

# PULSE OF THE CONGREGATION

July | August | September | October

## Upcoming Events

Nov 5: LRS Progressive Dinner

Nov 10, Dec 8: Youth nights

Nov 18, 19, 25, 26, Dec 2, 3:  
Wreath Making

Dec 16: Youth Christmas Party

## Local Officers 2023

Pastor: Brian Herren

Counselors:

Gary Livingston, Jim Clark

Treasurer: Jim Clark

Secretary: Dorothy Herren

Recorder: Melissa Clark

Youth Commission: Amos, Melissa  
Johnson, Michael Livingston

## Regional Officers '23

Regional Director: Brian Herren

Counselors:

Mike Terry, Gary Jones

Treasurer: Travis Clark

Secretary: Melissa Herren

Youth Director: Travis Clark

Women's Director: Dianna Clark

Church School: Melissa Johnson

Music Director: Cessaries Galusha

Activities Director: Michael  
Livingston

## Born Again!

*By Brother Brian Herren*

From the beginning, men have been taught that the way to enter the Kingdom of God is through baptism, and the way to inherit the kingdom is to keep the commandments. Adam was instructed, "Even so ye must be born again, into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit..."

Nephi described repentance and baptism as the gate by which men should enter into the straight path: "For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water: and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost."

After His resurrection, and before His ascension, Jesus Christ encouraged His Apostles with some of His last words to them: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen."

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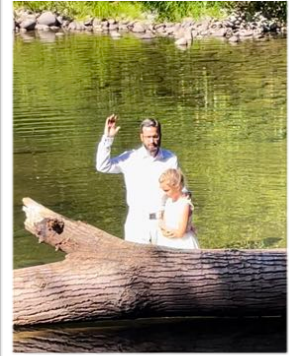
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When the men of Israel heard Peter's testimony of Christ, they were pricked in their hearts, and asked, "what shall we do"? The answer was direct: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ..."

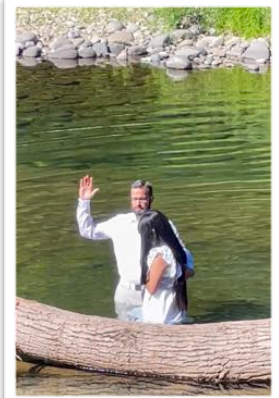
We have received commandment: "And He commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they can not be saved in the kingdom of God."

It is an honor and a privilege to have witnessed four souls heed the words of eternity, embrace the fullness of the gospel, and enter the Kingdom of God through baptism on August 22, 2022. The service was held near the convergence of Roaring River and Crabtree Creek in Scio, Oregon. Rochele Allen and Kevin Allen

were baptized with their mother, Sheila Allen. The Allen family immigrated from the Philippines and are neighbors of Brian and Melissa Herren. The family had been receiving regular cottage meetings from Brother Brian Herren and Brother Jim Clark, and have been active participants in many church activities. Elizabeth Herren, the youngest daughter of Brother Kevin and Sister Trina, was also baptized, showing an excellent understanding and a clear commitment to the Lord. Elder Brian Herren baptized the four in water, and was joined by Elder Gary Livingston as they were confirmed. Brother Gary Livingston preached the baptismal service and Brother Brian preached the confirmation service on the same day.



We feel assured that our Heavenly Father looks on with joy as the ancient and primitive gospel is maintained in these latter days, the ordinances observed as prescribed in scripture, and the hearts of men continue to bend toward God in Christ. May we keep these four new members of the church in prayer, and remember the covenant each one of us has made, that we might continue to enjoy the promised gift of His Holy Spirit, and have it to be with us always through unyielding obedience to His commandments.



We will not soon forget the blessings of that day, as heaven and earth seemed to touch for a time, that all might share in the decision of Elizabeth, Kevin, Rochele, and Sheila, to commit themselves to serve God and keep His commandments, becoming new creatures through the remission of their sins. As the newest members of the Church, they are welcomed with joy into the sweet fellowship and precious bonds of the body of Christ. Let us continue to uphold one and all in love. We are family.

## United As One

*By Brother Jim Clark*

After a few relationships failed because of Melissa's beliefs, particularly in the Book of Mormon, I prayed a young man might be brought into her life who would not only love and honor her but would also accept her beliefs. Certainly, it is much easier to compromise oneself, than to stand up for that which is right in the face of failure and loss of someone or something dear. I prayed that Melissa's courage and faith in righteousness could somehow lead her to fulfillment within her heart. About that same time, I was made aware that a group of young men would be visiting from the Independence, Missouri area during our Reunion. I knew Melissa had talked with a couple of these young men during Reunion, however found out several months later that she had continued to be in touch with one in particular, and that he would be returning to Salem to see her. It is then that I really met Amos Johnson, and over the course of the following year he and Melissa embarked on travel one here or one there every few weeks to see each other. After which Amos made the decision to relocate to Salem, with Dianna and I being blessed to have him stay in our home. A few months passed and Amos asked for Melissa's hand in marriage, now I was fully aware how our Heavenly Father had brought these two together and had miraculously answered so many prayers in the process.



From that point on an eight-month whirlwind ensued. I lacked the understanding of just how much is required in time, effort, planning, and finances to bring a successful wedding to fruition. None the less with a lot of help from many, including being blessed divinely as well, Melissa and Amos were joined in holy matrimony on the 9th day of July of this year. The venue alone was challenging, as after a two-year covid caused wedding pause, it seemed every venue was already booked for the summer of 2022. Yet Gallon House Farms fell into our laps, with the desired date available, and turned out to be quite a blessing. Following were flowers, wedding dress, photographer, catering, decorations, donuts, invitations, the list just goes on and on. A hexagon theme was made manifest which represented not only a strong continuous union, but also was consistent with the meaning of the bride's name being "honey bee". A simple but elegant decor, a beautiful outdoor setting, complete with five lovely attendants of the bride, and five handsome groomsmen complimented the couple on their special day. Brian Herren officiated, as the groom in a gray suit and the bride in a stunning wedding dress lovingly said their vows. Blessed by many family members and friends from not only Missouri, but five other states as well, the bride and groom were supported and surrounded by the love which emanates from our Heavenly Father through His Holy Spirit. As the sun began to fade, they drove off into their future together united as one, supported by many.

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We can only marvel at the tender mercies of our God, how He is intricately aware of every one of His children. How He does provide in great measure, and even though weddings are common, yet each is a special remembrance of His goodness, and His covenant which He has extended unto all. We joy in this union, express our great gratitude unto all who helped with, and attended, looking forward to the lives He has joined together. As the video to "Saturday Sun" depicts, may the new husband and wife live happily ever after, supporting one another in love and gospel bonds until the sunset falls upon their life together.



## Youth Service Projects

*By Brother Michael Livingston*

One of the great things that the youth are able to do in their activities are serving people. It is a great way to help our youth to have more of a serving and caring heart. This year we had a service project where we went to do some park clean up. We went to Bush park. That particular day was a little rainy. But no matter, the job must be done. The kids brought their rain coats and umbrellas and went to work. To add a little more fun, we broke the youth up into two teams, a girl team and a boy team. One category of this competition was to see which team could find the most trash. The other category was to see who would find the coolest trash item. There was a little bit of a dispute at the end on who won the most trash picked up but the judges decided on the girls. The boys, however, won with the coolest item found.

Another service project we had was making care packages for the homeless. We brought some food, water and toiletry items together and filled baggies to give out to the people who are in

need. We also wrote words of encouragement on cards to bring a smile to the faces of those who will receive these bags. It is so wonderful to see the youth serve in these different ways. No matter how old or how young you are, you can always do your part in serving others.



## Lambs on the Water

*By Brother Aaron Dukes*

On July 6th of 2022, the younger youth (the Lambs) of the Salem congregation of the Pacific Northwest branch were blessed to be able to take a kayaking trip on Mission Lake at Willamette Mission State Park. They were accompanied by guests who greatly enriched our trip with their presence.

The weather we were given on the planned day of the trip was wonderful, and it was conducive to enjoying time out on the water. Upon arrival, we also learned we would be sharing the lake with several fishermen. Both on shore and out on boats, they were infinitely patient with us and gave warm welcome. The youth did an admirable job navigating around their lines and learned quickly to be respectful of our fellows as we all shared in the bounty of natural beauty we had been provided.

Although there were enough boats for everyone who wished to captain their own vessel, the girls decided they preferred to go out together on the tandem which was brought. It's always a tough decision between wanting the companionship of your friends and desiring the freedom of your own boat. But in the end one of the kayaks was unnecessary.

Mission Lake is a calm and placid body, and much of it is therefore covered in algae and weeds. This provided a more challenging navigation hazard than the fishermen, and several of the youth quickly found themselves bogged down and had trouble freeing themselves. It was a careful balance, as when out in clear water near the center of the lake they had much greater control. But they also were capable of much higher speed, and this speed often found them drifting into a patch of weeds faster than they could turn themselves.

During lunchtime, Elizabeth opened proceedings and spearheaded the creation of a veritable Wall Street of trading and sharing. Much bounty was enjoyed by all. There were even cookies! Caleb also introduced the group to cucumbers seasoned with Tajin.

At the end of the day, the group came together to help each other. The more agile youth were quick to climb onto the pier and assist the others with disembarking, while the adults waded into the water to hold boats steady. The youth also all took turns attempting the challenge of lifting one end of the tandem kayak - by far the heaviest craft. It was treated as a right of passage to carry it for at least a little while, and this writer was certainly grateful for the assistance.

At the end of the day, while we were all tired from the excursion it was time to load all of the kayaks onto the vehicles and secure them in place. We had many wonderful conversations while enjoying each other's fellowship, including musings on the scale of the universe and proper kayak paddling technique. But I for one was happy to return home to enjoy cooler temperatures and a little rest.

## Congregational Camping Weekend

*By Sister Cessaries Galusba*

Once again, our congregation gathered for a weekend away from the bustle of the world to enjoy time in the marvelous creation of God. Foster Lake has so much to admire and appreciate, from open area where our tents all line up and we enjoy the field for play and campfires, to the lake for fishing, boating and tubing. Even though the weekend was scheduled for later September, we had perfectly warm weather and no rain.



In addition to the beautiful surroundings, Adam and Honey Brendel also joined us from Missouri and what blessings their fellowship brought! They introduced us to their little daughter, Charity, and she was a delight to us all. The children and youth always add so much to our experience together, and we praise God for them.

Worship included campfire services and Sunday morning preaching and singing. Elder Adam Brendel gave the spoken word and the Lord truly blessed his ministry for all the hearers. It was good to have our brother and sister among us again to worship together. One cannot acknowledge or bring praise enough for the might blessings God grants unto us. The peace, beauty, serenity and love we find in Christ we also find in all of His works, wherever we go. May we always remember and keep Him close in our hearts, for He never leaves us.

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## Canticle of the Sun

*By Francis of Assisi*

Most high, all powerful, all good Lord! All praise is yours, all glory, all honor, and all blessing. To you, alone, Most High, do they belong. No mortal lips are worthy to pronounce your name.

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars; in the heavens you have made them, precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and clouds and storms, and all the weather, through which you give your creatures sustenance.

Be praised, My Lord, through Sister Water; she is very useful, and humble, and precious, and pure.

Be praised, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you brighten the night. He is beautiful and cheerful, and powerful and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Be praised, my Lord, through those who forgive for love of you; through those who endure sickness and trial. Happy those who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they will be crowned.

Be praised, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whose embrace no living person can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Happy those she finds doing your most holy will. The second death can do no harm to them.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give thanks, and serve him with great humility.

## Great Lakes Reunion

*By Sister Melissa Herren*

In July Brian and I had the opportunity to travel to Michigan and attend the Great Lakes Regional Reunion. We left at 11:00 pm our time after Sunday evening class in Salem, and arrived at 6:00 am Eastern time. As soon as we arrived, we rented a car and headed to the reunion grounds held at Wesleyan Woods Camp near Vassar, Michigan. The Lord blessed us along the way, even though we were about 30 hours without sleep to begin the reunion. The drive was peaceful and the surrounding areas reminded us of Missouri. Once we arrived at the grounds we were greeted by the reunion director Elder Eric Eliason. We were provided with a wonderful cottage room to stay in (similar to a small hotel room) and enjoyed a much needed nap before the evening activities began. The theme for the reunion was "My People Will I Preserve." Guest ministry for the week were Elders Brian Mundy, Howard Parker and Brian Herren. The men rotated preaching and teaching assignments daily. The reunion was greatly attended with around 150 people. We were so warmly greeted and received by all the saints, we felt like family from the first day.

Our mornings started with family devotions that were led by a variety of individuals or families. The group of families that we joined ranged from young to old. Brian and I enjoyed seeing the sleepy faces of young boys that were anxiously looking forward to breakfast while we listened to the scriptures and discussions being shared.

After breakfast all joined together for a season of prayers and testimonies. It was so uplifting to hear their prayers and to hear how the Lord has blessed them in their lives. I know that God is good all the time and that He works in our lives. It was just such a ministry to me to hear the earnestness of their petitions and the joyful celebrations of God's blessings. After prayer service the group then divided by age for class time.

Lunch came next with a time for rest, relaxation, and recreation following. The reunion grounds were full of activities for young and old and there were also planned activities for all who wanted to participate, such as a corn hole tournament and family olympics. Tuesday through Thursday Elder Jay Havener taught in the afternoon.

Dinner was followed by evening preaching services. The services began with a time of singing and special music. The three visiting ministers took turns providing the sermons.

After evening services, old and young gathered around a roaring fire by one of the ponds for campfire led by Elder Todd Moses. I greatly enjoyed the campfires, laughing at the silly times, learning a few new songs, singing some old ones in a new way and just fellowshiping with the saints. The campfires ended with someone sharing a testimony or some words of encouragement and then a prayer.

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On Friday morning five men were baptized. Their ages ranged from newly eligible for baptism to late in life. It was a very warm morning with no breeze. We were blessed with beautiful ministries of music and the spoken word. What most blessed me during that service was the moment the first candidate was in the water and the man baptizing him rose his hand and started speaking, a refreshing wind started to blow and relieved the hot stillness of the morning. I was impressed upon that the Lord was greatly pleased with the service and was blessing us with His Spirit.

Brian and I truly enjoyed the meal times because we were able to visit and get to know many many people. I do have to say the younger ones were my favorite. Squirrely boys and slightly silly teen girls who started out shy and unsure soon started to call us over and ask us to sit with them. One of the girls, Dakota, painted us a picture and gave it to us on the last day. Their smiles and acts of kindness will remain with me always. One time when I was waiting for Brian to finish in a priesthood meeting a woman came to me and invited me to join her group and I truly enjoyed that time with those women as well.

Another one of our favorite things was how the people would describe where they live in Michigan. The state is roughly the shape of a mitten. During our meal times and getting to know people, we would ask where they were from. Every single person would raise their hand, keeping it in the shape of a mitten, and point on their hand to approximately where they lived in Michigan. Brian and I wished we had something easy like that for Oregon.

The week went by so quickly and soon it was Sunday and the services were over and we said our goodbyes. It was my desire that Brian and I would be able to see Lake Huron on our way to the airport. I had told Cory Eliason (Eric's wife) and asked for general advice on where to go and she offered for her family to take us. Their home was on the way so we were able to stop at their home for a bit and then followed them east toward the lake. We enjoyed about 30 minutes at Port Sanilac and were able to put our feet in the lake. The lake is so large that we could not see the other side. The water was warmer than our PNW lakes and streams and was a very pretty blue-green.

Brian and I are so so thankful that we were able to attend and provide ministry. We are looking forward to the day that we can attend again and see our church family in that portion of the vineyard.

