

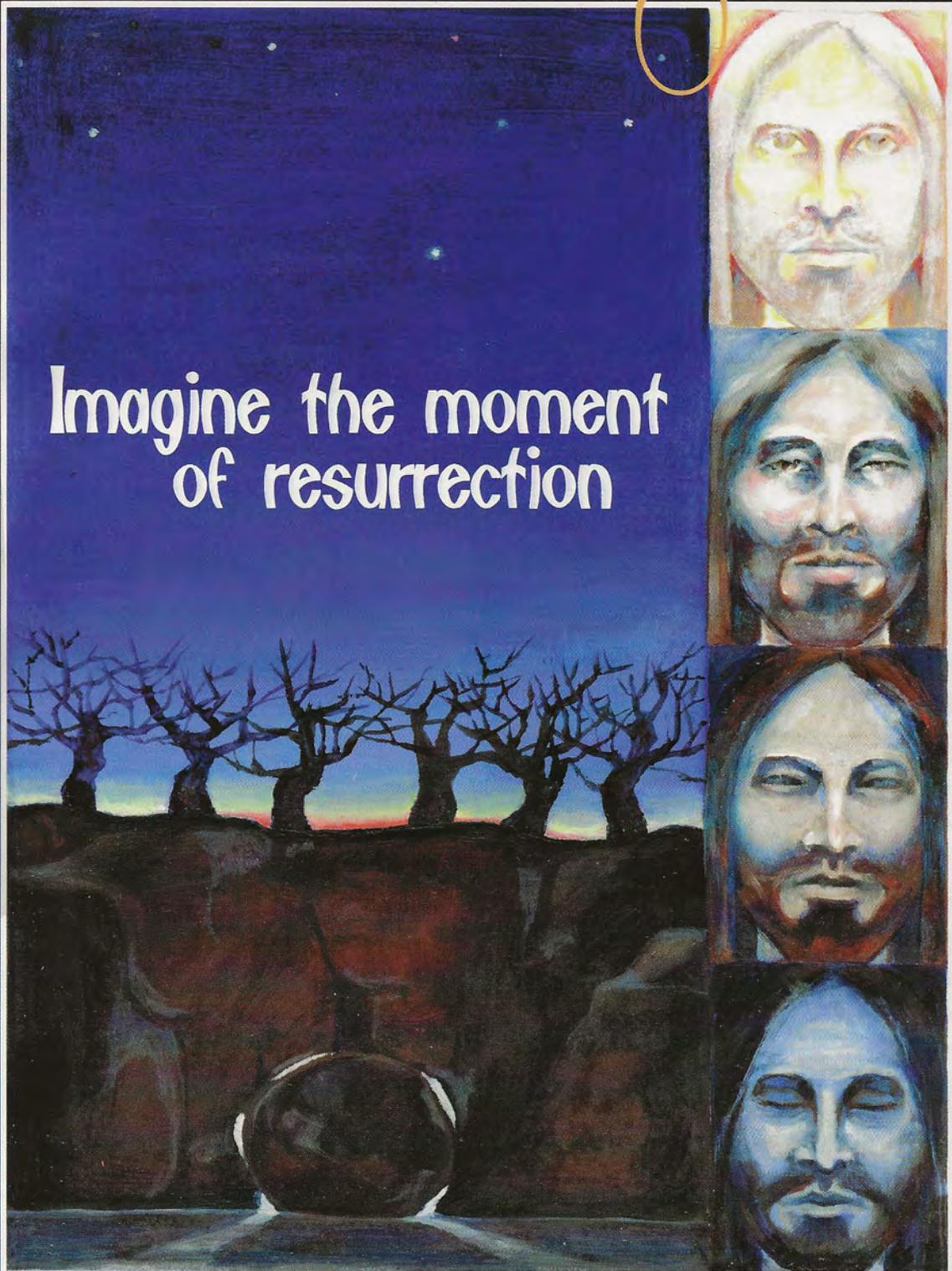
Messenger

Church of the Brethren

April 2000

www.brethren.org

Imagine the moment
of resurrection



Handwritten notes on a white card, partially obscured by the magazine cover.



Need to catch a little fresh air between your meetings?

Get out to the **BBT Fitness Challenge & Golf Outing at Annual Conference.**

BBT Fitness Challenge **Monday, July 17, 7:00 a.m.**

A 5K race for runners and walkers on a measured course.

Besides a good workout, participants will receive

- a commemorative tee shirt
- post-race breakfast (fruit, muffins, juice)
- prizes for category winners

Fee: \$15

BBT Golf Outing **Thursday, July 20, 8:00 a.m.**

Format: team scramble

Expanded this year to include all interested golfers attending Annual Conference.

Fee: \$40, covers greens fees, cart, range balls, beverages, lunch and prizes.

**All conference participants welcome. For more information
and registration forms, call 800-746-1505, ext. 393.**

Messenger

Vol. 149, No. 3

April 2000

www.brethren.org

Editor: Fletcher Farrar
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Publisher: Wendy McFadden
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On the cover: Our Easter cover is by Paul Grout, whose art and ministry were featured in the April 1999 edition. Grout, who is pastor of Genesis Church of the Brethren, Putney, Vt., has completed a series of paintings on the Easter theme, "Stations of the Resurrection." Grout wrote the poem below to accompany the cover painting.

Imagine the Moment of Resurrection

Imagine the moment
of resurrection
when light penetrated
what seemed impenetrable
what seemed eternal darkness, the tomb,
that moment
in all of human history
that changed everything
yet appeared
as the world awoke
just another morning.

—PAUL GROUT



10 The church and mental illness

The death last summer of Wes Albin, an active member of the Harrisburg, Pa., congregation, has opened this discussion of how churches can deal with depression, a common but misunderstood form of mental illness.

14 A doctor with a mission

With support from US Brethren, a Dominican Republic doctor who is a member of the Dominican Church of the Brethren has taken her faith and medicine on a mission to help Haitian refugees in labor camps.

19 Caring for creation in Belize

Upon their return from a Church of the Brethren "Faith Expedition" to Central America, three writers reflect on the Christian response to environmental destruction.

24 The Easter spiritual

"Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble." Reflecting on the deeper meaning of the familiar music, Ken Gibble writes: "When resurrection happens, you tremble."

26 A Quiet Place

A little old farmhouse in Indiana, on the grounds of Camp Mack, has been transformed into a spiritual retreat center where tired souls can find rest and renewal, where they can be close to God.

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From the Publisher

Those who read small print may have noticed lots of transition within the team that produces MESSENGER. While editor Fletcher Farrar is now an old-timer within the group, just about everyone else has come on board since fall. (We even changed printers a few months ago.)

Peggy Reinacher became acquainted with the Brethren last summer when she began as a temporary employee to help get subscription processing back on schedule after a major change in computer software. When long-time subscriptions coordinator Vicki Roche left in September, we were fortunate to have Peggy already trained and ready to go. She has excelled at finding ways to make the process more efficient.

Supervision of subscriptions and selling ad space have recently shifted into Brethren Press marketing. To these and all his other marketing tasks, manager Russ Matteson has brought energy, skill, creativity, and a keen sense of who the Brethren are. With business and seminary degrees, pastoral experience, and several years managing bookstores, his background is perfect for Brethren Press.

News manager Walt Wiltschek eased into the job by filling in on an interim basis when Nevin Dulabaum moved down the hall to the Brethren Benefit Trust. So when we hired Walt, he already knew just about everything he needed to know. In addition to broadcasting Brethren news through *Newsline* and giving attention to the denominational website, Walt is preparing the news section of MESSENGER. His twin passions for journalism and ministry (he comes straight from the Westminster, Md., congregation, where he was associate pastor) make him a natural for his new position.

With the next issue we will bring back an old name, that of Paul Stocksdale. He started his career with MESSENGER shortly after college, but left several years ago for a new job. He's been honing his design skills in the rarefied air of a Chicago ad agency, but never stopped providing occasional freelance design work for various agencies of the church. He comes back to us now because he and his wife, Cynthia, have just gone full-time running their own business, Cedar House Design.

Paul picks up where Marianne Sackett leaves off. A freelance designer, Marianne has designed about two years' worth of MESSENGERS, working from her home office in Chicago. Not only is she an expert at Quark, but on more than one occasion she's gone the second mile for us—driving the materials to Elgin in order to save us a day in the schedule, for example.

In addition to those whose names appear on the masthead, there are other outstanding but unaccredited folks who also help the magazine get out the door and into readers' mailboxes. However, the teamwork isn't really complete until you, our faithful readers, take the magazine into your homes and make it part of your lives. Thanks for being a member of the MESSENGER family. I wish the masthead were big enough to list you all.

Wendy McFadden

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Subscription rates:
\$16.50 individual rate
\$12.50 church individual plan
\$10.50 church group plan
\$10.50 gift subscriptions

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To view the official Church of the Brethren Web site, point your browser to <http://www.brethren.org>.

MESSENGER is the official publication of the Church of the Brethren. Entered as periodical postage matter Aug. 20, 1918, under Act of Congress of Oct. 17, 1917. Filing date, Nov. 1, 1984. Member of the Associated Church Press. Subscriber to Religion News Service & Ecumenical Press Service. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New Revised Standard Version. MESSENGER is published 11 times a year by Brethren Press, Church of the Brethren General Board. Periodical postage paid at Elgin, Ill., and at additional mailing office, April 1998. Copyright 1999, Church of the Brethren General Board. ISSN 0026-0555.
Postmaster: Send address changes to MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.



Printed on recycled paper



Don Brandt and Geraldine

How one man started his own heifer project

Don Brandt, a member of the Mechanicsburg, Pa., congregation, is neither a farmer nor a rancher. The closest he has come is to work at a plant nursery, and he helps sell produce at the Lebanon, Pa., disaster relief auction each fall.

He considered raising produce for the auction, until he got the idea that maybe he could grow something bigger.

He purchased a young calf at the auction and named her "Geraldine." With the help of his wife, Lois, and some friends he fed, immunized, and had the heifer bred, returning her to the auction the next year. On the day she faced the buyers, Geraldine behaved "like a good Brethren cow," in Don's words, bringing in a respectable \$1,075 for the disaster fund.

Don says the venture into cattle-raising was so enjoyable he might do it again—if there is a heifer as appealing as Geraldine!—SARA WILSON

Married for 70 years, one day at a time

It was a quiet celebration on Sept. 12, a small family dinner, that marked the 70th year since Meade and Velma McCoy, of Marion Center, Pa., were united in a simple ceremony at the Presbyterian parsonage.

"We've had our ups and downs like everybody else," says Velma. She and her husband are both 90.

Five years ago she was down with a heart condition and doctors didn't think she would survive. But after receiving a pacemaker she bounced back. After Christmas her hus-

band Meade was hospitalized for awhile, and Velma baked fresh buns for the folks from church who went to visit him. The McCoy's live with their son, William, a registered nurse who helps to care for them both.

They've been going to the Purchase Line Church

of the Brethren, Clymer, Pa., since 1940, when the pastor then, Dorsey Rotruck (currently of McPherson, Kan.) came to visit their daughter who was sick with pneumonia. "We have a lot of 'almost-grandchildren' at our church," says Velma. "There are a lot of young people who look up to us."

What is the secret to 70 years of marriage? "I asked my husband that and he had no idea," Velma says. "We plug along. You just have to keep plugging along I guess."

Youth take a hard look at racism

Jan 7-9 was the date of a young adult retreat held at Camp Eder, sponsored by

both the Southern Pennsylvania District and On Earth Peace Assembly. The retreat was attended by 15 young adults. We also had to acknowledge that at a retreat looking at racism, our brothers and sisters of color were very underrepresented, with only one female of color.

We can easily admit, as people who are predominantly of German heritage, middle class, and Protestant, we come from a very privileged subset of the world. What is very hard to admit is that as members of that privileged group, we are oppressing other groups in order to have our privileges.

Two videos, a documentary on the Los Angeles riots and a "Prime Time" special were presented to examine issues of racism, the effects of injustice towards blacks in the US, and the depth of emotion and anger over racial injustice. We discussed our isolation from multiculturalism, our unawareness of events that are not WASP, and how that lack of education can further widen the gap between racial groups. We spent time discussing how to raise our own personal awareness of race, ethnicities, and prejudice.

We took away from the weekend the hope of reconciliation found in Ephesians 2:14-19.

—BETH MILLER

An "Old-Timers Day" is planned for May 21 with Brethren heritage displays. Aug. 13 is a family picnic following the church service. Special events with guest speakers are planned for Oct. 7 and 8.

Guests and words of greeting are welcome. For information call 814-632-5051 or 814-632-8620.

Indiana men take on the world

Camp Alexander Mack hosted the third annual Northern Indiana District Men's retreat Feb. 5 and 6. About 40 men attended the retreat, which carried the theme, "A Man and His World."

Retreat attendees looked at the dynamics of relationships and explored the Christian responses to a world divided by condition, creed, and color. Leaders were David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness, and Lee Krähenbühl, co-pastor of Skyridge Church of the Brethren, Kalamazoo, Mich.

West Goshen honored as Centennial Church

The West Goshen Church of the Brethren, Goshen, Ind., was honored as the Centennial Church for 1999 by the Elkhart County Agricultural Society. The West Goshen congregation was established in 1830 by the families of Elder Daniel Cripe, Jacob Cripe, Clint Stouder, and John Pipping, who came to the area from Montgomery County, Ohio.



Roy and Jean Judy with Lucille and Alton McDaniel.

Roy Judy completes 40 years

On Jan. 1 Roy Judy, and his wife, Jean, were honored for serving the Ridgely, Md., congregation for 40 years. He began by sharing the pastorate with Alton McDaniel, each preaching every other Sunday; then Judy went to full time in 1961. Many friends and former members of the congregation came to celebrate the occasion, including Alton McDaniel, who brought the morning message, "Blessed are the History-makers."

Spring Mount marks 200 years of service

Spring Mount Church of the Brethren, Warriors Mark, Pa., celebrates its 200th anniversary this year.

Meetings were held in homes until 1859, when a small wooden church was built at the present location. This was replaced in 1886 by the present building.

West Goshen is the "mother church" for some 30 other Brethren congregations in northern Indiana and lower Michigan.

After 65 years Bush retires from ministry

Clyde Bush, of Curryville, Pa., has retired after 65 years in the active ministry. He was called to the ministry at the age of 18 by the Curryville Church of the Brethren and began his ministry at the Riddlesburg church. Other Church of the Brethren congregations he served include Stonerstown, Bellwood, James Creek, Beech Run, Waterside, Black Valley, and Pleasant Union.

During his ministry Bush preached 3,268 sermons, conducted 364 prayer meetings, baptized 157 (including 50 on one day assisted by two other pastors), and officiated at 110 weddings and 112 funerals.

Students study civil rights on tour of South

Manchester College professor Ken Brown and three students spent their January session in the South, visiting cities and sites associated with the civil rights movement.

The students in the peace studies program—Erica Sweitzer, Eric Christiansen, and Angela Florence—were taking a course titled, "Current Issues in Peace and Justice: How the Civil

Rights Movement has Changed the South."

The group went to the University of Mississippi, the one-time segregationist school that became a hotbed of civil rights activity in the 1960s. They visited the Lorraine Motel, site of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They were in Atlanta, Ga., for the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. In keeping with the words of Coretta Scott King—"It's not a day off, it's a day on"—they spent the day volunteering at an inner-city school and an AIDS shelter.

After serious accident, she shares her faith

Last June Flora Williams, professor of family and consumer economics at Purdue University and pianist at Lafayette (Ind.) Church of the Brethren, was in Mexico on a tourist van that crashed. Her injuries required the amputation of her right lower arm and hand.

A local newspaper article highlighted the positive attitude that brought Flora through her recovery. "Instead of being depressed, I reflect on the fact that I am blessed," she says. As one friend put it, she focused on the internal and the eternal, instead of the external.

She has returned to classroom teaching, and is even playing the piano and organ again. Rather than hide her prosthesis, she adorns it with nail polish and splashy rings. "The Lord did not promise life would be easy," Flora says, "but he did promise to go with us every step of the way."

Eshbach certified as fund raising executive

Theresa C. Eshbach, of Thomasville, Pa., director of institutional advancement for Bethany Theological Seminary, was awarded the professional designation of Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) by the CFRE certification board. Those certified have met professional standards and have agreed to uphold a code of ethics and the



Theresa C. Eshbach

Donor Bill of Rights. Also, candidates must pass a written examination.



Marjorie and Conrad Burton.

Remembered

D. Conrad Burton, 77, of Long Beach, Calif., died March 31, 1999. He was pastor of the Panorama City, Calif. congregation for 17 years. Later he left the pastoral ministry to develop a new mission—the development, construction, and management of non-profit housing for the low-income elderly.

In the 1960s, Burton ministered to despondent street kids of Los Angeles. "He would go down to the Sunset Strip and just talk and listen to the kids," said his wife, Marjorie. "He would help get them back on their feet, sometimes reuniting them with their families."

Martha Wenger Bachman, 77, of Lebanon, Pa., died July 11. She served in Brethren Volunteer Service, and with Civilian Public Service in Castañer, Puerto Rico. She was a member of Brethren Peace Fellowship and was known for her dedication to the cause of peace.

"In Touch" features news of congregations, districts, and individuals. Send story ideas and photos to "In Touch," MESSENGER, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.



Walt Wiltschek

Guillermo Encarnación, coordinator of theological training in the Dominican Republic; **Jerry Crouse**, mission co-coordinator in the Dominican Republic; **Allen Hansell**, director of ministry for the Church of the Brethren General Board; and **Becky Baile Crouse**, mission co-coordinator, join in laying on hands as 10 pastors are ordained in the first Church of the Brethren ordination service in the Dominican Republic.



Brethren Volunteer Service Orientation Unit 237 trained at Camp Ithiel, Gotha, Fla., Jan. 23 to Feb. 11. The work assignments for the volunteers are listed next to their names. Front row: **Kerry Labuschagne** (Camp Brethren Woods, Keezletown, Va.), **Sue Grubb** (staff); second row: **Matt Stauffer** (staff), **Andy Kloos** (San Antonio Catholic Worker House, Tex.); **Christy Bischoff** (Quaker Cottage, Belfast, Northern Ireland); third row: **Lynn Stoltzfus** (Christian Peacemaker Teams, Chiapas, Mexico); **Tobias Baier** (National Farm Worker Ministries, Florida/North Carolina), **Ali Durbin** (Guatemala Accompaniment Project, Guatemala City); Back row: **Barrett Chaix** (International Peace Bureau, Geneva, Switzerland); **Aimee Edmark** (Church of the Brethren Youth Services, Leola, Pa.); **Tracy Stoddart** (staff); **Veli Turhan** (Tri-City Homeless Coalition, Fremont, Calif.).

Dominican Brethren celebrate theology graduation

Brethren in the Dominican Republic use a traditional greeting when saying hello or farewell: “Dios le bendiga” — God bless you.

February proved to be a month especially filled with God’s blessings for the Dominican Brethren and for their counterparts in the United States. Feb. 12 marked graduation day for 17 students who became the first in the nation to complete a five-year Church of the Brethren theological training program. A week later, the first Brethren ordinations in the Dominican Republic took place at the ninth annual assembly of congregations there.

“This is a very sacred and historic moment in the international Church of the Brethren, and a special joy in the Dominican Republic,” said General Board Director of Ministry **Allen Hansell**, who conducted the services among the wooden benches of an outdoor pavilion.

In addition to the 10 pastors who were ordained, 7 more people were licensed during the Saturday evening service. The group of 17 included old and young, men and women —

all of them exhibiting a passion for Jesus Christ and the church. Each minister came to the front surrounded by members of his or her congregation to show support and community.

About 30 US Brethren were present for the historic ceremonies, joining more than 150 Dominicans. In addition to Hansell, the US representatives included executive director **Judy Mills Reimer** and Global Mission Partnerships director **Merv Keeney** of the General Board, **Jim Myer** of Brethren Revival Fellowship,



Walt Wiltschek

Pastor Sebastian Reyes of the Agua Viva congregation celebrates his ordination.

and a large workcamp group from Pennsylvania.

The entire ceremony painted a portrait of two cultures woven together, with Hansell delivering the ceremony and vows in English, and Guillermo Encarnación, coordinator of theological training in the Dominican Republic, translating them into the native Spanish. All ministry materials, such as certificates and identification cards, were also translated into Spanish for the occasion.

"I am happy and thrilled," said newly ordained Angelica Beriguete, pastor of the Fuente de Vida congregation, through a translator. "For anyone who is ready and feels called by God, this is a good direction. This is an exciting time for the church."

As many as 40 Dominicans are expected to enroll in the theological training program this year. Some of those are continuing students, but many are new. Nineteen congregations or preaching points are now functioning in the country with the guidance of Church of the Brethren mission coordinators Jerry and Becky Crouse, who live in Santo Domingo. The Crouses received a quick and emphatic round of applause for their work after Jerry delivered their report at the assembly.

Other major items at the assembly included approval of the 1999 treasurer's report and 2000 budget, elections for the coming year, reports from each congregation, and amendments to their conference's constitution.

Worship provided the central heartbeat of the weekend, however, with energetic and abundant music, fervent prayers, scripture readings, and moving messages — including addresses by Encarnación Saturday night and Reimer on Sunday, following communion.

As people went their separate ways after the closing worship, the mean-

ingful words came again: "Dios le bendiga." —WALT WILTSCHKE

General Board programs finish fiscal year in black

Church of the Brethren General Board treasurer Judy E. Keyser used "solid" and "stable" as the two words to describe the organization's financial status entering 2000.

"General programs," those which are not self-funded, showed a total income over expense of \$136,070 according to pre-audit reports. That strong showing came even after several adjustments, such as a one-time transfer to Brethren Press and a transfer to fund annuity payments.

For self-funding units, all but one finished in the black. The New Windsor (Md.) Conference Center showed the largest turnaround, posting a deficit in 1998 but showing a \$5,450 net income over expense in 1999. Similar good news came from Brethren Press (\$11,390), and from Emergency Response/Service Ministries (\$35,110). MESSENGER showed a net loss of \$25,380 for the year.

Urban Peace Tour visits churches of Los Angeles

During the week of Feb. 8-13 participants in Urban Peace Tour 2000 traveled to Church of the Brethren congregations throughout the Los Angeles area. They worshiped together, celebrating their unique cultures and backgrounds, but united under a common identity as Christians and members of the Church of the Brethren.

The tour gathered participants from Brethren congregations across the country including: Harrisburg (Pa.) First—Iglesia del Discipulado, Altoona (Pa.) 28th Street, Germantown (Philadelphia, Pa.), and Phoenix (Ariz.) First. Local area par-



Greg Laszakovits

Orlando Antonio Jiménez, a member of Bella Vista Church of the Brethren, Los Angeles, on the Urban Peace Tour.

ticipants from Imperial Heights, Valley View Whittier, and Bella Vista congregations further strengthened the tour.

"I was continually amazed by the worshipful and energetic spirit in which people gave themselves to the tour—heart and soul," said tour coordinator Greg Laszakovits, who is finishing a year doing anti-racism education through the General Board's Brethren Witness office.



Greg Laszakovits

Ernie Sewell, of Germantown Church of the Brethren, on the Urban Peace Tour.

Each night's worship celebration included music, testimonies, powerful preaching, and prayers for personal, interracial, and world peace.

"We could really feel the Holy Spirit move in those churches," said Nate Olivencia of Harrisburg, Pa. "It was powerful!"

One of the highlights of the tour was the final worship service at Central Evangelical Korean Church of the Brethren. The message was delivered in Spanish by Pastor Guillermo Olivencia of Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren, Iglesia del Discipulado, then translated to English, then to Korean.

"This is what the Kingdom of God will look like—look at the diversity!" rejoiced one church member.

Other stops on the tour included Principe de Paz, Imperial Heights, Pomona Fellowship, and Bella Vista/Bittersweet Ministries.

Annual Conference announces ballot

Paul Grout (Putney, Vt.), Joan Hershey (Mount Joy, Pa.), Marianne Rhoades Pittman (Blacksburg, Va.), and David L. Rogers (North Manchester, Ind.) are the candidates for moderator-elect on this year's Annual Conference Standing Committee ballot.

Standing Committee will prepare the ballot that delegates will vote on by cutting the list of nominees for that and numerous other positions in half when it meets in July prior to Annual Conference in Kansas City, Mo.

Other positions on the ballot this year are a member of the Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee; General Board members from three districts—Illinois and Wisconsin, Northern Ohio, and Southeastern—plus an at-large representative; one member each of the boards of On Earth Peace Assembly, Brethren Benefit Trust, and

Association of Brethren Caregivers; two members of the Bethany Theological Seminary board, one representing the laity and one representing the ministry; a member of the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee representing the laity; a member of the Committee on Interchurch Relations; and male and female members of the Review and Evaluation Committee.

CAIR team helps following Alaska Airlines crash

The Crisis in Aviation Incident Response program, administered by the Church of the Brethren General Board's Emergency Response/Service Ministries, was called upon again after the crash of Alaska Airlines flight 261 in the Pacific Ocean. Sharon Gilbert of the La Verne (Calif.) Church of the Brethren helped to administer that effort.

Other Brethren involved in the ecumenical team included Sheryl Faus (Chiques church, Manheim, Pa.), Judy Gump (Prince of Peace church, Denver, Colo.), John Kinsel (Beavercreek, Ohio, church), and Dena Gilbert (La Verne).

The team's work so impressed Alaska Airlines that a CAIR team was requested to work during a memorial service in Seattle for families of airline employees involved in the crash. Gilbert again co-administered that project, which included Brethren Patricia Ronk of the Oak Grove church (Roanoke, Va.) and Noel Gilbert of La Verne.

They cared for 58 infants and children during the services at the Seattle Convention Center.

Older Adult Conference speakers announced

The Association of Brethren Caregivers has announced the lineup of speakers for this year's National Older Adult Conference, to be held Sept. 11-15 in Lake Junaluska, N.C.

Retired pastor Jimmy Ross of Waynesboro, Va., will provide the message for the Monday night opening celebration, with the title "More than Leaves and Shade."

Other speakers include Robert A. Raines, former director of the Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center in Bangor, Pa.; McPherson (Kan.) College president emeritus Paul Hoffman; Marva J. Dawn of Christians Equipped for Ministry, Vancouver, Wash.; and retired pastor and former Annual Conference moderator Dean M. Miller.

Robert Neff, president emeritus of Juniata College (Huntingdon, Pa.) and former general secretary of the Church of the Brethren General Board, will lead three days of morning Bible study based on the Psalms.

Other presentations include a musical, "Heavenly Days," which will be presented by members of the North Manchester (Ind.) Shepherd center, and the biblical comedy of Ted Swartz and Lee Eshleman, better known simply as "Ted and Lee," in "The Creation Chronicles."

Personnel changes

Mark Sloan departed Feb. 1 for Nairobi, Kenya, to begin serving as special assistant to Haruun Ruun, executive director of the New Sudan Council of Churches. Sloan joined Ruun and Merlyn Kettering as the third member of the Church of the Brethren General Board's Global Mission Partnerships team serving with the NSCC. Sloan, from Stone Church of the Brethren in Huntingdon, Pa., completed graduate studies in theology and business administration in December.

Linda McCauliff has resigned as a Congregational Life Team member for Area 1 (Northeast) effective Feb. 25. McCauliff began serving with the General Board in January 1998 and has worked with the other team members in developing a more direct General Board approach to congregations

under the umbrella of Congregational Life Ministries. McCauliff is continuing in her half-time associate district executive position with Western Pennsylvania District.

Grants help after hurricane and China earthquakes

The second Emergency Disaster Fund grant of 2000 provided \$10,000 to support disaster recovery efforts through Church World Service following two Jan. 14 earthquakes in China.

The quakes caused heavy destruction of homes and public buildings, with more than 156,000 rendered homeless out of a population of 200,000 in the area.

The year's third allocation from the fund went to provide \$6,000 to the Falfurrias Church of the Brethren to assist with damage caused by Hurricane Bret to the church, its parsonage, and the surrounding community in August 1999.

Fourth Song & Story Fest set for July in Iowa

The Great Plains Song and Story Fest will be held the week before Annual Conference, July 9-15, at Camp Pine Lake near Eldora, Iowa. This unique family camp, offered for a fourth straight year, features the following Brethren leaders: Debbie Eisenbise, Dena Pence Frantz, Joseph Helfrich, Rocci Hildum, Jonathan Hunter, Lee Krähenbühl, Jim Lehman, Peg Lehman, Mike Stern, and others.

Call 515-939-5334 or e-mail campinelake@earthlink.net for more information.

Juniata College community says prayers for peace

People are gathering and saying prayers for world peace at dawn each morning this year in the Elizabeth Evans Baker Peace Chapel of Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa.

The prayer services consist of the ringing of a bell, the reading of an interfaith prayer, a time of silence, and the reading of a prayer from the faith tradition of the person overseeing that service.

The 2000 Prayers effort is being organized by the Baker Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies and the Campus Ministry Board of the college, along with several area churches. Volunteers take turns leading a week of the prayers.

The prayer services "will be a daily opportunity for the community to remember those who suffer from war and injustice and to ask for the strength and wisdom to work for a more peaceful world," said Andy Murray, director of the Baker Institute.

New Year's weekend event caps year-long J2K project

The "J2K: New Hope, New Day" project will conclude with a major theological gathering in Cincinnati over New Year's weekend. Titled "Speaking of Jesus . . .," the event will invite Brethren from across the denomination and from a variety of faith perspectives to share about their faith in Jesus and the impact of Jesus on the church and society.

Sessions are being designed to be highly participatory in nature. Jointly sponsored by Bethany Theological Seminary and the Church of the Brethren General Board, the conference will be the first such national gathering of its kind in nearly 20 years.

The purpose of the event is to "explore our faith and build community at a decisive time in the life of our church and in human history," according to the planning team. The team consists of Sharon Nearhoof, Richard Kyrematen, Harriet Finney, Rick Gardner, and David Radcliff.

Planners anticipate attendance by congregational leaders, seminary students and faculty, and district and denominational staff. Registration will be limited to the first 250 appli-

cants. Special consideration will be given to assisting people who live west of the Mississippi to attend. Contact the J2K project office at 800-323-8039 for more information.

Space remains in some summer workcamps

Many of the 22 summer workcamps offered by the General Board's Youth/Young Adult office have begun to fill up, but time remains to register for others.

Seven workcamps were full by early March: Indianapolis, Ind.; New Windsor, Md.; Crossnore, N.C.; Richmond, Va.; Dominican Republic (BRF); Lend-a-Hand, Ky.; and Lake Geneva, Wis.

Workcamps in Denver, Colo.; the second camp in Jamaica; Pine Ridge, S.D., and Puerto Rico were nearly full.

Those with the most space still remaining were: Young Adult Dominican Republic; Intergenerational, Harrisburg, Pa.; Americus, Ga.; Orlando, Fla.; Trees for Life in Wichita, Kan.; Washington, D.C.; Tijuana, Mexico; and Gould Farm, Mass. For more workcamp information, call the Youth/Young Adult office at 1-800-323-8039.

Western US youth will hold conference at La Verne

The Western Regional Youth Conference, held only once every four years, will take place July 6-10 at the University of La Verne (Calif.).

The event draws youth and advisors from the Idaho, Pacific Southwest, and Oregon/Washington districts and features worship, workshops, music, recreation, and other activities.

For more information, contact Dena Gilbert in the Pacific Southwest District Office at 909-593-2254 or at gogilbert@juno.com, or Don Flora at the University of La Verne at 909-593-3511, x4694 or at florad@ulv.edu.



Who in your church is suffering from mental illness? You may not know, because the mentally ill look no different from anyone else. But nationwide, 1 in 10 persons is afflicted by mental illness seriously enough to require treatment. One person in the US commits suicide every 30 minutes. Out of 100 adults between the ages of 17 and 74, some 15 will suffer from serious depression from time to time. Pictured is First Church of the Brethren, Springfield, Ill., a congregation that has cared for members with mental illness.

What churches can do for the depressed

A psychiatrist on the healing combination of medicine, love, and understanding

BY G. MARTIN KEENEY

Wes Albin of Harrisburg, Pa., tragically lost his life to depression last August [see article next page]. It is our hope that these words could be one component of the grieving process for his family, church, and the denomination: trying to build some education, understanding, and growth into the impossible task of “figuring out” the loss of Wes.

He was an admired acquaintance of mine, so I have been shaken by his loss. Being a psychiatrist is no protection. The concomitant sadness, contemplation, prayer, and conversations with others have led to some reflections on what the church can offer to community members suffering with depression.

A church community offers much

to alleviate all kinds of suffering. Empathy, genuine hope, laying on hands, anointing, availability, and prayer are important to those with depression. It is also important that those closest to the depressed receive some of the same, since it is draining to be in their position.

Frequently it is difficult to offer this kind of help because of lack of understanding of “emotional problems,” or discomfort with them. Stigma, however, becomes less formidable in a more knowledgeable community where words like *suicide* and *psychiatrist* can be said without choking. Churches can develop a foundation for this by offering Christian education about mental illness.

Looking at depression from an illness or “biology” perspective can help, too. Although loss, stress, or spiritual issues are usually related to

depression, there is a disease component as well. Indeed, some are more prone to this illness because of their genes, in the same way one might be at risk for diabetes or heart attacks because it runs in the family. This is why a combination of talking therapy and biological therapy (medication) is usually the best treatment. More information about the disease and its treatments is available from treatment centers (hospitals and professional offices) and local chapters of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

The important message that churches can help deliver is that most depression is diagnosable and treatable. Such knowledge is a powerful tool since it helps fuel honest encouragement and open support.

Many who are eager to help are sti-

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Wes Albin—A walking partner

BY HELEN S. HOLLINGER

Just before the CROP Walks started this past October in Harrisburg and York, Pa., Church World Service executive Roger Clark made a request: “As you take your steps this day to alleviate hunger, we ask that you walk in memory of Wesley Albin.”

Until his sudden death on Aug. 25, Wesley Paul Albin, 59, had served as Pennsylvania regional director of CWS/CROP for 24 years. As Wes’ widow, Joyce, cut the ribbon for the Harrisburg walk to begin, Clark said, “As you participate in today’s CROP Walk, know that Wesley Albin lives on in our steps. Even as we grieve deeply for our loss, we give thanks for the life and influence of this dear man.”

Recently Wes suffered from severe depression and was undergoing medical treatment and therapy. His family, friends, and colleagues had rallied around him with love and support, along with his pastors, Nancy and Irvin Heishman, of the Harrisburg (Pa.) First Church of the Brethren. Sadly, however, even as Wes continued to work and to share his gifted life with others, he lost his battle with clinical depression and took his own life.

“Ironically, his life commitments and work with Church World Service have saved literally thousands of lives and inspired countless others to deeper discipleship,” said his co-pastor, Irvin Heishman. “There is no doubt but that Wes left the world a better place.”

He took on a servant role early in his life. Born in Ottumwa, Iowa, he was the son of Brethren pastor Charles Albin and Ica Albin. Upon graduating from McPherson College, where he was student body president, he entered Brethren Volunteer Service in 1962, serving with Church World Service in South Korea as a field representative. He worked to provide food, clothing, and self-help equipment to some 800 projects, including orphanages, hospitals, and land reclamation projects. This experience moved Wes to dedicate his life to working to alleviate hunger throughout the world.

He worked for CWS/CROP in Iowa, Wisconsin, and the Mid-Atlantic Region before opening a regional office in Camp Hill, Pa. In citing Wes’ record 37-year tenure of service to Church World

Service—the longest of any CWS employee, as well as any Church of the Brethren member—Annual Conference Moderator Emily Mumma expressed gratitude on behalf of the church at large for his many years of ministry.

Over the last 25 years, Wes was an active member of the Harrisburg First congregation, serving as church board chair, moderator, Sunday school teacher, youth adviser, and member of numerous congregational and Atlantic Northeast District committees.

He was a dedicated family man, survived by

Joyce, his wife of nearly 30 years, daughters Elizabeth, a teacher in Kinman, Ariz., and Bridget, a student at Elizabethtown College, and son Paul, a high school junior. Also surviving are sisters Kathleen Waterman, Lavonne Krushwitz, and brother Robert, all of Iowa. He enjoyed the outdoors, camping, and of course, walking. He was featured in the December 1997 MESSENGER for walking 50 miles for CROP in Juniata County, Pa.

As family, colleagues, and friends wrestle with the tragic loss of Wes, some recalled his gifts: “When you talked with Wes, he was tuned in only to you. . . .” “His kind wit hurt no one and relaxed many a tedious moment.” “He lived the gospel and quietly inspired others to do so.”

Joyce Albin openly talks of her husband’s struggle with depression, hoping that the unjustified stigma surrounding this tragic illness will give way to better understanding, empathy, and help for its victims. Above all, she hopes that “Wes will be remembered for the kindness, humor, and compassion he showed to all people.”

The longest route in the recent Harrisburg, Pa., CROP Walk was fittingly designated as the “Albin route.” Those who walked this 10-mile route no doubt had more time to remember Wes Albin’s compassionate concern for the hungry. Indeed, all walkers could well have thought of Wes Albin as an immortal walking partner in the fight against world hunger.

Helen Stutzman Hollinger is a member of First Church of the Brethren, Harrisburg, Pa.



Wes Albin speaking to a group in York Pa., on August 24, 1999. It was the day before he died.

Tiann Scoggins

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fled by not knowing the right thing to say or do. Specific recommendations are difficult to make, since the "right thing" grows out of the feelings, content, and company of the moment. But it can be liberating to remember that any one statement is not going to make or break recovery from the illness.

Empathy and loving one's neighbor are good guiding principles. These are particularly important in assisting with grieving. "Telling the story" of loss is often an important part of the recovery from depression and for

survivors of those who have taken their lives. However, comments about "cheering up," "looking on the bright side," or attempts to minimize the problem, are of less value, even irritating.

It is important not to expect fast results and showers of gratitude for your kind words, listening, and prayer. That is not "gonna fix 'em," and if the friend is frustrated with lack of progress and quits visiting, it can solidify the depressed person's hopelessness. Rather, since even an uncomplicated depression lasts weeks to months, supporters need to

pace themselves for the long haul.

It is also important to remember that depression is, unfortunately, a potentially lethal illness. A tragic end does *not* denote shortcomings in friends, family, or the community.

Asking about suicide, though, is important. Some worry about offending by asking, but not doing so may preclude opportunity for a life-saving intervention (like hospitalization, or getting in touch with the involved professionals). Rarely is anyone put off by the discussion. It may truly be a relief to be able to acknowledge suicidal

How churches can raise the veil on mental illness

BY ROBERT BLAKE

An international survey indicates that mental illness is on the rise throughout the world. The *Congressional Record* estimates that one-third of all Americans will suffer from a mental illness at some point in their lives. The American Psychiatric Association found that nearly 50 percent of the people between the ages of 15 and 54 have experienced a psychiatric illness during their lifetime. The National Institute of Mental Health has determined that depression, the most common psychiatric illness, affects between 8 million and 20 million Americans at any given time.

While these numbers are staggering, the stigma involved with mental illness is devastating. The National Institute of Mental Health reported that when people were asked to list disabilities from the least offensive to the most offensive, mental illness was rated lowest, or most offensive. Research has shown that ex-convicts are held in higher regard than are people who have experienced mental illness. In our society there is a veil that hides the truth about mental illness.

Because of the stigma involved, relatively few people actually receive adequate care and treatment for their illness. Even fewer are willing to divulge that they are struggling, hurting, and in need of care and understanding.

Within the Church of the Brethren, a new program from the Association of Brethren Caregivers can help.

Voice Ministry's "Creating a Safe Place" program encourages congregations to be places where people are valued for who they are. As such, congregations have both an opportunity and a duty to reach out to people who are suffering with mental illnesses and invite them to participate fully in the life of the community.

Churches can respond in several ways. Educational endeavors can help church members become accurately informed about mental illness. Voice Ministry offers resources to groups within the church as they work to alleviate the stigma attached to mental illness. Parishioners can reach out, accept, and support persons with mental disorders as well as their family members. As this is done, people who have suffered the effects of the stigma of mental illness will begin to feel empowered and affirmed.

The great commandment calls us to love our God and our neighbors. Jesus invited us to give care to him by meeting the needs of those in his family. It is appropriate for us to reach out to people who suffer with a mental illness and are in need of care. We have an obligation to do this from a knowledgeable position and with care and understanding.

There is a veil that hides the truth about mental illness. We have an opportunity to help raise that veil and the responsibility to help destroy the stigma that surrounds those who suffer with mental illness.

Robert Blake is program field staff for the Association of Brethren Caregivers.

thoughts to another person.

Sharing the deep pain of depression with the afflicted is difficult, frightening, and agonizing, but it can broaden one's view of the scope of human experience. The exact healing words are usually elusive. But an understanding individual and community that can support people living with depression is a powerful healing force.

The community can also be helpful by not being harmful. Spiritual healing and mental health treatment must work together. Recoveries have been sabotaged from both directions by poor communication and/or mistrust, which has been present for decades. The mental health community needs to be more open to the benefits of religion and spirituality in healing.

The church needs to be open as well. Many who suffer have received the messages that they "don't need that medicine," or should "stay away from that anti-religious psychother-

apy," or should "get right with God," or they "must be being punished for something." These comments, whether overtly or covertly delivered, can lead to doubts about treatment or to quitting treatment altogether, resulting in further intensifying suffering and slowing recovery. Active spiritual lives and mental health treatment are *not* exclusive of each other. Individuals and communities supporting depressed loved ones must allow for their coexistence, and should work toward their synergism. My hope is that we begin to allow more healthy discourse between spiritual and medical/psychological communities.

The spiritual world of the church also offers faith in God as a unique "product." The "unforgivableness" of the depressive mindset can be tempered by grace and salvation. It is not a simple matter, though, since some profoundly depressed people are unable to fathom that salvation

can apply to them. Consistent, compassionate reminders of the "Good News" are useful for some over time.

This can even be essential for some whose depression has a large guilt component. Some think their illness is an ongoing punishment for past mistakes. The past can sometimes be placed into a tolerable context by means of grace. In short, God's grace does apply to all, and can be fostered in the afflicted by a caring faith community.

Churches can offer education, comfort, and enhancement of recovery for those profoundly smothered by this illness, without giving up anything of their fundamental nature, a window to grace and truth. I hope we do honor to Wes Albin and his family in doing so. M.

G. Martin Keeney, M.D., is a psychiatrist and a member of Stone Church of the Brethren, Huntingdon, Pa.

The slightly exaggerated adventures of a BVS hero*

Somewhere in Guatemala...



Elgin, Illinois. Director of BVS Dan McFadden's Office...



***Disclaimer:** The scene depicted is purely fictional. Poetic and artistic license has been used to elevate BVS to superhero status. Calls for help are customarily received from agencies rather than local villagers. BVS volunteers are generally not required to wear spandex and capes, nor physically fly through the air. Transportation to and from projects is provided. On assignment, BVS volunteers will work with, teach and learn from local people. BVS volunteers often report to have gained more from their experience than they felt they gave.

Illustration by Daniel Radcliff

Summer unit: June 11 - July 1, 2000

Held at New Windsor, Maryland

Fall unit: September 17 - October 7, 2000

Held at Camp LaVerne, California



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STORY AND PHOTOS BY
REBECCA BAILE CROUSE

Passion and compassion. Those are the two words that best describe the faith and the work of Dr. Hilcias Ricardo, who completed her first year of medical work in Sabana Grande de Boya with some of the poorest of the poor in the Dominican Republic. Dr. Ricardo's work is being supported by the Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and other individuals and congregations through the Global Mission Partnerships Office of the Church of the Brethren General Board.

Ricardo, 30, is the oldest of six children and recalls growing up knowing poverty. "I remember times when we did not have shoes," she says. Her father, Hipolito Ricardo Caliz, was a miner and earned about 125 pesos a month (about \$8.50) when she was a child. He would often get to come home only once a month to be with the family in Santo Domingo. Her mother, Ysidora Guzman Vivda de Ricardo, sewed clothing on her treadle sewing machine to supplement the family's income. Mrs. Ricardo said, "I sometimes would have to rip a zipper out of some

clothing and sell it for 25 centavos (a few pennies) in order to buy some bread and hot chocolate for the children's breakfast."

Yet hers was a Christian home and Ricardo developed a passion for sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. "We were living by faith," Ricardo recalled.

Three times a week they would walk about a mile to worship in the church where both her parents worked as ordained Assemblies of God pastors. "We had a neighbor who was an evangelist in our church and had a loud-speaker and we would walk through our neighborhood proclaiming Christ with him," Ricardo said. "I remember we six children playing the tambourines and singing as we walked through the streets."

Ricardo's love for sharing Christ includes leading a weekly Bible study for children in one room of the family's small home. Her mother led this time of Bible study for 20 years. For the past 10 years, every Saturday, Ricardo and her other siblings open their home to about 40 children from the neighborhood who come to sing and learn more about the Bible. Two





Dr. Ricardo makes a house call on a family to insure their use of filtered water at the Las Charcas sugar cane worker community.

of those children have gone on to become pastors.

Because of their difficult economic situation, the family sought scholarship assistance through the non-profit organization Compassion International for Hilcias and two of her sisters, Anna Lidia and Ruth Esther, to attend a local Christian high school. She finished her high school education in 1986 and graduated from the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo with a degree in medicine in 1996. Her sister Anna Lidia went on to become a medical doctor, and her sister Ruth became a lawyer.

It was through her two-year residency work in the rural areas of Barahona that Ricardo first came in contact with the Dominican Church of the Brethren through the Fondo Negro congregation. She began attending the Peniel Church of the Brethren in Santo Domingo in 1998 and became a charter member of the church Jan. 9, 2000. She is currently serving on the Peniel leadership team.

When Ricardo finished her two-year residency in 1998, she was contemplating where she would begin work when an opportunity became available through COTEDO (Commission for Dominican Ecumenical Work), a Christian non-profit organization working in the bateyes (sugar cane worker communities) near Sabana Grande de Boya, about two hours north of Santo Domingo. COTEDO, partnering with the Church of the Brethren and several other agencies, started a medical project

in the bateyes to improve the health conditions of the poor, many of whom are of Haitian descent.

"I remembered how it was to be poor and I wanted to do something to help the poor," Ricardo said. "That's why I came to Sabana Grande de Boya to work with cane workers."

In March 1999, Ricardo moved from Santo Domingo to Sabana Grande, living in a small rented room of a local family. She often returns by public bus to Santo Domingo on weekends to visit her family.

Ricardo's weekly schedule includes visiting seven different communities located between 5 and 10 miles from Sabana Grande. The roads are very poor and sometimes when the pickup is not functioning, Ricardo rides a motorcycle to get out to see her patients. One other outlying community can be reached only by riding horses or burros. Ricardo sees between 35 and 40 patients each day along with another physician, Erida Castro, who began working with her last August.

The doctors use either the school building, a church, or a home as their office, depending on the community. Health promoters are local volunteers who know the residents and assist the doctors in identifying people who need medical attention. The doctors often go door to door visiting in homes to encourage the use of filters for clean water, or to teach proper hygiene to the families. The doctors often are available simply to listen to the problems of the local residents as they



Dr. Ricardo stands inside the door of a home with some children in Las Charcas bateye, where she visits regularly and provides education, supervision, and consultation to improve health conditions in the community.

offer supervision, education, and consultation in these communities. Since some of the patients of Haitian descent do not speak Spanish, a translator helps the doctors communicate in the bateyes.

The doctors take some medication with them for headaches, colds, and fever, but often they write out prescriptions which a member of the family or the local health promoter will bring to the COTEDO office in Sabana Grande de Boya, which houses the pharmacy for the project. The medications for the pharmacy were donated by the Interchurch Medical Assistance (IMA) office located in New Windsor, Md. IMA is supported by contributions from a number of denominations, including the Church of the Brethren through the Emergency Disaster Fund.

Diarrhea, high blood pressure, and depression are also illnesses the doc-

tors treat often. They see pregnant women weekly and encourage the use of vitamins, which they provide as soon as the women learn they are expecting.

Because of the privatization of the sugar cane industry, many of the residents in the bateyes have been without work for more than one year. "The government has forgotten them. But COTEDO and the Church of the Brethren are working together to give them some hope," Ricardo said. "God is using us to help the poor with medicine, and support them and give them encouragement." Some of the workers will be hired by the private company in their area and begin work this spring earning between 80 and 150 pesos (between \$5 and \$10) per day.

Ricardo said that this is the first time many of the bateye residents have had consistent medical care. Visiting representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), also a funding partner for the project, gave the program high marks for its overall effectiveness in improving the health of the people.

Ricardo takes advantage of every opportunity she can to share her faith in Jesus Christ. She recently visited a man living in the Las Charcas bateye who has cancer in one leg. Ricardo first inquired about how the man was feeling. After checking on his physical needs and giving him some orange juice and crackers, Ricardo asked, "And how is your faith in God? Is it staying strong?"

"Yes," the man replied.

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Dr. Hilcias Ricardo, medical missionary supported by the Church of the Brethren, stands near a sugar cane field through which she passes daily on her visits to the sugar cane worker communities surrounding the town of Sabana Grande de Boya in the Dominican Republic.

The life of Haitians in the Dominican Republic

BY AMY RHOADES

You can see them in the streets, vending their wares. You can find them working long hours in manual construction or in the endless fields of sugar cane. These tireless workers have journeyed from their homeland of Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, to the Dominican Republic, which shares the same island, in hopes of creating a better life.

Even though opportunities are greater in the Dominican Republic than in Haiti, most Haitian sugar cane worker communities, called bateyes, lack basic human necessities. A July 6, 1999, report in Santo Domingo's daily newspaper *Listen Diario* revealed these statistics about the bateyes. There are 200,000 residents (2 percent of the Dominican population), or about 43,154 families, residing in 220 bateyes.

Fifty percent of the families live in barracks or duplex-style one-room homes. Two-thirds of the homes have no form of latrines, resulting in most people using the sugar cane fields as restrooms. In 32 percent of the bateyes there is no drinkable water and in the remaining 68 percent the present water filtration systems have missing or malfunctioning parts. One-third of the bateyes offer no schooling for children and a third of the population over age 10 cannot read or write. Fifty percent of the bateyes have no electricity.

Sixteen percent of residents receive no type of medical assistance and 50 percent rely on a local volunteer health promoter. In 26 percent of the bateyes there are outpatient clinics, 4 percent have a medical office, 3 percent have rural clinics, and 2 percent have small pharmacies. These health statistics show the great need being met through the medical project sponsored by COTEDO and the Church of the Brethren.

From 1822-1844, Haiti occupied the Dominican Republic. Then a war between the two countries ensued and the Republic gained independence from its neighbor. Restoration of international relations has not been easy. Haiti and the Dominican Republic continue to have their differences. Currently, tensions between the two countries still exist and many Dominicans view the pilgrimage of Haitians into the Dominican Republic to find work an invasion of their land.

The Church of the Brethren is seeking to set an example in the Dominican Republic. Intercultural relationships are continually being formed. Of the 19 congregations, fellowships, and preaching points in the Dominican Republic, two congregations and one preaching point are composed mainly of persons of Haitian descent. The youth and adults from these two nationalities gather and share in song, prayer, and scripture. These worship activities cross the cultural boundaries and help unite the Dominican Brethren.

"My impression is that amid the significant historical, economic, and racial tensions that exist between people of Haitian and Dominican descent, the Dominican Brethren have shown significant spiritual maturity in the way they live and work together as one body of Christ," says Jerry Crouse, mission coordinator for the Church of the Brethren General Board.

Amy Rhoades, a member of Trinity Church of the Brethren, Daleville, Va., is living in the Dominican Republic for six months assisting with translation for mission work and workcamps and living with Dominican Brethren families.



Dr. Ricardo checks Israel Castro, a patient from Las Cabilma, a community outside of Sabana Grande de Boya that can be reached only by horseback.

Caring for creation



Ron Brunk of Ivester, Iowa enjoys his moment in the sun during a hike in Blue Hole National Park. Earlier he and the others had been caught along this rain forest trail—appropriately, perhaps—in a downpour.

Reflections from a Faith Expedition to Central America

PHOTOS AND STORY BY DAVID RADCLIFF

Plants with leaves as broad as ironing boards. Bugs bigger than we'd ever care to meet. Rain alighting high in the canopy, never to make its way to the ground. Five-inch-wide highways along the ground created by the relentless march of leaf-cutter ants. The tantalizing possibility of a jungle cat sighting. Experiencing all this while based at the solar-powered Jaguar Creek Christian environmental center in the middle of the jungle.

And this was just the Belize half of the experience. From there it was on to Guatemala for 15 participants taking part in a first-ever environmental Faith Expedition sponsored by the Church of the Brethren. The group ranged in age from 15 to 65, and took on spelunking, snorkeling, hiking through rain storms, visiting isolated Guatemalan communities, and generally soaking up the sights, sounds, and smells of life in the tropics during their January trip.

As the firsthand accounts below testify, the trip was clear evidence that we live in an increasingly interrelated world. Of course, this is how God planned it: The earth as a living system in which goodness is spread through the chain of life. Yet we now find that goodness is not the only thing that courses along the chain. Economic policies on one continent have environmental impact on another, as do choices about how we use land or what kind of foods we expect to have readily available.

Some say that the chain is stretched taut, with links in danger of pulling apart. It's hard to believe otherwise when hearing that as many as 100 species of living things become extinct each day, mostly due to habitat destruction in the tropics. Do we have the right to so easily destroy what God so lovingly created? And isn't it even in our self-interest to think twice before bidding any part of God's creation an eternal farewell, as only one percent of plants on the planet have been tested for possible human benefit?

At the conclusion of this article are ideas about living as better stewards of God's good earth. For now, here are reflections of some of the folks who recently flew south for part of their winter.

Karl Joseph

16 years old

Onkama, Mich.

This trip was an amazing experience for me. I saw and learned a million things, but I think what made the biggest impression on me was the drastic difference between the Central American peoples' relationship with the land, and ours.

I had never before seen a place where most of the people make a living on the land they farm. It seemed to be that everyone who lived in rural areas had a farm to support their family.

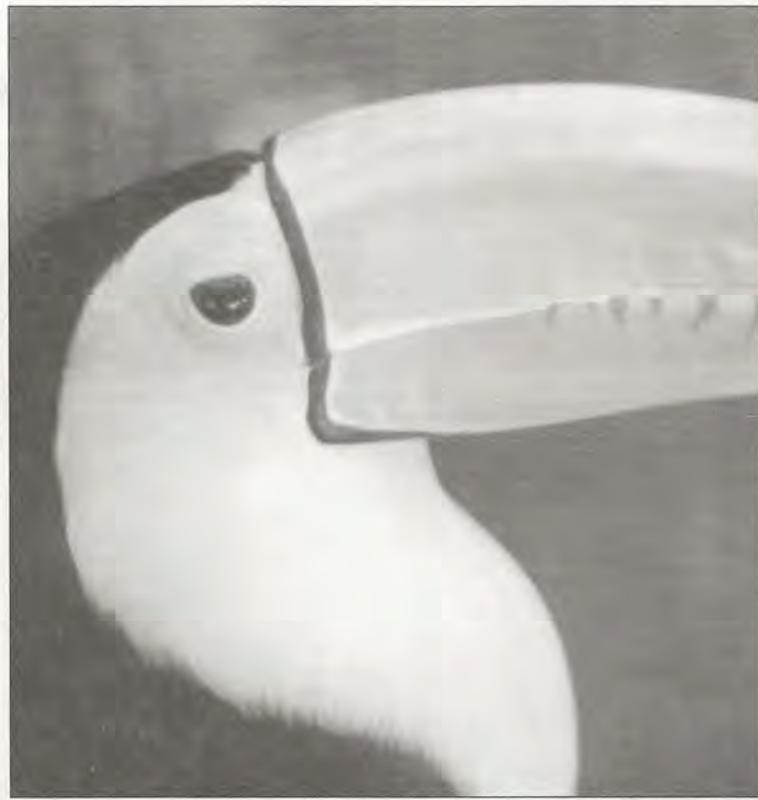
We spent one morning in Belize with a Mayan man named Jacinto who used the land the same way as his ancestors did, with the slash and burn techniques. Jacinto explained the good and bad points of that approach to farming, including the problem of increasing population. Many, many families have 10 or 15 children. Large families are a part of their culture, but now it is a problem, because land and resources are becoming increasingly scarce.

The contrast between Belize and Guatemala was quite drastic. In Guatemala, we could see the harsh environmental problems everywhere we went. Most of the small farmers are too poor to be environmentally responsible. They need to have firewood all the time, to cook all their meals. They have to use the little land they have for farming to make a living, and that usually means that they plant coffee and bananas on hillsides that are obviously too steep. Many people know how precious the land and forests are. But even if they realize their impact on the environment, their poverty forces them to try to get the most from what they have.

American-owned corporations in Central America grow coffee and bananas, often using chemical fertilizers and pesticides and corrupt farming practices that are exploitative to the land and the farmers working for them.

Only a fraction of the money that we pay for this food that we take for granted actually goes to the farmers. Also, the export crops use land that would otherwise grow food for the Guatemalan people.

I was constantly amazed by how much our lifestyle as Americans affects the environmental and economic situation in Central America. The most crucial thing I learned while I was on this trip was the importance of being, at the very least, aware of these problems that seem so far away. The earth, our home, is amazingly fragile and interconnected—something we as Americans often have a hard time seeing. This visit was a vivid reminder to me of just how true that really is.



Plant life in the tropical forest is diverse, exotic, and leans to gigantism. Tropical forest may contain more than 65 different species of trees per acre compared to only four tree species per acre in a (North American or European) temperate forest. Less than one percent of the earth's plants have been tested for possible human benefit; one in eight plants is currently threatened with extinction.





The health of tropical birds is closely tied to actions taken in somewhat less-than-exotic places like the fields and forests—and grocery stores and pet shops—of our own country. Just as for parrots and macaws, loss of habitat and the pet trade threaten the Keel-billed Toucan.



Marisa Yoder

High school biology teacher, environmental awareness advocate for Brethren Witness office Goshen, Ind.

Life is a balancing act. Inhale, exhale. Work, play. Earn money, spend money. Athlete, couch potato. Talk, listen. Home, church, work. Balance is crucial to the quality of our lives. So it is with nature too. God created day and night, land and water, plant and animal, male and female, birth and death.

I was reminded of the delicate balance that exists in nature as I stood under the large leaves of a young tree in Belize's Blue Hole National Park during a hard rain. I could hear the pounding of rain on the leaves of the upper canopy, so I knew it was raining hard, but I was not getting drenched.

As the raindrops slid down one leaf to the next then to a stem and on to a tree trunk, some of the water was captured by orchids, bromeliads and ferns, and the force and the quantity of the water was diminished. Water that hit the forest floor covered with leaf litter slowly trickled into the protected soil.

Water that hit the bare, compacted footpath, on the other hand, created a little stream that soon took on the reddish color of the soil as it flowed to lower ground. The soil needs to retain water to sustain plant life that in turn sustains the birds, the insects, the frogs, and many other animals. Cut down the trees and lose both the wildlife and the soil. Lose the soil and eventually the trees will perish and the wildlife with them. Balance between soil, water, animals, and plants is what keeps a rain forest alive and productive.

The narrow footpath created by hikers before me and used by our group had obviously upset the balance of the rain forest in a small way. But I am guilty of disturbing the delicate balance of the rain forest in more dramatic ways. My lifestyle demands resources like lumber, oranges, cabbage, snow peas, and coffee that are coming from the logging or the destruction of rain forests—and this is in part why rain forest in the tropics is being cut down at the rate of an acre a second. In addition, Belize and Guatemala have huge financial debts and they are trying to repay those debts by increasing their exports to the US.

How can I help restore the balance? I can buy only products that have the Eco-OK symbol. I can demand to know where my goods are coming from. I can become a wiser consumer, which often means spending a little bit more money, while supporting businesses that buy their goods from cooperatives, organic farmers, or shade farmers. I can help maintain the balance of nature by investing a little more of my time and my resources in practices that are nature-friendly.

Life—all of life on this planet—is a balancing act. What is each of us doing to maintain the balance that God intends for this good earth?

Chris Eberly

*Ornithologist, Mid-Atlantic District creation stewardship advocate
Warrenton, Va.*

Neotropical migratory birds nest in the US and Canada, then migrate south to the tropics each fall. Every year, these birds keep our nation's forests, grasslands, and wetlands healthy by consuming literally tons of insects, often keeping potentially damaging outbreaks in check. And just try to imagine a sunny spring morning without their beautiful dawn chorus.

But we are in danger of losing them. Neotropical migrant bird populations have been declining at an alarming rate over the past 30 years, as documented by a continent-wide survey. Only recently have we begun to unravel the connections of the different habitats that these birds require throughout the four seasons.

In our country, forest fragmentation from development and the conversion of native grasslands to agriculture reduce nesting success. Coastal areas that used to provide critical refueling stops during migration have now been "developed" as luxury resorts.

Further south, tropical deforestation completes the fractured puzzle these birds must piece together every year in order to survive. Envision birds that breed throughout the vastness of the US, Canada, and Alaska converging on Mexico and Central America each fall—an area perhaps one-tenth that size. We can then begin to understand the impact of losing even small areas of tropical forest.

The areas we visited in Belize and Guatemala provided a stark contrast in forest cover and in the number and diversity of bird species. While Belize was striking for its often heavily forested hills and mountains, historically forested areas on the Pacific slope highlands of Guatemala are now heavily farmed and mostly devoid of forests, even on steep hillsides. In addition, pesticides such as DDT (supplied by the US) are still used, often haphazardly.

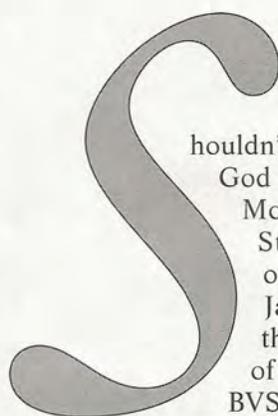
Have the insatiable demands of the American consumer society doomed these birds? Coffee is only one example, but a good one. Corporations that produce our supermarket coffee brands cut down rain forest and plant coffee as a crop in full sun. Not only does this require chemicals that run off into streams and wells, these sun coffee plantations are almost completely devoid of biological life. Coffee grown in the traditional manner under the shade of the rain forest canopy (or banana or cacao trees) does not require pesticides or chemical fertilizers. And shade coffee plantations retain as much biological diversity as rain forest.

There are many ways we can help conserve habitat for migratory birds (and help people, too, in the process). One is certainly through our consumer purchasing power.

When you consider your coffee purchases this spring, think birds! Migratory songbirds prefer shade coffee. Shouldn't we?



The Church of the Brethren is joining an effort to purchase 4,000 acres in the Eden Conservancy, a portion of which is pictured here. Orange groves encroach less than 100 yards from this spot along the river..



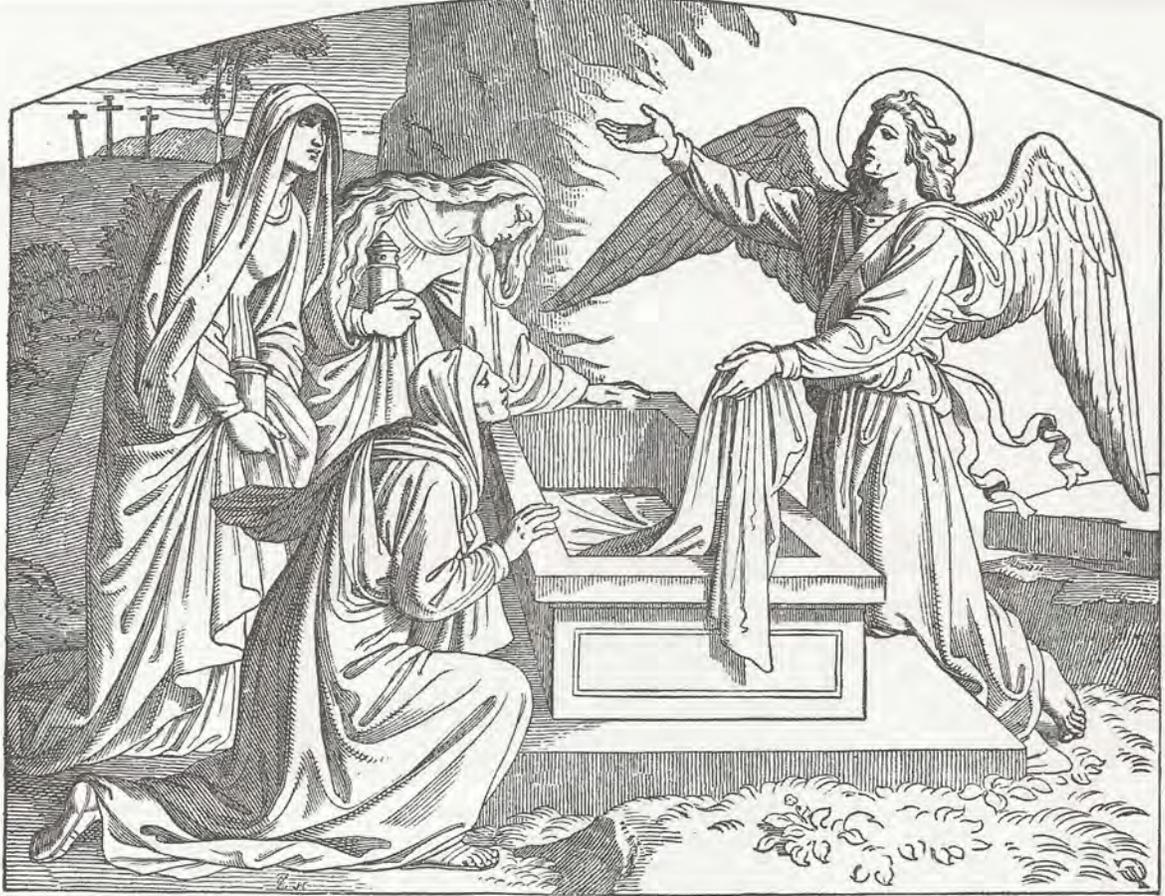
Shouldn't we each be living like the stewards God calls us to be? BVSer Samantha Morris of the Evergreen congregation, Stanardsville, Va., took that call seriously, spending the past year at the Jaguar Creek Center helping carry out the creative and important ministries of that Christian organization. And BVSer Robert Stiles is working even now with Church of the Brethren-sponsored environmental development projects in Guatemala. Both played key roles in making the recent Faith Expedition possible.

But we don't all have to go to Belize or Guatemala for a short trip or a long-term project. There are plenty of things we can do right where we live to maintain or restore balance to God's earth.

- Become a Creation Care Congregation, making stewardship of creation a priority in personal and community life.
- Request care of creation resources, including the environmental newsletter *The Third Day*.
- Take part in the "If a tree falls. . ." project of rain forest preservation being undertaken by the General Board. Every \$125 preserves an acre of rain forest in Belize or helps plant several thousand trees in Guatemala.
- Go along on a Faith Expedition to Central America—or visit an unspoiled area near your home.
- Join BVSers and head to Central America as part of an environmental project (contact the BVS office or Global Mission Partnerships office of the General Board).
- Give to the Global Food Crisis Fund wood-conserving stove project in Guatemala. Compared to open fires, each stove reduces wood consumption—and resultant deforestation—by 75 percent.
- Become passionate about some aspect of respecting and renewing God's good earth.

The Brethren Witness office can provide these and other resources. But that's just the beginning. The real work—and real joy—begin when we ask God to help us find our place in this wonderful and well-balanced world, a world that brings us blessing even as we return the favor by becoming the good stewards that God intends. 

David Radcliff is director of Brethren Witness for the General Board.



MasterClips

It causes me to tremble

An Easter reflection on a favorite spiritual

BY KENNETH L. GIBBLE

What makes you tremble? What makes you shake or shiver, quake or quiver? When you're sick with the flu, your body does those things, of course. Or when you go swimming and you get out of the water and the cool air hits you, maybe your teeth chatter, your skin gets goose bumps, and you stand there shivering.

But what else makes you tremble, makes your body quiver with excitement or anticipation? A first date, a job interview, a tense moment in a ball game? How about going to church? Does the possibility of what might happen to you in worship, on Easter Sunday or any other Sunday, make you tremble? Probably not, right?

Most North Americans expect worship on a Sunday morning to be fairly quiet and digni-

fied. It's what we are used to. Some Christians, of course, are used to worship that is noisy and rambunctious, with lots of body movement, hand clapping, even shouting. But most of us don't tremble outwardly in church.

What about inwardly? Does what is said or sung, spoken or prayed, ever make you tremble inside? Are you ever overwhelmed by the power of the gospel, by the amazing grace of God? Does it ever shake you up?

The spiritual asks, not once but twice: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" And then, without waiting for an answer, the song makes its own testimony: "Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble." And you can tell, by those words, that whether or not you or I were there when they crucified our Lord, the

singer *was* there, and the sight of Jesus being nailed to the tree, pierced in the side, laid in the tomb, caused a terrible, fearful trembling.

But then we come to the last verse of the spiritual: "Were you there when he rose up from the dead?" And you'd think that resurrection would elicit a different reaction. Not fear, but gladness. But notice what the song says: "Were you there when he rose up from the dead? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble."

And if you are wondering why the trembling, why not a breaking forth of hallelujahs on Easter in this song, remember that in the Gospel accounts of the first Easter, the reaction of those who learn about the resurrection is not happiness, not elation, but confusion, disbelief, and fear.

Wouldn't your reaction and mine have been the same? I prefer life to be predictable, sensible, manageable. I'm not fond of surprises. Even pleasant surprises make me uncomfortable. Whenever one of those eventful birthdays came along for me—like the big Four-0 or the big Five-0—I told my wife: "Promise me, no surprise birthday parties."

I realize this confession makes me sound hopelessly dull and boring, but there it is. I'm the kind of person who prefers that, as the Apostle Paul put it, "all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

Decently and in order. That's how Luke's account of the first Easter begins. Joseph, described as "a good and righteous man," does a good and righteous thing. He takes the corpse of Jesus and lays it in a tomb. And the women did what was customary in their time when a loved one died. They prepared spices and ointments, and they made plans to go to the tomb and anoint the body of the dead man.

Listening to this account, we admire Joseph and the women for their faithfulness and their courage. We nod our heads in approval at their steadfastness, their loyalty. There is much to be said about such people, the kind of people you can count on—people who are dependable, who

won't let you down when the going gets rough, people who will be there for you at times of disappointment and sadness, people who know what needs to be done and will do it.

When these good, loyal women come to the tomb and find it empty, when they see "two men . . . in dazzling apparel" and hear them say that their Lord is risen from the dead, it's perfectly natural that the women would be terribly frightened, would fall face down on the ground. A Lord risen from the dead is not predictable, it is not manageable, it is something totally new. When resurrection happens, you tremble.

So the women get to their feet and run back to tell the men what they had seen and heard. And the reaction of the men? Luke says, "these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe [the women]" (24:11).

And why should they believe them? Resurrection is not believable. It doesn't fit the way we live our sensible, predictable, manageable lives.

We have domesticated Easter, tamed it, stripped it of its power to produce anything that remotely resembles trembling. Easter is something we just do—once every spring.

But resurrection? Resurrection is something only God can do.

So let me ask you again: What makes you tremble? I hope that Easter makes you tremble at least a little bit. Not because it's a one-day-and-done-deal each spring, but because it is the announcement of God's victory over all the things that conspire against us—discouragement, pain, loneliness, disease, loss, injustice, hatred, and yes, even death. Even death. The final word belongs to God. It's a word of triumph. It's the bold assertion that nothing can defeat the power of God's love and grace.

That is enough to make you and me tremble with amazement and with joy. 

Kenneth L. Gible, pastor of the Chambersburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, is a frequent contributor to MESSENGER.

'Come with me to a quiet place'

Retreat house at Camp Mack welcomes the weary and feeds the spiritually hungry

tears or song or silence or discovering a wild place on a new path. What was once an ordinary "dark and rather uninviting house" (in the words of Norma Miller) has been transformed by love, faith, care, and prayer to something we need and long for, whether we know it or not.

I know that most of us are spiritually starved — hungry at least—and we are not aware of it until we get to a place that is quiet enough," Miller told me as we sat at the Quiet Place kitchen table on a sunny fall afternoon. She described feeling one point in her life that her soul was shriveled, "like those dehydrated vegetables. Once you add water, though, they become pretty good vegetables.

"I don't think we know how much trouble we're in."

On her first retreat (some years ago in Michigan), Miller was so exhausted she slept most of the weekend. The director of the retreat center gave her the scripture Psalm 127, v.2: "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved."

"It gave me permission to take care of myself," Miller said. "Eventually I realized that rather than running away from situations [by going on retreat], I was running to God. Jesus took care of himself that way, getting into a boat, just rowing away from the people.

"I came to a very important awareness of the intimate loving relationship with God —sitting at the feet of Jesus, not because there isn't anything else important to do, but because it's what you want to do."



An unneeded house at Camp Mack was transformed—by the Holy Spirit and hard work—into a spiritual retreat center.

BY SANDY HENDERSON

It was a dark and stormy night" when I first came to A Quiet Place in April of 1996—one of a group of six women gathering at this Brethren contemplative prayer center on the grounds of Camp Mack in Milford, Ind. We had been meeting in each others' homes for more than a year, but most of us had never been on this kind of a retreat before.

I remember the light spilling from the farmhouse door, and director Norma Miller's warm smile and soft-spoken greeting. I remember the plaque above the kitchen table: "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31). The day's busyness and the stress of the hour-long drive flowed away into the peacefulness of that simple welcome.

The phone rang. Norma announced that there was a tornado warning and we should take shelter. The seven of us clambered down the steep basement stairs (it was your basic "unfinished" farmhouse basement). We perched where we could, and to entertain ourselves began to sing old songs some of us remembered from Sunday school and camp: "Amazing Grace," "This Little Light of Mine," and rousing choruses of "Rise and shine and give God the glory, glory!"

My friend Patty Lane wrote later, "The basement uncovered tones in our voices that we had not heard before today. We blended and there was something hypnotic about our voices ringing together in the stone room. As each song ended I felt like I was waking up."

I have been to several retreats at the Quiet Place since that first one, and each one has brought a special gift, of

How to visit A Quiet Place

A Quiet Place can accommodate five or six people for an overnight stay — more than that for day-long retreats. Retreats can be directed, or can be personal prayer time. Spiritual direction is available. The grounds include many trails through open meadows, prairie, and wooded areas; and wildlife is abundant.

For more information about A Quiet Place, contact: A Quiet Place, Camp Alexander Mack, P.O. Box 158, Milford, IN 46542. Tel. 219-658-4831 You can also find information on the Web at www.campmack.org

A Quiet Place began as a dream in the heart of former Annual Conference moderator Phyllis Carter, who believed strongly that the Church of the Brethren needed a place for quiet retreat and prayer. With a committee of people who shared that dream, she spent a year and a half searching for a possible location. Meanwhile, Camp Mack had a small house no longer needed as lodging for volunteer workers. Camp director Becky Ball-Miller wondered what might be done with the house — and asked Phyllis if she knew anything about retreat centers!

The Holy Spirit may have provided the opportunity, but it took many hours of hard work by John Carter and other volunteers to prepare the place. They painted and renovated the house; provided furniture, books, and artwork as well as such mundane things as pots and pans and bedding; and cleaned up the grounds. A Quiet Place officially opened on March 3, 1996, just a few weeks before my group arrived.

“I can choose things for the house that have been especially meaningful for me but I am always surprised by what catches someone else and nurtures them,” said Miller of her work as the center’s part-time director. “I call it ‘Ambushed by the Spirit.’ It is such a blessing to realize that you are not in control of that.

“One pastor here on retreats watched a particular tree. One day she went back and lightning had split it. She had been working with her church on what happens when a church splits. She used the image of that tree in her journal.”

A recent addition to A Quiet Place that has caught people’s attention is a labyrinth mowed into the grass near the house by Elsa Littman of La Porte, Ind. Miller has written a brochure of prayers to be used in walking the labyrinth, an ancient prayer practice that has recently become widely popular. “I am always so surprised by the number of people who just stop by and walk it. . . . A person recently spent an entire morning journaling on her reflections of what happened with her and the labyrinth. It was a powerful time between her and God.”

Miller stresses the importance of times of complete silence, and encourages silence at retreat meals, especially breakfast. “Everything we do should



Objects in the house nurture retreatants in different ways, depending on the leading of the Spirit.

have that constant awareness of the presence of God in it.”

Contemplative practices like retreats to A Quiet Place seem somehow foreign to many down-to-earth Brethren, and silence can be downright scary. Many of those who come to A Quiet Place are from other denominations. The prayer center offers a free retreat day as a birthday present to all Church of the Brethren pastors in the area, but only a few have taken up the offer.

What would encourage more Brethren to explore the possibilities of A Quiet Place? “I wish I knew,” Miller said. “No amount of writing is going to change people’s minds. But generally when people experience A Quiet Place they want to come back.”

“I hope as we receive more guests here that it will become more evident —that

this is a place where many prayers have been said.” I can feel that, every time I arrive.



Sandy Henderson is a member of the La Porte (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.

The journey from here

A report on the state of the church



Messenger Dinner

5 pm, Sunday, July 16

Kansas City

Judy Mills Reimer
Executive Director, General Board

Join Messenger for a relaxing dinner, then hear the executive director of the General Board deliver her “State of the Church” address, a report on where we are and where we’re going as a denomination at the beginning of the new millennium. Program concludes in time for the evening business session.

Please order tickets in advance. There may be no on-site ticket sales.
 Call the Annual Conference office at 800-323-8039 to order.

Brethren and Calvinists should not be surprised by the growth in churches where the witness is expected to be more vocal.

Not just anything goes

I write regarding the Jan.-Feb. letter from one who does not want to “emphasize the name of Jesus” and feels so “sad to hear so much emphasis on the Christian religion compared to other religions.”

It may sound sweet and loving to think any religion goes. The Bible just does not teach so. A better part of the Old Testament is God’s warning and response to the Israelites’ tolerance and incorporation of other religions. Most of the New Testament uncompromisingly espouses Christ as *the only way*, and the Great Commission to carry this message to the ends of the earth.

Joy Welch
Pyrmont Church of the Brethren
Lafayette, Ind.

My vision for the church

The name by which our denomination chooses to be known is much less significant to me than the following:

- that we strive to be inclusive.
- that we always ensure “our word is as good as our bond.”
- that seeking “to do the things that make for peace” (both locally and globally) continues high on our list of priorities.
- that we be true to our spiritual heritage as we “remain *in* the world but not of it.”

Peggy Yoder
Stone Church of the Brethren
Huntingdon, Pa.

A pearl of wisdom

As one who is very sympathetic to Brethren ways and who served as a Brethren pastor from 1992 to 1998, I was interested in Fletcher Farrar’s reaction to the interpretation of the

parable of the Pearl of Great Price which indicated that we believers are the pearl [see “Bible study and the Kingdom of God,” Jan.-Feb.].

From my Reformed (Calvinist) background perspective, this is a rather common interpretation. And it serves to illustrate some variables on how one reaches conclusions regarding scripture interpretation. The Calvinist has obvious doctrinal presuppositions (emphasizing God’s sovereignty, election to salvation, predestined ends and means, etc.) which make it natural to see these in the aforementioned parable. If the Brethren person reached that interpretation through Spirit-led and corporate study, that is worth celebrating.

The sobering realities for both groups involve the tendency on the one hand for Calvinists to conclude that one must believe the correct doctrines. This may or may not lead to a grace-filled and joyous evangelistic witness resulting in numerical growth for God’s kingdom. On the other hand, Brethren will be too often satisfied with behaving correctly, following the example of Jesus, and may seldom give voice to answer anyone who asks a reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15).

Brethren and Calvinists should not be surprised by the growth in churches where the witness is expected to be more vocal.

Carl H. Van Farowe
Johnston, Iowa



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MOM: A model for ministry

After 15 years in pastoral ministry in small, rural congregations, I feel that I have finally determined what it is that people want and expect from a pastor. They want to be loved, they want to be encouraged, they want to be cared for, they even want to be pampered. In short, they want to be mothered.

Now there is the irony. Who is better able to mother than mothers? Women? We men are simply not able to provide what congregations want as well as women, and yet who do we still often exclude? Those who are most gifted and qualified for the job. Now mind you, some men do pretty well, and some women really mess it up, but let's face it, those qualities we usually expect from our pastors are unequally present in those we are often hesitant to utilize.

So why are we so hesitant? Our stated reason is that we desire to be faithful to scripture. We especially like Paul, because Paul has lent himself to easy interpretations that serve our cause, but let's take a little further look. Probably the most often cited passage is 1 Corinthians 14:33-40. Interestingly enough, however, women speaking in church is not the issue here, but the issue is, rather, orderly and reverent worship. Now, it would take an entire theological treatise to unravel all the complexities of Paul's theology, and frankly, I'm not convinced that anyone who does not want to be persuaded would be impressed, so I won't take the time. Let me simply remind us that this is the same apostle who stated in Galatians 3:28 that in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female.

So the real question is, do we of the small congregation really want an answer to our dilemma? Do we really want good pastors? There is a further irony. Another lesson of the past 15 years is that our small congregations that survive do so because of the dedication of women. In many cases, the men have simply dropped the ball, while the women have borne the burden of the tasks necessary to

keep the local church alive. I suspect that this has always been the case. In Romans 16, Paul urges support for those he names as the leaders and servants of the church, and the majority he names are women.

I have a pretty strong streak of nonresistance in me. I have no desire to fight or argue over the issue. I'm not interested in forcing my opinions on anyone. What I am interested in is helping any small congregations that are frustrated or discouraged by inability to find an adequate pastor, to broaden the horizons of their search. I'm not suggesting that you "settle" for a woman. I'm suggesting that if you can get over the hurdle of a lifetime of scriptural misinterpretation, you could be rewarded with just exactly what you have needed and wanted in a pastor in the first place.

When it comes to unconditional love, you just can't beat mom. When I was growing up, I was fortunate to have two loving parents. But when there was a real need for understanding and acceptance, it was mom who could be counted on. Several years ago my mother died. I had never considered the possibility of anyone else filling that role, but my dad has remarried, and wonder of wonders, I have a brand new mom! Forty-nine years old, and I can still go and feast at the table of acceptance and unconditional love.

Perhaps someone is offended by the model of the church as a bunch of pathetic creatures who still need their mamas. Well, every metaphor breaks down eventually, but I do believe that *real* men and *real* women have an eternal bond with their mothers, precisely because of the quality of the relationship. And it is those qualities from which the church can benefit. I am not suggesting that we think of female pastors as our mothers; I'm suggesting that the qualities which made certain people good mothers can make them good pastors.

Steven W. Mason, pastor
Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren
Grottoes, Va.

Coordinator, Brethren Academy

Bethany Theological Seminary and the Church of the Brethren General Board announce an opening for the position of Coordinator, Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, beginning September 1, 2000. Areas of responsibility include certificate programs of ministry training, continuing education and new initiatives for leadership development.

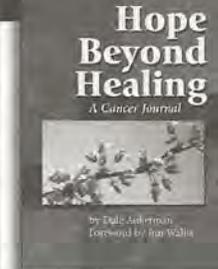
For a fuller description of responsibilities and qualifications, see "News" at www.brethren.org/Bethany, or call to request a copy at 1-800-287-8822, Ext. 1821. Qualified candidates are invited to send a resume and letter of application, and to request three references to send letters of recommendation to:

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Bethany Theological Seminary
615 National Road West
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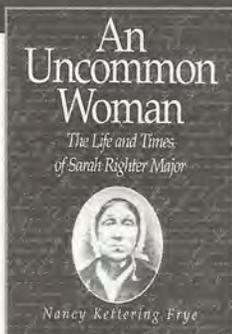
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Travel with us by coach to Annual Conference in Kansas City, leaving Elizabethtown, July 13, returning July 21. Visit Bethany Seminary in Richmond, Indiana enroute. For information, please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Sheaffer Rd, Elizabethtown PA 17022.

Travel to the White Continent—Antarctica—including Argentina and Uruguay, January, 2001. Optional visits to Iguassau Falls and Chile available. Write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Sheaffer Road, Elizabethtown PA 17022.

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Brethren Housing Association, a non-profit organization celebrating its tenth year serving the homeless families in the Harrisburg, Pa., area has a position available for an Executive Director. Duties involve broad administrative responsibilities including directing BHA's program, public relations, fund raising and property oversight. Experience preferred in administration and/or pastoral work with strong interpersonal skills. Hours and benefits negotiable. Please send resume to: Paul Wessell, Rhoads & Sinon LLP, PO Box 1146, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

La Casa de Maria y Marta seeks applicants for director. This San Antonio Mennonite Church ministry provides opportunities for groups to serve in the city while learning about realities in San Antonio and South Texas. Responsibilities include developing and directing service and learning programs for youth and adults and coordinating cross-cultural seminars for college students. Full-time, salaried position, housing provided. Spanish helpful but not required. For further information and an application, contact John Lichty (210) 533-7181.

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Coventry, Pottstown, Pa.: Megan Monahan, Sarah Naylor, Nathan Brownback

Dayton, Va.: Galen Knighten, Jr., Adam Myers, Bob and Pat Taylor, Claudette Trout, Judi Miller

Geiger, Friedens, Pa.: Barry Klink, Molly Klink, Danny Vettori, Michael Miller, Diane Miller

Good Shepherd, Tipp City, Ohio: Jeff Hendricks, Lisa Hendricks, Amanda Morris, Richard Kee, Elizabeth Kee

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Hollins Road, Roanoke, Va.: Jonathan Ayers, Amber Booth, Jennifer Garrett, Jessie Lamb

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Ivester, Grundy Center, Iowa: Megan Button, Connie Duncan, Mark Haren, Susan Haren, Sandy Hogle, Ashley Jensen, Kollin Leland, Kylee Leland, Leanne Kruse, Christy Reents, Elaine Reents, Sandy Schafer, Mark Tobias, Robby Tobias

Kokomo, Ind.: Shannon Taffinger, John and Joyce Fruth, Tiffany Seekri

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Lebanon, Pa.: Ronald E. Ludwick, Peggy Ludwick

Liberty Mills, Ind.: Terry and Deborah Barrett, Alicia Barrett, Andrea Barrett, Emma Barrett, Kris and Beverly Dierks, Chad and Cindy Michael, Harold Poe, Carrie Poe, Holly Walters, Drew Walters, Wesley Williams, Evan Williams

Mechanic Grove, Quarryville, Pa.: Richard Drennen III, Sylvia Drennen, Walter Buckley, Angel Weigand, Matthew Kreider

Mohican, West Salem, Ohio: Willow Spencer, Scott Johnson, Todd Johnson, Edmond and Phyllis Becker

Osceola, Mo.: Regina Miller

Paradise, Smithville, Ohio: Cleona Winkler Scott

Petersburg Memorial, Petersburg, W. Va.: Jonathan Taylor, Kelli Mullenax, Katie Lambert, Sarah Beth Taylor, Kimberly Bible, Kim Mullenax, Corey Lambert, Ryan Lambert, Derek Nesselrodt, Pammy Alt

South Bay Community, Redondo Beach, Calif.: Esther Alaxander

Sugar Creek West, Lima, Ohio: Audrey Holt, Thomas White, Phyllis Borger, Kristin Hackworth, Jennifer Jones, Matthew Jones, Stephanie White

Topeka, Kan.: Bradley Puderbaugh,

Paul Ingle, Regina Ingle, Doris Broadfoot, Casey Roberts, Andrew Fry, Andy Taylor, Ashley Puderbaugh

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Barr, Ernest and Leita, Virden, Ill., 60

Bechtelheimer, John and Retha, Glendale, Ariz., 50

Bucher, Mark and Alice, Carlisle, Pa., 60

Flora, Ernest and Maybelle, Boones Mill, Va., 50

Huber, Earl and Charlotte, Conestoga, Pa., 50

Jordan, Fred A. and Clara, Salem, Va., 71

Kimmel, William and Mildred, Ozarkie, Kan., 50

Oshel, Clifford and Phyllis, Topeka, Kan., 50

Scotfield, Donald and Dorothy, Kansas City, Mo., 55

Sharpes, Don and Bonnie, Dayton, Va., 50

Thomas, Bernard and Eleanor, Sebring, Fla., 50

Trenary, Morris and Alda, Bridgewater, Va., 50

Wentz, Edwin and Emma, Strasburg, Pa., 50

Whitcraft, John and Mary, North Manchester, Ind., 60

Deaths

Ballard, Orville, 89, Mt. Morris, Ill., Jan. 16

Beall, Donald M., Sr., 70, Beaverton, Mich., Dec. 2

Bennett, Viola, 89, Hagerstown, Md., April 13, 1999

Bishop, Dale, 75, Greenville, Ohio, Dec. 6

Bishop, Janice, 64, Greenville, Ohio, Sept. 26

Blough, Alma, 88, Somerset, Pa., Dec. 11

Bowers, Dale, 75, Dixon, Ill., Dec. 29

Bowman, Anna, 86, Greenville, Ohio, Dec. 8

Bowman, Earnest E., Fostoria, Ohio, Jan. 12

Boyd, Grace, 85, Troy, Ohio, Jan. 3

Bullard, Wayne, 80, Topeka, Kan., May 9, 1998

Butler, Lillian, 84, Kokomo, Ind., Dec. 10

Butts, Betty, 67, Chambersburg, Pa., March 18, 1999

Campbell, Henry, 76, Kokomo, Ind., Oct. 15

Chance, Sara "Sally," 80, west Grove, Pa., Dec. 28

Clark, Shelva, 61, July 21

Clingan, Mildred, 80, Hagerstown, Md., Dec. 18

Craighead, Virginia Mullins, 82, Roanoke, Va., Feb. 7, 1999

Cruz, Roger, Chicago, Ill., Dec. 18

Davis, Ada, 91, Mt. Morris, Ill., Oct. 8

Divers, Robert, 81, Rocky Mount, Va., Nov. 16

Estep, Paul, Dayton, Va., Dec.

Fairbanks, Helen, 82, Greenville, Ohio, Nov. 17

Fike, Rebecca Barr, Goshen Ind., Oct. 10

Fillmore, Gene, 75, Cushing, Okla., Jan. 4

Firebaugh, Florence, Mt. Morris, Ill., Oct. 21

Gilbert, Altha Swoyer, 89, Manhattan, Kan., Oct. 6, 1998

Gorman, Dorothy C., Pasadena, Md., Dec. 31

Grabill, Daniel, 94, Chambersburg, Pa., Dec. 19

Groff, Everett, Sebring, Fla., Oct. 9

Hann, Pansye, 85, Waynesboro, Pa., Dec. 19

Hardy, Walter, 88, Defiance, Ohio, Dec. 29

Harris, Hessie Perdue, 82, Roanoke, Va., Nov. 29

Hiite, Carl T., 86, La Place, Ill., Dec. 17

Hoke, Robert, Dover, Pa., Aug. 15

Holderread, Edith, 75, Cushing, Okla., Oct. 28

Hopkins, William, 81, Hagerstown, Md., April 20, 1999

Howes, R. Eugene, 85, Kaleva, Mich., Nov. 10

Hykes, Charles, 89, Feb. 22, 1999

Jones, Mabel F., 91, Chatham, Ill., Dec. 14

Karns, Willis, 89, Tipp City, Ohio, March 18, 1999

Keim, Maurice, Sebring, Fla., Dec. 11

Kline, Catherine, 85, Williamsport, Md., March 5, 1999

Kreider, J. Benjamin, 74, Willow Street, Pa., Dec. 2

Leaman, Ruth Irvin, 93, Wooster, Ohio, Dec. 19

Lowe, Leonard, Sebring, Fla., July 10

McAdams, Ernest, 85, Tipp City, Ohio, Oct. 4

Middlekauff, John, Sebring, Fla., Oct. 18

Miller, Fern, 92, Englewood, Fla., Nov. 21

Miller, Mary, 85, Williamsport, Md., Jan. 7, 1999

Mills, Grace, Monroeville, Pa., Dec. 23

Mills, William, Monroeville, Pa., Dec. 16

Moats, Glen, 89, Grundy Center, Iowa, April 29, 1999

Mohler, Harold I., 82, Warrensburg, Mo., Dec. 7

Murrey, Chester, 84, McPherson, Kan., Dec. 29

Neff, Eva V. R., 95, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 1

Niesley, Robert, Monroeville, Pa., Nov. 10

Palmer, Geraldine, 85, Hagerstown, Md., June 25

Park, Hazel, 91, Lima, Ohio, Jan. 5

Patterson, Elizabeth, Mt. Morris, Ill., April 27

Peiper, Martin, 85, Carlisle, Pa., Aug. 28

Peters, Kathryn, Sebring, Fla., Oct. 24

Peterson, Gertrude, Greenville, Ohio, Oct. 22

Peyton, Katherine, 89, Phillips, Eva, 75, Topeka, Kan., May 19

Powers, Willard, 90, Mt. Morris, Ill., Dec. 9

Raish, Richard, Dayton, Va., Dec.

Rebert, Helen, 96, Carlisle, Pa., April 3, 1999

Ridenour, Hattie, 84, Hagerstown, Md., April 1, 1999

Rowzer, Hazel, 92, Topeka, Kan., May 10, 1998

Rodgers, Todd D., 79, Windber, Pa., Nov. 8

Rose, Edith, 85, Tipp City, Ohio, Oct. 19

Rummel, Carmen, 97, Windber, Pa., Dec. 29

Schaff, Martha, 87, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 17

Sell, Ethel, 82, Claysburg, Pa., Jan. 7

Sheller, Charles, Marshalltown, Iowa, Dec. 115

Sibley, Prudence, 88, Topeka, Kan., Jan. 17, 1998

Slifer, Clarence, Grundy Center, Iowa, Nov. 12

Sollenberger, Marian, 94, Carlisle, Pa., Sept. 21

Stoner, Mary Jane, 75, Hagerstown, Md., Jan. 10, 1999

Stong, Mary Ruth, 67, Huntington, Ind., Nov. 8

Stump, Maurice C., 84, Christiana, Pa., Dec. 21

Thomas, Ellen, 89, Holsopple, Pa., Jan. 3

Tolman, Irene, 88, Topeka, Kan., May 2

Travis, Ron, 50, Eldora, Iowa, June 14

Trimmer, Alice, 88, Carlisle, Pa., Dec. 27

Troupe, Esta, 92, Hagerstown, Md., Feb. 5, 1999

Tudor, Lawrence E., 79, Springfield, Ill., Jan. 11

Van Nordan, Thomas, 75, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 12

Vaughn, Leonard E., 83, Alexandria, Va., Nov. 29

Vivian, Howard L., 74, Springfield, Ill., Dec. 5

Walters, Emma, 104, Boswell, Pa., Dec. 27

Warner, Kathryn, 84, Dayton, Ohio, Dec. 6

Will, Mildred, 94, Hagerstown, Md., March 24, 1999

Wright, Ralph, Rocky Mount, Va., Nov. 22

Yeager, Savilla E., 88, Chambersburg, Pa., Aug. 21

Licensings

Mickle, Chad Wayne, Dec. 5, New Enterprise, Pa.

Reffner, Earla, Nov. 28, New Enterprise, Pa.

Snair, Freeman Allen Jr., Dec. 26, Rockhill, Rockhill Furnace, Pa.

Ordinations

Crumrine, Duane E., Dec. 5, Clover Creek, Martinsburg, Pa.

Hooks, Eric, Sept. 26, Sheloceta, Pa.

Mosorjak, Gary, Jan. 23, Locust Grove, Mount Airy, Md.

Yi, Tae Ho, Dec. 12, Grace Christian, Upper Darby, Pa.

Pastoral placement

Hunter, Steve, from interim to permanent, Mount Etna, Iowa

Leaman, Frank, to West Shore, Enola, Pa.

Miller, David Lloyd, from chaplaincy to Lick Creek, Bryan, Ohio (Note: March Turning Points listed incorrectly David L. Miller leaving Carson Valley, Duncansville, Pa. David L. Miller remains at Carson Valley.)

Schreyer, Manfred, to West Alexandria, Ohio

Snell, Donald, to West Goshen, Goshen, Ind.

Watern, Steve, from youth pastor at Cedar Grove, New Paris, Ohio, to Beech Grove, Hollansburg, Ohio



Editorial

Living like we're dying

In October 1998, I had the privilege of having breakfast in the home of Dale and Ruth Aukerman. I had heard of Dale for years and seen his byline in *Sojourners* and elsewhere, and so had been pleased when he sent me the manuscript that became his article "Living with dying" (April 1998 MESSENGER).

Even though I was meeting him at the end of his life I will always be grateful for that moment. It was an almost enchanting time when he picked me up in the near dark of a chill autumn dawn, and we drove in his basic car the few miles to where we turned into his country lane. I was surprised by the prim neatness of the yard and shrubs. And then after a warm welcome by Dale's wife, Ruth, I was surprised again when she set before us a breakfast of, not tofu and sprouts, but fried eggs.

The handcrafted house, decorated with relics, family photos, and Ruth's art, was elegant in its simplicity, as was our conversation. It was, that is, until I asked Dale what writing projects he was working on. He said he was writing a journal about his struggle with terminal cancer, which he hoped to get Brethren Press to publish. But he said he didn't know how long he would have to work on this. "You mean you don't know your *deadline*?" I blurted.

He laughed, thank goodness. Later I received a letter from Dale: "In German there is a word, *Sternstunde*, an occasion that stands out as very notable and blessed. During this time I've been given *Sternstunden* again and again, and the breakfast with you here was one of them."

Now that I have read Dale's new book, *Hope Beyond Healing: A Cancer Journal*, just out from Brethren Press, I realize that it was precisely because he did know his deadline, at least more nearly than most of us know ours, that he lived so intently and so well during his last almost three years. The book begins with his diagnosis of cancer in November 1996, and everything afterward is measured by the time "since the diagnosis." The journal doesn't tell us how his days were spent before the diagnosis, though I gather his life was always pretty intense. But after he has cancer he visits with friends he hasn't seen in years, frequently talks with his wife about their love for each other, has his grown children home often, writes important articles, ponders scripture deeply, shares his faith openly, and plants trees.

Granted, we all work better with a deadline, but I came away thinking, this is how I want to live now. This book may be a good one to pull out and read again just before dying. But I think it is a good one to read just before living. Besides, we all have a deadline approaching. How close does it have to be before we start living life fully?

Dale worried about all the media attention he was getting for his public dying, even though he hadn't sought it. Others were dying with more faith and courage, he wrote. He came to peace on this issue by assuring himself that his intent was to point toward Jesus, not himself. I think God chose him for this job because, while he may have been a spiritual giant, he was a down-to-earth one, with a simple faith we all can identify with, a sense of humor, and a gift of words. His theology is more childlike than high. When his friend Don Murray, the actor, tells him we shouldn't speculate on the afterlife, he protests that scripture gives us an inkling, so there's no need to be too agnostic about it. Then he goes on to speculate that there will be a transition time after death before judgment, that we will be reunited with our spouses, and that heaven will be like a city where in the evening everyone comes into the street for shared life.

He twinkles when he tells of his big-city friend Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, coming to the country to help the Aukermans plant trees. Wallis admits he's never planted a tree before, but nobody pays attention until he plants one with the roots pointing skyward.

Dale notes several times the irony of his accepting free oncology treatment from the US Navy as part of a clinical trial, after having spent a lifetime as a pacifist and protester against the military. When he exults to a doctor about the treatment being free, the doctor responds, "You pay taxes like everybody else." Dale's son Daniel, knowing of his father's war tax resistance and his penchant for earning a less-than-taxable income, says later, "If he only knew."

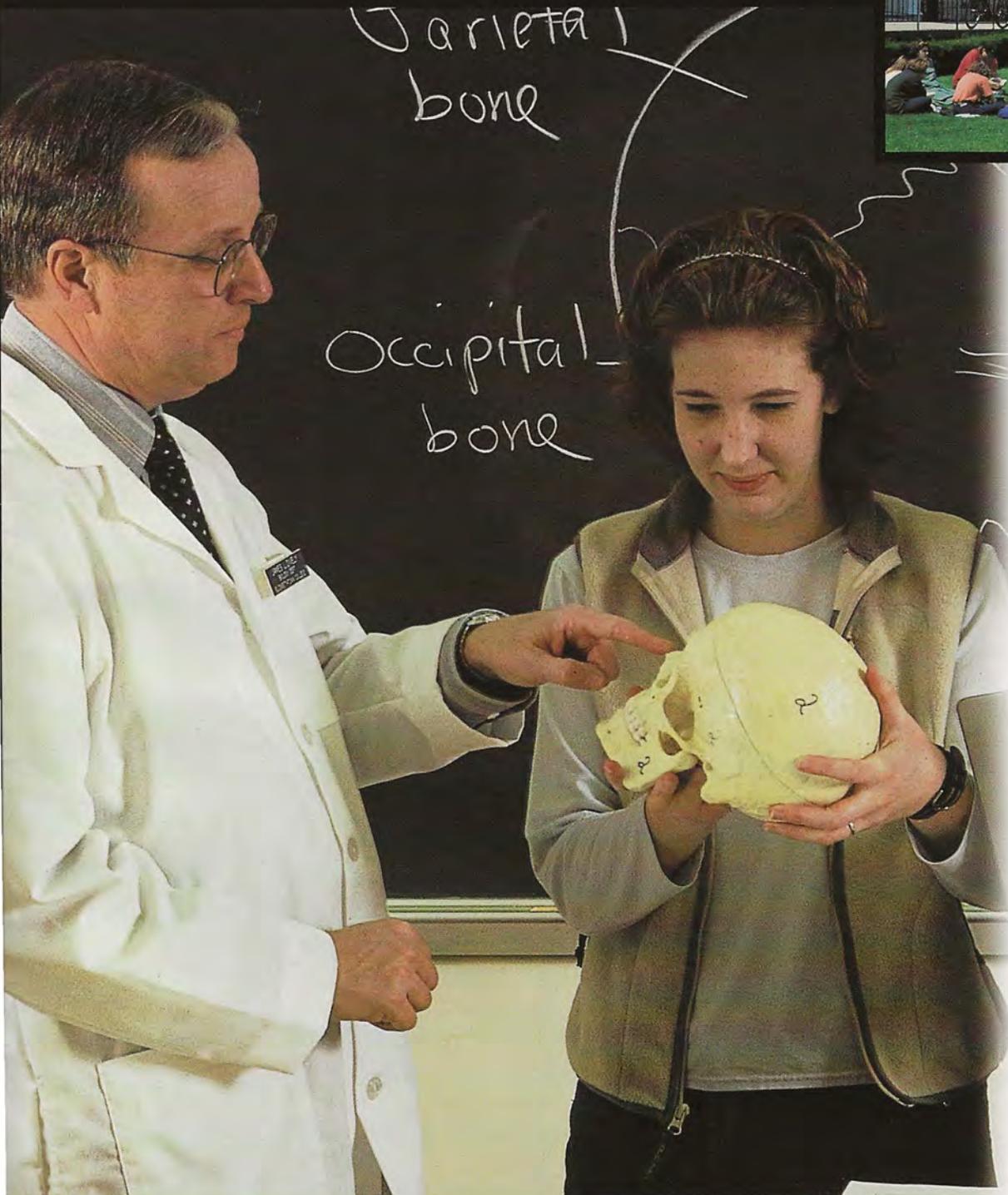
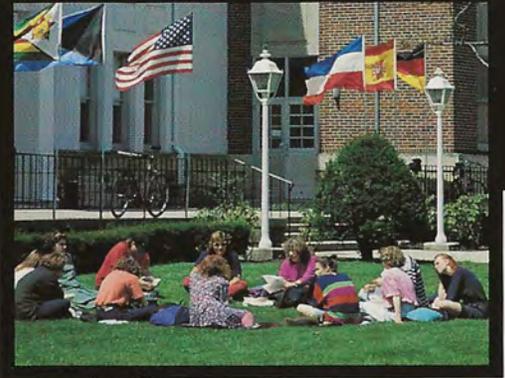
I love the way Dale ponders scripture. "I need to give more attention to the passage in Romans 14:7-9," he writes on New Year's Day, 1997. On the wedding feast passage of Mark 2:18-19 he writes, "I'm to be glad with Jesus the Bridegroom at the big party of life until I'm the one taken away." He loves Bach, and quotes Milton, Donne, and Shakespeare, too. But he keeps returning to scripture—Zephaniah, Isaiah, Job, Psalms, the Gospels, Revelation, Acts. This man had the Bible in his bones.

At the memorial service, Paul Grout noted that young people are rejecting the church, and we have presumed they are rejecting Christ. But he asks, "Is it possible they are rejecting our religion because they have not seen Christ in it?" In Dale Aukerman there was Christ through and through. And he has made me want to get started living like I'm dying. —FLETCHER FARRAR

Readers may order Hope Beyond Healing from Brethren Press at 800-441-3712. Price: \$14.95. Ask for Item #8233.

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