

# The Gospel News

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## A New Beginning: The Tse Bonito Tent Meetings



**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)**

A new beginning is under way in Tse Bonito, New Mexico. After almost 50 years of laboring for the Lord on the Navajo reservation, God has begun writing a new chapter amongst His chosen people. Indeed, a great awakening is under way, and God's prophecies are being fulfilled (Ezekiel 37:14).

Part of this "new beginning" started with an inspiration given to the ministry: to hold a series of four tent revival meetings, along with a Vacation Bible School, and invite the Navajo community for preaching, teaching, worship, dinner, and fellowship.

An undertaking of this magnitude was going to involve a great deal of prayerful planning in the months leading up to the event. Committees were formed and leaders stepped forward to complete preparations involving areas such as: groundskeeping, parking, lighting, advertisement, signage, music, electrical, supplies, sound system, sanitation, accommodations, and fundraising.

By the end of May, approximately 150 saints had registered to spend the week in Tse Bonito and Window Rock. Volunteers from coast to coast and every region in the US were represented. Four apostles, nine evangelists, twelve elders, sixteen Youth in Action (YIA) participants, and numerous others were eager to share their gifts and talents for the event. Many who could not attend sent generous financial support. The unity of purpose and spirit was remarkable, as we planned the camp meetings with great expectation. (Continued on page 4)

	<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would bless our hearts and give us peace.</p>		<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would cover General Conference with His spirit of unity.</p>
<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would keep our children safe from confusion.</p>		<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would pick us up when our strength runs out.</p>	
	<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would keep love as our main motivation.</p>		<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would shower our mission work with His guidance.</p>
<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would buttress our branches and missions.</p>		<p>8 THINGS TO PRAY FOR: (in October)</p> <p>That God would give us a peek under Zion's tent.</p>	

# B-T-P Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck

**Eighty-four years ago the Glassport, Pennsylvania Branch was dedicated in October of 1938, with a membership of 93.**

A Tribute to the Glassport Branch (Formerly the Rock Run Branch). On April 4, 1857, the Church organized the Rock Run Branch. This was only the second Branch to be organized. This was five years before the Church was incorporated in 1862 at Green Oak, Pennsylvania.

The exact location of Rock Run is not clear, but sometime in the early 1920s, the branch came to the town of Glassport, Pennsylvania. Around 1920, Brother John Penn anointed a terminally ill woman named Carmella Nolfi from the City of Monessen, Pennsylvania. She was healed, and one of the witnesses to the healing was a man who was an atheist and subsequently became convinced of the power of God; he, too, became a member of the Church. His name was Joseph Corrado. Brother Corrado then invited Brother Penn to accompany him to Glassport, because he had some Italian friends living there. Many heard and joined the Church, which was the start of the Italian Americans coming into the Church.

Many throughout the Church can trace their roots back to this branch. The "Word of the Lord" was given in the Glassport Branch on December 21, 1902, as follows: "Hearken, Oh My people and hold that thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Again, verily saith the Lord God, ye are My people." By the decade of the 1890s records show that over 600 brothers and sisters had been baptized at the Rock Run Branch.

The Glassport brothers and sisters met in many places in town. Construction of a building began in 1937 under the leadership of Brothers Isaac Smith and Anthony DiBattista, with help from the membership, at a cost of \$23,000. The Glassport Branch was dedicated in October of 1938, with a membership of 93.

These partial history excerpts are found in "A History of The Church of Jesus Christ Volume 2"



Glassport Church Building on Ohio Avenue



## 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.



## *“Stay Loose”* By Brother Doug Obradovich

**“Ye shall be free indeed” – John 8:35**

He drove past the empty lot heading into work, where he saw a dog tethered to a post by a short, unforgiving rope. Throughout the workday, continual thoughts of this dog brought him profound sadness. He passed the lot to and from work the next two days and finally stopped and asked neighbors about the situation. Their stories all aligned, as no one had been seen checking on or feeding the dog. The next afternoon he stopped again. This time he untied the dog and claimed him as his own. The dog spent the next 10 years of his life, well-fed and loved by the man and his family.

He had originally considered simply setting the dog free, but he knew this would never fully rescue the dog. While granting the dog freedom would certainly improve the animal's opportunity to survive, it could never assure a better life.

National statistics reveal 44% of prisoners currently serving sentences in state penitentiaries are repeat offenders or have been released and returned to their incarceration. Further statistics reflect 77% of lawbreakers also have previous records of criminal acts. Is it difficult to comprehend how someone who has been set free from imprisonment would ever do anything to jeopardize their emancipation? I wonder what our spiritual statistics are.

Jeremiah 40:4 invites, “Now, behold, I LOOSE thee this day from the chains which were upon thine hand. If it seems good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come and I will look well unto thee.” Are you willing to walk away from whatever imprisons you to “come” to Jesus? Consider experiencing Jesus looking at you with satisfaction, gaining His approval. Once loosed from our “chains,” we must not return to the scene of the crime in Galatian-like manner, who were deemed “foolish Galatians” and were asked, “Who hath bewitched you?” All fall short, because we are naturally “so easily beset” by sin. Does this describe repeat offenders?

Jesus said to His new converts, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall MAKE you free.” (John 8:33). Jesus continued, “Whosoever committeth sin is a servant of sin ... if the son therefore MAKES you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). The Word of God never states truth SETS anyone free, nor that Jesus SETS anyone free. Jesus claims both He and truth will MAKE you free.

When prisons release their prisoners, they are setting them free. My friend could have simply set that ill-fated dog free, but he instead chose to MAKE him free. Jesus never simply releases us from our lost situations. He recovers our dignity with His unconditional love and acceptance. He restores our self-pride by providing a genuine fresh start with His full and complete forgiveness. He empowers by gifting us with a much-improved resource for decision-making: His Holy Spirit.

So, when Jesus MAKES you free from your imprisonment to sin and you are unchained, STAY LOOSE!

# A New Beginning

(continued from cover)

Certainly one of the most critical components of planning this event was ensuring that all volunteers and visitors in attendance were well fed. Both lunch and dinner for large crowds had to be prepared daily. The food committee, led by Sister Donna Pepe and a group of tireless volunteers, needed to plan, prepare, and serve approximately 2,000 meals over the course of the week. This Herculean task was viewed as essential to the success of the tent meetings. Breaking bread with our visitors in the spirit of fellowship would allow the saints an opportunity to share their testimonies and words of encouragement.

## Obstacles Overcome Through God's Promises

The scripture from 2 Nephi 2:11, "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things..." was evident from the moment we arrived. Both the air conditioning and sewage systems in the church building were not functioning properly, the large rental tent partially collapsed under the strain of the strong winds, the sound system rental service canceled at the last minute, and the transmission on the truck bringing many of the supplies from Texas was breaking down near Albuquerque. Finding a live rattlesnake on the property served as another reminder that we were combating the opposition.

However, God knew what the group would be facing ahead of time. In His grace and mercy He prepared the way. For example, Brother Joe Ignagni, one of the ministers leading the event, asked for prayer the Sunday prior. As the ministry prayed, the Word of the Lord was spoken, "Thus saith the Lord: Know now My promises will be fulfilled! Step forward in faith, my son, and you will see, thus saith the Lord."

Similarly, while fasting in preparation for the revival, Brother Justin Cason asked God to use the young people as instruments to deliver the message of the Gospel. As he was praying, the Word of the Lord was revealed. God told him that if they would hearken unto His word, and bear witness of His power, the youth would be used to give God glory and to do His work.

So, when those inevitable trials arose throughout the week, the group knew that God was not only able but was also willing to remove every stumbling block we encountered. We moved forward with our preparations having hope and conviction that God's hand of protection was over us.

## Preparing the Way

The ministry felt it was vital to lay the groundwork for all of the volunteers, many of whom had never before labored on a reservation. Knowing the importance of sharing the Good News of the Restored Gospel to the Navajo Nation, Zoom

meetings for the YIA were held prior to the event. Seminars were taught during the week as preparation for our outreach. Topics covered how to be a missionary and to give your testimony.

One particularly impactful class was led by Brothers Larry Watson, David Jordan, and Ramone Yazzie, a Navajo brother, who provided background information on Navajo culture, history, and language. This class focused on how to adapt our outreach activities to demonstrate respect for the unique needs and cultural norms of the community. Lastly, we experienced an enlightening presentation and private tour of the Navajo Nation Museum by its director, Manny Wheeler.

Another seminar was held on the history of the Tse Bonito Mission. Members of the Watson and Jordan families, along with Sister Anne Calabrese, related the monumental undertaking of starting the work on the reservation. It was a revelation to hear the miraculous experiences that had transpired over the many years. While they individually and collectively endured times of great challenge, none could deny the importance of the work and the impact of God's Spirit. The love they have for the Navajo people and the conviction of their calling to work in Tse Bonito was evident in their testimonies.

## Ambassadors for Christ

Under the leadership and mentorship of Brother Josh and Sister Ana Benyola, Brothers Aaron Palmieri, Josh Gehly, Jonathan Checchi, Patrick Monaghan, and Michael Watson (connected to the GMBA's Youth in Action program and the Quorum of 70's Youth Missionary Operating Committee), the young adults were a formidable crew. They rose early for prayer each morning, twice gathering at the beautiful Window Rock monument for inspiration, and fasting periodically throughout the week. These "stripling" soldiers prepared themselves for the challenges of their tasks with humility and tenacity.

Despite the heat and many dangers—including wild dogs and some difficult situations, they eagerly knocked on doors, distributed flyers, and gave the invitation to come and experience the life-changing love of Jesus Christ. The young people had blessed assurance that God's protection was upon them. Before canvassing began, the ministry offered prayer. Sister Caitlyn Monaghan was given a beautiful vision during this time. She saw a circle of angels surrounding the youth. Each angel had a sword and a shield to give as protection to every member of the group. This experience gave them tremendous confidence that the Lord was preparing the way.

Outreach efforts occurred Monday through Friday. Accompanied by the ministry and other adults, the



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## Preparation

By Brother Anthony Scolaro

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." It's a familiar phrase to all of us, a phrase which we usually associate with the time of Christ's birth, yet it's a phrase that carries a timeless message. John the Baptist said it two thousand years ago, and all the prophets before him were saying it, though perhaps in different words, long before he was born. They were all speaking of the advent of Jesus Christ, the long-awaited Messiah. But these same words also apply to the children of men today, referring not to the birth of Christ, but to His coming in glory.

When Jesus ascended into the heavens, He left His followers with the hope that He would one day return. That hope is our source of joy today, as we endeavor to live our lives according to His will and endure all things until the end.

More and more often in the Church, we are coming across the word "prepare" in our various spiritual gatherings, The Lord has revealed to us that the time is not far wherein He will make bare His mighty arm and gather together the House of Israel, and He is looking for workers among the children of men who are prepared to do His work.

What does the Lord want from us in the way of preparation? Isn't it our broken heart and contrite spirit that He wants? Truly this is required of us, but the Lord will only work with us according to the desire of our hearts. And this desire manifests itself in many different ways. We show our desire to serve the Lord by walking uprightly before Him, keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, that we as vessels might be receptive to His Holy Spirit. Our desire is reflected in our attendance at church services, by our individual application to understanding the scriptures, by our willingness to show the light of the Gospel to our fellow beings. By giving of our substance to the Church, and by dedicating our time as well, whether it's spreading the Gospel overseas, emptying the wastebaskets at our own branch, or setting aside a time of fasting and prayer at home, we are showing the Lord that we want to serve Him and are giving our best to Him in our present capacity.

As we do all these things, preparing the way with the help of the Lord, we as individuals and as a Church will find ourselves to be the fruit-bearing branches that the Lord of the vineyard is seeking. Let us discipline ourselves to be constantly open to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Let us make His paths straight within us, that when opportunities arise for us to be used, we will be ready and willing servants, clad in the full armor of God.

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# A New Beginning (continued from page 4)

YIA went out in teams to canvass the homes and businesses on the reservation. They were excited to find an overwhelming majority of business owners and managers agreeing to post flyers in their storefront windows. It was quite a sight to see these “invitations” lining the streets of Tse Bonito and Window Rock. In addition to leaving flyers on the doors of hundreds of homes and apartments, many people were spoken to and prayers were offered for them and their families. Invitations were distributed at Navajo flea markets in both Window Rock and Gallup. During one visit, the youth played guitars and sang from *The Songs of Zion* to the crowds. By the end of the week, over 2,000 flyers were spread throughout the area.

## A Miraculous Encounter

One of the most powerful moments occurred when Brother Justin Cason and Brother Josh Benyola, both from the Treasure Coast Branch, were canvassing together. They were discussing how they had a desire and willingness to go to the Brighton Seminole Reservation when they returned home to Florida. Their parents and grandparents had done missionary work on this reservation decades earlier. The brothers came to a home and met a Native American man who asked them where they were from. In the course of this conversation, they discovered that this man had lived on that exact Seminole Reservation over 20 years ago, and he knew both Brother Justin’s father and Brother Josh’s grandfather! What an amazing, confirming experience, and how marvelous to be able to share with their families that the legacy of witnessing to the Seminole people had not been forgotten.

## The “Walls of Jericho”

On Wednesday afternoon, Sister Wendy Greenland taught an inspiring seminar to the sisters in attendance. We discussed what “walls” needed to come down which separate us from others as we endeavor to give our testimony and invite people to church. She used the example of the walls of Jericho and how God expected obedience and patience as Israel was told to encircle the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day they were to walk around seven times and blow the shofar on their final lap. If they followed God’s command—the walls would tumble and the city would belong to Israel.

Sister Wendy shared that she and her husband felt directed to do the same as a gesture of faith. Together they held hands and prayed silently while walking the perimeter of their property seven days in a row. Each day they

prayed for something specific in their life that needed God’s intervention. Sister Wendy and her husband, Brother Ed, marveled at how God moved His hand in miraculous ways and answered their heartfelt prayers.

The following day the leadership of the revival felt convicted to follow suit. After morning chapel, the ministry led the congregation to walk around the tent seven times in silent prayer. We were asked to pray that the “walls” of addiction, depression, poverty, anger, superstition, and other issues that keep God’s people in bondage be broken down. Seeing men, women, and children in a spirit of unity and silent prayer was a powerful image. When we finished the final lap we shouted in unison praises of hallelujah!

Next, we symbolically “crossed over the river Jordan and into Jericho,” as we stepped inside the tent and held hands while forming a large circle. We spontaneously began singing hymns of praise and worship in beautiful harmony.

It was during this time that Sister Darlene Ignagni shared a dream given to her over 12 years earlier. In her dream she saw a hill at the end of the street where the Tse Bonito church building was located. A fire had consumed the hilltop and a loud roaring sound was heard as the fire raced down the hillside. The saints were gathered in a building with no walls at the bottom of the hill. Only the roof and posts were visible. A cry came forth from the congregation to look and see a channel of pure, clean water flowing around the perimeter of the building. The final moment of her dream she heard someone state, “The fire will not consume us. The living water will save us.”

Sister Darlene then shared that her dream returned to her as she was praying and encircling the tent that day. She looked up and noticed the hill from her dream. She glanced beside her and realized the tent had no walls, only posts and a roof. She saw the footprints of the saints in the sand surrounding the tent’s perimeter. God then spoke to her and said, “I am the living water. Those who follow me have the living water within them. Now go forth and share it with others.”

It was a beautiful confirmation of God’s plan for the revival: to invite all to come and taste the living water of which you will never thirst, and find a refuge in times of trouble.

## The Meetings

God had been awaiting our arrival at Tse Bonito.

During every service, His power and presence was felt through inspired preaching, testimony, and singing. Mighty prayers were offered, and there were healings of body and spirit. Holy personages and angels were seen. The Word of Lord, visions, and godly dreams were given.

The Sunday before the tent meetings began, many had come early to help with preparations. There was great excitement caused by the sight of the beautiful revival tent, the new large Church sign on the building, and the brothers and sisters arriving from across the country. The anticipation for the coming week was palpable. Our Sunday speakers included Brothers Jim Speck, Josh Benyola, and Stacey Light. Their enthusiasm was infectious and the congregation’s spirit stirred knowing that great things awaited us.

Amazing meetings continued from Monday through Wednesday. These evening services were similar in style and feel to a campout. The opening ministers spoke powerfully, while the rest of each service was given over to singing, testifying, and praying. Three individuals asked for their baptisms at these night meetings.

Thursday night was the first tent meeting. The ministry felt that God had inspired this event and believed that He would bring many visitors. So, we stepped out on faith and rented the largest tent that was available (it held approximately 300 people). However, upon our arrival, we were only able to secure 250 chairs (fewer than we had been promised). But God knew what we needed. Approximately 55-75 visitors attended each meeting. When the children were included (after Vacation Bible School) and everyone was in the tent, we were almost exactly at 250 people. More importantly, many of the visitors who came continued to attend each subsequent meeting. Soon we were seeing the same smiling faces day after day. They were often clearly touched by the Spirit and sang out boldly during our congregational singing.

It had been decided to hold a VBS during the tent meetings for two important reasons. One, of course, is that VBS allows the children to learn about God and His teachings in a fun and interactive way. The other reason is that it would allow the visiting parents to better focus and enjoy the tent meeting services. The approximately twenty children that attended each day had a marvelous time! Sisters Cat Scolaro, Kathy Palensar, and Rachel Cotellesse led a team from Pinetop-Lakeside to provide skits, songs, snacks, crafts, face painting, and Bible stories for ages 4-12. YIA members, along with other volunteers, contributed to create an exciting atmosphere where the theme

“Monumental: Celebrating God’s Goodness” was taught. Seeing the volunteers have as much fun as the children confirmed that VBS is truly for all ages.

Among the visitors, one particular family was introduced to the Church the Sunday before the tent meetings. The husband explained in his testimony that they had driven to three churches that morning, but all three were closed. As they drove along the highway God prompted them to stop and visit our Church. During the service, both testified of the love they felt. The warmth of the congregation immediately made them feel like part of the family. They returned with their young daughter for Vacation Bible School each day, and attended all four revival meetings. They even volunteered to prepare food and serve meals. Watching them fellowship with the saints, it was clear they were sincere when they stated that they had found their new spiritual home.

Another Navajo family came to each of the nightly tent meetings. The father felt a desire to attend the revival services after helping to install the rental tent on the Church property. He was inspired by the Spirit he felt, and was greatly moved watching the YIA work together to help repair the tent after it collapsed during set up. He brought his wife and children to every night service, and stated to one sister that he had “...never felt love like he did from our Church people.” Truly, God was compelling people to “come and taste” the spiritual feast He had prepared for them.

God blessed us with wonderful speaking and singing throughout the tent meetings. After a symbolic blowing of the shofar, our Navajo friends, Pastors Ron Harvey and Jerry Tom, spoke to the congregation. The President of the Navajo Nation, Jonathan Nez, also visited us and addressed the group. Spirit-led preaching from our ministry included Brothers John Straccia, Jim Huttenberger, Josh Gehly, Steve Kerby, and Aaron Palmieri. In addition to congregational singing, we enjoyed touching songs from our Navajo friend, Patsy Wauneka (who had traveled from California), and Brother Herb Desjarlais (who had traveled from northwest Canada to join us). Following a beautiful Saturday evening service, four more individuals asked for their baptisms.

On Sunday morning, our visiting Apostles (Brothers Joel Gehly, Paul Liberto, Scott Griffith, and Pete Giannetti) took a leading role. The service began with a heartfelt rendition by the YIA choir (under the direction of Brother Jonathan Scolaro) of “Go Out and Be a Missionary,” along with a beautiful Navajo version of “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.”

Rousing preaching by our apostles followed, which served to ignite the Holy Spirit. The children of VBS delighted the congregation with several songs to close the meeting. After the service, another three candidates came forward asking to be baptized. Truly, God was blessing this event and providing great hope for the future of Tse Bonito.

### Baptisms

But the greatest moment of the week was yet to come—gathering at Wheatfields Lake and baptizing the individuals who desired a “new beginning.” These men and women wanted to become “new creatures in Christ” (II Corinthians 5:17). In total, ten candidates by week’s end had made the decision to follow Jesus Christ. Seven chose to be baptized in Tse Bonito and the others the following week at Lakeside, Arizona. A powerful plea was made by Brother Panfilo DiCenzo at the lakeshore, and one more indicated that he wanted to surrender to the Lord’s calling. This brought the total to 11 new names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. The group included eight Native Americans (including three generations of women from the same Navajo family), and one YIA volunteer.

Anyone who was there will long remember the power and beauty of this moment. *The Songs of Zion* rang out across the water as the candidates began to enter the lake. The baptismal site allowed a large group of brothers, sisters, and friends to gather on a ridge overlooking the lake. The view of the baptisms and mountains behind them was breathtaking. Because there were so many candidates, and the muddy lake bottom was difficult to traverse, it was decided to bring groups of candidates into the water together. An 83-year-old Navajo woman needed to be carried into the water by four brothers. It was quite a sight to behold.

The ministry felt to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost at the shore. What an amazing scene to view eight new brothers and sisters encircled by a large group of ministers kneeling and praying for this gift from God! Many people stated that these were some of the most moving baptisms and conferrals of the Holy Spirit they had ever witnessed. Even though this process took approximately an hour, no one wanted to leave. We all realized that we were experiencing something quite remarkable. We felt we were in a Holy place and witnessing what God’s plans are for His people. We understood that this was a new beginning for the work in Tse Bonito, the Navajo Nation, and for all those who seek to bring forth Zion.

Brother Justin Cason, who had been given the Word of the Lord prior to his arrival, heard

God speak these words upon his heart while standing at the shore: “I have commanded that ye shall bear witness, bear witness of the power I have given My ministry and the work I have prepared. Rejoice! Rejoice! And know that I am well pleased!”



Scan here to watch a YouTube video of the trip



# Take Up the Cause of Christ!

By Sister Mandy Griffith

**T**he Saints of the Southeast Region gathered together for our yearly conference in Lake Worth, Florida. Elders and teachers held their business meetings while the Ladies' Circle met for their service as well. Our new Southeast Region Officers are: President, Brother Ron Morle; First Counselor, Brother Mark Coppa; Second Counselor, Brother Philip Benyola. Our Southeast Region Ladies' Uplift Circle Officers are: President, Sister Abby Grant, Vice President, Sister Brianna Brown; Secretary, Sister Brianna Giovannone.

As we all convened for our evening service, the young people led the singing and blessed us with a recap of the Tse Bonito Youth in Action trip in June. Many blessings working amongst God's people were shared as the testimonies resounded of God's plan unfolding. Brother Ron Morle introduced a focused work for our RMOC, which entails visiting the Native American tribes in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. All are encouraged to fast and pray each Thursday for God's direction as we devote ourselves to the commission of the Church and go to the Seed of Joseph in our Region. To finish the evening, the young people reconvened up front to receive a back-to-school prayer. A brother spoke in The Gift of Tongues and The Word of the Lord came forth twice saying, "I am with you."

Sunday morning was filled with energy and excitement as the singing began! We opened with *The Songs of Zion*, #16: "Choose Ye This Day," and our Region Apostle Joel Gehly opened our service imploring us to choose the cause of Christ. II Nephi 25:29 says, "And now behold, I say unto you that the right way is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel; wherefore ye must bow down before him, and worship him with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul; and if ye do this ye shall in nowise be cast out." It's easy to say we believe, but do our words and actions reflect our belief? We must commit ourselves to this lifestyle and serve and worship Christ each day.

Like Solomon who was arrayed in glory, yet he confessed that Christ was above all, we want to be arrayed in the glory of God, through the power of His Holy Spirit! There are many causes today that do good, but Christ is the only cause that changes lives. Make Christ your cause today! If He is not your cause, then you deny Him. And the scripture says, "...deny Him not."

Brother Joel shared several experiences from the missionary fields where God is showing His covenant people that they are Israel. They are coming to the knowledge of Christ, and God is sending ministering angels to open doors and clear paths that His work may be done. We need to choose to be part of this cause and work for the

Lord with all our might, mind, strength, and soul.

A vision was shared that a dove came and rested on our brother as he spoke, and the room lit up. God allowed His spirit to array us, covering us like a blanket with His glory.

Brother Scott Griffith followed the message, restating that the right way is Jesus Christ, and He is the one and only way. Those who have been blessed with the truth of the Gospel have accountability to follow the right way. He read II Nephi 19: 6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of government and peace there is no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." Our government cannot provide the right way to follow; the government that Christ will establish will be of peace and justice, and we must cling to Christ's way.

Brother Scott rehearsed the account of David and Goliath, where David struggled to understand the fear of Israel in facing the Philistines. "Is there not a cause?" David exclaimed, as he stood in the power of God and went forth against the giant. The cause of Christ is worth the effort, and Jesus will provide all we need to stand for Him.

Brother Chuck Maddox continued with the theme, saying that the spirit that drew the disciples of old rests with us today. Jesus said a mere two words, "Follow Me," and they left everything and followed Him. Today, we get excited for things like sports, and as much energy as that stirs, we need to be that excited for the cause of Christ!

Brother Phil Benyola shared a confirmation of the message that as Brother Joel was speaking of the glory of God being arrayed among us, Brother Phil was hearing the words, "Wonderful, Counselor, Prince of Peace..." and once Brother Scott shared his scripture, he read those same words. Brother Kevin Jasmin also shared that he felt the message pointing him to the account of the one lost sheep. Jesus left the ninety-nine to go after the one; we were a lost cause, and Jesus came for us. Let us now live for Him and make Christ our cause.

There were several manifestations of the Spirit, in vision and Word of the Lord, confirming that the glory of God dwelt with us. We praise God for Jesus Christ and the gathering in His name. May we take up the cause of Christ and serve Him today and always.

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## What is your favorite book in the Bible or Book of Mormon and why?

"Psalms in the Bible and I Nephi in the Book of Mormon."  
-Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

"My favorite book is Luke because it is full of unique stories. Without this gospel we wouldn't have the story of the good Samaritan, nor the story of the prodigal son, two of Jesus most famous parables, & classic illustrations of the generous love

of God. Luke's most famous verse occurs when Jesus goes into the Temple, reads from Isaiah 61 & announces what his ministry is all about: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners & recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free. (Luke 4:18)"  
-Sister Nancy Plahovinsak, Edison, NJ Branch



# Unity of the Spirit

By Brother Jerry Valenti

Although each of us is an individual with our own mind and our own opinions, we all share the same Spirit of God within us. As a result, we should be “endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). Instead of focusing on areas where we may differ, here are 5 amazing facts that we should all be able to agree on, allowing us to achieve a level of unity as members of The Church of Jesus Christ.

**1 Jesus Christ is the Savior** - “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). Our sins are forgiven because the blood of Jesus paid the price for us. We are eligible for salvation because Jesus advocates for us at the right hand of the Father. Jesus is not a way to salvation – He is the only way.

**2 The Gospel was Restored** - In approximately 560 AD, there was a falling away of the Gospel (referred to as the Apostasy) that lasted 1,260 years (see Amos 8, Isaiah 29, Revelation 12). In 1829, the priesthood authority was restored and, in 1830, the Book of Mormon was published, bringing about the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**3 Bible and Book of Mormon are God’s Word** - These two books are more than just storybooks – they teach us how to live as servants of God. The teachings in these books are not suggestions or recommendations. They are not outdated, in need of revising to align with current ways of thinking in the world. These books are not to be used to merely uphold our own opinions, but rather as a way to come to know God such that we can make any necessary changes in our own lives to become the people God wants us to be.

**4 Ordinances are Performed Properly** - One of the causes of the Apostasy was that the ordinances of the Church were altered (see Isaiah 24:5). The Church of Jesus Christ today performs the ordinances (baptism, communion, feet washing, etc.) according to the way they are described in the Word of God.

**5 Latter-Day Prophecies will come to pass** - Prophecies in the Bible and the Book of Mormon tell us of a time when the scattered House of Israel will be reunited on this land in a place called Zion. A key event in the establishment of Zion will be the emergence of a man referred to as the Choice Seer (see 2 Nephi 3) who will be instrumental in the convincing of the Seed of Joseph. We also look forward to the coming forth of additional records that are currently hidden. When established, Zion will be a city of peace on the mountaintops for all to see (see Isaiah 2).

## Ladies’ Uplift Circle News

### Words to live by

By Sister Luann Carson

**Sunshine all the time makes a desert. Arab proverb** - “...he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matthew 5:45

**If we don’t teach our children to follow Christ, then the world will teach them not to.** - “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

**There are two ways to get enough. One is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less. G.K. Chesterton** - “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

**When you feel like you are drowning in life don’t worry. Your Lifeguard walks on water!**

- “Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.”

Matthew 14:25

**Worry is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained. Arthur Somers Roche** -

“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” 1 Peter 5:7

**In the end, some of your greatest pains become your greatest strengths. Drew Barrymore** -

“We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope.” Romans 5:3&4

**If I miss a meeting I might miss a miracle. Brother Bobby Bradwell**

- “...has the day of miracles ceased? ...I say unto you, Nay.” Moroni 7: 35-37

**Let your Smile change the world.. But don’t let the world change your Smile** -

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6.

**Joy is that kind of happiness that does not depend on what happens. David Steindl-Rast** -

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” Philippians 4:4

**This, my dear, is the greatest challenge to being alive: To witness the injustice of this world, and not allow it to consume our light.** -

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

**Wisely, and slow. They stumble that run fast. William Shakespeare** -

“I ...saw...that the race is not to the swift.” Ecclesiastes 9:11

# Atlantic Coast Region Conference

By Brother Michael Zaino

The Atlantic Coast Region had its conference on March 13, 2022. Brother Sal Rios, our Region President, welcomed everyone and encouraged us to recognize that Jesus is working even in the midst of the things going on in the world today.

Brother Joe Benoyola opened the meeting, he told us to be excited about the plans of God in the latter days, not to be discouraged, because the revelations of God are coming forth. Brother Joe said we need to move forward with the Lord. He used Ephesians 6:10-17 regarding putting on the whole armor of God. He said we need to pray to prepare for the battle with the full armor of God. Jesus Christ is our answer to take on the battles. There are things going on that can discourage us, but we should walk around with a smile on our faces because we have the Lord. Put the shield of God's protection upon you.

Brother Michael McLaughlin followed, adding how we need to have this armor of God with us daily, taking the sword which is the word of God. Brother Michael read from 2 Timothy chapter 1. He said we must put God first in our life before anything. We must not live in fear. We must draw closer to God. We understand what's going on in the world today, so we should not fear anything. "For God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Brother Michael Zaino spoke, saying that we should be the happiest people in the world. And that we can say "It is well with our soul," because of the armor of God we have upon us. If we have it upon us when we wake up in the morning, when we leave the house, wherever we go, we should be rejoicing. He

used scripture from 2 Chronicles chapter 20, where an army was coming, yet Jehoshaphat listened to the spirit and began to fast for deliverance. And the Lord said not to fear because the battle is not yours, but it is God's. Our battles are the Lord's. Bring our battles into His hands. Jesus won the battle for us when He died upon the cross; we have much to rejoice about today because Jesus lives. We need to hold onto the rod of iron. He concluded with Helaman 5:12, building our foundation upon Christ.

Brother Jerry Valenti followed, saying that the message is about being on God's team. He said that we are winners because of Christ's resurrection, we have victory in Him. We will be winners in the end if we are obedient to Him. We need to understand that we will go through things in life, but we should not give up, but keep going so we win our crown of eternal life. Brother Jerry said that the armor helps us to win the battle, we are in the battle to win. We need to use the power of prayer. When we have a problem, we need to bring it to Him in prayer. We know that God can do anything for us. Look for the things that God has done for us in our lives and share our testimony with someone. Let us listen to His voice, that's how we stay on the path so that we can win the race. Listen to the voice of God so we know where He wants us to go and what He wants us to do, He wants us to win the crown of eternal life. In summary, let us put on the armor of God and be ready for the battle, and be ready to share our testimony.

The Lord blessed our conference. Pray for our region that the Lord will continue to bless us.

SAVE THE DATE

GMBA CONFERENCE

NOV 12-13, 2022

FARMINGTON HILLS, MI





Dear Friends,

My mother was a smart and kind person who truly believed in God's laws and lived them. One of her greatest gifts to her children, family, and friends was her deep belief in forgiving others and in saying we were sorry after every fight.

She was not patient with us if we were moping around or complaining. When I had a rather spoiled, only child friend who would get mad at me, my feelings would get really hurt and I would worry. Usually, this friend also would put a note in our door calling me a mean name and saying she hated me.

One mean letter day my little brother brought me the folded letter and my mother said, "Just rip it up, Janet! You know how mean it will be. Do not even read it or worry about it! Play with some of your other friends and be happy. She will miss you and come back after a while."

So, I did. After a couple of weeks, she stomped over, still grumpy and angry (after all those days) and said in a mean voice, "About that note..."

"Oh, don't worry about it." I said happily. "I didn't even read it. I just tore it up."

She was shocked. But by me refusing to fight, or be sad and worried for days, it was over. She still stayed my friend but never fought like that again. There was no point. And I forgave her too.

The Bible is full of advice about forgiving others so God will forgive us. In the Lord's Prayer that Jesus taught His twelve disciples, He said to ask God to "forgive us our trespasses (things we do wrong) as we forgive others who trespass against us!" In other words, sometimes when I am mad at someone, I remember what Jesus teaches us. I ask myself, "Do you want to be forgiven Jan? If you do, you'd better forgive them!" (See Matthew 6:12-15.)

## Forgiveness

There also have been times in my life that it is really hard to forgive someone, especially if they continue to be mean, selfish, aren't sorry, or try to get their way or hurt others.

So what do you do then? One thing is to be safe and avoid those mean people if you can. Hope they are not your teacher or boss. Another is to pray in your heart and mind for words and strength and to stand up for yourself and protect yourself. And the final things are to think about whether you did something wrong, say you are sorry (if you are), forgive that person, and actually ask God to bless and forgive them too! Then go your way, pray, and be happy and grateful.

There are times when we are wrong. Sometimes it is easier to criticize other people and not think about things we are doing that are not right. Maybe our wrong things are even bigger than the other person's and we don't want to see that.

Jesus also taught us not to be so critical and hateful. He said, "Why do you look at some small thing (a mote or speck) that is in someone else's eye and don't think about the huge plank (beam of wood) in yours?...Go and get rid of the big problem in your life before you try to get the tiny spot out of someone else's life." (See Matthew 7:1-6.)

It is human nature to think we are right when maybe we aren't. Don't do this. Be honest. Talk it over with God. Love one another. Say you are sorry. Be sorry. Wherever we are, pray, count our blessings, be kind and love one another as Jesus loves us!

With love, Your friend, *Sister Jan*

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# Blessing Bits

## September Blessing Bits

**BB** **Though My Eyes Cannot See** - When we were given my daughter Deanna's diagnosis of a glioblastoma, fatal brain cancer, I felt as though I was utterly crushed. I wanted to be strong and put my faith in Jesus Christ, but the reality of what we were facing had overwhelmed me. Faithless, never! One night while driving home from the hospital I cried to the Father in frustration asking, "How should I pray? What should I say? Please, help me!" The Holy Ghost spoke these precious words to me:

"I praise and thank you, God,  
for healing Deanna!  
Though my eyes can not see it,  
Yet my heart desires it,  
And by faith I believe it."

I immediately began rejoicing; the weight of complete despair was lifted by the answer whispered to me by His Holy Spirit. I thank you all for your prayers, they are being heard and God is working!-Sis Barbara Nuzzi - Independence, MO

**BB** **My God is The Great Physician** - I'd been hearing my heartbeat, a constant drumming, in my right ear for five months. It led me to research, pray, and get anointed

every opportunity I could. Many nights I was robbed of sleep by the maddening thrum in my ear. Not long ago, in the early morning hours, unable to sleep, I began to research which ultimately led me to an article, and a doctor in New York City, and a diagnosis which requires brain surgery. I'm thankful for the condition in my ear. I know that God used it as a warning because a stroke or aneurysm would likely have happened without warning. I know our God is good, and I know He heals the sick.-Sister Judi Gensburg, Liberty, Ohio Branch

**BB** **A Miracle Among Us** - A few months ago, Brother Reynaldo Jacobo from the Torres-Martinez Mission (who is in his eighties) wasn't feeling well. One of his roommates called 9-1-1 and an ambulance took him to the nearest hospital. They quickly determined he needed brain surgery, then a helicopter rushed him to a major hospital. We were notified and went into prayer right away. At his age, the surgery was very risky and the odds weren't great. However, we serve a living God and our brother has been faithful. Miraculously, the surgery was a success and he has since made a complete recovery. It's as if he never had brain surgery. We are amazed when we see him at Church on Sundays. He's a walking,

talking miracle among us and a reminder of God's goodness and mercy. I thank God for his testimony.- Sis. Vanessa Tostado - Indio, CA Mission

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



**Question for this month:** What is one activity/component in your service to God that continues to draw you closer to Him?



**Answer from last month:** What is your favorite book in the Bible or Book of Mormon and why?

"My favorite is II Nephi because Lehi speaks to his son Joseph concerning the Choice Seer." -Brother George Kovacic, Middle Tennessee Mission.

Turn to page 8 for answers to this question.



*In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." John 14:2*