

Zion's Advocate

*"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost...."
1 Nephi 3:187*

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—APOSTLE JEFFREY OLDHAM—



—BISHOP BRANDON TARBELL—

**"AS THEY MINISTERED TO THE LORD, AND FASTED, THE HOLY GHOST SAID,
SEPARATE ME BARNABAS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK
WHEREUNTO I HAVE CALLED THEM."
—ACTS 13:2—**

Photos courtesy of Jennifer Yates

~ In This Issue ~

SERMON—To the Law and to the Testimony - Apostle Roland Sarratt	39
FROM THE ARCHIVES—1928 Conference	44
GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION— Sunday School Lessons on OBEDIENCE!	46

REPORT—2013 Church of Christ Solemn Assembly and Conference - Deb Haines	48
NEWS	55
OBITUARY—Bernice Ruth Gould (2/26/1922~2/10/2013).	58
NOTICES.	58



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To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour;
To promote His Teachings and His Church, the Church of Christ;

To be a voice of warning to His people; to be Zion's advocate.

Visit us at: <http://churchofchrist-tl.org/>

To the Law and to the Testimony



Sermon notes by
Apostle Roland Sarratt

The prophet Isaiah devoted himself to saving the Israelites during his day, but he also looked to the day when they would be reclaimed of the Lord. We have

We should develop an awareness of the Lord's expectations of our obedience to Him and develop a conscience accordingly.

reason to believe that the Lord spoke through Isaiah to us in these last days in prophecy as well. Let's turn to the eighth chapter of Isaiah, verses 13-20, and take lessons from the prophet's words.

Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread [Isaiah 8:13].

When a people are disobeying the Lord, they have reason to fear and dread Him. We have reason to believe that when we obey Him completely without ceasing we

have no fear or dread. However, we know we have all sinned and have an inclination to sin, which makes us subject to yielding to temptation. So we are never sure we won't slip up and find that our souls are in jeopardy.

Therefore the prophet gave true counsel when he said that we should let Him be our fear and our dread. We should develop an awareness of the Lord's expectations of our obedience to Him and develop a conscience accordingly.

So let's ask the question: what does it mean to sanctify

the Lord? It is to reverence and worship Him. It is to give respect to His word, the Bible and the Book of Mormon. If we are not of an attitude to do this, to reverence and worship the Lord, then we need to do as Jesus told the Jews to do: repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. If, indeed, we are living a lifestyle unworthy of the Lord's favor, then we need to repent and cleanse our hearts and minds.

The prophet continued with this statement: *And he shall be for a sanctuary....*

A sanctuary is a place of safety. We find security in the Lord and in His word. The complete statement shows us what the results are if we do not seek His sanctuary.

And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken [Isaiah 8:14, 15].

The prophet Isaiah is addressing the Israelites of ancient times, but his words can apply to any people who reject the Lord. Many of the Jews stumbled and were offended by His teachings. He warned them of the consequences of their disobedi-

ence, which included the overthrow of Jerusalem. Their willful rejection of Him became a means for the devil to deceive and snare them. Hear the prophet's instructions:

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him [Isaiah 8:16, 17].

The Lord truly prepared His word, His law and His testimony, to come forth in fullness in these last days. He has hid His face from Jacob (Israel), but has promised to reveal the fullness of His gospel to them in these last days, which we believe has begun.

Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion [Isaiah 8:18].

Although Mount Zion was referred to as Jerusalem in David's time, it also refers to the Zion yet future to our time, the Zion that is yet to be established on this land of promise.

And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

[Isaiah 8:19].

There is much misinformation (humanisms) coming from various sources today. I don't know that we could call them utterances of familiar spirits, but whatever they may be we definitely should not give heed to them.

Then to what are we to seek?

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them [Isaiah 8:20].

We should turn to what the Lord has given us: to the law and to the testimony. It has been said that the law is the Bible and the testimony is the Book of Mormon. Taking that as being true, I exhort you to rely upon these two standards as your defense against all that which might overthrow you in your day of your probation. This is especially true in this day when many false teachings are being promoted.

Are we in danger of being deceived? Surely this is a day of deception of which Jesus warned His disciples when He said, *Take heed that no man deceive you (Mat. 24:4).*

When Joseph Smith read in the book of James, "*If any of you lack wisdom, let him*

ask of God,” he went alone to inquire of the Lord to know which of all the sects (churches) were right. He was told to join none of them, for they were all wrong and their creeds were an abomination in His sight.

The personage that spoke to him said, “They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof” (*Outline History*, page 16). This statement is from three different scriptures in the Bible. “*They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me*” is found in Isaiah 29:26. “*They teach for doctrine the commandments of men*” are the words of Christ in Matthew 15:9. “*Having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof*” are the words of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:5. This combined statement gave significant reasons for Joseph Smith not to join any of the churches at that time.

From the time that that incident took place until now, many more churches and religions have come into existence. Also, after Joseph Smith’s death in 1844, many so-called Restoration churches came into existence. Time has proven that

this little church, by the name of Church of Christ, has maintained its differences of belief and doctrine from the other Restoration churches, as well as the other so-called Christian churches in the world. Our church history tells us that we have but barely survived from being swallowed up by some of the other larger Restoration churches. God has repeatedly saved this church from that demise.

Our work continues in retaining what we know as the fullness of the gospel of Christ in these last days. In weakness we are made strong in our faith in the Lord as we strive in our outreach to the world. Today we are faced with a broad spectrum of opposition, the extreme opposite being atheism, to the more conservative within the Restoration who are closest to us in our religious convictions. Yet we still hear the voice of the personage even this day saying, “Join none of them.”

At the 2010 Ministers’ Conference of the Church of Christ a presentation was given which exposed a prominent church’s practice of gathering large numbers by inviting people to come and worship without discussing and teaching church doctrine. The main purpose was socializing without exchange-

ing personal beliefs. Their success was remarkable. It could be said that that church manifests the broadest of the broad ways. It could also be said that it was the fulfillment of socialism, which is the forerunner of communism.

Do you realize that communism is not dead? Just recently there was a demonstration of a group of Communists on the west coast of this land of promise.

What is Communism? It is basically atheism. It is very much alive in the world and even within this nation, the United States. Atheism, via Communism, has made its way into many of our public institutions and into our government. Our laws are slanted toward a disbelief in God and favors scientific findings that exclude any intelligence higher than man. It can be found in many of our social activities and entertainments.

A dialog of a comic strip I happened to run across recently graphically made a comparison of the theory of evolution to the biblical creation story. I suppose it was intended to be humorous, but I didn’t take to be so.

The first statement in that comic strip contained an important fact: it referred to a theory of evolution. However, that *theory* has become a

fact of reasoning in the minds of many professors today, but it still remains a theory, not a scientific fact worthy to be taught in our schools.

On the other hand, all that God has done in creation is beyond the logic of the natural man. Man must have faith in that which he reads in the word of God or hears from the mouth of a believer to be able to confirm His existence. One must believe in God to know that He is. It seems like a strange paradox: you cannot know God without first believing in Him.

So, is it wrong for us to teach a belief in God in our schools in contrast to the theory of evolution? It might seem right to give equal time and effort for that which we as a people have espoused and declared from the time that this nation was founded. However, it appears that the Lord has given way to the wills of man and has let them become deceived by their own reasoning minds. Today we are witnessing the ripening of iniquity of this people. We barely have escaped the snare that is about to take the great majority down into the pit of deception.

The laws of this nation, the United States, have accepted three immoral practices and lifestyles which go directly contrary to the law of God. These are the so-called

Gay movement (homosexuality), the practice of living together without marital commitment (I've heard it announced publicly that marriage is on its way out), and the aborting of human babies before they are born as a method of birth control, which has resulted in the establishing of abortion clinics. These are three great evils that have become legally and socially accepted within my lifetime on this land of promise. It is my belief that the deliberate continuation of these immoral practices and lifestyles have brought this nation under condemnation. The consequence is that God will deal His justice upon the inhabitants of this land of promise.

It is evident that God's justice is already happening. It was announced publicly that the results of the recent election (November, 2012) was due to the great influx of Hispanic peoples in this nation. Also there are many Arab peoples immigrating to this land of promise, many of them having large families. This is not an intended reflection against the Hispanic or Arab peoples who have legally immigrated into this nation. If in no other way, the consequence of this immorality (the three evils I have stated here) will inevitably be realized within a few genera-

tions among those fair-skinned Gentiles whose forefathers established this nation if they continue to indulge themselves in these evils.

The Lord gave the commandment to man in the beginning: "*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.*" Homosexual relationships do not produce posterity. Two men cannot procreate; neither can two women. It goes without saying that when a people continually abort their children before they are born in great numbers, as is happening in this country today, there is inevitably a definite decline in their posterity in the following generations. Also there is little hope of family stability in non-committal relations where children may be properly reared. It is only a matter of time when the people who indulge themselves in these practices will diminish in numbers and other peoples who do not follow these practices will outnumber them.

Just how this fits into prophecy, I'm not sure, but the rejection of the fullness of the gospel of Christ by the European, fair-skinned Gentiles, has brought about a threat of them losing the freedoms they have enjoyed in the past. The Gentiles were blessed with a Christian heri-

tage when this nation was established. Greater yet was the blessing of the fullness of the gospel of Christ when it was restored to them here on this land of promise. However, their continual rejection of the fullness of the gospel of Christ indicates that the time of the Gentiles is surely coming to an end (see Luke 21:24, 32).

We might more fully understand what is happening if we consider Paul's statement in Romans 1:28: *"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient..."*

If you read the whole chapter, Paul is very graphic in his description of being given over to a reprobate mind. Surely he describes many of the people on this land of promise perfectly who are denying God and sinning against His word. The consequence of openly rejecting God is happening right before our eyes. The indulgence of lust is not restrained by a great majority of this people, and as a result God has given them over to do what they desire. They desire and literally demand the right to do wrong.

In John 8:33, 34, Jesus had a conversation with the Jews: *"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to*

any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."

Freedom to commit sin is not freedom, but results in being taken captive by the devil. Through the wills of the majority of this people, our government and our news media are fast becoming corrupt. What does this mean to us? We cannot rely or depend upon the laws of the land or the social environment of this people to guide us in our endeavor to gain eternal life. We must obey the laws of the land, but we have a more perfect law within the word of God that we must obey if we hope to gain the favor of the Lord. We must sanctify the Lord of hosts in our minds and in our hearts.

Psalm 19:7-10 gives us a summation of what the Lord has given to us that is perfect and the means of gaining perfection.

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple."

"The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes."

"The fear of the LORD is

clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

What is your reaction to these words of the psalmist David? Do they seem rather restrictive? Indeed, they are restrictive in comparison to the permissive words this liberal generation are promoting. However, David gave us the true guidelines by which God can save us from deception. God's law, testimony, statutes, commandments, fear and judgments can convert our soul, make us wise, rejoice our heart, enlighten our eyes and help us endure to the end. David evaluates these things as being more desired than much fine gold and sweeter than honey.

Yes, they are worth all the efforts we must make to be fully converted by applying the law and testimony of God to our lives. We must sanctify the Lord by reverencing and worshiping Him in our day of probation. Obeying God is our means of gaining true freedom.

FROM the ARCHIVES

From the Archives...



Those present whom we have identified are: 1. Br. Richard Wheaton is the young boy sitting on the ground above the "R" in church. 2. To the left of Br. Dick Wheaton is his older brother Br. LeRoy Wheaton. 3. To the right of Br. Dick are Margaret, Katherine, Tom Wheaton, Marion Denham, Margaret Long, and Ed Wheaton. 4. Br. Nicholas Denham is standing between window #3-4; you can only see his head between others. 5. To the left of Br. Nicholas is Br. Martin Case. 6. Br. Kenneth Smith is the young man standing third

FROM the ARCHIVES

1928 Conference



person back above the “M” in Temple. 7. Sr. Irene Maley (Yates) is the little girl sitting on the ground to the far left in the dark sweater. 8. Kneeling on the ground at the right side of the photo are: Brs. B. C. Flint, W. L. Gates, O. Fetting, H. E. Moler, T. J. Sheldon, A. M. Smith, S. Wood, C. Wheaton, A. Frisbey. Standing behind Br. Frisbey is T. B. Noreen. 9. The lady standing behind Br. C. Wheaton in the dark hat is Sr. Maggie McGreagor. If you can identify any of our brothers and sisters please let anyone on the Archive Committee know.

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Sunday School Lessons on OBEDIENCE!

The General Sunday School Association (GSSA) will be providing portions of lessons (teasers!) for three age groups on a common topic. To see the complete lessons, please visit the AVA website at www.cocsermons.net and click on the "Resources" tab to view all of the lessons and studies for children and adults. More information regarding Sunday School lessons can be found on www.edmodo.com or by contacting Susan Porter at porter_susan@sbcglobal.net or at her home address: 9 Market Street, Middleville, MI 49333.

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN:

Helaman's 2000 Stripling Soldiers VS The Sons of Eli

(Reference: Alma 24:63-79; 26:3-104 and 1 Samuel, chapters 2-4)

Activity: **Helaman Says!**

This game can be played at the beginning of class time to introduce the subject of obedience, or at the end to burn off excess energy and reinforce the lesson.

This is just a fancy-named game of *Simon Says*. The teacher (Helaman) calls out a simple instruction like, "Pat your tummy." If the teacher begins the instruction with "Helaman says," the students should complete the action. If "Helaman says" is not mentioned and a student follows that direction, then they are "out." Usually, anyone out has to sit out the rest of the game until only one child remains and is declared the winner. With this age and time constraints, we usually allow the child/children to remain in (with a big AWWWWW!!! when someone doesn't follow the instructions/obey!) so all students can play for the allotted amount of game time. Go over the rules of the game with the students beforehand and as you play, because they tend to be little geese that follow the leader with their actions and not by listening. Have a sense of humor and patience when you play with these precious souls while you teach them about obedience through listening.

(Find the rest of this lesson online at www.cocsermons.net: a story to read, a craft activity, a memory verse, and other resources for this lesson, and many others.)

—Jennifer Yates, hometeachin@cox.net

ELEMENTARY:

Object Lesson: **Follow the directions!**

(A similar object lesson was used at the 2012 Women's Retreat.)

Prior to the class, make a batch of Brownies in a Mug following the recipe below. Bring the completed brownies to class as an example of success when following the directions.

While the students are watching, mix another batch of the brownies together without measuring properly and combine the ingredients by talking through it with the class, adding ingredients and mixing it by what feels right or looks right. Microwave the brownie for more or less time. Have students taste both of the brownies and ask the discussion questions.

Ingredients for Brownies in a Mug: (Makes about 1/3 cup size brownie.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1 Tbsp. cocoa powder | 1 Tbsp. water |
| 1 Tbsp. flour | 1 tsp. vanilla |
| 1 Tbsp. brown sugar | Shake of salt |

Directions: Mix together in a coffee cup. Microwave for 20-30 seconds.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it important to follow the directions? (To get the right results, to make it taste right, or similar answers.)
- What happened when we did not follow the directions? (This is NOT a brownie! It tasted bad, etc.)

Scan this for more lessons and studies!



GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Compare following the directions for making brownies and how it is similar to God's direction in our lives. God had given us instructions on how we need to live our lives and when we keep His commandments, He blesses us and there is an eternal reward, just like the brownie, made correctly, is a much better reward for our efforts than the thrown-together concoction.

(Find the rest of this lesson online at www.cocsermons.net.)

—Liza Hedrick, liza.hedrick@gmail.com

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL:

The Potter and the Clay (Jeremiah 18:1-10)

In order to understand and apply this lesson directly to our lives, we will use *Strong's Concordance* to look up the meaning of a word in our selection of scripture. A concordance lists all of the principle words in the scriptures and gives the definition of the word in its original language—Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament. Sometimes the words have a different or deeper meaning than what can be expressed in the English language.

First, read Jeremiah 18:1-10 to understand the context. In Jeremiah 18:10, we see the word *obey* used: "If it do evil in my sight, that it **obey** not my voice...." Look up the word *obey* used in this verse using *Strong's Concordance*. After you find the word *obey*, look for Jeremiah 18:10 and write down the number associated with it. Look up that number in the back of the book, in the Hebrew section (Old Testament). If you do not have *Strong's Concordance*, you can look up "Strong's Concordance" online and use a digital version. Type in *obey*, find Jeremiah 18:10, and click on the small number to the right of *obey*.

This is what I found:

Strong's Number: 08085

Transliterated Word: Shama`

Phonetic Spelling: shaw-mah'

1) to hear, listen to, obey

a) (Qal)

1) to hear (perceive by ear)

2) to hear of or concerning

3) to hear (have power to hear)

4) to hear with attention or interest, listen to

5) to understand (language)

6) to hear (of judicial cases)

7) to listen, give heed

a) to consent, agree

b) to grant request

8) to listen to, yield to

9) to obey, be obedient

Definition:

This form of *obey* is used 1072 times in the Old Testament alone! Isn't it interesting that *obey* in this passage means "to hear" or more specifically, "to hear with attention or interest, listen to," "to listen, give heed"? So, the children of Israel were to **OBEY** the Lord...; in other words, they were to listen and give heed to His commandments.

When you were children, did you ever try to find a loophole when your parents asked you to do something specific? For instance, your mother told you to take out the garbage, but you chose not to take the garbage out for several hours. Later, she called you on it. You may have said something like, "You never told me *when* I had to do it." That defense wouldn't save you, would it? God wants us to obey; we must *perceive* and *understand* what is being asked of us and do it. There aren't any loopholes if we are performing obedience as God instructs. (Look up "obey" in Ephesians 6:1. Remember, Ephesians is in the New Testament, so it will be in Greek.)

(Find the rest of this lesson online at www.cocsermons.net: Jeremiah 18:1-10 in a story version, a web address to a YouTube video showing a potter throwing on a wheel is also provided to give your students a visual understanding about this scripture, as well as other activities or worksheets you may want to use.)

—Jennifer Yates, hometeachin@cox.net

REPORT

2013 CHURCH OF CHRIST Solemn Assembly and Conference

Friday Morning Prayer Service—Apostle Duane Ely and Elder Dan Lawrence in charge.

Br. Duane told us we need an attitude of fasting and prayer to draw closer to our Lord, and together as brothers and sisters. He read the Statement of the Apostles—"to be of one heart and one mind"—the Church of Christ. This is VERY important in these last days with what is coming upon this earth. We need to have unity and strength in the Lord. He read Moroni 6:6-9; Helaman 2:31; and Alma 4:6—pray for those who are seeking. We need to be waxing stronger and stronger, purifying our hearts in humility, and with a need to separate ourselves. Ask the Lord to speak to us for whatever we need in revelation: fill the Quorum; Conference, sacrament service, Conference meetings; no contention, that we'll be led; for His guidance, His leading and spiritual choices. If we're faithful, the Lord will be with us. This is His true church. We were led in a season of prayer, and many voices were lifted to the Lord. Some of the testimonies given were:

A brother told us a dream which was given to another brother in the church. In his dream he saw himself praying in church, and then he saw a piece of sugar cane up front pointing up to heaven. A voice told him it was a path and he needed to stay on it. Normal things, diversions and distractions were all around. He was told, "Focus on the Path." Another dream this same brother had was also about a path which he was on; going from house to house he saw people. Closer, he saw a middle-aged man standing there. This man would not shake his hand but told him, "Tell the people the

ax is lying at the base of the tree." When our brother heard this, it was put on his heart: "Are there some commandments which are more important than others? All are the same right now, but Isaiah is most important." He had prepared a study and found that others had been studying Isaiah also. Four months later at another local, a sister stood and testified that three times a messenger had come to her and told her to study Isaiah, especially chapters 1 and 13. The ax is laid at the trunk of the tree—pray we are not those who will be removed because we are not following His commandments.

A brother testified of the Holy Spirit resting on him strongly when he heard the song, "Let Us Pray for One Another," sung recently at a sister's memorial service. He admonished us that the Lord speaks to us all the time, but we're too busy to hear. This message was clear to him. The words emphasized were: "We can see it in the darkness, closing round our narrow way" . . . "Now the foe becomes more daring, knowing well the latter day," . . . "Be not weary of exhorting," . . . "That our lamps may then be burning, bright enough to guide our way." Our lamps must be filled with oil, which is God's Spirit. Quite often God uses the weak to do great things. . . . we must all be ready to be used.

Friday Evening Prayer Service—Apostle Jay Moser and Elder Ronnie Gill in charge.

Br. Jay told us our hearts have many desires, and used Jeremiah 17:5-9. We rely on things of this world more than we rely on God. Education

has drawn us away from God. Sixty-five percent of the world under age 30 is okay with gay marriage. Even in our own midst there are people questioning this. We have a sacred gift of God: our own free will. Br. Jay read Jeremiah 29:11-12 where we are told we will find Him when we search our hearts and hold nothing back. We were led into a season of prayer in which many voices were lifted up. A testimony offered was:

A brother testified of the Lord's healing after a stroke. He is now back at his former line of work, and he has been greatly blessed. He never before considered the words, "danger of education," but it is true. We are taught the belief that all things can be understood by science; that we tend to learn by osmosis; the belief that someone needs to prove it's true; an example is homosexuality. He was asked recently if it was wrong. He told her it's contrary to His creation, and we don't have that right.

Saturday Morning Prayer Service—Apostle Brian McIndoo and Elder Rick Olson in charge.

Br. Brian explained that the thoughts he had wanted to bring to us today were expressed yesterday. Alma 5:16-18, which tells us the path is straight, no varying. Alma 5:34-35, which tells us to cry repentance to the world and to ourselves. Alma 17:51 tells us to keep the commandments of God as they are written. . . . not how they are interpreted, but how they are written! Br. Brian recommended a book, "The Harbinger," written by Rabbi Jonathan Cahn, a Christian, who talks about the Jews and America and their defiance of God.

God has called America and the churches to repentance. He makes the point that the churches need to repent for their lack of passion. We should not compromise by accepting the works of darkness rather than His word, and the omission of His word. Examine ourselves. Bring ourselves back into the straight path set by God's word. The world has changed spiritual for sensual.

Br. Jay Moser explained that the foe is today more daring. The straight and narrow path is more and more difficult, and we become the enemy of churches because we don't conform to their way of righteousness. Luke 12:51-55. We must stand for God's truth; it will be opposition to the rest of the world. Changes are taking place at a rapid rate. . . . How quickly the evils of this world have been accepted. What is to come? Jesus Christ is to gather those who have been faithful. Let us be His bride when He comes to gather His church. We may be persecuted, we may be harmed, but we will be rewarded. Pray Christ will forgive us for our apathy; we need to stay in that straight path. The signs of the times are with us. Pray God will make us His people and strengthen us for the day at hand. We need Apostles, Evangelists, Elders, Priests and Teachers. The day is short and we need to be prepared for what is coming, and have that great hope for eternal salvation. After a season of prayer, the service was open to testimonies; here are some:

A brother told us the Book of Kings speaks of the still small voice, and that the Spirit will guide us in the latter days. It jumps out and fills him with the realization: who does it speak of? The great prophet Elisha! Today he heard the still small voice. . . it said, "*God is a god of peace. He is going to begin to withdraw himself from people. He can't live in the presence of evil. He must dwell in peace. The hearts and minds of other people fight against Him and He cannot stay.*" This explains much. . . the results in the world will be violence and anger. Our brother says he can't watch the news; he can't be happy with what is going on. He can't get away from it, but he wants to. Pray for greater discernment. We must know what God wants us to know. . . we have to know and we have

to be unified. He prayed over a special presentation that he is to give at the ministers' conference. He asked us to pray about what God wants us to do. . . #1-What is our responsibility? What does He want us to do? #2-Those people who have left God are going to be sweeping over all the earth. . . what is our responsibility, what does God want us to do? Our brother woke from a nap a few weeks ago and he was told. . . "*1 Nephi 3: 180-230. Bring forth my Zion.*" By the still small voice he was told. . . "*Dominion of the great whore and the dominions (plural) of the church of the Lamb.*" He asked, what is a dominion? The power of God will rest on those dominions. . . where does He want us to put our efforts? — 99% are spiritual. The New Jerusalem will come about after this. WHAT are we to do in those dominions? Where are we putting our energy? God will tell us!

A brother stood and shared a dream he'd been given years ago. He was in a conference setting. . . he thought on how to accomplish God's purposes. He was transported in a vision to see the early saints and how they traveled—he saw a building they gathered in, and then they trickled out the back of it as though with shame. They wandered down a river bed, muddy; the river bed got more gravelly and easier to walk upon. He was transported into their midst. A small stream was on the left, clear and clean, and they walked for some time. A great mist arose, a vapor or a fog. The river bed had a Y in it; a divergence on the side, and the river itself flowed the other direction. The mist made it hard to see, but he could hear his brother ahead giving words of comfort. The path crossed and went down the other way in the Y, and a few stepping stones were there to cross on. He did. He heard his sister-in-law and her voice of concern, and gave directions to her. He continued on down, saw a ravine, and he climbed out there. There was a treacherous path. At the top he found himself standing at the Temple of the Lord. He walked up to the porch where there were basins of water to cleanse before going in. . . he was then transported back to the congregation he had been in, and shared the dream with the people there. In

the dream, he was told the discussion was closed. He was told by the Spirit that, "*O people, you have missed your opportunity. . .*" He cried and cried. He has considerable concerns for the people in the Church of Christ. Years later he was told about a dream of another brother. It was also about a stream and concerns for him and his brother. He knows it is in his nature, thinking he has the truth; he can walk in cross purposes of any that walk in other ways. He knows he needs to be aware of walking a different path because of his arrogance. He was impressed of the Spirit when our brother spoke. Yesterday he heard the whisper to his soul. . . that the days will come when the vision of Br. George Cole will make the difference in who will stand.

A brother stood to testify that he has been touched by the things our brother said earlier. He's felt angry about the things going on in our land. He has spent time and money on that, but decided that only a little bit is necessary. He now gets a lot of mail and reads it in front of a shredder. The still small voice told him. . . God will do much if we are on the right track.

Saturday afternoon Prayer Service—Br. Placido K. Matu and Elder Thomas Gill in charge.

Br. Placido read from Philippians 4:6-8. . . Be thankful for all the blessings God gives us. Not many people have the blessing to be part of God's people and have His protection. Rejoice for the opportunity we have, and that we are part of the church. Think about decisions that you have in front of you, and make good choices for the Lord. We need to take advantage of this time; life is too short. Spiritual decisions are the most important. We're a chosen people, a peculiar people. We have a huge responsibility to be an example to others. Ask Him to prepare us, that we may make good decisions for Him. Jacob 5: 37. God hears and answers our prayers. We need to do what He tells us to do. It doesn't matter what other people think or say: only God. We are united, and need to be more united every day. People are looking for the truth. We ask God to prepare us for whatever

He has for us. Br. Placido led us into a season of prayer; some of the testimonies that followed were:

A brother testified of his blessing. Their daughter was very sick. After tests, it was determined she had anemia, nothing real serious. He, his wife, and all his family had prayed. He had changed his prayer for the Lord to give him strength if it was something bad. Then he felt more content, and it was good news that came. The last two years have been difficult, including a decision he had to make last year with the passing of his father, but God has taken care of them. He has many opportunities to talk to people now, recently talking to people in Columbia. Growth is not only in numbers, but also in spiritual experiences. An Elder had an experience recently; he opens the church an hour early and prays. He saw a vision of two angels close to the pulpit, and he felt great peace. God is showing us that His presence is with us. During a preaching service another saw a beautiful light around the brothers preaching. God does the work; He does it perfectly.

A brother testified that two weeks ago he and his hiking group went on a hike. . . it was a rough area. The desert is pretty hostile. The first day they went uphill 7-8 miles. Their water resources got low. Their map said a spring was up ahead. There was one green tree; they knew it must be the spring. They found water coming out of the sand and refilled their water jugs. Experience taught him: the Spirit of God is like the water; people around us are drying up. It refreshes like the promise of Christ. We have to seek it. The trail was marked, but began to disappear. They learned they had to stay on the trail. We lose our way because the world gets in our way; the world clouds our vision. Time after time they'd lose the path and find it again. Once off the path of God, if you approach it with repentance and prayer, you'll find it again. Despite all those things, we must stay the course and get to the end of the trail. . . then we'll rejoice. They were extremely blessed. There are many parallels to where we are at in the church. . . MANY people are concerned about what is going on and ask, Where is God? We still have a great

opportunity. . . a window. . . to share the hope we have of the God we serve. Our brother feels the urgency. . . no more time to waste; we must come out of the world. God is waiting. He wants to give us more. Take this time seriously. We were made for this day. . . it's our time to make a difference for God and Christ.

A sister stood and testified about when the hikers were lost but not really lost. . . She knows the times that are coming and asks how will she get through these things? She asked the Lord how to get through this time, as she was greatly concerned about her husband, son and the group; the Lord took those worries away from her, and the only time she cried was when she was in prayer. He gave her peace and assurance. He doesn't just watch us, He participates. There's no other way she could have remained calm. The Lord considers all the needs of His people.

Sunday Morning Sacrament Service— Apostles in charge were Buzz Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo.

Br. Buzz greeted us, and told us how nice it is to meet on a day we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, and he gave the opening prayer. Br. Brian McIndoo welcomed us and reminded us that we gather to remember our Lord and the sacrifice He made for us. He read John 19:1-11, 28-36. Br. Brian told us God created a way for us to come back to Him before He even created us. God's plan cannot be hindered by man. Br. Brian admonished us that when we partake, we do so in remembrance of Christ. A blood sacrifice was required. Christ sacrificed so we could live. He read John 20:1-5. Because Christ's tomb was empty we know WE will also be resurrected. After His rising He said He was to go to others and teach. The Book of Mormon shows where He did just that. He taught them. Our brother read III Nephi 9:1-3 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-29 and explained that this is for those who have made a commitment to the Lord. The emblems were blessed and served. A season of prayer followed, with many voices lifted in prayer unto our Heavenly Father. The service was opened for the leading of the Spirit and these

are some of the testimonies which followed:

A brother stood to tell of the miracles God has performed in his life recently. In January he had some tests done for his cancer. A mass was discovered, and in March he had a PET scan and waited for results. The mass was gone: it was nowhere to be found! Only God can do that.

A brother testified of being sick last night, and he thought he wouldn't be able to be here. God has blessed him. He is to have hip surgery soon; he's thankful for that. He had to make sure his heart is strong enough for surgery. He had a dye stress test. . . the doctor said he may have had a heart attack at some time. The main artery in the front of his heart is 90% blocked. He needs to have that repaired before he can have hip surgery. This hip problem spared him of a heart attack. God works in mysterious ways. He's thankful for our love.

Another brother testified he has conviction that this is the true Church of Christ. . . even though there are and have been problems. It's the strong wills of men and spiritual powers. The evil spirit tries to destroy; Satan has targeted the church because it is the true church. The Lord has intervened over and over again. Miraculous things have happened, and in combined services the Spirit has been with us strongly. We are learning how to be humble and love each other. The Lord has brought us a long way. . . He has a work for us to do and a place called Zion. He is preparing this people. The day will come when we will stand out as an oddity. He's thankful for all of us; we are a beautiful people in the eyes of God. Love surrounds us.

A sister testified that years ago there was a young man in the church she didn't care for. . . not sure why, but she didn't. She asked for administration; two of the Elders were called. One was the father of the one she didn't care for. Her heart fell because she didn't think God would heal her, feeling the way she did about this man's son. Her whole life she has been trying to love everyone as herself. She knows now that it means that you want everyone to have that same eternal life that you desire for yourself.

A brother told about coming to his first confer-

ence in 1951; he met a unique people. There were several bodies of thought among the people at that time. Still, people would sit and listen to a man they disagreed with for an hour. He saw people who would work together to find the will of God. They still came and met together to worship the same God; they were led by the same God. . . they worked together in love and that inspired him. A Romans 12 Church of Christ exists today. This church is very important today, because we respect sanctity of life at conception, marriage between man and woman, and that a man be called as was Aaron. His wife told someone when she was a child that she was going to be the wife of a missionary in Central America someday when she grew up. God is so good.

Br. Buzz called for another season of prayer. His prayer was followed by many others.

A brother stood and told us he received a call from the Lord for a young man in our church a few days ago while in meetings. He said, "Our brother Chris Moran is to be called as an Elder in the Church of Christ. The Lord has his reward; Chris is to know that, and that's between him and the Lord."

Br. Buzz asked for a season of prayer and many voices were lifted up in desire to know whether it was a true call.

Br. Buzz stood to witness that it was true, and he gave a call that, "Br. Jeffrey Oldham has been called and set aside as an Apostle in the Church of Christ." Another brother asked that we go into another season of prayer over that call. There were many voices lifted in prayer.

A sister gave witness that her late husband had a witness of Jeff's call to an apostle, and that he is to go to the Philippines.

Another brother said that last August, this brother witnessed to him that brother Jeff was to take his place in the Council. He felt the Spirit at that time, and our late brother said, "Not until I'm gone." Yesterday morning he felt he was to give the call, yet it didn't happen. He thought, "Perhaps I'm a witness." He thought of it this morning, but he didn't have the Spirit. His burden has been lifted now and he knows it is a true call.

A brother told us that at the Phoenix Reunion there was young man in front of him, and he thought about his ability to serve. The Spirit spoke and told him this young man was to fill the void of Jeff in the Bishopric.

A brother told us that in 2005 he asked Br. Jeff to assist him. While in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord rested on him. . . It told him that Brother Oldham would be in the Council of Apostles. He thought it would be sooner than this because of the strength of the testimony he received that day. This is the right call and the right time.

A sister told us as she listened to the testimonies earlier she thought there might be a calling to fill an office of Apostle. She asked the Lord, who? The answer was Jeff Oldham. In receiving that she was overcome by the Spirit.

A brother said, "Thank you, God, we needed this." He bore witness to Br. Moran's call. . . he felt the Spirit. He expects more and has more witnesses to those calls which are to come.

Br. Jeff stood and told us he had a request. He remembered traveling with his uncle. He learned a lot from him. He would watch him and learned a lot by his reaction. He told us that he was sat down one day by him at Dinner Sunday—his uncle told him the Lord had a greater work for him and he couldn't tell him what. He told him to pray about that. He did not doubt him. He felt the Spirit as he told him that. He admitted he's a weak person, a scared person, but he knows the Lord has been working in his life. He knows the Lord is working in the church and in each of us. He requested that we pray for him and his family.

Sunday Afternoon—Special Music Presentation followed by a sermon given by Apostle Duane Ely.



Br. Duane greeted us and read 2 Timothy 3:1-7. Perilous times shall come. . . "WE ARE LIVING IN THOSE LAST DAYS." The scriptures are here to warn us. People don't want to know these things. God chose this time and place for us. . . for His purpose. The righteous need not fear; but the unrighteous need to fear, for the judgment will come. He read 2 Timothy 3:1-7; and Mosiah 1:119-120—the natural man is an enemy to God, and seeks his own will. We can put off the natural man and become a child of God, giving our will up to God and the Holy Spirit. We must be changed. . . humble, submissive and obediently following Christ. He read Alma 14:11—a people who were truly converted to Him never fell away: they were a righteous people. Once you are truly converted you can't go back to the natural man. . . for if you do you are in danger of losing your soul. Being converted, you will ask for forgiveness and repent. He also read Moroni 7:52—charity. . . cleave unto charity. It has to be part of us. If we're angry we can't have charity. Br. Duane read 4 Nephi 1:17-20. There were no contentions there because they had the pure love of Christ. Their hearts were changed, and they separated themselves from the world. He read 4 Nephi 1:27-29: the people were lifted up in pride and they began to build up churches unto themselves to get gain. They did all manner of wickedness. They denied the truth of Jesus Christ. They followed their will, not God's. Br. Duane read Luke 9:62, Alma 17:79, and John 12:46-48. Br. Duane told us that a December Gallup poll showed that twice the percentage of a previous poll said they were in favor of homosexual marriage. The world is accepting sin. There will be consequences. If we want to enter the kingdom of heaven we have to follow His laws. . . all of them. Br. Duane read Moroni 7:13-14 and Isaiah 5:20-21 where we are told, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." THAT is what is happening today. If they're against the word of God they are for sin. He read, 1 Nephi 3:125. There is only one path: all the others lead to destruction. He read 2 Corinthians 11:3, 13-14. Br. Duane recommended a book to us. . . "The Harbinger." It will open your

eyes to the time we are living in. It talks about 9-11, which was a warning to America to repent. It compares America and ancient Israel, which was destroyed. What has America done since 9-11? It has become more wicked. Look at the things that America has accepted. This nation was founded on faith: where are prayer and faith today? We must repent and put Christ first in our lives. He read Mormon 1:86-87. All must stand before the judgment seat of Christ and be judged. There is great hope for the righteous, for those who diligently serve the Lord! Br. Duane read Isaiah 41:10, which is for the righteous only, *"Fear thou not, be not dismayed, I will strengthen and uphold thee..."* He also read Luke 9:23... We cannot ever forget His sacrifice for us, His perfect example, His commandments.

Monday morning prayer service — Elders Ken Oar and Thomas Gill were in charge.

Br. Thomas told us he feels we need to stand upon the Rock and do what Samuel the Lamanite did. This is a parallel of our time. He read Helaman 5: 33-43. We were led into a season of prayer by Br. Thomas, and many voices were lifted in prayer.

Monday Evening Song Service—followed by sermon by Placido K. Matu.



Br. Placido told us we are a blessed generation. How many people wanted to see this very time and the fulfillment of prophecies? The gospel is going to different nations; we have the responsibility to go and tell them the truth. People have opinions, but we have truth. He read Matthew 24:14. You cannot share what you do not have. There was a complete restoration of the Gospel in 1830: complete in our heart and mind. Christ came to give His gospel; it is the absolute truth for us. Br. Placido read Mark 1:14-15. Other people will come; are you ready to accept them? Br. Placido read Mark 10:13—he told us when God does something, He's never wrong. God directs because He has a plan. He read Ephesians 1:13. Your salvation is the most important thing you have or will ever have. Br. Placido said when your heart changes, it changes everything. With the pure love of God there is no contention. Three things to remember: #1-Words of truth, #2-Your salvation, and #3-You were sealed. Come to church to study. When tribulation comes you will be ready. Br. Placido read Ephesians 6:13-15. We have unity when we feel the Spirit of God. Br. Placido read Philippians 1:27—build your faith on Christ. He will work and there will be good results. He read 1 Nephi 3: 19—after the Gentiles have received the fullness of His gospel, He chose this nation, here with us. We have received the very best gift of God. Br. Placido read 3 Nephi 9: 69—God is preparing people right now. There is no space for division; we need to go in just one direction. We need to hear the instruction of God. Listen for what God is telling you. Br. Placido read Revelation 14:6—we have seen this prophecy fulfilled! We have the complete and unquestionable truth. He has given us the best truth. He has given us the gospel of peace, which has made us content. We need to stand fast, in one mind. If we are separated we can't stand. We are more valuable to God when we are together, when we are one.

Tuesday Morning Prayer Service — Priest Bruce Haines and Priest John Gill were in charge.

Br. Bruce told us in Alma, page 389-390, the

Lamanites were entrenched with wickedness, yet the sons of Mosiah converted thousands of them to the true gospel; they became righteous and never fell away. The others who once knew the true gospel yet fell away, their hearts were hardened even more; they lost what they once had and became lost in the world. In 2 Peter 2:1-3 and 2 Peter 2:20-22 we read that it would have been better for them to have never known the true gospel than to turn their backs on it. These are hard words to hear. We need to pray for those who are in spiritual need. If we're right with the Lord it's not a tragedy if we die... but for those who could die in their sins, we pray even more fervently. Pray for our brothers in the meeting at the East Local who are discussing the callings. Pray for those who were called and their families. He led us into a season of prayer; here are some of the testimonies which were given:

A brother told us he rides a bus and people ask you what church you belong to: do you have a testimony? It gives him a great opportunity. He read 1 Peter 3:15 and admonished us to always be ready to give an answer, a testimony of Christ. He invites our testimonies.

A sister told us she listens to sermons while driving, and she has one parable sticking in her mind to remind her of her responsibilities: He is the vine and we are the branches. Right now they are pruning; they cut the vines all back to one bud so that branch will grow, and all the strength and energy go to that one bud. God is telling us the same thing. We need to cut out all those extra things in our lives that we may focus on Him and bring fruit. John 15 tells us about calling out servants: *"I have chosen you that you should go and bring forth fruit; that whatsoever you ask the father may give you."* Prune our lives. That hurts, but we need to remove those things for a good purpose. It's easier to prune our little children, but that's God's job. We need to show God's love to our family, abide in His love and follow His commandments.

A brother told us he's not where he is supposed to be, but glad he's here. He read John 15:16. He didn't grow up in a church, but found the gospel

later in life. God saved him from who he was. He came here to help build Zion, and he ended up in a little congregation up in Cowgill. He was told by a man that he was going to call him into the ministry, and he did about a year and a half later. He was content teaching Sunday School, and dealing individually with people. He was told by this same man that some people never accept their responsibilities. It pierced him, and he told God if He wanted him to accept his call He was going to have to show him. One day a brother read this scripture (John 15:16) and it touched him. He knew he needed to accept because God had a greater work for him to do. He prays every day for God to put someone in his path to talk to. We have a love for each other that the world envies. Every day God puts us where He wants us, and it's not always where we want to be. Pray that we know Him better, then He'll pour out those blessings even more. That's the relationship you need more than anything else. He feels he missed the other meeting because he was supposed to be here.

A sister told us that when her father died she was two months old. Her mother kept her even though people offered to take her. She was raised with the Book of Mormon. She had rheumatic fever twice in her life. When she was a young girl she came to Conference with her grandfather. She met her husband here. Her four children are all blessings. She had prayers from the church during her last delivery, but she nearly died. She had prayed and God gave her peace. She's had a heart murmur all these years because of the rheumatic fever. During a storm her chest and heart hurt bad . . . she received administration . . . and she saw the finger of God touch her chest. She felt it, and she was healed. Her biggest trial now is her husband that left the church 18 years ago, and now he's not coming any more. He's not her husband any more. She is thankful for her blessings and God's watch care, and prays He can use her more.

A brother gave a testimony of how important testimonies have been to him . . . especially two. 1- At 15, Br. James E. Yates told a testimony. He knew after those two testimonies that he belonged to something real. One story was about going out

West and going through the petrified forest . . . the kids picked up pieces of petrified wood and hid them in their car. The next morning he went over a bump with the car and the frame broke because of the extra weight. He napped, and he dreamed that up the road they were putting in power lines, and that there were some support lines left in the grass that he could use to fix the car up and get it on the road. He got up and walked down the road like he saw in his dream. He found the lines and did the job. 2- Br. Yates was at an Indian reservation, and they were told he was a holy man and would bring rain . . . he didn't know that though. The next morning, he stood there with the Indians while they expected rain. The clouds came and it began to rain. It only rained right around them. These were the testimonies that grounded him when he was a young man.

A sister admonished us that Christ is working in all our lives. She wasn't always aware of this. She was born and blessed in 1931 by James E. Yates and Leon Gould. It was not until she was in her mid-thirties at a prayer meeting in Minnesota that God spoke to her for the first time. He said, "*You don't believe in me.*" She couldn't argue with Him. She drove home, she was cold, and she began to read and question. A year later, in another prayer meeting she said, "I believe." The Holy Spirit took hold of her then, and her life with Him began to grow, and she met Jesus. She couldn't get enough of him. "God doesn't have any grandchildren, only children . . . we need a personal relationship with him."

Tuesday Evening Song Service—followed by the evening sermon given by Elder Jeff Oldham.



Br. Jeff told us that several weeks ago he was asked if he would preach tonight. He feels the strength of our Heavenly Father. Br. Jeff told us he is back at school, and in a conversation he had with a blind man . . . the man asked him why he was "nervous when you talk to me? You're rotating your pen." Br. Jeff introduced himself to us. He's 42 years old. He told about his family. He works for John Deere, and he's been there fifteen years. He changes jobs every 1.6 years within John Deere. He stands before us as a servant of God—he's very proud of that. His job hasn't defined him: it wasn't who he was. When the call came through on Sunday, he wasn't expecting it. Br. Jeff read Alma 5:23-42. He explained that this is his testimony of the Spirit which is within him. He doesn't feel worthy of the responsibility. He would gladly sweep the driveway at the church. He has been compiling notes the last few weeks, working on this sermon. This scripture had been in his notes for some time. Last night he read it and knew it was a witness of God working in his life. There are four areas he wants to present: 1-HOW—Moroni 19:29-30; 2-PASSION, where is our focus?—Romans 5:3-6 . . . an inner drive to do what is necessary; 3-CAN YOU HEAR HIS VOICE? Are we truly listening?—Isaiah 41:10; 4-ROD OF IRON: do we have a hold of it? He read Matthew 7:7-8, admonishing us to have FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY and PRAYER. He's not ready. He's scared. His wife is scared. Anything is possible. He asks for an interest in our prayers. When his Uncle Frank told him there was a calling for him, Br. Frank didn't tell him what the call was. But Br. Jeff knew it was a call to be an apostle. Br. Frank told him to prepare. He's never had to think about strengthening his faith, because he just believes. Br. Jeff thanked everyone for their testimonies. He carries them with him. He thought his sermon was going to be about grace and prayer. Kneel down and pray, as we're at a pivotal time in our lives. He asked us to kneel with him in a season of prayer. Jeff led us, and was followed by many. He told us he appreciated our prayers. He asked us to remember our church, the responsibilities we have, and the work we have to do.

Wednesday Evening Ordination Service—Ordination of Br. Jeff Oldham to the office of Apostle, and Br. Brandon Tarbell ordained and set aside as a Bishop. Afterwards their wives joined them, and we had the opportunity to extend our love and our Hand of Fellowship.



Wednesday Evening Preaching—sermon by Elder Mike Bevaart.



Br. Mike told us he recently had an argument with himself. . . is it okay or isn't it? He was listening to a minister on the radio, twisting the scriptures, recently. Another time the same man was preaching about the same thing, and he used the scriptures correctly. Is it okay to feed off the subject he heard? The "it's okay" side won. He entitled his sermon, "God is love." It's impossible to measure the depth of God's love using only one scripture. His love is greater than ours. We cannot

accurately measure; it pleases Him if we just try once in a while. He told a story of a man telling the story of meeting Jesus, and they had a meal together. Pharisees were murmuring about this: how could He lower himself to be with those people? He used Luke 15:1-32 to explain that we need to be more righteous than the Pharisees. Br. Mike told a modern-day parable which has withstood the test of time. He said HE was an example of this parable. He left home one night before his father got home and he was gone for a long time. Beginning at age 13 he worked on a friend's pig farm during the summer for several years. He told of some of his experiences. If and when we turn our back on God and put distance between us, we don't think about Him and His sadness, or disappointment, or sense of loss, do we? It's all about us and what we want—what makes us feel good. When the police called his folks and told them they had his bike, but not him, he never considered the impact this would have on his family. He never thought about their reaction every time the phone rang. He never considered the feelings of his family. After many, many months of being on his own, he spent Christmas alone. He bought a bus ticket home, and hit a bad snow storm. . . he got stranded in a snow storm and had to call home collect. The operator asked his dad if he would accept the charges. He was asked if he was all right, and he said yes. He was asked, "Where are you?" He answered, "At the bus station." He father wanted to come get him right away. Can you imagine how that parent feels? Can you imagine with how much joy a parent would have, and how the parent would run to meet his son who has returned? God loves to save. God loves to save sinners. In this parable, where's the Savior? He's the one telling the story. He knows His story ends with being hung on a cross and crucified. His Father has to let this happen. He had to or there would be no opportunity for our Heavenly Father to run for us. How do we measure the depth of God's love? Can you imagine this same son running home to an earthly father? When that same son comes home to our Heavenly Father it is much different. There is a celebration like no other. What joy it brings

Him to save us at that last day. What is riotous living? The Bible and Book of Mormon will tell us. We transgress if we go against God's order of things. . . we enter into riotous living. The first thing we have to do is to admit that we have entered into riotous living. Once we do this, the parable has a whole new meaning. God ran for him. Br. Mike told us he's been studying this parable over the last few months; our Savior was speaking to him, personally. God will run for all of us. If we're honest we can liken ourselves to the younger or the older son. . . hopefully not the older son, as he is a Pharisee through and through. The older son was angry because his brother came home, and he didn't want anything to do with his brother. He even chastises his father and tells him he owes HIM. Matthew 5:20. This story is in past tense, but maybe some here are personally involved in riotous living and are afraid to approach God about it. Study the scriptures and they'll tell you what to do. Tell your Father, and run to Him. He has already been running toward you. There shall be joy in heaven over you. Br. Mike read 1 John 4:8. God is love.



Phoenix Local Report



I sit at the computer here at the end of February writing an article for the Phoenix local. It is hard to believe that Dan and I have been in Arizona for almost a year already! How time flies. We have made many new friends whom we cherish very much, but at the same time miss old friends and family.

Much goes on all the time here in Phoenix and I will try to capture some of the events that may not get posted on the other many sources of communication available today – and so much more timely.

Elections were held early this year for new officers and other positions. One very notable change was with our pianist. Sr. Kathy Ely decided it was time for a break and Sr. Aimee Yates has taken on that responsibility. Can you guess just how long Kathy held this position? I'll give you

the answer a little bit later.

Other offices pretty much stayed the same and include the following: **Pastor** – Elder Jim Yates, Jr., **Assistant Pastors** – Priests Aadam Yates and Gary Jacobsen, **Secretary** – Sr. Pat McCann and **Treasurer** – Sr. Rhea Housknecht. Br. Aaron Herd has become the **Superintendent of Sunday School**. Thanks goes out to each one of these folks for their service to God and our local, and to all the other many people who take on the responsibility of the needs of the church.

I'm sure almost everyone is aware of the newest addition to our local, little Grace Nicole Yates, born on February 5th, to a very doting Mom and Dad. Little Gracie came into this world at 9lbs 12oz. Congratulations to Mom, Dad and her two big brothers!



► **Grace Nicole Yates**

For a couple of months now, Sr. Laura Gill has opened her home to a Bible study on Thursday evening. I happened by the other night to see just what goes on. It was a very enjoyable and insightful evening. The event is very casual and friendly, as you can see from the picture I've in-



► **Thursday Evening Bible Study**

cluded. Those in attendance that particular evening included: Elder Ken and Sr. Marlene Oar, Sr. Sasha Gill, Sr. Rhea Housknecht, Elder Gerry and Sr. Cindy Case, and Apostle Jay and Sr. Chris Moser.

Keeping the youth involved and active is important to the Church of Christ. A volleyball event was held February 23, led by Priest Gary Jacobsen. You can see from the photo that it was well attended and enjoyed by all.

We always want to remember those who are serving our country in the military, and right now we have two people dear to our hearts that are in far away places—Sr. Rebecca Owen and Br. Brandall Silestewa. Please make sure you include them and all our military in your daily prayers, as well as our traveling ministry. Shortly, Elder Trevor Wratt and



► **Kathy Ely**

Apostle Joel Yates will be traveling to the Northwest, and Apostle Don McIndoo and Apostle Jay Moser will head to Mexico. We should also remember all those who are facing se-

rious medical problems, as well as those looking for employment. Many challenges face us these days and we are very blessed to have each other and God to lean upon.

Finally, a big thanks to Sr. Kathy Ely for her faithful service as pianist to the Phoenix local since 1975!

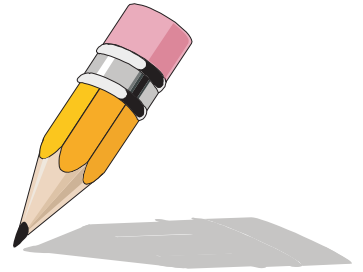
A big hug to my family and friends back home. God bless you all.

DiAnn Hedrick



► **Teen Camp**

East Independence Local Report



We send our love and greetings to all. It has been some time since this reporter has written, so please forgive me.

We lost two of our dear brothers since the last report: Priest Bill Malone passed from this life in August, and Apostle Frank Fann passed in September. We miss them both greatly! Our Sr. Karin is keeping busy in Independence with her grandsons, and Sister Carol is doing well, although she recently fell and broke a bone in her foot. We thank the Lord for her quick healing. Life goes on... although these loved ones will never leave our hearts.

Some of our East Local members were able to make the trip to Phoenix for the Arizona Reunion in November: Br. Buzz and Sr. Sue Brickhouse, Br. Mike McGhee, Br. Roland Sarratt, Br. David and Sr. Becky Rudd, Br. Craig and Sr. Jane Ann Carmichael, Br. Bruce and Sr. Deb Haines. It was a wonderful reunion filled with a sweet spirit and abundant fellowship.

Br. Buzz and Sr. Sue Brickhouse made a trip to Kenya, and Br. Buzz made several trips to India since the last report. It seems our missionaries are always on the go. Br. Mike McGhee made two trips to the Philippines, and Br. Andy Brantner accompanied him on the most recent trip in March of this year.

Attending the 60th Reunion of the establishment of the Church of Christ in Yucatan were the Carmichaels and the Haineses from the East local. Three other couples joining them were Br. Eli and Sr. Gretchen Tarbell from New York, Br. Adam and Sr. Sue Porter from Michigan, and Br. Mike and Sr. Deb Bevaart from Ontario, Canada. Apostles Alvin "Jay" Moser and Don McIndoo from Arizona accompanied them as they traveled to different locals. It was a very memorable trip, a joyous one that will not be forgotten, especially meeting so many loving brothers and sisters in that land.

Prayers are needed for our Sr.

Barbara Kimball who is under care for melanoma; Sr Irene Seibel and her heart condition; her daughter Ruby for her health condition; Sr. June Sarratt for her health and eyesight; Sr. Diane Brockman's mother, Ellen Stark, who has recently moved to Independence; and Sr. Pat McGhee, who continues to heal from her latest ankle surgery. Also, Apostle William Sheldon stands in great need of prayers for his health and vision.

Our prayers are for each of you, that the Lord will continue to work in all our lives. May God bless you and yours.

*Your reporter,
Sr. Deb Haines*

OBITUARY

Bernice Ruth Gould

February 26, 1922 ~ February 10, 2013

Bernice Ruth Gould, 90, of Junction City, Kansas, passed from this life on February 10, 2013.

Bernice was born February 26, 1922, to Gilbert and Josephine Schultz of Minnesota. She married Elder Arthur Eugene (Gene) Gould on June 26, 1938, in Bemidji, Minnesota. They lived in many locations, including Oregon, Missouri and Kansas, enjoying nearly 63 years of happiness. They lived in Junction City, Kansas, during their last years.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her loving husband, two sisters, four brothers and two chil-



dren. She is survived by her son Raymond and his wife Maurine; two daughters, Elizabeth (Beth) and her husband Melvin Tabler; Shirley and her husband Gary Reeds; one sister, Darlene Thomas; nine grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bernice was baptized into the Church of Christ, Temple Lot, while living in Minnesota, and loved serving the Lord with her husband, traveling with him in the ministry. She loved gardening and sharing the bounty of her garden, as well as cooking holiday meals; she always had a yard full of beautiful flowers,

which she shared with others. She loved to laugh with family and friends. She found great delight in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

NOTICES

THE HOPE of ZION

The Board of Publications has made available a copy of the report from the Committee to Study Zion entitled, *The Hope of Zion*. Contact Elder Robert Oldham at rwoldham1@sbcglobal.net, or any member of the Board.

AVA WEBSITE

On the Church of Christ AVA web site you will be able to access media such as archived sermons in video and audio formats, past issues of *Zion's Advocate*, searchable Bible and Book of Mormon studies and Sunday School lessons. Real time live streamed sermons are broadcast every Sunday at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. central time,

which can also be accessed from the site. We invite you to take a look and discover what a useful tool this site can be in expanding your knowledge and faith. The address is www.cocsermons.net.

CORRESPONDENCE COMMITTEE

The General Church Correspondence Committee would like to extend the opportunity for any who wish to communicate through written correspondence to contact one of the following three committee members:

PAT MCCANN (Chairman)
18808 N. 30th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85050

MARLENE COBB
725 S. Pickwick
Springfield, MO 65802

JUNE HAINES
11589 Genuine Rd
Clare, MI 48617

PRIESTHOOD VISITATION

If you or someone you know (member or non-member) would like to be visited by a member of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ, please call or write to the Council of Apostles at Church Headquarters in Independence. The phone numbers and addresses are listed on the inside front cover.

NOTICES

UNITED STATES

SCRIPTURE THEME CAMP

MAY 17-19

The Scripture Theme Camp will be held at Camp Bob White at the Knob Noster State Park, Missouri, beginning at 4:00 p.m. on Friday and closing at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday.

The Camp is family friendly, with outreach to children. Invite a neighbor child or relative to join in the fun of scripture search to improve our ability to articulate our faith and give a reasoned answer for it.

For more information contact: **Don Case, Glenn Gill, Daniel Malone, Jesse Lawrence or D. A. Vogel.**

MICHIGAN REUNION

JUNE 7-9

Friday there will be a fellowship gathering and potluck at Dennis and Betsy Trudgen's home at 5 p.m. From 2-5 p.m. there will be canoeing, rafting and fishing for teens, young adults and the young at heart. A BBQ dinner with smoked, pulled pork and a campfire for all will be from 6-10 p.m.

Saturday will begin with a 10 a.m. prayer service, followed by scheduled preaching services.

Sunday's Sacrament Service will be at 9 a.m., followed by dinner and an afternoon preaching service.

For questions or information regarding a place to stay, please contact:

Elder Adam Porter: (616) 240-3902

Elder Dennis Trudgen: (616) 520-6649

COLORADO REUNION

JUNE 14-16

Reduced rate rooms have been reserved at the Quality Inn at 733 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, Colorado. Call 1-800-790-2661 before June 3 and mention the Church of Christ.

Reserve a KOA Campground site at 2819 Highway 50, Grand Junction, by calling 1-800-562-1510 or emailing gjkoa@yahoo.com.

Please contact a member of the Reunion Committee if you are attending so meals and services can be planned!

Jean Larsen: (970) 434-8504

Marvin Carroll: (970) 523-9047

Liza Hedrick: (970) 462-8200

IDAHO REUNION

JUNE 21-23

This will be our 15th reunion for the Treasure Valley, and will be held at the usual location at the SISCRA Campground in Cascade. Please contact **Pastor Rich Bove** at (208) 870-3807 or **Elder Roy Coon** if you are planning to attend.

2013 VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

JULY 8-12 at the Temple Lot Local.

Contact **Becky Sheldon** or **Stephanie Welch** for information.

NEW YORK REUNION

JULY 12-14

The Akwesasne New York Local welcomes all of our brothers and sisters to fellowship and worship with us starting Friday evening at 7 p.m., and lasting through Sunday afternoon.

Questions? Please contact:

In Canada:

Wayne and Susan Miller

(613) 933-5469

wmiller12@cogeco.ca

In the United States:

Eli and Gretchen Tarbell

(518) 358-2911

egtartell@hotmail.com

Brandon and Tara Tarbell

(518) 358-9153

btartell@thetmg.com

CHURCH OF CHRIST TEEN CAMP

JULY 21-26 at Far-Westia in Stuartsville, Missouri.

Questions? Please contact **Jeff** or **Michelle Oldham** at (515) 339-6226 or mjoldham@me.com.

MINNESOTA REUNION

AUGUST 30 - SEPTEMBER 2 at the Bemidji Local.

We hope that you will invite friends and family to join us as we meet to sing, pray, receive sermons, hear spiritual lessons and play Christian games and sports.

The Bemidji Local is equipped with water and electrical connections, and bathrooms and showers, for campers. Brother Bill and Sister Elaine Gould will coordinate home accommodations for those who would like to fellowship and sleep in member's homes, or will help you find accommodations in local campgrounds, resorts or hotels. Note: the weather is transitional at this time of year so come prepared. Swimming and boating are available.

Contact:

Elder Samuel Gould: (218) 368-1427

Elder Bill Gould: (218) 586-2743

Sister Elaine Gould: (218) 586-2774

2013 WOMEN'S RETREAT

OCTOBER 4-5 at Lake Mauer Retreat Center, Excelsior Springs, Missouri, 64024

Cost: \$40/person—\$35/person if registration is received before August 31. Included: one night's accommodation and three meals: Friday supper from 5-7 and Saturday breakfast and lunch.

Meet for lunch and shopping at 11 a.m. Friday at the Excelsior Springs Ventana Gourmet Grill at 117 W. Broadway, OR come directly to the Retreat Center after 2 p.m.—the Retreat Program begins at 7:30 p.m. This is an outreach opportunity, so please invite friends and family, members and non-members alike.

Visit the Women's Retreat Website at:

<http://home.comcast.net/~ccwr/index.htm>

Registration Forms are available in the foyer of the Temple Lot Local, or by contacting **Jane Ann Carmichael** at (816) 478-7166 or at janecarmichael@sbcglobal.net.

ONTARIO REUNION

OCTOBER 5-6 at the Brant/Norfolk Church of Christ at 163 Teeter St., Teeterville, Ontario, Canada.

For more information, contact:

Bill and Marn Vieveen

(519) 759-8087

marnievieveen@sympatico.ca

Mike and Deb Bevaart

(519) 805-9790

mbevaart@rogers.com

PHOENIX REUNION

NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 1

If planning to attend, please contact:

Pastor Jim Yates, Jr.

2919 E. Siesta Lane

Phoenix, AZ 85050

(602) 374-3688

jimyatesjr@yahoo.com

Assistant Pastors:

Aadam Yates

19018 N. 29th Street

Phoenix, AZ 85050

(602) 300-9013

a.m.yates@cox.net

Gary Jacobsen

1317 W. Mohawk Lane

Phoenix, AZ 85027

gljacobsen@live.com

HONDURAS

MAY 18, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.: Marriage Retreat/Kids Scripture Camp (kids 1-11 years of age)

SEPTEMBER 4-5: General Reunion in Zamorano

JANUARY 16-19, 2014: Youth Camp in Zamorano

If interested in attending please contact:

Elder Thomas Gill

Cell phone: 011-504-32966474

thomasgill@la-comarca.org

Elder Ronnie Gill

Cell phone: 011-504-32067285

rongill@la-comarca.org

MEXICO

MAY 25: Youth Forum, Uayalceh, Yucatan

JULY 25-28: Youth Camp, Merida, Yucatan

OCTOBER 13: Reunion, Cancun, Quintana Roo

DECEMBER 8: Children Reunion, Motul, Yucatan



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Article of Faith, #9 - (concerning the Bible and Book of Mormon)
Baptism for the Dead—A Fallacy
The Book of Commandments - Its Role in the History of the Restoration
Brief Commentary: Book of Commandments & Doctrine and Covenants
A Brief History of the Church of Christ
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God's Purpose in America
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A Synopsis (Compares beliefs of three Restoration churches)
That Sacred Spot is Definitely Located
What about the Book of Mormon?
Why? (Amplifies absence of a First Presidency in Scripture)
Zion and the Temple of the Lord

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS NOTICE

To insure your membership records remain as current as possible when moving or relocating, fill out this form and return it to the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Attn: General Church Recorder, P.O. Box 472, Independence, MO 64051-0472, or e-mail the information to cofcrecorder@sbcgloba.net. One form per family, please.

MEMBER'S NAME: (First) _____ (Middle) _____ (Last) _____

OLD ADDRESS: (Street address) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

NEW ADDRESS: (Street address) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip) _____

NAMES of all Church of Christ (Temple Lot) members residing at new address: _____

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