

# The Gospel News

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Happy  
Thanksgiving!



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## ***Counting Our Blessings: Living with Gratitude***

**By Sister Sabrina Fisher**

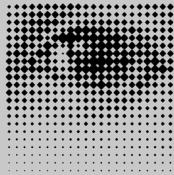
**A**s we step into November, our minds naturally turn toward Thanksgiving. The crisp air, the changing colors of autumn, and the quiet pause of reflection, before the weeks of anticipation for Christmas, invite us to consider how God has cared for us throughout the year. This season gently reminds us to pause and look back, not only at the blessings that fill our days, but also at the ways God has sustained, guided, and provided for us in every circumstance. This practice helps us recognize His hand at work and we begin to see that gratitude touches every part of our lives. Gratitude is more than a passing thought—it is a rhythm of life that shapes our walk with Him.

Scripture teaches us that thanksgiving is not limited to a single day or season, but is meant to be lived out daily as a testimony of God's goodness. With that in mind, here are ten ways gratitude works in our walk with God:

### **1. Gratitude As a Posture of the Heart**

Scripture reminds us that gratitude is not only an action, but also a posture of the heart. Developing this posture means intentionally adjusting our lives toward God's goodness, noticing His hand at work in every circumstance. It is more than a fleeting thought or polite expression—it is a consistent way of seeing life through the lens of thankfulness, acknowledging God as the source. It requires discipline to stop, reflect, and give thanks when our natural tendency may be to worry, complain, or compare. Yet when we pause to acknowledge God's presence and provision, our hearts are reoriented toward Him. This posture influences our thoughts, making them dwell more often on His blessings than our burdens. It shapes our words so that thanksgiving naturally flows in our conversations and prayers. It molds our actions, encouraging humility and generosity as we recognize that everything we have comes from the Lord. Embracing gratitude as a posture of the heart allows us to live intentionally, keeping our focus on God and responding to His faithfulness with continual thanksgiving (Colossians 3:15-17). It prepares us to lean more fully into trusting God in every season of our lives.

**(Continued on page 4)**



The Word of God gives such meaning to the idea of being thankful; let's explore:



Colossians 3:15  
And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Jacob 4:3  
...hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive (these words) with thankful hearts...



Alma 48:11,12  
And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man;... Yea, a man whose heart did swell with thanksgiving to his God...



1 Timothy 4:4  
For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.



Isaiah 51:3  
For the Lord shall comfort Zion... joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Jonah 2:9  
But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.



2 Corinthians 9:15  
"Thanks be unto God for his gift." (Ironic that, considering this description, we sure do speak about it a lot!)



# BFTP Blast From The Past

**S**he was told in a dream to "(b)uy the house at the crossroads and build your home on this stump." With that in mind, Sister Martha Christman's search for a new house would not be over until she and her husband, Brother Jacob, came upon a home in Imperial, Pennsylvania having a rather large stump in back whose roots had grown under the house. Her dream would be used in deciding the purchase of the house, but it would be the inclement winter weather that would prompt the saints of the McKees Rocks Branch living in the Imperial vicinity to begin holding meetings in the large garage next to the house 71 years ago this month on November 22. Out of town at the time, Sister Eva Moore would learn of "the preaching of the Gospel in Imperial" by letter and would consider this new work a fulfillment of the recent dream she had had of a newborn child.

**Current Imperial Building ►**

## First Meeting in Imperial



## 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.



Three feet equals thirty-six inches, or said differently, one yard. However, two feet is much more than just 24 inches. The book of Job is a riveting story about one man's resiliency over monumental setbacks, which provided his opportunity to discover the joy of overcoming. When God described our hero to Satan, He told him Job was "a perfect and upright man, one that fears God and eschews evil" (Job 1:8). When Satan described himself to God, he said he had been "Going to and fro in the earth..." and "...walking up and down in it" (Job 1:6-7). What contrast captured, as one stood faultlessly honest and the other secretly prowled from place to place!

Paul advised us to protect against such easy accessibility to evil by wearing "the

## "Two Feet Is More Than 24 Inches"

By Brother Doug Obradovich

*"Whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart" (Luke 9:4)*

*whole armour of God.*" This symbolic safeguard included specific counsel, "*Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*" (Ephesians 6:15), a reference to our deliberately caring for our most basic means of transportation and foundation. Throughout our journeys, we are exposed to the inherent threat of the Evil One's "*going to and fro in the earth*" and "*walking up and down*".

Isaiah addressed choosing destinations that are seemly, glorious, and bring honor to God. He states, "*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publish peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, publisheth salvation*" (Isaiah 52:7). He then asked, "*Who shall declare his generation?*" (Isaiah 53:8).

It's strange to hear feet described as "beautiful," given the wear and tear they endure supporting us throughout our lives. Few would lay claim to attractive feet. Isaiah's statement was an acknowledgment to the symbolic beauty of such effort to scale a mountain

which represents a higher existence than found in normal lowland lifestyle. Isaiah was honoring the determination in such desire and acknowledging the good news message that corresponds with this chosen, peaceful existence.

Finally, Isaiah offered his personal challenge to each of us: who is courageously willing to tell others of Jesus Christ ("who shall declare his generation")? Your two feet carry you to your proverbial mountains, but what shall you do upon arrival? Will you utilize your time in these resting places to tell those around you the story of eternal hope? Will your feet carry you to such magnificent moments? If so, where will your two feet place you next, so that you can make your stand? Will you climb higher to declare Jesus Christ?

Two feet equals much more than twenty-four inches. Your two feet represent your journey in life and all you accomplish throughout. How beautiful. Might your prayer remain simple: "Feet, don't fail me now!"

## **2. Gratitude Strengthens Our Trust**

This year, we may look back and see both joys and challenges. Yet through them all, we can join Paul in proclaiming, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). Gratitude strengthens our trust because it reminds us that God's provision is always perfectly timed and sufficient. Our needs are not always met in the way we expected or hoped for, but always in the way our faithful Father knows is best. When we recognize that every good thing comes from Him, we can echo James' words: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights..." (James 1:17). When we give thanks, we remember His faithfulness in the past and present, which strengthens our trust for the future. As we grow in gratitude, our eyes are opened wider to see just how carefully God cares for us day by day.

## **3. Gratitude Opens Our Eyes to God's Care**

Gratitude sharpens our vision to notice God's care not only in ways we can notice when we see them—through answered prayers, new opportunities, provision, fellowship, etc.—but He is also at work in countless unseen ways. He protects us from dangers we never encounter and arranges circumstances for our good long before we realize it. Think of those moments when you received encouragement exactly when you needed it, or when a door closed only to reveal a better path ahead. Gratitude helps us see these moments not as a chance, but as evidence of a caring Father at work. Even in seasons when life feels uncertain, gratitude gives us peace to trust God is doing more behind the scenes than we can perceive. As Proverbs 3:5-6 states, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." One day we may look back and realize how His hand quietly guided our steps, even when we did not recognize it in the moment. And as we recognize His constant care, our response should be to lift our hearts to Him in worship.

## **4. Gratitude Draws Us into Worship**

Gratitude is more than words said before a meal; it is a spiritual act of honoring the One who gives every breath we take. As we gather this Thanksgiving, the fellowship and food are sweet blessings, but the greater joy comes when we lift our hearts upward in praise. Worship rooted in gratitude acknowledges that God is faithful not only when life feels full, but also when it is lean. Whether in abundance or in want, in peace or in trial, He remains faithful. It is a recognition that His mercies are new

each morning, no matter the season. The Word of God calls us to this kind of thankful worship, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Psalms 100:4). Gratitude pulls our attention off ourselves and centers it on God's greatness and goodness, shifting our focus from what we lack to who He is. And when our hearts are lifted in worship, we begin to experience a deeper sense of contentment, for we realize we already have in Christ what we need most.

## **5. Gratitude Brings Contentment**

It is so easy in our daily lives to focus on what we don't have, what we wish we had, or what others possess. Gratitude counters this tendency by redirecting our attention to remember what God has already given and causing us to recognize God's faithful provision in our lives. It realigns our desires away from the endless chase of "more" and towards the fullness of Christ, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). Gratitude draws us into this kind of peace, because it reminds us that Jesus has already provided the greatest gift of all—salvation and everlasting life. What more could we truly ask for? And yet, the precious gifts in the storehouse of the Lord are always readily available for us. When we recognize the spiritual riches we already possess and have access to, earthly wants lose their grip. Gratitude helps us see blessings both big and small, from daily bread to eternal life. It roots our joy not in possessions but in the presence of the One who provides all we need. This contentment guards our hearts from restless striving.

## **6. Gratitude Guards Our Hearts**

A thankful heart not only shifts our perspective, it actively transforms our walk with God. Gratitude acts as a guard against pride, since it reminds us in humility that all we have comes from God, not ourselves. Gratitude quiets comparison by pointing us back to God's unique calling for our own lives. It strengthens us against worry, for it helps us remember God's past faithfulness and trust His future care. A grateful heart tunes us to notice His daily mercies—mercies we might otherwise overlook. As our hearts are guarded in this way, we find ourselves less tossed about by emotions or fleeting circumstances. Instead, we become more steadfast, anchored in the unchanging character of God. And this steadiness enables us to persevere when trials arise, giving us strength to endure with hope.

**(Continued on page 7)**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Sabrina Fisher  
gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org  
226-238-2305

ASSISTANT EDITOR  
David Tenorio  
dtenorio9897@gmail.com  
908-205-9397

CONSULTANTS  
Paul Liberto  
Leonard A. Lovalvo  
Anthony Scolaro  
Carolynn O'Connor

CIRCULATION MANAGER  
Shannon Hamet  
sis.shannonhamet@gmail.com

DESIGN & LAYOUT  
Ken Lombardo

COPY EDITOR  
Anthony Scolaro

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
Shannon Hamet

QUORUM OF 70 EDITOR  
Q70 Communication Team  
q70team@gmail.com  
313-820-4503

GMBA EDITOR  
Sydney Lovalvo  
sydlovalvo@gmail.com  
248-872-5078

GENERAL CIRCLE EDITOR  
Marty Jumper  
Becbogmart@comcast.net  
724-302-6599

REGION EDITORS

ATLANTIC COAST  
Andrew Tenorio  
andrew.tenorio@thechurchofjesuschrist.org  
908-405-8323

GREAT LAKES  
Kim Komjathy  
komjathy1976@gmail.com  
313-461-3176

MIDWEST  
midwest@thechurchofjesuschrist.org

PACIFIC  
Jody Greger  
cjcsldr@yahoo.com  
209-810-4880

PENN-MID ATLANTIC  
Ray Intrieri  
ray.intrieri@thechurchofjesuschrist.org  
724-622-7249

SOUTHEAST  
Mandy Griffith  
mandygriffith324@gmail.com  
727-264-7905

SOUTHWEST  
Anthony Scolaro  
anthony.scolaro@thechurchofjesuschrist.org  
732-259-3861

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## Human Freewill and God's Foreknowledge

By Brother Joshua Gehly

**S**adly, Christianity is a house divided. For roughly two thousand years, debates have raged over just about any topic from ecclesiastical authority to the color of the carpet in the sanctuary. No theological topic generates as much splintering as balancing the concept of freewill and God's providential power. If God is truly sovereign, how can mankind have any real freedom of choice? Does prophecy and a predestined plan subordinate freewill into a mirage of the mind?

Thankfully, the Book of Mormon provides perfect clarity on the topic. First, humans have genuine freewill agency. 2 Nephi 2:27 clarifies, "...men are free according to the flesh...And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil" (See also Mosiah 2:21 and Helaman 14:30-31). Rebuking any Calvinist concept of reprobation—or a fatalistic predestination to damnation—2 Nephi 26:24 proclaims, "He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world...he commandeth none that they shall not partake of his salvation."

These scriptures among many others establish freewill agency as genuine while also correcting a false teaching among a large portion of Protestant Christianity, but it does nothing to solve the paradoxical riddle of God's penultimate foreknowledge balanced with genuine freewill. How is it done? Again, the restored word of God clarifies:

In 1 Nephi 4, the Spirit of God gives Nephi a startling choice to make: Kill Laban. Nephi—while justified in the Law of Moses to kill Laban because of Laban's false accusations and attempted killing of Nephi and his brothers—hesitates. This wasn't Nephi's idea or plan. He was led there by the Spirit and had not premeditated anything. Yet the Spirit clarifies something important: "It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief" (1 Nephi 4:13).

Nephi had a real choice. He could spare or take Laban's life. Yet the Spirit outlined an example of God's contingency or hypothetical knowledge. Not only does He know what will happen, He knows what might happen under any given set of subjective circumstances. IF Nephi does not kill Laban, THEN all future descendants of Lehi would dwindle and perish in unbelief. In response, Nephi does kill Laban, giving hope for future descendants to yet choose Christ and live. David directly interacts with similar hypothetical foreknowledge of God, which spares his life in 1 Samuel 23.

The infinite knowledge of God is expansive enough not just to know all things within linear time, but to also know all hypothetical possibilities across time and space. Clearly understood in the opening storyline of the Book of Mormon with Nephi, this scriptural account of God's contingent knowledge allows for God to know all possible outcomes and therefore set the course for all souls within creation without fatally determining the choices of humanity in advance. Consider the Messianic cry over Jerusalem in this rhetoric with subjunctive notes, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37). May not just Jerusalem, but all of Israel and Christianity be gathered back to greater understanding of Jesus Christ through the beautiful and restored understanding of our Creator and Redeemer given clearly in the Book of Mormon.

## Daily Dose of Thankfulness

By Sister Sydney Lovalvo

**T**hanksgiving is one of my favorite times of the year. It's the start of the holiday season, there is a lot of time with family, and activities at my branch start to ramp up.

Over the last year, I have made it my mission to thank God for something specific every day, not just during the Thanksgiving season. It has not always been easy, but coming into this time of year, I feel that it was worth it.

I felt convicted to do this in the beginning of 2025. Reflecting on my article from last year's Thanksgiving issue, I wrote about the time I asked the Lord to change my heart to a thankful one. That was a major shift for me in my walk with God. To go along with that, I wanted to make sure I was intentional with my gratitude and be consistent in my giving thanks every day. The holiday season had ended, all the joy and excitement had died down, and I felt almost stuck in the mundane daily routine. I wanted to capture the feelings I had when I was at the Thanksgiving service at my branch, thanking the Lord for the year He provided me with. I also wanted to feel the happiness that I felt when I was sitting around the table with my family talking about the many blessings in our lives. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 inspired me, and it says, "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Jesus concerning you." Life can change fast, and I wanted to make sure that I always gave God honor and glory for something, big or small, that happened in my life.

I started off my daily moments of thankfulness eager and excited. It was easy for me to be thankful for the wonderful things in my life, but I was also becoming creative with being thankful for the not-so-easy things. By profession, I am a nurse. I had a particularly tough shift, and I walked out, got in my car, and said "Thank you Lord, for that patient who yelled at me. While it was a tough moment, I learned how to empathize, not get overwhelmed, and it taught me that I can handle tough situations now and in the future." Before I set out on this mission, I can tell you that I definitely would not have been thankful about that incident. As soon as that encounter was over, I probably would've found a coworker, explained the situation, and complained that the patient

shouldn't be mad at me. Instead, I chose it as a time to be levelheaded and find the good in what happened, and that's because the Lord helped me find thankfulness in the regular, maybe not-so-great things in my life.

Part of me starting these daily doses of thankfulness, as I have started to call it, was due to some unforeseen health issues at the start of 2025. I wanted to make sure that I wasn't letting my trials steal my joy. A couple of months ago, I got anointed, and a few days later, one of my issues was gone. I wasn't receiving treatment for this issue because conventional treatments would make my other health problems worse, and for months, my physicians were trying to find a way to treat it, but couldn't agree on one. In my mind there was no doubt that the Lord intervened on my behalf. But even with my strong conviction, there was a tiny part of me that thought "If the Lord healed this, why couldn't He have just healed me completely?" Almost immediately after that thought, I thought, "No, the Lord alleviated the problem that was interfering the most with my life, my current treatments, and my mental health to make this challenge a little easier."

I am not writing this to lift up myself or my way of thinking, but to glorify the Lord and testify how He has worked in my life. I also know so many of us have similar instances like mine, and I find it important that we can relate to one another. I could have been upset, frustrated, and discouraged (like I said, I was for a little bit, and it is valid to have those types of feelings), but the Lord has helped me be able to find gratitude even in the midst of hardship.

This season reminds us all that there is so much goodness in our lives that God has given us. There are also trials that He mercifully helps us through. I, for one, am thankful and have been blessed by writing these articles. Hopefully, some of the things that the Lord puts on my heart to write can relate to some of you in some way. As we enter Thanksgiving, I hope that you can find something to be thankful for every day and know that God is providing for you and sustaining you through all things.

## (Counting Our Blessings: Living with Gratitude - continued from page 4)

### **7. Gratitude Encourages Perseverance**

Gratitude helps us endure trials with a steady heart. When we choose to give thanks even in hardship, our focus shifts from the weight of the trial to the sufficiency of God's grace. Gratitude reminds us that the same God who carried us before will carry us again. By recalling God's faithfulness in past times, we gain strength to persevere through difficulties. It nurtures hope by recalling His past deliverance, and it fuels resilience by strengthening our confidence in His promises. Gratitude helps us to endure because it redefines hardship—not as abandonment, but as an opportunity to witness God's sustaining hand. Each act of thanksgiving in difficulty becomes a declaration of faith: 'Lord, I trust You.' This attitude of thanksgiving reminds us that God's plan is always perfect, even when the journey is challenging. And as gratitude steadies us, it also moves us to extend blessings outward, which leads into generosity.

### **8. Gratitude Fosters Generosity**

A thankful heart does not hoard blessings; it shares them. Gratitude reminds us that all we have is from Him, prompting us to extend His blessings to others. This transforms how we view our resources, time, and even our words. We begin to see them not as possessions to keep, but as gifts entrusted to us for the benefit of others. A grateful spirit recognizes that God's provision is abundant, and that sharing with others does not diminish what we have, but joyfully multiplies it. This kind of generosity reflects the heart of God, who gave us the ultimate gift of Christ. When we give generously with a thankful heart, whether through acts of service, quality time spent together, giving gifts or multiple other ways, we honor the One who provides all, making our generosity become a testimony of God's goodness, reflecting His love and directly pointing towards the Giver of all good things.

### **9. Gratitude Shines as a Testimony**

Gratitude also becomes a powerful testimony to others. A life marked by thanksgiving speaks volumes to the watching world. In a culture often marked by dissatisfaction, entitlement, and complaint, a grateful heart shines as a light of hope and peace. When family, friends, and even strangers see us responding with thanksgiving in both blessings and trials, they notice

something different. They see that our joy does not depend on circumstances or possessions, but rests in Christ alone. This testimony can soften hearts, draw people, and encourage them to seek the source of our hope and peace. Gratitude shared openly—through words, actions, and attitudes—becomes an invitation for others to encounter God's goodness and mercy. And when we share our testimonies of how God has shown up in our own lives, it not only glorifies Him but also blesses others. They may recall our testimony in their own time of need, remembering how God provided for us, and be encouraged to trust Him in their similar circumstance. As gratitude overflows, it not only impacts individuals, but strengthens the bonds of community around us.

### **10. Gratitude Strengthens Community**

Gratitude not only impacts our personal walk with God, it also strengthens our relationships. A spirit of gratitude fosters encouragement, patience, and mutual support among family, friends, and the body of Christ. When we share our blessings, express appreciation for others, and recognize God's work in the lives of others, we build a community rooted in love and unity. As thanksgiving flows among us, it becomes a channel for connection, building a community in selfless love and reminding us that we are part of something larger than ourselves. A grateful community shines brightly in the world, it reflects the light of Christ and points the world to Him.

Thanksgiving is more than a holiday; it is a way of life. Each day presents opportunities to notice God's hand at work—in the answered prayers, the moments of fellowship, the provision of daily bread, and even the trials that deepen our faith and dependence on Him. Our lives can echo the psalmist's declaration, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Psalms 107:1).

So may we encourage one another to see God's fingerprints on this past year—in the comfort of His Spirit, the unity of His Church, and the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. Let us carry that thanksgiving beyond this month into each day, for "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

# 30 Day Gratitude Reflection

This year, God surprised me with...

One small blessing that made a big difference was...

I thank God for the gift of...

This past year, I saw God's hand in...

One person I'm grateful for is...

A prayer God answered for me was...

My heart overflows with thanks thinking about...

I saw God's goodness when...

A moment of joy this year was...

I'm thankful God taught me...

I see God's blessings in the simple gift of...

A scripture that fills me with gratitude is...

One way I've felt God's presence this year is...

I thank God for giving me strength when...

The biggest blessing of this season is...

A song that fills me with praise is...

I thank God for the beauty of creation when...

One way God provided for me was...

I'm grateful for a friendship that has...

God showed me His love through...

One answered prayer that encouraged my faith was...

I praise God for protecting me when...

Something I once took for granted but now cherish is...

I felt God's peace when...

I'm thankful for laughter that came from...

I feel God's blessings in church when...

One testimony I'll never forget is...

I'm grateful for God's timing when...

One blessing I want to share with others is...

Today I thank God most of all for...



## A Journey To Thanksgiving *By Sister Marty Jumper*

The story of the first Thanksgiving is a beautiful account of God's love and grace to a group of people who sacrificed much in life and had the perseverance to continue. The Pilgrims suffered many hardships even before they considered crossing the ocean to settle a new land. As I thought about the Pilgrims, the words to the song "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" came to my mind: "I am tired, I am weak, I am worn." I think that the Pilgrims, in their thoughts and prayers, must have employed the words to this song long before they were written.

*Precious Lord, take my hand,  
Lead me on, let me stand,  
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;  
Through the storm, through the night,  
Lead me on to the light:  
Take my hand, precious Lord,  
Lead me home.  
(Thomas Dorsey, 1932)*

The "Separatists," as they were called, left the Church of England which was by law the church of the land. This was considered an act of treason by the government. They were hunted and persecuted on every side. Some were imprisoned, others had their houses watched night and day to try to catch them in secret worship. Many lost both their homes and livelihoods. The Separatists left England in 1608, and settled in the Dutch city of Leiden, where they were free to worship and enjoyed "much peace and liberty," according to Pilgrim Edward Winslow.

However, after living in Leiden for more than ten years, the former farmers lived in poverty. They, and even their children, worked in the textile factories for long hours and low pay. Another concern for the parents, in a quote by Pilgrim leader William Bradford, was that the children were being "drawn away by evil examples into extravagant and dangerous courses" by the influences of the secular Dutch society. For the children to remember their English identity was important to the Pilgrims, who could never return to England.

Looking to America, where English merchants had been financing colonial settlements, the Pilgrims could freely worship, have greater opportunity for economic recovery, preserve their English identity, and recognizing that there were Native peoples living in the New World who needed to hear the Gospel, part of the reason they were going was a missionary purpose. The pilgrims clung to the promises of God and believed that despite the dangers, this was what God wanted them to do. They couldn't have foreseen the hardships they would endure, but they were people of faith, and as Isaiah 41:13 reads: "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."

The rest of the story is well known. One hundred and two people decided to make the journey. The dangers, hardships, and losses they sustained were countless, but their "Precious Lord" took their hand and led them to "...the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people" (Ether 2:7).

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Brothers, Sisters, and Friends,

During the October 2025 General Conference, it was proposed to, and accepted by the Priesthood, to move the Gospel News to a completely digital format beginning in 2026.

This change will allow us to bring the articles, columns, and blessings you already love to you more efficiently. Each issue will continue to be available through the Gospel News section of the Church website under the Media tab, or by opening the Church mobile app and selecting Gospel News under Resources.

We sincerely thank all who have faithfully supported the Gospel News over the years. If you would like to contribute toward its continued ministry to help cover the cost of layout and design of the paper each month, you can donate online at [thechurchofjesuschrist.org](http://thechurchofjesuschrist.org) under the Donate tab, or by check, payable to The Church of Jesus Christ, mailed to Sister Shannon Hamet at 25565 Gibraltar Rd, Flat Rock, MI 48134. Donation to the Gospel News effort should be over and above any standard tithing.

We understand that this transition marks a significant change, especially for those who have enjoyed receiving the printed edition for many years. Please know this decision was made with thoughtful consideration and prayer. Stay tuned for more information on how we will be making the digital content more accessible for everyone!

God bless you,  
The Operations Support Committee



## Thank God For All He Does

Dear Friends,

Have you ever prayed really hard for something that you thought you wanted or that worried you and it did not happen the way you feared? Have you wondered if God was listening to you? Or did the thing you worried about even come to pass?

My family used to go to the Colorado mountains in the summer for vacation. My dad was a great driver; but the first year, I was really scared and worried that we'd have a big accident and drive off the mountain. I was young and I prayed and even closed my eyes when he drove on a scary high mountain road. But nothing bad happened.

I told my mother I'd really been scared. She reminded me that we'd said a prayer before we started each day, during the day, at every meal, and before we slept. And we also said "thank you God" and truly meant it. He heard us. He loves it when we reach out to him. He deserves it when we thank him with all our hearts.

In the Bible, the Apostle Paul teaches us to "Pray without ceasing" without stopping. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18.) This means I can pray and talk to God all day. I can ask Him to be with me in the car, at school, the doctor's office, when someone mean is bothering me, or scares me. I will then thank God.

I like to try new things and travel. A lot of the time something goes wrong. And every time I start begging God to help through the problem; God does. Just like God protected us in those scary mountains, He has continued to love and protect me every day.

As I grew up, I had many times when I feared, and many times when I worried over things that worked out! Mother and the scriptures taught me to pray and trust God. Then thank God over and over for all the good things He does for me (and all of us) each day! The Bible teaches us, "Be still and know that I am God." (See Psalms 46:10.) So calm down, say your prayers asking Him for guidance and wisdom. Then thank God and tell others how God helped you!

With care and love,

Your friend and Sister in Christ,

*Sister Jan*

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# Question of the Month

QTM

## ***In what area of your life have you seen God's provision this year, and how has it increased your gratitude?***

"We have lived in Arizona for 13 years. My son and daughter-in-law made a way for us to go to Michigan with them to visit. It was a blessed event." - Sister Joann Cotellesse, Pinetop, AZ, Branch

"I've seen God's provision this year in the continuation of *The Songs of Zion*. The gift has uplifted and increased my faith. I could never thank Him enough for His love towards His people. God Bless." - Brother Jeffrey Buffington Jr., Imperial, PA, Branch

"Eight years ago, God blessed me with the ability to call on a home with my daughter, sister, Kelsey Simpson, and her husband Troy, and two children, two years later we were blessed with a set of twins, two years later, I began to have a desire to move out on my own and retire as all four of my children were grown and married and had families of their own. I felt it was time for me to retire and enjoy alone time from being a single parent, and our family's grandma, and I wanted to grow my spiritual life closer to God. I know God's timing is not my timing, so I continued working, continued helping Kelsey and her family, continued visiting with my other grandchildren, attending church. God helped me through many health-related issues, surgeries, and physical therapy. My health is good again, and as of today, September 2, God provided me with a new home as a single person. I'm so excited to enter this new chapter of my life, not only spiritually but mentally, physically, emotionally, and focused on God and what He has in store for me in the future. All praise and honor to my God for His love, His kindness, and for always showing me it's okay to be a widow because He is always with me." Sister Cathleen (Kay) Gray, Monongahela, PA, Branch

"God provided a new position at work. He has provided an increase in knowledge and ability. This has increased my gratitude to the Lord because I know I do not need to rely on my own strength, but that through God, He will provide the increase." - Sister Alanna Wiktorowicz, Mesa, AZ, Branch

"I've seen God provide for me with school. I don't have many friends in my classes, yet I've felt God's presence with me more than ever before at school. I've felt so much more focused on His word this year than I did last year. I am so grateful that I even have the time to read scripture and pray. The last two years of high school were very busy and stressful, and this year I've had so much less homework, and my classes are amazing. God even inspired me and a church friend to take the time we had in our day to do a scripture plan together, and we've been holding each other accountable. Praise God for the time He gives us." - Sister Anna Maria Mott, Columbus, OH, Branch

"A warehouse was going up behind our house, practically in our yard. God provided the contractors to make us an offer on our home and then provided us with a bigger home for our family closer to our jobs. We desired to have the young people and the Saints over more often. We could never thank God enough for how He provided for us. It was a miracle how this all happened." - Sister Lydia Zaino, Edison, NJ, Branch

"After a rough first part of this year (the passing of my dear friend, Sister Dianne Maddox, my father, Brother Tom Jones, and my brother-in-law, Brad Rich), I realized how much I rely on the Lord and how He provided peace in such a hard time. He comforted me in so many ways, and I am truly thankful for His goodness." - Sister Kim Morle, Atlanta, GA, Mission

# Blessing Bits

## BB We're Putting the Band Back Together Again

When I was a young person growing up in the Imperial Branch, we had a nice little band that consisted of the piano, violins, guitars, and even the xylophone. Unfortunately, over the years, the band dismantled and we were left with just the piano. Recently, my younger cousin began playing the guitar and eagerly takes his place up front to strum along as the congregation sings. One day, my 15-year-old son, who's always been quiet and shy, expressed an interest in joining the band with a guitar of his own. As I admired the young people playing last Sunday, the thought came to me, "We're putting the band back together again." I thank God for the little things! - Brother Jeffrey Buffington Jr., Imperial, PA Branch

## BB At the Crossroads, I Found Him

It's amazing to reflect back on September 24, 2000—the day that I met a change in my life. Twenty-five years ago I was called by Jesus Christ.

I've never looked back on the years before then. I've always looked ahead. (That day was) life changing for me because my life didn't have direction—I was at a crossroads in my life. I thank Jesus Christ each and every day for His direction and guidance. He's my lighthouse keeping me from crashing into the rocky shores of life. It hasn't been easy, but it's been a blessing knowing He will always be the compass of my life. Thank God! - Brother William J Guerrero, Modesto, CA Branch

## BB A Beautiful Sunday Experience

On August 28, 2025, I noticed the prongs of my ring were empty—my engagement diamond was missing! I retraced my steps of cleaning house and packing for SWAMBA camp, while casually talking to the Lord about this. After searching thoroughly, I felt to stop, taking comfort in my relationship with my husband—the real treasure. The stone had served us well for almost 40 years. I knelt and prayed, acknowledging that God knows

exactly where the diamond is, and if He is willing to reveal it, I would be appreciative, but if not, I will go on with life.

Later, my husband suggested I look outside, as I had washed trash bins earlier that day. I looked in the area, and to my amazement saw a clear small stone glistening in a puddle of water on the sidewalk. Praise the Lord! The diamond was found! - Sister Reneé Scolaro, Mesa, AZ Branch

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at [eksanchor@gmail.com](mailto:eksanchor@gmail.com). [in approximately 150 words].

Answers to Question of the Month to [gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org](mailto:gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org).

# Q

**Question for this month:** *What part of Christ's birth story speaks most to you, and why?*

# A

**Answer from last month:**

**"In what area of your life have you seen God's provision this year, and how has it increased your gratitude?"**  
*Turn to page 11 for more answers.*



*And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise,..." – Daniel 2:21*