

# The Anchor



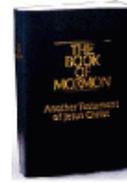
The Great Lakes Restoration Branches

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## News From Around the Region

Algonac-Atlanta-Dowagiac- Garden City- Lima-Oakwood Otter Lake-Port Huron-Sanilac-  
St. Johns

“By faith all things are fulfilled: Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God which hope cometh of faith maketh an Anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.” Ether 5:3b-4

### Algonac Branch



By: Val Bradley

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men. (Luke 2:14) We enjoyed many opportunities throughout the Christmas season to give glory and praise to our Lord and Saviour and we continually pray

for peace and goodwill among men in this new year.

The Children’s Thanksgiving Program, directed by Cory Eliason, was held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, November 13. Opening remarks were given by Kelli Williams and then the congregation sang, “With Thankful Hearts.” Readings were given by Cory, Kelli, Val Bradley, and Angie Elkins. The primary class (Laurel & Adeline Yaney, and Briggs, Bryer, & Ames Eliason) recited Bible verses and shared what they were thankful for. They also sang, “Praise Him, Praise Him.” The Junior High

class (David & Ava Nagy, Daynna Harm, and Alyssa & Miles Marcangelo) did readings and sang, "America." They also shared what they were thankful for. Liz Moses sang, "O Jesus The Giver." Todd Moses was the accompanist for the program and Nina Powers gave a special prayer of thanks. Following the closing remarks by Kelli, the children passed out thank you certificates that they had written for each adult member of our congregation stating what they appreciated about them. Thanks to Elaine Harm and Tina Yaney, the children looked wonderful in their pilgrim and Indian costumes, which added a lot to the program! We thank Cory for organizing this program, all those who participated, and all those who attended in support of our youth. We are especially grateful to our youth, who are such an integral part of our congregation!

In December, our Community Outreach Coordinator, Wendy Holmes, found a worthwhile project for our branch to take part in. She called the Port Huron City Recreation Dept. and was told about an outreach program called, "Adopt a Platoon." Wendy brought in Christmas stockings for our members to fill with socks, stationery, postage, card games & electronics, travel size toiletries, etc. Our small branch was able to fill over 30 stockings! She then dropped them off at the Port Huron City Recreation Dept., and they packaged them up and sent them to platoons overseas. She followed up with them after Christmas and was told that 1200 stockings were donated in 2015, and this past Christmas, over 2000 stockings (69 boxes!) were

donated. What a wonderful way to show support to our military troops! We hope to participate in this program (& others like it) again this year.

(Reported by Elaine King)  
The Algonac Branch Annual Christmas Bazaar was held at the church on Friday, December 2 and Saturday, December 3. Elaine King, Wendy Holmes and Marilyn Canham, with help from their friend, Tom, unloaded items and set up for the sale. Tom did an awesome job hanging all the Christmas bulbs from the ceiling to help make the fellowship hall look magical for the sale. On Friday, Wendy Holmes, Elaine King, Connie Burns, Marilyn Canham, Kim Gilchrist, and Angie Elkins were there to greet the customers. As always, we met some wonderful people from the community. We got to meet Kelli William's replacement at the Children's Day Care Center, Melissa Miller, who was a delight! She purchased some items for herself, then returned later that day to buy enough of our yummy baked goods for her whole work crew. We had a good visit with Melissa (who really misses Kelli!), and she will continue to hand out flyers to the students for all future sales. Kim Gilchrist brought some of her magnificent paintings to the sale. She was able to sell a few of them, which will help out due to loss of her husband's job. She was still able to give the church a donation. Every year we get some great sale donations brought in. The Yaney family donated a hand-crafted Michigan tree ornament. After the sale, Wendy and Elaine were pleased to receive one of these ornaments from Tina and Todd as a thank

you for organizing and running these sales each year. Connie Burns made several really great crafts, also, which were a big hit. Someone also donated some cool hand-painted bird feeders that looked like a church. After some discussion about what to charge for them, a gentleman came in and bought every single one of them! There are always interesting conversations with our customers. One lady told us about a "Cookie Walk" she took part in and explained how it works. Who knows ... we may try that next year? Several ladies came in and inquired about our church. As usual, Wendy did an excellent job explaining our beliefs and showing them around. One got to enjoy the beautiful piano music of Kim Gilchrist as she was practicing in the sanctuary. As always, our Bake Sale was a big hit. The few items that were left after the sale were quickly purchased by our own church family after the service the next day! We'd like to thank each and every one who helped out with this year's sale. Whether it was setting up, tearing down, donating baked goods or gently used items, all your time and efforts were greatly appreciated! This was by far, our best Sale yet! God blessed us with wonderful help, many guests, and an opportunity to witness to the community and we are grateful. Hope to see you all next year!

Our Algonac church family had our annual Christmas celebration on Friday, December 16. We met at Dimitri's restaurant in Chesterfield. As always, our Women's Leader, Nina Powers, had a small gift for each of the ladies (candle) and a booklet

titled, "A New Life" for the men. We also presented Nina with a gift in appreciation for all she does for us. We had a good turnout, and enjoyed good food and great fellowship.

Our Children's Christmas Program was held at 10 a.m. on Sunday, December 18. It was directed by Kelli Williams. After she welcomed the congregation, Val Bradley did a reading on "Unwrapping the Gifts of Christmas," followed by the Algonac Quartet singing "Silent Night." With Bethany Moses as narrator, the children reenacted the story of the birth of Jesus. Laurel Yaney played the part of Mary and Briggs Eliason was Joseph. He also played the role of one of the kings. Bryer Eliason was the Innkeeper, and also played the role of one of the kings. Their brother Ames, was the 3<sup>rd</sup> king. Miles Marcangelo and David Nagy were shepherds, and David also played the role of King Herod. The angels were played by Ava Nagy, Dayna Harm, Alyssa Marcangelo, and Addie Yaney, our littlest angel (what a cutie!). During the pageant, the children sang, "Away in the Manger," and Briggs, Bryer, and Ames Eliason sang, "We Three Kings." They really sang with gusto, and touched our hearts! Other special music was performed by Todd Moses, Gary Holmes, and the congregation. After the pageant Ames Eliason sang, "Go Tell it on the Mountain" and "The First Noel" was sang by Ames and Briggs Eliason. The congregation sang several Christmas hymns and then the children performed "Come and Ring Those Bells" on the bells ... always a favorite with our

congregation! The older youth performed "Joy to the World" on the bells. We were so proud of each and every one of our children ... what a wonderful way to celebrate our Lord's birth! A big thank you to Kelli Williams, Todd Moses, Cory Eliason, Amy Nagy, Elaine Harm, Tina Yaney, and all those who participated with special music. We were truly blessed by the ministry of our children and those who lead them.

December 25 fell on a Sunday this year, and it was so wonderful to start our Christmas morning with the saints! We had a great turnout and the service began with heavenly music from the Moses Trio. Our pastor, Elder Gary Holmes, brought the message, which he took from the book of Luke. He stated that the Lord chose to have His Son born in a lowly, smelly stable full of animals. The shepherds were just "regular guys" doing their jobs, and yet God chose to send the angels to them to tell them about Christ's birth. At times, we tend to put Mary and Joseph on a pedestal, but they were just common, ordinary people ... a carpenter, and a young girl. And yet ... God chose them for this glorious role and they accepted the responsibility! We are just ordinary people, also ... why would God choose us? However, if He could use them, couldn't He use us, also, if we let Him? As Gary ended his sermon, he asked us to contemplate two things: What gifts can we give to others at this season, and what gifts can we give our Saviour?

Our annual Candlelight Service was held on Wednesday, December 28, and was presided

over by Elder Gary Holmes. Gary gave the welcome and offered the prayers of invocation and benediction. Marge Holmes did a reading, "The Bethlehem Road." Gary read from Isaiah 9, and then played the guitar and sang, "What Child is This?" He then read about the birth of Christ, from Luke 2. The congregation sang a couple of Christmas hymns, and Ray Moses sang, "O Holy Night." Sheets of paper were handed out to the congregation and we were asked to write out what we thought was the best gift we've received from God and what is the best gift we can offer to Him. Todd Moses read the story, "The Legend of the Christmas Cookie." It is a children's story of a young boy named Jack who learns from his generous mother the story behind the Christmas cookie. The family who began the tradition of baking the special cookies gave them to the needy and shared the story of the very first Christmas. It offers inspiration for us to become cheerful givers and encourages us to share the true tale of Jesus' birth. We then lit our candles and Marge read the poem, "A New Dawning." This service is always a wonderful way to reflect on the gifts of Christmas and to ponder the gifts that we can share with others in the new year ahead.

On Saturday, January 7, our church family was delighted to attend a special 50<sup>th</sup> (hard to believe!) birthday party in honor of Liz Moses. We enjoyed a delicious meal of homemade

Chicken Jalapeno Chowder and 3-cheese bread, and a decadent, yummy chocolate birthday cake. She opened gifts and there was great fellowship. God bless you, Liz. We wish you the very best in this next chapter of your life!

Catherine Ward (Mom of Liz Moses) passed away on February 1. Viewing was held on Sunday, February 5, from 2:30 – 8 p.m. at the Gendernalik Funeral Home in New Baltimore. On Monday, February 6, a mass was held for her at St. Lucy Catholic Church in St. Clair Shores, where she had been a long-time, active member. Following a short service at the cemetery, there was a wonderful luncheon to honor her at the Italian American Cultural Center in Clinton Township. All those who knew Cathy will miss her dearly. Our hearts and prayers go out to Liz, Todd, Bethany, and the whole family.

Mrs. Catherine Ward  
(Mother of Liz Moses & Debra Ward)  
Born June 15, 1933



Heavenly Homecoming  
Feb. 1, 2017

Prayers would be appreciated for Tim Holmes, Dick & Connie Burns, Elaine King, Kelli Williams, Ray Moses, Gary & Marge Holmes,

Nina Powers, Dave Nagy, Bruce and Barb Krinkie, and Todd and Liz Moses & family. We are keeping you and all the branches in our prayers, as well.

## Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> Valentine's Day



## Garden City



By: Kurt & Susan Fishwild

### Younger Youth Retreat at Garden City

Submitted by: Elder Tom Essenmacher

“How do you rob God?” (Malachi 3:8) This was the challenge given to both the younger youth and adults at the Younger Youth Fall Retreat 2016 hosted by Oakwood Restoration Branch. Words like surplus, inventory, tithes and offerings, and accounting were added to our vocabulary during

the weekend as we were taught the financial law of stewardship. Submitted by: Betty Lou Newman  
The other words for the weekend would include “scripture hunts” (R. Philp), “favorite foods” (J. Cobb, J. Essenmacher), “outdoor campfires” (K. Horton), “smores” (K. Sadler), “swimming” (Lapeer), “singing” (S. Hood), “chalk talks” (J. Saylor), “devotions” (B. Sutton), “CIT time” (S. Johnson), and the “writing on the wall” (B. Newman).

To complete the weekend, Elder Fred Brown Jr. taught us the importance of using the Inspired Version. He used the text “Three Bibles Compared”.

After providing Ministry of Music for the 11:00 worship service we enjoyed a delicious meal thanks to the Oakwood members.

See you February 24 – 26 at Garden City for the Winter Retreat.

#### Christmas Program at Garden City

Submitted by: Betty Lou Newman

*If you seek for Messiah and, far from the way,*

*You are lost in the darkness or going astray,*

*Just stop for a moment; don't wander too far,*

*But look to the light of the Bethlehem star.*

Garden City adults and youth joined together to present a Christmas program entitled “In the Light of the Bethlehem Star.” Hymns and readings supported the play “Father’s Journey.” It is the story of four children (Israel and Macy Dabbs, Ethan and Megan Fishwild) whose father leaves to visit the Christ Child. He explains the meaning of the appearance of the new star, his need to depart, and the reason for his gift of frankincense. Each of the children desires to send a gift

to the little boy and each gift is connected to a Bible story (Joseph’s coat of many colors, Jacob’s ladder vision, Elijah and the widow of Zarepheth’s precious last meal and oil, and the widow whose two sons were saved by following Elisha’s instructions exactly.)

When the wise man returned, he gave an account of his adventure as recorded in Matthew chapter 3. We were again reminded to “Look to the light of the Bethlehem star”.

#### Other News:

Outreach – Members of the congregation purchased toys and the congregation took up an offering on December 4<sup>th</sup> to help the “Angels in the Motorcity” with their Christmas party for low income families.

#### Women’s Group

The Women’s Department is reaching out to members who miss services. A quick note with a copy of the bulletin is mailed to update them on events/activities of the branch. A CD of the service is also sent to those unable to attend.

Birthdays are celebrated each month with a special treat following the 11:00 service. Thank you, Kim. We really enjoy this thoughtful gesture.

#### Guest Ministers

On January 22, we were blessed by the preaching ministry of Elder Tom Essenmacher. Thank you to Tom and his wife Janine for visiting us and sharing in a potluck meal after the service.

## **Oakwood**



**By: Kathleen Modders**

**11/20/16 Thanksgiving Dinner! Gobble Gobble!! Kathleen and Mike Modders directed the younger youth in cooking a Thanksgiving Dinner for the congregation. Heather and Parker Mervyn, Dustin Michael, Chad Embree and Emma Turner, Jonathon Modders, Joshua and Mallory Johnson all helped put together a wonderful meal.**

**12/03 Woman's Christmas Party! Shawn Ruch brought the Oakwood women together and celebrated our Lord Jesus with a song service, testimonies and a great lunch. Kathi Havener led the women in silly Christmas games, including making Christmas trees out of red Solo cups. Shawn Ruch, Kathi Havener, Julie Fox, Kathleen Modders, Tracy Stokes, Dawn Modders, Michele Turner, Helen Brown, Candy McDonald, and Jamie Moore all attended.**

**12/04 A Prayer & Testimony service was held at 10 a.m. With Elder Fred Brown, Sr. Presiding, and Elder Fred Brown, Jr. preaching.**

**12/10 The women of the congregation had a cookie exchange, hosted by Tracy Stokes. Cookies were judged by how they tasted, how they looked, and how they were packaged. We were also judged on who had the ugliest Christmas sweater! Our**

**wonderful judges were Jay Havener, Mike Ruch, and Shaun Turner. Those who made cookies were Tracy Stokes and her Mother, Michelle Turner, Kathleen Modders, Amanda Ruch, Shawn Ruch, Christine Mervyn, Kathi Havener, and Julie Fox. Shawn Ruch and Amanda Ruch won first and second place for taste, and Kathi Havener won for best presentation. Christina Mervyn won for ugliest Christmas sweater!**

**12/10/16 Gingerbread House Decorating Party! Thank you, Michelle Turner, for putting this together for us. All that were in attendance were Michelle Turner, Tracy Stokes, Kathleen Modders, Kathi Havener, Emma Turner and her friend, Christina and Heather Mervyn and Amanda Ruch.**

**12/18/16 Children's Christmas Program was put together by Jay Havener. Chad Embree, Jackson Nagy, Drew Vandenberg, Emma Turner, Reese Nagy, Cruz Nagy, Julia LaRowe, and Heather Mervyn sang in the Youth Choir, singing Away in a Manger. Jay Havener shared a story of the shepherd's experience of the birth of Christ. Julie LaRowe sang The First Noel, and Jackson Nagy read the scripture Mark 10:11-14. Baby Paighthen Marie Gerwald, daughter of Rebecca and Joshua Gerwald, was blessed by her grandfather Elder Edward MacDonald and assisted by Elder Fred Brown Jr. Drew Vandenberg then read a short story about the birth of Jesus Christ about a sparrow showing the meaning of God himself sending his only son to live as a person so we could know the right way. Emma Turner read a poem called The**

Dime. Chad Embree read from the Book of Mormon III Nephi 8:20-27 Baby Baily Harper Carl, daughter of Syndney McConnel and Jared Carl, was then blessed by Elder Fred Brown Jr. and assisted by Baily's grandfather Elder Edward MacDonald. Elder Edward MacDonald shared a testimony by his mother's father in 1930 during the great depression about a Christmas tree he got with only .25 cents in his pocket. Reese Nagy read a short story about a lady trying to find a job to provide for her six children. Christmas morning, Big Wheel Truck Stop regulars filled her truck with boxes of clothing, candy, laundry and cleaning supplies, and four brand new tires. The service ended with signing JOY TO THE WORLD!

12/25/16 Elder Mick Ruch presided over a special Christmas Day service with Priest Mike Ruch giving a sermon titled Christmas or Xmas? During the service was a special administration for Robert Modders administered by Elder Jay Havener and confirmed by Elder Edward MacDonald. Beth was also administered to by Elder Edward MacDonald and confirmed by Elder Jay Havener. Closing the service, we sang I heard the Bells on Christmas Day.

12/31 New Years Eve Party 6-12 p.m. Kathleen and Mike put on a great New Year's Eve pizza party. Kathleen had everyone play a couple of games (winter themed Bingo, Tic- Tac- Toe and a Memory Game!) She gave out tickets and pulled one at the end of the night for a \$25 gift certificate to the lucky one who had the number! YEAH to Tracy

Stokes! All who attended were, Shawn & Mick Ruch; Shaun and Emma Turner; Tracy & John Stokes; Kathleen, Mike and Jonathon Modders; Matt, Christine, Parker, and Heather Mervyn; Dustin Michael; Kim and Keith Gilchrist; Chet and Cheryl Slagor; and Julie Fox. We had pizza and breadsticks. Everyone pitched in to take down all the Christmas decorations. It was a very fun night had by all who came.

1/1/17 We had a special New Years Day service with Elder Jay Havener presiding and Elder Mick Ruch preaching. During the service, Elder Mick Ruch was set apart as our new pastor for the next six months by Elder Edward MacDonald, and confirmed by Elder Jay Havener. The Congregation also sang Happy Birthday to Bev Ruch!

01/28/17 Women's Dept held a Prayer Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. Shawn Ruch gathered so many ladies in on this Saturday morning. We shared testimonies and sang a few hymns, and ate a wonderful breakfast cooked by Mick and Mike Ruch, Jay Havener, and Jonathon Modders. Kathi Havener, Amanda Ruch, Raven Franks, Mary Jones, Cheryl Slagor, Bev Ruch, Bonnie Murphy, Dawn Modders, Kim Gilchrist, and Julie Fox attended.

02/05/17 Dawn Modders asked the Elders for an administration for Bob at Stone Gate where he is being cared for. They opened it up for members to come and support Bob. We started off in a little room and so many people came we had to move to a bigger room. It was

communion Sunday Elder Mick Ruch presided over the service Elder Ed MacDonald and Elder Jay Havener performed the administration Priest Mike Modders blessed the bread and wine. When the administration was being performed everyone held hands in a circle around Bob. Priest Chet Slagor said a prayer, along with Deacon Kerry Horton and Elder Mick Ruch. It was quite a blessing being among Fred Brown Jr, Shaun Turner, Mike Danicki, Cheryl Slagor, Mark Hanna, Lois Porter, Matt Christina Parker and Heather Mervyn, Dustin Michael, Jamie Modders, Jonathon and Kathleen Modders, Bill Hulse, and Bill Sutton. It was a very powerful service we closed the service in Singing Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Coming up events:

Julie Fox to coordinate volunteers for Valentine's Military Packing day!

The Younger Youth Winter Retreat: February 24,25,26 at the GARDEN CITY BRANCH, hosted by Betty Lou Newman.  
Zion's Older Youth Winter Retreat: March 10, 11, 12 at the GARDEN CITY BRANCH, hosted by Michelle & Shaun Turner. We will be starting on the theme, "A Chosen Land" that will be building on topics that we will continue during the Summer Camp. We are excited to announce that we have chosen to move our camp to the Woodlands Campground in Hale, MI. This will be half the distance that it was in Hawks, MI. The dates for Summer Camp are July 9 through the 15th, 2017. We are excited to see our youth with the new edition of the Charlotte

Branch youth at both the retreat and the summer camp.

Upcoming priesthood & wives dinner in March. To Acknowledge what they do for the church and all the members who attend.

Summer Older Youth Camp: July 9-July 15 at the Woodlands Campground Association through the Community of Christ 318 S. Sage Lake Road Hale, MI hosted by Michelle & Shaun Turner  
Summer Younger Youth Camp: July 16<sup>th</sup>-July 22<sup>nd</sup> at Erie Beach Campgrounds, hosted by Betty Lou Newman.

Upcoming Birthdays are: 03/04 Jamie Moore, 03/06 Brandon Embree, 03/10 Heather Mervyn, 03/14 Chet Slagor , 03/18 Cody Ruch, 03/20 Lilly Konkle, 03/25 Derrick Embree, 03/28 Beth Everhart, 03/29 Jamie Modders, 03/29 Cheryl Slagor, 04/01 Michael Ruch, 04/03 Gloria Smith,04/08 Emma Turner, 04/09 Christina Mervyn, 04/26 Morgan Bean, 04/29 Andrew Konkle, 04/14 Dennis Smith, 04/15 David Mueller, 04/18 Chris Vandenberg, 04/20 Chris Nagy, 04/24 Jackson Nagy, 04/26 Rebecca MacDonald, 05/06 Jay Havener, 05/12 Mary Richards, 05/13 Noame Holcomb, 05/15 John Stokes, 05/17 Sydney LaRowe, 05/18 Tracey LaRowe, 05/22 Mike Danicki, 05/27 Eric Slagor, 06/06 Bob Modders, 06/06 Gage Slagor, 06/11 Matt Mervyn, 06/12 Bonnie Murphy, 06/14 Kim Slagor, 06/16 Beth Fabian, 06/17 Kathleen Modders, 06/18 Julia LaRowe, 06/24 Shirly MacDonald, 06/25 Chad Embree, 06/27 Cruz Nagy

## Otter Lake



**By: Susie Daggett**

Greetings from the Otter Lake Branch! We had our Christmas program on December 25<sup>th</sup>. It was good to see so many out on Christmas morning. Everyone participated with a story, poem, or scripture. Kerry Horton gifted the branch with a Tree of Life painting by Tracy Stokes. We are very thankful for our visiting ministry Brian Daggett, Ed Smerer, Fred Brown Sr and Rex Monarch.

## Port Huron-Sarnia Branch



**By: Sharon Smerer**

**Greetings Saints:**

We hope everyone is enjoying their Winter so far and we pray for continued good weather. See you in the Spring!

A little bird told me about one, Cameron Britz who attends Western Michigan University. He is on the Tennis Club and last year he placed 2nd out of eight competitors. WAY TO GO!!! Your Church family is proud of you. Cameron is the son of Jason and Carrie Britz and

grandson of John and Barbara Tynan.

We had two candidates, who were baptized and confirmed on Nov. 6, 2016. They are William Shamblin, was baptized by Elder John DeBell and confirmed by Elders David Teeple and John DeBell. Will is grandson of Chase and Michelle Miller. Lowell Milett, was baptized by Grandfather, Elder John DeBell and confirmed by Elders John DeBell and David Teeple. Lowell is son of Joe and Jennifer Milett and grandson of John and Connie DeBell.

Our Branch had their annual, election of officers and business meeting, Nov. 13, 2016. The congregation has voted Elder Ed Smerer as presiding elder. Bulletin person is Chris Kercher. Women's Leaders are Sherry Purcell and Carrie Britz. Music Director is Sue Fagan. Junior Church is Elder Brian Daggett. We appreciate your willingness to serve the Lord.

We have several young people who sing, Avery, Gillian, Olivia and their parents Scott and Amy Bolt, Sue Fagan, and Eldon Preston, Bill and Jane Hering and their daughters, Julia Payionk and Kelly Willoughby. Then we have those who play instruments, Lydia and Owen DeBell, Eldon Preston and Scott Bolt and the children and their Ringing of the Bells. Gillian and Olivia Bolt and Eldon Preston and Jane Hering, and Chris Kercher play the piano and Andrew Kercher, plays the piano and ukulele. We are so blessed to have such talented people.

Parents of Betty Milett, Joe and Jennifer Milett are proud of their daughter, Betty who received recognition at the Port Huron Northern Band Banquet in November for her second year, "Marching" with this incredible organization. Thanks Much, to Erick EezeeDaddy Senkmajer, Betty is still beaming about it! Your Church Family is also, proud of Betty. Good Job!! Maybe, she is taking after her Mother, Jennifer.

Andrew Kercher, is a Curator, in Dearborn, Mi. at the Dearborn Historical Museum. He is right in his Historical glory. Your Church Family is proud of your accomplishments.

#### **NAMES IN THE NEWS**

St. Clair County Community College honors, more than 1,400 students at St. Clair Co. Community college taking at least six credits earned a spot on the President's Honors List for the Fall 2016 semester. To make the list, students must maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 or higher. Our very own College Students, Gillian Bolt, daughter of Scott and Amy Bolt, granddaughter of John and Barbara Tynan; Evan Kercher, son of Chris Kercher, grandson of John and Connie DeBell; Alexis Parmenter daughter of Jessica Parmenter, granddaughter of Brian and Cathy Daggett.

On December 3, 2016 our Ladies from our Branch were invited to an, "Advent Tea," by the Wadham's Grove Community of Christ. Their theme, was an, "Old Fashioned Christmas." They had several flavored teas, water

and several delicious desserts. We heard from several people what their Christmas was like back when. Of the days when they went to a one room school and when they had their Christmas programs. It was exciting to recite a poem, or be in a skit. I remember, my Mom, made me a dress of white crepe paper with holly and red berries for a skit, I was in later that night, at my school, back when. One of the ladies mentioned about a ride on a one horse sleigh ride. Oh, the memories. It was very nice to fellowship with the other Congregation, and oh, the desserts, YUM!! We also, sang Christmas songs and played a game. A very nice time.

December 4, 2016 was the Children's Christmas Program at our Branch, directed by Jennifer Milett. The theme this year was, "Christmas," the Sunday School Children colored pictures that were placed in window panes. As Jennifer read, the children would place each colored picture in the window panes, finishing with Santa and Our Savior. Very nice!! Thank you to the Children for their pretty pictures and Jennifer for all her hard work.

Betty Milett, won 1st. place for Sanilac County First Impressions Contest, for her Artist Poster-- subject was Laughter. She drew a picture from one of our funniest Walt Disney World memories. While waiting for a bus to take her family back to their hotel a slimy tree frog decided to land on Betty's Dad, Joe Milett's leg. While "screaming like a girl,"

Joe knocked it off repeatedly but it kept jumping back on his leg. Good job, Betty!! Too..... Funny, Joe.

In the December 6, 2016 issue of The Times Herald the Starlites are in their 18th year and winning several key victories. The Starlites are a Competitive Dance team, they competed at the Showcase America Unlimited Dance Competition in Hazel Park, Mi. Ava Slossar with other girls from the Pom Division, won first, in the Starlites Mini Team and received High Point Award. The Starlites Youth Team was first in the Youth Pom Division, taking home the Ultimate Star rating in the division. In addition, they were first in the Jazz, Lyrical and Hip Hop Division and received he High Point Award from their Pom routine. Abby Slossar and other girls are in the Youth Team. The Starlite Junior Division are Allison and Brianna Slossar and other girls who placed first in Junior Lyrical, second in Junior Jazz and third in Junior Pom. The Junior Team received High Superior ratings in all categories and were awarded the High Point Award for their Lyrical routine. The Starlites, Senior Team was first in Jazz and Lyrical and second in the Pom and Hip Hop Divisions. The Senior Team received the Ultimate Star rating in all four divisions. They were awarded the High Point Award for their Lyrical Team. They are coached by Laurie Charron. The Slossar girls are granddaughters of Larry and Debbie Scheffler.

We have had Visiting Ministers, Elder Kurt Fishwild and wife, Susan and children, Megan and Ethan from Amherstburg, Ont. and

Elder Mick Ruch and wife, Shawn from Grand Blanc, Mi. We have been so blessed by their preaching of God’s Word. Our prayers are for their safety to and from their home. God’s Blessing! We even want to thank all of our Ministers for their guidance and the preached word.

Our Branch Hosted the Blue Water League for the Blind, Christmas Potluck. Priest Bob Harris said, the Blessing for the food. They had music playing and they had raffled off several Christmas Gifts to all that were present. They celebrated two birthdays with one large decorated cake. Everyone, had a full tummy and good fellowship.

The Youth of our Branch, on December 17, decorated Christmas cookies to give to the Congregation after the Sunday’s service. Thank you Children, they were Delicious!  
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We received a Thank You Card for the Christmas Gift Card from our present Presiding Elder Ed Smerer and wife, Sharon. Thank you to ALL for the Gift Card. We hope you have a wonderful and Healthy New Year. God Bless!

Ed and Sharon  
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We received a Thank You for the Christmas Gift Card from our past Presiding Elder David Teeple and wife, Barbara who are residing now in Arizona for the next few months. He says, “We do miss seeing you and worshipping with you. You are in our thoughts and

prayers and we wish you all a Healthy New Year, spiritually as well as physically. May God richly bless you and thank you for being such wonderful friends.”

**Dave and Barb Teeple**

We had our first Potluck for the New Year. Always, good food and fellowship. We ask prayers for ALL that are sick and ailing. We wish you God's Blessings for a healing. We would like prayers for those who have lost family members or friends.

### **Sanilac**



**By: Kathleen Palmer**

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven; Ecclesiastes 3:1

Well here it is winter. Our season changed from colorful to white. How beautiful God created each season.

A youth retreat was held at Oakwood on Nov 11-13. Emma Des Jardins attended from our branch. She gave up playing her last basketball game to attend. She loves to go to these retreats where they are taught the gospel and have fellowship and fun with the other children.

A business meeting and election of officers was held on Nov.20<sup>th</sup> with pastor Elder Barent Eliason in charge. Barent and Barb Eliason went to their second

home in Missouri for Thanksgiving. An Eliason Reunion was held at their son Peter's home. Barent's brother Bob and his sister Karen were able to be there along with their families. A wonderful time was had. It was the first time for all of them to be together at one time. Barent suffered a serious stroke, the day before they were to return to Michigan. It was touch and go for a while but through God's healing hand and through administering by the elders, he was able to return home in January. He had spent 40 days in the hospital. He is going to rehab and recovering very well. Barb was right there with him as well as family and friends. The Lord has work for him to do yet.

A Christmas program was planned on Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, but due to bad weather had to be cancelled. We then decided to postpone the program until Barent and Barb could be with us. They were delighted to hear this. Priest Mike Daniels, Deacon Kerri Horton and Elder Jim McLeod carried on the Lord's work while Barent was recuperating.

We had a Christmas candle light service, with Deacon Kerri Horton in charge with singing and scriptures of Jesus' birth.

We have not had a piano player since Barb was in Missouri and her bad back problem and Dora's health problems until Elder Eldon Preston volunteered to play piano when he could. It has been so wonderful to have piano music again. We truly are blessed to have him. Also his wife and mother.

The Peck High School band had a Christmas concert with senior Gary Des Jardins playing his trumpet and junior Maddy Parker

playing the clarinet. Also Sydney Parker and Emma Des Jardins had a part in the class Christmas play. We pray everyone had a Blessed Christmas!

January was a special time as Barent and Barb Eliason were able to return home. Barent was determined to come right to church and teach his class, which he did from memory, as his eyesight was affected by the stroke. Truly he is a dedicated servant of the Lord.

On Jan first, communion Sunday, Avery Carpenter, granddaughter of Bev Miller, took her first communion. It was very special for her and the congregation. We have been having prayer service every other Wednesday for the winter months at Barent and Barbs home.

The Christmas Program was held Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Dora, Kerri and Kathleen were in charge, which involved many. Emma, Brandi and Avery sang. Denise sang a very beautiful song. Dora and Kathleen read scripture from Luke. Brian read a story with Dora. The women's choir sang and Elder Eldon Preston played the piano. When church was over we had a delicious potluck dinner. Gifts were opened and a gift certificate was presented to our pastor and his wife. A wonderful fellowship was enjoyed by all.

We would like to recognize our own priesthood for the special messages they bring to us. Priest

Mike Daniels, Elder Jim McLeod and Deacon Gary Des Jardins. We appreciate so much the priesthood who travel a long way to bring us the gospel message: Elder Keith Dabbs and son, Elder Mike Ruch and Shawn, Elder Ed Mc Donald and mother Shirley, Deacon Kerri Horton and Elder Gary Holmes and Marge.

A very special event happened on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>, Isabel Oakley was born to Julia and Keith Albrecht. She weighed 7lbs and was 20.5 inches long. Her proud grandparents are Dora Gutierrez, Lowell Decker and Great grandpa Charlie Guitierrez. She was welcomed home by big brother Mattias. Congratulations to all.

Barb Eliason had back surgery Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> at Saginaw Cooper Hospital. After she is released she will be at Marlette Rehab for a couple of weeks. We are praying this surgery was successful and she will suffer no more with back pain.

Our Mother/Daughter Banquet will be on Sat. May 13<sup>th</sup> at noon. The theme is, "LOVING ANGELS." We extend a welcoming invitation to all who would like to come to enjoy a delicious noon meal and a very special program.

## **Regional Activities for the next quarter**

### **Feb. 24-26 Younger Youth Winter Retreat**

Garden City Restoration Branch

Contact: Betty Lou Newman

### **March 10-12 Zion's Older Youth Winter Retreat**

Garden City Restoration Branch

Contact: Michelle & Shaun Turner

### **Saturday, April 29, Great Lakes Restoration Branches Spring Women's Retreat**

Algonac Restoration Branch

9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Contact: Val Bradley or Kathi Havener

### **Saturday, May 13, Mother-Daughter Banquet**

Noon

Sanilac Restoration Branch

Contact: Barb Eliason or Kathleen Palmer

### **July 9-15 Summer Older Youth Camp at Woodlands Campground Association**

Thru Community of Christ 318 S. Sage Rd. Hale, MI

Contact: Michelle & Shaun Turner

### **July 16-22 Summer Younger Youth Camp at Erie Beach Campgrounds**

Contact: Betty Lou Newman

### **July 24 – 30 Great Lakes Restoration Branches Reunion**

A Joint Branch Crafts Table has been set aside for donations from each Branch, to contribute to the Reunion Fund. Please contact Kim Gilchrist, Wendy Holmes, Connie Burns or Elaine King about donations...they should be donated with a price tag attached at least one (1) week before reunion for those not attending reunion and those attending can just bring the donations with them.

### **From The Editor's Desk - Contact info:**

Jim Bradley

69250 Campground Rd.

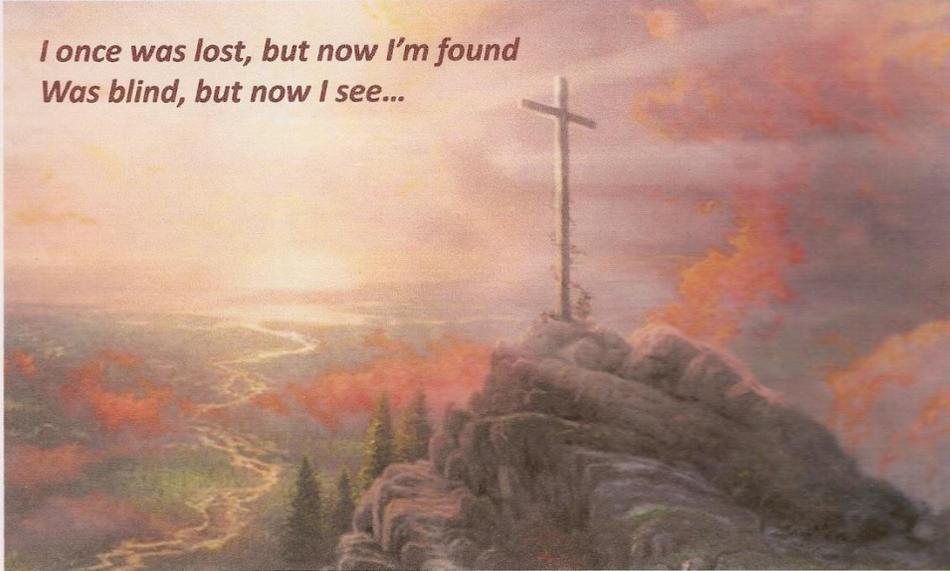
Romeo, MI 48065

Email to: [zionswatchman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:zionswatchman@sbcglobal.net)

Great Lakes Restoration Branches  
2017 Spring Women's Retreat

*Amazing Grace*

*I once was lost, but now I'm found  
Was blind, but now I see...*



**Date:** Saturday, April 29, 2017  
**Time:** 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Algonac Restoration Branch  
818 Market St.  
Algonac, MI 48001  
**Cost:** Free will offering  
**Bring:** Your Scriptures, a good sense of humor,  
and a desire to fellowship and share

Please let Val Bradley know ASAP if you will attend  
Val Bradley: [victoriangalval@aol.com](mailto:victoriangalval@aol.com)  
69250 Campground Rd., Romeo, MI 48065  
(586) 202-3351