

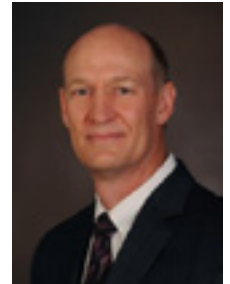
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# AKRON OHIO STAKE

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## *Stake Presidency Message:* **Pure Religion**

I grew up on a small farm in rural Idaho. As I recall, we only had about five neighbors within one mile in either direction of our home. One of these neighbors was a wonderful elderly widow, Ida Phillips. One day, when I was still quite young, I decided that I was going to do something nice for Ida. I don't know where the idea came from, but I recall getting permission from my mother to cut some flowers from her garden and take them to Sister Phillips. I hopped on my small, green Schwinn, banana seat, kids bike, and started on the one-mile journey to her home. I recall my eager anticipation of surprising her with these flowers. I hoped that this would make her very happy. I hoped it would be a memorable experience for her. It did, and it was. But what I wasn't expecting was just how happy and memorable that experience was for me.



President Coburn

I recall not just delivering the flowers, but also being invited into her home and sitting down and visiting with Sister Phillips (as much as one can “visit” at that age). Though I had hoped this would have a big impact on Sister Phillips, I know it had a much bigger impact on me, as it is one of the few clear memories I have at that age.

One of the scriptures that comes into my mind most often is James 1:27, “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.” I have always been impressed by the simple power of this scripture.

I love the term “Pure Religion.” It conveys so much meaning in two words—pure religion: kindness, compassion, benevolence, charity, the pure love of Christ.

“There is no religion without love, and people may talk as much as they like about their religion, but if it doesn't teach them to be good and kind to man and beast, it is all a sham” (Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*).

I am grateful that we are continually encouraged by our prophets and apostles to practice pure religion. I am grateful that we are reminded often by them of what pure religion is. We have such a great opportunity to practice this pure religion through ministering.

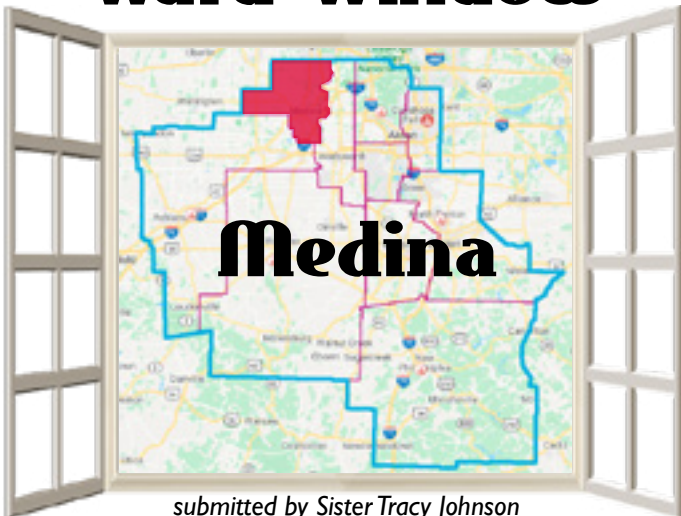
When introducing the concept of ministering, President Nelson said, “we will implement a newer, holier approach to caring for and ministering to others. We will refer to these efforts simply as ‘ministering.’”

In referring to this, Elder Holland taught: “Brothers and sisters, we have a heaven-sent opportunity as an entire Church to demonstrate ‘pure religion ... undefiled before God’ (James 1:27) — ‘to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light’ and to ‘comfort those that stand in need of comfort,’ (Mosiah 18:8–9) to minister to the widows and the fatherless, the married and the single, the strong and the distraught, the downtrodden and the robust, the happy and the sad — in short, all of us, every one of us, because we all need to feel the warm hand of friendship and hear the firm declaration of faith.”

What a wonderful opportunity we have been given to experience the joy and memories that come from ministering, as I first learned as a young boy, on a small, green Schwinn, banana seat, kids bike.

I add my testimony of the joy of ministering. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

# Ward Window



submitted by Sister Tracy Johnson



In December 2020, Stacy Tyhurst came up with the idea to have a Medina Ward Drive-Thru. The Relief Society had three goals for the day.

1. The Relief Society presidency wanted to distribute a Christmas gift to every sister in the Medina Ward. We requested that sisters pick up their gift at the church on Sunday, December 6, between 1 and 3 p.m. We also asked that ministering sisters pick up gifts for the sisters they ministered to and either deliver or mail gifts to them.
2. We were also collecting gift cards to put together a gift for our missionaries and members of the ward who might benefit. Members of the ward so generously donated gift cards, cash, and items they purchased. We were able to give our sister missionaries a special Christmas gift and mail gift cards to many members.
3. Bishop King encouraged us to make sure every member had access to the 2021 *Come Follow Me* manual, either online or the actual book. We asked members to pick up the manual for themselves and also encouraged members to take the opportunity to connect with those they ministered to by delivering a *Come Follow Me* manual. About 60 manuals were handed out that day.

When Shawnie Huffaker, the Young Women's president, heard about our drive-thru plan, she also wanted to join. She had planned the Virtual Ward Christmas party and was able to distribute invitations, the ingredients for a treat families could make, and special gift bags for the youth and primary children.

Working together, we accomplished much in only two hours. Items that were not picked up that day were delivered to member homes by the Relief Society and Young Women's presidencies. No one person had to bear the burden of delivering everything.

The best part was seeing each other face to face, although we still missed hugging and seeing smiles.

Members picking up stayed in their cars, and we brought the items to them. We wore our masks and enjoyed being outdoors, even in the cold weather, with a little bit of snow.

## MISSIONARY UPDATE



**NATHAN WEBB**

Leaving February 2021

California Anaheim  
Mission

## BRECKSVILLE HOME STORAGE CENTER

6900 Southpointe Pkwy, Brecksville, OH 44141  
440-526-4057 (Home Storage Center)

HOURS: Thursday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Wednesday and Saturday: by appointment

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# HEALING THROUGH CHRIST: THE CHURCH'S ADDICTION RECOVERY PROGRAM

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According to the 2018 U.S. National survey on drug use and health, 14.8 million Americans struggle with alcohol use disorder. Another 8.1 million Americans have an illicit drug addiction. Countless more individuals struggle with pornography, gambling, or eating disorders. These addictions make carrying out daily activities difficult and can impair an individual's ability to work or function in school, interact with family, or fulfill other major life functions.

All addicts fear admitting their problem to others, but Church members face additional pressures. In addition to the embarrassment of sharing their problem with family and friends, members fear being ostracized within their own wards. Often, parents or spouses of addicts don't know how to help them, and ward and stake leaders lack information on available treatment options.

In 2005, the LDS Church took an important step forward to address this crisis by creating the [Addiction and Recovery Program](#) (ARP). This inspired program takes the twelve-step process developed by Alcoholics Anonymous and places those principles within a gospel framework. The program was designed in consultation with Church leaders and counseling professionals by individuals who suffered from addiction and experienced the healing power of the Atonement. It contains language-specific for Latter-Day Saints, including scriptural references and quotes from Apostles and other leaders. Its purpose is to help overcome addiction by encouraging participants to draw closer to the Savior.

Like Alcoholics Anonymous, the ARP format is based on weekly meetings. These meetings are organized by facilitators who lead participants in the discussion of topics from the [Guide to Addiction and Recovery](#) manual. Remote meeting technology assists facilitators in preserving the confidentiality of participants. Anyone can attend meetings anonymously or even connect to remote meetings in other stakes.

The Akron Stake holds weekly ARP meetings for men and women struggling with substance abuse, pornography, or other addictive behaviors. It has become known as the 'Healing Through Christ' program to emphasize the role of the Atonement in the recovery process. Meetings are conducted over Zoom calls, and all are welcome – you do not

need to be a church member. Brother Derek Wilkinson and Brother Pat Callahan, both from the Akron Ward, serve as the stake's ARP representatives. Brother Callahan is a retired social worker with several years of experience in recovery program work. He successfully overcame his own alcohol disorder prior to joining the Church and has witnessed firsthand the program's effectiveness.

"In my role as a counselor and facilitator of the Church's Addiction Recovery Program, I have seen several people overcome the devastating effects of addiction," observed Brother Callahan. "I have seen spouses and other family members find peace and healing. These experiences have shown me that there is nothing 'too hard for the Lord' (Genesis 18:14) No matter what your current circumstances are, or what your loved one is going through, there is hope!"

If your life has been disrupted by addiction, you don't have to go through it alone. There are church and state resources that can assist you on the path to recovery. One starting point is the Church's website for the Addiction Recovery Program, where you can access the program manual, find meetings in your region, contact information for local facilitators, and view testimonial videos made by those who have overcome their own disorders. You can also access the [Spouse and Family Support Guide](#) and find information about support meetings for family members. Hard copies of these manuals can be obtained by contacting Brother Callahan or Brother Wilkinson.

You can also visit the U.S. government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration's (SAMHSA) [SAMHSA](#) website for information on government resources, including treatment centers located near you.

The most difficult part of obtaining help is to admit to having a problem. Anyone ready to take this step can

experience a life of freedom and safety, encircled in the arms of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Those who enter the addiction recovery program can expect to receive understanding and fellowship rather than recrimination. These meetings are a place to gather with others seeking recovery and with those who have already taken this path and are living proof of its effectiveness. In recovery meetings, you will find understanding, hope, and support.

## **AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

[LDS Addiction Recovery Program Website](#)

[Find a Meeting in your area](#)

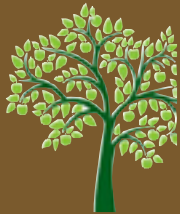
[Support Guide: Help for Spouses and Family of those in recovery](#)

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration website](#)

[JPatrickCallahan@hotmail.com](mailto:JPatrickCallahan@hotmail.com)

[d.wilkinson15@gmail.com](mailto:d.wilkinson15@gmail.com)

# Family History Corner



by Sister Jeanne Peugh, Director

## Asking for Help

Life gives all of us opportunities to learn, grow, and be perfected. It starts with the day we are born and continues until we leave this mortal existence.

Take time to reflect back on your life and think of how many times you have asked others for help. In the beginning, the expectation is with our parents as we ask for help to learn things to prepare us for school.

A toddler has a million questions every day and wants to know everything. Throughout our school years, we ask for help from our school teachers to better understand reading (what an author is saying), writing (how to use our English skills properly), and math (to understand equations of all things) so we are prepared for higher education. Along this path, we also learn many spiritual things from home, teachers, and church leaders that we ask to make sure we understand the truth of all things.

As we move forward in life, whether in our professional career or being a mother and homemaker, there are others that we reach out to and ask for help. Asking for help makes us stronger, not weaker. There are blessings on both sides when we ask for help. We learn and understand and the person that we reach out to ask for help from feels blessed that they can help you. Sometimes the person we go to may not have the answer that we are looking for, but then they go to someone else to ask to find the answer for you.

Family History work is about asking for help.

# Self-Reliance Corner

by Sister Diane Burgoon, Stake Self-Reliance Group Coordinator  
330-430-9912, [diane.burgoon@yahoo.com](mailto:diane.burgoon@yahoo.com)

## My Foundation Principle – Take Responsibility and Persevere

We have all experienced difficulties in our lives. Sometimes it seems like a steady stream coming our way. It's important to remember that "this too shall pass." As we look for guidance and strength from above, we can get through each challenge, with our faith stronger, and our hope intact for the blessings to come. When we accept our responsibilities as challenges that can refine us, and when we work hard, we are blessed.

*Four steps to completing a difficult task or challenge:*

1 KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE	2 REMEMBER TO WORK TOGETHER	3 REPLACE FEAR WITH FAITH	4 MOVE FORWARD WITH PATIENCE AND COURAGE
List your blessings.	Ask friends, peers, group members, and others for help.	Avoid doubt. Remember the Lord has all power. Call upon Him and accept His will.	Never, never, never give up; endure with faith. Look for lessons the Lord might be teaching you.

*Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer.*

Doctrine and Covenants 42:42

*Perseverance is demonstrated by those who . . . don't give up even when others say, "It can't be done."*

James E. Faust, "Perseverance," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2005, 51

Watch this video for a great example of someone who took responsibility and persevered: [Sedrick's Journey \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://www.churchofjesuschrist.org)

Contact your ward Self-Reliance Specialist, or myself (contact information in header above), for more information on joining a self-reliance group or Pathway. If you have any other questions or concerns, please let me know.

*The Lord has declared, It is my purpose to provide for my saints. [D&C 104:15](#)*

How do I get started? How do I properly use all the technology that is available to me? How do I know that this information is correct? What do I do when I can't find any more information? What person should I be focused on? Who is the right person to ask for help? This is the Lord's work, and we cannot do it without the Lord's help.

Each time you sit down to work on your family history, ask for the help of the Holy Ghost to assist you.

I testify to you that whether I am working on my own or helping someone, I have felt the Lord's direction in finding answers to the questions being asked. I love this work, and as consultants, we love to help others, so bring us your questions and let us help you.

Facebook page  
[Latter-day Saints in Northeast Ohio](#)  
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[@akronohiostake](#)