

Busy Times in the Life of our Branch

The parking lot is lighted, the volleyball/basketball court is functional, the playground is inviting and we are getting to know each other more and more through Spiritual Stewardship groups and Fun and Fellowship events.

The fall season started off with a Missionary Series. We celebrated and honored loved ones on Veteran's Day. There was a wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner, a Children's Christmas Program, a Senior Adult Christmas Dinner, and a Christmas Choir Program.

During December we also distributed Soldier's Goody Boxes and participated in our branch's annual Angel Tree ministry.

An annual Budget Meeting was held in December and we were thrilled to see all the accomplishments of past years and look forward to ministry and blessings projected to be shared for the future.

*We invite you to submit branch news reports to the Gathering & Greeting Committee anytime!
(Eric/Sarah English, Phillip/Alice Blea, Charlie/Susan Booth, Mike/Leslie Mitchell)*

Worship Times:		Communion
		Sunday
Sunday Early Worship	9:00AM	9:00AM
Sunday School	9:15AM	9:15AM
Prayer Service (Sacrament Sunday only)		10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship	10:30AM	11:00AM
Sunday PM Worship	6:30PM	
Wednesday PM— Prayer and Testimony	7:00PM	

Zion's Path

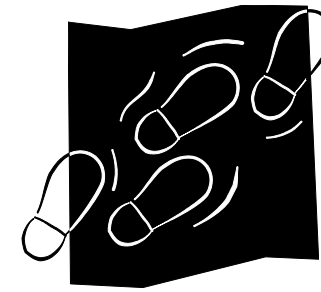
"...and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths..."
Isaiah 2:3

Church of Jesus Christ
Oak Grove Restoration Branch

1203 N Broadway
Oak Grove, MO 64075

Change Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #44
OAK GROVE, MO
64075



Zion's Path

"...and He will teach us of His ways , and we will walk in His paths..."
Isaiah 2:3

From the Pastor's Inkwell

"Be it resolved..."

In the 2005 Hollywood blockbuster movie, National Treasure, there is a scene in which the lead character (played by Nicholas Cage) quotes several lines from the Declaration of Independence from memory. It's a rather dramatic rendition of that portion of the document that reminds us of what government is for and that it is not only our right, but our duty to throw off such governments that abuse those responsibilities. He also makes a comment about how firm and resolved those founding fathers were. One of his co-stars quips that people don't talk that way anymore. His response is very insightful when he responds, "No, but they think that way."

Let me ask you to consider the following questions as we begin another new year. What are you firm and resolute about? What do you think about deep down in your heart that you are absolutely certain of? What beliefs and convictions do you hold to so tightly that you base all of your important life choices on?



If nothing is coming to mind, then perhaps it is time to rethink your priorities and really consider what your foundations are based on. Or you may have several basic beliefs that you've just now thought of, but you might not have a true conviction about them. You might not be willing to stake your life, fortune, or honor on them. The Lord desires for us to have firm foundations that aren't shaken by the various situations in which we may find ourselves in life. At the beginning of this new year is a perfect time to examine your life's direction and what it is that you are truly resolved about.

*"Wherefore, whoso believeth in God, might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, **maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.**"*
Ether 5:4

The Lord has promised that He will lead us to all truth if we will seek him. He has also counseled us that He desires to be not only our Savior, but also our Lord. If we truly ask, He will unfold for us what His plan is for our life and what our firm convictions should be.

Your servant in Christ, Priest Eric English, Associate Pastor

P.S. Please be sure to check out the insert included in this edition of the inspired message that the Lord has shared with us through Elder Jim Cawley. The priesthood voted unanimously to accept this counsel to Oak Grove as from the Lord.

Upcoming Events

Priesthood In-town Retreat — Jan 26 & 27
CMRB All Branch Gathering — Jan 14th

Oak Grove Branch Retreat —
Look for more details to be announced later

Proud to be an American --- by Debbie Mulheron (mother of Matthew Mulheron)

As many of you know, our oldest son, Matt, is in the U.S. Navy, stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. He is a “nuke,” meaning he was trained to work on nuclear reactors, and has a nuclear power degree. His ship, the USS Enterprise, has eight reactors and is the oldest and fastest nuclear aircraft carrier in the fleet. Matt works on the mechanical aspects of the reactors, a job that requires a lot of math, science, mechanical knowledge and patience. On November 18, 2006, Matt returned from a 7-month deployment. They went to Croatia, Greece, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, across the equator, through the Suez Canal, Dubai and Portugal. His ship was involved in hundreds of air attacks in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan.

Jim and I were able to be on the pier when the Enterprise, “Big E,” was pulled into port. After not hearing our son’s voice since April 1st, it was very exciting to know that in a matter of hours we would again talk to him. (We had communicated by e-mail but that just isn’t as good as in person or over the phone. You can’t really tell how things are going if you can’t hear the voice.) We went to Norfolk and arrived at the pier at 7:30 a.m. The weather was



Matthew (left) and Anthony

cloudy, windy and about 45 degrees, but we found about 1,000 people already there with posters saying “welcome home Daddy,” “we love you, son,” etc. The Navy gave everyone flowers, flags, pom-poms, shirts, snacks, and coffee. They also had heated tents set up on the shore.

Jim and I wanted to be on the pier so we wandered over to the bleachers but couldn’t find a seat. We decided to stand by the barricade so we could be up close and chit chatted with Navy boys standing watch. They had been flown off the ship several days before to help with the homecoming. None of them knew Matt but it was fun to talk about some of the things that took place on the trip.



USS Enterprise

At 9:45 we could see a helicopter escort in the distance and knew “Big E” was around the corner in Chesapeake Bay. It took about 30 minutes for the ship to come into the pier. The Navy sailors “man the rails” while the ship comes in. It was an awesome sight to see. The sailors stood at attention, shoulder to shoulder, around the perimeter of the ship and in the hangar bay. People were searching for their loved ones and screaming and yelling. Music was playing in the background. Just as the ship was anchored, the music, “Proud To Be An American” by Lee Greenwood was played over the loud speaker. Have you heard about 10,000 people sing this moving, patriotic song together? It made me cry as well as some of the people around me.

We stood and watched as the dads that had babies born while they were gone came ashore first

Successful Missionary Series

--- by Elder Steve Mapes

“EMBRACING THE WORD OF GOD—THE GOLDEN BIBLE”

In October, 2006, the Oak Grove branch held a month-long outreach series entitled “Embracing the Word of God—The Golden Bible.” There were eight special services focusing on Jesus Christ through the Book of Mormon. Last year a month-long series was video-taped and then put on DVD. The series this year will also be available on DVD starting in early 2007. Just like last year, two hundred branches will be receiving the full DVD series as a missionary gift from Oak Grove. The DVD’s have been used to strengthen existing members as well as teach new members and interested individuals about the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The series began with a Song and Testimony service. Guest music ministry was provided by saints from the Colbern Road and Wellington Branches, including Bob Harm, Rachel Crosley and Rochelle Kropp. Along with the uplifting music ministry were testimonies provided by Brother and Sister Metzger from the Spanish Mission in Independence. Brother Metzger was an evangelical who shared his experience of reading the Book of Mormon and how it brought him into the light of the gospel of Christ. Sister Metzger shared her testimony about a vision she had in Central America, where she was invited to read the Book of Mormon and was eventually baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ.

God richly blessed the congregation through the teaching and preaching portion of the series on topics such as: The Role of a Prophet and The Bible Points to the Book of Mormon (Aaron Smith), The Doctrine of Christ in the Book of Mormon (Gary Whiting), and Christ in America (Lyle Smith). Additional lectures on The Miraculous Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon and an Overview of the Book of Mormon (Steve Mapes) will also be included in the series. The series closed with a baptismal service, music ministry by Rodney Inglis, and testimonies by Brother Chip Gowan and Sister Mindy Mulheron (sharing for Sister Mirl Edwards). We feel very blessed that the Lord opened up his word to us and showed that by the mouth of two or more witnesses that His word is verified. We look forward to this series going to many parts of the world and believe there is no limit to how God can use this series to further the work of the Kingdom.



Cottage Meetings (teaching about the gospel and the Restored Church) are taking place at the church for both youth and adults right now - - - share the Good News and invite a friend to come unto Christ and join with our Church family!

If you would like to obtain a copy of this series on DVD, please contact a member of the Missionary Team (Steve Mapes, Don Cutshall, Ed Story).

WORD SEARCH JUST FOR FUN: CHILDREN AT OAK GROVE

NAMES MAY READ LEFT OR RIGHT, UP OR DOWN, OR DIAGONALLY!

Y B B A G B Y B M L H R W J A
W X H V E E R L E K E M E T U
L H N L R E R A L B H A R B H
S L A D A E H H E O U R D R S
A C U N L C T K A K M I N E O
L A V Y I E A T X E K A A A J
O Z T M I H B W Z F L H X N C
H H I T P A N A L I M A E N I
C C A E N I R E H T A C N A R
I K H V N Y L E T A K L P N J
N A Z A I H P L I J V V O W A
A B B Y N L O B I B A E Q I R
B R I A N N A P T H L C S L O
A U S T I N A H E L P F O L D
J A R E D Z M H E M I L Y B M

ABBY
AUDREY
BREANNA
CATHERINE
HANNAH
JACOB
JOSHUA
MARIAH
MOLLY
PHILLIP
WILL

ANDREW
AUSTIN
BRIANNA
EMILY
HAVILAH
JARED
KATELYN
MICHAEL
NICHOLAS
REBEKAH

ANNALEAH
BREAN
CALEB
GABBY
HOPE
JAROD
KATIE
MILANA
NOELLE
TYLER

Solution will be on the Greeter's table at church on Sunday, January 14. See you there!

Proud to be an American (cont.)

to meet their children. Then the officers came off the ship. The enlisted sailors came off next according to rank. Jim and I were scanning each face as they walked by, waiting to see Matt. All of a sudden, he was standing in front of me with that goofy grin he has. I was very controlled, not crying, but jumping up and down. The people around me were all crying and slapping his back. His roommate, Anthony, from Oklahoma was with him. Anthony's parents weren't able to be there so I became his mom also. What a joyous occasion!

Matt and Anthony had a list of places where they wanted to eat (they didn't like the Navy fare), so we headed off to the top of the list, Mexican. We ate

barbecue wings that evening and Cracker Barrel breakfast the next morning. Matt had to work one of the days we were there so we drove to Washington, DC, to see the war memorials and Arlington.

Matt will be able to spend the Christmas holidays with us. He hasn't been home since January. We are so thankful for the prayers and support that you have given him through these several years. He can tell you that he has 975 days left before he is finished (not that he is counting or anything!) We are proud of him and his desire to defend America as well as the other military sons and daughters. Continue to pray for them and their families. One last thing: Go Navy!

A Day in My Shoes --- by Richard Mitchell (son of Mike and Leslie Mitchell)

I am a Staff Sergeant in the United States Air Force, currently stationed at Ramstein Airbase, Germany. I just completed a five-month deployment to Balad Airbase, Iraq.

My day starts out like most people's days. I wake up to an alarm clock going off, not really sure if I want to be up yet. Although the clock says that it is 2100 hours (or 9:00 p.m.), my day begins when most are ending. I work in one of the few shops that doesn't close for anything. No matter what the weather, the day of the week, or if it is a holiday, somebody will need what I have to help support the mission.

My job in the Air Force is a Fuels Craftsman. I am in charge of making sure that aircraft receive the fuel that they need to make it to their next location. I work in what we call "The Box" or Resource Control Center. In The Box, we handle every aspect of the fuels world. We deal with individuals in person and receive phone calls from those that maintain the aircraft. The fuels world handles JP8, what the aircraft use; DG2, a basic diesel fuel; MUG, unleaded; LOX, Liquid Oxygen; and LIN, Liquid Nitrogen. A saying that we have is: "Nothing goes without the hose."

Once I get to work, I go over all the items that we have to account for. Then I get with the outgoing individuals that I am replacing to make sure that all the important information that I need to know is passed on to me. At midnight, I close out and account for all the fuel that was used and received throughout the day. I account for over 7 million gallons of fuel on a daily basis. During this time I also dispatch personnel to fill different requests for fuel. At the end of my shift I make sure that I pass on anything that I think my chain of command might ask a question about.

Then I head home and get ready for the next day. I work a 10 hour shift, five days a week.



Photos taken by Richard



Question Time — What is the Plan for Priesthood?

--- By Elder Gerry Bird

Why does the Restoration movement reject the concept of women in the priesthood?

I know of no reason why, by their nature, women should not be in the priesthood. I do believe the example of Jesus Christ is to be followed as precisely as possible. Despite ordaining at least twelve apostles and "other Seventy," he did not ordain women. Out of 82 people, at least some would have been women if that were his intention.

Some believe we think men have some superiority needed for priesthood. I have found no evidence that **any** Restorationists believe this.

Many believe that conditions were so sexist in Christ's day that he couldn't call women to the priesthood since they wouldn't be accepted, and that since we have evolved as a society, the ordination of women should now be acceptable.

The lot of women in Christ's day was much different, but to say that he chose to modify his message to fit the day shows a lack of understanding of his life and mission. For example, Jesus:

- preached forgiveness in a day of "an eye for an eye."
- taught in the byways and homes in a day where it was only acceptable to express religious beliefs in the temple and synagogue.
- associated with women of low station, scandalizing the religious leaders.
- compared favorably the gift of the widow's mite to the rich gifts of the wealthy, in contrast to the norms of the society.

- taught that he was the son of God --- blasphemy to the religious leaders of his time. The nature of his birth was a scandal if the whole story wasn't known.

Although these are but a few of the ways he was in opposition to the religious leaders, it is enough to reject the argument that Jesus modified his message for the time and place.

The consideration of any *change* to the priesthood shows a lack of understanding of the *nature* of priesthood. At creation, the earth was perfect and man was without sin; he walked and talked with God as with another person. When sin came into the world, things changed. In the beginning, God established the plan of salvation, with the coming of Jesus Christ in the meridian of time to pay the infinite price for us. This included establishing the priesthood to provide a way for God's power to be applied for the perfection of the saints.

With sin coming to the earth, God chose to give us a separation from him for our own protection. We know that no imperfect person or thing can come into God's presence without being consumed.

Priesthood authority was established to allow for ministry from the throne of God, as directly as possible, when people are prepared. It is no coincidence that when Jesus began his ministry here on the Earth he immediately began ordaining priesthood.



(Cont. on page 5)

Question Time (cont.)

Administration for the sick is a prime example of the many benefits available through priesthood authority on Earth. The miraculous healing power of Jesus Christ is made accessible to those who need it.

The opportunity to sit under preaching and teaching ministry is another example. The scriptures indicate that the priesthood is here to help lead us to Jesus Christ and on to perfection.

We have the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Without priesthood authority we partake of grape juice and bread; with priesthood authority, we receive forgiveness and renewal of our covenant of baptism.

The priesthood offices have specific parts in the home lives of the saints. The Priests should be in the homes teaching worship, encouraging prayer, teaching the children about God's love for them and encouraging all to pray and study the scriptures. The Deacons should be teaching the financial law, encouraging the children to understand it and helping with any questions. The Teachers need to always be looking for opportunities to bring further unity within the

church and between the saints and their neighbors.

In closing, please consider a calling that is only for women. In my opinion it is the most important single calling any person could ever receive. The importance of the **mother** is of infinite value to the church, to society and to the well being of the next generation. Any priesthood call, even in its greatest expression, pales in comparison. The good mother shapes the lives of each child in profound ways, and can bring all of her children up so that they readily respond to ministry and take their place as part of the kingdom. A bad mother can so taint her children that all the ministry and good teaching of the church cannot reach them.

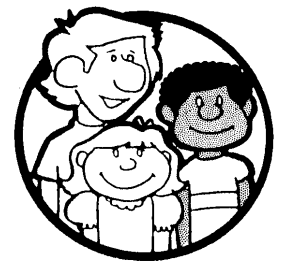
It is said that we are always within one generation of total societal breakdown, and that the greatest influence for keeping society intact and the church vibrant are the mothers. This calling can never be fulfilled as well by any man.

Sunday School News

--- by Synthia DeBarthe, Church School Director

The Sunday School Department is now completely staffed! Each classroom is set up with teaching materials, furniture and bulletin boards appropriate for each age group. EVERYONE is invited to please take the time to come downstairs and visit the classrooms...have a look at the wonderful learning environment provided each Sunday. We are excited and know you will be, too!

2-3 years old	Debbie Norman	God's Love for Us
4-5 years old	Melissa & Emily Scott	Old Testament
1-3 grade	Vi Hallier	New Testament
4-6 grade	Gerry & Stephanie Bird	Book of Mormon
7-9 grade	Joseph & Lori Smith	Principals of the Gospel
10-12 grade	Mel Doubledee	Studies for Today's Living



All classrooms are ready for the children each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. Being on time to class will help give each child a full opportunity to learn about and grow in the gospel.