

AKRON OHIO STAKE

Promises

One summer, our family spent a wonderful day at an open-air seafaring museum by the Atlantic. Every sight and sound around us were those of ships and boats and the art and science of fishing. The relentless fragrance of the ocean also whipped up in us a craving for the delicious creatures in the sea, which everyone in our family loved. A perfect way to end a perfect day, naturally, was a visit to a popular eatery of seafood, which we all ordered, except our youngest daughter, who asked for only a hot dog. We teased her for her curious deed, and she got mad.

My daughter is no longer mad, and now I have a story to illustrate how we can sometimes miss clear themes.

The words “covenant” or “covenants,” not counting their alternate forms, appeared almost 500 times in the scriptures. Adam and Eve began their mortality with a covenant with God. Individually we began our membership in the Kingdom with the baptismal covenant. Every saving ordinance, indeed, is attended by covenants. Each of us is on a covenant path. We are a covenant people. Covenanting is how God deals with peoples and individuals.

But then, why?

I’ve signed many a contract (legally binding covenant) with suppliers, clients, and customers over my work life. Contrasting interhuman covenants with God-man covenants may provide insights into the true nature of the covenants that God enters into with us.

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First, before I covenant with anybody, I want to know that the other party is trustworthy. But God covenants with people who individually and collectively have proven themselves unreliable.

Second, human covenants are typically designed to cover every loophole with complexity, contingencies, and fine prints. Godly covenants, on the other hand, are brief, simple, and frankly, not very protective. (There are no lawyers in heaven?)



President Wen

Third, human covenants are usually for fair and equitable exchanges. But Godly covenants are profoundly lopsided and unfair. God offers everything He has and will fully fulfill; we offer really just a promise or even just a willingness (D&C 20:77, Alma 7:15) to fulfill. God indeed “plunged the knife,” but Abraham was accepted when he raised the dagger, excruciating though it was.

Finally, I know of no human covenants that offer forgiveness of violations upon a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

In short, God uses covenants not to trade, but to bless. Their bywords are unfathomable generosity, leniency, and grace.

And in His wisdom, it seems to me, that the Lord has purposed neither a bar so high as perfection, which would drive away everyone nor a prerequisite so low as a mere confession of belief or intention, which would not drive anyone. It’s covenantal promises—freely, willingly and solemnly made by us—that can prove us (D&C 98:14) and keep us on the path; it’s the love behind the covenants—freely, willingly and painfully offered by God—when we see those tender mercies, that will draw us along the path.

How merciful and wise is the God of covenants! What else can we do but to receive, remember, and renew them. (Elder Bednar, Oct 17 Gen. Conf.)

Promises?

Upcoming Dates

- Tuesday, February 4 - Temple Recommend Interviews with stake presidency member/Medina 6:30-7pm. No appointments needed.
- Saturday, February 8 - Stake Youth Leadership Training/Tallmadge 10am-noon
- Tuesday, February 11 - Temple Recommend Interviews with stake presidency member/Tallmadge 6:30-7pm. No appointments needed.
- Saturday, February 15 - Quad Stake Dance/Cleveland 7-10pm
- Saturday, February 22 - Women’s Conference/Tallmadge 9am-1pm
- Sunday, February 23 - Ashland Ward Conference
- Sunday, February 23 - Face to Face for Youth Broadcast 8-9pm
- Thursday, February 27 - 2020 Temple and Family History Leadership Instruction Broadcast 9-10pm for ward and stake leaders and members with temple and family history callings and responsibilities
- Saturday, February 29 - RootsTech Family Discovery Day
- Saturday, February 29 - Stake Youth Ice Skating Activity/ Alice Noble Arena, Wooster 1-3pm
- Sunday, March 1 - Fast Sunday
- Tuesday, March 3 - Temple Recommend Interviews with stake presidency member/Medina 6:30-7pm. No appointments needed.

FEED MY SHEEP

Sister Brittany Kucnick, Stake Primary President

When I served as a ward Primary president, my presidency and I decided to reach out to a few less-active families. We started very simply by sending our Primary newsletter in the mail each month with a little note. One particular family had recently moved into the ward but had never attended church. Then it happened! They finally came to church! I spoke with them after sacrament meeting, and although they were hesitant to stay because their little girl has autism, it was because their little boy, then about six years old, wanted to stay,



that they decided to give it a try. We spoke again later, and the mother thanked me for the newsletters we had been sending. Their little boy, who was just learning to read, enjoyed reading them so much that he was the one to encourage the family to go to church.

Over the next year, our families spent time together. The kids stayed with us when mom and dad had to make an overnight trip to Texas to be there for a family member. We took the kids to some activities with us, so mom and dad could celebrate a special occasion.

They invited us to birthday parties. I would check in with them during challenging times to see how I could help. The family attended church for a while and participated in callings but then drifted away. Despite this, relationships continued as my family and others continued to reach out to them.

Eventually, this family moved out of state. In January of 2020, I was pleasantly surprised to find myself tagged on Facebook in a beautiful photo of their family at the little boy's baptism! Dad baptized his son, mom was a witness, the little sister sang, and the little boy glowed in his white jumpsuit. Mom thanked the people who had been an influence in his life.

"... by small and simple things are great things brought to pass." (Alma 37:6)

As we serve, we never truly know where our efforts in the lives of others will lead.

As we strive to follow the command to feed the Lord's sheep and as we more earnestly seek to follow the promptings we receive, we will notice a positive change come over us. The Lord knows we can become far greater than we can imagine if we simply love Him.



Family History Corner

by Jeanne Peugh,
Director

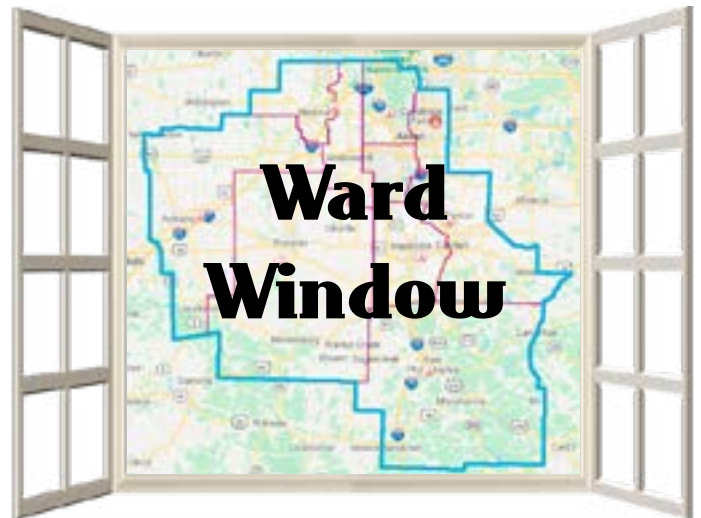


The Akron Ohio Family History Center has put a challenge out to do **52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks**. We hope that you are searching to find those lost ancestors. My husband and I came across some interesting information in the last week or so. His 4th great-grandmother's family was captured by Indians when she was only seven years old and remained captive for two years. Wouldn't it be wonderful to read their journal of this experience? Would you feel any differently about this grandmother? Please send me something you have found that you would be willing to share with our Stake members. They loved us first, and we can return that love by sharing their stories and doing their work. Family History is all about Love!

BRECKSVILLE HOME STORAGE CENTER SPECIALS



Sister Deb Carter, Elder & Sister Wolter 440-526-4057
6900 Southpointe Pkwy, Suite C, Brecksville, Ohio 44141
Wed-Thurs 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



Be sure to look for this column throughout the year to see what has been happening throughout the stake as each unit shares something special.

Revised schedule:
March - Medina
April - New Philadelphia
May - New Portage
June - Tallmadge
July - Wadsworth
August - Wooster
September - Akron
October - Ashland
November - Canton
December - Easthill
January - Massillon

Self-Reliance Corner

by Sister Diane Burgoon,
Stake Self-Reliance Specialist

Path to a Better Job

Looking to improve your employment? There's a formula for that!

Act in Faith + Work Hard + Work Smart = Success!

The Self-Reliance class – Find a Better Job can help you develop the skills to improve your employment opportunities. Ask your ward Self-Reliance Specialist for more information or contact Sister Burgoon. Also, check out LDSJobs.org for articles on finding a job and other topics.

For more information on becoming or helping others become more self-reliant, see: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/self-reliance/blog>

The Lord has declared,

“It is my purpose to provide for my saints” (D&C 104:15).

Diane Burgoon
Stake Self-Reliance Group Coordinator
330-430-9912
diane.burgoon@yahoo.com

North American Northeast Area Plan



Deepen conversion to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and the restored gospel.

1. Prayerfully study the Book of Mormon every day.

PHYSICAL

SPIRITUAL



You're invited!



What: Akron Stake Primary Activity
Who: Children turning 8-11 in 2020 with an accompanying adult
When: March 14th at 10:00 am
Where: Tallmadge Stake Center
106 Howe Rd, Tallmadge, OH

Classes offered (pick 3):

Music at Home Baptismal Covenants
Serving Together Preparing for the Temple
Building Unity Through Games

Accompanying adult will attend classes with the child or children they brought



Light refreshments provided after the activity

#strivetobe



INTELLECTUAL

SOCIAL