

A Circuit Rider:
A Report on the Missionary Work of Emergency Helper
Georg Streckfuss
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Until now, we have not received a report from Streckfuss, one of the Emergency Helpers, who left last year to go to our emigrated partners in the faith. However, he hasn't been idle. As far as we can tell, he has proven himself successful through labor and affliction. During the months of June and July in 1846, he was at the Williams Co., Ohio home of Detzer, sick in bed with the fever. Yet he still preached for Detzer in Lucas County from time to time.

On July 31st, Streckfuss arrived in Ft. Wayne, where he studied under Dr. Sihler for a time to advance his preparation for the ministry. Then Dr. Sihler sent him to Whitley County (Indiana), where he visited two German settlements three times. At that time, the fever was raging so violently, that it struck 6 to 7 people in one house and 16 in another. He gave a Christian burial to four German women, two of whom had arrived from Germany scarcely four weeks earlier. Several children he baptized, only to watch them approach death. It seems the blessing of his presence was important here. But, once again, even Streckfuss came down with a fever. He lay in bed 11 days at Columbia, the county seat and three days in the wilderness. With a Hoosier to guide him, he returned to Ft. Wayne ill.

In October he went to a professional, who is like the one of which Detzer brags. He helped Streckfuss as best he could in the missionary's condition. From the professional's estate, he went 16 miles away, looking for a German settlement, bearing heavenly words. After that, he had returned to Dr. Sihler.

In December, Dr. Sihler sent him out to visit the Germans in Noble, De Kalb and Steuben counties, Indiana. First he preached in a congregation associated with Dr. Sihler, 22 miles from Ft Wayne. But he was still greatly troubled by the fever. He said, "No wonder the fever would not leave me! The route I had to take was very bad; so bad that often I had to wade knee deep in water and bog. One moment you sweat and the next you freeze. The same is true of what you eat and drink. Every day you have different meals and different water."

Two days before Christmas, the fever finally left him. After a period of rest in January, he went on his way and visited the three counties named above. He found plenty of work everywhere. He preached, taught, comforted, showed parents how to instruct their children, and distributed greetings from their hometowns and other writings. He returned to Ft. Wayne from his missionary trip at the beginning of February.

After he had given his report to Dr. Sihler, Dr. Sihier commissioned him to visit the same three counties one more time. He left again on February fifth. Again, he found plenty of opportunities to preach, to teach, and to baptize. The account of the spiritual poverty, which Streckfuss gives, is heart-rending. He describes the especially wretched

lot of a family, like which there may be thousands in the forests of North America.

"The wife was a German, who as a very ignorant young girl had come to America. The husband is English. The couple has seven children, who had not been baptized. Naturally, they can understand neither German nor written English, because the mother herself can read and write so little. The family lives so deep in the forest that, even at a great distance, not a single English public school can be found to which you could send your children. This distress has broken my heart, because I do not know what to tell them to do, much less help them," said Streckfuss.

In the county seat of Steuben County, Angola, Streckfuss also had many opportunities to witness and to baptize. He returned to Ft. Wayne through La Grange County. On this trip Streckfuss baptized a total of 32 children, whom he was unable to instruct.

In any case, our readers know that Emergency Helpers are still able to accomplish something. May they pray to our God for each person baptized. May they feel sympathy for small children through Streckfuss. May they pray about every moment of comfort he offered to the sick or the dying. May they pray for every moment of witness to Christ, the only Redeemer. May they pray for every holy word that he was able to speak.

Streckfuss still has not found a permanent position. Let's offer him the funds to continue his trips, and so that he might be able to bring along and distribute the Holy Scriptures to Christ's poor sheep. Let's place in his hands a supply of books to distribute. "For me there is no road too far away or too bad to travel. No work is too much for me to accomplish. I go where my Lord sends me and do what He wants me to do." This is how Streckfuss' letter ends.

¹ From: oehe. J. K. D. "Ein Reiseprediger," *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord-Am., nlr11*, 1847
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