

Vignettes for Youth Conference
Elk Ridge, Utah Stake

Performed June 6, 7, 8, 2019

Reid Ranch (Utah)

The First Vision

The Translation of the Plates

The Restoration of the Priesthood

Written and Directed by
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These Vignettes can be performed as Reader’s Theaters, or as small plays where parts are memorized. They can be done with or without costuming, and with or without microphones, depending on the size of the audience.

The material for these three vignettes came from three main sources: The *Doctrine and Covenants*, the book, *Saints*, Volume I, and the book, *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* written by Lucy Mack Smith and edited by Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor.



The First Vision

Cast:

Preacher: *Jamie Elder*

Joseph Smith: *Nelson Barrett*

Mother Smith: *Lisa Bradshaw*

Father Smith: *Barry Bradshaw*

Alvin Smith: *Kyler Holman*

Hyrum Smith: *Hunter Stratton*

Samuel Smith: *Colby Call*

William Smith: *Gabriel Shallenberger*

Don Carlos Smith: *Ryan Crippen*

Sophronia Smith: *Maddy Ottley*

Katharine Smith: *Ashley Carter*

Lucy Smith: *Ashley Cahoon – also Violin*

Second Violin: *Kylee Cahoon*

About 14 minutes in length





Revival Choir

As audience comes from Revival and Transition Walk, the Joseph Smith family up front – Joseph Smith is in front, the family slightly behind him. The Revival Choir are already in the grove with the audience (done four times – 100 people each time).

The best thing to have for this is a microphone (or head phones) for each person – you could work with about four standing microphones – but Joseph Smith should definitely have head phones.

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” – sung by Revival Choir – Text: Martin Luther, 1483-1546

*(“A Mighty Fortress” is one of the best loved hymns of the **Lutheran** tradition and among **Protestants** more generally. It has been called the “Battle Hymn of the **Reformation**” for the effect it had in increasing the support for the Reformers’ cause.)*

Trumpet/and or Violins: Play this song through once while audience is sitting down.

Revival Choir including Preacher (who is on his own mike) and the complete Joseph Smith Family – accompanied by Trumpet:

A mighty fortress is our God, A tower of strength ne’er failing.

A helper mighty is our God, O’er ills of life prevailing.

He overcometh all. He saveth from the Fall.

His might and pow’r are great. He all things did create.

And he shall reign for evermore.

Joseph Smith: My name is Joseph Smith and this is my family. My Mother and Father, my two older brothers and sister, Alvin, Hyrum and Sopronia, and my three younger brothers, Samuel, William and Don Carlos, and my two younger sisters, Katharine and Lucy.

Joseph Smith continues: When I was twelve years old, I was concerned about my immortal soul. I often listened to the preachers who were in our area.

Preacher: You all are sinners in a sinful world, helpless without the saving grace of Jesus Christ!

Joseph Smith: I believed this message and I felt bad about my sins, but I was not sure how to find forgiveness.

Father: The different churches argued endlessly about how people could be free of sin.

Mother: Joseph was distressed to see people reading the same Bible, but coming to different conclusions about its meaning.

Joseph Smith: I believed God's truth was out there – somewhere – but I did not know how to find it.

Mother: Father and I both came from Christian families and believed in the Bible and Jesus Christ. I sought for the true church – even when it felt like the Savior's Church was no longer on earth – I kept searching.

Father: Like Mother, I hungered for the truth. I believed that Jesus Christ had come to save the world – but there was so much discord and confusion, I felt that attending no church was preferable to attending the wrong one.

Preacher: First you must unite yourselves with the right church. If you embrace wrong doctrine and unite with a corrupt church, you can expect coldness and darkness all of your lives.

Joseph Smith: But how can I know which church is right?

Preacher: That is not hard. You seek for the church that comes nearest the truths taught in the Bible. And that is the church to which you must unite.

Alvin: In the summer of 1819 – when Joseph was 13 years old – there arose contention among the preachers of different religions.

Hyrum: The Methodists were strong and they spread across the countryside to spur families, like ours, towards conversion.

Alvin: Soon competition for converts was intense.

Joseph Smith: My soul was at stake, but no one could give me or any of my family, satisfying answers.

Sophronia: More than any of us, it seemed that this younger brother of mine, continued to worry about his sins and the welfare of his soul.

Samuel: Day and night, Joseph watched the sun, moon and stars roll through the heavens in order and majesty and admired the beauty of the earth teeming with life.

William: He also looked at the people around him and marveled at their strength and intelligence.

Joseph Smith: Everything seemed to testify that God existed and had created humankind in His own Image. But how could I reach Him?

Katharine: Joseph attended a lot of meetings, searching for truth – he listened to soul-searching preaching.

Mother: That’s right, Katharine, and he witnessed converts shout for joy. He wanted to shout with them.

Father: But he often felt like he was in the middle of words and opinions.

Joseph Smith: Who of all these parties were right – Or are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?

Alvin: Joseph knew he needed Christ’s grace and mercy, but with so many people and churches clashing over religion, he did not know where to find it.

Hyrum: Hope that he could find answers and peace for his soul seemed to slip away from him.

Father: Much like myself, Joseph wondered how anyone could find truth amid so much noise.

Sophronia: Then, while attending one particular sermon, Joseph heard a minister quote from the first chapter of James in the New Testament.

Preacher: *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.”*

Joseph Smith: I went home and read this scripture again, in the Bible. Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart.

Mother: Joseph reflected on this again and again . . .

Joseph Smith: If any person needed wisdom from God, I did.

Father: My young son Joseph had searched the Bible before as if it held all the answers. Well, as a family, we all did that – but now the Bible was telling him he could go directly to God for personal answers to his questions.

Joseph Smith: I decided I needed to pray. I trusted in the Bible’s promise:

Mother: “Ask in faith, nothing wavering,” the Bible taught. God would hear his questions – even if they came out awkwardly.

Violin start playing the whole song: **“Oh, How Lovely Was the Morning”** while the following conversation goes on: (While the Violin plays, Sophronia, Alvin and Hyrum hum the song along with the violin)

Samuel: Joseph rose early on a spring morning in 1820 and set out for the woods near his home.

Don Carlos: The day was clear and beautiful and sunlight filtered thru the branches overhead.

William: He wanted to be alone when he prayed and he knew just the spot where he wanted to go.

Don Carlos: The spot was where he was clearing trees recently. He had left his axe there, wedged in a stump.



Sophronia: (Come in on the last phrase – and sing it):

“When within the shady woodland Joseph sought the God of Love.”

William: Satisfied he was alone, Joseph knelt on the cool earth and began to share the desires of his heart with God. This was the first time he had ever prayed out loud.

Samuel: He asked for mercy and forgiveness and for wisdom to find answers to his questions.

Joseph Smith: “Oh Lord, what church shall I join?”

Alvin: As he prayed, his tongue seemed to swell until he could not speak.

Hyrum: He heard footsteps behind him, but saw no one when he turned around. He tried to pray again, but the footsteps grew louder, as if someone was coming for him.

Sophronia: He sprang to his feet and spun around, but still he saw no one.

Samuel: Suddenly an unseen power seized him. . . A thick darkness closed in around him until he could no longer see the sunlight.

Alvin: Doubts and awful images flashed across his mind, confusing him.

Sophronia: He felt as if some terrible being, real and immensely powerful, wanted to destroy him.

Ashley and Kylee Cahoon play a slight introduction to song “Oh How Lovely Was the Morning:”

Alvin: Exerting all his strength, Joseph called once more to God.

Mother and Father sing (unison): (Accompanied on the violin by Ashley and Kylee Cahoon)

Humbly kneeling, sweet appealing—

’Twas “our” boy’s first uttered prayer— (Mother and Father can either sing these first two lines or speak them while the violin is playing the tune)

(All the family sing the rest of the verse):

When the pow’rs of sin assailing

Filled his soul with deep despair;

But undaunted, still he trusted In his Heav’nly Father’s care,

But undaunted, still he trusted In his Heav’nly Father’s care.

All of them sing (harmony if possible): (as Joseph is acting this out)

Suddenly a light descended,

Brighter far than noonday sun,

And a shining, glorious pillar

O’er him fell, around him shone,

While appeared two heav’nly beings, God the Father and the Son,

While appeared two heav’nly beings, God the Father and the Son.

Sophronia and Katharine sing:

“Joseph, this is my Beloved;

Hear him!” Oh, how sweet the word!

All the Brothers sing:

Joseph’s humble prayer was answered,

And he listened to the Lord.

(Violin continues to play to the end of the song during following conversation)

Mother: God the Father, and his son Jesus Christ, appeared to my son. He saw two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above him in the air.

Alvin: One of them spoke to Joseph, and even called him by name and said, pointing to the other – *“Joseph, This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!”* I know my brother Joseph, and know he told us the truth.

Father: *“Joseph,”* the Savior said, *“thy sins are forgiven.”* His burden lifted, Joseph then repeated his question:

Joseph Smith: “What Church shall I join?”

Father: *“Join none of them,”* the Savior told him. *“They teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”*

Hyrum: Joseph looked into the face of Jesus Christ. His eyes were as the flame of fire, the hair of his head was white as the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters.

Sophronia: Joseph expected the woods to be devoured by the brilliance, but the trees burned like Moses’ bush and were not consumed.

William: When the light faded, Joseph found himself lying on his back, looking up into heaven.

Katharine: The pillar of light had departed, and his guilt and confusion were gone. Feelings of divine love filled his heart.

Don Carlos: God the Father and Jesus Christ had spoken to him, and he had learned for himself how to find truth and forgiveness.

(Mother leaves the family group and goes towards him, as Joseph walks towards her.)

Mother: Joseph, what is it? What is the matter?

Joseph: *“Never mind, Mother, all is well – I am well enough off.”*

Katharine: Some few days after his vision, Joseph found himself in the company with one of the Methodist preachers, and gave him an account of his vision.

Preacher: Joseph, your story is of the devil. The days of visions and revelations ceased long ago. . . and they will never return!

Joseph Smith: This surprised me, but I found that no one would believe my vision. Why would they? I am only fourteen years old and have no education.

Don Carlos: I was only four years old when Joseph had this vision. We were just a poor family who had to work hard to make a living, but I know that Joseph told us the truth and that he had actually seen Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Lucy: I was born after Joseph had his vision of the Father and the Son and was not there to witness the troubled times that Joseph went through –But ever since I was born, I’ve had a testimony of the truthfulness of the vision and the calling of my brother as a Prophet of God.

Joseph: *“I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true; . . . why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision: I knew, it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it . . .”*

The Translation of the Plates

Cast:

Father Smith: *Don Shallenberger*

Mother Smith: *Desiree Shallenberger*

Joseph Smith: *Jacob Ith/Hunter Stratton*

Emma Smith: *Olivia Flitton*

Martin Harris: *Chad Nelson*

Lucy Harris: *Lisa Nelson*

Oliver Cowdery: *Caleb Mason*

David Whitmer: *Ty Hardinger*

Persecutors: *Gary Kinney*

Persecutor: *DJ Heap*

Persecutor: *Brent Clark*



All have scripts, but they need to be so familiar with the lines that they are relating to the audience as they tell this story. This is basically Mother and Father Smith telling the story to the audience – the others come in and enact some of the scenes. All of them (6) need head mikes. Mother and Father Smith can have standing mikes. The persecutors don't need them.

Mother Smith (narrator) (to audience): My name is Mother Smith, and this is Father Smith. As you remember, our son Joseph received his First Vision of the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Spring of 1820. Except for every kind of opposition and persecution from the different preachers of religion, nothing of any great significance happened to our family or Joseph until September 21, 1823.

Joseph Smith: On that particular night, our family had all stayed up late – we were talking about different churches and the doctrines they taught. I went up to bed in a loft bedroom that I shared with my brothers. I was awake, but everyone else was asleep, and the house was quiet.

Mother Smith: Joseph was seventeen years old now, and he longed to commune with a heavenly messenger who could assure him of his standing before the Lord, and he wanted to be given the knowledge of the Gospel he had been promised when he was in the Grove.

Joseph Smith: God had answered my prayers before and I had confidence he would answer again.

Father Smith: As Joseph prayed, a light appeared beside his bed and grew brighter until it filled the entire loft.

Joseph Smith: I looked up and saw an angel standing in the air. The angel wore a seamless white robe that came down to his wrists and ankles. Light radiated from him, and his face shone like lightening. At first I was afraid, but peace soon filled me.

Father Smith: He called Joseph by name and introduced himself as Moroni. He told Joseph that God had a work for him to do, and that his name should be had for good and evil among all people.

Mother Smith: Moroni spoke of gold plates buried in a nearby hill. On the plates was etched the record of an ancient people who once lived in the Americas. It also gave an account of Jesus Christ visiting them and teaching them the fullness of the Gospel. Buried with these plates were two seer stones, which would help him interpret the writing on the plates. Then Moroni quoted scripture and prophecies from ancient prophets.

Joseph Smith: Light then gathered around Moroni and he ascended to heaven. As I was thinking about the vision, Moroni appeared again and repeated everything as he did the first time. And he appeared a third time, repeating everything again. I was told to tell my father everything – all which I had both seen and heard, and was promised that my father would believe me.

Father Smith: I wept when Joseph told me about the angel and his message. It was a vision from God, and I told Joseph to attend to it – to find the plates.

Joseph Smith: I thought about the plates as I walked to the hill. I did wonder how much they would be worth, particularly since my family lived in poverty, but the plates were valuable not because they were gold, but because they witnessed of Jesus Christ.

Father Smith: He did find the right spot. It was covered by a large boulder, and beneath the boulder was a box made of stone. Looking inside, Joseph saw the gold plates, seer stones and breastplate, but as he reached for them, he felt a shock. He cried out,

Joseph Smith: *“Why can I not obtain this book?”*

Father Smith: *“Because you have not kept the commandments of the Lord,”* said a voice nearby.

Mother Smith: Of course, it was Moroni again, and Joseph realized that he had forgotten the record’s true purpose – he was tempted by the gold. He started to pray, and his mind and soul awoke to the Holy Spirit. He was reminded of the purpose of the book.

Joseph: I had much to learn about the value of the records, about keeping the Lord’s commandments, and about following Moroni’s instructions. For five years I visited the hill and received instructions and learned about the people who wrote on the plates. In the meantime, I married Emma Hale. She was the one I chose to accompany me on the evening of September 22, 1827. We arrived at the hill shortly after midnight.

Father: Finally, Joseph did get the plates. Up until now Moroni had protected the plates, but now it was up to Joseph to protect them. Rumors spread like wildfire! Wicked men tried to find the plates, using every strategy, and some even attacked Joseph on his way home from the hill.

Two or three men: (1) Joe Smith’s got a Gold Bible. (2) That’s right—let’s find him and check it out. (1) I’d like some of that gold, etc. (2) Yeah, me too!

Mother: He brought the “interpreters” or the “urim and thummim” home first. They were covered in a silk handkerchief and Joseph allowed me to hold them and feel them – it consisted of two smooth three-cornered diamonds set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows connected with each other in much the same way that old-fashioned spectacles are made.

Joseph Smith: Mother, *“it is ten times better than I expected! I can see anything. They are marvelous!”*

Emma: Mother – We need a chest to put these in. Joseph and I aren’t safe here anymore. We need to leave as soon as possible.

Men: *“We will have the plates, in spite of Joe Smith or all the devils below.”*

(Martin Harris walks up to Joseph Smith and shakes his hand during Mother’s lines – then walks towards his wife Lucy as she’s speaking)_

Mother: A friend, Martin Harris, gave Joseph \$50.00 to make the trip back to Harmony, Pennsylvania. In fact, he offered to go back to Harmony as well to help Joseph in the translation. One problem – Martin’s wife, Lucy Harris. She thought Joseph Smith was an imposter and was just trying to get money from them.

Lucy Harris: (*in audience*) I know Joseph Smith is an imposter! (*looks at Martin*) How can you support him? He's just trying to get your property.

Martin Harris: I don't think so. He needs our help. I'm going to Harmony to help him.

Lucy Harris: (*to audience*) I have a plan that will expose Joseph as an imposter. I think I'll go with my husband. (*to Martin*) Yes, Martin, let's go to Harmony. That will be good. I'll come with you.

Mother Smith: (*to audience*) When they arrived, Lucy tried to find the plates—she looked everywhere.

Lucy Harris: (*to audience*) I've looked! I can't find them, but I know they're here. (*to different people in the audience*) You can't believe this man. Joseph is an imposter, I tell you! If he had gold plates, he's stolen them from somewhere. (*to others*) Surely you don't believe him. Or you—he's trying to get my husband's money and property. Isn't it obvious to you?

Mother Smith: (*to audience*) While this woman remained in the neighborhood, she did all she could do to injure Joseph in the eyes of his neighbors. And it worked! Her lies and exaggerations stirred up resentment towards my son Joseph.

Persecutors: (1) He's a gold digger! (2) He's not a prophet, but an imposter! (1) That's for sure, (etc.)

Martin Harris: (*to his wife*) Lucy, you're wrong about Joseph. He needs my help. I want to stay here in Harmony to help him with the translation. I believe that the work he is doing is from God. I'll find a way to convince you. You'll see for yourself.

Lucy Harris: You just can't see it, can you, Martin?

Father Smith: (*to audience*) Martin Harris was a faithful friend to Joseph. On the 12th of April 1828, Martin became a scribe while Joseph translated the records written on the Gold Plates.

Mother: After two months of working on the manuscript, an interesting exchange took place between Martin Harris and Joseph:

Martin: Joseph, I would like to take 116 pages of this manuscript and show them to my wife, Lucy. I think it will convince her of the truthfulness of your divine calling.

Joseph: Martin, twice I've taken this matter to the Lord and twice he has refused . . . but I will ask one more time.

Father: On the third attempt, the Lord permitted Martin to take the manuscript home with him, on the condition that Joseph would be responsible for its safety.

Joseph: Martin, you must give me your solemn oath that you will protect these pages.

Father: Martin gave this solemn oath to Joseph, but Lucy was not to be trusted.

Martin Harris: Lucy, where's the manuscript. It's not where I left it. Lucy, I trusted you!

Lucy Harris: You've been gone from us for over five months. I tell you, Joseph is the one not to be trusted.

(Joseph kneels in humble prayer)

Mother: When Joseph learned of the lost manuscript, he knelt in mighty prayer. . . an angel stood before him saying that he had sinned in delivering the manuscript to Martin. He had to deliver the Urim and Thummim back into the angel's hand.

Father: That same month Joseph received a revelation from the Lord. He counseled Joseph saying, *"Remember, remember, that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of man. . . For behold, you should not have feared man more than God. . . Repent . . . and thou art still chosen and art again called to the work."* (D&C 3:3,7, 10)

Father Smith (continuing): Three months later, with the return of the Urim and Thummim, Joseph resumed the translation of the plates – this time with Emma as a scribe. The pages of the lost manuscript were never translated again.

Mother Smith: The weeks that followed were good for Emma and Joseph. Her health continued improve and together they worked on the translation of the Gold Plates. *(to Emma)* Emma, you're working so hard, but your health seems to be better.

Emma: Mother—we don't get to work on the book very often, but it's wonderful. I don't ever see the plates, but I know they're of God. They're real!

Mother Smith: Where do you keep them?

Emma: Well, for months they lay in a box under our bed, but I never felt at liberty to look at them. Sometimes they were on a table in our living room, wrapped in a small linen tablecloth—one that I had given Joseph to use.

Mother Smith: Did you ever have to move them and lift them yourself?

Emma: No, I never did that, but once I felt the plates while they were on a table—I traced their outline and shape. They seemed to be pliable like thick paper, and would rustle with a metallic sound when I moved the edges with my thumb.

Mother Smith: Rumors always get back to me. Some people say that Joseph is just making up the story, and then dictating it to you as if he were reading from the plates.

Emma: You know as well as I do that your son, and my husband, can neither write nor dictate a coherent and well worded letter, let alone dictate a book like the Book of Mormon!

Mother Smith: It's marvelous to me. . .

Emma: And it's marvelous to me! . . . as much as to anyone—I am satisfied that no man could have dictated the writing of the manuscripts unless he was inspired. Can you believe what is happening to all of us? It's a marvelous work and a wonder! (*continuing*) Mother, do you realize that he dictates to me hour after hour and then we have a meal or perhaps there's some other interruption. Then he comes back and begins exactly where he left off—without either seeing the manuscript or having any portion of it read to him.

Mother Smith: It would be unlikely for an educated man to do this—and for one so unlearned as Joseph is, it would simply be impossible! This is truly the work of the Lord!

Father Smith: What happened next was another miracle. We had a visitor come to our home, and we took him in and gave him a room. His name was Oliver Cowdery. (*as Oliver comes up from audience*) He was a teacher in the Manchester School. He heard the rumors, like everyone else did, and asked about Joseph. At first, we were cautious, but Oliver persisted, and we finally told him the whole story from the beginning.

Oliver: I was amazed at what Father Smith and the rest of the family related to me. I had a strong feeling that I could be of assistance.

Joseph Smith: I had been praying that God would send someone to become my scribe.

Father Smith: On the 5th of April 1829, Samuel arrived with Oliver in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and on the 7th of April Joseph commenced to translate the Book of Mormon and Oliver Cowdery began to write for him.

Oliver: (to audience) *These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of my heart! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or as the Nephites would have said, "Interpreters," the history called "The Book of Mormon"*

Father: With Oliver's arrival in Joseph's home, the work of the translation moved along rapidly. By the end of May the translation was nearly complete. However, persecution again began to manifest itself. Joseph prayed for a solution to this problem. The solution was to ask David Whitmer of Waterloo, New York to come to Harmony and transport Joseph and Oliver to David's home where they could finish the translation.

Mother: Joseph didn't know David, but we did and we had given him a brief history of the record of the Book of Mormon.

David Whitmer: I was only twenty-four years old at this time, but the Spirit of the Lord was working with me. I knew I was to assist Joseph in the work in which he was engaged. After experiencing some miracles myself, I hitched up my wagon and departed for Pennsylvania.

Father: With the completion of the book, Mother and I also went to Pennsylvania. Martin Harris wanted to come with us, but you don't need to worry – because he left his wife at home! Our stay in Pennsylvania was a glorious event.

Joseph: Martin Harris, you have got to humble yourself before your God this day and obtain, if possible, a forgiveness of your sins. If you do this, it is God's will that you and Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer should look upon the plates.

Emma: (to audience) Imagine if you can, this combination of men. My husband, a twenty-three year old prophet, David Whitmer, a twenty-four year old farmer, Oliver Cowdery, a twenty-two year old school teacher and Martin Harris, a wealthy forty-seven year old land owner and farmer. These three were given the divine privilege of seeing a heavenly messenger who showed them the plates of gold from which the Book of Mormon was translated.



All three men in unison (David, Oliver, Martin): *"We declare with words of soberness that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates and the engravings thereon. . ."*

Oliver: (to audience) *"I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands the gold plates. . . I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the holy interpreters. That book is true. I will never deny this testimony."*

Martin Harris: Nor I. . .

David Whitmer: Nor I. . .

Song: “The Spirit of God” first and second verses. Page 2, LDS Hymnal, Written by William W. Phelps.

Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, Martin Harris, Father Smith, Joseph Smith:

The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning!

The Latter day Glory begins to come forth;

Joined by Mother and Emma:

The Visions and blessings of old are returning

And angels are coming to visit the earth

Chorus – everyone, including audience:

We’ll sing and we’ll shout with the armies of heaven, Hosanna, hosanna to God and the Lamb

Let glory to them in the highest be given, Henceforth and forever , Amen and Amen

Everyone on stage (harmony):

The Lord is extending the Saints’ understanding

Restoring their judges and all as at first.

The knowledge and power of God are expanding; The veil o’er the earth is beginning to burst

Chorus – everyone, including audience:

We’ll sing and we’ll shout with the armies of heaven, Hosanna, hosanna to God and the Lamb

Let glory to them in the highest be given, Henceforth and forever , Amen and Amen



Reid's Ranch



The Restoration of the Priesthood

(This is a lot of background information that you can use. These will be done in three different locations by three different wards. These people will have scripts – like a Readers’ Theater – but they will know their scripts well, so they can connect with the audience – many lines could be memorized. At the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, Joseph and Oliver can simply act out what is being said (but this is optional). The same with the Melchizedek Priesthood – this is optional, but could be very effective if you choose to do it. If they act this out, then John the Baptist, Peter, James and John will need costumes, as will Adam, Moses and Noah. We picture the Father (earthly) and Son and Daughter on stools in front of mikes. One or two mikes can also be set up for Adam, Moses and Noah to use. None of them will need wireless mikes. Those three are also on stage in front at all times because they have “lines” throughout.



The Script:

Father: Spencer, I would like to tell you more about the Priesthood. And Christy, I’d love to have you hear this too. Both of you have been recipients of the power of the Priesthood as you’ve been given blessings ever since you were babies. And you will continue to receive these blessings the rest of your lives. I’d like you both to understand more about the power and authority of the Priesthood. Priesthood power and authority were given to men anciently.

Spencer: I’m sure Jesus gave the Priesthood to his apostles before he was crucified.

Father: Yes, he did. But it was on earth even before that. The Priesthood was first given to Adam – even before the world was formed. He helped create the earth and all living things. The creation was done by the power of the Priesthood. On earth, he held the keys to this power from generation to generation. Can you just picture the majesty of this man? Let me tell you about Adam and some other ancient prophets who used Priesthood power.

Adam: My name is Adam. I am also called Michael the Archangel. You can read about me in the scriptures. While on earth I had dominion given to me over every living creature. I will one day deliver up my stewardship to Christ as head of the human family.

Noah: I am Noah, also known as Gabriel, and I stand next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood. The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years. (*JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION, HEBREWS 7:3*). Whenever the Gospel is on earth, the keys of the Priesthood have to be brought from heaven.

Moses: I am Moses. At one time, I held the keys, and at another, Elijah held the keys. As Noah said, the Priesthood is everlasting. Whenever, the ordinances of the Gospel are administered, there is the Priesthood. There has been a chain of authority and power from Adam down to the present time.

Christy: Dad, has the Priesthood always been on earth?

Father: There have been times when only the Levitical or Aaronic Priesthood have been on earth. Spencer already has the Aaronic Priesthood. It was already on earth when Jesus walked the roads of Palestine.

Spencer: Yes, I know this. John the Baptist held that Priesthood – and had the authority to even baptize Jesus.

Father: That's correct, Spencer. But that's all he could do. The Aaronic Priesthood was on the earth from the time of Moses until the time of Jesus. John the Baptist didn't hold the higher Priesthood – the Melchizedek Priesthood. That had been taken from the earth. But Jesus, while on earth, wanted to establish His Church in its fullness. When Jesus took Peter, James and John upon a high mountain, and was transfigured before them, there appeared unto them, Moses and Elias. And they even heard a voice from out of the cloud, which said, *"This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."*

Christy: Can you tell us what happened on that mountain?

Father: That's a good question, Christy. Do you want to read D&C 63:21. . .

Christy: *"When the earth shall be transfigured, even according to the pattern which was shown unto mine apostles upon the mount; of which account the fullness ye have not yet received."*

Father: All that happened on the Mount of Transfiguration has not been revealed, but Jesus a few days earlier declared to Peter: Spencer, do you want to read this:

Spencer: *"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* (*MATTHEW 16:19*).

Father: That's the power of the Melchizedek Priesthood. All the Prophets of God held this power. And all the prophets through all the dispensations of time looked forward to the time of Joseph Smith. When a prophet is called and the Gospel is on the earth, it is called a Dispensation.

Adam: Joseph Smith was the Prophet foreordained to help usher in the long-promised Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. This is the dispensation when the Gospel will be restored in its fullness – nothing will be held back. I rejoiced when God the Father and Christ appeared to Joseph to begin this last and glorious dispensation.

Noah: I, too, looked forward to the time of Joseph Smith, the man chosen to be the Prophet of the Last Dispensation before the Coming of Christ – the time when the Priesthood would never again be taken from the earth.

Moses: All of us who at one time held the Keys of the Kingdom, looked forward to the time when the Prophet Joseph Smith would hold all of these keys. Many of us who were guardians of these sacred powers were grateful to appear to Joseph Smith and confer these Priesthood powers, and knowledge, and rights and privileges upon him.

Father: Spencer, you do recall how Joseph received the Aaronic Priesthood, don't you?

Spencer: Sure I do. Joseph and Oliver came to a passage while translating the Book of Mormon, which spoke of baptism, and wondered how this was to be. They went to a private spot in the woods and prayed and asked for revelation. And, Dad, now I understand why it was John the Baptist who appeared to them and gave them the power to baptize. This authority has to be given by one who held it and had the authority to pass it on.

Father: Very good, Spencer! After they received the Aaronic Priesthood and the ordinance of baptism, Joseph and Oliver experienced blessings they had never known before. Christy, would you like to read what Joseph recorded after he and Oliver were baptized:

Christy: *“Our minds being now enlightened, we began to have the scriptures laid open to our understandings . . . which we never could attain to previously.”* (JOSEPH SMITH - HISTORY 1:74).

Spencer: Do you think, Dad, that this could happen to me as well now that I hold the Aaronic Priesthood?

Father: Well, of course it could happen. It most definitely will happen to you if that is your desire. And, in fact, perhaps your mind has already been enlightened. As promised by John the Baptist, the blessing to receive the higher Priesthood was given to Joseph and Oliver shortly after they received the Aaronic Priesthood. The Ancient Apostles Peter. . .

Christy: I know, Dad . . . Peter, James and John appeared to them in a secluded location near the Susquehanna River and conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood upon them.

Father: Good for you, Christy. Joseph declared that he heard *“the voice of Peter, James, and John in the wilderness . . . on the Susquehanna River, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the dispensation of the fullness of times!”* (D&C 128:20).

Adam: In the years that followed, Joseph Smith was visited by many other priesthood holders from ancient times. Joseph Smith was a great Prophet of God.

Moses: I was among those who came to restore the priesthood keys necessary to make the full blessings of the gospel available to God’s children.

Noah: These messengers came to tutor the Prophet Joseph Smith, who would stand at the head of the dispensation of the fullness of times. All of us on this side, and you on the earth, are witnesses of this great and final restoration before the second coming of our Lord.

Spencer: Dad – I don’t think I realized how many messengers and angels besides Moroni, and Jesus and God, the Father appeared to Joseph Smith. We always seem to be taught that he was a simple uneducated boy on a farm, but he was taught by angels and God and Jesus Christ and Ancient Prophets. Heavenly Father knew all along who he would become. I hope to meet him someday.

Father: And I too, hope for that, Spencer. President John Taylor declared: *“If you were to ask Joseph what sort of a looking man Adam was, he would tell you at once; he would tell you his size and appearance and all about him. You might have asked him what sort of men Peter, James and John were, and he could have told you. Why? Because he had seen them.”*

