

# The Gospel News

## ***Apostles Visit Mesa, AZ Branch***

*By Sister Valerie Dulisse*

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*Give  
 Thanks for  
 Everything!*



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"The Mesa Branch was blessed to host the Apostles for a weekend in June 2022. On Saturday, June 4, the Apostles shared with us the blessings, revelations, and interpretation of tongues from their conference meetings held the prior week. This included the 1980 experience regarding the angel Huriahl who had given an account of the tribe of Israel located in the north country above the Euphrates River, and all of the confirmations of this, having been given to various members of the Ministry and the Apostles. There had also been experiences that God would go before us into Tse Bonito for the tent meetings among the seed of Joseph planned to be held later that month. We are in the midst of the Latter Day work. God is writing the script, our Apostles explained to us. When Brother Ramone Yazzie, a Native American brother from Tse Bonito, was speaking at the podium, Brother Scott Griffith witnessed a white personage next to him.

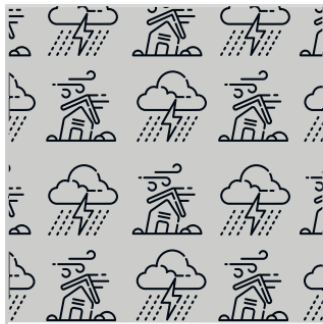
Apostle Jerry Valenti opened our Sunday service using 1 Nephi 8:5, a scripture depicting Lehi's dream, and likening it to a time in a person's life before meeting Christ, living in a wilderness, and a dark and dreary wasteland. The joyful difference in our lives came when we met Christ. Those who have no hope in Christ still reside in the dark and dreary wasteland.

In his dream, after wandering aimlessly, Lehi saw the tree and partook of the pure, white fruit which was so desirable and incomparable. The fruit was the pure love of God, which was such that He sent His only begotten son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to be our Savior and Redeemer. Living with Christ in our hearts is the best life we could ever receive.

Lehi wanted to share this fruit with his family. Lehi also saw a rod of iron on the path that led to the pure, white fruit, and many people were walking on the path. This, Brother Jerry said, is representative of serving God, basing your life and decisions on the Word of God. In this dream, a great and spacious building full of people mocked these people who were walking on the path. In life, this is symbolic of those who are worldly and persecutors of the family of God, who are all around us.

Brother Jerry exhorted us to not become distracted by the world, following them to try to fit in, and leaving the service of our King. We need to keep our eyes on that perfect, pure fruit, and stay under the umbrella of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The reward that awaits us is eternal!

(Continued on page 4)



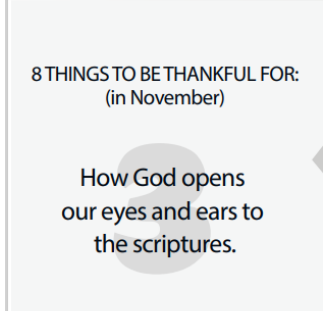
8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

The way God continues to help us through the storms.



8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

How God will bless the GMBA Conference in Farmington Hills, MI.



8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

How God opens our eyes and ears to the scriptures.



8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

The cycle of trials followed by deliverance followed by blessing.



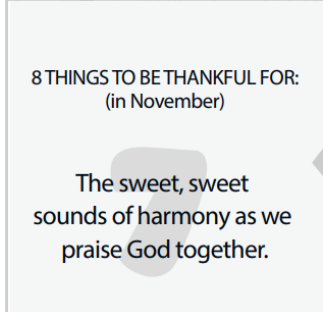
8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

The wonderful aromas coming from our kitchens this time of year.



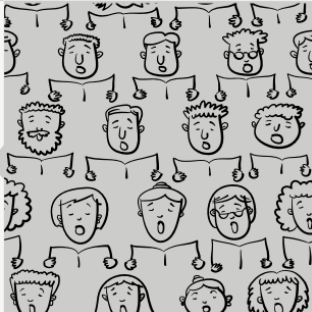
8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

The warm embraces and bright eyes of our little babies.



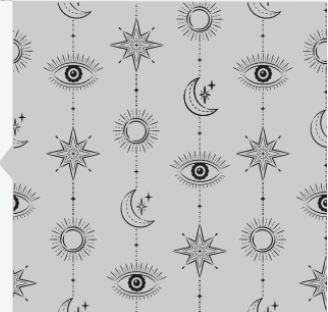
8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

The sweet, sweet sounds of harmony as we praise God together.



8 THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR:  
(in November)

Precious memories of the past and glorious hope of the future.



# BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck



**100 years ago this month Sister Anna Nastasia entered our church for the first time in Youngstown, Ohio. In her own words:**

"I had no enemies in my 'mother religion,' the church I belonged to before I met The Church of Jesus Christ. I was loved and respected by all. There was no man or woman that caused me to change. I sought not for gold or silver neither did I join through being told that this was the true church. It was not pride or love of earthly things that caused me to repent and be baptized for the remission of my sins.

When I entered The Church of Jesus Christ for the first time on November 5, 1922, to me it seemed that I had entered Paradise. I heard angels sing and my heart was quickly illuminated by the glory of God so that my tongue cannot express what my heart felt within me that day. My heart had been sad and I had carried a heavy burden. I never had a smile on my face but the instant I entered the Church I felt a load taken from me. I was illuminated within the depths of my heart and soul, so much that my grief was turned into joy. I fell greatly in love with the Church and that love is just as fresh today as it was then."



## Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

## Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America



## Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



### ***"Everything Else Is Icing"*** By Brother Doug Obradovich

#### **"If you love me, keep my commandments" – John 14:15**

He wanted to reach as many as possible with His message, so He needed leverage in order to maximize the opportunities available. Considering the surrounding areas and His limited ability to get to them, Jesus empowered 70 men to go two-by-two into these outreaches. With His authorization in hand, they immediately ventured into the unknown and soon completed their first round of efforts. The Word records their homecoming, as they were astonished with their success. They joyfully reported, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 20:17). They were clearly taken by their experiences and Jesus capitalized on this as a teaching moment, as He reaffirmed His empowerment, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." I picture Him pausing for effect, before He added His poignant clarification, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are

subject unto you; but RATHER REJOICE BECAUSE YOUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN" (v. 20).

He stopped them while they were still basking in their exhilaration, to highlight what was most critical in their walk with Him. Anything, everything and/or all things were merely add-ons to the foundation of His purpose. He wasn't quelling their excitement, diminishing their success, nor minimizing the cause. He was simply directing them to prioritize the invaluable gift they possessed. He reiterated their callings as directly authorized by God. He reassured they would witness unexplainable divine occurrences. But in all they would do and see, they would experience nothing greater than the day their souls were saved. He wanted to assure they stayed fixed on the miracle found in their own forgiveness. He wanted to make certain they remained centered and humbled by His saving their souls. In essence, He was declaring, "Nothing you'll ever experience is more important than your eternal salvation!"

When unemployment may affect your home, don't pause in begging God for help. When sickness may come upon you or your loved ones, there should be no hesitation in pursuing God's healing touch.

When you need any help for absolutely any reason (and there is nothing too small), go directly to the Lord. Remember, He wasn't telling His ministry to never tread on serpents and scorpions; He was saying everything is in addition to the salvation of their soul. So, when you ask Him to intervene and He answers your prayers and rescues you, celebrate these victories without reservation.

However, never allow yourself to lose sight of what is most important: your salvation. In the business world, "Keep the main thing the main thing" is a popular mantra. Jesus is defining the main thing: attain and maintain your salvation. The words that always come to my mind about this subject are, "Nothing else matters!" This should be read as a comparative phrase; when sickness, unemployment, problems, or discouragement enter, finding solutions are the primary goal. But afterwards, we often find ourselves with new understanding: Nothing else matters!

With that newfound clarity, we embrace the wise words from the Savior, "Rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." We understand EVERYTHING ELSE IS ICING ON THE CAKE! And His cake is most delicious!

# ***Apostles Visit Mesa, AZ Branch***

(continued from cover)

Brother Jerry drew a parallel as he took us to Matthew 14:24, where the disciples are without Christ in the boat, being tossed by the winds. Just as in Lehi's dream, without Christ, we are in a dark and dreary place. The Lord came to the disciples there in the sea, and their circumstances were transformed!

It is a good life if Jesus is part of it. The Lord can use you for something if you are basing your life upon His teaching. It can be the equivalent of walking on water for us! Through the Lord's strength, nothing is impossible. As we see the prophecies about Israel unfold, Jesus will be among us.

Brother Jerry then shared a beautiful experience of his special needs daughter, who had suffered from chronic rashes. She developed a rash one New Year's Eve, and it became worse on New Year's Day. With no doctors in the office, they gave her some medicine which only made it worse. His daughter, who does not speak, suddenly said to him, "Amen," three times. Brother Jerry understood she was asking to be anointed, so he proceeded to anoint her. Her rash then disappeared, and to this day, has never returned! God is so good!

Apostle Peter Scolaro followed and shared with us that, as humans, we tend to shrink reality to what appeals to our senses. He told us that his father, who was Brother Jonathan Scolaro's grandfather, was seen in a vision the day before standing next to Brother Jonathan during his ministerial board interview. Brother Peter encouraged us to consider living in God's reality, instead of just within what we experience with our five senses. The reality is that the purpose of this life is to prepare to be with Him in eternity.

When Jesus was walking on the water toward the boat, what was Peter's concept of reality, to think that he could walk out onto the water, as he asked the Lord to bid him to come to Him? It was up to Peter to conquer his limited vision of reality and ask the Lord to allow him to step out on the water. THIS is the Lord's reality! Our brother warned us that today the masses are persuading more and more people to walk away from the Word of God. Most of the time, you will be the only one in a crowd who believes as

you believe. Try to persuade others to join you, rather than be persuaded to abandon your beliefs.

The Spirit of God enables us at times to experience the great reality of the Kingdom of God. We need to work to purge our minds when we are taking Sacrament, of everything except to imagine how much Jesus suffered to be the sacrifice for our sins.

In the same way, remember that the trial of our faith means waiting and working while we seek an answer to our prayers. God wants to use us to be capable of great faith and service, and believe in HIS reality. Be in a position where He can use you. Sometimes, the peace of God is better than understanding. We may be disappointed in trying to understand the WHY of our afflictions. But having peace will help us to get through them.

Apostle Tom Liberto followed, taking his text from 1 Peter 1:4-5. "Where would we be in our lives without someone in the Church helping us?" he asked. He shared with us that when he was in the military, Brother Tony Picciuto, who was also in the military, had sought him out at the base where he was stationed. Both had been brought up in the Church from the time they were young. Brother Tony's influence and counsel were very instrumental in his spiritual maturation, as Brother Tom was baptized shortly after their encounter. Brother Tom shared that this week during the Apostles' meetings, the Lord had spoken, and they felt a powerful spirit as the Lord spoke these words to them: "This is a new day; prepare for the work that is going to come forth!"

We need to have a lively hope, to be lively stones, in spite of the world, the economy, and the many disconcerting things we see around us. Our Brother Tom encouraged us to have a hope in our hearts that the experiences and dreams that have come forth will come to fruition in our lifetime! We were all very blessed with the visit of our Apostles, and every cup was filled to overflowing that weekend, truly feasting on God's Word and the promises that He certainly will fulfill. May God give us the determination to remain faithful to see that day!

## A New Name by Brother Duane Lovalvo

***"I shall give this people a name, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people which the Lord God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem." (Mosiah 1:11)***

The Book of Mosiah opens with this dramatic event in which King Benjamin hands the kingdom over to his son, Mosiah. Benjamin was an amazing king, having led his people, the Nephites and the people of Zarahemla, to great military victories over their enemies the Lamanites. And he had eliminated false prophets and teachers from among the people. And Benjamin taught the people how to live righteous lives. In his final act, Benjamin looked to give his people a name.

He commanded Mosiah to gather all the people in the land to the temple, to hear his final message. And they all came, by the thousands. Can you imagine tens of thousands of people camping around the temple to hear their king? There were so many people that King Benjamin had a tower erected so that they could hear his voice. But there were so many people that he had his words written down and sent out for everyone to read, because they could not all hear him. Benjamin began to speak:

***"And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God. And he said unto me: Awake; and I awoke, and behold he stood before me."***

***"Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee; for behold, I am come to declare unto you the glad tidings of great joy." (Mosiah 3:2-3)***

What name was Benjamin going to give his people?

***"For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles..." (Mosiah 3:5)***

This event took place in 124 BC! The people must not have remembered the revelations of Nephi that spoke of these things 475 years prior.

***"And he shall cast out devils...he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue,...for behold, blood cometh from every pore..." (Mosiah 3:7)***

***"And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary." (Mosiah 3:8)***

Benjamin went on to declare many things about the Lord. Most importantly, he told the people that Christ would be scourged and crucified and that he would rise from the dead on the third day. He told them that the blood of Christ atoned for the sins of all mankind. And he told them that there is no other name given or any other way in which salvation can come to the children of men, only through the name of Christ.

And after King Benjamin finished delivering God's message he looked up and saw that the entire multitude of people, tens of thousands, had fallen to the earth. What an amazing scene that must have been!

***"And the people cried out; "O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins...And the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy..." (Mosiah 4:3)***

So, King Benjamin succeeded in giving his people a name, the name of Jesus Christ. And the people of Nephi rejoiced and were filled with the love of God. Amen.

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## White Beans for Dinner *By Sister Carolynn O'Connor*

I really enjoy working on the November issue each year. It is my favorite of all the issues, and it's a great time to reflect on how thankful I should be. "Should be," as in what I am trying to achieve rather than "am," as in I have already achieved it. This process for me involves continuous improvement and the exercise of working on the November issue helps me meet my goals to focus on being thankful.

Often, I find that I feel grateful for things that I may have missed recently, like a warm day or a person in my life who I have not seen in a long time. I recently read about the white bean challenge to encourage gratitude. It works like this: You open a can of white beans and eat them right out of the can. This is your only food for dinner, and you do this once a week. The theory is that when it is the only thing you can eat you become more grateful for the food you have for other meals. You enjoy the textures, aromas, colors, and taste more because you have experienced a meal that lacked all of these things.

We were all more grateful once we could meet together again after a period of being apart during the pandemic. The joy that we felt being together again was beautiful. So, absence does make the heart grow fonder! But do I really want to experience the disappointment of a meal of canned beans once a week, or separation from my brothers and sisters, to be able to experience the joys of a delicious meal and the blessing of being together? The answer is no. I want to feel overwhelmed with gratitude each time I walk into the church building, regardless of whether I was just there three days before, and grateful for the bounty of food I enjoy and can afford at each meal. The question is, how do we obtain this level of gratitude and joy as we navigate our day-to-day lives?

If it were simple, we would all be able to achieve this state daily. We know how to do it, but like anything else, we need to practice. Simply put, we need to Practice Gratitude. If you want to excel at yoga, or running, or piano, or knitting—you need to practice. If you want to play field hockey or paint a picture or make a wedding cake, or swim across the lake, or sing better—you practice. Gratitude requires the same dedication. You need to commit to a plan to become more grateful. It is the action of focusing on gratitude that will bring about the desired state of thankfulness, and this state will also bring you peace in your life.

The simplest way is to journal each day and write at least one thing you are grateful for. You can make a gratitude wall, send thank you notes, offer a prayer a day that is only thanking God and not asking for anything, or if you think it will help, eat a can of white beans for dinner once a week. The gratitude will come if you practice it and, in the end, you will feel more joy, and most importantly you will be living your life the way the scriptures tell us to.

I am committed to continuing this journey to improve myself and become more grateful, thankful, and joyful. For today, I will write my gratitude statement and skip the white bean dinner (or maybe I'll blend some with some good olive oil, lemon, and a handful of parmesan Reggiano and smear it on some crusty bread with a small basil leaf on top—just for a small reminder!).

Today's Gratitude Statement: I am grateful for all of you; my beautiful, amazing, strong, brothers and sisters who work tirelessly to serve God and spread the Gospel and who support the Gospel News and our phenomenal team of writers—who I am also thankful for.

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**Below are some of my favorite verses on Thankfulness.**

*This is the day which the*  
**LORD HATH MADE;**  
WE WILL *rejoice* AND *be glad* IN IT

-Psalms 118:24

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS  
for this is the will of  
**God in Christ Jesus**  
concerning you

-1 Thessalonians 5:18

AND WHATSOEVER YE DO IN WORD OR DEED,  
*do all in the name*  
**of the Lord Jesus,**

GIVING *thanks* TO GOD AND THE FATHER BY HIM.

-Colossians 3:17

AND LET THE PEACE OF GOD  
*rule in your hearts,*  
to the which also ye are called in one body;  
**AND BE YE THANKFUL**

-Colossians 3:15

MAKE A  
**joyful noise**  
UNTO THE LORD, ALL YE LANDS

-Psalms 100:1-5

O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD;  
**FOR HE IS good:**  
FOR HIS *mercy* ENDURETH FOR EVER.

-Psalms 136:1



# *Give Thanks for the things that keep you close to God*

## ***What is one activity /component in your service to God, that continues to draw you closer to him?***

"Hearing the Word of God preached, and singing." -  
Sister Kathy Natoli, Detroit, MI Branch #1.

"For me, it is the time I take in studying the scriptures  
—I feel the Lord's presence in them." -Brother George  
Kovacic, Middle Tennessee Mission.

"Music." -Sister Pamela Poisson, Treasure Coast, FL  
Branch

"Speaking to Him in prayer and singing praises unto  
Him." -Brother Michael McGuire, Cape Coral, FL  
Branch

"Wednesday night Zoom class with the brothers and  
sisters. I've grown and learned so much. These  
lessons have been a huge blessing for my mom and  
me because we are so far from a branch or mission." -  
Sister Jan Offet, Bell, CA Branch (living in Oregon)

"Reading the scriptures helps me to stay closer to the  
Lord." -Brother Michael Zaino, Edison, NJ Branch

"Discovering the mysteries of God in the Scriptures." -  
Brother Mark Kovacic, North Georgia Mission

"Reading scripture, praying, and reaching out to  
encourage others." -Sister Patty Kerby, Irvine, CA  
Branch

"Prayer! The blessed assurance of His presence and  
response is often instant. It is a wonderful feeling—His  
presence in all of my days! -Sister Salina Carlini, Inner  
City, MI Branch

"Prayers." -Sister Kim Zamora, Fort Worth, TX Branch

"My work for the Education Committee. It requires  
reading God's word, asking for understanding, and  
praying to be guided by the Holy Spirit. It's a blessing!"  
-Sister Renée Scolaro, Mesa, AZ Branch

"Praising God always, having true faith, hope, trust, and  
love combined into one is my life. Combining all these  
components while serving Him, no matter where I am,  
His love and Spirit engulf me so that when I praise His  
glory, everyone feels His love. It's a way of life, and He is  
alive within me. He knows my every need and takes  
care of me always." -Sister Lorraine Rose, Leesburg, FL  
Mission

"Ministering to the sick." -Sister Janice Gaulin,  
Creskide, MI Branch

"I feel connected to the Lord through service. Whether  
it is working on the Gospel News, helping in the  
kitchen, organizing a project or event, it always brings  
me closer to the Lord." - Sister Carolynn O'Connor,  
Farmington Hills, MI Branch

## ***Faith as Action***

***By Sister Christine Martorana***

I was not able to attend the April General Church Conference in person, but I watched the Saturday night meeting on Zoom. The meeting focused on a presentation on a recent missionary trip to Cuba. During the presentation, they showed photos and videos of our new Cuban brothers and sisters, some of whom were baptized and ordained within the span of just a few days. Wow—I thought—what faith!

I have always thought about faith as something internal, almost like a feeling or a belief. We can have faith in natural things. For example, I have faith that when I put a stamped letter in my mailbox, the mail carrier will pick it up, and several days later, it will arrive at its destination. I don't really understand exactly how the U.S. mail system works, but I believe (I have faith) that my letter will end up where I want it to go. We can also have faith in spiritual things. For example, I have faith that God exists. I pray to Him. I sing to Him. I've never seen Him myself, but I believe (I have faith) that He is real.

I think this understanding of faith as an internal feeling or belief is accurate, but after the Saturday night presentation at GC Conference, I realized that faith can be and should be so much more. The people in Cuba had not known The Church of Jesus Christ long enough to pray for days or months about their baptisms or ordinations, to wait for a big experience from God to confirm that He was calling them

And still, they willingly and eagerly accepted their calling.

As I listened to the presentation that night, my understanding of faith expanded. I realized that faith should not only be a belief; it must also be an action. Faith begins as an internal feeling, and it is a fine starting point. But if it ends there, its power has been cut short. Faith as a feeling is perhaps what led these Cuban men and women to be curious about the Gospel and listen to our missionaries. However, in accepting their calling to baptism and ordination, they transformed their faith from feeling into action. In so doing, they did not simply feel their faith, they acted on it.

And this, for me, was a new understanding of faith. Faith, I realized, cannot be something we feel and keep inside, as if it is a private possession we are afraid to lose. It must also be an action, an external manifestation of an internal feeling. For the men and women in Cuba, faith as action meant getting baptized and ordained within the span of just a few days. And while this might resonate with you, it can also mean different things to each of us. It could mean sharing our testimony when we are nervous about how it might be received, giving a smile when it is not deserved, or buying a meal for someone less fortunate. Whatever it means to you, I hope that my realization prompts you to think about what you can do to move your faith from something you feel to something you do



**We hope that you enjoy  
God's richest Blessings this  
Thanksgiving.**

**With love and gratitude for your support,**

*-The Gospel News Team*



## What We All Can Be Thankful For

By Apostle Jerry Valenti

At this time of year, many of us like to reflect on what we are thankful for. The exact things may differ from person to person but here are 5 amazing facts regarding things we all can be thankful for as members of The Church of Jesus Christ.

**1 The Love of God** – This is not referring to the innocuous concept that God loves everyone but rather to the love of God expressed by God sending His Son to earth to pay for our sins such that we can be saved. In 1 Nephi 11, Nephi is told that the Tree of Life in his father's dream represents the love of God and Nephi is then shown Jesus coming to earth and eventually being crucified for the sins of mankind. Jesus told Nicodemus that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

**2 Our Names are Written in Heaven** – We who have given our lives to the Lord have our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, indicating we are on the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life.

When the seventy expressed joy at being able to cast out devils, Jesus told them, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).

**3 The Gospel is Restored** – We could have lived in the Dark Ages when the Church was in Apostasy but instead, we are blessed to be living in the dispensation of time when the Gospel has been restored and we can look forward to the latter day prophecies coming to pass, perhaps in the near future.

**4 The People in Our Lives** – For some, it might be a spouse and children. For some, it might be other family members. For some, it might be a circle of friends. For all of us, it

includes our brothers and sisters in Christ. Regardless of who this specifically refers to, we can each be thankful for the people who God has placed in our lives.

**5 Possessions** – Although earthly possessions are way less valuable than the treasures we are storing in heaven, we can still be thankful for whatever possessions God has blessed us with in this life. While it's true that some people are blessed with more possessions than others, each of us can consider ourselves wealthy if we can be content with what God has given us. The Apostle Paul wrote, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11) and "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6).

## Ladies' Uplift Circle News

### Thanksgiving *By Sister Luann Carson*



Two groups of people were led by God from chaotic, wicked lands. Lehi was commanded by God to leave Jerusalem in 600 BC before it would be destroyed and its inhabitants taken captive. God led them to the seashore where the family "did worship the Lord" (1 Nephi 18:1). Throughout their journey they praised God for His deliverance, guidance, and protection. "They did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel" (1 Nephi 5:9).

Years before Lehi lived, in approximately 2200 BC, a group was led from Babel where the languages were confounded (Genesis 11:3-9 and Ether 1&2). Angry with the people, the Lord confounded the language and scattered the inhabitants abroad. A man we know of as the brother of Jared prayed that God would not confound the language of his family and friends. The Lord had compassion and directed Jared's brother and the group of family and friends out of the wicked land of Babel to the seashore. For four long years, the people dwelt at the seashore, forgetting to call on God. "At the end of four years...the Lord came...unto the brother of Jared, and stood in a cloud and talked with him...and chastened him because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord" (Ether 2:14).

Which group are we more like? Do we praise God often for His guidance and blessings? Or, like the brother of Jared and his people, do we forget to call on God? Life is busy and chaotic. Evil is around us, but God protects, directs, and preserves us. In thanksgiving, we should pour out our hearts to God, not just daily or hourly, but constantly keeping our hearts and minds fixed on praises to Him.

*"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth." - Psalm 34:1*



## Who Should You Thank?

But best of all, besides my material possessions, I have the truths found in the Book of Mormon and Bible!

When I am sick or my family is, I ask the elders to anoint me (see James 5:15-16). When I am confused about what to do, before I start, I ask God to open the right doors and guide me (see 11Nephi 32:9). "...I say unto you that you must pray always, ...that you must not perform anything unto the Lord...before you pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate (dedicate) your performance (what you do)...that it may be for the welfare of your soul." In other words, so whatever you do will bring good for you!

If you are reading this, someone told you about The Church of Jesus Christ! Usually, when one family member finds the power and love in this Church, they change. Then they share it with people in their families and they join also.

So, where did your family find this wonderful Gospel of love? What country did they come from? Ask your family. Since airplanes were only invented in 1903, how did God bring them here? Were they on a massive ship coming from Europe? Were they natives who had been here first for thousands of years? Did they come from Canada or South America, or an Island in the Mediterranean Sea? Were you lovingly adopted and flew here as a baby? Who brought you? Thank them. Who taught you? Thank them too. And share your love with others! Everyone needs help and love. Christ said we are the light of the world.

Think about how God has worked in your life that you know about faith, repenting, baptism, healing, and love! Thanks to someone else, now you know and must share your love and knowledge—even if you are young. Teach others what you know about God and His Church!

With much love,  
Your friend,

*Sister Jan*

Dear Friends,

On my Dad's side, I am a person whose ancestors came over on the Mayflower 13 generations ago. William Brewster, the Minister, was my 13th great grandfather. He and his people came here hunting for religious freedom to serve God in a pure and simple way. That first bitter cold winter, over half of the settlers died. Wise Native Americans began to teach them about farming and how to hunt and live off the land. They survived or I wouldn't be here. And now here I am, blessed by God. Raised by loving good parents, educated in the American way, and healed many times by the Lord. But most of all, I am a grateful member of The Church of Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving is a good time of year for each of us to think about and actually list things that we each are grateful to God for. Whichever country you are living in, if you are reading this, someone taught you, and you are blessed! If you have enough food, you are blessed. If God has ever protected you, you are blessed.

In fact, most of us are actually very spoiled. My Grandmother was born in 1902. She had no air conditioning in her ten-bedroom Kansas farmhouse; no hot running water, no inside toilet, and actually screens for windows weren't even invented yet! They used flypaper strips and it was so hot in summer they'd often sleep outside on their long porches. It was a lot like Little House on the Prairie by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

My other Grandma Robinson's family came from Scotland and traveled with Brother William Bickerton to establish the Church in Kansas. She told us about the terrible dust bowl days, when huge clouds of fine dust would blow in for hours. She would hang wet sheets at every door and window to try and keep the choking dust from her family. At the end of the storms, the sheets were totally dry and stiff as boards. They were all washed by hand. No electricity, airtight windows, telephones, or washing machines were invented. She was happy to have an inside pump for water.

So, I have all of those inventions. I own four or five Bibles and Books of Mormon and hundreds of other books that I read and re-read. I have a car; they had horses and buggies. I have wonderful smart doctors and amazing hospitals; they suffered. X-rays weren't invented yet to see what was broken under the skin. What do you have to be grateful for? What do you have more than one of?

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**Below is a miraculous Thanksgiving experience that can be found in our Church history book. We have published it in the Gospel News before, however it is worth repeating. Travel back in time almost 100 years ago to the home of Sister Helen Campitelle.**

It was in the year of 1928. My husband was out of work because of sickness. As it was the night before Thanksgiving, my children wanted me to go to the store to buy food for a Thanksgiving dinner. I did not have any food in the house except beans. I told my children I was very sorry that I was unable to make a dinner for them as their father was out of work, and they would have the beans which I had in the house.

It was seven o'clock in the evening and my children were discouraged. I told them not to be discouraged as the Lord could bless us just the same with beans. At seven-thirty we heard someone knocking and my oldest daughter, Rose, went to answer the door. She found a man there and he asked for Mrs. Campitelle.

While my daughter was talking to him, she saw a white car in front of the door and he said to me, "Mrs. Campitelle, what is the reason you don't want to give a Thanksgiving dinner to your children?" I told him the truth, that I wanted to, but as my husband was out of work, I was unable to do so.

He looked at my face and smiled. Then he said, "Mrs. Campitelle, I have brought a Thanksgiving dinner for your children." He then went into the car (which I did not see), and brought out all kinds of



groceries; fruit which looked like it had just been picked; fresh dressed chicken, which was still warm, and many other things.

When I saw all the groceries and food he had brought, I asked his name and address, as I wanted to remember him for what he had done for us. But he said, "Mrs. Campitelle, you don't need my name or address now." He looked at my children and said, "You have wonderful children and a wonderful family." Then he left.

The next day at dinner time, all the food was prepared, and we were seated around the table. Brother and Sister Frammolino were with us. While Brother Frammolino was asking the blessing on the food, he saw the same man come in and stand near the table and he said, "I fed my people in the time of Moses and I will feed them today too."



## **Thanksgiving for Thanksgiving**

**by Amos Russel Wells**

I thank Thee, Father, once again  
For many blessings gladly known,  
And many more beyond my ken  
That Thou dost see and Thou alone;  
But most of all my heart I raise  
To praise Thee for the power to praise.  
Thy bounty, it is wondrous kind;  
But oh, the smiling of Thy face!  
My life is all in love designed,

But Thou Thyself art grace of grace,—  
Thyself, oh, infinitely more  
Than all Thy bounty's golden store.  
That I can feel Thy Fatherhood,  
That I can press my hand in Thine,  
That I can know that Thou art good,  
And all Thy power is love divine,—  
This knowledge every bliss outranks;  
I thank Thee for the gift of thanks.



*"...Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." – Matt 15:27*

# Blessing Bits

**BB** **An Unlikely Occurrence** – It was Sunday, August 4, 1996. It was a feet washing Sunday in the Anaheim Branch. And it was also the day I decided to quit smoking. Yes, you heard that right. I smoked for about 20 years! I had come to a point where I was just done with it. We had two meetings that Sunday. After the feet washing service, the ministry asked if anyone needed prayer. I immediately went forward and asked the ministry to lay hands on me and ask the Lord to help me with the decision I had made to quit smoking. One of the ministers offered a beautiful prayer. The meeting ended and we all went home. I had bought the patches that help with quitting and put one on my arm. Remember, it was August and very hot in Southern California. I battled trying to keep those patches on my arm for 2 days because of the heat and then just gave up. About Thursday that week, I realized that I did not and had not felt one bit of withdrawal! Thank God, He had completely taken smoking away from me! It's been 26 years this month and I still thank God for what He did for me that August day. - Sister Debbie Kyriakakos - Albuquerque, NM Mission

**BB** **A Healing from On High** - During my annual thyroid appointment, the doctor noticed the growth she had been tracking for the past few years had grown to a concerning size. It was also a concerning color and shape that the doctor felt we should do a biopsy to see if it was cancerous. The following Sunday, I had not told anyone at Church of this

report but was praying God would heal me and provide a good answer from the biopsy. We had feet washing that Sunday, and while I was washing a sister's feet, she had a vision of a light coming down and shining through me. She was given the understanding that this was a healing over my body. She had no idea of the news I had just received. A few weeks later, the biopsy proved that the growth was benign and no cancer was found. I thank God He answered my prayers and healed me in that moment. -Sister Alyssa Maddox - Forest Hills, FL Branch

**BB** **"And I Can Walk and I Can Run and I Can Sing" #191 God Will Restore -**

After a Muncey VBS session, we had a prayer meeting in which Brother Jim Moore shared a dream he'd experienced the night before. As he spoke, he related that he had sung a prayer as he anointed one of the saints. He then anointed a sister from Muncey, singing his prayer. Shortly thereafter, one of the teenagers carried my little girl in as her right femur was broken. Brother Jim anointed her, and Sister June Hendrick drove us to the nearby hospital. A soft pathological cyst was the culprit, and Faran had two titanium rods inserted the next day. She began school non-ambulatory. Almost a year later, the rods were removed. By the grace of God, her growth plate had not been disturbed. Faran learned to walk normally again and even went on to play lacrosse! Praise God for His healing power! -Sister Connie King Gottschall, Vanderbilt, PA Branch

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at [eksanchor@gmail.com](mailto:eksanchor@gmail.com). [in approximately 150 words]. Answers to Question of the Month to [gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org](mailto:gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org).



**Question for this month:** What is your favorite part of Celebrating Christmas or New Year's Eve

**Answer from last month:** What is one activity /component in your service to God, that continues to draw you closer to Him? "By always looking back after going through trials (large or small), I can see how God is there all the time, and how he brings me through the trial with a stronger faith and closeness to Him! Praise God!" - Sister Jan Humphrey, Forest Hills, FL Branch. (Turn to page 7 for more answers.)



*"...Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." – Matt 15:27*