

MISSION TO AMISH PEOPLE

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Dear Friend,

March 2007

Several weeks ago a friend of mine had to remind me again that we can only see the “small dot” in the circle of life, but God sees the whole picture. This can be *frustrating* and a *relief*, all at the same time—*frustrating* because we would like to make better sense of our predicament, *relief* because God is much better at handling our circumstances. **Isaiah 55:9** FOR AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH, SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS, AND MY THOUGHTS THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.

Well, I hope you both enjoyed and celebrated over all the testimonies that people shared with you in the January 2007 update. The older I get the more I realize that the greatest success stories in life are not about those who strike it rich but rather about people who are serving and following the Lord with all their heart.

To God Be All the Glory!

At the end of 2006, I had the grand opportunity of sitting across the table from two of our faithful *monthly* donors—one a widow, the other a business man. It is often difficult to find the right words of appreciation for our donors and prayer warriors but please know, we are very humbled and blessed by every single one of you. Wouldn't it be great if some day in eternity, all of us could have a reunion, just to talk about all that happened because we did what we could to add more souls to the Kingdom. During 2006, 181 people and organizations gave a total of \$156,047.86 towards the MAP Ministry.

Rachel's Baptism



I had mentioned in our last update that a beautiful testimony was unfolding at the time of our writing—here it is in complete detail. As you know, we handle thousands of Bible lessons every month and often our workers get very attached to the students. The problem is, we are not able to stop by for a face to face visit or even call them. That all changed when we learned that Rachel (a SonLight Club student who lives close by) was getting baptized at her church in January—she had gotten saved after doing a SonLight Club lesson. Some of us were able to go to her church and witness her baptism. Rachel's family had left the Amish several years before.

Rachel shares her testimony with you: *I was at home doing my SonLight Club Bible lesson. It said to ask Jesus to be my Savior, so I did. That is how Jesus got to be my Savior. Don't you just love it! - That's what it is all about.*

The Amish Voice

For more than 3 years I have had this dream of sending an evangelistic newsletter/magazine out to Amish households.



On several occasions we had printing companies give us quotes but somehow it just never worked out. Mostly because my dream was always bigger than our bank account. In January, we mailed our first (8-page) publication out to a mailing list of 1,200 households. In March we added 4,000 more households to our previous mailing list and sent the second edition out. The responses that we have gotten back from recipients who received the Amish Voice, have been mostly positive—*Thank you Lord!* We are trying to be very sensitive that we don't ever come across as if we are attacking the Amish traditions and beliefs but rather, give out the plain and simple truth of the gospel. If the Lord provides, we will continue to send this publication out on a bi-monthly basis. We have some ideas on how this project will eventually be fully supported through the interaction of the MAP Ministry,

local churches and Amish communities around the country—we will share more as time goes along in 2007.

We sure appreciate all the volunteers from a neighboring church who gave us a hand with the folding, taping, labeling and sorting of this publication.



Speaking about Volunteers... We have been so blessed by all the faithful volunteers that come out every week to help us



with the SonLight Club and sometimes a "Thank You" just doesn't seem to go far enough. Recently—Tina, Amber and I paid a limo service for 3 hours to come and give our volunteers a ride on the town. We took them to the Jakes Restaurant

for a nice meal and then on to Friendly's Ice Cream where they were treated to some old fashioned ice cream. To top it all off, we had the Times Gazette come by and do a photo and story for our local community. I am not sure who had the most fun, but this we know, it will be a day that is not soon forgotten.

Benevolent Fund Ministry Coordinators



Don & Rosie are both members of our Advisory/Support Team. In our board meeting last month they were approved to head up a new ministry that we are calling the *Benevolent Fund Ministry*. What this means is, they will design a set of applications, guidelines and processes to help the ones that come to us for immediate and temporary protection, housing and living expenses. Our local Wal-Mart store gave the ministry a \$1,000 grant to get our benevolent fund up and started. If you feel lead, you may designate toward this part of the ministry. Don and Rosie, along with our treasurer will see to it that each dollar is well accounted for.

Last September, the ministry was able to assist Lizzie and her two boys by helping them move from a women's shelter to her own apartment. At first we had to start from ground zero but the wonderful news is, for the past two months she has been able to meet all of her own living expenses.



In January of 2007 we had another situation where a mother and her six children came to our doorstep asking for protection and help with living assistance. We could easily fill a book, if we wrote about all that was involved in this case. The mother was living in an abusive situation and three of the children were in dire need of medical attention. At first we had no choice but to put them up in motel rooms. A week later, Don & Rosie (above) took them in to their own home. Our home church and Christians from abroad, responded to their physical and financial needs.

When the mother had left her community, she had hopes that her husband would follow. But when she realized that he wasn't going to follow her, she decided to go back to the Amish community without letting anyone know. We were advised to notify the law of her abuse situation and did so, but as in most Amish cases, the law would rather let the Amish authorities deal with their own. In this case the Amish authority or Bishop was the abuser.

Just lending a hand



Over the years we have shared our home with more than 100 young people. Some stay for a couple days, others for 6-8 months. Some have even come back for a second round. We do get very attached to some of the ones that stay with us. The Lord has used us as vessels to lead some to Christ and others in marriage vows. In January, JD and his best friend moved into our basement apartment. The friend went back to the Amish but JD stayed. He started going to church and Sunday school with us and then joined my Sunday night Bible study. I started to notice that he was open and searching for this salvation that everyone was talking about. When I sat down with him last night he said, Joe, I have been reading the Bible every night this week, hoping to find salvation and I still haven't found it—I was reminded of Phillip and the Eunuch. Later that night, JD bowed his head and asked for forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. Only the day before I had led Sam and Sarah to the Lord also. They had traveled in from Canada to our area to visit a sister who had recently left the Amish.



March will be a very busy month for us. The Vallowes and I will be traveling to IN for a very special meeting and two church presentations. At the end of March, our family is leaving for an all expenses paid vacation to the Bahamas—We are excited about our time away and we praise God for friends that want to minister to us personally, in that kind of way.

Heb 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering... .. Together, we can do it! Joe for the MAP Team

Advisory/Support Team

Joe Keim (Executive Director)
Ron Graves, Pastor (President)
John Bouquet, Pastor (Vice President)
Mary Lou Yoder (Secretary)

Lynn Shadd/Tina Duffield (MAP Treasurer)
David & Teresa Yoder
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