



Calvary MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

OCTOBER 2022

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Calvary Messenger

October 2022

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The Faithful Pastor's Hands

Michelle Richard Kropf, 1956-2017

The old pastor's hands are calloused and rough,

They're worn and stained with silt,

But they tell us a tale

Of shovel and pail,

For they speak of the churches he built.

Though stained by the soil,

They speak of hard toil;

Of bricks that were patiently laid.

But the message most clear

From those hands worn and dear,

Was the commission of Christ he obeyed.

For those buildings of brick,

Though sturdy and thick,

Will someday be stubble and rock.

But the church that was wrought

By the truths that he taught

Will endure in the hearts of his flock.



“In Your Name. Amen”?

Henry Zimmerman, Narvon, PA

The first prayer I learned as a young child was:
 “Now I lay me down to sleep,

I pray the Lord my soul to keep.

If I should die before I wake,

I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

This little prayer first appeared in print in 1737, but likely its origin goes back even further. Most likely, I was one of the thousands of children who early learned to repeat this rhyme as a bedtime prayer. I recently thought about the ending of this prayer that I learned approximately 67 years ago.

Ending our prayers with “Amen” is a time-honored tradition. Jesus used it in His model prayer in Matthew 6, which we call the Lord’s Prayer. Amen is derived from a Hebrew word usually translated as “Amen” in the Old Testament, but once, in Jeremiah 11:5, it is rendered as “So be it.” In the New Testament Gospels, the Greek equivalent is often translated “verily,” meaning “most assuredly,” but when it is found at the end of a sentence, this word is translated as “Amen.” This word appeared 40 times in the

Epistles and, without exception, is rendered as “Amen.”

To end our prayers with this word meaning “let it be so” is good and fitting. God’s people have faithfully held to its use for thousands of years. But I would not know when I last heard a prayer conclude with “For Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

“For Jesus’ sake” is used multiple times in the New Testament. The apostle Paul earnestly pleaded for prayer on his behalf “*for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*” (Romans 15:30). We are reminded that we are forgiven of our sins “*for Christ’s sake*” (Ephesians 4:32). The apostle John reiterates this thought when he writes, “*Your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake,*” referring to Jesus Christ the Righteous (1 John 2:12). We minister and are “*servants for Jesus’ sake*” (II Corinthians 4:5). And we are told to “*not only believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake*” (Philippians 1:29).

Praying to God for Jesus’ sake has the idea that we are coming to God, not on our merit or who we are, but on account of Jesus and Who He is.

Another good way to end our

prayers is “through Jesus. Amen.” Jesus said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me*” (John 14:6). The apostle Paul adds, “*We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith...*” (Romans 5:1-2). Also, when referring to the Jews and Gentiles, he tells us, “*For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father*” (Ephesians 2:18).

Today’s most common way of concluding prayer in our churches is, “In Jesus’ name. Amen.” It also has the most extensive Scriptural basis. As we read the New Testament, hopefully, we notice the many times that the name of Jesus is invoked. Luke’s Gospel records that the 70 whom Jesus sent out returned saying, “*Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name*” (Luke 10:17). “*In my name shall they cast out devils*” is one of the signs that Jesus said would follow His ascension (Mark 16:17). Peter told a lame beggar that he had no money, but what he did have, he would give to him: “*In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk*” (Act 3:6). When Peter was called to account for the healing, he said, “*that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*” In his

Spirit-filled response, he added, “*for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:10, 12).

Excerpts from Paul’s epistles include, “*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Romans 10:13). “*And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus*” (II Corinthians 6:11). We must give “*thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 5:20). “*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him*” (Colossians 3:17).

When we specifically think about praying to God in the name of Jesus, we should especially consider the words that Jesus spoke to His disciples in preparation for His departure. He not only encouraged them repeatedly to pray to God the Father in His name but also promised to hear and answer their prayers, that their joy may be full. “*And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” (John 14:13). “*I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father*

in my name, he may give it you” (John 15:16). “Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16:23-24).

Another way of ending our prayers is one that began among young people years ago. But young people grow up, and now older lay members increasingly use it in Sunday School and prayer meetings. Prayer is made to God the Father and closed with “In Your name. Amen.” Should we pray to God in the name of God? This may seem acceptable to many in our society, such as deists, Jews, Muslims, and others who believe in some sort of deity or god but not the God existing in Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as we do. We hold the New Testament to be God’s full and final revelation to man. We believe the writer of Hebrews was inspired when he wrote, “*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession...Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14, 16). Also, Paul tells us that Christ “is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us”*

(Romans 8:34), and that He is the one and only “*mediator between God and men” (I Timothy 2:5). John also tells us that we have “an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (I John 2:1).*

This is my attempt to set forth a Scriptural basis for retaining the practice of concluding our public prayers with a recognition of the role of Jesus Christ. I want to be gracious to all who have picked up the practice of replacing “Jesus” with “Your name.” I suspect it was likely done unwittingly. I also believe that “*the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us...*” (Romans 8:26). I also realize that very few others may even be concerned if this becomes the common practice in our churches.

This is not to say that including Jesus’ name is a simple and sure formula for moving God to answer our prayers. We still need the heart of Christ, Who prayed in the garden, “*Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). We must acknowledge that our will may not be in accordance with God’s good and perfect will. But were it not for Jesus Christ, we would be unworthy even to approach God’s throne of grace. It is only on account of Jesus,*

only through Jesus, that we have this access, and only in Jesus' name that we can be so bold.

[Reprinted from the July-August 2022 issue of KMF Messenger. Used with permission.]



Announcement

Faithful Men Seminar

November 12, 2022

Biblical Manhood

Being a man involves more than what a man does. Primarily, it involves what a man is. In this world, there are plenty of definitions of what a man should be. But in this seminar, we will explore various aspects of manhood from a Biblical perspective. This time together will focus on encouraging all of God's men to take their manliness to the next level.

First, we will see how the Bible portrays the characters of several men and how God illustrated their character through the stories of their lives. Next, we will look at different forms of leadership that men often employ and how those forms of leadership can help or hinder him and the ones he leads. Then, we will examine some aspects of life that cause significant challenges for men. Finally, we will illuminate the life of the Ultimate Man, the Man Christ Jesus.

Portraits of Men - Dave Snyder

Models of Leadership - Tom Johnson

Tests of Manhood - Ben Waldner

The Ultimate Man - David Martin



Seminar will be held at Light of Truth Conservative Mennonite Church, 14890 Navarre Rd. SW, Wilmot, OH 44689. Directions: Traveling on Rt. 250 to Wilmot, take Rt. 62 and go southwest approx. 1 mile. Church is on the left.

For more information or to register, please contact:

Deeper Life Ministries: (614) 873-1199 or info@dlmohio.org.

reader response

RE: "Gay Girl Meets Mennonite Pastor" (August, p. 9)

I just wanted to say thanks for publishing the article "Gay Girl

Meets Mennonite Pastor." This sort of honest and thoughtful message needs to be published in Beachy publications. -Sherilyn



Annual Calvary Bible School Cleanup

Come join us in our CBS cleaning November 6-8, 2022, in preparation for the next school year. This is open for young and older. Our new staff building will be included this year so we could really use 45-50 people. If you, your youth group, or other friends could help us, we would really appreciate it. Good food, lodging in the dorms, cleaning supplies, and evening volleyball will be provided.



If you are interested, contact Lowell Swartzentruber, (864) 378-3394, so we know how to plan. Please come help us!

the bottom line

Confessing our Weakness and Grief

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Her husband had died. Some of us know what it is like to “lose” a spouse. A good friend, on the morning prior to the funeral service, said to her, “Be strong.” Good advice, would you say?

The death of a loved one is always a test of our affections, our spirit, and the process of loss relative to our plans. The ebb and flow of life’s mainstream flows on and on without return or a re-run. We hope for maximum pleasantries and minimal interruptions. However, we must take life as it is given into our lap.

Our culture has its norms about

how to respond to the variables of life. One of those is to think a certain way about financial loss, the calamity that happens from an accident, or the fearsome reality that shows the presence of cancer. On top of that grief, remorse escalates for the one who has had a history of skepticism about every pothole in the road and every bird that flies over his head. Hiding a feeling of weakness while always presenting strength and confidence does not really show our trust in God. That kind of deportment can leave an uncertain assessment of who one is in reality.

Trying to be glad outside while being sad inside makes for a mixed-up life and an uncertain testimony.

The Bible instructs us to acknowledge our weaknesses. The psalmist said, “*Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am*” (Psalm 39:4). The list in Hebrews 11 cites the extremities of life experiences in the people of faith in the Old Testament. An amazing paradox is given by a number of instances when seeming defeat was turned by God into an eventual triumph, and losses were turned into gain. In the midst of these unusual feats in Hebrews 11 is the illustrative phrase (v. 34) “*out of weakness were made strong.*” Many of us know about the amazing grace of God within that parameter in our own lives and in others.

The Apostle Paul was discussing his many difficulties for the sake of the Gospel and then followed up with his vision of the third heaven and his subsequent thorn in the flesh. He attributed that bothersome thorn to be a tormenting instrument from Satan to distract him from his mission. “*For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly*

*therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (II Corinthians 12:8-10). The Lord told Paul that God’s strength is a divine process of developing perfection. In his characteristic optimism, Paul twice exuberates in a burst of joy, saying, “*Therefore I will glory in my infirmities*”, and repeats that idea again in announcing, “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities.*” Those two “therefores” relate to the mighty promise from the Lord couched in those six words as a power phrase from the very throne of God, “*My grace is sufficient for thee.*”*

The testimony of Scripture is an invitation to participate in that grace, which was manifested by Christ, and is now manifold in supply. That grace can alleviate our fears and displace our sorrows. It can remove our doubts and placate our anger. In its place, the grace of God can forgive our sins, minister to us with a renewed faith, and establish in us a large place of peace and rest. “Therefore, I (say this to yourself) take pleasure in my recent setbacks and in the recent prognosis of my health (or other losses).”

Paul further speaks of our future resurrection, specifically about the physical body being “sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power” (I Corinthians 15:43). In II Corinthians 13:4, Paul writes that though Jesus “was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God.” That weakness was assumed thus by earthly thought processes without the input of God’s will in that crucifixion. Therefore, Paul then says, “For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him in the power of God toward you.” Amazing, isn’t it?

It can be a cultural thing to feel a need to appear strong in unfavorable circumstances. In the face of a great loss by fire, we might feel the need to keep saying, “It is not that bad; I can handle it.” Or in the event of a devastating storm where the tornado destroyed the barn and some of the equipment, to deny sorrow over the large loss. Or to guard against shedding any tears in public because, “I am strong; I can bear it myself.” One time at a revival meeting, a respondent was weeping for her sins, wanting to make a confession and be free from her past. As the counselor approached her, she said, “Don’t cry.” She didn’t like being sad herself, and seeing someone else being broken and mourning was a sign of going in

the wrong direction.

Crying in that kind of circumstance is good—very good. Any contrition for our past carnality and selfishness and personal sin is desired by our Holy Lord God. Let the tears come, be afflicted and mourn and weep. It is time to confess our weaknesses and our unworthiness of His forgiveness and grace. Being broken in spirit is actually going in the right direction; it is the path of reconciliation with God. It is a divine balm for human grief.

My wife observed that our song leader who led the spirited singing at our spring ministers’ meeting had some tears in that one song. A few pastors in the past have felt so deeply about their messages that their preaching caused a few tears in their delivery. Mothers who give birth to their babies usually have many tears of great joy. Let Zion travail as she brings born-again sons and daughters into the Kingdom of God, and do so with tears of rejoicing. I am trying to manage my own tears as I write these lines. I often had tears in writing the N.T. commentary series, most notably while doing the special book on Revelation. Prophecies of the future for this world is a most-blessed emotional and spiritual meditative experience!

The Bottom Line is that the true

perspective of life is not a continual line of successes but a season of seeming failure at times. It is not an unbroken stream of fulfilled dreams, but life also brings the recess of disappointments. There are times when our prayers seem to be put on “back order,” as the term goes in mass marketing.

Weaknesses acknowledged are steadily alleviated by the grace of God but can be prolonged in duration by placing blame for them on others. Grief that is accepted as a part of the divine plan of God, is healed more quickly than casting them into a steaming pot of bitterness on a slow boil.



God’s Truth Abideth Still

By Adellé Andras

[I strode out of the Gnadenuhnten Museum in Ohio and onto the grassy lawn. I stopped at the mound and read the plaque. I felt heavy with the weight and yet joyful for the memorial’s reason—a reminder of the Gnadenuhnten Christians. I turned slowly, heading towards the corresponding monument. In my mind I had traveled back in time. I was a Moravian girl, walking to my home after visiting a friend, unknowing of how my life would end...]

In Pennsylvania...

Well, my children, I have an announcement to make. Quiet now, Beth, Thomas.” John looked lovingly upon his children. “Your mother and I have felt for some time that we should move to Ohio and have finally decided we will.”

“When, Dad?”

“What part of Ohio?”

“Why?”

“It will be so hard! Will none of our friends join us?”

The last question came from Suzannah, a lovely girl of 15 years.

“Let’s see. When? It will be in one week. We don’t have much to pack, and mustn’t pack much as it is. We would also not like to get stuck in snow on the way. What part? It will be southeastern Ohio.” Dad sighed and continued. “The why is a little more complicated. We feel God calling us there, first and foremost, second, there are enough Moravians here, and third, there is a Lenape Indian tribe there, a group of newly converted Christians, and they could use our help and encouragement.

“Suzannah, I know it will be hard for you. I am sure it will be hard for all of us, but submitting to God’s will

brings joy unbound. I don't think anyone will join us but there are families there already, and David Zeisberger has told me there is at least one girl you can make friends with!" Dad smiled encouragingly. He well knew a difficult battle was going on in his eldest daughter Suzannah's heart.

"Husband, if you think it is fine, I say we get to work immediately with the inside packing, and you may take Jonathon and Thomas to pack up the barn."

"Yes, my lass, that will work. All right, children, to work we go!"

As Suzannah worked on emptying her small closet shelf, her thoughts whirled. *I expected this would come before long once Mr. Zeisberger visited. At least I know he is very kind and caring. And he did say there was at least one other girl there. Indian, of course, but no matter.* She knew Indians here, and they were very pleasant!

A pang went through her heart as she thought about losing her friends and moving so far away from them. There was Elizabeth, and Mary, and Hannah... *What will they think when they hear I am moving to Indian territory? Will they think my dad is wild? Their dads never thought moving to the Lenapes was a good plan. Oh, Lord, Dad said if we accept Thy will, Thou wilt give us joy—oh, how did he say it? Joy unbound, yes. I want*

to accept Thy will. Ministering to the Indians will be a work for Thee, and I want to do it. Even if harm comes our way from other Indian tribes, we will be safe in Thee. Feeling that amazing joy, her small partitioned-off "room" was soon empty, except her cot and her main necessities. She stepped back and surveyed it long and hard. Wood plank floor, a small straw tick mattress, a small, low table, and a tiny window completed Suzannah's room—the room she would leave forever in just one week. She turned to go down to the kitchen, wiping a tear away.

The smell of stew in their big iron kettle quickened Suzannah's steps.

"Mother, what may I do to help?"

"Well, Suzannah," Mother paused, glancing intently into Suzannah's eyes. She had expected the move to be hard on her, but she seemed to be doing quite well. She brushed aside a strand of brown hair. "You may set the table, and ring the bell for the boys to come in."

Suzannah took the smooth wooden bowls off their shelf, and put them at their respective places. Next, she collected the tin silverware from its mug, and set them all around. How she enjoyed setting the table; she loved how neat and inviting it looked when she finished it. The cups had been cut out of dried gourds, a gift from Mr. Zeisberger when he last visited.

Clang, clang, sounded the old cowbell. Suzannah smiled as she heard her 10-year-old brother, Thomas, shout, “Dad, did you hear that? The dinner bell!” as he beelined it for the house.

Fourteen-year-old Jonathan loped his way in, in that relaxing way he always walked, different from the helter-skelter way some of their family walked.

After the prayer, everyone dug into the delicious squirrel stew.

“John, have you gotten much done in the barn?” His wife, also Suzannah, asked him.

“Yes, though I had forgotten how many started projects I had unfinished!” His sheepish grin set everyone to laughing. They all knew his tendency to start and forget to finish projects, especially when it came to his woodworking business.

The week flowed by much faster than everyone had first thought. All their friends and family came to say their farewells on the day before John and Suzannah’s departure.

“Oh, Suzannah, why did your dad get that outlandish idea in his head to move to the Lenape Indians?! They have David Zeisberger to look over them!”

“Yes, Mary, but Schoenbrunn is still a ways away from that tribe, and my parents feel God’s call! I do too,”

Suzannah added shyly.

“Well, we will miss you!” Elizabeth confirmed.

“It’s okay, Elizabeth, I am sure they will be back before too long. There are many wild Indians around there and no civilization...” Hannah’s voice trailed off.

Suzannah’s eyes filled with tears. They had always been pretty good friends, but when one did something the others could not do, competition arose. She excused herself and continued her goodbyes.

• • • • •

“Dad, this road is so bumpy!” Seven-year-old Beth exclaimed. She held on tighter to the side of the wagon and watched as Jonathon and Thomas herded the three sheep, two cows, and one sow they had brought along. “How much farther?”

“Well, my child, maybe an hour or two yet. Keep up your spirit!”

This was their second day of travel, and they were all tired. Though they had lived on the border line of Pennsylvania, their destination was far into Ohio.

Finally, the wagon rolled into a small village.

“Welcome, welcome!” A man with strong Indian features stepped out of the shadow of an oak. “We are so glad to see you! God bless you! Ah, you think I am strange in these English

clothes and with English words?” He laughed in such a friendly way that Suzannah’s whole family felt very comfortable. “The credit for that goes to Mr. Zeisberger. We all look this way and can speak English fairly well. I am Joshua.”

The family followed him, gazing curiously and smiling graciously at all the people he pointed out. They all looked so pleasant, and there were even a couple other English families from other Moravian communities! John and Mother Suzannah were so thankful.

“Here is the church,” their tour guide paused as he walked 50 feet more, “And here is where you will live. I hope it will work for you!”

The year was 1772. The sun was barely visible between the great towering oaks, which intensified the chill. Suzannah was glad to step into the shelter of their new home.

The cabin was small with chinked walls. There was a hole in the middle of the floor that went into the cellar. A loft was overhead, and Suzannah heard Dad say that two tiny rooms could be made there by hanging a thick curtain in the middle. One could be for Suzannah and Beth and the other for Jonathon and Thomas. John and Mother Suzannah would sleep on the main floor. Their table fit in the front corner, and a few little

shelves finished it off. A lean-to off the back was made into a make-shift kitchen and workshop for John.

As Suzannah surveyed everything, she felt very glad because everyone there was so nice, and their home wasn’t too bad. A bit of sadness clung to her joy, though. Their old home seemed so far away along with all their friends and family. “Well, I will simply make new friends here!” Suzannah resolved.

Weeks sped by. John and Mother Suzannah got to know the Indian ways of cooking, washing, building, etc., and the Indians learned some English ways. Mother Suzannah made friends quickly with all the Indian and English women. Eventually, everyone felt at home.

Though Gnadenhutten, which means tents of grace (as David Zeisberger and the Moravian community there decided to name it), was much smaller than the previous community they had been in, John and Suzannah enjoyed it perhaps more than their previous home.

“I feel as if I have lived here all my life, and I love the little Lenape traditions! Rebekah and Rachel are such good friends, better even than Hannah, Mary, or Elizabeth ever were,” Suzannah contemplated.

One day, David Zeisberger came to visit along with a few Indians from

his community, and Gnadenhutten had a Love Feast, which refreshed and inspired everyone.

Suzannah gave her life to her Lord that weekend as well, as she knew that was what God wanted of her.

“That Suzannah, she such joy around here! She help me do my washing, and corn grinding, and reads to me of Bible when I sick,” one elderly squaw commented to another as she watched Suzannah and her two closest friends linked arm-in-arm and striding along the hard-packed dirt road.

“When I gave my life to Jesus, I did not know so many little challenges would come. Did you, Suzannah?”

“Why, yes, I guess I did expect it a little, Rachel, for my parents always spoke very openly about the Christian life. It is wearying at times, though, isn’t it?”

“I like to think of Jesus up on the cross, like we have a picture of in our meeting house. He was tempted and tried and never gave in. Surely I can at least try,” Rebekah exclaimed.

One month melted into the next, and though life was difficult at times, Dad and Mother and their family were thankful and happy.

In their first July there, a baby was born to one of the other white families, which caused much excitement. The Lenape had never

seen an English baby!

“Mother, can you believe—it’s been one year since we arrived,” Dad calculated, almost marveling.

“Really, Dad? I really like it here. Do you, Suzannah?” Everyone laughed at Jonathon’s question; they knew Suzannah loved it there and had a special connection now that she had been baptized.

1774 carried with it a tragedy. The chief-like Joshua, who had been the first to welcome John’s family, passed on to his eternal reward.

In another year, the total population grew to over 200 persons, and there was much cause for rejoicing. The Moravians had trusted their God to provide a way for them when they had started the community in 1771, and everyone could see God’s hand caring for them.

John and Suzannah were pondering the tenth year of their stay at breakfast on March 7, 1782, when...

“John! Ho, John! Please come!” A tense voice shattered the peaceful stillness of that beautiful morning.

“My family, be strong in the Lord, whatever comes!” They had discussed the possibility of Indians raiding them and suspected that was happening now.

Suzannah and her mother gathered everyone around with the youngest, Beth, being 17. They lifted up their

(continued on page 22)

marriages

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

Burkholder-Gingerich

Bro. Gary, son of Barbara and the late Paul Burkholder, Rochester, IN, and Sis. Elizabeth, daughter of Mary and the late Joe Gingerich, Plain City, OH, on August 13, 2022, at United Bethel Church for Bethesda Fellowship by Elmer Stoltzfus.

Hochstetler-Graber

Bro. Tyler, son of Phil and Rachel Hochstetler, Angola, IN, and Sis. Danae, daughter of Laura and the late Raymond Graber, Amboy, IN, on April 12, 2022, at Bethany Church by Darlton Bontrager.

Kauffman-Schmucker

Bro. Matthias, son of J. Timothy and Ruth Kauffman, Reedsville, PA, and Sis. Vienna, daughter of Andrew and Jolynn Schmucker, Guys Mills, PA, on June 25, 2022, at Plainview Gospel Fellowship by Tim Schlabach.

Miller-Stutzman

Bro. Caleb, son of Andy and Naomi Miller, Stone Creek, OH, and Sis. Ashley, daughter of Galen and Rhonda Stutzman, Plain City, OH, on August 6, 2022, at Grace Evangelical Church for Bethesda Fellowship by Elmer Stoltzfus.

Miller-Troyer

Bro. Keith, son of Howard and Catherine Miller, Advance, MO, and Sis. Bethany, daughter of Melvin and Lois Troyer, Advance, MO, on July 8, 2022, at First United Methodist Church for Crowley's Ridge Mennonite Church by Ethan Stutzman.

Steiner-Rohrer

Bro. Norman, son of Kenneth and Susan Steiner, Paynesville, MN, and Sis. Jerlene, daughter of Ernest and Sharon Rohrer, Grove City, MN, on August 12, 2022, at Evangelical Free Church for Believer's Fellowship Mennonite Church by Glen Chupp.

Schlabach-Caamaño

Bro. Kegan, son of David and Marilyn Schlabach, Kokomo, IN, and Sis. Priscilla, daughter of Luis and Nadia Caamaño, Rio Cuarto, Costa Rica, on June 4, 2022, in Costa Rica by Arlin Beachy.

Stoltzfus-Wingard

Bro. Anthony, son of Steven and Linda Stoltzfus, Bridgeton, NJ, and Sis. Melissa, daughter of Christopher and Ruth Wingard, Hartville, OH, on May 21, 2022, at Bethany Mennonite Church for Hartville Conservative Mennonite by Eugene Sommers.

When life becomes fragile, friendships become an even greater treasure.

-Anya Hursh, Ukraine



Troyer-Stutzman

Bro. Randall, son of David and Leona Troyer, Sugarcreek, OH, and Sis. Monica, daughter of Miriam and the late Leon Stutzman, Leon, IA, on December 11, 2021, at Salem Mennonite Church by Henry Miller.

Yutzy-Yoder

Bro. Caleb, son of Eli and Mary Yutzy, Leon, IA, and Sis. Rebekah, daughter of Myron and Vera Yoder, Leon, IA, on May 28, 2022, at Salem Mennonite Church by Henry Miller.



cradle roll

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

Bontrager, Ryan and Jeanine (Beachy), Grabill, IN, third child, second son, Michael Hans, July 10, 2022.

Brenneman, Paul Mark and Irene (Plett), Wooster, OH, third child, second son, Jethro Philip, August 4, 2022.

Eash, Gabriel and Heidi (Wadel), Plain City, OH, sixth child, third son, Marcus Noah, August 18, 2022.

Fisher, Merle and Stephanie (Byler), Lott, TX, second child and daughter, Olivia Kate, June 30, 2022.

Graber, Weston and Esther (Zook), Amboy, IN, fifth child, third son, Elliot Ray, December 4, 2021.

Helmuth, Tyson and Treva (Herschberger), Lovington, IL, seventh child, fourth daughter, Marla Joy, May 11, 2022.

Kanagy, Tony and Marla (Troyer), Bittering, MD, second child, first son, Jack Archer, August 11, 2022.

Kauffman, Curtis and Kelly (Shenk), Leon, IA, fifth child, third son, Treyvon Jude, August 17, 2022.

Kauffman, Rylan and Brianna (Hochstetler), Ft. Wayne, IN, first child and daughter, Isabella Grace, July 27, 2022.

Miller, Clayton and Angela (Helmuth), Plain City, OH, second child and son, Collin John, August 2, 2022.

Miller, Danny and Katrina (Smucker), Russellville, KY, first child and daughter, Isla Rae, June 23, 2022.

Miller, Darin and Margaret (Yoder), Lovington, IL, fifth child, fourth daughter, Jessica Dawn, June 10, 2022.

Miller, Kenny and Renae (Miller), Dundee, OH, second child and daughter, Laura Elise, July 21, 2022.

Miller, Laban and Lori (Martin), Leon, IA, first child and son, Jackson Wade, May 5, 2022.



Miller, Lyndon and Lynette (Derstine), Paynesville, MN, second child and son, Destin Blake, August 9, 2022.

Petersheim, Andrew and Marjorie (Stoltzfus), Gap, PA, fourth child, second daughter, Caroline Anne, August 17, 2022.

Schrock, Galen and Carrie (Herschberger), Tuscola, IL, second child, first daughter, Evelyn Rayne, July 14, 2022.

Stoltzfus, Dave and Rachel (Nissley), Advance, MO, second child and son, Alex Rhyce, May 23, 2022.

Stoltzfus, Mervin and Katy (Troyer), Advance, MO, fifth child and daughter, Victoria Jade, August 22, 2022.

Troyer, Christian and Jennica (Brubaker), Millersburg, OH, first child and daughter, Kayleigh Sage, July 30, 2022.

Troyer, Floyd and Rosemary, Kokomo, IN, fifth child, fourth son, Trenton Luke, January 7, 2022.

Troyer, Samuel and Charissa (Stoltzfus), Plain City, OH, fourth child, first son, Easton José, August 4, 2022.

Troyer, Stan and Melissa (Miller), Advance, MO, sixth child, fourth son, Zachary Clark, May 11, 2022.

Wright, Barrett and Marla (Martin), Orange, VA, fourth child and son, Hudson Oak, August 2, 2022.

Yoder, Dave and Audrey (Overholt), Montezuma, GA, fifth and sixth children, second son, fourth daughter, Kendrick Zane and Kara Danae, July 13, 2022.



There is no footprint so
small that it cannot leave an
imprint on this world.

obituaries

Fisher, Noah Zane, five months, of Lott, TX, passed peacefully from the arms of his parents into the loving arms of Jesus on June 24, 2022. He was born at home in Lott, TX, to Josiah and Janell (Stoltzfus) Fisher on January 8, 2022.

Noah will be remembered for his soft, gentle cuddles and his exceptionally calm and patient personality. His short little life was a source of faith building and

inspiration for everyone who knew him. The many miracles that God performed from his 20-week ultrasound to the moment of his death brought much comfort and peace and firm assurance that God's plan for Noah was divine.

He was surrounded with much love and care. His favorite place on this earth was in the caring arms of those who loved him. His most exciting time of the

day was when he could hear his daddy's voice calling to him after his arrival home from work. If Noah was restless during the day, simply hearing his daddy's voice on the phone brought comfort to him.

Noah is survived by his parents, sister, Elizabeth, grandparents: Lee and Sadie Fisher, Lott; Ivan and Barbie Ann Stoltzfus, New Holland, PA; aunts, uncles, cousins, great-grandparents, and numerous great-aunts and great-uncles.

He was preceded in death by four great-grandparents, several great-aunts, great-uncles, and cousins.

The funeral service was held June 26, 2022, at Faith Mennonite Fellowship. Burial followed in Poole Cemetery near Lott.

Miller, Edna Mae, 76, of Decatur, IA, passed away August 14, 2022, at her home surrounded by family. Edna bravely fought her short battle of cancer for six weeks. She was born April 12, 1946, to John and Sylvia Yutzy in Thomas, OK. On December 27, 1968, she married Paul Miller.

Edna accepted Christ as her Savior and was baptized as a youth at Zion Mennonite Church in Thomas, OK. She moved to Leon, IA, with her family in 1965, joined Leon Salem Mennonite Church and was a faithful member until her death.

She owned and operated Yutzy's Greenhouse in Decatur which she started with her mother in 1975. Her goal in business was to serve her customers with honesty and integrity. She loved her

family dearly and enjoyed playing games with her grandchildren. She enjoyed birds, flowers, and trips to the zoo.

She is survived by her children: Vivian Kay (Ken) Riehl, Dundee, NY; Vesta Renae (Lavon) Bontrager, Kalona; Verlin Ray (Sharon), Decatur; grandchildren, Jaydon (Janaya), Vanessa, Kendall, Kevin, Javon, Vonda Riehl; Tiffany, Cameron, Nicky (Lisa), Kierra Bontrager; Derek, Karson, and Alexa Miller; brother, Ray (Bertha) Yutzy, Kalona; and nieces and nephews: Nelson (Diane) Yutzy, Floyd (Elaine) Yutzy, Gloria (Johnny) Stoltzfus, and Teresa (Aaron) Wagler.

She was predeceased by her parents and husband.

The funeral was held August 17, 2022, at Leon Salem Mennonite Church with Monroe Gingerich officiating. Interment followed in the church cemetery with Henry Miller serving.

Mast, Joshua Cade, three days, Drasco, AR, died in his mother's arms on August 12, 2022, at the Children's Hospital in Little Rock, AR. He was born on August 9, 2022, to Lyndall and Carla Mast.

Joshua will be missed by his parents, sisters: Allison, AnnaKate, and Cassidy; grandparents: Robert and Katie Byler, and Stanley and Edna Mast; great-grandparents, and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

A memorial service was held August 14, 2022, at Friendship Cemetery in Drasco with Carl Gingerich officiating.



Peachey, Linda E., 104, of Belleville, PA, passed away July 4, 2022, at her niece's home in McVeytown. She was born August 8, 1917, in Belleville to the late Joseph Y. and Fannie (Renno) Peachey.

Linda was baptized in her youth and was a member of Valley View A. M. Church.

She is survived by her nieces and nephews: Mary (Sherle) Wert, Belleville; Sara Ann (Levi) Peachey, McVeytown; Arlene Peachey, Lewisburg; Rebecca Peachey, Belleville; Joe Peachey, Belleville; Leroy (Sally) Peachey, Lewistown; Dave Peachey, MI; and Lester (Shirley) Peachey, Belleville.

Linda was the last of her immediate family and was preceded in death by brothers, Aaron J. and an infant, sisters, Leah R. Peachey and Elsie M. Peachey, and two nephews, Jess Peachey and Lewis Peachey.

The funeral was held July 7, 2022, at Valley View A. M. Church with Earl Peachey and Loren Yoder officiating. Burial was at the Locust Grove Cemetery with Jesse Zook serving.

Yoder, Maynard, 75, of Leon, IA, passed away February 2, 2022, at Westview Acres Nursing Home in Leon. He was born November 30, 1946, to Moses and Cora Yoder in Kalona, IA.

He accepted Christ and was baptized in his youth. He was a member of Leon Salem Mennonite Church.

He had many friends and will be missed by all.

Maynard is survived by siblings: Enos (Esther), Leon; Jacob (Esther), Kalona; Pauline (Perry) Bontrager, Kalona; Moses, Jr. (Ruth), LaMont, MO; Norman, Thompsonville, IL; Jonas (Linda), Leon; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and an infant brother, Jerry.

The funeral was held at Leon Salem Mennonite Church on February 6, 2022, with Norman Troyer officiating. Interment followed in the church cemetery with Henry Miller serving.

Yoder, Verna, 98, of Abbeville, SC, passed away on April 27, 2022, surrounded by her family. She was born in Burton, OH, to Harvey and Fannie (Hershberger) Byler. She was married to Henry M. Yoder.

Verna was the oldest member of Cold Spring Mennonite Church.

She is survived by her children: Ivan (Marilyn); Julian (Elsie); Laura (late Raymond) Graber; Barbara (Henry Jr.) Hershberger, and Juanita Yoder; 17 grandchildren, and 62 great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by a son, Melvin, a brother, Clarence H. Byler, a sister, Katherine B. Yoder, and a great-grandson, Zaden Ebersole.

The funeral was held at Cold Spring Mennonite Church on May 1, 2022, with Steve Swartzentruber and Merl Beiler serving. Interment followed in the church cemetery.



In days gone by, debts acquired pursuing higher education were regarded by financial advisors as prudent debt since the debt came with the expectation of greater earning capacity. Over a lifetime it was assumed that the greater earning would more than pay for the cost of the education needed to achieve that earning potential. However, the rising cost of college education alongside growing economic uncertainty, make student debt more problematic all the time. The economic turbulence, associated with the pandemic of the last several years, has shone an ever-brighter light on the ever-growing problem of student debt.

Many parents are still paying off student debt at the same time they are trying to pay for their children's college education which amounts to a cycle of ongoing multi-generational student debt. As of 2015, the average college graduate under age 40 was paying just over \$400 a month to retire student debt. This is similar to an additional mortgage payment, except that this one doesn't have any collateral.

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President Biden created some waves in August when he signed an

executive order providing \$10,000-\$20,000 debt relief for college graduates who do not earn more than \$125,000 per year. Since this was an executive order, it didn't pass the House and Senate. This fact alone gives rise to some questions regarding the legality of this provision.

While the response has been mixed, the recipients are mostly glad for the relief. But some are left frustrated. Some are frustrated that the debt-relief amount isn't higher. Some are frustrated because they scraped, saved, and did without in order to pay off their debt. So, they don't get any help if their debt is paid. Others cast a wary eye toward inflation numbers to see if this might not accelerate inflation. Biden's political opponents chalk this up to election-year theatrics.

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Generally speaking, those earning a living in our circles fall into one of two broad classes of people. Most of us are either wage or salary-earning employees or we are business owners. In a broad and general sense, those who earn a salary or a wage operate in a market in which higher education means higher earning potential. In many cases, it isn't possible to secure

employment without, at minimum, a high-school diploma or equivalent. Operating and owning a business in our circles isn't very dependent on one's formal education. Is it any wonder that in cultural contexts such as ours, there seems to be an inversely proportional relationship between an emphasis on the need for higher learning and an emphasis on business ownership?

Oftentimes those wage and salary earners in our circles are employed at businesses owned and operated by brothers in the church. I'd like to make a few general observations that don't apply equally to all situations. But I wonder if some of us wouldn't do well to give some of these things a bit more thought.

Our churches and communities have been and continue to be tremendously blessed by businesses that are owned and operated by those with whom we share the pews. I believe the Lord is glorified when His children live as careful stewards of what He has entrusted to our care. I see a lot of evidence that many of the business owners in our circles take this privilege and responsibility quite seriously. It seems to me that successful business owners enjoy a high level of respect in our circles. I add my respect and appreciation to that of others.

It is not quite as evident to me that in some cases the career employees are regarded with the respect that some reserve for business owners. In some conversations I've participated in, it seems as if a certain assumption exists for some, that if a person works for someone else, it must mean that he isn't a good manager, is lazy, or possesses some other trait of inferiority. Wherever these sentiments exist, a person whose gifts and skills are not well-suited to management and ownership of businesses, often finds himself at the margins of the community. Is it surprising for an employee in this type of environment to ask himself, "Is there room for me here? Do I fit here?"

The ones in the community who are the successful business owners often employ these folks. In some cases the business is either unable or unwilling to provide sufficient wages to make long-term employment a viable option. Add into the equation that those who regard employee status as inferior, often regard with disapproval or suspicion the individual who seeks higher education in order to increase the earning opportunities. These factors have the potential of creating a self-perpetuating vortex in which successful businesses operated by

our people employ some of our people, at wages making long-term employment difficult.

Within the last year, my wife and I attended an Anabaptist Financial seminar for business owners. I was really blessed by so much of what was presented that day by a variety of people. This event is but one among many that demonstrates a growing awareness among our people regarding the opportunities and responsibilities that grow along with growing financial resources. At that seminar we heard emphasis on careful stewardship, respecting and valuing employees, advancing God's Kingdom through finances, Christlike relationships, and much more. I came away encouraged and heard similar sentiments from various attendees. I really appreciate the work of AF in cultivating stewardship and financial awareness in our circles.

I realize there is some risk in attempting to give audience to some of these observations. I suppose that some people might see this as being unnecessarily negative and not representing things as they are. I also realize that I've been employed by various folks. I regard those opportunities that I've had as blessings and privileges. I also feel I grew up in a setting that valued a

diversity of gifts and income-earning models. I appreciate all of that. I do not wish to foster an attitude of reproach and scrutiny towards one another, especially since many of you are doing very well in these areas.

However, this doesn't change my perception that some of these things do constitute areas of need for growth for some of us. In some cases that need is highlighted in our attitudes and our hearts and how we treat our brothers and sisters in Christ. In other cases it touches how we treat others as employees and employers.

I shouldn't leave this subject without acknowledging that in my encouragement to vest employees among us with appropriate dignity and respect, I haven't stressed the need for employees to be valuable to their employers. While that is an entirely legitimate emphasis, it wasn't the focus of these comments.




In August of this year, Toyota demonstrated to media observers a feature that they are working on which they are calling "hitch-less towing." The demonstration involved a Toyota Sienna minivan being "towed" by another Toyota Sienna minivan. Both vehicles were equipped with sensors that kept the following van a certain distance behind the lead vehicle. Lane changes, stops and corners

performed by the following vehicle closely mimicked those actions of the lead vehicle, almost as if it had been physically tethered to the vehicle it was following. Toyota didn't explain what level of power is needed in the trailing vehicle for this to function as designed. Given that vehicles that need to be towed often lack either the power or the wheels to operate, it isn't clear how useful this feature actually would be in situations where towing is necessary.

• • • • •

The vehicles I own and drive are not very new and don't have many "bells and whistles." So, when I drove a rental car in the last year or so, I was surprised by a few of the features. When I wandered too close to the center line or the outside edge of the lane, my steering wheel vibrated with a virtual rumble strip warning. The road I was on didn't have real rumble strips. The car provided me with a very slight steering wheel nudge toward the center of my lane in addition to

the rumble strip feature. However, it let me cross the center line without that vibration if I activated the turn signal beforehand. I also noted that I was losing speed despite having the cruise control set. That was a feature that prevented me from following the car ahead of me too closely. When I changed to the passing lane, my car immediately sped up to the cruise control setting.

It is not difficult to understand that these features are designed to provide additional safety for those riding in the vehicle as well as those sharing the road with them. However, I sometimes wonder what the long-term effect will be on drivers who become accustomed to corrective intervention when that corrective intervention disappears or malfunctions. As drivers, are we safer if we depend on electronic gadgetry to monitor ever-changing road and traffic conditions than if we drive without those safety aids? 

God's Truth Abideth Still (continued from pg. 13)

voices in prayer and supplication as John headed out the door to see what Mr. Roth needed.

Suzannah snuck a look out the small window, and gasped. "An American militia group is here, Mother. At least half of us will be

saved, since so many went to collect provisions from other communities and won't be back for at least a week more," she added quietly.

An hour or two later when the door swung open, everyone pulled in their breath, but it was only John.

“My family, be strong. The militia out there is sure we are spies or thieves or something of the sort and have decided to kill us all in the morning. I requested that we have the night to prepare for death, and they agreed. A few of us brethren got together and decided we will separate our women and men. We will spend the time fasting, praying, and singing.” A long silence followed. Everyone wept quietly, but no one doubted the Lord’s will.

“It’s almost funny, Dad. A few years back I would have gotten out my musket, riled together all the men, and fought, and I know we could do much hurt to that small militia group, but I have no desire. Rather, I wish to die for my Lord and hope others will learn of this and turn to God in repentance.”

The sincerity in Jonathon’s voice, and the will to do all he could all the way to the end—for Christ Jesus—inspired them all.

“Good bye, my lass and my sweet daughters, Suzannah and Beth. We will meet you in heaven.”

“Good bye, Dad, Jonathon, and Thomas!”

Their voices choked. This was certainly the most difficult trial they had been through, but what joy they felt. They would meet again in heaven! God’s will was sure and intended for their good. They knew

He was watching over them.

The women and children filed into the meeting house, and the men to Dad John and Mother Suzannah’s home.

The American militiamen sat outside around campfires and were startled to see the men and women separate, but if that wasn’t enough, the soon-to-be-massacred had begun singing, and some seemed to be praying. There was no screaming, no fighting back. The soldiers were surprised. They had seen the guns in every home and knew they could fight. One said in a gruff voice, “They must have gone mad!”

Another replied, “I happen to think they haven’t,” just as the faithful Moravian group broke into the moving hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

Ninety-six faithful, persevering Moravian men, women, and children were brutally killed on March 8, 1782, in Gnadenhutten, Ohio, by an American militia group.

We need not be discouraged though, for what a great victory for Christ it was, as the famous hymn reads. And truly, our God abideth still!

[Author’s note: A true happening; the John and Suzannah family are fictional characters.]



GNADENHUETTEN MASSACRE.

Alas! alas! for treachery! the boasting white men came
With weapons of destruction,—the sword of lurid flame;
And while the poor defenceless ones together bowed in prayer,
Unpitied they smote them while kneeling meekly there.

The cry of slaughter'd innocence went loudly up to heaven;
And can ye hope, ye murdering bands, ever to be forgiven?
We know not,—yet we ween for you the latest lingering prayer
That trembled on your victims lips, was, "God, forgive and spare!"

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Martin Luther

A mighty fortress is our God, a
bulwark never failing:

Our helper, He, amid the flood of
mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe doth seek
to work us woe;

His craft and pow'r are great, and
armed with cruel hate,

On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing;

Were not the right Man on our
side, the Man of God's own choosing.

Dost ask who that may be? Christ
Jesus, it is He;

Lord Sabaoth is His name, from age
to age the same,

And He must win the battle.

And tho' this world, with devils
filled, should threaten to undo us;

We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.

The prince of darkness grim, we
tremble not for him;

His rage we can endure, for lo! his
doom is sure,

One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly
pow'rs—no thanks to them—abideth;

The Spirit and the gifts are ours
through Him Who with us sideth.

Let goods and kindred go, this
mortal life also;

The body they may kill: God's truth
abideth still,

His kingdom is forever.



October's Bright Blue Weather

O suns and skies and clouds of June, and flowers of June together,
Ye cannot rival for one hour, October's bright blue weather.

When loud the bumblebee makes haste, belated, thriftless vagrant,
And goldenrod is dying fast, and lanes with grapes are fragrant;

When gentians roll their fringes tight, to save them for the morning,
And chestnuts fall from satin burrs, without a sound of warning;

When on the ground red apples lie, in piles like jewels shining,
And redder still on old stone walls, are leaves of woodbine twining;

When all the lovely wayside things, their white-winged seeds are sowing,
And in the fields, still green and fair, late aftermaths are growing;

When springs run low, and on the brooks, in idle golden freighting,
Bright leaves sing noiseless in the hush, of woods, for winter waiting;

When comrades seek sweet country haunts, by twos and twos together,
And count like misers, hour-by-hour, October's bright blue weather.

O suns and skies and flowers of June, count all your boasts together,
Love loveth best of all the year, October's bright blue weather.

Helen Hunt Jackson
[Public domain]

Pastor Appreciation Month

Alfredo Mullet, Chilton, TX

Pray daily for him, his wife, and his children.

Ask God to shower him with divine strength

So he can faithfully fulfill his sacred calling

To administrate the affairs of the church, for

One day he must render a full account to the

Righteous Judge for the manner in which he

Shepherded the holy flock of the Living God.

Allow him some room to be a flesh and blood

Person. Whenever you deem it necessary to

Point out some unseemly words or behavior, be

Really careful to do so with a respectful attitude.

Endear him to yourself and show how much you

Care about him individually. Be ready to help him

In carrying out his responsibility by accepting his

Authority over you. Remember that someday you

Too will be required to give a complete report

In front of the same Judge for the management

Of the stewardship He personally entrusted to you.

Never lay blame on him for your lack of spirituality.

Make it a habit to greet his wife and children.

Offer yourself and your resources to meet their

Needs. Encourage him in his continual labors

Through notes, e-mails, text messages, etc. Never

Hesitate to express your love and affection to him.

Sisters, Stitches, and Sewings

Lydia Nissley, Catlett, VA

Do you need a challenge? Could we sisters in the Lord help Christian Aid Ministries reach their goal of 100,000 comforters in 2022? In their annual report magazine they showed a graph with the amount of comforters given since 2018. In 2021 it was around 67,000. Can we reach 100,000?

I enjoy piecing comforters. Sometimes I use three-inch blocks made into a nine-inch patch. You can use eight-inch blocks pieced together in a “trip-around-the-world” pattern. You can also use blocks just pieced randomly. If you do that, alternating light and dark colors makes it prettier. They take any size from crib to full size.


Some ladies love to cut patches. Others finish the comforters by taking them home and binding them. One lady buys new sheets and uses a sheet on the bottom and on the top and knots them together with batting in between. Or she buys good sheets at the thrift stores and knots them. They need to be good sheets. Darker linings are better.

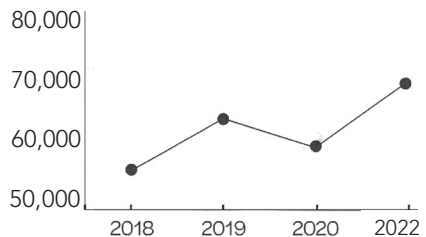
Knotting comforters is a good project for youth or families. We have two quilt frames and the girls pin the comforters in the frame and then

the boys do the stitching, cutting, and knotting. One of the youth girls threads the needles with the correct color of yarn so the boys don't need to do the threading. It's a fun thing to do. End the evening with a meal and fellowship, and yes, “Let's do it again.”

Maybe your Sewing Circle does a lot of quilting. How about doing more comforters? The girls can stand and knot, and the older ladies can sit and sew. There are various patterns and colors. Make it pretty. Don't you suppose refugee women or families whose houses are cold also love beauty?

Here is Christian Aid Ministries' graph showing the number of comforters donated. Can we get it to 100,000?

[The people in Ukraine will very likely face extra hardships in the coming winter with the ongoing war. There are various groups available to share materially or financially with those in need. AY] 



Show me the way

NOT TO FORTUNE AND FAME,
NOT HOW TO WIN LAURELS
OR PRAISE FOR MY NAME—

BUT SHOW ME THE WAY
To spread “The Great Story”

THAT THINE IS THE KINGDOM
AND POWER AND GLORY.

—Helen Steiner Rice

We are silent at the beginning of the day because
God should have the first word,
and we are silent before going to sleep because
the last word also belongs to God.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer



We should be careful to get out of an
experience only the wisdom that is
in it—and stop there; lest we be
like the cat that sits down on a hot
stove lid. She will never sit down
on a hot stove lid again—and
that is well; but also she will never
sit down on a cold one anymore.

—MARK TWAIN



Paul's Weeping Heart for His People

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

It is clear in Romans 9-11 the Apostle Paul is writing about his own brethren, the Jewish people: “my kinsmen according to the flesh” (9:3b). He speaks from a heavy, sorrowful heart and prays continually that they might be saved (9:1,2; 10:1). Paul continues with his message on Jewish evangelism: “Hath God cast away his people?” The question is asked in such a way that he expected a negative answer: “God forbid.” That is to emphatically say, **perish the thought!** “For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew” (11:1, 2a).

In Isaiah 40:1-2, we read how we are to speak and what we are to say to the lost among the Jewish people and all people: “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” (NIV).

• • • • •

Speak Tenderly to Jerusalem

[Name withheld for the author’s safety]

As an extremely insular people group, the Orthodox Jewish communities seem to stand as unapproachable islands in a sea of secular culture in this city. Looking in from outside, a feeling of intimidation can rise unbidden: the long black coats, the zeal in which the Law is followed, the rushed walking, the bent heads, and the devotion to God and Torah study. These observations contribute to the feeling that the Jewish people are far out of reach, yet God has opened doors for us in amazing ways.

I have had the privilege of working in an Orthodox home for the last year and a half, and in this time I’ve made an important discovery. Behind the tough exterior, both real and perceived, they are people just like you and me! They laugh and cry, argue and share concerns, love and despair, and like all of us, are on a search for peace, satisfaction, and fulfillment. It becomes clear that the Jewish people are not only sinners in need of a Savior, but also in desperate need of a personal relationship with their Father in Heaven and for the Holy Spirit to bring conviction and

truth. Through the power of God and fervent prayer in removing strongholds, our presence in the community and our spoken testimony, we believe that God will do and is doing great things among our Jewish brothers and sisters!

“Chaya” is an elderly Orthodox woman struggling to regain the use of her physical abilities after an accident. As a mother of nine and grandmother of 36, she is surrounded by family. I have observed their close and affectionate relationships and am reminded that wherever human life is treasured and valued, there is great beauty and God is honored. Unfortunately, even in the midst of this beauty, darkness is also present. In her desperate search for healing she delves deeply into dark energy sources, where witchcraft, Kabbalah (a Jewish mystical tradition), occult therapies, and remedies are part of normal everyday life. The fear present in her life and the manifestations of the demonic world are so clearly evident and when questioned about the involvement in some of these dark activities, her only reply was that as long as the rabbi says it’s okay, then it is okay.

The blind following of rabbinic interpretation can seem impenetrable, and sadly this does not seem to be an isolated case. In the

deadness of law and performance, a search for life and light can seem to become an obsession and many turn to witchcraft, Kabbalah, and other sources of counterfeit light. In all this, we realize that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, and it is only through the power of prayer that these strongholds can crumble and be defeated.


It is also astonishing what God can do when we are willing to go outside of our comfort zones, whether it is going directly into a dark place or taking a leap and inviting someone into our home. One day as I was with “Chaya” in the synagogue, the oppression felt almost overwhelming and as I struggled to breathe well, I pulled up Scripture on my phone. As I was reading, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.....the same was in the beginning with God,”* an Orthodox woman came up to me and said, “I can tell you are a good person just by looking at your face. We have a Hebrew word for it, which means that it comes from within.” I marveled later that at my absolute lowest when I had nothing, absolutely nothing on my own strength, God was present and was shining His light.

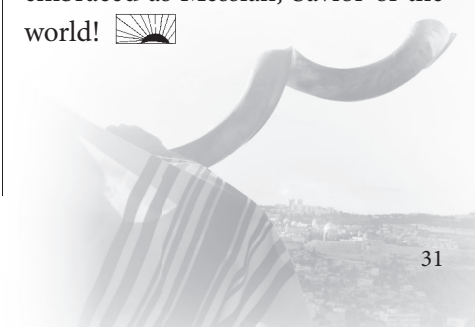
“Hannah” has been a frequent visitor in one of our homes. She shared that time with her family can

seem stressful, and she is so grateful that in this particular home there is peace and she can relax and rest. To see a husband and wife and children all operating out of the presence of Jesus and love for each other left a big impression on her heart. We pray that she will one day see the truth of Who Jesus can be for her. Stories abound of my teammates and me getting questions and comments, “Are you always this happy? Your home is so peaceful.” Or my favorite, “I know that I can trust an Amish person because I can just feel God!” In our presence, in our lives, as we live here among the Jewish people, the Gospel is being shown even when no words are spoken.

In a people group that has already decided in no uncertain terms that Jesus is not for them, do we ever get to share about Him? Is there any openness at all? Are we just wasting our time? “Mandy” was a visitor in one of our homes and after the visit expressed amazement at the peace and beauty that she experienced. Through this conversation, the Gospel was clearly shared that it is through Jesus and Jesus alone that we can experience this peace and joy. While we don’t know what “Mandy” will do with this straightforward message, we pray that God will work in her life and open her heart.

The responses, however, do vary. One elderly woman spoke to me on the street and in the course of conversation I shared that I am a follower of Jesus. Instantly a wall seemed to go up and while the conversation moved on to other things, that specific door seemed to shut with finality. In another instance while sharing an aspect of servanthood, the response was only, “That is so beautiful!” We praise God for these opportunities to speak boldly!

To have this group of people so close to the Gospel, in such proximity to God’s Word, and yet so very far away can feel heartrending. I am reminded of Jesus: *“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes...You did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you”* (Luke 19:42, 44 NIV). As we remove strongholds through prayer, and by living and working in this community and speaking the Gospel, pray that Jesus will be magnified and embraced as Messiah, Savior of the world! 



Show and Tell (Part 1 of 2)

Susan Schlabach, Ripley, OH



Grandma, tell me a story about when you were a little girl," begs this slip of a girl, the pajama-clad daughter of my daughter. I don't believe she is only trying to put off going to sleep, but her rapt attention as I tell of mud and mischief shows me how much it matters. Her small brain is processing the fact that this gray-haired grandma disobeyed her mama and ended up with a blister on her toe. Still pensive, tomorrow she will likely ask, "Grandma, can I see the scar on your toe? How long did you cry when the gravy burned your toe?"

Night after night my husband tucked our sons into bed with stories of his own. Eventually they asked for repeats. "Tell us the turtle story, or when you didn't do your chores." Interestingly, their favorites were the naughty ones, the scary and muddy adventures. I ponder, should there be deeper motivation to tell our stories than our children's entertainment?

God's Word answers that question. *Israel was instructed to tell the stories of God's provision to their children.* That's how the next generation

learned Who God was and how He miraculously provided for His people. They learned what it meant to be the chosen people. Do you suppose that hearing about the Red Sea crossing gave courage to scores of Israelite children years later? I love to picture Adam telling Methuselah about naming the animals in the Garden of Eden, and about the first time he laid eyes on Eve. Then Methuselah told Shem and Shem told Abraham! The people-bridges were few because these men lived such long lives. The Bible shows that this parade of stories also included the *muddy* ones, the disobedient ones, and the consequences.

Jesus told stories. Jewish scholars tell us that myriads of stories were passed around in Jesus' time; relayed, echoed, and immortalized by rabbis. Jesus would take those familiar stories and add His divine twist to them, teaching the truth of the new dispensation. For example, they were used to the story about the prodigal son, but Jesus added the distressed elder brother. In the middle of His storytelling Jesus also commanded, "Be like children." In the sense of liking a good story,

we're childlike for sure. I think we have some default settings that are childlike whether we want to be or not. We've all witnessed a drowsy congregation jerking to attention as soon as the speaker announces, "Let me illustrate with a story."

Remember Show and Tell from grade school days? I thought that getting to tell my own story was more exciting than listening to the boys' BB gun stories. Later, as the teacher, I curtailed the tsunami of stories that would have overflowed the textbook learning had I allowed them to be in charge. My daughter once took her 24-hour-old baby brother to Show and Tell. Her proud showing did the telling that day. Today, I watch a roomful of adults rivaling and relating accounts, some interrupting, in an effort to surpass the first story, and I decide we're all just grown-up children.

Tell your story in big and small ways. Not only does story time happen at bedtime, but as we snap beans, as we travel, and as our children sit alongside while we converse with older friends. Stories can be told in more ways than just words. A young couple, with the help of a small photo album, chronicles answers to prayer. As the years unfold, their children (and others) page through and learn about the mystery check that appeared in the mail, the job

that emerged out of nowhere when work was slack, a preemie's birth, and more. Photo books are excellent ways of bridging gaps from the past to now. (Label and caption the photos more than you think necessary today, because you stand more chance of forgetting details than you think.) Immortalize important events for your grandchildren's enjoyment through photos and take time to page through these volumes with them. If you kept a diary as a youth, bring those out for story time now and then. Your children will love it! Make a big deal out of ways God met your family in times of need. Boast on God's provision, something like the lines of Exodus 15:21 where Miriam gathered the ladies together and they sang, "*Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea!*"

Read the stories aloud. Early in our child-rearing days my husband and I had the opportunity to attend the *Parenting Adolescents* seminar at Penn Valley. One of the speakers extolled the value of reading books to your children collectively, even long after they are able to read themselves. We benefitted from that advice and took the opportunity to insert into our children's minds stories about Anabaptist history that they might not have picked up on

their own. I know of a homeschooled youth who was challenged (and rewarded) by his parents for reading through the *Martyr's Mirror*. Another homeschooling mother gave her students high school credits for reading *Unser Leit*.

Make a family tradition of show and tell when someone comes home from time away, travels, or Bible school. On the first evening at home or soon after, gather around the teller, look at the pictures, and ask for the stories. That exchange of information is invaluable,

for those who stayed at home as well as for the one who was gone. I grieve for the young person who comes home after some time away and there is no one who shows interest.

Education theorist Susanne Johnson wrote: *When we remember, we do so in stories. There is no way to convey who we are, or for our children to grasp who they are, without telling and living our story. Our self-identity, our character as a community is rooted in story, unfolded through story, and changed through story.*

[To be continued]



junior messages

The Angel's Kiss

Darlene (Byler) Sommers, Burlington Junction, MO

John and Dena Byler, an elderly couple, had traveled the long journey to Mexico for surgery. Dena was not well and needed surgery soon.

Before surgery, the dear couple prayed together for God's healing and His will to be done. They knew they were in God's hands as Dena went into surgery.

After surgery, Dena felt so ill. She was grateful she had a hospital bed in a private room and cried out to God for relief and healing.

The room was dark. It was time to sleep, but shivers shook her body,

making her feel tense and miserable. Dena, though exhausted, could not sleep.

"If there would be a time to die, it could be now," Dena confided to her husband.

John had shut the door so they could get much-needed rest. A nurse came to the door. She could not speak English and just motioned to them that the door must be open a few inches. Then she left.

Suddenly the dismal room brightened. Warm light shone around them. Walking around the bed was a bright form. His features

of thick dark hair and shining white clothes were beautiful. He bent and gently kissed Dena's forehead.


Instantly, the shivering stopped, and Dena felt so relaxed. Peace filled her heart. Deep within herself she believed that she would get better and that God had healed her.

Then he was gone. As suddenly as the light had appeared, so suddenly it vanished. Darkness settled into the room once again.

There was a calm, blessed peace in their hearts. The couple marveled at what had happened. "It could have been a doctor," John mused.

"No," Dena stated with faith and confidence. "I don't think a doctor would have kissed my forehead. It was an angel. It was so bright and there was that wonderful light. No, it couldn't have been the doctor."

Drowsiness wrapped its gentle arms around Dena. The nurse came with food, but Dena just wanted to rest. "I'm so sleepy," she confided as her eyelids drooped.

The formerly dismal room was no longer dreary. Reassured by their heavenly Father's love and presence, John and Dena rested peacefully in His arms of care that night. 

youth messages

Occupational Perspective

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

Somewhere in the distance, you hear a siren—or wait! It sounds more like an alarm... An ALARM! Groggily, we roll out of bed and shake the cobwebs of the previous night's rest from our consciousness as we go through our morning routine. Our morning routines are usually some combination of a wake-up beverage, prayer, devotions, and some sort of sustenance—not necessarily in that order. After we complete these steps our attention turns to something else—**work**.

Many of us have jobs and go to work every day. Others work at home as farmers or in a business located adjacent to or on the premises. Some work in family businesses while others pack a lunch and work for someone else. Still others have their own businesses that they run on their own or with partners and team members.

The concept of work originated back in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15 says, "*And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*" We

are created to work. After the Fall of man, God indicated to Adam that in order to eat he would have to work and sweat. As a result, we as people inherently find part of our identity and a level of fulfillment in what we do for work. If we don't, we should examine what we are doing for work. To exist we need to eat, *"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."* (II Thessalonians 3:10). Here the Apostle Paul clearly indicates that in order to eat we must first work. This is a basic concept that our parents have taught us from early in our lives.

When I got my first job (at least one that didn't include working for my dad), it was just a job for me. I was 16 years old and worked for a framing crew. Looking back, I can't say that it became part of my identity or gave me any level of fulfillment. Over the 17 years since then, I've worked numerous jobs. Some were just to get me through a season, while others were stepping stones in the development of the skills that let me do what I do now.

Recently, a friend was searching for a job and had offers from two different companies. After talking through the pros and cons, he ultimately chose the company that aligned more closely with his values

even though the other company was offering better benefits and almost 30% more money. While one company paid more, the other had a godly environment and was more flexible, allowing him to be more involved with his family.


Ask yourself, "Are you just working for a paycheck? Are you compromising your values or working a job you don't like just because you make good money doing it? Are you working a job that keeps you away from home or makes it difficult to be present for church services and gatherings?" I don't know that I can remember compromising my values to work anywhere, but I do remember being employed where I allowed myself to be negatively influenced by my co-workers. I recognized my situation and how I was being negatively impacted spiritually and prayed that God would open a door for me to do something else. He did exactly that and gave me work that didn't pay much financially, but I gained a wealth of experience and was paid in spiritual dividends.

It's extremely important that we weigh the impact that our occupation will have on our spiritual lives and on our effectiveness and availability for Kingdom building. Consider who you will be rubbing shoulders

with for eight or more hours a day. Think about how you can use the skills you are learning to advance the Kingdom of God. Maybe you work a job where you spend a lot of time talking with people. Are there things you can say to point them to Christ and challenge them to consider Him? Does your employer value families? Does he allow time off for Bible School or work projects? I'll never forget the conversation with my boss after being asked to go into voluntary service. Even though it would leave him short a driver on short notice, he didn't say a word about that. He said, "Go for it! You'll never regret spending time serving God!" He was right! Make sure you work for someone who cares about your spiritual growth and welfare as well as your physical one.

Never underestimate the impact that a healthy Christian work environment can have on your personal life. Whether you are an employee or in management, you can do your part. Having regular employee meetings with open discussion, communication, and prayer helps immensely with team-building. Taking interest in the personal lives of your team members, sales reps, and customers builds relationships that allow us to minister to others. I've had some amazing conversations about

Christ with people that I would not know or interact with if it were not for my occupation. Who we are as people of God is not something we just shut off during work hours. Everything we do and say is still representing the Kingdom of God.

Don't just work to put the hours in and make a paycheck. Ecclesiastes 9:10a says, " *whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.*" Our life is a vapor, and we owe it to our Maker to honor Him in whatever we put our hand to. The story is told of John and Tom who started working for the railroad at the same time. Forty years later John was the president of the railroad, and Tom was still pounding in railroad spikes. When asked why he wasn't the president of the company instead of John, Tom replied, "Forty years ago I went to work for \$5 an hour. John went to work for the railroad." Perspective is so important when you're evaluating your work. View your occupation as an opportunity to serve others and an outlet for the spiritual gifts that God has given you. Whether you're farming or doing secretary work, whether you're working in construction or baking pastries, God can use you if you seek opportunities to use your work as a platform for serving Him and impacting those around you. 

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The only thing you get for nothing is failure.

• • • • •

Youth and beauty fade; character endures forever.

• • • • •

Climb high, climb far, your aim the sky, your goal the star.

• • • • •

It is better to forgive and forget than to hate and remember.

• • • • •

Why is it that some people stop working as soon as they find a job?

• • • • •

A person who is going nowhere can be sure of reaching his destination.

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Criticism from a friend is better than flattery from an enemy.

• • • • •

He who fiddles around seldom gets to lead the orchestra.

• • • • •

The person with true humility never has to be shown his place;
he is always in it.

• • • • •

He aimed for happiness but settled for success.

• • • • •

Discipline yourself so others won't need to.