

The Gospel News

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The Simple Message—Jesus

By Evangelist Anthony Ricci

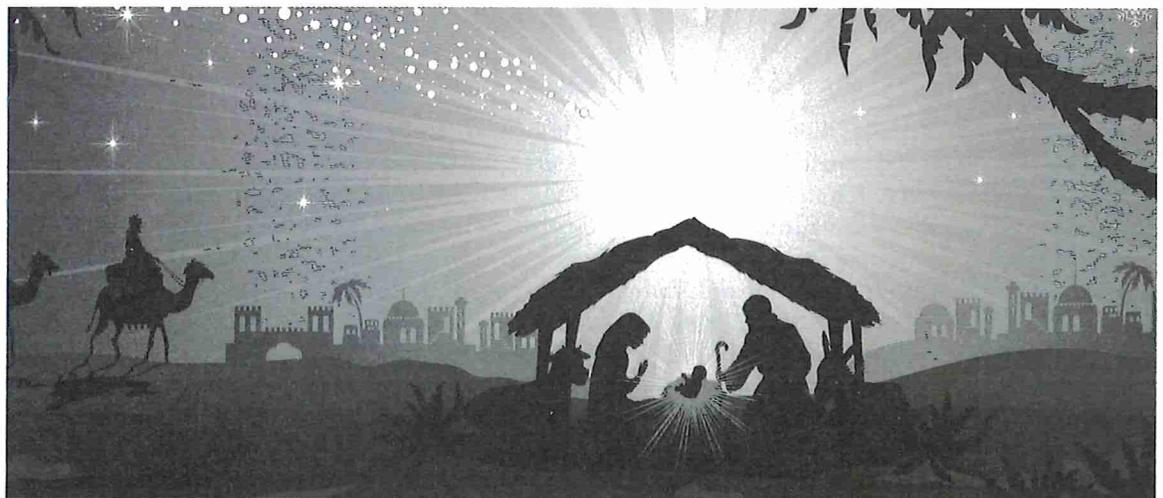
It was about 30 BC and according to the fifth chapter of Helaman, the land was not in good shape. The voices of the people who chose evil were more numerous than those who chose good. It states that neither the law nor justice had any effect in turning the people's hearts back to God.

It is in times like these that we realize there is only way that the hearts of men can be turned. As we examine the first part of this chapter we see a familiar message—a message that for centuries upon centuries has never failed; a message that was handed down from fathers to their children; a message that motivated brothers Nephi and Lehi to abandon their positions of political standing to become the preachers of this message. The message? Very simply put: Jesus.

These two men, as it says in verse 4, began to preach the Word of God, and would continue preaching all the remainder of their days. Can you imagine the level of conviction, determination, and True Love for mankind they must have had to devote their lives to preaching this message? They looked around and saw that the times were not good. They KNEW they had a solution and were about to embark upon an endeavor to change the world, one person at a time!

What makes this (in my humble opinion) one of the greatest chapters in all of the scriptures is that the writer wants us, the reader, to know that Nephi and Lehi had a plan (God's Plan) which, as we find out in verse 5, was taught to them by their father Helaman. They began to remember the words of their father who taught them the things he (no doubt) learned from his father and grandfather. He gave them fatherly advice and Spiritual truths from the words of King Benjamin to those of Amulek speaking to Zeezrom. From these teachings Nephi and Lehi established a five-step plan to change the world. The first two steps were to ensure that they were prepared to preach the message. The last three were the message.

(Continued on page 4)



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1 Start your day by humming "Joy to the World"	2	3 Remember- Jesus is the Reason for the Season	4	5	6 Help an older brother or sister prepare for Christmas
7 Share the joy of this season with your brothers and sisters	8	9 Pray for the Lakeside Mission- pg 4	10	11 Pray for those missing loved ones this time of year	12	13 When you wrap gifts remember the gift God gave us
14 Invite someone over to share your love	15	16 Share your love with someone new today	17	18	19 Spend time with a senior member of your congregation	20 Have a family over for the evening to sing Christmas Carols
21 Read the story of Christ's birth to a child	22	23	24 Call someone today who may be alone this evening	25 HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS!	26	27
28 Hug a member that was baptized this year	29	30 Spend some free time working for the Lord	31	1 Have a Blessed New Year	2	3

November 2014							January 2015							
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30														

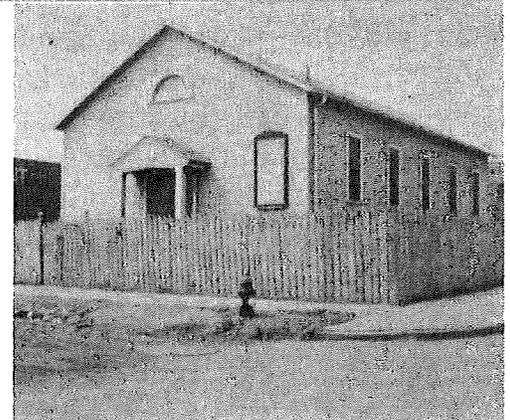
December 2014

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:13,14).

Blast From The Past

Hall and Devine

In August of 1924 – after meeting in the Frammolino home and a rented storefront on Cadillac Blvd. and Forest Ave. for over three years – the Detroit Mission began construction on a church they could finally call their own. Brother Ishmael D'Amico, elder in charge, wrote in his autobiography *My Testimony*, "I was entrusted with seeing that a lot and building materials were bought. I had to quit my job at Ford [Motors] for six months. Since there were few men in the Church, the work could not be done very fast. I can only say that God did much to help us build the church." Finally, on Sunday, December 28, 1924, ninety years ago this month, the Detroit Mission held its first meeting in their new church on the corner of Hall Ave. and Devine St. "We started to church that day from our homes and we all walked a line," Brother Ishmael explains, "There were about 43 of us. We walked into the church and formed a large circle with an elder in each corner and one in the pulpit. Each elder offered prayer, and it was a wonderful day for all of us."



Church building on corner of Hall and Devine

*May His Love bring you
Peace at Christmas
and always.*

*Merry Christmas & Blessed New Year!
With love, The Gospel News Staff*

Purpose • Mission • Vision

Purpose Statement

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

Mission Statement

- To draw Israel to Christ through an effort focused on the Native Americans of North and South America.

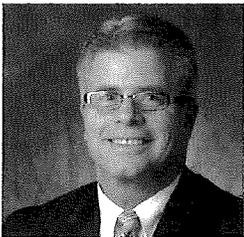
Vision Statement

- The full manifestations of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, resulting from living and worshipping in unity and righteousness, stimulate continuous growth of the Domestic Church—even at a rate of doubling over a five year period—while strengthening the International Church.

THE CHURCH OF
**Jesus
Christ**

Word Up

The Case For Christ: Holding The "Word Up" By Elder Doug Obradovich



*Is reading scripture difficult for you?
Do the "thees" and "thous" make Christ's words seem irrelevant,
even losing their potency in translation?
Let's take a deeper dive into Jesus' message and see if we can make sense of it all.
If successful, let's agree to hold the "Word Up"!*

"Peace, be still" (Mark 4:39)

Standing in our rented classroom at Buckner Elementary, back to a glass wall and congregation before me, I opened in prayer. Normally very focused during prayer, my attention was soon diverted by voices behind me. I had started a few feet from the wall, so I was unsure who was whispering behind me. I quickly ended my prayer, my eyes flying open, only to find I was facing the glass. I had rocked back and forth while praying, spinning myself around; the voices were those of my stunned children as they witnessed my slow-motion revolution. I couldn't even "be still" while praying!

Jesus commanded the seas to calm ("Peace, be still") and brought serenity to the panicky disciples ("Why are ye so fearful?"). Why, indeed! "There arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." To be clear, the severity of the storm had waves filling the boat with water. These accomplished fishermen understood their dilemma. To make matters worse, while they fearfully contemplated drowning at sea, Christ was "asleep on a pillow." Now, I'm not taking sides, but they seemed justified in their professional prognostication concerning the potential permanency of the negative effects to their boat filling with water while battling hurricane-force winds.

This all feels very familiar. I'm no fisherman (remember, I can't even "be still" long enough to pray, let alone wait quietly for fish to nibble on my bait), but I've encountered plenty of storms on my seas, convincing me they would bring certain destruction. Situations at work have made me believe my boat was surely sinking. Losing loved ones had waves filling my boat, leaving me knee-deep in grief. Experiencing different setbacks in our little mission has left me wondering whether we were going under. So often the proverbial winds were too loud to even hear Christ's voice and I was simply so caught up battling to stay afloat, I forgot to even listen for His calm commands.

Just because I consider a situation grave, Christ doesn't get "caught up" in diverting His eyes from what He knows. He knows He can overcome any challenge. He knows He can calm any storm. He knows. That's why He inspired David to write, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10). When we take our eyes off the storm, choose to "be still" and focus on Christ, we can also know. And I know one more thing: kneel down to pray; it's hard to spin around when I'm on my knees.

Do you have a favorite verse you'd like us to dissect? Please send it in to: "Word Up"

Meet the Branch

Domestic Church — Lakeside, Arizona



Early visits to the White Mountain Apache Tribe on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation were made between 1968 and 1969 when Brother Ike and Sister Bonnie Smith moved to Pinetop. They officially began holding services in their home in the fall of 1969. By 1970, weekly services were being held at the reservation's community center in Whiteriver. This proved to be an exceptionally busy time, with additional families moving to the area and lots of activity, especially among the children in the community center. A double wide mobile home was purchased and established as a church building. Its initial location was in Pinetop and it now resides in nearby Lakeside.

Now a Branch, Lakeside has 26 active members. Regular services are held on Sundays and Wednesdays in Lakeside, and once a month on the reservation. The branch remains true to its "mission" and continues to provide shuttle services to and from the reservation for services held in Lakeside. An ongoing layette program is in place, with delivery to families with newborns at the reservation hospital, and a Vacation Bible School is hosted annually, with many children in attendance.

The Simple Message—Jesus Continued from Page 1

Step One: (verse 6) Remember to Keep the Commandments of God.

Pretty straightforward: God said it? Do it. God said don't do it? Don't do it. Before they could teach the word, they needed to know the word. They were about to face a world that chose not to obey the commandments of God.

Step Two: (verse 7) "...that ye should do that which is good."

Oh, the wisdom of Helaman! Let me translate—walk the walk. As you preach Christ, live Christ. You will be known by the fruit that you bear. Don't just tell the people, show the people. What is good? The Love of God is. For the sake of space please read I Corinthians 13: 1-8. Not much can be added to the Apostle Paul's inspired writing.

Step Three: the message: (verse 9) There is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning Blood of Jesus Christ. "And they overcame him [the accuser] by the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:11).

The words from the hymn, "There's Power in the Blood," say it best:

*Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There's power in the blood, power in the blood.
Would you o'er evil a victory win?
There's wonderful power in the blood.
There is power, power, wonder-working power
In the blood of the Lamb.
There is power, power, wonder-working power
In the precious blood of the Lamb.*

Can't say it much better.

Step Four: (verse 10). The Lord will REDEEM them from their sin. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Galatians 3:4).

No longer do we need to be held captive by sin. We have a Redeemer that shed His own blood that we should be set free. What a message of hope!! No matter the situation somebody may be in, we can be redeemed.

Step Five: (verse 12) That it is upon the Rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation.

Everything we do, from the biggest to the smallest detail, place it on the Rock. Be the wise man who buildeth on the Rock that when (not if) the storms come, your foundation is true.

These two men, because of this five-point plan, went out amongst the Lamanites and preached with great power and authority (verse 17). It says in verse 19 that 8,000 of the Lamanites were baptized unto repentance. And they didn't stop there. In verse 20 it says they did proceed. Nephi and Lehi had a message to tell to a lost and dying people. It is a message that is just as relevant and powerful today as it was in 30 BC—Jesus. In the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Nephi and Lehi had a desire to see Salvation come to a nation but realized it has to be by the Revelation of Christ in each and every individual life. By keeping the commandments of God, by doing good, telling them there is Power in the Blood, telling them that we have a hope of redemption, and that Christ is the Solid Rock, the lives of thousands upon thousands were saved and written in the Lamb's Book of Life!

As it says in verse 20, they did proceed. Shall WE proceed? **TO THE WORK!**

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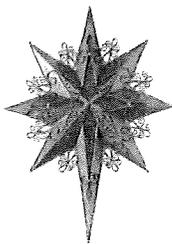
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A New Star *By Brother Donald Ross*

"Joy To The World, The Lord Has Come!"

And, according to the Book of Mormon, the event was exciting and breathtaking to all those who witnessed it.

Prior to the birth of the Lord, the Prophet Nephi, the son of Helaman, was distraught over the wickedness of the people. He cried mightily unto the Lord all day and then the voice of the Lord spoke to him saying, *"Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world to show unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets."* Read III Nephi 1:13. The Lord, speaking from the womb of Mary, announced his own birth!

A miracle, the sign spoken of by Jesus Christ, occurred that very night to announce His birth. It was a powerful and wonderful sign that signaled His birth. We read in III Nephi 1:21: *"And it came to pass also that a new star did appear, according to the word."* There was no darkness that night, but it was as the noonday sun! There was no darkness for approximately 36 hours! There were also many signs and wonders in heaven. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy by Samuel the Lamanite when he prophesized and predicted Jesus Christ. Read Helaman 14:4-7, a marvelous prophecy that came true at the birth of the Lord.

The light of Jesus Christ lit up the heavens! Can you imagine the hearts of the believers! They witnessed the fulfillment of prophecy. They were blessed beyond measure. Their service to the Lord was rewarded. Nonbelievers were converted to the Lord, His cause, and purpose.

Jesus Christ is truly the *"light of the world!"* He said so Himself, in John 8:12, *"Then Jesus spoke to them saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of the world.'"* The Lord said on more than one occasion that He was and is the *"light of the world!"*

We are privileged to be part of His Kingdom. We have the light of the world in our lives; we have Him in our lives! It is up to us to maintain that New Star. It is up to us to maintain the brightness of that light as we journey through life.

Since we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour, our Redeemer, we must allow our light to shine, not in an egotistical way but in a holy and spiritual manner so others can see in us the light of Jesus Christ. The Scripture says we are the children of light. We must live our lives so men and women can see in us the light of Jesus Christ.

Can you imagine a world of darkness, a world with no light? Can you imagine a world without Jesus Christ? Where would we be if the Lord did not come into the world to save us from the darkness of sin? What kind of a life would it be without the light of Jesus Christ?

Do you remember that when the Lord was crucified, the darkness that covered the land was so thick, the people could feel the vapor of the darkness! What an awful condition. But the light of Jesus Christ overcomes the darkness. He said it more than once, *"I am the light and the life of the world."* In Him, there is no darkness, only light, His light!

If that New Star did not appear, we would be men and women most miserable! There would be no hope. It would be a world of total degradation.

The light of Jesus Christ is such that it will illuminate the New Jerusalem that descends from heaven. We read in Revelations 21:23, *"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."*

Let us rejoice in His birth, let us rejoice daily and sing *"Joy To The World, The Lord Has Come!"* Merry Christmas and God bless you all.

It's the Most Musical Time of the Year *By Sister Michelle Watson*

I am cruising the aisles at the grocery store when I hear the words, *"Christ the Savior is born!"* I'm browsing through a clearance rack, and I get wind of, *"This, this is Christ the King."* I'm standing in line at the bank, and I make out, *"the Savior reigns."* I'm walking on the pier, and a sidewalk quartet belts out, *"Christ is the Lord."*

Have you ever noticed that, at Christmastime, it's totally normal in public settings to hear songs that confess Christ as savior, but such songs are almost never played publically at other times of the year? It's almost jarring to catch little fragments, such as the words *"Christ child,"* mixed in with the babble at a crowded restaurant. As I'm placing my order for a peppermint latte, I hear the wisp of *"sweet little Jesus boy."* A salesperson is handing me my receipt, and *"heavenly peace"* falls on my ears. I might even realize it's Mariah Carey crooning *"Jesus, oh what a wonderful child"* or David Bowie warbling *"peace on earth."*

Why are these songs "allowed" during Christmas but not other times of the year? Normally, it's fashionable to be cynical and irreverent, but Christmas gives everyone — even Hollywood A-listers — a "free pass" to be sentimental and devout. Are we fronting a façade with these Christmas songs, or are we removing the mask to reveal our true selves? The answer is different for everyone, of course. But the question is pretty interesting to me.

The world is moving toward an increasingly secularized version of Christmas, where images of snowmen and reindeer outpace angels and stables. Nevertheless, Christmas carols about Christ have endured. They're still played in restaurants, malls, plazas, and businesses. Why do you think it's still OK to sing about Christ at Christmas in our politically correct world?

Part of me wonders if it's because most of the songs depict Baby Jesus rather than grown-up Jesus. Baby Jesus is a harmless infant shivering in the midnight air, surrounded by donkeys and pigs. Oh, isn't He cute? Just adorable. Perhaps this "safe" image of Jesus is how the world prefers to view Him. Small, manageable, helpless.

But we know the great power that lies with that sleeping babe. We shouldn't patronizingly pat Him on the head. We should bow before Him. We know that the birth is only the beginning. Baby Jesus grew into a man who preached powerful words, performed jaw-

dropping miracles, turned lives around, cleaned dirty souls, and ultimately saved the world.

I need to be careful that I don't lose my reverence for Baby Jesus just because He's the subject of super-market music in December. Instead, I should take the opportunity to bow my heart before Him as I press the buttons in the elevator or wait in line at the Christmas tree lot. I want to enjoy this time of year when I get constant reminders of the Christ child and who He is and what He did for me.

When I take the time to really think about the lyrics in some of these Christmas songs, they are incredibly powerful. They shouldn't really be sung lightly.

Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die:
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing
O come, let us adore Him

Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on earth, good will to men.

Instead of just humming along with these pithy songs as I shop for stocking stuffers, I want to draw my heart out in praise to God for His Son. I want to talk to the person standing next to me in line about Baby Jesus and who He is to me. I want to seize the opportunity (the "in") the world has given me during this time of year. I want to use something as seemingly innocuous as a Christmas carol as a springboard for my testimony. I want to tell them that, yes, He was a child in a manger, but He's also so much more.

Southeast Region Conference "Faith is the Victory"

By Sister Dianne Maddox, Region Editor

On Saturday August 2, the Southeast Region met at the Treasure Coast Branch for our annual conference. The ministry met during the day, while dinner and the evening meeting were open to all. After enjoying a delicious dinner, we met together in the sanctuary and enjoyed a wonderful evening of fellowship together. The Treasure Coast Branch Choir presented several lively and enjoyable musical selections in praise to our Lord.

After a season of singing on Sunday morning, and a beautiful rendition of "A Quiet Revelation" sung by Brother Bryan and Sister Carolyn Griffith, our meeting was opened by Brother Scott Griffith. Brother Scott referred to the calling of Paul the apostle when he was struck down on the road to Damascus. The apostle's revelation was not a quiet revelation. Brother Scott read from Romans 1:16,17, *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* Brother Scott told of his own conversion, and waiting upon the call from the Lord to say *"I want you!"* He wanted a "loud conversion," but the call never came as he imagined it, and he finally had to step out on faith and tell God that he wanted to serve Him. He explained how we have to exercise our faith, and quoted the words of an exercise instructor: *"No pain, no gain, remain the same!"* We must exercise our faith to see results. He stated that our lives usually don't play out the way we imagine them, with the exact job we want, the exact amount of children, the perfect bank account, etc. We must overcome our fear of the unknown and we must have faith that God knows what is best for us. Sometimes we just have to step out and depend on God.

Brother Tony Micale then gave his testimony of how God has helped him through very difficult times recently, and encouraged us to be faithful in the Lord, as he has learned. We must have faith that God knows what is best for us and that nothing can compare to the power of God. He relayed how some things look good on the outside by using the analogy of a chocolate Easter bunny. But when you bite into the bunny, you find it's hollow, and not at all as it appeared to be.

Brother Paul Benyola addressed us and said that it all starts with forgiveness. He related how he was recently driving and was pulled over by a state trooper for exceeding the speed limit. As Brother Paul was preparing to receive a citation, the Officer said *"I've got a deal for you."* The deal was

that he would not issue a ticket if Brother Paul would agree to set his speed at 65 mph. Of course our Brother quickly agreed. The officer showed forgiveness, and Brother Paul said that Jesus Christ has an even better deal for us. Jesus will forgive us. That's the best deal we can ever receive.

Brother Larry Henderson, visiting from Detroit Branch #2, then spoke and referred to the words of the hymn, "A Quiet Revelation." The chorus states *"It's a quiet revelation, it's a little piece of gold, it's a little light from heaven that God's children here can hold, and we'll praise the Lord from morning, 'til the setting of the sun, for the quiet revelation's giving us the strength to run."* Brother Larry expounded on these words, stating that the gold is pure to the core, and that light that God has given us is the brightest light and is able to sustain and guide us. We have been justified through the blood of Jesus Christ, but we all must evaluate ourselves and do our best to have faith as strong as the Brother of Jared had. What's holding us back? Our own list of desires and wants? Or do we have the faith that what God wants for us is right? It is up to us to receive the promises God has for us.

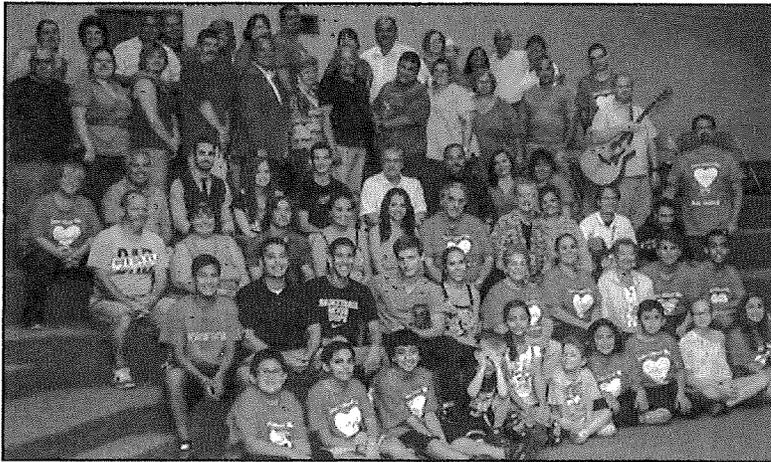
Brother John Catone took charge of the meeting as we transitioned into the ordinance of Communion. Brother John spoke of Jesus' great love for us and the forgiveness He offers. He referred back to Brother Paul's experience with the police officer and said *"Here's the deal from God: He'll give us His best, and we give Him our best, our reasonable service."* He reiterated what a sacred moment Communion is. Tongues were then spoken along with the interpretation, *"Thus saith The Lord: accept now this gift, this gift for all who would open their hearts unto Me."*

After Communion was served, Brother Peter Scolaro, visiting from Detroit Branch #1, spoke and said that faith is not a passive event, we can't just wait and sit. He told us of a recent funeral he performed for a sister in the Church. After the funeral, the sister's son, who is not a member of the Church, told Brother Peter that the service was beautiful and that when he dies, he wants Brother Peter to perform his funeral. Brother Peter told him, *"I didn't write your mother's life. She did. Change your life and give me a good funeral to perform."* We each have to write our own script. God has trusted us to shine our lights. We need to be His people and remember that serving God is not a burden, it's an opportunity.

We thank God for a beautiful weekend, and for speaking to us through songs, preaching, testimony, and tongues.

"Love Lifted Me" By Sister Lydia Zaino

Atlantic Coast Area MBA Campout 2014—September 5-7, Johnsonburg, NJ



The Atlantic Coast Area MBA started preparing for the camp, spiritually and naturally, in January 2014 when the camp director and co-director began praying for a camp theme and the area began having monthly fundraising events to raise money for the scholarship program so many young people would be able to attend. As camp approached, Brothers Jacob Goode and Sal Pusillo expressed how the theme came about.

We met on Friday evening for a small orientation meeting. Area President Kevin Perri welcomed us and went over what was planned for the weekend, and to expect the Lord's presence. We were very blessed to have some brothers and sisters with us from other areas and some for the first time; Brother Brandon and Sister Juliette Coppa who just moved to the area, Sister Kristy Rogalla, from Atlanta, Brother Don Perello and his son Jason from Maine, and we were grateful to have Sister Doreen Perri with us.

On Saturday morning we met for chapel and the meeting was opened with a slide presentation introducing the seminar teachers joyfully singing to "Happy". Brother Brandon Coppa then opened our meeting. He expressed how he and his wife, Sister Juliette, moved recently to the Mt. Laurel area and that no matter where you go in the Church, you feel the same love from the brothers and sisters. He opened up to Matthew Chapter 14, where Peter was walking on the water towards Jesus and then, when he lost focus, started to sink. He associated that scripture with the theme "Love Lifted Me" because it was HIS love that lifted Peter up. He related that to our natural lives and how, when we take our focus off of Christ, we start to sink—and then HIS love lifts us up.

Brother Tom Goode then expressed how campout is one of the happiest times in his life. While he is there he does not have to worry about anything.

It was such a hot and humid day, but after seminars we had a joyful afternoon with various things to do. There was an adult craft, a big swing, a zip line, and even fishing.

Saturday evening, the meeting was opened with another slide presentation showing the past year's campout. What beautiful memories we have! Our hearts were lifted up in seeing our loved ones.

When Brother Kevin opened the meeting, he announced that Brother Don Perello's son Jason asked for his baptism. Brother Jason commented that it was the peace that he felt in his seminar and at camp that made him ask.

Brother Phil Arcuri then spoke and reminded us that Jesus went to the cross for us. It was HIS love for you and me that lifted Him up on the cross. We could say that love lifts us daily.

There was a season of testimony and singing, followed by a wonderful time of fellowship in the dining room, surrounded by the Spirit of God. Some were by the fireplace with marshmallows or making hotdogs. Others were in a small group singing, and some were just sitting around enjoying one another's company. There was a table with a group of young people enjoying a game, laughing and having fun getting to know each other at a young age. You could feel a beautiful spirit of love and unity just flowing all around the room, and no one wanted to go to bed.

It was sometime during that evening that Brother Don felt the Spirit of God and knew that Jason was to be baptized at Camp. Jason asked Brother Jim Calabro to baptize him and he took Jason into the waters first thing Sunday morning.

As Brother Kevin welcomed everyone to our meeting on Sunday morning, you could feel the Spirit of God just moving around the room from one to another. After the meeting was opened Brother Jason was confirmed by Brother Ken Lombardo. We witnessed a moment of such great love between Brother Jason and his dad.

Brother Jim Sgro then opened our meeting, stating how God has blessed all of us. He opened up with Ill Nephi Chapter 27:13,14 and elaborated on it. He also said that this is the same Church in Jesus's day and the same Church bears My name, it is My Gospel, and I will always love you. Brother Jim shared an experience when he was passing communion at a GMBA conference and he started to cry when the Lord told him, "Thus saith the Lord, I loved you then and I love you now." Several brothers followed, and many more wonderful words were spoken. There was a season of testimony and the fellowship of Communion with the Lord.

Our meeting came to a close, and it was time to say goodbye. We will never forget how "Love Lifted Us".



Psalm 17 By Brother Kerry Carlini

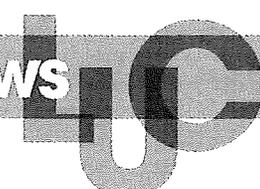
We see in David the young shepherd and slayer of the Philistine giant, Israel's greatest king and beloved psalmist. And when befallen by sin, we also see in David a man who found deliverance through prayer. James expressed that the *"effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* Psalm 17, known as "A Prayer of David," speaks to David's righteousness in prayer. The following are five amazing facts regarding this beautiful psalm:

- 1 Of truthfulness, David states his honesty before the Lord that his appeal *"goeth not out of feigned lips."* (v1)
- 2 Of justice, David petitions, *"Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal."* (v2)
- 3 In resoluteness, David rehearses, *"Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress[...]. By the word of thy lips,"* David continues, *"I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."* (vv3,4)
- 4 In confidence, David asks, *"Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings..."* (v8)
- 5 And, in faith, David proclaims, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* (v15)

James 5:16; Psalm 17



Ladies' Uplift Circle News



No Room

By Sister Lisa Champine, General Ladies' Uplift Circle President

Years ago, not long after my family came into the Church, the branch we attended decided to put on a Christmas program that involved everyone in the branch—adults, teens, and children. We all had parts, speaking and singing, we had soloists and groups. As a young person I remember the rehearsals with fondness and joy. We were all given practice cassettes (yes, this was before digital media existed!). I remember listening to those cassettes in the car everywhere we went. I could sing along with every song, I knew them all, even the ones that weren't mine!

There were many songs in that program that affected me, some of those songs I still remember. The one that I can still sing today and that made the most impact on my young girl's heart then and still does today was called 'No Room.' As a girl I didn't completely understand the lyrics. I simply loved the song; I loved the message, as I understood it then. I knew that I wanted there to be room in my heart for Jesus always.

As I grew older and made my commitment to the Lord the words to that song began to take on a deeper meaning for me. As I grew

in the Gospel I realized that the world we live in has very little room for Jesus, and if I wasn't careful with what I put in my heart, I could so easily displace Him. That was a sobering thought.

The magnitude of the Christmas story is sometimes lost in the secular celebrations of the day. The birth of Christ is recognized as a reason for the season but the true meaning is hidden by tinsel and lights. When I listen to this song I'm immediately drawn back to the elements of Christ's birth we read of in the scriptures. I think of Elizabeth when Mary greets her and she feels the babe leap in her womb and is filled with the Holy Ghost. I think of Zacharias whose tongue was finally loosed and was filled with the Holy Ghost realizing the fulfillment of prophecy and how his own son would play a part in it. I think of the angel that appeared to the shepherds with a glorious message and I think of the shepherds' response to that message. I think of Simeon to whom the Spirit revealed that he would not see death until he had seen Jesus. I think of Joseph, a man who unless he possessed the Spirit of God, might have chosen a very different path when he found out what had happened to his espoused wife.

And I think of Mary, whose words of praise will forever touch my heart, when she says, *"My soul doth magnify the Lord."*

Is there room in our hearts today for Jesus? I would never make the conscious choice to exclude Him from my life, I would never purposefully say *"I have no room for you, Jesus"* like the innkeeper did on the night of His birth. However, I have to ask myself, do I unconsciously reject Him from my daily walk? If I am not vigilant in making room for Him in my life and my heart, I can unknowingly nudge Him from first place, to second or third or thirtieth.

It is for all these things that I try every day to make room for Jesus and in so doing I recognize that He is the King of Kings, the Author and Finisher of my faith, that without His sacrifice I would have no hope of salvation, and that all of those great and wonderful things started with a baby born in a manger because someone said there was no room.

From the General Ladies' Uplift Circle, Merry Christmas and May God bless you in the coming year.



How God Protected Baby Jesus



Every child needs people who love them and people who will take care of them. Of all the babies ever born in this big world, Jesus was the only Son sent down from heaven by God to teach us about love. God sent the baby to a very special mother and father. The old devil knew the power and glory that people who believed in Jesus would experience, so he tried many ways to have the baby destroyed.

God picked a wonderful young woman named Mary to be the mother of Jesus. She was engaged to marry a carpenter named Joseph. The first way the old devil tried to harm Baby Jesus' life was to try and make Joseph break off his engagement to Mary by making him doubt her. Through a miracle of God, the Creator of all things, Mary was going to have a baby. Joseph knew he was not the child's natural father. If he doubted her, and didn't believe in this miracle, he could have demanded that Mary be punished and put to death (which would have kept Jesus from being born) but he decided not to make a fuss, and instead, to quietly break up with her (See Matthew 1:18-24).

But while Joseph was thinking about what to do, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream told him not to be afraid to take Mary as a wife, and that this child was a miracle sent by God, that Mary was filled by the Holy Spirit. The angel told Joseph that the baby's name was to be Jesus (which means 'Savior'), and He would save His people from their sins. Can you imagine how remarkable Joseph must have been to trust the Lord like that?

Joseph married Mary just as a law came forth demanding that every person had to travel back to their home town and be counted. They had to go in person. Mary was going to have the baby any day, but nobody cared that it was such a long and difficult journey for her to make. So many things could have gone wrong on their long, long trip. But Mary made it; nothing bad happened.

When they arrived in the town of Bethlehem, Mary knew she was going to have her baby any minute! In those days they did not go to hospitals; babies were born at home, in a safe place. But the city was filled with other people there to be counted,

and there was no room anywhere for the young couple to stop and get ready! Finally they were allowed to stay in a stable full of hay, where animals were kept. It wasn't a very safe or clean place for a precious baby, our Jesus, to be born. But he was born there; he was safe. And angels sang in the heavens outside to shepherds.

Then the old devil tried to get the jealous king of the land, Herod, to kill the baby who was Jesus. In a far away country, three good, wise men had been praying to God. Ancient prophecies told them that a new king, Baby Jesus, was going to be born. The three wise men followed a new star that shone in the sky. They stopped at the palace and asked King Herod where the baby born to be king of the Jews was located. Herod was shocked and angry! He pretended he also wanted to see the baby. He told his advisors to look in the history books and search the scriptures that told about the birth of Jesus. He tried to trick the wise men and told them to come back and tell him as soon as they found the child. He planned to kill baby Jesus.

They followed the new star in the east to where the baby Jesus was. When they saw him, great was their joy. They fell down and worshipped the child, and gave his parents a small fortune in gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But God warned the wise men in a dream that they should not return to wicked King Herod. So they left to go back to their country by another way (See Matthew 2: 7-12).

After they left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt (a far away country), because King Herod will hunt for the child to kill him" (See Matthew 2 13-22). They left immediately.

Joseph and Mary trusted in the Lord's message. It would be so hard to leave home and a familiar place for a country where people didn't even speak the same language, and did not worship God. We can imagine how the wise men's gifts helped them survive as the years passed until King Herod died and they could come back to their home and friends.

We can also see how wise Joseph was to pray, listen, and follow God's guidance over all the dangers of the devil who tried to destroy them. But, God, the Creator of all, is stronger and wiser than any evil one.

It is so important for us to learn from all of this that God is in control, and He can and will take care of everything in our lives. Pray and stay close to Jesus and God through all the trials and hard times of your life. The Apostle James teaches us in the Bible

(See James 4:7) to resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Or, say "NO!" to bad ideas and thoughts, and he will leave you alone! Try it—it truly works. Call on Jesus' name and you will see how God will protect you, just as he protected the baby Jesus, His mother Mary, and His fine dad, Joseph.

With love
Your friend,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

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More Answers to the Question of the Month continued from Page 12

changing of colors on the leaves in the fall. It reminds me of how in our own lives things die off and a reminder that with God we will get our color back.—*Brother James Matthew, Windsor, Canada Branch*

The beauty comes from what I see and hear, the birds singing, the trees, flowers, mountains, all that God created. The peace comes from what God put in me, just knowing God is with me all the time. I feel protected and know if I endure to the end I will make it to heaven. God is so good, all the time.—*Sister Cindy Dahl, Treasure Coast, FL Branch*

I enjoy all the beautiful seasons God has created but peace comes from knowing that He is still on His throne!—*Sister Donna Bogle, Aliquippa, PA Branch*

I'm thankful for the saints of God and the Church. I know that Chrsit instituted the Church because He knew we'd need the constant support, accountability, and fellowship. The prayers of the saints have certainly brought me peace and ease, and their smiles are filled with beauty.—*Sister Michelle, Watson, Irvine, CA Branch*

The environment here in the mountains of Arizona is breath-taking. We have beautiful trees and plants along with our wildlife. God's beauty is all around us. Such a sense of peace in Pinetop-Lakeside, Arizona.—*Brother Joe and Sister Joann Cotellesse, Lakeside, AZ Branch.*

GOSPEL NEWS QUIZ

Did you find the answers to these questions in this issue?

- What was Nephi and Lehi's five-step plan to change the world? (Pg. 4)
- How do you finish this verse? "I am the light of the world. He who follows me. . ." (Pg. 5)
- What "free pass" does Christmas time give everyone (even Hollywood A-listers) to be? (Pg.6)
- To whom did the Spirit reveal that he would not see death until he had seen Jesus? (Pg.9)

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A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke 2:32

Blessing Bits

BB I Will Serve Thee

When I was 14 years old, I was hospitalized for six weeks with chronic Bright's Disease. Not knowing what my illness was, I overheard the doctors speaking and they said I would not survive. I was going to die! That's why my mother began crying when she left the hospital. One Sunday in April 1952, Brother Mark Randy came to the hospital and anointed me. I was completely healed and went home in two days. I knew God loved me and blessed me with extended life. On July 6, 1952, I gave my "new life" to my Living Savior and have served and loved my Lord for 63 years.—*Sister Mary Ann Heaps, Forest Hills, FL Branch*

BB Count Your Many Blessings

Been blessed so many times, it is hard to choose just one to share. One of my biggest blessings was in 2013 when I was healed of cancer without chemotherapy. God also spared me from danger a few months ago. I wanted to attend church and I was

anticipating the three-hour trip to Leesburg. A few days prior to the trip, I lost the power steering in my car three times and pulled a muscle in my chest trying to get the car off of the road. I brought it to the automotive dealer only to find out that the car had been recalled for an ignition problem. This defect could result in the car turning off while driving, along with losing the power steering. Had I driven the car, I could have had an accident if my car died while driving, but God spared me as the power steering failure brought me to the dealer where I learned about the recalls. He never leaves me and continues to get me through day by day. He guides me every step of the way.—*Sister Lorraine Rose, Leesburg, FL Mission*

BB Showers of Blessings

Recently there was severe flooding in the Detroit area, very close to where I work. The night of the flooding, I "decided" to take a different route home. I later found out that the road that

I take home EVERY night was flooded 4-5 feet deep. The alternate road that I took home was completely under water within thirty minutes AFTER I passed through. The Lord is ALWAYS watching and protecting us.—*Brother Mario Zaccagnini, Detroit, MI Branch #1*

Send us your Blessing Bits [in approximately 150 words] and answer the Question of the Month by contacting us at gospelnewsinfo@gmail.com



Question for this month: *The Christmas Season can bring so much joy and create special moments. Do you have a special memory of a Christmas program, Church event, or blessing that happened this time of year?*



Answer from last month: *What brings beauty and peace to your life?* The Lord has brought a tremendous amount of joy in my life but the opportunity of having children and grandchildren has been the best. They both bring joy to my life that is unexplainable!! I look at their actions and I see myself in them and the feeling is wonderful! Thank God for His Love and Grace, without it we would not be here!!—*Brother Samuel Impastato, Detroit, MI Branch #1*

Turn back to page 11 for more answers to this question.



A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke 2:32