

**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, this is “Cuppa Joe”, where we explore Restoration history, and I'm your host, Karin Peter. Now here at “Cuppa Joe”, we partner with the Historic Sites Foundation to interview the presenters from their lecture series. So, this is part of their Spring Lecture Series, which, as a bonus, is also a video podcast today for this episode that you can find on *Latter-day Seekers Ministries* [YouTube channel]. Now, our guest today is Dr. William D. Moore. Professor Moore is an American studies scholar who teaches at Boston University in the American and New England Studies program in the Department of History of Art and Architecture. He holds an AB in Folklore and Mythology from Harvard, which sounds fascinating, and both an MA and a PhD from the American and New England Studies Program at Boston University. He researches, lectures, and publishes on vernacular architecture, folk art, American fraternalism, public history, the interpretation of historic sites, and the history of surfing? We might have to ask about that in just a moment. He has written extensively about material culture and the American belief systems. He is the author of *Shaker Fever: America's Twentieth-Century Fascination with a Communitarian Sect*, and *Masonic Temples: Freemasonry, Ritual Architecture and Masculine Archetypes*. He has contributed numerous articles to exhibition catalogs, books, and scholarly journals. And he serves on the editorial boards of the journals, *Winterthur Portfolio*, and *Buildings and Landscapes*. Phew! So, with that, we're honored to have you here and welcome, Professor Moore.

**Dr. William D. Moore 02:21**

Thank you. It's my pleasure to be here with you.

**Karin Peter 02:24**

So, what's not in your bio, but I'm going to add is, you have a delightful sense of humor, because after noticing our coffee theme in all of our *Project Zion* series, you put a little snippet of Joseph Smith there on your cover slide for “Cuppa Joe”, so we appreciate you making that connection. Now, your contribution to the Historic Sites Foundation Spring Lecture Series is titled, “Pleasing to look upon and easy to understand: RLDS Preaching Charts, their History, and Usage”. So, there's a little description that we have of your lecture, and I'm going to just read a little bit of that, and then we're just going to chat a little bit about it so that folks know what we're talking about, and they have an idea about what the lecture will be like in May. Elders and missionaries of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, or RLDS, regularly used preaching charts to visually augment oral evangelism during the final decades of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Often colorful, these graphic and artistic works, created by both professional artists and enthusiastic amateurs, were frequently quite large, measuring in some cases as much as 20 feet long or seven feet tall. This presentation is illustrated with charts from the Community of Christ Library and Archives in Independence and other sources, and it will offer an introduction to this important genre of RLDS artwork. So, Professor Moore,

we've talked a little bit about preaching charts on *Projects Zion* before but always from an insider view, from a Community of Christ perspective. And I'm really interested in what you have found in, you, yourself have found interesting about them, and why you're presenting on them for the Historic Sites Spring Series. So, let's start out with that one.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 04:28

So, this is maybe where I should start to share my slides with you.

**Karin Peter** 04:34

Okay.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 04:35

So, let me figure out how I do that. I've done it in the past, I know, but I can figure it out. Okay, so, here we go. Here's my screen, and here's the "Cuppa Joe". Here's Joe, from one of the preaching charts here, at maybe the pivotal moment in his life and the pivotal moment in Restoration history, right, where he's digging up the golden plates at Hill Cumorah in upstate New York, right?

**Karin Peter** 05:05

Absolutely. Thank you for that.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 05:06

And, we'll stay this preaching chart in just a minute.

**Karin Peter** 05:10

Okay.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 05:11

But I thought we'd start with this preaching chart. This one's from about 1923. We don't know who the artist is, but it's labeled down on the bottom right, you'll see in the tiniest little script there, "Painted for Elder Willard I. Newman", and Willard I. Newman was from Bridgeport, Connecticut. And this is part of a set of preaching charts that were donated to the Community of Christ Library and Archives in 2015, by Evelyn Billings. And I wanted to start with this one because I think it's a, it fits this title, "Pleasing to look upon and easy to understand", which that is a phrase taken from an article about preaching charts from the *Saints Herald*, from the early 20th century, explaining, you know, what this one author thought was important about preaching charts and criticizing some of them for being, you know, just splotchy and not very attractive. So, he was asking for them to be pleasing to look upon and easy to understand. And so, we ended up with one like this one, which I particularly like the flowers around the title, "The Resurrection", but also, it's colorful, and the beautiful stars over there in the story glory. The easy to understand part in this one is a little bit, you know, I think we're pushing it a little bit to say it's easy to understand, because if you're not schooled in Restoration theology, it's hard to understand what's going on here. But that also reinforces the fact that these preaching charts were visual support for oral evangelism, right, so that the whole point of the evangelism was to explain what's on the chart, and to make sense of the chart and to explain to the audience what the preacher hoped to convey.

**Karin Peter 07:09**

So, they were the PowerPoint presentations of their time, then.

**Dr. William D. Moore 07:15**

Exactly, exactly. So...

**Karin Peter 07:17**

I grew up RLDS, Professor Moore, and I don't even follow some of this, and I'm well versed in Restoration theology.

**Dr. William D. Moore 07:26**

Right. So, that's been a great challenge for me is trying to make sense of these. And it's been quite fun for me to do so. So, what, down across the bottom we have the different dispensations of what this, what Elder Newman was trying to convince people of, which is that, you know, there was the First Patriarchal Age, which is the Old Testament, right, leading up to the resurrection of Christ, and then the gospel dispensation, which is what we've called the New Testament, right, which then leads to Christ's reappearing, right, which is then when the just will rise out of their graves, right, and will live in paradise through the millennium, and then Satan loosed, and then a resurrection of the wicked. And this resurrection of the wicked is something that I was not really familiar with before I started thinking about this, right. But it's amazing to me that what we're looking at here really is moving towards, kind of, a universalism, which I didn't realize that RLDS was, kind of, Universalist, saying that there were, you know, that eventually, most people are going to find some sort of future with the Lord, some sort of salvation in the future, whether it's the sun glory, the moon glory, or this lesser star glory at the end, right. So, but it's also, as you mentioned, I've, you know, I did a lot of work on Freemasonry, and I was interested to see the sun, the stars, and the moon showing up here in RLDS symbolism. So, that's just a quick introduction to one of the example of RLDS preaching charts that we're talking about. But then I wanted to answer your question about context and what, why am I interested in this? And what's the context for my interest? So, my interest in these preaching charts is part of a, kind of, broader interest that I've had for a long time, and in what I think of is picturing faith which is, how do people visually represent their religion or their belief, and particularly how do individuals teach members of their group or how do they initiate outsiders into that cosmology, right? And I've been fascinated for a few decades by these kinds of visual aids for religious belief. And these, this is where my place as an American Studies scholar really asserts itself, right? Because these images, these works are not usually thought of as fine art. You don't find them in the Metropolitan Museum or the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. In fact, they're frequently undervalued or uncollected. I mean, they're very important for how these faiths get conveyed, how the tenets of an organization get conveyed, but they haven't been necessarily preserved or valued. Again, they sometimes are seen as ephemeral, again, the PowerPoints of their time period. They're also often thought of as folk art, rather than as fine art, but this is the kind of material I'm interested in. And just one from another faith tradition is this work you see on the screen now, which is what they call a Masonic tracing board. This is a genre of art that was produced by the Freemasons between the middle of the 18th century up to the middle of the 19th century. This one happens to be from Bridgewater, New York, which is right outside Utica, New York, which is in central New York. It's right in the middle of the burned-over district, if you think about American religious history. For Restoration theology, it's really in the middle of the Mormon heartland. Also, it's between

Rochester, New York and Vermont, where Joseph Smith Jr. was born and so, and it's in an area where many of the first generation of Mormons came from. So, this is part of the cultural context for Restorationism as well. And you can see that it also has the moon, the stars and the sun in this Masonic imagery, right, so that there's this linkage between Restoration imagery and Masonic imagery. And I'm very happy to say that this is actually a piece that I found out in the wild, so to speak. You know, it was hanging in the Masonic Temple in Bridgewater, New York. The lodge didn't think much about it. It was just, kind of, in a back corner. It had never been photographed. It had never been documented. And at that point I was working for the Grand Lodge in New York. I wasn't a Mason but I was working for them. And I was able to convince them to give it to the Grand Lodge Library. So, this is now, has been published a number of times and has entered the scholarly discourse, because of my work. So, I've been very pleased by that.

**Karin Peter 12:50**

What a great discovery.

**Dr. William D. Moore 12:51**

So, before I move on from it, I'll just also point out some of the important elements of this. The first two are the columns at the very front, which are Jachin and Boaz, which are the columns that are on the porch of King Solomon's Temple. So, those columns identify this building that we're looking at as being Solomon's temple. And that's a, kind of, central idea in Freemasonry. And then on the left, at the very bottom, you've got what they call a rough ashlar, which is a stone right from the quarry. And it's no good for building, you know, because it doesn't have plain sides and right angles. And then on the right is the perfect ashlar, right? So again, this is the individual before Freemasonry, the individual before they've learned the lessons and tenets, when they're not fit for society, versus the perfect ashlar on the right, which is this, a good citizen, a Freemason, someone that can be part of the building of the temple. Alright, so, again, this is a, this would have been a relatively secret painting in 1810. And it would have been used as people were discussing, what were the tenets of Freemasonry? How do you be a Freemason? What is it that you're supposed to know and do, right? So again, a visual aid for verbal teaching. So, this is one example of the kind of thing I'm interested in. Here's another one. This is a wonderful painting by McKendree Robbins Long, who is a fascinating character from North Carolina. He was a son of a relatively prominent family who then went to art school and he studied art in New York City at the Art Students League, and then he went to travel to Paris to learn how to paint portraits. And He came back to New York City just at the time that modern art took off. And it, he found that his style of art, what he had been taught how to do was passé, and he wasn't able to make a living as an artist. So, instead, he became an evangelist, he became a, first a Presbyterian, and then a Baptist preacher, and he spent his entire life traveling the backroads of the United States preaching. And when he got too old to be able to do that in the 1960s, he settled back into North Carolina and started to create illustrations of the Book of Revelations. And using his art historical background and using his talents, he created an entire series of images of the Book of Revelations, once again, using imagery to continue his tradition, continuous career of preaching. So, this is, again, obviously the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet and the two beasts, sometimes called the harlot, or the Whore of Babylon, right? And, in the academic literature on Reverend Long, they frequently call him an outsider artist because he is not bound by typical art historical ideas. And yet this image of the Whore of Babylon is directly based on a wood cut by Albrecht Durer from the European artistic tradition. So, I like to talk about how

this image is a way of talking about how this outsider, American religious art, actually is not so outsider and actually is central to American visual culture and also for that matter, Western art historical tradition as well. So, another genre that I talk about, and I lecture about this in my folk art courses, and these have been some of them collected, are Adventist charts. You know, and the Adventists are the group that derives from William Miller in the 1830s and 1840s, who believed that he had broken the code of prophecy in the Bible so that he could pinpoint the date upon which Christ was going to return in the 1840s. And so based on this, the Adventists started to create these charts to explain how they could pinpoint when Christ's Second Coming was gonna happen. And again, you can see here on the left, we've got the Colossus of Nebuchadnezzar, which is a prophetic image from the Book of Daniel, right? Again, across the top, we've got the various dispensations that we looked at when we started this talk, and the other chart with the Primal Age, the Patriarchal Age, the Mosaic Age, the Christian Age, the Divine Age. So again, you can see that this artist is coming up with different dispensations, different periods than the RLDS chart was, but still the same kind of idea. And then, once again, there's the Whore of Babylon down at the bottom, looking very similar to Reverend Long's, even though this is from probably 75 years earlier. The one I particularly like is, kind of, up to the right of the Whore of Babylon, which is the opening of the seven seals, and then the dead people laying around that which looks, kind of like, looks like the "Raiders of the Lost Ark", right, the end of the "Raiders of the Lost Ark", which, again, I mentioned that partly because it's funny, but also partly because it shows that these things are very central to American culture, right? The same ideas that we have in blockbuster American movies are being shown here much earlier in this Adventist chart. And this one, as I said, is in the Smithsonian, in the Smithsonian National Museum of American Art. And it's there because it was collected by Herbert Hemphill, who was a very important and influential folk art collector in the middle of the 20th century and started to be, started to see these things as being important American artworks. So, the Adventists have a number of different periods in which they are active. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the Adventists started to have just massive charts that they used for preachers to go across the country. So, and here are two images. The top one is this, the Adventist preacher, H.W. Bowman, being very proudly photographed with the chart that he's using to travel across the Midwest, trying to convince people to convert to Adventism, but also convert them to giving up sin and being, making themselves ready for Jesus's reappearance. And on the bottom is a chart that's in the collection at Aurora University, which is an Adventist University that has started to collect these. And you can see that these two charts are obviously by the same artist. Again, you can look at them and see that they're distinctly different. They're not the same chart, but you can also see that the same artist is producing this. And this is part of what's interesting to me about these artworks is that not only can you see the variation amongst the creators of them, and you can see change and similarity across creator, but you can also see change and similarity across works made by the same artist. So that's, kind of, the background and the context for how I became interested in RLDS charts, and I literally knew nothing about RLDS charts until about five years ago. And I was very, I was doing some research about the RLDS and I saw a preacher with a chart in front of him, and I said, "Wait a sec. Here's a genre that I don't know anything about." And I started to do research. And again, the folks, Ms. Killebrew at the library, and others have been very supportive and very helpful of me. And I was so excited to find the rich materials for studying RLDS charts that they had in their collections there. So, here is Evangelist James F. Curtis, posing with his chart in Pullman, Washington in about 1945. And, I mean, again, it's astounding how similar this is to the Bowman painting, right, that, showing off his chart. And I point out again, that right next to the evangelist, once again, we've got the



stars, the moon and the sun, continuing that theme that we've had. And this is a chart that George Weston made multiple copies of. So, you can see that this one, once again, is not the exact same chart that we have in the photograph with Curtis, but it's obviously the same theme, obviously by the same hand. And you can see that on the far right we've got the stars, the moon and the sun again, but in this one, they're in squares, and in this one they're off by themselves, right? So, once again, showing that they're not the same chart, and that all sorts of wonderful imagery around the edges, including, lo and behold, there, underneath the "Narrow Way" and the "Broad Way", we've got the "Whore of Babylon", on her multi-headed down at the bottom center there. And once again, we've got different dispensations. We've got Adam, Noah, Moses, and then our time, and then the Christ's reign of 1000 years, that theme of millennialism at, in the future. So, this one is by George F. Weston, who is the, really the Michelangelo of RLDS preaching charts, and this is Weston down here at the bottom. So, he lives from 1857 to 1937. He is born and grows up in Michigan, is, becomes baptized in the RLDS tradition, goes out, does missionary work and ends up finding out that his artistic work is the best way that he can serve the church. And he moves to Independence and spends the rest of his life in Independence and makes a living creating these charts and selling them to evangelists and ministers who are out on the roads. Here's another fabulous Weston chart called "The Time is Fulfilled", and you can see how very similar it is to the Adventist charts, again, using the Colossus of Nebuchadnezzar as the primary prophetic symbol. The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, right, that we're getting to the point. But I think the amazing thing here is that the RLDS tradition has transformed the prophecy so that it's no longer talking about, when is Christ gonna come back to earth again, but when is the new dispensation going to happen? So instead of leading to the second coming, it's now leading to, again, that transitional moment of, here we have Joseph Smith digging up the tablets again, right? So, it's interesting to me how the RLDS tradition has taken this Adventist form and reshaped it to its own purposes. This one is unattributed, and this is, part of the issue is that many of these charts, we don't know who the artist was, and again, they were not thinking of them as fine art, and yet they were producing them. And here, once again, the Mother of Harlots has the central position, and the Colossus of Nebuchadnezzar there on the left, and leading over to the New Jerusalem and peace and the blessed time that comes. And yet this one from the middle of the 20th century, it's amazing how part of the, God's judgment are these wars and cities being bombed and burned, right, which, of course, was central to the thought in America in the middle of the 20th century. And unfortunately, here we are in 2020, and we've got the same kinds of burnings and bombings going on. And again, notice that this one is 16 foot, seven inches wide, right? So, again, these are produced so that they can be seen by a large audience while the preacher is in front of them. Alright, so, again, other than just curiosity and interest in visual ideas, why should we care about these? And how do these charts contribute to an understanding of American religious history? Well, the first thing, I think, is that they broaden our understanding of Restoration history by taking emphasis off of the Salt Lake City Church, right, that so much of what's been written about the history of the Restoration movement, about the history of Joseph Smith's church has focused on Salt Lake, and is focused on temple ceremonies, and baptism of the dead, and all of the different aspects of that branch of the Reformation movement, or the Restoration movement, right? And so, by looking at these, we can say, you know, here's a completely different tradition. Here's another aspect of the Restoration history that shows that it's more complex, that it's not just the Mor-, it's not just the Salt Lake City Mormon Church, that there is another path. And in doing that, these charts also position the RLDS within this broader visual, evangelical tradition, right? And I know that some scholars have talked about the RLDS church as being, kind of, threading

between the Mormon church and mainstream Protestantism, right? And so, these preaching charts are, kind of, a material manifestation of that, in that, you know, it, they still have Joseph Smith in them. They still have the telestial, the celestial and the terrestrial heavens, right? They have all of these kinds of Restoration theology in them, and yet they are, they're out there competing with the Adventists, with the Foursquare Gospel Church, you know, that these are images that were produced in a period in which there was a great marketplace for American religion, and really the, all of the different denominations were competing for believers, right, so that these are part of, they tell that story. And in doing that, they also provide a greater context for understanding the remarkable membership growth of the RLDS church between 1860 and 1940. In 1860, there were not very many RLDS members. You know, when they, when the first organization came together in 1860, and when they convinced Joseph Smith III to the Presidentship, it was a very small group. By 1940, it's an international denomination. How does that happen? Well, partly it happens because people are traveling the back roads with these preaching charts convincing people that they are the true church and that there's a right path. Alright, and then the final thing I would say about, why is this important, is that by bringing attention to these and having people understand these, and have these part of the visual record and the scholarly record, just like bringing that tracing board up and having people publish it and talk about it, and showing it as part of understanding the Masonic history of the United States, having these out there and having people talk about them, simply brings the RLDS and the Community of Christ, further into the discussion of American religion, brings it from being a, kind of, more marginalized aspect of American religious history, to show how it fits into the broader contours of American belief systems. Alright, so those are, kind of, why I think these are important and why I'm studying them, and what I think we can get from them. And then just to wrap up, before I, you know, get off my high horse and let somebody else talk for a minute, I just wanted to show you this final one, you know, and again, pleasing to look upon and easy to understand. This is one I don't think is, you know, if you didn't have somebody walking you through it, image by image, you couldn't understand it at all. I mean, it's...

**Karin Peter** 31:31

No, no.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 31:31

...it might be pleasing to look at. It's got nice fonts and so forth, but it certainly isn't easy to understand. And this is the one where Joseph Smith, getting the tablets on the Hill Cumorah, comes from there, I started with, it's in the fifth dispensation towards the right of the screen on the top half. That's where that detail came from. And I also want to, just before I shut up, I want to thank Valerie Anderson, who took all these wonderful photographs of these images from the archives. I mean, again, these were not easy to photograph, 15 foot, 10 inches by three foot, 10 inches. You know, it's very hard to get a good photograph of this. And without her photographs, we couldn't be talking about these in this, in this same fashion. Alright, so, do you...

**Karin Peter** 32:25

That's a lot to look at.

**Dr. William D. Moore** 32:27

I'm sure you've got a lot to unpack here.

**Karin Peter 32:29**

Absolutely. So, the first thing that I find interesting about these, and I've seen some of the preaching charts before, not, definitely not as many as you've presented here, but it's interesting to see the different artists have very, we're talking about a pretty similar timeframe, but they have very different areas of focus on their theology, and what they're trying to get across, which I think has always been, kind of, a marker of the RLDS/Community of Christ is that we don't have this, you have to believe this certain way, and this only way in order to be a faithful believer. And you can really see that in these charts, because they focus on very different aspects of the theology of the tradition. But I also hadn't realized how much context was in them, as I watched you go through some of the slides. It really came home with the one with the bombers. That was, like, oh, wait a minute, that I've not seen. That's part of the contemporary context of the chart being included. And I hadn't realized that was part of them before. So, that was, kind of, a new thing for me. So, this has been helpful. You said you discovered the one Masonic painting by accident almost, in the Masonic Temple. What else did you discover? Did you have any, like, lightbulb moments or something that took you in a different direction?

**Dr. William D. Moore 34:01**

Well, yeah. So, finding that chart, I had actually gone to look at the furniture, so. I was the, somebody had brought me to that building to look at the furniture. And I said, "Well, the furniture is nice, but this is the really important piece here." So, before I talk more about that, let me just say that, that has been your idea, or your observation about how different they are, has been really interesting for me as well, in that when I started to go, you know, as a material culture person, what, I start with the object, and I look at the object, and analyze the object, but then I also go and try to find historical records and historical material about the objects, right? So, I started by looking at the charts, but then I've spent a lot of time reading the *Saints Herald*, trying to find out what the preachers were saying about their charts, seeing if I could find texts that go, went along with the sermons that would have gone with these charts and so forth. And the astounding thing is that the church hierarchy did not try to control, did not try to regulate, had no input on what these charts would look like. The *Saints Herald*, on a number of occasion, published some suggestions about what they thought might be effective charts. But I don't think, you know, again, from my standpoint, they weren't effective charts, what they were, what the editors were suggesting, and I don't think I haven't seen any ramifications of those in the charts that I've discovered, or that have been shown to me. What I did find, however, was advertisements, right, that George F. Weston is advertising that you can, that he'll make charts for you. I've also found evangelists who decided that they were going to retire, who were advertising in the back pages of the *Saints Herald* that if you wanted to buy their charts, he'd be willing to sell them to you. I found missionaries in the Philippines who were writing into the *Saints Herald* saying, "If anybody has spare George Weston charts, we'd love to have them in the Philippines." So, here we've got a story that's also about American visual culture being exported to other parts of the world, which then leads to all sorts of ideas about imperialism as well, of course.

**Karin Peter 36:47**

Absolutely.



**Dr. William D. Moore** 36:47

So, I think what I discovered was these wonderful, the commentaries in the *Saints Herald* about these, and helping to understand them better from what people who were involved with these objects were saying about them.

**Karin Peter** 37:02

So, you have written extensively about American religion and religious culture. Would you share a little bit with us about how your work has affected your own perspectives about faith?

**Dr. William D. Moore** 37:19

Well, in particularly looking at these charts, and also looking at the Adventist charts, what I've come to understand about my faith, and I was brought up in the Congregationalist Church, so pretty mainstream, liberal Protestantism, and again, I was born in 1963, so, it's mainstream liberal Protestantism of the 1960s, the 1970s, is what I was brought up in, and what I came to understand is that I really have no truck with prophecy. You know, I'm not really interested in what so many of these charts are interested in, right? These charts, so many of them are interested in understanding when is the end time coming, you know, and, you know, when do we have to get ourselves in order, because Christ is showing back up again, right? And also, kind of, what's gonna happen at the end times, you know, the resurrection of the wicked, you know, and how do we understand how the rules are going to be applied to us? And that, it, you know, that is not of interest to me in my faith, or in how I brought my son up. I wasn't bringing my son up to love one another as thyself, to love your neighbor as thyself, because otherwise you're gonna burn in hell for eternity. I was bringing it up, because it's about how do we live better together in the world that we live in presently? So, that's been interesting to me as a historian to think about how these charts show that at the end of the 19th century, beginning of the 20th century, people were very much obsessed with what's coming in the future and how to prepare for it and who is going to be saved and who isn't going to be saved?

**Karin Peter** 39:23

That's really interesting, Professor Moore. When I talk to people now about faith, other than people from other Restoration traditions, where the end and what happens after you die is a focus, most people are interested in what does it mean to live as a good person now, as opposed to what's going to happen after. I think socially we've, kind of, moved past that in our religious understanding, just as a people. So, you, you've spent a lot of time investigating Community of Christ RLDS as you have gone through these preaching charts. Did anything about us surprise you?

**Dr. William D. Moore** 40:10

I think that the thing that has been most surprising to me is understanding the transition that the denomination has gone through from the 1950s to the present, right? And that, I think from my reading and from my understanding, there's been, kind of, a radical reshaping of the denomination. And that kind of radical reshaping of a denomination is not something that I'm used to seeing in American religious history, that the members of a church can, kind of, consciously decide that they're going to leave behind one set of theological standpoints and take up another set. That's not standard.

**Karin Peter 41:03**

Well, we do have this weird tradition that where we've, kind of, accepted that we are a "peculiar people". That's one of our little insider, scriptural, Restoration scriptural traditions, that we're peculiar. So maybe that's been lived out in this way.

**Dr. William D. Moore 41:19**

Well, I don't, I didn't mean it to be peculiar. I meant it to be, kind of, an amazing amount of, kind of, institutional maturity, I think.

**Karin Peter 41:29**

Well, yeah, we take peculiar as a good thing. It's okay. We're okay with that. So, we have made a huge transition in Community of Christ. So, what about these charts, considering that transition to where we are now, what about these charts would be helpful for us to carry forward as a, like, a key learning that we'd, we would want to keep with us?

**Dr. William D. Moore 41:53**

Well, it's always good to know where you came from, I would say. And I think what these charts do is, because they are very much of their time and place, I mean, this one's 1923, Bridgeport, Connecticut, right? And though I'm not showing one here that's out of the same set that's ardently anti-Catholic. I don't have that image. I'd share with you if I had it uploaded, but I haven't. And, of course, 1923 Anglo-Saxon America was ardently anti-Catholic, right? And so, having that image and having these images is a good way to understand where the church has come from, to understand where it's going in the future. Just like, you know, we need to understand, in the larger context, we need to understand that there was the Ku Klux Klan in Reconstruction, and that the Ku Klux Klan came back in the 1920s. We need to understand the history of white supremacy in the United States so that we can understand how to avoid that in the future. So, I think having these charts as images of theology and of cosmology, that are in a particular time and place, is a useful thing to understand, not just for the RLDS, but for American religious historians as a whole, to be able to say this is what Americans were thinking in this time period. And this kind of thinking was popular enough that the denomination that was purporting it, grew dramatically in this time period.

**Karin Peter 43:49**

During that time. Well, I want to thank you Professor Moore, for this, and I encourage all of our listeners do go on to either the *Latter-day Seeker Ministries* [YouTube channel] to watch the video podcast of this, or be sure to tune in on May 26, at 7pm, central time, so you can view Professor Moore's lecture live. And are you doing a question and answer after the lecture?

**Dr. William D. Moore 44:17**

Yes.

**Karin Peter 44:17**

Oh, excellent. So, a chance to get all your questions responded to. Are there any last thoughts you'd like to leave us with, Professor Moore, before we close today?

**Dr. William D. Moore** 44:27

Yeah, I would, which is that if you have one of these charts, if your grandfather was an evangelist, if this is up in your attic, if, please let me know. The larger dataset that we have, the better, and I'm always looking for more examples. So, the library and archives in Independence has about 100 of them. There's 20 more of them that I've found in other collections, but I'm always looking for more so that I can bring them into the study and talk about them in the future.

**Karin Peter** 45:05

Fabulous. Thank you for that. And for our listeners, this is "Cuppa Joe", our discussion of Restoration history today on RLDS preaching charts. I'm Karin Peter. Our guest has been Dr. William Moore from Boston University. Thanks so much for listening.

**Josh Mangelson** 45:33

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