

The Gospel News

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

GRAB HOLD OF THE SPIRIT AND LET GOD TAKE US ALL THE WAY

Making the most of our service to God is not always a matter of constantly pushing ourselves. When we fully embrace the Spirit of God, we have limitless opportunities and power, and the Church is everything that it was intended to be. In fact, the term “limitless” in ordinary context is actually quite limited by human and natural boundaries, and pales in comparison to the “limitless” we know as followers of Christ. In so many ways, the Church has been receiving encouragement from the Lord to prepare ourselves for the unlimited blessings He has in store for us. Frequently, we hear the question: What does it mean to prepare? Is God not just asking us to allow His Spirit to make the most of us and His church?

In the word of God, we encounter many individuals who faced that same challenge. Although some of them were weighed down by overrating their own human frailties, these men ultimately accepted that call. When we review their stories, we almost always focus on the featured individuals, to name a few: Noah, Joshua, Gideon, Nephi, Moroni. But every one of these remarkable leaders was accompanied by his “battalion” of “soldiers” whose faithfulness proved to be essential to the mission.

What common factor did God seek in all of these groups? A powerful, life-determining, embrace of the Spirit and truth that backed their respective leaders. Through unity in believing the word of God, whether from recorded scriptures or from prophecies and inspiration, a resultant trust in God’s promises allowed them to be blessed magnificently. The faithfulness of the groups determined their expectations and their behaviors such that each member also became all that they ever could hope to be in a given time and for a given purpose.

Let’s look a bit closer at some of their stories.

Noah was told to prepare for a restart of mankind as God would wipe out the entire human race with an overwhelming flood while sparing Noah, his family, and all the beasts of the earth in an ark which Noah had to build to God’s specifications. God’s plan involved an unprecedented event of incalculable manifestation, but Noah heard the voice of God and obeyed. In so doing, he became a standard of faith for the ages. Meanwhile, Noah’s sons and their wives were challenged to believe that Noah indeed was receiving God’s instructions, that an earth-covering flood was imminent, and that the massive boat he was building in the middle of nowhere would actually hold together. No doubt they shared in enduring scathing mockery toward their father from an unbelieving public. Still, it was one thing to go along with the very old man while he built the ark,

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Father's
Day*



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• DAD'S NAMES •
(a worksheet for 8 dads)

Genesis 10

The brave & obedient dad.
(Ham's)

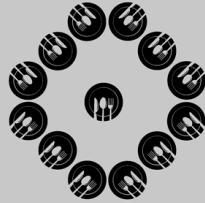


Genesis 22

The dad with an impossible mission.
(Isaac's)

Genesis 35
called

The dad with at least 13 kids.
(12 boys and 1 girl)



I Samuel 13:14

The dad after God's own heart.
(Absalom's)



I Nephi 6

The dad with a prophetic dream.
(Laman's, et al.)



Alma 17:1

The dad of four missionaries.
(Aaron's, Ammon's, Omer's & Himni's)

Mosiah 1

The granddad of four missionaries.
(Same four's)



Matthew 1:18-25

History's most famous step-dad.
(Jesus's)



BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck



Seventy-eight years ago, "About the month of June, 1946, the word of the Lord came to me thusly: "The Lord sent His servants into the vineyard, to prune and to nourish them (the saints), that the hidden things of the Lord might be revealed"---Brother James Curry.

The following is a short excerpt from the Gospel News entitled "The Father Image" by James Curry. "There is one God," Moses cried. What an overwhelming idea and how magnificent its consequences! Taking a disorganized crowd of folks who had been slaves in Egypt for generations... Moses persuaded them that God, this one all-powerful god, was their protector, fired them with faith in that conviction and transformed them from slaves to conquerors. "God is a God of Justice," added Amos. It was the high privilege of Amos to proclaim a God who could not be bought, whose ears were deaf to pleadings if the cause was unfair, who would have no discrimination in judgment between the strong and the weak, the rich and poor. Hosea proclaimed a God capable of great forgiveness. He stood up before a nation and proclaimed it with burning zeal—a God so strong that He could destroy, yet so tender that He would not! One God. A Just God. A good God. The conception of God which these three

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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.



“Not Even for One Second”

By Brother Doug Obradovich

“The very hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matthew 10:30)

later in this verse it says he “had come to Jerusalem to worship.” Traveling home in his chariot, he read and was seemingly confused by the word (Book of Isaiah). But he didn’t know God’s angel had already delivered God’s charge to Philip to provide the rescue, “Arise, and go south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.” Today that might sound like, “Travel south on Desert Hwy to 2653 Gaza Strip.” Specific directions on “where to go,” but not “why to go.” Philip unquestionably obeyed.

As Philip arrived, a chariot rolled in the distance and he again heard God’s specific directive, “Go near and join thyself to this chariot.” As Philip again arrived, the eunuch immediately asked him to sit and explain the words in Isaiah. “Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (v. 35). Discussing the Savior, they came to a body of water and the eunuch quickly requested baptism, “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” He confirmed, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

They went into the water and Philip baptized the eunuch. Then they parted, as the eunuch, “went on his way rejoicing.”

How precious are we to God? Enough to provide salvation to any and all, no matter how challenging. Consider that if Philip were in Jerusalem when he was originally directed by the angel, the distance was at least 75 miles. 1 person with 1 desire became 1 directive for His 1 ministry. That’s how precious we are to God.

Equally important: “How precious is God to us?” Or, “How far would we travel to obtain our own salvation?” We don’t slide in and out of God’s vision, as we are much too precious to Him. As He saw the eunuch, He sees you. As He noted the eunuch’s desire, He notes yours. As He met the eunuch’s need, He will meet yours. As He saved the eunuch’s soul, He will save yours.

You are never, never out of His view ... not even for one second. So, read the Word, climb into your chariot, and seek Him out. There are Philips awaiting God’s instruction right now!

Jesus said God notes every sparrow that falls to the ground, and we are much more valuable to Him. He said, “The very hairs of your head are all numbered!” So, you are never out of His sight, not even for one second. It was 1,593 miles one way. An Ethiopian eunuch was on the second half of that 3,200-mile journey, heading home from Jerusalem, when God revealed how we are always within His sights. The Ethiopian was unaware of how his life was about to change forever for the better. Each of us is that Ethiopian eunuch, journeying under the watchful eye of the Almighty.

Historians differ on why this man of “great authority under Candace the Queen of Ethiopia” (Acts 8:27) would have ventured such a distance, but

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but their true test came a week before it started to rain when the order came from God to prepare the animals and provisions and to board the ark—even before there was any evidence of the impending doom. (Matthew 24:38-39 tells us that life was as usual right up to the start of the rain.) A week later was too late, but they had been saved because of their belief and obedience. Genesis 9:19 states: These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread. Through their belief, the sons of Noah and their wives became the fulfillment of God's plan, and the earth was repopulated. Was it any less important for them to fulfill their potential than it was for Noah?

As Joshua led the children of Israel into Canaan, miracles accompanied them. Joshua prepared the people and God prepared Joshua. But Jericho was totally shut up, sealed, and protected by formidable walls. God promised victory to Joshua, but strangely, His instructions for the people seemed to have nothing to do with tearing down walls or combatting defenders. Instead, they were all about unity, patience, and obedience in following meticulous instructions for seven days during which all the people were forbidden to speak a word or to make any sounds with their voices. Here was a multitude of thousands mandated to silence (except for specifically designated music) every day for seven days. Picture yourself amongst the crowd. Wouldn't it have been too tempting to utter a word to a friend or family member at some point? Would you have been able to keep the faith in silence? But they did it, all of them, and upon the command and their united shout, the walls fell down flat. Here again, we see that the fulfillment by the people—every single person—was equally essential as the faithfulness of Joshua in taking the city. They had been all that they could be. (See Joshua chapters 1-6).

Gideon lived in tough times for Israel, tough times brought upon them by the Midianites due to their evildoings before the Lord. (See Judges 6:1 - 8:28.) God's angel approached Gideon greeting him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour... Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? Gideon's answer was basically the equivalent of, "Who? Me?" And we are familiar with all that followed as Gideon tested the Lord again and again before he would accept the challenge to realize his potential for the Lord. When he finally accepted and took the lead of Israel's army, we remember that God pared down his army to just 300 men whom he would lead down to meet the host of the Midianites and the Amalikes and all the children of the east who lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. It is those 300 that we consider today. What faith they must have had to be willing to continue forward to meet that numberless host of the enemy! Certainly, they had no idea what sort of tactics could overcome the gross disadvantage of their small number. Still they followed Gideon and found victory. Those 300 along with Gideon became much more than they could have ever hoped to be, and, by the power of

God, it was plenty.

Nephi's is a little different story that begins with the account of his father Lehi, a descendant of Joseph, son of Jacob. Lehi was a prophet in Jerusalem and a contemporary of other prophets such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel who, like Lehi, prophesied the demise of Jerusalem to an audience unwilling to heed them. The rejection of Lehi was so extreme that his life was targeted, and he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness (1 Nephi 2:4). Lehi's "battalion" consisted of his wife, his sons, their wives and in-laws, and a man named Zoram.

In saving these people from the destruction of Jerusalem, God was implementing His great plan for mankind that required delivering this remnant of Joseph to a very special but unknown promised land lying far away across an uncharted wilderness and a vast ocean. Complicating matters were two great issues: 1) while Lehi and his young son Nephi were firm believers, unbelief and rebellious episodes frequently rose among others in the group. And 2) they really didn't know where they were going or how to get there. At face value, this seemed to be an unsolvable dilemma, but Lehi and Nephi remained undeterred and continually received revelation from God to support their faith. Still the lack of unity and belief within their group was problematic for God to achieve His purposes.

One morning, having received the commandment to start their journey into the wilderness, Lehi arose to find upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness (1 Nephi 16:10). And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them (1 Nephi 16:28).

For comparison to a natural compass, anyone who has made serious use of a compass knows the following:

1. There are two pointers
2. One pointer always points North and South
3. The other pointer is set by the user toward the next point in the journey. This requires:
 - o Having a map to reference where the user is currently located.
 - o Knowing what is the direction to the next point as an angle to the North-South direction.

However, with the ball that Lehi found (ball or director, later named Liahona, referred to as the compass prepared by the Lord in 1 Nephi 18:12), God took care of items 3, 3a, and 3b because Lehi and his group could not use this special compass without God's help. Therefore (and we know the story) traveling the best routes and finally reaching the

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By Brother Anthony Scolaro

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen...”

(2 Corinthians 1:20)

Our spiritual journey with the Lord may include encountering promises in His word that at first seem hard to believe. As time goes on, if we study the word and continue to grow in Him, these promises become more believable as we read of their fulfillment and have our own faith-building experiences. All of God’s promises will come to pass. Some promised blessings are dependent on our faithfulness, while other promises and prophecies have nothing to do with us; He will bring them to pass regardless.

While diligent study can enlarge our understanding, the scriptures don’t tell us exactly when the Lord will fulfill His promises, or how He will bring that fulfillment about. We’re reminded of Abraham, who was singled out more than once in the new testament as an example of one who believed God’s promises.

One latter-day prophecy familiar to many of us is found in Isaiah 66:8. It says, “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” Scriptures like these challenge our tendency to believe only in things seen. We might venture to proclaim a belief in God’s promises, but fall back into inventing our own scenarios and timelines for how and when God will bring His promises to pass.

Would any of us have predicted 10 years ago the things that we are seeing unfold recently that fulfill promises either written in scripture or revealed more recently to our Church? We are living in an amazing time, as evidenced by the following:

- Missionaries to indigenous North American tribes (First Nations) are encountering people who identify strongly with Israel, despite not being familiar with the Book of Mormon;
- Individuals from other Restoration churches are expressing interest in our Church and seeking to better understand our beliefs;
- Advances in scientific research and technology, and the availability of information on the Internet, have yielded archaeological, astronomic, and linguistic discoveries supporting Book of Mormon accounts of the Jaredite and Nephite/Zarahemla/Lamanite cultures, languages, and migrations; and
- Some non-Restoration Christians have been studying the Book of Mormon and embracing it as a gospel-affirming work that does not contradict any of the teachings in the Bible.

While we may not identify any particular scripture being fulfilled by each of these things, we can be excited about the day and time we are living in. Even as darkness continues to increase throughout the world, we can “lift up our heads, and be of good cheer” to see great happenings unfold to bring about God’s plan for the latter days. Even more importantly, we can each play a part in this fulfillment as we apply the special knowledge that has been afforded us through the Book of Mormon to prepare ourselves spiritually, and prayerfully seek to be used as instruments in the hand of God.

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promised land was fully dependent upon the faith and diligence and heed maintained by the group.

This may be our most intriguing example of leaders needing their followers' implicit trust in order to be able to reap the benefits of God's promise to them. Nephi was consistently faithful, but, anytime the entire group did not align with him, the Liahona would not provide directions for their journey, and they instantly found themselves lost with no idea how to proceed. Effectively, the Liahona served as a physical tool which measured the faith and diligence of the group as a whole. For some of them, unity and faith came reluctantly only as a matter of self-preservation when they saw the "tool" going haywire.

Let's apply this example to ourselves today as we are still part of that Plan of God which is in progress. As recipients of the Restored Gospel and The Book of Mormon, we are on another leg of the journey Nephi led centuries ago. God's messaging repeatedly calls upon us to prepare our hearts. He calls upon us to rise to His standards in unity and righteousness. A revelation from January 2021 states: See now what is before you and know that your heart must be sure and your heart must be right and you must be anchored, anchored, anchored to the principles of My Son, Jesus Christ, the Rock of Salvation that was given through Him and the sacrifice! Are you there? Is your vision clear? Are your eyes focused? Is there love in your heart or is there malice? Cleanse it now that you may see and you may be part, thus saith the Lord.

If we had the Liahona with us today, we would be able to see the pointers line up to direct us when we all answer the questions above: "Yes, yes, yes, and yes!" We don't have the Liahona, but we can use these questions to guide us directly.

Can we answer "Yes" every time? If any of us struggles to honestly reply, perhaps Moroni's final advice will help:

Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot. (Moroni 10:32-33)

God wants all of us to be united... perfected in Christ, free of all ungodliness, blanketed with His grace, trusting in His power, sanctified, holy...so that we can complete our mission. Let us hold tightly to the Spirit of God and take the whole journey under His power.

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

The Harvest Is Great and the Laborers Are Few By Brother Andrew Tenorio

On March 9-10, 2024, the Atlantic Coast Region held their business conference in the Hopelawn, NJ Branch. On Saturday, the Ladies' Circle met in the Levittown branch engaged in a lesson, discussed business matters, and enjoyed fellowship over lunch. The sisters also learned a popular song from the Church in Africa, "Down On My Knees," which they shared with the congregation on Sunday.

On Sunday morning, Brother Sal Rios addressed the region and expressed his gratitude for the support of his leadership of the region for the past four years. He also welcomed the new officers into their respective roles. Afterwards, Brother Michael Zaino addressed the region for his first time as President. He shared that during the business session on Saturday, the brothers were inspired to pray for the new president and counselors. One brother had a vision during the prayer and saw an angel above the new president and counselors' heads.

Brother Ken Lombardo opened the preaching service on Sunday morning. In recent years, the internet has come to be a conduit of the Spirit of God via communication and fellowship for the Church. As much as technology can be a distraction from godly things, we know that for all the bad news there is something wonderful. Brother Ken reminded us not to be discouraged or distracted, because God is still on His throne and we are His workers. In John 4, Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at the well and eventually reveals Himself as the Messiah. The woman runs back to the townspeople telling about this encounter and several people take an interest in her witness of Christ. There is power in testimony, and we must have the courage to share our personal account with the Lord to others so we can also see multitudes follow. Brother Ken was inspired to read Matthew 9:37-38, calling for laborers of the harvest. We are all His laborers and we need to be available for the Lord, regardless

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Camp Memories *By Sister Sydney Lovalvo*

In preparation for Camp 2024, young people throughout the Church were asked about their favorite Campout memory. Here are their responses:

"One of my favorite campout memories occurred at my very first campout. It was my first time meeting people outside of my region, and being younger I was afraid I wasn't going to fit in and that I wouldn't know anyone. But little did I know that I was going to meet my lifelong best friends and sisters in Christ at this campout. It was earlier in the week, and when I went back to my room after the night meeting, I found a note on my door. It was from two girls in my seminar class, and they were inviting me to sit with them at the next meeting and hang out with them the following day. The note also said that they were very excited to get to know me and they welcomed me into their group. Looking back now these two beautiful girls, now my sisters, were and still are a blessing to me in my life, and impacted my life by their acts of kindness and showing the love of Jesus. That is something I will never forget. It showed me that God handpicked people just for me, and that I do not need to worry, and I just need to trust Him, and all will be taken care of." – Sister Catte'e Huttenberger, Mesa Branch

"Being camp director, I had many moments that stood out to me this past campout. But I think the most favorite I can recount would be standing at the water's edge and watching people one by one, give their life to Christ. Having asked for my own baptism at a campout, I know just how wonderful God is in these moments. Being able to share that spirit with these brothers and sisters is a feeling that will never dim! The week was such a blessing overall and I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to work for the Lord in this capacity. Looking forward to how the Lord will continue to bless us in campouts to come!"- Sister Alyssa Morle, Atlanta Mission

"One of my favorite GMBA Campout memories was in 2022 when all the young people were sitting in the lobby singing songs together from The Songs of Zion. Just singing together and praising God was such a blessing for me. I felt God's Spirit so strongly that night. During the same campout, I was also blessed by all the testimonies shared by the brothers and sisters in each seminar group. Everyone's testimony was so beautiful and heartfelt. The sense of community and faith was truly uplifting and inspiring"- Sister Isabella Kerby, Irvine

Branch

"One of my many memorable moments from GMBA campouts is when we were in Redlands, California for camp and the youth went to a young people meeting. This was my second youth meeting at camp and I remember the youth joining together in a personal way with the song "En la Viña del Señor." Hearing all the brothers and sisters singing in a different language, testifying and praising God really blessed me. I still remember that campout profoundly because of the love I felt from all around the country. At the time, it was my first GMBA camp outside of attending in California, Pennsylvania, and I could remember this one because of the love I felt from people I had never met. The blessings transferred over from all the world just shows how great God's love is and how beautiful this Church truly is. "And the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart." Enos 3."- Brother Paolo DiCenzo, McKees Rocks Branch

"My favorite campout memory is not a particular one, but something that always happens every time when I go to camp. It is the excitement and anticipation that are my favorite memories of camp. Packing up everything to get ready, finding a way to travel, and then pulling into the place, and just stepping foot on camp. You never know what brother or sister you will see first, and who you will get to talk to. It's always nice to take a week away from the world and give us another chance to focus on what really matters. I'm always so excited to see everyone and feel God's love and I always anticipate what will be in store for the entire week!"- Zacary Griffith, Forest Hills Branch

"I have been going to campouts for my whole life, and I am very grateful to have been able to experience the blessings from a young age. My favorite part of campout is always the congregational singing, but one of my favorite memories was in 2015 at CalU when I got baptized. I asked for my baptism at the end of seminar, so I went to lunch right after. I vividly remember walking into the lunchroom and having so many brothers and sisters come up to me and hug me as the news had spread. Feeling such pure joy and love from the saints was such a blessing, and I frequently go back to that moment and remember that feeling."- Sister Maddy Lambert, Farmington Hills Branch

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achieved has remained in control of men's thinking down to this very hour. What was there for Jesus to add? Only one thought, but it was so much more splendid than all which had gone before that it has altered the current history. He invited frail bewildered humanity to stand upright and look at God face to face! He called upon man to throw away fear, disregard the limitations of their mortality, and claim the Lord of Creation as Father. For if God is the Father of all men, then all are His children and hence the commonest is equally as

precious as the king. No wonder the authorities trembled. It was too dangerous a power to wander the world unleashed and uncontrolled. Either Jesus' life or their power must go. The message of Jesus was that God is supremely better than anyone had ever dared to believe.

"I who am nothing, my Father's a King. He rescues His children from sin. Prepares me a banquet no prince could afford, and I who am nothing go in". #179 The Songs of Zion

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of our abilities and inabilities, so that we may fulfill the words of Christ that tell us to pray to the Lord that He would send laborers into the harvest.

Brother Paul Palmieri followed and expressed what a joy it is to feel at home wherever he dwells with the saints. He reviewed the story of the woman at the well. When the woman was told about her entire life, she knew Christ was the Messiah and felt the love of the Savior. She didn't know what else to do but to realize her moment with the Lord when nothing else mattered. Brother Paul reminded us that our families and their testimonies won't get us into heaven, and we all need a one-on-one moment with the Lord. God wants us to be successful, to follow Him, and to depend on Him to direct our lives for good. As long as we seek God's blessings with an open heart, He will continue to call and qualify us to labor for Him. We are the light of the world because of Jesus Christ and we owe it to Him to tell the world this good news of salvation.

Brother Jerry Valenti concluded the preaching service with another perspective on Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well. Jesus says that His meat is to do the will of God and finish His work. Jesus' purpose was fulfilled in His crucifixion and resurrection: "It is finished." Brother Jerry noted that we

all take different responsibilities as servants of God to continue this work in the harvest, and the most accessible way is to share a testimony and stay available for God to use you. We are the laborers that answer the prayer in Matthew 9:38, and today is the day. We must be humbled by the responsibility we each carry as representations of the Lord to the world.

Brother Tom Goode introduced the communion service and related a confirmation he received from the Lord. He was asked to choose six brothers to pass communion, but he could only think of five. After meditating and praying about it, he still could not decide on a sixth brother to join. On Sunday morning, he was informed that only five brothers would pass communion instead of six. We were blessed to commune with each other and dwell in the sanctuary of God's unconditional love for us.

The officers proceeded with closing announcements and the young people were asked to sing #102 in *The Songs Of Zion*, "If You Would Labor In Zion." We are inspired through this song to remember our covenant with God: to love and serve Him to the best of our ability so long as we live. Jesus Christ could have remained in the flesh to grow His Church, but He instead chose you and me.

Ladies' Uplift Circle News



A Conversation with a Missionary Sister

By Sister Marty Jumper

Sister Jacqui King had a lovely visit with Sister Dolores (Dee) Picciuto from San Carlos as they discussed her work in the mission field.

How long have you been involved in missionary work?

Sister Dee: I was raised by missionary parents. My father was a Nazarene evangelist and my mother his spiritual partner. The Lord directed my father to establish several different churches and he led many two-week revival meetings. I was introduced to The Church of Jesus Christ when I met Brother Dan Picciuto, who had been baptized when he was fourteen years old. We married, and five months later I asked for my baptism. I have been here since 1961, specifically with the work in San Carlos. At that time, I had three little boys, and we were blessed to have three more children while here (one more boy and two daughters).

Have you been/or are you still involved with VBS? If so, can you give us an overview of how the VBS is structured,

who helps facilitate it, and approximately how many children participate?

Sister Dee: We started VBS in the summer of 1990. At the first VBS, we were blessed to have eighty children attend. COVID impacted our ability to continue with VBS to date, however prior to 2020, we held VBS every year. The average attendance is usually around ninety children. The structure has changed through the years, but we usually have the children rotate through several stations. We provide a snack and lunch for them. We have been blessed to have many young people volunteer throughout the years. We hope to resume our VBS in the summer of 2024.

Is there a particular Ladies' Circle event/activity that is memorable to you, if so what and why?

Sister Dee: One year we were able to take two of our Apache Sisters to the GLUC Fellowship weekend in Phoenix. Sisters Isadora Kayson and Della Steele were blessed to be shown

(Continued on page 9)

such love and attention during the event. It is my hope that the Fellowship Weekend can again be in Phoenix, Arizona, so that we may bring more of our Native sisters to the event and for them to be able to meet more of our sisters from the Church.

Often as Sisters, we see or notice different needs than perhaps the ministry. What needs do you see in your work with the Indigenous people?

Sister Dee: One need was recently expressed by Sister Andrea. She said, "We need people who will keep in contact with our young people. Ones that will call to check in and to just let them know they are thought about and cared for." Also, I feel it is good to have activities for the young people where they are engaged in activity, but still get to know the brothers and sisters in an informal way. The young people here in San Carlos are often shy and have not had opportunities, besides VBS, to interact with young people from the Church, and I would think that is true for most of

the children on all Reservations. I think it is vital for the non-native young people across the Church to be able to interact with our young people in some meaningful way.

Anything else you'd like to share—a word of encouragement, an experience, something to excite the sisters to pray more or to become more involved with the work with the House of Joseph?

Sister Dee: The words from SOZ #100,
"Too many heartbreaks, too much despair,
Too many teardrops for Israel to bear"

Those words ring so true here. However, "God IS my Rock!" We have witnessed many miracles and have had so many blessings, I am truly blessed. Please continue to remember us as we continue the work here and please remember the beautiful people of San Carlos in your thoughts and prayers. Much support is needed. Be prayerful to the Lord regarding if there is a work for you, or a way for you to help.

Gospel News Testimonies

Brothers and Sisters,

You will soon be receiving a letter requesting donations for your yearly subscription to the Gospel News. Moving forward, the paper copy will only be available to those who donate. It is also imperative that we receive enough donations to continue to be able to print the paper version for those who wish to receive it. Below, and in coming months, we will share testimonies of brothers and sisters regarding their experiences with the Gospel News, specifically the paper version.

"Growing up, I remember my family always received the Gospel News in the mail. As a child I always read the Children's Corner and thinking back, I really enjoyed the article along with doing the word search. I also remember my dad always showing me The Gospel News from the past which he had put into a folder and telling us about the Pillars in the church. My husband and I have always received the paper version, and now I read it from front to back, including The Children's Corner along with completing the word search. I like having it in my house, because you never know who might pick it up when visiting. There is still much to be said about having a paper version being sent to your house."
- Sister Kim Morle

"Growing up in Kansas my mother taught us Sunday School. She read us the Children's Corner from the Gospel News, written by Sister Mabel Bickerton and Bible Stories. It was also thrilling to read of those Missionaries in Africa washing clothes by hand along rivers with crocodiles. It was exciting to hear about our people on Reservations in Canada, South Dakota, Oklahoma and Arizona. Our paper connected us in wonderful ways. A brother in Aliquippa told me how he would get his son (not baptized at the time) to read the Corner with him and they would look up and discuss every reference verse referred to. Others send this paper to family in the Military, missionaries bring them to the mission fields, and some drop them at libraries. It connects members and their family and friends who live far from the Church. Not everyone lives in a city or has a big church. On March 10, 2024, CBS News morning program announced that 24 million Americans lack high speed Internet, especially those who are Rural or live on Reservations. Don't forget them. Let's keep reaching them using our paper." - Sister Jan Bork

"When I was younger, I collected the Gospel News articles from month to month and even salvaged some ancient prints from my grandparents' basement (maybe 1990s editions--not so old I guess). They are all at my branch now in Edison, NJ and we all enjoy reading from them. I've always been spiritually nourished from the Gospel News publications." - Brother Andrew Tonorio



King Asa Rests on the Lord

For ten years, when King Asa began to rule, he commanded the people of Judah to return to serving God, like their ancestors had. No more idols! His people listened. God blessed them. and all the other tribes saw what God was doing for Asa's people.

They saw God's power. They believed.

They came and joined the country of Judah and made a promise to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all of their heart and their soul. God was pleased with the people of Judah.

Then a massive army of enemies came to destroy Judah. They had a million soldiers, men on horses, and three hundred armed chariots of war! King Asa only had half that many soldiers. He cried unto the Lord God saying, "Help us... we rest on You. We go in Your name against this multitude! Lord, don't let man win against You!" And the Lord fought their enemies. And they ran away. But King Asa and his armies chased them until they were destroyed. King Asa and his warriors gathered all the weapons, tents, and wealth of their dead enemies. God had saved them! They told everyone about God's power! And there was no more war for the next 35 years. Old enemies even brought gifts to Judah when they saw the power God had given them.

In the thirty-sixth year, the King of Israel came against Judah. But King Asa made a huge mistake. Instead of asking God for help again, he went to an old enemy, the King of Syria, and paid him to come and attack the King of Israel! He did.

God was not pleased. He sent a prophet to Asa ... "You relied on the Lord before and He delivered your enemies with all their chariots and horsemen into your hands. You have not relied on your God. You have done foolishly. From now on you will have wars!" He said, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong on the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward God." (See 2nd Chronicles 16:9.) King Asa got mad and put the prophet in jail! He did not want to hear the truth. He had been warned years before ... "if you forsake (leave) God, He will leave you."

And three years later, King Asa was terribly diseased in his foot. Another mistake. He went only to his doctors, not to God. A king who had so much to be thankful for got so mad in his heart he would not be humble, say he was sorry, and ask God to help him. This can be done by any of us if we get mad, or hurt or tricked by the devil. So don't be! When you are wrong, with a prayer, admit it as soon as you can. Ask God to help you do this. Be sorry. Then thank the Lord God always! Remember, "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong on the behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him." He sees you. He wants to help you. Ask Him. Thank Him.

With love,

Your Friend and Sister in Christ,

Sister Jan

Dear Friends,

After King David died, Israel was separated into two countries; Judah was on the south, Israel was on the north. The two nations fought constantly.

Many people in these lands still worshiped false gods, prayed to statues, and even did sacrifices when they prayed to their false gods! This was a horrible thing. God did not want this! He wanted His people to follow Him like their ancestors, Joseph, Abraham, and Moses did! If they prayed to God He wanted to help and protect them.

One good King named Asa ruled after David and Solomon. Asa loved God and prayed for God's blessing and help in his life. God sent a prophet to tell him, "The Lord is with you, while you be with Him; and if you seek (pray and follow) Him He will be found by you. But if you forsake Him, (leave Him), He will forsake you. (See 2nd Chronicles 15: 1.) King Asa was warned.

And it's really that simple about serving God, even today. When we follow Him and His good, fair laws, God blesses and protects us. And we are blessings to others. If we leave God, we do not have the same power or receive the same blessings and protection. We'd need to repent and start over.

Things started out really wonderful for King Asa. He wanted to serve the one true God like his ancestors had. He tore down the places where people went to pray to statues and worship false gods. But he did not send helpers to the mountains and high places where more idol worshiping was going on.

When he learned that his mother, the queen, had gone up to the trees in the mountainside and made an idol and prayed to it, he chopped up the statue and burned it. Then he removed her as queen! (See 2nd Chronicles 15:16.) He did not want idol-worshiping people ruling his country!

Meanwhile, Israel to the north continued fighting King Asa's country of Judah. In those days, guns, ammo, bombs, flashlights, armored cars, trucks, dynamite, and airplanes were not yet invented! Boys trained at early ages to defend their families and selves using slingshots, bows and arrows, spears, and shields. Hand-to-hand combat with huge armies clashing against each other fighting and killing, was what happened. Thousands would die. Enemies stole each others' gold, silver, and riches, and captured families!

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Happy Father's Day to all of the kind, caring, hard working amazing fathers and spiritual fathers in The Church of Jesus Christ.

What are some of your dad's qualities, characteristics, or attributes you try to emulate?

"Anytime someone in the Church needs something, whether it is prayer, a visit, or a conversation on the phone, my dad is there for them. I hope to be able to do that for others as well. If someone needs something, I want to be as willing and quick to be there for them as my dad is." -Sister Anna DiMelis, Farmington Hills, MI Branch

"My father is a wonderful example of not taking life too seriously, and is generous and charitable to others." -Brother Patrick Monaghan, Columbus, OH Branch

"I admired my dad's interest in studying and discussing scriptures, and I enjoyed discussing scriptures with him. Scripture study is an interest of mine, and I enjoy engaging my husband and children in scripture based discussions." - Sister Renee Scolaro, Mesa, AZ Branch

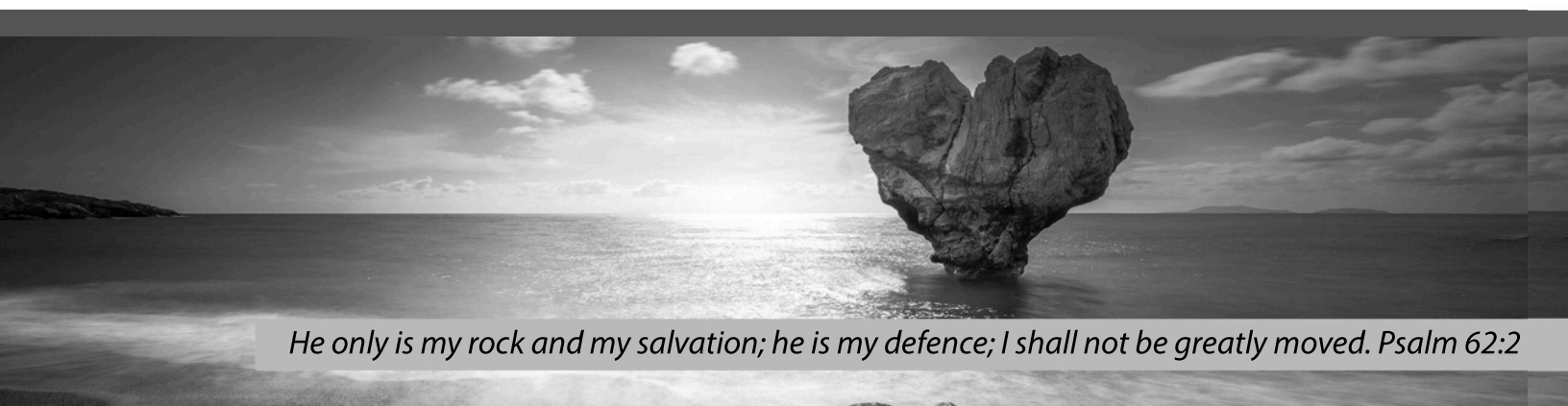
"My father, bro Paul D'Amico, was a very loving, patient, and knowledgeable man. He was very close to the Lord. God spoke to him many times. If I could possess his attributes, I would be very blessed." -Sister Sharon D'Amico Church, Simi

Valley, CA Branch

"My Dad always put God first, country, then family, in that order. In everything he did, he showed the love of God and looked to Him for guidance. He showed/taught me how to live my life, and I've tried to emulate him in my service to God and life." -Sister Terri Nath, Monongahela, PA Branch

"His persistence and kindness." -Brother Logan Azzinaro, Creekside, MI Branch

"My dad's ability to see the best in others, his unwavering spirit of forgiveness, and his willingness to put others before himself combined to create a unique individual who truly strove to be a light to those around him always. His greatest desire was to prove faithful until the end, and he achieved that carefully, through a life of servitude and sacrifice. He taught by example and I was fortunate to be a recipient of these wonderful lessons." Brother Anthony Gentile, Farmington Hills, MI Branch



He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. Psalm 62:2

Blessing Bits

BB The First Time God Saved My Life - When I was seven years old, I went to play with my friends that lived down the mountain, not far from my house. They had a very big tire swing we played on all the time. Opposite the tire swing were two enormous pine trees that, as we'd swing, we'd need to dodge. On one particular day, my friend and I rode together. I was facing backwards, so I didn't know which direction we were going to swing. I remember taking off with the swing going about twenty feet into the air and moments later hitting one of the trees. It knocked me out and I fell to the ground where there were many big rocks. I landed face first and smashed my face from my top lip, up. I recall going in and out of consciousness for seconds at a time, first at my friend's house, then in my mother's lap. I remember blood everywhere. Almost 50 years later, I'm still doing well. There's no reason I should have lived. Thank you, God, for the first time you saved my life!- Brother Brent Smith - Pinetop, AZ Branch

BB I've Got You - I have been raised to believe that there are angels among us to watch over us and to keep us from danger. One of my favorite scriptures is Psalms 91:11 "For He shall give His angels charge over thee, To keep thee in all thy ways." Recently, Tony and I were leaving for a doctor's appointment which is about an

hour's drive from our home. As we always do, we stopped at the door and prayed that the Lord would be with us as we made this trip. I opened the door and stepped out and there above us were clouds that appeared in the form of angels flying above our home. They filled the sky. It was magnificent and evidence that the Lord hears our prayers and cares about our daily needs. God is saying to us... "I've got you." !- Sister Lucy DeCaro - Lindsay, CA Mission

Note: If you're on Facebook, check my post from March 8th to see the picture I took

BB God Aced the Exam - Last semester, I had an organic chemistry exam that I wasn't feeling prepared to take. I said a prayer that if this medical career path was what God wanted for me, then He would need to provide the increase for the test. I answered the questions I knew, but there were some that I forgot how to do. As I looked them over, God helped me to remember something my professor had taught or something I had written in my notes, and it helped me to answer each of the remaining questions! When my grade was posted, I ended up receiving a perfect score! It was a higher score than I'd received on previous tests that I felt prepared for! My parents reminded me that God answered my initial prayer, and this showed me that He wants me on this career path. Praise God!- Brother Wes Griffith - Forest Hills, FL 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.



Question for this month: At what place other than at Church, do you feel closest to God?



Answer from last month: What are some of your dad's qualities, characteristics, or attributes you try to emulate?

Turn to page 11 for answers.



He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. Psalm 62:2