



How I Lead as Stake Music Coordinator | An Interview with Emily Poaletti

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Speaker 1 00:00:03 Okay, so you're here for some great church leadership content. The podcast is great, but there's also another piece of content you need to be enjoying each week. It is the Leading Saint's email newsletter. Now I get it. Email newsletters feel so 2006, you know, but it isn't as old fashioned as you might think. It's actually one of the most popular pieces of content that Leading Saints produces. Each week I share a unique leadership thought that can only be found in the newsletter. I keep it short and sweet. Most can read in less than five minutes. And then we share with you recent content. You might have missed throwback episodes and leading Saints events that happen more often than you might anticipate. If you want to make sure you are on the email list, simply visit leading-saints.org/fourteen. That's leading-saints.org/one-four. That will also get you 14 days access to our full library of content, not available to the general public. So look for Leading Saints in your inbox by going to leading-saints.org/fourteen. Or click the link in the show notes.

Speaker 1 00:01:25 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 00:03:06 So in this How I lead episode, we're headed to Rogers, Arkansas to talk with Emily Poaletti and she is a stake music coordinator. That's right, folks, uh, calling, I don't think we've covered yet, or if, if we have, it's been a while. And this is a phenomenal opportunity to learn how to enrich our worship experience with music by calling very capable people to these positions. Now, Emily brings the heat 'cause she has some great tips. Just the, the little nuances, you know, the little tips, tricks, things you can do with your phone, how to collect information, how to get people to choir practice, how to adjust hymns so they, maybe they're easier to sing or a little more complex and more dynamic to present in a, a sacrament or a stake conference, whatnot. So don't skip this even if you are not a stake music coordinator. But this would be a good one for high counselors, stake presidencies, Bishop Ricks to really understand how to better, uh, enrich our meetings, our worship meetings with music. So here is my interview with Emily Poaletti from Rogers, Arkansas. Emily welcome to the Leading Saints podcast.

Speaker 2 00:04:40 Thank you so much. Glad to be here.

Speaker 1 00:04:42 Awesome. Now you are in Rogers, Arkansas, which, uh, you said before we hit record about 10, 12 minutes from the Bensonville Arkansas Temple.

Speaker 2 00:04:51 That's correct. Yeah. Just south. And so glad that it's been dedicated now for just under two months and wow, it's been a joy.

Speaker 1 00:04:59 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. I bet. So what was the nearest temple before then?

Speaker 2 00:05:03 Uh, so we were in the Kansas City Temple District. That was about a three and a half hour drive. Oh, wow.

Speaker 1 00:05:08 So 12 minutes ain't bad, huh? <laugh>?

Speaker 2 00:05:10 No, not at all. No, that's cool.

Speaker 1 00:05:12 That's great. And we're going to explore, uh, and this is how we lead interview this. You're calling a stake music coordinator. This talk about an unsung hero, no pun intended, right? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:05:23 <laugh>. Yeah. It's, um, it's an interesting calling that, uh, I might talk about it more later, but it's like you said, not maybe something people think about in leadership. Yeah. But there is a, a lot that someone in this calling can do to really influence the entire stake. Yeah,

Speaker 1 00:05:44 Absolutely. You know, I think we take for granted that, uh, stake conference comes around and this choir just magically appears or, you know, some musical numbers or whatever it is. But there's a ton of work that happens behind the scenes now I know it's like, uh, typical, um, that, you know, they, you know, the, uh, the musicians, the people who have music backgrounds, they get pigeonholed in these, in these callings. Have you felt that way throughout your, your time in, as your adult life in the church?

Speaker 2 00:06:12 Maybe a little bit. I definitely have had, I've been award choir director in two different wards. I was award music coordinator in my ward before I became the Stake music coordinator. So I definitely have spent the majority of my adult life in music callings. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, um, for myself. I really enjoy it and I love being able to serve that way. So it's never felt like, oh man, I am getting another music calling just because I have a musical background. But I do kind of agree with what you're saying, that it, it can seem that way sometimes,

Speaker 1 00:06:45 But I imagine at the same time you probably enjoy it a little bit. I mean, to use your talent and education that way.

Speaker 2 00:06:49 Oh yes, yes, I would. It's the best way that I could imagine using the talent and education that I've been given Yeah. To serve in the church.

Speaker 1 00:06:58 So what is your, uh, your background or education with music?

Speaker 2 00:07:02 With music? Yes. So I have a music degree from BYU Idaho. I studied vocal music there. Before that, I grew up in a really small town in southwest Wisconsin. And because it was such a small town, um, there was a lot of opportunity for me to be in band strings, choir, all the things, because it was such a small student body that they just made it possible for students to be in every type of musical thing that you wanted to, rather than some, I know some bigger high schools you kind of have to choose because there's just not the bandwidth to, to accommodate that. But I did lots of music in high school and then obviously majored in it in college, got a degree, degree in vocal music. Nice. And then once I moved here, yeah, once I moved here I started teaching private voice lessons.

Speaker 1 00:07:57 Oh, nice. So it's, uh, little bit part of your career as well. Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:08:01 <affirmative>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:08:01 That's great. So, uh, is there a story behind you being called to this position?

Speaker 2 00:08:06 Yeah, um, kind of, yeah. It was funny because the high counselor texted me and it was a high counselor. I didn't know Uhhuh <affirmative> and, but he, he just introduced himself, you know, I'm brother, so-and-so from the high counselor, can I come to your house? And I think he said extended calling <laugh>, and I was, he

Speaker 1 00:08:25 Just wanted come hang out.

Speaker 2 00:08:26 Yeah. Maybe, I dunno, <laugh>, but he, so I'm thinking, man, I've never gotten a stake calling. I don't even know this high counselor. So I'm kind of racking my brain like what are the callings that I like sustain people for when the high counselor comes to my ward. And the only thing that I could come up with was a seminary teacher. Oh yeah. <laugh>, you better recognize like, here, it's all early morning, right? Yeah. And I was very pregnant and so I thought like, how am I gonna do this? Like, have a new baby. That was the only thing that I could think of. I don't know why. So when he extended the call to serve as a stake music chair, I thought, oh, actually, yeah, I can do that. I think that would be fine. <laugh> nice. I would enjoy that calling. And it seems a lot more manageable. <laugh>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:09:12 And was it, uh, was it tricky when your, your baby was born? I mean, or did you have a few months of runway to, to get acclimated?

Speaker 2 00:09:19 Yeah, I had a little bit of time. Um, because he was born within actually just a couple days of the high counselor coming to my house and extending the call. And I think our first stake conference was about two months after that. So I did use other people during that first stake conference. I had just, I just kind of made assignments and had other people lead the choirs and, well, I think I did lead one of the choirs, but I, I definitely asked for help. I had more delegation in that first stake conference. And then by the time we got to the next stake conference, I was kind of a little more acclimated into my, um, calling

Speaker 1 00:10:02 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. So I'm intrigued that you, you sort of got a team around you because I think there're, depending on the person, you know, that's called the, the stake, um, you know, music coordinator, they can either sort of put it all on their shoulders, you know, you, you're the music coordinator and the choir director and you're gonna, you know, find people to do musical numbers or whatever. But, uh, it sounds like you got a team around you. Tell me about that.

Speaker 2 00:10:23 Yes, I do. I have a great, we call ourselves the worship team, which I stole from David Butler on your podcast when you talked about calling his word council. The worship team.

Speaker 1 00:10:33 Yes. An episode everybody needs to listen to. It's awesome.

Speaker 2 00:10:36 Yes, for sure. So we call ourselves the worship team. I have an organist and then I have a secretary, and I have an events planner. That's the way that I chose to set up this, this worship team. And something that I learned was that this calling is kind of unique and that you can do it however you want to really setting up that committee. So, like you said, for me, I have a background in vocal music. I enjoy leading choirs, and so I do that myself. But if someone were in this calling with no vocal background, maybe they're an instrumentalist or something, a stake choir director or stake music leader that stands up there and conducts the hymns at stake conference can also be called, and it says that in the handbook. So that's how we set it up. I, after a few, a few different iterations, I figured out that was what I needed. I needed a secretary to help communicate things, take notes, get the word out about events, and

then I needed an event planner to help do all of the things like food prep and posters and just all of those other things that come along with events.

Speaker 1 00:11:48 Yeah. And so was that sort of your idea to surround people? I mean, or did the high counselor or assume that you would just be the music coordinator and, and not call any additional people? Or how did that come together?

Speaker 2 00:12:01 When I came into the role, there was one organist and one advisor, basically assistant. I'm not sure what, there was one other person there was an organist and then one other person that were in the committee. So the high counselor didn't really tell me what I had to do. He just said, this is how it stands right now. You're welcome to call new people. Like these people have been in this role for quite a long time. You could choose to release them and, and call new people. You can kind of set it up how you feel would be the most, um, helpful for you. So, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:44 Awesome. And, and they just give you that autonomy and you let 'em know. And someone new be called and they Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> get you the person, right?

Speaker 2 00:12:51 Yeah. Mm-Hmm,

Speaker 1 00:12:52 <affirmative> Awesome. Yeah. Love it. Anything else as far as just, uh, you know, starting in this calling, putting the team together, the worship team? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> or any, any other detail, just sort of general about the calling that we need to mention before we get into your principles?

Speaker 2 00:13:06 I think just recognizing that, as you said, I had the autonomy to figure out what was gonna be most helpful for me. That was nice to figure that out. 'cause honestly, I was in this calling for a few years before I realized, no, this is what I really mean. This is where my strengths are. But I think I can best serve the stake with leading the choir, doing, picking the music. Yeah. And these other things that have to, that are very important to this Calling to running events, to getting the word out about stake, choir, other things like that. It's not that I, I, I could do them I guess, but it's better to think like, from an essentialism point of view, I just wanna focus in on this and really magnify that part of the calling and then build out this worship team.

Speaker 1 00:13:59 Yeah. Awesome. Alright, well let's jump into your principles here. You sent me a good list of four principles we'll go through. And the first one being music is a unifying force. Unpack that one for us.

Speaker 2 00:14:10 Sure. So I actually brought my handbook because Oh,

Speaker 1 00:14:15 Nice.

Speaker 2 00:14:16 I wanted to,

Speaker 1 00:14:17 For those watching on YouTube. <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:14:19 Yes. <laugh>. I just wanted to start with the idea that music teaches doctrine. And one of my favorite things is in the hymn book. I don't know if the common latterday saint would know this, but in the preface to the hymn book, it says a lot of things. But my favorite part is some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns. Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort, the weary console the morning and inspire us to endure to the end. So

Speaker 1 00:14:53 Awesome.

Speaker 2 00:14:54 Yeah. I think music brings us together when we're singing as a congregation, because we're all doing this unifying thing, singing, hopefully feeling the spirit while we're singing these hymns that really do teach us doctrine, can comfort our souls, call us to repentance, all of those things that are in that first presidency preface. So when we are singing together, we're also testifying together. We're worshiping together. And I think that's something that can be really powerful when it's intentional.

Speaker 1 00:15:34 Yeah. I think oftentimes, you know, just from administrative standpoint, like maybe leaders putting together meetings or stake conferences, right? It's easy to kind of see the music as sort of a time feeler or you know, let's stretch our legs or you know, let's just, we've listened to people so long talk, let's, let's all sing together. Right? It sort of breaks up a little bit, which is, which is true, but it's, that's secondary tertiary to, to the real reason of, of worship. And I just think of the, you know, you talk about your worship team, then the evangelical tradition, uh, you know, when they say it's time for worship, they mean we're going to sing, you know, songs or, or, you know, spiritual worship music. And that's how we are literally going to worship God, uh, rather than just seeing or stretch our legs. And so to really see in that, that framing is, is powerful and and empowering for some, you know, someone in these roles.

Speaker 2 00:16:24 Yes, absolutely. I think absolutely just having that mindset shift, because when we come to sacrament meetings, something that I've talked to our stake presidency about is you come to sacrament meeting and you're gonna participate by partaking in the sacrament. That's something you're gonna do. You participate in that. But the other thing you're gonna do is sing. The other things are kind of done at you. People teach you with talks. Um, you listen to prayers and that can also be unifying. But the things that you're doing, you're sitting there and you're singing usually at least three, sometimes four hymn in a re meeting. And the hope would be that it is a worship full time for everybody. And I think, like you said, just even thinking about that as I'm coming here to worship through the singing of hymn can really make a difference. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:17:19 Yeah. So, um, here's a, here's a left turn, which I'm good at, uh, in these interviews, but I'm, and we can come back to your, your outline. I'm just curious of the, you talk about, you know, in a sacra meeting you may sing, you know, three or four hymns. Uh, you know, the intermediate hymn, I don't think a lot of people know this is, but the church sort of really deemphasized the intermediate hymn a few years ago, like in the handbook and, and whatnot. It's still like, and, and now it's, it's, I, if I remember right in the handbook, it's a very optional thing, not your opinion necessarily on the intermediate hymn, but like, how can we use

music? Because most Bishop Ricks are like, okay, after the first speaker we're gonna sing inter intermediate hymn. It's just a default position. Right? Hmm. So how, how could a Bishop Rick, uh, better look at music or using it? I mean, should they default to the intermediate or are some other things to, to be done?

Speaker 2 00:18:11 I think with music there can build in these really strong traditions that can be good or can be not so good. So I would say if a Bishop Rick is just defaulting to, we need an intermediate him because we need to intermediate him. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> it might not be the right thing. I think that sometimes maybe you do need more time for your speakers or you wanna have an extra youth speaker, something like that. And I would say, even though I'm very passionate about music, that's okay if you need to get rid of the intermediate hymn. Yeah. But I think perhaps creating the meaning to say, okay, we're doing this topic. Is there a hymn that would really edify the topic that we're talking, that we're gonna be discussing, the speaker's gonna be talking about today? Is there a hymn or musical number that would really help people feel the message that these speakers are gonna talk to us about today? And if so, then that's a great way to use music. But like you said, if it's just, oh, we gotta check the box or we'll just do one verse because we don't have enough time, then I'd say rethink it.

Speaker 1 00:19:30 <laugh>. Yeah. Yeah. Love it. Alright, let's go back to music as a unifying force. How else, uh, should we consider music as a unifying force?

Speaker 2 00:19:39 Yeah, so I thought it was very interesting that when we switched to two our church, one of the only things that stayed the same in our meeting block, I guess was the amount of time that was given to the primary in singing time. They had about 25 minutes before, they still have about 25 minutes now, right?

Speaker 1 00:20:00 Yeah, that's true.

Speaker 2 00:20:01 Yeah. And so I think that by teaching children these, this doctrine through primary songs that they will carry for their entire lives. Honest, you know, honestly, in a lot of cases, even this last general conference, elder Gao talked about getting into a taxi cab with someone who hadn't been to church in 25 years and yet could sing a part of I'm a Child of God, and still feel the power of that song all of that time later. So with music being a unifying force, I think for those with small children, or even if you don't have small children singing together primary hymns and primary songs, having hymns in your home that can unify families and it can unify congregations as they really know the songs and can feel the importance of the doctrine taught there. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:02 No, I love that. And, and I'm just thinking my own 3-year-old, she's very delayed, especially in speech, but, uh, we've noticed her singing more than than she, like, she tries to sing more than she tries to talk. And so Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> we're very encouraged by that, you know? And so we're like infusing her with more and more songs and it's powerful. Yes.

Speaker 2 00:21:20 Yes. That's wonderful. Alright,

Speaker 1 00:21:21 Anything else about, uh, unifying the power of, uh, music unifying before we move on?

Speaker 2 00:21:27 Um, I think the only last thing I was gonna say with this is I mentioned before just being careful about traditions. And in our stake we started a new tradition, which I think is good for right now and might not be the right thing in a few years from now. But for right now we're doing this multicultural music night because there are a lot of different languages and cultures that are represented in our stake. And so members can present a song from their native culture often in their language. We've had missionary people that served foreign language missions sing a song from their mission. And that's been the right thing to unify our stake right now. So there might be ways that was an idea that my stake president had to do this multicultural music night and I loved it. And I think it's been for the purpose of unifying us, it's been absolutely right.

Speaker 1 00:22:20 Nice. So was that like in the chapel type of thing and different, uh, different people would play or how did it work?

Speaker 2 00:22:26 Yeah, so we've done it twice now and it is in the gym on the stage, so Oh, okay. We actually have lighting and mics and it's more of a secular, like, people could do more secular songs or a dance number uhhuh or something like that. It's, it's, that is how we're doing it. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:22:48 Oh, I love that. That's cool. Alright, should we move on to meticulous preparation? Is, uh, you, you found that, uh, there's a lot of prep that goes into this calling?

Speaker 2 00:22:59 Yes. <laugh>, there is a lot of prep with any type of event planning, which a lot of this calling turns out to be a lot of event planning. So when I came into this calling, I realized that one of my visions was to have a stake choir where people felt like they could come and participate and they would be needed. And you didn't have to have some sort of musical level of training to come and to make that happen. And I, I also wanted to have it not be a large time commitment. I wanted to have maybe two hours of practice, maybe two and a half, three hours, not beyond that. So to do that, I learned that if myself and my worship team could prepare really well, then these choirs could come together and have a successful, put together a musical number that was gonna be very well done without a lot of time. So some of the things that we did were, we started making practice tracks. So I would have my organist, pre-record all of the instrument, like the accompaniment Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And we would make recordings of each person's part. So the soprano part Oh, nice. Part part, yeah. So that then we can email it out and say, here's your part, please practice at home. So the people are coming already familiar with the music. Hmm. So that,

Speaker 1 00:24:38 And that's just like a MP three file? Or how do you send them the Yeah, yeah. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. Okay.

Speaker 2 00:24:43 I just put it all into Google Drive and then Oh yeah. Okay. The Google Drive folder. Yeah. So that's cool. I did that to help people prepare. And then with that, I learned

some people were using that every day. They were at home trying to listen to it every day to learn their part. But some people didn't. They didn't once or not at all, and they felt like they were okay. But I liked that giving people the option to practice as much as they wanted to before they came. So preparing in that way, we did that. We started having a really effective check-in process. So this, with the preparation, I learned that a lot of time was being wasted as people came in the door and have to get their binders and then they're talking to other people, which is great. But there was just a lot of wasted time and you try to get everyone together and, and I'm only trying to do this in two to three hours, but it was, it was too much time. So

Speaker 1 00:25:44 Yeah. That's precious time.

Speaker 2 00:25:45 Yes. <laugh>. So we had a, again, this was with my secretary. She set up like a really effective, um, check-in where people would come in, they would scan this QR code to get themselves sign in. We'd give them their binder and then she would say, okay, you're the men are going down to that room, the women are going down to this room. We would start split up. Hmm. So that we would have a little bit of time just the women to learn their part, just the men to learn their part right at the beginning. And then we would come together for the last half hour usually. So just thinking through that, okay, how can we save on time if we need to break up into groups, let's just break up to groups in the beginning. Let's not come together and then come apart and then come back together.

Speaker 2 00:26:31 Something like that. Uh, I would also call section leaders like, um, man and a woman. Okay, here's the music early, please learn your part so that you can teach these specific parts of the hymn to this group in that 20 to 25 minutes. Oh wow. So all of this, all of these things just, I would sit there and think through the rehearsal. I would think, okay, we're only gonna be there for an hour when people come in, how are we gonna use that time? What, what is anything that we can cut out of this process so that we can actually sing together and be ready to sing together and create a really nice musical number.

Speaker 1 00:27:08 Yeah. That's good. So, so you break 'em up. 'cause you know, I'm just thinking my time in different choirs is, you know, maybe the Sopranos have a tough section and so the choir director works with them for a few minutes while everybody else just sort of sits there. Right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So to splitting 'em up and Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, they can focus on that and then come back together. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, ready to go.

Speaker 2 00:27:25 Yes. Yes. And I would tell my section leaders too. Okay, this is a really hard part for the men. This one verse or one section. Yeah, please just do that for 20 minutes. Maybe you can do this other part. But just really focus in on that one part. And then, like you said, we're not wasting time just sitting and waiting to work with the other group.

Speaker 1 00:27:46 That's really cool. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, uh, anything else with the meticulous preparation?

Speaker 2 00:27:51 One thing I would say is, as much as I do think it's important to prepare, you don't have to overthink the music that you are going to prepare. Using the hymn book is great. You don't have to find some sort of fancy arrangement that's gonna wow your congregation. Just going straight to the hymn book to prepare is something that I've found to be really powerful. And what I will do is sometimes just make small adjustments. Okay. The women are gonna sing the first verse or, and then the men are gonna come in on the chorus, or we're gonna drop out the accompaniment here. No piano, sing a capella for this one verse. Things like that are, you're taking the time to prepare and I get the music ready and write, um, type in those things on the side of the, of the hymn, um, so that everyone is able to easily follow along. But you don't have to overthink, oh, it has to be some grand arrangement every single time we're coming to stake conference.

Speaker 1 00:28:57 Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>. Yeah. And just take what you know, the arrangement and the hymn books and, and go with that. Right. Yeah. And just mix it up a little bit. So that's cool. Alright. Let's go to the next principle, which is Inspire Saints to use their talents.

Speaker 2 00:29:09 Yes. I heard a really cool story from my high counselor recently, actually. He was in a fireside with the piano guys and Steven Sharp Nelson, who is the cellist of the piano guys told this group of youth and adults. I know that I'm not the best cellist in the world, but I know that I have something to offer. And a lot of people would look at Steven Sharp Nelson and say, well, you are a professional cellist, you're pretty good, pretty, pretty talented. Right? But I think that's a message that I really strive when we go to, when we do a stake training to tell those in especially in the word music callings. Maybe you feel like, oh, I don't have a degree in piano performance. Or I, I only took piano lessons for a little bit when I was a kid and now I'm the primary pianist, or something like that. But you have something to offer if you desire to, to serve and to share your talents. So what I would say is for those maybe in a music calling where perhaps you're choosing music, doing word choir or something like that, or even stake choir, don't feel like you have to have some level of training or you have to arrive at some level of musicianship to really be able to create a meaningful s meaning or stake conference with the music. Just trust that the things that are meaningful to you will be meaningful to the congregation.

Speaker 1 00:30:43 Yeah. And, and that really sort of takes the, the pressure off because I know I, I think other people, there's some stakes who just have the talent there and so it can feel overwhelming. Like, now I'm in this other stake and I'm supposed to recreate the same thing. But just take what you have and, and encourage people to offer their, their talents. Right. No matter how Absolutely perfect they are.

Speaker 2 00:31:03 <laugh>. Yes. Absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:31:05 Cool. Anything else in relation to inspiring others to use their, their music talents?

Speaker 2 00:31:10 I would say please involve the youth as much as you can. I had a stake choir. It was our first one coming out of Covid where we could have a full choir again. And so as a worship team, we thought, let's, let's blow this thing out. Let's get as many people as we can. So we started individually texting people. We were asking all the music chairs, like, is there anybody in your ward we could invite? And we got 60 people to come to this stake choir, which for my sake, that was probably double what we'd ever had before. Hmm. But the interesting thing was we texted adults and we said that youth were invited, but we had so many youth that came just, it seemed like kind of on their own. They were telling their friends or something happened because there were tons and tons of youth. And so they, because they were so strong, the next day conference, we said, we're gonna have theming on their own. And they did the entire Sunday morning they sang a prelude. And then during the meeting for Sunday morning, it was just a youth choir. And again, I think there were like 40 of them. It was huge. And so,

Speaker 1 00:32:22 Wow,

Speaker 2 00:32:22 Using the youth as much as you can, if, if it's possible in your area, can be really powerful. They are, they're on fire. They want to serve, they want to contribute and be involved. And the other thing I would say about youth is please use them in your wards as much as you can have them. Music leader for the congregation, another thing I've seen wards do is have youth play. Just start with playing prelude in sacrament. Meaning to practice playing for a congregation, but not having the stress of keeping everybody on when you're singing congregationally, it's harder to mess up. Yeah, that makes sense. And then get back on. So having the youth participate in whatever way you can, I think sets them up to have confidence as they go into their adult life or maybe into missionary service that they actually can serve musically.

Speaker 1 00:33:18 Yeah. I, I love the prelude suggestion. I mean, 'cause you're right, they're, uh, they're in front of people, but it's a lot less stress, you know? I'd imagine. So. Great tip. Yeah. Awesome.

Speaker 2 00:33:28 One other thought I had just with Prelude, I actually think that that can be a low stress opportunity, not just to have, well, like for a performance type of, I don't know if I wanna say performance, but I, there was a ward that told me they would have special prelude numbers leading up to Christmas. So for four weeks leading up to Christmas, they would have basically like a full musical number as prelude right before a SAC meeting started. And I thought that was just a great idea because it helps set the tone as you're going into sac. Meaning that we're, we need to be reverent and we're going into this meeting. But also, again, this, the low stress for that performer that it's not right in the middle of the meeting and everyone's staring at me is we're getting ready to go. And that can be a really great way to help people use their talents and not be so nervous to do that. We actually started doing that with stake conference as well, putting an instrumental prelude number before the piano would play for, you know, 10 minutes. And then we'd have an instrumental prelude right before you're going into the meeting. And it really helps everyone to just be reverent. Yeah. Listen in, think about the meaning that we're about to start and hopefully be ready for the spirit to teach.

Speaker 1 00:34:58 So true. Like, don't sleep on that. The prelude musical numbers, in my opinion, I'd always call it general conference style, you know? 'cause they always have a prelude. It's the choir, you know, the, the camera that you see, temple Square and the Prelude. They're already singing the prelude, you know? Yeah. Because it does set the tone and Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, the typical sareme, you know, the Bishoprick member sort of shuffles up to the lectern and welcomes everybody. But to like have a musical number that really focuses everybody and, uh mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And it really makes, gives you a more reason to get there on time to to hear some remarkable music, you know?

Speaker 2 00:35:31 Yes. That was what a member of this ward that was doing that told me, she said, everyone's coming on time and we're, we're ready for soccer meeting when it starts because we've all just had this nice musical number. So

Speaker 1 00:35:44 I thought that, yeah, that's really good. A good idea. Love it. Alright. Should we move on to, uh, the technology you use?

Speaker 2 00:35:49 Yes. I've learned that technology is a great tool in any calling even with music. That's right.

Speaker 1 00:35:55 Yep.

Speaker 2 00:35:56 Yes. The first thing I already kind of mentioned, one of the things that we did was just using a Google form for the stake choir to sign in. But we had a QR code for them just to sign. So, and we also, I think we had a couple of extra devices lying around if someone didn't know how to use a QR code. But just having them sign in on a Google form right away, I learned was so much better <laugh> than having some random piece of paper that gets floated around and you never know where it ends up. And then as we were going into the temple, so our temple was dedicated just two months ago and I was helping serve with the, um, open house and dedication music committee and they would ask me, oh, well who are some people who could do these different musical things? And I thought, oh, well I actually have that ready to go and my Google form thing that we had already, already, already, um, already documented for stake choir. So using technology to just make your life easier. Documentation is a very good idea. <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:37:02 Yeah. So this is a QR code, like, uh, when they show up to choir practice or when you're just passing around the stake or when do you use it in, at choir practice?

Speaker 2 00:37:12 For this particular, yes. I just used it for choir practice. They would walk in the door. Okay. We had a table and a few different QR codes posted and said, can you please scan this and then sign yourself in. And then once they were signed in, then we could hand them their binder and say, all right, there's where you go to practice.

Speaker 1 00:37:32 Interesting. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so that way you kind of have, you keep tabs on who has come to choir practice and who needs to get the announcement or the text blast or whatever, right?

Speaker 2 00:37:42 Mm-Hmm, <affirmative> exactly. I see. Yeah. What board they're from, if they're a youth, all of that kind of stuff.

Speaker 1 00:37:47 Nice. Love it. Love it. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. What else?

Speaker 2 00:37:50 The other big thing I've learned with technology is using the markups tool, I think is what it's called. Yeah. So just in the iPad or iPhone markups tool, I learned that I can take music and then very easily edit it. Kind of like those hymn adjustments I was talking about. And then it's very clear for the musicians to read. So if I'm going to take a hymn and say, we want men only this verse women only that first, just taking the PDF from the church website, going over to, I did it on my iPad, the, the markup tool on the iPad. And then being able to add text and say, men only here. Or even I, the other thing that I found really helpful is covering up the verses that you're not singing for. So if you say, okay, verse one of all women, so cover up the text for the other verses.

Speaker 2 00:38:53 And then, so instead of just looking at, like, you normally do a hymn, there's all four verses, you're gonna be flipping pages. Yeah. But you see, okay, women only here, and then you turn the page. Okay, men only here, we're all coming back together. That use of technology, going back to meticulous preparation has made it so much easier to have a really constructive, efficient stake choir rehearsal. Because people, you don't have to waste any time saying, oh, that's actually the men singing there. Oh, please write this in. Or I forgot to do that. Whatever might happen.

Speaker 1 00:39:31 So you write it on, uh, using that markup tool? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And then you print it out with the, the changes. Is that

Speaker 2 00:39:38 The idea? Yeah, so, yep. Okay. And then I just print it out and make copies, put 'em in the binders so that everyone has it and it's easy to read.

Speaker 1 00:39:45 Nice. Love it. All right. Uh, so I'm curious about this iPhone shortcut. Tell me about this. Yeah,

Speaker 2 00:39:52 <laugh>. So the iPhone shortcut, which my husband did have to teach me about, I'm not super good at it, but the iPhone shortcut has a way that you can program, you can basically have the ability to text a large group of people in, but individually or so,

Speaker 1 00:40:14 Like mass text type thing,

Speaker 2 00:40:16 Kind of, but you're not making it into a group text. So it's a mass text. Oh, okay. In that you're texting a lot of people. Okay. But you have to have some big group text

Speaker 1 00:40:25 <laugh>. And if they reply, it doesn't go to everybody in the group.

Speaker 2 00:40:28 Yes, exactly.

Speaker 1 00:40:29 <laugh>. Oh wow. That's heaven sent. Emily, this is groundbreaking. So detail, I

Speaker 2 00:40:33 Know <laugh>, yeah. Maybe we should set up a, have my husband do a tutorial or something. But basically, so in, in this shortcuts app, again, this takes a little bit of time to set it up, but you save so much time after it's set up that it's worth it. You have to add in the notes section. And again, this is an iPhone thing in the notes section of the contact. So you say like, stake choir, and then in the shortcut you can say, text everybody with the, with that says stake choir in the notes part of the contact.

Speaker 1 00:41:11 Ah.

Speaker 2 00:41:13 So I learned that I could text about 50 people in like two minutes or less because it just would go and I would say reminder practice tonight, or reminder, bring your binders, whatever we need to get out the information about.

Speaker 1 00:41:30 Nice. We'll see if we can find a, um, a, a tutorial. I'm sure it's on YouTube already, so I'm sure they're, we'll put that in the show notes. Uh, yeah, because that's man, what that's handy. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> again, it leaves us Android users out, but hey, you know. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> you can take an extra time to text us. So Yes. Alright. What, anything else with technology worth be that would be worth mentioning before we, we wrap up?

Speaker 2 00:41:55 Another thing I learned is it's not in the Sacred Music app, but on the church website, the music part of the website, you can change the key of a hymn.

Speaker 1 00:42:08 Oh

Speaker 2 00:42:08 Wow. Which is very helpful if, if people are listening and don't exactly know what I'm saying, every him will be in a key meaning does it have one flat or two sharps or something like

Speaker 1 00:42:21 That. Oh, okay.

Speaker 2 00:42:22 Yes. And so what that means is sometimes the way that the hymn is written, it might be very high for like, the soprano part might be a really high melody. And I learned, okay, I'm gonna have this song be presented in my ward. This has a really high melody here for these sopranos, I'm just gonna change the key so it's not as high. And then it sounds great <laugh> because yeah, it's not pushing out of people's comfortable singing range. So I feel like that is something possibly underutilized. Once I figured out that that was an, a very easy thing to do, I use it a lot. Just bump down the key a little bit. You do need to check with your accompanist, whoever's gonna play to make sure it's not gonna be too hard if it gets into five sharps or six flats or something like that. But it, it's really easy to just bump it down. And then, like I said, it's not this strain on people's voices to try to sing a hymn that's really high.

Speaker 1 00:43:29 Wow. Interesting. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So, and that's just in the general, the music site on Church of Jesus christ.org, right?

Speaker 2 00:43:37 Yeah. So if you go onto there and you say you wanna look up a hymn and the hymn player, there's just a little option if you wanna change the

Speaker 1 00:43:45 Key and then you print it out it, since it's not the same key as the handbook. Right,

Speaker 2 00:43:49 Exactly. Yeah. So then I would print it out, make copies so that people are not bringing up their regular handbook. They're gonna Yes. Use the one that I've made for them. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:43:58 Yeah. And I would imagine, uh, I mean that's just one more way to sort of mix it up right? With, uh, the word choir is to make it sound a little different. Uh mm-Hmm. <affirmative> is just change the key. Right.

Speaker 2 00:44:08 Exactly. Yeah. Cool. It doesn't say much. And honestly, the singers are probably not gonna, they're not gonna have to think about it really. They already know. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> the melody. But like you said, you've kind of, you've mixed it up a little bit.

Speaker 1 00:44:21 Yeah. That's great. Mm-Hmm. Very cool. Any other technology, uh, hacks that we want to use?

Speaker 2 00:44:27 Another thing that I hope is not underutilized, but might be, is a sacred music app. It has so much to offer, it's very easy to create playlists. I've done that for sometimes when we're gonna have stake choir. And I wanna have it be kind of like a fun, a fun event. We'll just make a playlist in there of some of the contemporary music that the, like the hymn arrangements that are more contemporary Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And have that as like our prelude music playing in the hallway as people come in and they're signing in. So the Sacred Music app, like I said, you can create playlists, you can, it just has so much new music that's coming out, it feels like at a very regular basis. Wow. And I've been amazed at how much it's mostly the, the new music that I'm seeing at least pop up at the top of the, uh, like where it says new and featured, I guess is mostly contemporary music that they're putting out for the youth. But it's great music. It's really well done. It's recorded professionally. And I hope people know about those songs. Also, the songs of Devotion is another album that they put out at least a year ago. That's contemporary hymn arrangements. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And those, those, um, that music can just be used to inspire people to help people have something to listen to that is, that is spiritual, that is worshipful and is also not a hymn from the handbook. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:46:12 All right. I gotta check out the Sacred Music app. So yes, I have never downloaded it <laugh>. There's so many, it seems like the church has more apps than most people realize. Even more resources on the webpage, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> for specific callings that many don't even delve into because I don't know, there's just a lot to consider. You're reading the handbook, you're trying to, you know, do your calling. And so there's a lot there. So, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:46:34 Well, Emily, this has been, man, I just love these interviews that I just have these little nuances in them that, uh, could be life changing. Like that, you know, how to text multiple people with an iPhone and keep 'em out of a group text. Yeah. You know, so just these little things that really make a difference. And, uh, that will inspire somebody who's walking into this calling and doesn't have a clue where to start or how to make it easier or how to motivate people and, and get 'em to choir practice. 'cause that can be difficult, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So, um, last question I have for you, Emily, is as you reflect on your time as a stake music coordinator and the leader of the worship team, <laugh>, how, uh, how has, how has your time as a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:47:17 So I actually had the opportunity, not necessarily directly connected with this calling, but I was asked as an assignment to lead one of the choirs for the Bentonville Temple dedication. And going into that, I was very nervous. I was feeling kind of discouraged. And I told one of my ministering sisters that I was feeling that way. And she said, well, you're not doing this for anybody else. You're just doing this for the Lord. And you can never disappoint him. And that idea in any type of leadership, that you're not doing this to be seen by anybody else. You are not doing this in a stake music calling to wow people with your stake choir. You're just doing this for the Lord. And since that message has sunk into my heart, I've realized I can follow him and he's not gonna be disappointed. And I can carry that into my leadership, and that will make my impact much greater.

Speaker 1 00:48:31 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 will 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. And remember to get on the email newsletter list, simply go to [leading saints.org/fourteen](https://www.leading saints.org/fourteen).

Speaker 3 00:49:49 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 only 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.