

BROTHER'S KEEPER

THE COMINGS AND GOINGS OF THE PACIFIC
NORTHWEST

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Regional Events 2017

- Women's Retreat: April 28-30
- Men's Retreat: May 19-21
- Summer Preaching Series: June 2-4
- Congregational Camping: July 7-9
- Reunion: July 24-July 30
- Youth Camp: July 30-Aug. 5
- Priesthood Retreat: Sept. 8-10

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Make Ready a People Prepared For the Lord

by Brother Brian Herren

"Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman;

If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." - Ezekiel 33:2-9

The scriptures are universal in the admonition to prepare. God's people are not to be idle, but to be diligently constrained to those tasks of highest election. Our work had ought to be the kingdom work, which lays up treasures in heaven, while bringing

heaven and earth closer together in the lives of those committed to the cause. In fact, the labor to which we commit ourselves had ought to bring heaven and earth so close together that the seeds which are sown in daily life bear fruit in both until the two become one. If we pray, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done" without actually working hard until both of these righteous desires are entirely realized in our individual lives, then we have surrendered a calling of God for a wish of the wanting. The gospel promises do not make us accomplished, they make us accountable. It is not a matter of idleness or urgency, as much as it is a matter of love for the Master. To the anxious, a sense of urgency gives impetus to motive, but all too often in Christian form, the sense of urgency is mistaken as the motive itself. The pious run about scared and scaring others without a real sense of the peace of the Kingdom come. To the idle, a willingness to wait without working is mistaken as patience and faithfulness in the Lord and complacency leaves us wasted. Neither spirit will do, the nervous or the idle. Only true purpose can save us from such vanity, and only a pure motive will serve a pure purpose.

Men need to be moved, but the children of God need to be moved by that which moves God. A genuine motive helps steer the work, and increases the likelihood that one will remain steadfast unto the very end. Only understanding what we are preparing for, and why, addresses this need.

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We must understand that we are preparing for a life with God that will last forever. The scriptures speak to "making ready a people prepared for the Lord". They are not preparing to survive an economic collapse. They are not preparing for famine or invasion or political dissolution. They are not preparing to withstand the judgments of God upon the wicked. They are not preparing to cope with life without modern convenience. They are not preparing to protect their goods against those that would rob them. They are preparing for a life with God that demands a cheerful willingness to forsake all ungodliness, deny every worldly lust, and keep every commandment of God forever. Preparing for the fall of Babylon because she shall fall may prompt us to come out of her, but it will keep us focused upon Babylon. Preparing for an existence in the courts of our Father will not only bring us out of Babylon, it will bring us into His Kingdom with an eye single to His glory. The difference may seem nuanced, but God has always made leaving as much about coming as going. In obedience to the gospel call, leaving the world should be a function of coming unto the Father. If we are preparing for a sanctified life with God, a godly motive will best serve our needs. We must not become so invested in the idea of preparation that preparation itself becomes the end, rather than the means, of a divine outcome. Preparation can become a religion, but it is not ours. Those in Christ should remember what we are doing and remember why.

Several impotent motives remain influential in the lives of Christians. Recognizing these motives as less virtuous than others is not equivalent to judging them lame, but any ideal less virtuous than man is capable of will leave us short in the end. The following four motives may move men, but they are incapable of bringing forth the enduring fruit of the kingdom:

Insufficient Motive #1: Preparing to save our lives from danger. While God is intimately interested in our wellbeing, He is not limited to a concern of mortal longevity, and neither should we be. Whether we live or die can never be as important as whether we have lived or died in Christ. To distinguish the natural desires of men from the eternal perspective of God, one need look no further than Peter's effort to dissuade Jesus from going to His death in Jerusalem. There is contrast between Peter's plea and Jesus' unshakeable peace in laying down His life for immortal causes. In strong language Peter told Jesus to abandon His intention and save His life, and with strong language, Jesus revealed that His perspective reaches far beyond a mortal existence. Perhaps the overemphasis of saving one's own mortal life seems an obvious failure of human thought, but it seems to be a motive which never tires in man. Even today, men are persuaded toward Zion by the allure of escape from harm's way, rather than the rich promises of spiritual life with Christ and His children in brotherly love.

The motive is not without some value, but it is insufficient to the cause of righteousness. Some shall gather to Zion by our love for it's King, in obedience to His commands, and by our desires for fellowship with the children of the Kingdom. They are not moved by fear, but by love.

"For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; or whosoever will save his life, shall be willing to lay it down for my sake; and if he is not willing to lay it down for my sake, he shall lose it." - Mark 8:37

Insufficient Motive #2: Preparing to maintain wealth in a new economy. In light of the prophecies foretelling the fall of Babylon, crafty Christians have developed schemes to shift their assets to prepare for an economy which no longer honors traditional currency. Men are admonished to buy gold, or silver, or platinum, or cattle, or fish, with the hopes of maintaining a form of wealth by which they might comfort themselves in a post-currency world. A combination of insufficient motive #1 and insufficient motive #2 finds men storing weapons and food, grain and clean water, so that they might outlast the unprepared and save that which can be bartered. So far short is this mindset from the honest ambitions of the pure in heart that these works will only serve to contrast the hearts of righteous and the hearts of the selfish. Men have laid up their treasures on earth, and locked their hearts in the prisons of the tangible.

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ..." - Philippians 3:8

Insufficient Motive #3: Preparing to avoid suffering. It is hard to imagine this was the motive of Christ when He left the glory of His Father to suffer on the cross, and if the motive was never in Christ, it must never be in His children. If our efforts are made today with a mind to avoid suffering tomorrow, we have both our cause and our end in ourselves. The Apostles had every opportunity to spare themselves the shame of the gospel, the poverty of discipleship, and the swords of the wicked. They took no such occasion, but with joy realized the promise of Christ that those who are faithful will be persecuted as was He, turned out of the synagogues, and suffer the loss of many a worldly possession. Jesus taught that His disciples should seek first the Kingdom of God, and that worldly possessions would not be lacking thereafter, but an honest study finds that those who have truly sought the Kingdom of God first have found very little need for any worldly possession thereafter. That which is added is given by those men who have caught the vision of stewardship, realizing that the opportunity to have less is an opportunity for another to have more.

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We might excuse ourselves in our excess by attributing our abundance to the Lord...for the purpose of blessing others, but our excuse begs an explanation for our decadence at present. Perhaps a part of our preparation is secretly devoted to ensuring that we will not suffer, but whatever part that is, is a part diminished in motive. A sobering exercise is to ask ourselves why we are doing that which we are doing. If ever the answer is rooted in our comfort, in our ease and in our pleasure, we can be sure that such a motive will strip us of the rich blessings God gives only through much tribulation. Are we preparing to be comfortable in the last days? The idea seems opposed to that revealed in the lives of the martyrs, in the determination of the Apostles, and in the sacrifice of our Lord.

"...exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."
- Acts 14:22

Insufficient Motive #4: Preparing because time is short. Immediately, the conscientious might ask, "...and what if it were not?" Is our desire to draw nearer to the Lord simply a function of the time in which we live? If we did not live in the last days, would we feel less urgency to draw nearer to the God who made us? If we knew that we had 1,000 years to live upon this earth, would we be satisfied to live any portion of it unlinked with the Lord? If so, then perhaps we are motivated by time more than love, which inversion of principle is expressed in hearts made hard. Where then is our motive when time is no more? There was once a man who served a mission in Africa soon after he was married. By the end of the appointed mission, it is said that he paced the floor in front of the door and longed dearly to be with his new wife again. He could not wait. His absence from her was more than he could bear. The young man's focus was entirely upon his bride, and he could think of nothing else than being in her arms, serving her needs, pleasing her with gifts, showing her honor, holding her hand, swinging with her in the front yard, and sharing her company every day of his life. He was urgently disposed to their reunion, but his urgency was not because the end of the world could come at any minute. His urgency was not because his life could be taken from him at any time. His urgency was because he realized that his life was nothing if it were not a life with her by his side always. Is this our motive in Christ...that we cannot bear the thought of being any more removed from Him than must be, for any longer than absolutely necessary? Is our urgency a function of time, or a function of love? If time, it is temporal and will not last, but if love, it is the greatest principle and the last great test of the Church. We should feel a great and overwhelming sense of urgency. Not because of the lateness of the hour, but because of our intolerable separation from One we love so much! This urgency moves the righteous in every generation, and is built upon that which is lasting: charity. It isn't that time is inconsequential. Amulek reminds us that this life is the only period of probation that we should expect of God: "For after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness, wherein there can be no labor performed." It isn't that time is inconsequential. It is the substance of opportunity. It is the supportive framework in which more spiritual impulses work, giving a second push to more honorable causes. In the end, charity moves that which is godly, leaving the urgency of time less persuasive than the urgency of love:



"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." - Deuteronomy 6:5-9

Perhaps the pinnacle of preparation is revealed in the mission given to John the Baptist in Luke 1:17. He was to prepare the people, and his mission was informed by the end to which he was to prepare them:

"And he shall go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord".

The spirit and power of Elias was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. That same spirit of Elias is promised to us in the last days. We may be making ready, and we may be preparing, but are we a people making ready to be prepared for the Lord?

Make Ready a People Prepared For the Lord

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Let us consider the following as a region this year:

1) We must prepare to live forever with a perfect God, whose ways are perfect, whose words are perfect, whose laws are perfect, and whose works are perfect. This will require us to make changes and we should make them now. We must move toward perfection in principle and practice until we more closely resemble the Christ in whose image we are made, bearing record of God and His Only Begotten in form and function. We are preparing for the day when heaven and earth are one, and we must live each day in a way that brings them together now.

-AND-

2) We must do it because we love God so much that a life in Him is the only acceptable end for us, having developed an abiding adoration that will move us to the ends of the earth to please Him. We must love that which He loves and hate that which He hates, because He is in us, and greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

Pacific Northwest
Regional Theme for 2017:

Make Ready a People
Prepared for the Lord!

“Have ye walked, keeping yourselves blameless before God?

Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble?

That your garments have been cleansed and made white, through the blood of Christ, who will come to redeem his people from their sins?

Behold, are ye stripped of pride? I say unto you, If ye are not, ye are not prepared to meet God.

Behold ye must prepare quickly, for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand, and such an one hath not eternal life.

Behold, I say, Is there one among you who is not stripped of envy?

I say unto you, that such an one is not prepared, and I would that he should prepare quickly, for the hour is close at hand, and he knoweth not when the time shall come; for such an one is not found guiltless.

And again I say unto you, Is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother, or that heapeth upon him persecutions?

Wo unto such an one, for he is not prepared, and the time is at hand that he must repent, or he can not be saved; Yea, even wo unto all ye workers of iniquity; repent, repent, for the Lord God hath spoken it.

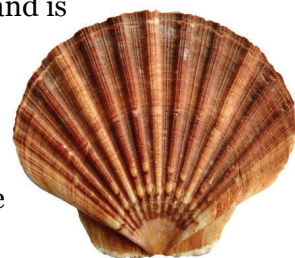
Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men; for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith, Repent, and I will receive you; Yea, he saith, Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely;

Yea, come unto me and bring forth works of righteousness...”
- Alma 3:47-59

Tenth Annual Congregational Campout!!! Don't Miss Out

by Brother Brian Herren

Reservations have been made for the Salem congregation's 10th annual congregational camping trip. Twelve sites at South Beach State park have been reserved for the weekend of July 7-9, 2017. Each site will accommodate an RV with full hook-ups as well as tents. The sites are larger and longer. Please notify me as soon as possible if you plan to attend. Each site is \$66 for the weekend. Checks can be made to Restored Church of Christ. Located near the Yaquina Lighthouse in Newport, OR, the park has a 9 hole disc golf course, playground, horseshoe pits, and a jetty. The state park spans several miles of beachfront and is convenient to the Hatfield Marine Science Center and Oregon Aquarium. The campsites were reserved in such a way as to enclose a grassy area that will be available for our common use and worship. We hope to enjoy the fellowship, beach fun, campfire services, and recreation in Christ that has made this annual tradition a cherished blessing. In recent years, our joy has multiplied as Saints from other parts of the Pacific Northwest, and even the Midwest, have joined us. As in years past, all are welcome, but campsites are reserved quickly. Please send word at your earliest convenience: 503.949.2484 or drbrianherren@gmail.com. May the Lord be glorified in our coming together.



2017 Pacific Northwest Women's Retreat

April 28-30, 2017 - Anderson Lodge

Regional Theme:

“Make Ready a People Prepared for the Lord”

Friday, April 28

- 5:30 Arrival
- 6:30 Introduction to the Weekend
- 7:00 Dinner
- 8:00 Evening activity

Saturday, April 29

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:45 Song Service
- 9:00 Classes
 - 1) Sister Marsha Bird
 - 2) Sister Sheila Schrunk
- 12:00 Lunch
- 12:45 Afternoon Chats (Testimonies & Sharing) - Sisters Sheila and Marsha
- 2:00 Free time, craft (\$7), recreation, preparation for Gifts and Talents to Glorify God
- 5:00 Dinner
- 6:00 Worship
- 6:30 - 8:00 Gifts and Talents to Glorify God

Sunday, April 30

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:45 Song service
- 9:00 - 11:00 Communion and Prayer Service
- Goodbyes and Departure

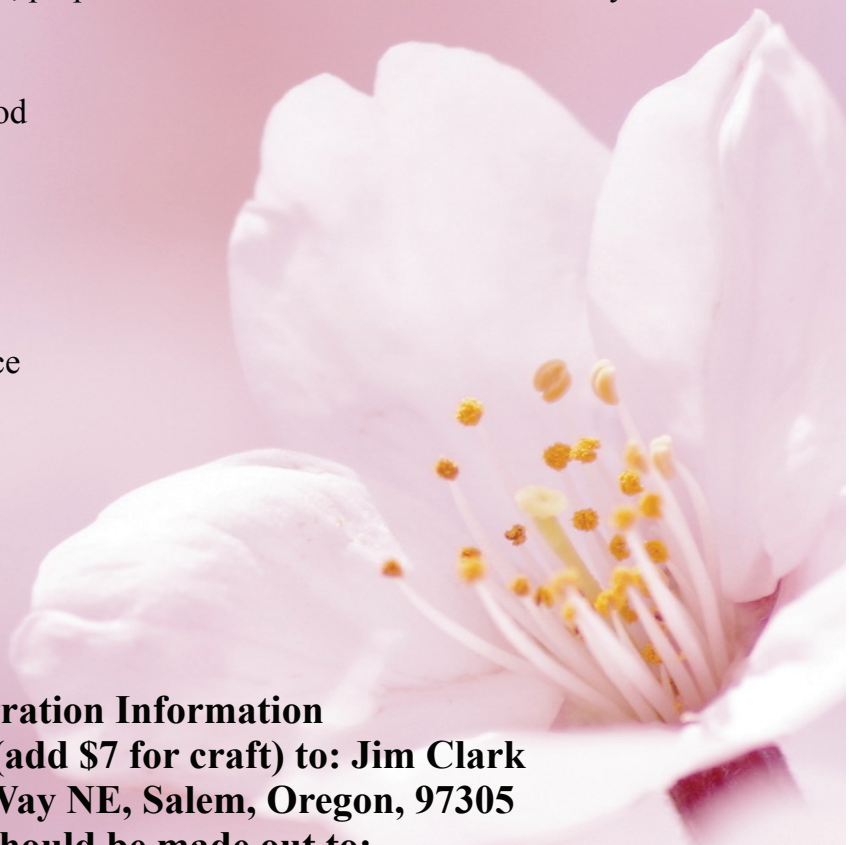
Registration Information

Please send \$125 (add \$7 for craft) to: Jim Clark

4577 Sunflower Way NE, Salem, Oregon, 97305

Checks should be made out to:

NW Region of Restoration Congregations or NWRRC



Sisters Sheila Schrunk and Marsha Bird to Bring Ministry at Women's Retreat

...a few autobiographical words from Sisters Sheila and Marsha



I am Sheila Schrunk and am married to my husband, Bob. We are blessed with four wonderful grown children and twelve lovable grandchildren living within 100 miles of our home in Odessa, Missouri. Bob is an Elder and we attend the Lexington Restoration

Branch. I am thankful to the Lord for the many opportunities He has provided our family and the many wonderful testimonies of the Lord working in our lives. I am a retired elementary teacher, and have co-directed numerous youth camps, including one in Nigeria, and also Women's and Youth retreats in Nepal. I have also been blessed in congregations to teach Sunday School Classes, be Sunday School Director, Women's Leader, Music Director, and other responsibilities. Besides enjoying watching our grandchildren in their church and school activities, and sports, I like to garden, practice piano, camp, and read.

I fondly remember the times Bob and I were able to worship with the Saints in the Northwest Regional Branches at the Northwest Regional Reunion at Vancouver and also attending services and visiting with the Saints in this area another year. I so look forward to worshipping our Lord at this opportunity to meet with the women and ask for your prayers for this Women's Retreat that we might do the will of the Lord in our worship, classes, and fellowship.



My name is Marsha Bird. I am married to Rob Bird and we have 3 children. I live in Higginsville, Missouri which is about an hour east of Independence and we attend the Lexington Restoration Branch. I retired in 2013 as a medical

transcriptionist. Rob and I have been involved in many youth camps and reunions through the years. We have directed Senior High and Older Youth camps and the last two years have been the directors of the Central Missouri Restoration Branches Reunion at Odessa Hills. I also served 8 years on the CRE Women's Council. One of my favorite things to do is spend time with my four grandchildren and I travel every Tuesday and Thursday to visit them. I love being with the Saints and look forward to the day when Zion will be a reality and all the Saints are gathered together with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I count it as a privilege to be able to come and spend time with my sisters at the Pacific Northwest Regional Women's Retreat. May God bless each one of you is my prayer.

Some have asked if we might have guests join us from time to time at our Women's Retreat. This year, Sisters Marsha Bird and Sheila Schrunk have been invited to come from the Center Place and teach classes. If this ministry is important to you, please plan to support it. The most helpful support may come in one of two ways: (1) Attend the Retreat (2) If you are able to make an offering to help fund airfare, please send a check to Brother Jim, addressed to NWRRC, and write "airfare" or "Sheila and Marsha" in the memo line.

Summer Preaching Series 2017

by Brother Brian Herren

Dear Saints, please mark your calendars and plan to attend a summer preaching series to be held in the Pacific Northwest, June 2-4, 2017. High Priest Paul Gage, of Independence, will preach Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. All are invited for a potluck picnic after Sunday morning services at Silver Falls

State Park. This will mark the 4th annual Northwest Regional Summer Preaching Series. In 2014, Brother Eric Odida preached a three day series, followed by Brother Frank Shepard and Brother David Gilmore. This year, Brother Paul Gage will preach the series and all who attend are sure to be blessed. Brother Paul is a gifted preacher with a commanding understanding of scripture coupled with an uncompromising commitment to the fundamental tenets of the Old Jerusalem Gospel. He is a pillar of the Church, a steadfast and steady man, who carries the gifts of the fathers of our faith. As each day of ministry and fellowship builds upon the previous, those who are able to attend the entire series will be especially glad that they made the effort. Please find a few brief biographical paragraphs on the following page, provided by his son, Brother Stuart Gage:

The Saints are encouraged to travel and attend each service:

Friday preaching service in <u>Vancouver</u>:	6:45 pm
Saturday preaching service in <u>Vancouver</u>:	6:45 pm
Sunday services at <u>Silver Falls Park</u>:	9:45 am

Summer Preaching Series 2017

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Paul Gage was born two days after Christmas in 1940 in Porum, Oklahoma. He graduated from Graceland College in 1965 and received his master's degree in educational administration in 1972. Brother Paul was married for over 43 years to his wife, Sharon, until she passed away in 2010. Paul is the father of two sons: Ronald and Stuart Gage. He taught elementary school for many years and retired as an elementary principal in Sand Springs, Oklahoma before moving to the land of Zion in 1993. After moving to Independence, Paul served as the administrator at Center Place Restoration School for several years and also worked for the Fort Osage public school district. Brother Paul has served in several priesthood offices, including deacon, priest, elder and high priest. He has been an ordained minister and youth leader, camping and reunion director, and pastor. Presently, High Priest Paul Gage serves on the Southeast Asia and Australia Ministries board of the Conference of Restoration Elders (CRE), and has served missions in Australia, the Philippines, and Canada. He is also the chairman of the Domestic Outreach Board. Brother Paul has served on the Publication Council for the CRE, and works tirelessly to make sure that the Tidings of Zion publication reaches as many of the Saints as possible. He travels regularly to support isolated branches, help organize the Saints, and promote the gospel. Brother Paul brings a great ministry to those around him. May you all be blessed by the ministry of the spoken word that he will bring to the summer preaching series.

Brother Paul Gage will be preaching the Pacific Northwest Summer Preaching Series, June 2-4, 2017. Please plan to attend. Friday and Saturday evening services in Vancouver. Sunday morning services at Silver Falls Park near Salem.

YAG-ing For the Lord

By Brother Travis Clark



When one thinks of the word "YAG"

a common synonym comes to mind: "adventure". The 2017 YAG Retreat still kept true to this thought. 16 young adults ventured through the snowy Santiam Pass to Black Butte Ranch, where the retreat was held. Two cabins were used, one for the girls and one for the guys. The girls graciously allowed their cabin to be used for classes, meals and fellowship. Each evening the guys would return to their cabin in the dark to rest up for the next day. Using a map that was anything but accurate, the guys would navigate a maze of snowy roads, full of unexpected dead ends due to 6ft snow piles, on the way back to their cabin. Needless to say, we would have benefitted from a Liahonna, but since none were available we relied on faith and laughter to get us through.

We fed on an ever-present Spirit, wonderful fellowship and delicious food all weekend. We arrived at Black Butte Ranch around 9pm Friday night and our Brother

Brian began teaching a class on life after death at 10pm. After an hour and a half of teaching we took a break to rest, but we were so excited for that which the Lord had already delivered! Saturday morning found some of the group venturing up the mountain to ride ski-bikes (basically a bike frame with skis instead of wheels). As Brothers Vitaliy and Kevin sought to see who could fall down the most on the mountain, Sisters Trina and Cessaries would whizz by as if they had been practicing the night before! After the fun on the mountain had ended and the group came back and brought their body temperatures back up to a normal level, Brian resumed his class from the previous evening. After 3 hours of class, with only a half an hour break for dinner, many questions were answered and many minds were enlightened by such a wonderful class. While the class ended, the Spirit and fellowship did not as we watched an inspiring movie called "The Insanity of God" which told several stories of those in modern times who have sacrificed everything in order to serve their Heavenly Father.

On Sunday morning our Brother Kevin grabbed his scriptures, put on his accounting hat and taught an informative class on tithing, offerings, oblations and the commandment God has given to us to do so. With our time drawing to an end, Brian delivered a powerful sermon inspired by The Lord and gave us a parting charge to stand up for the right and the truth in the world and to remain steadfast in our service to God, just as a soldier remains steadfast in the service to his general. As the 2017 YAG came to a close there was sadness and joy as we would be leaving each other and returning back to our lives in the world, but we were leaving with our cups filled and our knowledge of the scriptures greatly expanded. I thank and give all credit to The Lord for it is only and truly by His hand that everything and everyone came together so perfectly.



Saints From the Pacific Northwest Serve a Mission in East Africa

by Brother Brian Herren



Saints From the Pacific Northwest Serve a Mission in East Africa

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Eight Saints from the Pacific Northwest were blessed to serve in Kenya this winter. We left our homes and loved ones on December 15, 2016 in the middle of a snow and ice storm and would not return until January 1, 2017. Those that traveled include Brothers Brian Herren, Kevin Herren, Vitaliy Surova, and Michael Livingston; and Sisters Melissa Herren, Cessaries Galusha, Nicole Jones, and Melissa Clark. During the mission we served a youth camp in Kisumu, visited various branches of the church in Kenya, and shared the Restored Gospel with groups and individuals wherever we were sent. It was exciting to pass out scriptures and share about Jesus Christ. The missionaries taught classes on Repentance and Baptism, Faith, Charity, Zion, The Book of Mormon, Church History, Christ's True and Living Church, Life After Death, and Choosing the Right Path. On several occasions we were able to share with those not affiliated with the church, and we witnessed the Holy Spirit at work as people received the Restored Gospel. We spent time teaching individual families, but at least two entire villages were so interested in the Restored Gospel and Christ's true church that it now seems the whole village will come into the church together and form a branch!

