



# Pulse of the Congregation

February, 2018

## Aaron Dukes' Baptism

by Brother Brian Herren



On August 20, 2017, where the Roaring River empties into Crabtree Creek, Brother Aaron Dukes was baptized by Elder Gary Livingston in the presence of friends and family. The scriptures remind us that we are born into the Kingdom of God through the ordinance of baptism, and become citizens of the great Kingdom, having taken upon us the name of the King and promised to keep His commandments and serve Him until the very end.

*"Even so ye must be born again, into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit"*  
- Genesis 6:62

Brother Aaron received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost by the water's edge. Elders Brian Herren and Gary Livingston served in the ordinance of confirmation. The occasion was especially blessed because Aaron's family was able to attend. His mother and brother added a special ministry to us all (his father was unable to attend because of sickness), as we have long recognized that Brother Aaron's faith in Jesus Christ has resulted from good parenting. His faith serves as a lasting reminder of an honorable mother and father who taught him the ways of the Lord from the time he was a child. We can never be too thankful, or pay too much respect, to those parents who have served the Lord with distinction in the way that Mr. and Mrs. Dukes have in cultivating the faith of Brother Aaron.

It was a special blessing to me to see a dear friend baptized. Aaron has always ministered to me in his knowledge of the scriptures, his commitment to the truth, his conviction to follow the Word of God wherever it leads him, his willingness to ask the hard questions, and just as importantly, his willingness to prayerfully consider the answers. In all his gifts of intellect and wisdom, he remains one of the most humble men I have known as a friend, which has proven the greater part to me. In meekness, Brother Aaron is strong and quiet, ready to give answer, but willing to walk softly. I have loved him so, and to see him come into the fold of God through baptism has worked something meaningful for the Kingdom. May we all continue to grow in the gift of Jesus Christ, and honor the covenant we have made with Him, that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. May the Lord be glorified in His Church.





## Ladies Fellowship Weekend September 2017

*by Sister Sharon Trammell*

Women's Fellowship Weekend was held in the Columbia River Gorge this year with 13 attending.

We rented a house out in the middle of a forest and there were trails that we took a few walks on. There was some old growth timber that really made you think about all of God's creations. We were very happy that the forest fires were not visible and had not affected the area we were in, even though we were very near Multnomah Falls. Saturday morning some of us saw a couple of deer walk out of the forest and walk right by the side of the house. We also stopped for a picture and to look at the view of the Columbia River Gorge at the Women's Forum State Park, which was beautiful.

Saturday afternoon we again this year planned a craft for a non-profit. We decided to sew dresses for girls and young women. Little Dresses for Africa is a non-profit that asks volunteers to make dresses out of pillow cases to plant in the hearts of little girls that they are worthy. So we all got out the 2 pillow cases we were asked to bring. We cut the top in to a neckline and armholes and decorated them with fancy trim, ribbon, buttons, bows etc. Dorothy and myself sewed the hems and some bias tape around the arm holes and neck leaving it long enough to tie on both shoulders. The creativity that came out was amazing and all the dresses turned out beautiful. Several women wished that we would be able to go and give them to the girls in Africa ourselves.

Saturday night after dinner it was time for a yoga class lead by Sister Deanne and more fellowship.

As we were turning in for the evening sister Traci and I were the only ones left up and were crafting and listening to music. We listened to several songs and talked about a song in particular (Hallelujah) that we thought would be great to listen to Sunday morning before the worship. Sunday we gathered and before the worship I asked sister Dianna if I could play a song, but I really felt led to play one of the other songs Sister Traci and I had listened to (How Great Thou Art) instead of the one we had chosen. When How Great Thou Art was over, the worship was started and was focused on a song (How Great is Our God) and how all the words seemed to be extracted directly from the scriptures. The words were passed out and also listed all the individual verses from the Bible. It was a very nice and inspired worship.

We cleaned up and carpooled back home after a very peaceful and worshipful weekend with my sisters.





## Celebrating the Harvest

*by Brother Kevin Herren*



Halloween time becomes easy to become distracted by the dark traditions of the world. On the Saturday before Halloween the Lambs of Zion and the Builders and Climbers came together to remember the Lord and the goodness He has shown us this year. We enjoyed our fellowship together as we began by considering the works of God. Thinking back to a terrific reunion, wonderful youth retreats and an amazing youth camp, it's easy to see that God has truly blessed us in many ways. We read from the book of Alma where we are told to pray over everything; the crops of our fields, our flocks, our family and our labors. Understanding that it is God who gives unto us the fruits of the harvest we can better understand how we can pray for his blessings and see the answer to our prayers.

After considering our year and the blessings of the "harvest of the year" in our lives we moved into a time of games and fun. The first game we played was called "trick or treat" in where the kids selected brown paper bags and had to eat whatever was in it, some were treats like candy or soda. Some were tricks like dog snacks or raw onion. We enjoyed several different games and plenty of delicious snacks in a fun filled evening. On a personal note I felt very blessed to see the youth worship together, play together, eat together and grow together.

God knows all things which are needful for his children and we can trust in him to provide that which is necessary. God is the giver of all good gifts and it is his good pleasure to furnish our lives with the needful things of this earth. It is God who created the seed and the soil to plant. It is God who furnishes the rain to bring forth the fruit. Whether food upon our table or health in our navel or strength in our times of fear, let us always praise the Lord for the harvest which He provides.



## Builders Worship Services

*by Sister Deanne Murnieks*



I always feel so blessed to spend time with the Builders and Climbers. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the youth this year grow and stretch their wings. They are an extraordinary group of young people, overflowing with talents, and full of personality. It is wonderful to see them develop these amazing characteristics in ways that contribute to the body of Christ and edify our worship time together. They enrich us with their youthful zeal and their love of the Gospel. One such occasion was the campfire the Builders organized and led at the Saints' summer camping trip. It is on occasions like this that their individual personalities shine through as they choose their favorite fun and worshipful songs to share with all of their church family. One of my favorite parts of their offering was the thoughtful way they included the Lambs and gave opportunity for them to sing one of their favorite songs, "Ain't No Rock"...which they did with exuberance! The Builders have come a long way in the process of learning what it takes to skillfully lead a campfire (as it is more difficult than it may appear) and to work with one another for a finished product that, first and foremost, brings honor and glory to the Lord. Their desires to this end have yielded marvelous fruit as they have ministered to all of us through the cultivation of these qualities.

As the summer was drawing to a close, the Builders got together for another campfire! This time the focus was on preparing for the school year ahead. Sister Cessaries led this campfire, and they were able to relax and enjoy the time of fellowship and worship. It is always a joy to hear the angelic voices of the girls and the resonant voices of the boys as they come together to worship the Lord. Brother Gary joined us as well, and led the youth in a prayer service in preparation for the coming school year. He encouraged them to always do their best in everything they do, that it all might be done for the glory of God. He also discussed ways to be a light to those around them and to intentionally seek out those who may be lonely and not have many friends. I know the Lord cares for them very much and is always aware of their needs and the desires of their hearts, and I know that He does and will continue to bless them as they seek to honor and obey Him in all they do.



## Recent Activities for the Builders and Climbers

*by Sister Karlina Murnieks*

The youth of the church are always blessed with many opportunities to gather together for fun fellowship and insightful learning. Recently, we have had a few very exciting activities. In the beginning of December, the Builders and Climbers met together for the annual Christmas party. We decorated Christmas cookies to be taken to Simonka; this was a fun way to spread the love of Christ to some of our dear sisters in need during the holiday season. We also had a gift exchange and shared dinner together. After these more light-hearted activities were over we sang some Christmas hymns together and Brother Kevin read various parts of the Christmas story from the scriptures to bring us into remembrance of the most wonderful gift that we have ever been given, Jesus Christ.



Towards the middle of January, we were able to gather once again, this time to talk about our goals for the coming year. We opened the letters that we had written to ourselves at our New Years party last year. This was very exciting, and it was enlightening to see how we had changed and grown over the course of the year. Next, we wrote letters to ourselves to be opened next year. I enjoyed this part, it is exciting and also scary to think about where we will be in a year, but we are always reminded that with our eyes on our Savior our future is secure, no matter what it holds. Following this the youth commission shared some of their hopes for the coming year and we were able to talk about the ways in which we want to grow as a youth group over the course of 2018.

Finally, our most recent activity took place on February 3 when we were able to go ice-skating together. This was a fun time of fellowship and I enjoyed this opportunity to grow closer to my brothers and sisters in the Lord. Each of them has such a beautiful and unique personality, and I can't wait to see what we can become for the Lord throughout the course of this year.



### Local Business Meeting

Please support the following officers which were elected or appointed September 24th at the local business meeting:

|                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Pastor:               | Elder Brian Herren       |
| Counselors to Pastor: | Elder Gary Livingston    |
|                       | Priest Jim Clark         |
| Local Treasurer:      | Priest Jim Clark         |
| Local Secretary:      | Sister Deanne Murnieks   |
| Local Recorder:       | Sister Melissa Herren    |
| Youth Commission:     | Sister Maddy Clark       |
|                       | Sister Cessaries Galusha |
|                       | Sister Lisa Dukes        |

### Regional Business Meeting

Please support the following officers which were elected or appointed October 7th at the regional business meeting:

|                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Regional Coordinator:         | Elder Brian Herren       |
| Counselors:                   | Elder Brian Moreland     |
|                               | Elder Gary Jones         |
| Regional Youth Director:      | Teacher Kevin Herren     |
| Regional Women's Director:    | Sister Suzy Herren       |
| Regional Treasurer:           | Priest Jim Clark         |
| Regional Secretary:           | Sister Melissa Herren    |
| Regional Music Director:      | Sister Cessaries Galusha |
| Church School Director:       | Sister Deanne Murnieks   |
| Regional Activities Director: | Elder Jeff Rew           |



## Church Building Fund Garage Sale

*by Sister Dorothy Herren*

Planning for this year's garage sale started 2 years ago, when all the leftovers from the previous sales were put into storage. The dates for the sale were chosen (July 20, 21, 22), and the location set (the Scuito's garage). By Wednesday the items in storage were moved to the Scuitos' garage, tables were delivered or built and pricing of items commenced.

Traci was the Garage Sale Foreman organizing where each item was to be placed, while her minions Steve, Ron and Dorothy shuffled dozens of boxes, unpacked and made sure all sale items had price tags firmly affixed. Thanks to additional donations from many church members our inventory was increased and the variety of items available for purchase was richly enhanced.

We couldn't have asked for nicer weather; sunny and hot with a slight breeze. Sales were brisk throughout the three days, and thanks to Traci's pricing expertise we were able to sell items that might otherwise have been unsellable. Church members visited throughout the sale for enjoyable dialog, creative bargaining and some stepped in and helped when workers lunches were overdue (thanks Gary).

After all the bills and change were counted, \$618.25 was turned over to Jim Clark to be added to the Church Building Fund. Additionally, all the leftovers from this sale were donated to local charities. It is gratifying to be part of an event like this, not only does it increase our church funds, but it allows us to fellowship in a relaxed atmosphere.

## Annual Church Picnic

*by Brother Jim Clark*

On a hot sultry day over thirty Saints joined together for our annual congregational picnic. Abundant food was combined with fun and fellowship for an enjoyable afternoon. We seemingly are always blessed with delicious casseroles, salads, and desserts. Hamburgers and hot dogs rounded out our menu, while the very hot weather afforded opportunity to play and fellowship in the beautiful outdoors.

With water balloons, basketball, volleyball, and children's play equipment many were able to enjoy various activities. Charles and Deanne Murnieks proved that their team work and fast footedness were supreme, as they won a challenge to deliver a water balloon without using their hands, as well as a water balloon toss. While several of the children found it just as fun to break water balloons over each other's head.

Gary Livingston once again attracted the attention of many having done nothing to warrant being singled out as usual. While sitting quietly in his chair, he found several threatening him with water balloons. While his middle daughter threw a water balloon half heartedly in his direction, and his son seemingly lacking the nerve to throw a water balloon at him, Gary was blasted with a direct shot to the head by one of the Saint's whom shall remain nameless. His youngest daughter was probably not his favorite that day. Just merely an observation.

It was great to get to relax and fellowship one with another, and have a chance to discover "a little different side" of our brothers and sisters. Getting to know some better, while an opportunity to just spend more time with others. Surely we were blessed by strong bonds and breaking bread with one another. We praise and glorify our Heavenly Father in all we do, in times of solemnity and times of joy, in the beauty of His creation and the bounty of His blessings.



## Ladies Relief Society Progressive Dinner

*by Sister Trina Herren*

Sometimes I stand at the pantry wondering what to make for dinner, I think many others have done just the same from time to time. 12 of the women from the Salem congregation came together for fellowship and food in a progressive dinner. It was so wonderful not to wonder what to make for dinner, dishes to clean afterward or even how much of the food ended up in places it shouldn't belong. No counters to wipe down or leftovers to put away, we were truly treated like royalty and given a great opportunity to rest, eat as much as we wanted of the exquisite food lovingly prepared for us, and fellowship with my sisters. It really was a great relief to my soul and a wonderful reminder of how much we are loved and how much God loves each one of His children. The night started out with taco cups then we moved to another house for stuffed mushrooms and spinach cheese balls. Afterward we were treated to salad with a wide variety of toppings including shrimp and some super yummy bread. Our fourth stop was the main course where we were treated to chicken scampi with angel hair pasta. The fifth and final stop was desert. Oh man.... The deserts were so fancy and so amazingly delicious that I think I speak for all who attended in saying that it was so much more than we could have ever asked for. With our belly's full and several to-go boxes later, we parted ways to take our final rest for the night among our many different homes. Thank you doesn't quite say how I feel to have been a part of such a wonderful evening. I enjoyed every moment, every loving prayer offered by the men we love so dearly, and every laugh we were able to share.



## Lambs Litter Patrol Puddle Walk

*by Sister Cessaries Galusha*



## 2017 Christmas Caroling

*by Sister Cessaries Galusha*

On December 22nd, the congregation gathered at Brian and Melissa's new home for an exciting time of singing praises of our Savior's birth down the streets of Zionit, and also to collect food to give to the Marion/Polk County Food Share for those in need. We were very cheered on such a cool and rainy night, by the warm and beautiful lights and love that filled the home. We gathered our provisions of sandwiches and snacks before embarking on our journey.

Many of the saints had been cycling through the bout of influenza that plagued the countryside, but we did our best to sing anyway. Sharing the love of Christ to the neighborhood in any kind of weather is a joy worth experiencing, with plenty of fellowship included.



We concluded our caroling by stopping at Ron and Dorothy's home, and they invited everyone in for delicious cocoa and a warm fire! It was fully as enjoyable as the old tales of Christmases long, long ago, missing only the sleigh on snow covered hills. These moments are precious to remember, and let us not take for granted even the small ways great blessings come to us. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!