



Church Leadership in the 70s & 80s | Rick Francom, Bill Luker, and Lynn Peterson

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Kurt Francom:

Let's be honest, few humans enjoy meetings, and many feel trapped in meetings. As leaders, we don't want to burden those we lead, but meetings can seem to do that more often than not. We wanted to address the pain of meetings through the Meetings with Saints library. Here we have 15 plus presentations dedicated to improving the meetings we run. We have experts in the field addressing topics like getting people involved in meetings, staying on task, dealing with conflict in meetings, and a ton more. We'd love you to explore the full Meetings with Saints library over 14 days at no cost to you. You can do this by visiting [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14). That's [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14). We'll also give you access to all of our virtual libraries that educate about other leadership topics. It's really good stuff, so visit [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14) or click the link in the show notes. I got an email the other day from an individual, I forget where he is in the world, but he says, Kurt, I love Leading Saints and I listen to it every time I'm on the treadmill. And then one time during an interview, he heard that Leading Saints has a YouTube channel and like all the interviews, at least the vast majority of them are video recorded and you can watch the video recording of the podcast episodes. I'm like, yeah, man, get on there. Go subscribe on YouTube to Leading Saints and you can get a visual of the interview and not just an audio experience. And even if you're not a big YouTube user, do us a favor because this actually helps us gain more reach and expose our content to individuals who could really benefit from it, leaders around the world. So regardless, if you are on YouTube a lot or not, go to YouTube and search for Leading Saints. Find the familiar red logo and just subscribe. Even if you don't plan to view every episode there, that's going to help us gain a larger audience and more reach. Dial in the algorithm and we'll start showing up on leaders feeds that they didn't

know how much they're missing here at Leading Saints. So head on over to YouTube, search for Leading Saints and subscribe to our channel. And leave a comment every once in a while, but be nice. Leading Saints, back on your dial here. Thanks for pressing play. It really means a lot that you'd come here and listen. And hopefully, I always try and make the title as enticing as possible. But nonetheless, you've landed here. And I'm excited for this episode, kind of a personal episode for me, where I'm going to take you on a journey on memory lane here, talking with some people from my past. Because here was the original idea. I've heard stories of church leadership, you know, in our faith tradition from the 60s, 70s, 80s. It was such a different world back then, right? It was different to be a bishop in the 1980s as it is to be a bishop in the 2020s, right? And I was curious, it'd be interesting to hear about that, just like we go to foreign lands or international lands to hear about what's it like being a bishop in Spain or being a bishop in El Salvador or whatever it is. What was it like being a bishop in the 70s or in the 80s? And I put a call out to individuals to participate in that and didn't get too many responses back. And then it occurred to me, wait a minute. I have access to some remarkable mentors from my past who could step up and do this. And one of them being my father, Rick Francom, who's part of this episode. Bill Luker, who was his stake president when my father was bishop. And then Lynn Peterson, who is also a former bishop and in stake presidencies and was bishop during a time, you know, in the early 80s when even we got rid of the block schedule. I'm sorry, when we got the block schedule. Right. And it was a new way to doing church. And so everything from, you know, what was it like doing finances or welfare or leading a meeting? Or what were the concerns that you were really losing sleep over in the in the 1980s that maybe were different than what were we're faced with today. And so it was a fun conversation from some wise minds. And I love all three of these individuals so much, and they've had an impact on my life. And so I'm excited to introduce them to you. And hopefully you enjoy this conversation. I would love for as you maybe reflect back on your own journey, or if you know somebody who is who is leaders, a leader back in these several decades ago, Maybe they can reach out and share their own experience, either a comment on this post or we can feature them in another episode. It'd be fun to hear. So let's go back to the 1980s, to the 1970s and beyond and talk about what was it like being a church leader in the 1980s? Welcome back to a special episode of the Leading Saints podcast. Today, I scour the earth and my history for the legends of legends when it comes to church leadership. And these these three who showed up. So I'm excited to start with the gentleman to my right here. Now, you may realize that I get all my good looks from this guy. This is Rick Francom. I call him dad. But thanks for coming. I'm glad to be here. Good. Awesome. Bill Luker. Maybe put yourself in context real quick. How do you introduce yourself?

Lynn Peterson: Well, associated with these guys, we raised our families together in the same ward back in the 70s, 80s and 90s. That's right. Just great associations that have precious memories.

Kurt Francom: You live two doors down from us, right? Absolutely. Two doors from the front. That's awesome.

Bill Luker: Well, thank you, Kurt. This is an experience that I never thought I would have. Right. But just being with these two is a real honor. I look up to both of these guys. They each served in church leadership positions and I watched them grow and pattern some of the things I've done after what they've done.

Kurt Francom: Nice. Awesome. Now, Lynn, you were, I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, but you were probably my first bishop ever. You were Bishop June of 1982? 1980, February of 1980 is when I went in the first time.

Bill Luker: I've served twice. Oh, nice. My first meeting that I conducted was under the new block schedule. The meeting I went in in when was the old schedule when you had Sunday school in the afternoons. It was an experience.

Kurt Francom: And so that changed during your time as Bishop? Well, I was Bishop the first time. Wow. Definitely get into that. And Bill, you followed up with Lynn as Bishop for a few months anyways.

Lynn Peterson: Yes, I was called as bishop and normally I heard this story that it takes a bishop about five years to offend everybody in the ward. I was able to do that in four months. Because you were called after four months as the stake president, right? Four months as bishop. And then I was called as the stake president. Awesome. Talk about a shocking call.

Kurt Francom: Right. Yeah. I mean, you kind of you probably went in there thinking, I'm in the clear. Right. Because I'm a newbie in the bishop calling. But nonetheless, it happened. So then you were obviously released as a bishop and they followed up with this guy, my dad. And those are my earliest memories of church is my dad as bishop. And even I remember being that five-year-old or so kid finding out he's getting released. I'm like, wait a minute, like that's a thing? And sure enough. Now, let's start with you. Our hope is to, you know, really understand what leadership was like maybe in the 70s, 80s, 90s. It was a different time then, different processes, everything from administrative things to ministering and home teaching and things like that. But so, Dad, you were called as a bishop in the 70s. What year was that?

undefined: 1975.

Kurt Francom: Nice. And you're 26 years old. I was 26 years old. What's the story behind that?

Rick Francom: What do you remember from that process or what was that like? Well, we lived in a lived in Bountiful, Utah, and we were on a we lived on a street that was all four plexus. And then at the end of the street was a building that had 10 apartments in it. And then just the other side was a an apartment building. Oh, there probably is 100 apartments. And we'd lived there about a year. And I got a call from the stake president to come meet with stake president. I remember it was on a Tuesday night, went in and thinking, oh, well, maybe there I'm. And as I walked in, there was a fellow who I'd only seen once. that was just leaving the stake president's office. And he he had just gotten married and moved into our ward. And so I went in and the stake president visited with us and then called me to be first counselor in the bishopric. And I just kind of stared at him like, what? And like you were you felt you're too young to for such calling. Yeah. I like first counselor in the bishopric. I was expecting maybe the elders quorum. And yeah, we've decided to create a ward out of these all these apartments. We only had two homes in our ward boundary. And both of those homes, the people were inactive, never came to church. So I'm going, whoa. So I accepted and found out that the the bishop was a seminary teacher. We lived right close to Woods Cross High School. And he was a seminary teacher at the Woods Cross Seminary. Was he the guy that was leaving as you were coming? Right. Right. And he had just got he'd been married for two weeks. Oh, he called his bishop. And the reason they called him is the stake president knew him from being a seminary teacher. So they called him to be bishop. And I was first counselor. And the second counselor was a young man that I think he was like twenty three, twenty four years old. And here we are starting to experience what's a null experience. And here we were in a ward made up of all apartments. So it was mainly young couples, you know, newly married couples. And I think we only had Oh, the youth, maybe we had five or six people that were over 12 years old in the ward. So, you know, people would ask. I remember people asking, how are you doing? I said, I don't know. I'm just we're just taking a week at a time. You know, it was really, you know, we had no experience. So it's like this is just new. We're just doing what we think we need to be doing. Yeah. So about nine months later, We had stake conference, and I remember parking, pulling into the parking lot, and the bishop pulled in next to us. We were walking into the building, and he said, well, I want to let you know I've been transferred. I'm in the seminary program. I'm going to the Indian reservation in northern Arizona to become over the seminary there. And so I'm moving. I'm going, what? And the knot began to form in your stomach? And literally, all of a sudden, my heart just started to pound. It was just like I felt my heart was just going to leap out of my chest. Whoa. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: And to put your journey into context a little bit, I mean, you grew up in an inactive home. It's not like you saw your dad going to the church or you didn't experience a lot of these things close up, right?

Rick Francom: No. The first time that I really came to realize the magnitude of a bishop was when I was in the mission field. I was in southern Texas on my mission and would interact with bishops and so on. I came to realize, gee, how important bishops were to running the church. And so, you know, then it was a week or so later, I was called in and they extended the call for me to be the bishop of the ward.

Kurt Francom: So, now this is a little bit different. Maybe explain how that went back back in the day with being called as a bishop. It wasn't just a stake president interview, right?

Rick Francom: No, it was. It was just a stake president interview. I don't remember. But do you have to go to meet with an apostle? Oh, I'll tell you after that. OK, that's later. OK, that's later. So I was called the bishop and it was in July. And so at that point, you needed to be ordained by a general authority. And so at this point, the word has sustained you and all that. Right. But I needed to be ordained. And so They told me, well, I've set up an appointment. You're going to meet with LeGrand Richards and you need to go down to the church office building. And so I took my mother came and my wife and then her parents, well, her mother and then her second husband. When I married my wife, her father had passed away when she was in high school and she had remarried a fellow in Ogden and he was a stake president. in the Ogden area. And he he had lost his wife about a year before a year before. And he he was called to be the stake president when Spencer W. Kimball was a member of the Council of the Twelve. So he lost his wife. So he went to got an appointment with Elder Kimball and went and maybe President Kimball was the president. Then I can't remember. But he got an interview with President Kimball. and said, what should I do? And President Kimball said, well, you need to find a new wife. And so he found grandma, right? He found he found grandma. He found my mother-in-law. And she'd been about seven years. She'd been a widow and they'd gotten married. So he came to this. And we sat down in LeGrand Richards, his office. So this was in church administration building administration, just his office there, his office. And he sat behind his desk. And he kind of greeted everybody. Then he I was sitting kind of right in front of him and he looked at me and then he proceeded to ask me the temple recommend questions with your mother in law in the room and you're my wife and my mother. And he proceeded to go down all the questions. And then I'm going, you know, you're going, yeah, yes, yes.

Kurt Francom: You keep the law of chastity, do you?

Rick Francom: And I was like, oh, OK. And so then he he ordained me a bishop. But the interesting thing is that was like I remember it was right around the 24th of July. And on the first of August, another week later, the policy was changed to where they allowed stake presidents to ordain bishops. So I was one of the last bishops to be ordained by an apostle or general authority. So, that was kind of a unique experience.

Kurt Francom: I bet it was. I mean, it got complicated as bishops were being called elsewhere, right? It's like, you got to wait till an apostle's in town to get ordained.

Rick Francom: Right, right. So, they changed the policy. So, that's kind of a unique experience.

Kurt Francom: Lynn, what about you? Is there a story when you were called as a bishop in the 80s?

Bill Luker: Well, I remember specifically we had four young children and we didn't tell them until Saturday night because we didn't want them saying anything to anybody. And I just remember the stark look on their face. Well, what does that mean? You're going to be the bishop. They had no clue. And that, frankly, I didn't have a clue either. I had served in an elders quorum presidency, had never been a counselor to anything. So it was a call that was unexpected. And sometimes I think that's the best way to have that happen. I was called by President Rupp, who was the stake president at the time. What a wonderful experience to be able to learn from a stake presidency. That was my biggest thing. I didn't know what to do. I had served on a high council for a little while and had a bishop and I remember his name. He was a biology teacher, Bishop Bybee. You remember him? I remember the name, yeah. I was a young 33-year-old kid who didn't know anything and he took me under his wing and he taught me what I needed to do as a high councilman and that helped the transition into the bishopric.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. And then did you serve, was it five years roughly that you served?

Bill Luker: Five and a half. Yeah. And then, uh, I was released and went on vacation with my dad and his, and my mom, we went to California and we got down there and it was driving me crazy. Cause I didn't have anything to do. I didn't know what to do.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. There's the, that dynamic transition. Yeah. Lose your identity a little bit there. So, Bill, what about you? What do you remember about being called as a bishop after Bishop Peterson?

Lynn Peterson: As I've been listening to these two, the call of bishop doesn't have any real strong memories in my, I was serving as the stake executive secretary to President Rupp for several years. A special opportunity that was, it was really the call four months later to serve as the stake president that really has formed the memories in my mind.

Kurt Francom: So what's the story behind that? I mean, there are more details as far as, you know, it was just a routine thing that you'd be interviewed as bishop as a new stake president was being called.

Lynn Peterson: Yes, in fact, I went through all of the some of the files that I've collected through the years of church service, and I found the actual sheet of paper that was used by the General Authority. to interview all of the stake presidency and the high council and the bishops. And we have our pictures in here. And it's kind of interesting. I'll share that with you later if you'd like to. Yeah, that's cool. But I remember having my interview earlier in the day with with all of the other leaders. And it was late in the evening, probably about nine o'clock at night when the phone rang and President Rupp invited me to come back to the stake center with my wife. And the call was issued to serve as the president of the stake and I had a couple of hours to determine who my counselors would be because this was a Saturday night. It was going to take place on Sunday. And I just remember being completely emotionally drained. And what The details of a lot of that have disappeared through my mind over the years, but the feeling of feeling so inadequate to step into the role of a brother that I had served with and grown to love so deeply, I just remember feeling, how can I do this? But get up the next morning and do your very best. Yeah, yeah. That's what I've decided to do.

Kurt Francom: And it seems like that process of calling a stake president, it hasn't changed very much over the decades, right? It's the general authority comes to town, lines up some interviews, and then that decision is made usually later on the day, Saturday, right?

Bill Luker: It's amazing how that experience works. I had the opportunity to do that with, do you remember who the general authority was that called you?

Kurt Francom: Uh, I've got it.

Bill Luker: You can take a moment to find some stuff and we'll just, I mean, I, I remember going into the stake offices when he had been called. And at the time, I don't remember what we were doing, but for some reason I was over there and for quite a while, it took a while to replace you as Bishop because we called you Prezup for quite a while. Because he was serving the stake president and as bishop.

Lynn Peterson: It was Elder Groberg.

Bill Luker: Oh, okay. Oh, wow.

Kurt Francom: Elder Groberg was the former guest of the Leading Saints podcast.

Bill Luker: So that's cool. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: That's awesome.

Bill Luker: But you're right. The process for calling stake presidencies is pretty much the same now. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: Dad, what do you remember about round two with being called as bishop here? You had a bishop who only served four months. And well, any memories there?

Rick Francom: I remember, you know, it was a week or so after. I don't remember the time frame, but my wife and I had gone. It was it was like a Friday night, as I remember. We'd gone to a play at the Pioneer Playhouse, downtown Salt Lake. So we got home, I guess, nine, 30, 10 o'clock. And I don't remember. I think they were trying to get in touch with us and we weren't

home. And I think maybe the phone rang at like nine, 30, 10, you know, and they called and said, hey, can you come over to the stake center and, you know, meet with us? And I'm like, well, OK. And so we went over and the calls extended. You know, the experience I had, both times I was called and I replaced Bill Luker as bishop. And both times, as like I said, when I was the first time when our bishop says, well, we're moving, my heart started to pound. And the second time it was like there was just a confirmation. You're going to be called a bishop. And I was like, oh, OK. And it was kind of like, well, when is this going to happen? You know, let's get this over with, you know.

Bill Luker: Well, how long did you serve as bishop the first time then?

Rick Francom: I served, seemed like about two and a half years. So, the first bishop I replaced only served nine months and I was there about two and a half years. So, we lived in an apartment and we had an opportunity to buy a house. And so, we bought this house when we moved. So, you know, being the first bishop, there was the constant turnover. I mean, you know, apartments, people were coming and going and, you know, we'd call. I remember I must have gone through four or five in two and a half years, I must have gone through three or four or so Relief Society presidents. You know, we'd call a Relief Society president and then they'd, oh, we're moving. And so, but it was interesting. I had the same primary president the whole time that I was in his bishopric. And so, there was this constant turnover and people, I remember people saying to me, well, how do you deal with that? And I says, well, I don't know. I've never dealt with anything different. So, we just. You know, that's all I know. And so we would just deal with it. So and it was interesting as the that ward, the bishop who replaced me, he only served for approximately a year. And then the stake decided to dissolve the ward. It just it was just almost like the stake president was inspired for this period of about what? About three, four years for this ward to exist. And it's just interesting the number of people that went through the ward that, for instance, when I served as Bishop, my first counselor, he moved a little bit before I did, and he moved out and he became a bishop about a year after that. Sometime later, he was called to be a counselor in the stake presidency, and today he serves as a patriarch. And just the number of people that lived in that ward that had that experience, and then they moved on, they bought a home and They were all called the leadership experience. It was almost like it was just a training ground for a group of people. And I still have contacts with, we still get together with three or four couples that were in that ward. We get together and have dinner together and two or three times a year. And so, it's kind of an interesting experience.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. I mean, all of you kind of were called as a younger age and maybe it was more normal back then. I don't know. But even for myself being called as a young bishop, like in hindsight, yeah, I didn't know what I was doing and I felt really in over my head, but I'm a better

member at 42 because I've sort of had these experiences. At least I feel that way, right? That I can show up, have more empathy for for the leaders. Has that been your experience or?

Bill Luker: Oh, absolutely. I, it's a learning process. You learn as you go. And I remember in, when I was set apart the first time, President Rupp said, you know, you receive that mantle and that's a real thing. You cannot serve without that mantle. And when you're released, it's gone. And that's a real thing as well. So that's where you rely. I mean, sure, you're friends with a lot of people in the ward, but all of a sudden you're the pinnacle of the ward, if you will, and you have to make those decisions. And some of them are harder than others. So to rely on the Spirit is the most important thing you have to do.

Kurt Francom: You know, as I interview leaders all around the world, I often go, you know, ask them just generally what keeps you up at night type of thing or things as far as like mental health, pornography, you know, just modern day social media things. If we were to go back in time, what do you feel like, what kept you up at night back in the early 80s or 70s or so that, I mean, what was the big issues that really weighed on you and your ward?

Bill Luker: I think to me, it was finances. that was dealing with financial problems, ward budget, stake budget, temple budget. Those were difficult. We had a very, very young ward and we're all newlyweds, small children. And yet here we're trying to build a temple, take care of the building. And we were way, way behind. So to me, that was hard, the finance part of stuff.

Kurt Francom: Anything else come up, any other subjects that you felt like?

Rick Francom: Well, I think the finances, I don't know if people today realize that back then the budget of the ward budget, you had to pay for pay for electricity, the building and everything that happened. The church takes care of all that now. But we had to be constantly mentioning the ward budget. And then the stake you had to pay so much to the stake, because the stake depended on, you know, that's where their income came from. And so it was a task to just constantly be able to keep the income because people are paying tithing, plus they were playing fast offering, plus they were playing in award budget. That was constant. Yeah. I mean, I remember tithing settlement was tithing settlement. But here you had your opportunity to meet with members coming in and say, OK, well, how much do you feel like you could pay a month towards the the word budget? So it was.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So it wasn't just 10% that members were expected. It was 10% plus. Right. And so what was that process like? I mean, did you stand up and constantly remind them from the podium or was it in these private meetings or what do you remember from that?

Bill Luker: I don't know that we ever announced it over the pulpit. It was an opportunity to meet one-on-one with mom and dad and the kids, of course.

Kurt Francom: Like during tithing settlement or even outside?

Bill Luker: During tithing settlement, right. Do tithing settlement first, but then in preparation for all that, you've got to realize you've got a ward budget, a stake budget, a temple, missionaries. And so you have to work all that up and determine, well, how much can you give to help us in all these other fields? Yeah. So it was a lot of work.

Kurt Francom: Now, this is the area I grew up in and that you raised your family. This is West Valley City. It's not known as the affluent area of Salt Lake Valley, right? So, I mean, it wasn't that you were dealing with people with lots of wealth, but nonetheless, the church, I mean, if you didn't meet your budget, I mean, what happened? You just didn't have electricity that week or what?

Bill Luker: I just remember one experience and that was we were also raising money for the scouting program.

Kurt Francom: Friends of scouting?

Bill Luker: No, I don't remember what it was called. It was something else. But anyway, and we'd collected a lot of money for that particular forum for the Boy Scouts. And it was considerable, you know, a couple of thousand dollars. And I thought, Oh, good. Well, we were also way behind on stake budget and the stake presidency member said, no, you take that money and you put it in. And I went, well, wait a minute. Then he says, that's where it should go. It worked out perfectly. So it was difficult.

Kurt Francom: But there's a lot of those things happening behind the scenes.

Bill Luker: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: Bill, what do you remember from the stake perspective, just with finances? And I mean, were you always shaking down the bishops like, hey, here's your here's your due?

Lynn Peterson: You mentioned finances. I remember when the Jordan River Temple, this happened probably just before we were called. But the Jordan River Temple was built without using tithing dollars from the church. And to my knowledge, it may be the only temple in the world that's done this, where the members of the church in that temple district contributed all of the cash to build the Jordan River Temple. As I was going through some of my history notes, that memory came to my mind. But the opportunity to, using the paper technology of the time, keep track of all of that. I remember the constant, after sacrament meeting and everything was done, having the clerk and a member of the bishopric go to the bank and deposit all that. Maybe that still happens today, probably not to the extent that it did. Yeah, not as much money to deposit. Back in the 70s and 80s. So finances was certainly one of the things that we dealt with. I just remember dealing with the personal challenges that members of the ward or the stake would come in and deal with. And it had one of the hymns that we sing today that has some words that really brought to my mind recently. Who am I to judge another when I walk imperfectly? I remember having often those feelings as I was meeting with people, trying to counsel them and help them through a difficult challenge in their lives. And yet feeling the great love that Heavenly Father had for them individually. and really his support for me and giving me promptings of things that would help them through those challenges.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Anything else with like finances that come to mind as so I imagine like the so the power bill would just be mailed to your house and then you'd have to figure it out.

Rick Francom: I think the stake paid the power. We didn't pay. I don't remember. Did we pay bills? I don't remember that. I don't remember it. We'd have to have a, we'd click word budget and then we had an assessment to the stake and we'd, the money would go to them and then they would, I assumed, would take care of the bills that we'd have. I remember one instance where we had a family in our ward that their oldest son was going on a mission and these are folks that had financial struggles and they just weren't able to support this young man on a mission. we wanted to get this young man out. So, I remember lining up interviews with, oh, a dozen or so members in the ward that we felt like we could ask to see if they could contribute so

much a month while he was on the mission. So, I remember calling those people in and sitting down with them and some saying, you know, yeah, I would be happy to help others saying, I'm sorry, we just can't afford help out. And so it was, you know, a struggle.

Bill Luker: And that was the constant to me, is you were always meeting with someone with some kind of an issue, be it financial, be it physical, whatever. But to me, that was difficult, but you always had others you can rely on in the ward that you could call on to help with these types of things. To me, you know, you serve with brethren like this, you have counselors. And the camaraderie that you build in serving in the church, whether it be primary or bishop or stake president, that's where you really gain opportunities to help and you learn from the other people. I mean, as a young bishop, you're sitting there and someone comes in with a real problem. Oh, now what do I do? Again, that's when you rely on the spirit, but then you have counselors that you can go to as well to say, Hey, we've got a situation. How would you face this? And then of course, the counselor we go to is Heavenly Father, and that's spending a lot of time on your knees with your ward leadership.

Kurt Francom: What about like just more of an administrative action of like cutting a check, right? I remember as a bishop in the system, I put the paper in the printer and out comes a check. We sign it or it's even the clerk just runs the check over to my house. I sign it and he's on his way. Right. But what do you remember about how did you cut a check? Well, maybe you don't remember. I don't remember.

Rick Francom: Well, I remember, you know, basically, if it was a Sunday, then you go to the financial clerk who was in the clerk's office and say, hey, we need to cut a check for this this amount. Sometimes I, as a bishop, if I met with somebody who needed, for instance, they came and they needed some assistance from fast offerings, I would go cut the check myself and then I'd have to go run down one of my counselors and get him to sign it. And so there was always that situation. Back to the other situation, I remember with budget. my mind tells me that we were kind of struggling budget wise. So we lined up interviews with folks in the ward and I specifically remember there was a sister in our ward who was a widow and she had I think she had two daughters. They were teenage daughters. And I remember coming in and she worked, but she struggled financially, but she never came to me for help. But I asked her if she could help with the budget. And I remember her just saying, well, I think I can give a relatively small amount. And it just reminded me of the you know, the widow and the widow's might is, you know, I was just touched that she would, was going to sacrifice to help the budget. She didn't have a lot, but what she could contribute, she would contribute.

Bill Luker: Well, and we were holding budget dinners, you know, dime a dip. Oh really? To raise money for the war budget. So you'd have a war dinner. You'd invite people to not only bring the food, but now for every spoonful you got, it cost you a dime or a quarter or whatever, just trying to make ends meet.

Rick Francom: Yeah. They'd come and you'd say, okay, it's a budget dinner. Well, we need you to give us 50, 10, 15, \$20 and come. I remember speaking to that as a young, as a young man, they would have budget card. Do you remember the budget cards? And so I remember my grandparents were not active in the church, but they would pay budget and they'd have a budget card. And I'd be there. One of my best friends growing up lived right next to my grandparents. And on Saturday night, they would have a movie at the church on Saturday night. But to get into the movie, you had to take your budget card and show your budget card at the door to get into the movie. OK, so it was kind of Here's the reward. You get to go and they would have a, you know, a Disney movie or something on Saturday night, and then they'd sell popcorn and candy and things. Did you have that experience?

Bill Luker: Yeah.

Rick Francom: I remember the Friday, Saturday night movies. Right. And so that was quite common in the church that have, you know, and when I was first married, we moved into a ward and that was a big deal in the ward. They literally had a room it was a with a projector and they like just like a movie theater. They had it shoot in the cultural hall and shoot it out towards the screen. So it was so to raise money for for activities, activities.

Kurt Francom: Interesting. So if the youth wanted to go do whatever, you had to figure out where that money was coming from.

Bill Luker: And well, you had to set up a budget every year, some for the gals, some for the guys. Yeah. The primary, all the organizations had needs. And so you'd have to work with that all up. And again, that's when tithing settlement came up. That's when you discussed all of that. Yeah, right.

Rick Francom: It wasn't you did. And and I remember I remember vividly when I served on the high council once a year, we'd have this high council meeting. It was all about the budget. And

we'd go over the budget and go over all the line items. And and then the stake president would ask for a sustaining vote from all the high counselors. You sustain this budget and We'd move forward and then they would say, OK, they would assign each ward. Here's how much you need to pay this year and in your budget. And so you use a bishopric you had. Well, we've got to come up with this money every year. Wow. To meet the budget. Right.

Kurt Francom: Man, that would be so overwhelming to me that someone who's not a numbers guy, or I can barely do my own budget, let alone the church's or the ward's budget, right? But, and you see, I mean, that clerk position back then was crucial, right? I mean, where now, I mean, obviously I don't want to diminish what they do, but it's so electronic now. Systems have been streamlined that there's maybe not as much going on in the clerk's office.

Bill Luker: But it's interesting though, the same process applies today as it did back then as far as accounting for the funds and administering to the funds. You don't type out the green receipts anymore, but those clerks are still involved in all of that.

Kurt Francom: Anything with like welfare that we haven't mentioned, you got to tell it. This is one of my favorite dad stories of when you were the first time you were a bishop and you used fast offering funds in a unique way. Do you remember this?

Rick Francom: So, one night I get a phone call and there was a young single sister in the ward and she, and I'm not sure, I think I remember right, she had a dog. And I think the dog barked or something. And so their neighbors had called the police on her several times about this barking dog. And anyway, they finally, the police came and arrested her.

Kurt Francom: for a barking dog.

Rick Francom: And so I get this phone call that she is in in jail. OK, you were her one call was the. Well, it's like and I don't know that she had. I don't remember if she had family, local or what she was anyway. So I was at the point is like she's in jail. Like, OK, what do I do? Somebody said, well, you need to bail her out of jail. So I I wrote a check for the bail and bailed her out of jail. You know, so just doing the bishop thing, just helping people out. About a month or so later, I was having my monthly interviewed with the stake president. And he said, that's something to discuss with you. You wrote a check for bail. That's not policy that And I'm like, oh, okay. Well, I

didn't know. I was like up against the wall and I didn't feel like, you know, she needed to spend the night in jail. And so, I bailed her out. So, that was... That's nice.

Kurt Francom: The only mistake he made as a bishop.

Rick Francom: That's amazing. That's amazing. So, I remember bail. When I was a bishop the first time, we, the apartments, the church building was just across the street. So Sunday people would come in and say, I need some help. You know, and so the problem with the apartment where people are coming and going, you get new people and they'd show up maybe a week and then they're come knocking on your door. Oh, I need to visit with you, Bishop. We need help with finances. You know, I need paying their rent or food or, you know, those type of things. So I would say, OK, so I made arrangements with the custodian who was somebody in our ward or in the stake. I'd make arrangements and he'd be there Monday morning. I says, well, he'd say, just send them over. What? Eight thirty nine o'clock on Monday morning. And I'll have them do some help me clean the building, you know. So, and to me, that was the best way is that I'd say, well, okay, if you need some help, I need you to go over tomorrow. And I said, when can you go over to the building to help clean it? And then I'll visit with you later in the week. So, it was always my test. If they showed up and did the cleaning at the building, then I would have further discussions, we'd help them out. But it was a real way to separate the men from the boys. You know, if they didn't show up, I just say, well, until you show up, I just really can't help you until. And so that what that was. Gauge their sincerity that. Right. How urgent it was. Right. And then, you know, so I remember that experience. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: Any other welfare?

Bill Luker: Memories or experiences? Well, I think they're similar today as they were back then. People get themselves way in debt for whatever reason and they wait till the last minute and all of a sudden you as a new bishop or a seasoned bishop have the experience of trying to, okay, what do I do? How do I help these people without jeopardizing anything else? And so I don't think that's too much different now than it would have been back then.

Kurt Francom: Were you like now, obviously, I was a bishop in South Salt Lake, and I think we the amount of fast offering funds I spent, we contribute about 10% of that. So we want to thank the wards in Draper and Alpine for supplementing that. Was it was it more of a thing that you could only spend your what your ward brought in for fast offerings? Remember that or? Maybe that's too long ago, too much of a detail.

Rick Francom: I remember you kind of knew how much fast offerings you had to come in. And then if you were if you're going to be short, then you'd contact the stake president. And because at the end of the month, you had extra, the monies would be transferred to the stake and the stake would hold on to that money for a period of time. So they always had some money. So My thinking was if the stake didn't have enough, then it was calling down downtown Salt Lake and say, hey, we've got this problem and you had to get approval, you know, so to do that. But there was always you could always go to the stake and there will always seem to be enough to help you to cover to cover your your expenses.

Kurt Francom: And I remember I was on this side of this process is you'd send little teachers like me out to knock doors and and gather the fast offerings right where that I don't know, even in the Utah wards I've lived in, that's less of a thing, but now paying online is so streamlined, but for sure. Bill, anything else as far like aside from finances, any administrative thing or spiritual thing? What do you remember from your time as stake president that comes to the surface?

Lynn Peterson: I remember some stake conference sessions with some of the general authorities that would come to visit our stake. I remember the Saturday evening or the Saturday morning afternoon sessions that those brethren would be with us and we would get out the statistical reports and go through the data. And much of the counsel of those brethren that came to help us was to strengthen our stake and to point out maybe where we could do better, where we were not doing as well as perhaps we could. And So, I remember as a stake conference was coming up, I would look at the possible areas where we would be concentrating with that general authority where we could help and try to do our best. But many of those situations were a little stressful. pointing out, well, yeah, you've done great here. Let's not talk about that. Let's talk about where you need to do better. And the general authorities were always assigned to come to conferences at the time by the president of the Quorum of the Twelve. And I remember clearly when Howard W. Hunter was the president of the Quorum of the Twelve, and he assigned himself to come to our stake to preside over a stake conference. And I remember looking, wow, that is an interesting coincidence that the one who's assigning all of these stake conferences would assign himself to our stake. And I remember he was nearing the end of his life at the time, was in a wheelchair. And I remember preparing some of the, removing one of the chairs, the bowled in chairs at the pulpit in the chapel for him to come in. Church security would be there with him and so on. But I remember clearly when he came in to our Saturday meeting and church security brought him into my office and closed the door. And it was President Hunter and me. I sat in my chair. He was sitting next to me. And I thought, well, here is where he's going to help me find out where we need to be better as a stake. And I'll never forget this. He looked at me and said, President Luker, what can I do to help you? Oh, wow. The feeling of emotion and love that came from him as we spent time together discussing the joys and the challenges of serving in priesthood leadership. And the details of much of that

conversation have since left. I mean, I've had a few sunrises and sunsets in my life, and gratefully, some of the memories are now gone. And I'm grateful to listen to these two wonderful brethren messages and memories that they still have, that much of that detail is left for me. But I hope I will never forget the great emotion I felt as the member of the Quorum, the President of the Quorum of the Twelve, Art Hunter, who soon became the President of the Church, had those few precious moments with me as we discussed the sacred work and the truth of the restoration of the Gospel.

Kurt Francom: Wow, great story. I love that. Now back then, I forget when this changed, but conferences used to be quarterly, right? Rather than every six months.

Lynn Peterson: It was a quarterly experience. That's right.

Bill Luker: Remember, you used to keep all the agenda on a TRS-80. Remember that?

Lynn Peterson: You remember more details than I do. So what's a TRS-80?

Kurt Francom: You first got to start there.

Bill Luker: After he was called to be the stake president, then I got to serve as his executive secretary for quite a while.

Kurt Francom: Oh, okay.

Bill Luker: And that's a great experience. But he was computer literate. TRS-80 was an old radio shack. computer that was probably as big as any of these chairs here, and he was computer literate, he was able to put all those agendas in there, and I didn't even know what a computer was back then. And so that would save it and you could just adjust as, but it was four times a year, not just two times a year. Yeah. So I remember one day sitting in meeting and he says, okay, we've just finished stake conference. Let's start planning the next one.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And we did, I mean, especially quarterly. I mean, that, that'd be, it'd be like, you never stopped in stake conferences.

Kurt Francom: That's awesome.

Kurt Francom: Lynn, what do you remember just from the, you were Bishop when the block schedule kind of was universalized? What do you remember? Is there a story behind that? Or did you get a letter or how did that, how'd that go?

Bill Luker: Well, when I was called, I knew the block was coming. We knew it was coming. And so we had one week to prepare, but there were, I think, three or four I don't remember, four wards in the building. And so we had to meet out times. The only thing I remember is the first experience that I had is going home to my wife and saying, hey, sweetheart, the block schedule's coming up and we're going to have sacrament meeting at eight o'clock in the morning. With four small children. And the look on her face was, what? Eight o'clock in the morning? So that's one of my first memories of the clock schedule.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And once you got kind of those general details out of the way, it seemed like you kind of were locked in and took your time.

Bill Luker: Yeah. And away it went. Yeah. And I think that's probably one of the miracles of the whole process was it was a smooth transition. It took a while to get used to, but it was still a smooth transition.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Awesome.

Kurt Francom: Any other memories of block schedule or just schedule in general?

Bill Luker: Maybe this is off the subject here, but one of the things that I remember specifically about the stake is the opportunity that Bill here sat with us putting on the music man as a stake. And that involved the entire stake. We rented out the Promise Valley Playhouse, downtown of Salt Lake City. Which is no longer there. Well, the facade's there, but there's nothing behind it. And we, how many performances did we do? Two or three nights. Yeah, two or three nights. So all of the stake was involved in the writing process and in the acting process and we sold tickets and we paid for all of that.

Kurt Francom: So, was this another budget fundraiser type thing? Is that the reason you did it or?

Lynn Peterson: No, I think it was just more of an activity. It was, yeah. I think fellowshiping and just... Right.

Rick Francom: So, a lot of the stakes would do a play or, you know, I think it was came from roadshows and... Yeah. You know, when we grew up, roadshows were a big deal. And then even when we lived, I remember having to call someone to be over the roadshow. And so I don't know that a lot of members, even today, know what a roadshow is.

Kurt Francom: If your church has a stage, it's there because of the roadshows, right? That's right. Because right now we're like, what do we have on stage? Kids just fall off of them.

Rick Francom: So roadshows was basically, I remember as a kid, you'd you know, you had what, six, seven, eight wards. And so you would start at one building and perform the road show. Then you'd then take it on the road, take it on the road. You'd all loaded up in trucks and you'd moved down to the next building. And then somebody be right. Another word be right behind you. So you were giving that night. There'd be two or three buildings that you and you'd give that show three or four times during the night. And then they would have a rating, they, you know, pick the best roadshow. And then I remember at one point it was is that then they'd have a region. So you'd all the stakes in your area and then they you'd pick your best roadshow and you would have a night when you would compete against other stakes in the in the area and and have a it was a competition. And and so roadshows that was serious business. I mean, it was There were people, and I think Janice was involved in that. And it was to write the roadshow. I mean, people spend hours upon hours putting those. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: You didn't just do a classic play. You would. You would. Create your own.

Rick Francom: You create your own show. And it was a big deal. It was.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. I have memories of my older teenage siblings waking up early before school to go practice the roadshow and then get to school, you know. So it was definitely a thing. So. And would you say just in general, I mean, church was much more of a community thing, right? Like, I mean, now we still do the Christmas parties and things, but there is a lot more maybe going on down at the church house than we have today. Is that would that be accurate?

Rick Francom: Well, I think, you know, if you in your building, you'd have three or four wards, and so they'd have each have a night for mutual. And so, you know, Tuesday night, there would be a ward over there and next night. And so there was always something going on at the church building during the week from Tuesday through Thursday. And. So, you know, then basketball was always a big deal. And so at nine, nine o'clock, a bunch of guys that show up and want to play basketball for at the church. And and so then you got to the where somebody in the high council had to come and tell him they had to go home at eleven o'clock at night. And yeah. And so so there was always something going on at the church. You know, during the week.

Kurt Francom: And I don't know if it's just modern society. Families have different are pulled in different directions and have different distractions or or focuses, you know, that way. So. Any other story, concept? I don't want to lead you too much if there's a good story out there. Just any leadership dynamic?

Lynn Peterson: I remember one episode in our stake. I was feeling an opportunity and a need to increase the temple attendance and work within the stake. And back then, you could do family history work and then assign the names into your stake folder. Is that still possible, Rick, to do that today? I don't think it is. No, it's not. But so the members of our stake were challenged to do their family research and to assign those names into our stake folder at the Jordan River Temple. But you can have like groups now, right? Right. But not at the temple. Yeah. And then the stake members would go and if they didn't have their family names, they could go to the stake folder and take those names. And I remember the goal was to create a new stake. in the other side of the veil. The name of our stake was the Taylorsville North Central Stake, TNCS. And I remember as the very last name to create this new stake, my wife and I arrived at the temple and the last name was given to me. And as we came through the veil, I remember at the

next stake meeting announcing to the stake that TNCS was no longer the Taylorsville North Central Stake. It was the newly created stake. Oh, nice. And the other side of the veil. That's a sweet memory I have of the concentration and the importance of focusing on the house of the Lord.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And I just love those stories of just stimulating that engagement, the unity of a stake or ward to come together to accomplish those types of things.

Bill Luker: Well, and that to me, that's what a ward family is, is that unity that gets built as you serve together in a capacity. when you look at these three old guys right here and realize the number of years we've been together and the experiences we've had together, that bond is still there. And you create that as a ward. It's a little bit different in my mind of serving in the stake because you don't have that close interaction as you do in a ward. And that's the beauty of a ward is the bond that you create with the members of the ward. Yeah.

Kurt Francom: And that may be a good time to bring up that. I just love this tradition you've kept up with getting together because I just being in different bishoprics and stake presidencies, whatever, there's such a brotherhood there. There's such connection or or just being in the same ward with people. And so, I mean, how do you describe what you what goes on when you guys get together still for for dinner? How does that work and how do you organize it?

Bill Luker: Well, I guess we started in 1986. Oh, really? Yeah. And it was just, hey, let's go to dinner. And so we did two or three times. Then finally in early, I think it's 1987, we decided to start keeping track. And so we had to have a name. And so we named ourselves the Gormons. And so we would take, we'd go out every quarter and each family would select, each couple would select where we're going to go. And we've been doing that since 1986 and we do it today as well. We've added a couple other players there, but that's okay too.

Rick Francom: So every time when it was your time, you picked the place and you never told the other group where we're going to eat until that night. We all get together and say, oh, we're going to go to this place. And we've had some interesting experiences.

Bill Luker: And throughout all of these years, we've only been back maybe two or three times to the same place.

Rick Francom: So we've been back to a different restaurant at the same location, but a different restaurant for name. We've gone. And I remember one time we went in the place we were going to go to was closed, seemed like was closed. So we just had to just drive down the street and says, oh, there's a place. Let's go to that place.

Bill Luker: Well, and we keep track of, you know, hey, what did we talk about while we were there? Oh, maybe a son or a daughter got a mission call or, you know.

Rick Francom: And so, Lin has kept track of that on his computer. So, he has a list.

Kurt Francom: The TR, what was it?

Rick Francom: TSR, but now he keeps track. And so every once in a while, he'll send us an email with attachment and showing all the places that we've been and what we talked about and what we talked about. That's cool. And so that's, again, the camaraderie.

Bill Luker: Yeah. As you serve.

Kurt Francom: Yeah, because you two have my dad still lives in my childhood home, but you two have moved on. And and so what a great way to stay connected and stay connected. Yeah. Yeah.

Bill Luker: Yeah. Can you imagine the eternities? Just a little bit of an eternity watch as we sit here, but the eternity is forever. What a great opportunity and example of being together as a family forever.

Kurt Francom: Yeah, for sure. And it sounds like you need a foodie blog. You visited all these restaurants.

Bill Luker: We can tell you stories that were not to go.

Kurt Francom: Yeah, I bet, I bet. Any reflection on like as you see other up and coming young leaders, I mean, what advice would you give to new bishops or new Elders quorum presidents or just from both what you're monitoring or what you're seeing and also what you've experienced? What comes to mind with advice for leaders?

Rick Francom: You know, I have the advice as I see is, I think that sometimes bishops get so wrapped up in making things happen. And I think the advice I'd give to a bishop, make an effort to shake hands with as many people as you can on Sunday. You know, just greet them and say, how are you doing? And shake their hands. I think sometimes I see that bishops are so busy, they walk right by people and it's like, wow, he didn't even stop and say hello. Make an effort to say, because there's a lot of good, active, strong members who come week in and week out that don't ever have the opportunity to shake the bishop's hand or, you know, we're not asking for his time. Just shake his hand, greet him and say, it's good to see you. And yeah, let them know that we still appreciate you. Yeah. So I think that's the best thing, because when it's all over and done with, people are only going to remember the relationship. There's not going to remember about what happened in sacrament meeting or if the meeting started on time or start on time or just, but they will remember all that Bishop was always made an effort to say hello to me and acknowledge me for the day.

Bill Luker: Yeah. Well, that's where the concept of true love comes through because as you serve, you love the people that you're serving. Now you might not like what they're doing sometimes, But you love them and they in turn return that to you. And again, that brings it all together.

Rick Francom: I think we spend a lot of time now talking about ministry and we're always saying, well, I think really number one in the ministry is just going up and shaking somebody's hand on Sunday and saying, good to see you. For me, I've been ministered to, I've been recognized for just a moment of time and I don't need anything more.

Kurt Francom: Yeah.

Lynn Peterson: What comes to mind for you, Bill? You know, early in my church leadership experience, I came across a story. I'll share it with you that I have thought about many, many times during the years of my life. And well, let me share it with you and then I'll tell you my feelings. Wishing to encourage her young son in his progress in playing the piano, and by the way, music has been a very important part of my life, a mother decided to take her small boy to a Petrovsky concert. and they were seated and then the mom saw a friend of hers and went over to visit with the friend. Well, the young man thought, this is my opportunity to go explore. And so he wandered around and entered a door that said, do not, no admission. When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and could not find her son. Suddenly the curtain opened and the spotlight focused on the beautiful piano. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star. At that moment, the great piano master quickly moved to the piano and whispered in the little boy's ear, Don't quit. Keep playing. Then, leaning over, the piano master reached around the little boy's back and, with his left hand, began filling in the bass part. Soon his right arm reached around the other side of the young man, and he added a running abogado. Together, the old master and the young Novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderful creative experience. The audience was mesmerized. And here's the lesson that I learned. It's in the same way that God deals with us. What can I accomplish on my own? is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But when in the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can become beautiful. Next time you set out to accomplish a great feat, listen carefully, and you will hear the voice of the Master whispering in your ear, don't quit, keep playing. Feel His loving arm around you. know that his strong hands are playing the concert of your life. I remember coming across that story years ago in my early days of being a church leader. And I would often recite that to myself as I say, I have lots of heavy responsibilities. I'm in a way, pinking out Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. But the Lord has called me to do this. And I can feel his arms around me helping me do what I have been called to do. Those are sweet memories that come to my life.

Kurt Francom: I love that. So I love that story. And isn't that if there's anything that hasn't changed in the decades is we all feel still feel inadequate and we all still feel the presence of God that's really creating miracles and manifesting his glory, you know, just story after story of witnessing like there's nothing I couldn't have done what I just witnessed, you know, the change in people. And it's awesome. It's really good.

Bill Luker: You know, to me, what I would suggest to a newly called individual who is called perhaps as bishop is just be yourself. The Lord prepared you. You may not be prepared, but the Lord prepared you. And just like our story says, just wait, you'll get the answer. Don't be something you're not. It's awesome.

Kurt Francom: Well, and I think it's, you know, it's important to recognize just the ongoing influence that the leaders have, obviously, with the help of God. But I mean, every birthday, I can't help but think of orange creamsicles as my home teacher, Lynn Peterson. would show up on my doorstep. And as a six, seven, eight-year-old, I knew that I could determine I was sharing those orange creamsicles. And then the stake president, who's also a magician. I remember so many of your magic tricks from the stage and just thinking, how does he do that? It must be the priesthood. I don't know. And I've shouted out your wife Janice before on the podcast, just as a young bishops visiting primary from time to time. And I could just envision the pictures, the actions that she would do as the primary music leader. And of course, my dad, I mean, that influence goes on and on, recognizing that maybe 28-year-old Bishop Francom could figure this out because 26-year-old Bishop Francom figured it out other than bailing people out of jail. But I never made that mistake, thanks to my dad. So, anyways, I hope you feel that, that, I mean, we could flood this room with people who've been impacted by that leadership and who continue on the covenant path today because of that influence. I got one more question that I'll have y'all answer, but any other point principle story that must be told, it can be a little off topic or whatever, but anything you've been saving or did we cover it all?

Bill Luker: Well, maybe a specific. I remember specifically interviewing a young lady and her mother, and there was some infidelity involved in there. And as a young man, I wasn't sure what I was supposed to say. And I said something I probably shouldn't have said. And I offended the mother, not meaning to, but I did. That kind of haunts you a little bit. But again, be yourself. The Lord directs this church, not the bishop, not the stake president. The Lord directs the church. No matter where you are, teaching primary, follow that counsel and you cannot go wrong.

Kurt Francom: I love that. That's just recognizing, just having grace for yourself of the silly things we say. So trying to do our best. Right. So any others?

Rick Francom: I have the thought comes to mind is when I was called the first time as bishop and people coming in and sitting down and them unloading their problem in life. And I'm not a clue what an answer. And it was almost as if Sometimes it's as if on the wall in the office, it was almost like a chalkboard that someone was writing the answer on this chalkboard and says, oh, this is what you should say. I'm going, oh, OK. That was it was like, well, because I had no clue. I had no experience. You know, I was just but I felt like the Lord was just writing out an answer for me on the chalkboard. Yeah. And I share that.

Kurt Francom: Yeah, that's great. Oftentimes people will respond, you know, maybe to a positive experience. Like, I'm so grateful for these words or what you did for me. And I just say, I just work here. The rest is God's actually doing that. I just work here. So any others we covered?

Well, this is great. All right. Last question I have for you. We'll start with you, Lynn. As you reflect on your time as a leader, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Bill Luker: You know, that's an interesting question because I have the great opportunity now to be a co-primary chorister with my wife. And I thought about that. How am I a better person having served in different capacities? And to me, it all comes back to the fact that I know who I am. I know where I came from. I know where I'm going. I've experienced things that I didn't think I'd ever experienced before. But to rely on Heavenly Father, no matter what it is, your situation is. No matter what calling you have, you rely on Heavenly Father and the saving grace of Jesus Christ and you'll be just fine. Awesome.

Kurt Francom: Bill, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Lynn Peterson: What Lynn said is absolutely true. As I look back on the years of opportunity to serve, many of the details may have disappeared from my mind, but the realization that sticks with me is Heavenly Father has been with me as I, referring to that previous story, don't quit, just keep going. The promptings of the spirit come in most needed moments. Years ago, I learned that even dreams can have a spiritual presentation. And I began at that moment in time decades ago to carry pieces of paper with me in my hand. in my pocket everywhere I go, because sometimes impressions will come at unexpected moments of things that I need to remember and to do. But to have felt through these many years the love of the Lord and helping me through both wonderfully challenging and sometimes stressful moments. But I have felt his arms around me as he kept telling me, don't quit, just keep playing. And I love the Lord and I hope he knows how much I love him. Awesome. Thank you.

Kurt Francom: Dad, I was being a leader, helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ.

Rick Francom: Well, I think the one thing comes to mind is as I've been out of leadership and I sit in meetings or sacrament meeting and, you know, the bishop gets up and they trip and stumble and and make mistakes. I sit back and say, OK, you know, I thought maybe you need to tell them. And I said, no, just stand back. You know, they don't need any criticism. They just need to be supportive of what they're doing. And They'll figure it out and they may do it a better way than I would have done it. But, you know, so I think the older you get, say, well, I need to go and tell him how to do it. So I think I just learned to just sit back and let them, you know, and let

them know if you talk to them, hey, the bishop gives a talk, go up and say that was a good job, you know. let them know that I'm here to support you and I'm not here to be critical of what you're doing because, you know, I was there one time and I messed up too. So, I think I'm just trying to be kind and do the best I can. And so, I appreciate the, you know, I think having leadership, having the the help of the Lord, the Spirit guide and direct you to say what a wonderful experience to know that someone cared and that Heavenly Father cared and and he was helping me all along the way. And I felt his reassurance and everything's going to be fine and we move on. And I felt that love that he shares with me. I'm grateful for that.

Kurt Francom: That concludes this episode of the Leading Saints podcast. Hey, listen, would you do me a favor? You know, everybody's got that friend who listens to a ton of podcasts and maybe they aren't aware of Leading Saints. So would you mind taking the link of this episode or another episode of Leading Saints and just texting it to that friend? You know who I'm talking about? The friend who always listens to podcasts and is always telling you about different podcasts. Well, it's your turn to tell that friend about Leading Saints. So share it. We'd also love to hear from you. If you have any perspective or thought on this episode, you can go to leading-saints.org and actually leave a comment on the episode page or reach out to us at leading-saints.org/slash-contact. Remember, solve the burden of meetings by visiting leading-saints.org/slash-14 and getting 14 days access to the meetings with saints virtual library.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley: It came as a result of the position of leadership which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the declaration was made concerning the only true and living church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness. A loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away and to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.