

The Gospel News

The Glory of God Awaits Us!

By Brother Wayne Martorana

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*Sing
Glory!*



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Let us consider and review some of the most blessed time periods for the people of God, as recorded in the scriptures. There was one era in the Americas after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ and His visit to the Nephite people, and another concurrently in Jerusalem and vicinity, subsequent to the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts.

The following is a partial account of the events in the Americas:

4 Nephi 1: 3, 5, 15-16

[3] And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.

[5] And there were great and marvelous works wrought by the disciples of Jesus, insomuch that they did heal the sick, and raise the dead, and cause the lame to walk, and the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear; and all manner of miracles did they work among the children of men; and in nothing did they work miracles save it were in the name of Jesus

[15] And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.

[16] And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

The following is one of the accounts recorded in the New Testament book of Acts.

Acts 2: 41-47

[41] Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

[42] And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

[43] And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

[44] And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

[45] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

(Continued on page 4)



Mark your calendars to attend or pray for those attending the General Church October Conference: 10/11/23 –10/15/23



For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. Ephesians 2:10



...Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,... Hebrews 13:21



And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,...



...that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:2

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19



Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. Jeremiah 18:6

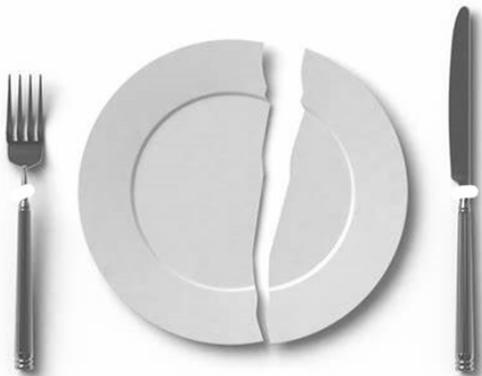


BFP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck

Ninety-five years ago this month, on October 11, 1928, Sister Stella Arcuri had an amazing experience on the day she was to be baptized. She was visited by a messenger of God, possibly one of the three Nephites.

"I was alone in my kitchen on Sunday morning getting ready for church. Suddenly I heard a knock at the front door. It was an old man dressed very poorly, asking for something to eat. I suddenly felt a peace come over me, and did not feel afraid at all. I invited him in and asked him to sit at the kitchen table. As I was preparing his breakfast, he began talking to me. He told me many things written in the Bible, and even told me that he knew I was getting baptized that day. I asked him how he knew all these things and where he came from. He told me that he lived way up on top of the mountain and he knew everything about me and the Church I was getting baptized into. He said so many things, I could not remember them all. When he finished eating, he got up and said he had to go, but, before he left, he said, "I was hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me drink." He said goodbye and left. I went to the front door to see which way he went, and by the time I got to the door he was already gone, as if he had suddenly disappeared. I went back into the kitchen to clear the table, but to my surprise, when I picked up the dish he ate from, it broke in half, and when I picked up the knife and fork, they also broke in half."





Purpose Statement

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

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America



Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



"An Unequally Traveled Two-Way Street"

By Brother Doug Obradovich

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." -John 15:16

we have created. Thus, the northbound lane remains lightly traveled.

Ironically, the moment we were least deserving, God granted His trust implicitly. After compiling a lifelong record of evidence that convicted us as unworthy of His confidence, we weakly apologized and asked Him to trust us anyway. God accepted. Imagine the person who has continuously stolen from you asking to borrow money. On the day of our baptism, we were not simply granted forgiveness through His grace, but also entrusted to serve as His representatives. Instantly transformed from our lowest point to our highest, and miraculously shifted from sinner to Saint, while not presenting any qualified resumé to earn such trust.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son" (John 3:16) continues, explaining, "whosoever believeth on Him" would inherit "everlasting life." God's unconditional love was extended to all people, as "the world" received the same invitation to believe and receive. Everyone has full access to God's glory. Everyone can become benefactors of His mercy and forgiveness. Before anyone was numbered amongst "whosoever believeth on Him," we were first "the

world." When we were least trustworthy, He trusted us. Thus, the southbound lane is always flowing smoothly and purposefully.

Our lives consist of encounters with others who match our untrustworthiness, which leaves us inflexible. We struggle to extend our hearts, which keeps the northbound lane less frequented. God continues to prove Himself worthy of our trust, yet we withhold more often than we relent. The Creator is pronounced guilty by association with His creation. He asks for our trust, and we refuse, clinging to our skepticism without evidence of His ever having failed. Jesus responds with unexplainable generosity, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). He does this despite our streak of perfect imperfection, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

No, trust is not earned; it is a faith-based endeavor. Who am I to ever have been entrusted with God's Holy Spirit? Who am I to have been trusted to receive His forgiveness and the moniker, ambassador? Who am I to withhold my trust in God? Who am I? I'm the guy traveling right beside you, northbound on the Highway called Trust.

Both lanes are frequented in undeserved volume. The southbound generously. The northbound lane, sparingly. Southbound traffic originates in heaven and flows earthward. Northbound traffic ventures from earth to heaven. This highway has been discussed throughout man's existence, quite possibly more over the past year than any time in most of our lives. The causeway is named "Trust," and defined by our confidence in some event now or upcoming. Its traffic is based upon belief established by events/experiences from our past. Thus, our trust is often doled out sparsely.

Growing up I had responsibilities just like you. All were rewards, based upon some prior behavior, which taught and reinforced trust as being "earned." I now question that conclusion, as experience has shown trust to be impossible to earn. And as you have, I've both trusted and been trusted, with most ending in failure. Only One possessed an impeccable record in trustworthiness, yet He continues to inherit the disappointments

(Continued from cover)

46] 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,

[47] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Consider the following table as a comparison of the events in 4 Nephi and Acts, along with what is prophesied about the Peaceful Reign era. There is much more which could be added about the conditions during the Peaceful Reign.

4 Nephi	Acts 2 & 4	Peaceful Reign
All converted & baptized; church established in several locations	Several baptisms (3,000) & the church increased daily	All converted to the Lord; New Jerusalem built
Many miracles & healings	Witnessed signs & wonders	Many miracles, healings & blessings
Members had all things common	Members had all things common; sold possessions & distributed equally; no one lacked anything	All things common; we enjoy the works and fruits of our labors
Love of God abounded, no contention	United in heart & soul; one accord	Righteousness of the saints binds the power of evil
Enjoyed promises of God; true joy and happiness	Experienced gladness & singleness of heart (single spiritual focus)	Joy of the saints, love, peace, unity with wonderful fellowship
Gathered together often, including fasting & prayer	Enjoyed fellowship w/ Lord's Supper & prayer; shared the word of God with power and much boldness, praised God and fulfilled the doctrine of Christ	Gather together often; Christ visits from time to time

Both eras of peace and righteousness were preceded by a similar sequence of events which initiated the change and ultimate outcome the Lord was planning. These events are as follows:

- Destruction and / or calamity which served as a motivating and uniting force for the people of God
- People humbled, focused and attentive to God and His plan, as a result
- Spiritual awakening and revival: rapid growth of the Church with large numbers of conversions and baptisms
- Great blessings and miracles witnessed as a result of the manifestation of the power of God
- Widespread love, unity, peace, and righteousness, including all things common for several years

Transitions, in general, can be very difficult. The definition of "transition": the process and associated timeframe of changing from one state, condition, or environment to another. Scriptural transitions are often difficult as well. Supporting evidence includes:

- The children of Israel's migration from Egypt to the land of Canaan. A 10-12 day journey took 40 years. Many longed to return to Egypt, where they were enslaved. Others perished in the wilderness due to a lack of faith, murmuring and idolatry, despite seeing the Red Sea part and receiving manna from heaven, among numerous other miracles. Only a relatively small group eventually reached Canaan,

compared to the several millions of Israelites who initially left Egypt.

- The migration of the Jaredites from the tower of Babel to the Americas, a choice land to God, above all others. Even when directed by God and favored to not have their language confounded, they were still distracted by the beauty of the seashore for four years, without praying, until chastised by the Lord and encouraged to proceed to their destination.
- Lehi, family, and friends left Jerusalem upon God showing them that the city would soon be destroyed. They were plagued with internal opposition, sin, and great obstinance. On occasion, the Lord dispatched an angel to intervene for the righteous. They reached their destination, but there was much sorrow, suffering, and tribulation along the way. Division and separation continued for centuries.

In conclusion, what do all of these historical details mean for us, the Church, in our generation? What mental image does this compilation of scriptures create? We understand that through the prophets, God has foretold of a future Peaceful Reign, including a primary city, the New Jerusalem. Despite other interpretations, these blessings will occur in the current flesh-life. While we wait in righteousness and labor for the Lord's plan to unfold, are we sufficiently prepared? – not the preparation of storing food or water, but rather the spiritual, mental, and emotional preparation of the willingness to be obedient to the Lord in all things, fulfill God's will, and be instruments in His plan?

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Types of Healings

By Evangelist Mark Kovacic

Over the years, I have witnessed the gifts of the Spirit, the same as those recorded in 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 and Mormon 9. Apostle Paul wrote, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." And some of the gifts can be broken down into subparts. For example, there are tongues and unknown tongues, tongues of men and of angels.

Similarly, there are at least two types of healings. This is not a new concept. Many years ago I heard a recording of Apostle Charles Ashton giving a sermon on this topic. He said that some people who are anointed for afflictions are not healed right away, but over time they are healed. Likewise, some are healed through medical care and some without any outside assistance. All healings, regardless of the source, are a blessing to the person and the Church.

Consider Apostle Paul's admonition regarding gift of tongues: "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe [believers], but to them that believe not [unbelievers]: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe" (1 Corinthians 14:22). Similarly, some healings are an immediate sign to unbelievers and some healings are for us [believers] to learn patience. Apostle James wrote, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:3-4)

Webster's 1828 American Dictionary defined perfect as "finished; complete, or consummate; fully informed, completely skilled"; and defined patience as, "The suffering of afflictions, pain, toil, calamity ... with a calm, unruffled temper; endurance without murmuring. Patience may spring from ... Christian submission to the divine will." To have a better understanding, go back to James' statement and replace perfect with some of the descriptions used in the definition.

So, we should not be surprised when a non-member or visitor requests prayer and is healed. Neither should we be surprised when members are anointed and are not immediately healed. You may be able to recite exceptions to this generalization, but keep in mind, not being healed is not a lack of faith. It may simply be God working in your life to perfect (complete) you with patience. This does not mean we should not ask God for a healing.

Consider the leper. He told Jesus, if You want You can heal me, You can make me clean. And Jesus responded, "I will" and immediately the man was healed. It is God's intention to have all who are anointed for afflictions to be healed by our Lord Jesus Christ. But Paul had an affliction and he asked three times to be healed and was not, but was told God's grace was sufficient. If we are afflicted, we should ask God to heal us and then accept His decision. As King Benjamin said "... willing to submit to all things which the Lord sees fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father." (See Mosiah 3:19.) Mormon wrote to his son, saying "... wherefore he [Jesus] advocates the cause of the children of men." Apostle John wrote, "... we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

And applying Paul's teaching, we would state there are no afflictions upon you but such as is common to man (he sends the rain on the just and unjust – see Matthew 5:45). "God is faithful; he will not suffer you to be tried above that which you are able to bear, but with the affliction he will also make a way for you to be healed, that you may be able to bear the affliction until you are fully healed." (1 Corinthians 10:13.)

How wonderful is the attention, love, and mercy God shows to us individually through our Lord Jesus Christ! Hold fast to your faith and trust in the Lord; be strong and of good courage—a healing is coming!

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Jesus stated on multiple occasions, "For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also." (Matthew 6:21; 3 Nephi 13:21). Where is our treasure and heart? We will each need to answer that question, both in word and through our actions. Are our attachments to a very comfortable lifestyle so strong that we might not want to leave and transition to fulfill God's plan, similar to leaving Egypt, Jerusalem, or the beautiful seashore? Might we also wish to complain, murmur, or procrastinate on the way? Are we ready? There is a set time to favor Zion, which is known to the Lord (Psalms 102:13). I would that if the "set time" is in our generation, that it might similarly be written of us...

- And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.
- And there were great and marvelous works wrought by the

disciples of Jesus, insomuch that they did heal the sick, and raise the dead, and cause the lame to walk, and the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear; and all manner of miracles did they work among the children of men; and in nothing did they work miracles save it were in the name of Jesus.

- And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.
- And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

May God bless the Church and all the righteous. The Glory of God Awaits Us!

GMBA GMBA News

Lesson Learned!

By Brother Phil Benyola

I was living and working in Indianapolis, IN, in April 2005, and was asked to travel to Missouri (~ 3-hr drive) on business on a Tuesday. I was concerned about this trip because I was also scheduled to leave on a missionary trip to Dominica on the following Saturday morning, just a few days later.

Since the trip was scheduled for overnight for only one night, I expected to drive back and arrive home late Wednesday night. I knew it would be stressful, but I also knew there was still plenty of time to do both; however, the meetings did not go as planned at the customer site and they needed me to stay longer than planned to make some changes to the product we were providing.

For obvious reasons, this caused me some alarm, but I knew that even if I didn't get home until Friday, I could still make the missionary trip without a problem. I figured I would be tired, but I also figured I could sleep on the long flight to Dominica. But on Friday, the meetings continued to go not as planned and things went from bad to worse. The customer asked me to stay through the weekend to make the necessary changes. Of course, I was unable to do that unless I forfeited my obligation to the missionary trip, which another brother had planned to make with me.

As Friday evening rolled around, I was panicking. I told the client that I could not stay over the weekend, that I had another commitment and had to leave. Of course, I was a wreck, knowing the consequences that I would face for making that decision. I arrived home around midnight on Friday, and frantically packed for my 6 am flight. I was very nervous and exhausted, and forgot my passport, which I had to pay over

\$300 to replace at the last minute, in Philadelphia.

The week in Dominica was a blur to me, because I was so concerned about what I would face when I returned home to work. The situation was a major distraction to me throughout the week, and essentially ruined the trip for me. As predicted, I was called into a conference room with HR on the following Monday morning when I returned to work, where they explained how upset the customer was and how disappointed they were that I did not stay as requested. Then, they asked me what I would do if I found myself in that situation again in the future, and after careful consideration, I explained that although I loved my job and wanted to be the best employee I could be, I was also very devoted to my church, and I had made a commitment there that I could not break. I had requested the time off several months in advance, so therefore, I said if given the same circumstances, I would do the same thing. At that, they looked at me and told me that they no longer had a place for me in their organization.

Needless to say, I was quite distraught at losing my job, and quite confused as to how God would allow this to happen to me when I was trying to do His will and work for His Church. I was angry. I decided to take a few days off and go lie on the beach in Florida and calm down. While I was there, I passed by a library and on a whim, thought I would stop in and see if there were any jobs advertised there, since I was now going to be job-hunting. I saw an ad on the bulletin board and called about it, and got straight through to the VP of HR. As it happened, I called in the middle of a birthday party, but they invited me in for an interview anyway. I explained that I was not prepared for that, that I did not have the right clothes, etc.

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What is your favorite Songs of Zion song?

"Oh, Beautiful Zion. There are so many wonderful songs, but from the first time I heard and considered this hymn, it has become a favorite. This Song of Zion captures the latter day promises and delivers hope and assurance to the Church that our beliefs are not in vain. It is for me, a contemporary and relevant message that our vision of Zion is true, and so very, very close to being experienced in reality." -Brother Joel Gehly, Erie, PA Branch

"Sing Glory is my favorite because the scriptures tell us to sing to the Lord a new song, but I love all of the Songs of Zion. They are sweet music to my ears." -Brother Michael McGuire, Cape Coral, FL Branch

"The Safety of My Father's Arms. This song just brings me peace knowing that in His arms I am safe no matter what is happening in the world." -Sister Kristy Zaino, Mt. Laurel, NJ Branch

"He Planted Me Deep." -Sister Carla King, Lorain, OH Branch

"Prodigal Running because it describes the deep love and hope that a parent will always have for a child that has turned away from the Gospel or their family." -Sister Linda Benyola, Cape Coral, FL Branch

"Come Before Winter. It is a sad song about the death of our nation with a great promise for the future." -Brother Jeff Buffington, Sr., Imperial, PA Branch

"Every month I seem to have a new favorite! This month is **Lo, There on Mount Zion.**" -Sister Wendy Woods, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"I love them all, but my favorite today is **Won't It Be Something To See Israel Smile.**" -Sister Heather Escobar, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"My favorite Song of Zion is **Sing Me the Songs of Zion, Saints.** I think it really captures that the Songs of Zion are a gift to the Church and whenever I need a pick-me-up from the Songs of Zion, I always start with #2 because it puts me in the right headspace to sing." -Sister Zoey Devore, Charlotte, NC Branch

"I feel like I have a new favorite Song of Zion every week, but **The Latter Day Theme** is the most recurring favorite. I love and appreciate how the song encapsulates Zion's beauty in such few words, and it even mentions the purpose of the songs as an introduction to our understanding of the latter days." -Brother Andrew Tenorio, Edison, NJ Branch

"My Lord Can. It is my favorite because HE CAN DO ALL THINGS!" -Brother Scott Griffith, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"To Keep the Gospel Pure. It is one of my favorite songs because that is one of the important tasks of The Church of Jesus Christ in the last days." -Brother George Kovacic, Middle Tennessee Mission

"I love them all. The words in each song are very special and so powerful! God can speak to us through any of these songs." -Sister Lili Arellano, San Diego, CA Branch

"I Am Your Brother. When we sing it, I feel the spirit of God in me and I get all choked up and can never finish singing it." -Brother Danny Roberts, Roscoe, PA Branch

"One Step at a Time. I like the message that it gives." -Sister Lisa Roberts, Roscoe, PA Branch

"He Planted Me Deep." -Sister Patty Kerby, Irvine, CA Branch

"They Say the Land Has Milk and Honey. I just love the scene that is painted throughout the verses. It brings me joy to think about God's promise and things to come." -Brother Anthony Francione, Liberty, OH Branch

"I, Who Am Nothing. The words are awesome and the music goes right to my soul." Sister Linda Reynolds, Simi Valley, CA Mission

"The Latter Day Theme & He's My Rock." -Sister Donna Amormino, Creekside, MI Branch

"God Is Moving by His Spirit. This song rings true in my spirit because when I counsel with the Lord, He always guides me by His Spirit. I know His voice because He is the Good Shepherd." -Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"Many years ago I had an experience while I was praying. The ceiling opened up and I saw the heavens and then the throne of God. I love the song **God's Still on His Throne.**" -Brother Timothy Dom Bucci, North Georgia Mission

"My favorite Song of Zion is **Be of Good Cheer.** I love the hope that it gives for the future of our Church with the promise of Zion. It reassures us that there is a kingdom of peace coming very soon, and that no matter what others tell us, we need to keep holding on to that promise. The chorus is my favorite part of the song: 'But I know the message delivered to me, The angel said, Be of good cheer. Hold up your head now, and don't put it down; The day you have dreamed of is here.' I can't wait to see the day when this promise is fulfilled!" -Brother Wesley Griffith, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"If You Would Labor in Zion. I love the overall 'Now is Our Time' message the lyrics convey, as well as the expressive melody. The steady, constant beat of the verses underscores the need to diligently press forward and be consistent in our efforts, while the chorus reminds me of mounting up with wings as eagles: finding the Lord's hand when you 'step out on faith' and 'leave your doubts all behind.'" -Brother Anthony Scolaro, Mesa, AZ Branch

"The Safety of My Father's Arms. Over 20 years ago, I had a decision to make regarding whether to stay in my current job or move to another position within my company. I spent many restless nights trying to figure out what was the best thing for me to do. That Sunday, this song was called and as we sang these words, 'Life is filled with problems that exhaust the human mind. Feeling strained to think of some solution,' I realized what I was doing wrong: I was trying to make that decision on my own instead of leaving it in the Lord's hands. I forgot to 'Let Go' and 'Let God.'" -Sister Dora Armstrong, Lorain, OH Branch

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

GOODNESS

Faith JOY GENTLENESS TEMPERANCE
PEACE LONGSUFFERING *Love* MEEKNESS

Goodness

By Sister Kim Morle

...I Love you Lord
For your mercy never fails me
All my days, I've been held in Your hands
From the moment that I wake up
Until I lay my head
Oh, I will sing of the **goodness** of God

...And all my life You have been faithful
And all my life You have been so, so good
With every breath that I am able
Oh, I will sing of the **goodness** of God

...I love your voice
You have led me through the fire
In the darkest night
You are close like no other
I've known You as a Father
I've known You as a friend
And I have lived in the **goodness** of God

This song "Goodness of God" is one of my favorite songs, and I love singing out loud in my car when it comes on. The lyrics ring so true in my life. Literally from the moment that I wake up until I lay down my head, I am so thankful for His goodness. I have truly known Him as a Father and as a Friend. God is so good! Everything good comes from God (James 1:17). He fills our hungry souls with good things (Psalm 107:8-9). He is GOOD, does GOOD, and gives GOOD gifts to his children (Psalm 119:68, Luke 11:13).

To me, the life of Jesus Christ is the perfect example of goodness, because He died on the cross for the sins of man in order to give us the gift of the opportunity for eternal life. His ministry and sacrifice are an example of God's goodness toward mankind. After all, the term "gospel" means "good news."

When we act out of true goodness of the heart and reflect the fruit of the Spirit, we are obedient to God's commandments and seek the benefit of others. Our actions come from a place of selflessness, and we place the needs of others before our own. No matter where we go or what we do, God's love and blessings are always with us, chasing after and showering us with His grace and Mercy. Even when we may feel lost, alone, or unworthy, God's goodness is there, ready to embrace and lift us!

Forgiveness

By Brother Dean Longrie

Several words found throughout the scriptures have the meaning of giving or receiving. Some examples include: Love, Charity, Power, and Forgiveness.

1 Since Adam and Eve disobeyed God while in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:17-24), there was a plan for man's forgiveness because of God's love for us (John 3:16).

2 In my early teens I did not love myself or feel worthy of love because I frequently "sinned" and thought God would not forgive me. I kept telling lies even after I promised God I would not lie again. I read that Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive. The Lord said, at least seventy times seven (Matt 18:21-22). At that young age, I concluded that God loves and forgives me, so I must be worthy of love and forgiveness. That was the start for me to love and forgive others. I know that God forgives us as often as we repent, seeking with real intent His mercy (Luke 6:37, Moroni 6:8).

3 Many of us have often prayed the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13). As part of the prayer, Christ taught us to ask God to forgive us as we forgive others, even as Christ forgave us. About three years ago I had what for me was a remarkable experience about forgiveness. I was home alone and feeling the need for God's forgiveness. I started reading the scriptures (Mark 11:25, Matthew 6:14) and found that if I want our Father to forgive my shortcomings, I need to forgive others. After reading this, I went out onto my back deck and asked God to forgive a relative that has disliked me for years. I had spoken the words out loud, and I immediately felt a physical weight, a heavy weight, come off my shoulders. "Wow," I cried, and thanked God. This was a powerful reminder to forgive others as Christ forgives me (Ephesians 4:32).

4 If we look beyond ourselves and view the abundant sin and strife we see occurring every day in virtually every nation throughout the world, we are deeply saddened. However, it is uplifting and hopeful that God was willing to turn from punishing the House of Israel, forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more, if they would repent and turn from their evil (Jeremiah 18:8 and 31:34). Would any country take God's offer today? We pray all nations will.

5 An important time for asking and giving forgiveness is before and during the Lord's Supper. We are warned not to partake of the bread and wine unworthily. It is noted that doing so has caused illness in the saints. We need to seek and give forgiveness prior to taking the sacrament (Luke 6:37)

Forgiveness, starting with ourselves, is a powerful gift we can all get from God and give to others. And, like all great gifts, they are even better when shared.

Ladies' Uplift Circle News

One Hundred Years

By Sister Karen L. Progar

Please forgive me if you have heard some of what I will share with you, but I am a person who believes that the best way to impress something into someone's memory is to repeat it. If you haven't heard it, enjoy this trip down memory lane from long ago.

In 1920, Sister Sadie Cadman had a desire to have a venue for the women of The Church of Jesus Christ to search and study the word of God and work for the Church. Brother Alexander Cherry was President of the Church in 1920. When Sister Sadie shared her desire, Brother Cherry encouraged her by telling her, "If you can do any good do it," which gave Sister Sadie the authorization to pursue her dream. We have to remember that it was a world in which women's rights were limited, as their role

in society was much different than it is today. The Ladies' Circle began after the first conference that year, when the priesthood agreed to the organization's establishment.

The Aliquippa Branch was established in 1922 and the very next year, the Branch became part of the Church's auxiliaries, Ladies' Uplift Circle and MBA. Our Circle was the seventh one organized, which gave our sisters the opportunity for widespread support and service to God. On Sunday, May 20, 1923, Sisters Hannah Skillen and Concetta Dintino organized our Circle in the home of one of the charter members, Sister Filomena DiGiacomantonio (Jackman). The collection that evening was 16 cents for the General Fund and 16 cents for the Indian Mission Fund. The following Tuesday, the sisters held their first regular meeting.

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Can You Make a Difference?

Dear Friends,

The other day I was in a happy mood. I was running errands at the Dollar Store. I decided to be kind and friendly. I let someone with only a couple of things in the line ahead of me. I talked with the lady at the cash register, and she told me about her family. When I left, she said, "I hope I see you next week." Then I held the heavy door for another lady to go out. She kept thanking me. And another shopper wearing a beautiful summer dress passed me and I told her how beautiful her dress looked on her.

I looked at everyone's face and thought, how many millions and billions of people are in this world. I wondered how many of them even know that God is real. His Son Jesus truly hears us and wants to help us. All we have to do is ask.

Then I saw the Bible School and Campout Bingo game the kids played. You give yourself a Bingo point for doing any of these acts. They made me smile when I realized they were the same ones I had just used as an adult, and you can use them, too!

Here they are:

- #1. Open the door for someone. It is kind to help; in the Bible, we are taught, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted..."(See Ephesians 4: 32).
- #2. Compliment someone. You could really cheer someone up, and just noticing others is so important.
- #3. Introduce yourself to someone new. I always hear people say, "Oh, I'm too shy!" Well, how shy do you think the other new person who does not know anyone feels? Say hello, especially at Church!
- #4. Sit by someone new. Yes. Reach out with friendliness.
- #5. Invite someone to play with you. Not everyone already has a good friend. Reach out!
- #6. Be kind to people who are younger or older than you. Do you think that every friend of your mom and dad is the exact same age? They aren't! That friend you make will grow up and you may know them for years. Not being the same age will matter less and less.
- #7. Smile at 5 people. Just show them your kindness and how you accept them.
- #8. Offer to help someone. Pick up something they dropped, or at home, help your family or a friend.

#9. Tell someone 3 things you are grateful for. Just a nice comment like, "Isn't it a beautiful day?" Or I can say, "Thank God the bad weather is over." Ask your parents or Sunday School Teacher for safe ways to talk to a stranger.

#10. Encourage someone. At the steep sand dunes, we saw a guy struggling so hard to climb back up from the water far below. He would take one hard step, and slide back two steps. We started calling to him, "Come on, you can do it!" He shook his head and kept climbing. He was probably embarrassed but he got up. We encouraged him.

One person can make a lot of difference to others, even to adults and teachers. In one class I taught, the kids would come into the Computer Lab and sit on the floor while looking at the lesson on the screen. One smart girl who was a fast reader would say things like, "Oh, that'll be fun!" or "I know what I want to write already!"

She brought a happy, interested spirit with her and got other students interested. You can do this too! You can make a difference at school,

in your neighborhood and in the lives of others!

Jesus told us we are a light in the world. "No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (See Matthew 5:15-16).

So, make a difference in this world! Be brave and shine your happiness to the world! We know God. We know Jesus. Remember, in Phillipians 4:13 we are taught, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (makes me strong)." We can change. We can shine God's goodness and make a difference in this world!

Have fun seeing people change! God bless you.

With love,
Your friend and Sister in Christ,

Sister Jan

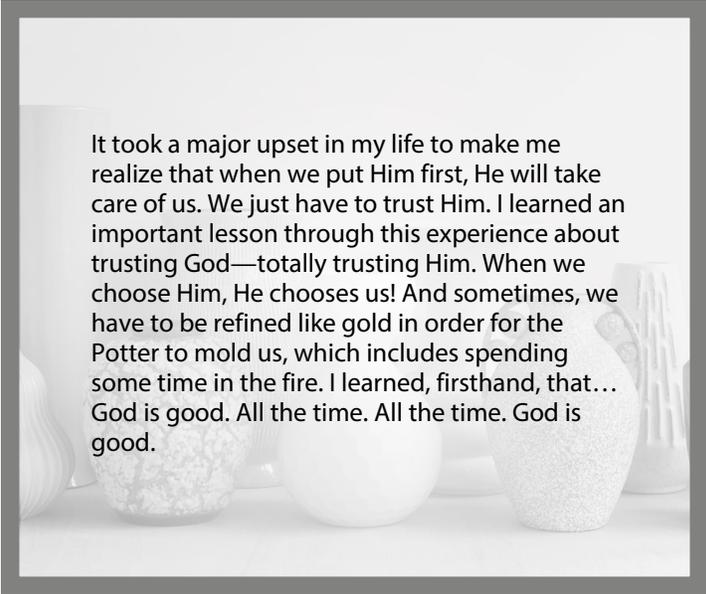
KINDNESS BINGO

Open the door for someone	Compliment someone	Introduce yourself to someone new/sit by someone new
Invite someone to play with you	Be kind to people who are younger or older than you	Smile at 5 people
Offer to help someone	Tell someone 3 things you are grateful for	Encourage someone

(Continued from page 7)

She told me not to worry about that, and to just come in. I immediately drove to the corporate office, interrupted the birthday party they were having, had the interview, and was hired on the spot in a Director role, with an increase in salary and a complete relocation package!

At the same time, I was offered an equivalent job in Indiana. Now I had to choose one! Did God want me to stay in Indiana, or move back to Florida? This was a different kind of dilemma. I prayed and prayed and did not feel that I was getting an answer, so I then bargained with God. I told him if someone— anyone— from Florida called me on Sunday morning as I was preparing for church, then that would be the sign to accept the Florida position. Of course, the phone rang! It was a sister from Florida who said she felt this very strong urgency to call me that morning, thinking something was very wrong. Instead, something was very right! That is how I wound up back in Florida.



It took a major upset in my life to make me realize that when we put Him first, He will take care of us. We just have to trust Him. I learned an important lesson through this experience about trusting God—totally trusting Him. When we choose Him, He chooses us! And sometimes, we have to be refined like gold in order for the Potter to mold us, which includes spending some time in the fire. I learned, firsthand, that... God is good. All the time. All the time. God is good.

(Continued from page 9)

For many, many years, our Circle met every Wednesday before the midweek meeting. When we discuss it, we wonder how we ever accomplished a lesson and our required business in 30 minutes every week, but we did!

Looking through our home Circle minutes, it was a blessing to see that the sisters continued to honor the older sisters who were no longer able to be an active part of the Circle. The sisters showed their love through visits and little gifts to the sisters. Over 25 years ago, the Aliquippa Circle had a large number of older sisters. The younger sisters held two birthday parties honoring these sisters, who were afforded the opportunity to share their testimonies and enjoy celebrations in their honor. It was a lovely way to highlight the sisters and their contribution to the Circle.

One of the most wonderful aspects of Circle is the bond the sisters share. Sometimes everything is amusing. At one time, some of our sisters were reluctant to answer questions during a lesson, fearing being incorrect. Because of this, in the Aliquippa Circle, we have a saying, "Jesus is always the answer."

One year, one of our sisters had bookmarks embroidered for us with the word 'Jesus' on them. It's like a secret that always makes us smile.

Brother John and Sister Mary Ross were very active in the missionary work in Africa. For years, they acted as missionaries to Nigeria. The Circle collected and shipped so many clothing items and other needed supplies to the country that the minutes are replete with donations and activity. In addition, anyone going out on missionary work still receives a donation from the Circle to be used for their trips and no request made by the Branch, Area, or General Church is ever denied.

We have a rich history and love our lot in The Church of Jesus Christ. Space does not permit me to share all the activities of the Aliquippa Circle, but allow me to repeat, no request ever made by the Branch, Area, or General Church is ever denied. It is my prayer that the Circle will continue with its good works and support of the Church and its membership.



"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." Isaiah 64:8

Blessing Bits

BB We Stayed Prayerful - We learned we were expecting in January 2021 and were overjoyed that God had blessed us with a child! At one of my early ultrasounds they detected that the umbilical cord was not placed exactly where it should be, which they termed "Marginal Cord Insertion". My doctor explained that the condition could restrict the baby's growth. Moving forward, we would need to monitor the baby's size and try to carry her for as long as possible. I spent the next few months at many doctor's appointments checking in and with every appointment, her size percentile kept decreasing (down to 3rd percentile) but we stayed prayerful. On September 10, 2021, I delivered a healthy baby girl who didn't need any NICU time! Then, when the labs came back a couple weeks later, the doctor said based on the measurements, there was no evidence that the cord had been misplaced! Our sweet Aubrey now falls in the 90th percentile in all her stats, is healthy, and continues to be a blessing!- Nia and Kyle Chambers, Detroit 1, MI Branch

BB An Act of Kindness Brings Great Joy - Recently I was having lunch with a very good friend of mine (who is by far the most generous person I know). A middle aged man walked into the restaurant talking very loudly to the waitresses. At first, a little annoyed by his voice, we quickly realized that he was mentally challenged. My friend told the waitress that she would like to pay his check anonymously. When the man finished and was ready to leave, the waitress told him that someone had already paid his check.

The man started gleefully shouting louder than ever, "Someone bought my food! Someone bought my food! How nice is that?! Someone bought my food! This has made my day, this is so wonderful!" Over and over he shouted this as he left the restaurant. My heart was filled with such joy for him that I could not contain my tears. Everyone there was smiling. His gratefulness made my day. - Sister Gelsa Staley - Forest Hills, FL Branch

BB Like a Needle in a Haystack - I operate the cranes at Cleveland Cliffs Inc., the largest industrial steel mill in Cleveland, Ohio. During a 12-hour shift, it's my job to move tons of scrap metal and raw materials so that they can be refined into flat-rolled steel. One shift, only days after getting a new cell phone, I'd decided to take a break to stretch my legs. Having just placed my phone in the front pocket of my work vest, I looked out over the expanse of the steel yard and down at the work that had yet to be completed. As I peered down, my phone slipped out of my pocket and down, down into a heaping pile of metal. For safety reasons, I wasn't able to look for my phone for several days when all work stops at the mill. To make matters worse, a front loader had come through that morning and done a sweep of the yard - my phone could literally have been anywhere. A co-worker offered to help me look, and as we set out, I uttered the words, "This is pointless." But God came through in a BIG WAY! I glanced three feet to my left and there, in an inch of dust and dirt, was the outline of my phone! Only God could have made that happen! - Bill Kall - Perry, OH Mission

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at eksanchor@gmail.com. [in approximately 150 words]. Answers to Question of the Month to gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org.

Q

Question for this month: What is your favorite fall food?

A

Answer from last month: What is your favorite Songs of Zion song?

"Take Time to Pray. This song reminds me to pray for myself and others. It is just a beautiful song." -Sister Joann Cotellesse, Pinetop, AZ Branch

Turn to page 7 for more answers



"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." Isaiah 64:8