



OMAHA NEBRASKA STAKE

NEWSLETTER

December 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE STAKE PRESIDENCY

It was December in 1943, and the world was engulfed in World War II. All were concerned for loved ones on distant shores, and concerns at home were compounded by money and food shortages.

With family resources carefully guarded, it was astounding to my father, Harold Hillam, then a nine year old boy, to receive a miraculous Christmas gift: a train set. This is not any old train. This train moved along the tracks all by itself. No pushing required. It seemed impossible for such a marvelous gift to be a reality. Oh, how Harold treasured that train.

A few years later, as Christmas approached, the world was emerging from war. Yet economic conditions in little St. Anthony, Idaho, had not improved. And for my father's family, they had actually worsened. Harold's father had been gravely ill, almost losing his life. There would be no gifts for anyone that Christmas, including Harold and his younger brother, Arnold.

A few days before Christmas, Harold's father came to him and quietly asked, "Harold, would you, would you be willing to give your train to Arnold so he can have a Christmas present this year?" Had he heard his father correctly? His treasured train? This was the request of all requests.

Christmas morning arrived, and Arnold squealed with delight as he received a train just like Harold's. Arnold soon noticed that Harold didn't play with his train anymore. Eventually, Arnold realized his treasured gift was not just like Harold's train. It was Harold's train. When Arnold understood the significance behind the gift, that train became priceless. (Story told by President Bonnie H. Cordon, 2022 First Presidency Devotional.)

The tradition of gift giving is intended to point us to the story of our Savior's birth. We have read the account of the wise men presenting their gifts to Jesus of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. More importantly we remember during this season that the greatest gift of all from our Heavenly Father is His gift to us of His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world! We rejoice in commemorating His condescension among the children of men, and we feel immense gratitude that His love and light shine down on us!

This season **we invite** all stake members to reflect on the gift of the Son of God, and then join in the effort to share His light with those around us. The opportunities to do so are many. The Giving Machines are a fun way to help others in need. Providing service is a powerful way to feel, and to help others feel, the love of our Savior. Spending quality time with friends and family will increase our joy.

We pray this Christmas season that you will feel our Savior's infinite love for you, and that His greatest blessings will attend you.

Omaha Nebraska Stake Presidency
Paul D. McAllister
Barry W. Webber
Danny C. Leavitt

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DECEMBER



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 FIRST PRESIDENCY DEVOTIONAL 7 PM ONLINE	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 STAKE PRIESTHOOD MEETING 4-5 PM STAKE CENTER STAKE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 6-7 PM STAKE CENTER	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 GIFTS OF PIONEER DISCIPLES MORMON TRAIL CENTER 2-5PM	23	24	25	26	27	28 ONS STAKE YOUTH ACTIVITY (14+) SEE PAGE 5
GIVING MACHINES @ WESTROADS MALL						
29	30	31				
<div> WEEKLY MISSION AND TEMPLE PREPARATION CLASSES FOR YOUTH STAKE CENTER 4PM </div>						

GIVING MACHINES

December 20 - 31 @ Westroads Mall

LOWER LEVEL NEAR VAN MAUR IN THE FORMER PANERA BREAD SPACE

GIVING MACHINE EVENTS

December 20

2-4 pm Cookie Decorating
Evening: Ornament Making

December 21

Morning: Storytime

December 22

Morning: Storytime
Evening: Games & Popcorn Bar

December 23

Morning: Storytime

December 24

Evening: The Night Before Christmas
with a hot chocolate bar & candy canes

December 25: MALL CLOSED

December 26

Morning: Storytime
Evening: Be a Hero event (Dress up like
a superhero)

December 27

Morning: Storytime
Evening: BYU Alumni Night

December 28

Morning: Storytime
Evening: **Creighton Basketball Night**

December 29

Morning: Storytime
Evening: Games & Popcorn Bar

December 30

Morning: Storytime

December 31

Morning: Storytime
Afternoon: ONS Stake Musical
Performances

LOOKING FOR MUSICIANS & PERFORMERS WILLING TO SHARE THEIR TALENTS AT THE GIVING MACHINES

We are looking for individuals, families, or friends who are willing to share a musical or dance performance near the Giving Machines on **December 31st between 4 pm and 5:30 pm.** Performances should last approximately 10 to 15 minutes, and performers must bring all necessary materials (instruments, music, etc.). If you are interested, please contact Nancy Checketts to schedule your time slot!

WANT TO BE IN THE LOOP ABOUT THE GIVING MACHINES?

Join the Ambassador email list! The latest news and updates on events will come through the Ambassador email list. **We have some great things coming with Creighton University and their basketball team, and when we have final details, this email list will be the first to know.** Please sign up here to get on this list.
<https://givingmachineomaha.org/ambassador-program/>

WANT A POSTER TO DISPLAY AT YOUR WORKPLACE?

Email Brooke Perkes at
bperkes@comm.churchofjesuschrist.org to
request posters to display at your business or
workplace.



You are invited to a **Light The World** Christmas PROGRAM

15 December | at 6 to 7 PM
LDS Stake Center
14680 California St

Christmas carols & cookies for friends & families!
Come with Cookies to Share!

CONTACT MARK PORTER FOR QUESTIONS



JOIN US FOR

GIFTS OF PIONEER
Disciples

SUNDAY **22** 2-5 PM
DEC

OPEN HOUSE
MORMON TRAIL CENTER
3215 STATE ST

ALL NEW STORIES, LIVE CHRISTMAS
MUSIC, GOODIES, AND CRAFTS!

Free Entry

Omaha Stake Youth Activity for Ages 14+

Saturday, December 28th

5:00-7:00 pm @ Omaha Stake Center

Service Project

Breakfast for Dinner

Gift Exchange

New or Loved (something from around the house) item under \$10

**OMAHA STAKE YOUTH ACTIVITY
FOR ALL YOUTH**

**WORLD WIDE EVENT FOR YOUTH
SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH
3:00-5:00PM
OMAHA STAKE CENTER**

YOUTH CAMPS *SUMMER 2025*

For the Strength of Youth (FSY) Summer 2025

- (For Youth turning 14+)
- 1st Session: Lincoln June 16-21
- 2nd Session: Lincoln June 23-28
- *Pre-registration begins October 22 - January 14*

Stake YM Summer Camp 2025

- May 28 - 31 at Camp Eagle

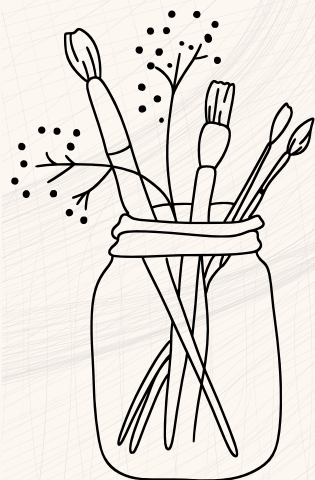
Stake YW Summer Camp 2025

- June 3 - 7, 2025
- June 3 YCL's only
- June 4 - 7 All YW

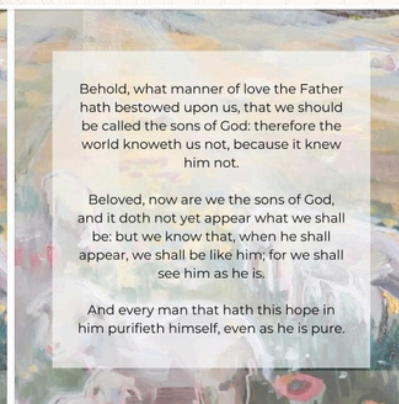


Thank you to all who participated in our stake's cultural celebration night with the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (CIRA)! We enjoyed wonderful food samples by House of Bah and beautiful performances by immigrants from our community. Please consider supporting CIRA this Christmas at the **Giving Machines** as they have been tasked with welcoming and re-homing over 300 refugees to our community this season!

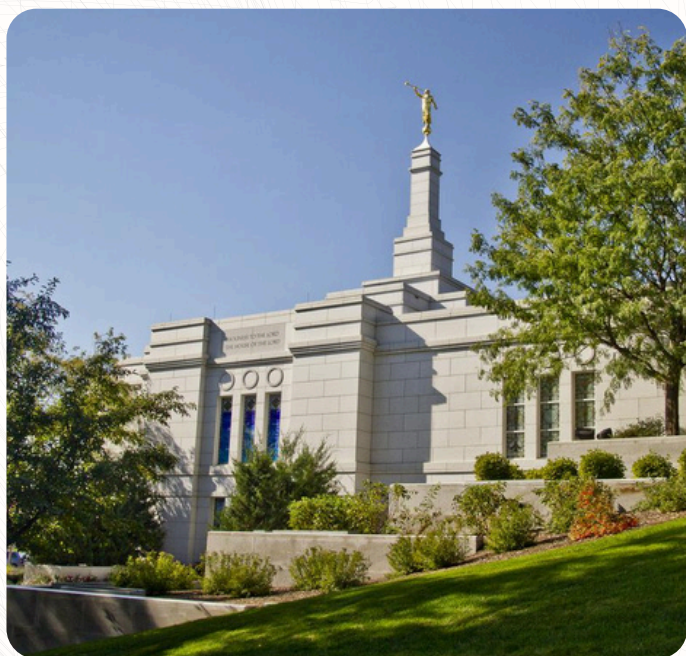
LOOKING AHEAD: CALL FOR ARTISTS



Those interested in submitting work for the Easter Art Show can learn more by clicking [here](#). This year's art show theme is *We Shall See Him as He Is*.



MONTHLY MESSAGE



As we enter the month of December, we have the opportunity to start or return to a tradition of Lighting the World in special ways during the Christmas season. As we consider how we might let our lights shine, I invite you to reflect on these invitations from President Russell M. Nelson:

- “Make a weekly sacrifice of time to the Lord.” ([Hope of Israel](#), June 2018)
- “Spend more time in the temple and in family history work.” ([Choices for Eternity](#), May 2022)
- “Focus on the temple in ways you never have before.” ([Focus on the Temple](#), October 2022)

On the [Light the World](#) site, there are numerous ideas – small and simple things – for sharing light. You may prefer to use a list, a calendar, or use the online Kindness Randomizer to generate ideas. However you choose to engage in lighting the world, I invite you to consider ways that you can strengthen family relationships and share your love and

His light through temple and family history work. The following are just a few ideas, with some parenthetical notes on family application:

- Tell a loved one they matter to you.
- Learn to say “Merry Christmas” in a new language. (Learn to say “Merry Christmas” in the language of your ancestors.)
- Text a photo of a fond memory to a family member.
- Learn how another culture celebrates Christmas. (Learn of and share your ancestral culture with family.)
- Help someone research their family genealogy.
- Take a family member or a family name to the temple.

As we go to the temple this season, with joy, with gratitude, and with reverence, we may – as the wise men of old – “come into the house...and [worship] him” (Matthew 2:11).

- Creighton Omer

FAMILY SEARCH CENTER HOURS

Open every Tuesday noon-2pm and 7pm-9pm,
or by special appointment

(402) 252-5131
Stake Center

Get free help from a Familysearch consultant,
or bring a friend!

TEMPLE RECOMMEND STAKE INTERVIEWS

[David Robles](#)

(801) 971-5194

Old Mill, Pacific Ridges, Eagle Run & YSA Wards

[Matthew Nielsen](#)

(719) 464 - 8456

Bennington, Blair, Columbus, Elkhorn
& Fremont Wards



SALVATION ARMY: WINTER NIGHT WATCH MEAL DELIVERY

Servers are needed to serve meals from The Salvation Army mobile canteen (TSA truck) on route that will distribute food to our neighbors in need. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



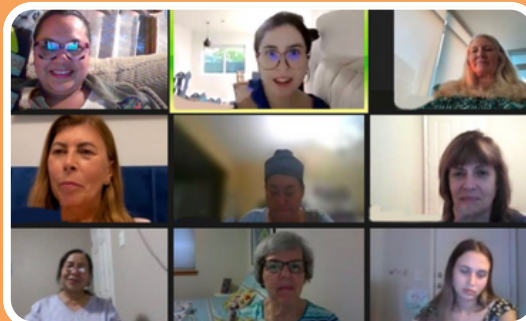
SA CHRISTMAS: TREE SORTING FOR ANGEL TREE

Join in spreading holiday cheer by volunteering at our Christmas Toy Shop! We need volunteers to help sort and inventory gifts being purchased and donated to The Salvation Army's annual Toyland. For volunteers ages 16+. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



LADIES LET'S TALK ENGLISH CONVERSATION SESSIONS FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

Support immigrant and refugee women by joining our online conversation sessions. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



CONGRATS TO MATT & ANDREW DECKER!

ONS members Matt & Andrew Decker were received the Ollie Webb's Volunteers of the Year award. They shared their love for music as they DJ'd Ollie Webb's dances.



MISSIONARY SERVING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Elder Hopkins plays the piano for the residents at Elkhorn Lifecare Center.

