



Sowing Seeds for Eternity

P.O. Box 128 • 575 US 250 • Savannah, OH 44874 • (419) 962-1515 • MapMinistry.org

Happy New Year, Friend:

—Joe Keim

What an absolute joy and honor it is to serve shoulder to shoulder with you in the battle against Satan and his evil forces. Because we all care for people and love to serve our living Savior, MAP was able to mail out 66,042 Bible lessons to Amish children and adults last year. As a result of God's convicting power, our labor, and prayer, 216 students surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ.



Joe and Esther Keim
Savannah, OH
(419) 651-6813

We appreciate all who sponsor Bible Club students at \$30 a year. Those who sponsor one or more students and provide us with an email address will be added to our list to receive regular student updates and testimonies. The Bible Club has truly been, and continues to be, the most rewarding ministry in which you and I are involved.

Throughout 2016, forty-three individuals and families were helped with housing, jobs, GEDs, counseling, and the many other needs that come with transitioning away from the Amish culture. This does not include the many who reach out to MAP via phone, letter, and email. Compared to five years ago, there are so many more Amish crying out for help. A married family man recently wrote:

...Man-made rules do take precedence over more important spiritual matters such as hate, anger, malice, strife, and such. What does it mean to strain gnats and swallow camels?

How is a good way to leave such a church in a Christian manner without the ill feelings? My older brother left and my dad told me very strictly not to have any interaction with him at all. I said to him: "I am going to because they didn't do anything wrong or sinful. They just left a cult for true Christian religion." My, what a heated

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My Father with My Heavenly Father

—Jonas Yoder



Jonas and Mary Yoder
Princeton, KY
(270) 625-6093

Happy New Year! I hope we are always moving forward and making progress in our lives as we head toward eternity.

Thank you for believing in our family and making our calling and ministry to people possible throughout 2016. I'm sincerely thankful for how the Lord used me to organize the Amish

Awareness Conference at the beginning of the year. It was a big success, with nearly 120 people in attendance.

I continue to work on developing relationships with local Old Order Amish and Mennonite leaders in my home area. Progress, at times, seems to go slowly. However, I was overjoyed this past year to

see several former Amish and Mennonites get more involved in spreading the gospel of Jesus.

We had some tremendous help and progress with our house addition in 2016! One of my goals for 2017 is to finish the addition so that our entire family can sleep under one roof, since our four

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Updates and Goals

—Samuel Girod



Samuel and Polly Girod
Bennington, IN
(419) 631-5162

Greetings. I want to thank you for supporting and praying for the ministry since our last update.

In January of 2016, we set a goal to present MAP in fifteen churches; instead, we ended up with eleven. Now that we have learned a few things along the way and gotten some extra help with calling and scheduling, we

have set our goal for 2017 to twenty churches. Let us hear from you if you are interested in helping us meet our goal.

Another goal we have for 2017 is to raise enough extra funds to send Bible Club lessons to 60 more students each month. At \$30/student each year, that adds up to \$1,800.

A lifelong goal that I want to work on is to continue to get more grounded in the Word of God and to have devotions and study the Word of God every morning with my wife, Polly. I'm learning that this sort of goal is sometimes easier said than done, particularly when you have a family and also run a

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oldest boys are currently sleeping in an apartment in our barn.

We acquired a small piece of property with a building on it that we hope to use this year to sell produce for some of the local Amish families. It would allow us to link and build relationships with the community.

In 2017, I would also like to present MAP Ministry in more churches. If your church is located in or near Kentucky, contact us. We'd be happy to come and share how the Lord is using us and others to reach the Amish with the gospel.

One goal that I had last year was to renew my efforts to reach out to my own parents and family. I made some progress in this area, though it was both a sad and joyous time in my life.

The last couple months were definitely life-changing for me due to the passing of my father. He had been an Old Order Amish preacher for as long as I could remember. He was also an ordained bishop for the past twenty years. He

always maintained a very strict Amish lifestyle. I had a good relationship with him up until the time I got saved and confessed faith in Christ alone for my salvation. From that point on, our relationship was rather rocky.

About a year ago, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. For the next couple months, it seemed that he might win that battle; but then slowly, he began losing. About eight months ago, I began visiting him about every month, hoping and praying for an opportunity to share the gospel with him. I was blessed to be able to spend time with him and to show him that I loved and cared about him, but my efforts to share the gospel with him seemed to be in vain.

In September, he became bedfast due to his intense pain. I began to pray that as my dad was lying there, he would realize there was nothing that he could offer to God of himself—not his works or religion or anything else—only faith in Jesus Christ.

My mom and siblings faithfully cared for him at home during this time. During the last ten weeks of his life, they kept a diary

of daily happenings. I went to visit him on the last Saturday before his passing. When we got there, he was asleep. I began to read the diary that my siblings were keeping. As I read that diary, I found that my prayers had been answered. One day in particular, my brother had written that while he was there visiting, Dad was having a very hard day. He was worried that he would not be able to go to heaven. My brother wrote that Dad began to cry, and simply cried out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" From that point on, he was very peaceful.

God granted me the privilege to be at Dad's bedside when he passed, which was a blessing indeed, as he peacefully slipped away to be with Jesus on Thanksgiving Day. I am very grateful for the testimony my dad left behind and which my siblings recorded. I am praying for opportunities to use his testimony to share the gospel with the rest of my family. I hope that you are all reaching out to the loved ones in your own families who are not trusting in Jesus Christ. We must work now, for one day soon, it will be too late.

—Jonas Yoder

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construction business.

I'm thankful for Rene' Budd, who serves at the MAP office in Savannah, and Ken Rauch from Illinois. They have been helping me out by contacting pastors within a 50-mile radius of Amish communities in Indiana and surrounding states. Ken makes the initial contact, and Rene' mails the ministry packet out to churches who are interested in knowing more about the Amish and MAP. Two weeks after the packet goes out, I follow up by contacting the pastor with hopes of scheduling a church meeting.

I was recently making a follow-up call with the pastor of a nearby church. At first, the pastor was not very talkative. He let me know that he had tried to minister to the Amish for years, but found them to be a very closed group. I listened intently until he was done, and then I told him that I understood and could relate since I had

lived the Amish life for thirty years. The pastor was surprised when he learned that I was former Amish. He seemed much more interested, and we had a heart-to-heart conversation.

In addition to speaking in churches, I recently began discipling some former Amish young men. So far, three have committed to going through the twenty-four lessons of the *ABCs of Christian Growth* study with me.

We have been continuing to take our little Joanna to the Cincinnati Children's Hospital for checkups. Joanna had not been sleeping very well for the past few weeks, but since the doctors determined that Joanna was lacking probiotics, they have been treating her "silent reflex," and Joanna has been



sleeping better. We appreciate all the prayers. Please continue to pray.

During Thanksgiving week, God provided for us to go see my great-aunt Fannie and her husband, Enos, in Florida. When I was a child, I remember my mother talking about her aunt who had left the Amish, but I never dreamed that I would get to meet her. Fannie left the Amish in the 1950s. She is now 91-years old, and she and Enos recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. It was good to hear that after 70 years of marriage, the love of Christ is still strong within them.

We look forward to serving the Lord with you in the coming new year. May God bless you in the new year.

—Samuel Girod

Hot Dogs, Harmonicas, and a House

—Matthew and Debbie



We have great news to share with you! After nearly two-and-a-half years of praying and waiting on the Lord, God blessed and allowed us to buy our “ministry home”! We thanked God and celebrated by having our family, our church family, and even some Amish friends over for homemade ice cream, roasted hot dogs, hot apple cider, and a bonfire. Later that night, we all went into

the house and enjoyed singing praises to the Lord, accompanied by our Amish friends playing the harmonica. God is so good!

At the October Amish Awareness Conference in PA, the Lord spoke to us that we needed to learn German (Pennsylvania Dutch). This was later confirmed by a phone call I had with Fannie Yoder (MAP’s new housemother). We have been able to borrow CDs and books from the library to help us. One of my Amish friends came over to visit and noticed our studies lying on our

homeschool table and asked, “Are you learning to speak German?” I told her we were. She replied, “That would be great if you could speak our language!” That was not the response I was expecting, but that sure made me feel joyful inside. The Lord knows what He is doing. Please pray that the Lord will help us with this new task, as teaching ourselves a new language is not something we know how to do very well. If you would like to contact us, please e-mail us at:

TheSimpleLifeMinistry@gmail.com.

—Matthew and Debbie

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discussion that led to. Needing help and prayers.

Last year, MAP mailed approximately 46,000 copies of the Amish Voice. One of the more popular articles, “My Story,” was written by Emanuel Schrock, a former Amish man from the Schwartztruber sect near our hometown. Years ago, someone gave MAP \$100 and asked us to buy some study Bibles and hand them out to the Amish. We followed through on their request. One of those recipients was a young man named Emanuel, who would go on to write “My Story.” In time, he left his community and went to Bible college in TX. Last year, he graduated, got married, and is now headed into full-time missionary work.

Esther and I took in seven runaways. Two of those young boys surrendered their hearts to Jesus Christ; one followed the Lord in baptism.

For fourteen years, a group of us have met every week at our house for prayer. We pray for our donors, volunteers, board members, missionaries, prayer warriors, each other, and the ones we serve in ministry. We have seen God do some amazing things, and believe the entire ministry is built on prayer.

Esther and I continued weekly Bible studies, did a wedding, spoke in thirty-one churches and two Amish Awareness Conferences.

All year we used the phone lines for weekly

and monthly conference calls. Last year, we added a new ministry called *Sermons by Phone*. Every month Paul switches out six new sermons. Amish people call in, listen to the sermons, and leave messages. The *Sermons by Phone* schedule is advertised in the Amish Voice and covers a variety of topics.

Last October, the board welcomed Jephtha and Fannie Yoder on as houseparents for the *New Beginnings Homestead*. They are planning to move to Ohio in May or June and become involved with MAP. Parts of their property and farm equipment are being sold as I write. Jephtha, also owner of a construction company, will be selling out.

As you can imagine, this has been a huge life change for the Yoders. It has not been easy for them to see past dreams and hard work be handed over to new owners, but the call of God continues to lead and they follow.

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men...And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him (Matt. 4:19, 22).

In December, the Yoders signed up for an online Bible school. Next month they are scheduled to begin their first week of training under *Caring for the Heart Ministries* in Lapeer, MI.

You can encourage Jephtha and Fannie by emailing them at jephtha@mapministry.org and fannie@mapministry.org. Let them both know you are praying for them.

—Joe Keim

Housing and Store Update

We have been working hard to raise funds for *New Beginnings Homestead* and *Beyond Measure Market*. Thank you for trusting us and standing with MAP. Thank you for caring about people. Together, we are building a legacy that will impact lives for Jesus Christ, far beyond our time on earth.

New Beginnings: To date, forty-seven individuals, grant foundations and businesses have gifted a total \$175,086 (\$174,914 is still needed to complete the project).

Learn more at: MapMinistry.org/Ways-We-Serve/New-Beginnings

Beyond Measure: To date, seven individuals have pledged a total of \$310,000 (\$440,000 is still needed to complete the project). Join these seven individuals by pledging an investment of \$25,000 or more for a return of 3% interest. Our prayer and goal is to get started by April or May.

For more information on how you might get involved, call or email us for a packet:

Joe Keim, Executive Director

* (419) 651-6813

* jkeim@mapministry.org

Receiving duplicate mailings?

Please note your correct name and address and return all labels to the address above

Moving?

Please send us the new address.

Not interested in the MAP Update?

Please let us know and we will remove you from the active list.

The Unstoppable Minute Hand

—Joe Keim

The minute hand on the clock reminds me that I'm moving full speed toward eternity—toward the incomprehensible, breathtaking moment when I will come face to face with God, my Creator and Lord. I cannot stop the minute hand! It refuses to turn back!

Then I look around and see multitudes of living, breathing souls wandering the earth in search of true meaning and purpose. They seem lost and blinded to the truth. They seem caught up in manmade religion, social media, technology, and the passing fads of this world. I start thinking, "I have the truth—it will give them everything they're looking for—it's right here in my hand—God's Living Word—it will change their life on the spot and in the forever!"

But then I suddenly realize the harsh facts! The multitudes don't want God's truth. They'd rather eat vomit on the floor than food from the King's table. My heart begins to sink and real deep sorrow begins to flood my soul. "Oh Lord, it's nearly unbearable—I feel so helpless,

and so powerless!" It is then that I am reminded of Jesus when He looked down over the city of Jerusalem—His own people—and proclaimed, *Oh Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* (Matthew 23:37)

These are the thoughts that overwhelm my heart tonight as I write this ministry update.

Esther reminds me, "Joe, you need to get your eyes off the people who aren't going anywhere and place them on the ones who are going somewhere! Think about all the volunteers who continually serve at MAP—the sacrificial donors and prayer warriors. Think about the ones who have surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ and are serving Him with their families." With that thought in mind, let me say thank you for listening to the heart of a missionary who continually and fervently desires to see the world around him get real with God.

—Joe Keim

Keim Family Update

In May, our son-in-law and daughter, David and Rachel, are expecting a baby boy. For now, we know him as Sprout. Esther and I have already decided that we will take all the grandbabies we can get.

At age 26, our son Jonathan decided it was the right time for him to consider having his own family. Lo and behold, the Lord brought a young lady named Havilah into his life. They are seriously in love.

Esther continues to serve the many who stay at our home for long and short periods of time. It's her gift and makes her feel good when people stop by for food and shelter.

As for me (Joe), I have been writing a book about my life and the ministry. It's something I've always wanted to do, but never thought it would happen. In the book, I mostly focus on my father/son relationship, leaving the Amish seven times, surrendering to Jesus Christ, and going into full-time ministry. It should be out in print by mid-2017. More to come.

—Joe Keim



There are various ways you can leave something to continue the Lord's work here when you graduate to heaven:

1. Trusts: Set up a trust that may offer tax advantages and allow you to directly give. Trusts come in many forms, including: revocable, irrevocable, and living.

2. Estate Planning: Choose to name our ministry in your will.

3. Life Insurance: It is often set up so that the premiums are tax-deductible.

4. Annuities: Annuities can be set up so that you keep the principle, while the ministry receives the interest.

5. Trained estate and tax planners can assist you in this area. Thanks for considering how you will be a good steward of God's blessings.

For details, call (419) 962-1515 or email us at Map@MapMinistry.org