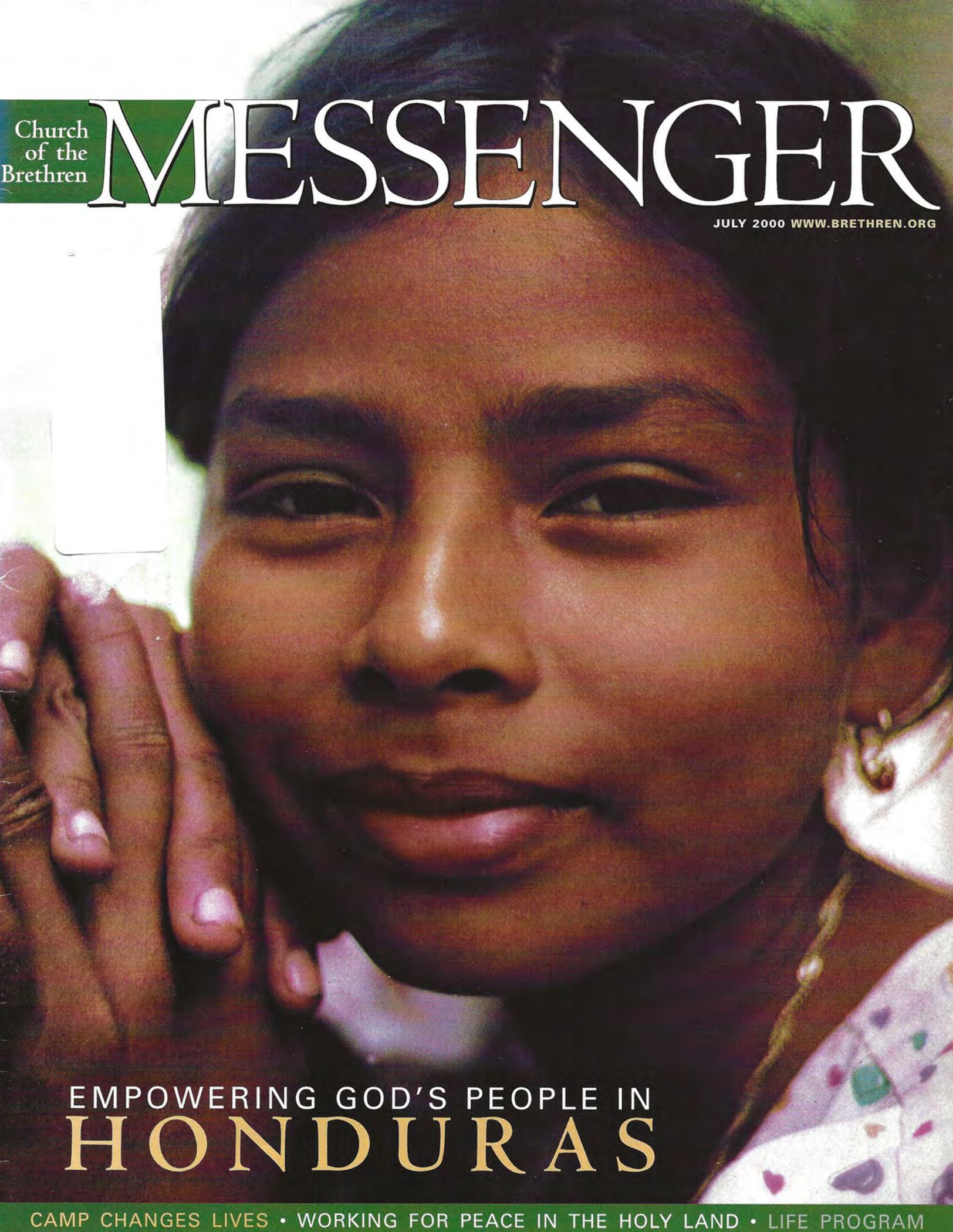


Church
of the
Brethren

MESSENGER

JULY 2000 WWW.BRETHREN.ORG

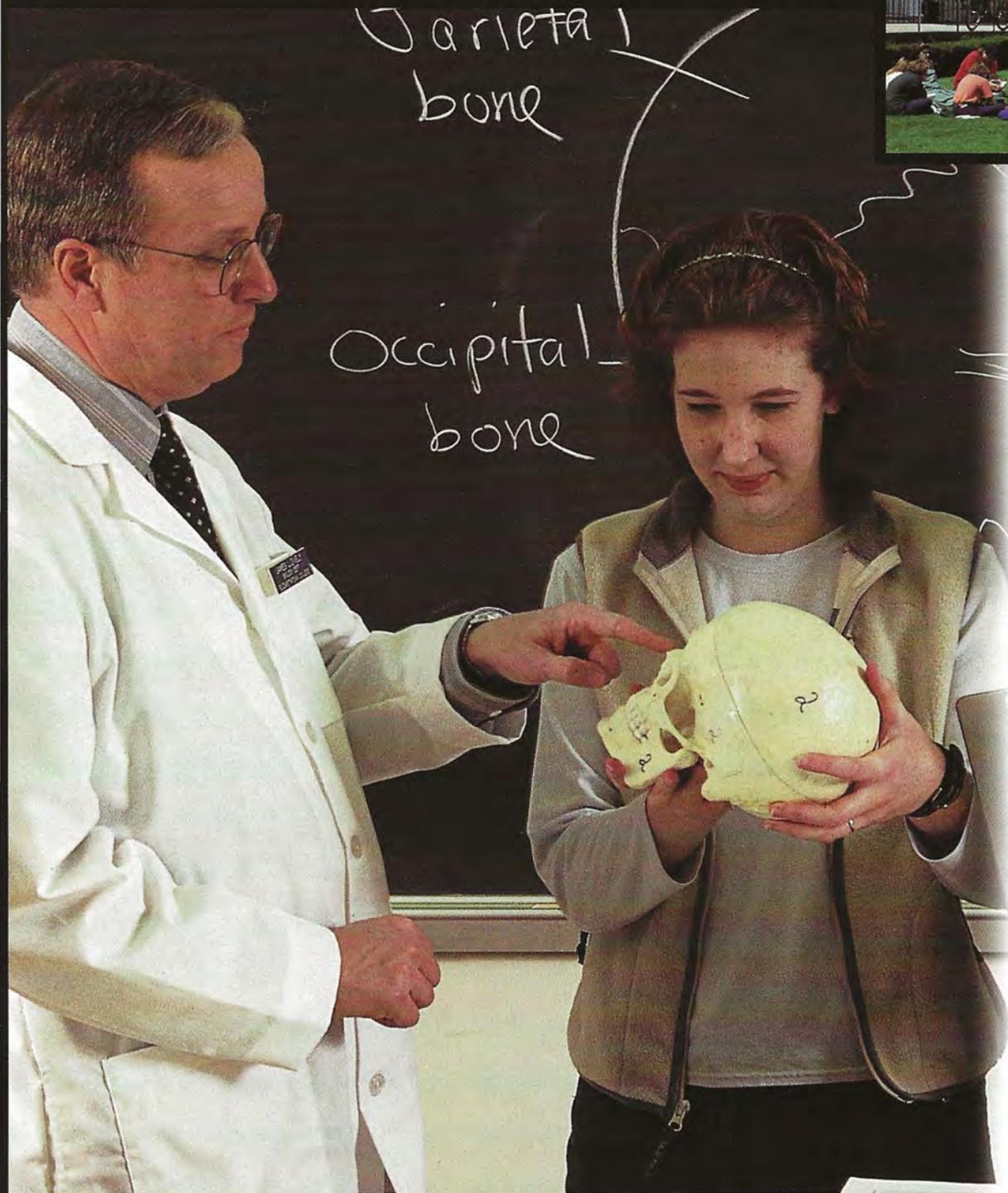
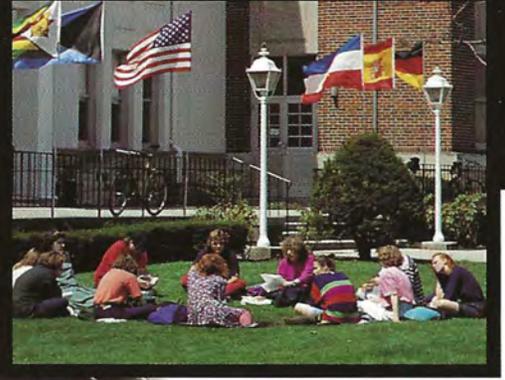


EMPOWERING GOD'S PEOPLE IN
HONDURAS

CAMP CHANGES LIVES • WORKING FOR PEACE IN THE HOLY LAND • LIFE PROGRAM

A Brethren Education

Joining Academic Excellence with Brethren Values



The cornerstones of a Brethren education are found in the values of the church itself: faith, peace, justice and service. Upon this foundation, students develop the qualities essential for intellectual growth, personal integrity, a strong faith, and service to their church and communities. A Brethren education reinforces in students a system of values which they will carry throughout their lives.

Brethren Colleges Abroad
North Manchester, Indiana

Bridgewater College
Bridgewater, Virginia

Juniata College
Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

Manchester College
North Manchester, Indiana

Bethany Theological Seminary
Richmond, Indiana

Elizabethtown College
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

University of LaVerne
La Verne, California

McPherson College
McPherson, Kansas



COBCOA

Church of the Brethren
MESSENGER

Editor: Fletcher Farrar Publisher: Wendy McFadden News: Walt Wiltschek Advertising: Russ Matteson Subscriptions: Peggy Reinacher Designer: Paul Stocksdale

ON THE COVER



David Radcliff



Glenn Mitchell



W. Henry Bolter

The cover photograph is by David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness, whose photography often graces the pages of MESSENGER. We asked him to describe this photo. He writes:

An uncertain future awaits young girls like Cristina of El Estribo, Honduras. Most often, they face a tomorrow that is clouded by things like little chance for education beyond sixth grade, early marriage to often-abusive or disrespectful spouses, and few opportunities for employment or personal development.

Ironically, enabling and empowering women is a key factor for enhancing the well-being of families, communities, and societies. For instance, there is a direct and inverse relationship between the years of education a young woman receives and the number of children she is likely to bear.

This photo itself does not hint at the possible troubles awaiting Cristina and other young women in poor communities around the world. She, like them, is more than the problems she will face. She is capable, intelligent, playful—and can smile for the camera. God’s image persists in the souls of even those at the margins of human society, giving them—and us—hope of a better day.

9 Church camp changes lives
 There are 33 Church of the Brethren camps, places that give young people time and space to be especially close to God. In this article, Walt Wiltschek celebrates the important role of camps in the ministry of the church.

12 Special section: Honduras
 After Hurricane Mitch left thousands of Hondurans homeless in 1998, the Christian Commission for Development set about to help them rebuild both lives and buildings. Working with this partner agency, the Church of the Brethren has sent both volunteers and dollars to aid the reconstruction. Howard Royer, who traveled to Honduras last year, edited this color section.

22 Working for peace in Hebron
 Church of the Brethren member Art Gish has spent extended periods in the Middle East working among Palestinian families in Hebron. He describes the vision of Christian Peacemaker Teams and explains the importance of presence.

25 Breathing LIFE into churches
 It is sad to see church buildings abandoned. Was it a lack of vision that led to their decline? Robin Wentworth Mayer describes the LIFE process, offered by New Life Ministries, which can help churches discover a new vision and fresh vitality.

DEPARTMENTS

2	From the Publisher	27	Letters
3	In Touch	31	Turning Points
6	News	32	Editorial



FROM THE PUBLISHER

Sometimes "redesign" doesn't refer to cataclysmic organizational shifts. This month it simply means that MESSENGER has a facelift.

A publication undergoes evolutionary design changes all the time, but every once in a while the moment comes to change a number of things all at once. The timing seemed right for a new look, now that we're in a new millennium and the 150th anniversary of the magazine is just around the corner. So we asked

Paul Stocksdale, who just returned to our masthead a couple of issues ago, to develop this new design.

The previous logotype changed exactly 10 years ago, to the month. The one before that was developed in 1971, though it was not radically different from the one generated in a major redesign of the magazine in 1965. Most of the logotypes have lasted a much shorter time than that one—one of them no more than four years. Maybe 10 years is a pretty long time, especially in this era of rapid change.

The first logo pictured here is from 1883, when *The Gospel Messenger* came into being. (MESSENGER traces its lineage back to *The Gospel Visitor*, founded in 1851, which is why our sesquicentennial will take place in 2001.) It's interesting to see that our new logotype—with a serif typeface rendered in all caps—shares some characteristics with the classic look of 1883. That original typeface (used 47 years) has withstood the test of time better than any of the intervening ones.

Bridging the classic and the contemporary, the traditional and the

forward-looking, is not a bad place for MESSENGER to be. As we move forward, we trust that the loyal readers who have always read MESSENGER will continue to do so, turning to it like a familiar friend. We also hope that new readers who don't even know what a Brethren pedigree is will find food for thought and nurture for the soul in these 150-year-old pages.

Wendy McFadden

How to reach us

MESSENGER

1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120

Subscriptions:

preinacher_gb@brethren.org
Phone: 847-742-5100
Fax: 847-742-6103

Display advertising:

rmatteson_gb@brethren.org
Phone: 800-323-8039
Fax: 847-742-1407

Editorial:

ffarrar_gb@brethren.org
Phone: 217-525-9083
Fax: 217-525-9269

Subscription rates:

\$16.50 individual rate
\$13.50 church group plan
\$13.50 gift subscriptions

If you move, clip address label and send with new address to MESSENGER Subscriptions, at the above address. Allow at least five weeks for address change.

Connect electronically:

For a free subscription to *Newsline*, the Church of the Brethren e-mail news report, write cobnews@aol.com.

To view the official Church of the Brethren website, go 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, July 2000. Copyright 2000, 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



Collecting typewriters for peace

The proceeds of the 1999 "Run for Peace" held in Elizabethtown, Pa., were hand-delivered to the residents of Mulukuku and Santa Rita, Nicaragua, by Bill Puffenberger last November. The money was used to begin a new community center building in Santa Rosa.

As part of the ongoing relationship with the Mulukuku community, Bill is collecting manual typewriters to be used in adult education classes in buildings without electricity. So far he has collected 28 typewriters, which will be cleaned and reconditioned before being sent to Nicaragua.

For more information contact Bill Puffenberger at 717-367-7021 or Puffenvw@etown.edu.

IN TOUCH

Women's retreat in Peace Valley

We gathered March 31-April 1 at an old schoolhouse in Peace Valley, Mo., 24 women from around the Missouri-Arkansas District. We laughed, cried, sang, shared our memories, prayed, played. And we broke bread together. Our ages ranged from the twenties to the eighties.

Clefa Cox and Dorothy Scofield of Messiah Church, Kansas City, Mo., led us in worship on Friday evening.

Marie Petty of the Broadwater Church, Essex, Mo., was inspiring and fun-loving as she led us in music, playing, and quizzes, suggesting biblical skits to act out in pantomime. Helen Fisher led morning watch, sharing with us the pain of watching bi-racial grandchildren suffer because they were bi-racial.

—Margaret Hartssock Keltner

Working to end sanctions on Iraq

Stephanie Schaudel will be working with the Church of the Brethren Washington Office this summer on Iraq sanctions issues. She is a May graduate of American University and a member of

the Lancaster, Pa., congregation.

Stephanie's focus will be on August 5-7 "End the Economic Sanctions on Iraq" rallies in the nation's capital. Included will be workshops, a cultural event on Saturday evening, an all-day vigil and rally on Sunday, nonviolence training sessions,



Stephanie Schaudel

and the opportunity for nonviolent direct action on Monday, August 7.

"Stephanie has a real passion for the situation of the Iraqi people, and we wanted to support her in her work related to ending the sanctions," said David Radcliff, director of Brethren Witness. Schaudel will work closely with Washington Office coordinator Greg Laszakovits, while also collaborating with other groups active on this issue.

Contact Stephanie at the Washington Office for information on the August event or for resources related to ending the sanctions on Iraq.



Reaching out in St. Petersburg

On May 5 the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Church of the Brethren presented a gift to its community in the form of a "May Fest in the Grove." About 40 children and adults from the congregation, clad in bright yellow church T-shirts with the Church of the Brethren logo and "Continuing the work of Jesus" taglines on the back, welcomed more than 100 visitors to the church grounds. The fest included pony rides, face painting, horseshoes, clowns, live banjo music, and free hotdogs.

This was the outreach project that followed the second phase of the church's participation in the LIFE evangelism process. For more on LIFE, a program of New Life Ministries, see article on page 25.—Phil Lersch

MILESTONES

Roanoke Central's 75th anniversary

On May 7, Central Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va., celebrated its 75th anniversary with worship and special events, including a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new children's playground,

and the burial of a time capsule to be opened during the centennial in 2025.

In the early 1920s a committee of the Northwest Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, later named First Church, recommended construction of another church building closer to the center of the city.

The new church building was dedicated May 3, 1925. Dr. M. G. Brumbaugh, former governor of Pennsylvania and then president of Juniata College, preached the sermon.—Ron Berkheimer

Mocks celebrate 70th anniversary

On April 6, 1930, Ruth Bowser and Clair Mock stood before George Rogers, a minister in the Dunnings Creek Church of the Brethren, New Paris, Pa., and exchanged their wedding vows.

On April 6, 2000, they celebrated 70 years of marriage. The Mocks' four children made possible ten grandchildren, and

nearly double that many great-grandchildren. Family and friends helped the Mocks celebrate their 70th anniversary at an open house at their home on April 9, 2000.

Their service to the church, beyond the local parish, included volunteer service to Camp Blue Diamond and at the New Windsor Service Center. To keep abreast of happenings in the Church of the Brethren, they now listen to MESSENGER on tape.

—Elaine Sollenberger

Appreciation for 65 years of music

On April 30, Stonerstown Church of the Brethren in

Shenandoah Journal, Dayton, Va.



Good Friday pilgrimage—Pastor Jim Beckwith of the Montezuma Church of the Brethren, Dayton, Va., took his turn leading several dozen pilgrims on a Good Friday walk through Bridgewater, Va.



The Committee on Interchurch Relations at the Brook Park (Ohio) Church of the Brethren. Left to right, front row: Joe Loomis, Barbara Cuffie, Belita Mitchell, and Jim Beckwith. Back: Jon Kobel (staff support), Tim McElwee, and Ken Kline Smeltzer.

Just what is the CIR?

No, it's not a child's affirmation that we do indeed exist (See, I are!), but the initials of the Committee on Interchurch Relations (CIR).

Composed of seven members, this committee encourages the Church of the Brethren in its relationships with our brothers and sisters in the wider church.

Its current objectives are to:

- promote and celebrate cross-cultural ecumenical partnerships of local congregations;
- encourage participation in the World Council of Churches "Decade to Overcome Violence";
- work with the American Baptists to train and resource our congregations undergoing cross-cultural transitions;

- communicate and implement initiatives of the National Council of Churches of Christ among the Brethren;
- communicate the work of the CIR within the Church of the Brethren; and
- model hospitality toward other Christians by inviting residents of host cities to participate in Annual Conference events and worship.

At Annual Conference the committee will be hosting the new general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ, Robert W. Edgar, as its featured speaker at the ecumenical luncheon and an insight session on Tuesday. For further information, check out the CIR website at www.brethren.org in the executive director's section.—Ken Kline Smeltzer

Saxton, Pa., celebrated the contribution of more than 65 years of music on organ and piano by Virginia Cunningham Reed. Old friends, family members, and former students joined longtime churchgoers to express "deepest love, appreciation,

and gratitude" to Virginia with a time of reflections, and a plaque quoting Psalm 100 ("Make a joyful noise to the Lord...") and Proverbs 31:29 ("Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all").



Celebrating music. From left to right are Dianne Reed, Virginia Cunningham Reed, and Sarah Q. Malone, pastor, Stonerstown Church of the Brethren.

Dedicating a peace pole

Palm Sunday afternoon saw a peace pole dedication service led by pastor Barbara Ober at the Live Oak (Calif.) Church of the Brethren. The pole was placed in memory of Coy Cason, who

had attended the church with his wife, Jo, for some 30 years before he died at the age of 85. The pole is inscribed with "May Peace Prevail on the Earth" in eight languages.

A peace memorial.

Jo Cason, son-in-law Phil Shepard, and daughter Sandy Shepard stand beside the peace pole placed in memory of Coy Cason.



Andrew Young shares fond memories of Camp Mack

Among the wood rafters and stone walls and earth floor of venerable Miller Auditorium, hundreds of Brethren and others gathered on May 20 for a celebration of Camp Alexander Mack's first 75 years. The camp, located in Milford, Ind., is one of the largest outdoor ministry facilities in the denomination.

Two special features highlighted the event: a keynote address from Andrew Young, president of the National Council of Churches of Christ and former United Nations ambassador, who spent a week at Camp Mack as a young adult; and the unveiling of a new Brethren history mural by artist Margie Petry.

The afternoon began with a hymn sing and reflections on the camp's history, including a recognition of all former camp directors and present director Becky Ball-Miller, then moved into Young's address. Young told his personal history, including that formative week at Camp Mack while volunteering for a nationwide youth program.

"I don't think I can say thank you enough for how much my life was influenced and shaped by that one week here," Young said. "Something happened that moved me in the right direction. That week, while I did not know it at the time, helped to shape my ministry."



Walt Witschek

Keynote speaker Andrew Young signs a book for Anni Bender of Milford, Ind.

Young said it particularly influenced his perspectives on nonviolence, and he later worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. He urged the camp to continue offering such life-changing experiences, saying "miracles will continue to be wrought."

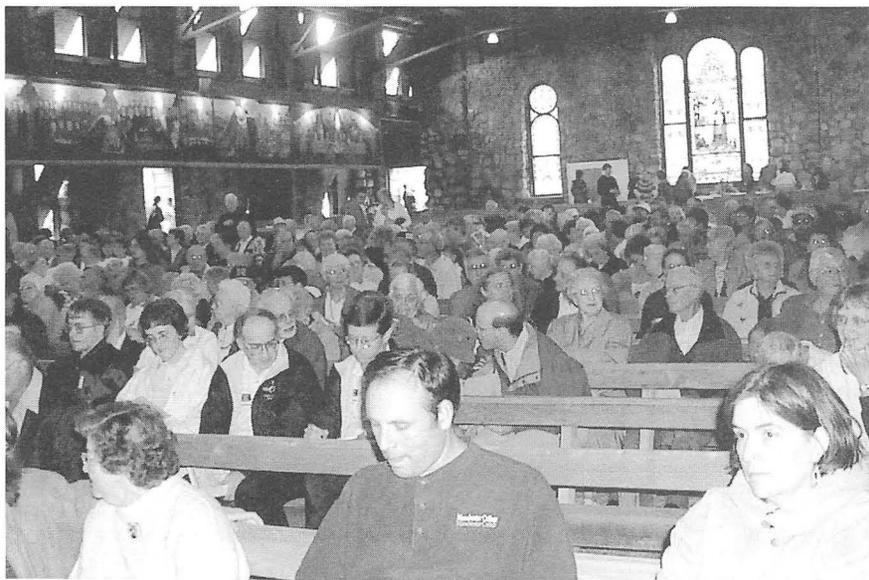
Petry then presided over the unveiling of the mural, which attempts to capture the past 50 years of Brethren history as it joins a series of murals, dedicated in 1949, already displayed in the auditorium. The mural shows more than 40 faces of people, along with logos, buildings, sketches, and other pictures. It was created on a very large canvas in her living room, with finishing touches added right up to minutes before the celebration.

Catching up with 50 years of church history is not an easy thing," Petry said. "I think I got most of it on this. It's busy, but that's what we were." —Walt Witschek



Walt Witschek

Artist Margie Petry, ▲ right, in front of a corner of the Brethren history mural she created, along with her granddaughter, Danelle Wion, who helped with the lettering.



Walt Witschek

◀ A crowd of supporters in Miller Auditorium for the celebration event.



Protests continue in wake of US action on Vieques

The situation on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, where protesters were seeking to bring an end to US Navy activity, came to a head on May 4 with the arrival of US law enforcement forces.

Protesters were removed, departing peacefully, and bombing tests and military maneuvers soon began again. The protest camps had stopped the tests for more than a year following the death of a civilian guard by stray bombs.

Demonstrations continued as bombing resumed, and Cliff Kindy and Ambrosia Brown of the Manchester Church of the Brethren (North Manchester, Ind.), both members of a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation, were among 56 people arrested for trying to re-enter the bombing range.

Religion News Service has reported that church leaders in Puerto Rico vowed to continue fighting for the US military's withdrawal from Vieques, and a demonstration was planned for the Puerto Rican capital of San Juan on May 28. In addition to Christian Peacemaker Teams, other US Brethren and individuals from Church of the Brethren congregations in Puerto Rico have been involved in the protests.

BBT board holds busy spring meetings

The Brethren Benefit Trust board addressed issues from insurance to charitable gifts at its spring meetings in Elgin, Ill. Business items included:

- Shifting all employees, programs, and assets currently under BBT to BBT, Inc., or the Brethren Foundation, Inc., to provide legal protection. BBT will continue to report activities of its incorporated entities to Annual Conference.
- An update on group life insurance, with exploration of a new carrier due to an impending large rate increase from Aetna US Healthcare.
- Approval of a policy stating that those Brethren Pension Plan members who retire

before age 59 1/2 and choose to annuitize the employer portion of their account while withdrawing the employee portion, and subsequently paying the income tax due on that account, will have a six-month waiting period before they are eligible to resume contributing into a new pension plan account.

- Giving updates on Flex-Care participation (781 people as of May 1), Clergy Consultation Service, charitable gift annuity registration (which the Brethren Foundation can now receive in 31 states), the Church Workers Assistance Plan, and three-year priorities.

- Approval of a change that allows charitable gift funds under \$50,000 to accumulate investment earnings, and approval of a new minimum investment of

\$10,000 (up from \$2,000).

- Approval of allowing up to 100 percent of the taxable portion of a minister's long-term disability income to be eligible for a housing allowance exclusion, beginning in 2000.

- Nominating candidates for three BBT Board of Trustees positions up for election this year, one to be elected by Annual Conference and two by BBT Pension Plan members (one of those to represent churches and districts and one to represent retirement home communities).

Church membership down from 1998

The Church of the Brethren lost more than 1.2 percent of its membership in 1999, according to statistics to be printed in the *2000 Yearbook* from Brethren Press.

Membership in the US and Puerto Rico at the end of 1999 was 138,304, a drop of 1,707 from the previous year. That follows a net loss of 1,389 members (about 1 percent) in 1998.

It marks the largest decrease, in both number and percentage, since 1994, when membership showed a net loss of 2,431 for the previous year. Overall membership is down about 8,400 (5.7 percent) since 1993. Numbers are approximate, and based on information provided by churches that return annual statistical reports.

Numbers of the Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), meanwhile, now stand nearly equal to those of its US sister denomination. Estimates put EYN membership at 130,000 to 140,000. The Church of the Brethren also has approximately 600 international members in the Dominican Republic.

BRETHRENSPEAK

As we live into a new century and move ever closer to the 300th birthday of our denomination, it is vital that we celebrate the gifts of all of God's children.

Christy Waltersdorff

Christy Waltersdorff is pastor of the York Center Church of the Brethren, Lombard, Ill.

Quoted from Resources for Calling Ministerial Leadership, the latest packet of materials in the In Our Midst series. This congregational resource, sent free to all churches, is available from Brethren Press.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

July 2-8 National Youth Spiritual Growth Camp, "The God-Centered Life," at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministries Center, Sharpsburg, Md.

July 6-10 Western Regional Youth Conference at University of La Verne (Calif.). Theme: "Peace Together a Future with Love."

July 9-15 Great Plains Song & Story Fest at Camp Pine Lake, Eldora, Iowa. Theme: "Celebrating the Fruits of the Land."

July 15-19 Annual Conference, Kansas City, Mo. Theme: "Love As I Have Loved You."

July 19-20 Ministers' Association meeting, Kansas City, Mo. Theme: "Interactive Preaching."

July 28-30 Brethren Revival Fellowship "Brethren Alive 2000" conference at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College (Brethren Bible Institute follows July 31-Aug. 4).

Manchester hosts youth conference

Small groups, music, workshops, and inspirational speakers ranked as favorites for more than 170 youth and advisors who gathered at Manchester College (North Manchester, Ind.), for the Midwest's Regional Youth Conference.

Participants said highlights included small-group sessions led by Manchester students, workshops on subjects from dating to athletics to prayer, and campus Peace Week activities that were available to RYC participants during free time, such as ultimate frisbee, tie-dying, and a variety of musical performances.

They also applauded the musical leadership of Joseph Helfrich, Ron Bohannon, and Brett Clark and the creative

keynote addresses from Frank Ramirez and Chris Douglas. Ramirez put on a large cardboard box with holes for head and arms to introduce his session, and Douglas used a clip on "kids doing things to make a difference" from the Oprah Winfrey show.

Michael Good, a youth at the Manchester Church of the Brethren, wrote a theme song for the weekend. This year's theme was "Things Not Yet Seen." Next year's RYC at Manchester, in April 2001, will feature performer Ken Medema.

Dramatic breakthrough achieved in Sudanese peace process

Reports from Africa said another "dramatic breakthrough" was achieved in the peace process of war-torn southern Sudan with the East Bank Nilotic People-to-People Peace and Reconciliation Conference, held May 9-15 in the Upper Nile village of Liliir.

More than 250 traditional and civil leaders representing members of the region's Anyuak, Dinka, Jie, Kachipo, Murle, and Nuer ethnic groups came together for the conference, facilitated by the New Sudan Council of Churches. Mark Sloan, working with the New Sudan Council of Churches on behalf of the General Board, was among those attending.

The conference, which follows a similar event on the West Bank of the Nile held last year [see MESSENGER, June 1999], functioned as a forum for people to face each other, discuss their differences, and agree to reconcile and make peace. Practical agreements were made on issues such as access to animal grazing areas and water points, and the return of abducted children and women. Participants also agreed on an amnesty for all prior offenses against people and their property.

The conference concluded with the making of a public covenant between the ethnic groups, when 129 representatives signed a comprehensive document pledging peace and reconciliation. Delegates urged the peace process to continue and include other groups.

Sudanese celebrate
during last year's peace conference. A similar conference in May helped move the peace process forward.



Connect the Dots

Things are different

The Association of Brethren Caregivers has been an independent organization since January 1, 1998.

ABC became an official denominational agency on July 3, 1998.

Annual Conference charged ABC with responsibility for the health and caring ministries of the Church of the Brethren on July 3, 1998.

Most ABC programs are congregationally based.

ABC needs financial support from you and your congregation to continue these programs.

ABC *does not* receive financial support from any other denominational agency.

ABC connects to you and your congregation by providing:

- National Older Adult Conference and Caring Ministries Assembly

- Deacon Resources

- Annual Health Promotion Worship and Study Resources

- *Caregiving* — a quarterly publication for caregivers

- *Messenger On Tape* — for people with visual impairments

- Scholarships and Loans for Studies in the Health Professions



The only way you and your congregation can financially support the caring ministries of the Church of the Brethren is to send that support directly to ABC.

Support the Association of Brethren Caregivers

1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, Ill., 60120; (847) 742-5100, fax (847) 742-5160; www.brethren.org/abc/

ANOTHER WAY OF SURFING

INTRODUCING THE NEW BRETHREN.ORG

New, user-friendly design downloads quickly

Another way of living.
Church of the Brethren

New search engine

The official homepage of the Church of the Brethren

Tell me more about the Brethren

Search this site

Find a church

Agencies

Annual Conference
Association of Brethren Caregivers
Brethren Benefit Trust
Brethren Employees Credit Union
Bethany Theological Seminary
General Board
On Earth Peace Assembly

News

Photo Journal

Calendar

Brethren Marketplace

- Related Links
- Listserv Info
- What's New
- Site Map

Features



Fifth National Older Adult Conference to be held Sept. 11-15 at Lake Junaluska (N.C.) Assembly.

Annual Conference information online!



A Church of the Brethren response to the 2000th anniversary of the birth of our Lord.

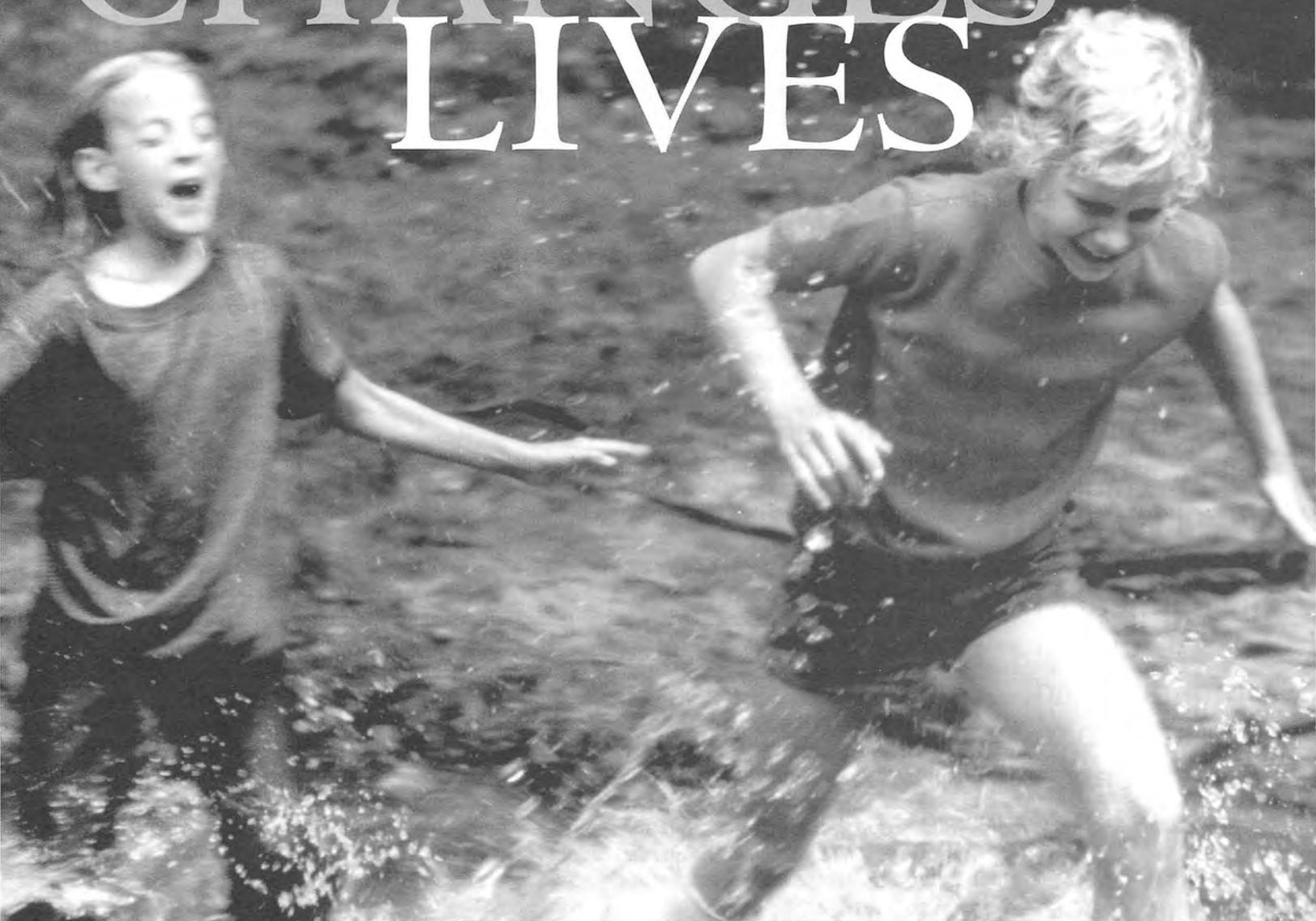
Please email the [web administrator](#) with your questions and comments.

Listing of key denominational and district events

Coming soon: a place to order books, subscriptions, or sign up for a workcamp

Visit us at www.brethren.org, or stop by our booth at Annual Conference and win fun prizes.

CAMP CHANGES LIVES



GOD GETS CLOSE TO KIDS AT CAMP

by Walt Wiltschek

A friend of mine called camp her “magic place.” When she was growing up, it was a place where she could leave behind distractions and stress and other less pleasant parts of life. It was a place where she felt surrounded by a supportive community. And it was a place where, more than anywhere else, she felt close to God.

Something about spending a week at camp brings a new focus to life, and for many people, those effects seem to linger. The experiences under that forest cathedral urge forward our faith and our sense of call in often surprising ways.

I know that my own call to ministry would likely not have happened had I not been coaxed and prodded into joining the staff at Camp Eder in southern Pennsylvania. I entered the summer anx-



Walt Wischek

While appreciation of nature forms an important part of camp, it is the spiritual environment of Christian community and openness to God's presence that truly makes camp a special place.

ious for the eight weeks to be over and left wishing they could go on forever. I saw the lives of both children and counselors touched and changed. I felt my own passion for ministry awakened and crystallized as God worked through my time there.

As I've gone on to work and volunteer at several camps and in other ministries of the Church of the Brethren, I've heard many similar sentiments expressed. Somehow, some way, God's spirit speaks to people loudly amid the quiet places of camp.

"I think ministry happens in very tangible ways," said Demetra Heckman, in her fifth year as program director at Camp Swatara in Bethel, Pa., and current chair of the denomination's Outdoor Ministries Association. "It's intentional, because we are a Christian camp ... and ministry happens at camps by the community that we create."

Heckman said the opportunity for children and youth from all backgrounds to interact one-on-one and in small groups with Christian adults, both paid staff and the countless volunteers, is particularly valuable. She's seen children open up more and more with stories of violence, illness, losing a parent or a friend, or other inner pains.

"Children are hurting a lot more," she said. "When they come to camp, it's an environment where they can share what's making them hurt and feel supported. The adults are here to listen to the kids and heal their hurts. It's a safe environment where children can feel God moving in that community, often much safer than they'd feel at home."

The Church of the Brethren has long valued camps as a means of reaching out, especially to children and youth. The church camps as we know them today began in the 1920s, starting with Western Pennsylvania's Camp Harmony

and Pacific Southwest's Camp La Verne in 1923-24, and exploded through the 1930s, according to the *Brethren Encyclopedia*.

The Church of the Brethren *Yearbook* published by Brethren Press now lists 33 camps and outdoor ministry facilities across the denomination. Some of them are large, year-round retreat centers, and others offer programs for just a few weeks during the summer, but all continue to work at providing a unique ministry in their respective areas.

"Camp has shaped who I am and what I want to be," said Tracy Stoddart, who attended Camp Colorado and now serves as a Brethren Volunteer Service worker in the BVS office. "As an adult, time at camp renews and strengthens my faith each year. I think the value of camp is immeasurable."

Stoddart said she values both the strong friendships and experiences she gained as a camper and the weeks she later worked as a counselor, helping lead her to a degree in elementary education.

Rebekah Houff, a youth from Bethel, Pa., has always had camp as a part of her life, since her father, Marlin, is a camp director. Even so, she said it has remained special. She plans to serve as a junior counselor at Brethren Woods in Keezletown, Va., this summer.

"You learn so much about God, make great friends, and spend a wonderful week in the midst of God's creation," Houff said. "Camp always changes me spiritually."

Molly Ault, a youth from Hanover, Pa., echoed those feelings. "Words cannot explain how much my soul is rejuvenated after just a week there," she said. "My faith level is skyrocketed, my mood is lightened, and all I want to do when I get home is sing praise songs and spread the word of God. I feel closest to the Lord when I'm at camp, and if I could, I'd live there simply because of that. Camp affects my life in so many positive ways that I can't begin to count them all."

Camp has changed many people over the years. General Board executive director Judy Mills Reimer said her time at Camp Bethel in southern Virginia was pivotal to her faith and call to ministry, calling it a "24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week, life laboratory, where I could practice the Christian values and Jesus' teachings with others learning with me." Randy Yoder, now district executive in Middle Pennsylvania, said it was a week as a counselor at Indiana's Camp Alexander Mack where he found his "Yes, Lord, here am I" becoming much clearer.

Robert Blake, who now works with the Association of Brethren Caregivers, grew up in the camps of another denomination but said the community, diversity, challenges, and support he found there led him to later become a minister when he joined the Church of the Brethren. "I remember being affirmed with a strength and to a depth that brought Christ's spirit alive," Blake said. "I learned that one week in the summer could influence the whole rest of my year."

Annual Conference moderator Emily Mumma said Camp Sugar Grove in Ohio was a place where "opportunity was granted and encouragement given to try my wings doing new things, even be a leader. It was a 'safe' place to fail." She said it was also where she really learned to pray.

And former UN ambassador Andrew Young, now president of the National Council of Churches, said during a speech at Camp Mack's 75th anniversary celebration that a week at Camp Mack strongly influenced his life, and such experiences can continue to influence others.

"You've created an environment for the presence of the church in the lives of young people, for the Holy Spirit to be revealed in prayer, singing, camaraderie, and Bible study

that goes on here," Young said. "You can never anticipate what's going to come of it."

And therein lies the heart of outdoor ministry. While appreciation for the physical environment of nature forms an important part of camp, it is the spiritual environment of Christian community and openness to God's presence that truly makes camp a special place of transformation in the lives of so many.

Camp Mack staff member Phyllis Leininger recently wrote a book, *The Cornfield That Grows People*, describing the camp's journey from an open field along a lake to a place that makes a difference in hundreds of lives. It's a story that could be recounted in camps across the country, and an ongoing story with bountiful harvests each year.

"A lot of youth do move on to other ministries, a lot of other options," said Heckman, who said her years as a camper at Camp Bethel were a major influence for her. "Camp is really the place where seeds are planted for their life in the church as they grow." 

Walt Wiltschek is manager of news services for the Church of the Brethren General Board and spent four summers on staff at Camp Eder in Fairfield, Pa., plus volunteer stints at Camp Mardela and Shepherd's Spring in Maryland.



Walt Wiltschek

I learned that one week in the summer could influence the whole rest of my year.



Providing Superior Care for Your Peace of Mind

EVERYTHING YOU WANT
IN A SERENE YET CONVENIENT COUNTRY SETTING.

RESIDENTIAL LIVING IN CROSS KEYS VILLAGE
• HARMONY RIDGE APARTMENTS OR COTTAGES

DINING - PLANNED ACTIVITIES - TRANSPORTATION
ON-CAMPUS BANKING & MEDICAL FACILITIES

ASSISTED LIVING CENTER

- SHELTERED NEIGHBORHOOD
- PRIVATE ROOMS WITH BATH
- HEALTH CARE CENTER
- HOUSEKEEPING

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

- SUPPORT SERVICES
- HOME HEALTH SERVICES
- SPECIAL CARE (ALZHEIMER'S) UNIT
- CROSS KEYS SUBACUTE CENTER
- ADULT DAY SERVICES
- SPECIAL CARE UNIT
- NURSING CARE
- RESPITE CARE

MEDICARE/MEDICAID APPROVED

Christian care since 1908

2990 CARLISLE PIKE - P.O. Box 128
NEW OXFORD, PA 17350-0128
1-888-624-8242
WWW.BRETHRENHOME.ORG



HONDURAS: EMPOWERING GOD'S PEOPLE

by Howard Royer

Upon the launching of the Christian Commission for Development (*Comisión Cristiana de Desarrollo*) in Honduras in 1982, death threats to staff were frequent. In that volatile era, assisting Salvadoran refugees massed on the country's western border and defending the rights of the poor did not win CCD many laurels.

In fact, Noemí Espinoza, one of the founding staff members, spent time in exile in the US during that tumultuous beginning. Contrast that to 1999, when Espinoza, as executive president of CCD, received her country's National Human Rights Award. CCD, the joint effort of Protestant churches, and Caritas, the Roman Catholic social ministry, were commended jointly for their outreach to the most needy and excluded of Hondurans.

Church of the Brethren connections with CCD go back to its beginnings, when Dan McFadden and Steve Newcomer were in Brethren Volunteer Service working with Salvadoran refugees in Honduras. It was in that

era and region, too, that Yvonne Dilling was lifting up the cause of Salvadoran refugees through Witness for Peace. Out of that encounter she co-authored the award-winning book *In Search of Refuge*.

In 1988 David Radcliff set up the first international workcamp with CCD, even before he joined the General Board staff. For most of the past dozen years he has led annual workcamp groups to CCD-related projects in Honduras.

Before Hurricane Mitch struck late in 1998, CCD's outreach centered on 113 rural communities in the poorest areas of the country. In each community its staff trained a representative group of villagers to analyze problems and define solutions.

Since Mitch, the agency's work has expanded to 400 villages and to Tegucigalpa, the capital, where CCD is headquartered. Enabling the expansion was the responsiveness of the international Christian community in sending volunteers and money. The CCD budget over the current two-year

“The poor possess a tremendous capability to solve their own problems. Our task is to accompany them.”

period is \$15 million.

Beginning with the medical team that was dispatched in November 1998 by the General Board to assist survivors of Hurricane Mitch, Brethren have maintained an active presence in Honduras. In follow-up to hurricanes Georges and Mitch in Central America and the Caribbean, General Board programs have invested over half a million dollars. Some 50 Brethren have joined the work brigades in Honduras since last August. Church of the Brethren women are being recruited by the

Brethren Witness office for a Faith Expedition to Honduras this November. And three projects there are seeking the placement of BVSers.

Individual Brethren are also involved. Harold Metzler, a builder from Memorial Church in Martinsburg, Pa., and his sons have designed and built prototype housing in Honduras. Others from Memorial church have worked in health and service ministries there. For over 25 years Chet Thomas, a Church of the Brethren member and former Church World Service director in Honduras, has given leadership to Project Global Village, an enterprise of interest especially to his home district, Western Pennsylvania. In 1994-95 BVSers David and Adela See of the Shenandoah District worked with Project Global Village.

For CCD and its partner churches, the focus goes far beyond such hurricane recovery efforts as rebuilding houses and bridges that were washed away. The larger challenge is long-term development,

continued on page 21



Paul Jeffrey CCD

AFTER MITCH, VISIONS OF HOPE

Paul Jeffrey CCD



After the waters of Hurricane Mitch lashed the countryside for a week in the fall of 1998, Hondurans faced an overwhelming task. Especially the poor and the marginalized. Their challenge went beyond the recovery of homes, land, and income, to the shaping of a more hopeful future.

In the nearly two years

since, 400 ravaged communities have been transformed through the efforts of the Christian Commission for Development (CCD). The Church of the Brethren is among CCD's long-time partners helping Honduras' poor glimpse what God's justice and love means for them.

Hondurans know well how water can both ravish and replenish



by Howard Royer

For CCD
the focus is
on working
with, not for,
the poor

BUILDING HOMES AND RELATIONSHIPS

In the language of friendship, no translation is required. Below, Sarah Shank with Honduran friends in 1990 workcamp.

Within days of Mitch's fury, the trust established between the Church of the Brethren and CCD enabled Yvonne Dilling to coordinate the first group of Brethren volunteers—

11 Spanish-speaking medical workers—to enter disaster communities in southern Honduras, supported by the Emergency Disaster Fund.

Since October 1998 Brethren have contributed over half a million dollars for hurricane relief in Central America and the Caribbean. Over the past year, more than 50 Brethren volunteers have helped build houses in southern Honduran villages, working under auspices of the General Board, CCD, and Church

World Service.

“Even in the face of urgent needs caused by Mitch, CCD keeps the focus on building relationships over building houses,” noted Merv Keeney, director of Global Mission Partnerships for the General Board. “Rather than working *for* people in need, participants return with a strong sense of having worked *with* the people, a style that inspires hope and renewal within both Hondurans and visiting workers.”



David Radcliff



Paul Jeffrey CCD

Fidelina Hernandez, front, works on her own home with help of neighbor. Organized by CCD and local pastors, their women's group erected 22 houses in Tegucigalpa.



David Radcliff

Paul Jeffrey CCD

Deliana Juarez, front center, cuts ribbon at doorway of her new home she and other women built in Tegucigalpa, aided by CCD.



For 10 years, Church of the Brethren workcampers have assisted with CCD projects in Honduras. Since last August, 50 Brethren volunteers have helped build houses, mostly along the southern coast.

Brethren grants boost livestock development in villages

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Rapid deforestation aggravated the Mitch disaster. The steep slopes and river valleys no longer have the ability to absorb vast amounts of water. Villages like El Estribo along the Choluteca River were swept

away—people, houses, livestock, tillable land.

Last year in a pilot project with CCD, the General Board's Global Food Crisis Fund provided \$5,000 for the women's group in El Estribo to purchase pigs

and chickens. Providing food and income, the livestock project was a marked success. This year the Brethren hunger program has allocated \$42,000 to help 800 other women in dozens of southern Honduran villages acquire small livestock.

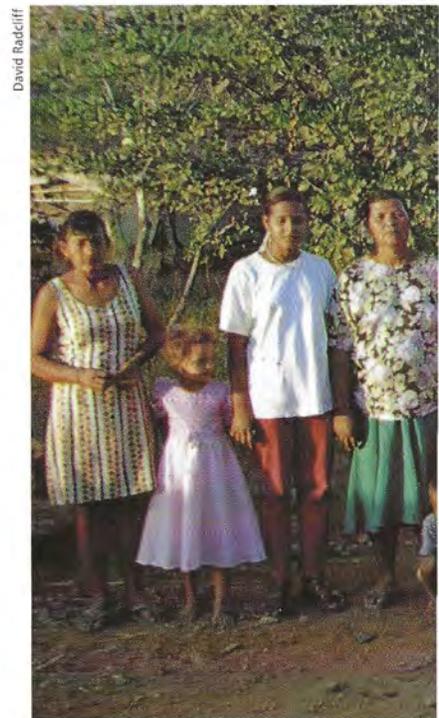
Small-scale development in poor, rural communities is addressed by CCD in a host of practical ways. With each, CCD's approach to change is for the poor to become subjects of their own history, rather than objects of someone else's planning.



CCD helps farmers adopt sustainable agriculture



Paul Jeffrey CCD



David Radcliff

Women and children of El Estribo, a southern Honduran village

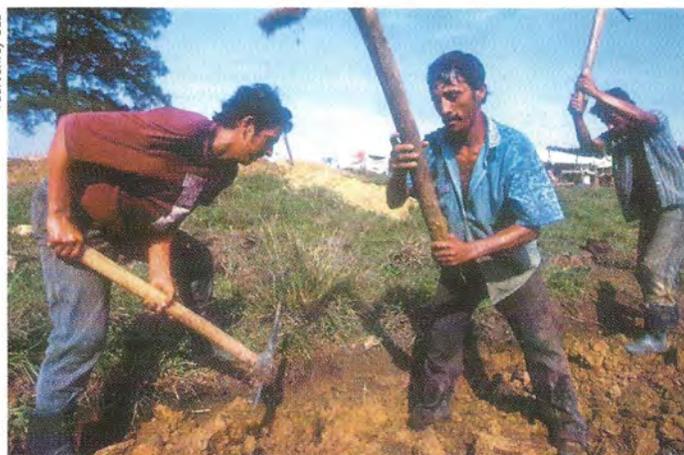


practices, soil conservation, improved seed stock, and better storage and marketing.



community where small livestock donated by Brethren has helped reinvigorate village life.

Paul Jeffrey CCD



Mudslides greatly reduced the amount of Honduras' tillable land.

Howard Royer



Juana Ramón Munquilla beside her new chicken house in El Estribo.

Paul Jeffrey CCD



Reforestation project in Ocotepeque enlists intergenerational support.

Circles of women marshal support for one another

NURTURING CIRCLES OF SOLIDARITY

In mobilizing the marginalized, CCD is particularly focused on the powerlessness and victimization of women. It places a premium on projects that augment household incomes. It assists women in building their own homes. In its village development

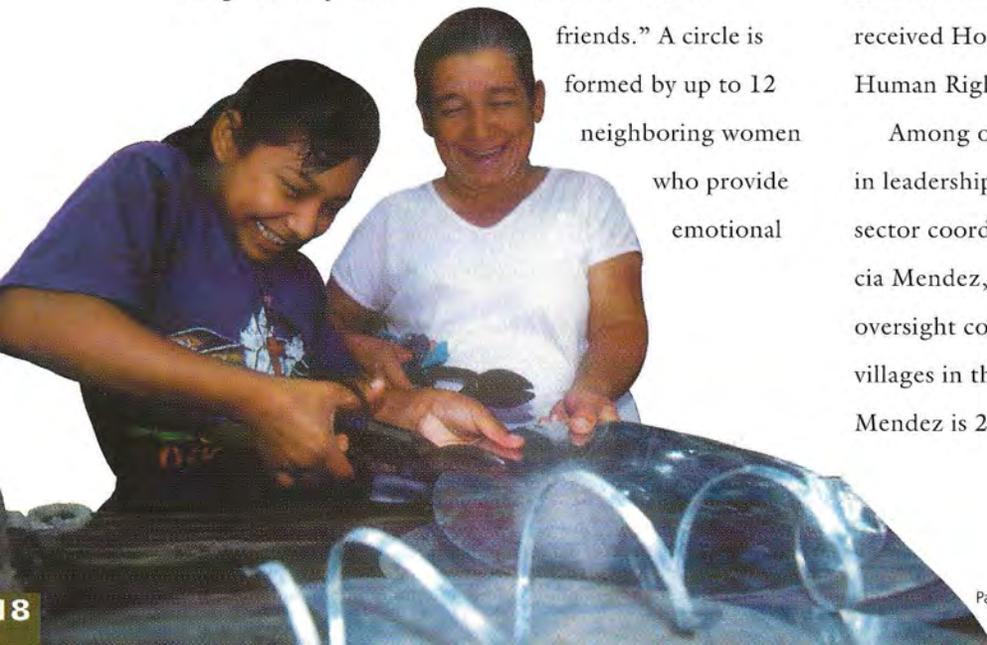
programs, CCD requires that women make up half of all committees. And it quietly but determinedly tackles issues of abuse and domestic violence.

A new venture is an organizational model called *círculos de amigas*—“circles of women friends.” A circle is formed by up to 12 neighboring women who provide emotional

and social support for one another. More than 200 circles now operate, El Estribo being a prime example.

CCD itself is a model of women in leadership. The executive president is Noemí Espinoza, a founding member who last year on behalf of CCD received Honduras’ Human Rights Award.

Among other women in leadership is Valle sector coordinator Patricia Mendez, whose oversight covers 78 villages in three states. Mendez is 24 years old.





CCD's revolving loan fund helps villagers form cooperatives and market products.

Paul Jeffrey CCD



Noemí Espinoza receives Honduras' Human Rights Award from Leo Valladares.

Howard Royer



Valle sector coordinator Patricia Mendez (left) with Paula Suazo in El Estribo.

David Radcliff



Brethren and Honduran volunteers at El Estribo project in August 1999.



At Nacaome and throughout Honduras, the Christian community lifts up the abundant life in Christ promised to all of God's children.

LIBERATING HANDS & HEARTS

The goal of CCD and partners: empowering God's people

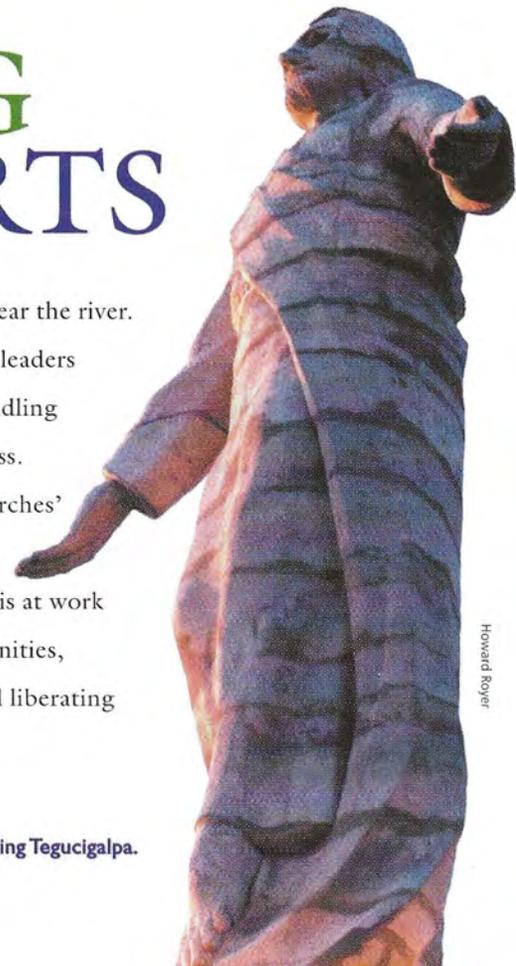
A key effort of CCD is training church leaders in pastoral care and congregational development. Theological training runs the gamut from grassroots programs for the newly literate to advanced degrees for pastors and teachers.

On the heels of Mitch, church leaders sensed the urgency of helping survivors deal with insecurity and low self-esteem. Many children, for example,

were afraid to go near the river. Some 230 pastoral leaders were trained in handling post-traumatic stress.

Through the churches' presence in Honduras, God's spirit is at work mobilizing communities, opening doors, and liberating hands and hearts.

Christ statue overlooking Tegucigalpa.



continued from page 12

Noemí Espinoza emphasizes, helping communities change the way that power is directed and exercised.

“The poor possess a tremendous capability to solve their own problems,” insists Espinoza. “Our task is to accompany them. If they’re not the ones to rebuild their communities, to participate in making decisions about their lives, then we have no future as a country.”

Espinoza is deeply grateful to the churches and relief agencies around the world that support CCD’s ministry and who, in her words, “recognize Christ in each woman and man who struggles to defend their rights and the rights of others.”

Merv Keeney, director of Global Mission Partnerships, affirms CCD’s theme, “Empowering God’s People,” as one that resonates with the commitment of the Church of the Brethren. “We rejoice in the opportunities God has laid before us for ministry in one of Latin America’s poor yet promising countries,” Keeney states.

Two occasions are at hand for Brethren to strengthen their understanding of the churches’ work in Honduras. In mid-July, Noemí Espinoza will be a guest and a presenter at Annual Conference in Kansas City. On Oct. 8, ministry in Honduras is the subject of this year’s churchwide World Mission Offering. 

This article is one of a series on General Board ministries. The writer was in Honduras earlier this year.

NIGHT SOUNDS

by Bill Hare

It’s pitch dark, but footsteps are heard as someone makes his way home, unaided by artificial light after a long day of work in the scorching sun in the melon fields. Plodding home for tortillas and beans and rest from the long day.

A rooster crows just 25 feet from my bed—is it time to get up? No, it’s 8:48 p.m. and soon the macho call is heard all over town as each calls his claim to his territorial roosting tree.

It’s quiet again, but not for long, as a dog across town detects an intruder. Every pooch within earshot answers the challenge of my domain!

Several in our room have already succumbed to sleep and have turned out the night time village sounds to add their own labored breathing, restricted inhaling, as they rest from the hot, dusty, uphill labor of the day.

It’s squeak, squeak, squeak, as the bats that have spent the day in the roof become restless and hungry and venture out to feast on those pesky, buzzing mosquitoes that bothered me a little while ago.

Quiet again, but no, that bat just fluttered against my mosquito net.

Somebody just walked by outside and there go the roosters again. First one, then another, and soon the din has spread again all over town.

Quiet again, but not really, as the constant sounds reverberate unchanging from the nearby river. Insect or amphibian or both, I don’t know, but the haunting night sound goes on unchanging.

Dogfight! Claim of territory! All over again, the dogs break the calm.

A nearby baby cries—maybe hungry, maybe sick. It makes its announcement in the universal language of crying.

There’s that bat again, still squeaking.

That rooster with the slight upward lilt at the end of his call just woke up and soon again each neighbor tries to outdo the other.

Quiet again. Finally some sleep, but not for long, as one of our guys shuffles past, dodging sleeping mats and suitcases, ducking under ropes holding mosquito nets, and carefully opening the squeaking door for his nightly walk down the path.

And so it goes, through the long, hot night, catching sleep when possible.

Before dawn, before first light, the nearby pump squeaks and water flows from one of the four wells in the community as Maria begins the never-ending task of carrying water for her family—uphill.

Old Juan plods by with the tap, tap, tap of his tattered flip-flops gently caressing his leathery feet. His frayed straw hat, not needed now, will protect him from the scorching sun later as he cuts firewood from the distant forest to load onto the burro he leads.

A cow moos, pigs grunt, a horse neighs—it’s like living in the barnyard.

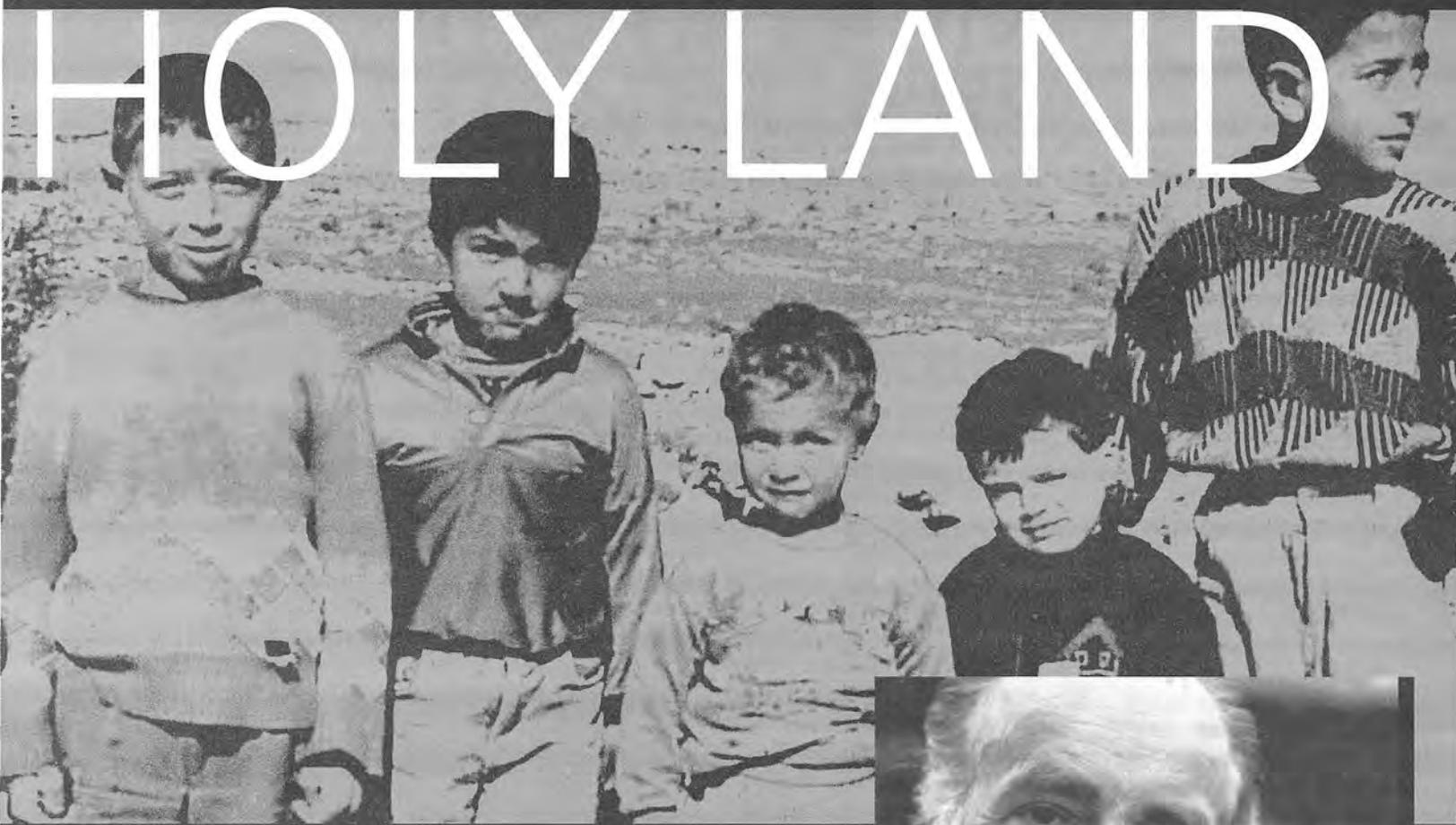
But that’s life here in Santa Catarina. A hard, hot life at the end of the road. It goes no farther. But there is hope here, hope for a better life, a better tomorrow. 



Bill Hare

Based on a week in Santa Catarina, Honduras, in February 2000, a village on the Nicaraguan border. Eight Brethren were part of a Church World Service/CROP group of volunteers constructing houses. Hare is manager of Camp Emmaus, Mount Morris, Ill., and member of the Polo (Ill.) Church of the Brethren.

HOLY LAND



CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKER TEAMS WITNESS IN HEBRON

by Art Gish

In 1984 Ron Sider addressed the World Mennonite Conference and challenged Mennonites to get serious about working for peace. He suggested that Christians start going into situations of conflict to be a nonviolent witness in the midst of those conflicts, taking the same risks for peace that soldiers take in war.

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) was started in 1986 as a response to that challenge. Although ecumenical, the largest numbers of people involved in CPT are Mennonites and Church of the Brethren people.

CPT has been in Haiti, the Middle East, Bosnia, and Chechnya, and has worked to diffuse tensions around Native American communities. At present there are full-time teams in Chiapas, Mexico; Hebron, Palestine; and New Brunswick, Canada. I have been privileged to be part of the team in Hebron four different times in the past five years, the most recent this past winter.

Hebron is mentioned 70 times in the Bible. It is where Abraham and Sarah are buried, and was

the capital of David's kingdom for seven years. Today it is probably the most tense city in Palestine, a city often mentioned in the news.

Working with CPT in Hebron has been one way I have found to live out Jesus' call for us to be peacemakers, and to make a Christian witness in a largely Muslim city. Almost every day in Hebron Muslims would ask me if I were Muslim. Often when I told them I am a Christian, a deep conversation ensued.

CPT is in Hebron, first, to listen and to learn. I have spent much time talking to the different factions of both sides of the conflict. I now count both Israelis and Palestinians as my friends.

We are also in Hebron to act as international observers. We say we have the grandmother effect. There are things we will not do if our grandmothers are watching us. When people know they are being

observed, they tend to act more responsibly. Just having international observers in places of conflict is important.

CPT not only listens and observes, we also get involved in the conflict. We engage in nonviolent direct action. When the No. 18 bus in Jerusalem was bombed two Sundays in a row a few years ago, our team announced that we would ride the No. 18 bus the next Sunday.

When there have been clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, we have often stood in the middle. One time our team prevented Israeli soldiers from firing their guns into a crowd of demonstrators, by standing in front of the guns. We have sat on the roofs of Palestinian homes that were about to be demolished.

Most important, our actions are rooted in prayer. Daily worship and times of fasting are essential to the work of our teams as we work to discern how to engage the powers of evil.

Recently the focus of the team in Hebron has been home demolitions and land confiscation. Part of this work has been starting the Campaign for Secure Dwellings (CSD), in which Palestinian families who face home demolitions are paired with congregations in North America. These congregations pray for their partner family, keep in contact with them, and act as advocates for them.

Here are two stories that illustrate some of our work in Hebron.

Love overcomes fear

For two weeks this past December, I lived with the Omar and Lamia Sultan family. The Sultans are a Palestinian Muslim family whose home in the Beqa'a valley east of Hebron was threatened by Israeli settlers coming at night and terrorizing the family. The settlers believe that all the land in Palestine was given to them by God, and thus feel justified in taking Palestinian land for their own purposes.

Our team wrestled with how we could turn this ugly situation into something beautiful. How could the power of love break into this place of fear and hate?

On the evening of Saturday, Dec. 25, there was a large settler demonstration at the Sultan home, ending with about 100 settlers coming up the hillside to and above the house with their flaming torches, destroying property and frightening the family.

The settlers announced on that evening that they would return on the following Tuesday to demolish the home, confiscate the property, and start construction of a new settlement there. This followed five days of round-the-clock vigiling in front of the home by the settlers.

Our team went on red alert. We sent out an urgent

action call for people of good will around the world to contact their governments and the Israeli government to stop this impending tragedy. We asked for help from the Israeli peace movement.

We later learned that College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., sent approximately 75 faxes to the Israeli government on behalf of the Sultan family. College Mennonite Church is paired with the Sultan family.

By Monday evening, Israeli peace activists began to arrive at the Sultan home to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian family. What a wonderful time we had sitting around the fire—Muslims, Jews, and Christians sharing together in Hebrew, Arabic, and English. I could tell the Sultans were grateful for the Jewish presence. I was excited. The ugly actions of the settlers brought people together.

From the gospel we learn that there is an arrogance to the power of evil. That arrogance leads to evil overstepping its own power. The powers of evil crucified Jesus, but in their arrogance brought about their own defeat.

After a lot of personal sharing, we talked about how to respond if the bulldozers came the next day to demolish the house. A number of us were prepared to sit in front of the bulldozers.

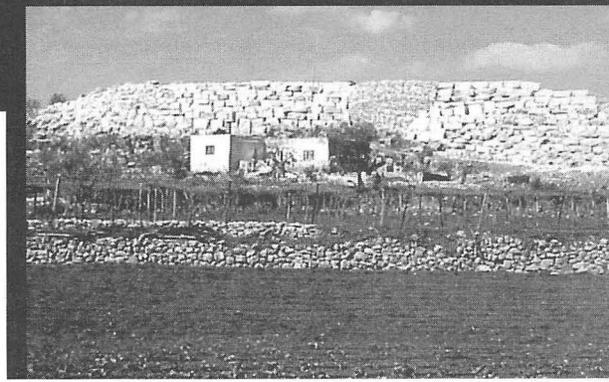
On Tuesday, about 50 Israelis from Gush Shalom, Rabbis for Human Rights, and other Israeli peace groups arrived. There were other internationals and lots of press there. Soldiers declared the area a closed military zone and ordered everyone to leave. No one left the area, however, and it ended up that the Israeli police allowed everyone to stay. Only two settlers showed up.

The next day, Wednesday, a large group of settlers came to occupy the land, but were removed by the Israeli authorities. I also was removed by the police from the area for a few hours during this time of removing the settlers. I returned to the Sultan home when all the settlers had left.

On Thursday, local Palestinians organized a march to the Sultan home. This included a member and a former member of the Israeli parliament, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Assembly, and a high-ranking Muslim official from Jerusalem. The march also included local Palestinian dignitaries and Israeli peace activists.

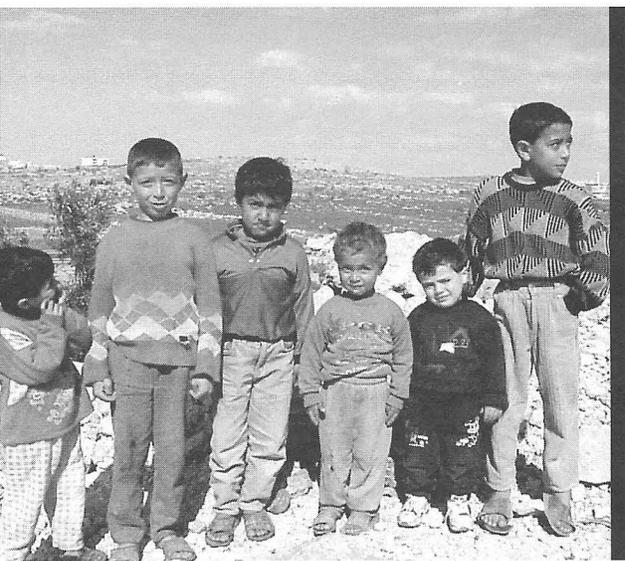
Although at first stopped by Israeli soldiers, the marchers eventually came to the house and greeted the Sultan family. With the dignitaries present, a high-ranking Israeli military official promised the Sultan family that their home was safe and would not be demolished.

After that there was no more settler activity at



A new Israeli settlement is being built on this hill where the rock wall was constructed. On the hill used to be the orchard of a Palestinian family in the Beqa'a Valley east of Hebron.

Our team wrestled with how we could turn this ugly situation into something beautiful. How could the power of love break into this place of fear and hate?



Six grandchildren of Omar and Lamia Sultan.
They are looking toward Hebron across the Beqa'a Valley.

It was thrilling to have Jews, Muslims, and Christians sharing together around the fire in front of the Sultan home. We experienced again that peace is possible in this torn land.

the Sultan home, and I then moved back into Hebron to be part of the team there. I continued to visit the Sultan family regularly. They adopted me as part of their family.

What did our peacemaker team do there? Actually, not very much. We were present with the family, we made ourselves vulnerable to the evil there, we alerted the world to what was happening, we asked for help and support, we prayed. Something happened that

was much bigger than anything we did.

It is exciting to think of the results of this action. The Sultan family received international attention and, because of their being visible, they are much safer now. We got a promise from the Israeli government that the home would not be demolished. It is now less likely that any settlement will be built there.

Israelis and Palestinians came together. It was thrilling to have Jews, Muslims, and Christians sharing together around the fire in front of the Sultan home. We experienced again that peace is possible in this torn land. The ugly situation did turn into something beautiful. Love overcame fear and hate. Here is one small example of what can happen everywhere, if we would open ourselves to God's grace.

A snowstorm brings us together

The Middle East was hit by a major snowstorm on Jan. 27 and 28 this year; Israel/Palestine received the biggest snowfall in many years. In Hebron, where they have a bit of snow every few years, we were gifted this time with about 20 inches of snow. Imagine, snow on palm trees. I was delighted.

On Thursday, Jan. 27, our peace team was in Jerusalem for two important meetings with Israeli and Palestinian activists. We knew a major storm was coming, but the meetings seemed important. When we left Jerusalem at 4 p.m., it was snowing hard. We also had to get through a massive traffic jam.

As we were driving south out of Jerusalem, the road was becoming more and more covered with snow, and at one point, near Bethlehem, we had to get out and push our taxi. Soon our driver

said he didn't think he could get to Hebron, and that he was going back to Jerusalem. We decided to get out and start walking toward Hebron, hoping for a ride in the night.

We started hitchhiking. A pickup truck used to transport workers picked us up. We sat in the back with two young Palestinians. It was snowing really hard. Some vehicles were stranded by the side of the road. After a few miles, the traffic was barely moving.

Before long traffic was not moving at all, but we were having fun. Our common plight had brought us all together. Palestinians, soldiers, settlers, and North American activists were all stranded, brought together by a snowstorm. Our differences no longer seemed important. Something bigger than us, and out of our control, had brought us together. We fight over things we want to control, but here was something none of us could control.

People who otherwise might be enemies now were acting as friends. Settlers, soldiers, and Palestinians were helping push each other's cars, each identifying with the others, all because of an act of nature. At this "checkpoint" we were all equal.

After sitting there for about two hours, I suggested that we start walking the 10 miles home to Hebron. As we started walking up the long, steep hill, we understood why traffic was not moving. For over a mile, cars and trucks were jammed together on the slick road. No one could move. Some places it was even difficult for us to squeeze between the cars and trucks.

At the top of the hill the road was free, and we soon got a ride into Hebron.

Friday was a quiet day in Hebron, except for the many snowball fights in which I eagerly participated. I must admit I started quite a few of the fights. What a wonderful way to break rigid attitudes and patterned responses, and connect with people in a new way. I started one battle with about a dozen young Palestinians, all of them against me. Excitement and commonality filled the air.

The Israeli soldiers were especially friendly and some of them even participated in the snowball fights. A few of our team members were walking up the street and pretended to throw snowballs at some soldiers. They said, no, no. Then some other soldiers came by who were more receptive to the idea. Our group threw some snowballs near the soldiers, who then threw snowballs back. There were no arrests. We did a lot of joking and laughing together with soldiers.

The snow brought us together, but unfortunately the snow melts quickly there. The oppression of the occupation continues. The problems there are too deep to be covered over by snow. We were, however, given another glimpse of what can be.



HOW TO REACH CPT

Readers may request more information and a copy of the Christian Peacemaker Teams newsletter by writing CPT, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680. Tel. 312-455-1199. E-mail cpt@igc.org

Art Gish is a member of New Covenant Fellowship, an intentional Christian community near Athens, Ohio. He is a member of the Church of the Brethren, a graduate of Bethany Theological Seminary, an organic farmer, and a peace activist.

The Love Feast



Compiled by FRANK RAMIREZ

The love feast is based on a simple premise: disciples do as Jesus commands. We examine our lives, wash feet, eat a simple meal, and take communion. Through stories, memories, scriptures, and photographs, the love feast is remembered and renewed, extending the invitation to all to come to the Lord's table.

Here is a glimpse into the corporate memory of this central ritual of our faith.

A perfect gift for new members, deacons, church leaders, and all who find their Christian home with the Brethren.

\$19.95 paperback #8208

\$49.95 limited edition hardcover #8240



Brethren Press

1451 Dundee Avenue

Elgin, Illinois 60120-1694

phone 800-441-3712

fax 800-667-8188

e-mail brethrenpress_gb@brethren.org

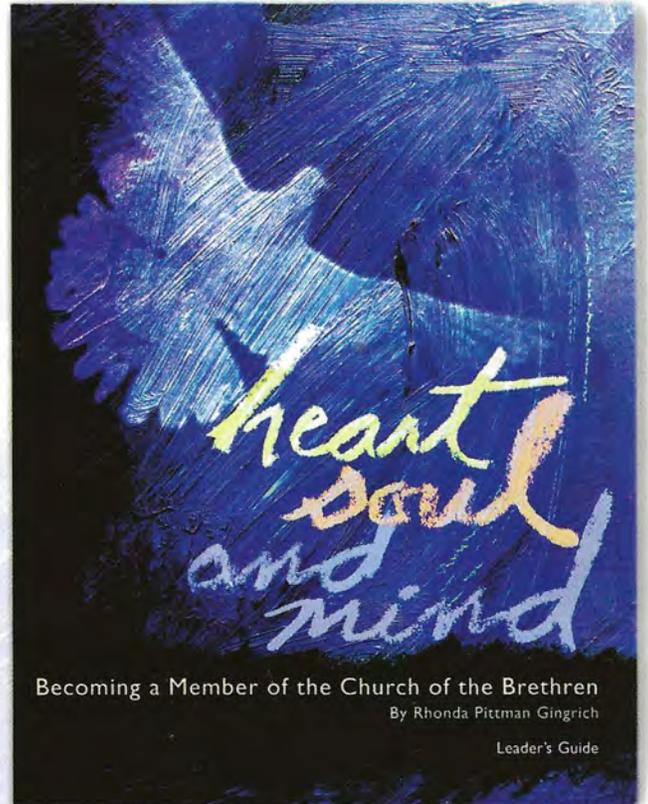
“Teacher, which commandment is the greatest?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment.”

Matthew 22:36-38

Giving God your heart, soul, and mind is central to the decision to be baptized as a Christian and become a member of the Church of the Brethren. *Heart, Soul, and Mind* is an adaptable membership curriculum for congregations to use with youth and adults who are exploring a deeper commitment to Christian discipleship.

Four units of study explore what Brethren should know about the Bible, church history, living the faith, and church membership. The Leader's Guide (#9922, \$24.95) includes reproducible handouts for students, ideas for a mentor program, and an apprenticeship program. The Membership Handbook for students (#9923, \$9.95) contains readings, exercises, and journal starters, and is valuable as a keepsake and benchmark of faith development. A video (#9924, \$19.95) featuring Brethren youth talking about faith is also available to supplement the curriculum.

Candidates for membership will be engaged —heart, soul, and mind—to love God, love their neighbor, and join in the community of faith.




Brethren Press
This day.

1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120-1694
phone 800-441-3712 fax 800-667-8188 e-mail brethrenpress_gb@brethren.org

DISCOVERING A

VISION



WHERE THERE IS
NO VISION THE
PEOPLE PERISH —Proverbs 29:18

**If your
church is
declining,
give it
LIFE**

by Robin Wentworth Mayer

*Whenever I walk to Suffern,
along the Erie track
I go by a vacant church house,
with its shingles all broken and black.
I suppose I've passed it a hundred times,
but I always stop for a minute
And look at the church, the tragic church,
the church with nobody in it.*

Maybe I'm overly sensitive to such things, but it seems that no matter where I go, no matter what route I take to get there, I invariably drive past a building that at

one time housed a vital church. Sometimes it's out in the middle of nowhere, just looking forlorn and lonely—where the only signs of life are the birds and the squirrels in the adjoining cemetery. Other times there's one on an abandoned corner in a “declining” neighborhood with boarded windows and “For Sale” signs on the neglected lawn. Often you'll see one that has been converted into an antique store or museum—a resting place for obsolete artifacts and outdated relics—which in itself is a chilling commentary.

And every time I pass one of these empty buildings, I wish the walls could talk. “What happened?” I would ask. “Tell me how you came to this! Did your pastor abandon sound doctrine for worldly fables? Did a root of bitterness spring up and defile many? Did temperate living give way to moral turpitude? Did you give the

**Whether
your church is
dealing with
a struggling
budget,
flagging
morale,
relational
tension, or
disputes over
doctrine,
discovering
a vision is
the first step
toward
overcoming
those
barriers.**

devil a foothold? Did you exchange the truth of God for a lie?

*This church on the road to Suffern
needs a dozen panes of glass,
And somebody ought to weed the walk
and take a scythe to the grass.
It needs new paint and shingles,
the vines should be trimmed and tied;
But what it needs most of all
are people praying inside.*

I know that sometimes the demographics of an area change enough so that the viable need for a church diminishes. I know too that sometimes a congregation relocates for positive, growth-related reasons, and that due to factors such as location, access, building codes, and remodeling costs, there's simply no buyer for the vacated building. In other words, I acknowledge that there are a number of legitimate reasons for a church to close its doors and not every empty meetinghouse is a testimony to failure.

But there are also far too many times that a church suffers a long, slow, painful decline and gradually fades away until all that's left is a building. There was no vision, and so the people perished.

The first study module of the LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) process is "Discovering a Vision." In his excellent book, *Following in the Footsteps of Paul*, author Ed Bontrager examines the First-Century churches that flourished in what is now modern-day Turkey. Through short video sketches, reader-friendly text, and engaging discussion questions, the LIFE curriculum draws parallels between the challenges of our Twenty-first-Century congregations with those encountered by these pioneer churches. Whether your church is dealing with a struggling budget, flagging morale, relational tension, or disputes over doctrine, *discovering a vision* is the first step toward overcoming those barriers. *Following in the Footsteps of Paul* gives biblical, implementable guidance on how to do just that.

In the 18 months since we began the LIFE process at the Kokomo (Ind.) church, we have welcomed several new persons into our fellowship—individuals who previously had no

church affiliation, and who were sought out and invited by other church members. We've experienced a significantly heightened sensitivity toward being inclusive to newcomers. And, as is always the case, our new members have contributed much input and enthusiasm toward creative strategies for outreach that are helping us combine the twin callings of service and evangelism.

The LIFE process is a two-year commitment that helps build disciples for an eternal kingdom. It is an investment of about \$2,500 that helps focus our treasures on heavenly values that thieves cannot touch and moths cannot destroy. It is not a bad return by any standards.

Churches that might vote it down by saying "We can't afford to do it" should take a critical look at their membership growth over the past 15 years, and project that trajectory into the next 15 years. Churches learn that if their budget is struggling, their money problem is merely a *symptom* of their *vision* problem. In which case, the better question is: "Can we afford *not* to do it?"

Today, if you're interested in visiting the once thriving churches of Asia Minor, you have to hire either a Muslim tour guide or an archaeologist. Neither heritage nor memory sustained them. They lost their vision, and they perished.

You can invest time, money, and energy into discovering and developing a vision for the future. Or, you can manage your budget constraints by pinching pennies and cutting corners. Then you can look forward, in a few years, to eliminating money problems altogether when you disband as a congregation and sell the church property.

*So whenever I go to Suffern along the Erie Track,
I never go by that empty church
without stopping and looking back;
Though it hurts me to look at the crumbling
roof and the shutters fallen apart,
For I can't help thinking that poor old church
is a church with a broken heart.*

—adapted from "The House with Nobody in It,"
by Joyce Kilmer

Robin Wentworth Mayer is pastor of the Kokomo (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.

ABOUT NEW LIFE MINISTRIES

The LIFE process is a program of New Life Ministries, a cooperative initiative among five Anabaptist/ believers' church denominations, including the Church of the Brethren, and one para-church organization. New Life Ministries, incorporated in 1997 as the successor to The Andrew Center, provides materials, consultation, and workshops for congregations in

the participating denominations in the areas of evangelism, church growth, and revitalization.

S. Joan Hershey is the coordinator of New Life Ministries. For more information, contact her at New Life Ministries, 1996 Donegal Springs Road, Mount Joy, Pa. 17552. Phone: 800-774-3360. E-mail: lifeminnew@aol.com.

“As followers of Jesus we are called to another path, a path in which the sword is put away, the damage healed.”

Canon of Holy Scriptures

Here is one 87-year-old Sunday school teacher and Bible student who, in Christian love and respect, does not agree with Brother Fenton Platter on the death penalty (see May Letters).

But my main reason for writing is to discuss his use of the term “the Bible.” There is no such thing as “the” Bible. There are at least 27 major and recognizable versions of “The Canon of Holy Scriptures,” not counting those translations into various languages. Brother Platter says the Bible is “to be believed as it was written.” How exactly was it written? And by whom?

Let it be known that I, along with others, believe this book to be the

greatest piece of literature ever written. It is most inspiring.

Don Snyder
Waynesboro, Va.

Put away your swords

In comment to the letter of Brother Platter [see “Bible and the death penalty,” May], we may find another message in Matthew 26:51-54. In that scriptural passage, Jesus tells what it means to be in the world but not of it. The follower of Jesus is told to put his sword back in its place. The people of Jesus are not people of the sword.

Those who follow the ways of the world, that is those who live by the sword, will die by it, but that type of

justice—an eye for an eye, a life for a life—is justice of the world. As followers of Jesus we are called to another path, a path in which the sword is put away, the damage healed (Luke 22:51), and forgiveness extended.

Karen Lefever
Los Angeles, Calif.

Pennsylvania geography

I wish to point out an error in the article “Celebrating a life full of Brethren memories,” in the May issue, about Miriam Wagner.

She and I are both members of the Hanoverdale congregation of the Big Swatara District of the Atlantic Northeast District. Paxton church is also a part of our congregation.

Hanoverdale is east of Harrisburg and about five miles north of Hershey.

When Miriam left the farm, she moved into our neighborhood, and we provided her transportation to church.

Verna M. Wampler
Hummelstown, Pa.

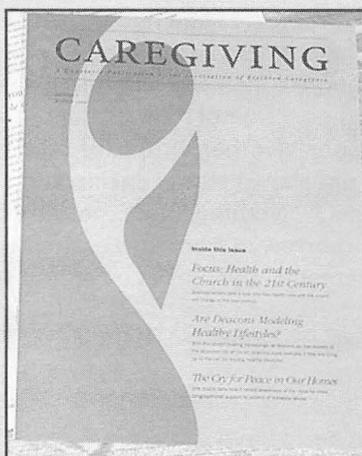
Poised for renewal

Thank you for the wonderful article covering the Renovaré conference in Elizabethtown, Pa. The content and spirit of the article were truly reflective of the experience. We are still feeling the results of the conference, well after the experience.

With this and similar efforts like Worshipful-Work [see June MESSENGER], as Brethren we are getting poised for renewal. In this case there is further grounding in terms of small Renovaré groups of spiritual encouragement, prayer partnerships, and individuals taking up the spiritual disciplines.

As a spiritual renewal team of the Atlantic Northeast District, an intentional emphasis is emerging on individual,

CAREGIVING IS



“Caregiving is excellent and I hope ABC continues with the same terrific content and design. Thumbs up!”

— R. Kurt Borgmann, pastor
Oakton Church of the Brethren, Vienna, Va.

CAREGIVING is a quarterly publication dedicated to providing practical information and the latest news about caring ministries for the Church of the Brethren. Learn about caring ministries including deacons, older adults, families, chaplains, retirement communities, disabilities and whole health.

Subscriptions are available for \$10 annually or at special congregation rates. Call ABC to subscribe.

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

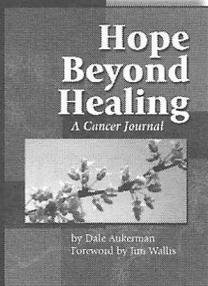


Association of
Brethren Caregivers

1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120
phone 847-742-5100 fax 847-742-5160

"If we suddenly find ourselves face to face with dying, we come up against ultimate questions... After I received the diagnosis of advanced lung cancer, I needed to deal with those questions more intensely than I ever had before."

—Dale Aukerman



Hope Beyond Healing:
A Cancer Journal
by Dale Aukerman available
now from Brethren Press for
\$14.95 plus shipping and
handling charges.



Brethren Press

1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120-1694
phone 800-441-3712 fax 800-667-8188
e-mail, brethrenpress_gb@brethren.org

group, and corporate spiritual growth being projected for a number of years in duration. Your article picked up so well the incremental steps we take to continue the growth and experience the joy.

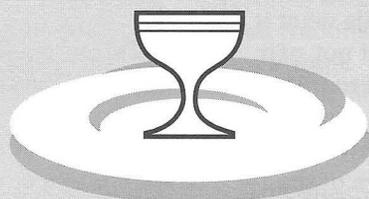
Thank you for an article that conveyed the real meaning and excitement

" With Renovaré and similar efforts, we are getting poised for renewal. "

of the conference. And we again thank the many, many persons who made this experience possible.

David S. Young,
Ephrata, Pa.,

Chair, Regional Renovaré Conference,
Co-chair, District Spiritual Renewal Team



Brethren Business Network

**Serving
God and
Neighbor
Through
Responsible
Enterprise**

Join other Brethren in business for support, networking, learning, and service.

www.brethrenbusinessnetwork.net
info@brethrenbusinessnetwork.net
(219) 982-5232

We must be silent no longer

I recently received from the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC) a short document offering guidelines on how the church and its leaders can help make discussion on homosexuality and other volatile matters more productive and fair. This "Fair Play" document had a number of excellent suggestions and helpful guidelines, including: "Do not tolerate the use of weapons" (verbal, written or otherwise), "Do not allow hostage-taking and threats," "Nothing about me without me" (borrowed from the Disability Rights Movement), and "Insist on educated, informed, and responsible dialogue."

These guidelines are indeed a helpful framework for our discussions, and BMC is to be credited for its hard work. However, I have to ask—what dialogue? It seems that many of us are perfectly content in sitting back and pretending that gay and lesbian Brethren do not exist. At the 1993 Wichita Annual Conference delegates passed a statement calling the church to refrain, for a period of five years, from bringing to conference business items concerning gays and lesbians. Unfortunately, many took that statement to mean that we should stop

LETTERS

“ I pray for the day when we can all worship together and see the presence of God in each person, whether straight or gay, whether white or Latino or African-American. ”

talking about our differences too.

The church must face its inaction and silence, and we must each do our part. I pray that we can begin again a dialogue in which each of us can share our struggles, our fears, and our hopes, all in an attitude of mutual love and respect. We must be silent no longer, and we can no longer pretend that those faithful lesbian and gay sisters and brothers among us do not exist.

I, for one, pray for the day when we can all worship together and see the presence of God in each person, whether straight or gay, whether white or Latino or African-American, whether from rural Ohio or urban Los Angeles. I pray for God to move in our midst.

John Harvey
Encinitas, Calif.

a life, the owner of an ox that gores a second person, a sorceress, anyone having sex with a beast, anyone sacrificing to any god but the Lord, and anyone afflicting a widow or orphan.

There are at least 30 more Old Testament scriptures prescribing the death penalty for various offenses, including being a prophet or dreamer of dreams (Deut 13:5). If we should kill all the people Moses wanted to have killed, the population would not grow so rapidly.

You may find more. Now read Exodus 2:11-15. When Moses had killed a man he did not favor the death penalty. He skipped the country and got a new identity. In time God used the murderer-Moses as the leader of the children of Israel.

Jesus was thought to differ from Moses on what to do about sins in



Position Available

On Earth Peace Assembly, Inc., a 25-year-old Church of the Brethren peace education movement, seeks Executive Director applicants.

Responsibilities include envisioning, designing, and implementing peace education strategy and program.

Experience preferred with management, fund-raising, and nonviolence education.

Seeking person with strong commitment to the centrality of peace and reconciliation in the mission of the church, and management skills consistent with the values of nonviolence.

For more information contact us: OEPA, PO Box 188, New Windsor, MD 21776; oepea@oepea.org; 410-635-8704; or www.brethren.org/oepea.

The death penalty, Moses to Jesus

The May MESSENGER arrived yesterday. As usual I read each word with care. I noted a letter from a longtime friend favoring the death penalty. Maybe my response will help him.

Moses was very heavy for the death penalty. I have gone through the books of Moses with a marker. I found many more than seven offenses calling for the death penalty. In Exodus 21 and 22 the death penalty is called for for one who strikes father or mother, one who steals a man for slavery, one who curses father or mother, one who takes

The opinions expressed in Letters are not necessarily those of the magazine. Readers should receive them in the same spirit with which differing opinions are expressed in face-to-face conversations.

Letters should be brief, concise, and respectful of the opinions of others. Preference is given to letters that respond directly to items read in the magazine.

We are willing to withhold the name of a writer only when, in our editorial judgment, it is warranted. We will not consider any letter that comes to us unsigned. Whether or not we print the letter, the writer's name is kept in strictest confidence.

Address letters to MESSENGER editor, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120.

Yes, but . . .

straight talk
from a
Brethren
sister

Wanda L. Callahan

Wanda Callahan, a “sister” or member in the Church of the Brethren, has never been one to wait for events to shape her. Rather, she has proactively sought to change her world.

Thus Callahan has spent a lifetime as an activist in many areas. In pithy, direct style, this book addresses such areas, including advocacy for the poor, for women in leadership, and for prisoners on death row.

“Wanda Callahan’s deep faith and her practical understanding of Christian discipleship shine through every page of this satisfying and valuable book.”

—Bob Gross, Coordinator, Ministry of Reconciliation, Church of the Brethren

Paper, 112 pages, \$8.99;
in Canada \$13.49

Orders: 1 800 759-4447
www.mph.org

Herald
Press



“ In recent years I have become concerned that we are becoming more like the Unitarians, and less like the New Testament church, in our vision statement and in our total faith and life. ”

John 8:1-8. Jesus knows that not one of us is sinless enough to give the death penalty. When Jesus was being crucified he prayed that God would forgive the ones taking his life.

Most of us have a long way to go to understand the Jesus way of dealing with all evil. He was clear in asking for a sinless person to cast the first stone.

Millions believe that Jesus knew God better than Moses did. I pray that the day may come when all can hear and follow the way of Jesus.

E. Paul Weaver
Everett, Pa.

Famous vision statements

“Of God, for God, with God.” This new “vision statement” of the General Board will be frequently seen in our Brethren publications.

As I reflect on this statement, I am made aware that it could readily be the vision statement of the Jews, or the Muslims, or the Unitarians, or of almost

any religious group in the world.

The Gospels and the New Testament Church had as the center of their “vision statement” a simple yet profound truth: “Jesus is Lord.” The Apostle Peter, as recorded in Acts 4:12, was certain:

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” The Apostle Paul proclaimed to the world his vision statement to the church at Corinth: “I preach Christ...the power of God and the wisdom of God... I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 1:23-24, 2:2).

Over the years I have had close friends who are Unitarian in their religious faith. I have studied their faith, and respect how they study and live it. In recent years I have become deeply concerned that the Church of the Brethren is continually becoming more like the Unitarians, and less like the New Testament church, in our vision statement and in our total faith and life as a church.

Olden D. Mitchell
North Manchester, Ind.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Christian Family Practice group is seeking a family physician to join our growing practice. We are located in North Central Indiana, near Goshen. We provide obstetrics with many deliveries done at an Amish Birthing Center near Shipshewana. Opportunities for short- or long-term missions. Independently owned (six physicians & one PA) and committed to remaining sensitive to the needs of the local community. Option to buy in. Contact Steve Wendler, Administrator, at Middlebury Family Physicians, PO Box 459, Middlebury, IN 46540. Day telephone: 219-825-2900 Evening: 219-825-7506.

Good Shepherd Home is seeking a full-time chaplain for this rural 100-bed nursing home and licensed 50-bed rest home located in Fostoria, Ohio. This position will provide spiritual care to the residents, families and employees. If willing, the chaplain may assist the executive director and Board of Trustees with fund raising and development projects. Good Shepherd Home prefers

candidates who are licensed or ordained ministers with strong written and verbal skills. Send or fax resumes to Chris Widman, executive director, phone (419) 435-1801; fax (419) 435-1594.

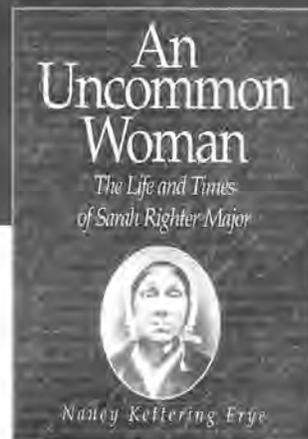
Travel with a purpose. Visit the “Cradle of Civilization,” March 16-29, 2001. Featuring: crossing the Red Sea, visiting Mt. Sinai, cruising on the Sea of Galilee, cable car ride to Massada. Visit Petra, the rose city, Jerusalem, The Holy Land, St. Catherine Monastery on Mt. Sinai. Full breakfast and dinner throughout. For information write Wendell and Joan Bohrer, 8520 Royal Meadow Drive, Indianapolis, IN. 46217. Tel/fax 317-882-5067. E-mail rdwboh@aol.com.

Visiting Washington, D.C.? Come worship with us at the Arlington Church of the Brethren, 300 N. Montague St, Arlington, Virginia. Phone 703-524-4100. Services: Sunday School 9:45-10:45 a.m. Worship: 11:00 a.m. Summer Hours: June 4 thru September 3. Worship 10:00 a.m.

No Sunday School. Nursery Services Provided. Roseann B. Cook, Pastor.

Wooden plaques of the Coventry Church of the Brethren are available for purchase. Cost is \$12.00 per plaque which includes S & H. To obtain one of these 275th anniversary specials, contact Linda Wood in the church office at 610-326-5426, or send a check made payable to Coventry Church of the Brethren, 946 Keen Road, Pottstown, PA 19465-6532 with notation, Anniversary Committee. Include shipping address in request.

York Center congregation in Lombard, IL will celebrate 50 years of ministry in 2001. To kick-off our anniversary we will have a celebration weekend August 12 and 13, 2000. If you have been a part of the York Center family we hope you will join us for this celebration. For more information call the church office at 630-627-7411 or e-mail Pastor Christy Waltersdorff (cwaltersdorff@mindspring.com).



Man, that woman can preach.

**An Uncommon Woman:
The Life and Times of Sarah Righter Major**

Nancy Kettering Frye, *Brethren Press*. Infamous in the mid 1800s as a woman preacher in a man's world, Sister Sarah bravely preached the gospel wherever people invited her to speak. Nancy Kettering Frye provides details, facts, and stories about the life of the first female Brethren preacher. Step into the 19th century and meet the men and women who influenced Sarah Righter Major's life and supported her preaching ministry. #8224. \$6.95.



Brethren Press

1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120-1694
phone 800-441-3712 Fax 800-667-8188
e-mail brethrenpress_gb@brethren.org

This month's Turning Points includes all listings received prior to 5/11/00 not previously published. Forms for submitting Turning Points information are available by calling Peggy Reinacher at 800-323-8039.

New members

Antioch, Rocky Mount, Va.: Melvin Fike, Lisa Fike, Joel Sowers
Arcadia, Ind.: Don Knapp, Dorothy Knapp
Bear Creek, Accident, Md.: Carol Smith, Jessica Smith, Katie Sizemore, Karen Sizemore
Bradford, Ohio: Truman Scott Bashore, Esther Naomi Bashore
Curryville, Martinsburg, Pa.: Yvette Brumbaugh
Greenmount, Harrisonburg, Va.: Justin S. Dean, Quentin L. Biller, Lenwell H. Sacra, Donna Gail Sacra, Charles S. Biller, Gene Smith, Michelle Smith
Harper Woods, Mich.: Tina Eckhart
Independence, Kan.: Danielle Gallagher, Betty Mayo, Mary Padley, Crystal and Douglas Wheeler
Lititz, Pa.: Lindsay Bednar, Carly Hess, Lisa Kreider, Jordan Rice, Joanna Witmer, Toby Enck, Dan Ober, Jim Ross, Barbara Showers, Harry Mumma, Terry Ross
Locust Grove, Johnstown, Pa.: Rebecca Birtle, Diane Christine, Christy Fyock, Ashley Kirkwood, Ryan Pristock, Tom Ream, Adam Thomas, Timothy Thomas, Lorie Wilt
Logansport, Ind.: Nicole Brown, Brenda Gaumer, Kayla Kite
Maitland, Lewistown, Pa.: Ty Angney, Jeffery Molek, Donovan Kratzer, Tony Poorman
McPherson, Kan.: Nathan Clary, Jamie Crist, Matthew Hoffman, Tim Houghton, Tyler Hughes, Jr., Bryan Jordan, Jordan Rothrock, Scott Vancil, Adam Wagoner, Joel Wagoner, Jan Diaz, Manny Diaz, Paul Liepelt, Brenda Lolling, Darlene Nelson, Marvin Nelson, Irven Stern, Patricia Stern
Maple Grove, Ashland, Ohio: Paul and Ella Myers, Brenda Henderson, June Tritle, Joe Woodring, Barbara Woodring
Maple Grove, New Paris, Ind.: Tiffany Berkey, Kelsey Garris, Jami Hoover, Marlena Marquart, Jamie Miller
Mechanic Grove, Quarryville, Pa.: Richard Drennen III,

Sylvia Drennen, Chris Purcell, Walter Buckley, Angel Weigand, Linda Waltman, Gerard Rosolie, Jill Rosolie, Susan Mull, Herb and Donna Martin, Shawn and Laura Love, Albert and Betty Pyle, Matthew Kreider, Genny Bledsoe, Jason Futcher, Matthew Groff, Leann Hart, Kandace Kreider, Trista Kreider, Tye Kreider, Rairdan Munro, Marian Osborne, Rebecca Wimer
Modesto, Calif.: Dortha and R. Norman Johnson
Mohler, Ephrata, Pa.: Ivan and Dorothy Ludwig
Monroeville, Pa.: Kelsey Brewer, Kristin Brewer, Bryan Furey, Julie Hernley, Hayle Ritchey
New Carlisle, Ohio: Aaron Larson, Andrew Larson, Denise Barlow, Samantha Larason, Cameron Dogget, Timothy Woelfer, Jeremy Funderburg, Shirley Bell, Andrew Gibson, Cheryl Gibson, Doug Gibson, Rodney Funderburg, Anna Reno
New Enterprise, Pa.: Paul and Jennie Turner, Davey Leidy, Danielle Settlemyer, Tracy Brunner, Madeline Kanode, Brittany Kanode
North Liberty, Ind.: Christopher Beyer
Northview, Indianapolis, Ind.: Anna Grady, Lida Emerson, Carol Emerson, Jacob Grady
Peace, Portland, Ore.: Jennifer Shepler, Robert Cone
Peach Blossom, Easton, Md.: Kathy Moore, Leo Truban, Joy Marshall
Pine Creek, North Liberty, Ind.: Jason Deckard, Lauren Mangus
Pittsburgh, Pa.: Zinnia Blackwood
Sangerville, Bridgewater, Va.: Dwayne Fifer, Ian Horn, Matthew Ridgeway, Eric Sheets, Kimberly Atkins, Danny Lambert
Snake Spring Valley, Everett, Pa.: Mike Dunkle, Janice Dunkle, Amber Dunkle, Janelle Dunkle, Sara Redman
West Goshen, Goshen, Ind.: Beth Hochstetler
Westminster, Md.: William Landon, Erica A. Royer, Ashley Cavanaugh, Curtis Wharton
Winter Park, Fla.: Rhonda Neal

Wedding anniversaries

Baker, Clyde and Glenna, Bradford, Ohio, 55

Bruckhart, Abe and Mary, Palmyra, Pa., 65
Gift, Donald and LaRue, Chambersburg, Pa., 60
Gingrich, Lloyd and Velma, Lebanon, Pa., 50
Gorden, Israel and Edwina, Goshen, Ind., 72
Harclerode, Joan and Howard, Everett, Pa., 50
Hostetler, Harley and Louise, Goshen, Ind., 50
Lambert, Mervin and Janet, Harrisonburg, Va., 60
Leapley, Ralph and Elizabeth, New Carlisle, Ohio, 50
Lehman, John and Maxine, Johnstown, Pa., 50
Roeth, James and Ruth, Bradford, Ohio, 55
Thomas, John M. and Louise, Valrico, Fla., 60
Walter, Donald and Rosella, Martinsburg, Pa., 50
Wine, Ray and Ann, Harrisonburg, Va., 50
Zuck, Nevin and Leah, Lancaster, Pa., 60

Deaths

Adams, Stella M., 95, Staunton, Va., April 27
Alley, Helen R., 84, Bridgewater, Va., April 1
Anderson, Lorenia, 89, Virden, Ill., April 16
Andes, Francis B., 85, Timberville, Va., April 9
Bankert, Pauline Miller, 93, Hanover, Pa., May 1
Barritt, Cheri Frazier, 39, Omaha, Neb., March 13
Beck, Rosemary, 51, Brinkhaven, Ohio, April 24
Benner, Phyllis, 61, Ephrata, Pa., April 8
Boitnott, John W., 102, Bridgewater, Va., March 31
Burnside, Mable, 84, Trotwood, Ohio, Nov. 27
Clark, Mary, Easton, Md., Oct. 2
Clark, Robert, 81, Easton, Md., March 16
Clinton, Dennis, 90, Virden, Ill., April 10
Cochran, Violet, 82, Berlin, Pa., March 7
Cox, Philip A., 46, New Carlisle, Ohio, April 29
Crites, Jeremy L., 18, Moorefield, W.Va., April 23
Crumley, William C., 87, Knoxville, Tenn., March 28
Dancy, Frances Sheets, 98, Jacksonville, Fla., April 29
Darr, Cora "Ferne," 85, Sipesville, Pa., March 12
Dellinger, Floyd E., Sr., 69, Fulks Run, Va., April 1
Diehl, Robert, 86, West Alexandria, Ohio, March 31
Dove, Evalyn, 90, Manassas, Va., May 23, 1999
Dove, L. Clifford, 88, Manas-

sas, Va., Feb. 22
Ebling, Dudley, 74, Easton, Md., June 17
Edmiston, Joseph, 84, Lewistown, Pa., March 29
Emswiler, Esther, 84, McPherson, Kan., March 21
Erbaugh, Ruth, 87, Brandon, Fla., Feb. 21
Etter, Dwane W., 98, Chambersburg, Pa., Feb. 1
Faidley, Norman, 83, Somerset, Pa., Jan. 21
Faust, Gladys H., 71, Chambersburg, Pa., Feb. 29
Feaster, Emmett D., 92, Petersburg, W.Va., March 31
Fetters, Samuel, 75, Lewistown, Pa., Nov. 15
Finiff, Charles E., 88, Chambersburg, Pa., Feb. 18
Fisher, Edna J., 92, Fulks Run, Va., April 10
Ford, Eva E., 66, Timberville, Va., April 25
Frazier, Clifton E., 81, Grottoes, Va., April 15
Ganger, Olive, 93, Greenville, Ohio, March 17
Gift, Lois E., 83, Chambersburg, Pa., Feb. 14
Harper, Ella O., 89, Moyers, W.Va., April 15
Harper, Elsie, 94, Moyers, W.Va., April 10
Hartman, Blanche R., 87, April 26
Hash, Ruby Mae, 86, Luray, Va., April 2
Hicks, Raymond G., 56, Champaign, Ill., April 29
Hoffman, Clark, 81, Somerset, Pa., Jan. 31
Hubbard, Treva, 84, Bradford, Ohio, March 10
Isenberg, James D., 94, Knoxville, Tenn., March 14
Johnson, Kenneth, 80, Troy, Ohio, March 20
Jones, Ethel M., 87, Chambersburg, Pa., March 30
Knupp, Roy, 86, Gray, Pa., March 28
Koontz, Leona, 90, Ebsenburg, Pa., April 28
Larsen, Nellie, 93, Council Bluffs, Iowa, April 7
Livingston, Robert J., 82, Covington, Ohio, Jan. 4
Lobb, Dorothy, 79, Johnstown, Pa., Jan. 22
Long, Edythe E., 89, Luray, Va., March 30
Looker, Darrell, 61, Piqua, Ohio, Dec. 27
Lunsford, Ernest, 88, Bealeton, Va., Nov. 2
Martz, Mary K., 84, Edinburg, Va., April 24
McNett, Leah E., 76, Bridgewater, Va., April 11
Miller, Jennie, 94, Friendsville, Md., Jan. 31
Miller, Margaret, 61, Accident, Md., Jan. 27
Mitchell, Reba, 79, Fairview, Ore., March 12

Mohler, Elizabeth, 101, Warrenton, Mo., April 15
Painter, Sarah F., 85, Stanley, Va., April 30
Peyton, Katherine, 89, Hollidaysburg, Pa., Sept. 27
Richard, Sadie, 91, Lewistown, Pa., Sept. 29
Sanger, Henry, Easton, Md., March 22
Sager, Otis, 84, Lost River, W.Va., March 17
Seese, Norman, Easton, Md., Jan. 1
Shaw, Kenneth, 79, Danville, Ohio, April 1
Shepherd, Ted, 81, Nokesville, Va., Sept. 30
Shifflett, Larry L., 49, South Daytona Beach, Fla., April 1
Shull, Everett W., 83, N. Manchester, Ind., April 26
Simmons, Dorothy, 80, Johnstown, Pa., April 11
Simmons, Marie V., 74, Sugar Grove, W.Va., April 17
Speers, Terry, 41, Trotwood, Ohio, Nov. 21
Stambaugh, Florence M., 90, New Oxford, Pa., April 28
Stoltz, Patricia, 67, New Carlisle, Ohio, March 7
Walkup, Norman K., 50, Mount Crawford, Va., April 16
Weimer, Ralph, 76, Manassas, Va., Aug. 31
Wood, Hester, 96, Boones Mill, Va., Feb. 7

Licensings

Fleshman, Greg, April 9, Buena Vista, Va.
Hileman, Michael C., April 30, Ashland Dickey, Ashland, Ohio
Reece, Kathy, April 30, Dallas Center, Iowa
Remillet, Charles, March 19, Buffalo, Ind.
Yankey, Robert, 59, Nokesville, Va., Oct. 17
Young, Frank P., April 30, Tire Hill, Pa.

Ordinations

Coffin, Joseph H., Feb. 20, Windfall, Ind.
Miller-Rieman, Ken, March 5, Huntington, Ind.
Wray, Harry, Feb. 13, Kokomo, Ind.

Pastoral placement

Barber, Howard, to Barren Ridge, Staunton, Va.
Jones, Gregory L., to Fairview, Unionville, Iowa
Sayles, Frank, to Bethel, Arriba, Colo.



To Sam, on becoming an Eagle Scout

Dear Sam,

On June 1 you will become an Eagle Scout. Congratulations. You barely know me, but your father is my best friend and I am inspired by his son's achievement. You will now be marked for life as a leader. If you ever run for political office, this will tell the voters you are one who not only believes in core values, but you have done the work they imply. Being an Eagle Scout will give you moral authority. Use it well.

Because I never got to the rank of Eagle—I stumbled on my citizenship merit badges—I look up to you all the more. Like you, I stayed in scouting long after many of my agetates had dropped out. I became a Senior Patrol Leader, and in that role worked to give the younger boys some of the wonderful experiences I had had coming up. We were famous for campouts. While other troops had neat flag ceremonies at their meetings, or learned to march with military precision, we spent our meetings sorting gear from the last campout or planning the next one.

I got my education around the campfire, listening to the older boys share their ignorance about sex, and learning to smoke grapevines. Our scoutmasters had that rare quality of knowing how to disappear. They knew when to reappear too, telling us when to knock it off and be quiet.

It was long after Taps that day was finally done, gone the sun. All is well, safely rest, God is nigh. Alone under the big night sky, God became real to me. I grew up under the stars. And I awoke to the dawn telling me the way I live my life matters.

It was in scouting that I learned the power of the group, one for all, all for one. Trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind . . . these weren't just theoretical concepts, or even rules for behavior around adults; they were how we treated each other. If somebody fell behind on a hike we waited till they caught up. We could be cruel, of course, but we knew that was contrary to the scout way. We were taught that fat kids got included, that poor kids looked the same in uniform, and black kids were welcome in our group.

Lately the Boy Scouts have taken a rap for trying to keep certain people out, but this isn't the Scouts I knew. We were physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight—but not narrow. When I was at the National Jamboree in 1964 our troop had a cookout with a troop from Massachusetts. At the end of the evening the scoutmaster from New England suggested that we form a "lodge circle" around the campfire. Our group from southern Illinois didn't know how to make a lodge circle; I assumed it might

be a regional scout tradition we needed to learn. Only after he repeated the instruction several times did we catch on that we were to form a "large" circle. Scouting for me is about making the circle lodger and lodger.

Scouts know the group is the thing, all for one. But there will be times when like an eagle you will soar alone. Some of my first lessons in personal courage came from your grandmother, who was my fourth-grade teacher. She would be so proud of you now. I remember she would bark, "Stand up straight, don't slouch," and I knew she was correcting my character as well as my posture. If I would hedge an answer she would say, "Don't be wishy-washy." I think of her when I am called to stand up straight and name a wrong.

Her lessons were confirmed in scouting, when I was "tapped out" for the Order of the Arrow. I have vivid memories of the night I lined up with my fellow scouts on the lakeshore at camp, shirtless for this solemn occasion. On the far side of the lake we saw an Indian chief in full headdress, standing in the bow of a canoe, his face lighted by a torch. He was paddled across the water, to the slow beat of a drum. When he finally reached our side of the lake he dismounted the canoe and walked silently in back of our line, stopping behind selected scouts. We would hear his open palm pound the bare shoulder of those singled out—three loud slaps and then they were led away. Finally he stopped behind me. I can still feel the pain of his hand on my shoulder, and the thrill it brought to my soul. You know the rest, which is not to be disclosed. Jesus too was sent into the wilderness for a time of testing. And from there he emerged a leader, one for all.

Life will give you many occasions for sorting out when to work as part of the group and when to act alone. Your father and I have both been guided by Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*:

"If you can keep your head when all about you/
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;/ If you
can trust yourself when all men doubt you,/ but
make allowance for their doubting too;/ If you can
wait and not be tired by waiting,/ Or, being lied
about, don't deal in lies,/ Or being hated, don't
give way to hating,/ And yet don't look too good,
nor talk too wise. . . ."

For you, Sam, I would add some "ifs" of my own. If you can use your strength as an Eagle to stand up for what is right, . . . if you as a leader can get the group to include the last, the lost, the least . . . then, as Kipling concludes: "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,/ And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!"—**Fletcher Farrar**

Scouts know the group is the thing, all for one. But there will be times when like an eagle you will soar alone. . . .

Life will give you many occasions for sorting out when to work as part of the group and when to act alone.

YOU'LL PROBABLY SPEND TWO DAYS
PREPARING TO GO TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE.



WHY NOT TAKE AN HOUR OR TWO,
ONCE YOU'RE THERE, TO PREPARE FOR
THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

**Annual Conference 2000 in Kansas City will be a great time
to learn about your retirement and insurance options.**

BRETHREN PENSION PLAN

Plan for a more financially secure retirement

Insight Session:

Putting your ducks in a row for retirement.

Presented by BBT's Employee Financial Services.

Tuesday, July 18, 9:00 pm.

Exhibit: Are you a member of the Brethren Pension Plan and approaching retirement? Stop by the BBT booth to request a calculation of your projected annuity.

BRETHREN FLEXCARE PLAN

FlexCare can save active members tax money

Insight Session:

What's for lunch? Tax Money!

A focus on BBT's FlexCare Cafeteria Plan.

Sunday, July 16, 9:00 pm

Exhibit: Active clergy and lay church employees, stop by the BBT booth to ask about all of your insurance options. Retired pastors, stop by to ask about optional vision and dental coverage.

Not attending Annual Conference? Call us at 800-746-1505 to learn more about your Pension and FlexCare options.



CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
BENEFIT TRUST
INC.

Think of MAA as an Extension of the Church

Brethren Helping Brethren

We insure members of The Church of the Brethren and member churches exclusively...and we want to transform the way you and your fellow church members think about insurance. We want your experience with Mutual Aid Association to be so unique that you see us as an extension of the Church.



We aren't a congregation or a district, but we continue the practices of the Church in the way that we reach out and care for you and for one another. Because we believe in the message of Christ and follow the teachings of the Church, you can think of the Mutual Aid Association as part of your Church community. We genuinely believe in the ideal of Brethren joining together for mutual aid. Here is one story out of many that illustrates our faith-centered business practices.



A New Church Rises From The Ashes

More than a dozen volunteer fire companies fought the flames, but the fire burned for nearly twenty-four hours until the Manchester Church of the Brethren was a hollow brick shell. Built in 1907 and extensively remodeled in 1950, the church was undergoing a major expansion to bring church offices, Sunday school rooms, and a nursery under one roof. Then sometime during the night of January 7, 1998, fire broke out near an electric hot water heater. All that was left of the 90-year-old church and its new addition would soon be dozed to the ground and trucked away.

That same day, a team from Mutual Aid's Abilene office arrived. On this first of several visits, the Mutual Aid Association workers stayed a week. They met with church leaders to handle the inventory of lost contents and other specifics. They also met with individual church members to help them deal with their sense of

loss and say farewell to their old building. Church members commented that the MAA workers became part of the church family and helped the congregation maintain its ministry and spiritual health. On the financial side, church members said that the Mutual Aid Association tried to help in every way it could and was very generous in the final settlement.

After a lengthy process of planning, construction on the new Manchester Church began in April 1999 – at a new 25-acre site that offers room to grow for many years to come.

All of us at Mutual Aid Association are proud to have played a part in building the new Manchester Church. Services started in March and on April 30, 2000, the Manchester congregation dedicated the building and began its spiritual journey in its new home.

Get Security You Can Depend On

The Mutual Aid Association has been faithfully meeting the property insurance needs of Brethren Churches and Church members for over a century. We offer free property appraisals and support services designed to protect your financial security and peace of mind.

Call 1-800-255-1243 Day or Night

You can also reach us by e-mail at maa@maabrethren.com or over our toll-free, 24-hour fax line at 1-800-238-7535. Our Web address is www.maabrethren.com.



Mutual Aid Association
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

A ministry of sharing to secure peace of mind.