

Saskatoon Saskatchewan Stake History 2013 Narrative

2013 represented the 13th anniversary of the separation of the Saskatoon Saskatchewan Stake into two parts. The Stake's notable events included:

Stake Conference February 16 and 17, 2013

President Douglas W. Robertson presided over this conference. Notable guests included President and Sister Greg and Linda Wood, Regina Temple President and Matron, and President and Sister Mark Thomas, President, Canada Winnipeg Mission.

The conference sessions were well attended, given that the conference was held in the middle of a bitterly cold winter. The Stake membership was 1,800, with 865 members invited to attend. Actual attendance was 454 or 52% of those members personally invited.

Priesthood Leadership Meeting

The conference's priesthood leadership objectives were:

- Priesthood putting families first, and;
- Improving our ministering to individuals, especially in regards to the Work of Salvation.

Other instruction included:

- Increasing teaching referrals to missionaries;
- Integrating Public Affairs and writing Unit histories;
- Using missionaries in Melchizedek Priesthood Quorums and groups, and teaching in the homes of less-active members;
- Reducing administration in order to increase ministering. Delegation of responsibilities was stressed.

Saturday Evening Session

This session focussed on the elements of family history and temple attendance in the Work of Salvation.

Sunday Morning Session

This session focussed on the elements of missionary work and teaching. At the conference, three men, Nathan Regnier, Lucas Julseth and Logan Froc, were advanced to the office of Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood. In addition, the earlier ordination of one man was ratified by the conference. [This brother, Curt Solomon, had been called to serve in the Prince Albert Ward Bishopric.]

The conference was told that the following members were serving full-time missions for the Church:

- Elder Dan Barba (Wanuskewin Ward): Canada Winnipeg
- Sister Marlene Breti (Wanuskewin Ward): Salt Lake Utah Family History Library
- Elder Toben Racicot (Battleford Branch): Dominican Republic Santiago

- Elder Owen Spencer (Wildwood Ward): South Africa Cape Town
- Elder Mark Tanner (Meadow Green Ward): Nebraska Omaha
- Elder Mark Watson (Wildwood Ward): Canada Vancouver

Stake Conference September 7 and 8, 2013

Elder Bruce D. Porter of the Seventy presided over this conference. Notable guests included President and Sister Mark Thomas, President, Canada Winnipeg Mission.

The conference sessions were well attended, given that the conference was held in the middle of harvest. 1,821 members were invited to attend, which is virtually the entire Stake membership. Actual attendance was 638 or 35% of those members personally invited. Having said this, the actual attendance was up by 170 members from the February conference.

The conference saw changes to the Stake Presidency with the release of Richard Watson and Keith Willoughby as Counselors. Keith Willoughby was called as 1st Counselor and Robin Erickson was called as 2nd Counselor.

At the conference, two men, Scott Johnson and Viktor Samuylov, were advanced to the office High Priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood. In addition, two men, Justin McMurray and David McKay, who had been earlier ordained as High Priests to allow service in the Wanuskewin and Prince Albert Ward Bishoprics, had those ordinations ratified by the conference. Also, four men, Samuel Dak, Evan Erickson, Howard Ortiz and Keith Foster were advanced to the office of Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood.

The conference was told that the following members were serving full-time missions for the Church:

- Elder Dan Barba (Wanuskewin Ward): Canada Winnipeg
- Sister Marlene Breti (Wanuskewin Ward): Salt Lake Utah Family History Library
- Elder Owen Spencer (Wildwood Ward): South Africa Cape Town
- Elder Scott Tanner (Meadow Green Ward): Florida Tampa
- Elder and Sister Eric and Jean Slocombe (Wanuskewin Ward): India Perpetual Education Fund Service Centre

In addition, the conference was advised that the following members had received full-time mission calls:

- Jessica Livingstone (Kindersley Branch): Utah Ogden Mission
- Katrina Robertson (Wildwood Ward): Romania/Moldova Mission
- Kale Scarff (Kindersley Branch): West Virginia Charleston Mission
- Michelle Tanner (Meadow Green Ward): Nevada Las Vegas West Mission
- Lucas Julseth (Wildwood Ward): Korea Seoul Mission

Conference talks covered the following elements:

- Covetousness, sharing the gospel, praying to Heavenly Father not Jesus Christ
- The things of God – our desire to be back with Him
- Primary teachers
- Faith and how we look at our lives – we need to be forward looking

- Leadership – being positive, expressing confidence and belief
- Heavenly Father never gives up on us
- Temple worship – we must view this as a privilege

Special Events

Mormons Next Door

This presentation was held in Saskatoon in March and in Melfort in June. Community leaders and the heads of other faith communities were invited to the Stake Centre in Saskatoon to watch a PowerPoint presentation about LDS core beliefs, followed by lunch and a sharing session. The Saskatoon attendance was poor, but important lessons were learned for later effort. These lessons were of great benefit in Melfort when they put on the event with Stake support. The Branch saw good attendance by the Melfort faith communities as well as civic and business representatives.

Bound for the Promised Land

This special musical and spoken word event was held on Friday, April 5, 2013 at the Fairmont Chapel in Saskatoon. A special musical guest was Doug Golde, a bagpiper. Several numbers were performed by the Saskatoon Stake Choir, under the direction of Cory Wanner, Stake Music Director. In total ten songs were shared to a full meetinghouse.

Tri-Stake Youth Conference

The Saskatoon Saskatchewan Stake hosted a tri-stake youth conference with close to 200 young people attending from the Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg Stakes. The conference was held from April 19 to 21, 2013. Youth had a variety of activities including dances, dinners, speaker's workshops and a massive service project.

Flood Relief

Saskatchewan was beset by general flooding in many areas. Some communities suffered significant damage due to spring run-off after massive snowfalls. Full-time missionaries and members were able to go out to several small communities to help erect sandbag dams and perform other flood related service. After the floods receded, they went back out to those communities to do clean-up. One notable chance to serve was at the Camp Shekinah Mennonite Bible Camp. Mennonite Disaster Services knew that Stake members were willing to help with any project and when the MDS ran out of hands, they contacted the Stake for help. This service was willingly provided, building bonds of support with that faith community.

These service projects garnered significant local press coverage which has helped local members and missionaries find more service projects to perform.

2nd Annual Mormons and Muslims Blood Drive

Members of the Saskatoon Saskatchewan Stake gathered with their brothers and sisters from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at to donate blood. The event was held in May, 2013, partly as a commemoration of the blood spilled in an attack at AMJ mosques in Pakistan, May 28, 2011.

Stake Pioneer Trek

The Saskatoon Saskatchewan youth travelled to the Regina Stake to participate in a Pioneer Trek. The youth were able to connect to their pioneer heritage by testing themselves physically and emotionally while growing spiritually.

Dance Alliance (BYU-Idaho)

This wonderful dance ensemble included the Saskatoon Saskatchewan Stake in its summer tour of Western Canada. The dancers performed in Saskatoon on July 30th, 2013. The venue selected was the Holy Family Roman Catholic Cathedral complex, as the Stake had selected the St. Mary's Community Wellness and Education Centre as a partner for the event. All sales proceeds from the event were donated to the Centre's dance program, ultimately funding 40 pairs of moccasins for the youth dancers. In addition, the BYU-I students were invited to the Centre for a joint dance workshop. The students were taught several First Nations Dances, while sharing some of their joining exercises. After the St. Mary's event, the Dance Alliance Troupe headed to Prince Albert for another performance before driving on to Winnipeg.

Ground Breaking Presentation

President Douglas Robertson, Stake President, attended the ground breaking for the new Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Mosque in Saskatoon on Saturday, October 5, 2013. While several civic leaders were asked to bring greetings from their organizations and some political representatives were present, President Robertson was the only non-Muslim religious leader asked to speak. Under President Robertson's leadership, the AMJ and LDS congregations have begun to work very closely to perform service in the city of Saskatoon.

Youth Conference

The Stake-Wide youth conference was held in Saskatoon October 18 and 19, 2013. This event saw youth from across the Stake gathered for workshops, dances and a service project.

Christmas Cantata

This special musical and spoken word event was held November 24, 2013 at the Fairmont chapel. The event was under the direction of Adam Brulotte, Stake Music Director. The event featured special musical numbers, choir pieces and congregational hymns, plus selected speakers relating to the Christmas season and the Lord Jesus Christ. The event was very well attended with several hundred members in attendance.

25th Annual Kindersley Live Nativity

The Kindersley Branch has hosted a live nativity for the last 25 years. This has become one of the town's most important Christmas season events. There are only three live nativities held in Saskatchewan, two of which are hosted by LDS congregations (Kindersley and Swift Current). Many people dropped by the meetinghouse to sit outside on hay bales watching a presentation on the birth of the Saviour. They then stayed to mingle with members over hot chocolate and dainties.