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Project Zion Podcast

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've been partnering with the Historic Sites Foundation to interview the presenters from their lecture series and today we are focusing on their Spring 2022 Lecture Series, and we have two guests with us today. We have Andrew Bolton and Jewell Bolton sitting in front of me on my Zoom screen, and they are both returning guests here at *Project Zion Podcast*. In fact, our episode today is tied in a, in many different ways to an episode, Andrew, that you did on the first LDS, or the first Latter-day Saint mission to the British Isles, and I found some similarities as I went through this. So, hi, Andrew. That's my official welcome. Welcome back. Hi, Jewel.

Jewell Bolton 01:31

Hi.

Karin Peter 01:31

Welcome back. Andrew, you worked for Community of Christ for 18 years, 12 of which you coordinated the Peace and Justice Ministries for the church in the USA and internationally, and this overlapped with serving for nine years in Asia, coordinating mission and pastoral care for 215 congregations in 10 countries. Now you are retired and you and Jewel live in, is it Leicester [pronouncing: LĪ' -ches-tər] or Leicester [pronouncing: LĪ' -ses-tər]?

Andrew Bolton 02:03

Leicester [pronouncing: Les' -tər].

Karin Peter 02:04

Leicester [pronouncing: Les' -tər]. Okay, Leicester, England. So, what are some of the projects you're involved with now?

Andrew Bolton 02:10

So, we have the joy of a community garden. They're called allotments in Britain. So, we have two plots, each five yards by 45 yards, and they're five seconds walk from our back garden. I sold broad beans, that's a large lima bean, this lunchtime, so that's a joy. Another joy is a big project called the Leicester Schools Peace Project. We're creating a peace curriculum for the 115 schools in the Leicester School District, from five year-olds to 16 year-olds. And this started last year when I found out that the University of Leicester was founded 100 years ago as a peace university after World War I. It was founded as a living memorial, a palace of peace with a motto in Latin which meant, "...that they may

have life." So, it's a very different kind of memorial to the normal stone war memorial. And it's a really good story that I thought would be good to be got into Leicester school. And now we're in our second phase of creating a scheme of work with lesson plans on peace for the schools. And we had a planning conference, workshop just this last Thursday at the university. We're borrowing ideas from the church's peace museum in Independence. Some church members, member teachers in a neighboring county, created a peace-mobile for primary elementary schools, and they also spoke at the conference. A second project is our congregation here in Leicester is involved in community organizing using a method similar to Outreach International, the church's development organization that began in the Philippines. In a listening campaign we found that two streets near the church have a big problem with school traffic, and we're having a big public meeting after lots of work over recent months to try and solve this problem of carried out a survey. And it's all helping build community and get to know our neighbors and hopefully we will solve this very practical problem where we fear an accident of a child being hit or killed on our street. And then the third thing that we do on a weekly basis is that we're in conversation with LDS seeker friends.

Karin Peter 04:53

So, you spent your lives promoting peace globally, and now you're doing the very same thing in your home town, in your area.

Andrew Bolton 05:05

It's wonderful.

Karin Peter 05:07

It sounds wonderful. Because you're both smiling at me, it looks wonderful as well. Thank you for sharing those.

Andrew Bolton 05:15

You're welcome.

Karin Peter 05:16

So, this round with the Spring Historic Sites Lecture Series, we've had some marvelous lectures of talking about people from the Reorganization perspective, which our Latter-day Seekers are less familiar with. So, your title of your series is "Charles Derry: First Reorganization Missionary to the British Isles". So, as we begin, can you tell us why you selected Charles Derry for your topic?

Andrew Bolton 05:50

So, he was, as you say, the first missionary of the Reorganization overseas in Britain, and this is my homeland, so I knew about Charles Derry, but it was reading his autobiography that really hooked me. And his autobiography, called *Autobiography of Elder Charles Derry*, published by Price Publishing in Independence, for \$10 it's a real steal, was recommended to me by Ron Romig, former archivist, former director of Kirtland Temple, and I was just caught by his story told in firsthand terms. And then I go on to read other papers about Charles Derry and find out that he made a very significant contribution later on to the Reorganization.

Karin Peter 06:50

Well, let's talk about some of that. Can you tell us a little bit about Charles Derry? When and where did he join the church? Who was he?

Andrew Bolton 07:00

So, he joined the church in October 1847, and the church at this time is growing phenomenally well, 8000 baptisms a year. It's amazing. He's only 21 when he's baptized, and he had just finished his blacksmith apprenticeship, eight years. He had time with the Methodists and also with the Baptists in Staffordshire, near Birmingham, which is in the Midlands. His family were very upset with him for joining the Latter-day Saints, but it didn't deter him. And two years later, he married an Anne Stokes, and they had two children; a little girl, and a little boy. So, as I said, the church was growing very fast at this time, 8000 new members a year, and by 1851 there were 32,000 members and 641 congregations, and Charles was working as a full-time missionary in the Midlands for six years during this time.

Karin Peter 08:11

So, for our Community of Christ listeners, when you talk about him joining the church in 1847, we're talking about what was available at the time was the Latter-day Saint movement because the Reorganization had not yet formed. So, we want to make that clear when we're talking to Community of Christ folks, and our Latter-day Seeker friends.

Andrew Bolton 08:34

So, let me add a note about that. So, I think the church was, the missionary message of the church from 1837 onwards, was the understanding of the gospel in Kirtland, Ohio, and the later developments that happened in Nauvoo were not preached over here. So, the church of 1847, that Charles Derry joined, was really akin to the Kirtland church. And it's only in 1853 that polygamy became public over here, so then, Nauvoo entered the British consciousness. So, I would say that we were an undivided church until 1853, January, 1853.

Karin Peter 09:33

And it did cause quite a bit of shock for British families who traveled to the US and we'll probably talk a bit about that as we go forward today in our conversation, because they didn't know about what was happening in Utah.

Andrew Bolton 09:51

No.

Karin Peter 09:52

So, Charles Derry migrated from Britain with Anne and his children to the Salt Lake Valley. So, I imagine that's where we're gonna encounter some surprises here because they arrived in Salt Lake in 1854. So, let's talk a bit about that journey. What was that like?

Andrew Bolton 10:09

So, on March the 25th, 1854, Charles and his family left Liverpool and sailed to New Orleans, and they were sponsored by the church. Remember, he'd been working for six years for the church as a full-time

missionary. So, New Orleans will be a place where British ships would pick up cotton to bring back to Lancashire, to Liverpool for the cotton mills in Lancashire. So, then they got on the paddle steamer, I presume, and traveled up the Mississippi and the Missouri to Westport in Kansas City, a journey of approximately 900 miles. Charles then bought an ox and cart, or oxen and cart, and traveled 1000 plus miles to the Salt Lake Valley from Kansas City. Tragically, his wife, Anne, died about four weeks out before arriving at the Salt Lake Valley, leaving Charles with the care of two young children and one little boy was sick. So, he arrives in the Salt Lake Valley in a lot of grief.

Karin Peter 11:28

Very much so. What does he find when he gets there? What's his experience like?

Andrew Bolton 11:35

So, it was difficult. As I said, he's arrived in grief, looking after two little ones, trying to earn a living, find a home. His first job was in a public works program harvesting potatoes. And it was about three weeks after arriving that he saw a wagon train of British immigrants arriving. So, he went over to see if there was anyone he knew and he was talking to one young woman when he saw an Eliza Herbert pass by. He didn't know her, but he was drawn to her and felt he should marry her. So, these were his first words to her, "Sister, my name is Charles Derry. I've been in this valley three weeks. My wife lies on yonder mountains having been dead seven weeks. I have two little children, one is sick. I have no home at present. I'm a blacksmith by trade and I hope to be able to make a living. If under these conditions, you will consent to be my wife and a mother to my children, I will be a husband to you in every sense of the word." So, he didn't mess around. His first words to...

Karin Peter 12:52

Not the most romantic, Andrew, not the most romantic proposal I've ever heard.

Andrew Bolton 12:57

No, not one that you would counsel a young person to do, but Charles is desperate and also open to the Holy Spirit. And the amazing thing is Eliza said, "Yes," and he said, "Those were the most wonderful word he'd ever heard." And about three weeks later, they got to know each other a little bit, they were married.

Karin Peter 13:29

Glad to hear that.

Andrew Bolton 13:29

And they were married for over 50 years.

Karin Peter 13:33

Oh my.

Andrew Bolton 13:34

So, meeting Eliza was a very good thing, this beginning, however the next five years were very difficult for Charles and his family. So, he's working in public works and 75% of his wages are withheld as

tithing, and then he finds himself cheated by the tithing office. Derry's own careful account said the office owed him \$30, but the office said he owed 43. When he examined their accounts, he found he had been charged luxury items, silks, etc., that he'd not had, but still had to pay for. He had two bishops of his wards, and they oppressed and cheated him also. And then in 1856 and 1857, there were famines, food was short, and on top of that there was Brigham Young's reformation, with pressure to support celestial marriage, be polygamous, and he says he saw old men with child wives, saw some women driven to insanity, great pressure to be loyal to Brigham Young. No one's allowed to leave and there were Danite attacks on dissenters, for example he mentions a Henry Jarvis. There was pressure on him to go through the endowment ceremonies in the temple but he felt there were some oaths he could not make. And he heard about the oaths from other people talking about their experience, even though they shouldn't have done. And then in 1857 he's mustered into the Nauvoo militia. So, the Nauvoo Legion continues in Utah and he's there in the mountains for three months ready to fight the US Army. But he says in his journal, in his autobiography, "I determined to shed no blood." He wasn't going to fight. So, it was tough and he wanted to leave, but he couldn't.

Karin Peter 15:42

So, for our church history listeners who might be new to some of the history of what happened in Utah in the late 1850s, there was a movement by the US government to protect the territories, according to the federal perspective. And from the Mormon perspective in Utah, they felt they were under siege. So, when you give me the dates of his service in the mountains, I'm assuming that's part of that campaign between the federal government and the militias in Utah. So, all you church history geeks, you can check out that for me and find out if that's what that was about. So, I imagined it was a pretty disillusioned Charles Derry that left Utah with his family in 1859, disillusioned towards the faith, disillusioned toward institutional church, towards religion in general, and I think you make a note also, towards God. So, what happens, what? First, how does he leave? There are attacks on dissenters and it's not easy to leave. So, what happens?

Andrew Bolton 16:53

So, I think he keeps courteously, politely saying he wants to leave and because he's not been through the temple endowment ceremonies, he's is allowed to. But he's completely disillusioned with God and Zion. So, he goes to Utah hoping for utopia and finds dystopia and is fortunate to get out of Utah. So, he joins a wagon train of others leaving, and he meets up with his mother and brother in Fontanelle, I think I'm saying that right, 53 miles northwest of Omaha in Nebraska. And he had written earlier to his mother and brother to not come on to Utah, 'cause it's bad news. He then heard about the Reorganization being led by Joseph Smith III, but is pessimistic. Now, Joseph had been ordained in 1860 at the Amboy conference. He came to the conference, he said, in response to a "power not his own" and he told the Amboy conference that if the same Spirit prompted his acceptance that prompted his coming, he's willing to serve the group. And this young group published a magazine called *The True Latter-Day Saint Herald*. And Charles was given a couple of these magazines and he read them on February the 6th, 1861, and his old faith came flooding back. He's baptized a month later, 3rd of March, 1861 and ordained an elder the same day, and again, missionary work straight away. So, with renewed faith, he re-established the family altar that he dismantled when he lost faith, and repentantly wrote a poem that became a hymn about that. And I've always thought of the poem, the hymn, as a communion hymn. It begins, "Around thine alter now". And would you like to hear Jewell sing it?

Karin Peter 19:09

That would be marvelous, Jewell, if you're willing?

Jewell Bolton 19:13

Sure. [singing] "O Lord, around thine alter now, to supplicate thy grace, as children we would humbly bow and seek our Father's face. Hide, not from us, our Father dear, thy gracious smiles we pray; but let thy love dispel our fear and draw us near to thee. Let thy great light illumine our souls and guide our erring feet; thy Spirit o'er us hold control and keep us from deceit. Then, gracious God, accept us now, from thy great throne above; help us to keep a sacred vow, and fill us with thy love. Amen."

Karin Peter 20:46

That's a beautiful hymn and I'm wondering, was that in the gray hymnal? Do you remember the gray hymnal.

Jewell Bolton 20:54

I'm not sure about...

Andrew Bolton 20:56

It's in the gray hymnal.

Jewell Bolton 20:57

Is it?

Karin Peter 20:57

Is it, because that's when, when you were singing, Jewel, all of a sudden, I had this flashback to the congregation that I attended when I was growing up, and I remember singing that hymn.

Andrew Bolton 21:08

And it's also in the red hymnal, the 18-, 1981 hymn book.

Karin Peter 21:12

That's a beautiful hymn and in the text of that hymn, I could hear some remnants of his feelings about what happened in Utah.

Andrew Bolton 21:20

Yes, and yet it's also full of faith again.

Karin Peter 21:27

And hope.

Andrew Bolton 21:27

He wrote over 200 poems.

Karin Peter 21:31

The blacksmith poet.

Andrew Bolton 21:33

Yes, there you go.

Karin Peter 21:36

Marvelous. So, he hears about Joseph Smith. I'm assuming his baptism and confirmation took place in Nebraska. Is that...?

Andrew Bolton 21:45

Yes.

Karin Peter 21:45

Okay. So, he's in Nebraska. Somehow he meets Joseph Smith III. What happened there when he encounters, when he really begins to encounter Joseph Smith III, the Reorganization in full, he's a missionary? What does he do?

Andrew Bolton 22:01

So, Joseph Smith III, in 1861, is only 29 years old, Charles Derry's just a few years older. So, we're talking about young adults here. When he meets Joseph III, he's impressed, and this is what he writes in his autobiography, about an incident at one of the conferences, "A brother with an axe to grind kept obstructing the business of the conference. Joseph III bore with him very patiently until it was necessary to stop him. Then he arose, not in anger, and simply prayed. The result, a calm, peace-loving Spirit prevailed throughout the remainder of the conference." So, Charles Derry was so impressed with this way of handling an awkward brother. And it would have been very different, he says, if this had been a conference in Utah. And he goes on to say, "The difference between the conferences of the Reorganized church, and those of the Utah order is very marked. In the latter, every matter brought before the people was cut and dried. He who voted in the negative or in opposition, will be a marked man. But in the Reorganized church, all things are done by common consent as the law of God directs. No man is questioned or snubbed while thinking and voting contrary to the majority." So, you could have discussion, real discussion, and people voting according to their convictions at a Reorganized conference. And so, the difference between the cultures of the two churches goes right back to the beginning. And my friend, Ron Romig, he thinks that because Joseph III had practiced law, Joseph III understood due process, and was not afraid of debate, discussion happening amongst the saints. And that was very good, worked really well for a group of basically dissenters, people of conscience, who were strong enough to break away and question things, but now in the Reorganization, had to live with each other. And Joseph was very good at presiding over those, that difficult group of people.

Karin Peter 24:40

Andrew, thank you for sharing that story from his autobiography, but also sharing a bit about that, because that is something we still hear from our friends who come to us from the LDS tradition and

engage with Community of Christ. They're very surprised by how we handle our business meetings in congregations and mission centers and our conferences and the ability to dissent.

Andrew Bolton 25:09

Yes. And it goes back to the earliest, yes, back to the beginning, and that's what I found out from Charles Derry's autobiography, but there's something else as well. So, he, and a few pages later, Charles is also critical of Joseph. Joseph found himself in Nauvoo being pressured to give a patriotic speech at the beginning of the American Civil War, and he ended up recruiting volunteers for the northern army. And this is Derry's comment, "Joseph III's forwardness in trying to gain favor for Zion, persuading young men to enlist in the war, have closed hearts of mothers and sisters against him, and they feel they owe their bereavements to him. I thank God that no mother mourns a son, no wife a husband, no child a father, through my counsel or influence. I believe if any man thinks the saints ought to enlist in this war, he should set himself the example." So, Derry spoke his mind in the Reorganization from the beginning and he was even critical of the young prophet who he admired. So, I find that he was already swimming in this open movement where dissent, and loyal opposition, and common consent was possible. So, I find it intriguing that he's doing that straight away. But it's important to say that Joseph and Charles became good, close friends, even if they didn't always agree. And, maybe I should add, just a note about Emma Smith. Charles met her in her home in Nauvoo. He may have stayed there. And he was very impressed with her, impressed with her intelligence, impressed by her good singing voice, and impressed by how others in Nauvoo saw her because of the way she'd brought up her sons. All of them were honest, hardworking, honorable people. Nobody could say anything negative about Emma in Nauvoo.

Karin Peter 27:29

Thank you for sharing that. We have a lot of listeners who love hearing about Emma Smith.

Andrew Bolton 27:34

Yeah, she's a wonderful woman.

Karin Peter 27:37

So, let's talk a bit about Charles Derry's mission, experience in the mission field. So, why send him back to Britain? Why send missionaries for the Reorganization to Britain?

Andrew Bolton 27:48

So, first of all, Britain is the first overseas mission, and it's enormously successful. Remember, I was saying that the church was growing in the British Isles, and by 1851, 80%, of all Latter-Day Saints worldwide were British born and baptized, and 60% of all Latter-Day Saints were still living in Britain. So, we were a British Isles church. The Latter-Day Saint movement was British, by a huge majority at this, in the early 1850s. The poor and working class were very responsive to the restored gospel and the cause of Zion. And currently, I'm working on a book project with a group of LDS and Community of Christ scholars about the radical peace and justice witness of the early church, and the relevance of the cause of Zion for us today, in Kirtland, in Independence, Missouri, Jackson County, and in the British Isles. It's a phenomenal story. So, the leaders of the Reorganization knew it was important to begin the work in the British Isles because it was a mission field that had been so responsive a decade earlier.

Karin Peter 29:06

So, I want to take a moment here to again mention that, Andrew, you did an episode with us, a “Cuppa Joe” about the first, very successful mission experience of the gospel being taken to the British Isles. So, I want to point people to the archives, that you can find Andrew’s lecture there and get a bigger picture about the early church in the British Isles. I learned a lot from that particular lecture, and I'm sure you will, too. So, Andrew, let's talk about that mission, the RLDS mission to the British Isles. What was that like for Charles Derry?

Andrew Bolton 29:44

So, he's on his own initially, as opposed to the first mission in 1837, then in 1840, where it was a team of people, where he had the support of others. And Charles was not always well. He left in December from his home, somewhat sick. He walked just about everywhere and the British climate is not great for walking, particularly in winter. And then the glory days of great responsiveness to the Latter-Day Saint message were now over. Latter-Day Saints were now associated with polygamy and weird theologies of the Godhead. You couldn't have had two bigger disasters in Victorian Britain; a sex scandal and departing from Trinitarianism. Derry visited former LDS folk and found them often suspicious and negative, and not wanting to have anything to do with Latter-Day Saintism anymore. LDS congregations also, of course, didn't allow him to speak. And at one point, he arrived in February 1863, and in May he was so lonely, when he saw in the post office, there were four *Herald* magazines for him. But he couldn't buy them because he had no money. So, he pawned his overcoat to be able to pay for the postage on the magazines. But then, five days later, Jeremiah Jeremiah, that's really his name, and Jason Briggs arrived, and the work could go together in a team way. And Jeremiah Jeremiah could preach in Welsh, and that was really helpful. So, going forward now to the end of, the first general conference was in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales. Merthyr Tydfil was the industrial capital of Wales. It had coal, good coal and good iron ore, and at one point to have the most advanced iron works in the world. So, this is the Merthyr Tydfil story. It was a boom town, and we had eight congregations in the early Latter-Day Saint movement. So, they had their General Conference beginning on Christmas Day 1863, with a party of 247 people, and then Boxing Day, which is December the 26th, and then December the 27th the conference proper was held. Jason Briggs presided and Charles Derry was the secretary. And it's interesting, there was a roll call of branches and members. So, in Wales, four branches have been established, and one of the four, Llanelli, is still going. Jewell and I preached there on Good Friday, 10 days ago. And in England, there were two branches; West Bromwich in Birmingham, and Lydney near Gloucestershire, near Gloucester, of which Charles Derry had founded. And we had 106 members, 38 Elders, 13 Priests, two teachers, and one deacon.

Karin Peter 33:16

One deacon. Oh dear.

Andrew Bolton 33:19

Well, we ordained a lot of elders in the early days. So...

Karin Peter 33:24

Yes. I think that one deacon might have appreciated some help however.

Andrew Bolton 33:28

Yes, he had a lot to do.

Karin Peter 33:30

Yes.

Andrew Bolton 33:31

But if you compare that with the first 1837, 1838 mission, there's a similar length of period, we had 1400 members and 26 branches. So, the rapid growth days are now over. And Charles Derry, in his last entry on December the 31st, summarized his ministry as follows: "he'd been given 24 pounds, 16 shillings. He'd written 77 letters, published 1000 of Joseph Smith III letters, walked everywhere except for 15 miles, always had shelter, a blessing, but didn't always have a bed."

Karin Peter 34:21

So, when we talk about the mission to the British Isles, we're talking about extreme sacrifice, to go and to serve in that way, and mission in other areas as well. But when we hear Charles Derry's story of his experience traveling to Utah, that long journey, traveling back to Nebraska, traveling to, back to the British Isles, that's quite a bit of commitment for one individual.

Andrew Bolton 34:50

And he hates the sea.

Karin Peter 34:54

He hates the sea, and he did all those ocean crossings?

Andrew Bolton 34:58

Yes, yes.

Karin Peter 35:00

Oh dear. So, Andrew, you talked at the beginning about why you chose to do a lecture on Charles Derry, your affinity for him, from his experience. What did you learn, as you researched him, that surprised you? Were there any new discoveries?

Andrew Bolton 35:16

Yeah. The first is a big discovery. Charles Derry's commitment to peace is ahead of Joseph in 1861. Joseph III takes us in a strong peace direction later on, is a real peace leader, but Charles Derry, I think, pushes him. So, in his diary, in his autobiography, you read he's mustered into the Nauvoo militia in Utah, but he's determined to shed no blood. He's critical of Charles III, critical of Joseph III, giving a war speech. By the way, it was his only war speech, but he's critical of that, and then, when he's coming back to the United States, he's passing through New York dock and he sees all these wounded soldiers, and he grieves for the waste of war. So, those are three stories of where his commitment to peace is so visible. And then I found out that he pushed and supported the Sunday school movement in

the Reorganization. He also helped start the reunion tradition in our church, which is a very Community of Christ, Zion for a week thing.

Karin Peter 36:39

It is. It's a both a blessing and a curse. That's my perspective. I'll toss that in.

Andrew Bolton 36:43

No, it's not a curse. Never a curse. I've never been to a bad reunion.

Karin Peter 36:48

Okay, so, let's talk about that. So, folks from our, from the LDS tradition won't know what a reunion is, so.

Andrew Bolton 36:57

Want me to explain it?

Karin Peter 36:57

So, reunion is a family camp.

Andrew Bolton 36:58

Yeah, go ahead.

Karin Peter 36:60

It's a family camp, where we all gather for a week and, sometimes at a church campground, sometimes at a rented campground, and we share living, and worshipping, and fellowshiping in community. Sometimes it's only for a few days, sometimes it can be eight or nine days in a row, but there are classes and worship and we eat together and we wash dishes together and we do all of our experiencing God's presence together in that week, so.

Andrew Bolton 37:30

It's a wonderful week. It's a taste of Zion and everybody's dressed down, and you don't know people's status in the outside world. Everybody's joining in. In some ways, the kitchen fellowship, washing dishes fellowship, is the best part of the whole experience. And this is...

Karin Peter 37:51

And that's my favorite, pots and pans, Andrew.

Andrew Bolton 37:54

So, there's no wasted moment because you're in the line for lunch and you have this fantastic conversation with somebody, get to know somebody. So, it's a wonderful, it used to be my deep people week that charged me up to be able to teach for the rest of the year as a school teacher.

Karin Peter 38:17

So...

Andrew Bolton 38:18

It's a week of Zion. And in the States, you have enough faith to make it be paid for by free will offerings. I love that. It's Act 2, all things in common all over again.

Karin Peter 38:31

It's also, in the states, very close to camping, which is not my forte, so hence my comment earlier.

Andrew Bolton 38:41

So, I think it's great training for missionaries in Africa, Latin America and Asia, because if you can survive our campgrounds, you can sleep anywhere.

Karin Peter 38:57

I don't know what that says about our campgrounds, but I'm gonna take your word for it. So, many of our listeners only know the history of the church, the history of the Reorganization as what happened in the United States. That's their paradigm for understanding our story. So, how might a more in depth understanding of the Reorganization, especially in the British Isles and other places, contribute to our discipleship as Community of Christ, as a movement?

Andrew Bolton 39:31

So, the end of Matthew's Gospel, you have the last words of Jesus; "...go ye into all the world and baptize all nations, teaching them to keep my commandments," etc. So, the Great Commission is an imperative for the Reorganization. So, that's the first thing to say. So, going to the British Isles in 1837 for the Reorganization to reestablish the church in 1863, is part of being faithful to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. So, that's the first thing to say. And it's to all the world, to all nations, to all ethnic groups, to all language groups, because the gift of the gospel is for all people. Zion is for all people. To declare the worth, equal worth of all people is part of the gospel. So, that's the first thing, I think. And then my, I've worked in, I met the church in Germany. I worked in the States for 18 years. I'm married to Jewell, who's a lovely American Girl. We worked in Japan for two years. I mean these, I found wherever I've gone, it's possible to have deep, meaningful personal relationships with people of all races, of all cultures, of all ethnicities, and that's good news. That's part of the gospel. So, we discover, in some ways, the depth and width of the gospel when we go into, find its expressions in other countries.

Karin Peter 41:32

When you've endeavored to study more deeply about the church, and the story of the church in the British Isles, how has that informed your discipleship? We just talked about how this might contribute to our community discipleship, but how has your study of the story of the church in the British Isles shaped and formed you as a disciple of Jesus?

Andrew Bolton 41:56

So, the first baptisms happened in Preston, Lancashire, and the area that was most responsive in those early days was up the Ripple Valley from Preston. I was born in Preston and I went to school in the Ripple Valley. So, I didn't know this growing up because I was Roman Catholic, but beneath my feet,

around me were these stories hidden from me at that time, of the early Latter-Day Saint Church and its great success. The hope it gave poor people, working class people who were going through the catastrophe of the Industrial Revolution. Enormous wealth was now being generated, but the poor were even poorer. They'd lost common land, the rights to common land. They moved from the countryside, landless, into the slums in the growing cities and towns, and the life expectancy halved from 38 to 19. And we had a message of Zion and the worth of all persons that brought such hope to these beleaguered people. And I think I mentioned that I'm working now with a group of Community of Christ scholars and LDS scholars to tell this story of the early radical message of hope, of Zion, of economic and social justice that we proclaimed in these islands, where it was so responsive. And this gospel of Zion, of the worth of persons, is something that is so relevant today as well. So, I hope my further study will help widen people's awareness of this early story, of the relevance of the gospel in the British Isles, to also our day.

Karin Peter 44:12

So, I look forward to a potential *Project Zion* episode for that text when we can have a conversation about it in the future.

Andrew Bolton 44:21

Yeah.

Karin Peter 44:23

So, as we begin to come towards the close of our conversation, in today's culture we talk a lot about DNA and ancestry, and the strains of our ancestors found in our own life experience today. So, I'm interested, how would you summarize Charles Derry's ministry contribution to the Community of Christ, his enduring contribution, his DNA, if you will, that we still see in the Community of Christ?

Andrew Bolton 44:55

He's enormously faithful. He gives his all. I don't think he would have been always easy to get along with, but I think I would have loved him because he would have loved me. He loved people. He makes this spectacular sacrifice, so, going back to the British Isles. And his wife, Eliza, has to be praised here 'cause she supports him. So, he begins the Reorganization in the British Isles, and by the 1890s, we're as big as the LDS Church in the British Isles. So, that's not a small thing that he did. And he, some of the people he gets back in the Reorganization, like Thomas Taylor for instance, become really important leaders in the British Isles church. He becomes the first bishop to be ordained in the Reorganization of the British Isles, the beginning of the 1900s. We didn't mention that he was called to be and ordained an apostle and he served in that office for five years, then resigned because he said he wasn't sure really that he was called. But then you find for the next 20 years, he presides over the high priest quorum and makes it something in the Reorganization. So, the fact that we have a strong high priests quorum tradition, those, we owe Charles Derry for that. He expresses common consent and dissent. He loves Joseph. He and Joseph III get on, even though they debate about things and don't always agree, but they're loyal to each other. So, you can be a dissenter, you can speak a truth, but you can love people at the same time, and be loyal and faithful to both the gospel and to each other. He embodies that. He starts the Sunday school movement and encourages and supports the Sunday school movement, which is a really important discipleship tool in the Reorganization. And the

other thing he does, he starts the reunion tradition and that's really important too, a taste of Zion for a week. So, he's part of the weaving of the early Reorganization in a very significant way. He becomes superannuated, that means he gets his pension, when he's 81. He's been ordained a patriarch for six years, so he's 81. And when I gave my talk last week, I found somebody in the audience said, "He married my grandparents when, in 1915," and he's 89 at this age. And, there's a photograph of him, white-haired, white beard, but his handwriting on the marriage certificate is not shaky. It's firm and clear, and almost copperplate. So, I'm impressed with Charles Derry. He dies at the age of 96. He makes a marvelous contribution to the Reorganization. He's a good example of what faithful discipleship is.

Karin Peter 48:24

So, this summer, as we're at reunions, as we engage in our Sunday school classes, we'll think about Charles Derry and the contribution that he's made to our own lives as we go forward in our discipleship. So, Andrew, we have a lot of folks listen to *Project Zion* who come from the Latter-Day Saint tradition. How does Charles Derry's story speak to them? What does it say to them and their story?

Andrew Bolton 48:55

So, Charles Derry understands your struggle and faced even greater disillusionment and a crisis of faith. He really would get your story and he'd listen with such empathy to your struggles. But then he found in the Reorganization, renewed faith, new hope. The cause of Zion was alive and well again. So, his story would, is an encouragement, I think, for Latter-day Seekers, because he was one. And in a way, if we were, we don't have saints, patron saints in the Catholic sense in our church, but if we did, he might be the patron saint of Latter-day Seekers.

Karin Peter 49:56

I love that, Andrew. That's a really lovely way to express that. I think we have unofficial saints in Community of Christ.

Andrew Bolton 50:03

We're all called to be saints.

Karin Peter 50:07

Absolutely. So, I want to thank both of you for being with us today, both Andrew Bolton and Jewell Bolton, and, Jewell, thank you for singing the hymn. I very much appreciate that. So, for our listeners, you can find Andrew's lecture about Charles Derry at historicsitesfoundation.org in the archives, along with many other lectures from the Spring 2022 Lecture Series. For a "Cuppa Joe", part of the *Project Zion Podcast*, I'm Karin Peter. Thanks for listening.

Josh Mangelson 50:50

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