

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of...

THE TESTIMONY

...of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel..." II Tim. 1:8

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." Gen. 8:22

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WE PLOW THE FIELDS

We plow the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand;

He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes, and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain;

He only is the Maker of all things near and far;
He paints the wayside flower, He lights the evening star;

The winds and waves obey Him; by Him the birds are fed;
Much more to us His children, He gives our daily bread.

We thank Thee, then, O Father, For all things bright and good;
The seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, our food;

Accept the gift we offer for all Thy love imparts,
And what Thou most desirest, our humble, thankful hearts.

All the good gifts around us are sent from heav'n above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, For all His wondrous love.

— Matthias Claudius, 1782

THE TESTIMONY

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EDITORIAL

THE WONDER OF
HARVEST...AGAIN

Many lessons and illustrations are often taken from the harvest of the earth that comes each year. Lessons of bountiful provision; lessons about the coming of the Lord, and the final judgment. There are lessons of sowing and reaping, and sober thoughts relating to the importance of how we live.

But aside from all of this, we think also of the *miracles* in God's harvest. The *amazing* and *astounding* way that many, many plants rise up from a germinating seed, spring up and grow, and then bear fruit identical to the seed sown. They bear fruit in abundance. Multiplied many times over, bringing forth food and fruit that sustains all of the creatures that God has created and made.

What a wonderful plan!
What a marvelous design! The continual propagation of flowers, plants, vegetables, and fruits for the sustenance and enjoyment of all!

And all of this is beyond the understanding of the most intelligent men and women of the earth. They can study these things; they can try to alter the pattern and outcome, but they do not understand its full design. *It is quite beyond them.* Sometimes men believe they

are quite skilled when they are able to study this phenomenon and eloquently describe it. But they have only observed this wonderful thing which God has done. They have done no more. *And they cannot do more.* It is all designed and accomplished by the Grand Creator.

It is "*as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how*" (Mark 4:26-27).

Behold the fields! Whether orchards, or grain fields, or open fields of hay or other crops, the marvel is the same. A huge variety of genetic processes designed by our God, and in response to the divine mandate given in Genesis 1:11:

"Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth..."

"And it was so." God spake, and it was done. What a wonderful Creative God!

And so we have come to expect the harvest! ***We expect the miraculous! We expect the amazing! We expect the utterly fantastic!*** We expect the astounding emerging of plants and stalks, and tree blossoms, and opening buds!

And while our hearts can easily grow dull in observing these things, and the wonder can become lost on our busy minds, God continues to faithfully bring forth from the earth His amazing promise, and blesses both the just and the unjust with His goodness!

For these abundant mercies and provisions for us all, He deserves our highest praise!

The God of harvest praise;
In loud thanksgiving raise
Hand, heart, and voice:
The valleys laugh and sing;
Forests and mountains ring;
The plains their tribute bring;
The streams rejoice.

Yea, bless his holy name,
And joyous thanks proclaim

Through all the earth;
To glory in your lot
Is comely; but be not
God's benefits forgot
Amid your mirth.

The God of harvest praise;
Hands, hearts, and voices raise
With sweet accord;
From field to garner throng,
Bearing your sheaves along,
And in your harvest song
Bless ye the Lord.

James Montgomery (1840)

Lowell Miller

GENERAL

NONRESISTANCE—HOW ANABAPTISTS RESPOND TO EVIL

Continued from the September issue...

QUICK SEDUCTION

Caught up in the sentiment of the day, in 1933 the United (*Vereinigung*) Mennonites stopped asking for special treatment as conscientious objectors from military service. By 1934, “nonresistance” was removed from the Mennonite confession of faith.

In 1939, when German armies took over West Prussia and Danzig, bringing the Mennonites of Danzig (North Germany) under German rule, many Mennonites saw it as an act of God. Emil Händiges of the United (*Vereinigung*) Mennonites wrote:

“Our German people have endured unspeakable difficulties under the Polish yoke during its twenty-year foreign rule, the most difficult at the end. Then God, the Lord, helped them through the hand of our Führer and freed them. We thank our Führer for this act of liberation.”¹²

Mennonite and conservative Evangelical journals praised these military conquests by German soldiers. These publications frequently quoted from the prophets and the Book of Revelation, portraying Germany as “God’s people” in prophecy.

¹² Händiges, Emil. “Zur Heimkehr der bestreiten Volksgenossen ins Reich” *Mennonitische Blätter* 86, no. 10–11 October/November 1939.

GOTT MIT UNS



Today, it's easier to think of these German soldiers as committed pagans and monsters. "After all," we tell ourselves, "How else could they have conducted all of these terrible deeds?" The sobering truth is that most of these German soldiers claimed to be Christians. Astonishingly, the belt buckle worn by many of these so-called "Christian" Nazi soldiers

boldly proclaimed, "Gott Mit Uns" (God With Us).

By 1940, the subtle influence of this political leaven had almost completely overtaken the German Mennonites. Issuing a proclamation representing the political posture of the Mennonite Union during this time, the United Mennonite church wrote:

"The Conference will not do anything that would even have the faintest appearance of opposing the policies of our leader (Führer)."¹³

Could they still be called Anabaptist? But more importantly, could they be called followers of Jesus?

FRESH FAITH AMIDST COMPROMISE

These changes were a far cry from the decree of separation from the world and shunning of earthly government espoused by the early Anabaptists in the Schleithem Confession of 1527. It's evident that their original convictions had grown stale.

During this time of compromise, small groups of first-generation Anabaptists emerged on the scene. A new group led by Eberhard Arnold was just becoming organized.¹⁴ Enthusiastically embracing the foundational ideas of Anabaptism, they were dismayed by the posture of their Mennonite spiritual cousins.

¹³ Goertz. "National Erhebung" 84. Original quotation: "Die Konferenz wird nichts tun, was den Anschein eines Huches Gegen die Politik unseres Führers enthält."

¹⁴ The Bruderhof community originated in the early 1920s under Arnold's leadership in Germany, influenced by religious revival and socialist youth movements. They became drawn to Anabaptism and eventually united with the North American Hutterites in 1930. Most of the group moved to England in the late 1930s and then on to Paraguay in the early 1940s to avoid military conscription and persecution. In the 1950s and 60s, the Paraguayan Bruderhof emigrated to New York. Their prior unification with the North American Hutterite communities was called into question throughout the years because of differing beliefs and practices. The Hutterites excommunicated the Bruderhof in 1954 but reunited on a probationary basis in 1975 after a formal apology from Bruderhof leadership. The Hutterian communities excommunicated the Bruderhof communities again in 1990. We choose to call this group Bruderhof rather than Hutterite to avoid confusion. Today, Bruderhof communities exist in North America, South America, Asia, and Australia

When Nazi authorities learned of these new Anabaptists, who were known as the “Bruderhof,” they became alarmed. Their radical theology and particularly their strong economic stance was more than the Nazis would tolerate. This scrutiny also brought heat to the more politically accommodating Mennonites, who were also called “Anabaptist.” When authorities asked the politically-friendly Mennonites if they were associated with the new Bruderhof, the Mennonites didn’t exactly stand up for them. In a united effort, both the north and southern Mennonites issued an official disclaimer: “The Bruderhöfer belonged neither to the Vereinigung (Union) of German Mennonite Churches, nor to any other organization within our Free German Mennonite Church.”¹⁵

It wasn’t long before this new Bruderhof was raided. Fortunately, most members escaped the country, ending up as refugees in England. When England, America, and Canada refused to let the new group settle, American Mennonites came to their rescue through the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The MCC helped the Bruderhof immigrate to Paraguay, close to a group of Colony Mennonites that the MCC was already assisting.

WHAT ARE NAZIS DOING IN PARAGUAY?

However, just when the Bruderhof thought they were far from the dreadful politics of their homeland, they discovered that thousands of miles away, virtually in the middle of nowhere, these Central American Mennonites were also indoctrinated with Nazi politics! The Mennonites in Paraguay were living in terrible conditions and frequently communicated with Mennonites in Germany. Many felt that if Germany defeated Russia, the Colony Mennonites would have a chance to leave Central America and come live in Germany.

Like their brethren in Germany, the Mennonites of Paraguay also held council meetings to discuss the advantages of Nazi politics. After their church council, sadly, they too blessed the Nazi government, viewing the Nazis as the political party upholding conservative Christian values. Following the conference, the Colony Mennonites of Paraguay wrote:

With greatest excitement we German Mennonites of the Paraguayan Chaco follow the events in our beloved Motherland and experience in spirit the national revolution of the German people. We are happy that in Germany, after a long time, a government that freely and openly professes God as Creator stands at the head of the nation... With special sympathy we hear that the current government takes seriously the realization of Christian principles in social, economic, and cultural life and especially emphasizes the protection of the family.¹⁶

¹⁵ Schroeder, “Prussian Mennonites,” 22.

¹⁶ Thiesen, John D. *Mennonite & Nazi?: Attitudes among Mennonite Colonists in Latin America*. Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 1999, 73.

One youth leader, writing home to Paraguay while studying in Germany, expressed: “If one lives through such weeks in Germany, one is drawn involuntarily under the spell of the Führer and can do nothing else than confess oneself a National Socialist.”¹⁷

HUTTERITE RESPONSE

The newly arrived Bruderhof members were disappointed by these developments. While Paraguay’s living conditions were indeed horrible, they felt that freedom of worship was worth the cost. Emmy Arnold, Eberhard’s widow, once wrote in a letter, “Better hookworm than hooked cross (swastika).”¹⁸

Responding to the lack of education and the deplorable living conditions of the Colony Mennonites, the Bruderhof quickly went to work trying to educate and offer social aid to the different Mennonite groups. Holding preaching services and hymn singing services, some progress towards repentance was made. However, it was still an uphill battle.

On one occasion, when Bruderhof people entered a church building that the Mennonites had generously given them to worship in, they were confronted with a framed picture of Adolf Hitler. The picture was prominently displayed, front and center, right over the communion table.¹⁹

I’M SORRY?

We know how the war story ended. Germany lost, Hitler committed suicide, and soon all the atrocities of the Nazi party were being broadcast to the world. The Mennonites, along with conservative Protestant, Catholic, and Evangelical groups, repented of their support for this anti-christ. Mennonite leaders even repented publicly. The Mennonites of Central America followed suit, and eventually, the political answers of the little German Führer were vehemently discarded.

Yet somehow, something was lost by this pandemic compromise. Something was particularly lost from the Mennonites. Compromise of this magnitude from mainline Protestants and Catholics was one thing—the world was somewhat used to seeing that. But when even the “radical Christians” were seen bending their knee to this evil, something deep was lost.

The German church that emerged out of post-WW II Germany was anemic. Secularism has claimed the day, and today radical Christianity is virtually unheard of in Germany.

¹⁷ Barth, Emmy. *No Lasting Home: A Year in the Paraguayan Wilderness*. Walden, New York: Plough Publishing House, 2009, 40.

¹⁸ Ibid, 15.

¹⁹ Ibid. 46. The slogan was translated as “The Common Good Before Private Good (or Before Self Good) Nazism was focused on corporate nationalism rather than a conservative approach to politics. However, this did appeal to many of those inclined to a more conservative viewpoint.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN TO THE MENNONITES?

When Dean, one of the writers of this paper, lived in Germany twenty years ago, he was a new convert to many of these Anabaptist ideas. Walking into a Mennonite church, he noticed the war memorials on the walls honoring Mennonites who fought in the war. Dean asked his guide, a man in his seventies who remembered the war period well, “How did the Mennonites get swept up into all of this Nazi nationalism?” The guide somberly replied, “It came over us like a revival.”

That was an impressive answer, and at the end it did indeed come on them like that. But was it completely unexpected? Was there a long time of slow compromise, more insidious than the Mennonites could perceive? As the years go by and we watch the way that modern conservative Mennonites respond to politics, we can somewhat understand how this could happen again. As James Peter Regier says in the conclusion of his excellent essay on this historic period of Mennonite history,

It seems then, that the biggest flaw of the Mennonites was not any immediate error. Instead, it was the natural consequence of years of gradual theological adaptations and compromises to better fit within the German community. When National Socialism came, the Mennonites no longer had the capacity to resist.²⁰

HAVE WE LEARNED OUR LESSON?

Have we learned that trusting in “good” political strategies is a really bad idea? When you hear your fellow Christian start telling you once again, “Times are different now,” please don’t believe them. Better yet, tell them that you think that it is exactly because the “world is getting so bad” that it is time to leave the failed solutions of the world and to start showing a model for the world created by our Savior Jesus Christ.

We cannot afford to be idle; a war is raging all around us. Simply opting out of secular politics isn’t our goal. We possess an agenda and a cure for this broken world. The Apostle Paul urged us: “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (II Tim. 2:3 NKJV). Yet, immediately after, he made it clear that our endurance must come without fraternization with the enemy or entanglement in the affairs of the nation’s we sojourn: “No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier” (II Tim. 2:4 NKJV). Anabaptist historian Marcus Yoder, when discussing his view of actively embracing these ideals, often says, ***“There are things that I am willing to die for, but there is nothing that I am willing to kill for.”***

The path to freeing yourself from the leaven of politics and compromise is simple, but for some, it will not be easy. Like the early Christians and Anabaptists, seek a deep connection with God and immerse yourself in the New Testament. Read the teachings of Christ and dare to take them seri-

²⁰ Regier, James Peter. *Mennonite Life, Mennonitische Vergangenheitsbewältigung*; Prussian Mennonites, the Third Reich, and Coming to Terms with a Difficult Past, March 2004.

ously. Let your prayer be: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” As you read the words of Jesus consciously receive that, “This is Jesus’ political plan for humanity.” Then, by His grace and His Holy Spirit, put it into practice. With this in place, let us, as author and teacher John D. Martin often says, “Demonstrate to the world around us what the whole world would look like if we would only obey the King.”

In this series, we have soberly pondered the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism. In 500 years, praise God, there are many things that we can celebrate. However, we also want to consider that in 500 years, we have made many mistakes. Like many of the stories in this article, we have strayed many times. Michael Sattler, one of the early leaders of the Anabaptists, warned his church in Horb, Germany while awaiting his execution, “Let no one shift your goal, which has been set in the letter by the Holy Scripture, which is sealed by the blood of Christ and of many witnessses of Jesus.”²¹ This caution not to “shift your goal” needs to ring in our hearts again.

Each generation has its own tests and challenges. In 1660, Thieleman J. van Braght wrote in his introduction to the *Martyrs Mirror* these sobering words, which are arguably more pertinent in modern times:

These are sad times, in which we live; nay, truly, there is more danger now than in the time of our fathers, who suffered death for the testimony of the Lord. Few will believe this, because the great majority look to that which is external and corporeal, and in this respect it is now better, quieter and more comfortable; few only look to that which is internal and pertains to the soul, and on which everything depends.

In Hebrews 11, the New Testament writer left us with a litany of testimonies of faith intended to both challenge and encourage us. Take note of the last few words at the end of the chapter, “...that they should not be made perfect apart from us” (Heb. 11:40 NKJV). In other words, without us, the testimonies of these heroes of faith are not complete. Or we could shift it into a command: “Get going; it’s our turn now.”

Let us not get distracted, or, as Michael Sattler challenged, “*Let no one shift your goal.*” The string of faith is completed as we walk faithfully in our generation. In the end, we are confident that the same simple commitment that guided our forefathers will keep us on the right path. Keeping the simplicity of biblical interpretation and a settled confidence that the words of Jesus are meant to be put into practice, we are hopeful that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide and sustain us until His return.

Keep the Faith.

Selected by the Editor from
Anabaptist Viewpoint

²¹ Sattler, Michael, *Legacy of Michael Sattler*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1973, 55.

STORIES FROM OUR PAST HISTORY

Elder John Kline

HE WAS MARTYRED AT HIS POST

Eighty-nine years after the Eder River baptism (1708) in Schwarzenau, Germany, when five men and three women, knowing the danger of denying their infant baptism, were willing to count the cost, kneeled, and were immersed and pledged a covenant of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ, there was born on June 17, 1797, in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, a great-grandson of Elder George Kline.

Elder George had emigrated from Germany as a Lutheran minister and had taken up residence in New Jersey where he met the Schwarzenau Brethren, later called the "Dunkers," the German Baptist. George joined this movement and was later ordained among them.

This great-grandson, John Kline, was fourteen when the family moved to the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and located on a farm a mile south of Broadway on the Linville Creek. Here they acquired farming land that came to be thickly settled by German Baptist Brethren. Thus John's background was Brethren and German. For him, English was a second language which he never learned perfectly, especially in its written form.

John Kline was married in 1818 to Anna Wampler at her home a few miles from the Kline resi-

dence. Their only child did not live to maturity. John was like most German farmers, accomplished and a good tiller of the soil, which rewarded him to be able to share and help others that had need. His most important efforts were to the work of spreading the Kingdom of Truth.

John was baptized in 1828 and called to the ministry in 1834, and from his first sermon he started a diary which recorded events of each day and night, where he was, and how he spent his time. In these diaries are recorded many of the sermons he preached, the visits he made, and frequently the substance of conversations held. He also studied Dr. Samuel Thompson's theory of medicine, a vegetable or botanic method of treatment. He was helpful to many in ways of healing the body and soul, serving in his Christian ministry, showing Jesus as the healer of the soul.

An illustration from his diary in 1835 on a preaching tour, mounted his sure-footed horse, Nell, Friday, September 11—Crossing the Shenandoah Mountain, then descending the Lost River valley to the Arnold settlement in West Virginia. He preached Sunday morning and Sunday evening, also leading the Love Feast.

He then traveled through Maryland and Pennsylvania, preaching almost every night.

Another time we find him in Montgomery County, Ohio, on October 5 and 6, preaching in homes

and gathering places, and on this journey of two months he traveled 1,317 miles, mostly on horseback. On this trip he officiated at eight love feasts, many council meetings, and preached almost daily. In 1854 he traveled 6,463 miles mostly on Nell's back. It is estimated that on his ministerial journeys on horseback and by train, he traveled 100,000 miles.

In an entry in his diary from January 1, 1838, he gave a clear insight into his character when he said, "I now resolve to do all the good I can this year—to shun all evil in thought, word and deed as far as I can. To learn all I can of wholesome truth. To make the best use of wholesome truth. To make the best use I can of what I learn and know. To do all this with an eye single to the glory of God and the good of mankind."

John attended the annual conference yearly during the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s. He served on many committees over the brotherhood. His leadership was also demonstrated in the way he faced many problems created for the brethren (as well as Mennonites) during the Civil War, opposed to slavery and military service. He wrote many letters to political authorities, including his friend, Governor John Letcher of Virginia. They finally granted exemption by paying a fee of \$500. He obtained a pass from the North and the South to cross the military lines to go to Annual Meeting. This caused distrust and strong feelings among

some in his local area. He was imprisoned for nearly two weeks in the Harrisonburg area. He would often say in regard to those troubled times, "I am threatened. They can take my life, but I do not fear them: they can only kill my body."

In 1864 he traveled to Hagerstown, Indiana, to serve his fourth time as Moderator of Annual Meeting. In closing the meeting, he spoke in his kind and pleasant manner that he may not see them again, as he shared about the troubled time between the North and the South.

After his return from the conference he pursued his regular course of life. He looked after the sick, visited the members of the church and preached as usual. On June 15 he left his home to take his "good, patient Nell" to the blacksmith shop to have her shod. On his way home the assassins did their bloody work. His body was found on a timbered ridge by the wayside, pierced by several bullets. Death had no terror for him, for when he was found, a sweet smile was on his face. He was laid to rest in the Linville cemetery, amid the tears of a sorrowing multitude of brethren and friends. They realized they had lost a kind and loving brotherhood friend and a wise counsellor.

May we live to His glory and our neighbor's good.

Glen R. Landes

COMPASSION WHICH IS PITY AND MERCY

THE FALLEN CONDITION OF MANKIND

The compassion of God was manifested from shortly after creation. Man came into a need for compassion when he fell by disobedience in Eden. The compassion of God prevented man from continuing to eat of the life-sustaining tree of life and thus living in sin forever. That was compassion.

The Psalms are filled with references to the compassionate nature of God. Indeed, in the whole Old Bible, the Historical books, the Judges and Kings, the Poetic Writings, and finally the Prophets we read one long account of how God's people disobeyed His teachings by turning to idols. They were delivered by men such as Moses and Joshua. They were called to account by the Judges. They were ruled by their own kings (good and evil), warned by the prophets, experienced the oppression of the Egyptians and neighboring Canaanites. Finally, they were enslaved by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Given the Law, they said, "All this we will do." But they did not do it.

They sacrificed to many gods. It was first a golden calf. Later it was the tabernacle of Moloch, an idol commonly worshipped among their Canaanite neighbors, sacrificing their own children in the fire. The three Hebrew youth in Babylon were subjected to the threat of this sacrificial idol worship. Because they worshipped their own god Remphan, God took them far away beyond Babylon as

Stephen preached in Acts 7.

The worship of idols was prevalent throughout Hebrew history and was practiced even in the very Temple of God in Jerusalem. In I Kings 11:7-8 we read that while Solomon built the marvelous Temple, he also built many idol temples on the surrounding hills. "Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." Each wife had her own idol.

In II Kings 21:6-7 we read of King Manasseh, "And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house [the very Temple of the Lord], of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever..." Idols were worshipped in God's city and in the very holy Temple.

In Ezekiel 8 there is an appalling account of idol worship in the Temple of God. "Then he brought me [Ezekiel] to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz [a detestable Sumerian fertility god]. Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man?

turn thee yet again [turn around], and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD [a terrible disrespect], and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east." [The sun god Baal was a god of the Phoenicians and the Canaanites.] This idolatrous worship—in God's holy Temple—was the practice of God's chosen people some 600 years before God rained compassionate pity on the whole creation by sending His only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind, and for ours. What a compassionate, merciful God!

GOD'S PITY TOWARD A LOST AND SINFUL CREATION

Psalm 78 is a comprehensive account of the waywardness of God's people. But in verse 38 we read, "He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath." In Psalm 86:15 we read, "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." In Psalm 111:4 we read, "He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion." In Psalm 112:4 we read, "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and

righteous." In Psalm 145:8 we read, "The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy."

But God's compassion is sometimes manifest as chastisement. The first Temple degenerated into a center of idolatrous worship. By the time Jesus came to earth the last Temple had sunk under the legalism of the Pharisees and Sanhedrin. As a result, God brought about the destruction of the first Temple in 586 B.C. and the last in 70 A.D. The Temple has been gone for nearly 2,000 years. If it is rebuilt, as some would say, its stated purpose is to reinstitute the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law, of which the writer of Hebrews said, "...But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building [not of this Temple]; Neither by the blood of goats and calves [the Mosaic Law], but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" That was the compassion of our God on this side of the cross!

WHAT OF CHRISTIANS UNDER GRACE?

We recount these events of long ago because, as Paul wrote to the Romans 15:4, "Whatsoever things

were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Compassionate hope and mercy.

God spoke of the Gentiles in Isaiah 65:1 saying, "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." We know this was spoken of the Gentiles because Paul cited it in his letter to the Romans (10:20–21) saying, "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." This is God's hope for the Gentiles.

Then God spoke concerning Israel in Isaiah (65:2–7) saying, "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick..." We know this was spoken of the Jews, for Paul cited this Scripture in Romans 10:21 saying, "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." This is the arms of God stretched out in hope for Israel.

Again, concerning Israel, Paul writes in I Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them [Israel] for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come [Christian believers today]." The examples of

men of past ages are a warning to these of the day of grace.

God has ever been merciful and full of pity. In the words of Jeremiah the weeping prophet, speaking of God's people in the Lamentations 3:21–22, "This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."

In Hebrews 9:14 we read of the greatest compassion of all, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

God dwells now in temples not made with hands. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And again in 6:19, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" This is the full manifestation of the compassion, the mercy, and the pity of God—that He should dwell in us.

APPLYING THIS TO OUR LIVES TODAY.

Most of us do not have little images on the desk or mantle or in the garden to which we bow down and worship. Today we do not plant groves in high places and worship there as they did in olden times. We do not, in this day, worship golden calves. We do not "Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter..."

Or do we?

Anything held so dear that it is

superior to God is an idol. Hours and minutes belong to God—all time is His time. Do we spend His time in His service? If we spend time in questionable employment and at play which would be better spent in His service, that time may become to us as idols. If we check our phone every idle moment, the phone has become our idol. We are stealing time which belongs to God. If we park our vehicle, walk away, but look back to admire its shine and color, that vehicle has become our idol. If we spend an inordinate amount of time on our personal appearance, our house, our farm or business, our garden and fields, our vacation home and “vacation” time, those may become idols to us. In considering all that we possess we should remember that we possess nothing at all. All things belong to Him. In Psalm 50:10 we read, “... every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.” God did not mention it here, but the forest and the hills themselves are His also.

COMPASSION RIGHT AT HOME

There is one more level of compassion and this strikes right to the heart of the home. This goes back to the Lord’s parable in Matthew 18:33, “Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?” As Jesus taught in Matthew 18 after the passage we hear read at every baptism, “Therefore, is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.” We

usually think of this Scripture in terms of owing dollars and cents. But dollars and cents are not the only debt people owe. We are all debtors to someone, to one degree or another, in one sense or another.

We would like to apply this “debt” in a way not usually considered. Most of us look out for ourselves, so to speak, most of the time. This leads to stress in relationships. Consider a husband who thinks his wife “owes” him more respect than he is receiving. Or that his teen-aged children should be more obedient or more respectful of his “authority.” But he does not return the love and honor which his wife deserves. Or the compassion and understanding that his teens deserve. We too often do not consider the burdens under which our loved ones are laboring. The stresses on our wife, struggling to keep a good home while several children demand her time and energy. We do not consider the stresses that our children and teenagers are experiencing in a world much different from that which we knew—relationships, courting, facing adulthood in an uncertain and threatening world. What do they owe me, and what do I owe them in this family relationship? The father has tremendous responsibilities—jobs for which he is sometimes ill-prepared. In addition, he is to be the physical, financial, and spiritual leader in the home. Tremendous pressures.

What do we “owe” one another? We owe each other due honor,

which means appreciation for their value. We owe respect for everyone needs due respect. We owe each other love. Everyone needs to be loved, and everyone needs someone to love. Where better than in the home? We owe admiration, encouragement, and much more. We all know the Scriptures. Colossians 3:19 says, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." And Titus 2:4, "That they may teach the young women to be sober [discrete and temperate], to love their husbands..." In Colossians 3:21 we read, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." It goes without saying that fathers and mothers should show love to their love-needy children of all ages—and, by example, to teach them how to love.

There is much room for the exercise of compassion in the home. The husband toward a weary wife, the wife toward her stressed-out husband. Parents toward their developing, maturing, and often frightened children. And children and teens toward their parents who are trying to do the best they know. In a family relationship we each "owe" our loved ones a debt of compassion. God showed such great compassion to us through His love and sacrifice. Therefore, "Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy [wife, husband, children, and parents], even as I had pity on thee?"

In all walks of life, we owe compassion which is a sign of pity. We have been redeemed at a tremendous cost. Out of compassionate

pity for His creation, God came to earth in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, to die on the cross.

Mercy there was great, and grace was free.

*Pardon there was multiplied to me.
There my burdened soul found liberty
At Calvary.*

*O the love that drew salvation's plan.
O the grace that brought it down to man.*

*O the mighty gulf that God did span
At Calvary.*

Marcus Miller

THESE MEETINGS

Throughout each year we go to many church meetings in our area. From the beginning of the year to the end we go to each one, primarily because of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died for us, so we, by serving and obeying Him, can have life eternal together, in that upper and better kingdom of Heaven! It's through the continual opening of His Word that we learn that everything comes from the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity). It's because of Jesus that we can be saved from the wiles of the devil. It's because of Jesus that we will begin this list of These Meetings:

Christmas meetings, New Year meetings, Regular meetings, Good Friday meetings, Easter meetings, Regular meetings, Love Feast meetings, Regular meetings, Annual Meetings, Regular meetings,

Harvest meetings, Regular meetings, Communion meetings, Thanksgiving meetings, Regular meetings

And then other meetings:

Funeral meetings, Council meetings, Baptismal meetings, etc.

Then we start over with Christmas meetings, and so on.

Blending hymns 446 and 89 in our collection, our thoughts are like this:

*A few more years shall roll,
A few more seasons come,
A few more meetings here
Shall cheer us on our way...
And I hope by thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.*

Then in John 16:16 Jesus says, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."

And then here is a portion of Christ's prayer to His Father for the apostles and for all believers. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:1-3). "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word..." (John 17:13-14a).

About three-fourths of the way down this list is harvest meetings. We have several of these meetings in our area. Having heard about

the joy of harvest a few times this year already, I want to go to John 4:34-36. "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." This tells of the joy of the spiritual harvest, when both the sower and the reaper share in the joy of salvation.

Galatians 6:7-8 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." One needs to definitely sow good seed to reap a bountiful and joyful harvest.

Jesus says at the end of Matthew 9, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." This describes the spiritual readiness of the people to receive the Gospel. And speaks of a time of spiritual joy and fulfilment, or the joy of harvest!

In this world we live in, we go to a lot of meetings throughout the year. Are these meetings here below preparing us with that blessed hope for that final harvest in heaven above, in that new Jerusalem? I think so!

Let's go to Revelation 3:5. "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

Revelation 14:7–8 says, "...Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

And Revelation 14:14–16, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

Let's continue to attend these meetings!

L. D. Flory

THE DANGERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

(from the perspective of a parent)

I know people say that social media can be a good thing, but that was not my experience. My social media journey began on Facebook years ago. I would post and keep up with my "friends." I would waste minutes, scrolling through my feed and reading countless articles thinking they would improve my life. Every now and then I

would read something about how Facebook isn't really "private" and that people can easily hack into my page and see my pictures and posts. I let fear overtake me and I would delete everything off my wall. I would spend lots of time making sure it was as private as possible.

Soon I heard about Instagram. I thought it would be pointless to open up an account because I had Facebook. I knew Instagram was only pictures, so using the excuse to keep up with family and friends, I set up an account. It was great for a while and I had fun seeing everyone's "perfect" lives. Between Facebook and Instagram, I spent countless hours through the week keeping up with people. People who in real life probably would never tell me they had a taco salad for lunch (as was posted on their social media account). As time wore on, I began comparing my life to all the "perfect" lives I was seeing. I would take pictures through out the day, always wondering what I should post. I was spending way too much time thinking of the perfect caption to go with my pictures. Every spare minute I had, I would pick up my phone and refresh my feed to see what I had missed. I would look at my post and see who all "liked" it and then wonder why so and so hadn't liked my picture. Did they not like me? Was I not good enough? I was spending hours a week doing all this over and over. I was becoming very discontent with my life. I wasn't enjoying my children. I didn't have the relationship I wanted with my husband. I was trying to get my fulfillment on social media. I was using it to numb out of my life. I had this feeling of "belonging" to

this false community and I couldn't quite let it go. My children would come up to talk to me and I would agree with them or tell them "just a minute" without ever looking at them.

One day, I quit, cold turkey. I didn't tell anyone. I just deleted my accounts! It felt so good and so freeing at the time that I began to wonder why I hadn't done it sooner. Little did I know the battle had only begun. Soon after this, someone contacted me because they were confused and offended that I had not told them I was going off social media. This shook my confidence and made me start to second guess my decision. I had to work through that and remind myself that I live my life the way I feel God is leading me. As soon as I was confident again, I felt Satan work his way in and I started going through withdrawal. I felt a sense of not belonging and not fitting in because I didn't know what was going on all the time. I felt like I had no friends. I began to research what the Bible has to say about social media. I researched other stories as well. This is what I found:

Social media can be like a drug. It is used to numb out from real life (Gal. 5:16).

It forms a sense of false community, making you feel like you belong (Col. 3:2).

There is a huge danger of pride in social media. The act of self-exaltation allows a person to make themselves the center of attention. The Bible clearly speaks against seeking out one's own glory (Prov. 25:27, Isa. 10:3). Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount that when we do alms (charitable deeds) we

should not do them before men, so everyone can see (Matt. 6:1-4).

King Solomon says in Proverbs 22:29 that we should be diligent in our own business. He said in the previous chapters that it is an honor for us to stay away from strife! He says only fools will be meddling (Prov. 20:3). He then goes on to say that anyone who passes by another conversation and meddles in it, is like a person who takes the dog by his ears. You will get bit (Prov. 26:17). In I Peter 4:15, Peter lists the busybody (a meddler in other men's matter) with the murderers, thieves, and evildoers. But Paul gives us a WAY OUT in I Thessalonians 4:11!!

This world is quickly losing the face-to-face conversations and the true sense of community. People are finding it easier to say things behind a screen than it would be in saying those things face-to-face (Prov. 10:19, Prov. 29:20, Eph. 4:29). Paul gives us a way out of this one as well in Philipians 4:8.

There is a danger of judging people, as in, you see their "perfect" life, and you also know what the "real" is like, that they are not sharing with social media. Of course, this goes with each person and what they decide to share. The false front that this portrays can cause strife and confusion in others' hearts (Phil. 2:3).

In thinking how much I used social media and how much I was on my phone, is this the example I want to leave my children? Do I want them growing up thinking all of this is ok? Let's be aware, parents! This is a real battle we are facing!

—Anonymous

AS WE GROW OLDER

First of all, I am not sure how we got to this age so fast! "One day at a time," the saying goes. But they have been good days, and we have been very blessed.

We are very thankful that we live in such a good country and have not been affected by a war. What a privilege it has been to be a conscientious objector! We did have a neighbor fellow who lost his life in the Vietnam War, so that made it more real. For many, the memories of this time are ugly.

We have heard it said that we are wiser in our older years. Yes, our experiences have taught us a lot, but we are still waiting to feel wiser! Will that day ever come? We have more time to pray, to help others, to do good deeds, but do we take advantage of this time? Or do we just think of ourselves? Could we make it a goal to go help young mothers, maybe a day each month with preparing food, washing windows, or cleaning out cupboards? We could share in the workload and listen to their cares and concerns. We would all be blessed.

Also, as we grow older, we have more time to encourage ministers. Monday mornings are a good time to write a note of appreciation for yesterday's sermon. Our ministry needs to know that time spent in the study of His word paid off!

They need to be lifted up, not criticized. Taking notes while listening in church is a good way to help retain those good thoughts. Ministers spend much time to help us learn of Him; surely we can take some time to encourage them.

In the span of just one year, we

buried a brother-in-law and a sister-in-law. This made life's brief journey real to us. We have seen how "life goes on" without them. Our time will also come to a close, so TODAY is the day to write that note, to do that good deed, to go that extra mile. Then the memories we leave will be sweeter, will leave a smile.

Titus 2 is such a good chapter, as are many in the Bible. I appreciate reading it often. Take time to start every morning with the Lord, in reading and prayer. Your day will go better. Love to you all,

Janet Denlinger

BEING WITH JESUS

Have you ever thought, "If I could only discuss this with Jesus"? As we read our Bibles, and learn how Jesus healed the sick, and taught His followers, do you sometimes wish you could have been there?

Oh, to walk and to talk with Jesus! To hear all the wonderful teachings He gave! How He healed and helped those in need!

He fed the five thousand and changed water into wine. He worked miracles! Are you sometimes just a little discontent, wishing you could have heard Him, and beheld those miracles?

But then I also think of this: Could I have kept up when following Him, and not gotten tired? If I had eaten bread and fish with the five thousand, would I have been truly seeking Him then? Or just

following because of the loaves and fishes? He fed so many with a small amount. What a miracle!

There was something though that marred a perfect walk with Jesus in that day. Jesus had many who hated Him! Would I have been afraid to walk with Jesus, and be seen with Him?

The woman at the well said to her friends, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4:29). Would I have been happy (like her) to hear my faults exposed?

When some were being baptized, would I have been in the crowd of believers? When Jesus spoke, would I have had my pen and notebook ready? If Jesus had told me to go fishing for a coin, or go get an untrained donkey, would I have just obeyed without question?

Mary and Martha often fed Jesus meals. Would I have always been glad that He was coming, and twelve others with Him? How would I have felt if I saw Jesus bring His friends, and come at little notice, needing to have something to eat soon?

When Jesus raised the widow's son, and Lazarus, and Jairus' daughter, would I have been among the believers, or among those that doubted and murmured?

Would I have had faith enough to get out of the boat with Peter, and walk to Jesus on the water? Or would I have said, "No, I think I will stay in this dry boat"? Would Jesus have seen a strong faith in me? Or would He have had to admonish me?

While watching Jesus on the cross, would I have been able to

understand that my sins put Him there? As we look within, we do see our sins, and they are so many! And my sins, and the sins of all humanity, put Him on that cross!

After Jesus' death and resurrection, the disciples went back to fishing. Were they still confused and without hope? Would I have been without hope? I like to think that I would have believed, remembering His words. Jesus spoke of those who did not believe. Would I have been among that number?

After Jesus ascended, He did send the Holy Spirit. They were filled with His Spirit. Do you suppose as the disciples remembered their time with Jesus, (after He had ascended) that they still had questions? Do you suppose they compared notes with each other as they tried to recall those days? Do you think they may have sometimes said, "If I could only ask Jesus"?

We are writing this as a self-examination before a communion. Sometimes we have read literature where the word "I" is used so often and wondered if this was wise. We may need to learn to use something else in the place of "I." Let us all examine ourselves!

When we see Jesus, may He say to us, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

When others hear us, and see our life, do they say, "Those people know their Lord"? Or, "They surely have been with Jesus"?

Vicki Witmer

Each generation has its own tests and challenges. In 1660, Thieleman J. van Braght wrote in his introduction to the *Martyrs Mirror* these sobering words, which are arguably more pertinent in modern times:

“These are sad times, in which we live; nay, truly, there is more danger now than in the time of our fathers, who suffered death for the testimony of the Lord. Few will believe this, because the great majority look to that which is external and corporeal, and in this respect it is now better, quieter and more comfortable; few only look to that which is internal and pertains to the soul, and on which everything depends.”

Anabaptist Viewpoint

MEDITATIONS

Pursued happiness will escape. Shared happiness will return.

Without Light we may go to places where we shouldn't be.

We throw away broken things. God fixes broken lives.

We learn more from problems than from prosperity.

If God is ALL in all, that leaves us as nothing.

Service is a great treatment for idleness.

Make all things right before midnight.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

This section offers some questions to think about, or for Sunday afternoon discussions, or to prompt future articles from our readers, etc. Readers are encouraged to offer questions.

The quote above in 1660 by Thieleman J. van Braght, as he published a history of the terrible martyrdoms of believers, strongly expresses that, for Christians, when there are times of peace, it is a time that holds even more danger than times of persecution.

Questions:

1. How can this be? Can unconverted people not think more clearly in times of peace?

2. Can't Bibles and Gospel literature be printed more freely?

3. Isn't Christianity more attractive during times of peace?

4. Isn't the Christian life more enjoyable in peaceful settings?

5. If his statement is true, is it possible for me to back up and see if there is something to be learned about our setting today in America?

6. Am I "[loving] this present world" as Demas did? How can I know?

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

July 18, 2025; Maple Grove, OH
Aylah Kinzie
Aug. 12, 2025; Shiloh, OH
Kate Filbrun
Aug. 15, 2025; Lower Twin, OH
Ava Yost
Aug. 16, 2025; Maple Grove, OH
Brendon Moore
Aug. 30, 2025; Mt. Zion, PA
Shirit Bowman
Sept. 1, 2025; Bear Creek, OH
Clayton Denlinger
Sept. 2, 2025; Morning Star, OH
Jaden Emig
Sept. 6, 2025; Lower Twin, OH
Wade Brubaker
Sept. 7, 2025; Caldwell, ID
TerriAnna Olivierrie
Sept. 8, 2025; Stillwater, OH
Will Flora
Sept. 10, 2025; Sugar Grove, OH
Reece Sink

COMMUNION NOTICES

Oct. 4, 2025 Providence, IN
Oct. 11, 2025 Lower Twin, OH
Oct. 11, 2025 Zillah, WA
Oct. 18, 2025 Maple Grove, OH
Oct. 18, 2025 Clearwater, IN
Oct. 18, 2025 Western Kansas, KS
Oct. 25, 2025 Stillwater, OH
Nov. 1, 2025..... Bethel, OH
Nov. 1, 2025..... Columbia River, WA
Nov. 1, 2025..... Kidron Valley, KS
Nov. 8, 2025..... Covington, OH
Nov. 8, 2025..... Shenandoah, VA
Nov. 8, 2025..... West Modesto, CA
Nov. 15, 2025..... Fall Creek, IN
Jan. 31, 2026 Pinegrove, FL
Feb. 7, 2026 Living Epistle, NM
Feb. 28, 2026 West Manchester, IN
Apr. 11, 2026 Fair Haven, KS
Apr. 11, 2026 Salem, OH

HARVEST MEETINGS

Nov. 27, 2025Pleasant View, OH

COMMISSIONS

Sept. 12, 2026; Pleasant View, OH
Mark Denlinger (with wife Gina)
Ordained to the Eldership.

NEW MEMBERS

June 10, 2025; West Manchester, IN
Raymond and Cara Kinzie

2025 OGBBC CONFERENCE FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance from 2024 \$79,184.57
Call for Funds \$350,900.00
Donations \$15,918.00
Lodging Receipts..... \$123,514.98
Total.....\$569,517.55

Expenses:

Insurance \$2,290.30
Thank you Donations \$1,700.00
Cedarville Food..... \$179,978.50
Cedarville Rent and Services....\$45,845.39
Cedarville Lodging..... \$111,930.00
Communion Committee..... \$996.75
Food Committee..... \$140.69
Lodging Committee \$2,178.23
Transportation Committee... \$9,457.32
Nursery Committee \$0.00
Usher Committee..... \$339.50
Preteen Committee..... \$520.00
Young Folks Committee \$8,676.94
First Aid Committee..... \$0.00
Kit Packing Donations..... \$14,990.00
Ministry Safe \$2,581.79
Sign Up Genius..... \$119.96
COA Committee..... 829.16

Total\$382,574.53

Ending Balance.....\$186,943.02

Carlton Brubaker, Treasurer

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL NOTICE

We are making our call for subscriptions for the year 2026 at this time. The subscription price for each subscriber continues to be \$30.00 per year, and should be received by December 1, 2025, from the District Agents. **Each District Agent should include an updated list of their subscribers, with their current addresses, highlighting any changes.** Individual subscribers' subscription payments should be received by December 1, 2025, as well, if possible, for the 2026 subscription year.

POEMS

DAYS LIKE THESE

The evening came, with colors bold.
Creation seemed to all unfold.
The water still, like crystal glass.
The flowers mixed, in deep contrast.

I looked toward the brilliant sky.
And knew, beneath God's watching eye.
That He would care for you and me.
Through troubles, in the days like these.

And now, as dusk stole o'er the land.
God seemed to paint a picture, grand.
His beauty, etched from shore to shore.
Reminding us, He would endure.

Whatever life would throw our way
We rest in mercies new each day.
The God of heaven, skies, and seas.
Still gives us peace, for times like these.

Laura Alspaugh
Lititz, PA

TRUTH

(From "The Battlefield")
by William Cullen Bryant.)

Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, wreathes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.

Selected by

Alice Mae Haney
Greenville, OH

I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
Lie down, thou weary one, lie down
Thy head upon My breast."

I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold! I freely give
The living waters, thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live."

I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's Light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk,
Till traveling days are done.

—Horatius Bonar

OBITUARIES

LAVY — Reta Kay, age 88, of Troy, Ohio, passed away Tuesday, August 5, 2025. She was born on January 14, 1937, in Dayton, Ohio, to Millard and Orpha (Garber) Denlinger. On April 24, 1955, she married Everett Lavy at her family home in Trotwood, Ohio. Together they shared 70 years. Reta was a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference, and her faith is what carried her throughout her many years. Reta found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She poured her heart into crocheting, quilting, and sewing. Reta crocheted Afghans for each of her grandchildren and finished her last Afghan after suffering her first stroke.

Canning peaches and salmon was another of Reta's favorites as she and Everett traveled to Barker, New York, each fall to enjoy some time away and spend time with special friends.

Reta spent many hours in the kitchen cooking and baking many delicious treats for her family, friends, and neighbors. She found joy in gardening, and canning, and freezing fruits and vegetables to eat throughout the year. Reta loved spending time working on the family farm.

She will be missed and remembered by her loving husband, Everett; children and their spouses, Larry and Kelly Lavy, Lowell and Kim Lavy, Lynn and Renee Lavy, Lonnie Lavy, Luann and Donnie Miller; grandchildren, Kyle Lavy, Kip and Nikki Lavy, Kyra and Jeff Tron, Jamen and Jen Lavy, Jaclyn and Jorde Spitler, Jessilyn and Tyler Wise, Blake and Kacie Lavy,

Brandon and Amanda Lavy, Trevor and Sarah Lavy, Trinity and Allan Sink, Trista and Dan Bodenmiller, Trelissa and Sam Jackson, Treyton and Kassidi Lavy, Treanna and Tyler Clark, Trace Lavy and Macy Miller, and Mason Miller; siblings and their spouses, Donna Williamson, Marty Brubaker, Lena and Darrell Bower, Tom Denlinger, Edie Murphy, Bob and Sharon Lavy, Eileen and John Henderson; 24 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. Reta will be reunited in heaven with her parents Millard and Orpha Denlinger, Ervin and Estella Lavy; sisters and brothers, Charles and Liz Denlinger, Marion and Millie Denlinger, Jerry Williamson, Ralph Brubaker, Judy Denlinger, Ferdie Murphy, Evelyn and Stanley Shellabarger, Paul David Lavy; daughter-in-law, Tiffany (Hines) Lavy, and granddaughter, Tracy Lavy.

Funeral services were held on Thursday, August 7, at the Covington meetinghouse, with interment following at Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

The Family

SCHAURER — Raymond Lee, age 91, of Covington, Ohio, peacefully passed from this life to eternity at his home on August 31, 2025. He was born March 26, 1934, near Covington, Ohio, to John H. and Mabel E. (Mohler) Schaurer. Ray was united in marriage to Mary Ann Stamy on December 6, 1959, in La Puente, California.

Together they raised their four children and shared a life of over 65 years. They spent their entire married life in the Covington area, farming and raising beef cattle. Ray received his private pilot license before he was married, and his love of flying stayed with him his entire life.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Ralph and sister-in-law, Lois; infant sister, Doris; and brother, Byron. Also preceding him were his in-laws, Daniel and Lena Stamy; his sisters and brothers-in-law, Erma Rinehart, Lois Rumble, Hubert and Kenny Stamy; and one great-granddaughter, Dezirae Rohrer.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann; children, Sherry and Kenny Angle, Denise and Dirk Crosier, Carmen and Kris Wall, and John and Diana Schaurer; 11 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; sister-in-law, Sandy Schaurer Knipe; and many nieces and nephews. We know that our loss is his gain.

The family wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the caregivers that helped make it possible to care for Dad at home, as well as Tracee and Janette, his hospice girls, that provided wonderful care during his last days.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, September 3, at the Old German Baptist Brethren Church near Covington, Ohio. Burial followed at the Sugar Grove Cemetery, Covington.

The Family

BOONE — Marlene Kay, 54, daughter of Donald and Beverly (Hufford) Peters, was born on June 7, 1971, near Flora, Indi-

ana. Having faith in Jesus Christ, she received Him as her Savior and was baptized on June 21, 1990, by her father. She lived out her faith as a member of the Cascade Valley congregation of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, New Conference.

Marlene deeply loved people, often thinking of others and seeking ways to spread sunshine and happiness. She remained single until the age of 36, spending that time serving others, nurturing friendships, and giving special attention to her nieces and nephews, who carry many fond memories of their one-of-a-kind aunt. She was a joyful, fun-loving soul in our family's story.

Marlene worked as a registered nurse for many years, much of that time as a dialysis nurse, caring for patients with kidney failure. In 2007, it brought her great joy to donate one of her own kidneys.

While in high school, she was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, a challenge she quietly faced in varying degrees throughout her life. On September 13, 2009, Marlene called for the elders to pray and was anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, which gave her much comfort.

On February 22, 2008, Marlene married Gordon Leroy Boone. With this union came a "ready-made" family of Gordon's children, Layne and Ruth (Wright) Boone, Deborah and Jason Rumble, and Marcia and Lane Riffey. The 12 grandchildren who became part of her life were very dear to her. Gordon and Marlene shared over 17 blessed years together.

Marlene faced her greatest challenge in the last few months and again called for the elders for prayer and the anointing on

March 16, 2025, which again brought her much comfort and peace as she approached her treatment. After many months of a cancer journey, she was called home to be with the Lord. Her desire and prayer were that if "someone, just one, came to Jesus, it would be worth it all." We leave that in God's hands. One thing we know with certainty, is that all who entered her room saw Him and felt His love. She departed for Heaven's shore on August 30, 2025, at the age of 54.

She leaves behind many who loved her, including her husband; her step-children; her grandchildren, Erica, Colton, Alexis, and Natalyn Boone; Patrick, Madison, Adrian, Easton, and Tamera Rumble; Tate, Ty, and Shae Riffey; her parents; her four brothers and one sister, Doug and Jane Peters, Randy and Gwynne Peters, Gary and Lavonne Peters, Wayne and Lisa Peters, Marianne and Aaron Garber; her brother-in-law, Sherman and Arlene Boone; her sisters-in-law, Sharon and Gary Lavy,

Marilyn and Marion Rogers, and Danielle and Sam Wray; along with many nieces, nephews, her church family, and countless friends.

Marlene's life verse was II Corinthians 12:9: *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*

We are thankful for the many precious memories she gave us, and most of all, for her faith in Jesus, who makes it possible for us to have a blessed hope in the midst of sorrow.

"Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name" (I Chron. 29:13).

A visitation was held on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 1:00–4:00 P.M. The funeral service was held on Sunday, September 7, at 10:00 A.M., with a Graveside Service following, all at the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, Ellensburg, Washington.

The Family

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Authors of essays, devotionals, poems, etc. are asked to review the Statement of Purpose on the back page of this periodical. Articles should

be based on Scripture. References are appreciated. Shorter focused articles are more desirable than articles that move from one topic to another. Selected material will be considered. Original writings are preferred. It is recommended that writers submit themselves to the Spirit, which reveals the will of God to the Church in every age, according to the varied needs and circumstances.

Written articles should be legible. Typed material is preferred and should be double-spaced. Electronic transmission or CD will be accepted. The author's name and address must be included on all material. An attempt will be made to contact the author of articles that are not accepted.

Old German Baptist Brethren
Church—New Conference

THE TESTIMONY

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The Testimony is a Christian publication intended for those who desire nourishment in their spiritual walk, and for writers who wish to express witness to the Truth of the Gospel as experienced in their own lives. It holds the Holy Scriptures to be its only Creed. Its purpose is to bear witness to the Truth of God's Word as it is applied in the daily life of committed Christians. It supports the anabaptist and pietist foundations of the Brethren of Schwarzenau, Germany (1708) including the biblical principle of the community of believers bound by a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus confirmed by adult immersion baptism (Mark 16:16). It strives to promote a life of true living piety among all who confess Jesus as their Lord. It seeks to restore and maintain

a fellowship of true primitive Christianity through the communication of all good things.

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