



The Saints' Observer

The Newsletter of the Joint Conference of Restoration Branches

October 2009

Volume 4, Number 3

A Call to Confer

Restoration saints from the United States are invited to gather in Independence, Mo., for the Third Annual United States National Conference, sponsored by the Joint Conference of Restoration Branches. The call to gather for worship, fellowship, and conferring on the business of the church is extended to restoration branches, members of restoration branches, persons who are or were previously members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (now officially known as the Community of Christ) and others who were baptized by authorized priesthood according to the scriptures.

The conference will convene on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009, at 10:00 a.m. at the Gathering

Place in Independence, Mo. (maps and driving directions are on page 11). Two and one-half days of the conference will be dedicated to business sessions. The final day of the conference will be a joint worship service for all conference attendees and all other saints who wish to attend.

All of the conference activities will take place at the Gathering Place, except for the campfire on Saturday evening, which will be at the Independence Branch. Business sessions will be held in the Conference Center. Worship services on Thursday and Friday evenings will be held in the Worship Center. On Sunday, Oct. 18, the worship service will be in the Conference Center.

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The 2009 United States National Conference begins Oct. 15 at The Gathering
One People with ... One Priesthood having ... One Voice

The Saints' Observer

The Newsletter of the Joint Conference of Restoration Branches

The Saints' Observer is designed as an aid to those supporting or interested in the JCRB. It is published by the Joint Conference of Restoration Branches in Independence, Missouri.

The Saints' Observer is developed by the Publicity Subcommittee of the Logistics Committee.

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Newsletter Staff

Gary Whiting, Editor

Rob Rolfe

Yvonne Galusha

Tara Broadway

Officers of the JCRB

Rob Rolfe, President

Gary Whiting, Vice President

Tony Durant, Treasurer

Rudy Leutzinger, Secretary

Jim Vun Cannon, Recorder

Contact Us

JCRB Conference Office; 1100 West Truman Road, Independence, MO, 64050. 816-252-1457. www.conferenceofbranches.org

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Parking at the Gathering Place has been expanded. New parking is available behind the Conference Center building, including expanded parking for RVs. It is especially important that the parking behind the Conference Center be filled before the parking on the hill on Sunday, the 18th since First Branch of the Remnant Church will be meeting in the Worship Center on that morning.

The conference facilities have a new feature that may interest some of you. The Conference Center, behind the stage area, has been modified into dormitory spaces. There are some handicap rooms, rooms for families and multiple persons. Restrooms are available. Room rates, without bedding, are six dollars per night per person. Bedding is available for an extra two dollars a night. Please make known your desire to use the

dormitory spaces before arriving at the conference.

To assist the less mobile among us, golf carts will be available to provide transportation from parking lots. Check at the registration booths for this service.

Plans are being made for a youth lock-in at the Conference Center. This will likely be on Friday evening, Oct. 16. For more information, check at the registration desk and listen for announcements during the conference.

A campfire will be held at the Independence Branch on Saturday, Oct. 17. Food and drink will be provided. You will need to bring appropriate clothing, chairs or blankets. Directions to the Independence Branch will be provided at the conference. We are not exactly sure of the weather on Saturday evening, but we are assured that it will get dark, with a roaring campfire, and we anticipate a good measure of the Holy Spirit and warm fellowship.

**Scriptures in hardback, paperback,
leatherbound and audio editions are now
available from the JCRB office.**

Call 816-252-1457 for more information.

**Joint Conference of Restoration
Branches**

**United States
National Conference
of the Church of Jesus
Christ**

1100 W Truman Road
Independence, MO 64050
816-252-1457

October 15-18, 2009

**General Theme: Zion the Beautiful
Beckons Us On**

**Thursday,
October 15** **Our Strength Comes From God
Psalm 121-124**

**Friday,
October 16** **Those Who Trust in the Lord Cannot Be Moved
Psalm 125, 129, 130**

**Saturday,
October 17** **The Lord Will Bless Those Who Walk in His Ways
Psalm 127, 128**

**Sunday,
October 18** **Bless the Lord, All You Servants of the Lord
Psalm 131-134**

Conference Staff

JCRB President	High Priest Rob Rolfe
JCRB Vice-President	Seventy Gary Whiting
JCRB Secretary	Elder Rudy Leutzinger
JCRB Treasurer	Elder Tony Durant
JCRB Recorder	Elder Jim Vun Cannon
Registration	Credentials Committee
Conference Manager	Sister Stephanie Hasselman
Audio/Visual	Priest Dennis King
Security/Parking	Deacon Steve LaHue
Building Maintenance	Deacon Ed Cummings
IT	Priest Duane Newman
Food Service	Sister Kelly Canfield
Music Director	Sister Karen Blakeney

Mass Meetings

High Priests/Patriarchs	High Priest Rob Rolfe
Seventies	Seventy Neil Simmons/ Ron Smith
Elders Quorum	Elder Timothy Johns
Aaronic Quorums	Bishopric (Cederstrom, Durant, Giertz)
Priests	Priest Roger Resch
Teachers	Teacher Rob Sinclair
Deacons	Deacons Steve LaHue, Ed Cummings
Women	Sister Barbara Giertz
Legislative Sessions	High Priest Rob Rolfe

Conference Schedule

Date/Day: October 15, Thursday

Remnant Church Gathering Place

Daily Theme: Psalm 121-124; Our Strength Comes From God

WC = Worship Center; CC = Conference Center

Time/Location	Event	Presiding
7:00 AM CC Lobby	Registration	Recorder Jim Vun Cannon
8:00 AM WC Sanctuary	Prayer Service	Elder Kerry Lancaster
9:30 AM	Break	
10:00 AM CC Auditorium	Opening Session Order Conference Seat Officers & Delegates Approve Agenda Order of Business/ Resolutions Ask Lord's Guidance & Blessing Informal Business Session	High Priest Rob Rolfe
12:00 PM WC Cafeteria	Lunch	
1:30 PM CC Auditorium	Business Session Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
3:15 PM	Break	
3:30 PM	Quorum Meetings: Membership Aaronic Priesthd Priests Teachers Deacons #1 Deacons #2 Elders High Priests Seventy	Elder Jim Vun Cannon Bishop Carl Cederstrom Priest Roger Resch Teacher Rob Sinclair Deacon Steve LaHue Deacon Ed Cummings Elder Timothy Johns High Priest Rob Rolfe Seventy Ron Smith
	Suggested Discussion Topics: General Church Organization & Government Stakes and Districts Role of Standing Quorums Rules and Resolutions	
5:00 PM	Supper	
6:30 PM WC Sanctuary	Song Service	Sister Karen Blakeney

6:45 PM WC Sanctuary	Worship	Elder David Newman
9:00 PM WC Cafeteria	Fellowship/Refreshment	
10:00 PM	Close Building	

Friday, October 16

Remnant Church Gathering Place

Daily Theme: Psalm 125, 129, 130; Those Who Trust in the Lord

Time/Location	Event	Presiding
7:00 AM CC Lobby	Registration	Recorder Jim Vun Cannon
8:00 AM WC Sanctuary	Prayer Service	Elder Vern Allen
9:30 AM	Break	
10:00 AM CC Auditorium	Business Session Reports from Mass Meetings Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
12:00 PM WC Cafeteria	Lunch	
1:30 PM	Quorum Meetings: Women Unordained Aaronic Priesthd Priests Teachers Deacons #1 Deacons #2 Elders High Priests Seventy	Elder Jim Vun Cannon Bishop Carl Cederstrom Priest Roger Resch Teacher Rob Sinclair Deacon Steve LaHue Deacon Ed Cummings Elder Timothy Johns High Priest Rob Rolfe Seventy Ron Smith
2:30 PM	Break	
2:45 PM CC Auditorium	Business Session Reports from Mass Meetings Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
5:00 PM	Supper	
6:30 PM WC Sanctuary	Song Service	Sister Karen Blakeney
6:45 PM WC Sanctuary	Worship	Elder Chuck Perry Patriarch Milo Burnett
9:00 PM WC Cafeteria	Fellowship/Refreshment	
10:00 PM	Close Building	

Saturday, October 17

Remnant Church Gathering Place

Daily Theme: Psalm 127, 128; The Lord Will Bless Those Who Walk in

Time/Location	Event	Presiding
7:00 AM CC Lobby	Registration	Recorder Jim Vun Cannon
8:00 AM WC Sanctuary	Prayer Service	Elder David Drummond
9:30 AM	Break	
9:45 AM CC Auditorium	Business Session Reports from Mass Meetings/Final Action Items Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
12:00 PM WC Cafeteria	Lunch	
1:30 PM CC Auditorium	Business Session Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
3:00 PM	Break	
3:15 PM CC Auditorium	Business Session Conference Business	High Priest Rob Rolfe
5:00 PM	Close Conference Clean-up facilities	
6:30 PM	Move activities to Independence Branch, 707 Allen Road	
7:00 PM	Fellowship Food/Games/ Etc	Youth Committee
8:00 PM	Campfire	
10:00 PM	Close Building	

Sunday, October 18

Remnant Church Gathering Place

Daily Theme: Psalm 131-134; Bless the Lord, All You Servants of the Lord

Time/Location	Event	Presiding
8:00 AM CC Auditorium	Prayer Service	
10:30 AM	Break	
10:45 AM CC Auditorium	Worship Service	Elder Dan Sherer
12:00 PM	Close Service	
12:30 PM	Vacate Building	

God's Promises for Prosperity

By Barbara Giertz

A women's retreat sponsored by the Restoration Women's Ministries was held Saturday, Sept. 12, 2009, at the Independence Branch. While attendance did not meet expectations, the event was considered successful by those who attended.

In discussing "God's Promises for Prosperity," Bishop Carl Cederstrom issued a call not only to the required financial stewardship but to a stewardship in the very living of our lives. Elder Bob Giertz followed with the basics of beginning financial accounting but also reminded us that stewardship embodies more than our finances. Committed Stewardship requires the "...discovery, accumulation, management and distribution of resources..." including all the gifts and talents God has given us.

Sister Kim Augenstein fulfilled her calling to exhort and edify

her sisters in both spiritual and physical preparation for the difficult times that will come. Both areas of preparation represent additional facets of stewardship. A committed preparation, first spiritual then physical, will bring us closer to God and strengthen our accountability for all God has spoken and given. Memorization of scripture and hymns has always been a spiritual foundation for the physical difficulties in life. A 72-hour emergency pack proves stewardship for the physical life in whatever disaster may occur.

The day gave us a clearer understanding of stewardship, of our committed response to God in all things, in all facets of our lives, that we may prosper in even the darker days to come. The retreat was video recorded and a DVD was produced. This DVD may be obtained through the JCRB office for \$2.00.

**Tracts are now available at the JCRB Office.
Call 816-252-1457 for more information.**

Notices

A scholarship fund to provide educational assistance for church member youth in Nepal has been established. Seventy Bill Leutzinger has secured the assistance of Storehouse Ministries to manage this fund. Twenty children are now eligible for assistance. Brother Leutzinger is requesting \$5,000.00 to pay for these children to attend school for one year.

Please consider the financial support you can give to aid these children in Nepal. Contributions should be made to Storehouse Ministries. The mailing address for Storehouse Ministries is Storehouse Ministries of ZION, 1100 W. Truman Rd., Independence, Mo. 64050. To find out more about Storehouse Ministries, please go to their website, www.zion-mo.org.

Frank Frye is organizing a tour through the Book of Mormon lands in December. There are still places open on the tour, which begins Dec. 5 and ends Dec. 16. If you would like more information, or to sign up for the tour, please contact Seventy Frank Frye at frankfrye@gmail.com.

Contributions to the Joint Conference of Restoration Branches may now be made through PayPal. If you choose to use this method for making contributions, be sure that you write on the memo line to identify any special distribution for your contribution, e.g., tithing, etc.

One word of warning—if you had a previous Pay Pal account and you have either changed your password or your credit card, or forgotten your password, you will not be able to log in to your account unless you first call customer service and get a five-letter code e-mailed to you to reset your password. Once your password is reset, you can login and edit your credit card information. Each time your credit card's expiration date passes, you will need to edit your account information. Your password must contain eight characters or more to be valid.

The New Testament on CD is now available from the JCRB Office. These recordings are a digital re-mastering of the original work by Harold Whitehead. The New Testament

of the Inspired Version joins the Book of Mormon CDs in the series of audio scriptures. The New Testament can be purchased for \$39.95. The Book of Mormon set costs \$79.95. It is hoped that the Old Testament will soon be available.



The battle in the courts between the Community of Christ and the Devon Park Restoration Branch continues. This means that the expenses of

the branch also continue. Please remember these saints and the need they have for your prayers, support, and financial assistance.

The Gathering Place

2820 S. 291 HWY, Outer Road, Independence, MO 64057



The Gathering Place is located between 23rd Street and I-70. It is accessible from the access road that parallels Highway 291 on the west side of the road. The complex has two buildings: the Worship Center (WC on the schedule) and the Conference Center (CC).

The Songs of Ascent

By Gary Whiting

Jerusalem is a city with a long history and a central place in the worship of Israel. David conquered the city and established the center of Israelite government there. He also established the city as the place of God's house, the Temple. Jerusalem became the Holy City and the most important location in Israel.

The Law of Moses required every male to come to Jerusalem to observe certain feasts and special observances of worship.

Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty; Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee. (Deuteronomy 16:16-17)

The place chosen of the Lord was Jerusalem. David arranged

for the Ark of the Covenant to be transferred to Jerusalem. David's son, Solomon, built a temple unto the Lord in Jerusalem after David's death. This beautiful temple was destroyed in the Babylonian conquest, but the city continued to be the spiritual center of every Jewish heart.

After the Jews were released from Babylon, the temple and then the city were rebuilt. The second temple lacked the glorious appearance of the first, but it was no less significant in the worship of the Jews who returned. King Herod, during the Roman conquest of the promised land, greatly expanded the temple and its surroundings. In this temple, Jesus and the apostles ministered.

There were many reasons for Abraham's children to make the journey to Jerusalem. They might come to observe any of the feasts described in the Law. They may come to make a special offering or to make a special plea to the Lord. These journeys were often made as families or larger groups. As they traveled to this

avored place, the people would try to prepare themselves to come into the house of the Lord. A special group of psalms are believed to have been a part of the worship and preparation of the Israelites as they made their way up to Jerusalem.

Psalms 120-134 are called the *songs of degrees* in the Inspired Version and King James Version. In newer translations, these psalms are called *songs of ascent*. The two names mean the same thing, but ascent is easier to understand, as the meaning is “to go up.” Many believe that this group of psalms were sung or recited by pilgrims as they traveled to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built in the mountains of Israel. Regardless of the road a pilgrim traveled, he/she had to go up to Jerusalem. This meant that they had a difficult road to travel and that their destination was in front of them as they traveled. As the parable of the Good Samaritan reveals, the roads were often dangerous places. The trip to worship in Jerusalem was not free of risk. The thought of being in the Holy City and approaching the Lord in worship at the Temple was also awe-inspiring and humbling. The psalms were used to seek the protection of the Lord and to prepare themselves for entering

the House of the Lord.

This picture is very useful for our needs at this conference and beyond. Our hope is to arrive, at long last, in the place of rest prepared for us by our Lord in the Promised Land of Zion. We must go up to the place of God’s dwelling. This journey is not without its difficulties and trials, but the exertion is well rewarded by the attainment of the Holy City. In our day, the journey is not physical, but spiritual. Like those pilgrims of old, we must draw our focus on the object of our desire, abiding in the presence of the Lord through the grace of Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

The road is spiritually hazardous and perhaps exhausting. Reviewing the principles in these psalms should help us be prepared and refreshed. It is easy for us to be discouraged by the rocks in the road. Rocks, like misunderstandings, impatience, persecutions and failures, cause us to stumble or receive temporary hurts. Like the Israelite worshipers of old, our focus must be on the delivering power of God and His promise to bring us into the kingdom.

A quick review of the 15 psalms gives the impression that the travelers are starting a long way from their goal. Psalm 121 and 123 speak about lifting the

eyes to the place of our help. On the journey to Jerusalem it would be natural to lift one's eyes up to see the city to which one was traveling. Zion is the place of God's house and thus the place from which blessings arise.

The Songs of Ascent reinforce Zion as the place from where Yahweh's blessings emanate, thus associating prosperity centralized in Zion with the pilgrimage to Jerusalem (*Dictionary of the Old Testament*, page 939).

In their travels, the Jews would have looked to God to preserve them as they journeyed toward His place of abode. The reference to Kedar and Mesech in Psalm 120 reflect the long distances some would travel to worship God in Jerusalem. Psalm 121 mentions that God will preserve his people in comings and goings. Psalm 123 looks to the time when the traveler's feet will stand in the gate. How joyful was the call to go together to Jerusalem!

God's protective hand is praised in Psalms 124-126, 129-130. The faithful sojourner must place full reliance on the Lord for safety and deliverance. God's past blessings are counted as assurance that He will bless and deliver those who trust in Him. He has faithfully heard the prayers of His people and delivered them from dangers many times.

The series of Psalms also instruct the pilgrim to put reliance upon the word of God and to follow His commandments with a steadfast faith and diligent obedience. We are only delivered into the blessing of God by hoping in the covenant promises of God and walking in His ways. This is the theme of Psalm 128-132. The righteous will flourish and the wicked will be destroyed.

Psalm 133 is exclamation of the wonderful fellowship of the saints that live together in unity in God's city. David describes this as the most glorious of blessings and equates it with the everlasting blessing of the Lord and the pouring out of God's spirit (precious ointment running from head to beard and then to the skirts of the priest's robes).

Psalm 134 is a call to praise God for all we are worth forever. Having been delivered into the city of God, Zion, we are to rejoice. The journey is complete and we are home at last.

This brief review of these psalms should quickly cause our spiritual eyes to view the journey before us as a people. It applies equally to the individual saint, but the fullness of joy in God is associated with fellowship, through God, with the brethren, or the body of believers.

It is like the journey of those in Lehi's vision along the narrow path. If we keep our eyes fixed on the goal and our hands (hope, effort, and energy) on the Rod of Iron, and believing that God will deliver us out of the temptations and afflictions of the wicked, we will attain the goal of the Tree of Life.

So it is with our journey towards Zion. We start a long way off, but the goal is there before us. We look up to see the Holy City and to look for the coming of Jesus Christ again. There are difficulties along the journey, but God is able to lead us there. He will deal with the enemies along the way. We must continue to cry out, with our

eyes looking up, relying on His word and promise.

This week, as we gather together, use the days together to dedicate yourself to this journey with all of the brothers and sisters. Rejoice and be glad, you are invited to come to Zion. Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord.

The time at conference is not the end of the story for us. We will need to go home again and carry the message of the gospel and our testimony of the Christ with us. May the events of this week together encourage us in the Lord, may His strength be granted to each and may the Light of Life fill each soul that the Kingdom of God may go forth.

**Joint Conference of Restoration Branches
October 2009
U.S. National Conference Budget**

This conference is an unfunded, non-budget event funded by donations ONLY.

Building Rent	\$2,450.00
Printing	\$1,025.00
Meals/Refreshments	\$3,200.00
Supplies	\$1,150.00
Video/Audio Streaming	\$1,600.00
Travel	\$3,750.00

TOTAL.....\$13,175.00

Please make your checks payable to: JCRB

Member/Delegate Conference Registration Form

Please complete this form legibly. Required information is in bold. Send to Joint Conference of Restoration Branches, c/o Elder James Vun Cannon, Recorder, 1100 West Truman Road, Independence, MO 64050.

for this or any past conference, list any changes and enter your JCRB member ID number here: _____ or email your number, name and branch affiliation to recorder@conferenceofbranches.org (Ask your branch recorder for the number, if you do not have one).

For Express Registration:

If you have already registered

Please check one: ___ **Official Delegate** ___ **Individual Member**

Name: _____

Birth Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Baptismal Date: _____ Baptized by _____

Confirmation Date: _____ Confirmed by _____

Priesthood Ordinations

Office: _____ Ordination Date: _____

Ordained by _____

Office: _____ Ordination Date: _____

Ordained by _____

Office: _____ Ordination Date: _____

Ordained by _____

(Restoration Branch members baptized/ordained in the RLDS church may obtain statistical information by calling the Community of Christ's Statistical Department, 816-833-1000.)

I am a member of _____ Restoration Branch,
located in _____.

Branch President: _____.

I am not a member of a Restoration Branch. I attend _____.

Solemn salutation and pledge for participants to the Conference:

As a brother/sister and fellow conference participant, I salute you in the name of Jesus Christ, in remembrance of the Everlasting Covenant, in which covenant I receive you to fellowship in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and

unchangeable, to be your friend and servant, through the grace of God, in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen. (See Doc. & Cov. 85:41)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Add me to the JCRB database Do not add me to the JCRB database

Conference pledge to Participants:

For all those brothers and sisters who have been authoritatively baptized and confirmed as members unto the Everlasting Covenant (Doc. & Cov. 20) and are willing to try to be blameless in the commandments of God, we pledge to accept you as a brother or sister in fellowship and to recognize both your voice and vote in this Conference.

Conference pledge to Priesthood:

We recognize the right of lawful Restoration Branches to call and ordain men to the offices of Deacon, Teacher, Priest and Elder. Since we have not had any council or conference greater than the branch, all priesthood

called and ordained in lawful Restoration Branches to offices other than these aforementioned cannot be recognized in this Conference; nevertheless, a previous ordination in the Aaronic or Melchisedec priesthood will be honored as they continue in good standing in their branch. To all those brethren of the priesthood who have been authoritatively baptized and confirmed as members unto the Everlasting Covenant, and who have been authoritatively ordained, and who are in good standing in their Restoration branches and who are willing to conduct themselves in accord with the commandments of God; we pledge to accept you as a brother in fellowship and to recognize your priesthood authority in the conference. (See Doc. & Cov. 85:41)

Branch Conference Registration Form

Please complete this information sheet and forward it to Credentials Committee, c/o Elder James Vun Cannon, Recorder, at 1100 West Truman Road, Independence, MO 64050, as soon as possible and prior to Oct. 15. Questions may be addressed to Elder Vun Cannon at 816-252-1457 or recorder@conferenceofbrances.org. If you have registered before for this or any previous Conference, just

include the information that has changed on this form.

For Express Registration: If you have already registered for this or any previous Conference, list any changes and enter your JCRB branch ID number here _____ or email your number and the name of your branch to recorder@conferenceofbrances.org (Ask your branch recorder for the number).

Branch name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone () _____

Branch President: _____

Priesthood Office: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: () _____

Email: _____

Branch Information

Date of Organization: _____

Organized by: _____

Current Membership: _____

Brief History

___ By-Laws or Brief History is attached.

___ Brief History is provided below.

Official Delegate (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 6-25 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 26-50 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 51-75 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 76-100 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 101-125 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 126-150 members (name, contact info): _____

Delegate for 150-175 members (name, contact info): _____



To verify allocated delegates from your branch and to seat members who wish to attend the conference, please provide a list or directory of members with names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, date of baptism, priesthood office, and date of ordination. Optional information for our data base should include date of birth and officiating ministers in baptisms and ordinations.

Each branch will be allocated one (1) official delegate (branch

president or other designated priesthood member) and one (1) delegate for each 25 members (a minimum of 2 delegates). Delegates must be members of the branch, in “good standing,” and elected by the branch. Please provide the names and contact information for the number of delegates to which your branch is entitled and an authorizing signature from a branch officer. Use back of sheet for additional delegates.

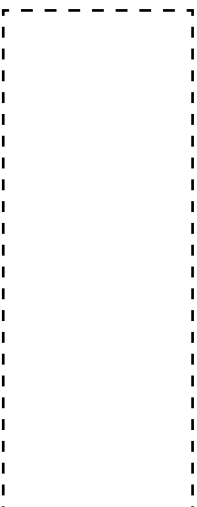
Authorizing signature: _____

Title: _____

Contact information _____

The Joint Conference of Restoration Branches

1100 W. Truman Road



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