hours, and the results of these discussions have been reported to the European Board. Shortly after 11:00 AM, the entire

group assembled together.

The general situation

The overall economic and political situation in Ukraine as well as in most of the former Soviet Republics continues to deteriorate. The government seems to have lost the ability to maintain order, and the presence of the Mafia increases. Our brethren testified that, thank the Lord, they themselves have been spared direct conflict with this organization up to now.

Wages and pensions are not paid

Workers have not been paid for months, yet continue to go to the workplace, for fear that if things should be restored to normal, they would have no jobs if they don't keep working. The same sad situation exists with those who are drawing pensions. No money has been received for many months. Last winter was very difficult for our brethren, and to our sorrow we learned that many were cold and hungry during one of Europe's worst winters. Because most of our people have small plots of land, they can grow their own produce and meat, and share with one another. We hope that we have funds to prevent this from occurring next winter.

Day to day living

Much of the food comes from corn, which our brethren try to grow themselves. One brother asked for financing for 10 young pigs which he could feed out and slaughter for distribution to the needy. Quick approval was given for this. We will pay all costs of production, and when the animals are slaughtered, he will receive the income from the meat. Our expenses will be deducted, and he will have the balance for his labor. It is hoped that this small beginning will inspire others to do the same. The meat will be distributed to our needy brethren for next winter. It was felt we needed to instigate this project without delay so that the hogs would be ready before cold weather. The European Board continues to stand on

a policy of teaching them to help themselves rather than continuing to send financial assistance.

System of accounting

Because these folks have come from 70 years of Communism, they do not understand the basics of accounting for financial matters. Our German brethren designed special books for this purpose, and a brother from each congregation was given the sum of 1,500 deutschmarks, plus an account book to keep track of income and expense. We intend to inspect these books yearly to audit the distribution of funds given by our loyal and supportive brethren. An interesting sidelight of this was that the Romanian elders also requested copies of these books for their own use.

The Spiritual Side

The most encouraging note was that they have 75 converts from a membership of less than 700. This does show that in spite of the hardships, God continues to work. One deacon told us that under Communism they had all they needed from day to day, but the church was locked. Today they have nothing, but they have religious freedom. He prefers today's conditions. The meeting was conducted in the Romanian language, translated to German, then to English, and at this point, both translators as well as all the brethren wept. It makes us wonder what we in America would do faced with the same choices.

All day meeting

The discussions with the Ukrainians lasted all day, and would take much space to relate. A full report has been given to the European Board, and we encourage our brethren to ask any board member about ongoing efforts.

Meeting with Romanians

Thursday morning, (May 29) was spent in visiting with the four active Romanian elders. They brought us up to date concerning conditions in their land, which also continues to be troubled by the remains of the former

political system.

Inflation is a serious problem in this troubled land, and in a later edition, we will try to show how an average day's wage relates to the costs of living. It still is a fact that one must labor long and hard for just the essentials. We continue to send a sea container of packages each month to Romania for the support of our needy brethren. However, there are some pitfalls, and this program will receive close scrutiny in the months to come. We need to make sure we are doing the best we can with available resources, and intend to evaluate the costs of sending from the USA as opposed to assembling the packages in Europe.

Church construction

Elder Albert Szabo presented the American brethren with a list of projected needs for church buildings in the land of Romania. The total cost of all of this construction totals over \$450,000, which exceeds our ability to fund. The building of churches falls under the jurisdiction of the Mission Committee, and these brothers have received the list of needs, and will try to allocate funds as they become available. The fact is that we do not have enough money available at present to fill all the needs, not only in Romania, but also in other places such as Yugoslavia and Hungary. Stewardship of funds is a necessity.

Help for self-help

On former trips, our brethren initiated a program of help for self-help in Romania. This is evaluated and coordinated by a committee of Hungarian brothers. They collect information from Romanians who have an idea for a business endeavor, and report this to the European Board.

Our brethren met with representatives from this committee in Szeged, Hungary after returning from Romania. Each project was reviewed, and the information received has been reported to the European Board. The European Board requests your support and prayers as the work proceeds. It is through God's grace that we can succeed.

- NOTICE -

Repair and Distribution of Worn Bibles, Bible Story Books, Hymns of Zion, Tabernacle or Gospel Hymn Books

We're distributing more used Bibles in the United States now, although some are still sent overseas. Thanks for your continuing support. You may get your books written or as or Wing or Bluffton World Relief Centers.

Jerry and Arlene Banwart
Box 181 C, 307 W. First St.
Congerville, IL 61729
(309) 448-2416

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN BIBLE DISTRIBUTION

Bibles distributed by our Churches

<u>1997</u>	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>	<u>TOTAL — 14 YEARS</u>
June	4,669	21,183	385,236

* Repaired Bibles Shipped = 180

NOTE: A new listing of Bibles and Testaments available for distribution can be obtained through a note or call to:

David Bertsch
11520 Grabill Road
Grabill, IN 46741
(219)627-2923 (fax the same number)

PLACEMENT OF POCKET TESTAMENTS

A very effective way of giving the pocket Testaments/Psalms/Proverbs (boxed), is to place the plastic box with label in hospitals, rest homes, motels, filling stations, stores, doctor, dentist, and eye doctor offices.

Be sure to ask permission to place the Testaments.

There are seven Testaments in each plastic box. This requires a regular check and re-fill of the boxes.

The plastic boxes and labels are available at the Leo Bible Distribution Center, 11520 Grabill Road, Grabill, IN 46741.

Puplit Bibles - Red Letter - Self-Pronouncing - K.J.V.

- Available At Leo Bible Distribution Center -

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN HOME FOR THE HANDICAPPED

On Friday evening, June 6, the staff of ACHH, Oakwood and Linden provided a pork chop dinner for approximately 150 wonderful volunteers that have given help in various ways over the past two years. What would we do without these special people who give of themselves to help in so many ways? Each one is greatly appreciated! For those who were unable to attend the appreciation dinner, as well as for those who did attend, we again say a huge "Thank you, and may the Lord bless you."

Many activities are being enjoyed since the weather is warmer. One of the residents' favorite yearly outings took place on Sunday, June 8, when Floran and Twylla Streitmatter hosted 40+ residents and staff at their farm near Princeville. They give a little tour of the farm animals, let the residents cut fresh flowers to make bouquets, have a hymn sing and provide wonderful food for them. Thank you, Streitmatters, for sharing and caring in this way!

Special Olympics (state) will be held this weekend (June 20-22) at ISU. Last Tuesday, a string quartet from the Peoria Youth Sym-

phony came and presented a beautiful program. We also invited Oakwood and Linden to enjoy it with us.

At Linden, First of all, they have had several outings, one which was paddle boating at the Pekin Lagoon on June 7; they also played frisbee and had a picnic lunch. In July, they have a trip planned to Six Flags.

Oakwood Estate residents are also planning various outings for the summer months, starting with a trip to Six Flags, Rockhome Gardens, and Chicago.

Jackie Barton, who lives at the Minnesota Cila (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) celebrated her 40th birthday on May 27 with a walk-in party for staff and friends. Approximately 45 people came with gifts and cards, and enjoyed cake and punch with Jackie.

AUGUST birthdays for all facilities are: ACHH - Dan McDonough (2), Eric Ringwald (4), Susie Landis (5), Martha Clymer (6), Nancy Eschmann (12), Shirley Pfeifer (23), Barbara Perkins (30), Christopher Loughe (31). LINDEN - Steve Holmes (18). 200 E. HAZELWOOD - Wayne Leman (12).

GATEWAY WOODS APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S HOME

Terri Gramm

Recently I heard the story of Queen Esther retold. It has strengthened my faith and I'd like to share it with you. The custom of King Zerxes was a truly amazing one. In Esther 4:11 it says, "...there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, that he may live: but I (Esther) have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days." Queen Esther had quite a responsibility on her shoulders to try and

save her people from the deathly decree engineered by Haman. From this I learned that God uses those who will take risks for Him. As a believer, belonging to Jesus is understanding that I can't do it alone. (Phil. 4:13)

Esther certainly didn't depend on her charm and beauty this time when she went before the king. She took this risk only after fasting and entreating that God's will be done. (See Esther 4). God had a plan for Esther. God has a plan for me, and God has a plan for you. Where is God asking me to stand firm, like Esther? Where is God asking me to deny myself and do His will regardless of persecution? Where is God asking you to do the same?

Once again, we have changes at Gateway Woods. Our assistant Sis. Janel Frank leaves Gateway Woods in July. She will be missed by everyone but we wish her joy and happiness as she marries Bro. Jason Habbeggar.

Children who have returned home recently are Echo C., Dawn G., Mandi G. and Brandon W. We pray that they can continue to make progress at home. We welcome Tiffany S. to the Schrock House.

Summer work, activities, and fun have begun here. Bro. Jon Rassi is the Summer Vocational Coordinator and does "Top Quality" landscaping with some of our residents for off-campus summer work. Other children are involved in on-campus summer work and activities. Sis. Abby Kipfer is our Summer Program Director. She wears many hats and works directly with Sis. Sandy Leman, our Education Coordinator. Sis. Abby teaches Independent Living Skills for those sixteen and older in such classes as consumer skills, banking and credit skills, apartment rental housing, cooking and is involved with scheduling volunteers and planning fun activities for

HUMAN SERVICES SCHOLARSHIPS

Gateway Woods - Apostolic Christian Children's Home is offering two \$1,000.00 scholarships to students enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate work leading to a degree in the human services field. The scholarships are available to any member of the Apostolic Christian Church or friend who attends on a regular basis. A description of the scholarship and an application are available by writing or calling Janel Ramseyer or Tim Sauder. Applications need to be returned by July 1, 1997.

Gateway Woods
P.O. Box 151
Leo, IN 46765
(219)627-2159

OPENING FOR DIRECTOR OF NURSING AT THE PEORIA HOME (SKYLINES)

Our present DON of nine years wishes to retire and we have an opening. Requirements: RN background, managerial skills, love for the elderly. Please contact Bros. Roger Herman or Rick Plattner (309)691-8091 if interested.

campus.

This year's Summer Volunteer Coordinator is Bro. Arlan Miller. He has the responsibilities of directing and delegating much of the work that our summer volunteers do. We would like to extend our thanks and recognize all volunteers who have given of their time and talents so far this summer. They are Bro. Nick Zaugg, Sisters Rachel Schrenk, Erica Kuntz, Christy and Carol Sauder, Sharlin Huber, Megan Ringger, Tiffany Wieland, Lori and Tessa Schamback, Holly Beer and Erin Kipfer, and Bros. Andy Kauffman, Rod Steffen, Rick Kaisner, Lon Vogt, Andy Bucher, Barry Beer, Scott Sauder and Todd Sauder. May God richly fill up their cups to overflowing even as they have done for us. We extend a warm welcome to oth-

WORK PROJECT DATES

Following are the dates for three upcoming Mexico Construction Work-teams:

July 31 - August 8

Contact Bro. Dan Beer (Milford)
(219)467-4633

Late Fall 1997

(Actual date to be announced)
Contact Bro. Bill Gerber (Lester)
(712)478-4489

Christmas 1997

(Actual date to be announced)
Contact Bro. Terry Kuenzi (Silverton)
(503)362-3275

RIDE THE BUS

Central Illinois bus trip to the Gateway Children's Home Auction and Sale on August 16.

The bus will leave Peoria Apostolic Christian Church Friday, August 15 at approximately 12:30pm and make passenger pick-ups at Eureka, Goodfield, Bloomington and Champaign with overnight stay in Fort Wayne at a motel.

The bus will return Saturday, August 16, leaving the Children's Home at 4:00pm. The cost of the bus trip is \$40 per person.

Contact Noah Herrmann, 231 Astrom Avenue, Princeville, IL 61559, phone: (309)385-4872.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINE

1-800-747-9049

Calls are answered by an answering service and referred to the hotline. You will receive a return call shortly. All calls are strictly confidential.

Callers will receive a screening, suggestions for appropriate services and assistance with appropriate referrals.

The hotline will not provide diagnosis or treatment.

ers who are planning to volunteer and share their gifts with us.

Finally, our big event of the year is coming right up. The annual Gateway Woods Auction and Sale is Saturday, August 16, 1997. All

GATEWAY WOODS

Saturday, August 16, 1997

21ST ANNUAL BENEFIT AUCTION

EVENT TIMETABLE

7:00 AM

Meals Begin
Bake Sale
Pre-priced Crafts Sale

8:30 AM

Gateway Woods' Songs
Devotions

9:00 AM

Quilt & China Auction
Craft & Art Auction
Craft & Antique Auction
Silent Auction

10:00 AM

Children's Activities

12:00 NOON

Specialty Items Auction

1:00 PM

Children's Activities

QUILTS, ANTIQUES

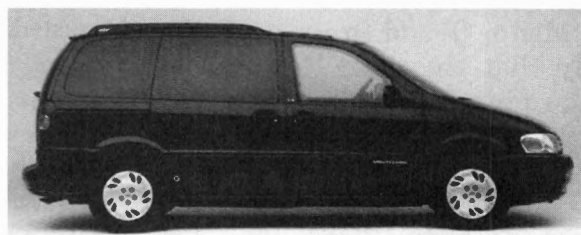
Christmas tree skirt
wicker baby carriage
oak quilt racks
curio cabinet

CHILDREN'S TOYS

toy barn
doll house, teepee
Fisherman's Starter Kit
Pencil table & chairs
ABC Block table & chairs
maple/walnut rocking horses

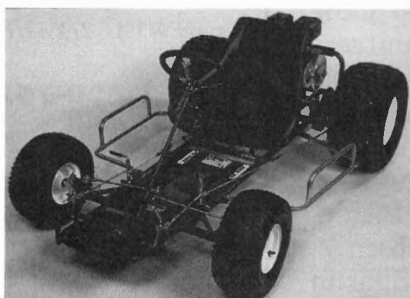
PARENTS' TOYS

Fontana Curio Clock
4 drawer oak filing cabinet
folding picnic table w/benches



SPECIALTY ITEMS

'97 Chevy Venture
4' Baby Grand piano
Gophur Fun Kart 5HP go-kart w/helmet
One night's lodging-Old Church House Inn (IL)
Teeny Beany Babies (full set)



CRAFTS

oak silverware box
hand-crafted bird feeders
Romans 5:8 oil painting
Layette Trunk w/supplies
Christmas Trunk w/decorations

GATEWAY WOODS

Apostolic Christian Childrens' Home
P.O. Box 151
Leo, Indiana 46765
219 / 627-2159

*All items are new, except for our quality antiques.
MasterCard and Visa accepted.*

GATEWAY WOODS is located ten miles northeast of Fort Wayne. Take State Road 1 to Leo, one mile east on Leo-Grabill Road to Klopfenstein Road, then north 1/4 mile. Watch for signs.

items are donated and proceeds from the auction go to Gateway Woods operations. See the sale bill in this issue. To make donations, volunteer or ask questions, contact your local Church Representative or call Gateway Woods at (219) 627-2159. We'll see you there!!

**APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN
PRESCHOOL
Athens, Alabama
Molly Stickling**

Summer at the preschool is in full swing. The children scream with excitement to be able to swim and enjoy the beautiful sunshine. Our theme for this summer has been "Stories Under the Sun". Our days are more relaxed than during the school year, but the teachers enjoy sharing stories and learning Bible verses with the children, while also teaching them about God's very own Son.

For the first few weeks in June, Alabama received a lot of rain. This rain caused mushrooms to grow on our playground. The teachers were constantly asking the children not to touch them or put them in their mouths. One child asked "Why?" Another child quickly answered while looking at a teacher for reassurance, "Because Jesus said so?" The teacher assured both children that Jesus would not want them to get sick.

The other day the five year olds were saying their prayer before their snack. Their teacher asked them how God could hear their prayer through the ceiling, and a child said, "Because He has good ears." The teacher wanted to remind the children that God hears all our prayers.

These two situations are only a few that happen many times throughout each day. They are a reminder to the teachers that the children are always listening and watching for Godly examples. In

our daily walks, may we be reminded to let our lights shine. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14).

This month the preschool will have a "Picnic at the Park" day. We will take a picnic lunch, and let the children enjoy a day at a local park. Some of the children's parents will help drive and also be a part of our picnic. We look forward to an enjoyable day!

We gladly welcome any volunteers who would come and spend some of their summer vacation at the preschool. Please contact the preschool at (205) 233-0591.

**ALABAMA, ATHENS
Joan Reinhard**

We greatly enjoyed a weekend of fellowship and singing on May 24-25 as we held our annual Memorial Day Singing. We had approximately 400 people and greetings were given from about 25 different churches. There were 31 different special groups that sang and much congregational singing. The entire weekend was a blessing to us here in Athens and we trust to all who attended. We want to especially thank Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL), and Bros. Jim Ramseyer (Bay City, MI), Ron Allenbach (Kiowa, KS), Paul Gasser (Akron, OH) and David Bertsch (Leo, IN) for their part in letting the Lord use them throughout the course of the weekend. We want to extend an invitation to all to return again next year and we do appreciate the effort made on everyone's part to come and make the weekend such a blessing.

June 10 was a day for sadness and joy here in our Athens congregation. We were saddened at the death of our Sis. Cleo Johnson. Sis. Cleo had been ill for some time and we do know the joy that awaits a child of God, but we will miss her here in our small gathering. We

ask for prayers for her family and loved ones as they say goodbye to a mother, a grandmother and a friend.

This day was also a day for rejoicing as a new baby was born in our congregation. Randy and Lisa Moore were blessed with their second child, Lindsey Brooke. Christopher Blake was there to welcome his little sister home, and we rejoice with grandparents, Elder Bro. Lavoyd and Sis. Doris Moore and Burt Miller. We ask God's guidance and wisdom for them as they train up their children.

We are thankful that Francis Edwards has been able to come home from the hospital after her stroke, and we still need prayers for our Sis. Shirley Haggemaker and Sis. Anis Perry who are currently still in the hospital.

We enjoy visitors and we thank each one who has come to fellowship with us this past month. We want to encourage others to include us in your plans if at all possible.

**ARIZONA, PHOENIX
Ron and Ev Hoerr**

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..."
Matthew 6:33

Vacation Bible School was June 9-13 and what great teachings for "Laying up our treasures in Heaven."

We are grateful to Elder Bro. Earl Ringger (Gridley, IL), Bro. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL), and Bro. Ken Lawson for instilling the desire for God's untarnished Word.

Our Sunday School children delighted us by singing songs they learned during the week. We appreciate all teachers and workers and ministers who labored so willingly so we could all be motivated by God.

Elder Bro. Jon Kokanovich was

in Chicago to attend the Mission Committee meeting.

Kari Niemeyer will be in Virginia until August 22 at,

HM3 Karoline Niemeyer
Naval Medical Clinic Quantico
Attn: OCS
2200 Lester Street
Quantico, VA 22134

after which time she will return to Joshua Tree, CA.

Bro. George Schuster has moved to Silverton, OR. We pray for God's will in his life.

Before we could celebrate Bro. Don and Sis. Josie Esterling's 50th wedding anniversary, they were called home for a funeral. May the Lord continue to bless them.

Several single members enjoyed going to Eureka, IL for Christian fellowship.

We need your prayers for young Mary Beth Sutton who is back in chemotherapy. Bro. Tim and Sis. Varen know God is in charge, but your love and prayers are needed. We all need to keep looking up!

Bro. Allan Freed and Bro. Gaylord Blunier were in the hospital.

Bro. Ray and Sis. Wendy Blunier are happy parents of Madeline Shea born June 13. Kaylea and Nolan welcome Madi, as do grandparents, Bro. Wilmer and Sis. Sylvia Blunier of Roanoke, IL.

What joy to see sons, daughters and grandchildren make the special effort to come to church on June 15, to be with fathers and grandfathers.

We are glad to have Bro. Matt Klopfenstein back in Phoenix. He will be doing his medical internship at St. Joseph Hospital.

Bro. Marshall Witzig is employed by Sundt Corp. and will stay in Phoenix as a career person vs. student.

"...If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Romans 8:31

Something to think upon:
We mutter and sputter,
We fume and spurt.
We mumble and grumble,
Our feelings get hurt.
We can't understand things,
Our vision grows dim.
When all that we need,
is communion with Him.

—author unknown

Note of Thanks:

A special thank you for remembering us on our 50th wedding anniversary. May God bless you for your love and kindness.

Don and Josie Esterling

ARIZONA, PRESCOTT

Jane Hodges

For those planning to visit the southwest this summer, we extend a warm welcome to our church in Prescott. We continue to have services every Sunday with ministers provided to us from other churches on all Sundays, but August 31 and November 30. Our annual corn roast is planned for Saturday, August 2, from 4 p.m. till dark. Everyone is welcome, but it would help us plan if you could let someone from our church know if you can attend. Our temperatures are usually 15-20 degrees cooler than Phoenix and Tucson, so sweaters or light jackets are sometimes needed in the evenings.

Our ministering brothers this last month were Bros. Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL), Ken Lawson (Phoenix, AZ), Jerry Isch (Philadelphia, PA), and Loren Knapp (Tucson, AZ). May God richly bless them and their families for their labor of love.

ARIZONA, TUCSON

Lisa Knapp

Bro. Joe Honegger will be with us for several months as part of his college experience. He is working for a local construction company. We are happy to have him here in

Tucson; we hope he feels welcome!

We have finally hit the 100 degree mark but are still having a fairly cool summer.

Our Vacation Bible School was a success and enjoyed by young and old alike. We are starting to have small Sunday attendance as our different families head for their summer vacation spots.

Our little Allison Bauer (Bro. Steve and Sis. Maria) was in the hospital this past month. We are extremely thankful that the doctors were able to diagnose her condition and prescribe medication that will control it. She is home now and exhibiting all the signs of being a normal, healthy little girl!

Brent and Kim Haas welcomed another son to their family. Hayden Paul came to join them on May 13. Weston is the new big brother and the happy grandparents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Carole Haas.

CALIFORNIA, ALTADENA

Joshua Martinez

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

Eccles. 3:1

Greetings to all in the name of our Lord and Saviour! In July we are once again reminded that every month has its own special blessings. July brings images of sunny days or warm summer showers, family gatherings, vacations and the dazzling fireworks on Independence Day. We are constantly reminded of how blessed we are and how good our Father has been to us. We are especially thankful for the freedom to worship as we see fit. Most of all, we are thankful for the freedom we have from our past sinful lives through the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our beloved Sis. Olga Larsen entered into eternal life on June 5.

Sis. Olga was a member of the Maywood, CA church and more recently resided at the Rittman Nursing Home. Her funeral services were held in Bellflower, CA. Our sympathy to all of her relatives.

We will miss our dear Bro. Shannon Stahl (Bro. Norman and Sis. Gloria) who will be pursuing his post-doctoral work in Chemistry in Massachusetts. A Bible study, singing and picnic were held to bid him farewell in the mountains behind Altadena on May 31. A reception was also held for him at the home of Bro. Doug and Sis. Sandy Aberle on June 14. In the five years that Bro. Shannon spent here, he became an important part of the Altadena family. We want to commend him into God's hands as he continues his education.

We are very happy to welcome Brian and June Crockett back into our Altadena family. We pray that the good Lord will help and guide them as they start a new chapter in their lives.

We are so grateful for all the visitors, young and old, and the ministers who visit us from time to time. Our thanks go out to Bro. Andy Klaus (Tokyo, Japan) who shared the Word with us. May the Lord bless him for his willingness to serve us.

If anyone will be traveling to or through our vicinity on your summer travels, please call us. We'd love to share our beautiful beaches and mountain scenery with you. May our Father keep all those who will be traveling this month under His protection. May you all have a happy month!

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO **Rose Huette**

Our Elder Bro. John Klotzle and his wife, Sis. Lois (Altadena, CA), spent Sunday with us which was also Father's Day. We were richly blessed as we were reminded how

much God loves us, and the love of our earthly fathers in comparison to our Heavenly Father.

The same Sunday, we had our annual business meeting. Bro. Victor Jevremov is replacing Bro. Leonard Locher on the Board of Trustees. Bro. Leonard will continue to serve as Treasurer. We wish to thank Bro. Leonard for all his loving labors while serving us on the Board for the past three years.

"In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."
Proverbs 3:6

Once again, it is the time of year when young people graduate and begin a new phase of their lives. Faith Nenadov (Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn) has graduated from High School. May she feel God's direction and guidance in making plans for the future. The Nenadov family has been worshipping with us here in San Diego and we trust they will feel God's love and blessings.

Our love and prayers are with Sis. Rose Kaplar who recently had surgery. She has suffered so much pain but the surgery went well for which we are thankful. Even though there is still pain, we hope that each day she will feel a little better so that soon we will see her smiling face with us once again in church. May God grant her a speedy recovery.

Once again, we welcome and appreciate visitors who worship with us.

ONTARIO, KITCHENER **CANADA** **Laura Baxter**

O, may we all united stand
By holy tie and sacred band,
As members of Christ's body here,
Led by Thy Spirit true, sincere,
With one accord.

May we in perfect love be found
When we Thy table, Lord, surround;
Keep soul and body purified;
Thy blessings, Lord, be multiplied
Upon this feast.

Then come into our midst today;
Impart Thyself to us, we pray.
This cup and loaf are proof and sign
Of this, Thy covenant divine
In Jesus' blood.

Zion's Harp #200

On June 7, we are thankful, as members of Christ's body, we were able to surround His table and partake of Holy Communion. We pray God's blessings could be multiplied and we can go on in one accord. Serving us Communion was Elder Bros. Ben Maibach and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI). We thank these dear brothers for their labors on our behalf and especially Bro. Mark for coming such a long way on a Wednesday evening in May to exhort us on partaking Communion with a pure heart.

We thank our many visitors for coming and the ministering brothers for serving us God's Word. Ministering brothers this past month were Elder Bros. Ben Maibach and Mark Bahr (Detroit, MI) and Bros. Duane Reutter (Rockville, CT) and Eugene Metzger (Lester, IA).

We welcome all visitors who are planning to be in our area to worship with us. Please contact Bro. Jim Baxter (519) 699-5081 or Bro. Tim Tomic (519) 634-9796 for more information and directions.

COLORADO, DENVER **Chuck and Naomi Wiegand**

Christian greetings across the many miles!

We've been enjoying the warm weather and the late afternoon showers that summer brings, but our favorite part of the summer are all the visitors that come our way. We get to meet many new

people and become reacquainted with our "regulars". We pray God will bless each one for making a trip to our church a part of your vacation plans. We are especially thankful for the services of Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Washington, IL), Bro. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL) and Bro. Neil Ramseyer (Bay City, MI). May they be richly blessed for their works of love.

Our hearts were saddened to hear of the death of Kate Knapp. She had lived in Colorado for several years and was a close friend of many. We will certainly miss her and will cherish the joy she brought to us.

We were reminded this month of the joy that John the Baptist had in serving God and doing God's will (John 3:22-26). Let us not only be willing servants, but let us serve our mighty God with joy.

CONNECTICUT, ROCKVILLE Cherie Galat

Our Rockville Single Group was blessed with many visitors as brothers and sisters came to fellowship with us over the Memorial Day weekend. It is encouraging and uplifting to see there are faithful brethren from all over the country.

As another Sunday School year comes to a close, let us thank those dear brethren who have given of their time to teach the Way of Truth to our children and young adults. May God bless those who are finishing their term and those who will begin or continue to teach.

We appreciate the labors of love of Bro. Shawn Metzger (Philadelphia, PA) as he preached to us out of God's Holy Word.

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord."

Proverbs 18:22

We rejoice with Bro. Dale Gerber (Bro. Everett and the late Sis. Phyllis) and Sis. Mary Ann Schneider (Bro. Emanuel and Sis. Verona) upon the announcement of their engagement. May God guide their steps as they plan their life together.

June 14 was a joyous day for David Mangold (Bro. Edward and Sis. Terry) and Heather Monti (Robert and Audrey) as they were joined in marriage. May they look to God for guidance as they walk as one.

Our prayers are with Bro. Ken Virkler (the late Sis. Christine) and Bro. Wilbur Kloter (Sis. Florence) as they recover from surgery and Sis. Dorothy Barton (Bro. Norman) as she recovers from an operation. May we continue to pray for those who need our prayers in times of need.

We welcome Bro. Brian Walder (Congerville, IL) who is here for the summer. Sis. Sarah Aberle (Altadena, CA) is also here for part of the summer. Our prayers are with Bro. Stephen Lanz as he spends his summer in Burlington, IA.

May God guide the futures of our graduates: Jessica Ballasy (Keith and Suzanne), Jaime Beyer (Bro. James and Sis. Linda), Carolyn Boynton (Ken and Sis. Jan), Sarah Cray (Bro. Ken and Sis. Debra), Leah Goric (Bro. Robert and Sis. Lynette), Russell Hany (Bro. Peter Sr. and Sis. Virgene), Sis. Alice Hoffman (Bro. Steven and Sis. Joan), Bonnie Lanz (Russell and Jane), Ruth Ludwig (Bro. Gerald and Sis. Heidi), Jeanette Mangold (Bro. Edward and Sis. Terry), Katie Ryan (Elder Bro. Kevin and Sis. Cheryl), Todd Schneider (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Maxine), Beth Ann Virkler (Bro. Daniel and Sis. Dorothy) and Eva Weiss (Morey and Donna).

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WASHINGTON Henrietta Meyer

The summer seems to bring interns and others with temporary assignments to our congregation. We welcome Kari Niemeyer (Altadena, CA) and Gina Meylan (Bay City, MI) to our gathering. We hope they will be as blest assembling with us as we are by having them here.

Our ministers this past month were Elder Bro. Andy Stoller (Smithville, OH), and Bros. Bill Gerst (Alto, MI), Shawn Metzger (Philadelphia, PA), and James Ramseyer (Bay City, MI). We thank these Brothers and their families for coming to visit us. Other visitors were from Goodfield, Morton, Peoria, and Washington, IL; Phoenix, AZ and Philadelphia, PA.

Sis. Wendy Fetter worked in both the Philadelphia and Washington D.C. areas as a nanny for several years. Several people have recently approached her asking if she knew any one with a church background who would like to be a nanny, in either area. If you are interested, please call Sis. Wendy for general information and details on the various positions available. Her number is listed below.

Services are usually held the first, third and fourth Sundays of the month at Tysons Westpark Hotel, located about one mile west of the Beltway (I-495) on Route 7. Services are at 10:30 and 12:30. On the second Sunday in July, we will be meeting in the home of Bro. Barry and Sis. Doreen Steffen since there will be a minister in the area. Please note on the third and fourth Sundays in July when we will be unable to use the hotel, but will be meeting in homes. Please contact the brothers listed below ahead of time to find out where we will be meeting the Sunday you are in the area and to get directions. If there is an interest expressed by

our visitors, we gather Saturday evening for fellowship and/or singing.

For more information, assistance, or just to let us know you are in the area, please call Bro. Matt Fetter (703) 860-5749 or Bro. Ken Martin (703) 724-4470.

FLORIDA, FT. LAUDERDALE **Nancy Rocke**

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Mark 10:7-9

Having the faith to believe that God has led them together, Bro. Aaron Webb and Sis. Gretchen Hanson were united in Holy Matrimony on May 25 in Champaign, IL. We rejoice with them and their parents, Bro. Brian and Sis. Jayne (Ft. Lauderdale) and Bro. Keith and Sis. Joan (Champaign, IL). We welcome Sis. Gretchen to our congregation and wish them God's rich blessings.

We lay the body in its tomb
until the Lord's voice bids him
"Come."

We sow the seed to rise anew,
and glorified, his God to view.

Zion's Harp #248

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Bill (Sis. Joan) Kuntz in the death of his grandmother, Sis. Florence Grandinetti (Philadelphia, PA). Many of us in Fort Lauderdale knew her because she lived here for many years, repented, and was baptized here.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

II Timothy 4:2

We are thankful to have had two visiting ministers and their wives, Bro. Bill Dotterer (Sis. Sharon, Phoenix, AZ) and Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Sis. Shirley, Morton, IL) with us. We appreciate their willingness to serve us; may the Lord richly bless them.

FLORIDA **NORTH FT. MYER'S** **Anjie Baum**

We will soon be celebrating our country's freedom or independence. What a blessing to be able to worship freely. We should celebrate every day, though, our freedom from sin through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Our freedom through Jesus is not for our independence. We are free to depend upon Him. Our freedom was bought at the ultimate price, the only perfect sacrifice.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:36

Our prayers are extended to Bro. Ralph Yergler and Bro. Roland Keller who are burdened with illness. We also think of their families.

Sincere thanks to ministering Bro. William Gudeman (Elgin, IL) for visiting us this month and for sharing God's Word with us. Visitors are always so welcome at our little church, especially at this time of year when we often have less than twenty in the congregation. We truly appreciate our home ministers, Bro. Victor Beer and Bro. David Eisenmann, who joyfully preach the Word to such few listeners.

FLORIDA, SARASOTA **Melissa Sabo - Rachel Koehl**

As July is upon us, our thoughts go to the tremendous price paid for

our freedom, both for our great Lord and much more our undying souls.

We can never be thankful enough for what God has done for each of us in this land of freedom, hope and prosperity. Surely, we want to remember the many that do not have such freedoms and hope and do our part to help whenever possible.

We were blessed to hear the testimony of our Bro. Justin Ooms and witness his baptism on June 7 and 8. We welcome him into the Family of God. Elder Bro. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) was here to assist in this work.

Other visiting ministers were Elder Bro. Ben Maibach (Detroit, MI), and Bros. Fred Domka (Mansfield, OH) and Bill Gudeman (Elgin, IL).

We surely appreciate all the efforts from these brothers.

GEORGIA, ATLANTA **Peggy Camp**

Once again, we were blessed with visiting ministers. Bros. Ken Hoerr (Peoria, IL) and Ron Steiner (Rittman, OH) ministered to us. We thank these brothers for bringing forth the Word in truth and sincerity.

Our Vacation Bible School was held the week of June 16. It was so encouraging to see the children's enthusiasm as they learned new songs and Bible verses.

If your summer vacation brings you south, please take time to come to Atlanta and worship with us. The church is located south of the city. Take I-85 south to exit 13. Exit 13 is State Route 138. Go west four miles. The church is a ranch style brick building and will be on the left side of the road. Please contact Bro. Linn Stoller (770) 631-4554 or Bro. John Brewer (770) 502-8629 for further information.

ILLINOIS, BELVIDERE

Carlene Jepson

As the school year comes to a close, we would like to congratulate our high school graduates: Alisha McCoy (Dave and Sis. Sheila) and Austin Mueller (Bro. Art and Sis. Marlene). May they "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Prov. 3:5) as they venture out into the world on their own.

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment..."

Genesis 18:19

Many of us have been blessed with God-fearing fathers. On this Father's Day, we are especially thankful for them and pray for the fathers of today to bring their children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

Our Sunday School children have started their summer vacation off with a fun week of learning about the Lord and "Daring to be a Daniel" at our Vacation Bible School. Thanks to all the teachers for the many hours of preparation and teaching our children. We also had speakers on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the high school students and anyone who wished to come. They were Bros. Art Mueller, Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL) and Andy Moser (Valparaiso, IN).

We also would like to welcome Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Angela Zimmerman as they recently have moved to the Milwaukee, WI area.

Church time change: The morning service and Sunday School (3 years to 8th grade) starts with singing at 10:15 a.m. The afternoon service and Sunday School (grades 9-12) starts with singing at 12:30 p.m. We hope to see many of

you this summer!

ILLINOIS

BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL

Carol Sauder - Janice Horner

Olivia Ann brightened the home of Bro. Mike and Sis. Liz Robinson on May 1, to the thrill of Danielle, Jessica, and Joshua. The happy grandparents are Pat and Leonard Hursh, and Bro. Ken and Sis. Phyllis Rokey (Goodfield, IL).

Corey Young, son of Bro. Lynn and Sis. Anne Marie Young, married Alicia Brady, daughter of Gary and Terry Brady, on May 17. Elder Bro. Everett Hari performed the ceremony. We wish them God's blessings and much happiness together.

On May 18, Elder Bro. Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Ted Hirstein (Morton, IL) shared the Word of God with us. Also on that day, the engagement of Bro. Andy Lehman (Bro. Nathan and Sis. Yvonne) and Sis. Jill Bauer (Bro. Ray and Sis. Marcia) was announced. Grandparents are Bro. Vernon and Sis. Arlene Schwab (Wolcott, IN), retired Elder Bro. Robert and Sis. Lucille Beyer (Peoria, IL), and Sis. Mary Bauer (Cissna Park, IL). That evening, we had a church potluck and the Jr. Choir was featured at our monthly hymn sing.

May ended with tears of sorrow that a loved one was really gone, yet tears of joy that only children of God can know. Sis. Peggy Ifft and her family shed those tears as her dad, Bro. William Rager (Latty, OH), was killed in a mowing accident. The funeral was May 27.

Sis. Carol Steidinger (Forrest, IL) confessed peace with God and was baptized by sprinkling while she lay on her hospital bed on May 23. She passed away at her home three days later, departing for her Eternal Home with the Lord.

Also, friend and convert Jack

Lowery, son of Paul Lowery (Myrtle Beach, SC) and Sis. Ruth Lowery, passed away on May 27. He too had sought repentance and found peace. His funeral was held at our church on May 31.

On June 7, Eric Strassheim (Bro. Dale and Sis. Carol) made a covenant of faithfulness to God and was baptized. The previous evening, he shared with us the beautiful story of how God had worked in his life and gave testimony of his renewed "childhood faith". Since he is living and working in Texas, he could use encouragement by way of notes, letters, or telephone calls:

Eric Strassheim
3201 Kari Lane, #421
Greenville, TX 75402
(903) 454-4643

Bro. Leland Plattner (Zapata, TX) was with us for Eric's baptism, and faithfully ministered the Word of God to us during the morning service.

ILLINOIS, BRADFORD

Brad & Cheryl Kupferschmid

In our hurried and busy lives, how often do we stop and think about what our spiritual forefathers gave that we might have independence from Satan and sin? Satan loves to keep us occupied with the "urgent" things of life so we do not attend to the "important" things. So let's stop and ponder a moment what the early church fathers gave so that we would have a chance to be a child of God 2000 years later.

If we pick up a copy of the "Martyrs Mirror", we can read story after story of the torture the first century children of God went through. This torture often ended in gruesome deaths (unthinkable by today's standards). I recently heard a ministering brother expounding upon this very topic. He said that Satan tried to stamp out the believers by force in the early

days after Jesus' death; but it was like throwing water on a chemical fire. It dispersed the children of God and spread the Gospel. Now he's using deception, and seems to be having much greater success in leading children of God astray.

Brethren, let's cling to the things that our forefathers gave their lives for so that our children may also sing "Faith of our Fathers" with thankfulness in their hearts. (Hymns of Zion #85). And let's also be thankful for the blessings of freedom our country has enjoyed for so many years.

Two more souls have been added to our church family this month. They are Bros. Tyler Joos and Steve Endress. Parents are Bro. Ralph and Sis. Jenny Joos and Bro. Larry and Sis. Becky Endress. We rejoice with their families and the angels in Heaven. May God give them the grace to serve Him faithfully the rest of their lives.

Here to help with the provings and baptisms was Elder Bro. Henry Dotterer (Rittman, OH). We thank him for coming and giving of himself for our benefit. Other visiting ministers this month included Bros. Kenneth Eisenmann (Cissna Park, IL), Gary Brown (Forrest, IL), Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL), Ron Joos (Pulaski, IA), John Steiner (Oakville, IA), and Paul Eisenmann (Burlington, IA). We thank them all for coming and invite them to come back soon.

We want to extend our deepest sympathy to Ronnie and Sue Eberle in the passing of his dear mother, Marie Eberle (Princeville, IL). We pray that God's nearness may be felt during this time.

Bro. Robb and Sis. Kelly Kieser were blessed with a baby girl on June 16. Samantha Jo joins her two big brothers, Andy and Clayton. Grandparents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Wilma Kieser and Charles and Judy Geary (Wyoming). May God give us all the grace to teach

our precious children about Jesus and all He has done for us.

On June 4, we voted for Sunday School teachers as again another term was completed. We thank Bro. Barry Dietz (Sis. Rachel) and Sis. Eileen Klumpp for their faithfulness as they taught the children of the love of God. Our prayers are with Bro. Ralph Joos (Sis. Jenny) and Sis. Roseann Stahl as they were voted as our new teachers. May God give them grace.

Note of Thanks:

A humble thank you to all who so kindly remembered me with your much needed prayers, cards, visits, and gifts since my surgery. May the Lord richly bless each one of you for your love.

Sis. Hilda Dietz

ILLINOIS CHAMPAIGN-URBANA Samuel and Pamela Furrer

"God observed the loneliness that plagued Adam in the Garden of Eden and said, 'It is not good.' That's why He gave him a woman to share his thoughts and feel his touch."

Our Sis. Gretchen Hanson and Bro. Aaron Webb (Ft. Lauderdale, FL) were united in marriage on May 25. Our church was full of family and friends from near and far, including many former residents of our area who have expanded into other parts of the country. It was a beautiful day for God to bless these two young people as they experience a new journey as partners for life. Sis. Gretchen is the daughter of Bro. Keith and Sis. Joan (Rinkenger) Hanson and has just graduated from U of I with a degree in elementary education. Bro. Aaron is the son of Bro. Brian and Sis. Jayne Webb of Ft. Lauderdale. He is self-employed and they will be

making their home at 6660 Landings Dr., #203, Lauderhill, FL 33319.

This year's Vacation Bible School theme was "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight" taken from the song "Jesus Loves the Little Children." Each day focused on a different culture of the world (Hispanic, Middle Eastern, African, Asian), with the craft and the snack representing the culture for that day. The week ended with a program featuring familiar songs such as "This Little Light of Mine" being sung in English and another language such as Spanish or Japanese. Whether it was learning how the story of the good Samaritan was an example of helping someone of a different culture, eating fried plantain—a snack from Nigeria, or making pinatas, the children seemed to really enjoy their week. This year's collection of money, clothing, and personal items will go toward helping migrant agricultural workers who come into our area in the summertime. Very special thanks go out to those who planned and organized the week and to the many college-aged students who annually serve as teachers and craft helpers for VBS.

We thank the many ministers who were with us for the college graduation weekend and for the big wedding weekend. These visitors of the past month included Elder Bro. Joe Braker (Morton, IL), and ministering Bros. Greg Rassi (Chicago, IL), Jaye Rinkenger (Goodfield, IL), Jim Rinkenger (Bluffton, IN), Loren Schrenk (St. Louis, MO), Rich Sutter and Brian Webb (Ft. Lauderdale, FL). May they be blessed for their efforts.

ILLINOIS, CHICAGO

Jill Rager

Sunday, June 8, we enjoyed a

lovely day for our annual Sunday School picnic. The Sunday School classes highlighted some of the things they had learned throughout the year. We thank the three teachers who have completed their term: Bro. David Kiefer (Superintendent), Sis. Jaron Grimm, and Sis. Elaine Gudeman. Following this short program, our Elder Bro. Dale shared the thought that we sometimes take for granted all that we learn in Sunday School, and that these teachings benefit us for a lifetime.

The next morning, as I was looking for a weather forecast on the radio, I caught a station that was mentioning something about God and so I stopped and listened. The discussion sounded very "spiritual", but I soon recognized the "lie" within the spiritual-sounding words. Bro. Dale's words about taking for granted all that we learn in Sunday School came back to me. Satan can wrap many truthful words around one tiny lie, and if we are not continual in God's Word, our "two-edged sword" may become a bit dull, thereby hindering our ability to recognize those hidden lies.

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

II Timothy 2:15

Although we did not have any high school graduates this year, we do have three 8th grade graduates: Bethany Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla), Jodi Lau (Bro. Steve and Sis. Marlene), and Marcus Leman (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jackie). Our college graduates are Bro. Matthew Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla), Bro. Tyler Reimschisel (Sis. Terisa) and Bro. Shannon Stahl (Bro. Norman and Sis. Gloria). We extend our congratulations as these graduates complete a portion of their formal education.

It seems to hold true in Chicago that graduation time is also transition time. Our Bro. Tyler and Sis. Terisa Reimschisel will be moving to Baltimore, MD where Bro. Tyler will be completing a residency. They will be attending the Washington, D.C. congregation. Sis. Tina Leman will be leaving Chicago to continue her education in Central Illinois. We also say farewell to Bros. Rick Kaisner and Dan Knecht who were attending school in the area. We will miss all of you and encourage frequent return visits!

On May 25, Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry, Sardis) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla) were united in marriage in Sardis, OH. They will be making their home in York, PA. and attending church in Philadelphia, so we will have to also bid farewell to Bro. Matthew, but welcome Sis. Bridget as an "extended family member" of Chicago.

Although farewells are difficult, it is comforting to have several welcomes as well. We welcome Bro. Jason Huber (Francesville, IN) who is with us for the summer, and Bro. Matt and Sis. Cammy Sutter (Indianapolis, IN). Matt is completing a residency in the area.

We also welcome and congratulate Sis. Dana Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna) who was married to Bro. Matt Knapp on June 15 in Fairbury, IL.

Finally, we want to thank our two visiting ministers, Bros. Mark Kiefer (Denver, CO) and Walt Rager (Toledo, OH) for sharing the Word of God with us.

ILLINOIS, CISSNA PARK Joyce Bauer - Beth Steffen

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able

ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit..."

II Corinthians 3:5-6

We are thankful to the following ministers for allowing God's Spirit to work through them to minister unto us: Bros. Bob Beebe (South Bend, IN), Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL), Mike Rinkenberger (Congerville, IL), Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL) and Mike Leman (Denver, CO). We appreciate their many efforts and pray their sufficiency will always be found in God.

The disciples asked Jesus "...Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:1-2).

Rejoicing over the wonderful gift of a new son, Trevor Dean, are parents Ed and Dawn Stock along with sister, Ashley, and brother, Corie. Trevor's grandparents are Bro. Les and Sis. Arlene Stock of here. We wish this family much joy and many blessings.

Jesus went on to explain greatness by saying, "...Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3-4).

We are so thankful Phil Waldbeser could see his need for a Saviour and humble himself as a little child. Phil is currently living in Chicago and is the son of Bro. Fritz and Sis. Joan Waldbeser. May God bless and keep you in His care, Phil.

Loved ones from our congregation hospitalized or going through tests recently were: Bros. Gib Stock, Herman Bauer, Ken Bauer, along with Walt Sinn and Jill Kaeb. May it help each of you to know how much God loves and cares about you. "Casting all your

care upon him; for he careth for you." (I Peter 5:7).

Our Bible class enjoyed ACYF June 1 in Bloomington. We thank all the congregations for their efforts to make this day an enjoyable one for our youth.

"...Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children."

Deuteronomy 4:10

We gathered children ages preschool through 8th grade together for two weeks of Bible school beginning June 2. It's always a growing experience for the children as well as the teachers. Life gets so busy. We need to remind ourselves that time with God and our children is time well spent.

"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else."

Deuteronomy 4:39

On four evenings of our VBS, the Bible class was given the opportunity to listen to topical Bible studies by Bros. Curt Rassi (Tremont, IL), Dale Stoller (Fairbury, IL), Ken Schneider (Remington, IN), and Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL). We want to thank these brothers for their many efforts. Also a thank you to each student that took the time to attend.

Our prayers and sympathy go out to those in our church family who have lost loved ones. Bro. Earl and Sis. Mary Knapp bid their farewell June 9 to their daughter, Cathy Knapp, of Minonk, IL. Cathy leaves her friends and family many wonderful memories, including a journal of gratitude that she started as she bravely battled cancer.

Helen Baker of Watseka passed away June 9 also. We extend our sympathy, especially to Helen's twin brother, Bro. Harry Young, and his wife, Sis. Bonnie, of here.

June 10, Eunice Frank of Peoria was relieved of her physical suffering. She is a sister to Bro. Ed Alt of here.

May Christ, our loving Shepherd, extend to each of you His comfort and care. What a wonderful promise we find in John 14:18, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." Great is God's faithfulness to us His children.

ILLINOIS, CONGERVILLE

Linda Knobloch

Missy Banwart

"He is my defense; I shall not be moved."

Psalms 62:6

In a recent sermon, we were reminded of the importance of habits. Praying, reading the Bible in the morning and evening, praying with and reading to the children, giving an encouraging word or sending a note to one in need, complimenting our spouse, and just having a willing, helpful attitude are only some of the good habits we can establish and maintain. So many beneficial achievements take much effort, but the blessings are tremendous. Just as good habits can help us to a closer walk with God, bad habits can tear down. May we pray for grace and humbleness to see ourselves as God sees us.

May 18, Sis. Annie Steffen (Bro. Duane and Sis. Lois) and Bro. Bruce Martin (Roland and Sis. Deloris, Eureka) took their marriage vows. Thanks to Elder Bro. Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) for sharing the ministering duties that day. We are thankful to have them assembling with us. Also, we welcome Bro. Duane and Sis. Jill

Gudeman who recently moved to Congerville from Kansas, where they had assembled with the Lamont-Gridley congregation.

Children are miracles,
Part of God's special plan.
Gifts that He has had in mind
Since the world began.

Angie Kay was born June 7 to Bro. Dale and Sis. Missy Banwart. She has one sister, Heidi. Grandparents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Arlene Banwart and Bro. Irv and Sis. Shirley Furrer (Wolcott, IN).

The weekend of June 7 and 8, two more souls were added to the fold. Bros. Matthew Zimmerman (Bro. Fred and Sis. Mary Ellen) and Kevin Knapp (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Gay) gave their testimonies and were baptized. It is so encouraging to observe souls sincerely seeking the Lord. Elder Bro. Joe Stoller (Princeville, IL) assisted in the services, for which we are grateful.

Our prayers are with Bro. Dick Hasty as he has recently been in the hospital.

Note of Thanks:

Ruth Miller would like to express her appreciation for the prayers, cards, visits, food and all deeds of kindness done on her behalf since her illness and stay in the hospital and nursing home. She is now at home, doing fairly well.

ILLINOIS, ELGIN

Peggy Heiniger

Norma Schambach

Our new Sunday School teachers are Bro. Roger Weiss, Bro. Jeff Kellenberger, and Sis. Debbie (Bro. Chuck) Kellenberger. May they be given Godly wisdom to teach our youth. We thank Bro. Rick Schmidgall and Sis. Karen (Bro. Roger) Weiss for their years of faithful service.

We congratulate our high school graduates: Greg Anliker (Bro. Gary and Sis. Edie), Tim Braun (Bro. Gene and Sis. Sue), Brently Schambach (Bro. Don and Sis. Leann), Sis. Erica Schambach (Bro. Les and Sis. Alison), Megan Schambach (Bro. Bob and Sis. Jeanne), Bro. Scott Schambach (Bro. Tom and Sis. Connie), Ben Schifferer (Bro. Glenn and Sis. Shirley) and Jason Schifferer (Bro. Tom and Sis. Kathy). May they always look to God for direction in their lives.

June 1 was the wedding of Bro. John Kinsinger (Bro. Bill and Sis. Sandy) and Sis. Wanda Baer (Ray and Sis. Janna) in Princeville. We welcome Sis. Wanda to Elgin. We pray God will bless them as they begin their life together.

Bro. Ed and Sis. Jenny Schambach recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with all their children. May God continue to bless their lives together.

Bro. Jim Hoerr (Peoria, IL) spent a Wednesday evening with us after helping plant trees at our new church. We appreciate his physical and spiritual service.

With saddened hearts, we bid farewell to Bro. Larry and Sis. Sue Steffen and their children, Britt and Whitney. We will truly miss them, but know they will be a blessing to the Denver congregation as they were to ours.

Bro. John Feucht left his home of many years here in Elgin to reside in an apartment in Morton. He left us with many memories. Though the miles separate us, we can remember each other in prayer.

We are thankful that God has brought Bro. Eric and Sis. Nancy Schieler and their children, Abbey and Jarod, to our congregation. Bro. Eric has been transferred to Naperville which brings Sis. Nancy back "home" to the delight of her parents, Bro. Paul and Sis. Joyce Weiss.

Two dear brothers were hospitalized this past month: Bro. Lester Heiniger and Bro. Bill (Sis. Evelyn) Gudeman. Both are home recovering. May God bless them with a full measure of health.

Bro. Earl Steffen continues to need our prayers as he has been transferred to a rehabilitation center. Though we struggle with physical ailments, it can still be well with our soul.

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

Psalms 57:1

Sis. Emily Preiss passed away June 18 after residing many years in our nursing home. Bro. Norm and Sis. Ginny Schock mourn the passing of her aunt.

July is the month our nation celebrates its independence and many freedoms. Has the abuse of these freedoms caused us as a nation to sin? The following is an excerpt from a prayer offered nearly a year ago at a session of the Topeka, Kansas State House. It applies to our nation as a whole:

"Heavenly Father, we come before Thee today to ask Thy forgiveness and seek Thy direction and guidance. We know Thy Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good," but that's exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values.

We confess that:

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Thy Word and called it a moral pluralism;

We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle;

We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation;

We have rewarded laziness and

called it welfare;

We have killed our unborn and called it choice;

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable;

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building esteem;

We have abused power and called it political savvy;

We have coveted our neighbors' possessions and called it ambition;

We have polluted our air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression;

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, O God, and know our heart today; try us and see if there be some wicked way in us; cleanse us from every sin and set us free.

I ask it in the name of Thy Son, the living Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen."

ILLINOIS, EUREKA Dori Blunier

How blessed 'tis when we as lambs are gathered 'round our Lord;
In youthful years with tender hearts, to hear the Master's words.

Hymns of Zion #73

Our children spent two very worthwhile weeks in Vacation Bible School talking about those basic truths which will help them all of their lives. They will benefit so much from the many songs and memory verses that they learn. We also appreciated the comfort and the extra room of our newly remodeled Sunday School area.

We had two new little baby boys born in our congregation the same week. On June 3, Kendall Andrew was welcomed into the lives of Bro. Brian and Sis. Tina Wiegand, Keith, Kaylene, and Kelton. Grandparents are Bro. Elton and Sis. Loretta Wiegand and Bro. Lewis and Sis. Arletta Martin, all of

Eureka.

Noah Lee was born on June 6 to Bro. Matt and Sis. Sara Zimmerman. Noah has one brother, Kyle, and his grandparents are Bro. Leland and Sis. Laurene Zimmerman (Eureka) and Bro. Bill and Sis. Karen Ringger (Bradford, IL). We wish both of these families the Lord's blessings.

Our prayers are with those in our congregation who have recently spent time in the hospital. They are Sis. Jean Knapp (Bro. Bob), Sis. Caroline Moser, Bro. Clarence Wenger, Sis. Elizabeth Knapp and Sis. Doris Rocke (Bro. Norman).

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Caroline Moser whose sister, Sis. Louise Finck (Gridley), passed away; and to Sis. Edna Blunier and Sis. Anna Wettstein who lost their brother, Bro. Ralph Knepp (Roanoke, IL).

We pray for God's traveling mercies for the many who will be vacationing this summer.

ILLINOIS, FAIRBURY Sally Fehr - Thelma Slagel

Our father's God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!

Gospel Hymns #738

As we again celebrate Independence Day, I thought of the prayer expressed in this hymn..."long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light" and pondered what our responsibility is to help this to continue. Then I thought of I Timothy 2:1-2, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable

life in all godliness and honesty." This July Fourth, as we give thanks for the freedoms God has given to us in America, let us remember to pray for our leaders and those in authority, especially that they may recognize God as the ultimate authority.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Revelation 19:7

Sis. Dana Banwart (Bro. Dale and Sis. Donna) and Bro. Matthew Knapp of Chicago (Bro. Charlie and Sis. Paula, Bloomington) were joined in Holy Matrimony on June 15. We appreciated the message brought to us by Elder Bro. Everett Hari (Bloomington, IL) reminding us that we should be spending our time now making ready to meet our Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ, some glad day. Also serving us this day were Elder Bro. Bob Walder (Congerville, IL) and Bros. Gary Endress (Bradford, IL) and Jim Plattner (Princeville, IL). We will miss Sis. Dana in our congregation, as they will be making their home in the Chicago area. May God bless them richly.

Also bringing us the wonderful Word of Life this month were visiting Bros. Jim Byrd (Roanoke, IL) and Earl Gerber (Forrest, IL). May you truly find that "the Lord is your reward" (Zion's Harp #210).

"Tenderly Jesus embraces the lambs as His treasure" (Zion's Harp #168). We are so thankful to hear that another soul has been called to repentance. We wish much grace to Josh Runyon (Bro. Mark and Julie).

Wade Jacob Fehr joined the family of Bro. Les and Sis. Sally Fehr and Marcus and Tanner. Wade was born on May 19. His grandparents are Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Martha Moser (Washington, IL) and Bro. Glenn and Sis.

Kathryn Fehr.

Should we be severed far apart
We know the Lord leads ev'ry heart
Hymns of Zion #230

Our congregation bid farewell to Bro. Todd and Sis. Cynthia Fehr and baby Logan as they are moving to Bern, KS. We will surely miss them in Fairbury, but are thankful that they will be living close to Sis. Cynthia's family.

Hospital patients this month were Sis. Holly Steidinger (Bro. Michael), Ollie Steidinger and Dawn Meiss (Scott).

Notes of Thanks:

My heartfelt gratitude and thanks for all who remembered me in prayer, kind expressions of love, inspiring cards, phone calls, gifts of love, delicious food and floral tributes during recovery of my mishap. May God bless you where human hands cannot reach and leave behind a beautiful glow that never fades away on the Victory Side.

Sis. Katharine Fehr

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of my family and friends for their many deeds of kindness, love and the many prayers offered in my behalf during my recent surgery and recovery. God has been good and I am doing well. Please continue to keep me in your prayers.

In Christian love, Sis. Louise Hartman

I would like to thank everyone who remembered me with cards, flowers or prayers during my recent stay at the hospital and nursing home following my broken hip. May God bless you for your deeds of kindness.

In Christian love, Sis. Aldine Steffen

ILLINOIS, FORREST**Marlene Walter****Mary Bachtold**

May 23 and 24 was a blessed weekend as we were privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of three dear souls. We welcome Sis. Tamra Bachman (Keith), Bro. Ben Zimmerman (Bro. Paul and Sis. Loretta) and Sis. Sarah Schneider (Bro. Jim and Sis. Sandra) as our new brother and sisters in faith.

We appreciate the willingness of Elder Bros. Art Bahler (Fairbury, IL) and Marvin Leman (Bradford, IL), and Bros. Carl Wyss (Washington, IL), Marvin Schmidgall (Eureka, IL), Todd Feller (La-Crosse, IN), Wayne Grimm (West Bend, IA) and Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL) to share God's Word with us this past month. We thank Bros. John Hartman (Fairbury, IL), Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL), Ed Fritz (Washington, IL), Steve Sauder (Tremont, IL) and Art Mueller (Belvidere, IL) for being willing to talk with our Bible Class students during Vacation Bible School. May God richly bless these brothers for their willingness to be used in His service.

We are thankful that souls are still answering God's call. It is our prayer that God will grant Kristen Koehl (Barry and Rosemary) much grace as she commits her life to Him.

June 7 was the wedding day for Steve Anliker (Elder Bro. Wayne and Sis. Judy) and Kristin Greenwald (Kenneth and Carol, Dublin, OH). We wish them God's blessings as they walk together as husband and wife.

Loren Honegger (Bro. Lloyd and Joyce) and Jennifer Johnson (Kirk and Jeanette, Bethalto, IL) have chosen November 29 as their wedding day. We wish them much happiness as they plan their new life together.

May God grant Bro. John Teubel much wisdom and under-

standing as he has been chosen to teach our Sunday School children. We hope he will feel our prayers and support as he undertakes this important work.

Several loved ones have spent time in the hospital this past month. May God continue to grant Bro. Wayne Honegger, Bro. Sid Leman, Bro. Earl Gerber, Sis. Renee Wenger and Sis. Rosetta Stoller his Healing Power.

Note of Thanks:

My heartfelt gratitude to all who remembered me in prayer, cards, and kind deeds during my surgery and recovery. May God bless each one.

Bro. Allen Zimmerman

ILLINOIS, GOODFIELD**Jan Beer**

A news item overlooked was the wedding of Tim Schwenk and Michelle Funk on March 15. My apology to Tim, Michelle and Tim's parents, Bro. Doug and Sis. Myrna. A belated "welcome to our fellowship", Michelle!

Our Sis. Mary Helen Heinold is confined to her home with a serious illness. We hope you can feel our prayers on your behalf, dear Sister.

Bro. Howard and Sis. Vera Heinold and Bro. Barry and Sis. Joyce Kloter have undertaken the monumental task of revising the Goodfield Church Directory. Thank you for your investment of time and energy - we appreciate having names, addresses and phone numbers of our congregation at our fingertips.

On May 22, Whitney Nicole Wiegand arrived to bless the home of Bro. Brad, Sis. Karen, Scott, Zack and Marissa. Pleased grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Maryellen Wiegand and Bro. Mel and Sis. Marilyn Blunier. May God continue to bless your dear little family, Brad and Karen.

Graduation Day is now a memory for our Middle School, High School and College graduates. Our heart's wish for each of you is that you will allow God to direct your path.

It was Goodfield's turn to provide a minister for the Nashville congregation on June 1, so a busload of brethren "tagged along"! We have a vested interest in that congregation because of our Bro. Stan and Sis. Jean Hohulin's relocation to that area. Even though some of us had other commitments that weekend and couldn't travel to Nashville, our hearts were with you. In the lonely times, Bro. Stan and Sis. Jean, we hope you will be encouraged by the memory of the busload of brethren who were representing the prayers and love of us all here in Goodfield.

Sunday, June 1, Youth Fellowship Day for our high school students was held on the campus of IL State University in Normal, IL. At 3:30 p.m. the students presented a vocal concert for their parents and friends. We pray God will bless these times of fellowship among our entire IL congregations.

Bro. Bart Rinkenberger and Sis. Janell Anliker pledged their lives to each other on June 8 at the Francesville, IN church. Parents are Bro. Jaye and Sis. Peg Rinkenberger and Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karol Anliker (Francesville, IN). It is exciting to see young couples establishing Godly households. We pray God's blessing on your new adventure, Bart and Janell.

The week of June 9-13 we had Vacation Bible School. God's special blessing on each teacher who devoted their time and effort to teaching our children each night that week. You have planted the seed, and we look to God to bring it to harvest. The Bible Class and entire congregation were taught by visiting ministers on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. Our gratitude is expressed to Bro.

John Laukhauf (Latty, OH), Bro. Ted Witzig (Morton, IL) and Bro. Lynn Steiglitz (Leo, IN) for those lessons delivered. A special thank you to the three singing groups - your music was the perfect ending for each evening. The week held a special glow for us because a young man of our congregation turned his life over to the Lord after hearing the message on Monday evening.

In my opinion, Father's Day does not receive the same attention from our pulpits as Mother's Day does - it's probably because our ministers don't want to "blow their own horn"! Men have a daunting responsibility to be the leader of their home. Our heartfelt prayers are with each husband and father for God to supply him with the grace to fulfill that commission.

ILLINOIS, GRIDLEY **Perry A. Klopfenstein**

Our annual Vacation Bible School was completed on June 13. "Our Spiritual Inheritance" was the week's theme. Speakers for the Bible Class and adults were Bros. Mike Rieker (Peoria, IL), Ted Witzig (Morton, IL), Steve Gutwein (Francesville, IN), Robert Pflederer (Morton, IL), and Carroll Gerber (Bluffton, IN). It was a time of spiritual blessing and enrichment.

Sis. Betty Klopfenstein was hospitalized with a severe heart ailment. As of this writing (June 20), she was improving. May God restore her to good health according to His will.

On June 18, we held our annual business meeting. Several were selected for church offices. Bros. Mark Campbell, Bill Schifferer, and Jake Schlipf along with Sisters Sherrie Stoller and Donna Ringger were chosen as Sunday School teachers. We wish them God's grace in this important duty.

Bro. Jerry Christensen was chosen as trustee and Bro. Roger Funk was selected as usher. Several appointed offices were also filled.

Lord willing, our congregation will host the Annual Conference in August. Preparations are under way for next month's big occasion. The church trustees and their committees are attending to all the details, and we eagerly await our turn to host our beloved brethren from coast to coast. May prayers across the states ascend to Heaven that our coming together in conference will benefit the church.

Satan is sly, and very clever, and he is not sleeping or slumbering. Surely, each of us can note the tone of moral decay in our beloved land—and that the enemy is bold enough to make efforts to undermine the faith.

Were it not for the presence of the Holy Spirit, and our diligent quest for it each day, the enemy's power might leave us distraught. But we can take comfort in the Scripture, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." God will not leave anyone that will not leave nor forsake Him.

ILLINOIS, MORTON **Phyllis Farney** **Cheryl Wuthrich**

The funeral of Sis. Emma Bernhardt was held on May 30. May the Lord comfort and bless her nephews and nieces: Bro. Melvin Baum, Wayne Baum, Bro. Robert Baum, Bro. Ken Baum, Sis. Eileen Mauer and Barbara Mohr; and her other relatives and friends.

Sis. Lola Strunk passed away June 7. May the Lord uphold her loved ones. Her survivors are her daughter, Sis. Pat Landes; her four brothers, Harold Hirstein, John Hirstein, and Edward Hirstein; her sisters, Sis. Edna Fite, Ann Rupprecht, Samantha Meeker; her two granddaughters

and five great-grandchildren.

We rejoice with Sis. Erma Hollis and Bro. Walter Feucht as they were united in marriage on June 1. May God continue to bless them as they now walk life's pathway together.

The announcement was made of the engagement of Bro. Mark Moser (Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb) and Sis. Colleen Beutel (Bro Alvin and Sis. Carol) of Tremont. We wish them God's richest blessings during their engagement period and for their future together.

Our Vacation Bible School was held June 2 through June 6. The topic for the adult sessions were Duties of Christians. We would like to thank all the visiting ministers who taught the adults as well as those that served our Bible Class youth. They were Bros. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL), Steve Sauder (Tremont, IL) Brian Huber (Francesville, IN), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Erik Givens (Princeville, IL), Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), John Rowell (Burlington, IA), Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL) and Rick Plattner (Peoria, IL). It was a wonderful week of fellowship and feeding on the Word each evening.

We have many shut-ins and those who are ill. Let us remember them and continue to uphold them in prayer. The hours are long and maybe a phone call or note would help brighten their day.

Notes of Thanks:

Bro. Eli and Sis. Bertie wish to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, gifts of love and visits while in the hospital and since coming home. May God bless all who were so kind.

We wish to express our most sincere thanks for the many prayers, cards, phone calls and words of comfort and encouragement conveyed to us during our husband and dad's illness and death.

Sis. Betty Yergler and family

May God richly bless all of those who shared their love with us during the illness and death of our mother, grandma and sister. The visits, calls, cards, food and prayers were all greatly appreciated. We want to thank all who sent memorials to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in memory of Gram and in honor of our little Amy who is now an outpatient there. Gram really enjoyed the beautiful singing of the Mortonairens. We will miss her warm smile and loving concern for us but are thankful that she is free from pain and is Home with the Lord.

Sis. Lola Strunks' Family

ILLINOIS, PEORIA Peter and Mabel Weber

We thank Bro. Marshall Hei-nold for his visit on May 21 and meditation on Luke 23 and Colos-sians 2. There are many false teachings today, one of which is that all will be well after coming to Jesus. God gave all authority to Adam, but it passed to Satan after Adam's transgression. We are going to struggle and enter into warfare with Satan, but through Jesus we can overcome Satan (Rev. 12:11). Jesus blotted out our sins and Satan's accusations of the brethren before God. The centurion, who had just crucified Jesus, had to confess that He was the Son of God after witnessing His death.

Bro. Marshall and Sis. Jan Hei-nold, here on a short furlough in May, have been living in Ixtlan, Michoacan, Mexico for 1 1/2 years in response to a request for a presence of our faith there. Ixtlan is a city of 5,500 at an altitude of 4,500 feet, about six driving hours west of Mexico City. Elder Bros. Chuck Hemmer and Dave Wiegand have visited Ixtlan twice and are planning a third trip in the near future. To date, there are 10 believers and three converts. A typical Sunday

assembly numbers 45 and at Saturday evening Bible study they have an attendance of 10-15 teenagers. They also teach children to read and write. At present, they live in a 30x30 building, one half of which is used for services. The Mission Committee has approved the purchase of an adjacent lot, where at a later date maybe a more suitable church building could be erected, possibly with the help of US work teams. This would give Marshall and Jan full use of the present building as their quarters.

Bro. Rick Plattner meditated on II Samuel 6 on May 25. The captured ark brought disaster to the Philistines and they decided to return it to Israel, unescorted on an ox cart. When it arrived at Nachon's threshing floor, Ussah put his hand on the ark to steady it, for the oxen shook it. God smote him there for his error (verses 6 and 7). This was not in God's protocol to move the ark, as only priests and Levites could touch it. Do we deviate from God's instructions? Do we walk by faith or fact?

We express our gratitude to Bros. Glenn Dill (Tremont, IL), Wayne Banwart (Champaign, IL), Ken Wuethrich (Indianapolis, IN) and Doyle Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN) for addressing the Bible Class during our Vacation Bible School from June 9-13. Special thanks to Bro. Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) for his message "Don't miss Heaven for the World" at our family night service on June 11. This life is not about this life, but life eternal. Take God's invitation seriously as we will stand alone on judgment day, without an excuse. When the invitation comes, RSVP with "yes, Lord, we are going to serve you!" Get the benefits now, as every day we serve the Lord is a blessing and true happiness.

We thank Bro. Hartzell and Sis. Mary Kaisner (Detroit, MI) for their Father's Day visit on June 15

and Bro. Hartzell's meditation on Deut. 6 and Hebrews 12. While many things disturb us, we have the beautiful opportunity to raise the children God has given us and embed into their hearts that Jesus is praying for us.

Former Elder Bro. Roy Sauder retired eight years ago on Father's Day from the ministry after 42 years of faithful and dedicated service to the Peoria congregation, 22 years as Elder.

We welcome Matt Ginzel into our fellowship. He gave his testimony and was baptized on May 17. He is attending the University of IL at Champaign and we thank Elder Bro. Dave Wiegand for his assistance in his conversion and baptism.

On the beautiful Sunday of June 1, Bro. Jeremy Zimmerman (Roanoke, IL) and Sis. Angie Sutor were united in Holy Matrimony by Elder Bro. Chuck Hemmer, Angie's grandfather. Visiting us for the occasion were Elder Bros. Don Sauder and Tom Hoffman (Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL). They will live in Waukesha, WI and Exodus 23:20 "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way..." will have special meaning to them. Bro. Walt Feucht and Sis. Erma Hollis were married the same Sunday at Morton. May the blessings of God follow.

We express our sympathy to the family of Sis. Louise Finck (Kaupp), who passed away at the Skylines on May 15. Her quiet and dignified presence will be missed.

Billy Richard was born on May 15 to Bro. Matt and Sis. Lisa (Schock) Waibel, their second child; and Gabriel Stuart to Stuart and Angela (Ober) Laughlin on June 11, their first. Congratulations!

Recent hospital patients were Simon Traub, Bros. Bud Fehr and Art Hermann and Sis. Esther Sut-

ter, Lydia Stoller and Emma Schneider. May they feel the prayers and concerns of their brethren.

Our heartfelt good wishes accompany Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Amy (Rieker) Ginzler on their move to Olatha, KS; and Bro. Matt and Sis. Lisa (Schock) Waibel to Indianapolis, IN. May they experience the same true love and fellowship in their new environments and visit us as often as circumstances permit.

ILLINOIS, PRINCEVILLE Joanna Herrmann

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;"

Isaiah 1:18

Two more souls have taken advantage of the shed blood of our Lord, and have become brothers in Christ. May 17 and 18, we were able to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of Bro. Andy Schick (Bro. Stan and Sis. Margie) and Bro. Derek Menold (Bro. Mike and Sis. Sharon). We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN) with us.

On June 1, we had two engagement announcements. Bro. Dennis Streitmatter and Sis. Stephanie Andrews (Washington, IL) plan to get married August 31. Bro. Dennis is the son of Bro. Bill and Sis. Diane, and Sis. Stephanie is the daughter of Ron and Connie Cargnino of Kincaid, IL and Homer and Karen Andrews of Carthage, IL.

Sis. Joanna Herrmann and Bro. Dave Sauder (Tremont, IL) plan to get married August 24. Sis. Joanna is the daughter of Bro. Howard and Sis. Mary Ann, and Bro. Dave is the son of Bro. Dale and Sis. JoAnn of Tremont, IL.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Psalms 116:15

Our dear Sis. Marie (the late Bro. William) Eberle has passed from time to eternity. Sis. Marie passed away June 3. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family. Her children are Ron and Sue Eberle, Larry and Marge Eberle, Marvin and Sharon Eberle and John and Carol Ganey.

We read in Psalm 127:3 that "children are an heritage of the Lord". There were two babies born in our congregation this month. David James was born June 10 to Bro. Kevin and Sis. Grace Herrmann. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Howard and Sis. Mary Ann Herrmann and Bro. Paul and Sis. Marilyn Nenadov (San Diego, CA).

Dylan Robert was born to Bro. Keith and Sis. Lisa Knobloch on June 13. He joins older siblings, Devon, Austin, and Alisha. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Nick and Sis. Gladys Knobloch and Bro. Robert and Sis. Norma Pfledderer (Francesville, IN).

Our thoughts and prayers are with our Sis. Anna Siebenthal. We pray she can feel God's nearness and His healing hand if it be His will.

ILLINOIS, ROANOKE Jana Gastman - Lisa Leman

Our Vacation Bible School was held June 9-13. We were motivated and encouraged as visiting ministers brought God's message to us. We thank Bros. Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL), Dennis Rassi (Fairbury, IL), Bruce Hohulin (Goodfield, IL), Rick Plattner (Peoria, IL) and Nelson Beer (Milford, IN). May God bless these brothers, along with our other visiting ministers this month: Elder Bros. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN) and Dave Wiegand (Champaign, IL), and

Bros. Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN) and Will Schieler (Milford, IN).

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Luke 15:10

We are rejoicing with the angels that five dear souls have turned to the Lord. Our prayers are with Gretchen Knepp (Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise), Marc Knepp (Bro. Rich and Sis. Janet), Scott Yordy (Larry and Edie), Mandy Luginbuhl (Bro. Rob and Sis. Gina) and Richard Burton (Joan).

Brittney, Brandon, and Colton Durand welcomed home Rachel Elizabeth on May 30. Tom and Sis. Marsha Durand are the thankful parents. Grandparents are Don and Sis. Helen Brown and Don and Linda Durand.

Bro. Wilmer and Sis. Sylvia Blunier were blessed with a granddaughter on June 13. Madeline Shea was welcomed home by siblings, Kaylea and Nolan, along with their parents, Bro. Raymond and Sis. Wendy Blunier (Phoenix, AZ).

We rejoice in the engagement of Sis. Jill Hoffman and Bro. Brad Sauder. Their parents are Elder Bro. Tom and Sis. Kathy Hoffman and Bro. Bob and Sis. Jan Sauder. We wish them God's blessings during this special time in their lives.

June 1 was the wedding day of Sis. Ann Hohulin and Bro. Ken Stoller. Their parents are Bro. Melvin and Sis. Shirley Hohulin and Bro. Richard and Sis. Barbara Stoller.

Sis. Jill Hodel and Bro. Aaron Carnahan were united as one on June 15. Their parents are Bro. Ken and Sis. Kathy Hodel and Mary Carnahan and Rodger Carnahan. We wish both of these couples God's love as they establish their Christian homes.

Death with thy weapons of war lay
me low,
Strike, King of terrors, I fear not
thy blow!
Jesus, the hero, hath vict'ry
achieved,
Blessed is he who on Him hath
believed!
Bright will the morn of eternity
dawn,
Bright is my vision, beholding the
crown;
Folded in Jesus' arms, no more I'll
roam
Joyfully, joyfully, safely at home!
Hymns of Zion #239

Our congregation was saddened at the loss of two precious souls this month. Bro. Ralph Knepp won the victory and passed away on June 10. Our prayers are with his dear family. He is survived by five sons: Bros. Ken, Bob, Curt and Rich (Roanoke), John (El Paso), and three daughters, Rachel Bauer (Phoenix), Sis. Carol Luginbuhl (Roanoke) and Marjean Largent (Scottsdale).

Sis. Myra Leman laid down her cross in peace on June 17. We rejoice with Sis. Myra in her victory, but we will miss her dearly. We extend our love and sympathy to her loving husband, Bro. Jim, and their six children: Bro. Jim Jr. (Roanoke), Gary (Roanoke), Bro. Jay (Chicago), Bro. Herb (Washington), Bro. Mike (Silverton, OR), and Sis. Jean O'Shea (Chicago). Our prayers are also with her five brothers and sisters left behind: Elder Bro. Don, Bros. Howard and Jerry, Sis. Mae Kae Hodel and Sis. Mary Schwind, all of Roanoke. May the Lord fill the void in their hearts.

May the Lord's healing hand be with those who have met with illness this past month. Our thoughts are with Bro. Bob Huhlin (Sis. Dit), Sis. Ruth Scherer, and Doris Aeschliman (Bro. Larry).

Note of Thanks:

Thanks for the many kind-

nesses extended to Myra throughout her lifetime and especially in these last weeks leading up to her death; also to her family. Your expressions of love and concern have been an encouragement to us and are deeply appreciated. May the Lord bless you. Thank you.

Jim Leman and family

ILLINOIS, TREMONT **Barb Dill - Barb Kaeb**

We are excited to learn of two betrothals this month. Bro. David Sauder and Sis. Joanna Herrmann (Princeville, IL) are planning an August 24 wedding. Parents are Bro. Dale and Sis. Joann Sauder and Bro. Howard and Sis. Mary Ann Herrmann. September 7 is the wedding date set for Bro. Mark Moser and Sis. Colleen Beutel. Their parents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Barb Moser (Morton, IL) and Bro. Alvin and Sis. Carol Beutel. We pray that the Lord will continue to direct both couples and that their lives together will be filled with the beauty of a Christ-centered love.

Little Corbin Steiner (Bro. Todd and Sis. Valerie) spent some time in the hospital this past month due to surgery. We are so thankful that he is now home and doing well.

We express our thanks and appreciation again to our ministering brethren who came to share God's living Word with us. They were Bros. Dennis Kaufmann (Bloomington, IL), Clark Stoller (Gridley, IL) and Dewayne Dill (Minneapolis, MN). May God bless each one, their wives and families.

ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON **Denise Romersberger** **Sue Ruppert**

We had several visiting ministers with us this month. We thank Bros. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO), Andy Klaus (Tokyo, Japan), and Walt Herrmann (Princeville, IL)

for their efforts. Our prayers go with you all.

We rejoice with Sis. Stephanie Andrews and Bro. Dennis Streitmatter (Princeville, IL) on the announcement of their engagement. Stephanie's parents are Homer and Karen Andrews of Carthage, IL, and Connie and Ron Cargnino of Kincaid, IL, and Dennis' parents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Diane Streitmatter of Princeville.

We had several young people graduate this year. Those graduating from high school include Bro. Grant DesCarpentrie (Bro. Stan and Sis. Jane), and Luke Baker (Joe and Sis. Karen). Our college graduate this year is Bro. Eric Hodel (Kent and Janet). We send them forth into their future plans, knowing that God will lead them and will give them wisdom as they look to Him.

Vacation Bible School was enjoyable for all those involved. The children excitedly learned new songs, heard about Jesus, did crafts and World Relief projects, and worked to raise money to send to the needy in Sudan. Blessings to all those teachers, parents and others for their many efforts.

Hospitalized this month were Sis. Julie Barth and Sis. Sue Ruppert. Both are now recuperating at home. We thank the Lord for His faithfulness, even in the midst of unexpected turns in life.

Note of thanks:

Many thanks are due to all of those that have taken time out of their own busy schedules to come and stay, bring in food, mow the grass, pray, send a card, or whatever. Through the ongoing times of hospitalizations, subsequent recovery periods, and other health problems, we have felt so blessed to be able to have a church family who cares for us, and provides for our needs. We know that our lives would be much more barren without each and every one of you.

Thank you seems so inadequate, but it is all that we can say. We love all of you and pray that God will bless you all.

Sis. Sue Ruppert and Sis. Denise Romersberger

In this month of July we think of our nation's independence. Independence is also something that every child and adult wants at some point in their lives. In today's society, there is value placed upon being able to function independently, both in professional and personal lives. But let us not get too carried away in striving for independence. Rather, we should be striving for interdependence with each other, while being dependent on our Heavenly Father. God made us with a desire and need to closely interact with each other. We only deny ourselves many blessings when we proudly say "I can do it myself."

We extend our deepest sympathy to Bro. Herb Leman and his family in the death of his mother. We are never ready to lose our parents but God knows what is best for each of us. May you find comfort in knowing God has taken her Home. Our prayers are with you.

INDIANA, BLUFFTON

Kim Maller - Brenda Bertsch

"Jesus is the Answer!" This was our theme for the 1997 Vacation Bible School. We watched the children work together doing good deed projects, traveling to area nursing homes, learning more about Jesus, memorizing many Bible verses, and singing songs to praise Him. It is our hope in Bluffton that Jesus is the answer for everyone.

We want to take a few minutes to "Congratulate" all of our many graduates in this year. It is our prayer that they all come to know the Lord and through Him they

will have much success.

We also want to welcome back to our congregation Bro. Frank and Sis. Gail Szabo and their children.

We were blessed with three converts this month, Brady Kaehr (Bro. Lyle and Sis. Connie), Tina Raber (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Mary), Jessie Kaehr (Bro. Jon and Sis. Julie) and Mark Reinhard (Bro. John and Sis. Pam).

One weekend we were able to sit and listen to five individuals give their testimonies. Baptized were Abby Gerber (Bro. Doug and Sis. Ruby), Joel Rinkenberger (Bro. Jim and Sis. Jeanne), Joe Sprunger (Bro. Kent and Sis. Sheila), Josh Maggart (Bro. John and Sis. Becky), and Tonya Raber (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Mary).

Joined together June 1 was Bro. Brent and Sis. Allison Kaehr. Their parents are Bro. Lyle and Sis. Connie Kaehr and Bro. Alan and Sis. Sheryl Ringger.

Engaged to be married we have two who their first mates have been called Home. Engaged are Bro. Dick Clark to Sis. Lucille Steffen. We wish them well as they start their new lives together.

Visiting ministers to Bluffton this month for various reasons were Bros. Doyle Frauhiger, Steve Frauhiger and Elder Bro. Phil Stettner (all from Bluffton North), Elder Bro. Jesse Beer (Milford, IN), Bro. Hartzell Kaisner (Detroit, MI), and last but certainly not least, Bro. Jaye Rinkenberger (Goodfield, IL). We pray they all returned safely home and carried our greetings with them back to their own congregations.

Born into our congregation this time were twin boys to Bro. Roger and Sis. Tara Steffen on June 5. They have four other boys anxiously awaiting Daniel Jay and David Jay's return to their home. Grandparents are Bro. Marvin and Sis. Della Steffen and Bro. Ted and Elaine Liechty. Keith and Martha Stoller will be enjoying an-

other girl in their family, Ella Kay, born on June 2. Grandparents are Bro. Ramon and Sis. Flossie Stoller and Bro. Ben and Sis. Arlene Habegger. Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie Fiechter warm their home with baby girl, Tianne Nichole, on June 17. Grandparents are Bro. Carl and Sis. Mary Fiechter and Bro. Earl and Sis. Pat Gerber.

Many have benefitted from prayers while they were in the hospital or recovering at home. Sis. Ada Gerber, Sis. Connie Kaehr (Bro. Sam), Jeanne Gerber (Arlen), Sis. Sandy Ringger (Bro. Kendall), Jamison Ringger (Bro. Kendall) and Sis. Mary Steffen.

Our sympathy goes to Bro. Scott Shady (Sis. Tami) in the passing of his grandmother. Alvin Kipfer also has gone from this life. We pray his family and friends may be comforted in this time of loss. Our Bro. Bill Rager (Sis. Lou Ann) suffered the loss of losing his father, Bro. Bill Rager, Sr. (Latty, OH). It is our prayer that you let the healing power help you through this tough time.

With all our activities, we have had a blessed month. Soon it will be vacation time and we welcome all to come and visit our Bluffton congregation. Until then, we bid you all a fond farewell!

INDIANA, BLUFFTON NORTH

Kay Steffen - Lori Steffen

We enjoyed Bro. Ben Manz (Junction, OH) and Marvin Stieglitz (Leo, IN) visiting us and sharing God's Word. May they be richly blessed for their efforts.

We rejoice to hear that our friends, Chad Aschliman (Bro. Alan and Sis. Debbie) and Seth Drayer (Bro. Denny and Sis. Jan), have answered God's call. May God continue to guide them as they trust their all to Him.

God has blessed our congregation with two precious babies this month. Bro. Steve and Sis. Gayla

Gerber welcomed Kylie Marie on May 30. She joins three brothers, Landon, Lucas and Levi. Grandparents are Bro. Galen and Sis. Joyce Baumgartner and Bro. Harry T. and Sis. Lois Gerber. Ryan Thomas is bringing joy to the hearts of Bro. Tom and Sis. Lorie Stoller as well as his big brother. Dr. and Mrs. Richard Boggs, Jean Boggs, and Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller are his grandparents. May God bless these families as they strive to raise their children according to His will.

God has directed Bro. Bruce Drayer and Sis. Heather Brudi to spend their lives together. Their parents are Bro. Jerry and Sis. Lois Drayer and Jim and Karen Brudi. Also announcing their engagement was Bro. Dick Clark (Bluffton) and Sis. Lucille Steffen, who plan to be married on July 30. May these dear couples feel God's Holy Spirit leading them as they travel life's pathway together.

One of our flock, Sis. Susan Maynard, has had surgery. Let's remember her in our prayers.

On June 17, Christian Care Retirement Community had a dinner honoring the many volunteers that give of their time to share with others. This is an ongoing facility and it takes a lot of hands to help things run smoothly and God will bless those who give of themselves.

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up."

Deut. 6:6-7

Our VBS was held from June 9-20 and involved about 450 students. God truly has allowed us an opportunity to sow the seeds; may

He grant the increase in due season.

INDIANA, FRANCESVILLE Lily Pelsy

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1

Four young ladies have found their freedom in Christ and brought forth their testimonies. Alyssa, Shawna, Brooke Gutwein (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Wendy) and Cheree Fritz (Bro. Mike and Sis. Monica) are now our sisters in the Lord.

The following loved ones have graduated from high school: Josh Benakovich (Ron and Karen), Ryan Gutwein (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Wendy), Sara Gutwein (Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda), Sis. Sharlin Huber (Bro. Brian and Sis. Jacki) and Bro. Lon Vogt (Bro. Ron and Sis. Dianne).

We wish three new couples the Lord's blessings. Those united in marriage were Chris Dyer (Helen Frederich and Ellis Dyer) to Greta Gutwein (Bro. Fred and Sis. Madeleine); Bro. Bart Rinkenberger (Bro. Jaye and Sis. Peg, Goodfield, IL) to Sis. Janell Anliker (Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karel); Bro. James Washburn (James and Debbie) to Sis. Tanessa Leman (Bro. Doug and Sis. Margaret).

June 6, Mackenzie Rae was born to Bro. Larry and Sis. Darlene Pfledderer. Big sister, Rylie, along with grandparents, Bro. Bob and Sis. Norm Pfledderer and Bro. Jerry D. and Sis. Pauline Gerber (Bluffton North, IN) are thankful.

We have had several loved ones praising God for answered prayers. Thankful to be home from the hospital are: Bro. Danny Overmyer (Sis. Carol), Josh Overmyer (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Tianne), Sis.

Velda Overmyer, Sis. Connie Wuethrich (Bro. Kevin), Sis. Viola Von Tobel (Bro. Virgil), and Bro. Eli Anliker (Sis. Priscilla).

We are rejoicing with Bro. Wendell and Sis. Karel Anliker as their son, Michael, has peace with God and man.

Bro. George and Sis. Elaine Erb have moved to Fort Wayne. We wish them God's nearness.

We were blessed to have the Word come forth with truth and power. We thank Elder Bros. Wes Knapp (Goodfield, IL) and Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO), and Bros. Jim Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN), Jeff Grimm (Goodfield, IL), Neil Widmer (Wolcott, IN), Ken Wuethrich (Indianapolis, IN) and Steve Frauhiger (Bluffton North, IN).

Note of Thanks:

Words fail me to express my most humble thanks and appreciation, first to my beloved family, my church family, neighbors, friends and my secret pals for remembering me in so many ways for my birthday. God bless each of you.

Humbly, Minerva Wuethrich

INDIANA, INDIANAPOLIS Melissa Baumgartner Lynn Dotterer

Greetings of love in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We recently held our annual church outreach on a Saturday. It was a blessing to help others and encourage ourselves to reach out not just once or twice a year, but every day of our lives as we continue in Christ and His love.

We wish to congratulate our recent high school graduates. They are as follows: Heather Schini, Seth and Jaimee Wuethrich, Kari Gibson and Nathan Freed. May God be their guide and joy on life's path.

INDIANA, LACROSSE**Anna Marie Stoller**

Peter Szabo, who has lived with Bro. Tom and Sis. Luann Troxel for the past year, asked Bro. Tom if the church would sing "Blest Be The Tie" as a farewell before he departed for his home, Hungary. As we bid a fond adieu to Peter, so we extend a warm welcome to Bro. Brad Rocke (Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth) from Eureka, IL.

Bro. Elvin Nuest and his daughter-in-law, Kathy (Dan), survived a serious automobile accident. Kathy was unhurt and felt thankful for the peaceful feelings she experienced since she has recently repented. Bro. Elvin, we are sorry to report, suffered a broken leg and subsequent surgery. Bro. Elvin and Sis. Jan also mourn the death of Sis. Jan's brother, Jack Lowery, of Bloomington, IL. Mingled with their sorrow is the joy that Jack sought his salvation before entering eternity. Our church family suffers, mourns, and rejoices with this dear family.

Facing a major illness and long term treatment is Joan Cambern (Jim), daughter of Bro. John and Sis. Lucille Heiniger. Our small congregation is experiencing a rash of illnesses and burdens at the present time—many needing extra love and prayers. Elder Bro. Curt Frank reminded us, "Keep our prayer life active", and how essential it is that we support each of our loved ones.

Sis. Sis and Bro. Harold Heinold are called to step from one major trial to another, the latest being the bereavement of Sis. Sis's brother, Glen Yergler, who Sis affectionately calls "Sam". Our love and support are extended to you, dear ones.

Intertwined with the burdens are the "honest..., just..., pure..., lovely..., good reports..., virtue..., and praise...". (Phil. 4:8). During the time that Bro. Glen and Sis. Sandy Heinold were receiving

some of life's crushing blows, their daughter, Melinda, received the marvelous peace of God in her heart. Joy and thankfulness filled our hearts on the day that Melinda became our sister in the Lord. Her uncles, Elder Bro. Bill Schlatter and Bro. Marshall Heinold, ministered on Sis. Melinda's baptism day.

Vacation Bible School brought Bro. Sid Kaufmann, Elder Bros. Andy Stoller and Dave Wiegand in our presence to speak on the three topics of "Seeking", "Respecting", and "Keeping". Following this week of spiritual nourishment, our annual Sunday School picnic was held.

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door." (Emma Lazarus, 1883). This famous poem, inscribed on the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor, invites any who flee oppressive conditions in foreign countries to enter America and taste the blessings of freedom. Many immigrants gazed upward at this impressive symbol of freedom with tears, daring to hope for a better life, daring to believe they might worship God unhindered. Early life in America was generally difficult, but it was free!

God holds the freedom light of salvation for all to behold. He grants freedom from the oppression of sin, and He invites all to enter His fold thus partaking of peace and safety from eternal destruction. Scott Levy (Bro. Roger and Sis. Sue) and Neil Stoller (Bro. Steve and Sis. Anna Marie) have followed that light and found peace with God. They have been announced for baptism in the near future.

As the poem by Emma Lazarus might allude to: God wants us to bring Him our wretched lives and

breathe the freedom from sin He offers abundantly.

INDIANA, LEO**Ethelyn Schlatter**

July brings to our minds Independence. We celebrate our freedom from a foreign nation on the 4th. Do we celebrate our independence? Or is it just a day of fun? As time has progressed, America is much like Israel of old. In Ezra 9:10-11, Ezra's prayer sounds like today. What is freedom? Isn't it to depend or trust on someone bigger than ourselves? Children depend on their parents to supply their needs. Spouses depend on each other for the things they forget, etc. Who better can we trust than the One who delivered us from the bondage of our sin? "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6).

A quote from George MacDonald, "This is a sane, wholesome, practical working faith: first, that it is a man's business to do the will of God; second, that God takes on Himself the special care of that man; and, third, that therefore that man ought never be afraid of anything."

May our trust in our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and our Father God bring peace and confidence to us all in these trying times.

Bro. Ernie Stoller had outpatient surgery, Bro. Bill Klopfenstein was hospitalized for several days, and Sis. Lucile Frank was hospitalized overnight following a fall. The Lord was gracious and all are doing well. He cares for His own.

We were blessed this month with many visitors, including Bros. Glenn Riggensbach (Smithville, OH), Randy Gasser (Detroit, MI), Greg Stieglitz (Indianapolis, IN) and Elder Bro. Phil-

lip Stettner (Bluffton North, IN) who delivered God's Word to us. We thank them for their efforts. Elder Bro. Phil also reported on his travels to Eastern Europe.

Bible School for the children started June 16. It is held in the evening so many parent teams can participate in the training.

INDIANA, MILFORD

Linda Beer - Renee Beer

Haste and seek your soul salvation! We rejoice with Kari Beer (Bro. Fred and Sis. Pat) as she has decided to turn her back on Satan and to live for Jesus. Our prayers are with Kari as she makes this change in her life.

We think of our loved ones who have experienced surgery or hospital stays this month. Bro. Walt Steffen (Sis. Dorothy) had minor surgery. Sis. Betty Beer (Bro. Maurice) suffered a broken arm. Bro. Theo Beer fell and had several broken ribs. We are grateful that everyone is now either worshipping with us or recuperating at home.

We were so thankful that Bro. Lenard Meyer (Sis. Charlotte, Chicago, IL) and Bro. Carroll Gerber (Sis. Louise, Bluffton North, IN) spent a weekend with us and ministered God's Holy Word to us.

The week of June 9th was a special blessing to us as we enjoyed thinking about being "Heaven Bound" at our Vacation Bible School. Many thanks to all who helped make this week possible. We appreciated the following ministers laboring on our behalf: Bro. Howard Plattner (Alto, MI) warned us about "Satan - The Roadblock"; Bro. Dan Stoller (Remington, IN) encouraged us to remember the "Holy Spirit - Faithful Guide"; Bro. Bob Meyer (Bluffton North, IN) reminded us about "Staying On Course - Help From Our Faith and Prayer"; and Bro. Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN) finished the week by speaking on "Nearing Our Goal - Current Events and Christ's Return". We also enjoyed listening to the singing groups that came each night and the many visitors that joined us for the week. The chorus of our theme song reminded us all to continue looking towards Heaven.

I'm bound for that beautiful city,
My Lord has prepared for His own;
Where all the redeemed of all ages,
Sing "Glory!" around the white throne;
Sometimes I grow homesick for heaven,
And the glories I there shall behold:
What a joy that will be when my Savior I see,
In that beautiful city of gold!

INDIANA, REMINGTON

Patti Bahler

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
1 Peter 2:9

The Declaration of Independence speaks of our being "created equal" and says we have certain "rights". The Constitution of the United States guarantees that the government will protect those rights for all citizens. Those two documents reveal that our freedom depends largely on a strong national constitution.

The Bible is a much more far-reaching "bill of rights" than these documents. It originated with God, who backs it with His justice, His concern for all people, and His sovereign power. And it is the only charter that guarantees freedom from sin's penalty and power. It is only in His light that we find true freedom.

We wish our graduates the Lord's blessings and hand of love

and protection as they continue their journey. Our college graduate this month is Chad Getz (Ron and Sis. Jeanne). High school graduates are Andy Getz (Bro. Eldon and Sis. Charlene), Stephanie Gish (Joe and Sis. Cheri Frantz) and Erica Clauss (Bro. Rex and Sis. Tammy).

On May 24, Matt Getz (Bro. Eldon and Sis. Charlene) was united in marriage to Heidi Vaughan (Joe and Betty). We extend our best wishes and God's blessings to them as they establish their home here in Remington.

Bro. Don Braker (Kansas City, MO) was here for the wedding and also shared the Word of Life with us on Sunday. We thank him for his labors. Bro. Gary Bucher (Valparaiso, IN) also ministered to us this month at our Topical Bible Study. He shared some thoughts and many scripture references on "The God of Hope". We thank him for his efforts on our behalf also.

John and Rochelle Ward were blessed with a baby girl, Madison Shea, on June 11. Grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Brenda Clark and John and Rosa Ward (Wolcott, IN). May the Lord be near John and Rochelle as they enter parenthood and begin to train Madison of God's love.

INDIANA, SOUTH BEND

Marci Nuenschwander

Sue Beebe

Heavenward, e'er heavenward
Let us wend our way!
What the righteous seek is there
Found without delay.
Heavenward His hand doth guide
Through the desert waste;
Draws thee closer to His side,
Makes thy spirit chaste.
He will destroy every earthly vanity,
And will lead thee finally into His joy!

Zion's Harp #91

It was a blessing to join with the

Milford congregation for Vacation Bible School June 9-13. The theme chosen for the week was "Heaven-bound", and our thoughts were focused through songs, prayers, scripture readings, and many good teachings brought forth by the visiting ministers toward our lofty goal of Heaven.

We thank the brethren who traveled to minister unto us: Bros. Howard Plattner (Alto, MI), Dan Stoller (Remington, IN), Bob Meyer (Bluffton North, IN) and Ron Bollier (Indianapolis, IN), and also the Milford congregation for so lovingly welcoming us.

Our prayers for God's blessings and guidance are offered for Bradley Langhofer (Bro. Marty and Sis. Lavilla), as he has graduated from high school and is now in summer school at Purdue University.

We thank Bros. Al Langhofer (Wichita, KS) and Ken Hoerr (Peoria, IL) and their wives for their visits and ministry this past month. We appreciate so much your taking time to fellowship with us.

We are happy to report that two precious little daughters have arrived to brighten the homes of our loved ones.

Bailie Irene was born June 18 to Bro. Don and Sis. Jill Lehman. Cathy Meyer and Jack Meyer, and Bro. Wayne and Sis. Shirley Lehman are Bailie's grandparents.

Rachel Meredith was born June 22 to Michael and Susan Beebe. Ron and Noreen Ingle and Bro. Robert and Sis. Sue Beebe are Rachel's grandparents.

May God grant each family much wisdom and grace as they seek to train their children in the way of righteousness.

INDIANA, VALPARAISO

Ken Susdorf - Cheryl Bucher
Greetings loved ones. The Lord

has once again tarried that we might all be ready for that great and glorious day!

We thank Elder Bros. Dale Eisenmann (Chicago, IL) and Nate Steffen (Elgin, IL) for coming and expounding on the Brotherhood Conference of 1996. Thank you both and may God continue to bless your works.

Also visiting us this month was Bro. Tom Troxel (LaCrosse, IN). Thank you, Bro. Tom, for letting the Spirit have free course once again as you shared God's Word with us.

This month was our first invite-a-friend weekend. Our thanks to all who came and thanks to all who made the effort for a blessed weekend.

Graduating this year from high school were Scott Ames (Bro. Tim and Joyce), Bro. Andy Bucher (Bro. Tim and Sis. Julie) and Drew Moser (Bro. Andy and Sis. Diane). May the Lord bless you all as you continue on life's journey.

Also graduating from Vincennes University was Becky Susdorf (Bro. Ken and Sis. Cindy). Becky was then married two weeks later to Chad Morris. They are residing in Lawton, OK where Chad is currently serving in the US Army. We pray the Lord will be with them as they now walk as one.

Just a reminder, our Vacation Bible School is July 15-17. Please come and enjoy this blessed event with us.

INDIANA, WOLCOTT

Beckie Lehman - Jody Bahler

Once again, summer is upon us with the usual rush of summer activities. June was off to a good start with our week of Vacation Bible School. We were blessed to have a visiting minister each evening. Our thanks are extended to Bros. Chris Wuethrich (Francesville, IN), Kevin Knapp (Bloomington, IL), Allen Stoller

(Bluffton, IN), Nile Bucher (Bluffton North, IN) and Ed Alt (Cissna Park, IL). We appreciate their willingness to serve us during our special week. It was a joy to see the smiles on the children's faces as they sang to us the last evening. It is our prayer that the seeds planted in their hearts that week will bear fruit for years to come.

Other ministers that shared with us throughout the month were Bro. Gary Bucher (Valparaiso, IN) who spoke to us about "hope" for our evening Bible topic, and Bro. Wayne Leman (Roanoke, IL). Their efforts were a blessing and greatly appreciated.

Our heartfelt prayers reach out to Sis. Cindy Schieler (Bro. Darl) for the passing of her father, Bro. Bill Rager (Latty, OH). Although it is so hard to say farewell to a loved one, we trust that God can comfort and care for those left behind.

We rejoice with Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler in the birth of their granddaughter, Clara Grace. She was warmly welcomed by parents, Anthony and Patsy Blades, and her brothers and sisters.

IOWA, BURLINGTON

Edith Massner

Monica Eisenmann

We are thankful that two young souls have found it necessary to turn their lives to the Lord. Our hope is that many more will yet turn their backs to the world and their hearts to God.

We had three high school graduates this year. Best wishes to Will Buster (Bro. John and Sis. Ingrid), Kandi Heiniger (Doug and Tari) and Julie Schulz (Bro. Gary and Sis. Karen). As they make decisions that affect their future, we pray that they make the most important decision first.

Scott Massner (Bro. Dale and Sis. Evelyn) and Sammi Murray (Gene and Teresa, Wapello) were

united in marriage on June 7. We wish them much happiness as they walk life's pathway. May they look to God for guidance in their new life together.

Bro. Jody Eberhardt recently underwent surgery. We are thankful that he was able to assemble with us again on Sunday. We pray that his improvement in health will continue.

We recently enjoyed our annual Sunday School picnic. Also, many children took part in a week of Vacation Bible School at the Fellowship Center. We extend a special thank you to all involved in helping.

We are saddened by the death of our Bro. Harvey Heiniger who was called Home on June 14. Funeral services were held Wednesday, June 18, with our Elder Bro. Ed Lanz officiating, assisted by Elder Bro. Roy Grimm (Taylor, MO). Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN), Bros. Gary Anliker (Elgin, IL), and Jim Vierling (Eureka, IL) were also present. Bro. Harvey served the Lord faithfully for about 57 years with approximately 37 of those years ministering to the Oakville and Burlington congregations, retiring in 1993. He will be greatly missed in our small Burlington church, where he attended since 1978. We extend our sincere sympathy to his dear wife, Sis. Leola; sons, Larry (Vallejo, CA), Mike, Doug and Tim (Oakville); daughter, Sandra Heckenberg (Tampa, FL); brother, Clem (Oakville); and sisters, Mayme Gerst, Ione Stoller and Pearl Vierling (Mediapolis).

IOWA, ELGIN Gloria Frieden

As I think ahead to the month of July, Independence Day comes quickly to mind, and along with that the word "Freedom". I consulted Webster and found this definition of freedom: "State of be-

ing free. State of not suffering from some pain, burden or worry. Having liberty; not being a slave; not restrained or controlled by others." Obedience to the law is liberty. A lawless person is never free. He is a victim of his bad habits. In the Gospel of John we find these words of our Lord. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32). Jesus also said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6).

God blessed us with two visiting ministers this past month: Bros. Bob Stoller (Lamar, MO) and Jim Knobloch (Winthrop, MN). We are thankful that they were led to come with their families to this "Little Switzerland of Iowa" and share God's Word unto us. May God richly bless them.

IOWA, GARDEN GROVE Delores Reinhard

Christian love and greetings to all.

July is the month in which we celebrate Independence Day. May we remember to thank God for the many years of freedom and blessings we have enjoyed in our nation. Let us be especially thankful that the Lord has allowed us to worship Him freely in a world where many have not the privileges as we have. Let us continue to pray for our government.

Once again, we have been richly fed and want to thank our visiting ministers for coming and sharing with us. They are: Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN), and Bros. Floyd Frieden (Elgin, IA) and Jon Schmidgall (Oakville, IA). May God bless and reward them for their unselfish service to our great God and to the brotherhood.

We also want to express our heartfelt thank you to all those who came from near and very far

away for our special weekend called "Invite a Weekend". It was indeed a great blessing for all of us.

July is also vacation month for many families that gather together from near and far to spend time with each other. We pray for God's traveling mercies to be with each one and that God will be in the middle of each family circle.

It is God's good will and pleasure to conclude this work of love,
For in Thee is found the fullness
of all wisdom from above;
That not one be lost nor perish
who began this heavenly race,
But be led from earthly tumult
to that joyful resting place.

Zion's Harp #35

IOWA, IOWA CITY Connie Gerst

The past month has been full of blessings for our Iowa City congregation. Visiting ministers were Bros. Fred Eberhardt (Burlington, IA), Andy Moser (Valparaiso, IN), Gary Endress (Bradford, IL), Trent Meiss (Eureka, IL), Dale Frank (Oakville, IA), Duane Kilgus (Fairbury, IL) and Pat Zaugg (West Bend, IA). We are truly grateful for these brothers' willingness to serve in our congregation.

June 8 was the wedding of Bro. Ben Weyrick and Sis. Wendy Eland. Parents of the couple are Fred Sr. and Joyce Weyrick of Wapello, IA and Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce Eland of our congregation. It was a blessed day for all of us as we worshipped God together with our many visitors and then witnessed the wedding vows of Bro. Ben and Sis. Wendy.

We want to offer our prayerful support to our newly elected Sunday School teachers. May Bro. Christopher Eland, Bro. Eric Spangler and Sis. Wendy Weyrick feel God's guidance as they teach our precious youth. We would like to extend a special thank you to

Bro. Neil Knobloch, Sis. Carrie Wiegand and Sis. Janette Schulz for all their efforts this past year.

IOWA, LESTER

Cindy Leuthold - Sue Warner

Oh, Lord, who art above,
Thou author of this love! Thou lamb
of God!

With Thy most precious blood,
That pure and cleansing flood,
Hast Thou my freedom bought;
Upon the cross.

Zion's Harp #202

It is the time of year when we celebrate Independence Day. We are so thankful for the freedom we enjoy in our country, yet those of us who have had our sins forgiven enjoy an even greater freedom than the world will ever know. Let us never cease to be thankful for this most precious gift.

We rejoice that Laura Metzger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Beth) has heeded the call and has begun her repentance. We pray that God will be near her.

We also rejoiced to hear that Jeff Leuthold (Bro. Charles and Sis. Vicki) now has freedom from sin and has peace in his heart.

We have enjoyed company from across the land, and are thankful for the visiting ministers who have served us. These include: Elder Bros. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN) and Art Nohl (Morris, MN), and Bros. Vernon Wettstein (Congerville, IL), John Steiner (Oakville, IA), Virgil Metzger (Chicago, IL) and Roy Koehl (Morris, MN). May God bless them and their families.

Our high school Sunday School students traveled to Tremont, IL for a weekend of fellowship. We thank the teachers and parents who made this weekend possible.

Mitch Knobloch (Bro. Glen and Sis. Joyce Metzger) and Amy Vander Sanden have announced their engagement. Amy is the daughter

of Connie and the late Jerry Vander Sanden. We congratulate them and wish them God's nearness as they plan for their wedding on September 6.

May 24 was the wedding day of Nelson Kuenzi (Bro. James and Sis. Barb, Silverton, OR) and Lisa Metzger (Bro. William and Sis. Charlotte). We pray God's blessings on them as they make their home in the Silverton, OR area. We hope they visit us often.

On May 30, Bro. Eli and Sis. Alice Metzger were thrilled to hear news of a new little granddaughter. Gretchen Marie was born to Joe and Kristi Metzger in Grays Lake, IL.

June 2 was the arrival date of Heather Lynne Moser. Heather is welcomed home by Bro. Brad and Sis. Gloria Moser, Tyler and LaChelle. Grandparents are Bro. Frank and Sis. Verna Moser and Bro. Ezra and Sis. Marie Knobloch. We pray that God will grant these parents His guidance and wisdom.

June 5 was our annual Sunday School picnic. This is an evening that our children always enjoy, and we appreciate the efforts of our teachers for planning the event and for serving us.

"Remember now Thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;"

Eccles. 12:1

June 7 and 8 was our annual Youth Fellowship weekend. Our high school students enjoyed being with the youth from Elgin, Iowa City and West Bend, IA and Minneapolis, Morris and Winthrop, MN Sunday Schools. We appreciate the loving counsel given by Elder Bros. Art Nohl and Leroy Messner, our own Elder Bros. Leo Moser and Dennis Warner, and Bro. Virgil Metzger. We pray that

the fellowship and the teachings will be of lasting value to our precious young people.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the many souls who suffer pain or bodily affliction. Hospital patients include Bro. Orvie Knobloch (Sis. Lauretta), Lou Moser (Tina), Tarah Meyer (Bro. Dean and Sis. Linda), Cari Moser (Bro. Rick and Sis. Lori), and Bro. Larry Peterson (Sis. Emily). Surgical patients were Jeff Metzger (Keith and Mary), Ryan Heyer (Jodi) and Sis. Charlotte Metzger (Bro. William). We are thankful for God's healing hand where it is His will.

We are glad to have Clint and April Metzger back in our area from Ohio, and congratulate April, who graduated this spring with a Master's degree.

Bro. Leo and Sis. Leona Moser were married 50 years on June 8. A reception was held for this occasion. We pray that God will grant them many more blessed years together.

Note of Thanks:

We wish to sincerely thank each one that remembered us with such beautiful prayerful expressions for God's continued presence in our lives. We, by the grace of God, have enjoyed 50 years of married life together—we thank our Heavenly Father for this milestone.

Leo and Leona Moser

IOWA, OAKVILLE

Melody Steiner

Debra Wagenbach

We congratulate and wish God's richest blessings to our graduates this year. Graduating from high school are Chaylee Hudson (Gail Hudson), Trent Kuntz (Bro. Bob and Sis. Edra), Brad Schmidgall (Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane), and Doug Wagenbach (Bro. Craig and Sis. Michelle). College graduates are Bro. Jeff Schmidgall (Bro. Don and

Sis. Carol) and Matt Wagenbach (Bro. Jerry, Sr. and Sis. Bonnie) from Iowa State University in Ames. Bro. Ted Wiegand (Sis. Carrie) graduated from the University of Iowa in Iowa City. May each of our graduates allow the Lord to lead them and direct them in the very important decisions they will now need to make in their lives. We are certainly thankful and happy to report that Brad and Trent have both felt the need to seek their soul's salvation and have begun their repentance. Also, our prayers go with Bro. Ted and Sis. Carrie as they make their home in Ankeny, IA and Bro. Ted will begin employment with the State Auditor's Office in Des Moines.

Bro. Ben Weyrick (Fred and Joyce) and Sis. Wendy Eland (Bro. Brad and Sis. Joyce) were united in Holy Matrimony on June 8 at our Iowa City church. We wish them the Lord's richest blessings as they establish their home in the Iowa City area where Bro. Ben will finish his education at the University of Iowa.

Bro. Brian and Sis. Stacia Tapp welcome little Meika Daelyn into their hearts and home. Meika joins her big sister, Mikayla, to complete their family circle. Thankful for another healthy grandchild are Bro. Ervin and Sis. Teresa Marti and Dave and Phyllis Tapp (Winchester, IN).

We are also thankful for our visiting ministers. Bros. Gary Bucher (Valparaiso, IN) and Arnie Gerst (Taylor, MO) were in our area to attend graduation during the Memorial Day weekend holiday. Bro. Mark Kiefer (Denver, CO) was home for Father's Day weekend. May God reward them for lending themselves in His service.

IOWA, PULASKI
Lisa Knecht

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

II Chronicles 7:14

Keep Our Nation In Thy Care
We are faced with many problems
that grow bigger day by day,
And as we seek to solve them
in our self-sufficient way,
We keep drifting into chaos,
and our avarice and greed
Blind us to the answer
that would help us meet our need.
Oh God, renew our spirits
and make us more aware
That our future is dependent
on sacrifice and prayer.
Forgive us our transgressions
and revive our faith anew,
So we may all draw closer
to each other and to You.
For when a nation is too proud
to kneel and daily pray,
It will crumble into chaos
and descend into decay.
So stir us with compassion
and raise our standards higher,
And take away our lust for power
and make our one desire
To be a shining symbol
of all that's great and good
As You lead us in our struggle
toward new-found brotherhood.
—Helen Steiner Rice

We are thankful our Bro. Russell Wuthrich is recovering well after his surgical hospitalization.

IOWA, WEST BEND
Lela Banwart - Eunice Fehr

Our congregation was blessed with several visiting ministers this past month. On May 25, Bros. Ken Wuethrich (Indianapolis, IN), Dean Messner (Winthrop, MN) and Floyd Schmidgall (Morris, MN) expounded the Word to us. This being graduation day, they had a special message for our high school graduates, emphasizing

what really is most important in life; that is putting God first. Retired Elder Bro. Paul Butikofer (Elgin, IA) ministered to us on June 1. May God bless each one, along with their wives, for their efforts in traveling to be with us.

Our hospital patients have been Bro. Cameron Knobloch (Sis. Tammy), Bro. Fred Wirtz (Sis. Hulda), Sis. Tammy Knobloch (Bro. Cameron) and Sis. Louise (Pearl) Anliker. Our prayers have been answered in their behalf and are so thankful that God has restored their health. Sis. Louise is still hospitalized following knee surgery, but we pray that God will continue to be by her side and that she can soon be home.

On June 3, we met to have our annual Sunday School election. We want to say a special thank you to our teachers who have filled their six-year terms for all their time, love, and concerns they have shown to our children. The duties have fallen on Bro. Darren Fehr for 6th grade and Bro. Kent Banwart for the 7th grade. May they feel God's direction as they try and teach our youth so that someday they will realize and feel the need to surrender their lives to the Lord.

Our Sunday School Bible Class and teachers were privileged to travel to Lester, IA for the annual Youth Fellowship of area churches. We want to express our thanks to the Lester congregation for all their efforts put forth on such a weekend. Many of the children look forward to this annual gathering, the renewing of old friendships, and to make new ones. It is our prayer that they always will have the desire to come, taste, and see the love of God and we can all be of the gathering someday in Heaven with all our family and friends.

JAPAN, TOKYO

Marie Inoue

As I write this article, pelting rains and strong winds from typhoon #7 are in full force over Tokyo. We are thankful for safe homes, warnings issued, and most of all a true and living God who answers our prayers in time of need.

Depending on prayer in time of need this month was our Sis. Shizuko Urushino as she faced surgery. A few hours before the procedure began, she phoned and asked for our prayers that the Lord would provide. Thankfully, the doctors feel all went well and she can return home to her husband and three grown children. Hopefully, she can resume her part-time job at the Refugee Center near her home where she assists in helping Southeast Asian refugees adjust to life in Japan.

Our assembly was thankful for the ministry and visit of Bro. Willis and Sis. Lois Ehnle of Shioda church. May the Lord continue to bless this couple for their many labors in His vineyard. Our family missed this visit as we traveled to the Shioda church and likewise enjoyed the brethren there on that Sunday.

We bid farewell to Bro. Andy, Sis. Chris, Drew and Ben Aberle as vacation time takes them "home" for a two month visit with family, friends, and time to enjoy different areas of the United States. We will miss their warm and friendly greeting every Sunday morning and their special contribution to our fellowship. May the Lord grant them and other loved ones of our congregation safe and blessed travels in the summer months.

KANSAS, BERN
Lori Baumgartner
Holly Meyer

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord..."

Psalm 127:3

We have a new set of first-time parents in Bern as Bro. Chris and Sis. Jill Hartter welcomed Ethan Neil on June 7. Our prayers are with them as they raise and nurture Ethan in a godly way. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Neil and Sis. Evelyn Hartter and Bro. Don and Sis. Marie Wagenbach (Washington, IL).

Also on June 7, Rebecca Strahm became the June bride of Matthew Ahlquist in Manhattan, KS. We hold them up in prayer as they adjust to marriage and make their first home in Columbus, OH. Parents of the couple are Bro. Wilfred and Sis. Verona Strahm and Melvin and Sheryl Ahlquist, all of Bern.

Celebrating 25 years of marriage were Bro. Matthias and Dorothy Strahm. A reception was held on Sunday, June 15, and we appreciated their family and friends who were here with us for this special weekend. We have sure enjoyed Matt and Dorothy's presence the few years they have been attending Bern and look forward to many more to come.

Visiting ministers of the gospel have been Bros. Dale Wulf (Lester, IA) and Doug Grimm and Roger Aberle (Sabetha, KS). A special thanks goes to them and their families.

On Memorial Day Weekend, our church hosted an "Invite-a-Guest" weekend. A singing was enjoyed Saturday evening and a church potluck was held on Sunday. The added fellowship was a blessing to all and a special thank-you goes to the couples who planned the weekend and made it all possible.

We welcome Bro. Todd and Sis. Cynthia Fehr and their son, Logan, to our Bern congregation as they have moved from Fairbury, IL. They will be making their home in Sabetha and we look forward to serving the Lord together.

On the other hand, we say farewell to Bro. Jason Strahm and Sis. Kristen Lehman. Jason will begin his career in agriculture in the Northeast part of Missouri and will be worshipping with the Taylor, MO brethren. Kristen will be moving to Phoenix, AZ where she has found employment and will become part of their church family.

Our Bible class and sponsors recently met the Wolcott, IN Bible class and their sponsors (for a combined team of 45 people) in Kingston, Jamaica for one week at the Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf (CCCD). It was a week full of blessings for everyone involved as we labored, worshipped, and fellowshiped together to the glory of the Lord. It was such a privilege to serve the Jamaican people and share our lives with them for a week. How wonderful it was to see the compassion in our young people as they reached out to the deaf children by holding them, playing with them, trying to communicate with them, and working together to improve and enlarge their campus. This will allow many more deaf children to get a Christian education in a loving, nurturing, and safe environment. A brother commented that when he first met the deaf children, he felt so sorry for them, since they live away from

e away from their families. But after hearing what sad conditions they came from, he realized how blessed they are to be loved and cared for at CCCD, and most importantly to be taught about salvation through Jesus Christ. We all came away with a renewed appreciation for what we have—Faith, family, health, etc., and may we strive to always keep that contentment in our hearts.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain."

I Timothy 6:6

We thank everyone for their prayers and support and praise God for His protection throughout the week and for safe air travel to and from Jamaica. Many friendships were made with the Wolcott group and we look forward to renewing them in years to come.

KANSAS, FORT SCOTT **Tammy Sinn**

Our hearts were saddened at the death of Betty Hartman. Our sympathy goes to her sisters, Sis. Marie Zaugg and Sis. Ruth Reiman (Burlington, IA). May they feel the comfort of the Holy Spirit in their times of loneliness.

The week of June 9-13, we held our Vacation Bible School. The following Sunday, the students shared the lessons they had learned through a program at the annual picnic. We thank all those who took time to attend or teach. May God add His increase to the work that has been begun in these young and tender hearts.

KANSAS, KIOWA **Janice Bahr - Darcy Kisling**

Seeds of goodness we are sowing
In the hearts of man today.
Bless it, Lord, that it may prosper,
And bear fruit for harvest day.

Now the field is ripe for harvest;
Let us then all garner in;
For if we should stand here idle,
Who would bring the sheaves of grain?

Chorus: Hasten gladly to the labor.
Consecrate to God your heart.
Say this day unto your Saviour,
"Lord, I'll gladly do my part."

Hymns of Zion #46

It's harvest time in our area, and those golden fields of grain bring to mind all the lessons Jesus taught us through parables about the comparison of the harvest and the world. As we look around us, it

seems like morality in our wonderful country is growing so much worse, and people are becoming slack at judging things by God's Word rather than by T.V., movies, media, etc. People are running to rather than away from the things that lead them away from their first love—God. The tares (the world) and the wheat (the children of God) grow together, and we fervently pray that we can be so strongly rooted in Christ that the world cannot choke out our Christian witness, so that when God garners the wheat into His Kingdom, we are not part of the chaff that is gathered to be burned. Be careful, loved ones! Watch and pray that we enter not into temptation, and chance losing that precious promise of a home forever with our Lord.

Our Sunday School held an all-day Bible School on Saturday, May 31, at the park here in Kiowa. God blessed us with beautiful weather and a wonderful day of fellowship.

Robert Willson (son of Bro. Gary and Sis. Janet Willson and grandson of Gerald and Sis. Helen Murrow) was united in marriage to Opal Ray on the shores of Lake Michigan on May 24. Robert and Opal are both in the service at the Naval Base there.

John Schupbach (son of Bro. Kent and Sis. Darcy Kisling, and grandson of Bro. Frank and Annabelle Kisling) was united in marriage to Shawna Robison (Kiowa) on May 28. John and Shawna will make their home in Kiowa. It is our fervent prayer that Robert and Opal and John and Shawna will make God the center of their homes, and that God will bless them with His love and direction in all their years together.

Sis. Edna Reed and Bro. Phil Hamilton were hospital patients this past month, but we are truly thankful they are both again able to be in our midst.

KANSAS, LAMONT-GRIDLEY **Julie Bahr**

Summer vacation is here and another opportunity granted unto us as parents to seize the endless challenges we face in teaching God's principles for successful family living. Our days can be filled with delight and enthusiasm, when we think of the endless ways that we can communicate to our children God's ways and the special assignment that He has for each of them. "It is not what we think that influences our children, it is what we communicate," I was reminded of again. May God abide in our homes and in each of our hearts, drawing us closer to Himself and each other.

We have many thankful parents whose gift to their children has been spiritual training, as well as academic training. We offer our congratulations to several from our congregation who have completed different levels of learning: Esther Knobloch (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jeri) from 8th grade; our seniors were Crystal Burdick (Rick and Mary Anliker), Heath Cochran (Jim and Cathy Kraft) and Justin Isch (Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane); and Brandon Emch (Bro. Bill and Sis. Susan) from Kansas State University. We ask for God's protection and direction for each of these young people.

Ministering Bros. Tim Zimmerman (Sis. Barbara) and Lloyd Kraft (Sis. Nadine) both required medical assistance in the recent past. Bro. Tim received some minor surgery and Bro. Lloyd was unable to assemble with us for a time due to a severe back problem. Being content with our trials in life can be a challenge for any of us. Lord, help us to feel that we can bear that which comes to our humanness.

How blessed we were to have Bro. Glen Funk (Sis. Sally, Wichita, KS) to minister to us this

past month. Bro. Glen and his family were here to witness the wedding vows of Dora Edelman (Sis. Jeanie and Bro. Albert) and Tony Hines (Ron and Judy) on May 17. Our loving congratulations are extended to Tony and Dora and we ask God's blessings upon their union.

Only God can bring about a spiritual rebirth. We rejoice with our young convert, Ester Knobloch (Bro. Tom and Sis. Jeri), who has expressed to us that she has peace in her heart and has a longing for baptism. We look forward to hearing her testimony of serving her Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Our congregation is saddened to report that Bro. Duane and Sis. Jill Gudeman have taken employment in Peoria, IL and have moved away from us. May God continue to direct and lead them in this new employment opportunity.

Our prayers are especially for little Amanda Reed, who recently acquired heart surgery. Amanda is the daughter of Tim and Cheri (Frieden) Adams. Bro. Jeff and Sis. Debbie Frieden are the concerned grandparents. We ask for God's presence and healing touch upon her and her family.

The most precious blessings we can receive from the Lord are the ones called "a heritage from the Lord." (Psalm 127:3). Twin daughters were born into the home of Sis. Jody and Bro. Mike Bahler (Wolcott, IN). Larissa Marie and Leandra Jane are welcomed home by a big sister, Amber. Delighted and thankful grandparents are Bro. Ron and Sis. Jane Isch and Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler (Wolcott, IN).

KANSAS, SABETHA **Mary Kay Wenger**

"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Luke 12:31

Our Elder Bro. Eugene Marti (Kansas City, MO) had special words for the graduates in reading from St. Luke. As he stated, it was the time of the year we think about new beginnings when we see the results of the seed being planted. Likewise, the graduates are making decisions on where to continue their education or seeking a job.

Sis. Helen Strahm, Bro. Calvin Weiss (Sis. Dena), Sis. Ruby Grimm (Bro. Gerald) and Bro. John Plattner were hospitalized. We pray for God to be with them in their various physical afflictions.

Bro. James and Sis. Sandy Hartter are the happy parents of a second son, Elijah James Hartter, born May 19. He will be a good playmate for his brother, Jesse. Grandparents are Bro. Virgil and Sis. Marie Hartter and Bro. Lowell and Sis. Karla Bahler (Wolcott, IN).

Sis. Evelyn Wysong enjoyed her 90th birthday with most of her family able to be with her for this special occasion.

We rejoice with Marc Wenger (Sis. Julie) and Kristin Hartter (Bro. Roger and Sis. Ilene) who were announced at peace. They await to present their testimonies which are tentatively scheduled for August 23.

Our annual Sunday School picnic was held. There was lots of good food and fellowship for all who attended.

Sis. Marie Banwart is now residing at the Apostolic Christian Home after spending many years in an apartment. We pray for God to continue to provide for her.

Note of Thanks:

A big thank you to everyone for their best wishes, prayers, kindness, cards and loving thoughts extended to me for my 90th birthday.

Sis. Evelyn Wysong

KANSAS, WICHITA **Emma Miller**

As always, with the coming of summer, we can expect changes in our routines. Two welcome changes are to have two students return to Wichita to complete their education. Bro. Derek Funk is transferring to Wichita State University and Sis. Jodi Reimschisel is doing her clinicals at Via Christie Regional Medical Center.

Another change is in the format of Wednesday evening services. We will have song services in some of the local rest homes. Also, we were scheduled to hold services at the Union Rescue Mission the second Wednesday in June. May others see our joy in praising the Lord.

With summer, many of us are busy in the outdoors with maintenance work and or recreational activities. As I was standing in line last Sunday, I heard a conversation in which several sisters were telling of some near tragedies the past week. They gave God the credit for sparing them and their loved ones in their work related activities. As we need to be watchful for physical danger, so we need to be watchful for Satan's snares.

Nathan Carnahan, son of Bro. Jerry and Sis. Pauline, has succumbed to an as yet undiagnosed illness while serving in the army overseas. He was airlifted to a hospital in Hawaii where he is under observation. We lift him up in prayer for his recovery.

We also remember Bro. Roger and Bertie Reimschisel as they prepare for Bertie's knee surgery on July 9. Bertie has bravely borne her affliction from polio for these many years and it is our prayer that God will continue blessing her.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON **Doug and Rebecca Germann**

Our heartfelt thanks to our many visitors these past weeks. Visiting ministers included Bro. Glenn Riggensbach and wife, Sis. Lou, plus several other couples from the Smithville, OH area. We enjoyed a potluck dinner with these brethren and a blessed weekend of fellowship. From Leo, IN came Bro. Lynn Stieglitz and wife, Sis. Leonda, who spent time with us. A special thank you to these couples and the many others who have traveled to be with us here in Lexington.

Proverbs 2:10-11 says so very much for our young people as they graduate from different levels of schooling. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart and knowledge is pleasant to thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee and understanding shall keep thee."

We wish our graduates this special blessing. Alex Neukomm graduated from high school and is the son of Bro. Jan and Sis. Glenda Neukomm. In addition, our eighth grade graduate is Kyle Germann, the son of Bro. Doug and Sis. Rebecca Germann. We wish these young men God's richest blessings as they enter new phases of their lives.

We also wish Bro. Philip Stoller God's blessings as he has recently graduated from a special school for watch repair in Cincinnati. Bro. Philip fellowshiped with us on several occasions and we wish him our best as he takes employment in the Eureka area.

Our family has always had a special chapter to read at the supper table and that was from I Samuel, chapter 3 where Samuel was called by God and asked Eli for direction in this matter. Many times we would read this beautiful account and repeat how Eli instructed Samuel to answer, "Speak for thy servant heareth." We here in the Lexington congregation are thankful that one of our young people has done just that. We wish

our friend, Philip Germann, much grace and wisdom as he begins this upward climb and seeks God in repentance. He is the son of Bro. Doug and Sis. Rebecca Germann. We wish many more the grace to humble themselves and seek their soul's salvation.

The Magnet

Thy Word, O Lord, draws us
together
In mutual fellowship to stand
It kindles in our hearts forever
The flames of faith and love's sweet
band.
The word of grace, which brought
salvation
And fellowship with Thy great
throne,
Who praise the Lamb with harp and
song,
Extends to all its invitation.
Zion's Harp #63

MICHIGAN, BAY CITY

Marlene Mosher

Rhonda Knochel

We wish the healing hand of our Lord to those who were ill and hospitalized: Sis. Mabelle Wackerle, Sis. Lorraine Wackerle (Bro. Sam) and Sis. Doris Knochel. Bro. Earl Ramseyer (Sis. Mary) had cataract surgery.

We would like to extend our love and our Lord's blessings to Clyde and Mildred Wackerle who have been given the years to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary together.

We had four graduating from high school this year. Young men and women who now will be more or less making decisions for themselves in new phases of life, whether it be a vocation or on to schools of higher learning. We wish these young people the foresight to look upon their Lord and parents and grandparents for guidance in whatever is ahead of them. If they look upon their Lord and follow His voice, they will come through okay. God does all

things right and well. He is never wrong.

They are: Josh Steffen (Bro. Derrell and Sis. Sue), Janelle Ramseyer (Bro. Neil and Sis. Sharon), Beverly Wieland (Bro. Rod and Sis. Evelyn), Nicole Mosher (Bro. Neil and Sis. Ginger). God's blessings to all.

We are having Vacation Bible School June 16-20. Grades pre-school through 8th are having classes from 10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Each evening, all are invited for services with the focus on our upper grade young people. There will be a different speaker each evening. The theme this year is "Jesus Wept" (John 11:35). We are looking forward to a very blessed week.

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."

Psalms 25:5

God's Gift

It's in the silence of the soul
Where peace and wisdom stay,
To guide us through the dim and
strife,
Confronting us each day.

God placed this gift within us,
With His loving grace,
Knowing that we need His love,
When trials of life we face.

This strength will gently guide us,
His love will see us through,
Releasing gifts of faith and hope,
To bear what we must do.

—Colette Fedor

MICHIGAN, DETROIT

Kristie Meyer

Manuela Denes

As vacation times have arrived, we look forward to getting away from the mundane routine of our jobs and household chores. We can learn to appreciate the important things in life, such as family, God, and just stopping to see the beauty around us (as the saying goes "stop

and smell the roses"). If for some reason we are not able to take a vacation, let us not get so wrapped up in our daily duties that we do not forget our priorities.

Smell the Roses

Slow down and smell the roses on
your busy, active day,
Slow down and breathe their
fragrance, where they grow along
life's way.
Take a minute of your lifetime to
enjoy a pretty bloom,
Pick a rose from nature's garden, it
will brighten up your room.
Be not hasty in your doings as you
hurry through the day.
But enjoy what God gives freely;
smell the roses while you may.
—Bill Carr

We want to welcome to our congregation Barbara Steelman, who is the mother of Bro. Chris Johnson (Sis. Barb) from Orlando, FL. Also, Crystal Ramsier (Bro. David and Sis. Dorothy) from Smithville, OH is interning with Ford Motor Co. for a summer program. Lane Moser (Bro. Neil and Sis. Ginger) from Bay City is with us as he is here for summer employment.

Graduation is always an exciting time in one's life as they plan for their future. This year the graduates are Laura Kujawa (Bro. Bill and Sis. Darlene), Josh Schmidt (Bill and Sis. Trudy) and Derek Wieland (Mark and Joy). May God bless them as they all plan to further their education.

We were privileged to have two visiting ministers this month. Bros. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeanine, Mansfield, OH) and Roger Aberle (Sis. LaVonne, Sabetha, KS).

Our sympathy goes to Sis. Beth Knochel (Bro. Dana) in the passing of her uncle, Bro. Bill Rager. We also extend our sympathy to Sis. Hilda Bauer (Bro. Walt) as her sister-in-law, Sis. Lola Strunk, from Morton, IL passed away; and to

Chuck and Dorothy Leman in the death of their sister-in-law, Sis. Myra Leman (Bro. Jim), from Roanoke, IL.

Our prayers go with Sis. Hilda Bauer as she had a fall and broke her hip. May God's healing be upon her.

The Woodhaven Benefit was June 1 and as always, was truly a blessing. A delicious supper and beautiful singing by the Detroit choir, Alto Men's group, and a group from Bay City was enjoyed by all.

Bro. Mark and Sis. Kelly Ramseyer and their children, Carrie and Caleb, are moving to the Denver, CO area as he takes employment there. Also, Marvin Wieland has found employment in Warsaw, IN and will be worshipping with the Milford congregation. We are saddened by their leaving and wish them God's blessings as they relocate.

"I do not know what is in the future,
but I do know who is in the future."

MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS **Perry Virkler**

Our congratulations to Carol Luthi and Dale Richter as they were united in marriage on May 24 in Morris, MN. We wish them God's blessings in their new married life.

We extend a warm welcome to Rustin Meister (Bro. Richard and Sis. Sharon Meister) of West Lafayette, IN who is working at New Mech Companies in St. Paul on a summer internship position. We hope he feels the warmth of our fellowship.

Our visiting ministers this past month were our Elder Bro. Leroy Messner (Winthrop, MN) and Bro. Dan Kilgus (Remington, IN). We thank them for coming and lending themselves to speak God's

Word.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

I Peter 2:21

IN HIS STEPS

Dwell not in the valley of despair,
waste not another day.
Arm yourself with faith and prayer,
and then be on your way.
Yield not unto temptation
which leads the soul astray,
But focus on the light ahead
and walk the narrow way.
Your Guide shall always lead you
and shield you from harm's way,
But you must follow in His steps
and listen and obey.
His strength shall never fail you
as you stop awhile to pray,
For at the end of your journey
you'll find a brighter day.
At the end of life's great journey,
Heaven's just a step away
For all who follow in His steps
and listen and obey.

—Clay Harrison

On Saturday evening, May 31, brethren and friends from the Winthrop and Minneapolis congregations met at Homeward Hills Park for a cook-out and potluck supper. A blessed evening of singing and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

We wish to thank the Lester, IA congregation for hosting the annual Youth Fellowship (Senior and Junior Bible classes) the weekend of June 7-8. May they be richly blessed for all their love and hospitality.

Congratulations to Leah Sticha (Doug) who graduated from St. Cloud State with a degree in Medical Technology. Her parents are Bro. Don and Sis. Bernadine Miller.

With saddened hearts, we bid farewell to two precious families. Bro. Myron and Sis. Lori Rumbold and children, Katlyn, Tyler and Kali, are moving to Sycamore, IL.

Bro. Leo and Sis. Tami Banwart, son, Brady, nephew, Brody, and nieces, Liz and Ashley, will be moving to Burlington, IA. We thank them for the support given to our church over the years. We will miss each of them greatly and wish them God's blessings in their new homes.

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

Hymns of Zion #91

MINNESOTA, MORRIS

Nancy Wulf

Linda Schmidgall

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord."

Proverbs 18:22

We rejoice with the two couples whose engagements were announced recently. On May 18, the engagement of Bro. Dan Schaefer and Sis. Shadow Fehr was announced. As they plan their wedding for July 13, may they look to God for His guidance. Parents of the couple are Bro. Steve and Sis. Pam Schaefer and Bro. Cork and Sis. Pam Fehr.

We heard the engagement of Bro. Bob Domnick and Sis. Cindy Nohl on June 15. Their parents are Bro. Gary and Sis. Velma Domnick and Bro. DeWayne and Sis. Janice Nohl. May God richly bless these two couples as they begin their life together.

Carol Luthi and Dale Richter were married May 24. Carol's parents are Harold and Bernice Luthi. We wish them God's bless-

ings in their marriage.

Bro. Eric Koehl and Sis. Kim Feuchtenberger were united in marriage on June 1. Parents of the couple are Bro. Ken and Sis. Karen Koehl and Bro. Wallis and Sis. Diane Feuchtenberger. We rejoice with them and wish them God's blessings as they establish a new Christian home.

We are thankful the lives of Ryan Kellenberger (Sis. Diane) and Trevor Schmidgall (Jody) were spared when they were involved in a car accident on the way to work. Trevor spent a short time at the hospital. Others in the hospital this past month were: Sis. Shirley Nohl (Bro. Noah), Sis. Marie Feuchtenberger, and Bro. Henry Nohl (Sis. Anna). We pray God will continue to heal them.

We always appreciate our visiting ministers and pray God will bless Bros. Kent Mogler (Minneapolis, MN), Jim Knobloch (Winthrop, MN) and Doug Grimm (Sabetha, KS) for bringing us God's Word.

Bro. Michael Messner (Bro. Tony and Sis. Nancy) has graduated from Tech. School and found a job in the Burlington area and will be attending the Burlington Church. Our other college graduate is Sis. Kristy Koehl (Bro. Karl and Sis. Marilyn).

Our high school graduates are: Sisters Cindy Nohl (Bro. DeWayne and Sis. Janice), Dawn Koehl (Bro. Arnie and Sis. Sharon), Sheila Nohl (Bro. Larry and Sis. Bonnie), Molly Wulf (Bro. Doug and Sis. Joyce), Bro. Matthew Koehl (Bro. Karl and Sis. Marilyn), Julie Kellenberger (Sis. Diane), Bro. Jonathan Joos (Bro. Harv and Sis. Debra), Paul Wulf (Bro. Dennis and Sis. Judy), Michelle Feuchtenberger (Bro. Bob and Sis. Gwen), and Jason Moser (Sis. Doreen and Gary). May each of these graduates feel God's guidance in the decisions they will be making.

MINNESOTA, WINTHROP

Becky Braulick

Jan Messner

Greetings!

With the 4th of July coming, we want to remember that with acquiring our independence as a nation, the most important part was being able to have the freedom to worship our God as freely as we do. As we know, there are some countries, even where our brethren live today, where they are not able to freely worship our Lord. Let us continue to take advantage of this freedom we have and remember not to take it for granted.

We were able to enjoy a nice Memorial Day Weekend with visiting Elder Bro. Ron Messner (Sis. Pam, Washington, IL) who brought forth God's message on our behalf. We appreciate all the visitors we have had this past month and thank them for their efforts in coming to share time with us here in Winthrop.

As we all know, this is the time of year that many of our youth graduate from high school and move on to further education or go out into the working world. It is a special time in their lives with many changes and exciting new ventures. Joleen Bussler (Bryan and Diane Jacobson, also granddaughter of Sis. Dorothy Jacobson), Sarah Miller (Tom and Maggie), and Adam Schmidt (Bro. Tim and Liz) are our graduates this year. May they let the Lord lead and guide them in all that they do in the years to come.

Our new Sunday School Superintendent for this next year is Bro. Verl Schmidt. We pray that the Lord will be at his side as he takes on this responsibility.

We would like to thank Lester, IA for their hosting this year's annual Youth Fellowship Weekend. It is so nice that our youth can gather in such large numbers and create lasting friendships and

memories from these weekends. We are thankful the Lord watched over all.

Our hospital/surgical patients this past month were Sis. Geri Messner (Bro. Marvin), Sis. Pearl Lienemann, Sis. Florence Messner, and Bro. Roland Messner (Sis. Melva). We have had each one of these dear loved ones in our prayers and may God continue to place His healing hands upon them as they recover.

MISSOURI, KANSAS CITY Brent Kellenberger

June 7 marked the 50th year of marriage for Bro. Jesse and Sis. Sophie Delph. On Sunday, June 8, Bro. Don and Sis. Eileen Braker hosted a reception for them in their home. We are thankful for the years Jesse and Sophie have been with us as well as the years they have been together. We pray God will continue providing for them.

Bro. Garry and Sis. Marty Rokey are new grandparents! Hunter McLean Kellgren was born May 15 in Jacksonville, NC. His parents are David and Andrea Kellgren. Paternal grandparents are Frank and Louise Kellgren of Kansas City.

On June 5 and 6, we once again enjoyed our annual father/son canoe trip and camp-out. We had a small group of 21 this year, but there was plenty of excitement on the frigid, fast-flowing Eleven Point River in South-central Missouri. We're thankful that God once again watched over us throughout the trip.

Vacation Bible School was held June 9-13. The younger kids were certainly enthusiastic as we sang and did crafts. Hopefully they will remember the Bible teachings as well as they learned the songs. As always, we are thankful for each one who dedicated time to be there.

Our congregation is once again blessed with a new couple. Bro. Jon and Sis. Amy Ginzel have recently moved here from St. Louis. We welcome them into our church family.

We are thankful that ministering Bro. Gerry and Sis. Ellen Hertzell (Sabetha, KS) could be with us this month.

MISSOURI, LAMAR Martha Kellenberger Carolyn Banwart

We were thankful to have Elder Bro. Gene Marti and Sis. Mary (Kansas City, MO) with us for a weekend. We appreciated his willingness to minister to us on Sunday and enjoyed seeing his Eastern Europe slide presentation on Saturday evening. It made us realize how thankful we should be for all the blessings and privileges we have in our country.

Also, thank you to Bro. Darrel Stoller (Sis. Gloria, Bern, KS) for expounding God's Word to us one Sunday.

Andy Marti (Sis. Carol Marti and Fred Marti) was married on June 12 to Misty Musgrove. We wish them God's blessings as they make their home in Texas.

MISSOURI, ST. LOUIS Betsy Schrenk

Thy word, O Lord, forever is
the mirror where we see
Our faults and duties as they are,
our likeness unto Thee.
Zion's Harp #142

One of our visiting ministers spoke of the use of mirrors in our lives. Each of us checks our physical appearance to make sure we look the way we want to look. We see and are then able to make the necessary adjustments and corrections. We don't use a mirror to spot our faults and imperfections and then make justifications—we

make changes!

The Bible enables us each to check the condition of our spiritual life, to see how close our likeness is to our perfect role model, Jesus. If we are honest and humble enough to spot and identify flaws and to make corrections, not justifications, it will certainly be to our own spiritual benefit, and then to the benefit of those with whom we live and to all those with whom we come in contact. When others look at us, do we reflect our Lord?

If we need to make corrections, the time is now. We know that there will be no self-justification on Judgment Day.

God bless the ministering brothers and their wives who visited our little church this past month. They are Bros. Ron Heiniger (Bloomington, IL), Erik Givens (Princeville, IL) and Marvin Dotterer (Forrest, IL).

We appreciate having two visitors here this summer. Bro. Mike Rassi (Tremont, IL) is doing an accounting fellowship that is based in St. Louis and is living with Bro. Doug Mangers. Sis. Janette Schulz of Iowa City took an intense pharmacology course at the University of Missouri in Columbia in June as part of her nurse practitioner studies. While most of her classmates spent every possible hour studying, she made the decision to make the long trip every Sunday to worship and have fellowship with us. Everyone who has ever been, or is now, a student knows that it can be tempting to sometimes neglect the spiritual aspect of our lives when the academic burdens are overwhelming. But God blesses us when we keep our priorities straight.

MISSOURI, TAYLOR Tina Sutter

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

James 3:17

We rejoice with Bro. Ben and Sis. Karen Knapp and big brothers, Brice and Evan, as they welcome into their home their new baby sister, Valarie Rose. May God grant them an abundance of wisdom and love as their children grow up in their care. Parenting is certainly a task that we need God's grace and love to carry out.

We are thankful to have had Bros. Mark Kiefer (Denver, CO) and Neil Ramseyer (Bay City, MI) minister to us this month.

Bro. Jim Sutter was hospitalized and underwent surgery this month. Many prayers offered on his behalf and his family would be much appreciated.

**NEW YORK
CROGHAN-NAUMBURG
Alice Virkler**

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:19-20

On Saturday evening, June 14, we gathered together to partake of the Lord's Supper and be reminded of the time when He broke the bread and shared the cup with His disciples before He suffered and died for our sins. We thank Elder Bro. Leo Moser (Sis. Leona, Lester, IA) for being with us for the weekend and for his messages

given to us through God's strength and love. May each of us go forward with a renewed zeal in service to God.

The Word was brought to us on May 25 by Bro. Jerry Isch (Philadelphia, PA). Our thanks also goes to him and his family for spending the day with us.

High school graduates this month are Tessa Farney (Elder Bro. Duane and Sis. Karen) and Kristy Hirschey (Mike and Judy). College graduates are Hope Graves (Bro. Floyd, Jr. and Sis. Linda), Sis. Amber Herzig (Bro. Ron and Sis. Eleanor) and Renata Virkler (Bro. Ted and Sis. Mae). May God guide each of them as they step into another way of life, some for employment and some for more education.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Bro. Floyd, Sr. and Sis. Loretta Graves as Bro. Floyd fell and has a fractured hip at this time. It is our prayer that they may be strengthened each day and be able to assemble with us again.

**OHIO, AKRON
Joyce Gasser
Diane Jarrett**

Greetings from Akron. We welcome Sis. Debbie Sauder (Bro. Bill and Sis. Becky) from the Columbus congregation as she begins her study at the University of Akron in affiliation with Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with Bro. Bud Walker (Sis. Mary Ellen) as he has been unable to assemble with us due to poor health.

We have recently had the opportunity to commemorate Independence Day. Let us glorify God for the freedoms that we have in America, and seek to use those freedoms in a way that would bring honor to our great God.

**OHIO, COLUMBUS
Nancy Banks**

June is usually a very busy month for the Columbus congregation. Our graduation breakfast was held in honor of our high school and college graduates. We were so fortunate to have many visitors with us that day, including Elder Bro. Aaron and Sis. Loretta Steffen (Alto, MI) and Elder Bro. Chuck and Sis. Miriam Hemmer (Peoria, IL). It was a very blessed day for graduates, family and brethren. Other visitors sharing with us this month were Elder Bro. Kenneth Sauder (Mansfield, OH) and Bro. Ben Manz (Junction, OH).

We bid farewell to Marvin and Jennifer Manz who worshipped with us this last year. They have recently moved to the Latty area and we wish them God's richest blessings in their newest endeavors.

Our prayers continue to be with Sis. Theresa Hunyady (Bro. Andy) as she has been unable to worship with us recently. May she and Bro. Andy feel the love and prayers from our congregation as Sis. Theresa struggles with the pain and infirmities of the body.

**OHIO, JUNCTION
Sandra Manz**

Bro. Paul Eisenmann (Sis. Elaine, Burlington, IA) lent himself on the pulpit when he visited our area the weekend of graduations. Bro. Paul Gasser (Sis. Joyce, Akron, OH) ministered to us on June 15 to the theme of God's promises to provide our every need. We often stand amazed at the way the Lord can comfort, chasten, direct, and teach us through one or the other of our faithful ministers. May God bless both of these brothers that they may continue to preach only as the Lord would lead them.

We rejoice with Marvin and Jennifer Manz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz and Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lori Stoller, Latty, OH) and their families as they have begun their repentance. They have moved from Cincinnati and will reside in the Latty area.

We are grateful for favorable weather this week that allowed for good progress in concreting part of our church parking lot. May God bless all those who supported this project in any way.

Notes of Thanks:

I would like to express my deep gratitude to each of you who showed love and sympathy in so many ways during the waning years and the death of my mother, Sis. Frances Dotterer. May God bless each one.

Sis. Ruth Dotterer

The family of Bro. Emmanuel Manz appreciates all the cards, gifts, visits, food, and phone calls we received after his surgeries, during his decline, and after his death. Your love and concern was a great comfort. May God bless you.

OHIO, LATTY

Kathy Sinn

Joyce Klopfenstein

We have had a very busy month in Latty. We would like to welcome Bro. Ned Stoller to our congregation for the summer. He is staying with Bro. Craig and Sis. Ruth Stoller. Also welcome to Bro. Mark and Sis. Marcie Graf and their children, Isaac and Jacob. They have relocated in the Latty area.

On June 7 and 8, we were privileged to hear the testimonies and witness the baptisms of our new Bro. Aaron and Sis. Jennifer Shepard (Bro. Dave and Sis. Deb Wenninger). Elder Bro. Charles Sauder (Sis. Miriam, Tremont, IL) was with us. We appreciate Elder

Bro. Charles' assistance and ministry to us for this special occasion.

We are thankful and rejoicing with the angels in Heaven, as Katie Zuber (Brant, parents are Bro. Bruce and Sis. Vicki Laukhuf), Marvin and Jennifer Manz (Bro. Ken and Sis. Gwen Manz, Junction; Bro. Dwight and Sis. Lori Stoller) have answered the call of our Lord.

The week of June 9 was the week of Bible School in Latty. We appreciate all the effort put forth by the teachers, parents, and all who helped make the week a success. May God bless each child who attended, as well as all those who helped.

Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie Laukhuf have announced the engagement of their daughter, Shane, to Shawn Gerber, son of Bob and Connie Gerber. May God be with them in the planning for an October wedding.

Bro. Rod and Sis. Edie Laukhuf, and Mel and Judy Hood are new grandparents. Jason and Carla Laukhuf welcomed Julia Louise into their hearts and home on May 19. June 8 was the birthday of David Robert Sinn. Thankful new parents are Bro. Bob and Sis. Sheila Sinn. Grandparents are Bro. Walt and Sis. Renee Sinn, and Jim Franklin and Jackie Forr. May God be with these new parents as they raise their precious children.

We are thankful for God's healing touch on Sis. Vera Laukhuf, who has recovered from pneumonia.

On May 23, we were saddened to hear of the sudden death of Bro. William Rager, Sr., who was injured in a mowing accident earlier that day. Our sympathy goes to Sis. Elsie, and their children: John and Mary Isch (Indianapolis, IN), Bro. Gary and Sis. Nancy Stoller (Bluffton, IN), Bro. William, Jr. and Sis. LouAnn Rager (Bluffton, IN), Bro. Gary and Sis. Peggy Ifft

(Bloomington, IL), Jerry and Julie Rager (Van Wert, OH), Bro. Darl and Sis. Cindy Schieler (Wolcott, IN), Bro. Curt and Sis. Denise Rager, and the many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. May they be comforted in this time of grief and loss.

OHIO, MANSFIELD

Cari Mann

"And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born."

Acts 22:28

As we come into the month when we celebrate our nation's freedom, these two sentences could be very aptly applied to us. Each of us can say as Paul did, "I was free born". And we all remember from our history books, the "sum" it took for us to be able to say we are "free born". Each of us who has been baptized in the name of Christ has obtained a freedom that cannot be understood by the world. As we celebrate Independence Day, let us each as followers of Christ, focus on the Sum that paid the price for our freedom.

On May 18, a breakfast was held at the church to honor our graduating high school seniors. They are Gale and Grant Dotterer (Bro. Gaylord and Sis. Betty). As they now move on to the next phase of their lives, may they always keep in mind that God is with them each step of the way.

We also wish to congratulate Sis. Esther Baumann, Sis. Tami Griffey (Bro. Chad) and Sis. Kristy Tucker on their college graduations. Sis. Esther obtained her master's in nursing and Sis. Tami and Sis. Kristy graduated from the Mansfield General School of Nursing. As these Sisters fulfill the Lord's work by caring for those

who are ill, may they feel His richest blessings upon them.

Veronica, Abe, Jed and Gretchen Sauder are happy to welcome home a new baby brother, Elijah Gage, who was born on June 7. Happy parents are Mark and Di Sauder and grandparents include Elder Bro. Ken and Sis. Sue Sauder and Ralph and Delores Miley. May they each feel God's blessings in this new son.

We all know how much faster and easier a job gets accomplished when many people work on it together. And so it was on June 7, when many of our congregation gathered together for our annual church clean-up day. May those who helped in any way be blessed for their willingness.

"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

1 Peter 1:25

How thankful we can be that the Word is used when the gospel is preached unto us. May Bro. Gary Maibach (Smithville, OH) and his family feel God's richest blessings for assembling with us one Wednesday evening.

One morning I woke to hear the rain pouring down. After a minute, I heard another more cheerful sound - the sound of birds singing. They had found shelter under the eaves of our house and were singing to their heart's content. I had to wonder if we who have found shelter in Christ are able to sing as readily when the rain is "pouring" down in our lives. If God provides shelter for the sparrows, then we cannot forget His promise to provide for us as we are of much more value than many sparrows. May each of us remember that we are "sheltered" when the troubles are raining

down.

OHIO, RITTMAN
Michelle Dotterer
Carla Stoller

We extend special thanks to the visiting ministers we had this past month, including Elder Bros. Robert Walder (Congerville, IL) and Ervin Knecht (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Greg Stoller (Forrest, IL).

Blessed with their first child, Bro. Sam and Sis. Gail Hartzler welcomed Sarah Lynn into their home on June 9. Grandparents are Bro. Merle and Sis. Bonnie Hartzler and Bro. Virgil and Sis. Lois Gasser.

Sis. Carole Steiner (Bro. Dave), Sis. Cherie Maibach (Jeff and Elsie), Sis. Martha Beery, Sis. Martha Walder (Bro. Don) and Bro. Carl Ingold (Sis. Erma) have recently been hospitalized. May God heal and comfort according to His will.

Our sympathy is offered to Bro. Ron Steiner (Sis. Ruth) whose father, Edwin, passed away June 10. Also, we want to remember Sis. Pearl Breece, as her husband, Bro. William, died June 11. Certainly God will comfort these families during this time of sorrow.

On May 10, Dennis Maag and Jeanette Troncone were united in marriage. Their parents are Robert and Martha Maag and Frederick and Katrina Troncone.

Bro. Dean Ramsier (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Terri) and Sis. Julia Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam, Sardis, OH) were married June 15. Beginning their lives together, may they be blessed and guided by God.

OHIO, SARDIS
Joy Indermuhle

Greetings of love to all. An unusual occurrence for our small church, we had the privilege to witness two weddings in the past month.

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord."

Proverbs 18:22

We rejoice with Sis. Bridget Zollinger (Bro. Gary and Sis. Terry) and Bro. Matthew Rassi (Bro. Greg and Sis. Carla, Chicago, IL) as they became one in the Lord on May 25. May God's blessings be upon their marriage and may He be with them as they make their home in Pennsylvania and attend the Philadelphia church. Then on June 15, Sis. Julia Brake (Bro. Bill and Sis. Miriam) and Bro. Dean Ramsier (Bro. Marvin and Sis. Terri, Rittman, OH) were joined in that blessed three-fold cord. We rejoice with them and wish them God's blessings as they make their home in the Rittman area, attending the Rittman church. We will miss these two dear sisters as they make homes with their husbands in other areas, but are glad they have allowed the Lord to guide them in this important part of their lives.

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels."

Proverbs 1:5

Stephanie Alrutz (Bro. Allen and Sis. Janet Indermuhle) has graduated from the 8th grade. As she looks to finish her public education in the next four years, may she feel God's blessings upon her and the many prayers that go with her.

OHIO, SMITHVILLE
Julie Maibach
Edith Miller

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.
Hymns of Zion #210

We rejoice with the angels over two young souls who have made known their desire to be "whiter than snow". Our new converts are Seth and Carrie Miller (son and daughter of Bro. Larry and Sis. Edith). May God richly bless them with His grace. We are so thankful the Lord is still calling souls, and how we pray for many more to answer the Lord's call.

On June 1, our high school graduates and their parents were treated to a breakfast. At this time, each graduate was presented a Bible with their name inscribed on the front. May each one use this Book as a guide throughout their lives.

We thank Bro. Bill Brake (Sardis, OH) for visiting us on a recent Sunday. May God bless him for expounding God's Word unto us.

May God grant returning health again to Christian Steiner (Kurt and Robin) and Sis. Lou Riggenbach (Bro. Glenn) who both spent time in the hospital recently, and also to Sis. Mildred Hartzler who has been ill and unable to be in church for some time.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Bro. Charles Nieman (Sis. Delphine) on the death of his sister, Margaret Bauman.

Our fathers' God, to Thee
 Author of liberty,
 To Thee we sing;
 Long may our land be bright
 With freedom's holy light,

Protect us by Thy might,
 Great God, our King!
Gospel Hymns #738

As our country celebrates another year of freedom, may we be thankful for what our forefathers did so that we can enjoy the heritage that is ours and strive to preserve it for those to come.

OHIO, TOLEDO
Rebecca Beard
Edie Fetter

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

Mark 10:9

Jesse Beard (Bro. Dave and Sis. Geralyn) and Gina Leshner (Fred and Linda) were joined in marriage on June 7. We pray that God's blessings will be theirs.

Bro. Mark Ramsier (Sardis, OH) was a recent visiting minister. We thank God for providing for our spiritual needs through the ministry.

Bro. Doug and Sis. Elizabeth Reinhard are leaving the Toledo area. They plan to make Junction their home church. We wish them God's blessings and guidance through this change.

OREGON, PORTLAND
Louisa Gallup - Mary Berg

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

Proverbs 3:5,6,13,14

What wonderful advice for all of

us but especially for our children as they end another year of school. We pray for them all. Special congratulations to Billy Berg (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary) as he has completed high school and is looking forward to attending college in the fall. We pray he will always look to the Lord for guidance.

We are thankful to hear that Sis. Golda and Lowell Ditch have been able to return to their home following a stay in the hospital and nursing home. Praise God for His wonderful healing power.

Visiting ministers this month included Elder Bro. Art Metz and Bro. Ed Knecht (Silverton, OR).

As summer is here, we always look forward to having many summer visitors. We welcome any and all who find it worthwhile to worship with us.

OREGON, SILVERTON
Rosa Lee Kuenzi

June has long been known for graduations and weddings and that has once again been the case for our congregation here in Silverton. Seven high school graduates were honored at a supper-reception held the first of June. They were Alex Bolliger (Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn), Aaron Kuenzi (Bro. Jim and Sis. Barbara), Martha Kuenzi (Bro. Nick and Sis. Mary), Tyler Kuenzi (Bro. Terry and Sis. Ann), Tyrene Kuenzi (Bro. Bob and Sis. Linda), and Scott Zollinger (Bro. Ed and Sis. Shirley). Bill Berg (Bro. Bill and Sis. Mary) of the Portland congregation was also included in this special time of recognition. Sincere wishes for God's direction and blessings in their lives are extended to them all.

This was a full weekend for these young people and for the remainder of the Bible Class and Sunday School teachers. Once a year, our Sunday School invites a visiting minister and his wife to

come to Oregon and spend some time with them and speak to them. This year, Bro. Ron and Sis. Lynell Palitto from Akron, OH were the special guests of the Sunday School weekend. May God bless them for their love and efforts in coming to share this weekend.

The wedding of Nelson Kuenzi (Bro. Jim and Sis. Barbara) and Lisa Metzger (Bro. Bill and Sis. Charlotte) was held in Lester, IA on May 24. They were united in marriage by Elder Bro. Leo Moser at the Lester Apostolic Christian Fellowship Center. An Oregon reception was held on June 14.

God has blessed two homes in recent weeks with little bundles of joy from Heaven. Bro. Harvey and Sis. Jennifer Kuenzi are the happy new parents of Janelle Louise born June 6. Sisters and brother at home are Nicole, Lorraine and Logan. Grandparents are Bro. Lee and Sis. Janet Kuenzi and Chuck and Connie Mueller (Forrest, IL). The second home was that of Bro. Mark and Sis. Elsie Sinn who named their blessing Bradon Otto. Brothers and sisters at the Sinn home are Evan, Emily, Abigail, Cameron and Tressa. Grandparents are Bro. Otto and Sis. Marian Sinn and Walter Teubel (Fairbury, IL).

Our sincere sympathy goes out to the entire Leman family at the passing of Sis. Myra. Bro. Jim and Sis. Myra had just recently visited here again and her positive attitude and cheerfulness was an encouragement to us. Special prayers to Bro. Mike and Sis. Lisa (Metz) Leman, Vonn and Maris of our congregation.

Many thanks to visiting ministers, Bros. Ron Palitto (Akron, OH) and Steve Baner (Gridley, IL).

PENNSYLVANIA PHILADELPHIA

Franz Soni

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Colossians 3:16

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Sis. Florence (Geist) Grandinetti. Sis. Florence is survived by a daughter, Mary Decerio. May God comfort her family.

Brethren from our church met at the Mennonite Central Committee Distribution Center in Ephrata, PA to bale World Relief clothing for needy people in Mexico.

We welcome Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget Rassi to our church family. The home churches for Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget are Chicago and Sardis, respectively.

We thank Elder Bro. Ed Schwartz (Bluffton, IN) for sharing God's Word with us this past month. May God richly reward him for his efforts.

We welcome all who are in the area to come worship with us. Services are Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. If you need more information, please call Elder Bro. Edward Aeschleman at (302) 478-7846.

TEXAS, CENTRAL AREA

Lois Gray

Ministers who visited our congregation and shared God's Word this past month are Bros. Ron Joos (Sis. Christy, Pulaski, IA) and Bill Hodel (Sis. Betty, Roanoke, IL). We are grateful for their labors of love.

In recent weeks, several communities in Central Texas have sustained damage from high winds, tornados and flooding. The heaviest losses occurred in the

town of Jarrell, 40 miles north of Austin, where a tornado claimed 27 lives and destroyed 35 homes on May 27.

There is opportunity for Apostolic Christian volunteers to assist on work projects for rebuilding in central Texas. To volunteer, contact Bro. Arnie Gerst (217) 223-8434.

Our usual schedule is: Dallas holds services the FIRST Sunday of the month. Central Texas services are held the LAST Sunday at the home of Bro. Bill Zeltwanger in Roundtop. The Sundays in between, we meet in Austin at the Omni Hotel at I-35 and Hwy 71 at 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon. This month's schedule has a change. On July 13, services will be held in San Antonio at Ramada Limited on I-35 north of loop 410.

Our welcome mat is always out for visitors, but please phone ahead to be certain where you will find it on a given Sunday. Contact persons are: Bill Zeltwanger (409) 249-5102 or Brian and Terri Kaiser (512) 338-4222.

TEXAS, DALLAS

Dee Rapp

Humbleness

"...God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:6)

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." (James 4:10)

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14)

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;" (Col. 3:12)

"and what doth the Lord re-

quire of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8)

"...dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor. 7:1)

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." (Phil. 4:1)

We want to thank the brothers who have faithfully served us this past month. Dallas services are held on the FIRST Sunday of each month at 10:30 and 12:00 noon at the Holiday Inn, DeSoto, TX.

Central Texas services will al-

ways be held the LAST Sunday of each month at the home of Bro. Bill Zeltwanger in Roundtop. The remaining Sundays will be held at the Omni Hotel in Austin at the intersection of Highway 71 and 35W at 10:30 and 12:00 noon. Contacts are: Bro. Howard and Sis. Dee Rapp at (972) 867-4074 or Bro. Bill Zeltwanger at (409) 249-5102.

TEXAS, ZAPATA

Viola Perdelwitz

Melva Messner

We were privileged to have Elder Bro. Duane Farney (Sis. Karen, Croghan-Naumburg, NY)

with us one Sunday this month to bring forth God's Word. We are thankful they included us in their travel plans.

We have received more than our normal rainfall this month. We appreciate the green lawns and roadsides.

While listening to a sermon recently, my thought was this: If there was a daily check list requirement of a good Christian, how would I rate?

Certain People are a Joy to Know

People who know
 how to brighten a day
 with heart-warming smiles
 and with kind words they say,
 People who know
 how to gently impart
 the comfort it takes
 to cheer someone's heart,
 People who know
 how to always come through
 when there's anything
 they can possibly do,
 People who know
 how to willingly share,
 who know how to give
 and who know how to care,
 who know how to let
 all their warm feelings show...
 Are people that other
 feel lucky to know.

—Amanda Bradley

Sermon continued from page 2

for, and that we sincerely seek forgiveness for, are thrown into the Sea of Forgetfulness never to be remembered anymore.

Do you know what? What is the challenge for you and me? God does it, but we don't do it very well, especially if it happens to involve us personally. Here, what Paul was saying was, "I have forgiven it. I am moving on. I encourage you to do the same."

He talks about it here. "So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." (II Cor. 2:7). He talks about not overcharging them. The Bible talks in another place where it says that you should warn that others may fear. In other words, it is healthy for us to remember that, except by the grace of God and our desire to follow and serve Him, we all would be in trouble.

It doesn't hurt any one of us to be reminded that we are all dust, and that we collectively as humans all have problems that could get us into severe problems, both physically and spiritually. Unless we repent for those and confess those and move on, those are enough to send us to hell.

That also should temper our view of other people because of the grace of God. It also should encourage us to handle those situations as God would have us handle them.

"To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;" (II Cor. 2:10). That is a pretty strong statement and I am not quite sure I understand that, nor I suspect that (at least the way I understand it) no one here would maybe want to make that statement. But we can each make that statement for ourselves for whatever list of things we kind of add up in our life that we don't

think we were treated fairly by somebody.

I guess one of the most devastating things that can happen in our life, is that we, for some reason, hold a grudge on anybody living, but especially devastating if we hold a grudge against somebody who is dead, because that has no affect on them any more and can eat us alive spiritually and physically.

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." (II Cor. 2:11). Who did we read about already this morning? He will use anything he can to discourage us, discourage the body of Christ, discourage unbelievers who think they can't ever make it and discourage those who are repenting in the same way. There is enough discouragement in this world without us spreading any more around.

The Bible talks about exhortation and the way I understand exhortation, sometimes we think of it as just admonition. But even admonition is supposed to give hope. It is not only possible, but as we follow the Lord and really trust in Him and consider His Word and apply His Word to us, it is impossible for us to fail. Isn't it true that our biggest challenge, whether we are converted or whether we are not, is to put self in second place?

What was the devil's problem? He didn't want to put self in second place; he wanted to be in first place. If we are honest with ourselves, what gets us all into trouble? If we are putting God first in our lives, what happens to selfishness and pride and hate and angry and envy? They are homeless, aren't they?

When we start putting ourselves first in considering ourselves first, all of those things start coming to the front because we become the most important person on earth, which is a terrible

mistake.

One of the best things is, first of all, sitting and reading God's Word. Second of all, we have the advantage that a lot of people in the midwest don't, unless you want to get up on the silo, I guess, is to climb a mountain. Those of you who travel, get in an airplane and look down sometime. From thirty thousand feet, you can't see anybody. That is really, in anybody else's sight, about what we amount to.

But in the sight of God, we are of great worth, not because of anything that we can do or did, but because His Son loved us enough to die for us, to live here, to deal with the devil on a day by day basis to overcome him on a day by day basis and to trust His God on a day by day basis.

I can almost hear the mind worrying because the same thought occurs to me, but He was the Son of God! Well, if you are converted, what are you? We ask converts this, but we maybe don't think about it enough. You are a brother or a sister to Jesus Christ which makes you what to God? Now this seems simple minded, I understand, but sometimes we need a simple minded reminder.

We have that same available power, the Holy Spirit that directed Christ can direct us. In one of the reasons, I think, I don't really know, but I think on Judgment Day, people will be speechless because there won't be any good excuses. The Holy Spirit's power is available to all those who will put God first, others second and themselves third. Then the little statement, "things last, because things don't last."

"Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into

Macedonia." (II Cor. 2:12-13). How do you know God's direction? It is a pretty dangerous thing to walk through life on assumption; and it is a wonderful thing to walk through life by faith. A lot of time, faith is not as solid as a tap on the shoulder to say exactly to go here or to go there.

God can and does open doors as we prayerfully seek His will. He can direct us and provide ways that we don't even understand. Then, you know, we still have a choice. We can walk through that door or we can look for something else.

As God opens doors, does it take more faith when a door is open unto us like it was here for Paul to walk through that door trusting one day at a time? Or, when we just have some special sign from God that we know that is what we are supposed to do?

I had a chance to have a long visit with a brother, not too many months ago, and we were talking about this very issue. It was real comforting to me to know that his response, as we were talking about this, he said, "I have never had some great sign in my life that I should do anything, except repent. But" he said, "I have never had the Spirit come up with this super-strong direction, or some super-

special sign that I should do anything."

But the Lord has always been faithful when he needed God to work in his life and when he needed direction that God would open the door. He or he and his wife would pray about it and God had always been faithful to open a door.

When you think about it in your life, when you have been faithful and sincerely prayed about something, has God ever failed to either not open a door, or to close it so you knew you were not supposed to do that? As we consider this, one of the nicest, one of the best things that God can ever do for us, is to answer with "no" a prayer He knows will not be good for us in either the long term or the short term.

I think most of us who have lived in this earth converted for any amount of time, have experienced both things. Hopefully, it hasn't happened to you, but the one time where God shut a door or didn't make a way open for us to do something we thought we really ought to be able to do, we have been able to look back and be ever so grateful. I mean, really grateful!

We have seen times in our lives where we have sincerely prayed and God opened the door and we

walked by faith through whatever that door was and we have been blessed.

Then, if we are honest with ourselves, we have also had times in our life where we prayed for God's will but we wanted our own and we did something that we had doubts about, or we knew we really shouldn't do. We pressed on the door long enough so that we kind of broke it down and got in and we were really, really sorry.

You think that we would learn, wouldn't you? Even sometimes when we run ahead, that we can learn. But haven't you also experienced that most of those times, you have to come back? God doesn't give you a detour to get you where you need to be—you have got to come back, even through repentance, or through backtracking, either spiritually or physically, to do it right.

His will is perfect, His way is divine, and we can and will be successful in the best sense of the Word as we daily trust Him and follow Him putting Him first. "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:30). Probably the nicest words in that whole song, "I have found it so." Is it your statement? Is it your faith?



Faith of our Fathers

The effort of this written page has been directed at establishing an appreciation for the severe trial that our beloved forefathers have gone through to both keep the true faith alive in their soul and to keep that same faith for those who would look to them as examples. There is no way that we will ever be able to relate to the severity of their hurt and anguish. We also can not stereotype the brethren of old because circumstances were different for the different time frames that the various incidences occurred.

We read for example in the Bible (KJV), the Holy Word of God, the scripture on faith. If only we could appreciate fully this chapter, for it is by faith that we please God. By faith, our forefathers did miraculous things. Noah, who could not see forward one hundred and twenty years, was moved by fear and his faith in God to build an Ark to the salvation of his whole family. Abraham, through faith, was able to pick up all his possessions and family and journey close to a thousand miles and find a land of promise that he had no idea was there. He simply followed God. Isaac by faith received Rebecca who by faith trusted God and followed Abraham's servant over the many miles to be met by Isaac in the field where he stood as they approached. There are others who could be mentioned, however our desire is to concentrate on the fact that all who had faith did not move mountains or possibly in their own eyes did not receive a reward for their faith.

*Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: that they might obtain a better resurrection: **AND** others had trial of cruel mockings and scourging, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (Hebrews 11: 33-40)*

It is in this scripture we see that not everyone receives well being for their faith. Would it not have been a strain on the faith of some dear soul, who had seen a neighbor's child raised from the dead, and then see their own child sawn asunder or drawn and quartered by four horses. We are probably all aware that the Romans, for torture, would tie a separate extremity of a person to four different horses and slowly walk the horses in four different direc-

tions. What remained was four pieces of a person, thus the term quartered. Scourging and Crucifixion used on the hardest of criminals was in turn used to persuade the believer away from his or her faith. The fiery stake, the wild beast and any other cruel form of torture was used by those who tried to persuade a believer away from the faith of our fathers. The sobering point is that we are not always going to feel good as our life of faith unfolds. When those lonesome valleys come our way, then lift your eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh our help. *My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. (Psalms 121:2)*

Today we are blessed with freedom to worship, freedom to speak, freedom to do almost anything that does not infringe upon anyone else's rights. We have slowly come to the point in America where we take these freedoms for granted and even expect them. We would like to think that we are free to do about anything we choose and that may even be hurting us in the long run. True freedom is to be disconnected, body and soul from sin. By that comment we recognize that we would not be able to be persuaded by any outward bodily pressure or hurt (torture) and we should not be allowing the old sinful nature to influence our inward soul. It is freedom from sin that man should be striving for in these sinful days when the definitive line between good and evil is seemingly more



Many were burned at the stake for their faith in God

and more obscure to the world.

There is history that we can lean upon when it comes to strengthening our faith. We can see how strong the faith of our brethren was in days past and that encourages us to become strong in faith today. Let's again review some of that history and pray our faith can become stronger.

We have reviewed in the past how persecution came to the true believer during the first century from the Roman government. In 66 AD Jerusalem was burnt to the ground save three towers, which was very significant in the future re-establishing of the destroyed parts. This was important to the Jewish people. In the second century some persecution came because of the Anabaptist nature of the true believer. Jerome, a faithful historian writes, "The Lord commanded His Apostles that they should first instruct and teach all nations, and then baptize those instructed, in the sacrament of faith; for it is not possible for the body to receive the sacrament of

baptism, unless the soul has previously received the true faith." This differed from the more ritualistic form of infant baptism and caused a great rift between the world church and the true believer. When one dwells on who is right rather than on what is right, we can expect problems and if those who are unfaithful are on the powerful side or group, those who oppose them will be persecuted to some degree. Again Jerome writes, "He that is spiritual never persecutes him that is carnal. I have learned from the command of the apostles, to avoid a heretic, but not to burn him. Christ came not to smite, but to be smitten. He that is smitten, follows Christ; but he that smites, follows the antichrist."

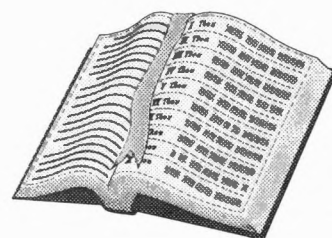
Many are they who have maintained truth in their hearts in spite of the pressure applied by the spirit of the antichrist and also those who through lack of faith chose to travel the broad way.

In the fourth century, beginning with the persecution of Diocletian in 302 AD, many great cruelties were inflicted upon the Christians. It was not and is not understandable how anyone human or otherwise could be so cruel as the Emperor Diocletian. Diocletian and Maximian ruled jointly and after about ten years decided to try and exterminate the believing Christian.

As touching the fearful tortures inflicted, P.J. Twisck writes, "These tyrants had some of them dragged through the streets, tied to the tails of horses, and after they were mangled and bruised, they had them put back

into prison, and placed upon beds of potsherd, so that rest might be more excruciating for them than actual torment. Sometimes they bent down with great force the branches of trees, and tied one leg to one branch, and the other leg to another, and then let the branches spring back into their natural position, so that their limbs were shockingly rent in pieces. They cut off the ears, noses, lips, hands, and the toes of many, leaving only the eyes, to inflict still more pain upon them. They sharpened wooden pegs, which were inserted between the flesh and the nails; and had lead or tin melted, and poured as hot as possible over their bare backs."

This persecution phase known as the tenth persecution was probably the most severe and was directed by the government of Rome, while the world church conducted their own atrocities. May God be praised for His tender mercy in supplying grace sufficient to these faithful brethren who maintained their faith in spite of terrible persecution. If this time would visit us again, will we find grace enough to stand firm? Will we stand firm if there is no persecution at all?





REMEMBERING

Our Spiritual Heritage

Part VII - Adjusting to America

Although 45 congregations had been established in the 53-year period from 1847-1900, growth was not without difficulty. Adjusting to a new land was not always easy.

The first split in 1906-1908 was a blow to the church. While 75 percent of the membership remained intact, the departure of loved ones weakened the fervent spiritual force that had been planted in America by our European forbearers.

Adding to the distress was another troublesome incident—a lawsuit against six church officials in 1908. A former member at Roanoke had sued four Elders and two other ministers for conspiracy and persecution relating to his dismissal from the church.

Named in the lawsuit were Elders Rudolph Witzig (Gridley, IL), Andrew Rapp (Morton, IL), Michael Mangold (Roanoke, IL), and Christian Gerber (Fairbury, IL). Also named were John W. Schmidt (Roanoke, IL) and John W. Schneider (Peoria, IL).

The amount of the suit was \$50,000 (equal to \$250,000 or more today). The accuser said that after his expulsion from the church, the Elders mandated that no members do business with him (he sold farm implements). He alleged that these mandates followed him when he later moved to Indiana.

The church officials pleaded innocent and quietly traveled to Peoria to face the charges. The subsequent trial proved to be a sensation. Much ridicule was heaped on the defendants, and a sense of persecution hovered over the church. Stinging headlines in both Peoria newspapers made our leaders look harsh, backward and

merciless. Typical of these headlines were: *Law Invoked To End Relentless Rule of Czar of Amish Church; Accuser Tells Story of Persecution: Dramatic Statements of Plaintiff; Curious Crowds Throng Corridors*. Other stories indicated speculation was rife on the outcome of the trial.

One reporter said Elder Mangold was a “good witness”. He explained that the only printed rules of the church were in the Bible. He told the court the church was guided in everything by certain verses in the Bible as they were amplified and explained by the Council of Elders.



The Elders lost the lawsuit and were fined \$1,000 (equal to much more in today's currency). They did not appeal. They quietly paid their fine, went home, and the incident eventually faded.

With a church division and thence a public trial, the church—still very German in culture and retaining the German language—began to recoil and pull in. Separation became even more deeply imbedded as an ideal. Skepticism regarding the “English” culture around them accelerated.

Added to the distress was the outbreak of World War I with Germany six years later in 1914, and massive American involvement a few years later. Young men of the church were conscripted. Brothers served as conscientious objectors (in the noncombatant category). Refusal to bear arms often brought harsh ridicule on them in training camps.

Because of the war with Germany, pressure was brought to bear on changing the worship language from German to English. The government, and the public in general, frowned on the use of German. In Gridley, IL vandals painted, “No More German” in yellow paint above the church's front door. Such incidents hastened the use of English in the worship service.

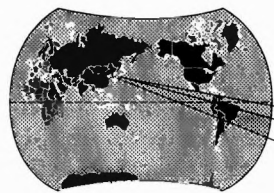
Until this time, no official denominational name was used by the church. In Europe it had been called Evangelical Baptist. In America, no official name was used. This was to avoid notice by the government.

Because young boys going into the Army as noncombatants had to list a church name, the Elders (about 12 at that time) met and chose the name Apostolic Christian, because the members followed Christ and the Apostles.

They specifically avoided use of the Baptist name in America because the Elders did not want to be identified with Baptist-related churches. There were some key doctrinal differences between the Apostolic Christian Church and Baptist beliefs. These centered on predestination, unconditional eternal security, and the concept of striving to overcome sin until life's end; and also on the biblical structure and authority of the church. As in Europe, Anabaptist and Calvinist precepts did not always mesh. The differences remain clear today, especially as modern evangelicalism takes a less explicit attitude toward Scriptures.

By: Perry A. Klopfenstein

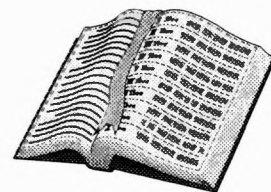
Next Issue: A Nation in Turmoil



The Light Of Hope

From Across The Ocean

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"Blaming Yourself"

Elder Bro. Willis Ehnle, Shioda, Japan

We have all been taught not to be proud, but to be humble. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (I Peter 5:5). I don't think it is possible to be too humble but I do believe the devil causes us to blame ourselves too much, on some occasions.

To be blamed by others has always been a concern. In II Corinthians 8:20, Paul wrote, "That no man should blame us." We try to avoid doing anything for which we might be blamed by others, but for some of us, blaming ourselves can be more of a problem than being blamed by others.

It is proper for us to blame ourselves for things which are clearly sinful according to the Bible. Then we need to blame ourselves enough to repent and not do it anymore. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (I John 1:9).

However, there must be others beside me who have regrets over something they said or did and

who have difficulty putting it behind them. It may be of a very trivial nature but it hangs on. Here is where we should try to help each other. First of all, I'll tell you, you are not alone.

Fortunately for me, I never blame myself so much that I become depressed. We human beings have very much in common and regrets of one kind or another afflict all of us at some time in our lives. It is a situation where we just can't get something off our minds.

In such a case, what should we do? Time itself heals a lot of things which aren't of a very serious nature but it also helps to tell someone about it. James 5:16 is very good advice. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." There is a healing of the body and also a healing of the soul. Let's not get bogged down thinking too much about something when there is nothing to do or to be gained by such thinking. It only decreases our efficiency in

what we are doing.

In the book of Genesis, 43:9, Jacob, also called Israel, was very concerned about sending his son, Benjamin, down to Egypt to get food, fearing he would never return. However, Judah said, "If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever." It was good that Benjamin returned, otherwise Judah would have been blaming himself for a long time.

We are taught in Ephesians 1:4 that God has chosen us, "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love." We become holy and without blame through the atonement which the Lord Jesus Christ made for us, which facilitates the mercy and forgiveness poured out upon us by the hand of God.

We need to be careful about blaming ourselves, but also about blaming others when they are humbly doing the best they know how.

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