

# Pulse of the Congregation



Newsletter of the Restored Church of Christ, Salem Branch



October, 2008

## A Joyful Sound

A review, by Melissa Herren

### What Does the Youth Commission Do?

OK, you vote each year to elect the members of the local Youth Commission, but do you know what they do? The Youth Commission is charged with serving the needs of our youth. First and foremost they are to provide leadership to the youth that will encourage the development of our youth's relationship with Jesus Christ. They also must promote the building of the sound moral character which is becoming of His Saints. They plan and execute community service-related activities, fellowship opportunities, and fundraising events. The Youth Commission operates under the direction of the Pastor, and must constantly be sensitive to the needs of the youth. They hear suggestions from the youth & the congregation, organize worship-related activities, and implement branch mandates. They are to serve as liaisons between the branch youth and the branch leadership, and should act as advocates for the youth. Last year, the Commission made all of the necessary arrangements for our Senior High youth to travel to Missouri for a summer camp. Above all, they are to reveal the merits of righteous living and reflect the pure love of Jesus Christ.



You may already know our Brother, Elder Gary Livingston, and the many gifts and blessings God has given him, but did you know that he has recently completed a CD containing beautiful songs of praise and worship? Through this compilation of inspired music, we are able to learn about our Lord and Savior and worship and praise Him as well. All of the songs and music were written and performed by Gary and it is especially evident that our Lord has provided His touch. Praise God from Whom all blessings come!

In this CD entitled, "Take Up Your Cross," Brother Gary provides songs of hope, learning, praise, and worship. The melodies and guitar performances of the songs are brilliant, with some more lively than others. The songs all have wonderful messages such as keeping our hope alive, spiritual encouragement, and a constant reminder of Jesus' love for us. You can learn more about this CD, order a copy, or even listen to song samples from his web page located at <http://livingfaithmusic.com>.

Recently, I was able to ask Brother Gary a few questions about this musical endeavor.

*What is your musical "background"? How did you come to learn the guitar/sing, etc?* The Lord blessed me by allowing me to be raised in a musical family. I started playing guitar when I was about fourteen years old. I started with folk guitar which taught me basic guitar chords and finger picking.

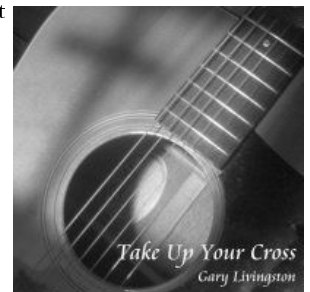
*Musical influences?* I grew up listening to The Beatles. Also, I have always enjoyed the acoustic guitar sound from artists such as John Denver and James Taylor. I remember as a youth, I played a lot of John Denver songs at church camps.

*If you were to categorize the "sound" of your music as a particular type, what would you categorize it as?* I really can't put the music on this CD into one single category. There is really quite a variety of different styles. Some songs incorporate gentle, melodious finger picking while others are faster paced with a more contemporary sound. A few songs contain sort of a "folksy country" flavor.

*I'm sure every song has a story of some kind or personal experience behind it. Which song has meant the most to you and what is the story behind it?* Each song definitely has its own testimony and has a special place in my heart. "Take Up Your Cross" is one that certainly stands out. I felt inspired to write a song about a man who lived during the time of Christ, but didn't know who Jesus was. This man noticed a "stranger" speaking to a multitude of people and would end up having a life changing experience as a result of the message of Jesus. When I got to the final verse, nothing came into my heart or mind. Even after much prayer, I was stuck. I decided to sit at my computer and type out what I had completed thus far. While I was typing, I received an email from a friend who was asking for prayers. She had been a smoker for over thirty years and had recently quit. After weeks without a cigarette, she was feeling the urge and needed strength. As I prayed, I was struck with how difficult it must have been for her to make that kind of a major change in her life and how Jesus gave her the power and strength to "let go" of her old ways. At that precise moment, the final verse came into my heart:

*"From that very moment my life was not the same, the power of that man, Jesus is his name. I let go of my old ways, everything is new, listen to these words Jesus has for you..."*

*Do you have a favorite song on this CD?* "Take Up Your Cross"



## Movie Night for the Whole Congregation!

Dear Saints,

I have reserved the Stayton Community Center for the evening of Saturday, November 15th for a showing of the movie "Expelled". The entire congregation is invited. Popcorn and soda will be provided, and all are welcome to bring their favorite snack, candy, etc. The movie is a documentary by Ben Stein, which challenges the credibility of evolution and reveals the unfair silencing of scientists and professors who conclude that there must be an Intelligent Designer of the universe based upon the available science.

The movie is very good, and balances humor with sound principles and reasoning. Ben Stein presents the material in an entertaining way, while illuminating the fact that science is, in itself, a strong supporter of our Creator. He also sheds a light on the illogical assumptions necessitated by Darwin's theories. It's really great to see "our side" presented so brilliantly, and to see the representatives of the institutions of higher learning fumble over the simple questions put forth by Mr. Stein. I hope that every member can attend, with exception perhaps of our youngest (those not likely to keep still / quiet). The movie is rated PG - there is one brief frame which shows a man who is smoking. I have seen the movie, along with our senior high youth, and would invite any questions you may have. I think each of us would benefit by seeing it, and I'm sure there will be many laughs along the way.

Let's get together and fellowship with a movie night, November 15th. Save the date, and plan to be there. Bring the family and your favorite snacks. There will be no cost to the church or any individual wishing to attend. Bring as many friends as you would like. We have a big screen and seating for 167 souls. The movie runs 90 minutes. Plan on being at the Stayton Community Center at 6:00 p.m. when the doors open, and be prepared for the movie to start around 6:30 p.m. The address is 400 W. Virginia Street. Stayton, Oregon 97383. Donations for the youth group will be accepted if you feel so led. The youth will be serving the popcorn and soda, and cleaning up afterwards. These donations will help the youth pay for summer camp next year.

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**The Bottom Line:** A motion passed at the September 28, 2008 business meeting that affects our youth. Each member received a letter in the mail detailing the motion, the rationale behind it, and its practical application. The bottom-line is, if our youth desire the church to pay their way to camp, I expect them to put forth some effort. DO NOT be idle until the last moment and then call upon the church for financial assistance. Local branch funds will still be used to meet the needs of campers who are not able to pay their own way to camp, but the issuance of such support will be manifest AFTER the particular youth has put forth every effort to earn their way to camp. The Youth Commission will provide ample opportunity for fundraising. If the camper does not desire to earn their way, or the parents do not desire to have their child earn their way, then the parents are invited to meet the costs associated with camp. Please feel free to call me (503) 949-2484. - Brian

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### Local Business Meeting

Please support the following officers which were elected or appointed September 28 at the local business meeting:

Pastor:	Elder Brian Herren
Counselors to Pastor:	High Priest Bill Curtis Elder Gary Livingston
Youth Commission:	Priest Jim Clark Sister Sharon Trammell Brother Kevin Herren Sister Traci Scuito
Treasurer:	Elder Gene Lufman
Secretary:	Sister Dianna Clark
Auditor:	Priest Jim Clark
Recorder:	Sister Nancy Curtis

### Regional Business Meeting

Please support the following officers which were elected or appointed October 11 at the regional business meeting:

Regional Coordinator:	High Priest Bill Curtis
Counselors to Regional Coordinator:	Elder Wray Moreland Elder Brian Herren
Regional Youth Director:	Sister Dawn Terry
Regional Women's Director:	Sisters Curtis & Clark
Regional Treasurer:	Elder Gene Luffman
Regional Secretary:	Sister Jan Esquivel
Regional Recreation Director:	Elder Wray Moreland
Regional Music Director:	Sister Jan Esquivel
Regional Church School Director:	Sister Janet Rew

Note: Please remember that volunteer opportunities are available at Simonka Place (ask Brian for details). Also, Brother Ron Trammell will take the lead again this year in organizing the sponsorship of a family in need for Thanksgiving & Christmas. Additional details will be available soon. Please consider giving generously to this worthy effort.