

BYU
Neal A. Maxwell
Institute for
Religious
Scholarship

2021

ANNUAL REPORT



Karl G. Maier
Memorial Building

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DIRECTOR'S LETTER

The Indispensability of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute

J. SPENCER FLUHMAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE

Maxwell Institute 15th Anniversary Banquet | 13 November 2021

This year, we celebrate fifteen years of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at Brigham Young University. Five years ago, I stood to commemorate a decade since our 2006 founding, having just been appointed executive director a few months before. Back then, I had less . . . gray hair. (What a sweet kid I was back then!) I was utterly overwhelmed at the challenge ahead of us. Today, I'm a little more "weathered," shall we say, and still exuberantly overwhelmed.

I am more convinced now than I was back then of the Maxwell Institute's *indispensability*. By that, I do not mean that the university or the Church couldn't do without the Institute as it is currently conceived. I am old enough to understand that change is the order of this world and that the Institute's work will doubtless change, be redirected, or even conclude as it is currently understood. Rather, what I mean by its indispensability is the pressing need, now and ever, for God's people to work hard at the edge of what is known and yet unknown. That is the domain of faith, after all. We are called to that space between the serenity of things we understand and the restless conviction that God is unfathomably grand and on the move. If our eye is single to God's glory, research, especially in the realm of religion, is an act of faith. If the sun ever sets on the Maxwell Institute, in other words, some wise leader before long will invent something rather like it.

Brigham Young University is indispensable for these same reasons. Our revelations call for a people of learning and places where kingdom building takes on intellectual dimensions. Ours is surely a religion of the mind, at least in part. Why else would God ask for our minds to be consecrated to his purposes like our collective and individual strength?¹ If this university exists in response to these divine directives, and I believe it does, then it is imperative that rigorous thinking about religion receives special attention. Many of you know my passion for teaching; I pause here to verbally salute our colleagues in Religious Education, who make teaching their institutional priority. The Maxwell Institute forms an indispensable, again in this broad sense, partner to Religious Education. Here, we are tasked with giving full-time attention to the challenging but wonderful



work of research and writing on the things that matter most. To my mind, the enduring presence of BYU and the Maxwell Institute drive home the truth that there will be no point when God's people can sit back, take stock of what he has given, and say "it is enough." There can be no coasting towards Zion.

The daunting work of religious scholarship is made necessary, it seems to me, by several truths underscored by our founding revelations. First, we work in the bright light of an active, revelatory God. For the Latter-day Saints, God *is*. His work unfolds in the present and future as well as the past. Our open-canon faith shimmers with possibility, every day, every hour. As one lives a consecrated Latter-day Saint life, there is a sense that something beautiful is about to happen. Some true thing is about to break into the world. For those who see with an eye of faith, it is creation's dawn, again and always, all around us.

Second, we labor in the context of the audacious idea of the perfectibility of the human person. Despite rampant evidence to the contrary, humans are capable of progress and refinement. The Restoration famously rips the lid off the notion of human potential and that truth has radical implications for education in Zion. That idea alone should fill this university with energy and hope unattainable elsewhere. And a research institute dedicated to religion on that sort of campus should be a force indeed.

Third, the Restoration's revelations fix learning and teaching firmly within community, the body of Christ. There is no solitary striving for knowledge for its own sake here. Learning and knowing here must feature community needs as both the ends towards which we strive and a wellspring for our motivations, too. The engine here is love, for God and for the neighbor. This is the motivational logic of consecration and Zion itself, of course—a place where "every man [and woman] seek[s] the interest of his [or her] neighbor . . . doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God."²

For the Latter-day Saints, God is. His work unfolds in the present and future as well as the past. Our open-canon faith shimmers with possibility, every day, every hour.

Fourth, it is clear to me that a critical element of God's love for the human family involves being comprehensible to that family and its ever-changing cultures. God is always at the work of translation, in other words. This is powerfully articulated in the Doctrine & Covenants.³ It is hard work, but it's work that falls to all of us. It demands that scholars of genius and expository power consecrate their gifts to translation in this broad sense. The rhythm of the universe is such that we can never simply assume that the work of a previous generation remains wholly suited to the next. So, as we rightly cling to timeless truths, the articulation and application of even foundational matters demand rearticulation and reapplication, so long as the earth spins.

These founding truths, and a host of others we might invoke, inject our work with real urgency. Five years ago, I predicted that, "*The joint will crackle and spark with intellectual and spiritual energy!*" Friends, that prophecy stands fulfilled! I am awed by what God has wrought here. We inherited so much from those who built the Institute before us. We honor those who gave of their time and resources in such worthy causes. We acknowledge with gratitude those who support and inspire us still. From our leaders in the BYU administration to our advisory board, to our growing circle of remarkable scholars and staff, to the more than three hundred students who have put their shoulders to the wheel with us over the past five years—we have witnessed so many talented people, doing so much good, for so many, I can scarcely articulate it. You know something remarkable is afoot when *I'm* a little speechless!

In our recent third of the Maxwell Institute's history, we have been busy. We have forged a clear and compelling mission statement (approved by the BYU Board of Trustees), received an unforgettable apostolic charge, moved into glittering new space on campus, and gathered an exceptionally impactful circle of religion scholars.

All this work proceeds under the benevolent burden that comes with being named after Elder Neal A. Maxwell. His large portrait hangs in our lobby. His name adorns our entryways. We cannot labor in our beautiful corner of campus without being reminded of his special apostolic ministry.

Dozens and dozens of books, articles, and media offerings have flowed from the minds assembled and associated here. Tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints and others not of our faith have read, watched, or participated in our publications and events. We take our mission, approved by a Board culled from the Church's highest councils, as a sacred charge. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's 2018 address to the Institute is scripture to us. It has fundamentally shaped our work.

And we are not done. Significant initiatives are underway. We have two extended book series in the works, one related to Jesus Christ and the other to the Doctrine & Covenants. We have path-breaking work on ancient Christianity in

development. There are remarkable volumes on the intersection of study and faith about to appear. We have big plans for ongoing scholarship related to scripture and theology. More brilliant minds will join with us. Transformational collaborations are in the offing. We know that much is required where so much has been given. There is much to do but we are lit up with the potential good within our sights.

All this work proceeds under the benevolent burden that comes with being named after Elder Neal A. Maxwell. His large portrait hangs in our lobby. His name adorns our entryways. We cannot labor in our beautiful corner of campus without being reminded of his special apostolic ministry. The burden of representing that ministry, in our admittedly limited and indirect way, has occupied my mind for more than five years now. As some of you know, I accepted my current role in large part because of my feelings for Elder Maxwell.

I met him for the first time at the October 1991 General Conference. My father took my brother and me to priesthood session that fall. We sat in the old Tabernacle, very near the front. Since we're among friends, I will admit that I did not want to be there. I was seventeen and not, ahem, spiritually inclined. My hair was long and I sported what my high school football coach had nicknamed a "Fluhman-chu" beard. (Cultural sensitivity

was not a strong suit for early-90s football coaches, clearly, but it was a clever quip!) I probably slouched in my seat. I secretly had planned to fade away from both Utah and the church after high school, skeptical and angry as I had been during my teenage years.

Waiting for the session to start, I was approached by a man who I recognized vaguely but could not have identified by name. It was Elder Maxwell. He walked right to me, shook my hand, and asked a series of questions about my life and plans. I was so struck by the exchange that I forgot my manners and stayed in my seat and felt sheepish about it afterwards. Nevertheless, Elder Maxwell sweetly ministered to me for what was probably about ten minutes. Dad eventually told me who it was that I'd been talking to.

I could not shake the experience afterwards. I was unable to articulate what had happened in spiritual terms at the time, so all I could admit to myself in the weeks and months that followed was that Elder Maxwell had something I lacked . . . *and I wanted it.* The light in his eyes and love in his being were impossible to dismiss. He had mentioned something about me serving a mission and, though I was not planning to serve when I arrived at that priesthood session, I soon determined to serve—in no small part because Elder Maxwell saw me that way. Within days of meeting him, I had another profound spiritual experience on the BYU campus and then experienced the electric jolt of a lifetime when I fell head-over-heels in love, at first sight, with Hollie Rhees. It is not a stretch to say that my life pivoted around those three events, experienced during the same few October days, almost exactly thirty years ago.

With all his brilliance, expository power, and impressive intellectual and literary attainments, then, it was Elder Maxwell's warm emulation of the ministering Jesus that matters most to this disciple-scholar. I have savored his sermons and books since but, in the first instance, it was his personal care for a brooding teen that fundamentally shaped me forever.

So, I would not dare view religious scholarship apart from the practice of faith. I would not compartmentalize the life of the mind from the things of the soul. We would not do so here because Elder Maxwell showed us a better way. What he said of this university exactly fifty years ago yesterday surely applies to the research institute that bears his name: "Brigham Young University seeks to improve and 'sanctify' itself for the sake of others—not for the praise of the world, but to serve the world better."⁴ Elder Maxwell's gifts, like his life, were placed humbly on the Almighty's altar. And, like the biblical loaves and fishes, his offerings of mind and spirit continue to multiply across the years. If we do our work well, the scholarship that flows from this institute in the end will form a fitting monument to both Elder Maxwell and the God he served so well. That is our highest aspiration. That is the towering peak we are determined to climb. I bear witness of the truthfulness of the revelations that guide us, of the apostolic calls that have fixed our course, and of the true Light that we seek, in body and mind, so long as we are given time to labor, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. **MI**

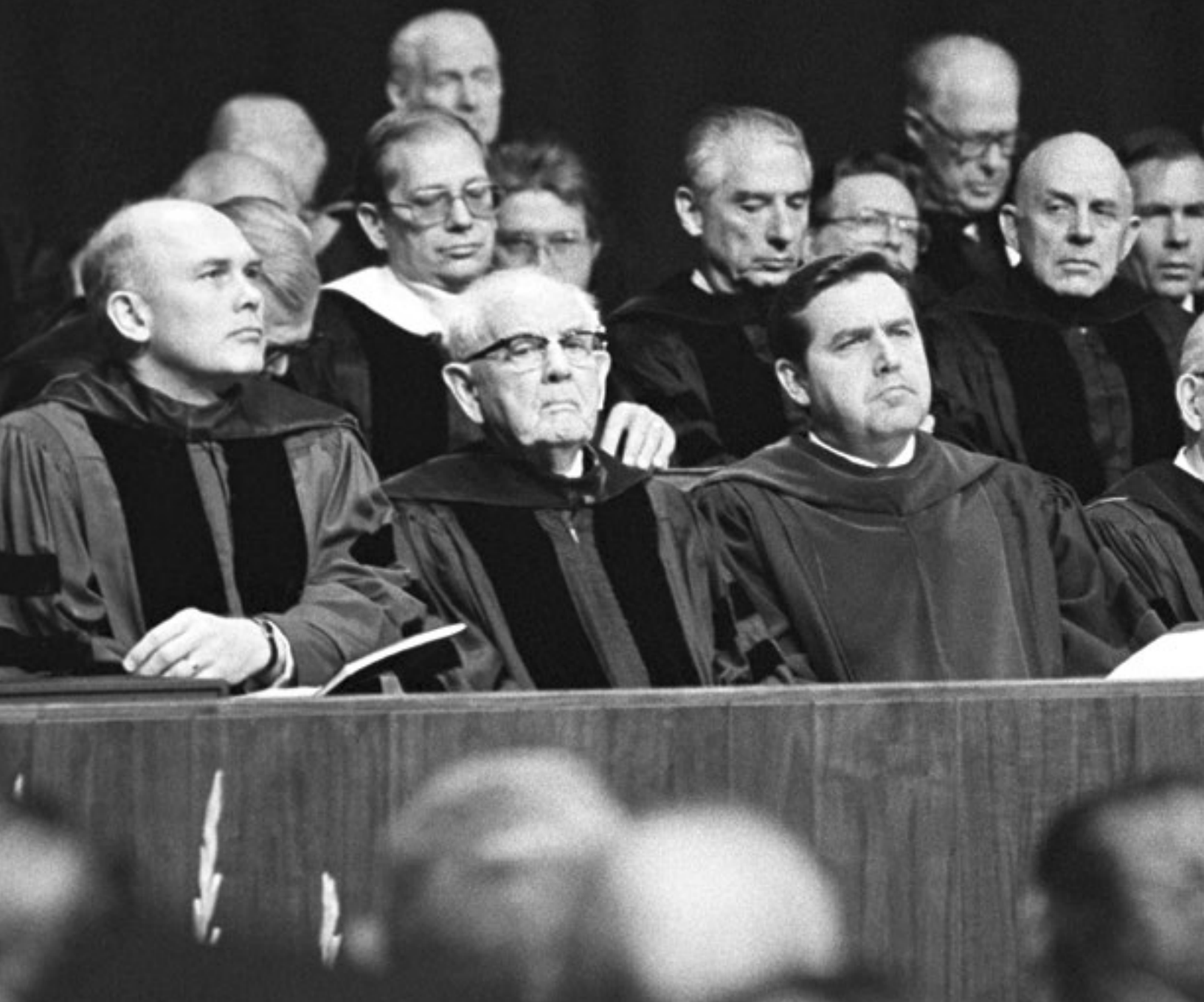


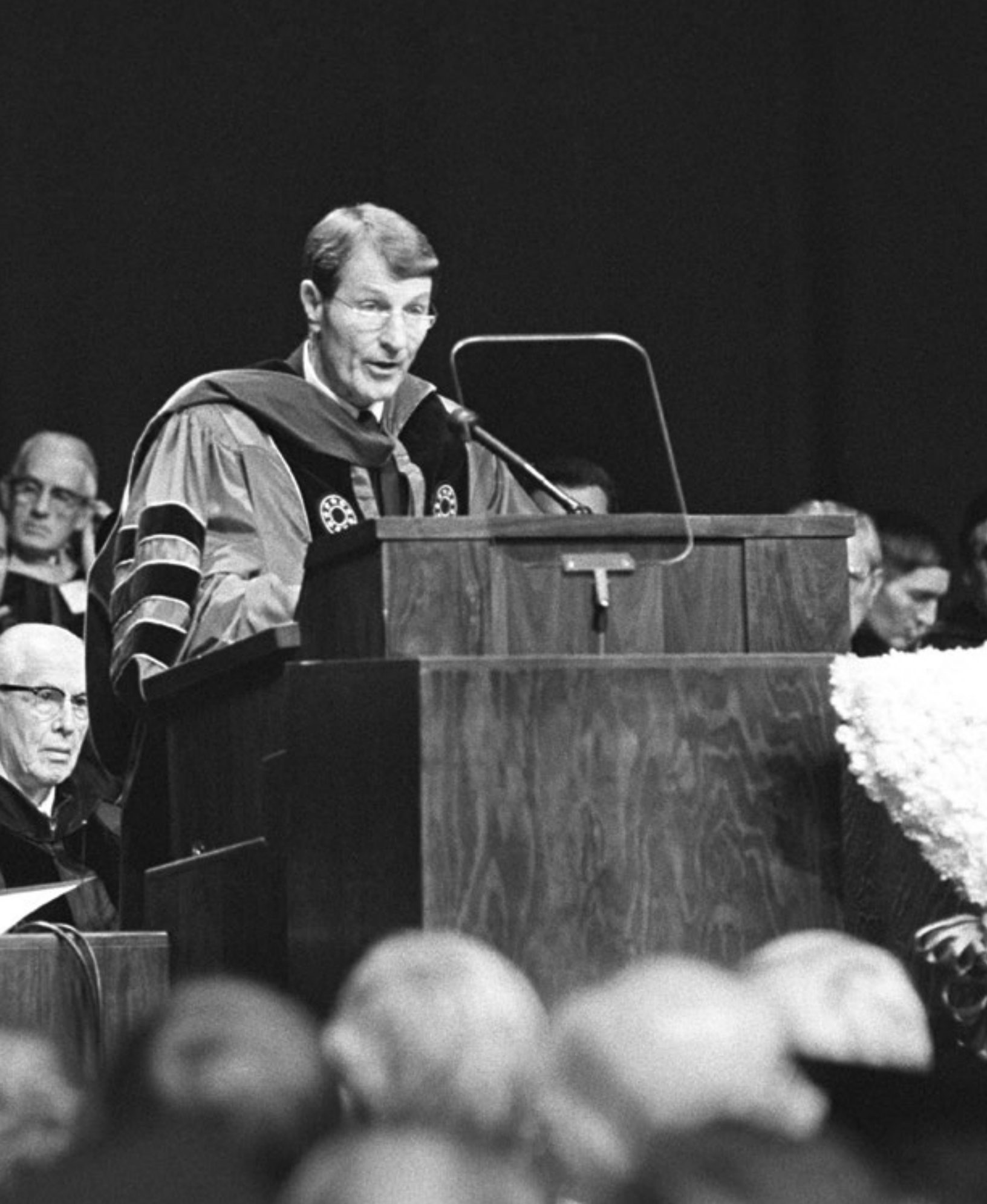
NOTES

1. See, among others, Moroni 10:32.
2. Doctrine & Covenants 82:19.
3. See Doctrine & Covenants 1:24.
4. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, "Greetings to the President," Addresses Delivered at the Inauguration of Dallin Harris Oaks, 12 November 1971 (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1971), 1, as quoted in President Spencer W. Kimball, "The Second Century of Brigham Young University," 10 October 1975, <<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/spencer-w-kimball/second-century-brigham-young-university/>>.

“Brigham Young University seeks to improve and ‘sanctify’ itself for the sake of others—not for the praise of the world, but to serve the world better.”

—ELDER NEAL A. MAXWELL









"The Neal A. Maxwell Institute at 15 Years"

PRESIDENT KEVIN J WORTHEN, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

Adapted from remarks given at the Neal A. Maxwell Institute's 15th Anniversary Celebration, Gordon B. Hinckley Alumni & Visitors Center, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 13 November 2021.

I never met Elder Maxwell. The closest I got was when I was on my mission and my father was in the stake presidency and Elder Maxwell was an assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Elder Maxwell came to our home, and he slept in my bed. But I was in Mexico! That's as close as I came to Elder Maxwell. It is a privilege to be here and a pleasure to be with you as we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of an institute named after him.

The "Second Century Address" by President Spencer W. Kimball, which he gave in 1975 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Brigham Young University, has been much on my mind. That has been the case for a long time, but even more seriously in the last eight months since Elder David A. Bednar reminded us that it is four short years until we will be at the midpoint since that prophetic declaration of Brigham Young University's destiny. What a wonderful thing to have the prophet, seer, and revelator—the president of the Church—come to BYU in 1975 and speak of our institutional future. In that address, President Kimball began, "My task is to talk about BYU's second century." You can understand why that's on my mind as we approach that midpoint.¹

It becomes obvious as one studies the address that President Kimball envisioned a unique kind of university. He used the word "unique" eight times, making it clear that uniqueness would be a key to fulfilling our prophetic destiny. I would like to make three observations about how insights from the "Second Century Address" apply to the work of the Maxwell Institute.

The first is President Kimball's insistence that our quest to be unique cannot be used as an excuse for mediocrity in the things that other universities value. He reminded us that we have a "double heritage" that we must pass on. Like every other university, we must convey to our students the knowledge that comes through scholarly research. But, in addition to doing that well (in fact, even *better* than they do at other universities), we also need to pass on the revealed truths that have been sent from heaven. That double heritage requires that we be "bilingual," that we speak the language of the spirit and the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ and also the language of scholarly research in the disciplines of academia.



In the “Second Century Address,” President Kimball predicted there would be “brilliant stars” that would come from Brigham Young University, “in all the scholarly graces.” That line in the address echoed an earlier BYU speech from President Kimball, one in which he related how BYU might shape those brilliant stars of the future. Referring to the world’s great artists, he said,

Take a da Vinci or a Michelangelo or a Shakespeare and give him a total knowledge of the plan of salvation of God and personal revelation . . . and then take a look at the statues he will carve and the murals he will paint and the masterpieces he will produce.²

I think the Maxwell Institute is at the forefront of using tools that have been provided through traditional means, adding to those a knowledge of the plan of salvation and personal revelation, and then seeing what kind of work can be produced.

That’s what President Kimball meant by being bilingual: we come to understand the ways of the world, and the ways traditional methods have worked for centuries, to discover new knowledge through research. We do that, and then we add to that a knowledge of the plan of salvation and personal revelation, and then see what kind of work can be produced. I think the Maxwell Institute is at the forefront of using tools that have been provided through traditional means, adding to those a knowledge of the plan of salvation and personal revelation, and then seeing what kind of work can be produced.

My second observation is that there is a role for research institutions in Brigham Young University’s destiny. President Kimball himself said that. He spoke of how BYU would need to change some planks from time to time as the “flagship,” as he called it, of the Church Educational System. As evidence that this phenomenon was happening, he cited, among other things, the creation of new research institutes. He named research institutes in language, in food, in agriculture, and ancient studies. Now some of those have gone away; they are planks

that have been replaced. But now we have research institutes focused on society's core institutions (the Wheatley Institution), on moral and ethical leadership (the Sorensen Center), and on religion—the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. It is possible that some of those planks may be changed in some ways, but I, like Spencer Fluhman, think that the one concerning religion is going to be enduring in a place like this.³

The third observation relates to President Kimball's caution that, though we must increase in learning through scholarship, we must never forget that our primary responsibility is to transmit that knowledge to others. As exhilarating as it is to make discoveries by study, and by faith and revelation, the process is not fully realized until we transmit them to others. This is conveyed in that wonderful quote from Elder Maxwell, given at the inauguration of President Oaks: "Brigham Young University seeks to improve and 'sanctify' itself for the sake of others, not for the praise of the world but to serve the world better."⁴ The Maxwell Institute is tasked with doing this for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and, perhaps primarily, the students here at Brigham Young University. This has been true for the 300+ students that have worked at the Institute over the past five years. But the work of the Institute should also touch others who will never come on this campus, some of whom may not understand the academic and spiritual languages. Maybe the Maxwell Institute must be *trilingual*—for many members of the Church will need a language they can relate to, framed in ways that will impact them.

So, there you have it, three observations from President Kimball of special significance for the Maxwell Institute:


Being bilingual,

Being gathered as a research community,

Seeking knowledge not for our own glory, but for the sake of others—those who are struggling in their faith, those who are seeking for a reason for the hope that is in them.

There is a great destiny for the Neal A. Maxwell Institute at this university that is part of its prophetic direction.

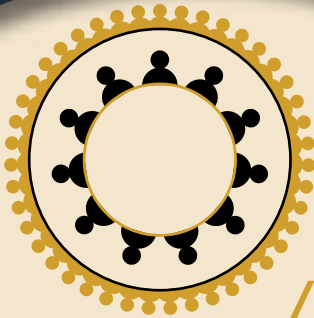
There is a great destiny for the Neal A. Maxwell Institute at this university that is part of its prophetic direction. At the end of that "Second Century Address," President Kimball said, "As previous First Presidencies have said, and we say again to you, we expect (we do not simply hope) that Brigham Young University will be among the great universities of the world." And then he said, "To that expectation, I would add, 'become a unique university in all of the world.'" President Kimball repeated a similar thing at the inauguration of then-President Jeffrey R. Holland five years later, but concluded with these words: "Then, in the process of time, this truly will become the fully recognized university of the Lord about which so much has been spoken."⁵

I bear you my witness that there is in fact a prophetic destiny for this university. It is part of the rolling forth of the kingdom of God. And the Maxwell Institute is part of that in the present and in the future. We will do what we can and then we will be still and watch with amazement what the Lord does with our work. I bear you that witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. 

NOTES

1. President Spencer W. Kimball, "The Second Century of Brigham Young University," address at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 10 October 1975, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/spencer-w-kimball/second-century-brigham-young-university/>.
2. President Spencer W. Kimball, "The Gospel Vision of the Arts," *Ensign*, July 1977, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1977/07/the-gospel-vision-of-the-arts?lang=eng>. The essay was adapted from "Education for Eternity," address at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 12 September 1967, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/spencer-w-kimball/education-eternity/>.
3. See J. Spencer Fluhman, "The Indispensability of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute," in this annual report.
4. Elder Neal A. Maxwell, "Greetings to the President," *Addresses Delivered at the Inauguration of Dallin Harris Oaks, 12 November 1971* (Provo: BYU Press, 1971), 1.
5. President Spencer W. Kimball, "Installation of and Charge to the President," address at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 14 November 1980, <https://ge.byu.edu/00000173-fde4-d884-a97f-fff70340000/spencer-w-kimball-climbing-the-hills-just-ahead-three-addresses>.

2021 Inside the Numbers



11 disciples-
scholars

43 student
research
assistants
and staff

10 journal articles/
chapter contributions
by Institute scholars



4 books
published

1 journal
published

3

books written/cowritten/
coedited by Institute scholars

1 building
dedication

5 translations

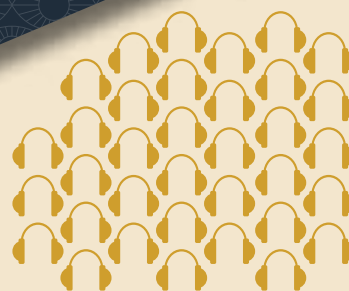


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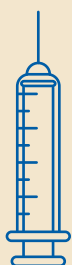
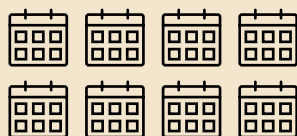
website visitors (314,005 page views)

35

podcast episodes
(538,026 downloads)



8 public events
(in-person)



100%

vaccination status

189,400

video views
(53,200 hours viewed)

8,370

 Twitter followers

8,389

 Facebook followers

3,199

 Instagram followers



"A Hair Wreath, a Bald Head, and a Usable Past: The Stuff of Discipleship"

JENNIFER REEDER

19TH-CENTURY WOMEN'S HISTORY SPECIALIST, CHURCH HISTORY DEPARTMENT

2021 Neal A. Maxwell Lecture—13 November 2021

On October 20, 1887, President Wilford Woodruff announced that the Manti temple was near completion, ready for "upholstering, furniture, carpets, etc., which are necessary to put it in a state of complete preparation for the sacred labors to be performed therein." He invited all to contribute liberally, that the names of every man, woman, and child would be recorded in the "Archives of the Temple."¹ Local Relief Societies and Primaries made carpet for the interior, as did women and children from as far away as Fillmore and Emery, Utah.² Mary Jensen, a counselor in the Manti South Ward Relief Society, exhorted her sisters, "the Lord will turn the key, we should prepare ourselves to do some work in the Temple."³ Mary Wintch created a decorative wall hanging for the temple: intricate flowers filled a baptismal font and formed a wreath made of the sisters' hair. These items—carpets and hair art—demonstrate material discipleship.

A Victorian hair wreath may appear distasteful to our twenty-first century sense of fine décor, but if we refocus our lenses with historical eyes, we can discover significant cultural ideologies in these artifacts. Material culture includes fine folk art, relics, and the stuff of lived religion. This *stuff* is defined in Webster's

1. Wilford Woodruff, "An Address from President Woodruff," *Woman's Exponent* 16, no. 11 (1 Nov. 1887): 84.

2. See, for example, Mary A. Hyde White and Norah Robinson, "R.S., Y.L.M.I.A. & P.A. Reports: Sanpete," *Woman's Exponent* 15, no. 3 (1 Jul. 1886): 22; Helena Madsen, Lucy Berglund, Hannah Wickman, "Sanpete Primaries—A Lamanite Love-Feast," *Woman's Exponent* 15, no. 23 (1 May 1887): 178; M.A. White, "Primary Fair," *Woman's Exponent* 16, no. 18 (15 Feb. 1888): 143; M.A. Greenhalgh, "Y.L.M.I.A. Fair," *Woman's Exponent* 15, no. 7 (1 Sep. 1886): 54; Analiza Seely, "R.S. Reports: Emery Stake," *Woman's Exponent* 14, no. 7 (1 Sep. 1885): 55.

3. Manti South Ward Relief Society, Minutes and Records, 1882–1973, vol. 1ss (1882–1889), 5 May 1887, 72, CHL.

1828 dictionary as a collection of substances, a heap of dust, chips, dross, or scraps of fabric or wood.⁴ And stuff, like a hair wreath, can reveal much in ways text does not about lived religion, usable past, and discipleship or, in the words of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “a more determined discipleship.”⁵

My personal interest in hair wreaths evolved when as a doctoral student writing my dissertation on nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint women and material culture, I was diagnosed with leukemia and lost my own hair. Elder Maxwell and I share this experience; in fact, we were both patients at different times of the same oncologist at LDS Hospital, Dr. Clive Ford.⁶ I did not expect the vulnerability that came with becoming bald. I also did not expect the expansion of discipleship when friends came to my aid: we had three head-shaving parties during which I both laughed and sobbed. Elder Maxwell spoke at the April 1997 General Conference in all his bald glory: “as you can see, the lights combine with my cranium to bring some different ‘illumination’ to this pulpit.”⁷ I couldn’t bear to go out bare-headed, and friends sent beautiful hats, scarves, and wigs. One friend went to the temple with me when I was scared to put on a veil with no hair. My Relief Society presidency joined me on my bed, all wearing hats, when we needed a picture for the ward history. That, my friends, was an unexpected discipleship, a sharing of burdens in a vulnerable situation.

As a historian, I turned to the hair of olden days. I empathized with Eliza Partridge Lyman, who lost her hair at Winter Quarters, probably due to malnutrition. She wrote, “What little is left I have had to cut off. My head is so bare that I am compelled to wear a cap.”⁸ Bless her heart. I know what it is like to have a cold head. Eliza and I rejoice at the scriptural promise that “not so much as a hair of their heads be lost; but every thing shall be restored to its perfect frame.”⁹

Going back even further, we find hair used as a material memorialization. According to legend, Charlemagne was buried in the ninth century wearing an amulet containing the hair of the Virgin Mary. That amulet reappeared when French Empress Josephine wore it to her coronation in 1804, enmeshing her political and religious authority.¹⁰ Locks of the hair of ancient holy women were often revered as relics, including Hildegard of Bingen; Saint Ann, mother of Mary, the mother of Christ; Saint Cecily, an early Roman martyr; and Thecia, the first disciple of Paul.¹¹ Catholic worship of saints’ relics shifted as the Elizabethan Age turned when Protestantism took a cultural hold. Commemoration transitioned from the relic of a saint to that of a beloved individual, memorializing personal relationships.¹² Hair artists considered the importance of using hair from living people rather than from the dead. This “live” material insinuated a perpetuation of animation, affection, and life.¹³

I did not expect the vulnerability that came with becoming bald. I also did not expect the expansion of discipleship when friends came to my aid.

4. Noah Webster, ed., *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), “stuff,” n.p.

5. Neal A. Maxwell, “Meeting the Challenges of Today,” devotional, Brigham Young University, 10 Oct. 1978, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/neal-a-maxwell/meeting-challenges-today/>.

6. See Bruce C. Hafen, *A Disciple's Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), xii.

7. Neal A. Maxwell, “From Whom All Blessings Flow,” General Conference, April 1997.

8. Mary Brown Pulsipher, History, typescript, 1–5, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

9. Alma 11:44; see also Doctrine and Covenants 29:25.

10. Stuart Blersch, “Victorian Jewelry Made of Hair,” *Nineteenth Century* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1980):42.

11. Kimberly Knight, “Hair in the Middle Ages,” *Internet Archeology*, 42 (2016), intarch.ac.uk.

12. Deborah Lutz, “The Dead Still Among Us: Victorian Secular Relics, Hair Jewelry, and Death Culture,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 39, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 128.

13. Helen Sheumaker, *Love Entwined: The Curious History of Hairwork in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 68.

Hair work as décor originated as a fine art in Western Europe in the late eighteenth century, particularly in Scandinavia, France, Germany, and England, then spread through Europe and the United States.¹⁴ Perhaps the preponderant Danish population in Sanpete County, Utah, influenced the inclusion of a hair wreath in the Manti Temple. In general, artifacts made of hair included pictures, rings, necklaces, brooches, pins, earrings, and wreaths.¹⁵ Hair was a very workable material due to its texture, pliability, and tensile strength—it could be easily molded into intricate designs.¹⁶ Popular motifs included flowers, plants, trees, birds, butterflies, and bees. Other formats wove hair in a manner similar to bobbin lace.¹⁷ Artisans formed the hair into jewelry, placed it in lockets, and collected it like signatures in friendship albums. Hair wreaths for wall display ranged in size from one to four feet in diameter and were often framed in shadow boxes to hold their three-dimensional forms.

The use of hair in territorial Utah demonstrated a sense of pioneer resourcefulness—a readily available medium. Because of their ornate quality, hair wreaths were often displayed in fashionable parlors.¹⁸ The Saints placed hair wreaths in temples, either in the Celestial room—the church’s finest Victorian parlor—or the temple’s grand entrance.¹⁹ Mary W. Wintch collected hair from women of the Manti South Relief Society. She

In general, artifacts made of hair included pictures, rings, necklaces, brooches, pins, earrings, and wreaths.

designed a grandiose floral display in a vertical arrangement, placed in a wooden-chip urn on the backs of oxen, on a fashionable parquet floor, surrounded by an open wreath. She framed her composition in a large octagonal shadowbox, 35" in height, 29" in width, and 6½" thick. The wood piece was created by Janne Mattson Sjödhall, a Swedish immigrant who edited the local Manti

newspaper.²⁰ Sjödhall was both the first person endowed in the Manti temple and the first to be sealed as a couple with his wife Christiana Wilhelmina Christofferson, also a Relief Society member. Her hair was likely included in the piece. Mary Wintch presented the art to the Manti Temple in 1888, I’m sure with great pride.

Let’s examine the cultural ideology of this type of artifact. Hair could depict a family tree, with a trunk woven of hair from progenitors and branches made of descendants. Sometimes hair from the paternal side would comprise half of the scene, while hair from the maternal side filled the other half, accompanied by a genealogical key delineating each contributor.²¹ It becomes even more complicated on paper with plural marriage, but in the medium of hair, the strands blend together, mixing color and texture into one. A hair wreath depicts the importance of family.

Other pieces honored different relationships.²² Popular fashion accessories of the time included hair jewelry to commemorate engagements and friendships, such as watch chains, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, rings, and belts.²³ People often exchanged hair locks in the nineteenth century as they would later exchange wallet-sized photographs.²⁴ Hair artifacts embodied a physical manifestation of a person—material memories

14. A wig-makers’ guild in Sweden organized in the early eighteenth century and controlled the market of hair art in the region for some time. Ruth Gordon, “Victorian Hairwork,” *Piecework* 4, no. 2 (April 1996): 36; Mlle. Defour, “Hair Work, No. 1,” *Peterson’s Magazine*, November 1850.

15. Frances Lichten, *Decorative Art of Victoria’s Era* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1950), 192; Sheumaker, *Love Entwined*, 1–15.

16. Lichten, *Decorative Art of Victoria’s Era*, 192.

17. Irene Guggenheim Navarro, “Hairwork of the Nineteenth Century,” *Antiques* 159, no. 3 (March 2001): 489; Blersch, 43.

18. Sheumaker, *Love Entwined*, 77.

19. Josh E. Probert, “Mormon Hair Art as Relic,” Mormon History Association, 2008, paper in author’s possession, 3.

20. Mark A. Staker, “‘By Their Works Ye Shall Know Them’: The World View Expressed in Mormon Folk Art,” *BYU Studies* 35, no. 3 (1995–96): 84.

21. These types of hair wreaths tended to be more popular in America rather than Europe. Navarro, “Hairwork of the Nineteenth Century,” 490. See Allison Kyle Leopold, “The Lost Art of Victorian Hair Work: What It Meant to Nineteenth-Century Americans Then . . . What We Think of It Today,” *Victorian Homes* 7, no. 1 (Winter 1988): 86.

22. Leopold, “The Lost Art of Victorian Hair Work,” 69.

23. Navarro, “Hairwork of the Nineteenth Century,” 485.

24. Gordon, “Victorian Hairwork,” 38.



Hair wreath and other examples of 19th-century hair art (courtesy of Jennifer Reeder)

of “embodied tactility.”²⁵ Hair art was often created to preserve relationships altered by physical separation and acted as a synecdoche, or a tangible memorial symbol, a representation of a loved one.²⁶ While hair on a living person changes color and texture over time, cut locks preserved a specific moment of time.²⁷ For example, Jane Blood’s 1880 diary described the gift of a hair wreath to demonstrate love for a dear friend in Kaysville, Utah.²⁸ Margaret T. Smoot requested a lock of hair from her missionary husband to place in a locket with his picture.²⁹

The Manti temple hair wreath also reflects a sisterhood originating in the Nauvoo Relief Society, which was “organiz’d after the order of heav’n.”³⁰ President Emma Smith taught that “every member should be held in full fellowship.”³¹ Presendia Huntington Buell did not live in Nauvoo at the time of the Relief Society organization. Having heard about the group from her sister Zina, she traveled to town where women gathered for a meeting. The minutes record that she “rejoiced in the opportunity—that she considered it a great privilege she felt the spirit of the Lord was with the Society, and rejoic’d to become a member.” Eliza R. Snow connected Presendia to this sisterhood, that “as the spirit of a person pervades every member of the body, so shall the Spirit of the Lord which pervades this Society be with her—she shall feel it and rejoice—she shall be blest wherever she is, and the Lord shall open the way and she shall be instrumental in doing much.”³² Presendia became entwined with her Relief Society sisters. Later, as a Relief Society leader in Utah, she traveled with Snow to train local branches.

The women of Manti represented a second generation of Relief Society. Most of them emigrated from Denmark, with others from Switzerland, Sweden, England, Wales, and Scotland. They did not experience the

25. Deborah Lutz, *Relics in Victorian Literature and Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1, 9.

26. Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 65.

27. Sheumaker, *Love Entwined*, 27.

28. Jane Wilkie Hooper Blood, *Jane Wilkie Hooper Blood Autobiography and Abridged Diary*, ed. Ivy Hooper Blood Hill (Logan, Utah: J.P. Smith, 1965), 35.

29. Olive Smoot Bean, “Biographical Sketch of Margaret T. Smoot,” Abraham O. Smoot Papers, n.d. 26, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

30. Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 1842–1844, 19 Apr. 1842, 31, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, UT.

31. Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 24 Mar. 1842, 15.

32. Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 19 Apr. 1842, 31–32.



1840s Nauvoo Relief Society but engaged in a tradition of female community that had been set for them by their predecessors. At the meeting dividing the Manti South ward from the North, stake Relief Society president Mary Ann Hyde remarked, “it was one of the gratest priviledges we could have to be associated with the Relief societies it took the good and the Just hoped that the sisters Would be wide a wake to there duties.”³³ On June 2, 1887, one year before the Manti temple dedication, the South ward’s Relief Society president Elizabeth Casto hoped that the women would soon do a good work at the temple. She then encouraged the German sisters to speak, after which “Anna Keller bore her Testamony in German.”³⁴ A month later, President Casto, herself from England, noted that “many have come from left their native land, to be blessed and serve the Lord.”³⁵ Their hair art reflected their international membership and included a tight collection of flowers, woven from the locks of hair of different individuals. While a handwritten attribution of the creator appears at the bottom of the piece, no indication reveals what hair belonged to whom. The fact that different colors of hair locks are woven together without identity demonstrates a new sisterhood, one without rank or hierarchy.

33. Manti South Ward Relief Society, Minutes and Records, 1882–1973, vol. 1ss (1882–1889), 2 Feb. 1882, 6, CHL.

34. Manti South Ward Relief Society, 2 June 1887, 73.

35. Manti South Relief Society, 7 July 1887, 74.

Examination of hair leads us to a tradition of female religious authority found in the spiritual gift of healing. At the Nauvoo Relief Society meeting on April 28, 1842, Joseph Smith authorized women to heal the sick by the laying on of hands, explaining that “wherein they are ordained, it is the privilege of those set apart to administer in that authority which is conferred upon them.”³⁶ Elizabeth Ann Whitney remembered that she was “ordained and set apart under the hand of Smith to administer to the sick and comfort the sorrowful.”³⁷ How interesting—from Joseph’s hand to Elizabeth Ann’s head, then from her hand to the heads of many others, connecting them in tactile ways to their divine gifts. Bathsheba W. Smith recalled how Joseph “had given the sisters instructions that they could administer to the sick.”³⁸ From Nauvoo to Winter Quarters, and across the plains, to Utah, women administered to each other. They gently placed hands on the hair of their heads to call upon the name of God.³⁹ Manti South Ward Relief Society member Maria Jensen connected healing with their new temple: “if we go there we will see the sick healed, and feel the spirit of God.”⁴⁰ Touch between the hand and the head demonstrated a physical connection in the present moment and strengthened the female sisterhood.

She, too, was extremely vulnerable, yet from her vulnerability came a rich testimony of her relationship with God.

In addition to healing, hair in jewelry and other artifacts also represented a fascination with death stemming from the philosophy of *memento mori*.⁴¹ Popular hair designs featured weeping willows, tombs, or trees.⁴² In the Middle Ages, some worried they may not recognize loved ones after death. A sentimental solution was to retain a lock of hair.⁴³ Plaited hair of the deceased was often encased in mourning jewelry and presented to immediate family and close friends in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For example, Queen Victoria wore a bracelet containing a lock of hair from her husband Albert after his death.⁴⁴ Emma Smith followed this tradition; after the death of Joseph, she wore a lock of his hair for the rest of her life.⁴⁵ Wearing jewelry made of a loved one’s hair was a physical token of memory well before the advent of photography.⁴⁶

In a typical, refined fashion for the time, the Manti Temple hair art featured a Victorian floral mourning wreath open at the top, symbolizing an ascent into heaven.⁴⁷ The message inscribed on the hair wreath articulates this belief: “These locks of hair, O Lord, thou hast seen us wear, so now we commit them to Thy Holy Temple’s care.” Their Relief Society minutes demonstrate their belief in God, the restoration, and their covenants constituting their individual salvation. This was an important concept for these women. On April 6,

36. Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 28 Apr. 1842, 36. See also Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 19 Apr. 1842, 31.

37. Elizabeth Ann Whitney, “A Leaf from an Autobiography,” *Woman’s Exponent* 7, no. 12 (15 Nov. 1878):91.

38. Clara L. Clawson, “Pioneer Stake,” *Woman’s Exponent* 34, no. 2–3 (Aug. 1905):14.

39. Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine Wright, “The Forms and the Power: The Development of Mormon Ritual Healing to 1847,” *Journal of Mormon History* 35, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 42–87; Jonathan A. Stapley and Kristine Wright, “Female Ritual Healing in Mormonism,” *Journal of Mormon History* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 1–85. See Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A House Full of Females: Plural Marriage and Women’s Rights in Early Mormonism, 1835–1870* (New York: Knopf, 2017), 135–183.

40. Manti South Relief Society, 4 Oct. 1888, 100.

41. C. Jeanenne Bell, *Collector’s Encyclopedia of Hairwork Jewelry: Identification and Values* (Paducah, KY: Collector Books, 1998), 8.

42. Lillian Baker Carlisle, “Hair Work Jewelry,” in *The Spinning Wheel’s Complete Book of Antiques*, ed. Albert Christian Revi (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1972), 416.

43. Marcia Pointon, “These Fragments I Have Shored against My Ruins,” in *The Story of Time*, ed. Kristen Lippincott (London: Merrell Holberton and National Maritime Museum, 1999), 293.

44. Michael J. Bernstein, “Hair Jewelry, Locks of Love,” *Smithsonian* 6, no. 12 (Mar. 1976):99; Navarro, “Hairwork of the Nineteenth Century,” 485–6; Lichten, *Decorative Art of Victoria’s Era*, 193.

45. Joseph Smith III, *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, ed. Mary Audentia Smith Anderson and Bertha Audentia Anderson Hulmes (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1952), 85. See Jennifer Reeder, *First: The Life and Faith of Emma Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2021), 160.

46. Gordon, “Victorian Hairwork,” 36.

47. Gordon, “Victorian Hairwork,” 38.

1882, Maria Jensen “urged the sisters to live faithful to their coven[an]ts.”⁴⁸ Shortly after the temple dedication, in a combined meeting with visitors to the temple from other locations, Sister Young spoke “of laboring here in the Temple, that the glory of God might be made manifest.” Sister Standing “rejoiced in the work of salvation. . . . That when our earthly career shall have finished, we may go back to the eternal presence of our God.”⁴⁹ Two months later, Sister O. C. Nelson testified, “it has strengthened me so much to go into the Temple that I cannot tell how much I encourage my sisters to go there. Many days have I been there I have felt that I could raise my voice and praise God.”⁵⁰

These Latter-day Saint women yearned to link their own physical bodies with a promised resurrection, where not one hair of their heads would be lost. They also wanted to share that eternal hope and connection with their deceased families. The Manti temple hair wreath encircled a baptismal font, where sacred ordinances were performed by proxy for the dead.⁵¹ As the temple neared completion, Sister O. C. Nielson “bore her Testamony to this work, we should live so, that we could do the work for our dead in the Temples.”⁵² Their work connected them to their families across both time and space. Sister Kimball exclaimed, “We can go in the

Temple and redeem our dead who have been in prison for thousands of years.”⁵³ The hair wreath represented their understanding of the temple work they could do therein.

Unfortunately, the popularity of hair art was fleeting; the practice declined when the Industrial Revolution prompted the commercial manufac-

We can cover each other with mercy and charity. We can fill the measure of our creation in more ways than posterity.

ture of goods.⁵⁴ Fear of disease and germs spread through human hair contributed to the demise.⁵⁵ Photography became more accessible to the general public, and as transportation and communication technology improved, hair art diminished almost entirely.⁵⁶ Victorian style transformed: dark, fussy ornaments appeared awkward and weighty compared to new light, sheer twentieth-century modern fashions.⁵⁷ The hair wreath illustrates a segment of popular memory that became unusable and virtually forgotten or considered unappealing. When artifacts are no longer used or needed, the collective memory loses capacity.⁵⁸ Hair wreaths were relegated as Victorian treacle for the walls of an outdated relic hall. The Manti Temple hair wreath is now in storage at the Church History Museum in Salt Lake City.

This hair wreath, though, is usable to us today, not only in studying lived religion and art history. It provokes the question: What do old-fashioned hair wreaths and bald heads have to do with Elder Maxwell and Elder Holland’s charge for disciple scholars?⁵⁹ I would like to propose four ways:

48. Manti South Relief Society minutes, vol. 1ss, 6.

49. Manti South Relief Society minutes, July 1888, 89.

50. Manti South Relief Society minutes, 19 Sep. 1888, 97.

51. Bernt G. Lundgren, “Janne Mattson Sjodahl—Baptist Minister, Convert to Mormonism, Editor, Author and Missionary,” MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971, 19.

52. Manti South Relief Society Minutes, 3 Nov. 1887, 78.

53. Manti South Relief Society Minutes, 19 Sep. 1888, 96–97.

54. Blersch, “Victorian Jewelry Made of Hair,” 43.

55. Navarro, “Hairwork of the Nineteenth Century,” 491, 486.

56. Gordon, “Victorian Hairwork,” 38; Martha A. Sandweiss, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 6, 11.

57. Sheumaker, *Love Entwined*, viii.

58. Edward Tabor Linenthal, *Preserving Memory: The Struggle to Create America’s Holocaust Museum* (New York: Viking, 1995), 107.

59. See Neal A. Maxwell, “The Disciple-Scholar,” in *On Becoming a Disciple Scholar*, ed. Henry B. Eyring (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995); Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Maxwell Legacy in the 21st Century,” Neal A. Maxwell Lecture, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 10 Nov. 2018.



1. EMPATHY.

Although as scholars we have an academic responsibility to objectively separate ourselves from our subjects, at the same time, we need to collapse the historic distance.⁶⁰ We cannot be presentist. We must seek context, and I believe, part of that context is empathy. My cancer experience introduced me to a deep vulnerability; my bald head helped me to see the women I write about in much more personal ways. When Eliza Lyman lost her hair in Winter Quarters, I understood. At the same location, when Jane Snyder Richards lost a toddler and a baby while her husband was on a mission, she was all alone. She wrote of the experience, “I only lived because I could not die.”⁶¹ I get it. In trying to write fairly and accurately about Emma Smith, I recognized the emotional trauma she experienced on many fronts.⁶² We must understand our subjects in a personal way and not judge them according to today’s standards.

I loved doing biographical research for *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women*. My responsibility lay over the first half of the book: 1830–1920. Once we had selected the sermons, I dug into biographical research about my female orators. Some of them were hard to find, leaving very little in the textual record. But as I dug deeply, I discovered Jane Neyman, who had been rejected from joining the Nauvoo Relief Society in 1842 yet went on to become the first Relief Society president in Beaver, Utah. She spoke of the mantle of charity to cover all sins, and the need to refrain from unneeded judgment. I love that physical connotation of a mantle covering our sins. I immediately recognized Jane’s vulnerabilities as she had suffered greatly from gossip in Nauvoo. Eleanor Jones presented a beautiful discourse on prayer, but I couldn’t find information about her anywhere. She hid herself from the public record, but I discovered that she had been born into a multi-racial family in the South before the Civil War. She joined the Church and came to Utah, where the census recorded her every year as “white.” She, too, was extremely vulnerable, yet from her

60. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

61. Jane Snyder Richards, *Reminiscence*, 1880, holograph, 20–21, CHL.

62. See Reeder, *First: The Life and Faith of Emma Smith*.



vulnerability came a rich testimony of her relationship with God. “There is no prison so dark, no pit so deep, no expanse so broad, that the Spirit of God cannot enter; and when all other privileges are denied us, we can pray, and God will hear us.”⁶³

Personal vulnerabilities toward our subjects—and with our colleagues—make us stronger disciple scholars.

2. EXPAND DEFINITIONS.

Who among you, I ask, would have ever considered finding discipleship in hair wreaths? I propose that we expand our definitions, not only of viable sources and random topics, but of a larger understanding of discipleship. Let’s not limit ourselves to traditional practices and media. Let’s expand to include women and global voices and material culture. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich masterfully demonstrates how material culture adds to the names, numbers, locations, and other quantitative data and brings in less prominent voices.⁶⁴ We should push ourselves beyond what we think are our limits and boundaries in order for the grace of Jesus Christ to expand and magnify us, to make more of us than we might have believed. As people of the House of Israel and the Abrahamic Covenant, we can be as the sands of the sea and the stars of the sky, but we should consider the diverse ways in which we can accomplish that. The hairs of our heads may do so much more than look good after a proper cut. We can cover each other with mercy and charity. We can fill the measure of our creation in more ways than posterity. Let’s look beyond that.

3. CONSECRATION.

When President Woodruff asked the Saints in Manti to contribute to the interior of the Manti Temple, women and children found ways to contribute, even with rag carpets and hair. They created with what they had. In Kirtland, women did not donate their best china, as the story is often told. Instead, children gathered broken glass and dishes for the stucco. This is not a story of second-best, but an example of usable past. Our history is

63. Ellenor G. Jones, “The Power of Prayer,” in *At the Pulpit: 185 Years of Discourses by Latter-day Saint Women*, ed. Jennifer Reeder and Kate Holbrook (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2017), 77.

64. See Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Knopf, 2001).

not perfectly whole, but contains gaps, breaches, and repairs.⁶⁵ When we expand the definition of consecration, we look to and understand those broken parts, especially when they are of a much more serious consequence, like race or polygamy. We recognize them and accept them, just as we recognize and accept our own broken and imperfect contributions.

When my leukemia recurred the first time in 2013, I received a priesthood blessing from a friend. He told me that I had a work to do, which I interpreted as my career in nineteenth-century Latter-day Saint women's history. He said that the Lord would preserve my life until my work was completed. I had a bone marrow transplant followed by another period of good work. Skip ahead to a third recurrence in 2016 and the need for a second transplant: I was done. I did not want to go through the intense physical and mental demands of transplant preparation and recovery. But I remembered that blessing in 2013, and I had an inkling that my work was not yet done; I felt a responsibility to do all I could to preserve my body to do that work. That was my consecration, with scar tissue in my lungs, a bald head, and an oxygen tank. I draw again on Elder Maxwell's teachings on consecration as "both a principle and a process, and it is not tied to a single moment. Instead, it is freely given, drop by drop, until the cup of consecration brims and finally runs over."⁶⁶


Our consecrations are both miniscule and grand, and they are all a part of a much larger work beyond our abilities. But oh, what a delight to be fellow Saints in a living church.

4. RECOGNIZE THE ONGOING RESTORATION.

Shortly before she died, Emma Smith spoke with her sons, Joseph III and Alexander. She said, "I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired." She described her experience in the restoration. "It is marvelous to me, a 'marvel and a wonder.'"⁶⁷ Emma positioned herself squarely in the middle of it all, exactly where she should be.

One of the three purposes of the Church History Department where I work is to witness and defend the truths of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. My colleagues and I get to do that every day. And yet it's not all stars and hearts and unicorns. We have to dig deep and do hard work. We explore what Elder Maxwell calls "wintry doctrine" and "pincushion periods."⁶⁸ Pincushions can take a toll on one's fingertips and on one's soul, but this is all part of discipleship.

We belong to this great fellowship: me, Emma, Eliza, Mary Wintch in Manti, Ellenor Jones, the woman to whom I minister, my colleagues in the Church History Department. Our consecrations are both miniscule and grand, and they are all a part of a much larger work beyond our abilities. But oh, what a delight to be fellow Saints in a living church. We have done much work, and there is much work to do. Let's lace up our shoes and eat our vitamin pills.⁶⁹

Wilford Woodruff noted that all those who contributed to the Manti Temple would have their names "recorded in the Archives of the Temple."⁷⁰ Sometimes that record is material rather than textual—the stuff of discipleship. May we learn from our past and use it in our quest as disciple scholars. 

65. See Jennifer Reeder, "Fault Lines Amended: Repairing the Breaches," in *Immediate Present*, ed. Laura Allred Hurtado (New York: Mormon Arts Center, 2017), 57.


66. Neal A. Maxwell, "Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father," General Conference, Oct. 1995.

67. Joseph Smith III, "Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *The Saints' Herald* 26, no. 19 (1 Oct. 1879): 289.

68. Neal A. Maxwell, "The Pathway of Discipleship," CES fireside, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, 4 Jan. 1998, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/neal-a-maxwell/pathway-discipleship/>.

69. Russell M. Nelson, in "Latter-day Saint Prophet, Wife and Apostle Share Insights of Global Ministry," Newsroom, 30 Oct. 2018, newsroom.churchofJesusChrist.org.

70. Woodruff, 84.

A photograph of a winter landscape. In the foreground, a snow-covered path leads into a forest. The trees are bare and covered in a thick layer of snow. The sky is overcast and grey. The overall mood is quiet and serene.

*"I bear you my witness that there is
in fact a prophetic destiny for this
university. It is part of the rolling
forth of the kingdom of God. And the
Maxwell Institute is part of that in the
present and in the future. We will do
what we can and then we will be still
and watch with amazement what the
Lord does with our work."*

—PRESIDENT KEVIN J WORTHEN





Documenting a Relationship: Early Latter-day Saints and the Book of Mormon

JANIECE JOHNSON

PAST LAURA F. WILLES RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (2017–2021)

2021 Laura F. Willes Lecture—13 November 2021

“**E**at this scroll,” the voice said unto Ezekiel. “Mortal, eat this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it. Then I ate it; and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey.” (Ezekiel 3:1, 3 NRSV)

The biblical books of Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Revelation all speak of eating scrolls, words, and little books. The imagery is arresting. In Jeremiah, to eat of God’s words is a joyous thing, and the action of eating enacts transformation—it produces a relationship with the Lord God of hosts. (Jeremiah 15:16) In Revelation, the little book was both sweet in the mouth and bitter in the belly, yet it still prepared the Revelator for God’s will. (Revelation 10:9–10) The words of scripture are never just words—they are a vehicle for change. I see the imagery as an attempt to capture the numinous experience of being changed by the word of God. This is about both the embodied physical action of eating scripture as well as its effect on the spirit—it is about the whole soul.

Now there is enough intriguing imagery of people eating holy things in the biblical text that we could spend our time with that; however, I want to consider what is left behind—the material markers of a people who have been changed by the Word—those changed by a relationship with sacred text. When believers eat the Word of God, what is left behind to document their transformation? Can those remnants tell us something of their souls?

The earliest Latter-day Saints were already a “people of the book”—they were a people of the Bible. They learned to read with Bible primers. They were immersed in the Bible from a young age and knew it inside and

out. As did Jeremiah, they ate God's words, rejoiced in them, and were changed by them. They saw themselves in the Bible; they likened the Bible unto themselves long before they heard of Nephi or Joseph Smith. As Phil Barlow has conclusively demonstrated, they would never leave their Bibles behind.¹ Yet with the Book of Mormon, they expand their notion of *sola scriptura*—the Bible as the ultimate authority—to include a new book of scripture and a new prophet who could consistently reveal more. They became a people of the *books*. Initially a pejorative, those earliest Saints received their nickname from that first new scripture—the Book of Mormon.²

Scripture never functions in just one way. Beginning with Grant Underwood in the mid-1980s, and then bolstered by Jan Shipps and Terryl Givens, scholars illustrated that one of the ways in which the Book of Mormon functioned in early periodicals, tracts, and missionary journals was as a signal or a sign. The Book signaled that Joseph Smith was a prophet, that the heavens were opened, and that charismatic gifts had been restored. It authoritatively signaled where the faithful should gather for the advent of the second coming.³ However, the analysis of outwardly facing missionary tracts and newspaper articles alone does not yield a sense of the context surrounding those sources—they show how missionaries shared the gospel message.

More recently, scholars have shown us that the Book of Mormon was a central spring for expanding ecclesiology, liturgy, and missiology.⁴ Its content mattered and shaped the restored church as it grew. However, to access the soul of lived religion, we need more. It is possible that theological claims did not center lived religious life. It is more likely that theological claims inhabit a corner of a much broader scope of religious experience. None of these approaches address the personal role of the Book of Mormon in the daily lives and practice of early Latter-day Saints—and they rely on men's writings almost exclusively. Early American religious historical trends like declension, feminization, and secularization were all eradicated, or at least significantly transformed, when later studies included women's sources.⁵

The words of scripture are never just words—they are a vehicle for change.

The historical development of theology privileges a certain category of religious ideas, yet does little to reveal one's soul. Implicit within reliance on a narrow subset of sources are assumptions about who makes theology. For some, theology is the dominion of the elites—a privileged academic realm that relishes its seclusion. However, that need not be the case—perhaps even more particularly for Latter-day Saints. As David Holland argues, “everyone’s a theologian.”⁶ For feminist theologian Rosemary Radford-Ruether, theology is simply “God-talk”: it is how human beings make sense of their interactions with the divine.⁷ As such, we are all theologians as we work to understand our relationship with God.

The primary concern of theology that reflects experience is not in the articulation of complex tenets; rather, it is how individuals understand their encounter with the numinous—the spiritual, the divine. Moreover, the voices included will not just be the elites but will include the full spectrum of the individual voices that make

1. Phil Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
2. See Janiece Johnson, “Becoming a People of the Books: Toward an Understanding of Early Mormon Converts and the New Word of the Lord,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 27 (2018): 1–43.
3. Grant Underwood, “Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology,” *Dialogue* 17/3 (1984): 35–74; Jan Shipps and John W. Welch, eds., *The Journals of William E. McLellin, 1831–1836* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 1994), 6–7; Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture That Launched a New World Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 64, 82–88.
4. Mark Ashurst-McGee, “Zion Rising: Joseph Smith’s Early Social and Political Thought” (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2008); Michael Hubbard MacKay, Gerrit Dirkmaat, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and William G. Hartley, eds., *Joseph Smith Papers Documents*, Vol. 1: *July 1828–June 1831* (Salt Lake City: Church Historians Press, 2013), 368–70.
5. Ann Braude, “Women’s History Is American Religious History,” in *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, ed. Thomas A. Tweed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 87–107.
6. “Briefly Moroni,” Maxwell Institute Podcast with David Holland and Spencer Fluhman, 17 November 2020, #122, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjVe1yPQ6nk>.
7. Rosemary Radford-Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

up the body of Christ. If all contribute to the body of Christ, all have a voice that should be heard. For a people who believe that one of the ways that Joseph Smith acted as an antidote to chaos was in his restoring the ability of all to “speak in the name of God,” an expansive notion of theology should be a central concern to us as Latter-day Saints. (D&C 1:17–20)

Moreover, ignoring women’s experience distorts our view of the past. This isn’t just a matter of including a token woman to avoid charges of gender exclusivity, but our goal is a better and more complete understanding of history. That will also include ordinary members of the church in many lands as the gospel spreads across the globe. Joseph’s equitable impulse encouraged individuals to develop their own relationship to the Book of Mormon and then share it with others. Male editors publishing church newspapers were never the only ones to accept, read, and interpret the Book of Mormon. If we continue to expand our source material, we expand our vision of early converts and their relationship with the Book of Mormon.

In 1841, Wilford Woodruff recorded Joseph Smith’s now well-known declaration that the Book of Mormon was “the most correct of any book, the keystone of our religion” and promised that one would get “nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”⁸ This declaration centers the Book of Mormon for the Church of Jesus Christ and extends a promise about practice. One needs to learn precepts to choose to abide them. Amongst the mundane glimmer fragmentary scraps of how individuals developed a relationship with this new book of scripture. And when pulled together we see a “cloud of witnesses” testifying how immersing oneself in scripture—eating it—can transform one’s soul. (Hebrews 12:1)

Despite our best attempts at retrieving the past and understanding the experience of individuals, not all relationships leave behind evidence. Autobiographies of early Latter-day Saints nearly always include how

one converted to the Book of Mormon—however, they are not always explicit about if or how their relationship with the Book developed over time. Some purposefully wrote about their relationship with the Book of Mormon, others leave us to scour for significant hints in their writings, others leave a material record of this relationship.

The historical development of theology privileges a certain category of religious ideas, yet does little to reveal one’s soul.

Some Saints gained a witness when they touched the Book for the first time. In that moment their own spiritual experience manifested the divine origin of the Book. Zina Huntington wrote that she felt “the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit to such an extent” that she knew it was true.⁹ Ezra Thayre received “a shock with such exquisite joy” when he touched the Book, he turned to an ancient hymn to express the insufficiency of words to describe the weight of his experience. Moreover, as he continued to read, he felt a “double portion of the Spirit” expand that initial witness.¹⁰ Others likewise struggle to find the earth-bound words that reveal the weight of their experience with the divine.

For some, a witness came quickly; yet for most, the practice of reading became a necessary conduit for them to gain their own witness. And it could take time. It didn’t work the same way for all. Yet, as they put in the time, they could develop a relationship with the text, and it could change them.

The practice of reading could begin such a relationship. Some early Saints prefer reading the Book themselves to hearing what a missionary said about it. Sarah DeArmon Pea let missionaries talk to the rest of her family, while she retired to another room to be able to read for herself. Though she only read for a few hours that night, the words stayed with her. She wrote, “It left an impression upon my mind not to be forgotten:—For in fact the book appeared to be open before my eyes for weeks.”¹¹

8. Wilford Woodruff, Journal, November 28, 1841, Journals, 1833–1898. Wilford Woodruff, Journals and Papers, 1828–1898, LDS Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah. Hereafter CHL.

9. Zina D. H. Young, “How I Gained My Testimony,” *Young Woman’s Journal* 4/7 (April 1893): 318.

10. “Testimony of Brother E. Thayre concerning the Latter Day Work,” *True Latter Day Saints’ Herald* 3/4 (October 1862): 79–82.

11. Sarah De Armon Pea Rich, Autobiography (1814–1893), L. Tom Perry Special Collections, BYU Lee Library, Provo, Utah. Hereafter LTPSC BYU.



When there was a shortage of Books, some of the earliest converts listened to the Book of Mormon in a group setting, like the earliest Christians listened to letters and gospels. In the Kirtland temple, it was acceptable to read long chapters of the Book of Mormon out loud as a part of the weekly church service—Wilford Woodruff read all of Jacob 5 one Sunday and then offered his interpretation. And no one balked. Some mark their regular practice with a simple mention. Sixteen-year-old Mary Parker Haskin noted in her journal that she read her Book of Mormon after helping her mother with dinner.¹²

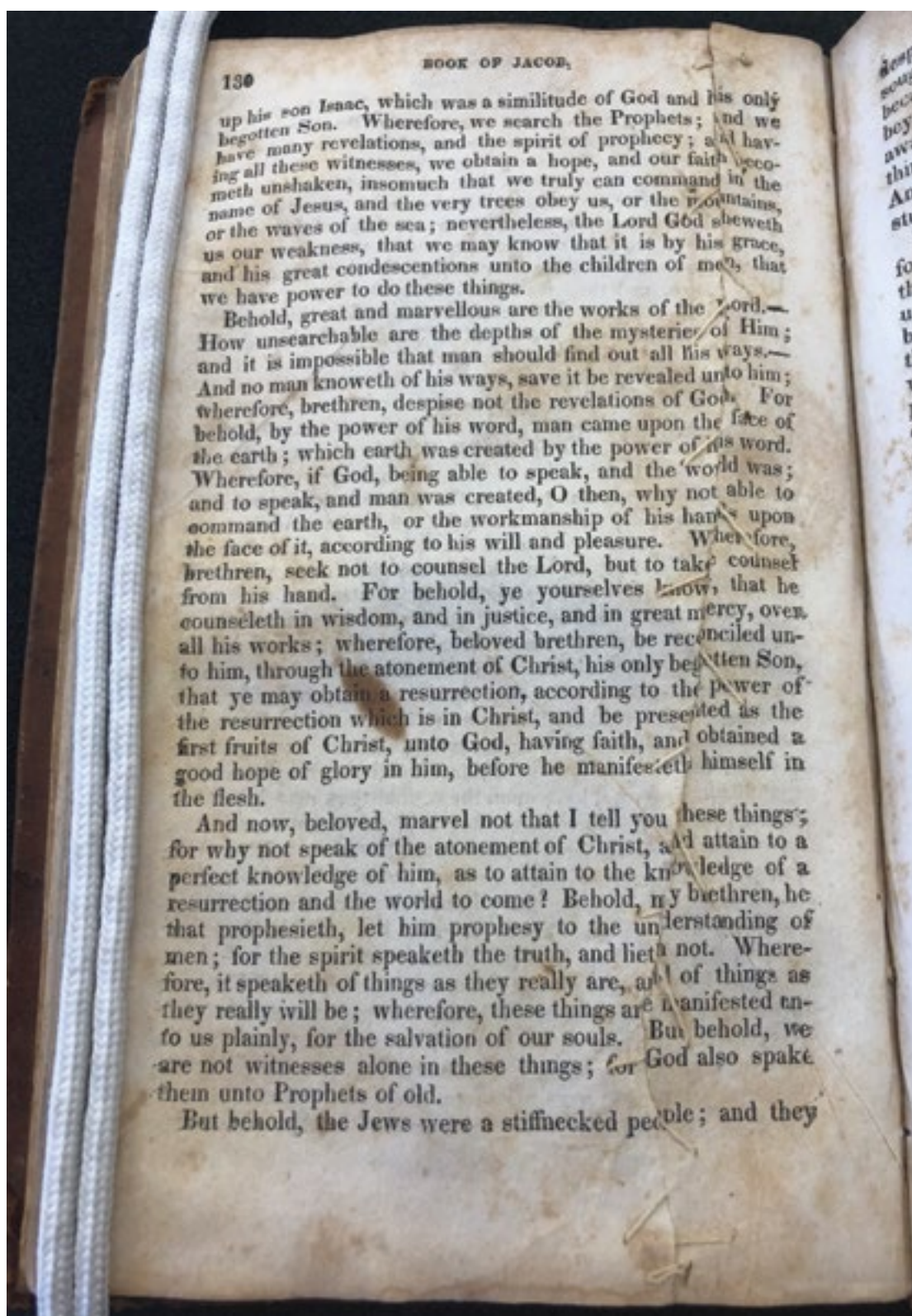
Beginning in Kirtland some Saints began to name their children after people in the Book of Mormon. Prior to her baptism, Nancy Tracy named her first son from the Bible, Eli, Samuel's priest mentor and also the name of her brother. She wanted her second son to have a "big name" out of the Book of Mormon and named him Lachoneus Moroni. She then named her third son Moses Mosiah, the two sticks of scripture together in one child.¹³ This practice became commonplace. After 1844 all of Parley Pratt's sons and one adopted daughter were given Book of Mormon names. Beginning with the town of Lamoni, Iowa, across the river from Nauvoo, the Saints often named places after the Book of Mormon. When the Saints arrived in present-day Utah, they proposed a massive state of Deseret, invoking the Book of Mormon word. They continued to look to Book of Mormon names, alongside biblical names, all along the Latter-day Saint corridor.

Place names offer a material marker of practice; more personal were those who left material signs of their practice with the Book. Some early Saints created their own reading charts to enable them to read the whole Book of Mormon "by course" in a chosen period—meaning they planned to read from beginning to end. The Saints were familiar with Bible charts that detailed the number of chapters in each book. An individual could take these numbers and plan that if they wanted to read the Book of Mormon in a year, they would need to read just over two chapters a week in their 1837 edition, 4.5 chapters in the post-1879 editions. The owner of one 1837 edition never wrote their name in the book but crafted their own reading chart. The chart tracked both the number of original Book of Mormon chapters and then the more than double number of chapters with Orson Pratt's 1879 edition, apparently using different editions of the Book in tandem as they read.

The single most frequent writing practice in nineteenth-century Books of Mormon is just a list of page numbers inside the cover of a Book to remember the location of important passages. Perhaps they shared the Book; perhaps they had no expectation that they would get another and didn't want to write all over the book. As writing in Books expands over the nineteenth century, the marginalia of many early Saints read as synopses of important pages in their Books of Mormon. These are the types of marginalia that occur most frequently in nineteenth-century Books: people trying to understand and remember a complicated narrative. The first level

12. Quoted in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, eds., *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 173.

13. Nancy Naomi Alexander Tracy, "Reminiscences and Diary," typescript, 1846, CHL.



A repaired (hand-sewn) page from 1830 edition of The Book of Mormon (courtesy of Janiece Johnson)

of understanding the Book of Mormon was the stories through which readers worked to understand their own experiences.

The Saints continued practices that were part of how they interacted with the Bible—including some that have gone on for centuries. The drawing of an index finger pointing to the text—what today we might call a manicule—shows up in manuscripts as early as the 12th century signaling something important. Patience Cowdery drew a small index pointing to what today is 1 Nephi 15 and Nephi’s interpretation of his father’s prophecy that “then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed,” certainly of central importance to the purpose of the Book.¹⁴

Patience Cowdery and others crafted their own personalized indices. Hers might have been created as she read. Frederick G. Williams crafted his index, alphabetized it, and then inked it inside the back cover and fly leaf, also including a list of books mentioned but not found in the Bible. The first index to the Book of Mormon was printed in 1835 and was sewn or bound into some first editions. William McLellin had it sewn into his, however, he still created his own.¹⁵ He started his personal index neatly in ink and seems to have continued adding to his complex system over significant time, resulting in an index that covers five pages. Each subject term lists every page in the book on which it is found, and each subject is appointed a sign (or symbol). Using his ministering entry as an example, he lists 55 times that “ministry, ministering or ministered” are found in the Book of Mormon and then gives the topic a symbol, an equal sign. He then marked each individual place where ministering is mentioned in the book—sometimes multiple times on a single page. This Book yields evidence of a relationship that continued to grow over time, one that would last longer than McLellin’s relationship with the restored church.

When a Book became worn or torn, some Saints without the prospect of a new Book mended their bindings and pages. Though the mending in these instances do not always exhibit great skill, they do exhibit great care. Keeping the Book together and its contents accessible was of primary importance—not even one page could be lost.

Families handed down Books that individuals used over years. Florence Barney was nineteen when she received an 1877 edition of the Book of Mormon.¹⁶ Yet the chapters were different from her contemporaries’ post-1879 editions. Florence made her copy more accessible by adding all the new chapter breaks. She could now read in community.

An 1873 German edition belonged to a German immigrant, Johan Kauer, living in Rexburg, Idaho.¹⁷ Extensive marginalia demonstrates that Johan read this book again and again over years. His marginalia include summaries, cross references, and theological interpretations. He, like Florence, continued to use his book after the publication of the new 1879 English edition. Since the 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon was the first to be versified, he marked not only all the new chapters, but every single verse on those nearly 600 pages. He was comfortable with his German Book of Mormon, perhaps not ready to switch to English scriptures. But he altered his Book, making it possible for him to sit in community with the Rexburg Saints as they studied together.

For some of the early Saints, ingesting the Word transformed the words that came out of their own mouths or flowed from their quills. Though Lucy Mack Smith’s first edition of the Book of Mormon doesn’t contain any

Though the mending in these instances do not always exhibit great skill, they do exhibit great care. Keeping the Book together and its contents accessible was of primary importance—not even one page could be lost.

14. *Book of Mormon* (Kirtland, Ohio: P. P. Pratt and J. Goodson, 1837), Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

15. *Book of Mormon* (Palmyra: Joseph Smith, 1830), Special Collections, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, California.

16. *Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Cannon and Young, 1877), LTPSC BYU.

17. *Das Buch Mormon* (Bern, Switzerland: John Taylor, 1873), Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

writing to reveal how she developed a relationship with the Book, her writing and dictations reveal much. In the letter that inspired my project, Lucy Mack Smith described the Book of Mormon to her brother and sister-in-law in early 1831, just nine months after the publication of the Book.¹⁸ The Smith family's mother tongue was the language of the King James Bible, yet this letter demonstrates how quickly Lucy's notion of scripture and her own tongue expanded to include the Book of Mormon. The letter is dense with quotes, paraphrases, and echoes of Book of Mormon language; in fact, over half of it is distinct Book of Mormon language. Years later, she demonstrated just how much the book changed her whole expression in the dictated history of her son. Scripture, particularly from the Book of Mormon, weaves through the biography.¹⁹

These early converts had already seen themselves and their lives through biblical text. More scriptural narrative offered them additional language to understand their own experience with God. Solomon Chamberlain felt a parallel between the experience of Enos in the Book of Mormon and his own experience of converting to Christianity—long before his conversion to the Church. The words of Enos became his own as he wrote his autobiography: “I cried unto the Lord night and day for forgiveness of my sins, like Enos of old, till at length the Lord said ‘Solomon, thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace and sin no more.’”²⁰ When British convert Harriet Goble Bird read the Book of Mormon for the first time, she considered it the most “beautiful book” she ever read. Soon after, she heard a Latter-day Saint elder speak and, in her autobiography, she described how “the scales of darkness fell from my mind and visions of eternity were opened to my view, and tears of joy fell from my eyes. I knew Mormonism was true.” Like Nephi's prophecy of the future Lamanites, the scales began to fall from her own eyes and enabled her to recognize the truth of the restored church. Shortly thereafter she confronted her former minister and found her expression in Nephi's words. She bore her testimony and called

him to repentance, declaring, “If you don't repent, I will meet you before the bar of God with this testimony.”²¹

An affinity with the Book of Mormon could be strong enough to be shared with friends and passed down through family. A seeker who had passed through several different churches,

Scriptural narrative offered them additional language to understand their own experience with God.

Kirtland resident John Murdock was another example of one who wanted to read for himself rather than to listen to the missionaries. After being converted to the Book as new scripture, he began preaching the Book of Mormon to his family and neighbors, and he then extended his work, traveling to other towns to preach the Book—before ever receiving a missionary call. He only had two Books with him so he “appoint[ed] meetings to read the Book of Mormon and invited all who wished to come and hear and it operated [*sic*] for good.” Sharing the Book with others was a consistent part of his life. It weaves through his own writings to such an extent that his relationship with the Book is indisputable. He felt such a strong kinship with Mormon that he later channeled Mormon and made his own abridgement of his personal writings titled, “An Abridged Record of the Life of John Murdock, taken from his Journal by Himself” His last entry is 7 June 1867. He wrote, “I must soon lay my tabernacle down to rest” and expressed his hope for resurrection and his thankfulness to God, ending his words as a prayer in the name of Christ. The next entry reads, “I, Gideon A. Murdock, proceed to finish the record of my Father.” Like Moroni, Gideon picked up his father's record and completed his witness.²²

18. Lucy Mack Smith to Solomon Mack, January 1831, CHL.

19. See Janiece Johnson, “Lucy Mack Smith and Her Sacred Text,” in *Open Canon: The Scriptures of the Latter-day Saint Diaspora*, University of Utah Press, forthcoming 2022.

20. Autobiography of Solomon Chamberlain, LTPSC BYU, 1.

21. Harriet Goble Bird, *Sketch of the Life of Harriet Goble Bird* (Nephi, Utah: Record Publishing Co., n.d.), 3-9. 2 Nephi 33:11, cf. Jacob 9: 6,13; Mosiah 16: 10; Alma 5:22, 11:44, and 12:12.

22. John Murdock, [Journal], LTPSC BYU.



Not all experienced the full blessings of the gospel in mortality as did John Murdock, however. For early Black Latter-day Saints Jane Manning James and Samuel Chambers, restoration scripture highlighted the emancipatory promise of the gospel that they did not yet experience within their Latter-day Saint community.

The daughter of an emancipated mother, Jane was born a free person in Connecticut in the 1820s. She likely worked as an indentured servant from a young age. Quincy Newell argues that she probably learned to read and possibly to write while working. In 1842, she heard a missionary preach, and she was soon baptized. She and her family gathered with the Saints in Nauvoo in late 1843 after a harsh journey.²³



19th-century copies of The Book of Mormon (courtesy of Janiece Johnson)

Jane's two patriarchal blessings use scripture—in conflicting ways, perhaps encouraging her own reading of scripture—urging her to find her place in the kingdom of God. Jane's own account in the *Young Woman's Journal* described her personal practice with scripture, "I used to read in the Bible so much and in the Book of Mormon and Revelations, and now I have to sit and can't see to read."²⁴ As her eyesight dimmed, Jane lamented the loss of reading scripture herself, yet she had already developed a relationship with scripture. And that relationship continued.

The Church History Library has an image in their collection we believe is Jane. At the time, individuals planned their studio portraits, carefully choosing what they would wear and what objects they wanted to highlight. After examining hundreds of these studio photos, Quincy Newell pointed out that in contrast to most, Jane chose to include a book in her portrait, a book under her left elbow that is the right size to be an 1870s era Book of Mormon.²⁵ Jane chose to emphasize her relationship with a book to document herself to her posterity and to the world.

Echoes of and allusions to the Book of Mormon and other Restoration scripture pepper her autobiography. When Jane met Joseph in Nauvoo, she remembered him greeting her and asking if she was the head of this "little band," the same phrase used in Alma to describe the two

thousand stripling warriors. Though small, the shared language of scriptural allusion offers an appeal to the authority of scripture as well as imbuing her history with the authority of spiritual experience.

In 1884, Jane wrote to President John Taylor requesting that she might be sealed as a child to Joseph and Emma Smith. The letter "concerning her future salvation" was short and yet included multiple references to each book of the standard works. She did not try to undo all scriptural interpretations that affected her negatively, including interpretations regarding the mark of Cain, however, she used the language of scripture

23. Quincy Newell, *Your Sister in the Gospel: The Life of Jane Manning James* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

24. Jane James, "Aunt' Jane James" in "Joseph Smith, the Prophet," *Young Woman's Journal* 16:551-552.

25. Quincy Newell, "Afflicting the Comfortable: Jane James, American Racism, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," Maxwell Institute Lecture, 18 October 2019.


and argued for herself using the example of scripture—most poignantly pointing to Abraham. The same text that other contemporaries used to bolster their arguments that she and all others of African descent should be excluded from temple blessings, she used to argue for the extension of blessings to her and her Black brothers and sisters. The Book of Mormon taught Jane and other Black Latter-day Saints that “all are alike unto God,” reinforcing the consistent scriptural claim that God was not a respecter of persons. (2 Nephi 26:33)

Samuel Chambers lived his early life in Mississippi. As an enslaved teenager, at the age of thirteen he learned of the gospel and was baptized in 1844. Without a local LDS congregation, Samuel attended Baptist church services with other enslaved people from local plantations. After emancipation, he saved for years to gather with the Saints in Utah. He, along with his wife Amanda and her extended family, journeyed together to Utah in 1870. (Samuel had shared the gospel with all of them.) The Chamberses had “mormon books, nothing but mormon books” in their home and shared those books with others.²⁶

Samuel was not ordained to a priesthood office as was Elijah Able and a handful of other Black men. In Salt Lake, in 1873, Samuel was set apart as an assistant to the deacons’ quorum. The meticulous notes of British convert T. C. Jones document Samuel Chambers’ witness and the influence of scripture on him. Chambers spoke 29 times over three-and-a-half years in his deacons’ quorum. We see him likening scripture unto himself and focusing on the emancipatory promise of Restoration scripture. Chambers frequently and specifically quotes, paraphrases, alludes to and echoes scripture—the Book of Mormon more than anything else. Though he never explicitly petitions for priesthood ordination, in a multitude of ways he implicitly demonstrates his worthiness to receive more and more of the blessings as well as the responsibilities as an active member of Christ’s church—as well as opening the way for his sisters and brothers of African descent.

Though small, the shared language of scriptural allusion offers an appeal to the authority of scripture as well as imbuing her history with the authority of spiritual experience.


On a December night in 1874, Samuel shared his testimony with his quorum, paraphrasing a verse from the Book of Mormon. “I was born in a condition of slavery, and received the gospel in that condition,” he said. “I realized I had done right. I received the spirit of God. . . . It is not only to the Gentiles but also to the African, for I am of that race.”²⁷ As Chambers paraphrased, he “likened” scripture unto himself and expanded the Book of Mormon promise that the gospel would be taken to the Gentiles, and also to the Jews (1 Nephi 22:9; D&C 112:4). As Samuel likened scripture unto himself, he, like Jane, found a place for himself in the restoration and demonstrated his fitness to receive more truth and more responsibility among the people of God.

To return to the image that we started with, eating scrolls, words, and little books, all can transform the one who eats. As Jeremiah spoke to the Lord, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts.” (Jeremiah 15:16) Scripture functions in a multiplicity of ways; as individuals develop a relationship with the text, it opens the possibility of transformation and relationship. As President Russell M. Nelson has reminded us, “Immersing ourselves regularly in the Book of Mormon can be a life-changing experience.”²⁸ These early Latter-day Saints offer us a “cloud of witnesses” that the Book was transformative for them. (Hebrews 12:1) It can be for us, too. 

26. Janiece Johnson and Quincy Newell, “Not Only to the Gentiles, but Also to the African: Samuel Chambers and Scripture,” article manuscript under review.

27. Salt Lake Stake, *Salt Lake Stake Aaronic Priesthood Minutes and Records*, volume 2: 1873-77, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, 102.

28. Russell M. Nelson, “The Book of Mormon: What Would Your Life Be Like Without It?” *Conference Report*, October 2017.



*“To my mind, the enduring presence of
BYU and the Maxwell Institute drive
home the truth that there will be no
point when God’s people can sit back,
take stock of what he has given, and say
‘it is enough.’ There can be no coasting
towards Zion.”*

—J. SPENCER FLUHMANN





"Building a Beloved Community"

REVEREND DR. ANDREW TEAL

CHAPLAIN, FELLOW, AND LECTURER IN THEOLOGY AT PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Delivered at the BYU campus forum—26 October 2021

Thank you for that generous presentation and kind introduction—not least the film from my beloved Damon Wells Chapel in Pembroke College, named after a generous and gracious gentleman who not only restored the Chapel and has supported it, but also endowed the chaplaincy and chaplain. Damon died last week in Houston, Texas: may he rest in peace and rise in glory.

It is a great privilege to stand here before all your verdant strength of youth and to be able to reflect with you what it means for us to strive to build a beloved community. Last month, Martin Luther King III introduced this series of fora, reflecting upon how we might better become a beloved community.

I need to start with a short introductory thanks to all who have made this possible in difficult circumstances. My time at BYU had a rather unexpected start—I'll come back to that later—but it's appropriate today for me to ask myself 'How do I feel?' and 'What's my responsibility in talking to you, my dear friends, in whose debt I will ever be?'

How do I feel? I feel a little overwhelmed, but immensely grateful. What is my responsibility? I think to start with the need to avoid the temptation to say things in order that you might love or like me! Of course, we need to be loved, we need to be understood, but, actually, that would be a very self-centred way of viewing this time together. Of course, I want you to like me because a lot of you can run a lot faster than I can at the moment! But my obligation is that I express my love for you. In 2 Nephi 1:25, a text that has lodged in my heart since I first read it, it's clear that the Book of Mormon's testimony to the truth of Jesus Christ is not manipulation, or the desire to take power and authority over others, but to see and celebrate the glory of God in service and love.

You will remember that Father Lehi tries his hardest always to reconcile his feuding sons; he wants them to see the truth and to appreciate God's work in each other. He confronts his rebellious sons for accusing Nephi of seeking power and authority over them. He says: "I know that he had not sought for power nor authority over you but he hath sought the glory of God, and your own eternal welfare." (2 Nephi 1:25)

I'd go so far as to ask the Lord to stay my lips if I veer into manipulation or self-interest, rather than words of mission and love.

Where do we start? With the wonder that we are already called into being as a beloved community: we are all beloved *now*. The Lord has called us together because he simply can't take his eyes off us in love. So we need to reflect that wonder. We need to show that whoever somebody is, whatever their colour, creed, background, gender, orientation—you name it—the Lord loves you. That's the baseline. We don't have to build that, that's *the Fact*.

Sometimes, in our past as religious communities of various hues, we have been too quick to speak, too eager to judge, too slow to listen and to communicate the Lord's love. We speak today of a cancel-culture, deliberately demonising and diminishing those with whom we disagree, but some of our different religious communities' approaches to minorities or powerless people indeed have nurtured this response. So, we have to listen and learn and love.

Then we will also find that it is necessary that a beloved community has boundaries, and norms, and expectations: no one should be hurt or damaged on the Lord's holy mountain, there cannot be exploitation, we cannot seek to exploit the vulnerable, or collude with oppression or unkindness; we must especially safeguard the most vulnerable—those who need our help the most. The Roman Catholic community in America, Ireland, France and the UK, along with Anglicans in the UK too, has betrayed sacred trusts much to our shame. *Being* a beloved community is also necessarily *building* a beloved community which is safe, being near enough to be trusted, but far enough ahead to be worth following, listening, and being accountable.

That is also countercultural. King Benjamin purged contention from the land according to the Book of Mosiah: inspiring us to have a mind not to injure one another but to live peaceably, pitching our tents towards the holiness of God and the temple, peaceably using our agency. *Being* a beloved community means daily beginning again at *building* this beloved community. That's hard, 'Every day to begin again' as the Rule of St. Benedict has it. Most of us want *certainty*—we even look to scripture (particularly in some Protestant and Catholic traditions) to offer us a guarantee that we're *in*. And even within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, some people can veer away from some of the consequences of being a restored church with a living prophet, and the difficulty of negotiating change. That's not new—think about the two declarations at the end of the Doctrine and Covenants—how they reflect great trauma and the prophetic task of pastoral care of people facing radical changes concerning plural marriage and race and the priesthood. Facing change together is core to this church.

Being a beloved community is also necessarily building a beloved community which is safe, being near enough to be trusted, but far enough ahead to be worth following, listening, and being accountable.

I'm sure you've seen some of the stuff on the internet that is aimed against the leadership of the churches and is longing for safe ground. There are some very antagonistic US Roman Catholic series of broadcasts which attack Pope Francis and the Catholic Bishops. There are also angry Anglican and Methodist broadcasts, because the internet has democratised dissent.

I'm not sure which is most damaging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—antagonistic websites that can often be seen to be the product of damaged or immature people or websites that seek to defend a perceived traditional Latter-day Saint series of values by attacking BYU or even policies and leadership in the Church. It can feel very popular to play to a perceived audience and think that we are doing good. But whatever our religious tradition, I think we have a serious challenge to face.

There may well be freedom of speech in the United States, which is very different from how that is interpreted in the United Kingdom—there, it's (superficially!) altogether more polite. But beware, if we start to become antagonistic and contentious, perhaps we have to reflect quite seriously on how easy it is to play to our own prejudices. Above all, if we become the accuser of our brothers and sisters, even calling members



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of this university with whom we disagree “apostates”—here’s one simple test question: are we being an *advocate* for our brothers and sisters and for the truth, or have we fallen into the role and nature of the *accuser*? Remember that our Lord is always the Advocate; it is our enemy who is ever our Accuser.

We live in very contentious times and so our task to all who come to this community and visitors is to say unashamedly, “We see you,” “we love you,” and “we will travel with you together into God’s perfect Kingdom.” At Chicago airport I had a flight transfer, and two other passengers asked me what I was going to do in Salt Lake City. I tried to explain; but in beautifully simple language one woman said to me, “Well then, you have to listen as hard as you can, to learn as much as you can, that you may love completely.” I think that wonderful woman was not far from the foundations of where we begin in building a beloved community: “we see you,” “we will learn to see ourselves with you,” and “together we will face the whole host of difficulties rooted in our history and prejudices and our own confusion.”

In January 2020, at Oxford First Ward, I spoke in a testimony meeting and read and signed, in the congregation’s presence, the BYU contract based on the honour code and Word of Wisdom: the nearest thing to a covenant I can make with this Church. But then, of course, COVID arrived, and this visit was postponed. I had to decide whether or not I kept those covenantal promises made in front of God’s people. There was no hesitation. In fact, it was a wonderful antidote to the culture of wanting to be exempt: it’s not conformity to rules, rather saying “yes” to the possibility of not reaching out one’s hand for that which isn’t right. “Yes” to standing in absolute solidarity with the addict, with people who are taken in and who are financially stretched by the abuse of alcohol and tobacco and coffee and even tea. It is possible not to reach out one’s hand to take

for oneself, but to stand in solidarity with those who cannot easily make those decisions. I began to see that the Word of Wisdom is a tremendous resource for sanctification: countering a conformity with destruction and the cancelling of others. I'm glad that I had the time because of COVID to practise that at home and understand that before I came here.

Some Christians would describe this as a kind of works-righteousness. Jean Calvin, re-moulding the words of Saints Augustine and Paul, might insist that we can add *nothing* to what God in Christ has already done for us, and any attempt to do so is the superfluity of naughtiness!

I found that, in fact, it has been the unleashing of grace. An early Christian writer, St. Clement of Rome, writing to the church in Corinth, uses a peculiar word which, I believe, connects with this faithful exercise of agency. The word is often translated *sojourning*. The first epistle of Peter speaks of Christian experience as “passing the time of our sojourning.” (1 Pe. 1:17) In other words, the early Christian community realised that there was a significant difference in the *quality* of time and space offered in Jesus Christ to that which was on offer in the empire. Rowan Williams notices that the words around *paroikousa* become the basis of the word parish. Early Christian understanding of time and space echoes with what other centuries later will claim in words like “this is the place,” “this is our time.” Sojourning doesn't simply mean waiting for the apocalypse; it means to claim this time by the power of, and in the service of, our Lord Jesus Christ. Not just kicking our heels, as if we're seeking to be entertained, waiting with boredom for the Apocalypse; rather, finding a way of making every moment a means to invite all people into the deepest truths of life, into a beloved community, which takes even our inadequate energies and gifts, and builds of them a Kingdom with Christ.

This Italian Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher, Giorgio Agamben, in his small book *The Church and the Kingdom* (London, Seagull, 2018), offers a story that you in this setting may not find very surprising. He says, “the initial Christian community, expecting as it did the imminent arrival of the Messiah, and thus the end of time, found itself confronted with an inexplicable delay. In response to this delay there was a reorientation to stabilise the institution and juridical organisation of the early church. The consequence of this position is that the Christian community has ceased to . . . sojourn as a foreigner, so as to begin . . . to live as a citizen and thus function like any other worldly institution.” (p. 4)

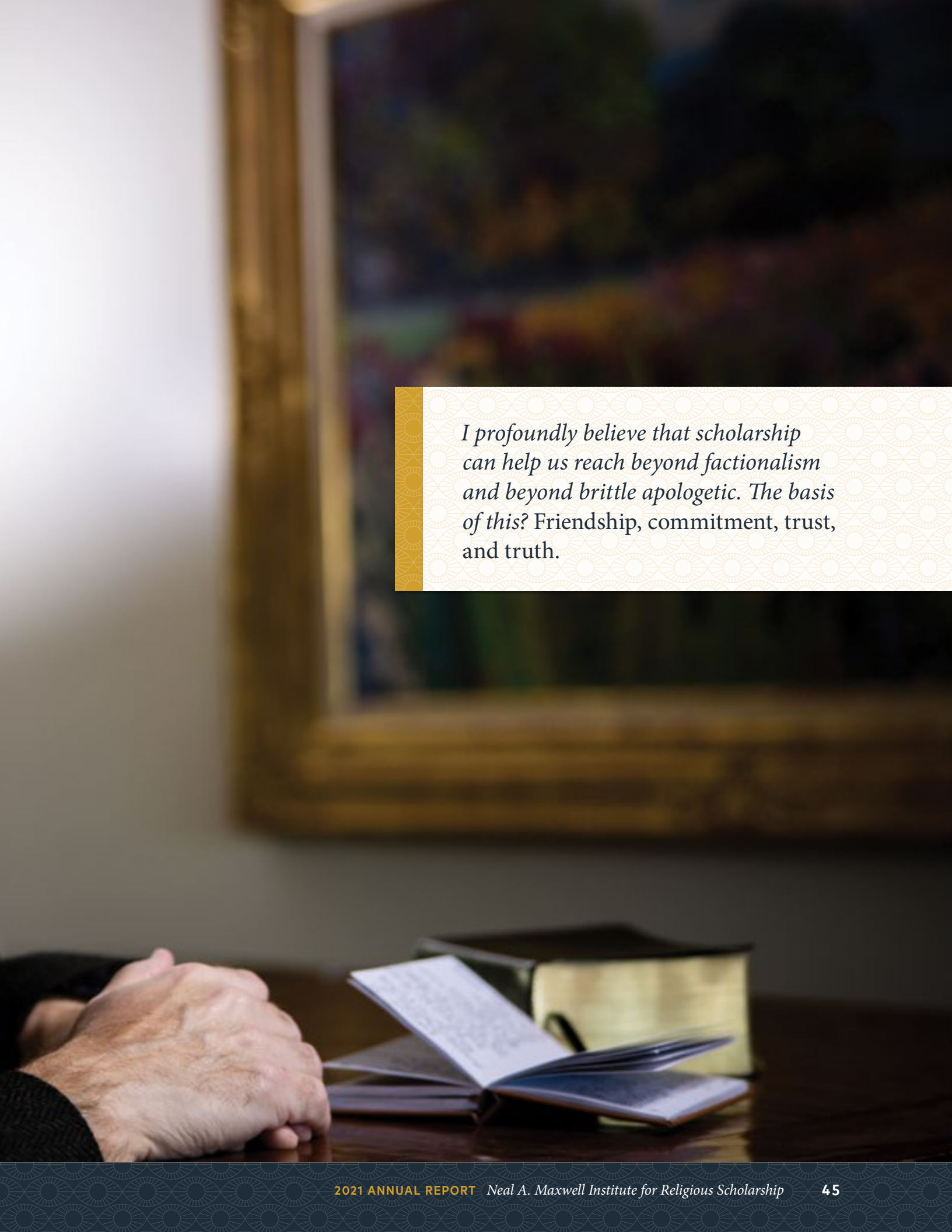
I love the fact that this comes from a scholarly, Catholic background; a recognition that the gospel is often traded for *churchianity*; I think of the explosion of delight and joy at the first vision of Joseph Smith Jr., even as it unfurls in layers of unexpected opposition: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is always urged to recover this first love: the urgency of mission that I have found in this community, both here and in the England London Mission in the United Kingdom, is that anxious engagement to make every moment a gate through which the Messiah can come.

I hope what I'm trying to say is that looking together across boundaries which are usually quite watertight can open our understanding and deepen our faith. Scholarship need not and must not lead to cynicism; rather it's an opportunity to become friends and to discuss things like grown-ups!

Let me take you on another historical example from the 4th century, an area I'm supposed to know something about. The 4th and 5th centuries wrestled hard to try to find a language of greatest scope to describe the nature of the persons Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as well as the nature and the work of Jesus Christ.

There was a notorious priest in the early church who became a point of contention. His name was Arius (c.250–336 AD), and, among other things, he was very biblical. He emphasised the singularity of God. Only the Father was God; Jesus was really the first creature, a natural mediator between the created and the eternal. He objected very strongly to images of God which depended upon mystery, which asked human arguments to take a back seat: there's a big irony here of course. The reaction to Arius was an attempt to say “anything that we can think about God is not anywhere near as significant as what God has shown himself to be: the eternal Father, the only begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit.” That's how credal language about the Trinity began. At its best, language about the Trinity was not a *definition* of God, how could it be? It was an attempt at description. But in the spiritual civil wars of the 4th century, our universal instinct to put everything in a box so that we can





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control the idea of God, re-emerged. Salvation was construed, in what we call the Athanasian creed, as compliance to a series of assertions, “Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.” How did that happen? It prescribed salvation by compliance to an idea. Sure, it tries to sustain a sense of mystery, but it does this by saying something, apparently denying it, and then reasserting it, leaving the reader dizzy. It implies to have found an absolute formula for God which ironically is the very opposite of what creeds were trying to do!

My experience with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has meant that for me even some of the most beautiful Eastern Orthodox prayers now make me stop and ponder if they address prayer not to the *persons* of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but to an *idea* of the Trinity. I am a Nicene Christian, but one who doesn’t worship a human idea, however clever or pleasing: I don’t think that the notion of the Holy Trinity is a sort of quadratic equation which holds together the three persons in a singular divinity. I have to say that I don’t know of a church that more rigorously addresses the *persons* than this Church, so to share this in an academic and inter-religious context so that we may understand one another and push more further into the beautiful mystery of God has to be our desire.

You may have heard of other divisions around the creeds: how churches fragmented, arguing whether or not the Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, or just the Father alone. The East and the West now have different Nicene creeds. Shared scholarship beyond simply East and West, beyond Orthodox, Catholic and reformed, including also the insights of the Restored church, will help us all.

I profoundly believe that scholarship can help us reach beyond factionalism and beyond brittle apologetic. The basis of this? *Friendship, commitment, trust, and truth.*

Those in a healing community build a beloved community around them, often without completely comprehending what we are doing.

So, can we look at each other as the Lord looks upon us? Longing for us in love, but not leaving each other where we began? True friendship asks all sorts of questions—questions we don’t yet know the answers to. I trust and love you and I want to ask a lifetime of questions as I travel with you, with a longing heart bringing others—beautiful people from my own and other communities—along with me so that they can share something of the richness, the kindness, the truthfulness that’s overwhelmed me.

I was sitting in the wonderful house opposite the Marriott Center where I live—pop in say hi, but please don’t all come at once! One sunny fall day, I was praying and reading Section 136 of *Doctrine and Covenants*. It made me weep with joy. President Brigham Young at Winter Quarters, Omaha Nation, on the west bank of the Missouri River, writes after the martyrdom of brother Joseph:

[1] The Word and Will of the Lord concerning the Camp of Israel in their journeyings to the West:

[2] Let all the people of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and those who journey with them, be organised into companies...

Those six short words were like a fountain of truth and trust—I sat knowing that this scripture was another testimony of Jesus Christ in this new world, after all that had happened unexpectedly, crowning as it were the massive kindnesses overwhelming me. Travelling alongside this Restored Church means being a part of a fluid and happy, repentant community; constantly delighted by the wonder of that invitation not only to know ourselves as loved, “I am a child of God,” (that’s a dignity that nothing temporal can take away) but to continue becoming and building one another up in love: not being afraid to keep on growing.

When I first came over to Utah, around four years ago now, there was a sense of excitement at President Russell M. Nelson’s insistence that the Church relinquished its shorthand self-description as “Mormon,” and

was to rely instead upon what the scriptures of this church use. First of all, **The Church**, *ek-klesia*, called out from collusion and convention to grinding monotony into life in God's own Being; then, naming the **Lord Jesus Christ**, moving away from cultural identity alone, to universal and eternal identity, that of belonging to the only name under heaven conveying health and salvation; then that we are in the **Latter-days**, not the institutional continuity of chronological time, but *Kairos*—the option of moving everything to enable all souls to enter the Kingdom; and finally, **Saints** with holiness in our hearts; holiness unto the Lord. Initially, I thought why use all those words when the singular word Mormon might do? Now I see just how sloppy it would be, and the wisdom of that revelation to President Nelson.

So, I have to tell you, my friends, that I think that my life's direction has been heading here even if I didn't know it. God is not an autocrat or tyrant and invites our collaboration—individual and joint agency—at every turn. There's a real possibility of greater unity between our churches and between our academies. We're exploring an organic Pembroke College Oxford—BYU connection, looking for decades of profound collaboration. Not just a series of theological, legal, humanitarian, practical conferences and events, as good as they are, or regular visiting scholars but **This is the time, this is the place**, because this is *his* time, this is *his* place. I'm not proposing another piecemeal reformation but travelling together.

The problem with reformations is that they are human ideas—the shocking power of the revelation to Joseph Smith Jr. is that here was no great German academic but an ordinary man who dared to *ask* God, and who had the ears to listen to the answer of the Father and the Son, the boldness to invite others on that journey, the courage to face even death for the glory of God and his brothers' and sisters' eternal welfare.

Marilynne Robinson's novels drip grace; *Gilead* remains one of the most spiritually vibrant novels of the 20th century. She is a Christian writer who doesn't avoid struggle but finds God there. When speaking in Sweden, she insisted on a new venture in theology, one that respects our materiality: another theme which is worthy of scholarly exploration together in terms of exploring the relationship of matter and God, in a way that only a dialogue across traditional boundaries would really bear fruit:

One thing theology must do now is to reconsider and reject the kind of thinking that tends to devalue humankind, which is an influential tendency in modern culture, one that, not coincidentally, runs parallel to the decline of religion. This devaluing of the species in effect puts aside everything interesting about us as irrelevant to the question of our true nature. . . . A new theology should be open to . . . [t]he sheer plenitude of things a mortal encounters . . . [is] a marvel in itself. . . .

A new theology must begin from and always bear in mind that fact that there is something irreducibly thrilling about the universe, whatever account is made of it. It would be theistic to say that the capacity for abstract thought, for example, was introduced into humankind by some external agent. This is not my style of theism. . . . Let us say instead that this capacity must have arisen out of the transformations potential in that first particle and realised over time, consistently with these potentialities. . . . Then . . . there is a profound, intrinsic relationship among all forms of Being.

This is the time. This is the place. This helps theology and even our beautiful universities build each other up in truth and love; not saying brittle-y, "*This is all I am, don't ask me to change.*" Rather, saying, "Whoever I am, whoever you are, we are the Lord's. Together let's grow into the full stature of Christ."

I also want to offer an unexpected metaphor today which certainly wouldn't have been in this address had I not needed 3½ weeks in intensive care at the burn unit of the University of Utah hospital. The immediate impression upon going in there was a sense of unconditional acceptance, not inappropriate for the first university founded by Brigham Young! There is a sense of entrusting each patient to participate in their own healing, a commitment to professionalism, a solidarity with those who are in pain, and a massive commitment to the progression of healing.

You might think that it's just about comfort and affirmation. Building a beloved community means seeing beyond the comfort; I will never forget seeing the sense of community that Professor Giavonni Lewis has built

in that place and the extraordinary capacity of nurses and doctors to help patients through the most difficult stretching painful times. Especially moving was seeing how much it costs nurses and ward staff to help patients move sore and tight skin. One little boy, let's call him Keith, had been in that unit since 4th of July when an adult had thrown a firework at him, causing significant injury. He has grown to love the staff even as they were asking him to do things which hurt. Being able to love people who help us to grow and who stand with us in our pain, is a beautiful example of the nature and the cost of *building* a beloved community.

I have to say that I wasn't the bravest patient, and I still am not. Every day I had a phone call from Elder Holland. I think people thought he was just my imaginary friend when I told them, until he turned up twice with police and security, then a lot of people wanted to see him! I told him that occasionally I'd been very grumpy—worried about losing my feet. One night, when I was at my lowest, a tiny white-haired blonde five-year-old little girl, let's call her Stella, came up to me as I was standing outside my room, grasped my little finger with her tiny hand, turned me round—there's a sight to see!—and made me walk around the ward with her. She wouldn't let me go until I kissed the top of her head; her parents and nursing staff chuckled but, I can tell you, that the characteristic hallmarks of God in Christ were there; this was indeed an angelic visitation. I'd been told to turn around *teshuvah*, repent, and been led by a little child. Those in a healing community build a beloved community around them, often without completely comprehending what we are doing: that, in a nutshell, is what I believe we are called to do together after the long history of difficulties and division and schism between Christian communities. Beautiful friendships can flower and bear fruit between Christian communities, if we're taken by the finger and turned around—after the pattern of the University of Utah burn unit.

I have to say I'd like to be able to be more upbeat about the recovery of my feet. Without the daily support of Nurse Carrie Brown, for example, I don't know where I'd be. In some ways healing is going very well, but I'm still not sure how it's going to work out. I, like everybody else, want to have the simple straightforward solution which makes everything all right NOW. That's not the pattern of anointing and sealing which I was blessed to receive. It may well be that I have to go back into hospital again and have some more of the tissue removed, perhaps even a little toe . . . again, before I get too morose, for what's a little toe between friends? Don't get me wrong, I quite like it on my foot, but having taken the initial steps of faith we can take steeper ones.

On Saturday night a friend of mine took me to the supermarket. While I sat waiting for him to get a bulb from a hardware store, the sun was setting in the West behind the mountains, but still illuminating the mountain tops of the Wasatch front, the moon shining with all the vibrancy of a circle of lace.

Stark horizontal light showed patterns of relationship and connexion in those western mountains. It was a beautiful golden evening; and I thought of the writings of a great ancient Christian, Saint Gregory of Nyssa. One of his insights was that he saw Christian discipleship not just as something to be achieved, becoming a one-off possession, this is neither scholarship nor discipleship. It's, rather, the *process* of learning to walk step-by-step; as the road gets steeper we are more equipped to take those difficult steps, recognising that it is an *infinite* ascent: into the very being of the Father in the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This made me think of the Latter-day Saint emphasis on *continuing*, of Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* 2:8, which echoes St. Gregory so closely.

The nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life, and lost every desire to sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith, where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his maker, and is caught up to dwell with him. But we consider that this is a station to which no man ever arrived in a moment. (Joseph Smith Jr., *History of the Church*, 2:8)

However long it takes to build this enduring communion between Oxford Pembroke and BYU, I commit to journeying with you; even on these feet, however ragged they become, even if I had to walk over hot coals to get to where I am now!




This is an opportunity to say thank you for much care in these traumatic days—in hospital and at home—by so many wonderful people.

Thank you for allowing me to express my honest commitment to travelling with you in a richness of faith which I have not otherwise experienced. I dedicate this Forum address in gratitude to God for Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, my beloved friend. We love you, Elder Holland, for being committed to *building* a beloved community, where a growth in love and understanding is possible.

When I first came to General Conference, I was shocked to witness protesters shouting rude things at my hosts whom I was growing to love. I thought I would walk over in my clerical collar and just try and make it clear that “You know these are lovely people; why are you so cross?” The reaction was a baptism of fire into what the United States understands as freedom of speech; I had things shouted at me that, had we been in the United Kingdom, would have been illegal hate speech. It was a bit embarrassing to hear some of what they said—but I felt that I could look my hosts in the eye and stand with you as you were ridiculed.

My closest friends have seen that my love for the Lord Jesus has grown exponentially because of my friendship with you, and I want to bring that to the beautifully diverse family of Christians (and people of all faiths) so that we may travel *together*, even across steep mountains, which will lead to our being blessed together.

I have been taught so much here, and I’m profoundly aware of the inadequacy of this expression; but I thank you authentically, and express my love for you, and acknowledge that I’m in your debt, a debt I can never repay.

Thank you. May God bless us in our journeying together. 

My closest friends have seen that my love for the Lord Jesus has grown exponentially because of my friendship with you, and I want to bring that to the beautifully diverse family of Christians.



Dedication of the West View Building

Bishop W. Christopher Waddell, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, dedicated the West View Building on October 11, 2021. The Maxwell Institute moved into the building in fall 2020.

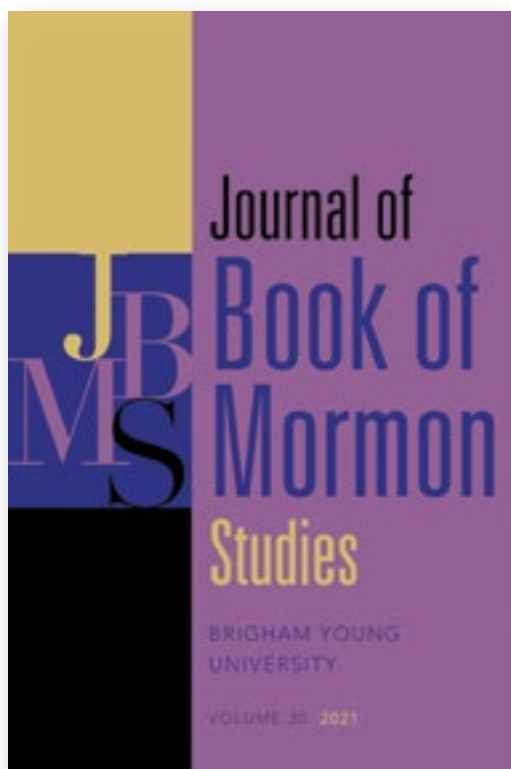


“Bless all who use this building with the spirit of curiosity and inquiry, of pondering and learning and insight and revelation as they seek thy will. We pray that all who instruct will be blessed with the gift of discernment and an added measure of thy spirit to teach correct principles, blessing those they teach to draw closer to thee and thy Son.”

—BISHOP W. CHRISTOPHER WADDELL

Publications

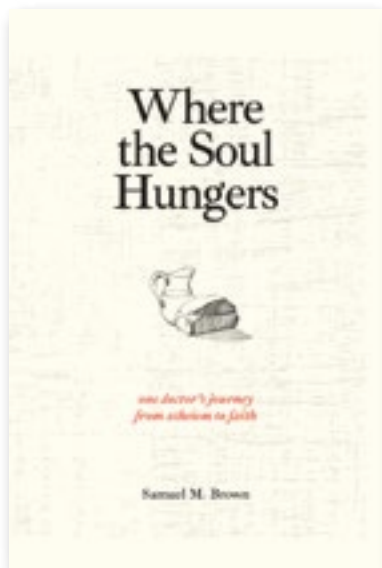
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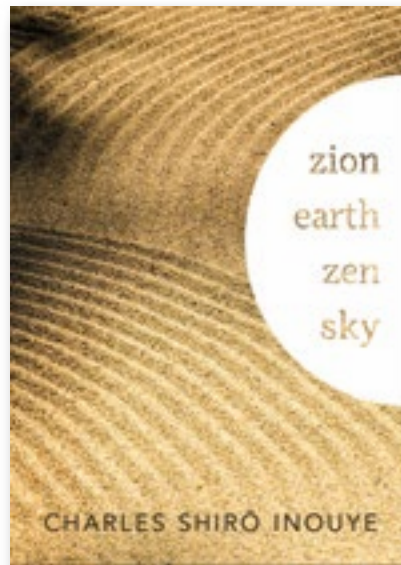
JOURNAL OF BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES
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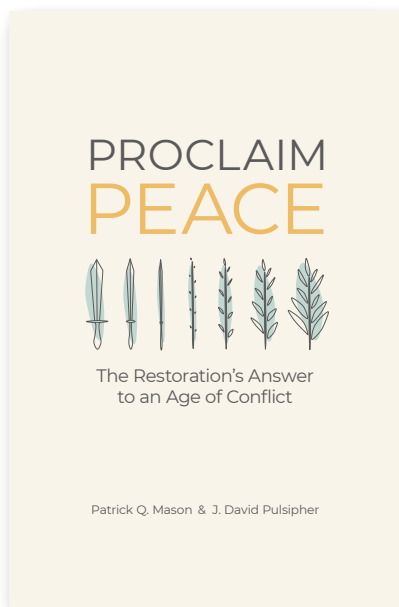
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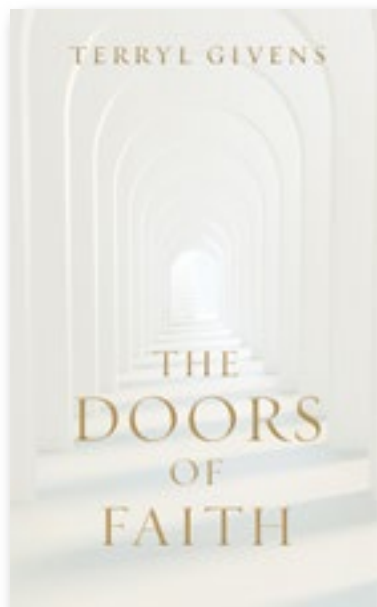
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Samuel M. Brown
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PROCLAIM PEACE: THE RESTORATION'S ANSWER TO AN AGE OF CONFLICT
Patrick Q. Mason and J. David Pulsipher
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THE DOORS OF FAITH
Terryl Givens
(December 2021)



2021 Institute Scholars

PHILIP L. BARLOW

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

I initially joined the Neal A. Maxwell Institute as a visiting scholar in 2017, intending to take advantage of a gracious offer for a year of research away from my much-loved teaching and life in religious studies and history at Utah State University. This time at BYU was surprisingly energizing and the atmosphere at the Institute was inspiring. Here was a place and a task that demanded all the intellectual rigor I could muster—and this among colleague-friends deeply prepared to be of assistance and of helpful, provocative challenge. It was also a rare place where such rigor was in explicit service to spiritual depth, to gather other disciple-scholars and with them to nourish fellow Latter-day Saints in their faith without parochial isolation from the wider world of ideas. I had enjoyed a rich, happy existence and professional life prior to my experience in Provo, yet I and my gradually less reluctant wife elected to stay when an invitation presented itself.



During the past three years, my role has become two-fold: I serve as the Associate Director of the Maxwell Institute and I am a scholar. In the first of these roles, I advise the Institute's gifted director, Spencer Fluhrman. I opine; he does the harder work of rendering decisions. Together we dream up ideas and potential directions designed especially to nourish the lives of thoughtful Saints; he has more and better ideas and chooses ones that actually work. Enabled by the university's generous support, we have surrounded ourselves with superb colleagues equipped to actualize the Institute's admirable mission. As of last year, we are ensconced in a gracious physical space that reflects and facilitates the pursuit of high-quality disciple-scholarship.

I am, as a scholar, at work on four book-length projects. (1) A collection of essays from Latter-day Saint scholars called *A Thoughtful Faith for the 21st Century*, a manuscript now reaching its final stages of editing before production. (2) A volume on the concept of "time" in modern scripture, which is an entry in a new

series, *The Doctrine & Covenants: brief theological introductions*, to be written by autumn 2022. (3) A book examining historically and theologically what the concept of “the only true and living church” can and cannot mean without contradicting other aspects of the gospel, a manuscript to be completed in 2023. And (4) an ongoing consideration of the war in heaven.

In support of this last, long-term endeavor, I published this year a historical-theological essay: “Shards of Combat: How Did Satan Attempt to Destroy the Agency of Man?” in *BYU Studies*. This work argues that our modern, dominant ways of conceiving the pre-existent threat to agency (especially the notion that coercion was Satan’s intended mode) have traceable histories and were not taught by Joseph Smith nor by scripture. This observation frees us to reconsider a full range of threats to agency, hence potentially affecting how we conceive and live in relation to this foundational aspect of the gospel. I also completed the writing of a chapter, designed for scholars, relating to all modern studies of the Restoration: an analysis of the shifting—and fading—dominance of history in Latter-day Saint intellectual life and the very recent rise of a critical mass of professional-grade theological reflection. The essay considers whether the primacy of history in LDS intellectual life is accidental or signals something peculiar about our religion that raises the intellectual stakes in history, thus explaining its outsized share of intellectual attention.

To the extent that each of these endeavors has achieved something worth contributing, they have been enabled by the time and resources afforded by the Maxwell Institute, the intellectual-spiritual stimulus of my colleagues there, and the partnership of four imaginative and diligent BYU students who served as my research assistants: Stephen Betts (now a doctoral student in religion at the University of Virginia), Alexander Christensen, Ryder Seamons (currently a law student at BYU), and Janai Wright.

JEFFREY G. CANNON

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

I joined the Maxwell Institute in August and quickly learned what a special place it is to work. Conversations are always lively, engaging, and shot through with the spirit of faith and purpose.

My primary project as a Laura F. Willes Research Associate is an investigation into African readings of the Book of Mormon. Scholars looking at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Africa have noted important themes in African Christianity that are largely unaddressed by Latter-day Saint proselytizing and practice on the continent. My research addresses what themes are important to African Latter-day Saints in their readings of the Church’s signature scripture.

How do they, for example, interpret well-known texts, such as the Allegory of the Olive Tree in Jacob 5? What insights can they share with the Church and the world about Christ and His gospel through their readings of the Book of Mormon? This project has already been aided immeasurably by the daily interactions with my fellow Maxwell Institute scholars. Conversations in seminar rooms, offices, and hallways have led me to consider topics such as sin, embodiment, and the concept of ubuntu in new and interconnected ways.

In service of my larger project, my initial task is to explore how studies of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and world Christianity can benefit each other. This will be published as an article and form part of the introduction to my planned monograph on African readings of the Book of Mormon. I was invited to present my early plans for the project to the Institute in a brown bag discussion last November, and since arriving, I have been able to circulate an early draft for an immensely helpful discussion with colleagues in a weekly faculty meeting.



Anxious to pay forward the opportunities I had as an undergraduate at BYU, I look forward to working with students. I hired my first of several research assistants to help me with my work. I have also taken advantage of the opportunity to share my research with students in the classroom, teaching one section of the Survey of World Religions course, where we explore the place of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints among the world's faiths.

D. MORGAN DAVIS

RESEARCH FELLOW

As I reflect on this year's developments, it seems more than usual that they are the fruition of efforts set in motion long ago. Almost nothing here is the product of my efforts alone, yet the feeling of having been part of each development brings deep joy.

In October, a conference on Islam, years in the planning, became a reality as notable scholars of Islam from all over the country and from a wide array of backgrounds gathered at the BYU Hinckley Center (and a couple of them via video, due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic) for two days of lively presentations and discussions about key aspects of this global faith that is on pace to become the largest religious tradition on the planet. Since its quiet inception many years ago, I was privileged, with several colleagues from various disciplines at BYU, to be on the planning committee for the event under the able helmsmanship of Grant Underwood, who occupies the Richard L. Evans Chair of Religious Understanding at BYU. We designed the conference to be relevant and accessible to experts and the public alike, and the presentations were indeed outstanding. And as a truly remarkable coda to the event, Elders David A. Bednar and Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles both spoke at a special after-event entitled "Welcoming Our Muslim Friends," which was directed specifically at members of the Church. They addressed the importance of building bridges of understanding, respect, and cooperation between our faith communities and introduced a new church publication entitled *Muslims and Latter-day*



Dr. Grant R. Underwood (BYU History) welcoming attendees
BYU's "The Islamic World Today" Conference

Saints. During a period of history when so much division continues to trouble our communities, I was thrilled to have even a small part to play in connection with this peace-building development.

Another way that slowly gathering forces made themselves manifest this year was in the Living Faith series of the Maxwell Institute, which I continue to co-edit with Miranda Wilcox, a scholar (in the department of English) of remarkable wisdom and energy. We issued no less than four new titles this year, a record that we hope not to break—or even tie again—for a long while! Once again, this year’s harvest of titles represents the depth and richness of Latter-day Saint thought, experience, and faith. They are:

- Samuel L. Brown, *Where the Soul Hungers: One Doctor’s Journey from Atheism to Faith*
- Charles Shirō Inouye, *Zion Earth Zen Sky*
- Patrick Mason and David Pulsipher, *Proclaim Peace: A Latter-day Saint Theology of Nonviolence*
- Terryl L. Givens, *The Doors of Faith*

More information about each of these unique and spiritually vitalizing titles is available elsewhere in this report.

At the Maxwell Institute, we also know that future harvests depend on sowing seeds today. We continue to encourage women who have academic or professional expertise to think about how they might contribute their voices and their experiences to the Living Faith series. Recognizing that women sometimes face specific challenges in finding time to write, we offered, for the second year in a row, financial support to a few women whose proposals showed great promise. We are very encouraged by the early results of this initiative and look forward to the full harvest when it comes into season.

Also, in support of the Living Faith series this year, I was pleased to interview James Faulconer for the Maxwell Institute Podcast, discussing his recent Living Faith publication *Thinking Otherwise*. Jim is a powerhouse of ideas and has mentored a generation of some of our most significant thinkers and writers, and it was a pleasure to discuss his book with him.

The Maxwell Institute also cooperated this year to publish a book-length essay by our former director, M. Gerald Bradford, who passed away last year. Once again, this was a blessing that incubated for many years as Jerry developed his personal statement of faith, *The Hope That Is in Me*, through numerous conversations with us, his colleagues, and through reading, temple worship, and service in the Church. I read several versions of it as he revised and refined his reflections on what the gospel of Jesus Christ had come to mean to him over a lifetime of seeking and living out his covenants. I am pleased that the Maxwell Institute, in cooperation with Jerry’s family, has made this publication available as a free download on our website. It is a fitting tribute to him.

In my own scholarship, the questions and reflections of several years’ worth of reading, travel, presentations, and conversations with many scholars and readers of the Qur’an have further coalesced. One of the highlights of this process has been the chance to meet every week with a group of bright and engaged research assistants who have been helping me to experiment with ways of engaging with the Qur’an as a “hallowed text.” We’ve studied poetry, written poetry, gathered images, made art of our own, and talked about conversations and stories that have been meaningful to us. Through this laboratory of reading, with these inspiring students, I have come to see the effort to have encounters with another tradition’s scripture as a process of learning to experience it as a hallowed text myself. This does not mean that I necessarily adopt the beliefs and practices of Islam, though I find much that is beautiful. What it means is that I “exercise a particle of faith” in the fact that billions of people have found something sublime in the Qur’an through their own direct experiences with it, and I may, too—not as a Muslim with a Muslim interpretation and application, but as a Latter-day Saint and as a person from within my own spiritual “homescap.” The hallowing of a text is an experiential process that our agency drives. It is not by mere intellectual assent, nor by a conversion that overtakes us in spite of ourselves. Instead, a text comes to be hallowed as we consistently approach it in creative and integrative ways, bringing our whole selves to it as we would to a new friendship that we want to cultivate. Desire, curiosity, imagination, and love are all in that mix. I am looking forward to sharing my notes from this journey more fully in future publications.

JAMES E. FAULCONER

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

I published a long essay on Latter-day Saint liturgy, focusing on the sacrament, in a professional journal: “Latter-day Saint Liturgy: The Administration of the Body and Blood of Jesus,” *Religions*. 12.6 (2021): 431. In it, I give a phenomenological description of the Latter-day Saint rite of the sacrament and argue that the rite transforms the lives of those who take part in it, making otherwise mundane acts of living into acts of worship that sanctify life as a whole and that bring together the Saints as a community.

The finished version of another essay, “The King Follett Discourse: Pinnacle or Peripheral,” has been edited and submitted for publication in Terryl Givens and Eric Eliason, eds., *Yet to Be Revealed: Open Questions in Latter-day Saint Theology*. Provo: BYU Studies, 2021. 85–104. That essay gives a historical overview of the reception and use of the King Follett discourse among Latter-day Saints.

In the Art and Belief Symposium at BYU, I presented a piece: “Bread and Body: A Latter-day Saint Aesthetic?” I argue that traditional aesthetics have approached the question of beauty by taking a Platonic approach in which the most important things are conceptual. But if Doctrine and Covenants 131:7–8 is correct, and everything is material, then that aesthetic is mistaken. Rather than vision, the Platonic metaphor for knowing a concept, we should use the metaphor of touch or contact (of which food is an excellent example) to



Dr. James Faulconer, speaking to Maxwell Institute Scholars

think about the beautiful. Latter-day Saint teaching is particularly suited to taking up the challenge of creating a metaphysics and aesthetics of touch. I will be publishing an expanded version of this in a book edited by a Belgian philosophy professor at the Catholic University of Leuven.

As part of my work in philosophy, I published two entries in *The Cambridge Heidegger Lexicon* (Cambridge 2021), edited by Mark W. Wrathall: “Awaiting (*Gewärtigen*)” and “Possibility (*Möglichkeit*).”

I took part in the Maxwell Institute’s Christology seminar in Bordeaux in July, and I am helping to keep that project moving forward.

With Fred Axelgard (Wheatley Institution), I continue to organize groups in Europe and South America to create Zoom conferences in which Latter-day Saint professionals and academics between 25 and 35 or 40 could get together to learn about and to discuss how to deal with the pandemic. In particular, there were sessions on personal mental health, helping others with their mental health, remaining civically engaged, and preparing for a career. There were approximately 60 people in attendance at each session. We are hoping to resume in-person conferences next year.

Four excellent research assistants worked with me: Richard Robertson, Courtney Fielding, Lavender Earnest, and Spencer Johnson. Each of them worked 5–8 hours a week, occasionally more. They not only did the usual step-n-fetch-it work of finding sources and making précis, but they also contributed significantly to my work by acting as my potential audience: they read everything I wrote for a Latter-day Saint audience and made material editorial suggestions as to tone, style, and content. Working with them was the perfect teaching experience.



TAUNALYN FORD

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

Being new to the Maxwell Institute, this “report” is more of a road map for the year ahead. I am grateful for the nurturing resources that will allow me to produce work for academic peers. I also feel gratitude for the many Latter-day Saints who have entrusted me with their stories and for the ways they have strengthened my faith and discipleship. I hope that the work I do at the Maxwell Institute will speak to other scholars of religion and fortify testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

I now have a growing circle of enthusiastic student research assistants that will help to create a valuable archive of church history for members and future researchers. It is no small thing to synthesize seven years of ethnographic work and over two hundred oral history interviews with Latter-day pioneers in India.¹ A large portion of time will be spent transcribing, cataloging, and mining these interviews for the nuggets of gold they contain. We begin with an examination of the work already completed in my dissertation and other published articles and chapters while discussing the scholarship that has influenced my thinking about the globalization of religion through a case study of Latter-day Saints in India.

The opportunity to mentor new scholars was a significant draw to the Maxwell Institute for me. One of my research assistants is an honors student in the music program and envisions writing her honors thesis on the globalization of religious music as she helps me examine the Indian context. Several of my other research assistants have served missions in Norway, Kosovo, Albania, and Hong Kong. While teaching classes on the Doctrine and Covenants at BYU, I encouraged my students to write their term papers on the Restoration of the gospel outside of the United States based on my favorite quote from a friend in the translation department, “It’s always 1830 somewhere in the Church!” In the same way, I hope to mentor future historians who have not only served for a time in a foreign country but continue to be invested in adding to the historical record of the people they have grown to know and love as missionaries.

With one of my research assistants, I am thinking about “lived religion” in India. My work naturally centers on the intersection of Latter-day Saints and India’s religions, even thinking in broad terms of churches that trace their heritage back to the Restoration through Joseph Smith. The RLDS Church, now known as Community of Christ, has a fascinating history in India, and the comparative study of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the RLDS/Community of Christ in globalization is instructive. My work has been enriched through an interfaith dialogue with the BYU Religion faculty and Community of Christ members. In addition to producing a chapter for a forthcoming volume on the dialogue, I plan to continue this comparative conversation in Coventry, England, with Andrew Bolton from Community of Christ, who spent several years serving as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve in India.

I will also encourage my research assistants to develop skills for conducting oral history interviews. In late January and early February of 2020, just before travel halted due to the pandemic, I returned to India to present at a conference in Amritsar. I spent a week conducting another round of ethnographic research in Mumbai, formerly Bombay, where in the 1850s, Hugh Findlay, one of the first Latter-day Saint missionaries to India, preached the gospel. I felt blessed to have gathered more oral history interviews before the borders closed. The impact of the global pandemic on Latter-day Saints in India is now an additional topic that I plan to include in my study. Thanks to the groundwork I have laid with my narrators in India and my greater confidence in using digital platforms like Zoom, I plan to continue my ethnographic work through the blessing of technology until I can return in person for a final round of fieldwork.

Presenting papers at conferences will help move my research forward, including a presentation at the International Association of Mission Studies in Sydney, Australia, which will hopefully be in person this



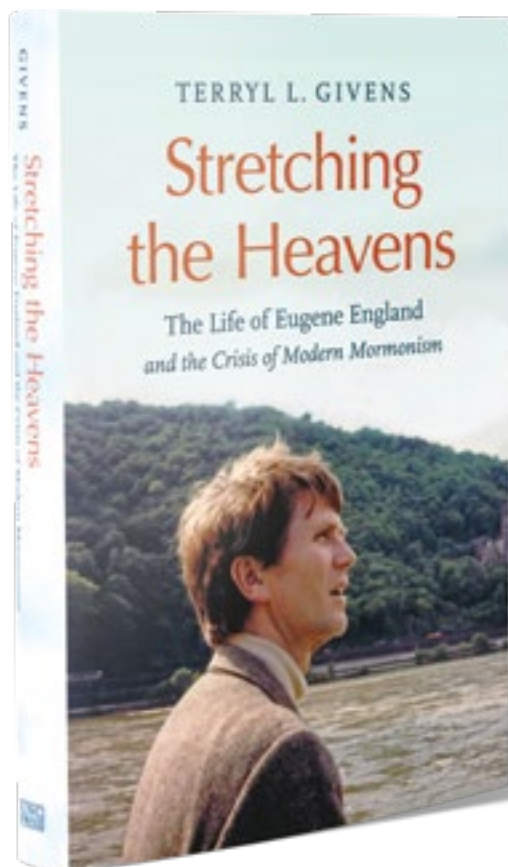
summer. My presentations and the work I publish in journals and books this year will enhance various chapters in the manuscript that I plan to publish with an academic press. Some of the presentations and articles include “Indian Caste and Gospel Culture,” “Dueling Orientalisms: Scottish Missionaries Meet the Mormons in 1850s India,” “Changing Dimensions of Reception: Bombay to Mumbai,” “Prophets and Polity,” “The Development of Community of Christ and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in India: A Case Study,” and “Challenges for Historians in a Global Church.”

1. Taunalyn Rutherford, “Picturing Pioneers in India,” *Ensign*, July 2020.

TERRYL L. GIVENS

NEAL A. MAXWELL SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

The intellectual and spiritual energy at the Maxwell Institute, together with support for full-time research, have enabled me to bring a number of projects to fruition this year: a biography, an edited collection, and a small monograph were all published: *Yet to Be Revealed: Open Questions in Latter-day Saint Theology*, ed. with Eric Eliason, BYU Studies; *The Doors of Faith*, Maxwell Institute and Deseret Book; and *Stretching the Heavens: The Life of Eugene England and the Crisis of Modern Mormonism*, UNC Press. The first is an attempt to both celebrate and elaborate the principle of continuing revelation, by addressing a number of questions for which the Restoration does not yet provide answers.



The hope was to also illustrate that culturally inherited assumptions may impose more dogmatic strictures than our doctrine actually warrants. The second volume was an expansion of four talks I gave at BYU in 2019, addressed to those looking for an alternative to the claims of secularism and skepticism regarding the life of faith. And the third is both a biographical portrait and a cultural exposition of the church's difficult passage through the “crisis of modernism” brought about by a growing historical consciousness.

I also took advantage of generous funding to employ seven research assistants, who assembled weekly in a seminar format where we read Christian texts from the first three Christian centuries—all as part of a long-term project I am preparing on Christian history as it might be narrated with attention to LDS perspectives. I hope to continue planning, with Oxford professor Andrew Teal, for a faculty seminar on the topic to be held in the UK in 2022.

I hope I have contributed to the larger community here at BYU by guest lecturing some half dozen times on the LDS theological tradition, and to the larger LDS community in various distant locales through more than a dozen talks and firesides based on my (and

Fiona's) writings on the Restoration. I've also presented plenaries this year at the annual conferences of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists, and the Association of Book of Mormon Studies.

KRISTIAN S. HEAL

RESEARCH FELLOW

Faith in the gospel comes from hearing it proclaimed (Romans 10:17). Therefore, preaching is foundational to the spreading of the Christian message and the ongoing project of teaching, inspiring, guiding, chastening, and caring for the souls of those who turn to Christ. Early Christian preaching was a heady practice, a highwire act in which a preacher often balanced rhetorical gifts and pure love to reach and teach the congregation before them. The desire to tend to the wounded, to teach and edify, and above all to preach the message of Jesus is perhaps no more evident in all early Christian literature than in their sermons.



This is the “Why It Matters” statement in my chapter, “Preaching Christ: Scripture, Sermons, and Practical Exegesis,” which I submitted this year for a volume of essays on early Christians that is under contract with the Maxwell Institute. This volume brings together the work of thirteen Latter-day scholars with specialist training in early Christianity, under the editorship of Jason Combs (Ancient Scripture), Mark Ellison (Ancient Scripture), Catherine Gines Taylor (Maxwell Institute), and me. This volume will introduce Latter-day Saints to early Christian believers, enabling them to reach a hand of fellowship across the expanse of time that separates us from these early followers of Christ. I consider this volume to be part of the ongoing Restoration of our understanding of early Christianity. It is thrilling for me to deploy my research to strengthen and fortify the Latter-day Saints in their testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

I have spent two decades researching and writing about early Christian sermons. This work has been a thrilling journey of intellectual discovery. Most importantly, it has convinced me of the goodness and faithfulness of early Christian preachers, especially of their faith in Christ and their commitment to preaching him and his message through the scriptures.

This year saw the publication of a technical volume surveying the works of the great fifth-century author Narsai of Nisibis. This collaborative volume provides the essential starting point for all future work on this important author and founding theologian of the Assyrian Church of the East. This year, my co-editors and I also submitted a collection of translations of the works of Narsai to Peeters Publishers (Leuven, Belgium). This volume is the first of a projected fifteen volumes that will make all of Narsai's works available in translation. Most of these homilies have never before been translated. Writing the introduction for this volume allowed me to reflect on the significance and contribution of this great Christian teacher and author.

Finally, this year I also submitted the chapter on Syriac sermons and biblical interpretation for a forthcoming volume on Syriac sermons scheduled to appear in Brill's New History of the Sermon series. This volume will introduce the wonders of Syriac sermons to a worldwide audience interested in preaching throughout the history of Christianity.

Studying early Christian sermons has given me a greater appreciation for our sermon tradition, especially the preaching we hear at General Conference biannually. Faith in the gospel comes from hearing it proclaimed. I hope to use the academic tools developed in the study of Syriac sermons to pursue a future project to study Latter-day Saint sermons. Surely there should be a volume on Latter-day Saint preaching in the New History of the Sermon series!

JENNIFER C. LANE

NEAL A. MAXWELL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE



After almost 25 years in the classroom, both at BYU and BYU–Hawaii teaching for Religious Education and some for History, including 11 years in BYU–Hawaii University administration, this has been a rewarding season to focus on scholarship. I am grateful for the opportunities available as a Research Associate at the Maxwell Institute

As part of the multi-year Maxwell Institute Christology Initiative, I spent much of the early part of the year with readings reconnecting me with my doctoral work in the History of Christianity. Participation in the two-week seminar in July and working with scholars with a passion for connecting Restoration scripture with the questions about the nature of Christ was a great opportunity, and I am looking forward to continuing that engagement and working on a volume in that series.

Another year-long effort building on past research and writing has been synthesizing and compiling papers I have written on aspects of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' theology into a manuscript currently titled *Our Sins, His Name: Agency, Ordinances, and Christ's Atoning Blood*. I explore the role of the ordinances as a way in which we connect with Christ and his atoning sacrifice, in which we receive the benefits of his having taken our sins upon him and through which we more fully take his name upon us. I am grateful to be working with an excellent student research assistant here at the Maxwell Institute who is helping me polish my writing and move this work forward.

This Fall, I shared work I have been doing on the biblical teachings on wealth and worship in two different venues. In October, as part of the fiftieth annual Sperry Symposium, *Covenant of Compassion: Caring for the Marginalized and Disadvantaged in the Old Testament*, I presented "Remembering Redemption, Avoiding Idolatry: A Covenant Perspective on Caring for the Poor," and the paper also appeared in the volume of selected papers (*Covenant of Compassion: Caring for the Marginalized and Disadvantaged in the Old Testament*, ed. Avram R. Shannon, Gaye Strathearn, and Joshua M. Sears, 256-90. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2021.)

In November, at the Latter-day Saints and the Bible section of the Annual Meeting for the Society for Biblical Literature, I presented on some Book of Mormon texts that follow the biblical connection between remembering that all we have comes from God and the warning not to set our hearts on riches, in "Love of God, Neighbor, and Riches." I hope to build on this scriptural foundation in a larger volume that I am currently calling *Setting Our Hearts: Wealth, Worship, and Discipleship*.

I am pleased to have updated versions of two earlier publications appear within the last year in connection with volumes supporting those wishing to supplement their annual scripture study with additional scholarship. For the 2021 course of study, "Redemption's Grand Design for Both the Living and the Dead" appeared in *Raising the Standard of Truth: Exploring the History and Teachings of the Early Restoration*, ed. Scott C. Esplin, 189-210. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2020. And for the 2022 course of study, "The Whole Meaning of the Law: Christ's Vicarious Sacrifice" In *Approaching Holiness: Exploring the History and Teachings of the Old Testament*, ed. Krystal V. L. Pierce and David Rolph Seely, 159-78. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2021.



Euteknia panel with personifications of Dikaiosyne and Philosophia, c. first quarter of the 4th century. Museum of Damascus, Syria. (Reproduction rights license @agefotostock)

CATHERINE GINES TAYLOR

HUGH W. NIBLEY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

In Romans 13:10-12, Paul counsels that, in keeping the commandments, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” He continues to admonish the Roman saints that “now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.” I have considered these verses as I enter the fourth and final year of my position as the Nibley Postdoctoral Fellow. I can hardly believe that this particular tenure in my career is coming to a close and is closer than I could have ever believed. Although the day is nigh at hand, I witness that the accomplishments that have come by way of this fellowship have irrevocably projected my career in definitive ways that will continue to be honorably fulfilled in faith and love.



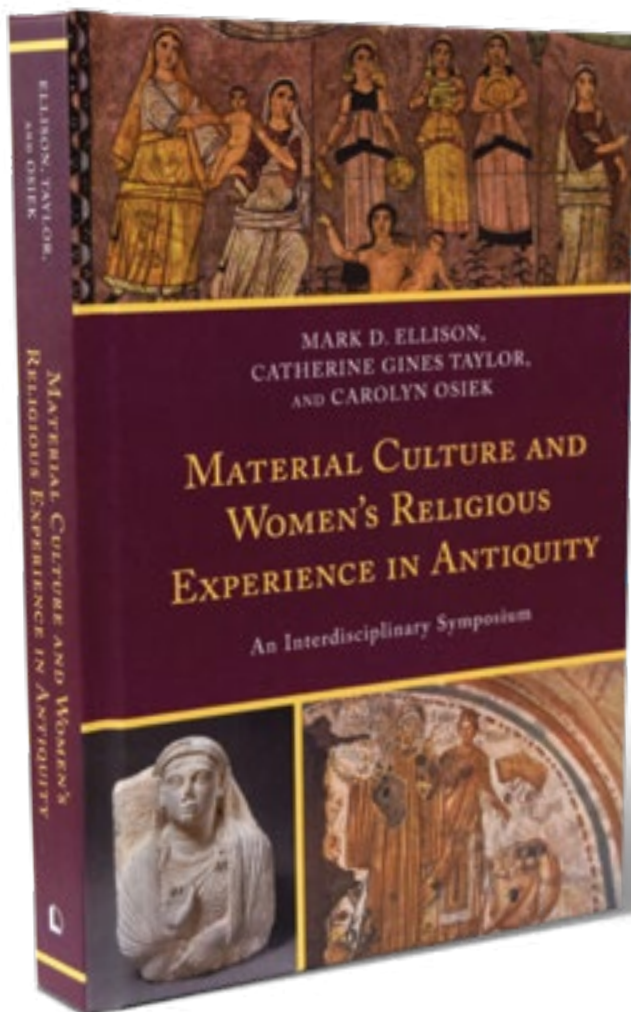
During the spring of 2021, I was pleased to work on a new volume, *Ancient Christians: An Introduction for Latter-day Saints*, collaborating with fellow editors, Drs. Jason Combs, Kristian Heal, and Mark Ellison. For my part, I wrote the chapter, “Inclining Christian Hearts: Work for the Dead,” and was moved once again by the liveliness of early Christians’ hope and their efficacious work for their kindred dead. When asked by Latter-day Saints, “Why do you care so much about ancient Christians and their material commemoration in art?” my reply is as follows:

When Latter-day Saints hear the phrase ‘work for the dead,’ we immediately think of baptism for the dead or other vicarious work performed in our temples. Yet our work for the dead also includes genealogy, family history, the dedication of graves, preparing the bodies of our deceased for burial or cremation, and more. For ancient Christians, work for the dead is attested in the material record and textual sources and includes evidence for baptism and intercessory prayer, vicarious good works, visionary redemption, and vigil keeping. The visual record is more than a casual cultural exploration of the past. It is, in some cases, the only source we have for understanding the faith of early Christians. As Latter-day Saints, we can learn from our ancient Christian ancestors how to better incline our hearts toward our faithful kindred dead, for truly “neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (D&C 128:15). We hope this will be the signature volume from the Maxwell Institute to be published in Fall 2022 in preparation for the “Come, Follow Me” New Testament study year.

I was fortunate to join in many interdisciplinary conversations at the North American Patristics Society Conference, held in May via Zoom. It was constructive to discuss my work on an Arlesian sarcophagus and interact with colleagues from around the country and abroad, receiving good feedback and honing my presentation skills.

I was honored to be part of the MA Committee for one of my research assistants, Josie Ableman, as she defended her thesis and received her Master’s in Comparative Studies in April. Mentoring students is an ongoing project and one of the best parts of my experience here at the Maxwell Institute. Although we do not have a teaching mandate per se, the close interactions we foster with student research assistants continues to enrich my life as much as it does theirs. Watching students spread their wings of faith and holding them accountable for their academic aspirations is a privileged stewardship. I am, as always, grateful for their careful reading, good thinking, and imaginative wonder as we waded through the deep waters of ancient Christian material culture and devotion.

During July, and under the good graces of the International Vice President’s Office, I was able to travel to Arles, France, and neighboring cities in Provence to resume research on ancient Christian sarcophagi. For three weeks, I worked in the Musée d’Arles Antique, the Narbo Via Museum in Narbonne, the Frederic Marès Museum in Barcelona, and many local archaeological museums. Unfortunately, the archives were still closed, but I met with the archaeologist Marc Heijmans




to explore and discuss the site of the 5th-century Christian Church and convent established by Saint Caesarius in Arles. A real highlight of my trip was visiting Saint Maximin La Sainte Baume during the feast days of Mary Magdalene and participating with friends in those anciently rooted celebrations.


The end of summer meant the arrival of my long-anticipated edited volume, *Material Culture and Women's Religious Experience in Antiquity*, published by Lexington Books. This volume was co-edited by myself, Mark Ellison, and Carolyn Osiek, and features fourteen excellent essays that help answer questions like: How can material artifacts help illuminate the religious lives of women in antiquity? How do archaeological and art historical studies recover women's religious perspectives and experiences that the literary record misses or underrepresents? My own chapter, "Foreseeing the Divine Bridal Chamber: A Household of Mosaics from Shahba-Philippopolis," is included alongside contributions from scholars across the country.

This year, my annual Faculty Seminar topic focused on Revelation 21 & 22, exploring John's material and visionary imagination. In preparation for the 2022 Sperry Symposium, I presented my paper, "Crowned with City Gates: The Divine Bride and New Creation in Revelation 21-22," and was delighted with the helpful comments and suggestions I received. On the heels of the seminar, I participated in the Art and Belief Symposium sponsored by the Maxwell Institute and the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts. My remarks were part of the Critical Understanding session. They centered on my recent research of images of female orant figures on sarcophagi and early Christian texts recounting Mary's, the mother of Jesus, Dormition and Assumption narratives. This symposium culminated in a faculty seminar of the same title and theme that took place virtually during the summer of 2020.

It has been a privilege to teach a section of Early Christian and Byzantine Art and Architecture for the Art History section of Comparative Arts and Letters during fall 2021. Being in the classroom has once again enlivened my deep love of teaching, where first-hand, transformative learning takes place. It has been brilliant to see students' eyes light up as we explore the underground catacomb images of Christ and his earliest devotees in one moment and soar to the heights of Byzantine domes and the scintillating mosaics of Christ enthroned in apocalyptic glory in the next moment.

As the year closes, I anticipate participating in the 2021 Society of Biblical Literature Conference held in San Antonio, Texas. I will be presenting new research on a sarcophagus frieze from the museum at Le Puy en Velay that I had the opportunity to examine and photograph during my trip to France. The paper is titled "City of Refuge, City Beautiful: A Late Ancient Sarcophagus and the Patriarchal Wife, Aseneth." This sarcophagus has had some initial cataloging but lacks a more thorough analysis of the iconography. I anticipate this paper developing into a book chapter for my second monograph, *The Lady at the Gate: Personified Wisdom and Late Ancient Sarcophagi in Gaul*. My goal is to secure a book contract for this volume before the end of my tenure as the Nibley Fellow.

I have every reason to believe that 2022 will continue to delight, surprise, and inspire in this grand vocation of religious scholarship. I especially anticipate additional mentored Inspiring Learning opportunities as I engage students in the heart of my research in France during spring 2022. Today is the day, my friends, the night far spent. One invaluable lesson learned from my experience at the Maxwell Institute is that pressing forward in our good work and the work of salvation means embracing the future, never generating action out of fear, and in being shot through with love, the fidelities of faith, and in beautiful salvific hope. 

An aerial photograph of a university campus. In the background, a range of mountains is visible under a clear sky. The campus features several large, modern academic buildings with multiple stories and many windows. A prominent tall, thin, light-colored tower stands out among the buildings. The foreground and middle ground are filled with a dense canopy of trees, many of which have turned bright yellow and orange, indicating autumn. A winding road or path is visible through the trees in the lower right. A white text box with a decorative pattern is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

“We labor in the context of the audacious idea of the perfectibility of the human person. Despite rampant evidence to the contrary, humans are capable of progress and refinement.”

—J. SPENCER FLUHMAN







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 2021 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>.

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Student Reflections

AUSTIN BALL, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

My experiences with Phil Barlow and Terryl Givens this last year have certainly been faith-transforming and mind-expanding. Phil's unassuming yet pragmatic wisdom has enlightened me through our conversations on topics ranging from the challenge of human freedom to the stresses of dating. Terryl's enthusiastic ambition for the limitless potentialities of human discovery has inspired me to run after him into the disciplines of theology, cognitive science, and cosmology, which (disclaimer for curious minds!) has sometimes left me feeling a little queasy about just how little we know.



Dr. Barlow had me close read through the Institute's recent brief theological introductions to the Book of Mormon, investigating some top Latter-day Saint thinkers' views on the phenomenon of time. As it turns out, it affects our experience of the sacred in some big ways. That work has been very creative and engaging.

For Dr. Givens, I've worked on tracing the history of God's retributive punishment and what this means about His personal character. Throughout my research, I've learned there are many stories, often discordant, about the way God treats His children; this is especially important to when—by breaking the commandments—we break each other. Determining the process of restoration and the proper response to sin is a complex subject, and for that I'm grateful to the Spirit of Truth. I've here had a great opportunity to discern for myself what Christian teachings are most true by appealing to that Spirit whose fruits are “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness. . .” (Galatians 5:22)

ALEXANDER CHRISTENSEN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

This year I have continued work on Dr. Barlow's many projects: finalizing *The Book of Mormon: brief theological introductions*, investigating “time” as understood in the standard works (for Dr. Barlow's volume in *The Doctrine and Covenants: brief theological introductions*), editing essays for the second edition of *A Thoughtful Faith*, and other smaller projects. In addition to Dr. Barlow's work, I was able to join Dr. Terryl Givens's research seminar on early Christianity, investigating how early Christian commonplaces (like the pre-existence of souls or the progressive nature of eternity) dropped out of the mainstream Christian narrative. Dr. Givens has also guided my own research project on the patristic reception of Paul's letter to the Romans. It has truly been one of the greatest blessings of my spiritual and intellectual life to work under—and be mentored by—these two great scholars and disciples of Christ.



RYDER SEAMONS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

This year I worked with Dr. Barlow tracking the concept of time as it appears in the Doctrine & Covenants—an exercise which provided many fruitful spiritual insights. I also continued working on Dr. Barlow's long-term project that focuses on the theology, stories, and art that constitutes our notions of “war in heaven” in the church as well as other religions. My involvement at the Maxwell Institute has been the highlight of my time at BYU. Though my time at the Maxwell Institute is at an end, I will carry with me the peace, happiness, and friendship I found here. I really think that my involvement at the Maxwell Institute breathed new and necessary life into my spirit and kept my spiritual life from spoiling or disappearing. I express my thanks particularly for Dr. Barlow, who has had a positive impact in every aspect of my life, and whom I consider my very close friend.





JANAI WRIGHT, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

The opportunity to work with Dr. Barlow at the Maxwell Institute thus far has been a true highlight of my experience at BYU. Under his guidance, I have certainly further developed the usual skills naturally pertaining to research and writing, the means by which the Institute carries out its purposes, and which add a nice polish to one's resume. However, while I am grateful for Dr. Barlow's mentorship which has helped me in this area, I am most grateful for what I have learned from his sense of wonder, which is in my opinion the first sign of what we call a disciple scholar. To engage thoughtfully and intentionally with matters of faith, to have important questions dripping from the mouth, and to be inspired to see things for what they really are, these are all gifts the Maxwell Institute, and in particular Dr. Barlow, have given me.



ISAAC THEOBALD, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

While I have only worked with Dr. Davis for a couple of months, he has already helped me to ponder the Qur'an and develop questions about its meaning, applications, and possible connections to my beliefs. I've gained greater insight about the importance of asking these questions and the understanding that not everything has an easy answer. Because of this process, I have a great appreciation for things foreign to me, but important in the lives of others. I'm grateful that the Maxwell Institute has allowed me to add my thoughts and ideas to the discussion on theology.



RICHARD ROBINSON, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working with the Maxwell Institute has been an enlightening and intellectually stimulating experience that has blessed me immensely. Our study of gospel fundamentals has played a key role in the development of my own moral code and bears profoundly upon my everyday life. Working with Professor Faulconer and other research assistants has provided me with the perfect opportunity to articulate my crystallizing understanding of Christ and the comprehensive gospel truths for which I am eternally grateful to him.



ELIZA CLARKE, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

This past year at the Maxwell Institute has been a steadying experience that has grounded me through a crazy, online, virtual year. Meeting with Dr. Givens and discussing the ideas and the influences that shaped pre-orthodox Christianity has given me a lens to more deeply understand my own faith in the broader context of religious history, as well as given me the opportunity to parse out exactly why I believe the things I do. The readings and discussions that I have had this year through the Maxwell Institute have been exhilarating and clarifying, and I have enjoyed every second of it.



ANNE DALLON, OFFICE ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute has been a privilege I never imagined. Hearing the scholars talk about their research is always really interesting. They've mentioned a lot of things and people that I have never heard of and I've been able to expand my own knowledge through them. I love seeing all the books the scholars order and seeing the hard things they tackle in their research. I have been able to help transcribe the Maxwell Institute Podcast and that has been a highlight of working here. Listening to Janiece Johnson and Joseph Stuart discuss ideas in the *Come, Follow Me* readings teaches me a lot. They have a lot of interesting insights that I never would have thought of. Being able to proofread a few papers for the scholars helps me learn more about Ancient Christians and how the gospel of Jesus Christ is timeless, and how policies changing throughout time don't diminish the truthfulness of the doctrine. Working at the Maxwell Institute is a truly spiritual and uplifting experience.

HOLLY GRAFF, OFFICE ASSISTANT

Being at the front desk in the Institute is an absolute joy. It's been such a wonderful experience getting to know and interact with our scholars; they are all so genuine and kind. It's amazing to see firsthand the work that is going on at the Institute and at times even helping with it. I'm constantly learning and gaining new experiences and I'm excited to continue during my time here.

**RACHEL REGAN, OFFICE ASSISTANT**

I came to the Maxwell Institute for a job in 2017 but it has turned out to mean a great deal to me in my personal and spiritual life. The Institute has acted as a safe space for me to verbalize my ponderings, questions and concerns and receive faithful mentorship. In addition, having exposure to the scholars' publications and books has helped me to more courageously challenge, stretch, and increase my faith and understanding in a way that will benefit me the rest of my life. I'm grateful for the opportunity to work here!

**ABBY ELLIS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

This year I have had the wonderful opportunity to work with Dr. Kristian Heal to help him organize letters written between Dr. Alphonse Mingana and a vast variety of scholars and friends. Dr. Mingana was known for his collection of Syriac and Arabic manuscripts about Christianity that he collected from different places in the Middle East. I have found it fascinating to see Mingana's belief and knowledge written in the pages to his friends and colleagues. It has opened my eyes to a whole different side of Christianity that I didn't know existed before. Dr. Heal's encouragement to discover something new as we work has helped me see the world with new eyes.

**EMMA FRANKLIN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

As a research assistant with the Maxwell Institute for Dr. Heal, I have performed a variety of tasks relating to editing, translation, and research. These tasks include proofreading transcriptions of letters, composing, editing, and formatting bibliographies, translating homilies from French to English, and editing a chapter and an article written by Dr. Heal before they were submitted. All these various assignments have allowed me to strengthen my editing skills and my attention to detail. Furthermore, I am more familiar with Chicago style bibliographies and have also improved my translation ability.

**ANGEL ZHONG, RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Working as a research assistant for Dr. Kristian Heal in the BYU Maxwell Institute has helped enhance my spiritual, academic, and intellectual growth. I spent the semester researching the spread of Christianity on the Silk Road, a topic that I was very interested to learn more about. My family was converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in China and researching the history and spread of Christianity in China strengthened my desire to pursue personal research on my family history. Dr. Kristian Heal provided guidance and assistance throughout the project and encouraged me to branch off and to do further research in areas that I was passionate about. As a result, I developed skills to help me discover and synthesize research materials and contribute to the academic world through my discoveries. Furthermore, I was able to expand my intellectual abilities when I analyzed primary historical sources in the original text languages of French and mandarin Chinese. Dr. Kristian Heal not only provided a positive, supportive environment for me to learn but emphasized the importance of me being able to benefit from the skills and knowledge I gained in my future endeavors. Because of the fulfilling experience I've had this semester, working at the BYU Maxwell Institute has fueled my passion for the pursuit of lifelong learning.





ABI MACCABEE, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working as a research assistant for Dr. Johnson has been a fulfilling and impactful experience. My understanding in church history and in research has grown immensely. My admiration for the early saints of the church 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 through working for the Maxwell Institute will stay with me for throughout my life.



JULIE MOUSSER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

My work at the Maxwell Institute has brought greater light and joy into my life. I find myself sharing the knowledge and increase in faith I have gained with others almost constantly as I have come to apply in my life lessons from those who learned of the gospel in the early days of the Church. I have learned from the example of those who stuck to their faith in trials and those who fell away what to do in the troubling times I currently am living through. Working with Dr. Johnson has also taught me how the Book of Mormon does not just build my faith, but it has built my character and I leave that mark on all those around me.



EMILY THOMAS, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

As a senior in the English major who is planning to pursue a career in academia, I've found my experiences at the Maxwell Institute to be invaluable. Working for Dr. Johnson this summer has opened my eyes to the process of performing and publishing research, and it has given me the opportunity to hone my close reading and problem-solving skills. Beyond that, though, this job has helped me to recognize the deep spiritual impact of knowing your roots. The testimonies of the early saints who faced terrifying mobs, heartbreaking loss, and even death have instilled in me a determination to commit myself more fully to strengthening my own testimony of the gospel.



KATHARINE DAVIDSON BEKKER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT


One of the greatest things I have gotten from working with Dr. Catherine Taylor at the Maxwell Institute is a recognition of the wealth of religious and spiritual knowledge there is to be gained from studying the beliefs, practices, and visual depictions of the earliest Christians. I have been continually amazed as I have learned how these devout Christians—those chronologically closest to the teachings of Christ—conceptualized cosmology, worship, and the vital roles of women. My time at the Maxwell Institute has given me avenues for broadening my understanding of my own practice of Christianity.



COLETTE BURTON, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Working at the Maxwell Institute under Dr. Catherine Taylor has helped me gain a greater insight into early Christianity and Byzantium and the important role women played. I have been able to understand more fully the robust oeuvre of art and art objects that abound in this time period and their significance to the fledgling Christian faith. Additionally, working with these resources has helped me practice and expand my research abilities. Working in this area has strengthened my faith as I've engaged with different perspectives and opinions on Christianity. It has helped me to think more deeply about my beliefs and why I believe.



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Salt Lake City, with a dense urban area in the middle ground and a sprawling university campus in the foreground. The campus features modern buildings, green lawns, and a large parking lot. In the background, a range of mountains with significant snow cover is visible under a cloudy sky.

“The Restoration famously rips the lid off the notion of human potential and that truth has radical implications for education in Zion. That idea alone should fill this university with energy and hope unattainable elsewhere.”

—J. SPENCER FLUHMAN



Academic Programs & Events

SYMPOSIA & SEMINARS



PROCLAIM PEACE: THE RESTORATION'S ANSWER TO AN AGE OF CONFLICT

PARTICIPANTS

- Patrick Q. Mason, *Utah State University*
- J. David Pulsipher, *Brigham Young University—Idaho*



BRIEF THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTIONS TO THE BOOK OF MORMON: QUESTIONS, ANSWERS, AND REFLECTIONS



PARTICIPANTS

- Sharon J. Harris, *Brigham Young University*
- Kimberly Matheson, *Loyola University Chicago*
- Joseph M. Spencer, *Brigham Young University*





BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF THE FIELD

PARTICIPANTS

- Patrick Q. Mason, *Utah State University*
- Joseph M. Spencer, *Brigham Young University*
- Kimberly Matheson, *Loyola University Chicago*
- Nicholas J. Frederick, *Brigham Young University*
- John Christopher Thomas, *Bangor University*
- Rosalynde Frandsen Welch, *Independent Scholar*



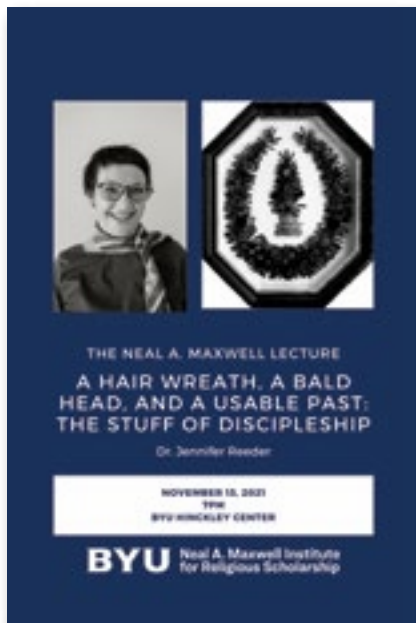
ART AND BELIEF: A SYMPOSIUM

PARTICIPANTS

- Anthony Sweat
- James Faulconer
- Kimberly Johnson
- Heather Belnap, Travis Anderson, Catherine Taylor, and Jeremy Grimshaw
- Joe Spencer and Caitlin Connolly
- Megan Jones and Jeff Parkin
- George Handley and Steven Peck

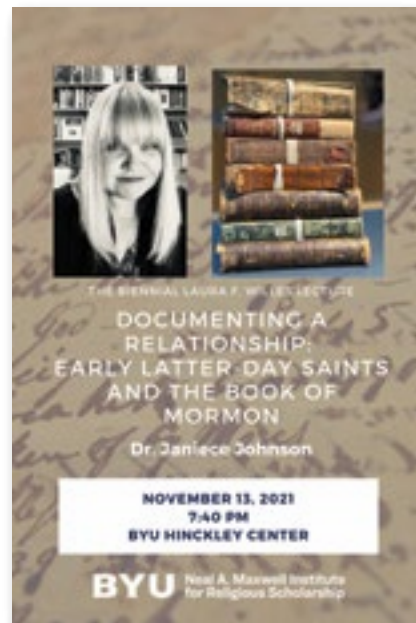


LECTURES



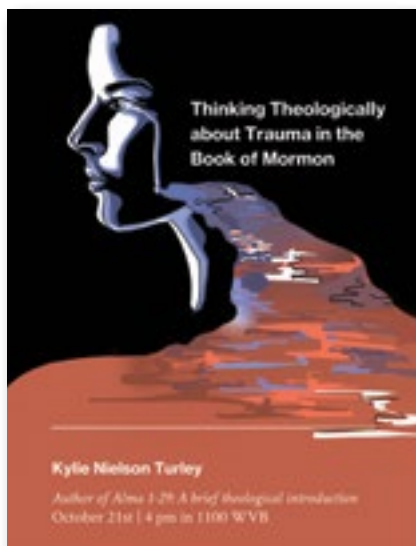
2021 ANNUAL NEAL A. MAXWELL LECTURE

Jennifer Reeder, 19th-Century Women's History Specialist, Church History Department, "A Hair Wreath, a Bald Head, and a Usable Past: The Stuff of Discipleship," November 13, 2021



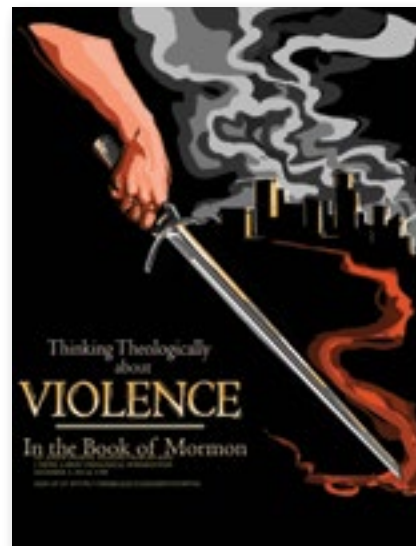
2021 LAURA F. WILLES LECTURE

Janiece Johnson, past Laura F. Willes Research Associate (2017–2021), "Documenting a Relationship: Early Latter-day Saints and the Book of Mormon," November 13, 2021



THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT TRAUMA IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Kylie Nielson Turley, Brigham Young University



THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Joseph M. Spencer, Brigham Young University



GUEST LECTURES

**CHARLES INOUE:
SUGAR COOKIES, NEO-ANIMISM,
AND THE POSTMODERN
AGE OF RENEWAL**



"While nothing is as normal as life, to my mind, normal things are God's greatest, most marvelous gifts."

from *Zion Earth Zen Sky*

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EDUCATION IN ZION AUDITORIUM

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SUGAR COOKIES, NEO-ANIMISM, AND THE POSTMODERN AGE OF RENEWAL

Charles Shirō Inouye




**JOSEPH SMITH
for
PRESIDENT**

THE PROPHET, THE ASSASSINS, and the
FIGHT FOR AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

**JOSEPH SMITH FOR PRESIDENT
AND THE FIGHT FOR AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

SPENCER MCBRIDE
ASSOCIATE MANAGING HISTORIAN OF THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPERS

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JOSEPH SMITH FOR PRESIDENT: THE PROPHET, THE ASSASSINS, AND THE FIGHT FOR AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Spencer W. McBride, *Joseph Smith Papers*

OTHER EVENTS

CHURCH HISTORY AND THE WORLD: THE WORD OF WISDOM, WITH THE JOHN A. WIDTSOE FOUNDATION

PARTICIPANTS

- Kate Holbrook, *Church History Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*
- Samuel M. Brown, *University of Utah School of Medicine*
- Richard E. Turley, *Independent Scholar*

Media Outlets

MAXWELL INSTITUTE PODCAST

The Maxwell Institute Podcast introduces listeners to the wide world of religious ideas through a Latter-day Saint lens. Guests in 2021 included James Faulconer, Terry Givens and Fiona Givens, Janiece Johnson, Charles Inouye, Robin Scott Jensen, David W. Grua, Jessica M. Nelson, Jennifer Reeder, Spencer McBride, Samuel M. Brown, Patrick Q. Mason, and J. David Pulsipher.



ABIDE

This year we introduced a new Maxwell Institute Podcast that focuses on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints's "Come, Follow Me" curriculum. Co-hosts Janiece Johnson and Joseph Stuart created the podcast, and also featured interviews with Kate Holbrook, James Faulconer, and Steven Harper.

The Maxwell Institute's podcasts are available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, YouTube, and other fine podcasting apps. They can also be streamed at mi.byu.edu/mipodcast.



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PHOTO CREDITS

Cover: *Mary and Elizabeth*. Oil on Canvas, 2013. Rose Datoc Dall.

1–2: Karl G. Maeser Building in winter. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.

3: Maxwell Institute scholars and staff. Photo by Rebecca Fuentes. BYU Photo.

4: J. Spencer Fluhman at BYU's Karl G. Maeser Building. Photo by Rebekah Baker, BYU Photo.

5: South campus hill in fall. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.

7: Red leaves against mountain snow. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.

8–9: Inauguration of Jeffrey R. Holland. Photo by Mark Philbrick. BYU Photo.

10: Bell tower stream. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.

12: BYU President Kevin J. Worthen. Photo by Alyssa Dahneke.

13: BYU President Kevin J. Worthen. Photo by Alyssa Dahneke.

16: Jennifer Reeder. Photo by Alyssa Dahneke.

19: Photos of hair art. Church History Museum and Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Museum, Salt Lake City, UT. Courtesy of Jennifer Reeder.

20: Jennifer Reeder. Photo by Alyssa Dahneke.

23: South campus path. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.

24: Brigham Young statue and Harris Fine Arts Center at dusk. Photo by Mark A. Philbrick. BYU Photo.

26–27: Snow on south campus hill. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.

28: Janiece Johnson. Photo by Alyssa Dahneke.

31: Y Mountain in winter. Photo by Rebecca Fuentes. BYU Photo.

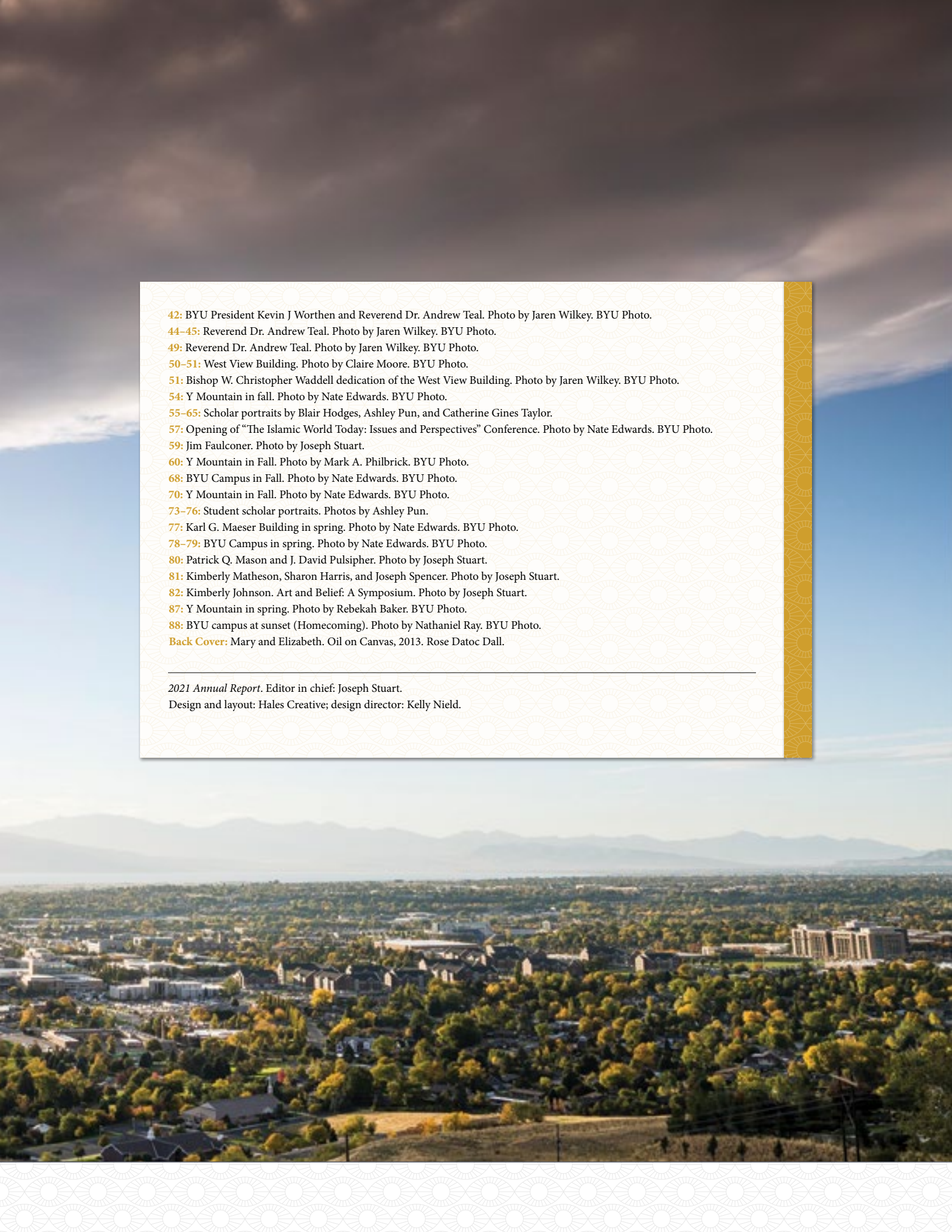
32: First edition Book of Mormon. The Huntington Library. Photo courtesy of Janiece Johnson.

35: Tree of Life statue in fall. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.

36: Copies of nineteenth-century Books of Mormon. The British Library. Photo courtesy of Janiece Johnson.

38–39: Karl G. Maeser Building in fall. Photo by Matthew Norton. BYU Photo.

40: Reverend Dr. Andrew Teal. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.

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- 42: BYU President Kevin J Worthen and Reverend Dr. Andrew Teal. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.
- 44–45: Reverend Dr. Andrew Teal. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.
- 49: Reverend Dr. Andrew Teal. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.
- 50–51: West View Building. Photo by Claire Moore. BYU Photo.
- 51: Bishop W. Christopher Waddell dedication of the West View Building. Photo by Jaren Wilkey. BYU Photo.
- 54: Y Mountain in fall. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 55–65: Scholar portraits by Blair Hodges, Ashley Pun, and Catherine Gines Taylor.
- 57: Opening of “The Islamic World Today: Issues and Perspectives” Conference. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 59: Jim Faulconer. Photo by Joseph Stuart.
- 60: Y Mountain in Fall. Photo by Mark A. Philbrick. BYU Photo.
- 68: BYU Campus in Fall. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 70: Y Mountain in Fall. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 73–76: Student scholar portraits. Photos by Ashley Pun.
- 77: Karl G. Maeser Building in spring. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 78–79: BYU Campus in spring. Photo by Nate Edwards. BYU Photo.
- 80: Patrick Q. Mason and J. David Pulsipher. Photo by Joseph Stuart.
- 81: Kimberly Matheson, Sharon Harris, and Joseph Spencer. Photo by Joseph Stuart.
- 82: Kimberly Johnson. Art and Belief: A Symposium. Photo by Joseph Stuart.
- 87: Y Mountain in spring. Photo by Rebekah Baker. BYU Photo.
- 88: BYU campus at sunset (Homecoming). Photo by Nathaniel Ray. BYU Photo.
- Back Cover:** Mary and Elizabeth. Oil on Canvas, 2013. Rose Datoc Dall.

2021 Annual Report. Editor in chief: Joseph Stuart.

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Mary and Elisabeth

(OIL ON CANVAS, 2013) BY ROSE DATOC DALL

