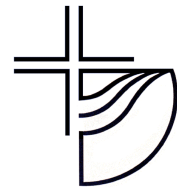


# News from the Brick

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

**Established 1820**



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Jodi Johnson, Secretary  
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.  
Worship: 10:00 a.m.

**May  
2006**

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

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

### **"Watching for the Signs"**

**Matthew 16: 1-4a** *The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah."*



Every spring I tell myself that I am really going to pay attention to the trees and not miss their buds bursting into leaves. Or I'll watch the flowering trees so as not to miss them or the crocus pushing their way through the soil. I want to "catch" them renewing the earth. And each time it seems that I wake up one morning and they are in full bloom. When did that happen without my noticing? It depends on the weather and the warmth of the sunshine whether they are slow or fast in bursting forth with color or leaves. I keep wondering when this miracle took place without my watchful eye. Was I not watching closely enough? It does seem at times as if these budding trees and flowers sneak up on me when I thought I was being very observant. But alas, each year, I am surprised and delighted to see the beauty that bursts forth.

In the scripture passage above, the Pharisees and Sadducees try to watch for the signs of God. In fact, they practically demand a sign from Jesus. They have been right smack dab in the middle of Jesus' ministry and yet want a sign from heaven. Wasn't it enough that Jesus has been coming and going in their midst healing and preaching and bringing hope? Like watching for the buds on the trees or the flowers, the religious leaders wanted to "catch" God in the act in order to figure out what was going on. How did he do it? It didn't seem to be enough to have Jesus in their presence doing God's work. It didn't seem to be enough to rejoice in the healing and teaching that was taking place. It didn't seem to be enough to see lives changed.

Jesus' response was the sign of Jonah. He foretold his death and resurrection, but they didn't understand that at the time. They were too busy trying to be observant so as not to miss anything. Yet they did miss it, because they were looking in the wrong direction. They were being too critical to notice. They were looking for change and yet they were in the midst of it and didn't see it!

As I observe Nettle Creek and ministry taking place, I am reminded of springtime. It reminds me of the buds pushing out of the hard ground. All at once they arrive. All at once the earth has been changed. We are in the midst of change and yet we may not be fully aware. It is happening in small subtle ways. People are working together in planning for events. People are volunteering to work or are attending studies. People are praying. We may not be fully aware, but it is happening. But most of all, let's not miss the sign of Jonah...the

