

THE BRETHREN



JOURNAL



Vol. 116

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No. 10

36 Pages

Needed: FRIENDS OF THE BRETHREN JOURNAL

— from the editor

The Brethren Journal has been publishing life and activities of the Unity of the Brethren in Texas for over 100 years. All of these include records of weddings, baptisms, deaths, etc., of the ministers... when they were submitted. These records are invaluable for families who wish to research their family history or activities that have taken place in our congregations and the denomination. It would be fitting, in the eyes of the Brethren Journal Business Committee, to ask for financial support for the continuation of this publication.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
The Brethren Journal, 705 Woodson Dr., Caldwell, TX 77836.



Synodical Executive Officers Installed

New officers were installed for 2017-2019 during the Fall Synodical Committee Meeting in October at the Hus Encampment: (L to R)

Rev. Joe Emerson (Financial Secretary), ***Angie Hairrell*** (Secretary), ***Rev. Whitney Amos*** (3rd VP), ***Kayla Marek*** (2nd VP), ***Rev. Mark Sevek*** (1st VP), ***Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky*** (President), ***Lynette Urbanovsky*** - absent (Treasurer).

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

From the President . . . by Rev. Larry Koslovsky

Jesus' Gift . . . by Rev. Vanessa Mitchell

The Lord is Good . . . by Rhonda Johnson

The Sermon on the Mount and the Ancients' Unity

. . . by Jim Pokorny

Ladies' Conference Invitation

...and so much more!

THE BRETHREN JOURNAL

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Visit the
Unity of the Brethren
Website:
unityofthebrethren.org

Seaton Brethren Sausage Supper Invitation

The Seaton Brethren Church
annual sausage supper fund-
raiser will be held Saturday,
February 17, 2018, beginning
at 4:00 p.m. until the sausage
is gone. The menu consists of
homemade pork sausage,
sauerkraut, new potatoes, sea-
soned green beans, bread,
homemade desserts, and tea
or coffee. Dine in or drive thru
plates will be available for
\$10.00 each. The LOCATION
of the supper is at **Seaton Star
Hall**, 10842 State Hwy 53,
Temple (Seaton). There will be
a bake sale consisting of
kolaches, pies, cakes, strudels,
other baked goods & jellies, a
raffle, and a silent auction.
Proceeds benefit the ministry
of the church, community, and
other projects. The public is
invited.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT . . . Larry Koslovsky

With endings come new beginnings. Between endings and beginnings, there is a suspension in time and level of suspense, like the movement from fall to winter to spring. We see it in Jesus' life: His death, burial (waiting), and resurrection. Our biennial conventions play this rhythm out and signal the beginning of the same kind of transition. Every two years as the convention is held, previous decisions are wrapped up; new decisions are birthed. Before we embark on the new decisions, there is a period of suspension and suspense as we go through referendum, set up new committees, and make appointments and move toward new vistas.

Over the last two years we have seen the selection of an Administrative Assistant that is now appropriating and appreciating the gifts and talents of Liz Ripple. An updated catechism was prepared and presented that is ready for study, reflection, and spiritual growth, and giving rise to a *Companion to the Catechism*.

New beginnings are being birthed. Major improvements and additions to facilities at Hus Encampment are at the edge of being set into motion. Hurricane relief has been provided and will continue for several weeks and months to come. Thanks to all who have prayed for and blessed

through giving aid to those who have lost so much in this natural disaster.

As we move forward in the next two years, please pray and fast for the Unity. We need a fresh vision from the Lord and infusion and empowerment of the Holy Spirit to creatively and faithfully minister to all – especially the least, the last, and lost.

Thank You.

Thanks, and appreciation goes to outgoing Executive Members of the Synodical Committee for leadership to the Unity and service to Christ. Much of the work that is done between conventions ultimately relies on the attention of these officers who execute decisions made at convention as well as carry roles and responsibilities prescribed by the Unity bylaws.

Thanks to the following: Kent Laza, President; Rev. Michael Groseclose, 2nd Vice President; Harvey Treybig, Treasurer; Liz Ripple, Financial Sec.; Liz Ripple, Administrative Assistant.

Liz Ripple now serves as the administrative assistant to the President and Executive Committee of the Unity. Liz has served on the Synodical Committee as secretary (2011-15) and financial secretary (2015-2017). She began her service in this paid position



Brethren Book Store

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Diane Heckman, Manager

on April 1, 2017, at the recommendation of Kent Laza, President of the Synodical Committee, and approval by the Synodical Committee. Liz is an active member of Fayetteville Brethren Church.

Her primary responsibilities include followup of decisions made at Convention, Synodical Committee, and Executive Committee meetings, as well as policies, procedures, and appointments to committees outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Unity.

Catechism Update

For some time now there has been a desire to update the catechism in light of scholarship over the last 30 years on the early Unity of the Brethren (1457-1620) that makes the Unity of the Brethren unique and a need to review and fine tune the Scriptures that answer the questions.

This updated catechism, while retaining the overwhelming majority of the questions found in the previous two catechisms, divides the questions into three major sections based on the early Unity's understanding of (1) the essential of faith, (2) those things that minister to faith (Sacraments and Scripture), and (3) things that are incidental to faith (rites of the church and last things).

Final review of the catechism by pastors will take place on Monday,

November 13, at Taylor Brethren Church. With this final review, adoption of the catechism for printing will take place with a report by the Pastor to Pastors, Rev. James Hejl, to the March 2, 2018, Synodical Committee meeting.

A *Companion to the Catechism* is in process of being written to lend further explanation to the catechism by Pastors James Hejl and Larry Koslovsky, who were responsible for the update of the catechism with input from pastors.

In collaboration with the Board of Christian Education, all congregations in the near future will be asked to take their entire membership through a study of the catechism.

Hus Encampment Building Program

Approval through the referendum sets in motion improvements and new facilities for the camp. Septic system expansion and remodeling of the main building are phase one. The cost for the septic system improvements is approximately \$60,000. The remodeling of the main building is estimated to be \$400,000. This will include remodeling and expansion of the kitchen, air conditioning the dining area, and the addition of restrooms.

At the Fall Synodical Committee meeting, \$200,000 was allocated as "seed" money to begin the project.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Austin – Bible Study at 10:00 AM
Worship at 11:00 AM.
– Rev. Linda Chandler

Bryan-College Station – worship at 9:00 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Mark Sebek

Buckholts – worship at 9:00 AM every Sunday except the 5th Sunday.
Holy Communion on 1st Sunday.
Guest speaker on 4th Sunday.
– Rev. John Kueker

Cade Lake Community Chapel – A Home Mission Project since 10-22-11 – Sunday School at 11:00 AM; Fellowship Lunch at Noon; Worship at 1:00 PM.
– Rev. Jim Heckman
Co-Pastor, Rev. Kay Polasek

Caldwell – Come as you are! **Sundays** – explore the Bible @ 9:30 AM (all ages); KIDS CHOIR practices @ 10:15 AM; & worship @ 10:30 AM! **Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday**, join the fun @ Family Game Night, 6-7:30 PM! Check out lifeatcbc.org for spiritual resources, events, videos, & more! Friend us on Facebook!
– Rev. Vanessa Mitchell

Crosby – 9:00 AM: Worship
10:00 AM: Faith Adventure
– Dr. Larry Koslovsky

Dime Box – worship at 9:00 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Kay Polasek

Fayetteville – Sunday School at 9:30 AM, worship at 10:30 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Joe Emerson

Good Shepherd Moravian – worship at 11:30 AM and 6:30 PM every Sunday.
– Rev. Adolfo Gonzalez

Granger – Bible Study every Sunday at 9:00 AM with worship service following at 10:15 AM.
– Rev. Larry Zabcik

Houston – Sunday School at 9:15 AM; Worship at 10:30 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Dr. Jerry Terrill

Industry – worship at 9:00 AM every Sunday with Sunday School for all ages following.
– Rev. Joe Emerson

Nelsonville – Sunday School at 9:00 AM
Worship at 10:15 AM
– Rev. Michael Groseclose

New Tabor – Sunday School at 9:00 AM & Worship at 10:00 AM every Sunday, "Tune Up" on Wednesdays, 7:30 PM.
– Rev. Dave Johnson

Ocker – worship at 10:15 AM every Sunday. Sunday School at 9:00 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Dr. Brad Herridge

Pasadena – Sunday School at 9:30 AM and worship at 10:45 AM every Sunday.
– Dr. Larry Koslovsky

Community Christian Church of Rosenberg –
Sundays: Adult Bible Study and Sunday School for children at 9:00 AM; worship at 10:30 AM.
Wednesdays: 5:30 PM Dinner; 6:30 PM Bible Study.
– Pastor Ben Kruse

Seaton –
Sunday, 9:15 AM – Prayer Gathering; 9:30 AM – Sunday School, All Ages; 10:30 AM – Worship Celebration Service.
Wednesday, 6:30 PM – Kid's and Adult Bible Study.
– Rev. Denise Mikeska

Snook – Sunday School – 9:00 AM; Worship – 10:15 AM.
– Rev. Joseph Polasek

Taylor – worship at 10:15 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. James Hejl

Temple – Sunday School at 9:30 AM., Worship at 10:45 AM.
– Rev. Tim Chaplin

Vsetin – A non-official member congregation of the Unity of the Brethren – Worship at 10:00 AM every Sunday.
– Dr. Mark Labaj
5th Sunday – Visiting Ministers

Wall – Sunday School (for all ages) at 9:30 AM; worship at 10:45 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Thomas Tallas

Wesley – worship at 9:00 AM every Sunday. Sunday School follows.
– Rev. Michael Groseclose

West – Sunday School at 9:00 AM and worship at 10:15 AM every Sunday.
– Rev. Curtis Holland

Westheimer Community – 9:30 AM, Christian Education; 10:30 AM, Worship, with Holy Communion every 5th Sunday.
– Pastor Lisa Johnson

In God's Hands Ministry

P. O. Box 321
Caldwell, TX 77836
979-574-7134

Everyday Ministries to Meet Everyday Needs
A Home Mission Work to Cade Lake and Burleson County

Mutual Aid Society – Listing of Local Secretaries' Addresses and Phone Numbers

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**Position currently filled by Administrative Board members

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Rev. Vanessa Mitchell (2017)
Crystal Dusek (2017)

Jennifer Chervenka – Youth Coordinator, Ocker Brethren

Synodical Liaison – Rev. Whitney Amos, 3rd Vice-President; chatney@aol.com

Hurricane Harvey Relief

On the days between August 25 through August 28, Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath as a tropical storm brought devastation from Rockport to areas well east of the Beaumont/Port Arthur area. Houston area church facilities fared well with no damage due to flooding; Good Shepherd Moravian Church suffered extensive damage, requiring the removal of all interior walls a minimum of four feet from the floor and the loss of all furnishings throughout the sanctuary and fellowship area including carpet, pews, the organ and pianos. Several homes in the Port Arthur area likewise flooded and were extensively damaged. Members in Crosby, Pasadena, and Westheimer suffered flood damages, as well. In response to this event, the Unity designated \$25,000 for immediate relief and has received donations from the congregations, the membership at large, along with the Moravian Church, bringing the

total to \$53,543 at the time of this writing.

Work crews are lined up for October 30 through November 18 under the leadership of Aaron Van Der Linder. Rev. Mark Sebek has been working closely with this project to make sure materials, housing, and meals for the crews are in place.

Synodical Committee Meetings and your Representation

The Synodical Committee operates much like the Board of Elders on the congregational level. It is important for your Synodical Committee Representative to be present for two reasons. First, your representative is entrusted to carry out the work of the denomination representing your congregation between conventions; and second, it is a way for your congregation to be informed about the opportunities and work of the denomination to carry out the ministry of our Lord.





CALDWELL BRETHREN CHURCH

401 South Main Street
(979) 567-7203

Rev. Vanessa Mitchell, Pastor
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Sunday School
9:30 AM

Children's Choir Practice, Sundays
10:15 a.m.

Sunday Worship
10:30 AM

Church email: lifecatcbc@gmail.com

Wednesday Family Night Gathering:
1st & 3rd Wednesdays each month

www.lifecatcbc.org *Come as you are . . .* *Friend us on Facebook!*

Fall Synodical Committee Meeting

Saturday, October 21, 2017 – 9:00am

Hus Encampment; Caldwell, TX

The Fall Synodical Committee Meeting was held on Saturday, October 21, 2017, at the Hus Encampment. There were 51 in attendance. Kent Laza opened the meeting with prayer. Kent Laza reported that the Executive Committee approved \$25,000 from the contingency fund to be used for Hurricane Harvey Relief. The Moravians will also be helping with the rebuilding.

The minutes of the Spring 2017 meeting were approved. The Financial Secretary's Report included the following account balances: Foreign Mission: \$48,665.73 (need \$24,334.27 to meet the budget); Home Missions: \$48,726.87 (need \$9,273.13 to meet the budget); Hurricane Relief Fund: \$52,358.00. Convention mileage donated back to Hus Building Fund totaled \$2,043. The Treasurer's Report included the following: The fund balance is \$243,246.79. The current savings balance: \$150,000 in a CD at CNB-Taylor. The current checking: \$93,246.79 at CNB-Taylor. It was noted that the Contingency Fund transfer

for the Hurricane Relief Fund was not reflected in this report. The Youth Director Report was given by Jennifer Chervenka.

All items of the Referendum passed. The motion to accept the results was approved. The Catechism will be ready for the Spring Synodical Meeting. Rev. Linda Chandler installed the new officers.

President: Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky
1st VP: Rev. Mark Sebek
2nd VP: Kayla Marek
3rd VP: Rev. Whitney Amos
Secretary: Angie Hairrell
Financial Sec.: Rev. Joe Emerson
Treasurer: Lynette Urbanovsky
Ministerial Alt.: Rev. Tim Chaplin
Lay Alternate: Wiley Marx

Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky assumed leadership of the meeting. Outgoing officers were thanked for their service: Kent Laza, Harvey Treybig, Liz Ripple, Rev. Mike Groseclose.

Rev. Brad Herridge was accepted as an Associate Pastor in the Unity of the Brethren. He will serve the Ocker



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December 31st

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Thoughts about giving...

Remembering the Unity of the Brethren or any of its ministries is a fitting testimony of your belief. Your gift in a will can be a legacy that continues to affect the Christian values, mission, and ministry that is important to you.

You can give without restrictions and let us use the funds for the most pressing needs or you can specify how, when, or where you want the funds used.

You can require that we hold the principle as an endowment and use only the earnings each year.

You can give in memory or in the honor of someone.

Your gift can be contingent. The funds go to someone if they survive you and if not, then to the Unity.

You can tell us now that you have named the Unity in your will and allow us to express our gratitude...or you can let it be known later.

There are many other ways to give. Contact any Board of Grants and Bequests member about what you can give and how you can give.

Leroy Parthum, Chair – Westheimer – 713-826-7993;
betty_parthum@yahoo.com

Eugene Haisler, Secretary – Ocker – 254-985-2316, dmheeh@msn.com

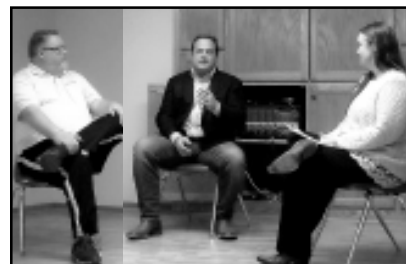
Ron Tyson, Treasurer – Houston – 281-373-4376 (home),
rdtyson1@hotmail.com

Lynette Urbanovsky, Unity Treasurer - Synodical Liaison – 4050
Pendleton Dr., Apt. 628, Bryan, TX 77802; (979) 450-1820;
lurbanovsky@gmail.com

Alan Tomasek – 512-859-2197, amtomasek@thegateway.net

congregation. Ryan Volkman, currently serving Wall Brethren as the Youth and Family Ministry Director, was accepted as a Ministerial Student. Ben Druse and Lisa Johnson were both granted 1-year license renewals. Rev. Kay Polasek is now pastor of Dime Box and continues to co-pastor in Cade Lake. Rev. Joe Emerson is now serving as pastor of the Fayetteville and Industry congregations.

The Foreign Mission Board budget of \$73,000 was approved, along with permission to have the board in place by January 1, 2018. The Home Mission Board budget of \$58,000 and the following list of new board members were approved: Marvin Chlapek, Alton Urbanosky, Beverly Mikeska, Tillman Clark, Rev. Linda Chandler, Beth Dusek, Martha Dove, Chair. The membership of the Christian Board of Education was approved: Peggy Hejl, Chair, Jennifer Chervenka, Rev. Whitney Amos, Debbie Clark, Angie Hairrell, Crystal Dusek, Vanessa Mitchell, Sandra Mertz. The Minister's Benefits Committee was approved: Roy Vajdak, Liz Ripple (appointed), Rev. Dr. Koslovsky (ex-officio), Rev. Mike Groseclose, Rev. Jimmy Hejl, Rev. Tim Chaplin, Rev. Joe Emerson. Clint Machann was approved as the Unity Archivist. Stacey Hooker and Dorothy Milberger were approved as



The Brethren Journal Secretary/Reporter and Treasurer. The Hus Encampment Board of Trustees was approved: Todd Corporone (Treasurer), Todd Snelgrove, James Marek, Rev. Tallas, Rick Weiss, Jennifer Chervenka, Tami Laza.

The Synodical Committee approved \$200,000 from the Board of Grants & Bequests to be used as seed money for the Hus Encampment Building Program.

Rhonda Johnson announced the New Tabor and Life of Love Ministries "Campfrence" to be held January 26-28, 2018. Rev. Dr. Koslovsky reminded ministers to get in quarterly reports. Liz Treybig announced their Veteran's Day program November 5 at 9 a.m. Rev. Lawrence Junek asked the group to pray for Epiphany (youth prison outreach).

The Spring Synodical Meeting is set for March 3, 2018. The fall meeting will be in September.

The meeting was adjourned with a benediction by Rev. Dr. Koslovsky.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Hairrell, Secretary
Unity of the Brethren

Knesek Family Funeral Chapels



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Jesus' Gift

- by Rev. Vanessa Mitchell

What losses have you experienced in 2017?

What challenges have you faced?

What struggles do you still feel unable to shake?

Before long the year will come to a close.

What has taken your heart and mind captive, wrapped in despair, in angst, in fear, or in sadness?

What has kept you at arm's length or even farther from God at times?

It would be great to arrive at New Year's Eve and make a resolution to forget all the difficult times of 2017, but mere self-determination – as we all know – does not compare to being filled with the power of God the Holy Spirit. Remember Jesus' words to His disciples, to you and to me, in the Holy Bible, in the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 22-27 (NRSV):

Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal Yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home

*with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me. I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But **the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.***

You feel how much God loves you when you keep His word.

You feel how much God loves you when you do not follow His word, but because you love Him, you try again.

God is looking for you to never give up.

God is looking to make His home within your very being.

Will you give Jesus another chance to fill you with His peace, to teach you what you need to know, to give you according to His extravagant holiness?

TAYLOR BRETHREN CHURCH

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 351, Taylor, TX 76574
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<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Board President</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>James D. Hejl</i>	<i>Buddy Michna</i>	<i>Mary Kokes</i>
<i>512-365-6890</i>	<i>512-365-1621</i>	<i>M-Th 8 a.m.-noon</i>

Hus Encampment Capital Building Campaign Pledge Form:

Please accept this joy-filled pledge.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

3-Year Pledge: ☐ \$100,000 ☐ \$50,000 ☐ \$25,000 ☐ \$15,000

☐ \$10,000 ☐ \$7,500 ☐ \$5,000 ☐ \$2,500 ☐ \$1,500

☐ Other _____

Amount Enclosed: _____ ☐ Check # _____ ☐ Cash

(Please make checks payable to: "Hus Encampment Building Fund")

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard Credit Card # _____

Exp. _____ Security # _____

Remaining Amount: \$ _____ to be paid over the next

☐ 12 months ☐ 18 months ☐ 24 months ☐ 36 months

Monthly Payment Amount: \$ _____

☐ Please charge my credit card monthly ☐ Please bill me monthly

☐ Please use electronic funds transfer from my bank acct. monthly:

Bank Name _____

Routing # _____ Account # _____

☐ The Hus Encampment may list my name and pledge amount in written materials when giving thanks to donors.

Signature: _____

Mail donation to:

Todd Corporon, Hus Board Treasurer
210 Phillips Street, Hutto, Texas 78634

Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

The Lord is Good

- by Rhonda Johnson

Psalm 85:5 "For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You."

There are things about our heavenly Father we need to have settled in our minds and hearts. Among them are the facts that God is good, and He is holy. When I began to realize in a new way and at a deeper level that God is good – it changed the way I anticipated life to play out. When I realized I could trust The Lord with every detail of my life, and no matter what happened He would ensure that good would come from every situation, I began to relax. Dread, fear, and an anticipation of what bad thing was going to happen next subsided as I learned to trust The Lord.

Recently, The Lord began showing me how the very negative and explosive atmosphere of my childhood home, caused by my mother's fits of rage, had actually trained me to be very sensitive and skilled in certain areas. I was shocked! I didn't know anything good had come from these events of unbridled anger and selfishness. Yet, The Lord had taken something utterly paralyzing and

showed me how during these episodes of verbal violence He had created in me an ability to listen to people. This ability enables me to minister in a special way. Just as Joseph said to his brothers in Egypt, "What the enemy meant for harm, God has used for my good" (see Genesis chapter 50). To know this dysfunction yielded something good was a huge triumph to me. I felt like I had won! The Lord had taken something my sister and I would classify as *devastating* and He created something from it that was good. It took 52 years for me to see good from shattering and tragic circumstances, but it was there.

If you're struggling to see the good in a situation or to realize that The Lord truly is good, you need to know *it's too early*. All things haven't been factored into your circumstances; God isn't finished working. Philippians 1:6 says "...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion..." Trust Him. As you follow Jesus and trust in His ways He will complete what He started in you. Then, you will see the end result does contain goodness from The Lord.

To communicate with the Hus Encampment...

... regarding scheduling* of meetings or events there, contact:

Kent Laza
4913 FM 166
Caldwell, TX 77836
(979) 220-1957
Kent.laza@verizon.net

*This must be done well in advance.

HUS ENCAMPMENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman: Kent Laza (2017),
(979) 220-1957

Treasurer: Todd Corporon (2016),
210 Phillips St., Hutto, TX 78634;
(512) 922-9292;
toddcorporon@yahoo.com

Members:

Todd Snelgrove, BCS (2011);
rtsnelgrove@gmail.com
Tami Laza, BCS (2015), 4913 FM
166, Caldwell, TX 77836;
tami.laza@verizon.net
James Marek, Taylor (2017);
james@cnet.net
Rick Weise, Wall (2017);
rick.weise@cosatx.us
Rev. Tommy Tallas (2017), (325)
656-8558; rev.tjt@gmail.com
Jennifer Chervenka, Ocker (2017),
(254) 983-1002; jennchervenka@farm-market.net

The Encampment is governed by a Board of Trustees of 8 members.

Terms: 2 years, may be re-elected/re-appointed for a maximum of 4 terms or 8 years (Unity of the Brethren By-Laws, Article XIV, Sec C, Par.4).

Non-Voting Appointments:

Programming Director: Amy
Snelgrove
agsnelgrove@hotmail.com

Unity Youth Coordinator: Jennifer
Chervenka; jennchervenka@farm-market.net; (254) 983-1002

Facilities Manager: Jim
(TxNFish@aol.com) & Dawn
(DMBaletk@gmail.com) Baletki;
(979) 693-2710; 3501 Kanati Cove,
College Station, TX 77845.

Caretakers: Robert
(rschlechte@hotmail.com) &
Cathleen (schlechte86@msn.com)
Schlechte; (979) 324-5560 or
(979) 255-8266.

Synodical Committee

Oversight: Rev. Whitney
Amos.

Hus Encampment Address: 3635
County Rd. 225, Caldwell, TX 77836;
(979) 272-8176.

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DAILY BIBLE READING GUIDE

Daily Morsels for December 2017

Dorothy E. Kocian

with Mari-Anne Kocian Gordon

All Scripture from the New International Version

1. O Lord, you have searched me and You know me. Ps. 139:1
2. My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high. I Sam. 2:1
3. **My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Lk. 1:46-47**
4. Abraham believed the Lord, and it was credited to him as righteousness. Rom. 4:3b
5. The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of His unfailing love. Ps. 33:5
6. This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. Ps. 118:24 (ESV)
7. Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens; Your faithfulness to the skies. Ps. 36:5
8. Praise the Lord, Who has given rest to His people. I Kings 8:56a
9. The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. Isa. 40:5a
10. **The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Ps. 19:1**
11. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. Jn. 1:14a
12. The Lord watches over all who love Him. Ps. 145:20a
13. Come and see what God has done. Ps. 66:5
14. Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds!" Ps. 66:3a
15. Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt His name together. Ps. 34:3
16. The mighty One has done great things for me – holy is His name. Lk. 1:49
17. **Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise. Ps. 48:1a**
18. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths. Prov. 3:6 (NKJV)
19. It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. Lam. 3:26
20. The Lord delights in His people; He crowns the humble with salvation. Ps. 149:4 (NHEB)
21. Serve your God and hold fast to Him. Deut. 13:4b
22. Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. II Peter 3:18a
23. God has surely listened and heard my prayer. Ps. 66:19
24. **The Lord is good to those whose hope is in Him. Lam. 3:25a**
25. A Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord. Lk. 2:11
26. Shout for joy, O heavens,... for the Lord comforts His people. Isa. 49:13a
27. Revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You. Ps. 85:6
28. Sing to the Lord for He has done glorious things. Isa. 12:5
29. Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in His ways. Ps. 128:1 (NASB)
30. The Lord is the true God; He is the living God, the eternal King. Jer. 10:10a
31. See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God! I Jn. 3:1

PLEASE JOIN US AS WE

*"Bear ye one another's burdens
And so fulfill the Law of
Christ." (Gal. 6:2)*

THE MUTUAL AID SOCIETY

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Daniel Vojtek, Vice-President
Natalie Outlaw, Gen. Secretary
Ruth Ann Wuensche, Treasurer
Dorothy Hinson, Jr. Dept. Secretary
Ann Sebesta, Board Member
Synodical Liaison: Kayla Marek, 2nd
Vice President

Every commandment, every precept, every law, every statute the Lord intends for us to follow is because He is good, and He knows the unseen road ahead of us. His commandments protect us, His precepts guide us, His laws give us structure and order, and all His ways are good *for us*.

Ask the Lord to help you see that He is good, and His mercy truly endures forever. There is life, strength, and rest when we trust in the Lord's goodness.

Love, Rhonda

Rhonda Johnson
Life of Love Ministries



To subscribe to weekly email devotions email me at:
RhondaJohnson@liveoflove.co
www.thelifeoflove.org

CHRISTIAN SISTERS' UNION OFFICERS

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(210) 244-3362;
bfsinc@tconline.net

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awotipka58@gmail.com

Financial Secretary: Lydia Faust, P.O. Box 125, Snook, TX 77878.
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lydiavajdakfaust@gmail.com

Treasurer: Linda Planka, (632) 335-2248 or (713) 472-3192;
mslindaj47@yahoo.com

Synodical Committee Liaison:
Rev. Whitney Amos, 3rd Vice President



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- Life Insurance
- Annuities
- Family Activities
- Community Involvement
- Youth Activities and Camp
- Scholarships
- Vestnik weekly newspaper

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Commissioned to Love



Ladies Campference

***Presented by: Life of Love Ministries
and New Tabor Brethren Church***

January 26-28, 2018

Registration \$50.00

At HUS Camp, Caldwell, TX

Find Registration Information at

**TheLifeofLove.org or
NewTaborChurch.com**

SAVE THE DATES . . .

January 6-7, 2018 – BYF Winter Retreat at the Hus Encampment.
Registration deadline December 15, 2017.

January 26-28, 2018 – Ladies' Conference at the Hus Encampment.
(See flyer in this issue!)

February 17, 2018 – Seaton Brethren Sausage Supper Fundraiser.
(See invitation in this issue.)

February 24, 2018 – State Children's Rally at Hus Encampment.

2018 Summer Camp Dates:

ENCOUNTER

Ages 7-8 years old

Camp Cost: \$250*

Camp Dates: July 8-10

ALPHA

Ages 9-10 years old

Camp Cost: \$350*

Camp Dates: June 10-14

PIONEER

Ages 11-13 years old

Camp Cost: \$350*

Camp Dates: June 17-22

DISCOVERY

Ages 14-15 years old

Camp Cost: \$350*

Camp Dates: June 24-29

CHALLENGER

Ages 16-19 years old

Camp Cost: \$350*

Camp Dates: July 1-6

HUS SCHOOL

Not offered in 2018.

**For more information about the Hus School Encampment go to:
www.huscamp.org**

Does your church/organization have an activity that you would like to include in this listing? Please send activity information including a contact name, phone number, and/or email address to the Brethren Journal Editor at: editor.brethrenjournal@gmail.com. Information must be received by the first day of the month immediately preceding the month of publication.

Schedule and Details of Upcoming Unity Activities

****December 2, 2017 – “What Child is This” Cantata Honoring the Birth of Christ** at Caldwell Brethren Church. The performance will begin at 6:30 p.m., with a fellowship meal to follow.

****December 8, 2017 – “What Child is This” Cantata Honoring the Birth of Christ** at Snook Brethren Church. The performance will begin at 6:30 p.m., with a fellowship meal to follow.

December 16, 2017 – “Hey! Day” for College Students and Young Adults.

December 17, 2017 – Industry Brethren Church Christmas Service at 3 p.m. with Pastor Joe Emerson (candle light). (No service on Sunday, December 24, at Industry.) (Fayetteville will not have services on December 17.)

December 24, 2017 – Fayetteville Brethren Church Christmas Service at 6 p.m. (candle light). Fayetteville does not have morning services on Sunday, December 24 (only evening).

****Date or time has changed for this activity.**

DON'T FORGET!...

December 31, 2017 – Your *Brethren Journal* Subscription expires!
Don't forget to send in your renewal!

HOUSTON BRETHERN CHURCH

6207 North Main, Houston, TX 77009 – (713) 864-6707

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO WORSHIP WITH US
Sunday School 9:15 a.m. – Church Service 10:30 a.m.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jerry L. Terrill

Dorothy Hinson
President

7331 Misty Morning Lane
Humble, TX 77346
(281) 620-0480

John David Skrivanek
Secretary

P.O. Box 1605
Bellaire, TX 77402
(713) 626-0522

Caldwell Brethren Fellowship Luncheon

Loving being together and welcoming new friends at our November Fellowship Luncheon! Thank you, Jesus, for continuing to bless us with everything that we need, especially the gift of You.



The Sermon on the Mount and the Ancient Unity

- by Jim Pokorny

As my class continued its study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*, one thing became very clear. Bonhoeffer set great store on the Sermon on the Mount. So much so that he devoted an entire section of his book composed of 15 chapters to these words of Christ. Along the way Bonhoeffer, figuratively speaking, holds up a finely polished mirror for the reader to gaze into. A mirror which uncomfortably reflects virtually every shortcoming. Understanding the turbulent times in which Bonhoeffer lived and the decisions he made as a result led me to believe that Bonhoeffer studied his own reflection in that same mirror while he wrote his classic, and again later while a prisoner of the Nazi regime.

As I studied Bonhoeffer's words concerning The Sermon on the Mount, I could not help but reflect on the history of the Ancient Unity and the impact the Sermon on the Mount had not only upon its theology but the daily lives of its members, as well. My purpose here is to reexamine that

portion of our collective history and discuss the impact those words of Christ had upon it in a world which was very much in a state of flux. These seeds were sewn well before the Unity came into being with Jan Hus, who was martyred in 1415.

Not long after the martyrdom of Hus, leadership of the Utraquists fell to a man named Jan Rokycana (1390-1473) who was elected Utraquist archbishop in 1435. In 1448, a Hussite noble named George Podebrady ascended the throne as king of Bohemia. This was a tremendous victory for the Utraquists. After Podebrady took charge of the government in Prague, Jan Rokycana began preaching from the pulpit of Tyn Church in the Old Town section of Prague. Church historians have not been entirely fair in their assessment of Rokycana. In truth, he played an important role in the origins of the Ancient Unity and even transmitted the teachings of Jan Hus to them. His fiery sermons inspired his nephew Gregory and a group of other young men to take Christian

MAKE YOUR OWN CANDY CANES!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon peppermint or spearmint extract
- 6 drops red food coloring

DIRECTIONS:

Grease two baking sheets with butter; set aside. In a large saucepan, bring the sugar, water, corn syrup, and cream of tartar to a boil. Cook, without stirring, until a candy thermometer reads 280° (soft-crack stage).

Remove from the heat; stir in extract and food coloring. Immediately pour onto prepared pans in eight 8-in. strips. Let stand just until cool enough to handle, about 1-2 minutes.

Working quickly, roll each strip into a 10-inch log. Cut each into two 5-inch lengths. Curve the top of each to form the handle of a cane. Cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: 16 canes.

Links for additional activities:

Mini Book with the Story of the Candy Cane: <http://www.christianpreschoolprintables.com/wp-content/uploads/CPP/BibleMinibooks/CandyCaneMinibookPack.pdf>

Candy Cane Poem printable: Attach a candy cane to the poem and have children pass out at church or to family and friends. <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B9KXCi8jmCeBZmY3MGI5OTEtZjdmYi00Y2NlWEwZTEtNTE3YzYxMzhhMjNm/edit?pli=1>

Check out the blog and for more ideas and links!

<http://sundayschoolhelperbrethrenjournal.blogspot.com/>

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The Legend of The Candy Cane

You can use the information below to tell the story or use *The Candymaker's Gift – The Legend of The Candy Cane* by David Haidel.

According to the legend of the candy cane, this candy was first created in the 18th century. At that time, in certain areas of Europe there was said to be a ban on public displays of Christianity. No Bibles or crosses could be owned. One man found this oppression distressing and wished he could share the love of Jesus and the joy of Christmas. Children didn't get to see nativity scenes or enjoy learning about the truth of Christmas. As a candy maker, this man prayed to find a way that he could offer local children a Christmas gift that would tell the true meaning of Christmas. His prayer led to The Candy Cane.

- **The Shepherd's Staff:** He chose to make the candy cane in the shape of a shepherd's staff. Jesus is the shepherd to His followers, and the Bible notes that the "sheep" would hear His voice and follow Him (*Psalms 23:1, John 10:11, John 10:27-30, Isaiah 40:11*).
- **The Letter J for Jesus:** Not only was the candy cane in the shape of a staff, but when held upside down, it formed a "J," which stood for Jesus (*Luke 1:31, Matthew 1:21*).
- **He is A Rock:** The candy maker chose hard candy for the candy cane, which was done to remind children that Jesus was our "rock," dependable and strong (*Psalms 31:3*).
- **By His Stripes:** Wide red stripes on the candy cane represent the crucifixion and the blood Jesus shed for our sins.
- **Red – His Shed Blood:** Through His blood, we are given salvation and life (*Revelation 1:5, John 3:16, Luke 22:20*).
- **White – Purification from Sin:** The white stripes on the candy cane represent the holiness and purity of Jesus (*1 John 1:7*).
- **Sweet Fragrance of Christ:** Peppermint was very similar to hyssop, which was used for sacrifice and purification in the Old Testament. It also reminds us of the spices brought by the Wise Men when they came to visit Jesus (*Psalms 51:7, John 10:29, Matthew 2:11*).
- **Broken For Us:** Of course, when the candy cane is eaten, it is often broken, which the candy maker meant as a reminder that when Jesus was crucified, His body was broken (*1 Cor. 11:24*).
- **Love of Christ:** The candy cane was made to be given as a gift, representing the love of Jesus when He gave us the gift of salvation.



living more seriously. They often wrote down Rokycana's words and discussed them later among themselves.

Rokycana stated repeatedly that true Christians in all times and all places could be identified by their love for God and their love of neighbor. While the Ten Commandments formed the basis of this, Rokycana also stressed the importance of the "six smaller commandments" Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount...

1. Do not respond to violence with violence.
2. Do not divorce your spouse.
3. Do not swear oaths.
4. Do not be angry without cause.
5. Do not look lustfully at someone.
6. Love your enemies.

The focus on these commandments of the Sermon on the Mount likely originated in Rokycana's conversations with Peter Chelcicky. Chelcicky (c. 1380-c. 1458) was the father of modern pacifism. The writings of Chelcicky influenced Leo Tolstoy, whose writings in turn influenced Gandhi. Chelcicky was either upper peasantry or lower nobility and was prosperous enough to pursue both education and writing. He likely heard Hus preach, and even spoke with him

in 1412 about the Eucharist. He remained an independent thinker.

Chelcicky believed in the separation of Church and State, and in his mind the concept of a Christian monarch was nothing less than a contradiction in terms. Chelcicky reasoned that Christ had abolished the old law with His new covenant. According to Chelcicky: "If He had wanted people to cut each other up, to hang, drown, and burn each other, and otherwise pour out human blood for His Law, then that Old Law could also have stood unchanged, with the same bloody deeds as before." How, he questioned, could one forgive in the name of Christ while still wielding a sword?

Chelcicky affirmed the idea of the six smaller commandments of the Sermon on the Mount. He relied almost exclusively on the ethics of his arguments rather than reasoning them out. Although he never pastored a church, the Ancient Unity relied heavily on his ideas when it came into being. Even after his treatises had been set aside, Chelcicky's ethics remained woven into the fabric of the Unity.

Rokycana was undoubtedly im-



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pressed with Chelcicky's sense of morality and pacifism. His preaching on the six smaller commandments of the Sermon on the Mount was influenced by Chelcicky. It was Rokycana who introduced Gregory and his circle to Chelcicky's main writings including *The Net of Faith*. These they studied carefully.

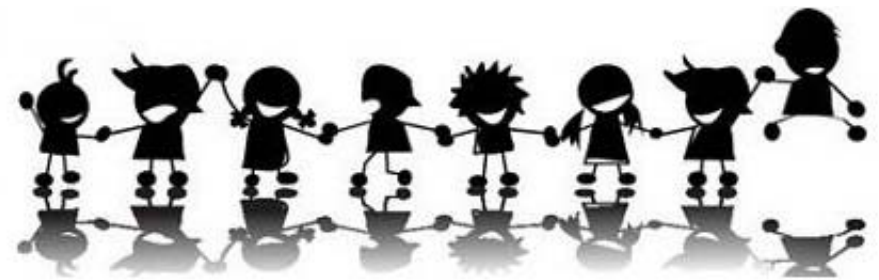
After reading Chelcicky for themselves, they determined that it was time for them to separate themselves from the evils of the world. With both Rokycana's assistance and the king's permission, Gregory and the others established a community in the village of Kunwald most probably in 1458 (although 1457 is frequently cited).

A Waldensian preacher grew quite close to Gregory and his community. This preacher, like Hus, was burned for his beliefs. It was this event that prompted Gregory and those with him to forever separate from the state church. At a synod held in Rychnov in 1464, the community was formally organized as "The Brethren of the Law of Christ". In 1467 the Unity looked within its own ranks and established a new priesthood. This new church was not only separate, it was illegal. Gregory remained a layman

until his death in 1474, which says a great deal about his personal humility. For his role in founding the Unity, history remembers him as Gregory the Patriarch.

The Unity endured a great deal, including a schism between the Major Party and the Minor Party. This was due in large part to the influence of Luke of Prague and the synod of Rychnov in 1494. As a result, there was a transition from a complete renunciation of the world to a desire to live a better life. The Unity would maintain strict discipline, but it would no longer turn away the weak. In fact, special measures would be taken to help those who were weak in faith. These changes were controversial and would remain so for centuries. The Unity learned what others had already learned; it was almost impossible to live according to the Sermon on the Mount in a fallen and temporal world.

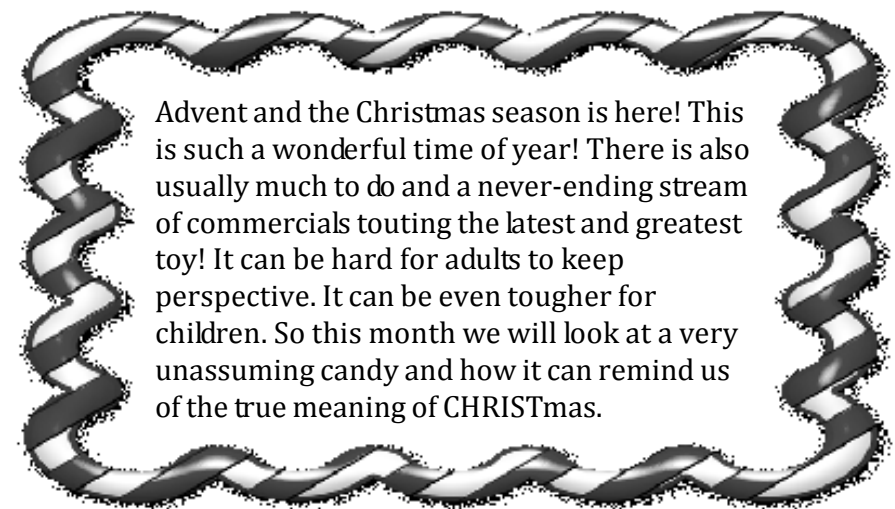
The Unity's ethics were based on the Sermon on the Mount. As it dealt with other churches in a socially changing landscape, the Unity's theology remained both clear and consistent. Even so, it successfully adapted to ever-changing historical



Sunday School Helper

When they saw the star, they Rejoiced.

Matthew 2:10



Advent and the Christmas season is here! This is such a wonderful time of year! There is also usually much to do and a never-ending stream of commercials touting the latest and greatest toy! It can be hard for adults to keep perspective. It can be even tougher for children. So this month we will look at a very unassuming candy and how it can remind us of the true meaning of CHRISTmas.

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the confidence to consider this a church, or to consider himself a leader. The pastor of Cochapa wants to help Cirilio in Valley of the Fly, but he can't make it there regularly to lead worship. Isaul recognizes this is a poor model anyway – where one pastor travels to another place to pastor that church, while there is a biblical elder-type (as described in Titus and I Timothy) available and willing. It's an old tradition, that he is discouraging, of creating "missions" rather than churches that tends toward passivity rather than native leadership.

And so the fifth Mexican chain of pastoral training using *Train & Multiply* is finally planned for Guerrero, under Isaul's capable mentorship of Florentino in Cochoapa and on to Cirilio in Valley of the Fly. This is a very long-standing prayer (25 years later!) finally answered, that we would be able to help the Metlatonoc Mixtecs with pastoral training in their own area, by and for their own leaders, with mentoring in their own language.

We had done this long ago with Alfonso from Yuvinani, and we have a number of the studies that we translated and printed for him in Mixtec. But when Alfonso left for the US, the training stopped. Now it begins again, inspired by a humble man in a place called Valley of the Fly.

We travel next week to Peru to continue mentoring the three chains of local leaders among the Mennonite Brethren church there. On the way we will stop in Panama and visit a few of the indigenous leaders of the MB work there. We will spend time with these good friends dialoguing about pastoral training among their people, too. In all these cases the potential leaders that we hope can be trained are people that don't fit in the normal avenues that the broader Church has available, yet they are exactly the kind of leaders that Paul developed in the NT record that we have. Pray for them, mostly, and for our input to find fertile ground.

Blessings, Anne

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circumstances. From Gregory to Comenius, the Unity expressed its faith in more sophisticated ways, but it still held to several core convictions.

One such conviction was that emphasis should be placed on right action rather than right belief. This was a direct result of basing its ethics on the Sermon on the Mount. In this, the Unity disagreed with Luther, who placed emphasis on the Epistle of James, which stated that faith without works is dead. The Unity clung to its identity despite criticism from both Catholics and other Protestants.

Another profound conviction held by the Unity was that it was necessary to distinguish between those things that were essential to salvation and those things that were ministerial. The Unity believed that the essentials were the work of the Trin-

ity – the Father creates, the Son redeems, and the Holy Spirit makes Holy. Also essential was how human beings were to respond. Man's response must have its foundation rooted in faith, hope, and love. This was perhaps the Unity's greatest contribution to Christianity. This also allowed it to adapt to a constantly changing world.

The Unity also searched continuously for sounder doctrine. It held that no individual church, not even its own, could come up with a single definitive statement of faith for all time. In fact, the Unity generated many documents that can each be considered confessions of faith. This continuous search for truth was inspired by Jan Hus whose life we continue to celebrate. The Unity un-



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derstood that as it moved through the course of time it would gain new insights. As result its teaching, by necessity, would have to change, as well.

Another of the Unity's core beliefs was held over from the Czech Reformation. It felt that it was imperative to provide scripture in the native language of the people and that same scripture was to be binding upon the church. The Unity made it a priority to develop a definitive translation of the Bible in the Czech language from the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

Education also played a prominent role in Unity doctrine. The Unity published the very first Protestant catechism. It held that confirmation was a profession of faith for those baptized as children. In fact, Luke of Prague wrote a catechism for the Waldensians when he visited them. Its greatest proponent of education was Comenius, who felt that education was for everyone – girls as well as boys. Education would no longer be reserved for the elite. Comenius also changed the ways in which people were taught. He is still referred to today as “the Father of Modern Education”.

Throughout its history, the Unity held that Christ calls His followers to love even their enemies. In times of persecution, the Unity understood that you cannot love someone while torturing or killing them. Christian love, by its very definition, can never be forceful or coercive.

As a result, the Unity was the first truly voluntary church in Western history. Despite pressure from places like Wittenberg and Geneva, the Unity never abandoned this core principle.

It continually held that Christianity must be a visible community of love. This understanding was inspired by both the Sermon on the Mount and the example of the original church – that of Christ and His apostles.

The modern world in which we live seems to grow more fractured and divided with each passing day. If ever the world needed to be reminded of the words of Christ from the Sermon on the Mount, it is now. A word of caution, though – we must make certain that we focus on what Jesus said. It is only too easy to begin debating with ourselves and others as to what He may have meant when He said them.

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In Christ's Love . . . From the Foreign Mission Fields

From the Thiessen's . . .

October 28, 2017

Subject: Valley of the Fly

Dear friends,

I have exchanged the structure of classroom teaching for accompanying Robert on his trips to see indigenous pastors in remote places. On this last trip we went back to Tlapa, Guerrero, where we lived when the kids were born. I haven't been back in 6 years. The riverbed (the *jale*) that divides the town still runs with murky water sliding down from the mountains, and you still walk or drive through it to where the Mixtecs live, but now it is crowded with stalls and vehicles vying for space to do business until the next flash flood clears them out. Our pastor-friend Isaul lives within a few feet of the *jale*. He's built a concrete house there, squatting on land no one has wanted to use until now. This rainy season the *jale* washed away an entire road dividing his neighbor's property from the riverbed, but he is confident it will not affect his own.

Isaul was once our Mixtec language mentor, and he tests my memory to see how much I've forgotten. I think that if I were immersed again, it would come back to me. Isaul's family is from Yuvinani, where we lived be-

fore my kids were born, before the military choppers dropped out of the sky there in search of us (drug or gun runners, or something they thought we were). In this market town, Isaul pastors a church of different Indian groups: Mixtec, Nahuatl, Me'phaa. But he also visits pastors from the Metlatonoc area, mentoring them in their own language. We traveled with him to Cochoapa and met the pastor, Florentino.

As we sat in the evening at Isaul's house, on those plastic wire threaded chairs with the hole in the back, we got to the topic of pastoral training. Isaul had wise things to say. He said that it doesn't work for the Mixtec pastors to leave the area for pastoral training. It did not work to burden them with having to get formal training before starting and pastoring a new group. If they were gifted and called, it was best to give them mentoring and training as soon as they had started gathering and leading a church.

He told us about a place called Valley of the Fly (or Fly Plain if you want the literal translation; though this doesn't have the same ring to it). In Valley of the Fly there is a new believer, Cirilio, who wants to gather a church in his own home, but lacks



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