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ONTHECOVER

Paul Stocksdale, MESSENGER's graphic designer, writes: For a creative solution to illustrate this month's cover, I did not need to look very far. The background is a scan of the inside of my TV's broken remote control. That remote control seems a fitting metaphor for the pervasiveness of technology in our world. What does the Church of the Brethren have to say to a world where even remote controls are not so simple? And where does the gospel fit into this world that is so rapidly changing?

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Paul Grout, moderator-elect, cites many reasons why the church has stopped being alive. A list of specific remedies is offered.

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Julie and Michael Hostetter, both ministers, take a lighthearted and hopeful look at what the church will be like in the year 2051.

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It has been two years since the author's mother, experiencing advanced Alzheimer's disease, has spoken his name. "I want her to know me again. I want to be her child again."

Paul Grout



FROM THE PUBLISHER



Lately my mother has begun reminiscing. I never knew much about her parents, who died before she married, so I'm eagerly absorbing these stories. Amazingly, she remembers the end of World War I. Just two years old then, she recalls the military band playing at the train depot across the street from her house in Lawrence, Kan. She remembers that her father, a second-generation German, demonstrated his loyalties by being extra-patriotic and flying the flag with more gusto than anyone else.

I learn that her grandfather was so proud of his Model T that he kept it on blocks (to keep the tires clean, apparently) and her grandmother had to ride in the old truck. I learn about the child-size furniture that her father made her for Christmas and which still sits in her living room.

She brings out "Betty," her mother's rag doll, which we calculate had to have been stitched together by her mother's mother well before 1900. We videotape some of these stories, and agree to continue during my next visit. There's the promise of opening an old black trunk in the basement.

I sense that my mother has some new desire to pass these stories on. And I feel a heightened urgency to receive the stories, to be the caretaker of this family history.

It's my family history, even though I don't have a drop of German blood. It's my adopted family history, and somehow it's shaping me even when I don't know it. Most of the time I feel very different from my parents, but sometimes I recognize what I have inherited.

It's a little like becoming Brethren. Perhaps it's a bit strange for us "convinced" Brethren to reminisce about our roots in Schwarzenau or pay attention to anniversaries and other moments from the Brethren past. But all of us, whether new or old Brethren, are the caretakers of this inheritance. All of us, whether new or old Christians, are the caretakers of the story of our faith.

I don't know what the church of the future is going to look like. Some days I worry about whether there will even be one. But we inherit more than DNA. The stories of our parents in the faith are part of our story today and will help us write the future. In fact, to mother or to father is to make a statement of hope about the future. Because the Bible tells us that God cares for us like a father and nurtures us like a mother, I know that I can live in that hope.

Wendy McFadden

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IN TOUCH

McPherson church sends 22 to Puerto Rico

Spiritual growth, fulfillment at seeing what their labor produced, and camaraderie between participants were highlights of a 12-day work trip by 22 people from the McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren to Puerto Rico.

The group worked with the Christian Community Center of Caimito (affiliated with the Church of the Brethren). It has a church, feeds poor residents daily, and provides free social services, medical, and dental care.

Construction was the focus, with some emphasis on medical care. Construction coordinators Al Wagoner, Bruce Wagoner, and Mike Goering found they had a lot to learn.

One project was familiar—sheetrocking, wiring, installing flooring, and painting at the center; another involved clearing a lot to build concrete piers to support a building. That building will house a community center, church, “soup kitchen,” and an apartment for volunteers who will help rebuild houses destroyed in hurricanes.

Other participants were Paul and Marla Ullom-Minnich, Sarah, Rebecca, and Jessica Ullom-Minnich, Gary Vancil, Paul and Mary Wagoner, Jan Diaz, Adam Wagoner, Anna Wagoner, Elizabeth Wagoner, Belle Whittaker, Connie McCue, Dave and Bonnie Fruth, Ed and Kathy Hackleman, and Amy Hoffman.

Group members recommend this kind of experience to others. Participants must be open to learning, eating different foods, living in close quarters with persons they don't know well (although they quickly get to know them well), working hard, and being without many comforts of home. But participants believe their lives are forever changed for the better through this experience.—Kathy Hackleman

The McPherson church “bucket brigade” at work in Puerto Rico.

Kathy Hackleman



Ashlee Riner and her collection of cans.

Collecting cans for One Great Hour

Ashlee Riner, age seven, began turning in her family's aluminum cans to a local recycling center in 1998 to donate the proceeds to One Great Hour of Sharing. Her congregation, Pleasant View Church of the Brethren in Fayetteville, W.Va., got wind of her efforts and began collecting the cans from its monthly fellowship dinners. With these cans added, her collection totaled 29 pounds.



Educators give to a school in Nigeria

On March 8 the Oak Dale congregation of Scherr, W.Va., was the site of a program of fellowship and information about Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria. Carol Bowman, a member of the Gen-

eral Board staff, spoke of her extensive experiences with the Nigerian people—as a child, a teacher, and last summer as a workcamper.

The evening focused on the Comprehensive Secondary School near Mubi. Galen and Florena Duling, members of the Oak Dale church, have con-

tributed funds for the construction of a two-classroom unit at the school. Carol had a number of slides that showed the school and some of the students who attend there. She spoke of the need for basic educational materials and aids. Textbooks are in short supply and somewhat outdated.

Education is dear to the hearts of the Dulings. They both spent their entire careers as teachers and administrators at the secondary and college levels in West Virginia. With their generous gift their influence will be felt among the people of Nigeria too.

For some time the Dulings have been considering an appropriate way to honor the memory of her brother, Lester Evans, and his wife, Edna Mae, who were lifetime ministers in the Church of the Brethren. They also wanted to honor the memory of their daughter, Nancy Marie (1947-1960), who was interested in education but died before her own formal education was completed. This gift was a meaningful and satisfying way for the Dulings to express their love. —Ray Glick

Kansas trio "Inspire" releases first CD

"Inspire," the women's trio from the McPherson (Kan.) Church off the Brethren, has released a new CD of their music, titled "In Jesus' Name."

The CD features 12 songs that trio members Ellen Gilbert, Dawn Hoffman, and Deb Wagoner have enjoyed performing since an opportunity to sing at church brought them together eight years ago. "I was asked to sing a solo in church," Ellen said, recalling the trio's founding, "and I really didn't want to sing alone."

Encouraged by favorable comments from the congregation, the trio began building a repertoire, and a reputation. By now the group has participated in more than 80 performances. Jenny Williams has served as the trio's accompanist since 1995.

Copies of the CD will be available for sale at Annual Conference.

—The McPherson Sentinel

"Inspire" members, from left, are Deb Wagoner, accompanist Jenny Williams, Dawn Hoffman, and Ellen Gilbert



A congregation's question about kidneys

Do you have one, two, or three kidneys?

The Akron-Eastwood congregation, Akron, Ohio, can ask that question of their members and get answers to all three numbers.

Why do some people have three kidneys? They are transplant recipients. In recent years, two members, Peggy Gardner and David Gindlesperger, have received live

donor kidneys. David received a kidney from a brother. Peggy's kidney came from another church member, Edith Kieffaber.

When Peggy's kidneys continued to deteriorate from polycystic kidney disease, her transplant options were quite limited. Her husband was not a match. Her sister died of the same disease, and her nephew had a high probability of having the disease. So several church members were willing to be tested. Edith was the match, and they both went through surgery successfully in 1998.

Edith Kieffaber recently received one of the Firestone "100 Who Serve" awards, named out of 700 nominations from all over the country. In addition to her donor status, she also works in the church and volunteers at the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank.

She does not recognize why a fuss is being made over what she has done, as it is something any Christian would do. But her example inspired two college students in her congregation to agree to be living lung donors for a friend. They were both eliminated as possibilities, but the congregation was proud to see the spirit of service and sacrifice continue.

—Marla Abe, pastor

An ode to Grant

My best friend, Grant Verbeck, couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, but when we were growing up in the small apple-growing community of Tonasket, Wash., that never kept him from singing.

I have this image of him standing next to me in the Ellisforde Church of the Brethren when we were kids.

As the congregation sings "God of Grace and God of Glory," I'm fooling around by nudging his side whenever we sing his name. "Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage, for the facing of this hour." His substantial frame doesn't budge too much, no matter how hard I lean on him. And with every nudge, he flashes me his chipped-tooth grin.

All of Grant's friends have similarly vivid, humorous, and warm memories of him. My particular viewpoint is that of a musician. Since those early days in the Ellisforde church, I've been writing folk songs and folk hymns. They're nothing fancy, at least in part because when I write a song, I strive for something simple. To me simple things are clearer, more memorable and ultimately more beautiful—like Grant.

Grant understood and embodied this kind of simplicity more than any person I've ever known. He didn't own much stuff, on purpose. He did seasonal manual labor by choice. He traveled about the country and the world, binding together a community of dispersed family and friends. On first impression, it may have appeared the rest of us had deeper roots than Grant—roots which seemed to prevent us from picking up to go visit each other like he always did. But the truth of the matter is that Grant was rooted wherever he was.

He didn't feel it necessary to save up for his own future. He only needed enough to live simply, and he did so with great pleasure. The rest of his energy and resources were to be shared with others. His itinerant lifestyle left him free to serve others more than most of us ever dream of serving. And in service, his roots were particularly deep.

Grant and I traveled to Nicaragua in 1988 to help a sister church build a vocational school for budding artisans to learn a trade. When we weren't scaling the rafters to nail sheet metal roofing or wiring the electrical outlets, we played games with the children. In one game of charades, Grant was assigned to be a creature for his team to guess. You should have heard



Four who grew up together in the Ellisforde Church of the Brethren, Tonasket, Wash.: Dan Stern, Tom Kinzie, Mike Stern, and Grant Verbeck.

the peals of laughter when such an enormous cockroach came skittering across the room.

Grant worked tirelessly for Brethren Disaster Relief, Heifer Project, and Journey of Hope, and performed countless unheralded services for many others, including myself and my family. Almost every remodeling project at my house over the past 25 years had Grant's hand in it, like the wheelchair ramp Mom needed after she broke her hip or the extra room my daughters needed when they outgrew the space they had used as babies.

When we were young, Grant and I worked together for many years on my dad's apple orchard. Dad truly loved him as a son, and I as his brother. It was an unspeakable loss to me and so many other friends and family in the Church of the Brethren when Grant died after a car accident in February of 1999.

Grant solid ground
Fertile and sound
To plant and build on
To build on

Grant us courage
Grant us wisdom
For the facing of this hour

This is my ode to Grant. Though it's now two years overdue, I know he wouldn't mind. I think he would shrug his shoulders and say, "That's okay. I'm not in any hurry." Then he would flash his chipped-tooth grin again. And even though he never sang in tune, Grant's voice and smile are among the few I'll always remember, as he stood singing next to me back home in the Ellisforde Church of the Brethren.—Mike Stern

Mike Stern is a singer/songwriter and storyteller from Seattle, Wash., who will be performing at the Potomac Highlands Song & Story Fest and at Annual Conference in Baltimore. His CDs and tapes are available through Brethren Press. The lyrics above are part of a song, "Journey in Hope," he wrote in memory of Grant Verbeck.

General Board approves new Brazil mission

With tears in his eyes and a mix of excitement and trepidation in his heart, Brazilian pastor/teacher Marcos Inhauser savored a moment he had dreamed of for years.

The Church of the Brethren General Board, during its spring meeting at the New Windsor (Md.) Conference Center, had just affirmed a major new church-planting mission effort in his home country.

Inhauser, who graduated from Bethany Theological Seminary after coming into contact with the denomination in the mid-1980s, said he expected a 30-minute debate before a "yea" or "nay" vote on the proposal. Instead, board chair Mary Jo Flory-Steury led the board through a lengthy, intentional discernment process of prayer and reflection that eventually led to enthusiastic and unanimous approval. "It convinces me of the seriousness of this church in doing the work of God,"



Walt Wiltschek

Inhauser said.

The plan calls for "pairing a few key leaders and volunteers from the United States with indigenous church leadership already in Brazil." That indigenous leadership includes Inhauser, who said he sees himself in a teacher/mentor role, and several people he has trained during his work as a seminary director in Brazil. The General Board's Global Mission Partnerships office will coordinate the venture.

In bringing the proposal, Global Mission Partnerships director Merv Keeney said the board should make two

Board member Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford of Colorado anoints Nadine Monn of the Global Mission Partnerships office during a Sunday morning worship service at General Board meetings.

assumptions: a long-term commitment of at least 25 years; and the need for "new" money to fund the project, "enlarging the pie" of donors willing to provide support. Some growing cities near São Paulo have been identified as possible starting points. The initial site is expected to become quickly self-supporting,

ABC board looks toward its future

The Association of Brethren Caregivers board continued planning for the organization's future at its spring meeting March 16-17 in Elgin, Ill.

The board approved a vision and planning process for the organization, formed a committee to guide the process, and established a timeline for its implementation.

"The board is addressing the long-range future of the organization and is moving away from the transitional planning it began in 1998, when ABC was recognized as a denominational agency by Annual Conference," says Steve Mason, executive director of ABC.

The Vision and Planning Committee will develop a vision statement, mission statement, and strategic focus for the board to consider. The committee may present these three items to the board as early as its September 2001 meetings. Once these elements are established, ABC staff will become involved in creating a strategic plan for the organization.

In other business, the board heard numerous updates from ABC's staff and its nine ministry areas and approved the 2001 operating budget, which projects a \$145,790 deficit. The projected deficit is due to three factors: a decrease of \$60,000 in revenue due to completion of Behold! campaign support, which ended in 2000; ABC's hosting of Caring Ministries Assembly, the smaller and more expensive of its two biennial conferences, in 2001; and the slower-than-projected growth of congregational support since 1998. Reserves will be used to cover the deficit, according to Mason.

The board also accepted board member Ron McAdams' resignation and recognized his term of service to ABC. McAdams resigned from the board because he was elected to the Annual Conference Standing Committee by the Southern Ohio District.

BRETHRENSPEAK

I am here as an old dreamer—a dream that I've had for 10 years to start a new church. . . . We have a lot of (churches) in Brazil, but all of them lack what you have.

Brazilian pastor/teacher Marcos Inhauser, proposing a new church start in Brazil to the General Board

allowing for a goal of a second church plant within five years.

At the March 8-13 meetings the General Board also:

- approved unanimously a proposal by the New Church Development Advisory Committee to establish an ongoing New Church Development Committee, to be named by the director of Congregational Life Ministries. The committee will work at a training/assessment program for church planters, mentoring models, establishing guidelines for grants, and other tasks. Its work will be funded by the Emerging Global Mission Fund.

- approved with modifications a Committee on Interchurch Relations request to answer a plea for forgiveness by Brethren Church (Ashland) executive director Emanuel "Buzz" Sandberg made at the 2000 Annual Conference ecumenical luncheon, reflecting on the divisions in the "Brethren family."

The resolution, which says the Church of the Brethren "also repents of the stubbornness that has caused brokenness" between the denominations, was accepted as a General Board resolution. General Board executive director Judy Mills Reimer was empowered to take that response to Sandberg. The resolution will be presented to the 2001 Annual Conference as a study document, for at least one year of discussion and conversation.

- approved unanimously a resolution on global warming, calling on individuals, congregations, camps, and other church facilities to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and take other steps to live harmoniously with God's creation. It also calls on General Board staff to make the issue a priority, and to provide models and educational resources for the denomination.

- approved unanimously a

revised set of financial policies and new bylaws for the General Board.

- approved unanimously about \$220,000 in capital improvements for the Brethren Service Center, mainly to replace windows in most of the campus' buildings.

In addition, the board's Executive Committee:

- appointed V. Jane Davis of Missouri to the Brethren Historical Committee, for a four-year term beginning July 1.

- completed the three-year review and evaluation of General Board executive director Judy Mills Reimer, expressing affirmation for her gifts and leadership and setting focus areas for the future.



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Personnel shifts occur at several agencies

• **Shantilal P. Bhagat** will retire on July 31 after nearly 33 years of service with the General Board. He began his General Board service in 1968 and carried many roles, including community development consultant, United Nations representative, eco-justice and rural concerns, and manager of the Global Food Crisis Fund in the first 10 years of its existence. Most recently he has served as staff

consultant for the Global Mission Partnerships office.

• **Elsie Holderread** announced her retirement as manager of human resources for the General Board effective Dec. 31, 2001. She has held the position since July 1997. From 1984 to 1987 Elsie served with her husband, Ken, on assignment from the General Board in Sudan. From 1987 to 1997 she was administrative assistant for the General Services Commission of the General Board.

• **James S. Replogle** announced his retirement as director of deferred gift services for Brethren Benefit Trust's Brethren Foundation Inc., effective March 1. Replogle has served the foundation and Brethren Benefit Trust as a board member, consultant, and director.

• **Brethren Benefit Trust** named several new employees in the early months of 2001: **Karla Hignite** as interim senior writer for BBT's Communications and Information Services department; **Loyce Swartz Borgmann** as interim mar-

WORLDWATCH



1. Dominican Republic. The General Board's Global Food Crisis Fund sent \$50,000 to the Caribbean island nation to fund loans that will assist people in starting small businesses. The project will be supervised by mission coordinators Jerry and Becky Crouse.

2. Inner Mongolia. A Global Food Crisis Fund grant will send \$10,000 to Mercy Corps International for food and material relief, including medicine, clothing, and blankets, to impoverished areas.

3. Sudan. A \$5,250 Global Food Crisis Fund allocation for the Sudan Council of Churches will make possible an assessment visit to the western part of the country, where drought has left thousands at risk of starvation.

4. Honduras. The General Board Executive Committee approved a \$60,000 Global Food Crisis Fund grant for the Central American nation, aiding Christian Commission for Development in a project that will allow women's groups there to purchase pigs and chickens and raise them for food and profit.

5. Goshen, Ind. A grant of \$12,500 from the Global Food Crisis Fund will aid LaCasa, Inc., in providing financial management, home ownership, and leadership development training to poor families in the area.

6. Colombia. Tracy Stoddart, a Brethren Volunteer Service worker serving in the BVS office, joined a delegation of 100 US citizens sponsored by Witness for Peace. The delegation went to witness effects of the US "Plan Colombia," which will provide \$1.3 billion for military intervention in the "war against drugs." Opponents fear increased military brutality and human rights violations will result.

7. Vieques, Puerto Rico. The small island remained in the news as the US announced it was indefinitely suspending US Navy bombing exercises there. Christian Peacemaker Teams, which has been actively involved in Vieques protests, canceled an emergency delegation planned if scheduled tests began again in March.

8. Eastern North Carolina. A long-term Church of the Brethren Emergency Response/Service Ministries project for Hurricane Floyd cleanup and rebuilding continued in the Vanceboro area, recently aided by a \$15,000 grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund.

representative for BBT's eMountain Communications; **Eric Thompson** as Information Services/eMountain support technician; and **Nancy Miner** as production coordinator for Communications and Information Services.

• **Jean L. Hendricks** of Eudora, Kan., was called as president and general manager of the Mutual Aid Association of the Church of the Brethren (Abilene, Kan.) effective Feb. 6.

• **Pete and Martha Roudebush** were called as district executives for the Southeastern District effective April 1. The Roudebushes will each serve one-fourth time as district executives; in addition, Martha will serve as the district administrative assistant. Pete is currently serving as pastor of Trinity Church of the Brethren in Kingsport, Tenn., where he will continue on a three-fourths time basis.

eMountain pulls plug on Internet service

ClearViewNet, a filtered Internet provider service offered through Brethren Benefit Trust's eMountain Communications division, ceased operation as of Feb. 28. The service began in April 1999 to offer Brethren and others a way to block out undesirable web content, but it was unable to garner the subscriber base it needed.

"It was our hope that ClearViewNet would become a leader in the filtered Internet provider marketplace," eMountain Communications director Nevin Dulabaum wrote in a letter to about 60 subscribers. "For a number of reasons, this has not happened."

Subscribers were offered a downloadable filter for Internet surfing free of charge for two years, useable with any Internet provider.

Due to "the realities of the marketplace," eMountain plans to focus instead on its other electronic services, including web development, design, and hosting; e-commerce development and hosting; secure Internet services; listserv e-mail discussion groups, and other projects.

Fr. Roy Bourgeois

Annual Conference Baltimore

Join Fr. Roy Bourgeois, founder and co-director of the School of Americas Watch, as he shares his passion for peace at three Annual Conference events.



Un-Luncheon

Noon, Monday, July 2
Fr. Bourgeois will be the keynote speaker. Attendees are encouraged to contribute to the Global Food Crisis Fund rather than buying lunch.

Learn about SOAW

Evening, Monday, July 2
Following the Outreach Dinner at 6:30pm. Fr. Bourgeois will remain to host a more personal time for those interested in specific information on the School of Americas Watch.

Insight Session

12:30pm, Tuesday, July 3
The Washington Office will present an insight session on the Decade to Overcome Violence. Resource persons will be Fr. Bourgeois and Mrs. Awut Deng Acuil.



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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.

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**Association of
Brethren Caregivers**

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UPCOMINGEVENTS

May 1-11 Brethren Volunteer Service unit 243, New Windsor, Md. (Older Adult unit)

May 3 National Day of Prayer

May 5 Bethany Theological Seminary commencement, Richmond, Ind.; **Youth Ministry Workshop**, "The God-Centered Life: What It Means to Be Alive" with speaker Paul Grout, South Waterloo (Iowa) Church of the Brethren; **Deacon Training Event**, Williamson Road Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va.; **New Life Ministries workshop**: "Hospitality: Life without Fear" with speaker Fred Bernhard, Ephrata, Pa. Call 800-774-3360.

May 6 National Youth Sunday

May 7-17 Brethren Witness Faith Expedition to Dominican and Haiti

May 20 Health Promotion Sunday

May 26-28 National Young Adult Conference, Brethren Woods, Keezletown, Va.

May 31-June 11 National young adult workcamp to Taizé, France

June 8-10 Annual Fellowship of Brethren Homes' Forum, at Bridgewater (Va.) Retirement Community



Milciades Mendez

Dominican church aims to become self-supporting

The 10th annual National Assembly of the Dominican Republic Church of the Brethren took place near San Juan de la Maguana Feb. 23-25 with the theme "Building ourselves up in the growth of our Lord, Jesus Christ." It included worship, celebration, decisions for the church's present life, and planning for its future.

In business sessions, 57 delegates discussed and approved items including construction model changes, recommendations by the National Board following the October 2000 Leadership Summit, and a report on the Conference properties.

Significant discussion centered on one of the National Board recommendations—to become financially self-supporting within a period of 15 years, starting next year—before it was approved. The National Board says it considers this an important step in the process of maturing as the Dominican Church of the Brethren. This decision will allow for the Dominican Brethren to establish themselves as a national church as the Nigerian Brethren have done.

Other actions taken included the implementation of annual evaluations of congregations, organizing an official church board in each congregation, a National Board subsidy for churches that qualify, a decision to have each congregation buy its own Sunday school materials, and a call to revise the mutuality aspect for construction projects.

The Ebenezer project (Bonaio), pastored by Wilson Nova, and the Sabana Torsa preaching point, pastored by Manolo Lamul, were received as fellowships (25 baptized members or more). Based on the number of baptized members reported by each congregation, there are 465 members in the Dominican Church of the Brethren.

Speakers at the energetic worship services were Dominican moderator David Reyes, Puerto Rican pastor Jimmy Diaz, and Global Mission Partnerships mission co-coordinator Jerry Crouse, who officially represented the General Board at the assembly. Latin America/Caribbean specialist Nadine Monn also attended, along with several other international visitors.

Pastor Eduardo Montero of the Proyecto Peniel congregation was installed as the 2001 moderator, and Félix Arias of San Juan de la Maguana as moderator-elect.

Dominican Brethren gather together. This year's gathering was the 10th annual assembly of the Church of the Brethren in the Dominican Republic.

YOUTHBEAT

Large group gathers for Eastern Regional

Eastern Regional Youth Conference was March 9-11 at Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa., with 250 youth and advisors representing the Atlantic Northeast, Middle Pennsylvania, Southern Pennsylvania, and Western Pennsylvania districts.

Paul Grout, moderator-elect of Annual Conference and former pastor of the Genesis Fellowship in Putney, Vt., served as keynote leader. His spiritual insights were among many components that contributed to worship services based on the national youth theme from I Timothy 4:12, "But be an example."

The weekend also included a choice of 14 workshops, a concert, a movie, and a T-shirt exchange. Juniata hosted the event free of charge to the group.

Middle Pennsylvania district executive minister Randy Yoder called the conference "a significant event to provide support for youth, for them to establish and grow friendships with other youth in the Church of the Brethren, to deepen their faith in God and develop their leadership gifts for the church's life and ministry."—Linda McCauliff

Young adults meet for winter retreat

A group of 25 young adults gathered at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministries Center, Sharpsburg, Md., Feb. 16-18 for a weekend of spiritual renewal and reflection, also led by Annual Con-

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"The authors give the general reader an excellent basic understanding of the beliefs and practices shared by all of these separatists while making the uniqueness of each group clear. One of the best single-volume works on this subject; highly recommended."—*Library Journal*

"References to recent phenomena—such as the media frenzy surrounding the unfortunate drug case involving Amish youth—as well as the inclusion of the latest scholarship should make this a book that will appeal to academic and general readers alike."—Donald F. Durnbaugh, Professor Emeritus, Bethany Theological Seminary, editor of *The Brethren Encyclopedia*

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ference moderator-elect Paul Grout.

Working with the theme "Who is Jesus?," Grout urged the group not to become numb to the life that Jesus offers despite a society that constantly bombards us with messages of individualism and consumerism.

Participants had opportunities to spend time alone in prayer and journaling, as well as time for singing, worship, and discussion.

The closing worship was a moving communion service with the message, "There is room for you at the table." It is the first time the General Board's Youth/Young Adult Ministries office has offered a winter retreat for young adults.



MESSENGER DINNER

at Annual Conference,

5 p.m. Sunday July 1

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SPIRIT, CHURCH,

The future renewal of the church depends on our living into this abundant Spirit, which need not be restrained by the institutions and fears of a previous time.

by Nadine Pence Frantz

Many of us active in the Church of the Brethren wonder what it will be like in 20-25 years. We see that the familiar ways of “doing church” are gone; the church culture that we knew is no longer holding sway over our peers, our children, or our children’s children. We are fearful of the changes that we see and wish that we could somehow manage and direct them so that they might not feel so foreign to us.

The 20th century was to have been “The Christian Century.” During this time in North America we began institutions—good, Christian institutions—to promote and secure the gospel, and we equated “going to church” with “being the church.” But the century that we have just completed has proved to be one of the most violent in history, and the institutions that we started have shown themselves to be more self-interested and self-perpetuating than Spirit-renewing.

To move ahead into this new century, to gain a vision of a living, vital church, we must let go of all that we have and give ourselves to a sense of openness, mystery, and creativity. We

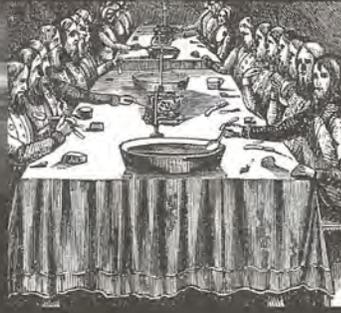
are offered, as a people, a gift from God at every moment—to know the resurrection of the flesh, here and now. The future renewal of the church depends on our living into this abundant Spirit, which need not be restrained by the institutions and fears of a previous time. The future of the church depends on us being the resurrected body of Christ in this world.

This is not a new insight. In approximately 215 A.D., Hippolytus gives us the question which was asked of all baptismal candidates, “Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?” These three are not linked together by accident. In the beginning, it was the Spirit which gathered the dispirited disciples to be the church during those crucial days of Pentecost. And it was in that Spirit-filled gathering that the disciples came to realize that they were the resurrected body of Christ. Even now, it takes the Holy Spirit to make us a Holy Church and for us to know the resurrection of the flesh. Theologians continue to acknowledge the Spirit as the generative force—the “breathing room”—of the church.

Anointed by the Spirit

Just as Jesus’ ministry began with the anointing of the Spirit at his baptism, so was the beginning of the church’s ministry inaugurated with the anointing of the Spirit at Pentecost. This means that as we gather today as the church to pray, to worship, to read scripture, to sing, to dwell in beauty, we come with the anticipation of an anointing that will let the proclamations and practices of Jesus as the Christ become our practices and proclamations. As a church in this contemporary age, we hope to be anointed to do the work and be the presence of Christ in this world. And we are to do this through seeking the presence and indwelling of the Spirit. It is only by the Spirit’s power that the church has power.

We must seek the presence of the Spirit for



RESURRECTION

the church weekly (or even daily!), for as much as we might wish otherwise, this is not a mantle that settles permanently on a church or a tradition. The Spirit of God is not tied to any one form in any permanent way. Thus as we, as the Church of the Brethren, seek to understand our mission as a church, we cannot set our eyes on what we have done or been in the past. We can only set our eyes on the present by dwelling in prayer and worship and with the creative arts in order to let God direct us.

For we have been told (and we have learned) that we do not gain ourselves by setting an agenda to manage change or by continuing a mission that is over. That is how we lose ourselves and gain nothing. Scriptures speak of how we will be given our true identity as the resurrected body of Christ as we lose ourselves into what God would have us do. This means that we do not, we cannot, ever really know what is ahead for us. We can only trust in God's gracious, living power. We understand this in other living commitments in our lives, such as marriage, vocational choices, or parenting. Likewise, we must recognize that being the church takes the same living commitment to God, without knowing what is ahead.

And this type of living commitment happens

best in those moments of creativity, contemplation, and prayer which are true moments of openness to the gracious abundance of God. Those moments press us to be a part of the mysterious presence which always surprises and always challenges us. Worship services that do not expect God's presence will not sense God's presence. Prayer that is said only for a show of piety is not prayer to God. Music that is performed so that we might show our skill and talent is not able to be transparent to God. Scripture that is read as if we already know God's word, is not able to be God's Word. But the worship, prayer, art, and reading that are able to be transparent to God, to be a window on the mystery that is God, gives us a glimpse of the abundance and renewal that is forever offered us by God.

The resurrection of the body

And with the indwelling of the Spirit, we will come to know how we as a church can literally be Christ's resurrected body. The church is the fruit of Christ's presence and the beginning of God's reign. Its mission is to incarnate ("make flesh") for others Christ's ongoing practices of life and hope in this war-torn and weary world.

RESOURCES FOR LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

"The Resurrection of the Soul in the Anabaptist Body: A Postmodern Pietist Meditation," by Scott Holland. In *The Believers Church: A Voluntary Church*. Ed. William H. Brackney. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1998, pp. 119-133.

The Community of the Spirit: How the Church Is in the World, by C. Norman Kraus. Revised edition. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1993.

Robert Kysar, *Stumbling in the Light: New Testament Images for a Changing Church*, by Robert Kysar. St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 1999.

Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church, by Letty M. Russell. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

"Beginning Ministry with Youth," by Tim Van Meter. From *In Our Midst*:

Congregational Resources. Elgin, Ill.: General Board, Brethren Press, 2000.

"The Spirit and the Church," by Miroslav Volf & Maurice Lee. *Conrad Grebel Review* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2000): pp. 20-45.

Re-creating the Church: Communities of Eros, by Pamela Dickey Young, Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2000.

And just as Christ was led into the broken places of human existence, it is likely that the church too will be led by the Spirit into places of suffering, loss, and betrayal, whether they be outside or inside of the church.

This means that we, the church, must see what we do as literally representing Christ to the world and not a mission that just takes care of ourselves, or our souls, or our church identity.

And just as Christ was led into the broken places of human existence, it is likely that the church too will be led by the Spirit into places of suffering, loss, and betrayal, whether they be outside or inside of the church. And as we follow such leadings, we will be humbled by the spirituality that accompanies poverty in the midst of abundance, by the comfort that accompanies mourning

yet doesn't dwell on the needs of the people who are mourning, and by the sense of yielding to the Spirit which truly "breaks for the world." And it will be the Spirit, God's Spirit, which will help to fashion us as the church into a site of compassion, discernment, reconciliation, and saving grace.

As we follow the Spirit into the broken places of the world, as we acknowledge to the Spirit our broken places, we participate in the resurrection of the flesh through moments of transformation, renewal, and life. We know this so well as a people; we know that it is only as we stand in our places of

■ ■ ■ LIVING INTO THE FUTURE:

by Sharon Nearhoof May

Once upon a time, in first-century Palestine, there was a young girl named Mary who had her entire life figured out. She knew where she came from—a respectable family in a small but loving town. She knew who she was going to be—the wife of a nice carpenter, the mother of some happy children.

Then one night, as she was sitting in her room thumbing through *Bride* magazine and thinking about her china pattern, an angel burst in with good news that God was going to do something totally new and amazing for the world through her.

Mary was terrified. A baby? The angel was grinning. The Son of God! And then the light went out and the room went dark and a young woman was left to live with a world that looked exactly the same yet had been changed forever.

I often wonder how she did it, how Mary let God change her life like that. I suppose I have always believed that it was mostly a matter of choice—that Mary was just especially strong or brave or virtuous to look all that change in the eye and decide, "Yes, I'll do this."

But that is not exactly how this story goes. At no time in this story did Mary answer a question. At no point did Gabriel ask, "So, are you in? Would you like to be the mother of God? Do you feel up to this?" In fact, we call this story the annunciation—the announcement—because

Gabriel is not popping the big question and waiting for an answer. The angel is announcing to Mary how it's going to be from now on, telling her how her situation has changed and further announcing that she is blessed because of how it has changed. Here is your story, the angel says. Here is how it goes. God has blessed you!

Aside from the angel's vague description of her future, Mary had nothing else to go on. She didn't know how any of it would turn out. She didn't know what God would do with the fruit of her labor. All she did know was that her future was suddenly wide open, out of her control, and her only real choice in the matter seems to have been how to respond to what God had chosen to do in her life. She had to choose whether to accept the news or deny it. And she had to choose whether to embrace and live into the future that now belonged to her or whether to fight that future all the way, getting angrier and more depressed, scared, and bitter with every inch her belly grew.

I have often wondered how Mary did it, what she knew that helped her stay open and positive and faithful in the midst of such change. I think maybe she knew that she did not own her life, but that her life was a gift she was called to offer back to the God who created her for the good of all creation. Maybe she realized that she could not control everything and that, in a certain Light, having everything her way suddenly looked strangely like having nothing at all. Maybe she

brokenness and hope that the Spirit works. Why is it so hard for us to know this as a church? Why does self-protection become the unspoken agenda item that dominates all other agenda items? Opposite of self-protection, it is in death and redemption, at the site of the crucifixion and resurrection, that the Spirit is made known to us.

The church before God

Thus it is at this site of true vulnerability before God that creativity and worship begin. Expressions of praise, poetry, lamentation, and testimony; songs of sorrow, hope, joy, and consolation; all these and more are what we offer to each other as we come together to celebrate God. We expect and participate in a new body, a new earth, a new way of being that demonstrates God's transformative power and takes part in God's Spirit which conquers death.

God is, we have been told, the Divine Host, the one who sits at the head of the Messianic Ban-

quet and invites all in who seek God's presence. Sinners, tax collectors, homeless, prostitutes, all of us are invited. If our hearts are not too hardened against those who will also be there, we will be able to receive the invitation with gratitude and say, "Yes! I, too, will come." The resurrection of the body happens as we gather around the table in God's abundance. The church is empowered as we seek to be in God's presence.

We believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh. And we believe in a God whose extravagant abundance we know daily. Our prayer is that the church will know the resurrection of the flesh through its ability to live in the Spirit and be such a gift to the world. 

Nadine (Dena) Pence Frantz is associate professor of theological studies at Bethany Theological Seminary, where she has taught since 1992. She has been ordained in the Church of the Brethren since 1985 and has pastored two churches, York Center Church of the Brethren in Lombard, Ill. (1985 interim) and College Community Mennonite Brethren Church in Fresno, Calif. (1989-92).

BECOMING THE GOD-BEARERS

somehow grasped that any chance to bear God into the world through her small body and her broken spirit was the chance of a lifetime.

Maybe what made Mary truly blessed among women (and men) was that she chose to accept what God was choosing for her without anger, without fear, without bitterness. She let go of the past, let go of her own vision of her future, and chose to receive the gift of God's life in her very being, in her body, in her spirit, in her soul. Then she carried that life and gave birth to it and nurtured it and gave it back to God with the kind of trust that made her whole even as it sometimes broke her heart. Mary embraced the improbable future God gave her in all of its wild uncertainty and, in doing that, she quite literally bore God into the world.

As Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster discuss in *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*, in the Greek Orthodox tradition, Mary is called *Theotokos*, a Greek word that means God-bearer. She is called that because she dared to seize the opportunity God gave her to grow, to be transformed, to do something unrespectable but profoundly faithful, and to be made whole as her self-made life fell apart.

Today we are called to be the God-bearers. Like Mary, we are given new circumstances to accept and God's new life to carry into the world. Like Mary, we are called to be open and trusting and to let go of the things that keep us locked in

the past and trapped in a future that is more about what we want for ourselves than what God wants for us. Like Mary we are called to be changed by the Christ who lives inside of us.

To answer the call, we must be willing to embrace the things that still make change possible. Among these are the humility to receive and offer ourselves as gifts to each other and our world, the faith and courage to hear Christ's call and follow the Spirit's leadings into God's future, and the grace to give up our need to control our own lives as well as each other and the life of our congregation.

We must also embrace the adventurous spirit to try something new even if we're confused and afraid and don't know how it will turn out. The Christian life is transformation. Our choice is how we will embrace the change God offers to transform us, how we will respond to it, carry it within us, and pass it on to the world. If we are faithful, then we too can become *Theotokos*—the God-bearers—God's people on earth in this generation who make a new tomorrow possible by the way we live today. 

Sharon Nearhoof May is pastor of the Phoenix (Ariz.) First Church of the Brethren, which is in the process of building a new church in a new neighborhood.



INTO THE FUTURE

Remedies for a church that has stopped being alive

by Paul Grout

Stating the problem: Neither our society in general nor the church in particular has been able to recognize how damaging the North American culture has been to our souls. Slowly, over time we have stopped being alive as God intended us to be alive. It has taken a Christian outside of our society to identify the depth of the crisis. Pope John

To understand the life that Jesus offers, we must begin to see the separation that has occurred—separation from God, from each other, from ourselves, and from God’s creation.

Paul has named our culture the “culture of death.”

I was sitting next to Moderator Phill Carlos Archbold at General Board meeting in Elgin a few months ago. Pastor Toma Ragnjiya, president of EYN (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), was introduced and gave a greeting to the board on behalf of the Nigerian church. When Pastor Toma finished speaking, Phill Carlos tapped me on the shoulder and quietly said, “You see, he is not afraid.”

I understood exactly what Phill Carlos meant. We were in the presence of a humble yet self-assured servant from whom Christ’s presence radiated. Pastor Toma and his wife, Kwanye, demonstrated a joyful abandon we rarely see. But what was this telling us about ourselves?

Former moderator Jim Myer recently said to

me; “I hope you’ll be able to travel to Nigeria and the Dominican Republic. It will bless you to see the church so alive.”

But wait a minute, what does this say about the church here?

Without even recognizing it, we have as a culture become afraid. Something within us has died. We must understand again that Jesus came to show us how to be alive. To understand the life that Jesus offers, we must begin to see the separation that has occurred—separation from God, from each other, from ourselves, and from God’s creation.

As Christians our words and our systems have become empty. We have become part of the problem. Our lives are founded on the value systems of contemporary culture and cultural religion. At this time it may be more difficult for Christians to see who Jesus was and is than it is for non-Christians. Like the people of Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth, we can’t know Jesus because we’re so very sure we already know him. North American Christians live in the spiritually toxic illusion that they already possess the only thing that could bring us alive so that we could walk unafraid.

In the North American church we are not faced so much with the evangelization of a lost world as we are with the evangelization of a lost church.

Individual Christians, churches, and whole denominations pull out pieces of scripture that justify their particular belief system. This is “designer Christianity” custom-fit to complement the unique prejudices, fears, and political affiliations of a given body.

All North American churches are essentially the same. The “slants” on religion that different groups think justifies them is what makes them all the same.

Send me any 100 North American Christians. Give me five minutes with each one. I will ask them in that time to describe their Christian faith. After five minutes, in at least 95 out of 100 cases, I will be able to tell you whether they

UNAFRAID

voted Republican or Democrat.

The point is, Christianity is now founded on belief systems related much more identifiably with political parties than with the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God has been largely replaced with empty ideology, masquerading as faith. For example, the expression, "The Lordship of Christ," or "Jesus Christ is Lord," has become a statement about our theology over and against the actual Lordship of Jesus within our hearts, minds, and souls. Statements about Jesus and about faith become substitutes to adopting the way of Jesus.

Rather than simply living in Jesus, in love, in peace, in joy, in justice, we resort to discussions of theology.

Our form of Christianity primarily focuses on belief systems. These interpretations of faith are almost completely divorced from the breathtaking, healing, fullness of life revealed by and in Jesus Christ.

The Bible has become so interpreted through the filter of a North American consumer mindset that we lose its central message, a message that is meant to bring us fully alive. Correct theology is something we can hold on to.

The church has gotten into calling people to make a "decision" rather than to participate in a counter-kingdom. Heaven has basically become a housing upgrade, like winning the lottery by just buying a ticket.

The power of evil in our society goes largely undetected. The spiritual forces of oppression that shape and control our lives are largely unrecognized.

In Protestant Christianity, pastors are the focal point of the church. Most pastors are exhausted; many are depressed. Pastors often suffer from conflicted feelings about their work. Pastors are increasingly losing faith in the church.

Pastors are too often treated like employees of corporations, often feeling the blame for a decreasing gross national product (membership).



Paul Grout

Expected to be CEOs rather than shepherds, the attrition rate of pastors is high. It becomes increasingly difficult for small churches to keep a pastor because they cannot provide salaries high enough to stimulate a pastor's sinking self worth or bribe them into accepting the emptiness.

North American culture is a culture caught in the grips of addiction. Few of us escape.

The frenzied pace of life is in itself an addiction. Upon meeting a Christian leader, the first thing that I am usually told is how busy they are. Keeping busy helps cover over the gnawing emptiness, the sense that something significant is missing. Keeping busy is a way of holding on to self worth. If I am busy it is a sign that my work is valued.

Activities for children increase each year. The amount of time that I had as a child to play, walk through the woods and fields, imagine, to be alone, to play football, basketball, and baseball with no adult supervision or program is nonexistent today.

Children's increased lack of true mooring, their being raced from one activity to the next is damaging their souls. Ever increasing learn-

ing disabilities, anxiety, and depression in children is being covered over with medication. Each year higher percentages of children are kept "balanced" through medication.

Our souls and the souls of our children cry out and we grow increasingly deaf to those cries. We have learned instead how to cover over the emptiness and for a time it works. Drugs work; if they didn't people wouldn't use them. But their effect wears off. New, more powerful drugs must be sought to perpetuate the numbing of our aching souls.

The rabid consumption of material goods perpetuates a hunger for more and more. The North American economy is held together by people purchasing a vast amount of goods they don't need. Buying things covers over emptiness.

A large percentage of North Americans are over-

The need for repentance is understood as we begin to see Jesus. Our thoughts, our actions, our fears, and our shallowness are exposed in the light of his presence.

weight. We eat to cover over anxiety. Our spiritual internal emptiness cries out to be filled. Physically filling our bodies can mask our need for spiritual food. Eating has become an addiction.

For many in our culture, religion has become the drug of choice. People tend to choose the expression of religion that best masks their emptiness and fear.

There are fundamentalist Christians, liberal Christians, charismatic Christians, orthodox, universalist, and social action Christians. Each group needs the other groups to look down on so they can feel good about themselves. Each group develops gatekeepers to maintain the status quo.

The North American church finds itself under the same judgment that God declared upon the people of Jeremiah's time:

"They sought after emptiness and have become empty" (Jer. 2:5b).

The way back: Recovery begins with learning to know Jesus.

The way to life is Jesus, but how will we find him? If we find him, how will we keep from falling into the same patterns that have so damaged us?

New life begins with genuine repentance. Most

people in the church agree that repentance is needed and will gladly point out people for whom it is necessary. Yet all of us are responsible for what has come about. We are in this together.

There will be little possibility for change to occur until we as individuals and church bodies enter into a season of genuine godly sorrow. The need for repentance is understood as we begin to see Jesus. Our thoughts, our actions, our fears, and our shallowness are exposed in the light of his presence.

It is time for business as usual in the church to cease for a time. For one year let's have our Annual Conference, our district conferences, our church business meetings, be a time of fasting, prayer, repentance, and a genuine seeking of what God would reveal to us together.

We acknowledge that we are not alive as God intends us to be alive. God sent Jesus to us to release us from death, from all that separates us from being fully alive. Jesus showed us how to be alive. Those who say they believe in him are called to live the same kind of life he lived.

Our spiritual emptiness has rendered us blind to the principalities and powers that shackle us. Demonic strongholds cannot be wished away. Prayer and fasting prepare the soil to receive the new seed the sower would plant.

For North American Christians, fasting is difficult because food has become an addiction used to cover over spiritual emptiness. During the fast, we enter the wilderness, the barren place, away from the constant distractions and frenzied pace of modern life.

Although this wilderness is primarily a state of mind, it may be necessary to physically remove ourselves from our familiar setting and literally go into the wilderness for a time of escape. It takes a major commitment to enter into this place where our souls will be quieted. We have grown comfortable with the distractions which now must be left behind.

The silent place is a fearsome place where our illusions and need for control are exposed. As Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, so are we. The tempter seeks to pull us back into all that separates us from life. The enemy of our souls calls us again to the empty dreams, the false goodness, the hidden longings, the artificial life, and the artificial religion of the kingdoms that are passing away.

The wilderness exposes our fear, our worries, our vanity, our longings for prestige, wealth, and power—all the old addictions. A mirror is held up to our souls and we cry out in anguish over what we see.

Jesus did not walk alone into the wilderness. He was accompanied by the Holy Spirit. In the wilderness our need for God is revealed. Recogn-

nizing our need, we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit's presence. We begin to walk as Jesus walked. We begin to experience the depth of loneliness that was his. Jesus was the loneliest person who ever lived because he knew what life was meant to be and saw a world that was missing it.

As we enter into his loneliness, we also enter into his peace. This is not the loneliness of the schizophrenic or rebel that separates us from others and life. This is the loneliness of the human species created by God in God's image. This is the loneliness of God that draws us into life and to one another. As we accept this loneliness into our lives, we come to understand that we will never be alone.

The fast in the wilderness leads us from doing to being, from talking to listening, from hungering for what will never fully satisfy, to the hungering for life. The way is revealed to us. Life is made possible again. A place for God has been created in our lives.

We begin to establish an order for every part of our lives in every day of our lives. We turn over our bodies to God, our work to God, our single and married lives, our lives as children and our lives as parents. The food we choose to eat honors our bodies as the temple of God. We learn to exercise and rest. We learn how to study and how to pray, how to laugh and how to weep. We learn how to be alone and how to be with others, how to live and how to die.

We learn the way of the shepherd and the servant. We learn the way of the prophet and the warrior. We are led to the "least" of society and we find Jesus. We learn when to be silent and when to speak. We learn when to be at peace and when to act in all "his" strength.

We begin each morning with thanksgiving. We enter into each day with praise. We spend the time outdoors with a new consciousness of God's creation and our place in it. Social and environmental justice become a natural part of being alive.

Scripture is no longer used to proof-text our opinions, but becomes instead the living, breathing, word of God. We begin to recognize a new aliveness within ourselves. We see the sacred within everything that God has created.

There is within us a Christlike love for everyone we encounter. We have broken with the exhausting pace of the world and we are learning to live in quietness. We are becoming childlike. All relationships are approached with a joyful childlike anticipation. A new health and quickness operates within our body, mind, and spirit. We move with decisiveness. We develop a clarity about our calling and ministry. We find ourselves thankful for being alive. We have a sense that we are continually coming alive. Worship becomes a natural expression of our state

of being. It is as if we have awakened. We have begun to "take hold of the life that is really life."

Specifics to consider: Disconnect identification with North American Protestant Christianity. Reconnect with Pietism and Anabaptism.

Genuinely foster the priesthood of all believers. Reclaim the setting apart of ministers from within the congregation, with regional ministry/apostle support teams. Move from pastor-centered churches to Christ-centered churches.

The full ministry of women is central to the emerging church.

End membership classes as they now exist in the church and develop extensive training in "The Way" of Jesus.

Transition youth groups from separated activity-based groups to shepherd, servant, prophet, warrior training. Integrate youth into the full life of the church. Prepare all youth for ministry.

The emerging church will be a racially diverse church.

End all negative talk about other people or groups.

The church needs a basic training program for equipping Christian leaders for ministry. Such a program would focus on the following:

- Living unafraid in the depths of Jesus Christ
- The Christian understanding of being alive
- Prayer and fasting
- Spiritual warfare
- Voluntary poverty
- Empowerment by the Holy Spirit, gifts of the Spirit, fruit of the Spirit
- Development of body, mind, spirit, and soul
- Nutritional eating
- Physical fitness
- Living in the wilderness
- The day with others
- The day alone, solitude, silence
- Life integrated with creation
- Tent-making ministry
- Honoring the creative aspects of our lives
- Lifestyles of peace and justice
- Ministry to a lost church
- The crucified life
- Putting an end to whining

The emerging church will not be formed by boards or committees or visioning groups.

The emerging church will be formed in homes around kitchen tables where a few people gather to genuinely seek Jesus together.



Paul Grout and his wife, Dorothy, share a home with another family in Putney, Vt. They have two daughters, Jenny and Sarah.



IN THE YEAR 2051...

by Michael and Julie M. Hostetter

We were both born in 1951 just 13 days and about as many miles apart. It takes little mathematical skill to conclude that we are each 50 years old. While tempted to look back over the past 50 years and take stock, we are instead choosing to look ahead toward the next half-century and take heart. We ponder what our descendants will experience in the church by the year 2051.

For more than 25 years, each of us has been involved in one form of ministry or another. Julie has been a church musician, teacher, minister of music and education, pastor, seminary and ecumenical administrator, and now a denominational staff member. Michael has been an associate pastor and pastor. From these many vantage points we look ahead to what the church may become in the next 50 years.

Such playful prognostication, jointly written, has advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages may be obvious. First, we have no idea what the future will hold for churches and therefore are uniquely unqualified to make any guesses. Second, we don't always see eye to eye. Julie and Michael read the same signs but sometimes come to different interpretations of what those signs mean. Another disadvantage is that neither of us has been eager to claim the role of prophet. Honor may not be accorded to prophets in their own country but neither is honor bestowed upon prophets from out of town. Just ask Amos.

The advantages of our imagining what the church will be like in 50 years may not be quite so obvious. But these advantages do allow us to screw up our courage enough to give it a try. One advantage is that no one else knows what the future holds for churches either. While books on the subject are to be found

everywhere, there is no consensus. Analysis of the past and data about the present can be helpful to us today but offer little help in predicting the future. So our guesses are about as good as anyone else's. We are also blessed by not being futurists. That is, we do not belong to that fraternity/sorority of academics who spend their energies imagining the future.

As ministers in the Church of Jesus Christ we are happily mired in the mud of the present. Therefore, our approach to the future usually amounts to finding our way through the struggles created when things have not gone quite as we had planned. The final advantage to our looking ahead 50 years to the church and churches of 2051 is that by the time that future becomes a reality, people will have forgotten what we predicted. Besides, even if people do remember, we will have long passed from this veil of tears and won't have to listen to their complaints. So here goes.



For Seasons of the Gospel congregation, the rhythms of the Christian year have become vital to the church's life and ministry in the year 2051. The resurrection of Christ has become a festival lasting until Pentecost, a full seven weeks. During this time, the people of Seasons church pay extra attention to where new life is occurring in their families, community, and world. The church's web page is filled with notes from members and friends about resurrection taking place all around. Stories are shared at church gatherings and study classes. People observe and become involved with God's rebirth of love. Easter is everywhere.

In 2051 Christian communities will be increasingly counter-cultural. When we were



growing up in the 1950s and '60s, churches played a central role in helping people to "fit in" to the communities of which they were a part. Since participation in a religious community was then necessary in order to be respectable and successful, congregations served as doorways into the mainstream of culture.

That is not the case today and will be even less so 50 years from now. In the religiously diverse society of 2051, merely being a Christian will be as unique as being "Brethren" was in 1951. Therefore, being a Christian and participating in a church will be a doorway leading away from the mainstream of culture. The church will not be a way in but a way out. This has profound implications for the proclamation of the gospel.



At First Church of the Future, a group of teenagers from the neighborhood has been playing basketball in the parking lot several afternoons after school. A few of the older members who come to clean the building on Friday afternoons started offering cold water to the youth. Conversations began, brief at first, and names were learned.

As it turns out, two of the youths are part of a nearby Muslim congregation. Another is a member of a local church, and several had no church home. After noticing that there are no lines painted on the parking lot for playing basketball, members of First Church, along with the neighborhood youth, gather on a Saturday to patch the parking lot and paint the basketball lines.

As a result, several of these youth have begun

coming to youth group meetings and to worship. Conversations have begun with some Muslim families about common concerns of the community. And all have become better neighbors.

In 2051, most American Christians will have given up on the idea that evangelism's purpose is to convert the entire population to Christianity. We will eagerly embrace our calling to announce the good news of Jesus in word and deed. Yet we will be more accepting of the fact that it is God who changes hearts. It is the work of the Spirit that convicts and convinces. Sometimes the results of the scattered seed will produce an abundant harvest. But more often Christians will be in the world as yeast and salt. Fifty years from now it will not be evangelism at any cost but faithfulness no matter what the price.

Fifty years from now it will not be evangelism at any cost but faithfulness no matter what the price.



At Alexander MacChurch, Sunday school class members gather at the home of one of their teachers. Scripture is read and a hymn sung. Several of them lead in praying for God's presence and guidance for the day ahead. They carpool to the homeless shelter to serve a meal

and interact with the guests. Having learned in their congregation about the unconditional love of Christ, they are eager to extend that welcome beyond the walls of a church building. In worship, study, and now in service, these Christians are being transformed into hospitable people.

In 2051, mission, worship, Christian formation, and service will be more integrated. Bible study groups, Christian education classes, and fellowship groups will all be involved in mission and outreach. Prayer and worship will accompany all study and learning. Service and devotion will go hand in hand. There will be a passion for Jesus Christ, a desire for communion with God, and respect and compassion for others.

Because all these are blended into one, Christian education will continue to move away from learning what to believe about Jesus and toward the development of Christian character as a follower of Jesus. Those who demonstrate such character may not be of one opinion with each other on all matters of theology and doctrine. But such disagreements will be opportunities to expand understanding and exercise the grace of Christ.



The young adults at A Pretty Typical Church have been raising some interesting concerns about worship. The praise choruses that the older folks love to sing don't seem to connect with them. One 25-year-old was bold enough to claim, "Those songs we sing on Sunday

In 2051, people will still disagree about what is most meaningful. Tastes will vary, understandings will differ, and what one person values, another will not.

don't really say anything. We need songs that acknowledge the high demands of being a Christian in 2051."

The pastor has taken the lead in helping the congregation to understand that worship always focuses upon God. Most agree that God is both the object and recipient of the people's worship. At church council, someone made a motion that if the young adults agree only to

sing songs that the church had sung for years, the older adults would agree only to sing those hymns which were new. Everyone had a good laugh at themselves. While the issues were not resolved, all agreed to take God more seriously and themselves less seriously.

In 2051, people will still disagree about what is most meaningful. Tastes will vary, understandings will differ, and what one person values, another will not. In the church of 2001 we sometimes call this the "worship wars." Debates over contemporary vs. traditional vs. blended worship are experienced almost everywhere. Perhaps these are not so much worship wars as they are a reflection of cultural and generational differences. This pattern is not likely to change dramatically in the next 50 years.

But it is hoped that Christians will learn to speak more than one language. This is not merely a reference to a language other than English. It refers to the differing languages of youth and older adults, poor and wealthy, right and left, and so forth.

There will likewise be no single language of faith. By 2051 we will have come to agree that the drama of worship is not intended primarily for the people's consumption, but for God's. There will be times in worship when people are "lost in wonder, love, and praise," and Christ's presence is experienced in the depth of the soul. Yet there will also be times in worship when we will be formed by the God of peace, mercy, and justice. So we will sing: "Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above / thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love."



The New Beginnings Church afternoon Bible study group has been meeting for almost a year. Most of the 12 members are retired and all but two are women. As they study the Scriptures, they notice that the Bible is filled with stories of God accomplishing great things through people who were flawed or had been considered to be failures. More important, they come to understand that it was only after Jesus' death that resurrection came. So it could be said that before new life was born, there was death.

They have been looking around at the activities of their own congregation. Some programs that once had been quite productive have lost effectiveness and with that loss has gone the support of the congregation. A lot of energy has been expended recruiting volunteers to staff

ministries that no longer have much vitality. They have reluctantly concluded that the women's fellowship is just such a program. If not dead, it has been on life support. Because the women of the Bible study group are the same ones who generally attend women's fellowship, they have made the decision to pull the plug. Letters were sent to people in the congregation inviting them to come to a "funeral."

On the chosen day, women and men gather to pay their respects, to say goodbye, and to bury the women's fellowship. The Bible study women lead the service and remind all who came that this occasion is about the death of something beloved—not about the failure of the women of the church. With honest sorrow they lean upon God's grace and reach out for God's help.

At the next Bible study, several additional women attend. All begin to pray that God will show them new opportunities for faithfulness. It takes some time, but gradually clusters of women begin new ministries. Some begin sewing comforters for a daycare center. Others volunteer as readers and tutors at the local elementary school. Still others begin writing to people on death row. An evening Bible study group begins its own time of discernment, study, and prayer. This leads to new initiatives for spreading the gospel in the church's neighborhood.

Church members notice the new life that is taking place among some of the women and men in the study groups. When asked how this has come about, one grandmother replies, "It all began when we buried the women's fellowship." New Beginnings church realizes that if it is going to be more open to God's leading, there will need to be more "funerals."

By the year 2051, more congregations will have realized that applying the model of "success and failure" to church life had not been helpful. Many programs and ministries had continued only because to end them would have been considered a failure. Congregational life had been weakened by people finding fault and assigning blame when programs had become ineffective.

Fifty years from now, congregations will understand that it is God who brings new life. They will have realized that it is difficult to be open to the Spirit's leading while stubbornly clinging to former ways. In the future, congregations will end a ministry or program by acknowledging the death of the old. There will be a time to mourn loss and to celebrate what God has done through God's people, without needing

to point fingers or to bemoan failure. Ministry initiatives will be based on discerning God's will for the future as well as evaluating current programs and imagining new possibilities.

By the midpoint of the century, many congregations will have learned to do for church programs what they had long done for individuals: mourn deaths and consecrate new life. Evaluating church life as either success or failure gives too much credit and blame to human ingenuity and initiative. Death and resurrection affirm that in life's endings God is already sowing the seeds for new beginnings. In the future as in the past, the church will live not by human strength, but by the power and spirit of God.

Through the prophet Isaiah, God said: "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isa. 43:19a). This question is always asked of God's people. It focuses on the present and the immediate future. Through Isaiah we are urged to be more perceptive and to recognize what God is about to do by seeing what God is already doing.



We have found it challenging to imagine what congregations will be like 50 years from now. Yet that forward glance has also been freeing. We have not been too concerned about the accuracy or precision of these predictions. Our imaginations have not been tethered to the reality of the present. We have been able to give in to dreams without having to figure out how the church can get from what is now to what will be.

Isaiah is right. It is by discerning what God is doing in the present that people can anticipate what God will do in the future. Unless we take that task seriously, little else is of consequence.

The church always looks to God for strength, guidance, and hope. To rely on any particular vision of the future is to misplace our confidence. Uncertainty about the future is God's best gift to us. We do not know what will come to pass in the next 50 years, but in Jesus Christ, we do know God. The church's task is to follow Christ faithfully. If Christians have the courage to embrace that calling, the future will indeed be exciting!

Michael Hostetter is pastor of the Williamson Road Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, Va. Julie M. Hostetter is coordinator of the Congregational Life Team-Area 3 (southeast). They are the parents of two daughters, Kate (21) and Abigail (17).

SHE WILL KNOW ME AGAIN

Reflections on seeing my mother

*With the drawing of this Love and
the voice of this Calling
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*
—from "Little Gidding," by T. S. Eliot

John 12: 31-32, John 14:1-6, Col. 3:12-17,
Rev. 19:6-9, Rev. 21:1-7

by Paul Grout

My mother looked at me today, not with the blank stare of one whose mind has been robbed of memory by the advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease, but as a mother looks at a son.

It appeared that for a moment she knew me. I am struck by how much I want to believe that she did.

She has not spoken my name in almost two years. My father goes to the nursing home every day and feeds my mother lunch. He accepts what now is, in thankfulness for what once was. His hope lies ahead.

Today, as he lifted the spoon to her mouth, she turned her head away toward me and stared at me. "I think she knows who you are," my father said. I wanted to believe him. I want her to know me again. I want to be her child again.

My childhood was as perfect as any childhood could be. My brother told me that he has been able to accept some painful circumstances in adulthood by remembering how uniquely good it was for us as children.

The kingdom of our childhood consisted of an area about a half mile in all directions from the center that was our home. Our house was separated from

town by woods and field. The lane from our house went through the woods to the edge of town. The school, church, grocery store, basketball courts, playground, and friends' houses were all within easy walking distance. We could just as easily walk away from town to be alone in woods and field.

If the center of this childhood kingdom was the old brick farmhouse that was our home, the center of our home was the kitchen table.

My mother sat across from my father. I sat across from my brother. I know now that what made everything else so good was that there was always a place for me at that table.

Thinking back on that time, I picture a spring day, my brother and me racing home from school, changing into play clothes, gathering bat, ball, and gloves, and heading to the baseball field.

Every spring we reclaimed from nature the far corner of the field that began just over the hill beyond our garden. Kids from our section of town met there on spring afternoons.

My brother and I played baseball until we were called home for supper. The time for supper would vary somewhat because my father would not always get home from work at the same time. My mother, who was an exceptional athlete, supported our playing as long as she could. She would not call us home until everything was prepared.

When my father arrived home and the supper was ready, my mother would walk up the hill beyond the garden to where she could see us playing in the distance. I picture her in a pale blue dress, cupping her hands around her mouth and calling,

"Paaauulll, Alllannn, come ho-ommmme."

When we heard her calling, we would stop playing almost immediately. The other kids understood the game was over for us. We ran home not out of obedience, not driven by hunger, not out of goodness or fear.

We ran home because it was time. The time for school and the time for play were over. Each day had an order. There was a wholeness, a completeness, a sense of comfort and security in the order. All the pieces of the day were held together by the evening meal.

We ran home to the table that was the center of our lives, the table that made everything else safe and good, the table that held our lives together, the table where our bodies, spirits, and souls were fed, the table of care, of laughter, and love. At the time we couldn't have explained all that it was but I believe that instinctively we knew.

I have come to believe that our deepest longings as adults are based on a need to return to a table where there is a place for us, or to find a table that has never been, a place where we belong, where we are cherished not for our productivity, our incomes, our looks, or our intellects, but for our humanity. A place where we are known, accepted, and loved as parents know, accept, and love their children.

This is the central and too often forgotten message of the gospel: there is a place for us at the table, the table of blessing established by God in Jesus Christ.

During their last supper together, Jesus did not show his disciples how to "do" communion; he visually demonstrated how to live communion. He gave them himself, his body, his blood. At the table he brought them



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home to God. In him they became children of God.

To come to the table of the Lord is to become fully alive. At his table we are fed—body, mind, and spirit. His death becomes our death, his life becomes our life, his way becomes our way.

This is the message we are entrusted to give to a generation of lost children: "There is a place for you at the table." We demonstrate this central gospel truth as we in Jesus Christ provide a place at the table in our churches, in our homes, and in our hearts. We give our lives as Jesus gave his life, that communion might exist on earth as it is in heaven.

As we enter into the depths of Jesus Christ, we experience daily on earth the table of blessing, of security, communion, and sacrifice. The table of completion lies in the future. The marriage supper of the lamb lies ahead. At this table every tear will be wiped away. Christ is our life in the present and our hope for the future. Here the table that I ran to as a child, that I experience in Christ on earth, becomes one with the table at the end. Jesus is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. What I experienced in the beginning, what I know now, what I hope for in the future—all radically affect how I live in the present.

This is how I picture the end. After exhaling my last breath in this world, a woman in a pale blue dress walks up a hill beyond a garden. She cups her hands to her mouth and calls: "Paull, come ho-ommme."

It is not my mother. It is God, and I become a child again running home to a table where there is a place for me, and there is a place for Alan, for Dorothy, for Jenny and Sarah. There is a place for Reba and Glenn, for Nora and Hazen, for Bobby and Philip. There is a place for all my friends, and there is a place for my enemies.

When I come home to this table I know that the communion will be eternal. My father and mother will be there as they were in the beginning, at the first table I knew.

My mother will come to me. She will take my hands in hers. She will know me again.



Paul Grout grew up in Pennsylvania. Two years ago he moved his parents to Vermont, his home and their childhood home.



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Is nuclear energy really from the devil?

by Charles Bowman

Fletcher Farrar's editorial "God's Yucca Mountain" [March] calling MESSENGER readers to opposition to nuclear power repeats the usual attacks on nuclear power inciting as much fear and concern as possible while presenting a dubious Old Testament biblical basis. No doubt nuclear energy has shortcomings. We can throw this young technology away or try to improve it. I have devoted the past 11 years to the latter, helping originate a program called Accelerator Transmutation of Waste (ATW) for destruction of the plutonium and other long-living radioactive species of commercial reactor waste. This research and development effort has spread worldwide to every nation with a significant investment in nuclear power and the international effort now totals about \$200 million per year.

The aim is a major reduction of the radioactivity of the waste at Yucca Mountain, or perhaps even to reduce it sufficiently that long-term high-level geologic storage would not be required. Another focus of this effort is to eliminate the coupling between nuclear weapons and nuclear energy technology. Thus nuclear energy systems are being designed that don't produce weapons material, don't require reprocessing (the means for recovering weapons-useful material from reactor spent fuel), don't require the isotope enrichment process (for making weapons-useful material from natural uranium), and for which an explosive accident such as Chernobyl is not just highly unlikely but absolutely impossible.

Improved nuclear energy offers hope for finally resolving some of the world's most difficult problems and these problems are well stated in the same issue of the MESSENGER. Nuclear produces no CO₂, which is behind the urgent appeal on page 22 titled "Global warming," and most of the "Making a Daily Difference" following page 26, and the "Friends of the Earth" article on page 12. Page 27 makes a highly commendable statement against war. The causes of war have been and should continue to be of equal concern to the Church of the Brethren. What threat of war is larger than the increasing US dependence on Middle East oil and the nation's determination to get as much as it wants at the price it wants by whatever means necessary? Nuclear now produces 20 percent of the world's electric energy and therefore substantially reduces the rape of the land for coal, the spewing of CO₂ into the atmosphere, and the US inclination for bullying and warring on other nations to con-

trol energy supply. Other technology also generates power without CO₂, but nuclear works whether the wind blows or not, and during the night as well as the day. It therefore does not require massive new hydro-dams for temporary energy storage that would further despoil the land.

As for the editor's lamented desecration of Yucca Mountain, it is worth noting that the recent digging there for 40 years of nuclear waste storage capacity is 1,000 times less than the required digging for coal in the US for only one year. Why should we be so much more concerned about the Yucca Mountain holy land of the Paiute and Shoshone than about the far greater desecration of the Navaho and Ute land in the Four Corners for coal, or the even larger digging going on elsewhere? Would Nehemiah be more concerned about a lasting impact on Yucca Mountain or the lasting impact on enormously more of our land from coal mining and the damming of our rivers for hydropower? Would he preach against burning away the world's coal and oil resources when we could deploy the nuclear alternative instead, and when fossil resources might be needed 20,000 years from now for some other higher purpose?

It is fashionable within the environmental movement to be against nuclear energy, but Church of the Brethren members have a good record for examining what the media feeds them, going where others care not to go, and doing what others care not to do. The Church of the Brethren long ago decided not to reject new technology altogether but to accept that which eased humanity's burdens, to support action to make it safe and available to all, and to minimize any negative impact on people and the environment. Nuclear energy technology needs this thoughtful consideration from the church. It would be consistent with its traditions if the Church of the Brethren would objectively evaluate the nuclear energy option, including comparison with other viable energy technology, list its concerns, encourage the search for the solutions to those concerns, and reserve judgment until the technology has reached its limits of improvement.



Charles Bowman is a neutron physicist who began his education at Bridgewater College and received his doctorate from Duke University. He has been awarded the US Department of Commerce Silver Medal, is a Fellow of the American Physical Society, and a Fellow retired of the Los Alamos National Laboratory. He pursues his research through the ADNA Corporation in Los Alamos, N.M., and attends the Antioch Church of the Brethren when living in Franklin County, Va.

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IN MEMORIAM

Brethren physician innovator in nation's mental health care

by Marvin Sherman



Dennis and LaVon Rupel

Dennis F. Rupel was a pioneer in the healing arts. Soft-spoken but determined, he championed a new kind of people-centered, community mental health care at Mennonite-sponsored Oaklawn Center in Elkhart, Ind. There in the 1960s he developed and directed the first day hospital for mental health patients in the nation, spotlighted by the National Institute of Mental Health. A lifelong member of the Church of the Brethren, he died last year at age 69.

Later he initiated the building of an innovative inpatient county mental health facility in Stockton, Calif.—bypassing the cumbersome and over-regulated general hospital system of care—and receiving accolades for the model facility by the State of California, whose legislature he helped convince to fund the project.

A three-year residency in psychiatry at the Menninger School in Topeka, Kan., had given him the vision and tools to launch a distinguished career in these new types of community psychiatry. The focus: taking care to the people where they live their daily lives, as opposed to waiting for persons to become incapacitated and go to an institution away from the home community.

Pioneering was in his genes. Paternal grandparents migrated from Indiana to carve out farmland in the Wenatchee Valley, and thrust children Charles, Paul, Martha, and Claude into church missions and service. Paul and Naomi Ziegler Rupel helped build the Brethren mission station at Garkida, Nigeria, where Dennis and his first sister were born, he on Sept. 27, 1930.

At age eight his family returned to the US at Riverside, Calif. After high school and a summer painting job, he packed a single well-worn leather suitcase and hitchhiked to Manchester College. Years later, armed with a medical degree from Northwestern University and a year's internship in Denver, he entered alternative service as a general physician at Humacao, Puerto Rico. Joining him was his wife, LaVon Widegren Rupel, a Grand Junction, Colo., Brethren whom he courted when she worked at Elgin State Hospital.

His volunteer leadership was highlighted by nine years on the board of trustees of the University of La Verne, 30 years on the Mennonite Board of Mental Health Services, and 25 years leadership in service projects of the Stockton Rotary Club. Besides a private practice, he also was consultant to community agencies, a volunteer for Su Salud health care for Latinos, a teacher and leader in his local congregation at Modesto, Calif., and in camps and retreats, and served on committees of Annual Conference and Brethren Health and Welfare Association. He is perhaps unique as a psychiatrist so much involved in the life of the church.

Dr. Rupel retired from private practice in 1999 to devote personal care to his wife, struggling to live with Lou Gehrig's disease. But in January last year he was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor, soon was comatose, and died June 4, 2000.

A humble man, he never sought honors, nor waved degrees. He focused on others, not himself. "He built upon his quiet, shy personality with gifts of compassionate listening, understanding eyes, and gentle presence," state his Modesto pastors, Ken and Bonnie Kline Smeltzer. "He devoted his life to the power of the healing presence of human love."

For more detail on Dennis Rupel, see www.rupel.com/dennis.

College roommate and lifelong friend, Marvin Sherman was for 44 years in the Beacon Heights Fort Wayne (Ind.) congregation. A retired insurance company executive, he and his wife, Lois Fike Sherman, now live in Robin Run Village in Indianapolis, where they are members of First Congregational Church. He pursues writing, photography, painting, tomatoes and perennial flowers, tutoring inner-city third graders, and mentoring grandchildren.

Who makes the rules?

This is in response to Jim Myer's statement quoted on page 18 of the Jan./Feb. issue. In response to the question, "Should we go to Brazil?", Jim said of the Brethren Revival Fellowship: "We're bursting at the seams with money and people. I'm glad to see this kind of thing happening. If this is going to be a mission project where the gospel is preached, churches are started, and people are baptized, and not just economic development, . . . I'd see no reason why we wouldn't be interested in participating."

The operational word in the above is "if." If you will play the game by our rules, we will furnish the football.

Is that truly the policy and position of Jim and the BRF? Or, were his actual words misrepresented in the article?

Galen Miller
Wenatchee, Wash.

Bro. Myer replies: The quotation is accurate, and the issue is not BRF's rules but the Bible's rules that doing biblical, soul-saving mission work includes such things as gospel proclamation, baptizing believers, and establishing church-planting congregations where Christian discipleship will take place.

John Grisham and the Brethren

The title of a best-selling novel by John Grisham caught my eye. Apprehensive as to what the contents of *The Brethren* would be, I scanned the description on the back cover and learned that it was a fast-paced story off three former judges calling themselves the Brethren who had run afoul of the law and were now running an extortion scam from inside a prison. I succumbed to the temptation to buy the paperback and then subjected myself to yet another assault on the name of our beloved denomination.

This was not the first time I had seen or heard "the Brethren" used in a less than positive sense. I recall another book several years ago entitled *The Brethren*, which referred to the Supreme Court. I have seen it used in reference to the men of certain tribes who performed blood-thirsty rituals and have heard it used derisively to refer to the male leadership of the Mormon church when they refused to listen to the pleading of the women. And, of course, there are the ever-present "good natured" jibes that we often

endure in ecumenical gatherings.

These uses of the word "brethren" would not by themselves be sufficient reason for changing the name of our denomination. But the fact is that "brethren" is an archaic and sexist term. I do not believe that this is the image we want to present to the world. The name by which we are called influences even how we feel about ourselves. I am proud of our denomination. I long to be proud of our name!

Esther Mohler Ho
Hayward, Calif.

Environmental questions

How many of you who want the environment to be "clean" are willing and able to make the sacrifice for that to happen? [See "Taking the Earth to church," March.]

You have a problem with the proposed disposal site for nuclear waste? If that is the alternative to coal-fired electricity, what do you propose for disposal of the spent fuel? How many wish to give up electricity, cars, water for lawns and gardens, fertilizer?

I'm sure a lot of our good Brethren don't wish to give up their dishwashers, their cars and trucks, much less water to flush the toilet. But these are water-wasters. What really is good stewardship? Is it in moderate use of all these gifts or does it mean doing without them?

Jean M. Winters
Eglen, W.Va.

Break silence on homosexuality

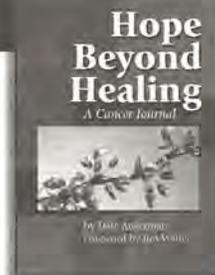
I was surprised to see your two-page spread on homosexuality and the church in the March issue. While most of the news was negative from the perspective of gay men and lesbians in the church, I am glad that you are not afraid to talk about this issue and the people it affects. I hope that you will continue to promote dialog on this challenging topic within our church. I pray that you will share more news that supports and opens doors for sexual minorities on the margins.

Dialog is essential for life and growth. The silence of the past several years has been deadly.

Matt Smucker
Richmond, Ind.

"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.



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Overcoming Violence: A SUDANESE WOMAN'S STORY

OUTREACH DINNER
Monday, July 5th at 5 p.m.

**Holiday Inn, Inner Harbor,
Chesapeake**

Speaker

Mrs. Awut Deng Acuil,
Grassroots Peace Mobilizer,
New Sudan Council of Churches

Mrs. Awut will help launch the church-wide "Decade to Overcome Violence" by focusing on peace efforts in Sudan, where race, religion, politics and economics fuel a decades-long war.

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Brethren Caregivers. For qualifications to receive a loan or scholarship, visit ABC's website at: www.brethren.org/abc/. For more information, contact Loans and Scholarships Coordinator Linda Timmons at (847) 742-5100, ext. 300, or e-mail ltimmons_abc@brethren.org.

Travel "ROYAL HOLIDAY" Featuring-The British Isles-Visiting: England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. July 24-August 8, 2001. Wendell and Joan Bohrer, 3651 US Hwy. 27 South, Lot 40, Sebring, FL 33870. Tel/fax 863-382-9371. e-mail rdwboh@strato.net

Plan your fall travel schedule; join Mennonite YOUR WAY TOURS and "travel with a purpose." Visit the Maritime Provinces of Canada, September 4-15, travel the Cabot Trail and Peggy's Cove, enjoy the story and musical drama of Anne of Green Gables. Risk the Churchill (Manitoba) Polar Bear Adventure, October 13-30, see migrating polar bears from the warmth and safety of our tundra buggy. Still a few openings for summertime tours. Write/call: MYW TOURS, Box 425, Landisville, PA 17538; 717-653-1111 or 800-296-1991.

Visiting Washington, D.C.? Come worship with us at the Arlington Church of the Brethren, 300 N. Montague St. Arlington, Va. Phone 703-524-4100. Services: Sunday School 9:45 - 10:45 a.m. Worship: 11:00 a.m. Summer hours: June 3-Sept. 2. Worship 10:00 a.m. No Sunday School. Nursery Services provided. Roseann B. Harwood, Pastor.

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1 Chronicles 28:20

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New members

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Curryville, Pa.: David Stiles, Laurie Stiles

Danville, First Danville, Va.: Joshua Scott Atkisson

Dayton, Va.: Daniel Beam, Elizabeth Fleishman, David Heatwole, Ashley Smith, Genevieve Dixon, Barbara Wallace

Freeburg, Paris, Ohio: Ray Haun, Barbara Haun, Dana Dickerhoof, Kyle Karlen, Rebekah Zellers

Germantown Brick, Rocky Mount, Va.: Lindsey Saul, Ryan Saul, Sara Starkey, Tyler Flora, Kermit P. Flora, Pauline Flora, Noel Naff, Stephanie Naff

Grossnickle, Myersville, Md.: Jamie Lee Brigham, Kevin Delauter, Seth Delauter, Linda Frushour, Michael Frushour, Peter Grossnickle, Benjamin Hurwitz, Zachary Keller, Adam Wolfe

Hanover, Pa.: Kathy Accardi, John Burkentine, Ted Schmittel, Brock Swartz, Lance Rusinko

Holidaysburg, Pa.: Jolene Claar

Jacksonville, Fla.: Mathew Jenkins, Donna Jenkins, Robbie Hardy, A. J. Morris, Loretta Morris, Jevon Morris, Billie Stull, Kelly Stull, Shaquilla Duhart

Knob Creek, Johnson City, Tenn.: Steve Renfro, Kathy Renfro, Stephanie Renfro, Katherine Renfro, Daniel Myers, Tracy Myers, Robert G. Rose, Anita Rose

Lick Creek, Bryan, Ohio: Jana Rose Nihart, Mary Beth Shearer, Merit Shambarger, Aaron Herman, Travis Zigler

Lone Star, Lawrence, Kan.: Eri Hirokawa

Marsh Creek, Gettysburg, Pa.: Brian Koons, Brenda Martin, Edward Steinour, Dorothy Steinour

Memorial, Martinsburg, Pa.: Keith Newlinland, Nancy Newlinland

New Paris, Ind.: Dean Gladfelter, Janet Gladfelter, Mark Miller, Kristen Miller

Oakland, Bradford, Ohio: Ross Gruber, Marilyn Gruber, Ron Lyme, Tina Lyme, Rick Lee, Denise Lee, Erin Lee, Lee Albright, Lora Albright, Lorraine Grote, Andrea Hammond, Todd Hammond, Dennis Etter, Rochelle Etter, Ben Etter

Osage, Kan.: Dan Egbert, Connie Egbert, Colleen Huff, Harold Groth, Linda Groth

Reading, First, Reading, Pa.: Sarah Dotter, Jeremy Parson, Phillip Thomas

Richmond, Ind.: Dean Johnson, Mark Wilhelm, Dawn Ottoni Wilhelm, Harold Spitzer,

Ruth Spitzer, Julie Faucett, Jonathan Shively, Kim Shively

Saunders Grove, Moneta, Va.: Donald Blair, Scott Fitzgerald, Nicky Bowyer, Cody Bowyer, Edria Wimmer, Chris Wimmer, R. Willard Hale

Sebring, Fla.: Donald Brewer, Mildred Brewer, Shirley Herrmann, Ellen Hunt, Donald Crouse, William Hann, Beverly Hann, William Nelson, Eleanor Nelson, Raymond Kepner, Mary Lou Kepner, Ralph Pullins, Mary Pullins, Gene Weeks, Carolyn Weeks

Syracuse, Ind.: Dustin Nabinger, Melissa Nabinger, Elaine Lemberg

Tucson, Ariz.: John Hales

Waterford, Calif.: Russell Betz, Kay Betz, Loreita Arnold

Wedding anniversaries

Anglemyer, Frank and Dorothy, Nappanee, Ind., 60

Balsbaugh, John, Sr. and Edna, Newmanstown, Pa., 55

Bauserman, Fred and Patsy, Maurertown, Va., 50

Bergy, Keith and Jean, Caledonia, Mich., 55

Bowers, Jimmy and Violet, Maurertown, Va., 50

Dotterer, David and Mary Louise, Union Bridge, Md., 50

Foor, Don and Doris, Everett, Pa., 50

Gochenour, Lewis and Eva, Woodstock, Va., 50

Gorden, Israel and Edwina, Goshen, Ind., 73

Harvey, Murray and Charlotte, Bridgewater, Va., 50

Heffelfinger, Homer and Verna, Richland, Pa., 60

Jordan, Frank, Sr. and Clara, Salem, Va., 72

Kegerreis John and Helen, Myerstown, Pa., 50

Maynor, Robert and Ila Mae, Hico, W.Va., 50

Menke Stewart and Betty, Greenville, Ohio, 50

Peters, Harry and Verda Mae, Hillsboro, Ohio, 60

Queer, Lloyd and Kathryn, Rockwood, Pa., 60

Rinker, Donald and Grethel, Toms Brook, Va., 50

Schieber, Virgil and Alma, Goshen, Ind., 55

Stehman, Willis and Alta, Lake Odessa, Mich., 60

Stump, Russell and Mildred, Myerstown, Pa., 55

Weaver, Dalton and Helen, Greenville, Ohio, 60

Weik, Harvey and Mary, Myerstown, Pa., 55

Deaths

Armstrong, Virginia, 94, Urbana, Ill., Jan. 25

Bailey, Elizabeth K., 90, New Oxford, Pa., Feb. 13

Barlow, Leona Kline, 85, Manassas, Va., Jan. 3

Barnhart, Stanley, 69, Goshen, Ind., Jan. 24

Baughman, James S., 85, Som-

erset, Pa., Jan. 5

Bechtel, Fay, 85, Sebring, Fla., Dec. 10

Beeghy, Milford, 102, Pierson, Iowa, Jan. 14

Berkheimer, Byron E., 75, Salemville, Pa., Jan. 29

Bittner, L. June, 69, Somerset, Pa., Nov. 26

Bodkin, Delbert Jones, 89, Dayton, Va., Nov. 28

Botkin, Ressie V., 88, Verona, Va., Dec. 13

Brandenburg, C. Eldin, 85, Myersville, Md., Jan. 5

Bridenbaugh, Doris O., 88, Martinsburg, Pa., Oct. 20

Buckingham, Ann, 85, Ankeny, Iowa, Jan. 13

Burket Elvin R., 99, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 7

Calhoun, Minnie Chloe, 73, Petersburg, W.Va., Dec. 5

Carter, Gladys S., 93, Bassett, Va., July 17

Cave, Mary "Arlene" Smith, 74, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 1

Chronister, Minnie R., 96, Brodbeck, Pa., Jan. 7

Cline, Harriet, 81, Dixon, Ill., Jan. 23

Cosner, John Harrison, 86, Mount Storm, W.Va., Jan. 19

Craun, Ernest Berlin, 11, 63, Mount Crawford, Va., Jan. 5

Crider, Harlan Mayberry, 72, Moorefield, W.Va., Dec. 5

Crow, Doris M., 85, Champaign, Ill., Jan. 31

Cullers, Jennie Margaret, 93, Timberville, Va., Jan. 11

Culp, Horace C., 81, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 20

Curie, Mary, Orrville, Ohio, Jan. 15

Davis, James A., 89, Martinsburg, Pa., Jan. 20

Deardorff, Mabel, 89, Chambersburg, Pa., Jan. 23

DeGrange, Richard, 74, Hagerstown, Md., Aug. 20

Dilling, Edna, 79, Boothwyn, Pa., Dec. 13

Dirting, Paul W., 76, Edinburg, Va., Nov. 29

Dispanet, Wilda Virginia, 73, Mathias, W.Va., Jan. 7

Dively, Anna Fern, 93, Martinsburg, Pa., Dec. 1

Dively, Dorothy, 69, Somerset, Pa., Jan. 6

Eikenberry, Nelda Rhoades, 84, Astoria, Ill., Nov. 7

Fair, Mildred E., 88, New Oxford, Pa., Dec. 20

Flemming, Charles, 93, Drexel Hill, Pa., Jan. 8

Frieze, Raymond Burford, 79, Linville, Va., Jan. 10

Garber, Ottie Wright, 97, Bridgewater, Va., Jan. 7

Gardner, Hershel Holmes, 81, Mount Solon, Va., Jan. 3

Geiman, Thomas Wilson, 62, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 11

Giles, William W., 73, McPherson, Kan., Feb. 6

Gindesperger, Fred C., 67, Chambersburg, Pa., Nov. 25

Gochenour, Gilbert Franklin, 84, Baker, W.Va., Dec. 14

Graves, Porter R., Jr., 57, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 22

Guisse, Harold S., 74, Gardeners, Pa., Feb. 4

Hartman, Charles B., 89,

Spring Grove, Pa., Jan. 7

Hendrickson, Evelyn Mary, 84, Petersburg, W.Va., Jan. 19

Hiller, Rodger W., 86, Ashland, Ohio, Jan. 5

Hoffman, Dean, 18, Martinsburg, Pa., Jan. 12

Hoover, Alice M., 91, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 25

Hoover, Harold, Hollidaysburg, Pa., Jan. 25

Jarrett, Frank S., 86, Bassett, Va., June 2

Jenkins, Wretha E., 83, South Whitley, Ind., Feb. 5

Jones, Harry F., 89, Johnstown, Pa., Nov. 26

Kitzel, Vera, 88, McPherson, Kan., Jan. 23

Koons, Ruth, 96, Ashland, Ohio, Feb. 2

Kopp, Robert, 77, Hanover, Pa., Jan. 30

Kretzer, Hazel, 78, Chambersburg, Pa., Nov. 25

Kuykendall, Oscar Ray, 97, Petersburg, W.Va., Dec. 27

Larsen, Lloyd A., 89, Vancouver, Wash., Nov. 24

Lewis, William Washington, 69, Woodstock, Va., Jan. 6

Lobb, Charles, 71, Denver, Pa., Oct. 12

Loucks, Frederick F., 80, York, Pa., Feb. 11

Mason, Carroll H., 75, Broadway, Va., Jan. 31

Mauck, Ruth Elizabeth, 82, Winchester, Va., Dec. 5

McBride, Ruth, 97, Decatur, Ill., Dec. 11

Metzger, Theodore T., 75, Johnstown, Pa., Jan. 11

Miles, Treva Irene Wolleson, 77, Ashland, Ohio, Feb. 5

Miller, Mary Virginia Simmons, 86, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 1

Miller, Robert J., 74, Seven Valleys, Pa., Jan. 14

Mohler, Orpha, 85, Florida, Fla., Jan. 13

Montel, Ray, 82, North Manchester, Ind., Feb. 6

Mumbert, Violet Macie, 76, Port Republic, Va., Jan. 19

Mundy, Leon A., 85, Bridgewater, Va., Dec. 17

Ncedy, Raymond, 73, Smithsburg, Md., Oct. 12

Ore, Taylor, 85, Henry, Va., April 9, 2000

Oren, Lois, Berryville, Va., Jan. 29

Pierce, Frances C., 81, New Oxford, Pa., Feb. 4

Raines, Tracie Lee, 91, Grottoes, Va., Dec. 7

Ritchie, Ruia Crider, 80, Broadway, Va., Jan. 21

Roadcap, Charlotte Virginia, 73, Broadway, Va., Dec. 24

Rodabaugh, Ruth, Eaton, Ohio, Dec. 24

Roudabush, Mary Ellen, 71, Waterloo, Ind., Dec. 27

Seritchfield, James, 79, Bedford, Pa., Dec. 4

Shadle, Charlotte, 90, Ogden, Iowa, July 7

Shingleton, Howard, 87, Augusta, W.Va., Jan. 25

Smelser, Isaac Randolph, 60, Stanley, Va., Dec. 22

Smith, Raymond Bowman, 93, Franklin, W.Va., Nov. 29

Smith, William Henry, 90, Bassett, Va., Oct. 26

Stone, Ellis Lester, 68, Bassett, Va., Dec. 5

Strawderman, Arnold Lee, 84, Mathias, W.Va., Jan. 12

Stroop, Marie Ollie Katherine, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., Jan. 22

Sweitzer, Mary J., York, Pa., Dec. 9

Trimmer, Harry E., 91, York, Pa., Feb. 12

Turner, Elsie S., 75, Bassett, Va., May 31, 2000

Van den Doel, Anthonie, 69, Oranjestad, Aruba, Jan. 1

Vess, Naomi Virginia, 70, Goshen, Va., Dec. 4

Weston, James B., 70, Harrisonburg, Va., Sept. 27

Whetzel, Ottie Virginia, 75, Petersburg, W.Va., Jan. 2

Whitaker, Halbert, 85, McPherson, Kan., Feb. 14

Wilhelm, Lizzie, 89, Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 30

Williams, Anna Blough, 89, Bridgewater, Va., Dec. 25

Williams, Helen Elizabeth Coffman, 89, Staunton, Va., Dec. 15

Wimmer, John Boyd, 88, Stanleytown, Va., Aug. 9

Yingling, Stuart, 75, Spring Grove, Pa., Jan. 21

Licensings

Durst, Mark, Georges Creek; Lonaconing, Md., Feb. 25

Fitz, New Fairview; York, Pa., Feb. 25

Heckman, Wesley Ray II, Feb. 4, Brandts; Saint Thomas, Pa.

Wray, Jeffrey Allen, Feb. 11, Cedar Bluff; Boones Mill, Va.

Ordinations

Aronhalt, Mary Colleen, Sunnyside; New Creek, W.Va., March 11

Bidgood Enders, Elizabeth L., Mack Memorial; Dayton, Ohio, Feb. 24

Bidgood Enders, Gregory, Mack Memorial; Dayton, Ohio, Feb. 24

Black, Brian S., Middle Creek; Litzitz, Pa., Feb. 25

Schreyer, Manfred, West Alexandria, Ohio, Feb. 18

Shockney, Richard Ray, East Dayton; Dayton, Ohio, March 18

Starkey, E. Patrick, Feb. 11, Summerdean; Roanoke, Va.

Pastoral placement

Cannaday, Jimmy O., from pastor, Jones Chapel, Martinsville, Va., to pastor, Red Oak Grove; Floyd, Va., Feb. 1

Quesenberry, James Hebron, from interim pastor to associate pastor, Red Oak Grove; Floyd, Va., Feb. 1

Zepp, Joy Elaine, to director of program for children and youth, Glade Valley, Walkersville, Md., Nov. 21



Out of this world

I had read in my travel guide that people drive on the left side of the road in India, like the British, but not so. In the countryside of southern Rajasthan state where we were, they drove down the middle, as though playing chicken with oncoming traffic, avoiding my early demise only with a last-minute left nudge on the steering wheel. While others napped, a fellow tour member stayed awake with me to mentally dodge traffic and gasp and occasionally cover our eyes. Only by our service of worry and prayer did we arrive at our destination unscathed.

Traffic going our direction gets the horn before we pass, not just a toot but a sustained blare. Most vehicles have a sign on the back asking for a honk—one said, “Horn okay please.” And there are more than motor vehicles in this circus parade of the Indian roadway. There are camels, elephants, donkeys, and cows. As we approached a tourist stop we saw in the distance a tall dark something standing in the road. What’s that? “A dancing bear,” said the driver nonchalantly. Of course, a dancing bear. Why didn’t I know that?

At the Hotel Kushalbagh in Udaipur visitors are greeted with an enigmatic sign in English, “This is out of this world.” It doesn’t say what is. But after the fluorescent in our room started flashing on and off disco-like, and someone outside—we called him “Big Ben”—beat pans on the hour at 3 a.m. and 4 a.m., I decided the overall experience of India was delightfully out of this world. The culture gap was mixed with humor, overlain with history, textured with spirituality.

A century ago Mark Twain said this: “The Indians may seem poor to us rich westerners. Yet in matters of the spirit it is we who are the paupers and they who are the millionaires.” The great emperor Akbar (1556-1605) tried to uplift the best of all India’s religions. “It has become clear to me,” he wrote, “that in our troubled world, so full of contradictions, it cannot be wisdom to assert the unique truth of one faith over another. The wise person makes justice his guide, and learns from all. Perhaps in this way the door may be opened again whose key has been lost.”

Christians are only two percent of the Indian population, though they are proud of their faith and influential beyond their numbers. It is exciting to contemplate what Christ may have in store for India, and what India may teach Christ’s church.

My wife, Mary, and I traveled to India in February on a Church World Service tour—a personal trip unrelated to the Church of the Brethren delegation’s problem-solving tour to former Brethren

mission areas a few weeks before. Our purpose was to witness the work being done with CWS funds and CROP Walk dollars through CWS’s partner agency in India, Churches Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA). Sponsored by 24 Protestant and Orthodox churches in India, including the Church of North India, CASA does relief and development projects throughout India with a staff of 700 people. Formed in 1947, CASA is a respected and professional organization. It was among the first on the scene with emergency relief after the devastating Jan. 26 earthquake centered in Bhuj, Gujarat. By April CASA had 45 people there to continue relief work and start rebuilding homes, aided by Church of the Brethren funds through CWS.

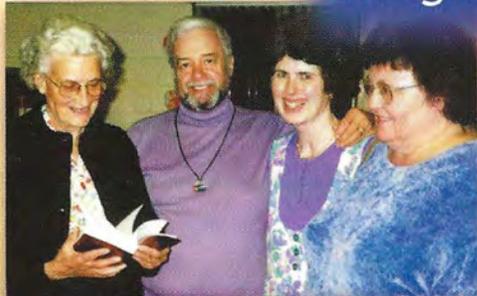
Though much of its staff was diverted to the earthquake effort, CASA took us to see their ongoing work to relieve a tragedy that rarely makes the news—the drought of southern Rajasthan, where there hasn’t been a substantial monsoon for three years. In poor rural villages outside of Jaipur, Udaipur, and Banswara, we were greeted lavishly with garlands and music, and told what the communities have done for themselves with CASA’s help. CASA community organizers work with women in “self-help groups,” which conduct micro-loan programs that give women control over money for the first time. Together they work against child marriage and to increase literacy among women. Farmers “bund” their fields with small earthen embankments so the water won’t run off if the monsoon does come this summer. They are deepening wells and learning the benefits of composting. In one parched village we ate at the home of one of the few Christian families, where a Bible verse was written on the wall in the local language: “I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink” (Matt. 25:35).

Because the political climate in India is hostile to proselytizing, I asked a CASA official if field workers attempt to tell Hindus and Muslims they help that the work is done in the name of Christ. “They know who we are,” was his profound reply. I asked CASA’s Udaipur staff why they did this work when they could all get better-paying jobs. Speaking through a translator, each of them eagerly told of their love and concern for the poor. What frustrates them? After conferring together they agreed on an answer. “They say they are not frustrated,” the translator said, “because they live in hope that things are getting better.” Here the song rings true: “They will know that we are Christians by our love.”—FLETCHER FARRAR

Because the political climate in India is hostile to proselytizing, I asked a CASA official if field workers attempt to tell Hindus and Muslims they help that the work is done in the name of Christ. “They know who we are,” was his profound reply.

It's a New Day

As the agency accountable to Annual Conference for the caring ministries of the church, the Association of Brethren Caregivers equips caregivers of the Church of the Brethren.



ABC's ministries serve many Brethren, including the:

918 deacon/caregiver groups that can call ABC for resources and training.



1,050 older adults who attended ABC's National Older Adult Conference in 2000 for inspiration, fellowship and education.

1,130 congregations and Brethren organizations that received resources to nurture and undergird families.

1,723 caregivers who read about topics, such as mental illness, dealing with anger, and loss and bereavement, in Caregiving, ABC's quarterly publication.



**When you need caring ministry resources,
call the Association of Brethren Caregivers.**

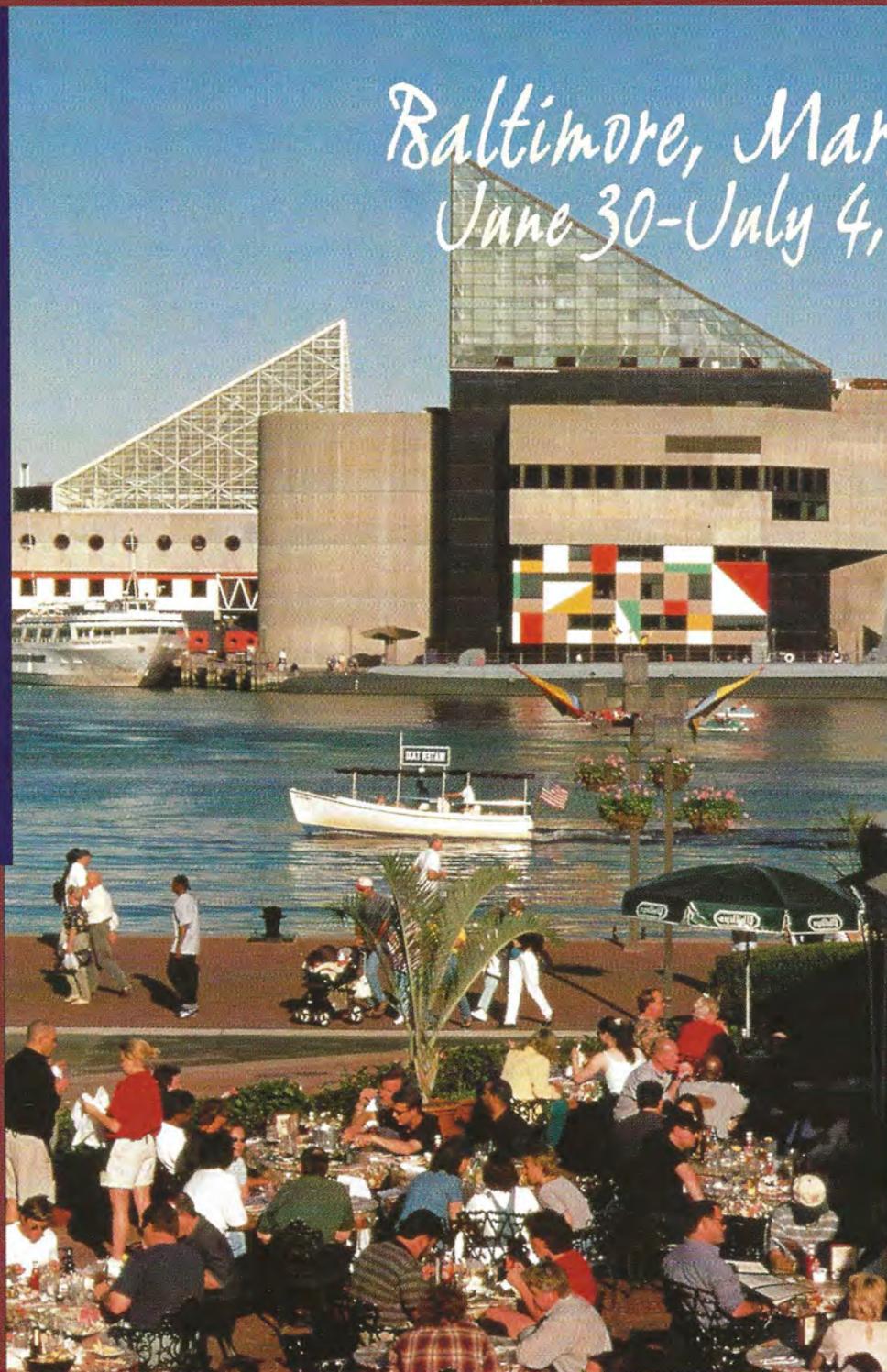


**Association of
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215th Annual Conference

Baltimore, Maryland
June 30-July 4, 2001



*Will you
not revive
us again,
so that your
people may
rejoice in you?
Psalms 85:6*

Photo by Richard Nowitz, BACVA

Annual Conference Speakers:

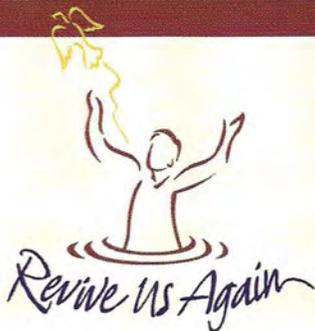
- Saturday evening.....Moderator, Phill Carlos Archbold
Pastor, Brooklyn First Congregation, Atlantic Northeast District
- Sunday morningTom Zuercher
District Executive, Northern Ohio
- Monday evening.....Rev. Harold Carter
New Shiloh Baptist Church, Baltimore
- Tuesday eveningFrank Ramirez
Pastor, Elkhart Valley Congregation, Northern Indiana District
- Wednesday morningChristy Waltersdorff
Pastor, York Center Congregation, Illinois/Wisconsin District

Brethren Ministries Live Sunday ~ 3:00 pm

*A 90 minute multi-media presentation of
ministry and mission from the five agencies
reportable to the Annual Conference.*

Don't miss it!

*The agencies are
Association of Brethren Caregivers,
Bethany Seminary, Brethren Benefit Trust,
General Board, On Earth Peace Assembly.*



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