



Listen for the Needs of Those You Lead | A How I Lead Interview with Rebecca Smart

November 1, 2023

Speaker 0 00:00:00 <silence>

Speaker 1 00:00:04 Attention Youth Leaders, if you have recently been called to lead the rising generation, I have a next step for you. Listen to an awesome presentation by Yvonne Hubert and Peter Vidmar, who are both respective members of the young Women and Young Men General Advisory Council for the church. Their presentation really helps clarify ways on how to effectively lead the youth using the Children and youth program. They also cover topics like Youth-led groups, how to lead through personal ministry, how to meet youth, where they are identifying the youth strengths and capacities. This presentation is part of the Young Saints Virtual Library, and you can access it at no cost by going to leading-saints.org/fourteen. Again, simply click the link in the show notes or go to leading-saints.org/one-four.

Speaker 1 00:00:58 So my name is Kurt Francom, and I am the founder and executive director of Leading Saints, and obviously the host of the Leading Saints podcast. Now, I started Leading Saints back in 2010. It was just a hobby blog, and it grew from there. By the time, uh, 2014 came around, we started the podcast, and that's really when it got some, uh, traction and took off. Uh, 2016, we became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and we've been growing ever since. And now I get the opportunity of interviewing and talking with remarkable people all over the world. Now, this is a segment we do on the Leading Saints podcast called How I Lead, and we reach out to everyday leaders. They're not experts, gurus, authors, PhDs. They're just everyday leaders who've been asked to serve in a specific leadership calling. And we simply

ask them, how is it that you lead? And they go through some remarkable principles that should be in a book that should be behind a PhD. They're usually that good. And, uh, we just talk about, uh, sharing what the other guy's doing. And I remember being a leader just simply wanting to know, okay, I know what I'm trying to do, but what's the other guy doing? What's working for him? And so that's why every Wednesday or so we publish these how I lead segments to share.

Speaker 1 00:02:39 Rebecca Smart from Ottawa, Canada. How are you?

Speaker 2 00:02:42 I'm well, Kurt. How are you today?

Speaker 1 00:02:44 Great. I'm so glad to make our way north of the border here in the United States and, uh, learn about the church in your area. So, I mean, if people were to ask you what's the church like in Ottawa, uh, what would you say?

Speaker 2 00:02:56 I would say the church is true everywhere. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:02:57 Good. <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:02:58 <laugh>. So that's the best thing. Uh, you know, it's wonderful. We're in a stake here. So Ottawa is, uh, in the eastern part of Ontario, and we border with, uh, Quebec, which is our French province. Hmm. And so our stake has eight units. We have one single, one young single adult branch. Uh, we have a one single adult ward, sorry, uh, one branch. And then we have a French ward as well, that's based on the Quebec side.

Speaker 1 00:03:24 Wow. Yeah. And, uh, do you speak French yourself?

Speaker 2 00:03:28 Not, no. No. <laugh> I don't at all. So Nice. I didn't grow up here. I've lived, I lived in Ottawa for about 10 years. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:03:34 I gotcha. Gotcha. So, um, and what is the, like what's the, the multilingual, you know, French dynamic look like in, in a stake? Like is stake conference there's interpretation available, or how does that work?

Speaker 2 00:03:48 There is, so we actually have stake conference this coming weekend, and there will be, uh, talks will be given primarily in English, and there will be French translation as well as Spanish translation. Oh, nice. We have, uh, saints from all over the world, um, of course, a lot from Quebec, but many from Africa, a large contingent from Latin and South America. So we're growing with lots of people who come into Canada. It's wonderful.

Speaker 1 00:04:12 Now, I've completely lost track of where temples are or where they're being built. So what's the closest temple or soon-to-be Temple to you? The,

Speaker 2 00:04:19 The closest temple to us is Montreal, which is a couple of hours away.

Speaker 1 00:04:23 Okay. Nice. But, and no, no announcements yet for Ottawa <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:04:27 No <laugh>, sadly, no. All

Speaker 1 00:04:29 Right. Well, that

Speaker 2 00:04:30 Would be wonderful.

Speaker 1 00:04:31 You know, if, if we're on this 2020 temples every conference, I think, uh, at some point they're gonna have to get to Ottawa, you know, so

Speaker 2 00:04:37 Well, that would be exciting.

Speaker 1 00:04:39 I bet. Awesome. Then, uh, maybe take us back to when you were called as the stake primary president. What, what, is there a story behind that?

Speaker 2 00:04:46 Well, sure. I actually served as the first, uh, first counselor in the stake primary for almost three years before I was called a stake primary president during the middle of Covid. Hmm. So I had the call with, uh, the member of the stake presidency and said, well, you probably know why we're here. And I said, no, tell me <laugh>. And so I hadn't expected it, but it was, uh, really a blessing to be called at a very tumultuous time. We've had lots of change and lots of wonderful things happening. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:05:13 And I imagine had you served at, on the ward level as a primary president before this?

Speaker 2 00:05:17 No, not at all. Oh, really? Nice. Most of my church service has been in relief society, actually.

Speaker 1 00:05:22 Okay. All right. Uh,

Speaker 2 00:05:23 I've never served in young women's, but, uh, lots of relief society. I've been a primary secretary and for a very short time, a music leader when I was about 18

Speaker 1 00:05:31 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. And so what was, what was that transition like, uh, going from counselor to president? Did you feel like you just picked up where the last president left off and he kept moving the football down the field, or, or what do you remember about that transition?

Speaker 2 00:05:44 So, the last Stake primary president was amazing. She was a mar remarkable woman and taught me a lot about, about leadership. And so I learned a lot from her. And I think the biggest change now is, uh, just some more meetings. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> I participating in stake council and things like that, which I didn't do before. Yeah. Um, but I've been blessed to have really amazing counselors and we just keep moving forward and we are so excited for all the changes that have been here with the Children and Youth Initiative. And, uh, we've really worked to embrace that and support, uh, and we've been working on growing leaders, you know, supporting our primary presidents to be stronger leaders.

Speaker 1 00:06:21 Yeah. And, and what does that look like as far as focusing on growing leaders, especially those primary presidents? What do you do in order to facilitate that?

Speaker 2 00:06:28 Well, there's a lot of things we do. Um, specifically, you know, we meet with them regularly and try to visit the wards as frequently as we can. Our stake is spread out, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So for me to get to where our stake center is, is about a 40, 40 minute drive in good traffic. Um, but the furthest point is about an hour and three quarters away, and there's another building that's, you know, about 45 minutes to an hour away. So, you know, visiting is not as easy as just <laugh>, you know? Yeah. Traveling to a different building one day, um, you know, 'cause it's only a 15 minute drive or something. So, uh, we work with that, but we, um, uh, plan, you know, plan trainings and try to engage as much as possible in having, you know, building relationships is really important. Um, but in terms of leadership, we, we talk a lot about needs and what are the needs. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So understanding, you know, going beyond the, the duties because leadership isn't just about administration and fulfilling duties. Right. It's about, um, you know who you are and who you work with. So we, we try to encourage leaders to think bigger, um, to have a bigger perspective and to, to explore that and work to meet the needs using their talents and abilities Yeah. That they, you know, they uniquely have.

Speaker 1 00:07:39 And so when you visit a, a primary, uh, uh, what's the overall approach? Like, uh, are you just trying to be present? Are you trying to be helpful? Are you trying to meet with them, you know, after the meeting? Or what does that look like? Uh,

Speaker 2 00:07:54 Often I try to meet with them after the meeting because we don't get a lot of face-to-face time. Yeah. And I usually start by asking a question, like, so what do you think is going well in your primary? What do you like about your calling? Mm-Hmm. No. And how can we support you? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> what, you know, what goals do you have? And, and really taking the time to listen. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. You know, we can observe what's happening in primary, how things are going. Usually try to go and visit one of the classes, see how that's going, you know, visit the nursery, um, but ask what they think is going well. Yeah. Because that's the most telling.

Speaker 1 00:08:26 And are there typical responses that you hear more often than others when you ask that?

Speaker 2 00:08:30 Um, that's a great question. And a lot of times we hear, well, we have great teachers, or Uhhuh, we need more teachers. <laugh>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:08:38 Right. You know,

Speaker 2 00:08:39 The teachers we have are great, but we can't get people called.

Speaker 1 00:08:42 Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:08:43 That's the biggest challenge.

Speaker 1 00:08:44 And that, that that sort of passive aggressive, uh, battle between primary presidencies and the Bishop Rick. Right. As far, because they're staffing, primary presidencies are staffing the largest organization in, you know, in the ward. And so that can be, uh, uh, you know, some tension <laugh> between that, that relationship

Speaker 2 00:09:02 There can be. And that's why it's so important, you know, I, I'm a big fan of following the handbook and knowing what's in there. Right. Yeah. Because there's so much power in it. And so when we know that, uh, bishops and counselors are supposed to work really closely with primary, then they're there and they see what's going on, and they see what the needs are. Yeah. You know, they can know the names of every child. Yeah. And that makes a big difference.

Speaker 1 00:09:24 Yeah, for sure. Um, and then, so you're, you're visiting then, and then you said you do some, some trainings, uh, on a regular basis? Or how does that work?

Speaker 2 00:09:35 Uh, so we of course do leadership at least once a year. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and try and do, we're looking at doing some virtual meetings just to see how that goes, if that, if there's a need there for it. Um, but our in-person, leadership's always, uh, mean a lot. We strive to make them really valuable. I am a big fan of having meetings that are useful, <laugh> and meaningful, and not just full of, um, you know, fluff. Like, let's get to the meet, let's get to the heart of it. Sure. Yeah. And so when we do that, we, we strive my presidency and I council really closely together to strive to meet needs Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> to understand what they are and meet them. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:10:11 And then tell me about just working with your presidency as far as coordinating who's going where, as far as visiting, and I'm sure you're sort of rotating to counselors are going to a certain place so that you don't both show up at the same location. <laugh>, I don't know. I mean, how do you, how do you manage all that?

Speaker 2 00:10:25 So we do our best. Um, so I actually just lost, uh, a, a counselor who was called as the primary president in her wards. So I'm thrilled for that because I can't imagine anyone better trained to be there.

Speaker 1 00:10:36 <laugh>. Yeah, sure.

Speaker 2 00:10:37 Uh, so I, hopefully we'll have a new counselor coming quite soon. Um, so we're spread out. We've been spread out around our stake. So for example, we have, um, we always visit the stake primary or the primary sacrament meeting presentations, which is, uh, a highlight. And last year we had five presentations on one day. Wow. <laugh>. Yeah. So we do, uh, we try to be very strategic, you know, so I might go to the one that my children are in, and my one counselor will go where her children are, or where her, you know, another one where her grandchildren are, and we'll, we'll just spread out and make as much happen as we can. Yeah. So it's a lot about coordination.

Speaker 1 00:11:16 Sure. Yeah. And that's the other thing. I mean, you sort of, there's probably a counselor that lives closer to that building that's an hour and a half away. Right. Uh,

and so Exactly. There may be, they frequent that primary a little more often, I'd imagine. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Awesome. Um, and your first principle you already touched on as far as, uh, the power of, of listening. Uh, anything else that we haven't covered around that principle?

Speaker 2 00:11:36 You know, listening is such an incredible tool, right? We, and we listened in so many different ways. It's about listening with our ears to what's said, but also what is not being said. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. Um, sometimes there's a fear that the stake is gonna come in and tell us what to do <laugh> or, you know, reprimand or offer criticism. So try really hard not to do that, but to just, just to listen to what's there. Yeah. And then offer feedback. Um, and of course, listening to the spirit, that's the most important. Hmm. To be able to be guided, you know, the spirit comes to us all in such different ways. Right. So modeling that and, and be worthy to, to listen and to have the inspiration of the Holy Ghost is a big game changer.

Speaker 1 00:12:18 Yeah. And that's the thing, you know, I mentioned that, you know, that relationship between the stake in the war, that they're, I don't think any stake leader wants to be, um, perceived as someone who comes in with a mandate, and here's what you're gonna do, what you're not gonna do. Uh, but you wanna be a resource. And that process of listening, I mean, that's the first step in being a resources Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you don't, you can't be a resource to problems you don't know or understand that they're experiencing. And so that's really the first step of, of, of establishing that relationship. I'm listening that you're a stake leader that's willing to come sit and listen to what they're experiencing.

Speaker 2 00:12:56 Well, and it requires a fair amount of humility, <laugh>, you know, which is something I'm always working at developing <laugh>, uh, because you don't know what's best. The worst thing is when someone comes in from the outside and thinks, okay, you know what we're doing, and we see this in the corporate world and, and all over. And it's not ideal. So what's, what's going on? What are the needs? And, you know, what are the unique gifts that this president has or this presidency that they can offer that they bring? And, and how they, they use things, you know, how they use the, the resources available to them. Yeah. It's really beautiful to see.

Speaker 1 00:13:31 It is for sure. Anything else around the, the principle of, of power of listening? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:13:36 Just being quiet, <laugh>. Yeah. Which is not always easy for me to do. <laugh> <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:13:41 Nice. Uh, all right. The next, next principle you put down is strength of combining knowledge and personal revelation. Mm-Hmm. Unpack that for us.

Speaker 2 00:13:49 Uh, what I love, so, gospel learning, when we look at the children and youth initiative, gospel learning is the foundational piece, and all the rest comes off of it, right? People get confused and they think, oh, well, there's service and activities, and they focus on the activities, or there's this goal setting program, but really the heart of it is gospel learning. And

that is the home centered church supported, of course. And that's where we get the knowledge to be able to act into the things that we need to do. So the power in learning comes from understanding, uh, a bit about the gospel, right? But also understanding our role as leaders, as primary presidents, understanding what's in the handbook, knowing what the program is. So then, first of all, it saves time and energy because you're not reinventing the wheel, you know, what's there, <laugh>?

Speaker 2 00:14:35 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And it's, you can do that. And then you can seek the inspiration that's required for your specific calling and capacity and what the needs are at that time. So you can adapt what's there when you know what's there. And you can be in line with doing, you know, doing things in the way that the Lord has set out. And that's where the power comes. Hmm. Instead of running around like a chicken with your head cut off, we all can have wonderful ideas and be inspired, but are the ideas, um, you know, what, what needs to happen? And we know what's supposed to happen, and we seek the Holy Ghost. That's where there's incredible power. Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:15:12 <affirmative>. Do, does any experience come to mind as far as, uh, seeing, you know, that that process in in action?

Speaker 2 00:15:19 You know, I'll talk about the children and youth initiatives specifically, and this'll be my own personal experience. So it was released, of course, in 2019, just before the pandemic, um, Canada shut down a little earlier than the States. And we had a lot more restrictions, uh, where I live than, than I know, uh, were experienced in many other places. Um, and so a lot of people kind of felt it got lost a bit. And as I've seen, um, study happen around that, that's where lives has been changed, where parents have been able to focus on, you know, the gospel learning. That's where there's blessings. And I've seen that in my own children. You know, my daughter is, uh, four and a half, almost five. And the other day she came home from school and it was, it had been beautiful weather here. So she was wearing shorts, and she was covered in mud and had sand in her hair and skin knees, you know, <laugh>. Yeah. Just skin, knees. And so she had a bath right away because, uh, she was very dirty. And of course, getting the water on her skin knees was so painful. Yeah. And so afterwards I was getting her clothes back on and getting her ready, and she was sobbing, you know, big tears. And I, you know, a child can, and she said, mommy, can we, can we say a prayer to heavenly Father that he'll help my niece feel better?

Speaker 1 00:16:36 Oh, wow.

Speaker 2 00:16:37 And I said, of course we can. Because that's where the gospel learning is, right? Yeah. The Heavenly Father will be there for me. And it's not just for children, but for adults as well. Right. Because how many times in our adult lives can we say, oh, heavenly father, just help me feel better. Yeah. That we have a need for that. So, um, for me, learning those basics, focusing on the, the gospel, learning and teaching and working to teach my own children, um, that's where there's power and a blessing, right? Yeah. They set a firm foundation like Hillman talked about at Firm Foundation.

Speaker 1 00:17:14 Love it. Alright. The next principle is seeking and using spiritual gifts. How do you go about that? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>,

Speaker 2 00:17:21 I love the idea, the, the principle that everything is so closely connected, right? That our spiritual and our emotions, that everything is tied so close together. And we think sometimes that things are separate, right? That there's talents and abilities, and that's just what I was born with, and that's it. And, and all the rest is separate. But really, they're so linked closely together, and heavenly father wants to bless us, right? He has all these things waiting to bless us, and there's talents and gifts, and I don't even think it's worth kind of separating them out. If we just put them all together and think of them as spiritual gifts, then it's amazing. And how do we wanna use them? How do we wanna use them? And then what do we need? So there's a chance to pray. What do I need? What do I need now?

Speaker 2 00:18:03 And then all of your life experience comes in and all of those talents and says, well, I can use it in this way. We have, uh, two of our primary presidents are artists, and it's amazing, and they can bring in all kinds of things from their perspective, which is wonderful to see. There's another one who is, uh, an an early childhood educator in her career. So she brings that understanding, and it's always exactly what the kids need at that time, right? So they can, they can utilize those things that they have, and then we can pray for more, you know, heavenly father, what do I need right now? And it may be, it may be as simple as, well, you need to be able to ask right now, you could have the gifts of gift of asking, and then you can have the gifts of listening, or you could have the gift of acting.

Speaker 2 00:18:49 Those are all connected, right? Um, it could be the gift of learning or understanding or seeking knowledge around your calling or wisdom on how to do things. They're there for us. There was an amazing quote, I don't have it right now, but, um, from George Q. Cannon, he talked about spiritual gifts and how we have a responsibility to seek them. And I think that it is, um, you know, really quite, quite fantastic when we think about it. Just the help that is there. We're not alone, we're not islands. And I always thought, it's so incredible. My prayers have been answered when I've asked and simply said, you know, what do I, I don't even know what I need. I know I need something. What is it? And the answers come. Yeah. Which goes back to the gospel learning of well, you know, knowing that I can ask, knowing that I can receive personal revelation, knowing how I receive revelation.

Speaker 1 00:19:44 Yeah. Yeah. And I love that doctrine because it's so empowering in a, in a faith community where we, uh, you know, we have such a strong tradition of lay leadership where mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, we get called into these roles, and our capacity seems so limited. And what a wonderful opportunity to step into, uh, some spiritual gifts or request and, and submit to the Lord what spiritual gifts you, you would hope to have or develop during this time. And, and, and once these callings are over with hindsight, after a few years, it's amazing to see just how we develop those spiritual gifts. And they continue to bless the, our, you know, the church, our communities, our families, even beyond the calling.

Speaker 2 00:20:24 Absolutely. And you know, one phrase that I never use ever is, uh, he or she is doing their best.

Speaker 1 00:20:30 Oh,

Speaker 2 00:20:31 Yeah. Because I think it is so limiting.

Speaker 1 00:20:33 Yeah, right. That's true.

Speaker 2 00:20:34 Because it's limiting in terms of it, it implies judgment, right? I'm judging what their best is. I have no idea what their best is, and I especially don't know what their best is when combine with the powers of heaven. Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:20:50 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:20:51 So I don't use that.

Speaker 1 00:20:52 Love it ever. Love it. Um, anything else around seeking and using spiritual gifts that you wanna make sure we, we cover?

Speaker 2 00:21:02 Do you know? It, it's a process over time, right? We start out and, um, I did a talk a couple years ago where I talked about the, the mustard seed, and, you know, it's so tall, so tiny, right? And, and for kids, I explain it, it's like a little sprinkle <laugh>, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> that you would find on a donut or a cookie or something. <laugh>, that tiny little sprinkle and how big it can grow is not it, you know? So it can be considered like this huge tree that's like as tall as, um, two, two basketball courts, I think put together is how tall it can grow. Um, but it's not actually tree. It's just a really big plant. And it can do that under just the right conditions, and we can create those conditions for ourselves. Right. And it doesn't happen that kind of growth overnight. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> it's bit by bit. And so it's so important to just review the progress of where we were yesterday. Right. I love, I love that saying that comparison is the thief of joy. So where am I today? And how does that compare to where I was before? So I can examine my own growth? And then looking forward, where do I wanna be? What do I need to do to get there? Yeah. And what gifts do I need? Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:22:09 That's powerful. Um, I, I wanna maybe shift over to just your experience on the stake council. Um, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, I mean, how, how is it done? What works? How do you approach those meetings? Uh, you know, anything come to mind? Just your experience attending, attending those meetings?

Speaker 2 00:22:26 So we were, uh, taught, I think by Elder Bednar that, uh, that meetings are a revelatory experience, you know, so I strive to meet them from that perspective. So of course, our stake is spread out, so we usually meet in person once a quarter, and then the rest of the meetings are virtual. Hmm. And, um, you know, I strive to come prepared, like I review the agenda, what's there, you know, do I have anything contribute? And then I, I think about it, and I always, uh, pray before the meetings for myself to know heavenly father, help me to know what I need to say, what I need to be prepared to contribute. And sometimes it's nothing. And sometimes it's a lot Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>, right? Depending on what the topic is. Um, we have a stake presidency that's really welcomes and encourages counseling together and discussion. And I think that's an incredibly valuable thing because we have people from, um,

you know, from all over with different perspectives. And when you welcome that discussion, um, then you can make good better decisions, right?

Speaker 1 00:23:32 Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:23:33 So I'm awesome. I'm, I'm never shy to speak up in stake council. Uh, yeah. It is really good. And, um, I've, I found it a very supportive, welcoming environment, and I really encourage primary presidents to speak up because, you know, in ward councils or branch council, when the primary children are talked about, first, the entire family follows. But if we only start by talking about adults, the adults are the only ones talked about, seldom does it trickle down.

Speaker 1 00:24:01 Yeah. Yeah. That's, that's really helpful. Then you might as well start there, right? Yeah. Cool. Uh, you mentioned, obviously, uh, we're recording this in October of 2023. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so we're in the thick of, uh, primary program season. And, uh, you mentioned it's been giving you busy as well. Anything, any, uh, like is there any connecting point with your pri your stake primary presidency and how primary programs are run? Or what advice do you hear going around or, you know, how do you any, any involvement there? Maybe there's not, but,

Speaker 2 00:24:34 Uh, so we, we just let them do their thing and say, tell us when to be there. Oh, cool. You know, we train, we train on what's in the handbook and what's available. Yeah. Um, but it's always wonderful to see. And coming outta the pandemic, we had some real, uh, you know, varieties of what happened. And even across the pandemic, some did them, some didn't. Um, the most powerful thing is when the children have a chance to share what they've learned.

Speaker 1 00:25:01 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:25:02 You know, to bear testimony. And that's where the strength is. And, uh, a year, year ago, I think, or maybe two, one of the wards ended with, uh, the primary children singing the first verse of, I'm a child of God and the congregation joining in for the rest. Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:25:17 <affirmative>.

Speaker 2 00:25:18 And the spirit was so strong because the children had testified all the way along about what they'd learned. And it was simple, but they testified, and then we celebrated that knowledge of our divine worth. Yeah. And that's, that's the gospel learning, that's the thing that transforms our hearts to bring us closer to Christ.

Speaker 1 00:25:40 Yeah. That's powerful. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Well, Rebecca, any, any other principle concept story that, uh, we need to make sure we fit in here? Or do we, do we cover it all?

Speaker 2 00:25:49 Uh, do you know, I actually think it's really important to talk about counseling with counselors. Hmm. And what that looks like. I know that Elder Ballard, of course, has talked about that quite a bit. Um, but it's overlooked. You know, I know that sometimes presidents come in and they either are afraid to make a decision or they come in with all the decisions made and just want the counselors to kind of come along with it. And I think, um, I have sort of a very democratic approach where I am very comfortable in making a decision. And also I strive very diligently to seek, um, the, the feedback from my counselors. And often our, um, high counselor who's assigned to primary will attend our meetings as well. And we bring in the advice of our secretary and go from there, because everybody brings, uh, such a diversity of experiences.

Speaker 2 00:26:40 Again, that's where this humility comes in, right. Where you can listen. I had an idea recently that I thought was gonna be terrific, and my counselors were like, hard, no, <laugh> not, not terrific. This would not be okay for me, <laugh>. And I was surprised because for me, I was like, I felt this was a great idea. You know, it was something I'd been, uh, you know, I thought had some inspiration that could be really meaningful. They were like, oh, no, I would have a issue with it for, for this, this, this, something I totally didn't think about. And I was like, oh, okay. And it took me a minute to kind of bring myself and say, oh, okay. I need to rethink this. And even though I really like it, and I can see how it would be good if they're saying, I don't think so. I need to listen to that. I need to pay attention. Yeah. Right. Because we want everybody to be comfortable <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:27:26 Yeah. I think that's a good indicator. I remember, you know, in different CIE where I've been the president or the bishop or whatever, where I walk into a meeting thinking I know the direction it's gonna go. And then by the end of the meeting, we've gone a different direction. So it's sort of a good indicator to know that, you know, that maybe, you know, if you're listening enough or asking enough questions that, you know, how often does the, does the direction or the result of the meeting end up in a very different place where you, where you thought in the beginning, you know, I think that's a good indicator that something is happening. People are being heard and, and other opinions are being considered. So,

Speaker 2 00:28:01 And we're always, I mean, I'm always learning. I love learning. So I'm seeking, you know, best practices about counseling together, about listening. And, um, you know, the biggest thing for me, I talk a lot about needs assessments, listening to figure out what the needs are. I had a wonderful meeting with a, a primary presidency a few months ago and said, so what, what needs do the children have? They started listing some things. And I said, and, and you're right, those are all needs, but those are adult needs. What needs do the children have?

Speaker 1 00:28:32 Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:28:33 Oh, you know, started to think and said, I'm, we're not really sure. Said Great counsel together about it. You know, pray about it. Figure out what the needs of the children are. Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:28:47 <affirmative>.

Speaker 2 00:28:48 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And it's a different way of approaching things, right? Because we get stuck. It's easy to get stuck in the, or bogged down in the administration, right? Yeah. 'cause there's so much of it. The day to day or the ideas of what way we've always done things or the way we want to do things. What is that meeting the needs? How do we know what the needs are? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. I'm really focusing on that.

Speaker 1 00:29:10 Yeah. That's powerful. Love it. Well, Rebecca, this has been fantastic. Uh, I need some excuse to, to head up to your part of the, the country there and <laugh> and, uh, and visit Visit.

Speaker 2 00:29:20 You're welcome. Anytime.

Speaker 1 00:29:21 It's, uh, I've been there, uh, not a few times and it's always beautiful and it's an incredible culture there. So, uh, last question I have for you, Rebecca. As you reflect on your time as a leader in the church, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:29:37 I love this question. I love that you ask it, because I think it requires so much, um, insight and self-reflection. And I've, I've considered this a lot. Um, and I think that it makes me a better follower of Jesus Christ because I have hope, um, because I have hope that I can change, that other people can change, and that we can transform to become more like Jesus Christ and experience Zion where we are. And you know, and then there's the hope and the atonement, right? And that all of it comes through Jesus Christ. So I think that having hope helps to move me forward and hopefully bring others along with me.

Speaker 1 00:30:26 And that concludes this how I lead interview. I hope you enjoyed it. And, uh, I would ask you, could you take a minute and drop this link in an email, on social media, in a text, wherever it makes the most sense, and share it with somebody who could relate to this, this experience. And this is how we, how we develop as leaders, just hearing what the other guy's doing, trying some things out, testing, adjusting for your area. And, uh, that's, that's where great leadership's discovered, right? So we would love to have you, uh, share this with, uh, somebody in this calling or a related calling, and that would be great. And also, if you know somebody, uh, any type of leader who would be a fantastic guest on the How I Lead segment, uh, reach out to us. Go to [leading scenes.org/contact](https://www.leadingscenes.org/contact). Maybe send this in individual an email, letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name for this interview. We'll reach out to them and, uh, see if we can line 'em up. So again, go to [leading saints.org/contact](https://www.leading saints.org/contact). And there you can submit all the information and let us know, and maybe they will be on a feature how I lead Segment on the Leading Saints podcast. Remember, check the show notes to listen to the powerful presentation by the general young men, young Women Advisory Council members, or go to [leading saints.org/fourteen](https://www.leading saints.org/fourteen).

Speaker 3 00:31:44 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. And when the Declaration was made concerning the own and only true and living church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness. The loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away. And to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.