



Bishopric Message—Bishop Tim Richardson

I have been thinking about fasting and how it is combined with testimony meeting. For half a century, beginning in the 1830s, fast and testimony meeting convened on Thursday, following a practice approved by the Prophet Joseph Smith. No written directive or explanation can be found that explains why that day of the week came to be used. In latter-day revelation, the Lord commands the Saints to "continue in prayer and fasting (D&C 88:76)." Revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith linked prayer and fasting in two contexts. One with Sabbath observance and the other with anticipated worship in the Kirtland Temple (D&C 59:9-14; D&C 88:76;19).



In combining prayer and fasting, the Lord restored a practice enjoyed by the faithful people in earlier dispensations. The Book of Mormon emphasizes the purposes of fasting: Drawing closer to the Lord and seeking special blessings from Him through prayer (Alma 5:46 and 3 Nephi 27:1).

In 1985, Elder Howard W. Hunter, then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, noted that the formal observance of regular public and private fasts was not established until after the children of Israel left Egypt. During Zachariah's reign in Israel, the people observed specific monthly fasts. By the time the Savior began His ministry, many pious Jews were fasting two days a week. Of greater importance to the Savior than specific times and places was his admonition that fasting be observed in a spirit of sincerity (see [Matt. 6:16](#)).

In life we tend to go through motions because of traditions or ease with good intentions, but sometimes miss the intentions of why practices were implemented. I often fast on fast Sunday without a purpose. I just know it's fast Sunday and that is what we have been asked to do. I think there are blessings from being obedient but I also feel Heavenly Father gives us opportunities to learn during our mortal journey and fasting is a way to learn about self mastery, discernment, sacrifice and through this gives us a small piece and understanding of what Jesus went through for us.

Fasting helps us draw near to God, surrender ourselves to Him and get direction from Him. Fasting has a power to comfort us in times of sorrow and mourning (Alma 28:4-6) and can help us become humble and feel closer to our Heavenly Father (Helaman 3:35).

It is my intent for this year to gain a better understanding of fasting and through deliberate sacrifice (fasting from food, technology, and other things that demand our attention) we can have spiritual experiences in understanding our purpose better and come closer to God and Jesus Christ.

What's Happening in January

Happy Birthday

3	Duffin, Sheran	17	Encke, Felicitti
3	Raines, Tyler	18	Davenport, Ava
4	Searle, Tyler	18	Holt, Lois
5	Brown, Lenaya	18	Horne, Doug
5	Christensen, Cambree	20	Brown, Matthew
6	Barton, Jessica	20	Lundwall, Dan
8	Raines, Michelle	21	Hart, Teri
8	Shepard, Nichole	22	Blake, CC
8	Warren, Matt	23	Huang, Celeste
10	Greenhalgh, Ann	24	Searle, Austin
11	Bowen, Kate	26	Cronkhite, Katelyn
12	Holman, Paul	26	Larsen, Taryn
13	Anderson, Aliyah	26	Mendenhall, Randy
13	Anderson, Jett	27	Poch, Liz
15	Didericksen, Tanna	28	Fedderson, Landon
15	Elliott, Kim	28	Seiger, Thomas
15	Ralph, Tammy	29	Hardman, Jenn
16	Collette, Diane	31	Seiger, Hunter

Happy
New
Year



Ward Christmas Party, December 1



Relief Society

On Tuesday, December 12, a Relief Society Christmas Party was held at the Brownstone Building. It was a delightful evening filled with festive holiday decorations, visiting, and a delicious dinner of ham, potatoes, salad, carrots, and dessert. We were treated to a story read aloud and then given a gift to take home. What a wonderful way to celebrate the holidays. A big thank you to the committee who put this together and worked so hard to make this happen.



COME ENJOY A SOUP-ER FUN
NIGHT WITH YOUR 18TH WARD
SISTERS AT OUR SOUP & SHARE
ACTIVITY!

**TUESDAY,
JANUARY
23RD AT
6:30**

COME READY TO EAT SOUPS AND
SHARE A STORY THAT TELLS US
MORE ABOUT YOU. (OPTIONAL:
BRING AN ITEM THAT RELATES TO
YOU AND YOUR STORY)



Primary

December was a very special month in Primary. Shepard Warren was baptized! It was a special day for family and friends. Shepherd's sister Piper read two poems that she wrote. Below is one of her poems.

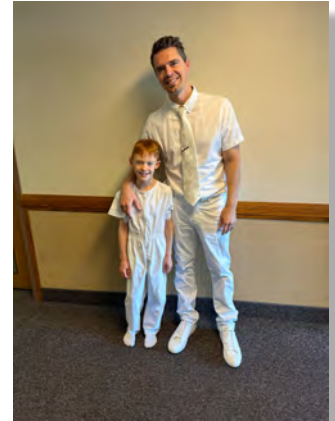
The children participated at the Christmas party by performing the nativity and a special musical number with Angklungs. The children also sang during sacrament meeting.

December was also the last month that Hawk Anderson, Stockton Hansen, and Lauren Fedderson are in Primary. We will miss them dearly and wish them luck in Young Men and Young Women!

We look forward to January, where we will welcome Grace Bullough, Bo Gowdy, Cooper Hardman, and Spencer Holman to Primary. We are excited for our new Sunbeams class.

Poem Written by Piper Warren with help from Jesus

<i>I'll Follow Him</i>	Sometimes He carries me,
I'm trodding in his footsteps,	Sometimes we talk,
I'm following his path,	Sometimes we just walk,
Sometimes I cry	But He will always love me,
Sometimes I laugh,	And I will always love Him.



Young Women

2023 has been an incredible year for the young women of our ward. We have made new friends and said goodbye to others as they have moved away to college or moved away. We are excited for the new year and the great blessings that it will bring. We are so excited to welcome Lauren Fedderson into the Young Women program! She is so sweet and will be a wonderful addition to Young Women.

For the month of December, we celebrated a new baby being born in our ward. Sister Mallory Bolingbroke is expecting in January and we were able to share in her excitement of welcoming her new baby. We also had a fun evening with the

Young Men and participate in an escape room. It was fun to work together to solve the mystery of the bishop gone missing :)

We enjoyed a Christmas party together to talk about activities for next year. We are excited for memories we will make together and for the blessing of growing and strengthening our testimonies together.

Thank you to our wonderful ward for loving us and being such great examples.



Young Men

In December, the Young Men visited Temple Square and the Giving Machines at City Creek.



Check out the Young Men's visit with Santa on the Ward Christmas Party page.



They also enjoyed cookies, games, and reading 3 Nephi 11 about Christ's visit to the Americas.

