

BELIEFS Values

Mormons honor faith's founding pioneers locally

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints volunteers from Oakland County participated in a worldwide celebration that commemorated the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the Mormon Pioneers, led by Brigham Young, in the Salt Lake Valley.

More than 20,000 Mormon congregations performed 150 hours of service in observance of "Worldwide Pioneer Heritage Service Day" on July 19.

There are 33,000 Mormons in Michigan and 93 congregations. In Michigan alone, the commemorative event associated with 150 hours of service would have resulted in 581 days, almost a year and a half's worth of service on Saturday.

"What a wonderful tribute to those who laid the groundwork of our faith through their personal sacrifices," said Trish Michalek, public affairs director for the Mormon Church in Oakland County.

Congregants from Farmington Hills and Walled Lake prepared for the service day with a series of projects.

"Our members sponsored a blood drive and planted flowers at a local nursing home, and some of our members participated in Habitat for Humanity's Archer/McNamara Blitz Build '97," said Bishop Paul Maddock.

They also teamed up to help beautify Pontiac Trail the morning of the service day. "A day dedicated to service worldwide has helped our members be more in tune to the needs in the community," Maddock said.

After the recent tornado, the congregants made 300 sack lunches and delivered them door to door to homes in Detroit that were without electricity.

They sorted through hundreds of items of clothing donated to storm victims at the Storm Command Center.

And they collected a truckload of food and supplies from the LDS Bishop's Storehouse in Farmington Hills and delivered the goods to storm-ravaged areas of Detroit.

On "Worldwide Pioneer Heritage Service Day," the Farmington Hills congregants opened their church grounds at 13 Mile and Farmington Road to the community, providing free food, visual displays of the pioneer era and experiences in basket weaving, quilting and butter making.

Children played pioneer games, made corn husk dolls and enjoyed crafts.

Many pioneer work instruments on display were on loan from Greenfield Village. Participants also made two replicas of handcarts, like those used by Mormon Pioneers to transport their goods West.

Those who successfully completed the trek West 150 years could not have made it had they not helped and served one another," Maddock said.

Families in Troy packed picnic lunches reminiscent of times past and gathered at the Troy Historical Museum to make needed repairs. Some sewed costumes to be used by workers at the museum.

"Even the children volunteered service," said Bishop's assistant C.J. Finkler.

Children too young to assist in the repair work, along with physically challenged people, stamped new school books used by the museum as well as clipped newspaper articles regarding historic events.

The Bloomfield Hills congregation labored to lay wood chips and spruce up the grounds at Bowers School Farm at Square Lake and Adams roads, said Bishop Jeffrey Kunz.

The Southfield congregation helped beautify the Southfield Civic Center grounds.

The Mormon Church and its members embrace the biblical principle of tithes and fasts. Members fast for two meals once a month and donate the money they would have spent on those meals to a fund to help the needy.

"Every dollar of fast offerings goes to help those less fortunate," said Michalek.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints operates a Farmington Hills food canning facility that serves Michigan and northern Ohio.

"There, with labor from many other churches, high school and college groups, our own members and employees from various businesses, we can much of the bulk foods donated to food banks in Michigan," Michalek said.

Foods like pizza sauce, for example, are donated to food banks in hundreds of three-gallon boxes.

The LDS cannery, using all volunteer labor, repackages the sauce in more usable portions so it can be distributed by food banks to those in need.

Salt Lake City remains the world headquarters of the nearly 10-million member faith.

Susan Friedman leads B'nai Moshe

West Bloomfield resident Susan Friedman was installed president of Cong. B'nai Moshe, succeeding Steven T. Rabinovitz of Huntington Woods.

Friedman has been a member of the West Bloomfield synagogue since 1968. She chaired the adult education committee during its "Shabbat Shaboom" adult Jewish living and learning project.

She has been active in the Sisterhood, the synagogue programming committee and the cantor's concert committee.

She's a long-time member of the board of directors, serving most recently as a member of the executive committee and as recording secretary.

Friedman is a docent at the Holocaust Memorial Center in West Bloomfield and a member of the auxiliary of Oakland General Hospital. She is married to Dr. Mel Friedman; they have three young adult children.

Also installed as new officers of Cong. B'nai Moshe were: vice presidents Harold Greenspan, Nancy Kaplan, and Marvin Zucker; treasurer Joel Ungar; recording secretary Kerry Greenblatt; and corresponding secretary Annette Kaufman—all of West Bloomfield.

Newly elected trustees for a three-year term were: Marc Belman and Lorraine Fisher of West Bloomfield; Ruthie Levy Kahn and Melvin Kepes of Southfield; Alyssa Martina and Marc Sussman of Huntington Woods; and Arthur Siegal of Farmington Hills.

Elected trustees for a term of two years were: Michael Adler of Farmington Hills, Steven Mondrow and Len Wanetik of West Bloomfield.

Elected trustee for a term of one year were: Yolotto Jaffe, Jonathan Liebman, and Alisa Peskin-Shepherd, all of West Bloomfield.

The incoming leadership is a multi-generational group, representing the diversity of interests and ages within the growing congregation. Parents of children enrolled in B'nai Moshe's LIFE (Learning Is a Family Experience) Program are among the new officers and trustees, as well as parents and grandparents of Hillel Day School students and graduates.

Relatively recent members of the synagogue are included in the new leadership group, as well as people who have belonged for many years.

For more information about Cong. B'nai Moshe, call (248) 788-0600.



Elected: Susan Friedman is the new president of B'nai Moshe.



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