

# Mar 24 2023 What's Brewing Kirtland editedaudio 3-7-23

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## SPEAKERS

Josh Mangelson, Roger Rose, Brittany Mangelson

### **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.

### **Brittany Mangelson** 00:34

Hello, everyone, welcome to another episode of Project Zion Podcast. This is Brittany Mangelson. And I'm going to be your host for today. And I am really, really excited about this interview. And I know that I say that every time and I know that I say, but I really am excited about this interview every time. And so, I'm just gonna say it again, I'm really excited about this interview, we're going to be adding to our What's Brewing series where we talk about mission and current happenings and what's going on in the life of Community of Christ. And the topic for today is What's Brewing at the Kirtland Temple. We have on Roger Rose, who is the director of the Kirtland Temple. And we are going to get just an update about what's going on in Kirtland. So, Roger, before we dive into the Kirtland Temple, let's get an introduction from you. So, tell us who you are, where you're at, and just kind of a high-level overview of you.

### **Roger Rose** 01:33

Well, I'm technically Dr. Roger Alan Rose. I have a doctorate in curriculum and diversity studies. And I have been working as the director of the Kirtland Temple Visitor's Center, museum, technically spiritual formation office for just over a year. Started in January last year. And I'm just learning the ropes and having a wonderful time. I feel very blessed to live here in Kirtland. It's a beautiful town. Today, there's no snow even so there, they said there was going to be but there isn't. And it's probably about 50 degrees outside, and everybody's walking their dog as I'm looking out the window. And it's just an honor to be here, I hope that I do a good job for you all.

### **Brittany Mangelson** 02:16

So, let's talk about the temple. The Kirtland Temple is very, very loved and important with a lot of groups within the Restoration and in Community of Christ, I feel like it's almost become this thing in our background, in our culture, in our history, in our current way of being, and yet it almost—not like gets overlooked, but like maybe a little bit compared to the temple and independence, the iconography of it, the temple and Independence seems to be a little more at the forefront. And so, I'm really excited to hear what is happening at the Kirtland Temple today and just kind of get an update in a, I don't want to say post COVID world, but in this new world, where we're figuring out how to live with COVID. And just to see the importance of the Kirtland Temple, in the life of the church today. So, with that, why don't you introduce us to the temple. So, if you were to give people a three to five- minute overview of the purpose, the history of this space, what would you say to people?

**Roger Rose 03:18**

A three-minute tour? Well, that's gonna be tough, but I'll do my best. So, the temple is a building that is very important for so many different reasons. But from where I'm sitting, it is a place where the church got its start. It's a place where the theology of the church was just at the very beginning of being articulated. So, the people that were here at the time that it was being built, are very important and essential to this. The temple, in a way is a manifestation. It's a symbol of the dedication that they had, in this very, very new frontier, that they were calling the Church of Christ in some contexts and the Church of the Latter Day Saints in other contexts. So the structure of the buildings originally would have sat on 156 acres of Temple Lot right here in Kirtland, which takes up most of what we now call Old Town Kirkland, where most of the older homes are located. Of that 156 acres, about 10 acres or so would have been considered the public square. And the early Saints actually wanted there to be three buildings to be built on the public square, which is kind of an interesting thing that a lot of people are not aware of. So just imagine three different temples, each having or serving a different function. One of them would have been dedicated for worship, one would have been dedicated as a printing office, and an administrative building, and one would have been set aside for education. They couldn't afford one building, let alone three building There's no way that they were going to build three buildings. And I'm sure that the people living in Kirtland at the time were really interested in the idea of there being a public square that had three religious buildings on it that are very big. So, I'm sure that there were interesting conversations, but to no avail, there's no way they could have afforded it. The original design of the building, then, already, the seeds of those three buildings had to be incorporated into one building. So that idea, that obviously came out of Joseph Smith Jr's head, were incorporated into one building. So, the building is a place of worship, it's a place of education, and it's a place of ordering the church, which is really the same structural and functional ideas for the Independence Temple. So, if you were to walk into the Independence Temple today, you would see a place of epic worship, a place of education, and a place of administrative ordering for the church. So, the two are a lot closer in their form and function than people might really take into consideration. The building is built as an interesting architectural style. The people that originally built the building wanted the building to be built out of huge stone. There's no way that the people could afford the time that it was going to take to carve the stone, it would have taken a decade or more. So, they decided they would use brick. But the brick that they fired, didn't have enough clay or the right combination for the recipe. So, they couldn't use brick, the brick failed. And luckily, about that same time, one of three master craftsmen came into town. He was from Canada. His name was Artemis Millet. And he knew how to build a building out of something called rubble stone, a Canadian technique. So, he took charge of the responsibility and got

everybody involved in the process of going into the nearby quarries and pulling out all kinds of sizes of stone, sandstone, bringing it back to the temple, and incorporating that into the building. He also had a really great recipe for the stucco that would be on the outside that would cover everything to protect it and put all of that together into beautiful building. Realizing of course, that these are not architects, these are master craftsmen. So, they're listening to the views of these people that are part of the First Presidency and attempting to articulate that to the worker bees. And master craftsmen were all trained out of the same series of books by person, an Asher Benjamin. And Asher Benjamin incorporated all kinds of different architectural styles into his books. So, the craftsman, they all incorporated a series of different types of architectural styles into the building. There's quoins, for example, on the corners, coins are spelled q u o i n s. They're these things that kind of look like Lincoln logs in the corners. Well, that's a Georgian design. There's also Gothic windows that would look like most religious buildings of the time. There's Greek revival in the building because of the gable roof. And there's federal style dormers on it. So, when you put all of that together, and then you put this Canadian stucco on the outside, it is a really weird hodgepodge of different architectural styles. And yet, somehow or other, it manages to come out, okay. They incorporate a lot of woodworking and craftsmanship into the lower court, a lot less on the second level of the building. And then even less when they get to the third floor of the House of Order it was called. It was dedicated on March 27, to 1836. And shortly after it was dedicated, the church started to run into all kinds of problems financially, but also infighting within the group of people. So as an attempt to try and create more flow of money, a bank was created. Of course, the church didn't have permission to have a bank. So, when they put together the bank, and they started printing notes, the state found out about it. Obviously, people in Kirtland let the state know about it. And before indictments could take place, they decided to turn all of the money into anti-money. So, they scratched the word anti into the plates, and they reprinted the plates that they could or just wrote on the bills, that this isn't really money. This is anti-money. And even then, the bank only stood around for just a few months. In fact, before people in the town realized that if they bought up as many notes as they could, and then demanded specie for the notes, specie being silver or gold, it would put a run on the bank and the bank would fail. So, it did by 1839. The bank was completely closed. The indictments started to fly. People were infighting among themselves because there's a lot of people within the Church lost a lot of money in the process. I always picture of the scene and it's a wonderful life where there's a run on the bank. I see These people are running down the street trying to get their money out of the bank, or they had to close up and they just ran out of money. Bottom line is Joseph Smith Jr. and all Oliver West. And it's just sad. But a lot of people lost their money. But at the same time, it is another testament to their attempt to try their very best to create an economy and good fortune for the members of the Church. The last thing that really took place then before the great exodus heading toward Missouri, was an attempt to try and rent the building to a Teachers Academy in the area called the Western Reserve Teachers Seminary. And they actually signed a lease for three years. And after the first winter, they couldn't take it. Because the winters really cold, and there's no insulation. There were fireboxes by then put in the basement of the temple, but it just wasn't warm. So, they just couldn't handle it. So, they broke their lease after the first year, and they escaped also. And even after that point, there were still people living in Kirtland that were members of the church. By early 1840s. There were about 500 people left in Kirtland that were members of the church. And most of them were eventually expected to move on to Nauvoo. And most of them did, but even then, there were still folks left behind. There's always been some group of people here since that time that associated with at least one or more of the different Restoration faith traditions. And then even after 1844, for the

temple, that's one of the faux pas around here that, that somehow the temple was left completely vacant. There was always somebody here that claimed ownership of the building, they gave tours of the building, etc. So that's the basic three-minute thing that would probably went more than three minutes. Sorry,

**Brittany Mangelson 11:43**

No, that background is really important, right? Because this is a pillar part of our community in our history, and has helped shape who we are since its beginning right. Since the beginning of the temple. And I will say that some of these stories surrounding Kirtland and the whole banking situation, they were wild for me to encounter for the first time. The history of the Kirtland era is fascinating. And then there's stories of the dedication and everything. And so, this is, this is a really important part of our church. That background is absolutely important. Now, I'm curious about your personal history with the temple. How did you become the director?

**Roger Rose 12:26**

Long story also. I first came to Kirtland in 1979. I was a junior in high school, and I lived in Minnesota at the time and the Minnesota districts under the direction of a Marilyn Smith and Terry Smith, who now live in Southern Florida. They decided that they would have a caravan and none of us knew what caravan was in those days. So, Denny Klinefelter, and a few people from the Woodbine area of southern Iowa came up for retreat. And they sold us on what caravan was. So, she put together a weeklong trip and we got on a bus and went all the way to Palmyra and then came back through Kirtland spent a couple of days here. And it was my first experience. And I fell in love with the building. I fell in love with the community and vowed that someday I would come back and see the place. In college I was a psychology and sociology major. And I ended up having a third major after going to Graceland University. But while I was there, I had the great fortune although painful encounter of people in my generation of taking the LDS history class with a dear friend now named Alma Blair. And Anna Blair was an amazing, wonderful teacher. But my generation was not taught what we learned in that class. And we went through a lot of painful deconstruction—maybe like what you were talking about, you know, in terms of the banking structure and all that. Alma Blair was brilliant teacher, but I was just angered by the entire experience. And, you know, I almost quit the church really almost gave up. I was in Aaronic teacher in those days, and I remember having lots of conversations with him. And I was ready to just chuck the whole thing. And I'm glad I didn't. In fact, he invited me to come to Nauvoo, the following summer, the summer of 1982. And as a result of that experience, and major in Psych and Soc, and having all of this experience along the way. I have to admit that the deconstruction and the reconstruction process of the professor's I had including Howard Booth and Bill Russell was a wonderful man and Tom Patton and Paul Edwards and Claire Villahos. All of those folks were people that held our hands, they held my generation's hands, as we got through that deconstruction and reconstruction. And by the time I was ready to go on to the Nauvoo internship in '82 I was ready to go. A lot of people that ended up going to that internship in 1982, were not as prepared with the deconstruction I think as I was. In fact, my girlfriend at the time later became my wife, she went to that internship also. And I think that's probably about the time that we decided to get married. I learned about how to cope with the turbulence that my generation was encountering, but also how to communicate effectively in a large setting, in spite of the turbulence. And there were turbulent years, this was 1982. So, there was still a lot of anger among people of both the Latter Day Saints Church and

the RLDS church in those days. And we didn't get along well, as well as we do now with that other organization. So, it was a very tumultuous summer. Let's just put it that way. I remember a lot of arguing a lot of anger, we were not as polite in Nauvoo, as we are. Now, we tended to not allow people to go and visit the Smith cemetery in those years without going through our spiel. And that was that was, it was very stressful because of that policy, and others like it, but in any sense. The following summer, my wife and I got married. And back then, if you made it through the Nauvoo internship with good enough grades, because Alma was the professor again. So, he was tough. And if you did well, that the church would contact you and invite you to go on to one of the other church historic sites and back then you could go to independence, you could stay in Lamoni, or you could go on to Kirtland. Well, after we got married Ken Stobaugh, who was the director of all of the sites in those days contacted us and invited us to spend the summer of 1982 in Kirtland. So, we were about to go to grad school, we didn't have anything to do. So, we came out to Kirtland. And again, I fell in love with Kirtland all over again. It was Nauvoo light, even in 1984. It's just a more pleasant environment. We know of a lot more intrigue now than we did in '84, that was going on in Kirtland. So, we interpreted the site differently. But at the same time, we believed that it was just what we accepted in RLDS tradition in those years that somehow, we were more associated with the Kirtland era than we were the Nauvoo era, thinking that somehow the Kirtland era was just an easier time. We know differently now, but it's now a different time, in that we get along better with all of the different Restoration groups. Then after that summer, we went on to grad school and in my church life, I ended up taking high school kids on caravans to all of the churches, historic sites a couple times. And that was just wonderful. And I kept in touch with the people that were involved in the leadership over the years. In fact, I met Seth Bryant, he invited me to come and act as the adjunct a few years back. So, I came to Kirtland again. And that summer, in fact, I was finishing my dissertation and having no idea that I was going to end up writing a church history kind of thing for my dissertation. So, I spent the summer finishing my dissertation in the shadow of the temple, which was kind of a wonderful thing. And then just a few years ago, the day I retired, I got this weird call from Lach Mackay. And he said, "What are you doing for the rest of your life? What do you want to do for your second career?" And I said, I didn't really have any plans as such. And he said, "Well, I'd like you to think about coming and being the new director in Kirtland." Well, he kept calling. We talked to each other every couple of weeks. And, and finally, my wife and I sat down, we really had a nice conversation. And we didn't want to make it just coming back as a romantic thing. I needed to really understand it. So, about a year, year and a half ago, I started coming up just to kind of get a feel for things. And then I started on January 3, in 2022. And it's been a wonderful year. That's how I got here today. Anyway,

**Brittany Mangelson 18:57**

I love it. I love the deep personal history that you have with the Kirtland Temple. And your comment from Lach made me giggle a little bit. "What are you going to do for the rest of your life?" That's how retirement works these days I hear. So, I'm really glad that you said yes, though, because it seems like you directing the Kirtland Temple in the Kirtland site in general is a really great fit. So since becoming the director, what has been your main focus? Can you talk a little bit about the goals for the space?

**Roger Rose 19:30**

You know, we were closed for two years because of COVID. That lasted really into the beginning of May, we didn't really open until last May (2022) and in the interim from January to May, most of my

focus then was really just learning from the staff. I've been probably the most blessed first boss of any place, because the staff has just been so phenomenal. And it's different from any other place that I've worked because everybody here except me is volunteer. And yet they're, they're just compassionate, but also passionate about the site. They work me into the ground, I cannot keep up with the volunteer staff. They're working all the time, and they gently guide me along the way, I can't thank them enough. I think probably in that process, the biggest exploration that I had to make was just learning how the system worked, so that we could pump life back into it. And it doesn't sound like it's that big of a deal, just turn the lights on. But it is after sitting still, for two years, it was difficult. The lights wouldn't work, or the video system wouldn't work, the electronic stuff, all the computers didn't work. And it took a lot of time and effort to get all of that working. Since then, I think probably my biggest focus has been on maintaining the facility and getting even now areas like in our units, the internet doesn't work that well. We have several units where interns and volunteer staff live when they're here, getting those types of things repaired and fixed. Just trying to keep the building itself up. And keeping up with all of the maintenance schedule that we go through. There's always something happening to maintain either the historic site itself or a visitor center or one of our units. And probably related to that, then I think my biggest focus these days is recruitment. We are a group of volunteers in this team. We have several people that come for a week or two or three or a month. And we're always engaged in trying to find adult volunteers that are willing to give up a little bit of their time. If they're a teacher, and they want to come during the summer or if they've just retired, they're looking for an adventure for a month or so. And as that is done, we have now learned to accept the willingness of some Latter Day Saint couples that have come and we call it the great experiment around here because we ask a great deal of our volunteers who come from the Latter Day Saint tradition, because they have to put on the face of the Community of Christ. And that's not an easy task. I think it would be very difficult for me to take off my mask of Community of Christ and put on an LDS type of mask. So that's been a challenge. But also finding COC staff volunteers that are willing to give us some time. People are getting older, and some of our former staff members that were volunteers, it's just more difficult for them to just pick up and leave and come here for a few weeks. So, a few of our units sit idle to some degree, and we want to fill those. So, we're always engaged in looking for retirees or people that are just interested in coming and spending a few weeks. And that also includes the internship. The internship continues. Ironically, it's now called the Alma Blair internship, named after my professor. And the internship goes on in Nauvoo the way it did before. And it goes on here. And we have enough funding, at least in Kirtland for us to have six interns, and I'm flirting closely with about four interns. And I'm hoping that they accept the invitation and come and work for us, the internship last 12 weeks, we give them a place to stay. And it's a wonderful experience for a person that's about 19 or 20 years old. Beyond that, we are constantly engaged in interpretation at the site. So, I'm in the process of rewriting and tweaking the way in which we approach the site because good interpretation is what we do, we are a historic site. And I look toward trying to maintain and create proper interpretation based on solid historical evidence and so forth. We follow the church's guidelines on history. And we want to maintain the idea that maybe what we know now may not be what we know tomorrow. So, we're always engaged in that. All of the people volunteer their time, but they also are engaged in time off when they are reading and studying and preparing for their interpretation here at the site too. And part of that, from my perspective, as a person that's very interested in curriculum comes down to designing curriculum. And I find it very, very necessary that if there is a curriculum that's going to be presented to the church, we're better for it to be written than in the shadow of the temple and Nauvoo, because that's where our history is. So we're

engaged in talking about curriculum and the process of writing a curriculum at some point in the future. And I've laid the groundwork, as you know, for some of that even now, and we're slowly working toward making sure that such a curriculum would not be a whitewashed American curriculum, but would incorporate the diversity that exists within the church and where the church had its start in other areas, because that is just as important as anything else.

**Brittany Mangelson 25:04**

I love everything you just said, I so appreciate the idea that the Kirtland Temple is still actively being studied, the Kirtland era is still actively being studied and the narrative that we use to tell our story, we're analyzing it. We're trying to be authentic and have integrity with how we tell our story. And I think that historical integrity is so important. And it's not like, "Oh, we figured this story out. And so here's how we're going to tell it." We're actively seeking deeper understanding of our own history and how that impacts us today. And so, the way that you phrase that and how it's this active living, breathing thing, even though it's a historical building, is so important to me.

**Roger Rose 25:53**

We like to call ourselves interpreters rather than tour guides, because it leaves the door open for us to reinterpret. A tour that I give today may not be the same tour that I'll give in a month because of some new piece of information that we come across. It is a living entity in that sense.

**Brittany Mangelson 26:11**

Yeah. I absolutely love that. So, this might be maybe an obvious question, or with an obvious answer, but maybe not. In general terms, how is the temple used within Community of Christ, whether that be the larger Kirtland community, like the congregation or the Mission Center, the larger Restoration community, what's its relationship just to the world?

**Roger Rose 26:39**

You know, in terms of the Community of Christ, there was a Kirtland congregation, when it first began here as the RLDS Community of Christ, they actually existed as a congregation in the Kirtland Temple, and they used the building. Even the basement was used for senior high class and so forth, even though there's a dirt floor down there. And, and it was like that well into the 20th century in the 1950s, and 60s, until the building across the street from the temple was built. And so, in that sense, there's always been a church connection, going back from the very beginning. In the 1890s, a bell was added, the apostle at the time a person named Gomer Griffith, managed to find a bell and purchase the bell, at a really good price. He had the bell installed. And as a result of the bell, the temple took on a different community interest, because it would be the alarm if there was some problem in the small village. In those days, they could get to the bell, ring the bell of Fire Brigade would show up, figure out where they had to go, and so forth. If there was an emergency, they could use the bell for that. So, the community has always had a presence, even from the beginning. The Kirtland High School met in the building in 1836. So that went on for quite some time. There is a sense, since then I mean, obviously bringing that up to today's date. The motto of the Kirtland community is faith in beauty, we are the city of faith in beauty. And there are quite a few really old and beautiful parishes and churches in the town. So now that the temple sits in the community of other faith traditions, and is rightfully in its place, not as a relic, but as a symbol of the growth of the religious institutions in this community. And as such, there are

community events, community worship services that have taken place for decades, in the temple. For the longest time, there was a Thanksgiving Day service that took place in the temple for the whole community. We have a Christmas Eve service that often takes place in the temple for the whole community, and the community adopts it. Now there may be times where there are members of the community that don't quite understand the relationship between what Community of Christ is and what the Latter Day Saint Ward is down the street. They don't quite get that sometimes. But the vast majority of people in the town do understand that and they know at least that they're not the same entity, and yet they will come to worship services. And we have an ecumenical council that exists that we have lunch once a month. And we talk about the different activities that are taking place. And it has been a very important opportunity for our church to meet with members of the ward and members of historic Kirtland and folks that are involved at the state level and Latter Day Saint church, because when they come often, they don't know anybody because they've just gone through the transition of a new person coming in. So, they'll come in and they'll sit with us because they'll see us, they know us they've met us already. It is cool. created an opportunity for unity among those two organizations. But I also think about the Episcopal folks and the Catholic people, they love us because we have something, even if it's just sitting over a meatball sandwich or whatever we can have this moment where we're talking about the 5k run that's going to be taking place next week or tomorrow is pancake breakfast at Community of Christ. So, it gives us an opportunity to speak as an ecumenical council. And I just think that it is taking its rightful place in that sense. In addition to that, though, honestly, the high school still, over the last few decades, the high school has been actively engaged in using the building from time to time, the football program at the Kirtland High School is one of the best in the States. So, it's not uncommon to have somebody call me and say, hey, we'd like to have a pep rally in the lower court. I know that sounds really crazy. But they honestly will have a pep rally in the lower court. And they will march their parade from the High School, which is about two blocks to myself up to the temple, which is about two blocks to my North right now. And they'll come in and they'll play their pep rally music and the superintendent will stand up and the mayor will have something to say and the Chief of Police will have something to say and then the quarterback will have somebody there. It amazes me, but it is really a community building. Now in terms of worship, obviously, we have worship services from time to time, any of the Latter Day Saint tradition, churches can contact me and they can come and have a worship service or retreat in the building. Most of the time that falls into one of three categories. It's either a Latter Day Saints retreat of some type or conference, worship service for the elders and the sisters that are going out on their mission, or it's one of our retreats or it's a restorationist retreat. Just in another few months, we'll have another big restoration retreat. It's used a lot more than people might think. It's not just a museum, it's not just a relic. It is something that is actively engaged.

**Brittany Mangelson 31:57**

Everything from pep rallies to meaningful worships, I love that. I love that it's been maintained as a community building. And it's not just a closed off, only for Community of Christ are only for folks in the Restoration. That other denominations, other faiths and just the community at large have access to it and can use it as a historical building. That is super important. I'm wondering too, I came from the LDS church, and I know some misconceptions that I had when I attended the Kirtland Temple as a youth. And I know some of the misconceptions that might be floating around from that perspective. Can you name some of them, and maybe some misconceptions that come from other places as well? It's one of



those things where the word temple is used. It's a historic site. People probably know it's related to Joseph Smith somehow, but what are your biggest misconceptions that you run across?

**Roger Rose 33:01**

I think in terms of misconceptions, it's an element of the tour to have people drop their mouth open, when they hear certain stories that kind of fly in the face of their seminary class or their primary class when they were kids. Because there are a lot of interesting things that people believe have taken place in the building that it just didn't happen like that. I think probably two or three of them that just come to mind. I think probably the most common misconception is the sparkly effect of the temple. You know, obviously, the stucco that is on the temple now was added in 1955. And it's a concrete kind of stucco. It's called Gunitite. It's like the stuff you'd spray in a swimming pool. But the original stucco did have a glitter. So, I don't know if in your primary class but in Sunday school, I was taught that the women gave their fine china so that they could donate it to the temple and fine china gave this glistening effect. Well, if you've ever dropped fine china accidentally on the floor, it doesn't suddenly start glistening. For one thing, fine china is not something that glistens for one thing. But also, these are people that are dirt poor that have moved into Kirtland very few families had enough money to where they would have had fine china. If anything, they sold their china to help pay for the passage when they were coming from Europe or they sold it to go down the Erie Canal from New York to come here. So, unless your last name was Young, or Tanner, that kind of thing, you probably didn't have a lot of fine china. So, the thing that made the temple glisten was glass, there was glass in that recipe that Artemus Millet brought along with him. And ironically, this is kind of weird because the original master craftsman. The first guy on the scene was guy named Jacob Bump. He actually stole and patented the recipe from Artemus Millet, which is kind of an interesting little sub story too. But in that recipe, they had to go throughout the community and look for pieces of glass and pottery, but they never said anything in the recipe about fine china. I'm sure that some people gave some fine china. In fact, in 1955, there's a legend that a young girl in the congregation gave her fine china to be ground up into the Gunitite and it's in a specific location, but you can't see it. And even if you could, it wouldn't have glistened. So that's the first one didn't gleam because of the fine china. Another one that I've come across, a lot of people will ask this really weird question. So was the temple defiled by animals. There is absolutely no evidence that any farm animals were ever brought into the lower court where there are these stalls, these little pew box things. Anybody that's ever been to any kind of farm knows that they're not big enough for any kind of animal, you couldn't even put sheep in these little teeny pew boxes. It's a myth, that kind of thing never happened. Although there were weeping holes in the building, there still are. There's two on each side there probably about four inches by five inches, and they were empty holes that would allow any of the moisture in the building to escape. So, from day one, there were critters in the building, I'm telling you anything, they could climb into one of those little holes, snake, raccoon, whatever, would have gotten in there. So, I guess in that sense, there were animals, but there was never any farm animals. One thing that I've just come across very recently, is the selling of the temple. This has been going on since the beginning. I'll have guests that show up—LDS folks often—we've heard that you're returning the temple back to the LDS church soon. Is that the case? And I'll just say, returning No, never going to be returned. I don't really know if I like that word anyway. But there is no imminent decision about selling the temple to anybody. In fact, last week, I know you're not going to believe this. But we had a phone call and an email from somebody very concerned about us selling the building. I know you're not going to leave it to Elon Musk. No, we have not sold. I'm saying it publicly, we have not sold the building to

Elon Musk, please don't think that he's going to be coming out here and using it for whatever Elon Musk would need for the temple that has not been sold and the idea of it being sold in the imminent future. I know of nothing that is on the forefront. But I'm pretty confident that that's not going to happen. My absolute favorite misconception is the singing of "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning" during the dedication service. The congregation did not sing "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning" during the dedication. In fact, we don't even know exactly what the melody was for "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning in 1836. The choir under the direction of WC Davis and WW Phelps. They did sing, "The Spirit God Like a Fire is Burning". We just don't know exactly what the melody was at the time. And it's interesting, because that's one of these very important, I think, elements that were planted into the church and evolved into different things. We don't sing the song the same way, among the different Restoration faith traditions, we sing it slightly different. Some of the groups don't even sing it to the same melody. And I think that that's kind of an interesting thing. Interesting little misconceptions.

**Brittany Mangelson 38:14**

Fascinating. But man, Elon Musk.

**Roger Rose 38:17**

I think that part of the misconception thing that there is an assumption among members of the Community of Christ, and among the Latter Day Saints that we're the only two groups that exist. But the fact that there are other organizations out there that sing the song differently than we do, I think it's probably a good idea to note that there's at least five or six, maybe seven different groups out there that all call this building their sacred space. And I think that that's an important element of this part of our responsibility. I believe, as the managers, the stewards of the building are to let people out there know that there are still Bickertonites out there. There's like 23 or 24,000 Bickertonites still living in Pennsylvania. And they see this as their sacred space. There are still 7000 or so Hedrickites that still exist, the temple lot folks in Independence, they're still there. They see this as their sacred space. There are at least two different Restorationist groups that have come and had retreats here. They see it as their sacred space too. The Remnant itself has about 1500 people, I believe, in Independence. There are still Strangites. I know, nobody would believe that. But I think there's about 100 Strangites left. I have given tours to members of the FLDS organization. That's an interesting experience. So we have we have all of these different groups. We're just a rainbow of different diverse ideas. And that's one of the misconceptions, I think that sometimes we assume.

**Brittany Mangelson 39:45**

Yeah, I'm really glad that you brought that up. I was at a seminary focus session in Independence several years ago and there was a group of fundamentalist Mormons that were on their own little church history site tour and they were in Independence at the temple. And then they were headed to Kirtland and all the stops in between. And I think that it's really refreshing to have Community of Christ folks recognize other denominations within this movement with a level of respect and shared brotherhood sisterhood, sibling hood of having these sacred spaces and that theological curiosity that we can enter some spaces that might not be super comfortable for us. I'm thinking of Independence and the LDS Visitor Center and the Temple Lot, they've got a visitor center right there. And then of course, Community of Christ Temple. So, I just really appreciate you acknowledging that, that even in

Kirtland, this is a space and a history that belongs to all of us. And that respectful shared experience I think, is really, really, really important.

**Roger Rose 40:49**

I believe that speaks to the difference of having a tour guide. And being an interpreter again, because knowing the history is not about attempting to try and prove our doctrinal perspective. It's about dispelling the argument. Because if a person from any of the different organizations wants to pick a fight, the easiest thing to do is to have good history. Because if there's good history, and you know about the historic interpretation based on good history, it tends to lower the tension in the group. And it just makes the entire experience a more accepting kind of, and very diverse opportunity. It's not to say that we don't have lots of interesting discussions. But I think the fact that we constantly are engaged in telling the public that our intention is to do good history, we want to find good history, and we're going to try and dispel some of those myths in the process. As a result, you'd be very surprised at the number of people that will stick around after their family goes out to the car, and ask us questions that we have the ability to openly discuss, not because we're attempting to try and proselyte our perspective, but because we're historians, and they want to know, you know, there are people out there that just want to know, they want to know about that doggone china in the stucco. They want to know about that. And we can try and dispel some of those myths and make the folks that were here in the 1830s more palatable, more attainable. I think because of that.

**Brittany Mangelson 42:28**

That's beautiful. As you were talking, it just really hit me that there's not a lot of opportunity for ecumenical dialogue or work within the Restoration. As far as from theology, or spirituality or spiritual practices. The divisions feel too close to home, right, or like too personal. It's not neutral, I guess, is what I'm saying. So, the way that we can do ecumenical relationship building, and really, the work is through our history. And so, I really think that it's so important to maintain that level of neutral. This is we're telling the story, we're telling the story, we're not going to argue theology, we're not going to argue, I know, specifically with the Kirtland Temple, there's a lot of different interpretation of things that literally happened, or did they see things with their spiritual eyes, or their physical eyes, those kinds of things. But it's like, let's just tell the story. What a beautiful place, that shared sense of heritage can really come alive in conversations that I don't think can happen in other avenues. Because as soon as you start talking theology or spirituality, ordinances, sacraments, things like that, that's when things get really divisive and painful.

**Roger Rose 43:46**

It's not to say that we know where we are now that our interpretation is finite. And we know exactly what we'll be thinking a month from now. We have grown so much. The new Mormon history just changed everything for us. And I applaud those folks like Alma Blair, that held our hands. I appreciate that. I do think that it's important that we realize that there were seeds planted here that did not end up being accepted in the RLDS tradition, and yet they exist here. We're not going to try and go down a road for the purpose of trying to dispel another faith traditions doctrine. But if the conversation comes up, I want our guides, our interpreters, to have a solid understanding of the history so that we can say that seed was planted here. People will sometimes ask, you know, I'll be on a tour and we'll get to the second floor and I'll mention the curtains that were dropped. And they'll say, "Well, are those the veils?"

And I'll say well, downstairs, they would have referred to them as veils, but understand that the concept of the veil here, both veils that would have been on the first floor here, were there because of an early interpretation. of the meaning of veils, that would have been a Pentecostal experience that would lend itself for an attempt to try and create sacred space holy of holies space for people in different areas around the room so that they could have a number of different worship services taking place at the same time. And yet, that small seed the word veil, or the word endowment, the way it meant in 1836, is a totally different thing just a few years later, once they get into the 1840s. So that concept is easy for a member of the RLDS tradition, or any of the different traditions maybe to say, "Well, that just didn't happen. That never happened." Well, it's complicated, but it's historic. And I think that if we really do a good job of telling that kind of story, I think it doesn't hurt a person on their summer vacation, but it does give them food for thought.

**Brittany Mangelson 45:54**

Absolutely. And it's fascinating, because these are the kinds of things that a lot of Latter-day Seekers, folks who come from the LDS tradition, who are interested in Community of Christ, have to deconstruct at some point, right, these words veil, endowment, what do they mean? And I remember asking Lach, who was the first guest minister to reunion that I attended, very pointed questions like, "Okay, give it to me straight. This word, this word..." and I'm pretty sure that both of those words, were definitely on my list. And I think at the time, he was the director of the Kirtland Temple, I think at the time, he was our guest minister, but either way, he knows his stuff, right. So, these are important words, because we so often take our modern interpretation, whatever that looks like, that's presentism, right, and impose them on something that was not reality back in the 1830s. That's extremely, extremely important for folks to realize. You've shared a lot of stories about the Kirtland Temple, but I'm wondering if you have any other favorite stories about the space, whether they be historical or stories of the space in today's world.

**Roger Rose 47:07**

There's all kinds of interesting little tidbit stories that you run across. But I think probably my alltime favorite moment. And I don't get to talk about this that often, because it's not really part of the tour. But to make a long story short, the pew boxes that were on the second floor of the building, when the Teachers Academy came in, in 1837, and 1838, they removed many of the cue boxes on the second floor because they wanted there to be an opportunity for lecture hall. And the only ones that were left were the ones that were in the four corners of the room. Now the inner court on the second floor and the inner court on the first floor, the lower court, Upper Court, they're very similar in their layout. But those four corners were left as original. They weren't replaced and rebuilt for years and years and years. So, whenever I go into the Second Court on a tour, we usually enter from the south side of the building. So, we'll go up the south stairs, and we'll go into the second floor through the door on the south side of the building. And every single time that I walk in there, I want to stop and tell them about Earl Curry. I don't even know if you've ever heard of Earl Curry. But Earl Curry in the Community of Christ tradition, or the RLDS tradition, for years was known as the man of the temple. He was a person whose family moved here when he was young. And then he went off, I can't remember where he went to school. I'm sorry. But he came back to Kirtland with a degree in ceramic engineering, he had worked as a ceramicist or whatever they were referred to, where he made things out of ceramics in the industrial sense. And he gave all of that up to come and live here. And he spent about three or more

decades, renovating the temple in lived here from the late 30s until the mid to late 50s. And in the process of doing that, he redid all kinds of different things. He fixed the plaster he repainted. He came up with different ways of making sure that the site could be maintained. He invented his own tools so that he could make the things happen. He was a genius. And every single day, this is the story. Every single day that he came into the temple, he would go to a specific place on the second floor in the corner of the first corner on the south east side of that room, and he would sit down for an hour and pray. And every time I walk into that, I can't help but turn to the left and see him sitting there. Now, he's not really sitting there. It's not like I'm having some out of body experience with him. I can see him and the dedication that he had for this building. I get the benefit of now having an opportunity to walk in these enormous footsteps for a person like Earl Curry. And we don't really talk about him that much, unless you're on a basement to bell tower in a different type of tour, where we start in the basement, basically. And we show you the tools that Earl Curry built. He made in order for him to take care of the building. And we go all the way to the bell tower, but we talk about him because we go into his woodshop, his little shop down at the bottom. And I just think I'm standing, obviously, where Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon stood. But even more recently, this person that worked on very little salary, to actually renovate and rebuild this building out of the love that he had for the building. It's an epic moment for me.

**Brittany Mangelson 50:43**

That is lovely. I love that that middle history is something that you're holding onto and uplifting in this podcast, because the story didn't just start and end with Joseph and then suddenly poof, we're here in 2023. That story actually brings me to a question that I have often got about the Kirtland Temple. And I recognize I'm kind of putting you on the spot here. Roger, could you maybe speak to the cracks that are in the Kirtland Temple on the outside. I hear a lot of misconceptions about how Community of Christ is just letting the temple fall apart. Because I know that that's a misconception. And I've heard people talk about this, of why those exist. But if you want, would you share?

**Roger Rose 51:29**

The cracks didn't actually appear in 1955. But the new stucco was put on the building then. And it was not based on Millet and Bumps original recipe it's made out of concrete, it's a concrete mixture. It's called Gunitite and it's sprayed on. When it is sprayed on, it goes into every little teeny nook and cranny within the rubble stone construction. It's never coming down. It's going to be up there until the whole building comes down at some point in an earthquake or something I don't know. But it's never going to come down. But since it's made out of concrete, and since it's thicker than the original stucco, it's heavy. And in some ways the building had to be reinforced. By then, there was a lot of reinforcement taking place because of Earl Curry did a lot of that. But that Gunitite cracks because it's made out of concrete. And as a result, by the time the first cracks began in the early 60s, it had had about five years of just sitting there 1960s technology was to use some chemical that has an oil base to it. So those cracks are not actually cracks. If you go up and look at them close, they're actually repairs on the cracks, but they're made out of some formula that has oil in it. And since there's oil there, even if you paint over it, the oil eventually wears through the paint. And since it's got oil in it, it tends to absorb and hold on to dirt. So, any of the dirt from the environment just from the normal day to day environment of anything, it's going to absorb little pieces of dirt. And even though we can go up there and we can scrub them, it's still there. So, the temple stucco is in good shape. It's not falling down. We are constantly

engaged in painting. The temple is sometimes I've heard it kind of symbolically, um spoken of like it's the Golden Gate Bridge. It's always being painted. Painting costs of fortune. If folks think that we're not doing a good enough job, have them send us some money because it costs a fortune. Just for the insurance of putting painters up there on scaffolding. It's ridiculously expensive. But there's always a painting project going on almost every summer. There's somebody else painting someplace, restoring something, renovating something. And it takes a lot. It takes it takes a village to take care of the thing. And it is a loving process. But when you see any of those cracks, if you come to visit, have your folks ask the interpreter there to explain that because it's they're, they're lines, but they're not endangering cracks. If anything, the Gunitite is a lot more safe than the original stucco because it was falling down in big chunks when they finally had to take it down in 1955.

**Brittany Mangelson 54:23**

Yeah, thank you so much for explaining that. And I think there's probably a sermon in this story somewhere. It's so interesting how we see something that looks scary or it looks like it's falling apart or it looks like it needs to be fixed. But we don't have all the information about it right. And so we make this judgment based on what we can physically see with our eyes and we think it's something that it's not, and yet with a little bit of digging or education, curiosity, the actual answer is not something to be scared of, and arguably like you just said it's stronger than it was before it was restored in the 50s. Thanks for clearing that up.

**Roger Rose 55:01**

Anytime.

**Brittany Mangelson 55:02**

Roger, you mentioned the guides and the interns and things like that earlier. So how are those utilized? So, if we send people to contact you, which we're going to do, what can you tell them about how their experience would be? How are interns and guides and things like that utilized at the space?

**Roger Rose 55:23**

It's important to realize that the Alma Blair internship is formally what it's called now, it has a really long legacy. There are pictures in the Herald from the 60s, where Richard Hawks, and Danny Klinefelter, and some other folks, in their very young, early images, they were guides here. And this is a place where people that I see as mountains in the church got their start. Where some 19 year-old kid walks on to the campus here and feels like they'll never have enough chutzpah to be able to talk to 50 or 60 people in a group and catch their attention and talk in such a way that they can tell a story about the building. And after 12 weeks of being with us, they know more about the building than I do. I mean, they've done their work, and they've done what needs to happen. So, this thing has been going on since the late 70s. I was lucky enough to be invited in 1982. Back then, it was originally designed by Ken Stobaugh and Alma Blair as a way to utilize young people almost in a way that would violate youth worker types of laws now. You know, back when we were kids, when I was 19-20 years old, when they invented this internship, it was designed in such a way that they could utilize us in ways other than simply through guiding and interpreting the site. We chopped wood, we dressed up in living history costumes, and made beeswax candles, we mowed the grass, had to trim the hedges and all of that kind of stuff. They worked us because they couldn't afford to hire the maintenance staff that they

needed in order for them to be able to do what they did. So that's really one of the reasons why this internship began back in the day. It is an epic opportunity, I believe, because you run into people now and then on a tour, they'll just walk up to you and almost in tears, say, I want you to know that in 1993, I was a tour guide here. And this became one of my favorite places. I just say I'm right there with you. I was here in 1984. And it's a I guess I might even call it a fraternity of people that have gone through that experience. You get to know people in a way that you don't in any other capacity by being engaged in learning and interpreting a site like Nauvoo or like Kirtland. And I wish that it wasn't as difficult as it seems to be today to get young people interested. I mean, we're competing against internships with Honeywell, and stuff like that, where the person for the summer gets paid a lot of money. And our internship is less than \$6,000. I think it's around \$5,500, we do give you a place to stay. But really what you're getting paid to do is become associated with a site and learn the history, to love the history, so that you can affectionately tell a story about the experiences that took here. And that's something that is hard to articulate to folks that are 19 or so. It is every bit as worthwhile today, as it was in 1982 and 1984. It is a lot of work. The interns that I've worked with will say I knew it was going to be a lot of work, but you never told me that it was going to be this amount of work. Because we do work you and and the reading—there's a lot to be read. I know that there are interns that have managed to get through the process without reading all that much. But you can tell in the tours that those people that are really engaged in the study, and so forth. Those are the people that are really the ones that do the best job. The day-to-day operations around here things kind of like this. We usually start at nine, which means that a person will get here at eight and there's vacuuming and there's polishing and there's straightening and there's turning the machine on to where it's ready at nine o'clock for guests to come in. There's making sure that there aren't little children fingerprints on the glass, there's making sure that the bathrooms are clean and that when people walk in, they're going to have a wonderful experience because it smells really good in the center and there's reviewing your notes a little bit before you actually go on the first tour. And then when they come and they're coming. July is on their way, and there will be 10 buses here one day, and everybody's engaged. And there's a sea of people running around doing things in the center. The interns are engaged in traffic management and helping people know what's going on, and getting their group together and taking them into the theater and so forth. I think it's just important, a person that age to have an opportunity to to be in that kind of thing is just great. They're also engaged in closing the center down at the end of the day. And there's things that need to be done. We work in a mercantile. So, it's a business, having to balance out and making sure that all of the money is set up correctly, and the till and all that they have to do that they have to help with inventory. Our guides, our interns are engaged in a research project that they do during the summer. Our interns are engaged in helping with the research library, we have a research library here. We have an archive here, there at times engaged in learning how that works. Those are skills that you just can't find anywhere else. And then after everything is said and done. Well, there's also classwork right, because it may not be Alma Blair, but there's this other crazy professor, his name is Seth Bryant, and he is tough as nails. And he expects people to know what's going on. And he's really good at what he does. He's one of the best historians I've met. And his class is epic. And the people are there but they're also engaged in zooming because David Howlett will pop in, or Mark Sherer or Matt Frizelle are somebody that is really knowledgeable about a specific base. And they'll do that on I think it's on Tuesday nights. So, they're constantly engaged in studying and preparing and they're really becoming Junior historians. So, after 12 weeks, I'm telling you, they know more about the church's history than anybody. And when they go off after they graduate from college, and they go into a congregation, and

somebody in the church there finds out that they know all of this history, guess what, unfortunately, they're going to be expected to teach a class and all that kind of thing. But I've seen it happen. It's just the only word I can come up with is that it's an epic opportunity. And I just wish that there were folks that would know how important that is and how it was. And the church can't afford to do it the way they did it back in the day because of labor laws and things. But there were 10 of us, I think in Nauvoo back in 1982. And by the end of the summer, we were running the place, but we were also engaged in an archeological dig. I think there's a dig in Nauvoo this summer. So, two of my interns from last year are going on to Nauvoo this year and they're excited about the dig. It's an epic experience. It's a life changing experience. And anybody out there that's listening to this that knows a 19 year-old person that wants to have somebody hold their hand while they're deconstructing and reconstructing and learning the whole process. Have them contact me because it is that important, I think for the Community of Christ. I sincerely believe that.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:03:01

Absolutely. I wish I could do it. I think it'd be so much fun. I've got a spouse and kids and a job though, but when I retire, that's what I'll do. That's...

**Roger Rose** 1:03:12

Absolutely!

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:03:13

Drag Josh out to Kirtland. Roger, this has been such an interesting conversation. I've learned a lot. And it's been really incredibly enjoyable. So, thank you so much. I always like to leave these conversations, with is there anything else you would like to say? Were there any other stories or bots that you would like to leave us with?

**Roger Rose** 1:03:36

I would really like to meet folks. So, if a person hears your podcast and drops me a note, just to say thank you or to have a question, I'd be happy to answer it. I will be at World Conference, and I'm not a delegate. So that means they'll probably chain me to a desk down in the basement of the auditorium at the Historic Sites Foundation Table. I think that Barb Walden is not going to let me leave. And that's kind of good because I'm going to be recruiting. I'm looking for retired couples, too, that are interested in spending a week or six months up here. We've got a few sites where we can put a person or a couple for several months. We have a need for the Mercantile. We have a need for working in the gardens, we have a need for maintenance. I'm really looking forward to the Community of Christ RVers. I don't know if you've heard about the RV club, but there's a group of people. They just come here every once in a while, and they do this monumental task. Well, this year it's going to be stripping and repainting the Sidney Rigdon house, and I'm really looking forward to watching them do their thing because I've heard really good stories about that. Come and see me at Conference if you're coming or drop me a note. If you're interested. We've got the website. Just look for the website. It's out there and drop me a note if you're interested in coming and spending even a week or so because we're always looking for folks that are interested in a new little adventure where they can come up. Everybody wants to come during October, of course, because that's when the leaves are changing. But we need interns for the summer. But we also need volunteers that are just willing to be here and help with the



Mercantile. And anybody that's got some retail management experience, we'd love to have them or folks that just want to know about the history. Let me just leave you with this. I think every single person that is missionary minded, whether they're a missionary elder, or a seventy, or whoever, I think they need to be here for a time. Those are folks that need to know the story. So that when they are engaged with the public, whether they're folks that are living in Utah, or Idaho, or Arizona, or wherever, anyplace, whether it's some place that's in Kentucky, whatever. If they are engaged in the missionary process, the only way you can really understand the stories if you get into the minds of the people that were here and really read the real research and find out where all of that comes from. And a lot of that is found online. But we've got a phenomenal research library here. And I know there's one in Nauvoo also. And it's a wonderful way to spend a summer but it's also a wonderful way to spend a couple three weeks if a person wants to come in and do that. So please find it in your hearts to consider coming to Nauvoo, coming to Kirtland, and spending some time with us. And for those folks that can't. The Historic Sites Foundation is always graciously willing to take your money. There's, there's always a need for more funding. This thing does not run itself; we don't get tithing. All of our money comes out of the Historic Sites Foundation. And there's always something that needs fixing around here, there's always a need for a new light bulb or a new toner in the printer cartridges and all that kind of stuff. We've got a nice budget and they do a really good job. But that money has to come from someplace. That being said, I have appreciated this sincerely, and I hope that I've done your podcast justice.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:06:58**

Oh, absolutely. I'm so glad that we were able to have this conversation and give you a platform. So will for sure, get your email address and the appropriate websites in the description of this podcast. But do you want to just share your email address if people want to jot it down

**Roger Rose 1:07:13**

My email address, I use my church email address, but you can email me at [rose@kirtlandtemple.org](mailto:rose@kirtlandtemple.org). Our website is [www.KirtlandTemple.org](http://www.KirtlandTemple.org). The email that I use most often is our [rose@cofchrist.org](mailto:rose@cofchrist.org). And that's spelled like this r r o s e @CofChrist. And that spelled C O F C H R I S T.org. And our phone number at the Visitor Center is area code 440-256-1830. A good date you wouldn't forget. Anybody that's interested or has any additional questions. I'm always here, I pretty much live here. So, if you have any questions, give me a call or drop me a note. And I'd be happy to meet with you. I know a lot of Seekers are the people that are interested in your podcast, anybody that goes on a trip and they're heading this direction, and they're just wanting to be in a safe place where they can ask any of those critical questions and do it in a private type of tour without having to worry about people interfering with the question. They're welcome to come to, I would be more than happy to take individual people on a tour and answer any questions. You'd be surprised at the number of times, that kind of thing has happened. And I've managed to be able to get them to Nancy Ross or to Denise Leichter in California and that kind of thing. So, we can find the contacts for people that are interested in meeting certain folks. And the only way we'll know about that is if people contact us so we can get them to the people that they want. But you'd be surprised at the number of times where a person has hung back and asked me the questions that need to be asked but are not easily asked in the community in which they live. So, we're here for them. Hmm, I absolutely love and appreciate that. And it does not surprise me one bit because I've asked all those questions as well. Thank you for that generous offer too, that was very kind. Thank you so much, Roger. This has been a really awesome conversation. And like I said, I've

learned a lot and I've had a lot of fun along the way. Thank you so much. I've enjoyed it. Thank you for the invitation.

**Josh Mangelson** 1:09:44

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