

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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Time To Be Thankful

We have had a busy month of October and look forward to a spirit filled Thanksgiving season as we move into November.

One of the ideas we are working on in our planning sessions is to develop activities in four areas for each quarter. They include worship, service, outreach and fellowship. All of these are important to our life together as a congregation.

I am always amazed how joining together to plan helps bring out ideas that help us see new ways we can do things and new talents we can use. I'm thinking about the idea of developing a service group that would help people with projects around their homes. We have Sue Beck in the congregation who can find us as much work as we would like to do with people she works with everyday.

I believe that if we can share in activities in each of these four areas that our life as a branch will be enriched.

We have organized the pastorate so that we have counselors helping oversee the programming of different months, which I think will be a very helpful. We are also dividing up the congregation so that we can keep a closer eye on the needs of families in our group.

Another area that we will be working on is trying to communicate better what is going on in the branch to those who cannot attend ever week.

It has been brought to our attention that sometimes we think things have been communicated, but really only those who are at church that day get the announcements. Be sure to let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can function better as the Body of Christ.

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

Seek Earnestly God's Way

(Sunday, October 2, the tape recorder failed again, and the reporter has attempted to report the service without a recording to transcribe.)

The Lord's Supper emblems had been served, and Ron and Di Smith had sung "Whispering Hope". Elder Norman Nelson began his discourse saying that there are many things we need to consider. He mentioned especially the needs of Brother Merle Jordison, his family and others not present; but for us all, we need to know that we are here by the grace of God and we need to know that we depend on Him for all that we have. He read Genesis 3:4-5 : "Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him; and also that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten I caused that he should be cast down; and he became Satan. Yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive, and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice."

We are not here in a vacuum. We are not in a situation in which we can depend on ourselves. We are constantly given a choice. We must prepare to listen to God or to be subject to the temptations of Satan. If we are not actively listening to God's voice, we are listening to Satan, who is continuously seeking to guide us away from God. You must do the things that lead into God's presence every day or be left out. It is your choice!

As In The Days Of Noah

We are told that today things are much as they were in the days of Noah. People are the same as they were then. To remind us how it was in the days of Noah, Brother Nelson read portions of Genesis 8:11-18. Genesis 8:11-12: "And it came to pass, that Noah continued his preaching unto the people, saying, Hearken and give heed unto my words, believe and repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our fathers did, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, that ye may have all things made manifest; And if you do not this, the floods will come in upon you; nevertheless, they hearkened not."

Our fathers did listen to Christ, Norman commented, but in the days of Noah, that was not the case. He then continued to read

Genesis 8:13 and 16-18: "And it repented Noah, and his heart was pained, that the Lord had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. ... And thus Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord; for Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation; and he walked with God, and also his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth was corrupt before God; and it was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence, and behold, I will destroy all flesh from off the earth."

"You don't know how close this is to happening now," Brother Nelson said. "Violence is common. People are killing each other because of Satan's temptations. If you don't believe as I do, I will kill you! If I am offended by you, violence has become the way I want to settle it! We have the same situation as there was in Noah's time. "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned, they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves; Wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness, and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good, if they hearken unto the counsels of God." (2 Nephi 6:57-61).

(2 Nephi 11:143-144) "Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time: for I will shew unto the children of men, that I am able to do mine own work. Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom, to reveal all things unto the children of men." There are so many wonderful things available to us. The reason we don't have them is that we have not learned to use the ones that we have. We have treated lightly that which God has given us.

The Book of Mormon is our new covenant, but we have treated it so lightly. It is ours, but there is so much more. I like to remember what Brother Neil (Simmons) told us at the retreat last Sunday. We are as if we were in a cave. We can't see what's out there because there is no light in the cave. We don't know that the light is out there. We don't know that God has given us so much more because we cannot see. Neil told us of a valley of the blind. When a sighted person came and tried to tell them what was around them, they thought he was crazy. They determined that if they could just put out his eye so he could not have these hallucinations, he would be sane like them. When we don't see, we don't understand what the Lord is trying to show us.

Seek To Walk With God

So it is important that every day we seek earnestly to walk with God. If that is not the case, we do not see the light. We don't know there is so much more awaiting us. We are allowing ourselves to do evil things - hate a brother; do things that make you look bigger; do terrible things. Just think what it would be like to be in God's presence in your present condition - the God who created all things and yet is mindful of you and wants you to come up higher and be His. That is what He wants! He has made it possible for us to be His and to comprehend the wonderful things He has for us. It will take full, devoted service every day if we want any part of it. The Father says, be baptized - follow me. (2 Nephi 13:14-16), "And the Father said, Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son.

And also, the voice of the Son came unto me, saying, He that

is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father, that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism; yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost;"

Have you received the Holy Ghost? If you have, is He still with you, or have you rejected Him? Hearken means hear, respond and obey. In the book of Jacob there is the story of the olive tree. God first chose the children of Israel to bring forth good fruit. Instead, they brought evil fruit. God had to prune, graft, and relocate the branches of the tree in His effort to get good fruit. God continually seeks to have a people who will serve Him and bring forth good fruit, not the wild fruit of our own desires but the fruit of His love to call people into His Kingdom. He is asking you to share His love so that all people will know that He loves them. Bear witness of His love every day. Those who bear evil fruit are pruned out. Only as you bear His love and His compassion can He keep you in His service. He calls laborers to come forth and labor with their might, not just do something nice once in awhile. His love must be carried to all people at all times. Those who bring forth evil fruit, do so at their own choosing. They will be cut down and burned. They will not be a part of His Kingdom.

Nothing we have goes with us from here to there. We have only the love we have given, the ways we have served our God. All else, our homes, our barns, our bank accounts are left behind - burned. The Kingdom of love for each other is bearing fruit in His name. Doctrine and Covenants 22:23, and also in other places in the scriptures, the Lord has said, "... there is no end to my work, neither to my words; for this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

Failures Are Not Fatal - Failures Are Opportunities

Priest Gordon Winkler read 1 John 1:4-10: "And these things we write unto you that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Anan Smith followed singing the familiar and beloved song, "He Leadeth Me". Brother Winkler opened his sermon commenting, "I had some thoughts as Anan was singing that beautiful song. I hope that as you come this morning that God will lead you to understand, and would lead me to present, the message that He would have for His Saints and His children."

I was attending a meeting in Des Moines last week. I knew that I was going to be on the schedule to preach this Sunday, so I was thinking as I had time on my own between meetings, discussions,

and conferences, what should I speak about today. I prayed about that and I did not receive any prompting that would prick my mind to think of something to speak about. It wasn't until the very last session when one of the speakers, a retired US Navy officer named Commander Scott Waddle, spoke, telling his story that I was flooded with thoughts about what to talk about.

Just to give you a bit of advanced notice of what we are going to talk about, Commander Scott Waddle's presentation was entitled, "Failure is not Fatal". I was so impressed by the message that the commander presented that I purchased his book so I could continue to remember some of the things that he spoke about. I am going to read just a paragraph or two by way of introduction. The title of his book is, "The Right Thing". I think as I read some of this, and I introduce him, it will come back to your mind who Scott Waddle was.

The book begins, "Over my dead body! You are not going to take the witness stand. Scott! Not without immunity! I'll kill you before I allow you to take the stand to testify without immunity," my lawyer, Charles Gittins, railed. "On second thought, I won't have to - you'd be killing yourself!"

"I smiled slightly at my defense counsel's impassioned plea; he had said something similar to me the first time I'd met him, and his attitude hadn't changed over the weeks he had been defending me. I knew Charlie wanted to protect me, but I felt compelled to take the stand. I honestly believed that the truth was not the worst thing that could be known about the sorrowful events in which I had just played a part.

"I have to, Charlie. I did it. Nine people are dead because of me."

"It was an accident, Scott. A horrible, freak accident, something that should never have happened, and it was not your fault!"

"No, Charlie. there's a time to be silent and there is a time to speak up for what is right. I'm the only guy who really knows what happened aboard my ship that day. I am the only one who knows what I saw through that periscope. I have to tell the truth. I have to take responsibility and let the chips fall where they may. It's the right thing to do."

"In a span of eight minutes on February 9 of 2001, Navy Commander Scott Waddle's life was forever changed. He gave the order to perform an emergency maneuver that inadvertently caused the nine-thousand-ton nuclear attack submarine he commanded to rip up through the water and smash into the Ehime Maru, a Japanese fishing boat."

Do you remember that account? Many of you may. The commander's story was heart wrenching. There was an audience of hundreds of people there. When he raised his hand they watched his hand. When his head turned, they watched his head as he shared his experience in this story. And you could tell how impassioned he was with his story. Tears came to his eyes at different times because, as he said, "I have to relive this event every time I tell it." So I would like to tell you a little about Commander Waddle and just what transpired on that February 9, 2001.

The Commander's Story

Commander Waddle grew up the son of an Air Force fighter pilot, and his life expectation was that he would follow in his father's footsteps and be an Air Force fighter pilot, too. As he grew older he, traveled around the world as his dad was stationed in many locations. When the time came for him to continue his education, he made application to the places that he knew very well: the US Navy academy, the Army academy, and the Air Force academy.

The latter was his first choice. After making the applications, he waited for mail to come into the home. The first letter that came was an acceptance into the Army academy. That wasn't what he was looking for. Pretty soon the second letter came and it was from the Naval academy. He had been accepted, but that wasn't the one he was looking for. Soon came the third letter from the Air Force academy - a rejection. He was not accepted into the Air Force academy.

And so he regrouped and thought to himself, "Well, I'll accept the admission to the Naval academy and there I can enter into the flight school and be a naval aviator." He thought there was something really exciting about trying to land an airplane on a floating landing strip on a Navy carrier with fifteen foot waves pitching it up and down and still being able to land. So that was what he set his sights on. After going through the Naval academy, he made application and requested to be in the school of aeronautics, passed all of the written tests and the oral interviews. When it was time for the physical, guess what. Commander Waddle's eyesight was 20/25 - not acceptable in a navy aviator. It required 20/20 vision, uncorrected. Once again, Commander Waddle's dreams had been smashed.

After those tests, he had received a letter inviting him to an interview with Admiral Hymen G. Rickover. Admiral Rickover was the director of the Nuclear Reactor Submarine Program in the navy. He accepted that invitation for an interview. Admiral Rickover individually interviewed over 250 applicants for a position in that service. His intent was to confirm the applicants technical knowledge and the ability they had to handle stress. His questions tended to be extremely personal, rather outlandish and sometimes bizarre. In fact, Scott says, as he went in to the interview with the admiral, the admiral pointed for him to take a seat in front of his desk. As he sat down, he slid to the front of the chair and found himself uncomfortable. He slid back and positioned himself in the chair to sit straight, and slid down to the front again. All this time the admiral is talking to him and sizing him up to see how he is responding. On the third time he slid down, he pushed himself up, stuck his leg outside the one side of the chair and wrapped his leg on the outside and hooked his toes to hold himself up straight. in that manner, when the process was over, he found out that the admiral had intentionally shortened the legs three inches on the front of that chair to see how those he was interviewing would respond to that uncomfortable situation. Commander Waddle graduated in the top one third of his navy class and he was hand picked by Admiral Rickover to be one of the candidates for the nuclear submarine program.

After years of training and experience, Scott Waddle was given commission of the USS Greenville. Greenville was a Los Angeles class submarine. Submarines are defined by size. Los Angeles submarines are 360 feet long. (For those of you who have a hard time with measurements and distances, three hundred sixty feet would be a little longer than a football field, including both end zones. That's how big this boat was.) It was a nuclear, fast attack submarine, meaning that it had the ability to do many maneuvers that most submarines could not perform. He had the most advanced submariners for his crew, about 140 men. (I have 130 employees at the hospital, so he had more people on this ship than I have employees at the hospital.)

Under Commander Waddle's leadership, the USS Greenville became the best submarine in the combined Pacific and Atlantic fleets. It had the highest marks for crew member testing, the highest

marks for cleanliness, and had the best scores on all maneuver activities. It was the pride of the submarine fleet. Commander Waddle tells the story about one time he was walking through the submarine. He was just really being taken in by the technology the way that the ship handled and the crew - how everything worked so precisely. He was just looking up ahead. Everything is open in a submarine so he could see the steam lines, and the water lines, and the hydraulic lines, and the electrical lines. As he was looking up, one of the ensigns came by and noticed that he was looking up. The ensign said, "Sir! What's wrong?" The commander says, "Nothing is really wrong." It wasn't too long before the chief master engineer came to him and said, "Sir. We have fixed the problem." The commander asks, "What was the problem?" He said, "We looked at all the steam lines. We looked at all the hydraulic lines. We looked at all the electric lines, and then, Sir, we noticed a paint chip, so we repainted the deck, Sir." That sounds comical to him, but that was the precision and pride the people had on this ship.

Then, on February 9, 2001, with his distinguished crew and sixteen distinguished guests on board, the SSS Greenville sailed off the coast of Oahu to demonstrate its maneuverable capability. They had determined that the maneuver they were going to demonstrate was an emergency blow out, rapid surface exercise. The submarine would come from the depths and up out of the water, propelled by all that air being blown out of the submarine.

They had completed all of sonar, radar and surface periscope sight inspections and had determined the area clear for the exercise. In time, Commander Waddle ordered the exercise commenced. The ballast tanks were blown out and the submarine catapulted to the surface at a fifteen degree angle. Just as the boat broke the water surface, there was a loud clang! He knew that he had hit something - maybe a buoy, was his thought. But it wasn't a buoy. The Ehime Maru, a Japanese fishing boat with a crew of experienced fishermen and a training crew of teenage boys was hit. The tail fin of the Greenville, heavily reinforced to cut through a polar ice cap, sliced diagonally through the length of the fishing boat. The ship went stern up and sank almost immediately. Nine crew members died. Eight later recovered. In eight minutes, Scott Waddle's life was forever changed, or as he put it, "It was a defining moment for the rest of my life!"

An International Crisis

It was a horrific accident, but it became an international crisis and a media blitz. Scott faced an onslaught of media speculations, interviews, accusations. He even talks about some of the hate mail and the phone calls that he received. People would make statements such as, "Japanese never gave us a notice at Pearl Harbor. They should have all drowned!" He was overwhelmed by the fact that this became more of a political international event than it was of how individual lives were involved and how individual lives were lost. The navy had an investigation. They had a panel of three US Naval Officers and one Japanese Admiral. The crew was granted immunity to testify before the panel. Commander Waddle was not given immunity, therefore his testimony was suppressed. He was not allowed to meet or address the Japanese families or address the Japanese nation. This began to eat on Commander Waddle. His decision to testify without immunity and to apologize to the families and the Japanese nation was ill advised and in opposition to his superiors. You see, Commander Waddle had lived around the world. He had lived in Japan and other Asian nations and understood that an apology is the honorable thing to do. In our society today, we have the thought that an apology is a sign of weakness or

admission of guilt. So there is a cultural clash there that Commander Waddle understood, and he felt obligated to apologize.

So, why did the Commander do it? He went ahead and apologized to each of the families individually. He apologized to the Emperor of Japan and to the governor of the state from which the Japanese fishermen came, and he told his story before a panel without immunity and risked that the information could be used in a court martial and he could spend the rest of his life in prison. He said the reason he did it came to him one night. He had not slept very much during this time period, and he was wondering through the house. He went in and kissed his daughter on the cheek while she was asleep. He came back into the room in tears, and his wife, seeing the emotion up and down, said, "What is it now, Scott?" And he said, "I just kissed our daughter good night. There are eight other families that couldn't do that." And the fundamental teachings that he had had through his Christian upbringing, and the lessons that he remembered about honesty and integrity as he grew up as a Boy Scout, and those things that he had learned as a cadet came back to him. Commander Waddle had determined that failure is not fatal if you humble yourself, if you disclose the truth and if you sincerely apologize. He found the ability to get through this whole ordeal by relying on his faith in God, in his family strength, and in a belief in forgiveness. Matthew 6:14 says, "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." And that was what Commander Waddle had set out to do.

Managing Failures We Experience

That's the end of that story. I would venture to say that none of us will ever have the experience of commanding a nuclear submarine, and therefore we can avoid this tragic ordeal that Commander Scott Waddle went through; but if you are anything like me, I have had failures in my life. Some failures have been for some people fatal. We hear all the time about car crashes involving alcoholism. We hear about gambling and the way it destroys marriages. But most failures are somewhat more subtle. Failure to prepare, failure to budget, failure to study. It is said that Thomas Edison performed 50,000 experiments before he succeeded in producing a storage battery. When asked if he had ever become discouraged searching so long without results, Edison replied, "Results? Why I know 50,000 things that won't work!"

Each of us has failed or will fail. Our response is what will determine what will become of our failings. To God, our failure is a lesson learned, an education. The scriptures instruct us many times to "Repent and come unto Me." I have to admit that many times when I have heard that I have thought of it as a one time event - repent and be baptized. But actually as I give thought to this, it is not a one time request. It is part of the cycle that draws us closer to God. It allows us to someday sit in His presence, as I read in first John. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John, 1:9.) Without being righteous, we can't sit before God.

You know, the Bible contains records of many who failed and yet were able to find forgiveness and to be mighty servants for God. God didn't give up on them. We don't have time to go through all of these, but I would like to highlight just a few of them for you: Remember a man by the name of Jonah? Jonah had some failings. God had come to Jonah and said that he wanted him to go to Nineveh because the people there had been wicked and He wanted Jonah to tell them that if they didn't change their ways, God was going to destroy them. Jonah's response was, "I am going to get on a ship and go as far away as I can go and get away from this request

of God.” So he did that and the Lord sent a great wind to the sea. There was a storm. People on the ship with Jonah said, “We are scared, and Jonah is the problem. Let’s throw him overboard.” They throw him overboard and he is swallowed by a great fish. He is in that fish about three days and nights - kind of an unpleasant place to stay, I would think. Then the Lord has the fish spit Jonah out on the dry land, where the word of the Lord comes to Jonah a second time and says, “Arise, go into Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.” In other words, “Go and do what I told you to do the first time!” Jonah awoke and went to Nineveh and did according to the word of the Lord. And God saw that the people had turned from their evil ways, and God turned away the evil that He said He would bring upon them. Jonah responded. (Jonah had some other problems after that, but we will end with his response.)

I also thought about Abraham. God promised him that his wife, Sarah and he would have a son, but Abraham was impatient. He failed to wait. So what did Abraham do? He slept with his wife’s handmaiden and she gave him a son. But God did keep His promise. Sarah, in her old age, bore him a son. Now Abraham is referred to as the “father of many nations”.

How about Jacob? Jacob lied to his father, stole his brother’s birthright and his blessing, yet God gave him the name, Israel to represent God’s people.

How about David? God made David a king, and as king, what did David do? He committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then with a clever plan, he had her husband killed to hide his failure. Yet David becomes known as “a man after God’s own heart”.

Then there was Peter. I may spend a little time remembering Peter here this morning. What were Peter’s failures? First of all, Peter failed to tell the truth. He failed to keep his promise. He failed in his loyalty to Jesus. (John 21:13-17). You will find all of this recorded. I am going to use Luke 22, beginning at verse 54-62. This is after Gesthemane. “Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the High Priest’s house;” (That was Caiaphas), “and Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him, as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him saying, Woman, I know him not.” And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth, this man was also with him; for he is a Galilean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while yet he spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly” I thought there were some interesting points here as I read through this story. Peter denied knowing the Christ three times just as Jesus had told him he would. And when Peter knew that he had denied the Christ just as it had been foretold, he left and wept bitterly. And I wondered about what “wept bitterly” meant. Probably “wept bitterly” portrays just how much remorse there was in that horrifying acknowledgment that he did what he said he would never do, and what Jesus said he would do. One of the things that I thought was interesting was that in verse 61 it says that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. I never thought about that until I was preparing for today, and I thought, “I wonder what that look was.” Do you wonder what that look was? When the cock crows and Jesus turns

and looks at Peter, do you suppose that was a look from Jesus of disappointment? Do you suppose, maybe, it was a look of sadness? Do you suppose, maybe, it was a look of confirmation? You know I get a look once in awhile from Linda, and I get a pretty good idea of what that look means at the time. But did you ever wonder what that look meant from Jesus?

The rest of the story that I want to continue with is found in John. this is kind of an after the fact story. Jesus’ disciples had gone fishing. In verse 3 of the twenty first chapter of John, “Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.” (Remember, these were commercial fishermen of this time, but that night they caught nothing.) “But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. And Jesus saith unto them, Children, have you any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

“Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

“As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.”

Now, this is the part to which I want you to pay attention. “So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.”

Did you ever get the connection that Peter had denied Jesus three times, and at this time, He asks Peter three times if he loves Him? Do you think Peter understood that - that he got that connection? I think he did. Instead of rebuking Peter for his failures, Christ was giving him another chance to prove himself. Christ was not looking at Peter’s past. He was looking at what Peter can do for the future. Christ was not concerned about Peter’s resume. He was concerned about Peter’s redemption.

So the thought that I want to leave you with is that your failures are not fatal. God has put in place a cycle, a system so that you can come closer to Him again. I think Commander Waddle recognized that cycle. Whether or not he considered it to be a Christian cycle, I think he might have; but he said the first thing he needed to do was to humble himself. The second thing he had to do was disclose the

truth - He had to express exactly what had happened. And the third thing he had to do was offer a sincere apology.

Our failures offer us a similar opportunity. They allow us to become more dependent upon God. They allow us to keep humble. They also give us the opportunity to appreciate the mercy and the forgiveness of God's love.

Blessing of Children The Service Theme

In introducing the service Sunday, October 17, 2005 Elder Michael Jordison read the account of Jesus blessing the children in the Americas after His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. Fire encircled the little ones and the angels ministered to them as their parents watched. The account is given in Third Nephi 8:12; 23-27. Elder Jordison also read Doctrine and Covenants 28:13 in which the redemption of little ones by the sacrifice of Jesus is declared, but they are placed in the care of parents who are to teach them so they can remain clean and holy, "So great things may be required at the hands of their fathers."

Michael then asked for volunteer prayers in behalf of the little one to be blessed and his family. After four persons responded, those immediately involved in the blessing were called forward. Patriarch Verle Cornish and Elder H. Alan Smith, grandfathers of Elisha Joseph Cornish, took their places before the microphone. Peter and Erin brought the baby and presented him for the blessing. He lay cradled in his grandfather Cornish's arms while grandfather Smith pronounced the blessing. Elder Douglas Smith gave the sermon that followed.

Jesus gave a prophecy of our time when He spoke to the people in ancient America, and told them of His desire for our children. This prophecy is found in Third Nephi 10:1-4 and verses 21-22: "But if they will repent, and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant, and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance, and they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob; And also, as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem; And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst, and then shall the work of the Father commence, at that day even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people."

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee." This morning we have come together for Eli's blessing, but we are not coming begging God to do something. God wants to bless Eli, and all children. His plan for all children is for them to live in peace, without fear, and to be taught of God.

We read of this in Doctrine and Covenants 45:10a,d: "And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them; and Satan shall be bound that he shall have no place in the hearts of the children of men. ... They shall multiply and wax

strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation, for the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their King and their lawgiver."

God's desire is for Satan to be bound, and for our children to grow up without sin unto salvation. This is the blessing that the Lord desires to give - the blessing everyone should have. So when they brought little ones to Jesus, we read in Matthew 19:13-15: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them, saying, There is no need, for Jesus hath said, Such shall be saved. But Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid hands on them, and departed thence."

Jesus said, let them come, do not prevent them, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Why would he say that? It's not because children are inherently good, but because of Jesus' sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice made them alive in Him, until they can learn to choose God to be their Father. Christ dies for all, and all sin has been atoned for in Him.

One John 2:1-2, reads, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin and repent, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Jesus Christ being the propitiation for our sins means that He is the atoning sacrifice that made it possible for little children to be free from sin without baptism; and the Disciples could rightly declare that Jesus had said of little children that "Such shall be saved".

Jesus came to destroy all the works of the Devil. Would you not agree that the things you have done in your life to hurt others, that have caused pain and sorrow to those around you, have not been the works of God? Would you not agree that those things have been sinful? 1 John 3:8 declares that sin comes from the devil, and it is the intent of Jesus to destroy all the works of the devil. "He that continueth in sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The work is already done! All there is left is for us to accept or refuse it. And those who do not have the ability or knowledge to make that choice, are covered by Christ's sacrifice. So children are a part of the kingdom and have salvation - not because they don't act selfishly or hurt each other, but because they don't know to choose to do differently.

Moroni 8:9,13, 25-26 is a specific statement of the condition of little children in the sight of God. "Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me.

"But little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a respecter to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism.

"For behold that all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all they that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, can not repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing."

Little children are alive in Christ, so they are a part of the kingdom. And if we want to be a part of the kingdom, we must be

like them. We have to be humble. Little children are humble without choice. They would die immediately after birth if there was no one to care for them. But we must humble ourselves, and accept that we have sinned, and accept the Lord's sacrifice for our sin.

Moroni 8:11 states: "Behold I say unto you, that this thing shall ye teach, repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children: and their little children need no repentance, neither baptism."

Verse 29 continues, "And the first--fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins; and the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart, cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God."

So Jesus calls us to come to live with God, through Him. Jesus lived his life as an example for us, so that we would know the way. In his blessing, as in his baptism, Jesus showed us what we should do. In Luke 2:25-35 we read; "And behold, there was a man at Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child, even Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph, and Mary, marveled at those things which were spoken of the child.

"And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; Yea, a spear shall pierce through him to the wounding of thine own soul also; that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

That the blessing contained the prophesy that Simeon pronounced concerning the death of Jesus, pierced by a sword that would pierce her soul as well, must have been difficult for Mary to bear. But that prophecy, along with the death of Jesus, should pierce our souls as well since it was for us that He died.

And so it was that in the experience of which Michael spoke recorded in Third Nephi 8:12-27, Jesus commanded the people to bring their children to Him, and he blessed the children one by one then prayed for them and angels came to minister to them in the circle of fire. Those children all followed the Lord, and to the third and fourth generation their children did likewise, Fourth Nephi 1:17-19 describes the results; "And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people. And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; And surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God: ..."

In Matthew 19, Jesus commanded his disciples to let the little ones come to Him, and to, "Forbid them not," That command is still

to us today. So why would we forbid them? Who would not deserve such a blessing? I have had parents say they didn't want their child blessed because there was not a church building to do it in where the family could come together. I have also heard people say that children should not be blessed because of their parents' sin; and I have had to ask, "What wrong has the child done? Why would God not want to bless this child because the parents are in sin? Would not such a child be in need of even a greater blessing?"

We may think that these are extreme examples of things that we would never do, but we need to understand that the worst way that we forbid children receiving the blessing of the Father is that we are content to live without Zion, so all children can be blessed. We are content not to have God's desire to be our desire. God's desire is found in Doctrine and Covenants 45:10d: "They shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation, for the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their King and their lawgiver." We prevent that by not building a society where children can grow unto salvation without sin.

By being content to just "bless" Eli as he grows in this world, we prevent the blessing God wants to give him. God desires not just that he be blessed, but that he will live in the blessing of the kingdom. James 2:16-17 puts it very well. "For if a brother or sister be naked and destitute, and one of you say, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled; notwithstanding he give not those things which are needful to the body; what profit is your faith unto such? Even so faith, if it have not works is dead, being alone." Just saying to be blessed, but not being willing to work and sacrifice to provide the things he needs does not profit us at all. Eli needs the kingdom!

Eli needs to live in Zion. If we are content to let him grow up in a world of sin and perversion, then we are keeping him from the blessing the Lord has for him. And not just for Eli, but for billions of others in the world. People are dying to hear. Do you remember what it meant to you when you came to the Lord? I do. While some of you may have heard his testimony, I want to share it again.

I had a childhood friend, Lee Lombard. Lee was difficult for even his mother to handle. When she took him to the doctor, Instead of medicating the boy, the doctor gave her tranquilizers to help her cope. Lee was a leader, and I was a follower, and so at one time did a number of bad things. Although I felt bad about doing them, when Lee would propose them again, if I said I didn't want to, Lee would remind me that I was already bad because I had done them before and doing them again could not make me worse.

Then I heard about a man named Jesus, who was the Son of God. They said He could make me clean clean, and give me a chance to begin again. I wanted that more than anything in the world, so I was baptized at the age of eight years and one day. Doug described the feeling of cleansing that he had as he came up out of the water. He demonstrated how he looked up and allowed the water to drain off of his face, and he felt - so clean.

Two weeks later when Lee urged me to do the bad things, I said, "No! I don't have to do those things any more. I have been baptized!" And I ran home and told my mother all the things we had done, and how I had been able to refuse this time. I think my mother showed some of the grace of God in that I wasn't punished. She told me that I was right. I was free now, and did not need to do those things any more.

People need to live in the the kingdom, and God is sending them to you to hear about it. On a recent trip to Tanzania I met Nicholas Opino. He had worked with Paul Makawiti but had lost his

job for some reason not known to me at the time. Nicholas had heard that the missionaries who had recently taught Paul the gospel were coming to Tanzania. One night he dreamed that they had arrived and were at Paul's house. So the next morning he walked about four hours to see whether his dream was true.

Nicholas found the missionaries in Paul's house, just as he had dreamed and was there for the services of the day. After the activities of the day, we took him home in a car and continued to teach him. When he heard the gospel, he, too was convinced of its truthfulness and wanted to be baptized. In fact, he seemed almost desperate to be baptized. Later, I heard the rest of the story. Nicholas had lost his job, because he was an alcoholic. He wanted to be free, but the alcohol still had hold of his body. On the morning of his baptism he had three drinks to avoid the "shakes". But since he was baptized, he has not had one drink of alcohol.

Who else needs to hear? How many more generations will need blessing, and not be able to live in the blessing? Let us come, and decide once and for all, that we will no longer forbid the blessings that the Lord has for all the people of the earth to be given; for we have this promise, found in Doctrine and Covenants 77:4a-4e: "Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father has in his own hands, and prepared for you; and ye can not bear all things now; nevertheless be of good cheer, for I will lead you along; the kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours; and the riches of eternity are yours; and he who receiveth all things, with thankfulness, shall be made glorious, and the things of this earth shall be added unto him, even an hundredfold, yea, more; wherefore do the things which I have commanded you, saith your Redeemer, even the Son Ahman, who prepareth all things before he taketh you; for ye are the church of the Firstborn, and he will take you up in the cloud, and appoint every man his portion. And he that is a faithful and wise steward shall inherit all things. Amen."

Zion Will Be

On October 23, Brother Gerald Bolingbroke brought us a message about the coming of Zion. He began his sermon by reading from Fourth Nephi 1:17-20: "And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people. And there were no envying, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; And surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God: There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God;"

As all of us know, we are living in a time when Zion will be. There is much turmoil in the world today. We need to look for the coming of Christ. Satan is trying to capture the minds of men and women. We must always be on our guard that Satan does not influence us.

There are many ways that Satan can lead us astray. There are many ways he can try to influence us. We must pray every day that God will send His spirit to protect us.

A very meaningful scripture comes from I John the, fifth chapter. This scripture tells us we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments. The love of God is shown when we keep His commandments, and they are not hard to keep.

If we are born of God we overcometh the world. We have victory when we overcometh the world by our faith. The person who overcometh the world is the one that believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Verses 11-12 of I John say this is the record that God has given to us, eternal life which is life in his Son. He that has the Son, has life, and he that does not have the Son has not life. Verse 20 tells us that we know that the Son of God is come and has given us understanding that we know him that is true. We are in him that is true even in his Son Jesus Christ who is the true God, and eternal life.

We cannot build Zion by ourselves. Many people have tried to build Zion, and they have failed. This morning I would like to look at the scriptures that talk about Zion and what they say.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 100:3d-3f we find these words "Behold, I say unto you, The redemption of Zion must needs come by power; therefore I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel, for ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham; and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched out arm; and as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be. Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers, Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence; but I say unto you, Mine angels shall go before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land."

The next scripture Brother Bolingbroke asked us to look at was also from the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 6:1 a-c. It talks about the cause of Zion. It was given in March, 1829, and it was addressed to Oliver Cowdery before our church was organized. This scripture is familiar to most of us. It talks about this church is come forth to the children of men, and we are to give heed to his word for He is God. His word is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword which can divide joints and marrow. God tells us again to give heed to His words and keep His commandments and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. It is like Hebrew poetry repeatedly saying "give heed to His words. "

He tells us not to seek for riches but for wisdom and then the mysteries of God shall be unfolded to us, and then we will be made rich, and if we have eternal life we are rich. If we do these things we shall have the means of doing much good to this generation.

The coming forth of this church was truly a great and marvelous work. We have many more truths in this church than the other churches have. Another enlightening scripture comes from Section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants, and it is also about the cause of Zion. It was given to Oliver Cowdery in May of 1829 before the Church was organized.

This scripture tell us again to keep His commandments, seek to bring forth and to establish the cause of Zion, and again to not seek for riches but seek for wisdom and then the mysteries of God will be unfolded to us and then we shall be rich. Again He tells us that if we have eternal life we are rich.

The City of Zion is revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Section 27 of the Doctrine and Covenants in September of 1830. In this scripture God tells the saints to go to the Lamanites and preach the gospel to them; and if they receive His teachings His Church will be established among them, and they will have revelations but not to write them as commandments.

He tells us that no man knows where the City of Zion is, but it shall be revealed. He does tell them, however, that it will be on

the borders by the Lamanites.

The name of the city where Zion was to be established was to be revealed later by the prophet. We know that that city was revealed later as the City of Independence, Missouri, and it would be a place of safety.

It is too bad that the other churches don't see the beauty of this church. They have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. Other scriptures from the Doctrine and Covenants which talk of the cause of Zion are found in Sections 11 and 12.

What is the cause of Zion. I believe it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost as is stated in Romans in the 14th chapter, verse 17, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" and also Galatians 5: 22 and 23. Galatians 5 tells us the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance against such there is no law.

The Lord talked about Zion in Section 42:3. He told the saints to go to the regions westward, and if the people there received them, they should build up churches in every region. God tells us the time shall come when it will be revealed when the city of the New Jerusalem shall be prepared for the gathering. And then they shall be His people and He will be their God.

Christ talked about the New Jerusalem being in this land in 3rd Nephi, chapter 9, verse 58 and 59 which is as follows. Christ tells the people in Central America that this land in which He has fulfilled the covenant that He made with their father Jacob shall be a New Jerusalem. When this New Jerusalem is established, the power of heaven will be in the midst of the people even as He was in the midst of the people who were there in Book of Mormon times. It will be just as when Christ was in the midst of the Book of Mormon people.

In Genesis 7: 70-72 Enoch was told that the New Jerusalem is Zion, and it was revealed in the days of Adam. "And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare; an holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch, Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there; and we will receive them into our bosom; and they shall see us, and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years shall the earth rest.

In the Doctrine and Covenants it talks about Zion being a place of safety in Section 45:13-14. It tells us that the wicked shall be among us and that if we do not want to take our sword against our neighbor, we will have to flee to Zion for safety. In Zion will be the only people who are not at war with one another. And it shall be said among the wicked, Let us not go up to battle against Zion for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible so we cannot stand. This scripture tells us also that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations and shall come to Zion singing with songs of everlasting joy.

There will be the gifts of the spirit such as tongues in Zion. We know of recent testimonies of the gift of tongues as the seventy have ministered in foreign lands. Brother Bolingbroke continued by telling us a story of the gift of tongues. This is an incident in the Life of Elder D. S. Mills as told by Julia T. Adamson entitled "Obey God

Above All Things"

During the reunion of the Saints at Irvington, California, September, 1907, Sister D.C. Montgomery, on the last Sunday during prayer and testimony meeting, arose and asked permission to repeat a prophecy given by a sister present in 1891. At the time, Brother D. S. Mills came up from the south to attend the reunion. Everyone rejoiced to see him again in this life, as he had been dangerously ill. This is Sister Montgomery's testimony.

Sunday morning they were having a good prayer and testimony meeting when Brother Mills arose. After giving a good talk, he said: "I have a testimony which I wish to leave with you, for I feel that I shall never meet with you again in this life. Just 20 years ago they were holding a conference in this very house. On a Sunday morning they were having a prayer and testimony meeting, just as they were having today, At this meeting a Welsh lady from San Francisco, Sister Bonner, arose and began to speak in an unknown tongue. She turned to an outsider and directed her whole speech toward him. He was a doctor and was accompanied by some other strangers.

When the sister sat down, no one seemed to have the interpretation, so they prayed that it might be given to someone. Then the doctor arose, his face as white death, and said: "I have the interpretation of that tongue, and it was all for me. I know that this old lady did not understand a word she was saying. But she spoke in the purest Latin that I have ever heard since my college days, when I was the Latin critic of my class, and I know well when it is properly spoken."

He was amazed at the message she had given him. He was a staunch Catholic, brought up and educated with the Pope of Rome, whom he counted as one of his best friends. She told him that the church of which he was a member is not recognized of God, and that this Latter Day Saint Church is the only church on earth that God recognizes as his own. She said that it was His will that he withdraw from the Catholic Church and unite with this Church and that it was God's will that he carry this Gospel to His people in Rome. She said that if He failed to do this, the Lord would cut his life short. He did not know what to do, for this was surely of God. Yet how could He accept it and go against his own church?

Brother Mill's home at the time was at the old Mission of San Jose which was situated two miles east of Irvington, and just across the street lived the priest of the mission church. That evening Brother Mills was in his garden when the priest and the doctor who received the prophecy came to him. The priest said that he wanted Brother Mills to tell him what happened at the meeting that day. Brother Mills related the story.

The priest said that was just what the doctor had told him and the doctor had asked the priest for advice. The priest was very much astonished, and he did not know what to advise. He knew it must have been from God, yet he could not give counsel that would conflict with his church. He asked Mr. Mills, what he would do. Brother Mills answered and told the priest that he would advise him to obey God above all things and to obey that command, for he was told that if he failed to comply, his life would be cut short. Then the priest told Brother Mills that he dare not interfere, and he would send the doctor to the bishop at Oakland.

A few days later the doctor and the bishop came to brother Mills and received the same message as before. The bishop was amazed and felt there was something in it, and he must not advise against the message. On the other hand the bishop said that he must not advise anything that conflicts with his church. He suggested the

doctor consult with the Pope at Rome. Brother Mills told the doctor and priest that he would advise him to consult no man on earth, but to obey God.

The doctor started for Rome, as his ministers advised, but he died on the way. At the time that this incident occurred, the doctor and his wife were visiting his brother-in-law and his wife in Irvington. Brother Mills remembered their names and that everyone living in the vicinity knew them.

After the meeting Sister Montgomery was walking with her two children when a lady spoke to her. She said to Sister Montgomery that she saw her at the meeting that morning. She asked Sister Montgomery if she was a Latter Day Saint. Sister Montgomery told her that she was.

The lady told Sister Montgomery that the Latter Day Saints had great faith and that Brother Mills' testimony was truly marvelous. The lady said that at the close of the meeting she went and called upon the relatives of the doctor. She told the relatives of Brother Mills' testimony, and they (the doctor's relatives) said that it was true, every word of it, just as Brother Mills had told it.

This story shows how important the Restoration Gospel is. Brother Bolingbroke closed with the thought that Zion will be established, and it may not be too long before it is. He closed with a scripture from Genesis 9:21-23, "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch; that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself. And this is mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth, and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy; And the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. And this is mine everlasting covenant, which I made with thy father Enoch."

Elder White had a vision of Zion in 1885. He was concerned about the redemption of Zion. He had the voice of God speak to him about this matter. The voice spoke to him and said I will redeem Zion in this way. Then brother White saw a vision where he saw a bright red ring around Independence and a portion of the surrounding country.

Brother White understood the voice of God spoke to him and said "I will not suffer any person to live inside this ring except those that keep the celestial law." He said His elders would receive an endowment, the same endowment that Peter received when He judged Ananias and Sapphira. He said all those whose words have been just and true, all those in whose hearts there was no guile or deceit, can abide the judgment. He also told Brother White that the following people will not be able to abide the judgment: All those who forgive with their lips, but not with their hearts; all those who have not spoken the true sentiments of their own hearts. The voice said that He would sanctify a larger region where people will be able to redeem the wastes places outside Zion.

Brother Joseph Burton also had a vision of Zion in May of 1878. In his vision, he saw, near the center of this continent, a large temple, facing west, which was surrounded by an evergreen wall at an equal distance from the temple on either side. At the northwest corner stood a man who was pleasing to look upon.

A man came out of the temple and walked down the steps, and to the gate. He was called a servant. He who stood at the gate guarding the entrance put a palm-leaf fan, which was composed of

a great many small leaves of the same shape. He had bound to his left arm in bright golden letters the words, "Bind up the testimony. Seal up the law."

The servant went on his mission, traveling rapidly and crying his message with a loud voice to the inhabitants of the earth. Soon he neared a town, and Burton saw a crowd of men with dark countenances, armed with guns, knives, clubs and stones, determined to take the servant's life.

The servant saw and apparently knew of their evil designs but heeded them not. As he neared the angry mob, a way was made for him through their midst. It was as if there was a great chain at a distance from him on either side, over which the angry mob had no power to harm him. They tried to stab him, but fell backward powerless. He passed through their midst calm as a child, only shouting his message of, "Bind up the testimony! Seal up the law." The servant went on his way over the country, through cities and towns, and villages, fearless and unharmed. Occasionally he would stop to give a leaf to the children who always seemed pleased to see him. They received the leaf with gladness.

Burton saw judgments coming on the earth after this.

Then Burton saw and heard in a clear, full voice from one "Mighty and Strong," the words, "Come home! Come home," the sound of which filled the whole earth. But none of all the inhabitants of the earth heard it except the children, those whom the "servants" had given a leaf. Burton noticed other servants returning with a stalk without leaves. The one "servant" returned and was told, "You have done well and have been faithful."

We need to be a people who will be able to reside in Zion. Let us keep the commandments and pray that Zion will be redeemed soon.

Brother Bolingbroke ended his message by reminding us that we had heard some scriptures about Zion, seeing that Zion cannot be built by men but must be built by Christ. We must pray that Christ will come back soon so Zion can be established.

An Invitation to Draw Apart and Worship

Priest Gordon Winkler was in charge of the music service that began with a prayer of invocation and the acceptance of the morning offering. Brother Winkler introduced the service as one that would be a mixture of songs, scriptures and a story. "We are going to sing together songs that direct us to separate ourselves from the world" he said, "to come apart and take this time to be with your Heavenly Father. You are not to worry about Friday of last week. You don't have to worry about Monday. Monday is going to come anyway. Separate yourselves and be apart this morning. We are going to share songs and scriptures this morning that testify that Christ is alive and we should confess His name to those in the world with whom we come in contact. We are going to sing and we are going to read scriptures that instruct us to speak and to teach the precious things of the gospel

"We are also going to share in ministry from our brothers and sisters in our congregation who have selected music and songs that express their relationship to a God worthy of being praised, who rejoices in hearing from His children that they have taken this day to worship Him. Then I have a story I want to share with you - a story of our national heritage.

We begin this morning by listening to a scripture read by Gerry Boilingbroke from the Doctrine and Covenants, section 8536. "Therefore, verily I say unto you, my friends, Call your solemn assembly, as I have commanded you; and as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning even by study, and also by faith. Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing, and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God; that your incomings may be in the name of the Lord; that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord; that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High."

The congregation responded singing the hymn, "Come Ye Apart. It is the Lord Who Calls Us. And O, what tenderness is in his tone!"

Jazmyn Galusha and Laura Swartz sang, "Our God is an Awesome God". Their clear young voices blended beautifully as they emphasized their declaration with appropriate actions as well as tonal inflections.

Alan and Valle Smith followed. Valle explained, "When we were trying to find something to share this morning, we came upon a song in our hymnal that we thought particularly spoke to us as we were having discussions about the church, where we are and where we are going as a group." Pat Bolingbroke accompanied them as they sang: "O God, send heralds that never falter, who dare to walk where Christ has set his feet. Who know the church as beacon and as altar where human need and your abundance meet " The song goes on to enumerate some of the needs the church is called to fulfill and asks again for heralds who know how to set us free to eagerly respond, "Here am I! send me."

Jim Barber read I Corinthians 15:50-58, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The congregation responded with the beloved hymn, "Lift your Glad Voices in triumph on high, for Jesus has risen and man cannot die!"

Jordan Thomas played three piano pieces: "In God's Most Holy Presence", "Fall Leaves" and "Mermaid".

Ken and Jean Schmidt, accompanied by Ken on the guitar, first sang: "In the dark of the midnight have I oft hid my face, while the storm crowds around me, and there's no hiding place. In the crash of the thunder, precious Lord, hear my cry, "Keep me safe 'til the storm passes by. 'Til the storm passes over; 'til the thunder sounds no more; 'til the clouds roll forever from the sky. Hold me fast, Let

me stand in the hollow of thy hand. Keep me safe 'til the storm passes by."

Ken then invited the congregation to join them and their daughter Sariah singing "Walk in the Spirit of Love, walk in the spirit of love. Love one another as Jesus loves you. Walk in the spirit of love." The other verses charge us to live and serve and walk in the spirit of love.

Cathy Akers read Doctrine and Covenants 3:16-18: "Behold, this is my doctrine: Whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church; whosoever declareth more or less than this, the same is not of me, but is against me; therefore, he is not of my church. And now, behold, whosoever is of my church, and endureth of my church to the end, him will I establish upon my Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against him. And now, remember the words of him who is the life and light of the world, your Redeemer, your Lord, and your God. Amen."

The congregation sang in response, "Church of Christ in Latter Days, Rise, Fulfill your destiny. Meet the challenge of this hour. Serve in love and unity."

Yvonne Galusha, accompanied by the guitar, sang, "How beautiful is the body of Christ". The song praises God for the sacrifice of His Son, praises Jesus for His willingness to go even to His death for us and constantly returns to the refrain, "How Beautiful!"

Michael Jordison, accompanied by Samuel, Isabel and Joshua at a second microphone and accompanying them all on his guitar sang a song of the amazing God whose creation is "Indescribable". The song declares "From the highest of heights to the depths of the sea, creation is revealing Your majesty". "From the colors of fall to the fragrance of spring,, every creature unique in the song that it sings." "You placed the stars in the sky and You know them by name." Then it uses such descriptive terms as indescribable, uncontainable, all powerful, untamable! "Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim, You are amazing, God!"

Linda Winkler read: 2 Nephi 14:3-6: "And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels, save it were by the Holy Ghost? Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye can not understand them, it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark. For behold, again I say unto you, that if ye will enter in by the way and receive the Holy Ghost, it will shew unto you all things what ye should do."

Again the congregation gave an appropriate response as we sang, "O, teach me, Lord. Teach even me, the precious things thou dost impart, and wing your words that they may reach the hidden depths of of many a heart.

Gordon spoke telling us he was going to share a short story from the book, "Under God." From the author's preface he read, "When we decided to embark upon creating this book, we decided to use King David as our model. He was a man after God's own heart, but he was also a murderer and an adulterer. And though David repented of his errors, they haunted him the rest of his life. In the same way, our forefathers left some things undone, and along the way our nation plunged into some dark traditions. Ours is a heritage of light and ours is a heritage of darkness. This book is a collection of short stories about our heritage."

Gordon commented that we lost part of our national heritage

during the recent past when a lady by the name of Rosa Parks recently died at age ninety two. He was preparing to read a short story about Rosa, who, he said did something that was pretty unremarkable at the time, but which ended up being a remarkable part of our national heritage. Here is her story:

“Rosa Parks was tired, so tired that she decided to take the bus home. She had been pressing slacks all day at her job. Her feet hurt and her back and shoulders ached. The first bus that came past had standing room only, so she decided to wait for the next bus in hopes of getting a seat. During her wait she remembered why she often walked home. Riding the bus took its toll on her dignity. The segregation laws in force in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, seem unbelievable today, but they were a reality for thousands of blacks in the South.

“Take the restrictions on riding the bus, for instance. Even though the majority of people riding the busses were people of color, the front four rows of seats were always reserved for white passengers. It was common to see people standing in the back of the bus while the first four rows remained empty. Behind the “reserved for white” section was a middle section where African Americans could sit if the seats were not already occupied by white customers. If just one white customer, however, needed a seat in the center section, all those already seated had to move.

“Even getting on the bus was an elaborate process for black people. They would pay their fare in the front, exit and reboard the bus at the back. Rosa died a little each time she found herself face to face with this kind of discrimination. In fact, Rosa had once been thrown off a bus for refusing to reboard at the back door.

Finally a second bus came, and to Rosa’s joy, there were a few seats available in the middle section - no man’s land! Rosa climbed the stairs, put her dime in the fare box, climbed back down the stairs, hurried to the back door of the bus, climbed up the stairs and made it through the aisle in time to find that there was still a seat available. She sat down in the row just behind the white section. What relief - for a minute! The bus picked up more riders, and the front section of the bus filled up. When the driver noticed a white man standing in the aisle, he ordered four people, including Rosa, to give up their seats.

At first no one moved. The bus driver said, “You all better make it light on yourselves and give up those seats.” The other three riders did as they were told, but Rosa knew that to do so would be wrong, and she quietly refused to get up.

“I’m gonna call the police,” the bus driver said. “Go ahead and call them,” said Rosa. She was tired, true, but even more she was tired of giving in. It wasn’t just the bus. It was the whites only restaurant, the drinking fountain, the elevators marked “Colored”, and the unspoken intimidation that were all a part of daily life in a place that did not treat all its citizens as equal. Rosa remembered, “I was tired of seeing so many men treated as boys and not called by their proper names or titles. I was tired of seeing children and women mistreated and disrespected because of the color of their skin. I was tired of legally enforced racial segregation. I thought of the pain and the years of oppression and the mistreatment my people had suffered. Fear was the last thing I thought of that day. I put my trust in the Lord for guidance and help to endure whatever I faced. I knew I was sitting in the right seat.”

“Rosa later wrote, “I felt the presence of God on the bus and heard His quiet voice as I sat there waiting for the police to take me to the station. There were people on the bus that knew me, but no one said a word to help or to encourage me. I was lonely, but I was

at peace. The voice of God told me that He was by my side.”

“As Rosa waited for the police to come, she thought about her life in the segregated South. Born in 1913, she had grown up on a farm with her mother, her brother and her grandparents. They were very poor and worked hard to raise enough food to feed themselves. Rosa’s mother, a school teacher, taught whenever she could, but also took in sewing and worked as a hair dresser. Rosa’s grandparents picked corn, peanuts, sweet potatoes on nearby plantations with little Rosa working alongside of them. It was so common for African American children to work all day in the fields that Rosa’s school closed three months earlier than the school for white children, and unlike white children’s school, Rosa’s school was little more than a shack with windows, a few desks, and only a few books.

“Rosa was raised as a devout Christian. She grew up attending church where her uncle served as a preacher. She recalls reading the Bible with her grandmother and their daily devotions before heading into the cotton field. Prayer and the Bible became part of her everyday thought and belief. Rosa learned to put her trust in God, and to keep Him as her strength.

“Rosa remembered how, as a young girl, walking through a white neighborhood in Montgomery she was pushed from behind by a white boy. Instead of walking on and pretending nothing had happened, which was the expected behavior, Rosa turned around and pushed the boy back. His mother was shocked! “How dare you touch a white boy?” Rosa replied, “I don’t want to be pushed by your son, or anyone else”, and she calmly walked away. She had tried to work within the system. She remembered her struggles to help the African American citizens get registered to vote. She remembered her years as youth advisor for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Remembering these things put a determination within Rosa. She had never been one to ignore acts of injustice. What was going on was not fair, not in the eyes of man - not in the eyes of God! It was time for action.

“When the police arrived, Rosa calmly asked, “Why do you push us around?” The officer replied, “I don’t know, but the law is the law. You are under arrest.” When the officers asked her to stand up and get off the bus, Rosa quietly obeyed. They drove her to the police station and fingerprinted her as though she was a criminal. Before they put her in a jail cell, they allowed her one phone call, and she called a prominent member of the NAACP who was a lawyer. Rosa was bailed out of jail for one hundred dollars and suggested that Rosa appeal her case to challenge the segregationist laws that had led to her arrest.

“Rosa’s husband and her mother had some real concern about Rosa’s personal safety, but they all agreed that it was time to act. Rosa later recalled, “As I sat in the jail cell behind bars, I felt as if the world had forgotten me. but I felt God’s presence with me in the jail cell.” The ministers in the center’s African American congregations lent their support. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made seven thousand leaflets encouraging African Americans to boycott the Montgomery City Bus System on Monday, December the fifth. A meeting that night drew an overflow crowd numbering in the thousands. What began as a one day boycott lasted three hundred and eighty one days.

“Continuing the boycott was neither comfortable nor convenient. Some people walked miles to work. Others rode bikes or shared rides. For more than a year, in the cold pouring rain and in the blistering heat of summer, the black community worked together in their one hundred percent cooperation. They were deter-

mined to pay the price to see change. As the months went by, Rosa's case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Rosa won! December 21st, 1956 Rosa sat in the front row of a newly integrated city bus

"Both Rosa and her husband lost their jobs and were considered unemployable as a result of their part in the boycott. They were also harassed with phone calls, letters, verbal threats and intimidations. The family moved to Detroit, Michigan in 1957 and for the next eight years they struggled financially until Rosa was hired as a staff assistant to a U.S. Congressman.

"In later years, Rosa was hailed as the mother of the Civil Rights Movement and received many awards and honors. Among them was a seventy seventh birthday celebration in the nation's capitol in 1990 which was attended by government dignitaries, prominent entertainers, and a host of African American leaders. Here Rosa was praised for her beautiful qualities of dignity and indomitable faith that with God, nothing can stop us. "In 1999 President Clinton awarded Rosa the congressional medal of honor, the nation's highest civil award."

Gordon commented, "Here's a quote from Rosa Parks, "I have learned that in order to bring about change you must not be afraid to take the first step. We will fail when we fail to try. Each and every one of us can make a difference." He continued, "I thought that was a really inspiring story. It's about a lady that was no more than a normal person who wanted to sit on a bus because she was tired. She changed the course of our nation. I just thought as I read that story that my hope is that we can be as Rosa was when she said, "I put my trust in the Lord for guidance and help to endure whatever I faced. I knew I was sitting in the right seat." I hope each one of you can look around and think that you are sitting in the right seat."

Sue Beck sang the beloved hymn, "If suddenly upon the street, My gracious Savior I should meet, And He should say, "As I love thee, What love hast thou to offer Me?" Then what would this poor heart of mine Dare offer to that heart divine?" The hymn goes on to remind us that we could not get away with just speaking of our love for Him and others but would have to show that love by acting upon it

Brother Winkler read the admonition of II Peter 1:4-8: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The congregation sang "Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all ", healing, blessing, easing burdens, lifting those who fall. In song we asked our Lord, Jesus to take our hands and make them gentle, kind and quick to work for all, even as did His.

Sherman Phipps was to offer the benediction. He asked the entire congregation to gather around him at the pulpit while he prayed, "Oh Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to gather together this morning. We thank you for Your great kindness in blessing us with Your Spirit, Your Presence. Father I thank you for the gifts of my brothers and sisters who have shared with us here this morning. Lord, I know that there are many in this group - perhaps all who are in this group have a desire to serve you and to know your will for their lives, and I pray, Father, that You would indeed,

forgive us of our sins, that You would continue to seek after us and not turn away from us even though we oft times are unworthy. Father, I pray that Your purpose in creating each one of us might be realized and that the will of the adversary might not be realized in our lives.

"Lord, I pray that each one of us might find burning within ourselves- within our hearts - the hope and the peace and the sureness that comes from knowing that every word which proceeds out of Your mouth will be fulfilled - that all of the words of the prophets will bear fruit. We pray, Father, that we might put our faith in You, that we might learn humility, that we might follow wherever You would have us to go- that we might submit ourselves unto You knowing that in doing so, we shall receive all things that You have promised to us. We pray it in the name of Your Son, Jesus."

Pat Bolingbroke, who had accompanied all of the congregational singing, played for the postlude, the hymn of praise and petition, "O, God Our Help In Ages Past, Our hope for years to come, Our shelter from the stormy blast Be Thou our guard while troubles last and our eternal home!"

News and Notes

South Iowa Group Plans

Members of the South Iowa Group met at Decatur City Restoration Branch October 22 to review reports on the recent Retreat held at Jericho Hills near Lucas and to plan for the future. The next retreat has been set for September 22-24, 2006. Since September 22 is the anniversary of the date on which Joseph Smith received the plates from which the Book of Mormon is translated, themes from that book will be featured.

The South Iowa group is an informal association of Restoration congregations, principally located in south and eastern Iowa, north-east Missouri and western Illinois, who meet, usually on the third Saturday of each a month, for a full morning and early afternoon of worship, study, fellowship and planning. All persons in the area interested in promoting the Lord's work are urged to attend.

Retreat Rich in Physical and Spiritual Blessings

Fifteen members of the congregation attended the South Iowa Retreat at Jericho Hills Camp Ground north of Lucas September 23-25. Others attending were from south and eastern Iowa, western Illinois and the Independence, Missouri area. "Come Follow Me", the theme of the weekend, was constantly before us from the moment we assembled for the first mixer under the leadership of Ron and Di Smith until the last preaching service with the Mount Ayr congregation in charge and Seventy Simmons preaching, was finished. Seventy Neil Simmons and Elder Doug Patterson were the guest ministers. Classes were enjoyed by all ages from nursery to adult.

One particularly beneficial feature of the weekend was a session in which Seventy Neil Simmons, Seventy Ron Smith and Elder Mark Dettrick answered questions about two activities that have caused many who are not informed a great deal of concern. Mark is on the credentials Committee of the group calling for a joint conference of Restoration Branches to be held in Independence, November 10-13. Ron and Neil are among those invited to participate in the discussions of the Peace and Justice Committee of the Community of Christ that has invited Restoration members to

confer with them about the differences that divide the groups. All three men expressed their desire to share information with anyone who is interested.

Pre-baptismal Classes in Session

Five members of a pre baptismal class are meeting regularly during the church school hour under the direction Of Pastor Alan Smith. Other participants are invited.

New Member Receives Gifts

Gable Galusha, whose recent baptism was reported in the last Newsletter, was presented a leather bound Book of Mormon by outgoing Pastor, Robert Rolfe. The book was inscribed with a number of scriptural references Brother Rolfe thought of especial value for Gable. He was also given his baptismal certificate and cautioned to take good care of it because, with the new homeland security measures in effect, in the future it may be necessary to have more than one authoritative document to establish ones identity.

Cornish Baby Blessed

Seventy seven members of the Smith and Cornish families and their friends and church family assembled at the Mount Ayr Restoration church on October 16 for services in which Eilsha Joseph Cornish, infant son of Erin (Smith) and Peter Cornish was blessed. The entire service, with Elder Douglas Smith as guest minister, is reported under the title, "Blessing of Children, Theme of Service." All present were invited to enjoy the food and fellowship of a meal provided by the families.

Counselors Approved

Elder H. Alan Smith, recently elected Pastor of the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch, presented the names of those whom he had chosen to be his counselors at the business meeting held Sunday afternoon, October 23. The names of those selected and approved were Robert Rolfe, Gordon Winkler, Rondey Bastow and Michael Jordison.

Alan announced that he had divided the congregation into quadrants with each Counselor responsible to see that the members in his quadrant receives the ministry needed. In each quadrant it is planned to have a program of ministry in worship, outreach, fellowship and service. Each member of the Pastorate will have responsibility for oversight of the general branch activities for a month at a time. Alan will take charge for October, Gordon Winkler for November and Michael Jordison for December.

During the brain storming session that followed ideas were presented for reaching out to the many Mexican families moving into our area, Jan Jordison starting a group for young women who work, instituting a people helping people program with Sue Beck the contact person because of her position in public health, the possibility of putting services on the radio at Lamoni as the Cameron Branch does at Cameron, etc.

Dates were set for a number of planned activities. Thanksgiving dinner will be held November 20. Since there will be no cantata this Christmas, there will be an informal sing-through of the Messiah after the Zionics dinner on December 4. We will participate in the Mount Ayr Window walk featuring the scriptural story of Christmas December 10. We will adopt a family from the Mount Ayr Neighborhood Council as we always do. December 18 is our caroling party at which we carol for and distribute goodies to our shut-in and elderly members and friends. The next weekend fast for the souls of those who know not God will be held the second weekend of January. Details will be announced later, but it is

anticipated that we will break our fast with a soup dinner at the church on Sunday, January 8, 2006.

Participation in Conference Considered

The Business meeting of October 23 was asked to determine whether the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch would participate in the Conference of Restoration Branches called for November 10-13 at the Stone Church in Independence, Missouri, and if so, who would they send as delegates. It was decided to participate and delegates were chosen. Robert Rolfe will represent the Pastorate with Ronald Smith, Michael Jordison and Mildred Smith representing the 71 baptized members registered in the branch. Gordon Winkler, Di Smith, Jim Barber and Gerald Bolingbroke were chosen alternates. A proposal of affirmations for consideration by the conference was submitted by Yvonne Galusha which was also considered. While the intent of the proposal was generally accepted, it was voted to table the proposal until a new preamble could be published with it assuring everyone that it was not an effort to bind anyone to a creed. The final decision is expected to be made early in November.

Congregation Fills Barrel For Liberia

Ron and Di Smith delivered a fifty gallon barrel, packed with clothes, food, Christmas gifts, books, school supplies and what have you, to Kansas City October 27 to be shipped to Liberia for use by the Saints in ministry. Pat Bolingbroke and the Smiths, all of whom recently returned from an educational mission there, supervised the collection and packing of the supplies.

The Saints in Liberia care for some 260 children in their school and orphanage to which the educational mission gave special ministry under the direction of Elder Randy Vick, in charge of a United Nations mission there. The barrel packed by the Mount Ayr Saints joined similar barrels filled by other Restoration congregations for shipment.

Women Attend Retreat

Cathy Nelson, leader of the Mount Ayr Women's Department, and Mildred Smith attended a Restoration Women's Retreat at Lake Doniphan near Excelsior Springs, Missouri, October 15-16. The theme of the gathering was taken from Doctrine and Covenants 1, "Prepare Ye For That Which Is to Come". High Priest Marlin Guin gave a power point presentation on "Preparing for the Coming of the Lord". There were classes on Home, family and personal dedication and sanctification. A special guest speaker was a Christian missionary to Israel who spoke of the happenings in that country as the Jews anticipate the coming of their Messiah and the Christians anticipate His return. Mildred participated in a panel on "How Grandma Did It?", an exploration of ways to cope without modern conveniences, especially in time of devastating occurrences such as have recently touched so many of the world's people.

Congregation Celebrates a Hallowed Evening

For the second year in a row, the congregation celebrated Hallowe'en with a hay ride at the Jim and Linda Barber farm home near Bethany, Missouri. Riding on hay bales behind Jim and his tractor as he took us to the wooded area where he and Linda have built a cozy cabin overlooking a six acre pond was exhilaration for adults and excitement for the many children on the wagon. Even Lucky, the big, friendly yellow dog, seemed to enjoy it. From the horseback rides and the romps with the dogs the children got at the house to the ride on the wagon, the scavenger hunt, the food

provided by Di and Linda, the campfire led by Ron and Di, all was rich ministry.

Sherman Phipps, our Halloween campfire storyteller, assured us that we worship a God who can do anything He chooses to do. He told us three stories: (1) of how he learned to pray as a child because he was afraid of the dark; (2) of a time his family's less than adequate automobile drove through water so deep that the lights were obliterated without a drop coming inside the car, without the engine of the old vehicle drowning out, and without the family even knowing they were driving through water until the lights began to shine again after the car cleared the water; (3) of a bike ride recently that would, without the intervention of the power of God, have been fatal.

Last summer, Jennifer allowed Cody to go on a bike trip with his grandfather. Knowing that bike riding is dangerous, Sherman always prays before riding. This past summer he had his grandson with him riding down a Texas highway at some sixty miles an hour when a car passed them and pulled off the road just a little way ahead. Sherman slowed a bit but kept going when all of a sudden, the car pulled out making a U turn in the highway right in front of him! There was no time to stop and no where to go! Sherm came face to face with the girl driver as she screamed in horror at what was about to happen. But the next second, Sherm and Cody were on the other side of the car, going down the highway as if nothing had happened.

Sherm pulled off the road and checked on Cody. He was fine. Right then and there, they offered a prayer of thanksgiving for the divine intervention that saved all of their lives. Sherm finished his story with the reaffirmation, he is convinced the Lord can do anything he chooses to do; and he says he thinks God has something in mind for Cody!

The return trip behind the lantern lit tractor under the starlit heavens was a perfect benediction for another wonderful Halloween celebration of the Mount Ayr Restoration family - truly a Hallowed Evening!

Delbert Smith's little ditty that he always passed out to Halloween trick or treaters proved once again to be true. "Halloween spirits spread fright and fear, but God's Holy Spirit brings love and cheer." He always taped a dime to the message and sometimes gave another treat besides.

Members Serve Elsewhere

Two families have given ministry outside the congregation this month. Rob and Linda Rolfe served in youth camps at Odessa Hills in Missouri and Rob preached at Maysville, MO, Ron Smith preached at Ottumwa and Northeast Des Moines.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
Mount Ayr Restoration Branch
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