

WILLOW CANYON 1st WARD

FEBRUARY 2014 THEME - THE PLAN OF SALVATION

How can I find comfort when someone I care about dies?

How have you or others you know found hope when loved ones have died?

What scriptures or principles have helped?

Prepare yourself spiritually now and you will have hope and peace that will sustain you. I know a faithful sister who tragically lost a loved one. She said she felt angels surrounding her and then one day after some months had passed – the angels left. She knew she was strong enough to handle it at that point.

Death is an essential part of the plan of salvation. In order to become like our Heavenly Father, we must experience death and receive perfect, resurrected bodies. When we understand that death is part of Heavenly Father's plan, and that Jesus Christ overcame death through His Atonement, we can receive hope and peace when a loved one dies.

Mosiah 16:7 And if Christ had not risen from the dead, or have broken the bands of death that the grave should have no victory, and that death should have no sting, there could have been no resurrection. Verse 8: But there is a resurrection, therefore the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up in Christ. Verses 9 and 10 are also comforting in Mosiah 16. After a "tremendous battle; even such an one as never had been known among all the people" where tens of thousands were slain – Alma 28:5-6 states: Yea, the cry of widows mourning for their husbands, and also of fathers mourning for their sons, and the daughter for the brother, yea, the brother for the father; and thus the cry of mourning was heard among all of them, mourning for their kindred who had been slain. And now surely this was a sorrowful day; yea, a time of solemnity, and a time of much fasting and prayer.

There is a good recipe here to deal with grief, fasting and prayer. But the plan of salvation offers us the following hope: Alma 28:12 While many thousands of others truly mourn for the loss of their kindred, yet they rejoice and exult in the hope, and even know, according to the promises of the Lord, that they are raised to dwell at the right hand of God, in a state of never-ending happiness.

I testify that God lives. There is life after death and this life is explained and taught perfectly in the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants and the teaching of our Prophets and Apostle today!

Please read the attached talk given in General Conference, October 2012 given by Elder Shayne M. Bowen of the Seventy, titled:

"BECAUSE I LIVE, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO"

Your Bishopric

RELIEF SOCIETY



Our 2014 Relief Society theme is:
Engaged”

“Bee Anxiously

D&C 58:27

The introduction to our theme was
Presented in January, February’s
lesson is “Be Grateful”

Do you sometimes wonder if your little efforts could possibly make any difference at all? Consider a simple example from nature. Honey is “one of the foods that includes all the substances—enzymes, vitamins, minerals, and water—necessary to sustain life,” writes Elder M. Russell Ballard. And yet, “Over its short lifetime of just a few weeks to four months, a single honeybee’s contribution of honey to its hive is a mere one-twelfth of one teaspoon. Though seemingly insignificant when compared to the total, each bee’s one-twelfth of a teaspoon of honey is vital to the life of the hive.” Your simple, daily acts of service matter, the power of many righteous people working together to fill the world, one drop at a time, with the sweet truths of the gospel.

BIRTHDAYS



February

- 3 Jay Nielsen
Samantha Ellis
- 4 Darin Olsen
Ryker Reynolds
- 5 Ruth Clegg
- 6 Ron Baker
- 7 Harry Mills
- 10 Donna Rose
Elva Hamblin
- 12 Joshua Ellis
- 13 Priscilla Trujillo
- 14 Mont Bishop
Sophia Larson
- 15 Matt Pendleton
Elizabeth Morrison
- 16 Brenda Miller
- 17 Ralph Tolman
- 19 Ryker Olsen
- 20 Klarissa Wells
Jill Rigby
- 21 Marie Thompson
- 26 Strider Curtis
- 27 Lee Guest
Alec Jones
Glen Ebmeyer
- 28 Kyle Anderton

WARD AND STAKE EVENTS AND NEWS

STAKE TEMPLE DAY - FEB 13TH

VALENTINE’S DAY - FEB 14TH

STAKE CONFERENCE - FEB 15-16, Elder Von G. Keetch, Area Seventy

CHOIR

We will meet each Sunday at Mary Bye’s at 1:00 pm. We perform on February 23rd. We will practice that day at 8:30 and no 1:00 practice. All ages and skill levels welcome.

EMPTY NESTERS

Our February meeting will be the 10th at 7:00 pm with Bob and Andrea Marx hosting. We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month and welcome any Empty Nesters to join with us.

CUB SCOUTS

Blue and gold banquet on Wed Feb 26th at 6:30.

Messiah Community Sing-in Rehearsals Begin Feb. 2

The Stake is presenting a Handel's Messiah Community Sing-in on Sunday, May 4. If you've sung or have wanted to sing The Messiah, this is your chance to participate in a wonderful experience.

This is also great opportunity to invite friends and neighbors of other faiths to participate with you. Choir rehearsals will begin on Sunday, February 2 in the Stake Center on 1700 East and will be held from 7:30 to 9 p.m. each Sunday (except General Conference Sunday).

We'll also need instrumentalists to play in the orchestra; orchestra rehearsals will begin in March.

Mark your calendars and plan to be part of this year's Messiah Community Sing-in.

All Faiths Welcome

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Welcome to:

Kyle & Miranda Clark. They reside in Manette Murri's basement.

Congratulations to:

Daniel and Kathryn (Clark) Valentine - Baby Girl named Ella May Valentine and weighed 7lbs. 3 oz.,

FAMILY DISCOVERY DAY

To assist in the work of salvation and encourage family history and temple work participation, Family Search will host **Family Discovery Day**. This is a free event for all Church members and includes classes and activities for youth.

Family Discovery Day will be held Saturday, February 8, 2014, at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. This event is held in conjunction with Roots Tech, an annual family history conference sponsored by the Church.

Speakers include:

- * Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
- * Elder Bradley D. Foster of the Seventy
- * Elder Allan F. Pacer of the Seventy
- * Heidi Swinton, author of President Thomas S. Monson's biography, *To the Rescue*
- * John Bytheway, author and youth speaker

Registration is required and is available at rootstech.org

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION

DATE FOR MARCH WILL BE FEBRUARY 25TH
PLEASE FORWARD YOUR AUXILIARY INFORMATION TO
ANDREA MARX AT:

sistermarx@gmail.com

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

MISSIONARY ADDRESSES

Elder Bruce and Sister Vivienne Sullivan

Spain Madrid Mission
Calle Fuerteventura 4, 2, Office 8B
28703 San Sebastian de los Reyes
Madrid
SPAIN

Rachel Jean Bierman (It has been requested that you not put Sister due to mail being stolen)

Missouri St Louis Mission
1850 Craigshire Rd Ste 205
St Louis, MO 63146

Hermana Emily Lloyd

Mision Chile Concepcion Sur
Castellon 1063, Casilla 3560
Concepcion, Bio-Bio
CHILE

Elder Gary and Sister Susan Johnson

632 Windsor Green Blvd
Goodlettsville, TN 37072

Elder Zach Rigby

South Carolina Columbia Mission
110 Oak Park Dr. Suite B
Irmo, SC 29063

FAMILY HISTORY - INDEXING

Want to be closer to your family this year? Get to know them through Family History. Remember Roots Tech on Feb. 8. Contact Natalie Nieldon-Riep for more information.

PRIMARY

Yearly Theme: Families are Forever

Theme for February: Heavenly Father has a plan for His children

Scripture for February: "O how great the plan of our God!" (2 Nephi 9:13)

We would like to remind the parents that the children should be learning the scripture for each month. Any help you can give them would be wonderful.

Activity Days for the Girls:

Feb 11th - Valentine Craft

Feb 25th - FHE Project/Lesson

YOUNG WOMEN

February Schedule:

Feb 5, 7pm: Dinner night at the Miles. Deacons are cooking.

Feb 12, 7pm: Love letters and Service project!

Feb 19, 7pm: Game night and dodgeball with YM

Feb 26, 6pm: Baptisms for the dead

SEALINGS

Our February ward temple night for sealings at the Draper temple will be Tuesday, February 18th. We need a minimum of 3 couples in order to meet our assignment, however it is a much more enjoyable experience if we have at least five couples participate. It is also appreciated when single brothers and sisters attend the session as well. The sealing session lasts one hour. Please contact Brother Lee Guest if you have any questions or would like to sign up for our next session.

“Because I Live, Ye Shall Live Also”

By Elder Shayne M. Bowen
Of the Seventy



Because of Him, even our Savior, Jesus Christ, those feelings of sorrow, loneliness, and despair will one day be swallowed up in a fulness of joy.

While serving as young missionaries in Chile, my companion and I met a family of seven in the branch. The mother attended every week with her children. We assumed that they were longtime members of the Church. After several weeks we learned that they had not been baptized.

We immediately contacted the family and asked if we could come to their home and teach them. The father was not interested in learning about the gospel but had no objection to our teaching his family.

Sister Ramirez advanced rapidly through the lessons. She was anxious to learn all the doctrine that we taught. One evening as we were discussing infant baptism, we taught that little children are innocent and have no need for baptism. We invited her to read in the book of Moroni:

“Behold I say unto you that this thing shall ye teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children.

“And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins.

“But little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a respecter to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism!”¹

After reading this scripture, Sister Ramirez began sobbing. My companion and I were confused. I asked, “Sister Ramirez, have we said or done something that has offended you?”

She said, “Oh, no, Elder, you haven’t done anything wrong. Six years ago I had a baby boy. He died before we could have him baptized. Our priest told us that because he had not been baptized, he would be in limbo for all eternity. For six years I have carried that pain and guilt. After reading this scripture, I know by the power of the Holy Ghost that it is true. I have felt a great weight taken off of me, and these are tears of joy.”

I was reminded of the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who taught this comforting doctrine: “The Lord takes many away, even in infancy, that they may escape the envy of man, and the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth; therefore, if rightly considered, instead of mourning we have reason to rejoice as they are delivered from evil, and we shall soon have them again.”²

After she suffered almost unbearable grief and pain for six years, the true doctrine, revealed by a loving Father in Heaven through a living prophet, brought sweet peace to this tormented woman. Needless to say, Sister Ramirez and her children who were eight years and older were baptized.

I remember writing to my family, expressing the gratitude that I felt in my heart for the knowledge of this and so many other plain and precious truths of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I never dreamed how this wonderful true principle would come back to me in future years and prove to be my balm of Gilead.

I would like to speak to those who have lost a child and have asked the question, "Why me?" or maybe even questioned your own faith in a loving Father in Heaven. It is my prayer that by the power of the Holy Ghost, I may bring some measure of hope, of peace, and of understanding. It is my desire to be an instrument in bringing about a restoration of your faith in our loving Father in Heaven, who knows all things and allows us to experience trials so that we can come to know and love Him and understand that without Him we have nothing.

On February 4 of 1990, our third son and sixth child was born. We named him Tyson. He was a beautiful little boy, and the family greeted him with open hearts and open arms. His brothers and sisters were so proud of him. We all thought he was the most perfect little boy who had ever been born.

When Tyson was eight months old, he aspirated a piece of chalk that he had found on the carpet. The chalk lodged in Tyson's throat, and he quit breathing. His older brother brought Tyson upstairs, frantically calling, "The baby won't breathe. The baby won't breathe." We began to administer CPR and called 911.

The paramedics arrived and rushed Tyson to the hospital. In the waiting room we continued in fervent prayer as we pled to God for a miracle. After what seemed a lifetime, the doctor came into the room and said, "I am so sorry. There is nothing more we can do. Take all the time you need." She then left.

As we entered the room where Tyson lay, we saw our lifeless little bundle of joy. It seemed as though he had a celestial glow around his little body. He was so radiant and pure.

At that moment it felt as if our world had come to an end. How could we return to the other children and somehow try to explain that Tyson wasn't coming home?

I will speak in the singular as I relate the rest of this experience. My angel wife and I experienced this trial together, but I am inadequate in expressing the feelings of a mother and would not even try to do so.

It is impossible to describe the mixture of feelings that I had at that point in my life. Most of the time I felt as if I were in a bad dream and that I would soon wake up and this terrible nightmare would be over. For many nights I didn't sleep. I often wandered in the night from one room to the other, making sure that our other children were all safe.

Feelings of guilt racked my soul. I felt so guilty. I felt dirty. I was his father; I should have done more to protect him. If only I would have done this or that. Sometimes even today, 22 years later, those feelings begin to creep into my heart, and I need to get rid of them quickly because they can be destructive.

About a month after Tyson died, I had an interview with Elder Dean L. Larsen. He took the time to listen to me, and I will always be grateful for his counsel and love. He said, "I don't think the Lord would want you to punish yourself for the death of your little boy." I felt the love of my Heavenly Father through one of his chosen vessels.

However, tormenting thoughts continued to plague me, and I soon began to feel anger. "This isn't fair! How could God do this

to me? Why me? What did I do to deserve this?" I even felt myself get angry with people who were just trying to comfort us. I remember friends saying, "I know how you feel." I would think to myself, "You have no idea how I feel. Just leave me alone." I soon found that self-pity can also be very debilitating. I was ashamed of myself for having unkind thoughts about dear friends who were only trying to help.

As I felt the guilt, anger, and self-pity trying to consume me, I prayed that my heart could change. Through very personal sacred experiences, the Lord gave me a new heart, and even though it was still lonely and painful, my whole outlook changed. I was given to know that I had not been robbed but rather that there was a great blessing awaiting me if I would prove faithful.

My life started to change, and I was able to look forward with hope, rather than look backward with despair. I testify that this life is not the end. The spirit world is real. The teachings of the prophets regarding life after death are true. This life is but a transitory step forward on our journey back to our Heavenly Father.

Tyson has remained a very integral part of our family. Through the years it has been wonderful to see the mercy and kindness of a loving Father in Heaven, who has allowed our family to feel in very tangible ways the influence of Tyson. I testify that the veil is thin. The same feelings of loyalty, love, and family unity don't end as our loved ones pass to the other side; instead, those feelings are intensified.

Sometimes people will ask, "How long did it take you to get over it?" The truth is, you will never completely get over it until you are together once again with your departed loved ones. I will never have a fulness of joy until we are reunited in the morning of the First Resurrection.

"For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

"And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy."³

But in the meantime, as the Savior taught, we can continue with good cheer.⁴

I have learned that the bitter, almost unbearable pain can become sweet as you turn to your Father in Heaven and plead for His comfort that comes through His plan; His Son, Jesus Christ; and His Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost.

What a glorious blessing this is in our lives. Wouldn't it be tragic if we didn't feel great sorrow when we lose a child? How grateful I am to my Father in Heaven that He allows us to love deeply and love eternally. How grateful I am for eternal families. How grateful I am that He has revealed once again through His living prophets the glorious plan of redemption.

Remember as you attended the funeral of your loved one the feelings in your heart as you drove away from the cemetery and looked back to see that solitary casket—wondering if your heart would break.

I testify that because of Him, even our Savior, Jesus Christ, those feelings of sorrow, loneliness, and despair will one day be swallowed up in a fulness of joy. I testify that we can depend on Him and when He said:

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also."⁵

I testify that, as stated in *Preach My Gospel*, "as we rely on the Atonement of Jesus Christ, He can help us endure our trials, sicknesses, and pain. We can be filled with joy, peace, and consolation. All that is unfair about life can be made right through the Atonement of Jesus Christ."⁶

I testify that on that bright, glorious morning of the First Resurrection, your loved ones and mine will come forth from the grave as promised by the Lord Himself and we will have a fulness of joy. Because He lives, they and we shall live also. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. Moroni 8:10–12.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 176.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 93:33–34.
4. See John 16:33.
5. John 14:18–19.
6. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 52.