

BIBLE MONITOR

VOL. CI

MARCH, 2023

NO. 3

"For the faith once delivered unto the saints"

OUR MOTTO: Spiritual in life and Scriptural in practice.	OUR WATCHWORD: Go into all the world and preach the gospel.
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OUR AIM: Be it our aim to be more sanctified, more righteous,
more holy, and more perfect through faith and obedience.

FOLLOW ON

Down in the valley with my Savior I would go,
Where the flowers are blooming and the sweet waters flow;
Everywhere He leads me I would follow, follow on,
Walking in His footsteps till the crown be won.

Down in the valley with my Savior I would go,
Where the storms are sweeping and the dark waters flow;
With His hand to lead me I will never, never fear,
Danger cannot fright me if my Lord is near.

Down in the valley, or upon the mountain steep,
Close beside my Savior would my soul ever keep;
He will lead me safely in the path that He has trod,
Up to where they gather on the hills of GOD.

Chorus:

Follow! Follow! I would follow Jesus!
Anywhere, everywhere, I would follow on!
Follow! Follow! I would follow Jesus!
Everywhere He leads me I would follow on!

William O. Cushing,
Selected by Shirley Frick

HERITAGE OF THE LORD

China is in decline. You may have heard this big news out of Asia. For the first time in over 2,000 years, China may not be the most populous nation on earth. The numbers are not yet official, but many believe that India has overtaken China for the number one spot. While India's population continues to grow and was expected to overtake China's in coming years, the big news is that China's population fell last year for the first time since the early 1960's when Mao Zedong's failed economic policies of the "Great Leap Forward" caused millions of deaths from famine.

Unlike China's famine 60 years ago, the fall in population last year is expected to not

only continue but accelerate. Demographers estimate that the Chinese population may halve from its current 1.4 billion to only 700 million in as little as 75 years. For reference, such a loss would equate to more than twice the current population of the U.S.A.

This news triggered alarm bells for government financial planners and investors as China's shrinking and aging population is projected to pose a heavy burden on the world economic stage in coming years.

So one might ask the cause of this population decline. Is the COVID pandemic or other sickness to blame? Is it emigration? War? Malnutrition? An increase in accidents or

THE BIBLE MONITOR MARCH, 2023

Published monthly by the Board of Publication of the Dunkard Brethren Church in the plant of Haines Printing Company.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Haines Printing Company, 10575 West Main Road, North East, PA 16428.

Terms: Single subscription \$5.00 a year in advance. Checks should be made out to "Dunkard Brethren Church". Send all subscription payments to the Editor.

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suicides? These things may contribute to the decline. However, the overwhelming cause of China's decline is simply...a lack of babies. In 2022, more people died in China than were born.

One might hastily point a finger of blame at China's "one-child" policy. However, China's fertility rate had already fallen from 6 children per woman in 1970 to 2.6 in 1980 when this policy was implemented. More than three decades later, seeing the handwriting on the wall, China relaxed this policy in 2016 and began encouraging citizens to have up to 3 children by offering cash incentives, discounted real estate and extending maternity leave. But still, China's fertility rate stands at 1.2 children per woman; far below the rate of 2.1 required to maintain a population.

This same phenomenon is being seen in other countries as well; Japan, Romania, Poland, Italy and Greece to name a few.

The obvious question then might be, why is the world having fewer and fewer babies? There may be myriad answers to that question. But might they mostly boil down to one

thing? That, the world does not grasp the value and blessing of children. In America, over the last few generations, culture has generally taught that children are a burden and an inconvenience. Does having children bring about burden to the parents? Is it an inconvenience? The answer to both of those questions is a conditional "yes". But burden and inconvenience are only a small part of the whole picture and are nearly always inseparable from all worthwhile things of value.

More and more the world seems to seek those things which bring the quickest satisfaction and gratification at the lowest cost of burden and inconvenience. But in doing so, is the world missing out on one of the most precious gifts of God?

As His creation, we are made in His image and after His likeness. God graced man with some of His own characteristics, including the ability to create and to give life. As we ponder this blessing, this should fill us with wonder and awe.

From the beginning, God instructed to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" Gen.1:28a. While

some believe that the world is becoming overpopulated, scripture is silent on this. The simple conclusion from God's word on this topic might simply be that we need not be concerned with overpopulation but to leave that up to Him. On the contrary, Psalm 127:3-5 says "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of thy youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

As we consider these verses, they don't tell us to worry about overpopulation. Rather, these scriptures and others instruct and encourage

us to the opposite; to increase the population by growing and raising godly families. As we further study these verses, we might also notice that they don't mention anything about the burden and inconvenience of having children. Did God forget about these things when tasking men to write the scriptures? I don't think so. But perhaps the burdens and inconveniences of raising children are so heavily shrouded by God's grace and blessing that they are insignificant and not worth mentioning.

While the world may be oblivious to the heritage of children that God offers us, may we clearly see it and embrace it for the blessing that it is and lift our hearts of praise to Him.

K. Brock

NEWS FROM THE NETHERLANDS

*A special introduction to the McGlenn family; the only
Dunkard Brethren in Europe.*

Greetings from the Netherlands! We are Tama and Carmen McGlenn, currently residing in a small village named Engwierum in the Dutch province of Friesland. We have 5 children: Josephine (8 yrs), Eleanor (6 yrs), Samuel and Naomi (twins, almost 4 yrs) and Abigail (1 yr). We are baptized members of the Bethel, Pennsylvania congregation since 2021, and attend the services by telephone.

We both grew up in Leiden, a city near the coast, in the province of Zuid Holland, in a university city and atmosphere. Tama's parents are artists originally from New Zealand, and they proclaim to be Bahais. That is an offshoot of Islam, but they are a lot more liberal. As a child, Tama grew up in a Muslim neighborhood and then went to an all-Dutch high school that was geared towards a university education. In high school he engaged in all manner of sordid affairs; smoking weed, drinking alcohol, listening to and making wild music. Seeing no God-fearing examples around, he quickly shed what little religious upbringing he had and adapted an anti-theist mindset there, which fit in with most peers at school; prideful, and scornful of the religious. He was always searching for a more meaningful way to live, but for the time being, occupied himself with a lot of videogaming when not doing homework or programming on the mathematical calculator. After finishing high school, he enrolled to study computer science in Leiden.

Carmen's parents grew up Catholic but decided that she should get baptized when she was old enough to make a decision herself and not as a baby. Her mother is a paleontologist, and her father has always been busy in the automotive industry designing new suspension and restoring classic terrain vehicles. When she was a teenager she moved to Athens, Greece where she attended a state-run high school. There she got a Bible in two languages, classic Greek and modern Greek, and had to follow mandatory religion classes to be instructed how to be a good Greek orthodox believer. This got her started to think about the Bible, and because they did not have internet at home to distract, or look up things, when it seemed to her that the teacher was saying extra Biblical doctrine, she grabbed her Bible and went to look for what it had to say. The more she read, the more she wanted to know, and the more she found out how twisted the doctrine was that they taught her at school. When she finished high school, she assumed that she should go to university as that was what everyone else was doing. She moved back to the Netherlands and attended the computer science course at the College of the Hague.

A Young Couple

While studying there we met and dated for a while. We were both convinced that marriage is permanent, and that dating should only be done with the intention of marrying. We also both wanted to have a large family. We felt we had so much in common that we decided to marry. We did live together for a year before marriage, as is custom in the Netherlands amongst non-conservative Christians. Carmen's parents were divorced, so she lived by herself, and for Tama it was not good to continue living at home. We married on October 31st of 2012.

After our wedding, Carmen started looking for churches that had a better doctrine than the one she had learned about at her Greek school. At first, she thought it should be easy to find, as there were so many churches. But then she found out that they all had something crooked in their doctrine! There was always that one Bible verse on which they simply did something contrary to what the Bible plainly said. She felt strongly pulled to the simplicity of the Quakers and the Mennonites but became disillusioned with their liberal interpretations. She started to dress modestly and felt a calling to cover her hair. At one point she found a picture of a Mennonite lady in a cape dress, and it seemed such an easy way to dress modestly and neatly. As there are so many choices in the world, and when you have no church rules, you get bogged down with all the choices, and you start to fear that you will make the wrong decision, or slowly slide away. So, it seemed to her a safe thing to follow the dress rules of the much more conservative Mennonites of the United States, and she sewed her first cape dress. This was ten years ago, and she has worn one ever since. There was still much to learn to become a serious Christian, but the desire to live the Bible way was awoken and would not go away!

A Young Family

We decided to go on an adventure and travel through New Zealand for some months. We had some savings, and Tama had always

wanted to move back to the country of his parents. While in New Zealand we met many interesting people and saw sights. And then we found out we were expecting our first child, so we went back to the Netherlands. There we lived for a while with Carmen's grandmother, in her attic. From there we moved to a tiny apartment in the busy city of the Hague, as Tama had found a job in nearby Delft as a software engineer. There Josephine was born, and we had much growing to do as parents! We were only 22 and 20 at that time and did not have much support from our parents.

Carmen started to attend the liberal Mennonite church every Sunday and attended baptismal classes there. She was greatly burdened to be baptized, as she was never baptized, and they were willing to baptize her. She already knew that she was more conservative in doctrine than most church members there, but she felt more connected to them than to the reformed protestants that she had met. It seemed to her better to be part of a liberal anabaptist church than none, and so she was baptized there in May 2015. She wore her head covering every day and dressed plainly. The rest of the church eventually got used to that, and there was not much friction. There was also much Bible doctrine that she did not know yet, so the church seemed to fit. Tama would attend the church service every now and again but didn't really feel that it was worth his time. Looking back, that seems understandable, they were usually preaching about how to be a good person, which Tama would say he already knew how to be.

We then moved to Delft, where we had bought our first apartment. It was cycling distance to Tama's work, and he was home earlier than when we lived in the Hague. We did not have a car, or driver licenses at that time, it was too expensive for us. There in Delft we welcomed Eleanor in 2016 into our lives. Living in a huge appartement block was not good for us, so we started to dream again of moving to somewhere rural where we could maybe homestead a little. Tama's parents told us rosy stories about how amazing New Zealand was, and as they were moving back themselves, they urged us to move with them. And so, we did.

Off to New Zealand Again and Back

We moved to New Zealand in October 2016. It was a huge mistake, and it cost us dearly. It turned out to be impossible for Tama to find a job, and the country was very un-Christian and full of crime. Living with Tama's parents was a big strain on us, and Carmen even lost her faith in the Christian way of life. It was a dark time. Tama lost his mental health, but through that great darkness, when all seemed lost, God called us. He showed through all that mess that He was in charge, and that He was very real. He showed us the phoniness of the Bahai faith, and the great worth of the Bible and the Christian way of life. We managed to scrape together some money and moved back to the Netherlands with our two children. With no money, and Tama's mental health still not good enough to work, we found out how it is to live in the lowest of the lowest of society, and how the system treats you. It was a very long and hard walk in the darkness, but through that our faith started to grow and grow. We learned that there is no other way than to lean on the Everlasting Arms, and to give up on Self.

We lived for some months with Carmen's maternal grandparents, then half a year in the attic of Carmen's paternal grandmother and then for some months at a housing for homeless families. We felt how it is to be unwelcome and move from place to place, constantly afraid of upsetting people. Tama eventually got a job with the Ministry of Defense, and we praised the Lord for that job! It helped us get us back on our feet, and it did wonders for Tama's mental health. He had some reservations about serving, although he did not yet know what Jesus taught on the matter, and it was, anyway, better than being without income. We rented a very expensive small apartment in Amersfoort and were finally able to live again as a family, in our own strength and dignity.

Anabaptists in America

A few months later, Carmen's mother was going on a trip to Washington DC, and at the last moment one of the colleagues could not

go. That meant there was an extra room not used, and it was decided that Carmen would go (as she is very fond of museums and there are a lot of those in DC). Carmen also really wanted to meet some conservative Anabaptists, after reading about their faith and practice and identifying with their way of living the Christian way. She found the Dunkard Brethren and it really felt like the church that she wanted to visit. She contacted them through the main website and was put into contact with Justin and Dawn Beck. They drove all the way to Lancaster town (where Carmen had gone for a weekend trip from Washington DC, being unaware that Pennsylvania was so huge) to pick her up for the church service. It was such a breath of fresh air to talk to them, and to listen to the sermon and the singing. So different than she was used to in the Netherlands. It was a stern sermon, but the people were full of joy for the Lord! Not stern and downcast as she knew from conservative reformed protestants over in Holland. When she went back to the Netherlands, as she was sitting in the airplane, she felt deep within her this certainty that the Lord had led her to this church. When she came back, we all noticed the difference in her, she was joyful, much more at peace and renewed in her walk with the Lord. Tama grew in the Lord, so quickly, it was hard to believe at first!

Revived in Christ

From there on everything went so quickly. From being in an uneven yoke, we were suddenly raising our children together for the Lord. The yoke was even. We really started to read the Bible, also to our children. We started singing hymns every evening, reading from Menno Simons, George Fox, and William Tyndale, and we started to visit with other conservative Anabaptists. We went to the annual Bible conference in Wales, organized by the Nationwide Mennonites, and felt at home amongst our brothers and sisters! What a joy! What a fellowship! It sustained us for the next few years.

We were expecting another baby and could buy a house again. Tama's wages were slim, so we could only afford a house all the

way up in the North of Friesland, and it was a fixer upper. We had to stop the rent on our apartment, and move in with Carmen's paternal grandmother again, and her father, because we could not afford to keep two houses. This was very close to Carmen's due date, but we naively thought that the house could be fixed up quickly to a reasonable standard. Little did we know that the house was an absolute mess, and almost everything needed to be fixed. And it turned out in March 2019 during the birth, that we were expecting twins! So there we were, living in Carmen's father's tiny house (1 bedroom total, Carmen's father slept on the couch in the living room), with newborn twins, Tama working a fulltime job, and a fixer upper 2.5 hours drive from where we were staying, which Tama went to on the weekends! The Lord sustained us through this mess, and we met the Beachy Amish men from the Irish Mission in Dunmore East, which was such a blessing. Having met them at the Shropshire Bible conference, they responded to our email asking for help, and five of their members came over for a week to fix the roof of the barn of the house that was about to fall in and take the roof of the house with it (they are attached to each other, as usual here in the Netherlands).

We had stayed in contact with Justin and Dawn Beck and had wanted to travel back to America as a family to all meet them, but it kept not working out. Tama still worked for the Ministry of Defense, and we knew that was not good as Christians, but he was now stuck in that job for another year at least. He had to travel once to New Jersey for work and went on the weekend to the congregation in Bethel and visited with Justin and Dawn Beck. He also immediately felt at home in the church there and felt that this was the church we had been searching for. He asked every question he could think of, and Justin patiently answered them.

Growing in Friesland!

He learned so much and was strengthened in his faith so much. He too came back changed from that visit. There was peace in his soul, a purpose, and so much joy! In November 2019, when

Tama returned from his trip to America, we managed to buy a very cheap row house in the next village over from our fixer upper and moved our family away to Friesland! It was so good to be by ourselves again, now as a family of 6. Tama still had his job in Amersfoort, 3 hours drive from our house, so he was gone for 5 days, and was only home on the weekend. That was very hard on Carmen, and we could see that we needed to change that, but we knew not how.

We kept in regular contact with the Becks, and they made it possible for us to book tickets to come and visit them and the church. But then the pandemic came, and we could not travel. We were so disappointed and felt so lonely. It was very hard. But, due to the pandemic, Tama was able to work from home, and that was such a great blessing! He was working during the week from the study room, and in the weekend was at the other house fixing it up. During this time, we could really focus on our family, our faith, and also on our priorities. We had been running hard for so long, we didn't notice we were so run down. So when we found out we were expecting our 5th child, we decided to sell the fixer upper. The market was very good for it, and we sold it at a profit. Now we finally had time for the things that mattered to us, but it was also hard giving up on some of our dreams with the other house. Tama no longer wanted work involving the military and in January 2021, left his job with the Ministry of Defense and started his own software company.

Baptized Into the Dunkard Brethren

In November 2021 we were finally able to travel to America again. During those three weeks that we were there we got baptized into the church. Such joy! We got to experience the fellowship of a God-honoring church, we got to meet lots of new people, and felt so welcomed and at home. It was hard to go back! We still think with great joy and happiness back to those three weeks and all the amazing people that blessed us with their words and actions.

The Path Ahead

Now, we still live in the row house, and it is getting a little small for us. We are uncertain what to do now. Some of our Anabaptist friends in the Netherlands moved to Ireland this year, and we visited them and the Beachy Amish church there. One other Anabaptist family is going to move to Canada next year in the Spring. So, now you wonder maybe, what are we going to do? We feel a great burden for the Dutch people. We want them to experience the joy and the peace that comes with living the Bible way and being part of a God-fearing church. We see seekers here; we met up with a few this summer. There seems to be an awakening going on here. But the seekers just see only our family, and say: well it's only you here, what if you also leave? Or they would like to stay with us a little longer, but we have no space for them. There is a family in Poland, who lived in Germany before but did not feel at peace there, who would want to move closer to us, but we have so little to offer. And then there are our own children, who loved being around all the other Christian children in Ireland, and in America, and who get so lonely without friends here. So we feel torn, and we pray every day that the Lord will show us the way.

He has a plan for everything, let us trust in Him.

You are welcome to get in touch with Tama, his email address is T.McGlinn@gmail.com (note that his email address in the 2022 DB Directory is misspelled). The McGlinn's are known at the Bethel congregation and their outreach website is at anabaptist.nl/en/contact. Their website includes contact information, a statement of faith, a blog and the option to sign up for their newsletter.

Tama & Carmen McGlinn,
Engwierum, Friesland
The Netherlands

CONNECTIONS

As members of the Bible Study Board our hope in writing monthly articles related to the Adult SS Lessons is that we all see afresh different points of connection that reveal the Word made flesh.

The Method Over the Ends

Have you ever been so caught up in something that you forgot why you were doing it? For example, you are busy planning a surprise birthday party for a loved one. In the excitement and intrigue of the planning stage, you brush off the person whose birthday it is. Perhaps they want to spend a quiet evening with you, but you have no time for that; you are busy planning their party! Maybe, on a more serious note, you get home after a long, tiring day of work. You do not have energy for your children's roughhousing, and their pleas for you to join them falls upon deaf ears. Granted, they are why you go to work in the first place, but now you do not have the energy to spend time with them.

Now, where am I going with these overblown scenarios besides offending surprise party planners and tired dads? John 5 tells of the Pharisees, who commit a similar error.

The Pharisees were zealous upholders of the Law. Their rigorous enforcement of the Law led them to create and add their own laws to ensure that God's laws were followed. Surely this attentiveness was what God would want! However, in the Pharisees' earnest efforts to follow God's law, they forgot the heart of God, and no longer sought to know Him. Keeping His law seemed just as satisfactory. Of course, they had to make sure that everyone else followed all the laws, especially their additional laws, and this placed a heavy burden on people who were trying to genuinely seek the heart of God. In this context, we are introduced to a man with an infirmity.

This man had been infirm for decades, and along with those gathered by the pool of Bethesda, hoped to be healed by being the first to step into the water when it was troubled. The infirmity he bore prevented

him from entering the waters, so when Jesus asked him, “wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6) he laid out his seemingly hopeless situation. Jesus tells him, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same days was the sabbath,” (John 5:8b-9). After thirty-eight years of languishing in discouragement, the man was made whole by the miracle of a healing touch.

Later, this newly healed man meets the Pharisees and they tell him, “It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed,” (John 5:10b). Ignoring the fact that this man had been infirm for thirty-eight years, the Pharisees focused on how he dared to violate the Sabbath, the holy day. Their curiosity was not piqued as to how he was able to carry his bed—Instead, their outrage was stirred up because he was doing it in the first place.

The Pharisees asked the man who it was that told him to carry his bed. They did not

bother to ask about the healing. They wanted to find and punish the man who had dared tell someone to break their laws, with the miraculous nature of this event going right over their heads. Despite their meticulous upkeep of the Law, the very presence of the One who had written the Law escaped their notice.

Today, as we go about our everyday life, let us remember who it is that we are serving. As we strive to follow the wisdom written in the Bible, let us not forget that we have been created to commune with God. Micah 6:7 asks, “Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” Instead, He wants but three simple things: “And what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8b).

On behalf of the Bible Study Board
Micaiah Johnson

PHIL'S PONDERINGS

As we “study to shew *ourselves* approved unto God...”

March 2023 Study Questions

March 5 – Rise, Take Up Your Bed, and Walk - John 5:1-16

Why did Jesus ask the man if he wanted to be healed?

What reason did he give for not having been healed?

Why did Jesus heal this man?

What does taking up his bed prove?

How was it perceived by some?

What does Jesus' warning to this man imply?

Commentary: Most of us know what it feels like to be stuck in circumstances that are not easily solved. A vehicle may no longer be trustworthy for a drive across country or across town. A once promising job now feels like a dead-end. A relationship that was full of energy and life now seems dormant and lacking any expectation of change. The longer the circumstances stay the same or continue to deteriorate the more helpless we feel that change is possible. At some point we lose hope and give up expecting that change is possible.

For thirty-eight years the unnamed man in this passage has been unable to change his circumstances. At one point he is moved by acquaintances to this pool of water where healing can take place. But those acquaintances aren't around to help when hope appears all too briefly or unpredictably. Then Jesus comes to him and asks him a simple question. “Do you want to be healed?” Like most of us he sees no solution, only obstacles, that prevent healing from occurring.

While there are many times that the obedience of faith opens the doors to new possibilities in our lives they only exist because Je-

Jesus has offered them to us. We respond to his invitation and offer of genuine change, whether for salvation or spiritual growth, so that new life can fill our hearts and minds. But to this man's complete surprise came the words that cannot be resisted, only obeyed. "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." Like the wind and the waves of the Sea of Galilee or the dead body of Lazarus nothing can resist the commands of Jesus.

March 12 – Honoring the Father Who Honors the Son - John 5:17-30

Did Jesus break the fourth commandment?

What reason does Jesus give for healing on the Sabbath?

Does Jesus make himself equal to God?

How does Jesus describe his relationship with God?

How do we pass from death to life?

What does Jesus mean when he says, "I can of my own self do nothing"?

Commentary: In the last verse of our previous lesson John informs us of the tremendous hostility developing against Jesus. The Jews began searching for a way to kill Jesus. What was his crime? He had just healed a man who had suffered from an affliction for thirty-eight years. But it was on the Sabbath that Jesus had healed him. The perspective of those Jews who wanted to kill Jesus was that he had violated the fourth commandment.

The Sabbath was a day to rest from all the labors of the other six days of the week. Yet, nowhere in the Law is healing forbidden on the Sabbath. Rather, it is in the Oral Law, handed down from generation to generation, that defined new issues as they emerged. According to the Oral Law healing is considered work. The Oral Law was considered as binding as the Law itself. Curiously, Jesus does not attempt to dissuade them from their belief. He does not appeal to some understanding that is backed up by the law. Instead, Jesus bases his actions on what he sees his Father doing. God (his Fa-

ther) is working and since God is working, he must also. The result is the same as dumping gasoline onto a fire. Their passions are even more inflamed. Jesus is making himself equal to God, the ultimate blasphemy. But Jesus is who he says he is. He cannot deny himself. He is the Word made flesh. He is God incarnate. He is the creator of all things. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus must be clear and consistent in proclaiming his identity as the Son of God. Our salvation hinges on knowing Him for who He really is so we can really be all that He has called us to be.

March 19 – The Father has Testified of the Son - John 5:31-47

Has anyone ever questioned the authenticity of your faith and practice?

Who is the first witness Jesus refers to in this passage who can authenticate his identity?

What is the next witness that supports Jesus' claims?

Who is the third witness?

What is the final witness?

What prevents those who hear him speak from believing who he is?

Commentary: We find ourselves having moved from a solitary appointment between a man who has spent the last thirty-eight years of life a captive of his own body and Jesus who has come to heal him. Now Jesus is surrounded by many hostile voices who want him dead. In their minds Jesus has leaped to the top of the most wanted list. Not only has he healed on the Sabbath, but he has spoken blasphemy by referring to himself in a way that makes him equal with God. But the hostile voices are not the only one's present. Most likely there are also silent voices present. They are here to listen to the man who has begun to heal many who have sought him out. They want to know more about him. Could he be the Messiah? Jesus has healed at least a few people by this time, and no one has contested those miracles. There is hope for those who also have been trapped by blindness, injuries, leprosy,

and other diseases. Jesus is not afraid to mingle with the least, the outcast, and those with poor reputations. He doesn't play favorites or pit one against another. God is certainly a witness for Jesus because no one could do what he is doing if God were not for him. And then there are the prophecies that point to a Messiah who will rescue Israel from her sins and raise her to prominence among the nations. There are so many reasons to let Jesus talk that their silence drowns out those who wish him harm.

There are times when our own minds are full of contrary voices. We aren't always sure who or what we should believe. Our own hopes wait to hear good news. Let us be drawn into the quietness of Christ's peace. He can sort out every problem and dilemma we find ourselves in. Let us listen to Jesus.

March 26 – One Lad's Lunch Feeds 5,000 - John 6:1-15

What is the purpose of a sign?

Why does Jesus go up on the mountain with his disciples?

Why does John mention the Passover?

What motivates so many to follow Jesus?

What is Jesus' first concern for the multitude?

What lesson does Philip learn from Jesus?

What is notable about the lad?

How does Jesus deal with Satan's temptation that He perceived coming from the crowd?

Commentary: When driving, we all recognize those big red and white signs that say STOP. Those signs are there for our protection. We know we are to slow down and stop and only proceed when it's safe to do so.

Perhaps you've watched someone drive past that sign without stop-

ping or slowing down or know of an accident that occurred because of that very thing. Ironically, that sign has no power to force you to comply. All it does is inform you for the purposes of your safety.

There are other kinds of signs that seek our attention. Some provide directions while others compete with other signs for your attention attempting to meet your needs. There are also times when events take place, and we wonder if they are a sign of the times or a sign of the end of time. These kinds of signs are highly speculative. In spite of our studiousness of these signs we may draw the wrong conclusion or never know the answer to our questions.

Jesus performed many miracles that often are called signs and wonders. The crowd that came looking for Jesus was already beginning to draw some conclusions about who Jesus was and what those signs meant. Jesus confounded their attempt to make Him an earthly king. But He had mercy on them first. He met their bodily needs for food since they could not provide it for themselves in any timely fashion. Jesus demonstrated the reality of His spiritual power in feeding the 5000. But He disappointed their political hopes knowing that their desires would lead to Satan's purposes being accomplished rather than God's. In short, they misunderstood the signs of Jesus' Messiahship.

That distorted perspective is still seducing believers today. The more attention we give to the political pundits of our day, regardless of persuasion, the more we may be confused about our purposes in being living saints in a world that is not our home.

OBITUARY

Clara M. Walter, 94, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, passed away Wednesday evening September 28, 2022, at her home. She was born in Norristown on July 12, 1928, daughter of the late John D. and Mildred L. Pike Walter.

Clara had worked 10 years at Winthrop Laboratory and worked many years as a cook at several places including Tobyhanna Army Depot and the Mt. Hope Home. She worshiped in the Christian Faith. Clara enjoyed cooking, especially baking bread, flowers, playing piano, organ, guitar and singing.

Clara will be missed by daughters, Jane M., wife of Robert Atkins of Lebanon, Marjorie E. George of Lebanon; her son, Kenneth, husband of Maxine Wilkerson of Richland; her 12 grandchildren; numerous great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. She is also survived by her siblings, Rev. John Walter, Eunice Wagner, Rev. Kenneth, husband of Patricia Walter and David, husband of Helen Walter. Clara was preceded in death by a son, Ronald Wilkerson, daughter, Mildred G. Zimmerman, grandson, John N. Zimmerman; brothers, Roger, Arthur and Nelson Walter and sister, Lois Boyer.

The service was held on October 3, 2022, at Porterfield-Scheid Funeral home in Lebanon Pennsylvania, followed by internment at St. John's Cemetery, Mt. Aetna, Pennsylvania.

NEWS ITEMS

Notice

Please be sure all queries, reports, and any other business for 2023 General Conference are in my hands by April 15, 2023.

Thank you,

Bro. Ken Brock, Writing Clerk of General Conference.

Address: 1520 County Road 2260, Stryker, OH 43557

Phone: 419-515-3396

Email: kenbrockdb@gmail.com

Polity Update

The 2022 transitional version of the polity is now available. This

version includes changes made through General Conference 2022. While not yet available on the Dunkard Brethren Church website, most brotherhood elders now have electronic copies. Contact an elder if you are interested in getting a copy.

Deacon List - Omission

As noted in the News Items of the June 2022 issue of the Bible Monitor, Bro. Tom Hawbaker was elected to serve as a Deacon for the Grandview, Missouri congregation last spring. However, Tom was inadvertently omitted from the list of Deacons in the February 2023 issue of the Bible Monitor. Bro. Tom's address and phone number are 7121 KS Hwy 7, Mound City, KS 66056, (515) 745-0174.

Minister Address Change

Bro. Jonathan Skiles' new mailing address is PO Box 1990, Cuba, New Mexico 87013.

Deacon Address Change

Bro. Seth Skiles' new mailing address is PO Box 34, San Ysidro, New Mexico 87053.

Bethel, Pennsylvania

The Lord willing the Bethel Congregation will have their spring revivals with Bro. Jonathan Skiles from the Juniper Hills, New Mexico congregation. March 19th 9:30 AM, basket lunch and 7:00 PM. evening service. March 20th-25th, evening services 7:30 PM. March 26th 9:30 AM, basket lunch and at 2:00 PM, the conclusion of the meetings. All are welcome! Pray for Jonathan as he prepares and brings the messages, that souls may be strengthened and the lost saved.

Karen Gingrich Cor.

Berean, Indiana

The Berean Congregation welcomes Brother Brant Jamison for our Spring Revival meeting beginning Thursday evening, March 23rd through Sunday, March 26th. Each one is invited to come

and enjoy these services. Evening services begin at 7:30 PM and Sunday at 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Lunch will be served on Sunday, as well. We covet your prayers for our brother and his family as we prepare for this time.

Donna Wray, Cor.

Dallas Center, Iowa

Please join us in prayer as Bro. John Eberly comes to bring us God's messages March 26 - April 2. May there be a revival in our hearts, minds and souls. May this revival touch our lives, our family, and our community!

If you care to join us in person, we will be having a carry-in meal on the 26th. Times for the 26th are Sunday School at 9:30 AM with preaching at 10:30 AM and 6 PM.

Each weeknight evening the services will start at 7:30 PM.

Saturday April 1st, services at 10:45 AM and 2 PM with communion 6:30 PM.

We will conclude our week of meetings on Sunday with morning worship at 7:30 AM followed by breakfast, Sunday school and church, followed by lunch and the last service at 1:30 PM.

Join us in person or in prayer that Satan can be defeated and Warriors for Christ may rise up and be strong!

Mabel Chupp, Cor.

Pine Grove, Pennsylvania

We will be having Love Feast April 2nd at 2 PM. Weekend meetings with Brother John Eberly will be held April 14th-16th. Evening services Friday and Saturday at 7:30 PM. Sunday morning service at 9:30 AM with a fellowship meal afterwards and no afternoon service. Visitors are so very welcome!

Rachel Noll, Cor.

General Conference

The Lord willing, the 2023 General Conference of the Dunkard Brethren Church will be held June 10-14, 2023, at Aldersgate Christian Camp in Turner, Oregon. (www.aldersgateretreat.com)

Bedding and towels will be provided. (1 towel, hand towel and wash cloth per person. They will wash once during conference) **If you are willing to share a room with someone else, please let us know.**

The closest airport will be Portland, Oregon. (approx. 70 mi. from conf.) There is a commercial shuttle service from the Portland Airport to Salem. (10 mi. from conf) (groometransportation.com) **RESERVATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED.** There is Amtrak service to Salem. (10 mi from conf.) We will run our own shuttle from conference to those 2 locations in Salem as needed.

Lodging reservations should be sent to Dennis and Norma Jean Stamy, 1539 SE Miller Ave. Dallas, OR 97338. Call or text. Cell Phone: 503-559-1481. Email normastamy@yahoo.com If possible, please have your lodging requests in by May 1, 2023. Further information and directions will be published later.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR APRIL 2023

April 2 - John 6:16-33 - The Bread from Heaven

1. Why were the people really seeking Jesus?
-
-

2. Why did they refer back to Moses and manna?
-
-

3. Can you summarize Jesus' instructions to them?
-
-

April 9 - Matt. 28:1-20 - The Resurrection!

1. What four statements did the angel say to the women who arrived early at the tomb?
-
-
-

2. What was the false report of the guards? Why?
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-

3. Can the Great Commission be carried out today?
-
-

April 16 - John 6:34-51 - Rejected by His Own

1. How are the Father and the Son intertwined?
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-

-
2. In verse 22 of Chap. 5, “the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” What does this mean? Why?
-
-

3. How will Jesus carry out justice?
-
-

April 23 - John 6:52-71 - Truth Misunderstood

1. The Words Jesus spoke is Spirit and Life. What does this mean to us today?
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-

2. Some walked with Him yet believed not and walked away. Can we walk with Him, yet not fully believe?
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-

3. Jesus chose all twelve disciples. How could Judas have betrayed Him?
-

April 30 - John 7:1-17 - Jesus' Brothers Disbelieve

1. What does Jesus mean, “My time has not yet come?”
-
-

2. Why were the Jews looking for Him?
-
-

3. Why did Jesus know the law better than they?
-
-

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