

# AKRON OHIO STAKE

## Stake Presidency Message

Hello friends, welcome to the month where we focus on Jesus Christ as Christmas approaches. He is certainly the Hope of the World.

I was recently driving a long distance with my wife and had some time to think. We were listening to Christmas music that reminded me of the magic of Christmas through a young child's eyes. Specifically, I was thinking how awesome Christmas was when I was a young boy and how that excitement, enthusiasm, hope, and joy was so terrific. Then a thought popped into my head that those feelings were indeed wonderful, but such similar magical feelings at that depth were probably only ever experienced by a child.

A few moments later, that thought was replaced with a more Christ-oriented thought that reminded me that such a level of excitement, anticipation, enthusiasm, joy, and even far beyond was described for those who love God. The apostle Paul stated it this way, "...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Corinthians 2:9).

So my thought was now that the excitement of a young child at Christmas time is a small fraction of the excitement we can experience in a coming day if we live the first Great Commandment and all that is associated with it.

Meanwhile, prior to that wonderful coming day, the scriptures and our prophet have warned us we need to prepare for difficult days. President Russell M. Nelson's recent talk regarding the temple's foundation and the metaphor of that to our own spiritual foundation is a masterful message. A statement in that talk was recently emphasized to me by the Spirit. President Nelson said, "it is now time that we each implement extraordinary measures—perhaps measures we have never taken before—to strengthen our personal spiritual foundations." I was struck with the thought that I should do this. I should do something I have never done before to strengthen my spiritual foundation.

During this Christmas season, I invite us as a stake to do the same as a gift to our Savior. Let us all examine our spiritual foundation and choose something spiritually strengthening, an "extraordinary measure" we have never done before, and implement it in our lives. If we choose to do this, we will 1) fortify our personal spiritual foundation, 2) demonstrate that we choose to follow the prophet, 3) strengthen our stake collectively and 4) show God that we love Him. We can thereby look forward, with the enthusiasm and wonder of a child at Christmas time, to blessings and happiness beyond our ability to imagine.

Of course, our ability to return to God where we can experience "what God hath prepared" is only possible because of the birth of Jesus Christ and His eventual heroic accomplishments two millennia ago. As the Living Christ document declares, "God be thanked for the matchless gift of His divine Son."



President Jensen

***...it is now time that we each implement extraordinary measures—perhaps measures we have never taken before—to strengthen our personal spiritual foundations.***

- President Russell M. Nelson

### Ideas for spiritual foundation strengthening:

- Read the Book of Mormon in a self-determined timeframe
- Memorize your top 10 favorite scriptures
- Memorize the Living Christ document
- Memorize the Restoration of the Gospel proclamation
- Memorize the Family Proclamation
- Read the Preach My Gospel manual
- Read all the scriptures in the Topical Guide about Jesus Christ
- Read/listen to all the talks by President Nelson or another favorite apostle or prophet
- Read/listen to all the Hear Him talks found in the Gospel Library app or online
- Commit to a weekly time for indexing or family history work
- Your own inspired ideas

# HOW ONE DAY CAN CHANGE OUR LIVES

by Sister Jeanne Peugh

On November 13, the Akron Ward celebrated their 100th anniversary with a potluck breakfast.

It was well attended and a delightful experience. Bonnie Perkins shares her story:

*After recently discovering that the Akron branch was established November 13, 1921, current ward leaders decided that a 100th-year anniversary celebration would be a great activity.*

*So this November 13, current and former members enjoyed a pancake-and-potluck breakfast. A display of historical documents, newsletters, records, photos, and bulletins encouraged reminiscing and connecting with old and new friends. Attendees tried out the ward Relative Finder group and Relatives in the Room. We wrote some cards to former members. We also chose names of deceased ward members and are now serving them by attaching sources, photos, and memories to their FamilySearch accounts.*

*Many of us left the celebration with a sense of gratitude for the brothers and sisters who came before us and, through their faith and service, built a strong foundation for our current ward, allowing us to better serve the Lord in the Akron area.*

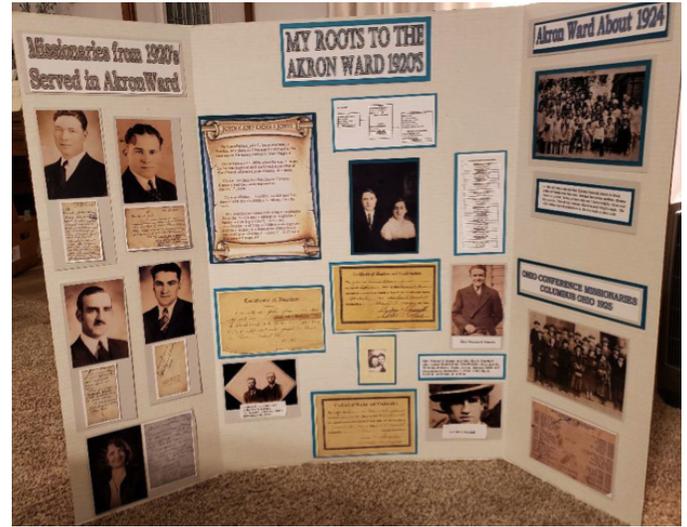


Bishop Lee, Bishop Davis and Bishop Jindra, and Melody Matney spoke about ward memories/development. There are several projects in process, and they were explained by Beth Jindra, Jeremy Eskelsen, and Bonnie Perkins. John Rumel has been a member in the Akron Ward the longest - for 58 years.



My grandmother joined the church in the early 1920s. Several of my mother's siblings also joined the church in 1924/1925 because my grandfather decided to join the church way back in 1896, and when they moved to Akron from West Virginia in 1914 or 1915, they became

involved in the Akron Ward. I am grateful for that day they made that decision and how it has changed my life.



I am sure many of us are grateful for all the missionaries who were willing to sacrifice their time to teach the gospel to those of us who have a desire to know the truth. I am especially grateful for the two missionaries that taught my grandfather as a single man and those that taught my grandmother and my mother and her siblings. My mother would talk about the church to us, but until missionaries came to the country (Brimfield), we only knew the things she would tell us. It was then I was taught by missionaries at the age of 12 with my older sister and brother. So November 19 was my baptismal date with my sister. We were baptized in Cleveland, Ohio. I just celebrated many years in the gospel. It is a date I will always remember.

This is a picture of the Akron Branch about 1924. My mother is in the front row with her hands over her eyes. Behind her is her mother, and behind her are some of her brothers. Also in the picture are a couple of my cousins.



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## How One Missionary Can Change Our Lives

Through the years, many things have changed, and the Akron Branch grew into a ward and was split many times to make other wards and branches. We have gone from the Cleveland Stake to the Akron Ohio Stake.

Almost 100 years ago, we were the Ohio Columbus Mission. This picture was taken in 1925. In the second row, the missionary in the middle is the one that confirmed my mother a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We were part of the Cleveland Ohio Mission for a long time until the last few years when it again became the Columbus Ohio Mission. We need to ponder how missionaries changed our lives.



This is to help us reflect on how important missionary work is to each and every one of us. This is the Lord's work, and they are following the counsel of our leaders to hasten the work. New converts, do you see the missionary that brought you the restored gospel in the picture below of the 2021 Columbus Ohio Mission?

We are so blessed by being members of Christ's church here upon the earth.



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This article appeared in the Akron Beacon Journal on September 14, 1941. It was given to me at our ward conference on October 24, 2021 from Brother Trevor Most from the Canton Ward.



This is Trevor's story as to how he received this article: "I served my mission in Parowan, Utah. I was asked to speak in one of the wards at the close of my mission and afterwards a nice man named John had come up to me talking about Akron, Ohio. He told me about how 80 years ago his father had lived in Akron for just a few years and while he was here they opened the first LDS Branch. His father wasn't a member but for some reason felt impressed to keep this newspaper clipping. So this nice man from Parowan, Utah, decided to give it to me since I was from the Akron Ohio Stake."



# AKRON STAKE SOCIAL MEDIA



by Sister Jordan Bigler

"And the Grinch,  
with his grinch feet  
ice cold in the snow,  
stood puzzling and puzzling  
"How could it be so?  
It came without ribbons!  
It came without tags!  
It came without packages, boxes or bags!  
And he puzzled three hours,  
till his puzzler was sore.  
Then the Grinch thought of something  
that he hadn't before!  
"Maybe Christmas, he thought  
doesn't come from a store.  
Maybe Christmas...perhaps...  
means a little bit more." -Dr. Seuss

I love the story of the grumpy Grinch, who learns that Christmas is about much more than presents and things. It's about the spirit and love of the season- and serving those around us, as Christ did.

As Christians, we know that Christmas means a little bit more. It's the time of year when we celebrate the birth of our beloved Savior and Redeemer. But sometimes, like the Grinch, we get caught up in all the holiday "stuff" to do, things to buy, places to go, etc., as if these things are what makes the perfect Christmas season. And while none of these things are bad, I'm reminded of what Dallin H. Oaks said in his October 2007 general conference talk, titled Good, Better, Best. He said: "We have to forego some good things in order to choose others that are better or best because they develop faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and strengthen our families."

As I think back over all the Christmases of my life - I have very few memories of what presents I received or parties that I attended over the years. The memories of past Christmases that are very clear though are the experiences that I had to serve others.

One Christmas in particular, I remember from when I was nine years old, there was a family in our ward at the

time whose father had lost his job a few months before. We decided as a family to do something for them anonymously. I remember how excited we all were to go shopping and pick out a gift for each of the kids in the family and to help my mom pack the box with the presents and food for a Christmas dinner. We were so giddy as we drove over to their house and hid in our car down the street while my dad dropped the box on their front porch and ran. And when we got home - since these were the days before caller ID - we called them from our house, and I got to say (in my best squeaky elf voice) that they should go check their front porch. A few weeks later, in sacrament meeting, the father of this family got up to bear his testimony and talked about how his family had been blessed by someone dropping off presents and food for his family and how grateful he was for that Christmas blessing. It had felt like more an adventure for us as kids than an act of service, but I will never forget the spirit I felt that Sunday listening to his testimony- and knowing that in some small way, we had been able to serve that family as the Savior would have.

"Ye are the light of the world....Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." - Matthew 5:14 & 16

What better way is there for us to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, who spent his entire life serving and loving others- than by spending our Christmas season emulating His example? The #LightTheWorld initiative by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an invitation to transform Christmas into a season of service. It's a worldwide movement to touch hearts and change lives by doing the things Jesus did: feeding the hungry, comforting the lonely, visiting the sick and afflicted, and showing kindness to everyone. The world needs more of that.

You can visit [ComeUntoChrist.org](http://ComeUntoChrist.org) to sign up to receive daily prompts throughout the month of December for something you can do each day to #LightTheWorld. Our stake social media sites will also be sharing daily inspiration that you can share with family and friends on social media to #LightTheWorld.

My hope is that this Christmas season, we can all follow Christ's example and let His light shine more brightly through us in all we do.

\*\*Follow the stake's social media sites on Instagram @akronhiostake & Facebook @akronhiostakelatterday

## MISSIONARY UPDATE



**CHANCE KIBUBUTA**

Returning December 2021

**Nevada Las Vegas  
Mission**

## BRECKSVILLE HOME STORAGE CENTER

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

HOURS: Wednesday & Thursday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Saturday, November 13 from 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

A food storage list is available at

[www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org)

## Self-Reliance Resources

### Exercise Faith in Jesus Christ

From *My Foundations*

As we intensify our thoughts of our Savior at this time of year, it is a perfect time to remember how through Him, all things are possible with faith.

#### Singers Wanted

The Lord delights in the songs of the righteous and our sincere praises offered to Him through music! We are organizing a Stake choir to prepare for the Easter season of 2022. Pandemic conditions permitting, we plan to put on a musical concert:

Stake Easter Concert

Saturday, April 9th, 7-8 p.m.

Tallmadge Chapel

We also plan to sing at Stake Conference a few weeks later. Our rehearsals will begin in February and will be organized to accommodate safe social distancing.

If you have interest or experience singing in the choir but have been waiting to be asked to participate in the Stake Choir, consider yourself invited! Would you please sign up at <https://forms.gle/EHDoMqH9qZZ2mn1P8>

Because the Stake Choir only sings a few times a year and has minimal rehearsals before performances, the following criteria are needed for choir members:

- Ability to read music and familiarity with notations and musical terms (ex: dynamics, breath marks, phrasing, crescendo, etc.)
- Ability to carry your part while those around you may be singing a different part
- Willingness to attend our minimal choir rehearsals and practice music on your own in between rehearsals (sheet music, recordings with individual parts, and recordings of rehearsals provided)
- High School age or older are invited (and youth encouraged) to participate

If you feel that you can meet the expectations above, we hope that you will join the Stake Choir!

If you want to sing more but aren't sure about Stake Choir participation specifically- please reach out and let us know. We'd love to discuss it so you can decide if Stake Choir is right for you. Your interest will help us get Ward Choir activities organized as well.

If you are interested, please sign up at <https://forms.gle/EHDoMqH9qZZ2mn1P8>. If you have questions, please contact Sister Robyn Taylor. We look forward to joining together in song next year!

*Taking action is the exercise of faith. The children of Israel are carrying the ark of the covenant. They come to the River Jordan. The promise is they will cross over on dry land. When does the water part? When their feet are wet. They walk into the river—act. Power follows—the water parts. We oftentimes believe, “I’m going to have this perfect understanding, and then I’m going to transform that into what I do.” I would suggest that we have enough to get started. We have a sense of the right direction. Faith is a principle—the principle—of action and of power. True faith is fo-cused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action. (Elder David A. Bednar, “Seek Learning by Faith”)*

*“And neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore they first believed in the Son of God” (Ether 12:18).*

*“Faith in God includes faith in His purposes as well as in His timing. We cannot fully accept Him while rejecting His schedule” (Neal A. Maxwell, **That Ye May Believe [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], 84**).*

*“Faith in Jesus Christ propels us to do things we otherwise would not do. Faith that motivates us to action gives us more access to His power. We also increase the Savior’s power in our lives when we make sacred covenants and keep those covenants with precision. Our covenants bind us to Him and give us godly power” (Russell M. Nelson, **“Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2017, 41**).*

*“When the focus of our lives is on God’s plan of salvation . . . and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening— or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy” (Russell M. Nelson, **“Joy and Spiritual Survival,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2016, 82**).*

Contact your ward Self-Reliance Specialist, or myself, for more information. 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).

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