

**A Brief History of H. Tracy Hall's Term as Bishop
of the Pleasant View First Ward of the Sharon East Stake
July 4, 1976-July 19, 1981**

I was called to be the bishop of the Pleasant View First Ward (to succeed Bishop Rey L. Baird) by Sharon East Stake President Ernest L. Olsen on July 1, 1976.

I was sustained, along with William T. Woolf, First Councilor, H. Reese Hansen, Second Councilor, and Raymond D. Harrison as my Executive Secretary, in Sacrament Meeting on the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, July 4, 1976.

The meeting commenced at 3:00 p.m. in the lovely, rock-faced chapel located at 650 East, Stadium Avenue in Provo, Utah and concluded about one and one-half hours later.

The previous ward clerk, Lamar Paxman, and his assistant clerks, Richard L. Larson, Jack V. Dixon, and Burthel B. Mayhew, were retained as my clerks.

The first two weeks as bishop were frenetic. Twenty-two meetings were attended. Twenty persons were released from their church callings and 33 persons were called to serve. Youth interviews, temple recommend interviews, a marriage interview, a mission call, and counseling interviews together totaled 56!

Additionally, there were five visits to ward members, three evenings working at the stake welfare farm in the Provo River Bottoms near the power plant, a sitting for a photograph of the new bishopric, planning for a young men's super activity, and the "setting apart" of those newly called to serve.

A "prayer circle" in the Relief Society room at 5:30 p.m. was held for the seriously ill, one-day old child of Neil and Laurie Hartvigsen Lindberg on July 21st. About 100 ward members attended.

The opening prayer was offered by H. Reese Hansen. Incidentally, Reese and I go by our middle names and the first name of both of us is Howard. A hymn, "I Need Thee Every Hour" was then sung. Brief remarks by Jens Jonsson on the subject of faith and prayer followed and then, as requested by the Lindbergs, I offered a prayer.

A closing hymn, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives," was sung and William T. Woolf offered a closing prayer.

The baby remained in intensive care at the Utah Valley Hospital for five days and passed away about 2:00 a.m. on July 26th. Shortly thereafter, this new Bishop conducted his first funeral at our Stadium Avenue Chapel.

At a meeting of all the Sharon East Stake bishops and the stake presidency on July 27th at 9:30 p.m. I learned that our stake would be divided into two stakes by the creation of an Oak Hills Stake. The division would take place at a stake conference to be held on August 8th in the Provo Tabernacle.

One week later, I learned that a Pleasant View Third Ward was to be created on August 15th by a division of our Pleasant View First Ward. Additionally, the Pleasant View Second Ward, which was still meeting in the "old purple church" on Canyon road at the foot of Stadium Avenue, was to abandon that building and move to our Stadium Avenue chapel. I was appointed "agent bishop" for the new three-ward operation on September 18th. The agent bishop's responsibilities include management of the facilities, scheduling, and certain financial transactions.

The stake and ward divisions caused many losses of key personnel. Our ward membership before the divisions was 539 persons, and only 350 after.

Now, the business of releasing and calling personnel began all over again only one month after being sustained as the new bishop.

On Monday, August 2nd at 6:00 a.m., the Deacons, Teachers, and Priests left for the High Uintah annual super activity. I was now 57 years old, the oldest bishop in the stake. I was not an “outdoorsman” and not particularly used to heavy activity. We all hiked to Pigeon Springs for a rendezvous. Leadership divided at this point with the Deacons going to Buckey Lake with Rey Baird. The Teachers headed for the Four Lake are with Erick Ericksen, and I continued on over Rocky Sea Pass with 10 Priests to the 11,200-foot high Uintah Lake. We camped there four nights, fishing, hiking, and enjoying the scenery.

Half of the boys were very unruly and foolhardy. The weight of my stewardship became very heavy and I was afraid that some of the boys would not come home alive. I also worried about my own physical and nervous exhaustion.

Prayers to my Father in Heaven, however, brought comfort and strength and I hiked out of the Uintahs not only carrying my own backpack, but in addition also carried the pack of a youth who had injured his foot.

I was asked to write this history while Ida-Rose and I were in the Missionary Training Center (MTC) preparing to leave for Zimbabwe on our mission.

At the MTC you arise at 5:30 a.m. and go to bed at 10:00 p.m. This has left me with little time to detail the five years of my tenure but I will do what I can before we leave for our mission assignment.

I periodically made demographic surveys of the ward because of a nagging fear that an aging ward population would seriously reduce our vitality.

A survey of the ward in October of 1977 revealed the following: 359 members, 102 families, 190 males, 169 females, 106 LDS homes, four non-LDS homes, six vacant lots, two moderately large vacant pieces of ground, 38 persons work for Brigham Young University (BYU), 84 married couples (32 of the married couples were alone—children gone), 11 widows, one widower, two male single heads of households, six female heads of households, average age of adult population (18 years and older) is 50 years.

A breakdown of the number of persons over 18 years within a five-year age interval (except for the 18-20 year interval) follows:

<u>Interval</u>	<u>No. of persons</u>	<u>Interval</u>	<u>No. of persons</u>
18-20	39	51-55	32
21-25	22	56-60	24
26-30	11	61-65	47
31-35	11	66-70	10
36-40	5	71-75	6
41-45	15	76-80	7
46-50	33	81-85	5
		86-90	3

My concerns of an aging ward were expressed in the various ward leadership meetings where leaders were urged to attract young families to move in where older families move out.

I was also concerned about commercial and BYU encroachments on our wonderful single-family dwelling neighborhood. Other ward members also shared this concern.

Young families coming into the Stadium Avenue and Andrus Lane area have been very helpful in maintaining a fine primary and youth program.

Remember the 32 married couples whose children were raised that were included in the above statistics. These couples constituted a latent pool of prospective missionaries. In this connection, every bishop has the mantle of his calling and I truly felt that I had mine. With the mantle comes diving guidance and I felt a goodly portion of this from time to time.

Perhaps the most dramatic instance of my ministry is related in a letter written to my children on March 29, 1978. The letter:

Last Sunday was usual enough except for that dream from which I awakened at 3:00 a.m. I took my usual shower, washed my hair, shaved and brushed my teeth. I have always brushed my teeth before eating. Food tastes better with a fresh mouth. However, it was Fast Day so there was no breakfast this day. I said my personal prayers (in the bathroom of course). Think of the billions of prayers that go up from bathrooms. Where else in the house can one have locked door privacy? The tithing received in the mail during the proceeding week was removed from my locked desk drawer and the mail from church headquarters was placed in my attaché case. Then I was off in the cool morning darkness to the bishopric meeting.

All the time, there was the nagging question, "What about that dream?"

Bishopric Meeting, Melchezidec Priesthood Committee Meeting, and Welfare Meeting passed, and Priesthood meeting began. I was conducting on this day. The members of the Bishopric rotate in this responsibility every week, as you know.

At this time, opening exercises for Priesthood Meeting were carried out in the chapel. We had the opening prayer and the announcements, followed by a call for any visitors to introduce themselves. Immediately, a tall young man with a crew cut hair style (rather unusual for this day and age) shot up from his seat up front on my right and said, "I'm Link Hunn; I'm a Quaker" and he promptly sat down. I shot right back, "Welcome, we're always glad to have Quakers attend our meetings, please come up to the rostrum and see me as soon as these proceedings end."

A few more persons introduced themselves and the opening exercises were concluded. Lincoln Hunn came up, said he was from New Jersey, was attracted to come here on account of the Osmonds. We have a lot of this. The Osmonds live in the Pleasant View Second Ward. Three wards, Pleasant View 1st, 2nd and 3rd all share the same Stadium Avenue Chapel by meeting at staggered times during the day. Teenagers show up from England, Japan, and other places just to get a peek at Donnie or Marie. It creates a lot of problems. In fact, we call it the "Osmond Problem."

It was Easter Sunday and Quaker Hunn was expecting some kind of early morning Easter extravaganza. He was 22 years old so I took him to the Elder's Quorum meeting. Being the bishop is interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which are the surprises. About a month ago when I asked visitors to introduce themselves, a man (again up front and to my right) stood up and did not introduce himself but, looking squarely at me, said in a loud voice, "Who are you?"

More meetings followed. Then there were five youth interviews and other business. Sunday School began and ended. I then took care of more unscheduled interviews and telephone calls.

Then I walked home, prayed, turned around and walked back just in time for prayer meeting for Fast and Testimony Meeting. High Councilman Lincoln Card was there and I asked him to offer the prayer. It was now time for Fast and Testimony Meeting!

Woven into the fabric of all these morning events were two threads: my dream and the message of Acts 2:17, “And it came to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit on all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

Well, I qualify for the “old men shall dream dreams” part of the quoted scripture. I had made up my mind. I would tell the congregation of my dream.

After the sacrament service, it is usual for the person conducting the meeting to lead off in bearing his testimony before turning the meeting over to the congregation for them to bear their testimonies.

I began by expressing gratitude for Easter and the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on our behalf. I then stated that I would bear my testimony in two parts, part of it now and the remainder at the conclusion of the meeting.

Now on to my dream: I was in the dream, you were in the dream, and everyone in this ward was in the dream. The dream occurred in three sequential scenes. In the opening scene we all beheld a father and mother with a very tall, emaciated son. The son was being held in the arms of the father and was visually being presented to us in a plea for assistance.

We were moved and wanted to help, but we were afraid. We were afraid that some personal harm would come to each of us if we attempted to help. It seemed that the harm would come from being too close to the son because we would contract the illness that had caused his emaciated condition. So, we held back and not one helped.

In the second scene, the entire ward was fishing at a great expanse of water. On the bank were marshes and trees. One large fishing pole was lying on the bank unattended and with a considerable amount of line let out into the sea.

The ward was paying little attention to the fishing pole. Presently, the line started to unwind and the reel to turn. The action was not vigorous in hooking a mountain trout but was rather sluggish. Nonchalantly, we somehow collectively began to reel the fish in. We had a difficult time doing this, not because the fish put up any fight, but because of our own clumsiness.

We got the line all tangled up around our arms, the trees, and the grass humps in the marshes. Eventually, the fish was reeled to shore. But—the fish was only two thirds of a fish! The entire tail section was missing, being severed from the rearward part of the fish in an irregular, angular cut. Regardless, we wanted the fish very much and also wanted the remainder of the fish still out in the sea swimming around.

Then, someone remembered that not one of us had a fishing license. Fear again overcame us and we were afraid that we would get caught and suffer dire consequences.

Scene three now begins. It was discovered that a license could still be obtained—a retroactive license as a matter of fact. But it was soon learned that the license could only be obtained from a certain judge and that judge was to be found in scene one of the dream.

Once again, we were fearful. We did not want to return to the opening scene of the dream. Incidentally, the license cost money but entitled us to keep the two thirds of a fish

already caught and entitled us to fish for the remaining one third still at sea. It was known that the part at sea would be difficult to catch—difficult indeed, but that it was possible.

At this point, I said that the first half of my testimony was completed and that if there were a “Joseph” in the audience, would he please interpret the dream. There followed a suspenseful pause. H. Reese Hansen, my second councilor sitting at my left, leaned over and said, “None will bear their testimonies, they are all waiting for Joseph.”

Well, people finally began to bear their testimonies, mainly about things that were on their minds prior to coming to meeting. Brother Card bore his testimony relating how my dream applied to recent happenings in his life: namely his reluctance to hire an applicant for a school teaching job wherein his heart told him yes but his head told him no because he was afraid that his (Card’s) career would be damaged if he hired this man. The man had been rejected by a number of prospective employers, had been out of work for a year and a half, wore old clothes and had a “country hick” appearance. Brother Card finally let the Spirit direct him however and hired the man and everything turned out all right.

Sister LaPreal Simmons commented on the dream stating her concern as being one who had not been willing to help in scene one.

The meeting continued until it was time to close and it seemed that there would be no Joseph. But as I was ready to leave my seat for the podium to close the meeting, Richard Anderson arose. He apologized in his opening words as to feeling unworthy to be a Joseph but that he knew yesterday that he was to bear his testimony today. So he commenced to interpret the dream. He felt that the dream, while having general meaning to the ward had a specific meaning for each of us. Richard said that scene one represented our Father in Heaven presenting the Savior to us for our acceptance. Our fear of accepting Him has been expressed before by the prophets of old. It is indeed a grave responsibility and awesome task if we accept him fully as required.

Scene two represented fishing for the souls of men and one third not caught represented the traditional lost sheep. We have 65 persons over 60 years of age that I would like to have on missions before my term of bishop is over. Also, there are 13 eligible ladies age 21 or older that are not married who could serve on a mission. Unfortunately, none of these are willing at this time to accept a mission call.

On the other hand, our young men respond remarkably well to accepting a call.

I don’t believe that Richard responded to the fishing license part of the dream but expressed the general theme of the dream that in spite of our great statistics (we probably lead the entire church), we must examine our lives, find where we are wanting, and do something about it.

I then closed the meeting with some concluding remarks.

I am a person who seldom dreams, and when I do it is just a passing flash. Consequently, this dream, which was long and full of detail, leaves me puzzled and amazed. After waking from the dream, I immediately wrote it down.

Here are some of the messages that I saw:

The fishing license had to be paid for in money. Money is the symbol of that which is the most difficult for the average person to give up. The same can be said for bad habits and sins. The fishing license for some could represent a temple recommend. Some may be unwilling to pay the price for this.

Other symbolism might suggest failure to complete the task of repentance for fear of confession to the bishop. Some may not be observing the Word of Wisdom. Others may not be taking affirmative action with respect to temple covenants.

The fact that the license could still be obtained after the fish was caught indicates that repentance is still available.

The bishop has a fearful task from which I try hard not to shrink. I am charged with the responsibility of prying into individual lives in a most personal way but strive to do this with love and kindness. I ask anyone present who needs assistance, particularly with regard to confession necessary to assure themselves of eternal life, to not hesitate to seek me out. Referring back to the dream, symbolism that I saw in scene one follows.

1. We have a father and mother in heaven
2. The emaciated young man was indeed the Savior, but in addition represented our brothers and sisters out in the world who are seeking our help, particularly in missionary effort by our older couples.
3. Our ward members may be afraid to volunteer for missionary service. Easy, pleasant retirement in "Happy Valley" is hard to leave behind.
4. The sickness we thought we might contract by approaching too closely to the emaciated young man may be real. We may, indeed, be called upon to risk disease in foreign lands but have we not been called upon to give our very lives if necessary?

Some of the things that might have been symbolized in scene two are:

1. The fishing pole lying on the bank unattended represents indifference.
2. Getting the line tangled while bringing the fish in represents that we need cooperation and training. We need to be more diligent in the scriptures. The fish presented no resistance. The task is not too difficult.
3. The fish could represent mankind, as Richard stated, but has a dual meaning that it could also represent the three degrees of glory. Two thirds of the fish was easily caught, although we were rather clumsy in catching it. We in the Pleasant View First Ward have merited the Telestial and Terrestrial Worlds but have not made it to the Celestial as yet. That part of the fish is still out there waiting for us to catch it.
4. The one third of the fish still at sea, having no mouth, would be very difficult to catch but we were informed in the dream that it could be done. This would require some increase in faith on our part, as it is not clear how this could be from our normal experience.

Some of the things that I interpret from scene three follows:

1. Even though we have caught most of the fish, we can still get a fishing license. This means there is still time for repentance.
2. The fact that the license must be purchased means that we must overcome our fear of total acceptance, without reservation, of Jesus Christ.

Well, so much for Bishop Hall's dream.

This dream gave me the determination to "lengthen my stride" with respect to missionary work. We already had momentum in this direction from the good work of previous bishops and youth leaders. We also had the potential in numbers because our "baby boom" was now peaking in 19-year-old young men. Our current youth leaders were also extra special in dedication to the cause.

As a result, a total of 64 missionaries were called while I was bishop. At the peak of activity, 34 missionaries (just a little less than 10% of our ward membership) were in the mission field at the same time. Ninety percent of age eligible young men served missions.

The percentage of young women serving on missions was not high but was commendable.

My only disappointment was in the unwillingness of couples whose children were raised and by older single women. I felt that about 39 older persons had the health and means to go but only 17 accepted the challenge.

Regardless, the paramount characteristic and success of the Pleasant View First Ward during my service was missionary effort. Not the least of this was the generous financial support of parents, friends, and missionaries themselves. The combined amount of money spent on our missionary effort from July 4, 1976 through July 19, 1981 was about \$500,000.00

President Olsen once asked me to give a talk on the subject on “How we get so many people to go on missions.” The occasion was a stake leadership meeting held on September 18, 1979. I told them that this was the best-kept secret in the Sharon East Stake but I was willing to let them in on it. There was a singular characteristic common to every member of the Pleasant View First Ward bishopric, including the executive secretary and all the ward clerks. Not one of them had served on a mission! I’m sure that I had more to say than this but I usually just talk from notes so there is no record of my additional remarks.

This was a coincidence probably caused by all of these men having served in the military in World War II.

There were some interesting side affects resulting from our intense missionary activity. Consider Sacrament Meeting. If you subtract ward, stake, and general conferences, fast Sundays, high councilman speaker Sundays, plus special Sundays for Easter, Mother’s Day, Christmas, etc., there are 19 out of 52 Sundays per year available for ward members and incoming and outgoing missionaries to speak. This was not nearly enough. We used all of the high councilman Sundays and often had to have two or three missionaries share farewells and homecomings. Many high councilmen understood our problem and did not speak at all or limited themselves to a mere five minutes.

One new high councilman who had a very fine speech prepared but did not get to speak at all was very incensed, and in his report to the stake president said that the entire bishopric of our ward should be released immediately!

Our sacrament meeting attendance was phenomenal due to family and friends attendance. Sometimes extra folding chairs would have to be placed almost back to the stage in the cultural hall, giving us a 140% attendance figure!

The stake had a performance award based on ten leading indicators. It was called the “Attaboy Award.” The award was presented to the bishop. I won it month after month and year after year. Finally, the other ward bishops talked President Olsen into abolishing the award on the grounds that the leading indicators were not fair.

Many important events affecting the entire church took place during my calling as bishop.

1. Blacks were given the Priesthood.
2. A two-piece garment was introduced.
3. Women were given the opportunity to offer prayers in Sacrament Meeting.

4. A young women's meeting to be held concurrently with the long established Priesthood meeting held for young men was inaugurated.
5. The consolidated Sunday meeting schedule was adopted.
6. Bishops were instructed to spend as much time with the young women as with the young men.
7. The bishop and his councilors, on a rotational basis, were to attend the opening exercises of the Relief Society and young women's organizations.
8. A most important question was added to the list of questions asked of an applicant for a temple recommend. The new question asks, "Is there anything amiss in your life that has not been fully resolved with appropriate authorities that should be cleared up at this time?" Through this question our kindly prophet, Spencer W. Kimball, gave us an opportunity to relieve ourselves of any nagging doubt and burden of guilt connected with past, unconfessed sins.

Many in their youthful years had experienced infractions of the Law of Chastity that for fear or some other reason were not confessed to the bishop. Lifetimes of faithful service often followed and repentance was complete with exception of confession. I hasten to add that such infractions seldom involved complete intimacy.

Word concerning the new question spread. Friends and neighbors discussed it. Mustering their courage, many arranged appointments to see me. At the appointed time, a person would often begin by saying, "Bishop, I have known you so long and loved and respected you so much and know that you love and respect me. I can hardly bear to tell you what I must. I fear that you will have no respect for me whatever when I finish."

As kindly and sympathetically as possible, I would hear their confession. Often there were tears for both of us. But the Spirit of God burned in the bosom of the penitent and bishop alike as assurance was given that God had forgiven all.

I particularly enjoyed working with the youth. Most of my church callings during my life have been related to the youth. I have been surprised at this because my natural personality is reserved and somewhat introverted. I am a thinker and do little in sports and "rough and tumble" activities. But I do truly love and care for them and enjoy being with them. I've been able to attend many of the sports activities of both the young women and the young men.

My Young Men's president was Dr. Alfred Ridge and the Young Women's president was Patricia Higbee. Ever faithful, untiring, and devoted are just a few of the qualities that Alf and Pat possessed. I will always have a place in my heart for their support of our youth program. We hiked into the Uintahs several times with the young men. Alf hiked in several times despite bad knees that later had to be operated on.

I remember well our last hike into the Uintahs. Our goal was Betsy Lake and was for Mutual age boys and girls, leaders, and spouses of the leaders. On driving to the place where cars and trucks were to be parked for the hike into the mountains, several cars and trucks had taken the wrong turn. Only two or three vehicles arrived at the right place. We waited and waited.

Meanwhile, it had turned cold and started to snow. It was also getting dark. Some wanted to go back and find a place to camp at a lower elevation and some wanted to cancel out completely and go home. The ultimate decision was up to me. The worry of hiking in was that we might be snowed in and none of us were prepared for winter weather.

Turning back would be a disappointment and a waste of all the preparatory effort. I can tell you that I was praying mightily. We needed two things. The lost cars needed to find us soon and it needed to stop snowing. I received an assurance from the Lord that all would be well and that we should go in.

I selected about six older, stronger boys to hike in, build fires, and set up tents. Slower hikers would follow them and I would follow later when the lost cars showed up. The lost cars showed up just as the advance party of fast boys started out. The snowfall began to fade away and the stragglers made it to camp just before the night closed in.

The next morning, the sun shone beautifully, the air temperature rose, and for the four days of our camp, we had a very enjoyable time. Our lovely mountains are wonderful places to hike and camp and have a good time, and we often took advantage of this situation.

Early on, I could see that we needed a truck to carry all the food, camping gear, tents, etc. required for going into the mountains. So I bought a new, blue Chevrolet truck and had a high rack built for it. The rack even extended out over the top of the cab. I had a wide horizontal swinging gate as wide as the truck body at the back of the truck. This enabled me to carry a great deal of camping equipment.

Misfortune struck me on our Betsy Lake trip. We were packing up, getting ready to go home. The steel rear gate to the truck had swung open a few feet while I was on the ground below picking up camping gear. As I picked up the gear I stood up abruptly and drove my head just above my left eye into the bottom of the steel gate with such force that I almost passed out.

The following day was Saturday. The evening was quite pleasant, and I proposed that Ida-Rose and I take a brief walk. As we walked, I began to see flashes of light, at the outer edge of my left eye synchronous with every step that I took.

The next day being Sunday, I sought out Dr. Merrell Oaks at church to see if something had happened to my eye. He said that I had the symptoms of a torn retina. That evening, Dr. Oaks anesthetized the region on my left eye and by cryogenic means fastened my torn retina to the back of my eyeball.

Following this, I had to endure eight days of lying on my back with a bandaged eye, sand-bagged so that I couldn't move. After this ordeal had passed, I could see clearly, felt fine, and was up walking around.

I went outside and found Ida-Rose trying to cut off a large branch off a pyracantha bush located in the front center of our house in those days. Not thinking at all that anything would be wrong with my cutting off a branch, I took the pruners and with some strain cut off the limb.

Then I drove to the post office to mail a letter. On the way back home, my eye began to hemorrhage internally and I could not see out of it at all. This was the beginning of my eyesight problems.

I've had three operations on my left eye and two on my right eye in which a retinal attachment occurred several years after the left eye detachment. As of this writing, I am scheduled for more operations in both eyes. Eyesight is so precious!

Watching young women's sports was interesting. As you know, the church has not emphasized women's sports in the past. The first year I watched girls' baseball or basketball, it was a real hoot. Coordination and timing were bad and they didn't know the rules of the games. But their leaders gave helpful encouragement and the girls improved markedly the

second year. It was wonderful to see their increased confidence and ability. Our youth leaders loved their kids and they knew it.

We had memorable fun at many events, such as swimming in the Great Salt Lake, visiting Martin Harris' grave, staying at the old MIA lodge, going on hay rides, etc. But more importantly, the rapport, teaching, and example found its way into the hearts of our youth. I am so grateful to all the adult leaders who served the youth while I was bishop. The concept of a Ward Activities Committee came in to being while I was bishop. I will always remember Joyce Ridge and her stewardship of that committee.

During the sesquicentennial (150th) year of the organization of the Church, she blessed us with treat after treat each month of the year. She was unstinting in the use of her talents and giving of her time. We are all grateful to her for these memorable occasions.

Joyce Ridge also designed and supervised the building of a beautiful riverboat float for one of the July 4th celebrations. I had a fairly long trailer, which I made even longer and which served as the base. I remember Joyce and Pat Higbee spending many hours on this project.

At this time, the wards and stakes were heavily involved in the production of the July 4th celebrations held in Provo City.

My councilors and I made a point of visiting each ward family member at least once per year. This was a rewarding experience. We also immediately visited new move-ins. Then, of course, we visited widows, the sick, and people with special problems more frequently. Ida-Rose L. Hall, my beloved, supportive wife, furnished orchids from her greenhouse to the sick, widows, birthday, etc. She has loved doing this.

In the matter of family preparedness, I checked the family food storage of 25 families one year. Every family's preparedness was excellent.

A number of loved ones residing in the ward passed away during my period of service. I did not conduct all the funerals because in some instances the deceased was a parent living in their daughter's home, etc. There are 13 deaths that I can recall.

I have so enjoyed visiting our aged brothers and sisters at frequent intervals. Most of them are widowed sisters because statistically women outlive men by an average of nine years. How well these sisters have gotten along and how cheery and bright they have been. They are shining lights to us. Oh, how I have loved them—Lucie James and Cora Caseman (Kathleen Lundquist's mother).

She had a terminal illness and had some difficulty with verbal conversation near the end. So we just held hands. I would give hers a little squeeze and could feel it travel right to her heart. She would then squeeze mine and send a reciprocal message of love. With her, all was right. She was ready to meet her Maker at His call. She knew Him, she loved Him, and she had kept His commandments.

The circumstances of my calling to be bishop happened thusly: I received a call from President Ernest Olsen to bring my wife and come to his office. He gave no reasons why. So we wondered why. I thought that we were going to get a mission call, but Ida-Rose pointed out that Bishop Baird had been in office five years and maybe they were going to install a new bishopric. I didn't think so because I was 57 years old and the stake was calling bishops in the 30 to 45 year age bracket.

Well, Ida-Rose's guess was right. I was called and was the oldest bishop in the stake. After calling me, he asked me to take a few minutes to select my councilors. I chose William Woolf as first councilor and H. Reese Hansen as second councilor.

My calling as bishop came at a very opportune time in my life—a time when I had reached financial security and did not have to work full time for a living. I was able to make myself available to any ward member at any time (with few exceptions) for an interview, help with a problem, or any other matter. I could also spend as much time as was needed on any matter. I loved being bishop. I worked hard at it and hope that the service rendered was acceptable to the Lord and to the membership.

I love and appreciate all who served with me. May God bless you all.

I would like to mention some of the old-timers who still live among us, the pioneers so to speak, from whom I have gained strength and a measure of wisdom: Tony and Leah Gleason, Clarence and Ana Ashton, Harold and Ruth Colvin, Preal Jones, and Frank and Norma Ashton. They constitute our “living beginnings” for the Pleasant View First Ward. May God bless them.

There are many, many people whom I have not mentioned above who have been important to the ward and our mutual stewardship. Please forgive me.

I have been writing this in periods of “spare time” since entering the Missionary Training Center” with my wife, Ida-Rose, on November 11, 1981. Spare time at the MTC really doesn’t exist. We arise at 5:15 a.m. and go to bed at 10:30 p.m. and it’s go, go, go all the time in between.

Time has run out on me. This is the first and only draft. I usually go through five drafts in my writing before I’m satisfied. So, this ward history of my bishopric is just a sampling of what transpired.

Remember that a considerable history of the ward is available from the Pleasant View First Ward News and Views (the ward newspaper), which is located in the ward library. This covers not only the period of my service but the service of many other bishops. In addition, callings, releases, and statistical information are available from the ward clerks’ records.

In closing, I wish to bear my testimony:

I know that God lives; I know the gospel is true, and I know that Jesus Christ is our Savior. We have been blessed with living prophets in the dispensation from Joseph Smith on through Spencer W. Kimball. I revere and love these men of God.

I have loved you dearly ward members, and have felt your love for me. It has been precious. Ida-Rose is a great soul. How I love her! She has been a pillar of solid gold to me while I served. We look forward to our call to the South Africa Johannesburg Mission as a thrilling, adventurous new chapter in our lives.

I wish to comment on your new bishop. H. Reese Hansen was called of God as bishop of the Pleasant View First Ward. I know that! He has many admirable qualities and great leadership skills. He is a very spiritual man. He is the man for this hour. Follow him as you would the Savior and blessings will flow to the Pleasant View First Ward such as never have been seen before.

On occasion, the Lord gives us personal insights to bless our souls and confirm our testimonies. Such occasions of spiritual enlightenment are difficult to commit to writing but I would like to try to tell you of a recent one for me.

On the afternoon of Thursday, October 29, 1981 a snowstorm arrived in Provo at about 4:30 p.m. It was gentle but heavy. This was the appointed hour to leave Provo for the Hotel Utah’s “Top of the Roof” dining room with some businessmen from France. We considered staying in Provo for dinner but felt compelled to drive to Salt Lake despite the bad road conditions.

We arrived late but had an amiable, relaxed, and satisfying meal though it remained dreary and black outside. Then, at meals end, as if for dessert, the spires of the temple began to shine through the overcast as the storm subsided. Simultaneously, we all walked to the window for a closer look. Suddenly the spires were radiant with diaphanous glory. Silent snowflakes from above gently caressed them and scintillate arms of wafting snow approvingly embraced them.

Reverent as the silent flakes, we stood attuned to this lovely scene. I know not what the others may have heard, but clearly and to my heart came the still small voice, “Tracy, the Gospel is true!”

I pray that the reciprocate—Tracy is true to the gospel—may always be. God bless you, my fellow ward members. I love you so much.

HTH Nov. 28, 1981