

## Sandy Utah Willow Creek Stake 2017 Historical Summary

As always, a loving and kind Heavenly Father and His Son blessed the members of our stake tremendously during 2017. We saw new members baptized. We saw the power of full time missions as we had missionaries enter and return from the mission field. At any given time, we had approximately fifty church service missionaries serving in various capacities. In the summer, we had more than 200 of our youth and their leaders go to Northern Utah as part of the Stake pioneer trek. There we learned about our pioneer heritage and the principles beyond the trek theme “pay it forward.” In November we held our Stake Conference for Youth where we joined with refugees from several different countries to serve, dance, and have fun together. We weren’t without tragedy during the year. We lost two members of our stake in a tragic act, but in it found strength as we came together in support of one another. We always marvel, and are always appreciative, to see our members serve faithfully in so many ways. We care about one another, and that shows in the concern we have for each other. We ask for the Lord’s blessings to be upon all.

Willow Creek Stake Presidency

Kimo Esplin  
Kevin Ludlow  
Joseph Staples

The following table provides a selected list of important stake activities during 2017.

**Table 1: Selected List of Important 2017 Stake Calendar Items**

<b>General Conferences</b>
Mar. 25, Apr. 1, 2
Sept. 23, Sept. 31, Oct. 1
<b>Stake Conferences</b>
Sat-Sun, Mar. 18-19
Sat-Sun, Oct. 7-8
<b>Ward Conferences</b>
Jan. 15: 2nd (9 am), 3rd (12:30 pm)
Jan. 29: 9th (9 am), 7th (12:30 pm)
Feb. 12: 4th (9 am), SA (12:30 pm)
Feb. 19: WW(11 am), 6th (12:30 pm)
Feb. 26: 1st (9 am)
<b>Annual Stake Priesthood Meeting</b>
Aug. 27, 4 pm
<b>Stake High Priest Quorum Mtg/Fireside</b>
Nov. 12, 7 pm
<b>Stake Conference for Youth</b>
Nov. 11,12
<b>Stake Pioneer Trek for Youth</b>
June 19-21

The theme for 2017 Ward Conferences was “Strengthening Families Past and Present”. In addition, the Stake Presidency asked the Stake High Council to speak on the following topics during there monthly ward speaking assignments

<b>Month</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Jan/Feb	The Sacrament and the Enabling Power of the Atonement
May	Sanctifying power of Holy Ghost
June	Testimony of the Prophet JS and the Restoration
July	Joy on the Sabbath
Aug.	Forgiveness
Nov.	“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me . . . “ Matthew 11:28-30
Dec.	“Knowest Thou the condescension of God?” 1 Nephi 11

In March 2017 a new Stake Relief Presidency was called and sustained.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Sustained</u>
President	Julie Marie Slauch	Teresa Kaye Curtis
1st Counselor	Lynne Buckner	Jennifer Amy Wilhite
2nd Counselor	Cynthia Scharman	Valery Gines
Secretary	Miriam K. Wasden	Leah Bryner

Also in March 2017 a new Stake Sunday School Presidency was called and sustained.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Sustained</u>
President	Ronald K. Esplin	David Smart
1st Counselor	John S. Johnson	Lee H. VanDam
2nd Counselor	Allen D. Mumford	Allen D. Mumford
Secretary	Thomas A. Williams	Jacob H. Smith

In October 2017 a new Stake Young Womens Presidency was called and sustained.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Sustained</u>
President	Peggy Knudsen	Amie Aslami
1st Counselor	Trina H. Benson	Chamane Monson
2nd Counselor	Kimberly Jo Kehl	Michele Goasland
Secretary	Sandra McMillin	Camille Merkley

There were five changes to the Stake high council during 2017.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Released</u>	<u>Sustained</u>
March 9	William A. Christensen	Darren J. Hansen
Oct. 8	John Kent Griffiths	Gregory Curtis
“	William M. Lodder	Cris Garff
“	Keith Duane McCleery	Eric Lyman
“	Kerry D. Rolfe	Jesse Paul Vance

Two regular stake conferences were held during the year 2017. The first was held March 18-19, and was presided over by Pres. Kimo Esplin. A brief synopsis of these meetings, as prepared by the stake clerk, is as follows:

#### Adult Session

Conducted by Pres. Kimo Esplin and focused on the life and mission of Jesus Christ. An LDS church video “To this end was I born” was shown followed by two speakers. Sis. Andrea Serranto spoke about the last supper, and Bro. Brent Dial spoke about Gethsemane. Another LDS church video was shown; “My kingdom is not of this world, followed by two more speakers. Bro. Bob Deeds spoke about the Crucifixion and Sis. Carolyn Ownby spoke about the resurrection. Finally, a third short video was shown, “Blessed are they that have not seen but believed”. Pres. Esplin then spoke about our need to have faith and believe, and shared several insights about temptation. He noted that Satan was also in the Garden of Gethsemane, and that Jesus experienced the full weight of all that he could inflict. He suggested that only those who resist temptation gain an understanding of Satan’s power and that because Jesus suffered and resisted for all of us, that we can ask for his help and he can truly give it, and do so as one who fully understands.

#### Priesthood Leadership Session

Conducted by Pres. Joe Staples (2nd C.). Bro. Ray Johnson related his experiences home teaching a newly converted couple from Iran. This couple had joined the church and faced many obstacles and challenges, including severe health problems, which with Gods help and through many efforts of members in his ward, eventually led to his recovery and his direct involvement in translating the Book of Mormon into the Farsi language. Then Bro. James Thackeray spoke about the great experiences leaders in their ward have had as they have made visiting members in their home a regular part of their ministry. Bro. Kim Powell spoke next about Family history and Temple work. Finally, Pres. Esplin spoke about how leadership and decision making in church presidencies and councils is very different from how it is in the world. He showed a video of President Eyring when he was called into the First Presidency in which he discussed this and contrasted it to his Harvard and Stanford training. Pres. Esplin then led a discussion about this topic with all of the priesthood leaders.

#### General Session

Conducted by Pres. Ludlow (1st C.). After stake business, sustainings and a choir number, four talks were given. Bro. Mario Garcia, talked of his conversion and testimony growth both before and during his mission. Sis. Penny Escamilla spoke of drifting away from the church, years of inactivity, and subsequent reactivation. Sis. Terri DeJohn and Bro. Steve DeJohn, just-returned senior missionaries then spoke. Sis. DeJohn shared remarkable experiences from their mission and Bro. DeJohn focused on his conversion to the church years prior. After a hymn, President Staples spoke about facing life’s challenges. He shared many insights and experiences that emphasized that we must choose faith, and not fear. Then Pres. Ludlow spoke about making time to “stop

and smell the roses”. He commented about the pressures of life, and how although there will always be storms outside of us, we need not let the storm be inside us if we take time to see the beauty and goodness in life, listen to the calming voice of the spirit, and face life with faith. Our final speaker was Pres. Esplin. He began by inviting all primary children in attendance to stand and sing two songs “I love to see the Temple” and “The hearts of the children”. After commenting on the message of these songs he invited Sis. Mikayla Hoggan, a 13 y.o. Beehive, to share her efforts and experiences leading to her legal adoption into her “eternal” family and of being sealed to her family in the Temple. Pres. Esplin taught about Malachi’s prophecy “turning the hearts of the children to their fathers”, discussed Moroni’s visit to Joseph Smith in this context, and the subsequent angelic visits Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirkland Temple. He continued by sharing many other insights and experiences concerning family and Temple work.

A second regular Stake conference was held October 7-8, and was presided over by Elder J. Devn Cornish, of the Seventy. A report of this conference was submitted by Elder Cornish elsewhere.

Based on quarterly reports, the 2017 beginning and ending membership statistics for the Stake are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 2017 beginning and ending membership Statistics**

Date	Number of Units	Total members	YM (12-18)	YW (12-18)	Primary (3-11)
Jan. 1, 2017	8	3795	155	140	420
Dec. 31, 2017	8	3890	156	169	420

During 2017, 28 missionaries left our stake to serve full time missions. These missionaries, and their assigned missions, are listed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 Full Time missionaries who left during 2017**

<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Departure Date</b>
Esplin, Sarah Kaye	Iowa Des Moines	04 Jan
Egan, Dan W. and Maureen C.	France Lyon	23 Jan
Benson, Jacob	Massachusetts Boston	25 Jan
Scott, Connor Michael	California San Jose	25 Jan
Groneman, Eliza Rose	California Ventura	08 Feb
Hogan, Britton Neal	Texas San Antonio	15 Mar
Cannon, Caden Abel	Brazil Brasília	11 Apr
Wouden, Jairus William	Ukraine Dnepropetrovsk	12 Apr
Glad, Stuart Nicholas	México Monterrey East	25 Apr
DeJohn, Stephen A. and Terri	California Irvine	10 May
Miller, Deseret Peggy	Chile Santiago West	24 May
Timmins, Joseph David	Canada Toronto	28 Jun
Tellez, Nicholas Dominic	Brazil Porto Alegre South	18 Jul
Hale, Chandler Ryan	Ohio Cincinnati	19 Jul
Aslami, Syed Ethan George	California Los Angeles	25 Jul
Mendel, Justin Quinn	Texas McAllen	26 Jul
Riggs, Eric Christopher	Pennsylvania Philadelphia	02 Aug
Johnsen, Samuel Rodney	Argentina Buenos Aires South	07 Sep
Fisher, Jacob Peter	Oregon Portland	26 Sep
Mansell, Clyde Whittaker	Washington Vancouver	27 Sep
Lignell, Jacob Kenneth	México Chihuahua	24 Oct
Bingham, Martin C. and Linda Grace McLachlan	South Carolina Columbia	06 Nov
Bunker, Joshua Edward	Canada Calgary	15 Nov
Brown, Alex Cameron	Indiana Indianapolis	15 Nov
Anderson, Nathanael S.	Arizona Gilbert	20 Dec