



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

Galatians 6:14

JANUARY 2007

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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 Saviour;
 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: Paul L. Miller
 7809 S. Herren Rd., Partridge, KS 67566
 Ph/Fax 620-567-2286
 paulmiller@mindspring.com

Assistant Editor: Elmer D. Glick
 RR 1 Box 47-C, Augusta, WV 26704

Associate Editor: David L. Miller
 P O Box 73, Partridge, KS 67566

Contributing Editors:

Simon Schrock
 Enos D. Stutzman
 Aaron Lapp

Missions Editor: Floyd Stoltzfus
 186 Skyline Dr., New Holland, PA 17557

Youth Messages Editor: Ernest Eby
 4812 Hwy. 5, Mountain View, AR 72560
 eeby@aristotle.net

Junior Messages Editor:

Mrs. Anita Yoder
 10393 N 1100 W, Ligonier, IN 46767

Helpers at Home Editor:

Mrs. Mary June Glick
 10351 Fayetteville Rd., Bealeton, VA 22712

Circulation Manager/Treasurer:

Mark I. Beachy
 11095 Pleasant Hill Rd. NW
 Dundee, OH 44624
 markbeachy@characterlink.net
 330-852-2982

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God's Hands

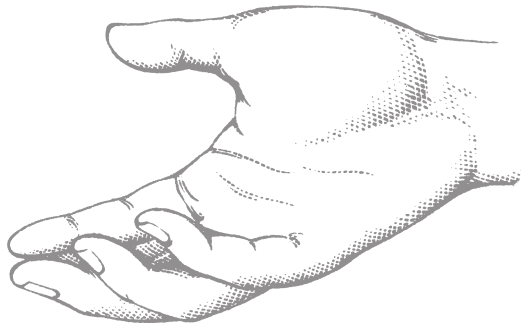
Katrina Byler, Middlefield, OH

The hands that shaped the earth,
That molded the first man,
The hands that placed you here
And mapped out your life plan;

These hands have comforted,
Brought healing to the weak
Raised people from the dead,
And formed the mountain peak.

There are so many things
These wondrous hands have done.
Making a bluebird's wings,
And fashioning the sun.

The most important thing
God did with His great hands
Was making and creating
All men in all the lands. 



The Christian's Joy

Nehemiah said, “**The joy of the Lord is your strength.**” The journey of life keeps getting better when there’s holy joy. Israel’s seventy-year captivity in Babylon bears this out.

To be free to worship God, to work at a chosen task, to earn money, to make personal decisions, these are but basic human rights. In Babylon, however, these freedoms were taken away. God’s chosen people were taken there as slaves, working for others without compensation. Their dignity was disregarded. Their hard labor exploited them for Babylonian profit. They longed to go home, but couldn’t. They were stuck, sad, tired, and homesick.

Psalm 137:1-4 describes Israel in that situation: “**By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?**”

Naturally, those captives didn’t feel like singing. They had lost their freedom and were under the thumb of cruel and idolatrous taskmasters. While in that hard spot, their taskmasters asked them to sing the songs of Zion, but their hearts were sad. How could they sing songs of joy?


After seventy long years, when freedom finally came, those who retained reverence for God sang joyfully again. Isaiah described the joy of the returning captives this way: “**Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away**” (Isaiah 51:11).

But some captives had made themselves so much at home that when they could go home, they preferred to stay in Babylon. They obviously did not value the true worship of God. They had lost one of life’s greatest treasures: reverence for God. So they nestled down in unbelief and stayed put. Thus they became examples of the creeping paralysis of doubt, of getting used to going through life

without God.

God's dealings with His people long ago speak to present-day situations. When we're captive to earthly choices and selfish habits, we cannot sing the joyful song of the redeemed. When we allow ourselves to compromise with God-defying situations, we can lose our will to stand on the Word of God. But when we confess our sins and place them under the blood of Christ and when we eagerly seek His will for us, only then we can truly sing the song of the redeemed!

Let us set our faces steadfastly toward the New Jerusalem. Let us turn from the captivity of carnal choices and bad habits. Let us ask Jesus to give us an appropriate loathing for the sights and sounds of our Babylon. Let us ask Him to tear away the tentacles of doubt. Only He can lift us out of confusion and set us down on the highway of holiness.

The Captain of our Salvation will give us holy joy and exuberant songs of deliverance. —PLM 

A N N O U N C I N G

The first Conservative Mennonite School Board Institute

On the February 2 and 3, 2006, (Friday all day and Saturday morning) the Antrim Mennonite Church in Freeport, Ohio, will host an institute for Christian school board members, principals and ministers. It is being planned by a committee appointed by Calvary Publication board as directed by the Beachy ministers at their annual meeting in April.

Speakers are being engaged to address various topics related to operating schools such as building vision, hiring and supporting teachers, setting policy, managing finances, and choosing curriculum. Some sessions will focus on the work of the principal and the role of ministers in the ongoing work of the school.

Programs will be mailed to schools who attended the Conservative Mennonite Teachers' Institutes in 2006.

If you did not attend those meetings and wish to receive a program, please contact: Elmer D. Glick, RR 1 Box 47-C, Augusta, WV 26704 or email: elmerghome@peoplepc.com

Re: Mystery to Reality – 1

In response to the well-written article, Bro. Aaron Lapp mentions his surprise the words “mystery” and “mysterics” are not used in the Old Testament.

Let me reveal unto you a “secret.” Deut. 29:29 says, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children, that we may do all the words of this law.” The German translation here for “secret” is “Geheimnis,” which in turn is also the translation for “mystery” in the New Testament. There are exceptions as in Deut. 2:28 where “secret” is translated “verborgene,” which means hidden and maybe elsewhere in the Old and New Testament. It all makes for an interesting work study. See Ps. 25:14, where “secret” is also “Geheimnis.”

—Wayne E. Miller, Rushsylvania, OH



Re: Eli Yoder Response, Nov., 2006

Concerning the veiling—let it suffice me to say “Amen.” Yet out of concern for your constituency, but for ours as well (N.O. Amish).

May we not be found guilty of “do as they say but do not as they do;” rather may we all do as we say. (Matt. 23:3)

God’s blessings to all,

—Wayne E. Miller, Rushsylvania, OH



Re: Radical Legacy

I wonder if the legacy the Anabaptist reformers left for us could not more properly be called “A Reasonable Legacy.” (October, p. 9) While their enemies saw them as radicals, I think God saw them as people who simply placed their faith in God and His Word. That simple faith resulted in uncompromising obedience. It’s still that way and it’s still our “reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1)

—Name withheld



OF ALL THE HOME REMEDIES,

A GOOD WIFE IS THE BEST.



From Mystery to Reality—Part 3

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

Curiosity Yields to Inquiry

Curiosity is a curious thing! The mental wheels of the mind turn at incredible speed. Adult curiosity turns more mental wheels than it does in the growing child, but frequently with less visible response. When children's minds are piqued, they make further inquiry. When adults have a question, they often jump to conclusion without inquiry—or without further action. That is rather sad when we consider that good thoughts are intended to be forerunners of good actions.

Too many adults quit reading, quit learning, quit inquiring, and quit being stirred. Consequently, they show little emotion and seem to care even less. They coast along and wish not to be disturbed.

However, not all of today's adults fit that description. Just today in church a lay brother testified to the congregation that the sermon of two weeks ago on the book of Daniel stirred his curiosity! Since the sermon, he read the entire book several times and wants to read it again! It is an

excellent case of curiosity yielding to inquiry.

The inquiry stage can be a rather delicate stage. A sharp word, a rebuke, an accusation (false or true) or an attitude of censure can quickly cut short a potentially positive and healthy response. Some adults—or even brotherly equals—may have caused some persons to shrink because family or church authorities have unkindly and condescendingly criticized honest inquiry, causing the inquirer not to ask adult questions.

When people lose interest in one area, they usually put their vision and energies into another enterprise into which they pour their lives with the least reprimand. We naturally invest ourselves where we expect the greatest rewards.

The curiosity stage in the younger child causes experimentation. Experimenting with blocks and toys is healthy and yields some discoveries. Drawing and coloring are experiments in discovery and development, based on the child's capacity to "image" a specific goal, strange and insignificant as it may seem.

Secure parent-child relationships in the home will bring wholesome inquiry. To be sure, the inquiry stage can be tiresome for parents. Answering a dozen and half questions in the forenoon and two dozen in the afternoon makes for a long day! Our daughter, Sharon, said, as she rolled her eyes, that one of her boys had so many questions. That one day she kept count: One stroke for each question. The little fellow asked an incredible 400 questions!

But look at how far your darling, questioning child has come. All the way through the innocent stages of imagination, he is trying to get into the real world. He is emerging from the cocoon of the imaginary to become a flitting butterfly of inquiry. As such, he floats around, dropping down randomly here and there, to touch and to taste the real world. If appropriately nurtured, his questions will eventually become more serious, sensitive, learning questions.

His many early questions are not only to learn bare facts. Often they are to learn how you as a parent feel and think. Many of the questions are really a disguised way of probing your thoughts about whether the space he occupies matters to you! This is especially so, Mom, when several smaller ones occupy most of your time, short-changing an older

child, as he sees it.

The Gladness of Inquiry

You might shock your child when you do this. But occasionally stop what you are doing. Get eye to eye, down on his level. Let him go for it, giving you all the questions he wants to ask. How long will this take? An hour or two? No, maybe ten minutes, maybe even less. "But he has been pestering me with questions for the last hour," you say. Right. But what little Johnny wants is not more information. What he really wants to know is: *Am I important to Mama?* "Suffer (allow) little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

Your little investment in vital parental interest will likely result in his soon going off somewhere and playing again. Probably that play will be something imaginary, which will arouse his curiosity, which will eventually lead to inquiry, and more questions.

If a child has felt any tinge of rejection, or even starvation for acceptance, the ten-minute free wheeling question-and-answer session will be tangible proof that he is fully accepted as a person in his own right.

Generating the Inquiry

The stages of imagination-curiosity-inquiry are without boundaries,

tumbling over each other as in a kaleidoscope. But there is progression from the abstract to the real. “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

Even in the middle and later adolescent years, curiosity and imagination are still part of their makeup. It is put there by God. He can use it for good purposes. We all are aware that Satan can also use these interests for perversion and sin.

Let us guard our children from perverted curiosities that lead to experimentation in evil practices. We should warn them about certain evils they should never do—not even once. Appropriate discretion needs to be considered here because we know that prohibition can create an attraction all its own.

Television is one of the worst perpetrators of evil imaginations. The plot is frequently detrimental, the characters are grossly unreal, and the attraction is catchy and addictive. The child’s fertile imagination is overstimulated which misleads his imagination.

His own imagination can be patterned after the real world preparing him for something constructive. Let the growing child be himself. Let him construct the imaginary within permissible parameters. His

real world input is being shaped and enlarged by experiences with home, church, and friends. Give him paper and crayons, blocks and spools, cloth and thread. These provide materials which help him transfer his mind from the imaginary to the real. The child’s imagination is endowed with purpose by God. Respect it. Nurture it. Guide it.

Guard the Inquiry

Put a fence around inquiry. Say “no” to children’s videos. Say “no” to the children’s fantasy TV programs. These are typically construed by misguided adults who seek to cultivate unreal and corrupted imaginations of misled and perverted adults. We must protect our children from such excesses of the imagination.

Animated cartoon figures are captivating, clever and calculating. Such programs do not generate inquiry and discovery into the real world. They are spoken of as “harmless entertainment.” Entertainment? Yes. Harmless? No. Harm is done because it takes away from the child’s own imagination or adds to it contorted figures and movement of fantasy untypical of the child’s own constructive imagination.

These fantasy shows are given at a time when the child should be graduating from the imaginary to the real at his own pace. A diet of

fantasy arrests the movement out of the primary imagination stage. Consequently, an appetite for more of the same is established. Parents like it, too, because it is a convenient baby-sitter.


Actually, these times of “harmless entertainment,” with their catchy tunes and convoluted movements make these children more “hyper” and uncontrolled when the box is finally turned off. Their minds are filled with noise, with constant and unnatural movements of unreal characters in questionable activities. To them it seems normal. Later they may produce these scenes in contorted re-enactments. Parents of such children may end up either pulling out their hair or pulling out another video. The latter is easier.

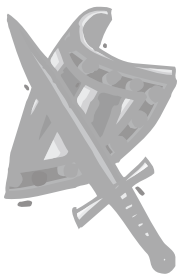
The child’s imagination is put there by God to make him curious, to make him inquire, to help him discover God who pursues him. Good role models will foster appropriate recreations in the child’s mind. Keeping life simple will help our children

be fascinated and satisfied by the simple.

An inquiring mind is one that is readily guided, whether child or adult. There is something very commendable and maturing about an open-minded inquiry. We parents have more to do about this beautiful fact in our children than we generally recognize.

These principles can in some measure be applicable to grown-ups. For instance, this whole series arose out of the writer’s curiosity about the word “mystery” as it is used in the Bible. The curiosity-inquiry experience under God helps to mature the mind and life. It makes us more productive in our spiritual giftedness and calling.

The Bottom Line is that the imagination is a God-given faculty given to arouse the curiosity. The imagination does not provide answers. At best, it motivates curiosity, which, in turn, seeks for answers by appropriate and honest inquiry. 



Peacemaking never costs as
much as waging war,
and it’s always a better buy.

Have We Missed It?

Chester Weaver, Grandview, TX

I am deeply grieved. I fear that we have squandered opportunity and are now reaping the consequences. The blood descendants of the Anabaptist people from both the Amish and the Mennonite side have largely lost sight of their own historic vision. Neither side really seems to care. I believe we are in the process of throwing the “baby out with the bath water.”

For some, Anabaptism is beards and plain clothes. For others it is interesting history, but not to be lived today because it is too extreme for today. But for most Anabaptist descendants, Anabaptism means little more than *The Martyrs Mirror* and scary stories.

How did we end up in a situation like this?

I see several reasons. **First** and foremost, we did not tell our own story. To our shame, the unbelieving Jews have done better than we have. They diligently teach their story. We seem to have forgotten ours. Nor do many of us even want to hear it. Why? It is too convicting. Formerly, we were a force that changed the course of Western history. Today we do not seem to know or care.

Secondly, we have adopted an-

other vision. We have adopted largely a Protestant theology on one hand and a Roman Catholic-like sacramentalism on the other. We seem to like it this way. The truth lies on the ground under our feet crying out to us, but we don't hear.*

Thirdly, we have become so materialistic that Anabaptism seems like a far-off dream. We are so busy trying to keep our heads above water materially that we dare not take time to dream. If we dream, we will lose a step, falter, and fall behind. No, we may not dream, even of our own story, let alone live it.

The result is that many people get disillusioned. They know somehow that there must be more than they are observing: Many young people are bored. Middle-aged parents are slaving at their material concerns, wearing away a little at a time. Middle-aged parents thought there was more to it than this but cannot figure out what. Old people cry—disappointed old people, scared old people who no longer know what to do. Some of them pray.

It is time to repent as a people—both Amish and Mennonite. It is time to strengthen the truth that remains. It is time to rediscover

what we have forgotten. It is time to stir up the old fires. But as history indicates only a few will have enough desire. Too many are fat and happy. Most Anabaptist-descended people do not even know that they should repent. Others would say we must not repent because it would upset the system. And God waits to see what we will do.

Consider for starters, both the following excerpts from longer monographs. The first offers a glimpse of the original vision, and the second the relevance of the Anabaptist Vision today. The first was written by Donovan Smucker and published in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* in 1945. The second was written a few years ago by James Lowry of Hagerstown, Maryland.

1. The Theological Triumph of the Early Anabaptist-Mennonites

The Re-discovery of Biblical Theology in Paradox

—*Donovan E. Smucker*

What was the supreme triumph of the original Anabaptists? What was the glorious heritage carried forth by the best Mennonite interpreters of this discovery?

In answering these queries the sympathetic sociologist points to mutual aid brotherhood, thus concluding that the supreme achievement was in

the realm of social ethics. Or, again an answer comes from the student of the peace principle and its historical development. This interpreter would say that the prime contribution of original Mennonitism was Christian nonresistance. Still others, both in and out of the Mennonite community, would place the center of gravity at the point of nonconformity and withdrawal, implying a kind of Protestant monasticism. Then, there is the theory that this great movement of 400 [460] years ago, whatever it set out to be, really was the seed-plot of the free, democratic societies which have developed into the past two centuries. Finally, *and unquestionably most common*, is the conception of original Anabaptism as dangerous heresy and corrupting treason, fatal alike to both church and state. At various times since the inception of the movement 465 years ago Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed theologians have followed this line of interpretation; although, to be sure, it is relatively uncommon in the twentieth century.

In each case these interpreters have focused their analysis on part of the truth. "The Anabaptist Vision," to use the Harold Benders's excellent phrase, certainly did include a mutual aid brotherhood; it did make much of Christian nonresistance; it

did have a doctrine of nonconformity (though it was not the ridiculous caricature often suggested by destructive critics): moreover, Anabaptism did make a great contribution to the development of free, voluntaristic institutions; and the charges of “heresy” are true insofar as they suggest a sincere criticism of conventional orthodoxy, Roman, Lutheran, and Calvinist (or theological liberalism, ancient or modern), a criticism in the light of what was considered a more perfect orthodoxy, non-heretical and non-treasonable.

To discover the nature of this orthodoxy, it is necessary to ask once again the question with which this paper started: *What was the supreme triumph of the original Anabaptist-Mennonite declaration?* The answer is this: *These great Christians re-discovered the theology of the Bible!*

Because the Bible is the written Word of God, because it is that comprehensive revelation of God to man, because it is a Divine message from God *through* man, this central triumph includes all other partial, specific or secondary comments which may be made in describing the “Anabaptist Vision.” Note that I have used the word “re-discovered.” This suggests that their triumph was, in essence, nothing new. The following sentence of Harold Bender’s,

supported by at least seven other historians of Anabaptism, defines the issue at this point:

“...Anabaptism is the culmination of the Reformation, the fulfillment of the original vision of Luther and Zwingli, *and thus makes it a consistent evangelical Protestantism seeking to recreate without compromise the original New Testament church, the vision of Christ and the Apostles.*” (Italics mine)

Which is to say that the Anabaptists re-discovered the “faith which was once delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3) It is this faith which is recorded systematically and comprehensively in the Holy Scriptures.

Yet, how delicate has been that triumph! Again and again the evangelical churches in general and the Mennonites in particular have lost that magnificent theology of the Bible, thus illustrating Reinhold Niebuhr’s dictum that every great spiritual achievement is subject to perils—and deadly ones—at all times.

2. The Anabaptist Vision Today

—James Lowry, *Hagerstown, MD*

I want to ask, *what does the Anabaptist Vision have to offer mankind today?*

The Anabaptist Vision as it expresses basic Christianity has everything to offer which the Christian religion

has always offered: on a personal level, forgiveness of sin, reconciliation with God, power to live a holy life, a living hope of heaven. But beyond these, it especially offers a solution to the evils which beset the human race at the end of the twentieth century, worse apparently than at most other times of human history.

How does the Anabaptist Vision relate to the following cluster of problems?

1) To modernity, to the post-Christian present with its scientific world view, to the loss of traditional values in Western civilization, also spreading throughout the world;

2) To consumerism, materialism, "entertainmentism," carnality, worldliness, pride;

3) To individualism, to the breakdown of community in urban areas, the breakdown of families, ethnic hatred, and violence.

1) Anabaptist primitivism which leaps from the corrupt present to the ideal past of the early church is an answer to the first set of problems.

Western society is similar to that of the first century where the tiny Christian church confronted pagan society with an unknown message. In spite of widespread education, modern man is ignorant of the content of the Word of God, of what the early church believed, and of how

the early Christians lived. Modern man substitutes new moral values, personal freedom, equality, feminism, advocacy of unspeakable sins, murder of infants and the elderly, and intellectual liberty. Anabaptism makes it possible to recover lost, forgotten values today as it did in Reformation times. Churches which have not compromised with worldly society, which have not forgotten traditional values maintain a living witness to these values. They are as "a city that is set on a hill."

2) The second set of problems, relating to the abundance of things and pleasures, is answered by traditional Anabaptist commitment to self-denial and simplicity, by the rejection of worldly life styles and entertainment, by the principle of discipleship and obedience.

3) The answer to violence, hatred, individualism, and the loss of community is the church, the colony of heaven, where the will of God is done on earth, the loving brotherhood. The church, the kingdom of God, is always at war with the kingdom of this world and suffers persecution. But here in the church, it is possible to live and grow in love, being transformed into the image of the Second Man, the Lord from heaven.

The Anabaptist Vision can answer the needs of man at the beginning of

the 21st century.

*[Chester Weaver further explains what he means by #2: God's truth stands on two feet. Catholicism holds an unbiblical view of salvation—no legs are present. Martin Luther got one foot on the ground when he understood and promoted justification by faith.

Roman Catholics did not want their people to read the Bible for themselves. They were not qualified to interpret it. Some Old Order groups discourage Bible reading today because the reader will likely become "confused"...

Anabaptism, however, went one step further than Luther to point out that that the doctrine of salvation includes the second leg of practical evidence of justification. In other words, a man is not justified by faith unless his life demonstrates it...

On the other hand, Anabaptist groups who understand the error of such thinking have reacted and created a sacral system of doctrine and practice so rigid that often the life gets squeezed out of it. These groups lose the doctrine of justification unwittingly by so emphasizing obedience, conservatism, and outward practice that many people conclude that life is found in the form. These

groups would also deem it necessary to pressure people to obedience. The fear of church discipline keeps them in good order. In these settings church leaders are feared and respected. Church leaders are understood to be the guardians of the faith (culture)...

Somewhere along the line Anabaptist descendants borrowed the sacral system and applied it to church life. They found it to work well. It solved many problems. It reduced Christianity to a formula. Once you get the formula right, you are "on a roll." ... "Those who are well need no physician"...]

Editor's note: I understand that examples of sacralism in the Roman Catholic church to which Bro. Weaver refers might be going to mass, confession to a priest and other sacraments the church requires. This "church loyalty" often offers license for a life style that is foreign to Christian discipleship.

Mere loyalty to the rules and expectations of Anabaptist churches, however, also fails to place a person's hope of salvation on scriptural foundation and brings a false sense of security, because it springs from a lack of faithful commitment to the Lord of the church.



marriages

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

Bontrager-Beachy

Bro. Tim, son of Lavon and Gladys Bontrager, Kokomo, IN, and Sis. Joann, daughter of Henry and Dora Beachy, Sugarcreek, OH, on July 15, 2006, at Valley View Community Church at Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Eicher-Graber

Bro. Nate, son of Dennis and Marie Eicher, Montpelier, OH, and Sis. Kimberly, daughter of Kenny and Rita Graber, Bunker Hill, IN, on Oct. 21, 2006, at Howard-Miami Mennonite, by Marvin Beachy.

Frey-Schlabach

Bro. Sheldon Devon, son of Elvie and Clara Frey, Shipshewana, IN, and Sis. Amy Melissa, daughter of Abe and Amanda Schlabach, Goshen, IN, at Fair Haven A.M. Church, Oct. 28, 2006, by Wilbur Yoder.

Gerber-King

Bro. Brian, son of Ronald and Elaine Gerber, Brunner, ON, and Sis. Emma, daughter of Omer and Anna (step mother, Emma) King, Greene, NY, at Home Fellowship, on Sept. 23, 2006, by Melvin Roes.

Hoover-Wagler

Bro. Tobias, son of Cleason and Salinda Hoover, Aylmer, ON, and Sis. Donna, daughter of Mervin and Wanda Wagler, Wellesley, ON, at Cedar Grove A.M. Church, by Arthur Gerber.

Hostetler-Kauffman

Bro. Michael Lynn, son of Ervin and Mary Hostetler, Belleville, PA, and Sis. Ellen Joy, daughter of Leroy and Irene Kauffman, Belleville, PA, at Pleasant View A.M. Church, Belleville, PA, on Sept. 29, 2006, by David J. Peachey.

Kandel-Yoder

Bro. Michael, son of Randy and Irene Kandel, Fredericksburg, OH, and Sis. Samantha, daughter of Robert and Elsie Yoder, Blackville, SC, at Williston First Baptist, on Sept. 23, 2006, by Virgil Kanagy.

Lapp-Zook

Bro. Kent, son of Barbara and the late Sanford Lapp, Dundee, NY, and Sis. Maryanna, daughter of Gideon and Mary Zook, Gap, PA, at Spring Garden Church for Bethel Christian Fellowship, on Sept. 16, 2006, by Lonnie Beachy.

Mast-Lantz

Bro. Joel, son of Alvin and Esther Mast, Millersburg, OH, and Sis. Staci, daughter of Mervin and Mary Lantz, Lott, TX, on Oct. 20, 2006, by Mervin Lantz.

Schlabach-Miller

Bro. Mel Schlabach, Kokomo, IN, (widower), and Esther (Beachy) Miller (widow), Middlebury, IN, were married Oct. 7, 2006, at Pleasant Grove Mennonite, Goshen, IN, by Randall Riegsecker.

Yoder-Beiler

Bro. Luke Alan, son of Glenn and Amy Yoder, Middlebury, IN, and Sis. Christina, daughter of Roman and Fannie Beiler, Paradise, PA, at Calvary Monument Bible Church for Mine Road Church, on Nov. 11, 2006, by Glenn Yoder.

cradle roll

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

Almada, Lucio and Sheryl (Stoltzfus), LaBelleza, Paraguay, first child and son, Lesli David, Nov. 26, 2006.

Beachy, Vernon and Verna (Yoder), Sugarcreek, OH, fourth child and son, Wendell Jeremiah, Aug. 26, 2006.

Beiler, Reuben and Naomi Sue (Stoltzfus), Gap, PA, eighth child, fourth dau., Heidi Sue, Oct. 23, 2006.

Bender, Linnford and Monica (Beachy), Lewisburg, PA, third child, second dau., Alayna Gayle, October 18, 2006.

Czekalski, John and Karen (Metz), Salem, MO, sixth child, fourth dau., Hannah Louisa, Oct. 14, 2006.

Yoder-Friesen

Bro. Ron, son of Phil and Elaine Yoder, La Estrella, Pital de San Carlos, Costa Rica, and Sis. Lorraine, daughter of Ben and Lois Friesen, Lewisburg, PA, at Christ Wesleyan Church for Shady Grove Christian Fellowship, on Nov. 11, 2006, by Joe Peachey.

Yoder-Graber

Bro. Justin, son of Olen Yoders, Minerva, OH, and Sis. Kristi, daughter of Benny and Miriam Graber, Bunker Hill, IN, were married at Bethany Fellowship, on Jan. 14, 2006.

Horst, Clifford and Carolyn (Erb), New Hamburg, ON, fourth child, second son, Craig Brendan, Oct. 12, 2006.

Hostetler, Dan and Kris (Gingerich), Belleville, PA, first child and dau., Alyssa Amanda, Oct. 29, 2006.

Hunsberger, Elon and Mary (Kensing-er), Mechanicstown, OH, second child, first son, Denver Lane, Aug. 4, 2006.

Knepp, Stanley and Shannon (Yoder), Loogootee, IN, second child and son, Cody Devon, Sept. 29, 2006.

Kurtz, Michael and Elizabeth (Brubaker), Woodville, NY, presently serving in Cayo, Belize, first child and son, Jaron Michael, Sept. 17, 2006.

Lapp, David and Angela (Mullet), McConnellsville, OH, fourth child, third dau., McKenzie Brooke, Oct. 31, 2006.

Lapp, Dave and Ruth (Lapp), New Holland, PA, third child and son, Japheth David, Oct. 11, 2006.

Lapp, Matthew and Miriam (Miller), Malta, OH, seventh child, third son, (one son deceased), Micah Seth, Oct. 20, 2006.

Martin, Jeff and Bonnie (Hochstetler), Hicksville, OH, sixth child, third dau., Joelle Faith, Oct. 11, 2006.

Peight, Ben and Joanna (Coblentz), Swanton, MD, third child, second son, Adrian Shawn, June 26, 2006.

Petersheim, Matt and Diana (Helmuth), Kalona, IA, second child, first son, Brennan Wyatt, Sept. 21, 2006.

Sandoval, Juan and Julie (Yoder), Shipshewana, IN, sixth child, third dau., Bethany Isabel, Nov. 26, 2006.

Shrock, Owen and Erma (Mast), Kinsman, OH, second child and dau., Andrea Dawn, June 24, 2006.

Steckly, Shane and Sharon (Kuepfer), Millbank, ON, third child and son, Jesse Shane, Oct. 6, 2006.

Stoll, Eldon and Linda (Coblentz), Summersville, KY, third child, second dau., Ada Renee, Sept. 23, 2006.

Stoll, Jeff and Hanna (Graber), Montgomery, IN, second child, first son, Emmett Joseph, Oct. 1, 2006.

Stoltzfus, Dave and Rosanne (Zook), Christiana, PA, fifth child, fourth son, Austin LaRay, Oct. 24, 2006.

Stoltzfus, Nathan and Bonita (Lambright), Goshen, IN, first child and son, Nathan Cole, Nov. 2, 2006.

Stutzman, Leon and Wanda (Bontrager), Wellman, IA, third child, first dau., Annika Faith, Sept. 15, 2006.

Yoder, Aaron and Nora (Yoder), Fredericksburg, OH, seventh child, fifth son, Loyall Aaron, Oct. 28, 2006.

Yoder, Lonnie and Violet (Overholt), Summersville, KY, sixth child, second dau., Shana Jewel, March 5, 2006. Received for adoption, Sept. 6, 2006.

Yoder, Marvin and Irene (Troyer), Kokomo, IN, fifth child, fourth son, John Wayne, March 4, 2006.

Yoder, Rudy and Christine (Miller), Milford, IN, fourth child, first dau., Kayana Beth, Nov. 18, 2006.

Zook, Dwayne and Heidi (Gingerich), Beavertown, PA, first child and dau., Amber Sage, Aug. 4, 2006.

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Patience is the ability to count

down before blasting off.

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ordinations

May the grace of God be upon our brother as he ministers faithfully. Let us pray for him.

Bro. Joel Gingerich, 34, Minerva, OH, was chosen by lot and ordained to the office of minister at Christian Fellowship on Oct. 29, 2006. Preordination messages were given by Dale Heisey, Costa Rica.

The charge was given by Perry Troyer, assisted by Dale Heisey and Jonas J. E. Miller. James Miller was also in the lot.

obituaries

Friesen, Wilbert, 41, Shipshewana, IN, died at his home from insulimoma, a form of cancer on Oct. 24, 2006. He was born Dec. 30, 1964, in Belize, C. A., a son of Dietrich and Margaret "Jeannie" Friesen. He was a member of Rosewood Fellowship.

On May 29, 1991, he was married to Janice Yoder, who survives. They have five daughters: Brenda, Janette, April, Marlee and Louisa, and three sons: Justin, Wilbert and Daniel. All live at home.

Other survivors include three sisters: Esther (David) Swartzentruber, Costa Rica; Martha (Jesse) Brubaker, Nicaragua; Clara (Antonio) Valverde, Costa Rica; five brothers: Levi (Mildred) Friesen, Costa Rica; Jacob (Bethany) Friesen, Costa Rica; David (Nita) Friesen, Nicaragua; Paul (Damans) Friesen,

Tylertown, TX; and Edward (Carmen) Friesen, Costa Rica. His father, Dietrich Friesen, is deceased.

Funeral services were held Oct. 26, at Rosewood Fellowship, with Glenn Yoder, Daniel Bontrager, Leroy Miller and Wendell Miller serving. Burial was in Rosewood Cemetery.

Gingerich, Willard A., 87, died at Kalona, Iowa. He was born April 23, 1919, in Johnson County, Iowa, son of the late Amos and Elizabeth (Brenneman) Gingerich. He was a member of Sharon Bethel A.M. Church.

On Dec. 18, 1941, he was married to Susie Alice Yoder. She died in 2001. They had three children: Clarence Gingerich, Bristol, IN; Dale (Elaine) Gingerich, Kokomo, IN; and Carolyn (Alvin) Geigley, Kalona, IA. Also surviving are six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by two brothers: Joe and Chris Gingerich; three sisters: Barbara, Katie and Magdalena Bender; and a grandson, Larry Gingerich.

Funeral services were held on Oct. 7, with Delmar Bontrager and Jake Yoder serving. Burial was in the North Gingerich Cemetery.

Miller, Edward F., 79, died Sept. 19, 2006, at his home in rural Kalona, Iowa. He was born in rural Kalona, on April 21, 1927, son of the late Daniel B. and Katie (Gingerich) Miller. He was a member of Sharon Bethel A.M. Church.

On Oct. 7, 1947, he was married to

Sarah Mast, who survives. They had ten children, seven of whom survive: Arden Miller, Kalona; David Lee (Martha) Miller, Kalona; Lucy (Roman) Stoltzfoos, Kinzers, PA; Elaine Miller, Kalona; Evelyn (Steven) Miller, Hutchinson, KS; Louise Miller, Kalona; and Nancy Miller, Kalona. Also surviving are 26 grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Other survivors include a brother, Calvin, Lott, TX; and a sister, Elva (Andy) Mast, Wellman, IA. Preceding him in death was a brother, Clarence Miller; a sister, Mary (Mrs. Sylvanus Yoder); two sons, Raymond and Howard and a daughter, Mary Catherine Miller.

Funeral services were held Sept. 22, with Jacob Yoder and Delmar Bontrager serving. Burial was in the Sharon Bethel Cemetery.

Stoltzfus, Elizabeth (Lapp), 89, died in hospital from heart complications Nov. 13, 2006. She was born July 7, 1917, in Leacock Twp., daughter of the late Samuel and Susie (Lantz) Lapp.

She was a member of Weavertown A.M. Church.

On Dec. 8, 1938, she was married to Gideon Stoltzfus. He died in April, 2002.

Surviving are two daughters: Ann Taylor, Lancaster; Sue (Mrs. Tom Gamble), Leola; and one son, John (Sally), Mammoth Lakes, CA. Also surviving are 8 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Other survivors include two sisters: Miriam Petersheim, Gap; Susie, (Mrs.

Aaron Glick), Gordonville; and one brother Leroy (Lucy) Lapp, Brethren Village.

Preceding her in death was a daughter: Priscilla Knutsen; nine brothers: John, Jonathan, Sam, Amos, Isaac, Crist, Mel, Jonas, and Emanuel and a sister: Lydia King.

Funeral services were held Nov. 17, with Aaron Lapp, John U. Lapp and Norman Kauffman serving. Burial was in the Weavertown A. M. Cemetery.

Troyer, Esther (Kurtz), 62, died Nov. 8, 2006, at her home after a two-year struggle with cancer. She was born Jan. 1, 1944, daughter of the late Monroe and Lizzie Ann (Mullet) Kurtz, in Madison County, Ohio. She was a devoted member of Bethesda A.M. Fellowship.

On June 6, 1964, she was married to Ervin Troyer, who survives. Six children were born to them. They are: Rosemary, Plain City; Hosea (Bernice Schrock) Troyer, Kenya, Africa; Nathanael (Ruth Smucker) Troyer, Plain City; Bertha (John) Stutzman, Plain City; Lois (Dwayne) Stoltzfoos, Plain City; and Heidi (Roger) Peachey, Plain City. Also surviving are 15 grandchildren, four sisters and four brothers.

She was preceded in death by two infant grandsons, one sister and three infant brothers.

Funeral services were held on Nov. 12, at United Bethel Mennonite Church with Perry Troyer and Millard Yoder serving. John L. Gingerich conducted the burial at the Bethesda Fellowship Cemetery.

A current news item reports that according to a survey conducted by Stanford University about six percent of the respondents suffered from “excessive internet use.” (*The Hutchinson News*, Nov. 23, '06) The symptoms of “internet addiction” include the following:

- Craving more and more time at the computer
- Neglecting the family and friends
- Being unable to stop the activity
- Having problems with the school or job.

Strictly speaking, the internet is spiritually and morally neutral. It can be put to good use. But the enemy is eager to capitalize on this remarkable invention to do unspeakable damage. Unrestricted access should not be considered as an acceptable option. Various safeguards are available that provide some protection for content that is objectionable from a Christian perspective.

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Our history books make much of the Civil War (1860-65) and the freeing of the slaves in the United States. It is interesting that slavery had ended in Great Britain some 60

years earlier. The story behind that is also interesting:

A young evangelical Christian, William Wilberforce, was deeply burdened about the injustice of slavery. At age 21, he was elected to the British Parliament. He is called the reluctant politician. This may be because he considered becoming a minister. But his childhood pastor, John Newton, a former slave captain and author of the hymn, “Amazing Grace,” convinced him that he could best serve God by ending slavery. Twenty years after he began his mission, slavery was legally abolished in Great Britain. (Gleaned from Kathleen Parker, *The Hutchinson News*, Nov. 24, '06)

Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, first published in 1851. It is considered to have been a major influence that gave popular support for the abolition of slavery in America. Her father and her brother, who were both named Henry Ward Beecher, were both Protestant ministers. Stowe's novel was written from a Christian perspective to address the extreme injustice of human slavery. The practice was deeply entrenched in political and religious circles. The economic stakes of southern plantation owners was a major factor in the conflict. The mistaken notion of racial superiority/inferiority was

also an inherent part of the conflict. The Civil War is remembered as a sad chapter in our national history. The wholesale destruction of life and property can be explained only as a manifestation of the uncivilized nature of war. Wounds from the conflict are still being felt by some people, especially in the South.

Here are two questions for your thoughtful reflection:

—Did author Stowe do right in feeding the anti-slavery sentiment that helped lead to this bitter conflict?

—How can present-day Anabaptists best address issues of social injustice?

I welcome the response of readers to these questions.




The mid-term election we have just witnessed seems like a fresh affirmation that for us to participate in partisan politics would involve serious compromise of Kingdom priorities. Our lives should model an ideal that would rarely, if ever, generate popular voter support. But if our lives are true “salt and light,” this is always right. It may, in some cases, affect public policy.

The late President Reagan is quoted to have said he feels a little safer to have some people who for reasons of conscience refuse military service.



Many of our people are wondering if there is going to be a draft. When Democrat Charles Rangel from New York called for reinstatement of the draft, it made headlines. However, Rangel is trying to make a point. He maintains that if the sons of lawmakers and others in the upper strata of society would be asked to risk their lives in military activity, it would decrease the likelihood of warfare. Reportedly, Rangel does not expect the draft to be reinstated, but is trying to make a valid point.

The newly-formed Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP) is designed to help locate work projects that would be eligible for approval by Selective Service as alternative service. CASP is also interested in promoting teaching on Christian nonresistance, especially to the rising generation. —DLM 

Friendship is the only cement that will hold the world together.

Ministers' Meeting Messages—2006

This is a condensation of a message given at the annual Ministers' Meetings, April 4-6, 2006, at Sugarcreek, Ohio. The set of eight cassette tapes with 11 messages is available from SON Recordings, 10100 Piper Lane, Bristow, VA, 20136, for \$40; or a set of 11 CD's for \$45, postpaid.

8. Healthy Evangelical Faith

—Ernest Hochstetler, Abbeville, SC

As I see it, healthy evangelical faith includes hearty singing like we have here today.

In Isaiah 55: 8 and 9, we are told that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. We want His thoughts. David prayed, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." That's a recurring theme in Old and New Testament that when we open ourselves to God, He will reveal tremendous insights and directions.

1 Timothy 4:1-5 begins with the negative thought of people falling away. We realize that that isn't the ideal. We like to see people coming to something good and staying with it. The call to stewardship requires we take what God has given us and utilize it, invest it and exercise it so that it becomes something greater than what was given to us originally.

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe, and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

We are warned that in the latter days, people will bind themselves to extra things that take our minds away from essential things. After additional comments, Paul exhorts Timothy in verse 11, "These things command and teach." In chapter 6:2, Paul clinches a point with similar words: "These things teach and exhort." He continues instruction in the following verses with: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife,

railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

The Good News is evangelical faith that we want to share with others. This morning we want to consider the question, “How well are we doing?” It’s like taking one’s temperature to see whether or not we are generally healthy.

Perhaps we should start at home. The Great Commission starts in Jerusalem and Judea and goes to Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. This morning we shall consider our “Jerusalem.”

Paul mentions the faith that he saw in Timothy’s life and says that he knows where it comes from. God wants us to be evangelical—to espouse the faith of the four Gospel writers. They were evangelists. We build our faith on this message and reach out with it. That makes us evangelistic by God’s design. We can’t keep it for ourselves, so we share it with others.

That’s what happened to me. I heard an evangelistic message and responded to an invitation to believe and accept Jesus as my Savior. That message offered me more than I had ever been offered before. Evangelism offers someone hope beyond what

they have. It was offered to me; now I want to offer it to others. Paul said he knows where it started. It started in Timothy’s grandmother’s life and she was successful in imparting that truth to her daughter, who passed it on to Timothy. It seems to me the implication is that Timothy would also pass it on to his children.

His faith had been transmitted for four generations and was an “alive” faith. It was not simply inherited. It was passed along with the awareness that the members of each generation must have their own personal experience. It wasn’t that Timothy couldn’t help it because of Grandma. He had to make his own decision like Grandma and Mama had made. These personal decisions brought each generation hope and peace.

How are we doing in Jerusalem?

How evangelistic are we? Is the body we’re a part of really interested in reaching out? I can’t answer for you. I can look at you and listen to your testimony and make some assumptions. How you are really doing, only you know. That’s why we sometimes have surprises. We think someone is doing well, but wake up and realize that it was not so well. We know of situations where a servant of the church actually has his office taken away.

1 Peter 3:15 says, “But sanctify the

Lord God in your hearts....” That’s where sanctification occurs, *in our hearts*. This speaks of thoughts and feelings and what expressions these cause me to give and to share. “Be ready always to give a reason to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that lieth in you with meekness and fear.” When people ask us why we have confidence to do the things we do, how do we explain where that confidence comes from? It is not something we have from long practice. It comes from experience with the Lord and we allow the inquirer to see that.

How well are we doing with matters at hand? I heard of a young man who had a fairly large business. As he went about his business, one day he commented that I’m making decisions in times of crisis. I make a decision when I have to make it. If we are to have healthy, evangelical faith, I think we must work on the preventive side of things, where we try to make decisions before the crisis develops. Sometimes we can prevent bad things from happening by foresight. I doubt that there is an older minister here who has not even helped make changes in the standards who has not wished that the change could have been considered without the issue already in evidence. We tend to do it backwards. We tend to say after we

have it, “What shall we do with it?” Sometimes we say that we’ll allow it. I do not say that’s wrong, but I think we present evangelical faith more viable when we don’t simply solve problems but exercise godly wisdom in preventing problems. The standards of the church are somewhat like walls around Jerusalem, which need to be strengthened at times. Let us do what we can to prevent problems and thereby strengthen our defenses.

We need active, alive truth integrated into our lives so that when we go out further, we have a message that saves. That requires preparation and gives us strength. Childbirth is a crisis in a woman’s life. Things have improved medically, so that now we hear less of women dying in childbirth. How is it in spiritual matters? Do we have methods that bring deliverance to souls in difficulty? If we falter and fail them, they will not come to birth. We must also give attention to nurture and growth.

With a vision of what God wants to do among and through His people, the church should give opportunity for ways and means of its people going out with the Gospel message. What is there in your congregation that provides for reaching out like this? Is your congregation alive and alert? Is it growing? Is there spiritual prosperity? We seem to make

ourselves busy and do quite well in material prosperity. But how is it with the things that matter most?

Materialism affects this issue. I wonder how well we're doing with materialism. The Dutch Mennonites did not fare well with it. Neither did the Russian Mennonites. I don't know why I should say that we have some unique control over this and how we can handle it. What they struggled with is the same thing that is being offered to us. We have our businesses and our farms, and I fear that these may make it difficult to maintain a good, healthy, evangelical faith. There can be interferences in these that can taint our testimonies.

Recently a piece of property was indicated as coming up for sale in our home community. Two potential bidders spoke of being willing to give whatever it takes to buy it. Someone was overheard to say to them, "That's alright unless some Mennonite finds out that it's for sale." I know we need building sites for our houses too, but such a comment is not to our credit.

Recently we invited a man to give his testimony in our church. In passing, he commented, "We all know that Mennonite men have an affair with trucks." That hurts me. It tells me that we're not handling material things well, if that's how we're perceived. What do we want to be

known for in our communities? Do we want an affair with trucks to be a part of our testimony? If it's important to you, I do have a pickup. If it's important to you what kind it is, I will tell you afterwards.

We need those things, but let's be practical. I hope that what you and I drive is primarily a means to go from Point A to Point B and do what needs to be done, reflecting Christian stewardship. Then I think you will have an evangelical witness that is practical, without extra baggage. We have seen it happen in our families and outside our families that people become discouraged because of material things.

We want to see our members develop and become strong Christians. If you are growing such people in your congregation, you know that they are in demand. You know that Amish Mennonite Aid, Missions Interests Committee and Christian Aid Ministries are looking for such people. You're not surprised when you get a phone call inquiring about, "Sister Susan for a teaching role?" or "Brother Samuel for a mechanic?" or "Family So and So for an outreach assignment?" These are the people who are prospering spiritually and the grapevine has carried it back to the missions office. As you recommend them, you realize that you're going to have a loss here at home. But it's al-

ways been that way that what you lose at home will be rewarded by having God give you something that exceeds what you gave up. That's not why we let them go, but it is encouraging to let them go and be used there.

We need good school teachers and mechanics and others like that "out there." These members, if and when they return, always seem stronger than when they left. What a blessing! You give them up, but God gives you something in return. Luke 6: 38 tells us, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." This creates in our congregations what you and I call fruit. That's a gain.

What do we do with a gain? Do we tear down and build bigger? This big building is a blessing in that it allows us to meet here. Otherwise we'd need to come up with a different plan for ministers' meetings. But in the planning congregationally and fellowship-wise, we need to think these matters through so that we have something that can be used efficiently for the glory of God. Let's be sure that we're on the right track when we tear down and build bigger. In our home congregation we built bigger, too. It

was a blessing to have you sit with us two years ago.

Another option is to start an outreach church. That might be practical. When we were adding onto our church some 13 years ago, I was in a time of crisis. I had just been ordained as bishop. Then God just touched my body with cancer. While I was in the midst of chemotherapy, we were making decisions like this. As you realize, during chemotherapy you don't feel the greatest. But I remember something that I said that the idea of adding to our church building was alright, providing that we don't forget that something called "outreach."

If we have outreach as a possibility, it brings a whole field of questions: Who's going to go? Where will they go? Where will be the support for this move? Will it strengthen the church? Can the church endure such a move? What leadership will be involved? It must be a healthy church for healthy decisions. A healthy church births a healthy idea. The church that grows and prospers can rebirth new ideas. And those can gain momentum and grow and repeat the process. That's the call of the evangelical faith. That's evangelism.

Is there a difference between an "outreach" church and an "outgrowth" church? An outgrowth church is the result of a full church house. Instead

of tearing down and building bigger, we might take ten families from this church, find a new location for those families to go to, and start over. We know of such situations where the nucleus of a new group was primarily from one congregation. There may not be as much difference as we suppose in “outreach” and “outgrowth” churches, because if they go with the right reasons, they will be interested in souls being saved around them. They will still try to get into the community and affect lives and draw them into the Kingdom.

One brother recently commented to me that he likes to go into churches and note what happens after the final “Amen” is said. Is there is a mass exodus or is there something to cause people to stand around in small groups and talk? That tells me something more important than certain specifics. Is the laity speaking to the ministers? Can young and old talk together? As he explained that to me, it really touched me. I thought he really had a good point. He’s not discarding emphasis on standards, but the greater indication lies in what’s happening in interpersonal relationships.

Our background comes from those who faced error in their church’s teachings. It simply did not measure up to the standard of God’s Word. As they faced this situation, they

decided to make some changes that you and I are benefiting from today. They understood that salvation was important. But the idea that God communicated His will to the pope and the other clergy did not set well with them. It did not match what they were reading in the Bible. They said that we do indeed need a salvation experience, but that we are not to go through the priest. Jesus, the great High Priest, provides direct access to the Father.

Both Lester Gingerich and Val Yoder have written about our faith forebears, who said that the brotherhood is important in making decisions. We consult with each other. I need you and you need me. The group gives us something valuable that is valuable and attractive. Our forefathers were known for brotherhood. They called each other brethren. We are still a small minority group in the midst of the larger culture, but I’m glad to be a part of a group that stands for brotherhood.

As we reach out beyond our Jerusalem, we don’t need to say that we have all the answers. Dale Heisey said that after they moved to Costa Rica, the church was growing and prospering. They enjoyed it and often gave people answers to questions they had. One day a brother came to Dale and said, “Isn’t there something we can give to

you?” As I recall there was something about planting corn in Costa Rica that the new believers could help the missionaries do better. We can learn something from those who did not grow up like we have. Our testimony can be enhanced by having an open ear to people to whom we would minister.

What are the right methods of reaching out? One way is material aid. In 1962, I went to Central America for 1-W service. In those early days, our churches were sending a lot of material aid to Belize. But as people grew and prospered spiritually, that program changed. While that was proper and right in the beginning, it was not something that we had to maintain indefinitely. As we have heard, it's better to teach a person how to fish than to ship him fish all the time. If that is to work, however, there should be evidence of fish in the pond. We must be careful that we don't leave them stranded. If we would share our faith, it is important that we use the right method.

Any material aid that is given should be given in the name of Christ. A cup of cold water, as simple as it might be, should be given in the name of Christ. He is the giver of all these things and it is important that we make it clear. We simply share what He has given to us.

I was asked to touch on how we are to deal with cultural differences. First of all, what is culture?

Culture is the way we do things.

A recent *U. S. News and World Report* described the dominant American culture as composed of people who are “fat, dumb and happy.” While that tickles us a bit, it becomes sad as we think about it. We find ourselves in the midst of that. In such conditions we want to have a church that is alive, healthy and well. If that's true, it is very important that we don't become a part of the culture around us. We must strive for a church that is more than one that is made up of people who are fat, dumb and happy. There needs to be some self-control and cultivation of intelligence. Unless we make sure of it, we will adapt to the culture around us, which tends to set our pace and direction.

In 1962, to be an American in Central America gave one the key to do just about whatever you wanted to do. As you heard in the missions report yesterday, there is now a stigma about being American in many countries of the world. In 1962, or thereabouts, someone wrote a book entitled, *The Ugly American*. While I have lost my copy, it was circulated among our mission personnel. That was the tip of the iceberg that is now bigger. That was the first indication that Americans

were not almost heavenly. During that time President Kennedy went to Costa Rica and met with the presidents of the five Central American republics. That was seen as a wonderful thing, but times have changed.

We Americans are no longer very welcome. Many of them make no difference in our Beachy Amish culture and the larger North American culture. If you are North American, then you are despised. But that should not make us stop either, because Christ was despised and rejected of men. He had a goal and He maintained His sense of direction to that goal.

Christian culture should always go the second mile. We should always be willing to lay down our lives for the sake of the Gospel, but we should also be willing to model the Gospel to those who are not fond of Americans. When Jesus Christ lives within, it changes you, even if you are from the United States.

One of our young people went to Indonesia. He noted that when those people see you smile and they start to realize what's behind that smile, they respond to that.

I understand that when our workers went to Africa and marriages were taking place, they found a dowry system in place. In a marriage, there had to be so many cows exchanged for the marriage to take place. That's so differ-

ent here. If there's any cow given, the bride's father might give the groom a cow to get started with. When we get there, we might tell them that this is all wrong. I know a brother who worked there and asked him what they did with that practice. He said that they worked through this and found that they could utilize this to be part of Christian testimony. It didn't have to be changed. Are we willing in such situations to say that maybe there is another way. If it doesn't violate what God's Word says, it can be adapted. While the old dowry system had become greedy and selfish, I don't think that just because there's a cow involved in a marriage that it's a violation of biblical principle.

As time goes on, fewer and fewer people respond to the Gospel. It seems that people are just getting hardened to it. That need not discourage us. We are to keep right on offering the Gospel to men.

We need to emphasize to our people the importance of Bible reading and prayer. Those two tools are the most important tools we have to offer to anyone. Let us keep right on fighting for the Lord Jesus Christ until the last day.

I love our church. I love our constituency. I appreciate the emphasis that has been held before us here. May God bless you!



Stewardship of Time

John E. Glick, Gap, PA

We sometimes feel we don't have enough time, but God has allotted to each of us the same amount. He wants us to be good stewards of it. We all have 24 hours in a day.

The problem is with what we give priority in our lives. We need to **find time** or **take time** for the really important things. Our relationship with the Lord and our family certainly falls in this category. Church activities surely belong on our time schedules. When we **spend time** in such matters we are investing in eternity.

When things go wrong at work and machinery breaks down, we may complain about **losing time**. How we respond to interruptions in our plans says something about our level of maturity. Have we learned to trust God with the details of daily life? Interruptions are not necessarily lost time. They may be time that God is using to teach us patience and to perfect our character.


Time can be misused. Time spent in doing foolish things that have no value is **wasted time**. There may be time during daily activities that we could be praying, meditating, or thinking constructive thoughts. Let's not waste that time by letting our minds idle away. By using our **spare**

time for something worthwhile, we need not **kill time**.

We can be guilty of **stealing time**. An example of this is a public meeting with several assigned topics. If one speaker goes **overtime**, is he not robbing his brother of time allotted for the next topic?

There's also the matter of **being on time**. Being prompt in meeting appointments enhances our Christian testimony. What employer doesn't appreciate having his employees arrive on the job on time? A particular area of concern is habitual tardiness at church services. Could we not easily get ready a little earlier in order to be at church and seated before starting time? Walking in after the service has begun is distracting to those worshipping. Being prompt at church honors God and is a blessing to us.

Maybe Sunday morning is our time to sleep in. Abraham rose early in the morning to begin the unwelcome journey to Mt. Moriah to offer up Isaac. Would it not please God if we would rise early on Sunday morning and pray for the service?

How we use our time will make a difference in eternity. Our time on earth is too short to spend in anything but godly living. Let us **redeem the time** because the days are evil. 

God is Light

Jonas Hershberger, Huntsburg, OH

Science tells us that light is constituted of three rays or groups of wave-lengths distinct from each other, none of which without the other would be light.

Each ray has its own separate function. The first *originates*, the second *formulates, illuminates* or *manifests*, and the third *consummates*. The first ray, often called invisible light, is neither seen nor felt. The second ray is both seen and felt. The third is not seen, but is felt as heat.


While God's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our

thoughts, I have not heard of a clearer illustration of our triune God:

God the Father originates. (God created the earth and all things.)

God the Son formulates, illuminates and manifests. (Jesus interpreted God's love for us.)

God the Holy Spirit consummates. (The Holy Spirit brings the new birth.)

The Apostle John wrote, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light**, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). 

helpers at home

The Beauty of Today

Mary June Glick

We are entering a new year—2007. Many of us believed that Christ would return before the year 2000. Now as we stand on the threshold of yet another year we can rejoice with anticipation for what it will bring. I find as I grow older, Satan would like to tempt me to look back on my life and feel discouraged or cause me to worry about the future. My desire

more than ever is to enjoy each new day, realizing that in every situation, God's grace is sufficient for me.

Enjoying the present means leaving behind the mistakes the failures, and even the hurts and wrongs we've encountered. It means not worrying about all we need to do tomorrow or next week, but simply trusting God and enjoying today.

Of course, there are preparations

that need to be made, work that needs to be done to meet the needs of our families. I believe the frustration comes more from thinking and worrying, than from the actual work we do. When we focus on the joy of now, we learn to laugh, to play, to pray, and to enjoy the moment.

Many of you who are reading this are going through difficult times and wonder, *How can I enjoy this moment?*

Let's think about ways of enjoying life right now:

1. It is only through a living relationship with Jesus Christ that we can experience true joy and peace in any circumstance. I must take time to have quiet time with God, to read His Word, to talk with Him and find renewal and strength for my day.

2. A thankful spirit is vital to help me enjoy today. Situations in our lives can change in a minute's time. A trip to the doctor's office can bring a diagnosis no one wants to hear—an accident, a telephone call, financial difficulties, a rebellious child who changes our lives—but somehow in the midst of these we can still be thankful. Thank God for the people who care, for doctors and medicine, for the ability to think and make small decisions—the list is endless. Thank God in the good times, too. Thank Him for the small blessings

and watch for them.

3. Building relationships takes time but brings much joy into our lives. I feel sorry for people who don't know the love of family, church, and other friendships. Life would be very empty without relationships. God made us social beings. We need each other. Develop friendships, reach out to people who are friendless, and life will be enriched.

4. Look for the beauty around you. Take time to watch a child at play. Listen to and identify birds and butterflies. Smell the roses. Read a good book. Drink a cup of tea with a friend. Try a new recipe. The list goes on.

For older women it is important to stretch our minds and to learn new things. It could mean a new craft or using the computer, writing, crocheting, sewing or whatever. There are so many opportunities to learn. I'm told it even helps prevent Alzheimer's Disease.

5. Look at what really matters. What we do is important, not only for today, but for eternity. So when you become frustrated with the cares and business of life, stop and ask yourself, "Does it really matter?"

Every moment in your life is God-planned—designed especially for you.



The Hot Pocket

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

Starla smiled with satisfaction as she viewed her work, stacks and stacks of precisely typed Bible stories. All of the stories had finally been translated and neatly typed into French Creole. A Haitian couple had been at Life Ministries to work on the translating. Now after many months of work, the project was ready to send to the print shop. All except for one thing—one major thing. Ten thousand dollars were needed to get the printing done.

Dan, our friend from the print shop, stopped in at eight that morning. He knew our Bible story translating project was nearing completion.

“Is the project ready to send to the press?” he asked Starla.

“Yes, it is all completed,” Starla said, “but we don’t have the funds to get it printed now.”

Lester walked in at that moment. “We won’t send this project with you till we have the ten thousand dollars we need to get it printed,” he stated.

“That is no problem,” Dan responded, “we are happy to start on the printing and you can pay us, Les, when the money comes in.”

Lester called his family and the

staff at Life Ministries together. He presented the need for ten thousand dollars for the Bible story books for Haiti, and proposed they spend the day in prayer and fasting. Right then they had a prayer meeting. At noon Lester, his wife Betty, and others fasted and prayed, imploring Almighty God to meet their needs.

At 1:30 that afternoon, the phone rang in Lester’s office. A man asked, “Do you need ten thousand dollars?”

“Do we need ten thousand dollars?!” Lester exclaimed. “Yes, yes, indeed we do. We were praying for that VERY amount this VERY day!”

“It’s like this,” the man said, “I have ten thousand I need to give to you. I will bring it in. At lunch time today, it seemed like my wallet just burned in my pocket. I didn’t know what was going on, but I got my wallet out and opened it. I found a check I made out to you three weeks ago that I forgot to send. The amount is ten thousand dollars.”

Lester went running to Betty, “God answered our prayer already, honey,” he rejoiced, “God answered our prayer on the very day that we were

fasting and praying. God is so good; God did it!”

Another prayer meeting was held at Life Ministries that day, a meeting of praise and thanksgiving to God for hearing and answering their prayer.

Lester promptly called Dan to come and pick up the Bible stories. Dan walked in the door, and asked incredulously, “What do you mean you have the money now?”

Do you remember to pray about your needs?

Who made the man feel like his wallet was hot in his pocket?

God loves to hear His children praying. He delights to answer prayer.

[Look for this story and more in a future book by Mary Ellen Beachy, due to be released by Vision Publishers, Fall, 2007.]



youth messages

Dear Youth,

Have you been taking opportunities the last while to be “moved with compassion’ toward your parents, siblings, and neighbors? Sometimes it can be difficult to know what is the most loving thing to do for someone we care about. The question often comes, “Should I bail them out of their troubles, or should I show them a

better way to live?”

This month’s writers have some good things to say on the subject of compassion. Hopefully you will be inspired to make a difference in your little corner of God’s universe. None of us will ever know how many people were touched by the ripples of love that were started when God’s love flowed out of us. —EE

This Month’s QUESTION

Something unique about Jesus’ ministry was the number of times that He was “moved with compassion.” He didn’t just see needs, but was moved. This seems to be something that is lacking in our churches today.

Why do you think this is? What do you think will need to happen in order for our youth to be known as people who are “moved with compassion”?

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I'm not sure just how a person should break the cycle. It seems obvious to me that if we are to lead by example, we will be far more successful in carrying on the torch. To light the torch ourselves, is a little harder. I think if we make an effort to think about others and how things affect them and wish only good on them, we would be much more moved when people are in need. One problem is that we feel taken advantage of too often when we give to others, and our advisors tell us, "See, you should have known." So the next time we think, "Ha, you're not getting me this time," and we try to protect ourselves, that results in zero compassion for others who are in need.

—Joshua Imhoff, Covington, TX



Prosperity can cause selfishness and complacency. Living in our own little prosperous world, we might tend not to take needs seriously. Also we can get caught up in material pursuits and interests of the world around us. This means that our priorities will be mixed up and our hearts will not be in tune with God's heart. We cannot have the compassion that Jesus had unless we have a close relationship with Him and can see the world through His eyes.

Young people like myself must main-

tain a close relationship with Christ so that we can see the needs and have His compassion. Going on mission trips is a good idea as it helps one to see the world's needs better and gives one the satisfaction and joy of having helped. Experiencing that joy one time could be a motivator for doing it again. Of course, our main motivation for helping others should be to glorify God. Utterior or selfish motives should be out of the picture.

—Matthew Yoder, Hartville, OH



First of all, I think it's important to note that while the church as a whole may be lacking in compassion, there are quite a few in our churches who are moved with compassion. For instance, in my church quite a few of the older couples live frugally and give very generously. I've also experienced compassion from various people in my church. Throughout my growing up years, these people (Sunday School teachers and others) saw my emotional and spiritual needs and invested time in me. They were moved with compassion.

It is true, however, that we in our churches can become much more compassionate. There are needs around us that are not being met. Why aren't we more compassionate?

It may be because we don't notice the need, or maybe we notice the symptoms but don't realize the extent of the need. Many times, though, we're not moved with compassion simply because we're selfish! We don't want to miss out on a good volleyball game, in order to listen to a hurting member of the youth group. We don't want to give money for Gospel for Asia because we're trying to get our house remodeled. Self just wants to be comfortable! Lastly, I think another reason we're not compassionate is because we're judgmental. Sometimes people just don't seem good enough to deserve compassion! They may seem so spiritually immature that we feel it's beneath our dignity to take an interest in their lives, or they may use the money we lend them so unwisely that we get frustrated and irritated and give up on them, instead of responding with compassion. (Although that may mean not lending to them again until we teach them self-control.) Because we're judgmental, we don't show compassion.

If we want to be people of compassion, instead of ignorant, selfish, or judgmental people, how do we become compassionate? Well, we might as well start praying that God will show us the needs. He will! Then we can prayerfully act compassionately, even when we don't "feel" compas-

sionate—when it's not some nice, sentimental flutter in our heart. It may sound simple, but in real life it's a journey. Thank God He's helping us!

—Marilyn Miller, Hutchinson, KS

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Compassion is definitely something that's missing among our churches. I myself have asked questions similar to this one. What is it that makes it so hard for us to be "moved with compassion"? Are we afraid to get down to the wounded person's level and get involved with whatever he or she may be going through? Are we afraid to get our hands dirty with other people's issues? Maybe we are afraid to simply get that close to someone. I don't have the answers, but these are a few questions that often go through my mind.

Could it be that compassion is lacking in our churches? Is it possible that even ministers are lacking in compassion? Think about it, "If a person rarely sees someone in authority showing compassion to others, is it any wonder that the youth lack compassion? If what youth generally feel is condemnation and we see someone in authority "writing off" those who are wounded, is it a surprise that we as youth don't show much compassion?"

I sometimes wonder if ministers ever think about it that perhaps some of the rebellion going on among youth is the youth's reaction to the ministry's lack

of compassion? Have ministers ever considered that rebellion in youth may be their way of saying they want and need help? It seems like an odd way to express that need, but sometimes youth can't think of any other way.

I think compassion is also something that should be taught in the home. What would happen if parents would stop having these "bad youth" for "desert" every evening and would instead start praying for them or reaching out to them??? It may not be easy but why not try? We as youth would do well by doing the same thing.

Jesus reached out to the woman at the well, as well as to the woman caught in adultery. What right do we have as His children not to follow the example He left for us? Let's crawl out of our boxes and start reaching out with compassion like Jesus did!

—A reader from VA

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The fact that we have it very good (money, goods, food, basically everything we need), our focus in life is very easily wavered. We also make ourselves busy. We become self-centered without any effort. How will a self-centered person be moved with compassion?

We will need to become more serious about our mission here on earth and strive to be more like Jesus. One thing that will help us to be moved

with compassion is not to let the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches take us down.

—Kevin King, Kinzers, PA

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I think before we can be "moved with compassion," we need to become moved with "passion!" It seems like we youth are slowly losing sight of our first love. Why is that? I believe simply because we are battling a furious enemy that is determined to destroy our souls. When we yield to the devil's schemes, he blinds us from the many needs surrounding us, and gives us no chance to reach out in compassion. Becoming compassionate is about getting a glimpse of a love so powerful and awesome you can't stay seated, but are moved with compassion by the ONE who first had compassion on you!

—Stephen Stoltzfus, Oxford, PA

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I think that often we are blinded because we are so busy doing our own thing that we aren't aware of the needs around us. In Mark 9:41, Jesus says, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." Obviously to Jesus, even a small act of kindness is important enough to be rewarded. We need to realize that everybody has a need and we are here to help each other.

If we keep our focus on Jesus, I think we will be able to see that people are hurting and need our help. Jesus Himself was the perfect example of how we should help others.

—Ethel Eichorn, London, OH

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I remember a time in my youth, after coming home from a term of service in Northern Ontario, I was wishing I could be a mentor to some of the struggling youth in our youth group. I was youth leader and thought I could help them. I thought I was a compassionate person and would have good advice that would help them mature. But for some reason, they never came to me with their struggles.

Several years later, my wife and I attended a counselor training week in Colorado. The counselor challenged us to pray for a compassion for others. He challenged us to go through the Gospel of Luke and look for every way that Jesus showed compassion to others. I did what he suggested and feel like it has changed how I relate to people.

First I prayed and asked God for

compassion for others. Then, I read through Luke and filled out a chart with what I found.

Here is an example:

Scripture Reference: Luke 23:1-3

Principle Learned: When Jesus was falsely accused, he didn't defend Himself, but simply answered Pilate's question with truth.

Practical Application: Today if someone accuses me of something, I don't need to defend myself, but keep my focus on doing what God wants me to do—speaking the truth in love.

I ended up with close to 20 pages of notes. Later, when I would be struggling with things in life, I would go back to this list and always found similar situations that Jesus faced. I would look at His responses and make a practical application for myself and then try to do it.

I have come to the conclusion that people aren't just looking for someone with answers. They want someone to care. If they sense that I care, then we can pray and ask God for wisdom to help answer their needs.

—Davy Mast, Oswego, KS

Next Month's
QUESTION

Sometimes we can get stuck in a rut, isolate ourselves from others, and forget our responsibility to live the life of Jesus in everyday life.

What are some practical things that you have done or that your friends have done, to touch others with the life of Jesus?

Please send your replies by January 20.



THOUGHT GEMS

It seems that the world has finally achieved perpetual commotion.

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Molehills of debt grow into mountains of worry.

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Advertising may turn a yawn into a “yearn.”

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The cross moves better for the man who carries it than for the man who drags it.

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Many a good idea has been smothered to death by words.

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Why is it that when we tell the doctor that we’re all tired out, he looks first at the tongue?

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We seem to learn more wisdom from failure than from success.

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There would be fewer divorces if the man tried as hard to keep his wife as he did to get her.

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More people are encouraged into virtue than are bullied out of vice.

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You can recognize the golden years by the silver in your hair.

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