



The 39,000-square-foot, four-story meetinghouse is at the base of the new 95 State at City Creek office tower in Salt Lake City, Utah.
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Friday Night, August 2, Family Meeting with Brad Wilcox

Friday Night, August 2nd

The youth received a booklet with puzzle pages from stories produced from the book titled *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*. This book was edited by Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor. When the youth went to the cited pages, they were able to read the same stories but in Lucy's own words.

Joseph Smith Sr & Lucy Mack Smith Family Reunion

August 1-4, 2024

Salt Lake City, Utah

"Wherefore, my dear children, I pray, beseech, and adjure you by all the relations and dearness that hath ever been betwixt us and by the heartrending pangs of a dying father whose soul hath been ever bound in the bundle of life with yours, that you know one another. Visit as you may each one another...If possible, once every year...or if you cannot meet, send to and hear from each other yearly and oftener if you can; and when you have neither father nor mother left be so many fathers and mothers to each other, so you shall understand the blessings mentioned in the 133 Psalm."

Asael Smith, father of Joseph Smith Sr.



Lucy Mack Smith Home in Nauvoo

Celebrating 52 years of coming to

Psalms 133:1
Behold, how good and how pleasant
together in unity!

ACTIVITY BOOKLET

For the
Younger
Generation
(3-5 year-olds?)

The young children had picture pages to color that also taught about the family.

Joseph Smith Sr. Family Reunion

What does the word ancestor mean to you? Is it important that we come to know who our own ancestors were? An ancestor is anyone who you are related to that has lived before you; usually the person has passed away. For example, you have parents and they also have parents, these are your grandparents. Your grandparents had a mom and dad. These are your ancestors. We could keep listing your ancestor's parents, but that would just show how many people have lived a good life in order to make your life possible. We are together this summer because we all have ancestors in common. Their names are Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith. Joseph and Lucy had eleven children.

During our last 2007 reunion we honored each of the children by planting trees at the Lucy Mack Smith Campground up Heber Canyon in Utah. We also placed a rock engraved with each of their following names:

- *Unnamed Son (ca. 1797)*
- *Alvin (1798-1823)*
- *Hyrum (1800-1844)*
- *Sophronia (1803-1876)*
- *Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-1844)*
- *Samuel H. (1808-1844)*
- *Ephraim (1810)*
- *William (1811-1893)*
- *Katharine (1813-1900)*
- *Don Carlos (1816-1841)*
- *Lucy (1821-1882)*

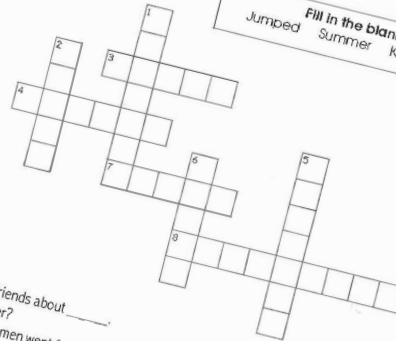
This year we are honoring our ancestors by doing service where many of our are buried. It is exciting to let them know we love them by caring for the Smith Family Cemetery.

The puzzle pages with stories are produced from stories in the book *Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*. This book was edited by S. Maurine Jensen Proctor. When you go to the cited pages you will be able to read but in Lucy's own words.



Dangerous Rescue-Daniel Mack
Stephen's brother, Daniel Mack, loved danger and did not fear death. He was known to risk his own life in order to save someone else. This great courage was displayed on the banks of the Miller's River on a sunny afternoon with a group of friends who were talking about going for a swim. Daniel tried to stop them from jumping in because he knew the water was dangerous. Three of the young men did not listen to Daniel. Shortly after they started to drown Daniel said "Now, gentlemen, these men are drowning; who will assist them at the risk of his life?" There was only silence. So, Daniel dove to the bottom of the river. Only to find each of them tangled in the weeds. He was able to pull up the weeds and carry each of them to shore. When one of the boys recovered he said "Mr. Mack you have saved us from a watery grave. You not only have wisdom to counsel, but when you ignore your advice, you still have the greatness to risk your own life to save them. I will never slight your council again" the other survivors agreed. Pg 31-33

Fill in the blank words
Jumped Summer Kicked People



Across

3. Daniel saw his friends about _____.
4. Who loved danger?
7. How many young men went for a swim?
8. Daniel knew the water was _____.

Down

1. This pulled the boys to the bottom.
2. "You have saved us from a watery _____."
5. Courage was shown on what river?
6. The boys were tangled in this.

Words To Choose From For Crossword Puzzle
Daniel Three Grave Weeds Current Dangerous Drown Millers



Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith 2024 Scholarship Winners



Daniel Adams talked about trying to start a youth council. He then announced this year's Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith Scholarship Winners: First place – Dallin Badal, Second Place – Alex Eyring, and Third Place – Katie Wallace. Dallin and Alex were able to accept their award in person. Katie was unable to attend as she was in Washington State.

Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith 2024 Scholarship Winner



3rd

Katie Wallace
Wenatchee WA
Music – Parent's Love

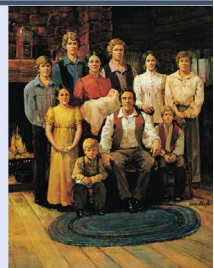


Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith 2024 Scholarship Winner



2nd

Alex Eyring
Bountiful, Utah
Video Narration Tribute
to the Smith Family

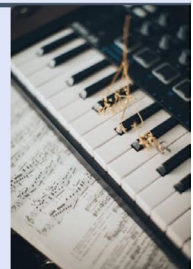


Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith 2024 Scholarship Winner



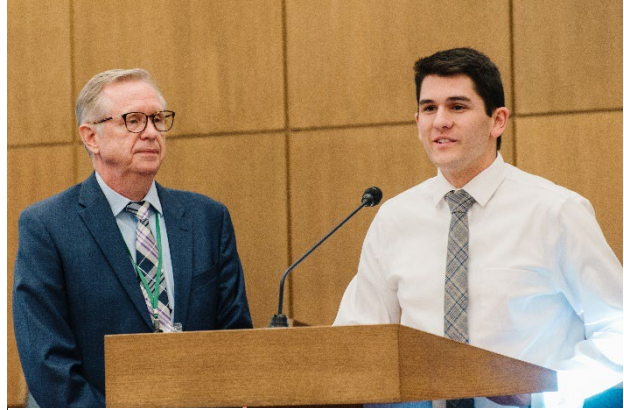
1st

Dallin Badal
Provo, UT
Smith Family Vignettes
Musical Arrangement





Alex Eyring, second place winner, was able to pick up his scholarship award in person. Dan Adams had him explain his entry



Dan Adams gave the first-place scholarship winner, Dallin Badal, his award and asked for him to share his submission project



Elizabeth Funk, Kimberly Jo Smith, and Bryan Davis sang a song written by Joseph's youngest son, David Hyrum Smith called, Let Us Pray for One Another



Frances & Steve Orton at the beginning of the Friday Night's Meeting



Craig B. Ballard, Chairman of the Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith Family Foundation and Board of Trustees, introduced our speaker, Brad Wilcox. Craig serves as a member of the Young Men General Board and works with Brad. He has also served as a bishop of a YSA ward, and President of the Oregon Portland Mission.

Craig Ballard, Brothers and Sisters, it is a pleasure to be with you. My father was President M. Russell Ballard, and we lost a great man on November 12th, 2023. One of the things that he wanted to make sure the Ballard family was keenly involved and significantly involved with was the Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith Foundation.

It was kind of funny because the older my dad got, the more he told it exactly like he saw it. And I remember all through his ministry. He would say, you know, I always think about Hyrum and Joseph and I'm wondering what more I can do. Towards the end of his life, he

said I'm not really worried about Joseph and Hyrum, but Lucy Mack. If I screw up, she's going to get me. I mean, she was tough. He was thinking Joseph and Hyrum might cut him some slack but Lucy Mack - you don't mess with her.

Steve, I figured out how you got such a punny sense of humor. We were talking about this. They are neighbors with the President of the General Young Men's, Steve Lund, and I think the two of you could do a quite a dog and pony show for the for the most punny dad joke-type comedy ever. It might be a little painful for most of us. Brad was saying, "It must be something in the Provo River. Don't drink the water."

Brother and sisters, it's a pleasure to be with you. I'm really pleased to be with a man that I love and really revere. Brad Wilcox's known to all, almost all of you in one way, shape or form. He is a prolific teacher, writer, speaker and he is also the first counselor in the General Young Men's Organization. I have the privilege of serving on that board and advisory councils. I have seen Brad in his different various roles really care about not only the young man but the young women. When you meet Brad, you really feel like he loves you and that is not something you can fake. He genuinely does love people, and it just exudes out of him. He is a great mentor to me.

We are so pleased with the caliber of the fine young men who are truly an amazing generation, and we are so pleased with their desire to live the gospel and to do the things that our Savior would have them do.

Without further ado, I'm going to turn the time over to brother Brad Wilcox.



Brad Wilcox was masterful at teaching the Smith Family





Steve and Frances interact with Brad Wilcox during the evening

Brad Wilcox began, it is a blessing to be here with you today. I remember coming and being part of the reunion before when Karl Anderson and I spoke together in the Conference Center. Man, when you lost Elder Ballard, you lost your connection to some good locations.

Because we were over in the little theater of the Conference Center, and I think we had dinner at the Conference Center right beforehand. What a blessing to be there then, and what a blessing to be able to come back and be included with you now.

I saw Karl and Joyce Anderson, and I'm so excited about the reunion in Kirkland. What a joy that will be. Those of you who haven't been to Kirtland, you need to go and experience that place.

I was at a YSA conference there once, and the young adults had come from all over the nation. They had their devotionals, classes, dances, and food, but they also got to visit the historic sites and hear what happened in those special places.

They got to be with the missionaries who explained it to them, and we got to have a sacrament meeting in the Kirtland Temple. This was before we owned the Kirtland Temple as a church, so it was amazing to have connections through Brother Anderson. I mean, he knew somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody.

I don't know how they got that, but we ended up having a sacrament service right in the Kirtland Temple, and it was such a joy to see all those young adults feel the spirit there as we sang, the spirit of God like a fire burning.

I got to stand on the pulpits, the very pulpits where the Savior came to Joseph and Oliver, and it was so exciting to stand on those pulpits. I told the young people, "Look at the woodwork. Look at the framing around the windows. Look at so many of the original windows that are there. Look at the woodwork on the pulpits."

These people gave their whole hearts and souls to building this beautiful temple. But then I told them they weren't professional builders. Hyrum Smith was in charge of the temple's construction, and he

knew little more than how to build a one-room log cabin, yet there he was, undertaking this incredible project.

They were dirt poor, digging down to their socks to fund this. Earlier in the week, Karl had arranged for me to go up into the spire. I saw Hyrum Smith's initials inside the spire, and Martin Harris's initials are carved in there.

I went down to the basement, which is kind of a half basement, and I saw how the original floor support beams were laid. Now, if you're going to lay a 2 by 4, you're not going to lay it the four-way because that could bow. You're going to lay it the two-way because that will support more weight. They showed me how all the original support beams had been laid incorrectly.

They'd been laid horizontally, and they were so far apart from each other because these people were just so impoverished. They had been laid so far apart from each other that the places of heaviest weight were where the pulpits were, and there were no support beams underneath them. Now there are. There are these beautiful steel eye beams with hydraulic lifts and everything. I mean now, now it's supported, but in its day, I mean, they're lucky they didn't sing, The Spirit of God, and woosh fall right through the floor.

But then, I said to the young adults right in the Kirtland Temple, "The flaws in the building did not keep Jesus from coming. The flaws, the mistakes, did not keep Jesus from acknowledging the building as his. Where there was weakness, he gave strength, and he changed that flawed building into a temple. And that's what he offers to do for us."

Oh, go to Kirtland. Go to Kirtland. Feel the spirit that you'll feel there. It will be worth every little ounce of funds that you have to put aside to be able to go and be part of that. You will love being there.

I think it's so interesting that on the very day that they announced that the church had purchased the Kirtland Temple from Community of Christ, a joint announcement between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and Community of Christ, it was our President Nelson, who had made sure that a special call was made to Karl and Joyce Anderson. President Nelson said, "We wanted you to know before the announcement." So, before we all knew, they knew.

And now you'll be able to go as a family and just be able to treasure the memories, which will be that much more important to you because of the family connections that you have in that very sacred place. What an experience you are about to have.

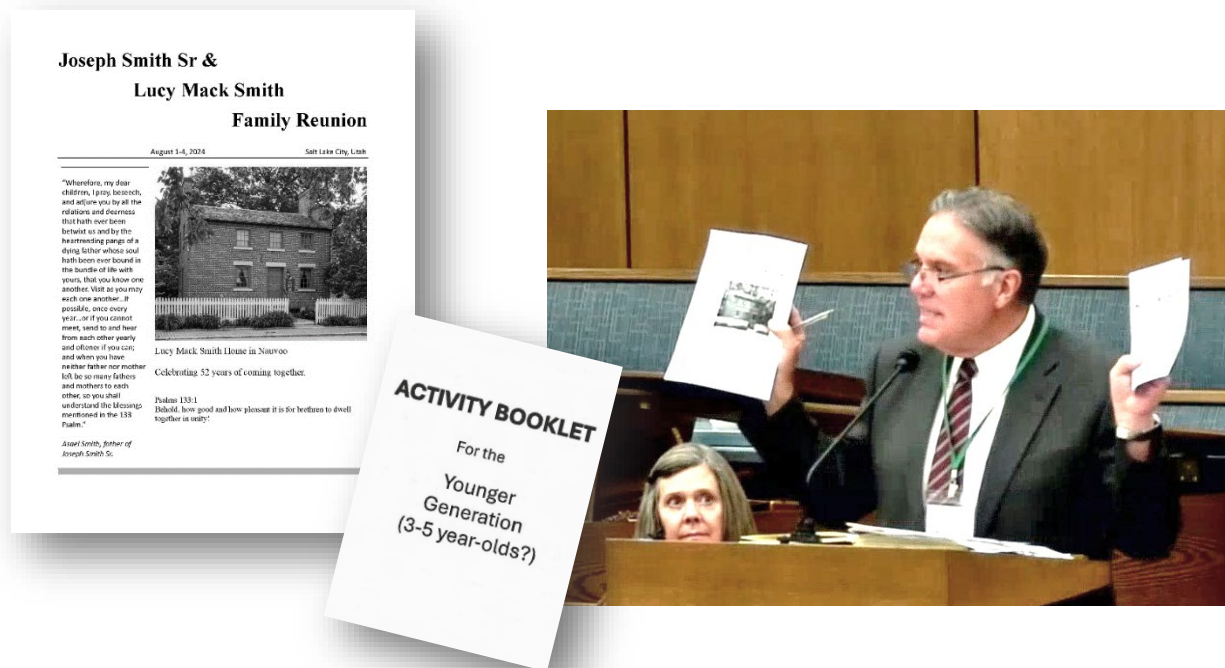
I was so excited when Brother Adams stood up here and talked about the scholarship. That's beautiful. My name is now Brad Wilcox Smith, and I'm going to apply next year. What a great service that is for you to do for the young people in your family and community to be able to give them an opportunity to have a little help with their education. I think that is something that the Smith family would definitely have been in favor of because they were so pro-education, even though it was so difficult.

Do you realize that Joseph Smith is known for something? Along with being a prophet, something we acknowledge him as, he is known in the country as the father of adult education programs in the United States. I don't know if you knew that, but I have seen education textbooks that list Joseph Smith Jr. as the father of adult education in our country.

Why?

Because they cannot find a school earlier than the school of the Prophets in Kirtland, that was for grown-ups. It wasn't just for children. It wasn't just for teenagers. It was for grown-ups, both men and women, who participated in the preparation that was available through the School of the Prophets, and because of that school in Kirtland, Ohio. They list him as the founder of adult education in our country. So yes, your family has much to be proud of and much to celebrate. And the fact that you're giving scholarships to some of his descendants and others is a beautiful reminder of a family that was very dedicated to education and lifelong education.

I was so happy to hear that you're reaching out to youth. They even showed me these little activity packets that they'd prepared for the youth so that they could stay busy during my talk. (Brad held up these booklets.)



The problem is I see more adults using these right now than I see youth using these. But whatever it takes people, whatever it takes to keep you awake, I'm all for it.

If we need more jokes, we'll get them right here.

Thank you for the music by David Hyrum Smith. What a beautiful hymn and I just love being here and being part of this. Thank you very much for the invitation to come.

My son, like Craig Ballard, served his mission in Japan, and I had served both my missions as a young man and as a mission president in Chile, where there's a strong Catholic background. And so, I knew how to teach people who were Catholics about the restoration. But I was very sincerely curious as I asked my son how on earth do you teach people in Japan who have no Christian background?

I mean, they don't celebrate Easter. They don't celebrate Christmas. They don't know the Bible stories.

How on earth do you teach them about a restoration of the gospel? How do you teach them about Jesus Christ? My son said, "It's easy, you just teach them about the Book of Mormon. When they read the Book of Mormon, then they find out that Joseph Smith was a prophet. When they know that Joseph Smith was a prophet, then they believe whatever being it was, who happened to come to Joseph Smith. And we know that being was Jesus Christ.

Wow, how strange that was to my ears.

I'm used to young people telling me, well, I believe in Jesus Christ, but don't talk to me about Joseph Smith. I believe in Jesus Christ, but I don't believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet. There are people in Japan who believe in Jesus Christ, not despite Joseph Smith, but literally because of Joseph Smith. I think in my own life, I've had a similar awakening in that I've realized, especially as I get older, that the things I love most dearly about my Savior, the things I know about Jesus Christ that mean the most to me, are all things that were revealed to Joseph Smith, things that were taught by Joseph Smith. I love Joseph Smith because he has helped me love my Savior at a completely deeper and more profound level.

Now, as Craig told you, we work with FSY. The young women's presidency in the young men's presidency are the ones who are over that program. What started as EFY at BYU. Young people had to pay \$500.00 to go to. Now FSY, for the strength of youth, with the church subsidizing it, now young people can go for an entire week, and it costs them \$75.00. And for those that can't afford that, the ward pitches in and pays for it.

This summer alone, we had close to 130,000 teenagers who participated in that program just in North America, but thousands and thousands more all over the world. They had the first FSY in Guam this summer. They didn't just bring the youth from Guam together; they brought all the youth from the outside islands. For many of these young people, this was the first time they had flown in an airplane to arrive in Guam for the FSY. For many young people, it was their first time sleeping in a bed. For many young people, it was the first time they had seen electricity. Oh yes, FSY showed them that they were not alone.

FSY showed them that they had other members of the church who shared their same standards. They were able to bond with other youth and with counselors who were just enough older than them to be heroes and role models for them. They were able to show them that they could have fun and live the gospel at the same time.

But look at what's happening as those young people's minds are being expanded. They're realizing that there's a world out there that has electricity, a world where they can gain an education, a world where people sleep in beds and fly in airplanes.

Think of what that will mean to their futures, and it's just remarkable to see what the church is doing all over the world as we bring these young people together to have that FSY experience.

I'm just returning from one of my assignments this summer, an FSY in Ottawa, Canada. That's French-speaking Canada. Then, to an FSY in Vermont.

And so there I was. I was in Ottawa, Canada. The whole thing was being held in French. They were translating it into English. Then I found out a whole group of young people there spoke Spanish and didn't speak English or French. Then, there was a whole group of kids that spoke Chinese. I felt like I was

at the United Nations. Here, these young people came together, and those language differences didn't stop them at all. It kept the rest of them busy trying to translate from one thing to another to another.

When I was speaking, it was an English being translated into French. When I was not speaking, I was translating English into Spanish, and I couldn't help the poor Chinese speakers. I just gave him a lot of hugs, but it was remarkable to see all these young people coming together and to see the difference that that's making in their testimonies and in their lives.

Later in the week, I went down to Castleton, Vermont, on the campus of Vermont State University, where we had another FSJ. I found out that I was really close to a little place called Sharon. Does that ring any bells for you?

I left after that conference and before I had to go catch my plane. I hurried down to Sharon so that I could see the birthplace. I had been there once before. I can't remember whether it was as a child on a family vacation. I know we went to Palmyra, but it can't remember whether I was a child there at Sharon or whether I was a young speaker at a youth conference that was being held back there and they took us to Sharon, Vermont. I don't remember which one was my first encounter with Sharon, but what a spirit there is there.

You drive up that hill to where that little cabin had been. You see the beautiful granite shaft that weighs 100 tons. They dragged it up that mountain to be placed at the very birthplace, and they did it on wagons that were being pulled by horses and oxen. To put that pillar up for a 1908, 100-year celebration. The pillar was dedicated by Joseph F Smith, who was the son of Hiram.

How moving for him to be able to be there to be able to dedicate that monument a foot for every year of Joseph's life, including the fraction of the foot that was until his martyrdom.

It was moving for me to be there to listen to the missionaries as they taught me about the Smith family. I was so moved to see the foundation stones that were still there for the little one room cabin where the Smith family was living, and they were renting from Solomon Mack. This little cabin, and that's where Joseph Smith took his first breath. He was born on December 23rd.

I was born on December 25th, so I've always felt a little closeness to Jesus and a little closeness to Joseph because of those December birthdays. But imagine how cold it was. Imagine the snow that surrounded that cabin, and imagine the happiness in that home as this new young family greeted the newest arrival.

Joseph, named for his father, Joseph Jr., named for his father, Joseph Sr., then the missionary said, "Come with me. Come with me. I'm going to take you on a little walk." We walked where many of you have walked down to the Solomon Mack foundation of that cabin. It was a little bigger, and we got to see the foundation stones where Solomon and Lydia had a home.

Now, why did they even have Land? How is he able to even own that property? You have to remember that Solomon was born into a family that was so poor that he was sent away as an indentured servant when he was just a young child. He grew up serving.

He grew up as a servant, earning his room and board by serving this family well. He also fought in the French Indian War and the Revolutionary War. As part of his reimbursement for his service in the military, he was given some land, and that's why they had land there.

And so they were able to help Joseph, Sr and Lucy as they were getting started with their family.

Now, it was later because of several frozen winters right in a row. They needed to move because of the crop failures, and that's what took them to New York. That's what took them to Palmyra, but we see in those crop failures the hand of God because they needed to be in Palmyra, they needed to be there before I taught it.

When I taught 6th grade, one time we were celebrating Columbus Day, and I wanted to help the kids think a little deeper about the whole Columbus experience. So, I asked a lot of what if questions?

What if Columbus hadn't made it?

What if he had not returned to Europe?

What if Columbus had landed in California?

How would our lives be different?

I mean, I was asking all kinds of what if questions to these little 6th graders. And I said, what if he had landed in California? Some girl says. "couldn't have happened?"

I said, well, I know it couldn't have happened, but what if it happened?

She says, "it couldn't have happened."

I said, yeah, but let's just say that the ship went clear down around South America, came up and landed in California. Where would our national capital be?

"It couldn't have happened."

So finally, I said. "OK, why? Why couldn't it have happened?"

She says, "Cause the plates were in New York, and if Columbus had landed in California, Joseph Smith wouldn't have even been close to the plates. And how could we have gotten the Book of Mormon?"

I said I wanted them to think deeper, and they did.

Now is when I tell you that I taught in Provo, UT.

Isn't that fascinating that even a little sixth-grade girl could figure out that Joseph had to be in Palmyra and that meant there had to be some crop failures and some hard winters in Vermont to get them there?

Lydia Gates Mack, who was Solomon's wife, Lucy's mother. She is the one that historian's credit for starting the pattern of Family Scripture study and family prayer. Isn't it interesting that some professors at BYU just did the very first study that's been done on how youth temple attendance has increased. What is motivating youth to attend the temple? The very first study, and it has a lot to do with scripture study and family prayer. Lydia Gates Mac didn't realize for two seconds that what she was starting was a pattern that would not only bless her family.

Where would Lucy have been without Lydia's pattern?

Where would Joseph have been without Lucy's pattern?

But she was starting something that would bless an entire world full of Latter-Day Saints whose children are filling the temples. Oh, it's so cute to hear President Nelson answer questions about the temples. People ask him why are you building so many temples? He says because the youth are filling them.

And then they say, where are you building your next temple? He says, "In your backyard." I think he would build one in everybody's backyard if he could get more of us to go and worship in the temple. But isn't it beautiful that these youth who are filling the temple, the youth who are motivated to go to the temple according to the study by a pattern of family scripture study and family prayer? Isn't it interesting that that was started by Lydia?

I hope that she gets to see the fruits of her laborers. I hope she feels very validated for every time one of her kids, said Mom, "This is so boring." Or just hitting each other the whole time she was trying to say a prayer. That's what my brothers and I used to do under the dining room table.

I hope she feels validated, and I hope she realizes that what she started clear back in Sharon, Vermont has made a difference. A huge difference. She said goodbye to Lucy in Sharon.

Lydia died in 1817.

She had to say goodbye to Lucy because they (Joseph Sr. and Lucy) were moving to New York and it was a goodbye because in those days it wasn't an I'll see you on FaceTime. It wasn't we'll write letters. It was a goodbye. And isn't it interesting that with all the faith she could muster, she told her daughter? We will meet again in the next life.

She's not the only one who had faith, because Solomon also lived with faith and integrity. I found it interesting when the missionaries told me that Solomon left to go fight in the wars. He then came back and had a grant to get some land because of his service in the war, but he still went back to the family in which he had been reared, and he finished the next few years to complete his servitude to complete the commitment that his parents had made. That tells you something of the integrity of Solomon Mack. That integrity was surely passed to the Smith family as well.

Well, it's a remarkable thing that as we learn more about the Smith family, there's just more and more for us to respect and more and more for us to admire.

Now I want to jump a few generations forward and I want to talk a little bit about somebody that loved this family reunion deeply and that is Elder Ballard. I'm sure he is missing the chance to be here. Perhaps in God's graciousness, he is actually being allowed to attend a few of the activities here. If you felt close to him, perhaps it's not by chance and perhaps it's not wishful thinking. Perhaps he has been here because he loved these reunions, and he was very devoted to keeping this family organization strong.

I want to share just a few personal memories. If you want more, we could have Craig come up and share because he has a lifetime of memories to share.

My first interaction with Elder Ballard was when I was a young missionary in Chile, and he was a member of the Seventy who had been sent to Chile to divide a Stake that was in my mission. He formed the Vije LaManna Stake and the Quijote Stake. He divided this stake where I was serving as a young missionary.

So throughout the weekend, as we had the state conference activities, he watched me. I watched him. We interacted together as we helped make that stake conference a success and the division of that stake a reality.

Those were some of my first memories of Elder Ballard. I remember him because he was so down to Earth. I just was so impressed with him. He just felt like he was my dad.

Yeah. I just felt like he was just part of my family because he made me feel so welcome and included. I remember him pulling me aside and saying Elder Wilcox. Your mission president has made a request, and I have denied it, he said. Your mission president wants to extend your mission for another five years.

And he says, I told him he can't even extend it by one month. I think my mission president was trying to strike a deal, you know, start with five years and settle for a month.

Elder Ballard said, "No, we're not going to grant that."

But he said to me, I hope you realize that's a high honor your mission president would want you to stay. I hope you realize the trust that he has in you.

Now, he didn't have to pull a young missionary aside. He didn't have to say something to build me up and lift me up. And yet he did. I think, because of that I was always just fascinated to follow him, follow his comings and goings as the Seventy and then as an apostle. I remember I always sat up a little straighter when he talked because I felt that personal connection with him.

How many of you did the same thing? Look at those hands. Because of that personal connection, we listened a little better. We listened a little closer.

I'll never forget his last conference talk because I was sitting on the stand, and I was watching the teleprompters and the only thing on the teleprompters was a big countdown clock. Big because that's about all he could see at that point. As he stood, he bore the most beautiful testimony of Joseph of Hyrum. He bore testimony of the restoration, and it all came from his heart.

People listening even now as they replay the talk, say there is no way that he did that without reading it. And yet he did. He stood up and from his heart he bore such a powerful testimony. I was so touched by his testimony because it wasn't on the teleprompter. It came straight from here and he finished with two seconds to spare.

Perfect timing.

A perfect discourse. All from a man who couldn't see the teleprompter.

I have wonderful memories of him. When I was a mission president, he and your mom came to Chile, and it was on one of their anniversaries. They even prepared a cake for them, and we sang, Happy anniversary.

Your mom said (looking back at Craig), "We don't usually have very many anniversaries at home. Thank you for remembering our anniversary." It was so wonderful to be with them.

One of his books, *Our Search for Happiness* had been translated into Spanish. I bought enough copies to be able to give one to each of the stake presidents in my mission. I thought it would be so nice if Elder Ballard would sign them. I asked the member of the area Presidency; do you think it would be OK if I asked Elder Ballard?

He said, "Absolutely not. Don't you dare. Don't you dare bother him with something like that."

Well, I dared.

And when the area Presidency member wasn't looking, I went up and I said, "Elder Ballard, I don't mean to bother you, but would you mind signing these books for the stake presidents in my mission."

He said, "Oh, I would be so honored. I would love to do that."

And so? He asked their names, and he signed books for them. He said to me, like it was a secret. "This book has been a pretty good little missionary."

That's what he said.

He said, "This book has been pretty good little missionary."

This book had been read all over the world and has been loved by missionaries who read it wherever they served. Yeah, it was a pretty good little missionary just like him. He was a good missionary.

I remember a dinner at our table, and I was sitting there with him, he said, "You know, I'm just really frustrated with these mission presidents." He said, "Here we have these wonderful people who are serving us, and nobody's offered them a copy of the Book of Mormon. Nobody's talked to them about the gospel. How can we expect our missionaries to talk to people about the gospel if they're mission presidents aren't even talking to people about the gospel? Why aren't they talking to them about the gospel? My wife hit my knee and said, 'Tell him.'" So, I said, "Elder Ballard. I have talked to them about the gospel. As they were setting up for this meal, I came in. That's Jose, and that's Maria." (I didn't memorize their names. Everybody's name, Jose and Maria.) But I did know some of their names and I said, "Elder Ballard, that was this person, and that's this person." I said, "I offered them a Book of Mormon. But they said what they'd really like to have, is a picture of you, because I told them that you are an apostle, just like Peter, James, and John."

He said, "Let's take that picture." Then he said, "You put it in a copy of the Book of Mormon." So, we did. We arranged for that picture.

(Turning to Craig) Brad asked, "Did you ever know this?"

We arranged for that picture, and I got copies of it, and we put it in the copies of the Book of Mormon. And I had all their addresses, and we got a copy of the Book of Mormon to them.

But I just am so amazed at how remarkable he was and how bold he was in sharing the gospel. He was so proud of me for having opened my mouth to talk to these people who were serving us. It just made me so happy to be able to tell him that I had done that. And it made me happy because it meant so much to him.

He never lost that missionary zeal from the time he was a missionary to the time he was a mission president. Craig, how old were you? Four years old when he was on a mission with his family. Four years old, and he'd never lost it in one of the last area committee meetings?

Those are the meetings that the 12 have on Wednesday. They have a meeting with the area presidencies and the area presidencies bring them up to speed with what's going on in their area. Not just what's happening with the church, but what's happening politically, what's happening with different countries and what some of the needs are as far as humanitarian aid. I mean, the area presidencies are able to talk to the 12 in this area committee meeting and it's on Wednesday mornings and he was the President of the Quorum of the 12 at the time. So, he would be in charge of those meetings.

At one of the meetings, they had a very famous professor from Harvard here. His name is Arthur Brooks. He is the one who has done so much research on happiness and what makes people happy. He synthesized all the research that's been done, and because of that, he's considered one of the world experts on happiness. Well, he was coming to teach at BYU for a devotional.

Elder Ballard asked if he would stay an extra day and come and speak to the Quorum of the Twelve. Elder Ballard was fascinated because the research that this man had done identified four pillars essential for happiness. One was family, one was friends, one was fulfillment. Now living for something bigger than yourself and one was faith.

A Harvard professor talking about faith? Yes, and talking so loudly and so convincingly about it that not only are his classes packed, but he keeps getting invited to be on all the talk shows because everyone is fascinated that here he is talking about faith.

He is the one, the first one that says that the increase in emotional health and mental health problems is happening at the same time as the decrease in religiosity and faith in our country. He is the professor that talks about how one is causing the other. It's our decrease in faith. It's our decrease in religiosity is actually spirit is causing this increase in the depression and anxiety and emotional health issues that are just skyrocketing, especially among our youth and our young adults.

Well, Elder Ballard said, "Would you come and talk to the Twelve about this?"

So, he did. He came and talked to them. Considering his audience, Arthur Brooks talked about happiness. He talked and quoted a scripture from the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 2:25: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy."

Well, he quoted it, even put it in his PowerPoint with the scripture reference. After his presentation was over, Elder Ballard said to him in front of the Twelve and all the general authorities and general officers who had been invited because they wanted us to be aware of this information as well.

Elder Ballard says to Arthur Brooks, best-selling author, Harvard professor, I was fascinated that you quoted the Book of Mormon, he said. "Have you read it?"

The Harvard professor said, "Well, I have to admit that I haven't. But I have a colleague that told me about this scripture, so I wanted to include it in my presentation."

And Elder Ballard said, "It's just the tip of the iceberg. If you think that scripture is good, you have to read the rest of the book. You really ought to read the rest of the book."

He's challenging him to read the Book of Mormon in front of everybody there. Well, they had more questions. When they were finally concluding the meeting, Elder Ballard said. "Mr. Brooks, I'm very impressed with you. You'd be a good member of the church. We could really use you in the church. I hope you'll consider joining this church." He said that right in the meeting, I was just like, go Elder Ballard. Yeah.

He was so bold, and I just have to believe that maybe in Elder Ballard we saw just a little bit of the boldness of Hyrum, the boldness of Joseph, who stood up even to enemies and testified of truth. I am so grateful for Elder Ballard.

I went to his funeral. As Craig spoke at the funeral, some of you were probably there. We were invited to go to the graveside service at the cemetery right up the street. We got there and I looked at family members who had gathered around to say this final goodbye. There were three teenage boys - I have an interest in teenage boys right now because of my call. I just love to be able to be with the young people and to be with the youth and I saw these boys and they seemed very sad. They were grieving. They were choking back some tears as a song was being sung.

Remember when Gentry sang, and they were kind of getting teary? Like most teenage boys, they were a little embarrassed about being teary. Something said to me, you need to go up. You need to just go put your arms around those boys. And so, Steve Lund and I were there together and we went up and we just kind of put our arms around those boys as they were struggling a little bit after the graveside service was over.

Then we sat and visited with these boys for a minute and got a picture together. I said to Steve Lund, "I'm glad we did that because that's what Elder Ballard would have done. We did what he would have done."

Earlier in July, I got this letter in the mail. It said, "On the day of my great grandfather's funeral. You approached me and my twin brother." (I just met triplets. What is it with The Smiths? Come on.)

He went on to say, "You approached me and my twin brother and my younger brother. You spoke to us, and you comforted us in our time of grieving. You came and offered words of kindness. You didn't have to come talk to us, but you did. It meant more to us than you'll know."

And what was I remembering as I read this letter? A young member of the Seventy who came up to a missionary in Chile and said, "Let me tell you something, your mission president told me." That meant more to me than he'll ever know.

Well then, this boy tells me that, "He is now going to the Rio de Janeiro, South Brazil mission. His twin brother is going to be serving in the South Paulo Porto Alegre Mission in Brazil, and there was even a note from his little brother who said I'm now 12 and I am a Deacon, and I get to pass the sacrament and do baptisms in the temple."

Where are they?



Alina and Matthew Ballard, parents of the boy who wrote the letter

You're the ones, those kids just wrote to me. Oh my gosh, it brought me to tears. They even sent pictures. (Then he held the pictures up.)



Brad continued, "Mom, you had to be behind this. I'm so grateful you did it. There's the little Deacon and there's the missionaries. And all I was doing was what Elder Ballard would have done. All I was doing was what I learned from him."

One last thing I'd like to share before I conclude, and this was from the church news. They're talking about a fireside that was done in France with Bishop Causse and with Peter Vidmar, who serves on the Young Men Advisory Council with Craig and with Fredette, who's over there as an Olympic athlete.

Listen to what the church news reports Fradette is among the thousands of athletes competing in Paris. He's participating in men's 3 on 3 basketball or three on three.

Yeah.

Basketball.

Yeah, I'd be basketball.

And glad he's not playing rugby or something. Here it says during the devotional he spoke about entering the NBA after his BYU team reached the NCAA Sweet 16 and he was recognized as the collegiate National Player of the Year. He had a lot of media attention, but after getting drafted and moving to Sacramento, CA, things didn't go as he planned. All of a sudden, he said. "I was not playing nearly as much or nearly as well as I was at BYU. I wasn't playing at all. I wasn't getting much media attention," he said. "For the first time in my career, I wasn't getting minutes in every game. I felt alone and depressed."

Then one day, halfway through the season, I got a phone call from President M. Russell Ballard, then acting president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who had previously met Fredette when he had played it, BYU.

As they talked Fredette listed his problems. President Ballard listened. Then President Ballard asked Jimmer. "Jimmer, are you reading the Book of Mormon Daily? I guarantee if you do that, it'll change your life." Fredette took President Ballard at his word. He's telling the youth now in France. "My basketball situation didn't change immediately. I still was very alone, but everything changed in my life because I had a different perspective. I was focusing on the right things which made everything better. I became a much happier person. I know that President Ballard was inspired to reach out to me that day for some reason."

He knew that he needed to. It was an amazing experience. That's the legacy. That's the legacy of Joseph Smith Sr and Lucy Mack Smith. That's the legacy of Joseph and Hyrum and all their siblings reaching out to others. That is the legacy of President M Russell Ballard.

That is how he touched my life that that is how he touched Jimmer's life. That is how he touched so many lives, not just by the great accomplishments that he had as a church leader, not just because of the incredible talks and testimony, but because of the private one. One-on-one phone calls. He made private one-on-one connections with a missionary in Chile. Who then was able to pay that back in a very small way by hugging a few of his great-grandchildren?

I bear testimony that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored by men whose blood flows in your veins. I bear testimony that there are many in non-Christian countries and in Christian countries alike, who believe in Jesus Christ because of Joseph Smith. I bear testimony that M Russell Ballard was a prophet, a seer of Revelator. I bear testimony of his influence and his example in my life, and I say this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Steve Orton stood and offered a thank you.



Steve Orton had to tease Brad a little. He said, "I just want to say, he speaks Spanish. I want to test him on this - as Como means - how and frijole - beans. Como frijole is, 'How you been?'"

Brad responded: "Yeah. How you been? That's right."

Brad pointed out, "You have to give me the right context there."

Steve, "And how do you respond to that question? Say, 'Muy Bean.'" Steve also said, "I'm sorry."

Frances pointed out, "OK, everybody. If you want to know if he's always like this, he is."