

Church
of the
Brethren

MESSENGER

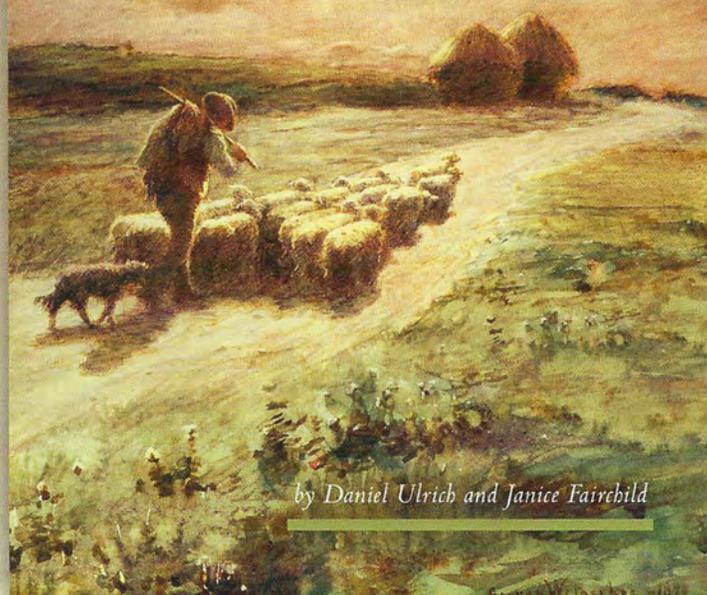
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Church of the Brethren

MESSENGER

Editor: Fletcher Farrar Publisher: Wendy McFadden News: Walt Wiltschek Advertising: Russ Matteson Subscriptions: Diane Stroyeck Design: Cedar House Group



Walt Wiltschek

ONTHECOVER

Brethren, Mich., is in many ways typical small-town America. It has a village store, a pizza parlor, a couple of churches, and tree-lined streets. In this town, however, many of those tree-lined streets are named after Church of the Brethren ancestors, and traces of Brethren heritage are everywhere. MESSENGER traveled to northwestern Michigan this fall to report on the town as it turns 100 years old.

Cover photo is by Walt Wiltschek.

10 Welcome to Brethren, Mich.

"In one small corner of the world, at least, 'Brethren' is a household word," writes Walt Wiltschek in his profile of the place where Brethren settled 100 years ago and named their town after their church.

16 Steward of the soil

When soil scientist John Doran won an international award for his work, he put the prize money to work through a charitable gift fund. Now the fund is helping the Church of the Brethren and other groups to make the world a better place.

20 When Jesus dropped by

Dan Petry, pastor of the Middlebury, Ind., congregation, writes that he was in his yard working on his fishing boat when a stranger came by and introduced himself as "Jesus . . . of Nazareth." Their conversation, recounted here, leaves readers to ponder "what would Brethren do?" if Jesus dropped by.

22 Dunker meetinghouse

The famous Civil War photograph of the Dunker meetinghouse on the Antietam battlefield has inspired Pete Haynes to view it as a metaphor for the Church of the Brethren today—a healing place in the midst of strife.

26 Letters from Baghdad

Church of the Brethren members Peggy Faw Gish and Cliff Kindy were in Iraq in December to witness for peace and try to stop a war. Here are their letters home, dispatches from the peace front.

DEPARTMENTS

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



FROM THE PUBLISHER

Twenty years ago my husband-to-be moved to Elgin and located an apartment. A few months down the road, the landlord (assuming he was talking to one of his own kind) confided that he was glad he hadn't had to rent to a black person.

Seventeen years ago, when we bought our first house, we learned through the grapevine that the next-door neighbor had worried that the house would be sold to a black family. (That's because the previous owners were Brethren, and Brethren had a reputation in town for forcing the fair housing issue by selling to non-whites.)

Two months ago, while I ate dinner next to my father, one of his neighbors strolled up to say hello, then said he had to head off to the bank to check on his account. "They're always making mistakes there," he said. "You have to watch them. They're so stupid. They're mostly Asian, you know." Then he cheerily took his leave while I stared into my plate.

So Trent Lott's infamous racist remark, spoken in an unguarded moment when he thought he was with friends, didn't seem all that surprising to me. While his reference to 1948 was extreme, the underlying sentiment is shared by more people than we want to believe. They just don't say it in public.

When people like Lott are deemed no longer capable of public service, it should not be because of the poor judgment of uttering one egregious remark. It should be for the record that has been spotlighted because of that comment. And if his record is judged unsatisfactory, then so should the record of a nation where race affects housing, employment, and education; where people with lighter skin and more expensive lawyers fare better in the criminal justice system; and where few people are bothered about the situation until someone makes a political blunder. Lott may deserve to be the scapegoat, but that shouldn't let the rest of the country off the hook.

Virtually all of us, whatever race we may be, are bound by stereotype and prejudice. I'm guilty of stereotyping people of all races, including my own. I confess I'm also prejudiced toward people from Mississippi.

It's easy to join the chorus of people denouncing the senator from that state. It's harder to admit that many successful Americans have benefited from the kind of leadership he has provided. It's easy to take a day off for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. It's harder to keep working toward King's dream. Lamentably, Lott may have been disturbingly accurate as he built a career representing the people of this country. If we don't like what we see in the mirror, let's start by examining ourselves.

Wendy McFadden

How to reach us

MESSANGER

1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120

Subscriptions:

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

Display advertising:

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

Editorial:

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

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Chicago stained glass windows feature Martin Luther King

The windows had to be replaced. Even though First Church of the Brethren, Chicago, had been almost completely renovated in 1989, the window frames had not been touched. By the year 2000 the wood was rotting; wind and rain were seeping in. Something had to be done. A windows committee looked at a number of possibilities and became attached to the work of architect Marvin Holt. His windows were made of beautiful colored glass segments held together much like medieval leaded windows.

The committee worked with Marvin to create a Church of the Brethren set of windows. First the entire church was asked to rank those symbols most significant to them. Eventually all felt the design expressed their faith. Then church members sold services like sewing or baking to raise the necessary funds.

A cross formation in the center contains a circle with twelve followers of Jesus in four colors: red, green, blue, and yellow. They represent the centrality of the community of faith and the multicultural nature of First Church. Above the circle, still on the vertical line, we see Jesus with arms stretched



The Martin Luther King, Jr., panel of the new stained glass at Chicago's First Church of the Brethren.

out like a praying figure (one of the most frequent symbols found in early church art). To the left of Jesus are praying hands, signifying our relationship to God, and to the right a dove that symbolizes the peace given to the disciples of Jesus. To the left of center is the Bible, the source of our faith and practice, and to the right a basin with a towel, a symbol not only of our Brethren worship, but also our dedication to service.

The bottom panel has three praying figures with uplifted hands. The panel to the left shows children of different races coming to Jesus and the one to the right portrays one saint, Martin Luther King, Jr. The very unique panel with King was not simply a reference to the African American martyr.

In 1966, while King was working and

living on the West Side of Chicago, his office was located in the church building. Chicago First commemorated his work with the congregation, and the memory of his presence, by making his visage a part of its new windows.

—Graydon F. Snyder

Poages Mill celebrates centennial

The Poages Mill Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va., celebrated its centennial with a special event planned for each month of the year. An "old-fashioned love feast" was planned for Nov. 2, with Virlina district executive David Shumate serving as communion leader, then preaching in worship Nov. 3. A luncheon and afternoon program were planned.

—Maurice E. Wright



The Hoss Wranglers, spouses, and friends at their 11th reunion at Camp Mack, Milford, Ind.

Hoss Wranglers reunite —57 years later

Following the end of World War II, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration made arrangements to ship horses to the wartorn city of Danzig (now Gdansk), Poland, for relief. The Brethren Service Committee was approached by the U.N. to assist with getting volunteers.

On Dec. 12, 1945, a group of 33 volunteers, primarily from Church of the Brethren and Mennonite backgrounds, boarded the *S.S. Clarksville Victory*. In addition to the volunteers on board there were two veterinarians, the ship's crew, 744 horses, 258 tons of hay, and 32 tons of oats and bran. A total of 56 horses died of shipping fever and other mishaps.

Fifty-seven years later, Camp Mack in Milford, Ind., was the location for the 11th reunion of the Hoss Wranglers, spouses, family members, and friends. Those who attended were Eli and Martha Beachy, Franklin, Ky.; Al and Catherine Nisly, Uniontown, Ohio; Paul and Ruth Bucher, Lititz, Pa.; Paul and Dorothy Epp,

Henderson, Neb.; Don and Betty Klippenstein, Goshen, Ind.; and J. Olen and Leona Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.

Also attending were Marcile Becker, N. Manchester, Ind.; Dean, Jael, and Esra Heisey, Mishawaka, Ind.; and Luis and Shirley Hurley, Wolf Lake, Ind.

—Dorothy Heisey

Honsaker honored for a ministry to children in day care

Bessie Honsaker, a charter member of Fellowship Church of the Brethren, Martinsburg, W.Va., was honored in October for 30-plus years of service as director of Norborne Day Care Center, a program of the Fellowship church and Trinity Episcopal church.

The day care center was the first of its kind in the area when it opened in 1969. Bessie, who had worked with day care programs for the Middle Maryland District of the Church of the Brethren, started at Norborne as a volunteer because the board of directors didn't think she had enough experience. Within four months Bessie was put on staff as director.

She was instrumental in getting state assistance to allow children from low-income families a place to be safe and to learn. She would often make home visits to each child enrolled. She and her staff would also help young mothers to find jobs and enroll in

educational courses that would help them to get off welfare.

—Carol Strickler, interim co-pastor, Fellowship Church of the Brethren

Virlina Urban Ministry event features pulpit exchange and paper bags

H-O-M-E! Eight-year-old Mikal Jordan spelled the letters in the air as Karen Cassell of First Church, Roanoke, Va., read the book *Benjamin Brody's Backyard Bag* (Brethren Press) during the children's message. The story is about Benjamin and the many ways a paper bag can be used. Through a conversation with a homeless woman, Benjamin found out that she used a large paper bag to store her belongings. A brown paper bag can become a h-o-m-e. After the story, everyone in the church received a brown paper bag and was invited to bring it back to church filled with food for the food pantry.

This book was shared in 10 Virginia congregations as part of the Nov. 24 worship service. Churches in Lynchburg, Richmond, Roanoke, Salem, and Virginia Beach participated in a pulpit exchange as part of the Third Annual Virlina District

Urban Ministry Event.
A planning



Bessie Honsaker with one of her many children.



Jack Karpenske, pastor of the Lynchburg, Va., congregation, shares the book Benjamin Brody's Backyard Bag with the children at the Peters Creek congregation, Roanoke, Va.



committee of Michael Hostetter (Williamson Road) and Patrick Starkey (9th Street) prepared resources used by all the participating churches that Sunday. Pastors traveled to neighboring Church of the Brethren congregations to preach, and someone in the local congregation served as worship leader. A copy of the book about Benjamin Brody was given to each church library.

Volunteer Service and other service programs at the Brethren colleges. Some of the worksites included Catholic Worker Houses, day care centers, Church of the Brethren Washington Office, and various church camps.

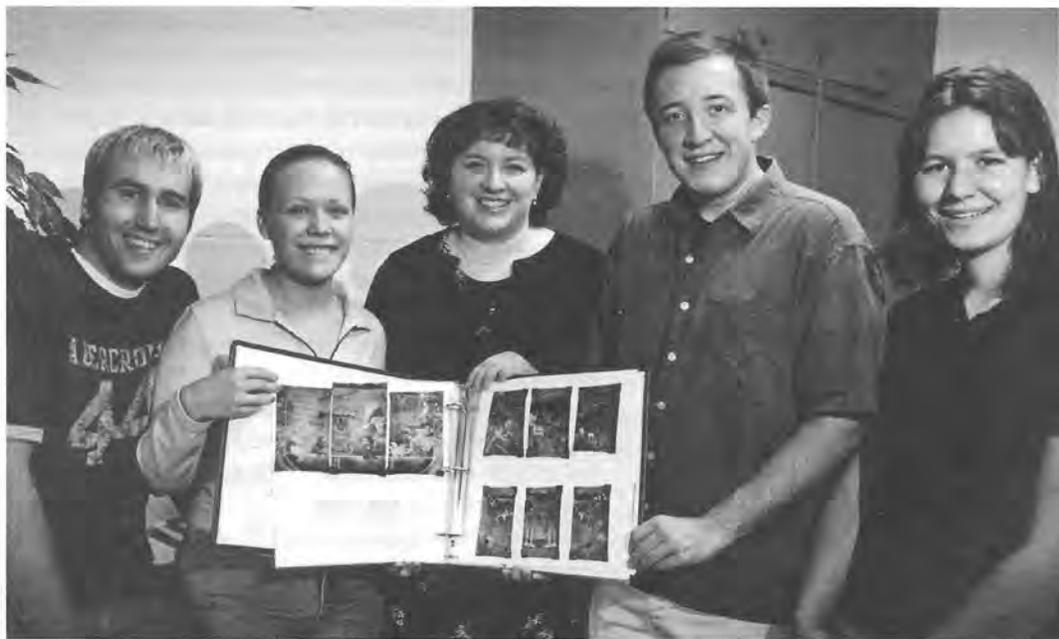
The program will be offered again in 2003 and 2004. For additional information contact Wendi Hutchinson at wahutchinson@manchester.edu.

A summer to explore theological vocation

Last summer 24 "not-so-average" students from five Church of the Brethren colleges worked in service-related jobs that took them outside their normal summer activities. These students participated in the Summer Service program of the Theological Exploration of Vocation, funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

The institutions involved in the grant want to increase both the number of students answering the call to ministry and the number of those who see their work choices as vocations with theological dimensions. The goal of the Summer Service program is to allow students to explore their calling.

Each participant worked for 10 weeks in their place of service and received a \$2,000 scholarship. The service experiences were arranged through Brethren



A scrapbook of summer experiences is shown by Theological Exploration of Vocation students at Manchester College. They are, from left, Jerry Pořorney, Julie Wieseke, Wendi Hutchinson (associate director for grant), Josih Hostetler, and Crystal Waggy.

BRETHRENSPEAK

"We do not advocate the way of peace because it is easy; it is hard. We advocate the way of peace because, as a people of faith, we take the Word of God seriously and as the rule of our lives."

—from the General Board resolution on the threat of war with Iraq, passed at the October 2002 meeting

"Mammoth" effort by General Board calls for restraint in Iraq

A letter sent from General Board chair Warren Eshbach and general secretary Judy Mills Reimer to US government leaders expresses concern and calls on them to exercise restraint in tensions between the United States and Iraq.

The letter notes the Church of the Brethren's position as a historic peace church and the belief in Jesus' words to "love our enemies." A copy of the General Board statement against war with Iraq, passed at its October meeting, was enclosed with each letter.

Church of the Brethren Washington Office coordinator Greg Davidson Laszakovits said

the office would hand-deliver the letter to every member of Congress and send it to White House leaders. Meetings were also planned with more than 100 foreign policy staff from offices of representatives and senators who voted for the Iraq resolution but might be open to the Church of the Brethren message. Laszakovits said the project has been a "mammoth task."

Youth ministers find space to seek God in a quiet place

Two dozen Brethren who spend much of their time doing youth ministry gathered in Maryland Nov. 18-20 simply "to be."

The sabbath retreat for youth ministers, offered by the General Board's Youth/Young Adult Ministry office, was held at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministries Center near Sharpsburg. There was no cost to participants except transportation, and scholarships were provided for those coming from a distance.

Youth/Young Adult coordinator Chris Douglas noted in publicity for the new event that, "This will not be a seminar on youth ministry. It will be an opportunity for persons in youth ministry to engage in spiritual renewal, prayer, and silence." Glenn Mitchell, a Church of the Brethren minister and trained spiritual director from Boalsburg, Pa., provided leadership for the retreat.

"You've chosen a retreat time, and that's a wonderful thing," Mitchell told the group. "So much of our life with God is making space." He called the sabbath space an opportunity to have a "sense of being with God instead of doing for God."

As one participant said, "I love my job, but some days I spend too many hours doing it." Others identified needs for rest, renewal, discernment, and direction as reasons for coming, some from as far as Indiana and California.

Mitchell used the scripture from Jeremiah comparing God's work in people's lives to a potter working with clay as a theme text, along with numerous other readings and poems. During the retreat participants had an opportunity to visit an actual potter's shop near Shepherd's

Spring. The three days also included teaching sessions on new ways to approach devotional time; hands-on activities such as stitching books; group spiritual direction and the availability of appointments for individual direction; worship, with Shawn Kirchner of La Verne, Calif., providing music leadership; and abundant quiet personal retreat time.

Walt Wlitschek





Kabul is not a place to feel secure, particularly if you are a child—a fact not lost to Afghan human rights groups slowly trying to build a foundation for a future in which tolerance and dignity, rather than hatred and conflict, become the watchwords for Afghanistan. With assistance from Church World Service, a Church of the Brethren partner and one of Afghanistan's most prominent human rights groups, the Cooperation Center for Afghanistan (CCA), has taken that commitment to heart, developing a children's rehabilitation center. The CCA program is providing some 100 children, ages 8-14, a place to come to after or before school.

BRETHRENSPEAK

"We are very thankful. This has come at a very crucial time for us."

—22-year-old Afghanistan resident Rahmuddin Huzruddin, on the rebuilding work being done in his country by Church World Service.

Bethany board applauds enrollment, plans for 2004 peace conference

The Bethany Theological Seminary Board of Trustees gathered for its semi-annual meeting Oct. 25-27 in Richmond, Ind. The board spent substantial time in group-building due to the significant number of new members.

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee reported that graduate student head-count and full-time equivalency (FTE) numbers are up from this time last year at the seminary, with head-count increasing from 64 to 81, and FTE from 37.51 to 44.42.

Updates were also provided on the Susquehanna Valley Satellite, which offered online classes for the first time in 2001-2002, and on progress toward the launch of Bethany's distributed education program "Connections" in August 2003.

The committee reported that Bethany is taking a lead role in planning a second major consultation of the historic peace churches that will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, in the summer of 2004. Don Miller will provide organizational leadership for this consultation.

The Institutional Advancement Committee gave an update on Bethany's capital campaign and noted the congregational phase of this campaign will begin at Annual Conference 2003.

The executive committee

Rob Rummel of Western Pennsylvania District watches as spiritual director Glenn Mitchell lights a "dancing flame" lamp at the start of a youth ministry sabbath retreat.

reported that it had authorized the appointment of a new board committee, Student Recruitment and Development, to focus on the changing nature of these areas. Bethany president Eugene Roop gave a report on his sabbatical.

In other action, the board: approved a 4-percent increase in tuition for the 2003-2004 academic year, from \$250 to \$260 per credit hour; reaffirmed the Brethren Journal Association as an entity of the seminary, and authorized it to publish a journal and other resources; and approved a change to the affiliation agreement with Earlham School of Religion at their request, dissolving the joint business office as of Jan. 1, 2003.

Personnel moves

• McPherson (Kan.) College has announced **Ronald D. Hovis** as its next president. Hovis, currently an associate professor and chair of the department of business at McPherson, will begin his tenure as president on March 1. He will be the 13th person to hold that position at the school. Hovis' selection came after a nationwide search in which the search committee considered about 40 candidates. The college's board of trustees gave Hovis unanimous approval.

• Bethany Theological Seminary announced the appointment of **Russell W. Haitch** as assistant professor and director of the Institute for Ministry With Youth and Young Adults, beginning Jan. 1. Haitch, an ordained minis-

ter in the United Methodist Church, will relocate to Bethany's Richmond, Ind., campus from Princeton, N.J. He has served most recently as visiting lecturer in Christian education at Pacific School of Religion and previously as a teaching fellow at Princeton Theological Seminary and as a pastor and youth pastor.

• **Julia Wheeler** was named coordinator of church relations at the University of La Verne (Calif.) as of Oct. 1. Wheeler, a La Verne alumna and a member of the Church of the Brethren, was most recently a teacher in several area school districts. Her primary duties with the university will include representing the school at district conferences and Annual Conference, youth conferences, and other meetings.

UPCOMINGEVENTS

Jan. 12-14 Evangelism

Connections ecumenical event for middle judicatory staff and other leaders, Houston, Texas

Jan. 16-18 New Church

Development Coaches' Network Training, Phoenix, Ariz.

Jan. 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Jan. 19-Feb. 3 Brethren Volunteer Service Unit 252 orientation, Gotha, Fla.

Jan. 30-31 Inter-Agency Forum meeting, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1 Mission and Ministries Planning Council, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Feb. 2-6 Council of District Executives meetings, Daytona Beach, Fla.

Feb. 7-9 "Exploring Your Call" discernment event for youth, Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind.

Feb. 14-16 Anabaptist Evangelism Council, Chicago, Ill., sponsored by New Life Ministries

Feb. 14-28 Global Mission Partnerships Faith and Advocacy visit to Sudan

Feb. 28-March 2 "Living in the Midst of Questions" discernment event for young adults, Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, Ind.

Major young adult conference put on the schedule for 2004

Young adults serving as youth workers at this past summer's National Youth Conference wondered whether there could be a similar big event for Church of the Brethren young adults. General Board Youth/Young Adult Ministry coordinator Chris Douglas began exploring the idea, and she says she and the Young Adult Steering Committee are ready to try it.

A major National Young Adult Conference has been set for June 14-18, 2004, at the YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch in Winter Park, Colo. Douglas says she expects schedules and fund-raising to be more difficult for the young adult age group, but she hopes for 400 to 500 young adults ages 18-35 to attend. Future events of this scale will be dependent upon the success of this first venture.

A denomination-wide Young Adult Conference has been held annually for years, usually at one of the Church of the Brethren camps, but it is typically a smaller event. First held over Thanksgiving weekend and more recently at Memorial Day weekend, it has drawn about 50 to 100 people in recent years. The 2003 YAC will be May 23-25 at Camp Eder in Fairfield, Pa.

Brethren make their mark on NCC General Assembly

Church of the Brethren delegates to the National Council of Churches annual General Assembly held in Tampa, Fla., Nov. 14-16, had an opportunity to share the denomination's unique perspective on peace with groups from the 36 member communions.

The General Board-sponsored delegation of general secretary Judy Mills Reimer, Global Mission Partnerships director Merv Keeney, Frances Townsend, L. Gene Bucher, and Valentina Satvedi was asked to lead a morning Bible study on Matthew 5:9 for the assembly, whose theme this year was "For the Common Good: Seeking Justice, Working for Peace."

Reimer gave an introduction on the denomination's heritage, and the group shared a reader's theater presentation titled "Listening to the Word of God," written by Brethren Witness director David Radcliff. All delegates were then invited to discuss Christian peacemaking in small groups and to offer some reflections. The devotional ended by singing "Let There Be Peace on Earth," followed by prayer.

Printed by permission of the Embassy of Angola.



Angola ambassador Dra. Josefina Pitera Diakite¹, left, conveys her thanks to Brethren Service Center director Stan Noffsinger and Guerra Freitas of SHAREcircle at a special reception in November. The two agencies have worked together to deliver significant aid to the African nation.

Delegates also took action for peace during the business sessions, unanimously passing a resolution that urges US President George W. Bush to "do all possible, without going to war" to resolve issues with Iraq while also urging Iraq to comply fully with the United Nations Security Council resolution. In addition, the resolution calls on Israel to comply with UN resolutions and urges the US to help resolve the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

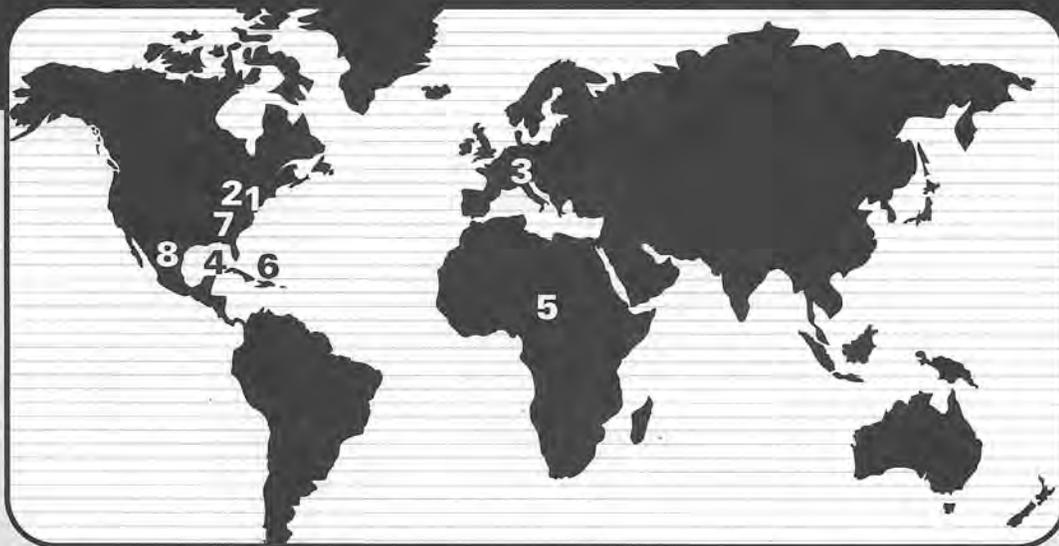
In other business, delegates celebrated the 100th anniversary of the interdenominational Mission Education Movement; heard a keynote address on Christian-Muslim relations and engaged in discussion on the issue; reflected on the "Changing Landscape of the Ecumenical Movement Today" and its implications for the future of the NCC; affirmed the NCC officers' recommendation that general secretary Robert W. Edgar serve a second term, to be voted on at the 2003 assembly; and approved establishment of a planning commission to recommend next steps in ecumenical work around the issue of genetic engineering.

Evangelism conference draws 50 Brethren to Philadelphia

Nearly 50 Brethren were among about 800 people who attended the fall Evangelism Connections conference held Nov. 15-16 in Philadelphia. Another, nearly identical event was held in Louisville this past April with about 500 attending.

The Evangelism Connections events are coordinated by Net Results Inc., with seven denominations—including the Church of the Brethren—as planning partners. Each conference included a trio of major keynote addresses, worship, and a choice of 10 workshops on evangelism issues.

Congregational Life Team member Stan



Dueck led a workshop on "Characteristics of Vital Congregations" in Philadelphia. Dueck said he heard positive feedback on both the workshops and the event as a whole. He found more lay members than pastors in attendance, signifying that "a significant number of the laity are involved in evangelism and outreach" in many denominations.

Brethren participants met for a Saturday morning denominational gathering hosted by the General Board's Congregational Life Ministries office and director Glenn Timmons. Church of the Brethren pastors and members came from Area 1 (Northeast) and 3 (Southeast). Mid-Atlantic had the largest district representation.

Disaster Child Care "angels" bring relief to Gulf Coast

Church of the Brethren Emergency Response/Service Ministries (ER/SM) sent five Disaster Child Care teams to the Gulf Coast after the area was battered by a pair of tropical systems in late September and early October.

Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili struck the Louisiana and Mississippi coastal regions within a week of each other, leaving widespread flooding and damage in their wake. The first team of volunteers traveled to Mississippi on Oct. 1 after Isidore, then went inland to ride out Lili before setting up child-care centers. Five centers were operating simultaneously in Louisiana at one point.

The centers closed by late October; the last one running was in the city of Lafayette. In all, 23 child caregivers made nearly 700 child-care contacts in the two states. The American Red Cross called the caregivers "angels" for the work they were doing.

ER/SM also had an busy autumn in disaster relief, with a project in southwestern Virginia closing Oct. 26, a short-term project in Bluefield, W.Va., wrapping up Nov. 23, and a flood relief project in Pineville, W.Va., closing for the winter that same week. The Pineville project will reopen in the spring. ER/SM representatives also made contacts and visits at numerous other sites struck by tornadoes and floods during the active fall season.

1. Washington, D.C. Brethren Service Center director Stan Noffsinger was among about 300 invited guests at a reception at the Embassy of Angola in Washington, D.C. in November. Noffsinger and Guerra Freitas, president of Angolan partner SHAREcircle, were received by Ambassador Dra. Josefina Pitra Diakite, and appreciation was expressed for the agencies' work in providing emergency aid to Angola. The General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund recently sent another \$8,500 for the distribution in Angola of canned meat provided by the Southern Pennsylvania/Mid-Atlantic District Meat Canning Committee.

2. Ohio. A tornado struck near the Dupont (Ohio) Church of the Brethren Nov. 10, as a series of storms ravaged the eastern half of the US. The church and its members escaped largely unscathed, but others in the region weren't as fortunate. Dupont church secretary Chris Murphy said a tornado touched down just a few miles from the church, destroying some homes and killing two people. No church members were injured or lost their homes, she said, but a few had damage. Some members of the Defiance (Ohio) congregation also reported damage to their homes.

3. Geneva, Switzerland. Faced with a predicted shortfall of income against planned expenses of 6.3 million Swiss francs (about US \$4.28 million), the World Council of Churches (WCC) has reduced its budget for 2003 by 7.4 million Swiss francs. This amount includes a 1.1 million-franc surplus which will allow the WCC to begin replenishing its general reserves and to provide a cushion for contingencies. As a result of the announced budget cuts for 2003, WCC staff will be reduced by 16 full-time equivalent positions to a level of 141 full-time equivalencies.

4. Cuba. A \$5,000 grant from the General Board's Emergency Disaster Fund will provide aid for hurricane damage in the Caribbean nation, in response to an appeal by Church World Service. Cuba was struck twice by significant hurricanes

earlier this fall, with Isidore and Lili both directly hitting the island. The funds will assist the Cuban Council of Churches in rebuilding homes and providing medicines, food, and blankets.

5. Africa. Church World Service (CWS) is moving forward with a new Africa Initiative seeking to bring increased attention and resources to the struggles faced on the continent. It will extend over at least five years, working with African national councils of churches and other partners. The initiative will focus on three particularly vulnerable populations: children, people with HIV/AIDS, and uprooted people—including refugees, migrants, and those who are internally displaced. Formal launch of the initiative is scheduled for January 2004 after a year of partnership-building and fund-raising.

6. Haiti. A joint delegation from the Church of the Brethren General Board's Mission and Ministries Planning Council (MMPC) and the Atlantic Southeast District traveled to Haiti Nov. 20-26 to further explore a proposal from the district for denominational involvement in the Caribbean nation, which borders the Dominican Republic. MMPC will review findings from this visit at its next meeting, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, and make its recommendations to the General Board.

7. Tennessee. A \$10,000 Emergency Disaster Fund grant will support the work of AID-NET (Assistance in Disaster-Northeast Tennessee) as it carries out home repairs needed after flooding that occurred in Tennessee in 2001. The funds will be used to help complete repair work on 17 homes and to replace three mobile homes.

8. Tijuana, Mexico. Church World Service this fall provided a shipment of health and school kits valued at \$9,850 to *Compañeros en Ministerio*, a Church of the Brethren General Board-affiliated group in Tijuana. The kits will benefit low-income, Spanish-speaking workers and homeless people in the US, and displaced people in economically depressed areas of Tijuana.



The place called

A small town in Michigan celebrates a

In one small corner of the world, at least, “Brethren” is a household word.

People rent videos at the Brethren Mini Mart. They wash their clothes at the Brethren Laundry. Their kids go to Brethren Middle School and High School and play for the Brethren Bobcats. And every September, they all get together to celebrate Brethren Days.

No, this isn't some imaginary fantasy land at Annual Conference. This is the village of Brethren, Mich., believed to be the only place in the United States bearing the name “Brethren.”

Granted, it's a small place. Longtime Brethren resident Don Stroup, who now pastors the town's Lakeview Church of the Brethren, once sat down with his aunt years ago and tried to count everyone in the community. They came up with a

total of 157 people. With a few small subdivisions being added over time, he says the tally is now likely near 200.

“It's just a little town,” Stroup says.

Brethren is located at the junction of two country roads by a corner of sprawling Manistee National Forest, in the far northwest part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The county seat of Manistee, with a population of about 7,000, is a 25-minute drive away.

To dispel any rumors, the streets here do not flow with ice cream and honey, and potlucks aren't held on every corner. (The Michigan District office—five miles up the road in Finnish-flavored Kaleva—is actually located in a corner of an ice cream parlor's building, however.)

In fact, the name has caused some confusion and even a bit of resentment over the years.



Brethren

proud history, while the faith behind the name lives on

by Walt Wiltschek

Don Willoughby, pastor of the Marilla Church of the Brethren in nearby Copemish, also pastored the Lakeview congregation for 24 years. He says the town has had an “identity crisis” of sorts between church heritage and current values, sometimes clashing over issues such as liquor sales. And can a school named Brethren really have a “fight song” or cheer?

“For the Church of the Brethren to have a town named Brethren is sometimes a plus, and sometimes it isn’t,” Willoughby says. “The name can cause trouble at times.” He describes Brethren as “a fairly typical rural community.”

Many haven’t even heard of the town, he says, let alone know what the name means. Those acquainted with the town still often stumble over the spelling, frequently writing “Brethern.” Even state offices sometimes make the mistake.

Generally, though, those who live here—and especially those who are Brethren—are proud of the town (in a humble Brethren sort of way), and they wouldn’t trade it for anything.

“It’s wonderful,” says Gladys (Danner) Grossnickle, a member of Lakeview and one of Brethren’s oldest residents at age 96. “I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.”

Grossnickle, a former schoolteacher, hasn’t lived elsewhere for long. Other than two years at Manchester College, she’s lived in the same family house for most of her life since age 3.

Many Brethren came to the remote corner of Michigan just after the turn of the 20th century, attracted by the promise of cheap, fertile farmland. Instead, they found sandy soil that soon exhausted its growing capacity. Winds off nearby Lake Michigan would sweep up sandstorms, and good crops



were hard to come by.

"They were sold a lie," says Jim Kinsey, a former Michigan District executive who continues to live in the state as a Congregational Life Team member. "It was supposed to be the kind of soil you'd find in southern Ohio, and instead it all went to ruin. If you'd had truth in advertising like today, you'd get in big legal trouble."

Those who made the move had often used their life savings to do so, however, so they were forced to create a life and form a community under the difficult conditions.

The Lakeview church is one of the older buildings in

town, built in 1904. The congregation remains active, with an average of 50 to 60 people attending each week.

"It's a very loving church," member Edith Mills says. "We're all like family."

Many of the worshippers are older, but groups of children and youth are also present, and everyone provides a warm welcome. Stroup—who always preaches from memory, without notes—even planned to begin a Sunday evening prayer/praise service this fall.

Such ambitious ventures are not unusual for the congregation, according to Kinsey.



How a Brethren teacher

Before actor James Earl Jones won Tony awards on Broadway and became known to millions as the voice of Darth Vader and CNN, he was a student in rural Brethren, Mich.

Jones was born in Mississippi in 1931, but "wanderlust" on the part of his grandparents who raised him led the family to move to a farm near Dublin, about 10 miles southeast of Brethren. He attended a small grammar school near Dublin, then moved on to what was then Norman Dickson High School in Brethren. He graduated from there in 1949.

Natural shyness, the adjustment of moving to Michigan, and the trauma of witnessing his brother's epilepsy, however, caused Jones to withdraw

during his childhood. He developed a severe stuttering problem and became a virtual mute.

"I was pretty much stymied by the inability to talk without stuttering," Jones said in an interview with MESSENGER. "I had to be assessed (at school) through written examinations."

The key to loosing his tongue came from one of his teachers in Brethren, an ordained Church of the Brethren minister named Donald Crouch. Crouch planned to retire in Michigan after a career as a college professor, but he couldn't stand seeing children who wanted to learn about literature and Latin without a qualified instructor, according to Jones.

"He dropped his plow and came back



People rent videos at the Brethren Mini Mart. They wash their clothes at the Brethren Laundry. Their kids go to Brethren Middle School and High School and play for the Brethren Bobcats. And every September, they all get together to celebrate Brethren Days.

“They’re very committed to the Church of the Brethren,” Kinsey says. “They know who they are, and what they’re all about. They’ve produced an incredible amount of leadership over the years, especially at the district level, and they’ve been pioneers for Michigan District camping programs. . . . They really have a good, solid faith tradition, and people can point to that.”

Stroup’s biggest concern these days is finding a successor. Stroup wants to retire at the end of 2003, and he fears finding another pastor to come to the area could be difficult. He himself was coaxed out of post-teaching retirement to

serve as pastor these past few years.

Holding teaching credentials is not unusual in Brethren, as the school is by far the town’s biggest employer. Stroup says the area is also “the hot spot for salmon fishing,” with outdoorsmen descending on the area in droves during peak seasons. The oldest building in town, a former post office, now serves as a fish cleaning station.

Other buildings scattered around downtown include a pizza parlor, a post office, the Sportsmen’s Lodge motel, and an old school building that Stroup and some others hope to turn into a senior/community center. Many of the

gave voice to a famous voice

as a teacher, lucky for us,” Jones said.

Crouch discovered that Jones was a “closet poet.” One day in class, Crouch—an accomplished poet himself—challenged his pupil to prove that a poem Jones had written was original by standing and reciting it. Jones accepted the challenge, to applause.

That began a longstanding bond between the two, as Jones regained command of his verbal expression and even became a star of the school’s debate team. Jones and Crouch remained in contact until Crouch’s death in 1982.

Of all the teachers he had, Jones said Crouch “was the one who impressed me the most.”

“What impressed me most about

him was his broad thinking,” Jones said. “He wanted to open our minds up to the larger world. . . . Especially during election times, he would really make us think and not get caught into what was handed down to us blindly from our families and our class or our social peers.”

Jones made his professional stage debut at the Ramsdell Theatre in nearby Manistee, where he enjoyed spending free time on the beach, then moved on to New York. The rest is legendary, with roles in a variety of Broadway plays beginning in the late 1950s, about 200 movies, and numerous commercial spots featuring his deep, resonant voice, including the famous “This is CNN.” In

December he received the Kennedy Center Honors for lifetime achievement in the performing arts.

“I can only take the whole voice thing as a wonderful irony,” he said. “I think sometimes you find when you have a weak muscle, that when you strengthen that muscle it becomes an even stronger muscle that defines your life in a way. That’s what my voice did for me.”

Jones said he still has many aunts, uncles, and cousins in Michigan, but he limits his travel these days. The famous voice was part of Brethren’s centennial this past year, though, as Jones made a tape that was played for a special assembly at Brethren High School.—**Walt Wiltschek**

A history of Brethren's Brethren

by Janet Stroup

With land becoming cheap after the logging of timber, hundreds of German Baptist Brethren families migrated to northern Michigan between 1902 and 1905 to establish farms. In a small settlement north of the Manistee River, a land office and post office were established. When a name was needed, Brethren was suggested, because of the predominance of Brethren there.

While helping his son build a house east of Brethren in the summer of 1901, Charles Keith preached a few sermons, becoming the first preacher in the area. That year the German Baptist Brethren held a union Sunday school and preaching service in a little log schoolhouse on Keith Road east of Brethren. Services continued there and in Deardorff's store for a time.

Organized in 1902, the church had 26 charter members including five "free" ministers.

George Deardorff was one of the ministers, and in 1903 the first love feast was held in his store. In January of 1904, the Deardorff building burned, and two of Deardorff's children were tragically killed in that fire. Theirs were the first two graves in the village cemetery.

The present church structure was started in 1904, and because



Opal Townsend, pastor Don Stroup, and Janet Townsend Stroup pause in front of the Lakeview church after Sunday worship.

the timber had been cut it had a view of nearby Lake Elinor, hence the name Lakeview. It was a plain building and was dedicated on July 1, 1906, with J. Edson Ulery giving the dedicatory address.

The Brethren Brethren were an ambitious and evangelical group. Lakeview is considered the "mother church" for three nearby churches: Marilla, leased from the first Baptist Church in 1904, Harlan, dedicated in 1908, and Onekama, dedicated in 1911.

The Lakeview church has been active in later years in disaster relief. It has a weekly outreach to elderly residents in group homes within the county and beyond.

Presently meeting weekly are three Bible study groups, a weight loss group, a choir, and a sewing group (Piecemakers). Monthly, the men meet for breakfast and Women's Fellowship meets.

Thirty years ago (before zip codes came into being) a member of the church, while in a western state addressed a letter to himself with an address listed only as "Brethren." When he arrived home, the letter was waiting for him. Perhaps this is still the only town named Brethren in the U.S. 

Janet Stroup, of Brethren, Mich., writes a column for the *Manistee News Advocate* newspaper and she played a major role in the Brethren centennial celebrations. Her grandparents, Dan and Lowerta Leckrone, came north to Brethren, Mich., in a boxcar, as did other families, along with their two small boys, household goods, cattle and food, disembarking and living in temporary housing until their home could be built.

A... Brethren Colony * * * *

Has just been started in Northwestern Michigan. Lands in this well-known fruit and farming district are for sale by the **New York National Land Association** which controls more farming land than any other individual or corporation in the State. We can refer you to Elders and Brethren high in the confidence and regard of the entire Brotherhood, who have written letters to us commending this land. We will gladly send you copies of these letters on your request. Conditions of climate and soil in our part of Michigan are so widely different from those in other parts of the country that you will be greatly surprised and edified to read these reports which are indisputable. Maps, books, illustrated pamphlets and extracts from the Agricultural Reports furnished free of charge by addressing

SAMUEL THORPE,

General Traveling Agent.

New York National Land Association,

Majestic Building. DETROIT, MICH.

Mention the **INGLENOOK** when writing.

This advertisement for land in Michigan appeared in the *Inglenook*, a Brethren weekly published from 1900 to 1913. The Michigan item first appeared in the October 13, 1900, issue and continued to appear each week through January 19, 1901. Courtesy Brethren Historical Library and Archives

Courtesy Brethren Historical Library and Archives

structures sit along streets named for early Brethren settlers, names like Studebaker, Young, Earhart, and Stutzman.

A church that sits diagonally across the street from Lakeview—the only other one in Brethren—is for sale, as the Methodist congregation that worships there prepares to move to a new building on the south end of town. The buzz this fall was that a group of Mennonites was looking at purchasing the old building.

Put it all together, and it adds up to a unique community. Those who live here certainly enjoy it, and they and neighbors from surrounding communities celebrated the town's centennial in 2002 with a series of festivals and special events.

Don Stroup's wife, Janet, was among the main organizers of "100 Days of Brethren," which included special church services, concerts, the crowning of a prince and princess, the dedication of a new village museum, heritage tours, a historical play, and a 5K run. And, yes, a potluck in the park. It all ended with an extra-special Brethren Days and parade.

Greetings were even sent from a famous former area resident, actor James Earl Jones, who graduated from Brethren High School in 1949 and honed his stage presence in Manistee (see article p. 12). Jones has credited the area and his teachers there with significantly shaping him and his storied career. Though born in Mississippi, Jones once proudly told a newspaper, "I'm a Michigander!"

The series of celebrations also included several nature hikes and fishing events, in keeping with the area's abundant natural resources.

That's the best part of the area according to Karl Joseph, a young adult who grew up in Brethren but now attends school in Grand Rapids. Joseph, a member of the nearby Onekama Church of the Brethren, says he still makes it home whenever he can.

"It's just so beautiful there," Joseph says, citing the forests and rivers with ample opportunities for hiking and canoeing. He says the Manistee River, which flows through massive Tippy Dam, is "what makes Brethren."

Opal Leckrone Townsend, Janet Stroup's mother, doesn't disagree. Her parents were among the town's original settlers, and she grew up in Brethren until she, like Grossnickle, left to attend Manchester College. She spent many years near Battle Creek, Mich., after she married, but eventually moved back to her roots.

"You're now in the most beautiful part of Michigan," Townsend says with certainty. "The northwestern corner. I didn't realize that until I moved back." One of the best parts, she says, is the friendliness of the community. "When people don't know you, they smile at you up here!"



People elsewhere sometimes smile and laugh, too, when they hear the town's name. Don Stroup recalls several times at Annual Conference when he wrote "Brethren" on the city name blank of his registration form and was told he put his church membership in the wrong place.

"You tell people about Brethren, Michigan, and they think you're putting them on until you show them on the map where it is," Kinsey says.

So if the current Annual Conference queries about a name change for the denomination come to fruition, does that mean the town's name will be changing, too?

Don't count on it. As Janet Stroup says, "In a little town, you don't want to go too fast! People say, 'What's your hurry?'" Chances are good that this will always be a place called Brethren. **W**

Walt Wiltschek is manager of news services for the Church of the Brethren General Board. He spent a few days in October enjoying the people and apple products of Brethren, Mich., and surrounding areas.

Healthy soils, heal

by Karla Hignite



Some call it dirt. Farmers know different. So does John Doran. He knows that right under our feet, one of the mysteries and miracles of creation is at work each day, supporting the vegetation upon which God's host of created beings depend for physical sustenance.

John also knows the importance of maintaining a healthy soil so the land will continue to produce. As a soil scientist with the US Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service and adjunct faculty member at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, John has for the past 27 years conducted research toward enhancing soil quality and crop production while also preserving the health of the environment. His life's work recently received international recognition, with a sizeable grant that he's now using to fund the good work of other individuals and organizations. An active member of Antelope Park Church of the Brethren in Lincoln, his faith sustains and guides his work.

A great cloud of witnesses

John became a soil scientist, in part, because of the influence of a childhood friend whose father was a soil chemist and would take the boys to his lab on weekends where they conducted greenhouse experiments. But the *kind* of soil scientist John became was perhaps most influenced by the Brethren with whom he came in contact. On occasion, John's father, an auditor with the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C., would take John and his family to the hills and hollows of Virginia for weekend escapes from urban living. It was there that John met his wife, Janet. Soon John started attending church with Janet's family, who were Brethren, and began learning about a different way of living.

John and Janet married in 1966 in the home of the minister of Calvary Church of the Brethren in Winchester, Va., after a blizzard canceled their church wedding three days before. Almost 10 years later—once he had earned his Ph.D. at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.—John, Janet, and then three-year-old daughter, Karin, moved to Nebraska where John accepted a position as soil scientist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Since then, the family has grown to include son-in-law Michael and grandchildren Fayth and Drew.

Janet, the oldest of eight children, says her family didn't have a lot when she was growing up. Her father owned a small sawmill and sold lumber. "There were times when my father didn't get paid for his work, but he never demanded payment from anyone," says Janet. "Money is nice, but it's not everything. I was brought up learning from my parents to help others."

Those ethics of simplicity and service became an early influence for John and were reflected by other Brethren who crossed his path. John met Stan Dell in 1967 when Stan came to the University of Maryland as a Brethren alternative service worker in agricultural aid. A post-World War II science revolution had spawned interest in grain production by chemical companies eager to feed the world, says John. "At the time, many of us thought this was the right thing to do. But Stan was dissatisfied and didn't feel he was helping anyone, so he stood by his faith and got reassigned to disaster relief work at New Windsor, Md."

A decade later, Doran was influenced by another Brethren, I. W. Moomaw, whose career was devoted to "agricultural evangelism," bringing to the fore the work needed to feed the world's multitudes as well as the

thy souls

The stewardship of soil scientist John Doran

associated environmental concerns of doing so. “So many times for me the awareness and sensitivity to the world around us and to social justice and peace issues came from the well of the church, from those striving to follow the example of Christ,” says John.

Throughout his career, John has carried these and other faith witnesses with him. In November 2000, John and Janet flew to Greece where John received a \$250,000 Onassis Award for his development of a soil quality test kit and for his longtime work in identifying indicators that help farmers understand how to treat their soils. That put John in the company of heads of state—including former US president Jimmy Carter—who have received the prestigious award. But John has learned humility along the way. “We don’t have a claim on anything. It’s by God’s grace that we have what we have,” says John.

Freely received, freely give

Who wants to be a millionaire? “Not me,” says John. From the moment he and Janet first heard he would receive the award, they knew they wouldn’t keep the money. “I probably could have leveraged that and some of our own financial resources to set us up to be millionaires, but then what do you really have besides a million dollars?” says John.

Instead, they used \$200,000 to open a charitable gift fund through Brethren Foundation (see “Faithful philanthropy” sidebar) so that the money could have a lasting impact for funding projects and people working on behalf of the environment, peace, and social concerns. Even though 2001 was a bad year for the US economy, their Renewing Earth and People (REAP) gift fund still provided \$5,000 in earnings that was

Nevin Dulabaum



John Doran in his laboratory.



Stan Cox, Senior Research Scientist for the Land Institute shows a soil sample to Jason Samsel, member of the Antelope Park Congregation.

then distributed among an agricultural project in Honduras, an institute in Kansas developing alternative crops and farming practices, and several General Board-related environmental and peace projects.

The Dorans contributed another \$25,000 to their congregation, the Antelope Park Church of the Brethren in Lincoln, Neb., for local initiatives that provide opportunities for enhancing spirituality and stewardship awareness. Congregational leaders administer the fund through an office established within the church. Contributions have already boosted the programming of the local church camp, Camp Mount Hermon in Tonganoxie, Kan. The remaining \$25,000 of the Onassis Award, minus taxes, is being used by the Dorans to administer REAP gift requests.

Becoming new creations

Where John stood in Athens delivering his acceptance speech for the Onassis Award was a mere 10 miles from the Areopagus where the Apostle Paul shared his knowledge of the “unknown god” that the Athenians recognized. “It seemed like everywhere Janet and I turned during that trip, we were confronted by Paul, reminded of the power and wealth of that elite group we were with,

and of how much we have materially in our own nation compared to the rest of the world,” says John. In his own modern-day translation, John could hear Paul telling the gathered community to “get with the program.”

“There is no way that I can give enough thanks to the community of faith for sharing the real message of Christ with me—in the words of Paul, to live no longer for yourselves, but through Christ, to become the creatures that God intends you to be,” says John. Inherent in that freedom is a calling to make a difference. John’s professional work as well as his spiritual life has been shaped by the recognition that we need to live differently in this world. “I think that with all our advanced technologies, we have gotten away from the basics of understanding the natural cycles of nature and understanding the natural world. We may argue about whether we are really experiencing global warming or whether ozone depletion is occurring, but the fact remains that we have the technological capabilities to influence the global balance,” says John. “We now recognize for the first time in the history of civilization that we have the technological capabilities to influence the global environment, and that is an event of serious consequence.”

From John’s understanding, one of humanity’s greatest needs is finding resource-friendly ways to meet a growing human population’s demands for food and fiber while maintaining environmental stability and conserving resources for future generations. To that end, one of the groups receiving funds from the Dorans’ REAP gift fund is The Land Institute in Salina, Kan., where Wes Jackson has for years been working to develop crops that don’t require the mas-

Wes Jackson, director of the Land Institute, which has benefited from a gift fund established by the Dorans.



sive amounts of fertilizer, pesticides, petrochemicals, and invasive harvesting techniques common to today's farming practices.

Healthy food sources begin with healthy soils. Among the soil attributes John's test kit measures is the level of nitrates present. "Some communities in Nebraska still have to drink bottled water because of the pollution in groundwater sources resulting from the heavy nitrogen fertilizers used in the 1970s," says John. In all, the kit tests and measures 10 different soil conditions or properties, including the levels of salts and carbon dioxide present and the ability for water to penetrate the soil and for plants to make use of soil nutrients—all indicators of soil health. John's soil test kit, a collection of simple tubes and measuring devices, has been picked up by a manufacturer, is being commercially marketed, and is receiving worldwide distribution.

Serving one another in love

But as John sees it, "The children of the next millennium won't care how articulate we were in debating soil quality and sustainability. They will care if there is adequate food for all and a natural world from which they can renew their spirits and their souls," says John. "In my interactions with different countries, I understand clearly that we have such an opportunity to lay out a blueprint of where we need to go, and yet we keep getting sucked into development criteria that are based only on our own short-term concerns for personal and national economic benefit."

While John's professional work centers on indicators of soil health, his faith is shaped by an understanding of certain indicators of spiritual health. Among them is the need to remain focused on the fact that faith is never an individual journey and that we're never done traveling, says John. Proverbs 16:3—"Commit your work to the Lord"—remains one of many biblical reminders for John.

"There are many ways individuals can use the resources they have to carry out the work of the church," says John. "The Lincoln congregation has witnessed to me through its simple living and living the upside-down kingdom," says John. "Without this, I don't think I'd have had the sensitivity I do toward living in service to others and sharing my gifts with others in need." ❧

Karla Hignite, former senior writer for Brethren Benefit Trust, is a free-lance writer now residing in Colorado Springs, Co.

Faithful philanthropy through a Charitable Gift Fund

John and Janet Doran never envisioned receiving such a large financial award. But they're glad the \$200,000 charitable gift fund (CGF) they established through Brethren Foundation can benefit church programs for many years to come. The Dorans established

a CGF in large part because they knew the investment would reflect Brethren values, since all Brethren Foundation investments are made according to socially responsible investment criteria. "A money ministry provides the opportunity for the people ministry, and that to me is the most important thing," says John. "The charitable gift fund is a good financial tool for helping other people."

But donors don't need \$200,000 to establish a CGF. Nor must they contribute one lump sum. Individuals can donate small increments and let funds accumulate over time for eventual disburse-

ment to specified charitable organizations. At any time a donor or a committee named by the donor can recommend fund distributions. As long as the goals of recipient organizations are consistent with Brethren values, the foundation will make the gift.

Donors are also allowed income tax deductions for gifts made and can avoid capital gains taxes associated with gifts of appreciated securities or real estate. Likewise, earnings from the fund accumulate with no tax implications to the donor.

Foundation CGF funds currently total about \$500,000. Recipient organizations range from denominational agencies, nursing homes, and camps, to ecumenical agencies such as Amnesty International and Church World Service, to local food banks, fire departments, and prison ministries.

According to Will Thomas, director of Brethren Foundation Operations, donor-advised funds such as the foundation's CGF provide a good option as part of an estate-planning tool or an overall strategy for philanthropy.

For more information about Brethren Foundation's charitable gift fund, go to www.brethrenbenefittrust.org, or call 888-311-6530.

—Karla Hignite



John (far left) and Janet Doran (far right) meeting with the local REAP Committee.

“Do I know you?” I asked.
He answered, “Not well.”

When Jesus dropped by

by Daniel M. Petry

I ran into Jesus the other day. Actually, he ran into me. And I'd have to say the meeting was not at all as I had imagined it might be. For those of you who have been earnestly praying that ancient prayer, “Maranatha” (Come, Lord Jesus!), you might want to hold off awhile until you've heard my tale.

I was out working in my yard. Actually, I was replacing the spark plugs on my six-horse Evinrude and getting my little fishing boat cleaned up for the next outing when a stranger happened by. He waved, as friendly strangers sometimes will do in Middlebury, and I waved back, thinking nothing of it. I immediately went back to my tinkering and so was startled a few moments later when I heard a voice, quite close, say, “Hello, Dan.”

I whirled around to see the stranger standing in my driveway, not four feet from me. “Do I know you?” I asked, trying to sound friendly but sure a hint of suspicion had crept into my voice.

He answered, “Not well.”

Seeing the puzzled look on my face, he offered his hand and said, “I'm Jesus . . . of Nazareth.”

I was so taken aback I didn't know what to do—bow, kneel, prostrate myself?—but then I wasn't sure I would do it right, so I just stood there blinking at him. Jesus came to my rescue, breaking the awkward silence by asking, “Your boat?”

Relieved, I blurted: “This leaky old tub? Yeah—I only paid \$600 for the whole ball o' wax: boat, motor, gas tank, oars, and trailer. It's got a crack in the transom under the motor mount. It's so bad that one of these days my motor's going to fall right off, either onto the highway or into the lake. Yep, it's my little boat, all right. Caught a lot of fish from it. But I hope one of these years to buy a much nicer one—something I wouldn't be ashamed to pull down the highway.”

“So this is how you feed your family?” he asked. “Do you keep the nets out back? Is the pond very productive?”

I thought he was kidding until I saw the innocent questioning in his eyes.

“No, Lord,” I said. “My boat's just for fun, for sport fishing. We don't use nets anymore, but rods and reels made out of graphite composites. My family doesn't need what I catch; it's

just a bonus, a change of pace, something to keep dinnertime from getting boring. But Lord,”—the hurt was sounding in my voice—“you should know that I'm not a fisherman by trade. I'm a minister—one of your ministers! I've been living and working for you for 25 years! My church has doubled in size. We're getting ready to build again. We're adding program, adding staff, we're on the move for the kingdom!”

“Oh,” he said softly. “I hadn't heard.”

I was stunned. The one real success story for the Church of the Brethren in this neck of the woods—and he hadn't heard? “But Lord,” I complained, “we put out a newsletter every month. We publish an every-household newspaper once a quarter. We have a website, e-mail, four phone lines—we're connected!”

“And?” Jesus raised one eyebrow as he asked this single-word question, and I knew what he was getting at.

“And I pray,” I protested weakly. “We all pray.”

“Yes,” he said. “You're welcome.”

“Welcome?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said. “For the food. You mutter something two or three times a day about food, so you're welcome. Oh, and I usually get an emergency appeal from you on Thursday afternoons for inspiration. I didn't realize until now that that must be your sermon-writing day.”

By this time I was getting angry. “Well, maybe me and my flock aren't the fervent people of prayer that you would have us to be—save for a few shining exceptions—but we are hard workers!”

“For my kingdom?” Jesus asked. His tone and look were stern.

“Well, yeah . . . and just in general. We have a strong Brethren work ethic. Granted, things taper off church-wise over the summer, but that's to be expected when you have church members who enjoy camping and boating and fishing at the local lakes over the weekend. And of course there are vacations to far-off and exotic places, and relatives who come to visit just for a Sunday, and trips to the zoo, and sleeping in on warm, lazy mornings. So yeah, attendance suffers. But they're all good people. Their hearts are generally in the right place. And even if they miss six or eight



offerings so they have enough spending money on vacation, they start giving regularly again once they come back.

"We weren't able to fully staff the choir to sing your praises last fall—not enough men were interested—but that's because our people work so hard. I work hard. We try to be financially responsible, good stewards of our material blessings. That's why I get out here in the summer to cut the grass and trim the bushes and shine up the boat and wash down the siding! Keeping up my property value, watching out for my future. We work hard and we save all we can in our pensions and bank accounts so that we will be well cared for when we retire and have enough left to tide us through our final illness. Work and save, work and save—Lord, haven't you noticed how good we are at that here in Middlebury?!"

My voice had risen in a frantic crescendo as I tried to make him understand. But during this outburst Jesus had slowly turned away from me. When I finished my tirade he said quietly, "Those who want to save their life will lose it."

"But Lord, I didn't think you were talking about our good old Brethren work ethic!"

Jesus turned around and looked at me. There were tears in his eyes as he said: "If it draws you away from my kingdom, if it causes you in any way to overlook the lost or the least, I was. Beware the bandwagon of popular religion, Dan. Some seem to think it's all about hard-working, middle class or affluent folks who get together every weekend for a 'Jesus party.' They think it's just 'Be baptized and live happily ever after!' while the rest of the world goes to hell. But Dan, I want to show you something."

Jesus pointed behind me. I turned and saw it. It was planted solidly in my front yard—huge, imposing, terrifying. It cast its shadow across my driveway, across my boat, up the side-

walk and onto the front door of my house.

"It's... it's... a cross!" I stammered. "But Jesus, you faced it; you defeated it; your very standing here proves your victory. You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!"

"So you have said," Jesus said quietly. "But this is your cross, Dan. You can only know my joy if you know something of my pain. You must complete my suffering. You must take up your cross and follow me."

Jesus took a few steps toward the street, then turned and said, "I have one thing more for you."

After his rather harsh indictment of my life and my church I feebly joked, "I don't suppose I'm getting my crown early, am I?"

"In a manner of speaking," he said. He handed me a crown of thorns and, without a goodbye, began walking resolutely toward Main Street. Curiously, the cruel wreath was still green, as though freshly woven. It was stained with his blood.

I looked around at my boat, my cars, my house, my easy life. I thought about all the frivolous money I had spent, all the time I had wasted, all the relationships I had failed to nurture with love and zeal. I realized in the deepest part of me that Jesus was right: the life of ease leads to death—spiritual death.

"For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 16:25).

I looked at the cross and I looked at the crown and I looked at Jesus, now well down the street, just ready to round the corner and go out of sight. I knew where he was going. To the lost, the lonely, the oppressed. He was going to speak words of challenging love to loose women and hard-living men. He was going to cast out the demons in a drug addict's mind and wrest the gun from suicidal hands. He was going to confront dishonest businessmen and crooked politicians and religious charlatans who use their power to enrich themselves and cheat the powerless. He was going to huddle in basements with little children where bombs and artillery shells were falling all around, gathering them to himself like a hen covering her brood, shielding them with his very own body.

I knew where he was going, and in a panic I shouted after him, "Jesus! I'm not sure I can do this!"

He turned, and for a moment, was transfigured before me. His face, his entire being shone with all the glory of heaven! It was just for a moment, but it was enough. He smiled, and my heart leapt with new-found courage as he shouted back, "Follow me!" **■**

Daniel M. Petry is senior pastor of Middlebury (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.



Lessons from the *Dunker*

You've seen the picture. No doubt it was in one of your school textbooks along the way. A small, white building sitting amid chaos—the aftermath of a horrendous battle. There, in an old, grainy, black and white photograph is the church. Well, strictly speaking, it's not the church. It's but a meetinghouse of the church. However, as the picture reveals, the bloodiest day in the history of the United States took place in the middle of a Brethren community.

In the land surrounding Antietam

creek, near the town of Sharpsburg, Md., lived a simple people who tried to exist peacefully separated from the world. Unfortunately, the world came to their land in full force, an uncivil war threatening to tear apart a nation. The world, you see, cannot be avoided, no matter how hard you try.

It was in the fall of the year, when farmers were preparing to harvest their crops. Seed had been planted in hope the previous spring, tended with care throughout the summer, and now was almost ready

for the next step in a year's cycle of hard work. And then the armies came.

Several years ago, Dennis Frye helped a group of children in a camp I was co-directing at Shepherd's Spring visualize what happened that bloody day long ago from the perspective of those who worshiped in that Dunker meetinghouse. Dennis, a professional historian and a member of the Brownsville (Md.) Church of the Brethren, at that time was a historian with the National Park Service, and Shepherd's Spring is a Church of the



Courtesy Brethren Historical Library and Archives

meetinghouse

by Pete Haynes

Brethren outdoor ministry center which lies only three miles from Antietam battlefield.

We gathered around a volleyball court and watched as he laid out the Sharpsburg countryside in the sand. Here was the farm of Samuel Mumma. There were the fields which D. R. Miller had so carefully cultivated. The last names sounded familiar, borne by some of the children watching Dennis draw in the sand. The 19th-century people behind those names, as well as the land upon which they lived long ago, would

be radically changed that day in 1862.

When this “volleyball court” map was finished, Dennis lined us up. These young people, some perhaps the descendants of those who once tended that very land, became the soldiers. It was fun trampling over this sandlot battleground, knocking down cornfields and fences, houses and barns.

The horror of that day is hard to convey to children, but I hope they—who are now adults—remember that a battle is more than the strategy of generals, or

the blood, sweat, and tears of soldiers. Real people live where conflicts rage.

I hope they remember something else—that the church was in the middle of the battle. On that most terrifying day, the little Dunker meetinghouse stood out. It became a lightning rod for attack as blue and gray aimed for its whitewashed walls. Afterward it became a hospital for those who survived, as well as for those who did not. That famous photograph by Alexander Gardner of Matthew Brady Associates, with the dead still visible,

Sept. 17, 1862, was a terrifying day. My mind cannot begin to conceive of 23,000 casualties. However, our church was there right in the middle of it all. Brethren wagons helped carry the wounded, dead, and dying. Dunkers shared many cups of water—and more—in Jesus' name. No doubt they were heavily involved in cleaning up the mess, restoring the land as they helped to partially restore the lives of those who left that place broken.

soaking Brethren soil with their blood, may be a relic of the past. I wonder, however, if it doesn't provide us a metaphor for what the church should be today.

Images are important in this so-called "postmodern" era. We all know that "a picture is worth a thousand words," but such images do more than describe a scene. They point the way. At last summer's National Youth Conference, Paul Grout began his message to the young people with a video composed of images he had painted, presented at the speed of a human heartbeat. Together, these pictures told the story of the Bible in but a few minutes. Practically gasping for air as it finished, we sat in silence, grasped by that to which those images pointed. Paul then quietly finished painting another picture, which was then raised for all to see. Later, we all reached toward this painting of Jesus, with the words "For such a time as this" below it, singing, "Give me Jesus."

Those NYC images pointed the way. We weren't merely looking back at the history of salvation. Yes, these paintings were symbols—visible signs of invisible realities. Yet they pointed not just to the past, but to the future. As we stretched our arms toward Jesus, many youth were stepping forth by faith to follow him on the road ahead. That's the power of a metaphor, which pulls us forward. I know, strictly speaking, a metaphor is a figure of speech, not a picture. These words, however, evoke an image.

When Brethren speak of the tub and

the towel, there is a picture behind it, a memory of an event in which we allow someone to wash our feet, and then get down on our knees to wash the feet of another, following the example of Jesus. The power of this image pulled the Brethren of a previous generation to commit acts of kindness that affected the world far beyond the small size of our denomination. We continue to allow the tub and the towel to metaphorically draw us in service and peacemaking directions, following Jesus now.

I wonder if the Dunker Church at Antietam battlefield isn't another image with power to move us in the directions Christ would have us walk today. Mind you, I'm not calling for us to get lost in the past, to know more about what happened 150 years ago than what is happening today. Sometimes we allow our heritage to pull us back instead of propel us forward.

Sept. 17, 1862, was a terrifying day for those who lived through it. My mind cannot begin to conceive of 23,000 casualties. However, I can see that our church was there right in the middle of it all. Brethren wagons helped carry the wounded, dead, and dying. Dunkers shared many cups of water—and more—in Jesus' name. No doubt they were heavily involved in cleaning up the mess, restoring the land as they helped to partially restore the lives of those who left that place broken.

Another church, another day—St. Paul's Chapel of Trinity Church lay in the

shadow of the World Trade Center in New York City. On another September morning those huge towers came tumbling down in an act of terror. Saved by a tree, this church building became a significant refuge for those dealing with the aftermath. Those who worshiped there put their faith into action. An Anglican priest from Australia I met over the Internet was drawn this past September to that ground zero, and was pulled to this meetinghouse of his own faith. Here stood the church, right in the middle of it all—right where it should be. The building speaks metaphorically, pulling believers toward the future.

With a carload of youth from my own congregation, I pulled up to the Dunker church at Antietam battlefield last summer, following a retreat at Shepherd's Spring. The tour guide, dressed up as a soldier (Where was the plain-clothed brother or sister?), had no idea we were spiritual descendants of those who long ago worshiped there. This fellow, who had participated in many reenactments of the battle, spoke of the pacifist people for whom this was a meetinghouse.

This building is a place where the story of the Brethren, so often a people who preferred to live behind the scenes and outside the mainstream, became plastered on the pages of history. I've often wondered why we haven't done more to let this image speak of who we are—not just our history, but our present and future. As a board member of Shepherd's

Spring several years ago, I sought to link the vision of this outdoor ministry center to the Dunker meetinghouse at Antietam, since it is just down the road.

What does this place speak to us today? First and foremost it tells of a church which finds itself in the middle of conflict. A terrorizing sniper recently took the life of a Brethren simply filling his car with gas in Manassas, Va. We live in a violent world, and that violence is not just "over there" somewhere. I thank God for the Manassas Church of the Brethren, which had nurtured and challenged this fellow, and who grieved his loss. They are an example of a church in the middle of it all, putting their faith to work right where they are.

Some who come to our camps and churches are from broken homes. Families today can be battlefields, even those with longstanding Brethren last names. The wounded from life-in-general lie all around us. The war rages in our midst, no matter where we are located. We are in the world, whether we like it or not. We cannot hide behind our heritage. That's not what the past provides us. Instead, it gives us images that can serve to propel us forward toward where God in Christ is leading us.

Such as that old Dunker church at Antietam battlefield. I envision three "r's" to draw from this image for the task of the church today. As in the days following Sept. 17, 1862, we are about *rebuilding* lives torn apart in the war of everyday life, *restoring* the land upon which God has given us to live, and working toward *reconciliation* in a world bent on conflict. How is God speaking to you, to your community of faith, through this old Dunker meetinghouse? Lean forward as you listen to this picture speak, sisters and brothers, not backward. **ZU**

Pete Haynes is a first-generation Brethren and pastor of the Long Green Valley congregation near Baltimore, Md. More information on "The Little Dunker Church" can be found at <http://www.cob-net.org/antietam/> or <http://rock-hay.tripod.com/peace/dunkerchurch/index.htm>



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DISPATCHES

Christmas letters

Two Church of the Brethren members—Peggy Faw Gish of Athens, Ohio, and Cliff Kindy of North Manchester, Ind.—were in Iraq in December as part of an effort by Christian Peacemaker Teams to head off war and witness for peace. Both have sent regular reports to friends at home. These are posted on the On Earth Peace website, at www.brethren.org/oepa/seekingpeace/Iraq.html. Here is a letter from each of them written during the week before Christmas.

Hope comes to us each day

Dec. 16

I am not at home to write and send a traditional Christmas letter to each of you, but will try to send you one from sunny Baghdad.

The last two weeks have felt like a time of waiting. We had less trips and visits to institutions because of the end of Ramadan followed by four days of Eid celebrations. We have been keeping ourselves busy with volunteer work, keeping up on the news, writing, visiting families and churches/mosques, organizing our team, and planning for future activities. Those of us who have been here longer have been orienting new people and arranging visits for them.

We had a major peace vigil in front of the U.N. Development Program offices two days ago and talked with many Iraqis and international people and had good media coverage. Now we are planning a series of vigils at "sensitive" (to their life and culture) sites, to remind our government that they have stated publicly that they would not target such places, (though they did during the Gulf War and would likely again). We have a vigil scheduled at a water treatment plant on Saturday and at an electrical facility on Sunday. At some sites, we may set up a tent as a symbol of the vulnerability of the Iraqi people.

Many ask how I am holding up in all of



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rom Baghdad

this. Living here is stressful in many ways, being a "rich" and privileged American in the midst of so many poor, dealing with the threat of war against the people who have become our friends, and dealing with the anger, discouragement, fear, and grief that keeps coming up in me. I am thankful to be continually given the strength to work through these things, but it takes constantly acknowledging my feelings and weakness. I am pushed to face and grow beyond my own selfishness and fears, and draw on the help from God and people around me.

This morning in our small group worship circle, Cliff talked about Advent as a time to embrace the "birthing" of the Kingdom of God breaking in among us, and he asked us what helps us sustain the kind of work we are given here. We shared about how important hope is for us. It is a hope in what could come from the efforts of thousands of people around the world praying and working for peace and for the miracles that God could do to work through this, that keeps us going. (The work here is no more important than the work you are doing there.)

Hope comes to us each day in unexpected ways through those who are the most helpless and have the least in terms of power or possessions. By the grace of God, hope can be strong in the midst of policies and messages of war and despair. After experiencing the month of Ramadan here, where millions of people were fasting and praying, we have thought of the power that could come from people all around the world fasting and praying for God's kingdom to break in and give peace in this and other lands!

May God's kingdom come!

Peggy Faw Gish

Listen carefully to the silence

Dec. 17

Dear family, friends, and good people,

Today I am struck by silence. Creation and life are silent. The slow-moving Tigris, the growth of the date palm leaf, and the expanding creativity of a child's mind are often changes taking place in silence.

Horror can often strike us silently too. I cannot hear the 90,000 anti-personnel mines that are stockpiled in nearby Gulf states by the US in preparation for—regime change? Yesterday I read of the microwave bomb that is being readied to take out electrical and computer systems. Because it won't differentiate between the electricity needed for a water treatment plant and that used for Iraqi military communication, the horrible silence of complicity in overwhelming death is numbing.

But hope can rise in silence as well. It is persistence in planting tomatoes and building homes in the face of war. It is the nurture of schoolchildren for the future when the news screams, "There is to be no future." I'll bet my life on the child's mind and the planted tomatoes.

Last Tuesday we met with a dozen Iraqi professionals. We shared our lives with each other. Amal asked, "What can we do together to stop this war?"

We met with UNICEF. Iraq is unique in the world because it pays for its own emergency relief aid. When 500,000 tons of raw sewage are dumped in the rivers each day, and sanctions keep the water treatment systems unworkable at necessary capacity, the children are the victims. The bombings of war, the broken electrical system, the devastated economy, and the holds placed on repair purchases by the United States in the UN sanctions oversight committee continue the insidious violence.

Thursday we went out to one of the UN inspection sites. It was an antibiotics plant operated jointly by several Arab

nations. We went to talk with media and to voice our affirmation of inspections as a way to deal with the unanswered question: Does Iraq have dangerous biological weapons (or nuclear and chemical weapons) and the missiles to deliver them in an attack against others?

Friday was a special trip to Diyala, a farming community over an hour outside the city. It was a gift. The sky was blue, the air was clear, and there were fruit trees everywhere! An extended family with five households operated a 45-acre fruit farm of oranges, bananas, pomegranates, apples, pears, dates, olives, grapes, and apricots. We ate fruit off the trees. Yum!

Saturday we had a press conference at a water treatment plant. We wanted to remind the US administration that it has promised not to target such civilian sites. Nevertheless, almost all Iraqi water plants were taken out in the Gulf War—certainly not just an accident. Pure drinking water is essential for the health of civilians, or anybody.

Some of you would know Sean Penn, of *Dead Man Walking* fame. He has been here the last three days to learn what is happening. He joined us some and we joined him some. Apparently he has taken out newspaper ads by himself and with other actors raising serious concerns about this impending war. When he was asked by the *New York Times* reporter why actors would speak out on political issues, he responded, "We face the prospects of an apocalyptic war. We all have a responsibility to oppose such a danger, whatever we do for a living."

The mood is changing. An Iraqi friend just back from London says bombing starts in ten days. Inflation is rising dramatically. Can it be that the words of delay in the media are just a decoy for imminent war?

And you, what do you hear in the silence?

Cliff Kindy

LETTERS

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"The news of salvation in Jesus Christ is good! Jesus left us a clear mandate to "go, tell, make disciples, teach" (Matt. 28: 19-20). The Church of the Brethren is not known for its urgent evangelistic fervor. Why?"

Hard questions about prayer

As we Brethren ponder the nature of God, it is instructive to compare the outcome of the recent Pennsylvania mine accident with the accident involving KLM Flight 607. The story of the mine accident is outlined by editor Farrar in the November MESSENGER. A brief summary of the KLM accident can be found in Vol. II of the *Brethren Encyclopedia*, p. 703.

In the mine accident, nine men, some of whom were Brethren, were freed from a flooded coal mine due to the heroic efforts of rescue workers and, ostensibly, the prayers of hundreds if not thousands of people. No lives were lost. It is certainly tempting to ascribe the success of the rescue at least in part to prayer.

But then there is the nasty example of KLM Flight 607. On Aug. 14, 1958, a KLM Royal Dutch airliner with 99 persons aboard left Ireland's Shannon airport for Idlewild airport in New York. Twenty passengers had participated in a Brethren heritage visit to Schwarzenau. Thirteen were members of the church. Eight were children.

When the plane arrived at a point 130 miles over the Atlantic, the pilot radioed that all was well. What happened after that is not known in detail. All contact with the plane was lost. Parts of the airplane were found floating in the ocean. There were no survivors.

Examination of the bodies and fragments of the airplane indicated that the plane had

probably disintegrated in mid-air. It was later determined that a violent electrical storm had been in the area. We can be sure that there were many prayers offered by friends, relatives, and the passengers themselves for the safe travel of the plane to New York. But not a single person survived.

How do we account for the difference in these two outcomes? One answer is to shrug off this question as merely something that we do not understand. Another is to try to develop a concept of God that is consistent with what we might call the real world. It does seem that the personification of God as simultaneously all-knowing, all-loving, and all-powerful requires modification. Perhaps some MESSENGER readers will be able to offer enlightenment on this point.

Wilson B. Lutz
N. Manchester, Ind.

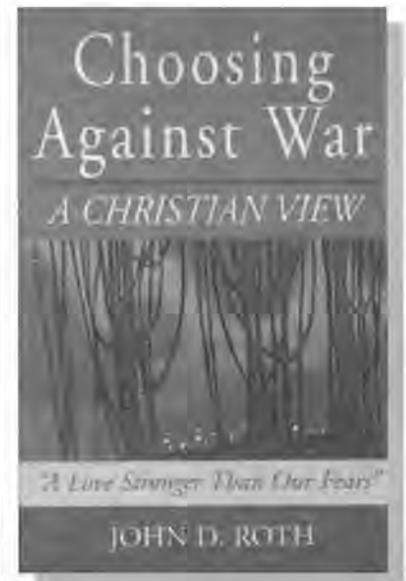
Why we don't do evangelism

The news of salvation in Jesus Christ is good! Jesus left us a clear mandate to "go, tell, make disciples, teach" (Matt. 28: 19-20). The Church of the Brethren is not known for its urgent evangelistic fervor. Why?

• We are a New Testament church. Still there is an alarming biblical illiteracy among us, in knowing what we believe and why.

• Could it be also that some have gotten into the church on a pretty lean experience

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of Jesus Christ, and so they live with a pale religiosity, having too little to effectively witness about to others?

- Instead of the church changing the secular culture, that culture has too successfully invaded the church and changed it instead.

- Another reason lies in the collapse of family life from infidelity, divorces, over-worked schedules, fatigue. Children lack models, teaching, and encouragement to choose Christ.

- Are new Christians told that it is their privilege and responsibility to share their faith in Christ with others? Too many lay people trust that the unsaved will be won by pastors, evangelists, and teachers.

- Lostness is a lost word in our vocabulary. "Jesus came to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Today people are finding new ways of being lost. Do we believe that one is lost without Christ?

- We have soft-pedaled sin, calling it a mistake or a maladjustment. So we push sin under a Freudian rug.

- We labor to strike a balance between evangelism and service. We are strong on service projects, lax on winning the lost.

- Are pastors preaching enough evangelistic sermons? Are pastors so intellectually bound as to quench the spirit, and neglect to give an invitation for a searcher to accept Christ?

- Our church is too weak in prayer power. Successful evangelism is prayed down and fired by the Holy Spirit.

Awake, Church of the Brethren!

L. Byron Miller
N. Manchester, Ind.

Brethren need vocational guidance

Money is not minted by members of the Church of the Brethren. But there are expenses. To pay pastors. To pay college professors. To pay editors. To pay for programs that help people in great need.

Where does that money come from?

It comes from transactions with people who are not Brethren. The way Brethren earn a living which permits Church of the Brethren institutions to exist, if pushed back far enough, inevitably means the larger economy is involved. It is not enough just to do each other's laundry.

The neglected topic, the elephant in the living room, is how each person earns a living. Christian vocation is essential. But the heart of Christian vocation is for each person to do what he or she does best. What is the greatest talent God has provided? This is a difficult question at any age. But, if done right, the harvest is good.

So it seems to me that all Brethren colleges and summer camps should provide world-class vocational guidance for every person of every age they serve.

This is a topic around which all Brethren can unite. We all must earn a living. To exist as a historic peace church in a country often tempted by military force, every member needs to be in that line of work where he or she has a special advantage, for the definition of patriotism can suddenly become a problem.

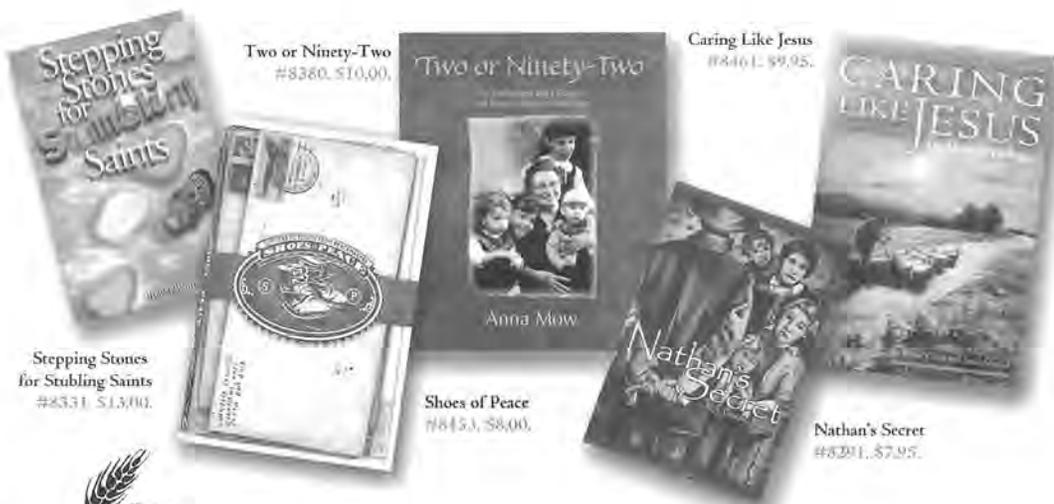
If a surge in concern for Christian vocation and Christian vocational guidance does not happen soon, all other Brethren concerns will melt away.

Wilbur Dunbar
Wooster, Ohio

Caesar didn't say it

Editor's note: A letter to the editor in the December issue (see "Give peace a chance") included a quotation attributed to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* on the nature of patriotism. We have learned from various sources, including the letter writer, that this quotation, widely circulated on the Internet, does not appear in Shakespeare's play. Indeed, a computer search of *Julius Caesar* for the word "patriotism" turned up no matches. MESSENGER regrets the error.

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Volunteers seeking a different kind of Brethren Volunteer Service orientation are encouraged to look into the special unit being held in Vermont, May 28 to June 17, 2003. Paul Grout, church leader and artist, will be our guest leader. If you're seeking to put into practice elements of the God-centered, Christ-led and Holy Spirit-empowered life with an emphasis on prayer and fasting, solitude and silence, life integrated with creation, and lifestyles of peace and justice, this unit is for you. Limited to 20 volunteers. The application process is to be completed by April 16, 2003. Call 800-323-8039, ext. 410, for an application.

Travel with Brethren on air-conditioned coach to Annual Conference in Boise. Originating Elizabethtown with pick-ups along Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana turnpikes. Visit Elgin headquarters. After conference one bus goes to Alaska via Inside Passage, Juneau, Anchorage, Mt. McKinley, and Fairbanks. Return via Alaska Highway through Yukon, Whitehorse; also Jasper and Banff parks in Canadian Rockies; Yellowstone and Mt. Rushmore. Our other bus returns home after conference via Yellowstone and Mt. Rushmore. June 30--July 14. For additional information please write to J. Kenneth Kreider, 1300 Sheaffer Rd., Elizabethtown, PA 17022 or kreiderk@etown.edu.

Alaska Anyone! A tour is being planned to Alaska July 9-22, 2003. Participants may include the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference at Boise, Idaho, on their way or do only the Alaska part. We will fly to Anchorage, Alaska, and then tour by bus for eight days. This will be followed by four days cruising the inner passage, with a final day in Vancouver and the Butchart Gardens. For a brochure, please write to Jim & Faye Myer, 234 Keener Rd., Lititz, PA 17543.

Experience Nova Scotia by bus, June 16--July 2. Originates in McPherson (other meeting points possible). You'll enjoy Mackinac Island, Ottawa, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, Halifax, ocean-front cottages on Nova Scotia's south coast, Boston area, Niagara, Ford Museum in Dearborn, and lots more. Cost: \$1,445 double occupancy. Includes all lodging, bus, and ferry transportation, some meals, other admissions and fees. Planned and hosted by Lowell and Barbara Flory. We have to get back in time for Annual Conference, and you can too! For brochure contact Flory Tours, 1142 E. Euclid, McPherson, KS 67460, (620) 241-1056, florytours@alltel.net.

Please send information to be included in Turning Points to Jean Clements, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL 60120; 800 323-8039 ext. 206; jclements_gb@brethren.org. Information must be complete in order to be published.

New Members

- Bridgewater, Va.:** Paul Bowman, Sarah Bowman, Erin Burke, Michelle Frank, Wanda Rhodes, Charlotte Trimble, Phil Zinn, Margaret Zinn
- Bush Creek, Monrovia, Md.:** Matthew Green, Tabitha Gold, Robert Lee, Joy Musselman
- Cedar Creek, Garrett, Ind.:** Brad Hardisty, Jan Hardisty, Alice Shaffer
- Central, Roanoke, Va.:** Nancy Reichard
- Columbia United Christian, Columbia, Md.:** Mark Canfield, Kim Leisey, Donna Martin, John Oliver
- Donnels Creek, North Hampton, Ohio:** Hayley Studebaker, Ryan Pearson, Darwin Hoover, Sam Dupstadt, Eric Lepley
- East Cocalico, Reamstown, Pa.:** Donald Cook, Dan Ensinger, Annabell Haynes, Richard Haynes, Kathryn Huyard, Ryan Martin, Abram Shrom, III
- Faith Community of the Brethren Home, New Oxford, Pa.:** Gretchen Kegel
- Fellowship, Martinsburg, W.Va.:** Natasha Salvador
- Free Spring, Millintown, Pa.:** James Rhea, Terry Rhea, Raymond Brown, Roger Graybill, Katelyn Kell, Alyssa Graybill, Clair Varner, Kathleen Varner, David Moist, Dennis Colyer, Paula Colyer, Amy Colyer, Betty Deamer
- Harmony, Myersville, Md.:** Wendy Leatherman, Paul N. Leatherman, III, Dawn Baker, Chris Milner, Isaac Sigler, Jr., Joyce Fisher Hubble, Brian Reed, Beth Holdcraft Reed, Frank Huntsman, William Vanover, Lori Sigler, Cameron Lee Eigenbrode, Russell Rice
- Heidelberg, Myerstown, Pa.:** Tristen Burkholder, Darin Alspaugh, Doris Alspaugh, Robert Balsbaugh, Betty Balsbaugh
- Leamersville, Duncansville, Pa.:** William Albright, Cindy Holsinger, Cheryl Wond, Amy Daugherty, Christopher Liebal, Justin Durr, Nancy Freeman, Stephanie Jo Trece, Rodney Estep, Jodi Holsinger
- Lewiston, Maine:** W. Joseph Drakus
- Locust Grove, New Castle, Ind.:** David Snedigar, Karen Snedigar, Josh Snedigar, Wesley Snedigar, Lora Smith, Eric Stickdorn, Lisa Stickdorn, Mary Roudabaugh, Joe Smith, Julie Smith
- Maple Grove, Ashland, Ohio:** Zachary Freer, Samantha Hinkle
- Maple Spring, Hollsopple, Pa.:** Tyler Ott, Kyle Zambanini
- Martinsburg Memorial, Martinsburg, Pa.:** John Tarry, Jennifer Tarry
- Mechanicsburg, Pa.:** Carlene Bengel.

Lucy Carberry, Gene Carberry, Zachary Kumler, Julie McCorkle
Middlecreek, Rockwood, Pa.: Sam Baker, Suzie Baker, Linda Baker, Kyle Sterner
Modesto, Calif.: Nels Jacobs
Morgantown, W.Va.: Dot Wiley, Todd Scott, Chrissy Martin, Mary Martin
Panora, Iowa: Bob Dehaan, Gerrie Dehaan, Dan Hayes, Linda Hayes, J. R. Wasson, Gayla Wasson, Rhys South, Barb South, Roger Tallman, Colleen Tallman, Jim Adamson, Janet Adamson, Roma Stetzel
Petersburg, Memorial, Petersburg, W.Va.: Dustin Dyer, James Hedrick, Jr., Stasha Kile, Holly Meyers, David Paugh, Whitney Wilfong
Philadelphia, First, Wyndmoor, Pa.: Dee Ramirez, Alex Ramirez, Lynn Blum
Pleasant View, Burkittsville, Md.: Tim May
Richmond, Ind.: Amanda Faucett, Elizabeth Faucett, Connelly Stokes-Prindle, Isaac Wilhelm, Jen Lewis, Nancy Faus
Somerset, Pa.: Bridget Mosholder, Helen R. Hay, Shirley Keifer, David Walker, Barbara Black, Rebecca Shaffer, Jeffrey Berkey, Jon Mosholder, Caitlin Mosholder, Jessica Schrock
Spring Creek, Hershey, Pa.: Mitchell Aguilar, Sr., Diana Aguilar, Kate Aguilar, Mitchell Aguilar, Jr., Max Aguilar, Kelly Aguilar, Jan Geesaman, Joel Holcomb, Bertha Holcomb
Springfield, Coopersburg, Pa.: Jeff Dimmick, Deb Dimmick, Scott Schoeniger, Karime Schoeniger, David Weiner, Sr., Brenda Williams, Kevin Zintak, Shelly Zintak, Curry Moyer, Lori Moyer
Stone, Huntingdon, Pa.: Edward Wallace, Joann Wallace
Troy, Ohio: Greg Coy, Jennifer Frost
Wenatchee, Wash.: Don Miller, Barbara Bowman Miller, Sue Anez, Marylee Buntain, Joe Chastain, Ken Clarke, John Clevenger, Karen Golder, Mary Carter Pringer
West Charleston, Tipp City, Ohio: Ana Gostomsky, Dean Copeland, Carolyn Workman, Jessica Workman, Michael Loughman
Wilmington, Del.: Brian James, Robin Stahl, Renee Vrtiska, Scott Vrtiska
Woodbury, Pa.: Tia Gates

Wedding Anniversaries

Barnhart, Kenneth and Donna, Springfield, Ohio, 50
Dively, Charles and Frances, Duncansville, Pa., 50
Gartzke, Don and Juanita, Roanoke, Va., 55
Hoffman, Vern and Elsie, Sebring, Fla., 55

Hykes, Charles and Louise, Hagerstown, Md., 60
Kagarise, Blaire and Pauline, Huntingdon, Pa., 60
Koontz, Ray and JoAnn, Everett, Pa., 50
Kramer, Gerald and Grace, Quakertown, Pa., 50
Oakes, Bob and Alice, Rohrsersville, Md., 50
Roussefow, LeRoy and Maxine, Waterloo, Iowa, 60
Sherck, Art and Marge, Goshen, Ind., 65
Showalter, Arlen and Edna, Everett, Pa., 50
Skelton, Darrell and Kate, Springfield, Ill., 50
Zook, Lloyd and Esther, Martinsburg, Pa., 50

Deaths

Bechtel, Fred G., 73, Curryville, Pa., Oct. 21
Becry, Mary, 91, Pleasant Hill, Ohio, Nov. 2
Berkey, William A., 86, Windber, Pa., Oct. 25
Blough, Dorothy, 84, Windber, Pa., Dec. 7
Bowser, Roy M., 69, Kittanning, Pa., Nov. 9
Boyer, Vivien L., 79, East Berlin, Pa., Nov. 15
Brannum, Adeline, 84, La Verne, Calif., Oct. 21
Briar, Agnes, 89, New Castle, Ind., Nov. 15
Brumbaugh, Martha, 77, Roaring Spring, Pa., Nov. 10
Buckle, Wayne Ford, 85, Alexandria, Va., March 24
Butterbaugh, Fred W., 90, Paradise, Calif., Sept. 15
Byrd, Jean, 75, Pleasant Hill, Ohio, April 11
Coffman, Helen, 74, Huntingdon, Pa., March 11
Corle, A. Ruth, 101, Martinsburg, Pa., Nov. 7
Craig, William, 89, Huntingdon, Ind., March 25
Craun, Velma, 82, Bridgewater, Va., Nov. 23
Cridler, John G., 74, Lima, Ohio, Dec. 11
Cripe, Mervin A., 85, North Manchester, Ind., Sept. 5
Curtis, Florence J., 98, Martinsburg, Pa., April 14
Deardorff, Bernice, 95, Clarksville, Mich., Dec. 9
DeBolt, Erma, 84, Uniontown, Pa., Oct. 21
Diehl, Lester, 76, Bowie, Md., Oct. 15
Dilling, Faye J., 82, Penn Run, Pa., Nov. 2
Eash, Nina, 95, McPherson, Kan., Nov. 17
Ebersole, George David, 61, Claysburg, Pa., Nov. 17
Edwards, James M., 79, Martinsburg, Pa., April 28
Flora, Frances, 74, Bridgewater, Va., Nov. 3
Flory, Raymond, 86, McPherson, Kan., Nov. 10
Ford, Janice, 66, Elizabethtown, Pa., Sept. 26
Furry, Winona, 89, Lima, Ohio,

Nov. 10
Gainer, Wilbur, 66, Manheim, Pa., Oct. 25
Gay, Leona, 85, Timberville, Va., Nov. 2
Gebbel, Harry, 78, Lebanon, Pa., Dec. 4
Gerberich, Sarah E., 97, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 1
Ginder, Martin, 90, Elizabethtown, Pa., Oct. 10
Green, Mary, 94, Covington, Ohio, Sept. 15
Grossnickle, Esther R., 88, Middletown, Md., Sept. 13
Haldeman, Marlin, 77, Palmyra, Pa., Oct. 4
Hartman, J. Richard, 79, Martinsburg, Pa., Oct. 22
Hartman, Mary, 81, Huntingdon, Ind., Oct. 29
Hess, Anna M., 91, Lancaster, Pa., Feb. 25
Holsinger, Robert, 78, Roaring Spring, Pa., Oct. 19
Holverson, Helen, 95, Franklin Grove, Ill., Nov. 2
Jones, Keith, 67, Continental, Ohio, Nov. 18
Keiper, Robert L., 97, Martinsburg, Pa., Aug. 19
Koota, Bounkhong, 56, Wakarusa, Ind., Sept. 11
King, Virginia N., 77, Hagerstown, Md., Oct. 21
Kirkpatrick, Vernona, 85, Modesto, Calif., Oct. 15
Klinger, Harold H., 80, Oak Park, Ill., July 29
Lindsay, William, 88, Hesston, Pa., March 14
Lupold, Virginia B., 75, Birdsboro, Pa., Dec. 16
Lutz, Lucille, 94, Greenville, Ohio, Aug. 18
Magrum, Steven, 55, Cairo, Ohio, Nov. 4
Markey, Glenn L., 61, York, Pa., Nov. 7
May, Roy L., Sr., 92, Boonesboro, Md., Nov. 15
Miller, Doris Mae, 77, Goshen, Ind., Nov. 6
Mitchell, Leona, 67, Stanley, Wis., Nov. 25
Murray, Grace, 85, Dalton, Ohio, Nov. 2
Overholt, Marian, 84, Freeport, Mich., Sept. 15
Palmer, Lee, 95, Sebring, Fla., Sept. 8
Peck, Genevieve, 85, Troy, Ohio, Dec. 16
Peightal, Helen, 81, Huntingdon, Pa., Oct. 1
Petry, Harold, 89, Greenville, Ohio, Oct. 19
Plank, Norman L., Sr., 91, Gettysburg, Pa., Nov. 11
Powers, Bunny, 75, Middletown, Md., June 1
Prowant, Vernon, 68, Cloverdale, Ohio, Nov. 10
Pullin, Harold, 95, Waterloo, Iowa, Nov. 22
Queer, Lloyd, 84, Rockwood, Pa., May 7
Reed, Alice, 75, Goshen, Ind., Nov. 15
Reese, Bert W., 66, Camp Hill, Pa., Nov. 18
Rice, Carl, 45, Elizabethtown, Pa.,

Nov. 25
Robbins, Bertha, 90, Sidney, Ohio, Sept. 9
Roth, Charles, 95, Harrisburg, Pa., July 17
Sackett, Lloyd B., 86, York, Pa., Nov. 9
Sailors, Paul, 69, Huntington, Ind., May 14
Shelley, Esther, 95, Mifflintown, Pa., Sept. 21
Shoemaker, Edith C., 96, Harleysville, Pa., Nov. 7
Sotzing, Donald E., 82, Troy, Ohio, Dec. 16
Stern, Luke K., 97, Bellwood, Pa., Nov. 12
Stites, Clarence, 93, Lima, Ohio, Nov. 1
Stoner, Jacob S., 96, Mechanicsburg, Pa., Aug. 4
Stough, Robert E., 85, Loganville, Pa., Nov. 18
Talbert, Dorothy, 89, Sunnyvale, Calif., Aug. 17
Taylor, Margaret, 80, Mill Run, Pa., Oct. 30
Turner, Herman Brewer, 88, Fulks Run, Va., Oct. 22
Ulrich, Eileen, 92, Huntingdon, Ind., March 27
Van Scoyoc, Webster Greig, 64, Pottstown, Pa., Nov. 1
Wampler, Mae, 102, Bridgewater, Va., Oct. 29
Weaver, Martha E., 92, New Oxford, Pa., Nov. 3
Weaver, Wilfred, 86, Modesto, Calif., Nov. 15
Weicht, Wilma Jean (Billie), 80, Everett, Pa., Nov. 25
White, Florence, 97, Troy, Ohio, Oct. 18
Wineland, Mary K., 87, Martinsburg, Pa., Sept. 24
Winter, Mildred, 92, Everett, Pa., Oct. 2
Wolfe, Clee, 85, San Francisco, Calif., Nov. 28
Wolfgang, Gloria J., 69, York, Pa., July 19
Wright, Vindetta, 80, Twin Falls, Idaho, June 29
Wykes, David W. (Blade), Jr., 31, Pottstown, Pa., Dec. 8
Zinn, Mildred, 63, Springfield, Ohio, Sept. 26

Licingsings

Kettering, Denise, N. Ohio Dist. (Maple Grove, Ashland, Ohio), Dec. 1
Schiavoni, Mary A., Atl. N.E. Dist. (Annville, Pa.), Nov. 24
Shellenberger, Charles Douglas, S. Pa. Dist. (Bunkertown, McAlisterville, Pa.), Dec. 1
Wertman, George Lester, Mid. Pa. Dist. (Hollidaysburg, Pa.), Nov. 24

Ordinations

Bean, Ruby, Atl. N.E. Dist. (Drexel Hill, Pa.), Dec. 15
Bretzinger, James Frank, S/C Ind. Dist. (Buffalo, Ind.), Oct. 27
Corral, Nick, Pac. S.W. Dist. (Iglesia de Cristo Genesis, Los Angeles, Calif.), Sept. 8

Fix, Brandan Elizabeth, Mid. Pa. Dist. (New Enterprise, Pa.), Nov. 5
Graybill, James R., Atl. S.E. Dist. (Venice, Fla.), Nov. 17
Glasscock, John, S. Ohio Dist. (Stony Creek, De Graff, Ohio), Oct. 27
Kingrea, David Ray, Shen. Dist. (Evergreen, Stanardsville, Va.), Dec. 8
Maclay, Connie, Mid. Pa. Dist. (Beech Run, Mapleton Depot, Pa.), Nov. 17
Markey, Georgia R., S. Pa. Dist. (Bermudian, East Berlin, Pa.), Dec. 1
Seinger, Harold, Jr., Shen. Dist. (Lebanon, Mount Sidney, Va.), Nov. 4
Spears, Richard Lynn, Atl. S.E. Dist. (Good Samaritan, Brandon, Fla.), Oct. 20

Placements

Bean, Ruby, pastor, Hatfield, Pa., Dec. 1
Bitner, Robert L., from pastor, Brookville, Ohio, to director of chaplaincy, Brethren Retirement Community, Greenville, Ohio, Nov. 1
Bohrer, Wendell, associate pastor, Sebring, Fla., Oct. 1
Bream, Jonathan, youth minister, Bermudian, East Berlin, Pa., June 1
Cooper, Scott, from pastor, Donnels Creek, North Hampton, Ohio, to pastor, Conewago, Hershey, Pa., Nov. 1
Crouse, Merle, pastor, New Covenant Fellowship, Gotha, Fla., Sept. 15
Detwiler, Robert W., pastor, Valley Point, Orbesonia, Pa., Nov. 24
Dinterman, Dale, pastor, LaPlace, Ill., Nov. 8
Fix, Brandan Elizabeth, pastor, Wabash, Ind., Nov. 11
Graybill, James R., associate pastor, Venice, Fla., Nov. 17
Hatfield, Terry, from pastor, Panora, Iowa, to pastor, Saint Petersburg, Fla., Nov. 1
Junkins, Carroll Glen, from pastor, Sandy Creek Congregation (Clifton Mills, Hazelton, Shady Grove), Bruceton Mills, W.Va., to pastor, Bethesda, Granville, Md., Oct. 1
Long, Jared, youth minister, Akron, Pa., Dec. 2
Smith, Leonard William, pastor, Broadfording, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 1
Spry, Charles Gregory, from interim to pastor, North Webster, Ind., Oct. 1
Trout, Dorsey Dewayne, from interim to pastor, Smith River, Stuart, Va., Nov. 5
Tyner, Larry, from pastor, Salem, Englewood, Ohio, to pastor, Prince of Peace, Dayton, Ohio, Dec. 1
Wilkins, Kevin A., from pastor, Elbethel, Mount Pleasant, Pa., to pastor, Wooddale, Connellsville, Pa., Dec. 31



Prayer for dummies

My New Year's resolution this year, as it is many years, is to pray more, to pray better, to recommit myself to a life of prayer.

I have a regular prayer time in the mornings, but I like to check my e-mail first. If I don't get caught up in that I settle down with coffee for my time with God. Then I remember the newspapers are out on the porch so I retrieve them and take a quick look at the headlines, then maybe read an article or two (or more), before returning to my chair and prayer. Sometimes (sometimes not) I get through the day's lectionary readings or write in my journal before I check my calendar and to-do list. By then the coffeepot is empty and my mind is so full of the day's possibilities and problems I can't sit still anymore. My day is off and running without much prayer for it to run on.

Richard Foster asks followers of his Renovaré movement to gain focus by making this covenant of renewal: "In utter dependence upon Jesus Christ as my ever living Savior, Teacher, Lord, and Friend, I will seek continual renewal through spiritual exercises, spiritual gifts, and acts of service." He writes: "It is by means of the spiritual disciplines that we bring our body, our mind, our spirit, all that we are, and place that before God as a 'living sacrifice'" (Rom. 12:1). According to Foster, the disciplines that will bring spiritual renewal include prayer, meditation, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, frugality, confession, worship, and more.

I need disciplines. At the times of my life when I have been most focused on spiritual disciplines I have felt closest to God. Spiritual fitness is like physical fitness. When I am physically fit I just feel better. But I'm always in and out of physical fitness; it never lasts. It takes so much effort to do the one most important exercise—pushing away from the table—that sometimes I just don't. And then I get too busy to exercise. After awhile I start to feel tense and out of shape. The scale tells me to drag myself back to the YMCA. I begin again.

So now as I begin again with prayer, I look for ways to make the re-entry easier. Maybe praying should not be a chore, but for some reason I'm resisting it like going to the Y. I'd rather read about prayer than pray, and buying a how-to book is my first step on any project. Though I've read many books on prayer, from classics to eloquent contemporary works, this time I wanted something basic. I looked for a beginner's handbook, and there it was: *Christian Prayer for Dummies*, by Richard Wagner. Though I'm mildly offended by the title, I figure we're all dummies when it comes to knowing how to approach the Most High. And though it seemed wrong to seek God through a book series that also offers to teach you how to train your dog, write grants, play golf, and

create web pages, I was intrigued by the book's straightforward approach to a difficult subject. It promised to "equip you with the know-how you need to deepen and enrich your prayer life." It also "helps you know why you're praying, whom you're praying to, what prayer can do, and how to pray effectively." It promised to be "highly practical yet life changing," while steering a middle course between the extremes of "touchy-feely spiritualism and heavy theological prose." It was what I needed.

Starting with basic definitions and the benefits of prayer, *Dummies* describes prayer as the "X-factor," the mysterious ingredient or hidden key, to history and life. Another section explains how sin can be a barrier to prayer. Though God promises to forgive sins if we confess them and repent (1 John 1:9), unrepented sin can keep God from listening. "No one would blame someone with a cheating spouse for backing off on communicating with the partner until the guilty party sorted things out," Wagner writes. I can follow that.

A chapter on "Avoiding the Potholes to Prayer" speaks to me, with headings on "Keeping your to-do list in perspective" and "Knowing God, not just serving him." The section about "Sticking a pin in pride" brought an ouch when I read it: "Instead of trusting God to take care of you, you let your pride convince you that you have things under control nicely, thank you very much. The inevitable result of pride is taking your eyes off God and others and putting them squarely back onto yourself." When I'm on the verge of success I tend to forget how I got there and just work all the harder. Martin Luther had a better approach: "I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer."

A chapter on fasting reminds me that going without food can concentrate my attention and make me remember my dependence on God. It has been awhile since I tried that aid to prayer. Joining a prayer group at church or making a prayer retreat can rejuvenate those of us who find private prayer difficult. Praying with the web is a new phenomenon, and there are excellent prayer sites available. At one I tried, www.jesuit.ie/prayer, I was guided through a ten-minute prayer with scripture for the day, complete with buttons to click for tips on what to do with distractions. Of course clicking for prayer tips became a distraction for me.

I'll never get prayer quite right. But along with other dummies like Billy Graham, who says here he hasn't mastered it either, I'll keep trying. —FLETCHER FARRAR

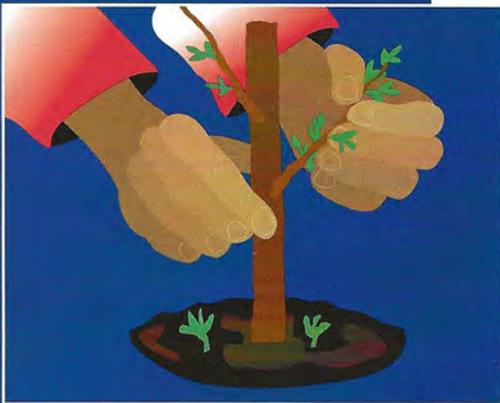
Christian Prayer for Dummies, by Richard Wagner, is available from Brethren Press at 800-441-3712 or brethrenpress_gb@brethren.org.

"...know why you're praying, whom you're praying to, and how to pray effectively."

—*Christian Prayer for Dummies*, Richard Wagner

Serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

—I Peter 4:10b



Loaves and Fishes. Seeds and Tools.

Miracles transform receivers into givers.
It happened on the shore of Galilee long ago.
Thanks to One Great Hour of Sharing, it happens
around the world everyday.

From Afghanistan and Angola to Vietnam and Zambia,
we Brethren reach out to comfort, console, restore, heal.
Our presence, shipments, partnerships in 70 countries
become, in Jesus' name, living symbols of God's love.

Each person who receives becomes a giver.
One person learns to read, then teaches another.
Villagers learn to dig wells, then show another village how.

Giving to this offering, you become a link
in this chain of transformation.
Your gift comes back to you in love because
every receiver helps someone else.

 One great hour of sharing.
Give your One Great Hour of Sharing gift through your local church or
send to the General Board, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120

217th Annual Conference

July 5-9, 2003, in Boise, Idaho



Program Booklet (available in May)

Please send the following:

- Copies at \$12.00 each of the 2003 Annual Conference Booklet (spiral binding)
- Copies at \$3.00 each of the 2003 Annual Conference Information Packet

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Amount remitted \$ _____

(Delegates sending the delegate authorization form and registration fee will automatically receive one program booklet.)

Information about conference programs and reservation forms may be obtained by contacting your pastor or:

Annual Conference Office
1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, Illinois 60120

Volunteer Helpers

I am volunteering my help with the Conference tasks
I have marked below

Please number them in order of preference.

- Registration (computer experience required)
- Usher (business & general sessions)
- Teller
- Information/mail desk
- Nurse

I plan to arrive at Conference on _____

Please circle age group:

16-22 23-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 60+

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Additional volunteers may indicate your interest in serving on a separate sheet.