

# AKRON OHIO STAKE

## Stake Presidency Message Retrospect & Prospect

As the pandemic subsides, we relish every resumption to normalcy, rejoice at the revelations given to us by our prophets pre-disaster (even home-centered Church a year before we're home-confined), recount the tender mercies we received in this trial, and remember the lessons we learned (such as those told by President Nelson in the Priesthood Session of the April 2021 General Conference).

President Nelson also said in the same speech: "There are many things the Lord wants us to learn from our experiences during this pandemic...I invite you to make your own list, consider it carefully, and share it with those you love."

Indeed, it was a jam-packed year of schooling in such subjects as the way of the Lord and the Church; prophecies and prophetic counsel; home-centered worship; how the world can change overnight; how the adversary and man can cause, take advantage of and magnify havocs; crisis-mode governments and institutions; human nature and our own nature; what things we cherish most and what things we can do without; liberty and its price; security and its price; power; how we fill time and how time may fulfill us and our families; technology and its uses, even in gathering Israel; the intended and unintended consequences of measures and countermeasures; emergency preparedness and last-day preparedness; the meaning of human touch (an essential component of gospel ordinances); the comfortings of the Comforter; stillness.

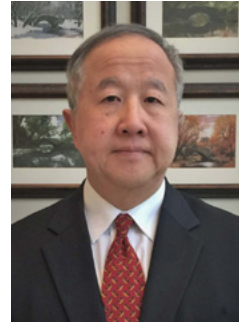
As a people and as individuals, we have gone through a stress test and endured a battle. We may have discovered where we need to fortify (a key activity in the Book of Mormon war chapters) ourselves, our families, our organization and ward. And as we take inventory of our losses and near losses, we may also come to feel more keenly our deprivations.

They who have been taken from us—we may only commit them to the Lord (Romans 14:8). They who have been left behind—the Lord has committed them to us (James 1:27).

Meanwhile, the following actual pandemic happenings could have taken place in any stake despite everyone's best efforts. An active, healthy member, due mostly to miscommunication, did not get to partake the Sacrament for over a year. Another isolated member told her friend: "Loneliness and lack of ability to do anything is just a wreck to me. It's been too long." A bishop observed: "There are a couple of youths whose oil was less than half full in their lamps before the pandemic. I think they're now pretty dry." A stake leader reported that a ward organization leader took the attitude that home church should be left as that, and no contact was made with or any virtual opportunities organized for members of the organization during the pandemic.

I tell these as one who shares the responsibility. However, we may note there is no censure whatsoever in the Savior's parable of the lost silver. For who, including the careful and conscientious, hasn't lost a coin before? The important thing is that we "light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till [we] find it (Luke 15:8)."

It was for good reasons, but a hard task, for our welcoming and tending church to devote so much of its time and efforts to limiting rather than inviting attendance and administering versus ministering. Now that the treacherous part of our passage is behind us, we must look back and learn so we can better navigate pestilences that are yet to come. In retrospect, we gain



President Wen

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## **Stake Presidency Message** *continued from previous page*

prospect. Perhaps there were more (or less) we should have done; perhaps we've overlooked some things (or, more importantly, some people); perhaps we shouldn't have tolerated some indignation. I, for one, will forever be haunted by the memory of a friend who died alone in a nursing home.

Let us now endeavor to restore, revive, reclaim and renew; search for that precious silver; be like our Shepherd in going after the one (Luke 15:3-7); and, should our brother (not "your son") decide to go to

a far country, make sure he knows that our Father continually waits for him (Luke 15:11-32).

And in case we think these are the calling of bishops and Relief Society and Elders Quorum leaders, President Nelson's injunction in the aforementioned speech was: "If you know of anyone who is alone, reach out—even if you feel alone too! You do not need to have a reason or a message or business to transact. Just say hello and show your love." Yes, we can pull out the phone (not even Zoom) to do that today.

Ideas for engaging in  
the Children and Youth Program  
as Families and in Wards

Sunday  
June 6th  
@  
6 p m EST

**Supporting Children & Youth:  
A broadcast for  
Parents and Leaders**

This one hour presentation may be viewed on  
[childrenandyouth.churchofjesuschrist.com](http://childrenandyouth.churchofjesuschrist.com)  
and through the gospel library

# Family History Corner

by Jeanne Peugh, Director



## Our Eyes and Holy Spirit

As I was thinking about what I would share with you, I read the talk from Elder Mathias Held of the Seventy in the April 2019 Conference. He stated, “Heavenly Father has given us not only one but two physical eyes. We can see adequately with only one eye, but the second eye provides us with another perspective. When both perspectives are put together in our brain, they produce a three-dimensional image of our surroundings. Likewise, we have been given two sources of information, through our physical and spiritual capacities. Our mind produces one perception through our physical senses and through our reasoning. But through the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Father has also provided us with a second perspective, which is really the most important and true one because it comes directly from Him. But since the whisperings of the Spirit are often so subtle, many people are not consciously aware of that additional source.”

We have been challenged to gather Israel on both sides of the veil; does not this dual perception apply to us in family history work as well? From the physical side or eyes aid our research as we collect the necessary information to make our families complete, but if we hit a roadblock or become confused on which road to take, do we turn to the other perspective and lean on the Spirit to help us? Do we seek with our spiritual side or eyes for information? We may hear the Spirit whisper to us, “You’re so close, press forward, turn a page, it’s there, you can find them.” The Spirit has been a blessing to me as I help those who come into the Family History Center for assistance. We need to be using all of our “eyes” as we work on our family history. The Akron Ohio Family History Center is open on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Please mark your calendar for October 16th for our fifth Family History Fair.

## BRECKSVILLE HOME STORAGE CENTER

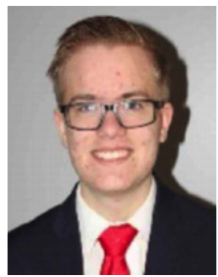
6900 Southpointe Pkwy, Brecksville, OH 44141  
440-526-4057 (Home Storage Center)

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

## MISSIONARY UPDATE

**DANIEL GARNER**

Leaving  
June 2021



México México City  
North Mission

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Preparing for emergencies or difficult situations can help us stay safe and feel more secure. Additionally, being prepared allows us to provide for our own needs, our family’s needs, and the needs of others when a disaster or unexpected event occurs. In May, the Stake sent out a brief survey about Emergency Preparedness.

The survey had websites to church resources. The weblinks to those resources have been replicated below. As we prepare in advance for unexpected emergencies, the Lord will bless with peace of mind and comfort us through His spirit.

### Church Emergency Preparedness Websites and Resources (not a complete list):

#### *Church Videos about Emergency Preparedness Water Storage*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DPxxc-PPlg&list=RDCMUCdNjexbIS\\_NKJC4ZRwKf9ag](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DPxxc-PPlg&list=RDCMUCdNjexbIS_NKJC4ZRwKf9ag)

#### *Food Storage*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_VglSdE0T4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_VglSdE0T4)

#### *Temporal Preparedness Resources*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/life/temporal-preparedness-resources?lang=eng>

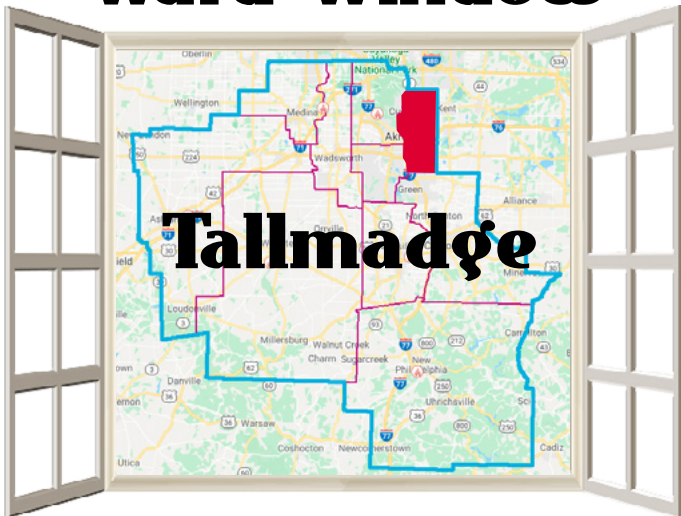
#### *Personal and Family Emergency Preparedness planning guide*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/shared/english/life-help/Personal-and-Family-Emergency-Preparedness-Planning-Guide.pdf>

#### *Brochure about ministering during a crisis*

[https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/shared/english/charities/pdf/2020/WEL\\_PD60011068\\_MinisteringGuideForSomeoneInCrisis\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/shared/english/charities/pdf/2020/WEL_PD60011068_MinisteringGuideForSomeoneInCrisis_FINAL.pdf)

# Ward Window



submitted by Sister Jennifer Biggs

*Missionary work has definitely changed over the last year; however, it is a change for the better. Elder Uchtdorf recently taught:*

*“We are learning much and the Lord has lessons in store for all of us as we seek to hear Him and find new ways to share His gospel. Now, is our turn to make the best we can out of this. I hope that we will not yearn to move back to something that didn’t work well in our lives before COVID-19, but rather look to the future with hope. May we each use this time to become more refined, edified, empowered, and refreshed to move forward.”*

*We have asked the missionaries serving from the Tallmadge ward to share their thoughts and lessons they’ve learned while serving during a worldwide pandemic. We encourage everyone to seek and follow personal revelation on how we can change our approach as we love, share, and invite others to Christ.*



## **ELDER THOMAS BIGGS - California, Sacramento Mission**

Missionary work has changed so much over the past year. I went from going door to door and talking to everyone I saw in the streets of Tijuana to being locked in my apartment and having a smartphone that I was expected to use to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. That was quite the scene change for sure!

I learned how to invite others to “Come unto Christ” in new ways. I learned how to make videos and simple posts for Facebook that taught simple principles of the gospel, which would allow the Spirit to touch the heart of those who saw it. From comments people would leave or their reactions to our posts, we are able to reach out to them and see if they are interested in learning more about the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. It has been amazing to see how many people have now shown interest in learning more about the gospel, who may not have been interested previously.

Towards the beginning of quarantine, I made a simple post on Facebook about the importance of the Book of Mormon and the Bible. From that post, I had two people from back home reach out to me, asking for a copy of the Book of Mormon. I never thought that they would be interested in learning more about the Restored Gospel, and I don’t know if they would have shown interest if two missionaries walked up to them. However, because of a simple post on Facebook that taught and testified about the importance of the Book of Mormon, the Spirit was able to touch them and soften their heart, opening them to receive a copy of the Book of Mormon and to begin reading it.

I have absolutely loved seeing how the work has progressed and how the Lord is continuing to hasten the work of salvation among His children, in these latter days, through the tools that He has given us, like social media! I know that it will only continue to progress further, and I cannot wait to see what the Lord has in store for us to be able to share the gospel to all His children in the way that they will be most open to receive it! It is going to be wonderful to be a part of this work as we continue to prepare for the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **ELDER CHANCE KIBUBUTA - Nevada, Las Vegas Mission**

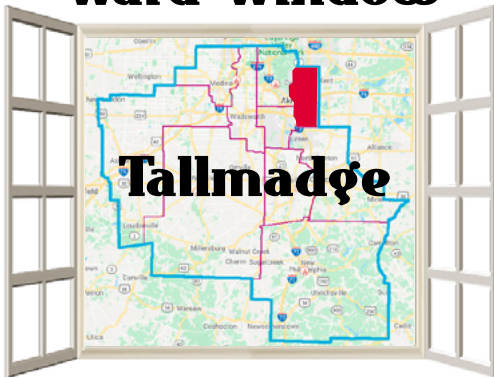
Missionary life during this pandemic is in principle the same as before covid, but when it comes to how we do it, there are many changes.

We are having a lot of virtual lessons. It saves us a lot of traveling time

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# Ward Window



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and enables us to have more lessons and interaction with people. We have learned a lot to rely on members' help to find, teach, and fellowship people. The work has not slowed down at all ... It is hastening ... The Lord is hastening His work.

During this pandemic, I have learned that the Lord is fulfilling the words that he promised. He said he would hasten his work and that he is able to do his own work. I would love to testify that I know that the Lord is hastening his work; I have witnessed it. My conviction of the divinity of the work you and I are part of has been strengthened over and over again during the past year. I know that we are the saints of the most high God. This is the work of the Lord. It is a marvelous work and a wonder. Now I have a story I would like to share:

There is a man I met about nine months ago. He was a friend of a returned missionary. His name is Patrick, and when he was back in New Zealand, he didn't like the church. He literally believed that we crazy people; we are quote "a cult."

Patrick is a professional boxer, and he is huge and massive. We arranged to meet with him. When we first met with him, I whispered to my companion, "watch out, do not offend him." We taught him, and when the time came to invite him to be baptized on August 22, 2020, which was about three weeks out.

He said, "No." I asked why and he explained why. He has been going through a lot of difficult things. I arose and testified to him about what is happening at home, how I could be home to help my father with his bills and have fun with my friends, but I am out here teaching the Gospel because I know that this Gospel is true, I have felt the Atonement in my life, and like Lehi, my heart burns with a desire to let the people know about these things.

As I finished with my testimony, he spoke boldly and said, let us write down that date and that he is willing to be baptized on August 22. Now he is a young man advisor, a ward missionary, and is married to a returned missionary. He is amazing and going strong. He will be Sealed to his wife in September.

I love Patrick, and seeing that change that the Gospel has brought in his life helps me reflect on my own life about how the Gospel has changed me. I am grateful for the Savior and all His blessings for me. I know that He loves me. I can sing joyfully that I have felt my Savior's love. I testify that the Church is true; the Book of Mormon is the word of God in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen!



## **SISTER MADISON CRITCHLOW - Londrina Brazil Mission**

Sister Critchlow attended the MTC in her home and then served the Tuscon Arizona mission for a time before being transferred to her original assignment in the Londrina, Brazil Mission. Madison has never known full-time missionary work outside the worldwide pandemic. She has seen the blessings of being able to connect with others around the globe virtually. She has been able to teach and share her love of the gospel and the Lord to others by using social media and other online platforms.

One thing she has had to get "used" to on her mission is...Lizards! In Arizona and Brazil, she has seen them and held them, and even screamed at them. Lizards have been everywhere!

As a family, we have witnessed Madison's love for the Lord grow as she has relied on our Savior and His Atonement through some trying times during her mission, but she has a testimony that we grow through doing hard things.

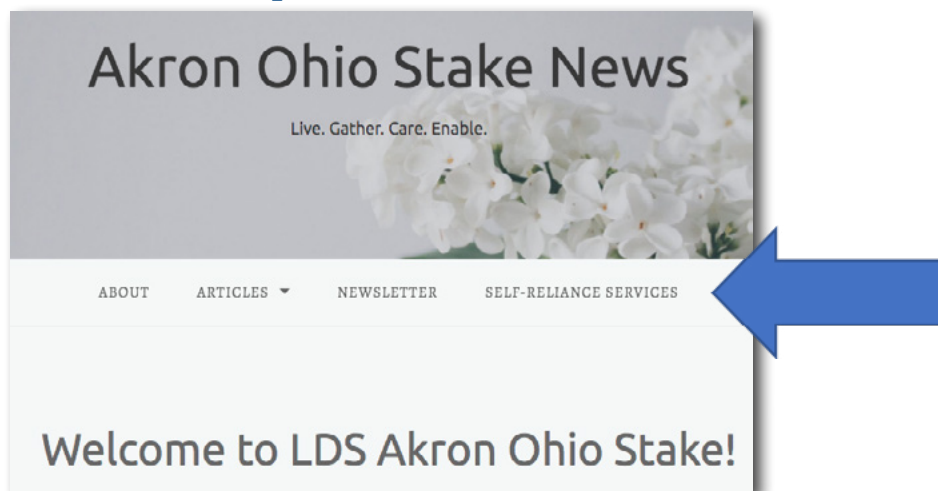
## **ELDER SPENCER CRITCHLOW - Fort Collins, Colorado Mission**

Elder Critchlow reports to the MTC on July 14. His sister will have been serving for 14 months when he enters the MTC.



# ANNOUNCING – NEW STAKE SELF-RELIANCE WEBSITE!



We now have a web page to bring you great offerings regarding self-reliance. It is on the same website as the Stake newsletter - <https://akronohiostakenews.com/>.



Here you will find testimonials from stake members regarding their experiences with self-reliance. There are links to more information about:

- Self-Reliance groups
- Employment Support
- Personal Finances
- Pathway Connect
- Emergency Preparedness
- JustServe

You can also register for a self-reliance group.

 <p><b>Self-Reliance Groups</b></p> <p>12-week courses combine practical skills with spiritual principles in a way that changes lives. <b>REGISTER BELOW</b></p>	 <p><b>Employment Support</b></p> <p>Get training on key elements of a job search like writing résumés, finding job leads, networking, and preparing for interviews. <b>REGISTER BELOW</b></p>	 <p><b>Personal Finances</b></p> <p>Tools to help manage finances, discipline yourselves in your purchases and to avoid debt. <b>REGISTER BELOW</b></p>
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We will be posting job leads as well.

## LOCAL JOB LEADS

**Mason Laborer (Medina County)**

Full-time, \$14-\$22/hour, M-F 7am-4pm

You can also submit a job lead to have posted.

Please submit any local job leads through the Contact Us form below.

Let us know if you have any questions or issues with the website, or if you have any suggestions for improvements.

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