

The Gospel News

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My Testimony

My Brother Alfred Burch

November 22, 1963

I was born on the Muncey Indian Reservation in 1906. I was brought up in the Anglican Church, but I had no interest in it.

I began to attend church meetings in The Church of Jesus Christ after my wife had attended a few meetings. My wife became acquainted with the Church through Sister Elizabeth Groesbeck. She often talked about the Church at home. She said there was more love shown in The Church of Jesus Christ than our own church. I started to go myself. I thought I would go just to please her. I found that it was true what she said. There was more love and kindness shown.

Soon, the brothers that belonged to the Church became acquainted with me, and told me about the Church. About a year after I started to go, I seemed to understand. They began to tell me to join the Church. They told me I had to be baptized. I said I couldn't very well do that, because I was already baptized in the Anglican Church. I thought I was all right. I quit going to church for a while. I was led away from the Church because of drinking. Then I

started to have troubles. I went to the hospital to be treated for lockjaw. I was there for three and a half months. I came out in March 1956.

While I was home, I met the Ministers of The Church of Jesus Christ. Brother Reno Bologna came to pay me a visit while I was sick in bed. I became more acquainted with him through his visits during that summer. I went back to the hospital three times during the summer. In December, I came out of the hospital and Brother Reno came to see me again.

He asked my wife how are you fixed financially to see you through the Christmas holidays? My wife told him we had nothing. He donated \$10 to us. At that time, I started to realize what The Church of Jesus Christ meant.

I still continued to drink alcohol. I drank many types of alcohol. I became an alcoholic.

I returned to the hospital again for an operation. So after I had the operation, I came home. I started to go to Church again. I realized I must be disobeying God, and He was punishing me by sending me back to the hospital. I still continued to drink. I went back to the hospital and had six more operations.

Then I realized I had to serve God. So I know that I must be a hard man. So God had to break my heart

to give me the understanding that I had to look up to Him.

When I realized this, I had a vision. I saw myself in the church. I was on a stretcher as though I was going for an operation. There were three men around me, all dressed in white. They were preparing me for an operation. Then I saw myself by the river bank. I saw a man in the water up to his waist. The water was very clean where he was standing. Then I saw myself carried in the water on the stretcher, and they took me out of the water and I saw myself wheeled into my room at home. It was a beautiful room, the nicest room I ever saw. Then I woke up.

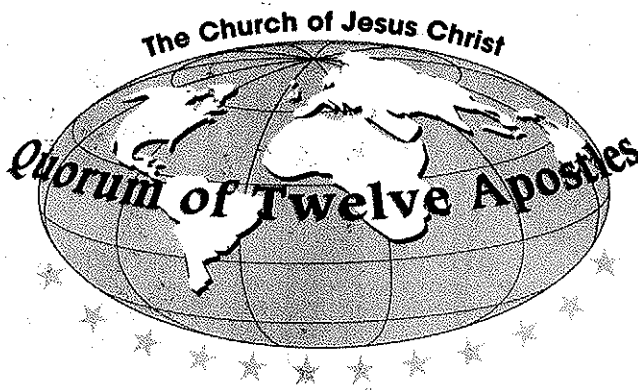
I asked my little boy where did we go, he said no place, I was here all the time. So I told him my dream. As time went by, I had another dream.

I met a woman all dressed in white. I asked her what must I do to know God. She said pray. I saw myself down on my knees and a bright light was around me. I woke up. But I went along the same as before, carrying on.

One day I left home. I went about a half mile down the road, and entered into an old empty house for no reason at all. Then I went back home.

The following week, I returned to the same house with the feeling that

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The Everlasting Covenant

By Apostle V. James Loyalvo

In Isaiah 24:5, it is written, "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant." Here are words that definitely speak of a people who transgressed the laws, changed ordinances, and broke an everlasting covenant.

While it can be readily agreed that, from time to time, Israel transgressed the laws of God and did that which was evil in His sight, yet the Lord did not make an everlasting



Apostle V. James Loyalvo

covenant, so far as the law was concerned, with Israel. The Apostle Paul says, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

It is also understood that no man was saved by the law but that all men, even before Christ, looked forward to the redeeming blood of the Saviour for eternal salvation. By faith in Him, then, they hoped for eternal justification. All the prophets from the beginning of the world spoke of the Christ, who was to come to the earth to redeem mankind.

To no man did the Lord make an everlasting covenant. Even to Abraham, the promise was not to him exclusively but in his seed, which seed was Christ.

The promise to Israel was that a Messiah would come and that they should hearken to Him. The words of Moses were, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

Isaiah also spoke of the coming Messiah very eloquently. It is my contention, therefore, that the everlasting covenant was made to, and broken by, a people under a different dispensation than that of the law. They could not break a law or covenant which was never made to them under the Mosaic Law. What is, then, the everlasting covenant which was broken and by whom was it broken?

A covenant is a pact, an agreement, a contract between two parties. Some contracts are verbal, while some are written and sealed by signatures of both parties. God did make some covenants with Israel.

None of these, however, was the everlasting covenant which Isaiah says was broken.

Paul said, "For the law made nothing perfect . . ." and,

"But now that he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should not place have been sought for the second."

He also stated:

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant . . .

"Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt . . .

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Here is an indication which positively tells us of a new covenant. This new covenant, or contract was to be made by God through the agency of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Lord God Himself says about His Son, ". . . This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

The Apostle Paul again said, "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Christ then was to be the Testator of this new testament. Through Him, the everlasting covenant was to be made.

The everlasting contract, or covenant could not be made to anyone else except His Disciples, who were His Church. Listen, then, to the serious and majestic words of the Saviour, as He made the everlasting covenant to His Church in St. Matthew 28:18-20,

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto

me in heaven and in earth.

“Go ye therefore, and teach 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 whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Please notice that Christ said, “. . . I am with you alway . . .” Here indeed is a promise! It is the everlasting covenant that He would keep unfaithfully.

It takes two parties to make a covenant. Jesus made this promise to His disciples, or His Church. Note how He commands them, “Go ye therefore . . .” The disciples, or the Church, were expected to keep their part of the agreement, which was simply to keep the teachings and commandments of Jesus undefiled, unadulterated, and pure. “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” The Lord admonished them. Again Jesus said, “Abide in me, and I in you . . . He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit . . .” Additionally, He stated, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.”

Christ also promised them that certain signs would follow the true believers in Him. The Apostle Paul clearly sets forth the gifts in I Corinthians, 12th chapter. These signs and spiritual gifts would continue so long as the Church would keep her part of the covenant, or agreement.

We know that, if one of two parties breaks the agreement clearly set forth in a contract, the loyal party is not obliged to continue in his part of the contract. The everlasting covenant, made between Christ and His Church, shows that they, the disciples, were to preach and teach all things whatsoever the Lord had commanded them. In return, the Lord Jesus would be with them always, even unto the end of the world. For their efforts in preaching His Gospel, a reward of eternal joy awaited them.

No greater blessing could have been bestowed on them than to be in the mansions of glory with Jesus

providing they, the Church, would continue to abide in Him. Unfortunately, however, the Church did not continue in His love, nor did they keep their covenant to love Him and keep His commandments.

Grievous wolves entered in, not sparing the flock. Ordinances and commandments were trampled under feet. Virtuous laws were supplanted by hypocritical substitutions. Men who were supposed to be teachers of righteousness turned out to be vicious and evil exponents of untruths, smoothly veneered with false humility and false love until the true and really sincere persons were purged from the Church.

It was not long after the death of our Saviour that men deviated from the Lord’s commandments to teach “. . . all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . .” They went into forbidden paths, forgetting the pure and simple teachings of the Lord and substituting their own personal opinion and commandments; and, as St. Matthew 15:9 says, “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

Jesus and His disciples taught baptism by immersion. Yet, it was not many years later when other modes of baptism were introduced and practiced, which, although very convenient to man, was and is at variance with Christ and His commandments.

Definitions of the word “baptism” by theologians and scholars, both of yesteryear and today, give a light to baptism which is certainly not according to scripture. Let me add at this juncture, however, that The Church of Jesus Christ, which I represent, definitely believes and practices baptism as commanded by Christ and His disciples; and this is by immersion.

There is no question that the mode of baptism which was practiced not many years after the death of the Saviour and is now practiced by most professing Christians was, and is, a far cry from the true mode of baptism as prescribed in the Holy Bible.

Truly, the Apostle Paul was correct in saying, that “. . . in the

latter times some shall depart from the faith . . .” Christ reiterated Isaiah’s words that “. . . for doctrines they shall teach the commandments of men.” Isaiah again says, “. . . because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.”

Every student of the Bible should agree with me that the true and only way to baptize is recorded plainly in the Bible. Nevertheless, suffice to say that Paul, the Apostle, prophesied definitely that there would be a departure from the faith. He warned Timothy to,

“Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee” (I Timothy 4:15-16).

How he must have groaned within at the frightful picture of the future when men would become lovers of themselves, trucebreakers, blasphemers, and the like. With tears, he told the brethren, “. . . that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.”

Jesus Christ saw the condition of the Church in the future when He said, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” The Lord warned them that “. . . many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”

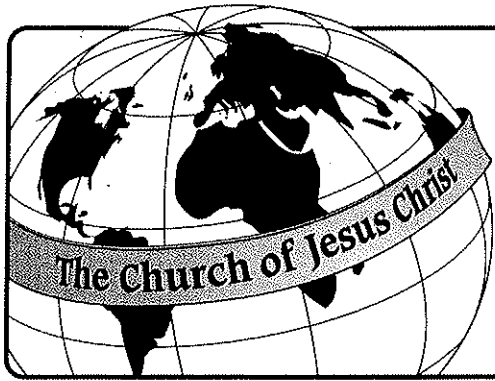
He knew that there would arise men who would seek their own interests, and to achieve such, they would do anything, even to using the name of God in the crooked and perverse dealings.

Christ said that:

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name

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A message from the Seventy

Domestic Missionary Operating Committee

*By Evangelist Leonard A. Lovalvo
Chairman, Domestic Missionary Operating Committee*

The Domestic Missionary Operating Committee (DMOC) was established at the October 1998 General Quorum of Seventy Evangelists (GQ70) Conference with the intent that it assist the Regions in expanding the domestic base in the United States and Canada. The DMOC reports directly to the GQ70 and will coordinate its domestic outreach efforts with the Region Missionary Operating Committees (RMOC). (The RMOC will continue to report to the RQ70 and Region but will also report functionally to the DMOC).

The other officers of the DMOC are Evangelists Dennis Moraco, Vice Chairman, and Jerry Valenti, Secretary. The committee is also comprised of the seven RMOC Chairmen. They are the following Evangelists:

Atlantic Coast—Joseph Perri
Great Lakes—Nephi DeMercurio
Ohio Mid-West—Wayne Martorana
Pacific—James Huttenberger
Penn-Mid Atlantic—Richard Lawson
Southeast—Eugene Perri, Jr.
Southwest—Dwayne Jordan

An important assumption is that the growth of The Church of Jesus Christ is the concern of every Church member. Therefore, the DMOC will be listening for ideas and suggestions that would enhance the GREAT WORK OF THE LORD. Contact your RMOC Chairman to offer your assistance, as well.

INFORMATION-GATHERING QUESTIONNAIRE

An information-gathering questionnaire sent to RMOC Chairman in January 1999, resulted in the following responses.

1. *What are your Region's needs?*
Activities; fellowship; to grow in love, unity, the Spirit of God, and membership; visits; seminars; Church buildings; resident ministers in various locations; ordained officers; and financial assistance.
2. *How can the Ministry be of assistance to those needs?*
Weekend events or visits to the branches and missions for a longer period of time; visitation programs with support personnel using a team approach; resident minister for 2-3 months; weekend Evangelistic services with personnel to follow up on leads.
3. *What types of programs need to be implemented to evangelize the Gospel?*

Relocation of a Minister where there are needs; preaching to uplift and confirm our mission and beliefs; special programs tailored for the specific needs of each branch; Sunday evening meetings.

4. *What have you tried that worked?*
Weekend events to bring the youth together; singing meetings; picnics/outings; guest speakers.

WEEKEND MEETINGS

On the weekend of October 23-25, 1998, a committee of six Brothers, Leonard Lovalvo, Jim Huttenberger, Anthony Piccuito, Louis Vitto, Leonard A. Lovalvo, and Ron Genaro visited the Atlantic Coast Region to present an Evangelistic Program. On the Friday evening, we met at the Hopelawn, New Jersey Branch for a singspiration and preaching service. Saturday morning, we met with the Elders and Teachers and presented information regarding marriage enrichment seminars, counseling, and communication techniques. In the afternoon, everyone was invited to engage in a seminar with the topic, "Preserving the Family." Saturday evening and Sunday morning meetings included singing, preaching, and testimonies.

The liberty of God's Spirit was enjoyed throughout the weekend and the feeling was that the response from the region attendees showed great appreciation. It was a beautiful experience with wonderful results such as an increase in love, fellowship, cooperation, and hospitality. Oral and written comments suggested that we make return visits.

During the first weekend this last October, the same brothers listed above presented a similar program in the Great Lakes Region. On Friday evening, a singspiration and preaching meeting directed to the young was held. On Saturday morning, a seminar was conducted on the qualities and techniques necessary to promote the Gospel. In the afternoon, our topic was "Preserving the Family," and the evening service was devoted to singing, preaching, and testimonies. The Sunday meeting was combined with the Great Lakes Region Conference. These events required the involvement of many people, which proved to be very rewarding to those who made presentations as well as those who attended.

PROMOTION OF THE GOSPEL

The promotion of the Gospel requires that everyone becomes in-

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Editorial Viewpoint . . .

We are starting a new century. We are also starting a new millennium. How many of us ever thought that we would see this event?

Here we are, witnessing two new measurements of time. A new one hundred years. A new one thousand years. Time truly marches on. It waits for no person or group of people.

The media at large has spent the last eighteen months or more informing the general public of the many so-called perils going into the new millennium. They would have you believe that the world is coming to an end. It is safe to say the water will run, the electricity that lights our homes will continue to work, and everyday life will no doubt continue as before. Have you noticed that credit cards that expire in the year 2000 and later are working just fine? The monthly statements are accurate and they have not stopped arriving in the mail because of date problems.

It is unfortunate that mankind does not spend as much time focusing on the Lord. It is sad that focus is lacking on the millennium with Jesus Christ which occurs after the First Resurrection. You would think the emphasis would be on serving the Lord through repentance, baptism and reception of the Holy Ghost. By serving the Lord in truth and in spirit, by enduring to the end, one will be part of the First Resurrection and millennium with Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Can you imagine how glorious it will be to reign with the Lord?

The second coming of Jesus Christ will be a glorious event. He will appear in glory to wed His bride, The Church of Jesus Christ. He will gather all the righteous unto Himself to live with Him for a thousand years. How marvelous!

The Scriptures tell us the Lord will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God! The dead in Christ, those who were faithful and righteous to their end, will rise first! The righteous that are alive at His second coming will be changed in a twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality and are then caught up in the clouds with those that resurrected. They will meet the Lord in the air. They will be with the Lord forever, never to depart from one another.

When will the second coming of Jesus Christ occur? The answer to this question is known only by God the Father. The angels in heaven do not know the answer to this question. We do not know when our own life will come to an end. How can we know when the end of the world will occur? We do know that His coming will be as a thief in the night. In other words, we do not know the exact date and time. Suffice it to say it will be sudden!

We are told on more than one occasion in Scripture that the times and seasons are known only by the Lord. Jesus Christ told His disciples in Acts 1:7, "It is not for you to know the times and the season, which the Father hath put in his own power." He knows all things! By Him all things were created. By Him, the end comes to usher in eternity in the Kingdom of God.

The Lord eloquently informed His disciples in the 24th chapter of Matthew what to expect at the end of time. The Lord's disciples asked Him, ". . . and what shall be the sign of thy coming; and of the end of the world?" Jesus Christ shared many signs with them in response to their question. A most important sign was His response in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

People paid no attention at all to God in the days of Noah. Despite Noah's preaching of righteousness and to repent and serve God, the people ignored him. No doubt Noah preached and pleaded with the people. He warned them of God's pending wrath if they did not repent

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The Children's Corner

By Sister Janet Steinrock

Dear Friends,

Have you realized yet how powerful your thoughts are? We talked in another lesson about how the greatest athletes in the world tell themselves good things about themselves. I told you about the famous Indian athlete who told reporters he would picture himself in his mind, running the right way and jumping the right way so that he would win. He made it to the Olympic Games, where the finest athletes in the world go to test themselves. He won gold medals.

Well, we are in a contest, too. Every day, when we wake up to a fresh new day, we have the chance to think good thoughts and do something good for Jesus.

Every day, or even every moment, we have a chance to start something good. We have a Savior. His name is Jesus. And Jesus knows all about the ugly things His children often think and do. And Jesus has the power to help us stop doing things that are harmful to ourselves and others.

We start by thinking about Jesus and His power and love. Then we must imagine Jesus. Imagine His gentle, quiet, loving smile. Turn off the TV, turn off the radio, go to a quiet spot in your mind and just talk to Jesus.

Tell Jesus how you were afraid and then got so angry. Tell Jesus how mean you wanted to be and ask Jesus to forgive you. He will. He already knows all of our ugly thoughts, and He's just waiting for us to ask Him to take them away and put love there instead.

Tell Him your shame. Sin grows when people are afraid to name it and ask Jesus to cut it out. Tell Jesus.

If you are really deep in sin and not sure even how to get out, tell that



"I'm just bad," stop right there!

You're the person Jesus came down to love. He died for you. He has all the true power of the universe, and He cares for you. Thank Him. Beg Him to help you again. Then remember, as you believe in yourself, that "I can do all things through Jesus Christ, which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

Sister Jan

WORD SEARCH

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to Jesus, too. He'll help you to want to get out. He'll give you a strong mind and a strong will to walk away from sin. Jesus also will let you see how empty and ugly that sinful way really is.

Then, after Jesus makes you strong and clean inside, you still have another job to do. That job is to thank Jesus and to put new thoughts in your mind. Your new thoughts can be straight from the scriptures.

One thought could be from John 3:16, "For God so loved the world [you and me] that he gave his only begotten son [Jesus] that whosoever believeth in him, shall not perish, but will have eternal life."

So if you start to holler at yourself or tell yourself, "I'm so stupid," or

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Missionary
Benevolent
Association

A Weekend of Restoration

By Sister Mandy Griffith

Another joyful weekend was had by all who attended the May 15-16, 1999 GMBA Conference in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. It was a weekend of Restoration, and the Lord truly reminded His children that He has not forgotten Israel and the Latter Day plan. God has chosen each of us to be a vital part of His Church in bringing forth His work, and the saints of God were reminded of this calling and refreshed in the spirit of Restoration.

Saturday morning, Brother Jeffrey Giannetti related an experience where the gift of tongues was spoken and the interpretation was, "Raise a song of joy and gladness to me, thus saith the Lord." Then, Brother Dominic Thomas shared his love for the Church and his enthusiasm for the GMBA. He said, "We must reflect the Lord's love and spirit; it's shown through fasting and prayer, devotion and dedication to the Church. The Church is not an inanimate object or an institution; it's an establishment of love and liveliness—the vibrancy of God! He then called the hymn, *Our Church* without previously knowing our brother's experience, which contained the words of this hymn. The words were sung to the honor and glory of God.

A portion of the day was given to the Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ to answer questions and address the congregation. Brothers Joseph Lovalvo, Paul Benyola, Joseph Calabrese, Joseph Bittinger and Russell Cadman spoke on topics such as: the Hill Cumorah, the Peaceful Reign, Zion, the Choice Seer, and the Latter Day work. We were blessed and excited to hear of all the wondrous works the Lord will bring forth, and we should feel humbled in knowing we have a place in this Restored Gospel.

At the close of the afternoon, the young people came forward and sang; *We'll Be Singing on the Mountain*, *Amazing Grace*, and *It's My Desire*. Brother Paul Palmieri offered a prayer over all of the young people that God would keep them in His care. We pray that these young people would grab hold of the Restored Gospel and be vessels of honor for the Master's use.

The evening program was given by the Ohio-Midwest Area, and the theme was, *The Homecoming, Israel*. Songs and scriptures of God's promises for His chosen people were offered, and the Spirit of God was in our midst. Brother Mike Nuzzi spoke in the word of the Lord, saying, "Israel, I love you. Israel, I love you. Israel, I love you. The prophets are among you. The time is near, thus saith the Lord." Thank you Lord, for the beautiful manifestation of your Spirit.

Following the program, Brother Ike Smith, Sr. spoke on Israel and how God can use young men to do His work. In the Book of Mormon, Lehi commanded his children to go to Laban and obtain the records. He sent these young men to do a mighty work. The same Spirit God gave Nephi is in the Church today. God will provide a way for us to accomplish this task; we are commissioned to find the Seed of Joseph and bring them back. Brother Ike said, "We need the Spirit of Nephi—the determination, dedication, and full effort into the work of the Lord. The young people should put all efforts into restoring Israel. The Lord doesn't give us any commandments lest He provides a way that we can accomplish them, and He will fulfill His work using you and me. We must renew our hope and trust in God, and we will see Israel's glorious return.

Brother Tom Liberto followed this powerful message saying, "Don't lose the war. We can lose battles now and then, but don't lose the war. We need to be strong, willing soldiers to meet this task head on—restore Israel." In Alma, the two thousand young soldiers were raised in the ways of the Lord. Their mothers taught them of God and they were brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. We must

train our children in their youth. They will take on the battles of the future. Brother Tom said, "Make the Church your life's vocation. The Lord needs you."

Brother Paul Palmieri then added, "Christ accepted no nation unless they repented. We must pray that Israel repents unto God." The only thing that brings change in our lives is repentance and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We are accountable for the lives of others. Are we sharing the message presented to us by the angel? Have we told everyone about the Restoration of the Gospel? Let's do our part to please the Lord. Let's be ready to meet the Master and hear those wonderful words, "Well done my good and faithful servant." When we received the Holy Ghost, we became workers unto the Lord. We need to rise to a higher level of righteousness and work for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Brother Paul Aaron Palmieri closed the evening meeting by inviting any unbaptized to come and join this Church. "We may not be perfect, but we serve a perfect Savior. This is His perfect Gospel." Amen.

Sunday morning we reconvened and the Ohio-Midwest choir opened with a few selections. Brother Joe Lovalvo opened the service by asking a question. "Are we waiting for Zion? There's nothing that says we can't have Zion now. Where two or three are gathered, the spirit of Zion is there. If we came with one mind and one heart, we can have Zion here." The brothers passed communion to the members of the Church. We felt a peaceful spirit as we partook of the holy ordinance.

Brother Joe Calabrese opened the preaching service, maintaining the theme of Restoration. "The Gospel is spreading all over the earth. We must focus on the responsibility that is coming our way. There will be greater things. We will see greater works. The Lord has given us the resource to do His work. Listen to the Spirit that speaks to you and put it into action." We can't get caught in the trap of being too busy or distracted. The devil

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Branch and Mission News

Ordinations in Hollywood, FL

By Sister Betty Gennaro

The Hollywood, Florida Branch and Miami Mission met together on February 14, 1999, to witness the ordination of Brother Justin Severson as a Teacher and Sister Helen Catone as a Deaconess in The Church of Jesus Christ.

Our Presiding Elder, Brother Dennis Moraco, explained the duties of a Teacher. He explained a Teacher is an extension of the Ministry, encouraging and teaching the saints. Brother Justin displays a humble spirit and his heart is on the things of God. His feet were washed by Brother Miguel Bicelis. He was ordained by Brother Joe Catone, Sr.

God's beautiful spirit prevailed as Brother Miguel and Sister Melissa Bicelis sang that wonderful hymn, *Ye Who Are Called to Labor*.

Brother Dennis then explained the duties of a Deaconess, which is to assist during baptism, feet washing, set the communion table, visit the sick and to be full of good works. Sister Helen's feet were washed by Sister Kathy Kirschenpfad. She was ordained by Brother John Catone.

Brother Miguel Bicelis gave us an inspirational message regarding the continuation of our Church. God's work will continue to be in good hands. We are used as vessels of clay by the Potter. There comes a time when we are presented with the truth, something seen by faith, which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is up to us to choose it or reject it. As members of The Church of Jesus Christ, we have chosen the better part of life. God has given us something very precious, Jesus Christ. Sister Helen's and Brother Justin's lives have been enriched abundantly by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May God continue to bless them and use them for His honor and glory.

Five Baptisms in Monongahela, PA

On Sunday evening, September 19, 1999, a large crowd of brothers, sisters and many friends and visitors gathered on the shore of the Monongahela River to witness the baptisms of five young people into The Church of Jesus Christ. It was a beautiful sight to behold the candidates and all that gathered to witness souls surrendering their lives to Jesus Christ. They all requested their baptisms on Saturday during the Penn-Mid Atlantic Area MBA Campout.

Brother Chuck Kogler baptized Brother Bradley Kurowsky. Brothers Joshua and Jeremy Nicklow were baptized by their father, Brother Robert Nicklow, Jr. Brother Rick Scaglione baptized his daughter, Sister Amanda Scaglione. Brother Alexander Cherry baptized his daughter, Sister Laurel Cherry.

We then convened at the Monongahela, Pennsylvania Branch where a large gathering witnessed the confirmations and bestowal of the Holy Ghost upon the new converts.

Brother Don Ross shared with the congregation, which included many visitors, that the Ministry was going to confirm the new members with the Holy Ghost. He stated that the Holy Ghost, the Great Comforter promised by none other than Jesus Christ is given to those who surrender their lives to the Lord. Brother Don reminded the congregation the Holy Ghost leads us, guides us and brings all things to our remembrance. It is a gift from God to those who are baptized and promise to serve God all the days of their lives. It is what causes individuals to change and become new creatures with the mind of Jesus Christ. Brother Don continued by reading the words of Moroni concerning the bestowal of the Holy Ghost.

Brother Robert Nicklow, Sr. confirmed his grandson, Brother Jeremy Nicklow. Sister Laurel Cherry was confirmed by Brother Don Ross. Brother Karl Kirschner confirmed Brother Bradley Kurowsky. Sister Amanda Scaglione was confirmed by

her grandfather, Brother Richard Scaglione. Brother Alan Metzler confirmed Brother Joshua Nicklow. The new brothers and sisters in Christ were then given the opportunity to bear their testimonies. They all praised and thanked God for His goodness and mercy toward them. They all promised to love and serve Him for the remainder of their lives.

The meeting continued with Apostle Isaac Smith speaking about the gift of the Holy Ghost. He stated that it is something to treasure, but the gift of salvation is God's greatest gift. The Lord speaks to our hearts, and when He does, we must not harden our hearts. We must allow God's Spirit to enter our very souls, and become an integral part of our very being. Brother Isaac exhorted us all to be seekers of the Kingdom of God, to live Godly lives and be good examples for the cause of Christ. He encouraged all to love and serve God.

Several bore their testimonies, thanking God for His mercy and blessings in their lives. It was a wonderful and blessed meeting. We all praise God for calling our new brothers and sisters into The Church of Jesus Christ.

Ordination in San Diego, CA

By Brother John Cihomsky

Brother Thomas P. Liberto was ordained to do the Lord's work as a minister in The Church of Jesus Christ on March 21, 1999, in the San Diego, California Branch. Saints from around the Pacific and Southwest Regions crowded into the branch to witness Brother Tom's ordination on a Sunday that was filled with God's Spirit in preaching, song and testimony.

Evangelist Leonard Lovalvo from Modesto opened the meeting and spoke on the importance of being called to the office of a minister in The Church of Jesus Christ. He followed his sermon by singing *Jesus Use Me* and invited Brother Tom to sing with him on the last verse.

Evangelist John DiBattista spoke

afterwards and related some of the many experiences surrounding Brother Tom's calling. He was followed by Apostle Thomas M. Liberto, Brother Tom's father, who explained the ordination process as we went into that portion of the service.

As Brother Tom's feet were being washed by his uncle, Evangelist Paul Liberto, Sister Bennie Jones saw a Personage hand a tool belt to Brother Paul. The belt and its tools were made of pure gold. When he received the belt, Brother Paul fastened it about Brother Tom's waist, signifying he was ready to toil for the Lord. The Ministry then knelt in prayer, and Brother Tony Piccuito was inspired to lay hands on Brother Tom. Sister Bennie then saw that all the ministers were wearing the same golden tool belts. Sister Bennie noticed that each belt was seamless, as if constructed as one piece.

Brother Tom then gave his testimony and reviewed his journey with the Lord, first as a member, and then as a Teacher. He also thanked God for the brothers and sisters who served as examples to him throughout the Church. Brother Tom concluded by saying the work of a minister is rooted in telling others about Jesus, serving the Lord and the saints. We thank God that He blessed us with a wonderful service, and our prayers are with Brother Tom that he may fulfill the duties of his new office with the Lord's strength.

God Speaks in Herndon, VA

By Sister Connie Frankenbery

We began our day, September 26, 1999, reflecting upon the recent Pennsylvania Area Campout. Brother Chip Smith led our Sunday School lesson, sharing some of the testimonies of the youth, particularly Joshua Gehly's experience of seeing Jesus, the pearly gates, and the streets of gold. He also related the words given to Brother Tony Ricci that we should listen to the Lord with our hearts. Our newly baptized Sister Amanda Scaglione shared her calling and testimony. We also bore witness to the

testimony of Brother Jan Schut from the Netherlands who had been with us this day and had spent a few weeks visiting in the United States. The pressing theme of not wasting our youth and serving God to our fullest, especially when we are young, became prevalent throughout the testimonies and throughout the day. The Spirit of God was truly in our Sunday School that morning!

As our day continued, it was clear that we were unified and that God was truly with us. Brother Mike Hildenbrand, followed by Brother Chatman Young, implored us to "give God our best." Both brothers referenced Genesis 4:1-7, admonishing us to not be like Cain who did not give his best. Brother Chat stated that the Lord has not changed. "He blessed Abel for giving his best and he will bless us too. If we choose to give as Cain gave, the Lord will not accept it." We then sang hymn #182, *Give of Your Best to the Master*.

During our testimony service, Brother Joe Smith, who has not attended for some time asked to have hands laid upon him so that he could make the proper steps back to the Gospel. After the prayer for Brother Joe and the others in need, Brother Mike Hildenbrand told the congregation that he had seen three angels rejoicing while hands were laid upon our Brother Joe. Within minutes, Sister Iva Bordeaux stood and in the Spirit of God said, "Thus saith the Lord, I will open the windows of heaven and pour out my blessings upon you my people if you will humble yourselves and serve Me with your whole hearts."

Our blessings did not end there, however. During our Ladies' Circle meeting which followed lunch that same afternoon, many meaningful words came forth concerning repentance and baptism. Sister Pat Hildenbrand also shared an experience she had after praying to be more spiritual and more dedicated to God. She had fervently been seeking God's blessings that she had remembered from the earlier accounts of the Gospel. Sister Pat shared that God spoke to her saying, "We have to have

our lives in condition so we will receive these blessings. The time is far spent and there is little remaining." Our sister felt that we have to serve God now. There is just no time left to get ready!

The brothers and sisters of Herndon are rejoicing for the way God spoke to us. What unity and what blessings! Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Miami-Dade, Florida Mission

By Sister Betty Gennaro

The Miami-Dade Florida Mission was organized on August 26, 1999. The brothers and sisters of Miami and Homestead joined together and now have twenty-four members. Our Presiding Elder is Brother Miguel Bicelis. A standing vote of thanks was given to Brother Joe and Sister Violet Catone for many years of dedicated service to the Homestead, Florida Mission. The mission has grown recently due to the new converts from Venezuela and Colombia.

Our first meeting together was Sunday, August 29, 1999. Brother George Kovacic spoke on Mosiah 23, on how the people fled in order to have freedom to worship God. They found a beautiful land, built homes, and were taught to keep the Sabbath Day holy. They had a love for Alma who was blessed with great wisdom. "Trust no man to be your teacher, except he be a man of God." Brother Justin Severson followed on the importance of dedicating our lives to The Church of Jesus Christ. Our joy increases as we do this. Righteousness is the true road to prosperity. Brother Miguel Bicelis closed this blessed meeting with the words, "Keep focused on the words of God."

Happy New Year
To All Our Readers

DIRECTORY UPDATE

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Announcement

For January, 2000, the CD rates for the General Church Building Fund are as follows:

1 year	5.60%
2 years	5.70%
3 years	5.80%
4 years	5.90%
5 years	6.00%

Deposits to this fund can only be made by branches and auxiliary organizations of The Church of Jesus Christ.

To make a deposit or obtain additional information, please contact Brother Gary Martin at:

202 Waterworks Rd.
Clarion, PA 16214
814-227-2421

My Testimony
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someone was leading me there. I entered the house and went upstairs, looked around, and as I was returning to go downstairs, I had a feeling to turn around and when I did, I went over to the corner of the room where there was a pile of trash. I kicked the trash and turned it over, and under all this trash I saw a Bible. I picked it up and returned home. Then that night, I started to read. I opened the Bible to where John the Baptist was baptizing, and I read where John said, "Behold the Lamb of God cometh." That was when Jesus was coming to the river Jordan to be baptized by John. I studied that chapter several times during the week before I understood what it meant. So, I told my wife I had to be baptized in The Church of Jesus Christ. I said to my wife, how will I find The Church of Jesus Christ? I turned the pages of the Bible and I was prompted to read the transfiguration of Christ. I read that over several times before I understood it.

I read the transfiguration where Peter said it is good to be here. He said let's make three tabernacles, one for thee and for Moses and one for Elijah. While he spoke, a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." And Christ was left alone and the others were taken away.

Then I told my wife, it is The Church of Jesus Christ that I must join. So while I started to read the Bible from the time I first found it, all my habits started to leave me. I quit smoking and drinking and I had my mind on the Bible.

In the meantime, my mother who passed away many years ago, came to me in a dream. When she was on her sick bed in my youth, she called me in her room and she said, "Sonny, when I am gone, I'll be waiting for you." As soon as I started to leave my bad habits and started to look up to God, she stopped bothering me. So I know she is resting now.

I started to go to The Church of Jesus Christ regularly, every Sunday.

I asked the ministers, Brother Joe Milantoni and Brother Tony Gerace to pray for me. I wanted to be baptized but I didn't know when.

On Easter Sunday I went to Church. When I got to Church, it started to rain and thunder and lightning. I could not see out of the windows because of the rain. But at that moment, I felt the power of God. I got up and asked for my baptism. It stopped raining! The sun came out and they took me to the river and I was baptized by Brother Joe Milantoni. I went to the church and was confirmed for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Two weeks later, my wife was baptized. I felt good and now it is two years this Easter.

I feel my body is all healed and haven't had a sick day since. I pray now, night and day. I pray for my people so that they might see the goodness of God as I see it.

I'm going to try my best to serve God to the best of my ability. So, I hope this testimony will touch the hearts of my people, the American Indian.

(This is the testimony of the late Brother Alfred Burch from the Muncey, Ontario, Canada Mission—Editor's Note.)

The Everlasting Covenant
Continued from Page 4

have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

"And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (St. Matthew 7:21-23).

Here is a good example that men would become wolves in sheep's clothing: professing but not possessing.

The Everlasting Covenant was thus broken by men who loved darkness rather than light.

(This article was taken from the Book of Sermons, which is published by The Church of Jesus Christ—Editor's Note.)