



Calvary

MESSENGER

“... God forbid that I should glory, save in
the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .”

Galatians 6:14

JULY 2022

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Calvary Messenger

July 2022

Purpose of Calvary Messenger is:
To propagate sound Biblical doctrine;
To stimulate a deeper study of God's Word;
To anchor and fortify the faith of Christians;
To point lost and dying souls to Christ the Savior;
To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;
And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.

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Editor: Aaron D. Yoder
 5188 W. 825 N., Leesburg, IN 46538
 Ph: 574-646-2123; Fax: 800-956-7850
calvary.messenger.19@gmail.com

Assistant Editor: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph: 620-567-2286; Fax: 620-615-7352
plmiller1934@gmail.com

Contributing Editors:
 Simon Schrock, Enos D. Stutzman,
 Aaron Lapp, Ronald J. Miller

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus
 3750 E. Newport Rd.
 Gordonville, PA 17529

Youth Messages Editor: Josh Kooistra
 2445 Rough & Ready Rd.
 New Concord, OH 43762
cm youtheditor@gmail.com

Junior Messages Editor:
 Mrs. Mary Ellen Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd.
 Dundee, OH 44624
maryellenbeachy@icloud.com

Women's Editor:
 Mrs. Susan Schlabach
 7184 W. Henry Rd., Ripley, OH 45167
skschlabach@gmail.com

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:
 Enos D. Stutzman
 7498 Woods West Ave.,
 London, OH 43140
 Ph: 614-460-9222
enosmary@gmail.com

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Loneliness—A Reminder

Today I heard You calling me,
I knew Your tender voice,
I knew that there'd be fellowship
To make my heart rejoice.

But like so many other times,
I thought I knew best,
What would bring me happiness,
And peace and joy and rest.

And so I pushed You far away
And heeded not Your call.
And when this empty day had passed,
I had no joy at all.

The realm of nature's beauty
Seems oddly far away.
There seems to be a gulf between us,
Now that I want to pray.

And yet I know that Thou, O God,
Hast not moved away from me.
But I, a lost and wayward lamb
Have strayed away from Thee.

And now as night is closing in,
And I feel my aching lack;
With tearful eye and empty heart,
I bid Thee take me back.

And again I learn the lesson, Lord,
That it seems I oft repeat.
Only in Thy presence can
My joy here be complete.

Michelle Richard Kropf – 1957-2017



The Company We Keep

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (I Corinthians 15:33).

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

In the recent past another senseless and heartless event occurred that has forever changed the lives of many families and a community in Uvalde, TX. A young man entered an elementary school and killed 19 fourth-grade students and two teachers. Atrocities of this magnitude with innocent children and people dying cause understandable sympathy and outrage as a country is torn apart once again in the attempt to determine who or what is to blame. This discourse is not an attempt to pick one side or the other in the gun control debate, but rather to see what the Scriptures say about the source of evil in man and his actions.

While we may have our opinions about actions or restrictions that could work toward solving this problem, we Anabaptist believers seek to follow the words of Jesus when He said, *“My kingdom is not*

of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence” (John 18:36). We do not intentionally kill any person, no matter the method.

It occurred to me that there was a time in recent history when an attempt was made to control a common vice among mankind by controlling the substance. On January 16, 1919, the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified by 36 states. This national law made it illegal to manufacture, sell, or transport intoxicating liquors within the United States and its territories. But by December 5, 1933, the nationwide Prohibition was over, repealed by the passage of the 21st Amendment which repealed the 18th. And indeed, even today, there are still certain substances that are controlled under threat of laws that attempt to contain the devastating consequences.

So, is the problem of evil in mankind an external or internal problem? Are we influenced by the evil around us or does it come from the fallen nature within us?

The Bible contains many examples of the influences of evil. Is it not an accepted idea among us that the downfall of Lot and his family was his move toward the cities of the plains, Sodom and Gomorrah? Even the New Testament tells us that our “communications” [companionship] affects our moral habits. “*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners*” (I Corinthians 15:33).

King Jehoshaphat was a godly king of Judah. But he joined King Ahab in battle and King Ahaziah in a business of building ships. His communications with King Ahab resulted in a wife for his son Jehoram. In II Chronicles 21:5-6 we read, “*Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD.*” The disastrous results of King Jehoshaphat’s friendship with King Ahab did not end with his immediate family. Even his grandson, Ahaziah, was influenced. “*Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother’s name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri. He also walked in the ways of the*

house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction” (II Chronicles 22:2-4).

In these examples we see the effects of external influences of evil. But what about the very first murder in the history of mankind? What influence brought Cain to killing his brother Abel? Were his parents ungodly people? Did he have friends who encouraged him to get rid of his brother? What media was Cain reading or listening to that resulted in his deadly action?

In Genesis 6:5 we read that God Himself “*saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,*” and He decided to destroy the whole earth with a flood.

Jehovah spoke through Jeremiah concerning the heart of man. He said, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

In the New Testament, the scribes and Pharisees were concerned that the disciples of Jesus didn’t wash their hands before they ate. Jesus explained to the disciples the difference between physical and spiritual contamination.

“Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. **For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:** these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man” (Matthew 15:17-20).

So, does it not matter what we read, the games we play, the things we watch, or the company we keep? Are we doomed to evil words spewing out of our mouths and uncontrollable urges driving us to find the best way to destroy the greatest amount of people? Is it the external or internal influence that affects us the most? Is there no hope for mankind, or for the world around us?

In the book of Ephesians, Paul tells us that despite the things we did in the past, there is hope for us because of the riches of God’s grace. “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the

children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:** not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:3-10).

Ahh, such deliverance, such freedom, such a new life made possible by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus! We are now His workmanship, created new in Christ Jesus unto good works that God had planned beforehand for a way to walk, words to speak, and life to bring to the world around us! Such power in Christ by the Holy Spirit living in our hearts—this is the answer to sin and death in the world around us!

—AY 

Loyalty in little things is a great thing.



Announcement

Single Ladies Seminar

August 5-7, 2022

L.I.V.I.N.G. VIBRANTLY

Single women can sometimes question their WHY. At times they may wonder who they are and what their purpose is in life. In this seminar, we will seek to discover some practical elements of living in relationship with God and others that can promote a vibrant, abundant life and usefulness in the Kingdom of God.

Topics include:

Living Vibrantly— *Delight Yoder, Bemidji, MN*

Intity in Christ— *Rosemary Troyer, Plain City, OH*

Value of Trouble— *Kelly Kauffman, Thomaston, GA*

Inside My Heart— *Valerie Steiner, Plain City, OH*

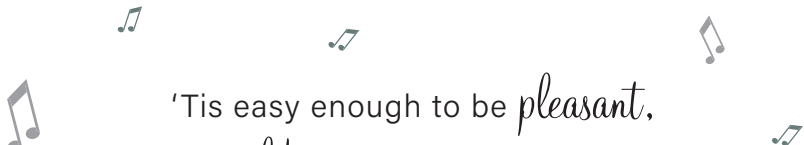
Navigating Friendships— *Naoma Lee, Harrisonburg, VA*

Grace for Reality— *Lucille Martin, Memphis, MO*

Location:

Plainview Christian School
8270 Amish Pike,
Plain City, OH 43064

For more information or
to register, please contact
Deeper Life Ministries:
(614) 873-1199 or info@dmlmohio.org

 'Tis easy enough to be pleasant,
When life flows along like a song;
But the man worthwhile is the one who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



The Faculty of the Understanding

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

One of the gracious fruits of education is the harvest of the human understanding. The understanding of the mind is a powerful faculty of the human brain. Webster's Dictionary states it as: **1** the mental quality, act, or state of a person who understands **2** as in comprehension, knowledge, discernment, and sympathetic awareness. The power or ability to think, learn, judge, etc. **3** a specific interpretation or inference **4** By mutual agreement, especially one that settles differences. To take for granted either as a fact, or as a means for interpretation. To supply mentally as an idea for the sake of information and learning.

The understanding is central to the learning process. We tell, explain, illustrate, give pictures, recall history, and project plans for the future. It encompasses our present experience in a powerful way, so that the Bible refers to *"the eyes of our understanding being enlightened"* to us who are seeing it through the eyes of faith. The several spiritual benefits of wisdom, revelation, knowledge, hope, inheritance, and power is spoken of *"to usward who believe"* in the resurrected Christ

(in the expansive text of Ephesians 1:17:23). In the midst of that six-verse admonition is that special phrase, *"the eyes of our understanding,"* being both broad-based as a current position and also as a platform in a grand declaration for present-day believers. As Paul reaches back to basing all of this to the glorious resurrection of Christ as a past reality, so he also projects it forward to a focused future in a reference to triumph and victory, *"not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."* He associates it to latching onto it by faith, not by the understanding.

The word understand/understanding is used 206 times in the Old Testament, and faith is mentioned two times. Whereas, in the New Testament, faith occurs 213 times. Jesus often chided his opponents for their lack of understanding, as well as their continual deficiency in faith.

In the last several years, I have observed a seeming increase of emphasis on the individual's need for understanding the doctrine and principles of the Bible. Somehow, this relates to the younger generation of preachers and writers. A preacher recently used the word "understand"

19 times in a 30-minute message. The subject was about salvation relative to our trials and stresses of life. A writer in a well-respected periodical used the words “understand/understanding” 27 times in a three-page article. His subject? A study on the theology of God. Another sermon recently used the word “understand” 43 times in a 43-minute message. Faith was all but absent in these cited cases and was not emphasized at all; there are more instances that could be mentioned. The Bible says faith is to be our primary response in regard to salvation, the recognition of God in all His attributes.

Are we amiss to say that our use of the understanding is gradually replacing faith and its worthy emphasis? Yes, the trend is not difficult to document; it should matter to us.

A few years ago, at our annual minister’s meeting, a guest speaker, who was a noted Bible teacher, emphatically said that the crisis in our churches is in the area of our understanding of Bible interpretation. He said we need a greater understanding of whether a Bible subject or doctrine should be “spiritualized” (allegorical), or be interpreted literally (word value). That certainly was not a faith-building statement. What do we wish

to give to our young people, a better understanding, or an undiluted faith?

There is no shortage of books and literature by noted Protestant authors on almost any Bible subject with an allegorical bent to it. That can be one reason that we have young people and young married couples who say they do not understand why we teach against being involved in league sports, worldly music, voting for political office, or making a few exceptions about basic purchases on the Lord’s day. The key word that comes up by some of them is about not understanding the Bible as needing to be interpreted in that way on these issues of minor importance. How often has it been said in discussion of liberties taken by “worldly Christians,” when they say, “Well, that is what you say you believe, but my understanding is different from your understanding.”

If, in permissible fact, we need to have our understanding instructed between two possible choices, we also are sowing the seeds of dualism. Our own understanding can be set over against someone else’s understanding. How can Bible readers, popular teachers and writers actually proclaim justification for any number of deviations from the Scriptures, some of which are far out and unthinkable? Some of

these issues are not only about the soul's salvation, but also about every possible current conduct in regard to Christian faith and practice, and which even reaches to bringing into serious question about whether hell is eternal.

Specifically, how do they do it as a matter of church policy and the new salvation? They compare Scripture with Scripture, which, by their understanding, forwards desired Scriptures to override subjects or doctrine that is not desired. Comparing Scripture with Scripture is theologically correct and profitable **if** it is employed to build and enlarge the divine edifice of God's truth. However, some of our people use this method to dismantle it and take away what has been signified and certified by Jesus Christ.

Right here in writing this article, I am at a crossroad. The implications for our churches are being tested in some new ways as the next generation of leaders are set in place. Basing our teaching on our understanding versus someone else's understanding, can easily pass for a church that largely is promoted on a relationship-based administration. It is the platform for some of the pulpit addresses commonly called "sharing" rather than preaching. The sharing of our understanding allows for others

to share their understanding, and by that can present personal choices. A dual interpretation is an arrangement that presents several options, which reflect one's preferences rather than establishing a fixed truth. The personal understanding can handily be the means for the justification for all kinds of churchly preferences.

A failure in understanding is called a misunderstanding. A failure in faith is called unbelief. A mere misunderstanding is considered to be less serious than unbelief.

Every religion has its own parameters of understanding, to which their adherents receive their reasoning, justification, and solace. God's truth comes by revelation, coming down to man from above. Man's understanding comes from below, and tries to fabricate or stack up some way or system upward for the elevation of the soul.

There has been a decided shift to using other Bible translations and paraphrases by our speakers at church services. They say that our young people can understand it better that way. We say the intentional move away from the KJV is easily justified **if** our desire is to replace faith in God's Word with the human understanding.

Webster's definition mentioned interpretation several times as being

choices for the faculty of the mind. As conservative Anabaptist churches, we are positioning ourselves more and more in the shift of generations toward the dualism of Protestantism. That insidious dualism comes about relative to how one chooses to understand any Bible subject or doctrine. Based on a person's understanding, it is not difficult to see how conviction is weakened on non-conformity, divorce and remarriage, veiling for women and bobbed hair. Any serious-thinking person can easily recognize that as a short list.

This worldly church dualism will put us at risk even in the cardinal issue of being saved from sin. The shift from personal faith to a personal understanding, easily, by its allowance for interpretation, will re-evaluate what is actually sin. Then, in tandem with that shift, there will also be a new view of what constitutes salvation from sin. That can readily, in a generation or two, transition to a revised declaration on what it takes to be accepted by God.

The Bottom Line is that our schools and publishing houses

are strong on the ascendancy of knowledge and education by way of an ever-increasing emphasis on the understanding. Our schools are number one ahead of the home and the church for nine months of the year for our children, and for our young people in high school. If sharing replaces preaching, and the understanding replaces faith, how can the church regain its Biblical emphasis on faith as in the revival decades of the past?

Catholics and Protestants have for the duration of their history, experimented with many kinds of tactics of claiming to enter into life by the narrow gate, and after that, living on the broad road. Conservative Anabaptists are not exempt from a gradual shift into that same worldly dualism, when we base our understanding on a given speaker's or writer's understanding of the Anabaptist's understanding, who quoted each other for their understanding.

How can we get back to emphatically state, "Thus saith the Lord," and take our convinced discipleship stand on that solid foundation?



Opportunity knocks,

BUT IT HAS NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO
turn the knob and walk in.

July 2022



Building Empires

Crist Helmuth, Cañon City, CO

May 5, 2018, dawned bright and beautiful. It was a Saturday morning and also a Mexican holiday called Cinco de Mayo, similar to our July 4th. I had promised my Hispanic worker I would stop by in the evening to eat some food they were making for a party. I had plans for the day—a school board meeting, a meeting with a disgruntled customer, a fundraiser at school, checking my irrigation water, and renting a pump to water the high spots in the field. If time permitted, I planned to take in the local rodeo in the evening. I checked the water flow in the field at 5:30 a.m. before my meeting at 6:00. As I was walking along the pipe, I felt a little ache in my chest. I didn't worry about it, especially since I had so much to do!

The school board meeting (I was chairman) took four hours with many cups of coffee. After that, I met with my customer, then went to the school fundraiser for a little bit. Kashif (my son) met me with a hot dog he didn't want. I ate that and for good measure got another one! Then it was time to work in the field again. I did some digging by hand to divert

the water to areas that needed it. After that I felt some tightness in my chest again, but not to worry, I had too much to do. I went to the rental place before it closed to get the pump.

When I got back to the field, I started to unload the hoses—200 feet of two-inch hose and 20 feet of intake hose. When I went to unload the pump, I debated about what to do. It had taken two men to load it and I was having some chest pain again. Frustrated that I would allow pain to hold me back, I decided to sit in the truck in the middle of the hayfield for a while. What am I, a wimp? Finally I decided to call my wife, Ruth. I told her I had some chest pains and asked if the walk-in clinic was open on Saturday, but she wasn't sure. Next, I called my son-in-law, Bruce, an ER nurse, but he wasn't available. I left a message to ask his opinion. I had no history or symptoms of heart problems. I had hiked several miles in the Grand Canyon in March and gone skiing two weeks earlier. No worries, the pain will leave! The water is running, and the high ground needs moisture along with some spots that I had just reseeded. The water will be turned off

tomorrow and the pump is waiting on the back of the truck.

The pain worsened and I started the truck. What a wimp! I decided to head to the clinic, but what if it wasn't open or what if I pass out on the way? The hospital is only a mile away and by now I knew something was definitely wrong in my chest. No time to waver, I headed for the ER at St. Thomas More Hospital.

I called Ruth to tell her what I was doing. I was still in denial. I am a young 62, healthy as can be and active. Still the pain persisted. I'm finally in a hurry. The speed limit is 30; I'm going 40. I meet a policeman, but he pays no attention. I come to a four-way stop, but with no other cars there, I don't stop. It's only .4 mile now. I turn right on the street to the hospital. Slow-poke traffic with not a care in the world. I come to the ER parking lot, but I can't park there with my big truck. I park in the regular parking lot.

The pain is getting worse! Two hundred feet to the door—will I make it? Now I'm worried; it's hard to breathe; it's hot in the parking lot, and my boots are heavy. The main entrance is closer—should I head in that direction? No, I can make it. I get closer to the ER doors. Are they going to open? Yes, they open automatically. Praise the Lord for

modern technology. The second set of doors opens. I'm in the waiting room! I walk toward the receptionist, breathing heavily. There is a patient in front of me. I find the closest chair and collapse. I am now starting to sweat and I'm groaning. I only hope someone will notice my predicament! Sure enough, God is faithful.

A lady in the waiting room using her cell phone walks up to me and asks if I'm okay. Dumb question! I tell her I'm having a heart attack; I am no longer in denial. She hurries to the desk and interrupts the receptionist. How rude! She informs her there is a problem out here. Before I know what is happening, they had me in a wheelchair heading for one of those dreaded rooms. They asked me to take off my shirt and somehow I managed to get my boots off and they got me on the table. Such a fuss they raised! I thought they were overdoing it. Stickers all over my chest, needles in my veins, junk under my tongue, calls for a chopper. They kept asking my name, where I was, and my date of birth. "Stay with us," they kept saying. (I don't know where they thought I was going!) I finally got so tired of the fussing I thought about rolling my eyes back in my head, but they had the shocker pads on my chest and back. I told them I didn't need them, but they said, "Just in

case!” They were wiping sweat from my face and chest.

Bruce saw my name on the monitor in the room he was working and came in to see what was going on. I saw him come in and assured him I was okay. My gray color told him otherwise. He called Ruth, who was on her way in, to inform her that I was indeed having those two dreaded words—heart attack. I saw her come in, looking scared.

The chopper came and they loaded me up to be transferred to Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs. I told them I always wanted a tour of the Royal Gorge from the air; could we do that first? Request denied!

Seventeen minutes later we landed on the roof of the hospital. They immediately took me into the cath lab where they proceeded to insert three stents into my right artery—the one called the widow-maker!

Unfortunately, after all that commotion there was not enough time left in the day to get done what I had planned. The pump was still on the back of the truck, the hoses lay in the field, the good Mexican food never touched my hungry lips, the bulls and broncos had to buck with one less fan to watch them, and new seed in the field was left to wither!

I was in the ICU for 24 hours, 12 of which I was flat on my back. They

kept giving me meds and poking me for blood. By Sunday afternoon I was moved to another floor and Monday at noon I went home.

Reflecting on this near-death experience made me ask, “What is God trying to teach me?” The first thing God reminded me of was that we have no promise of tomorrow. The Scriptures teach us that we should live each day as if it were our last day on earth. As I thought about this, I realized that I couldn’t remember the last time I reflected on my mortality. I was living like the rich man in Luke 12, building bigger, accumulating wealth, and gaining status in the community. As reflected in my account of the day of my heart attack, I was going and doing and making use of every minute of the day. I was building my empire here on earth. God calls such a man a fool.

As men we are taught to be responsible and provide for ourselves and our families. Sometimes, due to this and our carnal natures, we don’t know where to stop. Our attitudes can easily become like the rich man in Luke—build greater, accumulate more, and say to our souls, “*Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee*” (Luke 12:16-20).

King Nebuchadnezzar was in his palace when he said, *“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”* While we may not verbalize it, our minds can have those same thoughts. The Bible says those words were still in his mouth when God called from Heaven and took the kingdom from him. This attitude is not limited to businessmen. It is so easy to take pride in our accomplishments, or our knowledge, or our positions. In this time of wealth and opportunities, we would do well to examine ourselves.

- How does God view my business?
- Am I operating my business on God’s principles?
- Have I incorporated many of the world’s practices in my business?
- Am I building my own little empire here on earth?

A big shift in our culture in the last 75-100 years has been to move away from a ministry-occupation mindset to business-professionalism. We expect ministers to be the ones who provide for the spiritual needs of the church and community—that is their job. In other words, we have separated our responsibilities as ministers of the Gospel from our occupations. In the past, Christians would consider their jobs or occupations to be a

means of spreading the Gospel. That has been largely lost in our zeal to make money and not offend our customers.

We have no better example of that than our massive welfare system. We expect the government to take care of our widows, orphans, poor, and elderly. God’s design is that the church provides for those needs. It is a depressing cycle in that we grudgingly pay our taxes and criticize the government for misusing our money. How much better if the churches would have taken care of those needs so the government would not have needed to get involved.


To be sure, we recognize that there are many godly businesses among us that provide jobs, products, and services to our communities as well as giving to the needy and missions around the world. Furthermore, these businesses can be a light to the community by operating on Christian principles in integrity and honesty, being an example to other businessmen, and helping other Christian businesses get started. However, the danger and temptation is to take credit for ourselves, become proud, and not honor God with the blessings He has given us. This can also lead to greed and shady business practices.

The answer is not in seeing how

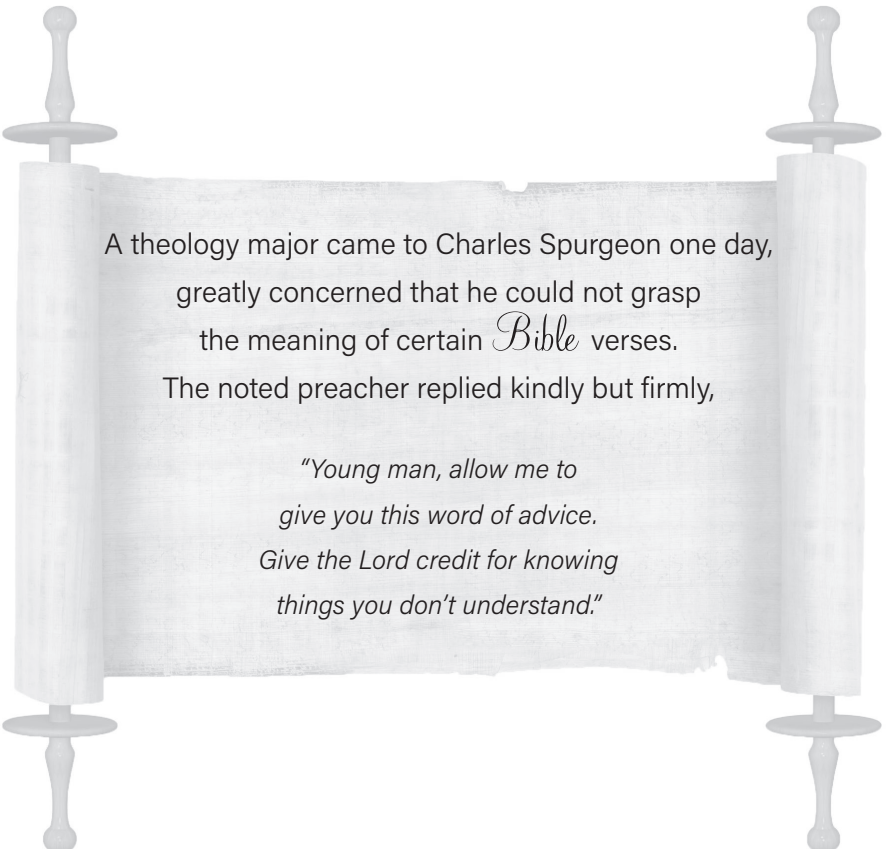
successful we can become, but to seek God in all our decisions and to honor Him in all that we do. Consider James 4:13-15: *“Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”*

After Nebuchadnezzar lived in the wilderness as a beast for seven

years, his senses returned to him, and he praised and honored God for everything (Daniel 4:34-37).

Can we truly say with Nebuchadnezzar, *“I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. Now I . . . praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”* 

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A theology major came to Charles Spurgeon one day, greatly concerned that he could not grasp the meaning of certain *Bible* verses. The noted preacher replied kindly but firmly,

“Young man, allow me to give you this word of advice. Give the Lord credit for knowing things you don’t understand.”

marriages

May the homes established by these marriages be little substations of heaven, where God reigns and His blessings flow.

Hochstedler-Miller

Bro. Forrest, son of Wilford and Beth Hochstedler, Parsons, KS, and Sis. Brianna, daughter of Ronald and Brenda Miller, Oswego, KS, on May 14, 2022, at Cornerstone Mennonite Church by Ronald Miller.

Kauffman-Stoltzfus

Bro. Levi, son of Tim and Ruth Kauffman, Reedsville, PA, and Sis. Rachel, daughter of Elmer and Elizabeth Stoltzfus, Woodstown, NJ, on April 2, 2022, at Faith Orthodox Presbyterian Church for Salem County Mennonite Church by Melvin Beiler.

Miller-Stump

Bro. Willis Miller, Stuarts Draft, VA, and Sis. Ruth (Alspaugh) Stump, Meyerstown, PA, on April 9, 2022, at Harmony Christian Fellowship by the bride's son, Evan Stump.

Miller-Zook

Bro. James, son of Dan and Anna Miller, Orrville, OH, and Sis. Martha, daughter of David and Elsie Zook, Fresno, OH, on April 23, 2022, at Light in the Valley Church for Messiah Amish Mennonite Church by Philip Miller.



cradle roll

The children which the Lord hath graciously given . . . Genesis 33:5

Beiler, Michael and Sharla (Peachey), Malta, OH, second child, first son, Landon Zion, April 30, 2022.

Bontrager, Greg and Patricia (Schlabach), Arlington, KS, seventh child, sixth son (one son and daughter in heaven), Liam Josiah, March 24, 2022.

Chupp, Kendall and Hannah (Yoder), Sarasota, FL, second child, first daughter, Eliana Ruth, July 20, 2021.

Garza, Ray and Debra (Miller), Kalona, IA, first child and daughter, Riley Bryn Garza, March 23, 2022.

Hostetler, Darvin and Arlis (Miller), Farmville, VA, first child and son, Dakota John, June 5, 2021.

Lantz, Keith and Cheryl (Stoltzfus), Honey Brook, PA, second child and daughter, Harper Jade, May 23, 2022.

Mast, Wilmer and Judith (Troyer), Farmville, VA, fifth child, third son, Zane Alexander, February 23, 2022.

Miller, Carl and Kayla (Stoltzfus), New Holland, PA, presently serving at Mountain View Nursing Home, VA, third child, first son, Davonte Benjamin, March 16, 2022.



Miller, Merlin and Kimberly (Miller), Washington, IA, second daughter, third child, Hadassah Deanne, March 30, 2022.

Paniagua, Jacob and Noemy (Perez), Itasca, TX, fourth child, second son, Ian, April 15, 2022.

Rose, Scott and Judith (Yoder), Hillsboro, TX, currently in Mifflinburg, PA, third child, first son, Fernando Walter, February 18, 2022.

Smucker, Otoneal and Jennifer (Paniagua), Cleburne, TX, first child and son, Aiden James, April 5, 2022.

Sharp, Joe and Carol (Horst), Belleville, NY, first child and son, Wendall James, April 4, 2022.

Stutzman, Joseph and Ethel (Eichorn), London, OH, fourth child, first daughter, Zoey Leanna, May 11, 2022.

Troyer, Dwight and Melora (Yeager), Waynesboro, VA, first child and son, Trey Emerson, April 24, 2022.

Troyer, Nelson and Lynita (Yoder), Falkville, AL, first child and daughter, Allie Lyn, April 17, 2022.

Villalobos, Charles and Loretta (Miller), Itasca, TX, sixth child, fourth daughter, Lauryan Ramona Maybelle, February 4, 2022.

Wagoner, Jesse and Joyce (Byler), Swanton, MD, first child and son, Jace Tolbert, May 7, 2022.


Weaver, Ernest and Patricia (Miller), Grandview, TX, seventh child, fourth son, Chester Charles, February 4, 2022.

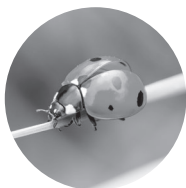
Yoder, Cornelius and Delores (Shetler), Grandview, TX, seventh child, second son, Judson Cade Elliot, February 18, 2022.

Yoder, David and Wanda (Weaver), Sarasota, FL, eighth child, fifth son, Ashton Logan, March 6, 2022.

Yoder, James Micheal and Luna (Lopez), Creel, Mexico, first child and son, Elias James, March 17, 2022.

Yoder, Jason and Amy (Eash), Waynesboro, VA, second child, first son, Ellison Jase, May 15, 2022.

Yoder, Timothy and Roselyn (Yoder), Big Prairie, OH, third child, second son, Erik Randall, April 29, 2022. 



*A sense of humor is the
lubricant of life's machinery.*

Beachy, Ada, 96, of Plain City, OH, passed away at her home on May 10, 2022, after a short illness. She was born June 12, 1925, to the late Eli and Malinda (Farmwald) Troyer. On April 18, 1943, she married Sanford Beachy who preceded her in death on March 14, 1995. They lived in matrimony 52 years.

She is survived by her children: Nelson (Martha), Karen (John) Helmuth, and Steve (Loretta); 13 grandchildren, 46 great-grandchildren, 18 great-great-grandchildren, a sister, Sarah Frey, and a sister-in-law, Emma (Beachy) Richards.

Until recent years, Ada spent much time in her garden, tending her vegetables and flowers. She loved the outdoors.

The funeral service was held May 13, 2022, at Canaan Fellowship with interment in the church cemetery.

Beachy, Ivan R., 71, of Free Union, VA, died at home on May 7, 2022, following a lengthy cancer journey. Ivan was born February 27, 1951, in Dover, OH, to Roman and Ada (Mullet) Beachy.

Ivan will be lovingly remembered by Elsie Mae (Kauffman), his wife of 49 years; sons: Darrel (Joanna), Dwayne (Kristina), David (Michelle), Durlin (Emily), Darius (Rosalia); and 19 grandchildren. He is also survived by his siblings: David, James, Merle, Stephen, Gabriel, and Tryphena.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roman and Ada Beachy.

Ivan's life was marked by sacrifice, his love of service, and his passion for building the kingdom of God. Galatians 6:14 guided his life from an early age. His pursuit of Jesus included two years of I-W service at Faith Mission Home, eight years of teaching and pastoral duties in Belize, C.A., 20 years of administrative work at Faith Mission Home, and 20 years of serving on the Amish Mennonite Aid mission board. He was ordained in 1980 and served in ministry for 40 years at Faith Mission Fellowship. Ivan retired from ministry September 2020.

Ivan counted it a special privilege to work with his sons as office manager at GME for the final seven years of his life. His family will always treasure the memories of days spent working together the past several months.

Though his health was failing, he never lost his zeal for service and could often be heard reflecting, "The hardest part of this journey is not being able to serve." His family rejoices that he is finally in the presence of the Saviour he loved so dearly.

Ivan's cancer journey

After a time of intensifying symptoms, Ivan was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer in December 2020. His treatment began in March 2021. Chemo created difficult side effects, particularly fatigue and neuropathy; but he continued to go to work and take care of things at home. The past six months included many family days as his sons and grandsons

worked to prepare an apartment for Ivan and Elsie.

Toward the close of 2021, Ivan's fatigue and neuropathy became more and more debilitating and his pain increased. The evening of April 24, 2022, was very special for us because all 31 of us were together. We took family photos in front of his favorite dogwood tree and then enjoyed ice cream on the front porch as the grandchildren played tag in the front yard and the older children sang on the front porch of the apartment across the driveway. That evening Ivan shared with us some of his wishes for his funeral service.

On Wednesday, May 4, his pain escalated to the point that he could hardly eat. Friday night, two of his sons took him to the emergency room for low blood pressure and pain. He was stabilized and sent back home. Around 5:00 Saturday morning his pain became completely unbearable. His brother, Merle, read Psalm 23 and as the words, "He makes me lie down in green pastures," filled the room, Ivan's body relaxed. A few minutes later, at 9:35 AM, he entered the presence of Jesus, home and free.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7).

Byler, Anna Mae, 55, of Cottage Grove, TN, passed away peacefully at her home on May 7, 2022, after a nearly two-year battle with cancer. She was born on May 14, 1966, to Earl and Ida Byler,

who preceded her in death.

Surviving are a daughter, Julie (fiancé, Billy Black), and a son, Jacob, (fiancée, Sierra Tucker), and four grandchildren: Isaiah, Chloe, Sophia, and Haley. Also surviving are three brothers: David (Mary), Paul (Darlene), Lester (Jean); and four sisters: Mary Jane (Ben) Schrock, Ruth Ann, Barbara (Menno) Wagler, and Martha (John) Byler.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a sister, Rhoda (Paul) Brenneman, a nephew, and a great-nephew.

She was a caregiver to several family members, then did foster care for a number of years, during which she adopted her children.

The funeral service was held on May 12, 2022, at Bethel Fellowship Church by Michael Yoder and a nephew, Anthony Wagler. Interment was at Calvary Christian Fellowship, Cottage Grove, TN, where she was a member. Another nephew, Joshua Byler, conducted the committal service.

Hochstetler, Laban E., 95, of Goshen, IN, died May 23, 2022, at Goshen Hospital. He was born on January 27, 1927, in Elkhart County, IN, to Elam and Eliza (Bender) Hochstetler. On October 4, 1949, in Middlebury, he married Agnes Bontrager. She died October 23, 2020.

Surviving are four daughters: Joanna (Oren) Yoder, Partridge, KS; Judy (Willard) Martin, Goshen; Elsie (Jason) Schrock, Halsey, OR; Mary Gingerich, Plain City, OH; three sons: Edwin,

Goshen; Nathan (Jan), Sioux Lookout, Ontario, Canada; John (Denise), Middlebury; 29 grandchildren, 48 great-grandchildren; two sisters: Miriam Graber, Goshen; Marietta (Jon) Stoltzfus, Goshen; three brothers: Daniel, Goshen; Noah, Elkhart; and Joseph, Minerva, OH.

He was preceded in death by his wife, parents, two sons: Wilbur Hochstetler and Mark Sweeney; two sons-in-law: Mark Gingerich and Lowell Mast; two grandchildren: Jaran Martin and Andrew Yoder; four great-grandchildren; two sisters: Esther Herschberger and Rhoda Hochstetler; and two brothers: Samuel and Walter.

He was a member of Fairhaven Mennonite Church and a dairy farmer. Laban was a quiet man, not one to stand out in a crowd. He was busy, though, in his low-key, behind-the-scenes sort of way. Never having completed high school himself, he helped build Clinton Christian School before he had school-age children himself, and served on its board for many years. He supported Heifer Project International and CROP and encouraged others to give as well. He looked forward to the MCC meat canner coming to Goshen every year and served as treasurer of that committee for many years. He served on the cleanup crew of the MCC Mennonite Relief Sale for many years and thoroughly enjoyed all those interactions. Laban was instrumental in beginning the services at the Elkhart County Jail on Sunday afternoons and regularly attended services at the Pendleton Correction Facility. He took a

keen interest in Gospel Echoes Ministry and supported Agnes as she graded Bible study courses for them. Though he stayed at home on his dairy farm, his heart was with his siblings and children who were serving in missions. He found ways to show his support and visited as often as he could to encourage them and to get to know their friends. He was the one who made sure that the missionaries in the North got their needs met through the food truck that left IN every year. Later, he and Agnes spent many years cooking at Camp Andrews after getting to know the folks at Fellowship Haven. When Mark Sweeney joined the family, Project Promise became a huge part of their lives. In his retirement years Laban made countless clothes drying racks and wooden crates to sell at the Depot to raise funds for Project Promise.

The funeral service was held on May 29, 2022, at Fairhaven Mennonite Church, conducted by the Fairhaven Ministry Team. Burial was in Miller Cemetery, Goshen.

Miller, Mary Ellen, 89, Kalona, IA, died March 25, 2022, at her daughter's home. She was born August 8, 1932, in Johnson County, IA, to Chris B. and Barbara (Brenneman) Miller. On January 15, 1953, she was united in marriage to Freeman Miller. He died on January 29, 2022.

She was baptized in her youth and was a faithful member of Sharon Bethel Church, Attending church was very important to her, and she attended as

much as her health allowed.

Mary is survived by two daughters: Rosie (Sam) Stoltzfus, Honeybrook, PA; and Joanna (Leighton) Yoder, Kalona; 12 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren; one sister, Leona Peachy, Kalona; three sisters-in-law: Susie and Katie Miller, Kalona; and Arlene Miller, Albuquerque, NM; one brother-in-law, Eddy J. Miller, Kalona, and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents, husband, a sister, Elsie; three brothers: Monroe Glen, Henry C., and Edwin Ray; and niece, Ethel Helmuth.

The funeral service was held March 28, 2022, at the Sharon Bethel Church with the burial following in the church cemetery.

Miller, Joe L., 86, of Millersburg, OH, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family at his residence on March 6, 2022, after a period of declining health. He was born September 1, 1935, to the late Levi and Alma (Mullet) Miller. On December 6, 1956, he married Fannie Hershberger who preceded him in death on December 29, 2000. On October 26, 2002, he married Mary (Beachy) Miller who survives.

Joe was a retired dairy farmer and owner of Doughty Valley Holsteins. He especially enjoyed spending time on his hobby farm, caring for his animals, chopping wood, and spending time with his grandchildren. He left a good example of love and commitment to the Lord and was a faithful member of

Messiah Amish Mennonite Church.

In addition to his second wife, Mary, he is survived by his children: Ivan (Becky), Dundee; Mary Ellen (Jerry) Mast, Berlin; Ruth Ann (Philip) Miller, Winesburg; Rhoda (Joe) Miller, Winesburg; Tim (Renae), Millersburg; and Bryan (Angela), Millersburg; 24 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren; siblings: Raymond (Anna), Levi (late Charlotte), Abe (Susie), Clara (Wayne) Miller, Aden (Esta), Anna (late David) Hershberger, Roy (Sue), Ivan (Miriam), Wayne (Linda), Ada Miller; sister-in-law, Fannie (late Jonas) Miller; step-children: Ina (Leroy) Schlabach, Sugarcreek; Carol (Paul) Wengerd, Berlin; Elson (Ellen) Miller, Tiverton; Julia (Dennis) Miller, Millersburg; Joanna (Norman) Yoder, Dundee; Eva (Stephen) Miller, Hustonville, KY; and Marlin (Ruth) Miller, Millersburg; 35 step-grandchildren, and 10 step-great-grandchildren.

In addition to his parents and first wife, Fannie, he was preceded in death by his siblings: Jonas, Dan (Fannie); sister-in-law, Charlotte Miller; and brother-in-law, David Hershberger.

The funeral service was held on March 8, 2022, at Messiah Amish Mennonite Church with the church ministry officiating. Burial followed at the church cemetery.

Shetler, Rachel B., 90, of Farmville, VA, entered into her eternal rest, surrounded by her loving children, on March 30, 2022, after suffering multiple strokes.

Rachel was born on May 18, 1931, in Dover, DE, to the late Jonas and Rachel (Beiler) Stoltzfus.

She married Uriah Shetler on November 22, 1951, and celebrated 60 years of marriage prior to his passing. She was a devoted companion to Uriah and loving mother to her 13 children. She welcomed all who entered her home with her gift of hospitality and served faithfully as a minister's wife alongside her husband on and off the mission field. She was a steadfast member of Farmville Christian Fellowship for 39 years. Last year she celebrated her 90th birthday surrounded by her children and grandchildren.

Surviving are 12 children: Martha (Lloyd) Slabaugh, Nappanee, IN; John, McAlisterville, PA; Anna (Albert) Miller, Farmville; Priscilla (Mark) Eichorn, Paraguay, South America; Stephen (LaVerda), Perkins, OK; Daniel (Phyllis), Thompsontown, PA; Mary (Alexi) Espinoza, Honduras, Central America; Miriam (John) Miller, Pamplin; Dorcas Shetler, Farmville; Joy (Ken) Mast, Dundee, OH; Bernice Shetler, Farmville; Julia (Jeff) Hertzler, Axton; 50 grandchildren, 66 great-grandchildren, and one sister, Naomi Yoder, Myersdale, PA.

She was preceded in death by her husband, a son, James, three grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

The funeral service was held April 2, 2022, at Concord Baptist Church Focus Center. Burial followed in the Farmville Christian Fellowship Cemetery.

Troyer, Jonathan Lee, 31, of Prospect, VA, passed away March 27, 2022. He was born November 28, 1990, to Eli and Barbara (Miller) Troyer.

He was preceded in death by his grandfathers: John Dan Miller and William Joseph Troyer; an aunt, Linda Lou Troyer; and a niece, Adrienne Mast.

He is survived by his parents, Eli and Barbara Troyer; sister, Ingrid (Eric) Mast; brother, Jeremy (Roxanne); grandmothers: Marie Miller and Catherine Troyer; nieces: Savannah, Abigail, and Olivia Troyer; nephews: Jordan and Colton Mast; uncles: John (Miriam) Miller, Paul (Janet) Miller, Steve Miller, Matthew (Sarah) Miller, Julius (Twila) Troyer, Nelson (Ellen) Troyer, James (Vera) Troyer; aunts: Elizabeth (Al) Buczek, Sharon Troyer, Linda Troyer, and Keren Miller.

Jonathan was known as the gentle giant and was loved by all. He enjoyed kayaking, camping, and fishing. He shared special memories with his cousins and friends: Shawn Troyer, Andrés Miller, Randall Miller, Charlotte Troyer, and Amy Miller.

Jonathan loved the Lord and was an active member of Farmville Christian Fellowship.

He was the youngest of three and will always be known as Mom's baby.

The funeral service was held March 30, 2022, at Farmville Christian Fellowship with David Miller and John Eicher serving. Burial followed in the church cemetery.



S&P Global Mobility reported that as of January 1 of the current year the average light truck on the road in the USA was 11.6 years old. The average car was 13.1 years old, for an average of 12.2 years old. This increased by two months over the average for 2021. This organization has been tracking this data for many years. The average age of vehicles on the road has risen each of the past 10 years.

It is the studied opinion of those reporting these statistics that the global microchip shortage and its resulting drag on new vehicle production is a major factor in the current rise in vehicle average age. While the average age of the fleet wasn't quoted in this report, it was stated that these vehicles are driven an average of a bit more than 12,000 miles per year.

About 15 years ago was the first time that I owned a vehicle that was less than 10 years old. When I was a child, I remember that when a vehicle passed the 100,000 mile threshold, it was considered a remarkable achievement. It was remarkable for two reasons, at least. Most people did a better job of staying closer to home than we tend to do these days.

Secondly, the ability to engineer and manufacture something with that kind of durability was a marvel.

Now, used vehicles that are advertised with fewer than 100,000 miles are often presented as being "low mileage." It is true that not all the materials used in vehicle manufacturing are geared toward enhanced durability. However, some combination of better engineering, better roads, and a more mobile society have led to a dramatic rise in vehicle mileage in my lifespan.

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I don't ever remember hearing about monkeypox until the last month or so. Monkeypox is caused by a virus in the same family as the smallpox virus and was first observed in two outbreaks in 1958 in colonies of monkeys that were kept for research purposes. Monkeypox is considered endemic in parts of west Africa. A recent outbreak has led health officials to take note. Cases outside of west Africa are extremely rare. In this outbreak, only 160 cases have been confirmed outside of Africa. All but 10 of those are in Europe.

The virus causes similar but more mild symptoms to smallpox. Human transmission occurs via close

contact, particularly saliva droplets. But the risk of casual transmission is quite low because it requires close and prolonged contact in order for transmission to occur.

This virus shares some symptoms with better-known sexually-transmitted diseases. In fact, the risk for monkeypox to those who are practicing a homosexual lifestyle is heightened considerably.

The rationale for the noteworthiness of the recent outbreak of monkeypox is more related to questions regarding how and why this outbreak is occurring now, rather than the risk to the public of becoming infected or the inherent danger of the virus.

• • • • •

It has now been more than three months since the Russian military waltzed into Ukraine. Those executing this “special military operation” to “drive out the Nazis in Ukraine” reported that they had been assured by their superiors that the Ukrainians would welcome these “liberators” and expressed surprise that the locals didn’t warmly welcome them. After all, Russia and Ukraine share a long common history. Many have families and relatives on both sides of this border.

Indeed, the defensive resolve of Ukraine has been remarkable. They are fighting for the survival of their

own country on their own turf. But the losses have been devastating, catastrophic, and anguish-inducing in so many ways.

Ukraine is a major global agriculture contributor, especially wheat production. Much grain has been destroyed, along with growing crops and the equipment to harvest those crops. Furthermore, the ports from whence this grain departs are under siege which stops the shipment of this grain. There is considerable global angst that the ripple effects of disruptions to the food supply in Ukraine will move millions of additional people into famine.

The destruction of infrastructure: houses, buildings, roads and bridges, manufacturing facilities, energy distribution, as well as cultural and historic sites are astonishing. It will take a lot of time and enormous economic heft for Ukraine to recover what can be recovered if and when hostilities cease.

But as we know, the human toll is the worst of all. Millions have left Ukraine for safer places. Other millions are internally displaced. Many thousands, both Russians and Ukrainians, have perished. Thousands of families have been permanently altered because someone died. How tragic! How unnecessary!

What about the Christians who live

in Russia and Ukraine who have been affected either directly by violence or from various levels of deprivation related to the conflict or the resulting economic sanctions? I am consoled by the thought that God provides grace commensurate to every need. But what a challenge they face!



My guess is that many of us in America have a pretty clear idea who the “good guy” is and who the “bad guy” is in this conflict. If you are among those, you are not alone in your opinion. Indeed, much of the world is united in its opposition to Russia’s plans and activities. I would like to offer a few perspectives for our mutual consideration.

War is terrible. Now is a good time to underscore our allegiance to the Prince of Peace.

When an international conflict like this arises, a flawed mindset manifests itself. That flawed mindset is one that seeks to paint a complete nationality with a broad brush. The way that mindset looks for Americans in this case is that Americans regard Russians as bad and Ukrainians as good. The truth is more complicated than that.

First of all, not all people agree on who the bad guys and who the good guys are. I’m confident that many citizens of both Russia and Ukraine

would prefer a solution to the current mess that diverges somewhat from the official actions of their respective countries.

Similarly, neither Putin nor Zelensky is “all good” nor “all bad.” That is not to say that both bear equal responsibility for the genesis of this conflict. Neither of them are appropriate role models for Christians when they conduct themselves in unchristian ways. But both bear the stamp of their Creator. Jesus died for both of them.

I am not proud to admit that too often the news of a Russian setback in this conflict and a Ukraine advance generates a celebratory sentiment inside me. It is proper for God’s children to desire justice and an end to suffering. But if we take the time to ponder our sentiments just a bit, I think we all know the difference between desiring the justice and peace that God authors and the justice that comes when evildoers receive their due recompense. The Scripture reminds us that vengeance and retribution belong to God. Jesus taught us in some pretty remarkable and clear ways how we should respond toward our enemies. Inasmuch as my responses align themselves with what belongs to God rather than my calling, those responses are more carnal than Spirit-inspired. I want to

do better—to think better.

• • • • •

“Wars and rumors of wars,” and “men’s hearts failing them for fear” are hallmarks of the latter days. I have tended to regard these as describing an escalation of events. These things are certainly descriptive of our world and its inhabitants today. However, a brief glance at known history reminds us that these characteristics have been with us for about as long as recorded history. There has been some ebb and flow. But lately I’ve been wondering if maybe this is more of a description of normal human behavior rather than to a specific period in time.

• • • • •

Someone leaked a document that seemed to indicate that the Supreme Court is poised to reverse the famous 1970 Roe vs. Wade decision that enshrined abortion as a constitutional right in the USA. If the decision is indeed reversed, this won’t mean an end to abortion in the USA. But states would then have the latitude to decide the legality of abortion in their respective jurisdictions. The response to this leak has followed pretty predictable patterns of dread and celebration that I won’t elaborate on here.

It seems very fitting that we Christians are pro-life. Now might

be a good time to remind ourselves of the far-reaching implication of promoting life. A strong pro-life stance involves, but is not limited to:

- Avoiding killing innocent babies through abortion.
- Welcoming persons with physical and intellectual limitations into our lives when possible, rather than consigning them to the unseen margins.
- Welcoming the elderly into our lives when possible, rather than consigning them to the unseen margins.
- Helping where possible to alleviate human suffering and deprivation.
- Make dietary and exercise choices that promote health and well-being.
- Avoiding circumstances that make us or others sick or are unnecessarily dangerous or life-threatening.
- Careful driving habits.
- Regarding children as gifts to be welcomed and stewarded well. They are not trophies to be acquired, stashed, or displayed. Neither are they inconveniences to be tolerated.
- Consider adoption as one way that we promote and bless life.
- Avoid participation in and enthusiasm for war.

This wasn’t meant to be an exhaustive list. Can we agree that the issue of being pro-life is about much more than abortion?

–RJM 

An Ambassador Has Gone Home

Simon Schrock, Fairfax, VA

According to the dictionary, an ambassador is: 1. An official of high rank appointed to represent his\her country in the capital of another country in an embassy. 2. One who represents God or godly qualities.¹

On Saturday, May 7, 2022, I received an unexpected and grievous message. Our dear friend and brother in the Lord, Ivan Beachy, had entered his heavenly home. Over the past years we had many contacts, visits, and times together. After he was diagnosed with cancer, our phone calls and emails became more frequent as we compared notes on each other's cancer journey. We exchanged many words of encouragement and prayers. These moments were often like a II Corinthians 12:9 touch of grace sent by God. My experience with Ivan truly reflected being a faithful ambassador for Christ's kingdom while traveling in the temporal kingdom of this present world. My last, short email message from him was sent from the ER on Friday night. The next morning this ambassador in Christ's kingdom was called to come home.


I was blessed to be able to ride

along to the Wednesday evening visitation and viewing. In the two-hour ride home and getting to bed, my mind went to a Scripture I often rehearse when trying to go to sleep, Philippians 4:4-7. As I reflected on our time working together with Ivan to build up the kingdom of God, verse four seemed so fitting in describing his life and conduct. *"Let your moderation be known to all men. The Lord is at hand."* Other translations shed a light on the word "moderation;" "gentleness" (NIV), "forbearing spirit" (NAS), and "your unselfishness, your considerateness" (Amplified). These words describe the spirit of Brother Ivan in working together on church conflicts—his patience in hearing concerns and disagreements of others.

After my cancer diagnosis the need of future leadership for our fellowship took on a sense of urgency. Ivan graciously agreed to walk with us in this sacred undertaking. My memory recalls a pleasant lunch meeting in Warrenton, VA, in working out plans to move ahead. He gave gentle and considerate leadership through an ordination about five months after my original

diagnosis of cancer. Nathan Beachy and our son, Ivan, were ordained that evening in November. Two years later, and after my second diagnosis with cancer, Ivan helped us again. His gentle, “forbearing spirit” helped us through another ordination. In November 2012, David Nisly was ordained to be the lead pastor in the office of bishop. The gentle spirit in Ivan’s servant leadership is fondly remembered.

He quietly but publicly demonstrated his commitment to

being a servant of Jesus Christ and His Body, the Church. This was noticeably observed as he cared for his beloved Elsie, bringing her with him in a wheel chair. His gentle, compassionate servanthood is an example to be remembered. His legacy has left believers examples and lessons worth learning. “*Let everyone see that you are gentle and kind*” (NCV). That was Brother Ivan Beachy. King Jesus has called His ambassador Ivan home. 

If you ever have something bad to say about anybody, be sure the answer to these three questions is “yes” before you say it.

Is it true?

Is it just?

Will it do anybody any good to say it?





The things I say
and do today
In memory's book,
I'll keep,
And when I'm old
and read them—
Will I laugh or
will I weep?

mission awareness

The Automatic Washer

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

The following article appeared in the “Intelligencer Journal” (Lancaster County’s daily newspaper) in the summer of 1994. It is a story of Eli and Verda Glick and their three youngest children traveling in a homemade bus from their home in El Salvador to the United States and back again. The article is written from the perspective of a journalist and has been slightly adapted to make better sense.

As the Glick family journeyed from El Salvador through Guatemala on the Peten Highway they stopped by to visit our family while we were living in Cayo District, Belize. Verda, who was often full of hearty good

humor, related how the wash bucket full of dirty clothes served well in an automatic fashion without needing electricity as the bus bounced and rocked up and down, side to side, swishing back and forth, washing the clothes as they traveled. Oh, how we laughed as we sat in the lawn under the night stars after a busy wedding day on the Cayo Church compound. Wholesome good humor and some laughter is a spice of life that can serve as an energizer for quality Christian service. After all, God made us that way. Verda, who went home to meet the Lord Jesus February 25, 2022, has served her Master faithfully. Praise the Lord!



Eli and Verda Glick, Amish Mennonite missionaries who travel to El Salvador, are shown with their children, Karen, 10, Paul, 13, and Tim, 17. Pictured behind the family is “La Hielora,” their mode of transportation.

Family Missionaries Travel to El Salvador

Joan Decker, Journal Correspondent

The Glick family traveled to Lancaster County for a visit after spending most of their last 30 years fulfilling a childhood dream.

Eli and Verda (Kauffman) Glick, both 51, Amish Mennonite missionaries in El Salvador, are doing what they always wanted to do—spread the good Word of God.

“To us, it’s home. We hope to continue living there and die and be buried there,” said Verda. They live in a brick house on a four-acre mango grove near the city of Santa Ana. The couple’s El Salvadoran commitment was put to the test in a country troubled by political

upheaval in 1993 when Eli was kidnapped and held for ransom. While driving home from a church service, along with a vehicle load of people, Eli was abducted at gunpoint and held for a ransom of 100,000 colones (nearly \$12,000) or he would be killed. After 31 hours of captivity, he was released. His son, Ernest, had delivered the ransom of a much lesser amount. What might have signaled an end to their stay only renewed the commitment this family made to the people of El Salvador.

Although they experienced armed robberies, and Ernest received a gunshot wound, they are quick to add that these incidences are not the norm. “Our family feels safe and secure,” said Eli.

Their transportation in El Salvador is a bus called “La Hielora” which their Salvadoran neighbors named because it resembles an oversized Styrofoam cooler or ice chest. The bus, which made the 3,600-mile trip from El Salvador to Lancaster County (one way) is used 365 days a year, doubling as a school and church bus.

Verda said that her son, Philip, who “was born with a wrench in his hand,” built it with its diesel engine and bus seats. The chassis came from a wrecked truck and the other parts came from various other vehicles.

For the 13-day trip here, the bus was transformed into a camper complete with curtains and bunk beds and “Glick-made” mosquito netting for the windows and doors. “It even has an automatic washing machine which is a five-gallon bucket. I just add water and detergent with the dirty clothes, and as we travel it sloshes around,” said Verda.

“The trip is a special family time, and an opportunity to visit friends along the way. It is always an adventure,” Eli said. The Glicks have five children, all schooled at home, four boys, then a girl, ranging from the ages 25 to 10 years. The two oldest, who are maintaining the farm business, remained in El Salvador. The children were born and raised in El Salvador.

Verda is a native of Bird-in-Hand, PA, while Eli grew up in the White Horse area. Verda, who took nurse’s training at both Lancaster General and St. Joseph Hospitals, beamed with joy as she recalled her days working at St. Joseph, “It was the first intensive care hospital, and the cost was \$30.00 per day.” Her husband said that he gained his career working on the family farm.

Their mission began when the Baptist community in El Salvador needed farmers to care for property surrounding a home for the elderly

in the Santa Ana area.

“When they interviewed us, I guess they thought we were good farmers,” Eli said jokingly. Although neither spoke Spanish, they learned as they went along.

“We were on loan, four years, to the Baptists through our church and mission (Amish Mennonite Aid) until the home closed. Then we ventured by faith on our own,” he said.

“As children, Eli and I always dreamed of doing missionary work. Our goal has always been to help people spiritually, physically, emotionally, materially, and in any other way we can,” said Verda.


Currently they serve five churches, three schools, and one medical/dental clinic which they started through Amish Mennonite Aid.

Eli is self-supporting and has maintained poultry operations which he recently shifted from laying hens to raising pullets. Having money on hand from egg sales caused numerous robberies which the change has eliminated. Eli, pastor for the churches, also coordinates the schools, while Verda puts her nursing talents to work as she oversees the clinic.

The Glicks look forward in returning to their home in El Salvador. Tim (17), who calls himself

“a handy type of fellow” will be taking back bicycles and other mechanical parts that he found in “dumps.” Paul (13), will be taking back a new unicycle, while Karen (10), who loves school, will be taking back books.

“La Hielora” will be loaded with

tools to replace those which were stolen, old calendars, seed catalogs, magazines, school books, hymnals, and more. Twenty-four quarts of freshly canned Lancaster County cherries will be scrumptiously relished by the family. 

A Woman After God's Heart

Truth and Tears

Liz Miller, Millersburg, OH



On that beautiful, ordinary Sunday morning in August, my world suddenly came tumbling down around me. I could not wake my husband! There was the 911 call, the ambulance ride to the hospital, and the life flight. I was soon told that Andy had a massive bleed in his brain from a ruptured aneurysm and it was very unlikely that he would survive.

Despite emergency surgery, the prayers of many people, and my desperate pleas to God, Andy died four days later after life support was removed. He never did regain consciousness or respond at all. I was stunned—in shock. My husband had seemed very healthy and seldom needed to see a doctor.

Eight days before my 63rd birthday, I was a widow.

This was certainly not my plan. I was looking forward to getting old together! But this was obviously God's plan for Andy and for me. At first, I could barely think. I really thought my *life* was over.

But then it wasn't. And I began to realize that not only did I need to go on living, but it was largely up to me to decide what kind of life I would live. The first step for me was to face the truth.

This sounds very simplistic, but many times when we are faced with the unthinkable we would rather not face the truth because it is too hard. On the way home from the hospital after Andy died, I remember sitting

in the back of the car and saying half out loud to myself, "I am a widow." The words sounded so strange and unbelievable. But they were true. It took many months for that truth to sink in and become reality to me.

In my grief and loneliness, I began to seek the Lord in a new way. One Scripture that was especially meaningful to me was Isaiah chapter 41. Verse 10 says, "*Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*" And again, in verse 13, "*For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.*" I certainly needed upholding and help.

I decided to take God at His Word and began to talk to Him about everything. It strengthens my faith to see how He answers my prayers, both in the small things and in the things that seem like mountains to me. God shows up in amazing ways and often through His people. He has been so good to me and has blessed me so much more than I deserve. When I feel discouraged, I find it helpful to remind myself of **truth**; the truth of Who God is and that He will never change even though many things about my life have changed.

Another thing that I find helpful

is tears. I am not given to tears easily by nature. But since my husband's death, I have found that tears are cathartic. In fact, I have come to believe that God wants me to spend some time considering what I had and what I have lost. The Bible says, "*the Lord healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds*" (Psalm 147:3). In order for God to heal me, I must acknowledge that my heart is completely broken.

I am still new to this path. I am thankful God has placed several godly women in my life who have been on this journey much longer than I have. It is incredibly comforting to spend time with them, and I hope to keep learning from them.

God has blessed me with family, friends, and a very caring church community. I find that these people appreciate when I am honest about how I am feeling and what is happening in my life. In rare times when people say something that doesn't *feel* quite right to me because of the lens I am looking through, I try to remember their intent which is love and care.

I am trusting God. I believe that slowly, step-by-step, day-by-day, He will help me learn to live with this loss and move forward in my service to Him. When I focus on Him and not on myself, He helps me see needs

around me that I can minister to. This brings a measure of purpose and joy back into my life.

[I sincerely appreciate Liz allowing us a small but important glimpse of her

widowhood journey. I am pondering how the principles she shares can apply to my own life. If anyone wishes to communicate with Liz personally they may do so at lizmiller56@icloud.com. SS]



junior messages

An Army of Singers

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Tucked in chapter 20 of the book of II Chronicles, we find an amazing story of faith in God and song.

One day a messenger came to King Jehoshaphat with terrible news. “A great multitude of fighting men, a vast army, is on the way. They are coming to destroy your kingdom.”

The king was terrified. He did the wisest thing he could have done. He fell on his knees, begging the Lord to show him what to do. He called out to everyone in Judah to cry out to God, fast, and seek the help of the Lord.

Jehoshaphat stood before the people in the temple courtyard, calling out publicly to the Lord. “Oh, Lord God of our fathers, You are the God of heaven. You alone are the Ruler of all the earth. In Your hand is power and might, and we know no one can stand against You. Oh,

God, You drove out our enemies and gave this land to the descendants of Abraham. This temple was built to honor Your Name. Now we are faced with calamity; a huge army of enemies is marching against us to destroy us. We cry out to You to save us. Save us, O Lord. Hear us and rescue us. We are powerless against this vast army of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir. Oh, our God, stop them. We are calling out to You for help, for we do not know what else to do. But our eyes are on You. Our souls wait for You!”

The Spirit of the Lord came upon one of the Levites standing there. He was a descendant of Asaph, a lead singer.

He cried, “Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all you people. Listen. The Lord says, “Do not be afraid or discouraged by this mighty army that is coming. The battle is not yours but God’s. Tomorrow you will march out

against them. You will not even need to fight in this battle. Don't be afraid or dismayed. You will go out against them. They will come up by the cliff of Ziz. You will stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. The Lord is with you."

The king and all the people fell down with their faces to the ground, worshipping the Lord. Then the Levites stood to praise the Lord with a loud shout.

Early the next morning the king encouraged the people, "Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in His prophets and succeed."

The king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, in a vulnerable and prominent place, to sing to the Lord and praise Him for His holy splendor.

The choir went out before the army and sang, "Praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever." Their song rang out over the valley and at

that very moment the Lord caused the enemy armies to fight against each other—what a confusion and slaying—till all were destroyed.

They found among the dead vast wealth, riches, and precious jewels that they took for themselves. There was so much it took them three days to gather the bounty. On the fourth day they blessed and thanked the Lord and went back home to Jerusalem with great joy, marching back home to the sound of music.

This account has powerful lessons for us, teaching us the value of seeking God in prayer and fasting—the value of faith and power in songs of praise to our God.

What will I choose today?

I can choose to tremble and fear, or I can choose to seek the Lord and sing.

[Correction: Last month's Junior Messages story was written by Margretta Yoder, Hutchinson, KS.]



youth messages

How's Your Flight?

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

Over the last two years, we've discussed various different topics in this space. The topics ranged from our

relationship to war, to more recently, our reputation. We've talked about youth and service, and we've even talked about courtship. We've talked

about being sold out, our finances, trying to outgive God, and we've talked about the impact we have on those who look up to us.

Over the last two years, a lot has changed. The world situation has gone from rumors of war and tensions in the Middle East to war in Ukraine; a country divided over race and politics with a booming economy, to a country still arguing over race and politics with inflation and violence on the rise. We've come through a pandemic that brought out the best in some and the worst in others (depends which side you ask). In the last two years, many have lost loved ones, and many have been welcomed into our lives by birth, adoption, and plain old friendship. A lot has changed, and whether we realize it or not, we aren't the same people we were two years ago.

What changed for you over the last two years? Has it changed you for the better? Perhaps your journey hasn't been very smooth. Are you in need of an attitude adjustment? Maybe you've been knocked off course or are slowly losing purpose? Let me explain.

When I was 18 I had dreams of being a bush pilot for Mennonite Air Missions. I bought the text books, got my log book, and took several

flight lessons before God had other plans for me, and I left flying behind. It wasn't all in vain, however, for I was able to glean a few life parallels from flying.

One of the first things you learn about flying is attitude. Attitude is the position of your aircraft in reference to the horizon. There is an attitude indicator on your instrument panel, and it helps keep you orientated and maintaining a level flight path. There is a lot that is going on around us in the world today. It's easy to get sidetracked from our goals and vision for the future by life in general. We watch the "scenery" and inadvertently begin to lose course. Maybe we've lost focus and have drifted a bit. Maybe we hit one of those fabled "air pockets."

Air pockets don't really exist like people thought they did. You don't just fly along and hit an "air pocket" like you would a pothole. What we call air pockets are actually air currents (sometimes called elevators) moving either up or down that cause turbulence and can move your plane several hundred feet or more in either direction. I remember the feeling all too well of hitting one of these air currents and seeing my altimeter drop several hundred feet in a matter of seconds.

You know that feeling when you are driving a hilly road too fast and pop over a small hill and your stomach flip flops? It's the same feeling. A similar thing happens to us when a major event in life happens. It could be anything; the loss of a loved one, a broken relationship, an accident, a pandemic, or even issues in the church or home. These events cause turbulence in our lives. They can cause spiritual unrest and upheaval in our daily lives and relationships. These air currents might not always be negative. Maybe you meet someone and a relationship develops. Perhaps God allowed the unrest in your church or your job to lead you to a better situation. Maybe you had your future figured out and then you were asked to go into service or teach school and now you're not sure what to do.

Another thing I learned while flying was something called stalling. It is exactly what it sounds like, when your plane slows down so much that it loses its lift and you are not able to maintain your altitude. An alarm horn goes off, warning you that a stall is imminent, and gives you the opportunity to make a correction. The first time the stall alarm goes off, a jolt of adrenaline goes through you followed by mild apprehension. If your instructor isn't right there


the adrenaline would probably be accompanied by unbridled fear if you haven't had the proper training. The first real indication of a stall happening is the right wing of your plane dipping hard which, if not corrected, would send you into an uncontrolled spin which you might not be able to recover from. Thankfully, flight instructors teach pilots how to recover from stalls and actually teach them something called slow flight where you fly with your plane right at the point of stalling and the goal is to keep the stall alarm going off without it actually stalling. After a few minutes of the stall alarm blaring continuously, it no longer sends adrenaline coursing through your veins.

Sometimes we stall in life. We are cruising through life, not in a hurry to go anywhere or do anything with our lives. We are perfectly comfortable to keep our heads down, go unnoticed, and continue to do our own thing without contributing at all to our church or the lives of those around us. In essence, we stall. We have no purpose (lift), therefore we stall out and our life (flight) has nothing to show for it and benefits no one. The voices of the world around us can be like that stall alarm. All the perfection that is portrayed in social media, the drive of materialism, and the need

for approval and acceptance—they are constantly sounding. They say we aren't good enough, we don't make enough money, we don't make a difference and wouldn't if we tried, and there is no way we are as happy as the people who *look* like they have it all together.

A few times now I've mentioned my flight instructor. Sometimes I wondered if he cared about whether I learned anything, or if he was just putting in his hours so he could qualify to fly commercially. As youth sometimes we wonder what God is doing. Does He really care about us and our future? If He did, why does He allow us to go through some of the things He does? Just like my instructor taught me slow flight to enable me to fly a plane on the brink of a stall and not panic, we can learn through God's help to navigate life with all the voices of the world saying we can't. The airplanes I trained in (like most) had two sets of controls. We would turn control over to each other by verbally affirming, "You have the controls," to which the other replied, "I have the controls," so we wouldn't both be trying to fly the plane in different directions. I have heard Jesus compared to a co-pilot and a pilot, but I'd like to compare Jesus to a flight instructor. He has His hands

on the controls, and when we let Him, will guide us where He wants us to go. We can try to fly our own way, but we have no way of knowing how that will pan out even if we think we know what we're doing. I remember the first time I did a stall. To recover, you push the nose of the plane down to pick up speed and then pull back up and level off (I think there is some rudder action in there, but I'm not going to guess what it is). I pushed the nose of the plane down and froze in terror as the plane plummeted toward the lake we were flying over. I didn't need to say anything as my instructor calmly took control of the plane and leveled us out (after which I began breathing again). Jesus is always there to take control. His word and teaching is what allows us to fly successfully.

We don't know what tomorrow holds for us, or what flight plan our Instructor has filed for us. We can trust that whether daytime or nighttime, He has the ability and skill to teach and guide us. How is your attitude? Has turbulence in the last two years blown you off course? Does that stall alarm still cause you doubt and uncertainty? How well do you know and trust your Flight Instructor? God bless you as you examine your own lives for answers to these questions. 

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The quickest way to get back on your feet is to get down on your knees.

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To love someone is to seek his or her best and highest good.

• • • • •

Pray when you don't feel like it; pray when you feel like it;
pray until you feel like it.

• • • • •

Our strength is shown in the things we stand for;
our weakness is shown in the things we fall for.

• • • • •

Stand on your own two feet and you will grow in stature.

• • • • •

The U.S. Constitution doesn't guarantee happiness,
only the pursuit of it. You have to catch up to it yourself.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN