

WILLOW CANYON 1st WARD

JANUARY 2013

THEME - THE GODHEAD

Dear Ward members,

Below is a summary of President Monson's Christmas devotional. It gives a perfect example of living a Christ centered life.

"Acknowledging that the Christmas season with its special meaning and beauty brings "rest to the weary soul," President Thomas S. Monson in his First Presidency Christmas Devotional message Dec. 2 observed, "It is easy to get caught up in the pressure of the season and perhaps lose the very spirit in our lives that we're trying to gain."

"Overdoing it is especially common this time of year for many of us," the Church president observed. "The causes for this might include too many Christmas activities to attend, too much to eat, too many expectations and too much tension. Often our efforts at Christmas time result in our feeling stressed out, wrung out and worn out during a time we should feel the simple joys of commemorating the birth of our Savior."

The real joy of Christmas is found from making the Savior Jesus Christ the focus of the season, President Monson affirmed. "We can keep Him in our thoughts and in our lives as we go about the work He would have us perform here on earth."

President Monson spoke of the elderly as "a segment of our society desperately yearning for an expression of love."

"The chill wind of dying hopes and vanished dreams whistles through the ranks of the elderly and those who approach the declining side of the summit of life," he mused.

He declared that true love is a reflection of the Savior's love. "In December of each year we call it the Christmas spirit. You can hear it. You can see it. You can feel it."

President Monson recalled an experience he had as an 11-year-old boy attending Primary. One day, the Primary president, a gray-haired lady named Melissa, asked him to stay behind to converse with her.

"She placed her arm about my shoulder and began to cry," he related. "Surprised, I asked her why she was crying."

"She replied, 'I can't seem to get the Trail Builder boys to be reverent during the opening exercises of Primary. Would you be willing to help me, Tommy?'"

He promised that he would, and soon found that his promise ended any problem of reverence in Primary.

"She had gone to the source of the problem – me," he said. "The solution was love."

Years later, Melissa, who was in her 90s, was living in a Salt Lake City nursing home.

"Just before Christmas I determined to visit my beloved Primary president," President Monson recounted. While driving to the destination, he heard on the car radio the song "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." He thought of the wise men who brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ child.

"I brought only the gift of love and a desire to say thank you," he said.

He found Melissa in the lunch room of the nursing home staring at her plate of food. As he spoke to her there was no response, only a blank stare. He took her fork in his hand and began to feed her, talking all the time about her service to boys and girls as a Primary worker.

Two other residents of the nursing home gazed in puzzlement at him, and one said, "Don't talk to her. She doesn't know anyone – even her own family. She hasn't said a word in all the time she's been here."

As the lunch ended and he stood to leave, he held her hand and said, "God bless you, Melissa. Merry Christmas."

"Without warning, she spoke the words, 'I know you. You're Tommy Monson, my Primary boy. How I love you.' She pressed my hand to her lips and bestowed on it a sweet kiss filled with love. Tears coursed down her cheeks and bathed our clasped hands. Those hands, that day, were hallowed by heaven and graced by God. The herald angels did sing."

President Monson urged, "There is no better time than now, this very Christmas season, for all of us to rededicate ourselves to the principles taught by Jesus Christ. It is the time to love the Lord, our God, with all our heart – and our neighbors as ourselves. It is well to remember that he who gives money gives much; he who gives time gives more; but he who gives of himself gives all."

Christmas "isn't just tinsel and ribbon, unless we have made it so in our lives," President Monson remarked. "Christmas is the spirit of giving without a thought of getting. It is happiness because we see joy in people. It is forgetting self and finding time for others. It is discarding the meaningless and stressing the true values. It is peace because we have found peace in the Savior's teachings. It is the time we realize most deeply that the more love is expended, the more there is of it for others."

President Monson concluded with this wish: "May we, as did the Wise Men, seek a bright, particular star to guide us to our Christmas opportunity in service to our fellow man. May we all make the journey to Bethlehem in spirit, taking with us a tender, caring heart as our gift to the Savior, and may one and all have a joy-filled Christmas."

Lets have a great 2013!

MISSIONARY ADDRESSES

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Mission Calls:

Gary and Susan Johnson - Tennessee, Nashville

Emily Lloyd - Chili, Concepcion South

SEALINGS

For your information Sealings will be at 6:00pm the third Tuesday of each month unless otherwise notified.

YOUNG WOMEN

Last year was a great year and we are so blessed to have shared all the many experiences we did with our amazing young women. We are excited for a new year and for all the possibilities it will bring. We will be welcoming new Young Women into the program and are anxious to get to know them, serve them, and love them. We pray our Young Women will continue to grow their testimonies and will always choose to "Stand Ye in Holy Places".

Upcoming Activities:

Thursday, Dec 27: Baptisms for the dead - Meet at Amy Clegg's at 9:30a.m

Wednesday, Jan. 2: Planning Activity

Wednesday, Jan. 9: Scripture Read-a-Thon

Wednesday, Jan. 16: 6p.m. Baptisms for the dead

Wednesday, Jan. 23: Combined with YM - ice skating

Wednesday, Jan. 30: Exercise with Julie/Vanessa

PRIMARY

Yearly Theme: I am a Child of God

January Theme: I am a Child of God, and He has a Plan for Me

January Scripture: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16)

Thank you to Laura Woodhouse for being our wonderful music leader. We wish her luck in her new marriage and home. Also thanks to Ivette Donosso for the work she has done in primary and nursery.

Welcome Heidi and Andy Clark to the Nursery!

The start of the new year brings new teachers and some changes in primary. We are switching back to Opening Exercises instead of closing. So all classes; Junior and Senior Primary meet in the primary room right after sacrament meeting for opening exercises all together. We are excited for this new year as your primary leaders.

RELIEF SOCIETY

The Ward Christmas party was a great success, thanks to Susan and Gary Johnson and a host of helpers.

The Relief Society Board continues to change and this last week we welcomed Jennifer Mitchell as our music chorister. We thank Elizabeth Rawlings for her efforts and hope she can have some relief from her back pain.

Our new board of teachers are doing a great job of teaching and we appreciate them.

From the Relief Society Board we wish everyone a joyous and wonderful NEW YEAR filled with HEALTH, HAPPINESS and SUCCESS in your efforts to live worthy of all the blessings we each have been given by our HEAVENLY FATHER AND OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

Love, The Relief Society Presidency

STAKE CONFERENCE

Saturday January 19th 7:00 PM 1st Session
Sunday January 20th 10:00 AM General Session

EMPTY NESTERS

Join with the Empty Nesters as we read *Jesus the Christ*. Tamalge gives many revealing insights into the life of Christ. We will meet January 14th at 7:00pm at the home of Merrill and Ronee Scott. All are welcome.

CHOIR

We probably won't practice until the third Sunday and then do an arrangement of a hymn like we did last summer. We will practice at Mary Bye's again. She has graciously offered her home. Give me some input on the time, especially those who have meetings on Sunday morning. We are really coming along nicely and the instruments always add a special touch. Love you all, Ronee

FAMILY HISTORY - INDEXING

Looking for a New Year's resolution? How about learning to index or starting on your own family history? Contact Natalie Nielson-Riep [801-440-2799](tel:801-440-2799) for ideas and help.

BIRTHDAYS



January

- 3 Kaylee Whitehead
- 4 Doris Mendenhall
- 10 Natalie Nielson-Riep
Mont Deming
- 12 Manette Murri
Zander Olsen
- 14 Zack Rigby
Kendon Riep
Ryan McMullin
- 15 Chyrrel Cook
Brenda Rogers
- 17 Joyce Fredrickson
- 18 Kirk Arnold
- 20 Wyatt Taylor
Warren Schmidt
- 22 Donna Strong
- 23 Kenneth Milne
Kathleen Barnhart
Martin Strong
- 24 Chandler Glauser
- 26 Spencer Bierman
Holly Miles
- 27 Marie France-Arnold
Charity Tuft

February

- 3 Olivia Bawden
Samantha Ellis
Jay Nielsen

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

DATE FOR FEBRUARY
WILL BE
JANUARY 29TH.

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR
AUXILIARY INFORMATION
TO ANDREA MARX AT:
sistermarx@gmail.com

It is desired that all the
auxiliaries contribute to
the newsletter.