

“This Is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”

BY MARGARET LIFFERTH

And I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph (D&C 35:17).

When Jesus was on the earth, He taught us what we need to do to be able to return to live with Him again. He showed us how to be baptized. He taught the gospel and asked us to obey His commandments. He organized His Church and ordained Apostles.

After Jesus Christ was crucified, His Apostles led the Church. They taught the people everything that Jesus had taught. But many people did not like them, just as they did not like Jesus. Some of the Apostles were killed because they believed and served Jesus Christ. After the Apostles had died, many gospel truths were lost, and priesthood authority was taken from the earth. This was called the Apostasy. New Testament prophets and apostles knew that the Apostasy would take place (see 2 Thessalonians 2:3). They also testified of the Restoration—that gospel truths and priesthood authority would one day be restored to the earth (see Ephesians 1:10).

Hundreds of years later, 14-year-old Joseph Smith was confused about which church he should join. On a beautiful spring morning, he went to a grove of trees to pray. A pillar of light descended, and Joseph “saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).



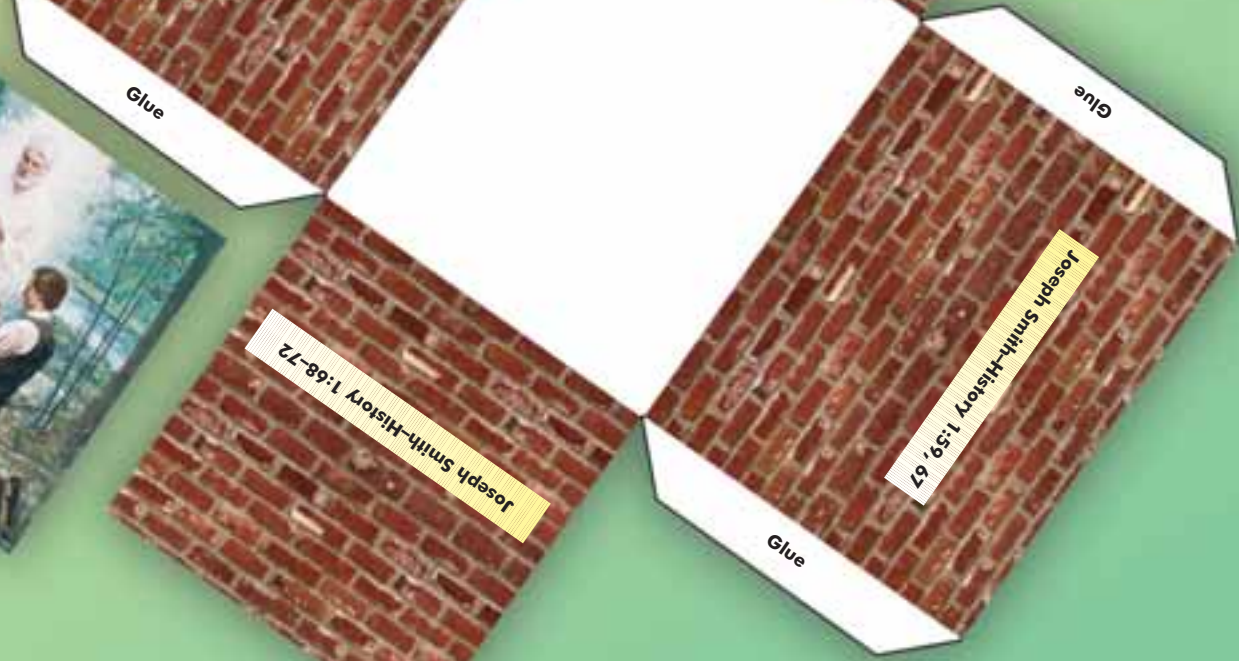
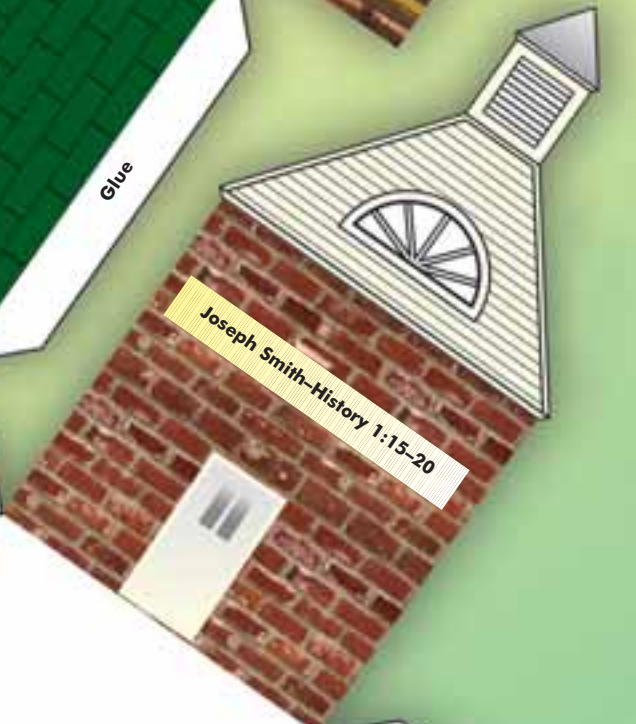
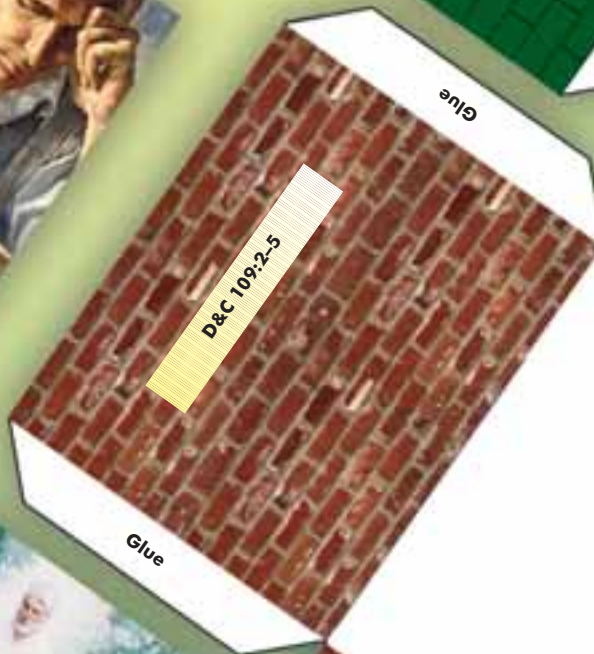
The First Vision, in 1820, was the beginning of the Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ. Gospel truths were restored by revelation and are found in the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. Priesthood power was restored by John the Baptist and the Apostles Peter, James, and John. Joseph Smith was called of God to be the first

latter-day prophet and President of the Church. The Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ is a great blessing to all the people in the world.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said he hopes each one of us can “simply, quietly” testify of the Restoration. He expressed his gratitude for his testimony of Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the Church when he said, “How grateful I am for the testimony with which God has blessed me of the divine calling of Joseph Smith, of the reality of the First Vision, of the restoration of the priesthood, of the truth of this, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (*Friend*, Feb. 2003, 2).

Restoration Church

Cut out the church, fold the walls, and glue the tabs in place so the church is standing. Then cut out the pictures. The scriptures on each side of the church tell about one aspect of the Restoration of the Church. Read each scripture and match the event in the scripture to one of the pictures. Then glue each picture to the appropriate side of the church. You may want to use the church as a visual as you learn more about these events during family home evening.



Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit, TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call.)

1. Fasten a large sheet of black paper and a large sheet of yellow paper to the wall or chalkboard. On the black paper, post the pictures Boy Jesus in the Temple (GAK 205), John the Baptist Baptizing Jesus (GAK 208), Christ Ordaining the Apostles (GAK 211), Sermon on the Mount (GAK 212), and The Last Supper (GAK 225). Attach the following pictures to the bottoms of six chairs: Joseph Receives the Gold Plates (GAK 406), John the Baptist Conferring the Aaronic Priesthood (GAK 407), Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration (GAK 408), Kirtland Temple (GAK 500), Baptism (GAK 601), and Blessing the Sacrament (GAK 603). Invite an adult ward member to come to Primary dressed in a simple costume representing New Testament times. Ask him or her to tell the story of the organization of the Church in New Testament times while referring to the principles and ordinances depicted by the pictures. Ask the person to bear testimony of Jesus Christ.

Sing "The Sixth Article of Faith" (p. 126). As the New Testament visitor teaches the children about the Church in New Testament times and the Apostasy (see Gospel Principles, chap. 16), remove the pictures one by one. Just as the paper is left black, so was the world left in spiritual darkness. Invite a returned missionary to tell the children about the First Vision and bear testimony of Joseph Smith. Sing "Joseph Smith's First Prayer" (*Hymns*, no. 26) or "The Sacred Grove" (p. 87). Invite the children to find the GAK pictures attached to their chairs. Have them read the story on the back of the picture and decide what principle or ordinance was restored. Post the pictures on the yellow paper. The Restoration, represented by the yellow paper, brought great light into the world. Bear your testimony of the Restoration and sing "The Church of Jesus Christ" (p. 77).

2. Help the children memorize the eighth article of faith by writing each phrase on a wordstrip. As you sing "The Eighth Article of Faith" (p. 127), invite two children to put the wordstrips in order. Repeat the song, removing a wordstrip each time until the children can sing it without seeing the words. Hold up a copy of the Bible and explain that the prophets of the Old and New Testaments teach of Jesus Christ. Hold up a copy of the Book of Mormon and point out that the second part of its title is "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." Why? The prophets in the Book of Mormon also teach us about Jesus Christ.

Play "Who Am I?" by dividing the children into five groups. Select one child from each group. On the back of each of the five children, tape a piece of paper with the name of one of the following prophets and a scripture reference of his testimony. (Nephi—2 Nephi 31:20–21, King Benjamin—Mosiah 3:17, Abinadi—Mosiah 16:13, Samuel the Lamanite—Helaman 14:8, and Moroni—Moroni 10:32). Ask the five children to wait outside the Primary room. Give each of the five groups the name of one of these prophets and let each group decide how to role-play a scene from the prophet's life. Invite the five children back into the room. As each one comes to the front, have the group assigned to the same prophet do the role play. The child tries to guess the prophet and asks yes or no questions until he or she can correctly identify him. After each of the prophets has been identified, let the children find and read that prophet's testimony of Christ from the Book of Mormon. Bear your testimony and teach that missionaries use the Book of Mormon to teach of Jesus Christ. Sing "We'll Bring the World His Truth" (pp. 172–73).

3. Before the children come into the Primary room, post a picture of the Savior (GAK 240) on the wall or chalkboard and cover it with a larger piece of paper. Place the following pictures in a box wrapped as a gift: Baptism (GAK 601), The Gift of the Holy Ghost (GAK 602), Blessing the

Sacrament (GAK 603), Young Couple Going to the Temple (GAK 609), Administering to the Sick (GAK 613), and Baby Blessing (Primary packet 3-21). Then hide the "gift" somewhere in the room. Prepare five or six written questions, such as: What do we call the power of God given to man on earth? Who may receive the priesthood? What are the two orders of priesthood? (Look in the Topical Guide under "Priesthood, Qualifying for" for answers.) On the back of each question, provide a clue that will lead to the next hidden question, with the clue on the last question leading to the gift. (For example, "Look under the table at the front of the room." "Look behind the piano.") Hide the questions, placing the first one under one of the children's chairs.

Tell the children that the Lord has restored a precious gift to the earth and that one of them will be going on a treasure hunt to find out what it is. Have the child who finds the clue under his or her chair read the question out loud. Answer the question together. The child follows the instructions to find the other clues, stopping to answer each of the questions with the rest of the Primary, until the gift is found. Teach that the priesthood is a wonderful gift to us from Heavenly Father. Sing "The Priesthood Is Restored" (p. 89). As you open the gift, explain that it will help us discover some of the ways we are blessed by the priesthood. Hold up each picture and encourage the children to share their experiences with each kind of priesthood ordinance or blessing. Attach the pictures to the paper covering the picture of the Savior. When all of the pictures are attached, ask, "Who is the source of priesthood power? Who makes all these blessings possible?" Take responses, then remove the paper covering the picture of the Savior. Sing "I Feel My Savior's Love" (pp. 74–75). Bear testimony of the blessings of the priesthood.

For younger children: Simplify the questions for the treasure hunt with questions such as: Do you know anyone who holds the priesthood? The bishop holds the priesthood. What does he do for us? Who is the prophet?

4. *Class Presentation:* Review the talks of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from the previous general conference, found in the May and November issues of the *Ensign*. Select four or five topics to review with the children. Give music clues by having the pianist play a few measures of a song relating to the principle—for example, "I'm Glad to Pay a Tithing" (p. 150), "The Lord Gave Me a Temple" (p. 153). As the children guess the song and the gospel principle from the music clue, briefly review the talk, show a picture of the speaker, and tell about one of the promised blessings of obeying that principle. Sing the song. Invite the children to write about or draw pictures of one thing they can do to obey the prophet and other Church leaders this month. Sing "Keep the Commandments" (pp. 146–47).

5. *Song Presentation:* To teach the song "The Priesthood Is Restored" (p. 89), have the children close their eyes as they listen to the piano accompaniment. How does the music make them feel? Explain that it is made to sound like trumpets announcing something important. Show the picture Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration (GAK 408) and briefly explain it. Ask the children to listen for what we learn about the priesthood from the words and sing a line of the song. Take responses and sing the line together. Sing the whole song through. Divide the children into four groups and give each group one line to sing. Have each group stand and sing their line of the song while the other children each close their hands into loose fists, put them to their mouths, and softly sing "do-do" (like a trumpet) with the melody. Involve the children as you sing the song again.

6. *Friend* references: "Joseph Smith: Prophet of the Restoration," July 2001, 14; "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Was Organized," Apr. 2001, 24; "The Prophet Speaks for Heavenly Father," Jan. 2001, 14; "The Restoration of the Priesthood," May 2003, 39; "The Book of Mormon," Mar. 2004, 43. These references and others can be found at www.lds.org. Click on Gospel Library.