

"And I, brethren...came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you...

THE TESTIMONY

...of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ..." I Cor. 2:1-2

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." Prov. 31:10-11

Vol. XVII

February 2026

No. 2

MORE PRECIOUS THAN SILVER AND GOLD

*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.
The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands [of pieces] of gold and silver.
Psalm 119:71-72*

The Law of the Lord is more precious by far
Than all life's possessions and valuables are.
More precious than all the things we can hold,
Than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

In amassing great wealth, we save all of these things,
Prizing our stuff and the joy that it brings,
Yet when life is all over the things that we love
Are nothing compared to the treasures above.

What we call "blessings beyond all compare."
We carry through life as all we can bear.
Our life's filled with plenty and more than enough,
But what is beside is just left-over stuff.

We start with a little and end who knows where.
And the least of God's children have something to share.
In men's sight we look wealthy and famous and tall,
But sometimes our possessions aren't blessings at all!

When we get to heaven to dwell with the blessed.
With the Saints of all ages and all of the rest.
There all the glories of heaven we'll behold,
Far better than thousands of pieces of gold.

Marcus Miller
Pleasant Hill, Ohio

THE TESTIMONY

CONTENTS

FRONT COVER	1
MORE PRECIOUS THAN SILBER AND GOLD.....	1
EDITORIAL	3
HUSBANDS, PRAISE YOUR WIVES	3
GENERAL	4
HEARTS OF WORSHIP	4
ROMANS 8:35.....	9
NOMADIC MODERNITY	11
HAVE YOU RSVP'D?	16
THE GREAT FILTER.....	18
MEDITATIONS	20
QUESTIONS TO PONDER	20
GENERAL ITEMS	21
POEMS	1, 21
OBITUARIES	23



“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” I Peter 3:7

EDITORIAL

**HUSBANDS, PRAISE
YOUR WIVES**

She is trustworthy, she is filled with goodness. She is industrious. She is wisely selective and makes good choices. She is a busy provider and is oftentimes an early riser. She is business-minded, thus possessing a healthy sense of values. She is not afraid to work with her hands. She has spiritual strength, honor, and hope. She is compassionate and generous. She labors for the best for her household. She is neat and tidy. Those closest to her are honored by her. She speaks wisely and kindly; actually, the law of kindness is embedded in her tongue. Because of this gracious feature and the fact that she reverences the God of heaven, she is radiantly beautiful.

That is a description of someone lovely and wonderful; Who am I talking about? To all husbands reading this, I may have just described your wife. A living gem, with a price far above precious jewels. A virtuous wife is a husband's chief luxury. Yes indeed, and how did I come to that conclusion? With substantial help from Proverbs 31:10–31 and a lot of personal observation involving my own lovely situation, I have experienced Proverbs 18:22 which says that "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the LORD." That verse celebrates finding a virtuous, supportive spouse as a great blessing and sign of God's favor, bringing companionship, wisdom, and fulfillment. It emphasizes that a good wife pro-

vides immense value, similar to rare treasure, enhancing a man's life both naturally and spiritually, and is a gift from God to be cherished. Therefore, husbands, take notice of the title of this essay. You may be thinking, "I thought the Bible says for husbands to love their wives." It sure does, and included in that love is Proverbs 31:28, "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

A good husband will never cease reminding his beloved spouse what a blessing she is, what a priority she is to him. His heart beats for her, he toils for her, he provides for her, he thanks God for her. There is a sweet spot nestled deep in his chest that relishes and cherishes her. Yes, there are times when he has to be very patient with her, because she comes equipped with special emotions and mood swings that are both baffling and fascinating. She wouldn't be a woman if she thought like a man. Praise her for her feminine attributes, especially that sweet, soft elegance that makes her a female and still thrills your heart though you have been married to her for many years. Think of those anxious, precious times when you stood by her side and watched the impossible take place, while your precious little children were born. Think of the countless hours she spent nourishing and caring for those precious lives, morning, noon, and night, well into the wee hours of the morning, nursing daily needs, skinned knees, bloody noses, high

fevers, and even broken bones. Think of the tons of laundry, the accumulated miles of footsteps involving grocery lists, and shopping lists required to provide for the endless needs of family, while fixing literally thousands of meals to feed ever hungry members of her household. Think of the countless errands and special missions she performed to assist in a man's world, whether it be to gather produce from the garden, bring meals to the field, pack your lunches, or ferry you hither and thither on special assignments. Think of her

hospitality when she provided for, and dined, and lodged invited company. Think deeply, and the lists of virtuous services just go on, and on, and on. And to think that all this time she treated and respected you as her special man with reverence and devotion. Something warm in her countenance speaks a language, that she did all this because she felt loved. Of course you love her, you have always loved her. Husband's keep praising your wives!

Phil King

GENERAL

HEARTS OF WORSHIP

Jesus once told a woman at a well in Samaria that, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23). Thru the power of the Holy Spirit, the people of God now have the opportunity and the ability to worship our Heavenly Father in such a way as He desires, a way which honors Him and blesses others, and there is a power and beauty in the simple worship to which the Scriptures call us under the New Covenant!

"Worship" is a term easily pigeon-holed in Christian circles, for everyone has a preference, a conviction, or a tradition, along with ideas of what actually constitutes worship, and why we should engage in it. However, when we consider the very real potential for

worship to become defined by the entertainment styles and emphases of unregenerate cultures around us, and even the occasional movement seeking to blend certain aspects of Old Testament worship into present-day worship services, it seems that there is a well-merited need for discernment and caution among the people of God as we ask how we can best honor our God. If we have experienced His grace in our lives, then we also ought to understand the importance, the relevance, and the value of worshipping the Father as HE desires: simply in spirit and in truth!

So what does it mean for us to worship our God wholeheartedly? II Samuel 6:12–23 records a short account from the life of King David that gives us some insight into the answer to this question, and three ways in which we can under-

stand true worship and apply it in our own lives.

By way of context, Saul, the first king of Israel, has died at the hands of the Philistines and David is now king over all Israel. David has captured the Jebusite city of Jerusalem, and made it his new capital city, and now desires to bring the Ark of the Covenant into the city. From I Samuel 5–6 we find the account of how proud men had taken it into battle as a “good luck charm” many years before, where the Ark was captured by the Philistines who placed it in their temples, until God smote their idols and their people until they placed it on an ox cart and sent it back toward Israel. Israel then came out to bring back the Ark, but they did so irreverently and in disobedience to the directions of God on how to transport it, placing it upon another cart drawn by oxen rather than having the priests carry it upon poles as instructed in the Law. When the oxen stumbled, a man named Uzzah reached out to keep the Ark from falling; for his failure to honor God’s direction against touching the Ark, Uzzah died on the spot, and as a result, the Ark was left at the nearby home of a man named Obed-edom.

Our account continues in II Samuel 6:12–15, where we read that, “It was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the Ark of God. So David went and brought up the Ark of God from

the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. And it was so, that when they that bare the Ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.”

1. Worship is defined as a Celebration of the Lord’s **PRESENCE**. The first thing we learn from King David’s actions here is that our worship should be defined by celebrating the presence of our God. Once David realizes the error of their ways from before and that the Ark was truly intended for their blessing rather than harm, he acts quickly to have it brought it up to Jerusalem, and he does so both reverently and in accordance with God’s instructions. Furthermore, take note of the descriptions of how this took place: there was “gladness” [rejoicing] (vs. 12); they “sacrificed” (vs. 13); he “danced... with all his might” (vs. 14); there was “shouting” (vs. 15) and the “sound of the trumpet” (vs. 15). This was a celebration! Yet were they actually celebrating? Was it the relocation of a popular tourist item? Was it about Jerusalem becoming a destination location? Was it about gaining riches or fame or other material blessings?

Certainly not! What David and the people were celebrating was simply that which the Ark of the

Covenant represented: the presence of God, manifested among His people! From Obed-edom's experience, we see that blessing comes when God dwells among His people, not always in a material sense, but spiritually! Has this been your experience? And if so, have you ever celebrated as David celebrated? Perhaps not with ram's horns, dancing, and animal sacrifice, but has your worship ever been an expression of spiritual exertion? Has it been a joyful celebration in response to the presence of God in your life?

John 1:14 reminds us that, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Jesus was God Himself come among us, the second Person of the Triune Godhead, not just some man whom God empowered! And because Jesus (God in the flesh) did come among us, His Spirit now dwells within every believer today! John goes on in John 14:23 to repeat the words of Jesus, that "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him." What a blessing to know that when God the Father and God the Son make their home in our hearts through the presence of God the Holy Spirit, His people will be blessed far beyond anything Obed-edom experienced while the Ark remained in his home!

2. Worship involves Giving from the Lord's **PROVISIONS**. The account of David continues in II Samuel 6:16–19 where we read, "And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to everyone a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed everyone to his house."

Notice what happens as the procession carrying the Ark procession arrives in Jerusalem, and the Ark is finally placed in a temporary tent which David has set up for it. Their worship is not only a celebration of the Lord's presence, but it is also very clearly defined by giving! In fact, there are actually two kinds of gifts here. We read about David's giving of offerings to the Lord, and also his gifts of food to the people! Consider this: the Ark represented God's Presence among His people, which brought blessing to His people

(just as it did with Obed-edom). Now David shows that genuine worship is reflected by giving back from those blessings which the Lord had ultimately Provided! Worship should prompt us to give back to God and also to share with others a portion of what He has given us!

Does my worship actually involve giving back to God? Just as Jesus was the Lamb slain (i.e., given) from the foundation of the world for us, are we willing to give back to the Lord? And to pass blessing on to others? What does the Word say about this idea of giving back? Romans 12:1 calls us to "...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God..." Philippians 4:18 speaks of being "full, having received...the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God." And Hebrews 13:15 tells us about offering up (giving) "the sacrifice of praise to God continually."

How easily we fall into the trap that worship is somehow mainly about "me" or "my" worship experience, even when the Lord is the One we are praising! And this is why David's response, as he brings the Ark to Jerusalem, offers us a powerful reminder that our God always calls us to turn, take the blessings which He has given us, and not only bless His name in return, but to look for ways to bless our brothers and sisters and others! What does this look like in your life? Does your worship

demonstrate a celebration of the Lord's Presence and a sharing of His Provisions? Psalm 96 reminds us of this as well, which David wrote specifically for the occasion of the Ark returning to Jerusalem and gave to Asaph (I Chr. 16) after the people were fed.

3. Worship involves Seeking the Lord's **PLEASURE**. II Samuel 6:20–23 (ESV) reminds us that our worship is not only about celebrating the Lord's Presence and sharing from His Provisions, but that it is also about seeking His Pleasure. "And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, 'How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!' And David said to Michal, 'It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD, and I will celebrate before the LORD. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this and I will be abased in your eyes. But by the female servants of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor.' And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death."

Notice how verse 16 points forward to these last verses, as we saw Michal watching David and the people entering Jerusalem. We learn that her heart is filled

with pride and bitterness when she sees David, and now we see those attitudes spilling out of her heart through her words! What was her complaint? She despises David because she believes he has not acted like a king; in her eyes he is acting like some vulgar commoner, he's an embarrassment with his jumping around and shouting, and he's wearing (in her opinion) completely inappropriate clothing! But why is Michal so worked up, and why is everyone celebrating except for her? What truly lies at the root of her refusal to join in? The language of verse 16 is crucial, as we consider how the characters are referred to there. We read of "King David" and "Michal, the daughter of Saul," rather than "David, her husband" and "Michal, his wife—his first wife." Why might this be?

Truthfully, Michal had been through a lot, and like David, she too had also suffered. She loved David once upon a time (I Sam. 18:20, 28). She helped him escape from Saul's assassins, she endured the shame of him being on the run as a fugitive, and then she was given away as another man's wife! Then David returned, and after years of marriage to another man, Michal is forcibly sent back to David as a political symbol and becomes just another one of his many wives. But take notice once more of her title here, "Michal the daughter of Saul," because this is the key to understanding her heart and attitude. Her father,

Saul, had always sought the pleasure of the people, desiring to look the part of a king and valuing public approval so highly that he willingly rejected God's commands! On the other hand, David refused to let his worship be defined by the crowd. In fact, the crowd's opinion (and even Michal's opinion) really did not matter to him in terms of worship; verse 21 says he celebrated before the Lord!

And yet, Michal missed the wonder of God's presence! She was so worried about David worshipping and appearing the "right" way that her expectations were hyper-focused on the proper way to worship more than the proper spirit in which to do it; she was more focused on her perception of image and stability than about the attitude of the heart, more worried of what men would think than what God thought, and for her, the "mission" of worship was less important than having the right "method" of worship! But David's worship was driven by what was pleasing to God; he sang, he shouted, he danced, he sacrificed, he distributed, he blessed, and he did all of it for God's pleasure!

So the question for you and me is: "What drives our worship when we come before the Lord?" Because it can be so easy to be like Michal sometimes, distancing ourselves in our pride, or our pain, or our preferences, and viewing worship as an activity that happens Sundays, or perhaps in communion, just something that Christians are

supposed to do! How easily we can fall into the trap of thinking that our worship needs to be performed just right, and to feel that it is “boring” or “stuff,” or perhaps it seems too “worldly” or “irreverent,” or that it is uninspiring and doesn’t seem to fill my need. It is easy to project my preferred traditions, desired experiences, or even baggage from my past onto how I judge what true worship should look like, how I want it to look or sound or feel, and again like Michal, how quickly I can focus on the model of worship at the expense of its ultimate mission—lifting up a grateful heart to honor our God! Truly, worship from the heart is so much bigger than you and I; and like David, the recognition of this should always fuel and define our worship together!

What can we learn from this little account as we come to worship? Hopefully a flame of true worship can be kindled among us by David’s example, and by the celebration of God’s Presence among us; and then, as we grasp more fully just Who it is among us, we can celebrate with a spiritual exertion that leads to giving from His Provisions just as we have received, back to Him and forward to one another! And finally, may we worship wholeheartedly for His Pleasure!

Christian Filbrun

ROMANS 8:35

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”

The hope is that we all, as individuals, would learn from difficult situations how we should respond, and grow, and mature. May we think about how we ought to respond, when, for instance, if we’re treated unfairly: do we respond in kind, or should we, in humility submit, if it is not against our Father’s will? In Romans 5:3–5 we read, “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

If betrayed, it will teach what true loyalty is, and we should forgive and pray for the betrayer, just as Jesus did as we read in Luke 23:34: “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” True surrender!

If rejected, we will learn not to take our brethren, sisters and friends for granted! But, as our Lord was rejected, so should we learn from Him as we read in Luke 17:33, “Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.” This could apply to persecution!

When we're ignored, our response is often "self," but hopefully it will teach us the importance of listening to others, and remembering our Lord's admonition as Matthew 16:24 reads, "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Another area for humbleness on our part!

Pain will teach us compassion, like our Savior showed so many times when He was here on earth! And when things seem to be falling apart all around us, then is when we need to look up! When we sorrow for family, friends and loved ones, keep praying! When we fear, as we all do at times, as a minister said one Sunday evening, we should read I Peter 5:7: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." God sometimes allows bad things to happen to His children, for their good, that we might learn humility, brokenness, obedience, and surrender to His will, as they are precious virtues in His sight! When these things enter our lives, His intent is to purify and refine—never to discourage or overwhelm. Everything, good or bad, that comes into our lives is either planned or allowed by our Father, and He knows what He is doing, and be assured, it is always for our good and His glory!

But, it's our choice, how we respond! Let us be happy and rejoice that we are so loved by our Father!

WHAT GOD HATH PROMISED!

Annie Johnson Flint

God hath not promised
Skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways
All our lives through;
God hath not promised
Sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow,
Peace without pain.

God hath not promised
We shall not know
Toil and temptation,
Trouble and woe;
He hath not told us
We shall not bear
Many a burden,
Many a care.

God hath not promised
Smooth roads and wide,
Swift, easy travel,
Needing no guide;
Never a mountain,
Rocky and steep,
Never a river
Turgid and deep.

But God hath promised
Strength for the day,
Rest for the labor,
Light for the way,
Grace for the trials,
Help from above,
Unfailing sympathy,
Undying love.

AliceMae Haney
750 Chestnut Drive
Greenville, OH 45331

NOMADIC MODERNITY

Eddie LaRow

*How this modern age has become
more nomadic and fluid and
foundationless, and the
remedy God provides.*

Submitters note:

This article is denser with more complex vocabulary and quotes than what many readers may appreciate. However, it seems to offer a worthwhile description of the strange new world that is unfolding around us.

A man trudged down the streets of Vienna in the winter of 1909, hugging the shadows cast by evening lamps. His dark brown hair touched his collar. His beard was unkempt. The brown jacket he'd purchased at a pawnshop for fifty kronen was threadbare, and his shoes looked ready to disintegrate with each step.

This vagrant had no home, no destination, no community. He drifted from flophouse to flophouse, sleeping in doorways when he had no money for a bed. He sold postcards he painted to tourists, barely scraping together enough to eat. Most days he went hungry. He was driven by an insatiable desire to belong.

It is almost impossible to imagine that this homeless drifter would, within three decades, command one of the most murderous regimes in history. But Adolf Hitler's years of vagrancy—what he would later call the period when he “grew hard”—offer a disturbing window into what happens when

human beings are severed from home, place, and genuine spiritual community.

From 1908 to 1913, Hitler was rootless in every sense. He had been rejected by the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts—twice. His best friend August Kubizek was succeeding as a musician while Hitler lived in squalor. His mother was dead. He had no family, no church, no trade, no purpose. He was, in the fullest sense, spiritually and physically homeless.

And in that homelessness, he found something dark to cling to. “Wherever I went, I now saw Jews,” Hitler later wrote in *Mein Kampf*, “and the more I saw, the more sharply they set themselves apart in my eyes from the rest of humanity.” Vienna's burgeoning anti-Semitic culture offered Hitler what he desperately needed: an enemy to blame for his suffering, and a twisted sense of belonging.

Hitler's story is not offered here in sympathy but as anthropological evidence. Human beings were not created for rootlessness. We were made for place, for people, for belonging. When those bonds are severed—whether by poverty, ideology, or the dislocations of modernity itself—we become desperate. And desperate people will latch onto anything that offers them identity and community, even if that something is monstrous.

Robert Birley, in his 1947 Burge Memorial Lecture, comments that totalitarianism seduces young people with a sense of community. “The most obvious symptom of the

spiritual disease of our civilization is the widespread feeling among men that they have lost all control of their destinies. Hitler's answer to that frustration was one of the main secrets of his power." Robert Nisbet, in *The Quest for Community*, likewise notes that the "disenchanted and alienated German worker" is key to understanding what drove millions to fanaticism.

Hitler's homelessness was concrete—a vagrant literally sleeping in doorways. But decades later, a Polish sociologist would diagnose a different kind of homelessness, one that now penetrates the entire structure of Western civilization. Zygmunt Bauman, a disillusioned socialist who had seen both fascism and communism fail, understood that modernity itself had become liquid. Bauman, in *Modernity and the Holocaust*, offered a cogent analysis of the Holocaust that posited that Nazism was a modern enterprise. He notes that "the Holocaust was not simply a Jewish problem, and not an event in Jewish history alone. The Holocaust was born and executed in our modern rational society, at the high stage of our civilization and at the peak of human cultural achievement, and for this reason it is a problem of that society, civilization and culture." Henry Feingold notes that the Final Solution marked where the European system went off the rails and "instead of enhancing life"—the goal of modernity post-

Enlightenment—"it began to consume itself." Thus Hitler's hatred for modernity in Vienna ended up leading him to not only a twisted ideology but to modernity itself.

"The whole of modernity," Bauman wrote, "stands out from preceding epochs by its compulsive and obsessive modernizing—and modernizing means liquefaction, melting, and smelting." Relationships have become provisional. Anxieties are no longer concrete and local, but diffuse and global. Products are designed for obsolescence. Even identity itself is consumable—you "try on" selves like clothes, discarding them when they no longer serve you. Gender is merely an expression, and love is whatever you want it to be. The self is a fleshly vehicle for expression. We pursue progress for the sake of progress, not toward any destination.

Yet Bauman offered no solution, and certainly no solution that Christians can grab onto and hold to in the liquid waters of the modern storm. He had seen socialism fail in Poland and capitalism liquefy everything in the West. He saw the homelessness of modern life with perfect clarity—but his work fails to point us toward the eternal rooted home that man has been seeking since the Garden of Eden.

So yes, Bauman's theory is essential for understanding our crisis, but it doesn't go far enough. Liquidity describes the mechanism; nomadism describes its con-

sequence. To be liquid means lacking a stable form. To be nomadic means you have no home to return to. Against modernity's eternal return to nowhere, the Christian faith offers the return to eternity. We, like the prodigal son, squander what we have until we have nowhere to look but back home.

Modern man has become a nomad, constantly moving from place to place, relationship to relationship, identity to identity. "The decline of community in the modern world has, as its inevitable religious consequence, the creation of masses of helpless, bewildered individuals who are unable to find solace in Christianity regarded merely as creed," writes Robert Nisbet. "The stress upon the individual, at the expense of the churchly community, has led remorselessly to the isolation of the individual, to the shattering of the man-God relationship, and to the atomization of personality." In other words, this nomadism is not just geographical but spiritual.

Unlike the nomads of old who moved with their tribes across familiar territories following ancient patterns, modern nomads wander alone through an undifferentiated landscape, following no pattern except the compulsion to keep moving. Nomadic modernity is the condition of being structurally homeless in a liquid world. It manifests in three domains that correspond precisely to what human beings were created for—and what modernity has systematically destroyed.

WE ARE HOMELESS IN *PLACE*.

COVID-19 clarified what had already become true. Work detached from location. Offices closed, team meetings moved to Zoom, relationships migrated to apps. The digital age promised freedom—work from anywhere!—but delivered a strange placelessness. When everywhere is potentially "home," nowhere actually is. But this doesn't just impact those of us who work in an office, or from home on a computer. It impacts those of us who farm the land and work with our hands. Blue-collar jobs, the backbone of America, are being suffocated by rising costs, international labor, and competition from large blue-collar corporations. Even if we don't move away from home physically, our work has become placeless in that we are bombarded by globalization even in small-town America.

For younger generations, even securing a physical place has become radically difficult. Skyrocketing housing costs have turned home ownership from an expected milestone into a luxury reserved for the already-wealthy or the exceptionally fortunate. Millennials and Gen Z aren't nomadic by choice—they're nomadic by economic necessity. Nomadism tells you that if you settle down, or if you commit, you'll miss opportunities. It's exhausting. In the words of Nisbet, "The human mind cannot support moral chaos for very long." Moral chaos breeds fatigue. And the desire for rest can lead us to dark places if we are not careful.

WE ARE HOMELESS AMONG *PEOPLE*.

As we seek fulfillment in perpetual self-exploration—"finding yourself"—we lose connection to communities around us. Relationships become projects, friendships become networks, and even family becomes optional. Influencer culture makes us feel like we have "a people," but we're merely hopping around, shifting our attention too quickly to lay down roots. We're constantly auditioning our identity, performing for audiences we'll never meet, seeking validation from strangers while ignoring our neighbors. Dating apps embody this perfectly. People are interchangeable, commitment is optional, and there's always someone better waiting for us.

WE ARE HOMELESS IN *TIME*.

History is seen as an endless march toward progress. Any claim to a rooted past impedes the perpetual revolution. The result is historical amnesia. Hannah Arendt calls this the severing of "the thread of tradition." This thread is connected, according to Arendt, to our natality. Every day the world is invaded by newcomers and those who are already here are merely waiting to move on. How are they to know where to go if they are left no clues as to where they are from? Many of us can't even name our great-grandparents or trace our nation's history. This is of course in part due to the stress on forward movement. We are taught to view tradition as oppressive, inher-

itance as privilege, and the wisdom of previous generations as irrelevant at best and harmful at worst. We have sought to unshackle ourselves from our very past, our very shared natality. When we're constantly moving, constantly remaking ourselves, we lose touch with where we came from. We become temporal nomads. Though situated in time, we live as if time began with us—acknowledging only this fleeting present that dissolves even as we grasp it, and the perpetually receding future that promises fulfillment but never delivers. The past becomes weightless. Those who came before us vanish into forgetting. This is the tyranny of the present.

Taken together, these three forms of nomadism create an ersatz freedom that amounts to exile. Liquid modernity promised liberation from the constraints of place, people, and past. It delivered rootlessness, loneliness, and despair. You have no ground to stand on and no story to inhabit. You're not liberated; you're lost.

And like Hitler in Vienna, lost people will grasp at anything that offers them a tribe: A nation to worship, a brand to identify with, a cause to die for, or an enemy to blame. All are attempts to resolve homelessness without going home. We see this all around us. Millions are grasping for something to resolve the drive for belonging, and unfortunately many are grabbing the wrong things.

But what if there is a home that has remained constant? One institution has remained solid for two thousand years while empires rose and fell, technologies came and went, and ideologies burned bright and collapsed. The Church—flawed, human, often flailing—has endured because it is rooted not in the shifting sands of human progress but in the bedrock of divine revelation.

Against the nomadism of placelessness, the Church offers place: The same liturgy—though in different variations—in the same building across generations, particular dirt under particular trees with particular neighbors. The Church is united by the past, present, and future. Reciting the Nicene Creed unites us, wherever we are, to something rooted. The kingdom of God is not merely an ethereal concept, but a place—God’s people worshiping Him for eternity.

Against the nomadism of peoplelessness, the Church offers people. I can’t help but hear the old John Michael Talbot lyrics, “We are one body, one body in Christ, and we do not stand alone.” (See I Cor. 12.)

Against the nomadism of pastlessness, the Church offers a past and a future: “Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8). There is something profound in the Christian faith’s understanding of the past, present, and future. Our faith is rooted in history, and yet

it is rooted in the future as well. We look back to the cross in order to live now in the kingdom. The past and future are intertwined at the foot of the cross. To be a Christian is to join together with millions of saints across all time, and together proclaim the shared heritage of faith.

In other words, the Church is structurally anti-liquid, anti-nomadic, anti-homeless. It offers what desperate modern nomads most need: roots that go deeper than modernity can reach. In the face of the ebb and flow of modernity, the Church is a bulwark of certainty; we profess with millions before us and millions to come that “We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.” She does not change, for the God who made her does not change.

We were created to be with God in a place, with a people, and with a purpose. Nomadic modernity has severed all three bonds, leaving us wandering in a modern wasteland. But the Church remains—ancient, enduring, solid—calling to the wanderer: “Come in and find rest here. Find purpose. Find hope. Find love.” The Church is the answer to nomadic modernity.

This article was first published in *First Things*. It is used by permission.

Selected by

Anthony Hess

HAVE YOU RSVP'D?

Let's look at the definition of RSVP. It's a French term *répondez s'il vous plaît* translating to English as "please respond." Some etiquette experts recommend responding even if you don't plan to attend, offering regrets. Recently we were at an event. Prior to going we received an invitation in the mail. I am sure you all received an invitation like this one, with the specifics of what, where, and when. On this one though there was a note at the bottom of the invitation, "Please RSVP by thus and such date." We RSVP'd and didn't think any more about it. The date arrived and we made plans for babysitting, and we went. We were a little late with our arrival (15 minutes). Not a huge deal, right? When we entered the room, we began to look for a seat. We walked around for about three or four minutes trying to find a seat at a table. We needed two seats as we didn't want to sit separately. There were empty seats here and there, but they had signs of other people's belongings, so they were already taken. So, there we stood at the back of the room with no seat. After a little hustle and bustle from the hosting group, they rolled out another table and began to set it with plates, cups, and silverware, and at last we could sit down.

You see, what happened at this event was that some people showed up who didn't RSVP, and the host group wasn't planning on that. We did our part; we RSVP'd, but still they had to make room for us. It struck me on the way home that this, to some degree, is how our Christian life is. Have you RSVP'd? Is there a place set for you around the table at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb? Or do you plan on just showing up hoping to get in? Argument could be made about how rude it was that someone went to all the trouble making the invites, addressing the envelopes, and mailing them out to the people, only to have some not respect their time and effort to RSVP. You know, that's a little how it is with God. We have to RSVP. The invitation's been sent, the work's been complete, all we have to do is RSVP. We must respond. If we do not then we will not have a place at the table. John reminds us of the words of Jesus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" and "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Accepting Christ and being born again are steps in our response to the invitation. Sometimes we sing this hymn:

*Come, sinners, to the gospel feast;
Let every soul be Jesus' guest.
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all humankind.*

*Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
The invitation is to all.
Come, all the world! Come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.*

*Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,
Ye restless wanderers after rest;
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt,
and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.*

*My message as from God receive;
Ye all may come to Christ and live.
O let His love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer Him to die in vain.*

*This is the time, no more delay!
This is the Lord's accepted day.
Come thou, this moment, at His call,
And live for Him who died for all.*

one, or will you be like the rich man begging just for a fingertip of water? Our response shouldn't be out of the "Oh well, that's what my parents did, so I must," or "Pastor so and so said I need to do it," or "Well, my best friend is, so what's the worst that could happen." NO! Our response should be, "Because that's what Jesus told us, and He invited all." It's a response that should come from the heart, not the head. II Peter 3:9 reminds us, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, BUT that ALL [emphasis added] should come to repentance." I especially like this



Not one of us can enter the feast without RSVPing. We must respond. We won't be able to show up without doing so. We also won't be allowed to just fill in for an empty seat either. All the seats at that table will be taken; there will be no empty seats. Will you be in

passage. Jesus, who is rich in mercy, who died for all of humanity, desires that not any perish, but that we all repent. A quote I came across one time that I sometimes think about is, "There is more mercy in Christ, than sin in me." If the sin in us outweighed the

mercy in Christ, then the only just thing for Christ to do is destine us to eternal death.

Think about the author for a moment, Peter, a man who was called by Jesus face to face, walked with Jesus side by side, was called the rock whom the church would be built upon, was called Satan by Jesus, denied Jesus, ran to see the empty tomb, one of the eleven who witnessed Jesus ascending into everlasting glory, a forerunner of the church age, and finished in strong humility dying for his Lord. All that Peter experienced somewhat encapsulated into one warning, “The Day of the Lord Will Come.” Peter warns us that the Day will come as a thief. Why do you suppose he chose to describe it that way? What is he telling us? “Get an alarm system installed on your salvation clock, and live in the flesh. That way, when the Day of the Lord comes, you’ll be alerted and can respond before it’s too late.” No, that’s not at all what he’s warning us. Alarm systems don’t keep thieves from showing up—they only alert you once a thief has shown up, at which point it will be too late. In Matthew 24:36 Jesus tells us, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” RSVP, unsaved ones!

You will not be able to enter in on the response of others; no one can respond for you. To those of us that have responded, WATCH, and don’t be distracted. Costi Hinn has said, “Busy Christians are some of the most distracted empty people you’ll find. Because they are so concerned about the work of the Lord, and not spending time with the Lord of the work.”

The choice is up to you, what do you want, a spot at the marriage supper of the Lamb with a feast that’s so heavenly it’s impossible with our finite minds to imagine what it might be like? Or weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth? Those are the two options, based on whether we RSVP or we don’t. The first Adam ate, so man died. The last Adam died, so man may feast, and feast with Him for eternity.

Landon Kelley

THE GREAT FILTER

In Brazil, we used a red ceramic tall water cooler that had a large filter system to eliminate all the substances we would not want to ingest.

Our automobiles have filters also, to keep the heart of engines pure and clean.

The most powerful filter, we feel, in our Christian race, is just knowing that our God hates sin.

To help us place this filter in our hearts, minds, and souls is to realize that only Satan comes up with many tricky reasonings that sin is OK.

But it is not OK.

We feel that thinking about God, reading, meditating, and memorizing His Word, will help us to turn away from sin.

One of the greatest filtering systems we have is our conscience. If we will listen to and believe lies and become numb, we may “sear” our conscience. If our conscience is “seared” (I Tim. 4:2) then it will appear that we have no filtering system, or that we do not care.

We need lots of prayer to overcome. Many things pass through our mind, unless we filter them out.

May we be hearers, doers, and most of all, overcomers.

STABILITY IN SIFTING SAND

If I could sift immoral sands

Away from my heart and mind,
Lean closer to Him, and understand
The treasures I can find.

To look away, as I look up,

To walk with Jesus now today,
If I accept salvation’s cup,
He will then lead me all the way.

If every day I turn away
From all of evil and from sin,
O, let me walk with Him today
He’ll help with struggles we are in.

I’ll shut my eyes, and I’ll kneel down,
I will kneel before His Throne,
On the road of life, may we be bound
And led, with all His children, home.

Just one more time, and one more
time,

I overcome as I pray.
He helps me through just one more
time,

Until the tempter goes away.

Then to rise with faith and hope,
May I live for Him each day,
I’ll ask my Jesus to help me cope,
And sift my sins away.

Vicki Witmer

He takes our sins away...

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:7–9).

EARLY CHRISTIAN QUOTES

“Are we not commanded to put away all immodesty? On this ground, we are excluded from the theater, which is immodesty’s own peculiar home. Is it right to look on what is disgraceful to do? How is it that the things that defile a man in going out of his mouth, are not regarded as doing so when they go in his eyes and ears?”

—Tertullian

MEDITATIONS

We may get what we want, but we may not want what we get.

Bangs often result in destruction. Could a “Big” bang *create*?

I may do whatever I want. But why should I want to?

“Ask and ye shall receive,” doesn’t include stuff.

Embrace stress. It may be the finger of God.

Sorrow can be a song as well as a sigh.

Pray for the peace of the church.

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.

We have heard that we live in age of *excuses*. It may be that this tendency of man appears to be worse now, than in some portion of our own memory, but in reality this began in the Garden of Eden. When God approached Adam about his disobedience, he immediately began to make excuse, and place blame on others. Perhaps we each have struggled with this.

It may be that we should ask ourselves some questions:

1. Is my excuse just an attempt to rationalize my failure?
2. Why is confession and admission so difficult for me?
3. Do I really think I make no mistakes?
4. Is my pride at the heart of most of my excuses?
5. What is a better path for me if someone points out a mistake?
6. How will I conduct myself if I have more humility?
7. Should I pray more about this?

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Oct. 17, 2025; Fair Haven, KS
 Tori Wray
 Nov. 23, 2025; Bethel, OH
 Bree Brunk
 Dec. 21, 2025; Caldwell, ID
 Haven Landes
 Brooklyn Miller
 Jan. 3, 2026; Fair Haven, KS
 Corbin Fisher

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

Dec. 15, 2025; Bethel, OH
 Randy and Anita Brubaker
 Melissa Bowman

COMMUNION NOTICES

Feb. 7, 2026.....Living Epistle, NM
 Feb. 28, 2026 Sequatchie Valley, TN
 Feb. 28, 2026 West Manchester, IN
 Mar. 14, 2026..... Dallas, OR
 Mar. 21, 2026..... Mt. Zion, PA
 Mar. 21, 2026..... Sugar Grove, OH
 Mar. 28, 2026..... Morning Star, OH
 Apr. 4, 2026 Modesto, CA
 Apr. 11, 2026 Cascade Valley, WA
 Apr. 11, 2026 Cutler Ridge, IN
 Apr. 11, 2026 Fair Haven, KS

Apr. 11, 2026.....Salem, OH
 Apr. 18, 2026..... Olive Branch, OH
 Apr. 18, 2026..... Shiloh, OH
 Apr. 25, 2026.....Bear Creek, OH
 Apr. 25, 2026..... Caldwell, ID
 June 7, 2026....A.M. @ I.W.U., Marion, IN
 June 27, 2026.... Mtn. View Brethren, ID
 Sept. 26, 2026..... Pleasant View, OH
 Oct. 10, 2026Lower Twin, OH
 Oct. 10, 2026Zillah, WA
 Oct. 17, 2026 Maple Grove, OH
 Oct. 24, 2026 Stillwater, OH
 Oct. 31, 2026 Bethel, OH
 Nov. 7, 2026.....Covington, OH

CONFERENCE COMMUNION

Lord willing, we anticipate a Communion Service on Sunday, June 7, at 4:00 P.M. which will be held during our Annual Conference June 6–9 at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana.

I Corinthians 11:26 “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.”

On behalf of the 2026 Committee of Arrangements,

Dean Brovont, Secretary

POEMS

THE TEACHER

Lord, who am I to teach the way to little children day by day,
 So prone myself to go astray?
 I teach them knowledge, but I know how faint the flicker, and how low
 The candles of my knowledge glow.
 I teach them love for all mankind, and all God’s creatures, but I find
 My love comes lagging far behind.
 Lord, if their guide I still must be, Oh, let the little children see
 The teacher leaning hard on Thee.

— Leslie Pickney Hill

ALL THINGS NEW*II Corinthians 5:17**Revelation 21:1-5*

New year has begun.
 New doors will open.
 New praise will ascend
 To our Savior and Friend.

New lessons to learn,
 New wisdom to gain,
 New thanks to give God
 For the joys and the pain.

New people to meet,
 New lives to be touched,
 Knowing all mankind
 To God means so much.

New seeds will be sown,
 In soil and in hearts.
 New increase be given
 As promised from the start.

New sun set to awe,
 New early sun rise.
 New days to enjoy
 With their beautiful skies.

New heaven and earth,
 New Jerusalem.
 This promise is true.
 Jesus is coming soon!

Winter Etter
 New Lebanon, Ohio

O WORD OF GOD INCARNATE*William How*

O Word of God incarnate,
 O Wisdom from on high,
 O Truth unchanged, unchanging,
 O Light of our dark sky:
 We praise thee for the radiance
 That from the hallowed page,
 A lamp to guide our footsteps,
 Shines on from age to age.

The church from her dear Master
 Received the gift divine,
 And still that light she lifteth
 O'er all the earth to shine.
 It is the golden casket,
 Where gems of truth are stored;
 It is the heaven-drawn picture
 Of Christ, the living Word.

It floateth like a banner
 Before God's host unfurled,
 It shineth like a beacon
 Above the stormy world;
 It is the chart and compass
 That o'er life's raging sea,
 Mid mists and rocks and quicksands,
 Still guides, O Christ, to thee!

Selected by

Nancy Sullenberger
 Arcanum, Ohio

PRAYER ON ENTERING CHURCH

Heat and burden of the day
 Help us, Lord, to put away.
 Let no crowding, fretting cares
 Keep earthbound our spirits' prayers.
 Carping criticism take
 From our hearts for Jesus sake.

—Author Unknown

WEARY IN WELL DOING

I would have gone; God bade me stay: I would have worked, God bade me rest.
He broke my will from day to day. He read my yearnings unexpressed
And said them nay.

Now I would stay; God bids me go. Now I would rest; God bids me work.
He breaks my heart, tossed to and fro, My soul is wrung with doubts that lurk
And vex it so.

I go, Lord, where thou sendest me; Day after day I plod and moil;
But Christ my God, when will it be that I may let alone my toil,
And rest in Thee?

—Christina Rosetti

OBITUARIES

BOWMAN — Lois Irene (Layman), daughter of Ezra R. and Dorothy (Boone) Layman was born September 27, 1939, in Franklin County, Virginia. After attending her home district's Communion service on her 86th birthday, she peacefully passed from this life the next evening, on September 28, 2025, in the comfort of her home.

She, along with her future husband, were baptized into the Old German Baptist Brethren Church on August 13, 1960, in which she was a faithful member until death.

On June 30, 1962, she united in marriage with Marvin David Bowman. They enjoyed 63 wonderful years working together on their dairy farm. This happy union was blessed with one son in 1972, Anthony Dean, who brought much joy into their lives. He married their beloved daughter-in-law, Jeanette Bauman. To further increase her joy, the Lord blessed the family with three grandchildren; Kirby, Brock, and Tonya. She loved her

family and has left them with many wonderful memories by her special care and tender guidance.

She will be greatly missed by her husband, her son and his family; siblings, Wayne (Wyleneia), David (Judy), Owen (Dorothy), Betty Selby, and Daniel (Teresa). Also, her in-laws, Miriam Layman, Rachel (Ellis) Jamison, Orville Bowman, Dallas (Marilyn) Bowman, Tommy Hudson; and a special friend who shared their cancer journey together, Navella and her husband Lavern Crumpacker; along with many other special nieces, nephews, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; in-laws, Roy and Susie (Beckner) Bowman; a brother, Lowell Layman; and in-laws, Curtis Selby, Ezra Lee (Susie) Bowman, Ruth Bowman, Betty (Loyd) Jamison, and Reva Hudson.

She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1995, at which time she asked for the anointing. From this she received much comfort and

strength as she endured chemotherapy treatments and was blessed with thirty more years of a good quality of life. In the spring of 2025, she was diagnosed with colon cancer. She enjoyed spending her last days at home being cared for by her loving husband, her family, and many other special friends and caregivers until her death.

Lois was an avid gardener and cherished time spent in her vegetable and flower gardens, saving and sharing many plants, which were then enjoyed by others. She also enjoyed the many boys who frequently visited their home with Anthony; taking pleasure in cooking breakfast for them and watching them eat. She loved a clean house, with a place for everything and everything in its place. We will remember her godly example.

Funeral services were held at the Oak Hill meeting house on October 2 by the home brethren. For a basis of thoughts, Proverbs 31 was used, with a focus on gardens and the patience of the gardener. The closing hymn from communion service was the last hymn Lois shared in singing. This hymn, #506, was used during the funeral service, as well as #526, which was a favorite of Lois's. The burial followed in the adjoining church cemetery.

The family greatly appreciates the support given by loved ones from near and far at this time of loss. Our hope is that we may all meet together in heaven.

The Family

MILLER — Leona Irene, daughter of L. J. and Anna Renicker, was born in Waterford, California, on May 23, 1935. She shared many wonderful experiences growing up on a peach farm and attending school near Waterford. At an early age, she accepted Christ as her Saviour. On Sunday, September 28, 2025, she passed into eternity at the age of 90 years.

On June 18, 1955, Leona was married to Charles Miller by Orlando Blickenstaff. Their first home was in Whittier, California. They were blessed with one daughter, Marilyn, before returning to Modesto. One son, Dale, was born several months later.

Mother had many interests. She enjoyed writing letters, and decorating cards with stickers for those who needed encouragement, and prayed that God would bless each one. For many years, she enjoyed staying busy with jigsaw puzzles, which kept Daddy busy preparing them, and making frames, so they could hang on their walls and continue bringing them joy.

In 2004, she felt God had called her to write poetry, which she shared with others in various ways. Often, she wrote a poem a day!

Feeding birds was another pleasure for her up until her fall in July. She loved animals also, and had many pets over the years. Someday, she expressed, she would like to pet a deer and a lion!

The last few years, she reached out by phone to many friends, of-

ten talking for over an hour. Some of these were life-long friends from childhood or early married life. Many letters and cards were exchanged in addition to the phone calls.

Mother thought often of that first day in heaven—to enjoy meeting Jesus and asking Him to walk with her to meet her family and friends who have gone before. She viewed the scene in her mind of beautiful flowers that would never fade or die.

Preceding her in death were her parents; her husband, Charles, in November 2024; her sister-in-law, Mary Renicker, in September 2024; one half-brother, Eldo Renicker; two half-sisters, Martha Garwood and Blanche Prichard; and cousins and special friends.

She is survived by her daughter Marilyn, and husband, Bill, from Modesto; and her son, Dale and his companion, Paula, from Mi-Wuk Village. Also surviving are 4 grandsons, Jonathan (DaNee), James (Laurel), Matthew and special friend Daphne, and Andrew (Stephanie); nine great-grandchildren; brother, Virgil Renicker from Pasco, Washington; and Terri Miller, along with nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Services were held at Wood Colony Hall on October 7, 2025. The viewing was 9 a.m. to 10:30 A.M. with the funeral at 10:30 A.M. The obituary and opening comments were given by Matthew Cover. Lloyd Wagner brought the main

message. The Wood Colony Cemetery graveside message was given by Ben Cover.

The Family

LAYMAN — Peggy Jo, 74, of Covington, Ohio, passed away unexpectedly in the early morning of Sunday, November 23, 2025. She was born June 20, 1951, in Troy, Ohio, to William and Pauline Buirley. She was united in marriage to Richard Lee Layman on March 13, 1971. God blessed them with 54 years together. They started their married life in Wirtz, Virginia, after several months moved to Troy, Ohio, and then settled in Covington, Ohio.

This union was blessed with one daughter and twin sons. Together they accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and were baptized Labor Day weekend 1973. Mom was a faithful member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, Covington District.

Mom and Dad met while working at the County Home in Troy. She was in laundry, and he in 1-W service. Mom drove a school bus for 28 years, enjoyed sewing, sending cards to many for all occasions, and camping. She loved to cook and had a heart for hospitality. Mom enjoyed our family times and playing games.

Mom is survived by her husband; daughter, Paula and Arlan Bowman, twin sons, Ted and Crista Layman and Todd and Deire Layman; eight grandchildren; 12

great-grandchildren; a sister, Nancy “Sam” and Dave Johnson; a niece, Laura; and a great-niece, Addi; mother-in-law, Ethelene Layman; in-laws, Kenneth and Brenda Layman, Patricia and Donald Brubaker, Barbara Yarber, and Harold Layman; nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents and father-in-law, Junior Layman.

We will miss “everything” about Mom. She was a very kind and caring person. We are so thankful for the good memories and will treasure them. Our sorrow and loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were held at 10 A.M. Wednesday, November 26, at the Old German Baptist Brethren Church (Covington). Burial was at Miami Memorial Park, Covington.

The Family

EVERY — Betty June was born November 20, 1931, in Preble County, Ohio, to the late Aaron and Ruth (Leedy) Flora. She passed away unexpectedly at home on Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at the age of 94.

She was a member of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church. Betty married Jim Avery on January 1, 1949, sharing 63 years of life’s joys and sorrows. God blessed them with three daughters. Betty worked at the post office in Ohio, and Knaus’ Berry Farm in Homestead, Florida. For 31 years they enjoyed living six months each year in the Florida sunshine, making many precious memories and lasting friendships. Mom lived at

home 13 years after Dad’s passing. In her later years she enjoyed all things, flowers, and was quite the reader. She was always interested in keeping updated on her great- and great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; parents-in-law, Clarence and Mary (Neff) Avery; her husband; daughter, Diana Denlinger and her husband, Lowell; brother, Gene (Dorothy) Flora; sister, Naomi (Myron) Bowman; and brother, Robert Flora.

She is survived by daughters, Peggy (Gary) Sattelmeyer, Dixie (Mike) Denlinger; daughter-in-law, Rebecca Denlinger; two granddaughters, Lori (Belden) Bowman and Tara (Rex) Cottrell; three grandsons, Kurt Sattelmeyer, Ryan (Alana) Denlinger and Matt (Lanie) Denlinger; 14 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren; brother, Richard (Linda) Flora; sister-in-law, Sue Flora; special cousin, Debbie Bowen; and many more family and friends.

The viewing and funeral service were held December 1, 2025, at the Wolf Creek Church. The home brethren spoke from Lamentations 3:22–26 and I Thessalonians 4:13–18. On a cold winter’s day Mom was laid beside Dad to await the Resurrection Day.

The Family

SKILES — Alberta Jean (Huffman) was born at Good Samaritan Hospital in Dayton, Ohio, on August 26, 1934. At 91 years old, she peacefully and quietly passed away in the early morning hours of December 2, 2025, at the Brethren

Retirement Community in Greenville, Ohio, where she made her home the last six years. She was the oldest daughter of John T. and Ethel (Garber) Huffman and was also loved by her stepmother Margaret (Brubaker) Huffman.

She accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior, was baptized at a young age, and lived faithfully until her passing. She affiliated with the Old German Baptist Brethren Church.

On May 31, 1953, she was united in marriage to M. Keith Skiles. They shared 44 years together until his passing in 1997. They were blessed with five children, Mark (Karen), Sharon (Stephen) Long, Deborah (Steven) Garber, Rebecca (Larry) Bower, and Stephen (Colleen); 20 grandchildren and 40 great-grandchildren.

She served faithfully beside her husband in the ministry of the Gospel and as editors of *The Vindicator*.

Alberta is survived by her children; sister, Arlene (Verlin) Cool;

and brother, Marvin (MaryAnn) Huffman.

She is preceded in death by her husband; parents; parents-in-law, Marvin and Esther (Spillers) Skiles; a sister-in-law, Diana Huffman; a brother and sister-in-law, Ivan and Wanda Skiles; and an infant great-grandson.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

Funeral services were held at the Shady Grove Old German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse on December 5 by the home brethren. Burial followed immediately after at the Miller-Grove Cemetery, Greenville, Ohio.

Her life of godly faithfulness is now concluded, and the baton is passed to future generations.

The Family

Terms

Subscriptions should be made through the congregational contact or through *The Testimony* office. Subscription price is \$30.00 per year. New subscriptions should be paid (prorated) through the remainder of the current year. All renewals begin at the first of the calendar year. Newly married and those unable to pay for a subscription may receive a free subscription through the agent of their local congregation.

Contributors

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

353 Billman Rd.
New Paris, OH 45347-9102

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.

Send all communication to:

The Testimony

353 Billman Rd.

New Paris, OH 45347-9102

Phone: (937) 604-9464

thetestimony@emypeople.net

The Testimony Committee

Lowell Miller, Editor

Phil King

Tim Deaton

Grant Fullmer

Rusty Flora

Associate Editors

Marcus Miller

Darryl Filbrun