

# The Gospel News

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## MUSIC as WORSHIP

*By Elder Ken Lombardo*

Editor's Note—Enjoy the first in a series of articles about music.

**R**emember the first time you heard *Amazing Grace*? I mean, after you were converted? The first time you sang the familiar words and contemplated, or even understood, their meaning, and a feeling of gratitude suddenly swelled up and brought a tear? The power of the hymn's message suddenly transformed it into more than notes on a page in a book. It became an instrument of worship.

Frankly, by themselves, they are indeed merely notes on a page in a book. It carried a spirit with it because of what you brought to the message. Think of the times in the middle of a service, someone calls some old hymn you haven't sung in years, and just as suddenly, you're transported to another place and time, and filled with pleasant memories. It's because of that connection your ears have with that melody or lyric. Fill in the blank: "My baptism hymn is \_\_\_\_\_."

It's the same with our noses. The aroma of something our grandmother once cooked can transport us back into her kitchen, or the fragrance of a particular after shave has a way of immediately plopping us into our grandfather's embrace.

The difference with music is the "worship" factor. God inhabits our praise, according to the scriptures, so His Spirit is embodied in the hymns we sing. When we connect with the Spirit in the message, something comes out of us and returns to God.

### *God's Ear*

God has instituted the concept of music into our worship experience for a designated purpose.

At the last supper, the scriptures record, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30). This transpired after Christ had given His disciples the bread and the wine, and after they'd heard Him declare His intentions that night. The hymn that they sang must have had some meaning to each of them, and might have been a "communion" of sorts as it must have served to unite them.

In the 5th chapter of John's Revelation, we read of concourses of angels who sang "...a new hymn..." that the Lamb who was slain was "worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

And then, of course, there's the book of the Psalms that is replete with commandments for us to make joyful noises, and to sing new songs to the Lord, to play instruments of praise to the Lord, and to come before the Lord with singing and thanksgiving, etc., etc., etc. (Did you know that the last five Psalms all begin and end with the phrase, "Praise ye the Lord"??? Check it out.)

(Continued on page 4)

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday                        | Thursday                         | Friday                         | Saturday                            |
|---|---|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| July 2014<br>S M T W T F S<br>1 2 3 4 5<br>6 7 8 9 10 11 12<br>13 14 15 16 17 18 19<br>20 21 22 23 24 25 26<br>27 28 29 30 31 | September 2014<br>S M T W T F S<br>1 2 3 4 5 6<br>7 8 9 10 11 12 13<br>14 15 16 17 18 19 20<br>21 22 23 24 25 26 27<br>28 29 30 | <i>Sing Praises to God! In the spirit of unity, sing the song of praise listed each day this month.</i> |                                  |                                  | 1<br><br>Something Beautiful   | 2<br><br>I Surrender All            |
| 3<br><br>Just As I Am   | 4<br><br>Jesus Loves Me   | 5<br>Keeping Step<br><br>Pray for the Simi Valley Branch - pg 4   | 6<br><br>It Is Well With My Soul | 7<br><br>Amazing Grace           | 8<br><br>Because He Lives      | 9<br><br>Sweet Sweet Spirit         |
| 10<br><br>It's My Desire  | 11<br><br>I've Decided To Make Jesus My Choice  | 12<br><br>Sheltered In The Arms of God  | 13<br><br>Sing Hallelujah        | 14<br><br>For Those Tears I Died | 15<br><br>Count Your Blessings | 16<br><br>First Love                |
| 17<br><br>If That Isn't Love  | 18<br><br>Living For Jesus  | 19<br><br>I've Got The Joy  | 20<br><br>He Lives               | 21<br><br>Blessed Assurance      | 22<br><br>Let It Shine         | 23<br><br>Mansion Over The Hilltop  |
| 24<br><br>The Spirit Of God Like A Fire Is Burning  | 25<br><br>He's Everything To Me   | 26<br><br>O What A Savior   | 27<br><br>Sing Glory             | 28<br><br>O Happy Day            | 29<br><br>He Touched Me        | 30<br><br>God's Still On His Throne |
| 31<br><br>Sing your baptism song today!   | 1   | 2   |                                  |                                  |                                |                                     |

August 2014

*"Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our king, sing praises" (Psalms 47: 6).*

## BTP Blast From The Past

### 1968 GMBA Nauvoo Campout

To the early Latter-Day Saints in 1839, it was a place of refuge from the religious persecution they had suffered in Missouri. Five years later in August of 1844, it became the site where Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young squared off for the leadership of the early Church. Then, remarkably, 124 years after their struggle—46 years ago this month—Nauvoo, Illinois gained the Church's attention again, this time as the location of the 1968 GMBA campout. *"The Wednesday service will 'ways stand out in our minds,"* Sister Karen (Milantoni) Pandone remembers, *"This meeting started out in singing, progressed to testimony, and ended with 15 young people asking for their baptisms—seven from our own MBA class."* Brother Carl Frammolino, then editor for the GMBA penned, *"Heaven Came Down and*

*Glory Filled My Soul' seemed to be literally fulfilled. . .The assurance of this song was reflected on the quiet, listless Mississippi the next morning when they became members of The Church of Jesus Christ."* Gospel News, October 1968



Group of brothers and sisters baptized ►



## 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 the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ.
- 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**

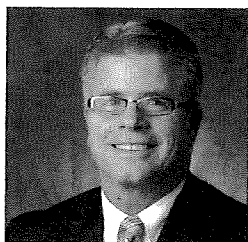
## GOSPEL NEWS QUIZ

Search through this issue for answers to these questions:

- What branch was started in a room next to a chicken coop? (Page 4)
- What is the "can-do" attitude we must have necessary for? (Page 5)
- What did the Anti-Nephi-Lehis do to honor their covenant? How does this apply to us today? (Page 6)
- What 10 things can we do to increase the blessings during the music portion of our services? (Page 6)
- What does a chocolate mud pie in a Kit Kat barrel topped with pink clay piggies have to do with Church? (Page 8)
- What did Elisha ask of Elijah prior to Elijah being carried off into the heavens in a fiery chariot? (Page 9)

## Wordup

### 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.*

*"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).*

In 1991, while with Sun Bank in Stuart, Florida, I was tasked with educating bank customers through public seminars. I was given specific written direction, scripts, and limitless counsel, but none better than, "Know your audience." This is still some of the best advice I've ever received.

When given the opportunity to speak publicly, I still assess and address my audience accordingly. As a minister, if the congregants are experienced members of the Church, I avoid preaching baptism. As a football coach, I would never present the proper techniques of painting sunsets to my team. In business, when speaking to bank presidents, I keep the subject on financial matters versus current fashion. If addressing a room of politicians, I would never waste time discussing moral behavior (sorry, just having a little fun).

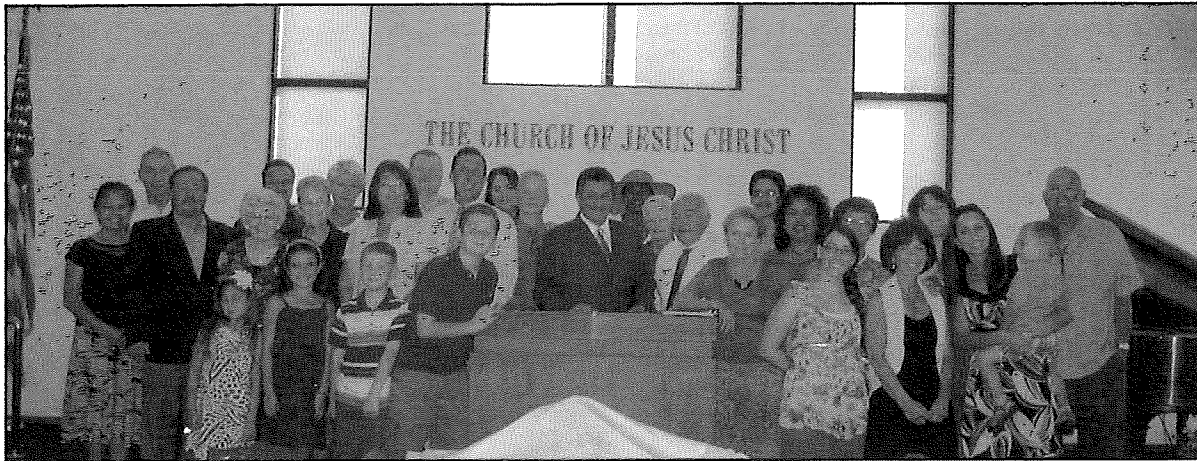
Jesus understood this as He certainly knew His audience and may have uttered a different statement had His disciples been salespeople, physicians, or mechanics. He knew His disciples' trade had readied them to "catch" souls for His cause. Their experience in gathering full nets taught them that some fish were good targets, while others (e.g., too small) were best discarded or thrown back. This may have been His thought when He taught them how some people were ready to hear the message and some weren't with the instruction, "Shake off the dust of your feet" (Matthew 10:14). As they prepared their hooks, maybe He taught them their spiritual bait was their personal testimonies, utilized to entice people to hear the message of salvation. When He told them to "Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find" (John 21:6), He was teaching to identify the best areas (neighborhoods?) where their words might have more effect.

Yes, if Christ's disciples had been hunters, this verse might have read, "I will make you hunters and gatherers of people." If they were advertising executives, He may have said, "I will teach you to market my message." Athletes may have been motivated with, "I will show you how to recruit great teams." If told to computer technicians, Matthew 4:19 might read, "I will train you in the importance of personal connections." Whether addressing a group of fisherman or a simple one-on-one with you, Christ knows His audience, speaking in a way each can understand. Take an account of your talents. Ask Christ to enhance them. And then He can use you for His intended purposes. Remember: the fish are always biting somewhere!

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

# MB Meet the Branch

## Domestic Church — Simi Valley CA Branch



**T**he Simi Valley, California Branch started from humble beginnings. In 1949, Brothers V. James Lovalvo and Rocco Meo held meetings in the home of Sister Mary Dichiera in the San Fernando Valley, and as their group grew, they met in a room adjacent to Brother Alex Cavallaro's chicken coop. The clucking of chickens mixed with the saints' songs of praise. Eventually they constructed a building, in 1956, on Roscoe Boulevard.

The San Fernando Valley Branch, as it was called, enjoyed a "golden era" in the 1960s and 70s. This period of time was characterized by powerful meetings, frequent youth gatherings, and outreach to Lindsay and Yucaipa, California and Tse Bonito, New Mexico.

By 1989, the saints had purchased a new property in Simi Valley, and the branch was renamed the Simi Valley Branch. Today, we have a close-knit congregation of about 40 members comprised of middle aged and senior saints. We also have a handful of beautiful children and teens. In the past three years, the Lord has called to baptism over seven souls from among our family members, and we thank God for that.

Brothers Ed Buccellato and Sal Azzinaro shepherd the flock, and the Lord has recently blessed both of them to overcome serious health issues. When you remember your ministry in prayer, please remember our brothers as well.

We hold Sunday School and worship meetings weekly, and the Ladies' Circle meets once per month. At this time, we do not have an organized MBA or mid week services. Our congregation has come together for parking lot sales and other activities. In March 2014 there was a San Fernando Valley Branch reunion, where over 100 people, many of whom hail from the chicken coop days, gathered to celebrate the great blessings God has poured out upon the branch over the years.

### Music as Worship Continued from page 1

His purpose for music in our worship is that He might hear us praise and honor Him, and that we might have a way of expressing our appreciation for what He did for us on the cross. It's actually a two-way street as He communes with us and fills us with hope for what He's promised us in the future.

### Global Praise

Around the world as the Church grows, we find our saints worshipping God in styles that are comfortable within the context of their different cultures. In some large branches, an array of instruments may accompany the praise, and choirs rehearse for Sunday mornings and various holiday programs. In some smaller foreign missions, the saints gather to sing before preaching begins, having no instruments at all, and keep the tempo by clapping their hands.

I remember the first time I visited a small mission in Mexico, where I went into the empty meeting place and saw, instead of a piano, a lineup of eight guitars (three of them small children's guitars), leaning against a bench. I knew I was in for something I'd never witnessed in my American experience.

When the saints arrived and the ministry, some young women, and a few children took up the guitars and the praise began, it was glorious.

What made it glorious, however, was not the instruments used, or the talent, or even the volume, but that element of spirit that causes the words to come from our hearts and travel to God's heart and back again. It's what unites us with Him and with each other, and was designed for that purpose.

I also saw the value that music had in engaging the children. It's hard enough to keep them interested in the Gospel in today's technology-crazed world. But if we have our kids sing alongside us in Church and point to the words, they are more likely to grow up with a greater understanding of how God touches us through music, and thereby learn yet another purpose. Don't forget Proverbs 22:6 that says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he shall not depart from it." I think of the many times I sing the songs my mother taught me that served to shape my spiritual music appreciation.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

### "Missionary Work" By Elder Donald Ross

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Jesus Christ came for all people; not just some, but all. He came to rescue the sinners, whether men or women. The Lord did not exclude any one from His plan of salvation. How do we know this to be a fact? Consider His commandment to His eleven remaining disciples prior to His departure from earth. In Matthew 28:18-20 the Lord states, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach 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 whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

It is important to note that He has all power. He can do all things that are expedient in the Father. The Lord can make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame walk, the leper's skin as new. He can and will intercede for our sins, provided we present Him the opportunity. The Lord did just that when He allowed Himself to hang on the cross, suffer a cruel death by crucifixion, and resurrected from the grave. Jesus Christ allowed Himself to be sacrificed for the entire human family, that whosoever will believe in Him, whosoever will follow and obey His commandments, will have everlasting life.

The Church of Jesus Christ has the authority, power, and commission to preach the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world. No nation, no people, no language will be overlooked. All shall hear the message and divine commandments of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Every nation, people, and tongue will be given an opportunity to hear the true and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is our mission. It is our Great Commission. The Church of Jesus Christ also has a Divine Commission to bring, teach, and preach the Restored Gospel to the Native American people.

Every nation, kindred, tongue, and people will be taught to observe all things that He commanded His disciples. His message was not only to His remaining disciples, it is for us as well. We have to possess the zeal, enthusiasm, and spiritual drive to preach and teach all nations. It will take the strength and power of God to make this commandment a reality. We cannot do it on our own. We cannot do it with our strength. We can only do this through the strength and power of Jesus Christ.

The Lord stated in the scriptures that we will do greater things than He did in His lifetime. What can we do that He did not do? We will be used as His instruments to gather the House of Israel. We will seek them out in the North Country. We will seek them out by the direction of Jesus Christ, to preach and teach that Jesus Christ is Lord, their Saviour and Redeemer. We will go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people with the message of the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All people will hear that the angel has flown in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to be preached to every nation, every kindred, every tongue, and every people. No one will be overlooked. No one will be excluded from the message of salvation and the requirements for salvation. All shall hear they must believe, repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost. All shall hear that The Church of Jesus Christ is the Church of the Lamb of God. It is the Church He gave His precious name to and it is the Church that He gave His life for.

This message of salvation was also given to King Benjamin by an angel of God. King Benjamin declared to his people, "...wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Mosiah 3:12). King Benjamin went on to declare that the Lord sent His holy prophets among all the children of men, to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same will receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with an exceeding great joy.

The Church of Jesus Christ is at the threshold of moving forward and carrying out this commandment of the Lord. It is on the move. The momentum is increasing; we are reaching out to many people, and soon, yes, very soon, all people.

There are many efforts under way in the Domestic Works and Missions Field. We have Foreign Missions in many lands. Requests for The Church of Jesus Christ are coming in from many nations. Letters are being received from around the world about The Church of Jesus Christ. People are hungry for the Gospel, the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You might ask, "How can we accomplish this with limited resources?" With God, there is no limit. With God, there are no limitations. The Apostle Paul stated in Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

This "can-do" attitude must apply to all of us. We also can do all things and accomplish all things through Jesus Christ. Do we need finances? The answer is yes. God will provide. He always does if you look to Him. Do we need workers? The answer is yes. God will provide by moving on those who express a sincere desire to be used by Him and for Him. Do not limit your thinking. Think big! Remember, ask and you shall receive. God will provide!

## VALUES By Brother Jonathan Scolaro

**Value:** Duty

### Definition:

- Carrying out assignments; supporting the body; fulfilling tasks, particularly when challenged by lack of understanding or excitement
- To follow customs, regulations and institutional codes out of a sense of duty, a required act or course of action; moral obligation

### Vital Verses:

• *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" – (Daniel 1:8).*

• *"And thus we see that, when these Lamanites were brought to believe and to know the truth, they were firm, and would suffer even unto death rather than commit sin; and thus we see that they buried their weapons of peace, or they buried the weapons of war, for peace" – (Alma 24:19).*

### Scriptural Examples:

Daniel and his three friends were taken captive and carried into Babylon. There, the King commanded that they eat his meat and drink his wine. But these boys refused to defile themselves with this food, despite the urging of their overseer who feared he would be executed for their poor health. After ten days, however, not only were they healthier and stronger than their counterparts, but God honored their integrity by blessing them with knowledge, skill, and wisdom.

The Anti-Nephi-Lehies were a group of Lamanites who converted to Christ and renounced their bloodthirsty lifestyle. Soon afterward, another Lamanite group threatened them with massacre. In order to honor their

covenant to never shed blood again, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies buried their weapons in the earth and allowed themselves to be slain. This passive gesture so convicted the hearts of their attackers that many of the enemy converted to Christ.

### Life Application:

It's easy to make excuses to compromise our duty to God. Daniel and his three friends could have claimed that they were captives in a foreign land or that they were risking the life of their overseer or that God had abandoned them to rationalize breaking their prohibition against eating meat. The Anti-Nephi-Lehies could have succumbed to the fear that they and their loved ones would be mercilessly slaughtered, breaking their vow against violence. But, because these people honored their covenants to God—despite the assumed risks—God blessed them in unexpected ways.

When we do what's right before God out of a sense of duty—like being honest with our taxes, like avoiding activities that provoke us to sin, like treating unlikeable people with kindness, like driving long distances to support church events—anything that seems inconvenient at the time, we can expect God to answer our prayers and bless us immeasurably beyond our minimal sacrifice. We have liberty and boldness to go before Him in prayer and to expect an answer.

### Points to Ponder:

- Do you find yourself serving God only when it's convenient for you?
- Do you find yourself asking God for something when you know you haven't been serving Him to the best of your ability like you promised at the water's edge?
- Can you reflect on your life and identify present day blessings that resulted from past decisions to uphold your commitments to God?

*Presented originally on the Gospel Blog*

## Music as Worship Continued from page 4

### A Musical Challenge

It seems that in today's speeding world, we may have lost a bit of the value of our music and its place in our worship experience. In the process, we may be losing the benefits and blessings intended for us by our Heavenly Father. The very concept of "worship" is being diluted.

Ask yourself: In an effort to move our service along, do we skip verses as we watch the clock? When a sermon ends and a hymn is called, is that the time we make a mad dash to the rest room, or worse, chat with our neighbor? Are opening hymns a sign that the meeting hasn't begun yet and therefore we can linger in the kitchen? Or do we think that singing hymns in Church is for the old folks? When an old hymn is called, (or a new one, or one from a book we don't favor), do we remove ourselves from the process and ignore the message? Do we think we don't have good voice, so we don't bother to sing at all?

It's happening all around us, but there's something we can do about it. Try this experiment the next time you're in Church:

1. See if you can connect with every song that's sung on some personal level.
2. Discipline yourself to read the hymns and open your heart to every message. Don't be satisfied with letting the old English syntax go over your head. (A phrase like, "...Don't let narrow self your way debar..." can pack a wallop.)
3. Value every simple rhyme.
4. Notice when a hymn's message merges with the sermon's message to hear God's voice confirming it.
5. Let the hymn time be focused on the hymn.
6. Fight the temptation to be distracted, or to allow our young people to be distracted by technology. As the anti-texting-while-driving campaign states, "It Can Wait." That's true of hymn time as well.
7. Smile when it's a song of victory, reflecting on what Christ has won in your life.
8. Sorrow when it's a song of His sacrifice.
9. Rejoice when it's a hymn that speaks of Zion and gives you hope for tomorrow.
10. Travel back to the river when you sing your baptism hymn or *Amazing Grace*.

You'll find that that connection will bring you back to your core desire of receiving more of His Spirit. And your blessings will abound like it's promised in the 100th Psalm, *"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing."*



# Branch & Mission News

## Quincy Branch Quorum of Seventy Outreach Weekend

By Sister Cheryl Hester

On Saturday, March 22, 2014 the Quincy, Florida Branch began an outreach weekend. Over the course of the weekend, over 100 members and visitors came to hear about the wonderful Gospel of Jesus Christ. We had been given a task by our elders earlier that month for each member to invite family, friends and also brothers and sisters that have not been to Church in a while to attend an eventful weekend. There were many visitors that flocked in to hear the Word of the Lord. It was a joyous time of love and fellowship!

All in attendance enjoyed very powerful and Spirit filled words from two visiting evangelists from the Quorum of Seventy; Brother Clifton Wells from the Omaha, Nebraska Mission, as well as Brother Chatman Young from the Herndon, Virginia Branch. We were given many powerful messages from our brothers concerning prophecy and revelation. They told us that it is important for us to feel the power of God. We should pray to God and thank Him while learning how to diversify our prayers. We were reminded of the strength of the Queen of Sheba, from I Kings 10:1. She challenged King Solomon regarding all of his riches and she was not afraid to seek after what she had heard about and ask for what she wanted. We must be like that with Jesus, and if He sees fit, we will be granted what we ask for, but we must be ready to use what we are given.

Sunday morning we met at the water's edge for the beautiful baptism of Genessis Diaz-Rivera. She was baptized by Brother Charleston Hester and confirmed by Brother Clifton Wells. Genes-

sis had been attending for over a year and decided it was time to make her commitment with God. Please remember our new sister as she begins her journey as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ. One of our brothers stated that even though he has been a member for years, our new sister will get the same reward. He shared the parable of the laborers working in the vineyard and each receiving a penny even though they began their work at different times.

Faith, Hope, and Charity was a theme. Brother Chatman shared with us an e-mail with a very heartfelt message concerning a man who was on trial. Satan was the prosecutor, Jesus was the man's lawyer, and God was the judge. Jesus paid it all; therefore, the case was dismissed!

It was also mentioned that we must be ready to do the Work of the Lord. We must also recognize and remember that none of our accomplishments are from us but anointed by God. Ephesians 4:22 talks about the covenant made, and we must do away with the old us and go on our journey as a new self. Brother Clifton expounded on many scriptures pertaining to covenant blessings. He stated that we must have spiritual understanding as we look at the blessings God has given us. We should have a prayer of thanksgiving while recognizing what the Lord has done for us.

The brothers, sisters, and friends in attendance were also invited to a delicious meal at the close of the day. What a wonderful time we shared in love and fellowship!

## A Blessed Weekend at the Modesto, CA Branch

By Sister Valerie Dulisse

On March 15, 2014 our branch received a visit from Apostle Paul Liberto and Evangelists Bob McDonnell and John DiBattista. That Saturday evening Brother John DiBattista gave a PowerPoint presentation on "The Restitution of All Things," which was both informative and interesting historically, as well as a reinforcement of prophecies he shared with us about the future events we will experience in our world. Brother John had gone to such great lengths in his study of scriptures and formed a timeline which spanned the generations from God's interaction with our first father and mother, Adam and Eve, to the time of Zion when *"the ransomed of the lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."* We were grateful for the time and effort that our brother had poured into this presentation, and it gave us much to contemplate when considering the miraculous events that have transpired, and the glorious events still to come in God's plan of "The Restitution of All Things." After the presentation, we had fellowship with one another and anticipated the following day's worship service.

On Sunday morning Evangelist Bob McDonnell opened the service, sharing how he had been called into the Church, feeling a pounding in his heart as the Spirit of God touched him during a church service. He said, *"Did I know all about the restoration and prophecies of God at the time of the calling of God in my Life?"* He answered that he did *not*, but he *did* understand the Spirit of God urging him to accept Christ into his heart and his life. Brother Bob said he received the most relevant thing that we all need in our lives; Jesus Christ, as our friend and personal Savior. Once we have a relationship with Christ, then He can use us to further His Kingdom on earth.

Brother Bob shared that recently he had traveled to Oklahoma and over the past five years the brothers on the Oklahoma Team have met and established contacts with nearly 40 Native American Indian Tribes. This is an exciting work, and he shared how they feel God's direction in it. One of the brothers on the Oklahoma Team heard the Lord speak to him and say: *"I have done a Marvelous Work and Wonder, go tell it!"* "This is what we are doing," Brother Bob said, *"bringing the message of the Restored Gospel to them."* The brothers have discovered that we and the Native Americans there have some common beliefs, and their desire is to build on this and let the Native Americans know that many of their traditions, customs, beliefs, and even future hopes and expectations are found in the Book of Mormon!

(Continued on Page 11)

## Southwest Area MBA Bake Auction *By Cat and Benjamin Scolaro*

On March 8, 2014, the Southwest Area MBA (SWAMBA) held a bake auction to raise scholarship money for the Southwest Region campout this upcoming Labor Day weekend, 2014. Many brothers and sisters worked hard to make fabulous culinary creations for the event, which was held at the Mesa Branch.

When the big night finally arrived, the esteemed panel of judges, composed of Kalei and Reese Hood, Hallee and Holden Ivey, Alayna and Olivia Landrey, and Cristina Scolaro, compared the scrumptious entries. The judges, all age 13 and under, were thoroughly impressed by the variety.

Voted "Most Creative" was a chocolate mud-pie in a Kit-Kat barrel topped with swimming pink clay piggies. A sweet-potato cake titled "Just As I Yam" snagged "Best Veggie Experience." "American Tradition Award" went to a delectable apple pie, and Sister Inge's German fruit tart took "Best Fruit Experience." Other categories included "Death by Chocolate," "Best Visual Presentation," and "Best Cookie/Cupcake."

Screaming laughter and lots of raised hands filled the room throughout

the competition. Brother Dick Christman, the wily auctioneer, sometimes took bids from people who had accidentally raised their hands in side conversations; Sister Carrie Jankowski accidentally bought several baked goods in this manner. Additionally, an anonymous sponsor gave \$80 to a group of young boys under 12 who initiated a bidding war on numerous items.

About 60 brothers and sisters attended that night, and even with all the noise, the event raised about \$1,500. That was \$400 more than the MBA auction last year and enough to help almost twenty young people attend camp!

The event was a hit, and the MBA expects more craziness at next year's auction. Most of all, everyone enjoyed the event and is looking forward to a spirit-filled campout.

For more information on how to register for the Southwest Area MBA campout (Aug. 29 – Sept. 1, 2014), please contact camp director Steven Dulisse at [sndulisse@gmail.com](mailto:sndulisse@gmail.com).



## CAMPOUT THEME SONGS FROM THE PAST



1967 — *This Church*  
 1968 — *Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul*  
 1969 — *Jesus Use Me*  
 1970 — *O What a Savior*  
 1971 — *Sweet, Sweet Spirit*  
 1972 — *For Those Tears I Died*  
 1973 — *If That Isn't Love*  
 1974 — *Do You Know My Jesus?*  
 1975 — *I'm Free*  
 1976 — *God's Wonderful People*

1977 — *I've Decided to Make Jesus My Choice*  
 1978 — *Blessed Assurance*  
 1979 — *He's Everything to Me*  
 1980 — *There Is a River*  
 1981 — *Sing Hallelujah!*  
 1982 — *God's Still On His Throne*  
 1983 — *To See the Morning Light*  
 1984 — *Wave the Flags of Zion*  
 1985 — *First Love*  
 1986 — *We Shall Sing On the Mountain of the Lord*  
 1987 — *Keeping Step*  
 1988 — *Set Her Free*  
 1989 — *He Touched Me*  
 1990 — *People Need the Lord*

1991 — *Sheltered in the Arms of God*  
 1992 — *Amazing Grace*  
 1993 — *En La Vina Del Senor*  
 1994 — *Taste the Grass On the Summit*  
 1995 — *Jesus On the Inside*  
 1996 — *Mansion Over the Hilltop*  
 1997 — *It's My Desire*  
 1998 — *Just For Me*  
 1999 — *World Missionary Conference-no song*  
 2000 — *Are Ye Able, Said the Master*  
 2001 — *Stand Up For the Restoration*  
 2002 — *We're Marching to Zion*  
 2003 — *The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning*  
 2004 — *Let It Shine*  
 2005 — *They Can't Burn the Flag On Zion's Mt.*  
 2006 — *In the Army of the True and Living God*  
 2007 — *Jesus Loves Me*  
 2008 — *Sing Glory!*  
 2009 — *I've Got the Joy*  
 2010 — *He Planted Me Deep*  
 2011 — *World Conference-no song*  
 2012 — *O Happy Day*  
 2013 — *I Surrender All*



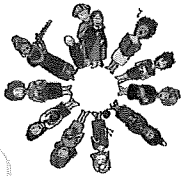
## 5 Amazing Facts

### Elisha and the Shunammite Woman By Brother Kerry Carlini

In response to Elijah's directive, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee," we read that Elisha asked of him a hard thing: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Then, upon seeing Elijah carried off into the heavens in a fiery chariot, Elisha's request was granted. Many miracles followed Elisha, both in the presence of kings and in the company of common people. Here are five amazing facts regarding his encounter with the Shunammite woman:

- 1 As often as the prophet Elisha passed by the home of the Shunammite woman "she constrained him to eat bread" with her and her husband—eventually encouraging her husband to build a chamber onto their home that Elisha might have a place for rest on his journeys.
- 2 For this act of generosity, Elisha said to her that he would ask of the king or captain of the host anything on her behalf. Yet, in being childless he granted her wish to have a child.
- 3 However, when the child was grown—in the fields one day with the reapers—he fell gravely ill and died in the lap of his mother. In much grief, the Shunammite woman sought out Elisha, and upon arriving at her home Elisha was used of God to restore the boy to life by lying prostrate upon him.
- 4 But the story does not end here, for when it had been revealed to Elisha of a great, impending famine, he instructed her and her household to "sojourn to wheresoever thou canst sojourn" to escape the famine.
- 5 Then, upon returning home seven years later, it was the Shunammite woman's testimony—before the king—of how her son was brought back to life by Elisha that moved him to have all of her property and possessions restored back to her and her household.

II Kings Chapters 2, 4, and 8



## Ladies' Uplift Circle News

### What Does the Circle Mean to You?

By Sister Lisa Champine, General Circle President

I am often asked this question: what does the Circle mean to you? Depending on who is asking me, I sometimes respond with, "What does the Circle mean to you?" It is not meant to be a flippant response to a serious question but often it helps me to understand where the person asking the question is coming from.

Why is this important? I'll try to explain. I started attending Circle when I was about 11 years old with my mother after she was baptized into the Church. I always enjoyed it; I would even say I liked attending as a girl. I probably couldn't verbalize the things I liked about it then, but looking back at the 11 year old me I know that I liked spending time with the sisters. It was a different atmosphere or vibe, if you will, than our other church services and meetings. As a relatively reserved young girl I could relax a bit and just be. The Circle Sisters made it easy to fit in, to be a part, to feel like I belonged there and that even an 11 year old had value and a place in our Circle.

At first I don't even know if I realized that our local Circle, (which at the time was the Sterling Heights local), was just one part of a bigger group. I had no concept of Area Circles or even the General Circle then. I just knew I liked it. I liked hearing the lessons; I made an effort to find the question (our question giver Sister Rose Gerry was pretty tough!), and eagerly looked for my word for the next meeting. I didn't know it then, but as my affection for this group of women deepened and grew their living examples of the Circle and Christ grew for me as well.

I didn't know that I loved the Circle until I transferred to a branch that did not have an organized Circle. There were many reasons at the time why we weren't able to formally have a Circle in the branch. We still met together as sisters for scripture study and were blessed in our gatherings, but for me, then in my 20's, I missed it. I missed being a part of the organization as a whole. I missed the Circle.

As time moved on, my branch was now at a place where we could sustain a Circle.

That was a joyful realization for all of us. We were thrilled to finally hold up the banner of The Ladies' Uplift Circle in our part of the vineyard, and that's when I knew what Circle meant to me.

You see, the Circle means something different to everyone. But, there are touchstones that define what it is. Some look at the Circle and they see only the service and fundraising efforts. Those elements are vital and important and necessary for so many needs in the Church today, but, to say the Circle is just a fundraising arm of the Church is a gross inaccuracy. Some say the Circle is a coffee klatch for the women of the Church to get together and have a good chinwag. Some feel that Circle is old-fashioned and antiquated and not relevant to the needs of today's women. I would respectfully disagree.

So, what does Circle mean to me? I can quote you the aims and our mission statement. I can supply the total

(Continued on Page 11)



## What Can Music Do For Me?

loved the Lord, to come and play songs praising God. King Saul would hear David play and the bad spirits would leave him. There is power in singing praises to God.

How many music memories do you have? When I was a little girl, my mother used to iron clothes at night when we all went to bed. We each had favorite songs that we would ask her to sing to us as she worked. My older sister always wanted "I Come to the Garden Alone." I could just see a beautiful garden full of sweet smelling roses. I always asked for "The Old Rugged Cross." These songs calmed us and kept us from being scared. Try singing any time you are worried or scared.

When my daughter was young I would play favorite songs from the Songs of Zion for her on the piano as she settled down to sleep. Later I gave her the CDs and she played calming, peaceful music for herself as she drifted off to a peaceful night's rest. When I went through a very sad time in my life, I played and sang "Good Morning God, can it be dawn? Excuse the tears, the night was long." Every night that song comforted my heart. It reminded me that a new day with joy was coming.

The scriptures say that angels in heaven surround God's throne and sing. King Mosiah and the prophet Lehi both saw God sitting on his throne surrounded by huge numbers of angels, singing and praising God. King Mosiah said he wished he was there already. (See Alma 36:22 and 1 Nephi 1:8). Can you think how that incredible music would touch your heart and go right through you?

The Bible says that Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn and then went out to the Mount of Olives. The Apostle Paul sang when he was chained in a prison. Paul also taught us in Ephesians 5:18 to "...be filled with the Spirit [of God]; speaking to yourselves [sharing with one another] in psalms and hymns and spiritual

*songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always and for all things unto to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Music can be a prayer, it can be exciting, it can be hopeful, peaceful, and powerful. Put a song in your heart and be a stronger, happier person.

With love,  
Your friend,  
Sister Jan

## WORD SEARCH (Psalms 98)

|          |        |         |
|----------|--------|---------|
| MUSIC    | GLAD   | THE     |
| IS       | SAD    | LORD    |
| ANOTHER  | MAD    | ALL     |
| WAY      | SCARED | THE     |
| TO       | MAKE   | EARTH   |
| EXPRESS  | A      | REJOICE |
| YOUR     | JOYFUL | AND     |
| DEEP     | NOISE  | SING    |
| FEELINGS | UNTO   | PRAISE  |

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| E | S | I | A | R | P | G | O | D |
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| J | N | E | X | P | R | E | S | S |
| D | E | R | A | C | S | I | N | G |

Recently I gave my piano away to a young friend, my CD player broke, the XM radio wires outside broke, our iPod was lost, and I was without music! I even left the television on all night to hear the quiet background music from the station showing what's on all the channels. Oh my, I had not realized how relaxing and soothing music is to my heart. In Church on Sunday there was such a beautiful spirit of happiness and joy as we sang together that I wished it would never stop. It sounded like we were at a Campout rejoicing together.

I started wondering about how the scriptures talked about music from the old, old days. In Genesis it says that Adam and Eve's great grandson, Jubal, was such a wonderful musician he was called the father of all those who play the lyre (small harp) and pipe (instrument like several small flutes joined together).

We also read that after God saved the Israelite people from being killed by the powerful Pharaoh's armies, they also sang with great joy. In Exodus 15: 1-27 they sang the story of how God sent a strong east wind to hold back the water of the Red Sea so the people of Israel could cross on dry land. God loves His people and will protect them. I would have loved to hear the beautiful, lively, and wonderful singing of those people who were saved! Can you imagine how loud and happy you would sing if God had just saved your life? How many tears of joy would fill your heart as you sang and praised God's holy name!

When King Saul disobeyed God, evil spirits would come into his mind and trouble him. Only spiritual music calmed him. His friends found the young man David, who

## What Does the Circle Mean to You? Continued from page 9

amount the Circle has fundraised over our 94 years. I can read you by-laws and minutes, but those are just the bones of the skeleton that make up the General Ladies' Uplift Circle, the flesh and blood of who we are and what the Circle means is so much more.

Circle means fellowship and acceptance. It means love and understanding. It is the camaraderie between women that have never met before but because they spent some time together at a Circle meeting or fellowship weekend are now lifelong friends. Circle means having a place to cry when sorrows become so great that they threaten to sink your ship, or sharing a joy so profound there are no words to express how good our God is. Circle is knowing that someone is praying for you before you even have a chance to ask for it. Circle is going the extra mile so that a child that you will never meet, in a foreign field, might have breakfast in the morning, or, a new mother on a Native American reservation can bring their baby home in clothes and blankets provided by loving hands that will never see the baby it covers. Circle is a card sent at the exact time you need it, with the exact words you needed to hear. Circle is knowing that regardless of ethnic background, whether we are married or single, old or young, rich or poor we are all daughters of God and have a place and value in His eyes. Circle is knowing that as women of The Church of Jesus Christ we can enrich our service, our fellowship, our families, our branches and missions, and, most importantly, our relationship with our God by being a part of it.

My life was changed forever the day my parents met The Church of Jesus Christ. I was set on a new path and being a member of The Ladies' Uplift Circle has only enriched my walk with the Lord in ways that I cannot fully comprehend. To quote one of The Songs of Zion, *"Oh, wondrous grace! God found my place for me."*

That is what Circle means to me. May God continue to bless each one of you is my prayer.

## A Blessed Weekend at the Modesto Branch Continued from Page 7

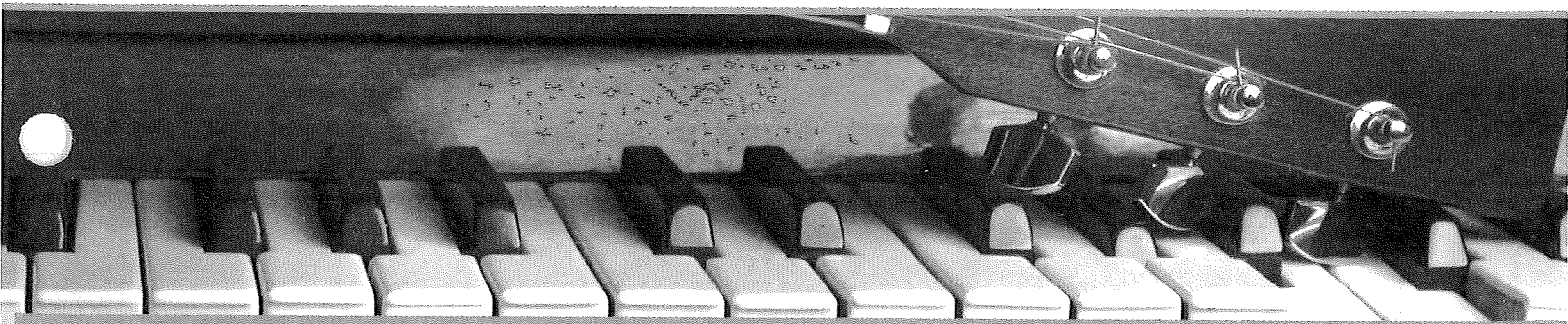
Brother Bob briefly shared the Gospel message from the days of Christ and the establishment of His Church in Jerusalem, the Apostasy of the Church, and the Restoration of the Church in our day and time. He exhorted us that we have to know and understand the Great Commission of the Church as well as the Divine Commission. Isaiah 65:19 speaks of the future of the House of Israel in Zion, how blessed they shall be. If someone asks us, *"What is the origin of your Church?"* We need to know. He urged us to never forget our identity: to endorse it, embrace it, and go out and share it. He exhorted us to press forward and persevere in serving God all the days of our lives.

After Brother Bob finished speaking, some of our Hispanic brothers and sisters graced us with a song selection in Spanish, which is always such a blessing in our branch. We feel the same joyous Spirit, even if the words are in another language.

Apostle Paul Liberto followed, commenting upon how much peace, joy, and love he had felt since arriving at the Modesto Branch. He also shared how much he misses all of the saints from our branch who have gone on to their heavenly reward, and what a blessing they provided him when they touched his life over the many years He had known them! But the Spirit of God has never changed, he reminded us. Brother Paul thanked God that when He restored the Church, He brought back the Spirit of God. If we did not allow the Spirit

of God in our lives, we would be lost. Jesus himself taught us how we should live. Brother Paul referenced the 23rd Psalm regarding the sheep and their shepherd. We are sheep, he said, in need of Jesus to lead and guide us. He told us that when sheep walk to the water to drink, they create a deep trough in the path where they have walked, and they fall down into it. The shepherd needs to pick them up, or the sheep will just lie there and die. The shepherd needs to direct them where to walk. Jesus wants to be our shepherd, to pick us up and keep us on the path. It does not matter what age we are, or what we have done. Confessing that we need Him and knowing that we cannot have true, lasting joy without Him in our life, is what is needed. If we stay on God's path, He will give us inspiration to make a call, visit someone, or send them a card to uplift them. Alma 37:37 states that we should *"Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and He will direct thee for good."* Brother Paul shared that there is a special mission for God's people. The glory is that it is our job to bring His message to all the countries of the world, and they will raise up men to teach their people.

The visit of our brothers and their messages of hope was such an uplift and encouragement to the brothers and sisters in the Modesto Branch. May each of them be blessed for their constant sacrifices and their unending work to bring God's beautiful message of the Restored Gospel to the world.



*All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Psalm 66:3-5*



# Blessing Bits

## BB *The Money Will Be There*

About 15 years ago in the middle of winter, I was working full time and going to school at night. My truck had 350,000 miles on it and I was worried about it breaking down coming home from class late at night. I was REALLY worried. I remember praying hard about this, and the Lord told me, "The money will be there." I thought I was hearing things. Again I prayed and again the Lord said, "The money will be there." I began to question myself and wondered if I was imagining things. The third time I prayed hard about it, the Lord once again simply said, "The money will be there." I knew at that moment that this was indeed the Lord talking to me and I said, "Okay Lord, I hear you." I knew it was the Lord, and I knew to trust Him. Two days later, a friend of mine called to say he knew of a car for sale with low mileage that was within my price range. He also said the owner of the car was trustworthy. I knew at that moment that this was the Lord's intervention, and just as the Lord had told me, the money was there. I will never forget this experience as long as I live. He comes to each of us in different ways, but what a blessing it was to have this wonderful experience.—  
*Sister Lori Burkett, Detroit, MI Branch #2*

## BB *God Hears Every Prayer*

I recently went through some medical tests and I was informed that early indications showed I possibly had a terminal illness. Further testing was needed to confirm this diagnosis. Meanwhile, I petitioned the brothers and sisters through the Gospel email system. I also asked many others for prayer, including my family, friends, and even my neighbors, many of whom added my name to their Church prayer lists around the country. I then spent the most difficult and frightening seven days of my life waiting for the test results. The results were that while I do still have some health concerns going forward, the more definitive tests showed that I do not have the fatal version of the illness, but have a treatable condition instead. I am truly blessed.—*Brother Jerry Difede, San Diego, CA Branch*

## BB *Completely Healed*

In 1995, I was diagnosed with a kidney disease caused by the strep virus. After months of taking large doses of steroids, I was told my disease was in remission. However, it could flare back up any time I got sick, and I would need to be hospitalized to get it under control again. Every time I got a cold or flu I worried that the disease would come back. One time I was starting to show the

symptoms of a relapse and asked to be anointed. After they prayed, one of the ministers told me that I wasn't in remission, but that God had healed me. The disease never came out of 'remission' and I truly feel that I was healed. Now, 18 years later, I was being tested to be a live donor for my dad's liver transplant. I never put my kidney disease down on the paperwork because I knew I had been healed. After all the tests came back they said I was in great health and did not show any evidence of ever having had abnormalities with my kidneys. Praise God! Even science proved my miracle!—*Sister Laura Stone, Creekside, MI Branch*

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

# Q

**Question for this month:** *Is there a hymn that helped you decide to give your life to Christ? What is your "baptism song"?*

# A

**Answer from last month:** *How will you spend your Summer Days? What will you do to strengthen your relationship with God and/or the Church this summer?* I will spend my Summer days by doing the best that I can to praise and thank the Lord for giving me the Summer. To strengthen my relationship I will be reading the Word and praying that I will understand the Word.—*Brother Adrian Vasquez, Fort Worth, Texas Branch*



*All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Psalm 66:3-5*