Attention Parents:

If you are bringing small children to Sunstone West, we invite you to use Sunstone’s hotel suite when you and your little ones need a break from sessions to eat, nap, or rumpus. See Mary Ellen or Carol at the registration desk for the room number and key card. The room will have a TV, small refrigerator, and space for adventures.

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8:30–8:55 AM Devotional

2. MORNING DEVOTIONAL: THE PRODIGAL SON

We start the symposium on a thoughtful, spiritual note by exploring what we can learn about and from the father and his two sons in Christ's parable recorded in Luke 15:11-32.

CAROL B. QUIST is Sunstone’s associate editor and office manager.

Garden Room A

9:00–10:00 AM CONCURRENT SESSIONS

3. ANCIENT METAL RECORDS–A NOTION PREPOSTEROUS IN JOSEPH SMITH’S DAY?

MICHAEL G. REED, Sacramento; MA, liberal arts, CSU Sacramento, BA, humanities/religious studies; author of forthcoming, Banishing the Cross: The Emergence of a Mormon Taboo.

Hugh Nibley declared, "[T]he knowledge and use of metal plates for the keeping of important records is beginning to emerge…. It will not be long before men forget that in Joseph Smith's day the prophet was mocked and derided for his description of the plates more than anything else." Lehi in the Desert, 107.

Contrary to what Nibley implies, Joseph's critics generally mocked him either because they associated his "find" with his treasure quests or they believed the plates (if made of gold) should've been heavier—not because people doubted the existence of ancient metallic records. My presentation will demonstrate that the acknowledgment of ancient metallic plates' existence was a fairly common idea in Joseph Smith's nineteenth-century environment.

Chair   LARRY VOLLI NT IN E

Garden Room A

4. THE LIONESS OF THE LORD: THE LETTERS OF AUGUSTA ADAMS COBB TO HER HUSBAND BRIGHAM YOUNG

CONNELL O’DONOVAN is a genealogist with more than 30 years' experience and a freelance historian of Mormonism. Connell will be publishing Augusta's letters later this year.

An archive in Wisconsin contains some 150 letters that Augusta Adams Cobb wrote to Brigham Young from 1844 to the 1860s. Augusta was Brigham's second plural wife (of 55 total). A Boston Brahmin, herbalist, and cultural feminist, Augusta abandoned her wealthy first husband and six of her children to marry Brigham.
Young in 1843. Her letters are replete with the details of their failing relationship. Separating Brigham the prophet from Brigham the man, Augusta found the man an uncouth, lower-class hypocrite who often unfairly chastised her, played his favorite wives against her, and on occasion even whipped her. Although she bitterly complained, like singer Patsy Cline, the more he abused her, the more she vowed to win back his heart. While they never divorced, Augusta did have Brigham seal her for eternity to Joseph Smith and later asked to be sealed to St. Paul and even Jesus Christ.

CHAIR JOE GEISNER

Garden Room B

5. RELIEF SOCIETY HERSTORY: THE WOMEN WE COME FROM

LAURA COMPTON is a member of the Sunstone board and resides in Cupertino with her husband and two sons. She uses her journalism degree (BA, Humboldt State University) to write for the Mormons for Marriage blog, to review books for the Association for Mormon Letters, and to proofread articles for the Journal of Mormon History.

In light of President Julie Beck's call to focus on the history of Relief Society, we'll look at some of the highs and lows of this auxiliary, including stories from lesser-known women who were Relief Society members throughout the decades. Join us as we walk uncorrelated in their shoes and find out the big—and the little—things they did to keep Relief Society alive. We'll share resources for further study as well.

CHAIR MINDI RITZMAN

Garden Room C

10:15 AM–11:15 AM
CONCURRENT SESSIONS

6. AUTHOR MEETS CRITICS: PERSISTENCE OF POLYGAMY

Co-editors Newell G. Bringhurst and Craig L. Foster have brought together all new articles on the history of Mormon polygamy. Join us for a discussion of this groundbreaking anthology with one of the co-editors and two readers/critics.

JOE GEISNER and his wife provide residential care services for the developmentally disabled. Joe is a lover of Mormon books and reads way more than he should.

LES GRIPKEY is a long-time student of Mormonism. He received a BA in comparative literature from San Diego State University. Les is currently researching Stephen Silver, who was excommunicated in the French Mission Apostasy of 1958, becoming a leader in the LeBarons' fundamentalist church in Mexico before founding his own sect.

NEWELL G. BRINGHURST, Visalia, California; PhD, emeritus professor of history, College of the Sequoias; author or editor of numerous books on Mormonism, including Persistence of Polygamy and Scattering of the Saints: Schism within Mormonism.

CHAIR to be announced.

Garden Room A

7. FAITH AS A DEADLY SIN (OF PRIDE)

GLENN CORNETT, MD, PhD, is a principal at Pastorus Pharma, LLC, a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on disorders of the central nervous system. Glenn lives in Palo Alto with his wife and four children and is an avid musician and composer.

In an April 1989 General Conference talk, Ezra Taft Benson said, “Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion.” This paper agrees. An unquestioned, aggressively supported faith tends to dismiss logical argument and evidentiary consideration, thereby involving the abdication of one's responsibility as a thoughtful moral agent. This is a form of pride that also continues to be highly destructive in many forms outside of religion, including those of persistent tribalism and ideological extremism. This paper discusses unflinching, uncritical faith as a sin of pride, one that is indeed a stumbling block to the LDS community.

RESPONDENT: KIM MCCALL is a member of the Sunstone board of directors and a long-time gospel doctrine teacher.

CHAIR JASON HARRIS-BOUNDY

Garden Room B

8. OUR EARLY CALIFORNIA ANCESTORS


Early California drew the interest of British, Spanish, Russians, Mexican "Californios," and American immigrants, as well as an array of Native Americans who had settled on the west coast thousands of years before the European arrivals.

Although Brigham Young chose not to settle in the Golden State, he tracked the pioneer journeys of Lewis and Clark. Four years before California became a state, Young commissioned Sam Brannan to sail from New York to San Francisco in 1846 with about 248 Mormons who would become part of early California life. Young also proposed a state of "Deseret" which sought to extend his Utah settlement across California to the Pacific Ocean. Although this proposal was unsuccessful, Brigham Young perhaps should be considered a California pioneer, since the arrival of so many early settlers resulted from his initiative.

CHAIR CONNELL O’DONOVAN

Garden Room C

11:30 AM–1:00 PM
CONCURRENT SESSIONS

9. PANEL: ROLES OF WOMEN IN COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

The role of women, particularly in the areas of priesthood and leadership, has changed radically over the past four decades. Section 156 of Doctrine and Covenants, given in 1984, introduced ordination of women in the denomination. The panel will analyze these changes from two different approaches: 1) the institutional and historical contexts, with emphasis on how women's priesthood and leadership has impacted imagery and activity, including perspectives on how the ordination of women is seen and interpreted
in India and sub-Saharan Africa; and 2) one woman's personal experience of God and of living through the transformation and expansion of women's roles.

KAY FLETCHER was ordained an Elder in Community of Christ June 2003 and in January 2005 became the pastor for the Walnut Creek California congregation. Kay is now the Mission Coordinator for the Sierra Pacific Mission Center serving Northern California and part of Nevada.

RONALD W. SMITH has been a full-time minister of Community of Christ since 1993, traveling in the western United States, Africa, and southern Asia. In October 2008, he became the mission center president of Sierra Pacific Mission Center in northern California.

JENNY HEDMAN is an elder in Community of Christ and works as the young adult minister for Northern California. She taught fifth grade before deciding to work full-time for Community of Christ. Her husband, Daniel and one-year-old son, Deacon are a wonderful support and great inspiration for her ministry.

CHAIR LES GRIPKEY and CARLA LONG

Garden Room A

10. PANEL: THE SPIN OF ART: HOW ART INFLUENCES THE MESSAGE OF HISTORY.

By framing what you see and how you see it, a painter is in charge of history. Similarly, a composer can 'spin' our understanding of what 'really' happened. Considering examples from centuries of Catholic and LDS art and music, we will look at how artists have left their (often subversive) mark on the historical record by influencing it, changing it, inverting it, concealing it. "Just because it's Jesus doesn't mean that it's true."

PANELISTS:

PAUL CRABTREE's music is the product of two cultures, combining the seriousness of the European tradition with the restlessness of the American spirit to produce perceptive works that are relevant to the twenty-first century experience. A strong believer that mythology underpins contemporary experience, he is able to intermingle ideas as diverse as Latin poetry and 1960s girl groups, yet his music maintains a seriousness of purpose that intensifies both 'high' and 'low' cultural references.

LAURA COMPTON is a member of the Sunstone board and resides in Cupertino with her husband and two sons. She uses her journalism degree (BA, Humboldt State University) to write for the Mormons for Marriage blog, to review books for the Association for Mormon Letters, and to proofread articles for the Journal of Mormon History.

GLENN CORNETT, MD, PhD, lives in Palo Alto with his wife, four children, various instruments and "serious amplification equipment". He is an avid musician (computer, guitar, piano, synthesizer, voice) and composer.

CHAIR KIM MCCALL

Garden Room B

11. FILM SCREENING: FORGOTTEN JOURNEY: THE STEPHENS-TOWNSEND-MURPHY SAGA

"That great dazzling success! But all of that was forgotten under the power, the dystopian power of the Donner Party."

—Historian Kevin Starr

Join us for a screening of Forgotten Journey, the award-winning public television documentary film recounting the tale of the first traveling party to successfully cross the Sierra Nevada range with oxen and covered wagons—one of the truly remarkable achievements in the history of the West. The film will be introduced by local historian Don Buck.

DON BUCK is a retired historian from DeAnza College in Cupertino. For 30 years, Don has been researching, locating, and mapping emigrant trails—the California Trails in Nevada and northern California and the Southern Trails in New Mexico and Arizona leading to southern California. This research and trail mapping led to trail preservation work with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Forest Service. He has edited a number of emigrant trail-related publications and is a charter member of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

CHAIR WILLIAM W. QUIST

Garden Room C

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
LUNCH BREAK

The lunch buffet requires a separate $19.50 fee for the meal. If you plan to purchase the lunch, please register in advance. We have a very limited number of extra lunch tickets available for purchase on-site. You can order lunch from the hotel restaurant or walk to a nearby eatery.

Bring your plate back to Garden Room B to watch Mormon clips from The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, and the recent episode of Big Love that features Sunstone in one of the story lines.

Garden Room B

3:15-4:15 PM
CONCURRENT SESSIONS

12. VERY CARELESS IN HIS UTTERANCES: THE EDITING, CORRECTING, AND CENSURING OF CONFERENCE ADDRESSES

JOE GEISNER and his wife provide residential care services for the developmentally disabled. Joe is a lover of Mormon books and reads way more than he should.

At the Sunday morning session of the October 2010 General Conference, President Boyd K. Packer gave a talk titled, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel." A few sentences and several words were changed from the presented talk to the published talk posted on the Church's web site, LDS.ORG. Almost instantly, these changes and their significance were analyzed in the media and on the Internet. Some suggested this kind of editing is a common occurrence with general conference talks. Others commented that practice may not be unique, but it is uncommon and even a monumental moment in Mormon history. This paper seeks to answer the question, how common is this kind of editing?

CHAIR KAREN ROSENBAUM

Garden Room A
13. DISCRIMINATING GOD'S SPIRIT AND MESSAGE IN COMMUNITY OF CHRIST'S DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS SECTION 164

RONALD W. SMITH has been a full-time minister of Community of Christ since 1993, starting in Denver, Colorado. In October 2008, he became president of the Sierra Pacific Mission Center in northern California.

Community of Christ's triennial world conference, held in April, 2010, in Independence, Missouri, held the potential to throw the church into schism. Two major social issues, same-sex marriage and the nature of baptism, had the church's membership polarized.

President/Prophet Stephen M. Veazey brought to the conference a document which became section 164 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Section 164 and the discernment process leading up to the conference brought a sense of the Holy Spirit to the gathering which allowed dialogue, exploration, and hope. We will explore the discernment process, the policy changes that resulted from section 164, and Christ's repeated invitations resident within the newest section of Doctrine and Covenants.

CHAIR CONNELL O'DONOVAN

Garden Room B

14. A SECOND MITT ROMNEY PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN: PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS VERSUS POTENTIAL FOR FAILURE

NEWELL G. BRINGHURST, Visalia, California; PhD, emeritus professor of history, College of the Sequoias; author or editor of numerous books on Mormonism, including Persistence of Polygamy, Scattering of the Saints: Schism within Mormonism, and Black and Mormon.

As Mitt Romney is poised to launch his quest for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination, he enters the race as the apparent front-runner—according to various recent polls. My presentation focuses on two questions: First, what are the reasons the former Massachusetts governor finds himself in the enviable position of “front-runner”? Second, what are the potential pitfalls Romney could face in his second quest for the Republican nomination for president? In an attempt to answer the latter question, careful consideration will be given to the so-called “Mormon question,” stemming from Romney's LDS faith—an issue in 2008 which limited his appeal to Christian Evangelicals—the latter constituting a “major base” of the Republican Party. Also considered will be other hindrances that could derail Romney's effort.

CHAIR LISA FAHEY

Garden Room C

4:30–5:30 PM CONCURRENT SESSIONS

15. “RIGHT OF THE FIRSTBORN”: LINEAGE AND HEREDITY IN THE THEOLOGY OF JOSEPH SMITH

CHRISTOPHER SMITH, PhD student, Claremont Graduate University; BA, Biblical Studies, Fresno Pacific University; MA, Christian history, Wheaton College.

The importance of family to Joseph Smith is well-known, but discussions of the subject often focus on marriage and sealing. Less has been said about Smith's peculiar fascination with lineage and blood relation. Early Mormon scriptures feature hereditary records, hereditary priesthoods, hereditary blessings, hereditary curses, hereditary offices, and even hereditary names. They also single out firstborn sons for special privileges and prerogatives. This paper will contextualize Joseph's views on heredity against the backdrop of the Bible, nineteenth-century folk religion, and Smith family dynamics. It will also explore how Joseph's fascination with heredity influenced his views on race and gender and informed his practice of polygamy to “raise up seed.”

CHAIR KIM MCCALL

Garden Room A

16. THE EXPLORER AND THE COLONIZER: JACOB HAMBLIN AND BRIGHAM YOUNG

TODD COMPTON is the author of In Sacred Loneliness: the Plural Wives of Joseph Smith (Signature Books, 1997), which won the Mormon History Association Best Book Award. He started out as an acolyte of Hugh Nibley, and perhaps three people in the Mormon community have read his pure Nibley volume, Victim of the Muses: Poet as Scapegoat, Warrior and Hero (Harvard University Press, 2004). He is currently finishing a biography of Indian missionary and explorer, Jacob Hamblin.

Viewing Jacob Hamblin as a simple Indian missionary misses many complexities and paradoxes in his life. In most ways, he was entirely loyal to the LDS faith, community, and leaders; in other ways, his sympathy for Indians caused him to see how LDS exploration and colonization was undermining the Indians’ way of life. A lifelong Indian missionary, he also served as an explorer for Brigham Young, known as the great colonizer. Brigham sent settlers to places with an economic focus. Indians lost out in the competition for resources, and many of them turned to begging or thievery, or starved when their traditional farming areas and water were taken. Jacob revered Brigham as a prophet and served the dangerous exploring missions he was assigned with ready obedience. On the other hand, there is some evidence that Jacob resented Young's settlement of St. George/Santa Clara in 1861 and felt that Young had not supported him as Indian missionary over the years. Hamblin's relationship with Young thus was paradoxical, including both religious devotion and loyalty and clear-sighted views of the consequences of Young's colonization in southern Utah.

CHAIR KAREN ROSENBAUM

Garden Room B

17. FUNNY PAPERS: CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS DISCUSS SUNSTONE'S COMICS ISSUE

What do you know about Mormon comics, and would you like to know more? Perusing the September 2010 issue of SUNSTONE magazine will go a long way in answering both questions. In the first collection of its kind, editor Stephen Carter and guest editor Theric Jepson brought together an impressive assemblage of Mormon-themed comics and artists with LDS backgrounds to demonstrate the richness and range of Mormon comics. Join Theric and two of the contributing artists for a closer look at this particular form of storytelling.
Eric Jepson is an accidental Mormon comics snob and guest editor of SUNSTONE’s comics issue. He blogs at MotleyVision.org, is the editor of The Fob Bible, and has published short fiction in Arkham Tales, Dialogue, and other venues.

Jeanette “Jett” Atwood is an artist living and working in San Francisco. Her original artwork has appeared on SUNSTONE covers and as illustrations for various articles. She’s also responsible for the manga-style Book of Mormon cartoons on the back pages and covers of SUNSTONE from February 2009 to the present.

Brad Teare began his career illustrating for the New York Times. His comic, “Cypher,” first appeared in Heavy Metal magazine and was later published as a graphic novel. His work has appeared in SUNSTONE magazine, the Big Book of series from Paradox Press, and makes regular appearances in Graphic Classics. His most recent project, “The Subterranean,” can be viewed online at: sandhogcomics.blogspot.com.

Chair Mindi Ritzman

Garden Room C

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There will be a short break between the last concurrent sessions and the closing plenary so that the hotel staff can open the partition between Garden Rooms A and B.

6:00 PM–7:30 PM
CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS
(Mary Ellen Robertson)

OPENING SONG: “Come Thou Fount”

OPENING PRAYER: STEPHEN COHEN

18. PANEL. BINDING UP THE WOUNDS: HEALING EFFORTS FOLLOWING CALIFORNIA’S VOTE ON PROPOSITION 8

Many of us are all too familiar with the damage and human cost from Proposition 8. In the years since, what efforts have been made by LDS Church members, leaders, and by people of other faiths to help heal from this divisive chapter that pitted politics and religion against each other?

What can straight/Mormon/religious allies do to facilitate the healing process and support LGBTQ family members, congregation members, and friends who are struggling? What will assure the LGBTQ members of our religious communities that our healing overtures are genuine? What can Mormons learn from people of other faiths who support marriage equality? And how can we approach this polarizing topic with the empathy, compassion, and love that all God’s children deserve?

Our panelists bring many perspectives to this discussion. We welcome their thoughts about ways to center our efforts on healing, reconciliation, understanding, dialogue, and demonstrating love and respect to our LGBTQ brothers and sisters.

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Kim McCall invites you all!

Three “totally awesome” spiritual & cultural events

Sunday, March 20

9:00 AM
Menlo Park Ward Sacrament Meeting
Kim will be speaking on Matt 25:34
“Take no thought for the morrow . . . all these things will be added unto you”
1105 Valparaiso Avenue
Menlo Park, CA

NOON
Join with (or listen to) the fabulous ward choir, rehearsing Brahms Requiem
Menlo Park Ward Building Annex, behind church building
1105 Valparaiso Avenue
Menlo Park, CA

4:30 PM
Outstanding Choral Concert
Bay Choral Guild (BCG)
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church
600 Colorado Avenue
Palo Alto, CA
Tickets: $25 general, $20 senior, $6 student
http://baychoralguild.org
MODERATOR:

LAURA COMPTON became a spokeswoman for the Mormons for Marriage web site when it caught the attention of news media and has been talking about it ever since.

PANELISTS:

CONNELL O’DONOVAN has been active in radical LGBT politics since 1987. He founded or co-founded 10 LGBT organizations while living in Utah. An award-winning writer, he has published many articles on LGBT spirituality and theology. He grew up LDS but after coming out, he joined two divergent spiritual paths: the Quakers and Paganism. He was excommunicated in 1991 under the direct order of Boyd K. Packer. In the wake of Prop 8 and after nearly 20 years of being unchurched, he began attending the United Church of Christ in Santa Cruz, which has an "Extravagant Welcome" program aimed at LGBT folks and was baptized in the very cold ocean 4 July 2010. During the Prop 8 campaign, he coordinated Mormons for Marriage Equality in Santa Cruz County and was a founding member of LDSAPOLOLOGY.ORG. He personally received more than 500 pledges to vote no on 8 from people he met “on the street.”

WARREN (TREY) LATHE is married, a father of two, biologist, and a business owner living in San Francisco. An LDS convert at 18, he was excommunicated at 38 because of his relationship with his now-husband. Trey has been active in the marriage equality fight in California and the fight against Prop 8. Recognizing the damage the Prop 8 struggle has done to his family and friends, he has been an active participant in several bridge-building activities between LDS Church leaders and the gay LDS community.

ELISA DELLA-PIANA is an attorney, mom, and Berkeley Ward member (the last of these being perhaps her best attribute). She witnessed the Oakland Stake presidency’s talks on loving and accepting LGBTQ members, spoke at a meeting with Marlin K. Jensen on post-Prop 8 healing, and helped organize an event called "Gays and Mormons Unite" at the UC Davis law school. She and her sisters have just begun developing a short video project that will share stories and voices of gay Mormons and their families. She is humbled to be on a panel in such outstanding company.

BRAD CARMACK is finishing his last year at the BYU law school in the master’s of public administration program. He plans to eventually work for the federal government in the foreign service. He was raised in Meridian, Idaho, and is an active member of his ward. He has been involved in community action programs and events, including BYU Jail Outreach and a discussion group at BYU, Understanding Same Gender Attraction. He has written a book called Homosexuality: A Straight BYU Student’s Perspective.

SAM WESTFAHL is an LDS gay man from Mesa, Arizona, who is attending Utah Valley University and majoring in criminal justice corrections. Sam will share his personal experiences living as a gay Mormon man in Utah.

MITCH MAYNE is currently working on a book about being an openly gay, active Mormon. He blogs on this topic (http://MITCH-MAYNE.BLOGSPOT.COM/) and consults individually with gay Mormons and their families. In 2009, he was approached by local LDS leadership for Oakland, Berkeley, and Walnut Creek to be part of a program designed to help Church members better understand gay Mormons. Mitch is also a member of the advisory council of the Coalition of Welcoming Congregations of the Bay Area, which is a program unit of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry at the Pacific School of Religion.

SAMUEL CHU is executive director of California Faith for Equality and the California Faith for Equality Action Fund, directing the nation’s largest interfaith statewide network of local congregations, organizations and faith leaders. Samuel is also a fellow at the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California. A first generation immigrant from Hong Kong, China, Samuel received a BA in political science from the University of California, San Diego, and an MA from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

CLOSING SONG: To be announced.

CLOSING PRAYER: To be announced.

Garden Rooms A and B

~8:00 PM–9:30 PM
POST-SYMPHOSIUM DINNER GATHERING

There will be a dinner gathering at Elephant Bar in Cupertino after the closing plenary session. We’ll reserve some tables for any and all who would like to join us and continue the conversations. Elephant Bar offers Asian and American cuisine in a kid-friendly atmosphere.

Elephant Bar is located at 19780 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino, CA 95014 (408) 865-0701 www.ELEPHANTBAR.COM

From the Hilton Garden Inn–Cupertino, head south on N. Wolfe Road. Turn right at Stevens Creek Blvd. The Elephant Bar will be on the left: 19780 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino, CA 95014.

Many thanks for the generous contributions to underwriting the expenses of this year’s Sunstone West. We’re grateful for the support of Board member KIM MCCALL, LISA FAHEY, and KAREN ROSENBAUM. And hearty thanks to GLENN & JOHNNA CORNETT for the use of their home and musical instruments for our Friday evening opening social.

Thanks also to Board member LAURA COMPTON for her tireless assistance with venue searches, equipment rental/procurement, and program planning—in addition to participating in several sessions as a speaker, panelist, or moderator.

As always, we appreciate the members of the Sunstone community in the Bay Area who attend Sunstone West, submit proposals for sessions, or help by chairing sessions. Thank you for being here!