



Rockville

*As we,
who with unveiled faces
all reflect the Lord's glory,*

*are being transformed into His likeness
with ever increasing glory,*

*which comes from the Lord,
who is the Spirit.*

2 Corinthians 3:18

Reflections

December 2009 Volume 7 Issue 4

Every holiday brings a little extra planning, preparation and a certain "presence of mind," and the upcoming Thanksgiving is no exception. Many of us are blessed with and look forward to spending time with extended family. But it's also a treat to spread the table for foreign students who have no place to celebrate this American holiday. Nate's family has hosted foreign students for much of his childhood, and we have attempted to do the same, except a few years when we visited my family in Indiana.

While it does require that extra preparation, it brings extra interest and interesting memories in return. We have found that most students are delighted to meet an American family and see how they might function; and it's challenging for us to look at the world from their point of view. One man from China commented, "Everything in America is big. Even the dog is big!"

Speaking of perspective, Kuwait is a country not often represented, but in an unusual twist, we hosted a Kuwaiti student during the Gulf War. As I recall, fortunately he was favorable to the U.S.

Another favorite, is hoping the students are willing to prepare an authentic dish, or better yet, a meal, for us during their stay. It's usually downright delicious! Food can also bring humorous memories. I mean, how many ways are there to cook plain, white rice? One year I was serving rice, since I figured they would like that, and the wife of our "family" offered to prepare it for me. After ONE bite, her husband blurted out, "Who cooked this rice? It tastes like Korean rice!"

Hosting students is an unique opportunity to demonstrate what Christianity is all about.

*If
you missed
the opportunity to
host a foreign student
this past Thanksgiving,
keep it in mind
for next year.
Special memories are
waiting to be made!*

Along with widows, and orphans, we are instructed to care for the foreigners among us. Often they are curious about the Amish and Mennonite beliefs and outright ask questions about Christianity. Even if they do not ask, Nate has been faithful to address spiritual needs in some way and hopefully the seed can take root.

It is worth the effort that is required. If anyone has never hosted students before, but is considering it, I would encourage you to just try it. Ask a few questions from other people and take the plunge. I think you'll be glad you did. submitted by Tricia Stoltzfus

*Rhoda Snader
Correspondent*



In Loving Memory of Jonathan Edward Stoltzfus

Silence. Increasingly desperate silence.



The carefully positioned doppler moved, seeking a heart-beat. Nothing but silence- the worst silence of my life. Silence -that snuffed out all dreams associated with life.

Faith needs to leave the land of feelings. In faith I believe the angels carried you from my womb to the arms of Jesus. In faith, I believe that you are incredibly, blissfully happy in a perfect place I can only begin to imagine. In faith I believe I will see you again, and know you as you were fully intended to be. Oh, that our whole family will be there. May the circle be unbroken!

My mind comprehends that you are gone, Jonathan, but my heart is still trying to understand it. While that process is happening, God continues to pour out His love and comfort on us. How Great is the Father's love for us! Yes the Lord gives and the Lord takes away. You were taken from us, and we grieve our loss. But, blessed be the name of the Lord- He gives us spiritual blessings in return. Jonathan, as strange as it may seem to people, I feel God's joy in the midst of the sorrow. I've never enjoyed life more than I do now! What amazing grace!

submitted by Cheryl. photo credit: Thanks to Erinn Howe.

Suddenly the conversation at breakfast that morning no longer applied. The friendly rivalry about who was going to hold you first. Of course Mom would be the first, the kids decided, then Dad, then the argument of who would be the next lucky one. Strangely, this new reality was opposite of "normal." Daddy held you first, Jonathan, and I held you

last, the very last. I don't even know which one of your brothers or sisters held your first. I wasn't there to see it. People were fighting for my life- both in the physical realm



and the spiritual realm. It was the next morning when I held you. I was so weak, I couldn't support you on my own. Marvin showed you to me, and I took comfort in hearing how you were held and loved throughout the night. Jonathan, your body was still warm with love when I held you. I take comfort in that.

Dear Jonathan,

"You've been part of us for such a short time, but you've left a footprint in our hearts even though you've never seen our faces or felt our caresses.

We miss you- but then we look up... up to heaven...up to Jesus... and we know that you are safe in His arms."

(excerpt from Aunt Kate's letter, read at Jonathan's graveside service.)

Jonathan Edward Stoltzfus

August 11, 2009

7 lbs 21 inches long

Trip to Bowery Mission

submitted by Peter Stoltzfus

On October, 18, 2009 the youth group and a few other members of Rockville went to New York to visit the Bowery Mission. This is a trip which I had been looking forward to for quite a while.

After about a 3 hour trip to the Bowery Mission we experienced a very warm welcome from Mr. Maclin and the staff. We were given a tour through the facility, after this it was time for the service. Since the homeless people may only get a meal if they attend the service there were quite a few people in attendance for worship and Pastor Gene's meditation. The musically gifted in our youth group played and sang. It was such a highlight for Mr. Maclin that he kept asking the girls to play more songs.

After the service Mr. Maclin talked to us about the Bowery Mission's work & vision, gave his testimony, and also sang us some hymns. I missed all this because I was one of the five who were able to help serve the meal to the homeless people.

Overall the trip to the Bowery Mission was both fun and enlightening. I definitely came home grateful for the home and family that I have.



While waiting for the turkey to cook
Thanksgiving Day

585 runners participated in festivities of the

5K Turkey Bowl Race (Most of the kids did the 1 mile Fun Run.)

This was the 18th Annual
Benefit Run
for Tel Hai Camp and Retreat.

Pictured are the runners from the
Ranck Family (with Paul's
niece) and the Ed
Waldron Family.





HAVE YOU NOTICED?

*that there have been few months more recently
when the pages in the monthly Reflections have been abbreviated.*

I'm hopeful that maybe some comments along these lines might inspire creative ideas !!

This publication is designed to

- * encourage the believers.
- * be an avenue to report on happenings
- * share with one another our thoughts on the printed page.

If you are involved an church activity. Take a picture of two and submit a few words for a report.

If you go on a Missions Trip. Let us know in writing how God met you there and what you experienced.

Monthly columns like the following list all happened because someone has taken the time to create and/or recruit the submissions for them. Consider if YOU are the one with an idea for a column. Dream a bit.

...**Do You Know...?** We are nearing the end of hearing from those in our congregation. Christina has done such a good job with convincing many of us to put our lives on paper. What column focus might we like to replace this one with?

...**Just Thinking** is a column to hear what others are thinking. Janae solicits these thoughts.

... **Martyr's Mirror** was a series submitted by Herb to encourage our faith.

... **Culture Corner** was a column of art and poems collected by Wilma.

... **Library Lines** is a column to list library updates. Ruby welcomes unsolicited Book Reports.

...**Missions Update** Rhoda scouts out and submits updates on Missions.

DON'T wait to be asked. I'll be hoping to hear from many of you soon.

I am glad for each submission. However I want to remind us that I do have MUCH MORE SPACE available for our enrichment.

MIGHT I HEAR FROM YOU?

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