

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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### True Love Waits

Apostle Paul might have said "True Love Waits," but he didn't. He did say that charity suffereth long. We have said that "patience is a virtue," but few possess that quality. I tell you the truth, I wonder if any Americans have patience. I've been at a traffic light and the horn honks behind me the instant the light turns green. I've had a driver screaming at me for not going through the traffic light quick enough. It is not supposed to be that way. Jesus, in the parable of the sower, said that when the seed fell upon good ground, (the person received the word in an honest and good heart and kept what they heard) they brought forth fruit with patience. (Luke 8:15) Our God is described as a God of patience.

Perhaps we should ask our youth to make this their motto for dating. In fact, this is exactly what the term, "True Love Waits" was created to do. This title is the name of a program started by Christians in Uganda, East Africa. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the infection rate for AIDS had reached 30 percent and was increasing. A program was started (approved and supported by their President) to try to convince young men and women that abstinence was the best answer to prevention of this deadly disease. The young people were counseled to not have any sexual relations before marriage, to combat AIDS. The program was a success. In 10 years, the AIDS infection rate in Uganda dropped to 5%. In a continent where this plague has continued to destroy both young and old, "WOW" , what a big success!

It is interesting to met that a program based on Christian teaching was a success, while other "programs" barely made a dent in the disease. Even President Bush has noticed this program and has commended Uganda's President for the initiative.

"True Love Waits." This is not just a title, it is a gospel principle. If we are to be "like him" we need to be disciples who wait.

## TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

### August Communion Service

Michael Jordison preceded the Communion address singing a song the words of which he had appropriately revised to provide a spiritual setting for the service.

With our lips let us sing one confession  
With our hearts hold to one truth alone  
For He has erased our transgressions  
Claimed us, and called us His own - His very own.  
People of God. Called by His name  
Called from the dark and delivered from shame.  
One holy race, Saints every one  
Because of the blood of Christ, Jesus the Son.

Hear us, oh spirits of darkness  
So you will know where we stand.  
We are His servants, purchased with scars  
And bought by the blood of the Lamb, the blood of the Lamb.  
People of God. Called by His name  
Called from the dark and delivered from shame.  
One holy race, Saints every one  
Because of the blood of Christ, Jesus the Son.

Give us your Spirit, Oh Father  
We witness to You here this day  
That we will remember You, take on Your Name,  
Committing to do all You say. And in every way  
Make us people of God. Called by Your Name  
Called from the dark and delivered from shame.  
One holy race, Saints every one  
Because of the blood of Christ, Jesus the Son.

Make us people of God. Called by Your Name  
Called from the dark, made pure by the Flame  
Zion's pure light, Saints of the One  
Who ransomed and pardoned us, Jesus the Son.

Prior to reading his scripture selection for his Communion

sermon August 3, 1003, Seventy George Knotts thanked Michael for his musical offering then commented, "I want to mention, before I read this scripture about a crisis that happened to our family coming back from Oklahoma. We were coming through Muskogee and a lady didn't see us and pulled right out in front of us. In the process of hitting us, she went on and hit another lady across the way. So I think you would have been proud of me. I didn't lose my cool. I was out there just taking down the information. I just wanted to share that with you in relation to this scripture. this is a really familiar scripture, but part of it might not be."

Brother Knotts read from James 1:2-8: "'My Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into many afflictions;' (That wasn't quite my attitude to have joy, but I did feel that some good was going to come out of that even though the bumper laid fifteen feet in front of us and the front of the car was mashed in!) 'knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.' (Now this is the part that is familiar, and you might not know that that went before. 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.' (Now I would like to read the last verse in that chapter.) 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the vices of the world.'"

Brother Knotts then reached for a publication he received in the mail and announced, "You might not be aware of some of the vices that the young people are faced with. I wasn't until I got this, and it surprised me a little bit. It says among those teenagers who believe - This is a survey done among the born again Evangelical's believer young people -- 46% believe Jesus committed sins. 51% say he died but did not raise from the dead. 81% claim that all truth is relative to the individual and his or her circumstances. 53% believe all religions pray to the same God. 65% do not believe Satan is real." George then commented, "Well, if that's among the believers, and they are believing that, then God help us!" He went on to read, "'We must correct our young people's distorted beliefs and help them move beyond mere belief to solid Christian convictions.' And here is a follow-up to that. 'Why belief matters - More than 80% of the young people have distorted beliefs of Christ and Christianity. But does it really matter? What difference what they believe? Those with such distorted views are - (Now this will surprise you.) Those that don't believe in Christ are 200% more likely to physically hurt someone. 216% more likely to be resentful. 300% more likely to use illicit drugs. 600% more likely to attempt suicide.' It makes sense to follow Jesus! It pays!"

"All right, I want to read you something that came out of my daily devotion for August 3.' He read from the book, *God Calling*, a book that he uses continually and recommends for all to use. "Give every moment.' (That's how appropriate it is that this came up on Communion Sunday.) 'How dear to my heart is the cry of love that asks for all of me, that wishes every action, thought, word and moment to be mine.

'How poor the understanding of one that thinks that money to be used in this good work of that, is a great gift to offer. Above all, I desire love, true, warm, childlike love, the trusting, understanding love, and then the gift I prize next is the gift of the moments, of all

moments.

'I think even when love's, impetuous longing to serve Me has offered Me all of Life, every day, every hour, I think ...' (George interrupted his reading to call attention to a notation he had made on the white board on the side of the sanctuary saying, "And that's why I wrote Remember, Remember, Remember, Remember over on the board because, if you'll notice in the front of the Hymnal there will be the Communion prayers, and the prayer on the bread, I think mentions to remember four times. So that's why I put the repetition for remembering over there four times. It must be very important that Jesus wants us to remember Him." Then he resumed reading.) 'I think even then it is a long, and not an easy lesson, to learn, what it means to give Me the moments.'

Brother Knotts then asked for a show of hands of those who say their major prayer in the morning, in the evening, at every meal. "Some Indian tribes pray five times a day, morning, evening, at noon and they also have this middle prayer in there so they pray five times a day." Our speaker suggested that if you are working in an office and you pray in the morning and evening, the morning and afternoon breaks would also be good times to pray. That way, he said, you would pray five times a day and have something to remind you of it. "Well, it's easy to say you made your major prayer one time a day and then have reminder prayers all through the day. The Lord wants you to remember Him all of the time - the moments - the moment of our moments." He resumed reading, "'The little things you plan to do given up gladly at My suggestion, the little services joyfully rendered. See Me in all and then it will be an easy task.'" This is a priceless time of initiation, but remember that the path of initiation is not for all; but only for those who have felt the sorrow-cry of the world that needs a Saviour, and the tender plea of a Saviour Who needs followers through whom He can accomplish His great work of Salvation joyfully.' If we can give Jesus each moment of every day, that would be a good gift. But just think what he has given us."

"I have something else I want to share with you. This is the most I have ever shared in any presentation, but this little book called, *Be Mature*. I don't know how I got it, but it has been a valuable little book and I am marking things in it pretty heavily. It says, 'a surrendered will'. It seems like that's what we are doing today symbolically as we come to Jesus - as we come to Jesus and surrender our will, covenant to obey him in all things, always remember him all the moments and that we will obey his commandments, and what's the other thing to remember? Take His name upon us. The song Michael sang indicated about taking His name and reminded me of that. Can you visualize yourself wearing an over-the-head strap with the word, Jesus written real big here. (He pointed to his chest.) Would you laugh at the same jokes if you had that on your chest when they were told? Or would you just refrain from laughing and they would know you didn't appreciate those things? Or would you look at the same literature in the doctor's office. Would you watch the same television shows if you could be videotaped and you could be sitting here with the word Jesus strapped to your chest? 'Just think! They are videotaping it and look what I'm watching!' I'm just trying to get you to bring it up to moment by moment taking upon you the name of Jesus and trying to make that graphic."

"Back to surrendered will. 'God cannot build our character without our cooperation. If we resist Him, then He chastens us into submission. But if we submit to Him, then he can accomplish His work. He is not satisfied with a halfway job. God wants a perfect

work. He wants a finished product that is mature and complete.

'God's goal for our lives is maturity. It would be a tragedy if our children remained little babies. We enjoy watching them mature, even though maturity brings dangers as well as delights. Many Christians shelter themselves from the trials of life, and as a result, never grow up. (Never get out of the boat. Right Rob? Our speaker referred to the class taught earlier by Robert Rolfe from the book, *If You Want to Walk on Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat.*) 'God wants the little children to become young men' and young women. (He just says men. Doesn't say little girls.) He wants them to become fathers.

George summarized the next portion of the test. Paul outlines three works that are involved in a complete Christian life. First, there is the work God wants to do for us. Second there is one He wants to do in us. The third one he wants to do through us. Then he commented, "Well, that's enough reading about that, but God wants to use us, and He wants to work with us, and He wants us to be responsive to Him. And probably the best response that we could have for Jesus is to always remember Him. Remember Him at television time. Remember Him at car accident times and crises. Remember Him when it is not a crisis - Remember Him all of the time.

"And it would be extra nice if we were kind to those people around us, wouldn't it? Do you think that's what Jesus wants us to do? Even your companion. Wouldn't that be nice if you were just kind to your companion all of the time and didn't take them for granted? After the accident, you know the air bags go off, and my wife's hearing has been affected. It has been teaching me something about being kind because I'll say something and she'll repeat back what she thinks I said, and it's a whole different story. You could get impatient with that, but we both start laughing when I tell her what I really said, and I can see how people who really are hard of hearing could really have some conflicts go on in their home.

"But thank God we are here today, and we have a time for renewal, a time for recovenanting. Today is Promise Keepers day, and that is us. We are the Promise Keepers in our day."

## Look Up And Live

To introduce his sermon, Elder Norman Nelson read from a prophecy given by Apostle Arthur Oakman in 1974. "Many have not applied themselves. When great darkness covers the earth they will feel much heavy weight and burden upon their souls and they cannot bear it. It is not long until the earth again will be drenched in blood and darkness shall cover the world. For many who have heard my voice but did not heed it, it will be too late. When they call upon me, I will not answer. There will be a short season until World War three. Our country will be involved. There will be perilous times. People in America will be brought to their knees even with things they shall suffer. Material possessions will be of no value. The only real value will be the quality of life. It is not time for fear, but rather time for rejoicing, for only through these means can the gospel go to all the world."

"In order to have some perspective of what we are talking about, we need to start with the beginning. As I have read this many times before, I still think it is very important that we start there. 'I am the Beginning and the End; the Almighty God. By mine Only Begotten I created these things. Yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest. And the earth was without form, and void; and I caused darkness to come upon the face

of the deep. And my Spirit moved upon the face of the waters, for I am God. And I, God, said, Let there be light, and there was light.' (Genesis 1:2-5 IV).

"We need to keep in mind who we are and what we are and what we serve. We seem to be afraid of each other. We also seem to want to glorify each other. But God is the creator. Jesus Christ made us. He knows us, and He loves His creation. He has given us so much to work with. He has given us our knowledge. He has given us these books to read, and he says, 'I'll be your tutor. I will teach you everything there is to know. Just come and ask Me! I'm there waiting for you to ask. I made you. I want you to be a certain kind of person - one that can love me. One that can love each other.' Remember the thing He said to Noah and to Enoch, 'I created the people and yet, not in all the universe has there been such great wickedness as here. I created you to love each other, and you hate your own blood.' And so He wept over the people and over His creation because they had completely forgotten and refused to be His children.

### God Wants You to Ask

"In John 1:1-4 we read that 'In the beginning was the Gospel preached through the Son. And the Gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without him was not anything made which was made. In him was the gospel, and the gospel was the life, and the life was the light of man; ...' He who created you, gave you the word, asks you to study it and asks you to come to Him and seek His counsel, not once a year - not through a big meeting, but for every day and for every minute of your life. All you have to do is ask.

"Jeremiah says, 'For I spake not unto your fathers nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.' (Jeremiah 7:22-23). Obey My voice! What's the problem here? Do we even hear His voice? If you don't hear His voice, you certainly can't obey it. Again, we have to ask. We have to come to Him in earnest prayer and ask to hear His voice. You can't obey something you don't know. Unless you hear His voice, you can't obey it.

"Who do you ask when you want something? Some very intelligent person? He said, 'Ask Me!'" Again Jeremiah says, 'Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and the man whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope is in the Lord. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out his roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaves shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of the drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.' (Jeremiah 17:5-8).

### Whom Do you Trust?

"The Lord is the one you trust. Now we need to talk to each other, of course, to support each other; but our conversation has to be in the Lord - not about the weather or about what this person is or isn't doing, but what does the Lord want me to do today? Jesus said, again in John, 'I was sent here by God because He loved you. Because He loves you, He sent me to come and take your sins on me that you might live.' Again, if you haven't heard His voice - if you

haven't seen His face - if you haven't witnessed of this Lord of yours, how can you follow His commandments?

"Again in chapter 4 of John, Jesus was at the well in Samaria. A woman came and He asked her to give Him some water. She said, 'How come you are a Jew, and you ask me for water when I am a Samaritan?'" He said, 'If you knew who it was who asked, you would ask me for water, the living water from which you would never thirst.' I believe I have told you about my experience in that situation. Just for a brief statement - when I was in Nigeria, we had a prayer service and that night I had a dream in which I believe I was by that living water or that well or that fountain that John talked about, and the Lord invited me to come and drink freely. You know, that short experience with God when I actually saw my Lord, is something that there is no way I can explain to you how it felt or how it is. You can use the words wonderful, beautiful. Once you have seen the Lord and have been with Him, you can never fear again. That love - that joy - that beautiful feeling passes all understanding. There is nothing you can do that will make it more worthwhile for your life than to have the experience of being with Him. It isn't what you see. It's the feeling that comes with Him, and that feeling is worth everything in this world.

"You know, when God taught the children of Israel, He told them of their weaknesses and their sins, etc. He said, 'But my hand is stretched out still. (2 Nephi 8:95,9:72). My hand is always open to receive you if you will repent and come to me.' It's always there, but the thing that isn't said, "My hand is there. Come to it. But My backhand is there if you don't.' This war that is coming is a backhand. And some of the things that are happening to our country now is that backhand. It is happening to us because we haven't listened to His voice as a nation. And our sins are multiplied and many. Remember in the time of Noah the Lord repented because they had made man because man had made an abomination of everything that should have been good. Noah preached to the people, and they said, 'What's wrong with us? We are all good people. We are married and giving in marriage. We have children, and they are good children. They are strong. They are giants, etc.' (Genesis 8). But all flesh had confounded the ways of God. They were no longer interested at all in their spiritual being. They were interested only in their physical structure - in that which made them physically pleasant. Nobody else mattered. 'What I do is important to me!' The carnal, sensual part of life was what was important to those people. And what is stated in another scripture is, 'As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the end time.' (Matthew 24:44).

### **The Problem Today**

"And this is the problem we face today, isn't it? Our people are concerned about the carnal and sensual part of their life and not concerned for each other but certainly not concerned about God - the One who created them, the One who loves them, the One who wants to teach them. There is no desire there. I think I have said this before to some of you at least, it's like I go to school - I go to Gerry's class and learn his name and he gives me a couple of terms in science, and he gives me the book that he wants me to study. So I leave that session, go out and find another book - it doesn't really have the same material in it, but it is something that somebody named the new English Translation or something. Gerry tells me, 'I am going to be there every day to tutor you. If you will come, I'll help you understand the material. But I kind of glance through this other book and it doesn't say the same thing that he says, but there's something there, you know. I never come back to talk to Gerry about his class. So it comes to the end of the term, and I go back for the final exam.

It's all gibberish. I don't understand a word he has written on that exam, but I want my A! That's how foolish we are. We never talk to God. We never really seek to know Him. We certainly never come back to have Him tutor us in the language He has written, yet we want to get to heaven. Wouldn't such a one be miserable there? You couldn't understand the language. Did you ever have that terrible dream that you went class and didn't have the book and couldn't find the room where you were supposed to be. It is a terrible thing. But that's the kind of life we are living. We are not interested enough to do the kind of thing it takes to really have God as our tutor, as our teacher, as our God.

"Let's turn to Doctrine and Covenants for just a moment. One of the beautiful statements is this in Section 76:3a,g-h). 'We, Joseph Smith, Jr., and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and thirty two, by the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened, and our understandings were enlightened, so we could see and understand the things of God. ... . And, now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him, that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father; that by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created; and the inhabitants thereof are the begotten sons and daughters of God.' He asks you to have that experience with Him. 'Verily I say unto you, that I, the Lord, will contend with Zion and plead with her strong ones, and chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me; for she shall not be removed out of her place. I, the Lord, have spoken it.' (D&C 8:8d). 'I, the Lord, chasten whom I love.' (D&C 92:1a). If you haven't been chastened, you have escaped the love that could have been yours.

"Verily, thus saith the Lord, it shall come to pass that every soul that forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face, and know that I am, and that I am the true light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. ... . I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that ye may come unto me. For if ye keep my commandments ye shall receive the fullness and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace.' ( D&C 90:1a, 3b-c). He doesn't unload the whole load on you at once. It's like learning. He's your teacher - He's your God. 'Verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn; and all those who are begotten through me, are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn. Ye were also in the beginning with the Father - that which is Spirit - even the Spirit of truth; and truth is the knowledge of things as they are, as they were, and as they are to come; and whatsoever is more or less than this, is the spirit of that wicked one, who was a liar from the beginning. The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of Truth. And John bore record of me saying, He received a fullness of the truth; yea even of all the truth, and no man receiveth a fullness unless he keepeth all of the commandments.' (D&C 90:4a-c).

### **He Can't Make You Love Him**

"You see, we were born into this world. First God created us spiritually and then He gave us our body. He wants us for His children. He wants us to learn and to desire Him to the point where we will come to Him and learn from Him and be His children. You see, He could make your spirit, and He could make your body, but

He couldn't make you love Him. He couldn't make you want to keep His commandments. That you had to choose. If you choose to keep His commandments - if you choose to be his child - if you choose to be His friend, He has all these things available for you. The books that He has written - not the watered down languages that some people choose instead of. (Like Ron says you know when he talks to a person who says, 'That's not in my Bible.' 'Well, here it is.' 'Not any more, is it!' And so many of us do things like that. 'It's not there, so I'm not accountable for that.' But you are accountable because it is written in the books, and you need to study all good books and find the truth as God shall give it to you.

"We have the same complaint about Jesus that we have about Joseph Smith. In John the Pharisees said, 'Well, how come this unlearned man, a man who is not lettered knows all these things?' John 7:13-23 reads 'Howbeit, no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. Now about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught, and the Jews marvelled saying, How knoweth this man letters having never learned? Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keep the law. Why are you about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil; who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the Sabbath Day circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath Day receiveth circumcision, that the Law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me because, I made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath Day? Judge not according to your traditions, but judge righteous judgment.' 'Judge not according to your traditions, but judge righteous judgment', Norman repeated.

"Now let's use the words of Nephi. (2 Nephi 11:44-51). 'For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all that we can do; and notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ until the law shall be fulfilled; for to this end was the Law given. Wherefore, the law has become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ, because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments; We talk of Christ. We rejoice in Christ. We preach of Christ. We prophecy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for remission of their sins. Wherefore, we speak concerning the law, that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given. And after the law is fulfilled in Christ, that they need not harden their hearts against him, when the law ought to be done away.'

"I have to remember one of Arladine's statements, and that was, 'The law was written on stone plates so you couldn't bend them. You can break them, but you can't bend them.' Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, might, mind and strength, and the second is like unto it. You shall love thy neighbor as yourself. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not take anything that belongs to your neighbor. Thou shalt not covet anything. All these are laws that were given away back there, and now the law of Christ is even superior to that. It says, you must love. Perfect love and perfect charity of Christ is the answer to all

our problems.

"Let's look at Alma's statement to his people, 'Now, as you are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light; yea and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times, and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life. And now, I say unto you, If this is the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him that ye may serve him and keep his commandments; that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?' (Mosiah 9:39-41).

"The same advice that is given here has been given to us by our Patriarchs for this season of time. 'Humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him; cry unto him when ye are in your fields; yea, over all your flocks; cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, midday, and evening; yea, cry unto him against the power of your enemies; yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is the enemy of all righteousness. Cry unto him over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them; cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may increase. But this is not all; ye must pour out your souls in your closets, and your secret places, and in your wilderness; yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out to him in prayer continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those around you. And now behold, my brethren, Do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if you turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance if you have to those who stand in need. ... If you do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith; Therefore, remember to be charitable or ye are as dross which the refiners do cast out and ye are of no value to men. ... After ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the Holy Scriptures testify of these things, bring forth fruits meet for repentance.' (Alma 16:219-226).

"Remember, our instruction is, 'Cry nothing but repentance to this people.' Remember your God. Serve Him with all your might, mind and strength. The beauty, the wonder, the blessings that can be yours are beyond understanding. He openeth the windows of heaven for you. You have to look up and live."

## Are You Ready?

During the offertory, Kathy Akers played the hymn, the first stanza of which recounts, "One day when fell the Spirit's whisper, it touched with zeal the waiting throng. Inspiring hope, it courage gave them to cultivate the gift of song". High Priest Robert Rolfe prefaced his scripture reading by thanking her for the offering, saying that his mother used that hymn to teach him to sing bass. Further he stated, "I don't know whether any of you feel like I do. You may say, I'm kind of discouraged . I've got a burden and am feeling low. I've got problems. This scripture is to remind you, and to remind all of us, that there were people who came before us that had problems as well. He then read an abbreviated version of Exodus 1:8-10,15-22. "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come on, let us

deal wisely with them; lest they multiply and it come to pass that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah and of the name of the other Puah; and he said unto them, When ye do the office of a midwife unto the Hebrew women, and ye see them upon the stools, if it be a son, then ye shall kill him; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live." And it came to pass that the midwives feared God that he made them houses, and they didn't do as they were told. "And then Pharaoh charged all his people saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."

Barbra Jordison sang a message from God urging all to, "Take My hand and show that you follow me," which prompted Brother Rolfe, after commenting on the beauty of both her song and her voice, to say, "It seems easier to follow Jesus when you are sitting in the pew and no one is hassling you, but what if you were a slave in a mud pit and were treated worse than animals; then you are hearing the Lord saying, 'Follow Me'?"

He then read what he called a true and never-ending story out of a book called *The Living Bible Encyclopedia in Story and Pictures*. He said the story was more for the younger people over whose heads he and other speakers often spoke.

"Earlier in the evening the new moon had gleamed in the west beyond the soft glowing waters of the Nile. Now it was gone, and no light remained but the pale glimmer of the stars. A faint wind moved in the fronds of the palm trees. Frogs croaked mournfully from the marshes. It was midnight and the Hebrew village, a jumble of poor mud huts clustered together, slept in darkness and silence. But in one of the huts a lamp burned furtively lighting the anxious faces of a woman and her little girl, busy with a strange, hurried task. They were alone within the hut - Jochabed, a sweet faced woman with thick, black hair, and Miriam, the ragged little girl with great dark eyes. On the table before them, edged with light from the lamp, stood a small, boat shaped basket woven of papyrus reeds and covered with pitch. The reeds were sturdy and yet light enough to keep the little craft afloat upon the river. The pitch was thick and strong and would keep the water from entering. The little ark was finished, yet there was still more to be done. Pieces of linen, newly washed, must be folded again and again and laid inside to make a soft, fresh bed - a bed for a baby. Now the moment had come - the moment dreaded for many days by both the woman and the girl. From a cradle in the shadowy store room near by, Jochabed lifted a sleeping baby. He was small and plump and sweet. His eyes closed. His black hair rumbled into curls. His rosy hands flung up against his little face.

"Oh, Mother", whispered Miriam stricken, "How can we part with him?" The anguish in her voice was like the anguish in her mother's eyes. For a moment Jochabed lifted her little son against her breast. Her lips trembled, and yet her voice, when she spoke, was calm and unwavering. "We must trust God", she answered quickly.

The night was passing and there was a long journey to be made. Jochabed placed the little lad in the new cradle and tenderly covered him. Lifting the basket in her arms, she went to the doorway and peered outside. Miriam quenched the flame of the lamp. Together they crept out into the street of miserable huts, passing one and then the other, hurried and fearful - watching for the dreaded sight of an Egyptian guard. Faster and faster their bare feet fell upon the dampened dust. Soon they were beyond the village and on the high

road leading to the river Nile. Now, they were quite alone in the dark and the silence.

"It is the only way to spare his life," Jochabed said over and over. "We must put his little boat on the river and trust in God to send it into the hands of someone who will give him kindly care." Miriam did not answer. Her throat was filled with aching. Her eyes filled with tears, for the little brother in the basket was very near to her heart. She knew that her mother was seeking to comfort her and that her mother's words were reasonable and wise. Yet it was heartbreaking to think of this tiny baby only three months on the earth, alone on the waters of the Nile with none to hear his cries or to still his fright. Yet, he was alive and there was hope that he might be found by someone who would pity him and tend him lovingly. But if he remained at home, he would surely be discovered and slain, for he was a Hebrew child, and the Pharaoh had decreed that every newborn Hebrew boy must be put to death."

"And we sometimes think that we have problems. It would be pretty hard for anyone to do that, wouldn't it? Most of you know the rest of that story. If you don't, get out the Book of Exodus and start reading. You will quickly go through this story.

### **Perspective On Our Problems Offered**

"You know, for the past couple of months, I've been thinking about the progress of the work in Mt. Ayr and in the Restoration movement generally, and I can honestly say that generally speaking, I have been discouraged. It seems to me that we are at a standstill. And perhaps some of you have had a few discouragement these last few months yourself. I read these unfulfilled prophecies that are in the scriptures and wonder how long it will be before those prophecies are going to be fulfilled. It seems to me that each generation lives and dies expecting these prophecies to be fulfilled in their life time, but then die without it happening. And if you want to look, the Elders' Conference is having their share of troubles. The Saints seem to lack what is necessary to go forward and redeem Zion. And as I thought about this, I remembered just who the author of discouragement is. I remembered what Jesus suffered. And I remembered what His ultimate sacrifice was and that it was for me. "As I thought about these things, I remembered the account of Moses. If you remember the scripture, it says that Pharaoh ordered that all boy babies be killed because they were multiplying too rapidly. And I thought about that, and I thought that doesn't make sense to me. I was a country boy, and you know what. You could kill rooster after rooster after rooster, and the chickens kept on laying. We could sell every male calf that was born, and our herd kept right on growing. And I wondered if Pharaoh just said that was the reason he was killing the male children. And you say, 'Why would he say that if it was not the case?' As you know, the Bible doesn't address that specific point, but I would like to raise it anyway.

"Let's say that the Pharaoh was told or read a prophecy about a deliverer that was going to come and free these slaves. You know the Egyptians had many, many gods. They worshiped about everything that crept or crawled or flew. You say, 'He couldn't have read this because Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. Therefore, this could not have been written.'

"Contrary to what is being taught, they did have writing back in those days; and if they didn't have writing, they had strong oral traditions that were repeated to each other. Could the Pharaoh tell his people, 'I have heard this prophecy and I believe it?' What would that say about the relationship of his gods to the Hebrew God? If that God was able to bring this off he must be more powerful

than all those Egyptian gods that he worshiped. Or maybe, as we would say in today's language, 'He was just hedging his bets.'

"Anyway, he gave the order that all male children were to be killed, and we don't know the answer to all of that. But I got to thinking about that and I wondered, 'Where is the prophecy that a Moses is to be born - that this deliverer was to come forth, and to whom was it given?' For those of you that may not be familiar with the answer to that question, the first part of it is found in Genesis 15:17 IV, it may be a different versification in other versions. But Abraham got a prophecy from the Lord that his descendants would be slaves for four hundred years. (I'm like you. Four hundred years seems like a long time. Four hundred days being a slave would be a long time!) After that time they would come out of slavery. His grandson, Joseph, received a promise from the Lord that a prophet would deliver his children out of bondage from Egypt. You find that in the fiftieth chapter of Genesis, verse 24.

"How long was it from the time that Abraham got his revelation to Moses? The reason I ask that question was, how long did these people have to suffer relying on a prophecy that was centuries old? Well, I went through and did the math. According to what I figured out, Abraham lived about 2200 BC. He was a hundred years old and Sarah was ninety when Isaac was born. (So you see, if you wait long enough, you can afford to have a family.) Jacob was born when Isaac was sixty, and Joseph was born when Jacob was ninety. Joseph died when he was a hundred and ten, and Exodus 1:8 says a new king arose who knew not Joseph - after he died. If you add all these together you get 360 years before the four hundred years of captivity starts. That means you have about 760 years that these people had known about this prophecy before it could take place. God said they were going to be in captivity four hundred years. I guarantee you they were there at least four hundred years. God doesn't do this approximately. I might ask you this, 'if you were in the mud pits - most of you, probably all of you have seen Cecil B. DeMille's Ten Commandments where they are standing there stomping straw into the mud. You think there might be a tendency to wonder whether that prophecy ever would be fulfilled even if you knew about it? I would say, that's probably so.

"Let me ask you this, in Luke 21 we have the Disciples coming to Jesus saying, 'Tell us concerning thy coming.' And if you read that, He told them many times that the believers in Christ at least would know when the time was about to happen. And in Matthew 24 we have the same thing happening. One of the things he said was that it would be like it was back in Noah's day. Do you think today is like Noah's day? Maybe you would have to say, 'What was it like in Noah's day? It didn't rain. We have got that right now, at least for a time; but I think he was talking about how wicked the people were. Anyway, how many years has it been since that message was given? A couple of thousand? Do we still believe it? I do, but I still keep wondering how long is it going to be before His coming; because He has promised that He is going to come. Probably some of you have thought, 'I wonder if it's a long time yet.' And if you have been like me, well, if it's a long time yet, I don't have to change anything today. I've got enough time to get fully repented. I don't have to hurry because I've got a long time yet.

#### **What God Wants From Us**

"We have been talking about couch potatoes, boat potatoes and pew potatoes in regard to the account in Matthew 14 of Peter stepping out of the boat. I would like to suggest to you that some of the Saints want to be safe and secure and they don't want to ever get out of that boat. A few want to take chances, to walk on the water

and achieve some real spiritual growth. And I just ask you this morning, 'Which would you like to be, safe and secure or get some real spiritual growth in your life?' And if it will help you to answer the question, Jesus said something about that, didn't He? He said, those that will seek to save their life will lose it, and if you will give up your life, you will find it.

"Probably a better question this morning is, 'What does God want you to do with your life? And your life is every day. You've got every moment from now until He takes you home. We can all say repent. That's easy to put up there, but what He wants has more to do with how we treat each other and how we think about this. I would like to refer you to Matthew 18:21-22, and for those of you that have a Bible this morning, you might turn to that. This is a famous passage, and this is what we all try to do in terms of justifying ourselves. It says, 'Then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?' Is that a pretty good offer? If someone does dirt to us seven times, and we forgive them seven times? 'Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times; but, until seventy times seven.' That means if we get to 490 times we can stop forgiving them then, or does it mean Jesus is really saying, 'Peter, why are you counting?'

"And to make this matter more clear, he gives another parable, and this is really the crux of what he is telling the Disciples about forgiving each other. 'Therefore is the Kingdom of Heaven likened unto a certain king who would take account of his servants.' Now remember, in the class we talked about one talent was equal to fifteen years accumulated wages, so you can figure how much 10,000 was. 'But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.' By the way, that was the custom back then. You know there was no bankruptcy court. If you didn't pay your debts, you, all your property, your wife, your kids, were sold into slavery and that's how your debts got paid. 'And the servant besought him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. The servant, therefore, fell down and worshiped him. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants which owed him a hundred pence, and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

"So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all that debt: because thou desiredst it; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.'

"There are some things about this story that I hadn't thought about. One of those is that the amount that was forgiven the first servant was about 600,000 times what the second servant's debt was - a very large amount. And when I thought about that, I thought, 'How many times do you think you may have sinned in your life and may yet sin before you die? Do you think it might be several hundred thousand times. Start dividing that up per year for a

hundred years and it doesn't come out really that many times per day. When you look at it that way, wasn't Jesus trying to make His disciples understand the principle rather than trying to put an amount on their seven times seventy - trying to say, 'Look at how much I have forgiven you for your sins. You are to do likewise.' We really ought to be struck with awe at what has been forgiven, or as Ron talks about, remitted, without anyone else having to point that out when it comes to our individual lives."

Brother Rolfe referred again to the song Barbra Jordison had sung just before he started his sermon. "I appreciate very much the gift that Barbra has in music. She has a quality to her voice that makes any song she sings seem twice as good, I think. The question for us this morning is, are we going to live our life according to the gifts God gave us, or are you willing to remain a pew potato, if you are one, and just sit there and not do anything? Or are you going to just sit there and think about doing something until you die? It ultimately comes down to what we really want to do, doesn't it?"

### **The Choice Is Ours**

"I might tell you this honestly, if I wanted to I could help make this Mt. Ayr church the most wide awake and working church in the whole world. If I wanted to, I could come to church regularly and encourage other people to attend. If I wanted to, I could be prepared for church school class every Sunday. If I wanted to, I could volunteer to teach a Church school class. If I wanted to, I could show much more devotion in my worship services, and thereby get more good for myself. And if I wanted to, I could tell others about Christ and His church and help lead them to salvation. At least, my actions could always speak of Him. Of course, this all depends on what I want to do about it. If I want to, I could quit being a pew potato and walk on the water. Or we could stop just thinking about it and come to Jesus as He is calling us to do.

"Thinking about it before you act - you know, look before you leap; there are lots of proverbs - Ben Franklin has several of those - is not a bad thing, but it's only a good thing if thinking is followed by action. What did James say about this? He said, we are to be 'doers of the word and not hearers only.' (James 1:22). How many of you have heard that before? How many of you remember what it says right after it? I mean this is in the same verse. It says, 'deceiving our own selves.' Isn't that interesting? Who are we deceiving if we are not doers of the word? We are deceiving our own selves. And if all we are doing is thinking about the kingdom rather than acting to try to make that happen, we are very much like this poem. This is a story about a little engine.

The little blue engine looked up at the hill.  
His light was weak, his whistle was shrill.  
He was tired and small, and the hill was tall,  
And his face blushes red as he softly said,  
"I think I can, I think I can, I think I can".

So he started up with a chug and a strain,  
And he puffed and pulled with might and main.  
And slowly he climbed, a foot at a time, a  
And his engine coughed as he whispered soft,  
"I think I can, I think I can, I think I can".

With a squeak and a creak and a toot and a sigh,  
With an extra hope and an extra try,  
He would not stop. Now he neared the top,  
And strong and proud he cried out loud,  
"I think I can, I think I can, I think I can".

He was almost there, when --- CRASH! SMASH! BASH!  
He slid down and mashed into engine hash  
On the rocks below --- which goes to show  
If the track is tough and the hill is rough,  
Thinking you can, just ain't enough.

"You know, I think I am ready to lose weight. And I think I am ready for the Kingdom of Christ. I think I am ready for the Lord to return. And I think I am ready to stop being a pew potato.

"Saints, let's take our gifts from God and rejoice in them, because, as the scripture, Doctrine and Covenants 85:7, says, 'For what does it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift.'

"Are you thinking you are ready?"

## **A Service of Music and Testimony**

Sunday, August 24, the eleven o'clock service was one of song and testimony. Following the prelude with Jan Jordison at the piano, Seventy Ronald Smith, who was in charge of the service, began by first reading Psalm 100 and then inviting the congregation to sing the Psalm, with slight alterations, with him.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye, all ye lands.  
Serve the Lord, the Lord with gladness.  
Come before His presence with singing.  
Know ye that the Lord, he is God.  
It is he, he that hath made us, and not we ourselves.  
We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,  
And into his courts with praise;  
Be thankful unto him, and bless, and bless his name.  
For the Lord, the Lord he is good; his mercy is everlasting;  
And his truth, his truth endureth,  
Endureth to all generations.  
Halleluia, glory, halleluia. Amen.

After the welcome the congregation sang, "The God of Abraham praise. All praised be his name, who was and is and is to be, and still the same!" and the prayer of invocation was offered by Elder Rodney Bastow.

In introducing the offertory, Brother Smith told of a recent happening among those who just returned from Kenya. Such missionaries are often asked what food was the most difficult to eat of all they were offered in far away places. In response to the question this time, Aaron Ballantyne told about Hulda.

The missionaries were ministering to a group in the worst slum area of Nairobi, in the home of a woman named Hulda. The home was tiny with mud walls, a dirt floor and a tin roof. Hulda was very poor, but she had found in the gospel she was hearing such comfort and joy that she said she believed the Lord loved her more than anyone else on the whole earth. She wanted to give the missionaries food.

It was Wednesday night and the missionaries and the Saints in Kenya were following the request of the Restoration Patriarchs that



# Visas for Pam and Eric Odida, Dean and Pressler

*Editor's note: This testimony from Eric Odida was shared at the Missionary Family Reunion this summer and during the Odida family's visit in the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch. This version is shared from memory by Mildred Smith with some help from Ron Smith.*

To obtain a VISA to travel from Kenya, East Africa to the United States, three conditions are usually required. The persons requesting the VISA must show that they have funds to finance the trip, have social and economic ties that will compel their return, and if their going is to attend some special occasion, they must have a written invitation from someone of stature assuring the officials that they are really going for that particular event. Pam and Eric had their invitation to attend the Missionary Family Reunion. They were not, however, leaving their children at home to assure their return. And they had no funds in the bank to indicate that they could finance the trip. On faith, Eric applied for VISAs anyway.

Eric went to the US Embassy in Nairobi with the necessary documents and handed them in. Later that day he was talking with a fellow employee asking whether he thought he should ask for time off from work before he knew whether he would get the VISAs. His co-worker said, "Praise God and go ahead with the application!" As they were talking, Eric's cell phone rang. The caller identified himself as calling from the United States Embassy and told Eric to go to the Embassy on Thursday morning.

The US Embassy in Nairobi is open from 6 to 9 AM for VISA applications. Eric and Pam arrived a little after 9:00 a.m. The gate was closed and the guards were not inclined to let them in. When Eric mentioned that he had been called and told to come, however, the guards "rolled out the red carpet" for him.

Eric and Pam made their way through the maze of security and presented their documents at the appropriate window. A Kenyan clerk looked at the documents and told them to come back on Monday. Eric told the clerk that they had planned to leave on Saturday and asked if there were any other documents needed or if anything they could do to expedite the decision on the VISAs. He was told all of the documents were there. They would just have to wait until Monday. They had no choice but to leave the Embassy without the VISAs.

Just after Pam got out of the door, something told Eric to go back to the window. He did. At the window, he called to the clerk telling her again that he had been called and told to come on Thursday. The young Kenyan lady called another woman to come to her window. This was a black American woman who asked where the documents were. When told they were in a folder in another room, she told the clerk to get them. After looking at the documents she asked Eric if he had the money to pay for the documents. He did, and

she told him to return to the Embassy at 2:30 p.m. that afternoon to pick up his VISAs. He came back and picked up the visas as he was told to do. He was granted his leave of absence from his work and praised the Lord mightily for the miracle.

The next day, Saturday the American embassy was closed for several weeks to avoid feared terrorist activity. Had not the call come asking him to appear at the Embassy when he did, the Reunion would have been finished before the Embassy opened again and there would have been no possibility of the Odidas being in attendance.

When they came, there was no plan for Eric to teach at that gathering. Once there, there developed a need for another class, and Eric filled that need, much to the delight and edification of many. And the entire body of worshipers was blessed with the gift of tongues, or interpretation of tongues, as Eric's Kenyan English was made crystal clear to the assembly as he shared his testimony.

Addendum: Even the acquisition of tickets resulted in a miracle. Eric could not get tickets until he had the VISAs, but, on the strength of the promise of VISAs on Friday, he went to the airport to make arrangements for them on Thursday. The agent at KLM said they would cost \$1,400 each, and she could hold them until Friday without payment. Ronald and Douglas Smith had authorization from ARM, African Restoration Ministries, to pay for the tickets, but they were in West Kenya, far from Nairobi. Eric called them. They boarded a bus, traveled through the night and were picked up by Eric in the morning. It was now Friday morning and they were all to fly Saturday.

At KLM the agent first asked Eric for proof Dean and Pressler were really his children. When shown that they were on his passport, the fellow seemed flustered and said the tickets would cost \$1,900 each. Eric protested that the lady said \$1,400 yesterday. The fellow said there was something wrong with the tickets and sent them to talk to a lady, who turned out to be Rapindra Flora, the one who had reserved the tickets the day before. The first thing Eric said was that he should be on a missionary discount. She asked if he had anything to validate that. He pulled out his ordination certificate and she said, "Fine"! She did some checking and said she believed she could save them \$200 on each ticket if they were willing to go through Memphis instead of Detroit. When it was all done, the Odida's four tickets cost a total of \$4,096 instead of the \$7,600 the first agent had asked. And the tickets they were issued provided far more comfortable seating and were more flexible than the tickets on which Douglas and Ronald were traveling. They even allowed for an extension that permitted both Dean and Pressler to attend youth camps before their return home.

we all fast the evening meal on Wednesdays and pray. Hulda understood that they were not eating that night, but told them she wanted them to have the food for breakfast. So when the missionaries started to leave, she started putting all of the food she had into bags for them. They protested that they had food and she should keep hers for her children. She answered that she had prepared the food for the missionaries and the Lord would provide for the children. Knowing that she had given all she had and wondering how the children were fed, that food was the most difficult Aaron and his companions had to eat all of that trip!

Brother Smith asked how many of us would be willing to empty our refrigerators, our bank accounts, our purses, everything we have for the missionary effort to spread the gospel throughout the world. The offering was received.

The congregation then sang the joyful hymn, "Since Love is Lord of heaven and earth, How Can I Keep From Singing?"; and the musical offerings interspersed by testimonies, began. Michael Jordison opened with that beautiful tribute to our Creator and His handiwork, "Morning is Broken". Gaylord Shaw immediately offered his testimony of a time when he was teaching at Kent State. He taught the nursing students anatomy and physiology, and on one occasion he was invited to speak at their graduation chapel. That hymn was traditional with the girls, and he cherished the memory of the beauty of that experience and its affect on his life.

Young Cede Smith asked to sing the camp song, "My God is So Big - so strong and so mighty, there's nothing that he cannot do!" Ron and Di sang it with her and invited the congregation to join them all. Then Ron and Di sang the prayer hymn, "Step by Step, Dear Lord, please help and guide me, always be just a step ahead of me." Matthew Anderson played a piano solo.

George Knotts offered his testimony of the blessings that have come from the accident he and Beth had on their way back from Oklahoma. Beth is recovering. The replacement vehicle began to give trouble. The problem was fixed without charge when it was traced to a faulty battery.

Ricky Leonard spoke of the way sacred moments appear at any time and in any place, and the earth in that place becomes sacred. He was in a McDonalds located in Northeast Kansas - South East Nebraska sharing a fudge sundae and the Book of Mormon with some Indians. Seated near by were three men who appeared to be just business men. The men had their papers but were not reading. Rather they seemed to be listening to what was being said. As they were all leaving, and the men were getting into a car next the Leonard's, one of the men tipped his head toward heaven and sang out in Hebrew with a sound that Ricky said "reverberated through the heavens". Ricky said he was certain the men were the Three Nephites. And, he commented, the Lord changed the sacred land back to secular, and there is just a McDonalds there now on that sacred spot.

Barbra Jordison took her place at the microphone, seated with her guitar in her lap and gave a testimony of the "gift of presence". She told of the long time she has waited for a companion. At one time having moved to be close to one of interest, and having enjoyed the friendship of another, whose lack of interest in God and His ways caused her to reject the possibility of marriage. She then sang a poignant song concerning "An Illusive Dream", which ends with a expression of faith that makes it possible to trust in God and "Just come along and walk with Him".

Rob Rolfe accompanied himself on his guitar singing a powerful song of John the Baptist who was "Just a Cry In the Wilder-

ness", preparing the way of the Lord!

Sheryl Phipps responded to Di Smith's request that she share her testimony of her wedding dress. Sheryl gave an abbreviated version of the story she had told a church school class some time before. Sheryl and her twin sister Sharon had come into contact with the church in Creston at about age 16. Their own family was not religious. The girls were expected to attend Sunday School and church each Sunday morning at the Methodist church and their parents went sometimes for Easter and Christmas. Sharon was dating one of the RLDS boys and was attending Zion's League with him on Wednesday evenings. Sheryl refused to go because her Pastor had said those people believed in the Book of Mormon and it was an evil book.

Sheryl and her Lutheran boyfriend broke up, and for some time Sheryl spent Wednesday nights at home alone. When she got tired of being alone, she finally went to Zion's League. Soon she was involved with the other activities of the Creston congregation. Sheryl and Sherman began dating, but her parents did not like Sherman. His name showing up in the paper for loud pipes and/or speeding did not help.

By the time they were 18, Sheryl and Sherman had been dating for about 1 1/2 years and decided to be married; but they had not become engaged. Sherman was waiting to ask her father's permission before asking for the commitment. The time came that Sherman did ask to marry Sheryl. Her father agreed but said they should not expect her parents to help with or attend their wedding. They had \$400.00 with which to pay for their wedding. Wedding plans were made with the church people acting as her family. Sherm's mother was a good seamstress and planned to make the wedding dress. Another offered the wedding cake as a gift. Another collected and managed the flowers, etc. The pattern for the wedding dress had been chosen but the fabric had not been purchased when Dorothy, Sherm's mother, received word from her younger sister in California saying that she no longer wanted the hope chest their father had made for her and was sending it back for Becky, Sherm's older sister.

Sheryl was present when the chest arrived. In it was a wedding dress that fit Sheryl perfectly. When they asked the sister about the dress, she said she knew nothing about it. She had not put a dress into the chest and had no idea how it got there. Sheryl accepted the dress as God's affirmation that what they were doing had God's approval. Later they were told in prophecy that John the Beloved had ridden with Sheryl's father the night he gave his consent for the marriage and had softened his heart.

Faye Shaw affirmed her belief that we have no reason to be concerned for the future if we are God's people. She told of one who was concerned whom the Lord showed in a miraculous way that He would provide.

Kathleen Myers came to the microphone and said she did not have a testimony but a prayer request. She said Jared Beck had injured a foot while running at school and had it casted with concern that it might still require surgery. Jared enjoys running and wants to carry on the tradition of the sport in his family. Immediately Ron asked for prayers for Jared, for Tyler Morris who was ill and could not be in the service, for Steve and Elaina Smith as they searched for a new vehicle, one they could afford to purchase, to replace their broken down one, and for Dan and Beth Kinnaman who were not in the service. Volunteers responded promptly.

Ron sang "Abish's Song", a song of longing for the Kingdom to come written by Douglas Smith for the Book of Mormon musical

that is about ready for production. The song is based upon the experience of the woman in the court of King Lamoni who had been converted to the Lord Jesus by something her father had experienced years previously but of which she could not speak in the presence of her Lamanite captors until Ammon came to share the gospel. She says, "I have waited so long!"

We sang, "Come Thou long expected Jesus. Born to set Thy people free; from our fears and sins release us. Let us find our rest in Thee."

Elder Gaylord Shaw pronounced the benediction. It was long past closing time, but the congregation seemed not to want to leave. The spirit of fellowship and worship continued to pervade the congregation.

*\*Note, for some reason the recorder did not work, and this report is written from notes. We are sorry we cannot share with you the total beauty of the experience.*

## A People Without Guile

Elder Michael Jordison began by reading John 1:29-51. Please read it all for yourself. It begins with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist and carries John's testimony that this was truly the One, "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!" John testified that he knew who Jesus was because the one who sent him to baptize, even God himself, had told him, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And, he said, "When he was baptized of me, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

The next day, John was with two of his disciples when they saw Jesus walking. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" And those two disciples followed Jesus. When Jesus saw them following him, he said unto them, "What seek ye?" They called him Rabbi, Master, and asked where he lived. He said, "Come and see. And they came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day; for it was about the tenth hour."

Andrew, one of the two who heard John and followed Jesus, found his brother Simon Peter and told him, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Andrew brought Peter to Jesus. "And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a seer, or a stone. And they were fishermen. And they straightway left all, and followed Jesus."

The next day, Jesus went into Galilee, and found Philip, and said to him, "Follow me." Phillip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael questioned, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said, "Come and see." "Jesus saw Nathanael coming unto him, and said of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael, surprised, asked, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answering said, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Nathanael answered, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Jesus questioned, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

After commenting on the original song Steven Smith sang

concerning the reward of living as a true Christian, Michael questioned, "Do you ever feel like you are spinning your wheels and going nowhere; you are working really hard, but nothing seems to really happen? Well, that happens in my spiritual life, too. Struggling and trying really hard to serve God, but sometimes it seems like I am just going nowhere - not really progressing - not really drawing as close to Him as I would like." He explained his concern that he speak the word of the Lord to the congregation and his gratitude for the support of his wife of whom he said, "If I ever get to heaven, it's going to be because of her". He then offered a prayer asking the Spirit of God to attend his effort to communicate to the congregation the thoughts God had put on his heart.

Our speaker reread a part of his scripture. "The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was at Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming unto him, and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"

### To Be Without Guile

"I have read this lots of times, and this has always captivated me - this passage about Nathanael - 'an Israelite in whom there is no guile'. I don't know what guile means to you, but as nearly as I can come up with a definition, guile refers to deceitfulness in our words and in our hearts. And here is Jesus saying, 'Here is an Israelite indeed who is without guile'.

"When Julie and I were married, one of the things we built our marriage on was honesty. I have done some things that I shouldn't have, but I have always told her. I have always confessed those things, and because of that trust in being able to share the truth, she knows that I am not going to deceive her. I am not going to be in some kind of a situation without her knowing. I think Jesus Christ also desires that same type of relationship with us - one where He can trust us. We are called to confess our sins before Him - to share those deepest and darkest things with Him. That builds a trust, I believe, with Jesus Christ - one where He can trust us with His power - one where He can trust us with His Spirit - one where we can speak in His name, and it shall be done unto us.

"Everybody is familiar with Revelation 14:6 - 'And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel ...' I want to read a little bit just before that verse with which we may not be quite so familiar. This refers to the hundred and forty four thousand. 'And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.' Did you catch that? These are those in whose mouth there is no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God. I don't know about you,

but that's the kind of personality trait that I would like to have - to be faultless before the throne of God - without guile.

"Genesis 6:66 is one of my favorite verses in the Bible; and it says this, 'And, behold, all things have their likeness; and all things are created and made to bear record of me; both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath, all things bear record of me.' The Spirit has worked with me with this verse. Everything that God has created - everything from the walls to the microphone, to the rug, the chairs you are sitting on, my clothing - all those things bear record of God. And all those things in some way or fashion are going to teach us about Him. All the laws that He imposes are laws to teach us about Himself. To reveal Himself is His greatest desire - to reveal Himself so there is no hiddenness - so there is no deceit. He's not holding anything back from us. And one of the best examples that I could come up with of how this is, is the creation of man. The scriptures teach us there are three in heaven - the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and these three are One God. We have one God that we worship - 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord.' (Deuteronomy 6:4.)

"When we were made in the image of God, we were made in three distinct parts. We were made with a spirit. We were made with a body (flesh). And we were made with a soul. And just as the Holy Ghost bears record of the Father and the Son, the Spirit and the Flesh, our soul bears record of our spirit and our flesh. Although we can't use our creation and try to define God, what we have to do is to take God and define man because we were made in His likeness, not Him in ours.

"Most of you are familiar with the Mosaic Law. The ordinances and the sacrifices were a representation of Jesus Christ. God gave a pattern - a picture of Himself to the Israelites. The temple and the things inside the tabernacle in the wilderness, all those things were physical representations of spiritual truth of a nature of God that man could understand. All of our universe is there to reveal God, but not just to reveal that He made them. He wants to reveal who He is through them. That's really what I want to talk to you about today, and I'm just going to pick on one aspect.

#### **We Are Made With Emotions**

Michael called to mind good romantic books or movies that bring emotions of joy and excitement and they really move upon us even though they are not real. He related the experience of one who accidentally witnessed a Civil War re-enactment. He actually had a part in the battle, a perspective that nobody else had, because he had crossed over into the lines and he was right on the front. He was seeing them shoot back and forth at each other. He could see them falling down and when the cannons would go, whole regiments would drop. And then he saw a little drummer boy keeping step with soldiers. Suddenly he realized he was in the middle of an ambush with Union soldiers firing on Confederates, and the little drummer boy was hit. He fell to the ground, flopped around, his hat rolled down the hill. Tears came into the eyes of the accidental observer. He had been caught up in the emotion of it. It was almost as though it was actually happening before his eyes. "That's what good books and movies do for us," our speaker observed. They bring out emotions, real emotions God has placed within each of us.

#### **God Wants You to Ask Questions**

"Why would God put those emotions within us? Why would He give us those feelings of love and desire?" Brother Jordison recommended that we always ask questions." That doesn't mean that you

question the gospel. It doesn't mean that you question your faith. It means you desire knowledge, greater understanding. Always question. I do that with scriptures all of the time. 'What do you mean by this, Lord? It doesn't make sense to me.' And things have opened up to me that aren't even in the scriptures when I have done that. Ask questions.

"I think that is one of the reasons Peter, James and John were taken on to the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus, Mark says they asked Him many questions. Why just those three? Because they asked Him many questions concerning His sayings. God wants to reveal things to us. That's what section 90 teaches, too, I believe, where it talks about knowledge and the Spirit of Truth being intelligence and light so that all things are revealed unto us. He wants us to know these things. He wants to reveal Himself to us. All you have got to do is ask.

"So I am asking, 'Why did God create marriage? And why is marriage between one man and one woman? We might think there are some pretty easy answers to that, but I don't look for the obvious. Why was procreation instituted the way it was? God could have perpetuated the human race by any other means, but He chose to do it in a way that was going to reveal something about Him - something about His nature. I believe He did it so He could reveal about our relationship with Him. That might be over simplistic, but that's what I have come to understand. If you look at the creation of man, you have Adam - one guy out there alone. He's got all these animals and plants around him, but really, he's alone. What's God do with Adam? He puts him to sleep, cuts a wound in his side, reaches in and grabs one of his ribs or side (depends on how you want to translate that) and He forms this woman, Eve, out of his rib. He has taken from within Adam and created something for Adam. He has separated the one into two.

"Now He's got a problem. He started out with one, now He's got two. He has to do something. He has to bring them back together; and that's what marriage was instituted to do - to bring the two back into one. 'And they became 'one flesh'. God is revealing something about Himself here. He said, 'Here I am out here, and I'm creating. It's My nature to create and to love. And I'm creating within Myself.' We say, God created us out of nothing. No, He didn't! He created us out of Himself. Maybe the matter was out of nothing. I don't know, but anyway, He created us out of Himself. And so now, because sin has separated us from God, just as Eve was drawn out from Adam, God has to do something to bring us back into one with Him. And that's the covenant with Christ. It's the same as that marriage covenant which we have on earth. He wants to bring the two into one.

"This is really neat. I love it. This is from Third Nephi 9:20-23. Remember Jesus has come to the multitude. He has been talking with His disciples, and He goes back and forth to the multitude a little bit. Then He goes off and when He comes back, the Disciples are praying. While He's away, He's praying, 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me, that I have chosen them out of the world. Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.' Who would that include? All of us. Right? 'Father thou hast given them the Holy Ghost, because they believe in me, and thou seest that they believe in me, because thou hearts them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them. And now, Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all they which shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in

me, that we may be one.' He goes off and comes back and basically prays the same thing, 'that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me that we may be one that I may be glorified in them.'

"There's something about our marriage that brings us back into - that reflects the relationship of Christ with His church. In Mark 10:7 it says, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father, and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh; so then they are no more be twain but one flesh; ... .' And that type of intimacy that comes out of our relationship as a man and a wife is the same, in a way, type of intimacy that Jesus Christ wants to have with His church. He wants to have it with us individually, one on one; and He wants to have it with His church, one on one. You know, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is one church, and that's the type of intimacy He wants us to have in our marriages. I want you to understand, I'm not an authority on marriage. I sure have made a lot of mistakes. That's kind of my disclaimer I am throwing in there, but I really feel like the Lord has opened my eyes and spoken to me about this.

### **The Kingdom - The Pattern For Marriage**

"From Ephesians 5:22-33, our brother Paul has said, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself.' Remember, the two are now one. 'For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; For we are members of His body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined with his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.' Catch that? It is a great mystery, and here He is talking about men and women but He's saying, 'Really, I'm speaking about Christ and the church. I think there is a really important lesson to be learned here. The pattern for the Kingdom is to be the pattern for our marriages.

"When couples - boy and girl - first meet, there's an excitement, kind of the excitement that you feel when you first come to know the Lord. You want to be together. You want to hold hands. You want to share. Some of you may want to talk more than the other, but you want to communicate. You want some type of communication and communication comes in more ways than just verbally. That's the same type of intimacy that Christ wants with us. He wants to be with us all of the time. He wants to share with us. He wants to hear about everything; and He doesn't want there to be any deceit or any hiding of anything between us. He wants us to be completely honest and open. Then He can trust us. Just like you need a healthy environment in your marriage for the fruit of that marriage, children, you need a healthy environment in the kingdom for the fruit of the kingdom, which is Zion. We cannot have Zion unless we are healthy - unless we have a vibrant and intimate relationship with the bridegroom - until we know Him. You know how it talks about we will know Him as we are known. That's what it's all about - this intimacy - this relationship with Jesus.

"You know, today, anybody can have a kid for the most part. In fact, I even saw a movie where they put the baby inside a man. I don't know. Maybe they can do that, but that's not the pattern. That's not the way God has designed it. He designed marriage, and He designed children in a way which will teach us more about Him and how He wants to relate to us. Remember that the Kingdom should be the pattern for our families.

"So we have one God and we have one church, and they work together as one, becoming one. And the fruit of that relationship is joy and happiness, peace and love. I don't know whether I want to call that a fruit, but those things culminate and they reproduce until you have the kingdom - until you have Zion. And in marriage you have one man. You have one woman. This is a reflection of the divine nature of God. You have one man and one woman, and they become one, and joined together this union should produce happiness, joy, love and hope. That's the way God has designed it. Then when we have created this healthy environment, that's when we have created an environment where we can raise our children, the fruit of this happiness and this joy - this intimacy - we can raise our children in ways to serve God where they will not depart from Him. That's what He's wanting. The spiritual intimacy has to come first, always has to come before there can be any physical intimacy. That's true of the Kingdom as well as it is in our lives.

"Genesis 7:23: 'And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them.' The people were called Zion, and then you go a couple of verses down and it says and then they built this 'city of Holiness, even Zion.' That intimacy has to be there before we are ever going to see the fruit - that intimacy with our Lord and with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

"Now I am going to go back to Ephesians 5:25. Men, I want you to listen up here. It says, 'Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ... .' How did Christ give Himself for it? He gave everything, didn't He? He didn't get nothing in return - not a thing - nothing - or did He? Ultimately, He did. He gave Himself 100% and really He left the pattern for our marriages. It's for men to give 100%. I've talked with others and several of you about marriage being a fifty-fifty deal. It is not fifty-fifty. It's all or nothing! That's really true. That's because it's based on the pattern of Christ. He gave Himself all, and the men are to give themselves all - 100%. Now ladies, it says here, 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord.' A lot of women don't like that verse, and I can understand why. It's because the husbands haven't been giving a hundred percent. But you think about how Jesus cares for His bride - how He takes care of her - how he's got all this patience for her. She keeps messing up, but still His hand is stretched out. And really, wives, that's what you are looking for in a husband, isn't it? Somebody who will be willing to give himself all and to be patient, willing to bear all things and to take care of you, and to fulfill your needs just as you fulfill his. I believe Jesus needs us like we need Him. If He didn't need our love, why would go to that great length to get it? Our relationships together mirror the relationship of Christ with His bride. We need something from each other. It doesn't make us anything less nor does it make us anything more than God, but we become one in a way that I can't even understand it, And I don't think we will understand it completely. Maybe in the next phase of our lives we will.

### **Understanding The Need**

"So, if we want to have healthy relationships, we need to have a good understanding of the Kingdom; and we can take the pattern

of the kingdom and apply it to our lives. Really, if we want to have healthy families - if we want to raise our children up the way that God wants us to, we need to understand that our family unit is a Christian unit. In 1990 Brother Walter Weldon was awoken and given twelve messages. One of those messages said, 'Tell My people to sanctify your lives.' And I believe part of that sanctification refers to ordering our homes and making them pure - making them environments where we can serve the Lord - where we are not distracted by our own humanness, naturalness - where we are not made natural anymore.

"Brother Ray Huggett was at a retreat in 1971. (You can find this on centerplace.org.) He had an experience with what he called the four clouds over Zion or somebody has called it that. He saw the city and he sees enormous clouds overshadowing it so that the city couldn't shine forth in its beauty, it's brilliance. And one of those clouds is - I'm just going to read you his words - 'And somehow we have failed to teach our children about the sanctity of marriage and its true purpose. And our children grow up thinking, 'Well, if this doesn't work, we'll try another one.' And somehow they don't seem to understand or to appreciate that marriage in the truest sense is a sacramental relationship. It's where God enters into a covenant between two people, and when they can give themselves fully and wholly, and express themselves without remorse of conscience and guilt and feelings of fear and can have a union that's joyful, that is complementary one to another, that fulfills and gives joy and happiness and hope to those things which give strength to each individual who takes part in a true marriage. Sometimes we haven't taught our children how to preserve themselves for this experience, so they don't have to look back with remorse and sorrow and broken hearts upon their experimentation of an earlier day. Such things as not teaching our children these principles have indeed detracted from the culmination of the Zion expression.'

"You know, that's the same thing that the Lord has been showing me. Two different experiences, but they say the same thing. I believe the keys of the kingdom bear upon the sanctity of marriage and of our homes. And it's not just to have fidelity in marriage. There are all different aspects of marriage that need to be cultivated - need to be worked on because marriage is an expression of the union of Christ and His bride. We can't hold to the keys of the kingdom while the reflection of the kingdom in our marriages is in disrepair. It doesn't mean that we are completely wore out, but there are things that we need to work on in our marriages. And that's the guile that I was referring to before us. We say, "Lord, we go to church, and we're doing all we can to serve You' while we are spinning our wheels and not really getting any closer - we are not getting any further along the road. That's because there is a little bit of deceitfulness left within our hearts because here we have a part of our lives that is supposed to be a reflection of our goal, and our reflection is all murky and dirty and not really bearing upon the goal. And God says, 'I want you to be without spot - without blemish.' He says, 'No unclean thing can dwell in my presence.' And do you really think that He's going to let things down here be murky and slide that murkiness right up here into the goal? I don't think so. I don't believe so. He's saying, 'I want you to cleanse this part. Get rid of the guile. Get rid of the deceitfulness of your heart. This is what He's saying here: "And he answered them and saith unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you, hypocrites. As it is written, this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me., in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrine and commandments of men.' There's a whole other side here that we've

got to be aware of. Our lips - our spiritual side is praising God, and we are working towards the goal, but our hearts are down here with guile because we are not really interested in changing every aspect of our lives. I don't know how we can ever hope to fully be instruments in the kingdom of God while we are still lacking in some areas.

"I'm just going to touch on this real quick because I think this is real important. Marriage today is not holy anymore. In fact, we're trying to change the definition of marriage - you know, between two women or two men or just if you make an agreement or whatever you want to live together. that's all right. We're trying to redefine marriage. What that does is that it perverts the pattern that God established. And I think that one of the most important things that we can do as Christians is to preserve that sanctity of marriage because it's a mirror image of the relationship of Christ with His bride. And if we are out there promoting something other than that image, we are not really promoting the kingdom. We have got to get back to the basics. One man and one woman for life - special circumstances involved there, but that was the pattern. Instead we are sending a double message to the world. I'm not saying that we are necessarily doing that, but we need to be mindful of our relationships together so that we can actually be a church that is full of the glory of God because our homes and our lives outside of the home reflect the love of God and his devotion unto His bride.

"With that, God bless you."

## News & Notes

### Officers Chosen For 2003-2004

The annual business meeting for the election of officers convened Wednesday night, September 3 at the church in Mt. Ayr. Robert Rolfe was elected Presiding Elder and his choice of counselors sustained. Alan Smith and Gordon Winkler serve as Mt. Ayr counselors and Ronald Smith and Gerald Bolingbroke serve in Lamoni. Other coordinators chosen include Jan Jordison - Caring, Barbra Jordison - Christian Education, Michael Jordison - Evangelism, Linda Winkler - Fellowship, Gerald Bolingbroke - Stewardship, Pat Bolingbroke - Worship, Bess Leonard - Worship Center, Ed and Diane Anderson - Senior/Junior High - Youth Ministers, Michael and Julia Jordison - Junior youth ministers, Kathy Akers - Secretary, Harold and Kathy Akers - Recorder, Mildred Smith - Historian, Alan Smith - Newsletter Publisher, Cathy Nelson - Womens' Leader. Jan Jordison, Tim Mitchell and Cathy Nelson were elected to two year terms on the building Committee. Linda and Gordon Winkler and Dan Kinnaman still have a year to serve. Consideration of the budget will be held during October after those chosen for special responsibilities have time to determine the needs.

### Fall Retreat Imminent

September 26, 27, 28 are the dates for the South Iowa-North Missouri fall retreat at Farwesta. The Mt. Ayr congregation carries a great deal of responsibility in its activities. Alan Smith is the Pastor for the weekend. Ron and Di Smith are in charge of the mixer and camp fires. Robert Rolfe is responsible for the Sunday morning prayer service. We will be assigned duties in preparing and serving one of the meals. Several of our number will be involved in conducting the children's classes.

The theme of the retreat concerns our heritage as Saints of the Restoration. Dave Drummond is in charge of the healing service.



**CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST**  
**Mount Ayr Restoration Branch**  
**607 E. Madison St.**  
**Mount Ayr, IA 50854**

## News & Notes

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Alberta Cunningham is in charge of the food preparation and service. Rudy Leutzinger is the guest minister for adult classes, Gay and Faye Shaw for the youth classes, Henry Eppinger, Alicia Sindt, Judy Faunce, and a host of others for the children.

Bryan Mundy again directs a session featuring testimonies of the many who have ministered in Kenya, Nigeria, Nepal, and elsewhere this year. That session is scheduled for Saturday evening. As is this congregation's policy, the costs of those who attend from this congregation will be paid by the congregation, so everyone can afford to go! If you want to make a donation to help defray the expenses, you may make the offering in Mt. Ayr or at the retreat.

Bud and Mary Drummond are in charge of registrations. It would be helpful in planning meals, space, etc. if they knew about how many to expect. If you have not already registered, please register now by calling 816-678-9015. If you don't get a chance to register, come anyway. You will be glad you did.

### Youth in State Fair Competition

Jazmyn and Aquila Galusha advanced to the semifinals in the Bill Riley Talent Show at the State Fair in Des Moines this month. Jazmyn played her violin, Aquila his guitar.

Colleen Wilcoxsin rode in the Iowa State Fair equestrienne competition. She received a blue ribbon in barrel racing, and red ribbons in pole bending, travel class and halter showmanship. She has also been successful in other meets around the state.

### Women's Class To Begin

Women of the congregation, especially those who are not employed outside their homes, and their friends were invited to meet at the home of Cathy Nelson for breakfast Tuesday, September 2. Seven women responded. It was determined to meet each Tuesday morning at 8:30 a.m. in the homes of members and friends for study and devotions.

The places of the September 9 and subsequent meetings will be announced. The women have chosen to study the parable of the

virgins, a study that is proposed by the Womens' Council of the Restoration Elders' Conference. Ask Mildred Smith for a copy of the text or download it from the internet.

### Graceland Students Returning

Saturday, September 6, those free to assist are requested to meet at the home of Ron and Di Smith at 10:00 a.m. to prepare care baskets for returning Graceland students known to the congregation.

Patriarch's Birthday To Be Celebrated

Patriarch Roy Kopp will celebrate his ninety fifth birthday September 5 from 3:00 until 5:00 p.m. at the Crown Colony Dining Room in Lamoni. His daughter Terrie and husband Leland Taraba are hosting the event.

### Congregation to Participate in Mount Ayr Singspiration

Plans are being finalized for participation in the Mount Ayr festival of music in Judge Lewis Park, at 3 p.m. Sunday, September 7. Our congregation will provide at least three numbers for the program in addition to our contribution to the group singing. Come and join in. This singspiration is always an inspiration!

### Ecumenical Service in Lamoni

The congregation has been invited to participate in an ecumenical service on September 28, just as we return from the Farwesta Retreat. The service will be held in the Lamoni Central Park following the block parties held all over the city.

### Book of Mormon Day Planned

Mark the last weekend of October for a Day with the Book of Mormon.