CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY!!

ALLELUIA!
**Purpose of the Conference of Restoration Elders**

“To bring solidarity to a growing number of Restoration branches and Latter Day Saints in general during this period of disruption and fragmentation” (Conference Operating Guidelines accepted in 1996).

The Conference exists to:

1. Organize the coming together of Melchizedec priesthood, as well as the Aaronic priesthood members, for:
   - Spiritual preparation and to unify our efforts on behalf of the work to which we are called.
   - Much needed fellowship and fraternity to prepare us to defend and preserve the faith.
   - Identify and seek divine guidance concerning the critical issues now confronting the Church.
   - Chart a course of action that will maintain the gospel as restored in 1830 (Original Letter of Intention and 1993 Conference Materials).

2. Support Restoration branches in their efforts to work together.
3. Provide needed resources to branches and members as they are requested.
4. Offer ongoing support and resources to Restoration priesthood.
5. Offer support to the elders to take the gospel message to the world.

The Conference is not the Church, but a gathering of the Melchizedec priesthood to share in testimony, prayer, legislation, and preparation to return to our branches better equipped and unified to perform our duties to minister to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

In addition, the Conference of Restoration Elders provides a forum for Aaronic priesthood and member alike to share in fellowship and to be nurtured in the Word. The Conference helps the scattered Saints and isolated branches throughout the world to enjoy the hope that we find in Jesus Christ and each other.

**Conference of Restoration Elders Resource Center**

Volunteers staff the office to answer questions, respond to letters and e-mail, prepare publications for mailing, and more. Hours are Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Hours may change. Please call ahead to be sure.

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Repenting
Towards the Work
of the Kingdom

By Elder William (Vim) Horn
CRE Chair
Sibley, MO

Adapted from a sermon shared at the Oak Grove Restoration Branch during the sacrament service January 1, 2017

In all of our lives there come points of reflection. Today can be one of those times. Not only do we have the opportunity to reflect on what has taken place this month, and what we will do differently in the coming month, but we also have the opportunity to reflect on the past year and consider what we will do differently going forward.

We, who have entered into covenant with God, come to this table having repented and received a remission of our sins upon condition of enduring to the end. We know, because of our sinful nature and weakness, that repentance should be an active, ongoing part of our lives. Let me ask this question—As you made preparation this morning, and as you reflect on the coming year, are you repenting from something or to something?

In one of his radio sermons, 1) Arthur Oakman shared that, To Jesus, repentance meant much more than regret for past actions. It was more, even, than the determination to replace evil with justice. It meant first, a passionate faith in God. This faith issued in a deep love for God which became the mainspring of conduct. If we come to this table only thinking about what we have done wrong, then we have lost sight of the greater motivator, that is considering what we might do different because of God’s love for us and what he has done for us.

Brother Oakman continues, Christ did always those things that pleased his Father. Likewise he told his followers, “he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he shall be loved of my Father. No man really finds his true identity until he is conscious of the love of God and responds to it. Thus one comes to one’s self, as did the prodigal, who, when he came to himself recognized his sonship and returned to his father. While it is helpful for us to remember and reflect upon what we have done that separates us from God—it is more important and helpful to remember and reflect on what has brought us closer to God.

Oakman continues, We have devaluated the splendid word “repentance” by thinking of it in negative terms. We have imagined that repentance means merely “leaving off doing that which is wrong.” Certainly there is a need for us to remember and reflect on that which is wrong in our life, but only for the purpose of adjusting our focus on doing that which is right. We should only reflect on the past in light of how it will inform our current and future walk. Reflection on what has happened for any other reason is a form of self-indulgence that steals away precious energy for what we could do for the sake of the Kingdom.

Oakman shares that, No man can forget or overcome his sin by always thinking about it. What Jesus points out is that repentance is directed toward the Kingdom. It is not only the consciousness of sin that leads to adjustment, but the fact that attention is to be centered on a better way of life. While repentance is away from self, it is away from self because it is toward God. It begins by thinking about our resources and our gifts, and how these can be used for the coming of the Kingdom. It begins not by thinking about what is wrong with us, but by thinking how our faculties can be used for a cause that endures.

Let me ask the earlier question again, but in a different way—Is our focus on repenting from something that we might receive a reward? Or, is our focus on repenting to something, and finding our reward in serving God and others? Remembrance and reflection should usher in renewal—renewal of our commitment and dedication to move closer to God and to embrace the work for which we have been called. To reform ourselves for the work of the Kingdom.

When you made your covenant in the waters of baptism, you publically acknowledged your desire to take upon yourself the task of actively being engaged in the work of the Lord. You acknowledged your love for God and your willingness to sacrifice yourself for the sake of the Kingdom—you pledged...
your life to serve God and to serve others. As such, you committed yourself to a life of self-sacrifice. You committed to:
- pursue the interest of the Kingdom above your own
- pursue the interest of others above your own
- pursue a way that could lead to suffering, ridicule and personal harm at times

At the time of your baptism, you most likely didn’t fully comprehend what your commitment might entail, but I would bring to your understanding and remembrance that this is what you pledged, and continue to pledge when you partake of the sacrament. (Moroni 4:4)

So, why do you knowingly embrace this life of self-sacrifice? It is because you know that in doing this you are also committing yourself to a life of sublime fulfillment—fulfillment that can only come when one is fully in harmony with the divine intent of their creation. You are allowing the divine prerogative to supersede the personal, and through that process, fully actualizing the purpose of your creation. You are challenging yourself to sacrifice the, “natural man” and to allow the mind of Christ to fully inculcate your life. In this, you are challenging yourselves to take on the form of Christ, to humble yourselves and become a servant.

As in all things, Christ has not only shown us the way to accomplish this, but he is the means for us to accomplish it. For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son—and Christ so loved us that he humbled himself and became as us, and was obedient unto the cross for our sake. (Philippians 2) Christ is the corner stone upon which all is built—the entire gospel rests on His shoulders—on His humility, His faithfulness, His obedience to God, and His love for us. If he had failed, or wavered in any of these things, you and I would have no hope.

Brother Oakman says this about Christ. He is risen. And because he lives now he has power over death. Because he has power over death, he need not have died except it was to show us that, by living his way, we have no need to fear death...If he has died to show us this, how much he must have loved us.2)

Christ loves us so much, that he humbled himself, took upon himself the form of a servant and became as us—that we might have the opportunity to humble ourselves, to take on His form, that of a servant obedient unto our cross, and become begotten sons and daughters unto God. (Doctrine & Covenants 76:3g-h) What we have done here today, as begotten sons and daughters, is to symbolically acknowledge the sacrifice that was freely given out of love for us, and that we, in turn, willingly take upon ourselves a life of self-sacrifice. Each of us here partook of the emblems because of the personal covenant we made with God at the time of our baptism. Entering into the covenant took but a moment—fulfilling our covenant involves a lifetime of commitment and sacrifice. (2 Corinthians 5:15-21)

The opportunity to repent towards taking our place in the work of the Kingdom is before each us. What we choose to do with that opportunity is totally up to us. We can choose to fulfill the covenant we made with the Lord, and live one with Christ and the Father and serve one another, or we can choose self-will and live, (or die) with the consequences. The choice is ours, and it is ever before us, until it is gone.

Mosiah 3:8-12 And now, because of the covenant which ye have made, ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters: For behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him, and have become his sons and his daughters. And under this head ye are made free; and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free. There is no other name given, whereby salvation cometh, therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God, that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives. And it shall come to pass that whosoever doeth this, shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ.

1) Oakman, Arthur A., Radio Minister, Unto All Men, The Sermon: REPENTANCE, Program Number 309A, furnished by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Expectations

By High Priest Paul J. Gage
Independence, Missouri

What are your expectations about or of God? A great “Santa Claus” somewhere, out there, just waiting to drop all the treasures of the world on us, just because we might ask? Do you get upset with God when you ask for such things and it doesn’t happen? Ask the widow in Mark 12:47-50. Did she win the lottery the next day or even expect to? I doubt it since she gave out of her living, meaning she had learned to trust God in all things. Ask the rich young ruler in Luke 18:18-27. He had certainly been blessed with “riches,” but not the kind that would “pay his way into the service of the Lord.” We never hear of him again.

Did God say, and do you expect to never suffer hardship and trial, even in the midst of serving the Lord? Ask Paul and Silas as they were beaten and chained in jail in Acts 16:22-33. If that were you, what would you be doing, especially at midnight? They were not having a pity party, but rather singing praises to the Lord. The prison walls fell down and the jailer and his family were all brought to the Lord.

Do you think that because you made a covenant with the Lord, were baptized into “His Church,” and spend much time “serving Him” that your place in Celestial Glory is secure? Ask the five foolish virgins in Matthew 25:1-12.

For some reason, we of the “church” think we should be spared all the trials of life including sickness, death, loss of things, because, after all, we are His people, aren’t we and why does He let these things come upon us? But Jesus tells us in several scriptures that even as He and the prophets suffered and were persecuted, so would those who followed Him. Sometimes, we have a slanted view of how we think things ought to be. Jesus tells us in John 13:34-35 that we are to love one another as He loves us and that is how others will know we are His disciples. Could it be that many times in our trials, God is telling us to remember to obey His commandments?

In her recent book, entitled, “When God Doesn’t Fix It,” Christian writer and singer, Laura Story, shares some of the things she and her husband, Martin, discovered about God in their struggles with his illness of a brain tumor. A sub-title of the book says, “Lessons you never wanted to learn. Truths you can’t live without.” Laura and Martin were and still are very actively involved in their church and many times in dealing with Martin’s illness, they asked, “Why is this happening to us? We are some of God’s faithful ones, but they found out that God doesn’t move on our schedule or our whims, but on His schedule for us to be all that we can be in Him.

Laura lists at the end of each chapter a myth and the Truth. Some of them include:

Trials are a curse......Trials are an opportunity.

God’s primary desire is to fix broken things...God’s primary desire is to fix my broken relationship with Him.

Salvation is gained by the things I do...Salvation is gained by what Jesus did for me.

Things have to get better before I can get better...My situation may not get better, but I can get better through Jesus Christ.

She was given the words to a song, entitled, “Blessings.” Some of the words are, “What if your blessings come through rain drops? What is your healing comes through tears? What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know YOU are near? What if the trials of this life are your mercies in disguise?

I have heard members of the Church talk about taking their own lives because they can’t bear the
struggle. Judas did not have to commit suicide. He could have totally repented. Cain did not have to receive the “curse,” he could have offered the correct offering. Look for the hand of the Lord in all aspects of your life. Don’t give in to the ways of the world or the adversary. God has a plan for each one He has created and wants to fulfill that plan, which might sometimes have to come through our sufferings and trials. We know that to those who remain faithful through it all, the words of the Lord will be spoken to you, “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Matthew 25:23, and also in Matthew 25:35, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Jesus is Coming
by High Priest Paul J. Gage
Independence, Missouri

Are you ready for the wedding? Don’t be a foolish one.
And think you really know the groom, but something’s left undone.

Be wise, dear one, with oil to spare, and your lamp be burning bright.
Be guided by the Holy Ghost and walk in Truth’s great light.

Don’t be deceived, but know the groom, you know He is The Way!
Be ready when the trumpet sounds, It could be any day.

The call may not be when you are awake, perhaps you’ll be asleep,
But be prepared, even at midnight, for you have the Lord to meet.

Don’t be outside when the door is closed, He wants you in with Him.
There won’t be time to go to the store, you can’t get in on a whim.

Now is the time! Now is the day! The Bridegroom will soon appear.
There will be nothing else you can do, When the news is told,
“HE’S HERE!”

Your Vocation

By James Daugherty
CRE Historian

If someone were to ask you, “What is your vocation?” you would probably say, house wife, or doctor, or farmer, or teacher etc., which would be your occupation, not your vocation. Vocation means to be called, or to have a calling, and became synonymous with ones occupation or work, because of the belief that God gave to every person, gifts and skills if properly used, to meet the physical needs of life. Your vocation is more than your occupation. However, to have a calling changes over time and circumstances. A young student in school, has a calling to discipline himself to make the best grades possible. As circumstances change, his calling may be to become proficient in a trade or profession. Your calling may be to become a husband or wife, to make a Godly home.

The greatest calling one can have is to be called a Saint, not just a good person but a “Saint, according to the covenant.” When you are in a covenant relationship with our Father you look for ways to serve Him, even when it’s inconvenient, not what you had planned, or sometimes a hardship. There are many examples from scripture, as well as our rich heritage in the Restoration movement. What comes to mind when we think of callings is often focused on priesthood callings, and the valiant missionaries who have graced and enriched our lives. An excellent example of missionary zeal and a supportive wife, can be found in the lives of Henry and Elizabeth Deam. Henry was from Pennsylvania and spoke the German language. After moving to Illinois, and when the church was scattered because of the death of Joseph, he continued to travel back to Pennsylvania preaching the Restoration gospel.

“Going without purse or script and leaving wife and young children in the care of God, he left them without any visible means of support, except their faith in the Lord, that He would provide. He
traveled hundreds of miles while his wife was at home praying for his success, with an abiding faith that God would not forsake her, though at times it would seem she was left without a ray of hope.

One time he went from Illinois to Pennsylvania, leaving her with two babies, only fourteen months apart, and one an infant, she walked a mile to a creek to do a washing for a farmer’s wife, after eating the last bit of corn cake in the house for her breakfast. When through with her day’s work she entered the farmer’s house at night, faint and hungry, where a table was laden with choice edibles; and when she departed without an invitation to dine, and knowing there was not a bit of anything at home to eat, her heart sank. Then her strong faith came to the rescue, and upon entering her home she poured out her soul to Him who regardeth the sparrows, and she found relief in prayer and was given assurance that all would be well. She had scarcely risen from her knees when there was a knock at the door. She found the farmer’s hired man there with a large basket of cooked food, enough to last her several days. When that was gone the way was provided for her to get more.

When in later years one of her daughters remarked, ‘It was not right mother, God never asked it of you,’ she said, ‘Yes, it was right. Think how few there were when this work first started. I do not regret it. My rest will be hereafter.” Church History Volume 3, p.733. Being the son of a missionary; I know what sacrifices our family made, particularly my mother, in order for my father to be effective in his calling, as a Seventy. What we were called to be was no less important than Dad’s calling. Elizabeth Deem was right in her observation about the early Reorganization, and the commitment it required; “Yes, it was right. Think how few there were when this work first started.” We are few in number, in comparison to other denominations, but the Lord has laid upon us an awesome challenge, and that is to prepare ourselves spiritually in order for His church to once more be restored in its fullness. The calling that is ours, in this latter day, is to take advantage of our opportunities by attending reunions and youth camps. Information on the reunion and CRE conference, held at Waldo, is in this issue of “Tidings of Zion.” Now is the time for work, we can find our rest in the hereafter.

What the Resurrection Means to Me

By Deacon Claude Faulkner Claremore, Oklahoma

Christ’s resurrection from the dead guarantees our future resurrection from the dead. Because our Lord both died and rose again, we are promised that we too will be raised back to life as He was and is. The Apostle Paul was inspired to explain how God accomplishes His plan in stages. Paul was inspired to write these words in 1st Corinthians 15: 20-23. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” The word first fruits speaks of a sampling, a foretaste, a glimpse of what’s coming.

God used the analogy of Israel’s agricultural harvests to illustrate important aspects of His great plan of salvation for the human race. Hence the “harvesting” of mankind, in which the resurrection of the dead back to life plays a major role. Some aspects of this plan are pictured by the specific annual festivals which represent harvest times in ancient Israel.

“First fruits” is a term used to denote the first part of the harvest. This part of the annual harvest was considered Holy in ancient times. As God’s people, truly converted Saints are considered first fruits of God’s spiritual harvest as James stated in James 1: 18, “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.” Jesus is the first of the first fruits, the most holy part.

The resurrection of Christ gives us power to live the Christian life of Romans 8:10-11, “And if Christ
be in you, though the body shall die because of sin, yet the Spirit is life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

Paul stressed to the Roman church that others would follow in due time in Romans 8: 28-29, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For him whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be confirmed to his own image, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

An entire chapter of the New Testament, 1st Corinthians 15, discusses the resurrection. It begins by affirming Jesus’ own raising to life and quickly gives a description of the restoration to life of His disciples and true followers. These are God’s first fruits.

Certainly the Scriptures do not teach that we will be sinless in this physical body we now live in. On the other hand, we can now win over sin, not because of some inner goodness of our own, but by the indwelling power of the Spirit of God.

Jesus Christ can, will and does make us altogether different kinds of people. More than thinking it, we must believe it. It says this in 2nd Corinthians 5: 17, “Therefore if any man live in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,”

God alone can give you, me, all of us who will, the power to successfully live this Christian life. The way is a bit difficult at times but the awesome result of our Creator’s activities on this earth is summed up in Hebrews 2: 9-11, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,”

Our God is actually enlarging His family in His own way and in accordance with His own timetable. The first resurrection simply represents the first fruits in God’s plan of salvation. The great comfort we have is that the God of the universe, our Creator and Lord, knows us, loves us and will be with us. One of Jesus’ names is Emmanuel, which means “God with us.” (Matthew 2:6). I think it more properly means, ‘God among us’.

We have been chosen by God and on our Christian journey because we are not at our final destination. We are all engaged in a process of overcoming our sinful nature. As long as we have breath, our God is not finished with us, just yet. He is still at work in each one of us. He cares for us, He loves us, you and me. He wants us to draw ever so nearer to Him.

All of us, wherever we are, have to work daily at not slipping into unbelief and cynicism, because life can be so hard and confusing. We learn daily from life so that we can have joy and praise Him for His guidance from His Word and Holy Spirit which strives within us as we walk in the path of our Lord. We can take courage with these words from Philippians 1:6, “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;” Do we fully realize the magnitude and wonder of the incredible gift beyond measure that we have by our Lord’s work and His sacrifice completed by His Resurrection?

Third Nephi 5:15-17
And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; And this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes, and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety, and did bear record that it was he of whom it was written by the prophets should come. And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying, Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus and did worship him.
Center Place Restoration School (CPRS)

By Dan Schoenemann
Administrator

"Tis incumbent upon the Saints…to be in the world and not of it, living and acting honestly and honorably before God and in the sight of all men, using the things of this world in the manner designed of God, that the places where they occupy may shine as Zion, the redeemed of the Lord." – D&C 128:8b,c

To be in the world and not of it has been the rallying cry of the Restoration since the beginning. To train up the student in this endeavor is the goal of Center Place Restoration School. The mission statement of CPRS is divided into two parts.

Part one states, “CPRS aims to provide an education that instills a desire for Godly character, to lead children to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.” Beginning with the morning scripture and prayer and continuing through the daily chapels, classroom devotional, Christ-like environment, and religion classes, the students learn not to be a part of the world.

Part two of the mission statement says that the aim is also “to equip students with the skills necessary to excel in society and assist in the establishment of Zion.”

To prepare the student with the needed skills, we offer a rigorous curriculum that includes the option of two dual credit (high school/college) classes in Spanish and Anatomy here at our campus. Students have additional opportunities to begin earning college credits during their senior year by attending pre-approved early morning classes off campus and then returning to school to enjoy the complete CPRS experience. Those with a strong interest and ability in math may apply for the Math & Physics Institute sponsored by Metropolitan Community Colleges, where they can earn college credit in Calculus I and Physics.

Another opportunity for college credit is from Summit Technology Academy, where we are just completing our second year of association. Summit Tech offers courses in the fields of medicine, engineering, computers, and international business, plus much more. With the solid background students receive from CPRS, our seniors have been very successful at both institutions.

Beginning this fall, we will have the same morning schedule available at Fort Osage Career Center. Courses there are wide-ranging, from medicine and engineering to welding, construction, and firefighting.

More additions to CPRS at the start of the 2017-2018 school year include a preschool program for 4-year-olds and incorporating more Vo-Tech offerings to the morning curriculum. With recent changes in state laws, we plan to pursue approval for CPRS to participate in the A+ scholarship program, which add to the other scholarships that are available to CPRS graduating students.

CPRS is supported by donation of Restoration branches and individuals from across the nation. The desire to have a Christ-led people who are successful and can proclaim the gospel by not being a part of the world is the goal of these supporters and the school family.

If you are interested in hearing more about the CPRS experience, you may visit our website at www.cprsgoldeneagles.com, or call our office at 816-252-1715 to schedule an appointment to visit with us.
Firstly, let me greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as I am glad to be able to share with our people, and testify about the love, the power and mercy of God to me all during my life. Now His blessings are extended even to my family and friends not only in Mexico, but in other countries of the world where I have been sharing the good news of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Serving in the office of Seventy, I testify that there is no other way to reach the glorious place that the Lord has promised as we read about in the Holy Scriptures, which is the Inspired Version of the Bible, and also, the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, unless we come to God with a contrite heart, clean of mind and heart. With this in mind, there have been times when I have come so close to God have taken the opportunity to ask Him to let me stay always near to Him. He, in response, takes me by my hand and we walk together. We cross all kinds of problems and we get to His people who hunger for His word and do not know about His promises.

He makes me to speak to His Children sometimes as a Deacon, sometimes like a Priest speaks to his Brothers and Sisters, and many times like an Elder, I pray for His mercy to those who come to me because they suffer from sickness. I praise our God because in Him there are no limitations. I am so grateful to Him because He invited me to come to Him even from the first two years of my life and made me to get to know of His holy kingdom in the earth which was known in the world as Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I praise Him because when I go to different lands which are not my country, He makes me understand that I am a citizen of all lands and that those lands are in His hands and that I am responsible to take them the word of His love and mercy, and take them out from slavery of sin.

I know that the Spirit of God like a fire is burning in these days and that the latter day Glory continues to come forth and for that I will sing and I will shout with the Armies of Heaven, Hosannah to my God and the Lamb. May glory to them in heaven and earth be given hence forth and forever. Amen.

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**News From Mexico**

By Seventy Juan Reyes
Saltillo, Mexico

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**Kenya, East Africa Testimony**

By Elder Brian Herren
Salem, Oregon

Eight of the Saints from the Pacific Northwest were blessed to serve in Kenya this winter. We left our homes and loved ones on December 15, 2016 in the middle of a snow and ice storm and would not return until January 1, 2017. Those traveling included four youth leaders, three recent high school graduates, and a high school senior. During the mission we served a youth camp in Kisumu, visited various branches of the church in Kenya, and shared the Restored Gospel with groups and individuals wherever we were sent. Brother James Yogo and his wife, Sister Ruth, opened their home to us while we stayed in Nairobi, and lovingly blessed us by treating us as family. We wish to thank them and publish their good deeds for all they did on our behalf. In Kisumu, our team stayed with Brother Eric and Sister Pamela Odida where we were treated with the utmost kindness and generosity, and lacked nothing. Sister Pamela was a faithful and compassionate mother to us all. Brother Eric directed the mission with wisdom. We are also deeply appreciative of the hospitality offered by Brother Austin and Sister Jane Odicoh while we stayed in Bonde. While in Bonde, we shared with a group in Konyango Apusa, where I believe another branch of the church is imminent after witnessing their reception of several gospel teachings. A class was taught on repentance and baptism, followed by classes covering priesthood authority, the organization and function of Christ’s church, the apostasy, the restoration of Christ’s true and living church on April 6, 1830, and the Book of Mormon. These fundamental teachings were also shared at Mbeme, where the listening congregation voiced delight in that which they had heard and expressed their desire to join the church and establish a branch in that village. From home to home, village to village, and day by day, we felt the tender mercies of our loving Father upon us, His Spirit making straight the way, and His hand gently opening the doors before us.

To be forthright, the eight of us that traveled are weak and just learning, the adopted sons of a cause more
noble than we can rightly claim. There is a lot for us to learn and our failures reminded us. Still, God is able to work where men are weak, and He gives us weakness that we might be humble. Something good was worked in a beautiful land filled with a faithful people, but something beautiful was also worked in our hearts. I will never forget returning to Nairobi on our last night in Kenya. We stayed in the exact same room where we had stayed on our first day in Africa. We slept in the exact same beds, and washed in the same waters. One of the missionaries commented on how nice everything in that room now seemed, and how the same place had seemed so much more base and scary on the first night. Something had changed between our first night there and our last. The missionary said, “I don’t think the room has been made new, but I think my eyes have been made new”. I could have wept. When a man has new eyes with which to see, and a new heart with which to feel, I know he is not far from the Kingdom. Perhaps one of the greatest missionary fields remains the untamed portions of our rebel hearts. When we go out, we come ever more in, nearer and nearer in the Spirit of Christ.

During our final days in Kenya it was hard not to feel the impending shadow of our departure. I have been to East Africa three times and never once felt ready to leave. The tremendous natural beauty, the warmth of the people, and the opportunity to bear record of the Light captures one’s heart. It is a beautiful and joyful place, and even the hardships of daily life and disease cannot help but accent the grace of God and His providential care. There is an unmistakable connection between the poor in resource and the poor in spirit that causes a humble people to inherit the kingdom of heaven. “Yea, blessed are the poor in spirit, who come unto me; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And again, blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. And blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 5:5-8 IV

It is in the drought stricken fields and the dusty hills that one can more easily understand that all that we have is God. It is in the cheerful countenances of the Kenyan people that one understands that He is all that we ever need. The lessons of my youth become practical there, and Bible verses take form beyond the words which we speak so easily in a more comfortable habitat. I wish I could return and stay another month right now. It’s hard to say whether we are more strangers here or there, when the Spirit of God makes every habitation of our Father feel more the home than that which men can build.

We did not suffer in Kenya, but we met those who did. We did not go hungry, but we have seen men beg. We did not thirst, but we saw some who were not likely to live through the day. It seems that experiences like this make fertile the soil of one’s heart, that the compassion of Christ might flourish within. The callouses we have unknowingly developed and the depraved indifference within are worn away layer by layer until the most human parts of us and the most godly parts touch. We celebrated Christmas in Kenya. Still, though Christ be born a thousand times in Bethlehem, if He be not born in our hearts, we are doomed. What can Bethlehem be to us, from without, if we have not Bethlehem within? What is a Savior of men at the right hand of God if He be not the Savior at the center of our hearts, to change our view and clarify our mission?

It was hard to leave. This is the work we were made for. May the most important mission field of our lives always be the one wherein we find ourselves at any given time, beginning in our homes and community, and spreading far beyond. Wherever we be, people are people, and God is God. It is the mediation between the two that develops the most clear appreciation for the nature of Christ, and the most genuine adoration for His loving intercession. When we stand in the gap, we stand with the Lord... for Him, by Him, through Him, and in Him. May He be glorified forever.

We have not forgotten the foundation and strength of the homes from which we have come, built firmly upon that Rock which gave us so great a liberty abroad. We have not forgotten our branches, the flocks where we are fed, or the shepherds who feed us. May they be honored in our letters, and our mothers and fathers. We know this mission started with the prayers of our mothers before we could walk, and was cultivated by the hymns that our fathers sang in truth, and many a fiery sermon to straighten us in our youth. We thank God for His work here...and there...until both are one in Zion.
“Lo! It is my will that my gospel shall be preached to all nations in every land, and that men of every tongue shall minister before me.” Section 116:1b. I have recently been blessed to have the opportunity to travel to Kenya where my eyes were opened to a truth which I have always understood in an intellectual way. The gospel of Jesus Christ has been taken to the thirsty in Kenya in a way which is unfamiliar. Understanding the social and economic situations in Kenya, I stepped off the plane expecting to find a downhearted and troubled people. I expected to be able, by the grace of God, to be some sort of blessing to the Saints in Africa who are few in number comparatively speaking.

What I found in Kenya was a group of Saints who have caught hold of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I found a people who hungered and thirsted for the word of God. My eyes were opened to the power of the gospel which is undeniable. Our brothers and sisters some 9000 miles away received us into their homes as though they had known us all their lives. There was a bond which can only be found in the children of God. The hand of God is at work in mighty ways in areas which we know not. It astonishes me to this day; the pure joy and peace which the Saints in Kenya live their lives. There is an understanding there which is seldom seen in my life which is that in all things…ALL things we must rely upon God.

The word of God is quick and powerful to the dividing asunder of both joints and morrow and has taken root in the lives of our brothers and sisters across the world. The word of God has brought men from fighters to soldiers of the cross, from men filled with drunkenness to men filled with the Holy Ghost. I met men and women whose lives have been transformed from utter hopelessness to that of exceeding peace and joy. Never have I seen a more faithful and thankful people. Daily there were prayers of sincere thanksgiving that they actually awoke that day. Never a word of discontent or complaint was heard. My testimony is this: the God of the universe is working. He works tirelessly without rest. He works in places which men forget about or seldom consider. Our God has sent the redeeming word to East Africa and the faithful have heard and responded in ways that are unimaginable and most beautiful. The one true church flourishes at the hand of the Almighty!
Tidings of Zion 13

Traveling to Kenya was like a dream come true for me. All my life I have lived hanging on to every word that missionaries share in testimonies and sermons. Hearing about great miracles in the lives of our brothers and sisters across the globe has always been a tremendous strength to me, and has shown me how important the gospel of Jesus Christ is in this world. The Saints that I heard about became great inspirations to me, and I memorized their names and the saving grace that God worked in their lives, but I never knew I would meet them face to face!

Our group of eight missionaries offered ministry at a youth retreat when we arrived in Kisumu, and I was charged with teaching classes on the Book of Mormon both at the retreat and as we visited branches and homes elsewhere. This assignment truly helped me appreciate the gift of this book of scripture perhaps more than I have before, and I began to see how difficult it is to comprehend the fullness of the gospel without its plainness.

About a week into the trip I began to have serious concern about some swelling in my feet. Several of our members experienced swelling on account of the long days of travel we had to get there, and I was told this was normal. However, after almost a full week had passed the swelling remained no matter what I did to relieve it. Others began to show concern as well, and I worried how much more swelling I might encounter on the return trip if it did not go down. One morning I finally brought it to the attention of our mission leader, Brian Herren, who is a medical doctor by profession. Nothing could be done at that time, but I became a matter of prayer. Immediately after this we had worship with our group before going out for the day, and I had my foot elevated as we sang hymns and prayed. During our singing, I began to feel a tingling sensation in my foot, and when I looked down I was bewildered to find that in a matter of a couple minutes, all the swelling had completely disappeared! I was completely amazed by this, realizing how unnatural it was for the swelling to disappear in such a very short time when I had been walking on it and exercising it for the week following my travels, elevating it at night, all with no avail. In my prayer that morning I was full of thanksgiving and awe in recognition of this kindness the Lord had shown me. I praise Him still for this clear sign of His presence with us. I watched it carefully the rest of the trip, and especially on the return travels, which ended up being longer than the trip to Kenya. Even through the 6-7 hour drive back to Nairobi and 40 hours of travel returning home, my feet never swelled again. Praise the Lord!

The blessings of this trip were many and great, and I will share one more of a divine appointment. One of the Saints I have been particularly impressed with through the testimonies I heard from my youth is Sister Hulda Simba. Many in our group had never heard of her, but I mentioned her name a few times in my excitement to be there. After the youth retreat ended, Brothers James Yogo and Chrispin took us many places to visit and bring ministry. We did not always know where we were going, but we happily rode in the cars with them to wherever they took us, and shared our love of Jesus with the people. On one of these occasions, Vitaliy asked me to share about Hulda Simba and her experiences because he did not know them when I mentioned her. So as we drove, I shared with the people in our car about Sister Hulda and the miraculous way God brought her to the truth and saved her soul. I added what an amazing blessing it would be for us to meet this woman while we were there in Kenya, but I did not know if that would be possible. Several minutes later we drew near to our destination, and Brother James turned around and informed us that we were going to the VERY HOME of Sister Hulda Simba! What a shock that was for our car! We knew that God was leading us even in our conversations and desires! But the testimony does not end here. We were blessed richly to meet this faithful soul and

The Love of God Shone Down on Us

By Cessaries Galusha
Salem, Oregon

T
her family. We shared and visited and sang praises to the Lord. She told us that she was suffering from cancer in her eye, and she had no hope of medical attention. She had made the very long trip to Nairobi to the hospital to receive care from the doctors for her eyes, but she was turned away. The doctors were on strike and would not see her. She had to travel all the way back and the expense was for naught. All she had left was to hope in the Lord’s deliverance. Brothers Brian Herren and James Yogo administered to her and we prayed for God’s intervention. A day or two later, Brother Eric Odida received a call from Sister Hulda and she told him that night she had a dream and in this dream she underwent surgery for the cancer in her eye. When she awoke that morning, she felt completely healed of her affliction and suffering.

The God that we serve is true and faithful; He is full of might and wisdom. None can find out His doings nor search the depths of His being. He is all powerful and present in every cell and fiber of His creation. How great is our God, and how holy are His ways. He cares for His own and never ceases His labors. He never sleeps and never weakens, and how we need Him. We honor His holy name, and bow in reverence before Him always. No one is like our God, and He is worthy to be praised!

I was very blessed from the beginning stages of our mission in the way that God blessed me with a fundraising idea that made way for me to raise the funds to go and not be a burden to those around me. He was with us the whole journey and I will forever be thankful for the things I witnessed there. On the plane ride there, however, I began to have a sore throat. I thought maybe it was just from the long traveling hours and I pushed it out of my mind. I am the type of person who only gets sick once a year and I had been praying that God wouldn’t allow it to be during the mission time. We arrived and all were in good spirits so I felt that everything would turn out fine. As each day went on though progress was made with my cold. It turned from a little runny nose to a tickle in my throat and on the last day of the camp we attended and taught at some girls asking if I had a “cool cough” which I found out meant a cold and me replying “yes”. I didn’t know why God had given this cold to me in such a sacred time, but it forced me to rely on Him even more. At the end of the camp I had completely lost my voice, and this lasted for a few days. It was especially worrisome to me because as a group we had prepared ministry of music and without my parts that could not be shared. The day we visited the Lisana Branch my voice was especially bad. I knew that this branch was very special in the sight of God and I wanted to be a blessing to the Saints. I was asked if I was physically able to sing and I replied quickly with a “Yes!”. However, doubt crept in and as I sat there I began to realize that I couldn’t even speak, so how would I be able to sing those high notes? I started to pray and I asked God to just allow me to sing those two songs and that I would be okay with having no voice for the rest of the day. I got up and I did it! God really blessed me to be able to sing those high notes and the Spirit poured out so strongly in that place that day. God also really blessed me in the way that I was sick, but I never felt sick. I wasn’t extra tired, I never had a sore throat, besides on the airplane, and I was able to sing every day. There were many testimonies happening everyday within our group and also outside of it and it was beautiful to witness. It was an extraordinary trip, one that I hope to be called to serve on again.

Oregon to Africa Connection

By Melissa Clark
Salem, Oregon

Having the opportunity to travel to Kenya was such an amazing blessing from God. I was privileged to go with an amazing team and we shared many experiences that I will never forget.
Arthur Oakman shared a testimony from his life when he was a young elder, serving as pastor in California. He desired to know if he was fulfilling the responsibilities of his priesthood office. He decided to petition the Lord and went each morning, at five o’clock, for many months to inquire of the Lord. As time went on, he became aware of four young men in the congregation that were not members, but were married to Latter Day Saint girls. As he became aware of them, he began to pray for them. Each morning, at his usual time, he would add those men to his prayers, in addition to the inquiring that he was doing of the Lord. As time went on, Brother Oakman would spend more and more time praying for those young men, until one morning, when as he went to go say his prayers, the sole purpose of that morning was those men, and he had completely forgotten about his question. When he forgot about himself, and became immersed in the lives of others, he miraculously received the answer to his question. That morning, he received a glorious vision of the Lord Jesus answering his question in the most spectacular manner, and that morning, those four young men were given a blessing uncommon upon this earth. Brother Oakman declared that when one is lost in loving those upon this earth, that person receives every blessing that the Lord would give, for he/she keeps all the commandments in so doing. “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Galatians 5:24).

In traveling to Kenya, we went to give, and sought to forget about ourselves, focusing on those in Kenya. In so doing, those we interacted with were blessed by the Lord, and we rejoiced to be used as instruments numerous times in the span of a few days. How wonderful it was to share testimonies, teach classes, worship, and just spend time with the Saints in Africa. Amazingly, even as Brother Oakman was fed by the presence of the Lord when he loved with his might, so were we fed from on high, that our plates were overfilled, when we fixed our gaze upon the eternal lives of those we visited. God was our shadow by day and our pillar by night. He answered the questions upon our hearts, giving us assurance by revelation. He administered to us, breaking the progression of pain in our bodies, forcing it to yield to the relief of the Holy Spirit. There wasn’t a thought that was hid from Him, nor any desire that went unnoticed. He sent us brothers and sisters whom we fell in love with. Truly, the Lord blessed us, and we are grateful to have enjoyed His presence as we labored in love in Kenya. Such blessings aren’t limited to missions overseas, for the Lord will bless anyone, anywhere, where they labor in love, yet there is something unmistakably special when one sets his feet upon foreign soil. Knowing that you have traveled thousands of miles to share with but one soul about the precious Savior, even Jesus Christ. It is a feeling unlike any other. We therefore pray that the testimony of our Lord continues to go throughout all the world, and until he might call us again to such a privilege, we labor for the souls of men in our land. “And he said unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2 IV).
“Beware of the Traps”: Mission Trip to Germany

By Elder Brian Mundy
Independence, MO

In September of 2016, Greater European Missions, (GEM), sent four missionaries to Germany. We were asked last Spring to do a family retreat where the members could bring their husbands and children. This was a first and a very exciting opportunity. Naturally we also continued follow up ministry to the members, their families and new contacts.

After much prayer, the four of us selected the theme for the retreat, “Listening to the Voice of the Good Shepherd”. We had great discussions and crafts in which everyone participated. One activity really seemed to have a great impact. It took place on a Saturday night. We had all the members there but two, as well as their families. We asked them what were some things that were hurting their relationship with God or with each other. Things were mentioned like trust, envy, jealousy, lying, etc. These don’t sound any different that the things we experience here in the US or in other parts of the world. After discussing these things, I took from my bag a box of mouse traps. We talked about the spiritual battles we face each day and how Satan does not want us to be one and listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd. We talked about how he lays traps in our path to hurt us and separate us from each other and from God. We then wrote on the back of each trap some of the things we discussed. We placed the set traps on the ground. We asked for two volunteers. We blindfolded one and told that person that they would have to listen to and trust their partner to lead them through the set traps. The other people could yell and try to distract them by lying to them about where the traps were or to not trust their partner. After several had participated I talked to them about trust. Elder Joe Hale was on this trip and he is my pastor at Missionary Branch. We teamed up. To represent how the Lord speaks to me and how important it is to listen to him to avoid the traps, I even took my shoes off to walk through the set mouse traps. They couldn’t believe it! As the activity began, I could hear Joe fine and responded as he directed me but then those around me got louder. Some even grabbed me trying to pull me towards the traps. There was so much confusion that I couldn’t hear his voice clear enough to proceed. I had to stop and yell, “I can’t hear you, Come to me and lead me”. Joe came over, held me and took me away from all of the traps to the place he was wanting me to go. This was a very moving experience to all present but especially to me. When we finished, I talked to them again about what we had just experienced and made sure that each person understood. I then mixed up the traps and asked the head of each family take one and told them to pray over their families so they would not fall into the trap that they had selected. Each commented that the trap they had selected was the very sin that they had been facing.

We too need to beware of the traps that Satan places before us. Sometimes he decorates them up pretty to disguise them but when we step on them they will still cause us harm.

Please continue to pray for the work in Germany. Even though, to some, it seems to be going forward slowly, we are making great strides and lives are being turned to the Lord. GEM has two or three trips planned for 2017. Let us all incline our ears to hear the Lord’s voice above all the other distractions that are out there.
Women’s Council
New Year’s Brunch

By Mary Sue Kennon
Blue Springs, Missouri

On January 28, 2017, seventy women from various congregations met for a brunch at the Colbern Road Restoration Branch. The theme for the morning was, “Be Valiant in Testimony,” with an emphasis on sharing our testimonies and recording them for the children of the future.

Milee Gage led a hymn sing to start our day. Barb Capps was pianist. Nancy Eyerly’s devotional gave us an insight into the testimonies shown in the lives of Sarah, Hannah and Rahab from the book, “Wisdom from Women of the Bible”.

Marsha Bird entreated us to be valiant in testimony, to be boldly courageous and not be ashamed to testify that Jesus is the Christ. We need to see with spiritual eyes to recognize a testimony when it happens and use those peaceable moments to share those testimonies with our children and grandchildren. Testimonies are given to us by the power of the Spirit; we may only have that one chance to share that testimony. We must also be aware that our lives are a living testimony and people are watching, whether we are aware of it or not, to see how we handle a situation. We must be constantly aware of what we say or do.

Marsha stated that we have the responsibility of privilege and will be judged for what we failed to do. The world needs to know that God loves them and has prepared a place for them. D&C 85:22a ...“testify and warn”...

Linda Wilson’s testimony was a demonstration of keeping a covenant made with God. Having lived in Florida for 10 years, she returned for a visit to Independence. She was given a set of Scriptures by her brother-in-law, something she did not have. She began to read them daily when she got home. She was made acutely aware that she had not shared the stories of Jesus and God with her young daughter. After a “terrible” week of problems,

Linda went to her knees in prayer and made a covenant with God, “If you will bring me back, I will serve you all the days of my life.” Within a year, she was back in Independence with a job. She immersed herself in the word of God.

God gave her a second chance at motherhood and she was determined not to fail. She wrote stories and testimonies for Sunday school and Bible school and later church school curriculum. Every story and every testimony she wrote she read to her sons. She taught at Oak Valley school then at CPRS. She told the Lord, “If you will open the door, I will do whatever it takes to serve.” That was put to the testin the past two years.

In June 2015, a mass on a kidney required the removal of her kidney. She had been a diabetic for 25 years and it was too much for the remaining kidney so she was put on dialysis three times a week. Following another surgery her heart stopped and she was placed on a ventilator for four days and nights in ICU. The family was told Linda would not make it through the night.

Linda spent eight weeks in the hospital and seven and a half weeks in rehab. She had to learn how to breathe on her own, to talk, to walk, to write and even to think. She returned to teaching at CPRS in October 2016. She told her students, “If you think God doesn’t do miracles, look at me; your prayers got me here. Because of the prayers of the Saints and the students at CPRS, I am able to be here.” Linda remained true to her covenant to serve God all the days of her life as she passed onto her eternal reward February 27, 2017.

Stu Gage, our retreat pastor, stated, “In these times we need our testimonies to remember that He is there.” He concluded with “share your testimony of Christ! If necessary, use words. Live your testimony!” I Peter 3:15-16.
Testimonies from Luzon, the Philippines

Good day to each and everyone. I am here to give thanks to the Lord with all my heart for He is always there for me as well as my family. If they are not here, maybe my life will be worthless for they were the ones who inspire me to overcome the problems in my life. I didn’t lose my hope and faith for me to solve my problems. When I joined the Church of Jesus Christ, everything in my life has changed. I also pray to the Lord for continuous strength and good health for my family, to my sons and daughters and especially to my husband who works far away from us. I also pray to the Lord for good health for us to do our everyday tasks and for us to do our work for the Lord.

Testimony of Sister Merlinda Natino

I was one, also with others, who didn’t want to go to this congregation. Why? Because all I know is that people are attending services because of the free meals after every service and also, because I belonged to the Catholic faith. One day, I was invited by my friend who told me to attend and nothing would be lost. My friend also told me that it feels good to sing and to listen to the word of God. At first, I refused, but my friend didn’t give up inviting me to attend and I was convinced to join. The first moment I attended the service, I felt something that made me attend every day and I feel happy doing it. I have an illness, but it doesn’t stop me to attending. Why can I say this? Because I accepted the new chapter of my life whole heartedly. I was baptized to a religion that I really never like before, and I am not having any regrets on it. I didn’t expect that I would be having a new set of family who can help me with my problems especially for my medication needs as well as my spiritual needs. I really thanked the Lord for sending Brother Murray and Sister Delma to serve as a way for me to know the Lord more. I know that it is very different from the kind of Church I used to attend, but I really thanked the Lord for accepting me as I am.

Testimony of Sister Merly, now deceased

Domestic Outreach: Michigan to Canada

By Crystal Lavigne
Stoney Creek Ontario, Canada

Our family, Todd and Crystal Lavigne and our five children, Michael, Alicia, Dylan, Matthew and Joshua, were blessed with ministry and fellowship during the weekend of February 11th and 12th, 2017. Joining us were also my mom, Jean Mahoney, and a friend, Jen. I would like to share about the weekend and share the importance of not only travelling ministry, but also, the importance of family ministry.

Leading up to the weekend, our family had been under family duress. It was a very stressful time, that wasn’t supposed to happen. We were so looking forward to our visitors, yet, as the week approached and the family duress came to its final peak, I was contemplating on whether or not I should cancel the visit. Then that still small voice came to me and told me not to cancel, that His timing was perfect and planned from the beginning.

Our guests arrived around 2:00pm, on Saturday. My husband and four sons were home to greet them as I had to pick my daughter up from an orientation for work. Our guests included Priest Mike Ruch, Priest Shaun Turner and his wife, Michelle, and daughter Emma, as well as another lovely young lady named Paige Carnahan. They all attend the Oakwood Restoration Branch in Michigan. In meeting our guests, I instantly realized that God’s timing is perfect. We shared lunch together and began to get to know each other a little bit before mom came over to meet everyone. Mom then took Shaun and Mike to make a hospital visitation. This was the part I was most nervous about. I was so excited to have Shaun bring his family and Paige with him, but I
was nervous as to what to do while the priesthood were gone. We have never had the blessings of hosting a minister with his wife and child and another young lady before, so I had no clue how we were going to do to use the time.

As it turned out, I had nothing to worry about. God planned that too. He also showed us how wives, families, and friends can minister. God, also showed my daughter how important women really are in the church. Shortly after Mike, Shaun and my Mom, left the house, Michelle was already to share with us. I think she had a wonderful class prepared that we started, but it led into more sharing and it was beautiful. Emma, her daughter, was able to help entertain and bring church fellowship specifically to my three younger boys. Paige was especially able to connect with my older two, as they are only a couple of years apart, and overall, everyone was able to fellowship, share and worship together. There really was a ministry/fellowship brought into our home that only a woman could bring. A woman, who, in my view was truly led by the Spirit that weekend.

Later in the evening, we had a class for everyone. My brother’s girlfriend, Jen, is new to the teachings of the Restoration, and our class was certainly a “heavy” topic. Watching her eagerly take notes and participate in the reading, truly made my heart glad. Of course, we got all the note-taking equipment from, Michelle, who happened to be prepared with that too! Shaun, held a very interactive class, that was lively, informative and engaging. He was very open to listening and offering ministry during this class, which didn’t have a time limit. I could feel such a calm in the room. Even when Shaun decided that he was going to tell a parable that had nothing to do with the topic at hand, and we all laughed, that calming Spirit was still there. Everything felt at peace. It was a feeling that our family most certainly needed, and I can still feel that same calm when I think back to our weekend together. Shaun and Mike left our house late that night to go spend the night at my parent’s home. That left our family with the three ladies. We stayed up late enjoying each other’s company, talking and sharing some great stories.

Sunday came and we had services in our home. For those of you who are so blessed to attend church every Sunday and Wednesday, we got to share in that experience, which doesn’t happen too often for us. The Spirit was felt throughout the whole service which was led by Shaun and Mike with Mike being the speaker. We sang a couple of hymns we’ve never heard before and for the first time ever in our home we had “real” piano music to go along with it! This happened because just a couple of days before, Judy Monarch, had mailed some CD’s to my mom, containing piano music of many of the hymns. It was awesome singing to the music! It was a joyful time for sure. I have to make mention, that while we were singing a song, which I did not know, all of a sudden it sounded to me like angels were there singing with us. I tried not to make it obvious as I looked around. Now, I’m not saying that there were no angels, but I am saying that I found a voice that sounded like an angel for sure. For as I looked up, and was able to narrow in on one voice, I realized the most beautiful voice that I had ever heard, unadulterated, was coming from Mike Ruch. I love music. I love the ministry of music and, I was surprised upon hearing his voice. It brought the hymn alive for me and our family. I knew Mike’s family had talent because we have enjoyed listening to his uncle and dad through their online ministry.

After the service we had lunch and more fellowship together. Before leaving, we were talking to Mike about how much we truly enjoyed listening to his family online bring their musical ministry. We had mentioned that it was just the previous week or two, we had heard his dad bring musical ministry to one of the services at their branch. None of us had ever heard that song he had sung, but needed to know what song it was. He sang it with such feeling and passion and the words were some of the most beautiful words ever sung. After a quick brainstorm Mike knew what song we were talking about, the name of the song was,” Jesus, There’s Something About That Name”. He said he actually had a CD in his truck, of his late Uncle Bob Ruch, singing that song. Mike, left the CD with us. We have seen every online service that the late Bob Ruch, had performed, and we have
heard him singing online many times. We have heard many stories of Bob, and how wonderful a man he was, for the Lord. Sunday, proved, that Priesthood is eternal, because even through death, Bob Ruch, ministered to our whole family, in my home, through music.

This weekend was truly meant to happen. Everything from the Rubik’s cube to the little gaffes. Everyone of our visitors, Shaun, Michelle, Emma, Paige and Mike, brought us more than they will ever know. After Sunday came to a close, I couldn’t help but be so thankful for God making sure I listened to His still small voice. He had this planned from the beginning.

It’s hard being isolated and visits are sporadic. We appreciate all the visits we get more than we can humanly express. Our home is open to other priesthood members and/or Saints and families, that would like to come worship and/or fellowship. Please feel free to make contact through the Domestic Outreach Program of the Conference of Restoration Elders, (CRE). Contact information is on the inside front cover of *Tidings of Zion*.

**A Young Missionary**

By Alicia Mahoney
Stoney Creek, Ontario, Canada

**Being** 16 years old, it might come as a surprise to some just how much I love and am interested in the Church. Well, maybe not to some who are surrounded by Restoration youth in their daily lives, but it does come as a surprise to people at the swimming pool who have never even heard of the Restoration!

There is no Restoration Branch in the Hamilton, Ontario Canada and hasn’t been since the split in the Church in the late eighties. But that doesn’t stop me from getting excited about God! Even at the pool I am thinking about how much I love my Heavenly Father as I try to perfect the technique in my front crawl. I am always so excited and happy to share my love of God with others, and I am determined to be a missionary and spread that love each day. I was presented with the perfect opportunity just the other week at the pool!

There is an older lady who I usually chat a little with at the pool, because we used to be in classes together. A few weeks ago, while I was swimming again, she came and said, “Hello.” Every once in a while, she would come over while we were swimming and ask us how we were doing, what we were doing in class, and just to chit-chat. Eventually, she asked me that one question that left me the perfect opportunity to share our faith! She asked me what grade I was in, and if I wanted to go to college or university. At first, I didn’t recognize the opportunity, so I said the usual “Everyone’s always told me I should be a lawyer, but that’s not what I want to do,” speech. Then I was going to tell her I didn’t know what I wanted to do yet, recognized my opportunity, and I felt compelled to tell her, “I want to be a missionary!”, I wasn’t expecting her to be as excited as she was,

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**Doctrine and Covenants 17:1**
The rise of the church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, it being regularly organized and established agreeably to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April; which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jr., who was called of God and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church; and to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the second elder of this church, and ordained under his hand; and this according to the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, both now and forever. Amen.
which, in turn, made me so excited! So, for the last few minutes before public swim ended, we had a long and exciting conversation about religion. We talked about a lot of things, including our Church, the Restoration branches, the split-off, religion in schools, how we feel sad that some people don’t believe in God, and lots of other things.

When she said that she doesn’t go to church anymore, but was thinking of going again, I invited her to join us when we have priesthood over. She didn’t answer me about ever joining us, but I am making it a matter of prayer. As public swim ended and we had to part ways, she told me about how excited my brother and I had made her that young people are interested in religion. It was such an exciting experience for me as well! I usually see her at the same time every week at the pool, and last week, I was given another opportunity to talk about God. This time, I was able to share some about our Church’s history. She thinks religion is beautiful, so don’t worry, I wasn’t boring her! She was very engaged in our conversation, and we both talked about how much we love testimonies, and how amazing they are. I was more than excited to share about some of the amazing work that God has done in my life, and one of the ways that the Holy Spirit has moved in my family. She shared a testimony with me, and we continued to talk more about how we feel bad for those people who don’t believe, those who don’t know about or believe in the Love, Hope, Forgiveness, Charity, and much more, that God is and has for them. I have been so very blessed to know the priesthood members, as well as the other Saints, that I do. The ones that make an effort to visit us, or being in the presence of the ones that we can visit, make me happier than they will ever know.

My experience might seem average to some, but to a young girl who day-dreams about doing missionary work, and being able to show other people that God loves them, it was encouraging to know that I can make a difference in doing my best to work for the Lord.

2017 Priesthood and Men’s Retreat

By Steve Kropp
Napoleon, MO

Sponsored by: Central Missouri Restoration Branches, Conference of Restoration Elders, and Pastors of Zion held at Oak Grove Restoration Branch, Oak Grove, MO

On Thursday, January 19 and Saturday, January 21, 2017, nearly 100 priesthood and men from the surrounding areas of the Center Place joined together for worship and classes as a part of the annual priesthood education offering.

This is the first year that non-priesthood were invited as the invitation was sent to all priesthood and those men in our congregations truly searching for the Lord’s guidance in their lives. The 96 men that registered their names in attendance were challenged to “Seek first for Wisdom and all other things shall be added to them.”

Teachers for the classes began with Elder David Gilmour from Colburn Road and Steve Kropp from the Wellington congregation. The Thursday night classes provided food for thought relative to the topic and the following: “The first step to wisdom is silence, the second is listening.”

High Priest Paul Gage presided over the prayer and testimony service to start the day Saturday morning. The service provided a solid spiritual foundation for the classes following. Elder Brian Schultz from the Columbia, MO branch and Vim Horn from Oak Grove provided the classes. It was noted in the class sessions that the Restoration has sought and searched for many things since 1984, however, one of the things we stand most in need of is wisdom. “If any of you lack wisdom……….”

The classes ended on Saturday just after noon with three prayers: One recognizing the sovereignty of God, one thanking Him for the restored gospel and the truth that He delivered to mankind, and the third petitioned His guidance and that we might use the wisdom He brought to our minds during the worship and class time.
My Encounter With The Three Nephites

By William Settles
Aurora, Illinois

This experience took place almost 40 years ago, but background is needed to fully understand.

My younger sister was a year behind me in school and hoped to attend an expensive, out-of-state university that friends also planned to attend. My parents were average, middle-class people and I knew that they would find it difficult to support two of us at a university. A friend’s mother told me that the drug store where she worked often hired high school boys, and so I applied and got the job. I would spend the next seven years working there in every department.

With good grades I was able to obtain a scholarship for my tuition, but was responsible for my room and meals in the dorm, plus books and other personal items. I tried each semester to schedule my classes so that I could work three days each weekend like Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, or Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, so I could earn the money necessary, and only one semester did I have to ask my dad for help.

This meant that every weekend I had to drive some 30 plus miles home to work for three days in the drug store. For the first several years this trip back and forth generally went with only small problems. However, one day on a Friday, I awoke to a day with heavy rain, and dark clouds. I did not look forward to the drive home as I knew it would be slow with possible accidents along the way.

For the first eight to ten miles things went very slow and only a few cars were able to pass. It finally looked clear for me to pass. Suddenly the older lady in the car ahead of me began to make a left turn. I could see her white face and hair in my headlights. I knew if I hit her broadside it could kill her and me. I knew the road had a very steep ditch. All this time it was raining hard, but I had to act very quickly and decided that the ditch was the only answer. After hitting the ditch bottom very hard I sat there for a couple of minutes, before turning off the engine as I was not sure if I had damaged the gas tank.

I got out in the rain and slowly worked my way to the top of the deep ditch wondering how far I would have to go for assistance. At the top of the ditch was a dark green middle-size truck with three men standing behind it with a chain in their hands. They were all dressed alike in dark work clothes and were of short height, with dark complexion like they were Latin American.

We walked toward each other and they said to me, “We are here to help you.” I said that I did not have any money to pay, unless I could send it to them.” They said it was not necessary and immediately went down into the ditch to attach the chain to my car. In a few minutes my car was sitting at the top of the deep ditch and I walked around it and saw no real damage for its rough descent. The three men walked toward their truck and I went after them to thank them and to shake hands. They said they were glad to help me and were gone immediately.

I walked over to my car to see if it would start after such a rough experience. It started immediately. After letting it run for a few minutes I was on my way home. My car never did need any repairs from the experience.

To this day I can only conclude that the Lord sent the Three Nephites to assist me in a special time of need and to also give me a testimony to give me faith of greater strength. If you look at all the many coincidences you cannot imagine my shock to find three men standing in the rain at the top of a deep ditch exactly when I had need of them. The Lord knew my need for help. I can still close my eyes after the many years since this happened and see each event exactly as it happened that day and the faces of the three men.
Hope, Faith, and Desire through the Resurrection

By Mrs. W. Wallace (Rosamond) Smith

Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruit of them that slept—1 Corinthians 15:12, 13, 14, 20 I.V. The darkest and saddest hour in history—the crucifixion of Christ—was turned into history’s most crowning glory and mankind’s brightest hope when Christ arose from the grave and made possible, for all, the resurrection of the dead.

In a well-known picture painted by Watts, a young lady is sitting blind-folded upon a darkened globe; in her hand is a harp with all the strings broken but one, which is “Hope.” This picture has been spoken of as being typical of the feeling of the disciples after they had seen their Savior crucified. All of their strings had been broken—even of that hope. For the love and ministry of Christ had caused them to want to leave even their homes and loved ones and follow him in order to bring this same ministry to others. They had great visions of power and glory and service to mankind. Then cruel men nailed him to the cross and crucified him. As his friends laid him in the tomb, their hopes and visions went with him. Then the great miracle happened. An angel in shimmering white proclaimed, “He is not here; he is risen.” They were transformed into a new faith and hope and followed him to the ends of the earth. This time there was a new and different glory—a new promise—a demonstration of newness of life and eternity. Their Lord had died, but he had risen from the dead; they had both seen and talked with him.

Christ’s profoundly significant statement, “Because I live, ye shall live also,” filled all who heard and believed with a new hope, faith, and desire for eternal life. And because of it people rejoiced for yet another reason: they had made the discovery that Christ was still available. And man has rejoiced from that day until now with the continued promise that Christ is still available in our lives. Who is there in these modern times who would not like to repeat the words of hope as recorded in Philippians 3:10: “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.”

If we did not have hope and faith in the rewards which have been promised us upon obedience to and persistence in living in harmony with the gospel as restored by Joseph Smith, men would not have an incentive to advance in all fields of industry, science, the arts and religion. Therefore we should all be more diligent in performing our tasks here upon this earth, each according to his own ability. We should indeed be faithful stewards of our time, talents, and material possessions.

Parents need to consider more seriously their responsibility of seeing that their children are instructed and baptized when eight years old; and parents should set an example by living wholesome, intelligent, spiritual lives. All of us are called to come up higher and reflect the life of Christ in our everyday living. Only thus shall Zionic homes be builted.

Christ’s revealments after his crucifixion, typified love, obedience, and doubt. As he revealed himself to Mary Magdalene, he recognized her devotion and love. He next appeared to a band of women hastening from the empty tomb to announce the resurrection to the apostles. This, of course, was in obedience to the angelic command.

Christ recognized Peter’s great repentance. Then Christ revealed himself to the two who were journeying to Emmaus, a city about twelve miles from Jerusalem. They said of him, “We trusted that it had been he!” (Isn’t this like many of us today? We rather believe in Christ and his teachings, but not in too definite or personal a way.)
Those people wanted to believe but just didn’t have enough faith. Here we are made to see that Christ sympathizes or pities those of us who find it difficult to believe. I believe he recognized their honest doubt. This should give us more patience with those who have either lost faith, or who, because of certain temperaments, find it hard to believe.

Also Jesus spoke kindly to Thomas who was both skeptical and doubting, which shows further compassion and sympathy. Thomas’s faith was weak; he needed to actually touch the nail prints and put his hand into the wounded side. This is one of the most human and touching scenes recorded in Christ’s ministry here upon earth. It is related that Jesus entered and spoke to this disciple: “Thomas reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.” Then it was that Thomas, almost overcome with knowledge, answered, “My Lord! And my God!”

This recorded scene has great importance to all of us who have need to learn more charity and sympathy. Christ was patient and understanding of this disciple. He could easily have reproved Thomas, but rather, in effect, he said, “I understand, Thomas; here are my hands! You have that kind of temperament; all people are different.” How often we criticize people because they do not believe or see or react as we do; and in many instances, we haven’t the opportunity to explain our motives or our actions. How helpful it would be if we could practice the art of understanding. The following poem illustrates the result of our failure to understand.

She drew off her life’s bitter brew—
And, by a chemistry she knew,
Each night she yielded God her soul,
Each dawn she gave her a golden bowl
All who tasted were vivified
But one, with solemn visage, sighed

Heartache, failure, disaster—
Distilled it into laughter.
Emptied, earthy, and dim;
Bubbling over the brim.

By the utter joy she offered,
“She’s probably never suffered.”

– Woodbridge O. Johnson

We are told that Jesus conquered death because he had always lived without sin. Because he was without sin, he had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again. The only truly powerful life, then, is the sinless one. This knowledge is a constant reminder for us to come closer to Christ in our daily living. This we can do or not—it is our own choice; for in the very beginning, as recorded in Genesis 2:19-21 of the Inspired Version of the Bible, man was given his free agency. But what is so significant to me is the fact that as we were given this agency, we also were asked to assume responsibility and accountability. Here we are reminded in part: “Thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but remember that I forbid it” (Genesis 2:21, I.V.)

As the events leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ are brought to us again this Easter season, it is well for us to ask ourselves; how has it affected our individual lives? Is our daily living purposeful? Are we humbly and diligently preparing our lives now for eternity?

So challenging and appropriate, especially in this atomic age, is Amulek’s warning: For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold, the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors. . .Therefore I beseech of you, that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness, wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say
this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. –Alma 16:228-232

“What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” asked Pilate of the people when Jesus was brought before him in the Roman court at Jerusalem. He didn’t want the responsibility of making the verdict. How can we, individually, answer this question? Perhaps by evaluating our lives in the following manner: Do we just barely believe in this restored gospel and remain indifferent? Have we lost faith and become discouraged? Do we need to develop a sure personal conviction? (It is important to realize that this sure conviction is often obtained by losing one’s self in service to others.) Have we converted one soul to Christ?

I am challenged and inspired anew to begin here and now to perform those duties which are in accordance to my talents, hopes, and desire. I firmly believe that were it not for the doctrine of the Resurrection we would have no promise of rewards worthy to call forth desire strong enough to establish hope. And without hope we would hardly be capable of being inspired by faith. Indeed, we would be as Paul says: “If in this life only, we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.” Herald Reprint (Date not known)

Testimony of Moroni

By Linda Smith, Butler, MO

I have been impressed several times lately to share this testimony. Is not my testimony, but the testimony of my husband, Ron Smith, his mother, Velma Smith, and Moroni.

In April of 1966, my husband and I lived in Buckner, MO. We had a phone call from his father, Ward Smith, who lived in Lapeer, Michigan, while building a church there. He told us that his wife, Velma, was given seven days to live. The doctors had found colon cancer. There were two tumors and one was blocking her colon.

Ron was working at Allis Chalmers and notified his boss that we needed to go to Michigan. We drove from Buckner, Missouri to Lapeer, Michigan, arriving early in the morning. Later in the morning, Lyn Smith took us to the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. Velma had a lot of tubes, IV’s, in her and we almost didn’t recognize her. Ron sat down next to his mother to visit with her. At that time, he related an experience of a lady in Arizona who had cancer and Moroni came to her.

She was in a Catholic hospital with Catholic nurses and a protestant doctor. The doctor came in her room before surgery and was elevated off the floor when he walked in. There was a personage sitting by her bed. The doctor asked who it was and the lady told the doctor it was Moroni. She proceeded to tell the doctor who Moroni was and about the Book of Mormon.

The lady was then taken to surgery where Moroni stood next to the doctor. After surgery, Moroni told the doctor this lady was a chosen vessel of God and would be ready to go home in three days. The doctor laughed and replied that after surgery like this it would be more like three weeks.
Moroni stayed with the lady for three days. After that the doctor and nurses were no longer elevated when they went into her room. The curiosity of the doctor led him to tell the nurse that they would look at the incision. When they pulled the bandages back, there was a fine scar. She went home that day.

Ron told his mother it was possible that Moroni could be with her as there was to be a special administration that evening. Velma said, “Maybe so, son.”

That evening, Ward Smith, Carlos Smith, and Patriarch Jim McBride administered to Velma. The rest of the family went to the large waiting room to wait and pray. Unbeknownst to us, Ron was praying for Moroni to come and heal his mother. When the men finished the administration, they came out of her room and nothing was said. Ron was devastated.

The next morning, which was Easter, we met with the Saints in Lapeer, Michigan. Afterwards, we all went back to the trailers to change clothes and went to the hospital. When Ron had changed, he went to his father’s trailer. While there his uncle Carlos came in and asked Ward if Jim had told him there was a fourth set of hands on Velma’s head. Jim had told him it was Moroni. Ron was elated and turned pale. His dad asked him if he was okay. He said he was and would tell him later why he was pale.

When we got to the hospital, Velma had been to x-ray. The tumor that was taking her life had shrunk. A few days later it was gone. She was sent home. Her last wish was to see her first grandchild. I was three months pregnant. We traveled back to Buckner and six months later, Ron called his folks to say they had a beautiful granddaughter. They drove down to Independence, Missouri and saw Dana Gayle. When Velma saw her, she started getting bad again as the other tumor was growing. They stayed with us for a week and went back to Michigan.

When Dana was two months old, her grandma died. Velma’s body was shipped to Speaks Funeral Home. They said hers’ was the largest visitation they had ever had. People were there who went to grade school with Velma. One lady who went to school with Ron and Sam asked Ron how he could stand next to his mother’s casket. He told her his mother wasn’t in the casket, she was near his shoulder and anytime he needed her, she was right there.

Later, Sam asked Patriarch Jim McBride how he knew it was Moroni with them in Velma’s administration. He told Sam that he had seen him twice before. The first time was when he was praying about a church building in Clio, Michigan. Moroni told him who to contact for permits, etc. and who to notify for building construction, which is how Ward and Carlos Smith went to Michigan to build one church and ended up building 14 altogether in the Detroit, Michigan area.

The second visit was during a prayer service. Brother McBride was presiding. Moroni came in and sat next to Aunt Geneva who was to have thyroid surgery that week. Moroni told Brother McBride to reassure Aunt Geneva that the surgery would go smoothly and successfully. Geneva lived to be 94 years old.

Book of Mormon  Moroni 1:27-30
And again, I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift nor the unclean thing. And awake and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion, and strengthen thy stakes, and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.

Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind, and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ: and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in no wise deny the power of God. And again, if ye, by the grace of God, are perfect in Christ and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father, unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy without spot.
2017 Restoration Branch Reunions

June 5-10  
Zion’s Ridge  
Independence, MO  
Contact: Ray Lane 816-650-6573

June 10-17  
Central Missouri Restoration Branches  
Odessa Hills Campgrounds  
Odessa, MO  
Contact: odessahills.com or 816-230-4000  
or Judi Smith 816-633-4199

June 11-17  
South Crysler Restoration Branch  
Graceland University  
Lamoni, Iowa  
Contact: Todd Schoenemann 816-796-6945  
Registrars: Paul and Lynette Davis 816-795-0703

June 25-30  
Restoration Branch Family Reunion and Conference of Restoration Elders  
Sponsored by the CRE and Pastors of Zion  
Independence, MO  
at Waldo Avenue Restoration Branch/CPRS  
Contact CRE Office 816-836-3421, or eldersconference.org

July 1-8  
Buckner Restoration Branch  
Odessa Hills Campgrounds  
Odessa, MO  
Contact: Eric Baker 816-765-8802

July 22-29  
Woodbine Iowa Reunion  
Little Sioux, Iowa  
Contact: Mic Coolman 712-310-7495

July 24-30  
Great Lakes Regional Reunion  
Vassar, Michigan  
Contact: Helen Danicke 248-651-3208

July 24-30  
Northwest Regional Reunion  
Vancouver, Washington  
Contact: Brian Herren 503-949-2484

July 29-Aug 4  
Kirtland Area Family Reunion  
Temple Grove, Transfer, Pennsylvania  
Contact: Peter Peterson 440-862-1029

July 29-Aug 5  
Maine Restoration Reunion  
Brooksville, Maine  
Contact: Eddie Faulkingham 207-348-2297

If any additional camps, retreats, or reunions should be listed or any corrections needed, please notify the CRE Office at 816-836-3421 or Paul Gage at pauljg_64055@yahoo.com
2017 Restoration Branch Youth Camps

IOWA
June 11-17 Jr. High-Sr. High at Little Sioux, Iowa
   Contact: Dave and Karla Hamblen 402-659-8211
June 9-13 Junior Camp at Little Sioux, Iowa
   Contact: Gina Birdsall 712-456-2048

GREAT LAKES REGION
July 9-15 Jr. High and Sr. High Zion’s Youth Camp Woodlands Campground Hale, MI
   Contact: Shaun and Michelle Turner 616-951-2138 or 616-881-6309

MISSOURI
CENTRAL MISSOURI RESTORATION BRANCHES
Odessa Hills Campgrounds, Odessa, MO
Genesis 9:22 “Embrace the Truth”

May 21-27 Older Youth Directors: Ron and Raylene Buckles
June 4-8 Junior Camp Directors: Mark and Jamie Bendorf
June 18-24 Senior High Camp Directors: Stu and Milee Gage
June 25-July 1 Junior High Camp Directors: Justin and Tiffany Jones

RESTORATION CAMPING INC. (RCI)
Go to RCICamps.org for more information.
June 5-9 Walk the Talk (grades 10-13) Odessa Hills
June 24-30 Mountain Camp (grades 10-13) Colorado
July 8-14 Leadership Camp (grades 10-13) Odessa Hills
July 9-15 Bountiful (grades 7-9) Odessa Hills
July 16-22 Mammoth Camp (grades 9-13) Lake of the Ozarks
July 23-26 Tiona (Girls grades 4-7) Odessa Hills
July 26-29 Liahona (Boys grades 4-7) Odessa Hills

NORTHWEST REGION (Oregon/Washington)
July 30 - August 5 Grades 6-12 at Yacolt, WA Contact: Dustin Mason 360-931-1738

TEXAS
July 5-9 2000 Strong Adventure Camp
   Camp begins at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, July 5 and concludes Sunday, July 9. There are two camps held concurrently. A youth camp for ages 8-18 and a young adult camp for those 18-25 (or close to 25). The camps are held at the Collin County Adventure, 1180 W. Houston St, Anna, TX. The Collin County Adventure Camp is staffed and managed by the Dallas Metropolitan YMCA. For more information, go to www.2000strong.us or contact Jerry Skotak @ 214-574-3051 or jskotak@verizon.net.
Calendar of Events

WOMEN’S RETREAT – PARKERSBURG, WV RB
Saturday, March 25, 2017
Contact: Renee Webster at rjb_2bnzion@yahoo.com

CENTRAL MISSOURI
ODESSA HILLS CAMPGROUNDS AT ODESSA, MO

Spring Retreat Dates 2017  Philippians 3:14 “Pressing towards the Mark”

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CONFERENCE OF RESTORATION ELDERS/PASTORS OF ZION
CHURCH HERITAGE WEEK EVENTS
Sunday, April 2, 2017 at Waldo Avenue RB: 8:30am prayer service followed by 10am Combined Restoration Branch Sacrament Service.
Other events planned for Tues. April 4 and Thursday April 6. Details TBA.

MISSOURI: COLBERN ROAD RESTORATION BRANCH PREACHING SERIES
Sunday, April 23 AM and PM and Monday (24) and Tues (25) evenings
Elder Brian Herren from Salem, Oregon

OHIO/PENNSYLVANIA/WEST VIRGINIA REGIONAL MEETING
Sunday April 23, 2017 in Kirtland, OH...9:45am-Noon

NORTHWEST REGIONAL EVENTS
Women’s Retreat April 28-30, 2017...............Men’s Retreat May 19-21, 2017
Summer Preaching Series June 2-4, 2017......Contact Brian Herren at 503-949-2484 for details.

CRE WOMEN’S COUNCIL SCHEDULE FOR 2017
Spring Retreat  Sat. April 8: Details forthcoming
Fall Retreat    Sept. 23-24  Odessa Hills Campgrounds
The Women’s Council functions to serve the women of the Restoration.
Contact Chair, Deana Griffin at 816-254-2806 for information about ministry and events.

CRE ANNUAL KIRTLAND PRIESTHOOD RETREAT
September 16-17, 2017

CENTER PLACE RESTORATION SCHOOL
26th Annual Restoration Celebration “To Change a Heart”
A drama presented by CPRS to assist with the tuition assistance program.
Friday, March 31, 2017  7 PM and Saturday, April 1, 2017 7 PM School Auditorium.
For more information, contact CPRS at 816-252-1715
Go Ye into all the World...

African Restoration Ministries (ARM)
African Restoration Ministries (ARM) Mission trips are planned to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya and Nigeria in 2017. There will be a women’s retreat in Kenya in April, and a Pan-African priesthood retreat in July/August and a youth retreat in August. The final work on the Book of Mormon translation is going forward. In Nigeria, there will also be a youth retreat, a women’s retreat, and a missionary trip in the fall of 2017. The Lord has been moving in amazing ways to further the work of the kingdom on the African continent.

Greater European Ministries (GEM)
See article in this issue by Brian Mundy.

Latin American Missions Board (LAMB)
Elder Antonio Orellana from Honduras serves as the National Minister and Seventy Juan Reyes, and wife, Tina, provide ministry in Mexico.

Southeast Asia and Australia Ministries (SEAAM)
Missionary Trip to the Philippines, Elder Murray Broughton, Euroa, Victoria, Australia
Dear Saints around the world, as you might suppose, it is impossible to write down everything that happens on such journeys as we share in the Philippines. This is much like any missionary trip taken, no matter where it is. Truly as the hymn says, “His Saints are lovely in His sight, He views His children with delight.” Every day we were involved in preaching, teaching, visiting, performing the various ordinances of the church and whatever else the Lord wanted us to do. It is also difficult to name all those we were involved with, but know, for sure, they are holding on to the precious Rod of Iron. I would mention some of the local priesthood who are so vital to the ongoing, daily work. Elder Ace De Vera, Priest Julius Candido, and Deacons Richard Candido, Constantino Natino Jr. and Joel Natino. Books and many other materials are constantly being requested and supplied to meet the needs of the Saints in Luzon. There were nine baptisms during this mission.

Thank you to the South East Asia and Australian Ministries Board (SEAAM) of the Conference of Restoration Elders (CRE) and many others for your time and effort for sending the books. A BIG THANK YOU also to those brothers and sisters in Christ from Queensland, Adelaide, New South Wales and Saints from America for all the donations financially. It is a big help especially the people in need. I cannot thank you enough. Only God knows your generosity and kindness to the less fortunate!

All the missionary boards have a need for financial assistance to be able to continue the ministry in the world. Funds are used to help with travel expenses of those who go abroad, for the educational programs and to provide needed materials for teaching and training of priesthood and members, as well as providing vehicles for transporting the missionaries and local priesthood. Checks can be made out to the CRE and on the memo line designate where you want your donation to go. You can designate any of the above named groups, one of the councils, the CRE General Fund, Tidings of Zion or any area of your interest. Thanks to all who have supported these efforts. God bless you.
**Announcements:**

**ADDRESS CHANGES**
Please notify the CRE Office staff of any changes in your mailing address, phone number, email address, church or marital status, etc. Also, please notify us if you wish to discontinue receiving the *Tidings of Zion*. All contact information is on the inside front cover of each *Tidings of Zion*.

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**
There is a great need for additional help in funding the *Tidings of Zion*. The cost is about $6000 per issue depending on how many copies are printed, sent, and the postal rates. The *Tidings of Zion* currently goes into 4400 homes around the world, including 48 states of the USA as well as Australia, Canada, England, Germany, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Nepal, the Philippines, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

Usually we print between 4800 and 5000 copies so we can send, by flat rate boxes, a larger number to Honduras, Kenya, Nepal, and the northern and southern islands of the Philippines to be distributed to the Saints in scattered areas.

As far as circulation, the *Tidings of Zion* probably reaches more homes than any other Restoration magazine. If 25-30 branches, groups, or individuals could contribute $1000 per year, it should cover the cost for *Tidings of Zion*. Some branches and individuals are already doing this and it is VERY MUCH APPRECIATED. Checks can be made out to the CRE and in the memo line, write, “Tidings of Zion.”

As treasurer of the CRE I would like to thank you for your response to the financial needs that were mentioned in the last Tidings. **Remember just as you have monthly obligations to meet for your home the CRE also has monthly obligations to meet.**
Ray Lane, Treasurer, CRE

**SHARE WITH US!**
Please send your articles, testimonies, branch news, youth activities, regional events, etc. Send to the CRE c/o Publication Council. Contact information is on the inside front cover of each *Tidings of Zion*.

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**LIVE STREAMING OF SERVICES**
- Oak Grove RB
  
  http://www.ogrb.org/video.html

- Waldo Avenue RB
  
  https://www.waldoavenuerestorationbranch.org

**CD’S, DVD’S**
Many branches record services and will send copies to those who so desire. One is Oakwood RB in Michigan. Contact Dennis Smith at 248-961-6487.

Let us know if your branch also livestreams and/or sends out CD/DVD’s

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**READER’S COMMENTS**

I really appreciate getting the Tidings of Zion to keep me up on events in the Restoration. Keep up the good work. I remember you in my prayers.

*Al Lind, Preston, Missouri*

The Tidings of Zion is what I look forward to receiving in the mail. It is a great source of strength to me.

*Wayne Snell, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada*

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**New Life in Christ, Abundant and free**
What glories shine, what joys are mine
What wondrous blessings I see.
My past with its sin, the searching and strife, forever gone! there’s a bright new dawn!

**FOR IN CHRIST**
**I HAVE FOUND NEW LIFE!**
Then go to the house of the Lord, then go to the house of the Lord,

Colbern Road RB
Lee’s Summit, Missouri

Kingsville, Missouri RB

Vancouver, Washington RB

Tagum City RB
Tagum City, Mindanao, Philippines

Euroa, Victoria, Australia RB

With anthems and songs of thanksgiving and praise
Let us go to the house of the Lord.