

PULSE OF THE CONGREGATION

January | February | March | April

Upcoming Events

June 12-14: Preaching Series
 July 3-5: Congregational Camp
 Aug 3-9: NW Regional Reunion
 Aug 9-14: Regional Youth Camp
 Men's Retreat: September 18-20
 Women's Retreat: November 6-8

Pastoral Update

These are wonderful days in which to live, but unforeseen circumstances occasionally require our flexibility and resilience in serving the Lord. While the Saints have been required to revisit traditions, expectations, and future plans, the Lord has been working in the lives of us all. He has allowed our faith to be tried, and we are learning more about ourselves, those around us, and the world in which we live. The Lord has brought healing and comfort, and shown forth His power in reminding us of those principles



important to the building of His kingdom. In many ways, the less virtuous elements of man's nature, and the more tenuous nature of man's kingdoms, have been exposed. The Lord continues to build His kingdom, the Adversary continues to oppose it, and men give their strength to the one or the other. Times of hardship tend to clarify our vision of this, and remind us that only the Kingdom of God will remain in the end. Those who have invested their trust in worldly strongholds may have been shaken, disappointed, and sorely troubled, but it is not too late to refocus our allegiance and commit more fully to the Cornerstone that will never fail. I am grateful for so many blessings that have come in recent days, and for the renewed awareness of how fragile the systems of men are, and how much we depend daily on the the Lord of our salvation. Perhaps we have become increasingly aware of our reliance upon Him, and His ability to supply our needs, both in life and in death. We have a Rock upon which we are built, a sure foundation that never fails, a very present help in times of trouble. As a body, we have had to make temporary adjustments to our collective worship. The Women's Retreat has been moved to November, and the Men's Retreat has replaced the Priesthood Retreat in September. Let us be patient in these circumstances. In time, we will see that God is glorified in this matter, as we prefer tenderness and forbearance to less virtuous feelings. For now, let us be peacemakers amongst the brethren, showing our joy in times of trial, with self discipline and a perfect brightness of hope in the sweet reunion that inevitably awaits us.

The Lord Calls Brother Travis Clark

In December of 2019, Elder Brian Herren announced that the Lord had called Brother Travis Clark to the office of Deacon, having received that call by divine revelation. The calling had been presented to both of Brother Brian's counselors who had confirmed the divinity by their own testimonies. The calling had been presented to Brother Travis, who sought for and received his own witness, and accepted the call accordingly. A business meeting was held on January 5, 2020 wherein Brother Brian detailed his testimony and gave voice to the congregation. Several stood in affirmation to bear their own testimony, not only of the call, but of how the Lord had also revealed to them the very office to which Travis would be ordained. Two of those testimonies are presented here. The body consented unanimously and Travis was ordained to the office of Deacon on February 9, 2020 at the hands of his father, Priest Jim Clark, and the pastor of the Salem branch, Elder Brian Herren.



Travis Clark Being Ordained to Deacon

And he shewed not himself unto them, until after they had faith in him; wherefore, it must needs be that some had faith in him, for he shewed himself not unto the world. But because of the faith of men, he has shewn himself unto the world, and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that thereby others might be partakers of the heavenly gift, that they might hope for those things which they have not seen; Wherefore ye may also have hope, and be partakers of the gift, if ye will but have faith.
-Ether 5: 8-10

Travis Clark Called to Deacon

Being given the gift of a son I watched him grow up over the years. I was aware of a testimony which Brian Herren had received in Kirtland concerning Travis, but it had been eight years and had faded to the back of my mind. Even as life continues to unwind so many things come and so many go. Travis had begun his own life, being blessed with a wife and a child on the way. It was then that I was prompted to notice many changes burgeoning within Travis. I was pleased as a father to see him responding in such a manner unto his family, his Brothers and Sisters in Christ, and most importantly unto his Heavenly Father. Now it was during this time that I was given to know he was called to the Priesthood and unto the office of Deacon. Being thrilled by this knowledge, and not being one to keep things to myself, I wanted so much to share this with others. However I also being Travis's father, did not wish to influence, or be in any way an instigator of this God-given conferment. So I shared this with no one, not one soul, not even my wife. Being keenly aware many times I was tempted to say something, but for several months I kept my peace. You can only imagine my relief and joy as my Brother Brian revealed this call he had received unto me. The validity of that which had been manifested and foretold, but now was being brought forth and affirmed. With liberty, I could now share this wonderful blessing with my family and others. Recognizing the perfect timing and perfect wisdom of our God. If we will with patience serve him, respecting His power and authority, He so graciously provides that which is necessary for the day. It was interesting as well as I remembered my own call to the office of Deacon. Travis being of the same age, with a son of the same age, and it coming forth the same month of the year. There is much we do not know, but we see time and again that our Heavenly Father is from the beginning through eternity aware of us, and we need only to place our faith and trust in Him!

By Brother Jim Clark



Testimony of a Priesthood Call

By Sister Dorothy Herren

While sitting in the quiet of our cozy little sanctuary one Sunday morning, about a year and a half before Brother Travis Clark's call to the priesthood, I was praying and meditating. My prayers weren't directed in a specific way until they were turned toward our priesthood. That made me think about when and if any of the men in our church would be called to be ordained. The thought no more entered my mind when my head was almost forcefully turned to the other side of the sanctuary to rest on Brother Travis, and these words were impressed upon me "he is next".

I didn't relate this to anyone, but kept it in my heart and waited for some other revelation to come about. Nearly a year later, while sitting in church, for a second time my head was compelled to turn towards Brother Travis and the word "Deacon" was impressed upon my mind.



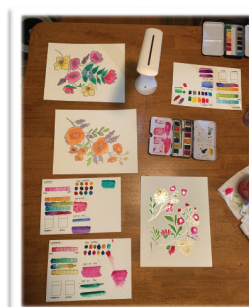
Imagine my joy and excitement when I was asked to place in the Sunday Bulletin for December 22, 2019, the notice of a business meeting to consider Brother Travis' call to the priesthood, specifically to the office of Deacon.

God reveals wondrous things to each and every one of us. We need only listen and wait on His timing for them to be fulfilled.

Ladies Relief Society Fellowship

By Sister Cessaries Galusha

For the start of the new year of our Lord, 2020, the Ladies Relief Society decided to find new ways of fellowship and growing together. Besides monthly meetings and scheduled activities to aid in service where we may, the women planned one evening each month to gather for study and crafts. Alternating every other month, one evening is spent learning new skills, such as painting in water colors, and another evening for studying the women of the scriptures. All who were interested and available purchased the book, Women of the Bible by Ann Spangler and Jean E. Syswerda. The first meeting together was spent discussing the daily devotionals and discussion questions surrounding the events in the scriptures. For the next study gathering, some new recipes will be tried and we will also get to share in a potluck meal together! What a joy it is to spend such time with sisters in the Lord.



Worship Services in Trying Times

By Brother Ron Herren

These are difficult and trying times that we are living in today. With the spread of the Covid-19 virus things began to change in extraordinary ways. I think many Americans believe that we are immune to these kinds of situations and circumstances. We are not! It didn't take long to feel the effects as limitation in the movements of our society increased.

Two of the ways that impacted Dorothy and I the greatest were being separated from our families and not being able to gather and worship regularly, as we have in the past. We felt a great amount of sorrow as we contemplated these things. Then came GREAT news, Sunday Sermons and Wednesday Evening Prayer Services were going to be available through Zoom. Our spirits were lifted in anticipation. As we prepared, through prayer and fasting, we were very anxious to see what the Zoom gatherings would bring. They brought hope and peace through our Savior Jesus Christ. It has been such a blessing to be able to gather and worship, albeit electronically, with the saints from around the world. We have gained strength and comfort from the prayers and testimonies of the Saints, and have truly been blessed by the Sunday Morning messages from our Priesthood.

When these trying times pass, and they will, we will look back and reflect that the things that we needed most, to worship our Lord and pray with the Saints, were accomplished and that the Lord blessed us richly.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. -John 8:12



Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. -Isaiah 45:22

Cards to Brighten Someone's Day

By Sister Maddy Clark

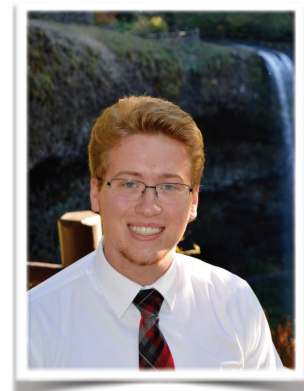
As a little girl, I loved to write letters and make cards for my family and friends, almost as much as I liked receiving mail from others. With this, and memories of my grandparents' appreciation for letters/cards, I led Caleb and Elizabeth in a card making activity in January. I set out white construction paper and some markers and set them to work. Each child made one card to be mailed to either John and Pat Henderson or Bill and Nancy Curtis. Once they were done drawing on their cards, Michael and I helped them to come up with some encouraging and friendly words to be written on the inside. Afterwards, the two Lambs swapped cards and signed them. It was a brief activity, but fun to see how the littlest of our youth think. "What are their favorite colors? What do they like? Do you think they like purple?" The questions were endless, and unfortunately I didn't have any answers, but I was able to assure them that it didn't really matter what color the hearts were or if the flowers were perfectly realistic. I told them that the saints would be glad of the kind words and the bright colors, especially as the letters were unexpected. It was a fun activity and hopefully a reminder that even the smallest of us can do something kind for



Builders Movie Night

By Brother Michael Livingston

On January 31st we had a movie night with the youth. I remember as a youth I always loved movie nights. It was nice to hang out with friends that were a part of the church. And to have a good discussion about the movie that we watched. For this activity we watched Ben-Hur. It was based in the time of Jesus where a Jew Prince was falsely accused and was sent to be a slave for the Roman Empire. The movie follows his life as a slave and then ultimately following Jesus. The movie had lessons of love and forgiveness. It also showed a lot of what life was like back in that time, which we don't often think about. We had a good time fellowshiping with the youth over the movie and also dinner. After the movie we had a good discussion over the lessons of the movie. We all look forward to the next time we can meet together again to fellowship with the youth.



Encouragement to the Youth

By The Youth Commission

These are troubling times before us. A lot of uncertainty in the world. But this is not a time where we should be fearful but a time to strengthen our relationship with God. In the well familiar scripture, which is also a camp song, James 1:2-3 says "My Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into many afflictions; Knowing this, that the trying of our faith worketh patience." We need to be thankful in all things. Below are words of encouragement by us, the Youth Commission. We hope these words bring comfort to you which is only found in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God bless.

To the Youth,

I would first like to tell you that I miss you! It isn't the same not seeing you each week, even though we may have seen each other in passing once or twice. I miss our activities, the laughter, the teasing, and even reminding you guys to stop picking on each other. My prayer is that we will soon be back together again, but because I do not know how long "soon" will be, I would like to leave you with a few words.

This is an unusual time. It may seem fun, because you don't have to go to school, or boring, because you can't see your friends or go shopping. Strange because when you go to Dutch Brothers they don't give you stamps on your stamp card and can't hand you your drink directly.

Think of this time not just as a time to be able to see your family more than you may usually, but as a time to strengthen your relationship with God. We may not be able to meet on the second Thursday of every month for Youth Nights, but you can meet with your families in your home. You can share with them, study with them, and learn with them. You can spend this time in prayer and in thanksgiving for the abundance that we have been given, even now. You have the ability to do this without worry or fear, without a second thought. We are called to be lights in this world. I also encourage you, the Youth, to reach out to those around you who seem in need of encouragement or uplifting. Write letters, send emails, call, text, FaceTime or Zoom. Leave notes or small gifts on the porches of your friends and family (like the lily Travis and I found on our doorstep before Easter). Give the homeless care packages or your favorite scripture written on a piece of paper or a five dollar bill. There are so many now who are in need of some kind words, a scripture, or a written prayer. A reminder of the hope and the refuge we can find in our Heavenly Father.

May God be with you until we meet again.



Maddy Clark

Encouragement to the Youth

By The Youth Commission

Youth of The Church,

Though people today live in uncertainty and fear, wandering day-to-day what the next will bring, one thing is certain and forever true: Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior and will one day return to this earth. Never forget the love that Christ has for you and His desire for you to seek and follow Him.

There are many problems in the world right now and it is very easy for us to get caught up in the fray. We can become angry and upset because the life we were comfortable with has been changed or fearful and worried for what tomorrow may bring. We can also be happy, joyful, loving and kind because we have an unshakable bond and faith in Christ that gives us peace and hope. One of the founders of jazz, Duke Ellington said: "a problem is a chance for you to do your best". At this time in our lives, are we going to be like the rest of the world or are we going to be the best we can for Christ? Believe it or not, the beauty of conflict, adverseness or problems is that they can bring forth great blessings. Things like microwave ovens, superglue, Duct tape and penicillin are all the result of inventions that were created because of discoveries made during wars of the 20th century. Perhaps a few blessings that can come from the problems we are facing right now are a chance to grow closer to Christ through studying and prayer with more free time we have and greater opportunity to share His gospel with friends and strangers who may be more willing to listen now than before.

Things may seem dark in this world. Things may seem dark in your life. One light, one spark can make a difference. Now, more than ever before in your life, it is important to let the light of Jesus Christ in you shine! Reignite that fire in your soul and fan the flames so it grows strong and mighty. Let that fire burn so hot, so bright, so intense that it can be seen by all. Let your countenance be so different that people feel they must ask you "why are you so happy, why do you have joy in times like these"? Youth, never forget the hope that we have in Christ and that He will return and establish His Father's Kingdom here one day. Never forget the love that Christ has for each one of you. Never forget the love that He has for your friends, families and even the stranger on the street. Though our ship may be sailing through a storm upon the ocean now, I assure you we will safely reach dry land. As the song goes, "Troubles come and go, even on the mountain high or valley low. Never let your faith go, never let your faith go. We Gon' Be Alright".



Travis Clark

Encouragement to the Youth

By The Youth Commission

Youth,

It has been a long time since we have met together. I miss you guys and our youth activities a lot! I also miss seeing you guys at church. You all have been in my thoughts and prayers. I do hope that all of you have been well.

You have heard that these are very different times. A lot of people are scared of what is going on in the world. People are unsure of what is going to happen. I am unsure of what is going to happen, but I do know that God's plan is perfect. We might not understand why this is happening, but we need to trust and have faith in God. I don't know if you guys know this about me, but I really like bees, in particular honey bees. They are really cool insects and I can see a lot of similarities between them and us. Just like us, they work to provide for their home. And some of those hives have a beekeeper. The beekeepers job is to look after the hive and care for it. They go visit the hive often and open it up to make sure all the combs and bees are healthy. To the bees, they don't see a beekeeper who cares about them but they see someone tearing apart their home. They don't understand what is going on. They try to fight back. But after a while, they start to trust the beekeeper and they don't fight back. Even though they don't understand why he is taking apart their home, they just trust that it's for the best. The beekeeper sees the bigger picture for the hive, the bees do not. Just like us, our world might seem to be falling apart, but God's plan is perfect and He knows what is best for us even if we don't understand. We have to trust in God always.

God loves us so very much. And we need to be thankful for all things. If you are like me, you might have realized there were a lot of things we take for granted. And I have learned that we can never take anything for granted. We need to always be thankful.



I love you guys. We, the youth commission, love you. And you guys will be in our prayers. Keep fighting the good fight of faith.

Michael Livingston

