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You are a Pioneer of Faith

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Hello my pioneer friend,

Happy Pioneer Day! In case you didn't know, July 24th is Pioneer Day, and it's usually a huge celebration in Utah (because it's a state holiday.) I guess not too many are aware of it around here. That's okay, it's a pretty Utah and church centric holiday anyway. It commemorates the entry of Brigham Young and the first group of Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847. Other surrounding states celebrate it too because of the Pioneer members of the church who settled the surrounding area during that time.

Are you a pioneer? I say yes!

Because whatever you do, it's something that no one has ever done in just the way you have done it. Every day you're a pioneer. You forge new paths and experience new adventures in your life. And every day is a unique challenge. You never know what might happen.

When we think about the pioneers who crossed the plains to settle in Utah, we know their entire story and how it all turned out, but during their journey, they had no idea what would happen. They didn't know if they'd make it or if the church would continue to thrive and grow. Many of them actually didn't make it, and there was a lot of death and sorrow along the way. But they had faith.

Faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ is what sustained them. Faith that he called a prophet in the latter days. And faith that what they were a part of was something much bigger than themselves that would continue to grow and fill the whole earth according to prophecy.

That kind of faith can sustain you too.

You may not be traveling miles of treacherous land in a wagon to escape persecution and live in peace, but you are building a legacy. Someone appreciates your struggle and sacrifice and determination to reach your goal. That someone is here on the earth as family or friends or Penny Creek ward members, but many more are beyond this mortal existence. Those who have gone before you are rooting for your success, and some are waiting for you to do sacred work for them in the temple. Others, who haven't yet come to this earth are counting on you to prepare a place of faith and peace for them to enter. And especially, your Father in Heaven knows and appreciates your efforts and unique struggles every day. He is always there to guide you to the best paths and marshal support for you from His children on both sides of the veil. There are many people involved in your story.

So Pioneer Day should not only be a remembrance of faithful Latter Day Saints who braved the elements and traveled over mountains and valleys to settle in the Utah Valley and other western United States, but it should also be a day to remember that you are a pioneer on an important journey. And though you may not experience the physical hardships that our Latter Day Saint pioneers did, you are still traveling treacherous spiritual, mental, and emotional territory filled with dangers and obstacles, heartache and sorrow. Yet, as you continue faithful, joy and peace are awaiting in your own Utah Valley.

Pioneer Day has a special meaning for me because it was the day five years ago when my Mother finished her journey here on this earth. She was a pioneer because she joined the church as a teenager after good friends took her to seminary every day and helped her see the joy of the gospel. She loved her children immensely, and served others in many ways. I look forward to reuniting with her in the future.

You are a pioneer. You are on a unique personal journey along with many others who are pioneering their own difficult path. Together, we can help each other reach promised land, which is peace, joy, and love through faith in our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I'm so glad we're on this journey together. Happy Pioneer Day! (yesterday :)

Take care.

Bishop Williams

P.S.

All Singles - As part of the Abundance Project, we would like to invite you to join us for a special fireside by John Israel. John learned to share his abundance by writing five thank you cards a day for 365 consecutive days. His story made it onto National News outlets and even landed him on stage at TEDx. We are fortunate to have John share his experiences with us. Mark your calendars for this unique opportunity. Sunday, August 1st at 7 pm PDT, access the link for the devotional at <https://www.lds-sa.org/devotionals>. The Abundance Project is part of the 2021 Abundant Life Conference. Come discover your abundance. Register for the conference at [lds-sa.org](https://www.lds-sa.org).

The link to our sacrament meeting Zoom broadcast is available to anyone who requests it from one of our Bishopric members, Brother Stoker, Brother Colson, or myself.

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.