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A Great Work

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Hello Penny Creek Ward friend,

How are you doing? (Reply and let me know.)

I know the new year usually brings hope and optimism as we look forward to change and progress, but it's possible that this new year may be different than in the past. Your hope may have been a bit dashed due to recent events or ongoing circumstances.

So, let's talk about some good things that are happening.

You only need to browse the [newsroom site](#) of the church to see all the wonderful things that the church is involved in.

And even though 2020 may have been an awful year in some regards, just take a look at the [2020 Year in Review](#) from the church website and you'll be in awe at how many amazing things occurred last year.

And if you need some inspiration, the brief articles and videos on [this page](#) are powerful.

Don't forget, the Lord continues to perform His work. We are part of the Lord's Kingdom on the earth and it is moving forward to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. This is a great work we are involved in.

The foundation was laid a couple hundred years ago when Joseph Smith experienced the first vision, translated the Book of Mormon, and restored Priesthood keys to the earth. Now, we have a fully functioning kingdom accomplishing God's work. We have a prophet who is being led by the Lord himself to give us messages for our time, and to make changes in the church that help us focus on the pure doctrine of Christ and becoming better at ministering to our fellow brothers and sisters.

The drastic changes to our church practices are only a way to help us focus on principles and doctrine, and let go of traditions and practices that are not essential to salvation. We are not accustomed to such rapid change but there's something we need to learn from it. Remember what the Lord said to Joseph Smith when the church and people were suffering from tremendous persecution and the prophet was in prison (at least we don't have it that bad.)

"And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge conspire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens gather blackness, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good." (D&C 122: 7)

Somehow, these trials are for our good. Joseph Smith couldn't see the great future success and growth of the church at that time, but we have the privilege of seeing it now. The same is true for many of the dire scenarios we read about in the Book of Mormon and Bible, we know how things turned out, and why. We are supposed to learn.

Learn what? Well, everything, but mostly trust. Trust in God. That He is in charge. He knows everything that is happening, everything that will happen, and He knows you personally. That is someone you can trust. No one else deserves as much trust from us. "The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (D&C 122:8)

"Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:33-34)

And not coincidentally, that scripture is the youth theme for 2021: A Great Work.

It contains 3 key principles we all should remember:

1. Persevere when doing God's work, it's important.

2. Great things come from small things.
3. The Lord wants us to want to serve Him.

I also encourage you to listen to the youth theme music album for this year and see if certain songs have a special message for you. Music is powerful. That is why we have always had hymns as part of our worship. These aren't hymns, but they have great messages of hope. You can be encouraged and uplifted by listening to them.

[Listen or download them from here.](#)

And finally, you can read the great inspiring stories on our [Penny Creek Ward website](#).

Keep the faith my friend! And "hold on thy way...thy days are known...fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever." (D&C 122:9)

Take care.

Bishop Williams

P.S. I hope to see those in Group A (and anyone else who feels a special need) in person at our Sacrament meeting tomorrow at 9:00am. And it's perfectly fine if you feel more comfortable watching our broadcast online at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzQM_SmjDFmwHAA6lfjtseg/live

We'll 'see' you in spirit.

You received this email because you made your email address available to your local Church leaders. It was sent by Rex Williams, whose calling is Bishop.