

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

BYU
Neal A. Maxwell
Institute for
Religious
Scholarship





BYU Maxwell Institute

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To Gather and Nurture

J. SPENCER FLUHMAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE

Nearly three years ago, the BYU Board of Trustees approved our Maxwell Institute mission statement. *The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship both gathers and nurtures disciple-scholars. As a research community, the Institute supports scholars whose work inspires and fortifies Latter-day Saints in their testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and engages the world of religious ideas.*

To pursue this mandate with authentic excellence is an exciting challenge in any era, but at the time our mission statement was fashioned we could not have foreseen the obstacles to gathering that would come in 2020. Like virtually every other institution in the world, the Maxwell Institute and Brigham Young University have been fundamentally disrupted and disoriented by the global pandemic, a still-spreading plague that continues to threaten lives, livelihoods, and individual and institutional futures.

Even so, through it all our core convictions remain unchanged. First, we continue to trust in a collaborative model that conscientiously hearkens back to the beginnings of the Restoration. “Zion” named a communal vision bearing a lofty set of aspirations for the earliest Latter-day Saints. Beyond a place to gather, the name-title designated a *people*, living and working together in preparation for a new world God would bring in the fulness of times. That sort of people would be recognizable in part by the motivating ambition of their common cause. They would be a people “of one heart and one mind, and [would dwell] in righteousness; and there [would be] no poor among them,” as one early revelation described an analogous ancient gathering of disciples (Moses 7:18).

The unity, righteousness, and equality of that vision continues to fire our imaginations. Scholars from different backgrounds, fields, and training unite here in a shared search—a rigorously pursued process of academic inquiry—for *knowledge that matters to the life of the soul*. Like our colleagues throughout the university this year, we have adapted and experimented, creatively reassessed and reapproached. We, too, are finding footing in this new not-so-normal. But we’re doing it together, and that commitment to each other seems to matter even more now.


Second, we remain witnesses that scholarship and Christian discipleship can be mutually reinforcing. We reject any decoupling of the two and, rather, continue to pursue the latter by means of the former.



Understandably, not all institutions that pursue or promulgate knowledge about religion fuse research and religious practice this way. But we do. As part of our unique place among institutions of higher learning, we are empowered to work in the light of explicit Latter-day Saint ideals and identity.

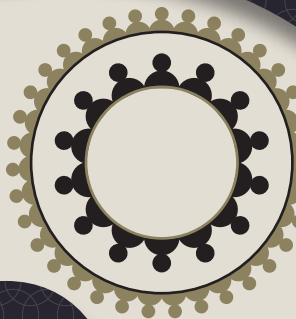
Lastly, we maintain our conviction that scholarship pursued with the highest academic standards can inspire the body of Christ. As I've watched our growing circle of disciple-scholars and advisors pursue their work under such vexed conditions, I'm reminded of another key word in the Restoration's Zion-building lexicon: *consecration*.

From my vantage, the professionals within our circle crafting, curating, disseminating, and translating scholarship for both interested academics and for Latter-day Saints at large constitute inspiring contemporary examples of consecration. As a paramount example (among the many others detailed in the pages that follow), I commend to readers our twelve-volume series, *The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions*, published despite significant obstacles during this single calendar year. The monumental effort of dozens of dedicated authors, editors, designers, artists, and production staff was expended with a single purpose in mind: to support Latter-day Saints in their efforts to slow down, dive deeper, and read more transformatively in the Restoration's keystone scripture.

Indeed, to watch so many consecrate their talents and creativity—and under such circumstances—reassures me that our mission to gather and nurture disciple-scholars remains critical, pandemic or not. In the end, these trying months have made us prize our research community, and the university and Church communities that sponsor it, all the more. And, as ever with aspirations so compelling, the future looks very, very bright. 

The unity, righteousness, and equality of that vision continues to fire our imaginations. Scholars from different backgrounds, fields, and training unite here in a shared search—a rigorously pursued process of academic inquiry—for knowledge that matters to the life of the soul.

2020 Inside the Numbers



35 student research assistants and staff

14 disciple-scholars



17 journal articles/
chapter contributions
by Institute scholars

14 books +
1 journal published



8 books written/
cowritten/
coedited by
Institute scholars



23 podcast episodes
(528,112 downloads)

20 public events (15 online)



1 new West View Building housing the Maxwell Institute (including 1 library, 24 windows, 21 offices)—the 81st academic building at BYU

97,000


website visitors
(393,500 page views)

1 global pandemic (and what felt like 8,765 Zoom sessions)

300,070

video views
(86,000 hours viewed)

8,081

 Twitter followers

7,894

 Facebook followers

2,293

 Instagram followers



MAXWELL LECTURE

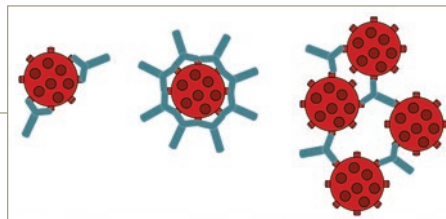
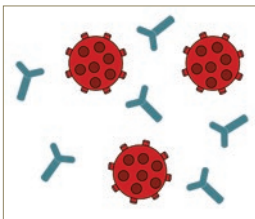
The Weight of Legacy: A Disciple-Scholar's View

KATE HOLBROOK

MANAGING HISTORIAN, HISTORY DEPARTMENT, THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

2020 Neal A. Maxwell Lecture

Elizabeth Hale Hammond's research and writing vastly improved outcomes for heart transplant patients. In fact, she was one of the pathologists who developed the heart transplant grading schema for the International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation. But when she first began publishing her research in 1989, transplant experts around the world thought she was crazy, and they weren't shy in their disparagement. Hammond, now a professor emeritus at the University of Utah School of Medicine, was convinced that antibodies were causing a form of heart transplant rejection. For those of you who've forgotten biology, antibodies are proteins that circulate in the blood as part of the immune system. Their job is to identify intruders such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites, bind to them, then bind to other entities in the blood that will neutralize the intruders. I'll repeat that one more time just in case scientific terms stir up in any of you an initial sense of panic. One interesting characteristic of antibodies is that they're shaped like the letter Y, which makes them an apt way to honor our BYU venue tonight. We'll come back to Dr. Hammond, but let's shift for a moment to discussing one of the broad implications of her story—that of legacy.



Y-shaped antibodies circulate in the blood and bind themselves to harmful pathogens.



Dr. Elizabeth Hale Hammond

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We in this audience can become haunted by questions of legacy and reputation. Our worry over it can seriously impede our scholarship as well as the disciple aspect of our attempt to be disciple-scholars. Worries about our reputations not only threaten the quality of our scholarship, but those worries can lead us to be consumed by jealousies, poor colleagues, and inadequate mentors. When other people say something to undermine our credibility, whether what they say has any truth in it or not, it can make us feel crazy. As a scholar, I have been tempted and tormented by these feelings myself. I have seen scholars whose work I particularly admire suffer the same. And I've definitely seen this suffering in scholars whose work and character I don't admire. Although the academy is an effective place to foster these bad feelings and behaviors, you and I have seen them elsewhere—politics, business, the arts. I offer this talk as an invitation to consider those aspects of legacy that we can control, and how to make the most of those, and then be free from worry over all that we cannot control.

When Dr. Hammond was first introducing her research, the other heart transplant experts focused exclusively on immune cells as relevant to transplant success. Dr. Hammond wasn't a mad scientist conceiving her

theories in some cave of the research wilderness. At least ten years earlier, some general researchers had identified antibodies as playing an important role in transplant success, but the heart transplant detractors ignored those earlier results. Despite the public disparagement, Dr. Hammond continued with her research, which, to their great credit, both the University of Utah and Intermountain Medicine continued to support. She continued because she knew that her results were accurate and that this work was important to make heart transplant surgeries a viable and less risky treatment option. Consider the ramifications of that. She reported that her ability to focus on others, on the value of the information to patients and their doctors, "helped to drive me onward in the face of public rejection of my ideas."¹

As she continued with her research, Dr. Hammond learned that even in the absence of immune cells, patients' risk of dying was nine times higher when antibodies were present. Other groups eventually began to recognize and publish similar findings. At last, twenty-two years after her first publication on antibodies in heart transplants, the international cardiology community accepted and came to depend on her results.

Public disparagement is a potent dissuader. Dr. Hammond had to make the faith in her mind and heart stronger than the fear; she had to believe that God would direct her as she worked with honesty and diligence. Her desire to help patients and their families had to be stronger than her desire to be accepted.² When we are consumed with what our legacy says about us, we invite torment into our lives. When legacy matters to us because of what we can do for others, we invite God, purpose, and meaningful achievement into our lives.

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LEGACY

I hope that many of you have enjoyed the terrific "Conversations with Terryl Givens" recordings, cosponsored by the Faith Matters Institute and the Maxwell Institute, in which Terryl interviewed Latter-day Saints about the intersections of their intellectual work and their faith. As an intriguing way into the interviews, Terryl frequently asked guests what they thought would be printed in their obituaries, or what they would wish to see there. My husband, Samuel Brown, is a medical researcher, an intensive care physician, and a professor of medical ethics who also writes books exploring Joseph Smith's theological contributions. Sam responded that he most wanted his obituary to report, "He died defending his family from a grizzly bear attack with his bare hands." When Terryl pushed for more, Sam added, "Professionally I think I would like to be known as a figure who forced us to reconsider how we deliver intensive care during a life-threatening illness." Sam's words



Institute scholar Terryl Givens interviews Samuel M. Brown on the Maxwell Institute Conversations podcast, cosponsored by the Faith Matters Foundation.

revealed his yearning to be self-sacrificing and brave, his desire to be remembered, and his focus on helping other people.

One of Church members' favorite contemporary artists, Brian Kershisnik, spoke more in his answer about character than he did about art: "I aspire actually more to being. I hope that I am to be a good human being rather than an artist. Obviously you're talking to me here because of my profession, but I derive a lot of power . . . in my art from a search to deepen myself as a human. I hope that shows up in my obituary."

The writer Margaret Blair Young realized as she achieved her professional dreams that her covenants and doing God's will became increasingly important measures for her moving forward. "When I finally became a published writer," she acknowledged, "I realized it wasn't that big of a deal. . . . That was when I started taking my covenants very, very seriously and asked God for something that would matter, that maybe I could use my talents, but it wouldn't just be so I could have a byline. . . . The name I most want to be called by is disciple."

Margaret's past collaborator and friend Darius Gray has dedicated himself to providing resources, such as the Genesis Group, to Black members of the Church and to preserving and sharing their history. Darius managed to convey charity, gratitude, humility, and faith in a few well-chosen words for his obituary: "To those whom I've loved, I love you still. To those who have loved me, thank you. See you soon."

Most of the responses, including many I haven't mentioned, and including my own, reveal discomfort with the topic of legacy. As Latter-day Saints, we know we're not supposed to aspire to fame or glory. But still we do want our lives and our work to have mattered. As Brian acknowledged, "Obviously, you're talking to me here because of my profession." My own response was,



Darius Gray

“I’ve written some books in Latter-day Saint women’s history that I feel have been good contributions. I think I’ll be remembered generally through favorite recipes that have come from me. I’ve decided that’s maybe in some ways a richer and more lasting visceral experience that people will have of my having been on this earth.”

While I told Terryl I thought recipes would be part of my legacy, I certainly hope all of the writing I have done, and the mentoring, will have meant something. I don’t spend most days of my life on writing history and not care about it—I care immensely. But with my answer, I was trying to convey two things: (1) all that we cannot control about our legacies, and (2) the importance of work that is less public, less celebrated, and also exceedingly meaningful.

CARETAKERS

Historian Laurel Ulrich has been honored with a Bancroft Prize, Pulitzer Prize, MacArthur Fellowship, Guggenheim Fellowship, and many other honors for her attention to women doing less celebrated work and for her exceptional high standards and thinking behind that focus. “The real drama is in the humdrum,” she both wrote and proved throughout her career.³ Laurel is famous for the saying, “Well-behaved women seldom make history.” As you may know, she used these words at the beginning of an essay about women whom historians had ignored. There are obvious reasons why historians have not celebrated these women—they have seldom led countries or troops into battle; they haven’t, like Henry VIII, beheaded their marriage partners in an effort to get an heir of their same sex; they weren’t delegates to the Constitutional Convention. For much of the field’s history, historians were interested primarily in power, drama, and influence.

At its heart, history is an attempt to figure out what happened, but in doing so we also define what mattered. As scholars and as disciples, it’s crucial for us to remember this, because while the histories we research and share send messages about what matters, we often leave out contributions that really mattered. A General Authority, J. Devn Cornish, observed that parents and Sunday School teachers have a much deeper impact on people than do the more well-known and celebrated general Church leaders.⁴ Those parents and teachers make it into memoirs and magazines; do we also include them in our peer-reviewed work? Having met her only

once, my brother-in-law still remembers how my grandma made him feel loved, welcome, and comforted. She did so for many others, too, including me, who lived with her. Have I adequately preserved this work of hers? If I can’t find the right scholarly model to do so, maybe I need to develop one myself.

The way we interact with children also teaches what is worthy of recognition in the way we perk up over certain topics and praise other people. When a dad is impressed by a story of someone sacrificing for the common good, children learn that that is the way to impress Dad. When a mother is impressed by the phrasing in a child’s writing, the child learns that writing well is the way to impress Mom. We all want people to be



Kate Holbrook reading with her grandmother Belle F. Stewart in 1975.

aware of our effort. We want to be interviewed for podcasts, be mentioned on the news, and be the recipients of awards. Not all of our desire to matter is bad. We want our lives to have mattered in God’s eyes. We want to be useful. But if we serve only to gain approval, we are missing out. Acting out of love for others is a more pure, effective, and satisfying motivation. Changing that motivation can be as simple as thinking about it. If we catch ourselves thinking about how something will make us look, we can switch our thoughts to focus on how our actions will benefit someone else.

REPUTATION

As scholars, parents, and mentors, then, we are caretakers of others' legacies—our words strongly influence the meaning people attribute to others' lives. And a second way legacy impacts us regards our own reputations. Church culture conveys mixed messages about what to strive for. We're not supposed to want recognition, and that message comes through when people receive callings. We say things such as, "No one was more surprised than I" or "I spent a sleepless night on my knees." At the same time, we admire Church members who have prominent callings or professional success. When led to think about our reputations, as Terryl asked us to do, most of us admit that we care about how we are remembered.

Since the quality of our work influences what other people say about us, it makes sense to think about the legacy we are creating through our work. What is the nature of it? Do we put more of our energy into building or tearing down? Do we write for the exclusive few who have the expertise to disseminate an important high-level understanding more broadly? Or do we write for the exclusive few so we can feel exclusive? Do we write to translate wisdom from the arcane details

of our specialty, or do we write to maintain our scholarly reputations? We do have to signal that we know what we're talking about, although I actually think we don't have to signal it quite as robustly as we often do.

When I was in college, a friend introduced me to the work of Wayne Dyer, who taught me some important lessons, including the fact that you can't control your reputation. Dyer said, "Your reputation is in the hands of others. That's what the reputation is. You can't control that. The only thing you can control is your character."⁵ Diane von Furstenberg said something similar in an interview for the Masterclass series, which was fascinating because her career is in clothing design, a field in which reputation is both vulnerable and vital for success. You can lose everything, she said. You can lose your home, your family, your reputation, your wealth, your job, you can lose your parents, you can lose your wealth, you can even lose your health, "but you never will lose your character. . . . Your character is something that no one can ever take away."⁶

We do have some control over the quality of our work—we can organize and exert ourselves to do our best work. But after that, I think these two are right, that character is one of the few things we can control. I would add to that insight that to build character, we can put ourselves in places that invite God into our presence; we inhabit those places when we act. When we serve, pray, read scripture, or attend church, we invite the Divine into our lives and souls where God improves our character.

Not all of our desire to matter is bad. We want our lives to have mattered in God's eyes. We want to be useful. But if we serve only to gain approval, we are missing out.



Wayne Dyer



Diane von Furstenberg

MOTIVATION

For many of us, the hunger for our lives to matter can lead us astray. Some of us seek that meaning through power and money. Since large salaries don't generally accompany the life of the mind, most of us who have chosen to become scholars have relinquished aspirations about mattering because we have money. But we might channel our disappointment about wealth into sneering at those who are rich. When I was in seventh grade, my geography teacher was exceedingly bitter about money. In fact, his bitterness and discussing the soap opera *Days of Our Lives* with classmates are my most prominent memories of junior high. One minute

my teacher would be talking about state exports, and the next he'd be criticizing, again, the "people who live on the hill." Back then in my hometown, people who lived on the hill tended to have more money. He's certainly not the only person who, in defense of a fragile sense of self, has said insensitive things about others, but his embarrassing example reminds me not to sneer.

Reflect on your own responses to settings that make you feel vulnerable. When you prepare a response to papers for a conference, do you focus more on providing helpful feedback and encouraging the other speakers or on making yourself look good? How do you speak about candidates during rank and status meetings? What kinds of comments do you make at faculty meetings? How do you interact with others during campus writing workshops? If you feel that your reputation is always on the line, consider handing that worry over to Jesus. He will protect you while you can focus on the greater good.

I recently heard Elder David A. Bednar suggest that if we're trying to develop Christlike qualities for the sole purpose of being seen as good people, our prayers for help might not yield much result. But if we're trying to develop them on others' behalf, then God will help us. When I heard him say that, I felt in my heart that it was true. And I remembered Dr. Hammond—that she was able to withstand ignorant criticism of her work because she was motivated by others' welfare. Elder Bednar's insight is crucial to understanding the dynamics

*Concern with nurturing people past
and present . . . leads us to more
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concepts and relationships that will
sustain others for a long time.*

of righteous legacy. If I pray, "Please help me to prepare a good talk so that people will know I'm smart," that's a weak prayer. If I pray, "Help me to include content in this talk that will provide direction to someone listening and comfort to someone else and help others to feel God's love," that's a better motive, and a much better deal for the divine beings responding to my prayers, because they get to help me and others all at the same time, although I don't believe they do the math that way.

VANITY

I read Alma chapter 1 in the Book of Mormon as an indictment of people who are obsessed with reputation. When we meet Nehor, the antagonist in this chapter, some of us might assume we are blameless in comparison with him. "We aren't like him," we might think, "because he is physically strong and wears 'very costly apparel'" (vv. 2, 6). But the same passage that tells us about Nehor's impressive physical attributes also mentions that he "began to be lifted up in the pride of his heart, and . . . even began to establish a church after the manner of his preaching" (v. 6). So we don't get a pass after all. I know that some of *us* like to imagine the Church established after the manner of our preaching.

After Nehor became angry with and killed a righteous elderly man during an argument—I assume because he was losing the argument—he had to appear before Alma the judge. The first thing readers hear Alma mention to Nehor is not the murder but the sin of priestcraft, which Grant Hardy, in the beautiful Maxwell Institute edition of the Book of Mormon, astutely defines as "religious fraud to gain wealth or power."⁷ Alma says that if priestcraft were enforced among the people, it would "prove their entire destruction" (v. 12). In other words, Alma taught that if people commonly committed religious fraud to gain wealth or power, it would destroy their society. Nehor received a death sentence for having killed another person, and just before what the book calls his "ignominious death" (v. 15), Nehor acknowledged that his teachings had been false. But his deathbed repentance didn't receive enough attention, or at least it wasn't enough to undo the destructive precedents he'd set. Priestcraft persisted because many people, as the scripture says, "loved the vain things of the world, and they went forth preaching false doctrines; and this they did for the sake of riches and honor" (v. 16). In response to their teaching, many people left the church and then criticized those who stayed (see vv. 16–24). The righteous kept the commandments, listened to the word of God, and worked hard. Righteous teachers did

not think they were better than the listeners. No one wore extravagant clothing, and they used extra resources to clothe and feed the hungry and tend to those who were sick (see vv. 29–32).

Wendell Berry's *The Unsettling of America* offers another thinking model to help us understand legacy in constructive ways. In this model, Berry contrasts the exploiter with the nurturer.⁸ Exploiters want to get the most for themselves out of any given resource or relationship, regardless of how their behavior impacts that resource or relationship. Nurturers are primarily concerned with the *health* of resources, relationships, and communities. Berry's focus was on land, so he described exploiters getting all of the resources they could out of a piece of land, then moving on to another once that land was wrecked. In contrast, nurturers built a sustainable relationship between the land and the people who worked it, so both the land and the people stayed healthy. This exploiter/nurturer model also illuminates Nehor's priestcraft. Nehor was an exploiter. He didn't care about others' relationship with God, the health of the church, or anyone's well-being. He cared about his own wealth and power. Alma, on the other hand, devoted himself to people's well-being, their relationships with each other and with God, and the long-term health of the church. This exploiter/nurturer pairing relates directly to vanity and the way we think about legacy. Obsession with being well-regarded tempts us to exploitative behavior in our interpersonal relationships as well as in the way we treat sources in our work. Concern with nurturing people past and present, on the other hand, leads us to more careful thinking, to honesty, to building concepts and relationships that will sustain others for a long time.

ADVOCACY

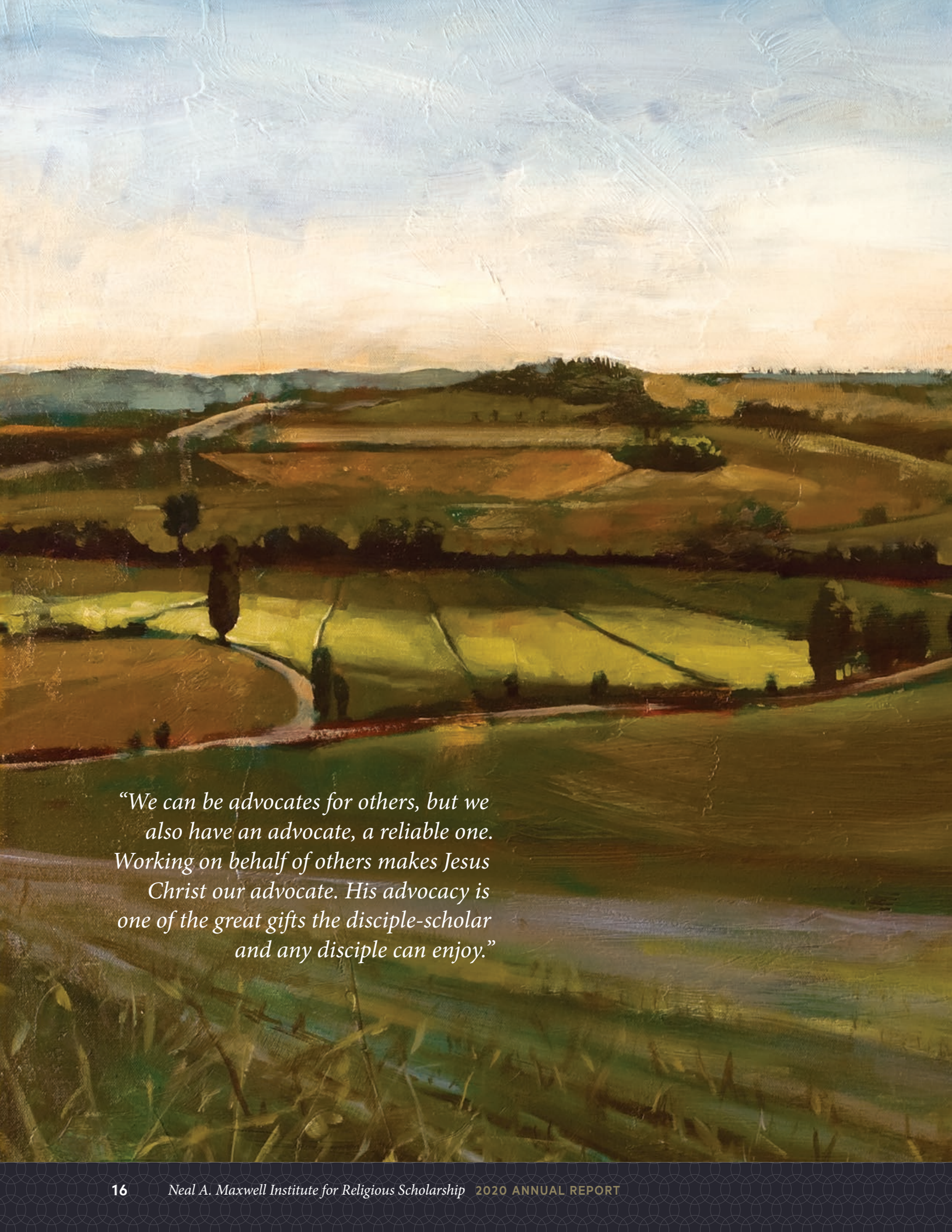
One aspect of nurturing is advocacy, by which I mean supporting a cause or a person. We can be advocates for others, but we also have an advocate, a reliable one. Working on behalf of others makes Jesus Christ *our* advocate. His advocacy is one of the great gifts the disciple-scholar and any disciple can enjoy, and it manifests itself in our lives in a number of ways. I'll briefly mention three:

- First, the advocacy of Jesus Christ improves the quality of our work and leads our work to find its audience more widely than we can take it on our own. He can make our work accomplish in the world the good it has the potential to accomplish.
- Second, when hurting from a negative review by someone who didn't understand our work, we can have faith that that work will still find an audience and still influence the collective understanding for good. We can hope for the happy ending that Dr. Hammond received after her years of diligence. When hurting from a negative review that was justified, because we missed an important perspective, we can feel grateful for that voice, because it helped safeguard the collective understanding from the harm that we did. And we can be grateful because the review, if we let it, will help us to do better work in the future. As our advocate, Jesus Christ can comfort us from the pain of being falsely accused or publicly wrong.
- Third, Jesus's advocacy can guide us toward truth and solid evidence. I believe this is what the diligence of Dr. Hammond allowed her to do—to bring out truth. We experience this frequently where I work in the Church History Department: a dose of divine intervention gets the right sources on our desks or brings a conversation with someone that leads us to frame a sentence differently.

Mark Staker, who works in the Historic Sites Division at the Church History Department, had such an experience when he was working on the renovation of the priesthood restoration site in Pennsylvania; his experience models how to blend



Replica of Joseph and Emma Smith's Pennsylvania home.

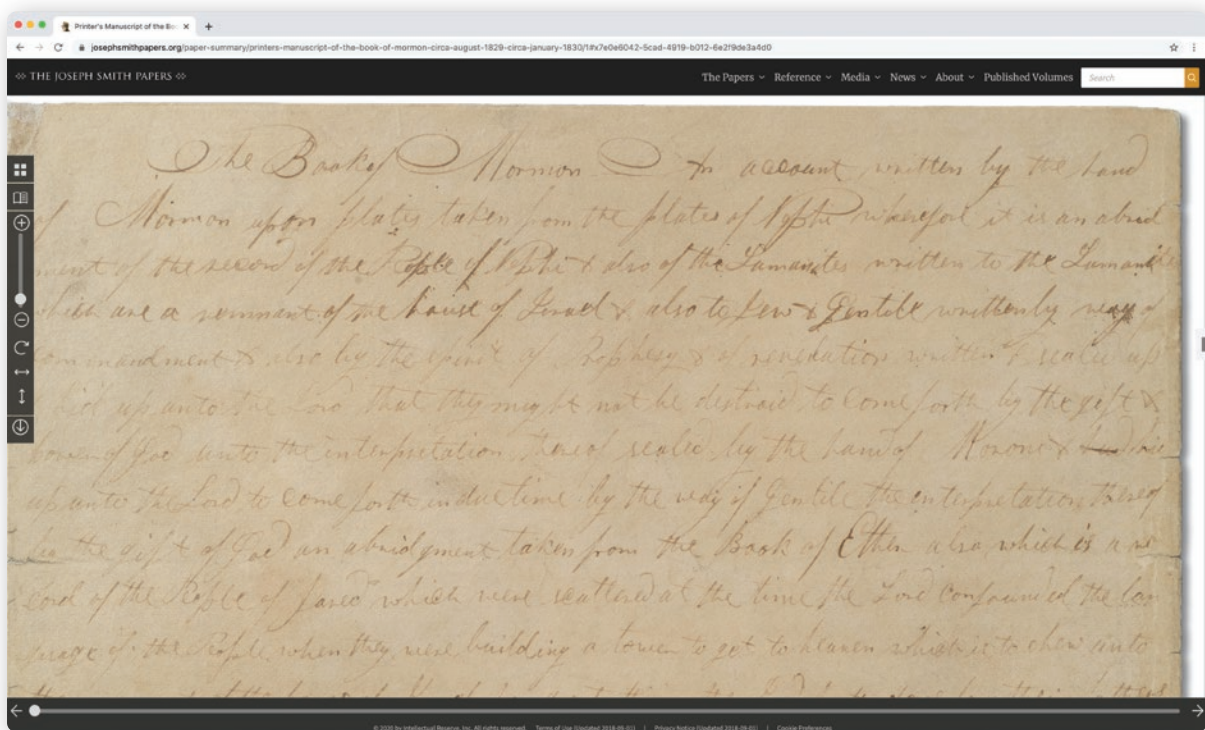


“We can be advocates for others, but we also have an advocate, a reliable one. Working on behalf of others makes Jesus Christ our advocate. His advocacy is one of the great gifts the disciple-scholar and any disciple can enjoy.”



scholarly work with the Savior's advocacy. Mark developed additional love and admiration for Oliver Cowdery, Emma Smith, and Joseph Smith during the project. "I wanted the site to reflect in detail everything I could learn about them as individuals, including their personalities, their sacrifices, and their contributions to the Restoration," he wrote. "I gave considerable attention to Oliver Cowdery as scribe. He walked all the way from Manchester, New York, through the snow and rain to meet Joseph. He arrived with his feet exposed in worn shoes and his toes slightly injured through the freezing. Right after he arrived in Harmony, he stayed up late into the night with Joseph as the two talked. Then Oliver took his meager schoolteacher's salary and made the first payment on Joseph Smith's property both as a desire to help and as a sign of his commitment. He then immediately began to work as Joseph's scribe."

Mark thought a lot about what tools Cowdery would have used in his work as scribe. He studied the vast collection of nineteenth-century writing materials at Old Sturbridge Village. He looked at inkwells, penknives, and original quill pens found tucked between the pages of an old financial ledger or in the drawer of an old desk. He also discussed with scholars who'd carefully studied the original Book of Mormon manuscript how it had been produced. He learned that Cowdery's writing grew wider when the tip of his pen became old and flared out, and then his writing narrowed once more after starting with a new quill. Through this research, Mark determined that Cowdery would have used a turkey feather for his quill pens.



Printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon.

So Mark looked for turkey feathers to put in the replica of the home where Joseph and Oliver had worked together, but he ran into a problem. He could buy an entire bag of goose feathers from China for four dollars, but turkey feathers came from American sellers charging fifteen or twenty dollars each, and he felt wrong spending that much money on them. So he bought a bag of goose feathers and made over a hundred pens. Packing up a fistful of the goose quills, he took them along when he drove to Harmony to finalize the installation. But he knew the goose quills were wrong.

The morning of the opening, Mark arose before sunrise to put finishing touches on the home, including the quill pens. In his words:

I arrived just as the morning light changed the home to a warm, rose glow. I was thinking about the feather at the time. I don't remember if I was praying for a solution, or if I was just lamenting not having one. There on the front stoop was a beautiful eleven-inch-long feather from the tip of a wild turkey's wing. . . . I picked it up, pulled out a penknife, and then had the perfect quill sitting in Oliver's inkwell on the table a few minutes later. . . . I left part of the fletching on the pen so it would be clear what kind of bird had provided it.

I'm grateful for that generous turkey. But in my mind it was God who orchestrated the experience. I think Oliver was pleased that his contributions to the Restoration were remembered and celebrated. I could say in my heart, "I know what you did." And he could whisper in my mind, "I know you know."⁹

To qualify for the kind of advocacy that both Mark Staker and Elizabeth Hale Hammond experienced, we have to let it in: believe in it, pray for it, and let it happen. An additional way we and they qualify is to keep working. "The Lord loves effort," as our prophet told a group of children in Palmyra, New York, last year.¹⁰ But perhaps the most important aspect of their qualification was that they were working on behalf of others, as nurturers, not as exploiters.

SHARING LEGACY

Before closing, I invite you to consider one additional aspect of legacy that we encounter even when we do good work for the right reasons, and we'll return to the Book of Mormon to explore this final point. As you have noticed, just because someone is in the scriptures doesn't mean that she or he did the right thing or that we should heed their words. Often, we have to figure out for ourselves whether what they have said or done is consistent with other Church teachings and with God's will. This dynamic is particularly obvious in the Hebrew Bible, where men sleep with their sons' widows and sacrifice their daughters, but it is at work throughout scripture, which is, after all, a human attempt to record and make sense of human experience with the Divine. In Alma chapter 26, a missionary, Ammon, so exuberantly expresses the joy of having done good work on behalf of others and in partnership with God that his brother softly accuses him, "Ammon, I fear that thy joy doth carry thee away unto boasting" (v. 10).

Ammon, Aaron, and their fellow missionaries had risked not just physical privations but their lives in an effort to share information with the Lamanite peoples. As a result, thousands of Lamanites entered more deeply into God's love, experienced redemption, and exemplified integrity and charity in a way that then inspired and instructed the Nephites. Ammon had good reason to celebrate the legacy of what everyone together had accomplished—God, the Lamanite peoples, and the missionaries.

Here is his response to his cautious brother's worry about boasting:

I do not boast in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God. . . . I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my



An additional way we and they qualify is to keep working. "The Lord loves effort," as our prophet told a group of children in Palmyra, New York, last year.

God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever. . . . He has brought [our Lamanite siblings] into his everlasting light, yea, into everlasting salvation; and they are encircled about with the matchless bounty of his love; yea, and we have been instruments in his hands of doing this great and marvelous work. (vv. 11–12, 15)

Ammon's exultations are worth our emulation because he focused on others' well-being and, while acknowledging the human effort involved, still described their success as a gift from God. Ammon's words also teach us that celebrating legacy in humility and gratitude does not require that we grovel. Ammon showed us how to feel good about helping others through gratitude rather than through boasting.

Terryl's question has led us to a complex conversation. Some of you might be wondering why he even asked that uncomfortable and potentially incriminating question about how we want to be remembered. There are good reasons: the question is a smooth way to move from general to specific in an interview, and it quickly

gives audience members a sense of the person they're listening to. It's an engaging question—I enjoyed hearing how people like Neylan McBaine, Tom Griffith, and Rosalynde Welch answered that question (listen to their interviews with Terryl, if you want to, as well). But the question is also beneficial because it invites us to reflect. How better

Our efforts to make our lives matter can be interwoven, like the lattice top crust of an exemplary pie, with righteous motivation.



to avoid vanity than to examine our aims and to think through what we hope our lives will mean, so we can have a chance to make them mean something worthwhile? Maybe the Holy Ghost is right now inviting you to answer that question yourselves.

CONCLUSION

The legacy of the boy who sought, two hundred years ago, a quiet space to pray for spiritual direction is not in that boy's hands. His legacy lies now in our hands, in the ways we respond to the teachings and Church structures he left behind. While he was alive, he created a worthy legacy by working for our salvation, and *not* obsessing over his own reputation. He worked for us to have the forgiveness that was the first thing God offered him in the sacred grove, and the love of God in our lives, and relationships that transcend the threats mortal life puts in their way. He worked as a nurturer, with faith, optimism, and strength.


I offer my remarks tonight in the spirit of empathy, encouragement, and also warning about times vanity leads us to care more about our own reputations than others' well-being. Instead, our efforts to make our lives matter can be interwoven, like the lattice top crust of an exemplary pie, with righteous motivation. Let's have faith in God's abundance. Sister Michelle Craig taught at the last general conference, "There may be times when you . . . find yourself struggling to see how God is working in your life—times when *you* feel under siege—when the trials of mortality bring you to your knees. Wait and trust in God and in His timing, because you can trust His heart with all of yours."¹¹ God's abundance is the real antidote to the feelings that haunt us when we want to matter, and shape our professions, and sell more books than we actually do. With God in our hearts, we are more than enough. **MI**

NOTES

1. Elizabeth Hale Hammond, email to author, October 1, 2020.
2. Elizabeth Hale Hammond, "Faith and My Life as a Medical Scientist," in *By Study and Also by Faith: Forays*, ed. Melissa Inouye and Kate Holbrook (Provo, UT: Maxwell Institute, forthcoming).
3. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Vertuous Women Found: New England Ministerial Literature, 1668–1735," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1976): 20–40; Sarah Pearsall and Kirsten Sword, "Laurel Thatcher Ulrich Biography," *General Meeting Booklet, 2010 AHA Annual Meeting*, <https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/presidential-addresses/laurel-thatcher-ulrich/laurel-thatcher-ulrich-biography>.
4. Personal communication with the author during a meeting on October 5, 2017.
5. Wayne W. Dyer, *Staying on the Path* (ReadHowYouWant.com, 2009), 7.
6. Diane von Furstenberg, "Mental Toughness," *MasterClass*, 2020 (timestamp 1:45), <https://www.masterclass.com/classes/diane-von-furstenberg-teaches-building-a-fashion-brand>.
7. Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ, Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship; Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2018), 244.
8. See Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1986), 71.
9. Mark Staker, email to author, November 2019.
10. Quoted in Joy D. Jones, "An Especially Noble Calling," *Ensign*, May 2020, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2020/04/14jones>.
11. Michelle D. Craig, "Eyes to See," October 2020 general conference, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2020/10/14craig>.

An architectural blueprint of the West View Building is shown in the top left corner. It features a grid of rooms, each containing a desk and chair, with various lines and dimensions indicating the building's layout.

West View Building

A photograph of the West View Building, a modern structure with a grey stone facade and large windows. The building is surrounded by trees with autumn foliage. A concrete walkway with a metal railing is in the foreground.

"There is something powerful about a community of disciples of Jesus Christ who view themselves not just as isolated individuals pursuing their own goals but as part of a covenant community gathered together to realize their full potential as children of God."

—President Kevin J Worthen¹



Under the direction of Joseph Smith, early Latter-day Saints were admonished to gather together—not only to receive saving ordinances, pool resources, and prepare to build Zion generally, but also specifically to “obtain the advantages of education; and in order to do this, compact society is absolutely necessary.”² The Neal A. Maxwell Institute’s mission statement includes the charge to “gather and nurture disciple-scholars,” and we have never felt more acutely than now how interconnected both gathering and nurturing are—and how much the latter depends on the former.

The year 2020 has been challenging, but at the Maxwell Institute it won’t be known only as the year of the pandemic. It will also be remembered for marking the completion of our new physical gathering place situated near the heart of BYU’s campus. The West View Building was announced in November 2018. The Institute was assigned a dedicated space in the south wing of the main floor, to be designed to fit the purposes of our unique mission—a mission inseparable from the imperatives of our faith. As President Russell M. Nelson has taught, “research and education are religious responsibilities for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”³

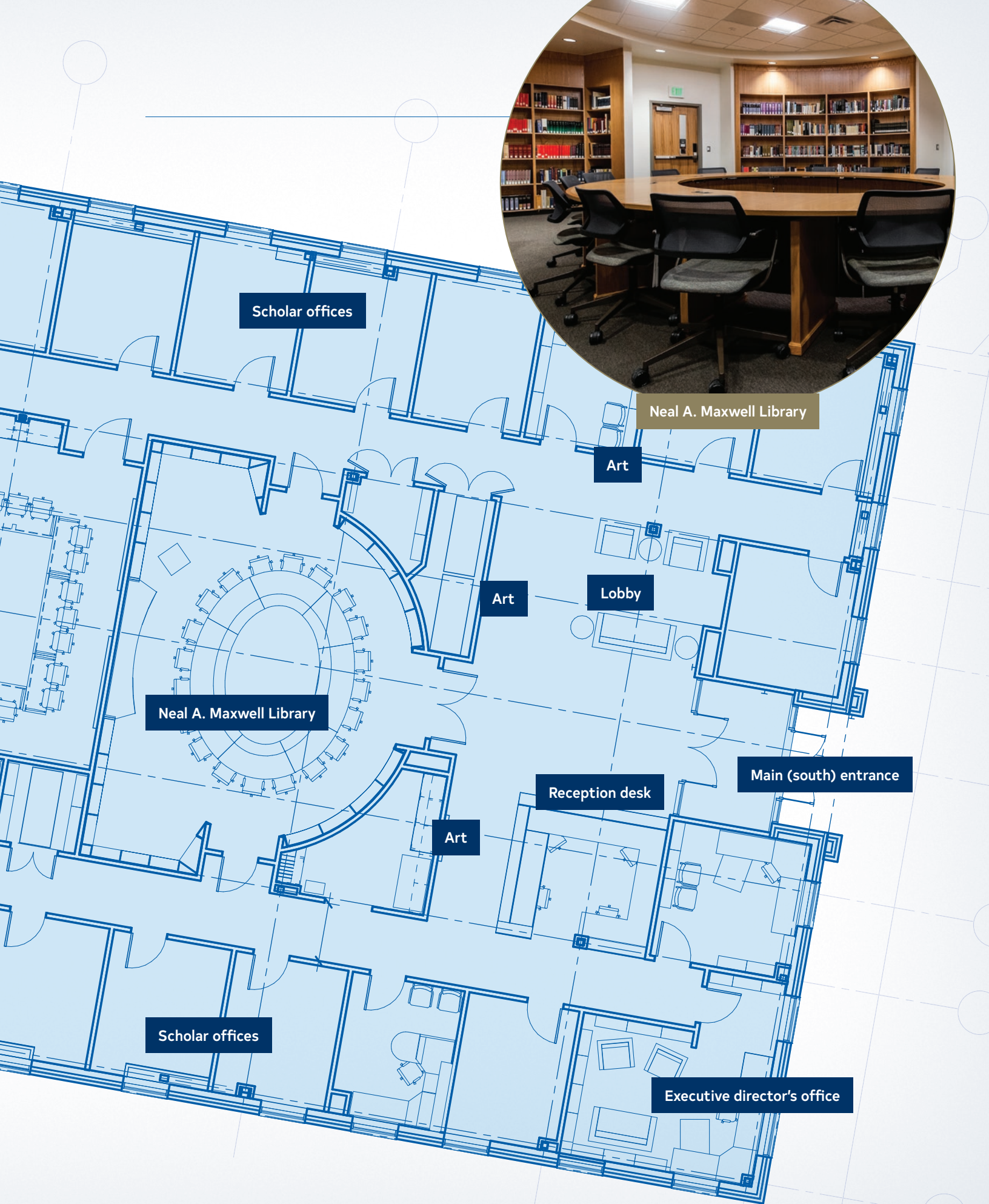
Art

Conference room



Scholar's office



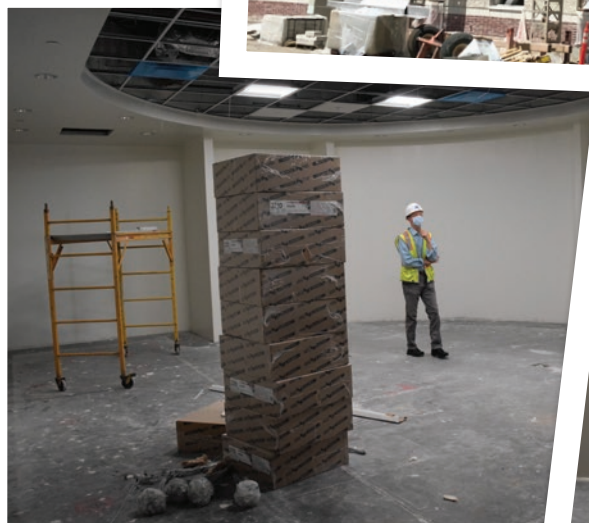





Demolition of the old Faculty Office Building to make way for construction of the new West View Building



On behalf of our scholars, staff, and the thousands who will be impacted by the work produced here, we express deep gratitude to the many people who made this new space possible, from its initial planning stages through its design, construction, and furnishing. It was remarkable to witness the kind of gathering required in order to make our own new gathering space possible. The gifts and vision of Institute faculty and staff combined with talented architects, facilities personnel, university administrators, interior designers, and artists have made for an inspiring space worthy of the apostolic ministry of our namesake. The space will serve the campus community and wider public well, and well into the future.

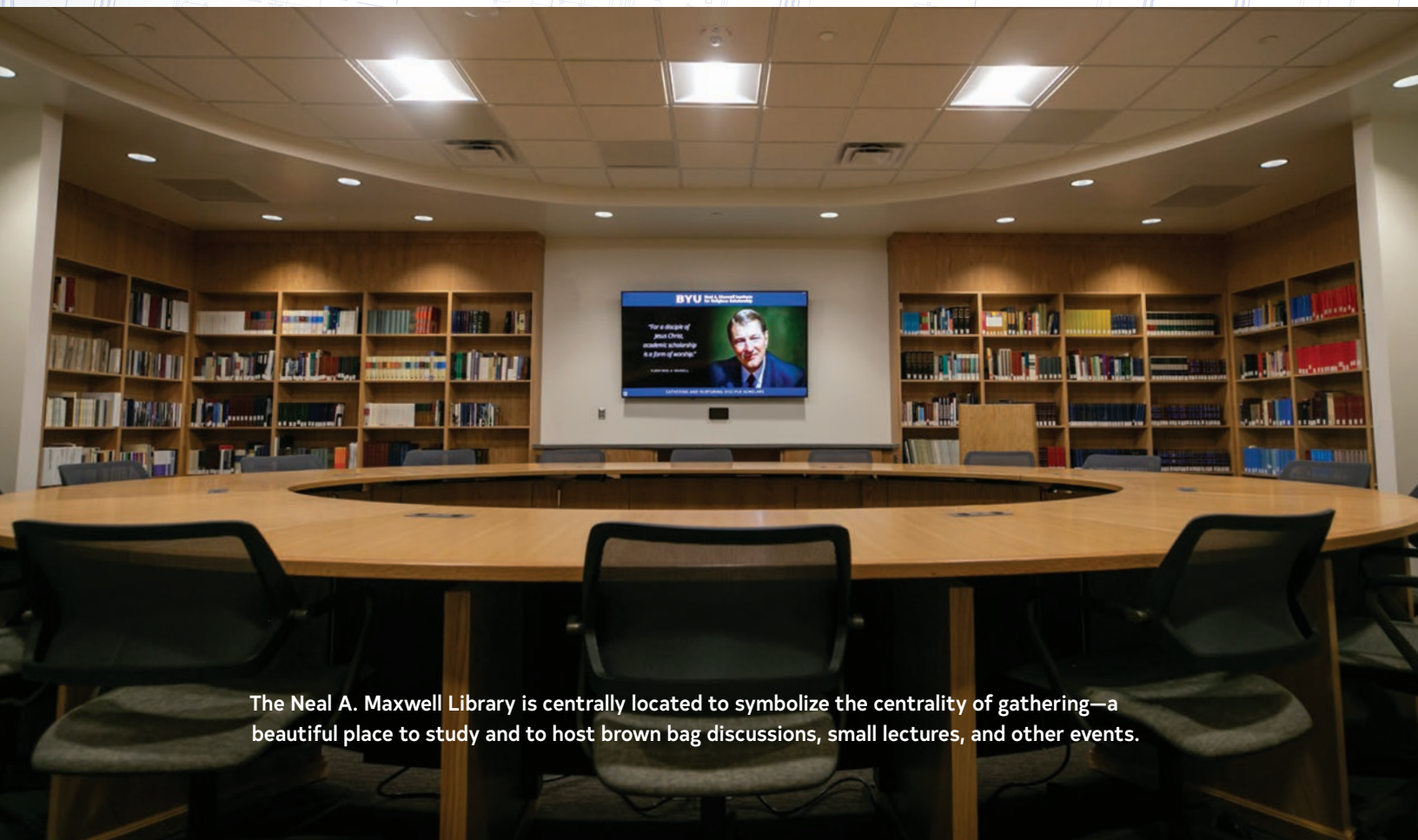




We are confident that the West View Building will become a microcosm of what President Worthen described of Brigham Young University as a whole, providing "a truly unique opportunity to come to know . . . what a life that is both spiritually strengthening and intellectually enlarging looks like," a home to disciple-scholars who are "at the forefront of knowledge in their fields of expertise and also rock solid in their faith in and commitment to the truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ."⁴ MI

NOTES

1. Kevin J Worthen, "A Joyful Gathering of God's Children," *BYU Magazine* (Spring 2020), <https://magazine.byu.edu/issue/spring-2020/>.
2. Often attributed to Joseph Smith, this admonition is from Sidney Rigdon, under the editorship of Joseph Smith, in "To the Saints Abroad," *Elders' Journal*, August 1838, p. 53, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed October 12, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/elders-journal-august-1838/5>.
3. Quoted in Marianne Holman Prescott, "Church Leaders Gather at BYU's Life Sciences Building for Dedication," *Church News*, 17 April 2015, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/church-leaders-gather-at-byus-life-sciences-building-for-dedication>.
4. Kevin J Worthen, "Gathering: Education in a Compact Society," *BYU Devotional*, 10 September 2019, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen/gathering_education-in-compact-society/.



The Neal A. Maxwell Library is centrally located to symbolize the centrality of gathering—a beautiful place to study and to host brown bag discussions, small lectures, and other events.



**WEST VIEW BUILDING
ART SPOTLIGHT**



ROSE DATOC DALL

Behold the Handmaid (oil on canvas, 2013)

Mary and Elisabeth (oil on canvas, 2013)

Both *Behold the Handmaid* and *Mary and Elisabeth* were created as part of a series of paintings about the early years of the Savior's life from Mary's point of view. *Behold the Handmaid* depicts the annunciation with Mary gazing up at the angel Gabriel, who is out of the frame. Mary is kneeling with the fabric pooled about her, leaning on a water vessel, which symbolizes that she is the chosen vessel to be the mother of the Messiah. I painted the image in unearthly blue and green tones to suggest the very out-of-ordinary and sublime nature of this encounter.

The companion painting, *Mary and Elisabeth*, depicts both women linked arm in arm in sisterly solidarity. Their hands are clasped as if to lend support to each other. Elisabeth has a calm resolve to her demeanor while Mary gazes off with both hope and trepidation in her eyes. These women are forever linked in the same story—both with miraculous pregnancies, both as chosen vessels to bear a prophet in one case, the Messiah in the other. There is a feeling of both anticipation and foreboding in this image, as the clouds billow in the background, which seems to foretell a coming storm and travails to come. The thistles at their feet are called Mary's Thistle or milk thistle. There is a legend in which Mary was resting beneath a thistle while nursing the Savior when a drop of her milk fell upon the leaves, which gave the plant its milky-white veins. I chose to use this spiky plant to symbolize Mary's travails to come, especially having to flee into Egypt and care for a small child in the wilderness. The spikes on the plant also reminded me of thorns not unlike those on Christ's crown, adding an extra level of symbolism.

I am so pleased that *Behold the Handmaid* and *Mary and Elisabeth* are displayed together at the Maxwell Institute, as they are part of the same story. As a woman artist, I am especially grateful that two portraits of heroic women of the Bible are included in the Institute's art collection.

In addition, I was very pleased that *Behold the Handmaid* hangs adjacent to J. Kirk Richards's painting *The First Vision* in the space, since both paintings depict a pivotal theophany. Each depicts a heavenly visitation that changed the history of the world. I am especially gratified by the thoughtful and careful selection of these pieces to hang together in the same space, each representing a seminal event not only in history but also in our Latter-day Saint tradition, in which one event happened to a man, Joseph Smith, and the other to a woman, Mary. It is not often that both theophanies are seen in a parallel light.



CAITLIN CONNOLLY

holding holy things (oil on panel, 2019)

I created the painting *holding holy things* as a way for me to personally engage in one of my favorite scripture stories. I have loved reading the book of Ether over the years, and the experiences of the brother of Jared have been especially meaningful to me. It is hard as a woman to continue to engage in spaces where I don't see other women I can relate to. It is also hard to feel an emotional void as a result of the literal void of women in sacred text.

At the same time, I have had meaningful spiritual experiences with the restored gospel that have been a beautiful part of my spiritual growth. It is helpful to me to imagine women that don't exist in the written text by drawing or painting them into the conversation. Seeing them in some sense of physicality allows me to also see myself as a participant in the conversation in the past and moving forward. I titled this one *holding holy things* (my husband calls it "the sister of Jared") because I am a curious person by nature and I am sure, if I were in this woman's place, I would have held the stones.









J. KIRK RICHARDS

The First Vision (oil on panel, 2020)

I began this version of the First Vision hoping to depict ideas from accounts less commonly seen by Latter-day Saints. In attempting to address these ideas, my painting borrows from another heavenly vision painting: *Joan of Arc*, by Jules Bastien-Lepage. I specifically wanted to address two First Vision ideas from Joseph's accounts. The first is from this passage:

I retired to a secret place in a grove and began to call upon the Lord, while fervently engaged in supplication my mind was taken away from the objects with which I was surrounded, and I was enwrapped in a heavenly vision and saw two glorious personages.¹

The idea of Joseph's mind being taken away from surrounding objects and enwrapped in a vision makes us wonder exactly what happened. Was it a spiritual vision or a physical visitation? Was he transported through a portal? Did his mind connect to the umbilicus of the heavenly womb? Was it a daydream? As an artist, I don't feel a need to know definitively the answer to these questions. Rather, I feel a need to create space in my community for others to be able to ask them. In Bastien-Lepage's *Joan of Arc*, Joan too is facing in the opposite direction of her vision, and yet there are visible presences in her sacred garden. I wonder what it meant for Joan and Joseph for their minds to be enwrapped in heavenly visions.

The second idea comes from this passage:

And I saw many angels in this vision.²

The depictions of the First Vision I grew up with did not explicitly include angels. In my painting, I wanted a host of heaven to appear with the Father and the Son. This host appears through the trees, much like the heavenly visitors in *Joan of Arc*. I like this marriage of spirit and nature—as if the trees themselves are also singing God's praise.

One more allusion to Bastien-Lepage: the golden path on the ground in my painting reflects a garden path within the *Joan of Arc* painting. In my version the path leads to a rectangle of light in the background, representing Joseph's earthly life. Earth is commonly represented by the square, and heaven by the infinite circle. Joseph here is suspended between two worlds: earth and heaven, the physical and the eternal.

NOTES

1. Joseph Smith, "Church History," in *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, IL), 1 March 1842, pp. 706–10, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/church-history-1-march-1842/1#source-note>.
2. Joseph Smith, "Sketch Book for the use of Joseph Smith, jr.," *Journal*, September 1835–April 1836, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-1835-1836/24#source-note>.



MATTHEW GRANT

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (oil on panel, 2020)

A centerpiece of the new building is the painting of the Institute's namesake, Elder Neal A. Maxwell. The painting is based on one of the last official photographs of Elder Maxwell, which became a family favorite. Cory Maxwell initially displayed the photograph during his address at the Annual Neal A. Maxwell Lecture dinner in 2018. Artist Matthew Grant worked to create a photo-realistic image of Elder Maxwell that faithfully depicted this dedicated disciple and apostle. Demonstrative of his personality, kindness exudes in his contemplative stance. His countenance bears the mark of a sweet and somber soul tempered by the trials of mortal experience.







BRIAN KERSHISNIK

Book of Mormon illuminations

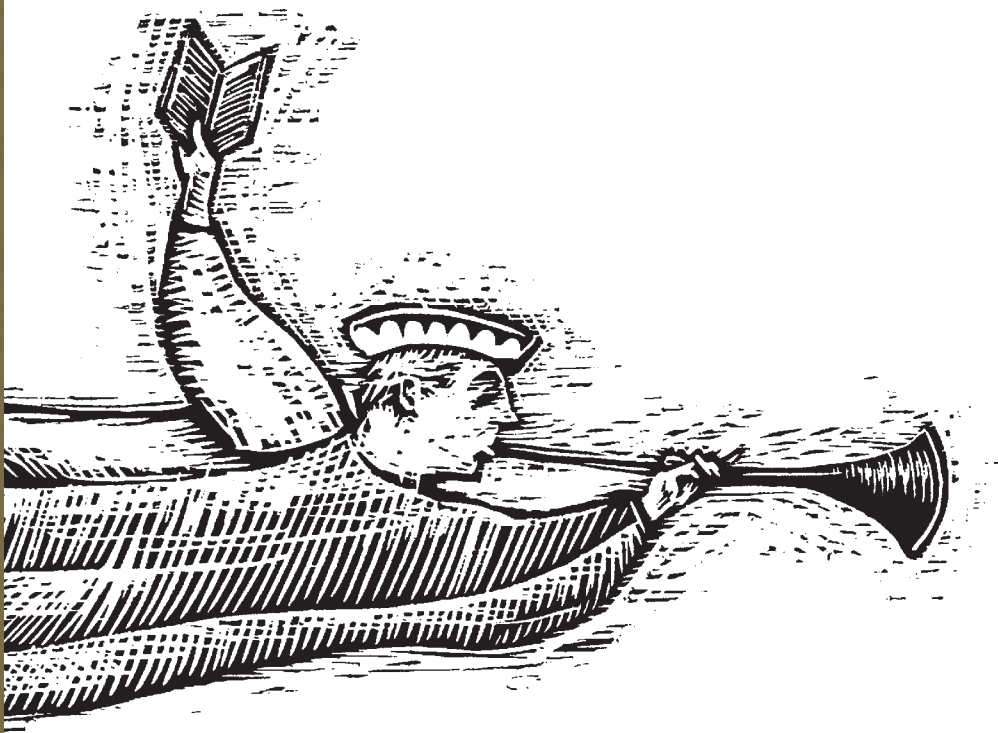
(woodcuts in Baltic birch, 2018–2020)

I have been a student of the Book of Mormon since my early teenage years, so when the Maxwell Institute approached me to contribute art for its study edition of the Book of Mormon a few years ago, I approached the project with a paradoxical combination of eagerness and reluctance. My love for this book of scripture and my respect and affection for the people involved were great motivators for me. But illustrating scripture is problematic. People love pictures and often want artists to do the visualizing for them.

I believe that for any text—and especially scripture—the decoration should draw the reader further into the words rather than replace or distract from them. So I undertook illuminating the Book of Mormon with woodcuts that would provoke rather than direct readers' thoughts.

In total, I created one woodcut for each book in the Book of Mormon (two for Alma), in addition to a frontispiece depicting Jesus Christ and an endpiece depicting an angel holding aloft a sacred book. I'm gratified to see the engraved woodblocks that were used to print the illuminations hanging in the Maxwell Institute where they themselves can provoke further contemplation among the scholars and students who gather there.







The Book of Mormon

brief theological introductions

The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions series seeks Christ in scripture by combining intellectual rigor and the disciple's yearning for holiness.

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1 I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

2 Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians.

3 And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge.



1st Nephi

a brief theological introduction

2nd Nephi

a brief theological introduction

Joseph Spencer

13. And now, my beloved brethren,
all those who are of the house of
Israel, and all ye ends of the earth,
Farewell until
that great day shall come.

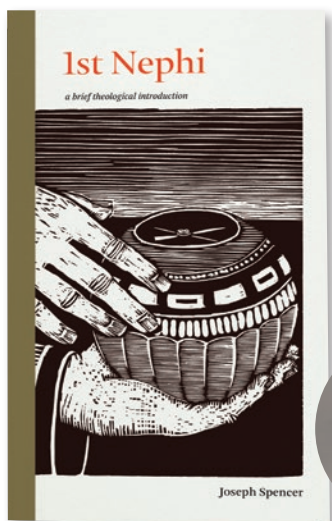
and respect the words of the Jews,
and also my words,
and the words which shall
proceed forth out of the mouth
of the Lamb of God,
behold, I bid you an
everlasting farewell,

15. For what I seal on earth, shall
be brought against you at the
judgment bar;

Amen.

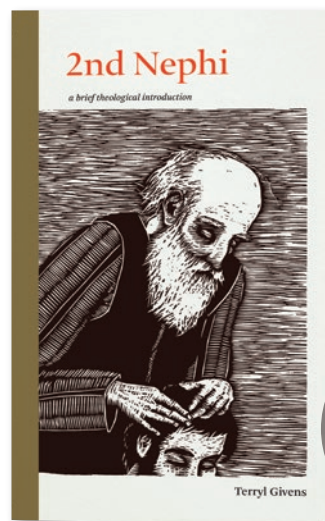
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—BRYAN SEBESTA



1ST NEPHI:
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JOSEPH M. SPENCER
Brigham Young University



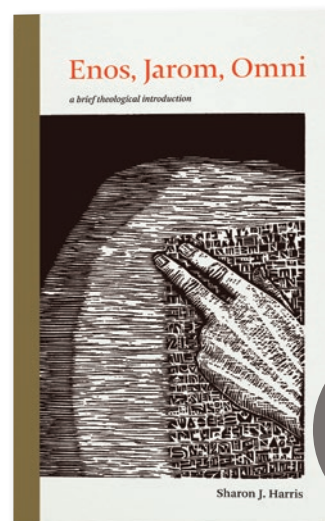
2ND NEPHI:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

TERRYL GIVENS
*Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship,
Brigham Young University*



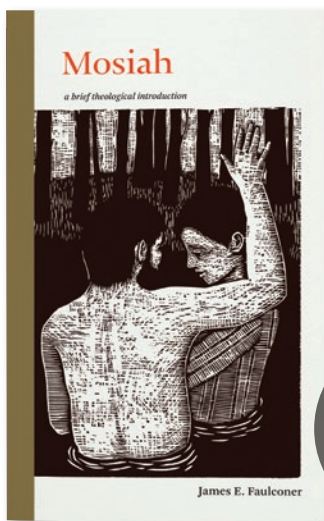
JACOB:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

DEIDRE NICOLE GREEN
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ENOS, JAROM, OMNI:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

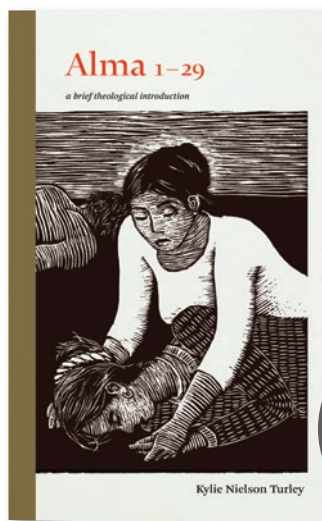
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MOSIAH:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

JAMES E. FAULCONER

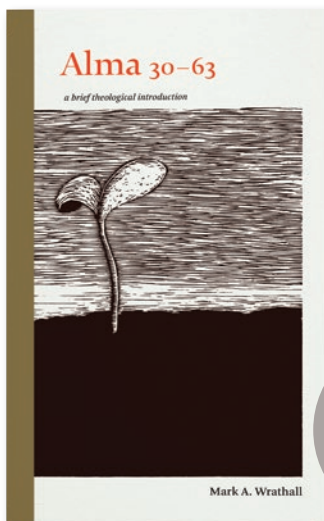
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Brigham Young University*



ALMA 1-29:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

KYLIE NIELSON TURLEY

Brigham Young University



ALMA 30-63:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

MARK WRATHALL

University of Oxford



HELAMAN:
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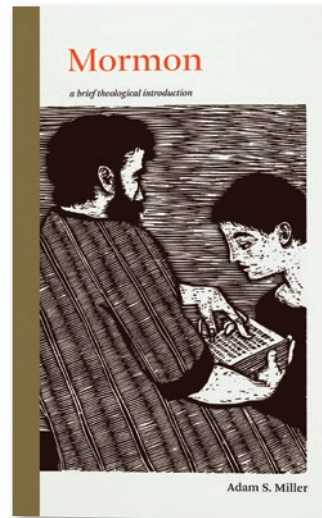
KIMBERLY MATHESON BERKEY

Loyola University Chicago



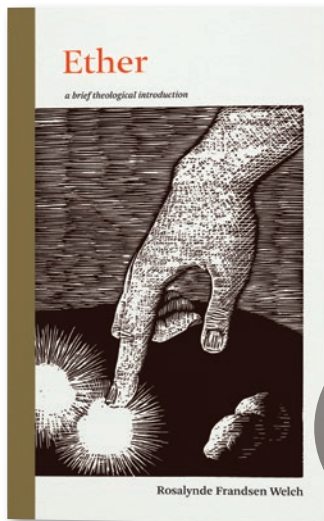
3RD, 4TH NEPHI:
A BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

DANIEL BECERRA
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From beginning to end, Book of Mormon record keepers demonstrate great care for their physical records—a tangible element of their witness of Christ. The prophet Nephi takes time to tell readers he engraves “upon plates which I have made with mine own hands” (1 Nephi 1:17).

The design for each *brief theological introduction* to the Book of Mormon should serve as a reminder of the artisanship and meticulous care of those who forged, engraved, protected, and translated the record through the ages. The modern artifact supplements the witness of the words inside.



Instead of ore, award-winning designer Douglas Thomas had paper and ink; acclaimed artist Brian Kershnik had chisel and wood. Careful attention to the visual and tactile elements of each volume helps the words of ancient prophets and modern authors perhaps shine a little brighter in readers’ hands.

Thomas’s work was selected to appear in the 2020 “100 Show Gallery”—a juried competition of the Salt Lake City chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts. The books were also featured in the 2020 Design Faculty Show at Brigham Young University’s Franklin S. Harris Fine Arts Center (left). He fashioned a design fit for gallery display.

Each printed volume is an artful artifact you can own. The design and visual illuminations go well beyond decoration—each invites readers’ contemplation as elements of inspiration and witness in their own right.

"This series is proving to be an essential resource for digging deeper into the theological messages of the Book of Mormon."

—THE ARCH-HIVE

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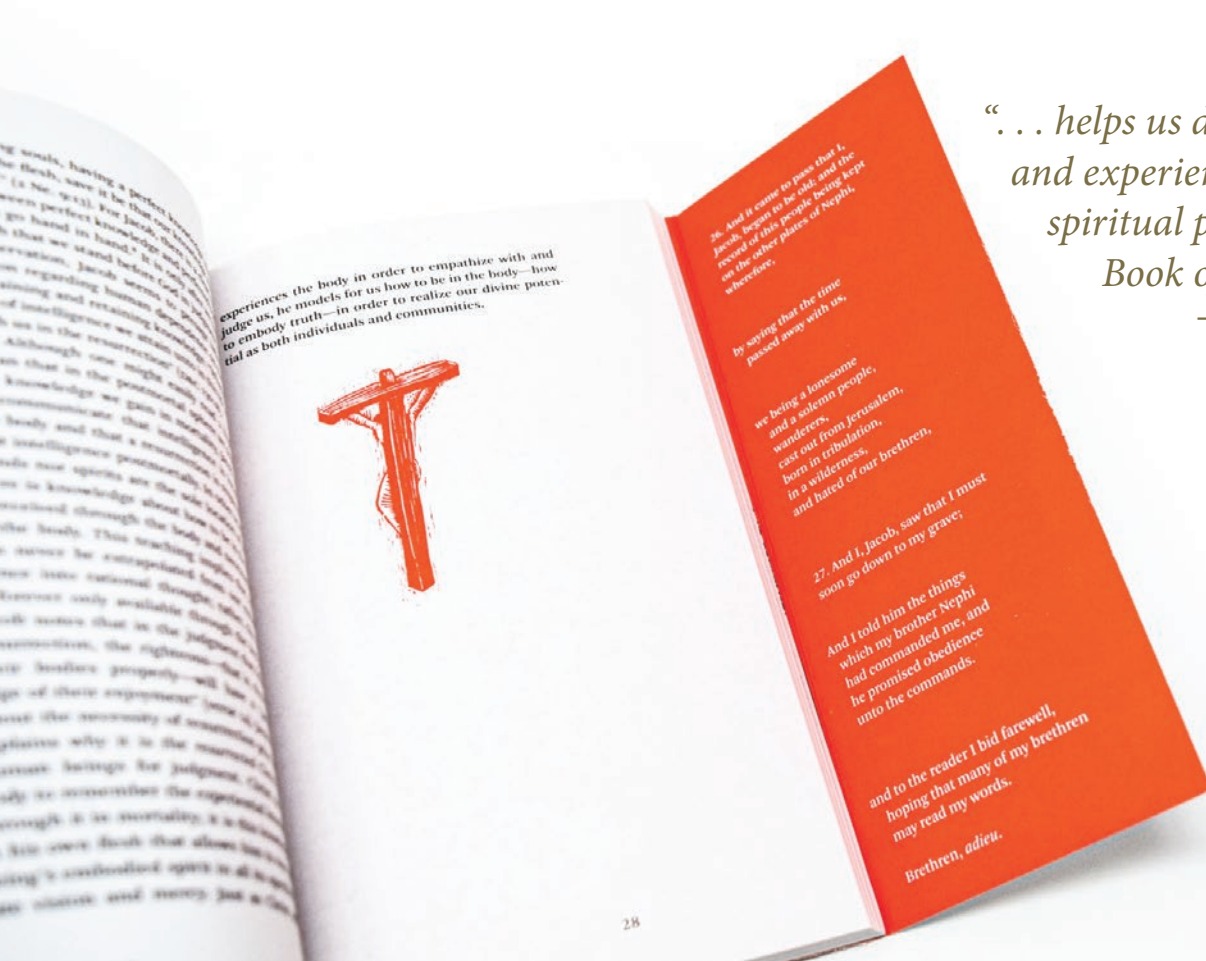
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Brian Kershnik

BOOK DESIGN AND TYPOGRAPHY

Douglas Thomas



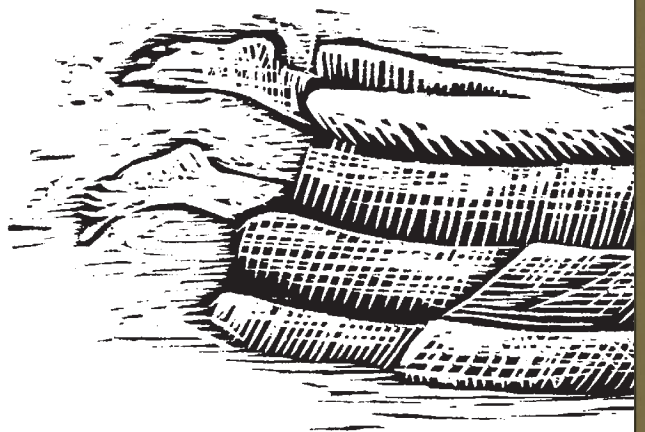
"... helps us drink deeply and experience the true spiritual power of the Book of Mormon."

—GERALD SMITH

32 Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

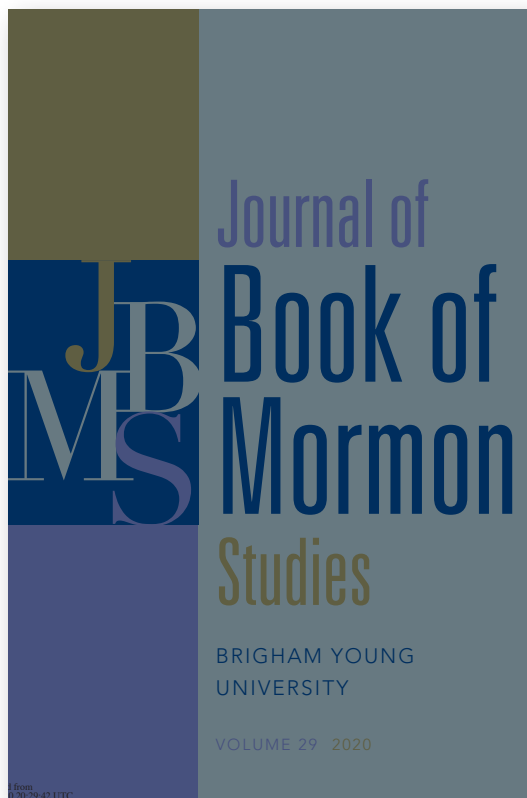
33 And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.

34 And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.



Other Publications

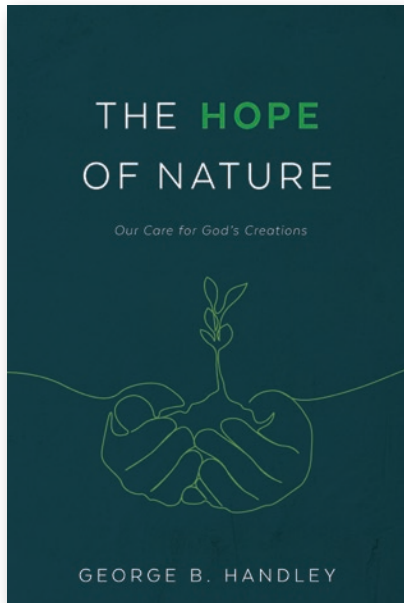
PERIODICAL



JOURNAL OF BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES VOLUME 29 (SEPTEMBER 2020)

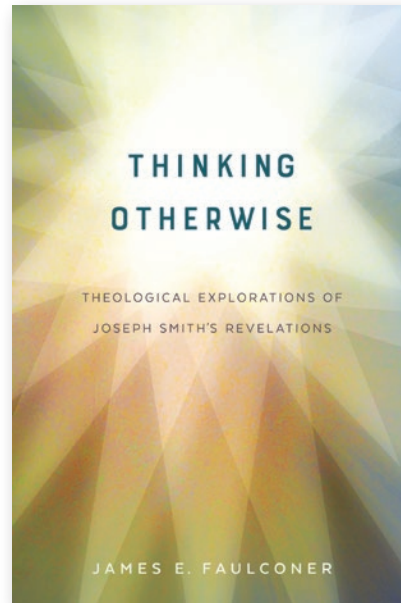
Editor in chief Joseph M. Spencer, Brigham Young University • *Associate editors* Matthew Bowman, Claremont Graduate University; Amy Easton-Flake, Brigham Young University; Jacob Rennaker, John A. Widtsoe Foundation; Nicholas J. Frederick, Brigham Young University; Rosalynde Welch, independent scholar • *Book review editor* Janiece Johnson, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

LIVING FAITH SERIES



**THE HOPE OF NATURE:
OUR CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION**

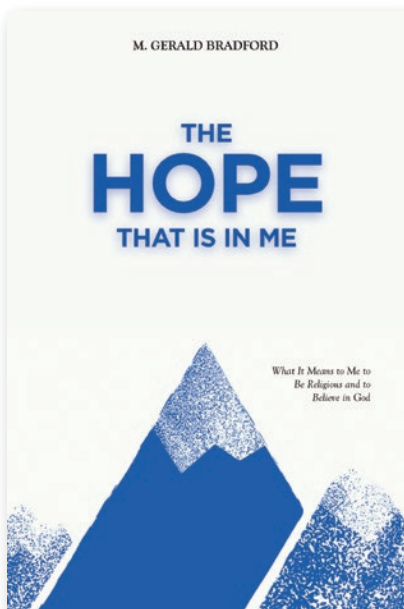
George B. Handley
(March 2020)



**THINKING OTHERWISE:
THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS OF
JOSEPH SMITH'S REVELATIONS**

James E. Faulconer
(December 2020)

PUBLISHED IN MEMORIAM



**THE HOPE THAT IS IN ME:
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE RELIGIOUS AND TO BELIEVE IN GOD**

M. Gerald Bradford

(December 2020)

Dr. M. Gerald “Jerry” Bradford served as executive director of the Maxwell Institute from 2008 to 2016. Shortly after completing a book manuscript testifying of his personal faith, Dr. Bradford passed away in April 2020. In his memory, the Maxwell Institute offers his book electronically free of charge.

See mi.byu.edu/book/Bradford.



2020 Institute Scholars

PHILIP L. BARLOW

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

The Neal A. Maxwell Institute has not been immune this past year from the disruptions of our ongoing global pestilence. Important lectures and symposia were postponed or canceled. The arrival of visiting scholars of regional, national, and international repute, scheduled here as guests for weeks or semesters, was deferred. Plans for research trips and presentations by our resident scholars and administrative team were put on hold. The spiritual and intellectual synergy deriving from frequent personal exchanges among associates on campus was constrained. Although spared the larger commotions faced by Brigham Young University officials and our teaching colleagues—to say nothing of the vulnerability and suffering in the world at large—we will not soon forget the peculiar challenges of 2020.

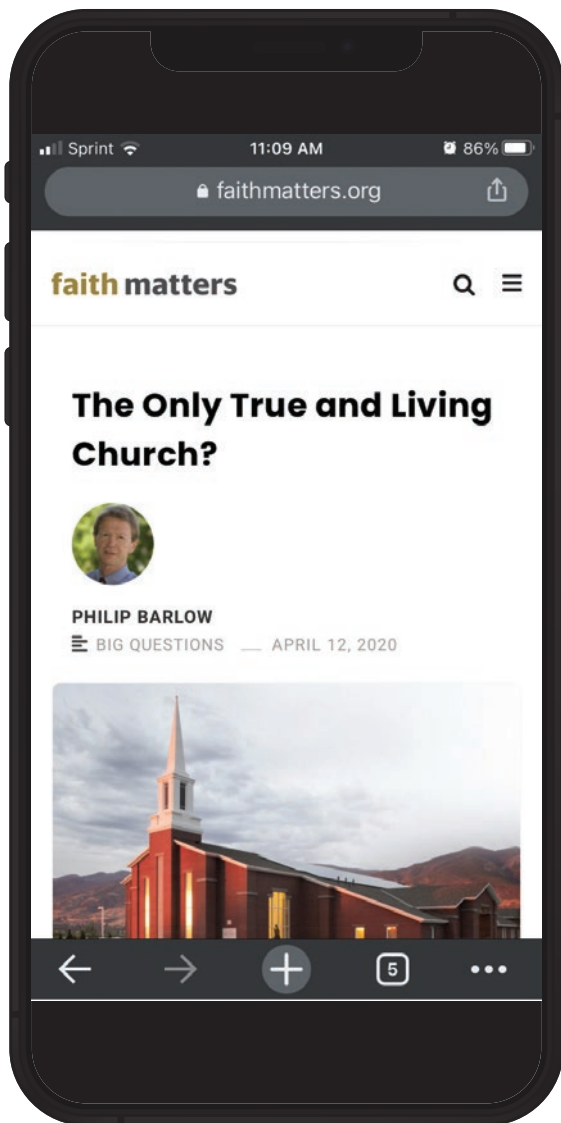
All the more notable, then, that the year has witnessed inspiring progress here. Diverse and ongoing contributions from Institute scholars are exemplified elsewhere in this annual report, while a pair of public milestones warrants particular mention here.

First: The publication in this single year of the groundbreaking twelve-volume series *The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions*, destined to render the richness of holy writ more accessible to many thousands of readers into the indefinite future.

Second: The long-awaited transition of the Maxwell Institute to a gracious physical location in the newly constructed West View Building, near the heart of BYU's campus. This is sacred space where beauty meets practical need and where unfolding scholarship is, as our namesake Elder Maxwell declared, "an act of worship." We invite readers to schedule a visit when circumstances permit, to sense as we do the vibrancy upon crossing the threshold, which will only grow as the pandemic fades.



These two advances and much else noted in this report were enabled by a partnership. The talent, diligence, imagination, and resourcefulness of disciple-scholars, disciple-staff, and disciple-student assistants associated with the Institute were undergirded by the uninterrupted support of the University and the extraordinary husbanding of resources managed by its sponsoring institution, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That many colleagues and schools around the world are beset with furloughs, constricted or suspended programs, and even the threat of institutional collapse in a time of economic duress is lost on no one here.



My own efforts in this context during the year have included, as associate director, extra on-site attention to the week-by-week Institute happenings while irreplaceable executive director Spencer Fluhman was on leave as a visiting professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara during spring semester. Along with Dr. Fluhman, I serve also as a general editor of the emerging *brief theological introductions* series, noted above. I published an article on navigating the conceptual and practical challenges intrinsic to loving those among us too often cast to society's—and even the Church's—margins, and another on what the concept of “the only true church” can and cannot mean while remaining compatible with other gospel precepts and while attending to the history of similar language across religious history. I continue work on a book-length manuscript on this latter topic, along with editing a fresh collection of spiritual witness for our troubled times (*A Thoughtful Faith for the Twenty-First Century*). With my gifted student partners (Ryder Seamons, Alexander Christensen, and, on a special assignment, Anna Allred), I have continued to make progress on this and on a larger project: collecting, analyzing, and contextualizing the conceptions, lore, and profundities attached to ideas—within and outside the Church across centuries—concerning the war in heaven.

The year 2020 was a challenging yet memorable year of progress. Plans for 2021 and subsequent years are coalescing. Prospects are, frankly, thrilling.

CHRISTOPHER JAMES BLYTHE

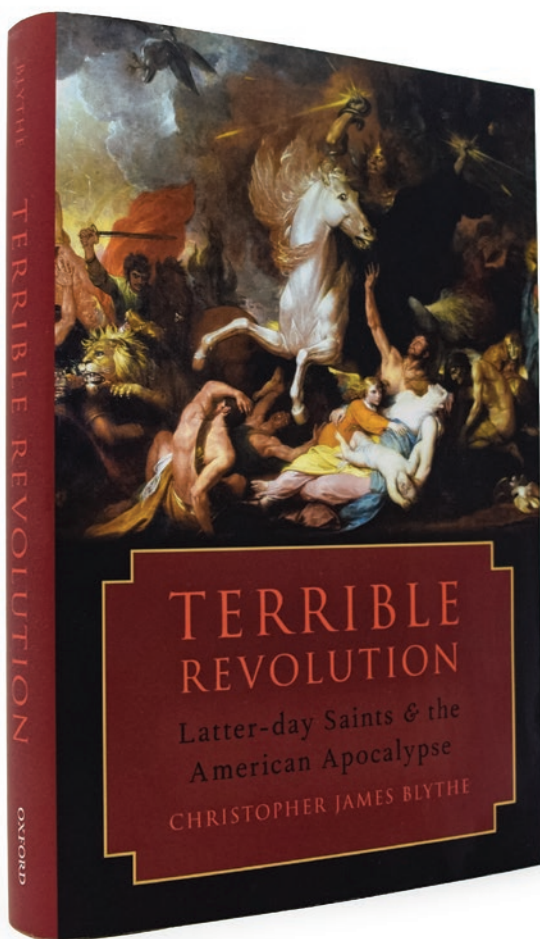
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Despite the new challenges of 2020, this year at the Maxwell Institute has been a wonderful season of collaboration, writing, publication, and outreach. I have had excellent research assistants and generous supportive colleagues. I have continued to take advantage of the amazing gift of time offered so abundantly at the Institute. My publications this year included chapters in two edited collections, one journal article, and many essays aimed at Latter-day Saints or a more general public audience. These short articles appeared in *Juvenile Instructor*, the Maxwell Institute Blog, *Meridian Magazine*, *Public Square Magazine*, *Religion Dispatches*, *Sightings*, and the Utah Historical Quarterly Blog.

This year also saw the publication of my first monograph, *Terrible Revolution: Latter-day Saints and the American Apocalypse*, published in August by Oxford University Press. I have been very pleased with the response to the volume. While COVID-19 put a damper in my plans for book signings and lectures, I was able to do a number of interviews for podcasts and blogs. This included appearing on Doug Fabrizio's *RadioWest*, the Salt Lake Tribune's *Mormon Land*, the *Maxwell Institute Podcast*, Laura Hales's *LDS Perspectives*, the *New Books Network*, and several others. I even had the opportunity to be interviewed for *Vozes Mórmons*, a Portuguese language Church history blog. They kindly translated my answers.

In October I received word that a collection I coedited with Christine Elyse Blythe and Jay Burton, *Open Canon: Scriptures of the Latter Day Saint Diaspora*, was accepted for publication by University of Utah Press. This work argues that Joseph Smith initiated a robust scriptural tradition that extends beyond his own revelatory texts to include the works of many subsequent scripture writers. Chapters focus on texts such as Harry Edgar Baker's *Word of the Lord*, Maurice Glendenning's *Levitical Writings*, Charles B. Thompson's *Book of Enoch*, and others. Contributors include eighteen well-known as well as up-and-coming Latter-day Saint studies scholars, including Matthew Bowman, Kathleen Flake, Laurie Maffly-Kipp, Joseph M. Spencer, and Casey Paul Griffiths. The foreword is written by the Institute's own Philip Barlow, author of the landmark book *Mormons and the Bible* (Oxford University Press). We look forward to seeing it in print in the coming year.

During the course of the year, I also drafted five articles that will appear in different venues, including a study of Latter-day Saint esotericism that will be published next year in the *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Secrecy*. An essay entitled "Emma Hale Smith on Stage" was published in an online series, "Art for Uncertain Times," by the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts. Additionally, volume 9 of *The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents*, which I coedited with Alex Smith and



Christian Heimburger, was awarded the Best Documentary History Award from the John Whitmer Historical Association. My work on *Book of Mormon Geography: A Cultural History* has also moved forward this year, although two major research trips have been delayed.

This year I also completed my first year in two positions: coeditor of the *Journal of Mormon History* and co-president of the Folklore Society of Utah. At the Institute, I have had the opportunity to organize and conduct our weekly brown bag sessions. This past semester over Zoom we have virtually hosted a variety of wonderful scholars.

D. MORGAN DAVIS

RESEARCH FELLOW

Despite the unexpected changes and challenges that this year brought—canceled travel, canceled conferences, and canceled plans to bring scholars to the Maxwell Institute for conversations and consultations—I feel as though I’ve been to the ends of the earth and back again. This is owing to an unlooked-for opportunity, as I was invited to contribute to an international research effort to chronicle the particular ways Islam as a faith and as a way of life has been understood and lived in the vast geography of India over a broad swathe of time. Doing the research for my chapter in this yet-to-be-named collection was a thrilling journey into a vast literature spanning a full millennium’s worth of travelogues, trader reports, and memoirs that include famous figures like Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta, and Vasco da Gama, as well as many lesser-known (but no less intrepid and colorful) men and women. I was accompanied on this unexpected journey by Garrett Maxwell, an able student research assistant who, during the opening stages of the project, married his fiancée from the Indian state of Kerala, where much of the action in our narrative takes place! We began in earnest in April and finished in August, emerging from it feeling no less exhilarated (and exhausted) than if we had taken an actual journey ourselves.



In addition to writing that chapter, now under review, I wrote a long article for the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* that appeared this year under the title “Prophets and Prophecy in the Qur’an and the Book of Mormon.” There I lay out a case for reading the Qur’an and the Book of Mormon comparatively and survey the topics and questions that a comparative investigation of prophecy in both scriptures entails.

Related to that, a journey I’m still on this year is the continuing exploration of the resonances and dissonances, the spiritual riches, and the theological possibilities of the Qur’an as it is sounded in proximity to the sacred writings of the Latter-day Saints. What is scripture, and what is its power in the lives of those who hold it as such? What is our duty as Latter-day Saints who believe that the things God has revealed and caused to be written by prophets in every nation will be made known to the other segments of God’s family (2 Nephi 29:10–14)? These questions continue to motivate my thinking and writing, which have begun to take shape this year as a book-length project.

I have been grateful once again this year to be able to explore ideas and try out various readings of the Qur’an in the company of a cadre of bright and engaged student research assistants who have greatly enriched my experience of the scriptures of Islam and the scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as we have considered them together.

It has been a privilege to serve as a series editor for the brief theological introductions to the Book of Mormon and to continue work with Miranda Wilcox—Brigham Young University professor of English and a member of the executive committee of the Institute’s Board of Advisors—as coeditor of the Living Faith book



series with its focus on building faith in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly among young adult Latter-day Saints. The college experience is often one of the most spiritually dynamic and expansive times in a person's life. New questions are explored and new ideas and information are considered. The Living Faith series exists to provide these questing Saints and their mentors with the rich intellectual and spiritual fruits of disciple-scholars who have come to value, through personal experience, the ways that a life in Christ adds depth and vibrance to the life of the mind. This year we issued two new titles.

The first was George B. Handley's *The Hope of Nature: Our Care for God's Creations*, which includes the reflections of this thoughtful Latter-day Saint eco-theologian on what it means for us to stand in the place of Adam and Eve as stewards over God's creation in this moment of ecological crisis. The passion and compassion with which George writes is truly sobering and inspiring.

The other Living Faith title to appear was *Thinking Otherwise: Theological Explorations of Joseph Smith's Revelations*, by James E. Faulconer, an emeritus professor of philosophy at BYU who joined the Maxwell Institute as a senior scholar this year. Faulconer discusses the fraught relationship between classical philosophy and Christian theology and notes that Latter-day Saints are not immune from reading scripture poorly if we are not careful to examine the categories and terms we default to when speaking of God and divine things. He makes a case for what he calls "performative theology" and provides some compelling examples of the method in practice with close readings of Moses 5 and Doctrine and Covenants 121.

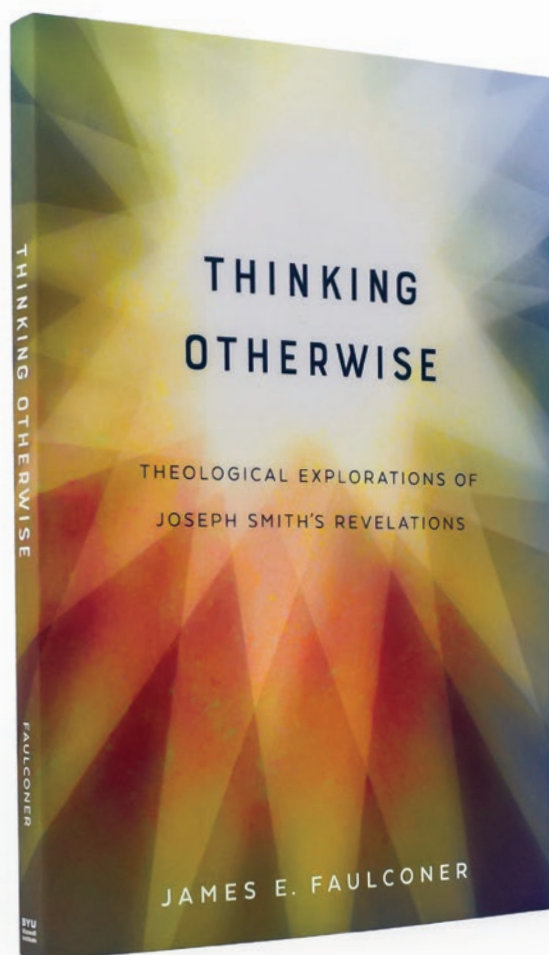
The spirit of mutual support at the Institute is one of its greatest traits. I love my colleagues here as well as those who have moved on from the Institute to other endeavors. It is a joy to be a part of this community of disciple-scholars.

JAMES E. FAULCONER

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

I joined the Maxwell Institute as a senior research fellow in January of 2020, coming from Brigham Young University's Wheatley Institution, where I had been pleased to work for two years, and from the Philosophy Department at BYU, where I had the great fortune of teaching for the previous forty-two years. As good as being at Wheatley had been, I was pleased to be able to make the change. It brings me together with colleagues with whom I can think about my work and clarify what I am trying to do. Having such a community is immensely valuable as I explore theological issues related to Latter-day Saint practice and belief.

My scholarly work focuses primarily on using scripture to do Latter-day Saint theology—not in the sense of laying out the doctrines of the Church, but in the sense of rediscovering things scripture teaches. Much of the first part of the year was devoted to helping as an editor of the Maxwell Institute's series of theological introductions to the Book of Mormon. In addition, I published two books, *Mosiah: a brief theological introduction* and *Thinking Otherwise: Theological Explorations of Joseph Smith's Revelations*. Both are written for a



nonspecialist audience. The topic of the first is indicated by the title. The second lays out a brief overview of the history of Christian theology, discusses a few of the ways in which the revelations of Joseph Smith diverge from that history, makes an argument for why close reading of scripture is an important kind of Latter-day Saint theologizing, and concludes by offering theological interpretations of Moses 5 and Doctrine and Covenants 121.

Along the same lines, I published an essay, “Performative Theology: Not Such a New Thing,” in *Dialogue: a Journal of Mormon Thought*. In that piece I discussed the history of theology as scriptural interpretation and argued for the place of such a theology among Latter-day Saints. What that means for Latter-day Saints in general is that our quotidian personal and family scripture study can become an important source of ongoing theological insight and spiritual rejuvenation. It needn’t be, as too many experience it, the same thing over and over. A related piece, “Response to Taylor Petrey’s ‘Theorizing Critical Mormon Biblical Studies: Romans 1:18–32,’” appeared in *Element*, a journal for Latter-day Saint philosophy and theology. My work that is aimed at professional philosophers consisted in two articles in Mark Wrathall’s *The Cambridge Heidegger Lexicon*; the first was “Awaiting (*Gewärtigen*)” and the second was “Possibility (*Möglichkeit*).”

With the incredibly useful help of three student assistants, I am presently working on three additional scholarly pieces. The first is a book on the nature of community that uses three biblical stories (Adam and Eve, Abraham and Isaac, and Moses and Israel) to make its points about community. The second is a book on the covenant nature of faith, hope, and charity. The third is an article commissioned by the journal *Religion* on Latter-day Saint liturgy. The last of these three will be published next year. I hope to see the other two in publication by 2022. The Maxwell Institute’s generosity in providing me with these assistants has enormously expanded the scope of what I can accomplish.

Looking forward, I have begun readings in the history of Christian Christology with an eye toward trying to understand and explicate a Latter-day Saint Christology. My questions concern not only what the Christian tradition has taught about Christ and how Latter-day Saint teaching differs, but also what we might learn from the tradition and what kinds of contributions we might make in Christological conversations with our non-Latter-day Saint academic friends.

This year at the Institute has been fruitful for me professionally and personally. I hope it also has been valuable to the Institute and that it has made a contribution to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to its members.

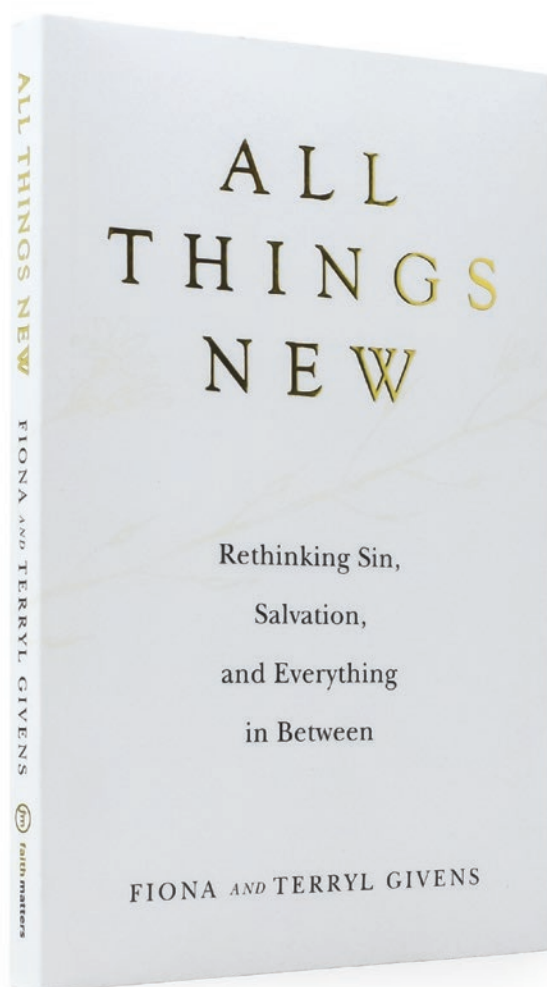
FIONA GIVENS

RESEARCH STAFF

It has been my privilege this past year to work with several solicitous and kind scholars of the Maxwell Institute who have been generous with their time, offering critical encouragement for the projects in which I am engaged. A chapter entitled “Feminism and Heavenly Mother” was published this year in Routledge’s *Handbook on Mormonism and Gender*. In spite of current circumstances, Terry and I have been able to participate in firesides through Zoom with missionaries in East Ukraine, London, Rome, and Milan. We have also been invited to participate in firesides in Sunderland, San Diego, Pasadena, Oklahoma City, and Denver, as well as to smaller gatherings elsewhere. President Debra Munk also invited me to speak at the Washington DC Stake Women’s Conference in March.

Much of this year has been spent researching various atonement theories and their influence on social and political systems. The primary focus for one chapter I’m working on is the atonement theory that crossed the





Atlantic with the Puritans, particularly its long-lasting influence on America's penal justice system. The book, edited by Deidre Green and Eric Huntsman, has a publisher pending for 2021. The research for this project could not have been accomplished without the extraordinary efforts of my student research assistants who swept up myriad texts into their voracious and capacious minds and took comprehensive and detailed notes on each of the books they read.

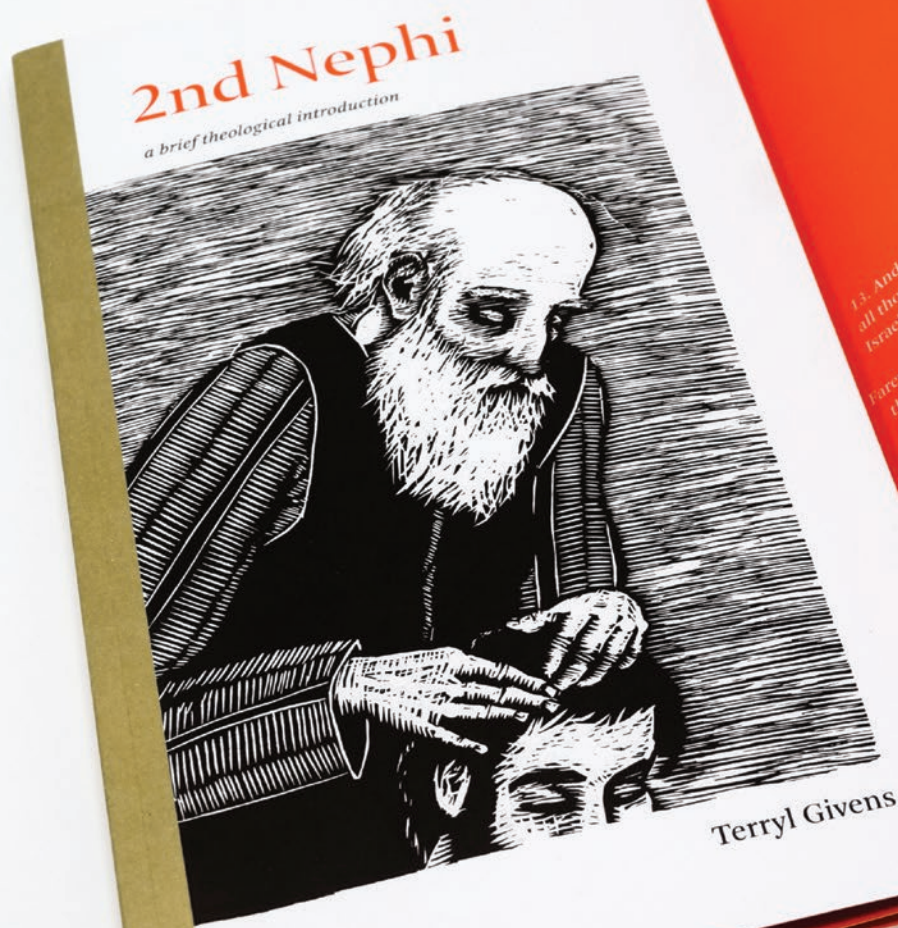
From extensive research into the American penal justice system and into atonement theories advocated by nonviolence atonement scholars, feminists, womenists, and liberationists in particular, I hope this project will contribute, in interesting ways, to the discussion of what a powerful influence atonement theory can exert on the political and social understanding of a people and its various social systems. This year has also brought to fruition a broader book-length treatment of atonement. The central narrative explores the Restoration's radical revision of the foundations underlying atonement theology in a comparative conversation with other religious systems. The volume, titled *All Things New: Rethinking Sin, Salvation, and Everything in Between*, was published in late 2020 by the Faith Matters Foundation.

TERRY L. GIVENS

NEAL A. MAXWELL SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

I left the comfortable but tired routine of an endowed chair at the University of Richmond primarily to be part of what I saw as one of the kingdom's most promising enterprises: a newly energized Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. Where else can one find the opportunity for daily cross-fertilization with some of the most committed disciple-scholars in the Church, along with the time and resources to engage full-time in the work of faith-building research? As a consequence, I have been able to bring to fruition a number of projects this past year. In February, the Institute published my contribution to *The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions* series, *2nd Nephi*. In September, Oxford University Press published a general introduction to the Church that I was invited to write, titled *Mormonism: What Everyone Needs to Know*. And in November, the Faith Matters Foundation published a Latter-day Saint-oriented book I wrote with Fiona Givens, *All Things New: Rethinking Sin, Salvation, and Everything in Between*—an attempt to exemplify what I referred to in last year's Annual Neal A. Maxwell Lecture as the



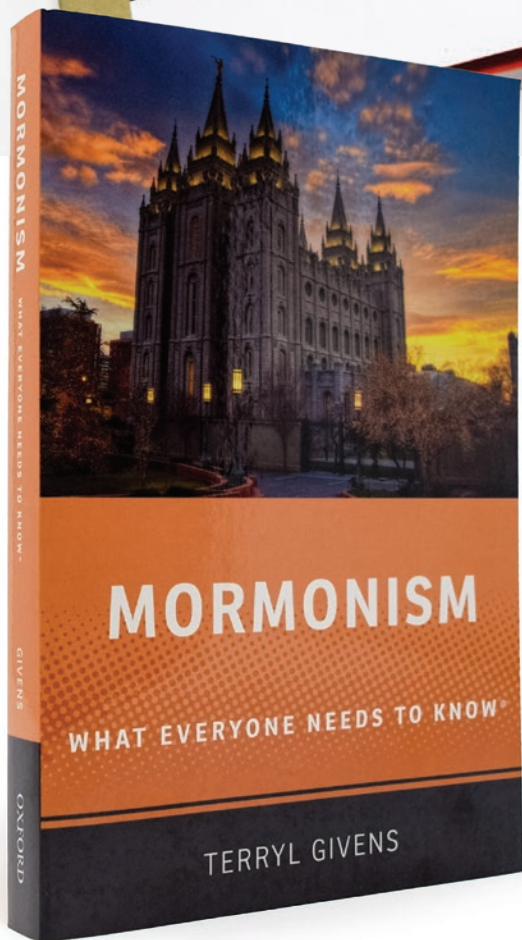


13. And now, my beloved brethren,
all those who are of the house of
Israel, and all ye ends of the earth,
farewell until
that great day shall come.

and respect the words of the Jews,
and also my words,
and the words which shall
proceed forth out of the mouth
of the Lamb of God,
behold, I bid you an
everlasting farewell,

15. For what I seal on earth, shall
be brought against you at the
judgment bar;

Amen.



elaboration of a new vocabulary appropriate to a new dispensation.

In September I delivered a paper on the Book of Moses as a pre-Augustinian Text at the *Interpreter's* Book of Moses conference. In addition, Fiona and I have maintained a busy fireside schedule, though currently by Zoom rather than in person. We have presented to missions in Ukraine and London, and to wider audiences in Denver, Pasadena, Oklahoma City, northeast England, Rome, Milan, San Diego, Washington DC, and other local wards and stakes.

I have been assisted by phenomenal student research assistants in my writing projects. In September I organized eight such enterprising students into a research seminar to help me lay the groundwork for a new major project. Together we are reading through some of the earliest primary sources in the Christian tradition and experimenting with nontraditional ways of constructing a broad revisionist history of the

Christian church. I have also been collaborating with Dr. Andrew Teal of Pembroke College Oxford, thinking through with him a possible joint endeavor in this regard.

In sum, my work has benefited from a full-time research schedule and from the material resources of this institute; I have been enriched by generous and erudite colleagues; and I have been able to mentor and to learn from some of BYU's outstanding students along the way.

RAVI M. GUPTA

AFFILIATE FACULTY

My first encounter with the Maxwell Institute was in 2017 when I was invited to deliver a lecture entitled “Who Owns Religion? A Hindu Perspective on Being a Disciple-Scholar.” In the ensuing lively discussions with the Institute’s scholars and students, we recognized strong resonances between the Latter-day Saint experience and that of Vaishnava Hindus like myself, despite the apparent differences in our historical contexts and ecclesiastical structures. The rich conversations we had at the weekly brown bag gathering, during the podcast, and over dinner impressed upon me an understanding of and admiration for the Institute’s work. Its mission to “gather and nurture disciple-scholars” struck a deep chord, given my own background as a scholar and lifelong practitioner of Vaishnava Hinduism.



Fortunately, in August 2020 I had the opportunity to return to the Institute, this time as a visiting scholar in residence for four months. When I arrived, I was at a crossroads in my research. Having authored two books, edited another two books, and published numerous journal articles, I was ready to tackle a new area of research that was a natural development of my prior work, although it required a different set of skills. I used my time at the Institute to embark on this new endeavor: writing a Hindu eco-theology. This required familiarizing myself with the secondary literature on religion and ecology, not just within Hinduism, where there has been precious little written on this subject, but also in Christianity, where the topic is far more developed.

How do Sanskrit commentators interpret stories that pit human beings against their environment? How do they react to instances where human (or divine) responses were destructive or supportive of the natural world? What resources do these commentators provide for the construction of a Hindu theology of the environment? My time at the Maxwell Institute provided me the opportunity to read relevant literature, begin writing, and, most importantly, engage with other scholars in residence to share ideas and receive feedback. As I pursued these conversations, I also came to learn much about Latter-day Saint theology, history, and institutions.

During my semester at the Institute, I wrote and submitted an article on eco-theology for the *Journal of Dharma Studies*, completed several chapters of a Hinduism reader for Oxford University Press, led a brown bag discussion on Hindu interfaith theology, presented a seminar on my research to the Institute’s scholars, met with students interested in pursuing the comparative study of Hinduism and the Latter-day Saint restoration, and spoke on Steven Perry’s BYU Radio podcast, *In Good Faith*, among numerous other activities.

I am deeply grateful to the Maxwell Institute, and especially to Dr. Philip Barlow, for providing me this invaluable opportunity to learn, study, and write in an environment steeped in both faith and scholarship.



KRISTIAN S. HEAL

RESEARCH FELLOW

Working with students on research and publication projects has been the most rewarding and memorable feature of my two decades spent thus far at the Maxwell Institute. I have always found productive use for an interested and bright student. What is more, involving student research assistants has changed the way I conduct research. I tend to think more incisively about the research process and see where students can meaningfully contribute. I am also more drawn to research projects that are amenable to student involvement and contributions. As a result, I benefit from their creativity and capacity and enjoy seeing students gain research skills and the experience of working at a professional level.



And things get done! I often hire students for specific tasks, but as I get to know them and learn more about their interests and capacities, it becomes clear that they can contribute significantly to other projects as well. Occasionally students just come and knock on my door because they are interested in my research area. Paul Perrin (BA '03, MPA '05) and Jack Manis (BA '09) knocked on my door because they heard that I worked in Eastern Christianity. Both Paul and Jack served missions in Armenia, and during their service they had not only grown to love that beautiful country and its people, but also became fascinated by their ancient Christian tradition. Since no one else at BYU teaches about or studies the Eastern Christian traditions, I am regularly invited by faculty to give guest lectures about Eastern Christianity and Christianity in the Middle East and India. But I am most delighted when a curious student seeks me out.

Paul Perrin worked as my research assistant on several projects relating to the publication and preservation of Eastern Christian texts. Paul first became involved with these projects by volunteering his expertise in Armenian to the Eastern Christian Texts book series, an offer that was gladly accepted. I took this as a significant harbinger of his character. One had to be impressed with a student who was taking a full load of classes, was holding down a job, and was still willing to volunteer his remaining free time for something he felt passionate about. I hired Paul the next semester and made full use of his skills with Armenian and French. He possessed numerous qualities that made him a productive and useful research assistant and a pleasure to work with. His curiosity and passion for the Eastern Christian traditions gave greater meaning to my work. Paul went on to do graduate work in public health, maintaining active connections with Armenia in his research, worked for Catholic relief services, and is now Evidence and Learning Director and Keough School Associate Professor at the University of Notre Dame.

When I first met Jack Manis I was immediately struck by his curiosity in Eastern Christianity—not a vague interest in an unusual branch of the Christian tradition, but a robust, intellectual curiosity that took him into texts, manuscripts, and specific research of his own. The fact that this curiosity was combined with a keen intellect, an affable nature, and a capacity for work, ingenuity, and self-motivation made Jack an ideal research assistant and conversation partner. Jack worked on the digitization and organization of the S. Kent Brown collection of Eastern Christian manuscripts on microfilm, where he was particularly useful in working with Armenian manuscripts from St. James Monastery in Jerusalem. He also assisted with compiling a cumulative index to the scripture citations and key terms in the writings of the great Syrian poet Ephrem (d. 373). These projects required attention to detail that is sustained over a long period. I was impressed with the fact that Jack showed initiative in solving problems and improving processes. Toward the end of my time working with Jack, we collaborated on a research paper funded by a research grant from Brigham Young University. Jack wrote the proposal that won the grant funding, and we collaborated in writing an article on the Syriac background to the Armenian commentary on Genesis attributed to Ephrem. Jack's knowledge of Armenian, his initiative, and his research into the relevant texts and secondary sources were essential to the successful completion of this



project. The article was published in 2018. After graduating in family studies and ancient Near Eastern studies, Jack went on to become a teacher in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion and is currently on the faculty at the Tempe Institute of Religion on the campus of Arizona State University.

I was also privileged to work with another returned missionary from Armenia, Aubrey Brower Young (BA '13). Aubrey worked primarily on the reception of Genesis in the Armenian tradition. She was working within the context of a long-term project to produce a bibliographic guide to the reception of Genesis in late antiquity. Her work complemented and extended my research in the Syriac tradition. The two main outcomes of Aubrey's work on this project were a twenty-five-page annotated bibliography and a prize-winning paper on Adam, Eve, and the Fall in Armenian sources, which Aubrey presented at the 2013 Religious Education Student Symposium. Her annotated bibliography categorized and described the Armenian sources on Genesis and gave summaries of the main items of secondary literature. This research project introduced Aubrey to Old Testament apocryphal sources in Armenian and to methods of studying the reception and rewriting of the Old Testament. Aubrey went on to earn a master's degree from the University of Oxford in Classical, ancient Mediterranean, and Near Eastern studies and archaeology ('17) and is currently studying for an MA in cultural heritage management and preservation at Johns Hopkins University.

I still serve as the curator of the S. Kent Brown collection of Eastern Christian manuscripts on microfilm, and in that capacity I receive requests from around the world to scan microfilms that are uniquely held in our BYU collection. Working on this collection gives students experience working with primary sources and a greater appreciation for the manuscript heritage of Eastern Christians; it also raises their awareness of the value of creating digital tools to advance scholarship.

Kira van Dyk (BA '20) has been working to help fulfill these requests for the past year and more. Kira brought care, attention, and curiosity to a task that demands sustained concentration. While working with Kira on the scanning project, I became aware of her interest in linguistics and so invited her to get involved in

gathering research materials for an essay that explores how research on second language reading fluency can inform the process and practice of learning Classical Syriac. This will be the first time that the wealth of applied linguistics research for second-language acquisition has been applied to the problem of learning to read this ancient language fluently. This project stems from my experience teaching Syriac and my sense of the importance of mastering ancient languages if one is to effectively do religious scholarship with ancient religious texts. I was delighted to find in Kira a student who was curious, intelligent, and interested enough in linguistics that this would be the right project for her to work on.

In working with Paul, Jack, Aubrey, and Kira, I am convinced that the primary value of my research is the contributions it makes to the education and development of Brigham Young University's brilliant undergraduate students. I feel a responsibility to work at the highest levels of scholarship, to maintain broad and compelling research interests, and to publish significant work so that I can sustain a vibrant and lively research environment within which BYU students can flourish and learn.

JANIECE JOHNSON

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

As a scholar and historian, I am drawn in by narratives and the power of stories. I am compelled by the ways in which stories—both fiction and history—are received and the effect of those stories on the lives of individuals. In the last year I have been generally focused on two major projects that revolve around stories.

After joining the Institute in 2017, I quickly published a journal article on early Book of Mormon reception shifting the accepted scholarly narrative of the Book of Mormon's early devotional role for Latter-day Saints. Since that time, I have expanded that research to a book-length project, presented my ongoing research dozens of times, published elements of the larger project, and am now working on a book proposal for that project currently titled "Becoming a People of the Books." Though several conference presentations were canceled in this chaotic year, I remain focused on understanding the power of the Book of Mormon in the lives of the early Saints. I am currently concentrating on the relationship of two early Black members of the Church (Jane Manning James and Samuel Chambers) with the Book of Mormon through the records of their voices. I also presented on the material record of nineteenth-century copies of the Book of Mormon—narrowing in on a single first edition in which the owner crafted a five-page handwritten index documenting the relationship developed with the book.

In this pandemic time, I also worked on a book proposal and manuscript tentatively titled "American Punishment: The Mountain Meadows Massacre and Mormon Transgressions." The book examines the interdependence of the prosecution for the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the popular narrative told about the massacre; both of these modes of storytelling reveal more about the storytellers themselves and nineteenth-century American ideologies than the massacre itself. After positive responses to my proposal from multiple university presses, I have moved forward and the full manuscript is currently under review.

A critical element of my Institute experience has consistently been the small army of research assistants I've been able to direct—overwhelmingly female and hungry for female mentorship. These students, from a variety of majors, have consistently impressed me with their love of the Book of Mormon, their dedication to the work, their intellect, their skill that they employ, and their eagerness to have a secure place to discuss difficult topics of the academy and faith. Several have gone on to graduate work.



gift of the Book of Mormon and the early Saints' reception of that gift in my essay titled "The Prophet, the Book, and the Saints." Another essay considered Rahab and her unexpected yet essential role in the entry of Israel to the promised land. The December issue of the *Ensign* will include a piece I've written about the individual experience of many early Saints as they converted to the Book of Mormon and the importance of gaining a witness of one's own.

This fall as we moved into our new space in the West View Building, I, along with other members of the Institute's art committee, was able to see the fruits of our labors as we installed the art that represents our highest hopes for the Institute. It now feels like a gathering place worthy of our mission statement and our namesake.

Though the story of this year has proceeded in an entirely unexpected direction without much of the structure of the Maxwell Institute that nurtures, unifies, and enables us to thrive, it has continued to afford me the scholarly luxury of time as I work to speak to both Latter-day Saints and the larger academic world.

STEVEN L. PECK

VISITING FELLOW

My time with the Maxwell Institute is turning out to be one of the most important experiences I've had in twenty years at Brigham Young University. It has been pivotal in structuring new thought and academic scholarship. Those I've had the opportunity to work with are among the finest, brightest, and most dedicated scholars I know. I consider my chance to associate with them a genuine delight. This summer, despite some growing disability and dealing with the challenges of the pandemic, I was pleased to address reviewer comments for a theological paper I've been writing about matter, Latter-day Saints, embodiment, and evolutionary responses to what agency means in biology and in the sciences. It is a paper that draws both on my scholarship in Latter-day Saint studies and on the sciences. I have also worked on a special volume for *BYU Studies Quarterly* on evolution and Latter-day Saint responses to this important scientific concept. My fellowship with the Maxwell Institute has afforded me opportunities to engage with other scholars in ways that have profoundly influenced my thought and the direction of my academic research. It is a pleasure to be a part of this organization.



CATHERINE GINES TAYLOR

HUGH W. NIBLEY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

Disciple-scholarship, for me, is a rigorous and lively thing that matures into a confident poise while remaining openhearted, inquisitive, faithful, and engaged. In so many ways, discipleship is a state of being—being a learner and being a follower. As the insightful theologian Rowan Williams has described, this state “presupposes following because it assumes that we are willing to travel to where the Master is, to follow where the Master goes.”¹

As I enter my third and final year as the Maxwell Institute's Hugh W. Nibley Postdoctoral Fellow, I am keenly aware that my experience here has included





following after some rather ordinary work, a little bit every day, in the (now-virtual) company of rather extraordinary colleagues. This place has allowed for three years of consecrated time, time that has effectively changed the shape of my academic career and my spiritual life. As a disciple in this place, it has been remarkable to me to find the attentiveness of careful thinkers and devoted scholars who believe that my work and their work—our work—does good in the world. For me, the first force of my spiritual life and the life of the mind is the presence and distillation of the Spirit of God. Again, Rowan Williams describes what I have experienced: “This happens not by effort and struggle, with furrowed brows and tensed muscles, but by allowing something to rise up, something irresistible within your awareness that is God’s purpose coming through to make the difference that only God can make.”²



During this time of pandemic, I have felt particularly inspired to write a number of blog posts for the Maxwell Institute. At Eastertide, I wrote a piece about symbolism, “An Art Historian’s Perspective on Christ in Triumph.”³ I also wrote a post in the early days of our socially distanced lives called “Wonders in the Deep.”⁴ This post has stayed with me over the months. It focuses on the prayer-song of Psalm 107:23–30 and specifies various calamities; it acknowledges the powers that vanquish the very elements of nature herself.

*They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.*

*For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.
Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.
He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.*

As I noted in that post, our supplications, our prayers, and our human words have a profound theological grounding. God asks us to speak. Our voices of praise and pleading are meant to be heard. They are not drowned in the deep. Our personal psalms are themselves a salve and a succor by which the God of the whole earth can interact with us, even as we labor under distress. Our words may, in faith, bring divine protection to our neighbor and ourselves.

With that, I am reporting on my labors of the past year with some hopeful expectation for the world ahead.

At the beginning of March, I co-organized a student symposium, “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture,” hosted by the Maxwell Institute. Four of my research assistants presented short papers on directed research in a session called “Women and the Early Christian Material World.” Presentation topics included prophecy and images of women teaching in early Christianity, the material legacy of Saint Thecla, the evidence for heresies within late ancient households, and an exploration of Mary as an archetype of the church in word and image. I am so proud of these women and their conscientious attention to the work they do for me, as well as their examples of faith in the world. Mentoring students constitutes some of the best, most rewarding work I do at the Institute. Our interactions have deepened my perspective of my research and have expanded the scope of work I am able to accomplish. As we counsel together, ask questions, and consider the art and material evidences that help us understand early Christian women’s lives, our own sense of identity is enriched.

It was a pleasure to also chair a session at the interdisciplinary symposium, “Women’s Voices of the Middle Ages and Renaissance,” this past spring. Collaborations between Brigham Young University’s College of Humanities, the Department of History, the Kennedy Center, Global Women’s Studies, and Medieval and Renaissance Studies are always brilliant events.

The year 2020 has been a year of canceled academic conferences. For example, I was expected to attend the International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds, where I was set to present a paper titled “Border Crossings: Sarcophagi from Arles and the Avenue of the Dead,” and at the North American Patristic Society Conference I was meant to present a paper entitled “Vigils to Keep: Sarcophagi from Arles and Lay Devotion.” I am hopeful that the Mormon Scholars in the Humanities conference, which was to be held at the University of Oxford, will be reconvened and I will be able to discuss my paper “Walking with Spirits: Sarcophagi and the Early Christian Aesthetics of Death.” I anticipate convening with colleagues at next year’s Society of Biblical Literature conference, heaven willing.

I am honored to be a coeditor of a forthcoming book from the Maxwell Institute, provisionally entitled *The Church of Jesus Christ in Antiquity: Brief Introductions for Latter-day Saints*. For this volume I will be writing on the topic of work for the dead within the context of the ancient Church. Early Christianity, in all of its wondrous complexity, is important for Latter-day Saints to understand, especially as we acknowledge our relationship with our kindred dead. This volume promises to feature some of our brightest minds on a variety of resonant themed topics. My editorial work with my colleague Dr. Mark Ellison also continues as we finalize our publication, *Material Culture and Women’s Religious Experience in Antiquity*. We expect this book, published by Lexington Books, a division of Rowman & Littlefield, to be available in the early fall of 2021.

Ultimately, the greatest tragedy associated with my work has been the loss of research time in places like the Vatican Museum and my fieldwork in Provence, France. The body of sarcophagi that I study in southern France is not easily accessible via traditional library resources. I have attempted to fill that gap with texts, catalogs, and museum website searches, but there are invaluable details and contexts that are absent in these

more distant forms of research. I continue to work on various projects related to the iconography of female Christian piety, practice, and authority in late ancient Christian Gaul. I am grateful to the Kennedy Center and the Religious Studies Center at BYU for their generous support of my research and hope to be able to utilize their grant funding in the coming year.

It is my hope that this year ahead will also find me in the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, in the antique cemeteries and sanctuaries of Arles, France, and in the Languedoc region of southern France. While these plans can be made and unmade, one thing is for certain: I am deeply grateful to the Maxwell Institute, both faculty and staff, for their support and vision. I have been well nurtured in this place of quiet in the storm, this “desired haven.” It has been a privilege to sojourn with them here.

NOTES

1. Rowan Williams, *Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life* (London: SPCK, 2016), 9.
2. Williams, *Being Disciples*, 18.
3. Catherine Gines Taylor, “An Art Historian’s Perspective on Christ in Triumph,” *News & Blog*, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, April 12, 2020, <https://mi.byu.edu/arcsolium/>.
4. Catherine Gines Taylor, “Wonders in the Deep: A Reflection on Our Current Health Crisis from Psalm 107,” *News & Blog*, March 28, 2020, <https://mi.byu.edu/covid19-psalms107/>.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

SHORT-TERM RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENT

From near the beginning of my academic research on the Book of Mormon, the Maxwell Institute has offered a variety of encouragements and a welcoming environment for my work.

Located near the world-class collection of all things Book of Mormon housed in the Harold B. Lee Library on the BYU campus, the Institute provides access to a unique collection of scholars with expertise in and around Book of Mormon studies with whom a researcher like myself can consult. While it is possible to undertake research on the Book of Mormon in any number of venues globally, it is this immediate access to Book of Mormon scholars in the flesh, as it were, that make my periods of residence there extremely enriching.

The Institute’s physical location on campus also provides access to other immediate resources for my research needs, including a variety of scholars scattered across campus who are working on Book of Mormon-related topics as well as the rich collections of the Museum of Art, which houses the Minerva Teichert Book of Mormon murals. This wide array of interests and expertise have contributed to my research projects across the board, which include literary, theological, reception history, and historical issues. Surprisingly, on more than one occasion I have crossed paths on the BYU campus with other scholars from the Pentecostal tradition who have been brought to campus for special lectures and presentations.

Over the years the Maxwell Institute has facilitated my research efforts by providing office space, arranging lectures and seminars in which I shared and discussed my work, securing accommodation, and from time to time covering other travel expenses as well. I have developed close and lasting friendships as a result of my times of residence at the Institute.

Among my research endeavors that the Institute’s support facilitated greatly include my volume *A Pentecostal Reads the Book of Mormon: A Literary and Theological Introduction* (CPT Press, 2016) as well as my current project, *Implied Readers, the Bible, and the Book of Mormon*.





Inspiring Learning at BYU's Neal A. Maxwell Institute

In accordance with President Kevin J Worthen's call for Brigham Young University to provide students with opportunities for "inspired learning," the Maxwell Institute welcomed nearly forty students in 2020 who contributed to our work as research, office, and communications assistants.¹ As the following student reflections suggest, Institute faculty and staff worked hard to cultivate an environment to enrich young hearts and minds. Just as important, we have been blessed by the examples of faith seeking understanding demonstrated by this wonderful group of students.



1. Kevin J Worthen, "Inspiring Learning," University Conference address, August 22, 2017, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/kevin-j-worthen/inspiring-learning>.

Student Staff

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Josie Ableman

Noah Allen

Anna Allred

Austin Ball

Sydney Ballif

Alex Brown

Calvin Burke

Alexander Christensen

Eliza Clarke

Abby Clayton

Josh Davis

Lavender Earnest

Bethany Erickson

Amber Felicia

Courtney Fielding

Allison Foster

Nick Hainsworth

Soo Lee

Luke Lyman

Abi Maccabee

Kelli Mattson

Garrett Maxwell

Mallory Oniki

Emily Ostler

Logan Packer

Miriam Parker

Emily Peck

Brontë Reay

Jonathan Rosenbalm

Ryder Seamons

Hanna Seariac

Josh Stevenson

Matthew Tyler

Kira Van Dyk

Richard Wight

OFFICE

ASSISTANTS

Olivia DeMordaunt

Reagan Graff

Sol Lee

COMMUNICATIONS

ASSISTANTS

Brandon McMeen

Ashley Pun

Kylie Romano



Student Reflections

RYDER SEAMONS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

My work at the Maxwell Institute this year was enriching and inspiring—I couldn’t get enough of it. For Dr. Philip Barlow I researched the historical significance of the phrase “true and living church” in Christian theology. I also delved into sources from many faith traditions to learn more about the concept of the war in heaven. As always, I express my gratitude to the Maxwell Institute for cultivating a close-knit community of thoughtful believers. I also express my greatest thanks to Dr. Barlow, a close friend and mentor, for his constant guidance and love.



ALEXANDER CHRISTENSEN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working with Dr. Philip Barlow this year has been extremely rewarding. First and foremost, I’ve had the opportunity to help edit and proofread the groundbreaking series *The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions*, of which he is general coeditor. It has been an expanding experience to observe firsthand the scholarly, administrative, and creative processes that go into the making of each volume. They are magnificent pieces of faith and scholarship. Additionally, we’ve worked together with Christine Blythe at the Harold B. Lee Library to initiate an archive of recorded interviews of Church members concerning their understandings of the war in heaven. I’ve never thought so much about the war in heaven in my life, but each interview brings new insights, new points of view, and new stories that enrich my daily faith and thought. The war in heaven now looms behind almost everything I think about. Finally, I have combed through a number of creeds and confessions from other Christian traditions since the era of the primitive church in search of examples of exclusivist truth claims. This has broadened my understanding of how The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints fits into Christian history and the picture of humanity as a whole. I love working with Dr. Barlow.



HANNA SEARIAC, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Recently, I began working for Dr. Christopher Blythe and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I am researching early Church history and ancient scripture, which allows me to become more knowledgeable about the excellent scholarship that has been done on these topics and that strengthens my testimony. I love the variety of topics that I get to research and find that each one takes me down a road that leads me to greater knowledge and faith. My research here inspires me to find avenues for articles I can write and contributes to volunteer apologetic work I do for other organizations. As a graduate student in BYU’s Comparative Studies program (focusing on ancient cultures), I am pleased that my research with Dr. Blythe both informs my work and gives me the opportunity connect our 1800s history and heritage back to early Christianity in exciting ways. I am truly grateful to work for the Maxwell Institute and see religious scholars in action. Dr. Blythe inspires me to continue on the path of pursuing quality scholarship while remaining faithful.



ANNA ALLRED, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Being a research assistant at the Maxwell Institute is one of BYU’s hidden gems. My work at the Institute has enhanced my love of learning and broadened my passion for studying religion. I find it hard to fathom that I am being paid to talk to people about religious topics and read books about Church history. The assignments I have been given are engaging and fascinating.



The assignments include interviewing people about the war in heaven for Dr. Philip Barlow and digitizing a vinyl record for Dr. Christopher Blythe. The scholars are wonderful people, and I learn much from them. I am currently working on a project about Emma Hale Smith with Dr. Blythe. Learning about Emma has given me a clearer perspective on who she was, the difficult challenges she faced, and the significant influence she's had on Church members through many generations. As I work on projects, I am encouraged to research, to ask questions, and to seek answers.



NICK HAINSWORTH, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Over the past year, I've had the opportunity to engage in rigorous textual analysis and discussion with Dr. Morgan Davis's Qur'an reading group. Each week we spend time reading a specific section of the Qur'an, trying to understand its meaning and context to different Muslims around the world and engaging in comparative exercises with our own faith tradition. Doing so has broadened my cultural and religious understanding, given me an opportunity to practice discursive skills in the academic study of religion, and provided me with new insights into my own faith convictions.



JON ROSENBALM, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

I had the opportunity to work this past year with Dr. Morgan Davis studying the Qur'an. We analyze the Qur'an and its impact on contemporary Islamic culture and theology and compare it to other holy books and their respective impacts. Our weekly research assistant meeting with Dr. Davis is by far the most fascinating part of my work. The thoughtful insights from my colleagues and Dr. Davis are enlightening, but the discussions we get into are even better. He encourages discussion and the sharing of ideas, which fosters an atmosphere of genuine learning. New ideas come and new connections are made. Some of the most memorable moments of my job have been deep conversations that began as mere tangents. Dr. Davis uses these ideas and insights in his writings on theology and the Qur'an. In short, I get to study the Qur'an and think about its impact on Muslims and Islamic culture. I get to talk about deep questions of morality, philosophy, and theology with extremely intelligent and open-minded people. And I get to have a hand in influencing works by Dr. Davis. It's a great job, it's been a great year, and I'm looking forward to the year to come.



LAVENDER EARNEST, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Over the past few months, I have been working with an excellent team under Professor James Faulconer to write and compile a book on Latter-day Saint theology. While much of the book is dedicated to tracing epistemological shifts throughout Western philosophical history, we have primarily been interested in how the advent of the Restoration paved a way for doing what is called "performative theology." This is a specific type of theology that entices a person to respond to the call of the scriptures—the call of the divine, of the other—and in so doing to more fully participate in a Zion community. Working with Jim and the other research assistants on this project has opened my horizons, as it were, to the unique marriage of faith and scholarship that has so atrophied elsewhere in academia. I am ever grateful for the light that such a marriage has imbued my life with and that will continue to emanate through my future academic work.



EMILY PECK, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Researching the Qur'an with Dr. Morgan Davis has been deeply enriching and has taught me about the beauty of other sacred texts. Carefully reading specific surahs and focusing on individual verses has expanded my view of Islam. I've come to find beauty in researching the Qur'an and have also found how essential interfaith study is to understanding my own faith tradition.



LOGAN PACKER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Throughout my life, I have always had questions that I have not been able to answer. As a research assistant at the Maxwell Institute, however, I have been able to use my undergraduate experience as an opportunity to explore some of the topics that have perplexed me most. While working with Jim Faulconer, I was able to work on cutting-edge research in the field of philosophical theology. We sought to answer questions concerning the nature of God, the Atonement, scripture, metaphysics, and faith, showing how these issues might be resolved when contextualized within a framework of the restored gospel.



By studying these issues, as well as the responses to them provided by the world's greatest thinkers, I have been able to learn a number of lasting lessons. Among these things, I have learned how to understand the beliefs of others even if I do not agree with their positions. I have learned how to think clearly about sensitive issues such as morality, religion, and existence. And, ultimately, I have been able to develop meaningful relationships with mentors like Jim, while at the same time developing a more reasoned understanding of the doctrines taught by the restored Church of Jesus Christ. I am so happy that I had the opportunity to work at the Maxwell Institute. My experience at BYU was made very meaningful because of it.



COURTNEY FIELDING, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

I've been working as a research assistant with Dr. James Faulconer for only a short time now, but I have already come to love my time working for the Maxwell Institute. Under Jim's guidance, we have conducted research on Latter-day Saint liturgy, especially as it pertains to the endowment ceremony and the sacrament. This has been such an enlightening process, not only because I have been able to add my own creativity and thoughts to a research project, but also because I have increased my understanding of the Atonement, the sacramental process, and the importance of each element in the sacrament service. I've always had an interest in studying religious theology, and I'm excited to now have an opportunity to do so under such a great professor!



SYDNEY BALLIF, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Reflecting back on the year I've spent learning under the mentorship of Fiona Givens, I am reminded of the myriad lessons I learned. In research I conducted on the feminine divine and various atonement theories, I was invigorated by exposure to new ideas and thought-provoking questions. My testimony has deepened in seeking answers and navigating doubts. I had the opportunity to participate in the Institute's student symposium, "Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture," presenting a paper investigating detrimental perspectives on Eve and the reverent parallels between her and the sacred symbols found in Latter-day Saint tradition. As a novice research assistant, I was



stretched as I crafted a position, researched relevant evidence, and confronted opposing arguments. Fiona, through her masterful example, has taught me to be bold in exploring my inspired questions and prayerful in my research. Working for the Maxwell Institute, I have discovered that it does not merely produce influential faith-filled work. The Institute also houses devout, faith-filled disciple-scholars who nourish their community with light and knowledge.

EMILY OSTLER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working as a research assistant for Fiona Givens was one of the most incredible gifts of my BYU experience. Each day I was able to immerse myself in the scriptures, in theological commentaries, and in articles covering a range of fascinating topics. I had the opportunity to present a paper at the “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture” student symposium about the Hebrew Bible’s Deborah and her roles as a spiritual and political leader, which was a stretching, empowering, and spiritually enriching experience. Throughout my time at the Institute, the way I approached my faith markedly transformed in the most beautiful way—it became a process of sincere searching, of pleading with God for help in my efforts to bring healing to a hurting world, of immense gratitude for Jesus Christ’s powerful, permeating love. My relationship with God has never been more intimate and so present in my relationships with others, where I now carry more patience and charity. Fiona’s care and support were invaluable, and she always made me eager to study—and I know she will continue to do so. Working so closely with a woman with



such sincere care for the world—especially when such work entails studying the scriptures and discussing such deep, consequential topics—just changes you. Having just begun graduate studies in theology, I am especially grateful for the ways that working with Fiona has strengthened my research skills, deepened my faith in Jesus Christ, and grounded me in the love of God. It has been the most soul-expanding, faith-strengthening, and joy-enhancing experience, and I have countless words of thanks for the opportunity I have had to work at the Maxwell Institute and with Fiona Givens.



MALLORY ONIKI, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Though I have been a research assistant for Fiona Givens for over a year now, I am still in awe at her depth of knowledge coupled with grace and love. She has been a hero of mine long before I worked for her and has since become a mentor and dear friend. We have been studying Christ's atonement this year. It has been transformational to research this topic from various lenses and



backgrounds, all the while deepening my knowledge and testimony. I have researched various atonement theories, including womanist and nonviolent atonement theories. Participating in the Maxwell Institute's "Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture" student symposium was a clear highlight of this year. I spoke of Wisdom, as portrayed in Proverbs, and her roles. Researching and presenting this paper greatly increased my conviction of the feminine divine. It was incredible to gather with other students and speak of women who have given us strength and hope. Researching with Fiona has been an incredibly rewarding experience that I will always cherish.

JOSH STEVENSON, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working for Fiona Givens these past few months has been a real pleasure, even if most of our interactions have been virtual since soon after I was hired, COVID-19 hit. I began in February, reading a few of her and Terry's books to get a better sense of where they were coming from theologically (*The God Who Weeps*, *The Christ Who Heals*) and then started research in support of her book chapter project on redefining our conception of sin, repentance, and so on. I looked especially at the United States penal system (including the death penalty, for-profit prison prevalence, and so on). I read a pair of fascinating books by the scholar Marie Gottschalk on this subject. One of the highlights of my experience so far was getting to review her and Terry's new book manuscript "All Things New." Overall, I've really appreciated the opportunity to work closely with a top-notch, faithful scholar and get a behind-the-scenes look at the rather laborious process (in a good way) by which good ideas become published works.



JOSH DAVIS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

While working with Dr. Terry Givens, I have been studying the teachings and intellect of Edward Beecher, a nineteenth-century preacher and theologian. The project fits perfectly into the great work that Dr. Givens has done throughout his career while seeking for truth, regardless of its source. To learn from Dr. Givens and see the way he approaches his scholarship has been an experience I will always cherish.



LUKE LYMAN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

My experience as a research assistant has been exciting and educative. I have been exposed to texts and ideas that I would not have encountered otherwise, and I have been challenged by many of them. I have been given a long leash at times to explore texts, but also had those assignments balanced by other assignments with very direct instructions. I feel blessed to have been given such a wide range of experiences.

GARRETT MAXWELL, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Dr. Morgan Davis is an invaluable cog in the Maxwell Institute machine. With training outside the Western world of scholarship, he brings a refreshing worldview to the table that looks beyond just our Christian neighbors and extends an ecumenical hand to our Muslim brothers and sisters. It was my pleasure over the summer to do research for a historiographical survey of Islam in India through the eyes of travelers and traders over a thousand years. Furthermore, our Qur'an study group has continued to be fruitful, and as he has shown in the latest volume of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, the Qur'an and Book of Mormon have a lot to talk about if only we can get them in the same room. Much is to be done here, and Dr. Davis is doing it with the eye of a careful scholar and the heart of a disciple. I have also spent time with Dr. Terry Givens mining early Christian writings. We are seeking to bring to the spotlight some lesser known, but perhaps more impactful, inflection points in early Christian theological developments. Over the summer I assisted in finalizing manuscripts for two books coming soon to press, both of which will make any reader think twice and thrice about discipleship and religious paradigms. Dr. Givens works with an indefatigable urgency that I cannot help but admire both scholastically and personally, and it has been my delight to assist in bringing to fruition some of these momentous projects.





ELIZA CLARKE, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working with Dr. Terryl Givens has been an absolute pleasure. In speaking to my family and friends about it, I always refer to it as my “Sunday School on steroids time.” Being able to learn about many things from early church history, whether that be the Christian church or more specifically The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has really opened my eyes to the profoundness of our doctrine and the reason why we believe the things we do. This enhanced historical context helps me understand more deeply the culture in which I live and the importance of following our Savior.

CALVIN BURKE, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

The past year I have spent working for Dr. Terryl Givens on the biography of the late Dr. Eugene England was a transformative experience for me. With great reverence, I add my humble testimony to that of our namesake, Elder Neal A. Maxwell: the beauty of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ truly is “inexhaustible.” Because of my experiences with the phenomenal disciple-scholars at the Maxwell Institute, I hope to wear out my life in service to the Master, knowing now with a surety that academic scholarship truly is a form of discipleship. I am grateful for the unforgettable experiences I have been blessed to have while working at the Maxwell Institute, and I look forward to many more in my service to the kingdom of God, at BYU and beyond.



KIRA VAN DYK, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

As a research assistant for Dr. Kristian Heal, I divided my time between two distinct types of work: first, summarizing literature on reading comprehension development and its applications to second-language reading acquisition and fluency; second, scanning microfilm manuscripts from the Cairo Coptic Museum and archiving them for scholars’ use worldwide. I continue to use what I learned from research on reading comprehension in my current job teaching reading through phonics, and I anticipate my improved note-taking will be useful in future postgraduate education. The scanning component of my work has left me with an enduring interest in studying Egyptian-Christian archaeology. By entrusting to me these responsibilities, Dr. Heal honored my interest in pursuing linguistics and introduced me to interdisciplinary study in academia. Working as a research assistant for Dr. Heal ranks among my most enriching experiences at BYU.



KELLI MATTSON, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute with Dr. Janiece Johnson has enhanced my personal, spiritual, and academic growth. Through my research, I have developed a greater appreciation for the Book of Mormon and the early Latter-day Saints who sacrificed everything for this sacred text. In submerging myself in journals, letters, and other texts of the Restoration, my testimony has deepened and the divinity of the Restoration now occupies an essential place in my conversion. Additionally, through her kindness, intelligence, and example, Dr. Johnson has inspired me to contribute to the academic world in my field of study.



BRONTË REAY, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute has been both spiritually and intellectually enlightening. I have felt connected to early Latter-day Saints in a way that I never experienced before. As I have read journals, newspapers, theses, and personal correspondences, I have come to realize that their testimonies of the Book of Mormon were wrought from experience and faith, just as ours must be today. I have felt my desire to come closer to God increase as a result. I have felt academically inspired by Dr. Janiece Johnson and her commitment to discover lost testimonies from a myriad of voices and backgrounds. Overall, my experience as a research assistant has brought me closer to fulfilling



Brigham Young University's mission statement, as it has strengthened me in my quest for perfection and eternal life.

ABI MACCABEE, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working as a research assistant for Dr. Janiece Johnson has been fulfilling and impactful. My understanding of Church history and the research process has grown immensely. My admiration for the early Latter-day Saints has expanded as I have come to know more about their lives through the primary sources we analyze. I will always be grateful for this position at the Maxwell Institute. I am confident that the knowledge and skills that I have attained here will stay with me throughout my life.



MIRIAM PARKER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute has been a wonderful experience. I love learning and researching about early pioneers. I receive spiritual strength as I study others' experiences and acceptance of the Book of Mormon. Lately, I even had the privilege of reading the journals of one of my own ancestors—George Q. Cannon. Reflecting on the Saints' daily examples of discipleship is inspiring. Overall, the Maxwell Institute's research is spiritually and intellectually edifying thanks to its exceptional employees.



ABBY CLAYTON, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working with Dr. Janiece Johnson and her cohort of engaged research assistants pushed me in unexpected and fulfilling ways as I ended my chapter at BYU this last year. From Dr. Johnson, I learned how to organize, read, and piece together an otherwise overwhelming supply of primary material. I worked with her on a wide breadth of sources and topics, from the transatlantic reception of the Book of Mormon to missionaries in the Pacific Islands and to pioneer women crossing the plains. Dr. Johnson's attention to every scribbled note and the joy she found in every offhand remark of these centuries-old personal accounts vividly brought early Church members and their testimonies to life. Most importantly, she taught me how to be both a thorough and a compassionate historian.





ALLISON FOSTER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

In the Maxwell Institute student symposium this year, I had the opportunity to present an original paper of my own scholarship, “Done in Good Faith: Exploring the Acts and Legacy of Saint Thecla, a Disciple of Christ.” The opportunity to write and present that paper under Dr. Catherine Taylor’s mentorship was invaluable to me academically, professionally, and spiritually because it allowed me to experience firsthand the intersections between these seemingly disparate fields.

My work for Dr. Taylor continues to connect me to the visual and spiritual world of Early Christian women, particularly in their role as *materfamilias*.



JOSIE ABLEMAN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

As a research assistant for Dr. Catherine Taylor, I’ve been researching, among other things, the relationship between women and house churches from Late Antiquity. I am specifically looking at the influential and incredibly dynamic roles that women played as part of these house churches and how this was exemplified in primary sources, both textually and visually. Through my work for Dr. Taylor, I have not only improved some vital skills, like research and writing that will continue to aid me through my graduate education and beyond, but I’ve also gained an invaluable mentor.



OLIVIA DEMORDAUNT, OFFICE ASSISTANT

I have learned so much working at the Maxwell Institute. I love being surrounded by some of the brightest and kindest minds. It’s always interesting to hear about the different projects scholars are working on. I’m inspired by their drive to pursue different interests and tackle difficult questions. It’s been a tremendous blessing to play a tiny part in the brief theological introductions to the Book of Mormon series being published. I’ve been able to see a long-familiar book in an entirely new light and perspective. During a time of uncertainty and chaos this project has been a source of joy and fulfillment. I’m grateful to be able to work at an institution that stretches me both spiritually and intellectually.



REAGAN GRAFF, OFFICE ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute has been an honor that I never expected when I first applied. Every day I have the opportunity to come to work and be surrounded by some of the best minds theology at BYU has to offer. It’s a work environment that encourages and cultivates curiosity, questions, and innovative ideas. I have learned so much from the Institute about the importance of honoring the questions one has and seeking for answers in unexpected yet faith-driven ways.

Not only has my testimony of the gospel increased, but so has my understanding and love for so many other religions and cultures. The Institute instills a widespread appreciation for all faiths and backgrounds and has taught me that there is so much to learn from others. I am grateful for the Institute because it taught me to open my eyes and see the gospel, the world, and myself in a new light.



SOL LEE, OFFICE ASSISTANT

I absolutely love working at the Neal A. Maxwell Institute. Not only am I grateful for the new friends I have made, but working here has deepened my understanding of the gospel and brought me closer to my Savior. I was given the wonderful opportunity to participate in proofreading books in the brief theological introductions to the Book of Mormon series. As I read, I gained a deeper knowledge and greater appreciation for the Book of Mormon. Also, we get to transcribe the Neal A. Maxwell Podcast, and I can’t express enough how grateful I am to be able to feel the Spirit while working on them. Listening to these podcast episodes has truly opened up my perspective. It is definitely a blessing that I get to learn and feel the Spirit as I work.

BRANDON MCMEEN, COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Working for the Maxwell Institute has given me a unique opportunity to develop my talents in audio and video. One unique aspect of working for the Institute is that I get to develop my talents in an uplifting environment. I love being able to work on creating media content that can help someone spiritually. This perspective also helps my educational pursuits because as I focus on how to help others spiritually with the content that I create, I'm able to have a stronger purpose that helps me to create better content and to improve my skills.

**ASHLEY PUN, COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT**

Working for the Maxwell Institute has been a meaningful experience for me spiritually and intellectually. For me personally, it connects religion with education and pushes me to become a better student in my field and of the gospel. I look forward to doing projects and assignments because I know that it will always include the Spirit. I always try to include the Spirit in every aspect of the job, which is something I have never done in a job before. It is truly a special privilege to work for the Institute.

**KYLIE ROMANO, COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT**

I've only been working at the Maxwell Institute for a short while, but it has been great. One of my greatest goals in studying advertising is to be able to create content that makes a difference and helps others. Working at the Institute means that every project I work on focuses on the goal of bringing others closer to Jesus Christ. It's such a blessing to use my skills on something so meaningful to me.



Academic Programs & Events

SYMPOSIA & SEMINARS



**MAXWELL INSTITUTE
SEMINAR (WINTER &
FALL SEMESTERS)**

PARTICIPANTS

John Christopher Thomas, *Pentecostal Theological Seminary*
Kristian Heal, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*
James E. Faulconer, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*
Catherine Gines Taylor, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*
Ravi M. Gupta, *Utah State University*
D. Morgan Davis, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*
Christopher James Blythe, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*





LATTER-DAY SAINT WOMEN & SCRIPTURE: A MAXWELL INSTITUTE STUDENT SYMPOSIUM (MARCH 6, 2020)

PARTICIPANTS

Chairs:

Catherine Gines Taylor, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*
Janiece Johnson, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*

Students:

Josie Ableman, Britta Adams, Kayla Bach, Sydney Ballif, Elizabeth Broderick, Emma Croft, Allison Foster, Meredith Hanna, Kris Kryscynski, Garrett Maxwell, Olivia Moskot, Mallory Jones Oniki, Emily Ostler, Audrey Saxon





LATTER-DAY SAINT WOMEN IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE (JUNE 2020)

CONVENERS

Kate Holbrook, *Church History Library*

Laurie Maffly-Kipp, *Washington University in St. Louis*

PARTICIPANTS

Vinna Chintaram, *Utah State University*

Sasha Coles, *UC Santa Barbara*

CarrieAnne DeLoach, *Rice University*

Janan Graham-Russell, *Harvard University*

Alison Halford, *Coventry University (UK)*

Amy Hoyt, *Claremont Graduate University*

Alexa Himonas, *Columbia University*

Farina King, *Northeastern State University*

Hazel O'Brien, *Waterford Institute of Technology (Ireland)*

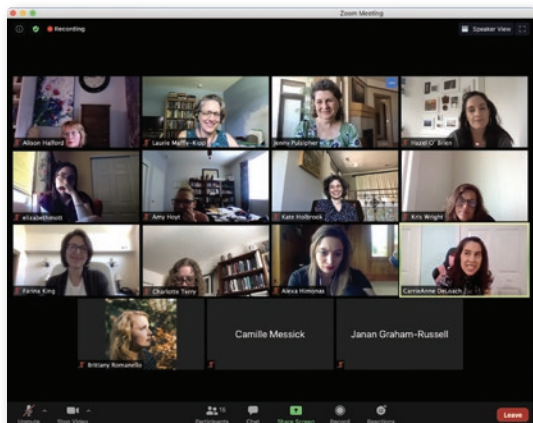
Jenny Pulsipher, *Brigham Young University*

Elizabeth Mott, *Claremont Graduate University*

Brittany Romanello, *Arizona State University*

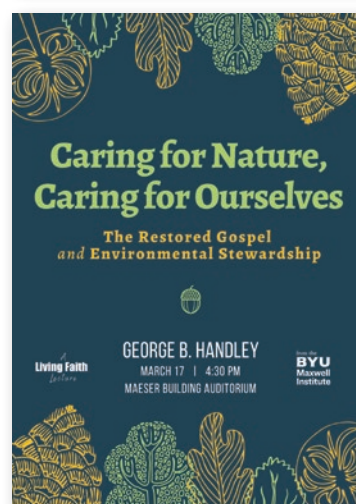
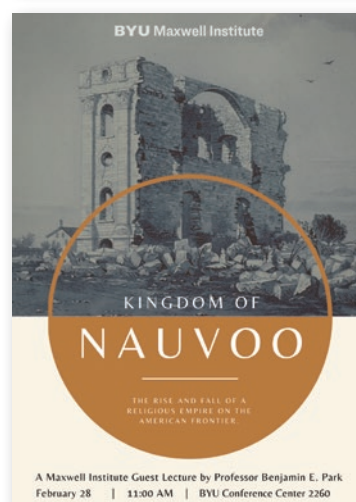
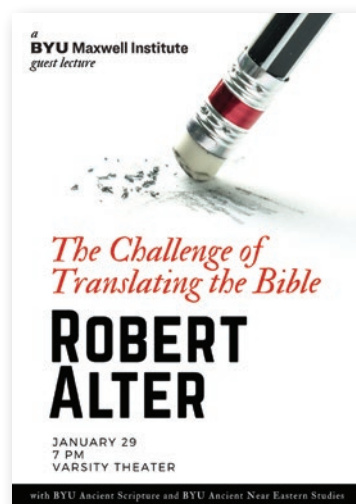
Charlotte Terry, *UC Davis*

Kristine L. Wright, *Princeton University*



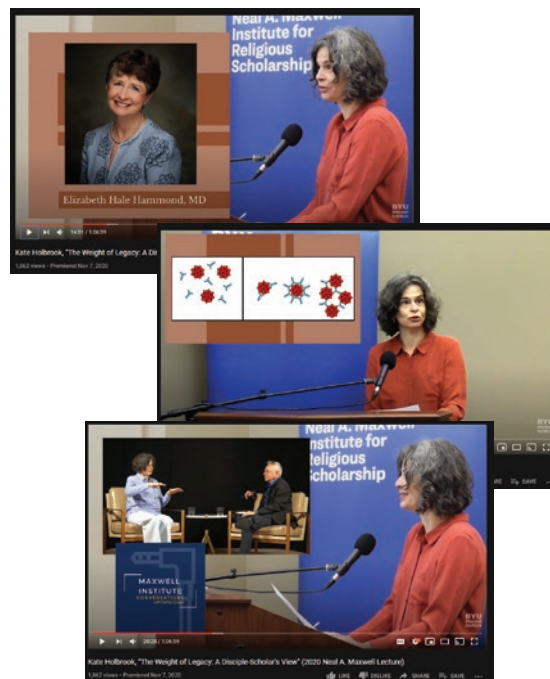
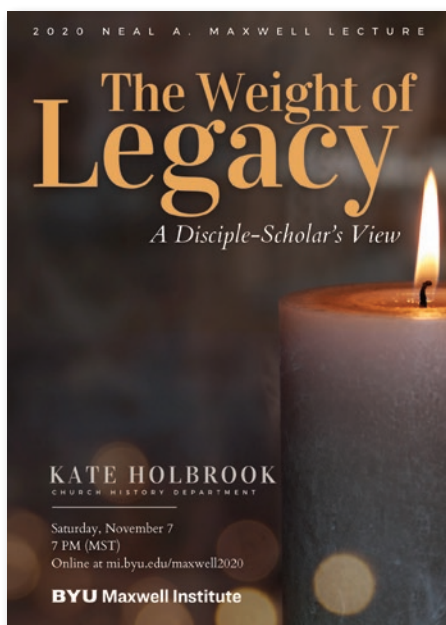
GUEST LECTURES

- Robert Alter (University of California at Berkeley), “The Challenge of Translating the Bible,” *January 29, 2020*
- Benjamin E. Park (Sam Houston State University), “Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier,” *February 28, 2020*
- George B. Handley (Brigham Young University), “Caring for Nature, Caring for Ourselves: The Restored Gospel and Environmental Stewardship,” *March 26, 2020*



ANNUAL NEAL A. MAXWELL LECTURE

Kate Holbrook, Church History Department,
 “The Weight of Legacy: A Disciple-Scholar’s View,”
 November 7, 2020



BROWN BAG

Each Wednesday, faculty and visiting scholars from the Maxwell Institute and Brigham Young University, along with other friends, gather in an informal setting to discuss new research ideas, publications, and presentations. Brown bag sessions allow scholars to share their own research and to peek over the fence at what other disciple-scholars are working on. Sessions were on hold beginning in March, then resumed online in September.



OTHER EVENTS COSPONSORED BY THE MAXWELL INSTITUTE

BOOK OF MORMON CONVERSATIONS, WITH THE JOHN A. WIDTSOE FOUNDATION

August 9

J. Spencer Fluhman, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*

Philip L. Barlow, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*

Larry Eastland, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

August 23

Joseph M. Spencer, *Brigham Young University*

Richard E. Turley, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

September 6

Terryl Givens, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*

Laura Redford, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

September 20

Sharon J. Harris, *Brigham Young University*

Jacob Rennaker, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

September 27

James E. Faulconer, *Neal A. Maxwell Institute*

Michael Stanley, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

October 11

Kylie Nielson Turley, *Brigham Young University*

Larry Eastland, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

October 18

Mark Wrathall, *University of Oxford*

Chris Eastland, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

October 25

Kimberly Matheson Berkey, *Loyola University Chicago*

Jacob Rennaker, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

November 8

Daniel Becerra, *Brigham Young University*

Laura Redford, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

November 15

Adam S. Miller, *Collin College*

George Durham, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

November 22

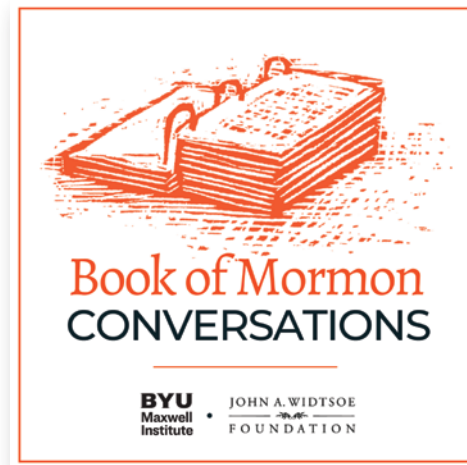
Rosalynde Frandsen Welch, *independent scholar*

Michael Stanley, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*

December 13

David F. Holland, *Harvard Divinity School*

Larry Eastland, *John A. Widtsoe Foundation*



FAIRMORMON CONFERENCE

August 2020, Provo, Utah

2020 BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES CONFERENCE

October 2020, Online

Media Outlets

MAXWELL INSTITUTE PODCAST

The Maxwell Institute Podcast plugs listeners directly into ongoing discussions of scholarship and faith at Brigham Young University. Guests in 2020 included Catherine Taylor, Katherine Kitterman, Rebekah Ryan Clark, Neylan McBaine, Deidre Nicole Green, Sharon J. Harris, George Handley, James E. Faulconer, Quincy Newell, David Walker, David Charles Gore, Kylie Nielson Turley, Melissa Inouye, Margaret Bendroth, Mark Wrathall, Robert Alter, Kimberly Matheson Berkey, Benjamin E. Park, Daniel Becerra, Christopher James Blythe, Adam Miller, J. Spencer Fluhman, Rosalynde Welch, David F. Holland, and Ravi Gupta.

The Maxwell Institute Podcast is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, YouTube, and other fine podcasting apps and is streamed at mi.byu.edu/mipodcast.

Executive producer—J. Spencer Fluhman

Producer, editor, host—Blair Hodges

Guest hosts—Philip L. Barlow, James E. Faulconer, J. Spencer Fluhman

Transcription—Lilia Brown, Ana Garcia, Reagan Graff, Olivia DeMordaunt, Sol Lee

SOCIAL MEDIA

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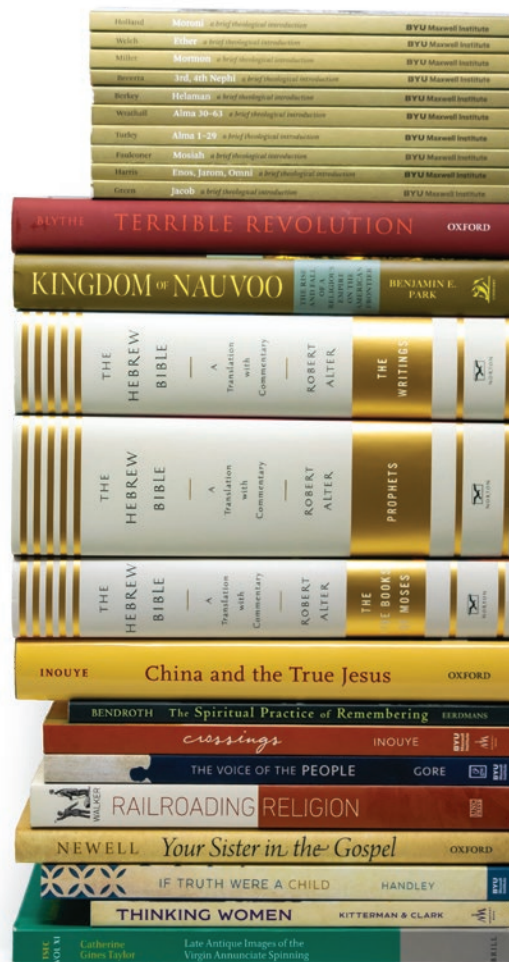




PHOTO CREDITS

- Cover: J. Kirk Richards, *The First Vision* (oil on panel, 2020)
- Page 1. Brigham Young statue with mask, Abraham O. Smoot Administration Building, Brigham Young University. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.
- Page 4. J. Spencer Fluhman at BYU's Karl G. Maeser Building. Photo by Rebekah Baker, BYU Photo.
- Page 5. Karl G. Maeser Building. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.
- Page 8. **Top:** Kate Holbrook. Photo by Saguaro and Spruce Photography. **Bottom left:** Antibodies and pathogens. Courtesy of <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antibody>. **Bottom right:** Dr. Elizabeth Hale Hammond.
- Page 9. Photo of Kate Holbrook by Blair Hodges.
- Page 11. **Top:** Screen capture of the Maxwell Institute Conversations interview featuring Samuel M. Brown (left) and Terryl Givens (right). **Bottom:** Photo courtesy of Darius Gray.
- Page 12. Photo courtesy of Kate Holbrook.
- Page 13. **Left:** Wayne Dyer. Photo courtesy of Realitycheck Media Consulting. **Right:** Diane von Furstenberg. Photo by Stacy Geiken.
- Page 15. Replica of Joseph and Emma Smith's Pennsylvania home courtesy of Intellectual Reserve, Inc., <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/historic-sites/pennsylvania/priesthood-restoration-site/joseph-and-emma-smiths-home>.
- Pages 16–17. Nathan Florence, *A Conversation With the Master* (oil on canvas, 1972). Courtesy of the artist. <https://www.nflorencefineart.com>.
- Page 18. Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, circa August 1829–circa January 1830, p. i (text from the title page), The Joseph Smith Papers, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/printers-manuscript-of-the-book-of-mormon-circa-august-1829-circa-january-1830/1>.
- Page 19. Turkey feather at Triple T Ranch in Grantsville, Utah. Photo by Sarah Shepherd.
- Page 20. Apple pie. Courtesy of smittenkitchen.com.
- Page 22. West View Building. Photo by Claire Moore, BYU Photo.
- Page 24. Janiece Johnson's office. Photo by Claire Moore, BYU Photo.
- Page 25. Neal A. Maxwell Library in the West View Building. Photo by Claire Moore, BYU Photo.
- Pages 26–27. Demolition of the Faculty Office Building and construction of the West View Building at Brigham Young University, 2019–2020. Photos by Blair Hodges.
- Page 28. Neal A. Maxwell Library. Photo by Claire Moore, BYU Photo.
- Page 29. **Top:** West View Building. **Bottom:** West View Building lobby. Photos by Claire Moore, BYU Photo.
- Page 30. Rose Datoc Dall, *Behold the Handmaid* (oil on canvas, 2013).
- Page 31. **Top:** Photo courtesy of Rose Datoc Dall. **Bottom:** Rose Datoc Dall, *Mary and Elisabeth* (oil on canvas, 2013).
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- Page 33. Caitlin Connolly, *holding holy things* (oil on panel, 2019).
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- Page 38. Brian Kershishnik, *Blessing* (woodcut in Baltic birch, 2018). Photo by Blair Hodges.
- Page 39. **Top:** Photo of Brian Kershishnik by Blair Hodges. **Bottom:** Brian Kershishnik carving the frontispiece for the Maxwell Institute Study Edition of the Book of Mormon, *Other Sheep*. Photo by Blair Hodges.
- Page 40. Brian Kershishnik, *Book Bringer* (woodcut illumination, 2018).
- Page 41. Brian Kershishnik, image of golden plates from the *brief theological introductions* book series.
- Pages 44–46. Author portraits by Rebekah Baker, BYU Photo.
- Page 47. **Top left:** Proofs of *Alma 1–29: a brief theological introduction*, by Kylie Nielson Turley, at BYU Print and Mail. Photo by Blair Hodges. **Top right:** Brian Kershishnik carving an image for *Moroni: a brief theological introduction*, by David F. Holland. Photo by Blair Hodges. **Bottom:** Students view copies of the *brief theological introductions* series on display at the Franklin S. Harris Fine Arts Center at Brigham Young University. Photo by Blair Hodges.
- Page 51. Brian Kershishnik, *Book Bringer* (woodcut illumination, 2018).
- Page 54. Y Mountain. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.
- Pages 55–73. Portraits of scholars by Blair Hodges, Ashley Pun, and Rebekah Baker.
- Page 59. Holy Qur'an. Photo by Ahmad Ardity, pixabay.com.
- Page 65. Y Mountain. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.
- Page 69. Frederick G. Williams's first edition Book of Mormon with handcrafted index. BYU–Idaho Special Collections. Photo by Janiece Johnson.
- Page 71. **Top:** Catherine Taylor presenting research during the Institute symposium "Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture."

Bottom (left to right): Catherine Taylor, Allison Foster, Kris Kryscynski, Meredith Hanna. Photos by Blair Hodges.

Page 74. BYU students mask up in response to COVID-19 coronavirus. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.

Page 75. Student research assistants gather following presentations at the symposium “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture.” Left to right: Audrey Saxon, Emma Croft, Janiece Johnson, Olivia Moskot, Elizabeth Broderick, Garrett Maxwell. Photo by Blair Hodges.

Page 76. Catherine Taylor gathers with student research assistants in the conference room of the Clyde Engineering Building, BYU campus. Photo by Blair Hodges.

Pages 77–87. Portraits of student research assistants, office assistants, and communications assistants by Blair Hodges and Ashley Pun.

Page 79. Morgan Davis meets with his team of student research assistants in the conference room at the Clyde Engineering Building, BYU campus. Photo by Blair Hodges.

Pages 80–81. Student research and office assistants gather to discuss *1st Nephi: a brief theological introduction*. Photo by Camille Messick.

Page 82. Student research assistant Garrett Maxwell presents his work during the symposium “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture.” Photo by Blair Hodges.

Page 85. Students gather in the Clyde Engineering Building conference room at the 2020 Maxwell Institute student orientation meeting. Photo by Blair Hodges.

Page 88. **Top:** Kristian Heal presents research during his session of the Maxwell Institute Seminar. **Bottom:** Terryl Givens (center), Catherine Taylor (left), and Philip Barlow (right). Photos by Blair Hodges.

Page 89. **Top:** Olivia Moskot presents her work during the symposium “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture.” **Center** (left to right): Emily Ostler, Catherine Taylor, Janiece Johnson, Kris Kryscynski. **Bottom:** Guests listen to presentations at the “Latter-day Saint Women and Scripture” symposium. Photos by Blair Hodges.

Page 90. **Left:** Zoom screenshot courtesy of Laurie Maffly-Kipp. **Center:** Robert Alter chats with a student following his presentation. Photo by Blair Hodges.

Page 91. **Left:** Robert Alter. **Right:** Benjamin E. Park. Photos by Blair Hodges.

Page 92. **Top:** Screenshots of Kate Holbrook’s Neal A. Maxwell Lecture, premiering on the Maxwell Institute YouTube channel on November 7, 2020. **Bottom left:** Christopher Jones attending one of many brown bag gatherings early in 2020. **Bottom right:** Joseph Stuart presents research during brown bag presentation. Photos by Blair Hodges.

Page 95. Tree of Wisdom sculpture, Brigham Young University. Photo by Nate Edwards, BYU Photo.

Pages 96–97. Y Mountain over Utah Lake. Photo by Jaren Wilkey, BYU Photo.

2020 Annual Report. Editor in chief: Blair Hodges.

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Production editor: Don Brugger.



holding holy things

(OIL ON PANEL, 2019), BY CAITLIN CONNOLLY

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