



## **Rallying the Ward Around Sacrament Meeting | A How I Lead Interview with Ryan Webb**

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Kurt Francom: Let's be honest. Few humans enjoy meetings, and many feel trapped in meetings. As leaders, we don't want to burden those we lead, but meetings can seem to do that more often than not. We wanted to address the pain of meetings through the meetings with Saint library. Here we have 15 plus presentations dedicated to improving the meetings we run.

We have experts in the field addressing topics like getting people involved in meetings, staying on task, dealing with conflict in meetings and a ton more. We'd love you to explore the full meetings with saints library over 14 days at no cost to you. You can do this by visiting [leading-saints.org/14](http://leading-saints.org/14). Explore that's [leading-saints.org/14](http://leading-saints.org/14). We'll also give you access to all of our virtual libraries, the educate about other leadership topics.

It's really good stuff. So visit [leading-saints.org/14](http://leading-saints.org/14) or click the link in the show notes. 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 2014 came around. We started the podcast, and that's really when it got some traction and took off 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 guru, 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 we just talk about us sharing what the other guy's doing. And I remember being a leader just simply wanting to know, hey 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.

Ryan Webb, welcome to the leading Saints podcast.

Ryan Webb: Thank you. We're having me excited to talk to you.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Now you are in North Carolina and you're an Institute. Director out there for, North Carolina state is that I get those details right?

Ryan Webb: Well, that's right. Yeah. We've been in for about 8 years.

Kurt Francom: Nice. So what what's your path been in church education that that landed you there?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. So, went to you Utah state for Grad and got hired by the church and start teaching seminary in Utah County, and then they asked us to move to Colorado Springs where we were 5 years and got to teach to the air force Academy along with a few other assignments. And then we thought we'd lived there forever, and they came collin and said, hey, there's a good opportunity out at North Carolina for you. You're willing to take it. So we did and have just loved it.

We've lived here for 8 years and could not be happier. Carolina

Kurt Francom: Awesome. And now how many, like, full time staff are you working with their full time faculty?

Ryan Webb: There's 4 guys in North Carolina? But I our I work by work with 19 stake presidents and Courtney all things Seminary at Institutes and just... Yeah. You're not really on a faculty so to speak. Gotcha.

Somebody who's over us who lives in Atlanta, but

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So if if if somebody's going to North Carolina state and they wanna take to... You're gonna be their teacher. Is that that way...

Ryan Webb: We had moved out some volunteers do help. But pretty much. Yeah. That's right.

Kurt Francom: Gotcha. And then, yeah, your recording is obviously a a church building. And so do you... Is your... You hold your classes in, like, a traditional church building or...

Ryan Webb: So we actually have an Institute at Nc state. There's also an institute at Un Chapel Hill, which are pretty close to each other, and then Duke University has a decent population of L kids, and we have a class there, but it's in on campus just in 1 of the buildings ends on campus.

Kurt Francom: Nice. Now I love asking this question to, like, maybe therapist or others weren't sort of just cold. Like, with no, no anticipation of this question, but I'm just curious like, today teaching the... This, you know, rising generation, the young single adults or young adults, What what are you seeing? What are you observing?

I mean, what what would you report back in just a few minutes?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. That's a great question. As soon as you ask I feel very optimistic. We have amazing young adults. Though young adults, I will get to work with are very intelligent.

They they think through things. But most of the time with a very faithful lens, you know, they want to be disciples of Jesus Christ. I think sometimes people think they come across as asking too many questions, but I I think it's... The the questions they ask actually deepen their faith. So, yeah, I I think that we ought to be super excited about the future with the faithful young adults that let are all around.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Now. That's awesome. Awesome. Now you're also serving as a bishop.

How long have you been in that role?

Ryan Webb: It'll be 3 years this fall.

Kurt Francom: Oh, great. Great. And, was this... I... Your first go at at yeah this bishop, I assume.

Ryan Webb: Yeah. We've got a a pretty good sized award. I think we have 86. Youth currently in the world. So, yeah.

That's a fun big word.

Kurt Francom: And and how would you describe the other, character award where they're either geographic or the makeup or anything like that?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. So we live about 20 minutes from the Raleigh temple. So we have a pretty high population of the L mds folks around here, and... Or our geographic is probably 15 minutes from 1 side of the ward to the other in the car. High high activity level.

We get about 250 people to Sacramento meeting each Sunday. We have 20 active priests currently. So, you know, I think sometimes we thought of moving in to North Carolina, the church is gonna be, you know, somewhat small, but not where we live. It's pretty strong fact it's the strongest word we've ever been in as far as numbers go and activity.

Kurt Francom: Oh, yeah. That's encouraging to hear. So just take me back maybe to that first year, the first 6 months, like, just getting going in this calling with them, you know, I know from those that recommended, I speak to you. I mean, you have some pretty unique approaches and things. But, like, where do that begin?

Or how do you walk into this really thinking dynamically like that?

Ryan Webb: Oh, I don't know. It's all a blur in those first 6 months. Just... I think realizing, first off, our former bishop was just amazing. And so I picked his brain a lot and just So tell me what you think about this, and he still is accessible to me, which is super super fun.

But also recognizing that I've been blessed with certain gifts and talents. And so for this stage of my life for this season while I have this calling, what does heavenly father want me to do with my gifts and talents. And so I think at first, I was a little hesitant to, like, You know, I have I'm a church education employee. I have a full time professional teacher. I didn't wanna be talking too much.

Even though I like to do that, I like to teach. I like to speak even. And I was a bit hesitant at first, like, I don't wanna give them too much of me, But I think when I settled in of just, hey, I... I'm called at this time for reason, and I'm gonna use the gifts and talents that I have to bless people. And for better or for worse.

That's what I'm trying to do.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. Now you've had a significant focus on... I mean, maybe you just... Described differently.

But as far as Sac meeting, how you approach Sacramento meeting that you've tried to do? I mean, how would you describe that approach, what are you trying to accomplish through Sacramento?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. So this all started when as a bishop brick we thought, okay. What can we actually do that will impact people. We spend so much time doing lots of things. Are there a few things that we could do really well that could actually impact our congregation.

The people come to church. And 1 of the first things that can't our mind with sac. We we control what happens in Sac and each Sunday, We spend time every bishop break meeting talking about Sac meeting. We we plan these out, we can impact what happens there. And so as we

started talking about that, we just had a few ideas and meetings and and start thinking through what we could do to to change or at least make a greater impact in Sac made service.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And I appreciate you frame that because as I think about... I mean, if you think of obviously, the the Bishop is often framed that they have a they have an influence on just the word in general. Right? They're they're helping all the different organizations and maybe the activities.

But I mean, for... As far as the most bang for your buck, I mean, sac meaning, that's the that's, like, that's your meeting. Right? You... It's never anywhere else unless you delegate it somewhere else or or, you know, you're picking the speakers.

You're really guiding that. And so For a to have a lot of influence, they should start with the the sac aggravating.

Ryan Webb: It seemed like an easy place to start and knowing that, you know... As bishop, I'm going to decide who speaks, we're going to decide who... What happens during those minutes together, let's see what we can do to have a greater impact. So...

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So what what what did this look like early on is you're trying to trying to orchestrate straight.

Ryan Webb: Yeah. So the first thing that came to our minds was okay. We are constantly inviting friends to church. What do we want? If if I'm bringing my neighbor to church, what do we want them to experience when they come?

And so it started actually with what happens when they walk through the doors of our buildings and do what they feel welcome. Is there something that we need to do as a bishop like, to make sure when people walk through these doors, they feel welcomed. So we had this idea to go to the young women's president and say, hey. You think there's anything our young women could do to impact the culture of Sac meeting as far as even before it begins. And kinda just sent her off, and she came back with some beautiful ideas and have...

It's it's changed a bit over time, but it's basically to right now is all of our young women are the greet of our... In our building on Sundays. They have a whole system in place. We had a kickoff meeting for them to kinda introduce the idea, I had some guests come and join. And our young women are now greeting people as they come through the doors up the building every Sunday, and that's just really changed the overall filling as people come to Sac Meetings.

That was where we started.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. I I love that. Especially, and maybe, you know, just need being raised and living in the Utah context, you know, very saturated. We don't get a lot of a lot of people walking in or it's...

I don't know. I maybe we're... That's all a podcast guess. But. But the point being is that sometimes we don't, structure our meeting, expecting the visitor to walk in.

Right? And so by... But but if we took that step, maybe more visitors were walk in or more people would be inspired to invite others to to to bring to church, you know? So I love that that approach and makes sense, especially in North Carolina where you're not the dominant religion in the area. Right?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. We've had the chance to visit many other churches of friends, and I, we have pastors our neighborhood who have invited us. We've gone as a family, and we felt so welcomed. So, like, what a great place to be and we thought, what are we doing in our church to make people feel that way And and does... As a member, am I hesitant to invite my friend if I'm worried that they're not gonna be greeted well or or what have they ex experience in other settings where they've gone is there's some things we could do to better match up.

So they feel like, oh, this this is a great place to be even before the call begins.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. It makes total sense. I'm I'm curious. So you go to your... You said you went to your young women's president and kinda said what what would you suggest we do.

Right? And I I love that dynamic wanna dig in more to to this, just as far as involving your your reward counsel this or specific members, Like, was that was that discussion or that invitation made within the context of, like, a word council meeting or was it a personal invite and, you know, in the hallway or, you know, 1 to 1 meeting or

Ryan Webb: The the idea came in bishop Brick meeting. We then went to the young women's president, 1 on 1. And said, hey, We think the young women would be really good at this. Could you think through what it would look like? And then as she brought back information, we presented in work counsel and, they, kinda refined it a little bit and Yeah.

Then we move forward.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So so I love this. I think there's a principle of just sort of putting out a general invitation. Like, this is generally what we're thinking. But if it was...

If you were in charge of that component or, you know, a young men young women, the Elders Quorum, whomever, what would it look like. Right? And then then then that stimulates revelation that they bring back.

Ryan Webb: And she was way better at it than we were. It was it it came out great. So that's

Kurt Francom: awesome. So... Anything anything else you would... As far as the details of how the young women do that or things they do how they prepare when they show up any details like that.

Ryan Webb: Yeah. We had a kickoff off meetings. We wanted the young women to feel like it was a big deal because it is. A big deal. You know, they...

So we we had a planned meeting where they had signed converts the church in our ward, come tell about their first experience coming to church. We had a member the stake presidency who was invited to also share his thoughts about what we were trying to do just to kinda of solidify the young women. This is a big thing. And It was a miracle. Actually, the mission president came to church that Sunday that we were planning on doing it, and I said, hey, Here's what we're doing at Church.

You wanna come, So he came in shared this testimony about what the young women Is I think they had immediately bought into... We play a big role in Sacramento not just do the young men, play a big role and what happens in on Sundays, we do too as young women. And so they sign up, they have a little system where they sign up. They I think there's 6 of them at a time, and they have different stations and different things, and they stay out till after right before the Sacramento actually begins the the sacramento part of of Sacramento meeting, and then they come in and sit by their families. But, we think I think them every Sunday.

I go shake their hands. Don't thank you for being out here and and we ask them to come early just like we do our young men to prepare. So it's been a really... It's been a neat thing.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. I love this this approach of exposing them to real life stories and people who are impacted you know, long ago, maybe or prior to to showing up as a visitor and and getting that perspective, and that really gives you something to work with that stimulates further revelation.

Ryan Webb: Yep. Yeah. It's been pretty awesome.

Kurt Francom: That's awesome. Alright. And any other component that you've tried or as far as improving the Sac meeting experience.

Ryan Webb: So that... That's just all before Sac begins. The next step is, you know, what do we wanna actually do in Sacramento media? The first thing we decided was we wanted to get rid of the traditional, you know, list that we had. We had this list of every member in the ward, and you could see the last time they spoke and and now we would just go through and say, okay, whose turn is it to speak.

And so that was the first day we saw, let's get rid of that. Idea. And let's let's just try to make worship full, meaningful edi a fine sac meetings and not worry about those logistics. So we had a Bishop Brick meeting where we have this whiteboard in the office, and we just said, imagine

nothing is off the table, and we could do whatever we want for Sac. What what could we come up with?

Let's let's just brainstorm. We just threw a bunch of stuff on the whiteboard. In fact, I was looking at today. I still have the screenshot of that whiteboard. And we just had some ideas that we'll probably never ever do and some ideas that we have done.

And the whole principle of just how can we make sac meaning ed and worship? That was kind of a switch to think we wanna worship, And what does that mean? What does that feel like? What does that look like in sac? And so we've tried some things and some have gone better than others.

And but there's there's been a neat excitement in Sacramento. I don't know exactly how to describe it. I've I've heard a few members say, like, I'm excited to come and see what you guys are gonna do next. Like, I... I'm excited to be here on Sunday because I know it's not gonna be the same thing that, you know, yeah accustomed to.

So that's been fun.

Kurt Francom: Now I'm... I'm sure you're not too much of a renegade. I mean, you you know you're not trying to reinvent the church or you wanna... You do open the handbook everyone well. So how how what did that dynamic look like?

Because I know some leaders are listening we like, well, I don't know does the hamburg So you can do that? Know. Yeah. So they... I mean, how did you involve how did that process go?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. And for sure, we don't wanna go against the handbook or do anything different. But we also wanna think outside the box and know that there's revelation available to us. So the first thing we said is well, we know music is powerful. Music brings a spirit in a unique way?

And why can't we do that more often? And so we immediately said, what if we had a musical number every single Sunday at church. And at first, we were like, that that seems crazy, but we We contacted our music coordinator and said, hey, what do you think if we tried to have a musical number? And she said, let... Let's try it.

And so we've been pretty consistent for about 9 months of every week, musical number of some sort. Have had to get creative of how to make that happen, but that's been been 1 big change that's definitely within the bounds of the handbook. And I was a good good place for us to start.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And I wanna underscore this this approach that is so... Again, it it really gets the the wheels turning as far as inviting to who imagine we have a clean slate. Like, there's no prior tradition or expectation. What would it look like If we are really to create a dynamic experience, you know, in Sacramento meeting.



And you could plug in, you know, a primary program. You can plug in the young men camp, You get, you know, what all these different activities we do to kinda wash away the tradition because sometimes we're bound by that tradition feeling like, well, sort of worked last time or you know, not too many people are complaining. So let's just do that. Right? Or or improve that, just maybe 5 percent, you know, and go from there, but, there really is a power of saying, what if we started completely over from scratch?

Right?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. I can't I can't emphasize that enough as far as the role that the holy ghost has played for us and in teaching us as bishop break. I I love that principle of we are entitled to revelation as a bishop Brit God wants the people who come to our ward on Sundays to be edi a fight and strengthened. And if we're the ones who are going to decide what happens, we need him to tell us to instruct us on how to help that be ed a fine, and that clean slate that you've talked about has really been important.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. It's awesome. So so music now is... You're still doing the the...

Every week. There's a musical number?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. So I'll give you a few ideas of things that have happened. You know, of course, we the music leader knows of people who have musical talents within the ward, And has definitely utilized them, but we've also made simple assignments like to our young men's, young men's, The whole young men's is gonna sing in 3 weeks. And they spent some time on youth night preparing for that. We've done that with the Relief society.

The elders quorum, our young women, included our primary. So right there or you've got 4 or 5 musical numbers just from your auxiliary that you can pull from, And then, we've sent out sign ups for musical numbers through people, we've reached out to other churches to bring in choirs from other churches even. Cool. Because we thought, hey, that's a cool way to get some non members into our congregation is... Yeah.

Like they're required. To come thing.

Kurt Francom: And there's probably not no shortage of choirs in north Caroline. Yeah. Right.

Ryan Webb: So that's been a another way, but we've and we've invited people who were a little shy about their musical talents but had heard they've had them to to do it. And it's been a real cool thing. So everybody's love that.

Kurt Francom: That's awesome. And then do you... I mean, the typical thing is, you know... After Sacramento? You have this 1 speaker, and then you have, like, a...

You break it up with a musical number in between the speakers? Is that generally how you do it? Or how have you mixed it up that way?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. And again, we're trying to maybe think outside the box a little bit, so rarely do we have you know, traditional 10 minutes speaker and then a musical number and then another speaker that just hasn't happened much lately. In fact, it's kinda funny. That happens mostly only when it's high counsel Sunday. When do we know that somebody from the stake is coming in to speak.

And they're gonna do that traditional format. But 1 of the principles that we've kinda come up with that shorter talks or better most of the time, unless it's maybe a really trained person or somebody who's who's got a particular topic they're passionate about. So that's that's been kind of 1 of our guiding things moving through this is that we keep things kinda short. And so we would tend to have more than 2 or 3 speakers if we're doing some short stuff. I can give you a couple examples of that if you want.

But...

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. Might living in here.

Ryan Webb: 1 of the 1 of the ideas that I I tried to list all the sac we've done over the last 9 months or so. 1 of the ideas we had was what if we had a a language meeting where we had people who speak different languages come up and share their testimony in that tongue that they speak. So he just started looking at the languages that people speak from missions, and we had on this particular Sunday 14 different languages where people shared their testimony in that language. Even though opening closing prayer was done in a different language, and it was... We told them you got 90 seconds to share your testimony in that language.

Please don't stand up and say, Oh, I haven't spoken this language in 20 years, don't just jump right into it. Tell us what language you're speaking and then just jump right into it. And it was powerful to hear the gospel will taught in those different languages, That that was super fun.

Kurt Francom: Wow. So you just lined them up. Right? So and most of the... I mean, nonetheless let's just book that language.

It was just... 1 language after the other that you didn't understand, but just knowing that they were testifying and and knowing probably most of that they learned this sled language in the context of preaching gospel was added to that power.

Ryan Webb: Yeah. We we had 1 particular member who was really nervous about it, and he's kinda of been semi active, I would say, and the it just re... The fire in him from his mission, you know, to be able to think, man. I I used to testify of this all the time, and here I am in this tongue that I love, these people that I loved. And and it was beautiful.

So lot a lot of great comments from that 1.

Kurt Francom: Any other examples what things have you done?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. I'll just I'll start reading off list, because I know you all Got

Kurt Francom: a list. I love it.

Ryan Webb: We've had an all music service where we only had music. The whole time, and it was focused on worshiping, and there was a variety of musical numbers, We took the living Christ and broke it up paragraph by paragraph with musical numbers in between each paragraph. So we just read from the living Christ. We had a narrator who kinda did that, and then had musical numbers in between. We've done a young men's only sac.

Increment meeting where they prepared at all? Just like we said, primary takes 1 sac meeting a year. Why can't we have our young men take a sac or that. Yeah. So they they prepared the whole side from me in service.

We've done that with young women as well. We did it because of him meeting, so you know the video because of him, the church message that's usually around Easter. We asked... So 6 different people to share their own because of him, and we actually share that video at the Star Sack meeting and then have these 6 individuals share their own because of him experience. That was a really powerful Sunday.

We did 4 Christmas programs in the month of December. So our idea here was each time we invite our fruit. We always say invite your friend, the church puts out this thing about, invite your neighbors to come worship with you on Christmas. And a lot of people out here have their own churches they go to on Christmas. Let's, let's let's have our whole December be Christmas program.

Mh. And so we did 4 Christmas programs in December, really encouraging our members to invite their friends to come experience across service at a church. So we did 4 Easter programs, this year with the same kind of idea.

Kurt Francom: Oh, that's awesome. That's really good. And then there's a that option. Right? Of, like...

Invite your neighbor, oh, I can't come that week. Well, how about the next week.

Ryan Webb: Right. We're we're having multiple Christmas programs this year.

Kurt Francom: Nice Yeah.

Ryan Webb: And they're all they're all pretty in a sense like, well thought out. Right? We... You usually really think through your Christmas program, the musical numbers and who and we did that with all 4 of them. So It was it was a lost Yeah.

Awesome. Any others? Oh, This was when we did recently, about 3 weeks before this meeting, I stood up and said, As you know, we've been trying to mix things up with sac meetings. So here is something we're gonna do 3 weeks from now. We would like the whole congregation to prepare a talk.

And then we're going to randomly call on people from the congregation to come share what they prepared. There was a bit of a gasp from the war when we said this, all but the topic was simple. It's why I believe. You've got 90 seconds to share, written down why you believe. And we asked, please don't come up and try to wing that.

Please write down why you believe. We've seconds. 90 seconds. We then, the next week announced it again, and what we did on the day of it was instead of calling people up randomly, we actually just opened it up and said anybody who wants to share their why I believe, please come up here. And we've...

It filled it filled up up upfront. So there was a line to have everybody share from little shoulder to youth to our adults. And that was maybe even more helpful than the actual experience was fact that we had families at home, writing these out. Children are asking their parents if they had written they're why, I believe children sharing with their parents, they're why I believe. And afterwards, as a bishop Rick we thought, how cool is it that people were in their homes doing things that we asked them to do.

Like, as part of this sake of meeting service.

Kurt Francom: So Did you notice it, like, a decrease in attendance that day at all?

Ryan Webb: We were worried about that. But no. We didn't. In fact, we were... I was nervous?

I told the word council, we meet every week as the word council, And I told the word council was before church. If no 1 gets up at least everyone in this room has to get, to share their why, I believe, but it wasn't a problem at all. So was fine.

Kurt Francom: Wow. I love that. Love that. And and here's the thing is it and maybe so people were listening this may I, like, this trauma response to that moment like in stake conference when they were called up to share their testimony. Right?

And generally speaking, I would really discourage any leader from doing that type of thing where you're like, oh, why don't we invite a few people like... But yours is so different because you're preparing them. Right? You gave them a heads up. You made a very simple 90 seconds.

Here's the topic. Go home and prepare it. And again, to me, it's not necessarily bad that people invite people up. You know, out of nowhere. It's that their unprepared is very...

Like, it's very an un kind thing to do at times. But when you prepare them, and then you you you know, switch it up.

Ryan Webb: Yeah. I had even made a video or that week, a recording myself, like, talking to the word about this upcoming sac and to not being nervous. We're not gonna call anybody up.

Kurt Francom: Oh, okay.

Ryan Webb: At So I... We really tried to prepare them. Like you said instead of just, hey. Yeah. Come on up here.

So That's. We're gonna do that. We're gonna do that again with titles of Christ. So we'll do that again where we say prepare talk about your favorite title of Jesus Christ and and what it means to you. And yeah.

Do it again. Awesome.

Kurt Francom: Have you gotten any, like, being so creative and and with these different approaches have you gotten any blow back from members of your ward or any negative feedback? Or...

Ryan Webb: There was 1 member who didn't love the language meeting because they're like,

Kurt Francom: Okay.

Ryan Webb: I couldn't understand anything that was going on.

Kurt Francom: And Yeah.

Ryan Webb: For me, it was more of the experience of I I got up at the end of this and share a scripture about the gospel be preached to all nations, tongues and people and tried to make it feel like, look. This is a beautiful amazing global faith that we're a part of, but I didn't I didn't resonate. I guess. Him. So

Kurt Francom: Yeah. And then in the last few years, there's, I at least from my perspective here, in Utah, there's been more of an emphasis on having a focus on Christ and Sacramento meeting, especially. And just through these examples, it's... That seems to be an obvious. Is there anything that you would add to that as far as your approach of keeping Christ as the focus of of the meeting?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. Definitely a big focus for us is to have the Christ centered Sac services. We try to really emphasize the Sac itself as the most important part of our meeting. And then every time we prompt someone with something Christ is the center of all of our prompts. Yeah.

A few other things that just came mind as you said that, we at... We've asked people to sign up if they would like to speak on any topic that they want to. And so we sent out a sign up and say, hey. If you wanna speak, we had a little couple of paragraphs of instructions, but they were all on somehow connected with how Jesus Christ has has strengthened them. Those have honestly been some of the best traditional sac and talks when they have shared something they've been thinking about.

They've been passionate out instead of just, hey, here's the topic we're gonna give you exactly what you're gonna say. And here's the amount of time. We've said to them. What's been on your heart? What's been on your mind that you...

So 1 guy talked about the Him in Sacramento. And honestly, I think it should be in the Leo. It was such a good talk. Another guy that wanda to talk about profits and how profits have changed his family. And and that's just...

We've got a list of 20 people and that's now become, hey. What should we do 3 weeks from now? Oh, let's just go to that list of who said they want to speak?

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Now that there's so much here that comes in mind. Like, just... This is such an underrated principle in my opinion as far as leadership is is actually giving people an opportunity to request and even outside of of Sac, even calling. Like, there's something powerful when you even ask people of the reward, like, what do you do you wanna serve here.

You are you you love primary? Like, maybe we find you a place there. You love working with youth. Maybe... Right?

And obviously, not everybody's gonna get what they want just the way it's structured. But I'd love this in even in Sacramento meeting of of saying, do you... Those who wanna speak, like, raise your hand. Let's let's see it and let us know what you would speak about because... And and there is power.

I think, you know, I wouldn't... I don't wouldn't ever wanna skip over the dynamic of having somebody who is quite a bit nervous, and they don't do this often, and, you know, there's such a blessing in in standing up there and doing your best and testifying fine. Everybody's rooting for you, and how great. You know, maybe it wasn't an awesome talk, but you know, that's great. Had that opportunity.

But, you know, generally speaking, you know, in a more traditional way. When you invite say, hey, who wants to speak And I think you're gonna find that you have a better quality of message

in Sac because they actually wanna stand there. They actually wanna participate in that way. Right?

Ryan Webb: Yeah. It's a beautiful thing when people use their agency in that way. And and and I think it also is in some strange way training or or helping people see like, what what are you passionate about? If you were to speak in Sac, what would you choose to talk about? I...

I've said this a few different times to our ward we should always be working on something when it comes to, like, a gospel message. You know, you... If you're speaking this Sunday current sac and you're spending some time thinking about that. You're preparing you're looking the scriptures a little differently. Imagine we did that every single week, where we're like, I'm I'm pair to deliver something to someone, and it enhances our own personal scholarship.

So hopefully, that message is also coming across.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Yeah. That's that's great. It's John, this Randall game I... We're recording this first part of June and, you know, a few weeks ago is Mother's day.

So would you do for Mother's day?

Ryan Webb: Mother's day, we use our reward council a lot because we wanted our sister's input there. And so we had a lot of music. That was the idea they wanted a lot of music on Mother's day. I think we had 4 musical numbers on. And then they what we found something from sister Do and some paragraphs from a talk that she gave.

And then we had a sister who came up and read those paragraphs. So the work council said, don't make a sister prepare. Don't make her you know, stress out on Mother's day, but she'd be happy to get up and just read a few paragraphs from this talk. So we didn't have any commentary insight. It was just straight out of sister Do and music numbers.

Kurt Francom: Mh. Yeah. Now, you know, with roughly 52 Sundays in a year, I guess, 50, if you you know, stake conference 48 with general conference. Right? I, I mean, you get to a point that you can't do anything too.

I mean, too unique every week. And so... I mean, do you feel like there is a general cadence to your meetings that sort of a default position that you come back to?

Ryan Webb: We're once a quarter, we're we're planning Soccer meetings, and then we actually spend time every word council talking about Sacramento. In some regard. So I don't think we've settled on a cadence yet of, like, this is what we go back to. It's only it's been about a year since we've really been trying to mix things up. I mean, I can look and see what we've got going on the next 3 months and we've got a lot of auxiliary led sac coming up in the in the summer.

But, yeah. I don't think we've really settled on. Here's our default.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So there's gonna be maybe a a sac that is just completely handled by elders, like, they're picking the speakers and doing that right. And and obviously, they're running it by you and you you're aware of what's gonna be happening. But they're they're worrying about the details of it.

Ryan Webb: That's right. The next 1 upcoming is actually the 12 and 13 year olds. So Okay. It's boys and the girls, they're gonna have a youth night where they plan it together. And we really talk to our youth leaders like, let them plan this what do they want sac meeting to look like?

And they're gonna plan and execute it. When we did our youth led meeting, actually... This is 1 of the first ones we did. I actually had the Dea Cor teachers quorum presence sit next to me on understand when we did our use lead meeting and my counselor are set with their family lease, and we had them say the opening prayers and the closing prayers and that's actually 1 thing that we've continued is we always have a use or a primary child say 1 of the prayers in Sacramento meeting.

Kurt Francom: Mh.

Ryan Webb: That's that's awesome.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Really good. Yeah. I'm I'm curious so this so this... I mean, the it's more of...

I mean, Talks about it, but S, but it's more of a word council

Ryan Webb: we definitely use our word council a lot. Yeah. Yeah. We... Yeah we've had many work councils.

In fact, this has also been really helpful. Word councils where they've said, I wish the whole word was in here right now. Like, this is so edi to be able to have these work council experiences. And so we've gone and said, okay, let's have word counsel moments in elders quorum, Relief society and include them in our meetings. Take this question to Elders quorum today and bring it back next Sunday with you or what the Elders Quorum says about that or relief Site does the same thing.

Or if I have a message, that I want to get out to Relief Society, then that's what the Relief Society president takes. Hey. More counsel today. Bishop asked us to read, for example, the new paragraph about the garment. And so they...

Did that last Sunday, we had a work council discussion. They had that same discussion. With their relief society to try to make our whole ward, feel like they have a say and an impact on what's happening every Sunday.



Kurt Francom: Man. That's so that's insightful. Love that. Really good. And so and you talk about this quarterly meeting, it shows is that a core...

Every quarter you have 1 word council meeting that's only focused on preparing sac.

Ryan Webb: So we usually just do that as a bishop break. So the bishop brick gets together every quarter. We try to hammer out the next 3 months, and then we'll take those to the work council with our ideas.

Kurt Francom: Gotcha. So that may be, hey. Elders Quorum, you've got this you know, these 3 weeks that we need you to approach and we're gonna do a you thing on these days. Right? So...

And then they they fill in the details from that. Right?

Ryan Webb: Yep. They fill in the best parts.

Kurt Francom: So good. So good. Anything else that we're missing any ideas or thoughts or approaches or things that didn't work or lessons learned or...

Ryan Webb: There's definitely been things that worked. We've really tried to help our fast and testimony meetings be you know, Simple direct testimonies of Jesus and, you know, some days are better than others on that. And...

Kurt Francom: Yeah. We we I'll get that. Yeah.

Ryan Webb: And when I say, you know, 90 seconds why, I believe that doesn't mean that there wasn't somebody who spoke for 4 minutes or 5 minutes just because we're not. Gonna make sit down after 90 seconds. But yeah. But... Yeah.

For the most part, I think there's this this filling of we wanna come to church on Sunday and fill hope and strengthened by Jesus Christ. And And we can do that. We can highly influence that experience. And I think there's just an eager ness from our members who wanna be in involved in it as well, you know, with the little things like, sign up to speak and and calling people out of the congregation or and having them prepare like, I feel like there's somewhat of this... We're doing this together, and that's been beautiful.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. So I'm curious if you were to coach a brand new bishop Rick on how to have the best fast and testimony meeting? Like, what what things do you do to to lead to that result?

Ryan Webb: No, I feel like that's 1 of the things we gotta work on. But...

Kurt Francom: Okay. Alright.

Ryan Webb: You know, there's there's material where you can get a quotes from profits about what a pure testimony is. And then, definitely, the bishop brick member who bears that first testimony has gotta be an example of that. If you get up and say, we would invite the congregation to have bear brief testimony centered on Jesus Christ, and then you go on for 10 minutes and tell 3 stories. It's less light.

Kurt Francom: So true Happens.

Ryan Webb: So. So just modeling that and emphasizing over and over the power of simple pure testimony and encouraging it.

Kurt Francom: Yeah. Really good. I just feel like just hearing from your experience and and the ward like, This isn't, like your idea or your thing. It's not the Bishop xfinity. It's not only the Word council thing, but you've really rallied the word around sac meeting.

Knowing that all these other, you know, extracurricular things are happening, you know, if people still go to second hour, and they'll go still got their things or, you know, but this really is a rallying point for the word to start. Like, everybody show up here first, and we're gonna create something that'll impact you in it'll sort of overflow to these other experiences in the church and and experiences at home and and really impacts the culture of the word in a positive ways. Is that a good way to sum it up?

Ryan Webb: I think so. I hope so. I mean, if I'm going to sacrifice me, what do you what do you want to have happen while you're a sac meeting. And what do I want my children to experience in Sac. If if we're bringing our neighbor that we've been trying to get the church for the last 3 years and here they come to Sac, what do I want to be there?

And it's it's not boring. Like I I don't wanna bring my neighbor to something that I don't feel like they're going to feel at a fight and strengthened by. So with that premise, can we as a group as a a award to figure out a way so that if someone walks through our doors, they will feel edi and strengthened in Jesus while they're with us. And the truth is, I've got 6 kids who come to church with me this Sunday. And I need them to fill those things that I just described that I want my neighbor to fill.

And so it's worth our thought to think through how we can impact our sac services.

Kurt Francom: Last question I have for you as you, reflect on your time as... A bishop as a leader in the church, how is being a leader helped you become better follower of Jesus Christ.

Ryan Webb: Oh, that's a good question. I I struggle often with feeling adequate. I look around our congregation often And think of so many people who could be doing this, and I'm just humbled by the opportunity to serve in this capacity. So how how is serving in this capacity

helped me be a better disciples Jesus Christ. It's just made me recognize my desperate need for Jesus Christ.

Like, I cannot do anything of myself and with him, it can go wrong. And so I you take that extreme by myself. I can't do anything and with him, I can't go wrong. And it's just been humbling to be tied to him to be bound to him in that way because as a dad as a bishop as a husband, he he wants these people found me to be edi fight and strengthened, and he's not gonna let that go a miss. So I'm just humbled and thankful to be part of this work and I know it's his work.

Kurt Francom: And that concludes this how I lead interview Hope you enjoyed it, and 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 most sense and share it with somebody who could relate to this this experience. And this is how we how we develop as leader just hearing what the other guy is doing, trying some things out, testing, adjusting for your area, and that's that's where grew great leadership discover. Right? So we would love to have you, share this with somebody in this calling or a related calling, and that would be great.

And also, if you know somebody, any type of leader who would be a fantastic guess on the how I lead segment, reach out to us, go to leading scenes dot org slash contact maybe send this in individual email letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name for this interview. We'll reach out to them. And see if we can line them up. So again, go to leading saints dot org slash contact, and there you can submit all the information and let us know. And maybe they will be on a future how I lead segment on the leading Saints podcast.

Remember, solve the burden of meetings by visiting leading Saints dot org slash 14 and getting 14 days access to the meetings with Saints virtual library. It came as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought fourth 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 bold and courage, ability,