"Come Thou, Shepherd, faithful One; May Thy light dispel the darkness!"
Guided by Principled Living

Jude’s epistle calls for earnestly contending saints who build up ourselves on our most holy faith. United in vision, purpose, and mission, let’s keep ourselves in God’s love and look for Christ’s mercy unto eternal life. A team of believers recently articulated nine guiding principles as a framework for faithful focus. These help us, as branches on the Lord’s true vine, aspire to principled living that reflects the Spirit’s guidance. The power of Christ’s kingdom beckons revived citizens and transformable refugees!

Our recently articulated guiding principles may seem new, but the ideas behind the principles have been alive for many years, helping shape our church’s identity. For the May 2021 Silver Lining, we look to compile an article featuring your observations of these principles practically enacted among us.

The topic is "Select one of our nine guiding principles, and describe a time you witnessed this principle at work in our brotherhood." Using 600 words or less, send your contribution to features@acsilverlining.org by March 15, 2021. After reviewing the nine principles (https://www.apostolicchristian.org/guiding-principles), share how you’ve seen Spirit-guided, principled living bring eternal benefit!

Toward glorifying God and loving as Jesus, our triumphant Lord,
Sam Manz, Silver Lining Features
To summarize, what is our purpose? To glorify God. How will the world witness the fruit of the Spirit in our lives? If we let our light so shine before men. How do we shine? By loving as Jesus loves – through actions and not just words. This, Jesus says, is how the world will recognize that we belong to him, and thereby glorify the Father.

Loving as Jesus loves is a lofty calling, and one that can seem overwhelming when we consider his matchless example. To help us get started fulfilling our purpose, let’s break down several of the ways that Jesus loves.

**Jesus loves compassionately.** Jesus’ heart breaks with those who suffer. He wept with Mary and Martha when he heard their brother had died. Moved with compassion, Jesus healed a man with leprosy. Entire cities gathered around him, seeking out his loving care. Most of us do not have the ability to cure leprosy, but we are able to sit and listen to a friend who is lonely, ill, or stricken with grief. We can take time out of our busy day to lend a helping hand or an encouraging word.

**Jesus loves sacrificially.** Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice for his loved ones. He left the glory of Heaven to become man, only to be tortured and put to death, all to repay the sin debt of lowly mankind. Again, this is not the sort of sacrifice most of us are facing; none of us are being asked to leave Heaven, but there are many ways that we may be called to love sacrificially. Living through the recent pandemic, many of us have had the experience of sacrificing important social occasions or family gatherings out of care for our vulnerable loved ones. Or, as Christians, we may forego an activity that we enjoy because it has the potential to tempt a brother or sister to sin. Additionally, we may submit to family members or those in authority, even when it means sacrificing our personal desires, out of love for God’s instructions. Some of us may have opportunity to sacrifice ourselves by fulfilling the duty to care for the personal or physical needs of an ailing relative.

**Jesus loves without discrimination.** Jesus loves everyone. During his time on Earth, he gave particular attention to those who were disregarded by Jewish high society. He spent time with various sinners, touched a leper, and valued the company of young children. During a time when women were largely considered property, Jesus held them in high esteem. Jesus’ respect for women can be found throughout the New Testament, but it is notable that the sisters Mary and Martha were dear friends of Jesus; Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susanna were early disciples; and the first person to
Sermon by Bro. Paul Zimmerman, Forrest, IL
June 28, 2020

2 Chronicles 15:1-7 & 1 Corinthians 12

Good morning. We have some visitors among us: welcome. It’s good to have you here. To the rest, I almost feel like I need to say, “Welcome home.” It’s just so good to have brothers and sisters here and the church benches filled.

So, how’s our mind this morning? We sang that Sunday Morning hymn. It says:

"Hallelujah, fairest morning
Fairer than my tongue can say
For today my cares are banished
This shall be my happy day
By its sweetness and it’s rest
Shall the inner man be blest."

As we sang that on the side bench, I had to think about a verse I’d thought of this morning, one that we often recite the first portion which simply says, “Be still and know that I am God” (Psa. 46:10) I came across something recently, I think in the past week, and it just jarred me. A lot of times we think, ‘Okay, that means I shouldn’t talk so much and let God talk to me.’ But I realized it comes a little deeper than that. We have to still ourselves physically and mentally. Have we done that this morning as we came around the word? “Fairer than my tongue can say. For today my cares are banished.” Physically and mentally stilled, and we have a lot on our mind.

We have a portion of our family together here, and I know many of us probably have thought about the poor news one of our dear couples was given. Many things of life will press about us, but can we force them out and “be still and know that I am God”, as he says? This is the day that God has asked us to set things aside. He’s asked us to let that world go, and he’s asked us to focus on him so, as much as possible, that the inner man, it says, may be blest.

I don’t know where the word’s going to open, and I thought of that sitting on the side bench, but I’ll tell you in true confession here, when I came up here and sat down, God told me I needed to be still and let him. I needed to calm my heart. Calm the fearfulness of picking up the word and being asked to expound upon it to a church that is sitting and listening and waiting. God reminds us it’s not our work. It’s the spirit’s work.

You know, I heard someone ask, “How can so many people read the Bible and not turn to God?” Part of the wise answer was, “Because they take knowledge, but they resist application.” And don’t we do that at times? Didn’t we, dear friends or brothers and sisters? We sat and listened and listened and listened, and it made us feel guilty, but we didn’t yield ourselves to application. So, as we sit and let the inner man be picked up and strengthened, let’s let our hearts yield to application.

I have where it’s opened in 2 Chronicles, Chapter 15. [Reads verses 1-7]

We’ll stop there with verse 7.
If you would, sing #126, Joy on the Lord’s Day.

I have here in 1 Corinthians, the twelfth chapter. As we have been encouraged this morning, this is the chapter on how God has made us, how God has put us together here. Some would say it’s happenstance, and I would so tell you that it’s not happenstance. It’s all by design of God, and as we’re all here together, we all bring something to – I’m going to use our church family here at Forrest – and I have experienced, I think as many of you have, involvement in HarvestCall. You can see, and I marvel because there’s such a talent in our brotherhood of our Apostolic faith, to where there are so many that you can tap on the shoulder, and they will step up and bring something, as
we would say in today’s terms, to the game. Yet, Satan will use a lot of isolation. This could be to any of us here on the level of our home church or to the corporate level of the Apostolic faith, and then let’s take it out further. There’s a multitude of spirit-led believers out there, and every one of our sole purpose is to glorify God, lift him up, and praise him. Bringing it back down to a small scale here, we cannot emphasize enough that there’s not one of us, and not one listening or viewing, that says, “I go there, but I don’t have any duty there.”

A lot of times, we’ll interview converts and say, “You’re baptized now. What are you going to do in the church?” You know, that’s not really fair. They’re in a humble position, and they’re not going to stand up and say, “I think I’ll make a good Sunday School teacher, or I can do this, or I can do that.” But we try to encourage them to be builders, to be prayer warriors. There’s a part for everybody here.

Paul seeing a need, wrote this chapter. We probably won’t be able to give it the full umph that we should if you want to study it out, but he says that everyone has a gift and everyone has a duty. The chapter here is labeled Spiritual Gifts. Sometimes we put too much emphasis on that, and maybe say “I don’t have a gift. I don’t have anything special.” We can go back to Romans where he speaks of, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate...[and] whom he did predestinate, them he also called” (Rom 8:29-30). God had the knowledge of everyone who sits here and claims the name of Jesus Christ having been purchased by the blood of the lamb. Every one of us has a purpose that God foreordained because he knew it. So, you take your life, not from the day you repented, but for its entirety because there was a God that set aside and said, “I have a place for you because I know you are going to choose me.” Paul takes this chapter here and starts to put it together. Let’s read.

I want to pause there after verse 11.

That last verse says, “dividing to every man severally as he will.” God gives us these things. First, you can say, “Well, I don’t have a gift.” If the Holy Spirit is in you, it says here, even the simplicity “that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” (v3). Our acknowledgment our repentance, our conversion, our presence here would not have happened without the Holy Spirit in our lives, and we have to acknowledge that. We’ve spoken at different times, and if we did a study on the spirit we know, there are so many ways that we hinder it. We also know there are so many ways that it can enhance and is working behind the scenes, even speaking to God when we cannot pray right and when we pray amiss. God gives us everything we need here as we sit around the word.

It says, “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit” (v4). I’m going to go back over a few of these verses before we go further because we are all different. The only thing that should unify us, loved ones, is Jesus Christ and him crucified. There’s not one of us that can come into the fold or be purchased unless we come through the door which is Jesus Christ, but if we’re going to look up and down the pews and expect every one of us to be the same, then we have hindered what God is trying to do. We need to look at the whole picture. God loves variety.

God has a whole world out there that needs to be reached, and he can’t do it with one style of person. When we repent, we come to him and give our lives to him, but he takes that which is in us and couples the character in which we are with what we become when we are born again. If we have a compassion for this one, or if we have a way of reaching this type of people, we recognize not all of us are the same. We have to acknowledge that. We have to absolutely embrace it if we’re going to have unity that is focused on Jesus Christ and him crucified and not how I think.

— Please turn to pg. 63
**Whole-life Discipleship Ministry Begins in Haiti**

*Caribbean Committee*

Haiti is very poor. The average Haitian lives on $250 per year. Only half of the Haitian population is literate. Only 20 percent of Haitians attend high school. Only a quarter of Haitians have access to safe drinking water. There’s no disputing that material poverty is simply a way of life in Haiti. For decades, countries and organizations have given material relief to Haiti in hopes to help this problem. Unfortunately, this relief has often distracted Haitians from what they can do with their God-given talents and resources. The people of Haiti are most desperately in need of an accurate view of God, themselves, others, and the rest of creation. With this Biblical understanding and the power of Christ in their lives, lasting positive change away from spiritual and material poverty can result.

A subcommittee of the HarvestCall Caribbean committee is embarking on a ministry of whole-life discipleship with the people and churches of Haiti. This discipleship ministry is taking place in the form of training and teaching in Christian faith communities in Haiti. The vision is that they would apply this knowledge to solve problems facing their relationships with families, churches, and communities but also to be effective witnesses for Christ and advance God’s kingdom.

It is no easy task to faithfully teach all the commandments of the Lord in any setting. Poverty can present itself as a simple lack of resources when in fact, all things need to be reconciled to God. Colossians 1:19-20 says “for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” Since relationships with “all things” were broken at The Fall, an approach of whole-life discipleship is appropriate. This type of discipleship is about teaching a person spiritually, physically, financially, occupationally, and in all areas of life.

HarvestCall is adopting the framework of the Truth-Centered Transformation (TCT) program to begin the work of whole-life discipleship in Haiti.

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**Keeping the “Little Things” from Stealing Our Productivity**

*Haiti Dairy Committee*

Good Vision Farm, home of the HarvestCall Haiti Dairy Program, has been learning and adjusting to the culture in Haiti that is considerably different than the USA. An example of this was recently brought out, and we thought it might be interesting to share it.

In Haiti, it seems to be culturally acceptable for animals and poultry to walk on and graze property that doesn’t belong to their owners. However, these animals are not to be harmed because that would not be acceptable. At the farm, we are trying to minimize feed loss to the dairy cows by not allowing poultry to rob the cows of feed. It sounds kind of crazy to think that stray chickens, turkeys and guineas could cause any harm, but they can.
TCT is a program that is designed to equip rural churches to apply God’s truth to their lives, reach out and serve their communities, and learn basic life skills. The TCT authors have faithfully applied principles of Biblical discipleship with the goal of people growing as imitators of Christ. More than 2,000 rural, materially poor churches across the globe have embraced this program over the last decade.

This five-year program includes teaching on how the Bible applies to every area of life, how Satan’s lies keep people from changing, basic life skills training, and the great importance of God’s intervention to bring about change. The training is taught by the local pastors and church leaders. As a part of the program, Haitian believers will be challenged to do “Acts of Love” for their neighbors which will both give witness to Christ’s love and also affirm to these believers that God can use their gifts and time to bless others. Throughout the program, there is also a simple magazine published and circulated among participating communities that encourages the churches with stories and testimonies from other areas, reinforces the ideas in the trainings, and brings additional basic teaching. HarvestCall’s role will be to translate the program to Creole, provide training to these pastors/leaders, help them in implementing the principles, accountability, and program administration.

This year, a Haitian administrator has been hired to teach local pastors and church leaders in this training program. He has nearly finished the first teaching module with 15 Haitian churches. To sum up the sentiment of the churches, one participant recently commented “It helps [us] to understand that we can preach the gospel and make a great impact in the community despite [our] poor economic means”.

May God inspire you to join in praying for the future of this new ministry. – **by Dale Koch**

In the past, when the cows were fed grain, as well as forages of brachiaria grass and corn silage, stray poultry immediately joined the cattle in eating, and they knew exactly how to get the best grain! They definitely took advantage of it (Matthew 13:14 …and the fowls came and devoured them up.)

After giving some thought to this situation, the crew decided to change the way the cows were fed. They began to feed grain to the milking cows in the barn at milking time morning and evening. Additionally, they started feeding brachiaria and silage to the cows in the cool of the evening when these poultry animals were roosting and not bothering the feed. During the day, the farm workers started guard duty by taking turns shooing them away and pushing up feed regularly to the cows. These efforts have led to a significant increase in milk production! Of course, these situations are ongoing, but we were thankful to find solutions that are culturally sensitive to our Haitian neighbors.

What are the “little” things in our lives that are pecking away at our spiritual growth and maturity? How much more productive would we be if we could stop thieves from robbing us of the energy we need to fully trust and serve our Lord? The Lord is faithful with grace to the humble. May we be honest about ridding our lives of spiritual thieves and robbers. – **by LuAnn Troxel**

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Where Is My Hope?

The Scriptures have such a beautiful and profound way of illuminating the human experience. As they come from our Creator, it makes sense that Scripture would describe us better than we can describe ourselves. One example of this is Proverbs 13:12 - “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.” Hope can be a roller coaster of emotions. We know what it is like to hope for something and the disappointment we feel when it does not occur. Yet we can also relate to the great rejuvenation we can feel when we hope for something and it happens.

For many of us this past year could be described as having our hopes deferred, having things hoped for which have not come to fruition. This past year has also revealed several things I have taken for granted — things I had started to view as guarantees and when they changed, it was painful. Reflecting on Proverbs 13:12 has led me to consider two questions. First, what kind of sickness has inhabited my heart because of deferred hope and secondly, what does this reveal about hope.

As I consider the disappointment of the past year in my life, I acknowledge most disappointments have been relatively small. For example, my children’s school year has not gone as expected; there have been many cancellations and my hope for a return to “normal” has repeatedly been dashed. As disappointments accumulate and uncertainties loom, I notice my disappointment growing to anger and anger shifting into resentment. Regrettably, this has led to viewing others and their perspectives in harsh and unfair ways. To say it plainly, I can see how unfulfilled hopes have contributed to or revealed my sick heart. Deferred hope has exposed the reality that I need ongoing transformation.

Acknowledging my heart sickness has been painful but necessary. Yet I notice my natural conclusion to the experience of disappointment is to set hope aside. I view hope as the problem and therefore deem it far too risky and something that will lead to more sickness. On the other hand, I notice how much my heart is prone to hope. I hope for a good night of sleep, connection with friends, going out to eat, church to look the way I want, people to have the same perspective as me and so on. Along with noticing how I have a natural inclination to hope for things, I also recognize the Scriptures do not condemn hope but rather paint hope in a positive light. Romans 15:13 tells me my God is the God of hope who fills me with joy and peace “that I may abound in hope.” This verse among others clearly tells me hope is not the problem and I should not set it aside.

If hope is not the problem but actually something the Scriptures encourage, then what is the problem? Sadly, my natural conclusion is to blame my circumstances. To abound in hope, I often look around and identify what needs to change for me. Yet as I consider Romans 15:13, I realize my circumstances are not the problem either. Circumstances will certainly affect me and deferred hope will lead to disappointment, but circumstances
are not the source of my problem. The problem is deeper and can be framed as realizing the difference between hoping for something and hoping in something. When I hope for something, I anticipate an outcome and experience disappointment when it does not occur. On the other hand, when I hope in something, I place my confidence, whether consciously or unconsciously, in something I am viewing as sustaining or life-giving. Placing my hope in things that cannot deliver leads to devastation. The past year has exposed this difference — I have put my hope in things that I should only hope for. I have placed my hope in circumstances turning out the way I want them to or think they should (i.e. schooling, church, connections, activities), instead of placing my hope in the One who is truly sustaining and life-giving in the midst of all. It is reasonable to have desires, dreams, and plans, but it is vital that our ultimate confidence and hope is only in God.

As I step into the coming months, I pray my hope will be in the One who can and will deliver. His promises are sure and will come to pass. The path toward those promises being fulfilled may not be what I hope for or look the way I think they should, but I can and should put my hope in Him. He is trustworthy in the midst of these unmet expectations. This past year has helped expose some of the idols in my heart, and this has been both painful and good. My prayer is that I can learn from this deferred hope so I am able to hope for things while being very careful to only put my hope in Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 6:11-20 "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily sware by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

ACCFS has numerous resources to assist someone who is going through a wide range of hurts and emotions, from the pain of loss to worry, loneliness, anger, stress, and others. Each resource, either created by or reviewed by ACCFS staff, can assist in identifying the challenges of these powerful emotions and in bringing our thinking into obedience to God’s Word. For these resources, please visit our website at www.accounseling.org/category/hurtsandemotions.
In our 2020 Year in Review newsletter, we reflected on how this past year felt like it was consistently inconsistent. We began the year thinking that the biggest change we would be dealing with in our lives here at LifePoints would be the construction of the new Administration Building and the Timber Ridge improvements that would follow. We experienced an Influenza outbreak in January at Timber Ridge, and we thought that might be our only major health scare of the season. But as we all know, that is not how the rest of 2020 proceeded.

COVID-19 has certainly brought more changes to our lives than we could have imagined. Visitors and volunteers were no longer able to enter our residential facilities. Residents were no longer able to attend their workshops and outside day programs. COVID screening questions, temperature checks, and face masks all became a regular part of daily life. We have had to manage positive cases in both residents and staff. Praise God that there has been recovery and healing in those instances.

But 2020 was not all negative. There has been a lot of heartache, frustration and disappointment. However, there has also been a lot of joy and positive changes in our lives here at LifePoints. Staff creatively came up with different spirit days and celebrations to help make every moment of being at home special for residents. Family members adopted new technology skills in order to stay connected with their loved ones. Plans and funding for a new Activity Center were established. And God has been faithful through it all.

We all know that change does not stop now that a new year has begun. At LifePoints, we will be experiencing a change in leadership later this year. As many may know, our current Executive Director, Elder Bro. Ron Messner, will be retiring in August. He has worked at LifePoints since 1981 and has served as the Executive Director since 1994. The Board of Directors spent a number of months planning and interviewing candidates for the position, and they recently announced that Bro. Blake Stahl will be the new Executive Director. Bro. Blake has been living in the Chicago area with his wife and children, and he has been serving as the Director of Rehabilitation Services for several therapy centers in that area. We are thankful for his heart for our mission, and we praise God for providing for us as we enter into this new time of change.

In the spring of 2020, I heard about the need for the Summer Volunteer Coordinator at Gateway Woods and prayed about filling it. I felt like it would be a great opportunity to learn and be used over the summer. Within the first week of my new “job,” I was humbled at just how great God was for bringing me to Gateway for the summer.

Despite everything that was happening with COVID-19, I felt like my volunteers and I were able to bring life to campus that was so desperately needed by all. The Gateway campus had been closed to most visitors since March and we had a cap on the number of volunteers that could come each week. Any volunteers that were able to come, held an extra measure of hope upon their arrival.

We spent the majority of our days working around campus and “tidying” things up. In the evenings, we would enjoy endless games and laughs with the residents and each other. It was a time to lay aside all other life responsibilities and demands, and bask in the freedom
of simply loving one another and dwelling in the goodness of our Heavenly Father.

The best part of my role was watching my volunteers come with excitement and curiosity as to what Gateway Woods was all about. Watching them leave with a yearning in their hearts to stay just a little longer was the worst part.

Volunteering over the summer is so much more than just the physical work on campus that gets done. Volunteering is about building relationships with the residents and showing them just what it means to be a Christ-follower. The residents were able to see the consistency of my volunteers by their positive attitudes and joyful spirit that exuded from them. As one group of volunteers were leaving one week, one of the residents looked at me and said, “Is that how all Christians are?”

The Summer Volunteer Coordinator position opens up opportunity for sharing the Good News to teens who are desperately seeking for someone or something to fill them. How great is our God that he made it possible by opening Gateway Woods and making it easily accessible to do this? May God get the glory for all he has done and is continuing to do through Gateway Woods!

**News:**
- If you would like to share good news to searching teens through being our 2021 Summer Volunteer Coordinator, contact Bro. Keith Schambach at keith.schambach@gatewaywoods.org for more information.
- We currently have these openings at Gateway Woods: Assistant Houseparent, Gateway Farms Assistant, and Foster Care Case Manager. For more information, please see our ad in this month’s edition of The Silver Lining or visit the Careers page on our website at gatewaywoods.org/careers.
- We are searching for our Summer Education Intern. Please contact Bro. Brock Williamson at brock.williamson@gatewaywoods.org for more information. This is a great opportunity to gain some experience while impacting our residents!
- You could be a Summer Intern-Farmer with Gateway Farms. This is a great opportunity to work directly with residents as you plant and harvest bountiful gifts from the garden. Please contact Bro. Eric Bahler at gwfarms@gatewaywoods.org for more information.
- You are an important advocate to help us spread the word about God’s work at Gateway Woods. Please continue to lift us up in prayer, check our website gatewaywoods.org and our Facebook page at facebook.com/gatewaywoods often for updates, and make sure that you are on our mailing list. If you would like be added to our mailing list, please contact us at 888.443.4283 or send an email to info@gatewaywoods.org. Finally, if you would like to receive a monthly email detailing how the work at Gateway Woods is bringing help and healing to those in need, please consider joining our Restoring Hope email list. You can do so at gatewaywoods.org/newsletter or by emailing jon.ringger@gatewaywoods.org.

**Alabama, Athens**

Lisa Aschliman, Kristy Moore

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 8:38-39

We had quite a few people missing during the holidays as people went to visit their families and enjoy time together.

Bro. Jonathan Hodel (Roanoke IL) was our visiting minister in January. We are very thankful for the ministers and their wives who are willing to come and share with us on their rotations. We welcome anyone who is passing through the area to join us. We love to have visitors!
Plans are in the works for the Athens, Alabama congregation to host ALive 2021 over the Memorial Day weekend, May 29-31! Should circumstances arise that would require cancellation, a decision will be made by April 15. Registration went live February 1, so mark your calendars because our limit is 200 people. Please see the website at www.ALiveAlabama.com for more information.

We ask for continued prayers for Sis. Carolyn Lewis as she endures her battle with cancer. We would also like to ask for prayers for Shawn Ray who has had health issues lately.

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

Arizona, Phoenix

Marge Lindenbaum

“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” Eph 1:12-14

The Greek word for “redemption” is “apolutrosis,” meaning deliverance or redemption. It is a combination of two words, one meaning “ransom in full, riddance or Christian salvation,” and the other, “forth from, out of, and in composition usually denotes separation, departure, cessation, completion.” (condensed from Biblesoft’s New Exhaustive Strong’s Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary.)

We are redeemed by the blood of Christ alone (1 Pet 1:18-20). As is so often true, the Word has multiple layers. We are saved out of our sin, but not rid of our sinful nature until we step into eternity. The plan was made in eternity, before the foundation of the world, but carried out in time so it is subject to the limitations of time during our life on earth. Yet it is a completed work. God’s ways are truly higher than anything we can comprehend or imagine. His Word delivers what we can understand of this astounding plan of salvation.

Throughout the New Testament, we find encouragement and instruction to do good. Invariably, where such instruction is found, it follows that the way those things can be accomplished is in us and through us – and not by us. It is the Holy Spirit working in us. We have no capacity to do good except through the grace and help and power of God. The Spirit is given to indwell us, work in us, and conform us to the image of Christ. It is only the work of God through his Spirit that saves us from our sin. (1 Thes. 5:24, Num. 23:19, Isa. 9:7) “The presence and work of the Spirit is how we can be confident the entire transaction will be completed. Imagine standing in the presence of God, clean and pure and bearing the image of his son!

While we continue to struggle with our sinful selves, we look forward to the day we are fully redeemed, brought forth out of and separated by our departure from this corrupted life form into eternal life with God the Father. “And so shall we ever be with the Lord”. 1 Thes. 4:17

“…then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:28

We were blessed this past month by the service of three visiting ministers. We were thankful for the willingness of Bro. Arlan Miller (Sis. Katie, Gridley, IL), Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS) and Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein (Sis. Suzanne, West Lafayette, IN) to stand before us and declare the Word.

Bro. Daniel Knochel was baptized into our fellowship. We gladly welcome our new brother in Christ and wish him and his fiancé, Sis. Lexi Stoller of Gridley, IL all of God’s blessings on their union!

We participated in a blanket-cutting evening to make gifts for our homeless population to try and keep warm – the desert nights do get cold and these are necessary items, even here. We made our goal of 300 blankets in one evening! We pray that God will bless that work and those less fortunate. We wish everyone a new year filled with all the Lord’s blessings poured out in abundance.
Arizona, Prescott
Autumn Rokey
We enjoyed visiting minister Bro. Alan Schambach (Sis. Sarah, Remington, IL) and many other family visits in the past few months. While our winter may be a bit sunnier and warmer than other places, we still settle into the dormant season and hope for spring just like the returning of Christ someday. We may not experience it in our lifetime but each day we can awake knowing God's new mercies will get us through the day.

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.” Lam. 3:23

Arizona, Tucson
Dean and Jackie Knobloch
I have been relying on this melody to carry me through these trying times:

“Trust and obey,
For there’s no other way
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.”

Trust and Obey, Hymns of Zion, #186

We were sorry to hear of the passing of Sis Sandy Fehr’s (Bro. Gary) father, Leroy Brandt of Morris, MN. We offer our heartfelt sympathy.

It is a pleasure to welcome Bro. David and Sis. Anna Zimmerman and their family here as they relocate from Forrest to our small congregation. We are looking forward to worshiping with them and are thankful for their desire to support the Tucson church.

We want to thank Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Sis. Christy, Morris North, MN) for ministering to us via Zoom. We have not been gathering in person as we are still seeing large numbers of COVID-19 cases, but our hope and prayer is that soon we will once again be gathered in our house of worship.

California, Los Angeles/Altadena
Kali Sauder

“Le dijo Jesús: Yo soy la resurrección y la vida; el que cree en mí, aunque esté muerto, vivirá. Y todo aquel que vive y cree en mí, no morirá eternamente.” Juan 11:25-26

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” John 11:25-26

Together we grieve the loss of our dear sister in Christ, Sis. Adela Chavez, especially alongside her daughter, Sis. Letty and granddaughter, Kelly. The separation is painful, but in Christ we find hope knowing because her faith was firmly in her Lord Jesus, she will never die but lives eternally with him. Sis. Adela did not speak English so our fellowship with her could sometimes feel limited by our broken Spanish, but she always expressed joy to be with us. Now we look forward with hope to being reunited around the Throne when every language will sing the new song proclaiming Jesus as King and Savior.

Colorado, Denver
Tess Leman
We enjoyed several visitors over the holidays. Thank you to Bro. Scott Aberle (Sis. Dorine, Washington, IL) for sharing the Word and your smiles with us.

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.” 2 Cor. 4:8-18

Though the times may be strange and difficult (and may get worse), we are given the precious opportunity to have the death and life of Jesus be manifested in us! Let’s go represent him well to the dark, dark world around us.

Connecticut, Rockville
Heidi Beutel, Kim Schneider
We rejoice with Bro. Rob Bahler (Bro. Tom and Sis. LaNae) and Sis. Leah Steiner (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill, Morris, MN) as they announced their engagement. May God bless and guide them always!

We are thankful for Baiju Joseph (Sis. Lavanya Baiju), Rose Walder (Bro. Brent and Sis. Naomi), and Kaleigh Weigand (Bro. Brad and Sis. Deanna) as they were announced for baptism. We look forward to hearing their testimony and witnessing their baptism.
Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with little Teagan Carlson, her parents, Bro. Ben and Sis. Christie, and siblings, as she continues to undergo treatments.

**District of Columbia, Washington**

*Henrietta Meyer*

With the start of the new year and the new schedule of visiting ministers only twice a month, Bro. Preston Kaehr (Bluffton North, IN) led us in a Bible Study virtually.

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

**Florida, Fort Lauderdale**

*Renee Mangold*

We are grateful for visiting ministers Bro. Fred Dietz (Sis. Shaena, Elgin, IL), Bro. Stephen Baner (Sis. Donnalou, Gridley, IL), and Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN). We pray that he will bless them for their willingness to serve and share his word.

Bro. Dan Steiner passed away on Dec 30, 2020 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Bro. Dan’s funeral service was held in Tremont, IL. Our sympathy goes out to Sis. Shirley and her family and pray for God’s comfort and peace. Bro. Dan and Sis. Shirley have been regular winter visitors for many years. Bro. Dan loved the Ft. Lauderdale church family and was loved and appreciated by all. He will be dearly missed.

Our sympathy also goes out to the family of Kaywin Martin (Patricia), who passed away in Delray Beach, FL on January 11, 2021. Kaywin’s funeral service was held in Roanoke, IL.

We are really looking forward to our winter visitors that may soon be coming. We are delighted to have you worship with us. However, since we expect to have visitors traveling to Ft. Lauderdale from so many different places, we ask for your help to keep the church open and everyone safe and healthy. We will be limiting our Sunday services to a morning only gathering, without lunch or Sunday school. We ask that everyone wear a mask, practice social distancing, and sit together by families. Please do not attend services if you have been exposed to COVID-19 within the past 10 days or have had any recent symptoms of COVID-19. While we may be socially distancing, we can all look forward to spiritually being closer than ever as we appreciate our health and the desire God has given to come together in worship. Thanks for your understanding and support. We hope to see you soon.

**Florida, Fort Myers**

*Addison Steidinger, Carrie Steidinger*

“Continue in prayer” Col. 4:2

“A prayerless soul is a Christless soul. If you are a child of God, you will seek your Father’s face, and live in your Father’s love. Pray that this year you may be holy, humble, zealous, and patient; have closer communion with Christ, and enter often into the banqueting-house of his love. Pray that you are an example and a blessing to others, and that you may live more to the glory of your Master.” Spurgeon, Morning and Evening

Our church family rejoiced together on December 20 as Addison Steidinger (Bro. Karl and Sis. Carrie) was baptized as a sign of her union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. We give a special thanks to Elder Bro. Jeff Streitmatter (Sis. Lynne, Sarasota, FL) for leading her as she shared her faith in Christ with the church.

We pray often that God will equip men with the Spirit in order to share his Word. “That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.” (1 Cor. 1:5).

God has answered this prayer through Bro. Curt Rassi (Sis. Kathy, Tremont, IL) and Bro. Andrew Rassi (Sis. Sandy, Morton, IL) who were with us this month to lead in worship.

**Florida, Sarasota**

*Sandra Kaeb*

As a new year is upon us, we look forward to seeing our winter residents. With all the regulations and health advisories, our number of winter visitors has declined. We are thankful for those who can come this year and we will miss those who will not be able to visit.

On January 13 we held our business meeting. For a small church everyone is needed and it is a blessing.
to see the body of Christ working together. For those who continued in their position, for the new ones coming in, and for those whose term expired, may God reward you for your service and willing hearts.

We ask that anyone traveling from the north not come to church or attend group functions outside of church for a seven day period after arrival. We ask that everyone (locals and visitors) respect and follow the intent of this requirement, which is to provide protection for all those attending church services during the winter months when we have a high rate of turnover of attendees.

Haiti, Bonne Fin - Hospital Lumiere
Rick and Komari Aberle
Greetings in Jesus from Bonne Fin!

We continue to face decisions with the mission here. We want to thank the church for continued prayers that God will send workers to the field.

We also are thankful for some travelers over the past weeks. Sis. Komari Aberle and children were able to return to the hospital for the holidays. Sis. Lydianne Metzger was able to visit family in the U.S. over Christmas as well. We also want to say farewell and thank you to Ruth Feucht as she completed her service. We wish her Gods blessings as she reintegrates into life in the U.S. We welcome to our team Sis. Joan Schmidgall from Morris, MN. Sis. Joan is serving a short-term assignment with us in support of the mission. May God bless her efforts and service.

Our visitors over the past month include Bro. Tom Hitz (Detroit, MI) and Bro. Gardy and Sis. Suzanne Moreau and family (Rockville, CT). Both of these hospital board members were here in support of the mission. Additionally, Bro. Matt Knapp (Peachtree City, GA), Bro. Jon Zeller (Morton, IL) and Bro. Rick Wuethrich (Francesville, IN) visited the HarvestCall missions in Haiti. Bro. Matt and Bro. Jon served us by sharing the Word with us as we gathered for services. The hospital was also visited by a South Carolina orthopedic team this past month.

Haiti, Les Cayes
Mike and Susie Walder

We want to heartily welcome the Schrock family to Les Cayes to begin serving in the construction department! Bro. Kurt and Sis. Julie Schrock and children Josiah, Gabriel, Corban, Kylie and Nathaniel (Congerville, IL) are a welcome addition to the HarvestCall team here and also to the local missionary group, which has been greatly diminished in recent years. It is not a small step of faith to move a family internationally into a challenging, needy culture and they will surely appreciate your prayers.

We were thankful for a number of visitors recently. Bro. Matt Knapp (HarvestCall executive director, Peachtree City, GA), his daughter Sis. Megan, Bro. Rick Wuethrich (Francesville, IN) and Bro. Jon Zeller (Morton, IL) came to view HarvestCall operations and encourage the missionaries. Bro. Matt and Bro. Jon also gladly shared God’s Word with us on a Sunday afternoon and many other local missionaries were able to be present for the service and meal following. Thank you for your visit.

Bro. Les and Sis. Christine Kaeb and Bro. Doug Leman (Francesville, IN) were also able to come help at the dairy for a few weeks while Bro. Daryl and Sis. Deb Knobloch were back in Bradford for Christmas.

A nice group of men from Akron, Ohio came to help the construction department put a new roof on a church out on the southwest coast. We know the experience was a huge blessing to all involved, recipient and giver alike. Another group was also able to come to assist the Apostolic Water Aid program. This is so appreciated since these supportive brothers always teach and encourage the Haitian workers while performing machinery maintenance.

As travel restrictions are tightening around the world, and specifically impacting travel back into the U.S., we pray for discernment for all upcoming trip planning.

Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Walder were very happy to receive news of the birth of their first grandchild, Eugene, born to Bro. Evan and Sis. Leah Walder (Roanoke, IL). Sis. Susie is in the U.S. now for a time.
Illinois, Belvidere

Darcy Steffen

We would like to warmly welcome Sis. Deana Beyer to our congregation! She moved here from Prescott, AZ to be closer to her children. We enjoyed getting to know her for a few weeks until she was admitted to the hospital due to COVID-19 complications. Please keep her in your prayers, and we pray she can worship with us in person again soon!

Our hearts were broken when we heard the news that Bro. Gary Schifferer, Jr. (Washington, IL) passed away suddenly. Bro. Gary Jr. is the grandson of Bro. Bill and Sis. Lana Schifferer. His parents are Gary Schifferer (Marianne) and Peggy Schifferer of Marengo, IL. We plead for prayers on behalf of his family following this devastating loss.

We are thankful that in such a time of shock and sadness after the funeral, our Elder Bro. Duane Rocke (Sis. Bonnie), took the time to engage our church family in a conversation around sudden loss. I often wonder how we would ever get through such trials on this earth if we did not have a hope of heaven. My sister-in-law recently introduced the following song to me:

“In the moment He appears and the light from heaven shines, I’ll forget ev’ry fear, ev’ry pain I’ll leave behind. Then I’ll see Him as He is and I’ll know Him as I’m known. Ev’ry tear wiped away when I go home. Ever present is the tho’t that a moment waits for me When unworthy as I am, His glory I will see. I will empty all my praise before my Father’s throne. Ev’ry tear wiped away when I go home. If the trial I endure and your presence I can’t find, Be near me, Lord, I pray, bring back unto my mind That your promises are firm and I’m never on my own. Ev’ry tear wiped away when I go home.”

When I Go Home, G.M. Eldridge

Illinois, Bloomington

Kinsey Dotterer, Lauren Zimmerman

We are very thankful for a new year and new faces in our church family. We welcome Bro. Darren and Sis. Kendra Fehr and their son Carson. We also welcome Sis. Sadie Rumbold. We rejoice with Sam Knochel; son of Bro. Ben and Sis. Molly, who has given his heart to the Lord. We mourn with the family of Sis. Terri Huber (Bro. Ryan) upon the death of her father, Kaywin Martin (Patricia, Delray Beach, FL). Our prayers are also with Bro. Allen Huber (Sis. Erika) a grandson of Kaywin.

We enjoyed a blessed weekend hearing the testimonies and witnessing the baptisms of Sis. Livia Schumacher (Bro. Greg and Sis. Shelley) and Bro. Will Steffen (Bro. Sam and Sis. Shelley). We appreciated having Elder Bro. Harvey Kaeb (Sis. Judy, Gridley, IL) and Bro. Klint Bahler (Sis. Alesia, Indianapolis, IN) as visiting ministers this month as well.

We celebrate in joy with Bro. Drew and Sis. Danae Martin at the birth of their daughter Maebel Rose. She was welcomed home by older siblings, Micaiah and Elowyn. Grandparents are Bro. Alan and Sis. Janice Martin (Princeville, IL) and Bro. Don and Sis Jackie Hoerr (Peoria, IL).

We started our year off right with a Wednesday Selah night. The fitting topic was, “A Night of Prayer.” The importance of praying for our church body and being intentional in this new year with our prayer was the main discussion. Truly, no better way to start off 2021.

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” Heb. 13:8

Illinois, Bradford

Becky Endress, Lena Stoller

“The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted…He delivereth me from mine enemies…Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.” Psa. 18:46, 48-49

After a recent day of worship, I thought of this Psalm magnifying the Lord and his work in our lives. First we read in St. John 18 about Jesus’ trial, when Pilate said “What is truth?” In this world, we were reminded, there are many voices and conflicting stories, and it is hard to know what to believe. That is when we should look up beyond the strife and confusion in the world and remember that Jesus told
us to expect it. Do not be troubled; now is the time to rejoice that there is a heavenly kingdom coming!

That afternoon we read in Exodus 5. When the Israelites asked to go and worship God, Pharaoh retorted that they must not have enough to do, and increased their workload. In 1 Corinthians 16, Paul, who was a forceful, energetic man, told the church, ‘A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.’ 1 Cor. 16:9. The Lord has work for us all, but sometimes when he places a work on our heart, we say, “I’m too busy,” and we miss that window of opportunity. Maybe our ‘adversary’ is our busyness. There isn’t time to do everything, so we need to discern which things are profitable and right.

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.” 1 Cor. 16:13-14

Thanks to our ministers who labor for us so faithfully week after week. Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI) visited recently, sharing in this work.

We are thankful Bro. Jordan Elsasser (Sis. Sharon, dec) is recovering well from his hip replacement surgery and able to assemble with us again.

**Illinois, Champaign**

**Brent Young**

This month, our church family enjoyed the best type of weekend; one that includes a testimony and baptism. Sis. Addie Waibel (Bro. Brian and Sis. Wendy) testified that Jesus is the answer to our sin problem and was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19). Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth, Goodfield, IL) shared a clear gospel message on Sunday morning, and on Saturday evening he encouraged us that ‘2020 was a good year.’

It was not always easy. It was rarely predictable and at times even unprecedented. It was good though, because God is good (he loves us), and God is great (he is in control). God is good all the time. All the time, God is good.

**Illinois, Chicago**

**Diana Eisenmann**

Online services continued through the holidays and into the new year.

We rejoice with Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget Rassi on the engagement of their son Carl to Maddie (Madeline) Matthews of Columbus, OH. Maddie’s parents are Dave and Tricia Matthews, also from Columbus. They are planning a wedding next winter.

Bro. Emmaus Rassi (Bro. Matthew and Sis. Bridget) graduated from high school in December and moved to Sardis, OH for work. Bro. Fred Sollberger also moved to Morton, IL due to a change in employment. We will miss both of them, but we are grateful for God’s guidance in their lives and know they will each be a blessing in their new location.

We are excited that Bro. Luke and Sis. Lydia Kieser moved to Chicago at the beginning of the year for schooling and student teaching, respectively. Bro. Luke attended school in Chicago prior to their wedding last spring, and we are glad to welcome them back into our church family.

**Illinois, Cisna Park**

**Denise Kaeb, Louann Kaeb**

We extend our sympathy to Sis. Velma Rinkenberger as her family circle is growing smaller. She said goodbye to two of her brothers, Bro. Richard Steiner (Sis. Ann, Tremont, IL) and Bro. Dan Steiner (Sis. Shirley, Tremont, IL).

“One by one their seats were emptied,

One by one they went away,

Now the family is parted.

Will it be complete one day? ”

*Will the Circle Be Unbroken,*

*Hymns of Zion,* #222

We also received word of the passing of Sis. Elna Grimm (Elder Bro. Bob Grimm dec., Goodfield, IL). Elna is the aunt of our Bro. Mark Waldbeser. As a child, I have fond memories of the Feller sisters and their families returning home to Cisna Park and several of their husbands were ministers. I remember it as always being an encouraging Sunday.

I must admit I was a bit discouraged the Sunday we were to have our Christmas Sunday school program but could not because of the pandemic. It was announced that morning that we would sing Christmas songs at noon with our own song leader. I was so refreshed and encouraged by our doing that as a congregation! There is nothing as beautiful as singing *Silent Night*
as a congregation! If our current situation has done anything, it has caused us to be thankful for the “small” things that we have taken advantage of in the past.

Along those same lines, our Sunday school and song leaders have returned to the practice of singing up front at the beginning of our afternoon service. What a blessing for our congregation to see the joy on the faces of our students and the singing so beautiful! The Sunday school has also returned to their respective places. It is also a joy to know they are again congregating in the church building.

We are also doing a partial remodel in our Fellowship Hall. All is going quickly and we look forward to using the new areas!

Our Bro. Wayne and Sis. Delores Knapp have been dealing with an unexpected hardship in their family. Their grandson, Andrew Knapp and his wife Jamie, were on vacation in Florida when Jamie was hospitalized. She has since been transferred to undergo therapy and will, hopefully soon, be able to return to the Chicago area for further therapy. Our hearts and prayers go out to this family and especially to their two preschool aged children. May Jamie and the rest of the family feel our prayers and love!

One final thought: “Great faith is a product of great fights. Great testimonies are the outcome of great tests. Great triumphs can only come out of great trials.” Smith Wigglesworth

**Illinois, Congerville**

**Mary Knapp, Erica Steffen**

We sadly bid farewell to Bro. Kurt and Sis. Julie Schrock as they have relocated to serve in Les Cayes, Haiti. At their sending service, Bro. Jon Zeller (Sis. Christine, Morton, IL) shared a short history of the mission in Haiti, as well as what some of the Schrocks’ responsibilities will be. We trust God will watch between us and look forward to their visits home.

A final farewell was said to our Sis. Maxine Virkler, as she passed peacefully into eternity on January 9. Our prayers are with her dear husband, retired Elder Bro. Andy, (formerly of Bay City, MI) as well as her children, including Bro. Dennis (Sis. Gayle), and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. The promise of heaven grows more real to each who watch their loved ones cross over. Praise be to God for this living hope!

“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” John 14:2

**Illinois, Eureka**

**Debra Blunier, Lavonne Schumacher**

“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” James 1:4

A young relative of mine was very excited to start piano lessons, but after half a year, his parents report that he still likes his piano lesson but does not want to practice. Isn’t that human nature, for adults, too? There is a spiritual parallel for us in “practicing patience.” We long for the pandemic to be over and done, but meanwhile we need to be active in whatever the Lord has called us to do, and to be patient in waiting for God to give us the blessings that he knows are best for us. His timing is not ours, but it is perfect.

With so many cancellations and postponements due to COVID-19, it sometimes seemed that nothing was happening in 2020. But when we look back, we realize that we experienced many joys, and some sorrows. We welcomed eight babies into our midst. We were thankful for 12 converts and four baptisms. We had one wedding and six funerals.

We extend sympathy to Sis. Gail Rhodes in the passing of her father, Harold Hurwitz.

Bro. Tom Schambach (Sis. Connie) and Bro. Nate Steffen (Sis. Marilyn, dec) were hospital patients this month. We pray for their continued recovery and for others in our congregation who have been sick.

**Illinois, Elgin**

**Amy Gasser**

Congratulations to Landon Kellenberger and Ashley Gregory, who have announced their engagement. Their parents are Bro. Greg and Sis. Debbie Kellenberger and Mark and Jane Gregory, also of Elgin.

Our Sunday school Christmas program was held virtually. We thank the students and teachers for their efforts in presenting it to us.
Through all this, we are grateful to those who served our church family so willingly this past year.

We mourn the passing of Sis. Nathalia Getz (Bro. Allan) on December 18. Our sympathy goes to her sons, Bro. Wayne Getz (Sis. Mary) and Bro. Gary Getz (Sis. Gail), as well as to all the family. She loved attending church, and we will miss her. “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.” Psa. 122:1. May we gladly make our way heavenward, to the everlasting home of our Lord.

We thank Bro. Kevin Schrock (Sis. Rachel, Congerville, IL) and Elder Bro. Tony Manz (Sis. Denise, Junction, OH) for bringing us the Word. Hearing visiting ministers is one of the special blessings that binds our churches across the land.

Illinois, Fairbury

Kati Meiss, Trish Steidinger

We thank Bro. Jerry Wagenbach (Sis. Bonnie, Mediapolis, IA) for ministering the Word to us recently. We pray the Lord will bless him for his efforts on our behalf.

Our prayers have been with Bro. Jim and Sis. Juanita Walter and Sis. Marsha Fehr (Bro. Nathan) as they have been hospitalized or have been experiencing some health complications. We pray they will soon be in good health again.

“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Mark 10:15

Thinking of little children brings to mind many attributes. Little children are trusting, loving, forgiving and resilient. They want love and acceptance from their parents. Little children seek to please. Let’s focus on the childlike attribute of being resilient. A couple of definitions of resilient are, 1. able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions, and 2. able to recoil or spring back into shape after bending, stretching, or being compressed. I have to wonder, if we are being resilient. Are we as trees rooted deep in Jesus’ love so when we are bent and stretched, we spring back into shape? Do we recover quickly from difficult conditions? Little children love to walk hand in hand with their parents. I believe if we place our hand in the hand of our Heavenly Father and fully trust him to lead us, we will be resilient because we know he is in control. We don’t have to worry because we know he will care for us. Finally, children are so quick to smile and show their joy! May we, as little children, share our joy through our smiles to those we meet along the way. This is what our Father wants for his children, for as Jesus also said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” Mark 10:14

Illinois, Forrest

Jessica Gerber, Marsha Lanz

As the turmoil of the world seems to be growing, the quiet peace of God becomes more precious. Worries, anxieties and fears for the future strive for a place in our hearts, but how comforting to know that we can rest in the knowledge that God is still in control. We thank our Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO) for being willing to remind us of God’s love for us.

Feeling God’s peace in their heart and desiring baptism, we rejoice with our converts Benton and Erica Kaeb and Elise Dotterer (Bro. Jason and Sis. Lynn).

We rejoiced to listen to the testimonies of our new Bro. Kirk and Sis. Myra Edelman, along with their daughters Sis. Brianne and Sis. Kendra. We thank Elder Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda, Tremont, IL) for assisting during the evening. What an encouragement for all of us to be reminded of God’s provision and faithfulness.

Our prayers are with Bro. Larry Ifft (Sis. Shirley) as he recovers from knee surgery. May God continue to grant healing.

We rejoice with Bro. Joe and Sis. Damaris Kaeb as they welcome little Oaklynn Grace into their home, joining big brother Brecken. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Kevin and Sis. Kara Moser (Fairbury, IL). It’s precious moments like these that bring the late Bro. Eldon and Sis. Stephanie Kaeb close to our hearts as we see their faith and loving example passed to their grandchildren.

Our prayers go with two dear couples who have moved to different churches. May God grant a smooth transition for Bro. David and Sis. Anna Zimmerman and their
children as they support the small church in Tucson, AZ. We also pray God’s wisdom for Bro. Pete and Sis. Jolene Zimmerman and their family as they move to Leo, IN to serve at Gateway Woods.

As new duties were taken on at our annual business meeting, we appreciate the willingness of brethren to serve. We are also thankful for those who have completed their terms, giving of their time and talents to work in his vineyard.

Notes of thanks:
I wish to thank everyone for all the love, cards, phone calls and other items sent to Al and I for my 90th birthday. It was very much appreciated and quite humbling. May God bless everyone and a special love to all. Sis. Melba Zimmerman

Notes of thanks:
We so appreciate the love, prayers, cards, gifts and food shared with us since surgery. May God richly bless you. - Bro. Larry and Sis. Shirley Ifft

Illinois, Goodfield
Amy Hinrichsen, Judy Knapp

“Another year is dawning,
Dear Master let it be…”
Another Year is Dawning,
Hymns of Zion, 150.

Aren’t we thankful, that as we begin a new year, not knowing what is before us, that our Father in heaven has it all in his loving hands? The past year has been one of many challenges for sure with many chances to give God the glory he deserves. Did we complain about the restrictions we were faced with or did we find it a time to praise God for his goodness to us each and every day? God is good and will supply our every need if we just trust him completely in all things.

Our dear Sis. Amber Enhle has allowed God to lead her down a new path in life, as she felt called to the missionary work at the Gateway Woods campus. Sis. Amber is the daughter of Bro. Phil and Sis. Barb Enhle (Princeville, IL). A special sending service was held for her on January 3 and we sent her off with our blessings.

Also allowing God to lead them are our Bro. Lakin Dietrich and Sis. Abby Feucht, as their engagement was announced to the church. Parents are Bro. John Dietrich (Congerville, IL) and Renee Dietrich and Bro. Curt and Sis. Beth Feucht (Washington, IL).

A number of our loved ones have had surgeries or illness and we lift them all up to the Father in prayer. Tony Wirth had back surgery and reports that he had immediate relief after the surgery for which we are thankful. Also, we are thankful to report a successful heart procedure for our Sis. Bonnie Gerst (Bro. Steve, dec). Sis. Vi Wagner was hospitalized for a few days and is now recuperating at the nursing home.

Bro. Alfred Kieser (Sis. Marie) grieves the loss of his twin brother, Albert, who passed away in Florida recently. We lift the Kiesers up in prayer during this time of loss. Our dear Sis. Elna Grimm (Elder Bro. Bob, dec) received her crown of victory on December 30. Her funeral was held on January 4 and conducted by her grandson, Bro. Mike Grimm (Sis. Amber, San Diego, CA). Surviving children are Sis. Terry Hart (Bro. Bill), Sis. Peg Rinkenberger (Bro. Jaye), Sis. Trish Gerber (Bro. Roger), Sis. Pam Wiegand (Bro. Art), Sis. Lisa Rieke (Bro. Brian), and Elder Bro. Jeff Grimm (Sis. Ruth), all of our Goodfield congregation, Sis. Jacki Huber (Bro. Brian, Francesville, IN) and Sis. Livy Blunier (Bro. Kurt, Eureka IL). Sis. Elna was known for her writings, especially poems, and after she passed away the children found this letter to her Lord in her Bible. I felt it was such a beautiful description of who she was that I wanted to share it with all the readers.

"Dear Lord,
Sometimes my faith is very weak
And you seem far away
But its your nearness, Lord I seek
From day to weary day
I want to feel your hand in mine
Where e’er I chance to be
It’s such a comfort just to know
That you are here with me
I know a truer friend, dear Lord
There could not ever be
Than one who gave his life for all
For such a one as me
It breaks my heart when I reflect
Upon the way you died
The bitter anguish that you bore
As you were crucified
Not only did you bear my sins
Along with utter shame
But for the sins of all the world
Alone…you took the blame
And when you were forsaken there
By everyone you knew
You cried, “Dear Father please forgive
They know not what they do”
There never was a greater love
Nor could there ever be…
Than that great awful sacrifice
You made to set me free.”
- Sis. Elna Grimm
Blessings to all as we journey together toward Heaven this new year!

Illinois, Gridley
Perry Klopfenstein
We are happy to report the marriage engagement of Sis. Lexi Stoller to Bro. Daniel Knochel, (Phoenix, AZ) on December 10. A native of Gridley, Sis. Lexi now resides in Phoenix. She is the daughter of Bro. Mike and Sis. Peggy Stoller. He is the son of Elder Bro. Herbie and Sis. Laurie Knochel. We offer them our congratulations and praise God for the Lord’s work in guiding them together. They are planning to be married on March 20, Lord willing.

Ashley Cela of our congregation was seriously injured in a car accident just west of Gridley on Route 24. She suffered multiple injuries and was rushed to the hospital. Her life was spared, thanks to God, and she is recovering, although doctors say the road to recovery may be a long one.

Visiting ministers were Bro. Brandon Emch (Sis. Maria, Kansas City, MO) and Bro. Mark Wettstein (Sis. Karen, Lamar, MO). We appreciate and thank these brothers for their preaching labors.

Illinois, Morton
Annette Tanner

Even as we were for many reasons glad to see 2020 end, we are aware many of the situations which made us feel that way still persist; the pandemic, political unrest, etc. Yet we still have many reasons to rejoice and be thankful.

December 20 we heard the engagement of Bro. Scott Kieser (Magdalena, MX) son of Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jane Kieser, to Sis. Arika Nuest (Magdalena, MX) daughter of Bro. Lee and Sis. Paula Nuest (Latty, OH). We wish this special couple God’s blessings as they make plans for their March 21 wedding in Latty.

We rejoice with first-time parents Bro. Reid and Sis. Ashley Aberle as they welcome Sadie Lynn into their hearts and home. She was born December 24. Happy grandparents are Bro. Todd and Sis. Wendy Braker and Sis. Debbie Aberle (Bro. Peter, dec., Tremont, IL).

Our deepest sympathy goes to four dear families who laid to rest their loved one. December 24, Bro. Milton “Milt” Grimm entered heaven. Surviving him are his wife, Sis. Shirley Grimm and one daughter, Linda Miller (Robert). December 30, Sis. Elna Grimm (Elder Bro. Bob, dec., Goodfield, IL) earned her heavenly reward. Among her many survivors is her sister, Sis. Geri Neukomm (Bro. Al) of our Morton church. December 31, our Sis. Marie Ellen “Pat” Landes (Bro. Bruce, dec.) met her loving Saviour. Left to mourn her loss are two daughters, Sis. Barb Schwind (Bro. Dave, Roanoke, IL) and Beth Ehresman (Gridley, IL). January 11, Kaywin Martin (Patricia, Delray Beach, FL) passed away. He was the grandfather of our Sis. Sheryl Kaiser (Bro. Nick).

We congratulate Sis. Brianna Tanner (Bro. Brian and Sis. Dawn) and Bro. Kalahan Aberle (Bro. Scott and Sis. Dorine Aberle, Washington, IL), as they were united in holy matrimony on January 3. Bro. Scott gave much good advice to them, and to all of us, as he had the wedding service. We wish this dear couple God’s blessings as they begin their married life, and in the years ahead as they worship with the Washington congregation. We thank Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) an uncle of Sis. Brianna, for sharing God’s Word with us at our morning service.

January 8 we sang a farewell hymn for Bro. Joe Gomez who is moving to Moline to help care for family members. We wish him God’s guidance, direction and blessings as he ministers to those around him.

January 8 our Bro. Andrew Rassi (Sis. Sandy) continued our Family Worship Night.
topic of “God of Miracles” with instruction to “Thank Him”. Bro. Andrew reminded us#1 Do not focus on accumulating “stuff”. #2 Be thankful for small things. #3 God owns everything. We need to be generous and share with others.

As we continue to pray for our nation as a whole, our church, and ourselves in these uncertain times, we need to remember to heed the words of the following hymn:

“When upon life’s billows
You are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged,
Thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings,
Name them one by one,
And it will surprise you
What the Lord hath done.
Are you ever burdened
With a load of care?
Does the cross seem heavy
You are called to bear?
Count your many blessings,
Every doubt will fly,
And you will be singing
As the days go by.
When you look at others
With their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised
You His wealth untold;
Count your many blessings,
Money cannot buy
Your reward in heaven,
Nor your home on high.
So, amid the conflict,
Whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged,
God is over all;
Count your many blessings,
Angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you
To your journey’s end.

Count your many blessings,
Name them one by one;
Count your many blessings,
See what God hath done.”

Count Your Blessings,
Hymns of Zion #116

Illinois, Peoria
Bonnie Bach, Crystal Wettstein

As we begin the new year, I am reminded of the words of a hymn.
“I don’t know about tomorrow,
I just live from day to day.
I don’t borrow from its sunshine,
For its skies may turn to gray.
I don’t worry o’er the future,
For I know what Jesus said,
And today I’ll walk beside Him,
For He knows what is ahead.”

I Know Who Holds Tomorrow,
Melodies of Praise, #112

Our church welcomes a new baby boy, Steffen Wells, born to Bro. Caleb and Sis. Kristen Plattner. May God give wisdom to these first-time parents as they seek to train him in God’s ways!

We extend sympathy to Sis. Leona Ivie and Sis. Glenna Pflederer in the loss of their sister, Ilene Hild. Sis. Elsa Hartman (late Bro. Leroy) passed away at age 99. She faithfully served the Lord for many years and supported her husband who was a minister. May God be with her family, Sis. Vicki Hartzler (Bro. Al, Princeville, IL) and Sis. Mary Plattner (Elder Bro. Rick, Fairbury, IL).

Sis. Amanda Kieser, Bro. Caleb Roecker, and Bro. Karl Weyeneth will be our new Sunday school teachers. Bro. Mike Hoerr will have new responsibilities as a trustee. God bless all who serve!

“Many things about tomorrow,
I don’t seem to understand;
But I know who holds tomorrow,
And I know who holds my hand.”

Illinois, Princeville
Melinda Christ, Cherie White

On Christmas, Bro. Matt Zimmerman (Sis. Kim, St. Louis, MO) visited family here and we are thankful for his ministry. Unfortunately, our annual Christmas program had to be cancelled. However, the Sunday school children still got their treat bags that they look forward to! We are thankful God provided another opportunity to worship him. A drive through nativity and chili supper was held on the Princeville Fellowship Hall property and our brethren, friends and community alike were reminded of the birth of our Lord and Saviour who would one day give his life for all mankind.

“Haste and seek your soul’s salvation;
Heed the word of God today!”
Repent Ye!, Zion’s Harp, #52

Our hearts are full of joy when another soul seeks the Lord in repentance. We rejoice with Libby Martin (Bro. Larry and Sis. Tiffany).

Starting in the New Year, we are thankful to be able to congregate for two services again and have the Sunday school children resume classes.

Precious Maebel Rose was born January 1 to Bro. Drew and
Sis. Danae Martin, (Bloomington, IL). Siblings are Micaiah and Elowyn. Grandparents are Bro. Alan and Sis. Janice Martin.

December 27 was the baptism day for Bro. Alec Wagenbach (Bro. Tim and Sis. Tricia) and Sis. Kendra Wagenbach (Bro. Troy and Sis. June). May God’s blessings be upon them!

We will miss Bro. Quinn and Sis. Sandi Steffen and family, Colt and Auburn as they follow the call to serve at Gateway Woods. May God provide for all those that reside there and bless the support of the staff.

Our annual business meeting was held on Wednesday, January 6. May God bless the efforts of those that retired from their positions and for those that assumed new roles.

Several spent time in the hospital. We continue to pray for Sis. Bertha Jean Herrmann (Bro. Harry, dec). We are thankful that Bro. Al Hartzler (Sis. Vicki) is now at home. Diane Stahl was also hospitalized and now has moved to Apostolic Christian Skylines.

May God console those that have lost loved ones. Sis. Nathalia Getz (Bro. Allan, Eureka, IL) passed away. Her sister is Sis. Anna Lou Grimm (Bro. Earl, dec). Sis. Elsa Hartman (Fairbury, IL) has passed. She is the mother of Sis. Vicki Hartzler (Bro. Allan, Eureka, IL). We sorrow for Ron and Mary Satzler whose son, John has passed away. May God comfort each one.

**Illinois, Roanoke**

**Judy Sauder, Barb Schwind**

Bro. Bob and Sis. Ann Knapp celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on December 27. We wish them God’s rich blessings on this special milestone and throughout the coming years.

Many in our church are rejoicing over the birth of a new family member. Bro. Evan and Sis. Leah Walder welcomed their first child, Eugene Richard, on December 23. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Rich and Sis. Bev Bertschi, and Bro. Mike and Sis. Susie Walder who serve in Haiti. On December 28, Granger Lane was born to Bro. Luke and Sis. Allison Fischer. Older brothers and sister Clay, Halle, Reid, and Cason, as well as grandparents, Bro. Duane and Sis. Rachel Schroeder and Bro. Kevin and Sis. Annette Fischer, are also thrilled with his arrival. Nellie Rose arrived to bless the home of Bro. Sam and Sis. Emily Wettstein on January 14. Her older brothers and sisters Will, Jack, Hattie, and Tillie, and grandparents, Bro. Scott and Sis. Elaine Frank (Eureka, IL) and Bro. Gary and Sis. Elna Wettstein, are also rejoicing at Nellie’s arrival. Also, Maverick Jesse was born to Jeremiah and Heidi Edwards of El Paso, IL, on August 26. Bro. Don and Sis. Colleen Leman are his thankful grandparents. Bro. Jim and Sis. Connie Hodel became first-time grandparents with the birth of a granddaughter, Theodora (Theo) Calypso, to Troy and Elissa Dennis of Clarksville, IN, on January 8.

Bro. Matt and Sis. Jennifer Mangold welcomed Carter Matthew into their family on January 14. He is their first grandchild and is the son of Ben and Nelly Mangold, who are serving with the U.S. Army in Germany. May God richly bless these dear families as they raise their children in the ways of the Lord.

“…Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Cor. 15:54

A number in our church have laid to rest dear loved ones in the past month. Merlin Kaeb (Ida Lou, Arrowsmith, IL) passed away on December 10. He was a brother-in-law to Bro. Russ Leman. Sis. Nathalia Getz (Bro. Allan, Eureka, IL) went to be with the Lord on December 18. She was a sister-in-law to Sis. Jan Getz and Jerry Getz (Raylene). Wilmer Blunier went to his heavenly home on December 23. He was the father of Bro. Ray Blunier (Sis. Wendy), a brother to Sis. Erma Moser and Sis. Rachel Leman (Bro. Rich), and a brother-in-law to Sis. Sally Blunier, all of Roanoke. Sis. Pat Landes (Morton, IL) went to be with the Lord on December 31. She was the mother of Sis. Barb Schwind (Bro. Dave). Sis. Wilma Pulfer (Bro. Leslie, Tremont, IL) died on December 31. She was a sister to Leslie Wettstein (Susan). Kaywin Martin (Patricia, Delray Beach, FL) passed away on January 11. He was a brother to Bro. Glen Martin (Sis. Carol). Dave Rankin (Barb, Eureka, IL) died on January 14. He was a brother-in-law of Sis. Carol Knapp. We rejoice that
our dear loved ones have won the victory in Jesus, and we ask that our Lord would comfort these families in their loss.

Our Bible Class students sang outside of the Roanoke Apostolic Christian Home on December 20. We thank them for blessing the residents there!

On January 3, Bro. Matt Oesch (Sis. Shelli, Alto, MI) and Bro. Ben Lindberg (Sis. Anneliese, Taylor, MO) were our visiting ministers. Bro. Matt read from Ezra 6. “…for the Lord had made them joyful…” Ezra 6:22. Bro. Matt encouraged us to live from the perspective of joy as we look forward with unspeakable joy to the second advent of Jesus when he will bring perfect restoration to mankind. We thank all of our ministering brothers and their wives for faithfully serving us on the pulpit and ask for God’s continued blessing upon them.

The engagement of Bro. Eddie Moser (Bro. Greg and Sis. Shar) and Sis. Jessie Jones (Bro. Steve and Sis. Susie, Washington, IL) was announced on January 10. May God richly bless this dear couple as they look forward to marriage.

On January 10, Elder Bro. Frank Sauder (Sis. Kathy) encouraged our church to have patience during these difficult times we are going through as a nation. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Rom 8:28. Bro. Frank reminded us that Joseph, Daniel, and David all served in kingdoms and under leaders who did not follow the Lord. Bro. Frank exhorted us that even though it is easy to be somewhat fearful when we look at our earthly circumstances, we can trust that “…perfect love casteth out fear…” 1 John 4:18. And “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also give us all things?” Rom 8:32. We are so grateful for the Lord’s faithful promises and provision and thank Bro. Frank for his words of encouragement. We thank all of our ministering brothers and their wives for faithfully serving us on the pulpit and in so many other ways, most of which we are unaware of.

We rejoice with Natalie Hodel (Bro. Jason and Sis. Rena) who has begun her walk with the Lord. We pray for God’s rich blessings upon Natalie in her journey of faith.

On January 17, a number from our church helped with services at the Peoria Rescue Mission. What a blessing to share the Good News of Jesus with others.

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 15:11

Bro. John Bradle (Sis. Jill) led a topical Bible study “What is joy and how can I have it?” on January 17. We were encouraged to be like a thermostat and not a thermometer regarding joy in our lives. Rather than our joy level fluctuating depending on the circumstances of life (like a thermometer), our joy should remain steady regardless of the circumstances of life (like a thermostat). We thank Bro. John for sharing these insights with us.

We want to lift up Sis. Doris Hodel, Sis. Pat Fischer, Eugene Walder (Bro. Evan and Sis. Leah), and Bro. Dave Schwind (Sis. Barb) in prayer for our Lord’s healing mercies. Eugene is home from the hospital and doing well, and Bro. Dave’s recent CT scan showed no evidence of disease. We are so thankful for God’s enduring faithfulness and mercy!

**Illinois, Tremont**

**Debbie Aberle, Lucy Kaiser**

Come see the baby Jesus, lying on the hay! We rejoiced that our Sunday school children could present us with a Christmas program. Our tradition in Tremont is for all to receive an orange. Elder Bro. James Fehr related the white “stuff” of an orange (under the skin) to our year of 2020, and how we need to get rid of the frustration, anger, and bitterness, and get to the good fruit of the orange (Jesus), and partake of him, for Jesus is going to return to claim his own!

We rejoice with Bro. Tom and Sis. Jane Bolliger with the birth of a new grandson, Mack Oliver Slagel, born to Jason and Debbie in Florida. Sis. Debbie Aberle is thankful for the safe arrival of granddaughter Sadie Lynn, born to Bro. Reid and Sis. Ashley Aberle (Morton, IL).

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Psa. 23: 4, 6

Sis. Wilma Pulfer professed peace in her final moments here on earth. Our prayers have been with Bro. Les, and her children, Jeff, Kathy, and Eldon Pulfer, and Doris Miller (Kendall). Bro. Daniel Steiner leaves to mourn his passing, wife Sis. Shirley, and children Diane Paton (Alex), Mark (Jennifer), and Dale (Pam).

“And, Lord, haste the day When the faith shall be sight, The clouds be rolled back as a scroll, The trump shall resound And the Lord shall descend, Even so— it is well with my soul.” It is Well with my Soul,
Hymns of Zion 55

The beginning of 2021 in Central IL brought an ice storm, loss of power, and snow. We all had to marvel at the beauty, though it caused much tree damage and power outages. Jesus reminds us in John 15: 4-6,

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

We have prayed for, and are thankful for the miracle in a measure of recovery from COVID-19 for John Dohman (Sis. Judy, Ft. Myers, FL). Sis. Judy was originally from Tremont, and John was hospitalized here at OSF in Peoria. We continue to pray for all affected by the virus, and the healthcare-givers. We also have remembered Elder Bro. James Fehr (Sis. Brenda) and Bro. Russ Ehnle (Sis. Terrie) as they both had surgery.

**Illinois, Washington**

**Lillian Pfaffmann**

United in Holy Matrimony on January 3 were Bro. Kalahan Aberle and Sis. Brianna Tanner. Their parents are Bro. Scott and Sis. Dorine Aberle, and Bro. Brian and Sis. Dawn Tanner, (Morton, IL). May the Lord be their unseen guest as they start their lives as one!

Another forthcoming wedding! Our Sis. Jessie Jones is engaged to Bro. Eddie Moser (Roanoke, IL). Their parents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Susie Jones and Bro. Greg and Sis. Shar Moser, (Roanoke, IL). Our prayer is that God will bless them in all ways as he knows best as the plan their lives together!

“Beyond the sunset, no clouds will gather, No storms will threaten, no fears annoy; O day of gladness, O day unending, Beyond the sunset, eternal joy! “Beyond the sunset, O glad reunion, With our dear loved ones who’ve gone on before; In that fair homeland we’ll know no parting, Beyond the sunset forever more!”

**Hymns of Zion #172**

Sadly, Bro. Gary Schifferer, 30, passed away this past week. His grandparents are Bro. Bill and Sis. Lana Schifferer (Belvidere, IL), and his parents, Gary Schifferer, (Marianne, Marengo, IL) and Peggy Schifferer (Marengo, IL). Graveside services were held in Belvidere and a memorial service was conducted in our Washington church on Sunday. Our sympathy and prayers go out to the family and friends at this difficult time. Truly God knows our hearts and how best to comfort us!

When a loved one passes from this life, it leaves an emptiness and loss to those left behind.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Bro. Randy and Sis. Evie Mogler in the death of his father, Bro. Andy Mogler, on January 19. We will sorely miss him as he was Mr. Social, loving everyone, and so special to us. We rejoice in his victory in Jesus!

**Indiana, Bluffton**

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

“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.” Philip. 4:1

Several babies were born this month. We are rejoicing with the birth of Lincoln Charles, born to Bro. Drew and Sis. Annie Rinkenberger. Bro. Linc and Sis. Catrina Rinkenberger and Bro. Chad and Sis. Megan

Ciera Hamilton (Matt and Jackie) is a new convert. We wish to warmly welcome her!

We were blessed to have a unique Christmas program this year. We are thankful to the Sunday school students for their participation and all who worked hard to make it happen. Our Sunday school teachers and students have learned to be flexible in the past year. Lord willing, we will start up Sunday school classes for the younger grades again on a bi-weekly basis, after not meeting for several months.

During the months of January and February we are doing a church-wide Bible Study on the book of Philippians. Hopefully it will be a spiritual blessing to those who participate!

Our prayers are with Sis. Mary Baumgartner as her husband, Bro. Herman, passed away. We extend sympathy to their children, Colleen Richards (Mike), Carol Wenger (Jack), Annette Owens (Greg), and Greg (Missy) as well.

May we stand fast in the Lord in the new year!

**Indiana, Bluffton North**

**Deanna Brinneman, Rhonda Maller**

Though 2020, and its burdens have passed, we have entered 2021 with many questions about the future. For the most part, the answers will not come in startling visions, but in daily living. Should it prove to be harder or easier than 2020, one thing is sure, God is sovereign, ever-present, always faithful, and he will not forsake us. His Word remains, and the truth will set us free.

> “Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isa. 40:30-31

We began 2021 with a church-wide Bible reading plan and a church-wide Bible study.

The reading plan focuses on the book of Matthew and corresponding passages from both the old and new testaments. The Bible study covers the book of Philippians. We are prayerfully seeking the Lord’s blessings. May all who participate “be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” Eph. 6:10.

Once again, families in our congregation have suffered the loss of loved ones. We offer our sympathies to each family, knowing those who have gone on will be sorely missed.

Bro. Herman Baumgartner, 96, passed away on January 9. Herman is survived by his dear wife, Sis. Mary Baumgartner; three daughters, Colleen Richards (Mike) and Carol Wenger (Jack), both of Bluffton, Annette Owens (Greg, Kendallville, IN); a son, Bro. Greg (Sis. Missy, Indianapolis, IN); two sisters, Sis. Violet Meyer (Bluffton, IN) and Sis. June Lehman (Harold, Wolcott, IN); eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Bro. Gary Stoller, 83, went home to be with his Lord and Savior surrounded by his wife and children on January 10. In addition to his wife, Sis. Nancy, Gary is survived by four daughters: Sis. Sherry Pfister (Bro. Dan, Bluffton North, IN), Tamara Leman (Jon, Muncie, IN), Virginia Stoller (Ottawa, OH), and Sis. Leslie Isch (Bro. Nathan, Bluffton, IN), a son; Thomas (Lori Boggs, Ohio City, OH), two sisters; Sis. Wanda Leman (Bro. Roy, Eureka, IL), and Sis. Jan Laukhuf (Rockford, MI), twenty-one grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.
We also offer sympathy to Sis. Marcia Brewster (Bro. Brian) in the passing of her Aunt, Sis. Maxine Virkler (retired Elder Bro. Andy, formerly of Bay City, MI).

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

Indiana, Francesville
Jacki Huber, Connie Linback

“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” Psa. 90:1-2

Greetings!

In a recent sermon we were reminded that even small actions can make a difference in our world. Examples: Bethlehem, Baby Jesus, a hug or a smile, a letter or a phone call, etc.

Sadly, our Christmas program was cancelled because of COVID-19 this year. We are once again grateful for technology, as the Sunday school teachers, students and families presented the Christmas story in song and plays. We were blessed!

The announcement was made that retired Elder Bro. Steve Gutwein (Sis. Linda) has decided to retire from the pulpit ministry. We extend thanks to Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda for their years of faithful service to our congregation.

Prayers were extended for Bro. Les Kaeb (Sis. Christine) as they have safely returned from Haiti, also for the PYG for safe travel on a mission trip to Phoenix. Bro. Chris and Sis. Sharon Huber are once again helping HarvestCall in the mission field. They are helping in Marianna, FL for the winter mission. We pray for safety in travel and work for all who are called to help in this effort. Our prayers continue for many who have health concerns including Sis. Juanita Norman and Sis. Louise Topp.

Bro. Chris Wuethrich (Sis. Carla, St. Louis, MO) shared in the ministry this month and we were blessed by his service to us.

During our New Year’s Eve program our minister reminded us “Not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass unto you and not one thing hath failed thereof.” Josh. 23:14

The Lord blessed us this past Sunday as teachers and students began holding in class Sunday school lessons once again.

We extend a warm welcome to Sis. Gail Gutwein, who has spent many years as a missionary in Argentina and is now at home in Francesville!

**Note of Thanks**

We would like to thank everyone for the love, prayers and many deeds of kindness given during Jacki’s mom’s (Sis. Elna Grimm, Goodfield, IL) final illness and since she has gone to be with the Lord. You are all loved and appreciated. Brian and Jacki Huber

**Indiana, Indianapolis**

*Edie Bollier, Kaylin Bollier*

We are thankful for God’s faithfulness in 2020! It was a year that stretched us all and provided new ways to worship and encourage each other. We had opportunity to accept others’ ideas that differed from our own. Everyone seems to deal a little differently with all the changes, but we can trust that God is bigger than all of this and not surprised or shaken by it but rather he is sovereign over it all!

“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.” Dan. 2:20-22

In our congregation we had reasons to rejoice. We are thankful for Sis. Emmy Stieglitz (Bro. Greg and Sis. Lisa) who is engaged to Bro. Ross Huber (Bro. Gene and Sis. Sherri, Francesville, IN). We wish them God’s blessings as they plan for their wedding and their lives together.

Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Melanie Wales welcomed twin daughters, Emma and Zoe, who they adopted from Korea. Their big brothers are Xander and Finn. We welcome these sweet girls into our church family. Another joyous occasion was the birth of Adler Jon Schwab who was welcomed
by his parents Bro. Lance and Sis. Ashley and big sister Juliet and big brother Jett. Grandparents are Bro. Jon and Sis. Wendy Schwab and Mike and Mary Creigh.

We also had many reasons to weep as so many in our church family lost parents or grandparents. Sis. Lauren Moser’s grandfather, Bro. Phil Moser (Bluffton, IN) went to be with the Lord. Sis. Rebekah Fritz’s (Bro. Ezra) grandfather, Bro. Albert Edelman (Lamont, KS) passed into eternity. Elder Bro. Ken Wuethrich (Sis. Lyn) also said goodbye to his mother, Sis. Ruth Wuethrich. The grandchildren here in town are Heather Rowe (Michael), Seth Wuethrich (Jenny), and Sean Wuethrich (Julie). Another family grieving the loss of a parent are Bro. John and Sis. Peg Sauder. Her mother Joanie Johann of Eureka went home to be with the Lord. Her grandchildren are Bro. JR and Sis. Tiffany Sauder and Bro. Steven and Sis. Paige Emch. Then more recently, Bro. Greg and Sis. Missy Baumgartner said farewell to his father, Bro. Herman Baumgartner of Bluffton. The grandchildren are Bro. Zach and Sis Leah, Barbara and Bethany. We also extend our sympathies and prayers to Bro. Ben Pfister who lost his grandfather, Bro. Gary Stoller (Bluffton, IN).

All these dear ones will be missed by their families and we pray that God will comfort them as they mourn but also draw their hearts to long more for eternity. As we start another year, we look forward with anticipation to see God’s faithfulness again!

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his Compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore, will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.” Lam. 3:22-26

Indiana, LaCrosse

Meagan Frank, Sharla Messner

“…If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Rom. 10:9

With great joy, we heard the testimony and witnessed the baptism of our new sister in Christ, Carol Ailes, on January 3. Throughout the day we were reminded of our Father’s mercy and faithfulness, as many years of prayers were answered! We were blessed to be joined by members of Sis. Carol’s family, our beloved Valparaiso congregation, and several visiting ministers. We would especially like to thank Elder Bro. Randy Gudeman (Sis. Becky, Francesville, IN) for stepping in and leading the day with such grace, as well as ministering Bro. Tim Bucher (Sis. Julie, Valparaiso, IN), Bro. Jon Pratt (Sis. Sharon, Valparaiso, IN), and Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) for sharing in the day.

Indiana, Leo

Jan Beer

We rejoice that Max Laukhuf, son of Bro. Mick and Sis. Lisa (Waibel) Laukhuf, has made public his faith in the salvation of his soul through the blood of Jesus Christ. We pray God’s grace for him on this journey. We look forward to his testimony and baptism.

Our church has had two hands-on opportunities to share Christ’s love. Two Saturdays were spent constructing a local community center and food pantry, and another spent cleaning up trees damaged in recent ice storms for a neighboring widow. Many thanks to those who organized the projects, offered willing hands, and kept the workers fed. We are blessed to work together as a church family, and pray that those on the receiving end can feel the warmth of God’s love.

Our annual church business meeting was held on January 15. We thank the trustees for their efforts, as well as all those who have finished terms. Our prayers are with those who will carry on the work!

We would like to thank Bro. Dan Stoller (Sis. Deb, Remingtion, IN) and Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) for joining us for our New Year’s Eve church service. What peace it brings to be reminded that through the wisdom and grace of God, we can build upon our foundation, Jesus Christ.

“And ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” 1 Cor. 3:23
It is our joy to welcome newcomers to our church family. Bro. Pete and Sis. Jolene Zimmerman are new House Parents at Gateway Woods. Their young sons are Finn and Dex. Bro. Pete and our Bro. Jesse Zimmerman (Sis. Karla) are brothers, so it will be great for those two families to be able to live closer together. Also, we welcome Sis. Amber Ehnle and Sis. Jalynn Hinrichs, who are now Assistant House Parents at Gateway Woods. In this age of COVID-19, our contact with all of them will be considerably more complicated, but we are thankful to have them in our church family and look forward to becoming acquainted.

Bro. Bill and Sis. Cheri Blunier are excited at the birth of another grandson. On January 15, Abraham Lewis was born to Nathan and Carrie Pulley. He has a big brother named Judah. We pray God’s blessing on this dear family as they desire to rear their children to love and serve the Lord.

Our Bro. Jon and Sis. Amy Gerst and their family have been in a state of upheaval since they were forced by political unrest from their missionary post in Ethiopia. The mission agency they serve with has relocated their missionaries, and we are grateful that our beloved Gerst family has been assigned a business position in Ft. Wayne, IN. On January 13, Bro. Jon was accompanied to Ethiopia by our Bro. Jon Ringger to aid in the dispersal of the Gerst’s material possessions that were left behind in their hasty retreat last fall. The brothers expect to return to the US on January 26. We are praying for their safety, good success in closing out the former Gerst household, peace, grace and comfort as Jon bids farewell to his families’ friends and neighbors in Ethiopia. The four Gerst children have felt the impact of this emotional transition for the family, and we pray they can feel peace and God’s comfort as they settle into their home in Ft. Wayne. We are so grateful and excited to have them remain as a vital part of the body in our Leo congregation.

Wednesday evening, January 13, was set aside for our annual business meeting. It was a blessing to learn of the condition of the congregation in a business sense. We were encouraged in the stewardship of our time, God-given talents and resources. As always, we are grateful for the members who have willingly served. We are also grateful for the members who were willing to be on the ballot to fill these vacancies, so the church is able to function well and bring glory to God.

In the current pathetic state of the world, our nation and even our cities, may you find encouragement in these verses: “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; ... Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Isa. 26:1,3.

Indiana, Milford
Heidi Beer, Anne Wilson

We extend our sympathies to Russ and Sis. Pat Mikel at the passing of their mother Mildred Mikel. She was a beloved and cherished by her family.

We thank Bro. Brett Lanz (Sis. Renee, Rittman, OH) for serving our church on New Year’s Eve. It is such a special time to reflect on God’s provision and presence through past events. As we look forward, we often make goals and have high hopes for a new year. This year, many of us look at 2021 with different eyes. We have seen how quickly our lives can change and how different things can turn out from what was expected. The popular phrase from a Keith Getty song, “In Christ alone, my hope is found” rings so true.

God has not ceased to call the lost to him and this points us to the eternal. We rejoice with Claire Beer (Bro. Brent and Sis. Pam) as she has turned her life to God. For a world that is crying out for real hope and encouragement, there is no place to find it other than in Christ.

Indiana, Remington
Jenni Honegger, Marcella Tyler

We are thankful to Bro. Ryan Schock (Sis. Melanie, Bloomfield, IA) for visiting us and sharing the Word with us. May God bless him for his willingness.

We’ve had two births to rejoice about in our small congregation this month! Little Meyer William arrived on December 26 to bless the family of Bro. Joel and Sis.
Wendy Putt. His excited siblings are Boden, Emery, Nora, and Sybil, and his grandparents are Bro. Don and Sis. Suzie Fiechter (Bluffton, IN) and Bro. Brian and Sis. Tami Putt (Francesville, IN). Elder Bro. Dan and Sis. Jenna Kilgus welcomed a new little granddaughter. Rylen Kaye was born to their son Aaron and Kayla Kilgus. Rylen's big brother is Austin and her other grandparents are Bro. Bruce and Sis. Kathy Wuethrich (Francesville, IN). We pray that both of these precious little ones will continue to learn about Jesus as they grow.

We've also had cause to rejoice over a new couple becoming one in the Lord this month! Sis. Valerie Bahler (Bro. Mark and Sis. Benita) married Bro. Isaac Mogler (Bro. Chuck and Sis. Beth, West Bend, IA) on January 17. We pray that God will continue to bind their hearts as they begin their journey as husband and wife, and that Bro. Isaac will bring Sis. Valerie back to visit often.

In addition to the rejoicing, there has also been cause for sorrow for some in our congregation this month. Sis. Ada Jones (Bill, dec., West Lafayette, IN) passed away at the age of 98. She is survived by her sons Kerry and Ross (Ana), four granddaughters, and 3 great-grandsons. Sis. Ada grew up in Remington, was married here, and is remembered fondly by many. She was also the aunt of our Sis. Jayne Price and Sis. Diane Isabell (Bro. Phil).

We also extend our sympathy to our Bro. Stan Virkler (Sis. Beth) and Sis. Elizabeth Stoller (Bro. Evan) for the passing of Sis. Maxine Virkler (Retired Elder Bro. Andy, formerly of Bay City, MI). Sis. Maxine was Bro. Stan's mother and Sis. Elizabeth's grandmother. We pray that the family will feel our love during this time of parting.

With the new year comes our annual meeting and elections to various positions in the church. We want to thank those who are finishing their terms for their service and labors of love, and we also want to encourage those that are beginning new terms that they have our support and prayers.

Indiana, South Bend
Joshua Martinez

“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” 2 Cor. 1:4

Our prayers this month were with loved ones affected by the COVID-19 virus: Bro. Don Lehman (Sis. Jill) whose brother, Dale, has been on a respirator. Also, our friend Sterling Goins’ National Guard unit has been deployed to Southern Indiana to aid in the vaccine distribution. We would like to thank Elder Bro. Randy Beer (Sis. Deb, Milford, IN) for assisting our Elder Bro. Scott Schafer (Sis. Gigi) with the reading of the Memorandum on January 13. We also extend our condolences to Sis. Rachel Langhofer (Bro. Craig) whose grandmother, Sis. Maxine Virkler (retired Elder Bro. Andy Virkler) entered eternity with our Lord and Savior.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” 1 Thes. 5:28

Indiana, West Lafayette
Libby Wahl

“I’m going to make everything around me beautiful- that will be my life.” Elsie de Wolfe.

I came across this lovely thought, and somehow it settled my heart in the midst of lots of lightning and thunder. Oh, for grace, to be a fruit of the spirit bearer in 2021.

Our hearts, though sad as we miss this lady who made things pleasant when we were with her, rejoice that she is eternally home. Sis. Ada M. Schieler Jones, 98 yrs of age, crossed the river on January 2. Her family is planning a spring memorial service.

We so appreciated having Bro. James Emch, (Phoenix, AZ), visit us and share an encouraging message. Annual processes have commenced for elections of rotating church positions. We also are seeking God’s guidance for ministry support on our pulpit.

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” John 8:12

Indiana, Wolcott
Brittany Gerber, Luann Gerber

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

We are thankful as we head into this new year that we may approach it with joy, peace, and hope knowing that these come from God and not from what is happening around us!

Bro. Mike and Sis. Jody Bahler are happy grandparents of a new baby boy. Lincoln Roy was born in December to Bro. Kevin and Sis. Leandra Dotterer (Rittman, OH) and joins big brother, Jude.

Bro. Tim and Sis. Rachel Schwab also welcomed a new little grandchild. Penny Jean was born on January 5 to Justin and Lizzy Schwab.

We are sorry that we missed sending condolences to our Bro. Kip Edelman (Sis. Donita) on the passing of his father, Bro. Albert Edelman (Lamont, KS). We are thankful for the peace that comes with knowing that Bro. Albert has finished his race faithfully and that he gets to live eternally.

We met on January 11 for our annual meeting. It was a blessing to spend time together and see the willingness of so many to fill necessary positions to keep our church moving forward as the hands and feet of Jesus. We are so thankful for those who have served so faithfully this past year!

**Iowa, Burlington**

*Marilyn Anderson, Angela Steiner*

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Eccl. 3:1.

Life is full of seasons. First, the obvious weather patterns that bring sparkling snow, refreshing rains, warm sunshine and brilliant leaves. Then there are other seasons of change, adjustment, relationships, hurt, and joy. As I ponder this concept, I savor the word “purpose” as I think how God is such a God of order and the author of purpose. This brings a perfect peace and hope that as we walk through our current season, whatever that is, we know God has a beautiful purpose in mind!

“A time to be born, and a time to die…” Eccl. 3:2. We pray God’s comforting hand upon Sis. Ingrid Buster as she laid her father-in-law to rest. Sis. Ingrid was always so kind and caring to Raymond Werner and we trust that God will fill the hole that is left. Along with death, we have a reason to rejoice as little baby Bethany Ivy was born January 17 to Bro. Andrew and Sis. Hannah Schulz. Sweet Rebecca is awed and excited to welcome a baby sister, along with thankful grandparents, Bro. Gary and Sis. Melody Schulz and Bro. Mike and Sis. Ivy Steiner.

“A time to get and a time to lose…” Eccl 3:6. With the arrival of a new year, some have gained new church responsibilities and others have laid duties down. We want to thank Elder Bro. Jon Schmidgall (Sis. Julie, Mediapolis, IA) for ministering to us and assisting with our annual business meeting. The ballot results are as follows: New trustee: Bro. Daniel Steiner, New Kitchen committee: Sis. Melody Schulz, Replacement for Memorial Gift committee head: Sis. Rachel Wyss, Replacement of Secretary-Agent: Bro. Jacob Wyss. We want to offer our sincere appreciation for those who have served us and for others who are taking on a new role. May God bless and guide you.

We also want to thank retired Bro. John Steiner (Sis. Carol, Mediapolis, IA) for supporting our Burlington pulpit and sharing the word of God with us this past month.

Lastly, we continue to lift up those in our congregation who have met with sickness this past month. At this point, COVID-19 has infected most of our small congregation and we thank God for walking with each of us through the challenges.
As we continue to slip into the new year with many unknowns, we can have joy that “He hath made everything beautiful in his time…” Eccl 3:11. What beautiful purpose might he have for you in your season of life?

**Iowa, Elgin**  
**Maria Rocke**

We extend our sincere sympathy to Bro. Kent Getz (Sis. Betty) and Sis. Sandy Stork (Bro. Mark) as they bid a final farewell to their mother, Sis. Nathalia Getz (Bro. Allan, Eureka, IL). May the peace of God comfort their hearts until they meet again “some sweet day, by and by.”

We held our business meeting in early January. We thank Bro. Jim Knobloch for his duties as trustee the past three years and Bro. Dean Rocke was elected to fill this position. Bro. Doug Rocke was given support for Sunday school treasurer. May God bless all who give of their time and talents to serve our local church body.

**Iowa, Garden Grove**  
**Laura Funk**

Greetings from snowy south central Iowa. We have a beautiful covering of white snow we received and are still under a blizzard warning. Not sure how much snow we have as the wind is blowing.

Our congregation was blessed by visiting ministers Bro. Jim Butikofer (Sis. Diana, Iowa City, IA) and Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA).

We are thankful God has directed Bro. Leland and Sis. Kathy Metzger to move to southern Iowa and fellowship with us. Welcome! I am sure West Bend will miss you!

We had been having two church services with a sack lunch at noon. Several from our congregation became ill so church was cancelled. We are again having two services and bring your lunch. We are thankful most have recovered from the various illnesses and can gather with us again.

Several from our congregation work in the healthcare field. Emotions are running high during the pandemic, elections and violence. This verse reminded me how I should respond and react to others. I don’t know their situation and should not judge them.

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another.” Col. 3:12-13

**Iowa, Iowa City**  
**Diana Butikofer**

Bro. Jon Pratt (Sis. Sharon, Valparaiso, IN) and Bro. Joel Troxel (Sis. Amy, LaCrosse, IN) joined us for our Christmas Day service. We appreciate their willingness to share the Word of God with us and trust he will bless them.

**Iowa, Lester**  
**Kristi Knobloch, Lois Mogler**

“Another year is dawning,  
Dear Master, let it be,  
On earth, or else in heaven

Another year for Thee.”  
Another Year Is Dawning,  
Hymns of Zion, #150

We were blessed with 15 new babies added to our congregation in 2020. Eight faithful brethren passed from this life into eternity last year.  

Bro. Larry Bahr (late Sis. Julie, Ft Scott, KS) shared God’s word with us the Sunday after Christmas.

Kasey and Karmen Peters welcomed their first child Posie Mae on January 1. Her loving grandma is Sis. Linda Klostergaard (Bro. Brad, dec.).

Our winter HarvestCall projects have started with many participating in sewing, wood working projects and children’s activities. We hope this can be a blessing to those who participate and to those who receive the items created.

Our prayers are with Randy Ludwig as he was hospitalized for heart issues. Recovering from a farm accident is little Nora Matthiesen, 3-year-old daughter of Jed and Deann Matthiesen. At this writing she is still in an induced medical coma as her body heals. There have been hopeful signs of recovery for precious little Nora. Ever thankful for God’s healing and strength, along with her parents, are grandparents Bro. Greg and Sis. Lori Popkes. May we all be strengthened and encouraged by God through trials known and unknown as he has always been our faithful provider.

Sis. Lois Metzger (Bro. Jim) returned to our area after staying with family in Tucson, AZ for a couple of months. We welcome her back.
We are thankful that Gabi Feucht (Bro. Tim and Sis. Carla) has found peace and we look forward to her baptism.

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Bro. Andy Mogler (Washington, IL) formerly of Lester, IA on his death. He and his wife, Sis. Frieda (dec.) raised their family here. Many extended family and friends will miss him and his phone calls as well.

While the world continues its chaos and confusion, we can take comfort that this world is not our home. But we have responsibilities to uphold God’s commandments for his people. May we ask for and be given the grace needed to do so.

“Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod.
We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.
Onward Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus,
Going on before.”
Onward Christian Soldiers,
Gospel Hymns, #365

Announcement:

Lord willing, services will be held in Clyde Park, MT the weekend of June 26-27, 2021. For more information contact Bro. Wes Moser or Bro. Bob Metzger. See notice in the “News and Notices” section of this issue for more information.

Iowa, Mediapolis
Laura Kuntz, Janet Lanz

How inspiring it is when prayers are answered and a loved one turns his heart and will to the Lord. We are thankful that Clay Buster (Jessica) has begun his repentance. We continue to pray for him as he starts on this new path.

We were blessed with two visiting ministers this past month. Bro. Michael Wagenbach (Sis. Erica, Wolcott, IN) and Bro. Greg Fehr (Sis. Denise, West Bend, IA) were here over the holiday season. We thank them for sharing the gospel message with us.

A precious baby girl has arrived into the hearts and home of Bro. Kurt and Sis. Kaylee Banwart of West Bend, IA. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Monte and Sis. Kelly Lanz, who look forward to getting to know this new little one.

It is always refreshing to begin a new year. Like the newly fallen snow on the ground, it is a fresh beginning with new mercies. As we step forward, may we always keep in mind that although we make a plan, God holds “the” plan. Even though it seems like things around us are spiraling out of control, God is still on the throne, His arm is not shortened. He has seen many generations of his people through hard times, and he will continue to see us through these present situations also. “Fear thou not; for I am with thee.” Isa. 41:10.

Iowa, West Bend
Jenny Banwart, Karen Schmidt

Rejoicing in the arrival of their firstborn, Emalyn Grace, are Bro. Kurt and Sis. Kaylee Banwart. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Kent and Sis. Beth Banwart and Bro. Monte and Sis. Kelly Lanz (Mediapolis, IA).

Bro. Isaac and Sis. Valerie Mogler were married in Remington, IN. Parents are Bro. Chuck and Sis. Beth Mogler and Bro. Mark and Sis. Bonita Bahler (Remington, IN). We wish them many blessings and welcome Sis. Valerie to our church.

We appreciated having our Elder Bro. Rod Bajema (Sis. Sue, Lester, IA) spend the weekend with us. We were also blessed on Christmas Day to have Bro. Clint Schmidt (Sis. Magdalena, Winthrop, MN) share the Gospel message. May God bless each of you.

Japan, Shioda & Tokyo
Anna Inoue, Marie Inoue, Carrie Ito

We wish all a blessed New Year as we begin 2021. We know the Lord is in control and will guide us safely. It is special to read our Christmas cards, one this year from a sister of our Rittman, OH church. She wrote that it has been 80 years since she and her friend from here in Japan started a pen pal correspondence. This is all because of a second grade teacher who gave out the names of Japanese students. It is wonderful that both women, even though they have lost their mates, do love the Lord, continue to correspond with each other, and glorify our Father.
Due to an increase of COVID-19 in some areas, our city of Tokyo has been faced with restrictions in gathering and eating together. We are back to one service and no lunch at church. We hope it will be lifted soon. We are so thankful for those who do attend and those who faithfully listen through technology. May the Lord bless our ministers who faithfully feed our flock.

Kansas, Bern
Leigha Rokey, Rita Menold

Christian greetings from Kansas! A new calendar year is underway, and we pray you are each one growing in grace and the fullness of God’s love! Since the time of the last writing, our country has transitioned into new leadership at a variety of levels. Speaking for myself, I can find myself wrestling with anxiety of what is to come, and yet I feel such a peace in Jesus. We have had several recent messages brought to us from our pulpit that are so heartwarming and encouraging. We were reminded in Psalm 46 of God truly being our refuge and strength, and he is with us in time of trouble and discouragement. We were also reminded recently of how large of a God we serve. Never underestimate his power. When I become still, and remember who God is, there is such a calming presence in my heart. God is still, and always will be, on the throne!

We appreciate Bro. Klint Beyer (Sis. Kara, Sabetha, KS) and Bro. Seth Hartter (Sis. Brenda, Burlington, IA) for sharing the Word with us this past month. Bro. Almanzo and Sis. Jody Strahm, as well as big sister Kayla, are thrilled and thankful for their new bundle of pink! Little Kathryn Joy was born on December 30! Happy grandparents are Kyle and Peggy Strahm, and Sis. Luci Goodman.

Our prayers are with Sis. Waneta Platter as she mourns the unexpected loss of her grandson, Vinton Robuck (Richard and Angela, Halsted, KS). As heaven feels a little closer, we trust that the void in the family circle will be filled with a peace from God and sweet memories.

January 16 was the wedding day for Bro. Michael Baumgartner (Bro. John and Sis. Lori) and Sis. Sheila Graf (Mark and Marcy, Rittman, OH). Although the wedding was many miles away, technology made it convenient for us to feel a part of their special day! We are thrilled to welcome Sis. Sheila to our church family!

Following God’s direction, Bro. Travis and Sis. Leah Rokey have moved to the Lamar, MO area. We will miss them so much, but know they will bless the Lamar congregation in numerous ways.

God be with you all. He remains faithful!

Kansas, Ft. Scott
Janelle Wuthrich

"Heavenward, e’er heavenward
Let us wend our way
What the righteous seek is there
Found without delay,"

But not on earth.
Joy here alternates with woe;
Lift on high from earth below
Thy heart and mind.”
The Heavenly Mind,
Zion’s Harp #91

As we see the increasing chaos and turmoil in the world around us today, may we ever strive to keep our heart and focus always toward our heavenly Father who still sits on his throne.

We are so very thankful for the Lord’s healing mercies for those in our congregation who have recently spent time in the hospital: Sis. Aleta Banwart (Bro. Don), Sis. Karen Kellenberger (Bro. Rick), and Bro. John Sinn (Sis. Carol). May they continue to feel his strength as they recover.

We were blessed to have our Elder Bro. Randy Kellenberger (Sis. Karen, Kansas City, MO) with us recently to share the Memorandum with our congregation. Although the letter was written several months ago, the message was so timely for where we are today, and we truly appreciate the efforts of the elder body who submitted it for our benefit.

Kansas, Lamont
Maria Luthi

“For we all as a vapor pass away,
And not one of us is promised
to live another day!
So redeem the time
and strive to give
Like a child of God who
has six months to live!”
Six Months to Live by Taunia Henry
We have had many reminders of the brevity of life recently. What a comfort to know that our believing loved ones are safe in the arms of Jesus and yet what a sobering reminder to redeem the time that we’ve been given. If we’re alive, God has a purpose for us here on this earth. Our church is saddened by the passing of our dear Sis. Dorene Metzger this past month in a car accident. We extend our sympathy and prayers to her children, Bro. Shawn (Sis. Sandy, Philadelphia, PA), Philip (Stephanie, Emporia, KS), Wendy Fetter (Lakewood, CO), Barry (Amber, Sabetha, KS), and Bro. Cory (Sis. Jodi, Wichita, KS). We also extend sympathy and prayers to Bro. Ron Isch (Sis. Jane) with the passing of his brother Lloyd Isch this past month.

We enjoyed several virtual visiting ministers earlier this month and are now thankful to be gathering in-person again. We wish to thank Bro. Jeremy Leman (Sis. Shara, Forrest, IL), Bro. Roger Aberle (Sis. Lavonne, Sabetha, KS), and Elder Bro. Nick Gutwein (Sis. Suzanne, West Lafayette, IN) for sharing the Word with us.

**Kansas, Sabetha**

**Leanna Hartter, Whitney Hartter**

The children shared the beautiful Christmas story with us during their annual Christmas program. We are thankful for all the efforts that each student and teacher put forth!

This past month we were thankful to have Bro. Adam Zeltwanger (Sis. Christy, Morris North, MN) and Bro. Troy Metzger (Sis. Gwen, Lester, IA) share the word of God with us.

Two babies were welcomed into our hearts; Will Rodney Hartter (Bro. Jed and Sis. Whitney) and Landon Dean Hartter (Bro. Jacob and Sis. Rachel). Will’s grandparents are Bro. David and Sis. Beth Hartter and Bro. Rodney and Sis. Arlene Grimm. Landon’s grandparents are Bro. Todd and Sis. Cynthia Fehr and Bro. David and Sis. Beth Hartter.

We are thankful that souls are answering the call of God! Alli Strahm (Bro. Troy and Sis. Dawn), Emmie Grimm (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Carrie), and Weston Grimm (Bro. Darin and Sis. Marci) have begun their repentance. We pray that they will build their foundations on the solid rock of Jesus!

“…On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.”

*The Solid Rock, Hymns of Zion, #99*

We had two hospital patients this month. Sis. Dena Weiss and Alphia Edelman (Bro. Steven and Sis. Kelly) are both home now.

A farewell potluck and singing was hosted for Bro. Travis and Sis. Leah Rokey (Bern, KS). We pray God will bless them as they make their new home in Lamar, MO.

**Kansas, Wichita**

**Niklaus and Sara Schrader**

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ.

A lot has happened in our country in the last few months, but as much as ever, it’s important to remember that our God and Protector is in control always and forever. We know that no matter who’s in charge, God’s will is going to accomplished as he sees fit.

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” 1 John 4:4

Our prayers are with the Bro. Cory and Sis. Jodi Metzger and family in the loss of Cory’s mother, Sis. Dorene Metzger (Lamont, KS). She will certainly be missed as a mother, grandmother, and friend to many. Praise the Lord that she is with God in Heaven for eternity. May the family find comfort in God’s assured salvation.

We hope to assemble in person later this month, and pray for God’s guiding hand throughout the rest of this new year.

**Mexico, Ixtlán**

**Ruth Gerber**

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” John 14:27

As we wrestle with all the changes a pandemic has brought, or with the uncertainty of the political climate, his peace is what we desire.

Our church has once again returned to virtual meetings, as COVID-19 is definitely on the rise. We are prayerful for the church families currently going through it and for wisdom in moving
forward. It is a blessing to be able to communicate with phones, share prayer requests, and to have a church to reach out to for support, but it is also a time to learn that the Lord is the one we depend on.

We rejoice with Sis. Berta de Gonzalez on the birth of her granddaughter, Luanna Joy (Bro. Ben and Sis. Gloria Kaeb, Alto, MI). We know she will be a joy and we look forward to having them back to visit so we can meet her too.

México, Magdalena
Laura Aviña

We are thankful to all be in good health after the colds and COVID-19 we experienced in the last month. We are also thankful for the technology that allows us to connect for prayer and hearing God’s word.

After Bro. Joel and Sis. Kristi Leman moved to Colorado and Bro. Seth Gerber (Sis. Jodi) felt led to step out of church administration duties this December, we were in need of brothers to fill those vacancies. We appreciate the willingness of our Bro. Denver Slagel (Sis. Katie) and Bro. Jonathan Aupperle (Sis. Bere) who have accepted the responsibility of helping with church administration alongside Bro. Todd Stoller (Sis. Zoë).

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.” Psalms 19:1-3

The proclamation of God’s greatness never ends, no force can stop or hinder it. Praise be to God that he remains unchanging and sure!

Michigan, Alto
Heidi Kaeb, Renee Steffen

It has been quite some time since our congregation has welcomed a new baby, so we are especially thrilled to announce the birth of Luanna Joy Kaeb, daughter of Bro. Ben and Sis. Gloria. Thankful grandparents are Bro. Curt and Sis. Luanne Kaeb and Sis. Berta de Gonzalez (Ixtlan, MX).

We are very thankful that Sis. Gina Blough experienced such smooth travel to Kenya and is getting settled in language school. Our prayers will continue as she transitions to her new home and culture, and shines the light of Jesus to those around her. Our prayers are also with Josiah Grimm as he has recently moved to Ohio and we will miss him.

We extend our sympathy to Bro. Craig and Sis. Chelsea Huber in the passing of his grandfather, Kaywin Martin (Patricia, Delray Beach, FL). We continue to petition the Lord on behalf of our dear Sis. Jeanette Overholt as she endured another hospital stay and continues with cancer treatment. We pray for her mom, Sis. Darlene Goodwin, as she endures this trial as well.

Michigan, Bay City
Sarah Knochel

Bro. Nathan Hodel (Sis. Jamie, Roanoke, IL) and Bro. Jeff Waibel (Sis. Margo, Leo, IN) spent time in Bay City over the Christmas holiday visiting family and ministered to our church family.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you” John 14:27

We are thankful to see God’s redeeming love manifesting in lives of our loved ones. We praise God that Janice Huntley (Jesse) was announced for peace recently. We look forward to the time she will be able to give her testimony and we can witness her baptism.

We pray for those who spent time in the hospital recently. They include Bro. Eugene Meylan (Sis. Carol) and Sis. Betty Wieland (Bro. Morris). We pray God will continue to provide healing and strength where it is his will.

Our hearts are saddened at the passing of Sis. Maxine Virkler (retired Elder Bro. Andy). Bro. Andy and Sis. Maxine served as leaders for our Bay City church for many years and now attend church in Congerville, IL. We pray God will be with Bro. Andy, their children and grandchildren in the coming days.

Our annual business meeting was held January 6. We are thankful for those who are willing to serve the physical needs of our church. Bro. Jack Knochel (Sis. Debbie) was elected as Trustee and Sis. Maureen Wiess was elected to the Kitchen Committee. Sis. Maria Ruegsegger was selected for the Sewing Committee.
**Michigan, Detroit**  
*Krista Wieland*  

Happy New Year to all! In light of the unrest and discouragement in our nation, I have been positively challenged by a mentor to perform one act of random kindness to someone daily. I also am reminded more than ever of my precious late grandma’s constant words to me which were “Keep on keeping on.” During prolonged periods of staring at my four walls (don’t get me wrong, I am incredibly blessed to have a home) I am reminded some people are in a hospital room alone with no visitors allowed. Wow. My heart aches for them as well as those in our community struggling. Although we cannot visit, we can help them in other ways. Offering to pray for people is always wonderful, while sometimes there are immediate practical needs that we can look for; groceries delivered, meals, an encouraging card, gift card, shoveling snow, and/or most importantly, our time to listen are just a few. If we can’t talk face to face, phone and email are options. I challenge each of us, including myself, to step outside our own world for a moment and look for a way to help someone in a small way while continuing to pray for them. A little time and love go a long way and never returns void. Sharing a personal example from years ago, our church’s retired elder’s wife sent me a text message every day during my prolonged hospitalization and I will never forget what it meant to me.  

Our prayers continue to be with Sis. Kristen Hitz and her family as she continues to have ongoing medical challenges.  

We recently were blessed to have our Memorandum service conducted by Elder Bro. Lucas Frank (Sis. Crystal) and our retired Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev).  

Last Sunday we began adding an abbreviated second service following the first service. Between the first and second service, we had a short time of fellowship. Two services allow the Sunday school teachers to hear a sermon as they are teaching class in the morning. I am so thankful for technology that allows our church to remain connected, but there is something special about physically being with our family of believers.  

Let’s be encouraged to thank God for our priceless religious freedom and also to pray for all nations and leaders as we read in 1 Tim 2:1-4.

**Minnesota, Minneapolis**  
*Brenda Messner, Renee Messner*  

We share our love and greetings as the new year continues to be a struggle for many. May our heavenly Father surround those who are facing hard times including those with an illness or grieving the loss of a loved one. Bro. John and Sis. Debbie Berglund, and their son Matt, are but a few, who we are lifting up in prayer.  

Sharing the Gospel Bible Study done through Zoom is a benefit to stay in touch with each other as well as learn ways to help those with a hurting heart. Jesus is our only hope and true comfort in this world. Seek him and search for him with all your heart!

**Minnesota, Morris**  
*Beg Wellendorf, Brianna Wulf*  

There’s good news brothers and sisters. God’s love for us never changes. His love is faithfully present. It’s unchangeable. Unending. We are inseparable.  

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom 8:38-39

We choose daily, hourly, minute by minute, which path our thoughts and actions take. Let’s choose to direct our hearts and minds to the complete love of God and praise him with all we’ve got.  

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusted in thee.” Isa 26:3

God’s love is evident in many ways. Today, God’s love is in the hearts of Bro. Matthew and Sis. Tara Wulf for the health of their infant daughter Kinlie. The Lord provided medically trained hands to care for her. We are in awe of God’s love.  

God’s great love is present as we grieve. We pray for Bro. Gary and Sis. Sandy Fehr (Tucson, AZ) on the passing of Sandy’s father, LeRoy Brandt. We trust in the Lord to replace their sorrow with his peace and comfort.
God’s love is beautifully evident in the engagement of Sis. Leah Steiner (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jill) to Bro. Rob Bahler (Bro. Tim and Sis. LaNae, Rockville, CT). March 14 has been set for their marriage ceremony.

God’s unending love is worldwide. Sis. Joan Schmidgall is serving the people of Bonn Fin, Haiti as a missionary. Please pray for her and for all missionaries who share their talents and the Word with those in need.

“Be true: be true! The Lord is by thee standing; Joyful with Him at last will be the ending! Tho hard the strife and long the conflict be, Through faithfulness the Lord will honored be.”

Be True! Zion’s Harp, #172

Minnesota, Winthrop
Ginny Stoll, Dixie Messner

As a new year dawns, our prayers are with Bro. John and Sis. Joleen Elder and their family as they said goodbye to Bro. John’s mother, Charlotte Elder (Arlington Heights, IL).

Sis. Brenda Messner and Sis. Georgia Messner spent some time in the hospital. We are thankful they are both home and recovering. We also want to keep Sis. Ginny Stoll in our prayers with her ongoing health issues.

Note of Thanks

Sis. Georgia Messner would like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts and prayers.

Missouri, Taylor
Michelle Rassi

The weekend of January 9-10 was a busy one for our congregation. We were blessed to share Holy Communion together on Saturday evening. Although different, because of social distancing, the same Spirit was present and abundant. On Sunday, we heard, with mixed emotions, the last sermon of Bro. Loren Schrenk. He has ministered in St. Louis since 1988. In his final message to the church, he testified of God’s faithfulness in his life and encouraged us that God would be faithful in the future. We are thankful for Bro. Loren and Sis. Betsy’s many years of service, leadership, and Godly example. Elder Bro. Kent Heimer (Taylor, MO) shared the Fall Memorandum with us in the afternoon service.

We gathered for our monthly HarvestCall night and knotted fleece blankets to donate to a local Children’s Hospital.

We welcome Jozsef Kocsis (Akron, OH) to our congregation. He will be attending a local college. We pray that he will feel much love in this place.

Missouri, Taylor
Tami Pflum

As we began this new year, Bro. Kim Sutter (Sis. Vonette) challenged us to consider how God would desire us to live in these unprecedented times. He then shared the simple answer found in Micah 6:8: “….what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” While the answer may sound simple, it isn’t necessarily easy to live out. When we witness injustice around us or are treated harshly, it can be easy to lash out with equal treatment. Pride in some form is a constant battle for nearly everyone. But just imagine the difference it would make if every Christian were to faithfully and diligently live lives marked by justice, mercy, and humility this year, in spite of all that might be going on around us!

We were grateful to once again enjoy the ministry and fellowship of Elder Bro. John Lehman (Sis. Carol, Bern, KS) as they made Taylor “Home” for a weekend.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the many who have said farewell to family and friends in recent months, including Bro. Kerry Simmons (Sis. Brenda) in the loss of his brother, Robert Simmons (Novinger, MO) and Sis. Dona Grimm (Bro. Roy, dec.) in the loss of her sister, Sis. Elna Grimm (Elder Bro. Bob, dec., Goodfield, IL).

We also have spent time in prayer for those who have suffered injury or illness this month,

January 13 was our annual Business Meeting. We were once again reminded of all the behind the scenes efforts required to keep our physical church running smoothly. Heartfelt thanks to all who play a role, big or small, seen or unseen, especially to Bro. Rusty Adrian (Sis. Amy), Bro. Brent Hoerr (Sis. Charlotte), and Sis. Tricia Grimm (Bro. Don), whose various terms just ended.

Those who agreed to take their places: Bro. Dave Stieglitz (Sis. Paige) as Head Song Leader, Bro. Keith Krzesinski (Sis. Connie) as Trustee, and Sis. Connie Krzesinski (Bro. Keith) on the Food Committee. Thanks to each one for being willing to take on these new duties.

New York, Croghan/Naumburg
Karen Farney

Our holidays this year were much different, as our Sunday school children were unable to present their Christmas program because of the virus. We missed hearing their little voices saying their pieces and singing the Christmas songs.

It was a blessing to gather for services Christmas Day, to hear of the miraculous birth of our Lord and Saviour.

“And, behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.” Luke 1:31

We usually have a covered dish meal and singing New Year’s Eve, but this year we had a New Year’s Day service which was a blessing to start the year.

As we are in a new year, we pray for God’s grace, guidance, and protection as we journey through this life here below, for each step leads us closer home.

Ohio, Akron
Joelle Indermuhle

Bro. Bryon and Sis. Lisa Palitto are thankful to welcome another grandson, Ethan Roy Klopfenstein, born to Bro. Andrew and Sis. Brianna (Columbus, OH) on December 23. He joins big brother Ryan.

Jozsef Kocsis Jr. recently moved to Missouri for school. He is the son of Bro. Jozsef and Sis. Susan Kocsis. We pray that he will feel at home in his new location!

Spending time in the hospital recently was Zion Gasser, son of Bro. Brad and Sis. Amanda Gasser. May the Lord be near those undergoing health difficulties.

Ohio, Columbus
Nancy Banks

Greetings to all from the Columbus church! Our current status is the opening of our church for one service on Sundays, and we are thankful for small steps taken forward.

We will also have the reading of the memorandum Saturday night with Elder Bro. Mark Masters (Sis. Jeannine, Mansfield, OH).

Our family has been currently studying 1 and 2 Peter in the mornings and it lifts our hearts and spirits with all that is facing our country as we speak. We are thankful for these words of encouragement and hope.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Pet. 1:3-5

Recently I heard a quote from a family member that made me stop and think. “We don’t have to be happy to be thankful”. As believers, we can’t be too happy with the way our world is going, but being thankful for his provision sees us through the toughest of times.

Ohio, Junction
Karen Schlatter

We welcomed the New Year with visiting ministers Bro. David Maibach (Sis. Larisa, Smithville, OH) and Bro. Richard Manz (Sis. Audrey, Prescott, AZ). Many thanks to these brothers for sharing the Word with us.

It was a blessing to listen to the testimonies of Joanna Schrenk (Bro. Steve and Sis. Linda) and James Fairchild. Elder Bro. Lynn
Stieglitz (Sis. Leonda, Leo, IN) assisted Elder Bro. Tony Manz with the testimonies and baptisms. Bro. Ned Stoller (Sis. Heidi, Alto, MI), and Bro. Trent Gasser (Sis. Molly, Akron, OH) also visited and shared in the ministry for the special weekend. We are so thankful for those who visit us and are willing to minister from God’s word.

Our prayers continue to be with those who have been struggling with health issues over the past couple of months. May we remember Bro. Bud Manz, Bro. Kyle Schlatter (Sis. Casey), Sis. Annabelle Spangler, Sis. Carolyn Manz (Bro. Ben), and Eleanor Gerber as they continue to battle health issues and are generally not able to attend church.

Our annual business meeting was held the first Wednesday evening in January. A special thank you to the brothers and sisters who completed their term for the following positions: Bro. Roger Manz as Trustee, Bro. Alan Manz as Usher, Bro. Sam Manz as Church Secretary, Sis. Jen Manz as Kitchen Committee, Bro. Roger Gasser as Gateway Woods Representative, and Sis. Laurie Schlatter as HarvestCall Ladies Activities. A big thanks for all of the work and effort put into these positions over the past few years. Taking over the positions that have terms beginning in 2021 are Bro. Jim McCullough as Trustee, Bro. Caleb Schlatter as Usher, Bro. Scott Manz as Church Secretary, Sis. Kayla Manz on Kitchen Committee, Bro. Wendell Spangler as Gateway Woods Representative, and Sis. Karen Schlatter on HarvestCall Ladies Activities. May each one feel the prayerful support of the church brethren.

Our sympathy goes out to Bro. James Spangler (Sis. Carolyn) and his extended family in the passing of his brother Roger Spangler. Roger was also a step-son to Sis. Annabelle Spangler. He and his family have been very well known in the community for many years. May the Lord comfort the Spangler family at this time of loss.

Bro. Les and Sis. Karen Manz welcomed a new granddaughter into their family circle. Kamea Leigh Hartzler was born on January 13 to Bro. Brad and Sis. Tami Hartzler (Rittman, OH).

Sis. April Manz recently had surgery to repair a ligament in her left thumb. We are thankful she is healing well and able to return to work.

As we go about our daily lives, are we taking time to put on the armour of God? The Bible reminds us, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day…” Eph. 6:13. May each one of us take the time to prepare our hearts and minds by filling them with words from the Bible so we are not caught off guard by the evil forces of this world. I am encouraging my second grade Sunday school students to memorize verses 10-20 of this chapter. As we review these verses each Sunday, it has taken on a much greater meaning to me.

Ohio, Latty

Angie Klopfenstein, Carmen Stoller

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

Greetings of love and blessings to you for 2021! As we begin a new year, we are so thankful to reflect on how Christ makes all things new within our lives! At our annual business meeting, we reviewed last year. In 2020, Latty had seven new babies, seven deaths, seven converts, three baptisms, and one wedding. What a blessing that God provided new life, both physical and spiritual, as well as allowed others to go on to their reward.

We would like to support those with new offices this year. They include: Bro. Kurt Sinn (Sis. Lisa), Bro. Thad Sinn (Sis. Kara), Sis. Alexis Stoller (Bro. Jon), and Sis. Carmen Stoller (Bro. Rustin) as Sunday school teachers, Bro. Ben Stoller (Sis. Kendra) as head song leader, Bro. Steve Sinn (Sis. Joy) as Country Villa trustee, Sis. Marlene Sinn (Bro. Tim) as HarvestCall Sewing committee member, and Bro. Nolan Sinn (Sis. Brooke) as church/fellowship hall trustee. May God bless each and every part of our body as we serve the Lord together.

We rejoice with our two new converts this month, Crystal Klopfenstein (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Cherry) and Bryce Rosswurm (Bro. Bruce and Sis. Amy). May the Lord richly bless and guide each of them.
Sis. Arika Nuest (Bro. Lee and Sis. Paula) is engaged to Bro. Scott Kieser (Bro. Jeff and Sis. Jane, Morton, IL). Both Bro. Scott and Sis. Arika are missionaries at CVE in Magdalena, MX. Also, Bro. Abram Klopfenstein (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Cherry) is engaged to Sis. Cherelle Steffen (Bro. Matthew and Sis. Deanna, Princeville, IL). We pray for both of these couples as they prepare for joining their hearts together in service to God.

Our prayers are with Sis. Elsie Rager with the passing of her son-in-law, Bro. Gary Stoller (Sis. Nancy, Bluffton North, IN).

Thank you to Bro. Sam Manz (Sis. Shelby, Junction, OH), Bro. Marvin Hartzler (Sis. Sue, Rittman, OH), and Bro. David Maibach (Sis. Larisa, Smithville, OH) for ministering the Word to us.

**Ohio, Mansfield**

**Katie Miller**

We have all been affected by pandemic-related precautions, and my mind especially goes to those who are in nursing homes or otherwise separated from family and church. We are thinking of you. We love you! Bro. Dave Eyerly (Sis. Edna) is spending time in the hospital for rehabilitation. Bro. Curt Walter (Sis. Elizabeth) is also in our prayers as he serves in leadership at the Apostolic Christian Village of Rittman, OH.

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy. For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” Philip 1:4-6

Angels rejoice, and so do we, when our loved ones seek the Lord! We’re prayerful for Ryan Domka that he would find much grace as he begins repentance. Ryan is the son of Sis. Connie and the late Bro. Fred.

The Bible is the standard with which we re-calibrate our hearts. What a comfort it is, during the course of life. We thank Elder Bro. Matt Manz (Sis. Deanna, Toledo OH) for preaching the Word when visiting during the holiday season. Bro. Earl Beery (Sis. Suzie, Rittman OH) also traveled to be with us, and we appreciate his labor of love as we brought our minds around the word of God.

The turning over of a new year brings a change in church offices. We are grateful for each starting a new term including: Bro. Dan Sauder (Trustee), Bro. Ed Ramsey II (Trustee), Bro. Chuck Beer (Trustee), Sis. Tami Griffey (Kitchen Committee), Sis. Dorina Miller (HarvestCall Committee), Bro. Matthew Dawson (Usher and Recording Committee), Bro. Tim Beer (Assistant Superintendent), and Bro. Marvin Beer (Treasurer). May God bless the service done in his name.

“Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do, Do not wait to shed your light afar, To the many duties ever near you now be true, Brighten the corner where you are.”

“….. Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar, Brighten the corner where you are!”

**Brighten the Corner, The Children’s Harp # 58**

**Ohio, Rittman**

**Maria Beery, Julie Steiner**

Kamea Leigh Hartzler was born on January 13 to Bro. Brad and Sis. Tami Hartzler. She is welcomed by siblings Mack, Havyn, and Salona, and grandparents Bro. Jeff and Sis. Bev Hartzler. On December 23, Nora Constance Rufener was born to Troy and Kaitlyn Rufener. Nora’s grandparents are Bro. Steve and Sis. Jenee Rufener. On January 15, Mathias Caleb Hartzler, entered this world, the newborn son of Bro. Shane and Sis. Suzanne Hartzler. Welcoming this lad are siblings Carla, Esther, Titus, Mya, and Mallory, and grandparents Bro. Dean and Sis. Jan Hartzler and Bro. Carl and Sis. Carol Steiner.

Sis. Margaret Winkler (Bro. Stanley) spent time in the hospital this past month. Spending time at home due to sickness and recovery seems to be the lot of many these days. Each day is truly a gift.

Ginny Hilty’s (Frank) father, Dale Marty passed away this past month. Sis. Juliet Nieman (Bro. Derek) and Sis. Jessica Riggenbach’s (Bro. Corbin) grandmother, Wilma Davis, also passed away this month. Jim Bates (Nancy) passed away and will be missed by many family members, including sister-in-laws Sis. Sandy Dotterer (Bro. Gary), Sis. Karen
Riggenbach, and Sis. Betty Bachman (Zane).

We rejoice with Bethany Klotzle (Bro. Wayne and Sis. Jane Klotzle) and Haley Steiner (Bro. Joel and Sis. Katrina), who have begun repenting. As souls repent, God then prepares them for baptism. We rejoice with our new Bro. Bobby Cochran Sr. (Sis. Paulette), who found grace to receive baptism in his home this past month. And yet, there is room!

Sis. Sheila Graf and Bro. Michael Baumgartner (Bern, KS), made vows to one another, as husband and wife, on January 16. Parents are Mark and Marcy Graf and Bro. John and Sis. Lori Baumgartner (Bern, KS). We will miss Sis. Sheila here in Rittman. May God add many blessings to this new family.

Thankful for many visiting ministers this past month, including Bro. Nathan Rassi (Sis. Michelle, St. Louis, MO), Bro. Dana Nieman (Sis. Lea, Remington, IN), Bro. John Baumgartner (Sis. Lori, Bern, KS), Bro. Jeff Bahler (Sis. Heidi, Wolcott, IN), and Bro. Scott Aberle (Sis. Dorine, Washington, IL). God’s Word continues to be preached!

Ohio, Sardis

Renee Blough, Doris Miller

We learned in December that Bro. Thad Indermuhle (Bro. Dana and Sis. Joy) is engaged to Sis. Dayra Knoblock (Bro. Travis and Sis. Kathy, Lester, IA). It was a joyful announcement that added to the blessing of the season. Sis. Dayra was able to visit Sardis around the New Year. We praise God for the leading of souls seeking him for direction in marriage.

"Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight
Rolls a melody sweeter than psalm;
In celestial-like strains it unceasingly falls
O'er my soul like an infinite calm.
Peace! peace! wonderful peace,
Coming down from the Father above;
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray,
In fathomless billows of love."

Wonderful Peace, Gospel Hymns, #746

Livi Beard (Bro. Seth and Sis. Faith) has felt the peace of God. Her desire is to place her citizenship in God’s hands, and she is looking forward to baptism.

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world:"
John 18:36

Ohio, Smithville

Connie Maletich, Millie Stoller

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.” Psa. 145:3

Jeremy Miller (Bro. Mike and Sis. Carol) is our new convert. What a blessing for our church to know God is still calling souls.

The birth of Leila Mae has brought much joy to Bro. Dinold and Sis. Karla Gabriel. Bro. Loren and Sis. Marlene Dettwyler (Silverton, OR) are also happy for the safe arrival of another grandchild.

Our prayers for healing are with Bro. Kevin Rufener (Sis. Marcia) as he has spent time in the hospital this month.

Our sympathy is extended to Bro. Ed Marty (Sis. Elaine) at the passing of his dad, Dale Marty. We also remember Sis. Kristen Gasser (Bro. Mark) as her mother, Betsy West was laid to rest. We sorrow with Bro. Ken Maibach (Sis. SueEllen) and Bro. Steve Maibach (Sis. Dawn, dec.) at the death of their brother-in-law Jim Bates (Nancy). We grieve with Bro. Dwaine and Sis. Shelly Beery as their daughter, Dorrice Beery died after a short battle with cancer. We pray that her siblings Sharnise, Sis. Mariah Rudy (Bro. Cole), Katrina Tilton (John), Sis. Heather, Andrew, Nathan and grandparents Arthur and Eileen Beery would feel the comfort only God can give at this time of loss.

“Not now, but in the coming years,
It may be in the better land,
We’ll read the meaning of our tears,
And there, sometime,
we’ll understand.

Then trust in God thro’ all the days;
Fear not, for He doth hold thy hand;
Tho dark thy way, still
sing and praise,
Some time, some time,
we’ll understand.”

Some Time We’ll Understand, Hymns of Zion #165

Ohio, Toledo

Anne Baumann, Rebekah Witzig

Another year has come and gone, and God continues to be faithful and unchanging. He continues to work miracles in
Each of us! We are rejoicing with Olivia Beard (Sardis, OH), one of our college students, and her family as they look forward to her testimony and baptism scheduled for March 2021.

We also believe that God is faithful as we lift Kurt Rager, as well as Bro. Walt and Sis. Sharen Rager, up in prayer due to Kurt spending some time in the hospital because of health concerns and further complications.

With the help of so many brothers and sisters, near and far, our new church building project continues to progress. It could not be possible without the support, prayers, and many hours of donated time and services. We continue to be in awe of the many gifts and talents spread throughout our national church body. Ministering brothers Bro. Dean Steffen (Belvidere, IL) and Bro. Jeff Bahler (Wolcott, IN) along with two other brothers were able to spend the week here with us, working at the church building site and bringing forth the message of the Bible. As we continue on, may we completely trust God’s constant faithfulness to his children.

Ontario, Kitchener
RoseLynn Metzger

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” Jer. 29:13

Greetings to all in Jesus name! As I write this letter, the snow is falling gently outside my window and I think back to Christmas time, when we didn’t have much snow lying on the ground. Of course, we were all hoping for a white Christmas, but our snow had melted a few weeks earlier. On Christmas eve, sure enough, the snow started falling gently, and by the next morning, there was a blanket of snow covering the ground. One might call it a Christmas miracle, but I believe it was God smiling down on us. I often overlook small details like these, but if we remain still in God’s presence, we can see so many blessings scattered throughout our day. God is all-loving, and shows his love in so many different ways. I pray that we can be vessels used to show his love to the world.

On December 16, Bro. Warren Schlatter (Sis. Cindy, Junction, OH) joined us for a midweek service, willingly bringing the Word to us. Over the Christmas season, we did some socially distanced caroling for local nursing homes and families. There is something so special about being outside, holding lanterns and singing about the birth of our Lord! Due to changing COVID-19 restrictions, we had an early Christmas Eve service on December 23, some joining over Zoom, others attending church. Retired Elder Bro. Mark Bahr (Sis. Bev, Detroit, MI) joined us for this special service.

On January 6, we also had a midweek service. Bro. Elmer Gingrich brought the Word to us. We were blessed to be able to join our Detroit, MI congregation in the reading of the Memorandum on January 10. It was an encouraging morning, with so many relevant topics and scriptures. A special thank you to our virtual visitors this month! Blessings as you journey through the upcoming weeks, continuing to serve our Father.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isa. 55:8-9

Oregon, Portland
Louisa Gallup

We are thankful that as of this writing, we have not heard of any new COVID-19 cases in our immediate circle of loved ones and church family. We continue to pray for safety. Especially for those vulnerable and those working in medical settings.

Note of Thanks

Our heartfelt thanks for the prayerful support, flowers, cards and words of comfort, we received during the loss of our father, father-in-law and grandfather, Willem Bernson. May God bless you for your kindness. The Bernson and Gallup families.

Oregon, Silverton
Lorraine Kuenzi, Teresa Sinn

We are happy to share that Bro. Ben and Sis. Carolyn Bolliger celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary December
10! God has blessed them with many years together, and they in turn have blessed those they have come in contact with.

Andrew Roth (Bro. Jim and Sis. Deb) has recently committed his life to the Lord! It is encouraging to see the Lord at work, and we pray that Andrew will seek God with all his heart.

Bro. Chad and Sis. Megan Walter welcomed a grandchild this month, Lincoln Charles, son of Bro. Drew and Sis. Annie Rinkenberger (Bluffton, IN).

Please pray for Bro. Lynn Kuenzi (Sis. Marilyn) as he has recently returned home from a hospital stay and continues to battle ongoing health issues.

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Laura Isch

“I now have found the firm foundation
Where evermore my anchor grounds!
It lay there ere the world’s creation,
Where else, but in my Saviour’s wounds?
Foundation which unmov’d shall stay,
When earth and heaven pass away.”

Christ, the Foundation, Zion’s Harp, #221

We are always so thankful when another soul turns to God in humble repentance! We praise God that Lydia Isch (Bro. Jerry and Sis. Linda) has expressed her desire to seek the Lord. We wish her much grace as she begins this life of faith.

We were very saddened to hear of the passing of Bob Allen (Sis. Rika). Our prayers and sympathy are with Sis. Rika and her children: Hira, Yoshi, and Tomo.

As the world around us seems to be so unstable and unpredictable, may we all cling to the Saviour: our true foundation!

Tennessee, Nashville
Mike Fritz

We are thankful for visitors who come to worship with us and serve us. Our recent visiting ministers have included Bro. Dan Walder (Sis. Pam, Cissna Park, IL) and Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser (Sis. Sue, Peachtree City, GA).

We have also been blessed by the fellowship of visitors from Cissna Park, Fairbury, and Goodfield, IL; Wolcott, IN; and Philadelphia, PA.

While Elder Bro. Tom Waldbeser was here, we were blessed to share Communion, hear the Memorandum, and hold our annual business meeting.

We want to thank our outgoing officers for their service: Bro. Jeff Stoller, trustee; Sis. Mahlia Fritz, treasurer; and Bro. Mike Fritz, assistant treasurer. We give our support to our new officers: Bro. Jeremiah Stoller, trustee; Bro. Jeff Stoller, treasurer; and Sis. Mahlia Fritz, assistant treasurer.

One night in early January, a car ran into our church building and knocked a large hole in the wall. While repairs are being made, we are meeting in other locations, so when you plan to visit, please contact us to learn where we are meeting that Sunday. Contacts are Bro. Jordan and Sis. Emily Fritz, 615.852.9109, jordanmfritz@gmail.com; Bro. Jeremy and Sis. Jillian Bradbury, 765.993.8917, jeremy.bradbury1975@gmail.com; or Bro. Jeremiah Stoller, 615.761.7033, jeremiahleestoller32@gmail.com.

Texas, Austin/Bastrop
Candy Meiss

Greetings from the Austin/Bastrop church of Texas. We were blessed by hearing the Word as Bro. Dan Koch (Sis. Julie, Tremont, IL) served us this month. Thankful for their willingness to spend time with us and share the pure Word by the Holy Spirit’s inspiration.

Brothers and Sisters: More than ever, this is a time for us to be salt and light . . . unashamed, bold lovers of God and others, and people of prayer. Come Lord Jesus, come. Wouldn’t this be a great day for the Lord to return?

“In a world of fear and turmoil,
in a race that seemed so hard to run.
Lord, I need Thy rich infilling;
Even so, Lord Jesus, come.
Even so, Lord Jesus, come.
My heart doth long for Thee.
Though I’ve failed and betrayed Thy trust,
even so, Lord Jesus, come.
Come as wisdom to children.
Come as new sight to the blind.
Come, Lord, as strength to my weakness.
Take me, soul, body and mind.
Come Holy Spirit I Need Thee.
Come sweet Spirit I pray.
Come in Thy strength and Thy power.
Come in Thy own gentle way.
Even so, Lord Jesus, come.
My heart doth long for Thee.
Though I’ve failed and betrayed Thy trust.
Even so, Lord Jesus, come.
Even so, Lord Jesus, come.”
Even So, Lord Jesus Come/
Come Holy Spirit

We give thanks that many families participated and were able to share in the church Christmas program. It was a blessing for all and we appreciate all the work the Sunday school teachers did to prepare for this special time to remember the birth of Christ.

“There is coming a day, when no heart aches shall come, no more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye. All is peace forever more, on that Happy golden shore, what a day, glorious day that will be. There’ll be no sorrow there, no more burdens to bear, no more sickness, no pain, no more parting over there; and forever I will be, with the One who died for me, what a day, glorious day that will be. What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see, And I look upon His face, The One who saved me by His grace; When He takes me by the hand and leads me through the Promised Land, what a day, glorious day that will be.”

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

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, write; for these words are true and faithful.” Rev. 21:4-5

We are looking forward to our Elder Bro. Marvin Dotterer (Sis. Nancy, Forrest, IL) coming in February for Communion and the Memorandum. Anyone coming to South Texas is most welcome to visit and worship with us. We appreciate our visitors.

Texas, Zapata
Mary Plattner

It is wonderful to go to church and see our small congregation grow with each Sunday. Our winter residents have been returning and each one is appreciated as they come from various churches in the north. This year a food and clothing distribution was done for our community as we have done for several years. We have a large indigent population and for several years this has been done in conjunction with one of our local schools. Because of the current restrictions, changes were made in the manner of distribution this year. Weeks were needed to prepare for it and in less than a day most all the items were distributed. Special thanks to those that made a special trip and came early to Zapata to assist with this. The community has certainly appreciated the effort put forth by the brethren and always express their appreciation. Hopefully, this can continue as we certainly feel the blessing of the event each year.

Vermont, Clarendon
Sarah Wagenbach

We are thankful for our visiting ministers that joined us from Rockville, CT via Zoom this month: Bro. Brad Wiegand (Sis. Deanna), Bro. Tom Bahler (Sis. LaNae) and Elder Bro. Kevin Ryan (Sis. Cheryl). On December 27, we joined together via Zoom to watch and take part in our virtual Christmas program. We were thankful for the many friends and family that were able to join us to worship God through our Sunday school children’s singing and recitations of Christ’s birth. Meeting virtually allowed others a unique opportunity to join us! We thank our children for their hard work and for our Sunday school superintendent’s innovation to make this happen.
In 2 Corinthians 5:18, we are told that God has “given unto us the ministry of reconciliation.” In the next verse, Paul reinforces that statement by saying that God has “committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” So clearly, this is an important charge to the church. Do we fully understand it? Let’s take a deeper look and then consider how we might apply it as an Apostolic Christian Church.

Paul has stated previously in this chapter that all men are either identified with Christ or not identified with Christ. Those that have been identified with Christ are new creatures that have died with Christ, are risen with Christ, live with Christ, and are no longer who they once were. And because of this, we do not identify them first and foremost by their flesh (skin color, social status, language they speak, etc.) but by being Christ’s!

We could ask, how does something this drastic happen? This question is answered in verses 18 & 19. God has done the following:

- **Reconciled us to Himself** – Reconciliation assumes that there has been a broken relationship. An example would be a married couple that has had strife and contention, has moved out on each other, and are seeking legal counsel for a divorce. They need to be reconciled. This is true of our relationship with God. Man’s relationship with God has been broken since the first sin in the Garden of Eden. The scripture states that the reason that we have a broken relationship with God is because we by nature are at war with God – his enemies (Colossians 1:21; Romans 5:10). We need to be reconciled to God and GOD HAS RECONCILED US TO HIMSELF.

- **By Jesus Christ** – God tells us exactly how he reconciles us! Through the death of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:22a; Romans 5:10). We cannot be reconciled to God through trying harder, doing better things, fitting a certain social class, or etc. We can only be reconciled through Jesus! He is the only way (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

- **And has given us the ministry of reconciliation** – God not only reconciles and saves us; he also sends us! Since we have come to realize that our primary identification in life is either being in a relationship with Christ or not in a relationship with Christ, we are called to be working to reconcile others to God through Jesus Christ! We want others to be one with Christ!

Paul continues in verse 20 and states that those of us that have been reconciled to God are ambassadors for God and that God is making his appeal through us. An ambassador is one that represents the power and dignity of his sovereign. God is using us as his people to appeal...
to those that are not reconciled. Paul then says, I pray you in Christ stead to be reconciled to God. This word pray means to implore or to petition with urgency. We as believers are called to petition others with urgency to be reconciled to God!

Finally, Paul gives the summary in verse 21 –

• Jesus lived on this earth and did not sin at all – words, thoughts, or actions
• However, He became the penalty of sin for us! Our sin was judged by Him at the Cross!
• Why – so that we could be made the righteousness of God in Him

Men can be reconciled to God because God has poured out His wrath on His Son and place His righteousness on us! PRAISE GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS!

How does this relate to us a brotherhood?

It means that we understand the primary need of ALL people is to be reconciled to God. Of course, people also need food, clothing, shelter, and etc. – these are real needs. However, the deepest need of a person is to be reconciled to God. When a person is reconciled to God the gifts and talents that God has created them with can be used in a way that God is honored. This understanding should direct both our personal outreach and that done by individual congregations. It is also a strategic focus of HarvestCall, as the church’s missions agency. Looking forward, HarvestCall’s goal is that we will have highly relational ministries that are focused on people over projects, and God will be glorified through the faithful proclamation of the gospel.

What should this look like in the future if we as a church are faithful to this focus area?

We believe that a faithful fulfillment in this focus area will result in the following, both in local ministries and HarvestCall ministries:

• Ministries that are focused on evangelism and discipleship over projects and “fixing” others.
• Consistent assessments in all of our ministries as to where we are at with our focus on people and relationships.
• Extensive preparation for missionaries in the gospel, cultural awareness, sensitivity to others and a primary focus of evangelism and discipleship.
• All members seeking ways to engage in the Great Commission.
• In the countries where we minister, indigenous people will be reconciled to God, churches will be planted, and when ready, the local people will be given the responsibility of church leadership as well as becoming a part of HarvestCall Boards and Committees.

Spend time today contemplating the gift you have been given by being reconciled to God and your calling to urge others to do the same. Pray that we as a church — and particularly the HarvestCall organization — will make the ministry of reconciliation a primary focus in our personal lives and in our ministries! Matt Knapp serves as Executive Director for HarvestCall.
How has Fellowshipping with Believers of Other Generations Enriched Your Walk of Faith?

In Spring Of 2020, Bro. Dwight Rokey invited me to attend a Bible study at his home. Elder Bro. Brad Strahm and his wife, Sis. Michelle, led the meeting, while Bro. Dwight and his wife, Sis. Anita, also took part. The others present were to be our church’s “young group.” While I was hesitant, I recalled being very encouraged earlier by participating in a bi-weekly study on Joseph with a mixed age group: two of the Rokey children (one married daughter with her husband and another in high school), a couple near my age, and a couple a few years older. I decided to accept Bro. Dwight’s invitation once, but then I would not attend again if I really stood out as the oldest. I knew three of the younger men who were also repenting and two or three others with whom I routinely spoke at church. I told myself that anything is okay once. I enjoyed the study guide on Ephesians, the discussion, and singing a hymn or two. However, I remained unconvinced that I would attend again.

COVID-19 changed many things. Both church worship and meetings for our convert group were online. While I spoke weekly with other men and extended-family relatives from church, the lack of in-person fellowship as I continued my repentance was a big challenge to me. Only a small group of believing friends remained from the old days, and they were busy with their families and children. When opportunities to try the “young group” presented again through a semi open-air meal and another Bible study, I welcomed the chances just to talk to anybody this time. Again, I told myself that while I would go, this was likely the last time. I would thank Bro. Dwight and Sis. Anita and say I appreciated the thought. By the end of the meeting, though, I surprised myself, or, rather, God surprised me!

Matthew 18:20 says, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Ephesians and the study weren’t the only things that spoke to me. The young believers’ attitudes and kindness touched me also. The dynamic was unique compared to what I had experienced in my years attending various young- and career-adult Sunday school and Bible study classes. Fellowship in the Apostolic Christian Church truly feels like an extended family, and this was no different. Yet this time, some of them were also career-minded single adults in similar circumstances to my own, despite a difference in our ages.

Attending the “young group” Bible study has led to fellowship and close friendships that would not likely have developed outside the church. 1 Timothy 4:12 says, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” Fellowship with younger believers has been an encouragement to me to see their sincerity of faith. It has also allowed me the opportunity to encourage them in their walk where my experience can be of value. Likewise, I am no longer surprised when a younger believer can lend experience to me. Bro. Lynn Hartter - Bern, KS

I attended the Gridley, Illinois, congregation. To this day, I remember two faithful, elderly Brothers, Joe Rinkenberger and Albert Grusy. As a young member, the Lord drew me to these Brothers. Although they spoke Swiss-German, and I spoke High German, we understood each other with ease.

In addition to their German, their caring, faith, and devotion also impressed me. After lunch on a bench in the hall, I sat with Albert and would ask him, "Wie geht's?" (How are you?) He would answer me, "Wie man's treibt." (As you steer it.) He also would remark how the soybean market fluctuated more in one day than it did for one year in the past. He was right.

In the lunchroom, I also asked Joe how he was. He would say, "Wie es mit den alten leuten geht" (meaning, "As it goes with the old people").

I still remember their faces, kindness, and faith towards God to this day. They spoke English, but it was extra special in German.

Bro. Paul Klopfenstein - Bloomington, IL

ONE GENERATION passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. (Ecclesiastes 1:4)

The generation that has passed away in my lifetime included five single, converted aunts. Their example of serving the Lord with joy and contentment spoke volumes to me. Since all lived out of state, it was something to celebrate when any of them came to visit! While I didn’t think about it as a child, I realized as a young adult that their lives portrayed a peace and joy, which only arose from their trust in God. They taught me about being content in life, showing interest in others, loving and appreciating those who are older, and realizing the blessings of a single life. Through them, I learned the benefit of sharing and receiving advice from those who are older and more experienced.

One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. (Psalm 145:4)

Since my parents and aunts instilled in me the value of learning to esteem older generations, I welcomed interactions with older, single Sisters when I became converted. Within my home church and at other congregations, God blessed me with opportunities to spend time with such Sisters. Although some were a decade or two older than I was, they were willing to fellowship with me and teach by word and example. As my early mentors, they taught me so much in my walk of faith. And I am grateful.

I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. (Psalm 89:1)

While I value what I can learn from those who are older, I especially enjoy getting to know those who are several decades younger. Throughout my converted life, I’ve enjoyed the blessings of attending local, single-group singings and getting to know the young people. As we grow older, it’s not always easy to attend with those so much younger. However, the joy of singing and fellowship is well worth the courage it takes to go. Building relationships with younger believers has enriched my walk of faith.

When they see we are interested in them, they reciprocate. As older single believers, we can share our life experiences and engage in conversations to get to know them better. While some may be shy or hesitant to start a conversation with someone older, I’ve learned we can initiate spiritual conversations with them. In this way, we can pass along to those younger the joy of serving our Lord and Savior. By sharing his faithfulness to us in our lives, we encourage them to trust that he will be faithful throughout their lives too. I’ve learned that those who are young today have some of the same concerns we had. Their world and challenges are different. Yet, in essence, they still want to serve the Lord, be able to share concerns, and seek advice. As we’re willing to grow in mutual fellowship across generations, we find and give encouragement in our Christian walks. Sis. Patricia Steiner - Mediapolis, IA
A S A WHOLE, we Apostolic Christians are fairly open to connecting with a range of generations. This may vary somewhat throughout our lives since it is natural to gravitate to those with a similar life stage and/or circumstances. When I came to Chicago church as a young single Sister, I delighted in getting to know its diverse, older generation. (Had I remained in Tremont, I might have missed getting to know them because I thought I had “known” them all my life. However, I was not familiar with that age group as individuals, but rather as a group: Mom’s club or Dad’s guests that he hosted at “men’s singing.”)

My second “Mom” was a dear member of that older generation. Christine Eckel died in a nursing home on May 1, 2020, the day before her 97th birthday. Although having COVID-19 hastened her death, she hadn’t had strength nor had she been healing before that. So, while she was a public health statistic, we in her beloved church family viewed her differently. She loved and prayed for us, and we loved and prayed for her. Losing a mom, sister, and dear friend still hurts so much. (Her Fetzer family’s story is included in Stories of Faith and Courage - Volume 4.) After losing a son to cancer, she had lost her husband Ken some years earlier before her daughter died of cancer also. That left one son and his wife in the Chicago area and two granddaughters out of state. We delighted in picking her up and taking her back and forth to church. (Early on, she and I bonded over having dill pickles for sandwiches at church! We were always so pleased when whoever served provided them.) She loved music and truly enjoyed when our grandchildren sang for her. They loved her too, and we hope they remember some of the things she told them. She was wise, yet she spoke her mind. All in church were heartbroken when she could no longer receive visitors at the nursing home. As we missed her and the visiting experience, she missed all her visitors too. Yet, she was so accepting and ready. Near the end, she was no longer able to pick up the phone and hold it when we tried to call. Additionally, hearing us and speaking to us was difficult for her. Dwelling on her faithfulness and willingness to “be absent from the body” reminds us all of the Lord’s work, and he is always good. No matter what she endured here, she serenely looked onward and forward towards heaven.

While my grandchildren may overuse electronics, technology truly blesses us with connection in these days of COVID! As necessary, we gather virtually for church services, VBS, and fellowship nights. Through a WhatsApp for Chicago Apostolic Christian moms and ladies, we keep in touch with more generations more often – and perhaps more closely – than we did before. As an older one in the group, I’ve relied on my daughter to connect me and post our pictures. Other young moms often request prayers (for themselves and others we may not have heard about across the nation) and clue us in on their lovely families with pictures. We older ones react to prayer requests, pray, and ask for prayer for ones we know. We feel free to comment and share our own situations and needs. We also celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, joys, and sorrows. It’s a blessing to be living now despite restrictions. “To every thing there is a season, … (Ecclesiastes 3:1)”

Sis. Kathy Schlatter - Chicago, IL
The News and Notices section of The Silver Lining provides a way for qualifying non-profit entities to make the brotherhood aware of church-related events, opportunities, needs, and services that would be of special interest to Apostolic Christian Church of America members and regular attendees. Email us at editor@acsilverlining.org for a copy of our advertising policy, which specifies who may advertise, sizes, file formats and deadlines.

News and Notices

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Christian Guesthouse and Worship Services in Rochester, MN

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Guesthouse - Three bedrooms with private baths, laundry, kitchen and family room area.

Guesthouse Accommodations:
4733 Birdie Lane NW, Rochester, MN 55901
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(507) 288-0072

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

Light from the Word

Now available by downloadable PDF at
www.acpublications.org

After entering the website, click on the item located at the left hand frame entitled, “Light from the Word Reprints”. The entire set of editorials are available in a complete download (June 1987 to current).
Registration now open for ALive 2021

Plans are in the works for the Athens, Alabama congregation to host ALive 2021 over the Memorial Day weekend, May 29 – 31! Registration is now available to sign up on the website at www.ALiveAlabama.com.

This year "Hope" will be the overarching theme for the weekend. Ministering brothers Brad Metz (Bloomington), Kirk Plattner (W. Lafayette) and Mark Klaus (Athens) will speak on having hope in God during struggles when we don't understand "why," and how to encourage others who are going through tough times. This is a very relevant topic for the trying times we are living in.

The weekend event will be held at The Vision (www.visionministry.org), a beautiful 300+ acre Christian Retreat facility nestled in the side of a small mountain near Huntsville, AL. The grounds include a stunning lodge where we have worship; a lake; playground equipment, hiking trails, and more.

Want more details? Visit www.ALiveAlabama.com, our Facebook page @ ALiveAlabama or send an e-mail to info@alivealabama.com.

Should circumstances arise that would require cancellation, a decision will be made by April 15.

The Athens congregation and ALive Committee look forward to hosting you for ALive 2021!

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Head Coverings and Veils

Now available at the Apostolic Christian Publications store in Goodfield, IL
$12-25 each, depending on the style. Available IN STORE ONLY.

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2021 Apostolic Christian Church Services
Clyde Park, Montana

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

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

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

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

For equipment, contact Comfort Inn (406-222-4400) will have a block of rooms available under Apostolic Christian or Bob Metzger

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

Free will donations serve to cover meal costs and facility expenses.
A day tour of the area may be organized for those interested on Friday June 25th.
2021 Team Schedule

**Mexico**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reynosa</td>
<td>Jan 5-12</td>
<td>Trenton Edelman <a href="mailto:trentonedelman@gmail.com">trentonedelman@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>March 20-27, 2021</td>
<td>Adam Kaeb - <a href="mailto:operationscve@gmail.com">operationscve@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>May 28- June 3, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magdalena</td>
<td>June 11 - 17, 2021</td>
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<td>June 25 - July 1, 2021</td>
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**Jamaica**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness Tour</td>
<td>Jan 8 -21, 2021</td>
<td>Loren Dettwyler 503-580-9629 <a href="mailto:lmdettwyler@gmail.com">lmdettwyler@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCCD - JDV</td>
<td>June 4-12, 2021</td>
<td>Mark Lindberg 815-641-9065 <a href="mailto:lindma@hotmail.com">lindma@hotmail.com</a></td>
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*If you are interested in sponsoring a team to Jamaica, contact Loren Dettwyler*

**Haiti**

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Jan 8-15</td>
<td>Ron Palitto <a href="mailto:ronp@palittoconsulting.com">ronp@palittoconsulting.com</a> 330-336-5373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Jan 15-22</td>
<td>Rich Kuntz <a href="mailto:rrkuntz60@gmail.com">rrkuntz60@gmail.com</a> 815-848-2420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Jan 15-22</td>
<td>Andy Getz <a href="mailto:andy@getzitdone.com">andy@getzitdone.com</a> 574-870-5046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Jan 22-29</td>
<td>Nathan Steffen <a href="mailto:nds235@gmail.com">nds235@gmail.com</a> 616-308-6621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>Feb 19-26</td>
<td>Josh Moser <a href="mailto:joshmoser92@gmail.com">joshmoser92@gmail.com</a> 309-573-6398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>March 19-26</td>
<td>Wes Sutter <a href="mailto:wasutter@icloud.com">wasutter@icloud.com</a> 309-863-1309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes / Torberck</td>
<td>Feb 6-Mar 5</td>
<td>Brent Hodel <a href="mailto:htf94@gmail.com">htf94@gmail.com</a> 309-231-7467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>March 5-12</td>
<td>Andy Getz <a href="mailto:andy@getzitdone.com">andy@getzitdone.com</a> 574-870-5046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>March 5-12</td>
<td>Rich Kuntz <a href="mailto:nkuntz60@gmail.com">nkuntz60@gmail.com</a> 815-848-2420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>March 19-26</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a> 309-266-9009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Les Cayes</td>
<td>March 26-April 2</td>
<td>Jon Zeller <a href="mailto:jczeller1972@gmail.com">jczeller1972@gmail.com</a> 309-266-9009</td>
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**Missionary School - Bonne Fin, Haiti**

**TEACHER OPPORTUNITY**

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

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

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

For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact:

Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director
Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
HARVESTCALL MISSIONARY PURPOSE
The primary purpose of a HarvestCall missionary is to proclaim Christ and serve others. In fulfillment of HarvestCall’s mission, all missionary roles are purposed toward the sharing of the Gospel, the discipleship of believers, and the demonstration of the love of Christ through deeds of compassion.

PRIMARY ROLE: DEAF DISCIPLESHIP (3-5 years)
1. To intentionally and effectively be engaged in discipling relationships as part of a healthy body of local believers.
2. The commitment of our team to discipleship within the Deaf community continues to deepen, and as such we believe there is a need for long-term growth of our missionary team. We believe that 3-5 years is necessary for cultural and language acquisition before someone is adequately prepared for discipleship roles. Therefore, the purpose in the early years would essentially be as a “training ground” although the near-term role itself might change with time as the missionary becomes more equipped for the long-term role of being engaged in Deaf discipleship.

TRANSITIONAL ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES:
1. Key Result Area #1 (first step)
   Cultural and Language Training
   a) Complete Levels 1, 2, and 3 of JSL (Jamaican Sign Language) training on island
2. Key Result Area #2 (near-term)
   HarvestCall Jamaica Team Role
   a) Support Sis Erin with En Gedi House ministry and child-care
   b) Assist in the distribution of material aid
   c) Possible establishment of Deaf Can! Coffee ministry in Mandeville
3. Key Result Area #3 (within 6-12 months)
   CCCD Role possibilities
   a) CCCD support opportunities
      (based on skill and interest)
      • Agriculture (vegetable crops and cattle as well as coffee farm)
      • After school activities
      • Construction and maintenance
      • Teaching or Interpreting (w/ ASL skills already)
      • Coffee farm (Deaf Can!)

QUALIFICATION AND SKILLS REQUIRED:
1. Interest and desire to learn sign language (past training / experience is preferred)
2. People person – willing to engage with others, particularly those different than you

For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact:
Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director
Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108

En Gedi House Ministry - Mandeville, Jamaica
MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY
HarvestCall Missionary Purpose

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Primary Role: Deaf Discipleship (3-5 years)

1. To intentionally and effectively be engaged in discipling relationships as part of a healthy body of local believers.
2. The commitment of our team to discipleship within the Deaf community continues to deepen, and as such we believe there is a need for long-term growth of our missionary team. We believe that 3-5 years is necessary for cultural and language acquisition before someone is adequately prepared for discipleship roles. Therefore, the purpose in the early years would essentially be as a “training ground” although the near-term role itself might change with time as the missionary becomes more equipped for the long-term role of being engaged in Deaf discipleship.

Transitional Role Responsibilities:

1. Key Result Area #1 (first step)
   Cultural and Language Training
   a) Complete Levels 1, 2, and 3 of JSL (Jamaican Sign Language) training on island

2. Key Result Area #2 (near-term)
   HarvestCall Jamaica Team Role
   a) JSL Video Bible translation coordinating / video editing / support
   b) Support Deaf Can! Operations
   c) Support E3 Fellowship gathering (small church establishment)
   d) Assist in the distribution of material aid

3. Key Result Area #3 (within 6-12 months)
   CCCD Role possibilities
   a) CCCD support opportunities (based on skill and interest)
      • STM teams (support Seth for a year before taking responsibility)
      • Construction and maintenance
      • Teaching or Interpreting (w/ ASL skills already)
      • Teen Bible study

Qualification and Skills Required:

1. Interest and desire to learn sign language (past training / experience is preferred)
2. People person – willing to engage with others, particularly those different than you

For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact:
Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director
Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
**Bible Distribution: Sharing His Word in Love**

_Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people._ Psalm 96:3

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**Hospital Lumiere - Bonne Fin, Haiti**

**DIRECTOR OF NURSING**

The nursing department within the hospital and clinic at Hospital Lumiere is staffed by Haitian nationals who are trained and certified by the Haitian medical system. Over the past 10 years, the nursing staff capability and dedication to serving the patients has greatly improved. All nursing departments are supervised by well qualified and skilled team members that are responsible for delivering the nursing services including staff assignments, scheduling, quality assurance and training. The position of Director of Nursing is to support the nursing team providing guidance, supervision and mentoring. This is not a hands on direct patient care position.

A key component of the medical program at Hospital Lumiere is hosting medical teams and ongoing training from medical professionals in the States. The DON will be responsible for establishing, coordinating and hosting nursing medical teams visiting HL.

This opportunity is a fulltime missionary position resident at Hospital Lumiere in Bon Fin, Haiti.

**DEPARTMENT QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Active member of the Apostolic Christian Church with a heart for service and desire to share the love of Jesus with the Haitian people
- Love for Haitian people and desire to work in close collaboration with Nursing Staff with a focus on relationship building
- Commitment to Ethical decision making and honesty in all decisions
- Responsibility and Accountability in all action, and willingness to support Nursing Supervisors in fostering program expectations with their nursing staff
- Willingness to adapt to necessary and frequent change
- Attitude of openness to learning and respect for Haitian culture
- Willingness to learn Creole language to effectively communicate with staff
- Willingness to work as team-player with other staff members and other members of Leadership Team including Administrator, Medical Director, Manager of Central Supply, Facilities Director, Operations Director, Finance Director and Pastors Office.
- Desire to interact with patients, families and employees while serving as an Ambassador For Christ.

**REQUIRED EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:**

- Active Licensure as Registered Nurse in US
- 5 years nursing experience preferred

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For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact:

Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director
Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or
Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
The Hospital Lumiere team is presently seeking candidates for missionary service as Facilities Manager. Singles, Couples and Families of all ages are encouraged to prayerfully consider full time missionary service supporting the Hospital Lumiere ministry and outreach in Bonne Fin, Haiti.

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

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

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If you are interested in Medical service, please review the Medical Professional Advertisement.
Those in the child sponsorship program have several things in common. They are very poor, they desire to learn, and they have an undying soul.

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

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

Isaiah 54:13

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

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Address _________________________

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Morton, IL 61550

Phone: 309-266-6080
Fax: 309-266-5281
Email: childsponsorship@harvestcall.org

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Visit: www.harvestcall.org/our-missionaries
BUSINESS MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITY

The Fatted Calf is seeking a candidate to serve as a Business Missionary in Magdalena, Mexico. The primary purpose of this role will be to proclaim Christ and serve others through the avenue of community interaction, using the business marketplace as the primary vehicle of ministry. In the fulfillment of HarvestCall’s mission, The Fatted Calf, principally through its majority ownership of Productos Carnicos La Mision (PCLM) and its sponsorship of EXPO Esperanza, is purposed toward sharing the gospel, discipling believers, and demonstrating the love of Christ through deeds of compassion in the context of the workplace and community involvement opportunities. Interested candidates should explore the PCLM business operations at www.thefatcalf.com/productos-carnicos-la-mision

Desired Qualifications

- Member in good standing within the Apostolic Christian Church of America
- A demonstrated heart for sharing the gospel, specifically within the workplace and community
- Significant project and team leadership experience in the workplace
- Demonstrated background in community engagement
- Experience with team building, personnel evaluation and management
- An entrepreneurial background and interest
- Strong language skills, either existing or to be acquired prior to coming to the field
- Willingness to adapt to and engage in Mexican culture
- Business management experience. Food and/or agricultural backgrounds preferred
- Strong mentoring and training skills
- Business financial skills are desired but not a requirement
- Not be afraid to “get your hands dirty” in the day to day workplace
- Willing to make a commitment for service of at least 5 years, Lord willing

General Duties and Responsibilities of Business Missionary

- The position will, in the business context:
  - Come alongside our employees to assist them in the gospel centered management of business units. Train, train, train – Disciple, disciple, disciple
  - Interact with customers and vendors to demonstrate the love of Christ through these business touchpoints
  - Serve as an active member of the local community to provide a vehicle for the sharing of our gospel centered organizational objectives – clearly demonstrating the love of Christ to the community
- To interact with summer interns to train, disciple and assist in their gospel centered experience as they come to engage with the children of CVE, CVV and the Magdalena community
- As a part of a management team, to act as the liaison between business operations and the management team and Board of Directors as needed
- To take an active role in the business operations, creating touchpoints of gospel engagement with employee teams.
- To help ensure that the gospel is never secondary within the ministry of The Fatted Calf and the operations of PCLM through spiritual training, employee engagement, community relations and business administration
- To be an active member of the Magdalena congregation
- To actively engage in coordination of the ministry with those of CVE and CVV.

For additional details for this exciting and worthy service opportunity contact:

Amber Miller - Missionary Care Director
Email: amiller@harvestcall.org or Phone: 765.250.4295 x108
Communication in Marriage

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

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[1512] Price: $10.00
This comprehensive 10-lesson Bible study was developed by ACCFS. We have been given some powerful principles in God's Word which can be applied to each marriage to encourage it on the path toward health. In addition to some text followed by questions, each lesson includes an exercise for each couple to complete privately.

Loving as One in Christ

[1514] Price: $10.00
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Four Great Loves

[1603] Price: $8.50

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whom Jesus spoke after his resurrection was a woman – Mary Magdalene.\textsuperscript{11} Even though Jesus had the opportunity to appear to Peter, John, and Mary together, he seemed to purposefully wait until Mary was alone.\textsuperscript{12}

Jesus also befriended Samaritans, who were a people group that many Jews despised. To the great surprise of his disciples, Jesus initiated a thought-provoking conversation with a Samaritan woman whom he knew to have a promiscuous past. The woman came to believe that Jesus was the Christ, and her testimony moved her community to seek out Jesus. Jesus ended up staying with them in Samaria for two days and many Samaritans became believers during that time.\textsuperscript{13}

The way that Jesus loves all people without discrimination is a wonderful example that runs counter to human nature. Race, gender, age, lifestyle, and political party are some of the many ways people categorize others and justify diminished love, or even hatred. We certainly do not condone choices that overtly go against Scripture, but as followers of Jesus’s example we recognize the worth of every human and share the truth in love.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Jesus loves unilaterally.} “But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you… For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?”\textsuperscript{15} Jesus spoke these radical words to his disciples during the Sermon on the Mount, and it could have been just a powerful sermon by a talented preacher, but Jesus proved that these were more than flowery words by following through with eternally-significant actions. “God commended his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”\textsuperscript{16} While we were still sinners, enemies of God, Jesus gave his life for us. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”\textsuperscript{17} How remarkable it is that the King of Kings would love his enemies enough to die for them!

While we may or may not have a true enemy in our lives, most of us know someone that we just do not “click” with very well. Take a moment to identify someone like that in your life. You probably will not be asked to die for this person, but how can you alter your heart and interactions to better convey that you value him or her as part of God’s creation? While the person may not reciprocate your attempts to thaw a chilly relationship, remember that most of the people Jesus died for do not even acknowledge his existence.

\textbf{Jesus loves out of a pure heart.} Motivation matters. We can observe some of the ways that Jesus loves by reading about his actions. Yet we need to keep in mind that a Christian may demonstrate seemingly selfless works with the motivation of bringing glory to self, rather than to God.\textsuperscript{18} Therefore, we must be diligent in monitoring our hearts, as we love and serve in Jesus’ name, so that the true light of Christ may shine and the Earth may be “filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”\textsuperscript{19}
So, “there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.” (vv5-9) I’m going back over this just to remind us.

I praise God because we now have seven brothers on the pulpit, and not one of us is the same as any other. If we were all the same, why do we need seven? But God has looked out and has been very compassionate as his desire is to reach young and old that they may know and understand. The Apostle Paul would say, “To the weak, I became as the weak; to the Jew, I became as the Jew.” He didn’t become them, but he had that incredible gift of the Spirit that he could think on how they are thinking. I’m 64. I cannot think back with all these changing times to how a younger family functions, but God has provided that from our pulpit through others. Take courage in that, brothers and sisters. He’s doing whatever he can that we may be reached, that we can be drawn together, that we can come together to be in the strength of him by the Holy Spirit.

We’re not all the same knowledge-wise. Some have a gift of retention of the word. Others do not. It does not make us right or wrong; we are just simply walking in our gift. We have to realize that as we go further in. We might say, “Well, that brother or that sister is so gifted.” Yes, some have the gift of organizing and putting together groups and covering all the bases while others just simply do not. That doesn’t mean we’re a lesser brother or a better brother or sister. We are just simply exercising what God expects out of us because that’s our gift. It also gives none of us the ability or the excuse to sit back and give Satan the time by saying, “I am not worth anything” because you’re insulting God. “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (v 11).

Don’t get gift envy. “I wish I could do that.” Just being real open here – I wish I could remember verses like Bro. Marvin. It’s never going to happen, and I waste my time being envious because it’s a gift, and they work at it. We’re still God’s children, and we have to realize that, as individuals sitting in these benches. We’re going to talk about how we can bring it all together, but we are God’s children as individuals.

Going on then, starting from verse 12. We’ve taken the time to acknowledge we’re all going to be different. Okay, one more thing before I continue: How many of us raise our family the exact same way? I like that because we don’t. It just brings home that we are individuals. We don’t dress the same. We don’t decorate our houses the same. The Lord knows we don’t think the same. But we have to be unified to put this all together because God says, “I made this person this way and I made this person that way, and it’s going help each other.” How many of us who are married understand why God saw that man needed a helpmeet? It’s because they fill in the blanks of our shortcomings. They motivate. They encourage. They direct, and we’re to do that one for another. If we’re at odds saying, “Boy, I could never be like him. He won’t have anything to do with me”, then Satan has caused the separation.

Now I will finally go on to that twelfth verse. [Reads verses 12-17] Pausing. Here’s a good example: Paul uses the human body for this illustration. If we just had nothing but eyeballs in the benches, we would not hear.

— Please turn to pg. 64
You can break it all down. As we talked earlier, I’m just a foot so cover me up, put a shoe on me. It’s not as fancy as a hand that reaches out and grasps, but you’re not going anywhere if you don’t have a foot. The foot can’t say, “I don’t fit into the program here.” That thinking has to go, and we have to have a godly contentment because, as it comes here, “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” (v18). Okay. We can be as disgruntled or disconnected and discontented as we want to be, but we’ll read a little further, if I remember right, to where that attitude is going to get you. God says, “This is where I want you; this is where I have placed you.” – excuse me, I’m not trying to put words in God’s mouth, but – “Get on with it” because it’s where he wants you to be. I think that’s all part of being content, dear ones.

It says, “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim 6:6). We tend to think that’s for wanting earthly things, but, you know, we could think, “This is where God put me, and I’m just going to coast.” That’s not what he’s saying at all. Be the best foot you can be, or be the best eyeball you can be because you’re doing it for the Lord. A contentedness has to be where we understand our limitations, but that doesn’t mean we don’t try to grow. We understand that “I’m not going to be like brother so and so or sister so and so, but I’m part of a body that was purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ and him crucified.” It pleases God to give us our place in life.

“And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” (vv19-21) That’s where we run into danger. When we get sideways – when a brother or sister says, “I don’t need this. I’m out of there. I can get along just fine.” – that’s a problem. If we have the Holy Spirit in our lives and if we’re letting him work to the fullest, we will understand the power of a believing church family and we will understand our intricate part in that family. May we never ever say, “I have no need of that brother or that sister.” If we have that attitude, then we have not understood the variety that God wants or his desires for the whole package, for a whole complete operating family used in his work and for our spiritual growth.

“Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary” (v22). I’m going to pause here as I’m thinking because I don’t trust my mind. There is nothing more beautiful in a church than old people. We absolutely need them; they’re a necessity. I know as my mother and others get older, they think, ‘What do I have to offer? I’m just around in everybody’s way, and they’re making all these concessions to keep me here and this and that.’ No. I often try to remind them, “You’re here because God is not done with you.”

There’s nothing more powerful, and the word speaks often with this, loved ones, where it says the younger need to visit with the older and the older with the younger. You take our oldest brother or sister in the church and then look at our young generation and the vast technology changes. We want to say, “Well, I don’t have much in common.” Oh, you’ve got everything in common because we, every one of us, carry human nature. We all have temptations. The flesh has not changed; just the way it’s addressed and given us before a temptation has changed. The temptation has not changed.

“And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath
tempered the body together, having
given more abundant honour to that
part which lacked: That there should
be no schism in the body; but that
the members should have the same
care one for another.” (vv23-25) I’ve
brought this out before in a talk. I
don’t go up to brother so and
so and say, “Boy, you’ve got the
best looking spleen around.” We
don’t acknowledge those uncomely
parts. They’re there, and they’re
absolutely vital; many, many parts
in our body are vital. Pride of man –
the fault of fallen man is that
we want or need reassurance, and
when we are the spleens and the
livers of a church body, we don’t
get a lot of acknowledgment. If
we take away the spleen and liver
and all those things, and man will
die. That’s where we have to find
within our hearts the comfort and
have that reassurance, “I am where
God has placed me.” We’re not
going to get from man the ‘atta
boys’ on the back because it’s just
how we tend to do it. We are not
real encouragers, at times, and I
encourage you as a brotherhood
to be encouragers. It goes a long
way. We all need it. We don’t
need to be puffed up and bragged
about, but we simply need to be
acknowledged and encouraged.
There’s not one in here or back in
the Sunday School or busy as they
should, as they’re called to do, that
doesn’t need this.

“That there should be no schism
in the body” (v25). It takes work. It
takes work by everyone.

“Are all apostles? are all
prophets? are all teachers? are all
workers of miracles? Have all the
gifts of healing? do all speak with
tongues? do all interpret?” (vv29-
30) I think we know the answer
to that. And as Paul finishes
the chapter he says, “But covet
earnestly the best gifts: and yet
shew I unto you a more excellent
way.” (v31) Then he goes into
that love chapter.

If you want this body to click,
you have to have love. That’s why
he said, after that big speech to
the Corinthians – this is how
you need to be, this is how you
should operate, you have look at
everybody like this – he basically
says, “You’ve got to love them.”
How much easier it is, we all
know, when love acts.

Before I sit down, I’m going
to finish with the promises and
encouragement from – I’m going
to say the bluntness of – that Old
Testament reading. “The LORD
is with you, while ye be with him;
and if ye seek him, he will be
found of you; but if ye forsake him,
he will forsake you” (2 Chron 15:2).
Sometimes, as man – maybe it’s
just one of my pet peeves – we
use vagueness. We sometimes act
like we’re protecting the name
of a person, but we can also use
vagueness to really try to get a
point across when there’s not a lot
of depth to what we’re trying to
bring out. Here, it just simply says,
“The LORD is with you, while ye be
with him; and if ye seek him, he will
be found of you; but if ye forsake him,
he will forsake you.” We couldn’t
write it much more plainly, but
I’m going to leave you with the last
verse that I read there.

What a privilege we have
here, loved ones. We’ve been
united. It was a good Sunday to
have that chapter open up on the
body because we’re coming back
together. The body wasn’t absent;
we could see works and efforts
and time being put in by brothers
and sisters when we were separate
and the things that went out – the
encouragements and the verses –
so I’m going to say, “Continue on.”
We’re not done with this. We’re
not home yet. We’re getting to
exercise our body, getting to move
a little more, getting to fellowship,
which should strengthen us.
When some brother or sister just
totally irritates us, remember we
have diversity. God loves diversity,
but he loves even more when we
have unity in love, when we’re
unified by the Holy Spirit. He
said, “Be ye strong therefore, and let
not your hands be weak: for your
work shall be rewarded” (v7).
Origins in Europe
In order to obtain a clearer perspective of the Apostolic Christian Church in America, it is essential to review events in Europe in the early nineteenth century, particularly as they relate to Samuel Heinrich Froehlich. He was born in Brugg, canton Aargau, Switzerland on July 4, 1803 to Samuel Froehlich and Gottliebin Berger Froehlich. He was the sixth and youngest child of this union. The Froehlich family was part of the Swiss Protestant State Church. His father, Samuel Froehlich, served as a sexton in the church in Brugg. He was in charge of the maintenance of church property. He rang the church bells, and sometimes dug graves in the church cemetery.

Samuel Heinrich Froehlich
As was customary in that area, a son was often offered by families to study for the ministry, and serve in a state church. This was the case for Samuel Froehlich. He had no special calling, but was supposed to learn it as a trade and profession. Thus, he went to school in his home town until he was seventeen years old. While studying humanities at the University of Zurich, he was exposed to many philosophies which confronted the beliefs instilled in him in his youth. Rationalism was prevalent and he fell prey to those teachings. After four years at Zurich, he studied theology at the University of Basel where he was profoundly influenced by scholars who had little use for the concept of a living God. Froehlich’s lifestyle reflected this philosophy and his attitude was so hardened that he believed what he was doing was not sin. He preached his first sermon on Psalm 51:10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God,” while he was in spiritual danger.

Conversion
It was in 1825 during Easter vacation in Brugg, when he was twenty-one years of age, that Samuel Froehlich responded to the call of God. He wrote: “A very soft voice, which was neither terrifying or depressing, but nevertheless very convincing and penetrating, spoke in the depth of my soul, ‘It cannot remain thus with thee. Thou must change.’ And at the same time it drew me irresistibly onward. I knelt for the first time before the hidden God and with uplifted hands solemnity made an oath of fidelity, that from now on it would be different with me.”

Thus, he began a true repentance. Froehlich describes his experience. “I went out into the mountain and forest, knelt and prayed and cried out in lonesome places. My whole being was longing, sorrowfulness, and anxiety. I sought the Lord Jesus Christ with ardent fervor and many tears.” All theological or rationalistic lectures became an abomination to him. He said, “I was now in another school.” The school of the cross had become the one of greatest importance.”

Spiritual Struggle
For several months Froehlich existed in a somewhat suspended state. He sought God, but could receive peace of mind. As an unexperienced babe in Christ, with no significant direction, he struggled in a lowly and burdened state for several months until finally the glorious peace of God filled his heart. Regarding this he writes, “For a long time I remained in this fiery furnace until at length faith in Jesus Christ, the Crucified, brought me rest, peace and light, and made place within me for a new creation. From then on Jesus Christ was the center of my whole life and sphere of activity.”

-by Perry A. Klopfenstein
Staying Connected to the Certain God for Redemption

"Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.” Philip. 2:1-5

Greetings from Jamaica! I pray that you will have a joy-filled year of 2021 as we enter into a new year of the unknown and the unpredictable while remembering that God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is the only Source of Certainty.

The significant part of 2020 was undoubtedly unusual for all in this world. In Jamaica, since March 2020, as an impact of the pandemic, we had to navigate the unknowns and adapt to the new normal in life, adjusted to the norms of face-covering, hand/washing or sanitation, and frequent cleaning. One thing that these adjustments have taught us is that where there is a will, there is a way. That is the masterpiece of humanity that God has blessed us with; no matter what transpires in life, we can and will develop new coping mechanisms and strategies to survive. Since then, I have first-hand witnessed the commitment of fellow believers to share the love, hope and faith of Jesus Christ and keep rooted in the peace and comfort that he alone brings. Together, all our efforts to keep each other uplifted by steadfastly sharing our love, hope and faith represents this most relevantly: United we stand, divided we fall (Matthew 12:25; Mark 3:25).

In the months ahead, we still won’t know what will become of us and the world. We won’t know what will evolve as time progresses. Despite that, the good news remains that as long as we keep our eyes on him - the Source of Certainty - and radiate from him the courage to live out the life that he has outlined for us in his word, we are sure to experience his peace and comfort that he has got this. We may have our moments of concern, uncertainty and anxiety, and that is a normal thing for us as human beings to experience! What is more helpful and restorative is when we acknowledge such emotions and process through them with the Truth while entrusting them to God and walking in faith that he shall redeem them according to his will.

Facing forward, may we consider how we may continually and/or more relevantly “wear the face mask” of Jesus Christ so the world may see him as the source of salt and light through us, sanitize ourselves of any bitterness and perturbation by staying rooted in the immovable Word of Jesus Christ that we take heart in any trials for he has overcome the world (John 16:33), and cleanse our minds and hearts with his love, hope and faith to become rivers of blessing towards others (Hebrews 7:7; 1 Peter 3:8-17) by living out the lifestyle described in the scripture of Philippians 2:1-18. All thanks and glory be unto our God the Father for his Son through whom the Holy Spirits enables the fruition of love, hope and faith in and among us!

-by Tashi Widmer
Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee:

Psalm 55:22