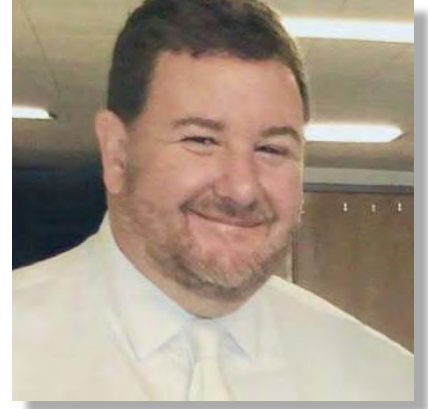




### ***Bishopric Message—Brad Schreck***

As we've begun to study the *Book of Mormon* this year, I've been reminded of the many layers and symbolism of Lehi and Nephi's vision of the tree of life. As we've all read and discussed this prominent part of the *Book of Mormon*, it is undoubtedly familiar to each of us. But this most recent discussion garnered thoughts and ideas I had never previously entertained. I'm not sure why these ideas struck a new chord in me this specific time and not in past discussions on the same topic. Maybe I was listening more this time. Maybe life's experiences prepared me to open my understanding. Maybe the instructor was using a unique conduit to help me gain a new perspective.



One idea that encouraged study in my mind was the comment that in the vision of the tree of life, the iron rod was so close to the river of swift waters. I had never remembered this description before, and it piqued my interest. One class member theorized that this symbolized the purpose of allowing those people who were holding to the iron rod to be close to those in the swift waters, thus allowing them to reach out their hands in assistance.

This idea really stuck with me and made complete sense. My thought immediately turned to a loving and knowing Heavenly Father and Savior who by always showing their love and concern for Their children, would place the rod and those on its path, close to those in need of help. This is consistent with everything we learn and know about our heavenly stewards—they are always thinking of us, they are always willing to help us, they are always wanting us to return to be with them, and they are always close by when we need them.

In this same line of thinking, I was then turned in thought to our Heavenly Father's desire to always hear from us. I thought of how I enjoy hearing others pray when they speak to our Father in Heaven like they are having a conversation with him; like two people who are familiar and well known to each other. Without showing signs of disrespect, complacency, or traditional prayer structure, I love to hear how others talk to our Heavenly Father in this way. The familiarity and ease of those types of prayers brings comfort to me, because I imagine our Heavenly Father wanting so badly to hear from us and wanting us to be comfortable calling on Him in our time of need. I imagine Him holding the iron rod with one hand and with His other hand outstretched to reach me or any one of His children who might find themselves in the swift river of water, realizing the precariousness and danger of their situation, and reaching to Him for help.

This is precisely what the Book of Mormon teaches us. In 1 Nephi chapter 15, Nephi teaches his brothers that our Heavenly Father and Savior Jesus Christ are always there for us. In discussing the things his father Lehi has seen in vision, Nephi comments on this very idea saying, "...they (his brothers) did not look unto the Lord as they ought. And they said: Behold, we cannot understand

*Continued on page 5*

## What's Happening in February

### New Callings

Jennifer Horne     Primary instructor  
Sadie Eggleston     Primary instructor

Adam Bullough     Welfare and self-reliance  
specialist

# Happy Birthday

1     Christensen, Abbi  
1     Christensen, Braxton  
1     Davenport, Ivy Grace  
3     Jensen, Hailee  
3     Young, Whitney  
7     Fisher, Mike  
9     Broshears-Heibel, Lisa  
11    Brown, Doug  
12    Bleazard, Wayne  
12    Warnock, Jared  
12    Winn, Zachary Michael

14    Guerrero, Joseph  
14    Jensen, Sharon  
15    Manwaring, Milo  
16    Richardson, Alli  
17    Fedderson, Lauren  
19    McMillan, Adam  
19    Westenskow, Jacqueline  
20    LaFortune, Jackson  
21    Blake, Steve  
27    Roylance, Darin

### Primary

In January, four new Sunbeams joined Primary. To get to know the new Sunbeams and for them to get to know the other kids, each child chose a hat, and we sang everyone's name. It was a great start to the new year!

Jackson LaFortune and Taz Nelson are now in Activity Days this year. They have had a great start with Lego Olympics and a combined soccer game with the Activity Days girls.

We are exciting to be studying the *Book of Mormon* and will be learning some fun new songs. We are excited to sing them to you during the program this fall.

This year, as a Primary, we are working on memorizing all the Articles of Faith. Each month we will work on learning one. To pass

off an Article of Faith, each child can come to the primary room after the second hour and recite it for any member of the Primary presidency.





## Relief Society

In January the Relief Society sisters enjoyed a *Soup & Share* activity. The sisters enjoyed a variety of soups, rolls, and delicious lemon cake as they chatted with each other and listened to stories that various sisters shared. It was a wonderful evening.

### Save These Dates!

**Saturday, February 10**, at 6 p.m. is the elders quorum Chili Cook-Off.

**Saturday, February 24**, at 10 a.m. is the Stake Relief Society Conference with Jenedy Paige, the renowned LDS painter and American Ninja Warrior, as the keynote speaker. The Laurel-age Young Women are also invited. Lunch will be provided. Watch for more details.

**Tuesday, February 27**, at 7 p.m. A special guest speaker, Stewart Martinsen, will teach us about *Home and Emergency Gardening*.





## Young Women

Our dear Young Women have made the winter month of January so bright with their beautiful spirits and testimonies. We had a wonderful month together.

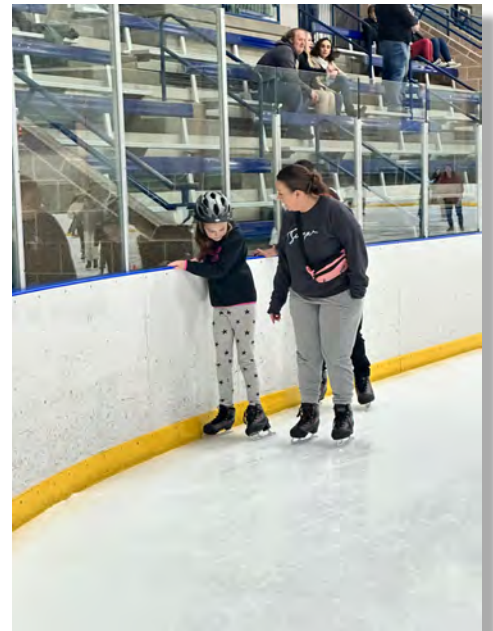
We have focused on the Book of Mormon, as we have taken on the Stake's challenge to read from it each day. We started the month with decorating and personalizing a paper copy of the Book of Mormon. The girls have such amazing talent, and it was fun to see how individual their scriptures became. We had an activity to talk about and learn from each other about different ways to study and apply the

teachings of the Savior that are found in the Book of Mormon. We also had a fun activity ice skating with the Young Men. We have some great skaters in our ward!

The girls did a beautiful job singing in the choir at stake conference.

We are looking forward to activities in February, such as baptisms for the dead at the temple, a fun service activity, and a sports night.

Thank you to these beautiful girls for being a blessing in all of our lives.



*Bishopric message continued*

the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive tree, and also concerning the Gentiles. And I said unto them: Have ye inquired of the Lord? Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said? If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known unto you."

I hope each of you finds as much comfort and peace in the knowledge that the Lord is always reaching for us and wanting to hear from us. He will never forsake us and will always have time for us. No matter what questions, struggles, or issues we have, He is always there if we'll but come to Him. I know that this principle is true and that He loves each of us unconditionally and without end. My hope is that each of us turns to Him to find peace in this life and a saving hand in times of need.



Little Cottonwood 18th Ward Relief Society

# Home & Emergency Gardening

Tuesday, February 27, 7pm

Relief Society Room  
6210 South 725 East

Brother Stewart Martinsen of the 6th ward will share his expertise on:

- Raised-bed high-yield gardening
- Soil-bed high-yield gardening
- Heirloom seed selection/production
- Harvest and storage/root cellars
- Growing microgreens year-round



## *Spotlight on Anastasia Blair*

Anastasia was born in Evergreen Park, Illinois, which is in the south Chicago area. When she was very young, she and her sister moved with their mother to Arlington, Texas. She grew up in Arlington, which is the home of the Dallas Cowboys and the Texas Rangers. Anastasia was always fond of dance and took all kinds of dance classes growing up and through high school. She went to the University of Texas at Austin for undergrad and then attended pharmacy



school at Texas Tech University. After that, in about 2013, she moved to Utah and did two years of residency at the University of Utah specializing in Critical Care Clinical Pharmacy. She also worked at Utah Valley Hospital for a while, and currently works as a pharmacist at the Intermountain Medical Center on a team that supports the Intensive Care Units in the Intermountain Health network.



When she first flew into Salt Lake for her residency interview, she was in the taxi leaving the airport when her mom called to see how her trip went. It was dark and Anastasia really couldn't see the mountains or much of the city,

but she told her mom that she felt like she belonged here. It just felt right. Years later and still in Utah, it was through her friends from work that she was introduced to the Church.



Anastasia still loves to dance and loves to work out on her Peloton bike. She enjoys traveling and has been to Greece, Egypt, and has seen a lot of the U.S. She most recently travelled to see the eastern seaboard in the fall and in a few months, she will be going with some good friends to spend a couple of weeks in Spain. She also loves being the favorite aunt to her two nieces.

When asked who inspires her, she said her mom is an inspiration to her. She is one of the hardest working people she knows and has inspired Anastasia to want to be like her.

We are so glad to have this wonderful lady in our ward!

Feb 2024