

# News from the Brick

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

**Established 1820**



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Dee Reneau, Interim Secretary  
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.  
Worship: 10:00 a.m.

**June/July  
2005**

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

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## ***Carol's Comments***

## **Directionally Challenged**

*Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7: 24*

I am directionally challenged. I can get lost going around the block. I can lose my way in a department store or hospital. When I worked at the Brethren's Home for ten weeks during my seminary training, I started out from my office to make a visit. I ended up back where I started somehow without finding the resident. Now I can use the excuse that it is a confusing building, which it is, but I remember wondering how on earth I could have made a circle. So I tend to ask for directions wherever I am. I'm not too proud to do that, for it saves time wandering around in circles.

You may have heard the story of an elderly Scottish woman who was making her way through the countryside. Each time she came to a crossroads she would toss a stick into the air. Whichever way the stick came down was the direction she went. At one intersection, however, an old man saw her toss her stick into the air not once, not twice, but three times before resuming her journey.

The old man was curious. "Why are you throwing your stick like that?" he asked.

She squinted and replied, "I'm letting God direct my journey by using this stick."

"Then why did you through it three times?" asked the curious old man.

"Because," she said, "the first two times He was pointing me in the wrong direction."

Sometimes we feel like throwing the stick up in the air over and over like the old Scottish woman. We don't like the direction of our lives. We don't like the direction of our jobs. We don't like the direction of our church. You name it. We become frustrated and feel like throwing a stick especially when things don't seem to be going the way WE want it to. Oftentimes we even want to force the direction...determine which way things will go. And, many times that means we are even leaving God out of the picture. Oh, we say we're following God, like the old woman, but we're following our own way and wants and not what God says we need.

Direction can be hard to determine, of course.

So how do we discern the direction God wants us to go? It takes a lot of prayer. Individual and corporate prayer. When we say we are a praying church, we ought to see people getting together to pray together. For "where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst," says Jesus. There is power in numbers. There is power in prayers.

Debra K. Farrington says in *Hearing with the Heart: A Gentle Guide to Discerning God's Will for Your Life* that "If you're more comfortable making the decisions, you might try to rush God or tell him what to do rather than listen patiently and attentively. And if you're a person who likes open options, you might find it hard to settle on a course of action that eliminates other possibilities, even when you've heard God clearly with your heart" (p. 175). Discernment also comes from being in the Word...really study God's message to us...testing our decisions with God's Word.

