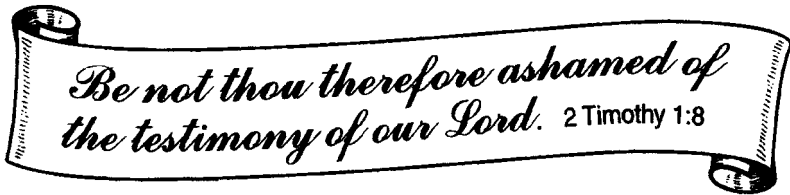


# THE EASTERN MENNONITE TESTIMONY

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM THE MONTHLY PUBLICATION  
OF  
THE EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA MENNONITE CHURCH  
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*Editor: [anabaptistmennonites.org](http://anabaptistmennonites.org).*

When we gather for public worship, we come before the Lord in reverence and formality. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psalm 89:7). Heavenly beings cover their faces and cry, "Holy, holy, holy!" before the Lord of glory. Formality is not the essence of worship, but it is conducive to reverence and godly fear.

Quietness, simplicity, and careful attention complement formality. We should quietly assemble for worship and wait before the Lord in reverent, expectant meditation. We do not gather for merely social reasons; nor do we gather to flaunt our clothing or ourselves. We should gather with our ears attentive to God's Word.

Some people associate formality with hypocrisy and deadness. One of its definitions does have this negative connotation: "To have the appearance without the substance." But formality does not stifle spirituality. To be formal is to be conventional, following established forms, customs, and rules. Formality provides a structure wherein spiritual life can flourish. We would not be casual about a meeting with an earthly president or king. How significantly greater a matter it is to come to worship before the sovereign One of the universe!

Consequently, we follow the traditional, established customs when we gather for worship.

In contrast, the casual spirit of society is expressed by the modern cliché "think outside the box," and by a mentality that discards the cultural, traditional norms both in everyday living and in religious activities. Many church signs announce both a traditional (formal) worship service and a second, contemporary (casual) service. We cannot entirely escape the casual influences that surround us, but we must guard lest they affect us—perhaps unconsciously.

Formality affects numerous details of worship. The traditional practice of carrying black Bibles and Bible cases demonstrates a respect for God's holy Word, and helps to avoid a casual or contemporary appearance. A reverent, formal attitude will be expressed by an erect, attentive posture. We must avoid slouching, and arrest our wandering eyes or minds.

We dress formally for worship. Our practice is for brethren to wear suits, not trousers worn with just any coat. The word suit indicates that the trou-

sers and the coat are of the same fabric. We button our shirt collars and sleeves, and at least several of our top coat buttons. We wear black dress shoes, not black casual shoes.

Those who lead in worship should contribute to the formal tone of the worship service, beginning with the opening greeting and concluding with the amen at the end of the prayer.

Like the greetings in the epistles, our greetings should have a spiritual tone. We greet the assembly in the Name of Jesus, in whose Name we have met. A mere "Good morning" or similar expression lacks the gravity befitting the assembly of the saints.

We have met to worship God not to entertain, nor to be entertained. Those who teach and preach are responsible to expound the Scriptures. They should follow the Scriptural pattern of Nehemiah's day when "they read ... distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8). Consequently, humor is absent. When practical illustrations are used, they should relate directly to the spiritual truth being taught. They should illuminate and instruct, not produce ripples of amusement across the worshippers.

In all of these areas and others, we will continually face pressure for something less formal and more casual. We might ask, "Do these little things really matter? Must we be so insistent regarding our traditional, formal patterns?" Our practices in these areas fit with a traditional, conservative church culture. To become less formal in the details would have its effect upon the whole until finally the essence of our church culture would be changed. We should readily understand that significant change begins with small changes. The pages of Mennonite history are filled with examples.

—JSM



## " My People Shall Never Be Ashamed" (Part 2)

Having considered that God's people never have a reason to be ashamed of their God and His way, let us examine some of the reasons they are never ashamed of His Word and His people.

**We will never be ashamed of His Word.**

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you" (1 John 1:3). John watched the soldier pierce Christ's side, and "forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe" (John 19:34, 35). Is anything more convincing and more sure than having "seen and heard"? If you saw an accident happen, no one could convince you that it had not happened. You would say, "I know it happened because I saw it happen."

Peter declared, "We ... were eyewitnesses of his majesty.... This voice ... we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount" (2 Peter 1:16, 18). He too "saw and heard." But note that Peter declared, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19). More sure than what? It is simply stating that the Word of God is surer than sight and hearing. It is absolutely sure.

Jesus says it so plainly: "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Its truths transcend time and culture. It is "a lamp unto [our] feet, and a light unto [our] path." Its only direction is toward God Himself. We will never be ashamed of the inerrant Word of God. "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments (Psalm 119:6)." "I know His promise never faileth, / The word He speaks, it cannot die" (Church Hymnal, #243).

**We will never be ashamed to be His people.**

What a privilege to be the people of God! We are "called ... out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (1 Peter 2:9, 10). We are on display before the world as a city on a hill that cannot be hid. We are a living demonstration not only of the mercy and grace of God but also of the wisdom of God. That now "might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10).

We have both the privilege and the responsibility of letting the light of the Gospel shine on the candlestick of daily living. Just as Israel of old was placed at the crossroads of civilization, so we in our day are placed here for the divine purpose of showing to the world the beauty and the glory and the satisfaction of identification with our God. When God's people take God's way, a glory is produced that simply cannot be hid.

We will never be ashamed to be His people because of our present opportunities as well as our present blessings. We share a common faith, a common salvation, a common identity, a common burden, and a common goal.

We are a brotherhood, "striving together for the faith of the gospel."  
We will never be ashamed to be His people because it identifies us with God and His eternal cause—a cause much greater than ourselves.  
And finally, we will never be ashamed to be His people because of an eternal reward. If we are on display today, can we imagine the glory it will be to be on display then? We will be not only blameless because of sins forgiven but also worthy to be presented "faultless before the presence of his glory" (Jude 24). "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Saviour, if of Zion's city  
I, through grace, a member am,  
Let the world deride or pity,  
I will glory in Thy name:  
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,  
All his boasted pomp and show;  
Solid joys and lasting treasure  
None but Zion's children know.

"My people shall never be ashamed"—not now, and not in eternity!  
*Brother Kevin*



## The Ordinance of Feet Washing

Feet Washing was instituted by the example of Christ on the eve of His ultimate sacrifice for our sins on Calvary's cross. Our Lord used His soon-to-be crucified hands and washed the feet of His followers. This humble act—taught by example—was the culmination of His teaching concerning meekness and lowliness.

Humility was a recurring theme of Christ's teaching. He had taught the disciples to sit in the lowest places at a wedding (Luke 14:8-11) and roundly condemned the Pharisees for loving the uppermost seats at feasts (Matthew 23:6). He taught them to avoid titles such as rabbi, master, and father. He

said they should not have a political chain of command such as the princes of the Gentiles have, but seek to serve rather than be served. Neither His fellow men nor the devil could persuade Christ to be an earthly king. The Beatitudes of Matthew 5 (every one of which goes against our Adamic nature) are the identifying traits of His followers. Once, He used a little child to show the attitude necessary to enter the kingdom of heaven. Because Christ knew the terrible potential of pride to corrupt individuals and devastate the church, He taught by word and deed the essential grace of humility. Christ's condescension could be thought of in two levels. Christ's coming from highest heaven to earth was a demotion of staggering proportions. Even if Christ would have come as king of the world, He still would have stepped down beyond our ability to comprehend. A further step in this condescension was His willingness to live as the lowest of men and submit to the death of the cross. When Christ washed His disciples' feet, He demonstrated a condescension that the disciples could not understand at that point.

### ***The Meaning of Feet Washing***

In Bible times, feet washing was an act of hospitality to one who entered the home. It was lowly work often done by servants. When Peter objected to having Christ wash his feet, he was bearing testimony to the reversed position of a master performing this act for a servant.

Jesus was also teaching His disciples the next logical step. If He washed their feet, then they should certainly be humble enough to wash each other's feet. This was to remind them of the true nature of greatness and the equality that He was expecting to be present in the yet unborn church.

Our current practice of Feet Washing, while more symbolic than practical, is to remind us of the above principles. We wash each other's feet to signal that we are willing to lay aside personal ambition to serve others. We allow our feet to be washed, an act that we regularly perform for ourselves, to show that we are willing to accept direction from others. The ordinance of Feet Washing embodies brotherhood principles unknown to worldly organizations and unique to the Christian faith.

### ***The Practical Outworking of Feet Washing***

Although Feet Washing was not practiced consistently by all Anabaptist groups, many conservative Mennonite churches have historically practiced semiannual Feet Washing in connection with the Communion service. While these observances are important and fulfill Christ's command to "do these things," yet it is essential that we obey the ideals that Feet Washing symbolizes lest we make a mockery of this ordinance.

Our lives should be characterized by humility. Using our abilities to draw attention to ourselves is self-glorification. Lusting after highly visible positions or viewing the church as an organization in which to climb to personal prominence violates the spirit of Feet Washing. Our goal should not be to develop a large business empire so that our employees and our capital will make us a profit with little effort on our part. Allowing others to take credit for good things that happen and staying out of the limelight are actions that complement the outward act of washing the feet of our brethren. We should be willing to humble ourselves and allow the Lord to exalt us in due time as He deems best.

Serving the church and our fellow man in simple ways characterizes a Christlike spirit. We should not consider performing the lowly tasks associated with service beneath our dignity. Are we too rich or important to help with church cleaning? Can we help with church projects as simple laborers without being the one in charge? Are we willing to labor in small, unnoticed ways, leaving the question of rewards to the sovereignty of God? Can we cheerfully serve the "least of these," such as the elderly or the handicapped, without considering it a waste of time?

The ordinance of Feet Washing may seem at first glance to be at variance with Biblical teaching concerning God-ordained authority. After Jesus had washed the feet of His disciples, He said, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." Interestingly, Jesus did not lay aside His authority; He rather taught His disciples that authority is a call to service. Certainly, any person who enjoys the authority or prominence of his position and ignores the call to servanthood has a worldly outlook toward his position.

The Bible indicates that Jesus' attitude of service was not a one-time, put-on act, but extends into eternity. Jesus promised that the watching servant would be served by his lord (Luke 12:37). The saints in heaven will serve Him and reign with Him simultaneously (Revelation 22:3, 5). May we follow our Lord's example to true happiness in this life and in the one to come.

*Brother Gardell*



## Church Committee Report

### Ashland / Numidia Bible Schools

The bells are quiet. The halls are empty. The dorms are vacant. The doors are locked. The forty-eighth year of Bible school is now history.

Even though the buildings are closed and quiet, not everything has come to a standstill. Pleasant memories live on, renewed commitments continue, new friendships blossom, and truths learned inspire deeper godliness. The six hundred fifty-eight students who were enrolled in seven terms continue to influence their homes, congregations, and communities.

One of the significant changes this year was the absence of a fourth term at Ashland. The potential difficulty in staffing eight terms and the strong student interest in Numidia factored into this decision.

With the increased use of the Numidia facility, it seemed wise to make some improvements. Twenty-five replacement vinyl windows were installed in the "new" dorms and the staff rooms. The two, large, ancient dryers were replaced with three regular-sized dryers. At Ashland, replacing the rubber roof above the chapel was a significant expense.

The tremendous amount of time and effort invested in seven terms of Bible school cannot be measured in monetary figures. Acquiring one hundred fifty people to staff seven terms has been difficult, but we are indebted to all who served—some more than one term. We are also indebted to the brotherhood for offerings, gifts of food, and, most importantly, prayer support.

Parental support is also very necessary. We are grateful for parents who help their young people come to Bible school with a spiritual desire to study and with a healthy respect for the administration and the standards. Parents should be familiar with the brochure and the student-acceptance letter. These documents outline the standards and expectations for the students. Parents are responsible for student compliance with these standards.

This month the Board will meet for our annual all-day meeting to reflect on the past year and to begin planning for next year, if the Lord tarries. One of the challenges we face each year is the need for administrators. Some of our present, faithful administrators believe they are aging beyond their usefulness. Please pray that the Board would be granted divine wisdom for all the decisions that need to be made. It is our desire to keep the Bible school a spiritually safe experience for all.

As a Board, we recognize that in the past century, the institutions of the church were instrumental in leading the church into worldliness. We face the challenge of consistently maintaining the standards, when leniency and



tolerance would be the easier way. We need faithful brethren and sisters who, like Aaron and Hur, stay up our hands that they might be "steady until the going down of the sun."

*Brother Darrell For the Ashland/Numidia Board*



### Togo Investigation Report

The MMM continues to evaluate the level of interest and the need for a conservative Mennonite witness in Togo, a West African country bordering the east side of Ghana. On January 22, six brethren traveled from Ghana into Togo to spend a week investigating. The group included 2 brethren from the Ghana committee, 2 brethren from the MMM, 1 brother from the Ghana mission, and a brother as French interpreter.

Two Bible conferences were held, one in the capital city of Lomé and one in Kpalimé, about sixty miles northwest of the capital. These meetings included two messages, each followed by a period of open discussion. Attendance was light, but the interest was good—with plenty of questions and discussion. Brother Christopher has faithfully attended our Bible conferences for more than a year and has completed most of the Lamp and Light correspondence courses. He approached us the day we left Lomé and asked to begin instruction for church membership.

The investigation activities included meeting with officials in Lomé to determine the requirements for beginning mission work in the country. Ghana has a "quota" requirement for immigrants, which is a hindrance to getting long-term workers. Togo does not have such a requirement. The school restrictions, however, are very similar to those in Ghana. This means that native children attending our school cannot receive the accreditation that they get in the public schools.

Several trips were made to investigate the country, focusing on the area within sixty miles of Lomé. The land was in the dry season, but the river valleys were flooded and growing a crop of rice. Other crops include corn, cassava (mandioca of Paraguay), pineapple, banana, palm nuts, cocoa beans, and plantain (a tropical fruit that looks much like the banana, but is hard, starchy, and eaten cooked). Many of the natives are involved in subsistence farming.

Lamp and Light Publishers tries to find groups willing to establish churches in countries where they have a significant number of correspondence students, especially if some are showing interest in a conservative Mennonite church. Currently the Ghana mission office is handling the work of the French correspondence courses in Togo, which involves about two thousand students. Brother Richard from Lomé has completed all the courses and is being instructed for church membership along with his wife. He is also instrumental in assisting the Ghana mission office by distributing and collecting the correspondence lessons from the Togolese students.

Because of its proximity to Ghana, the request for a church in Togo came to the Ohio Wisler brethren, who are in charge of the work in Ghana. The MMM has been assisting with the work in Ghana, and the Ohio Wisler brethren have been looking to them to lead out in any work that would develop in Togo. Pray that the Lord would direct the Board as they continue to consider this work.

*Brother Galen*



### *A Visit to Guatemala*

Welcome to our churches in Guatemala. We assume that you have flown into the capital, Guatemala City. If you have come in the wintertime, it will feel warm at seventy to eighty degrees. You probably will not even guess that you are five thousand feet above sea level.

As you drive the winding road out of Guatemala City, you will notice the crowds; the city has 1.2 million inhabitants (the majority of the country's 40 percent urban population). If your destination is the highlands, where four of our six churches are, the three-hour climb on the Pan-American Highway across the Sierra Madre will increase your elevation approximately three thousand feet. You will lose count of the curves and tumulos (speed bumps) but will be drawn to the beauty of the mountains and volcanoes. You will notice the wealth and pomp of the city fading into smaller houses and shacks, some of which are made of tough cornstalks or sticks. Depending on the time of day and year, you may wonder what happened to

Guatemala's tropical climate. (Between December and February, the cooler months of the year, nightly low temperatures of twenty degrees Fahrenheit have been reported.)

About twenty minutes beyond Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's third largest city, you will arrive at San Juan. From there it is only ten minutes to La Victoria, the earliest congregation in Guatemala (established by the MMM). The church at La Victoria was built in 1977. Lately, one of the most thriving business activities in this area is construction. There is a fair amount of agriculture, principally, growing corn. Potatoes are next in importance, often the cash crop of our highlands brethren. Beans, squash, cabbage, lettuce, carrots, and other cool climate vegetables are also raised. At this elevation there are no large rivers, but there are some small, winding streams beginning their descent to the Pacific Ocean.

From La Victoria, we will return to San Juan and travel twenty minutes (and approximately one thousand feet) up the mountain to reach La Cumbre (translated "the peak"). La Cumbre can be considered the center of our mission operations. Here is where our young people come for Bible school in October. QMP (Quetzaltenango Mennonite Publishers) also operates on the same property. A woodshop that Brother Larry began has provided work for some of the local brethren. There is a house for the local minister and a casita for single sisters. The English speaking children from the highlands come here for school. (Spanish school is also in the building. The terms run at different times with a few months overlap.) In the church house the English language services are held approximately every three weeks. A fellowship meal is provided here over the time of bishop visits (approximately every three months). There are not many local members at La Cumbre, but corn and potatoes are still the staples, as far as crops go. Those who are accustomed to farming with tractors would not feel at home here. As you scan the steep hillsides, it is not hard to believe that you could fall out of your field. Whether it is the economics or the virgin soil, it seems that the fields keep moving higher up the slopes.

From La Cumbre, we will visit El Eden. Even though we were at "the peak," we still need to keep climbing before dropping down the other side into a town named Palestine (Palestine). This is where our Eden brethren do a lot of their local buying and selling. About thirty minutes of curvy, hilly driving on paved road will bring you to the church, which is the highest of the six, claiming an elevation of about ninety-five hundred feet—about five hundred feet higher than La Cumbre. Here, in addition to corn and potatoes, you will notice various fields of wheat and oats. As is true of

our other highlands locations, there is small-scale grazing done—usually small herds of sheep or goats, possibly with a cow or two. The local brethren will testify to an increasing population, obvious in the growing number of houses along the way to which some of the brethren who are masons contribute.

From El Eden, there are several ways to travel to Santo Domingo (Holy Sunday). If you enjoy scenery and wish to save time, you will choose the ravine route, which takes about thirty to forty-five minutes. You may have to back up if you meet a vehicle where the road is too narrow to pass. If you prefer wider roads and less scenery, it may take an hour and a half to go back out to Palestine, up the asphalt road another fifteen minutes, and into Santo Domingo on another dirt road. The hillsides here are steeper, and the living standard is probably the lowest of our highland churches. At an elevation between eight thousand and eighty-five hundred feet, the weather is a bit milder. About a thirty-minute drive from the church, near a town called Rio Blanco (White River), apples and other fruits are grown. When it is time to make applesauce, we usually order apples from here.

To reach Estaci6n Castillo, our most recently established church in Guatemala, we will need to drop down the mountain to San Juan again. There we make a turn and continue to drop until we reach an elevation of fifty-five hundred feet. During the rainy season, it usually rains daily here. The dry season does not bring as much rain; although it is rare to have long dry spells as there might be at the coast. If you enjoy tropical rain forests, you will feel right at home here, especially if you like a temperature range of forty-five to seventy-five degrees. Coffee is the leading crop grown here. (Guatemala produces about 7 percent of the world's coffee.) Some farmers are trying to grow avocados as well as some other tree fruits. Macadamia nuts grow well here, often being planted among the coffee bushes. Some lumber is harvested in this area also.

Our last stop is Guiscoyol. This is what we often simply refer to as the coast, due to the fact that it lies roughly five miles from the Pacific Ocean. (And it is only fifty feet above sea level.) On this leg of your trip, you will experience the most dramatic elevation change (three thousand feet in three-quarter hour) as well as changing temperatures. It does not drop below sixty degrees here, but neither have we seen temperatures over one hundred. As you were leaving the coffee plantations, you would notice more bananas. Then the bananas give way to cattle pastures. You may notice that there are increasing changes in the people too. Back in the highlands, Indian dress is fairly prevalent; at the coast there are more ladinos

(mixed Indian and Spanish descent), who follow Spanish-American customs. Expansive sugar cane fields blend with the coastal horizon. Seemingly endless rubber groves also attract attention.

As you cross the coastal plains, you will notice that fields are larger here, so farming with a tractor may be a viable option. The chief crops are corn and sesame, with cattle raising probably next on the scale. If you visit during the dry season, your eye will likely be drawn to various fields of irrigated crops—corn, watermelons, tomatoes, peppers, and so on. The growing potential at the coast is high. (If managed properly, it is possible to produce three crops in a year—compared to the highlands where nine months produce a single corn crop.) Pests and diseases likewise abound, which means that profit is often determined more by selling price than production. Close to the church lies Lake Guisocoyol, a two-and one-half mile lake which provides water for irrigation, freshwater fishing, washing clothes, and so forth. Coconut and mango trees thrive in the area surrounding the lake.

Your visit to the Guatemalan churches is always welcome. Our brethren and their needs are as diverse as the country itself. While the country and its geography are interesting, do not forget to take an interest in your fellow Christians here. To make the most of your visit, learn Spanish (if you can); be flexible; and come prepared to stay awhile!

*Brother Jesse*



### **"Come Out of Her, My People" (Part 4) Casual Attire**

"Father, do you think that Mrs. Sanger's children are Christians?" Richard was pondering the scene at Mrs. Sanger's viewing. The elderly widow had lived beside the Martin family for many years.

"I think they profess Christianity," Father responded. "But I expect they live rather independently of any church."

"Why didn't they dress up for an occasion like this?" Richard's voice sounded perturbed. "None of her sons were wearing a suit. Several were actually wearing jeans and pullover sweaters. It almost felt disrespectful."

"Yes," Father agreed, "it appears that our society is throwing away traditional formality. They are indulging in a relaxed, casual atmosphere."

Our lives should be governed by varying degrees of formality. Working hours might be the least formal. We roll up our sleeves, whistle a tune, and

give full attendance to our jobs. Family mealtimes are more formal. How pleasant to see the children gather around with clean hands, freshly combed hair, and tidy clothing! This is complemented by polite manners and table etiquette.

Public worship demands our highest level of formality. Diligent effort is given to be clean and tidy. Wrinkles must be pressed from Sunday clothing, shoes polished, and hair trimmed and combed. God Himself taught the Israelites this pattern of preparation at Mt. Sinai. "Go unto the people, and sanctify them . . . , and let them wash their clothes, and be ready" (Exodus 19:10, 11).

But a degenerate society will not be ruled by formal traditions. Unkempt hairdos become the fashion. Mismatched suit and trousers become acceptable. Even adults may be found with shoes untied and shirttails freely flowing. This mentality says, "I can do as I like and as feels best to me." This breakdown tends to creep into our wardrobe in areas referred to as casual. These informal occasions include family gatherings, doctor visits, shopping trips, and long-distance travel. How should we and our youth appear at these times?

The American (and many other cultures) love for blue jeans—a popular attire for any occasion by both genders—has coincided with the trend toward casual, informal appearance. We help ourselves and our youth by avoiding this type of wardrobe. A healthy disdain for the "blue jeans image" will encourage us in choosing distinctive, Mennonite attire.

For informal occasions we should appear in clothing which could be suitable for church occasions. We ought to eliminate striped shirts, sport shoes, and light-colored jackets. The timeworn pattern of dark-colored trousers and light-colored shirts should not give way to the reverse order often seen today.

The casual appearance of shirt collars opened and sleeves pushed up is sometimes evident on occasions when more formality is proper. This casual tendency should be curbed in courtship occasions, during after-church visiting, and at wedding receptions. The plain suit worn with all buttons open also signals a casual image.

A casual image springs from a mindset that prefers relaxed standards and lightheartedness. We are called to sobriety. Cultivating strong convictions in our youth is necessary if we will remain steadfast against drifting with currents of worldliness. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Corinthians 16:13).

—*Brother Christopher*

## *PRAYER POINT*

*“The effectual fervent prayer  
of a righteous man availeth much”*

Pray for the work of the Child Care Committee.

Since the work began in 1980, approximately one hundred children have been placed in our homes for short- and long-term care.

Pray for the Committee as they receive requests and search for willing homes to place needy children.

Pray for our school boards. In our 79 schools at least 400 brethren are dedicating their time and talents to this important work.

Pray that the Lord would bless their labors and provide the remaining teachers needed for the 2015-16 term.

Pray for Lamp and Light Publishers.

This work was founded in 1974 at Farmington, New Mexico.

Their work is focused on publishing Bible study courses and other materials in various languages.

Pray that this sowing of the Gospel seed may prosper under God's blessing.

Thank the Lord for His promise of "seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter."

The bursting forth of spring reminds us of His goodness.

"For, lo, the winter is past . . . ; the flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of singing of birds is come."