

► **CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR MISSIONARIES:** This is the annual reminder for individuals or churches who wish to give monetary Christmas gifts to our EC missionaries. If the missionary serves overseas, it is better to give the monetary gift through either the GMC office or the mission agency with which the missionary serves. Cashing checks overseas always costs the recipient a lot in fees, plus it may open your check to being altered and cashed for a much higher amount than you intended.

► **DO NOT SEND CARDS TO THE GMC OFFICE TO BE FORWARDED TO MISSIONARIES.** If the missionary is in the USA, either permanently or on furlough, then mail the card, check and/or gift directly to them. If you need current mailing addresses, contact Pat at the GMC office for that information. Thanks!

► **A number of our missionaries** are struggling with severe support shortages. If you would like to help them, even with a one-time gift, please contact Pat at the Global Ministries office for a list of needs. You can email to [ecglobal@eccenter.com](mailto:ecglobal@eccenter.com) or call 717-866-7584. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of these needs.

► **PLEASE NOTE** – E.C. Church Center will be closed December 24-26 for the Christmas holiday, and December 31-January 1 for the New Year holiday. Best wishes for a blessed Christmas and healthy, happy New Year to you and yours!

► Congratulations to **Rev. Yoriyoshi Abe**, who was formally ordained as a pastor in the EC Church of Japan last month. Bishop emeritus Rev. Mike Sigman was there as well to participate in the service. Pastor Mike was Yoriyoshi's mentor while he (Yoriyoshi) was a student at Evangelical Seminary in Myerstown and involved in ministry at Grace Community Church in Willow Street, PA.

► Keep **Chris & Debbie Bowers** in prayer as they finish their six months of home assignment in the eastern USA and also Australia, to return with their daughters to their home state of Washington. The Bowers will return after the holidays. Pray that they will be able to adjust quickly back to their busy routines at work and home.

► **Rev. Ken Sears** will also be finishing his home assignment this month. He will leave in mid-December to fly to Texas in order to spend the holidays with his family there, and then leave in mid-January to return to Ukraine. Please keep him in prayer for safety and good health while traveling.

► Congratulations to **Yoriyoshi and Emiko Abe**, who are expecting their second child in early March! Daughter Kanae, who is two this month, is looking forward to being a big sister. Best wishes to all!

► **BJ Whitaker** had the opportunity to speak at an all-church youth event in Tenerife, Canary Islands in October. Afterwards, a young man came up to tell him that God had spoken to him through BJ's words. Praise the Lord!

► **Ed and Val Schubert** finished their furlough at the end of last month and have returned to Honduras. Please keep them in prayer for safety and especially for good health for Val..

► **Beth Grimm** will be spending most of the month of January in Guatemala, testing MK students and developing learning plans for those with learning disabilities. Please keep her in prayer for safe travels and good health during the three weeks she is in country.



## Throwing Stones

**W**hen we were children, and someone called us names, we'd often chant "Sticks and stones may hurt my bones, but names will never hurt me!" The problem was, we were wrong. Names, and labels, can do a lot of damage to people, sometimes as much as physical attacks. The affects and scars can last even longer.

Bullying has become an epidemic in our times, according to sociologists. With the proliferation of social media, people can say vicious things about others and remain anonymous. Ugly rumors can spread faster than weeds in summer, causing pain and stigma for the victims. Sadly, some young people haven't been able to brush off the negative remarks. There has been a marked increase in suicide, especially among those in their teens, due to being bullied online.

Jesus was no stranger to verbal abuse. Due to his birth situation, he probably heard the word 'bastard' whispered behind his back on more than one occasion. After Jesus began his ministry, people in his home town of Nazareth often blew him off, saying "Isn't this just the carpenter's son?" The implication was that Jesus was a nobody just giving himself airs; at best arrogant, at worst, a crazy man. As a result, he could not minister effectively there.

The Pharisees and other religious leaders also had lots of negative things to say about Jesus. He didn't fit the mold for what they wanted in a Messiah, plus he had this annoying habit of pointing out to them (and everyone else) how hypocritical they were. So they whispered lies behind his back, and plotted to get rid of him.

Stoning was a popular form of capital punishment in Jesus' time. Even though the practice of stoning is no longer used, we still throw our verbal missiles at one another, hoping to inflict pain. There seems to be an attitude of extremism in our country today; if you don't agree with me, you're a \_\_\_\_\_. (Fill in the blank with whatever invective you use depending on the issue.) But when the religious leaders dragged a woman caught in adultery before Jesus, arguing that she be stoned for her sin, he responded, "If any of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." (John 8:7 NIV) Sometimes we forget that we're all just sinners, saved by grace.

At this time of year when much of the world celebrates the coming of HOPE in the form of a baby, instead of throwing stones at each other, let's throw up our hands in praise to our God for His great gift, and in prayer for the world which so desperately needs to hear about the Savior.

Pat Strain



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <b>PRAYER NEEDS</b> Rev. Dr. Lalrosiem Songate, principal of Evangelical College of Theology in NE India – training men and women to take the Gospel to surrounding areas	2 <b>Ed &amp; Val Schubert</b> – returning to Honduras after some necessary R&R in the USA	3 <b>Pray for Rev. Th. Janga</b> , field leader of the EC Church of Nepal – complete recovery from dengue fever, protection from hostile forces	4 <b>Cassie Wells</b> – campus ministry at Cedar Crest College in Lehigh Valley – continued prayers for health and more financial support	5 <b>As your churches prepare next year's budgets, prayerfully consider if you can help some of our missionaries facing severe support losses.</b>	6  – Sue Haglund*	7 <b>Rev. Donald Kunkel</b> – retired pastor/missionary living in Idaho
8 <b>PRAYER NEEDS</b> Pray for <b>Rev. G. Abraham Powell</b> , bishop of the EC Church of Liberia – progress in outreach programs	9 Pray for the <b>District Field Directors</b> as they work with the churches in their respective districts	10 <b>Rev. Joe Toy, Jr.</b> – open air ministries in greater Philly area and at large public events	11 Pray for <b>Rev. Kaitinkap Vaiphei</b> , General Director of the EC Church of India – wisdom and vision	12 <b>Dan &amp; Mary Lynne Wills</b> – serving at JAARS Center in Waxhaw, NC	13  – Rev. Dan Moury	14 <b>Jonathan &amp; Kathy Wilson</b> – translators in Papua New Guinea among the Binandere people
15 <b>PRAYER NEEDS</b> <b>Brian &amp; Missy Wagner</b> , teachers at RVA in Kenya, currently on home assignment until next June – praise for family time	16 Pray for <b>Major Josh Metz</b> , chaplain in the U.S. Army, currently serving in Missouri	17 <b>Marcia Hopley</b> – retired missionary living in Philadelphia and active in an inner city multi-cultural church plant	18 <b>BJ &amp; Rachel Whitaker</b> – serving as church planters in Alcora, Spain – pray for wisdom and God's direction	19 <b>Rev. Robert &amp; Bettina Schaeffer</b> – working with LIFE Ministries in NY as well as pastoring in PA	20 <b>Rev. Ken Sears</b> – finishing up his furlough, spending holidays with family in TX before heading back to Ukraine	21 Pray for <b>Rev. Juan Zuñiga</b> , Superintendent of the EC Church of Latin America – plans to expand the EC Church into southern Mexico and beyond
22 <b>PRAYER NEEDS</b> Pray for <b>Rev. Nobuo Abe</b> , Chairman of the EC Church of Japan – vision for outreach to the people of Japan	23 Pray for all <b>those who will be traveling</b> over the holidays, whether overseas or in country, for safety	24 Remember those (missionaries, service people) who will be spending Christmas away from family	25 <b>O Come, O Come Emmanuel!</b>	26 <b>Pray for there truly to be 'peace on earth, good will towards men' in our country and not only this time of year</b>	27 <b>Jim &amp; Janet Stahl</b> – training leaders in oral cultures to accurately share Bible stories with their people	28  – Janet Stahl Pray for the <b>persecuted church, especially in China</b> , which is physically destroying the homes where house churches met
29 <b>PRAYER NEEDS</b> Pray for <b>someone you know that needs Jesus</b> in his/her life, and then be ready to share the Gospel with them	30 <b>Gloria Smethers</b> – serving as a nurse at the AIM Retirement Center in FL	31  – Gloria Smethers As the year ends, <b>thank God for His provision</b> for the past year and dedicate the coming year to His glory	<b>ANNIVERSARIES</b> December 10 – Lamar & Janice Stoltzfus December 12 – Randy & Chris Amberman  *DENOTES RETIREE + DENOTES CANDIDATE		<b>BIRTHDAYS</b> January 2 – Jim Farr * January 2 – Lamar Stoltzfus January 5 – Jim Stahl January 8 – Celia Dick * January 10 – Dan Wills	