

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Karin Peter 00:33

Welcome to Cuppa Joe, part of the Project Zion Podcast, where we participate in exploring all things, restoration history with different guests. So, today I have my decaf latte that has several grounds floating in the top of it. And I'm not sure what our guest's beverage of choice is, but I invite you to grab your caffeinated beverage and join us. I am Karin Peter, and our guest is Barbara Walden. Barb is part of the church history and sacred story team of Community of Christ. She holds a Master of Arts in museum studies and is Executive Director of the Church historic Sites Foundation. Now, many of our listeners may know her from the popular history bus tours, I don't know the official name of those tours. But when people talk to me about the bus is how they refer to them. So, let's welcome Barb Walden to the podcast today. Hi, Barb.

Barb Walden

Hi, Karen. Thank you for the invitation. I feel like I'm sitting with Terry Gross in our Community of Christ Fresh Air episode. And I'm excited about it. So, thank you for the invitation. And I look forward to talking church history with you.

Karin Peter

Well, this is a wonderful day, because as you shared with me, you were one of the first interviews on Project Zion Podcast, Brittany Mangelson interviewed you and John Bolton, I think you were her first interview. And so, this is a return visit for you.

Barb Walden

Now, she's a pro. I mean, like she's doing interviews like she has done this all of her life. She does, she does indeed.

Karin Peter

Well, we're happy that you're here with us today, because we are going to visit a little bit about some very mighty women of the restoration. In particular, Emma Burton, and Catherine Kelly. And I have to admit, Barb that I did have to go and look these people up because I was unfamiliar with those names. So, I went to several of the books that I have on church history, and I was rather disappointed because they barely mention Emma Burton and Catherine Kelly. In fact, there is a disturbing deficit of women's voices in general in much of our official church history. So, I'm hoping that you can, by the end of our podcasts, recommend some texts to our listeners and to me so we can better understand and appreciate the role of women in our denominational story. So having said that, let's begin with this Emma Burton. So, I did find on the internet, that Herald House published a biography of Emma by

Beatrice Witherspoon in the Autumn Leaves in 1914. Now, it had been written before that. But in it, you can see a photo of Emma and her husband, Joseph, so I got an idea of what she looked like. And some may recognize him and not by her name, but they might recognize another name that's linked with her. And that is the name. I'm going to try to say right? Evanelia, yeah. Is that Evanelia? Oh, yeah. Okay. And Evanelia was the missionary boat that sailed to Tahiti in the 1890s. So, with that tidbit of information about Emma Burton tell us more.

Barb Walden

I'd love to. And first let me say you're not alone at having never heard of Emma Burton, or never heard of Cassie Kelly. Oh, we are going to change that today. We're going to talk quite a bit about these women, because they were certainly inspiring women. I was introduced to Emma Burton a few years ago in reading over some letters, and discovered that in 1890, there was a high priest that was appointed to the Pacific Slope Mission out in California and his name was G.S. Mills. And while he was there, Emma had become sick. She and her husband where in that area, where he was serving the church in a missionary assignment. And as she was seeking administration, the two men laid their hands over her head and in a prayer, the prayer said that she was to administer to the sick among the females of the church, and an apostle at the time TV W. Smith wrote to Bishop E.L. Kelly, who happened to be Cassie Kelly's husband. And he was writing about the occasion, and he said, say what Sister Emma may, he was very hard of hearing and not understanding at all, even if a portion of what was said, it was square out and out ordination. And I found that letter so fascinating. Mills, yes, mills defended himself to this Apostle Smith and said, what I have said and done in that matter was by the power of the Holy Spirit, and I can't go back on that. I was speaking under the influence of the Spirit. And I felt that was what God was telling me to do. So, you know, in reading this letter, I thought, who was this woman causing such an uproar? Because it did create an uproar in California, and throughout the church. And so, I just, you know, I'm a sucker for scandalous women, so I had to learn a little bit more. And this is what I discovered about Emma. She was born in Nova Scotia in the 1840s. And she married a man named Joseph Burton, who is a ship captain in the 60s, about the time they were married. Sailing took Joseph away from the family for long periods of time, and he ended up giving up the sea life in order to homestead. They had begun a small Bible gathering in California, in the 1870s, and it was in California where they came across two RLDS missionaries, who had arrived in their town to preach to the group, and she later joined the church. She was baptized in the 1870s. Joseph, her husband was called to the priesthood, and he later becomes the president of the Southern California District, and Emma would travel with him as he was ministering to the people in his assigned field, she would often do the behind the scenes stuff. She would assist pioneer church families that were arriving in California looking for a place to settle. She would write news about the missionary outreach that was going on, submit things to the Herald, submit things to, you know, congregations throughout the church about what was happening. And then in 1884, California couldn't contain them. And they were assigned to go to Australia. And they spent some time in Australia. And this coordination happens now after they returned from Australia. She talks to President FM Smith in 1919, about that experience, and she said that she remembered being sick and was seeking administration from her husband. And she said, as I thought it over, there could be no harm in it. There was no priesthood conferred. And very many enjoyed the privileges and blessings of the priesthood, even though they're not sealed upon them, one of which is to accompany the elder on his missions. And another of mine was the gift of healing. And I found that particular letter that she wrote to F.M. Smith, interesting, because it was true. By 1919, she

had lived this long life, traveling with her husband, helping in healings and administrations and things that oftentimes only priesthood members would do. She was right there as a partner with him. So, when she was looking back on it and said, there could be no harm in what took place in 1890 with that special prayer, it all made sense to her. Unfortunately, the rest of the church weren't as caught up as she was in that mentality or that theology or how she viewed gender roles or no gender roles. But when you start to look at her life, you know, that makes a little bit of sense. You had mentioned the family was involved in the Evanelia. Then went over to Tahiti, her husband, Joseph was the captain of that boat. And while she was in Tahiti, she wasn't someone who sat on the bench and watched her husband do all of the work. She was right in there with them, and they helped translate scriptures into the Tahitian language and publish those. It was the women in Tahiti that she was especially intrigued with. She was involved in a number of spiritual healings and noteworthy careers. She talks about casting out devils in Tahiti. She says these are ordinary incidents with immediate healing results, and they were going on all the time, in Tahiti. So, she says it was silly that Americans were having such issues with her praying for the healing of others. Perhaps for Emma though, this ministry of hers, and I'll call it a ministry, it didn't seem uncommon in Tahiti, that was a culture that encouraged these spiritual manifestations, you know, including prophecies and healings. They were fairly common. And although women weren't involved in the formal leadership of the church, they were encouraged to take a spiritual role in their families and in their local community. And she really embraced that. This allowed her to comfortably fit into her surroundings in Tahiti and feel useful in the ministry of the church. She wasn't excluded by you know the virtue of her sex from participating in spiritual healing. And her methods were well understood and accepted by the Tahitians. And it's also clear that her husband was supportive of these things that she was doing in the work that she was doing. And it's interesting as she details some of this work, it's like she's, she talks about one experience, which I think was actually in Australia, where there was a woman suffering from rheumatism. And she called it sciatic rheumatism. But she said, she prayed over the woman and rubbed oil on her limbs each morning, and in the course of doing this, she felt that healing was taking place that this affliction was being removed from her. She said, the next time she prayed and rub this woman's limbs, she encircled it with her fingers. And as she moved her hands downward and off the sister's foot, all the time pressing firmly against the flesh, the woman is healed. So, it's just interesting to think, you know, with our laying out of hands of administration today, and considering, you know, Reiki and a lot of the things that are being practiced today, and she's practicing this in 1890s, and is experiencing, you know, these spiritual moments of healing. So, I found her absolutely fascinating. She's just a fascinating woman. You know, in her journal, she talks about the sister's prayer meetings taking place in Australia, in Tahiti. She returns to the United States, becomes a prolific writer and frequent contributor to the Herald and Autumn Leaves, and inside, when her husband passes away, she remains very active in the church until she passes away in the 1920s. And, in fact, just the other day, our friends out at the Joseph Smith historic site, came across a Herald article that was printed in 1923. And Emma was out visiting her sister in Nauvoo, who her and her husband were caretakers of the Joseph Smith historic site at the time, and they were having a Nauvoo celebration day celebrating the history of Nauvoo. And in the article, it referred to Emma speaking to the group about some of her missionary travels, and she was referred to as one of the greatest missionaries in the church. And that's pretty remarkable for someone that very few know about. So, I find her intriguing and inspiring and scandalous sometimes.

Karin Peter

Well, I find it interesting that when DS Mills, administered to her and this happened, where he felt he was speaking the words of the Holy Spirit or impressed of the Holy Spirit on her and about her giftedness and kind of calling her to that, or suggesting that that was her ministry, that was similar to what people experienced in Nauvoo in the early church with women, the call for women to form the Women's Relief Society and to function in that way. And yet the reorganization had a really hard time with that in finding the place for women, because we didn't carry that forward.

Barb Walden

Absolutely. It is such an essential part of history and knowing one's history, because I think if we were more familiar with what was taking place, in Nauvoo in the 1840s with the Women's Relief Society, perhaps the transition that took place with women in the priesthood in the 1980s, could have gone smoother, or if we would have been familiar with what was happening to Emma Burton, in the 1890s, maybe we would have been more welcoming to women in the priesthood. I don't know.

Karin Peter

Well, we do have some gaps in Community of Christ and understanding our own story. One of them Emma points out pretty solidly. And that is that we are often unaware that we have a pretty charismatic slash Pentecostal bent to our early story. We have lots of discussion and writings about it from the time in Kirtland and what took place there and how people articulated that those experiences. And here we have someone who wasn't a part of that, that joined the church much later out in California, and also have those experiences. So, for folks today that understand our sacraments to be fairly, to be less charismatic, and much less Pentecostal. That's a shock to some people.

Barb Walden

And I think, Emma, it was very much experiential with her. She wasn't a philosopher. She wasn't a theologian. I think her beliefs were based on her experience. And I think in her international travels, her mind was open to other cultures and experiencing the divine and those other cultures, which she welcomed in and embraced. But it became very difficult when she returned home to the United States and found that not everyone else that experienced that and not everyone else was as welcoming so some cases, she felt quite ostracized by those spiritual experiences that she had in Australia and Tahiti.

Karin Peter

And perhaps we're more sensitive to the different cultures and cultural expressions of the church now, because we have the ability with transportation being fairly affordable for many people who come from various places in the world and gather together at World Conference and Allah and other expressions of the church in a much more diverse in people, United States, which is in the 1880s and early 1900s. Right. So, she was a groundbreaker, and lots of different things. Absolutely. So, I'm going to have to research a little bit more about her husband to see happen to him just because I find him to be interesting, as well.

Barb Walden

If I can give you a reading assignment, Restoration Studies, you know, those wonderful volumes of church history and theology, there's a great article in there about Emma Burton, Spiritual Healer. It's not a very lengthy reading. But it's a good reading.

Karin Peter

All right, listeners, restoration studies, Emma Burton. Okay, so with this newfound interest in Emma Burton for us, and she is a fascinating woman, and indeed a strong woman who challenged a lot of different aspects of gender stereotyping, and gender roles in the church. And so, what might we learn about her that would speak to us today? What part of her life is important?

Barb Walden

Oh, that's a great question. Because I think Emma thought out of the box, and I think because she pushed the boundaries, she experienced a life and has a story like none other. And I think to me, that's a testimony of not limiting yourself to, you know, the boxes that we live in, or limiting ourselves to the expectation of others, but opening ourselves up to experiencing things in no other way. I think her life story says that her life story also shows us that as you get older, you grow. And as you experience other cultures, and as you move from one place to the next, as you meet one person from the next, they make an impact on your life, and what you believe today, and what you believe, 10 years from now could be dramatically different. And you see that in Emma's life, you see her growing spiritually and mentally. And you see her and her husband in this partnership that I think a lot of the ways that she grew and a lot of the, the woman that she was, in many ways was because she had the support of her husband, and that he defended her, when she did place yourself in positions that made people uncomfortable when she did speak up and share her opinion, or say this isn't right, or step into a role that women weren't normally in. He supported her in that. And there are plenty of examples of women who didn't have the support of their husband, who didn't have the opportunity that Emma did. So, I think there's a lot of lessons that we can learn from Emma. But I think most importantly, it was her willingness to continue learning and to continue experiencing the church and her faith community in a way that wasn't constricting. Despite sometimes feeling constricted herself, or feeling ostracized herself, she was able to move beyond that. And I think that's important for us to learn today.

Karin Peter

So, I also want to be very frank about the reality that there are still struggles if you're female in the church, that we live within different aspects of our shared community on a religious journey. So, what struggles that Emma Burton experienced might still be part of what it is to be a woman in the church today.

Barb Walden

Of course, there's the struggles that women experience with gender types, the expectations, being a mother, being a nurturer, you know, the stereotypes that we've had for decades. She experienced that I think there's this concept in her time that a woman was supposed to act a certain way and behave a certain way. And I think sometimes women still feel that pressure where they often feel sidelined or, in some cases feel as though they played second fiddle. I think that's something we continue to struggle with. And I think it's, it's not just in our faith community. I think we see it within the American culture, in a

number of other cultures where women often feel as though they're second place and they struggle for equality and for women's rights, and I think we have come a long way, thanks to people like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony and Sojourner Truth. But I think we also have quite a ways to go. And it's good to look back at people like Marietta Walker and Emma Burton and Catherine Kelly, who laid the foundation that we can stand tall on today, which is why it's important to know these stories.

Karin Peter

Okay, so the next strong female that we're going to talk about today is Catherine or Cassie Kelly. And as I said, I found even less about her. When I looked, I found that she was a teacher. And I looked at your notes that you and I had talked about, and I saw that she actually watched over the restoration of the Kirtland Temple in the 1880s, which was interesting, and she went on to contribute a great deal to the reorganization.

Barb Walden

So, let's talk a little bit about Catherine Kelly. Catherine and it's interesting her friends called her Cassie Kelly was a feisty woman. Oh, she was opinionated woman. She was also a worker bee. She wasn't one to just kind of sit back and do nothing. She was a go, go go, you know, you know, those women in your life that just don't seem to stop and where do they get this energy? Don't they ever sleep at night? That was Cassie Kelly. So, she's certainly empowering in that way. I wish I had half the energy she had. But for Cassie, she's also quite personal for me. Lachlan Mackay introduced me to Cassie Kelly, about 15 years ago, I had started as the site director at the Kirtland Temple in 2002. And one of the first assignments he gave me was, he was hoping I would be more involved in the church history community, you know, with John Wick our Historical Association and the Mormon History Association. And what better way to do that, then give someone a research assignment, and so he said he wanted me to go through the Kelly letters that are in the church archives. Now, these are the letters that E.L. Kelly, who was a bishop in the church had written to his wife, Cassie Kelly, when they lived in Kirtland in the 80s. And you know, Kelly's brother William Kelly, who was president of the Quorum of 12, was also living in Kirtland with his family in the 1880s. And so has E.L. Kelly and William Kelly would travel the northeast and around the church, raising funds for the restoration of the Kirtland Temple, Cassie was left behind in Kirtland to more or less oversee a lot of the work that was taking place. And fortunately for us, they are writing detailed letters back and forth to each other where Cassie is updating the men as to what's going on in Kirtland and they're bringing her up to speed on the fundraising that they're doing while they're out in the field. And their descendants, saved those letters and then later donated them to the church archives. So, they're wonderfully preserved in the archives for people to go back and research and learn more about the Kelly family, which is really awesome. So, when I began as the site director, I was able to dive into these letters, and get to know Kathy from her letters from her handwriting. Get to know her relationship with her husband and some of her struggles. And, you know, what I discovered about her was, she had Iowa roots. She was born in Iowa. She was working in a school for a while when she met E.L. Kelly. He was the superintendent at the time. And they were married, they moved to Michigan, and they were living in Michigan when the church called E.L. Kelly to serve in the bishopric. And they encouraged them to move to Kirtland in the 1880s to oversee the restoration of the Kirkland Temple. The temple had fallen into disrepair. The church wanted to have a general conference there in 1883. But they needed to restore the strengthen the temple in order to be a structure that could have hundreds of people there for a general conference. And the Kelly's were more

or less in charge of making that happen. So, they relocate to Kirtland. And for the 1883 conference, they begin strengthening the temple, the floor joists, the exterior, they focus a lot of the energies on the outside of the temple and preparing it. They post the 1883 conference and then they're told now it's time to work on the inside of the temple. I think William Kelly writes that they wanted to restore the original splendor to the house of the Lord. So, by the 1887 conference, they had poured a lot of work into restoring the floor of the lower court into replastering really making the temple, you know, magnificent for those general conferences, and I don't think the temple would be in nearly as great shape as it is today without the Kelly's. So, with, with our church not being a very rich church at the time, it was up to E.L. Kelly and his brother William to travel and raising funds and working with vendors to do the restoration on the Kirtland Temple while Cassie has left there in Kirtland, living right across the street from the temple in a hotel. She's managing the hotel; she's raising her children and she's giving tours of the Kirtland Temple and overseeing a lot of the maintenance work and preservation work that's taking place at the time. And all the while writing home to her husband about what she's encountering. And this is where her feistiness in her opinion comes out, because she's calling the shots. And, and, you know, she's writing her husband saying, this is the direction I'm going with, if you feel differently about this, you know, let me know, I'm paraphrasing, of course, but there are some cases where she makes a decision that he doesn't necessarily agree with. And, and they're just hilarious letters, you know, you really connect with that, because, of course, husbands and wives don't always agree on everything. So, when you're reading about it in the 1880s, with her sense of humor, it's just a riot. And so, while she's there, and she's watching this restoration work, you know, the temple caught on fire a couple of times, and there's a great story about her, working with the bucket brigades to put the fire out on the bell tower of the temple. And she writes, E.L. and tells him all about that, when she wasn't carrying buckets, she knows she's acting as a master tour guide, while managing that hotel and raising a family. And these colorful letters talk about the visitors that she encounters. And the community building that's taking place, people are looking at moving back to Kirtland and making this another church community like it was in the 1830s. So, in some cases, she's acting as a real estate agent trying to find that property, you know, to live close to the temple. And she opens up the temple to the community. I think she believed in the good of community. And she built these relationships with those outside the church. In many ways, although she welcomed the community, she didn't always welcome their ideas. So, there's one example where Roger Playsted who lived in the neighborhood around the Kirtland Temple, came to her and suggested that they turn the upper court of the temple into a roller-skating rink. You know, you say, think about all the new church members, though, join her church, if you allow them to roll around in the Upper Court, she hates the idea and raves to E.L. that is it is not going to happen, we're not going to let anybody roll around in the Upper Court. There was another case where the Grand Army of the Republic had requested the use of the church hall for community dance for the veterans. And she wrote to E.L. about possibility of it. But when she doesn't hear back from him, she made the decision to go ahead with it. Of course, the event takes place. And a letter from E.L. arrives after the event where he advises her not to go along with the dance, and so she writes back and shares, you know, that the affair was passed off as a grand success. It was an honor to those connected with it; it was remarkable. So, she really is, you know, a community person. She's there, allowing people to give lectures in the temple, along with the everyday tours and hosting of general conferences, and our work within the community included, I mentioned looking for real estate for people in the area, but also going home to home and these home visits. And she wrote to E.L. about the need for more priesthood members, and about the need of the church members living in the area.

And so, you know, when you think about priesthood members making home visits, this is Cassie and her daughter making home visits. And the stories that she talks about with praying with these people, and some of their afflictions and the need of the congregation is, it's really fascinating. You know, how some things are just timeless. But you know, also with the congregation, she vents to E.L. about some of her frustrations with some of the preaching. One of the letters she speaks honestly about the struggles of living in community and that a minister from another church was criticizing her denomination publicly and she vents about that how frustrated she is. Another one talks about one of the priesthood members, Brother Scott complaining too much, and somebody needs to do something about him. She says he preaches too loud. And if we don't watch it, he's going to drive people away. You know, I mean, it reminds you that in many ways congregations, are families, and that there are things we love about them and there are other things that drives us crazy.

Karin Peter

I know, the same things that drove people crazy in the 1880s.

Barb Walden

Absolutely. She writes about an apostle Gomer Griffith, who also lived in Kirtland. She says Brother Griffith is home with his usual amount of grumbling about things which does not help them work any. So, she's so opinionated, and she's a straight shooter. I mean, she doesn't gloss over it by any means. Which is kind of funny because Fred Smith the later President, talks about her, you know, as this grand woman of Israel but he also says that he knew that after preaching a sermon wherever one says, what a fine job you did, what a great job you did, that Katherine Kelly would always be honest with him about how he really did any areas that needed improvement. And then he appreciated that about her. So, I think she was honest, you're going to admit, courageous at times, but the family lived in Kirtland in the 1880s. And then they eventually relocated to Lamoni where the church headquarters was, and after her children move out of the home, she says to really take off, she championed the role of women's ministry as a board member, and a chairperson of the Daughters of Zion. She was an editor for the Mother's Home column in the Herald. She was a founder of the patroness society at Graceland, and the sanitarium in the hospital, that later begins in Independence. She's a contributor to the Herald and the Autumn Leaves. In the 1890s, the church conference established a woman's group that was called the Daughters of Zion, and Cassie was the first president of this organization. And in that first year, there were like 23 to 25 local groups organized all over the United States, these Daughters of Zion groups, and they really laid the groundwork for what would become the church women's department. She just was phenomenal. She helped organize the children's home for orphaned children in the Lamoni She helped establish the Saint's Home, which focused on the elderly, and their needs within the community. And she noticed in Lamoni many of the students were longing for this home atmosphere while they were at school. And this may have led Cassie to help organize another patroness of society. And so, by having bazaars and suppers the women of the society would earn money to erect the Patroness Hall for these college students. And she coordinated town parents to better support students for loneliness and set in, and that continued on for decades. So, I think with her what I so admire about her is, she would see a need within the community, and she would act on it. It wasn't as though she needed asked for permission, or she wanted to put together a committee to discuss and lay bylaws she saw needed she moved in on that need. And I just find that empowering. So eventually, the family moves to Independence. And she becomes even more involved in the

Independence community, you know, at the sanitarium and hospital. When the Sanitarian started to struggle financially, she calls in the community to save the day. She organized, I mentioned the patroness society in Independence., and the women of this organization, mended sheets, towels, and pillowcases and hospital linens. They made caps and gowns and surgical masks for the doctors and nurses. They went in and assisted in kitchen work and cooking. They helped wherever they were needed. There's a great quote from Cassie, when she says when something needs to be done at the San, we just hustle around and go and do. And I think that's really like a motto for her story, her life. And, you know, eventually she passes away. They're in Independence. And I think she was 90 or 91, certainly in old age.

Karin Peter

And I'm hoping as opinionated and can do focused in her old age as she was throughout their life.

Barb Walden

Absolutely. Absolutely. I don't think she ever quit. But you know, I would love to have a conversation with E.L. about what it is like to live with Kelly, or, you know, interview her children as to what it must have been like. But thank goodness, those letters were preserved in the church archives, where we can find out about Cassie from her own handwriting.

Karin Peter

So that must have been really exciting for that to be your first foray if you will into the greater such as three community to go through those letters. I have heard about the E.L.Kelly, all my life, but not about Catherine. So, I look forward to going back and doing some more research.

Barb Walden

On to a personal standpoint. You know, when I was researching her, I had just started in Kirtland just moved to Kirtland with my husband started as the site director of the temple. And it was there were days that were overwhelming. My husband Jody was working down in Columbus, about a two-and-a-half-hour drive down at the Ohio Historical Society. And we were away from each other during the week and see each other on weekends. And so, we'd have long phone calls every night. And he wasn't there. And you know that that was difficult. So, as I was reading Cassie Kelly's letters, I'm reading about her challenges overseeing things that the Kirtland Temple as she's writing to her husband wishing he was there, wishing he was there for that support, but also seeing the closeness of those two in these letters. In the same way that I felt that nearness with my husband in those long conversations because every night it was us, setting aside that time to connect, where I think with her and El, he was setting the time aside to write these letters to focus on those needs and their relationship. I think when there were moments that I felt overwhelmed with my managerial responsibilities there in Kirtland to go back and read about Cassie Kelly and how she felt overwhelmed and that she was resilient and persevered and what she was able to accomplish. It humbled me to think, why am I overwhelmed with these little things when she's putting together a bucket brigade and literally putting out fires. So, I found in many ways her story was in fact, empowering and inspiring for me as a young woman in a position that we hadn't had a female site director at the Kirtland something before, so I felt like I was forging into new territory to read by Cassie Kelly, doing that as well, in her time in place, made me felt like there was a connection there. And she certainly her story strengthened me in many ways.

Karin Peter

Serving Cassie Kelly's shadow, I'm sure she was watching you and saying you will go far also. So, when I first read about Catherine Kelly, I thought she was really a forerunner of what I might call social justice. But really, in this view, it's more community justice, community involvement, addressing community needs, that today we would probably consider part of the mission initiative, were called to abolish poverty, and end needless suffering. So, what do you think Katherine Kelly would be up to you today? What would she be championing in the life of Community of Christ? What needs will she be addressing?

Barb Walden

I think she would be doing the same thing she was doing in her time in place, I think she would be championing those who felt that they didn't have a voice. I think she would be in the same way that she was creating the children's home for orphaned children and a home for the elderly. I think she would be out there advocating for the needs and rights of those children without mothers and fathers, the elderly of the community, I could see her out there championing healthcare, and really focusing on those who feel that they are fighting for equality. I think she's one that's always on the line, serving at the soup kitchen. And I think in many ways, she feels like the Dorothy Day of Community of Christ. Where she saw a need and she went in there and served me without judgment without question. This is someone who's starving, they need food, no need to ask.

Karin Peter 37:52

And in her free time, she be letting all of us know how well we did in our latest sermon.

Barb Walden

Oh, yeah, sure. Afterwards, you get a talking to, that tradition continues in the church today, Catherine Kelly, thank you.

Karin Peter 38:08

So, Emma Burton and Catherine Kelly are both from relatively the same time period in the church. And both were married to people who served the church in official capacities. And the reorganization was fairly small. So, you think they knew each other?

Barb Walden

I think they did. I think Cassie Kelly's husband, Bishop E.L. Kelly, he certainly would have been in contact with Joseph Burton, and would have been involved in Evanelia and the raising funds for the Evanelia. So, I think they would have known each other. I can't say there would have been close friends or intimate friends, but I think they were aware of one another existence. Gosh, the conversations would have been fascinating.

Karin Peter

Wouldn't they? Absolutely. So oftentimes, we joke about Emma Smith, that she was the mother of the restoration, and certainly the mother of the reorganization. And we don't have saints in Community of

Christ. But if we did, let's do a pretend. If we had saints and Community of Christ, what saint would Emma Burton be? She would be the patron of who?

Barb Walden

I don't know. That is such a great question. And I thought quite a bit about it. You were kind enough to give me a heads up that this was going to be one of the questions. And so, you would think that I'd have a brilliant answer to that. And I just don't know. And I think part of it is, it's hard to summarize her in just one ministry or one character description because she was so much more than a title.

Karin Peter

Well as a seventy, I have to say I appreciated the quote you shared, that someone referred to her as the greatest missionary the church had. And so just for fun, in my mind, she's going to be the patron saint of missionaries and of the seventy. so, I'm going to claim her for all the women who are seventy and all the women missionaries.

Barb Walden

Oh, I love it. Yes, sharing the gospel was certainly one of her passions. Yeah. So how about Catherine Kelly? Did you think of what she might be the patron saint of? Well, to me, she was the saint of preserving the Kirtland Temple while at the same time sharing the sacred story. But that was just such a small period in her life as she was so much more. So, it seems as though she was the saint of helping the helpless of being the voice for the voiceless. And just like Emma Burton, she was so much more than that. And once again, I just don't have a good answer. I have a feeling you've got a good answer. And I will agree with whatever you whatever it is.

Karin Peter

Well, for me, it would be she is the patron saint of all uppity women of all who, who are opinionated and feisty, and refused to stay in the box, that other people have the assigned to them.

Barb Walden

Yeah, the saint of uppity women. I can think of a lot of us who actually would be part of that.

Karin Peter

So, I so appreciate you introducing me to both of these individuals. And in the future, I'm hoping to hear more from you and from others. And you've given me several names of people to share stories of strong, capable women of the restoration, women who defy gender roles, and serve according to their giftedness, and follow the leadings of the Spirit in their life and in their ministry long before it was considered officially proper to do so. So, I'm looking forward to future conversations. As we bring this episode to a close, are there any additional thoughts on Emma or Catherine, that you wanted to leave with us?

Barb Walden

Well, the only additional thought that I have is I think Emma and Cassie's story tells us and your story and the impact that you make today can greatly impact people, generations from now. I never met Catherine Cassie Kelly, I never met Emma Burton, but I can tell you, when I read their letters, and I

learned about their story, they had a great impact on my life. And I think in many ways that gives me hope for this generation, as people like you, Karin, who do make an impact on people's lives. It's not just for this time and place. But it is for decades from now and long after you're gone. Your story can continue to inspire. And, you know, stir up trouble if needed. But that that story is continuing. And so, when I think of church history, I think of not only the period that Emma and Cassie were involved in, but we're living church history now. And how important it is that we are preserving your story and the story of your listeners, because I think that's going to be an important story to tell years down the road.

Karin Peter

Thanks, Barb. I just cannot express my thanks to you and to the other members of the church history and sacred story team. I cannot express enough thanks to you for introducing so many wonderful aspects of our story into our community narrative that we'll talk about today and that we will continue to talk about going forward. Thanks for sharing today the stories of Emma and Cassie, these two remarkable women of the restoration. And if you listeners are interested in contacting Barb or the rest of the church's history team, they can be reached at [historian at Cofchrist.org](mailto:historian@Cofchrist.org). And so, for today, this is Cuppa Joe, exploring restoration history, part of the Project Zion Podcast. I'm Karin Peter with Barb Walden. Thanks for listening.

Barb Walden

Thank you, Karin, it was a joy to share a cup of joy with you.

Karin Peter

Thank you and I look forward to additional stories in the future.

Josh Mangelson 44:14

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