

The Gospel News

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF

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*Never
 Lost*



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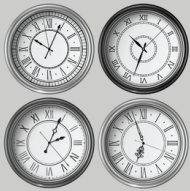
God has great things in store for us. It is spiritually healthy to let this thought dominate your mind. Reading slowly and thinking carefully about each phrase, contemplate the picture Isaiah described for those who believe in Christ and for those who will yet be convinced to believe: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:2-4). Hopefully, pondering upon this familiar passage brings you pure joy and has become a reference that anchors your vision of the future.

As latter-day events unfold in our times, we look forward to the reality of the mountain of the Lord's house. Meanwhile, we talk a lot about preparation of the heart and mind, sanctification of our souls, and living and working in unity and righteousness, concepts which are very much in the front of our minds if we have been paying attention to God's revelations and inspired messages. Take pause and be alerted if you have found these revelations to be more disconcerting than reassuring. Indeed, the imperative term "prepare" can impose an uncomfortable sense of obligation upon the carnal mind: the requirement of effort to make ready, and, yes, if it were natural for us to be prepared, God would not have to message mankind repeatedly as He has throughout history. Certainly, spiritual preparation during these pre-Zion days does have implications for our daily living and the choices we make.

First, of course, we understand that anyone who is spiritually aligned with the Lord seeks His will and does not become intertwined with worldly people or with activities that indulge the carnal nature. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ...what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ...for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). Moreover, as a person achieves the "state of being spiritually prepared," the building of God's kingdom will take a high position in the prioritization of personal activities and use of resources—in other words—God will direct the everyday lives of the faithful. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself" (Matthew 6:33).

Prophecy is given for everyone's benefit. Instructions are given to provide all men and women with knowledge of the paths of righteousness. But as to receiving these prophecies and instructions, each of us is a unique individual "receptor" who receives according to his own individual "mix" of carnal and spiritual understandings, or rather, carnal and godly spirits. Of course, we know that these do not actually blend but rather conflict; the carnal mind is at enmity with God (see Romans 8:7).

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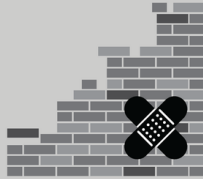


To every thing
there is a season,
and a time to
every purpose under
heaven:
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8



TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to be born,
and a time to die;
a time to plant,
and a time to pluck up
that which is planted;

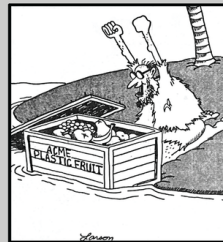
TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to kill,
and a time to heal;
a time to break down,
and a time to build up;



TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to weep,
and time to laugh;
a time to mourn,
and a time to dance;



TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to cast away stones,
and a time to
gather stones together;
a time to embrace,
and a time to
refrain from embracing;



TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to get,
and a time to lose;
a time to keep,
and a time to cast away;

TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to rend,
and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence,
and a time to speak;



TURN, TURN, TURN
A time to love,
and a time to hate;
a time of war,
and a time of peace.
(It's not too late...)



BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck



Eighty-four years ago this month, on September 11, 1939, a discussion was held at Branch #1 in Detroit Michigan, concerning the need for a church building in Muncey Reserve, Ontario, Canada.

The Council Hall they had previously been meeting in was converted to a school forcing members to meet in their homes. Brother George Nicholas then wrote to the President of our Church, William H. Cadman, expressing concern for the work because of a lack of a church building. A lot was purchased and approval granted for construction. Many brothers worked hard and in six months it was dedicated debt free, and was equipped with small living quarters including a bedroom and kitchen. Upon Bro. Nicholas' ordination into the ministry, on October 15, 1939, (The first native minister in The Church), he relinquished his duties as a Tribal Chief, believing he could not truly administer the duties of an elder and also be in public service.

Photos of Brother George Nicholas from Ancestry.com

(continued on page 11)



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.



"Can't Fake It if You Want to Make It"

By Brother Doug Obradovich

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." (Matthew 15:8)

Years ago I met with and challenged my team of financial advisors to each present an educational seminar over the following quarter. They all accepted and committed to do so. At our meeting 3 months later, I pondered how to address them, as not one had honored their promise. Had they simply appeased my request with no intention of actually following through?

Their humoring me became a personal affront, leaving me apoplectic. I surrendered to my prideful self-righteous "them versus me" outlook, and even concluded that my dedication to them was much greater than theirs to me. Their credibility plummeted, and I knew I could never trust them again. Years later, reading the verse above, I

wonder how Jesus must have felt as He evaluated those around Him.

My situation was petty, especially in light of the seriousness Christ was facing with His own team of hypocrites. They clearly underestimated the power of Christ, feebly attempting to get close enough to Him ("draweth nigh unto me") without investing any real energy in following through. Are there still "this people" claiming to follow Jesus without sincerely dedicating their hearts to Him and/or His cause? Keep in mind, His cause requires real intent, because souls are at stake.

Following up in that meeting so many years ago, I made a case for those prospective clients robbed of their opportunity to hear about good, sound investing. I said, "Because of our negligence over the last 90 days, some have lost their opportunity to protect themselves." How much more serious are the effects of dishonoring Christ with lip service? Such carelessness jeopardizes

the salvation of those seeking the truth.

Please don't misunderstand: understandably, sometimes the best you can do is just attend church. But on a normal, daily basis, if you're going to "draw nigh" to Jesus Christ, this closeness must be appreciated as your unique opportunity to grow and benefit. He wants to and will "immediately" bless His people (Mosiah 2:22). When others see His evidentiary fingerprints on your life, they will follow willingly. You are the conduit for others to find their salvation. They, then, will have opportunity to become magnets for other lost souls. Your sincere desire to serve God and serve others ("Do the Two") can affect more than we can possibly foresee.

Conclusion: "Draw nigh" to God. Honor Him with words. Respect Him with righteous servitude. Love Him with fullness of heart, soul, and mind. You will "immediately" experience how much better it is to be numbered among "His people" and not "this people."

(continued from cover)

The degree to which each of us anticipates the future with joy or with fear is dependent upon his or her individual "receptivity" or preparedness. Ideally, we follow the proverbial advice: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

So, as we consider the wonderful promise of Zion, let us take care not to allow our fleshly minds to become sidetracked while we think about what may happen before we get there. Do not slide into a mindset that views preparation as a burden rather than an opportunity. For example, one might wonder: How will I be impacted by God's dealings with those who would oppose His plan? Are world systems about to collapse? Should I be setting aside my life plans because God is getting ready to make big changes? Is the future set such that there is no use in pursuing an education, or planning for retirement, or finding a spouse and planning a life together? For some individuals, questions such as these can dampen the joy of envisioning God's latter-day Kingdom of believers under His protection, gathered in trust and in worship, and blessed with His power and gifts. For others, the prospect of impingements on their current lives disrupts their ability to receive the guidance God is giving or even prompts them to dismiss it as currently irrelevant.

Yes, we know that those who put their trust in the arm of flesh do have cause for concern. But brothers and sisters of The Church of Jesus Christ ought to be above such concerns—free of fear because of our righteousness and faith AND our studied knowledge of God's promises. Still, it is apparent from scriptures that God's people have frequently needed reassurance that He will take care of them as long as they seek to live for Christ. Let's be reminded of some of those reassurances:

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9).

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:18-19).

"Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire" (1 Nephi 22:17).

"Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy and holiness shall be upon their heads; and they shall obtain gladness and joy; sorrow and mourning shall flee away. I am he; yea, I am he that comforteth you. Behold, who art thou, that you shouldst be afraid of man, who shall die, and of the son of man, who shall be made like unto grass?" (2 Nephi 8:11-12)

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

These scriptures speak of Christ's deliverance, reassuring us both while in the flesh and for eternity. It is intriguing to contemplate the mindsets of faithful individuals who lived during the times

these assurances were originally spoken and written. It appears that those saints were not so different from us today. It is likely that they too had their conflicted moments, experiencing dread and repugnance over the trends of their day while they struggled to live in the hope God offered them with His promises. Centuries of conflict have passed since the first lie was told in the garden. The Apostle Paul recognized that, while we tend to focus on this life of flesh and blood, our struggles and our opportunities are simultaneously temporal and eternal. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39). We live in hope of an eternal kingdom that has its beginning with the saints on this earth and continues as all flesh passes and there is a new heaven and a new earth. Therefore, we are able to understand that our preparation for Zion is not meant to be different than our preparation for Eternity.

Today as in all times, God is willing to guide us to live "prepared" in faithfulness and righteousness as we go about our business as saints who variously...

... may obtain learning for better living.

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:" (Proverbs 1:5)

... are likely working to earn their own living as best they can.

"Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work" (Exodus 35:35).

... may find partners and marry.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him (Genesis 2:18). Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it (Ephesians 5:25).

... hope to enjoy the fruits of their labors.

"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:9-10).

... always respect the Lord in everything they do.

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:23-24).

God does not want us to live in fear or dread. Neither does He want us to sit idly waiting to be acted upon.

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The Great Escape

By Brother Duane Loyalvo

One of the most interesting stories in the Book of Mormon is the escape of the people of King Limhi from subjugation by the Lamanites. What makes this story so intriguing is that it serves as an analogy to the human struggle. You see, in the year 121 B.C., in a land called Shilom, being a part of the Land of Lehi-Nephi, thousands of Nephites found themselves under the yoke of bondage. Their city was hemmed in on all sides by the Lamanites, and they had no hope of escape. Furthermore, they were forced to pay tribute to their enemies. Now, of course, these Nephites had brought these sorrows down on themselves.

Many years earlier, a man named Zeniff had overzealously led this large group of Nephites out of Zarahemla. They departed from the main body of Nephites to satisfy their desire to reinhabit the lands of their first inheritance, the place where the Lamanites lived. After King Zeniff died, these people were led into great sin by Zeniff's son, King Noah. Noah's corruption knew no bounds. He taxed the people to pay for his palaces. He had wives and concubines. He created his own version of a religion, surrounding himself with priests who supported his excesses. Noah ordered the mass production of wine, and the people became drunkards. Worst of all, Noah and the priests caused the prophet Abinadi to be put to death by fire. When Alma secretly started baptizing converts, it was Noah who sent his army in, and Alma's people were forced to flee into the wilderness. Eventually, Noah was executed by his own people, but the damage was done. Noah's son, King Limhi, inherited a mess. His armies suffered loss after loss in battles with the Lamanites. Thousands of widows and children were left to mourn for their lost men. Limhi had no choice but to sue for peace and pay the tributes imposed by the Lamanite king.

It was at this point that the people of Limhi began to humble themselves and cry mightily to God. Their situation began to change for the better. The Lord softened the hearts of the Lamanites, and their burdens were eased. Then, one day, God threw them a lifeline. A great and mighty man named Ammon led a small band of strong men out of Zarahemla to search for the lost people of Zeniff. They wandered in the wilderness for forty days before they finally arrived at the city of Shilom. The Nephites began to have hope. It wasn't long before they came up with a plan to save the people. Gideon proposed that they give their wine tribute to the Lamanite guards and then sneak the people out the back pass when the guards became drunk. The plan worked to perfection. The entire city of Shilom was evacuated in a few hours. Thousands of men, women, and children slipped out the back pass and escaped into the wilderness along with their flocks, herds, and possessions. In less than two weeks, the multitude crossed the borders of Zarahemla where they were received with great rejoicing by King Mosiah and the Nephites.

So, what can we glean from this story to help us in our battle for salvation? Clearly, we can compare the people's departure from Zarahemla to our leaving the protective body of the church. This move left the Zeniffites exposed to danger. Likewise, leaving the body of the church can deny us the comfort and support that we need in our daily lives. It's not hard to compare Noah's sinfulness to what would happen if we totally rebelled against God. The result would be a loss of many blessings as we would become lost in the darkness, having let go of the rod of iron. Aggression, lasciviousness, and substance abuse are certainly things to avoid. In this comparison we find that the pain, frustration, and subjugation of the Nephites is like what would happen to us if we followed the path of Noah. Captivity by the evil one awaits at the end of that road. And yet, we see the boundless mercy of God in this story. When the people humbled themselves and begged God for deliverance, hope was not far away. The great and mighty Ammon pushed through all obstacles (he traveled for 40 days) to find the lost people and lead them home. Is our Lord, Jesus Christ, very far away when we need Him? After we have strayed, does He cease to listen to our cries for help? Jesus overcame all obstacles to save YOU and ME! He fasted for 40 days, overcoming all temptations of the flesh. He is quick to recover us if we offer a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and He will lead us home.

GMBA Camp 2023
Ogelthorpe University Atlanta, GA.

NEVER



LOST

"I am so humbled and blessed to serve as GMBA Chaplin. God spoke to us Sunday morning and said He had sanctified our campout. The blessing that followed all week showed we are "Never Lost" from his love, power and gifts. Praise God!"- Brother Chuck Maddox Sr, GMBA Chaplain

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to be camp director this past year. Despite the trials & obstacles, I got to meet, know and connect with brothers & sisters throughout the church & it has not only brought me closer to them, but much closer with God as well! When we lean on each other, we are Never Lost!"- Sister Alyssa Morle, Camp Director

"It was such a blessing to be part of this camp. I am forever grateful for the connections I made with my brothers and sisters."- Sister Sophia O'Connor, Assistant Camp Director

"Never lost to me was that we are always found and always victorious! We found so much, love, and joy and learning together... and we experienced victory! Praying, praising, new commitments to God, recommitments to do our best! Just an incredible week!"- Brother Lucas Martarano, GMBA President

"Having Everyone reunited was an immense blessing! I'm in awe of how the Lord continued to bless us day after day, meeting after meeting. It was such a great reminder of how we are NEVER LOST from the Lord."- Brother Ryan McDonnell, Vice President





1

HUNGRY HUNGRY HIPPOS BOUNCEHOUSE

4

YEARS SINCE FULL CAMP

PEOPLE THAT ASKED FOR BAPTISM AT CAMP

13

BRANCHES THAT ATTENDED

49

82

KIDS 12 AND UNDER

HEAT INDEX IN
HOTLANTA

93

(but it felt much hotter!)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE

538

680

COFFEE PODS CONSUMED AT CANTEEN

POUNDS OF LINENS SISTER
KIM MORLE WASHED

1,000+

SCHOLARSHIP MONEY USED

\$80,000

130,897

STEPS BY A CAMPER THAT WEEK

CHICKENS SERVED: TOO
NUMEROUS TO COUNT!

GENTLENESS

Faith PEACE **GOODNESS** TEMPERANCE
JOY LONGSUFFERING *Love* MEEKNESS

Gentleness *By Sister Dianne Maddox*

In looking for inspiration for writing this article, I found difficulty finding something to write about that didn't sound trite or even plagiarized. So I asked several young people who attended our recent YIA what their definition of gentleness is. Please read their varied and very insightful answers below.

"Being patient and understanding with people. Not being harsh. Not rough."

"I don't feel like I'm a gentle person. I feel destructive and large and bulky. But I think that gentleness is all about being kind and tender, not a physical attribute."

"Gentleness is when you handle adversity well and when you take criticism well. Also, on my recent flight, I had the chance to practice gentleness when seated next to two severely misbehaving children. I did not react the same as other people but rather, I chose to be gentle with them."

"Gentleness to me means caring. When you're gentle with something, that means you care for it and don't want anything bad to happen to it. Almost like a protector."

"To me, gentleness is kindness, easy, careful. To be gentle you have to care for what/who you are being gentle with. It can also be the feeling of wanting to help others no matter what."

"As Jesus said, to be 'Harmless as doves,' to be so full of love that you are incapable of harming someone or being angry with them."

"Gentleness to me means quietly loving. Wholehearted charity, not expecting anything back, but peacefully knowing that you can share that love and enjoy it without needing anything in return."

"Soft and kind, easy. Pleasant."

"Tender kindness."

"Gentleness is the combination of patience and love in order to show care."

"The true meaning of gentleness is the compassionate and tender-hearted approach towards others, filled with kindness, patience, and love."

"Gentleness means being calm, kind, and having a soft heart. It also means being able to forgive others for their mistakes, and

being willing to help."

"To be gentle is to recognize that God's ways and thoughts are high above our own" (Isaiah 55:9). Gentleness comes from humility. To be gentle is also not to view ourselves as better than anyone else."

"Gentleness to me means being able to be soft in situations, like being kind or tender."

Their definitions are varied, and filled with great advice. These kids are wise beyond their years!

As we are instructed in James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." Let us exercise that kind of wisdom in all of our interactions.

One thing I admit that I need to be careful to avoid putting on a facade of being gentle by exercising passive aggressive behavior. True gentleness is rooted deep in our hearts and must come from a sincere desire to be gentle with others, but it is tempting to fall into the trap of just appearing to be gentle.

Gentleness goes back to what is commonly called "The Golden Rule" Luke 6:31 says, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." If I want to be treated with gentleness, I need to treat others with the same courtesy. I need to treat others with the same gentleness that Jesus Christ treats me with.

This is a great quote by Max Lucado. "I choose gentleness... Nothing is won by force. I choose to be gentle. If I raise my voice may it be only in praise. If I clench my fist, may it be only in prayer. If I make a demand, may it be only of myself."

May God bless us as together we strive to be a more gentle people. Gentle with the person that cuts you off in traffic. Gentle with the cashier that won't accept your return of the defective item without a receipt. Gentle with the customer service person that doesn't speak your language well. Gentle with your child's playmate that tracks mud in your house. Gentle with your employees when they make a mistake. You get the idea. "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great" (2 Samuel 22:36). Go be gentle and be great!

(continued from page 4)

God does not want us to live in fear or dread. Neither does He want us to sit idly waiting to be acted upon. Rather He gave us the opportunity to act for ourselves, taking positive action to obtain the promises He has presented to mankind through His Son, Jesus Christ. "...[A]nd men are, that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to (2 Nephi the commandments which God hath given" 2:25-26). He created man to have joy in the Lord; therefore, we owe it to ourselves and to the Lord to live joyously in the hope of ultimate salvation, basking in the blessings of our preparation as His promises unfold.

Be sure to take good care of yourself!

In the love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

James Crudup, Joel Gehly, Pete Giannetti, John Griffith, Scott Griffith, Paul Liberto, Thomas M. Liberto, Leonard A. Lovalvo, Frank Natoli, Paul A. Palmieri, Peter Scolaro, Jerry Valenti

To learn more about The Church of Jesus Christ, with Headquarters in Monongahela, PA, please visit our website. The World Operations Center for world-wide missionary efforts is in Greensburg, PA.

www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org

Ladies' Uplift Circle News



Bouquet of Blessings

Atlantic Coast Ladies' Circle Program

The Mount Laurel Ladies' Uplift Circle was asked to present a program following the Business Meeting of the Atlantic Coast Area Circle in March of 2017. As a teacher for the Mount Laurel Ladies' Circle, the thought came to mind of how each sister and friend represents a beautiful flower.

Each flower is different in its look and fragrance, but together they make a beautiful bouquet. Each one adds joy and value, so the theme of the program naturally became "Bouquet of Blessings!" Beyond that, more importantly, the thought came to mind about each of our sisters and their talents, and what each of them brings individually to our Circle. In thinking about that collectively, a picture encompassing all of them became a beautiful bouquet, with blessings to be shared.

As the presenter, I spoke for a minute about my desires growing up for a career, first to be a teacher and also to be an author and writer. Although none of these natural careers ever came to pass, as God had inspired more involvement in Church and especially the Ladies' Circle, it was apparent that the Lord was moving His hand of direction towards the Ladies' Circle and being a part of preparing lessons and encouraging our sisters and friends attending the Circle.

Everyone seems to like a visual. The visual for this program was what can be called a collage. In looking up the definition of a collage, it is a technique used in visual arts, where artwork is made by assembling different forms, thus creating a new whole. What an inspiration to think of the individual sisters of our Ladies' Circle creating a collage! When we are put together, we become one.

Thinking about the times we might receive flowers, whether it be for prayer if you are sick, to celebrate a special occasion, to express sorrow in a time of loss, or to show love, I expressed my personal favorite as being "Just Because." When thinking about "Just Because," when we came to Christ, His love was not based on anything having to do with our own accomplishments, or deserved based on our own doing... but because His Love surpasses anything we as individuals can ever do to deserve it.

By Sister Marty Jumper

That day, the sisters sang from the Saints Hymnal the song, "Showers of Blessings," however; we decided to change the words to "Flowers of Blessings!" It was a great way to express how we felt toward each other.

We went on to define the meaning of Bouquet.

1. A bunch of flowers arranged as one;
2. An arrangement of flowers given as a gift of love;
3. A collection of flowers, cut and tied together; and
4. Flowers picked and fastened together in a bunch.

We are sure everyone can agree, that definitely describes our Ladies' Circle!

We were blessed that day to have Sister Geneva Dell present in our meeting, who related an experience that can be found in our Church History book about the Sisters being as a Bouquet: On December 26, 1935, the General Circle met in the home of Sister Cadman in Monongahela, PA.

Sister Cadman received a letter from Sister Ivy Fisher of the Stelton, NJ Mission (present-day Edison). In the letter Sister Ivy reported the following experience:

"Last Saturday evening, February 1 (1935), we had our Ladies' Circle meeting. It was wonderful. I must tell you our experience as we met at Sister Frances' (Venuto) home. I asked Sister Rose (Rogolino) to open the meeting. The meeting was opened with hymn 181 (I'm a Pilgrim), and prayer. Our Brother Frank (Venuto) was in the next room sitting next to the stove with his head bowed down.

While he was sitting there a young girl came to him with a basket of flowers. She said to him, "I am going to give each one of my sisters a flower." Brother Frank said to her, "Where is mine?" The girl said to him, "You will have yours some other time."

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Other Sheep—Never Lost

for each letter. For example, an S could be represented by a snake, an Egyptian letter, or one in a secret code.

“What message would you want to leave to the future people?” I asked. Some students wrote their names followed by a verse or two about the Lord. Others wrote about where we were and what we were doing. All were in the unreadable code they had invented, just like the plates the Book of Mormon was written on!

We also wanted to see these ancient cities in ruins in The Book of Mormon. We watched parts of two National Geographic videos showing us Peru and also Guatemalan jungles. The explorer there is a man named Dr Albert Lin. They are using a new invention, called Lidar, almost like an x-ray of our bones. The Lidar erased the images of the jungle and shows the actual ancient ruins underneath!

They are now discovering thousands and thousands of dirt and jungle-covered mounds that turn out to be undiscovered ruins! Who knows what God will let them

discover? Who knows what ancient, secret knowledge will be uncovered in our lifetimes that further proves the Book of Mormon?

Pray and ask God to use you. Pray for love and kindness towards everyone. Remember, God chose you to be born right now, in this day and time. He is with you always. He will never forsake you. You are never lost to Jesus and God!

With love,

Your Friend and Sister in Christ,

Sister Jan



Dear Friends,

At GMBA Camp in Atlanta, we learned there are two very important, ancient records, the Book of Mormon and the Bible. In them both, Jesus tells His followers they are never lost. Like a good shepherd who has 99 of His flock but one is missing, Jesus goes and finds them. They are never lost to Him.

Jesus said that there are more of His people, hidden far away, but never lost to Him. He called them His sheep because He was called our Shepherd. Jesus is the Son of God who protects, defends, guides us and finally meets us in heaven. He has a plan for each one of us! He will help you. In the Bible, in the faraway country of Israel, Jesus told His twelve apostles, “Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd”(see John 10:16 in the Bible). We know these sheep are the people He brought to the Americas, the Native American people here. The Book of Mormon tells us this (see 3rd Nephi Chapter 15).

And after Jesus was crucified and a huge destruction happened in the Americas Jesus visited the Americas. He taught those who survived about God and the right way to live. The Book of Mormon teaches us that only the most righteous (the best) people survived. So every single Native American, South American person which we call “Indian People” are the descendants of the very best of the best. How do we know? It is recorded in the Book of Mormon, written on sheets of metal. Some were gold and some brass. Metal would never fall apart like paper. (Read 3rd Nephi Chapters 15-17.)

This history was written in old, forgotten languages that no one understood without God helping them to interpret. In our class, each student was given a set of four sheets made of metal and ready to be embossed or written on by pressing.

In order to do this, we each wrote an alphabet and either followed a set of Egyptian Hieroglyphics or made up a code

H U O
 L Q V Z G A A Y A
 R C A E H Q M Q B J Z N P
 B W W Y A R E J R R K D C V U G M
 D S D Y O U Q W S K F Y P F O D I J I
 A R R E A P T N A A L M I J Y F G A D G H
 U Y F J M C X Y Z L Y G Z W H I V C B S A
 L C U Q B J I Z H O A O N P R A I E U M E N Q
 Z I E O U P R T Y E U F L G T P F R C I E P X
 W P W O U Y G S W N E V E R J E D Q A Z I I F L A
 Q A O M T S H K P H F H E K D U G U J T O U F Y L
 I Y O D V Q Y E R D A Y R A H J T X H E V G X X G
 I R U E G J O B U A B L T T N P W A B Z H L W D D I L
 N F S E O O N P O F Y L E Q J O J P Z S L A H P I F R
 Z Z R Y N D N A N D C L A W C F R Y U F Q L V X Q A L
 J T O Q U N R J E O I T G H G I X F A Q X J D L D
 H O L C P Z F T S W W U R V R A Q Z S O J Y L F A
 I Z R A U C Q T O N M D O O X Y T X Y C X L O Y U
 U T G E V K R P A R S L H C H D O I I Q T M U
 P S E V O L H P V A S K Y I S S S E D O F K M
 B A N D H O U D W S R S G E C D H C Z J M
 O T P J E S S D A D C M J S F E J I R A X
 Z P O R C E Z J G Q G Z O H S N J V O
 B Y O U G I V O P L A P S E E S E
 Y E X P A D G I W K B W N
 S V P A D H V H R
 B V A

YOU ARE NEVER LOST TO GOD HE SEES YOU AND LOVES YOU AND WILL HELP YOU AT ALL TIMES ASK HIM WHAT YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO DO IN THIS WORLD

(continued from page 2)

He decided to spend his remaining years, along with his wife Julia, serving the spiritual needs of his people. He had the gift of prayer and anointed many individuals. Many of his people were miraculously healed, including a man who had come to his house with frostbitten feet. The most inspiring sermon that Brother Nicholas preached was from Isaiah 20. As he would pick up The Book of Mormon, he would say, "This is the voice that speaks from the dust to us and our children. Some day our

people will hear this voice of hope, this voice of promise." Brother George Nicholas also served in the Canadian military during World War I as a sergeant in the infantry overseas expeditionary force.

More information about Bro. George Nicholas and the Muncey work: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ Vol 2.

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The brother came in and told us what he had seen. At first he thought it was Sister Rose's daughter (Geneva). (It was not.) I can't begin to tell you what a blessing was in that home. We then sang "The Spirit Of God Like A Fire Is Burning." After the meeting a sister had a desire to sing 286, "Ye Who Are Called to Labor." When she opened the book, Sister Frances saw a light come out of the book. We all thank God we had a wonderful meeting."

We appreciate the reminders from the sisters who were pillars in our Church that God was telling them how precious our Ladies' Circle is and the love of our sisters was, and still is.

God bless all of you, and keep showing your individual beauty through His love.

Share what you wrote in your journal entry last month about the verse in Joshua 1:9

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

"In the early 1980's, we moved from Louisiana to Ohio. I was feeling such a desire that the Lord would speak to me directly so that I could know that we made the right decision. One Sunday night we visited the Imperial Branch. It was my first time, and I didn't know anyone there. That night when the meeting was opened for testimony, I was the first one on my feet to praise God. As I was standing there, a brother stood in the gift of tongues, and then his hand pointed to me (his eyes were closed). He spoke these words, "My Child, continue to exercise faith and I will bless your life. I am Jesus Christ the Son of God." My silent prayer was answered, and God has surely been with me and blessed me!" -Sister Cathy Genaro, Forest Hills, FL Branch.

"God reminds me that I'm never alone because He allows his saints to surround me with love continuously." -Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"This scripture has helped me during adversity, times where I had challenges. It helps me get through everyday challenges." - Brother Michael Zaino, Edison, NJ Branch

"Throughout my whole life, God has been with me, but I wasn't dedicated or willing to understand that before being baptized. I have been walking with God for four years, five months, and nine days and counting so I feel that God has revealed to me in my life to just step off the boat & trust Him always. My most recent experience is my first GMBA camp being able to attend with a teenager & a seven month old was a bit nerve wracking, but thank God for the help from brothers and sisters in Christ. The overall experience was beyond amazing! I know God is with me and wherever He wants me to go, I will follow. My desire is for all to know though we may be weak. We got a mighty God!" - Sister Heather Escobar, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"In 1994, I was diagnosed with aggressive cancer. I had the strongest chemo they could have administered to me. It's called by medical staff the "red devil." You can only have it once in your lifetime is what I was told by my doctor. After five months of chemo, the doctor said I needed 35 radiation treatments. Brother Frank Altamore had the word of the Lord in regards to me. This is part of what was given to him " Tell her, tell her to come onto Me, I will take care of her as sure as the rain is falling down." That gave me great hope. I was anointed for wisdom in regards to taking the 35 radiation treatments. After I was anointed, a sister came up to me and shook her finger at me and in a very powerful voice said, "You are not to take the radiation!" The hospital called me three days in a row telling me to "run not walk" to take the radiation treatments. God gave me the courage and took away my fear to say "no." I told them not to call me anymore. I was not going to take the treatment! Praise God that was 29 years ago! I thank God everyday!" -Sister Mary Bertolo, Detroit, MI Branch #1.

Blessing Bits

BB My Confidence is in The Lord - My work position is mandated to be licensed with the state in order to perform certain responsibilities. It was essential that I pass an exam to remain an active employee. I love to read (my wife, Sister Taryn, can vouch) yet, I confess, when it comes time for exams, I lack the confidence to pass. And so, there I was, ten years out of college and a week from the exam, ready to read, re-read and review the booklet to prepare when that familiar feeling of uneasiness came over me. However, I stopped and began to pray. Each time I sat down to study, I asked the Lord to calm my nerves and for the ability to retain the information to His glory. As I sat for the exam a week later, I experienced peace and confidence. The Lord helped me pass not only this licensing exam, but an additional exam, too! All glory to His name!- Brother Marcus Natoli, Branch One, MI

BB The News Will Reach the Scattered Tribes - En el año 2022, yo estuve en la cocina de mi casa y mi hija estuvo en la sala mirando las noticias. Ella me habló y me dijo, "Ven! Mira cuanta gente está en la frontera de los estados unidos queriendo pasar." Cuando cesaron las noticias, regresé a la cocina y cuando me fui, empecé a cantar el coro de número 59 Mirar La Luz de Un Nuevo Dia en Los cantos de Sión: "Y exclaman Ah! ¡El día ha llegado ya! Y gloria a Dios de noche me guardo!" Y me dije a mí misma que se acerca el día en que José se revelará y mi pueblo comenzará a llegar a la tierra prometida. Gloria a Dios.

In 2022, I was in the kitchen of my home and my daughter was in the living room watching the news. She said, "Come here! Look at how many people are wanting to cross the border into the United States." When the news story ended, I returned to the kitchen and as I went, I began to sing the chorus of #59 in The Songs of Zion, To See the Morning Light: "And they cry, "Ah, we knew the day would come," and "Praise the Lord, He kept us thru the night!" And I said to myself that the day is not far off when Joseph will reveal himself and my people will begin to arrive in the promised land. Glory to God.- Sister Josephina Luna, Bell, CA Branch

BB He Supplies My Every Need - I can't thank God enough for His wonderful Church and being with me more than I deserve. All of my life, I've only known "church" as it pertains to my home branch in Hopelawn, NJ. Not having many young people in the branch, I've always felt alone, like there was no one to open up to about the spiritual challenges I've faced. Going to my first General Church Conference with my cousins in fall of 2021 felt like seeing the Church for the first time. The fellowship, services and seeing so many of the saints filled my heart and soul. Out of shame, I was still timid about sharing my challenges with other brothers and sisters. After the following conference, God prompted me to open up to a brother about the spiritual challenges I'd been facing using James 5:16. Though I felt unworthy, the Lord directed me out of a situation, walked me through my spiritual battles, and gave me my brothers and sisters to lean on.- Brother Joshua Calabro, Hopelawn, NJ Branch

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

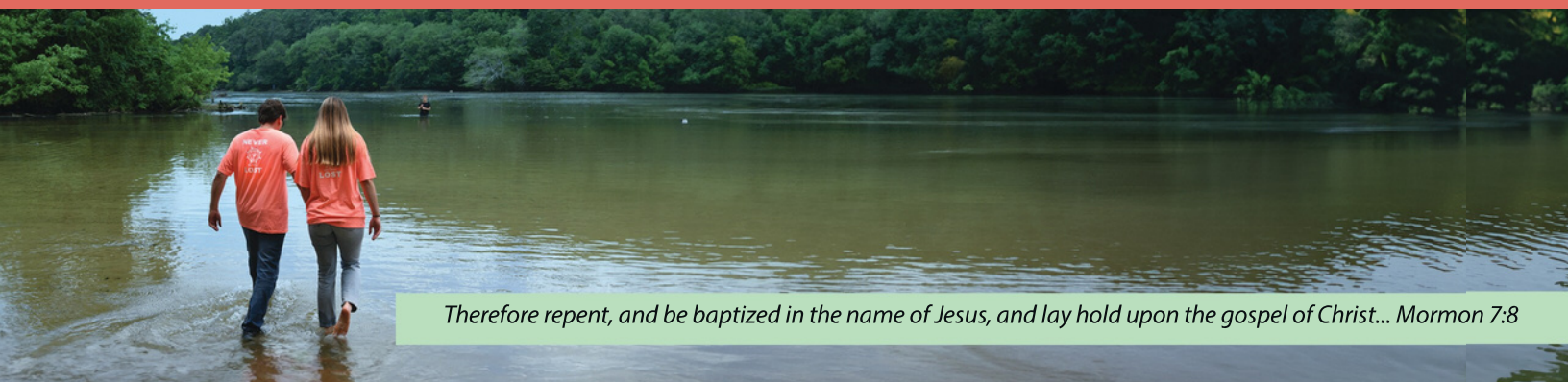
Q

Question for this month: What is your favorite Songs of Zion song? Feel free to share why.

A

Answer from last month: Share what you wrote in your journal entry last month about the verse in Joshua 1:9.

"I have estimated that I have driven well over 100,000 miles for the Lord and because I begin each trip in prayer, I have never had a mishap. All glory goes to God." -Brother George Kovacic, Middle Tennessee Mission.



Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ... Mormon 7:8