REVIEW

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



Our Commitment: Being Different, Being Better



ecause of the realities of printing and production, this message is being $oldsymbol{D}$ written several weeks before it appears in print. And given all that we're experiencing right now, it is difficult to predict what the world might be like by the time this Review magazine arrives in the hands of readers.

But as of mid-summer 2020, some things loom large-and demand our attention. In a 17 June 2020 address at BYU's Religious Freedom Review, Elder David A. Bednar called this a time of "wake-up calls." COVID-19 is affecting everyone in unprecedented ways-but we're facing more than just a global pandemic. As Elder Bednar said, the world faces "a most pernicious social plague of racism." It seems worthwhile for all of us to spend some contemplative moments in this wake-up call exercise.

How can we minister to individuals in a time of disconnectedness? How can we address blind spots in our attitudes about racial justice? (It's worth checking out a series of very short films created by BYU advertising students at checkyourblindspot.org.)

How can we each work to fight against that "most pernicious social plague of racism"? How will we be different? How will Religious Education at BYU be different?

We join a chorus of voices expressing admiration for the faculty and students of BYU who, in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, transitioned to remote teaching and learning in only a matter of a few days in March. While acknowledging ongoing challenges, we nevertheless have to give high praise to the university community for making this work. Some of those efforts are highlighted in this edition of the magazine. But as we approach fall semester, we know more must be done to connect with and engage and support students effectively.

We also join a chorus of voices on our campus calling for us to take up the charge given by President Russell M. Nelson and leaders of the NAACP to "review processes, laws, and organizational attitudes regarding racism and root them out once and for all." In all aspects of our work in Religious Education at BYU, we know more must be done—and we pledge to do it. We stand with the BYU Committee on Race, Equity, and Belonging in affirming that "rooting out racism, healing its wounds . . . is the responsibility of every member of the BYU community." We will do all we can-in our classrooms, in our curriculum, in our interactions-"to work tirelessly to build bridges of understanding" (President Nelson's words).

As we start an academic year unlike any other, we, too, will be different than we have been before. That is our commitment.

Associate Dean, Religious Education



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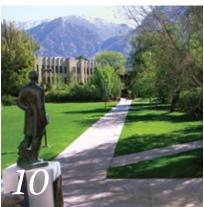
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On the cover: Devotional with Elder Jack N. Gerard in the Marriott Center during the Covid-19 pandemic. Photo by Nate Edwards/BYU Photo.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER Founded in 1975 by Jeffrey R. Holland

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SOMEDAY" HAS COME

SCOTT C. ESPLIN (SCOTT_ESPLIN@BYU.EDU) IS PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR OF THE BYU RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER.

ur offices in the Religious Studies Center share BYU's Heber J. Grant Building with the more well-known campus testing center. During the peak times of midterm and final exams, hundreds of students pack the hallways, snaking their way in a line that extends out the door and down the sidewalk, cramming one last time and likely offering silent prayers before facing their academic fates. As a staff, we occasionally grumble under our breath at students who sit on the floor against our doors, not knowing they open periodically, or at the crowds these busy times bring to the building's limited restroom facilities.

After joining campus in the retreat to remote instruction in March owing to Covid-19, then slowly returning to our offices throughout the summer to move forward our publishing work, we miss those stressed-out students with whom we used to share close quarters.

Religious education is relational. When the Lord organized the School of the Prophets in Kirtland, Ohio, in the winter of 1833, he gave direction regarding student and teacher interactions. They all were to listen, participate, and love one another, facilitating equal privilege

and edification (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:122-23). The instructions even outlined their manner of greeting-saluting each other in the name of Jesus Christ in a covenant of immutable fellowship and brotherhood "through the grace of God in the bonds of love," walking "in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever" (v. 133).

President Dallin H. Oaks emphasized that relational teaching

like this, especially gospel teaching, is more than simply dispensing knowledge. "A gospel teacher will never be satisfied with just delivering a message or preaching a sermon," he taught. "A superior gospel teacher wants to assist in the Lord's work to bring eternal life to His children."1 That human interaction transforms all involved.

I pray for the return of students. I am eager to help them figure out on the first day of class that the JSB



BYU's Heber J. Grant building, home of the Religious Studies Center. Photograph by Brent R. Nordgren.

(Joseph Smith Building) and JFSB (Joseph F. Smith Building) are not the same. I cannot wait to trip over them as they study in our hallways. I do not mind walking to another building to use the restroom because the lines are too long in our own. While students may not, I even long to feel the collective stress level of the Grant Building rise several notches as young adults worry once again about their recall abilities. I look forward to all of these things because I know that education for eternity matters eternally.

On long days as parents of young children, my wife and I occasionally joked, "People say we will someday miss this . . . but today is not that day." When it comes to students on campus, for me, the "someday" of missing them has come.

Gratefully,

Scott C. Esplin

Publications Director Religious Studies Center

Soft C. Eylin

Note

1. Dallin H. Oaks, "Gospel Teaching," Ensign, November 1999, 80.

Calendar of Events

Sidney B. Sperry Symposium Friday and Saturday, 23-24 October 2020

The presentations for the 49th Annual Sperry Symposium will be recorded and made available online. The theme is "How and What You Worship." Presentations will cover Christology, the study of the nature and mission of Christ, as well as *praxis*, which involves religious practice. In light of Joseph Smith's revelations (particularly section 93), this study necessarily involves attention to the spiritual and intellectual quest to "know" the Savior (John 17:3). For more information, visit https://rsc.byu.edu/conferences/sperry.

BYU Easter Conference

Friday, 26 March 2021

The BYU Easter Conference will be held in the Joseph Smith Building auditorium (subject to change) beginning at 7:00 p.m. The keynote speaker will be Virginia Pearce Cowley, an author and former member of the Young Women General Presidency. The other two speakers are Tyler J. Griffin, associate teaching professor of ancient scripture at BYU, and Jennifer Reeder, historian and nineteenth-century women's specialist at the Church History Department. 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 https://rsc.byu.edu/conferences/easter.

These events are free of charge, and registration is not required. Please note that some events and their details are subject to change. For more details, please visit us online at rsc.byu.edu/conferences or contact Devan Jensen at 801-422-9304.



Faculty Highlight: Andrew C. Skinner

ANDREW C. SKINNER (andrew_skinner@byu.edu) IS PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.



NDREW SKINNER CAME TO BYU IN 1992 AND IS PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT $m{\Lambda}$ scripture. He served as chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture (1997-2000), dean of Religious Education (2000-2005), and founding executive director of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at BYU (2006–2008). From 2010 to 2014 he held the Richard L. Evans Professorship of Religious Understanding, in which role he engaged in interfaith dialogue and other efforts to build bridges of friendship and understanding among people of different religious faiths.

Andrew is the author or coauthor of twenty books and two hundred articles; he is also the editor of seven contributed volumes. These works treat a variety of religious and historical topics—from the life of Christ to military history. He earned degrees from the University of Colorado, the Iliff School of Theology, Harvard University, and the University of Denver. He also studied at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He has worked at BYU's Jerusalem Center six times as an instructor and as its academic director, most recently from 2018-19. He is married to Janet Corbridge Skinner. They have six children and ten grandchildren. X

Faculty Hightlight: Fred E. Woods

FRED E. WOODS ($fred_woods@b\gamma u.edu$) IS PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.



RIGINALLY FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, FRED E. WOODS JOINED THE Church at age twenty and served a mission to Adelaide, Australia. He earned a PhD from the University of Utah in 1991 and has been a professor in BYU's Department of Church History and Doctrine since 1998. A visiting teaching and research professor at several universities, he was awarded BYU's Richard L. Anderson Distinguished Research Award in 2002. From 2005 to 2010 he held a Richard L. Evans Professorship of Religious Understanding. Last year Fred coauthored a book on the Saints of Tonga, and he recently completed the forthcoming book The Latter-day Saint Image in the British Mind, with a companion documentary film. Fred currently holds a Moral Education Professorship and has selected Las Vegas as a model of how Latter-day Saints have brought light and morality to that desert community. That research will result in another joint book and documentary publication next year. *X

Staff Highlight: Joshua R. McDaniel

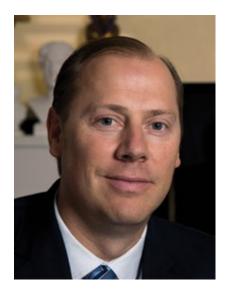
 ${\tt JOSHUA\,R.\,MCDANIEL\,} (joshua_mcdaniel@byu.edu) {\tt IS\,THE\,CONTROLLER\,FOR\,RELIGIOUS\,EDUCATION\,AT\,BYU.}$



Joshua R. McDaniel is the controller for religious education and oversees all budgets and financial activities. He assists the deans and department chairs in managing resources and facilitates faculty needs for funding in support of teaching and research. Josh was born and raised in La Jara, Colorado, and served a full-time mission in the Chile Santiago West Mission. He earned a bachelor's degree in recreation leadership from BYU–Idaho, a bachelor's degree in accounting from Adams State University, and a master's degree from Brigham Young University. Prior to joining BYU Religious Education, Josh worked in public accounting doing tax and audit work. He came to BYU in 2008 as an accountant and later served as an assistant controller in both Continuing Education and the Office of Information Technology. Josh is married to Susan McDaniel, formerly Susan Hornberger, of Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. They are the parents of five children and reside in Springville, Utah. **

Faculty Highlight: Lincoln H. Blumell

LINCOLN H. BLUMELL ($lincoln_blumell@byu.edu$) IS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY.



at Brigham Young University, began his academic study of religion at the University of Calgary, where he received a BA with honors in classical and early Christian studies and an MA in religious studies, emphasizing ancient Christianity. He also holds an MSt from the University of Oxford (Christ Church) in Jewish studies, and in 2009 he completed his PhD at the University of Toronto, specializing in early Christianity. His research focus is Christianity in the Roman and Byzantine periods with special emphases on Christianity in Egypt and on Greek and Coptic papyrology and epigraphy. He recently edited the collected volume New Testament History, Culture, and Society: A Background to the Texts of the New Testament. **

Micah Shea, Joseph Smith, and (Social) Distance

Jordan T. Watkins

JORDAN T. WATKINS (jordan_watkins@byu.edu) IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

uring the current COVID-19 pandemic, we've become accustomed to hearing and using the term social distance. As an intellectual historian, I've spent a lot of time thinking about another kind of distance: historical distance. This is the dislocation that separates people across time rather than space. As a PhD student, I began to examine how antebellum Americans awoke to a sense of historical distance, or in other words, how they began to confront the realization that they lived in a cultural setting that was fundamentally different from past eras, including those they had approached as familiar. Just a few years after I began work on this topic, I was confronted by another kind of distance: the distance caused by death.

In 2012, Micah Shea, my youngest sibling, committed suicide. Once she had been brought close to me through adoption; now death has placed her at an unspeakable distance. During the past eight years, the personal distance between me and my sister has

informed my scholarship on historical distance, and vice versa. And during the last few months, both have shaped how I've been thinking about social distancing. While practicing social distancing is different from the facts of isolation and social distance—whatever their causes and forms—perhaps it's still worth making the obvious observation that to experience estrangement from each other is part of what it means to be human. Social distance reminds us of just how important our embodied interactions are; it imbues sociality with even greater meaning.

While we are in unique circumstances, peoples temporally distant from us have also faced and addressed challenges caused by isolation and social distance. Setting aside more obvious examples, Joseph Smith's experiences during the summer of 1842—the time period covered in volume 10 of the Documents series of The Joseph Smith Papers—highlight the inspired ways in which the prophet of the Restoration dealt with

the threat of social distance and the reality of isolation. Like the rest of us, he experienced various forms of social distance throughout his life. These distances inspired him; his revelations and teachings aimed to secure sociality. The sins Joseph committed when he was a boy led him to feel alienated from God and inspired him to seek and find communion with the divine. The events that followed can be understood as part of his quest to ensure an eternal communion for himself and, later, for the Latter-day Saints.

That spiritual quest, and our comprehension of it, depends on material documents, mediations between people living in the same time and at different times. In the twenty-first century, our use of various forms of media can be understood as an effort to close the distances between us, even as those very uses can create new social distances. Similarly, we as historians use remainders from the past to bring close those who are historically distant, to varying effect. As we examine historical documents, the past moves in and out of focus, offering glimpses of its people and their problems. In the case of the summer of 1842, we discover that then, as now, media of all kinds mediated-by enhancing but also by mitigating and overcoming-social distance. In July 1842, Missouri governor Thomas Reynolds issued a requisition, a document that demanded Illinois governor Thomas Carlin's assistance in extraditing Joseph to Missouri for trial.1 The trouble began on May 6, when an unknown assailant shot former Missouri governor Lilburn W. Boggs, who had signed the infamous "extermination order," a document that promised to place distance between the Saints and their Missouri homes. After the May shooting, unsubstantiated rumors-which began to spread in Illinois newspapers-suggested that Joseph had orchestrated the assassination attempt.2 During the same weeks. John C. Bennett became estranged from the Church.3 These two developments soon converged in a new threat of extradition, which Bennett pledged to support.4 Sensing danger, Joseph and the Saints petitioned Illinois governor Thomas Carlin for protection, and the Nauvoo City Council formed a new night watch and bolstered the municipal court's power over habeas corpus cases.5 When granted, a writ of habeas corpus demands that arrested persons be brought before a judge to determine the validity of the arresting warrant. In Joseph's case, the writ would ensure that he could not be removed to Missouri without



Just a few years after I began work on this topic, I was confronted by another kind of distance: the distance caused by death.

first being taken before a local justice of the peace. In other words, even as certain documents threatened to place distance between Joseph and his family, friends, and followers, other documents functioned to keep him close to them.

When Reynolds's requisition reached Carlin, he signed an arrest

warrant, and on August 8 three officers arrived in Nauvoo and arrested Joseph. Joseph immediately petitioned for a writ of habeas corpus, and Nauvoo's municipal court obliged, temporarily separating Joseph from the officers and from the threat of removal to Missouri. Recognizing the limits of these legal safeguards,



Micah Shea Watkins, November 2011. Photo by Leah Watkins, used by permission.

to protect against social distances on earth, certain ritual documents had power to mitigate spiritual and social distances in the eternities. Isolation from loved ones-and the threat of distance brought about by possible extradition and death-primed Joseph for revelation and inspired him to develop teachings and create documents aimed at securing sociality in heaven.

Since Micah's death-which created a distance of penetrating darkness and deep despair-I've pored over her journals in search of understanding and hope. Perhaps something like what led Joseph to insist on the importance of creating ritual records has led me to want to recover Micah's writings; in light

Joseph began to practice a kind of social distancing-he went into hiding. He chose to hide not in the face of a pandemic, but in hopes of avoiding an extradition attempt that posed a threat to himself and, he believed, to the Saints. While in hiding, he wrote to his wife Emma, explaining that it might be safer for him to be "at a little distance off."6

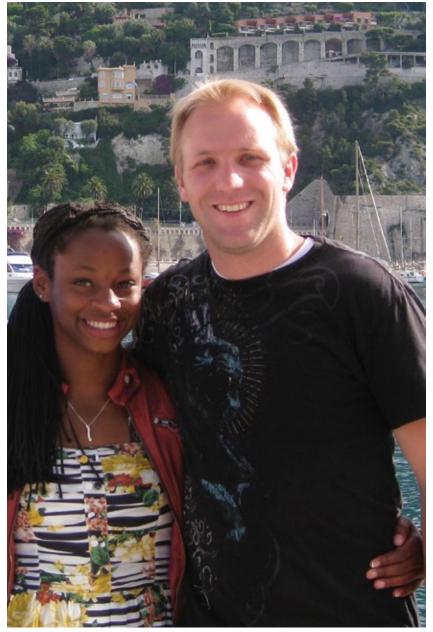
In relative isolation, as he contemplated further separation and even possible death, Joseph became reflective. On August 16, and a week later on the 23rd, while absent friends and family members-both dead and alive-Joseph spoke aloud their names for his secretary to record in the Book of the Law of the Lord. In this act the Prophet brought loved ones close through memory, as well as through pen and ink. This was the creation of a medium that secured more than temporal safety. As Joseph

The "same sociality which exists amongst us here will exist among us there only it will be coupled with eternal glory which we do not enjoy now."

noted, "These are the ones that shall inherit eternal life."7 Just a few weeks later, while again in hiding, he wrote to the Saints and instructed them to keep careful records of baptisms for the dead. Perhaps inspired by his recent petition for a writ of habeas corpus, he taught that records of rituals kept on earth would stand in for the dead in heaven, demanding that those without bodies be judged according to works done in the flesh.8 In revealing the doctrine of baptism for the deceased, Joseph had found "a writ of H C [Habeas Corpus] & for the dead." Just as certain legal documents had power

of her absence I want to secure her presence. This journey has placed me in close proximity to her successes and joys, but especially her sadness and pain. Although surrounded by a family that loved her immensely, she felt isolated and alone, the result of myriad realities, including her own choices and especially the choices of those who failed to see her light. These realities created distances that led to another kind of distance, one that no amount of documentation or creative readings of that documentation can seem to overcome.

But not all is lost. As I've tried to somehow close the imperceptible



Micah Shea Watkins and Jordan T. Watkins, May 2010. Courtesy of Jordan T. Watkins.

but omnipresent gap between myself and my youngest sister, I have gained a new awareness of separation, a new care for connection, and a new desire to respond to social distance with grace. I've also found increased hope in the records of Restoration rituals. Such records show that Micah and

I were sealed together and that my mother received Micah's initiatory and endowment on her behalf. These records signify that the distance between us need not be permanent. I continue to read Micah's journals in hopes of discovering further evidence of the mitigating power of material

documents. In one entry she noted, "It's great having all of my siblings around at once." Caring for such connections and expressing that care in pen and ink, as both Joseph and Micah Shea did, fills me with hope in Joseph's teaching that the "same sociality which exists amongst us here will exist among us there only it will be coupled with eternal glory which we do not enjoy now."¹0

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Notes

- 1. See Thomas Reynolds, Requisition, 22 July 1842, in The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals,
- 2. See Letter to Sylvester Bartlett, 22 May 1842, in The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, 10:89-92 (hereafter JSP, D10).
- 3. See Notice, 11 May 1842, and Letter to James Sloan, 17 May 1842, in JSP, D10:40-45,
- 4. See "Historical Introduction" to Letter from Calvin A. Warren, 13 July 1842, in JSP,
- 5. See Mayor's Order to City Watch, 20 May 1842, in JSP, D10:82-84; Letter to Thomas Carlin, 24 June 1842, JSP, D10:195-200; Ordinance, 5 July 1842, JSP, D10:233-36; Letter from Thomas Carlin, 27 July 1842, in JSP. D10:314-17: and Letter to Thomas Carlin, 30 July 1842, in JSP, D10:323-24.
- 6. Letter to Emma Smith, 16 August 1842, in JSP, D10:402.
- 7. See Reflections and Blessings, 16 and 23 August 1842, in JSP, D10:414-25, quotation on 418.
- 8. See Letter to "All the Saints in Nauvoo," 1 September 1842 [D&C 127], pp. [1-3], www.josephsmithpapers.org; and Letter to the Church, 7 September 1842 [D&C 128], pp. [1-9], www.josephsmithpapers.org.
- 9. Minutes and Discourses, 6-9 April 1844, as reported by Thomas Bullock, p. 27, www.josephsmithpapers.org.
- 10. Instruction, 2 April 1843, as reported by William Clayton, p. 67, www.josephsmith papers.org.





athering together for religious study and worship is one of the oldest forms of human interaction. For millennia, the faithful of numerous religious traditions have sacrificed to worship in shrines, sanctuaries, and temples around the globe. Scholars estimate as many as 300 million people annually embark on some form of pilgrimage. These include countless millions who flock to Middle Eastern cities like Mecca and Jerusalem, India's Bodh Gaya and Varanasi, Japan's Shikoku Island, and Europe's Lourdes or Rome. Hundreds of millions of others gather on a regular basis in local churches, synagogues, and sanctuaries to commune with God.



Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during Easter's Holy Fire ceremony in 2017. Photograph by Scott C. Esplin.



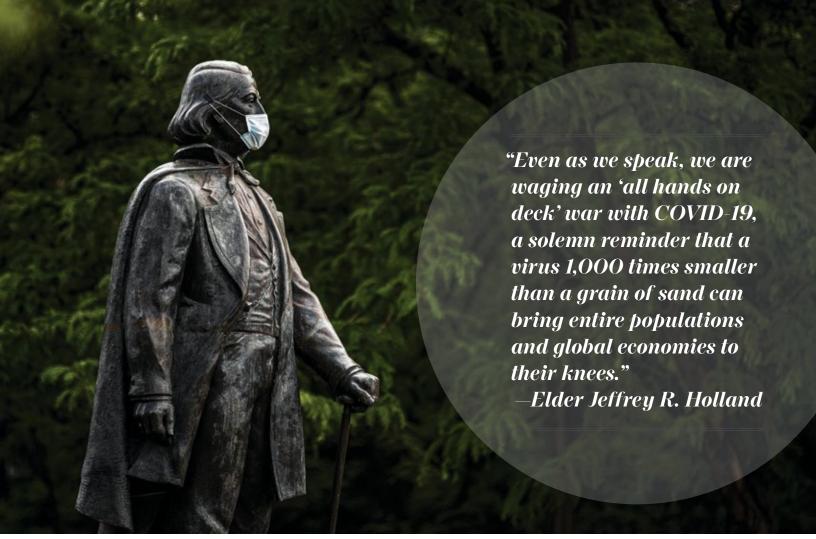
Pilgrims praying at the Great Mosque of Mecca in 2003. Photograph by Ali Mansuri, Wikimedia Commons.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints share in this desire to gather together to talk of and rejoice in Christ (see 2 Nephi 25:26). Modern revelation indicates "it is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus," mirroring a Book of Mormon pattern (Doctrine and Covenants 20:75; see also Moroni 6:6). In addition to gathering for regular religious services, members also frequently assemble in other sacred spaces. Each year, hundreds of thousands pray in Palmyra's Sacred Grove, sing "The Spirit of God" in the Kirtland Temple, or walk the quiet streets of Nauvoo. Youth groups around the world don bonnets and bandannas to pull handcarts in pioneer trek reenactments or gather around campfires for testimony meetings. Most importantly, hundreds of thousands worship regularly in sacred temples, performing essential ordinances for themselves and others.

In 2020, this religious rhythm of the world, as well as that of the Church, has been upended by a global pandemic. The Hajj to Mecca, one of the five pillars of

In 2020, this religious rhythm of the world, as well as that of the Church, has been upended by a global pandemic.

Islam and something that many faithful Muslims plan a lifetime to experience, was discouraged by Saudi Arabian officials worried about a gathering that would assemble an estimated two million people in close proximity. For the first time in centuries, sites in Jerusalem sacred to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ were closed for the Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter celebrations that highlight the Christian calendar. During the same season, Jewish groups dramatically scaled back their Passover celebrations around the world. For Latter-day Saints, weekly sacrament meetings have been canceled, temple worship restricted, pageants postponed, and pioneer



Statue of Brigham Young wearing a mask during the Covid-19 pandemic. Photograph by Nate Edwards/BYU Photo.

treks rescheduled. At the April 2020 general conference that was, itself, transformed into a broadcast-only event, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland noted, "Even as we speak, we are waging an 'all hands on deck' war with COVID-19, a solemn reminder that a virus 1,000 times smaller than a grain of sand can bring entire populations and global economies to their knees."1

As everywhere else in the Church, Religious Education at Brigham Young University has been impacted by this upheaval. In March, classes pivoted to remote instruction, with students encouraged to return to their homes, where possible, while faculty scrambled to transform classes tailored around high levels of interaction into online gatherings. A university task force was quickly formed with representatives from the various colleges, including Religious Education, who counseled together about the impact on the campus community. Professor Anthony Sweat, one of the representatives from Religious Education, observed, "It was fascinating to watch how quickly decisions needed to be made, how



Devotional with Elder Jack N. Gerard in the Marriott Center during the Covid-19 pandemic. Photograph by Nate Edwards/BYU Photo.

vastly information and perspectives shifted within hours and days (from a temporary shutdown to a more long-term approach), and how capably and flexibly the administration, faculty, and students all responded to suddenly shifting the entire thirty-thousand-plus students at the university to remote instruction within a week. It really was an organizational, technological, and educational

feat that is unprecedented in our history." Remote instruction continued throughout spring and summer terms, and students and faculty learned new ways to continue to "instruct and edify each other" (Doctrine and Covenants 43:8).

Scientists, scholars, and social commentators have drawn comparisons between the COVID-19 pandemic and earlier contagions that ravaged the world, including the 1918 flu epidemic.

A Pattern in Our History

Scientists, scholars, and social commentators have drawn comparisons between the COVID-19 pandemic and earlier contagions that ravaged the world, including the 1918 flu epidemic. On Wednesday, October 16, 1918, the campus newspaper White and Blue boldly heralded, "SPANISH INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC-SCHOOL CLOSED. HALT!!" The university community hoped for a swift end to the closure, with the paper declaring, "The situation is not serious, however, and the enforced vacation will probably not be longer than a week. Students should follow the papers closely as the order for resumption of school work may come any day." While noting that several students were quarantined in the Maeser Memorial Building, the paper concluded, "The disease has made but slight inroad in Provo."2

Church officials in Salt Lake City did not share in the campus optimism. On October 10, 1918, Elder James E. Talmage (1862-1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote in his journal, "Yesterday an order was promulgated by the State Board of Health, effective this morning, directing the suspension of all public gatherings owing to the continued spread of the malady known as the Spanish influenza. The Salt Lake Temple was closed

WHITE AND BLUE

SPANISH INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC -- SCHOOL CLOSED



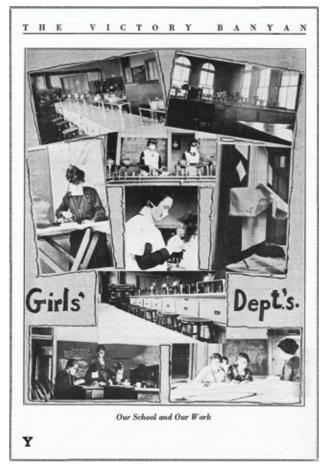
NEW MECHANIC ARTS BUILDING

HALT!

BYU's White and Blue student newspaper announcing the closure of campus due to the 1918 flu epidemic. Public domain, courtesy University Archives.



American Red Cross community center kitchen for influenza patients in Salt Lake City, ca. 1914-1919. Courtesy Library of Congress.



BYU students and staff wearing masks during the 1918–19 flu epidemic, featured in BYU's annual student yearbook, *The Victory Banyan*, published in 1919.

at noon today, and instructions were issued that all the Temples be closed and all Church meetings be suspended. This is probably the first time in the history of the Church that such radical and general action has had to be taken."³ Six days later, Elder Talmage continued, "The influenza epidemic is claiming an increasing toll of lives all over the country. Surely a desolating scourge and sickness is sweeping the land. The mandate of the State Board of Health regarding public gatherings in Utah is rigidly enforced. House parties, public funerals, except in the open air, and wedding receptions are specifically forbidden. The exigency seems to fully warrant this drastic action."⁴

Elder Talmage's concern regarding the gravity of the 1918 flu epidemic proved prophetic. Significant Church events, including the November 1918 funeral of Church President Joseph F. Smith, were held privately, and the April 1919 general conference was postponed until June. While exact figures are difficult to determine, somewhere



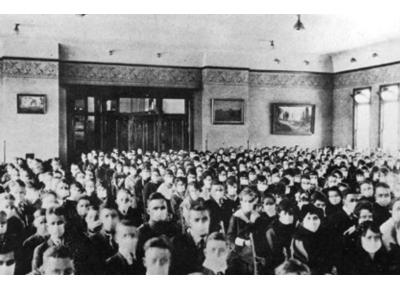
President Joseph F. Smith with his wife Julina, ca. 1916. Courtesy Church History Library.

Somewhere between twenty and one hundred million people died globally from the pandemic between 1918 and 1920, including nearly seven hundred thousand Americans.

between twenty and one hundred million people died globally from the pandemic between 1918 and 1920, including nearly seven hundred thousand Americans. In Provo, hundreds of people, including students, perished.

Lessons Learned

When classes resumed in January 1919, students returned to a changed world. Activities were curtailed and masks were common. But light from heaven burst forth during the challenging time as well. Just as the flu started to take hold, President Joseph F. Smith received a revelation regarding the redemption of the dead. Known today as Doctrine and Covenants section 138, it describes Christ's ministry in the world of spirits and the saving work that occurs there as the gospel message is proclaimed to all. In a season of despair, learning prevailed.



BYU students assembled in College Hall during the 1918 flu epidemic. Public domain, courtesy University Archives

We are learning lessons in Religious Education from the Covid-19 pandemic as well, though they do not rise to the level of President Smith's revelation. Professor Sweat summarized, "Pedagogically, I believe that the shift to remote education, long term, will cause us as religious educators to reevaluate why we physically gather students together to learn. It was assumed (and used to be) to disseminate information. But internet technology has decentralized information. Lectures can be given live online or prerecorded and downloaded. Student discussions can happen via the discussion board tool found in many learning management systems. Students can have powerful spiritual experiences with truth through carefully guided, independent assignments."

Professor Tyler Griffin, another religious educator on the university task force, likewise observed, "This shift has forced teachers, students, administrators, and support staff to all rethink what is absolutely essential in an educational setting. Many things that were previously seen as nonnegotiable requirements in our courses have now become nearly impossible to implement. This has opened many conversations about how we can adapt and shift our focus to those things that we can do online."

Remote instruction is not without its drawbacks. Professor Sweat continues, "It is usually not as rewarding as a teacher to teach remotely. I miss the physical

When classes resumed in January 1919, students returned to a changed world. Activities were curtailed and masks were common. But light from heaven burst forth during the challenging time as well.

'connection' with the students and the class—reading the body language and vibe of the class and simultaneously being edified together." But a change in classroom delivery can also have positive impacts. Professor Griffin noted how it is reshaping student interaction. "While many would think that moving students out of a classroom into an online environment would result in less engagement with the content, I have found the opposite to be true. It is far easier for a student to disengage during a classroom lecture than it is online. I am asking them to respond to questions using the chat box and putting them in breakout rooms to discuss principles and applications. These activities invite everyone to stay engaged and focused more than normal because they will all engage with more questions rather than sitting back and waiting for a few vocal students to do all the participating."



Professor Brent L. Top teaching a Religious Education graduate class on Zoom during the Covid-19 pandemic. Photograph by Richard Crookston.

Students likewise adjusted to the remote instruction. Though challenges emerged, several praised the newfound flexibility while others noted the learning that occurred. "The accessibility... was really nice," one student remarked. "I was able to get all of the work done and learn so much on my own time." Another added, "I was shocked how much I was able to learn. I loved learning on my own time."

Hope from Heaven

In spite of the challenges presented by the pandemic, we remain optimistic that good can result. Professor Griffin emphasized that remote instruction does not reduce spiritual power. "The Holy Ghost is not limited by the use of technology or the spread of distance. When students hear the gospel as taught from the scriptures and words of the living prophets, the Spirit testifies of truth and changes lives. The students are more than willing and able to adapt to the new learning environment online. They have proved to be more open to these changes than many of the faculty who feel nervous to have their content and lecture material put into a digital form."

Indeed, there is hope on the horizon. Professor Sweat concluded, "I am fundamentally rethinking why we gather, why it's necessary, what are its benefits, and how to maximize and create more purposeful educational gathering when we return to face-to-face instruction. "The Holy Ghost is not limited by the use of technology or the spread of distance. When students hear the gospel as taught from the scriptures and words of the living prophets, the Spirit testifies of truth and changes lives."

-Professor Tyler Griffin

I need to do more research and exploring, but a blended, mastery-learning approach seems to me to be the wave of the future, and this quarantine has accelerated the speed of that oncoming wave in my own future teaching."

As the pandemic started to grip Church and campus life in dramatic ways, President Russell M. Nelson shared his hope: "These unique challenges will pass in due time. I remain optimistic for the future. I know the great and marvelous blessings that God has in store for those who

Continued on page 29.

Saints at War: The Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq

Kenneth L. Alford

KENNETH L. ALFORD (alford@byu.edu) IS A PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

he opening chapter of the Book of Mormon concludes with this insightful statement from Nephi: "But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Nephi 1:20).

In April 2005, Elder David A. Bednar testified that "the tender mercies of the Lord are real and that they do not occur randomly or merely by coincidence." He explained that "the Lord's tender mercies are the very

The armored vehicle that Elder William K. Jackson was riding in was attacked by a suicide bomber. This photo shows the damage the vehicle sustained. Courtesy of William K. Jackson.

personal and individualized blessings, strength, protection, assurances, guidance, loving-kindnesses, consolation, support, and spiritual gifts which we receive from and because of and through the Lord Jesus Christ.... The simpleness, the sweetness, and the constancy of the tender mercies of the Lord will do much to fortify and protect us in the troubled times in which we do now and will yet live."1

The latest volume in the Saints at War series shares faith-promoting first-person accounts written by Latterday Saint men and women who served in the Gulf War, the War in Afghanistan, and the Iraq War. Many of the experiences outline tender mercies and miracles, both large and small, received by Latter-day Saints during those military conflicts. For each war, the book provides a timeline, a history of the Church's presence in the country or region, and a rich set of photos submitted by participants in the war effort.

"The simpleness, the sweetness, and the constancy of the tender mercies of the Lord will do much to fortify and protect us in the troubled times in which we do now and will yet live." —Elder David A. Bednar



Above: Major Brent Taylor unfurling an American flag on a mountaintop in Afghanistan during the summer of 2018. Courtesy of Jennie A. Taylor. Below: Jennie Taylor at the casket of her husband, Major Brent Taylor, who was killed in Afghanistan, in November 2018. Courtesy of Westbroek Studios.

Here's a sample from the book—a journal entry from U.S. Air Force Colonel Dave Sawyer, who commanded the "Flying Tigers" during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Friday, February 15, 1991

I flew early this morning, going further north than I had ever been before.... Unfortunately, during [a] climbing turn, I took a very bad hit from a surface-to-air missile.... I immediately checked my engines first. It panicked me a little that it was becoming quieter, but after I assured myself that the RPM, temperature, oil pressure, and hydraulic pressures were all good, I figured it was only getting quieter because I was climbing and slowing down. I was about forty-eight miles from friendly territory, so it took us about twelve minutes to get there—a long flight. After we crossed into Saudi Arabia, I had [my wingman]





Colonel Guy M. Hollingsworth (left) with Elder Paul B. Pieper, General Authority Seventy, at the Al Faw Palace in Baghdad in November 2009 when the Baghdad Iraq Military District of the Church was organized. Courtesy of Guy M. Hollingsworth.



Damaged tail section of Dave Sawyer's A-10 aircraft after being struck by an Iraqi rocket. Courtesy of Jeanne Sawyer

fly in close and check me out. Both rudders were heavily peppered with holes, and the right rudder middle hinge was broken with the rudder bowed out. The right elevator was 90 percent blown away. ... After [landing,] I climbed out of the airplane and got my first look at it. I was amazed at how much damage there was! The tail end was also shredded and hanging down by a thread—about the last foot or two. There are probably about two hundred holes in the airplane—also some in the engine. The miraculous thing is that there was not one hydraulic line or control cable damaged, much less severed! God was really watching out for me today. President Baker of the Alexandria Stake promised all of us at Eglin Air Force Base that we'd come home safely. I surely put that to the test today!

DO YOU KNOW?

- What are America's longest and shortest wars?
- In which country was an Area Seventy (and future General Authority Seventy) almost killed in a suicide car-bombing?
- 3. In which country did a retired four-star general make it possible for a General Authority Seventy to organize a district of the Church in an active war zone?

others are available in Saints at War: The Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq. could enter Iraq and organize a military district there). These stories and many 3. Iraq (Elder/General Bruce A. Carlson provided assistance so Elder Paul B. Pieper 2. Afghanistan (the future General Authority was Elder William K. Jackson). 1. Longest: Afghanistan (2001-present); shortest: Gulf War (100 hours). :SA3W2NA

In the book's foreword, Dr. Robert C. Freeman asked, "What is the value to be derived from a volume like this?" In answer to the question, he wrote: "Speaking to students at Brigham Young University in March 2003, on the eve of the war in Iraq, former Church President Gordon B. Hinckley signaled at least one important answer. On that occasion he said, 'May those of us who are spared of such [military] sacrifice never be proud or arrogant, but rather humbly grateful for those who lay their lives on the line in time of war.'2 In truth, just learning the stories of our veterans is a powerful way to evidence our gratitude." X



Chaplain Christopher Degn is shown praying over a Humvee he was asked to bless before it "left the wire." Courtesy of Christopher Degn.

"May those of us who are spared of such [military] sacrifice never be proud or arrogant, but rather humbly grateful for those who lay their lives on the line in time of war." —President Gordon B. Hinckley



A Latter-day Saint service member of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment baptizes Sergeant Kevin Wood in an oasis in Iraq's Al Anbar province. Courtesy of BYU Saints at War Project



The 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment's Latter-day Saint service member's group is shown after performing a baptism for Sergeant Kevin Wood (center) in an oasis in western Iraq's Al Anbar province. Staff Sergeant Tony Bertolino (far left) was later killed by sniper fire during a convoy traveling toward the Syrian border. Courtesy of BYU Saints at War Project.

Notes

- 1. David A. Bednar, "The Tender Mercies of the Lord," Ensign, May 2005,
- 2. Quoted in Jesse Hyde, "President Hinckley Speaks of War," Deseret News, 19 March 2003.

A CELEBRATION OF INTERFAITH ACTIVITY

Robert L. Millet

ROBERT L. MILLET IS PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF ANCIENT SCRIPTURE AT BYU.

wenty years ago, in May 2000, L a very significant meeting took place in a conference room of the N. Eldon Tanner Building on the Brigham Young University campus. A group of Latter-day Saint Religious Education faculty members met for the first time with six Evangelical Christian scholars to begin what came to be known as the "Mormon-Evangelical Dialogue." The evangelicals included their leader, Richard J. Mouw (president of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena at the time), Craig Blomberg (Denver Seminary), Pastor Gregory Johnson (president of Standing Together), Craig Hazen (Biola University), and Carl Mosser (a PhD candidate). Latter-day Saint participants included Stephen Robinson, Andrew Skinner, David Paulsen (Philosophy, BYU), Roger Keller, and Robert Millet, leader of the BYU group.1

It was decided in that first gathering that our purpose was not apologetic—we were not there to defend our own faith. Nor was it evangelistic-conversion of the

"other" was not the reason for coming together. We determined that our overarching purpose was to build bridges, enhance understanding, correct misunderstanding and misperception, and establish meaningful friendships. The dialogue has been much more than a conversation. We have visited key historical sites, eaten and socialized, sung hymns and prayed, mourned together over the passing of members of our group, and shared ideas, books, and articles throughout the years. There has developed a sweet brother- and sisterhood, a kindness in disagreement, a respect for opposing views, and a feeling of responsibility toward those not of our faith—a responsibility to represent their beliefs and practices accurately to members of our own faith. We as Latter-day Saints hate to be misrepresented; why, then, would we ever want to misrepresent the beliefs of persons of other faiths? No one has compromised or diluted his or her own theological convictions, but everyone has sought to demonstrate the kind of "convicted civility"2

that ought to characterize a mature exchange of ideas among a body of believers in the Prince of Peace. No dialogue of this type is worth its salt unless the participants gradually begin to realize that there is much to be learned from men and women who believe differently than we do.

True dialogue is tough sledding, hard work. In my own life it has entailed a tremendous amount of reading of Christian history, Christian theology, and, more particularly, evangelical thought. We determined early on that we could not very well enter into another's world and way of thinking unless we immersed ourselves in that person's literature. This we did before each dialogue. Doing so is especially difficult when it comes out of one's own hide, that is, when it must be done above and beyond everything else one is required to do-teaching, researching, publishing, and carrying out citizenship responsibilities. It takes a significant investment of time, energy, and money.



Group of BYU Religious Education faculty members with Evangelical Christian scholars on the steps of the John and Elsa Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio in July 2017. All photos courtesy of Robert Millet.

It soon became clear that far more critical to success in this dialogue than intellectual acumen was a nondefensive, clearheaded, thick-skinned, persistent but kind and pleasant personality. Those steeped in apologetics, whether Latter-day Saint or evangelical, face an especial hurdle, an uphill battle, in this kind of dialogue. We agreed early on, for example, that we would not take the time to address every polemic against Joseph Smith or the Book of Mormon, any more than a Christian-Muslim dialogue would spend appreciable time evaluating proofs of whether Muhammad actually entertained the angel Gabriel. Furthermore, and this is much more difficult, we agreed as a larger team to a rather high standard of loyalty-that we would not say anything privately about the other guys that we would not say in their presence in our dialogue setting.

Our overarching purpose was to build bridges, enhance understanding, correct misunderstanding and misperception, and establish meaningful friendships.

The first dialogue was as much an effort to test the waters as to engage a specific topic. The evangelicals asked that we all read or reread Anglican scholar John Stott's classic work, Basic Christianity, and some of the BYU contingent recommended that we read a good introduction to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When it came time to discuss Basic Christianity, we had a rather revealing experience. Richard Mouw asked, "Well, what concerns or questions do you have about Stott's book?" There was a long and somewhat uncomfortable silence. Richard followed up: "Isn't there

anything you have to say? Did we all read the book?" Everyone nodded affirmatively that they had indeed read it, but no one seemed to have any questions. Finally, one of the BYU team members responded: "Stott is essentially writing of New Testament Christianity, with which we have no quarrel. He does not wander into the creedal formulations that came from Nicaea, Constantinople, or Chalcedon. We agree with his assessment of Jesus Christ and his gospel as presented in the New Testament. Great little book."

After a few years of dialogue, Richard Mouw suggested that we not meet next time in Provo but rather

in Nauvoo, Illinois. We spent several wonderful, faith-filled days in the "City of Joseph." Feelings were tender on both sides, and tears were shed by many at the Carthage Jail, as well as during our brief contemplative walk down Parley Street to the Mississippi River, where the Saints in February of 1846 began their exodus to the Great Basin. Our meeting one evening in the upstairs room of the Red Brick Store was especially interesting, as we discussed the organization of the Relief Society, the vital place of temples in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the first temple endowment was administered there), and Joseph Smith's conferral of all the keys of the kingdom on the

Twelve Apostles. On the night before we were to leave Nauvoo to return home, we held our final meeting in the Seventy's Hall. We sang hymns, and Richard Mouw spoke on the topic "What I would love to see take place within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the next twentyfive years." I then spoke on "What I would love to see take place within evangelicalism in the next twenty-five years."

Two years later we met in Palmyra, New York, and once again focused much of our attention on historical sites and sacred events in Palmyra and Fayette. Our two hours in the Sacred Grove was absolutely priceless, as we discussed the religious

world of 1820, as well as the doctrinal significance of the Prophet Joseph's first vision. One of the last Church historical sites that the entire group visited was Kirtland, Ohio, where our discussion was on spiritual gifts. It shocked some of our evangelical friends to learn that Latter-day Saints were speaking in tongues some seventy years before the famous Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California, during the early years of the twentieth century. We each had reaffirmed what we had come to know quite well in Nauvoo-that there is in fact something very real called "sacred space."

Other doctrinal topics discussed through the years included the nature and effects of the Fall, how salvation comes, the canon of scripture, revelation, authority, and the nature of God and the Godhead/Trinity. One of the most memorable of all our discussions centered around the concept of theosis, or divinization, the doctrine

Our time together has resulted in mental stretching, the jettisoning of incorrect notions about the other, and soul-searching.



Gathered in Salt Lake City are Gregory Johnson, Elder Robert Wood, Gerald McDermott, Elder Jeffrey Holland, Richard Mouw, Spencer Fluhman, Robert Millet, Grant Wacker, and Grant Underwood.

that men and women may become as God is, espoused by Latter-day Saints as well as members of the Eastern Orthodox Churches. For this dialogue we invited Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, professor of theology at Fuller Seminary, to lead our discussion. In preparation for the dialogue we read his book One with God: Salvation as Deification and Justification, as well as Latter-day Saint writings on the topic. Members from both religious bodies commented that we need to know the church fathers better than we do. Both groups were fascinated with such Eastern Orthodox expressions as participation in God, union with God, assimilation into God, receiving of God's energies but not his essence, and divine-human synergy. More than one of the evangelicals asked how they could essentially have ignored a matter that was a part of the discourse of Athanasius, Augustine, Irenaeus, Gregory of Nazianzus, and even Martin Luther.

Our time together has resulted in mental stretching, the jettisoning of incorrect notions about the other, and soul-searching. Several participants have remarked that even in some of our most intense conversations they felt a special spirit in our dialogue, a kind of Superintending Presence attending our poor efforts. We felt that the Lord approved of what we were striving to do. On a number of occasions as we have ended the twoto-three-day dialogue, a scriptural passage has come to mind. The Savior taught that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, who offered much encouragement for interfaith efforts, meets here with Pastor Gregory Johnson and Robert Millet.

18:20). To borrow Oliver Cowdery's words, "these were days never to be forgotten" (Joseph Smith—History, 1:71, note). In fact, they were days that have proved to be life changing. **

"An Evening of Friendship" will be held in the spring of 2021. It will represent a formal conclusion to the dialogue and a celebration of twenty years of study, conversation, discovery, bridge building, and treasured friendship. The celebration will be open to the public.

Notes

 Over the years the faces of the dialogue group changed, with the exception of a few on each side who remained involved to the dialogue's conclusion. Evangelicals who later joined the dialogue include David Neff (at the time editor-in-chief of *Christianity Today*), James Bradley (Fuller Seminary), Doug McConnell (Fuller Seminary), Bill Heersink (independent scholar), Donald Hagner (Fuller Seminary), Dennis Okholm (Azusa Pacific University), Cory Willson (Calvin Seminary), Stephanie Bliese (Garrett Theological Seminary), Gerald McDermott (Beeson Divinity School), Anthea Butler (Penn State), Christopher Hall (Northern Seminary in Pennsylvania), and John Turner (George Mason University). Latter-day Saints who were involved for a number of years include Camille Fronk Olson (Ancient Scripture, BYU), Paul Peterson (Church History and Doctrine, BYU), Rachel Cope (Church History and Doctrine, BYU), Shon Hopkin (Ancient Scripture, BYU), Jana Riess (independent scholar), Richard Bennett (Church History and Doctrine, BYU), Phil Barlow (Utah State University), Grant Underwood (History, BYU), Spencer Fluhman (History, BYU), J. B. Haws (Church History and Doctrine, BYU), and Brian Birch (Philosophy, Utah Valley University).

This is a term used by Richard Mouw in his book Uncommon Decency: Christian Civility in an Uncivil World, rev. ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010). American religious historian Martin Marty once commented that there are many people in this world who are convicted (devoted to their faith), and there are many people who are civil (who deal kindly and respectfully with people). But there are very few who are both convicted and civil.

The "Why" behind the YReligion Podcast

Anthony Sweat

ANTHONY SWEAT (anthony_sweat@byu.edu) IS AN ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY AND DOCTRINE AT BYU.

h, you're a BYU religion professor? So, what kind of research do religion professors publish?"

Many Brigham Young University religion professors have been asked a form of this question. Some are surprised to learn that publishing research is a significant part of most BYU religion professors' work and are even more surprised to learn of the quantity and quality of those publications. Each year, BYU religion professors produce hundreds of publications,1 many of them related to the teachings, practices, or history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints. The problem, however, is that they are published in a variety of different places, and many students or general Church members may never hear about or read them. Enter the Y Religion podcast.

Although podcasting has been around since the early 2000s, in the last few years its popularity as a common form to consume information has exploded. In the United States, monthly podcast listening has nearly doubled from 2015 to 2019. According to the 2019 Podcast Consumer report, 32 percent of



Americans have listened to a podcast in the past month, and 22 percent in the past week. Those who listen weekly listen, on average, to one episode every day. When they were asked why they listen to podcasts, the top selected response (74 percent) was "to learn new things."2 These statistics illustrate why packaging the various research publications of BYU religion into one central podcast was a logical undertaking.

Work began in earnest in 2018 to organize the endeavor and has come to fruition under the direction of the dean of BYU religion, Daniel Judd, and his administrative council, who approve of each potential interview and subject. In 2019 a committee was formed under my direction consisting of a few "teaching track" professors (those whose primary job is to teach large numbers of students)-Casey Griffiths, Ryan Sharp, and Brad Wilcox-charged with interviewing their colleagues about their published research and counseling on decisions regarding the podcast.

From the beginning, BYU students were involved in the podcast's creation. Students sent in more than one thousand suggestions for a potential name for the podcast, such as Thus We See, Saints and Scholars, and By Study and Faith. There were even some humorous ones like *Y* on the Mountaintop. These student suggestions were analyzed for common words and themes, and a final list of names was voted on. In the end, a student's suggestion of Y Religion came out on top.

The involvement of BYU students did not end there, however. Student Bridger Tower created the podcast logo, and four students-Grant Cagle, Sam Clawson, Collette Jones, and Alastair Scheuermannrecorded more than one hundred original music tracks for the podcast



Brad Wilcox interviews his colleague Kerry Muhlestein for an episode of *Y Religion*.



BYU student sound engineers Mitchell Bashford and Connor Miller work on sound leveling for a *Y Religion* episode.

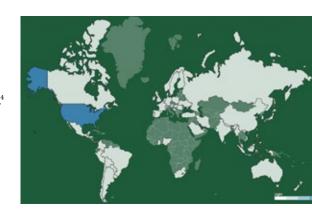
background scoring. Students
Mitchell Bashford and Connor Miller
do the podcast sound recording,
engineering, and postproduction.
Yet another student, Ashley Pettit,
handles the online Instagram marketing and community management.

The first *Y Religion* episodes launched in February 2020. Each episode covers three segments: why the research was done, why it matters, and why the professor chooses faith. Early episodes have included Barbara Morgan on women and priesthood, Justin Dyer on suicidality and Latterday Saint youth, and Steve Harper on how Joseph Smith remembered the First Vision, among others. Although only a few months into its first season, Y Religion is ranked in the top 10 percent of global podcast downloads according to metrics provided by The Podcast Host,³ averaging 4.9/5.0 stars on Apple Podcasts. Although most downloads are from the United States, there is a growing international

audience also, with downloads in sixty-six countries.

With "outreach to the larger community" as one of the stated missions of BYU Religious Education,4 the hope is that this podcast will magnify the magnificent research done by Religious Education faculty to enlighten and edify the broader Latter-day Saint population. As the podcast continues to expand its content, the religious interests of many listeners will be well served. One online reviewer wrote, "I love being able to learn about such a wide variety of interesting topics that help me both understand our religion and feel the Spirit" (5 stars).

Links to the publications discussed on each episode are available on the podcast's website (http://rsc.byu.edu/yreligion). Patrons can listen and subscribe to the *Y Religion* podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google, and Stitcher. **



Notes

- Based on data provided by BYU's Religious Education, there were 248 publications from BYU religion faculty in 2019.
- "The Podcast Consumer 2019," https://www .edisonresearch.com/the-podcast-consumer -2019/.
- "Podcast Download Numbers: What's a Good Gauge for My Podcast?," https://www .thepodcasthost.com/planning/whats-a-good -number-of-downloads-for-a-podcast/.
- BYU Religious Education Mission Statement, BYU Undergraduate Catalog (2019–2020), https://catalog.byu.edu/religious-education.

FACULTY AND STAFF

APPOINTMENTS

Shon R. Hopkin and Tyler J. Griffin began serving as chair and associate chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture.

- Alexander L. Baugh was reappointed for another year as chair of the Department of Church History and Doctrine. Anthony R. Sweat will continue as associate chair.
- Daniel L. Belnap, Frank F. Judd Jr., and Gaye Strathearn were advanced to the rank of professor.
- Gerrit Dirkmaat, Nicholas J. Frederick, and Greg Wilkinson received continuing faculty status and were advanced to the rank of associate professor.
- Mark D. Ellison, Jan Martin, and Avram R. Shannon were granted candidacy for continuing faculty status.
- Krystal V. L. Pierce was hired as an assistant professor of ancient scripture.
- Ryan H. Sharp was hired as an assistant teaching professor of ancient scripture.
- Eric D. Huntsman began serving as the director of the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies.
- Kerry Muhlestein will join John Hilton III in representing BYU Religious Education on the Faculty Advisory Council.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Amy Easton-Flake won the Mormon History Association's best article on women's history for her article "Poetic Representations of Mormon Women in Late Nineteenth-Century Frontier America," in Representing Rural Women, ed. Margaret Thomas-Evans and Whitney Womack Smith (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019), 125-43.
- Kenneth L. Alford, a professor of Church history and doctrine, received the M. Ephraim Hatch Teaching and Learning Faculty Fellowship.
- Tyler J. Griffin, a professional teaching professor of ancient scripture, received the Robert J. Matthews Teaching Award.
- Lincoln H. Blumell, an associate professor of ancient scripture, received the Richard L. Anderson Scholarship Award.
- Byran B. Korth, an associate professor of Church history and doctrine, received the West Belnap Citizenship Award.
- Gregory E. Wilkinson, an associate professor of Church history and doctrine, received the Religious **Education Annual Innovative** Teaching Award.
- Jason R. Combs received the Harvey B. and Susan Easton **Black Outstanding Publication**

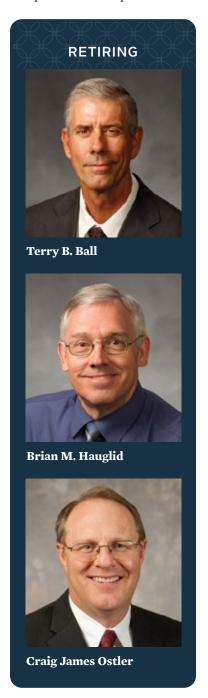
Award in Ancient Scripture for Academic Scholarship for his article "The Polemical Origin of Luke 6.5D: Dating Codex Bezae's Sabbath-Worker Agraphon" (Journal for the Study of the New Testament 42, no. 2 [2019]: 162-84).

Charles L. Swift received the Harvey B. and Susan Easton **Black Outstanding Publication** Award in Ancient Scripture for Latter-day Saint Gospel Scholarship for his article "The Lord Slayeth the Wicked": Coming to Terms with Nephi Killing Laban" (Journal of Book of Mormon Studies 28 [August 2019]: 137-69).

- Steven C. Harper received the Harvey B. and Susan Easton **Black Outstanding Publication** Award in Church History for Academic Scholarship for his book First Vision: Memory and Mormon Origins (Oxford University Press).
- **Richard E. Bennett** received the Harvey B. and Susan Easton **Black Outstanding Publication** Award in Church History for Latter-day Saint Gospel Scholarship for his book *Temples* Rising: A Heritage of Sacrifice (Deseret Book).
- Connie Brace received the Staff and **Employee Recognition Award**

"Gathering in His Name, Remotely." Continued from page 17.

(SAERA). Connie serves as the secretary of the Department of Church History and Doctrine, where she treats all with great patience and respect. X





Photograph by BYU Photo.

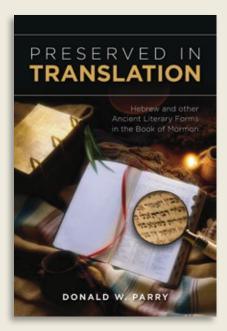
"This shift has forced teachers, students, administrators, and support staff to all rethink what is absolutely essential in an educational setting."

love Him and serve Him. I see evidence of His hand in this holy work in so many ways."6 He later added, "We rejoice in the peace that radiates from the Lord Jesus Christ. It will continue to fill us with hope and joy. Our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son love us, are aware of us, and will bless each of us. I love you, dear brothers and sisters, and assure you that wonderful days are ahead."⁷ 💥

Notes

- 1. Jeffrey R. Holland, "A Perfect Brightness of Hope," Ensign, May 2020, 82.
- 2. "SPANISH INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC-SCHOOL CLOSED. HALT!!," White and Blue, October 16, 1918, 1. For additional information about BYU during the 1918 flu epidemic, see the recent BYU Magazine feature by Michael R. Walker, "Lessons from 1918," in the spring 2020 issue.
- 3. James E. Talmage, October 10, 1918, James E. 7. Russell M. Nelson, https://www Talmage journal 22, MSS 229 box 5, folder 9, in James Edward Talmage Collection, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

- 4. James E. Talmage diary, October 16, 1918.
- 5. Leonard J. Arrington, "The Influenza Epidemic of 1918–19 in Utah," Utah Historical Quarterly 58, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 165-82.
- 6. Russell M. Nelson, https://www .churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news /president-nelson-shares-hopeful-message -as-coronavirus-outbreak-continues.
- .churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/when -will-worship-resume-in-meetinghouses -and-temples-president-nelson-addresses -topic-in-video.



Preserved in Translation: Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon

DONALD W PARRY

It should come as no surprise that the Book of Mormon reads like an ancient Hebrew book. After all, its story begins in the world of the Old Testament and its chroniclers were literate in some form of Hebrew. What is surprising is that there are so many Hebraisms in the book-and that they have survived translation into English! Many of these remnants that persist in the text make for odd English but are perfectly sound Biblical Hebrew.

US \$19.99

RECENT AND UPCOMING **PUBLICATIONS**

To purchase any of the following publications, please visit https://rsc.byu.edu/books/recent and search by book title.



Illuminating the Jaredite Records

DANIEL L. BELNAP, **EDITOR**

This volume explores the relationship

between the Nephite and the Jaredite records culturally, politically, literarily, and theologically. The first section considers the impact of a Jaredite subculture on Nephite politics, a

Mesopotamian perspective on seership and divination, and the brother of Jared's theophany atop Mount Shelem as a spiritual transition. The next two sections explore aspects of Moroni's construction of the book of Ether and its depiction of women, particularly the daughter of Jared. The last section examines ways in which the book of Ether in particular can be effectively taught to a modern audience.

US \$27.99



Understanding Covenants and Communities: Jews and Latter-day Saints in **Dialogue**

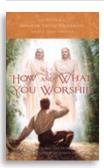
MARK S. DIAMOND

AND ANDREW C. REED, EDITORS

Interfaith dialogues deepen connections between people of different faiths as they seek to carefully

articulate their beliefs and practices. The first collaboration between a Jewish university press and a Latter-day Saint university press, this volume derives from the Jewish–Latter-day Saint Academic Dialogue Project, a groundbreaking interfaith encounter that highlights how these communities share significant historical and communal bonds. This volume is the fruit of five conferences, addressing such themes as theological foundations, sacred scriptures, lived experience and worship, and culture and politics.

US \$24.99



How and What You Worship: Christology and Praxis in the Revelations of Joseph Smith

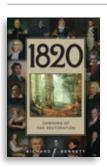
RACHEL COPE,
CARTER CHARLES,

AND JORDAN T. WATKINS, EDITORS

Section 93 of the Doctrine and Covenants deals with concepts that scholars term *Christology* and *praxis*. Christology has to do with the study of Christ's nature, while praxis involves religious practice. That this revelation should insist on both the "how" and the "what" of worship indicates that knowledge and practice are inseparable. Joseph Smith's

revelations and teachings constitute a unique textual setting to analyze this relationship. This volume focuses on the person of Christ and the practice of worshipping him as outlined in the revelations of Joseph Smith.

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1820: Dawning of the Restoration

RICHARD E.
BENNETT
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a chronicling of

signal events of

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INSPIRING

LEARNING IS

PART OF EMILY'S

"GOLDILOCKS"

EXPERIENCE

rowing up in Brigham City working in her family business, Emily Cannon learned the value of work. Early on her parents made it clear that if she and her four siblings were going to college, they would need to pay their own tuition.

Receiving a half-tuition academic scholarship meant that for the first two years of school, Emily didn't need a second job and could focus on studies. However, by her third year, it was clear she would need a job to supplement her scholarship. That's when she began working for the Religious Studies Center, a donor-funded inspiring learning opportunity that turned out to be surprisingly pertinent to her plans for a career in marketing. Emily has been writing marketing materials and social media content. Being edited by professionals has been an enlightening mentoring experience.

"I didn't realize how much there is to learn," she said, laughing.

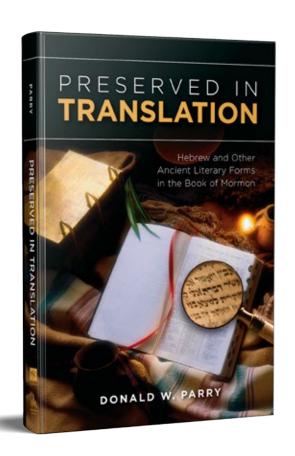
The family business experience helped Emily realize she wanted to work in business, but finding a clear path was a "Goldilocks" kind of process.

"I started in accounting. I knew right away that was not for me. So I tried finance, and that was better, but still not the right fit." Emily served a mission, hoping to find answers, but even after a spiritually enlightening eighteen months in Virginia, teaching the gospel in Spanish, she was no closer to a decision. On a whim she applied to the marketing program and was accepted. That felt just right.

Now, as graduation approaches, on-the-job marketing experiences will help her refine her vision even further as she prepares to enter the workforce full-time.



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