



# THE CHURCH OF Jesus Christ

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## *A New Year*

As 2010 leaves and 2011 enters there are many thoughts which come to mind. There are things that we would, no doubt, like to leave behind with the old year and things that we would like to change or adopt as we enter the new year. Resolutions, as they are called, can be good as there is always room for improvement in all of our lives, both naturally and spiritually speaking.

Naturally speaking, some of our thoughts and desires, just to name a few, might be to lose some weight, exercise more, eat more healthy foods, be a more thoughtful husband, loving wife, a better father, mother, son or daughter, etc.

Spiritually, our thoughts and desires might be to draw closer to God, spend more time in prayer and the reading of the scriptures, more time in fellowship with the saints in our homes, being more faithful in attending all church services and church related functions, etc.

These, no doubt, are all good things for us to consider, however, let's dwell on the thought of being what God wants us to be and doing what God wants us to do.

There is no doubt that we are living in what the scriptures call the "last days". The last days is a day and time when many prophecies recorded in the scriptures will come to pass. Along with the prophets, Jesus Christ also spoke of the last days and things that would happen and be fulfilled. We will mention a few of the events that will occur and our role as the body of Christ [His Church].

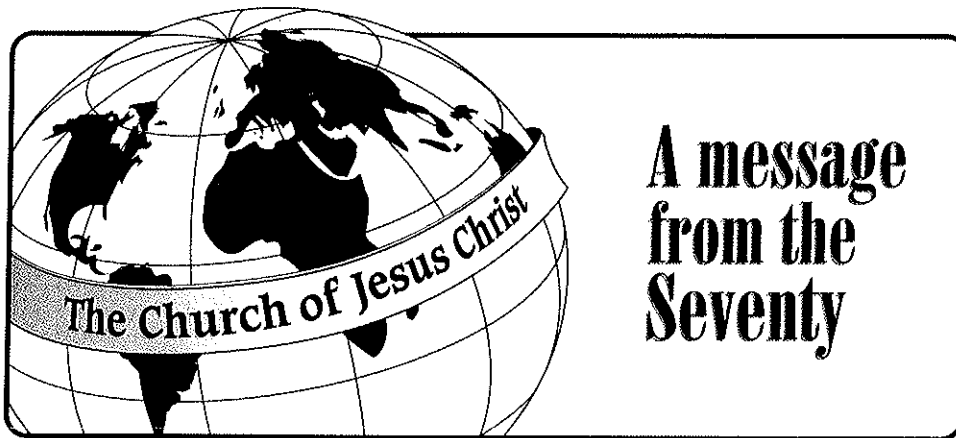
The last days is the time immediately before the Kingdom of Zion [in the flesh], referred to as the "Peaceful Reign", when the prayer of Christ will be fulfilled when He prayed unto His Father in Matthew 6:10, "*Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*" Christ spoke in Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 that false messiahs would rise up, there would be wars and rumors of wars, nation shall rise up against nation, famines, earthquakes, persecution for the people of God, iniquity shall abound and the fact that this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.

God's word is yea and amen! The scriptures say, let God be true and every man a liar. What He has spoken

will surely come to pass! Much will transpire in the last days to fulfill all of God's Word. To bring about all that has been spoken God will use His children, His Church, the body of Christ as the vehicle to establish His truths and eventually build His Kingdom on earth. What an awesome responsibility and calling the people of God have in these the latter days.

What can we do, as His people, in 2011 that will put us in position to be used of God in such a mighty way to go to every nation throughout the world, to every people, to bring the gospel message of love, hope and salvation? Certainly, as we examine ourselves individually, we see need for improvement, necessary changes that need to be made in our lives to put us in position for such a calling. What should our prayer be? How can these changes be made? There is a saying that goes like this; "Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be!" We must go to the source of all help and strength; He who can miraculously effect positive change in our lives that we might be vessels of honor fit for His use!

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## Southwest Region News

*Evangelist Barry Mazzeo,  
Southwest Quorum of 70 Region Secretary*

It is always a blessing to visit the saints of God and to fellowship together in His wonderful love.

### **Fort Worth, Texas Branch**

Sunday, December 5, was a brisk sunny day with a wonderful opportunity to meet with our dear brothers and sisters in Fort Worth.

The Spirit of God was felt in greeting each other with that love so often experienced in the body of Christ.

The blessings of God showered us as we sang together in praise to our Savior filled with thanksgiving for His grace imparted to His children.

### **Vision**

As the communion table was being set, a sister had a beautiful vision of the Lord. He was dressed in white garments and was standing next to a brother sitting on the rostrum. He then moved next to the table being set, looking at the congregation and pointing to the table said, "This is why I came because of my great love for you!"

### **Worship Service**

The gathering was opened in prayer invoking God's blessing upon all present.

A solo was sung, so appropriately,

*"When He Was On The Cross, I Was On His Mind."*

The visiting brother arose to speak and lovingly greeted all who were assembled. He used for his text Psalm 27:1-3,

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"* [verse 1]

His words were encouraging as he spoke, telling the saints we need to ever be confident, trusting in God, knowing His promises are true. His Word declares He will never leave us nor forsake us but will be with us always. Whatever the trial, God has promised us victory and deliverance in and through Jesus Christ, the great lover of our souls.

Our brother's theme was the "Heritage of the Children of God" taken from Isaiah 54:17, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; . . . This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord. . ." He cited two examples; the first, taken from II Kings Chapter 19, when King Hezekiah received news the armies of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, were going to come to destroy Jerusalem. He, Hezekiah, went up into the house of the Lord and spread the letter before the Lord crying that God would save

the people. God spoke that Sennacherib would not even enter into the city and He, God, would defend the city. That very night the angel of the Lord went out and smote, in the camp of the Assyrians, 185,000 of the armies of Sennacherib. God heard the cries of His people! The second example, taken from II Chronicles Chapter 20, when Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah as he heard that the children of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir were going to come to destroy them. The Lord heard their prayers and spoke through Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, saying; ". . . Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." [verse 15]

As the people of God began to sing and to praise the Lord, God caused the enemy armies to destroy one another! Our brother encouraged the saints to lift up their heads and be of good cheer for the Lord will fight all of our battles and the victory will be ours in every circumstance; this is the heritage of the children of God!

As the service continued, many spirit-filled testimonies were given praising God and thanking Him for all His benefits which He bestows upon His children. That same beautiful spirit continued in the administering of Holy Communion in remembrance of our dear Lord!

The wonderful love of God and blessed fellowship continued as some of the saints came together for dinner in the home.

It truly was a blessed weekend as we basked in the sunshine of God's presence with the saints in Fort Worth, Texas.

### **Denver, Colorado Mission**

Sunday, December 12, was also a brisk sunny day as I had the opportunity, along with my dear wife, to visit with the saints in Denver.

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## Southwest Region News

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The love of God filled our hearts as we greeted one another with such joy we have come to realize in this glorious Gospel.

Though the number of people in the Denver Mission are few, the fellowship and love of God we experienced was beautiful. The saints there are faithful and continue on in their service to God with hearts filled with thanksgiving for all of His blessings.

### *Worship Service*

The meeting was introduced with prayer asking God's blessings to be with us in our gathering.

The table of the Lord was set for Holy Communion and the Spirit of the Lord came in our midst as we meditated upon our Savior and what He did for us at the cross.

The visiting brother greeted the saints in love thanking God for another opportunity to visit them in Denver.

His text was taken from Luke 1: 26-33. The theme of the sermon was the message of the angel Gabriel unto Mary, "*Being highly favored of the Lord,*" relative to the coming birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our brother spoke of the great blessing in Mary's life as God handpicked her to give birth to a son whom she was to call Jesus! A great miracle [man had nothing to do with] as this was God's Son, who was prophesied in the scriptures would come into the world. What a privilege and what a joy to be used of God for such a mighty work! Our brother continued stating we too are greatly blessed, as children of God and "highly favored of the Lord", that we might be vessels of honor to bring Jesus Christ into the hearts and lives of the children of men unto their salvation. The angel of the Lord in Luke 2 spoke unto the shepherds, abiding in the field, concerning good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

He was speaking of the Savior which is Christ the Lord whom we adore and whom we bear witness of not only of His physical birth but of His spiritual birth into our hearts and lives and how God the Father desires all men would be saved from their sins and none would be lost!

The Spirit and Love of God was felt as testimonies were given to His glory and the exaltation of His Holy Son, Jesus Christ. The Lord's presence was felt as Holy Communion was administered and we remembered the great price our Savior paid in giving His life as a ransom for whosoever would come, believing in Him unto eternal life!

The fellowship and love of God continued as all were able to enjoy a delicious meal together before separating one from another.

Another beautiful weekend passed by as we were able to rejoice with the saints in Denver!

### *Other Southwest Region Blessings*

Our Heavenly Father has been gracious to us throughout 2010 and we want to thank Him for all of His blessings which He has showered down upon His children in each branch and mission throughout the Southwest Region.

### *San Carlos Mission*

The mission has been blessed with many visiting brothers and sisters who have a desire to help with the work on the reservation. Along with a rotation of ministers, we have been encouraged to see teachers, deacons and deaconesses respond to the call for help throughout the year supporting this great work. San Carlos has been blessed with numerous baptisms, those who have returned to fellowship rededicating their lives to Christ, weddings, blessings of children along with numerous visitors who come and have expressed a desire to someday be baptized and become part of the family of God!

### *Albuquerque, New Mexico*

There is a beautiful group of people that have been meeting in Albuquerque for several years now and are very excited about the Church and the great work of the Lord. There have been four baptisms of late with hope of more who show desire and enthusiasm along with a nice group of young people who love to gather together. They have a beautiful fellowship and are very active in attending all Region events and are planning, with excitement, through fundraising activities, to attend the World Conference in June.

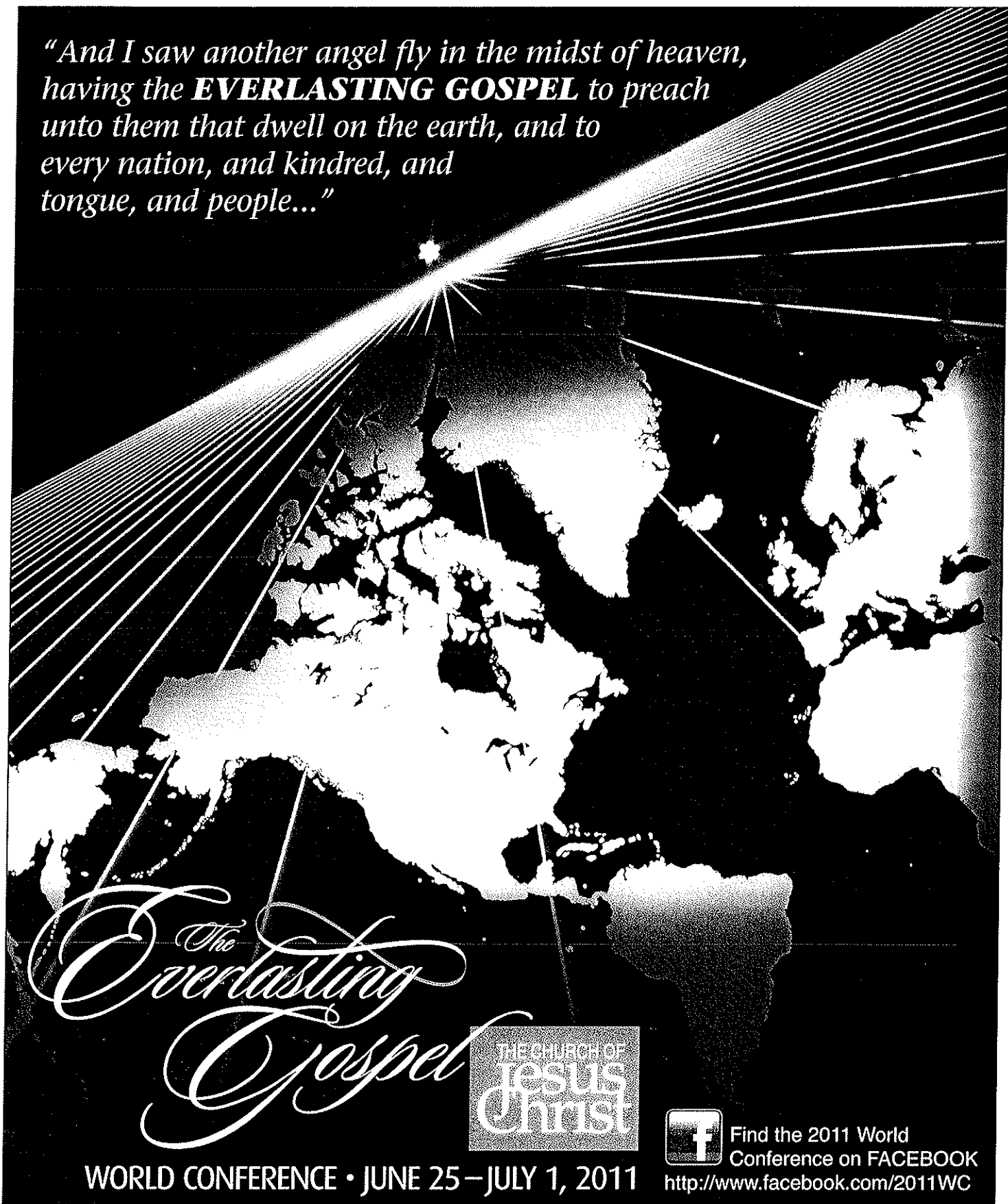
We thank God for His goodness to us yet we are also aware there is much room to grow. Our prayer is that our Father will fill us with His love and we will possess more of the divine nature of our Savior and be more Christ-like, filled with desire and love for the children of men. We want to see more souls come to Christ and experience this joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

May we always seek to be meek, humble followers of the Lord always recognizing His greatness and our great need for Him in every facet of our lives, both to our natural and spiritual needs. Christ said if we would abase or humble ourselves before Him that He would exalt us. May we ever be sufficiently humble that He might exalt us to enjoy the abundance of His blessings, filling us with His Spirit and experiencing His presence daily along this journey from earth to glory.

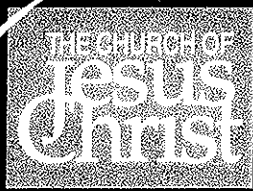
In conclusion, it is our desire to draw closer to God and be the light of Christ to shine more brightly in us that others may desire to come to the Savior and find rest unto their souls.

May 2011 be a wonderful year for all of our branches and missions, both domestic and foreign. Might the blessings of God and His presence be in our homes, among our families and may our marriages be blessed and strengthened in Christ, the giver of all we enjoy.

*"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven,  
having the **EVERLASTING GOSPEL** to preach  
unto them that dwell on the earth, and to  
every nation, and kindred, and  
tongue, and people..."*



*The Everlasting Gospel*



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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
 Carl Huttenberger, Jr.  
 62 Dogwood Court  
 Jamesburg, NJ 08831

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**  
 Donald Ross  
 649 North Allerton Ct.  
 Moon Township, PA 15108-3291

**CONSULTANTS**  
 Alex Gentile  
 Paul Liberto  
 Leonard A. Loyalvo  
 Anthony Scolaro

**OFFICE MANAGER**  
 Cathy Gentile

**GMBA EDITOR**  
 Jameson Staley  
 734 Pantera Drive  
 Murfreesboro, TN 37178

**GENERAL CIRCLE EDITOR**  
 Theresa A. Bravo  
 29 Northfield Avenue  
 East Brunswick, NJ 08816

**REGION EDITORS**

**ATLANTIC COAST**  
 Michael Zaino  
 2410 Birchwood Court  
 North Brunswick, NJ 08920

**GREAT LAKES**  
 Carolynn O'Connor  
 8007 Schneider Rd.  
 Manchester, MI 48158

**MIDWEST**  
 Joshua Gehly  
 424 W. College Ave.  
 State College, PA 16801

**PACIFIC**  
 Anthony R. Cardinale  
 2857 E. Alden Place  
 Anaheim, CA 92806

**PENN-MID ATLANTIC**  
 Martha Gehly  
 84 Lazy Livin Lane  
 Front Royal, VA 22630

**SOUTHEAST**  
 Bonnie Kunkel  
 8990 Tatum Road  
 Palmetto, GA 30268-2455

**SOUTHWEST**  
 Michelle Watson  
 3039 S. Eugene  
 Mesa, AZ 85212

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## Editorial Viewpoint . . .

The definition of standard is “used as, or conforming to, a standard, rule, model, etc. Generally accepted as reliable or authoritative.” Using this definition, what is the *standard* in the world today? What rules or customs are accepted as the standard, or model for all to follow? Can this standard be changed by just one person, who is viewed as reliable or authoritative?

In Alma chapter 46, we read about a man named Amalickiah, who used flattering words to cause many people to leave the Church. Helaman and his brethren worked so hard to establish the Church, and took such great care of it, but in practically an instant, it nearly fell apart.

It is true that it takes years to build, but only seconds to tear down. We can even see today, how the World Trade Center buildings, which took many years to build, were destroyed in a matter of minutes. This is true spiritually. It is true in the case of standards that take years to build, but with just a few flattering words from someone who disagrees, can be destroyed in almost an instant. I recently heard there is now an initiative in the United States to ban the use of God’s name in any form of media. There are hundreds of thousands who signed a petition in agreement to this!

*“Thus we see how quick the children of men do forget the Lord their God, yea, how quick to do iniquity, and to be led away by the evil one” (Alma 46:8).*

The only “standard” or “model” that we should follow is found in the Word of God. Yet, because there are some who disagree, this standard, that took years to build is being torn down every day, at an extremely rapid pace.

Moroni, the chief commander of the armies of the Nephites, became angry with Amalichkiah. He rent his coat and took a piece of it, and wrote, “In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children.” He fastened it to the end of a pole, like a flag. He called it “the title of liberty.” Moroni went about waving his flag, and proclaimed:

*“Behold, whosoever will maintain this title upon the land, let them come forth in the strength of the Lord, and enter into a covenant that they will maintain their rights, and their religion, that the Lord God may bless them” (Alma 46:20).*

Moroni boldly was trying to re-establish the *standard* among the people. Are we trying to re-establish the *standard* in the world around us today? There are many who are fighting furiously to remove God’s standards. Are we fighting back just as furiously to keep God’s standards in tact?

It is amazing how one person, who has flattering words, can cause people to reject a standard they have been following all their lives. Many people today who have left the Church, made the decision based on what one person may have told them. They may have spent their whole lives being blessed, and receiving confirmation of their beliefs by the power of God, and with just one conversation with someone who has a convincing spirit, can deny it all.

The year of 2011 is upon us. Our forefathers would not even recognize the world in which we live. Things have changed so dramatically and so rapidly. It is never too late to lift the title of liberty, and boldly proclaim God’s standards to the world around us. The song “*The Standard of Liberty*” says, “*Why do you wait, son? The battle is raging, And many young soldiers have long gone to war. There’s no need on the side lines, and not on the back lines, But only the front lines are pleading for more.*” As we begin this new year, I leave you with that challenge. If one person can lead so many away from the truth, surely one person can lead them back. Maybe that person is you.

# The Children's Corner

By Sister Jan Bork

## The Story of Jesus' Other Sheep in the Americas

Dear Friends,

Have you ever watched a little puppy or kitten trying to figure out where things are or how to jump up and get something? They have to learn just like we do. Since God created us, He knows how hard it is for people to do the right thing. From the beginning of creation, God had a plan to teach us. In the Bible, he gave Moses the Ten Commandments when He was training the twelve tribes of Israel to be good followers. He also promised that in the future He would send a Savior for the world, the Messiah, Jesus, to teach us the true way to love each other and be kind.

In The Church of Jesus Christ, we are greatly blessed to have two books, the Bible and the Book of Mormon, to teach us how to be better people. Sometimes people are surprised to hear about the Book of Mormon. Some people think that God only speaks through the Bible to teach us. They do not know that in the Bible, Jesus called himself a shepherd for people and said to His followers in John 10:16, *"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."* He was telling us in the Bible, that somewhere else in the world there were other people that Jesus was going to visit!



This is where the Book of Mormon comes in. It is the record of three different groups of believers who were led to the Americas by God. Each group had great men of God and many prophets to teach them the right way to live. Just as the Jews kept the record of God's promises, which became the Bible, these people kept records of their lives and God's power and promises to them. It is called the Book of Mormon. The stories were written on thin sheets, or plates of metal that could not easily be ruined like paper is. These plates were hidden so they would not be destroyed by the evil one who wants all people to be afraid and ignorant of God's love. They contain wonderful stories of how God worked with and helped His followers here in what God calls "The Promised Land," set aside for His followers. It also tells us the future of what will happen on this land.

The first group followed a good man named Jared who prayed God would not confound their language during the time when the Tower of Babel happened and everyone was scattered. (Genesis 10: 4-9). God blessed this group called Jaredites, and brought them across the ocean to the Americas where they lived for hundreds and hundreds of years. But little by little, they quit serving God. He warned them that they would be wiped off from the Promised Land unless they stopped their evil ways. They did not listen. Soon the entire nation became one huge battlefield until all were killed except for one survivor, King Coriantumr, who wandered across the land. Huge cities lay aban-

doned and empty. This last survivor was found by the third group; they had left Jerusalem when it was being destroyed, following Mulek, a king's son and calling themselves Mulekites.

This group found part of the ancient Jaredite record carved in a strange language on a huge stone (see Omni: verse 20), and later twenty-four gold plates [sheets of metal] were found in the ruins of huge abandoned cities along with rusted parts of huge swords and breastplates worn to battle by large Jaredite warriors. The Mulekites were so curious about the Jaredite city ruins and wanted to know more about who those people were. But none of them knew the language. And none of them served God and had the power of God to interpret, or figure out, ancient writings. When they met up with the second group, the Nephites, God allowed these plates to be translated by His seer, King Mosiah, and then they all knew who these ancient people were and how they came over during the Tower of Babel days.

Mormon put a shortened version, called the Book of Ether, into the Book of Mormon. When we read these amazing stories we learn more about the love of God, His promises to all who follow Him and how we are all supposed to be equal and loving to each other. Many of the preachers and prophets in the Book of Mormon were given the power to see the future also. They promised us that when we do a truly good job of serving God and helping each other and when we follow the words in the Book of Mormon and Bible until we are hungry for more of God's word, then we will be given even more ancient records of God's workings with other nations!

In the Book of Mormon, the Lord said in II Nephi 29:11, *"For I command all men, both in the east and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I*

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## Ready for the Meat

By Brother Anthony Scolaro

Atlantic Coast Region President Brother Jerry Valenti addressed the congregation gathered for our Regional Conference on Sunday, September 26, 2010, continuing on the theme of Outreach that had prevailed on the preceding day. The principal text of his sermon was taken from Hebrews 5:12-14:

[12] *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

[13] *For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

[14] *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

In addressing the congregation this morning our brother submitted that the comparison of “strong meat” to “milk” in this scripture was not an exhortation to become expert in the scriptures, or to memorize every article of faith, or the timeline of the Restoration of the Gospel. Rather, Brother Jerry turned to the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John, where Jesus is invited by His disciples in verse 31 to eat of the food they had gone to buy in verse 8. At this juncture of the account Jesus, having just ministered to the woman at the well, explained to them, “. . . *I have meat to eat that ye know not of*” [verse 32]. “. . . *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work*” [verse 34].

The strong meat, as Brother Jerry explained it, is the ability to exercise skill in the word of righteousness [verse 13]. It is the exercise of the Spirit of God in us to discern both good and evil [verse 14]. Jesus demonstrated the use of this strong meat in John 4:7-30, where He spoke of the “living water” to a woman who He knew had had five husbands, and was living with a man who was not her husband. She was truly thirsting for this living water, and through the course of their conversation, Jesus was eventually able to reveal to her that He was the Messiah.

Brother Jerry then blessed us by recounting numerous revelations, experiences, and miracles that took place in the lives of some of the members of his home branch in Levittown, Pennsylvania, which has had 24 baptisms in the last six years. Remarkably, many of these recent converts have been individuals not previously affiliated with the Church or any of its members. In one case, upon attending her husband’s funeral service, a woman who had never before attended our church [although her husband had been baptized for some time] remarked how comfortable she felt there and eventually asked for her baptism.

Another man, who had continually opposed his wife’s involvement and membership in our church, called the presiding elder and said that he had some issues to settle with him, and told him to meet him outside of the branch the next morning. When the presiding elder arrived, expecting a very unpleasant encounter, he was shocked when this man whom he had never met came out of his pickup truck, threw his arms around the brother, and crying, explained how the night before, the Lord had come to him in a dream telling him of the error of his ways. Experiencing a complete change of heart, he too asked for his baptism.

In a third instance, one of the branch elders was getting a haircut when the woman cutting his hair told him that due to a dream she had, she realized that

she and her longtime boyfriend needed to be married. The problem, she said, was that none of the local churches she asked would perform the marriage. “Well, you didn’t ask me,” replied our brother elder. Eventually, he did marry the couple and shortly afterward, the husband and then the wife each asked for their baptism. In each of these situations, the Lord had been working in the lives of these people, revealing to them the truth in The Church of Jesus Christ, and calling them to repentance and baptism.

Brother Jerry admonished the congregation to give the Spirit of God ample opportunity to work in people’s lives. His words caused us to look at ourselves and ask how we would interact with a person like the woman at the well in our world today. Would we see them as a soul in need of salvation, prayerfully seeking a way to present the Gospel as something to be greatly desired? Or are we still feeding on the milk, preoccupied on what we want God to do for us instead of vice versa, so concerned with our temporal needs and circumstances that we don’t see the need that others have for the Lord? Can we make the time to give them a kind word, to understand them, and eventually to explain to them how Jesus Christ has changed our lives, and can change theirs?

Brother Tom Goode of the Metuchen Branch followed Brother Jerry’s message with an account of his own missed opportunity to share the Lord with someone while waiting in an airport. During a lengthy delay, he had felt strongly prompted by the Spirit to tell a certain gentleman about Jesus Christ. However, our brother talked himself out of it, worrying what the individual would think about a complete stranger coming up to him and initiating such a conversation. Brother Tom stayed right where he was, and didn’t say anything.

When they all finally boarded the plane, this man ended up sitting

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## Ready for the Meat

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a couple of rows ahead of where our brother was seated. The next thing Brother Tom knew, a young man sitting next to the gentleman turned and asked the man if he knew Jesus Christ! The two of them became engaged in a conversation about Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation that continued for the duration of the flight. Brother Tom shared with us the remorse he felt at not following the Lord's prompting.

What had made him hold back from sharing the Lord? Brother Tom explained it very simply: it was fear. He brought to our remembrance the account of the prophet Elijah in I Kings chapter 19, where he fled from Jezebel and hid in a cave. The Lord asked him, not one time but twice, "*What doest thou here, Elijah?*" In our day, just as then, there are many who have not "bowed unto Baal and kissed him." Our brother encouraged us, along with himself, to be confident that we have the Lord with us as we go out in His name. He told us that he himself had been raised in a Christian church, but until he was introduced to The Church of Jesus Christ and experienced the love that he found here, he had never known the Son of God.

The next speaker was Brother Nick Boruch of the Levittown Branch. He spoke of the excitement manifested in the bearing of a person who has just experienced something wonderful in his or her life, and shared an account of something that occurred shortly after his first child was born.

Having taken some time off work and staying home with his wife and baby for a number of days, Brother Nick finally ventured out to the store to get a few items. As he was paying, he explained that without realizing it he was saying, "Here's one dollar, and here's another dollar, and here's a third dollar, etc." in the same sing-song manner that he had been cooing to his newborn infant. The cashier looked

at him and said, "You're a new father, aren't you?"

Brother Nick suggested to us that being part of the Restored Gospel should impart a sense of excitement and joy to us that should be obvious to the people we encounter on the high-ways of life.

Our brother then shared a testimony of his relationship with the family that had lived next door to him for the last ten years. On several occasions he had opportunities to pray for them, once praying in their home so they wouldn't be bothered by nightmares and be able to have restful sleep, and another time anointing their young child when her finger had been caught in the car door as it closed. The nightmares had ceased, and after looking at her daughter's finger, the doctors in the emergency room told the girl's mother that there was nothing wrong; that she didn't need to be there.

Brother Nick expressed his thankfulness that God allowed His power to be manifested in the lives of this family, and then shared with the congregation the fact that his neighbors were of the Muslim faith—something that was obvious to him the day they moved in. In spite of this, they continue to invite him into their home to pray for them in the name of Jesus Christ! He asked our continued prayers on behalf of this family, and urged us not to allow any preconceived notions or prejudices to deter us from sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with anyone. Jesus died for all, and His precious, sinless blood washed away the sins of the entire world.

Brother Thomas M. Liberto continued on the theme of being ready for the meat. He stated that there are seven billion people on this planet who need the Lord. We're all here for a reason—for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to go forward. He quoted from I Peter 2:9,

*"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a*

*peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."*

Brother Tom exhorted the congregation and priesthood alike to know that the Lord has chosen us, and that He has a purpose for our lives in His Gospel.

After the young people came forward and sang a hymn, each one was asked to introduce herself or himself, identify their branch or mission, then tell of something they were thankful for. Looking at our young people, it is always amazing to see the change that takes place over the course of two or three years. What were yesterday young boys and girls are now young men and women; the transformation is sometimes so dramatic that we don't recognize them unless they tell us their name. Before they returned to their seats, Brother Jerry Valenti turned to face them and admonished them to become strong brothers and sisters in the Church. He explained that we look at them not only as a part of the Church today, but also, more importantly, as the ones growing into spiritual maturity and carrying the Church forward in the future. Both young and old left the meeting on this day with the conviction that we must be ready for strong meat and in the love of God, bring the message of salvation to a dying world.

*It is of the Lord's mercies  
that we are not  
consumed, because his  
compassions fail not.  
They are new every morning.  
Great is thy faithfulness.  
(Lamentations 3:22,23)*





## Branch and Mission News

### CHANGE

By Brother Pete Oestreicher

The theme that developed at the Sunday, October 31, 2010 meeting in the Aliquippa, Pennsylvania branch was *"Change"*. Brothers, sisters and friends from the entire Penn Mid-Atlantic Region [including North Carolina], and from the Midwest and Great Lakes Regions, gathered to witness the ordinations of two workers in the Gospel. Brother John Mark D'Antonio was to be ordained an Evangelist, and Brother Tom Hunt was to be ordained a Deacon.

Evangelist Nephi DeMercio from the Plumbrook, Michigan Branch opened the meeting, and asked the congregation to reflect on Jesus Christ. Brother Nephi used I Corinthians 15:1-19, the resurrection of Jesus Christ as his scriptural reference. Christ resurrected, in order that we may have the hope of eternal life, and in order to achieve eternal life, we must change from natural or temporal beings to spiritual beings.

Apostle Phil Jackson from the Kinsman, Ohio Branch offered experiences and his testimony to show how God had changed him. Brother Phil exhorted the candidates to use the authority and exercise the gifts they will be given today in their new calling, and mentioned that the Lord changes us a little at a time.

Evangelist George Kovacic from the Gastonia, North Carolina Branch, and Vice Chairman of the Penn Mid-Atlantic Quorum of 70, introduced the Evangelist ordination service. Brother George referenced the four sons of Mosiah, whom the Lord revealed were to be evangelists [although not ordained]. Brother George read the duties of an Evangelist from the Law and Order, and mentioned that at the

recent Q70 meeting, Brother John Mark was unanimously recommended to become an Evangelist. While he was being recommended, Brother Paul Ciotti spoke in tongues, confirming Brother John Mark's calling. Apostle Paul Palmieri washed Brother John Mark's feet, and he was ordained by Evangelist Frank Giovannone.

While Brother Paul Aaron Palmieri was mentioning that Brother John Mark has experienced trials in his life which prepared him for his new office, Brother Tony Ricci, Penn Mid-Atlantic Region President, spoke in the spirit:

*"Rejoice, Rejoice! O, Church of Jesus Christ, an Evangelist has been ordained. Thus saith the Lord."*

Brother John Mark expressed himself. From when he was baptized thirty years ago, he was dedicated to the Lord. He thanked his extended family, relayed a dream where the Lord promised to take care of him, and made it known he wants his light to shine to all.

According to Brother Paul Aaron Palmieri, the ministers of the Aliquippa Branch made it a matter of prayer, and knew Brother Tom Hunt was ready to fulfill the duties of a Deacon. A spirit of unity was experienced in their meeting. The duties of a Deacon were read, which include being filled with the Holy Ghost. Brother Tom's feet were washed by his son, Brother Brandon Hunt, and he was ordained by Brother Don Ross.

Brother Tom then expressed himself, thanking the Lord Jesus Christ for calling him into the Gospel and changing his life. He stated he always wanted to do more for the Church and made it a matter of prayer. Brother Tom is looking forward to working with his fellow deacons, and wants the Lord to help him in his new office.

This day is a day of *"change"* for both brothers. Brother John Mark was born and raised in the Church, and

rendered his life to Christ thirty years ago. His *"change"* occurred gradually as he took on the responsibilities of a deacon, a teacher, an elder, and is continuing as he assumes the duties of his new office.

The *"change"* in Brother Tom's life is different. Brother Tom was raised in a different faith, and met The Church of Jesus Christ through his wife, Sister Earlene. They were married in the Church, their children attended Sunday School, they attended campouts and other activities, and attended The Church of Jesus Christ thirty-three years before being baptized. Brother Tom's decision occurred about four weeks after his wife was baptized. He saw the change and joy in her life, and for about a month, continued his old life style alone, but it wasn't the same. He wanted to experience the same joy that his wife was experiencing.

Brother Tom was active in his community. He was a football and baseball coach, and an officer in several social, fraternal, and civic organizations. He spent a great deal of time in bars and clubs, and admits he had problems with gambling and alcohol. For all the time he was involved in this lifestyle, he provided for his family, had a successful marriage, sent two sons through college, and prepared for his retirement. Brother Tom held numerous jobs throughout his life, is a retired Corrections Officer for the state of Pennsylvania, is retired from the National Guard, and presently works with disabled people to supplement his income.

Since being baptized, Brother Tom wanted to do more for the Church, the brothers and sisters, and the Lord. He helped whenever and wherever he was able, and was especially inspired by a sermon about *"Using Your Talents"*. He then prayed, and asked the Lord, *"what will you have me do,"* and right after that, was approached regarding his new calling.

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## Change

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Before the end of the meeting, Brother Bob Nicklow, Sr., related an experience he had on the pulpit. Brother Bob smelled the odor of oil which was particularly strong, and he knew the Lord was in attendance, since oil is representative of the Lord. It was at this time that Brother Tony spoke in the spirit.

We wish Brother John Mark and Brother Tom the best in their new callings, and are certain that the “changes” in their lives will, and have resulted in positive “changes” for The Church of Jesus Christ.

## The Church of Miracles

Lorain, Ohio December 2010

*Submitted by Calabrese Family*

If you had any doubt that our Church was a church of miracles read the following:

We need to share a Christmas miracle with everyone that we all witnessed in the Lorain, Ohio Branch. Sister Aileen Calabrese has survived three episodes of lymph node metastatic tongue cancer in the 1980s. We all know Brother Tony and Sister Aileen’s lives have been quite stressful as she has been blind since age nineteen and is slowly losing all her vision. To add to their grief, their son was taken home in a car accident in 2004. So the whole branch was concerned when she announced she had a new lesion on her tongue, strikingly similar to the other cancers. We called upon our whole branch to fast and pray as well as Michigan and Florida Regions through our brothers and sisters in the family of Christ.

The lesion had developed over about a month and she sought treatment from her oral surgeon for biopsy. The Lord was with Sister Aileen and the family through the whole ordeal.

First, while Sister Aileen and her daughter, Sister Jennifer, were out Christmas shopping, they ran into a messenger of God, a man who kindly led Sister Aileen away from some ice and spoke to them. It was later confirmed this was one of the three Nephites!

Before she went for her biopsy, a voice spoke to one sister that it was not what we feared. Another sister had an experience that Sister Aileen’s grandson, Zane, came to her and told her his Grandma was still going to be around next Christmas. One brother had a vision that only delicate flowers were springing from Sister Aileen’s mouth. Then another beautiful vision came forth about Brother Tony and Sister Aileen wading through rough waters when a voice spoke to them asking why they would trudge through, when up ahead a bridge had been prepared for them. The initial surgeon’s report was encouraging but still recommended biopsy after an initial treatment plan.

Through the prayers of brothers and sisters, one week later the lesion was completely gone! When the surgeon went to biopsy it, he was amazed to find the lesion healed. He acknowledged the miracle! Another brother had an experience that the lesion was cancerous but had been changed by the hand of the Lord. The gift of tongues was spoken and confirmed this.

To paraphrase III Nephi 27:7-10, as Jesus told His disciples on this land when He appeared to them, if you call upon the Father for the church in my name, the Father will hear you and if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel then the Father will show forth His own works in it and bless the church for His sake. We are The Church of Jesus Christ, Restored Gospel and I believe these are the kinds of works [miracles] that will be manifested in His church.

Praise God! Happy New Year! Let us hope this experience encourages and strengthens all that it reaches!

## FREE AT LAST!

*By Sister Rosanne Champine*

On a brisk morning, December 5, 2010, Brother Dustin Palposi stepped into the waters of life. He was baptized at Detroit Branch #1 by Brother Brett Gibson and confirmed by Brother Larry Champine.

Below is our young brother’s testimony of finding his way to Christ:

*“Brothers and Sisters—FREE AT LAST!”*

Growing up, I was brought to Church by my family from time to time [I am the great-grandson of Brother Vito Buffa]. I came pretty regularly as a teen for a while, but as I started making my own choices, and began doing things I knew were wrong, I was soon over my head in sin. I remember talking with a co-worker, telling him I wanted to be closer to God. I would pray every night, but not with a full heart. I didn’t really know how. I didn’t understand. I made a lot of mistakes.

But the Lord, through my darkness, has brought me into His Light!

I would ask for God’s Spirit to help me with my anxiety. I would pray with my father and it would help me. There is no worse feeling than lying in your bed at night thinking you are going to die, and knowing you are going to hell. But again, I would pray. I visited church and was prayed for by the ministry. I felt that I should come more often, and the Lord started to work with me.

One day at work, my heart began to race. This joyous, euphoric feeling came over me so strongly that I wanted to cry. But there was no one there who would understand.

I started to attend church more and talk about my feelings with my Aunt, Sister Stephanie Rado. She asked me

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