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When the Gospel Comes Home

by Joe Keim

Last week, I received a third call from the same Amish community in Wisconsin. As I listened to those on the other end, I couldn't help but believe that God is doing something special there. Pockets of revival seem to be breaking out in Amish communities all over America, as people begin searching the Scriptures for themselves.

In one case, the family was recently excommunicated after challenging their ministers about what the Bible teaches. After a lengthy phone conversation, we mailed them a box of resources to help them make sense of what they are experiencing and what they should expect next.

It is not an easy road. They lose their community, their identity, and many of their closest relationships. This family is now searching for a church community and believes they may have found one in a Black-Car Mennonite Church.

A few days later, I received a call from another man from that same community. Harley has been married for about fifteen years and is the father of nine children.

He shared how someone first came along and planted a seed in his life. At the time, Harley rejected what he heard because it did not agree with what he had been taught. Later, the Lord sent others who continued to water that seed. Then, after several years, God gave the increase.

When the truth of the gospel became clear to Harley, he could no longer resist saying

yes to Jesus Christ. Since then, life has become very challenging, even confusing.

The church leaders learned that Harley's views on salvation were changing and called him in for a meeting. In Amish culture, ministers are placed on a pedestal and highly respected. They are believed to be chosen by God. Questioning them is unacceptable.

Harley said, "I was shaking."

The church leaders warned him that he could face church discipline. Before the meeting ended, Harley asked if he could share a few Bible verses. By God's grace, they allowed him to do so, and he felt the meeting went better than he expected.

The greatest burden on his heart is his wife, Dora. She is frightened by everything that is happening. She wants Harley to put his Bible away, stop asking questions, and continue following the traditions they have always known. With nine children involved, the pressure on their marriage is tremendous.

When Harley asked me what he should do, I encouraged him to read 1 Corinthians 7 as he seeks to understand how to work through the disagreements in his marriage. That chapter gives important direction to believers who are married to an unbelieving spouse. I reminded him not to give up on his marriage, but to continue loving Dora, praying for her, and living out his faith before her with lots of patience and grace.

I also reminded Harley that although the book of Acts does not record every family story, we know these same struggles must have taken place. As thousands came to faith in Christ, many homes would have experienced division. One spouse believed while the other did not. Some children believed while their parents resisted. Jesus made it clear that following Him would divide families, and He has called us to forsake all other relationships, including our own lives, and follow Him.

I have promised Harley that we are going to fight for Dora on our knees. We are going to pray for her. We are going to pray for each one of their nine children and their marriage. We are going to trust that the same God who opened Harley's eyes can open the eyes of each one of the family.

I promised Harley that I would share this need with you so you could join the rest of us in praying.

Thank You, Michal

One of the greatest challenges in ministry is finding the right people to serve; not just someone who has the skills, but someone who has the heart, the calling, and the willingness to sacrifice. Most nonprofits and ministries simply cannot pay what people could earn in the business world. Seven years ago, God answered one of those needs when Michal volunteered at MAP.

Little by little, Michal began taking over our publication department. Before long, she

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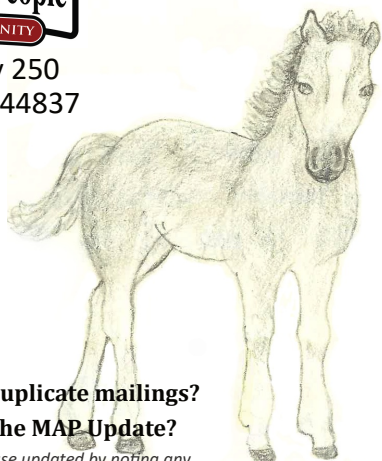
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correction

*** Featured drawings are from SonLight Club students**

Continued from Front...

was laying out and formatting the *Ministry Update* and *The Amish Voice*. Whether you receive these publications by mail or read them online, Michal has poured countless hours into making each issue clear, attractive, and ready for print.

If you have ever attended one of our *Step Out of the Boat Conferences*, you have seen another side of Michal's work. Behind the scenes, she organized details that most people never knew about. She was incredibly organized, highly dependable, and committed to excellence.

One of the things I appreciated most about Michal was her desire to understand exactly what I was trying to accomplish. She listened carefully, asked questions, and then worked hard to make it happen. She wasn't interested in simply getting the job done. She wanted to get it done well.

Eventually, I insisted that we begin paying her. The amount was almost embarrassing, but she accepted it. Even then, Michal consistently worked far more hours than she ever turned in. She gave because she believed in the ministry and because she loved the Lord.

Everything Michal touched reflected excellence. She met deadlines. She paid attention to details. She cared about doing her very best. She truly was the kind of

staff member every ministry director hopes and prays for.



Over the past few years, however, her health began to decline. As much as neither of us wanted to admit it, it slowly became clear that the day would come when she would need to step away.

On July 31 of this year, Michal completed her final day with Mission to Amish People. As she likes to

remind me, "I didn't quit. I retired."

Near the end of her time with us, we had a conversation that neither of us will soon forget. As she reflected on the years she had invested in the ministry, the calling God had placed on her life, and the passion she had poured into the work, tears filled her eyes. Those seven years were not just a job to Michal. They were an act of service to the Lord.

Michal, you will be greatly missed. Your shoes are not easy to fill. By God's grace, He has already provided someone to continue the work, but your contribution to this ministry will never be forgotten.

On behalf of all of us at Mission to Amish People, thank you for seven years of faithful, sacrificial service. Thank you for giving your best, for caring so deeply, and for serving with excellence.

May the Lord richly bless you in this new season of life.

Celebrate with the SonLight Club

In May, we broke our mailing record with over 5,200 lessons in an single bi-weekly mailing, and boy, did we celebrate! Our ultimate desire is to reach 8,000 in one mailing. We are committed to reaching this for our Savior and for these precious students!

As a relationship building exercise, our June newsletter challenged students to draw a picture of their favorite animal that God created. We received lots of horses along with cows, dogs, cats, ducks, and a monkey. We featured some of the drawings in the following newsletter as well as hung some of the artwork we absolutely loved here on the office wall!

Our second July mailing was recently taken to the Post Office. We mailed over 8,800 lessons during the month of July. That's another record to celebrate! July is usually the slowest month of the year at about 5,000 lessons. Also, there have been 242 reported salvations in the SonLight Club in 2026 so far. Now that is something to praise God for! Thank you for partnering with us and thank you for praying for us! It makes all the difference!

- Jennifer Schneeg

SONLIGHT
Bible Club



The summer heat is drying up the SonLight Club funds! Please consider scanning the the QR code to learn more about the club and how to donate.