

Women of the Restoration

FROM THE RESTORATION WOMEN'S COUNCIL, CONFERENCE OF RESTORATION ELDERS

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2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

January 24

RWC New Years Brunch

Colbern Road Restoration Branch
9 AM – Noon

April 11

RWC Spring One-Day Retreat

Waldo Restoration Branch

September 26–27

Fall Retreat

Odessa Hills

For more information about the 2015 activities or to register, please call Mary Prater 816-277-8885.

THEMES FOR 2015

The main theme for 2015 is *Jabez's Prayer*.

The tri-year themes are:

1. Bless me indeed
2. Expand my coast
3. Thine hand might be on me and keep me from evil

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"Gifted Hands"

"GOD IS CALLING YOU TO BE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Behold, do men light a candle and put it under a bushel? Nay, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Therefore, let your light so shine before this world, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16-18)

As the end of 2014 draws near, it is appropriate to spend time counting our blessings and considering how well the light of Christ has shone in our lives. The time we have spent in God's presence should be evident in our lives – in the way we do our work, in our attitude toward others, and our willingness to offer service. Sunday worship is a blessing that can strengthen our resolve to be obedient and cheerful in our warfare but it is not enough to grow us into the people of God's Zion. All the hours of each day are opportunities to shine the light of Jesus into the lives of others. Beginning every day with time (that precious gift from God) in worship and seeking God's guidance and strength will equip us to be a light. In and of ourselves, we have no light. It is essential to look to God through Jesus to have light to share with others.

"The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single to the glory of God, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light which is in thee be darkness, how great shall that darkness be." Matthew 6:22-23

After starting our day with God, we need to be continuing in prayer as we go about our daily responsibilities. Oh how easy it is to be distracted, to become frustrated or worried. These things will cause our light to dim. But do not be discouraged. As we find ourselves leaning on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5) and we stumble, just looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) can reignite the light and get us back on the right path. God has blessed us with gifts and talents designed to bring the knowledge of Him to the people of this world. He is the light that shines through us to entice others to have a desire to learn about our Heavenly Father and His precious Son. Oh what wonderful joy it is to have a relationship with Jesus. Let us share this knowledge with others that their joy maybe full and we can rejoice together. Shine brightly God's love and watch what can happen in 2015.

RWC

Called to be the Light of the World

Kay Williams, Excelsior Springs, MO

We should be constantly alert to winning souls to Christ, because soul-winning is our great responsibility! "...therefore, let your light so shine before this world, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matt 5:18."

In my Sunday school class of kindergarteners a few years ago, I had probably made an unwise decision to use lighted candles, as a prop, while singing the song "This Little Light of Mine." The children were delighted to turn out the lights in the room and sing with their candles burning brightly. When we came to the verse, "don't let Satan blow it out - no!" each child inadvertently blew their candles out! For a few seconds they were completely still and of course the room was very dark, then one five year old boy jumped up and yelled, "Don't worry I'm going to let Jesus in!" He opened the classroom door and the light from the hallway flooded in! "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." 1 John 1:1-5

Are we always in the light, or is it only a temporary condition for most of us? Is the light within us on the dimmer switch and, if it is, what can we do to increase that light? "For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ; and the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world." DC 83:7b-c

During a class at a recent women's

retreat, the teacher had the women sing the children's song, "This little light of mine, I will let it shine, won't hide it under a bushel, NO." The teacher thought it might be a good idea to sing this together as a congregation once in a while also! We were asked what our bushel represented that we hid our light under. Several responded with some "BIG BUSHEL" answers: Pride, indifference, anger, being judgmental and one last response was comparison. Do we measure ourselves by someone else's achievements, to vie and compete with them or see if we are similar or equal in comparison to them? The scripture read, "...for the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light." God has given to every man, woman and child a portion of His Spirit (light) from birth. "Which was the true light, which lighteth every man who cometh into the world. John 1:9.

Perhaps someone has ignited that light within you by telling you about the gospel of Jesus Christ and then the desire within you, to be obedient, brought you to that covenant of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. My husband has shared often of his experiences in teaching pre-baptismal classes when he sees the light come into that person (whether they be young or old) and he knows that they are truly convicted. The joy of that moment is tremendous!

So our candles are brightly burning, yet from time to time the temptation to hide the flame always seems to creep in upon us. God knows this will happen, so He has provided a way for us to always remember Him and to keep our covenant with Him, by partaking of the sacrament, often. David Smith penned these words to a hymn: "We must not wait, for now the time is ours, and if I wait, another waits for me; We see the workings of contending powers; The darkness and the Holy light we see. Then let us render service to the Lord, and drive those clouds of fear and doubt away, that we may all rejoice with one accord until the dawning of that perfect day." (From "A Calm and Gentle Quiet Reigns Tonight".)





Thank You

from the Women's Council

Over the past few years the Council has appreciated all the hard work that Kay Williams and Nancy Huffman have done in service to the sisters of the Restoration. Nancy's computer skills enabled us to be on the CRE web page and set up an emailist to assist us in keeping the sisters of the Restoration notified of our various activities. Kay's wonderful sense of humor was contagious. Her sweet spirit and inspirational thoughts were always appreciated when we were planning our various activities. We wish them well as they continue to bring ministry and thank them for their service to the Council. We would like to introduce you to our two new members. Deana Griffin and Elyse McLeod have many gifts and talents of their own to contribute to the Council. We welcome them and look forward to serving with them.

Hello, I am **Deana Griffin**. In 1997, with my friend, Shirley Holloway, I gathered to Independence from Puyallup, Washington. *(We have many testimonies about that trip that we will need to share later.)*

I was born and raised in Klamath Falls, Oregon. I am a fourth generation Latter Day Saint and have always been active in church. My father was pastor of our congregation more than he wasn't and Mom was very involved in the women's group. I moved from Klamath Falls to Spain for two years and from there back to Oregon where I received my teaching degree, and then from there to Washington state.

I have been married to Lonnie Griffin for 15 years, and between us we have seven children, 12 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. The kids and grandkids are scattered across the states from west to east and south, so we don't get to see them often. We have two grandchildren here, which bring us great joy. Lonnie and I attend

Waldo Restoration Branch in Independence.

I am happy to be a part of the Restoration Women's Council. In the past I have served as a youth leader, Sunday school director, and Women's leader in different congregations.

My name is **Elyse McLeod**, and I'm happy to be serving as part of the Women's Council for the first time this year. I have been married to my husband, Josh McLeod, for 9 years. We have three children, Avery (7), Owen (4), and Kalan (1). I taught in Early Education classrooms for 5 years before making the switch to stay at home with my children. We also made the choice to become a home schooling family this year as well, and we are all enjoying learning together. We attend Outreach Restoration Branch, and for the past 4 years I have directed Vacation Bible School and enjoyed it so much I'll be doing it again! I enjoy working with children and serving the Lord, and I'm SO excited to be working with the Women's Council, too.

RESTING IN GOD'S HANDS by Erin Cornish, Columbia, MO

In a recent women's meeting, one of the questions in our book asked us "How has God provided you strength in the last year? What specific event or conversation caused you to seek His sustenance for your daily life? What did that look like?" A clear and definite progression of how the Lord had worked with me through my recent miscarriage came to my mind.

The first day I found out about my miscarriage I was devastated and grieving. There were a lot of tears and what ifs and just plain sadness. Over the next few days so many people reached out to me. There were meals, flowers, cards, text messages, phone calls and offers to watch the kids. Other women who'd had miscarriages told me of their experiences and cried with me. I was incredibly touched by the outpouring of love that I received from friends, family and church family. It really seemed as though I could tangibly feel everyone's love wrapping around me. This was number 1 in the progression – Feeling **LOVE**.

The next day as people continued to reach out; I spent some time in prayer and reading my scriptures. I believe in direct response to the love I was experiencing, all I could think about were my many blessings. Being a part of such a supportive family and church family was highest on my list. All of my many blessings were at the forefront of my mind all day. This was number 2 in the progression – Meditating on my **BLESSINGS**.

As I was counting my blessings, my thoughts naturally took the progression of how faithful God has been to me in the past. I began to think about how we had prayed for this baby before it was even conceived, just as we had prayed for our previous children. I began to contemplate on how we are here on this earth to prepare to meet God (Alma 16:228). I was beginning to trust that this experience could somehow be used for good and how my

response to this trial could help me to prepare to meet Him someday. In short, I was trusting God that this was all under His watchful eye and in His capable hands and plan. In fact, throughout the week, a line from one of our children's music CDs kept running through my head. "When I am afraid, I will trust in you, I will trust in you," Which brings me to number 3 in the progression – **TRUST**.

I came to this realization that I could trust God with my miscarriage. I could give my wishes and my control to Him and focus on His perfect plan. As I began to trust Him a resignation came over me. Almost involuntarily I said "God is good." I couldn't think of anything else to say. In my sadness I just said "God is good" over and over again. My trust had turned to Praise. And that was the final stage – **PRAISE**.

My husband, Peter, sang this hymn to me during our trial, and it pretty much sums up how I am feeling.



How Can I Keep From Singing?

What though the tempest loudly roar?
I hear the truth: it's living!
What though the darkness round me close?
Songs in the night it's giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?

Alma 16:119 says ". . . and he also gave them strength that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ."

Looking back on the experience of my miscarriage it almost doesn't seem possible, but I testify to you, that my sorrow truly was completely swallowed up in the joy of Christ. So to answer the first questions above, I felt like this is how the Lord worked with me to cause me to seek His sustenance for my daily life.

What did it look like?

LOVE, BLESSINGS, TRUST, PRAISE

Fall Women's Retreat

by Delores Champ, Oak Grove

Many women from several Restoration branches met together on a gorgeous fall weekend, Sept. 27–28, at the Odessa Hills Campground to bask in God's Spirit and worship and fellowship with one another. The theme was "God Is Calling You to Be the Light of the World."

We started Saturday with a hymn sing and devotional period. Then Cara Smith led us in opening our eyes to the opportunities for outreach around us. She spoke of the song we all grew up learning, "This Little Light of Mine." We all put 'bushels' over our 'light.' What bushels have you placed over yours that you need to work on removing? Fear, Pride, Discouragement, Anger, Comparisons, Insecurity, Physical Pain, Weariness, Grief, Guilt and Shame, Forgiving Others, Forgiving Yourself, Regrets, Disappointment? Some of these are not necessarily bad in and of themselves, but we need to either stop doing them, or, in the case of forgiving others, start.

Next, Sylvia Powell led a discussion on the Prayer of Jabez. This is found in I Chronicles 4:9, 10. Ask God what His will is in your life. Ask God how you can serve others. Ask God where He wants you to go; what He wants you to do. Step out of your comfort zone. Pray the prayer of Jabez and put on your holy armor each day.

Following a marvelous, yummy, delicious lunch, Sandy Hamar revealed how we could further expand our horizons, and expand



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our borders. We don't necessarily have to serve in a foreign country; opportunities also abound for service in our own back yards. That is why we need to ask God what He wants us to do, where He wants us to go. No matter where God wants to send you, be it here, 10 miles away, or 1000 miles away, be open, ready, and willing. If you do not get an answer to your prayer, pray anyway. If you want to change, you have to be willing to go. If you do not go after what you want, you'll never have it. If you don't ask, the answer will always be no. If you don't step forward, you will always be in the same place.

We had a craft period where we all decorated tote bags by stenciling lighthouses, beaming bright, on them. There are many creative women among our sisters! We also played "Name That Tune," and heard interesting history behind some of our well known, and well-loved hymns.

Saturday evening we heard light-shining testimonies from Christine Hedrick, Kim Augenstein, and Judy Smith (regarding Salome, an African woman), Elders Dave Keller and Hal Chadwick shared three videos of how others have shared their light – how a woman changed a blind man's sign for help into one so that more people would give to him; Matthew West's music video for "Do Something;" and one where a busy Mom wanted to meet her cousin at the airport for a brief visit and how things just kept getting in the way. But she was reminded, at the end of the day that the things she had ended up doing for OTHERS were

important, and she had shared her light with them in the ways that she served that day. Dave and Hal mentioned: stop worrying about what you cannot do and think of what you can do – for God, and for others. They spoke of people of light, good and true – mentioned in Ephesians.

Some of the Scriptures used were Matthew 5:16–18; Psalm 16:119; I Chronicles 4:9–10; Matthew 7:12–13; John 10:10; II Corinthians 12:8–20; Philippians 4:13; John 15:5–7; I Chronicles 16:11; Matthew 21:20; Isaiah 59:1–2; II Corinthians 10:4; II Timothy 1:7; Luke 12:35; Isaiah 6:6; Ether 1:48–69; Mark 10:51–54; Mosiah 2:12–20.

Will you be the one:

- **To take His light into a darkened world?**
- **To answer to His call?**
- **To stand when those around you fall?**

We were issued a challenge: Any time you have a negative thought, just acknowledge it with "I did it." Frustrations are negative thoughts. Ask God to help you see things from His perspective. Try to diminish those "I did its" over time. Go. Grow. Glow. Let your light so shine so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.

Sunday morning we shared again with hymn singing, prayers, and testimonies. It was a beautiful service. Then we shared brunch together and went our separate ways – to be a light to bring others to know God more fully.



Break Free and Let Your Light Shine

by Pat Chadwick

In the evening of our retreat we planned for the women to send up luminaries. After a day of being taught that we need to get out of our comfort zones and let our lights shine, it was an inspiring experience to send our lights up into the night sky. I was enthralled with how beautiful the luminaries we sent up were against the black sky. In the darkness they shone so brightly and spoke to my heart of the call that Christ has given us to be a light in this dark world.

One woman was having trouble getting her luminary to go up and so I helped her hold it a little longer while it heated up. Finally it took off but was still slow in rising and so got caught in the trees. She was very disappointed as the other luminaries rose up high and into the night sky while hers was stuck in a tree. I said a little prayer for her and then a sudden breeze came up, just a short little puff of air across the lake, and her luminary escaped the tree that held it down and flew up into the night sky. The woman gave a cry of joy as her luminary joined the others going up into the sky to shine its light into the dark night.

I thought how many times we

are like these luminaries, sometimes we are slow to get on fire, and we lag behind and get caught up in things of the world and can't seem to rise higher. Then God sends His Spirit, his puff of air as it were, and we are set free of that which binds us down; and then we can reach new heights and our light can shine brightly into the darkness of this world, lighting the way for others. Just as this woman was joyful that her luminary was flying high and giving light, what joy God must have to see us break loose from those things that bind us down and go forth into the darkness of this world to shine for Him.



Women's Leaders Luncheon

The women's leaders of the Restoration gathered together at Outreach Restoration Branch October 11 for a program followed by a luncheon furnished by the Restoration Women's Council. The keynote speaker was Jean Robison who reminded the ladies how important friendly visiting is, especially to our shut-ins. All of the leaders then shared what they were doing in their own congregations. Everyone came away with lots of new ideas. During lunch they had an opportunity to make new friends and renew old friendships. The activity was enjoyed by all.



Words of Wisdom

INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

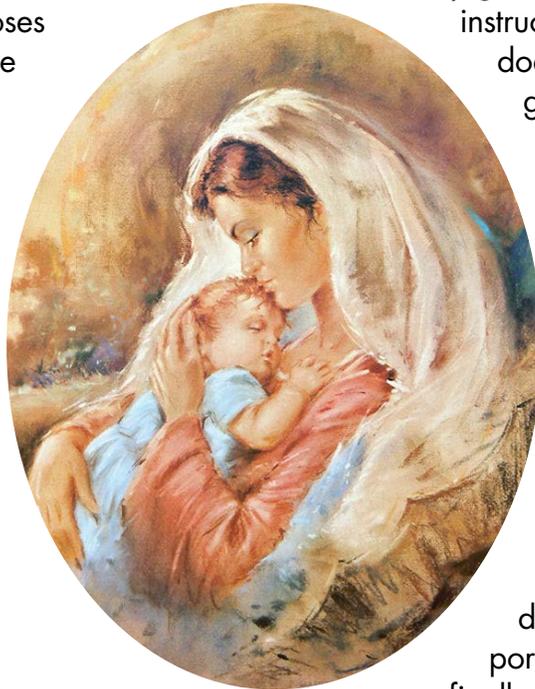
by Alicia Negaard

Another Angel

Imagine a mother playing with a toddler and baby on the floor in a shack. They are slaves to Pharaoh but she is happy watching her toddler roll a ball across the floor. She is happy to see her beautiful baby.

All her life she has known slavery. She has a good husband and they have a little bit of peace by keeping the taskmasters pleased. Darkness is nearing and her husband has not come back yet. She stirs the porridge on the fire.

They have decided that Moses is a crazed old man. Every time he says something their life has gotten harder. They don't really know this God that he talks about. No one they know or have ever known has seen this God. Yes, the river turned to blood and that was really hard but Pharaoh's magicians did the same. Yes, there were frogs, flies, and boils but those things just happen sometimes. There is always a logical explanation for each plague. Really, it is hard to understand why anyone believes



the plagues were the work of God.

Now, they have been told that if they don't put blood on their doorposts that their first born will die. She scoffs. Look at her daughter. She is lovely and so healthy running after that ball. Her husband is also a first born. He is the picture of

health. The taskmaster is always so pleased with his labors that he is able to bring home extras for the family. She shakes her head. That Moses is just plain crazy. I am glad we are done with him.

We aren't putting blood on our doorposts tonight. My goodness, to do that would draw flies. After that plague, who would want to attract any flies into their home to bother the baby? The light is getting fainter outside. The neighbors are busy gathering in their homes following the instructions for that strange meal. She

doesn't have a lamb and she isn't going to someone else's home to have one. Everyone knows it is the wrong season to eat lamb anyway. Far better to let the lambs grow. Much more meat that way.

She wonders where her husband could be. He does work later than the others most of the time. But the sun is down now and he is not home. The task master must have had something else for him to do tonight. Well, she would set the porridge aside for him to eat when he finally gets home. She is lucky to have

continued on next page

him. He is a good provider. She tucks the little ones into bed and lies down to shut her eyes to wait for his coming.

We all know that she awakens to sorrow. Her unbelief and neglect will cost her the lives of her husband and oldest child. We all want to reach across time and waken her and tell her Moses is a prophet—not crazy. We want to tell her, “Your lives depend on you doing what is right. Put some blood on your doorposts. Save your husband. Save your child.” But the history is closed. She will reap what she has sown.

There aren't many Saints that don't know at least the basics of the Word of Wisdom. Lack of knowledge doesn't prevent us from following it. Somewhere along the way we have stopped believing that it matters. We no longer believe that it matters for our health, stamina, wisdom or life. We have stopped believing that the God who created us and dictated Section 86 knows more than Dr. Oz. Just as surely as the woman in that story will awaken to sorrow, we too will awaken to sorrow.

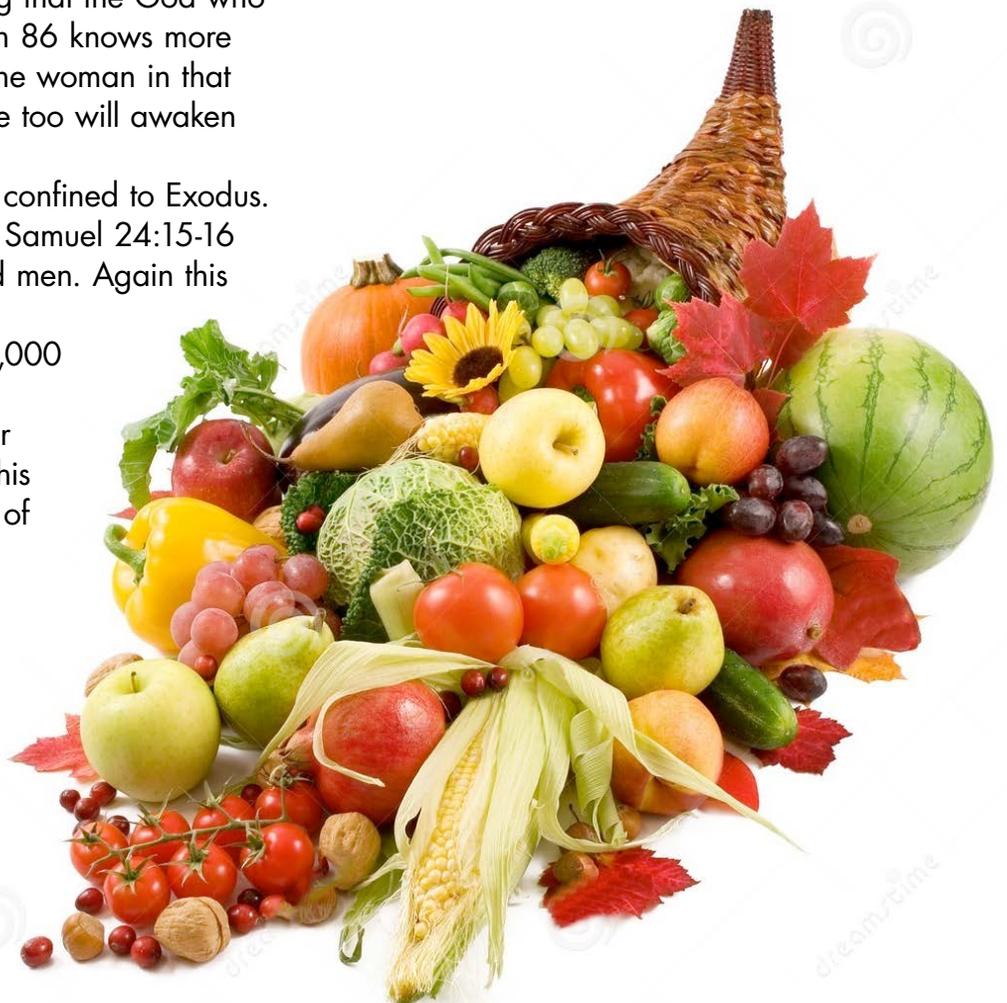
The destroying angel is not confined to Exodus. He makes an appearance in II Samuel 24:15-16 where he destroys 70 thousand men. Again this angel appears in II Kings 19:35 and destroys 185,000 Assyrians in a single night.

In two stories over a quarter of a million people died from this angel of destruction. The book of Revelation makes clear that the future destruction coming will be even greater. “And the four angels were loosed . . . for to slay the third part of men.” Revelation 9:15. Using figures from 2013 that will be 2.4 billion people slain.

Just as the Lord prepared an escape for the children

of Israel, He has prepared an escape for us. They were to paint their doorposts with the blood of a slain lamb. We are told the destroying angel passed those homes without entering and causing death. How are we to escape? Section 86:3c-d tells us that if we obey the Word of Wisdom and “are walking in obedience to the commandments” that “I, the Lord, give unto them a promise that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel and not slay them.”

Yes the story of the mother in Israel is fiction. We don't have any actual accounts of Israelites on the night of Passover disobeying the Lord's warning. The question is will we have modern accounts of Saints ignoring the warning in Section 86? How many of us will be destroyed for refusing to heed its warning? The time is now to follow its wisdom. The time is now to follow Christ.





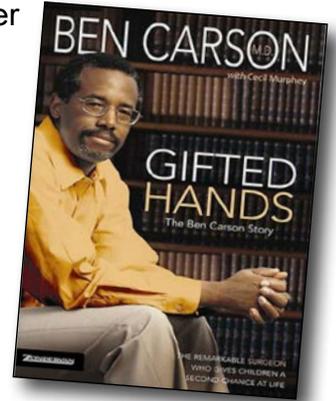
Inspirational Book Corner

Reviewed by Suzanne Bendorf, Warrensburg, MO

"Gifted Hands"

Authors, Ben Carson, MD and Cecil Murphey

Ben Carson grew up in the inner city and was encouraged by his mother that he could do anything he set his mind to and more. She, being one of 24 siblings and married at the age of 13, believed that her 2 sons would excel and encouraged them every step of the way to work hard and succeed. He persevered working hard to achieve his dream of becoming a neurosurgeon. Through his diligence, he became the first neurosurgeon to successfully separate Siamese twins. He realized he had gifted hands that could do extremely delicate procedures, and acknowledged this was a God given talent. The book tells his life story as well as sharing fascinating surgical cases giving children a second chance to have a normal life. He speaks openly of how the power of prayer and faith played a huge role in giving hope to many hopeless situations. This is a book that would encourage young and old alike to turn to God for the strength to do the seemingly impossible and to never give up.



Zondervan Publications, 224 pages, available at Amazon, Christian Bookstores, and Wal-Mart for \$6.00.

To receive updates on RWC activities email us. Or go online at stg.eldersconference.org, click on the Councils tab, then **Women's Council**. For updates of Council information, newsletters you can download, lists of women's leaders, classes available from the Women's Council, forms, and other information.

The Women's Council is a part of the Conference of Restoration Elders. It operates under the guidance and direction of that Conference.

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