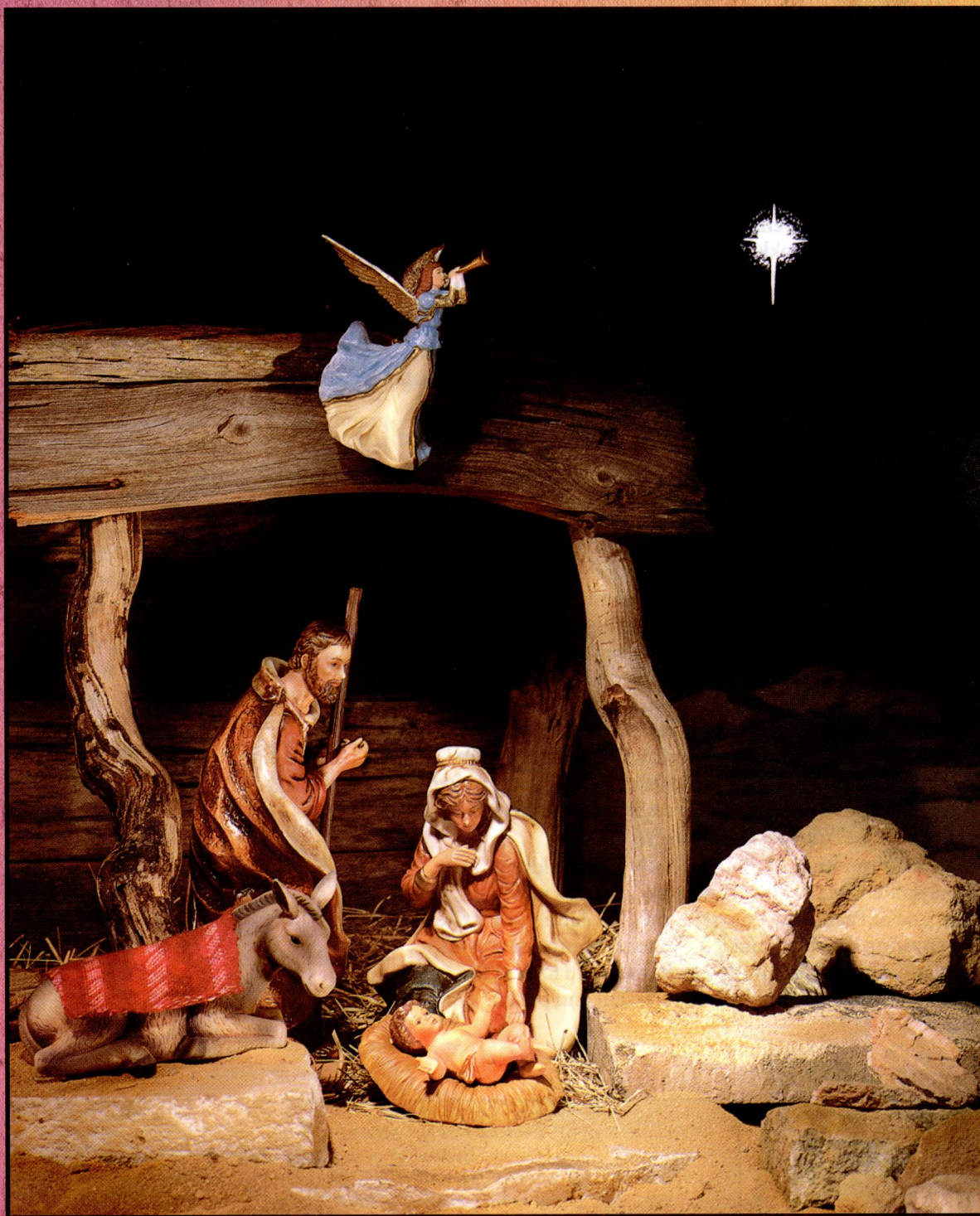


A lesson on love

evangelical

VISITOR

December 1998



Special People

Beth's story

Before she left, she came into our office and said we should paint a mural on the office wall portraying the theme, "A place where dreams come true."

Beth* is a single mother with four children under the age of nine. She was in Pacific Lifeline's program for 18 months, working to get to a place where she could support herself and her children. She took junior college courses, got experience in bookkeeping and administrative assisting, and developed a stronger sense of self-confidence as she went through our program. Her last goal was to get a job, and she spent weeks sending out resumes and going to interviews. She landed a job in computer sales, for which she has a natural knack. She was up and going in no time, outselling many of the other employees. She received a bonus for her performance and felt good about being able to support her family once again.

As it neared her time to move out, Beth grew more and more excited. She had dreams about where she would put her children's beds, and was giddy about the prospect of being able to leave unwashed dishes in the sink overnight. Before she left, she came into our office and said we should paint a mural on the office wall portraying the theme, "A place where dreams come true," because she is now doing everything she ever hoped and dreamed of doing. Yes, we provided the place for her dreams to become reality, but she did all the work. The self-confidence and pride in helping herself and her family will positively influence future life-decisions she makes for herself and her children. At her "graduation party," she smiled broadly and said to our current residents, "You can do it too!!"

About a month later, Beth took her four children to Disneyland. The tickets had been a Christmas present from one of Pacific Lifeline's donors. The family spent the day enjoying the rides, and left exhausted from the crowds, heat, and a busy day. On the way home, Beth looked forward to getting back to a quiet apartment and putting her

children, already asleep in the car, to bed. She needed to get up early for church in the morning, and her mind was already planning the next day's events.

Arriving home, they found that their apartment had been robbed while they spent the day away. As Beth searched from room to room, the list of stolen items grew longer and longer: the dining room chairs her pastor had given her; her mom's video camera along with all the tapes she had taken of her children, as well as the small stereo her mother had given her; all of her jewelry, including her grandfather's watch and the mustard seed charm, reminding her of her newly found faith in Jesus Christ; her son's brand new bike, which was his gift for his ninth birthday, only three days before. So many people had reached out in generosity to her, giving what they could, and giving what she needed. In one cruel move, someone had taken it all away. She had just unpacked boxes that had been in storage while living in our shelter, only to have their contents stolen as well.

Why? Why does someone who has worked so hard to struggle up the hill of life get knocked right back down again? Why do people have to be so cruel? How is one to pick up the pieces and go on, yet again? Her son, whose birthday bike he only got to ride once, looked at her sadly as he went to sleep that night. His words to her were hard to take, but they rung true in her heart: "Mom," he said, "I guess its going to be okay. We are supposed to store up our treasures in heaven, not here on earth anyway. And at least we are all still safe."

*All names have been changed. The author is Kirsten Horak, on staff of Pacific Lifeline, Upland, Calif.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Articles about "Special People" in their teens, 20s, 30s, and 40s are invited.

"Special People" profiles a wide variety of Brethren in Christ members of all ages and from all walks of life. You are invited to submit a short article about some "Special Person" you would like to introduce to Visitor readers. Articles should be typewritten, preferably 300-400 words, and must have the approval of the person being profiled. If your article is accepted for publication, we will contact you to secure a photo for publication (which will be returned). Mail your article to *Evangelical Visitor*, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550.

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A lesson on love

by Jacob Kentie

If I had to spend Christmas in the hospital, it was going to be beside the tree my mother bought just for me!

I remember well the Christmas of 1936. As a boy of seven, I had been admitted to Zuidwall Hospital at the Hague in Holland. Four days before Christmas, and there I was in the hospital, awaiting a hernia operation.

Being so young, it was a crushing blow for me to have to endure such an inconvenience before the biggest holiday season of the year. Not only that, but I was so used to being around my seven brothers and sisters. Now, I was alone.

Do you know how lonely a hospital is at Christmas time? I wanted so much to be home with my family, but such was not to be the case during the Christmas of 1936.

They put me in a ward with other children, but the best part was that my bed was right next to the big Christmas tree thoughtfully provided by the hospital to lighten the spirits of children just like me who could not spend time with their families at Christmas. Its beauty, however, was of little consolation as I knew all too well my heart was at home with *our* Christmas; Mother's, Father's, my brothers', my sisters'... but not mine.

Through many tears, my mother promised she would return soon to check up on me. Imagine my surprise when Mother came to visit that very night, bringing what was probably the very first imitation Christmas tree ever made! It stood tall at eighteen inches, complete with pretty little candles

and ornaments. Here I was in hospital, but with *my* very own Christmas tree. Mother thoughtfully placed it on my bedside table where I could easily view its beauty anytime I wished.

Not long after Mother left, a nurse came into my room to check my vital signs. As she was going about her business, she asked if I would consider loaning my Christmas tree to another boy in the hospital. My pulse must have reached a nine on the Richter scale! Loan my tree? No way! This was *my* tree and if I had to spend Christmas in the hospital, it was going to be beside the tree my mother bought just for me! Let him get his own. I was in bad shape. After all, it's bad enough to have a hernia operation, let alone during the Christmas season. As the nurse left, no further words were exchanged. She knew my position on the subject and that was that. Yet I never forgot the sad expression my response left on her face.

The following morning, Mother came to see me. As she heard how that nurse had dared to give my tree to another kid in the hospital if I let her, she quietly picked it up and took it with her, saying that she would take it home so that no one could take it.

I was relieved at this, even though I wouldn't be able to enjoy it either. Unknown to me, my mother had already spoken to that same nurse before coming to visit me.

After lunch the following day, the nurse encouraged me to get out of bed and go for a walk with her. She had someone she wanted me to meet. I was led into the intensive care room. I saw a boy of my age in obvious pain look up to see who it was that was visiting. But that was not all. On a stand next to him stood MY TREE! I couldn't believe my eyes! I

didn't know what to think. Had my mother been mugged for it when she left the hospital? Had she betrayed me and secretly given it to this boy, thinking I would never be the wiser?

As these thoughts invaded the inner sanctum of my mind, they quickly dispelled when I saw the big smile on that boy's face, a smile even his pain could not displace. He told me how grateful he was to have my Christmas tree. He realized it was a sacrifice hard for me to make. I think he also realized he probably wasn't ever going to go home again. I will never forget his big smile, nor the quiet, softly-spoken words carefully chosen by the nurse. I told him I was glad to cheer him up. And strangely enough, I meant every word.

When Mother came later in the day for another visit, I thanked her for giving my tree to that little boy. Somehow, my temporary discomfort didn't feel so bad when compared to my poor, frail, sickly-looking new friend. I told her how happy it made him. As I looked into her face, we both knew we had made a wise and worthy sacrifice.

My new little friend never did see Christmas Day 1936. The nurse returned my tree with the shocking news that he had passed away Christmas eve night. We both agreed that my little Christmas tree was the best thing that happened to him while at the hospital. I felt so very sad, yet I had a warm feeling inside. How glad I am that my mother was able to look beyond my momentary selfishness and share that gift with someone we didn't even know. She knew that in the long run, I would understand. She sure knew her son! We were glowing in the warmth of the light we brought into that little boy's life long after he passed away.

You know, I still have that little Christmas tree. Oh, the ornaments are long gone, its beauty has faded, but it has been an important part of my life ever since that Christmas of 1936.

The author has been a member of the Sherston (Ont.) Brethren in Christ Church for more than 30 years. He has served as a youth leader, evangelical outreach leader, and deacon.

Somehow, my temporary discomfort didn't feel so bad when compared to my poor, frail, sickly-looking new friend.



Christmas reflections

All good gifts

by Dave Wagner

BULEMBU, Swaziland—On our family's first Christmas outside Canada, we and our Swazi host family traveled two hours to attend a Christmas celebration with a sister church in Ekupheleni, Swaziland. Some 120 people crowded into a hot tent—too small for even 100—for a four-and-a-half-hour service that included choirs, drama, testimonies, prayer, preaching, a gift exchange, and a lot of singing.

Everyone received a gift. Families brought extra gifts for surprise guests. The gifts were simple and practi-

cal—a soup bowl, water glasses, a basket. The idea of giving gifts was familiar to us, but we marveled at people's reactions after opening their gifts.

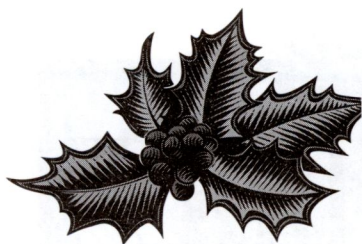
"Sijabulile!" (We are filled with joy!) and "Siyabonga, Jesu!" (Thank you, Jesus!) recipients shouted as they danced, holding the simple gifts high above their heads. At the time we were busy mustering energy to equal these displays of enthusiasm, but later we pondered these expressions of joy and thankfulness.

Swazi Christians often don't thank us directly when we give them gifts, but rather thank God. They say, "Thank you, Jesus," instead of "Thank you, Dave." In this way they remind us that all good gifts, indeed all good things, come from God. Even receiving a simple metal soup bowl is a reminder of God's goodness, and the great gift of his son, Jesus Christ.

May our Christmas gift exchanges always remind us of God's goodness to us. If we remember this, we will be filled with joy.

Siyabonga, Jesu! Sijabulile!

Dave Wagner of Edmonton, Alta., teaches at Havelock Mines Secondary School in Bulembu, Swaziland. An MCC news release.



Christmas reflections

Dorothy's gift

by June Hershberger

ARUSHA, Tanzania—I have seldom been as humbled as when Dorothy gave me the little blue plate stamped with the friendship verse.

I had always hoped for good women friends here in Africa, and from the beginning I had a unique relationship with Dorothy. She and her husband, Christopher, and my husband, Marc, and I worked in the same church development

after Christmas, we paid for the whole family's bus trip to visit us in Tanzania. Since we knew they were struggling financially, we bought them generous Christmas gifts—mostly clothes we knew they could never afford to buy. We took them to various family attractions, paying the entrance fees and refreshments for us all, and when the weekend was over, sent them home with a box of special food and various treats.

Our motives weren't paternalistic, but I know they felt we gave them so much and at times found it hard to accept, but it was so easy to give to them. They are our equals, our true friends, who simply find themselves in a different economic state.

On the last day of their visit, Dorothy shyly came out to the living room and with a self-conscious smile handed me a small gift. She told me she had tried to find me something special, something I couldn't possibly already have. That must have been difficult from her point of view!

Dorothy's gift was a tiny glass plate, painted with blue flowers and the words "Our friendship is like a flower—planted in prayers, nurtured in love, blossoming in God's caring hands." She had obviously spent a lot of time choosing it and I was touched that she had given me a gift from her heart. I thought of all the material gifts I had lavished on her and her family the past several years, and knew they couldn't mean any more to her than her gift meant to me at that moment.

I've always known Dorothy and Christopher have given us much more than material gifts—their understanding and acceptance, interpretation of their culture, a window into their thinking, support and admiration, acknowledgment of our gifts and strengths, honesty and their pure hearts and motives.

But to get an expression of love that put it into words as my little china plate does is something I'll always remember and treasure.



Marc Hershberger

June Hershberger (left) with her friend Dorothy Ndege.

department. Dorothy and Christopher were my teachers as I struggled to learn the ropes of a new culture and job. Dorothy was quiet and didn't talk much when Christopher was around, but over the years when we were alone we confided in each other.

I enjoyed Dorothy's sense of humor and came to know her as an intelligent, wise woman, who selflessly gave herself to her family and the many people who visited her home at all hours. I know she struggled to stretch their meager church salary to match their needs. But I never heard her complain, only speak of her trust and faith in God the provider.

It was a sad day for me when Dorothy, Christopher, and their four children moved to Kenya for further schooling. One year, soon

June Hershberger served as co-director of MCC programs in Tanzania. A MCC news release.

Conventional wisdom would say...



CHRISTMAS WAS ALL WRONG

The country was too small.

Israel was an awfully small country, even by first century standards. Compare the size of Israel with the size and power of the Roman Empire—an empire whose size was greater than the size of the Soviet Union of the cold war era. If God were going to become man, it didn't make sense for him to pick Israel as the place to do it.

The Jews were not well regarded.

In every period of history, the Jews have been regarded as a headstrong, conniving, unreasonable, and uncontrollable people. They have always been the target of mistrust, abuse, and insult. The great heroes of the world have always looked like Greek gods, noble Romans, Viking warlords, or fierce barbarians. Even the inscrutable wisdom of the oriental would make a much better choice. If God were going to become man, it made no sense at all for the Jews to be the race he would pick.

The time was not right.

In centuries to come, communications would revolutionize the ability of mankind to know, observe, and verify historical events and

people. In the first century there was no telephone or television, no radio or satellite communications, no news and information networks, no information super highway or internet web site. If God were going to become man, it made no sense for him to choose such a time as the first century.

The chosen ones were too poor.

If God were going to become man, the very least he could do would be to elevate the top echelons of society by his presence. It is unthinkable that he would choose any but the most regal, the most powerful, the most wealthy family in the world to be a part of. If he chose the poor and lowly, he would almost certainly be a target of the jealousy and fear of the powerful. That's a handicap too large to be ignored. If God were going to become man, it made no sense for him to choose such a family as penniless peasants.

The prophecies were too complex.

If God were going to become man, he would have to fulfill a lot of prophecies. But it seems that he could at least prophesy it in ways

by Bill Halsted



Christmas is the time we celebrate the fact that God set aside conventional wisdom in every conceivable area, and acted out of love instead.

easy to fulfill. So many of the prophecies seem to contradict others.

For instance, it was prophesied that he would be called a Nazarene, but be a native of Bethlehem, but be called out of Egypt. How could he possibly be native to three widely separated locales? Then there were all the prophecies of being a conquering Messiah but a suffering servant, one whose kingdom would last forever but one who would die a horrible and helpless death, one dearly loved but fanatically hated. If God were going to become man, it made no sense for him to be boxed in by so many intricately woven, contradictory prophecies.

The risk was too great.

If God were going to become man, he would be placing himself in jeopardy too great to contemplate. Imagine the very idea of God being exposed in the helpless naked flesh of an infant! What an opportunity for Satan! If he were to make himself that vulnerable, it is a foregone conclusion that Satan would unleash all the fury of hell in a frontal assault that would continue throughout his life, to destroy him, to make him sin, to make him harbor just one sinful thought—just for a moment. To accomplish this quixotic concept of redemption, he would have to accomplish the impossible task of remaining alive, remaining sinless, and doing all the teaching and preparation necessary to usher in a new covenant. If he failed at any point, the whole scheme of redemption, planned from the foundation of the world, would fail. If God were going to become man, it made no sense for him to do so under circumstances of such great risk.

The recipients are too unworthy.

If God were going to become man, he could only consider doing such a thing for the very finest, the noblest, the most worthy of the

human race. There aren't very many of those. In fact, the very finest, the most noble, the most worthy among us are neither fine nor noble nor worthy. We are base and selfish and foolish, even at our finest. If God were going to become man, it made no sense for him to do so for creatures such as we.

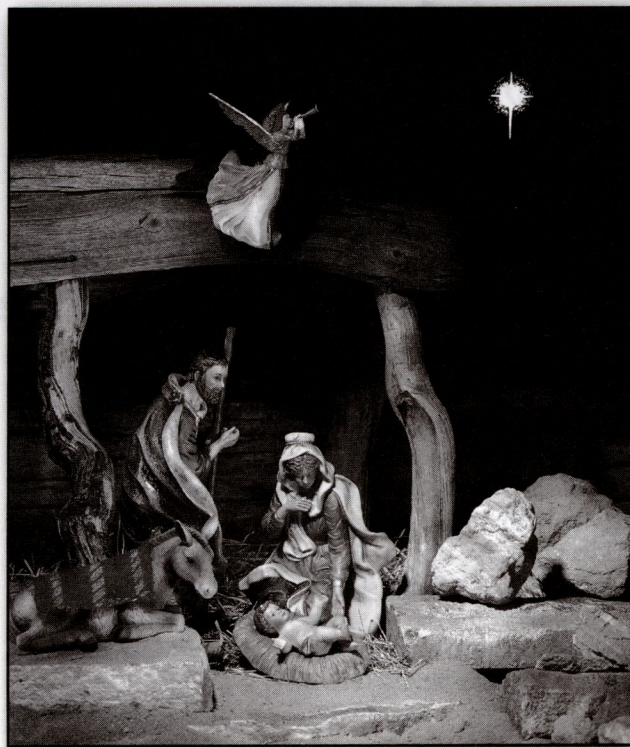
Ah, the foolishness of God! How grand and wonderful and inscrutable! "The foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom," Paul says (1 Corinthians 1:25).

Christmas is the time we celebrate the fact that God set aside conventional wisdom in every conceivable area, and acted out of love instead. Love for you. Love for me. At Christmas we celebrate again the inconceivable fact that God did become man. He came as the poorest of the poor, the most helpless of the weak, exposing himself in utter defenselessness to the full onslaught of Satan's worst. He accomplished the impossible at every point, fulfilled the unfulfillable in every detail, and wrought salvation for the very worst of an evil and twisted humanity.

And now, nearly twenty centuries later, the message of all that he accomplished still resounds throughout the world. The invitation to his salvation still rings out. The power of his Spirit still reaches into the hearts of the most depraved and defiled, transforming them into holy and godly examples of righteous living. His transforming power continues to turn hatred into love, selfishness into concern for others, indifference into compassion, and lust into a consuming passion for all that is high and holy and good and pure.

The foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men. Thank God for the absurd foolishness of his inexpressible love that we remember at Christmas!

Bill Halsted lives in Griffith, Ind.



Symbols of the King

by Dennis F. Kinlaw

We wonder how the Jews and their religious leaders missed Jesus. The reasons they gave for rejecting him were the very reasons they should have accepted him. That was one of the marks of their sinful self-centeredness: They saw things backwards. We often miss him for the same reason.

God loved us so much that he came and lived among us. He stooped to become a mortal man. As one of Charles Wesley's hymns says:

*Our God, ever blest, with oxen doth rest;
Is nursed by his creature, and hangs at the breast.*

How far God was willing to go in order to reach you and me! We don't expect to find God among the oxen, but that's where Jesus was. We don't expect the sovereign God to enter this world in the form of a baby, but that's how he came. And we don't expect the One on whom our existence depends to be dependent on one of us, but he was. God loved us so much that he was willing to reverse our roles. He became one of us so that we might have his nature and have fellowship with him. What an awesome truth! Because it is so awesome, the Jews missed him—and so do many of us.

The Jews knew that the Christ would come as a king. A king enters his kingdom with a throne, a crown, a scepter, and a retinue of servants ready to do his bidding—the symbols of his power. Yet, when Jesus the King of kings entered his kingdom, that is not the way he came. Four symbols in the Gospel of John depict the regal power of Jesus; but those symbols contradicted the world's understanding of a king.

*We don't expect
the sovereign God
to enter this world
in the form of
a baby, but that's
how he came.*

The Rejectable King

The first symbol is suggested by the prologue to John's Gospel, where we are told that Jesus "came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (1:11, RSV). John expands upon this image in the Book of Revelation, as Jesus says, "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me" (Rev. 3:20).

I have been deeply impressed by Holman Hunt's painting entitled *The Light of the World*, which hangs at St. Peter's Cathedral in London. It depicts Jesus standing at a door and knocking. Hunt shows Jesus wearing a king's robe and a priest's garment; so he is the Intercessor-King. He wears a crown upon his head and carries a lantern in his hand; hence, the title, *The Light of the World*. But Jesus knocks at a door that has no handle, no way of opening it from his side. Greenery has grown over the door frame, suggesting it has been a very long time since that door was opened, if it ever was.

I first saw that painting when I visited London in 1955; I saw it again in 1974. When I viewed it a second time, I thought, *Nineteen years have passed, and he is still knocking*. No head of state has to knock at anyone's door. The President of the United States does not knock at doors; someone goes before him to open them! His aides are sure that the President never gets in a situation where he can be rejected, for that would be a snub to the nation he represents. No President can afford a public image of rejection.

He became one of us so that we might have his nature and have fellowship with him. What an awesome truth! Because it is so awesome, the Jews missed him...

Yet the King of kings came into the world as One who knocks—One who is vulnerable and rejectable. The Jews did not expect that. They wanted a king who would come in power and pomp to expel the Romans from their land. Yet Jesus came, not to deal with the Roman menace, but to see whether his people would accept him. So he knocked and he knocked...and he is knocking still.

The Humble King

The second image of the Messiah appears three and a half years later in John's narrative, as Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The people of the city have heard about his miracles; they know about his power. Just a few days before, not far from the city, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (11:1-44). Spectators to that event have spread the word throughout the capital city. By Palm Sunday, everyone in Jerusalem has talked with Lazarus, or talked with someone who had talked with Lazarus, or talked with someone who'd talked with someone who'd seen Lazarus raised from the dead! So the whole city turns out to greet Jesus. They hail him as their Messianic King. As Jesus crests the Mount of Olives and begins his descent into the city, people strip branches from the olive trees and pull the cloaks from their backs, laying them on the ground to make a pathway for him. They cry out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the king of Israel!" They are ready to crown him as their king.

At that moment, Jesus mounts a donkey to ride into the city. Some Bible commentators speculate that this is a kingly gesture; they theorize that royal donkeys were ridden by certain leaders of the ancient East. But I assure you that no Roman general ever entered Jerusalem on a donkey, and no Egyptian pharaoh ever had a donkey pull him in his gold-plated chariot. In the ancient world, the horse symbolized power, while the donkey was a humble beast of burden. Without question, this is a Messianic gesture. Zechariah 9:9 had predicted, "Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey..." If we read the rest of Zechariah's prophecy, we get confirmation of the fact that Jesus' riding on the donkey is an intentional act of Messianic fulfillment: "He will cut off the chariot...and the war-horse from Jerusalem" (Zech. 9:10). It is as if Jesus were telling the exultant crowd, "I am not the kind of king you expect. I am not coming in physical power or military might.

I come, not to impose something upon you, but to offer you redemption. So I come meekly."

Most of us like the "horse" style of dealing with other people, rather than the "donkey" style. The horse is a symbol of worldly glory; we like to have the admiration that a horse rider can command. But Jesus does not come to seek glory; he comes to serve, not to be served. So he rides on a donkey. The Jews, who had great ambitions for their Messiah, could not understand why he did this.

The Servant King

The third kingly symbol is seen the following Thursday night, as Jesus takes his disciples to an upper room to observe the Passover meal. There he takes a basin and towel, kneels on the floor, and begins washing their feet. Peter looks incredulously at him and says, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus says, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand" (13:7).

Imagine the trauma in Peter's heart that night. Finally, he says, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" (13:9). Jesus says that is not necessary. He simply wants Peter and all of his disciples to know that he is their servant.

If you are offended by the idea of Jesus being your servant, you have the same problem Peter had. You still think as the world thinks, not as God thinks.

The Self-Sacrificing King

The fourth unexpected symbol of the Messiah is found in John's narrative of Good Friday. Dorothy Sayers said that human history is replete with examples of men and women dying for their gods, but who could have imagined a God who would die for his people? So it was on Good Friday.

As the people of Jerusalem viewed the cross, they must have thought, *There is conclusive proof that this fellow is not the Christ: he dies like any other man. He is an imposter!* They rejected him for exactly the reason that they should have fallen at his feet and adored him, because their salvation came through Jesus' sacrifice of himself.

The Jews' reasons for rejecting Jesus were half right. Normally, kings do come with thrones, crowns, and retinues. When Jesus returns, he will come with all those symbols of power. Read the Book of Revelation with that in mind, and you will notice that Jesus does not come patiently knocking

and so do many of us.

on our doors; he comes as a clap of lightning that bolts from the East to the West in an instant, and no door can keep him out. Every eye will behold him and every knee will bow before him. No one can shut Jesus out when he comes a second time.

When Jesus returns, he will come not on a donkey, but on a great white horse. There will be a stack of crowns on his head—bejeweled crowns of gold, not of thorns. Out of his mouth will come a sharp, flaming, two-edged sword; and across his thigh will be written the words, “King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:11-16).

When Jesus returns, he will come not to kneel at our feet. Revelation 6 says that all the mighty leaders of earth, as well as the poor and humble, will prostrate themselves at his feet. He will not be on a cross, but on a royal throne. We disposed of him the first time he came; but when he returns, he will dispose of us.

The Book of Revelation tells us that Jesus’ return will not be a new opportunity for redemption. It says he comes in power and glory, fixing everyone’s destiny forever: “Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy” (Rev. 22:11). No sins will be forgiven when Christ comes the second time; no lust will be removed from the human heart; no broken relationships will be restored. He will come again to fix us eternally as we are.

Sacrifice and Redemption

We rejected Jesus when he came in the only form that would allow him to save us. John 12 tells us that, after Jesus’ triumphal entry of Jerusalem, he told his disciples, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (v. 23). He was referring to the cross; he knew the only way for him to accomplish his mission was to go to the cross. So he said, “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (v. 24).

Do you notice what the Son of God is saying? God himself cannot act redemptively without going the way of self-sacrifice.

If we wish to bear fruit for God, we must be willing to do the same. We must come to the end of ourselves; we must follow his path of vulnerability, where our lives are exposed to rejection and pain. That is the only way our lives can be

redemptive. If we want our lives to be wholly his, we cannot be characterized by the pomp and circumstance of the world, any more than he was. We must be servants. Our lives must be poured out for others.

Recently, I visited a mission station and talked with a veteran missionary who had graduated from Cambridge University. He had served at the mission so effectively that the mission officials asked him to become president of their seminary. He responded, “Oh, no. That’s no place for a gringo. A national leader ought to fill that post.”

Then they said, “Very well. Let us make you academic dean of the seminary. A man with your credentials is needed in that position.”

“Oh, no,” the missionary said. “We have a national leader who can serve quite capably in that position as well. I insist that you make him the academic dean.”

Soon the mission leaders began considering where these staff members should live. They felt the missionary should live in the best house on the compound. “No, the president of the seminary should live there,” he said.

The next-best house? “No, the academic dean should live there,” he said.

So the mission officials had no choice. They put the missionary and his family in the remaining house. It had no sink in the kitchen, so the family washed their dishes in the bathroom until one of their children contracted hepatitis. The students of the seminary visited him and wept at what they saw. “Deuteronomy says that when we have a sojourner in our midst, we are responsible for his well-being,” one of them said. “We must do better by you than this.” So they found better housing for the missionary and his family.

Since my visit to that mission, I have heard that the national church in that area—a church once badly divided—has begun to come together. That sounds like the work of Jesus, doesn’t it? When Jesus became one of us and lived like us, redemption came from it. I cannot say whether the missionary’s attitude caused the healing that is taking place on that mission; but I know that when we are willing to spend and be spent for Jesus’ sake, there will be fruit from our lives.

*Excerpted from a new book by Dennis Kinlaw, **The Mind of Christ**, available in January from Evangel Publishing House. Formerly the president of Asbury College and member of the faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary, Dr. Kinlaw is now president of the Francis Asbury Society.*

Pramod Roul
(center) with those
from the village of
Tamudi Bandha
who responded to
the "Jesus" film
shown in the Oria
language.



"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Psalm 34:3 NKJV).

THESE WORDS express for me the almost indescribable. Since my last report published in the July '98 *Visitor*, we have completed two more evangelism trips, one to southern Africa and the other again to eastern India (Orissa). In both areas we experienced a marvelous outpouring of the work of the Holy Spirit as these people from such diverse cultures moved from the realm of Satan to the Kingdom of our Lord: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together."

My partners in ministry were Wendell Zercher in Africa and Pastor Lou Astuto in Orissa, India. We represent a very small part of the team that has been responsible for the ministry: included in the ministry would be all of our prayer supporters, our board, and especially the national evangelists and follow-up missionaries who work under incredible pressures. With all these people pulling together, the Kingdom is advancing, and enemy territory is being reclaimed (in some areas for the first time ever.) In all these things we give God the glory. I am just happy to be a part of seeing some truly amazing happenings.

In June we were able to show the "Jesus" film 12 times in the Ndebele, Tonga, and Shona languages to more than 6,000 people. Our showings took place in a variety of settings: schools, villages under the stars, church plantings in the townships, and with the families of the patients at the Macha hospital. Each setting had one thing in common—people coming to know the Lord—with more than

10 percent responding to an invitation to follow Jesus. We were able to take names and addresses so that the national evangelists can continue with follow-up. We rejoiced at seeing 60 older Tongas confessing to the Lord (at the top of their lungs) at 11 p.m. at the Macha hospital, praying with over 200 students with Pastor Doubt Ndlovu at Matopo Secondary School, and being part of breaking down barriers which exist between Shonas and Ndebeles as we shared the gospel in an open market in Harare, Zimbabwe. One of our prayers is that we might be able to share in the future with Doubt Ndlovu's new missionary outreach to Botswana.

Now moving some 5,000 miles to the east, as of this writing, Lou and I have just returned home from Orissa, India. After a quick trip to Woodstock School to visit my son Vaughn, and to see Dana and Judy Crider (where both of us recuperated from illnesses), it was time to travel by train and jeep with an Indian evangelism team deep into the lush, mountain interior where the Kui-speaking tribals live. Before you even start ministry in this part of the world, you feel in need of a vacation to recuperate from the trip and the parasites, not to mention the ever-present danger from Hindu fundamentalists.

You know, we often joke in Christian circles that God can even use the jaw-bone of an ass. Well, on this trip I felt like a walking dead man—total-

"Jesus" film ministry

by Dan Deyhle

Dan Deyhle is
director of Everybody
Ought To Know, Inc.,
Mechanicsburg, Pa.

ly without energy, and Lou developed cellulitis in his leg and ran a fever. But God proved himself again. If we will even show up, he will do the rest. Even the national evangelists weren't exempt from the tough conditions. Pramod Roul fell down at a waterfall and knocked out a tooth. What a team we made! But with lots of support, seven showings, Sunday preaching, and even a talk given to 40 Kui leaders were accomplished. More than 3,000 people saw the "Jesus" film, 400 Bibles and 500 Scripture portions were given out, and some 300 Kui animists and even a number of Hindus received Christ as their Savior.

Going forward, we have had begin-

ning discussions with Bijoy Roul, director of the Brethren in Christ in Orissa, on how we can reach the many tribal groups which, until now, have yet to have any witness. This is not a solicitation for funds—not even a veiled attempt—but for \$3,000 US, one could completely finance two Bible-trained missionary national couples for one year to go into the many remaining areas. We haven't even scratched the surface. If this doesn't excite you, check your pulse. You might be dead!

In closing, I want to make note of something the Brethren in Christ dollars are funding among these Kui people. Deep in the mountains, about 100 miles

apart, are two hostels—the Salem boys' hostel and the Grace girls' hostel. These are for the 6- to 12-year-old sons and daughters of the new Kui converts. These places became home to us. At present, about 120 students are enrolled, learning how to read and write, and learning how to be evangelists. These are repositories of learning like I have never seen before. They are turning out little apostles, everyone of them. I have never seen such determination.

Please pray, everyone! It really makes a difference. In 1999 we have a schedule much like '98 with a few additions. Together we can make a difference. To God be the glory!

"Jesus" film ministry in Zambia

Witch doctor meets Jesus

by Rachel Kibler

We are very aware that we are penetrating deep into Satan's territory by taking the "Jesus" film out to the people. For instance, consider the weekend that we showed the film at Chisikili to more than a thousand people. There were 41 who stayed to pray for repentance or whatever their needs were.

We learned that there had been a funeral in a nearby village. A girl had died and her parents had called the witch doctor so that he could try to find out who had killed her. Even in this day, many people here do not feel that people die of natural causes; someone must have caused the death. The witch doctor cut into the dead body and then rubbed some of his potions into the body and put some in the grave before they buried her. This was supposed to reveal who killed her. If someone dies within the next several weeks, especially if it is an old person, it would be believed that person caused the other death. Then that family will try to find out who caused the old person to die and on and on it goes. I was acutely aware that weekend that Satan

was going to be on the warpath because of this "Jesus" film.

We had 22 persons on the team that weekend. As usual, team members went out visiting villages during the day. As I came back from the seminar I had been teaching, I could hear their singing out in the nearby villages. The Word in song was going forth, regardless of the demonic happenings nearby.

The next week we were at Mweebo. Saturday night there was a witch doctor at the showing and he stayed for prayer. Sunday morning he came to the church and asked for some people to come with him to his village because he wanted to get rid of all of his charms and medicines that he used in his evil craft. George went with several others back to his village. The converted witch doctor began to gather his things. Then he would stop and think, and then go back into his hut for something he had forgotten. There was a certain cactus growing in the village and he said that was part of his craft. He cut it down and then dug up the roots and put that



The "Jesus" film team in Zambia.

on the pile. When he had gathered everything, the pile was burned. He later gave his testimony in the Mweebo Church of how God has delivered him from his life of sin.

This man had attended Sikalongo Bible Institute many years ago, but had turned away from the Lord. Now he is reclaimed. His first name is Silas. Satan is angry when sinners repent. Will you pray for godly strength for Silas? That Sunday morning, four teens from that village received Christ.

Rachel Kibler and her husband served at Nahumba Mission in Choma, Zambia, from April 1995 to September 1998. Rachel shared this incident from this past summer on how the "Jesus" film is being used to bring people to Christ. The Kiblers are members at the Cumberland Valley Brethren in Christ Church in Pa.

Stretching experiences

by Steve Westberry

Once again this past summer, TIMS has experienced growth in every area of ministry. The verse that comes to mind to account for all the Lord has done is "He who began a good work...will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6). TIMS was started by the Lord and he is the one who makes it all happen according to his plans. Those plans can only become reality because of all who are willing to serve by going, giving, and praying. Some sow, others water, but God brings the harvest.

Five cross-cultural teams were sent out this year—to New Mexico, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Forty-one wonderful teens and outstanding leaders came from all over North America—California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Washington, British Columbia, and Ontario. They came for 10 days of intensive training camp with many different expectations and, at the conclusion of their mission trips, returned home with a different world view of the missionary call and what it really means to serve the Lord.

In New Mexico, the team did an awesome job remodeling the public laundry at the Navajo mission, helped replace the roof on the mission house, conducted two different Bible clubs in the Navajo community during which several children accepted Christ as their Savior, assisted in evening ministry to youth and children, and helped with Sunday school and worship services.

The Nicaragua team had the opportunity to live with national families, an unforgettable experience. The Lord stretched them right from the beginning of the trip by giving the entire team eight days without their luggage. One of the young people remarked that she realized how much she has that she really doesn't need. What a great teacher our Lord is! They also worked hard building the La Cebita Brethren in Christ Church, con-



TIMS team members with local kids in Nicaragua.

ducting a five-day Bible club, doing outreach at an orphanage, and participating in various church services.

Our Venezuela team did some great work at the new Ministry Center on the water system and building retaining walls. They had opportunity on weekends to do street ministry, help with church planting outreach in San Juan, and participate in church services. The team was blessed by the passion for God and enthusiastic worship on the part of the Venezuelan people.

The team serving in Zambia had the privilege of sharing the love of Jesus, touching the lives of people who were sick and dying. They ministered at Macha Hospital, painting hospital wards and rooms which allowed for much interaction with patients and their families. The team did an outstanding job ministering to hurting people through their friendliness and smiles. They also served through village outreach and participated in church services. Their own lives were deeply impacted through their experiences, especially recognizing the reality of spiritual warfare.

Our Zimbabwe team was challenged in building a much-needed library for the Ekuphileni Bible Institute (EBI). They also presented a chapel program at EBI, had opportunities for village-to-village evangelism, and participated in many other

church services. Their hearts were touched by the tremendous needs of the people of Zimbabwe, who were still content with what little they have. This experience gave the team a different perspective of the abundance we have here in North America. After three weeks all teams returned to camp for a time of debriefing.

The first TIMS adult work team went to Nicaragua where the six-man crew helped the congregation at the San Judas Brethren in Christ Church build a new church building. The team was impacted during the two weeks of working alongside Nicaraguan brothers as they saw the joy in their hearts in the midst of great poverty.

Our hearts were blessed as team members shared how their experiences challenged them to a deeper commitment and a closer walk with the Lord. Plans have already begun for next summer's cross-cultural teams and we are anxious to see how the Lord will grow TIMS in 1999.

Steve Westberry and his wife Bonnie are directors of Teens in Missionary Service (TIMS), a ministry of the Christian Retreat Center in East Waterford Pa., and Brethren in Christ World Missions in Grantham, Pa. Since its beginning in 1993, TIMS has been actively involved in providing opportunities for short-term cross-cultural service.

Love hurts

by Melanie Hawbaker

The Lord calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves. In the past weeks I have come to realize that putting this command into practice hurts.

Last week a friend of mine died. She was from La Calzada, mother of two, fighting cancer, and trying to bring up her children alone until her husband was released from jail. Luz Marina became a part of my life one day as she entered the church to receive haircuts for Luis and Betsabet (her children). In the following weeks we visited Luz Marina, sharing the gospel and praying with her as she spent many days in bed due to extreme pain. On several occasions, Luz Marina entrusted us (the church) with her children.

Luz Marina struggled with the truth that God loved her and forgives her of her sins, and the constant temptation to return to the streets as a prostitute and to do drugs. I grew to love Luz Marina and pleaded many times with God to rescue her and help her begin a new life in him.

Luz Marina had some good weeks, saying no to her old life, enjoying the peace and love of the Lord. Unfortunately, she returned to her old habits and ended up in the hospital where a kidney and part of her large intestine were removed. One week later, she died. By this time her husband, Luis Carlos, was out of jail and we began to share with him and support him.

Luis Carlos is a thief and drug user. He has a desire to change and



began to come to church. Through the support of the church and Luis' determination, the children stayed in La Calzada with their father. We are trying to encourage Luis to fix things with the Lord and change his lifestyle both for himself and for the children.

I have never been a thief, drug abuser, or prostitute; I cannot understand the internal battle one faces to say no to these habits. However, I saw Luz Marina struggle and a part of me entered the struggle as her friend. And now I continue to struggle as Luis Carlos is in jail again. My heart hurts as I see the children and desire the best for them. God has reminded me in these weeks that he is in control—that he is with Luis Carlos in jail, and that he is with Luis and Betsabet, and that he is going to help us, the church, do what is best for the children. This gives me hope, but it still hurts.

Since December 1997 Melanie Hawbaker has been part of the ministry team in La Calzada, a ghetto in Bogotá, Colombia, where a Brethren in Christ Church has been established. Melanie's friendship with Luz Marina began in June. This account was written in the fall of '98. Melanie is a member of the Manor Brethren in Christ Church in Lancaster Pa.



Only God can do that

Bruce and Merly Bundy returned to Spain in September 1998 following a three-month furlough ministry time in the States. This is a portion of their first letter to their supporters after their return to Spain. The Bundys have been serving in Spain since 1988. They are members of the Mount Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church in Mount Joy, Pa.

We have new faces in the congregation and the house groups have been experiencing a slow and steady increase. There are members who are genuinely concerned for the spiritual health of others and are also battling in prayer. The last two Sundays attendance has been 20 and 17, which is higher than when we left and there were people missing due to work or ill health that normally come.

We have also seen some very positive signs among neighbors which we have been trying to build bridges with. Last weekend we were able to renew old acquaintances, and people seemed really happy to see us and very open to continue our relationships. That's an answer to prayer since many times, when people don't see you for awhile, they lose interest. Elena (our downstairs neighbor) has also been asking a lot of questions about the Bible and seems more open than ever. We praise God for that.

Please continue to fervently pray for the work here. We need protection and an open door into people's hearts. Only God can do that. There are a lot of

plans in the making for the next few months, but we don't want to take another step unless God is in it and he's leading the way.

Lift Jesus high!

Lauri Dennis of AD2000 reports on a Nepal Youth Event. Shem Lal Hembrom, chairman of the Brethren in Christ Church in Nepal, serves on the AD2000 committee for eastern Nepal. Reprinted by permission. E-mail <AD2000@xc.org> for further information.

Late in June, Expeditions International Mission (EIM), under the auspices of Nepal AD2000 Movement, held a meeting of about 50 youth leaders from around the valley to discuss the needs of the young people of Nepal. The need for revival and contextualization was brought up along with the need for unity. Out of this meeting a committee was formed to hold an event called Lift Jesus High. The committee consisted of ten youth leaders from different churches around the valley. These leaders planned and organized this event to be held at the Birendra International Conference Hall in New Baneshwar near the Kathmandu airport. This hall had never had a major Christian worship event held in it, they were expecting between 400-700 young people.

On July 26th, with all the leaders finishing final details between 1,200 to 1,400 young people crowded into a space built for 700 maximum, with the desire to lift Jesus high! Several youth teams from the States combined with church leaders and Miss Beautiful Nepal '98 to form a power-packed four hours of worship and encouragement. The three original objectives presented by EIM were to: (1) lift Jesus high, (2) challenge the youth to take the gospel to their nation and beyond, and (3) equip them for the task by the power of the Holy Spirit.

These goals were achieved along with unexpected numbers and

unprecedented cooperation between churches who truly care about "passing the torch" to the next generation. They are now looking to the next step of forming a consistent valley-wide fellowship of leaders. The Lord is truly uniting and empowering his Body for the Kingdom's sake.

Encouraging growth

From Jack McClane's report on his Africa administrative tour in September 1998 comes this excerpt about South Africa. Jack has been serving as the Executive Director of Brethren in Christ World Missions since September 1991.

I must add on a word regarding the ministries in South Africa. We found the church building in Pretoria to be in impeccable condition, with all work completed. That includes toilets, office, bars on the windows, and grass surrounding the church with trees and flowers. Shortly after our arrival on early Sunday morning, a caravan of eight or ten cars full of people arrived and that caravan was followed by two enormous tour busses. Our two pastors in the Johannesburg Brethren in Christ church, Timothy Mrsuku and Francis Moyo, had brought the entire congregation (at least most of it) from Johannesburg. These are the two young men who are studying in the Rosebank Bible Institute in Johannesburg. They are pastoring a church in Johannesburg and are supported by the church. Brethren in Christ World Missions is funding only their studies. They are delightful and handsome young men, and every indication is that they are doing superb work.

These pastors state they have outgrown their rented facility in Johannesburg and are averaging at least 200 people at Sunday worship services. They have regular Wednesday night Bible study, prayer time on Friday evenings, youth services on Saturday, and then Sunday services. They hope to plant church number two in Johannesburg by the end of this year and possibly yet a third church toward the end of 1999. How encouraging!

Dinner was served to the combined congregations of the day. We could not feel better about South Africa. **EV**

**Check out the
Brethren in Christ
World Missions
Website: www.bic-church.org/wm**

Dear Friends,

May I share a vision with you?

I see thousands of people who'll need gospel literature in the next few years. Some read English, some read Spanish, and some read other languages. Some are teenagers, while others are homemakers or retirees. What they all have in common is a deep hunger to know more about God. The printed word is the easiest and most economical way to reach them.

But we're not fully prepared to reach them.

You see, Evangel Press has worked hard to serve the needs of the Brethren in Christ Church. Our printing and publishing work began nearly eighty years ago, when the church raised money to buy a building and equipment to print the Evangelical Visitor. The Lord prospered our printing and publishing ministry. Soon we stopped receiving money from the church and began giving money back. For several decades now, Evangel Press has gladly provided financial support for Sunday School curriculum, the Evangelical Visitor, and other vital publications of the Brethren in Christ.

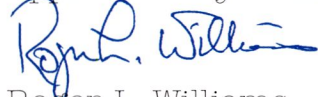
Though the people of Evangel work hard, they need the proper equipment for this ministry. A vital piece of equipment, our Miller 2-color perfecter press, is worn out. We don't have money to buy another. However, we must buy another press soon to meet our commitments.

So the Board for Media Ministries' Board of Directors has approved a new printing press at a cost of approximately \$450,000. If necessary, we will borrow the money to do this. However, we have borrowed heavily in recent years to modernize our bookstore ministry and purchase other printing equipment.

We need your help. If you share the vision of reaching people with Christian literature, please send a generous gift to the Board for Media Ministries to help purchase the new printing press. Each donation will reduce our need to borrow money and will allow more funds to be used in the Brethren in Christ publishing ministry.

Will you help us?

Appreciatively in Christ,

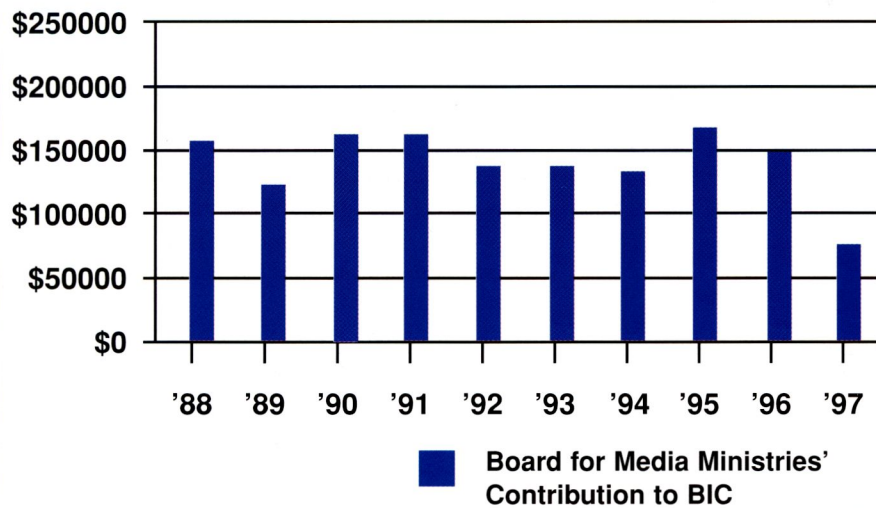


Roger L. Williams

PS—Today's mail has a note from BIC missionary Paul Eberhard about our series of Hispanic books, La Vida con Dios ("Life with God"). "These types of materials are simple yet helpful," he writes. "I trust that Evangel Press will be able to continue producing such things in the future." Your gift will make it possible.

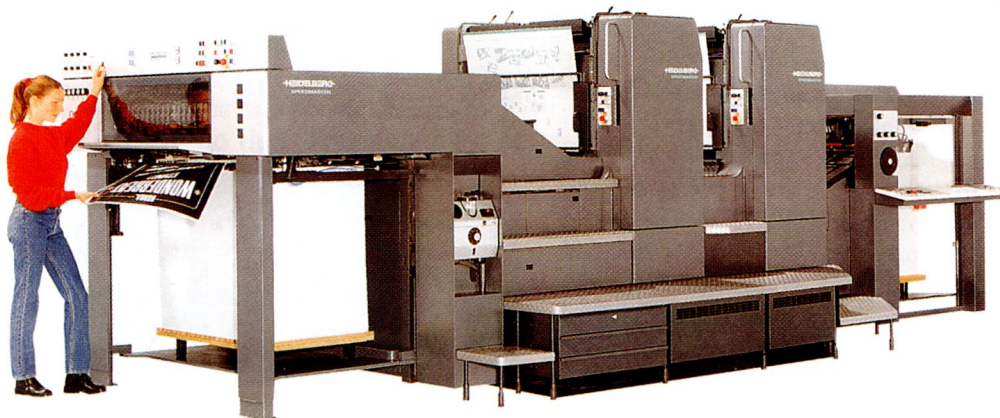
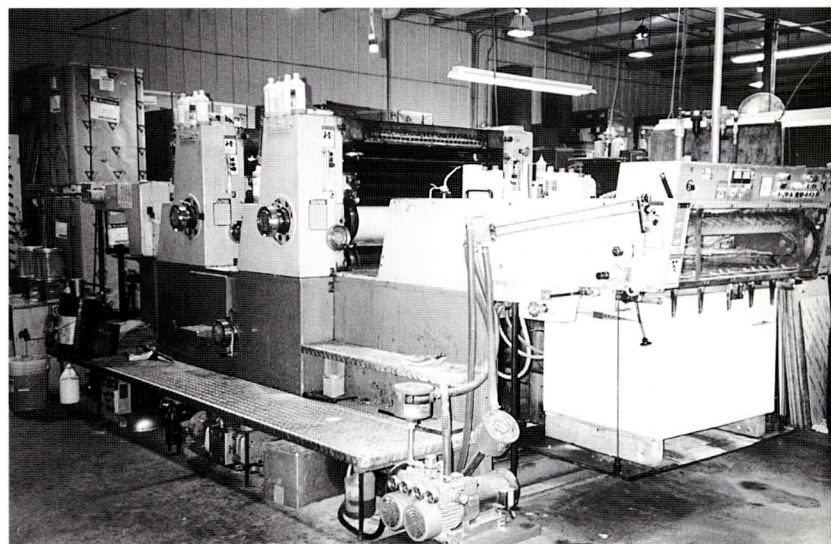


Brethren in Christ Board for Media Ministries



The Board's total 10-year contribution to the Brethren in Christ Church:
\$1,406,634

Our Miller perfecter press is used for all one-color printing. This includes the text of the *Evangelical Visitor* and all of our book printing. This trusty friend is now old and slow. Parts are difficult to find and repairs often delay crucial projects.



This new press is faster, more efficient, and economical. Will you please help make this vision a reality?

How Will Your Contribution Help Spread the Gospel Message?

As an evangelical church, we are compelled to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with people around the world. The printed word is the most economical way to do that. In many areas, where repressive governments prevent open evangelistic meetings or where poverty cuts people off from Christian broadcasting, the printed word is the only way to share the gospel.

The church benefits twice from Evangel's printing ministry. One way is through putting the Lord's message on paper for the Brethren in Christ and other Christian groups. The other way is to build the church's publishing and bookstore ministries with income from the Board's printing operations.

**You can make a difference.
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Detach this form and send it
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YES, I want to support the publishing work of the
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YES, I intend to begin regular support of the publishing
ministry of the Brethren in Christ for the coming year.
I am enclosing a gift of \$ _____, which is the first
of my ☐ monthly ☐ quarterly ☐ annual
contributions. (The BMM will send me a reminder.)

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Thanks . . .

Your generous support will help continue and expand the literature outreach of the Brethren in Christ Church. You will touch the lives of thousands that you may never meet, as your publishing house continues to produce Christian resources for use around the world.

The Lord gave the Word:
great was the company of those that published it.

—Psalm 68:11



*Brethren in Christ communications exist to
declare our vision,
promote our mission,
teach our values,
encourage our dialogue,
and strengthen our bonds of trust.*

—Statement adopted by the Leadership Council
of the Brethren in Christ Church
July 1998

NCC Reports

Articles about Niagara Christian Collegiate are appearing in the *Evangelical Visitor* to provide Brethren in Christ members an opportunity to learn more about this Brethren in Christ high school located near Niagara Falls, Canada. The first number of articles will focus on the mission statement of the school:

"In an international, family-like school, to educate young people, equip them to live the Christian lifestyle and empower them to make a difference in the world."

Equipping young people to live the Christian lifestyle

1. Opportunities to Accept Christ

NCC students are regularly given the opportunity to make a decision to follow Christ. Many students are moved during chapel services, in their residence, or even in a classroom situation to make a commitment to Christ. This week, a young grade 7 girl made a first-time commitment. Since the beginning of the year, she had been questioning whether this was something she should do. Her teacher encouraged her and helped her understand what was involved in making a decision to follow Christ as her Savior. During a Communion service this week, she felt the leading of the Holy Spirit and turned over her life to God! Many Canadian and North American students this year have made new commitments to follow Christ or renewed previously made commitments. We thank God for his work among today's young people!

2. Mentoring

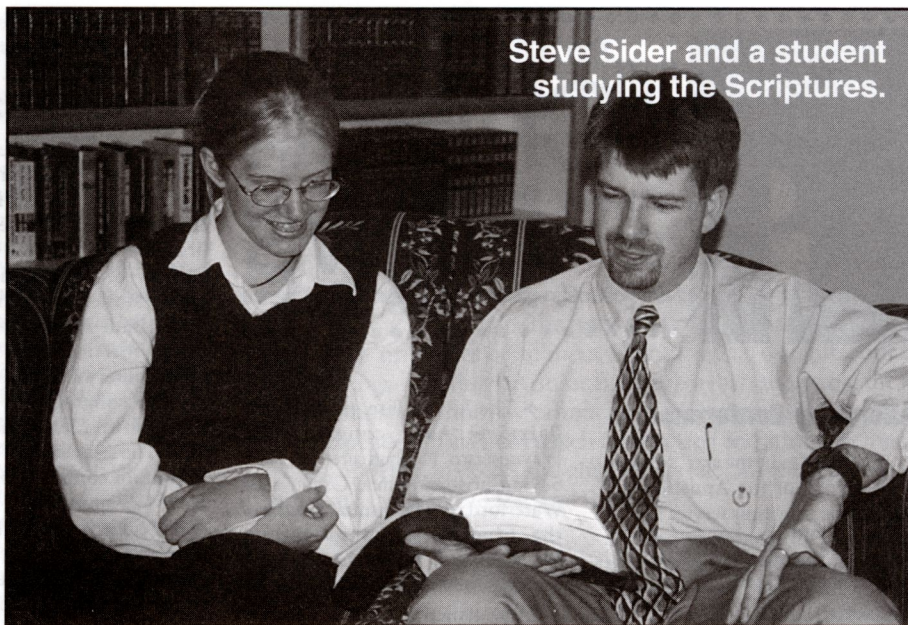
Once a student has accepted Christ as Savior, NCC attempts to partner them with a senior student or faculty member so that they may be mentored in their faith. Sometimes this relationship is "casual" in the sense that the

new Christian and mentor meet as they are able and the mentor assists in areas where the young person needs guidance. Other times, a more formal program is established that enables the young person to grow in "knowledge and truth." Two years ago a young man from NCC participated in a spring missions trip to St. Croix. While on the team, he made a decision to follow Christ. Following the trip, he met on a regular basis with a teacher. Together they searched the Scripture, prayed together, and encouraged each other in the faith. By following the biblical model of mentoring, NCC helps equip students in living the Christian life.

3. Christian Lifestyle Classes

Twice a week, every NCC student participates in Christian Lifestyle Classes. These classes provide an opportunity to learn about Christ and the world. An examination of Scripture assists in integrating Truth into daily life and developing an understanding of self and the world. Challenging the post-modern mind with absolute Truth is a key aspect of Christian Lifestyle Classes. A new initiative of Christian Lifestyle Classes at NCC this year has been a program which partners every student

Steve Sider and a student studying the Scriptures.



with a mentor. This allows every student, whether Christian or non-Christian, to have someone who can counsel and encourage them.

Equipping young people today for the Christian life is crucial if this generation is going to impact the world in a significant way. NCC is preparing teenagers so that they are equipped to follow God in a radical, passionate way.

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Church News

Notes of Congregational Activities in North America

Allegheny Conference

Earl Herr gave the skit "Missionary Journey of the Apostle Paul" during the morning service Oct. 25 of the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. In the evening, the Hollowell puppet team presented "Back to the Bible." ♦ Alicia Williamson was the musician in the morning service and evening concert Oct. 4 at the **Antrim** church, Chambersburg. ♦ Rally Day with the group Common Bond was Oct. 18 at the **Chambersburg** church. Fall revival with Ron Susek was Nov. 1-

4. ♦ The Living Fire group of the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., had a retreat Nov. 6-8 at Christian Retreat Center, East Waterford. ♦ The annual bazaar of the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, raised \$11,000 for mortgage reduction.

Attendance was 306 for Family Day, Oct. 25, at the **Green Spring** church, Newville, Pa. Preparation included sending 3,000 letters, handing out programs door-to-door, and free coffee and donuts at a local market. ♦ The **Hollowell** church, Waynesboro, hosted the

third annual love feast for the Fairview, Five Forks, and Paramount congregations. The Hollowell children presented "God's Little Praisers" on Oct. 25. ♦ The **Iron Springs** church, Fairfield, Pa., has a new furnace. ♦ Roger Witter was guest speaker Oct. 25 for the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation. The first Sunday school fall fair was held Oct. 17 on the parking lot with games, stories, food, and surprises.

Bedsaul Agee of Michigan led revival meetings Oct. 12-18 at the **Montgomery** church, Mercersburg, Pa. The congregation enjoyed the Bunkertown Men's Chorus on Oct. 25. ♦ The secret sisters of the **South Mountain** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., sponsored a workday for senior citizens on Oct. 17. On Oct. 4 Don and Cathy Fahnestock shared about their work with Hands of Grace ministries. ♦ The **Mt. Tabor** church, Mercersburg, had revival with Si Lehman Oct. 11-14. The youth served 200 people at an Oct. 24 spaghetti dinner.

Atlantic Conference

Meals are being offered to the teachers and leaders of Wednesday nights activities at the **Cross Roads** church, Mount Joy, Pa. ♦ A guess-who's-coming-to-dinner was Oct. 4 for the **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation. A new attenders fellowship was Oct. 25. ♦ The **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., viewed the film *Apocalypse* on Nov. 7. ♦ Jeff Baxter of Kingdom Building Ministries led revival meetings Nov. 1-8 for the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa. ♦ Four new adult Sunday

school classes began in October at the **Hempfield** church, Lancaster, Pa., on growth, money management, Elijah, and following Jesus.

At the missions conference Oct. 9-10 of the **Lancaster**, Pa., church, a plaque was given to Gene and Ruth Madeira for 20 years of self-supported ministry in South and Central America. ♦ Melanie Hawbaker reported in the Oct. 4 service of the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., on God's work in Bogota, Colombia. Pastor Dillon began a 5-week workshop on sharing faith on Oct. 19. ♦ Oct. 11, Firefighters Appreciation Sunday at the **Millersville**, Pa., church included a display of equipment from seven different fire departments. ♦ Robert Lehman spoke Oct. 25 to the **Mt. Pleasant** congregation, Mount Joy, Pa., on "A Vision Born." Marlin and Anna Ruth Ressler spoke on Zimbabwe in the evening. ♦ On Oct. 18 the **New Hope** church, Harrisburg, Pa., celebrated their fourth year of services. A new women's ministry began Oct. 11. ♦ A missions evening Oct. 18 at the **New Joy** church, Akron, Pa., focused on Zimbabwe. Twelve persons were baptized on Oct. 25.

"Hearts and Hands for the Harvest" was the theme of the Nov. 11-15 missions conference of the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation. ♦ "I'll Be There Sunday" was Oct. 11 at the **Pequea** church, Lancaster, Pa., followed by a pig roast. Bob and Carol Geiger spoke in the Oct. 18 service. ♦ On Oct. 20 the **Refton** leadership hosted a "talk back and prayer time" with opportunity for feedback from the congregation. ♦ The **Silverdale**, Pa., church planned a praise and healing service for Nov. 8 with harp and piano music by Joanna Mell. ♦ The kid's worship celebration Nov. 1

Schedule of Events

Board meetings are held at Grantham, Pa., unless otherwise noted. For more information, contact the denominational office, P.O. Box 290, Grantham, Pa. 17027; phone (717) 697-2634.

1999

Jan. 18-20	Theology of Salvation Core Course
Jan. 24	Mennonite World Conference "World Fellowship Sunday"
Jan. 28-30	Board for World Missions board meeting
Jan. 28-30	Messiah College Board of Trustees meeting
Feb. 2-4	Leadership Council
Feb. 4-6	General Conference Board
Feb. 11-13	Brethren in Christ Polity Core Course - Upland, Calif.
Mar. 5-6	Pacific Conference Annual Meeting
Mar. 14-18	Theology of the Church Core Course - Kansas (tentative date)
Mar. 19-20	Central Conference Annual Meeting
Mar. 19-20	Midwest Conference Annual Meeting
Mar. 26-27	Atlantic Conference Annual Meeting
Apr. 10	Allegheny Conference Annual Meeting
Apr. 16-17	Canadian Conference Annual Meeting
Apr. 16-17	Susquehanna Conference Annual Meeting
Apr. 19-20	Brethren in Christ Church History Core Course - Wainfleet, Ont.
Apr. 30-May 1	Southeast Conference Annual Meeting
May 11-13	Leadership Council
May 17-21	Theology of the Church Core Course
May 20-21	Messiah College Board of Trustees meeting

Ministry staff opening

A pastor of youth and adult education is needed at New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church, Chambersburg, Pa. Principal responsibility is with youth. Full-time position. Applicants should have appropriate training and experience. Send personal recommendations or resume to:

Dr. Robert Verno,
Senior Pastor
New Guilford Brethren
in Christ Church
1575 Mont Alto Road
Chambersburg, PA
17201

Pastor of Music and Worship

The Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, a growing congregation of 500-600 in South Central Pennsylvania, is seeking a full-time person to lead and develop our worship, music, and drama ministries. If interested, please contact Senior Pastor Steve Munger at (717) 375-4658, or write c/o Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, 24 Kauffman Road East, Chambersburg, PA 17201.

at the **Skyline View** church, Harrisburg, Pa., featured Rev. Loolu the clown. The college and career class viewed the series "Life on the Edge" recently. ♦ On Nov. 15 George and Rachel Kibler shared with the **Speedwell Heights** congregation, Lititz, Pa., about their work in Zambia. A special offering was received by the church for a church in Puerto Rico destroyed by Hurricane Mitch.

Canadian Conference

Four Disciples in Growth (DIG) groups are meeting at the **Bertie** church, Stevensville, Ont. Lamar and Eileen Fretz spoke recently about the Ethiopian church. ♦ The youth of the **Boyle** church, St. Ann's, Ont., had a kickoff party Oct. 23. The Kamp Kahquah Kids hosted a spaghetti supper Nov. 7. ♦ The 35th anniversary project of the **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont., was new kitchen flooring and replacement of basement windows. ♦ The **Clearview** congregation, Kindersley, Sask., moved into their new worship center Nov. 1 with a record attendance of 205. ♦ The **Delisle**, Sask., congregation hosted a father-son fishing retreat Oct. 2-4. The special speaker Oct. 25-29 was David Illman.

A meal followed the Sept. 27 service with Isaac and Connie Flagg at the **Heise Hill** church, Gormley, Ont. ♦ John Oros spoke Oct. 20 to the **Massey Place** congregation, Saskatoon, Sask., about Romania. Dave Illman led meetings Nov. 4-8. ♦ Guest speaker Oct. 25 at the **Oak Ridges**, Ont., church was Lynda Kelly. The evening service focused on the ministry of God's Street People with Charlie Fazio. ♦ John and Ethel Sider spoke a missions message Oct. 25 to the **Port Colborne**, Ont., congregation. ♦ Phil Keefer and Daryl Climenhaga were October guest speakers for the **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont.

A work bee was Oct. 17 at the **Sherkston**, Ont., church. Pastor Chester led a grief recovery series on October Thursdays. ♦ Registration night was Oct. 13 for the Kountry Kids program at the **Springvale**, Ont., church. The theme for the term was "Circle of Friends: Being Friends with Jesus." ♦ Oct. 25 was missions Sunday at the **Stayner**, Ont., church with Mark Holland, Grace Holland, and Lester and Leota Mann. ♦ On Oct. 7 the Pioneer Girls' Club of the **Wainfleet**, Ont., church recorded a high attendance of 72. ♦ On Oct. 16 the **Westheights** church, Kitchener, Ont., hosted the Women Making a Difference (formerly WWA) conference. A farewell

service for Paul and Clare Kiss, youth pastoral couple, was Oct. 4

Central Conference

A Kids' Clubs fall festival was Oct. 28 at the **Amherst** church, Massillon, Ohio. ♦ On Oct. 18 guest Charlie Byer at the **Beulah Chapel** church, Springfield, Ohio, spoke on "What Do You Say When You Meet the Lord?" ♦ On Oct. 21 the prayer fellowship of the **Christian Union** church, Garrett, Ind., viewed a video of General Conference highlights. ♦ On Oct. 11 Bishop Byers visited the pastor appreciation potluck meal of the **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich. Weighdown Workshops began Oct. 22. ♦ The Six:Eight Players presented "A Night to Remember" Oct. 21 for the **Morrison**, Ill., congregation. The church had a "Thirty Years and Counting" service Nov. 8. ♦ "You Can Be a Friend of God" was the Oct. 25 Friend Day sermon at the **Mooretown** church, Sandusky, Mich.

The **Northgate** fellowship, Tipp City, Ohio, recently sent a series of three mailings to new residents in the area. ♦ A dinner followed the Rally Day service Oct. 18 of the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, church. ♦ Barbara Reinford, MMA counselor, was guest of the Sippo Valley church, Massillon, Ohio, on Oct. 18 for the service and meal after. ♦ The electricity was out during the Oct. 11 service of the **Valley Chapel** church, East Canton, Ohio, but God supplied the power: a breakfast served by youth, special music by Dawn DuBose, and the testimony and baptism of a cancer survivor. The church welcomed seven new members in October.

Midwest Conference

After the area football game on Oct. 15, 35 youth attended a lock-in at the **Bethany** church, Thomas, Okla. ♦ The Adventure Bible Clubs (ABC) kickoff was Oct. 14 at the **Rosebank** church, Hope, Kan. Bishop Brubaker visited morning worship on Oct. 25. ♦ The **Zion** church, Abilene, Kan., hosted the Gospel Tide Hour dinner Oct. 26. On Nov. 1, Carl Mortenson spoke on JAARS and Wycliffe ministries.

Pacific Conference

On Oct. 11 Pastor Lynn Thrush of the **Chino**, Calif., church spoke at the graveside service which was part of a several-day observance of the death of 54 aborted babies dumped at a roadside in March 1997. ♦ Members of the **Pacific Highway** church, Salem, Ore.,



E.V. TimeLines

Selected from the archives of the EVANGELICAL VISITOR

100 Years Ago

Dec. 15, 1898—Editor H.N. Engle, in remarks on Christmas: "This calls forth the question whether our gift giving is after the fashion of godliness and according to the principles of holiness. Do our feasts, our gifts, our dispensings—be they lavish or meager—reach the poor, the needy, those of whom we cannot hope to receive again? Or are they expended in avenues which tend to feed and stimulate the carnal appetite, in excess and gluttonness [sic], in entries to sin and paths which lead the soul from God?"

75 Years Ago

Dec. 10, 1923—Editor O.B. Ulery: "At Christmastide millions are spent for frivolous passing toys, and we find the multitudes so engrossed that it is almost impossible to have any interest or attendance at services or revival meetings. How little we find today of that spirit of reverence, honor and worship accorded to our precious Christ, by the Shepherds and Wise Men, even when he was only a babe."

50 Years Ago

Dec. 27, 1948—E.J. Swalm, in an editorial titled "His Star": "Many star-gazers cannot associate a star with a stable or a monarch with a manger. They can exalt themselves above the stars of God but cannot humble themselves for acceptable worship. We have never really seen the Crucified Christ if our hearts have not been broken and we have never worshipped the new-born King."

25 Years Ago

Dec. 25, 1973—John E. Zercher, in an editorial introducing *The Ministry of Reconciliation* adult Sunday school elective: "The study of nonresistance—especially as it relates to military service—may be a bit like the proverbial fixing of the leaky roof. When it is not raining it does not leak, and when it is raining it cannot be fixed. In times of peace and in the absence of the draft there is the temptation to see the subject as irrelevant. On the other hand, when military service is a live issue, feelings are strong and it is difficult to look at the subject with the objectivity it requires. Just as fair weather is the time to repair the roof, so a time of relative peace is an appropriate time to examine the teachings of Christ as they relate to non-resistant love, especially as it relates to the Christian's attitude toward war."

10 Years Ago

Dec. 1988—In an editorial on the Incarnation: "In Jesus, God has revealed most clearly his nature and purposes. In Jesus, God entered our culture, speaking our language and demonstrating his love for us. By doing that, God has provided a model for our own ministry. We are called to cross whatever boundaries separate us from other people, sharing the good news in words which communicate to them, and demonstrating through our attitudes and actions the love of God."

attended the Willamette Valley Christian Education Convention recently with speaker Tony Campolo and various workshops. ♦ A new members potluck reception was held Nov. 1 at the **Upland**, Calif., church. The Prime Timers had movie night Nov. 8. ♦ On Nov. 15 Kent Byers of the **Riverside**, Calif., church preached at the **Walnut**, Calif., church, and Pastor Schletewitz at Riverside.

Southeast Conference

A father and two daughters were baptized recently into the fellowship of the **Campbellsville**, Ky., church.

♦ On Oct. 11 the youth of the **Highland Park** congregation, Dublin, Va., sponsored a hot dog dinner with profits going toward the Extreme Youth Conference in December. ♦ The **Millerfields** congregation, Columbia, Ky., featured Ken Smith from Canada in Oct. 19-25 revival meetings.

Susquehanna Conference

The **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa., welcomed two new members Oct. 4. The congregation recently received donations for the Navajo Mission well project. ♦ The Pioneer Girls of the **Carlisle**, Pa.,

church sponsored family roller skating Nov. 23. ♦ On Oct. 12 Rachel and George Kibler spoke on "God's Outrageous Love: For All Nations" to the **Cedar Grove** church, Mifflintown, Pa. ♦ On Oct. 11 people of the **Dillsburg**, Pa., church distributed nearly 200 "Jesus" films to homes in the neighborhood. ♦ Dwayne Potteiger led revival meetings Oct. 31—Nov. 3 at the **Fairview** church, New Cumberland, Pa. ♦ The Oct. 27 women's salad supper at the **Grantham**, Pa., church featured Susan B. Caroselli, chair of the fine arts department of Messiah College.

Roy and Lois Lehman, Sam and Sarah Oldham, and John and Ethel

Sider led the missions emphasis weekend Oct. 2-4 of the **Jemison Valley** church, Westfield, Pa. ♦ The **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church hosted Doris Wagner of Global Harvest Ministries for a seminar Nov. 13-14. ♦ Missionaries at Macha Hospital, Lester and Leota Mann, spoke Oct. 21 to the **Messiah Village** congregation, Mechanicsburg. ♦ The youth of the **Redland Valley** church, York Haven, Pa., had a corn maze Oct. 9 and a mission impossible adventure Oct. 25. ♦ The **Wesley** church, Mt. Holly Springs, began Good News Clubs in October with more than 25 children attending at two locations.

MONEY MATTERS

Designated Contributions: Are They Tax-Deductable?

by Philip Keefer

This material is condensed from the Church Law and Tax Report, Tax Reference Library, 1998 Edition. Philip D. Keefer is Executive Director of Stewardship Services for the Brethren in Christ Church.

A family in your church has suffered a severe loss as the result of a fire. The Smiths, another family in your church, gave your church treasurer a check for the family involved in the fire. Are the Smiths eligible for a tax-deductible receipt?

Understanding charitable contributions is very important. There are many unique, and often technical, rules that apply to charitable contributions. When donors or church leaders are not familiar with these rules, there can be unfortunate consequences.

To help avoid such consequences, I want to deal specifically with benevolent contributions in this article.

Many churches have established benevolence funds to assist persons with a catastrophic illness, accident victims, the unemployed, the

aged—the list could go on. The question is not whether or not a church can establish benevolence funds. The question is: when is a benevolent contribution tax-deductible?

Undesignated contributions to a church benevolence fund are deductible. However, problems arise when a donor makes a contribution to a church benevolence fund and designates the intended recipient of the contribution. For example, Bill and Jane Smith are members of your church, which has a benevolence fund. Mary Brown (another church member) has inadequate medical insurance and is suffering physically as a result of a devastating fire. The Smiths contribute \$1,000 to the church benevolence fund with the instruction that their contribution be applied to Mary Brown's medical bills. Is the Smiths' contribution deductible? The answer to this question depends upon the following two considerations:

(1) According to section 170 of the IRS Code, contributions "to or for" a qualified charity qualify for a tax-deductible receipt as long as the donation is "to or for the use of" a charitable organization. Contributions to an individual are never deductible since they can never be "to or for the use of" a charitable organization.

(2) Did the donor intend to make a contribution to the church or did the donor only intend to benefit the designated individual, thereby using the church as an intermediary in order to obtain a tax deduction for an otherwise non-deductible gift? The intent of the donor ordinarily determines whether the transfer should be

Cooperative Ministries

Receipts, Year to Date January 1–November 30, 1998

	United States		Canada	
	1998	1997	1998	1997
Proportionate	<u>1,988,048</u>	<u>1,905,915</u>	<u>347,388</u>	<u>326,452</u>
Congregational	1,898,781	1,795,157	347,388	324,903
Individual	89,267	110,758	0	1,549
Designated and Direct Giving	<u>713,460</u>	<u>710,917</u>	<u>42,012</u>	<u>50,310</u>
Congregational	357,200	315,459	42,012	48,660
Individual	356,260	395,458		1,650
Total to Date	<u>2,701,508</u>	<u>2,616,832</u>	<u>347,388</u>	<u>326,452</u>
Total Budget	<u>3,768,911</u>	<u>3,877,632</u>	<u>452,000*</u>	<u>419,300*</u>
Received to Date	71.7%	67.5%	77%	78%

*Note: Canadian Conference total budget does not include designated or direct giving.

For The Record

Births

Bartle: Noah Ross, Sept. 25; Arthur and Claudia (Bustos) Bartle, Mooretown congregation, Mich.

Bishop: Zachary David, Oct. 19; Eric and JoAnn Bishop, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Brown: Kira Lynn, Sept. 27; John and Stefanie (Tosh) Brown, Dillsburg congregation, Pa.

Brubaker: Daniel Mark, Sept.

28; Douglas and Karen (Kemrer) Brubaker, Manor congregation, Pa.

Cober: Kiara Sophia, Sept. 18; Sheldon and Maria (Perez) Cober, Whittier, Calif.

Cordell: Nathan Edward, Oct. 7; Craig and Mary Cordell, Five Forks congregation, Pa.

Dobrenski: Gillian Dawn, Oct. 2; Doug and Kathy Dobrenski, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Gaskins: Aaron Wade, Oct. 23; Shane and Teresa (Brown) Gaskins, Millerfields congregation, Ky.

Henson: Audrey Madeline and Chloe Elizabeth, Oct. 22; Trevor and Cindi (Butler) Henson, Millerfields congregation, Ky.

Hess: Micah Jonathan, Oct. 11; Peter and Dawna (Bert) Hess, Scottdale, Pa.

Hughes: Christen Brooke, May 3; Tim and Kim Hughes, Mowersville congregation, Pa.

Morrow: Richard McFarlen, Oct. 9; Barry and Laura (Collard) Morrow, Boyle congregation, Ont.

Pierce: Evan Christopher, Sept. 14; Christopher and Pamela (Gehman) Pierce, Palmyra congregation, Pa.

Pitts: De'Marlo Shayvon, Sept. 17; Dennis and Nicole (English) Pitts, Valley Chapel congregation, Ohio.

Potteiger: Tyler James, Oct. 15;

Darrell and Lisa Potteiger, Mowersville congregation, Pa.

Roth: Naomi Evelyn, Sept. 29; Mark and Maggie Roth, Fairview Ave. congregation, Pa.

Sherk: Tessa Elizabeth, Oct. 16; Steve and Lisa Sherk, Port Colborne congregation, Ont.

St. Pierre: Brandi Victoria, Oct. 15; Sheryl and Curtis St. Pierre, Port Colborne congregation, Ont.

Stern: Margaret Suzanne, Oct. 6; Brad and Heide (Jeffries) Stern, Martinsburg congregation, Pa.

Wenger: Gabriel Adam, May 17; Richard and Angel Wenger, Mowersville congregation, Pa.

characterized as a tax-deductible contribution to a church or a non-deductible transfer to an individual.

Contributions to your church's benevolence fund are deductible as long as no recipient or beneficiary has been designated.

However, church members and others are free to make anonymous recommendations (in writing) to the church board regarding desired recipients. The board could appoint a benevolence committee to receive written or oral recommendations from the congregation regarding benevolence fund candidates and make recommendations to the church board. The committee should not be aware of the identity of donors to the benevolence fund. In the event the donor's identity is known by the board and the board distributes the funds according to the donor's desires, the donation is not deductible.

If a donor merely suggests or recommends a designated recipient, his or her contribution may be deductible. As a suggestion or recommendation, the donor must see the donation to be "to or for the use of" the church and subject to its control rather than to the designated individual. Once a donor makes a contribution, the church has the complete legal and equitable control over the donation. Donors can from time to time submit recommendations to their church regarding recipients of the fund. Such recommendations are to be advisory only and the church can accept or reject them.

A private letter ruling (IRS Letter Ruling 8752031) suggests that contributions to a church benevolent fund can be deductible even if the donor mentions a beneficiary, as long as the facts demonstrate that

- the donor's recommendation is advisory only,
- the church retains "full control of the donated funds and discretion as to their use," and,
- the donor understands that his or her recommendation is advisory only and that the church retains full control over the donated funds, including the authority to accept or reject the donor's recommendations.

One possible way of establishing these facts is for churches to adopt a "benevolence fund policy." The policy should have all distributions from a benevolence fund subject to the unrestricted control and discretion of the church board.

What about special appeals to which donors make contributions? Many congregations have made special appeals to raise funds for a particular benevolence need. Are contributions made to such offerings tax-deductible? Unfortunately, neither the IRS nor any federal court has addressed this issue directly. It is possible that such contributions would be tax-deductible if the following conditions are met:

- (1) the offering was preauthorized by the church board,
- (2) the recipient (or his or her family) is needy and the need is substantial,
- (3) the offering is used exclusively to pay a portion of the need,
- (4) immediate family members are not the primary contributors, and,
- (5) no more than one or two such offerings are collected for the same need.

What next? Churches need to establish a benevolent fund policy whereby they and their treasurers are protected from the need to respond to a contribution which is not tax-deductible. If your church establishes a benevolent fund, you should review your church's charter to be sure your statement of purpose includes "charitable" as well as "religious" purposes.

For more details regarding this issue, please feel free to contact the Director of Stewardship at (717) 697-2634. Stewardship Services is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

The material in this article is relative to the United States and the Internal Revenue Service. Canadian churches should contact their Stewardship Offices for information regarding the deductibility of designated benevolent contributions in Canada.

Weddings

Bedell-Wenger: Laura Renee, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Wenger, Waynesboro, Pa., and Kevin Gilchrist, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Bedell, S. Dayton, N.Y., Oct. 24, at Fairview Ave. Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Kent D. Maxwell officiating.

Fretz-Wideman: Alexa Rae, daughter of Glen and Jean Wideman, Gormley, Ont., and Hubert Jay, son of Hubert and Marilyn Fretz, Stevensville, Ont., Aug. 22, at Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Mike Anderson and Rev. Norm MacLaren officiating.

Gooderham-Teal: Dana Nicole, daughter of Gary and Shirley Teal, Springvale, Ont., and Jordan Taylor, son of Gordon and Joan Gooderham, Fort Erie, Ont., Sept. 12, in Crescent Falls, Alberta, with Rev. Gordon Gooderham officiating.

Grube-Hess: Brenda Sue, daughter of Elvin and Susan Hess, and James Robert Jr., son of James and Doris Grube, Oct. 3, at Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald N. Wingert officiating.

Obituaries

Brubaker: Grace G. Brubaker, born Nov. 16, 1902, daughter of Norman and Lottie Groff Smith, died Oct. 22. She is survived by nieces and nephews. Grace was a homemaker and resident of Messiah Village for the past 13 years, where she participated in the sewing circle and Sunshine Band. She was a member of the Crossroads congregation, Mount Joy, Pa., where the funeral was held with Rev. Richard Mailloux officiating. Interment was in Bainbridge Cemetery.

Conrady: Jeffrey Lynn Conrady, born Oct. 24, died the same day. Surviving are his parents, Jeff and Lois Conrady; sisters, Alyssa and Rachel; brothers, Jonathan and Joshua; and grandparents, J. Lynn and Harriet Conrady. Interment was at the Dillsburg Cemetery with Rev. Jim Spurrier and Rev. Dave Miller officiating.

Dawe: Richard A. Dawe, born July 21, 1943, in Schuylkill County, Pa., died Oct. 26. Surviving are his wife, Connie (Spidle); a daughter, Angela Johnson; a son, Dustin; and two grandchildren. Richard was employed by R&A Bender, Inc. He was an instructor of first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation for the American Red Cross. He attended the Air Hill congregation, Pa. The funeral was at Lininger-Fries Funeral Home with Rev. Cleon Nyce officiating. Interment was in Stenger Hill Cemetery.

Fike: Corrine T. Millhouse Fike, born Feb. 21, 1919, in Fort Wayne, Ind., died Oct. 19. Preceding her in death were a daughter, Erma Slessman; two brothers; and two sisters. Surviving are her husband of 60 years, Archie Fike; a daughter, Frances Book; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and three sisters. Corrine had been a sewing instructor at a clothing factory, and clerk and bookkeeper at Martin's Hardware in Nappanee, Ind., for 31 years. She was a devoted member of the Nappanee congregation where she served as church historian, Sunday school secretary, and in the sewing group. The quilts and comforters made with her help made their way to Lifeline Women's Shelter, Navajo Mission, and all around the world. The funeral was held at the church with Rev. Joseph W. Fox and Rev. Jerel Book officiating. Interment was in South Union Cemetery.

Foust: Donald E. Foust, born Feb. 24, 1931, in Fenton, Mich., died Oct. 7. Preceding him in death were his wife, Rose M. (Burk); and his wife, Anna M. (Bechtel). Surviving are a daughter, Beth A. Safley; two sons, Jody C. and Ralph R.; five grandchildren; three brothers; and a sister. Don was a truckdriver and custodian most of his life. He was a member of the Conoy congregation, Pa., and most recently of the Palmyra congregation. The funeral was held at Trefz and Bowser Funeral Home with Rev. Louis O. Cober officiating. Interment was in Laurel Hill Memorial Gardens.

Hartley: Martha L. Hartley, born

Sept. 30, 1902, in Canton, Ohio, daughter of Monroe and Elizabeth Dick Paulus, died Oct. 26. Her spouse, Walter Hartley, preceded her in death. Surviving are three sons, Robert D., James E., and William M. Brubaker; a daughter, Sharon R. Bearss; 8 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. Martha had resided at Messiah Village since 1993. She was a Gold Star Mother of the American Legion and a member of the Highland congregation, Ohio. The funeral was held at Messiah Village with Rev. C. Ronald Burgard officiating. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park.

High: Mahlon Huber High, born Sept. 10, 1913, son of David S. and Mary Huber High, died Oct. 15. His wife, Gladys M. (Mellinger) preceded him in death. Surviving are his wife, Ella Hess (Mylin); a son, James L.; 3 daughters, Norma H. Forry, Jean M. Lapp, and Dorothy A. Breneman; 12 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; two stepsons, Leland H. and Lawrence M. Mylin; a stepdaughter, Lauretta R. Wendling; four stepgrandchildren; and four sisters. Mahlon was a retired farmer. He was a member of the Willow Street Mennonite Church where he had taught Sunday school. He was married to Ella for 19 years and attended the Manor congregation, Pa., with her. The funeral was at Willow Street Mennonite Church with Rev. Robert A. Breneman and Rev. Robert L. Sheetz officiating. Interment was in the Willow Creek church cemetery.

Lehman: Edna E. Lehman, born Aug. 30, 1907, daughter of Oscar and Lottie Machen Lehman, died Sept. 17. A sister, Florence, survives along with nephews. Edna had resided at Messiah Village since 1986. She was a former nurse and teacher at four African missions and a former nurse at York Hospital and Colonial Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. She attended Messiah College, York Hospital of Nursing, and London Missionary School of Medicine. She was a member of the Pentecostal Assembly of God. The funeral was held at the Messiah Village church with Rev. Robert Ohliger officiating. Interment was in the Locust Grove church cemetery.

Leonard: Lydia C. Leonard, born Nov. 14, 1897, daughter of Irvin X. and Barbara Alice Smith Leidy, died Oct. 27. He husband, Joseph Leonard, and three sons preceded her in death. Surviving are two children, Alice Christian and Glenn Leonard; seven grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Lydia was a deaconess of the Altoona congre-

gation, Pa. She was a member of the Martinsburg congregation, Pa., where the funeral was officiated by Rev. Earl E. Herr and Rev. Richard L. Riley. Interment was in Dry Hill Cemetery.

Mell: Kathryn R. Mell, born Dec. 5, 1914, in Ramona, Kan., daughter of Samuel and Lillie Haldeman Brehm, died Sept. 2. Her husband, Sherwood N. Mell, preceded her in death. Surviving are two daughters, Pamela K. Lehman and Karen J. Williams; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and three sisters, Faith Carlson, Pearl Wolgemuth, and Doris Harley. Kathryn had resided at Messiah Village since 1984. She was a homemaker and relief houseparent at Milton Hershey School. She was a member of the Messiah Village church where the memorial service was held with Rev. C. Ronald Burgard and Rev. Janet M. Peifer officiating. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park.

Sisco: Jay E. Sisco, born Feb. 25, 1925, in Sanilac County, Mich., son of Elio and Ida Thomas Sisco, died Oct. 25. A sister, Flossie, preceded him in death. Surviving are his wife, Marion P. (Starr); 4 sons, J. Richard, Michael, David, and Curtis; a daughter, Marilyn Howell; 10 grandchildren; his stepmother, Alta Sisco; 4 sisters, Florence Carlson, Grace Hartsock, Verna Bundy, and Evelyn Gose; and a brother, Harold. Jay graduated from Messiah College and Shippensburg University. Aside from pastoring, he taught for 13 years full-time and another 11 as a substitute. He was a member of the Palmyra congregation, Pa., where he was a deacon, Sunday school teacher and mission committee member. He was serving on the Atlantic Conference nominating committee and as treasurer of the regional Missions Prayer Fellowship. The funeral was held at the Palmyra church with Rev. Louis O. Cober officiating. Interment was in Gravel Hill Cemetery.

Tribute

We remember one of God's choice servants, Jay. E. Sisco. His service to Christ and the church in pastoral ministry spanned 42 years, dating back to 1952. Jay first served the Bethel congregation in Merrill, Michigan. Bishop E. J. Swalm ordained him to the ministry in 1953. Jay later served the Martinsburg, Woodbury, Morning Hour Chapel and Moore's Church (now Redland Valley) congregations in Pennsylvania. While at Moore's Church for 14 years, he completed his education and taught school.

In 1975 Jay came to the Atlantic

Opening for Elementary/Middle School Principal

Shalom Christian Academy (grades K-12; enrollment 400) is seeking an elementary/middle school principal. SCA is a parent-owned school with an Anabaptist tradition. SCA was founded in 1976 and currently has 34 faculty. SCA is accredited by ACSI and Middle States (MSACS). Send résumé to Conrad Swartzentruber at 126 Social Island Road, Chambersburg, PA 17201, or email shalom@shalom.k12.pa.us.

Congregational Life announces 1998 Music Scholarship grants

Congregational Life Ministries seeks to partner with local congregations in carrying out their mission. One specific way is the annual Music Scholarship where four young people each receive a \$200 grant for the further development of their music gifts. This year we had 38 youth apply. It is a pleasure to announce the four recipients for 1998.

Lyndsey Deck is a member of the Bethany Brethren in Christ Church in Thomas, Okla. Her music interests focus on voice and piano. She has participated in numerous choirs, ensembles, duets, and contests in her school. She is quite active in her church through choirs, the Praise Team, ensembles, duets, solos, and Vacation Bible School. She plans to commit her talents to Jesus and spread his word through music. She will use the scholarship to continue private voice lessons.

Austin Hartman is a member of the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church in Elizabethtown, Pa. His music interest is found in the violin. Austin is a gifted violinist and the winner of numerous competitions including the 1997 Albert Greenfield Competition. He has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra and has been featured in many recitals including a performance at a state dinner for Governor

Tom Ridge. He uses his talent for the Lord in his local congregation with ensembles and solos and has performed at General Conference. He plans to use the scholarship to continue his studies as he works towards his musical goals in hopes that through this, he will be able to serve the Lord using his God-given gift.

Joy Houck is a member of the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church in Lancaster, Pa. Her music interests are piano, flute, piccolo, and voice. Joy uses her talent in school and church. She is a member of her school orchestra and chorus. She participates with the worship band and plays the flute or piano during morning worship. She believes that music is a key part of worship and desires to use her gift for God's honor. She plans on using the scholarship to take private piano lessons.

Michael Thrush is a member of the Chino Brethren in Christ Church in Chino, Calif. His music interest is focused on drums. Michael uses his talent in the school bands, the worship team on Sunday mornings, in a Christian band, and teaches elementary-age children the drums. He plans on using the scholarship to buy a drum set in order to travel with his band and continue to lead worship in the youth group.

We congratulate these fine young people. The church is blessed to have so many who are committed to serving the Lord and the church. The Music Trust Fund is pleased to provide them with the opportunity to continue their training. **EV**

Conference, first at the Conoy church, then Souderton. Following five years at Nappanee, Ind., Jay returned to pastor the Hummelstown congregation until retirement in 1994. Retirement from pastoral ministry did not mean retirement from active involvement. At Palmyra he fulfilled numerous responsibilities.

Jay had a deep love for Christ and the church. This was reflected in the sacrificial and deeply committed way he served. He was concerned with declaration of the truth, and was a student of the Word, which he loved to teach. Jay's leadership style didn't rest on the forcefulness of personality, but rather on integrity of life and love for people. He had a ready smile, was easy to learn to know, and brought warmth and caring into his ministry. He was dearly loved.

Though his life on earth has now been completed, the fruit of his life and labors remain. Jay has received the ultimate commendation from his Lord, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Come and share your master's happiness."

Craig E. Sider
Bishop, Atlantic Conference

Vital: Sarah Maude Vital, born Dec. 14, 1905, daughter of George and Millie Miller Dugan, died Sept. 30. Surviving are her husband, Anthony N. Vital; two daughters, Betty J. Harwell and Miriam M. Jarrell; a son, Paul L.; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren. Sarah had resided at Messiah Village since 1990 and was a member of the church there. The funeral was officiated at the church by Rev. C. Ronald Burgard. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park. **EV**

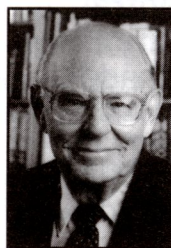
Wingert: Eunice M. Wingert, born May 30, 1900, in Abilene, Kan., daughter of Samuel J. and Mary Olive Frey Lady, died Oct. 19. Her husband, Norman A. Wingert, preceded her in death. Surviving are a daughter, Lois A. Tidgwell; a son, Norman O.; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and a brother, Samuel Lady. She and Norman were relief workers with MCC for many years. She was a former school teacher in Oklahoma and California. She held dual membership with the Upland congregation, Calif., and Reedley Mennonite Church, Calif. She had resided at Messiah Village since June 1996. The funeral was held at Messiah Village Chapel with Rev. Janet M. Peifer and Rev. C. Ronald Burgard officiating. Interment was in Grantham Memorial Park. **EV**

Think As Christ Thinks

"THE BIBLE holds before us the promise that we can live in full communion with God, here and now. We can have his heart, his outlook, his priorities, his goals and objectives, here and now. The Bible extends to us an invitation to begin walking with God now. We need not wait to receive some new mystical insight in order to be fulfilled. It is a present reality for those who have the Spirit and heart of God, as he promised to give us.

"That is God's vision for us: 'The nations shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when through you I display my holiness before their eyes'" (Ezek. 36:23).

—*The Mind of Christ*, p. 34



Dr. Dennis Kinlaw, former president of Asbury College, challenges the notion that Christians cannot know what the Lord wants them to do. To the contrary,

the Lord reveals his thoughts to any believer who allows him. His Holy Spirit can transform a person's mind to see what Christ sees in a given situation.

"This book explores how common people such as you and I can have the mind of Christ," he writes. It's a journey that can change your life forever.

The Mind of Christ by Dennis F. Kinlaw

144 Pages / Softcover / 6x9"
ISBN 0-916035-93-X
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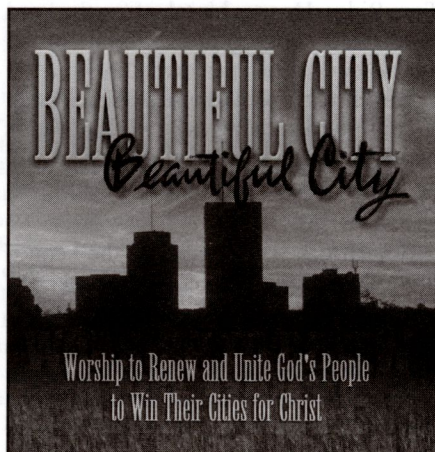
"Beautiful City" worship CD update

by Tim Day

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesian church that God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20). That is quite a promise!

In April 1998, the original "Beautiful City" compact disk was released as an expression of worship and prayer by a group of musicians and worshippers from Belleville, Ontario (See the June 1998 *Evangelical Visitor*, p. 24).

In the months that followed, Dan Cutrona from Kle-Toi Records became



aware of the project and affirmed its focus of Christians praying and interceding for their city. Dan has been in the music industry for over twenty years in Los Angeles and Nashville as both a player and producer. In recent years his focus on worship recordings has led him to producing CDs with worship leaders like David Ruis, Kevin Prosch, Bob Fitts, and Graham Kendriks, as well as to be connected with worshipping communities from around the world.

It was during this past summer that Dan and the staff of Kle-Toi decided to start a new record label called "Sold Out Records" to carry worship recordings from around the world which have been birthed in a local context. "Beautiful City" was selected as one of the first possible recordings to be released on this label. To prepare these songs for broader distribution, an expanded group of musicians and singers returned to the studio with Dan and Tim to rework each of the songs.

"Beautiful City Sold Out Version" is a new CD containing all new renditions, enhanced production, and digital mastering. Despite all the changes and additions to this project, the focus remains the same: a heart cry for spiritual renewal and unity within God's people to win their cities for Christ. The style of these songs range from a black gospel version of "One Lord," a worship song performed at 1998 General Conference, to a classical rendition of "Come Lord and Abide," to the contemporary pop rock "Shout and Be Glad." All of the songs are based directly on Scripture and lead the listener through a worship experience of praying and interceding for their church and city.

Through these last months I've real-

ized that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. Now my prayer is that as the Brethren in Christ join with the rest of the body of Christ to intercede for and win their communities for Christ, that we will see the fulfillment of Ephesians 3:21. "To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Special Offer

Those producing the CD wish to make this recording available at low cost to all the people of Brethren in Christ churches. The new prices are \$8 U.S./\$10 Cdn. for a CD and \$5 U.S./\$7 Cdn. for a cassette (all taxes included). Songbooks are available for \$7 U.S./\$10 Cdn. With each purchase comes a free full-color poster, "A Prayer For My Community."

To purchase a copy, please mail a check or money order to: Tim Day, 544 Victoria Ave, Belleville, Ont. K8N 2G7. Please include an additional \$2 per order for postage and packaging. For more information, please call: (613) 967-3763 or email: tday@reach.net.

EV



**Mennonite
Central
Committee
Canada**

Mennonite Central Committee Canada seeks applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

All applicants must exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active membership in a Mennonite or Brethren in Christ church, and nonviolent peacemaking.

Please direct enquiries to Search Committee members:

John Wiens (chair) - (604) 434-5358
Pauline Hogan - (905) 688-0361
Willie Stoesz - (204) 377-4724
Ed Barkman - (204) 254-7734
Lori Unger Brandt - (204) 284-7881

Please direct applications to:

John Wiens
Executive Director Search Committee
c/o Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 5K9
Fax: (204) 269-9875

Review of applications will begin on January 31, 1999 and will continue until a suitable candidate is selected.

Pastoral Care Promotion

Messiah Village, a continuing care retirement community located in Mechanicsburg, Pa., has recently promoted Rev. Janet M. Peifer to Director of Pastoral Care. Her responsibilities include giving guidance to the spiritual life of the total community including residents, their family members, staff, and volunteers. She is responsible for directing the pastoral care department, which includes staff scheduling and evaluations, as well as overseeing the continuing education and development of the pastoral staff. She also serves as one of the Village Chaplains and Associate Pastor of the Messiah Village congregation. Janet began pastoral service at the Village in June 1997.



Pastor Peifer is a 1988 graduate of Messiah College, received her M.Div. from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and her Doctor of Ministry from Lancaster Theological Seminary, with a focus on pastoral care with the elderly.

EV



Opening the Word of Life

Everyday
a holiday

The holidays encourage most Christians and they should. Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving are important times for thinking about specific elements of our faith. However, I must confess, that I experience a certain tinge of frustration or discouragement during the holiday seasons. What I sense is that for many people the holidays have degenerated into *exclusive* times for thinking about the birth and resurrection of our Lord, and for thinking about God's blessings throughout the year. Do we think about such grand truths only on the holiday?

Paul uses a small, apparently insignificant word to counter this sort of trend. It is the word "always." In Ephesians 5:19-20 he writes, "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, *always* giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." A person does not need to dig too deeply into a Greek lexicon to find an accurate definition for this word. The word "always" is *pantote*, and is a compound word composed of *pan* ("all," "every," "any," "the whole," as in our word "pantheism") plus *tote* (meaning "when" or "while"). In conjunction these words signify "always," or more literally, "at all times" or "at all-whiles." If you combine the instances of Paul's use of *pantote* (always) with the verses where he refers to "continually" and "in all circumstances," the count comes to about twenty-seven. A perusal of these verses yields the conclusion that "always" is an important little word. There are some characteristics of the Christian life that should constantly be present—attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors that should never leave us.

As a summary, these verses can be placed into several categories. First, there are lessons from Paul's example. In 1 Cor. 1:4, 1 Thess. 1:2-3, 2 Thess. 2:13, and Col. 1:3, he states that a behavior or attitude of his is a continual giving thanks to God for his brothers and sisters in Christ. In 2 Thess. 2:13, Paul's wording is one of Christian obligation, "we ought always to thank God for you." Thus, a constant attitude of thankfulness for the family of God should be characteristic of the Christian year-round.

Second, in Phil. 1:4 and Eph. 6:18, Paul mentions that he is ceaselessly praying for the church. Not only does his attitude express thanksgiving for his brothers and sisters, but his pattern of behavior is one of unremitting prayer for them. A Christian who isn't praying regularly for the church, and in general, is deficient, lacking a behavior that should always be there.

Third, Paul presents some observations about what is always occurring in the *normal* Christian experience. God is always leading us in triumph (2 Cor. 2:14); Christians always bear in their bodies the death of Jesus (2 Cor. 4:10-11), which is best interpreted as a complete giving over of ourselves to Christ so that his life can be present in us; Christians are always confident, knowing that our destinies are heaven (2 Cor. 5:6); Christians rejoice in all circumstances (2 Cor. 6:10); Christians always desire the exaltation of Christ through their lives (Phil. 1:20). A Christian life without these is deficient.

Finally, Paul uses the word "always" to admonish the church. These strong, direct commands are his most potent uses of the word *pantote*: "Give thanks to God for everything," (Eph. 5:19-20); "Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord," (1 Cor. 15:58); "Be zealous...always," (Gal. 4:18); "Rejoice in the Lord always," (Phil. 4:4); "Be sure your speech is always full of grace," (Col. 4:6); "Always try to be kind to each other," (1 Thess. 5:15-16); and "Pray continually" (1 Thess. 5:17). In the Christian life, these directives are to be fulfilled on every day of the year.

Sometimes the small, uncomplicat-

ed words are the most important. Mark Twain is reported to have said that it was not the parts of the Bible that he didn't understand that disturbed him, but the parts that were clear were the ones that concerned him the most. In the verses where Paul uses the word "always," the meaning is as clear as an fine autumn sky. "Always" is a strong, purposeful, determined, expectant word. Strong in that there are no times when a person should do otherwise or a circumstance should be otherwise. Purposeful since it indicates a certainty regarding Christian truth and that there are behaviors and attitudes which are right regardless of the situation, i.e., the Christian life is not to be lived in a haphazard way. Determined because "always" denotes behaviors which result from convictions, action based upon the standards established by God. And expectant because in relationship to God we can depend upon him to be consistent and such consistency should be characteristic of his people as well.

There should be certain circumstances, behaviors, and attitudes that are part of the Christian life every day, and not just on the holidays. May every day as you walk with Christ be a holiday as you contemplate all that he has done for you.

The author of "Opening the Word of Life" is Ed Kessler, pastor of the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church in Millersburg, Pa.

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Mennonite Central Committee is actively recruiting for the Accounting Manager position at Ten Thousand Villages, Akron, Pa. All applicants must exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith, active church membership, and nonviolent peacemaking. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree in accounting, CPA or equivalent preferred; five years experience including financial analysis experience preferred; Word Perfect and spreadsheet experience required; attention to detail and organization; experience working importing preferred. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position. For more information, or to receive a job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at (717) 859-1151, MCC Human Resources, or e-mail psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

MESSIAH COLLEGE NEWS

Messiah College dedicates new Agape Center

On Nov. 2, Messiah College dedicated its new Agape Center for Service and Learning with an open house and ceremony, hosted by Messiah College President Rodney Sawatsky and the director of the center, Dr. John W. Eby. The Agape Center consolidates all of the service-learning and community service activities at Messiah College into one centralized location for a more effective integration of service into the learning environment.

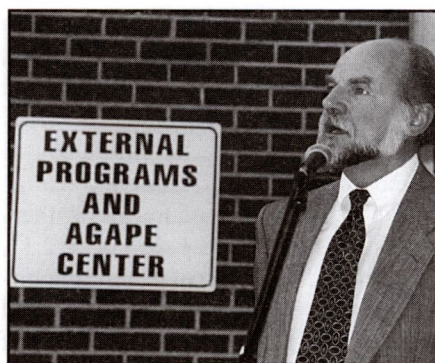
"An essential aspect of the mission statement of Messiah College is to educate men and women in preparation for lives of service. The Center is oriented toward being a part of that educating process," said Eby.

The Agape Center houses the college's Outreach Teams, Service Ministries, World Christian Fellowship (WCF), Service-Learning, Service Teams, and Volunteer Services. Previously, these six branches were spread out in various areas on campus and reported to different offices such as College Ministries or the Messiah College Student Association (MCSA). However, their work was similar and often intertwined.

"Right from the start, we found that our work overlapped with each other and MCSA. By working in a more organized way, we can build on each other's strengths," said Eby. The center provides a centralized location where students and faculty are able to access service opportunities that take place through Messiah College. It also works to distribute volunteers where they are needed for service in the surrounding community and for local events of service. In short, explains Eby, "The Agape Center is a one-stop shopping center for service opportunities at Messiah College!"

"There is a lot of student interest in responding to community needs and getting involved with service," said Eby.

Last year, nearly 50 percent of Messiah's student body volunteered for the Special Olympic event on Messiah's campus. More than 700 students commit to service through the various ministries of the Outreach Teams. Many academic departments participate in service-learning by providing tax assistance to the elderly and lower-



College president Rodney Sawatsky at the dedication ceremony for the Agape Center.

income community members, language tutoring for refugees, engineering projects, and nursing clinics.

"It is my hope that students don't stop serving, but make it a lifetime habit, and that they will reflect their faith by ministering to people in need," said Eby.

Dr. Eby brings a unique aspect to the center because he has strong academic interests as a leader and administrator, yet the experience of mission and service contacts. An undergraduate major in chemistry from Eastern Mennonite University, he went on to receive his master's and doctorate degrees in developmental sociology from Cornell University. He has been involved in Mennonite Voluntary Service programs, was academic dean at Goshen College, and held the chair of the business department at Eastern Mennonite University.

Former NASA astronaut Lyceum speaker in November

Dr. Sally Ride, former NASA astronaut, was the most recent speaker in Messiah College's 1998-99 Susquehanna Valley Lyceum series, speaking on Friday, Nov. 6.

Dr. Ride was selected for astronaut training in 1978, and reported to NASA in July of that year. As part of her training, she was a member of the support crew for both the second and third space shuttle flights, and worked in mission control as a capsule communicator for those two missions.

Dr. Ride flew in space twice. Her first flight was aboard the space shuttle Challenger in 1983. During the mission, the five-member crew deployed communications satellites for Canada and Indonesia, performed the first satellite deployment and retrieval with the shuttle's robot arm, and conducted materials and pharmaceutical research.

Dr. Ride's second space flight was also aboard Challenger, on the thirteenth space shuttle flight, in October 1984. During their eight-day mission, the crew deployed the Earth Radiation Budget satellite, conducted scientific observations of the Earth, and demonstrated the potential for satellite refueling by astronauts.


In June 1985, Dr. Ride was assigned to a third space shuttle flight. Training for that flight was interrupted in January 1986 by the space shuttle Challenger accident. For the next six months, she served as a member of the Presidential Commission investigating the accident. Upon completion of the investigation, Dr. Ride was assigned to NASA headquarters in Washington, D.C. as assistant to the NASA Administrator for long-range planning.

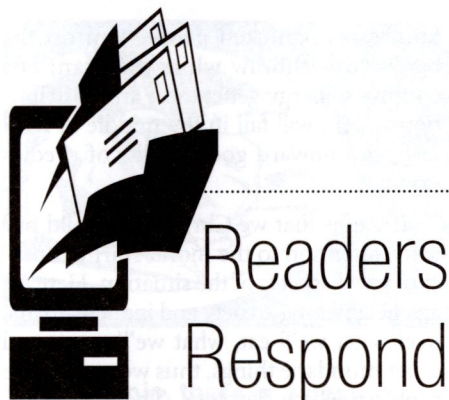
Dr. Ride has written a children's book, *To Space and Back*, describing her experiences in space, has received the Jefferson Award for Public Service, and has twice been awarded the National Spaceflight Medal. Her latest books, *Voyager: An Adventure to the Edge of the Solar System* and *The Third Planet: Exploring The Earth From Space* are currently in bookstores.

"John Wesley" rides again at Messiah College

On Nov. 10, Messiah College presented "The Man From Aldersgate," a one-man play about England's 18th-century evangelist/reformer John Wesley.

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, traveled throughout Great Britain on horseback and preached 42,000 sermons. Actor Roger Nelson travels throughout the world on an airplane, bringing John Wesley back to life for his audiences. He has given more than 900 performances in 30 countries on all six continents, including Carnegie Hall in New York, the Shakespeare Centre at Stratford-Upon-Avon, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the Stratford Festival Theatre in Canada, and Wesley's Chapel in London.

"The Man From Aldersgate," adapted directly from the journals of John Wesley by playwright Brad L. Smith, won a 1989 Religion In Media "Angel" award. Mr. Nelson won the 1992 Best Actor award from the International Christian Visual Media. United Methodist bishop William R. Cannon said: "When Roger Nelson is dressed in 18th-century garb, with the powdered wig, he looks exactly the way Mr. Wesley looked as seen from his portraits. His knowledge of Wesley is remarkable, and he holds his audience spellbound. I have never seen a better dramatic presentation." 



Dialogue about "Dialogue"

Whether readers respond by word of mouth or write in the Dialogue column of the Visitor or in other ways share their views, it has been important for we Brethren in Christ to express ourselves. It has also been important and helpful to read and listen to the views of others in the church.

I suspect that is one of the reasons General Conference has been a valuable experience for most of us. When the brotherhood and sisterhood is spread over Canada and the United States as well as many other countries, it is just not possible for us to talk very much with one another. Even General Conference conversations are limited by time and space in a sense.

When, however, something is written in one of our church publications, everyone can have access to it by purchasing the material or by talking with someone who has read the written response, article, poem, or whatever. Many of our publications are to be commended for being instruments which help to inform us of the opinions and viewpoints of fellow believers. In my view, the *Evangelical Visitor* has been outstanding in this regard.

We have many examples of this, but I wish to cite three found in the October 1998 issue. Three persons wrote in a significant way, and let me say that each of these viewpoints were important and deserve attention. Roger L. Williams wrote for "Dialogue." Chris Frey "spoke to us" in "Reader's Respond." The article "Revival, Renewal, Worship and Other Questions" by Ken Abell is the third example.

In my way of looking at it, these written words need to be heard (read) by the Brethren in Christ. The point is not whether we always agree or not, but that we have a better understanding of the thoughts of persons who are sisters and brothers in the Lord.

The concern which prompted me to

write this is that when we make changes based on evaluations of "outsiders" (which is not inherently bad), let's be prayerfully careful that we do not trash something which may be of great value. Hopefully, we will want to always provide for dialogue, and especially in this "electronic age" our words and thoughts should gently push the "people buttons" that result in mental and spiritual development and growth.

E-mail letters do not excite me too much, but I'm learning to see value in them. I prefer real mail because I am a stamp collector and enjoy seeing my mother's own handwriting and all that. However, whatever the medium we use to express ourselves, my hope is that we will always have a free avenue to share what is precious to us, writing, sending, or saying the things we feel strongly about, even though we may differ from those who may lead the General Conference twenty years from now or those who may control our publications. Within the body of Christ—specifically the Brethren in Christ—I believe it is very important for members and friends to have the opportunity to express themselves. No matter what shape our publications may take, there needs to be provision for dialogue.

If this freedom is lost, and I pray God it will not be, we will be very miserable. Sometimes just being able to express our view helps us to see where our own point is weak.

I have read that one of the reasons Hitler may have lost WWII was because he harshly treated those officers who brought him bad reports. Then, many officers gave him nothing but good reports, even though not true.

When we speak the truth in love and with grace, the body of Christ can be enriched.

Jerel Book
Garrett, Ind.

The 100th anniversary conference in Zimbabwe

For me, it was an unprecedented and spiritually challenging event to have attended the 1998 General Conference at Matopo Mission, which celebrated 100 years of Brethren in Christ World Missions.

So many things rushed into my mind as I went back over the years of the early fifties: the birth of our four children; teacher training; the Central Primary School; work line; Mr. I. Kumalo as headmaster and my interpreter in the church services; Mr. Seduza Moyo, with whom I worked so closely as Boarding Master and Farm Foreman;

Umfundisi N. Dlodlo and his keen oversight of the churches in the Matopo District; and a flood of other memories of people and events.

First, this General Conference was big. So many people! The Conference was young—so many capable and responsible men and women who have the work of the church and evangelism as a main agenda of their lives. The Conference theme, "Celebrating a Vision," was given special preeminence. The speakers were emphatic, outstanding, and very positive.

I enjoyed the ordination and commissioning services. These two events were positive commentary on the life of the church. Our Zimbabwean church will never die as long as God-called men and women respond to the challenge of pushing back the barriers of sin, where Satan is in control.

I enjoyed the free and easy way in which the main offering was received. And my mind went back to the years when offerings were taken at Matopo Mission in the early fifties. What a change from then to now! It was with a spirit of enthusiasm that this most generous offering was taken which sends the first Brethren in Christ missionary couple into neighboring Botswana.

I enjoyed immensely as they, who belonged to the Old Matopians Association, marched into the tent. Some then shared their concerns and vision of the future for the Zimbabwe Brethren in Christ Church.

How refreshing it was to see the children come into the tent and give their short program. They were given such positive response by the people. They are tomorrow's church! They must have felt important as they shared with all of us.

I give praise to the Lord for the vision of those who planned and assumed responsibility for the building of the new museum at Matopo Mission. This building now preserves for the church the memorabilia of by-gone years, and also of future years.

Always, when there is spiritual movement of significant proportion, there are also counter productive forces at work. When there is clear vision from the Lord, there is always blurred vision from the enemy. My prayer is that for each of us, as the new decade approaches, our praying may reach into the deeper things of God, and that particularly the church leadership will generate a growing vision among us, the followers of God.

Alvin J. Book
Youngways Guest House
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Discipleship for the 21st Century

The Y2K opportunity

by Samuel Brubaker

In the autumn of 1998 I'm hearing repeatedly about the upcoming "Y2K" ("Year 2000") problem. This situation is caused by the inability of some computers to distinguish between centuries when the last two digits of the year read 00. Predictions of the severity of the problem vary widely—from minor inconvenience to social catastrophe.

Thus far, it appears that the highest level of concern and the severest predictions of trouble are emanating from conservative Christian circles. From these quarters are coming radio discussions by prominent Christian leaders, many of whom are warn-

ing that severe trouble is certain. Resource packets, suggestion lists, and other printed materials are being offered (sold) to advise us how to prepare and cope.

Not all Christian voices on the subject are declaring the darker predictions. The editor of *Christian Computing* magazine has gone public with his admonition that the problem, although potentially real, is mostly overdrawn in conservative Christian circles.

Thus far, most of the predictions of trouble and the suggestions for preparing ourselves to cope with it are focusing on economic dislocations: we will have transportation difficulties; we'll lose the money we have in banks; we'll have difficulty buying food and fuel; we'll have problems conducting our businesses; there will be bank

failures as panicked people run on the banks to withdraw while they can; our country's energy generation and distribution system will fail in the middle of winter—and onward goes the list of predictions.

It seems that we Christians should pay some attention to the moral/spiritual/psychological aspects of the situation. Here we are, heightening anxiety and inducing panic over what we'll eat, what we'll wear, and other mundane things, thus worsening the problem which develops. The Y2K situation will be greatly multiplied if the public preparation and responses are fear-driven. Fear will cause the difficulties to snowball.

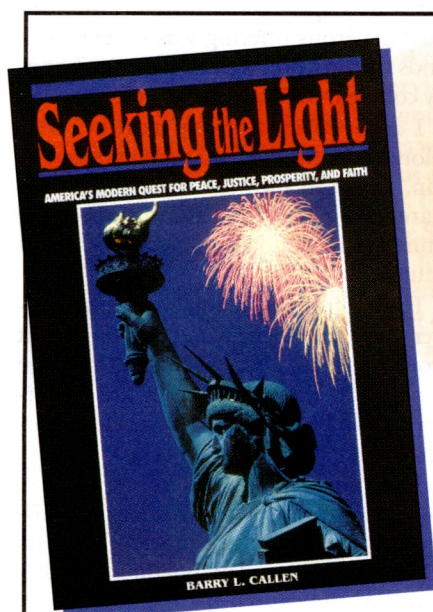
Fear is not the only major spiritual factor. The ever-present greed and selfishness of humans will thrive in an atmosphere of fear and calamity. Theft, hoarding, dishonesty and refusal to share will be common expressions of a fear-driven response. Such a spiritual atmosphere will certainly worsen whatever economic impact results from Y2K.

This is a good time for Christians to demonstrate true Christian values and virtues. First, we can show that our sense of security depends on something other than material goods. Unfortunately, to disseminate doomsday fears as we're doing and to begin hoarding large stores of goods at the expense of others (as some are reported doing), sends the world a message about what we're really "anxious about."

Further, we can demonstrate generosity, caring and sharing, which will become more conspicuous if the situation degenerates into serious inconveniences and shortages. How sad for the cause of the Kingdom of God if the people with the largest and most tightly-held hoards of food and other resources are the Christians. How good for the Kingdom if Christians, due to calm and prudent preparation, are able to share their provisions with others in need; and by their example, influence others to prepare calmly and be generous toward the well-being of all.

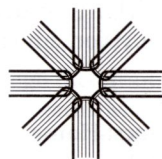
Y2K is presently an unpredictable phenomenon. Somehow, I feel more concern about how un-Christianly will Christians behave than about how badly will our machines fail. Let's stimulate one another to demonstrate in this situation the values and virtues taught by Jesus, especially as recorded in Matthew 6:19-34.

Samuel M. Brubaker, a regular columnist for the *Visitor*, lives in Arcanum, Ohio.



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Onesimus

Readers may correspond with Onesimus by writing to him in care of the Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550. Letters to Onesimus may be published unless they are marked "Personal—Not for Publication."

Yes, Virginia, there is a Jesus

Dear Paul,

I thought you might be interested in this correspondence between me and a little girl that I used as an editorial in the local newspaper. It has touched a lot of hearts.

Dear Onesimus,

I need to ask you a question because my mom says that you will tell me the truth. Some of the kids at school say that Jesus isn't real. They say that Joseph and Mary and the manger and all those other people are just make believe. Is that true? Is Jesus really real?

(Signed) Virginia

Dear Virginia,

Yes, Virginia, there really is a Jesus. He is not just a plastic baby doll in a manger or a pretty ornament on a Christmas tree. The kids at school just don't know enough about him yet to really believe.

Jesus was born a long time ago in a small town called Bethlehem in a country called Israel. He cried and wet and ate just like your baby brother Alex. His parents were very poor but also very loving and very religious, and while he was growing up, he was very obedient. As he got older, his daddy taught him how to be a carpenter. He also learned a lot of things about God, and when he was about thirty years old, he became a preacher.

He liked to teach people how to be good and kind. He healed people who were sick. And he could even make people who had died come alive again. He seemed to be able to love everyone he met.

He especially loved children, Virginia, and he made it a point to tell big people how important you were. He said that you could teach us grownups many

lessons if we would just take time to listen.

When he got older, Jesus said stuff about himself that made some powerful religious men very angry. He said that he wasn't just a man, but that he was really God and that he had come to earth as a man to save people from their sins.

The powerful people didn't like him saying that and so pretty soon they killed him. They made him lay down on a cross made out of wood and they hammered big spikes into his hands and his feet. Then they stood the cross up and he had to hang there until he died. I'll bet that hurt a lot. His mom and his friends all cried.

But Jesus wasn't lying when he said he was really God inside a man's body. And because people can't kill God, even if they wanted to, he came back to life and walked around for about a month talking with his friends again.

A lot of people saw Jesus alive and got real excited. So they wrote letters and books about him. These stories are part of a big book we call the Bible.

And there is even more to the story, Virginia. Jesus is still alive today and wants you and me to believe his story.

***So, it's really true,
Virginia. There really
is a Jesus. That
means that when you
sing those Christmas
carols this year, you
can believe in him
with all your heart.***

For some reason, really believing his story can change our lives.

Believing in Jesus can help people who are bitter to become forgiving. People who are hateful can become loving. People who are stingy can become generous. People who are cheaters can become honest. People who tell lies can become truthful. People who are alcoholics can become sober. People who are confused can begin to figure things out.

I know this is all true, Virginia, because that's what happened to me. I waited a long time to do it, but when I believed in Jesus, he changed me. Someone who is not real couldn't do that because I am a very stubborn person.

So Christmas is a good time to really believe in Jesus, Virginia. Not just because he was here a long time ago, but because he is still here today. Jesus really is real.

Some people don't believe all this, Virginia. If they believed it, they would get changed too. They try not to think about it very much so they won't have to change their minds. They say that Christmas is just a fun day with Santa Claus and reindeer and presents. But Christmas is really a birthday party for Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Even the name Christmas has his last name hidden in it.

So, it's really true, Virginia. There really is a Jesus. That means that when you sing those Christmas carols this year, you can believe in him with all your heart. And when you get old like me, you will never be sorry you did.

Jesus loves you, this I know,
Onesimus

The Onesimus XVI column for 1998 has been written by Pastor Ron Bowell. Ron and his wife Kerry live in Salina, Kans., and have five grown children and two grandchildren. After serving the Zion congregation for 14 years, they began in September as the pastoral couple for a Midwest Conference church planting in Salina. The Cross Roads Church plans to begin core group worship services on Sunday, Dec. 6, and will do a "Phone's For You" campaign in February 1999 with 17,000 dialups planned. A Grand Opening Celebration is planned for Easter Sunday 1999.

Onesimus XVII begins his correspondence with Paul in the January-February issue.

Focusing our Mission

250 Growing, Discipling,
Sending Congregations
by A.D. 2000



Keeping vision strong

by Ray Hock

The steel doors slammed behind me and locked. A staff person met me and showed me the direction and told me the room number. From there I was on my own.

Down the bare corridor and to the left I met my friend who was waiting. We settled into his sparsely decorated room and began to talk. I'm not sure what I was expecting to hear, but the story I was told that day could be anyone's story. It's a story that happens far too often to ordinary people like you and me when we lose sight of our vision in life.

My friend, to use his own words, said, "I began to let down." His vision, once strong, began to dim and his spiritual vitality became flat. In time he became drawn to some questionable activities and soon he found himself headed down an undesired path, enslaved by things over which he felt he had no control. No, it didn't happen all at once. In fact, it took years. But the results of "letting down" were devastating to both himself and many others.

We as a church have a strong, clear vision statement: "250 Growing, Discipling, Sending Congregations by AD 2000." The vision clearly resonates with us as a brotherhood. Yet the vision burns no brighter or clearer than what it does in each of us and in each of our local congregations. With a plethora of good things for us to do, it becomes easy to involve ourselves in what seems good and be distracted from clear, focused vision on what is

at the heart of who we are as the people of God. We need to insure that our vision does not drift by periodically restating and recommitting to the vision God has given us.

Our vision will burn bright within us when we sense both the greatness of our vision and its urgency. We see this in the life of Nehemiah, who set out to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. When his enemies sought to distract him, he sent the simple message, "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down." Nehemiah's vision had burned itself into the very fabric of his life. He was neither distracted nor intimidated by his enemies, but urgently pressed on toward completion. As a church, our vision of winning people to Christ, equipping them, and thrusting them out into the harvest is great enough and urgent enough for us to move forward with the same intentionality that Nehemiah had. Like Nehemiah, we too can keep our vision strong.

Vision will be strong and clear to all when we continually describe the future and show how to get there. All of us need to be enabled to see how the present and the future are tied together. Participatory strategy sessions will help make this possible. Nehemiah gives us an example of how to do this. He and his staff gathered the leaders of Israel and described what God had put in his heart. Out of that session he developed both strategy and ownership of the vision. Each leader took responsibility to build the section of the wall near them, and working together, they built the entire wall.

A mini-version of this happened recently in the Susquehanna Conference when we launched Pathway Community Church on November 1. Church planting pastor John Cress-

man worked to involve a number of Susquehanna Conference Churches in a "Phones for You" evangelism project. Over 100 persons from various churches helped make 17,000 phone calls in the greater York community. On opening Sunday, one church sent a worship team, another church sent children's workers, and a variety of helpers came from several other Brethren in Christ churches in our conference and in neighboring Atlantic Conference. Together they ministered to 150 persons who came to a Brethren in Christ Church for the first time. That opening Sunday, three persons accepted Christ for the first time and three others rededicated their lives to Christ.

One new church was added to the growing network of Brethren in Christ churches and our vision of "250 Growing, Discipling, Sending Congregations by AD 2000" became closer to reality, because the vision burned brightly and clearly for months in the hearts of people who came together to work as a team for a common goal. The good news is that this kind of teamwork is happening in other parts of the brotherhood as well. It will continue to happen as we sense both the greatness and urgency of our vision. God wants to do a great work among us as we keep our vision strong.

Ray Hock is bishop of the Allegheny and the Susquehanna Regional Conferences of the Brethren in Christ Church.



EDITORIAL

An update on decisions by the Board for Media Ministries

At the November 20-21 meeting of the Board for Media Ministries, two major decisions were made which have bearing on the *Evangelical Visitor*. First, in relationship to the printing division, the Board authorized a capital fund drive for the replacement of one of our main printing presses, which prints (among other things) part of the *Evangelical Visitor*. In recent months, the press has frequently been out of commission, which has thrown a number of periodicals (including the *Visitor*) off schedule. In fact, as this issue nears completion, I've just learned that the press is down once again—and we're into "crunch-time" in terms of Christmas mail delivery.

The second decision centered on the frequency of the magazine next year. As reported in the October issue, the Board for Media Ministries since General Conference had been taking transitional steps in line with the Leadership Council's announced decision to "retire" the *Visitor* in mid-1999, replacing it with a new "flagship" publication. However, the Leadership Council's plans changed, and recently the Board for Media Ministries was asked to consider producing the magazine through the end of 1999.

The Board for Media Ministries looked at such issues as staff assignments and responsibilities, which have already been modified in view of the announced changes for the *Visitor*. In addition, with the anticipated cessation of the magazine in mid-1999, the annual autumn subscription campaign had been canceled. (An abbreviated renewal campaign will be conducted over the next several weeks.) In light of these factors, the Board decided to move to a bi-monthly publication schedule, which will begin with the January-February 1999 issue. We anticipate a modest increase in the number of pages in the magazine by adding a 4-page cover to the present 32-page format.

J. Wilmer Heisey has agreed to serve as features editor for the magazine in this final year of the 1990s. The *Visitor* will feature a series of articles in which various writers will look toward the new century, examining such issues as freedom of choice and accountability; what it means to be a covenant community; how we face the future; and how we help each other to be faithful. Luke Keefer Jr. and Esther Spurrier will be writing in the January-February issue, on the topics of how the Brethren in Christ handle Scripture, and implications of being made in the image of God.

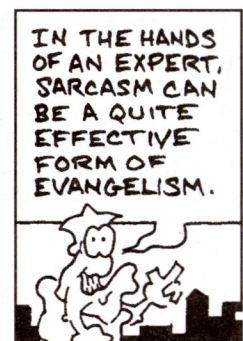
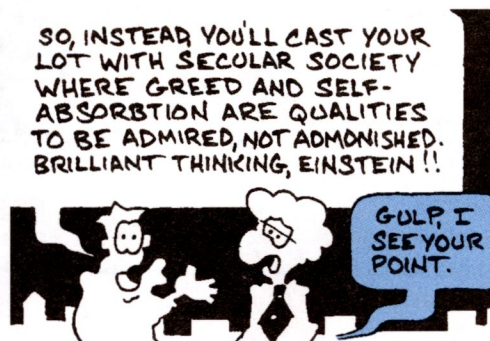
Board members as well as the staff of the *Evangelical Visitor* regret the recent uncertainty and confusion regarding publication of the *Evangelical Visitor* (including the erratic delivery schedule). We trust that in the long run, the decisions which are made will serve to strengthen the Brethren in Christ Church and bring glory to God.

G



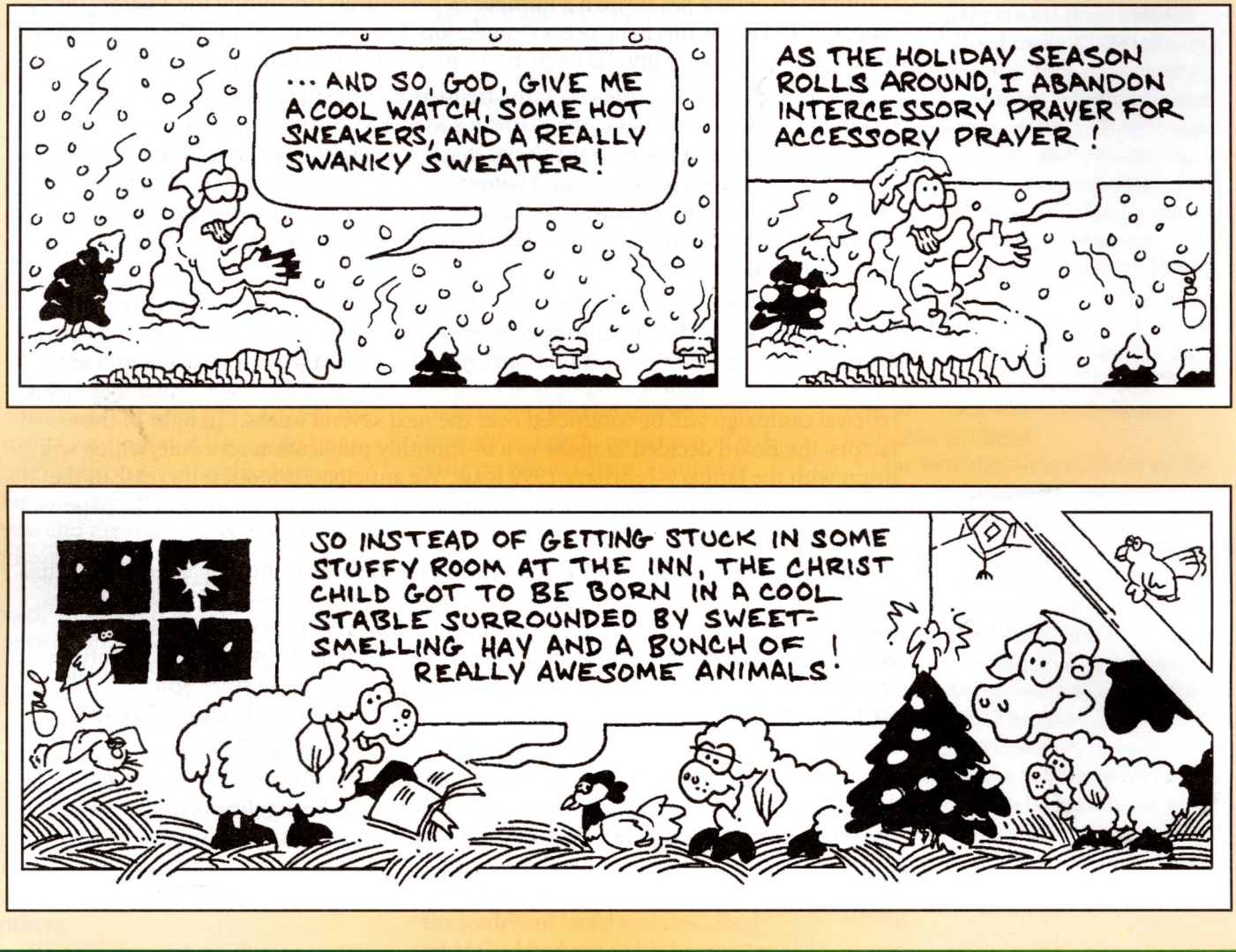
Pontius' Puddle

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Christmas Greetings from Pontius' Puddle



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