

## Bermudian Church of the Brethren

### **WEDNESDAY'S WORD** – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler

to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week

December 26 in the year of our Lord 2018 - #770 Christmas Week

Today's devotional was originally written by Pastor Larry for the devotional book, **Fresh From The Word: devotions for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brethren**. This devotional was prepared in 2008 for the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brethren and includes authors from all 6 of the Brethren groups that trace their roots to the 1708 baptism in Schwarzenau, Germany (Brethren Church, Church of the Brethren, Conservative Grace Brethren Churches International, Dunkard Brethren, Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, and Old German Baptist Brethren). Writers include some you may know like: Warren Eshbach, Paul Grout, Jim Hardenbrook, Tim Harvey, Harold & Priscilla Martin, Jim Myer, and Victoria Smith; and some voices of Brethren past like Alexander Mack & Anna Mow. While written for the anniversary year it is a wonderful daily devotional for any year, with a suggested Scripture reading, devotional, thought for the day, and prayer. for each day. Looking for a new devotional for 2019? **Fresh From The Word** is available thru Brethren Press ([brethrenpress.com](http://brethrenpress.com)).

## A Shining Lamp

**“(John the Baptist) was a lamp that burned and gave light...”** John 5:35 NIV

On Christmas Day 1795, a large sheep-skin deed, measuring 27” X 29”, was signed by representatives of the German Lutheran, German (Dutch) Reformed, and German Baptist Brethren congregations on the wild frontier of Paradise Township, York County, Pennsylvania. The deed set aside one acre of farmland for the construction of a union house of worship to be used by the three congregations on a rotating basis, and to be used as a school. The old meetinghouse served faithfully until around 1920. In 1980 the youth of Bermudian Church of the Brethren began the major task of restoring Altland Meeting House. On Christmas Eve 1981, under the theme **“A Light In The Window,”** a Christmas Eve candlelight worship was held. Each Christmas Eve since, by kerosene lamp and candlelight, the old meetinghouse windows shine with a welcoming light as the story of Christmas is told once more.

Jesus speaks of John the Baptist as a **“lamp”** that gives light as a testimony. Altland Meeting House still shines as a **“lamp of testimony.”** In a time long before the modern ecumenical movement, Altland was a place where believers celebrated unity rather than differences. The old house of worship has a raised preaching platform, something unheard of in early Brethren meetinghouses, but obviously a testimony to being willing to work together. Today the windows shine as a testimony to the steadfastness of the Gospel. A recent Christmas Eve saw a group of leather-clad “bikers” join the worshipping congregation. Neighbors gather at the old meetinghouse from many different denominational backgrounds. In the light of the old building, the true testimony of Christ’s love being for all people still shines!

**For the day:** How can you “shine” for Jesus today?

**Prayer:** Lord of Light, in a world that is so often marked by darkness, the testimony of Your love still shines brightly! May I, like John so long ago, be a “lamp of testimony” for who You are to all those I come in contact with today.

Blessings, Pastor Larry <><