

GREAT LAKES RESTORATION BRANCHES NEWSLETTER

VOL. III - 31

ISSUE #65

WINTER 2009

Atlanta

Algonac

Aurora

Corunna Mission

Dowagiac

Garden City

Lake Mission

Lima

Oakwood

Otter Lake

Port Huron/Sarnia

St. Johns

St. Thomas

Sanilac/Sandusky

Sault Ste. Marie/Eckerman Essex/Amherstburg

**And our Restoration Friends; Greetings from the
Great Lakes Restoration Branches, Missions and Study Groups.**

**“O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in transgressing
against that Holy God, and also the awfulness of yielding as to the
enticings of that cunning one.**

**Remember, to be carnally minded, is death, and to be spiritually
minded, is life eternal.**

**O, my beloved brethren, give ear to my words. Remember the
greatness of he Holy One of Israel. Do not say that I have spoken hard**

things against you; for if ye do, ye will revile against the truth: for I have spoken the words of your Maker. I know that the words of truth are hard against all uncleanness: but the righteous fear them not, for they love the truth, and are not shaken. O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteousness.

Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel: and he employeth no servant there: And there is none other way, save it be by the gate, for he can not be deceived: for the Lord God is his name.”

II Nephi 6:73 - 82

“And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me, in and of the Holy Ghost, which witness unto them of me and of the Father. Behold, because of their belief in me, saith the Father, and because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles, that the fullness of these saings shall be made known unto them.”

III Nephi 7:30 - 31

A farewell from your editor.

This is my farewell to the newsletter. After 44 issues, beginning in August 1997, arthritis in my fingers has taken its toll. And it is time for a change. My very grateful thank you to so many who have given advice and encouragement and especially to our correspondents. Without them there would be no newsletter.

New Editor.

Your new editor is Jim Bradley. Jim and his wife Valerie attend the Algonac Branch. If you have heard Jim preach you know what a stirring speaker he is. He is knowledgeable of church history and the events surrounding us today. Jim knows the Lord and honors and follows him on his daily walk of life. I ask for your kind consideration and help for him as he assumes this responsibility. Jim is a very caring person and it will undoubtingly show up in these pages.

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Sanilac Restoration Branch—Winter 2009

Reported by Barb Eliason

“The Seasons of the Soul” Why am I cast down and despondently sad when I long to be happy and joyous and glad? Why is my heart heavy with unfathomable weight as I try to escape this soul-saddened state? I ask myself often—“What makes life this way, why is the song silenced in the heart that was gay?” And then with God’s help it all becomes clear, the soul has its Seasons just the same as the year—I too must pass through life’s autumn of dying, a desolate period of heart-hurt and crying, followed by winter in whose frostbitten hand my heart is as frozen as the snow-covered land. Yes, man too must pass through the seasons God sends, content in the knowledge that everything ends, and oh what a blessing to know there are reasons and to find that our soul must, too, have its seasons. Bounteous Seasons and Barren Ones, too, times for rejoicing and times to be blue, but meeting these seasons of dark desolation with strength that is born of anticipation that comes from knowing that “autumn-time sadness” will surely be followed by a “Springtime of Gladness.” Helen Steiner Rice

Greetings from the Saints at Sanilac to everyone who reads this newsletter. It has really been a cold January. Nature seems to be telling us to slow our lives down after a rush, rush December. God continues to be good to us as we count our blessings.

November 1st found Denise Rich traveling to Oakwood to represent our branch at the Hootenanny. The next weekend Barent and Eric Eliason attended the Priesthood Retreat at Blue Water. All the branch members were busy getting ready for our second big event, “The Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale” which was on Saturday, November 22nd. We realize how much work it involves, but we also know the rewards. The nicest reward is that of fellowship with all those who came; church members, friends, and neighbors. We really feel it is a witnessing day to all and are so grateful to all our talented ladies for their crafts. The economy is very bad, but the Lord blessed us with over \$2300 that day. Thank you to all who attended.

All our Priesthood headed to Missouri for Thanksgiving to be with family, and we are so fortunate that Elders Mick Ruch and Jay Havener had the desire to serve and give ministry to all those remaining. Everyone reported a wonderful Thanksgiving Day with many thankful blessings.

December brought lots of activities beginning with December 3rd. Several gathered at the church to decorate for Christmas. Our pastor doesn’t have to tell us the three wise men do not belong at the manger scene. We even had a tree donated for our basement this year. While attending an estate sale it was mentioned that a decorated table tree would be nice for the church. Her children, a brother and two sisters, overheard the conversation and immediately donated the tree saying, “Mom would be so thrilled to know that the tree was in a church.” As usual, we layed out Viola Phelps’ wall hanging with the Christmas story scenes handmade. Viola is a shut-in and this makes us feel closer to her in our hearts.

Friday, December 12th seventeen members including guests headed out on a very cold winter night to go Christmas caroling. The idea was to bring a gift to those we chose to visit, but it ended up that we were the ones blessed. At every place we went, they insisted that we come inside because it was too cold out. We sang at the homes of Mary Morris, Kathleen Palmer’s mother, Clemente Gutierrez, Dora Gutierrez’s father, Sandusky Senior Citizen High Rise, Denise Rich’s Mother-in-law, Virginia Rich and Dora Gutierrez’s aunt, (All the residents were waiting for us on the first floor, they sang with us with smiles and twinkling eyes, and even gave us cookies.), Esther Markey (her daughter and son-in law, Phronsie and Dave Miller were there), and Barbara Gerstenberger. What a

special bonding this was for our branch. We also saw lots of tears in eyes of those we were visiting. God truly blessed us all.

Barent Eliason reports that Sat., December 13th was a special Saturday set aside for the Saints to improve Kingdom building skills. Patriarch Verle Cornish and Elder Aaron Smith came up from Independence to teach and instruct. Barent, Eric, and Cory Eliason attended. What am I willing to do for the sake of the Kingdom, and ten top tips for becoming spiritually fit for the Kingdom were subjects of the day.

Sunday, December 14th was a very special day for our branch. The day began with our Christmas program directed by Cory Eliason. After much practicing and fun, the day was here for the performance. The program begin with the congregation singing Christmas songs "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day," "O, Come all ye Faithful," and "Silvery Star, Precious Star." The children then put on a Christmas play entitled, "Christmas Drama." Those involved were Aubree Rich, Gary DesJardins, Paige and Maddy Parker, and Emma DesJardins. After a wonderful performance, we had a special treat of Aubree Rich on the trumpet, and Paige Parker on the clarinet playing "Silent Night." The branch sang the song as they did a beautiful job of playing this duet. The program was closed with everyone singing "Joy to the World." Thank you Cory for all your hard work involved in putting on this program. You and the children did an excellent job.

Following the Christmas program we had a special guest visitor. Elder Aaron Smith who was in Michigan for the previous day's event gave the branch spiritual ministry. Denise Rich sang a introit, and the choir sang the special. After the morning service we gathered in the basement for our Christmas family dinner. It was not a surprise that we had a wonderful meal. Then it was time for Christmas gifts. Our Branch gave each one a personalized calendar to keep tract of birthdays and anniversaries.

During this period we have had snow, snow, and more snow. We have been fortunate that we only canceled church once. We were surprised that on Sunday, January 25th with the bad weather, we had 23 present. We would also like to say thank you to our pastor who takes charge of turning the heat up before services and plowing the snow in the parking lot. He is truly a servant of our Lord, and makes attending church more desirable.

Our branch has accepted a bid from Steve Parker for putting new windows in our basement. This has been a need for several years as cold air come through the present windows. We now have the financial income and are looking forward to the completion of this project.

Newsletter Tidbits:

- Jim Negaard is in Missouri. Was there for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Barent and Barb Eliason flew to Independence, and Eric and Cory Eliason drove to Oak Grove, Missouri. While there at Thanksgiving, Barb celebrated her birthday with the family.
- Bill and Kathleen Palmer vacationed in Florida in December. They were called when we were caroling at her Mother's home—sitting on the deck watching the Atlantic Ocean.
- Aubree Rich played her French horn in the Sandusky High School Christmas concert.
- Maddy Parker's picture was in The Sandusky Tribune. She was in costume for the Peck elementary Christmas program "Candy Cane Lane."
- Barent and Barb Eliason left early heading to Missouri to see Barry and Lisa's children in their Christmas program. It was the first time to see their grandchildren Daniel, Sarah, and Emma with their costumes. Daniel played a trumpet solo and all three played piano pieces. Lisa Eliason was the Christmas program director at the Hill Cumorah Branch.

