

## Mount Ayr Restoration Branch **NEWSLETTER**

Mount Ayr Restoration Branch - Ed Anderson, Pastor - 641-223-0480

[www.gospelrestored.org](http://www.gospelrestored.org)

Lamoni Restoration Branch - Joel Loving, Pastor - 816-447-7181

 @gospelrestored

### For The Beauty of the Earth

For the beauty of the earth,  
For the glory of the skies,  
For the love which from our birth  
Over and around us lies.

For the joy of human love,  
Brother, sister, parent, child.  
Friends on earth and friends above,  
For all gentle thoughts and mild.

For thy church that evermore  
Lifteth holy hands above,  
Offering up on every shore  
Her pure sacrifice of love.

For thyself, best gift divine  
To our race so freely given!  
For that great, great love of thine,  
Peace on earth and joy in heaven.

Lord of all, to thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise.



### CONTENTS:

Ed Colyer - page 2

Tony Crandell - page 4

Dan Norman - page 7

Gordon Winkler - page 10

Jon Barney - page 14

Rob Rolfe Obituary - page 18

MARB Retreat Info - page 19

### APRIL Speakers

#### Mount Ayr:

4/3/22 - Prayer, Testimony and Sacrament Service

4/10/22 - Ed Anderson

4/16/22 - Branch Retreat/Jason Hamilton

4/17/22 - Gordon Winkler

4/24/22 - Tony Crandell

#### Lamoni:

4/3/22 - Carson Holbrook

4/10/22 - Josh Jordison

4/17/22 - Sherman Phipps

4/24/22 - Terry Chown



***Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior***  
***Elder Ed Colyer***  
***March 6, 2022***  
***Lamoni, IA***

As a Call to Worship Patriarch Ron Smith read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29. . . . *the Lord Jesus . . . took bread; And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

This isn't exactly a scripture and yet it is. Hymns have meant so much in the past and especially as a young lad when I listened to my mother as she sang the hymns and sobbed and cried at the stove and at the sink because of her lot. Hymn 161 (Hymns of the Restoration) says it all as far as I'm concerned and this will be my scripture this morning.

*O God, whose presence glows in all-  
 Within, around us, and above!*

*Thy word we bless, thy name we call,  
 Whose word is truth, whose name is love.*

*Thy truth be with the heart believed  
 By all who seek this sacred place;  
 With power proclaimed, in peace received,  
 Our spirits' light thy Spirits grace.*

*Thy love its holy influence pour  
 To keep us meek and make us free,  
 And throw its binding blessings more  
 Round each with all, and all with thee.*

*Send down its angels to our side,  
 Send in its calm upon each breast;  
 For we would know no other guide,  
 And we can need no other rest.*

I worry about people hearing me especially since I have hearing aids. I don't know if anybody else in here has hearing aids or not but these are the most frustrating things a person was ever saddled with. I have an app on my phone that allows me to control the volume that I hear here but I have to have bluetooth to make that connection and sometimes bluetooth has a habit of disappearing. They told me that if I ever lost bluetooth connection, that I could either put these hearing aids in its charger, these are rechargeable by the way, or turn them off and turn them on. Well if you are going down the road 70 mph how are you going to put them in a charger. By the way I think here at the back of the receiver on each ear is an off and on switch but if you are doing 70 mph it's kind of hard to reach back here and recycle from off to on. It's frustrating so sometimes going down the road when I lose bluetooth connections I can't hear a thing Cheryl says. Maybe that's good or maybe that's bad but it's some of the frustration I have with hearing aids. At this point I worry about whether people back there hear me or not.

Assuming that you do hear me, I'm going to tell you a story. I was raised with no father. Some of you might know that. I have three younger brothers. The youngest one was born in 1947. This story is about a woman who was told by the Lord that now wasn't her time that she had four young sons to raise, and when they didn't need her anymore, would be her opportunity to go home. I'm convinced and I shared this with my brothers that was the reason whenever we came back here for vacations that my mother was quick to go see the waitress or the waiter and then give her her credit card and make sure the bill was paid before we even got a chance to pay it. It gave her a sense she was needed. So we had to fight that as we grew up.

Mom did a wonderful job of raising us I think. I remember my mother standing at the sink washing dishes or at the stove stirring whatever she was cooking singing hymns and sobbing as she sang those hymns. Mom was born in 1916 and she had the chance to attend the Old Brick Church just over here behind us where the COC church now stands. As a young lady she stood on the side of the road or on the curb watching that church burn down.

My mother singing those hymns affected me in many ways. I was the oldest of the four and little did I know that 8 years from then she would receive a visit from Brother Bob Farnham who was the Stake



President at the time telling her that I had a call to the office of Deacon. Oh did she worry about that. 'He's too young. He doesn't know anything about the church yet.' Brother Farnham said, 'He'll grow into it.' Her singing and her sobbing and her pleading affected me greatly as the days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months and months turned to years.

My dad was ordered to pay \$25 a month child support. He never paid a penny. Subsequently my mother drew what's called A-D-C, aid to dependent children. Things were different back in those days. Mom had to account for every penny that she spent, every penny. If I needed a pair of shoes and my brother needed a coat, Mom had to request that through the state and if the State of Iowa agreed to that request, the next month she would receive that many dollars in addition to support money that they paid.

Late one night as I lay in bed thinking about things, how I was going to manage, what I was going to do after high school. I didn't want to be a farmer. I was raised around farmers on a farm south of Davis City. Anyway this one particular night I heard my Mother singing again and I took it upon myself to peak through the door. There Mom was kneeling beside the bed sobbing, singing a hymn you all have heard I suspect. We don't sing it much any more. *Pass me not O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry; While on others thou art calling, Do not pass me by. Savior, Savior, hear my humble cry; While on others thou art calling, Do not pass me by.*

Friends, if anything ever affected me as a young man that experience did. But do you know what? It wasn't long after that experience that things began to get better around the house. Mom was not so emotional. She seemed to smile more. She wasn't so bossy. It was years later that I came to the realization how things fit into place. How the hymns that we sing and how the prayers that we offer, the smile on our face, the handshake, the pat on the back how those things affect others. This is the rest of the story.

It wasn't long after that I went to the post office in Davis City. We had postal boxes back in those days. They didn't deliver the mail to every house. Davis City only had about 350 people living in it anyway. I picked up a letter. The only thing on there was a postmark Kansas City, MO, no return address. This happened every month and as I got older I realized that those letters arrived the week after Communion Sunday. You

know what was in those letters? A check for \$25. That \$25 covered the child support that my father was ordered by the court to pay which he never paid only it didn't come from him. I can tell you that.

I never knew where it came from until sometime during the early 80s. I was visiting with Richard and Pamela Price down at the bookstore in Independence. Richard had asked me to write an article for the Vision Magazine which I gladly was doing. Somehow the conversation came around to the subject we're talking about right now. As I explained to Richard and Pam I didn't remember much in those days that we lived in Kansas City before the divorce, before moving in with my uncle and grandfather, but as I remembered it we were attending what was the Kansas City Stake Fourth Branch. I don't know whether by the early 80s it still existed or not. As I was talking to those two people I happened to mention an older gentleman attending Fourth Branch whose name was Daddy Lloyd. We didn't know him by any other name. When I said that Richard Price got a big smile on his face. He personally knew him and he said that the reason those checks arrived the week after Communion Sunday or during that week was that every Communion Sunday, specifically every Communion Sunday, that Daddy Lloyd would offer a prayer for a family who lived in Iowa and with permission of the leadership of the congregation he took that \$25 out of the oblation fund and sent it to us.

At the same time that the letters started arriving each month, I began to notice that church members (or so I was told) from Kansas City and Independence as they traveled north to Minneapolis, Chicago, Detroit and Des Moines would stop at our place in Davis City and offload baskets and boxes of garden vegetables, fruit, clothes and you know, friends, it was only then that I came to the realization that God truly works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.

I must ask you why you are here today? Is it because you feel you have to be here today, a sense of duty, a sense of obligation or are you here because you are driven internally by that Spirit which leads us to do good. I'm telling you, friends, these hymns that we sing, these prayers that we offer, these hands that we shake and even if Shay is in the crowd and we say, 'Run, Shay, run,' people depend upon those.

Why are you here? The scriptures say to examine ourselves. There's nothing specific in scripture





telling us how to worship. I call your attention to when Jesus met the lady at the well, the Samaritan woman, and what did she say? She began to tell Him that her fathers worshipped a certain way and Christ stopped her and said, ‘You have it all wrong.’ I’m paraphrasing. ‘The Lord seeks those who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth.’

It’s my constant prayer that when I walk in the door of the church, when I talk to you, when I shake your hand, when I pat you on the back, when I look you in the eye that I am truly worshipping our Heavenly Father in Spirit and in truth because there’s no other way. I am sure Mom as she knelt there beside the bed sobbing, ‘Pass me not, O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry,’ little did she realize that that prayer, that hymn would bear much fruit later on. May we be that example today? May we be that example as we reach our hand and partake of the bread, as we reach our hand forward and partake of the wine.

\*\*\*\*\*

***The Good News***  
***Elder Tony Crandell***  
***February 27, 2022***  
***Mount Ayr, IA***

For a scripture reading I would like to read 2nd Nephi 13:29-32. Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life. And now behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.

Last fall I spoke on the topic “What is the Gospel of Christ?” Here is just a little review of that sermon. The focal point or takeaway was that “the Gospel is very simple!” It is the Good News. . . In fact, it is the ultimate very best news you could ever hear or receive!

The gospel is good news because it can bring a lasting and permanent answer to all our problems with sin. It can deliver you from bondage (hopelessness) of sin that can or will ultimately destroy your faith. The

gospel will set you on course that is for your highest good. It provides for you all things and concepts that pertain to life and godliness.

It transforms your wants and desires so that they line up with God and His created purpose for you. And it turns you from a pathway of self-destruction to a pathway of eternal life, joy, and peace.

So, here was the take-away from that morning last fall. The sole purpose of the gospel is to show us that there is an opportunity for eternal life for everyone who will but believe and have faith in the message of the Gospel no matter what kind of life they have lived up to now. **Now, That is Good News!** It is “for the SALVATION of everyone who believes” or to say it another way, “it is the rescue, healing, deliverance, safety and well-being of everyone who believes.”

You know the “Church,” not this Church or any other organization we call a church that we might join, can provide us a 100% sure path to Salvation. Religion in and of itself cannot provide us salvation. **Salvation is a result solely of our personal relationship with Christ.** I can’t hold on to Sandra’s great faith and good works as a leverage for my salvation. As much as I respected my dad’s ministry, his faith, and his work in the church, it is not going to add to my salvation. All the scriptures, teachings and testimonies of the church will prepare us for an understanding of salvation and will help teach us to trust in what we read and learn....But, **Salvation is solely our personal relationship with Christ.**

You know that in the not-too-distant future for many of us, we will be rewarded for that personal relationship we are developing with Christ. It seems like there is a significant increase in the number of people Sandra and I know who are facing very serious illnesses. It is probably because as a group we are all getting up and passing the age Psalms 90:10 said we might attain. *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years.*

Sandra has two cousins who have grave (if not terminal) health issues. She is troubled by the fact that they are not grounded in any particular belief in the eternal hereafter. They are not necessarily anti-religion...they just don’t have any affinity to explore, ask questions, or inquire about their eternal future. We are both amazed how many people can go and will go



through life and leave their eternal future to pure chance.

I have been thinking back about those comments I made that morning last fall and realize there is more to say. OK, so....how do I establish a personal relationship with Christ that is required... how do I establish that, or where do I find that?

**First of all...**I must have faith in Christ and believe He has the power and authority to grant my salvation. We've all heard the term at church, "We must *Praise Him and Worship Him.*" This is another one of those phrases we toss around without stopping to consider the meaning behind the words. It has now become another one of those simple catchphrase(s) that has morphed into vague Christian-ese.

We especially hear those words when referring to Christian music. The unintended result is that music, one of God's gifts to aid us in worshiping, has for many become an end unto itself. **The danger of overfamiliarity of misusing biblical terms is that the overuse of the undefined terms like "praise and worship" actually ends up diluting the intended meaning.**

One author puts it this way.....When I was a new Christian, having been raised Jewish, I was oblivious to the various Christian phrases being taught to me. All I knew was the experience I was having with God. As I began to grow spiritually, Christian lingo became a part of my Christian life — somehow dulling the experiences I used to have. I had become numb in a way. No longer was "praise and worship" an experience with God; it was just another part of the "church" experience.

So, I decided to do some research on my own and get back to the basics. Here is what I discovered.

**What is Praise?** Praise, in the original Greek, means to sing, to tell of, to give, or to confess.\* In simpler terms, it means to be thankful for God's blessings, and to declare that good news to God and to others. Here are some Readers Digest examples in Scripture:

- [Psalms 9:1-3, 18:2-3 and 28:2, & 6-7](#) describe how to praise God for what He has done for us.
- [Psalm 79:13](#) tells us to praise God by passing from generation to generation the knowledge of His goodness, grace, and mercy.
- [Hebrews 13:15](#) tells us that instead of using sacrifices towards God, we are to offer Him praise

and thanks. In other words, giving praise is a form of sacrifice.

- [1 Peter 1:7](#) explains that our faith naturally leads to our praise of God.
- In [Acts 16:25](#), we see Paul and Silas praising God and witnessing to other prisoners. It is also worthy to note that they were praising God under horrible circumstances in their lives.

Each of these Scriptures emphasize that praise is an outward expression, not just to God, but in order to tell others how good God is. **This is the true foundation of praise.** It doesn't have to be directly correlated with music, and it has nothing to do with putting on a musical performance. True praise comes from deep in our heart, and the outcome is that others see God working in us. A wonderful example of this can be found in the song Mary proclaims while still carrying Jesus in her womb ([Luke 1:46-55](#)). Filled with His Spirit and fully aware of His greatness, Mary tells of how magnificent God is. She sings of how great He is, not only to her, but to all people of all nations.

**What is Worship?** Worship, in both the original Greek and Hebrew, convey the idea of: "to prostrate oneself, to bow down, to fall face down, to pay homage and to pay respect."\* In other words, worship is the highest form of honor and respect that we can show towards God. While worship can be done in public, its main directive is very different from praise. Worship is a direct conversation between you and God. It is highly intimate and personal. Here are some examples in Scripture:

- [Luke 17:15-16, 7:36-38](#) explain that by worshipping, we are putting God first in our lives. This coincides with what Jesus said in Matthew 22:35-40 when He quoted the greatest commandment from the Old Testament.
- [Isaiah 29:13](#) explains the difference between worshipping by human rules as opposed to worshipping from the heart.
- [John 4:23-24](#) tells us that all may worship God, and that we are to worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- [Romans 1:25](#) explains how we can be deceived and worship the things God has created rather than worshipping Him who is the Creator.

There is great importance to be placed on worship. The devil himself knew this, which is why he made it the final temptation for Jesus in the wilderness



[\(Matthew 4:8-10\)](#). What we worship is who and what we will follow. Worship goes beyond words and feelings. It is the foundation for our true servanthood towards God. This is why worship is so intimate — it defines our relationship with Him. There is nothing on this earth, or in our lives, that is more important than our personal relationship with God.

An excellent example of this is found in [John 12:3](#) when Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anoints the feet of Jesus with expensive perfume. Judas, who was later to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, was quick to criticize her because he saw it as a waste of money. He claimed the money could instead have fed the poor and helped the unfortunate. Jesus saw that his statement held no true worship-value toward Him, so He rebuked Judas. Whereas He defended Mary by saying she anointed Him in preparation for His burial, thus showing her devotion. Basically, Jesus was teaching that there is no higher value than worshipping God.

Praise and worship clearly go beyond something we do in church or at a concert. It is not just a title to be assigned to describe an activity. Rather it is a complete way of life for one who follows Christ. Praise and worship are in fact to be the foundation on which we live our lives. Without both, we can't possibly be effective at being the hands and feet of God. To accomplish this, worship of God and of Him alone must be a first priority at all times. Through our worship of Him and the intimacy that comes through such worship, praise for Him will naturally flow from our actions and words. In doing this our lives will be a true reflection of Christ, from the inside out

This last week during our Monday evening BOM class we were studying 3<sup>rd</sup> Nephi. The thought that took over my mind was that we really don't know how to worship or praise Christ beyond "just words". In verse 11 of Chapter 8. Here is just one example of praise from that text.... *And they did all, both they who had been healed, and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him. And as many as could come, for the multitude, did kiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears.*

Now, I think this is an excellent descriptive example of the level of thankfulness and praise that I think we will all feel and want to replicate when we find out that His promise of "The good news" becomes reality in the moment of our transition into eternal life. What Joy!!! What Relief... What Thankfulness!!!

All He asks of us is to have faith in His promise.... Faith...Hmmmmm...we talk a lot about faith. Here is another one of those words we use a lot in church without really defining it.

The thing that is really at the root of tormenting fear, is the fear of death. Hebrews 2:14-15 says, *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

Now, think about those verses against whatever you are afraid of. Some people are afraid of heights. They are afraid they might fall and die, so they have a fear of death. Some people are afraid of close places. They are afraid they might smother and die, so they are afraid of death. Some people are afraid of storms. They are afraid they will get blown away and die, so they are afraid of death! That fear of death is the power of the devil, according to the Bible. Jesus came to deliver you from that. In Psalm 56:3, the Psalmist said, *What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.* You need to say to whatever has you in bondage, "You have no rights over me; Jesus came to deliver me from fear, and in Jesus' name, I am free!"

A few years ago, Roger Potts and I attended a three-day technical class in Chicago. A high point whenever visiting Chicago is to see the Sears Tower. Its sky-high observation deck allows you to view Chicago and Lake Michigan through a see-through floor. The glass floor makes it feel like you are stepping out onto nothing.

My friend Roger can't tell you anything about the wonder of this glass floor by his personal experience, since he refused to step out from the back wall to the front edge of the building and step out onto nothing. I had the experience, and I was happy to share it with him.

Oh! He believed the floor would hold. He saw that it had held many other people....ten at a time. He had faith in it...but, just not enough faith to take a step out onto the glass floor. His unbelief – did not affect the Sears Tower Skydeck and its reliability. It was solid whether he had faith to believe it or not. His unbelief didn't affect the building. His unbelief affected only him and robbed him of an experience of a lifetime.



Because of age now (82)...he will probably never get another chance to experience the exhilaration of standing on that glass floor one hundred and three stories in the air...or 1353 feet above the ground. Romans 3:3 says, *For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?*

Our Spiritual belief or unbelief in Jesus doesn't make Him more or less trustworthy. God remains faithful and strong because that is Who He is. A person's unbelief in Jesus robs them of experiencing God's faithfulness here on earth and it could rob them of a life in heaven with Him one day.

God remains faithful. We all have the opportunity of a lifetime to choose to believe Him. Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow could be too late. So, as it was the take-away for that morning last fall...it is the same take away of my message this morning...

The sole purpose of the gospel is to show us that there is an opportunity for eternal life for everyone who will but believe and have faith in the message of the Gospel...no matter what kind of life they have lived up to now. Now, That is Good News!

\*\*\*\*\*

***What is Your Commitment to God?***  
***Seventy Dan Norman***  
***March 13, 2022***  
***Lamoni, IA***

I would like to read for your consideration this morning from Matthew 5:25-26. *Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me, or if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, Leave thou thy gift before the altar, and go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

It is good to be here with my brothers and sisters in Lamoni. I have looked forward to the opportunity to come and to share with you here. I know that I have labored with quite a few of you that attend here and other areas doing missionary work or reunions or other church work that we've found ourselves involved in. For that I am indeed blessed and thankful for that there are those who have willingly served their Master.

As I was preparing about what to share with you from the Lord today, I recognized that each and every

one of us deal with things within our lives that have a tendency to separate us from God. Sometimes they are things that we don't really even think about a whole lot but yet sometimes it's the tiny things that keep us separated from the Lord.

I am going to share a couple of testimonies with you that go along with the scripture that I read to you from Matthew about if your brother has aught with you. I've always found that scripture very interesting. The reason I find that interesting is if you have aught with your brother, he probably has some aught with you. Did you ever think about that. Even if you don't have aught with your brother but your brother you know has aught with you, you should still go and reconcile with your brother and take care of that.

I had an experience here recently that really kind of drove this point home. I had labored for many years with a friend of ours. I recognized the ministry that he brought but there were just some things that I didn't agree with. One day I was offering my prayers to the Lord and this brother's name came to my mind. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon me and convicted me of the way I was viewing my brother. Even though I felt from a logical standpoint, from church structure standpoint and from scripture, I had the high ground yet I recognized as the Spirit of the Lord rested on me that I did not view or perceive this brother in the manner that God did.

We are who we are today from the sum of experiences that we have had throughout our lives. Those things that we have encountered have shaped us into the people that we are. When we experience certain things over and over, we just know what the outcome is going to be so we feel like we're justified in taking the high ground on it because we know from experience. The Lord's Spirit rested upon me and opened my eyes and understanding and said, 'You do not perceive him as I do.' I know that I don't see God's whole plan. In my weakness in the flesh I can only perceive those glimpses of my understanding of what is before me. Only God knows what that whole plan is and He's sees it perfectly. It's not tainted by experience or by perception but by knowledge and understanding of each individual that He knows, that He dwells in and that He works with.

I found that I needed to repent of those thoughts because I recognized that this man brought forth good works, he bore good fruit and that He was a servant of the Lord. I had never stopped to consider that God





perceives the fullness of the picture. Where does that leave us? It leaves us at the mercy of our God. If we truly want peace as the song we just listened to and watched on YouTube shared with us, that peace only comes from one place and that's from God. That's when we so fully empty ourselves of all of those things and open ourselves to Him. Galatians 2:2 says, *I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

We have to look beyond what our perception is. We have to understand that we don't perceive all truths and understanding the way that God perceives them. We need to remember that we are but little children in the eyes of God. All of us who have had children know that when a child is small they will say I want this and I want that. When you're in a store they want a candy bar or other things and we, as parents, don't take the time to stop and explain to our child why he can't have all these things. We just say 'no.' That's the way it is with God.

We are to become as little children in the eyes of God. We need to understand that when He gives directions we might not understand them but there is a purpose in the design behind it and it's specifically for the blessing of His people. That's why we need to be very considerate because the strength of our membership and our branches is where the strength of the church resides. Each one of us even if we aren't priesthood members have responsibilities in our relationship with God to make it the best relationship we can possibly make it recognizing that where we are today in that relationship with God is not necessarily where we need to be. We can't address a problem within our lives until we acknowledge that there is a problem. That acknowledgement allows us to humble ourselves before God so His Spirit can enter in and we can experience His peace and His joy.

I remember a poster as a young man growing up. It said, 'Let there be such oneness between you that when one cries the other tastes salt.' That's the way we should be especially as a body of Christ, especially. We can't allow our preconceived understandings to stand in the way of God's work. I think we ought to be specific in our prayers. I have prayed, Lord, I really need to do this. This really needs to happen.' But I have come to an understanding where I say, 'Lord, what can you bless me with today?' What understanding can He give me

that I can perceive the truth because I don't know what God can do, what He can give me that is best for me. I know what I want but God sees it more clearly than I do. If I take myself out of that and allow God to bless me He will richly bless me in ways I never expected or could even pray for. That allows God to work within our lives to a depth that we've never understood before.

Brothers and sisters, the decision in making these types of choices is an individual one. I can stand here and give you these words and these lessons but it's up to you to choose to enact and to act upon those things that your lives will become enriched with the power of God within them. That's truly the desire of your Heavenly Father that you begin to walk in righteousness each and every day. Don't expect that it's going to be perfect every day. The fight that we are in is a lifelong battle. Now I heard somebody say here the other day that God didn't necessarily put us in this life to have victory over the things in this life. He brought us into this life that we might endure, that we might fight for Him and ourselves to be a righteous people. We can't come in and expect God just to give it because we're His people.

Years ago I had been seeing a young lady who was in the employ of the Stake. We were coming home one night and she said, 'You know I do a lot for the Lord. I work for the Stake and I really like these things. I really like jewelry and nice things. I think the Lord should bless me with those because I am doing all this work for Him.' Really, is that why we're working for the Lord? So we can get gain? We're working for the Lord to gain victory for our souls, our everlasting souls. The things of this world hold nothing everlasting. It's only by the power and grace, the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ that we have a hope for that eternity beyond this life. It is by allowing God to penetrate to the very depths of our heart and being and being willing to admit that we don't perceive all the truths and allow God to work within us so that His will be done in our lives.

I am going to share an experience that happened with Ruth Ann and me. Ruth Ann and I had been attending reunion at Odessa Hills for a number of years. I remembered going there when they first started having reunions. Central Missouri Stake branches had bought the campgrounds and I had grown up going to camps there and so we thought we would start attending reunion. We used to go to Woodbine but we had two





small children and that reunion was very primitive at the time so it was easier to go to Odessa which was 10 minutes down the road from where we lived.

As we started attending we realized that there were people there who had been sharing things about Ruth Ann and me that were really bad. They weren't good. We could feel this undertow year after year after year. In conversations with people we could feel this undertow. We attended out there for 7 years. One day at the first of the reunion week Ruth Ann and I felt this undertow again. We knew some things were being said that weren't good about us. We were worried about the influence this might have on our young children so we had pretty much decided that we were not going to go back and attend the reunion after that year.

The first of the week Ruth Ann had gotten up to go to do KP and a young lady left class and ran after Ruth Ann. She said, 'Ruth Ann, I need to talk to you.' Ruth Ann barely knew who this girl was. She had seen her around but she didn't really have conversations with her. Ruth Ann said, 'Well, what do you mean?' She goes, 'I need to beg your forgiveness.' Ruth Ann said, 'For what?' The young lady said, 'For years I have believed all of the things that I have heard about you and Dan and I need to ask for your forgiveness because after having labored and worshipped and worked with you over these last few years at reunion, I know that those things are not true.' Not once did Ruth Ann and I ever lift our voice in opposition to anything that was being said or might have been said. We went. We labored. We worshipped. We fellowshipped.

Before that week was over there were three other people that came to us and begged forgiveness in the same way. Do not think that God does not know what is going on in your life because He does and He will act accordingly in His time that you might be best blessed by His will in the best way. If this has happened prior to that time it would probably have not had the impact that it had when it happened. We never once raised our voice in accusation or in defense. We went and loved them and labored with them and the Lord brought about a restoration of those relationships.

God is capable of doing all these things, brothers and sisters. Even in your lives and the things that you struggle with and we all struggle, we need to recognize the power of God and say, 'Lord, let me get out of the way. I am going to place this burden at your feet and ask for your blessing.' Maybe it's not done in the way we

would expect or in the time that we might select but I can promise you this, it will be a deep and rich blessing in His time.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to perform the ordinance of marriage for a couple of young people. I had known the young lady for quite a few years. The counsel that I gave to them was much the same. The power in your covenant lies in your relationship with your Heavenly Father. It's the same with us in our baptismal covenant. We need to remember the promise we made when we entered the waters of baptism and claim that promise and let God work and magnify His great work within our lives but we have to be willing to set those things aside that God might do His will. It would be really easy to say, 'I can't do it, Lord. Look at everything in my life. There's trash in there. Look at all this junk. I'm not worthy to talk to anybody about who you are.' That is a really easy excuse to use. The challenge is to recognize that God knows about us. He knows about all our trash, all our junk, all our shortcomings. He knows that but He still loves us in spite of that.

It's time that we as a people begin to take that trash out of our lives and make room for God to work within us because as we allow God to work within us, His light begins to shine through us. Each and every individual in this branch, if you were to do that little by little you would begin to see God's light shining forth in great power in your lives, your families and your branches. But what are you willing to do? What commitment and steps are you willing to understand the immense blessings God desires to give us. What steps are you willing to do? He's not going to take you by the arm and twist it up behind your back and say, 'Your going do it.' It's your choice. Is there a willingness within our hearts and our minds to allow God to come in and to penetrate to the very depths of our souls that we might enjoy His love and His peace all the days of our lives. I cannot promise you that there will not be trials. I know there will be. There will be joy. There will be pain but there will be love and we know that there will be strength found in the love of our Heavenly Father regardless of those things that transpire. That's how every dark day might be. However heavy they might be. We never tread this path alone. Don't ever think that you are on this journey by yourself. You will find that you are wrong when you take a moment to see where your Heavenly Father is at.



Brothers and sisters, oh how I wish the Kingdom was now but I know that it's going to take a people of righteousness and a willingness to allow that righteousness to exist within their lives for that to come to pass. I'm willing to roll up my shirtsleeves and labor with my brothers and sisters to see that we all get down that path together that His Kingdom might come. That His Kingdom might be built and be shone forth the power upon the face of the earth in these last days. But it's only going to happen if we choose to love Him within our hearts and our minds to a greater depth than what we've experienced and set excuses aside and take the trash out and allow God to prevail with the strength of His Spirit that it might shine forth with the truth and His love that He has for the righteousness of His people.

Do not think that we have the strength to do this alone because we do not but there is one who does. The one who gives us that strength is the one who resides within us and the stronger He resides within us the more righteous that we can become and the stronger His people will be as a body but it only comes by individual choice and desire to open our hearts and minds to allow Him to come in and to help us shovel out all the junk that we have and make room for Him within our hearts and our minds.

It is a journey and it is a process. It has to begin some place. Many of us are on that journey. Many of us have stopped and looked around and we need to put our nose back to the path again and keep moving forward and keep striving that God can have His will done through us in this place in this time. I would admonish all of us to pray together for one another in times of richness and times of sadness, in times of joy that we rejoice when we recognize where that strength is, it resides within us. Allow God to grow in you. Allow His Spirit to strengthen you. Allow Him to lead you to greater heights that you might profess who He is, that the world will see who He is through you.

May His blessings be upon you. May His Spirit always abide with you. May His love abound with you and may we all strive together to be the righteous people of our Heavenly Father.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CARING LEADS TO SHARING

**Elder Gordon Winkler**

**February 20, 2022**

**Mount Ayr, IA**

My scripture reading for today is from I John 3:16-18. *Hereby perceive we the love of Christ, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth is brother have need, and shutteth up his bowls of compassion from him, dwelleth the love of God in him? *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue only; but in deed and in truth.*

### 1. AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP EXHIBIT

- Union Station, Kansas City
- Heidi, Linda and I attended Monday February 7th
- ~ 2hrs to walk through and listen to the headphone dialogues
- The exhibit contained maps, photos, sections of bunks, clothing, shoes and many other artifacts left to remember the ~ 1 million people murdered in gas chambers or worked to death at Auschwitz
- There were many video clips of interviews with survivors that were heart wrenching
- Stories of families split apart never to see each other again
- Children subject to experimental medicine; being sent to the hospital was a death sentence!

Walking through the exhibit I found it unfathomable that people could treat one another in the manner displayed. Yet there it was right in front of me. Clearly the love of God was over shadowed by the evil instilled in men to gain power and recognition unto themselves, to prove themselves superior to others.

I was most taken by a statement made by an Auschwitz survivor named Mike Vogel which was framed on one of the exhibit walls. It read:

*"You had to have a partner - a partner to take care of you - and you to take care of him. A partner who you could organize food with and would share food with. You had to have someone to help because if you stood by yourself, you couldn't survive. You didn't survive. There we're those people who didn't want to share anything. They were always afraid to share a piece of bread. And those were the people who went first."* The statement from Mr. Vogel under the dire



circumstances of Auschwitz provides a summary of my message this morning.

If we don't care for each other we can't survive the trials and difficulties we face. If we are afraid to share the bread we have others will not survive. And Jesus said unto them, *I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* John 6:35

Care for one another and share the bread of life found in Jesus Christ.

## 2. ILLUSTRATIONS OF CARING LEADING TO SHARING

This morning I would like to present two illustrations of caring leading to sharing. The first is from the Bible - Paul and Silas's prison experience found in the 16th Chapter of Acts. The second illustration of caring leading to sharing is found in the travels and interaction of Ammon and King Lamoni. You can find this recorded in the Book of Mormon - Alma Chapter 12.

I think one of the primary objectives /missions of the church should be to care for others and to share with others. Caring can take on many forms including meeting essential needs, visiting, providing labor, phone calls, cards, email and text messaging.

In Acts 2:44-47 Peter describes caring as it was found in the early new testament church. *And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.*

Honest and sincere caring provides opportunity to share the good news of Jesus Christ. I saw a slogan one time that said "Life Happens". What has happened to you to define your life is different from what has happened to define mine. Life is different for each one of us because of circumstances, decisions and the situations we face.

### Paul and Silas

The point is we all go through life. In Chapter 16 of Acts, Paul and Silas face life in a prison. What happened is that a slave girl who was possessed

with a demon, a spirit of divination, came and harassed Paul and Silas, following them for days. So, they cast out her demon. You would ordinarily think that would be a good thing. But, her masters then became very upset, because through the power of this demon she was able to tell fortunes, and her masters made a profit from this ability. When Paul and Silas destroyed their method for making money, they turned the city against them telling all that they taught customs which were not lawful to receive, neither to observe being Roman.

The magistrates then had them beaten with many stripes and thrown in prison with their feet in stocks. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them.* Paul and Silas were going through a really difficult time. They had just been beaten, probably bleeding and in a lot of physical pain. They were unjustly thrown in prison, and they were probably lying on a cold hard floor (maybe on a straw mat) in a damp stone prison cell. They were probably fed once a day, and the place was filthy. Talk about experiencing hardship of life.

What I wish to point out is that things happen to each of us in life. We all encounter trials and difficulties and we all have things that try really hard to distract us from witnessing or sharing our faith with others. Going through hard times it is difficult to praise God like Paul and Silas did, let alone share your faith.

Whenever we are experiencing a time of trials we can become focused on our own hardships. Feeling as though we are trapped in them, we forget to look around and see that there are others who are hurting as well, like the prisoners who were present around Paul and Silas. Paul and Silas were not alone in that jail.

We all go through life, and life can distract us from witnessing. It blinds us to the needs of other people. It is hard to look out and see others when we are so inward focused and consumed by our own world.

Even though we have our own set of troubles and distractions, our own demands on time, we need to keep our eyes open to the people around us. If we can just open our eyes we will see that others are going through things too!

Paul and Silas put their own needs and problems aside and began to pray and sing. They sang from the joy of the Lord that was in their hearts, but they also sang for another reason. In verse 25 we read that the other prisoners heard them. So, we see that Paul and Silas also sang for the benefit of the other prisoners in



order to lift their spirits and to become a witness of their own faith.

They began demonstrating caring and sharing here, but there is more to this story. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyones bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out is sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying do thyself no harm; for we are all here. Then he called for a light and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas.*

The point I wish to make here is that - we can choose to care. Did you notice what happened here? God made a way for Paul and Silas to escape, but when the keeper came in were they gone? NO, they were still there along with all the other prisoners. Let me repeat - ALL of them were still there!! If we were imprisoned and the doors suddenly opened, wouldn't we try to escape? I would at least consider it, I think we all would. So why did Paul and Silas stay?

They stayed because they cared. They made a faith lead decision. They had a choice to gain their physical freedom or to help others find spiritual freedom. We have to make a conscious decision to care. Caring is a choice, and we see here that Paul and Silas made the choice to help people find their spiritual freedom.

Those who don't know Jesus Christ as their savior are bound to a spiritual prison, and it is up to us to help set them free. We help set people free when we care enough to share and accept the message that we share.

The prison keeper was not a prisoner of the jail. However, he was a spiritual prisoner. He had never been forgiven his sins by accepting Jesus Christ. Because he had never been forgiven he was destined to suffer the consequences of his sins. According to Romans 6:23 the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul and Silas cared enough about the others around them, they cared enough about one lone prison keeper, that they stayed put in the place of their hardship. Just think, if they had escaped, their hardship would have been placed upon the prison keeper. If the prisoners had escaped, the jailer probably would have

been considered incompetent and tortured or executed. That's why. He was contemplating taking his own life. If he died or killed himself, then that would have led to hardship for his family. If he would have succeeded in killing himself, the worse hardship would have been never knowing Jesus as his Savior and spending eternity separated from God.

Because Paul and Silas stayed, and because Paul called out for the prison keeper to stop and not harm himself, he called out for a light and ran and fell down before Paul and Silas. I see this calling out for a light as being symbolic of calling out for the light of Christ. And I see the prison keeper falling before Paul and Silas as coming to a place of humility before the Lord Jesus.

Just as caring is a conscious decision so is sharing. We must choose to share. *And (the keeper) brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. (30-32)*

Caring will open the door for us to meet people's spiritual needs, for they will see that our faith is genuine and they will ask questions. I used to remind my employees at the hospital of an old adage, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care". In healthcare that is true no matter your position. It applies equally if you are a nurse, therapist or physician.

The prison keeper sensing Paul and Silas cared, began to ask questions. In fact, he asked a very straightforward question - "What must I do to be saved?" How did Paul and Silas respond? Did they quickly change the subject because they were afraid to answer or because they felt inadequate to share the gospel? NO! They made a choice to answer his question, and in reply they gave him a straightforward, truthful answer. They made a choice to share, which is what we must do as well. What they shared was the gospel - "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ".

Anyone who is willing to send out the light as the prison keeper did, humble themselves before the Lord, and ask Jesus to come into their hearts will receive eternal life. We see here that even the people in the keepers household were saved as they too believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straight way. And when he had*





brought them into his house, he sat meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. (33-34)

Do you see what happened when Paul and Silas denied themselves an escape from their trials and denied their own freedom to care for those around them? People were saved, and they were set free from their spiritual prison house. Who was saved? We read that, “he” the prison keeper, “all his family” and “all his household” were saved as a result of sharing the gospel message.

Caring and sharing meets the needs of other people physically and spiritually, but it also can fulfill our need as well. Whenever we look out beyond ourselves and reach out to care and share, God delivers us from our own hardships.

Look what happened to Paul and Silas after they cared for the needs of others. And by the way those needs were right in front of them. They didn’t need to look any great distance for the opportunity to care and share. The prison keeper brought them out and cleaned their wounds, dressed them and took them to his house for a meal.

Did God take care of Paul and Silas? Yes he did. Moving ahead to verses 35-36 we find the magistrates decided to release them by their own choice, or so they thought. Paul and Silas did not have to make a jail break. Everything was accomplished according to the law. Not only did Paul and Silas win their freedom in the end, but others were helped to escape their spiritual prison as well.

As for the other prisoners around Paul and Silas, they too probably had the opportunity to receive Jesus Christ and be set free spiritually. We just don’t know any further specifics.

### **Ammon and King Lamoni**

Let’s move on to the account of Ammon and King Lamoni. Herein is another example of caring leading to sharing.

We pick up the story at Alma 12:30. Ammon went into the land of Ishmael. And as he entered the land he was captured by the Lamanites and bound. He was taken before King Lamoni who had the pleasure of pronouncing Ammon’s fate. He could slay him, retain him in captivity, cast him into prison or cast him out of his land. *King Lamoni inquired of Ammon if it was his desire to dwell in the land among the Lamonites.* (33)

Ammon responded it was his desire to dwell in the land perhaps until the day he would die. The King was pleased that Ammon wanted to stay and had him unbound. He then offered one of his daughters to be Ammon’s wife. Ammon refused but said he would be the King’s servant. And so Ammon was assigned to watch over the flocks of King Lamoni. (v.36)

Ammon made at the **Choice to Care** as a laborer, a servant of the King. After he had been in the service of the King 3 days, he along with other servants had taken the flock to be watered at a common watering spot. There they were confronted by another group watering their flocks also. This group of Lamanites scattered the King’s flock under Ammon’s care. *Now the servants of the King began to mumber; saying, “Now the King will slay us as he has our brethren because their flocks were scattered by the wickedness of these men.”* (v.40)

So apparently this situation had happened before and those men responsible for watching over the King’s flock were punished by death for losing the flock, and they wept fearing they would be slain.

*When Ammon saw this, his heart was swollen within him with joy; for, said he, “I will show forth my power to these my fellow servants, or the power which is in me restoring these flocks of the King, - **And here is Ammons reasoning** - that I may win the hearts of these my fellow servants, that I may lead them to believe in my words.”* (v.43)

So, Ammon led his fellow servants to gather the flock back together and bring them back to the place of water. And when they did, the same band of wicked men stood ready to again scatter the flock and slay Ammon. But, Ammon stood his ground casting stones with his sling and slew several. This made the others angry and they were determined to kill Ammon, but every man that lifted a club against Ammon he cut off their arm with his sword. The squeamish ended with 6 fallen by the sling & stone, many with an arm cut off and their leader killed.

Ammon and the servants returned the flock to the King’s pasture and the servants carried the arms and testimony of what had happened to the King. When the King had heard from each of the servants he concluded that Ammon was more than just a man. *Behold, is not this the Great Spirit...?* (v.64) The servants answered they didn’t know, but he couldn’t be slain by the enemies of the King.



***Be Ye Also Ready***  
***Elder Jon Barney***  
***March 13, 2022***  
***Mount Ayr, IA***

King Lamoni acknowledges there is a great spirit as was taught by the traditions of his fathers, but wrongly believes that is Ammon. Ammon is brought before King Lamoni and after a time King Lamoni asks, “Who art thou?” Art thou the Great Spirit who knoweth all things?”

Ammon answers he is NOT. The King asks him to tell him by what power he has done all these things and he will give him what ever Ammon wants. Ammon says to King Lamoni, *Wilt thou hearken to my words if I tell thee by what power I do these things? This is the thing I desire of thee.* (v.99) And the King answered him and said, “I will believe all your words.” And Ammon began to speak to him with boldness.

Ammon was prepared to share and when the opportunity presented itself, or rather God had made ready the heart of King Lamoni, he was bold in his teachings and testimony. He taught that God was the Great Spirit and creator of heaven and earth. Ammon began with the creation of the world, the fall of man. He shared the records and Holy Scriptures of the prophets down to the times that their father left Jerusalem. He expounded to him the plan of redemption which was prepared from the foundation of the world. He also made known to them concerning the coming of Christ; and all the works of the Lord he made known to him. There is more to this account but Ammon’s caring and sharing brought King Lamoni, his wife, other servants and many that would listen to the knowledge of Jesus Christ and their eternal salvation.

I’m thankful this morning to share the experiences of Paul and Silas, AND that of Ammon and King Lamoni. I wish to encourage you this morning to look beyond yourselves to see what is going on in the lives of the people around you, your neighbors, friends, family and co-workers. Take some time to lend a listening ear and a helping hand and you will eventually be given an opportunity to share the most important and life changing message they will ever hear - the Good News that they can have a personal and intimate relationship with the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.

\*\*\*\*\*

Elder Ed Anderson used Matthew 7:17-20 as a Call to Worship. *What man among you, having a son, and he shall be standing out, and shall say, Father, open thy house that I may come in and sup with thee, will not say, Come in, my son; for mine is thine, and thine is mine? Or what man is there among you, who, if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

I have chosen a passage of scripture that comes from the prophet Amos 8:11-12. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord; And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.*

When we read from Amos it talks about a drought. It talks about a loss but it’s nothing where you can eat it. Nothing you can do without it for a drink. It has to do with a drought of hearing the words of the Lord. It wasn’t too long ago that I was watching a YouTube video and one of these fellows came on and said, ‘You know the United States is in a crisis. Our world is in a crisis. It’s not a crisis of natural means exactly. We have a crisis in this country of truth. The media won’t tell you the truth. They won’t report the truth. They report what they want to report for their own objectives and their own causes, they say what they say. You can’t trust politicians to tell you the truth. You can see that. You can see press agents for politicians get up and tell more falsehoods than they tell truths.’ You know what the weird thing about it is in our day and time that people really don’t have any shame for being caught in telling a false statement or for telling a lie or saying something that is disingenuous. They don’t seem to be embarrassed by it. Maybe it’s because the press doesn’t hold them to it or hold them accountable. That’s bothersome and it’s really bothersome for people that want to speak the truth or now in our day and culture silenced or they’re put to a cancel in cancel culture.

How is it that you can be forthright before God and before others and do what is right and not tell the truth? I don’t think that works. The man on YouTube said, ‘It’s really bothersome that people in the world are making a conscious choice to do something other than the truth, to believe something that they know is fact and truth, something that is correct and turn away from it deliberately and consciously choose something that is not.’

It fits really nicely with our adult class this morning. Many times we see that. When I come to worship in my home congregation, I see a guest minister come in and impress the good Spirit has laid upon that heart exactly what the impress the Spirit has laid on our other worships in our early morning worship and in our adult class and in the



worship service that follows. That's really neat that the Spirit uses people that are willing to listen.

You know in this world today there are being transmitted at least two signals. There's one that the Lord and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost if you will transmits to us and causes us and leads us in the way of what is right and what is true. It's up to us if we listen to that channel. If we are on frequency and we're up on top dead center and we're beating with that signal, we're going to hear it and if we want to incorporate it, we will have a bread crumb trail of evidence in our lives and in our actions that we did hear it and that we did practice it and that those things are there for us.

The interesting thing about truth, the prophet says the people will look for the word of God, maybe in the future to and fro, up and down, left and right, from the north, every compass rows directions. They go looking for truth but they are not going to find it. Wow! Is it really a fact that the Lord doesn't always strive with man if we have deaf ears?

Truth has a nasty little habit of revealing itself in time. I would like to snitch on my Grandma Barney. Most of you don't know her. You never met her. Grandma married when she was 16 years old and they lived in the dust bowl of Oklahoma. They lived on a farm on the banks of the Canadian River outside of Seiling, OK. I went down there once. I've only seen it twice and it's really interesting country. They have sand dunes at a park where you can race your ATV up and down. Just a few miles away from that they have a Wiley Coyote butte and just a few more miles there's a green wheat field. All of these things were surrounded by an area where they farmed which was looking pretty hot and pretty dry next to that river where my Grandad Barney used to farm. They were Okies and left during the dust bowl. They went to California like so many other people did. I went down there in March and thought it was hot. I can imagine what it was like in the summertime but they had weather down there.

She wanted to impress my Grandpa Ed with her ability as a cook. She wanted to make some bread and impress my grandfather with her cooking skills and let him feel good about the fact that his new bride was able to take care of herself in the kitchen. Well, she decided, 'Ed's gone to work and I've got to put this leavening agent in here. I have to put the yeast in with the flour so I want to make sure it rises.' We don't want something that is going to stay down and be disgustingly flat bread. So maybe she thought if I put in a double measure of this yeast stuff it will come out fine.

Have you ever heard the story about the sorcerer's apprentice? How he goes out and does an incantation and it backfires on him and he can't shut the thing off. The mop handles are breaking and subdividing and they are running out the door and there's water everywhere. Well, it kind of went like that with Grandma. This batch of bread dough continued to grow and to grow and to grow. It became too much. It was spilling out the oven door. It was a real big mess and get how this goes. This will go nicely with our discussion from the adult class. She decided to conceal the bread dough. What she did was she went out to the chicken coop where there isn't any turf. It was easy digging out there in the chicken coop and she dug a hole and put this bread

dough in the hole and covered it up with the warm Oklahoma dirt. It was probably red dirt.

Of course, the bread dough being like the truth in this matter revealed itself when Grandpa came home and put the horses in the barn. He came back out to see this great big mushroom growing up out of the chicken coop. The chickens were not going to leave it alone. You know how chickens are. They were into the dough. I don't know how many chickens died but the truth was out and there was no way to hide it, no way to deny it.

So it goes with the truth. The guy on the YouTube said, 'We're having a crisis of truth.' He was really quite depressed about the fact that there are so many people that are choosing to follow a lie and it's hurting our world. It's causing people to die. Their mortal lives are being lost and I only begin to wonder how much corruption can we have where we have people taking kickbacks and influencing people in government before we really compromise our ability to stand with what is right and what is true and keep people alive on Planet Earth. Because where there is that weakness there is a terrible influence and other people take advantage of situations that are really evil. Things haven't changed too much on the face of the Planet Earth really.

There are always people, it seems like, that are willing to do something unscrupulous to get power or to get gain or to get influence or to get some money. I just can't understand how it would be, how selfish you must be to be able to throw your fellow countrymen under the bus. Throw them under to take trillions of dollars in terrible costs so you can have a million dollars or two yourselves. Surely, they must believe something else because I believe that where I am going there is going to be a moment where I have to meet my Maker and He is going to tell me about all the disappointing things that I haven't repented of.

I always told my son when he was growing up, my son's a law enforcement officer, and I said, 'If you really want to get into this stuff and really know, make sure you are not getting into drugs and you are not smoking the weed because if you do any of these things, somebody else will tell you, 'Well, nobody will know.' I said that's not true. You're going to know. God's going to know and somebody else is going to know and if you want to pass that polygraph test or if you want a job at Homeland Security, you're going have to be able to say I didn't do those things. It's a crisis in our world.

I think there's a good definition of this and I would like to go to Doctrine & Covenants 90:4c-e. *The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth. And John bore record of me, saying, He received a fullness of truth; yea, even of all truth, and no man receiveth a fullness unless he keepeth his commandments. He that keepeth his commandments, receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth, and knoweth all things.* This is where you get the crayon out and start underscoring. *Man was also in the beginning with God. We got to see it. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also, otherwise there is no existence. Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man, because that which was from the*





*beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light. And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation, for man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receiveth a fullness of joy; and when separated, man cannot receive a fullness of joy. (5a-e)*

I want to have a fullness of joy. I don't want to be alienated in the world to come. Maybe that's one of the lies that they say. I heard this guru guy on YouTube talking. He's some a real wise man of Eastern religion. He said, 'You know why we have such an energy problem with people in the world today. We just don't realize that we're all going to die and that we have a certain amount of time because if we really knew that we were running out of time, we would be more energetic and we'd do more things. You are carrying on like you are some kind of an eternal creature.'

Well, wait a minute, partner. Wait a minute. That's where the lie just hit. That's where we quit listening to this man because we are eternal creatures. We have been created by an eternal being. There's a real neat little promise in Section 22 of our Doctrine & Covenants that tells us that God's great work and His glory is to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man. What's God all about. He's working hard to bring us back into His presence. God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son. Why? To bring us back into His presence, everybody that will. Everybody will recognize that but you know something, if we've got faith and we believe in that statement there can only be one place that we place our faith. We can have false faith. We can believe in something that isn't true and something that doesn't work.

Years ago I used to be a high voltage lineman. There was an old Ford truck that we kept in an A building, a big old yellow thing, that broke down a lot but one thing that had been stuck on the back of this truck was an adhesive sticker that had been put there by the REC that owned the truck before we got it. That truck sticker, that safety warning, said 'If it isn't grounded and if it isn't de-energized and it isn't tested with a meter, it isn't dead.' Think about that. Obviously there have been some linemen out there that believed something that wasn't true. They thought it was dead. They thought it was grounded. They thought it was tested but when they reached out they got 7000 volts and blew their arm off and died.

So what do we put our faith in? If we trust in something other than the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah, our faith is in vain. It doesn't work. It doesn't work. I watched a little bit of CBN Network last night. They had this guy on there. He was in Ukraine. He is a Christian and the moderator of the show said, 'What can we do to pray for you? What shall we ask in our prayers?' He didn't ask for a fire to come down from heaven. You might have thought he might have asked that maybe they could be relieved from these terrible oppressors that are coming. Do you know what he asked for? It would almost make you choke. He said, 'I ask that you have the Lord send to us the peace that passes understanding, that His Kingdom will be manifest to us in our lives here.' Wow! That wasn't selfish at all was it? He didn't want the fear. I don't think he had the fear but it was a selfless thing that he asked for.

I pray for Ukraine all the time. They're right in the middle of a problem. They have a history of being corrupt themselves. Where you have to pay some kind of a public official to get what you want. The world is full of that. We can see it. Our people are carrying on the same way. Those people are carrying on the same way. When we start dealing that way, people die. It's sad, isn't it and we don't have to be that way. We don't need to be afraid. The Lord will preserve His people. That's the good news and the good news is that Jesus brings us His gospel for us to believe in.

Even though people in this world are trying to cancel everything, I always repeat myself now. I didn't used to preach the same sermon twice but I am going to have something in this one that I just have to tell you about. Wherever I go and wherever I have an opportunity for people to listen, I always tell them this. Maintain your free will and your agency, your God given gift at all cost. Don't resign your free will to something else or to someone else or to an algorithm that does your thinking for you. If we do that and stand by and let somebody else do the thinking and the deciding, we are going to be without our agency and it's going to be very hard to get it back. It's just not as easy as being in the driver's seat either. 'Well, I make my own decisions, Brother Barney. I do.' OK but that's not enough.

We went to visit our daughter in Shenandoah, IA. We weren't too far from here on Highway 2 the other afternoon. Jocelyn had the radio on and we were listening to that station in Murray and this gal came on singing a nice country western song. The song is about a couple who break up and the guy in the relationship tells his girlfriend that it's all off. We're breaking up. The whole refrain of the song says, 'I don't have to listen to you. Don't you tell me what to do. I'll go on loving you for eternity if I want to.' I don't think it's going to work that way and people don't respond normally that way. I'm sure there are some people out there that really felt the love when they heard her say, 'Don't you tell me what to do. I'm going to keep loving you any way.'

The problem is, it's not enough to make your own decisions. The decisions that we make have to be righteous decisions and they have to follow the true and living God. If we're doing something on our own, then we're probably going to fail and we're probably going to have a price to pay. There are consequences to the decisions that we make. We talked about that a little bit and it's true. If we don't make the right righteous choice and follow God and His laws then there's a consequence and it probably won't be very prone to give us a blessing that's for sure.

When we keep God's commandments, what we do with Him and for Him has an instant blessing. Have you ever noticed that about a commandment? Every time the Lord tells us to do something, there's a blessing that comes with it. Let's pick one of the Ten Commandments. Thou shalt not commit adultery. If you keep that one you instantly don't have to worry about getting hit in the backside jumping out a window with buckshot from a jealous lover. Right? You don't have to worry about those things. Just keeping them is a real good thing.

I am going to read you a piece of history now. How many of you are old enough to remember a fellow that was a leader of the USSR named Nikita Khrushchev. Do all of you





remember him? Khrushchev liked to visit the United States. I think he wanted to go see Disneyland and visited a pig farm in Iowa but sometimes he would get angry. He would beat on the pulpit and say all these things. Here is what he said.

I might have just missed the mark in life to be able to hear his sermon. It's really not a sermon. It's a prediction. Analyze what his prediction is and compare it to the world that we live in now. This speech was given September 29, 1959. Just think about this. Khrushchev says this while he was here.

*Your children will live under Communism. You Americans are so gullible. You won't accept Communism outright but we will keep feeding you small doses of Socialism until you will finally wake up and find that you already have Communism. We will not have to fight you. We will so weaken your economy until you will fall like overripe fruit into our hands. (This is how he says he's going to do it.) Democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.*

Measure the last two years and see if that isn't happening. Remember Socialism leads to Communism so how do you create a Socialist state then? 1) Health Care - control health care and you control the people. (He said this before I took my first breath.) 2) Poverty - increase the poverty level as high as possible so the poor people are easier to control and will not fight back if you are providing everything for them; 3) Debt - increase the debt to an unsustainable level. (Is there any of that going around? That way you are able to increase taxes and this will produce more poverty. There's a poverty cycle here I see); 4) Gun Control - remove the ability of the people to defend themselves from the government. That way you are able to create a police state; 5) Welfare - take control of every aspect: food, housing, income (like the stimulus check) of their lives because that will make them fully dependent on the government; 6) Education - take control of what people read and listen to and take control of what children learn in school; (We heard that already today.); 7) Religion - (this is the most dangerous part, brothers and sisters) remove belief in God from the government and from the schools because the people need to believe only in the government knowing which is best for them, what is best for the people; 8) Class Warfare - (You hear about this and watch this. This is happening.) Divide the people into the wealthy and the poor. Eliminate the middle class. This will cause discontent and it will be easier to tax the wealthy with the support of the poor. Those are the points.

I say, brothers and sisters, we don't have to go on with that and we don't have to do it. So why are modern people going deaf to their own awareness? Where is our sense of awareness to the things situationally that are going on around us and why would we be willing to look the other way. It would be easier and more comfortable if we just looked the other way, if we said nothing. Because after all, the squeaky wheel does get the grease. Right? But you know what, if we follow after these dictates and we go to worshipping a government instead of worshipping the true and living God, if we will not give respect to the fact that God put on flesh and blood Himself in Christ Jesus. He came down here, He lived, He taught, He died, He was resurrected

and He's doing all this to bring us back into His presence because He loves us that much. If we can't make that choice, if we can't listen to the channel that the Lord is transmitting on, there's another channel out there in the world today and that is the one that the adversary to God preaches and teaches and transmits. It's a message of self-aggrandizement, it's a message really of selfishness.

Years ago I used to work for a police agency in Central Iowa and one day I got called into the Control Commander's office. He said, 'Barney, come in here. We're going to send you to the University of Northern Iowa for awhile. We know you go to church. We know how you'd be able to behave yourself in this thing. We want you to go over there and see what they have to say because satanism is a problem for corrections. Satanism is a problem for law enforcement and if you know about their wicked little holidays and their ethos, you'll be better prepared to do business with them.

So I went over there more than one time and I learned that, this may not bode well. For them it's not so much the worship of the devil himself that is a religion, but it is the worship of themselves as individuals in selfishness. They had lots of holidays on their satanic calendar but their favorite day was the birthday of the self. They adorn themselves. They worship themselves and it's all about me, me, me. That's not what Jesus teaches. He has a selfless doctrine. He tells us to be giving and contributing our time and our effort to the betterment of other people. Some of these things aren't easily done. Some of the things we are required to do in the gospel are hard to do. They're difficult. It is not a new thing that people want to listen to something other than the Lord. It's not.

I like this passage from Isaiah 6:6-7. The prophet is having a vision experience and he sees this in the Holy of Holies where God lives. *Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.* Iniquity is socially accepted sin on a group scale so the prophet is now worried about what his people are doing as a group and He's worried about his sin individually because he's standing in the front, right front and center of God Almighty in His perfection. *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people (this is the part to go and underscore with your pencil) Hear ye indeed, but they understood not; and see ye indeed, but they perceived not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed.* (8-10) I'd like to heal up. I'd like to see our country healed up. I'd like to see the church heal up but we're not going to get there until we can come full circle with that right there.

Have you ever taken a look at the parable of the 10 virgins. All of them are waiting for a wedding to come. Some of the girls are more prepared than others and the cut is 50/50. We see this 50/50 cut all the way through whether it's the sheep and the goats example or whether we see the



parable that talks to us about our talents. All of these 50/50 cuts are out there and this one is no exception. Those girls had come and were waiting. But you have to understand a little bit about what it was like to get married 2000 years ago in Jerusalem because they would make the bride wait and it would be up to the groom in their tradition to come out and announce that he was coming to the bride's house to get her. No makeup in the middle of the night. He was going to come over there and get her and she better be ready when it was time to come.

So she's got to be ready and her wedding party has to be ready too. These girls are mildly aware. Now I have several different dimensions of situationally awareness I want you to think about here. Number one is the awareness of what's going on around you, situational awareness. This could be your preparation in the physical world but better yet it ought to be your preparation in the spiritual world. Be aware of what's going on around you.

The next thing is to make preparation to be prepared. How many of you have a paring knife in the kitchen? It's the most widely used knife in the whole kitchen at my house. The thing is used to cut something out. It's a short little knife and it's used to take the core out of the apple or it's there to take the blemish off the side of a piece of fruit. You pare it. You take it away. Pre means in advance. Prepare - do the cutting. Get that stuff ready ahead of time. That's not enough. What comes next is to be ready. You read about that in Matthew too. Be ye also ready for in an hour that you think not the Son of Man cometh. Be Ye Also Ready. I used to see that on the headstone when I was a teenager. I had a neat job. I used to cut grass out at Rose Hill Cemetery. I liked it. I knew where everything was at back then. If somebody came into the cemetery and wanted to find a headstone, I knew where it was at. I've kind of forgotten over the years but I can about take you to that headstone there. That piece of ground hasn't changed a bit since I was 16. It said that very thing - *Be ye also ready. For in an hour that you think not the Son of Man cometh.* It's not just enough to be ready, we find this out when you have all kinds of electronic equipment, maybe radio equipment there's not enough to be thinking about it. There's not enough to be preparing for it. It's not enough to say that you're ready. You have to be tested and say, 'I know it's going to work.'

So if we have all these things ready, there's something that we need to be getting ready for. I read about this in an article that Tony wrote and put it in the Restoration Voice magazine. That is that we are the children of the King. If we're the children of the King and we're a part of His Kingdom, then that Kingdom is not meat nor drink but is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost and nobody can take it from us. Just like it was shown to Daniel in the destruction of the great monolith that Nebuchadnezzar saw. A hand reached into the mouth and took the stone out and hurled it at this great big statute and broke it into pieces. The interpretation was that this was the Kingdom of God that will never be destroyed. It will never belong to other people. It will never be taken away and it breaks down all the systems and the nations, all these empires. These great world empires break down in the face of the Kingdom of God. That's really neat.

I want to read this little tiny scripture from Luke 16:17-18. *Then said Jesus unto them, The law and the prophets testify of me; yea, and all the prophets who have written, even until John, have foretold of these days.* This is the part to underscore. *Since that time, the kingdom of God is preached, and every man who seeketh truth presseth into it.* Think about that and read that again. God is preached, and every man who seeketh truth presseth into it. The Kingdom of God. You can't segregate that and you can't break it up.

Just one thing I'd like to warn you with in closing. Today we live in a time with unscrupulous people without principles who demonstrate that they are entirely callused against the promptings of the divine conscience. They've resigned their agency by choice and choose evil, refusing to hear and to react and to do that divine will. Brothers and sisters, the church needs sanctification and without it our world is headed to judgment.

\*\*\*\*\*

(On March 9, 2022 both the Mount Ayr and Lamoni Restoration Branches lost an important person in the lives of both of those congregations. We will miss his wisdom, his stories and jokes, his smile and his songs.)



**Robert Allen Rolfe**

Robert Allen Rolfe was born to Howard Ernest and Vivian Opal (Duel) Rolfe on September 1, 1943, in Crump, Michigan. He died at the Decatur County Hospital in Leon, Iowa on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.

Rob, or Bob as he was known in his youth, grew up and attended a one-room country school in Midland, Michigan, before starting at Midland High School and graduating in 1961. He went to undergraduate school at Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa. He earned his Law Degree in 1973 from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. Upon graduation, he moved to Creston, Iowa, where he was the prosecuting attorney for Union



County for eight years. The family moved to Lamoni, Iowa, where he joined the Sherman Phipps Law Office in 1979. Rob continued his legal work including service as the Decatur County Magistrate for many years. His current practice included doing abstracting.

While at Graceland College, Rob met Lynda Suzanne Propst. They were married on August 22nd, 1965, and were blessed with four children, Derek, Adrian, Sara, and Alana.

In his free time, Rob enjoyed golfing, bowling, and deer hunting. His faith was strong and he was a guiding force in organizing both the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch in Mount Ayr, Iowa, and the Lamoni Restoration Branch in Lamoni, Iowa.

Rob's church family was also very important to him as he dedicated most of his life to serving, preaching, and sharing his beliefs with the people he met along his journey. He was very active in his community, serving on the Lamoni City Council, Lamoni Community School Board and Lion's Club.

Rob also loved music and found opportunities to bless others by performing. He loved going to Bluegrass festivals and listening to his favorite songs. An accomplished musician himself, he could play guitar, banjo, mandolin and piano, and he shared those talents with his children, family and friends. He was in several musicals. One of his favorites was playing the character Lazar Wolfe in the Fiddler on the Roof presentation at Graceland College. He also sang and played his guitar with the Ringgold Singers, a group based out of Mount Ayr, Iowa.

Preceding him in death were his parents; wife, Lynda in 2018; and his sister Frances Parker. Survivors include his children, Derek and Cathy Rolfe of Plattsburgh, Missouri, Adrian Rolfe of Lamoni, Sara and David Hirsch of Thornton, Colorado, and Alana Rolfe and fiancé, Tim Massa of New Orleans, Louisiana; four grandchildren and one great grandson as well as his brothers Paul, Brian and Ted all of the Midland, Michigan area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Mount Ayr Restoration Branch Retreat**

**2320 State Highway 2, Mount Ayr, IA**

**April 16, 2022**

**Guest Minister: Elder Jason Hamilton**

**Retreat Schedule:**

**Adults**

**8:30-9:00**

**Welcome/Morning Worship**

**9:00-9:30**

**Hymn Sing**

**9:30-10:30**

**Testimonies**

**10:30-12:00**

**Adult Class by Jason Hamilton**

**12:00-1:00**

**Lunch**

**1:00-1:50**

**Adult Class by Jason Hamilton**

**2:00-2:50**

**Adult Class by Jason Hamilton**

**3:00-4:00**

**Youth Presentation**

**Youth**

**8:30-9:00**

**Welcome/Morning Worship**

**9:00-9:30**

**Hymn Sing**

**9:30-10:30**

**Testimonies**

**10:30-12:00**

**Youth Classes**

**12:00-1:00**

**Lunch**

**1:00-1:50**

**Youth Classes**

**2:00-2:50**

**Youth Classes**

**3:00-4:00**

**Youth Presentation**

**Please RSVP by April 13: 2022 to: [chuster@unitedwb.coop](mailto:chuster@unitedwb.coop)**





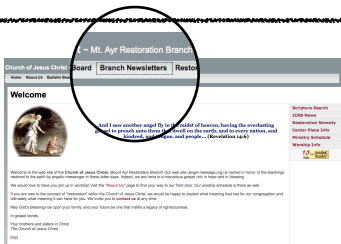
# Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

c/o Cheryl Phipps  
15581 270th St  
Lamoni, IA 50140



Have you misplaced your MARB Newsletter?  
Want to read it online or search past issues?  
Visit the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch website at:

[www.gospelrestored.org](http://www.gospelrestored.org)



*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (Revelation 14:6-7)*



## Sunday Evening Fellowship

**On Sunday evenings the Lamoni Restoration Branch gets together many times for fun and fellowship. This particular Sunday evening we divided into teams to answer questions from the scriptures. If our answer was wrong one person from our team had to try and remove a Jenga block without collapsing the tower. Ed Colyer is trying his hand at removing one. If you are in Lamoni you are welcome to join us at 5:30 pm Sunday evening for food, fellowship and ?**