

Amwell Echoes

REACHING OUT WITH LOVE AND COMPASSION SO OTHERS MAY KNOW CHRIST

December/January '03-04

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*We're on the Web!
See us at:*

www.amwell.org

Leadership at Amwell

• **Pastor Robert DiSalvio**
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• **Deacon Chairman George Hettman**
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• **Deacon John Caimano**
(908) 284-2258

• **Deacon Robert Hughes**
(732) 780-3398

• **Deacon Jeff Kiskurno**
(215) 968-5584

From The Pastor's Pen . . .

by Robert DiSalvio, Pastor at Amwell COB



Something Good is Happening

Ralph Carmichael wrote a Hymn titled "Something Good is Going to Happen ..."

We're entering that special time beginning with Thanksgiving and ending in a New year. The centerpiece of this season is the celebration of Christ's birth - There is a sense of excitement and anticipation in the air.

As a Church family we look forward to the Thanksgiving Eve Service, The Children's Christmas Program, for the first time a Christmas Eve Service, and our New Year's Eve Candlelight Service. These are some wonderful traditional services we can look forward to.

Something else that's good is happening at Amwell!
We are in the early phases of three major new undertakings for the kingdom.

#1. Jeff Kiskurno, Bob Hughes, and myself will be working with volunteer members of the congregation in a group we call 'Team A'. The primary objective of 'Team A' will be to answer the questions:

- How do we let people know what we are here?
- Do we have the ministries that will equip the congregation to grow spiritually and numerically and serve the needs of our community as we ready people for Jesus Christ?

'Team A' will put a plan of action together for presentation and implementation to the congregation for approval. If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you, you can be part of 'Team A'.

(Continued page 8)

"I Knew You Would Come" by Elizabeth King English

Herman and I locked our general store and dragged ourselves home. It was 11:00 PM, Christmas Eve or 1949. We were dog tired. We had sold almost all of our toys and all of the layaways, except one package, had been picked up.

Usually we kept the store open until everything had been claimed. We wouldn't have woken up happy on Christmas knowing that some child's gift was still on the layaway shelf. But the person who had put a dollar down on that package never returned.

Early Christmas morning we and our twelve-year-old son, Tom, opened gifts. But I'll tell you, there was something humdrum about this Christmas. Tom was growing up; I missed his childish exuberance of past years.

As soon as breakfast was over Tom left to visit his friend next door. Herman mumbled, "I'm going back to sleep. There's nothing left to stay up for." So there I was alone, feeling let down.

And it then began. A strange, persistent urge. It seemed to be telling me to go to the store. I looked at the sleet and icy sidewalk outside. That's crazy, I said to myself. I tried dismissing the urge, but it wouldn't leave me alone. In fact, it was getting stronger. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer, and I got dressed.

Outside, the wind cut right through me and the sleet stung my cheeks. I groped my way to the store, slipping and sliding. In front stood two boys, one about nine, and the other six. What in the world?

"See, I told you she would come!" the older boy said jubilantly. The younger one's face was wet with tears, but when he saw me, his sobbing stopped.

"What are you two doing out here?" I scolded, hurrying them into the store. "You should be at home on a day like this!" They were poorly dressed. They had no hats or gloves, and their shoes barely held together. I rubbed their icy hands, and got them up close to the heater.

"We've been waiting for you," replied the older boy. "My little brother Jimmy didn't get any Christmas." He touched Jimmy's shoulder. "We want to buy some skates. That's what he wants. We have these three dollars," he said, pulling the bills from his pocket.

I looked at the money. I looked at the expectant faces. And then I looked around the store. "I'm sorry," I said, "but we have no--" Then my eye caught sight of the layaway shelf with its lone package. "Wait a minute," I told the boys. I walked over, picked up the package, unwrapped it and, miracle of miracles, there was a pair of skates!

Jimmy reached for them. Lord let them be his size. And miracle added upon miracle, they were his size.

(Continued on page 7)



HAVE YOU METTHE OPDYKES

Stella and her gang are faithful members of our congregation. This family somehow manages to make their way here, in spite of weather, car trouble AND 2 toddlers!

Stella and husband of 20+ years Charlie are the parents of 4 lovely daughters: newly wed Kim (who resides in Annadale), outgoing Heather, who attends 11th grade at Hunterdon Central and 2 1/2 year old twins Sara and Kayla who complete their home!

Stella was born near Sommerville and grew up in Delaware and Princeton. She met her future husband as a Junior in high school. Her father and Charlie's were friends and the two kids just naturally gravitated to each other. Stella is employed at Caraustar, making cardboard partitions. She has been working there for over 15 years. When she can squeeze out some spare time, she enjoys her extensive doll collection (she has over 75!) and loves doing puzzles.

Heather keeps busy with her school work and is very involved in Amwell's Youth Program. Heather is also active in Girl Scouts and loves to collect NASCAR trading cards! A highlight of her winter is the weekend retreat to Camp Swatara.

Toddlers Sara and Kayla didn't have much to say during their interview; however they do enjoy Sunday School and they love to visit others in their pews!

Even though she didn't attend Amwell until after his passing, Pastor Landis appeared in Stella's life on many occasions. He performed many marriages in her family, including her in-laws! The Opdykes started attending services at Amwell after Kim and Heather became active in Friday night Youth. Their regular attendance started in 1999. Stella came to know Christ as Savior as an adult and wants to make sure her children are being raised in the Lord's Sight.

The Opdykes are a wonderful family and Aunt Sue rounds out their little troupe! If you ever need a hug or smile or a bit of encouragement, you will surely be uplifted by this gang! The Opdyke Clan is a true blessing to all at Amwell!

MARANATHA NEWS BRIEFS
Indonesian Christians Killed
In Muslim Protests

([ANS](#)) -- 2,000 Indonesian security forces were on high alert Nov. 19, after 4 Christians were killed by Muslims angry over attempts to arrest those responsible for previous anti-Christian in Poso, Central Sulawesi, reports said.

"Four more Christians, including the treasurer of the prominent Central Sulawesi Christian Church (GKST), have been killed in the Poso area," apparently in recent days, claimed The Barnabus Fund, which supports persecuted Christians.

"On Sunday November 16 the bodies of Mr Tadjodja, the treasurer, and his nephew were found in their car between two Muslim villages near Poso." The organization said that his car had been broken and that "Mr Tadjodja had been cudged with a heavy blunt instrument to such an extent that his head had been crushed and his face was difficult to identify."

His nephew had been attacked "with a machete, or similar weapon, and his neck had been almost completely severed." "Mr Tadjodja, 58, had been sent by the church's synod to preach" in one of 5 villages hit in Oct. 12 by Muslim violence in which at least 11 Christians died within two days, The Barnabas Fund explained.

In addition another member of GKST, identified only as Dennis, was "beaten to death", in recent days said The Barnabus Fund, after he traveled through Poso on the way to the town of Palu.

"An irate Muslim mob forced him to come to a halt and then dragged him from his motorbike....His body was found near the market area in Poso along with the body of another Christian and GKST member assumed to be Mr Bowo, though his identity is as yet unconfirmed."

The Barnabas Fund has complained that while international media "rightly covered in detail the memorial services...to mark the first anniversary of the tragic Bali bombings that killed 200 Westerners," there has been little attention for anti-Christian violence in Indonesia.

Some 2,000 Christians are believed to have died in Muslim violence in Poso and surrounding area's between 1999 and 2001. The latest killings have added to concern among human rights groups about a return of wide spread bloodshed

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IN LOVING MEMORY...

My good friend Ponny Williams passed away September 1, after 4 1/2 years of having ovarian cancer which then spread throughout her body. She is now at peace, pain free, & with our Lord. She repented & accepted Jesus Christ as her Lord & Savior.

Ponny so much appreciated all your prayers & gifts.

Thank you.

Elaine Van Duyne

"GRACE"

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

One day a peddler knocked on the door of photographer Eric Enstorm. "Come in," he said, "and join me. I'm ready to sit down for dinner."

As the peddler walked in an idea struck the photographer. He asked, "Will you pose for a picture?" "Yes," he answered, and Enstrom seated him at a table with a Bible, a pair of glasses, a bowl of food and bread. "Please bow your head," he suggested, and the peddler thanked God for the food.

He snapped the picture and called it Grace. Thousands of copies have been sold.

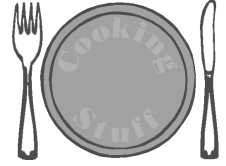
The photographer said, "This man doesn't have much of earthly goods, but he has more than most people, a thankful heart."

Have you?

Prayer: Deliver us, Father, from being ungrateful and ungracious. Inspire us to say thanks with our lips and to show thanks with our lives. Help us to please Thee with our praise: in Thy name. Amen.

From The Kitchen of ... Sue Pierman
Apple Walnut Cake

3 cups flour * 1 3/4 cup sugar * 1 tsp baking soda * 1 tsp cinnamon
3/4 tsp salt * 1/4 tsp nutmeg * 1 cup oil * 1/2 cup apple juice or apple sauce
2 tsp vanilla * 3 large eggs * 3 medium apples, chopped
1 cup chopped walnuts * 1 cup golden or dark raisins



Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Grease and flour a Bundt or tube pan.

Measure all ingredients, except for the chopped apples, walnuts, and raisins, into a bowl.

Mix on low speed until combined. Beat on medium speed for 2 minutes.

Stir in the apples, walnuts, and raisins.

Bake 1 hour or until it pulls away from the sides of the pan. Cool 10 minutes. Remove from pan. Cool completely. Sprinkle with confectionery sugar. Serve and enjoy!

Your Deacons desire to communicate more directly with each member of the congregation. We have therefore assigned our Deacons to the congregation by alphabetical blocks as follows. Do feel free to contact **ANY** Deacon however!

A-G	George Hettman Sr	609-466-3554
H-M	John Caimano	908-284-2258
N-S	Jeff Kiskurno	215-968-5584
T-Z	Robert Hughes	732-780-3398



MUSIC MINISTRY GROWING ...and LOOKING FOR YOU!!!!

2004 promises to be a year of growth and change in our Music Ministry. Lauren Frankevich is taking the helm and is working with the talent of our congregation to broaden our approach to honoring The Lord in song. Lauren is always looking for vocalists to bring special music Sunday mornings. If you play an instrument then please let her know; she wants to be the catalyst for your talent. She is tapping our eager young people for a Youth Choir. The idea of a Bell Choir is not out of reach; with proper coordination and some willing participants we can look forward to a chorus of volunteers willing to go Christmas Caroling and perhaps bring songs and joy to shut ins and the sick throughout the year.

Lauren is looking for anyone who feels the Spirit's call in this special line of service. She is more than happy to speak with you about YOUR role in a truly wonderful ministry in Praising the Lord.

PLEASE SHARE!

Our web site not only has the weekly sermons preserved, but there are plenty of pictures of our changing and growing congregation! This is a great and easy way to show off YOUR children to grandparents, uncles and aunts and family friends!

www.amwell.org



Please support our church's effort to aid the FLEMINGTON FOOD PANTRY. They are in desperate need of non-perishable household staples. See any Busy Bee with your contribution.

DON'T FORGET OUR CHILD OF COMPASSION HELEN

YOUR DONATIONS WILL ALLOW THIS CHILD TO BE THE CONTINUING RECIPIENT OF QUALITY MEDICAL CARE AND THE SUPPLIES SHE NEEDS TO GROW HEALTHY AND STRONG IN THE LORD.

DECEMBER, 2003

- Morning Star Craft Group Meets Every Tuesday @ 9:30 AM
- Olympians and Teen Youth Group Friday Evenings
- Wednesday Bible Study every Wednesday at 7:15 PM
- **KLEIN MEETING HOUSE SERVICE Canceled for 2003. Will return for 2004**
- **MARRIAGE EXCURSION CONTINUES** (See George Hettman for date and time)
- 4 Busy Bees @ 7:30 PM In The Annex
- 14 Children's Christmas Program
- Evening Christmas Caroling (TO BE ANNOUNCED)
- 18 Thursday Noon Group @ 11 AM
- 21 Christmas Worship Service
- 24 Christmas Eve Service (TBA)
- 28 Mission Sunday Scheduled
- 31 New Year's Eve Watch Night in Church Annex



JANUARY, 2004

- Morning Star Craft Group Meets Every Tuesday @ 9:30 AM
- Olympians and Teen Youth Group Friday Evening
- Wednesday Bible Study every Wednesday at 7:15 PM
- TO BE ANNOUNCED Busy Bees @ 7:30
- 15 Thursday Noon Group @ 11AM
- 18 Mission Sunday

BLANCHE'S CORNER (continued from Page 2)



The older boy presented the dollars to me. "No," I told him, "I want you to have these skates, and I want you to use your money to get some gloves." The boys just blinked at first. Then their eyes became like saucers, and their grins stretched wide when they understood I was giving them the skates. What I saw in Jimmy's eyes was a blessing. It was pure joy, and it was beautiful. My spirits rose.

We walked out together, and as I locked the door, I turned to the older brother and said, "How did you know I would come?"

I wasn't prepared for his reply. His gaze was steady, and he answered me softly. "I asked Jesus to send you."

The tingles in my spine weren't from the cold. God had planned this. As we waved good-bye, I turned home to a brighter Christmas.

From The Pastor's Pen

(Continued from Pg 1)



#2. John Caimano, Joe Ferello, and George Hettman Sr. will be working with volunteer members of the congregation in a group we call 'Team B'. The primary objective of 'Team B' is to focus on the physical needs of the meetinghouse. Projects like improved bathrooms (including handicap facilities), Nursery and Sunday School Classes, Grounds Cleanup, Painting of exterior and interior. 'Team B' will put a plan of action together for presentation and implementation to the congregation for approval. If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you, you can be part of 'Team B'.

#3. At sometime in 2004 we will put a task force together whose focus will be to revise our existing organizational structure. That group will determine if the present structure meets the many needs of the congregation and if not what shall the remedy be? You'll learn more about this as 2004 rolls on.

Please be in prayer about the work of these Teams. If we seek God's Will, God's Guidance, and God's Wisdom truly
Something Good is Going to Happen!

Pastor Bob



JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON!

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<http://www.brethren.org/>

We also broadcast sermons on:

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Each Sunday at 7:30 A.M.

We Sponsor the Ravi Zacharias
radio programs:

"Let My People Think"

and

"Adventures in Odyssey "

What Were Their Occupations?

by Sonia A. Randall

Work is a blessing from God. The first job man ever had was that of a gardener (Genesis 2:15). After that, the Bible tells of many occupations that people have had. Can you match the following people with their work?

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Simon Peter worked hard at this job until Jesus called him to be His disciple (Luke 5:2-3). | (a) TENTMAKER |
| 2. Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla because they all had this same occupation (Acts 18:2-3). | (b) PHYSICIAN |
| 3. Noah worked in this profession after God gave him some detailed instructions on a specific project (Genesis 6:14-16). | (c) SURVEYOR |
| 4. Title for some of the Israelites who recorded the accounts of their tribes (1 Chronicles. 9:1). | (d) ASTRONOMER |
| 5. These recorders kept lists of the kings and events which are still used today (1 Kings 22:39). | (e) HISTORIAN |
| 6. These Israelites had understanding about the portions of land the nation of Israel owned. | (f) MUSICIAN |
| 7. God gave Solomon great knowledge needed for this occupation (1 Kings 4:33). | (g) FARMER |
| 8. God told Job that even people in this field cannot compare to God's greatness (Job 38:31-33). | (h) BIOLOGIST |
| 9. Solomon was allowed by God to fulfill this job in place of his father (1 Chronicles. 29:19). | (i) GENEALOGIST |
| 10. Adams's firstborn son, Cain, held this job (Genesis 4:2-3). | (j) FISHERMAN |
| 11. These people had an important part in marking the boundaries of land among the tribes of Israel (Joshua 18:4). | (k) SAILOR |
| 12. These workers sometimes have reason to praise God for miraculous rescues (Psalm 107:23-31). | (l) ARCHITECT |
| 13. These artists were chosen by David to use their talents before the ark of the covenant (1 Chronicles. 16:4-6) | (m) GEOGRAPHER |
| 14. Luke probably had many opportunities to practice this profession while he traveled with Paul (Colossians 4:14). | (n) SHIPWRIGHT |

An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening of Church services when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled, Stop! Acts 2:38!" (Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you." "Scripture?" replied the burglar.

"She said she had an Ax and Two 38's!"

Bible Brain Twister

(Find 17 hidden Books of the Bible in the paragraph below)

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books are not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To other, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of the 17, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup or tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are the names of 17 books of the Bible in these sentences. (One preacher found 16 books in 20 minutes. It took him three weeks to find the seventeenth one.)

Answers on page 16

Ponius' Puddle



News of the Church of the Brethren

Taken from the Brethren website at brethren.org

BRETHREN BITS

Brethren Benefit Trust's shareholder advocacy efforts on behalf of small-scale coffee farmers proved to be effective this fall as Procter & Gamble announced that it would begin marketing a Fair Trade Certified blend of coffee.

A shareholder resolution on which BBT was a co-filer was withdrawn after Procter & Gamble, the largest seller of coffee in the US, introduced Millstone's new Mountain Moonlight Fair Trade Certified brand. The resolution had urged the corporation to review its policies as they related to the effects the steep decline in coffee prices has had on coffee farmers.

"Many farmers in developing countries who planted coffee in response to encouragement from development agencies have been devastated by low prices for their product," said Will Thomas, BBT's director of Foundation Operations. "This will help double their income."

Fair Trade Certified coffee is grown primarily on small family farms that are part of democratically run cooperatives. Through membership in the cooperatives, farmers are able to sell their products at guaranteed prices, while the cooperatives in turn invest in the community through housing programs, health clinics, schools, women's programs, and scholarship programs, according to a release from BBT.

Shareholders and advocacy groups had engaged Procter & Gamble in discussions on the issue over the past two years. Last December, a coalition of investors--including BBT--engaged the company in dialog on the issue. In April, the coalition filed the shareholder resolution.

The new Millstone Fair Trade Certified coffee is currently available only online, at www.millstone.com, or by calling 800-729-5282. Cost for a 10-ounce bag is \$8.99 plus shipping. Coffee growers receive \$1.26 per pound. The product will be available on store shelves within a year if sales support it, according to a company spokesman.

Additional information on Fair Trade Certified coffee and related issues can be found at www.globalexchange.org and www.fairtradecertified.org.

On a warm Nov. 1, 44 people from as far away as Ohio gathered at the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., to learn more about Family-Based Youth Ministry. Well-known youth ministry author and speaker Mark DeVries led the group in his high-energy style, giving statistical information mixed with hands-on, practical "how-to" youth ministry ideas.

Family-Based Youth Ministry, DeVries said, is about moving young people to mature Christian adulthood. To do that, he said, each youth needs to have many adults (such as choir directors, youth advisors, prayer partners, Sunday School teachers, pastor, etc.) who know the youth and keep touching base with him or her.

In 15 minutes of brainstorming the group came up with more than 100 "program ideas," many of them new ideas that could be used to keep youth groups active. But the real meat of youth ministry, DeVries said, is empowering families and building on the intergenerational connections that can be made during that active time.

The workshop was sponsored by the General Board's Youth/Young Adult Ministries office.

Videographer David Sollenberger of Annville, Pa., will have a video of the workshop available in the near future for youth pastors and other church leaders to use in training workshops and/or parent meetings.





WHAT CHILDREN HEAR

A Sunday School class was studying the Ten Commandments. They were ready to discuss the last one. The teacher asked if anyone could tell her what it was. Susie raised her hand, stood tall, and quoted, "Thou shall not take the covers off the neighbor's wife."

One particular four-year-old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets, as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

A little boy was overhead praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

A Sunday School teacher asked her little children, as they were on their way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

The preacher was wired for sound with a lapel mike, and as he preached, he moved briskly out the platform, jerking the mike cord as he went. He moved to one side, getting wound up in the cord and nearly tripping before jerking it again. After several circles and jerks, a little girl in the third pew leaned toward her mother and whispered, "If he gets loose, will he hurt us?"

6-year-old Angie and her 4-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, & talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

My grandson was visiting one day when he asked "Grandma, do you know how you and God are alike?" I mentally polished my halo while I asked, "No, how are we alike?" "You're both old." He replied.

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus."

One Sunday in a Midwestern city, a young child was "acting up" during the morning worship hour. The parents did their best to maintain some sense of order in the pew, but were losing the battle. Finally, the father picked the little fellow up and walked sternly up the aisle. On his way out just before reaching the safety of the foyer, the little one called loudly to the congregation, "Pray for me! Pray for me!"



ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER

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Marge Landis
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Cell# 267-549-5201
email: bigtymekis@yahoo.com



Missionary Outreach



Amwell Church of the Brethren supports many Missionaries. Not only do these people and organizations count on our financial support they greatly depend on our prayers and encouragement.

Please send them a card or letter to let them know you care.

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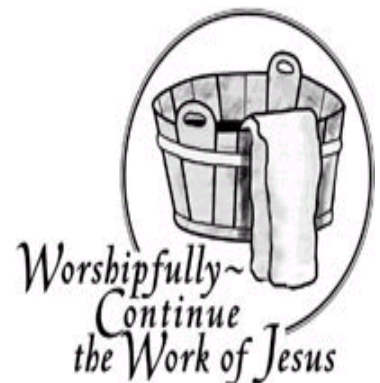
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PARKS PLACE ANTIQUES

Carey & Ann Parks

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908-369-1732 <http://parksgroup.net>



CASSETTE MINISTRY



See George Hettman after service for a cassette of Sunday sermons. They are great for listening while in the car, after deciding there is only garbage on TV or for sharing with friends.

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EVEN MORE WANT ADS...

JOE AND SHERRY FERELLO are collecting used toner cartridges as part of a fund raiser at their children's day care. St. Paul's will benefit from this effort. Please help if you can! See Joe or Sherry if you have any questions!

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Bible Brain Twister Answers

MARK, LUKE, KINGS, ACTS,
REVELATION, JAMES, RUTH,
NUMBERS, JOB, AMOS, ESTHER,
JUDGES, TITUS, LAMENTATIONS,
HEBREWS, PETER, ECCLESIASTES
(this is the tricky one)

YOU ARE NEEDED

WHO: YOU!

WHAT: CHURCH MINISTRIES

WHEN: NOW!

WHERE: AT AMWELL, AT HOME AND AT WORK

WHY: BECAUSE THE LORD INSTRUCTED YOU!

HOW: DIG IN! DO IT! ASK THE PASTOR AND DEACONS! OPEN YOUR BIBLE! GO TO GOD'S THRONE ON YOUR KNEES!



You are encouraged to pray for your own family and your Church Family. Start with your Pastor, and include The Deacons and Trustees and each member of this congregation. There is so much need in our little group. . . . people need help with physical struggles, marital stress, mental and emotional growth. Finances can be overwhelming for some. Others may desire a friend or companion. Some may need a helping hand caring for a family member or a small child. Car or home repairs can be a source of pain for the ill-equipped. Lend a helping hand to a brother or sister. Most needs are never made known. Some people have a hard time bringing their burdens to light. We have a Christian duty to each other to make our needs known AND to be a source of help and inspiration to each other. Do what you can and do what you should!



The cold world needs warm-hearted Christians.

--Unknown



Live as though Christ died yesterday, rose from the grave today, and is coming back tomorrow.

--Theodore Epp

You do well to believe in God. Satan also believes...and trembles.

--James 2:19

God gave us memories that we might have roses in December.

--Sir James Barrie



JUST A LAST MINUTE THOUGHT...

Submitted by **LORRAINE CAIMANO**
A STORY TO SHARE



Several years ago, a friend of mine and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. My friend, Arlene, was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy, with a fine home on the waterway, and cars costing more than her house.

The first day and evening went well, and Arlene was delighted to have this rare glimpse into how the very wealthy live. The husband's employer was quite generous as a host, and took them to the finest restaurants. Arlene knew she would never have the opportunity to indulge in this kind of extravagance again, so was enjoying herself immensely.

As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant that evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of Arlene and her husband. He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long, silent moment.

Arlene wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigarette butts. Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny.

He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?

Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been of some value.

A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before! What was the point of this?

"Look at it." He said. "Read what it says." She read the words "United States of America."
"No, not that; read further."

"One cent?" "No, keep reading." "In God we Trust?" "Yes," "And?" "And if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin."

Whenever I find a coin I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it! God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him?

Who am I to pass it by? When I see a coin, I pray, I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God; that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me.

Blessed am I, God is patient and pennies are plentiful!

When I was out shopping today, I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up, and realized that I had been worrying and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words, "In God We Trust," and had to laugh. Yes, God, I get the message.

It seems that I have been finding an inordinate number of pennies in the last few months, but then, pennies are plentiful!

And, God is patient...