

Obtain New Heart

Welcome

Thank you for being here. Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who have stepped up to make this conference a success. And I would like to take a moment to say Thank you to all the volunteers that helped assist or prepare or managed an activity. This part of the conference couldn't have been possible without all of you so thank you!

Thank you to the speakers, the staff at Zion ponderosa, and all of you have sent donations, and those who have helped set up and have taken on different parts of the conference, sound, and video, sacrament, website, programs. A lot goes into this and it takes us all to make this happen. So thank you to those who have helped put it on and to those who have come to participate. Its amazing what can happen when this many people come together.

A Couple of things,

Bathrooms are north of the lodge, there are additional bathrooms and showers and laundry rooms on the other side of the swimming pool.

Recreation center is where you can find and check out equipment for extra activities provided by the Ranch. (Volley ball, pickle ball, paddle boarding etc.)

The catered meals for those of you that purchased them will be in the tent to the left of the bathrooms. The Cloke of Charity activity will also be there.

The medical tent is located next to the welcome tent. You can go there for any medical needs or to the welcome tent for lost and found, or questions.

If you are having any parking issues or room or meal issues, go to the front desk at the lodge and they will help you.

2 fire pits by the lodge.

There is a bigger fire pit on the other side of the pond you are welcome to use at night. Please keep a close eye on your children around the pond and fires. Please do not leave them unattended. We want to make sure that everyone is safe while we are here.

Opening prayer-

Hello Everyone,

My name is Carolyn Barlow. My husband Mark and I were baptized and took the covenant in the summer of 2020. Most of you probably remember us from the time our new born twins Amulek and Alma were in the hospital the beginning of 2021. I want to take a moment to say thank you all for bearing that burden with us. We are overwhelmed by all the amount of love and many prayers and emotional and financial support that you all showed to us. Most of you didn't even know us but I know that we couldn't have fought that battle alone, without all of you. We really learned a valuable lesson in how we can bind the enemy through uniting together and bearing one another's burdens. You all did that with us. I believe it was a lesson for us all. And because of your willingness and love, our two boys are with us today and doing very well. The Lord has been so good to us.

When we were first baptized, we went to the Lord in prayer Asking that we could help with this or that. We felt like we were getting nowhere for months. Finally we put aside our own desires and asked the Lord what it was **He** wanted us to do and we were given the direction we should go. It wasn't exactly what we had in mind, not what we wanted to do at all if I were to be honest. But we started going the direction the Lord led us. As we went, we found that there had been a lot of division and hurt among us as a people. We spent the last few years seeking to understand why and prayerfully asking the Lord what He'd like us to do about it. He

continually led us, taught us and shown us many things in the last 3 years. He used our boys, especially Amulek, to give us many valuable insights in the direction to go. All of the times in the hospital, gave us new layers of understanding and inspiration. We did our best to follow that and listen. Though our challenges have been very difficult, we are grateful for the many experiences we have had that have led us the direction we should go in seeking to bring healing amongst this people.

I'd like to share just one of these experiences.

The second time Amulek was life-flighted to the hospital was almost exactly 2 years from the time Him and his twin brother Alma were life-flighted the first time as new borns. This time it was because the shunt he had became infected. While we were there with him, Mark and I spent a lot of time praying about the issues dividing this people, asking what can be done. While we were praying about it, Amulek's oxygen suddenly dropped and his heart rate spiked. I grabbed the nurses and they quickly got him oxygen and called the doctors. He had gone into a major seizure. The doctors gave him a few doses of medication but nothing would make the seizure stop. They got to where it was too dangerous to give him anymore of the ones they had so they had to order a new medication. To give Amulek the support he needed, they took us down to ICU to the exact same room we were in 2 years before. We were only hours away from the anniversary of the first time he had been there. A lot of memories flooded back to us of the many terrifying moments we had had in that room before, and now here we were again. Fear tried to overtake us and I recognized it immediately and began to fight against it. I started to focus on my breath and get my mind in the present moment seeking to hear the Lord's voice, remembering the promises he had given to us before. Eventually I had peace come over me. I began saying to the storm, "peace be still" over and over again. I was surprised by how calm I felt, I had an inner knowing that Amulek would be okay. And I became aware in that moment that I was experiencing healing from the trauma that happened 2 years ago in that very room. I continued to say "peace be still." 90 min had gone by and they still hadn't gotten the new medication, then Amulek finally came out of the seizure on his own. Less than 20 hours later we were back up stairs and Amulek was doing great. After reflecting on this experience we felt the Voice of the Lord whisper to us the purpose of it. Our prayers were being answered.

We had the knowing and understanding given to us that in order to find healing of the trauma that we experience 2 years ago that we had to go back and face it. I had to experience it again but do it differently. I was able to be present and aware of my triggers coming up and let them go so I could find peace again even in the midst of chaos. Then it came to us that the same thing needed to happen for this people. We were given the understanding that we have been stuck, unable to move forward, that we needed to go back and process the hurt we have caused one another in order to heal from the trauma of our past wounds. It was clear that we didn't need to spend a lot of time revisiting these wounds, we just needed to be able to bring awareness to it and process it so we could let it go and move forward. We have been on a journey being led by experiences like this that has given us little bits of pieces of information on what needs to happen. We have simply trusted and followed the voice each step not knowing where we would end up. And now here we are. We have seen pieces fall into place that we had no idea were in the works. We have been in awe watching it all unfold.

This weekend is an opportunity for us as a people to reflect back on the last 7 years. It is an opportunity to begin to find healing among us. We have felt to go about this as gently as possible, creating ways we can unite our hearts together again. Our intention is to create a safe space where we can come together and "through play" discover the things that divide us from one another. We hope to explore how we can overcome our differences through charity and learn to see one another the way the Lord sees us so we can love each other as He does. In this process we hope we will begin to unite our hearts together in an effort to be one so we can be the Lord's people. He has said, "If you are not one you are not mine." Our hope is that throughout this weekend, the things that currently divide us will begin to dissipate and we can learn what we ought.

We recognize that the theme of this conference has been a little concerning to some. So hopefully by now, some if not all of that concern has been lifted and you can see our hearts. We have been pondering and praying about this for about two years now. We are doing our best to make this fun, and non threatening while at the same time open up a safe space for us to ponder on the questions, what have we learned and what ought we to have learned. We hope that you ponder on these questions and talk amongst each other about them, all weekend. I think we all will be pleasantly surprised by the direction this goes. I know we have been so far. We don't have a planned outcome of how this needs to look. We are only seeking to take the next step in the direction we are guided. Our hope and prayer for this weekend is that this will be another step in the right direction of knitting our hearts together as a people so we can cry with one voice and begin to bear good fruit. We are grateful for the insight the Covenant of Christ has given. It is no accident that it has been joined to this conference. We have gained so much light from it and hope that your conversations will also include what we ought to learn from this book that has been made plain to us.

I want to spend a couple minutes talking about the activities before we split up. We have spent many hours prayerfully preparing 6 different activities that will take place this morning, and tomorrow morning. It is set up that all of you here today will be able to participate in 4 possibly 5 of them by the end of tomorrow. I hope you brought your journals because you will want to write down your experience as you will reflect back on these experiences for the rest of your life. Every one of them has a powerful lesson to learn. They have a way of getting you to see things differently.

You all should have received colored stickers at the welcome table with four Letters written on it. For the purpose of organization, This is the suggested order of Activities to attend, 2 today and 2 tomorrow. You will either go to "The Wall" or "Volcanic Eruption". If there is time after these you will do "Parachute Toss". They are similar in that they will require physical activity but different in the lessons to be learned from them. In saying that, I wish to say, please do not let your physical abilities get in the way of participating in these, even if you just watch it. You will get experience from watching, but yours and everyone else's experience will be multiplied immensely by your participation. I can assure you that the most impactful experiences come from helping one another. That is what we are here to learn.

Please make sure you attend all three of the following: "A Cloke of Charity", "Soul Connection" and "Reflection". These do not require any physical activity but we hope that they too will be very impactful. They are completely different than each other.

We as a body of believers are about 7 years old in the covenant. We are still children. So, I would like to end with a children's short story from the book "Love Does for Kids". I hope you will hear this story with the ears of a child. Notice the simplicity of things at the beginning. And notice the method used to turn enemies into friends. My purpose in sharing this story is to set the stage and shed some light on what we are hoping to accomplish here this weekend through these activities.

This story is called "Living Water".

Our family has a cabin in Canada that we call the Lodge. One of my favorite things about the Lodge is that it has been a safe place for people to solve problems.

Jesus gave some great ideas on how we could solve problems. He said that if we have a problem with someone else, we need to go to that person directly and talk about it so we can be friends again. Sometimes talking through a problem can be hard, and we might need to ask someone else to help us. Jesus said that was okay too. An important part of loving others is giving them the chance to make things right when they've made a mistake. If you've made a

mistake and need someone to help you talk it through, that's something parents and teachers are really good at. When Jesus didn't know what to do, He asked His Father for help. We can do the same.

When our family made friends with different world leaders, we found out that some of the countries weren't getting along very well. There had been wars, and people had said unkind things, so the leaders had trouble talking to each other. We had just built the lodge, so we thought, what could be a better place to bring together people who were having a hard time talking to each other? Maybe we could help them become friends.

For the first gathering at the Lodge, we invited folks from five different countries that were very upset with each other. We didn't tell them beforehand who else we had invited. We thought they might not come if they knew! When they all arrived, it was a little awkward. Our new friends were shocked. "You want me to spend time with them?!" They each exclaimed, pointing to someone in the room they didn't like. "That person's country is at war with my country! We can't be friends!"

Our new friends hadn't been at the Lodge for long before they raised their voices and started saying mean things to each other. It was getting bad fast, and I could tell that our new friends needed help getting past these problems.

"Friends," I said, stopping the fight. "In our house, we have a rule: anyone who fights has to jump off the cliff behind the Lodge into the water with me. Let's go!" There was a brief moment of stunned silence, but they could see I was serious. One by one our guests made the leap into the freezing cold water with all their clothes on. Something amazing happened as we all bobbed in the salty ocean water. The fights were forgotten, and our new friends started cheering each other on to jump again. They laughed until their sides hurt.

People climbed up the cliff to do more jumps. Some people jumped together, holding hands to help each other conquer their fear of heights. This shared moment of bravery and adventure put conflict in its rightful place— the bottom of the ocean. The water dissolved the anger the leaders had toward each other. That evening, after an afternoon of cliff jumping, these new friends, who had been angry with each other just a few hours before, sat in a circle and shared stories and talked about their hopes for the future of their countries.

I'm not surprised that Jesus talked about water so much. His first miracle was changing ordinary water into wine. He walked on water, was baptized in it, and calmed it when the waves got big. He even compared himself to water, saying that the life He had come to bring was so good for us it would be like taking a drink of water and never being thirsty again. I think we can do a lot more with water than we think. We may not be able to walk on it, but the next time you have a problem with someone and can't figure out how to solve it, you might want to just jump in the water together! You don't need to jump off a cliff (and, really, you should only do that with permission from a grown-up) but maybe you could think of something else to do to help bring people together.

In sharing this story, Our hope is that we too will be able to lay down our conflicts, in whatever form they be, and come together in laughter, and support of one another, while playing together.

Thank you for coming and participating and we hope you will all have a great time!

Lunch will be at 1, then we will regroup at 2:45.

Please take a few min to use the bathroom, and grab your journals and prepare yourselves for the activities. We will be starting them right on time so that we can have the meals catered right on time. And remember to have have fun with each other.