

Intro Music: [00:15](#) [inaudible] [inaudible]

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Intro Music: [00:57](#) [inaudible] [inaudible]

Carla Long: [00:59](#) Hello and welcome to the Project Zion podcast. I'm your host, Carla Long and I'm happy and excited about this interview today. I'm here with Bryce Veazey who works for Major Oak Productions and is a super talented guy. I know because I've worked with him before. He flew to Europe with me once to make a video for us there and Bryce, I don't know if you remember this, but I was upgraded to first-class on a flight across the Atlantic and you had to stay back in economy and when you walked by me in First Class I might have said something about peasants. Do you remember that?

Bryce Veazey: [01:35](#) It does sound familiar. Yes. What I remember about that though is actually a good thing I believe because you had some sort of frequent flyer program with them. We got to go into the lounge while we were waiting to board that flight, which was my first experience going into like a major airport airlines lounge where they have free food and all that stuff and you can sit in the comfortable chairs and watch TV. And that was a whole different experience for me as far as being in an airport. So I really enjoyed that. You, you know, you can keep the first class as long as I got to do that, I was happy.

Carla Long: [02:09](#) Oh well that's wonderful. Peasant [laughter] um, I do not have that anymore. I am not flying as much anymore and I will tell you I missed those airport lounges for sure. So Bryce, we've already heard your voice. Tell us a little bit more about yourself.

Bryce Veazey: [02:24](#) Sure. Yeah. Um, so as you said, my name is Bryce Vezey. I have a, uh, a small production company with my brother called Major Oak Creative or Productions. We go by both names. And then I also work part time for the church and the communications department as a video producer slash videographer, uh, which entails all kinds of different work, everything from filming, you know, uh, with the camera and the audio equipment, all that down to editing it, putting in special graphics and all that kind of fun stuff. And then making sure that it gets out either over the web or in a physical form in the way that it's supposed to.

- Carla Long: [03:03](#) Ah, that sounds really fun. I mean it sounds like nothing that I'd be good at, but it sounds like so much fun. And, and you are given a pretty big task this last year for the church. Can you tell us a little bit about that task?
- Bryce Veazey: [03:15](#) Yeah, absolutely. So I'm trying to think. When it started, probably early 2018, the idea was brought forward as everyone at headquarters was looking at conference coming to, to make a special video that would be shown at conference, but also have life well outside of conference. And that video's purpose was to, for one, celebrate the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Temple, which was, um, at this past world conference. And if anyone was present there, then you probably participated in, in those ceremonies. And then the other side of the kind of purpose of the video, uh, was to show what the Temple means today. Um, and, and not just a physical building, uh, what it means in people's hearts, you know, 25 years after the dedication of it. How is it still alive and working in today's world and in the life of the church.
- Bryce Veazey: [04:23](#) So that's, that was really kind of just the general purpose of the video is we want to make something that captures all of these things. So we went through a few rounds of what would this video look like, what kind of video would it be? Um, and we finally kind of settled on a, uh, kind of a hybrid of like a, a little bit of a history documentary as well as a very current style documentary that would showcase the reasons why the Temple was built in the first place. Where that history came from, but then how people are still carrying it in their hearts today. And not just those people who are closest to the Temple physically, but people who are on other sides of the globe and how they carry it on a daily basis in their hearts. And that even means people who may be perhaps have never seen the temple in person, how do they perceive it and its meaning in the world. So that was the, that was kind of the purpose that we landed on is we wanted a video that captured those things. And uh, from there I just kind of started plotting out things that would need to be included in the video for those things to be accomplished. And what we ended up with, I, I personally feel is a really fun and um, informative video about the Temple and, uh, and what it means, not just the physical building but what it means to people in their lives.
- Carla Long: [05:52](#) Well, that's a pretty big ask actually. That's really impressive that you got all of that into one video. Who were you working with, um, when you are making this video?

- Bryce Veazey: [06:02](#) Sure. Um, so as per the purpose of the video, I think it, we started with the idea that we obviously need a few leadership voices in the video. Well, so I'm speaking about the on camera people behind, um, you know, kind of in the headquarters realm, it was, we were mostly, it was the communications department working with the first presidency to kind of shape the message and, and the direction of the video. But from there, once I got into actually producing it, one of the first things I realized is we probably should have Wally B Smith on camera talking about, uh, the experience of being the leader of the church in that process. Obviously it started before his presidency, um, but he was the one who kind of really brought it into a physical manifestation.
- Bryce Veazey: [06:54](#) And so I knew that we had to do an interview with him. And, um, then, you know, my dad being Steve Veazey, I thought we should probably have a current leadership voice in there. And, um, that seems like probably the best way to kind of give it the book ends of the leadership perspective of why the Temple was built and what it's current purposes from a leadership perspective. But then we knew that we wanted voices of people who, like I said, maybe maybe people who had lived here in the United States that had seen it in person. Uh, but we also wanted people outside of the United States and we even wanted non English speaking voices to be featured in the video. So through the communications department and just kind of talking to some people who knew, you know, apostles who know their fields. Um, we determined that we wanted to have footage that was in Bolivia with Darwyn Copa and his wife Nora, uh, and their three sons.
- Bryce Veazey: [08:00](#) We, we wanted to spend some time in their home with them, kind of seeing how they embodied the Temple. Uh, and they do some really cool stuff. We can get into talking about more specifics about, you know, what is featured about them in the videos, but we just, we knew that we wanted to capture them. And then we also thought, you know, we probably want to go to Africa and, and get some footage of how people there, uh, embody and live out the Temple. So we got in contact with Catherine Mambwe in Zambia. Um, and she was, you know, more than happy to set up many things. We went to congregations and did home visits and all kinds of things like that to capture the essence of Africa and how it embodies the Temple. Um, and I wish, I really do wish that we could have gotten more places and done more.
- Bryce Veazey: [08:49](#) I would have loved to go to Asia as well, parts of Europe, anywhere where the church present and, and really capture

those, uh, those people's stories and how they view the Temple, how they live with it on a daily basis. Um, of course, you know, budgets and time frames and all those things keep you restricted, uh, to kind of the things that you have to do. And so that's the, we, we landed on those spots, but then also within the states here. Um, we got in contact with Brittany Mangelson out in Utah. And, um, she had a really personal story about her daughter, uh, Lilly. And, uh, just a, an experience that they had one afternoon with a little necklace that lily had, uh, that was a pendant of the Temple. And so she had shared that on Facebook and it had come to my attention and we thought, you know, that's a, that's a pretty good story.

Bryce Veazey: [09:50](#)

And if we can capture that in a video form, then it could make a really good, uh, section of the video that talks about what the Temple may be means to a child, um, and how children are seeing the Temple and how, how that, it's a hard concept for a child to grasp exactly what the temple is, uh, and what it represents in the world. But through, I think through their stories, through the Mangelson's story, we get a good glimpse as to how a child can, can kind of get a little deeper with the theology of the temple, which I thought was a really cool aspect of the video as well.

Carla Long: [10:26](#)

Well, yeah. And you say it's hard for a child to grasp what the Temple means. It's definitely hard for an adult to grasp. And, and I, I feel like your video is, is helping too, and maybe even shape and adults perspective of the Temple as well. And, and maybe even put it into like a sharper focus as to what it can mean and what it does mean to people of the world. I mean, I've lived in Kansas and Independence and so like sometimes the Temple can get a little bit, blah. You know, I worked there for five years, so I would, it was my office building. And so it's hard to remember at times what it can mean to someone in Bolivia or in Africa or in Asia or in Europe who may have never have seen it, but once or not at all. So, and this is a really important video you've made to help people remember that this is an important building. Uh, what it symbolizes is important and what it calls us to do is even more important.

Bryce Veazey: [11:19](#)

Yeah, absolutely. And that, you know, not that I, I would say that anyone has forgotten what the Temple really means, but I feel like it's just been a good reminder. And this is even just coming from me personally having grown up around the Temple, I have a few memories of being, you know, being there while it was being built, my grandmother taking me and my cousins up there to watch it being built. But for me, this is the deepest I've ever understood. It was the process of making this

video. And so I, that that translates out and that other people are starting to, to feel that way, that it, it, it has the potential to reenergize your excitement about the mission of the Temple.

Carla Long: [12:04](#) Absolutely. I don't want to lose this. You talked a little bit about when you were talking about Darwyn and Catherine and you mentioned that you could go into a little bit deeper and I would love to hear more of those stories about the Bolivia visit you and the Zambia visit, if you wouldn't mind.

Bryce Veazey: [12:20](#) Yeah, absolutely. So, um, in Bolivia with Darwyn and Nora, they, um, on a regular basis open up their home as basically the church building. They don't have a, if an actual church building in the area where they live. Uh, and so they regularly open the doors to their homes and invite the community in that they've built. Um, some of these people are family members. Uh, some of them are friends of family, some of them are people that they have just encountered out in life, uh, and have built relationships with. And so I, I believe it's every Tuesday and this might change Tuesdays or Thursday nights. Um, they, they have a group, um, of these folks come in. Nora has a little, uh, a separate building, um, on in their house kind of area where they have like kind of a craft studio set up. And, um, she teaches a woman's group how to do all kinds of different crafts, like kind of DIY style crafts that could then be sold, uh, to make, you know, uh, make a living to, to kind of give, um, people who are usually somewhat disenfranchised a leg up and in the world, a way to bring in some income, um, to not only, you know, in a, in a money sense, but to, to increase their own sense of self value because you can build something and see it be sold and people want it.

Bryce Veazey: [13:57](#) And they also spend a lot of time just talking during that it's fellowship, it's getting to know each other's woes and figuring out how they can support one another at the same time that that's going on. There's in the main house, they're having a like kind of a children's program, which is almost like a, I it to me, you know, coming from a Western style church experience, it reminded me of like a Vacation Bible School. Um, it was seen and games and watching some cartoons that had like, you know, moral messages in them. And it was just, it was really cool. It, it, like I said, it reminded me of like a camp or a, a Vacation Bible School, but this is just their weekly activity that they do. And then of course, after those activities happen, everybody comes together in the home, uh, to do a church service, um, where there's lots of singing, lots of music.

Bryce Veazey: [14:55](#) Uh, myself being a musician, I love that part because they're playing not only a regular guitar, but some really unique native instruments to Bolivia. So getting to see and hear those was really fun for me. They, they share a testimony. They share in fellowship. There's, you know, some sort of like a snack usually at the end of it that they've prepared. So it's just a, it's all all evening, uh, event. That's just really fun to be a part of. And I think what I was able to capture with the camera, you know, is that it's just that a refuge where people are coming together and enjoying each other's company and kind of uplifting their souls. And so that, you know, there's actually going to be kind of a more in depth the video that comes out about that. Um, in both places. Bolivia and Zambia, I filmed a lot of stuff more than what's in the Temple video.

Bryce Veazey: [15:51](#) And, um, those are each going to be kind of their own standalone mission story that'll come out through the churches, uh, youtube and, and communications networks here in the coming months. So you'll be able to see a lot of these things that I'm talking about and it's just, it's, uh, it, Bolivia in particular was a very tight knit community feeling, which was really cool to experience in person then. So to kind of give you some context on, on my travel, I flew to Bolivia, spent about five, four or five days there, and then flew directly to Zambia. So my head was kinda spinning by the time that I got off the plane in Zambia, but I got there kind of in the middle of the night, met up with Catherine and we were in a, a town called Ndola Zambia, um, where she had set up. Um, you know, I think I got there on a Saturday, so the first thing we did the next day was we went to, uh, a church service and one of the villages right on the outskirts of town. And it was one of the most vibrant church services I've ever witnessed. And I've been, this is actually my third trip to Africa at this point. And this one was just, there was so much energy and excitement that morning, um, that I, you know, when I was filming it was like anywhere that I pointed the camera I was getting just amazing stuff, you know, people with looks of sheer joy on their face and as a videographer I was just really eating it up. I loved it. It was, it was a lot of fun. So I got to experience that big group setting. But then Catherine, along with a couple of other women in the congregation, congregation regularly make home visits to people in the village who for whatever reason, physical ailments or age or any kind of thing like that can't make it to church. The building itself.

Bryce Veazey: [17:44](#) So they come and do home visits to them, check up on them, see what they need, see if they act, you know, like any material items that they may need. Just spiritual support, sit, talk with them for a while, pray with them. Um, I didn't experience this,

but I believe that there's, you know, serving of, of communion, uh, in those settings as well. So we did that. We, we walked around the village for an afternoon and making these home visits. And, um, that footage is, there's some of that footage in the temple video and you'll be able to see that's we're visiting people who are in a hard life. And, um, those experiences were, were in a way, I mean, they're tough to get through. Uh, uh, I'm there knowing that I have a comfortable bed to go back to that night, that eventually I'm going to come back here to the United States where I have air conditioning and all these things.

Bryce Veazey:

[18:43](#)

And, and I have to sit there with a camera and film people who are in a much different situation. So as much as I appreciate the experience, it was a hard one to get through, um, to, yeah, in so many words or less, kinda hold a camera in front of these people. But I think, and at the end of the day, what I, I kind of, you know, think when I get back to the hotel that night is, um, by doing this I am, I'm helping share their story with the rest of the world and the rest of our church community, which I think is nothing but good. Uh, it's not, it's not taking advantage of, I don't think. I don't, I don't feel that way. I hope that what it does in the bigger picture is actually increase our sense of connection to everybody. Um, and I feel, you know, I hope that's, that's my hope. But, um, yeah, both of those places had such a unique and vibrant culture. Uh, I just, I, it was a profound experience to be able to be with those people and, and film and then share their story and see how those who just viewed the video feel now connected to those people.

Carla Long:

[20:08](#)

Absolutely. And I think one of the gifts that you give to the church in doing so is just exactly what you just said. It is a gift. Not everyone gets to travel to Africa and to Bolivia and to all of these different places that you have gone to and they don't get to meet the people that you've gotten to meet. And, and you're absolutely right, Bryce. I've, I've been to Africa only once and Asia and I've been all over the world except for Antarctica. And there are those moments at when you just have to take a step back and reevaluate where your brain is at and just say, um, and, and just, you just have to be okay with what's going on and a lot of ways. And, um, but it's very, very difficult. It's really difficult to walk into other people's lives. And, and, and it's unfortunately really easy to feel sorry for them, although it's, that comes from our privilege, doesn't it?

Carla Long:

[21:10](#)

It's, and, um, and then you recognize that they have a lot of things that we don't have to. So, I mean it's, I don't think it's equal necessarily, but I do think that it's really important for us to hear each other's stories. And that's what you're doing. And

so I am really appreciative and it sounds like in both places, in their own unique and special way, they're both embodying what the Temple is and what the Temple calls us to and Bolivia with the, um, opening of your home in the hospitality and everyone's welcome and, and trying to help people, uh, perhaps find more self-worth, um, and teaching them how to do crafts and selling. And then in an Africa with the, with the worship, the vibrant worship, which always just blew my mind, that people were that excited to go to worship. And there are times when I try and re recreate like an African type worship in the states and it falls flat so hard! It just has never worked. And yet I still keep trying. So I mean you're, they are embodying the temple and their own unique and special way and people in the United States and body, the Temple in our own unique and special way. And so we can appreciate those differences and we can also enjoy those differences as well. And you helped bring us that,

- Bryce Veazey: [23:30](#) Well, yes. I mean absolutely. I agree. And one thing that I, I really like, uh, in both areas, I believe that there's some of this in the, um, in the temple video, which I always call it the Temple video. I, its formal title is uh, Becoming a People of the Temple. But both Darwyn and Cathryn had a way of framing what they do, um, as a representation of the shape of a spiral. You know, that it starts at a point and it, it moves outward and it connects, um, to things much further out than that central point. And they both had just really unique ways of phrasing how they, you know, see what they're doing. As, as doing that as, um, starting with one idea and like expanding it further and further and further in this kind of spiral form, just like the shape of the temple.
- Carla Long: [23:31](#) I love that they used the spiral analogy in what they're doing. That it's perfect. It is perfect that, um, and you know, like that center point for me is always Jesus Christ and then it spirals out and out and out. I, I love that. That's really cool. And they both mentioned that. Yeah. Oh that's amazing.
- Bryce Veazey: [23:53](#) Yeah, it's a, it's really cool.
- Carla Long: [23:56](#) So how long did the video end up being? Cause it sounds like it could have been at least a zillion hours long.
- Bryce Veazey: [24:02](#) Yeah. Uh, I, you know, the first cut that I put together of it was about 17 minutes long I think. And we were aiming for like a 7 to 10 minute video to be shown at conference. Um, so we went through several rounds of kind of trimming things down and trying to really just focus in on the core message of each little scene. And what we ended up at, I think was, was a little under

15 minutes possibly. It's been a while since I've looked at that version because there has been a, even a further recut version that is now being used, um, up at the Temple as the tour video. Um, they're kind of testing it now cause the Temple does have a, an older video that really explores the history of what brought the movement to Independence and why that's, you know, area was chosen for the temple, uh, which the newer video does touch upon, but not in the depth that the older one does.

Bryce Veazey: [25:03](#)

So right now, uh, folks that are going on a tour at the temple can watch the newer one and they're kind of seeing does this, you know, accomplish the same thing, but it has some of these other elements in it. Um, being able to actually see the, the effect that the Temple has way beyond its own walls. So yeah, it's, uh, and I, I, there's, as I mentioned, there's other things that are still coming out of the video, other cuts, uh, more in depth mission stories that are going to be about Bolivians and Zambia respectively. And yeah, it very easily could have, if I, if I were to put everything in there, that would have been possibly, it could have been an hour, it could have been a full length documentary really. But we, we just really wanted, um, that experience for those at conference to be succinct and to be, to the point. And I feel that we accomplished that and now that we're releasing these other versions, I feel that we're actually getting everything out there that is included in the video.

Carla Long: [26:04](#)

Oh, that's very cool. So, um, what was the reaction of the people at conference after they had seen it?

Bryce Veazey: [26:09](#)

Um, it was, it was positive, overwhelmingly positive. Uh, there was just a lot of, you know, I personally received plenty of, you know, appreciation from people, uh, who had seen it. I believe that they, there is, there is so many requests for it to be seen again that uh, the audio visual, uh, folks up at headquarters kind of set up a TV, uh, in the lobby of the temple that was just playing it on a loop throughout the rest of the week, which was pretty cool. It went up online and got lots of views, got shared a lot of places, plenty of great comments on, on the video itself. I've even received a few direct messages from people saying how much it meant to them, which always kind of brings a tear to my eye. And I've, that's, you know, to have somebody directly address me and tell me how much it meant to them really kind of gets me every time. So the, the response has been overwhelming in a lot of ways.

Carla Long: [27:09](#)

Oh, that is so cool. And so how can people see it now if they want to see it now?

- Bryce Veazey: [27:15](#) So it's a present on our church's youtube channel. If you go to youtube and search for community of Christ, you'll find, you know, the churches. It's got all kinds of, we have playlist of all kinds of different things up there. But what's cool about that is there is the English version, which is the original one. And then there's also a French and Spanish subtitled version up there. So it's available in three languages on the churches. Youtube, I believe it's on the church's Facebook page as well. So those would be the best places to find it.
- Carla Long: [27:47](#) Oh, that's wonderful. And I love that they're, you know, trying to see if they can use it for the tour. The Temple tour, I was a Temple tour guide for two years and I remember, I think I remember the video that we showed word for word and yeah, it was definitely time for that one to be retired. So it's exciting that we continue to, we don't just let the old stuff go and go and go, that we continue to realize that God is calling us into new and different ways and that we are people hopefully who've listened and who try and respond. And so I think that we have, I'm guessing, I would think that we've only really scratched the surface of what that Temple actually means to people and what the Temple could mean in the life of the church.
- Bryce Veazey: [28:34](#) Absolutely. And that's a part of the video I think towards the end is, is my dad is speaking. Um, he's talking about the future of the temple in his section and there's even more to his interview that I would love to be able to, to cut and put out it as its own standalone thing. I just, I don't have any other footage to show because this is all just thoughts about what the future of it could be. You know, there, there could be very conceivably interactive virtual ways to experience the temple from afar. Um, you know, like, uh, 3d walkthroughs. Um, I, I know personally through the communications department, we have been trying to figure out how to do that, how to put together, um, a more virtual experience of the temple in a physical sense. But that's really only one step of it really. The Temple is a, it's a meaning. It's a thing that we have to take into our hearts and minds and live out every day. So it's not just about the physical building, it's, it's about how we share the message of the Temple in this new world, this new world that we're living in, all this technology, all the connection that we have, it, it provides so much opportunity. So how do we really take advantage of that and use it to its full extent?
- Carla Long: [29:56](#) Oh, that's really cool. It sounds really exciting. Uh, well Bryce, this has just been really informative and really exciting and I hope that after people listen to this, to this podcast that they go

and watch the video. I mean, I'm going to go watch it again. Uh, is there something that I didn't ask that you wanted me to ask or some, something else that you wanted to say before we sign off?

Bryce Veazey: [30:20](#) Um, I'm looking over just kind of notes that I had jotted down. Um, no, I can't think of anything else.

Carla Long: [30:27](#) Oh, well then we rocked this.

Bryce Veazey: [30:29](#) Yeah, we covered it pretty well.

Carla Long: [30:30](#) Bryce, thank you so much for your time. Thank you so much for your talent and that you're willing to share it with the rest of the church. I, I know for a fact that you're a super talented guy with, with, um, with videos and with music and with just being around you. So thanks again for sharing that.

Bryce Veazey: [30:45](#) Well, that's very kind. I appreciate it and thank you very much for inviting me to be a part of it. This has been a lot of fun.

Carla Long: [30:50](#) Thanks, Bryce. Bye. Bye.

Josh Mangelson: [31:00](#) Thanks for listening to Pproject Zion podcast. Subscribe to our podcast on Apple Podcast, Stitcher, or whatever podcast streaming service you use. And while you're there, give us a five star rating. Project Zion Podcast is sponsored by Latter-day Seeker Ministries of Community of Christ. The views and opinions expressed in this episode are of those speaking and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Latter-day Seeker ministries or Community of Christ. The music has been graciously provided by Dave Heinze,

Outro Music: [32:03](#) [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible].