News from the Brick

Nettle Creek Church of the Brethren
5352 N. Brick Church Road
Hagerstown, IN 47346

Established 1820

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Eloise Beeson, Secretary
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.
Worship: 10:00 a.m.

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Continuing the Work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

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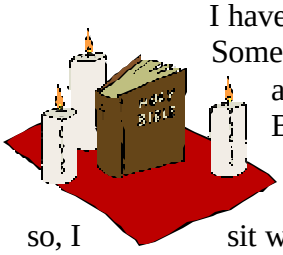
Carol's Comments "A Light for the Journey"

Isaiah 9: 2 *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.*
John 12: 46 *I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness.*
I Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

I like candles. I own lots of candleholders that are of different shapes and styles. I have candles with different scents and colors. Just ask my husband. I seem to be collecting as many different candleholders as I do books. And if you've been around me very long, you know that besides having difficulty staying out of Wal-Mart, I also have trouble staying out of bookstores. I don't know when this candleholder collecting all started. Perhaps it came to light (no pun intended) when I was in seminary. For me, candles are a symbolic reminder of the light of Christ…Christ our light…a light in the darkness. The scriptures give us many references to light. And so I have come to enjoy candles.



I have a habit that I have developed as I come to my personal prayer time. I light a candle. Sometimes it is more than one candle; it's lots of them. Candlelight is warm, inviting, soothing, and chases away the darkness. In candlelight you can only see so far, if the room is dark. But if you move the candle the light goes with you. There is just something peaceful about sitting with a lit candle. Think of all the things for which we use candles: birthdays, worship, prayer vigils, celebrations, Christmas Eve services, peace movements etc. And so, I sit with my candle or candles.

One morning as I sat down to have my personal devotions and prayer time with God, I lit one candle. I have a little table tray that I use. But this tray collects more than my candle or candles. It collects the TV remote, paper clips, pens, mail I need to discard, books, Bible, and yes those chocolate candy wrappers! As I lit the candle, the thought crossed my mind. There is something wrong with this picture—candle in the midst of all this collection of "stuff." There was hardly room for the candle! Now one could interpret this as symbolic of Christ's presence in the midst of all our "stuff" of life and shining above it, which is true. But for me it represented the collection of "stuff" in my life that was crowding out "the Light." Yes, I hardly had room for the candle with all the other "stuff" on this small table. And so I took everything off the tray (I piled it somewhere else). ☺

I then had only the lone candle. Isn't it just like us to crowd so much other "stuff" into our lives that it almost blocks the light? Isn't it interesting that we let the "stuff" keep piling up? Oftentimes it is emotional "stuff", or relationship "stuff", or fear "stuff." Sometimes it is even church "stuff: that blocks the light of Christ. Do we let these other things take priority over God?