

# Cuppa Joe | Women of the Restoration | Lizzy Blair

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Lizzie Blair, William Blair, Minnie Blair, Briggs and Gurly, Women of the Restoration, Reorganization, Amboy, IL, Sandwich, IL, Mission, IL, Lamoni, IA, Joseph Smith III

## SPEAKERS

Karin Peter, Wendy Eaton

### **Karin Peter** 00:27

Welcome to Project Zion Podcast. This is Cuppa Joe, where we explore Restoration history. And I'm your host, Karin Peter. Today's episode is part of our series about women in Community of Christ history, where we have been telling the stories of women and how they shaped and led and offered ministry and had a profound impact on the story of Community of Christ. Our guest who's been sharing these stories with us is Wendy Eaton, Wendy's a favorite here at Project Zion Podcast. And we're always happy to have her with us. Wendy has worked at multiple Restoration historic sites, and has also served as the administrative assistant to Historic Sites Foundation, and is now adding to her list of credentials working in the Community of Christ archives. So this is very exciting as things transform in how we preserve our story. And Wendy, we're happy you're here with us for a new story today. So howdy.

### **Wendy Eaton** 01:32

Hello.

### **Karin Peter** 01:34

So today we're going to be talking about someone who, as usual on Women of Restoration History. I am unfamiliar with, and this person's name is Lizzie Blair. And so I'm looking forward, Wendy, to you telling us who she was. And what is it about her story that interested you enough that we're having this conversation about her life. So, I'll turn it over to you.

### **Wendy Eaton** 02:04

So, a *Saints Herald* editorial opens with this statement, "A tribute to Sister Elizabeth Blair. At the conference, which met at Independence, Missouri, April 6 1910, known as the Jubilee year, there were nine persons on the conference platform who were at the conference at Amboy Illinois, April 1860. The two most conspicuous among these were Elder EC Briggs and Sister Elizabeth Blair, who was the widow of Elder William Wallace Blair. And, of these two personages, Sister Elizabeth Blair was the more well known." And the remainder of the front page of this issue of the *Herald* and into the next couple paragraphs is completely dedicated to Elizabeth who had recently passed. I have to admit, when we set up this episode, I only knew that Elizabeth Blair was the wife of WW Blair. And I only knew

one story. And it was a story I kept thinking was about another woman named Lizzie who lived in the vicinity at the time of the story. So, I had it completely mixed up, but figured it out. She was among the women who, I think it was Vida Smith termed missionary widows, those spouses, the women who stayed behind and took care of the homes and the farms while their husbands traveled for the early years of the Reorganization. And like, I really, I'm really happy when this happens, I was able to find her memoirs, mostly by her, but she dictated them to her daughter Minnie, so Minnie interjects a few times within the memoirs, but these are Elizabeth's own stories.

**Karin Peter** 03:59

So, Wendy, I want to interject here, if our listeners aren't familiar with the Women of Community of Christ History podcast that you've been doing. This is really important here this point, and it's very important to you, and you've made that such a part of these podcasts. And that is that we hear the story of women from as close to the source of the person as possible, so that we're not always hearing about women from the writing of men in our history. So, the fact that you have this resource is just wonderful. And I want to point that out, that you work really hard to make sure we get to hear from as close to the woman's own voice as we possibly can go.

**Wendy Eaton** 04:45

And what made me even happier in finding this memoir, many of the memoirs that I found, they're in the Heralds, they are in the Autumn Leaves, that youth magazine. This one was in the Journal of History. And so, it feels like another step up of her significance to have been included into this collection of journals where there, there are a number of women writers within it, especially women like Vida Smith, but not too many biographies of women within those journal sets. I was pretty happy about that, too.

**Karin Peter** 05:22

All right.

**Wendy Eaton** 05:24

So Elizabeth Johnson Dodie, was born the 13th of April of 1832 in Newark, New Jersey. When she was eight years old, her father died, leaving her mother alone with two young daughters. And just four years later, their mother died. And the sisters traveled from New Jersey to Chicago to be raised by an aunt, and another aunt lived close by. And so, the sisters would travel back and forth between Chicago and this tiny town where the other aunt lived. By the time Lizzie is 17, she's teaching in a town called Dixon, Illinois. And she's moving throughout a space of Illinois that would later become known as part of the "cradle of the Reorganization," these many towns scattered through southern Wisconsin, Northern Illinois into Iowa, where the Reorganization would soon be emerging. They weren't yet, and she wasn't a church member at this point in time. So, she's teaching, and, in the summer of 1849, so two years before the Reorganization really starts emerging. She meets a man named William Wallace Blair. He described her in his memoir, which I think is fun because her memoir, their daughter helped record. His memoir, one of their sons helped record. It took all of the family to take care of this. But so in the summer of 1849, they met, and, in his memoirs, he describes Lizzy as small, elegantly formed with warm brown hair and dark blue eyes. She's full of life and fond of city society. They fall in love, and are

married on Christmas Day, just a few months after meeting. And they move to his family's farm out in the middle of Central northern part of Illinois, not a lot of city society out there.

**Karin Peter** 07:34

I was going to say didn't he just say she liked the city?

**Wendy Eaton** 07:39

And she had a hard time adjusting to this life being on her own, not having people to just go out and hang out with. And if I think if it wasn't for her mother-in-law, who was a physician in the area, Lizzie, I don't think would have had a very good time adjusting, especially that first year or so of marriage. In fact, within the memoirs, she talks about how she would take sewing or piece work out and sit in the corner of the field while William was working, just so that she wasn't alone in the house. And, it's just a really rough transition for her. But it gets better. And one of the things that her daughter records when she interjects into these memoirs, she says mother found it all so different from her former life that it seemed just a ceaseless round of irritating concerns and duties all day long. And after supper, it was knitting of socks and mittens or sewing until time to go to sleep. So again, big life adjustment for the city girl to move out to rural USA. Their first child, Charles, was born in 1851, and soon after Lizzy and William began investigating a faction of the Latter Day Saints, a splintering that had happened after the Nauvoo time period. They come across William Smith, who was a brother of Joseph Smith Jr., and they are intrigued by what he has to say, and both are baptized on the ninth of October in 1851. But within a year, they both lose trust in William Smith and they leave his association. Their second child, a daughter named Fanny, joins the family in 1853. In the following year, they moved from one small town to another small town, but this small town East Paw Paw, Illinois, is not too far from Amboy, and Lizzie begins attending a Presbyterian Church. She sings in the choir. She's involved in the Sunday school organization. She enjoys the company of that congregation. In 1855, a second daughter was born and this is Minnie who helped record her mother's memoirs. William leaves farming behind at this point. He decides to try going into business and see if that would help out the family and make life a little better for them. In November of 1856, two men arrived to talk religion with William. They talk late into the night and in the following morning, as Lizzy is leaving for church with the children, the men come back to continue the conversation with William. And when she returns from church, they are still talking. So she's curious, she pulls a trunk over to the doorway, from the bedroom to the living room, and she sits hidden in the doorway and listens in on what the men are talking about. And, she discovers that they are really arguing quite a bit, especially about Scripture. And she's very proud and even laughing that William is able to best them and everything when it comes to Scripture. These two men are Edmund Briggs and Samuel Gurly. They are on their way to Nauvoo to talk to Joseph Smith, III. And, as they leave in the evening, Lizzy responds about how she had listened in on this conversation, and she was proud of him for keeping up his own in this discussion. And, he records later on that he thought they were really inexperienced and very young for ministers, but they were both impressed by them. And, not too long after, they go to investigate further, even traveling to Wisconsin in December of '56. To go visit more about this Reorganization that's starting to happen. And what I find really fascinating about this is how this pairs with what happens with Briggs and Gurlys, just a few weeks after this visit with the Blair's. In our first episode, I'm pretty sure it was the very first women in church history we recorded, we talked about Emeline Griswold Smith, Joseph Smith, III's new bride at this point. They had only been married a few months. And so, Briggs and Gurly are on their way to Nauvoo for that very first visit that

I'm pretty sure we talked about in that episode, and how it pairs between the two of them. So when Briggs and Gurly arrive in Nauvoo they end up in a shouting match with Joseph. One of them, I can't remember whether it was Briggs or Gurly, was in tears while the others argue with Joseph. And so you have this experience with Lizzy laughing over the energetic debate, and Emmeline having to calm down her husband who's in a raging temper. You have Lizzie and William, who are really interested right away and join pretty quickly, and Emmeline and Joseph who are very hesitant about joining with this affiliation. And then to jump further, both Joseph and William would be prominent leaders within the Reorganization. There's a lot of stories known about them. There're not so many stories known about Lizzie and Emmeline, but they both live very similar lives with their husbands gone often and having to raise their families and care for homes without that additional support of a spouse. So, it's an interesting comparison in this just a few couple of weeks, those experiences with Briggs and Gurly visiting these two tiny towns in Illinois. So, like I said, William and Lizzie are pretty interested. He gets baptized pretty quick in April of 1857. And the next day was ordained to high priest and sent out on missions, which is pretty common what they did back then. And so, Lizzie is now adjusting to, "okay, my husband is going to be gone all the time. I can't run this business." So, he sells the business that he was running, and they were turned to farming. But with him traveling as a minister, she's the one taking care of the farm as well as raising their children. So, the next story is really great because Minnie records and she's very specific in the memoirs that she records her mother's own words. So, I pulled out a huge portion of this quote to share with you. So Minnie records her mother's words. "One of the incidents that marked itself indelibly upon my mind was this. We had been hoping and praying that brother Joseph would speedily come and take up the work that his father had set him apart to do. Many had visited him, but he had given no decided answer further than to say he would not come until he felt the call of the Lord upon him. In a prayer meeting in 1860, I arose and told those present not to be discouraged. But to be a good cheer for brother Joseph would come and fill his place at the April conference, as I had seen him coming in a vision. I had no sooner taken my seat than doubt assailed me, and I would have given much to have recalled my words, why had I not waited to see if it would come to pass? It seemed a long wait from February to April. And what made me fairly tremble was the fact that my words were repeated and repeated and ended with the assurance that sister Lizzie saw him coming."

**Karin Peter** 15:53

No pressure, no pressure.

**Wendy Eaton** 15:56

The account continues, "well, the appointed day arrived, but no brother Joseph, my anxiety was almost unbearable. The forenoon was spent in preaching. During the business meeting, there was a stir outside the door. A whisper went around that brother Joseph and his mother had come, I shut my eyes while they and several others came in and were seated. Then I looked up to see if the newcomer corresponded with the man of my vision. There he sat, just as I saw him." Her husband was one of the four men who laid their hands on Joseph's head to set him apart as president of the church. And two days later, Lizzie and William hosted Joseph and his mother Emma in their home along with others, to just spend some time socializing. And she remarks that Emma spent much of the evening sharing many stories from the early days of the church. And I think that must have been quite an experience for all of them gathered there. This incredible joy was followed by great sorrow. As I mentioned, William's traveling quite a bit and his now appointed mission takes him to the East Coast. At home, Lizzie was

left to the task of tending to their eight-year-old Fanny, who had contracted typhoid, and even though she tried to reach William by mail, she wasn't successful. And so she was alone when the daughter died. She's buried on Christmas Day 1860. Minnie, the other daughter, recalled that she was alone in the family home when her father returned at the end of March of 1861. So, several months later, she sat in his lap and felt the tears as he grieved the loss of Fanny and the fact that he had been away during this time period. He became incredibly sick, and Lizzy was afraid it was going to turn into tuberculosis. Thankfully, it didn't, but the illness left him incredibly weak, and they decided to move to Iowa to see if that little bit of a climate adjustment would help him out. He's still weak. And so, Lizzie is the one taking up a lot of the heavy burden of moving the family West. He's driving the cart, but she's driving the [...]. She's the one gathering wild food and herbs, and she's the one cooking over the campfires every night. They reach Gallands Grove, Iowa and settled among church members there for a time. While they're away at a conference, their home is robbed, and this experience leaves them deciding, "let's go ahead and move north." And so they moved to Little Sioux, Iowa. They were offered property by church members who live there. But they came to realize just how poor these church members were. And they didn't want to accept this property when they owned a farm still in Illinois, so they didn't accept the offer. They went ahead and purchased their own property. Now, to the east, we have the Civil War raging at this point. It's 1862. It's just, it's a mess on the East Coast, especially. But in the Midwest, there is a Sioux war going on, one of the native people with some of the American residents there. And there's growing fear from this battle that's happening up in Minnesota, and a number of people living in the northern part of Iowa are starting to leave especially those who have children. And Lizzie recalls one moment when she's close to the birth of their fifth child, she's home alone because William has gone off preaching again. And a Sioux man appears in the doorway of the cabin and asked for food. Lizzie fed him and he left peacefully, so it ended up being a good encounter, even though it's still scared her to be in such a situation. So, as I mentioned, she's expecting again, and baby Williams soon arrives. William, the father, has, his strength has recovered enough that he's really getting called to go back out on extended preaching missions. In 1864, they decide to return to Illinois and they settle in the town of Sandwich, which is just five miles west of Plano. It's another tiny little town, but it's still in this vicinity to this Cradle of the Reorganization. In the fall of 1865, Lizzy calls William home from a mission, the first and only time she ever did that. She's expecting again and they have just about run out of money. She's not able to manage the farm and the children and winter's approaching. So, William returns he takes up a winter teaching job to earn some money, and another son named David joins the family. But the church is pulling at William. They really need his ministry and his skill that he has with Scripture, and debating other ministers at the time. Lizzy's still weak from the birth of David and even with the money from the teaching job, the family really didn't have much. William heads out again. And, one night as Lizzie's putting the children to bed, she realizes she had enough food to feed them, but she didn't have enough for herself. And as she goes to bed and tries to pray, all she could think about was potatoes. When she got up in the morning, she saw no reason to get the children out of bed because there was no food to give them. A knock came at the door, and it's Israel Rogers, a church member who's in the area. As he had left his home that morning. His wife called him back in. And Mahalo Rogers handed him a basket of food, and told him I know Sister Blair needs this. And so, food arrived when she had nothing to give her children. The Blairs sold their farm near Amboy, and began to build a home in Sandwich, and this became the meeting place for church members even as it wasn't finished, and even as William leaves again, this time for a very extensive mission west to California. Lizzy had just a little bit of money again, it runs out very quickly, but this time

she refuses to call her husband home from mission. She doesn't even tell him that she's pregnant. She doesn't update him how the farms doing. It's just very simple, lighthearted news that she sends him. As the family is starting to get settled down for the winter. Church members come in and help finish the home so it's ready for the cold weather that's coming. But all the children have whooping cough, and Lizzie is late into her last pregnancy. And church members Eliza Cox and Emmeline Banta stepping in to help Lizzy with the birth and with the children, Clara Hartshorn who would soon marry David Hiram Smith, she comes to help Minnie, who's now 13, with laundry and cooking. And, as I said, Lizzie kept all of this from William. And after baby Frederick was born in 1868. It's Marietta Walker, who writes to William to tell him everything that's going on. And there's another child. That's kind of the way Marietta.

**Karin Peter 23:55**

We've heard about Marietta several times on the Project, Zion Podcast Cuppa Joe series. So yes, I can envision that happening.

**Wendy Eaton 24:04**

So, William finally arrives back home in March of 1870. Just about two years. This new baby that Marietta informed him of, was old enough to run down the lane with the other children to greet him. So, he had been gone quite a while out to California. And, this is something that I love about these very few stories we have of the women that live in the Plano vicinity at this time period. They are nearly all married to men who are traveling extensively for the church, and they look out for each other. They all had times where they were unable to feed their children, or that their families were sick and they needed help, and some other woman always showed up to help out as much as they could. Many of these women that I've mentioned would become the founding members of The Gleaners, which later became known as the Might Society, which is one of the early church organizations for women. And so we've jumped ahead enough in the timeline that Lizzie and William's children are just about ready to start launching out to the world. Nineteen year old Charlie, the oldest, would go to Michigan to work with church member George Blakeslee, and 13 year old George, moved in with the Rogers family who were still in the same town, but he moves in with a different family to help out with their home. And William heads out again on mission, this time traveling with Alexander Hale Smith, to Utah. Lizzie, even though everything's going on with the home and the farm and raising the kids, she encourages her children to get as much schooling as they possibly can, even if it meant she had less help at home. And Minnie records in the memoirs that, on days that there wasn't any school, Lizzie would hurry through her morning chores and then would make a circuit through the community to check on the other women before getting home in the evening and rushing through to catch up on the chores that Minnie wasn't able to do during the day. In 1873, when Minnie's 18, she earns her teaching certificate and moves to Mission, Illinois, which is another tiny little town in the middle of Illinois, and she stays with the Haier family. This is another church family. But without Minnie's help, her mother is overworking herself and she comes down with typhoid. Thankfully she's not sick long and she recovers, but recovery from typhoid can be incredibly lengthy. So, Minnie comes home to check all things to make every make sure her mother is resting and taking care of herself and she decides to take her two older little brothers, George and William back to Mission with her to stay with the Haier family. So that that would just leave Lizzie home with eight year old Fred. And it's drawing close to conference time and a group of church members from the Plano vicinity, got together and reserved a train coach to travel to conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa together. So, I may be wrong, but I think this might be our first caravan of church

members traveling from one location to another. And some people might not think conference and a road trip are the best ways to recover from a serious illness, but Lizzie was surrounded by society and her friends and they greatly enjoyed the visiting and of course the singing that happened along the trip. And when she got to Council Bluffs, she got to see her husband again. So that was probably pretty nice. In 1876, Lizzy's able to join William on one of his travels, she goes to Pennsylvania with him, and they attend the Centennial Exposition. This is kind of like a World's Fair in Philadelphia. While he had been traveling in the east, he discovered that she had inherited money from land sale by her father's family. It would take some time for the money to arrive, but when it did, they were able to invest in 80 acres of land in Lamoni, Iowa. The home in Sandwich, Illinois is finally completed in 1877, just in time for Minnie to be married in the front parlor. On one of his trips west, William had been given the length of rose-colored satin and a length of black silk. The rose was turned into a wedding dress for Minnie, while the black was made into a dress for Lizzie. And, Minnie remarked it was one of the best gifts from her father to be able to wear something so elegant for her wedding. On another trip to California, a man had given Williams some small golden nuggets which he had made into a ring for Lizzie. After nearly 30 years of marriage, her original wedding ring was starting to wear a little thin. William's now called to serve in Utah and the Pacific slope for an extended period. The youngest three Blairs really need some fatherly attention so they decide that Lizzie, William, David, and little Fred would move to Salt Lake City with William. So, William's still traveling but at least they're closer to one another than if he had gone off to the west and they had stayed in Illinois. And sadly, Minnie does remark that her mother had tears in her eyes as she packs up the home in Sandwich, because, as I said, it had just been completed, and here she was packing up to head to Utah. So, the family settles into life in Utah. Lizzy goes straight to work at the Salt Lake City branch. She visits the sick, she teaches Sunday School, sings and leads the choir, and she opens her home to those who want to hear about the Reorganization. So, she kind of becomes a missionary in her own right, there in Salt Lake. They have been in Utah for about two years when the second to youngest child, David, took a teaching job to help pay his college tuition. He met a young man who talked him into moving to California to get involved in the Gold Rush that's happening out there. He knows his mother doesn't want this for him. And so, he decides to pack up quietly in the middle of the night with the idea of sneaking out at first light before she even gets out of bed. Lizzie must have known though because she intercepts him before he gets out of the house and talks him out of such a risky venture. The family remains in Utah so that 1884, which is when they finally move to Lamoni, Iowa, and invest in that farm that they had purchased with her inheritance. Lizzie's well known and loved in Lamoni. Her garden was filled with flowers. Her home was tidy, and it was always open to anybody who wanted to visit. With the railroads so accessible in Lamoni, she's able to travel to see her children and now grandchildren. Minnie remarked that on one of the trips, two of her brothers took their mother to a street fair, where she excitedly experienced every thing she could, except for riding a camel. Her brothers didn't like the idea of their mother getting up on such a large animal, and so they refuse to let her experience riding the camel, and I wonder how much she must have fought them on that. So, William's still traveling, but Lizzie as I mentioned with that trip to Philadelphia, she's able to join him on more occasions. And there's this great 1895 letter that Lizzie wrote to Minnie, that talks about a trip to California that Lizzie made with William. Lizzy says, "this is indeed our honeymoon trip alone with Father, the man I have loved so long, is still the noble culture gentleman that he was in his youth. And he gives me every consideration that he did when we were sweethearts. He helps me on with my rubbers. He holds my coat for me. He carries all the baggage, and assists me on and off the cars." Another letter that same summer, they're in Pleasant Grove, Utah now, and they're visiting their son

David and his wife Margaret. And Lizzie writes, "yesterday was an eventful day. A mountain towers above Pleasant Grove, on the top of which is a lake that they tell me extends to the depth at least 1/3 down the mountain. Margaret and I were anxious to climb this mountain. We climbed about five miles up, then felt that we must turn our back on the trail. It was worth the effort for the wonderful site that was spread out before us. Away to the southwest stretched Utah Lake, Pleasant Grove nestled at the foot of the mountain. But at night when father preached there were two very sleepy girls in the front row." In 1896, William is about to head to Kirtland for the spring conference. He felt that he was going to be called on an international mission. So, before he leaves Lamoni, he makes arrangements for their son Fred to have power of attorney over the estate. He's unwell during the conference, and only becomes worse as the days continue on. On the train back to Lamoni. He died in his sleep. Minnie wrote that her mother never gave into her sorrow, but she felt alone in Lamoni. To help ease her loneliness, she invited single women to come live with her. Her work with the young women of Lamoni kept Lizzy energized in her later years, and the young adults adored her, and often invited Lizzy to join them for the young adult prayer meetings on Wednesday, which they got to have their own. And I wonder, Minnie remarks that her mother, with their father traveling so much, it was Lizzie who taught her and her brothers how to pray. So, I wonder if the young adults in Lamoni were getting that education in prayer from Lizzie as well. Lizzy died quietly in her sleep on the eighth of June 1912 at the age of 80. She had been in Kansas City but was brought back to Lamoni to be buried next to her husband at Roselawn Cemetery. Lamoni closed all businesses the day of the funeral, and the Lamoni Might Society, that women's organization, covered her grave in red roses. Her six official pallbearers were members of the Lamoni Stake High Council, and the young ladies of Lizzie's Sunday School acted as honorary pallbearers. Her students wrote of Lizzie, "we extol her virtues as a wife, mother, teacher and friend. And recall her meeting of hardships as the wife of a pioneer missionary in the Reorganization, as a zealous volunteer in church and Sunday school activities, and a conscientious child of faith in all her many varied experiences as encouraging examples to us of what a Spirit touched with the holy fire is. The effects of such a life go on and on until eternity alone reveals its magnitude." So, a greatly respected woman in her own right.

**Karin Peter** 36:26

What a lovely testament to her life.

**Wendy Eaton** 36:31

So, I have one last story to share about Lizzie. [Okay] And this is the one that made me laugh when I read it. So, it's later in her life, and Lizzie and her daughter-in-law, Margaret are invited to attend a reunion at Pertle Springs in Warrensburg, Missouri. So, Karin might remember I mostly grew up in Warrensburg.

**Karin Peter** 36:55

Warrensburg, Missouri, you did.

**Wendy Eaton** 36:57

And my parents home was just a few miles from Pertle Springs. I had no idea they had reunions in our church at Pertle Springs. I knew there was a lot of church members out there. But I never realized those forest and trails that we used to go walk, held reunions that Lizzie Blair and others were at. But

there was this great story she records at this. The young adults, who I've already mentioned, they really liked Lizzie. They plan on having a watermelon feast one night, late one night, and being good church kids, they asked Lizzie to come chaperone them, so that everything's on the up and up and they won't get in trouble for this. The following morning, Lizzie was attending to her morning getting ready for the day activities. And she overheard a number of the other older sisters complaining over the boisterous noise and carrying on that had happened the night before at this watermelon party. Lizzy stopped the gossip saying, "You are mistaken about this matter. The young folks who were at the worship service and a number of them sing in the choir. Then, with the permission of the stake president, they had this little watermelon feast. I was invited and was present. They may have laughed and been a little noisy, but they were a splendid lot of young adults. I fear that I laughed as much as any of them and enjoyed it too."

**Karin Peter 37:00**

Well, no wonder the young adults appreciated her so much. So, when you, when you were putting this together to talk about Lizzie Blair, which I'm just fascinated from the very beginning that as a young couple they had they were visited by these two members of the forming Reorganization. And a few weeks later, those same people are in Joseph Smith and Emmeline Smith's living room. I mean, a heated debate. That whole time period is just it sounds like an episode to a wonderful historical Netflix series or something that just had a great storyline to it. But when you were going through the story, what it what is your like, very favorite bit about Lizzie.

**Wendy Eaton 38:32**

She was just so determined, and so willing to do the hard work. And, it's so hard to just keep doing the hard work that needs to be done when your life is in turmoil, and all the different things that she was going through. And it was her persistence and her optimism and this love of life that just kept popping out in this memoir. She seemed like, no matter what was thrown at her, she just kept going with it as much as she could. There were times that it got really rough, and she wanted to call in help, like one time, she called William back from a mission, but for the most part, she just did the hard work as much as she could. And, again, I as I had mentioned, the all those little stories of the women in Plano and Sandwich and Amboy, who were just stepping right in to take care of one another while their husbands were gone. And they're left alone with farms and children and all the illnesses and everything going on in life, how they just took care of each other,

**Karin Peter 40:42**

Some of the early blessings of community in the Reorganization, [yeah], to the women's relationships. So do you see anything in our current expression of Community of Christ that you could attribute to maybe being a little bit of Lizzie's legacy in the church?

**Wendy Eaton 41:01**

As you mentioned, that Blessings of Community and that story at that reunion at Pertle Springs, something was going on, that she didn't like these women were upset that there was a lot of rowdy noise and a party going on by the young adults. And she just stepped right in. And she said, No, it was fine. And she defended and supported those young adults, which is critical to defend and support one

another, especially when we know that the right thing is being done. Even if it makes some people uncomfortable or unhappy at times.

**Karin Peter** 41:45

A good lesson for us to continue to carry on as we tried to be a people that really lives out Worth of All Persons, and All Are Called. Yeah. I love that about her too. So Wendy, do you have any insight on maybe what our next story might be in Women of Community of Christ history?

**Wendy Eaton** 42:07

I know the last time we recorded we talked about me pursuing Verda Bryan. She had to get put on the backburner with everything, all the chaos in my life over the last few months with sales of the historic sites and my moving and adjusting to a new job. Every time that I would pick up Verda's story, I just could not continue it. But when we got together and okay, we really need to record something. Yeah. Well, I came across I had just found a day or two before this memoir of Lizzie Blair. And I'm like, I think I could do this because it was someone I had no idea about someone I had no connection to. [Yeah.] So I got through the research on that and was able to pick up Verda's story again. So hopefully, pretty soon we'll be able to go back and explore her a few would be a very different type of person than we have experienced before because [OK] I'll leave it at that. She would be a very different type of woman than we have covered in the in our past connections and stories.

**Karin Peter** 43:17

Well, we'll look forward to that story coming in the future in our Women of Community of Christ History series that we've got here at Cuppa Joe, and I want to thank you as always, for bringing your research, your insight, and your commitment to telling women's stories from as close to their words and their perspective as we can get. So, if you have questions for Wendy or perhaps suggestions of women from Community of Christ history, you can reach her at [weaton@cofchrist.org](mailto:weaton@cofchrist.org). This is Cuppa Joe, part of Project Zion Podcast. I'm Karin Peter. Thanks for listening.