

MISSION TO AMISH PEOPLE

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Dear Friend,

September/October 2006

Someone once wrote... *In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven. One day our heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of our body - but not the end of you and me. We may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but we are going to spend trillions of years in eternity. This life is only the warm-up act or the dress rehearsal for what is to come. God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity.*

Salvation So Rich & Free

Several weeks ago I took the opportunity to share God's simple *plan of salvation* with a particular person for the second time. When I got all the way to the end, I asked, would you like to personally accept the Lord's payment for your sins and have every single one of your sins erased? I did not get an answer right away so I said, not only could you have all your sins erased but the Bible says when you put your faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you become a new creation, your name is recorded in the Book of Life and you are immediately birthed into God's family. The reply I got back was, Joe, I am just not ready yet.

Even though one said "no" to salvation, six others said "yes" in the past several months. I would like to share at least one of those "yes" stories with you now. It is probably the one that has gripped me the most because it comes from an 81 year old man who I will call Daniel. Daniel first wrote to us in July after someone had given him the booklet, *My Amish Vows: Are they Binding?* and asked if we could help him with some questions he had about salvation and the Amish church he is attending. Since he was from another state I got in contact with our friend Levi who lives about 20 minutes from Daniel's home place and asked if he would help us out. After 3-4 meetings and Bible studies with Levi, Daniel bowed his head before the Lord and put his trust and faith in Him alone for salvation. Several days later Daniel's daughter also put her faith in Christ alone for salvation.



In late August I was given the awesome privilege to meet Daniel face to face. After several hours of Bible study, Daniel looked up with tears in his eyes and said, *"for the past 60 years I have taught my children and grand children that in order to go to heaven they have to trust and live out the traditions and ordinances of our forefathers in order to go to heaven and now I am finding out that I was wrong all along"*. Please pray for this father and daughter because I believe that at least one of them was going to get excommunicated on Sunday.

Preaching & Singing

This photo was taken in our own back yard. It was the night that six men and women from Africa stopped by to sing and preach to our prayer group. It was also the night that 3 people raised their hand for salvation and a handful of others rededicated their lives to God.

We are working on getting another group together to make the 2-week missions trip over to Africa in Feb of 2007.



A New Prayer/Support Team for Sullivan, OH

The very high percentage of young people & couples who leave the Amish do not attend a church and if they do attend, very few go on to become members and settle down where they can use their spiritual gifts in a local ministry. Sometimes this devastates me because I don't know how to turn this trend around. The one thing that seems to be working is our weekly support group meeting. It takes place in the home; it allows us to discuss and pray for the struggles that former Amish people are having and it also gives us an opportunity to encourage people to join and get involved in a local church.



For two years, God burdened my heart to organize a second support group 20 minutes NE of us. In Dec of 05 God clearly brought the Vallowes to us from Elyria and they would spend the next full year, coming to our meetings in Ashland. Then we received a call from the Reeds who live in the very area that we were praying about. They wanted to know how they could become involved in opening their home for a support group. The photo shows where we met

at the Reed home in August to discuss and strategize ways of out reach. After mailing out letters, making phone calls to all the former Amish in the area we had our first prayer/support group meeting on September 5th.

Update on Lydia & Barbara



I am not always that good at following up on previous newsletters but wanted to do that with the two girls living in our basement apartment. They have been staying very busy with their jobs, GED classes and driving lessons—it's hard to keep up with them. A note came in the mail for Lydia a couple weeks ago that read, *Dear Lydia, Your dreams can come true! I received my nursing license a few weeks ago. It's not that hard to accomplish, just a lot of paper work & waiting...Ruth Weaver.* Thank you Ruth for that note of encouragement—the timing couldn't have been more perfect! Our hats are off to all who help with transportation. Not long after our July newsletter went out two family's (one from Missouri and the other from Washington) asked if they could adopt the girls. Lydia's sister Mattie moved in with the girls this month too.

Graduation Celebrations



We knew they could do it! Miriam, Emma and Esther recently celebrated their graduation accomplishments. Miriam and Emma are both supervisors in the restaurant and food businesses. We think they are the best but then that is just us talking. Esther decided at the very last minute that she is going to join the route of her brothers and go to Bible College in KY.

It is obvious to us that those who go after their GED's become a lot more confident of themselves—it shows up in their spiritual and emotional walks in life; it also opens up so many more doors for advancement and achievement.

Meeting in Elkhart, IN

During July and August the ministry received close to 8 or 9 calls from the Elkhart IN area and I finally told myself, if we receive one more call, it must be God's will that I make a trip out there. One pastor even said if you are not out here by the end of August, I will come to see you in OH. In August I spent 3 days in Elkhart and it would take a book to tell you all the good that came out of that meeting but in short 30 people showed up for a Monday night meeting. About half of the group were Amish, some were pastor's and others were business men who employ Amish people. All of us had one goal in mind—how do we get the pure gospel out to people who are so rooted and grounded in religion and traditions. There is only one answer, those of us who have been delivered from death and hell must get serious about prayer and eternity. The Hochstetler's—Levi & Sue (above/left) have been mightily used by God in helping us out with ministry in and around Elkhart. Levi is the kind of fellow that knows how to get people excited and has been passionate about getting more involved with MAP. We have cried together for lost souls many times on the phone and continue to call each other just about every day, just to pray for God to move in the hearts of Amish people.



Hocking Hills Retreat



About 30 of us got away from the daily grind of life and went on a weekend retreat this past weekend, down in southern part of OH. The devotional theme for our weekend was, God send revival to our hearts and lives. On Saturday night a group of us gathered around the campfire and just prayed for God to work in our own lives as well as our families who have not yet accepted the gospel.

Most of the people who went on this retreat were people who have been involved in the prayer meetings and church planting in Mt Gilead.

Here at the Office...



Amber



Marie

In August, the MAP Board made a decision to hire Amber for 20 hrs a week. She had already been involved with the SonLight Club as a volunteer for several years and does a great job and has a heart for ministry.

Also in August one of our very special volunteers (Marie) went on home to be with the Lord. We have missed her very humorous personality—she was one of a kind.

Thank You For Your Highly Valued Partnership

Thank you so much for every prayer and every support dollar you offered to the Lord on behalf of the MAP Ministry. Several people gave the ministry a \$1,000 or more in the recent month and it really helped us out tremendously. I should also mention that over \$2,000 has already been given toward land and a building for MAP. We also have a person that said he would match any gift up to \$5,000. Everyone is of course welcome to join us in giving towards this project if the Lord leads.

Marching on to Zion with you—Joe, Esther, Jonathan & Rachel Keim

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

Lynn Shadd (Treasurer)
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