

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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Reviewing Reunion

One of the things Valle and I do at the end of each reunion is tally up the evaluation sheets to see how the people who respond feel the week went and what suggestions they have for the next year.

It is always a balancing act between people with different views of what they wanted from the week and how things should be properly done. All in all, the week was felt to be a good one by those responding. There is always some tweaking to be done or schedule changes to be made so that needs of different groups can be met.

I always enjoy reading comments from the people at the reunion to know that the week has made a difference for them. It makes all the effort of so many people worthwhile.

I have enjoyed the opportunity we take on the Sunday after the reunion to share some of the highlights for people in our branch as well. Some of their comments are shared in this month's newsletter.

Greg and Jani Thomas, co-directors of the camp, and their children stopped by for this service with us on their way back to Alabama, and it was good to see them again so soon. They noted how involved our branch is in making the reunion a success. When you stop to think about it, we have two of the seven Seventy active in the Restoration as part of our branch in George Knotts and Ron Smith. And when the list of helpers from our congregation was made for the newsletter, one can see that the reunion truly is an outreach of our branch to the rest of the church.

As we search for how we can best move forward toward the Kingdom, we have to stop and realize how truly blessed we have been as a branch and how we are called to be a blessing to others.

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

Communion, a Call to Repentance

It was the Communion service of June 3, 2007. High Priest Robert Rolfe was in charge. He opened the service with the admonition, "Let us worship the Lord", then read 1 Chronicles 16:8-29: "Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. Remember his marvelous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

"O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

"Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvelous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols; but the Lord made the heavens. Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering, and come before him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." And we sang "Earth and all stars, loud rushing planets, sing to the Lord a new song!"

Our next admonition was "And Center Our minds and hearts on Him".

Brother Rolfe read Luke 12: 24-35: "And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life,

what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. For the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment. Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; nevertheless God feedeth them. Are ye not better than the fowls?

“And who of you by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

“If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast in the oven; how much more will he provide for you, if ye are not of little faith? Therefore, seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind; For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father who is in heaven knoweth that ye have need of these things. And ye are sent unto them to be their ministers, and the laborer is worthy of his hire; for the law saith, That a man shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.

“Therefore seek ye to bring forth the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom” We sang, “My Shepherd will supply my need. Jehovah is His name!” As the song ended, Brother Rolfe commented, “I like that last line, because as a grandfather you know something of what it's like to have a child at home. I read this past week that if God had a refrigerator, he would have your picture on it!”

We were charged to, “Trust the Lord to perform”. Doctrine and Covenants 17:4a and 4b was our scripture: “By these things we know that there is a God in heaven who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth and all things which are in them, and that he created man male and female; after his own image and in his own likeness created he them, and gave unto them commandments that they should love and serve him the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship” We sang “Great Is Thy Faithfulness, O God my Father!”

Michael Jordison sang the appropriate and beautiful hymn, the first stanza of which pleads, “Touch me, Lord, with Thy Spirit Eternal. Stir my soul to respond to Thy call. Take my love, for I offer it freely. Hear my prayer as I trust Thee for all. Hear my prayer as I trust Thee for all “

Priest Kent Clisby was the speaker for the service. He looked directly at the Communion table as he began speaking. Today as we come prepared to take the emblems, we come forward seeking forgiveness, and all the Lord asks is for us to repent - not a big deal, I don't think, except that sometimes for me, I don't have that day long enough to keep repenting of all the things - you know.

In all of the scriptures, in all three books, and I am going to read from all of them, repentance is a big thing. I am going to start in the Third book of Nephi chapter 5 verses 41: “And again I say unto you, Ye must repent, and become as a little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in no wise receive these things. And again I say unto you, Ye must repent, and be baptized in my name, and become as a little child, or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God. Verily, verily I say unto you, that this is my doctrine; and whoso buildeth upon this, buildeth upon my rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.” I like that. He repeats it twice in two verses. Now, the part of a child, I have got that down pretty good! I can do the child thing, but you know I am still trying to build by “My

Doctrine”. I would like to build His house.

In the Bible, at the very beginning - the very beginning, Genesis 6:54-59 Adam is talking with the Lord. “And our father Adam spake unto the Lord, and said, Why is it that men must repent, and be baptized in water? And the Lord said unto Adam, Behold, I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the garden of Eden.” and He goes on to say, you have to repent, you know. You are never going to come unto My kingdom until you finish repenting! Now that's the beginning of to Bible, and near the end of it, not completely the end - 1 John: 2:1 says: “My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin and repent, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;”

In the Doctrine and Covenants 17:6, “And we know that all men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ and worship the Father in his name, and endure in faith on his name to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.” Now, every scripture is talking about repentance or you can't be saved - or you can't go on. And by taking of the emblems that we have set before us this morning, we have that opportunity to start again - to refresh ourselves - become once again one with the Lord Jesus Christ. We can become one body.

I've been working too much. I've had a song running through my head for a long time. I was working this week end. Ron was up in his office, and I asked Ron about it. I do not do the web thing very well, but he Googled and got on and came up with the song that is performed by George Strait and written by Aaron Baker. I play this a lot in my vehicle, and my kids get very sick of it. I'm sorry but I - it's just. I'm hoping I can get through with reading this for you because it emotionally ties with me too much. I love the song. You are lucky I am not going to sing it because I tried several times. It wasn't working well with me, but I will put forth the words. Incidentally, I don't do county music much and George Strait is country, but this song is great;

“I got sent home from school one day with a shiner on my eye. Fightin' was against the rule and it didn't matter why. When Dad got home, I told that story just like I'd rehearsed. And then stood there on trembling' knees and waited for the worst.

And he said, “Let me tell you a story about a father's love. It's a secret that my daddy said was just between us.” He said, “Daddies don't just love their children now and then. It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen.”

When I became a father in the spring of '81, There was no doubt that stubborn boy was just like my father's son. And when I thought my patience had been tested to the end, I took my daddy's secret and I passed it on to him.

And I said, “Let me tell you a secret about a father's love. A secret that my daddy said was just between us.” I said, “Daddies don't just love their children every now and then. It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen.”

Last night I dreamed I died and stood outside those pearly gates, When suddenly I realized there must be some mistake. If they know half the things I've done, they'll never let me in. And then somewhere from the other side I heard these words again.

He said, “Let me tell you a secret about a father's love.

A secret that my daddy said was just between us. He said, "Daddies don't just love their children every now and then. It's a love without end, amen, it's a love without end, amen."

And I don't understand why my kids don't like that. Father's Day is coming up, so I thought it was okay.

The Lord is our Father, and He will grant you. Just ask! I guess that's what I like about this song, You know, we all want to do the best we can, and we don't want to give up in our children - in ourselves as to what we can go on to do. As the person in the song - "I stood outside the pearly gates and suddenly I realized there must be some mistake." Well, that kind of hits home sometimes. You are kind of going, "How did I get there? He doesn't know?" But the book is already written, and your name is on that book. And we have an opportunity to do as He has asked us to do by taking these emblems and believing on His name and work. I'd like to end with this: After this song is done, It's His love that's without end. Amen!"

Baptism - Opportunity For a Lifetime

I know that everybody came for the baptism, so what I have to say is probably superfluous, but I would like to take a few minutes to read a scripture and talk a little bit about baptism and some things that are important to us. For a scripture reading I have chosen Ephesians 4:11-13:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we, in the unity of the faith, all come to a knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; ... "

This is a familiar scripture to many of us because it speaks of the church and the Priesthood, but I would like to speak about it in terms of baptism this morning. As I was thinking about baptisms, it occurred to me that, Sam, you were only about a year old when I had a very special baptism, and you may not remember this story. And Isabel, you weren't even born yet, so you certainly don't remember it from that time, but you probably have heard it since. But I thought I might tell you about the time I baptized a witch doctor. I don't know if you remember that story or not. (A surprised exclamation came from a child who questioned, "A witch doctor?" Ron answered, "A witch doctor!")

I was in Kenya, East Africa, and my brother Doug and I were at Eldoret. We had gone to visit a man named Caleb. When we got to Eldoret, Caleb spoke for a couple of hours to us about how difficult it was to be a Christian. He was living in an area where there weren't any jobs. Unemployment was seventy percent or higher. He hadn't finished high school, so he didn't have marketable skills in a professional way. He was telling us that he was trying to decide what he should do. He said, "Now, if I could be a minister for you" - (thinking that we paid ministers like most people do) - "If I could be a minister for you, then I could feed my family; but if I can't be a minister for you, I will have to go home and take them home. But if I take them home, my father says that I have to inherit his pot of evil things."

We asked more about that and found that his father was a witch

doctor, and he had a big pot with evil things in it - that's the way that Caleb described it - that he had inherited from his father who was a witch doctor. His father had gotten it from his father, so this had been passed down for generations in the family. Caleb, being the oldest son, was supposed to be the guy that got it next. Caleb had apparently talked with some other folks who said, "Well, you know that's your cultural duty. You need to inherit that from your father." But Caleb was worried about being a Christian, and how you could reconcile that.

We opened up the Bible for him and read from Matthew 6:38, "Seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God and establish His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." That was pretty hard to say to somebody whose family doesn't have enough to eat, but I felt like the Spirit was impressing me to say that to him, and that's how we left that night. The next morning Harron Aruna, our host, came to us and said, "Would you like to go to Caleb's father's house today and burn the pot?" I'm thinking, "Oh, my goodness! Are we going to go and break into somebody's house and steal their family heirloom? What is he talking about?" I talked with Doug, and we said, "Harron, we will go and talk with the old man, if you like." So he said, "Fine". So we got everybody together and the next morning, really early - about 5:30 or so, six of us bundled into a little tiny car. We kind of squeezed ourselves in and went off to Kakamega, which was several hours away.

Out in the countryside in Kenya, people live in what they call compounds. They have a main house, and then they have houses for the children and houses for the old folks. They are huts, really. There was a main house under construction. We were ushered into the new house for which the walls were still being built, but it had some shade. They served us some cool ade there; then Harron and Caleb went off to talk with Caleb's father, Hosea. While they were gone, the family told us a little about Hosea. They said he was born in 1884. This was 1998, so that made him 114 years old. They said he had fought in World War I and World War II and that he was a "hard man". They said that even at his advanced age, if he got violent, it took more than one person to restrain him; and that he had been a witch doctor all these years, and people were afraid of him. When he would "cast a spell", somebody would die. They told us all these things about Hosea.

About twenty minutes later Harron came back, and Nathan, one of the other guys who was with us, said, "Well, is it a war in there?" Harron responded, "It's a war of words. Now it is your turn to go and talk to him."

We followed Harron into a small mud hut with a thatched roof. There was a fireplace in one corner. We saw an old man, toothless and barefoot, sitting on a cot at one side, and we were ushered onto a bench opposite him. So we sat down and didn't really know where to start. What do you say? So Doug started in asking, "Do you believe in God, the One that created the world? Hosea did not speak any English, so his questions had to be translated. Doug hadn't gotten too far when the translator said, "He's ready to repent!" Hosea informed us that he was an old man who he had lived a very hard life. He was going to die soon, and he was wanting to make it right with God. We listened to him, and he reached underneath his cot and brought out a big ceramic pot, about this big around (Ron demonstrated a large circle with his arms) and it had a flared neck. Hosea put the pot into the middle of the room. He told us he wanted to make it right with God and he said, "Now, if you'll put some money on the pot, I'll take the money and you can have the pot, and I will give you a place where you can build a church on my

compound."

When the old man finished, I pointed my finger at him and I said, "God doesn't want your pot, and He doesn't want your church. He wants your heart!" It occurred to me that we needed to tell Hosea the story of Aaron and King Lamoni's father from the Book of Mormon, but I couldn't remember any of the details. I couldn't remember a single thing except that we have got to tell him that story. So I nudged Doug and said, "You've got to tell him the story of Aaron!" Doug started in. He did a credible job of the story.

When Aaron came to King Lamoni's father, king Lamoni's father had been very upset with Aaron for having dissuaded his son from his old beliefs, but he listened to what Aaron had to say. And when Aaron told him that he could have his sins forgiven, King Lamoni's father was touched. He said to Aaron, "I'll give up my kingdom if I can have this salvation that you have talked about." And Aaron said, essentially, "God doesn't want your kingdom, and if you want salvation, you've got to get down on your knees and you've got to pray and ask God to forgive you and you have to give up all of your sins."

So King Lamoni's father prayed. The prayer he prayed is really interesting. He said, "O God, if there is a God, and Aaron says there is a God, and if You are God, I will give up all of my sins to know You and to have this salvation of which is spoken." It took quite awhile to get the story interpreted. They read the prayer from the book and the conversation went on for some time. Pretty soon, Hosea, the old man, stood up, came over to the pot that was out there in the middle of the room. There was a cow's horn wrapped with some twine or something, that was used as a stopper for the pot. He took that out. We didn't know what was going on. He said some words in Luo, his native language. Later they told us that he was renouncing the spirits and everything about the pot. Then, with no money from us - with no promise of money or anything else from us, he stood up and asked his son to bring some water. His son brought a bucket of water and poured it into the pot, which made it sizzle and pop. Nathan said he saw smoke. It was kind of dark in there. I didn't see any smoke, but there was something effervescent in that pot for sure. When it settled down, Hosea had the pot carried out into the yard and he asked his son to get him a stone.

Caleb brought him a stone, actually a pretty large one, and Hosea proceeded to smash his pot. He smashed it all to pieces. When he was done, he put the stone down. When he stood up, he said, "Now I am ready to be baptized."

Now the Doctrine and Covenants says that if somebody repents and witnesses that they have forsaken their sins, they should be baptized. So we took him to the river. It took us a couple or three trips to get everybody to the river where we had seen some guys swimming so we knew it was deep enough to have a baptism. Everybody came down to the river, and I had the privilege of baptizing a one hundred and fourteen year old ex-witch doctor. They handed him over the bank to me, he was really light - less than 90 pounds. I baptized him and handed him back up to those waiting above. I had not brought any extra clothes with me, so I had wet clothes for the rest of the day.

We went back up to the compound, where we talked about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and how, if Hosea was making a covenant to have the Spirit with him, he needed to have the gift of the Holy Spirit in his life to help him keep that covenant - help him to stay on the right path to the end of his life. After a couple of hours of talking, we laid our hands on him and baptized him with the Holy Spirit.

There was a lady watching all this who lived close by. In fact,

everybody in the whole neighborhood was watching and wondering what was happening. This particular lady was wearing a bunch of crosses. She was a big lady who practiced the same kind of profession as Hosea. She said, "You know he has been baptized before." We said, "Oh, really!" "Yes. Back in the nineteen twenties when the Catholics first came in, he was baptized and he gave them a place to build their church." Somebody spoke up and said, "Yes, but he never broke his pot!"

You Have a Lifetime. Hosea Didn't!

Now, you two have come to be baptized today, and you don't have a pot with nearly as many evil things as Hosea had. But all of us come, when it's time, because we want to follow Jesus. We want to give up those bad things in our lives. We want to do the right things, and be like God. The scripture that I read talked about "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," and I was wondering, Sam, do you know how tall you are?

Four nine. Do you know how tall you are, Isabel? How do you tell how tall you are? You measure it. You stand up next to something? I was going to stand you up by this pole and measure you today, but it's a little bit inaccessible because of the crowd.

I remember when I was a kid, I was really concerned about how tall I was going to be. I was shorter than Alan and Mom told us that some researcher had said at a certain age you were half the height that you were going to be when you got old. So we all measured very carefully and I think I was supposed to be about six four. So I grew up. It didn't matter how much we wanted to grow, or whatever, although we do have to do some things if we are going to grow. One of those things we have to do is to eat. Do you ever eat? One of those things we have to do is to drink water. Do you ever drink water? (The children responded positively to each question.) We all have to do that. We have to take care of our bodies if we are going to grow, It's the same thing with our spirits.

Do you know how tall your spirit is? You don't have any idea? Well, how do you measure your spirit? The scripture that I read says you measure it against "the stature of the fullness of Christ". So it doesn't matter how tall it is, but it is a matter of the choices that you make. And you have to measure those, not against your sister or your brother - you know, "He did it first to me!" That's not the way to measure what you do. What you measure it by is what Jesus did and what Jesus is and what Jesus said. And when we measure by that measure, that's the place where we need to stand up tall. So that's why we are coming to have the baptism.

There are a few more things that could be said here about baptism. Alan is going to say a few, but I just wanted to share that with you so that you would know that you are getting a chance to do, at the beginning of your life what Hosea never got a chance to do in all of his life until the very end. You have the privilege of growing up as a son and a daughter of God and being a brother or sister to Jesus and having that as a measure for your life. So, God bless you, and keep you. We are looking forward to your baptisms.

Ministry of Song

Jan and her daughters sang Naomi Russell's "Baptized in Water":

"Baptized in water, you became a person born anew.
You made a covenant and now God adds his promise, too.
His Holy Spirit can be yours today and all life through.

"To some it comes as bursting light in this, your special hour.

It may come slowly, and in time, as an unfolding flower.

However it may come to you, you'll feel God's love and power.'

The Baptismal Charge

Elder Alan Smith gave the baptismal charge: Sam and Isabel, I just have a little more to add. As we look forward to you making this covenant making this - it's bigger than a promise. A covenant is a little bit bigger than just saying, "I promise to do this." It's really meaning it. It's really working toward it saying to God, "Everything that I know, everything that I can do, I want to follow You! I want to be what You want me to be. I want to keep Your commandments and learn to serve You." And then the Lord can bless your life by washing away the sin and preparing that life for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which we will be sharing in later on.

But being baptized and following Jesus isn't just for yourself. It's not just so that you can be clean - that you can be whole - that you can have the Lord's Spirit to bless you. But the scriptures tell us that you are also taking on some responsibility for your brothers and sisters. When you take upon you the name of Christ, which is what happens as we share in these ordinances, you have some responsibility for those around you as well - your family, your friends, all those you come in contact with.

I just wanted to share with you what Alma said to a group of people, when they were getting ready to be baptized many years ago. He said, (Mosiah 9:39-42). "And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people" (Is that what you want to do - to be called the sons and daughters of God?) "And are willing to bear one another's burdens that they may be light;" (What does that mean? When you see someone who is carrying a heavy load, can you help them out? Because as we share those burdens, as we share the things that come into our lives, then they can be made light with Christ. "Are you willing to mourn with those that mourn?" (When people lose some one that they love or something has happened in their lives that makes them sad, are you willing to support them?) "to comfort those that stand in need of comfort" (To share in the unhappiness - to share in the joy - to share in all the things that come into your lives together as we seek to build His kingdom.)

"Are you willing to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things and in all places that you may be in, even until death?" (Now that's a strong promise, isn't it? Every place that you are, everything that you do even unto death, you are going to say, "I am going to be a witness for God.") "That ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life."

Now Alma said, "If this is the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord as a witness before Him that you have entered into a covenant with him that ye will serve him and keep his commandments that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you. And now, when the people heard these words, they clapped their hands for joy and exclaimed, This is the desire of our hearts."

I hope that is the desire of your hearts, Isabel and Sam, to follow Him - to work for His kingdom in your lives, and to stand as witnesses - to take upon you the name of Jesus as well as Sam and Isabel -to know that people are going to look to you and say, "What would Jesus do? What is Jesus like?" And you can say, "This is what I am trying to do because I want to follow Jesus."

It's a big responsibility, but it's an exciting one and a joyful one. My prayer for both of you is that He will be able to help you keep this covenant all of your lives.

The Baptism of Water

The congregation was instructed that we were to walk to the lake where the baptisms were to be held singing the song Sam had chosen, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!" and after Sam was baptized, we were to sing the song Isabel had chosen, "Praise Him, Praise Him, all ye Little children. God Is Love, God is Love!" Elder Michael Jordison, Father of the children, performed the baptisms. After the baptisms were finished, we sang three stanzas of "Admonition", penned by Joseph Luff before he became an Apostle in Jesus Christ's church so many years ago, and were dismissed by the benedictory prayer of Elder Elefson.

*The words of the Introit for the service, sung by Jan Jordison and her daughters, follow:

When I Am Baptized

I like to look for rainbows whenever there is rain.
And ponder on the beauty of an earth made clean again.
I want my life to be as clean as earth right after rain.
I want to be the best I can and live with God again.

I know when I am baptized my wrongs are washed away
And I can be forgiven and improve myself each day.
I want my life to be as clean as earth right after rain.
I want to be the best I can and live with God again.

His love is without end! The Lord's love is without end. Amen!

Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The congregation gathered quietly under the canopy of a beautiful sky laced by the leaves of the plentiful trees near the eastern most shelter house in Poe Hollow Park. At the appropriate moment we were led by Ronald Smith and his guitar to sing, "Santos, Santos, Santos - Holy, Holy, Holy." Michael Jordison offered the invocation.

Elder Alan Smith announced that Samuel Jordison was to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit at this service and commented that Tanner and Teagan Rowland received the same ordinance at this place just a year ago.

Second Nephi 13: 14-15;16-17 was read. Great and Marvelous Are Thy Works" was sung.

High Priest Sherman Phipps delivered a message, interactive with Samuel. Sherman asked Michael to go sit with his wife and asked Sam to go stand behind his parents.

I want to read a couple of scriptures. The first is from Section 49:2g-49:2h. "Believe on the name of the Lord Jesus, who was on the earth, and is to come, the beginning and the end; repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, according to the holy commandment, for the remission of sins; and whoso doeth this, shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of the hands of the elders of this church."

This next one comes from section 39:2b- "And this is my gospel." One of the reasons I wanted Sam to stand, and I hope I don't wear him out, but I wanted him particularly to stand with his parents because that's where he is going to learn a lot of what he needs to know, and already has. I thought if we were on our feet, Sam, you and me, maybe we could communicate better.

“And this is my gospel: repentance and baptism by water -” You have done that I hope. I know you were baptized in water. Repentance is something we all have to keep working on every day. “And then cometh the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter which showeth all things and teacheth the peaceable things of the kingdom.”

Sam, you went down into the waters of baptism, so you took the first step. Having done that, the promise is that you will receive the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter. I don't know what that means to you. It will probably mean a lot more to you as you go along through life and maybe some of these people here this morning will have an opportunity, not just today, to tell you what it means to them, how important it is to have that Spirit with you, and to be able to rely on it in all things. And that's the other thing that it says here that that Holy Ghost - that Comforter - will show you all things and teach you the peaceable things of the kingdom.

Those aren't just words, Sam, and there are a lot of people here this morning that could bear witness to you of how true that is. God really will, through His Holy Spirit, teach you what you need to know, and He will do that over and over again, if you are listening.

Sam, maybe I should ask you a question. What did it mean to you to be baptized? (Samuel went to the microphone so his answer could be heard by all.) “It meant that I might make my covenant with God and to repent and to tell people that I believe in God and I want to follow His commandments.”

Sherman replied, “Well, Sam, that's exactly what it should mean.” And if it is going to mean that if you are going to show other people what it means to have God in your life, and I am not saying this just to you. It applies to all of us. You are going to have to be different than the people around you. You are going to have to make different choices. when everybody else is off doing things. This doesn't mean you can't have fun in your life. Actually, hopefully, following the Lord will bring more joy into your life than anything else possibly could. But, when other people are off doing things that you know aren't right, you are going to have to be strong and say, “No. I'm not doing that!” And that's part of having the Holy Spirit with you, because the Spirit will teach you which things are right and which things are wrong. And those aren't just words. The Spirit really does that. It will show you the way. It sometimes maybe won't seem as clear to you as others, but if you take time to ask the Lord to tell you what you need to be doing, He will, because the scripture says the Holy Spirit will teach you the truth in all things; and it really will.

One of the things you are going to need to do, Sam, is read the scriptures. I think you already do. It's good to go to classes and hear what other people have to say and to learn from other people, but you need to read them for yourself. As you do that, the Lord will open your mind and show you a lot of things that you would never learn waiting for men to teach you. You are going to have to be willing to be the son of God - not Jesus, but one of God's sons - twenty four hours a day, every day. I asked you to stand over there with your folks - your brother and sisters - because part of being a son of God is being a good son with your parents. It's being a good brother to your brother and your sisters. You know all of that, but you have to remember it every day.

We are living in a special time, I think, and some of these other people later can tell you what they think, and hopefully they will take time to do that. But we are living, Sam, in a time where we can't wait and tell ourselves, “Well, we'll do what God wants us to do

later. Right now we are going to do what everybody else is doing. We can't do that, and you can't do that. Every day - every thing that comes up, you have to be sensitive to that Holy Spirit which is telling you what's right. And if you do that, Sam, your life is going to be exciting. It won't always be fun, but it will be exciting! There will be lots of things you will have to struggle with and deal with, but the truth is, it's really God who will deal with them. As long as you turn it over to God, He'll take care of it.

I don't want to go too long here, this morning, but that's true in everything. He really will open the way for you. You have heard some of my stories already. He really will move you from one place to another if that's what needs to happen, physically. He can do that! He'll move things out of your way. He'll send His angels and His servants to fight your battles for you and to protect you, and to make it possible for you to speak up for right when every body else is afraid to.

I don't want to get too carried away here, Sam, and tell you that you will never have any problems, and nothing will ever go wrong, because that wouldn't be true. Some of those people who have stood up for the Lord have gotten stoned and even killed, but that's not a bad thing particularly. If you go for the Lord, every thing that happens to you will go for good, and you can bet that those prophets who got stoned and killed, their reward was sure and glorious. I am not saying that will happen to you, but what I am saying is that you have got to be willing to stand for the Lord every day - everything that is going on. And you know all that all ready, but it's easy - and I am talking now - how many years ago was it that I was baptized - 56, I think, almost. So I am talking looking back and you are looking forward. It has been easy to get distracted sometimes and forget in tricky was. They are not too tricky if you think about it, I guess, but, you know, somebody does something I don't like, and I get mad at them. I have been tricked because that's not God's reaction. So I should have been listening and asking the Holy Spirit how to respond to that. So, in little things like that every day, are you willing to do that? (Samuel responds affirmatively.) Okay. God hears you, and He's going to hold you to that. He's going to hold every one of us to that. I don't know if you have thought about it or not, but if you made that covenant saying, “I am willing to do it”, He's going to hold you to that!

We are going to stand before Him again someday, Sam, and everything we have done will be right there in front of us. But He's a really loving God - a very forgiving God. So if you make mistakes like we all do, and you stumble, you get up in the morning and you think, “Well I shouldn't have done what I did yesterday!” Don't kick yourself around about that too much. Just learn from that mistake and ask God to forgive you, and He will.

Let me ask you one other thing, Sam. Do you feel like you have ever heard God talk to you? (Sam answered affirmatively.) That's good. I am really glad to hear you say that, because He does talk to His people. Sometimes it's an audible voice and other times it isn't. (If you want to sit down you can, or if you want to stay standing, that's fine too.)

I want to share with all of these people this morning something else that has been on my mind. Have you ever read about some of the guys in the Old Testament like David and Samuel, Solomon - some of those guys? One of the things I have been really impressed with lately is that those guys knew how to talk to God, and they knew how to listen and hear His answer. If you read those stories, over and over, when they needed to know whether they should go into battle or retreat, they didn't just guess, and they didn't sit down

and have a council meeting. They went and asked the Lord; and the Lord answered them. And there is something about that that we still don't understand, I think. Maybe it's just a matter that we don't go ask.

I'll pick on David. David, back in the scriptures, had seventeen children, I think, and they all had different mothers! Now that's probably not a good thing, is it Sam? No. You should have one wife! And there are other examples, do you know what he did? A lot of people he just killed. That's not a good thing either, is it? No!. In spite of all those awful things that I think he did - they seemed bad to me when I read them - the Lord still answered his prayers. He would still go to the Lord and say, "What do I need to do?" and the Lord would tell him. So there's something about the way the Lord works with His people and those who will ask that I don't think we quite understand.

I think sometimes, we just don't realize how real He is and how open He is to us coming and talking to Him because a lot of times, we think we are living pretty good lives. We haven't killed anybody, maybe. We don't have a hundred wives or was it a thousand Solomon had? We don't do those things, so we think we are OK. But, are we talking to God? Are we repenting and humbling ourselves so He can listen and answer our questions on a day to day basis?

Well, Sam, you are shaking your head, no, and you are right, because most of us don't do that. We need to be. We live in a time where if we are not communicating with God, we are in trouble, because we need His input. We need to know what to do every day with our lives. Okay, I have said more that I was going to say.)

Are you ready to ask God to baptize you with fire and the Holy Spirit? And if He does that, which He says He will, are you willing to walk upright before Him, and never lose that Spirit? (The answer was again affirmative.)

Sherman responded, "Okay." and Alan invited Samuel to take his place before the congregation. We sang, "Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh on Me". High Priest Robert Rolfe and High Priest Sherman Phipps placed their hands on Samuel's head and he was baptized by the Holy Ghost. Sherman was the spokesman:

"Sam, my brother Rob and I lay our hands upon your head now, knowing that we are just men and nothing of ourselves except the Lord would use us.

"Heavenly Father, we ask that You would use us now - that You would forgive us and cleanse us that we might not stand in the way of that which You desire for our brother. And God, our creator, we ask You now, as You have promised, that You would pour out Your Holy Spirit upon our brother Sam that he might, indeed, be baptized with fire. We pray, Father, that though he is young that he might feel Your Spirit burning within him, not just here in this moment, but every moment of this probationary state. We pray, Lord, that You would grant unto him knowledge, wisdom beyond his years. We pray, Father, that You would open his eyes that he could see with spiritual eyes and hear with spiritual ears that he might be an instrument in Your hands for the sake of Your children.

"And Father, we ask this day with the power and authority that You would grant unto us that Samuel might be sealed up and made a part of Your Church of the First Born and that his life here on this earth might be specifically for the sake of the accomplishment of Your work, for the sake of the souls of his brothers and sisters who also need to know of You.

"Lord, we pray that you would keep him to fulfill the promises which he has made unto You, and we know that if he will do this,

that You will keep Your promises unto him. We know that You have placed in Sam very special gifts that were placed there even before the foundation of the earth - gifts that Your people need, And we pray, Father, that You would continue to work with him, to pursue him, to be patient with him, and to pour out Your Spirit continually upon Him that those gifts might bear fruit for You and for Your people. We pray, Lord, that You would surround him all the days of his life with Your angels and with Your servants who remain upon this earth until the return of Your Son again, and that Sam might grow from day to day and continue to walk in Your path as he desires to do so today. And we pray it in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Robert Rolfe accompanying himself on the guitar, sang, "Since I met Him". It's from the ninth chapter of the book of John.

"I was down by the corner just passing the time Sitting in the light and feeling it shine. The sound of crowd began to grow in my ears, so I waited and listened, and I heard them draw near.

"Then a man stepped up to me and spat on the ground, put some mud on my eyes and then smeared it around, sent me off to Siloam to wash off the clay. I opened my eyes and looked at the day. And I had no idea how He did it. I just know what happened to me. Yesterday I was in darkness. Then, because of Him, I can see.

"When the Pharisees heard it, they put me on trial. Even called in my parents and grilled them awhile. And when at the end, I defended the man who had opened my eyes, all the trouble began. I said, ever since the beginning of time, no one has opened the eyes of someone born blind. This man sent from God just can't be denied. They cursed me and beat me and threw me outside.

"And I really don't know how He found me. I know He was talking to me. It was easy to tell by the sound of His voice, He was the reason I see. As soon as He spoke to me, I couldn't hide. The awareness that welled up from deep down inside. To mine was the dreams that he's made to come true. To kneel there and worship was all I could do.

"So I called Him my Lord and my Savior for every thing He'd done for me. Yesterday I was in darkness. Since I met Him I can see. So I called Him my Lord and my Savior for every thing He'd done for me. Yesterday I was in darkness. Since I met Him I can see. Since I met Him I can see!"

Testimonies of the Reunion

Following the baptism of the Holy Spirit for Samuel Jordison on Sunday, June 24, 2007, the nature of the service was changed. Jared Beck has the traveling mike, Elder Alan Smith announced, so we will be able to hear you if you would like to share something that happened to you during the last week at reunion or something that you would just like to let us know about how the Lord has been moving in your life.

Lynda Rolfe was the first to speak: When I got to reunion, I saw Eric (Odida) and remembered that Eric said that I was like his mother. I thought, "There's my son! I'm proud of him!" And so I decided to follow him and to help with his classes. I just enjoyed the time I spent with him, and I learned. My spirit really grew and I learned something new that I always knew, but it was just needing to be refreshed. I'm going to work on it a little more. There are scriptures that tell us that we are not just separate like we think we

are. God is within us. Samuel knows this. We have kind of talked about what his last name is now and that he has God within him. We need to look through God's eyes instead of always through our eyes, and look through the Holy Spirit at what God wants us to do, what He wants us to be, and what steps He wants us to take. It's not an easy thing to do. It is something you have to train yourself to do, but that is what I am going to try harder to do - train myself to look through God's eyes.

George Knotts spoke: There are two things that were outstanding to me at the reunion. One of them was the children's play. It was red on the stage, and they came out in their white costumes and were standing in a close circle of white. I thought, "How dramatic is that!" and it was so well done! and one of our congregation helped pull that off! That's one of the Smith girls.

The other thing was in class by Richard Neill. He had a spiritual experience where the Lord showed him four different times in history how the Lord was firm with the people. Genesis 7:23 in the Inspired Version. We have heard this so much, but it's so critical, and the Lord is holding us to it. "And the Lord called His people Zion because they were of one heart and one mind and dwelt in righteousness, and there was no poor among them." Each time in history where they haven't done that, He cut them off!. Now it's our turn, and it was pretty heavy the way he put it. If you get the CD of his class, his first class was out standing and his last class was outstanding. I didn't get to hear the ones in the middle.

Ron Smith was next: I had a very busy reunion and sometimes you don't get a chance to talk to as many people as you would like. One of the outstanding things for me, we had asked Mark Deterick to do a class called "Valiant Witnesses". The idea was to get some of the young people who have been missionaries to share their stories. Mark had told someone that he was not going to be there, but that someone had not communicated that to me. So just the week before reunion started, I was calling Mark and he said, "Oh. Didn't you get the word?" All of a sudden I had another class to teach in the afternoon. I wasn't sure exactly what to do, but as it turned out, it was a fabulous class!

I didn't do anything. All I did was to ask the kids to share with us, and we had outstanding testimonies. If you didn't get a chance to go, maybe you will get the recordings of those classes because it was something else! Lauren Smith and Brett, Micah Bates, the Book of Mormon interns, Kendall Geno. The last day I messed up the signals with Brett. I got it in my mind that he was going to be back and talk about his Australian trip and stuff, but he wasn't able to be there. (Brett was taking Pamela Odida to an appointment with a specialist in Independence who is treating her thyroid problems for free.) He told me he was not able to be there, but I just slipped. And so it was like 2 minutes before class, and I didn't have a class. So I asked some of the RCM (Restoration Campus Ministries) kids who were there to share their testimonies, So, on the spot they shared for a whole hour the testimonies they have had; and for me it turned out that getting to go to that class was one of the high points of the reunion. I don't always get to go to any classes. I also really appreciated Aric Turner's Book of Mormon Geography class. It was a lot more than Book of Mormon Geography! For me, That was really worth going to. That was great!

Maria Elefson: This week at reunion I had the opportunity to actually help with several of the classes, both the Junior High and the preschool, and the preschool are what I want to talk about. Both Elyse and Tyrell were in there. They were very cute kids all the way around, and we took them outside every morning because they liked

to play outside.

One day one of the kids goes, "Why is the mountain covered in snow when it's not winter?" We were all like, "What? Oh, the gym!" So we had to take all of the kids over there and lift them all up so they could touch it and feel for themselves. I guess the blessing was just the wonderment these kids have with everything, and the eyes they see the world with. The kingdom is with children - just the innocence and what not. It was wonderful to be able to experience all week.

Gregg Thomas (Alabama) spoke: I never knew exactly who was from the Mount Ayr branch and who wasn't. Coming from an isolated area, we have always kind of felt that the Seventy Reunion was kind of our home congregation. I guess that makes Mt. Ayr home.

We have had so many wonderful experiences this week as I look at our purpose when we come. I know i come as a sponge that's kind of dried out and worn out and looking forward to soaking up the fellowship and the spirit that radiates off of each of you. We were privileged to start soaking up the Spirit several weeks before reunion as we began daily, and sometimes several times a day, phone conversations with Alan and Valle, and what a blessing! Then to see how the Lord moves in His timing.

From Reunion, we went to Cedar Rapids, and this morning we were headed back to Independence when we decided that we would go on over to Mt. Ayr to worship with you this morning. About mile marker 30 we got a phone call saying, "We are not meeting at the church today." What a blessing that in the Lord's timing we happened to be in the time frame that we could make it, even though we apologize for being a little late. What a wonderful God to put all the details in order so that we can receive the fellowship, provide ministry and receive it in the times we are most needy.

Terry Chown (Ohio): I was out running one day this week and, as is often the case, I have more energy at the beginning of the week than I have towards the end. My time as I got later and later in the week registered slower and slower. About Thursday, I said, "You know, I really want to get the time that I had on Monday". I thought, "Well -" if you have ever been out to Sherman and Cheryl's house, you know they have that down hill about the last half mile. So I thought, "I'll pick up the pace there. That will help me hit the mark that I got on Monday." And then I thought, "You know if you wait for that last half mile - you are not going to be able to make up all the time in that last half mile!"

I think that is a lot of how I feel about things in general. If we wait until the last little bit, we may not be able to hit the mark that we want to hit. And one of the things this week that I felt really impressed with was the youth. I didn't see a lot of the adults come to the campfire, and as I listened to the youth sing at the campfire, what a great job Cara did, I thought. The youth, I think, have the pace and the energy that is really needed to lift and maintain the church. I hear people say they are discouraged that Zion hasn't come yet - that we haven't made more progress - that the church is in the state that it is. But if you went to campfire and listened to the singing and saw the vitality and energy and enthusiasm that I saw there! I thought it was really uplifting, and I think there were some real blessings that you learn from the youth and the life and the spirit that they bring to the church.

Mildred Smith : I had the same feeling about the reunion that I have about this morning. As I sit here and listen to the kinds of things that are spoken and sung, I wonder, "How does it happen that the Lord allows me to be a part of such a people?"

Jani Thomas (Alabama. Gregg and Jani were the assistant reunion directors): I had kind of heard about Mt. Ayr and knew that a lot of our equipment at the reunion was marked, My. Ayr and knew that you all did really carry a lot of the burden for us at the Seventy Reunion yearly. So, what a joy to be able to worship with you this morning! We went to cedar Rapids yesterday. The schedule was crazy. I had a couple of aunts and uncles there waiting for us. We pushed the time limit just a little bit and we left late last night. We knew we wanted to be south of there because we have a sixteen hour drive home. After 2:00 it's all the same to me, but I said to Gregg, "You know I didn't get a chance to say Good-bye to Valle! I am so distressed over this! We had to leave and go up to Cedar Rapids!" But he said, "You know Mount Ayr is on the way." So I came back to finish business that we didn't get done yesterday.

Fran Wilson: I have a request for prayer. I am going to introduce the Book of Mormon to a friend, and if I could have your prayers, it will sure make it strong. The Spirit will be there.

Alan asked if someone would like to offer that prayer and Ammon Thomas volunteered this prayer: "Our Father in heaven, I come before You at this time to ask you to put the blessing of your Spirit upon our sister and her friend. Lord, as she is seeking to spread Your word, I ask that You would bless her, that You would support her in her endeavors. Lord, I ask that You would be with her friend and allow her to receive it well. Allow her to feel your Spirit and know that this is true. Lord. You are the Master of all things and I ask that Your will be done. And , Lord, I thank You so much that You have given us to share Your words with those around us."

Diane Anderson: A couple of times this week the words from my Patriarchal Blessing have come back to bless me and remind me of God's love one more time. While I was out for my morning run on Thursday, I was listening to Christian Radio and the fellow said that he had hope that when we are going to Wal Mart that maybe the trend in Europe would come over here to stop the frustration of standing in line. He said that when you are walking through the aisles now in Europe, you pick up the items, have a little hand scanner of some sort. You scan it as you put it into your cart, and it saves you a whole bunch of trouble when you are checking out. Well, obviously, that would mean that you must also probably scan your credit card. Instantly, when he said that, I am thinking to myself, "Oh, Lord. This is a sign of the times. We have been talking about this all along, how you are going to have to have a sign in our forehead or in our hand in order to buy or sell in the last days or it won't be convenient for us to get food." I have been thinking about that several times since I heard that on the radio.

It brought back to me the words of my Patriarchal blessing again where I was told that times are going to be terrible and many of us will not know how much longer we can stand it, but that if we put our trust in God and follow the teachings of the Savior, and endure to the end - and we have heard that word lots this week - endure to the end! - that we will be safe in His kingdom.

I am thankful this morning that through other words in my Patriarchal Blessing initially, a blessing is given to us for the future to read and to ponder over and to meditate as we pray and study about those words, that it would bring us continued blessing and direction for our lives. And I am thankful to my Heavenly Father again this morning for giving me those words to teach me in advance and to teach me in a personal way that if we endure to the end, we will be safe, but we must put Him first.

Rob Rolfe: I just wanted to say that, I don't know but for those of you who heard Pretty Paint telling what he has been telling

people across the country, but I wanted to tell you that that prophecy has gone through all of the tribes - not just the Crow and the Sioux and so forth. It's from one end of the land to the other, and the remarkable thing to me was that he would come to white people to tell them, because they have not been giving that to the white people. The Navaho word for white people is bellegasa, which is not a nice term. I just don't dismiss what he said casually because he is not traveling all over this country giving that message because he thinks it would be fun to talk to white people. That man is very far up into the Indian medicine men in this country and is considered a holy man by many of them.

I will just tell you this. Lynda has a gift of dreams. She doesn't talk about it very much, but she really does have some of the most interesting dreams. Many years ago she had a dream she didn't understand. For those of you who remember, there was a time that there used to be no Eisenhower Interstate system. They were building that when she had a dream one night, and there was grass in all the cracks. She said, "How could there be grass in the cracks of an intestate?" You don't have to think about it too long - at least I didn't. There is nobody driving on it. That's why!

It was disturbing to her when she had this dream and saw this, and with good reason. And so, we talked to Arturo Gomez about this. He just smiled and said that he thinks it's one year more. Brother Pretty Paint said four years. Arturo thinks it is one year more. He said it would be five because that's when the Maya calendar ends. From him, coming from that culture, he says that's when that is going to occur. So that gives you comfort. You have one more year than you thought, if that's the case. I just say, make that a matter of prayer because I don't think this was a casual happenstance that he came and talked to our reunion at this particular time.

Lynda spoke up: I just want to add that what he was saying - I don't know if he was saying it quite out, but he's saying that his people are coming here and he hopes that we make them at home in our homes.

Robert Vaughn: I have two things to say now. First of all, this service was really remarkable because I think of all the opening things that Sherm said. I shared with Sherm the other night. He talked about the veil of Babylon and how this would sort of stop our view of the Spirit. I thought about this a lot. I thought about the fact that our bodies change so much and so often, yet we still have this spirit here. It seems like it is something from the evil one or Lucifer who basically pushed this veil over our eyes sometimes. That meant a lot to me! It meant a lot because, you know, if we can just remove this veil ---. When I sit around here and I look at the trees and I see this magnificent work. It is just fascinating! I think about the veil, in a sense for me, has been removed!

The second thing I was going to say, and I didn't even think about this before. Rob said this, but I will share my experience with you, too. While I was driving up here this morning, I come up to - I go down this hill because I kind of like to watch the nature and everything like that, but I have this vision about this road, how long would these roads be around after they cracked? It was kind of remarkable. I didn't know that was prophecy or anything, but I just wondered. You know, when we run out of energy and things are gone, the roads will crack. So I just thought I would share that.

Micah Bates: The Lord has seen fit to bless me so much in my life! and it seems like every single time he does, I think, "Man! How real is this?" There is no possible way anything could be more real in my life. I am sure that this is the truth, and there is no doubt in

my mind. It seems like every single time He allows me to see a little more of who He is! And this week, I got to see a little bit more of who He is, what He has for his people, and a little bit of how His prophecies, which so many people in this world discredit and just put on the way side, so many of His prophecies have come true and are coming true in our time. We are sitting here as the most blessed people of all creation, because He has allowed us to be a part of this work. I just can't praise Him enough for the vision that He has given me throughout my life, and especially this week, of what needs to be done and what He has in store for us if we are faithful to Him.

Beth Knotts: I would certainly be an ingrate if I didn't express my thanks to you folks and to my heavenly Father. Friday morning I went early for a doctor's appointment in Des Moines. I am still a little awkward about turning corners and my steering is not too good. So I was a little uneasy. I have a friend there who has been a servant of the church her entire life. I don't know how many years she was church secretary, and I think of the many reunions and camps that we did together, Junior church and Bible school. She is in a retirement center where she is essentially alone as far as the church is concerned. And I thought, "If they don't dilate my eyes, I'm going to go and visit her"; and they didn't.

When I got to the place, they couldn't find her. She wasn't in her room and they said she was watching Lawrence Welk up with a group. So I went there, and she wasn't there. I had planned to be back, but I decided, "I am not going to leave until I find out where she is!" So I sat down by her room and waited. It turned out she had gone up to get her hair done, which was not too significant. But while we were visiting, a relative called and said, "You had better look at the television." I found that there was a tornado going through just south of us, between Des Moines and Lamoni. So I waited until it looked like 35 would be all clear and I could come home.

I didn't get home until 8 p.m. that night, and the weather was bad - just heavy rain and visibility wasn't good. But I thought how blessed I was to get home. I was grateful, and just as I got in the door, George called and said that he had been worried and you folks had prayed for me. So I am so grateful to you and to my heavenly Father. You know, if she had been in her room, and we had visited, I would have been in the Cummins area about the time that the tornado went through. God is so good to us, and many times we are not even aware of His goodness. Thanks to all of you, too. (George added, Ronald prayed and everybody said, "Amen".)

Brandy Anderson: I just wanted to say that I did drive through that storm right at the point when the tornado was going through. It was completely clear on one side of the interstate and black on the other side and all of a sudden it was just like Whoosh! across the road, and I couldn't see a thing, and I was driving and I was so scared! I started praying and when I was finally able to pull over, I called my Mom. I was in a construction zone and I couldn't see the road. I couldn't see the car in front of me. I was very thankful and very blessed that I made it home. (Alan exclaimed, "Praise the Lord!")

Valle Smith: Alan and I have never, ever bought a lottery ticket, never in our life! We have never gambled or played any of those kinds of games of chance. And I said to Alan the other day, probably part of the reason we don't do that is because we know we would never win. We just don't have that kind of luck as well as knowing that it is not a good use of our resources, but I said to him, "If I feel that unlucky, then why do you think I was born into a family that has a heritage of the gospel? Why was I chosen to be

a part of this great work?

Most of my life I have probably spent wondering why and running from figuring out why rather than accepting that the Lord has a work for me to do. Out of all the millions of people in this world that need to be blessed by his plan, He has chosen each one of us. So whereas playing the lottery I wouldn't be very lucky, I have been very blessed to be included in this plan. As I sat here this morning, meditating with the beautiful setting and the music, I thought about our congregation and how amazing it is that the Lord has placed each one of us here with different talents and abilities both in worldly ways and also in a spiritual way, and that in these Latter Days,

I was glad that Gregg and Jani drove in when they did, too, that He has assembled a team here in this congregation that He is really counting on. And what a privilege that is, also. After this week instead of doing as I have a tendency to say, "Why me, Lord?" and to make excuses why I am not the best person to do something; but to say, as many of you have said, "the time is short!" and to enthusiastically embrace the challenge that lies ahead of us and that others are depending on us to lead them.

Alan Smith: I had a little insight, I guess, as I was preparing for the worship service for the staff that we had down in Independence on Saturday night, That was in recognizing the story of Enoch and his sharing with God. As God opened Enoch's eyes to His love for people - something that Enoch, even in all his love couldn't comprehend until it happened to him. The scripture talks about how his heart swelled. Eternity shook for him. All of a sudden he understood what that love was about.

Then he kept asking God, "So what's going to happen to all of these people, and what is Your plan?" So God would tell him a little more of the plan and it says, "Enoch wept!" God would tell him a little bit more of the plan and "Enoch wept!". And then God talked about our day, and He showed Enoch that there would be a time when he and all the Church of the First Born would be able to return to earth. He talked about the fact that we would fall on each other's necks and hug each other and all these kinds of things. The scriptures say that that's when Enoch's joy was made full!

We talk about waiting for Zion. We think of our lifetime or however many years we have been knowing about it and been thinking about it, and that's a long time. But I kind of understood what it must be like for Enoch and his city. How long has it been for them that they have waited that their joy could be made full knowing that there was a people that responded and would allow this great plan to come to fruition. In my mind's eye, I saw them lining up, getting ready to come back. Someone in the back is pushing a little bit. They are a little anxious. "Let's get going here!" Somebody is saying, "Wait a minute. We can't go quite yet! All the years that we have been praising God and all the years that we have been doing the things that we have been doing are leading up to this final moment of joy for us!" And what it must be like to wait, even if there is not time as we know it. I don't know how time goes where they are. I know it's not quite like ours.

I hope that you have been blessed this morning as we have shared in the blessing for our brother Sam, and I hope you have been blessed by the testimonies and the music and the setting, and everything else that we have experienced here this morning.

We sang, "Holy Spirit, Lord of Love" and were dismissed by prayer offered by Elder Steven Smith.

News & Notes

A Look Into the Past

The last Newsletter may have been confusing to our readers. The "News and Notes" for the month were inside the letter on page 9. The "News and Notes" on the back page were the result of the computer's remembering last year's Newsletter. We apologize for any confusion that may have resulted from the computer's "faithfulness"!

Award Received

Samuel Jordison received the Tingley Spirit award at the recent Little League Baseball tournament a Tingley, Iowa. The award is given to a player who encourages other players and who does good work on his team. Sam caught a ball and threw a runner out at first base and hit every ball pitched to him but one.

Fasting Weekend Observed

This quarter's fasting weekend was observed beginning June 8. The fast was broken with a congregational dinner after the baptismal service of June 10.

Service Celebrates Baptism

Sunday, June 10, 2007 Samuel and Isabel Jordison were baptized in the pond at the home of Ronald and Di Smith in Lamoni. The entire service was moved from Mt. Ayr to Lamoni and focused on the baptism.

A temporary chapel was set up under shelter of the deck, expanded by the use of tarpaulins to cover the entire patio. Chairs were set up, and a sound system installed so the service could be recorded. The opening worship under the direction of Ed Anderson, and the adult class taught by Robert Rolfe, were conducted on the patio. All ages of the children met inside the house with Di Smith and Cheryl Phipps their teachers.

The general service that followed was under the direction of Elder Alan Elefson with Seventy Ronald Smith the speaker and Elder Alan Smith giving the baptismal charge. See the complete report along with Ronald's sermon titled, "Baptism, Opportunity For a Lifetime". Samuel's Baptism of the Holy Spirit is reported in this issue under the title, "Picnic in the park". The baptism of the Holy Spirit for Isabel will be held at a later service.

Artist Serves

Seventy George Knotts returned recently from Oklahoma City where he judged the sculpture division of the Red Earth art show. The show is exclusively for Native Americans artists. George's mother, born in 1888, was one of the original enrollees in the Cherokee Tribe.

Congregation Serves at Family Reunion

Again this year Alan and Valle Smith were the co-directors of the Missionary Family Reunion sponsored by the Restoration Seventy. Cheryl Phipps was the registrar. Together, Alan, Valle and Cheryl and gave untold hours for months in preparation for their duties, planning, registering, assigning accommodations, preparing class and worship spaces, receiving and dispensing the nearly \$80,000 that are required for such an undertaking. The \$50.00 per

family registration fee only assures a place at the reunion for the family to stay. All the rest of the funds were obtained in three offerings and the many personal offerings given by those who were happy to share their plenty with those who could not provide the approximately \$140.00 per person the week actually cost.

Jan and Barbra Jordison coordinated the golf cart transportation system that makes it possible for elderly and handicapped persons to attend. Jan and Barbra, Sherman Phipps, and Doug Calford were among the drivers. The Ed Anderson family, Brandy, Ben and Matt with their father, along with Sherman Phipps were among those assisting people to move in and away from the dorms using lawn tractors and trailers provided by Sherman and others as well as the golf carts.

Michael Jordison was worship coordinator. Ronald Smith and George Knotts were two of the Seventy sponsoring the Reunion. George was in charge of one evening service and participated in the Seventy Forum each morning. Ronald was in charge of the witnessing class featuring the testimonies of the youth who have taken special assignments over the world, directed the large group prayer services, chaired the Seventy's Forum each morning, co-taught the second general class with Seventy Richard Neill, was in charge of an evening service and preached the closing evening sermon. Di Smith was in charge of the services to the families with small children providing care for babies and toddlers during the two morning class sessions and the evening services. Julia Jorsison,

Aquila Galusha Pam Chowen and Maria Elefson were among those who assisted her. Maria Elefson, Sherman Phipps and many others assisted with the children's classes and the presentation of the musical that climaxed the weeks' study for those classes. Cede Smith, Jazmyn and Aquila Galusha, Samuel, Isabel and Joshua Jordison, Tanner and Teagan Rowland all participated. Jennifer Rowland was in charge of recreation each afternoon for 2-6 year olds.

Lynda Rolfe assisted Eric Odida with his class for youth. Yvonne Galusha was Web Master, Cessaries was the piano accompanist for a number of services, and Jazmyn and Aquila were among those performing in the musical on the final evening. Robert and Lynda Rolfe and Yvonne Galusha sang in the choir. Robert was in charge of one of the prayer services on the days the group was divided. Diane Anderson was nurse in charge of all medical care.

Cara Smith was in charge of campfires. Mildred Smith taught an afternoon class through the week. Alan Elefson came as a first responder when there was a medical emergency on camp. Others contributed time and money to make it a successful week, even in reaching the goal for financing the reunion.

Picnic in the Park

Samuel's Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Services for Sunday, June 24 were in Poe Hollow Park east of Mt. Ayr. Sixty seven persons attended bringing their lawn chairs and blankets for the informal setting for the service. Samuel Jordison received the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and a testimony service highlighted the experiences of the reunion just past. See the more complete record among the service reports.

Following the service, a catered dinner was provided by Ruth Thomas from her Grandma's Place in Lamoni.

We Have A National Champion Among Us

Gabel Galusha and his father, George, were not able to attend the Reunion. They were away at the Oceanic Center in Daytona, Florida, where Gabel was participating in the U.S. Tunbling Associations' national Championship meet.

Gabel was the national champion in the Double Mini division, first in a field of seven. He was second in the field of 13 in the Trampoline Novice division.

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