

## John and Kim Bytheway/Scott and Angelle Anderson/Seth Christensen



### YOUTH PRESENTATION ROOTSTECH 2025

#### IT'S YOUR STORY!

#### YOUR DIVINE DESIGN

- You are invited to explore with us the story of you!

You are part of God's divine design to help prepare the world for the Second Coming of His Son, Jesus Christ. Your personal story is woven into the eternal story of all of God's children, and you have a vital role to play in gathering Israel right now!

You have the capability to connect the past, present, and future. As you learn more about your purpose and potential, the more confidence you will have in your journey. The more you serve your loved ones on both sides of the veil, the more protection you will have against the adversary, and the closer you will come to your family and to Jesus Christ. The more you use the tools, technology, and resources available all around you, the more fun and success you will have in doing family history, temple, and missionary work.

This is your moment - you were born to be a gatherer, and you've got this!

- "Enlist in the youth battalion of the Lord...There is nothing of greater consequence... Absolutely nothing. This gathering should mean everything to you. This is the mission for which you were sent to earth." President Russell M. Nelson [Hope of Israel](#)
- "Anytime we do anything that helps anyone — on either side of the veil — to make and keep their covenants with God, we are helping to gather Israel." President Russell M. Nelson, [Let God Prevail](#)
- Each of our stories is a journey still in progress, as we discover, create, and become with possibilities beyond imagination." Gerrit W. Gong, [We Each Have a Story](#)

#### YOU - YOU'RE THE ONE

- **You are among the ones** Nephi saw in vision (Ne 14:14)
- **you are the ones** spoken of by ancient prophets (Joel 2:28-32)
- **You are the ones** who are the stripling warriors of the last days Alma (53:20-21)
- **You are the ones** President Nelson said were saved to be a part of the Youth Battalion to gather Israel. "You are part of a divine plan to bring about salvation for the world and prepare for the glorious return of Jesus Christ...There is nothing of greater consequence... Absolutely nothing. This gathering should mean everything to you. This is the mission for which you were sent to earth." President Russell M. Nelson [Hope of Israel](#)
- **You are the ones** we want to applaud!

- “The youth of Zion today are a chosen generation. Before these young people in today's generation were born, they received their first lessons in the world of spirits. They were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in His vineyard for the salvation and souls of men.” [Pacific tour: President Nelson](#) see D/C 138:53

## DOCUMENTING YOUR STORY

- Every single one of you has a story, and your story is worth documenting and sharing. It is worth remembering.

If you don't yet have a FamilySearch account, see “Create an account” in the upper right corner of the FamilySearch home page. In FamilySearch Memories, you can document your story with photos, documents, and stories. Once you have the living people filled in on your part of the tree (starting with you), that's when exciting things can happen! So fill in what you can and then get some help filling in the first four generations - up to your great-grandparents and watch what happens! If anyone else has entered information about common ancestors - that information will appear on your tree!

On your phone, you can download the apps “Family Tree” and “Memories,” so you can add memories, do research, find temple names for proxy ordinance work, receive family information, and do all kinds of additional activities. See [Memories and Family Tree mobile app features • FamilySearch](#).

- So many of you know about documenting memories because you do it all the time - it's called social media. For those who participate - You are already record keepers - you are already doing family history by writing yours - one post or message at a time! And when you save your photos and social media screenshots to FamilySearch, they are saved forever!

With the [FamilySearch Memories Audio app](#) or the Record My Story feature on [FamilySearch Discovery](#), gathering, digitally recording, sharing, and preserving has never been easier. Read more in The Family History Guide [here](#). So grab your cell - go to the Memories app, and hit that plus button to add an audio message, a story, or a photo. That's family history on the go!

## BACK TO YOUR FUTURE

- Who knows what will mean the most to your posterity years down the road. What will they want to know about your story and what things were like for you when you were young? How will your stories inspire and bless them?  
“Your story should be written now while it is fresh and while the true details are available...the way you face up to challenges that beset you. Do not suppose life changes so much that your experiences will not be interesting to your posterity. Experiences of work, relations with people, and an awareness of the rightness and wrongness of actions will always be relevant. Your journal, like most others, will tell of problems as old as the world and how you dealt with them.”  
[Spencer W. Kimball Speaks Out on Personal Journals](#)
- What do you think about writing a message to your future spouse? What would it be like for a husband to read a message from the girl he married - a letter that she wrote to him before they ever met? What would it be like for a wife to read a note written by her husband to her when he was a teen?

- Knowing about what your ancestors wanted you to know about them will help you know what might be important to those who come after you! Record what you want your posterity (future family) to know about you.

## THEIR STORY IS YOUR BACKSTORY

- What did your ancestors want you to know about them? The story of your ancestors is your “backstory” and is part of your story. Their lives can bless you in amazing ways. Explore their journals, stories, to see what meant the most to them. It might take a bit of detective work but you’ve got this!

See [10 Ways To Discover, Gather, and Share Family History Stories](#)

- A great place to start learning more about your story is to start with your living relatives. Interview them to see what they remember about your common ancestors, and what they want you to know about their own story. Record your interviews both formal and informal.



[Why We Need Our Family Story Now More Than Ever](#)

- “In an article in the *New York Times* entitled, [The Stories That Bind Us](#), Bruce Feiler reported on research into children’s resiliency and their ability to deal with stress. Children who knew a lot about their families:
  - Tended to do better than other children when they faced challenges.
  - Proved to be more resilient and able to moderate the effects of stress.
  - Had a stronger sense of control over their lives.
  - Had higher self-esteem.
  - Believed that their family functioned successfully.
  - Felt that they belonged to something larger than themselves.

From family stories, children gain insights into how to deal with the situations they encounter in life. A family’s stories tend to support a “unifying narrative” or pattern. For example, family narratives might include: overcoming adversity, doing what’s right, and helping other people in times of need. The healthiest narratives reinforce the sense that family members persevered through many ups and downs as best they could with varying degrees of success.

- Tell stories to children whenever possible (at the dinner table, in the car, and so on). Tell all types of stories, from simple or humorous (our family’s worst vacation ever) to profound (my grandmother’s struggle with cancer).
  - Tells stories that reflect life’s ups and downs but result in a positive outcome over time and show the family’s ability to overcome difficulties. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
  - “Connecting with our ancestors can change our lives in surprising ways. From their trials and accomplishments, we gain faith and strength.<sup>16</sup> From their love and sacrifices, we learn to forgive and move forward. Our children become resilient. We gain protection and power. Ties with ancestors increase family closeness, gratitude, miracles. Such ties can bring help from the other side of the veil.” Gerrit W. Gong, [We Each Have a Story](#)
- Sample story from [John Bytheway](#)  
Two days before his eighteenth birthday, Jack Bytheway joined the United States Navy along with three friends from South High School in Salt Lake City, Utah. A little over a year later, Jack was at his battle station on an aircraft carrier northwest of Iwo Jima under attack by Kamikazes. He stayed at his post on an anti-aircraft gun and fought for his life, and the lives of his shipmates. Three of Jack’s shipmates also had Jack’s eternal life in mind. Jack was not a member of the church at the time, but his three friends were. When the announcement came for “Mormon

Church Services” in the library of the ship, Jack’s friends went to work, pulling him off his bunk and taking him to church. Jack said he didn’t understand most of what was going on, but it planted a seed. After the war, Jack decided to date some Latter-day Saint girls. The rest is history – or better said – family history



## HELPING OTHERS WITH TEMPLE WORK AND FAMILY HISTORY

- “Many of you may think family history work is to be performed primarily by older people. But I know of no age limit described in the scriptures or guidelines announced by Church leaders restricting this important service to mature adults. You are sons and daughters of God, children of the covenant, and builders of the kingdom. You need not wait until you reach an arbitrary age to fulfill your responsibility to assist in the work of salvation for the human family.

The Lord has made available in our day remarkable resources that enable you to learn about and love this work that is sparked by the Spirit of Elijah. For example, FamilySearch is a collection of records, resources, and services easily accessible with personal computers and a variety of handheld devices, designed to help people discover and document their family history. These resources also are available in the family history centers located in many of our Church buildings throughout the world.

“It is no coincidence that FamilySearch and other tools have come forth at a time when young people are so familiar with a wide range of information and communication technologies. Your fingers have been trained to text and tweet to accelerate and advance the work of the Lord—not just to communicate quickly with your friends. The skills and aptitude evident among many young people today are a preparation to contribute to the work of salvation.

I invite the young people of the Church to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. I encourage you to study, to search out your ancestors, and to prepare yourselves to perform proxy baptisms in the house of the Lord for *your* kindred dead (see [D&C 124:28–36](#)). And I urge you to help other people identify their family histories.

As you respond in faith to this invitation, your hearts shall turn to the fathers. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be implanted in your hearts. Your patriarchal blessing, with its declaration of lineage, will link you to these fathers and be more meaningful to you. Your love and gratitude for your ancestors will increase. Your testimony of and conversion to the Savior will become deep and abiding. And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary. As you participate in and love this holy work, you will be safeguarded in your youth and throughout your lives.” David A. Bednar [The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn](#)

- And I have this one admonition: Do not underestimate the capacity of these young men and these young women...They need to be anxiously engaged in this work right now. And they will help identify things to do, ways of accomplishing this work, that will majestically move this work all over the earth. Please do not underestimate what those Aaronic Priesthood quorums and those Young Women classes can accomplish.” David A. Bednar [2020 Temple and Family History Leadership Instruction](#) (Watch [here](#)).
- “On behalf of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, we have confidence in you. You are the Lord’s battalion...We know, we witness, we testify that you will contribute to helping great things happen in this work all over the earth. We expect you to surprise the adults. We expect you



to seek inspiration and revelation in your youth.” David A. Bednar, [2020 Temple and Family History Leadership Instruction](#)

- “And they’re not planning activities in Aaronic Priesthood quorums and in the Young Women classes to take up time, to fill a checkbox because we’re supposed to do this every week, or because we want to entertain people. You focus on the work of salvation, learning and living the gospel, sharing the gospel, uniting families, and helping the poor and the needy. Period, exclamation point, end of sentence—that’s it. This is really simple” David A. Bednar, [2020 Temple and Family History Leadership Instruction](#)
- See [You've Got This! Tried and Tested Ideas for Ward Temple and Family History Success](#)
- A fun idea for wards is to plan activities and events to help older seniors to share and record stories. These can be planned as ward activities, YM and YW combined activities, primary activities, Relief Society or Elders Quorum activities, or special events.
  - The Bluffdale 2nd ward planned a special “1950s” evening to honor the older seniors with a dinner, share their memories on a timeline, and then divide into rooms at the church building to record stories from their lives.

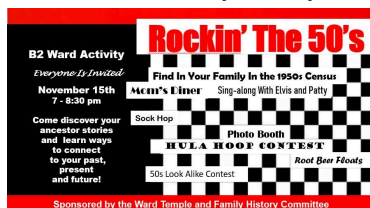


- “Fast friendship” is a great way to get to know ward members and their stories. The youth rotate places and ask the Seniors a question about their lives. It works well to schedule an appointment to have a couple of leaders and a few youth to visit and record stories after this activity.



Fast Friendship

- Here are some ideas for ward activities that feature the youth teaching their families and other ward members about family history:



[Rockin' the 50s](#)

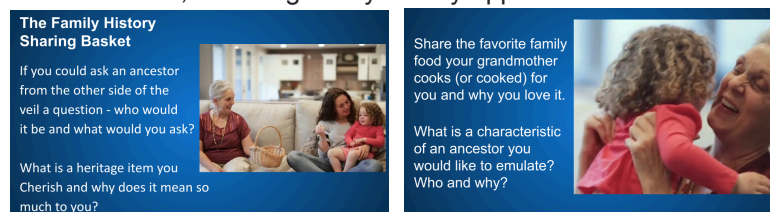


[Detective Street](#)

- Here are some amazing activity ideas for families to learn to love and do family history. Most of these activities require four of your generations to be filled out on the FamilySearch family tree.
  - [BYU Family History Technology Lab](#)
    - What is the game that tests your knowledge of your family tree? Geneopardy! If you think you know your family tree, try out this fun game and prove your knowledge to your friends and family. Enjoy hours of entertainment in Family Home Evenings, at family reunions or just on your own.
    - Wheel of Family Fortune is the classic party game that tests how well you know your ancestor's names. Play alone, or add other players to create a fun game for the whole family.
  - [FamilySearch In-Home Activities](#) help you learn about your family history and connect with your ancestors. You can do activities at home, with a group, or online. See: [Activities About You and Your Stories](#) [All About Your Ancestors](#) [Your Family](#) [The Temple](#)
    - [All About Me](#) is a favorite "anytime" activity that encourages story-telling as participants guess what the economics of the time on your birthdate were like (or another person's), as well as what was popular in music, the movies, sports, and in the church.
  - [The Family History Guide](#) OUR MISSION: To greatly increase the number of people actively involved in family history worldwide, and to make everyone's family history journey easier, more efficient, and more enjoyable.  
See [Activities Index](#), [Latter-day Saints](#) and [5-Minute Ideas for Latter-day Saints](#).  
See [The Family History Guide Activities Videos - YouTube](#)



- [The Family History Fun Basket](#) is an example of a game to play anytime, anywhere! Circle up the family for a fun, easy to create family history game at a moment's notice! With almost no prep, this activity is ready when you are!
  - Look for "no-prep" activities and games on this family activities page and on the activity pages for [Individuals](#), [Youth](#), and [Kids](#).
  - Select those you want to use for a particular occasion, write each one on a separate slip of paper and put them all in a basket, jar, or hat.
  - Take turns drawing an activity from the basket to have some family history fun for any length of time.
  - Have the basket and paper ready for use at any time, adding different activities to adapt to the group and gathering.
  - See this [blog post](#) for ready-to-copy-and-print activity ideas for the basket, including family history apps to add to the fun.



- Helpful Activity Resources:
  - [Activities for Families](#)
  - [Activities for Individuals](#)
  - [Activities for Youth](#)
  - [Kids Corner](#)
  - [Youth Page](#)
  - [Weekly Family History Activities - A Come, Follow, Me Companion \(Family History Activities Correlated to Each Week\)](#)
  - [BYU Family History Technology Lab](#)
  - [In-home and Online Activities on FamilySearch](#)
  - [Ward and Stake Family History Activity Ideas](#)
  - [The 21-Day Family Connections Experiment](#) and this document: [Family History Activity Ideas and the 21-day Challenge](#)

## TEMPLE WORK FOR THOSE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VEIL

- I invite the young people of the Church to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. I encourage you to study, to search out your ancestors, and to prepare yourselves to perform proxy baptisms in the house of the Lord for *your* kindred dead.” David A. Bednar, [The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn](#)

“As you perform temple ordinances for family members, the spirit of Elijah, ‘a manifestation of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of the divine nature of the family,’ will knit the hearts of your fathers, mothers, and children together in love.” Gerrit W. Gong, [We Each Have a Story](#)

President and Sister Nelson offered the invitation to make temple and family history work more a part of our lives in an address given at Rootstech 2017 (see a clip [here](#)).

**Sister Nelson:** “It is my testimony that however fabulous your life is right now, or however discouraging and heartbreaking it may be, your involvement in temple and family history work will make it better.”

**President Nelson:** “We can be inspired all day long about temple and family history experiences others have had. But we must do something to actually experience the joy ourselves. I would like to extend a challenge to each one of us so that the wonderful feeling of this work can continue and even increase. I invite you to prayerfully consider what kind of sacrifice—preferably a sacrifice of time—you can make in order to do more temple and family history work this year. We are engaged in the work of Almighty God. He lives. Jesus is the Christ. This is His Church. We are His covenant children. He can count on us.” [Open the Heavens Through Temple and Family History Work](#)

“What do you need in your life right now? More love? More joy? More self-mastery? More peace? More meaningful moments? More of a feeling that you’re making a difference? More fun? More answers to your soul-searching questions? More heart-to-heart connections with others? More understanding of what you are reading in the scriptures? More ability to love and to forgive? More ability to pray with power? More inspiration and creative ideas for your work and other projects? More time for what really matters? I entreat you to make a sacrifice of time to the Lord by increasing the time you spend doing temple and family history work, and then watch what happens. It is my testimony that when we show the Lord we are serious about helping our ancestors, the heavens will open and we will receive all that we need.” Wendy W. Nelson, [Open the Heavens through Temple and Family History Work](#)

“Why do we want the Savior to be the author and the finisher of our stories? Because He knows our potential perfectly, He will take us to places we never imagined ourselves. He may make us a David or an Esther. He will stretch us and refine us to be more like Him. The things we will achieve as we act with more faith will increase our faith in Jesus Christ.” Camille N. Johnson, [Invite Christ to Author Your Story](#)

“We each have a story. Come discover yours. Come find your voice, your song, your harmony in Him. This is the very purpose for which God created the heavens and the earth and saw that they were good. Praise God’s plan of happiness, Jesus Christ’s Atonement, continuing restoration in His gospel and Church. Please come find your family, all your generations, and bring them home.” Gerrit W. Gong, [We Each Have a Story](#)

- **Promised blessings for temple and family history work**

- [Family History and Temple Work: Sealing and Healing](#)
- [The Promised Blessings of Temple and Family History Work 1](#)
- [The Promised Blessings of Temple and Family History Work 2](#)
- [The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn](#)
- [Hope of Israel](#)
- [We Each Have a Story](#)
- [Let God Prevail](#)
- [The Gathering of Scattered Israel](#)
- [Open the Heavens through Temple and Family History Work](#)