

The Gospel News

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Why Now? Enjoy these testimonies from three new members

My story starts off simple—I was born and raised in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I was enriched with the love of God on my side, and I was shown the path of miracles through other brothers' and sisters' experiences. With that being said, I am now fortunate enough to say I chose Jesus Christ as my Savior; however making that decision has truly been a journey, and the question that I ask myself sometimes is—why now?

The summer of 2012 is when I surrendered to the Lord. The decision had been on my mind for a while and I knew that it would happen some day; I just did not know when. When it was finally my time, would I know what it would feel like? Would I know that God is calling me? These were the unanswered questions that had me feeling lost and confused.

Then summer came around and I specifically remember asking for my baptism at the campout at California University. When I asked my parents, they didn't agree. They didn't think I was ready and wanted me to come home and see how I felt after camp, and then make my final decision. So I did just that, and about two weeks later on Sunday, July 15, 2012, I gave my life to the Lord. When I woke up that morning I felt different; it was quite an indescribable feeling; all I remember is feeling fresh. On our way to church, I asked my parents once again if I could get baptized. However, they still did not think I was ready. I realize now that they had been praying constantly and were only looking out for my best interest. But at the time I became upset and even began to cry. When my parents saw how upset I was, we pulled over on the side of the road, "talked it out," and of course, prayed. I specifically remember pouring my heart out telling them that I knew it was my time and I wanted nothing more than to serve God and get baptized. My parents finally let me pursue my desire and when we arrived at church I talked to Brother Frank Natoli and he confirmed my spirit and desire for baptism. At approximately noon we headed to the water and I was baptized.

As you can see, my story is simple—I was born and raised in the Gospel and I knew someday I would make this decision. All the unanswered questions that I felt before my baptism were suddenly answered, and whenever I find myself asking "why now?" I can hear myself answering "why not?"—Sister Jessica DiBattista, Detroit, Michigan Branch #1

My heritage in the Church goes back to the Church's beginning with my great-grandfather, James Curry, Sr. He was a minister when the Church was in its infancy. My uncle James Curry, Jr., was a minister in the Elizabeth Branch. My grandmother, Gertrude (Curry) Little, was a deaconess in the Glassport Branch. I have attended the Church off and on for most of my life. I made my living in the field of retail, so for a long time I couldn't attend. I had to retire early and was then able to attend on a regular basis. I then became afflicted with a major health problem. My cousin, Sister Janet Humphrey, strongly urged me to forget what I thought were major discrepancies in Christian Gospel and to concentrate on FAITH. Spiritual and intellectual "growth" are very important to me. I normally keep my life private but I sensed that sharing my struggle with certain members of my branch would be a blessing. Sister Dianne Maddox, who was also struggling with her own health, reached out to comfort me. She was very sincere in her interest and we shared our fears of being ill. Others also were very supportive but Sister Dianne showed her true spirit. I felt she went beyond the occasional inquiry about how I was feeling to helping me deal with my illness and to have faith. Sister Dianne made me realize that I shouldn't be afraid of what I was facing, that God would be with me and to have faith in Him.

(Continued on page 8)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1 Love God above all	2
3	4	5 Love your neighbor as yourself	6	7 Love your life	8	9 Love the Bible and Book of Mormon
10	11 Love the brothers and sisters	12	13	14 LOVE to all of you!	15	16
17 Love the opportunity to go to Church	18	19 Love the Gospel	20	21	22	23 Love your family
24	25 Love yourself	26	27 Love & pray for the members in Aliquippa and Venezuela	28	1	2

January 2013
S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26
27 28 29 30 31

March 2013
S M T W T F S
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31

February 2013

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35).

BTF Blast From The Past

In what possibly could go on record as the coldest day ever for a baptism, Bertha Ford entered the chilly waters of regeneration in Kinsman, Ohio, February 9th, fifty-five years ago this month. She and her husband, Douglas, had been frequent visitors from Windsor, Canada, spending time with family at the new Kinsman Mission. But on this day when the temperature had risen to a mere five degrees below zero, Douglas warned his wife that she would catch a cold if she were to be baptized. In watching the baptism, it was Douglas who succumbed to a cold. However, it would not be long before he would also be baptized and thus, with his wife, joined the ranks of another small band of saints in upper Canada, seeking to establish a work in Meaford, Ontario.

Sister Bertha Ford with Sister Linda Boyle ►





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Purpose Statement

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

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ.
- 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

The Everlasting Gospel *By Evangelist John DiBattista*

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

Jesus was speaking of searching the Old Testament in this verse, and, as He said, it is full of testimonies of Him, His Kingdom, and His Church. I would like to share a brief glimpse of the Church in the days of Moses and show how the Gospel has remained the same over time.

Let's look at Hebrews 4:2, *"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith. . ."*

As we read the preceding chapter in Hebrews and the verses that follow this one, we see the writer is talking about the period known as the days of provocation when the people of Israel refused to believe God and were ultimately thrust into the wilderness for 40 years, awaiting a new generation that would inherit the promised land.

The Apostle Paul says in Galatians 3:19 that because of the lack of faith the law was added; *"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions. . ."* The question that I ask is, "Added to what?" The answer, of course, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The law was added because the people of Israel had not developed a level of consciousness to receive by faith the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God's intent was not for them to have burnt offerings and sacrifices, as told by Jeremiah 7:22,23 *"For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in that day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people."*

God wanted them to walk by faith, but they refused, so he added the Law of Moses as a schoolmaster or a director that pointed the way to Christ.

There is a beautiful type and shadow found in Exodus 15:22-27 of The Church of Jesus Christ that bears out this point.

In verse 23, the Hebrews find themselves at the waters of Marah, but they could not drink because the waters were bitter. The people murmured and the Lord showed Moses a tree that when cast into the waters would make the waters sweet and drinkable. I am of the opinion that this is where the children of Israel were offered the waters of regeneration or baptism, but because they refused, the waters became bitter to them. This is much like when someone today refuses their calling for rebirth, and the concept of baptism becomes bitter to them. The tree that makes the waters sweet is a representation of the tree that Christ hung on. As we read further in verse 26, the Lord offers to lead and guide them by His voice, the Holy Spirit, as He does for all of His followers. In verse 27, the people of Israel come to Elim where there were 12 wells of water representing the 12 apostles and threescore and ten palm trees representing the 70 evangelists, a clear type and shadow of The Church of Jesus Christ.

Israel had a chance to enter into rest at the waters of Marah, but they refused, says the writer of Hebrews, and wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Worse yet, they were under the yoke of the law for 1,540 years.

God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. His Gospel is the *everlasting* Gospel!

Domestic Church—Aliquippa Branch



In 1922, when the branch was organized, Aliquippa was an industrial city on the rise. Most of the brothers in the branch worked for the railroad or the booming steel mill. When Brother Philip Mileco was ordained an elder shortly after he and his wife, Sister Rose, were baptized in Youngstown, Ohio, he began to hold services in his home. A few visitors and neighbors were converted and the little group became a mission. In 1924, the group purchased a home and converted it into a church building. A larger building was purchased in 1944 and in 1957 that structure was sold and the group built the current building on Ross Drive.

The early group set a good example for the current membership by immediately becoming MBA and Ladies' Uplift Circle supporters upon organization, and these auxiliaries are still part of the weekly schedule. Currently there are few children attending. Efforts to grow the branch and increase the number of young families have been made including canvassing the neighborhood and inviting children to a Fall Festival.

The membership provides for the needs of the community whenever possible by providing sweets for Meals on Wheels and holiday food gifts for the needy. In addition, on Christmas and Easter, the Branch MBA performs programs that are advertised in the local newspaper, with an invitation of attendance to anyone seeking a holiday blessing.

Attracting new members is the mission and prayer of the branch so that all our neighbors could share in the love that we have found in Church of Jesus Christ.

International Church—Venezuela



The first trip to Venezuela was made in 1996 by several brothers and sisters at the request of Sister Alicia Bicelis. There are currently two missions, the Valle Guanape Mission and the Maracaibo Mission, located ten hours apart.

The members of the Valle Guanape Mission, located on the eastern side of the country, are humble and possess a beautiful spirit. There have been many powerful experiences, dreams, healings, and meetings filled with the Spirit of God. Brothers Raul Bicelis and Esnel Calcurian preside over the mission.

In late 2004, on the western side of Venezuela in Maracaibo, a young man named Jose Chavez Hernandez was looking for the Restored Gospel. He had been searching since age 11 for the true Gospel. One day while searching the internet, he came across our Church's website. Soon after, Brother Don Ross began a continual correspondence with Jose. Shortly afterward he was baptized, and today Brother Jose and his natural brother, Brother Angel Chavez, are the elders at the mission.

Currently there are 13 members in Venezuela; there is still much work to do. They are a hospitable people, full of energy, and love. Approximately, 45 percent of the population is under 21 years of age! Some 67 percent of the population is Mestizo, meaning people of European and Native American of Venezuela descent.

Please remember the Church in Venezuela in your prayers.

This editorial was written by Brother Don Ross and is reprinted from a previous issue of The Gospel News.

How do people know you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ? Is it because they see you going to Church? Is it because you have told your neighbors that you attend The Church of Jesus Christ? There is one way described by the Lord that conveys to the entire world that you are a disciple and member of The Church of Jesus Christ.

You will find the method of recognition depicted by the Lord in John 13:34-35 which states, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Please notice that Jesus Christ commanded that we love one another. This is not an option. It is a requirement for Him to extend salvation to you. He said on another occasion, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." Christ continues this theme of love by expressing, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Jesus Christ set the supreme example by sacrificing His life for mankind. He gave His life for His friends. He gave His life for the entire world that if they would obey His commandments, which include faith, repentance, baptism and reception of the Holy Ghost, they would reap an eternal reward in the heavenly kingdom of God and Jesus Christ. These are just a few of His commandments. There are many others, but bear in mind that He told Nicodemus that unless a man is born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In fact, the Lord told Nicodemus that without this new birth, a person will not even see heaven!

Love is the true test of a disciple of the Lord. It is the true test of a son and daughter of Jesus Christ. It is the true test of a brother and sister in Christ Jesus.

One way we show our love to God and for God is through brotherly love. How can a person say he or she loves God and hates his brother? If a person says he loves God and hates his brother, he is wrong. This is scripture! These are the words of the Lord Himself. It is also asked in scripture how can a man love God whom he has not seen and not love his brother whom he has seen? It simply is not possible to love God and hate or despise your brother. You must remember, if you call your brother a fool, you are in danger of losing your soul.

The entire law hinges on the love of God. Jesus Christ tells us we must love God above all and we must love our neighbors as we love ourselves. He goes on to say we must love our enemies. We must do good to those who spitefully use us for their gain or gratification. We have to possess the love of God to obtain a level of righteousness that conveys a saint of God. This means we must love all men and women, regardless of their state or condition. We are not to love the sin. We must love the sinner. The Lord loved all. His examples of forgiveness are based on His love for mankind. He forgave the adulterous woman. He forgave the woman at the well. He forgave Alma, the son of Alma. He forgave the sons of Mosiah. As yourself, could you have washed the feet of Judas Iscariot, knowing that he was your enemy and would betray you? Have you ever tried to imagine the Lord bending to His knees, towel in hand, the feet of Judas Iscariot in His hands, and Him washing the feet of the man who has come to be known as the son of perdition? This is the kind of love the Lord wants us to possess and exhibit towards our fellow man. This is known as Love Divine, All Loves Excelling!

One of the Lord's Apostles, John, is known as the Apostle of love. He tells us in his writings that we know that we have passed from death into a life with Jesus Christ because we love or loved the brethren. Those that do not love their brother or sister abide in death! Those who do not love the Lord, do not love their enemies, their neighbors, their brethren, those that despise you, are in a sad spiritual state.

The love of God is also known as charity. It is the pure love of God. It abides forever and whoever possesses it at their last day, it will be well with them. It is this love that attracts people to the saints of God and The Church of Jesus Christ.

Is your love for the Lord above all else? Do those around you feel and see the love of God that is so characteristic when you become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ? What we send out, comes back! Remember, your love shows that you are a disciple of the Lord. Possess and convey the love of God. It is a commandment!

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Love and Respect

The Southeast Region Marriage Retreat

By Sisters Dianne Maddox and Christine Mortorano

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"—seems like an easy enough scripture to understand and fulfill, but as many married couples know, married life is not always easy.

On October 26-28, 2012, 29 couples from the Southeast Region joined together to learn how to strengthen their relationships. On Friday evening, we kicked off our weekend with the "Not So Newly Wed" game. Some couples answered almost every question correctly, while others were shocked by their spouse's answers! But really, marriage is not about knowing your spouse's middle name, is it? What was enforced during this weekend is that marriage is about *Love and Respect*. It is vital to love and respect each other even though we may each interpret things differently. When a husband says he has no clothes to wear, he most likely means that he has nothing clean to wear, while the wife most likely means she has nothing new to wear. Same words, but different meaning! We must love and respect each other so that we don't get caught in the **Crazy Cycle—Without Love, She Reacts Without Respect, Without Respect, He Reacts Without Love**. . . and on and on. Rather, we should be caught in the **Energizing Cycle—His Love Motivates Her Respect, Which Motivates His Love**. . . Our reactions will motivate the love and respect of our spouse, which is ultimately what God planned when he made man and woman.

I have delivered to you today." The power of God that was felt at that moment was undeniably strong.

After a day of workbooks and seminars, Saturday evening we were free to go on a date! Some couples joined together later that evening for a light-hearted game that included sharing memories and singing love songs.

On Sunday morning, the workbooks came back out. This day we learned about the **Rewarded Cycle—His Love, Regardless of Her Respect, Regardless of His Love**. . . The Rewarded Cycle is about unconditional love and respect and rewards forever, resulting in the unending "first moment." Truly, loving and respecting our spouse is loving and respecting God. Later that morning, we were instructed to look at our spouse and state something we love and respect about them. This initiated a tremendous spirit of love. During this time, a brother spoke in the Word of the Lord, *"I have seen and I have heard and I am pleased. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts."*

Soon it was time to end our wonderful weekend. As we closed in prayer, the Gift of Tongues was given. At the conclusion of the prayer, the interpretation was given: *"Wait! Rejoice! And know that I love you my children! Love one another as I have loved you. Love one another as I loved you. Rejoice! And know that I love you!"* Another brother followed in the Spirit—*"Thus saith the Lord!"* The Lord opened and closed our weekend with His blessing. All left truly uplifted and united. . . in LOVE AND RESPECT.

God's Spirit and approval of this gathering was made evident throughout the weekend. On Saturday morning, a brother heard the Word of the Lord: *"Thus saith the Lord, Let My Love rule in your hearts, your homes, and in your marriages. Thus saith the Lord!"* He wrote this down and gave it to Brother Scott Griffith. While Brother Scott was reading this experience to all, this same brother spoke out loud in the Word of the Lord: *"Thus saith the Lord, I have spoken, this is the message that*

Blessings in Malawi

By Evangelist Anthony Ricci

*Okendekadwerenga, ndiperekamonimudzinalaYesuKhristu—
Beloved reader, I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ.*

I had the privilege to join Evangelist Lyle Criscuolo on the last 14 days of his 28-day mission trip to Malawi, Africa. Brother Lyle had already been in country 14 days with Brother Art Gehly, Jr., who was with Brother Lyle for the first 12 days as they worked in northern Malawi. I left home August 30, 2012, flying into New York City, where I took my 16 hour flight into South Africa. From there it was a short three-hour flight into Lilongwe, Malawi. What a blessed sight to be come

off the plane and see Brother Lyle and Brother Wilson, the director of our Church in Malawi whom you may have met last year at the World Conference, standing on the top level of the airport waiting and waving for me. I praise God for the fellowship we share—because from Lilongwe, we got into a car and went another six hours south to our first stop—the city and mission of Blantyre.

The Sabbath had finally arrived.

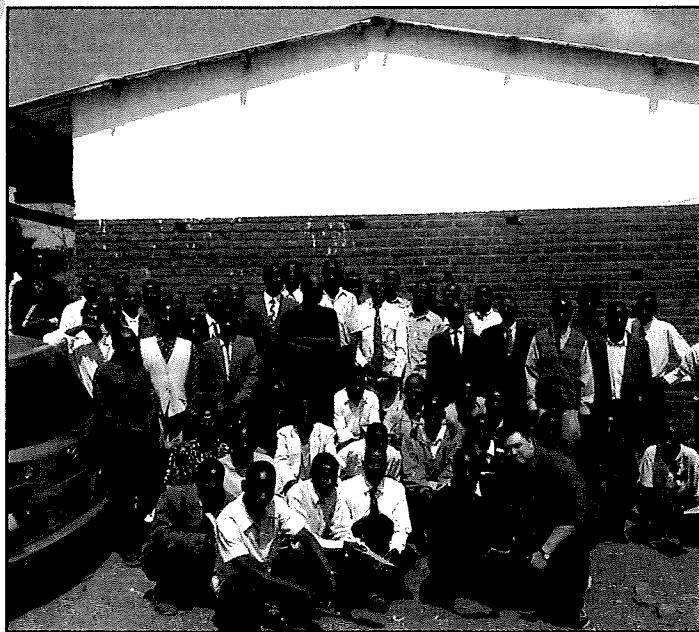
What tremendous joy to pull up to our humble building on the outskirts of town where we could hear the praises to God being sung in the native language of Chichewa. My first meeting on African soil, I was overwhelmed by the pure joy our Saints have in serving God in this little building, with gaping holes where doors and windows are desperately needed. I was introduced for the very first time to a part of our family of Christ in Africa!

(Continued on Page 7)

Blessings in Malawi

You may be able to read the words I can write to describe, but I know I fail in relaying to you the blessings that were truly felt being in the presence of such wonderful brothers and sisters. Our meeting was filled with the Love and Spirit of God—and OH WHAT SINGING! We were treated by selections from a women's, mixed, and a young people's choir. We ended our most blessed of Sunday meetings with a traditional Malawian meal at Brother Vincent's home and truly, the best was yet to come.

Over the next three days, we welcomed 54 brothers from all over Malawi and Mozambique to an Elders and Teachers Conference. As we met each brother, we felt their joy and conviction of being part of this Gospel. Mulungu Alemekizeke—Praise God—for HIS Love, that He calls such noble and humble men into His priesthood. I cannot express how impressive these brothers are in the knowledge of the Word of God, the restoration, the structure, and ordinances of The Church of Jesus Christ. These brothers have been well instructed. Great job, Malawi/Mozambique Field Committee! For this writer though, our brothers' full understanding of the power of the resurrection of Christ to change the lives of men and women is what brought us most joy.



Elders and Teachers Conference

For three days we fellowshiped, we exhorted, we taught, and we sang. We concluded our conference by dedicating the building in Blantyre, ordaining two elders and 12 teachers, and a very special celebration of the Lord's Supper. At the end of the conference, our brothers departed back to their missions, some traveling a full day or two. The privilege, joy, and blessings

Continued from Page 6

received just to be able to greet and embrace fellow laborers and ministers who hold strong to the same cause, uphold the same doctrine, and fight the same good fight, is a memory this writer will cherish forever.

The next two days were spent visiting our missions south of the city of Blantyre. Our first visit was to the Mulangi Mission where they meet in a rented room while they work at molding bricks to build their own building. The same spirit, love, and hospitality we felt all week was also felt there. In a small room, a joyful sound was lifted towards heaven. Songs and testimonies rang out with praise to our Risen Christ—HIS name was uplifted and glorified. AMEN!

Our final visit was in the African plains in the small village of Namlenga. This mission is blessed to have their own building. I can truly testify, the Namlenga Mission is alive in Christ! What a fantastic meeting. As one spirit-filled song that was sung "*We will follow the call of Jesus, whether He calls in the morning, He calls at noon, or He calls in the evening,*" was just like every place we visited. At every meeting we had, the name of Jesus was praised, glorified, and uplifted. Truly our Jesus finds men and women in the most remote places. These eyes have seen the call go out and accepted in the villages and huts in the Himalayan and India regions, the cities and villages throughout South America, and now in the land of Africa. We praise God for His Grace that has no boundary and no respecter of country when people need to be saved! He is the rescuer of our soul—BLESSED BE HIS NAME!

All that was left was our six-hour drive back, our flight back to South Africa, our 21-hour flight back to Dulles Airport, and the four-hour drive back to Pittsburgh. IT WAS WORTH EVERY MINUTE!

Dear family in Christ, with all my heart, I am so happy to let each of you know that you have a strong, vibrant, and growing family of God in Malawi (over 2,000 members and over 5,000 in Mozambique). BE EXCITED! The Church of Jesus Christ—our Church—is on the move! By the time you read this article, we should have baptized over 200 more members. GOD IS GOOD, ALL THE TIME! ALL THE TIME, GOD IS GOOD!

We Praise God He kept us safe, kept us healthy, and kept us in His Mighty Hand. We Praise Him for Who He is. We Praise our Savior Jesus!

IyeAnauka—He Arose! And as always—KU NTCHIK—TO THE WORK!

Mission—Home

By Brother Daniel Mora

During the weekend of November 9-11, 2012, the GMBA gathered together at the World Operations Center to take care of business, conduct a clothing drive to help those who were affected by Hurricane Sandy, and spend time together in fellowship.

The first to arrive on Friday evening had the opportunity to get together for an evening of fun. Everyone enjoyed themselves indoors, with some taking part in games and refreshments, and others venturing outdoors to spend time around a bonfire. The weekend was off to a good start.

On Saturday, as everyone made their way inside the World Operations Center, those arriving found that there were several posters on the wall. These were the testimonies of individuals who had the opportunity to attend the previous GMBA campout. The testimonies were posted to prepare everyone for part of the day's business—to help make it possible for others to attend campout and have a personal testimony.

The day moved forward a special theme was presented for all to think about—Mission Home. Questions were asked, "How

does one prepare for the mission field in one's own home?" And "How does that compare to the preparations that are made when going overseas to a foreign field?" It was demonstrated that there is no difference. Sacrifice, time, fasting and prayer all constitute the proper preparation for spreading the Gospel.

The challenges of our mission at home are many and well known. With a few skits, the young people portrayed scenes of our daily lives where these challenges present themselves. When our jobs, our personal interests, and our ambitions start to encompass our field of vision inasmuch that we cannot see that our home is suffering, that is when we must be mindful. Even when one is occupied in the service of God, one must also keep an eye on their family life. For example, Eli was a man of God, and performed well in his offices of high priest and judge over Israel. However, by his failure to discipline his two disobedient sons, Eli seemed to respect his sons more than God.

The scriptures are filled with other examples of parents who suffered in keeping their families focused on the Lord. Lehi had difficulty instructing his sons, espe-

cially Laman and Lemuel, but he did not cease to firmly teach them the things of God. Alma solicited the help of the saints and the Lord, hoping that his son, Alma, "might be brought to the knowledge of the truth." David desired to build the Temple for God, but because of his own mistakes, he was not allowed. Since his son, Solomon, was afforded to complete the task, David provided for Solomon's needs and the building of the Temple became possible.

As illustrated in the dream recently given to the Church, the young people are being attacked by ravaging dogs. Therefore, as The Church of Jesus Christ, we must do our best to fulfill the commission of our homes and families. Pray as a family, keep the children in fellowship among the saints, and as a parent, make it known to the family that God comes first.

This was the message that was presented to all who attended GMBA conference on Saturday. Then as Sunday morning came, the congregation heard the glad news of one more soul expressing a desire to be baptized. Indeed a beautiful way to adjourn—but only to carry over! We thank God for such a beautiful weekend.

Why Now? *Continued from Page 1*

About the same time, Brother Gene Perri approached me at church. What he said to me in private was that my family's history in The Church of Jesus Christ alone justified in me that I belong to the family of God. With Sister Dianne's love of the Church that she manifested for me and Brother Gene's wisdom, I decided that I needed to put all my false objections aside and give my life to Christ.—
Brother John Little, Lake Worth, Florida Branch

My husband, James Beatty, and I were not raised in the Church and we didn't take our children to church. We lived pretty godless lives unless something was going wrong, which was often. Then, we were blaming Him or begging Him or making empty promises. Jamey and I made very poor decisions in our lives from addiction to alcoholism to sinful relationships and everything in between. We hit bottom while we were living in Columbus, Ohio. We were putting our addictions before more important things. We were close to homeless, we lost pretty much everything, and we had so much shame and guilt. One day out of nowhere, Jamey said we were going to move to Erie. So, we packed our family up and moved to Erie, Pennsylvania, not knowing that this would be the best thing that could happen to our family.

We got to Erie with nothing but a couple of bags of clothes and our children. We moved in with Jamey's step-brother and in one night we were cured of our addiction to drugs. We were introduced to Brother Joshua Gehly and attended the Erie Mission the following Sunday. We were welcomed with open arms, something we have never experienced before. That day we were introduced to the love of Christ. We found what our family had been missing for so long. The Gehly family and all of our other brothers and sisters in the Church have shown us what a true family is and what a true family should be, and we love them very much. We attended the Church regularly and started meeting with other members from other branches, and the love was the same. We finally felt accepted and by the grace of God we were given a second chance at life, a chance to give our children something we never had.

So the reason for our baptism was that Jesus Christ was finally the answer we were looking for. The Church of Jesus Christ is our home our family. We have been so blessed since we accepted Jesus Christ into our lives. Without the Lord in our life and the love and support of our Church family, God only knows where we would be. He knew what we needed, and God in our lives was the answer. We look forward to raising our family to serve our Lord and Savior. We look forward to many years serving Him. We thank Him every day for our second chance to serve Him and thank Him for the love that He and His Church have shown us each and every day. Our new life began November 10, 2012.—Brother James and Sister Kalia Beatty, Erie, Pennsylvania Branch

Young Nephi *By Brother Kerry Carlini*

After Lehi announced to his sons that the Lord was commanding them to go back to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass, Nephi's response was in part, *"I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them. . ."* Here are five amazing facts regarding Nephi, the youngest of the four sons, and his faithfulness in accomplishing the very thing that the Lord commanded:

- 1** After Laman failed in the first attempt, it was Nephi who persuaded his brothers to be faithful in their commission and offer Laban, the keeper of the plates, their considerable family wealth for the brass plates.
- 2** But after Laban stole their wealth and attempted to take their lives, it was Nephi whom his brothers Laman and Lemuel beat with a rod.
- 3** However, when an angel appeared and reprimanded the brothers, it was Nephi, of whom the angel said, *"the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you. . .because of your iniquities."*
- 4** It was Nephi, then, who encouraged his brothers to go down into Jerusalem for a third time to obtain the plates.
- 5** Finally, it was Nephi whom the Lord ordered to slay Laban, trick Laban's servant Zoram into handing over the plates, and then offer Zoram his life if he would join them.

I Nephi Chapters 3-4

Ladies' Uplift Circle News



Organizing in Albuquerque, New Mexico

By Sister Karen L. Progar

The first thing the saints in Albuquerque did was find a building in which they could meet. They did a great job at that and are working on getting it ready to serve their new community. Also important to the growth of their branch was establishing their auxiliaries. Sister Lisa Champine and I had the privilege of being there to organize the Ladies' Uplift Circle on September 29, 2012.

Sister Lisa, Sister Berni King (Southwest Area Ladies' Uplift Circle President) and I met with the sisters and young women of the Albuquerque Mission to create their circle. It was a beautiful weekend in Albuquerque, with the city preparing for the annual hot air balloon festival. Clear blue skies greeted us as we headed to the building that morning. It was a joy to see 20 in attendance for the meeting.

The sisters shared the history and future plans of the Circle with the group, after which the offices were discussed and many volunteered to fulfill the responsibilities of those offices.

It is the desire of the General Circle to see an increase in young women taking up the work of the Ladies' Circle, Sister Lisa appropriately chose to elaborate on the scripture in Psalm 144 where it states, *"that our daughters may*

be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." What a beautiful thought and amazing wish for the Church's young women.

It was then a joy to see the group's excitement and a blessing to see the Circle develop its commitment to the missionary efforts of The Church of Jesus Christ. With the organization meeting behind us, we headed off to enjoy the city, shopping, and fellowship, common loves among the group.

We praise God for His blessings to us and to the Circle and pray that the Circle in Albuquerque will shine forth in its new community.



Albuquerque Ladies' Uplift Circle



"Here I Am, Lord" Your Servant Hears You

Do you remember the story of the young boy Samuel who was taken to the Temple and given to the priest, Eli, to be raised and taught God's ways? His mother, Hannah, wanted a child with all her heart. She was begging God for one. Every year their family went to the big city of Jerusalem to the temple to pray and thank God. Hannah knelt down, crying so hard as she prayed that the man in charge, Eli, thought there was something wrong with her and scolded her.

When Hannah explained how she was praying for a baby, Eli prayed and asked God to bless her. When she went home, she became pregnant and was full of joy. Hannah promised God she would give Him this child to live at the temple and learn how to serve Him. She kept Samuel with her until he was a toddler then took him to Eli, the High Priest, in Jerusalem.

Every year Hannah made her son a little coat and brought it to him when they came to the temple. Eli asked God to bless Samuel's family and Hannah had five more children, but Samuel was special to God and to people. (See 1 Samuel 2:26).

Could you let your little child leave you and go live far away? I think it would be so hard to let him go. But God had a plan for Samuel. Eli's older sons had turned out to be bad men. They were breaking the rules of God and hurting people. Eli talked to them but did not force them to do right. The people knew they could not trust these sons. The people started to think they would like a king instead of a judge. God sent a messenger to warn Eli that both of his sons in one day would die and God would raise up a faithful priest who would serve Him in truth.

One night as the boy Samuel was sleeping, he heard a voice calling his name. He woke up and ran to Eli's bedroom. "Here I

am," he said. Eli told him he had not called him, go back and lay down. Again Samuel heard the voice calling him and he ran to Eli. Again Eli told him he was not calling. After the third time Samuel heard the voice and ran to Eli, Eli understood that the Lord had called the child. (See 1 Samuel 3).

Eli told him, "Go, lie down; . . . if he call thee, that thou shalt say, *Speak, Lord, for your servant heareth.*" And the Lord came, and stood and called Samuel's name three times.

Samuel answered, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." The Lord told Samuel that He was going to judge Eli and his family because Eli's sons were doing great evil in the church as leaders and Eli did not stop them. Both he and his sons were going to die.

In the morning, Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision. He did not know that the Lord had already warned the High Priest. Eli asked Samuel "What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee: I pray thee hide it not from me; God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee."

When Samuel told him every word, Eli said, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth him good." And Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and he followed the words of God. And all the people of Israel knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And as Samuel grew, the Lord revealed Himself. Samuel guided the people and told them the words of God whether they liked him for it or not.

The day came when Israel was fighting a battle and both of Eli's sons were killed. Eli, who was quite old, was sitting outside and fell back and died. God's warnings came true.

When the people demanded a king, Samuel was sent by God to meet Saul, and anointed him the new king. When Saul broke God's command and was replaced by David, Samuel was so sad but did as God directed. (See 1 Samuel 16: 1-15) He lived to be an old, old man who was much

honored and revered by the people of Israel for the strict and loving way he served God and led them.

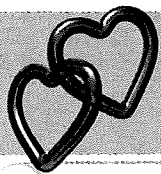
Sometimes it is very difficult to be the one speaking up and doing the right thing, but God needs humble, good people in this day and time. Do not be afraid to pray and tell God you want to be an instrument in His hands. And then when he calls you answer, "Speak Lord, your servant hears you."

With love,
Your friend,
Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

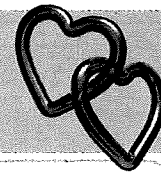
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Advice From The Pros

We've asked brothers and sisters who have been married 50 years or more to share with us their advice on how to keep a marriage strong.



Always include God in all your plans. God gives meaning to your marriage, home, and family. There will be happy and sad times, joys and sorrows, but it must be supported by love. Your marriage will survive if you have great faith, trust, and understanding.

Brother Gene and Sister Flo Perri

We knew it was the LORD'S will for us to be married in the first place. Beyond that we have always tried to allow the LORD to be the center of our lives. We must lean on, depend on and trust HIM for all things!

One other ingredient that has been essential to a great marriage is laughter. We surely need an abundance of it to smooth over any bumps on the road of life.

Brother Lou and Sister Shirley Vitto

"We have always put God and Church first in our lives and He has always provided for our needs. We can both say that serving God together in our marriage has been the most wonderful blessing."

Brother Howard & Sister Anna Jackson

Say I love you often and mean it.

Be faithful to each other.

Be a good listener—God is a good listener.

Learn to forgive and accept forgiveness.

Do things together—we love to cruise—share your hopes and dreams.

Pray a lot and include God in everything.

Communicate, communicate, communicate.

Divorce is not an option.

Never criticize your mate in front of others.

Attack the problem—not each other.

Forget whether you are right or wrong—there is no right or wrong way to fix a relationship. Find your own way that works. But recognize when it is not working and be honest when it needs fixing.

You don't necessarily solve problems—you learn to manage them.

There is no such thing as a perfect marriage, only perfect moments.

Marriage is a bed of roses—thorns and all.

Brother Lou and Sister Adeline Ciccati

Always remember that marriage was created by God and is pleasing to Him. It is a blessed estate and should never be taken lightly. God has given you to each other for a lifetime. Never consider dissolving the sacred bonds of matrimony. When differences come up do your best to see your spouse's point of view and always understand that men and women think differently, to which we say amen! God created men and women to be different for a reason. Value your individual strengths and weaknesses and support each other in your weaknesses. There is strength in unity. Following are some tips from each of us to help you through the discovery stage together.

Brother Paul to the Men: *Listen to your wife, hear what she says, then think about it if you do not agree. I have found that my wife often speaks with greater wisdom than I am willing to accept at the time. Never stop surprising your wife with loving words and unexpected favors around the house. Always hold her in the highest esteem and treat her with love and respect. Keep romance alive in your marriage. And, remember, it is always true: happy wife, happy life!*

Sister Orletta to the Women: *Never criticize or demean your husband in public. Give your husband time to think about what you say without demanding an immediate response. Tell him you appreciate his love and devotion to you. Always make him feel proud to have you as his wife.*

Apostle Paul and Sister Orletta Liberto

It all started in a skating rink in 1942. When we first saw each other, it was love at first sight. We were married Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1942. There have been many trials and tough times, but by the love of God, which was taught to us by the saints of the Church, we made it to this day. There was a lot of give and take and many prayers that have kept us together over the past 70 years.

Brother Michael and Sister Ann Radd

1. Always keep the lines of communications open.
2. Always think of how your personal decisions affect your spouse and how you would react if the roles were reversed.
3. Always treat your spouse the way you want to be treated.
4. Always remember you became one when you vowed to "love each other till death do you part." Love each other unconditionally.
5. Always be there for each other in all circumstances.
6. Finally, make the Lord an integral part of your daily lives.

Apostle Tom and Sister Marsha Liberto

Honor and respect your spouse by being most interested and dedicated in your effort to be the right person for this, most precious wonderful of all, human relationships. Cherish the gift of self that is given to you by your spouse and understand that your 50 percent of the relationship is 100 percent of all you are and will become. Trust God, know His love for you, and He will help you to have the depth of understanding, dedication, and love to carry you through a lifetime of union, sharing, and oneness that was little more than a bright dream in your youth. Never lose the vision of that beautiful young person you met at the altar that wonderful day.

Brother Dan and Sister Olivia Parravano

Blessing Bits

BB It Was the Love

"It was the love of the saints that convinced me to join The Church of Jesus Christ and get baptized on a frigid day on February 1975 through MANY inches of ice. That great love was a blessing to me then and remains a blessing today." *Sister Joyce Vargo—Detroit Branch #2*



Sister Joyce Vargo's baptism

BB God Calms Our Storms

I was at home alone, allowing myself to be troubled, and I started having an anxiety attack. It was so severe, I was actually scared of the way it was making my body feel. I laid on the couch

and started praying for God to please come to my aid. Almost immediately, starting at the top of my head, a feeling of calm started working its way through my body, all the way to my toes! The attack was over. There's just simply NO other explanation other than the hand of our Lord. Amen!
Sister Cindy Davis—Lake Worth, Florida Branch

BB He Touched Me

I was getting out of a truck, and as I slid down off the high seat and landed on my feet, I felt a sharp pain shoot through me from my ankle to my shoulder. I was in much discomfort afterward, and medication didn't relieve the pain. My doctor took X-rays and found no broken bones. He gave me more pain pills, but they didn't help much. The pain was worst right at my hipbone. On June 24, 2012, I went to church, still enduring the pain. Before the meeting, Brother Sal Azzinaro anointed me. The meeting started, and as we were singing the hymn "He Touched Me," I felt like a warm ball was rolling out of my hipbone, and the pain stopped immediately. The Lord has always

helped me with my needs and pains I've had through the years, but I never experienced a healing like this. Praise God and His son Jesus! *Sister Betty Azzinaro—Simi Valley, California Branch*

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

Question for this month: Do you have a favorite hymn or church song that speaks of God's love? Are there certain song lyrics that especially touch your heart in describing the love of God?

Answer from last month: Do you have a spiritual routine or workout or is there something that you do to start your day off right spiritually speaking? My spiritual routine is: I begin to pray on my morning drive every day, Psalm 118:24, "this is the day the Lord has made..." then I pray for others the rest of the way, with a little bit at the end for me to trust Him more for my day and job.—Brother Ken Lombardo

Do you enjoy the Question of the Month section? If so, please send in your answer each month. We need increased participation to keep this section going!"

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord. Psalm 150:6