



Calvary

MESSENGER

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

Galatians 6:14

APRIL 2022

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Calvary Messenger

April 2022

Purpose of Calvary Messenger is:
To propagate sound Biblical doctrine;
To stimulate a deeper study of God's Word;
To anchor and fortify the faith of Christians;
To point lost and dying souls to Christ the Savior;
To welcome prodigals back to the fold and family of God;
And to help defeated Christians find victory in Christ Jesus.

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Nature's Song

Michelle King, Port Royal, PA

"Let there be light," thundered across the heavens.
The voice rang clear; it echoed back again.
Deep darkness ran in terror as light soared.
The demons trembled for His voice had roared.
So light was born and clothed in lovely gold.
It danced in joy, His glory to behold.
God called it good as He beheld His light.
He let it rest and ushered in the night.

He formed the heavens with His Holy Word.
The waves upon the sea were fin'ly heard.
The land appeared from nothing for its God,
But emptiness inhabited the sod.
He spoke again into the atmosphere,
And life sprang up upon the tiny sphere!
The living green now carpeted the earth.
An angel chorus rang in joyful mirth.

The newborn earth lay shiv'ring in the cold.
God lit the sun—a ball of fiery gold,
So warming earth in brilliant, beaming light.
He called the moon to sing in darkest night.
The oceans roared in emptiness beneath,
Then spectrums danced upon the azure deep,
As praises rang within earth's canopy,
For life was born upon the sky and sea.

The desert plains and fertile fields sublime
Lay patiently, awaiting God's design.
The silence echoed in a mirthless reign,
But God's voice rose to add a sweet refrain.
Upon the earth, a million heartbeats sang,
A song of spring and life, as hoofbeats rang.
Then all of nature joined in one accord
To echo hymns of praise forevermore,
For God had echoed joy upon His world. 

God's Steadfast Love

“**A**nd the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:6-7).

In this month we commemorate the death and suffering of our Savior. God, the Word, was made flesh and came down to this sin-cursed earth, lived among us, ate our food, experienced sweat and tears, became tired and weary, saw hypocrisy and bigotry, and experienced dangerous storms. But this Word in the flesh took time to bless little children, touch the lepers, heal the blind, forgive the repentant adulterous woman, go to a seeking publican's house for a meal, brought a funeral procession to a dead stop by raising the dead, restored the “right mind” to a demented, demon-infested, deranged, outcast of society. He met

seekers in the dead of night, on the mountainside, under an opened roof, on the beach, at a city well, and even on a cross next to Him.

This was not just a great teacher, though He was “the Teacher.” He was not some magician who could pull rabbits out of a hat, but He could take a lad's meal of a few loaves and fishes and bless it into more than 500,000 percent, plus enough for the women and children with leftovers enough for a church fellowship dinner. But the greatest act of His life was in His death, when it seemed He was overcome by the hatred and jealousy of the rulers of God's people. He willingly gave His life and turned it into an innumerable multiplication of Life, sufficient for every seeker from the beginning of mankind to its end. This love, this unfathomable grace, this unfailing love that pursued sinful man since the Garden of Eden, not only covered our dreadful and awful sins, but washed them away and makes of the most sinful dregs of the world a brother of Christ, an heir of God, a joint-heir of our Redeemer, with our names written in God's Last Will and Testament, the book of life.

God's great mercy was planned for us before the foundation of the world. Although He destroyed the first world, He kept a godly man and his family for the seed of mankind. He made a covenant with Abraham, but He ended up paying the seed of Abraham's part of the covenant because He knew they would not be able to keep up their end of the deal.

Moses speaks of God's love and purpose for His people in Deuteronomy 7:6-10, *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."*

7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

10 And repayeth them that hate him

to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face."

He miraculously delivered His people from Egypt, saved them from sure slaughter on the banks of the Red Sea by His fiery Presence. He brought them to the mount of God where He taught them how to worship Him. While He was giving detailed instructions, face to face, to His friend, Moses, for the tent that would house the mercy seat, the people whom He loved cast their jewelry into the fire. Then the one whom God had chosen to represent Him to His people, molded a golden calf, fashioned it with a graving tool, and they said, *"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."*

"And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down; for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves" (Exodus 32:7). And Moses pled with his God for his people, appealing to Him on the basis of His covenant, His unfailing love, to remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, servants of God, to not consume them. *"And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do to his people" (Exodus 32:14).*

So Moses and Joshua went down the mountain to find the children of

Israel dancing and worshipping the calf that Aaron had made.

It is on this backdrop that the LORD God proclaimed Himself to Moses. After God had punished the people and Moses called them back from their idolatry, Moses went up to the LORD again, to the top of the mount of God, and said, “*I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.*” So, the LORD God put him in a cleft of the rock, covered him with His hand while all His glory passed by, then took away His hand and allowed Moses to see His back parts. And, “*The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting*

the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

RSV

This same God, and His Son Jesus, because of His steadfast love to us, showed mercy upon us and extended grace to all of us who receive Christ’s Blood for the remission of our sins. He has now called us His people, “*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*” (1 Peter 2:9).

What a merciful God we serve! Spread some praises of His love this month!

—AY 

the bottom line

A Special Message to All Boys and Girls

Aaron Lapp, Kinzers, PA

The following is a transcript which was read as the testimony of a young man just before his baptism at the Weavertown congregation. It was written and read by 15-year-old Jaron Michael Riehl. He gave his

permission for its publication.

• • • • •

Good morning and thank you to everyone who showed up. It means a lot to me to see you all, whether you are immediate family, relatives, or friends. When I was about five years

old, my brother and I were playing in our basement, and he thought about what we were playing and how it wasn't right. We both kneeled and prayed. I did not yet know what I was praying for, but I followed his lead.

It was a few years later that I rededicated my life to Christ when I thought I knew more. Still, I did not truly know what it meant to be a Christian. When I was about 10 or 11, I once again gave my life to Christ. It was at this time that I first understood a little more and realized I needed a Savior.

As it may not be surprising to you, I was not yet ready in mind and heart to lead a life of dedication toward God. This led to a lukewarm Christianity. When I was 12, my mom and I were driving to clean a house when a large double-long semi-truck was pulling out of a driveway on our left-hand side. We were in his blind spot, and he did not see us coming. On our right side was a deep ditch. I still believe that it was God's hand that led us through it. The truck kept pulling out, and when he finally did see us, we were close to the truck and he froze, continuing to pull out. By the time we passed it, the truck was well over on our side of the yellow line with the ditch on our right side (there was no buggy lane). With the drop-off on the one side of

the road, I don't believe it is dramatic to say we would have rolled over had we gone down into the ditch. I was not only nervous of hitting the truck, but I realized I wasn't strapped in. It is only imaginable to think what would have happened if we had crashed or rolled. This shook me very hard.

I reflected on my life and saw that I had been living in sin every day. Vulgar language, anger issues, and false repenting were in no means behind me. I remember to this day the guilt and dread that I had each night—afraid that in my sleep the Lord would come or something bad would happen. I prayed each night for peace just to be able to sleep, though in my heart I knew it was not repentance. The next day, usually without fail, I would do the same things I repented of just the night before.

It was on one such night shortly after, that I felt overwhelming guilt and was scared out of my mind. I prayed the normal prayer for me, but it didn't go away. Soon after, I was in tears from the burden and went into my parents' bedroom and told them about it. It was shortly after that I prayed with them and felt the most joy of my life. I can honestly say that it was the highest point of my life.

The next morning, I woke up

again with the same peace and joy as before. I remember looking at the calendar and writing in my Bible the date of the day before, which was April 8, 2018. It is a day that I think back on with both good and bad memories, but it is a day I will never forget. I used to wish that I had some crazy conversion with God speaking to me in a dream, but looking back, I can see that my life was in a place that I never thought I would be in. Rather than letting it haunt me, God has in His grace given me a resolution and an outline of things to not do and gray lines to not cross.

I would like to finish with one of my favorite verses. Philippians 4:11 says, *“Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”* This verse speaks to me in that God has blessed me so very much and in ways that I never saw before. I think it was in our last instruction class someone mentioned that we had no choice in where God put us. And looking on my life, I can say fully that I would not want any other life or situation. Sometimes what amazes me almost more than all the blessings I have is that I still find something to not be thankful for.

Last but not at all least, I would like to thank the pastors for their incredible work that they have done throughout instruction class, and the dads for also helping with the lessons. I would also like to thank my family for coming out and being here to support me, and to my friends who also have come to spend this special day with me. Thank You.

• • • • •

I was especially intrigued by his brother Jamien being aware of their sin before God. Jamien was eight and Jaron was five. I asked him, “Jaron, could you tell me about your sin as a five-year-old?” Jaron freely complied. He said he and Jamien were acting as soldiers in a war, like shooting and killing people. Jamien said this kind of activity is sin, so Jaron followed Jamien on his knees, crawling together under the ping pong table to where they felt they were out of sight from whomever. It was there on their knees where they made their confession to God.

The Bottom Line is that as an adult, I desire to always be as sensitive and humble to recognize my sins, and be as instant and sincere in confession to our Holy and Almighty God as were these two young, unpretentious boys!



FEED YOUR FAITH and your doubts will starve to death.



Dispersing the Night

Rebekah Brenneman, Virginia Beach, VA

The darkness presses round the earth,
Like suffocating heat.
It voids all hope to heed the way,
And misdirects the feet.

Humanity is stumbling, groping,
For anything to grasp.
They little know how short a time
These worldly things will last.

They claim one thing and then the next.
But each one like before
Reveals that its façades of strength
Will never long endure.

Do they not see their helplessness?
Their misery and pain?
Do they not know that what they seek
Delivers only bane?

They do not know, for they perceive
That this is all for fun.
They have not heard that they are called
A serious race to run.

To them it is a thrill, a game,
To see what they discover.
Surprises wait to be revealed
And each leads to another.

There is a reason they are here.
But will they ever know?
Is there no way that they will hear
The greater way to go?


This greater way is one that leads
To Heav'n's eternal home.
It's represented by a peace,
A surety unknown.

There is a way for them to hear,
By lights that shine in darkness.
But will these lights beam bright enough
To pierce throughout the blackness?

Who are these lights sent out to point
The lost ones to the right?
What gives these lights the pow'r to shine,
Dispelling through the night?

These lights are people who obeyed
God's call to follow Him.
They shine because they let God's life,
In them new life begin.

The only hope to know the way
That leads to Heav'n above,
Is walking in this Light Divine –
Surrounded by His love.

So will your light shine bright enough
To chase away the night?
To show to all the greater way,
And guide them to the Light? 



Resurrection Day

David Peachey, Belleville, PA

Want to start an argument? Just try determining which day of the week it was that Jesus died on the Cross! Some may say, “It had to be Wednesday.” Others will just as vehemently declare that Thursday is the day. And still others may be tempted to roll their eyes and think, “Oh no, not **this** discussion again! Doesn’t everyone know that it was on a Friday? Why else would we have off work on Good Friday?”

I’m not naïve enough to think that penning these few words will forever settle the argument! So why bother? It seems to me that in our Greek or Western tendency to want to once and for all settle a matter, we may have overlooked a different perspective of the Gospel accounts. There are, to be sure, some things that can be settled forever, and other things... well, they leave room for some stimulating and at times rather heated discussions!

With that, let’s dive into the Living Water of the Word and get a glimpse of how God worked in one of the most exciting times in history. On a certain first day of the week almost 2000 years ago, two disciples were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus.

This was quite a special first day of the week, ‘twas Resurrection Day, although it appears that they weren’t totally convinced. You see, their eyes hadn’t been opened yet. Along came a “Stranger” who walked with them and asked about their conversation and apparent sadness. After listening to them, He had this to say, “*O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself*” (Luke 24:25-27).

Scriptures, you say? What Scriptures? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? Check out Luke 24:44. “*And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*”

Did you know the Jews call their Scriptures the Tanakh? Tanakh is an acronym, made from the first Hebrew letter of each of the Scripture’s three traditional divisions: Torah (“Teaching” or “Law”, also known as the Five Books of Moses),

Nevi'im ("Prophets"), and Ketuvim ("Writings", e.g., Psalms, Proverbs, etc.)—hence TaNaKh. In other words, Jesus explained that the things that had happened to Him were a fulfilling of the Text!

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:46).

The third day. As days are reckoned in the Bible, they start at sundown and go to sundown the following evening. Why? That's how it happens in Genesis 1. Why do our days start in the middle of the night? Seems like a rather strange time to start a day, not?

"And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on" (Luke 23:53, 54).

Crucified and placed in a tomb on Friday; Day 1. Rested in the tomb on the Sabbath; Day 2. Rose from the grave on Sunday; Day 3. A day doesn't have to be the full 24 hours. Part of a day can be called a day as well, as I understand it. (Note; the Scriptures were written by Jews, mostly to Jews. That doesn't mean that they aren't applicable to us former Gentiles. Just something to keep in mind.)

So that wasn't so hard after all,

was it?

But what about Matthew 12:40? *"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* Does that mean that Jesus had to be in the grave for 72 hours exactly? Could He have risen at 71 hours and 30 minutes?

It seems to me that we ought to be careful of saying that God **had** to do things a certain way. God can do great things; He isn't bound by our sense of how we think it should be.

And what say other Scriptures?

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21).

"And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry" (Matthew 17:23).

"And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Matthew 20:19).

"Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal

him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matthew 27:63, 64).

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31).

"And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mark 10:34).

"We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands" (Mark 14:58).

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Luke 9:22).

"And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected" (Luke 13:32).

"And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again" (Luke 18:33).

"Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" (Luke 24:7).

"Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:18-21).

"Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly" (Acts 10:40).

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:4).

So, which is it? Three days and three nights? After three days? On the third day? Yes, that's right. All of them.

But there's more.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Corinthians 5:7).

Christ, our Passover?

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:20).

Christ, the Firstfruits? What's Paul getting at?

Read Leviticus 23. Note how often those feasts are called the Lord's feasts; God even calls them, "My feasts." He gave them seven feasts to observe each year: Passover, Unleavened

bread, Feast of Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Booths.

Passover began on the 14th day of the first month. The Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the following day. These two feasts could fall on any day of the week; they varied from year to year. The day of the week wasn't important, but the date was. But there's a difference with the Feast of Firstfruits. That's always to be on "*the morrow after the Sabbath*." For us westerners, that's Sunday. (Note-to say that there's only one Jewish way to celebrate the Feasts would be similar to saying that there's only one Mennonite or Amish way to do a wedding, or Communion, or whatever.)

Here's what I believe happened the year that Jesus of Nazareth gave His life on a Roman cross. He died on Passover, I Corinthians 5:7.

Now remember, the next day is the beginning of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. So, if Jesus dies on Friday afternoon, he is buried just before sundown as Unleavened Bread is starting. (Remember that sundown is the beginning of the new day.) Do you know what prayer was probably on the lips of the Jewish nation at the time Jesus was being "planted" in the earth? (Keep in mind the words of Jesus in John 6, especially verses 35,

48, and 51.) "Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who brings forth bread from the earth." Isn't that amazing? Quite a coincidence? Hardly. Now don't forget the Feast of Firstfruits! Sunday is coming!

Died on Passover, buried as Unleavened Bread began, rose on Firstfruits, sent His Spirit on Pentecost! And what sound are we waiting for to mark the second coming of our Messiah? The trumpet, right? How remarkable. In God's calendar of Feasts, do you know what feast comes after Pentecost? It's the feast that comes at the end of harvest, and it's marked by the blowing of trumpets. I wonder...

There's also church tradition. From fairly early in church history, it appears as though Friday was the traditional day of the crucifixion of Jesus. How much weight do we place on church tradition? Well, we like it pretty well when it comes to a defense of the women's veiling in I Corinthians 11. Until fairly recently, almost all Christians viewed that as still applicable to Christian women. I think we do well to view modern deviations from historic Christianity with great suspicion. By historic Christianity, I mean that of the New Testament and shortly thereafter. How soon after? Here's a quote from Irenaeus, with the history that links

him to the apostle John.

Polycarp and Ignatius, two of the early church fathers, studied under the apostle John. Irenaeus learned from these two.

“It is plain then that the Lord, in obedience to the Father, endured death on the same day in which Adam died, disobeying God. This day accordingly our Lord would go over again with the rest in His own Person, and so came to His Passion on the day before the Sabbath, which is the sixth day of creation, on which man was formed: by His Passion conferring on man a second formation, that which is out of death.”
-Irenaeus (born around 130 AD)

Now I'll try to wrap this up. Ever notice the garden scene in John 20? Why do we need to know that the tomb was in a garden?

If my calculations are correct, Jesus stands before Pilate on Friday, the sixth day of the week. What day was man created? And Pilate declares, “*Behold the Man*” (John 19:5).

The Greek word that Pilate uses for “man” is *Anthropos*. The word doesn't just mean “man,” like “Here is a male person.” It means “human being.” Pilate is saying, “Behold the human being.”

That word is the same word that is used in Genesis 1:26-27 in the Greek Old Testament, when

God creates human beings. It says: “*Then God said, Let Us make man [Anthropos] in Our image, according to Our likeness... God created man [Anthropos] in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*”

Later, on that same day, the Son shouted, “*It is finished.*” Then, on the seventh day of the week, the Creator rested. And with the first day of the week, New Creation began with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead! Did you ever note what Adam was designed to be? A gardener, right? And what did Mary mistake Jesus for? An architect? Of course not. She thought He was a gardener! And that's what we were always meant to be (Genesis 2:15). Gardeners, cultivators of good fruit. What a glorious future awaits us, that promised time when we, along with all creation become made new! Won't it be a great joy to do gardening and many other things in the new earth?

“*And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new*” (Revelation 21:5a).

Look at what God says He will do! Make! Echoes of Isaiah 43:19? And II Corinthians 5:17, “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*” NKJV “*Therefore, if anyone is in*

Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" NIV

And because we believe that the future awaits, we now live the way that the Text has promised that people will be like in God's rule on the earth. For us, New Creation has already begun. Don't you think we should live as though we believe that? Oh yes, remember what the Creator did after He formed man? Breathed into him the breath of life, right? Read John 20:22. The disciples were

so excited after the coming of the Spirit that they went out and "turned the world upside down." What are you waiting for?

[This thought-provoking article explores the fulfillment of the feasts of the Old Testament in Christ's death and resurrection. Searching out the Word of God for greater understanding of the mind of God and the blessings we enjoy in the day of grace is always a worthwhile pursuit. AY]



A **smile** costs nothing but gives much. It enriches those who receive without making poorer those who give. It takes but a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it, and none is so poor that he cannot be made rich by it. A **smile** creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in business and is the countersign of friendship. It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and is nature's best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a **smile**. Give them one of yours, as no one needs a **smile** so much as he who has no more to give.



marriages

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

Hershberger-Yoder

Bro. Gabriel, son of Gabe and Rachel Hershberger, Oskaloosa, KS, and Sis. Dinah, daughter of David and Dorothy Yoder, Oskaloosa, KS, on August 6, 2021, at Town and Country Christian Church for Ebenezer Amish Mennonite Church by David Yoder.

Nissley-Yoder


Bro. Darrel, son of David and Janice Nissley, Cynthiana, KY, and Sis. Judith, daughter of Nathan and Elsie Yoder, Holmesville, OH, on January 29, 2022, at Sharon Mennonite Church for Peniel Christian Fellowship by Nathan Yoder.



Yoder-Yoder

Bro. Leslie Dean, son of Tim and Arlene Yoder, Mannsville, NY, and Sis. Katlyn Leann, daughter of Elmer and Roseanna Yoder, Montezuma, GA, on December 4, 2021, at Montezuma Mennonite Church by Donny Swartzentruber.

Yoder-Yoder

Bro. Lynford Harley, son of Paul and the late Carol Yoder, Montezuma, GA, and Sis. Lilly May, daughter of William, Jr. and Lila Yoder, Montezuma, GA, at Montezuma Mennonite Church by Donny Swartzentruber. 

cradle roll

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

Coulter, Jason and Katrina (Peight), Honey Grove, PA, second child and daughter, Mataya Noel, February 6, 2022.

Hostetler, Stephen and Megan (Weaver), Russellville, KY, third child, first son, Trevor Noah, February 21, 2022.

Martin, Andy and Arlene (Raber), Hicksville, OH, fourth child, second son, Silas Drew, January 25, 2022.

Martin, Nelson and Hannah (Miller), Partridge, KS, first child and son, Caspian Pascal, February 18, 2022.

Miller, Daryl Ray and Glendora (Chupp), Kandiyohi, MN, first child and son, Tristan Cole, January 30, 2022.

Miller, Lavon and Janine (Boll), Auburn, KY, second child, first daughter, Oakley Joy, December 21, 2021.

Miller, Philip and Jessica (Graber), Oskaloosa, KS, sixth child, third son, Dexter Ross, January 7, 2022.

Overholt, Adam and Gwen (Brechtbill), Taylorsville, NC, third child, second daughter, Melanie Dawn, December 4, 2021.

Plank, James and Megan (Yoder), Montezuma, GA, sixth child, fourth daughter, Aspen Jade, February 14, 2022.

Showalter, Jeremy and Laura (Rohrer), Eagle Rock, VA, eighth child, fourth son, Josiah Wayne, February 12, 2022.

Stoltzfus, Shaphan and Barb (Hostetler), Taylorsville, NC, third child and daughter, Aryia Joy, September 4, 2021.

Weaver, Aaron and Jen (Derksen), Greensburg, KY, second child and daughter, Jacalin Grace, December 5, 2021.

Weaver, Jonas and Bernice (Yoder), Oskaloosa, KS, fourth child, third daughter, Kaylene Rose, July 13, 2021.

Yoder, Chris and Charla (Funk), Oskaloosa, KS, fourth child, second son, Bryant Lane, December 3, 2021.

Yoder, Daniel and Kathy (Miller), Hutchinson, KS, second child and daughter, Mariah Grace, February 3, 2022.

Yoder, LaVon and Angela (Yoder), Salisbury, PA, fourth child, second daughter, Aubrey Hope, February 7, 2022.

Yoder, Neal and Lilly (Yoder), Oskaloosa, KS, first child and daughter, Brylie Faith, November 9, 2021.

Yoder, Tristan and Lois (Hershberger), Ozawkie, KS, third child, first daughter, Geneva Lynn, January 30, 2022.

Zimmerman, Rodney and Kaylene (Martin), Greensburg, KY, first child and son, Tyron Spencer, January 10, 2022.



ordination

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

Bro. Linus Troyer, 55, (wife, Miriam Coblentz), was ordained as a “full charge minister” at Living Waters Fellowship, Barrs Mills, OH, on February 27, 2022. Preordination messages were given by Lee Fisher. The charge was given by James B. Mullet, assisted by Bobby Miller and Elmer Smucker. Cristen Mullet shared the lot.



Chupp, Ida J., 74, of Holmesville, OH, passed away unexpectedly at the Pomerene Hospital on February 1, 2022, following a short illness. She was born May 10, 1947, to the late Sam M. and Mattie (Wengerd) Miller. At a young age, Mary Bowman became her stepmother. She preceded her in death. On September 11, 1969, she married Paul J. Chupp. He survives.

Ida was a homemaker. She loved the Lord and was a faithful member of Peniel Christian Fellowship. She faithfully supported her husband in the work of the Lord, and lovingly cared for her children and grandchildren who will deeply miss her. Her new house, garden, and flowers, that she enjoyed, have been left behind for an eternal one in Glory.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by her four children: Ivan (Carol), Holmesville; Ruth Chupp, Emma Chupp, and Barbara (James) Miller, all of Limestone, TN; nine grandchildren: Annie, Kentlyn, Kaiden, Kaleb, and Aliyah Chupp, and Latisha, Janae, Lynford, and Durrell Miller; siblings: Melvin (Mary) Miller, twin brother, Ivan (Elsie) Miller, Barbara (Atlee) Weaver, and Aden (Katie) Miller.

The funeral service was held at Peniel Christian Fellowship on February 6, 2022, with Nathan Yoder, David Miller, Wayne Mullet, and Joshua Miller serving. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Gerber, Glen R., 51, of Gadshill, ON, peacefully passed on to his eternal reward on December 25, 2021. He was born August 24, 1970, in Stratford, ON, to the late Arthur and Laurene (nee Roes) Gerber. On August 11, 2001, he married Karen Wagler. They shared over 20 years of marriage.

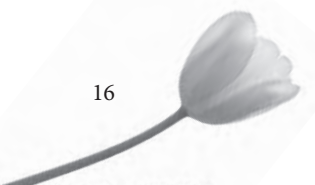
He was baptized upon the confession of his faith in Jesus Christ on November 16, 1986, and was an active member of the Cedar Grove Amish Mennonite congregation.

He leaves to mourn his departure, his wife, three sons: Joshua, Craig, and Jason; and five daughters: Angela, Heidi, Ashley, Brooklyn, and Sherri, all living at home in rural Gadshill. He will be sadly missed by his siblings: Linda (Allan) Erb, James (Patricia) Gerber, Paul (Brenda) Gerber, Timothy (MaryBeth) Gerber, Ruthann (Larry) Wagler; parents-in-law, Mervin and Wanda Wagler; brothers/sisters-in-law: Bernice (Ralph) Gerber, MaryBeth (Timothy) Gerber, Donna (Tobias) Hoover, Larry (Ruthann) Wagler, and many nieces and nephews.

The funeral service was held December 31, 2021, with Jeff Kuepfer and John Gerber serving. Burial was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Glick, Verda Jane (Kauffman), September 4, 1942 - February 25, 2022.

Last Friday night, February 25, 2022, Verda Jane, known as "Hermana Juanita",



left this life to go be with her beloved Lord, after fighting cancer for five years. We will remember her for her big smile, her hospitality, her captivating classes for children, her caring attention to sick people, her countless sacrifices made to serve others, and her consistency in remembering birthdays, and rewarding perfect attendance to Sunday schools.

Verda was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on September 4, 1942. Her parents were Christian and Suvilla (Smoker) Kauffman. She had three brothers and three sisters. Only her three sisters are still living: Lillian Beiler, Judy Beiler, and Iva Lapp.

As a child, Verda loved collecting and caring for many varieties of turtles. As a young woman, she studied for two years to become a nurse. She also taught school for one year. She wanted to do a variety of things to prepare her for the mission field. A young man named Eli Glick began to show a special interest in her during a Christmas caroling youth activity. After a time of courtship, they were married on April 2, 1966. They shared an interest for the country of El Salvador, and from the time of their engagement, they agreed they would move to El Salvador to work in the mission field. They left for El Salvador 11 days after their wedding, determined to give the rest of their lives in service to the Salvadoran people, according to God's will. They lived four months in Sitio del Niño, then three and a half years in Ayutica, and 52 years in Cantón Zacamil. During the Salvadoran civil war, they had

to leave the country for a few months, but God allowed them to return to their beloved country of El Salvador.

God gave them four sons and four daughters-in-law: Ernest and Bonnie, Resbaladero, El Salvador; Phillip and Judy, Zacamil, El Salvador; Timothy and Sonia, Texas, U.S.; Paul and Geneva, Aldea Bolaños, El Salvador; and a daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Merle Yoder, Pennsylvania, U.S. Verda also got to know 32 of her grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. One of her grandsons, Tito Andrés, went to be with Jesus before her.

For 30 years Verda operated a medical clinic. After the clinic closed, she still had a lot to do: helping her husband run Christian day schools, writing articles and books, forming and participating in writers' workshops, helping her children and their families, cooking and preparing lots of food for church events and for her family, preparing literature to send to the prisons, visiting the prisons and teaching crafts to the inmates, and always teaching a Sunday school class in her church. She had a difficult experience in 1993 when her husband was kidnapped. She wrote the book *Deliver the Ransom Alone*, describing this event. She was an encourager and a comforter, caring about the needs and problems of others, and doing everything in her power to assist them. Her faith in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was the purpose and the source of strength for her godly life. Surely it is her desire that all of us would know and believe in Jesus Christ also.

Kinsinger, Jonas D., 85, of Oakland, MD, entered into eternal rest on February 7, 2022, at his home. Born December 28, 1936, in Meyersdale, PA, he was the son of the late Dan S. and Lydia Kinsinger.

In his youth he was baptized upon the confession of his faith in Jesus Christ and was a member of Mountain View Mennonite Church. Jonas was a lifetime farmer and enjoyed being on his farm. When Jonas wasn't able to get around as well, he used his golf cart. He also enjoyed taking clothing for donation to Christian Aid Ministries.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy Eliza (Yoder), four sons: Homer (Sadie), Oakland; Tobie (Verda), Oakland; Eli (Ruth), Cynthiana, KY; Ivan (Lucinda), Oakland; daughter, Rhoda (Enos) Byler, Minerva, OH; step-sons: Mervin (Renee) Hershberger, Kalona, IA; Larry (Evelyn) Hershberger, Kalona, IA; step-daughter, Marilyn (Jim) Schrock, Kalona, IA; sisters: Sarah Summy, Mt. Vernon, MO; Fannie Beachy, Oakland; 17 grandchildren, 10 step-grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and nine step-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Ida M. (Hershberger), brother, Noah D.; sister, Ida D. Summy; and grandson, Josiah Byler.

The funeral service was held February 11, 2022, at Mountain View Mennonite Church with Kevin Coblentz, Daniel Schrock, and Derrick Bender serving. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Nisly, Amos, 97, Hutchinson, KS, died January 12, 2022, at his home. He was born June 26, 1924, in Hutchinson to the late Noah A. and Rosa (Schrock) Nisly.

Amos was a retired pastor and member of Center Amish Mennonite Church. He was ordained as a minister in the Amish church in 1952, and later ordained as bishop at Center A.M. Church, ca. 1959, serving in that capacity until 1996.

Amos was a dairy farmer who also enjoyed working with horses and sheep. He loved the Lord and loved people. A favorite phrase of his was, "He did it again!" when he wanted to praise the Lord. He freely shared his love for the Lord with those around him, sometimes asking, "How is it with you and the Lord?"

On November 8, 1951, he married the late Anne Yoder from LaGrange, IN. They enjoyed almost 70 years of marriage.

Amos is survived by sons: Phil (Lucy), Tim (Shelli), and Larry (Pam), all of Hutchinson; daughter, Rosi Nolder, Selinsgrove, PA; son, JR (Renee), San Antonio, TX. Also surviving are two sisters, Rebecca (Albert) Miller and Ella Nisly, both of Hutchinson; 18 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

He was also preceded in death by his stepmother, Mary Nisly; brothers: Will (Mattie), Abraham, Moses (Mary), Joe (Velma); and sisters: Lydia (Melvin) Yoder, Anna (Jake) Raber, and Mandy (Walter) Funk.

The funeral was held at Center A.M.



Church, January 16, 2022, with Dwight Miller and LaVerne Miller officiating. David Yoder shared reflections. Paul Yoder spoke at the graveside. Burial was at West Center cemetery.

Schrock, Martin Dale, 68, of Grantsville, MD, died January 29, 2022, at his residence. Born August 18, 1953, in Meyersdale, PA, he was the son of the late Olen and Miriam (Beachy) Schrock.

Martin was a member of the Mountain View Mennonite Church. He had a passion for singing and sang with the church chorus, The Mountain Anthems, from its inception to its disbandment which spanned approximately 50 years. He was a soloist for the group and bus driver for many years. He believed that he was born to drive the bus for the ministry. He was known as an excellent driver, providing a safe and smooth ride. His care for the bus was impeccable.

Martin was a truck driver for Noah M. Beachy and Sons, T.F. Milling, and Grantsville Truck and Trailer. He was a payload operator for several pallet shops, worked in production at Rigidply Rafters, and was a service representative for Choice Books. Just prior to retirement he was employed at Closet Maid in Grantsville.

Martin is survived by his wife of 40 years, Catherine Joyce (Tice); three brothers: Millard (Diane), Grantsville; Mayard (Trish), Cumberland; Melvin "Cork" (Lorie), Accident; seven sisters: Vera (Bruce) Martin, Meyersdale; Delores (Michael) Yoder, Grantsville;

Gloria (Kenneth) Swartzentruber, Salisbury, PA; Loretta (Gerald) Tice, and Lila (Merlin) Beachy, Grantsville; Julia (Bradley) Yoder, Springs, PA; Rebecca (David) Kauffman, Bittering, MD; and a special nephew, Steven (Amber) Tice II, who lived with Martin and Joyce for some time.

He was preceded in death by a sister, Geneva Joy.

The funeral service was held February 2, 2022, at Mountain View Mennonite Church with Peter Beachy Jr., Matthew Hottle, and Terry Yoder officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Wiles, Simon, 72, of Fredericksburg, OH, passed away unexpectedly on December 14, 2021, from an apparent heart attack. He was born in Millersburg, OH, on June 27, 1949, to the late Walter and Mary (Miller) Wiles and married Pauline Raber on April 15, 1972. She died October 29, 2018.

He was a member of Living Waters Fellowship Church in Barrs Mills, OH.

He is survived by children: Jennifer (David) Miller, Charm; Greg (Laura), Kidron; eight grandchildren, and sisters: Esther Morrison, Mary Wiles, and Martha Schlabach.

He was preceded in death by brothers: Paul and Dan, and sisters: Carrie Snyder and Rachel Fisher.

The funeral service was held December 18, 2021, at Gospel Light Chapel with James B. Mullet officiating. Burial was in the Gospel Light Chapel Cemetery.

Yoder, Edwin E., 92, of Montezuma, GA, passed from this life on December 12, 2021. He was born August 28, 1929, in Princess Anne, VA, to the late Enos W. and Mary (Miller) Yoder. On December 12, 1950, he was united in marriage to Sara Brenneman. They enjoyed over 50 years of marriage together before Sara's death on April 10, 2001.

In his youth, Edwin accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and was a faithful member of the Montezuma Mennonite Church.

He is survived by seven children: Stanley (Pauline), Melvin Paul (Irene), Marlin, Mark (Esther), Dale, Wesley (Laura), Darlene (Glen) Yoder, all of Montezuma; daughter-in-law, Sandra Yoder, Bittinger, MD, 30 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren, brother, Floyd, Montezuma; sisters: Sadie Beachy, Marshallville; Vernie (Mahlon Jr.) Weaver, Montezuma; Alta Kauffman, Marshallville; and Mary (Gerald) Yoder, Costa Rica.

He was preceded in death by two stillborn sons, two sons, Ivan Ray and David, daughter, Leila Fern, two grandchildren, and three brothers: Claude, Allen, and Melvin.

The funeral service was held December 15, 2021, at Montezuma Mennonite Church with David Lee Yoder, Randall Yoder, and Donny Swartzentruber officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Yoder, Sara N., 90, of Montezuma, GA, went to be with the Lord on February 13,

2022. She was born October 14, 1931, to the late Noah and Sadie (Schrock) Yoder in Norfolk, VA.

Sara was raised in Norfolk, VA, along with her 11 siblings. She was baptized in her youth and was a faithful member of the Montezuma Mennonite Church.

On September 9, 1952, she married Alva E. Yoder, and they greatly enjoyed 58 years together. During that time, they moved to Montezuma, GA, and raised a family of 12 children. They opened and operated a restaurant called Yoder's Deitsch Haus where she cooked lots of good food for many customers.

She dearly loved her Jesus, husband, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, whom she prayed for daily. She was happiest when they came home to spend time with her. Her sweet tea with lemon was a highlight for all.

Always treasuring the memory of their sweet mother are her children: Alva (Susan), Virginia Beach, VA; Daniel (Rachel), Elmer (Roseanna), Johnny (Linda), Nathan (Mari), Milton (Barbara Ann), Miriam (Lee) Whitt, Michael (Kathy), all of Montezuma; Eva (Pete) Miller, Cedaredge, CO; Laban (Rosie), Benjamin (Mary), Montezuma; son-in-law, Peter (Martha Ann) Whitt, Montezuma; 68 grandchildren, 118 great-grandchildren, two brothers: Allen Yoder, Stark City, MO; Noah Yoder, Jr., Burgettstown, PA; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Alva, daughter, Laura Linda (Yoder) Whitt, four grandchildren, one

great-grandchild, six sisters: Esther Kanagy, Vernie Brenneman, Frieda Yoder, Elsie Brenneman, Amanda Plank, Lena Swartzentruber; and three brothers: William, Daniel, and Clarence.

The funeral service was held February 16, 2022, at the Montezuma Mennonite Church with David Lee Yoder, Irvin Yoder, and Donny Swartzentruber officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.



observations

For as long as I can remember, motorists in the United States have had the option of choosing between high and low beam headlights while driving at night. High beams offer much better visibility, but low beams do better at keeping the glare out of the eyes of approaching drivers.

For about 20 years now, much of Europe and Japan has been using adaptive beam headlights that are more selective in where the light is focused. This provides better night vision for the driver and less danger to approaching traffic. The United States is poised to join Japan and most of Europe in allowing adaptive beam headlights on new US vehicles, perhaps as soon as the next year or two. Improving night vision while reducing glare for oncoming traffic seems like a win/win situation to me.



It is estimated that approximately two thirds of the world's population lives with inadequate access to

potable water. But the ocean doesn't seem to be running out of water. It is the salt content of sea water that constitutes a major hurdle to many uses of sea water. Much effort has gone into attempting to find ways to remove the salt from sea water so it can be used. But a major glitch in most systems of salt water desalination is that the salt build-up fouls the system rather quickly. To remedy this problem is either complicated, expensive, or both.

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and from China think they have come up with a nifty desalination system that uses solar power, a few inexpensive materials, and the natural convection of hot and cooler air. This system captures the evaporated water and releases the salt back to the water from whence it was drawn. This eliminates the problem of salt buildup. Fine-tuning this apparatus will likely take another year or two, but those involved in the research

indicate that they estimate that a unit that covers one square meter of water could supply a family of four with their drinking water needs. Cost of the materials to construct it would be approximately \$4.

For those of you interested in more specific details, feel free to consult the article entitled, “Solar Powered System Offers a Route to Inexpensive Desalination” in the February issue of *Science Daily*.

I appreciate that a reader/brother alerted me to this article. I also really like how he signed off his email to me. He wrote, “Abide in Christ, the Living Water.”

• • • • •

Speaking of water...while en route to Kenya recently, our traveling party had an interesting conversation in the Amsterdam airport while waiting for our Nairobi flight. We spoke with a gentleman who grew up Mennonite and had a surname common in Mennonite circles. He is retired from a teaching position at Michigan State University. I do not recall his exact teaching expertise, but it was focused on agriculture and specifically crop-growing.

Since his retirement from full-time teaching, he devotes significant energy to finding ways to improve agricultural practices and production for those with limited resources. He

was on one of his many trips to Kenya. He said he has visited between 60 and 70 countries over the course of his teaching career and his current focus.

He was promoting the idea of installing a membrane about 18-24 inches below the surface of the ground. The membrane simply blocks the nutrients and moisture from sinking into the soil where the roots can no longer access them. However, the membrane must be installed in such a way that excess water can percolate away. This has worked astonishingly well in sandy soil with reports of yields of 150% or more than side-by-side crops versus where this membrane is not installed. He says they are focused on very small farms where it is feasible to do the manual labor needed to remove the topsoil, install the membrane, and replace the soil. The organization that this man represents is called Soil Water Retention Systems.

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My wife and I have been privileged to visit Kenya three times now on Amish Mennonite Aid (AMA) board delegation visits. The most recent visit encompassed most of the month of February of 2022. Each visit is unique and stirring in its own way. There are several things about the current visit that are fresh on my mind that I find noteworthy.

I've been blessed again by the team of workers that God has called to labor in this field of God's vineyard. About a dozen families and several single folks from a diversity of contexts in North America are here serving with AMA. They bear testimony, both verbally and by their demeanor, that where God calls, He enables. That enablement also includes the ability to not only do the work, but adds joy and goodwill for the task. That joy is a soothing balm that helps alleviate homesickness and provides confirmation of God's presence where He calls us.

I've noted the joy on the faces radiating from the hearts of our Kenyan brothers and sisters who have become part of the church in Kenya. These men and women have experienced a good measure of life's joys and sorrows but have chosen to walk with God. I'm reminded again that a wide variety of circumstances exist for God's children the world over. Yet, I'm humbled and excited when I'm reminded again of the constant grace of our unchanging God that speaks to every human need in every circumstance. This bridges across cultures, ethnicities, and tongues. God is all-sufficient for every person in every circumstance. This trip has again brought that into sharp relief for me. These interactions

have left me with the impression that I've been treading on holy ground.

We visited places where believers are located in six different areas without Anabaptist churches. In each of these areas, those following the Gospel are saying with one voice, "Please come and establish a church here. We want to follow the Gospel fully. We want you to show us the way." Those living in these locations indicate that there are others who are hungry for the gospel. They've been reaching out to their neighbors but desire to have additional teaching and direction. It is possible that those already there can shift their responsibilities a bit in partial response to this plea. But really, God's children need to be thoughtful about how we steward our opportunities to spread the Gospel. That stewardship calls God's children wherever we are.

Currently there are around 550 church members spread among 16 established congregations in the churches in Kenya established by Amish Mennonite Aid. There are 22 native pastors and deacons laboring in these churches.

The cocktail of monetary value tied to formal education, economic deprivation, and free public education all contribute to the difficulty that Christian education has faced for

the children of our dear brothers and sisters in Kenya. For this to happen in a sustainable long-term way, it will require significant funds or very low costs. The funds will need to come from dear brethren who are stretched more thinly economically than most of us can grasp, or need to be supported and subsidized by those who have more resources. There are no easy answers. But we had some discussions on this trip that underscored both the interest and the need for Christian school opportunities for these children. Would you like to help these folks pray for these needs to be met?

• • • • •

There is plenty to choose from if you want to talk about attention-grabbing headlines. The brewing tension between Ukraine and Russia at the time of this writing leaves many

people uneasy. By the time you read this, I cannot predict what will have happened in the interim. Several things come to mind as I ponder this situation.

God's children living in difficult circumstances need our prayers. Let's pray for them.

Those occupying civil and political positions need our prayers. The Scripture enjoins us.

"Wars and rumors of wars..." "Men's hearts failing them for fear..." These words were penned long ago, but the message is quite contemporary and relevant.

Luke 21:28 follows some of that with these encouraging words, "***And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.***"

-RJM



Living Life in the Light of Christ: Inheriting Like Jesus

Nathan Zook, Baltimore, MD

I recently heard of a teacher attempting to teach his students about class/income differences in society. He invited the students to participate in a footrace challenge with \$100 as the final prize. First, though, the students had the

chance to get a head start if certain characteristics applied to them. Those who had a father figure living with them in the home were invited to advance two steps. Students receiving a private education could take another two steps forward.

Growing up in a home where a family never had to worry about their next meal earned the students another two steps. Having both parents still married provided a student with two more steps. Not having to help mom or dad with bills earned more steps. Finally, the students were encouraged to look around them and think about the fact that nothing any of them had done had led to their advantages on this racecourse. They inherited these advantages from birth.

Of course, wealth may result from decisions such as the choice to save or invest and behaviors such as attempts to be frugal. Nevertheless, some humans are born with more advantages than others. These advantages can lead to increased opportunities and social inequality. Those born with advantages may forget they did not deserve them and begin to view themselves as superior to others. Those born without advantages may harbor bitterness toward the “system” and jealousy toward those perceived to be endowed with greater opportunities. In Jesus’ kingdom, inheritance follows a very different pattern.

A fair and equal inheritance

Unlike our first birth, we have a choice in our second birth when we

answer Jesus’ call to be born again. Those who choose to enter His kingdom enter a radically different family where all can receive the same inheritance. In describing His kingdom, Jesus tells a parable about laborers who work for a full day while others work for just one hour. All the laborers will receive the same reward. Jesus then declares, “*So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen*” (Matthew 20:16).

In this parable, Jesus is not describing the inheritance of earthly economic wealth but equality between those who enter His kingdom after a lifetime of service and those who may enter closer to the end of their lives. In Jesus’ kingdom, those who join the church at a young age with parents who are believers will have no eternal advantage over those who join at a later age.

Meek recipients

A study by two Italian economists found that the richest families in Florence in 1427 were still the richest families in Florence in 2011. The world’s way of passing on economic inheritance is most commonly based on blood relations. Jesus proposes a radically different type of inheritance. In Jesus’ kingdom, inheritance is based on a specific

character trait—meekness. Early in His ministry, He declares, “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth*” (Matthew 5:5).

This promise could lead Jesus’ followers to smugness or bragging about one’s own humility to be perceived as meek. The story is told of a conservative Anabaptist family going home after a church service. The father proudly remarked, “You know, I think we were the plainest people there this morning.” Looking down on others as not meek enough or criticizing people for not being humble is the exact opposite of a meek attitude.

A meek person will wait patiently for Jesus’ promised earthly inheritance without forcibly taking it or denying others the opportunity also to receive the inheritance. James 5:1-6 describes the woes that will pile up on rich individuals who profited unjustly through corruption and fraud. Rather than calling on the meek to rise up and right the wrongs of social injustice, believers are called to be patient and wait for the day of the Lord. “*Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for*

the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:7-8).

Undiminished inheritance

My earthly ancestor, who first immigrated to what later became known as the United States, was named Moritz Zug. Moritz is rumored to have come with so little wealth that he had to work off his ship’s fare as an indentured servant. After a lot of diligent work, he later acquired over one thousand acres of farmland. Due to the vast number of Zook descendants, this land was disbursed quickly and did not reach down to my ninth generation.

Inheritance in Jesus’ kingdom will not be diminished no matter how many others receive it. Jesus graciously allows us to be His joint heirs. As the only Begotten of the Father, Jesus could have kept us out of His kingdom. Instead, we can be adopted into the family. “*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ*” (Galatians 4:6-7).

Delayed inheritance

In Jesus’ radical kingdom, patient suffering occurs first, well before the inheritance is gained. “*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,*

that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:16-17). To receive this inheritance, we need to avoid being discouraged by the suffering and lack of earthly status that may occur for

those who are Jesus’ joint heirs. We must persevere in the hope of the promised fulfillment of glorification with Christ.

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mission awareness

Why We Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Floyd Stoltzfus, Gordonville, PA

T*he Greeks did not believe in the resurrection of the body and in some degree this affected the church at Corinth. The Apostle Paul exercised his Spirit-filled gift of exegesis to expound on the marvelous fact that Jesus arose from the dead. This thorough explanation and careful analysis could stand the investigation of any court case and be judged as truth in the judicial assembly.*

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the core of the gospel message. (Core: the central part of an apple or pear that contains the seeds. The innermost part of anything. Webster’s Dictionary).

This is the greatest message ever told whether at home or abroad. It needs to be spoken over and over. Job is probably the oldest book in the Bible. He believed firmly in a living Redeemer and in the resurrection of his own body (See Job’s declaration in the opening texts). Yes, in the book of Revelation, Jesus gave these comforting words to the seven churches and to you and me: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (1:18).

Permit the Mission Awareness writer to use his own outline and penned thoughts which served as a guide in preaching and teaching assignments.

I. Introduction

A. Opening Texts:

1. *“For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me”* (Job 19:25-27).
2. *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept”* (I Corinthians 15:20).

B. The Outline:

1. Indispensable prophecies and types of the Resurrection
2. Infallible proofs of the Resurrection
3. Indisputable points of the Resurrection
4. Incorruptible power of the Resurrection

II. Body

A. Indispensable prophecies and types of the Resurrection

1. Isaac, a type of Jesus Christ (Genesis 22:1, 2, 7-12)
“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (Hebrews 11:17, 19).
2. Waving of the First Fruits on the morning after the Sabbath (Leviticus 23:10, 11, 16) *“But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept”* (I Corinthians 15:20). Notice the underscored phrases in point B-1.
3. *“Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption”* (Psalm 16:9, 10).
4. Aaron’s rod that budded (Numbers 17:1-10)

B. Infallible proofs of the Resurrection

1. *“In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...”* (Matthew 28:1)
2. The earthquake (Matthew 28:2)
3. The appearance of the angel (Matthew 28:2-4)
4. The witness of the angel (Matthew. 28:5-7)

Renan, the French skeptic, wittingly said, “You Christians live in the fragrance of the empty tomb.”

5. The witness of the grave clothes, especially the head napkin by itself (John 20:3-8)

6. The testimony of the Scriptures

*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20, 21

* Acts 2:24, 27, 30; 3:15; 4:10, 33; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 34; 17:2, 3, 31 and more

7. The testimony of Jesus’ disciples

- Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Matthew 28:1)
- Peter (Luke 24:35, I Corinthians 15:5)
- Cleopas and his friend walking to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31)
- Ten disciples (John 20:19-23), Thomas missing
- Eleven disciples (John 20:26-29), Thomas included
- Seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25)
- Five hundred brethren at once (I Corinthians 15:6)
- James, the Lord’s brother (I Corinthians 15:7)
- Eleven disciples (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Acts 1:4-11)
- Stephen (Acts 7:55, 56)
- Paul (Acts 9:4-6; 18:9; 23:11; 27:23,24; II Corinthians 12:1-4)
- John on the Isle of Patmos (Revelation 1:12-20)

8. The testimony of martyrs and the Christian Church

9. Your personal testimony

10. The testimony of those who are converted in seeing the living Christ through visions and dreams

C. The indisputable points of the Resurrection

1. The Resurrection makes all the difference for time and eternity.
2. The Resurrection is the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Dependence of the Christian faith.
3. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the crowning proof of Christianity.
4. It is the major cog in the plan of redemption.
5. According to I Corinthians 15:14-19, if one denies the Resurrection of Jesus, he is forced to six disastrous consequences.
 - a. All preaching is meaningless (15:14a).
 - b. All past, present, and future faith is vain (15:14b, 17a).
 - c. All preachers are liars (15:15).
 - d. All confessing Christians are still in their sins (15:17).

- e. All departed Christians are in hell fire (15:18).
- f. All reason and purpose in life is destroyed; *“we are of all men most miserable”* (15:19).
- g. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychiatry, wrote: *“And finally, there is the painful riddle of death, for which no remedy at all has yet been found, nor probably ever will be.”* Oh, how empty and hopeless!

D. Incorruptible power of the Resurrection

1. A guarantee of our justification

“Who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25).

2. A guarantee of our present day victory

In Romans 6 Paul states many results of being planted together with Christ in the likeness of His death (crucified with Him), buried with Him, and risen with Christ. One of the glorious promises for Christian victory is verse 22: *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”*

3. A guarantee of Christ’s intercessory ministry now

“He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

4. A guarantee of our Resurrection

“Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you” (II Corinthians 4:14).

5. A guarantee that faithful labor will be rewarded

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58).

III. Conclusion

Friend, here are precious verses if you have never received Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour. Receive Him now: *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”* (Romans 10:9,10).

(Acknowledgements: Some thoughts of this sermon outline were from Willmington’s Guide to the Bible).



The Mercy of God Remembered

Susan Raber, New Concord, OH



I was asked the question, “How has God shown mercy to you?” This was my response. Because God’s mercy is new every morning, I thank Him for the daily ways He shows His mercy to me by helping me to remember.

When I’m feeling worthless, God reminds me that He is my Maker, Redeemer, Defender, and Friend.¹

When I’m upset, He reminds me that anger is a choice.

When I’m thinking negative thoughts, He reminds me to sing.

When I’m feeling a need for affirmation, He reminds me that He is my “*exceeding great reward*.”²

When my workload is too heavy, He reminds me that I need to focus on His grace instead of the tasks.

When I’m feeling sorry for myself, He reminds me to do something nice for someone else.

When I’m offended by someone, He reminds me that I must not only not resent it but make it an occasion

to exhibit the Son of God.³

When I wonder if I’ll ever get it right, He reminds me that to abandon to God is of more value than personal holiness.⁴

When I’m too organized, He reminds me that my greatest asset can become my greatest weakness.⁵

When my physical pain level is high, He reminds me that He learned obedience through suffering on the Cross.⁶

When I want what others have, He reminds me to “*be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*”⁷

When I feel out of control, He reminds me that He’s much bigger than I am, and I can trust Him.

When I’m afraid, He reminds me

3 Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

4 Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

5 Simon Schrock, *Your Strength May Become Your Weakness*

6 Hebrews 5:8

7 Hebrews 13:5

1 Robert Grant, “O Worship the King”

2 Genesis 15:1

that “*perfect love casts out fear.*”⁸

When I’m having trouble in a relationship, He reminds me that I need to identify with His interest in other people.⁹

When I’m proud of my abilities, He reminds me that “*pride goeth before destruction.*”¹⁰

When death stares me in the face, He reminds me that heaven is much better than what we have here and that “*I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with His likeness.*”¹¹

When I can’t seem to attain spiritual goals, He reminds me that it’s only by His righteousness that I can be saved.

When I’m feeling lonely, He reminds me that I need to line up my feelings with the Truth of God’s Word.

8 1 John 4:18

9 Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

10 Proverbs 16:18

11 Psalm 17:15

When I’m tempted to say something negative about someone else, He reminds me that I should never doubt another’s sincerity.

When I turned 50, He reminded me that “*my age is as nothing [to Him]: verily every [woman] at [her] best state is altogether vanity.*”¹²

When it seems to take me so long to catch on to a truth He’s been trying to get me to see, He reminds me of His patience and mercy.

When I sit down to write about the mercy of God, He reminds me that “*the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting*”¹³ and I’ll never be able to gather it all neatly in a concise way because He is the great I AM and always will be MY AMAZING God!



12 Psalm 39:5

13 Psalm 103:17



He who kills time injures eternity.
Take time to think—it is the source of power.
Take time to play—it is the secret of perpetual youth.
Take time to love and be loved—it is a God-given privilege.
Take time to read—it is the fountain of wisdom.
Take time to pray—it is the greatest power on earth.
Take time to be friendly—it is the road to happiness.
Take time to laugh—it is the music of the soul.
Take time to give—it is too short a day to be selfish.
Take time to work—it is the price of success.

Singing in Russia (Part 1)

Papa, Can We Sing?

Mary Ellen Beachy, Dundee, OH

There was no church in Dmitri's village, for communism had slowly snuffed out most of the churches and places of worship. The pastors were thrown into prison or killed. Dmitri had been raised in a family of believers. His parents loved the Lord and took him to church when he was young. But now, with his sons, he could attend church only once or twice a year.

One day Dmitri asked his wife, "Would you agree to our family reading Bible stories weekly so our sons could learn about Jesus?"

His wife was overjoyed. She had been praying for years that her husband would lead the family in worship.

Dmitri gathered his family around him one night each week. He would reach for the precious old family Bible. He relearned and retold the stories as his family joined in.

The boys asked for more, "Papa, can we learn to sing the songs that are sung when we go to the real church?" And so they added singing to their

weekly Bible study. The small group could feel the Presence of God. It was a blessing to their hearts to read the Word and to lift their voices in praise and prayer.

In this small Russian village, the houses were close together, and the windows were open in warm weather. The singing of the beautiful old hymns wafted away on the evening breezes. The neighbors heard. Nothing could remain hidden. They noticed how this family worshipped Jesus and enquired, "Can we come to your house and join you for Bible stories and songs?" The people were longing for the knowledge of God. A small group began to gather to read and discuss the Word and to sing and pray.

The group grew to 25 people. The authorities noticed and warned Dmitri, "You have started a church. This must stop!"

"I am not a preacher," Dmitri told them. "We are just a group of family and friends getting together. How is this a church?"

“We don’t care what you call this,” the communist official barked, “you must quit or terrible things will take place.”

When the group grew to 50 people, Dmitri got fired from his factory job, his wife could no longer teach, and the boys were expelled from school. But worse things were yet to come.

One night while he again spoke to the neighbors about Jesus, the door to his house burst open. He was grabbed by officers, slapped in the face, and coldly warned again.

A small grandmother stepped out of the crowd. She boldly waved a finger in the officers’ faces. Sounding like an Old Testament prophet she announced, “You have touched a man of God, and you will not survive!”

This happened on Tuesday and by Thursday night that officer dropped dead of a heart attack. The fear of God swept through the village. At

the next house-church service, 150 folks showed up. They were hungry and pressed close to the windows and doors of Dmitri’s small house to hear the Word and to raise their hearts in song to God.

The authorities could not let this continue. Dmitri was thrown into prison. The next 17 years were ones of loneliness, sweat, blood, beatings, and tears. His family suffered many untold hardships.

But Dmitri would not let go of Jesus. He refused to stop telling the Good News. The next 17 years were also years of song and faithfulness to His Lord.

[To be continued]

Resource: Nik Ripken, The Insanity of God, B & H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tenn. 2013

Read The Insanity of God for true stories and encouragement in faith in Jesus.



youth messages

For Such a Time as This (Part 2)

Josh Kooistra, New Concord, OH

This month we’d like to look at the testimonials from two previous Anabaptist Refugee Committee (ARC) volunteers and

also get an update on the more permanent ARC work developing in Minneapolis. For privacy, the names of these volunteers have been

changed. For the purpose of telling them apart, we'll call them Curtis and Amelia.

Describe a day as an ARC volunteer.

Amelia- My experience as an ARC volunteer was in Wisconsin where I was working with the Afghan refugees housed at Fort McCoy. We volunteers stayed at the Sparrow's Nest which is a retired abbey located about 20 minutes from the Fort.

We ate breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Following breakfast, one of the team boys would share a short devotional. We left for the Fort around 8:40 a.m. Our first stop was Morning Meeting where we girls met with the Catholic Charity's coordinator and other volunteers to discuss current issues and the events of the day. We then headed to the center assigned to us.

I spent most of my time in the women and children's centers. The center was split into two sections. One side was designated for women to learn and socialize. We often allowed the women to choose how they wished to spend their time. Usually they wanted to learn English or discuss life in America. We were blessed with translators who made this possible. Sometimes the women just wanted to have fun. They played bingo, put puzzles together, did yoga, danced, and drank tea.

The other side of the center was set up for children to play and do crafts. We were privileged to have a very large selection of games and craft supplies. The children arrived at 10:00 a.m. and it was up to us to keep them entertained! Many hours were spent coloring, playing cards, putting puzzles together, building block towers, jumping rope, and much more.

We closed the center at 12:00 noon and went to the DFAC (dining facility) for lunch. Our center reopened at 2:00 p.m. and the afternoon was mostly a repeat of the morning. We closed at 4:00 p.m. for the day and headed back to the Sparrow's Nest. We had supper at 6:15 p.m. After supper we had Debrief where everyone shared a little bit about their day. Once Debrief was finished we were dismissed to spend the evening as we chose.

Curtis- A normal day started at 8:30 a.m. Usually, when we got to the Fort, we had a line of 4 to 6 children at our recreation center waiting for us to unlock the door. So, after getting those children started with a game of some kind, I usually swept, picked up the items left behind from the previous day, and then played and interacted with the children who showed up, with an average of 20 before lunch. In the afternoons the men and older boys would show up to play football

which we call soccer. It provided good activity for them to release their energy and also to interact and make friends. Usually they'd stay till 4:00 p.m. or so. The last hour and a half were spent with the children again riding bikes, playing soccer, etc. We closed at 5:30 p.m. Supper was at 6:15 p.m. with debriefing immediately afterwards. Curfew was at 10:00 p.m. so we had time to do a few activities in the evening including singing, playing spike ball, visiting, etc.

Tell about an experience or happening during your time with ARC that really blessed you and made you feel like, "This is why I'm doing this."

Amelia- As I worked at the Fort and started to meet the children and talk with them I soon realized that these children have faced much trauma and grief in their short lives! I would often ask the children about their families. And many of them would tell me that part of their family was still in Afghanistan. My heart broke for these children! As I listened to the many sad stories of broken families and saw the haunted, sad eyes of some of the children, I knew that my purpose here was to show them a small portion of the love that Jesus has for them!

Curtis- There was a 12-year-old boy who came to my center every day. He was a very friendly boy who

always had a smile and interacted very well with the other children. He couldn't speak English very well, so communication was difficult, but on one of the last days he brought in his dad, and I got to talk with him for a while. He gave me insight into this young boy's life. He has two brothers and three sisters still in Afghanistan with their mother. He is here alone with his father and gets extremely lonely for his siblings. His father told me with tears in his eyes that every evening his young son cries himself to sleep because he misses his mom. He thanked me personally for being there and coordinating activities for the children. That was an encouragement to me that God is touching lives through the work of ARC.

How did working for ARC change you?

Amelia- The biggest blessing and inspiration of working as an ARC volunteer was the interaction I had with the other volunteers. I was so inspired to see so many young people with a strong desire to serve Jesus and show His love to the Afghan people!

Curtis- It was an experience that changed my world view. These people are humans just like you and me. It wasn't until I spent a couple days at the Fort that I realized how friendly and happy these Afghans are. One 21-year-old showed me some videos and

pictures of the situation in Afghanistan, and it's terrible. I mentioned to him about the friendliness of the people, and he said something that struck me hard. "I'm just happy to be alive. A lot of my friends died." That got me thinking. Am I happy to be alive? Also, just interacting with the Afghans and seeing how they've accepted their lot in life spoke to me. They left everything behind to flee for their lives. Why can't we as God's people be willing to sacrifice our time to help them in their time of need?


What would you tell someone thinking about getting involved with ARC?

Amelia- "And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14b).

I would say, "Go, get involved!" My experience with ARC was very good! I appreciated how much the board members were involved with what was happening on the ground. And I enjoyed the times that board members stopped in at the Sparrow's Nest and interacted with us volunteers! I pray God will continue to guide and direct ARC as they seek to show His love to

the Afghan refugees.

Curtis- *If you have the opportunity to be a part of this work, by all means, GO! I understand that not everyone is cut out to do volunteer service, but if you have an interest in work of this nature then I would definitely encourage you to get involved. From my experience it is a little nerve-racking at times but God will reward your efforts.*

The work in Minneapolis is progressing slowly but surely. English classes started in early February with an average class size of a dozen people. ARC has rented a small house for classes and apartments for the volunteers. They are prayerfully pursuing the option of buying a nearby facility for a permanent base of operations with plans for a potential coffee shop and more room for classrooms and housing. They are still in need of volunteers for teaching and to be houseparents. There is also a need for funds with housing costs being around \$750 a month per volunteer. If you are interested in the work in Minneapolis, please reach out to ARC at info@arcministry.org or call 715-314-0388. 

*God makes a promise — faith believes it,
hope anticipates it,
patience quietly awaits it.*



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Periodicals

THOUGHT GEMS

Why is it that nobody listens when history repeats itself?

• • • • •

How come only the most sensible people agree with us?

• • • • •

Form good habits; they're as hard to break as bad ones.

• • • • •

Don't pray for an easy life; pray to be a stronger person.

• • • • •

Get ready for eternity. You're going to spend a lot of time there.

• • • • •

If you think time heals everything, try sitting in a doctor's office.

• • • • •

A man is a failure who goes through life earning nothing but money.

• • • • •

It is easier to hide mistakes than to prevent their consequences.

• • • • •

An open mind and a closed mouth make a happy combination.

• • • • •

You should drive as if your family was in the other car.

• • • • •

Selfishness short-circuits prayer.