

BYU RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WINTER 2019

REVIEW

CALENDAR ✕ COMMENTS ✕ INTERVIEWS & SPOTLIGHTS ✕ STUDENT & TEACHER UPDATES ✕ BOOKS



Saints Internalizing the Restoration

NO. 3A

“My Gospel Study”—a Remarkable Resource from the RSC



The year 2019 marks a time of new beginnings for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members worldwide. The exciting announcement by President Russell M. Nelson in October 2018 general conference of a reduced block meeting schedule and increased emphasis on home-centered, Church-supported curriculum introduces an amazing new era of gospel scholarship and learning. In his announcement, President Nelson reminded us, “We are each responsible for our individual spiritual growth.” He went on to assert, “Parents have the primary responsibility to teach the doctrine to their children.”¹

Against this backdrop, the Religious Studies Center at BYU is offering a popular resource called “My Gospel Study” that brings together in one place over 4,000 articles on a wide variety of topics. This tool offers remarkable content written by scholars, educators, Church leaders, and historians during the more than forty years the RSC has been in existence. Nearly all of this content is unavailable on LDS.org or other resources. It can all be found at rsc.byu.edu/my-gospel-study and is ready and waiting to bless our lives. It is searchable and has, as one of its features, supplemental readings organized around

the current year’s Church curriculum (rsc.byu.edu/sunday-school). It promises to enlighten and enhance this year’s study of the New Testament and other volumes of scripture. Whether for use in our personal study, preparing gospel lessons, or perhaps preparing a talk, this expansive library is available to everyone.

Certainly, we will be greatly aided in strengthening ourselves, our families, and others as we make use of this tremendous resource. Thanks to all those who have worked on this project. May we all seize this great day of learning and spiritual enlightenment! ✂

Robert C. Freeman

Associate Dean, Religious Education

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Opening Remarks,” *Ensign*, November 2018, 8.

BYU

Religious Education

REVIEW

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A Publication of the Religious Studies Center

WEB: rsc.byu.edu/review

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by Scott C. Esplin



OUTREACH

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On the cover: *The Sacred Grove*. Photo by George Edward Anderson, Manchester, New York, 12 August 1907, Anderson Collection, Church History Library.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER

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THE WORK OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

“Why are you going to work?” One of my children recently asked as I was getting dressed to go to campus. Resisting the natural reaction to respond, “Because you like to eat,” I have since reflected on his question. Why do I work in Religious Education? What is the purpose of this unit of Brigham Young University? What role might we occupy in the life of the university and possibly the larger Church?

Our charge states, “The mission of Religious Education at Brigham Young University is to assist individuals in their efforts to come unto Christ by teaching the scriptures, doctrine, and history of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ through classroom instruction, gospel scholarship, and outreach to the larger community.” This issue of the *Review* magazine highlights recent endeavors by faculty and staff to accomplish this mission by increasing scriptural, doctrinal, and historical understanding on campus as well as in the broader Church.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell has assembled a team of more than forty New Testament scholars to create a remarkable resource for Latter-day Saints. Slated for publication

this spring, *New Testament History, Culture, and Society: A Background to the Texts of the New Testament* is described in our research update.

In a fascinating interview, Dr. Steven C. Harper reflects on the inspiration behind the new series *Saints: The Story of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Latter Days*. Readers will learn about the need for an updated narrative history of the Church and how this resource can

help them internalize the Restoration. Dr. Harper left Religious Education to serve for several years as managing historian and a general editor of the series. He shares the role he and others on campus had in it and reveals details regarding forthcoming volumes.

Dr. Barbara Morgan Gardner joined with others, including Dr. Mauro Properzi and Latter-day Saint young adults from across South



Religious Education is located in the Joseph Smith Building. Photo by Richard B. Crookston.

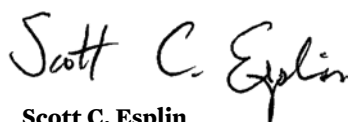
America, for four days of personal mentoring, small and large group discussions, firesides, and presentations at the South American Seminar (*Seminario Sud Americano*), a conference for Latter-day Saint young adults held in Buenos Aires in conjunction with the 2018 G20 Interfaith Summit.

Additionally, this issue shares highlights of interviews with Brother Tad R. Callister, General Sunday School President, and three of the curriculum developers who created the new *Come, Follow Me* resources. Brother Callister and his team offer suggestions for centering instruction in the home and improving the quality of classes across the Church.

Finally, we welcome Daniel K. Judd as the newly appointed dean of Religious Education and director of the Religious Studies Center.

Teaching students the scriptures, doctrine, and history of the Church and expanding that instruction to a larger community is a glorious endeavor. We are excited to share it with you.

Sincerely,



Scott C. Esplin

Publications Director

Religious Studies Center

Calendar of Events

Open to the campus community and the general public

BYU EASTER CONFERENCE

Friday, 12 April 2019

The BYU Easter Conference will be held in the Joseph Smith Building auditorium beginning at 7:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Elder Bruce C. Hafen, a former General Authority Seventy. The other two speakers are Richard Lyman Bushman, Gouverneur Morris Professor of History Emeritus at Columbia University, and Barbara Morgan Gardner, associate professor of Church history and doctrine. Each speaker will talk about various aspects of the Savior, his life, his mission, the Atonement, and his influence in our lives today. Plan to bring a friend or loved one and come early. For more information, visit <http://rsc.byu.edu/easterconference>.

SIDNEY B. SPERRY SYMPOSIUM

Friday and Saturday, 25–26 October 2019

The 48th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium will be held in the Joseph Smith Building (JSB) Auditorium and nearby classrooms on BYU campus. The theme is “Give Ear to My Words: Text and Context of Alma 36–42,” exploring powerful teachings on repentance, prayer, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ as shared by Alma to his sons, Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton. For more information, visit <https://rsc.byu.edu/sperrysymposium>.

These events are free of charge, and registration is not required. Some event details are subject to change. For more details, please visit us online at rsc.byu.edu/conferences or contact Brent Nordgren at 801-422-3293.



Faculty Highlight: Carter Charles

CARTER CHARLES (carter_charles@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.



A NATIVE OF HAITI, CARTER CHARLES JOINED THE DEPARTMENT OF Church History & Doctrine in the fall of 2018. Before coming to BYU, he was a tenured faculty at University Bordeaux Montaigne (France), where he obtained all his degrees: a BA in linguistics, literature and history of Anglophone Countries (2004); an MA in American studies (2005) with a thesis titled “Priesthood and Leadership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and another MA in the same discipline (2007) with a thesis titled “‘The Kingdom of God on Earth’: Latter-day Saints, Politics and the Republican Party”). His PhD dissertation is titled “The Political Integration of Mormons in the United States, from Reed Smoot to Mitt Romney” (in French, 2013). Charles taught English as a second language at different levels in the French secondary and higher education system from 2006 to 2014 before transferring full-time to higher education. ✂

Faculty Highlight: Casey Paul Griffiths

CASEY PAUL GRIFFITHS (casey_griffiths@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT TEACHING PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AT BYU.



CASEY PAUL GRIFFITHS WAS BORN AND RAISED IN DELTA, UTAH. HE RECEIVED a BA in history at BYU and then returned to complete an MA in religious education and a PhD in educational leadership and foundations. He serves in the professional track at BYU, teaching as many as 1,400 students per semester. In his scholarly work, he researches the history of Latter-day Saint education, with emphasis on religious education. As part of his research he has traveled to New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, and Guam, researching the role of education in the Church. He has published a number of articles on Church education for academic and Latter-day Saint audiences. He also greatly enjoys working in interfaith dialogue with Community of Christ and other churches in the Restoration movement. Before joining the BYU faculty, he served as an instructor and writer in Seminaries and Institutes. He lives with his wife, Elizabeth, and their four adorable children in Saratoga Springs, Utah. ✂

Faculty Highlight: Keith J. Wilson

KEITH J. WILSON (keith_wilson@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



KEITH J. WILSON HAS BEEN TEACHING AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY for the past thirty-eight years. First, he was here as an adjunct instructor for fourteen years. After receiving his PhD from the University of Utah, he has been with the Department of Ancient Scripture for the past twenty-four years. His dissertation focused on the dissipation of religious influence in American higher education. His greatest scholarly thrust has been to study the history and organization changes in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (today known as the Community of Christ). He has helped to organize scholarly exchanges with both the Community of Christ and with the major breakaway groups of those who still cling to former RLDS teachings. Notwithstanding his work with these Restored Church cousins, Brother Wilson's favorite work is with his students, who generally total 500–800 per semester. He never tires of teaching the Restoration. He resides in Provo with his wife, Linda, and many of their eight children and twenty-four grandchildren. ✂

Administrator Highlight: Marshall Morrise

MARSHALL MORRISE (marshall_morrise@byu.edu) IS THE WEB AND SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.



MARSHALL REID PETTIJOHN MORRISE WAS BORN IN PROVO WHILE HIS father attended BYU after military service in Korea (where he was baptized). Marshall attended BYU, pursuing a bachelor's degree in computer science and later a master's degree in instructional science. After serving in the Korea Pusan Mission, he married his high school sweetheart, Susan Lorraine Hall. They are the parents of five sons and one daughter. Working at the J. Reuben Clark Law School, he joined with professors to develop cutting-edge software tools for lawyers. In 1987 Morrise and several partners started Capsoft Development Corporation, a software company based on technology licensed from the law school. They grew the company to seventy-five employees over a ten-year period before selling it to Matthew Bender & Co., a legal publishing company. After eleven more years in legal technology, Morrise returned to the law school, working in web development until 2013, when he and his wife served as mission president and companion in the Korea Seoul South Mission. While they were gone, their married children doubled their grandchild count from nine to eighteen. He returned to BYU, where he found a place in Religious Education. In addition to his web administrator responsibilities, he and Susan teach a missionary preparation class. They are the grateful grandparents of twenty-four grandchildren. ✂

NEW TESTAMENT *History, Culture, and Society*

By *Lincoln H. Blumell*

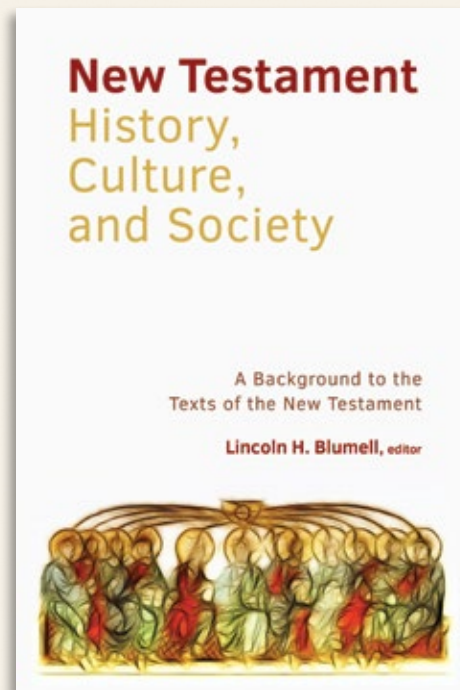
LINCOLN H. BLUMELL (lincoln_blumell@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.

With the New Testament as our study focus this year, readers are looking for good resources. The forthcoming book *New Testament History, Culture, and Society: A Background to the Texts of the New Testament*, ed. Lincoln H. Blumell (BYU Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book, 2019), brings together some of the best Latter-day Saint scholars in the field of biblical studies to produce a reference work that will elucidate the text, history, culture, and society of the New Testament and its world. This volume is intended as a kind of handbook that readers can consult topically to supplement their study of the New Testament.

The book is divided into seven sections:

1. Jewish Background of the New Testament
2. Greco-Roman Background of the New Testament
3. Jesus and the Gospels
4. The Apostle Paul, General Epistles, and Revelation
5. New Testament Issues and Contexts
6. Text of the New Testament
7. After the New Testament

In the first section, “Jewish Background of the New Testament,” the eight chapters cover a host of topics, including the law of Moses, the intertestamental period, the Jerusalem temple, Dead Sea Scrolls, rabbinic literature, notions of messianism in ancient Judaism, and modes of Jewish hermeneutics. There is also a chapter with more than twenty images that provide a virtual tour of



Jerusalem and the Temple Mount in the New Testament period. The opening section therefore seeks to introduce the reader to the larger Jewish context of the New Testament—scriptural, extrascriptural, and archaeological.

In section 2, “Greco-Roman Background of the New Testament,” the focus of the five chapters moves out to the larger Greco-Roman world and includes chapters on Roman law, Greek and Roman philosophy and religion, Judea as a Roman province, and the First Jewish Revolt against Rome.



Section 3, “Jesus and the Gospels,” comprises ten chapters that illuminate Jesus’s ministry, death, and resurrection, as well as the canonical and noncanonical gospels. In addition to a lengthy chapter that provides an overview of Jesus’s mortal ministry and that includes biblical and Restoration scripture, there are chapters on Atonement theologies, economics in the first century, and a geographic survey of Jesus’s ministry.

Section 4, “The Apostle Paul, General Epistles, and Revelation” devotes four chapters to the life and letters of the Apostle Paul and introduces and discusses the remaining writings of the New Testament.

In section 5, “New Testament Issues and Contexts,” the eight chapters cover a variety of topics pertaining to women, family and marriage, clothing, worship, baptism, and nonverbal communication and prostration.

Section 6, “Text of the New Testament,” contains six chapters that examine the New Testament text from a variety of perspectives. In addition to surveying the Joseph Smith Translation and how the text of the New Testament is employed in Restoration scripture, there are also chapters on New Testament textual criticism, the King James Translation, and the Greek text underlying the King James New Testament.

The final section, “After the New Testament,” has two chapters dealing with early Christianity in the post-New Testament period and the canonization of the New Testament.

Above: This new volume includes ten chapters that illuminate Jesus’s ministry, death, and resurrection. Photo by Matt Reier. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Below: The Apostle Paul writing his first epistle to the Corinthians. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.



Given the breadth and depth of the volume, there is something for virtually anyone who wants to gain a deeper understanding of the texts and background of the New Testament. While chapters are written using the best scholarship available, they are written for readers who are nonspecialists; technical vocabulary is defined; maps, tables, and pictures are included; and the end of each chapter features a “Further Reading” section. As there is nothing quite like this volume for lay Latter-day Saints, it is hoped that this volume will be a welcome addition for those who are seeking a deeper engagement and understanding of the New Testament. ❧



By Steven C. Harper and Scott C. Esplin

STEVEN C. HARPER (steven_harper@byu.edu) IS A PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU AND EDITOR IN CHIEF OF BYU STUDIES. HE PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS MANAGING HISTORIAN AND A GENERAL EDITOR OF THE SERIES *SAINTS: THE STORY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE LATTER DAYS*.

SCOTT C. ESPLIN (scott_esplin@byu.edu) IS THE PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR AT THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER.

Esplin: How did the *Saints* project come about?

Harper: I remember that you and I were invited to serve on a committee. We were told by Elder Marlin K. Jensen, then the Church Historian and Recorder, and Richard Turley, who was serving as Assistant Church Historian and Recorder, that the First Presidency had invited them to propose a plan for updating B. H. Roberts's *Comprehensive History of the Church*. There were a bunch of us on that committee. I don't remember exactly how many, maybe twenty?

Esplin: Yes, probably fifteen to twenty. People from BYU, others from the Church History Department. There

were also some from Seminaries and Institutes and others from Correlation. Those from BYU included you and Spencer Fluhman, who is now at the Maxwell Institute, Reid Neilson, and myself. Originally Craig Manscill was there, but then he had a teaching assignment at the Jerusalem Center.

Harper: I remember being both thrilled about it and having some trepidation about whether it could be done in the information age. Is this a possibility? Can we do it right? Pretty early on in that process, the whole committee was tasked with an idea. And the four of us (you, me, Reid, and Spencer) happened to be at department meetings



Cover art for the *Saints* series. Painting by Greg Newbold.

together at the Hinckley Building on campus at BYU and spent some time afterwards there together just thinking about what would it look like, what would be the scope, theme, how it would work. And to me, that was a real revelatory meeting. There was inspiration flowing, and it didn't come from any one person. It was just a wonderful, synergistic process of everybody knowing something that needed to be thought of or included. The plan that came out of that was to do a four-volume representative history.

We would not try to cover everything in the volumes but to make it the story of Latter-day Saints making and keeping covenants, striving for exaltation. Therefore, the way to structure the volumes was a temple trajectory. Volume 1 would end in 1846 when thousands of individuals were endowed and sealed in the Nauvoo Temple. Volume 2 would end when they started to do ordinance work in the Salt Lake Temple after dedicating it in 1893. Volume 3 included the Swiss Temple in the mid-1950s.

The series becomes increasingly global with every volume. Now, with the fourth volume it's not going to end in just one temple like the others. There are many temples spread all over the world.

The series becomes increasingly global with every volume. Now, with the fourth volume it's not going to end in just one temple like the others. There are many temples spread all over the world.

Esplin: Which is a nice problem to have! That's fabulous. What themes did you choose to emphasize, and what is being done to include the stories of lay members, women and men, worldwide?

Harper: I remember one day, a couple years into the project, we were starting to think very hard about what to call it. At that point it was already clear to us that Mosiah 3:19 was the map for the story. Everybody in this story is on a quest. They start as natural men and women, enemies to God ever since the Fall. In any good story, the protagonist has to change over time, has to have a pretty big change over time. What better change than from a fallen mortal to a Saint, having yielded to the Holy Spirit, becoming a Saint through the Atonement of Christ? So King Benjamin gave us our story arc, and as we thought about what to call it, *Saints* was the right word. It was very clear that the word *Saints* would capture the theme. Becoming Saints is the story. Everybody in this story, starting with Joseph Smith, is a fallen person who wants desperately to become a Saint through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. And that's the common thing that unites all the characters. Once that theme became clear, we started looking for characters who could personify that because we couldn't possibly tell the comprehensive history. We can't tell everybody's story, so we are telling stories of a few Saints who represent all.

From the beginning, we wanted to be very mindful of the great commission to take the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. That is the story in some important ways. So it has to include representatives of nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. For this reason, you're thinking not just of the story of headquarters, which is important, but the story on the farthest frontier of the Church. I was particularly interested in the relationship of those members who were sometimes called from center to periphery. I wanted readers to meet prophets long before they become prophets, a long time before they have any idea that they are going to be prophets, when they just want to love God and be saved. I wanted readers to watch prophets grow into prophets. At the same time, I wanted readers to meet women and men they'd never heard of before and realize that they too received revelation.

We have a wonderful history of the gifts of the Spirit and revelation being bestowed upon the Saints generally, and the books show that as well. Readers find Amanda Barnes Smith in the direst possible circumstance receiving revelation about how to minister to her family. And that is one example of hundreds. Joseph Smith grows into a capital "S" Seer, a capital "P" Prophet. A lot of other people in the story are prophets, seers, revelators, and there's



Steven Harper in his office with the *Saints* cover art in the background. Photo by Brent R. Nordgren.

a wonderful relationship between them. The A story, you might say, is that Joseph Smith restores the broken covenant that leads to exaltation. And then the B story, you might say, is that many men and women believe his revelations and get their own confirming revelations, and they sustain him as a result.

Esplin: What were some of the most exciting things for you to tell?

Harper: You know that I love the First Vision. That's where it all began. It's not just that it was such a great revelation, but it turned the Apostasy on its head. The First Vision is so wonderful because a dominant teaching in Joseph Smith's world was Calvinism, what the Presbyterians were teaching, which means he was being taught that he was a totally depraved person, that there is no divine nature, nor is there what Latter-day Saints would call agency. In his 1832 account of his vision, he said that he has become convicted of his sins; he felt to mourn for his sins and the sins of the world. He was coming of age as a teenager, and he realized that he was fallen. And the theology that he was getting quite a bit of was telling him, "That's it for you. You are fallen. You're very likely going to be damned for all eternity, and you deserve to be." And that is a discouraging doctrine about God.

He was worried very much about that. And the reason I love the First Vision is because it evidences to us so beautifully that God loves teenagers—he even loves sinful teenagers! Joseph was not guilty of great or malignant sins, but sins that worried him enough to seek and receive evidence of God’s love for him and Christ’s redeeming grace. And so that is the catalyst of the whole story.

That’s where the restored gospel begins—with the correct understanding of the nature of God. I love that the story begins with the First Vision. And in many ways that charts where we go. We believe in revelation—all that God revealed, does now, or will yet. It becomes a story of revelation, revelation to unexpected kinds of people, like teenage Joseph Smith, his mother, a schoolteacher from Vermont, and a farmer from Palmyra.

Esplin: What were some of the most difficult stories to tell? What were some of the most challenging topics?

Harper: The Missouri persecutions. Those events were emotionally disturbing, and I’ve been through that stuff, as you have, over and over. I was surprised at how visceral it was to tell the story of Amanda Barnes Smith. For maybe the first time in my life, I realized that’s a really ugly story that is emotionally painful for people to process. She is the main character through that, and I don’t know if anybody’s ever suffered more, had a worse experience than she did in 1838.

Esplin: I recently read the volume to my children, and they’re young. The two that were old enough to understand it were eleven and nine, and it was hard. It was hard to tell those stories, and they reacted emotionally. But at the end, they loved the volume. We finished the entire book, and their first question was, “Dad, when’s the next volume coming out? Do we have to stop here? When can we keep going?”

Harper: I’m so thrilled. I came to the project fully buying into the idea that Rick Turley, who really is the major visionary of the whole thing, was articulating—that this has to be a narrative. Later on, Dave Nielsen, one of the great writers on the project, showed us a quote that he found in Wilford Woodruff’s journal where President Young told the Church historians in the 1860s, “Write in a narrative style, and write only about one tenth as much.”¹ So we were convinced we were doing what the prophet wanted, at least in the narrative style, if not in writing only a tenth as much. And of course, when you write a narrative,

the story should feel like a roller coaster ride, not a flat style—not the way I write history books. I was completely converted to the idea, but I didn’t have the tools to enact it. I didn’t know exactly what it would mean. But as we learned more and got the right people in place who did know and understand how to write a narrative, it became very clear that Church history maps onto a narrative arc really well.

Esplin: Talk to readers of the *Review* magazine about the organization of the project and your role. You left BYU Religious Education for a period of time to head this project up.

Harper: As we noted, on that first committee there was a contingent of faculty members from Religious Education, and then four of us who were on it sort of served as a subcommittee and proposed the four-volume idea, which the larger committee adopted and sent to the First Presidency. That became the vision for the project, the backbone for the project. So, after being released from that committee, I was invited to start outlining a couple of the volumes along with several other people. The idea all along was that no one person would ever *be* the project.

President Young told the Church historians in the 1860s, “Write in a narrative style, and write only about one tenth as much.”

It would always be a collaborative effort. It would always involve a lot of different people, there were some fears, including my fears, that it could sound like it was written by a committee. That fear has not materialized. The inspired nature of the narrative idea has become very clear to me over time.

The revelation required to get this done always was collaborative. It came as a result of counsel. The title for the books came that way. The main ideas for the books came that way. Many of the stories and strategies have come not to one person sitting alone but to a group of people who were prayerfully counseling together about it.

Reid Neilson left Religious Education to become managing director of the Church History Department in Salt Lake, so one of the four of us who was in that

committee led the whole project. He invited me to come work on it. I worked with a small team, about five to seven people, including historians who wrote early drafts, and we spread them around the department and had people read them. The feedback was that the idea was good, but it sounded like historians were trying to do a narrative and not succeeding. Then the problem was, who do we find, who do we get? And as you might guess, the people who were needed were ready, right on time. We asked around who would be the right people, and Scott Hales was clearly the one to become what we called the literary editor. It was his job to be the voice of the volumes, to give *Saints* consistency, and to structure the volumes—to be the architect. And he and some other very talented people are the main reason why it's such a good read.

Rick Turley asked us to imagine we were watching an engrossing movie, and then they stop the movie, turn on the lights, and someone comes out on the stage and says, “Now I’m going to tell you what this movie is about!” You just can’t do it.

Esplin: So this team produced a project, and then you have subsequently been able to come back to BYU?

Harper: Yes. Volume 1 is out, and I had a heavier role in volumes 1 and 2 than volume 3. I had some responsibility for volume 4. Jed Woodworth was working on other assignments at the Church History Library when we began, but when he finished those, thankfully, he was assigned to *Saints*. I think he is the most knowledgeable historian of Latter-day Saints on the planet, and the scope of his knowledge is extraordinary. It was a great opportunity for me to bow and gladly have him assume those responsibilities. He now is doing the job I was doing, and I’m doing a little bit of what he was doing before, which is the historical review: reading drafts, helping ensure historical accuracy and integrity.

Esplin: One thing I’m excited about in the project is not merely the volumes themselves, but the additional resources provided for readers. Talk to us about those

resources and the ways they are structured so they don’t interrupt the flow of the narrative.

Harper: When you write a narrative, you cannot stop the action and dissertate on some obscure topic or else you slam the brakes on readers. Rick Turley asked us to imagine we were watching an engrossing movie, and then they stop the movie, turn on the lights, and someone comes out on the stage and says, “Now I’m going to tell you what this movie is about!” You just can’t do it. And yet there are places in Church history where many people want and need context, more information. So how do you serve the readers who just want to read the great story and internalize it *and* simultaneously serve the readers who say, “Well, how do they know that? Tell me more about that.” The answer to that is, the footnotes are rich. And many of them have links, and in the digital versions readers can click on a link and go to a topical essay. For volume 1, there were well over one hundred of these topics. Some of them are videos; some of them are textual, with a lot of graphics. There’s a lot of rich information. People who want it can find it pretty quickly and easily. Within a few clicks they can be at the raw source material for most of the book.

Esplin: This, then, is one way that the book is different from other earlier histories. Are there any other things that come to your mind? Anything else that stands out to you as making this history significantly different from other histories of the Church?

Harper: I have here on my shelf Joseph Smith’s manuscript history. I have B. H. Roberts’s *Comprehensive History*. I almost never pull those volumes off the shelf. And neither does anybody else anymore, right? They’re on my parents’ shelves at home. They’re great! They’re wonderfully rich resources. But they don’t help the present generation internalize the past very well. We need a past that speaks to the present. In some ways, that’s what memory is. Memory is making a useful version of the past for the present. I believe it’s for this reason that the Lord said to keep the history continually, and you’ve got to do it for the rising generations (see Doctrine and Covenants 47:3; 69:8). And we knew that the rising generations are not reading the old histories. I don’t blame them. And we knew that we needed to follow the Lord’s commandment in some way that would respond to his children who are in those rising generations. We had to have a narrative that’s fast paced, that’s reliable and accurate and true—they want



"We have to find effective ways to help Latter-day Saints internalize and remember that there was a First Vision, that the priesthood was restored, that the Book of Mormon was translated by the power of God, that Zion was revealed and striven for and suffered for and sacrificed for, and that Saints have come before us who were natural men and women and yet longed more than anything to become Saints through the Atonement of Christ." *Ask of God*, painting by Sandra Rast.

to be able to trust it. If we could give them that kind of a history, they would devour it, and the evidence is that they are devouring. More than eighty million chapters have been opened or listened to or read online.

Esplin: And that's not counting everyone who is reading it in print.

Harper: Exactly. Three hundred forty thousand print copies have been sold.

Esplin: And it's starting to roll out in other languages?

Harper: Yes, fourteen languages total, soon. Several of those are already out and the others will be, which will reach more than 95 percent of Latter-day Saints across the globe. So that signals that the Lord loves his children.

Esplin: By way of conclusion, maybe what have you learned in all of this, and what do you hope readers learn from *Saints*? What do you hope they get from it?

We need a past that speaks to the present. In some ways, that's what memory is. Memory is making a useful version of the past for the present.

Harper: What I hope is that it will do what the Book of Mormon calls enlarging "the memory of this people" (Alma 37:8). I lost my memory in 1994 for a few weeks. It was the strangest experience of my life. I was in Nauvoo with my wife on a semester travel study. I woke up one day and didn't know who I was, where I was, anything. I woke up in the University of Iowa Hospital. I had no idea how I got there, when I got there. And I now know that I had been there for over two weeks. My wife was there. I knew that I knew her, but I had no idea. I couldn't tell you her name. I didn't know we were expecting a baby. It is the strangest experience to have your memory gone! If you don't have a memory, in some ways you don't exist. You don't really exist!

So think of how often the scriptures talk about remembering. If we don't remember the Restoration, then in some ways there may as well not have been a Restoration, as far as we're concerned. So we have to find effective ways to help Latter-day Saints internalize and remember that there was a First Vision, that the priesthood was restored, that the Book of Mormon was translated by the power of God, that Zion was revealed and striven for and suffered for and sacrificed for, and that Saints have come before us who were natural men and women and yet longed more than anything to become Saints through the Atonement of Christ. That's our inheritance. That's our heritage. If we don't have it in our minds and in our hearts, it would be tragic. We would lose the Restoration. So that's what I hope, that Saints will internalize the Restoration from reading these books.

Esplin: Thank you, Steve. Thank you for your work, and thank you for your willingness to share your talents and gifts with the members of the Church. ☘

1. Brigham Young, in Wilford Woodruff, journal, 20 October 1861, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

HOME-CENTERED, CHURCH-SUPPORTED LEARNING

By Scott C. Esplin

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“As Latter-day Saints, we have become accustomed to thinking of ‘church’ as something that happens in our meetinghouses, supported by what happens at home,” noted President Russell M. Nelson in the October 2018 general conference. “We need an adjustment to this pattern,” he continued. “It is time for a home-centered Church, supported by what takes place inside our branch, ward, and stake buildings.” Accordingly, President Nelson revealed, “For many years, Church leaders have been working on an integrated curriculum to strengthen families and individuals through a home-centered and Church-supported plan to learn doctrine, strengthen faith, and foster greater personal worship.” He announced “a new balance and connection between gospel instruction in the home and in the Church.”¹

To better implement these changes to teaching and learning in the Church, the *Religious Educator*,



Brother Tad R. Callister, Sunday School General President. Photo by Cody Bell. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

the journal for BYU Religious Education, recently published interviews with Brother Tad R. Callister, Sunday School General President, and Brian J. Hansbrow, Ted Barnes, and Paul Murphy, curriculum developers in the Church’s Priesthood and Family Department.² These individuals are among those who prepared

the new *Come, Follow Me* resources for learning and teaching the gospel. As producers of the curriculum materials, they provided helpful insight into the new model for gospel learning in the Church. We are pleased to share excerpts from their insights.

How did the changes come about?

Brother Tad R. Callister outlined how the curriculum was developed. “The *Come, Follow Me* curriculum for the youth commenced in 2013. . . . At that point in time, the feeling of the Brethren was ‘We like this content material of *Come, Follow Me* for the youth. We’d like to see something like that developed for the adults.’ . . . The question was raised, ‘How can we employ *Come, Follow Me* principles with adults?’ Then the thought came, ‘But how can we make it home centered and Church supported?’ I think this was truly an evidence of revelation coming line upon line, and there was direction from above, there

was direction from the curriculum staff—input that they received from all the auxiliaries.”

Curriculum developer Brian Hansbrow added, “The month that we launched youth curriculum, January of 2013, we went right back into our executive council, and they said, ‘When are we doing this for the adults?’ . . . We had created this nice wonderful curriculum for the youth, and there was an approach to teaching and learning there that was a little different. The model was a little different. It wasn’t just about participation, but that became one of the ways people evaluated whether or not they were following the model. Our director at the time, one of the Brethren that was leading our little team, focused on a little phrase in the Church handbook.”

Fellow developer Ted Barnes continued, “That phrase from the handbook was quoted in general conference about being ‘home centered and Church supported.’ . . . So we wrestled for a long time, wondering, ‘What does that mean and how should that guide the curriculum?’ Our leaders would say, ‘You’re never going to get this curriculum right until you focus on the home.’ We weren’t even thinking about the home at that time. We were just thinking about Sunday School and adults—in fact, the adult Sunday School and the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society. . . . I think Elder Christoffel Golden said, ‘You’ll never get the curriculum right until you figure out the home.’ He had a vision for how curriculum needed to be more than just a classroom experience, that learning and teaching is much



“We’re trying to take people from being page-turners of the scriptures to disciples who study and ponder the scriptures.” Photo by Matt Reier. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

broader than that, and if we limited ourselves to just what happened at church, we’d miss out on most learning opportunities.” Accordingly, a home-centered, Church-supported model emerged.

How does *Come, Follow Me* integrate learning across the Church?

As they focused on the home to produce the curriculum, developers realized that they needed to integrate

all of the priesthood and auxiliary groups in the Church. Speaking of the alignment that could occur across all ages as a result of the curriculum, Brian Hansbrow added, “We went to the Primary General Presidency and said, ‘We can’t create something that’s centered in the home and supported at church with our current model of curriculum because in my home I’ve got six children and they’re all on different things.’ So how do we

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unify the home around one topic? . . . It was working with the Primary Presidency to say, ‘Can we create a curriculum that brings in every family member?’” The curriculum that emerged aligns the course of study for children, youth, and adults, in their Primary, Sunday School, youth, Relief Society, and priesthood classes.

Brother Callister concluded, “Honestly, it truly was a combined effort, and I think it was integrated in two ways. One way is that the family was included in an aligned study. But the curriculum was also integrated in that all of the auxiliaries

were participating, realizing that the individual and family book involves every single auxiliary in the Church—the priesthood, the Relief Society, the youth, the Primary, the Sunday School. They all had to be in harmony on what that ought to be.”

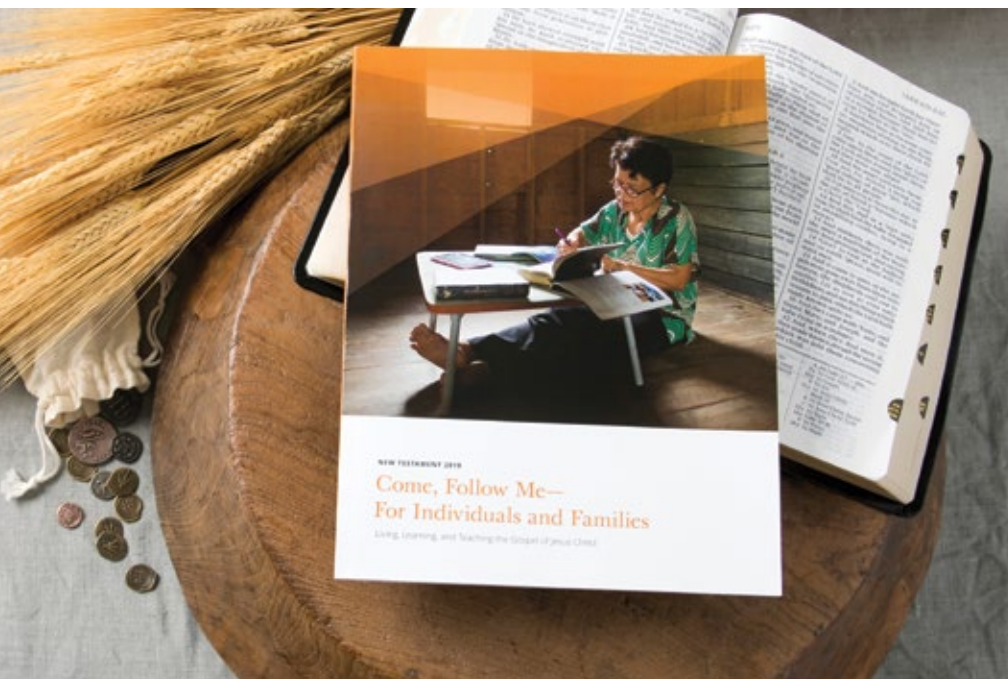
What is the design of the new curriculum?

The design of the *Come, Follow Me* resources for learning and teaching places greater emphasis on learning as individuals and families in the home, coupled with a class experience that builds on this outside

learning. Developer Brian Hansbrow picked up on the role the home should play in the new curriculum. “The previous curriculum model essentially said, ‘The goal is conversion.’ We knew we had to have the Spirit for that, but then we focused on great classes. The previous curriculum was all about the class. We focused on whatever we could do to have a great class, and in order to have a great class, well, we had to have a great teacher. The whole idea was we had to be fantastic as teachers, and we all had to create a great experience, and then this would lead to the Spirit.

“But what the research said was, ‘No, it’s personal and family scripture study—scripture experiences!’ What great teachers do is they encourage those experiences to happen. They say, ‘Tell me about the experiences you had when you read that scripture on your own.’ Or they say, ‘Tell us how you were in Matthew chapter 5 this last week. Where do you feel that the Lord really spoke to you?’ You get people to start having a different kind of experience with the scriptures and start thinking about how the scriptures are speaking to them—how the Spirit is working on them. Then our classes become a different experience too.” Curriculum developer Paul Murphy succinctly stated, “One of the ways we flipped the model was we used to talk about it, then invite people to go home and read it. Now, we invite them to read the material, and come together to talk about it.”

In addition to emphasizing learning that can occur outside of class, Brother Callister added that the classroom experience should



The design of the *Come, Follow Me* resources for learning and teaching places greater emphasis on learning as individuals and families in the home, coupled with a class experience that builds on this outside learning. Photo by Christina Smith. Courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

improve as a result of these changes. He cautioned, however, that no single approach would be ideal. Rather, teachers should employ a variety of methods in their teaching. “We’ve learned that more discussion was necessary, that we didn’t want talking heads,” Brother Callister outlined. “The pendulum sometimes swings too far, and sometimes we ended up with people who would have *all* discussion and thought that’s what a Christlike teacher was—solely discussion. But a Christlike teacher also discourses, gives context, has discussion, extends invitations, uses music and art—all these other resources—and reaches out to those who don’t attend class. . . . They are to teach like the Savior teaches, using all of the methods that he uses.”

Offering a specific example, Brother Callister continued, “We’re not saying to this person that you should use 50 percent discussion and 50 percent discourse; we’re saying you need to find the balance that works for you. Now, if I’m going to a class with Elder Bruce R. McConkie, I might want 80 percent discourse and 20 percent discussion. For someone else, maybe the reverse. But we’re saying this is where you have to use personal revelation and decide. We need a balance. But don’t become that one-note player on the piano—only a discussion leader or only a talking head. Use all those resources that the Savior used that made Him such a wonderful, balanced teacher.”

What practical considerations might apply to teaching a class? Those using the materials will note that they are less prescriptive



Photo by Forrest M Anderson.

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than some previous study materials. Brother Callister offered useful advice for how teachers can benefit from the new materials. “We have left it open to them to say, ‘You take whatever material from the last lesson that you gave up to the current lesson this week that families were studying—if that’s two or three lessons—you take whatever material from those two or three lessons that you think would be most helpful to the members of your class.’ So instead of having six pages of material, you might have twelve pages of material. You won’t lack for material! The biggest concern is

that we’re concerned that the teachers may feel that they have to cover everything that is in there. We hope we can get away from that. Cover the points that you think are most important. If you cover only three of the twelve, that’s fine.”

Developers repeatedly stressed that the pressure “to cover” a specified number of chapters should be reduced. Paul Murphy, a curriculum developer in the Priesthood and Family Department, shared, “I’ll speak to the teachers for just a minute. I think it’s been our feeling that teachers can really do some

We're hopeful for families that, with these manuals as resources and activities as resources, it will help them truly study the scriptures rather than go through the checklist mentality of "Everybody read a verse, and then we go to bed." That's a good start, but it can be better. Better is pondering.



Curriculum developers, from left to right: Mike Barber, Ted Barnes, Paul Murphy, and Brian Hansbrow. Photograph by Scott C. Esplin.

marvelous things in supporting the home. One of the things that they can do is to let go of the feeling that they have to cover all the material in the classroom at church now. . . . You have two weeks now of material, and many Gospel Doctrine teachers feel this way—that they have to be the one

that knows more than anyone else in the room. Those days are gone, and now we get to say, 'I am one person in this room that's had an experience in these scriptures. There are many others in this room, and what can I do to tap into their experience and bring that to bear in the classroom?' I think

that in and of itself will transform and motivate people at home—because when they come to church knowing that what they have experienced at home will be drawn upon and that they will be able to share that, they are going to be motivated to share those experiences and to have those experiences week after week after week in their homes." Ted Barnes added, "The feeling is that we are not as concerned about coverage as we are about the revelatory experience that can happen in our lives."

Additionally, the organization of the new curriculum allows for dedicated lessons on significant occasions. For example. Brother Callister noted, "Because it's by date you may have seen also that on Easter Sunday, there's a special lesson for Easter on the Atonement of Jesus Christ, so you're not going to be talking about Balaam and the talking donkey because that's where you are in the Old Testament. Then you get to Christmas, you will always have a lesson on the life of Christ. . . . So you can bring your friends on Easter Sunday and Christmas and know they're going to have an appropriate lesson . . . so that we feel comfortable bringing nonmember friends or less actives, that it's going to be a subject that they ought to be hearing about."

Brother Callister added specific recommendations for teachers regarding lesson preparation. "I would say a couple of things. One is that they seek personal revelation and not rely just on the curriculum—that it's a supplement, it's not a replacement for revelation, that they go to

the effort to think of their own questions, their own resources, their own invitations that they might extend, prior to reading the rest of the lesson. If they do that, I have no doubt that they will receive personal revelation that will be very, very rewarding to them and to the class.

“Number two is that they start thinking about the lesson at least a week in advance. I think we all understand the reasons for doing that. Revelation doesn’t come only on Sunday morning from 8 to 9 a.m.; that’s not the only time revelation comes. Revelation comes line upon line, precept upon precept, and if people will start at least a week early, I think that revelation will come at various times. Maybe when they drive the car, maybe when they’re in the shower, maybe at the dinner table. They may hear a conversation and say, ‘Oh wow, that’s a good thought! I could use that in my lesson on this subject!’ It may inspire them to live that doctrinal teaching a little better during that week. If they start at least a week in advance, I think they increase the opportunities for revelation to come into their lives by giving the Lord the chance to work through them and not just that little narrow one-hour period on Sunday morning.”

What do leaders hope will happen because of the adjustments?

Brother Callister added his hopes for what the new curriculum and learning model could accomplish. “I think President Nelson took us from home teaching to ministering, which was, as



Leslie Nilsson, © 2014 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.

he declared, a holier way of doing it. I think we’re trying to take people from being page-turners of the scriptures to disciples who study and ponder the scriptures. We’re hopeful for families that, with these manuals as resources and activities as resources, it will help them truly study the scriptures rather than go through the checklist mentality of ‘Everybody read a verse, and then we go to bed.’ That’s a good start, but it can be better. Better is pondering.

“So, number one, it’s to take us to a higher plane in terms of our spiritual study.

“Number two is there is a very clear emphasis that the parents have the prime role of teaching in the home, and now they have extra resources to help them. . . . They won’t take away the inspiration of parents, but there will be enough help to parents to add or build upon that. . . . I think it will lift parents in terms of their vision of the responsibility to

be prime gospel teachers in the home, give them the resources to do so, and take us from a checklist mentality to a real pondering mentality that will give us greater faith and make us a holier people.”

With a new emphasis on learning in the home, coupled with resources and a schedule designed to foster it, there seems to be an increased level of excitement for gospel study in the Church. All point toward the goal of moving forward on the covenant path.



1. Russell N. Nelson, “Opening Remarks,” *Ensign*, November 2018, 8.
2. See Tad R. Callister and Scott C. Esplin, “The New Home-Centered, Church-Supported Curriculum,” *Religious Educator* 20, no. 1 (2019): 9–23; Brian J. Hansbrow, Ted Barnes, Paul Murphy, and Scott C. Esplin, “Creating the New Home-Centered Curriculum,” *Religious Educator* 20, no. 1 (2019): 25–33.

SOUTH AMERICAN SEMINAR

By Barbara Morgan Gardner

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In Buenos Aires, forty-five intelligent, driven, humble, enthusiastic, spiritually sensitive young adult Latter-day Saints from all parts of South America gathered together with native and international business, political, medical, and Church leaders for the first annual *Seminario Sud Americano* (South American Seminar) on 23–26 September 2018. Focusing on the conference theme “Los Mormones in Sudamerica: Nuestra Religion en la Esfera Publica” (Mormons in South America: Our Religion in the Public Sphere), these participants spent four very full days listening, learning, analyzing, planning, and dialoguing on what they could do as members of the Church to be more effective in the public sphere.

This seminar had its inspiration in an earlier event held in Europe. Dr. Jim Faulconer, associate director of the Wheatley Institution and previous director of the BYU London Centre, was deeply aware of the isolation that young adult members of the Church living abroad experienced. What became known as the LDS

EuroSeminar commenced and was deemed extremely successful.

As an observer of the EuroSeminar, Gabriel Saez—an enthusiastic member of the Church in Argentina and an adviser to Argentina’s vice president Gabriela Michetti—knew immediately this was an opportunity he wanted the young adults in South America to have. “When I saw the experiences these European students were having, the quality of speakers, the interactions of the students, and the mentoring at the EuroSeminar, I immediately knew that this is something the young adults in South America needed,” he explained. Within a short time, Gabriel, with the assistance of Dr. Faulconer and Fred Axelgard—senior fellow at the Wheatley Institution and previous EuroSeminar organizer—began forming a committee for a similar seminar for Latter-day Saint young adults in South America. This committee included Gabriel Saez, Dr. Faulconer, Fred Axelgard, South America Area Seventy Alfredo Salas, and myself.



Néstor Curbelo, Church historical presenter, holding the journal of Elder Melvin J. Ballard, who dedicated South America for the preaching of the gospel. Photo courtesy of Barbara Morgan Gardner.

This organizing committee immediately began brainstorming what it would take to make this new dream a reality. Funding and official sponsorship were quickly and graciously provided by the Wheatley Foundation, BYU Religious Education, the Widtsoe Foundation, Grupo Roble, and the Stirling Foundation, which provided plane tickets, boarding, and other accommodations for participants from Argentina to Columbia and Brazil to Peru. With sponsorship, enthusiasm, networking, and



Sunrise commemoration picture of participants, organizers, and speakers at the Tres de Febrero Park in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Elder Ballard, on Christmas Day 1925, dedicated South America for the preaching of the gospel. Photo courtesy of Barbara Morgan Gardner.

The primary objective was to bring young Latter-day Saints together from all over South America, to enable them to meet in an environment that combined academic rigor and sincere faith, and to allow them to connect with other members their age who had similarly strong faith and desires to excel in their profession and make a difference in society.

leadership in place, planning and implementation became a reality.

The objectives of the Seminario Sud Americano were fourfold. The primary objective was to bring young Latter-day Saints together from all over South America to enable them to meet in an environment that combined academic rigor and sincere faith and to allow them to connect with other members their age who had similarly strong faith and desires to excel in their profession and make a difference in society. The second objective was to introduce these young adults to more senior Latter-day Saints who could model what it means to take one's spiritual and



Seminar students from all over South America participating in a panel discussion with speakers from BYU and South America. Photo courtesy of Barbara Morgan Gardner.

moral values into professional and community or national settings. The third objective was to enhance their appreciation for their own heritage

with the intention of building on the shoulders of others who had gone before. The fourth was to experience strength and understanding in the

The participants chosen from the applicants demonstrated faithfulness to the gospel, excelled in education or work, demonstrated a pattern and interest in civic and interfaith experiences, and were recommended by local ecclesiastical leaders.

interfaith realm in order to reach a greater audience.

To meet the primary objective, we took great care to ensure the right participants were selected. For multiple reasons, including finances, timing, and desire to keep the seminar intimate, we determined that no more than forty-five young adults would be invited to attend. Within the first few weeks of the call for attendees, approximately four hundred Latter-day Saint young adults applied from every country in South America. The participants chosen from the applicants demonstrated faithfulness to the gospel, excelled in education or work, demonstrated a pattern and interest in civic and interfaith experiences, and were recommended by local ecclesiastical leaders. The forty-five chosen participants included professionals such as journalists, medical doctors, musicians, professors, artists, business administrators, teachers, nurses, politicians, and current students and graduates still making decisions about their future employment.

At the end of the seminar, the first objective seemed to have been met as many of the participants expressed delight in meeting other active and strong Latter-day Saint members their age who were interested in similar topics. Milton Montana from Columbia expressed, “I have felt alone for so long. This seminar has put me in contact not

only with mentors and those older and more experienced, but also with members my own age, with similar drive, experience, and motivation. I feel renewed, motivated, and empowered. It’s so energizing to know that I am not alone.” Following the seminar, one student wrote, “To all of my new friends and companions, I am ready at any time to join you in your coming projects. I hope that together we can bring to fruition many important ideas. Thank you for your kindness, thoughtfulness, and enthusiasm. I love you all very much.”

To meet the second objective, men and women—primarily Latter-day Saints from South America who successfully participated in politics, business, medicine, and education at local, national, and international levels—were invited to present or participate as panelists throughout the seminar. Some of these local mentors included **Romanna Remor**, politician and BYU alum from Brazil; **Charles Pimentel Martins**, currently the CEO of Mundo Verde and an Area Seventy; **Juan Manuel Lugones**, attorney for the Government of the Province of Buenos Aires; **Gustavo Marangoni**, an Argentine politician and consultant; **Carlos Aguerro**, manager of the Argentina Missionary Training Center; **María Crespo**, director of the Buenos Aires office of the United Religions Initiative (URI); and many others.

Professionals from BYU and the United States were also asked to participate as speakers and panelists to bridge the gap between continents and validate the experience for participants. The speakers and panelists from the United States included **Mauri Properzi**, from BYU Religious Education; **Warner Woodward**, former BYU professor of organizational behavior; **Ed Rowe**, international attorney and alum of BYU and the University of Chicago; **Jacob Renneker**, acting director of the John A. Widtsoe Foundation and BYU alum; **Larry Eastland**, experienced entrepreneur and BYU alum; and **Brian Adams**, director of the Center for Interreligious and Cultural Dialogue at Griffith University, Australia, and BYU alum; and **Jim Faulkner**, **Fred Axelgard**, and myself, who were part of the organizing committee and also spoke.

For the third objective, we met at 6:00 a.m. in a park near the center of Buenos Aires, where nearly a hundred years ago Elders Melvin J. Ballard and Rulon S. Wells dedicated the land of South America for the preaching of the gospel. Néstor Curbelo, a well-respected Latter-day Saint historian from Uruguay, met all participants and organizers at this sacred site. Standing in a circular formation, the participants listened reverently to each other as they read excerpts from Elder Ballard’s dedicatory prayer offered on Christmas



Some of the South American Seminar participants and Barbara Morgan Gardner of BYU after the historical lecture and commemoration ceremony. Photo courtesy of Barbara Morgan Gardner.

morning of 1925. From Elder Ballard's dedicatory prayer these students heard this plea, "Remember in mercy the 'hope of Israel,' the youth of the Church who have upon them the future, that they will remain clean and pure from the sins of the world, and that they can be found worthy of their inheritance, and arrive at their glorious destiny."¹ Then, reading from Melvin J. Ballard's original journal, participants were reminded of South America being part of the "Land of Zion." One statement in particular from Elder Ballard dated 4 July 1926 and scribed in the notes of Vernon Sharp stood out to many participants. It read, "Work will go slowly for a time just as an oak grows slowly from an acorn. Not shoot up in a day like a sunflower that grows quickly and thus dies. Thousands will join here. Will be divided into more than one mission, and will be one of the strongest in the Church. The work here is the small[est] that it will ever be. [The] Day will come when the Lamanites here will get the chance.

[The] South America Mission [is] to be a power in the Church." As they stood there together, they recognized that the prayer of a faithful Apostle had been answered, and his prophecy was literally fulfilled in them.

To meet the fourth objective, we recognized that timing was critical. We consciously timed the seminar to coincide and overlap with the G20 Interfaith Summit, planned and scheduled to be held in Buenos Aires the end of September. Thus, with permission granted by the G20 organizers, our Latter-day Saint seminar participants saw firsthand how leaders of the Church, including Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Sharon Eubank (first counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency) spoke and publicly interacted with other religious and political leaders in a more global and public atmosphere. This experience at the G20 Summit, especially watching the live interaction between Elder Christofferson and other religious and political

leaders, proved to be a highlight for many participants of the seminar.

This overlap between the G20 Interfaith Summit and the seminar also provided the perfect window for a surprise visit and discussion with Elder Christofferson, which proved to be a great blessing for the participants, the majority of whom had never met, nor seen an Apostle firsthand. "Hearing Elder Christofferson speak in Spanish directly to us, such a small seemingly insignificant group, was very humbling and exhilarating," Sandra Montilla from Columbia recalled. "The opportunity to shake hands with a prophet of God and have him here in our country was a highlight not only of the seminar, but of my life," declared Sebastian Pawluk, a participant from Argentina currently serving as a bishop.

The seminar more than met the dreams and expectations of the organizers, sponsors, and participants. Following the seminar, participants shared sentiments, experiences, photographs, and posts on various social media sites. In addition to the repeated and heartfelt sentiments of gratitude were declarations such as "These were the most edifying days of my life," "It's going to take a lifetime for me to assimilate the immense emotion, revelation, and knowledge that I learned," and "I look forward to returning to my country and applying what I have learned from all of you and especially from the Lord." ❧

1. Original prayer of dedication offered by Elder Melvin J. Ballard as provided by Néstor Curbelo and translated by Barbara Morgan Gardner.

My Dear Sister: Letters between Joseph F. Smith and His Sister Martha Ann Smith Harris



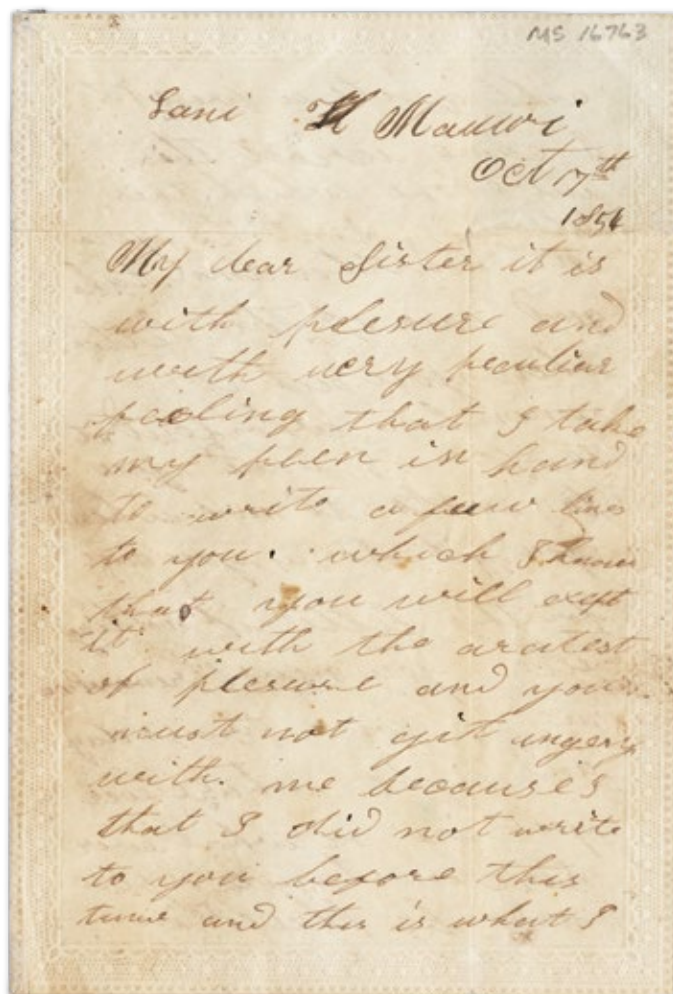
Joseph F. Smith gathered his family each November to celebrate his birthday. Following his death on 19 November 1918, the family continued the annual tradition, honoring their husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. Today, the Joseph F. Smith Family Association still holds a reunion on the Monday closest to his birthday. The reunion gives family members a chance to learn about their family through talks and presentations on Joseph F. and his five wives: Julina Lambson Smith, Sarah Ellen Richards, Edna Lambson, Alice Ann Kimball, and Mary Taylor Schwartz. The family honors his living grandchildren and all eight-year-old descendants who have been baptized or are about to be baptized. There are

an estimated 8,066 descendants, of which 7,513 are living. If spouses are included, the number jumps to 11,268, of which 10,405 are living.

During the most recent reunion held on Monday evening, 12 November 2018, at the Monument Park Stake Center in Salt Lake City, the family received Richard Neitzel Holzapfel's final report on the brand-new book *My Dear Sister: Letters between Joseph F. Smith and His Sister Martha Ann Smith Harris*, edited by Dr. Holzapfel and Dr. David M. Whitchurch and copublished by Brigham Young University's Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book.

The 241 letters included in the published volume are a treasure trove of personal insights into the lives of Joseph F. and Martha Ann during a unique era of Latter-day Saint history. Over six decades of correspondence demonstrate the tremendous devotion between the orphaned children of Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith as they share their innermost feelings, joys, heartaches, determinations, and family happenings. Some compelling information found within the letters include reflections on the death of their parents and remarks about the visit of the Prophet Joseph Smith's sons, David and Alexander (Joseph F.'s first cousins), who traveled from Nauvoo to Salt Lake City.

The letters range from 1854, when Joseph F. was a fifteen-year-old missionary in Hawaii, to 1916, when he was President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This book contains transcripts of all the associated letters and is richly complemented by photographic images of people and events representing the lives of Joseph F. and Martha Ann. A biographical register helps readers sort people and time periods.



This is the first page of a letter from Joseph F. to Martha Ann, 17 October 1854, with envelope and lock of Joseph F.'s hair. This the first known extant letter in the collection written to Martha Ann from Hawai'i. This letter was in possession of Carole Call King, along with the other letters her grandmother had preserved. King eventually donated the collection to the CHL. Courtesy of Church History Library.

The 241 letters included in the published volume are a treasure trove of personal insights into the lives of Joseph F. and Martha Ann during a unique era of Latter-day Saint history.

At a Smith family reunion many years ago, Dr. Holzapfel introduced the family to the letters, most of which were preserved by Carole Call King, Martha Ann's great-granddaughter. King did not realize the treasure she inherited when her father, Anson B. Call Jr., passed away. Busy with the funeral and other family demands, she overlooked the contents of one box. Left unnoticed on a closet shelf for some time, it caught her attention one day as she was putting away the vacuum. In the bottom of the box, underneath her mother's chiffon wedding dress, she found three small, long, narrow boxes neatly wrapped in tissue paper.

On them her grandmother Sarah Lovina Harris Passey had written in her own hand the words "Letters to mother."

King opened a box and discovered inside nearly a hundred original letters written by Joseph F. Smith. Joseph F., for by that name he was affectionately called, had addressed and sent them to his younger sister Martha Ann.

Holzapfel, a professor from Brigham Young University at the time, contacted King after hearing about an 1854 letter that she had found in one of the boxes that included a lock of Joseph F.'s hair in the envelope. In the course of their conversation, Holzapfel learned about the other letters and arranged to visit with her the following day at her home in Mountain Green, Morgan County, Utah. King graciously showed him the collection of handwritten letters, many of which were inside their original envelopes. During their conversation, King gave Holzapfel permission to copy, transcribe, and publish this important collection of personal letters.

In the months that followed, Holzapfel invited Whitchurch to join the project. Whitchurch oversaw the challenging transcription effort, producing summaries of

MS
Sugar House, near Jan 31st 1856

J. J. P. County

My dear and affectionate brother Joseph
 it is with pleasure that I
 set down to write a few lines to you to answer
 your kind and ~~very~~ affectionate letter. I received it
 this evening with the greatest of pleasure and
 happiness. ~~to~~ to hear from you John told me
 that you was sick and I was sorry to hear
 that for it will put you back a good ^{day} I am
 afraid but I hope ere this letter reaches you
 you will be as well and hearty as you ever ~~was~~
 thank the Lord ~~for~~ that I health is blessing
 that I enjoy I have not been sick so as to be
 confined to my bed aday since you left home
 and I wish that it had been so with you but
 the Lord orders all things for the best. I have
 been going to school to Llewellyn you and am learning
 minding fast and I intend to learn a good
 deal faster than I have ~~we have~~ got one of
 the finest school houses in salt lake valley
 and brother Eldredge keeps school and he is a
 good school master. I have got additional and
 I am sorry that I have made mistakes in writing
 to you and bothering you in reading my letters
 but you must excuse me this ^{time} and I will try to
 do better ~~for~~ ^{next} time. There is plenty of dicta
 ary about and ~~if~~ if you have got agree me
 I would advise you to keep it even if you could
 send it for I presume that it is an artical
 that you need your self when you are writing
 I have ~~written~~ written one letter to you before that I
 gave to John to send and he sent another
 that I had written in the back of it I wrote
 it when I received the back of that you sent me
 I have ~~not~~ got all off the things you sent me

This is a masterful collection of letters, history, and biography—all rolled into one. The editors have left no stone unturned, scouring archives and personal collections, creating decade introductions, and sharing historical context to breathe life into their stories.

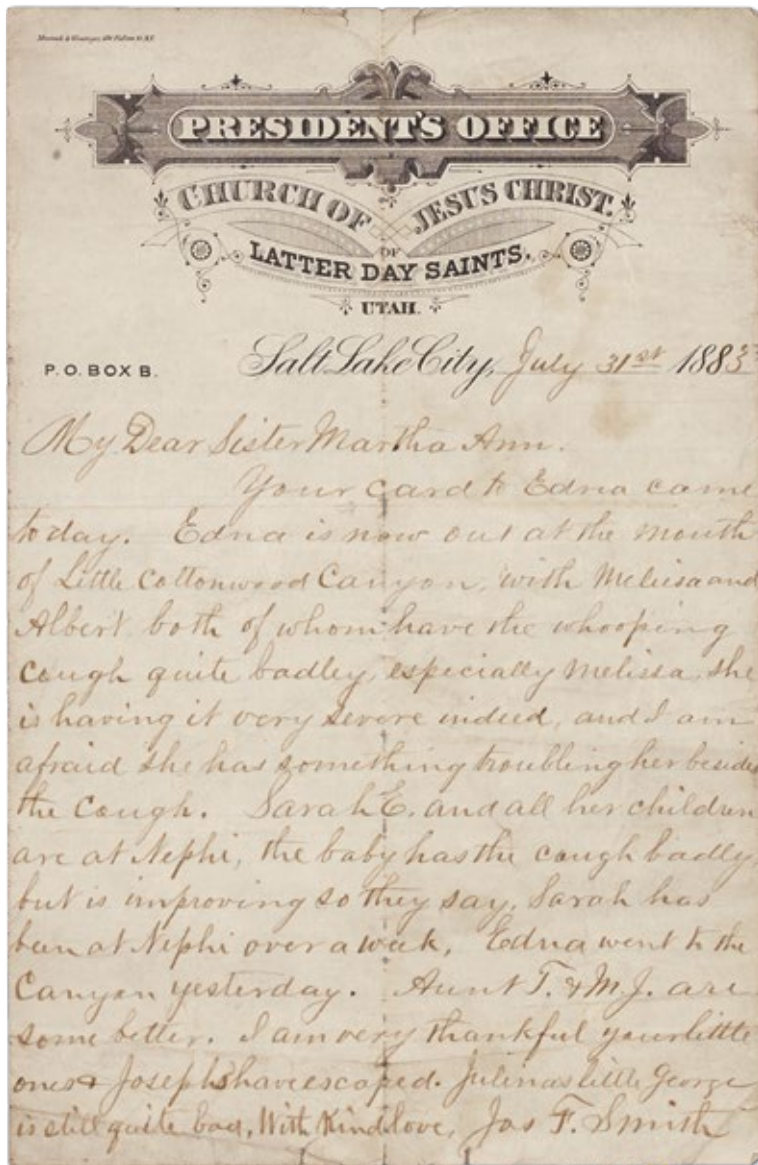


Envelope and first page of a letter from Martha Ann to Joseph F., 31 January 1856. This is Martha Ann's first known surviving letter to her brother. Courtesy of Church History Library.

each letter along with a biographical register. At the same time, Holzapfel began searching in several institutional repositories for additional letters, researching material for historical summaries for each decade represented in the letter collection, and gathering information to be used to annotate each letter to help readers contextualize the documents.

Another important development occurred when Carole Call King donated the collection of letters and envelopes to the Church History Library in Salt Lake City. In response to her generosity, the Church provided Holzapfel and Whitchurch copies of Martha Ann's letters to Joseph F. housed in their collection, which had previously been closed to researchers. Additional letters were donated to the Church History Library by other Harris family members.

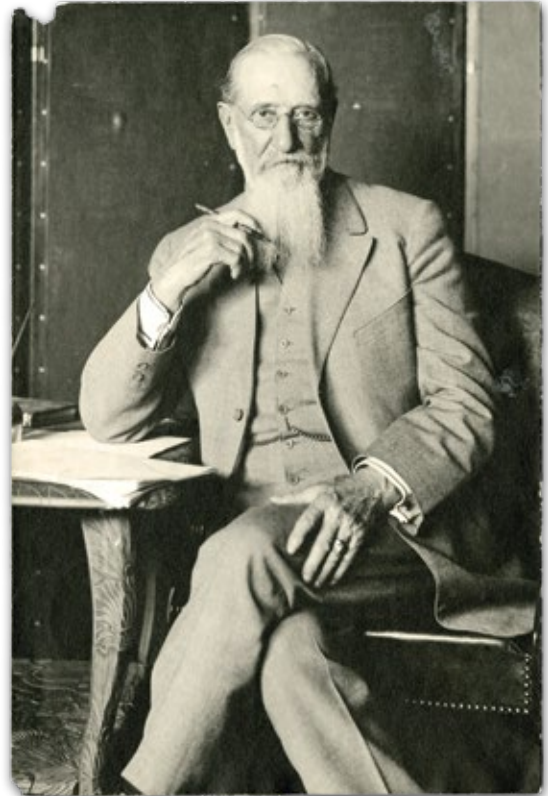
Holzapfel and Whitchurch searched the Church History Library and the libraries at Brigham Young University, the University of Utah, and the Utah State Historical Society looking for additional letters. Eventually, they discovered nineteen of Joseph F.'s letterpress copybooks at the Church History Library, two in private possession, and one at the University of Utah. Copies of sixty-nine letters are preserved only in Joseph F.'s letterpress copybooks, the originals not having survived. Additionally, one incomplete original Joseph F. letter was handed down in the family. Fortunately, a complete copy of that letter is found in one of the copybooks. The letterpress copybooks offer clues to help date letters when questions arise about the exact date of composition. In cases where original letters are damaged by holes or tears, copies from the letterpress copybooks have made it possible to produce more complete and accurate transcriptions.



Joseph F. to Martha Ann, 31 July 1883

Over six decades of correspondence demonstrate the tremendous devotion between the orphaned children of Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith as they share their innermost feelings, joys, heart-aches, determinations, and family happenings.

This is a masterful collection of letters, history, and biography—all rolled into one. The editors have left no stone unturned, scouring archives and personal collections, creating decade introductions, and sharing historical context to breathe life into their stories. ✕



FACULTY AND STAFF

APPOINTMENTS



Daniel K Judd has been appointed to serve as dean of Religious Education effective 15 February.

Andrew C. Skinner was appointed to the board of directors for the International Dead Sea Scroll Foundation, 2018. He was appointed associate director—academics and dean of students, BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, 2018–19.

SELECTED FULL-TIME FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

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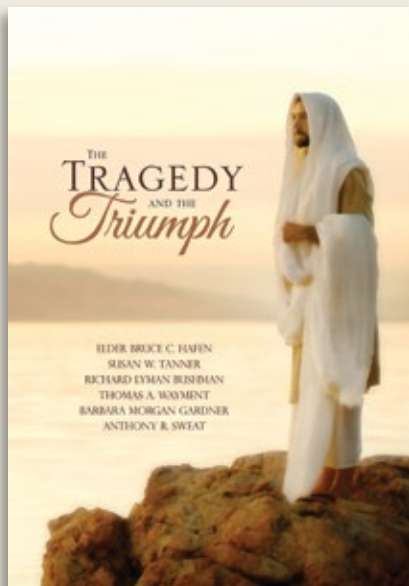
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RETIRING

Cheryl A. Snelgrove, secretary to the associate deans, retired in January.



The Tragedy and the Triumph

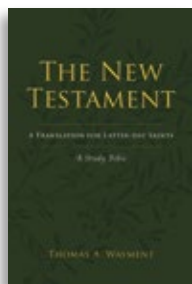
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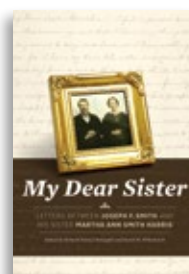


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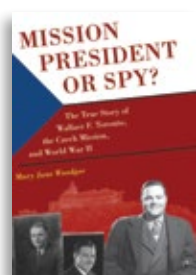
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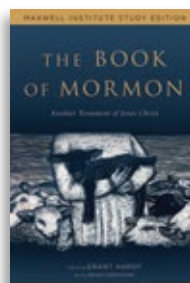
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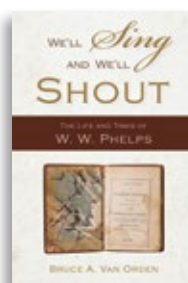


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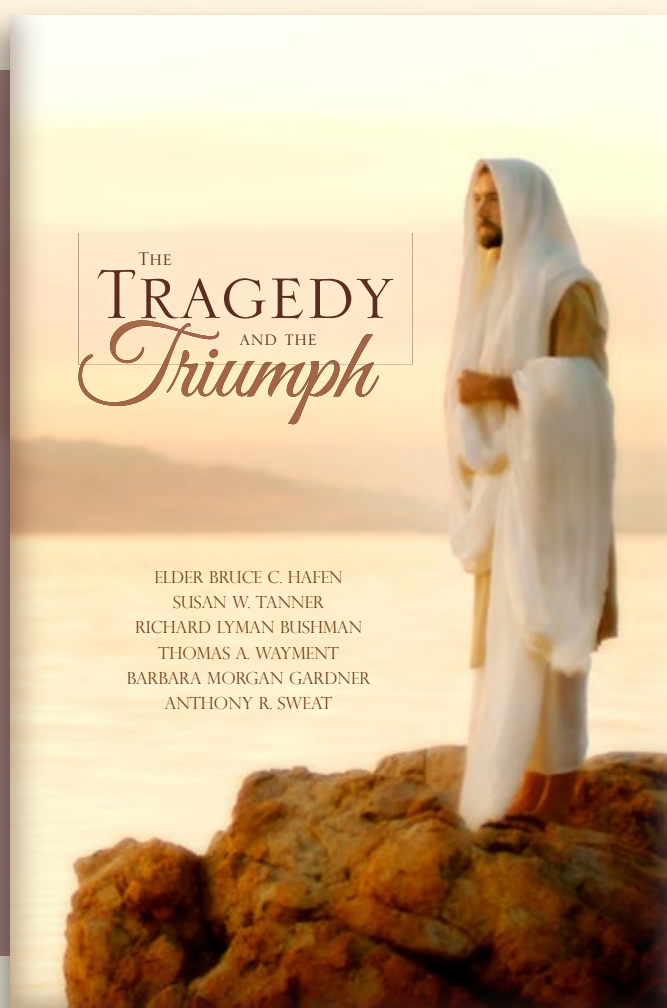
"I always thought I would be a teacher or a nurse. Then I met some people who said I should consider being a child life specialist," said Carlile. Child life specialists work with children in trauma situations—often medical—and help the children to cope using techniques such as play therapy and distraction.

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