

Annual OGRB Retreat—April 27 to 29 @ Odessa Hills

Friday – April 27th

- 6:00pm – Gather
- 7:00pm – Welcome / Mixer
- 8:00pm – Retreat Theme
- 8:30pm – Campfire
- 9:30pm – Snacks
- 10:30pm – Lights out

Saturday – April 28th

- 7:30am – Early Worship
- 7:45am – Breakfast
- 9:00am – Class #1
- 10:15am – Break
- 10:30am – Class #2
- 12:00pm – Lunch
- 1:15pm – Class #3
- 2:30pm – Recreation
- 5:30pm – Dinner
- 7:00pm – Worship/Sharing
- 8:30pm – Campfire
- 9:30pm – Snacks
- 10:30pm – Lights out

Sunday – April 29th

- 7:30am – Early Worship
- 7:45am – Breakfast
- 9:00am – Prayer Service
- 10:30am – Worship Service
- 12:00pm – Lunch
- 1:30pm – Break camp

**Becoming an
Incendiary
Fellowship**



Zion's Path

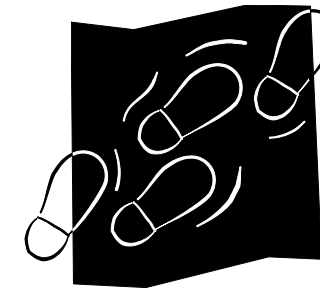
“...and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths...”
Isaiah 2:3

Church of Jesus Christ
Oak Grove Restoration Branch

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Oak Grove, MO 64075

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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

Our mission, as part of Christ's church on the earth, is to bring redemption to a fallen humanity. One of the natural outgrowths of this redemption coming to a community will be Zion. Sometimes, however, our vision is not equal to the task. See if this next sentence resembles something we've thought in our lives before:

“..we tend to interpret our vocation as that of husbanding the little flame in effort to keep it flickering a little longer. What we ought to know is that a flame cannot, in its very nature, be contained....so fire cannot continue to burn unless it penetrates the surrounding combustible material.”

As the author (Elton Trueblood) points out, we don't understand the nature of fire. It cannot exist on its own. It must be constantly expanding or it must be flickering out. If we are to have this fire within us, how can we save others if we ourselves, haven't been saved? The author's next two quotes make this very clear.

“Christians are perpetually being 'sent out' (Mark 6:7), but they cannot be sent out unless they have already been *drawn in*.”

“What is the use of being sent out if men have nothing to give when they arrive?”

Do we have something that the world needs? Our initial reaction might be yes. However, I would ask you to break that sentence down. “Do we” – not other people in the church, not the priesthood, but do YOU personally have something that the world needs?



Second, what is the something? Is it just an understanding of who God is, or is it a relationship with the Father? Is it a large quantity of “going to church and singing when I am supposed to” or is it true worship? What is it that YOU have that the world needs?

Last, does the world need what you have? Does it need book knowledge or repetitious prayers? Does it need constant fear and frustration or does it need peace and joy? What is your life filled with and does the world WANT it, let alone NEED it?

Brothers and sisters, we are at an apex in time. Do we want the fire in our lives and consequently, do we want to keep it there? If the answer is yes, then come to the church retreat this weekend (April 27-29) and find out what we can do to obtain this fire.

By Elder Aaron Smith, Associate Pastor

Upcoming Events

Oak Grove Branch Retreat —
April 27-29 at Odessa Hills

Oak Grove Priesthood Retreat—
May 12th at OGRB (AM only)

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Bates City Mission Thriving --- by Lisa Libich

Services were first held at the Bates City Mission in August 2005 with about 30 in regular attendance. In July of 2006, we moved into our church building at 728 Old 40 Highway, which is about one-half mile west of Bates City. Attendance has grown to about 60, with a few Sundays with over 100!

We have witnessed many special events during this time, including ordinations, births, baby blessings, weddings and baptisms. Our Presiding Elder is John Martinko and his assistant is Elder Mark Churchill. The Oak Grove Restoration Branch assists in providing ministry through the spoken word and ministry of music.

A very well-attended potluck dinner is held every second Sunday with great country cooking and fellowship. In February we had a Valentine's dinner at the church. We have also enjoyed birthday celebrations at our new building. There was a church gathering at Hank's gym on March 30th and over 40 people attended. A sunrise service was held on Easter morning at 6 a.m. There was a BBQ and campfire on April 18th.

The priesthood have really grown and risen to the challenge of ministering in a small group setting ensuring individual needs are met.

Our church family is growing and strengthening in the Lord. Come and see us anytime!

(From the Gathering and Greeting Committee: The Oak Grove branch is thrilled that the Mission is doing so well, and we continue our prayerful support for all the wonderful efforts of our brothers and sisters in Christ.)



New outdoor landscaping at the Mission!



Cross display at the Mission

Getting to Know You (continued)

Our family loves to pack up and go on trips (short or long). Danny and Sue like to fish and play golf (they wish they could go more often!). Danny is very interested in church history or any history for that matter. Molly likes to play volleyball and we love to watch her. Megan enjoys reading Christian novels as well as other types of books, and enjoyed being in plays at school. They both really enjoy roller coasters. Susie is an avid KU basketball fan.

You might compare our family to the Ingalls of "Little House on the Prairie" because we have all girls and live on a small farmette. We have gardened, we raise our own beef, and we have also raised rabbits and chickens.

Our favorite story from the Book of Mormon is probably the account of Christ's coming to the Americas after his death when he ministered to the people and blessed the children. When he said "behold your little ones" and the angels came down and ministered to the children, it was so special!

Easter at Oak Grove

--- by Susan Booth

In keeping with our branch theme over the past two months, our Presiding Elder, Vim Horn, challenged us with an opportunity

to write down those things which separate us from the Father, place it in a sealed envelope and lay it all at the foot of the cross.

"Come unto Me; lay your sins at the foot of the cross and be renewed."

He lives!

In order to be a part of Zion, we probably need to be more studious with our scriptures. We also need to be more outreaching because being a part of Zion is being a part of something bigger than ourselves.

We feel like our church family knows us pretty well, but we want you to know that we have tried to be a family that makes memories. Both of us have lost loved ones early in our lives and we know how important the memories are. Because any one of us could be gone in an instant we try to spend time as a family making those memories quite often.



Getting to Know — The Danny & Sue Hight Family

Danny was born on St. Patrick's Day, which is why he's called Danny, not Daniel. He was raised in southern Missouri and went to Camp Wakonda in Racine, MO. He is the youngest of five brothers. He was working for Gospel Tract Society when he met Sue, then started work at the Lake City Ammunition plant shortly before they were married. After ten years, he went into business for himself cleaning carpets and upholstery.

Sue is the youngest and only girl with four older brothers. Also, she had two older half-brothers, three step-brothers and one step-sister. She has lost three brothers. Raised in southeast Kansas, she also went to Camp Wakonda but didn't meet Danny until she moved to Independence. She played basketball in high school and in her first year of college. Sue's real name is "Carolyn Sue" but everyone calls her Susie. She and Danny met at a Center Stake Older Youth meeting.

Megan is a freshman at Missouri State University, where she is working on her Child Development Certification. Her nickname is "Wee-One." She was born in Blue Springs and attended Oak Valley and CPRS schools. While in high school, she played volleyball, basketball and soccer, was a Cheerleader, and participated in plays and student government. Planning on attending Penn Valley next year, she became engaged to **Jared Norman** after the Sweetheart Banquet at church in February.

Molly is a junior at CPRS. Her nicknames are "Miss B," "Marlene" or just plain "B." She was also born in Blue Springs and attended Oak Valley and CPRS schools. She has played soccer and volleyball for CPRS for several years but her love is volleyball. She is trying to decide what college to attend. A couple of college coaches have shown an interest in recruiting her for volleyball. She is considering majoring in Child Life Specialist.

Abby, Prince and Baggins are our three dogs. Also, Jared gave Megan a new puppy named "Cupid" when he proposed. She found her engagement ring tied into a bow tied around Cupid's neck. **Sassy and Nalla** are our two cats.

Our favorite family vacation was probably the Florida trip before Megan's senior year in high school. We drove to Mississippi and spent the night with Danny's brother, Don, and Joyce in Tupelo. Then we traveled to Florida and spent two nights at Clearwater Beach. The next stop was Disney World, where we stayed for a week at the Polynesian Resort. Even putting up with the heat could not get in the way of this great vacation.

"All of us became members of the church as a direct result of being raised in the church with a strong heritage on both sides of the family. The Oak Grove branch gives us such a feeling of belonging to a greater family and we appreciate the caring attitude of the people."

On a trip to Silver Dollar City, we went to a kids' show where families take part. A request was made for a couple of families to participate. Megan raised her hand (unbeknownst to Danny) and they picked her! Our family had to go backstage and then play a game on stage in front of a couple of hundred people. During one part of the game they asked Danny to put on a costume . . . it was a huge diaper and bib. Then they asked him to throw a temper tantrum. First, the girls and I were shocked when he said he would do it. Then, we were even more shocked when he threw himself on the floor of the stage and threw one big fake tantrum. Our only regret was that we didn't have anyone in the audience with a camera. I'm sure we could have used those pictures for blackmail purposes.

Danny, Molly, Megan, Susie



News from the Building Committee --- by Charlie Booth

The Building Committee has been hard at work over the past few months. Here are some updates and completed projects:

Parking Lot Paving: The Committee is currently waiting for the city to give final approval of the storm water runoff and retention plan developed by SDC Engineering, Inc. With such a large area of new paving being added, we are required to control excess runoff to avoid damaging either church property or that of "downstream" landowners. The plan is to provide an earth-bermed retention pond in the northeast corner of our church property. Also, the City of Oak Grove has stated that once construction of the retention pond is complete, we may begin paving the parking lot in phases, which is good news!

Kitchen Stoves: The Committee has approved a motion to purchase two new high-quality residential gas stoves to replace those currently in use.

New Window Blinds: New horizontal wood-slat blinds have been purchased and installed in the Kitchen, Music Room, north Classroom and Library.

Heating and Cooling Improvements: Following a thorough study of the heating and cooling needs of the building, the Committee has approved some modifications to (mainly) the Sanctuary air flow design components. These changes are being implemented for two purposes. (1) to provide more effective cooling during the summer months, when the system is running at peak demand, and (2) to fix what has been an improper balance of supply and return air. In addition to the Sanctuary, the air flow in the Music Room, north Classroom and Library are also being addressed. The work is being done by Elkins Air Conditioning & Heating of Grain Valley.

Donation and Storage Policy: A draft policy has been prepared and forwarded to the Pastorate for review. It addresses donations (other than money), storage of personal items in the building, loan out of church-owned items from the building, and establishment of a building inventory.

Remember, the Building Committee welcomes your suggestions and comments regarding stewardship of our church home. Be sure to watch the Bulletin for notices of both our upcoming Committee meetings and future Volunteer Work Days.

"Our homes need to become a sanctuary for the Spirit of God." - Priest Howard Cozart

Question Time — What does it mean to have the Spirit of Christ with us?

--- by Elder Rich Jones

An easy question to answer—isn't it? When I was asked by Charlie Booth to write an answer to this question my first response was, "Sure; no problem; this will be easy; I can write an answer to this really quickly and be ready to tackle the next question." Wrong, wrong, wrong!

Like so many topics in religion the phrase "the Spirit of Christ with us..." is loaded with multiple meanings and nuances. Are we using it to refer to our own spirits, or spiritual conditions? Are we referring to the personage of Jesus Christ, unseen, but standing by us? Maybe we are using the term "Spirit of Christ" to mean the Holy Spirit. This is specifically inaccurate but a generally accepted usage when it is understood that the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, bears witness of Christ the Son, and the Father, and that the Holy Spirit is in them and they are in the Holy Spirit. Then there is the condition we call the "truth" which is the "knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come..." (D&C 90:4b). The Spirit of truth is Christ (D&C 90:4c). The Spirit of Christ is given unto all people (Moroni 7:14) so that we may be able to discern good from evil.

Which one or ones should I pick? Here are a few short answers to the original question.

Let's start at what I think is the beginning. When we were created, we received the Spirit of Christ, who is the Spirit of truth, in us so that we can make informed choices. I say informed because agency, or the ability to make our own choices without being told how to do so, requires knowledge of good and evil. Knowledge of good and evil allows people to understand pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow. This understanding enlightens us to expect consequences of our choices, choices that are demonstrated by our actions.

Understanding is intelligence or the light of truth. Understanding the truth then allows us to freely choose evil or righteousness. If righteousness, we are accepting God's invitation via Jesus Christ and the Plan of Restoration to return unto him in eternal communion, which is joy and eternal life (John 17).

This is, hopefully, a good point to pursue the idea that "having the Spirit of Christ with us" means that we have ordered or structured our own spirits to be Christ-like in nature. Why have we done this? So that somebody who meets us on the street can say, "Wow, John Doe sure has the Spirit of Christ about him—doesn't he?!" That's nice, but our real reason is because we want Christ to be in us (D&C 50:8f, 3rd Nephi 9:30 and John 17) and we in him so that we can be acceptable unto the Father when we are eventually judged before God.

Is it hard to achieve this Christ-like spirit? It certainly seems so for most of us because we struggle within ourselves with temptations to rebel against righteousness. The actual process is really pretty simple. We must have faith in Jesus Christ being the Only Begotten Son of the Father. We must repent and be baptized with water, fire, and the Holy Ghost. Then to show our continuing commitment to our covenant with our Heavenly Father, we must do what Jesus did (3rd Nephi 12:34, 35). I don't mean the miracles, but the acts of goodness and kindness to your fellow human beings. Don't do these things begrudgingly or with prejudice; that is hypocrisy and sin, and will be accounted against you (Moroni 7:4-7)

If we have understood these ideas so far, then embracing them and putting them to work in our lives should result in our having received the Holy Ghost (the Comforter, the spirit which bears witness unto humanity of the Father and Christ the Son). This spirit abides with us in lieu of Jesus being with us in the flesh as he was with his disciples in Israel. When this spirit is in us, then the Spirit of Christ is with us.

Junior High Sunday School Class --- by Catherine R. Thomas, Student

The Junior High Sunday school class is taught by Mrs. Lori Smith. Her daughter Heather assists in the classroom. Recently, the priesthood came in and taught a class on stewardship. We are now studying church history. Mrs. Smith adds variety to class by providing us with puzzles, word searches, and other fun activities. She also gives special classes for holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, and Valentines, all the while keeping the focus on Christ and our walk with Him.

Our class is currently in the process of painting a very nice model of Christ's church as he designed it. Every Sunday we have fun (whether it is trying to get paint off our hands or learning the origin of the word holiday), but we also learn about Christ and his church. If you are in Junior High and would like to learn more about God, please come and bring your Scriptures.



Recent snapshots of the class working on the Church model project