

Welcome to Primary!

Thank you so much for choosing to serve in primary. We feel honored to have you as a teacher. As a primary presidency, we want every child and every teacher in our Primary to find the divine within themselves. Elder Rasband recently observed, "[Jesus] values the divinity within us and so must we." As a presidency, we believe that the precious children in your class are divine, they are eternal, and they are beloved by our Creator, by our Heavenly Parents, and so are you.

We need you; your class needs you; your teaching partner needs you. Have the courage to share yourself with them. These children might not remember much of what you say, but they will remember how you make them feel. Love them. Listen to them. Visit them. Find the divinity within them. We trust you and believe in you.

Most importantly, be you. Arguably one of the most poignant stories in the scriptures is the woman who anoints Jesus's feet. She is judged, reprimanded, and humiliated by the apostles for worshipping and honoring God in her own way; however, Jesus defends her, loves her, and declares, "She hath done what she could."

Do what you can for the children in your class. Share who you are. Whatever you can give and however you can give it, that is enough. It might seem small and, like the nameless woman anointing Jesus's feet in the above story, you might be unique in how you choose to worship and express God's love, but whatever you choose to do, we accept it.

We love you. We deeply appreciate your willingness to love and teach in our precious primary. Please remember to look for the divine within the children you teach, your teaching partner, and yourself. We hope you can find God in the sweet, angelic faces.

Much love,

The Primary Presidency

## PRIMARY TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Please be prepared with a 25-minute lesson/discussion each Sunday. Curriculum and teaching ideas can be found online: *Come, Follow Me – For Primary*. Pray for each child in your class; adapt the lessons to their needs. Share personal stories and learn alongside the kids you teach! At the beginning of each lesson, ask each individual to share something from their week.
- Please be on time. Junior primary will meet in the Primary room right after sacrament meeting, Senior primary will meet in their classrooms for 25 minutes before we switch. Be there to welcome each child to your class.
- If you are unable to attend Primary, PLEASE find a substitute. Each month a substitute list full of wonderful teachers will be provided for you. Please contact our substitutes in advance. Consistent attendance will deeply benefit the connection you have with your class.
- If you have children who are absent, please visit them. Remember, they are divine. Your intention should be to share love and wonder, not attendance.
- Please reinforce reverence in your classroom, in the hall, and in the primary room. We all witness and express God's love in different ways, allow creativity! But please remember to be respectful of others' worship.
- Folders with print outs, roles, and other class information will be located outside of the primary room doors for senior primary teachers to pick up after sacrament. Leave the folders in the classroom for junior primary. Please sanitize the chairs and table in your classroom with the provided cleaner.
- Complete the *Protecting Children and Youth Training* (15 min.) if you have not done so in the past 3 years. As a reminder, we are mandatory reporters of abuse. We report all abuse to the police.
- We will hold Teacher appreciation gatherings every quarter. Please make a special effort to attend. We want to help you love your calling! We want you to feel supported, connected, and appreciated! Please let us know of any needs, ideas, or concerns you might have as a teacher in our ward's Primary.

Thank you so much for your dedication and time to this calling!



Your Primary Presidency

## Teaching Tips

1. Prayer is an important teaching tool. Throughout the week, ponder and pray about the principles in the coming lesson.
2. Almost every lesson has more material than you will be able to cover in class. Read the lesson and thoughtfully choose one or two main principles that you feel are best for you and your class.
3. Become familiar enough with the lesson that you can summarize the important parts. Do not read it from the manual.
4. Relate the lesson to your own life! Children love hearing personal stories about real people. Connect with the kids, ask them to share stories from their own lives.
5. Take comfort. You do not need to know everything to be an effective teacher.
6. Plan some simple questions that will allow your class members to share their experiences and insights.
7. As a teacher, you are called to learn! Teach what is fascinating, exciting, and new to you. Sing, dance, color, play learning games, prepare object lessons, etc.
8. Above all else: Love. Love those kids and feel our Heavenly Parents' love for them.

The doctrine of Heavenly Mother is uniquely ours, uniquely recent, and uniquely “great and important.” The Gospel Topics Essay about Her states that “the doctrine of a Heavenly Mother is a cherished and distinctive belief among Latter-day Saints.” With Her in mind this coming year as we focus on the shared stories of Christianity in the New Testament, let us celebrate Her in the creation of humankind, the creation of this miraculous world, and when describing the nature of God.



Here are a few quotes and resources we have amateurly collected for you to use in your primary lessons as you see fit:

**“All human beings are children of loving heavenly parents and possess seeds of divinity within them.”**

*Becoming Like God, Gospel Topics Essay*

“Logic and reason would certainly suggest that if we have a Father in Heaven, we have a Mother in Heaven. That doctrine rests well with me.”

Gordon B. Hinckley, “Daughters of God,” General Conference, 1991.

“*Eloheim* is from the word Eloi, God, in the single number; and by adding the word *heim*, it renders it Gods.”

Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 371.

“God is our father. He loves us. He and our mother in heaven value us beyond any measure. They gave our eternal intelligences spirit form, just as our earthly mothers and fathers have given us mortal bodies. Each of us is unique – one of a kind, made of the eternal intelligence that gives us claim upon eternal life.”

Spencer W. Kimball, *My Beloved Sisters*, p.25



J. Kirk Richards, *Mother Creator*

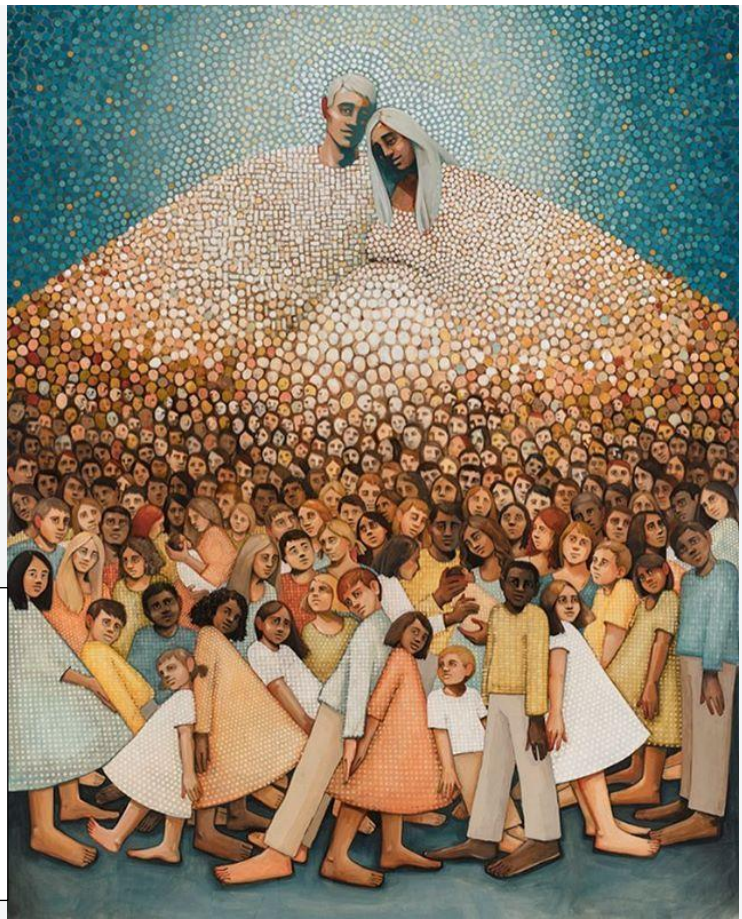
“All of us commenced a wonderful and essential journey when we left the spirit world and entered this often-challenging stage called mortality. The primary purposes of our existence upon the earth are to obtain a body of flesh and bones, to gain experience that could come only through separation from our heavenly parents, and to see if we would keep the commandments. In the book of Abraham chapter 3 we read: “And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.”

Thomas S. Monson, “Ponder the Path of Thy Feet,” General Conference, 2014.

“Everyone, before coming to this earth, lived with Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, and each was loved and taught by them as a member of their eternal family.”

M. Russell Ballard, *Our Search for Happiness*, 1993.

Caitlin Connolly, *In Their Image*



“Our heavenly parents provided us with a celestial home more glorious and beautiful than any place on earth. We were happy there. Yet they knew we could not progress beyond a certain point unless we left them for a time. They wanted us to develop the godlike qualities that they have. To do this, we needed to leave our celestial home to be tested and to gain experience”

*Gospel Principles*, 1978, p. 13.

“This divine entreaty is consistent with the fact that, as begotten children of heavenly parents, we are endowed with the potential to become like them, just as mortal children may become like their mortal parents.”

Russell M. Nelson, “Perfection Pending,” General Conference, 1995.

“Trees reach up for the light and grow in the process. So do we as sons and daughters of heavenly parents. Facing upward provides a loftier perspective than facing right or facing left. Looking up in search of holiness builds strength and dignity as disciples of Deity.”

Russell M. Nelson, “Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods,” General Conference, 1996.

“All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother, and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity.”

First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, Anthon H. Lund; “Messages of the First Presidency,” 4:203.

“To Mother Eve, to Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, to Mary of Nazareth, and to a Mother in Heaven, I say, thank you for your crucial role in fulfilling the purposes of eternity.”

Jeffery R. Holland, “Behold Thy Mother,” General Conference, 2015.

“You are daughters of God. You are precious. You are made in the image of your heavenly Mother.”

Spencer W. Kimball, 1982, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 25.

“Our theology begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them.”

Dallin H. Oaks, “Apostasy and Restoration,” General Conference, 1995.

“You are a son of God. You lived in a premortal existence as an individual spirit child of heavenly parents.”

Boyd K. Packer, “Counsel to Young Men,” General Conference, 2009.

“You have light because you are literally spirit daughters of Deity, “offspring of exalted parents” with a divine nature and an eternal destiny. You received your first lessons in the world of spirits from your heavenly parents.”

Julie B. Beck, “You Have a Noble Birthright,” General Conference, 2006.



“And so the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve, were formed and given bodies that resembled those of our Heavenly Parents.”

*Gospel Principles*, 1978, p. 28.

“Our Heavenly Parents’ love and concern for us continues to this very moment.”

M. Russell Ballard, qtd. in “A Mother There,” 1992.