

## Getting Acquainted with the New Women's Council

Women have always had an important ministry to offer in the church. Emma Smith was designated as an "Elect Lady," and one of the assignments the Lord, through her husband, asked her to do was to oversee the Relief Society in the early church. Those twenty women had special responsibilities to minister to the women and families of the church. The important role of women in the church has continued down through the years and was affirmed in modern day revelation in 2013: *"To my handmaidens, yea, even you daughters of Zion: Even though you are not permitted the authority and role of priesthood, you are of equal worth in fulfilling the work of bringing forth my kingdom on earth in these last days.... Your labors of righteousness and your sacrifices are truly a blessing to me and bring honor and glory to your Heavenly Father"* (D&C R-157:5a).

In the Remnant Church, we have been blessed for many years with an abundance of faithful, vigilant women in our Remnant Church Women's Council. They have provided support and ministry in many different ways. The new Women's Council will build on the foundation of those years and brings to the church a plethora of gifts, talents, and experience. They also represent a diversity of age and home locations. Please become acquainted with these women.

### Angela Collins



Angela lives in Vian, Oklahoma, and is a member of the Blackgum Branch in Oklahoma. She is married to Elder Eric Collins, and they have three adult children, a son, and two daughters. Angela is also the daughter-in-law of Leland and Darlene Collins in Independence.

Angela is presently taking care of her 92-year-old grandmother. When she has time, she likes to read and do counted cross-stitch. She is also working on a prayer journal and a Bible study journal, which she hopes to complete in time for the South Central District's Fall Women's Retreat.

Sister Collins hopes the Women's Council can accomplish set goals and grow closer to each other. She is also anticipating growing closer to others in other congregations and branches as new opportunities open.

### Cheryl Blanton



Cheryl is a member of the Blue Springs Congregation and lives in Belton, Missouri. She is currently working with a friend to rehab a house in Independence, Missouri, and plans to move into it to be closer when the house is finished. Cheryl is widowed, but is very close to her one sister and two nieces and their families, all of whom attend the Blue Springs Congregation with her.

Cheryl and her late husband, Chuck, were avid motorcyclists and belonged to a Christian "biking" group. She has some interesting testimonies about those experiences. Cheryl says she still has her Harley three wheeler. She also enjoys spending time with her three small dogs when she is at home.

Sister Blanton is looking forward to getting acquainted with the women on the council and in all the congregations and branches. She is also eager to help set up programs to meet the needs of the church.

### Coral Rogers, Women's Leader



Coral has been appointed the Chairperson of the Council and brings years of women's ministry to this position. She has been involved with women's ministry in the small branches most of her adult life and has recently served three

years as the South Central District's Women's Leader. Coral is married to High Priest Elbert Rogers and they attend the Sperry Branch in Oklahoma. They have two adult sons, one of whom is married and has two children, so she enjoys being a grandmother, also.

Coral says her interests are very focused on church work, and she has been especially involved in work with the children and youth. She and Elbert have been camp directors for the Junior High Camp and also the South Central District's Junior Camp. She works behind the scenes for the Oklahoma Reunion each summer and helps with the Vacation Church School in their area, as well. At home, she has been working on writing a study guide for the Book of Mormon aimed at those who are new readers to this book of scripture, from young teens through adults.

Sister Rogers' hopes and goals for the Women's Council include continuing the tradition already established to prepare and distribute study materials for women, developing a welcome (or survival) manual for wives of newly ordained priesthood members, and creating care packages for our college students and possibly connecting these students with a church pen pal, perhaps from among our retired church members. One other concern that she knows will resonate especially with those in out-lying areas is to redefine the "age" at which young women feel that they are welcome to participate in activities. Coral feels that many girls, age 12 and up, could benefit from the mentoring that goes on in women's ministries. She also plans for our military personnel to receive reminders that the women of our church thank them for their service and know throughout the year that they are not forgotten.



### **Cynthia Tibbitts**

Cynthia lives with her two sons in Skiatook, Oklahoma, and they are members of the Sperry Branch in Oklahoma. She was widowed when her older son, Alex, was five and her younger son, Parker, was only two. Cynthia has homeschooled her sons through their elementary, middle, and high school years. Alex, now 20, attends Tulsa Community College pursuing a business degree. He was ordained to the office of teacher in 2016. Parker, now 17, will be a senior this fall and is interested in pursuing a degree in technology. He recently accepted his call to the office of deacon and will be ordained soon.

Cynthia has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Tulsa. She worked in oil and gas accounting until her first son was born and then became a stay-at-home mom. Her work in the church has included serving as branch women's leader, branch youth leader, a teacher for Vacation Church School, and a helper at senior high camps. In the past few years, she has also become a Pampered Chef consultant. Her favorite pastime is spending time with her sons and their spoiled pets. Her hobbies include listening to Remnant Church hymns and contemporary Christian music, playing the piano, and reading.

Sister Tibbitts says her hopes and goals for the Women's Council are that they treat each other with kindness, tenderness, and respect, even when they disagree, thereby setting the example for all members of the Remnant Church to follow. She also hopes to help in establishing zionic homes and relationships to prepare ourselves to withstand the evils facing us in the world, and in that way, to be examples for others to follow.

### **Erin Gates**



Erin Gates lives in Oak Grove, Missouri and is married to Eddie Gates. They attend Center Branch in Independence, Missouri – where she has served as the women's leader for several years. Erin grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota where her family was active in their local RLDS branch. She recognizes the blessing of having a long heritage in the Restored Gospel across multiple generations of both sides of her family. While her parents and two brothers still reside in the Twin Cities area, she is very fortunate to have a number of her extended family here in the Center Place with her.

Several years after earning a bachelor's degree in psychology, she decided to go back to school to learn ultrasound sonography. Erin has worked full-time as a diagnostic medical sonographer at an obstetrics and gynecology clinic for the last 15 years. She loves her job taking pictures of those precious little babies!

Erin has always loved reading in her spare time, as well as crocheting and more recently, quilting. She enjoys the simpler things in life and is content to read or craft for hours. Her husband's more outgoing and sociable demeanor compliments her reserved nature. She jokes that when introducing herself to others at church, she'll add "...I'm married to Eddie Gates". Eddie serves as the branch president at Center Branch, and was recently called to the office of High Priest. Erin is looking forward to getting to know the other sisters on the Women's Council, and being able to work together for the cause of Zion!

### **Megan Romer**



Megan is a member of the Bountiful Congregation, and she and her husband, Bishop Andrew Romer, have three children, Natalie, Kevin, and Daniel, with a new baby due to arrive at the end of June. They built the first home in the Bountiful community.

Megan graduated from college with a degree in Communication and Public Relations. Although she has been out of the formal workplace for a few years now (with young family responsibilities), she still enjoys writing, editing, and designing for various church projects. She is also very skilled with her DSLR camera and has been hired to photograph high school seniors, families, engagements, and several weddings over the past ten years. Now, she says it is mostly her children who grace the front of her lens! Megan has been playing the violin since sixth grade and recently began taking piano lessons. She hopes to continue that pursuit to be able to play for church services.

Sister Romer's prayer for the Women's Council is that they may become a united group of women who can serve the ladies of the church in all seasons of life. Additionally, she hopes that the general role of the Council would be more widely known, perhaps by an awareness campaign, if needed.

### **Toni Zahner**



Toni Zahner lives in Blue Springs, Mo. She is married to Priest Marty Zahner and they have two children who are young adults now, Keilah and Jacob. Toni is also a dog mom to her mini dachshund, Sadie. Toni is a daughter in law to Lou Zahner from First Branch and sister in law to Mike and Stephanie Zahner of the Sperry Branch. Her mom is Vicki Pinkley who also attends First Branch.

For hobbies Toni likes gardening, mostly flowers. She also enjoys spending time with her family. Toni love going to Zumba classes, which helps keep her fit and healthy, and in her 'spare' time, she practices the piano. Yes, she can also play. After all, she is part of a very musical family. Toni currently works full time at Commerce Bank in downtown Kansas City.

Toni and her husband Marty were young adult leaders several years ago at First Branch. She has helped with women's activities and is looking forward to doing even more now that her children are older. She is very interested in the church's youth and young adult groups. She is anxious to watch our children continue their progress as young adults in the church, since they are our future.



We look forward to good things for the church from this group of women. Feel free to contact one of them if you have questions or suggestions. Please keep them and their ministry in your prayers.