

Cuppa Joe | Women of the Restoration | A Prophetic People

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Wendy Eaton, Karin Peter

Karin Peter 00:29

Welcome to Project Zion Podcast. This is Cuppa Joe, where we explore Restoration history, and I'm your host for that, Karin Peter. So, today's episode is part of our series about women in Community of Christ history, and we've been telling the stories of women and how they shaped and led and offered ministry and had profound impact in the history of Community of Christ. And our guest to share these stories with us is Wendy Eaton. Wendy is one of my very favorite people to come and visit us at Project Zion Podcast, and we're always happy to have her here as our guest. She's worked at multiple Restoration historic sites and also serves in the archives now at Community of Christ headquarters, so all kinds of new things to learn and see in that capacity. And we are the beneficiaries, I guess, of all of that, that you are able to put together Wendy, and we really appreciate it. So, in Community of Christ, we use language where we talk about being a prophetic people as a community, and we value community discernment and listening together to the Divine Will for the whole church around the globe. And that got Wendy to thinking, Are there strains of being a prophetic people that we can find in our story that come from women's voices in our history. So apparently, the answer is yes, we can, because starting today, we're going to be talking about several women from church history who were part of what we are now becoming, which is a prophetic people, which is quite relevant as we sit here in 2025 approaching a World Conference with our first female president- prophet to be sustained and ordained. So pretty exciting. So Wendy, who are we going to talk about today?

Wendy Eaton 02:38

Yes, oh, I have a collection of women. Typically, what we've done is I focused on one or maybe two or three women in a family, and I give very full biographies so that I could share as much as I can. I'm not doing full biographies, but I'm going to put things into context, because, as a historian, it's really important to go with context at the time. And so, what does it mean to be prophetic? On our church website, being prophetic means that we are called to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying, and then we are to faithfully respond. So, it's listening and call to action. And of course, I went to the dictionary to get a little bit broader definition as well, thinking initially this is going to be really hard to find instances, so I needed a nice, big definition besides what the church goes with. And so, in the couple dictionaries that I looked in, I found, 'one who utters divinely inspired revelations,' another that said, 'a person who has spiritual and moral insight and one who shares words that inspire and guide,' and one dictionary

referenced Saint Paul, who I don't always agree with, but references Saint Paul, and he defined prophecy as, 'words that provided edification exhortation,' which are big words, but crucially, 'comfort.' And that really got me thinking. And the idea of words that provide education and understanding, but especially comfort reminded me of many of the stories that we've talked about with different women on this podcast series. So, in Community of Christ, we've shifted a little bit on our idea of prophecy. Initially we were very much a people with a prophet that has expanded into as you said, being a prophetic people. And I think that's an important thing to keep in mind as we move through this. I'm looking back at history at times when there was one prophet leading the one true church, so we have to contend with that a little bit, but I'm looking back on it with our modern lens today of how are these people listening to Joseph Smith Jr and Joseph Smith, III? Little bit further on, but mostly those two. And, how are they responding to that prophetic guidance, and their actions were often quite prophetic in and of themselves? And so, our Doctrine and Covenants was primarily a record of this prophetic guidance. And so the people would have had access to these words to study them. I think it's not out of line to add to that ongoing prophetic guidance, the various hymnals of the Latter Day Saint movement. These are very important books, not just because we're often groups of people who like to sing, especially sing together, but we were constantly updating our hymnals, and they were always reflecting where we were at the time. So our hymnals have become time capsules of where the people are and what they're doing, and thankfully, most of our hymnals have a lot of hymns by women, especially church members. So, I was able to pull from a variety of sources that I haven't really touched before in doing this series. So, that kind of lines up where I started with all of this. I had three women that jumped to mind immediately, and then it just snowballed from there. And one of the first ones that I want to start with is going to be the earliest example that I have of this. We talked about Elizabeth Blair a few months ago. Lizzie Blair, as she was known by her friends and family. Her husband was a prominent early church leader. They joined so early that they were members of the church before Joseph Smith, III was president and prophet of the church. And one of the stories that I shared came from her memoirs, and she talks about in February of 1860 gathering with a group of church members, and they were essentially in a prayer service, and they were talking together and sharing together and lamenting that Joseph, III had not joined them yet. And in her memoirs, Lizzie has this recorded. So I'm going to quote from her memoirs. "One of the incidences that marked itself indelibly upon my mind was this. We have 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 have visited him, but he had given no decided answer, further than saying that he would not come until he felt the Lord call him. In a prayer meeting in February, 1860 I arose and told those present not to be discouraged, but to be of good cheer for brother Joseph would come to 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. 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. So, April does roll around. She's there at the Amboy, Illinois conference, and she's basically in a nervous wreck when eventually Joseph, III, and his mother, Emma, walk in and join the meeting, and he is set apart as president of the church. So, this early prophecy is a very historic view of prophecy. So, that idea of fortune telling or seeing clear events happening in the future to come. And this is often, this happens quite a bit in the early church. It's seen as a spiritual gift of the people. At times, it's referred to as speaking in tongues as, and it would require someone else to verify that what the person spoke is of God. And so, it's interesting that she speaks

these words of comfort to her friends and family gathered at this prayer meeting, immediately sits down and doubts herself, but then the chatter in the months to come has this confirmation from all these different people that must have reassured her and others that what they were waiting and praying for was indeed going to happen eventually. So, a very historic view of prophecy. But I think it's fascinating that that's recorded and such a great story out there before the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is even officially up and going, we have a member acting as a prophetic woman.

Karin Peter 11:25

Although, I do want to know exactly how relieved she was when he actually walked in, because if she was doubting herself right after speaking the words, after a couple of months, she must have been frantic. So, kudos old Lizzie Blair, but still, I wouldn't have wanted to be in your shoes.

Wendy Eaton 11:47

She, she's a fascinating woman. I hope people have had a chance to listen to her story. So, that was a rather long story. I have a couple short ones to intersperse in here as well. Marietta Walker, I would be remiss to not include in a list of prophetic women, but she has been talked about a lot, so I'm not going to get into great detail about her. She was raised in the church in the 1840s, but the family had stepped aside after the confusion of everything happening in Nauvoo, and she rejoins the church as an adult. And this story comes from the 1880s. So, Marietta Walker was crucial in the development of children's resources, and one of those resources is one of my favorite resources, the Autumn Leaves magazines. And so, a few months ago, I was looking for something else that happened to be in the very first issue of Autumn Leaves, and I noticed that on the very front page, Marietta Walker, as editor of the magazine, had written a salutation or greetings to her readers, and she describes what the purpose of Autumn Leaves what she plans it to be. So, this is 1888 and she talks about it's the parents' job to raise children. But she expands on that to include how the church is also responsible for seeing to the education and the training of children, especially if the church hoped those children would grow to continue their activities within the church as an adult. And there's a quote in that salutation that I think is very fitting of Marietta Walker. And so, she again, she's talking about how important training for children is. She says quote, "God has wisely intended we should be carefully trained so in life, the church, by divine appointment, becomes your fostering mother. And if she fails, from her pulpits and through her publications to give to you your portion of meat and give it in due season, God will hold her responsible, and the Ministry of His Church will have to answer to him for the neglect." End Quote, fighting words for Marietta, putting an incredible amount of pressure on the leaders of the church in 1888 of their responsibility to training the children and the youth. This might seem a little bit of a stretch of being prophetic, but I don't think so, because Marietta Walker was always looking to what can be done to prepare others to lead. Within the church, she was always, many of the women we've pulled were pulled into church service because of Marietta Walker. And church president, Fred M Smith, when he was a teenager and a young adult, he talked about how Marietta Walker was a critical person, same with Elbert A Smith. He cites Marietta Walker as a crucial person to his training, and they would become incredibly prominent leaders, both church leadership, Fred M. as president, but then Elbert A. and all the different roles that he served within the church during his lifetime. So powerful fighting words from the future mother of Graceland as she is (...) today.

Karin Peter 15:49

Marietta. And we have, we have, I think, more than one episode on her, don't we? We have a full biography. And then we featured here her, I think in another one.

Wendy Eaton 15:59

Yeah, there's a full biography. I that's not one of the ones I looked up, but there is a full episode on her. I think might be one of the ones Barb Walden did, because Barb is a big fan of Marietta. And I reference her at almost every single episode I do, because, again, the era of women that I focus on, almost all of them were hand picked by Marietta Walker for their jobs that they stepped into.

Karin Peter 16:24

She had a huge influence on the church through that.

Wendy Eaton 16:27

She really did. And I think back to a quote, and it's from one of the letters. So don't, don't pull me specifically on this. I didn't pull this one to look at it. But when she first unites with the Reorganization, she in a letter, writes to Joseph Smith, III something along the lines she hadn't quite joined yet she was right on the brink of it, that she would do everything she could to discover if this really was, using the language of the time, 'the true Church of God,' and if she were to discover that it wasn't, She would do everything in her power to stop it.

Karin Peter 17:04

Yeah, I remember that quote? Yes.

Wendy Eaton 17:06

The sentiments in there, [yeah.] So, we're going to jump ahead quite a bit. I decided not to stick specifically chronologically with this idea, because it has the potential of being an open topic for us in years to come. The next woman that I want to share about is one who's fascinated me for years, but I've never quite been able to put together an entire podcast on her. She was one of the first women that I thought of as a prophetic woman, Pauline Frisbie was a black woman, and she had multiple challenges before her as both being a black person and being a woman. She lived from 1908 to 1984 so some of the contentious years of the Civil Rights Movement she witnessed right up, especially since most of her life was spent in Michigan, specifically the Detroit area. Her family joined the church while she was growing up and as a child and a teenager, her passion was music. She was trained as an opera performer and auditioned for a role in a Broadway production of Carmen Jones, earning a supporting role in that production run. She often performed on the radio and in theaters around Detroit, and became a popular guest minister and musician at church reunions and conferences. A lot of conferences within the Michigan and parts of Canada, but occasionally to World Church or general conferences as well. She was active in the growing women's organizations of the 1960s and 70s, and she brought a crucial racial representation to that group as it was forming, she continued to perform and sing throughout her life and the people that I talk to today that remember her, remember her as a singer. And in our library and archives, Rachel Killebrew, the librarian, archivist, she found a recording of Pauline. It's terrible quality, but this is now the first woman on this podcast that I've heard her voice, even though it was a terrible recording, so it wasn't near the quality of what her voice was, I'm sure. So, I want to focus specifically on the years 1967 and 1968. So, in 1967 she and others were returning from

a reunion in one of the Michigan areas. They left reunion and they heard reports of rioting and looting taking place. This is August of 1967. In the, in a Herald article printed a few months later, January of 1968, if anyone wants to chase it down and read it. Pauline and others wrote their experiences with the riots in an article that was titled, "We Were There." Pauline's home, and that of her daughter, Catherine's weren't destroyed as many were. However, the music school that Pauline taught at was looted and lost about \$12,000 worth of equipment, and the market next door to the school was nothing but a charred mass from these riots and looting taking place. In April of 1968 the church's World Conference opened and learned the news of the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr, and within the conference body, the church leadership brought a resolution to have a time of mourning and remembrance for all the work that Dr King had done. Specifically President Wallace Smith mentioned a pledge to work to end prejudice and bigotry, and the conference approved that resolution. Already on the docket for the conference was a resolution from always known as Brother William Blue. He was a beloved black leader, pushing the church to bridge the racial gap, gaps. Pauline Frisbie stood and addressed the conference as they debated over this resolution, and I'm going to quote her statement that was presented on the church, or on the conference floor. Just a warning. This is 1968 and there is probably going to be some uncomfortable language, but these are the words that Pauline shared. Quote, "I am deeply aware that this gospel is to be taken to all people, all races, but there has been, even in the attitudes and in the actions, and in the non-actions, and in the indifference, a lack of even being interested in taking the gospel primarily to my people. We need to reach out a little bit more to take the gospel to the people who are hungry among the Negro race." End Quote, and a few months later, she had an article published in the Herald. So, August 1968, a year after those riots that her friends and family returned to after their reunion. This article is titled, again, little bit of uncomfortable language for us today, "A Negro Latter Day Saint Looks at the Church." And this is another very good article that if people are interested, I encourage you to try to find and read. She writes, quote "as a converted Negro, I believe in the church's ordinances and teachings. I also believe the church is divinely commissioned to teach the peoples of the world how to live. I view the church through the eyes of faith, and see God's Spirit working in and through some of its members. I believe there is resident within the church the untapped power of God, which is, which if the people could unleash it, if they only would." End quote, so again, one of those dictionary definitions that I found was a prophet is a person who offers spiritual and moral insight. And I think this very much zero ins on that spiritual and moral insight racial justice would continue to be a terrible issue within the church, and I would say even today, we continue to struggle with this. And that was 1968 that she's writing these words. And it definitely. Emily, it's something we still very much need to work on.

Karin Peter 25:00

language is very reminiscent of some of the Old Testament prophets, when they would say things like, you're supposed to be caring for widows and orphans and you're doing neither one. When will you start? It has that kind of a tone to it.

Wendy Eaton 25:22

And I could, I wish there were more recordings and that they were better quality, because I think it would be fascinating to hear her inflections, because I can only read it and try to do the best that I can reading into this as her. Pauline Frisby is, she's one of those women I really want to find out more about because I think she was a crucial bridge in a world that was incredibly unkind to her, and I don't know if

the church truly appreciated everything that she did and everything she was willing to experience to just bring a little representation in her life. Maybe one of these days, more documents will come up, but haven't found them yet.

Karin Peter 26:10

Well, if I know you, you'll keep looking.

Wendy Eaton 26:12

Been looking on her for five years. Yeah, yes, I will keep looking. So, the next woman I want to share about, we're going to jump a little more lighthearted now. And this is Carrie Thomas. So this is another woman I've known this story for many years, but I just don't know a whole lot about Carrie. And the little bit I've pulled it's, it's not a very full story to share in a, in a complete podcast dedicated to her. So I was glad to have a chance to include her in this one. And I bet even if you don't recognize her name, you will recognize the hymn when I get into it. So, as I mentioned, the Doctrine and Covenants has for many years been how we record these words of guidance so that they stay recorded, and we could keep revisiting them as years go over. And, I would put the hymnal kind of as right in there with the Doctrine and Covenants as well. And so, as we look back through our own personal history, I bet many of us who have been religious through our lives have stories from when we were teenagers that we look back on now and cringe as spiritual experiences, but as we continue to revisit them, we could again understand where we were at and find value within those stories. And so, Carrie Thomas, I think, is an example of that. Her family, when she was a child, had heard about this Restoration movement under Joseph Smith Jr, but they weren't in any proximity to a church, so they didn't join. And then, when she was grown and married, they again heard of this Restoration movement. Now under Joseph Smith, III, and her father wrote to church leaders and said, hey, there are six of us up here in Michigan. If you send somebody up here, we'll join. So, a missionary went to Michigan, and Carrie's family and extended family ended up joining the church. Her father would lead the branch. And Carrie, who was an artistic woman, drawn to drawing and painting, but also poetry, she became an early author of some of the church publications. So, just a few poems here and there, but they show up in the Saints Herald in those earliest years. And so, at this time, you're going to get a fun tidbit. When the church was first organizing and they were publishing the Herald. They called it The True Latter Day Saints Herald, again thinking on that one true church business that we do not push anymore. But as she has joined the church, she's thinking on this True Latter Day Saints Herald and this 'one true church' idea, and a poem comes to mind, and she ends up creating this poem as she's going about the house cleaning. She and her husband had one little boy. He was about two, and they were expecting another baby any day. And as I said, she's going about the house, just cleaning the babies coming anytime is anybody who's been an expectant parent probably would understand the idea of nesting. We would put it today, getting ready for everything, cleaned and lined up. Baby clothes ready to go, diapers ready to go. And as she's cleaning, this poem just starts writing itself, and she sits and writes five verses, and the tune is, "Tis a glorious thing to be in the light, in the light." Twelve hours after finishing writing this poem, she gives birth to twin girls, so their family increased by two extra children, rather than just one, as they were expecting. And she sends this poem off to The True Latter Day Saints Herald, and it is published on the front cover of the October 1 1868 issue.

Karin Peter 30:44

Oh, my goodness. So I grew up with the gray hymnal. That's a hymnal that we use in congregational life, and I remember that particular hymn being sung in worship services. So yeah, if you get near a pastor's study and a congregation, look around and see if you can find a gray hymnal and find this in there.

Wendy Eaton 30:45

And so, the editors were so captivated by this poem that they printed the whole thing on that front cover. So, it was initially five verses. When it would be published in a hymnal in 1870, it was shortened and altered just a little bit to make it a little more singable and to fit the church a little better in identity. But thanks to efforts to preserve those old church publications, we have copies of that 1868 Herald, and you we could see all of the words, and I'm going to share those words with you so it's a little long and a little repetitive because it is a hymn, but I think it's a lot of fun, and I want listeners to hear this idea, she repeats this in the light, in the light, over and over again, and it's full of prophetic imagery. So, "The True Light of God," as it was printed in The True Latter Day Saints Herald "Tis a glorious thing to be in the light, in the light, which the saints of old did see, the true light of God, Revelations, Holy Light is the light is the light, and all else is dark as night, save the light of God." The chorus goes, "Let us walk in the light, in the light, in the light. Let us walk in the light in the light of God. Long the earth in darkness lay without light, without light. But the darkness fled away before the light of God. God has spoken from on high, this, the light, this the light, and now bids the world come nigh to this light of God." And it repeats the chorus, the third verse, "Prophets are restored again in the light, in the light. And the Gospels gift to men in the light of God. Blessings to the ancients given, in the light, in the light, are again received from heaven in the light of God." Again, repeat the chorus, "But we first the law obey in the light, in the light, as they did in Peter's day, in the light of God. Then the Holy Ghost is given, blessed light, blessed light. Tis the only light of heaven. Tis the light of God." And the last verse, which is the one that was not included in the hymnal, "Let us keep our spirits pure in the light, in the light, and unto the end, endure in the light of God. Then when Jesus comes again, in the light, in the light. And we shall live with him, reign in the light of God." So, it's a fascinating snapshot of what it was like for someone to be excited to be a new convert to this church, and to be very open to what the leaders are talking about and preaching about and telling them, these are the gifts that you could have, this idea of God continuing to speak to us and to guide us. So, like I said, it was printed in many hymnals. I haven't been able to count exactly how many, at least four, and the last one that it appeared in, it was tucked away in the historical section, and it had been altered from its original appearance as a poem. And it was published in the 1956-7 old, gray hymnal. Some of our lifetime church members might know exactly what I'm talking about with that one. So, my dad grew up in New England, Connecticut and Maine, and he remembers singing this one growing up. My mom grew up in Missouri, not too far away from independence, and she has vague memories of singing it. I've participated in enough historic hymn festivals that I am very familiar with singing this one because the story is just so great. Like I said, the last time it appeared in a hymnal was 1956, so it's one that you don't come across too often anymore. So, if you could find a pianist who can really play it, because it is a vibrant hymn. You don't get the vibrancy when I just read it, but it's, it's very it really sets you going. [yes]. So after that, 1950s old gray hymnal. The next hymnal that we would produce as a church was the one that I grew up with. The 1981 red hymnal is it's now often referred to. And the next woman I want to share about is Barbara Howard, and a hymn that she wrote that first appeared in that hymnal. So, I don't like talking about such recent people, so I'm not going to give you a whole lot of biographical information on her, but I think

Barbara Howard is a woman that in decades to come, as we look back, as I have looked back on people like Marietta Walker, Barbara Howard, is going to be one of those powerful people that was really leading the church in very unprecedented times. And this hymn of hers, "Bear Each Other's Burdens," is a prime example of what she was living through. So, the 1960s and into the 70s and the 80s, and really even up to today when you look at the recent church history, we've experienced a lot of growth, a lot of challenging growth that at times, has caused a lot of heartache and pain as we try to open ourselves to this guidance that ourselves and our leaders are experiencing through opening themselves up to trying to find where God is leading us. And so, this hymn, "Bear Each Other's Burdens," which, yes, I grew up with the hymnal, but I remember specifically as almost always being included in prayer and testimony meetings. So, I was a really weird kid. I liked going to prayer and testimony meetings. I almost always had a coloring book and crayons with me when I went, but I liked going because that was when I would listen to people like Ramona Seeley and Dorothy Bailey and some of the women who helped raise me as a little kid. I got to hear them tell stories. And, as I look back on my life, I realize how important that has been to where I'm at today is hearing those stories from people. And I remember specifically Dorothy Bailey sharing a testimony. And I was probably 9 or 10, so I don't remember the testimony itself, but I remember her becoming very emotional as she shared this. And the presider, who was leading this prayer and testimony service, he said, let's sing bear each other's burdens, and then let's pray for our sister. And so we sang together this hymn, and then they specifically prayed for Dorothy right there in that testimony meeting. And, as I think back on that memory, I think how important those prayer and testimony services are, and we still have instances of them popping up every now and then, but you don't see that as often anymore. It used to be my home congregation there in Lawrenceburg, Missouri, every Wednesday night you gathered for prayer and testimony meetings, and they there were some very uncomfortable ones, and I sat there, especially as I got older, and couldn't take the coloring books and crayons with me, but they were always very significant services to experience people being so vulnerable with one another, and I thought that was an important part of those services as I look back today. So this hymn, "Bare Each Other's Burdens," much shorter than the last one that I read. It's just a few lines. But I want to share them, because, again, as Barbara Howard is leading and acting during her lifetime with church leadership, we're going through a lot of growing pains, and these words bring a lot of comfort to people as they work together. So, this is how they appear in Community of Christ Sings. So, it is in our current hymnal, "Bear each other's burdens, share each other's sufferings and love, as the Savior has shown. The strength of our caring heals pain souls are bearing, and we are no longer alone. Bear each other's burdens, share each other's suffering and love, as the Savior has shown. God calls us to healing, Divine Love revealing, wherever we meet human need. In time so momentous, expectant, portentous, the world suffers anguish and greed. God calls us to healing, Divine Love revealing, wherever we meet human need." So, I mentioned it is in Community of Christ Sings. And one of the things that I really like about this specific hymnal, if you flip to the back, there's a list called the "core repertoire," and these are considered hymns of incredible significance. They're all printed in French, Spanish and English, unless they are printed in their original language. I believe there's several from Korea and such like, that are just in those one languages. But these are hymns that we are challenged to know as well as we can, so that if someone is in need, like that prayer and testimony meeting, we know that hymn well enough that we can just sing it. We don't have to pull out the hymnal. We don't have to rely on an instrument. And this hymn, Barbara knew what she was doing, simple words, simple memory, melody. It's a very easy one to learn and sing. It's a very important part of our ongoing expansion of ourselves as we open up to

God leading us. [absolutely] So, in wanting to get a broad a collection of women as I could, it got to thinking, can I find a child's story? So, as hard as it is to find women's history, it is even harder to find children's history unless they are of prominent child like there's all sorts of Joseph Smith the third childhood stories I could tell you, but there's not that many, besides people like him. But fortunately, there is a story of one of his granddaughters that I think is very fascinating. So a number of years ago, we did a Cuppa Joe episode on Ruth Smith, wife of Fred M Smith, and that was Alice's mother and father.

Karin Peter 43:27

And she was crazy involved in the community, as I recall.

Wendy Eaton 43:32

Yes, as an adult, her intelligence and her wisdom and her eloquency really earned her space. I mean, her husband was pretty active too, but she, there is so much written on Alice Smith Edwards. There's, there's a lot to be seen about her, but I'm going to focus in on her childhood just a little bit, and so a lot of people will be familiar with her father, Fred M., her grandfather, Joseph Smith, III, her great grandfather, Joseph Smith Jr. But her grandmother, on her maternal side, was a pretty relevant woman, too. And the only reason I haven't shared too many of Alice Cobb's poems is because they're epically long and take a lot of interpretation to understand. Little Alice must have inherited a little bit of her grandmother's poetic skill, because besides being a very mathematical child, a very intelligent child, she also wrote quite a bit of poetry in her life, and I found a poem from when she was nine years old that I thought was just great, that I wanted to share. Jump back to her mother, just briefly. In that episode I based, it was mostly about Fred M Smith. But I was it was Ruth's book that I was focusing on. And she talks about her two daughters, and she says how relieved she is that she had daughters because she didn't want her children growing up with the pressure that her husband Fred did as to use slightly snarky language, heir apparent of the church leadership. She, let me find my quote from her. "For once, I can rejoice in the limitations of my sex, for when I think of what my husband's life has been ever since his childhood, of what trials and sacrifices and responsibilities he has had to overcast the joy of service." I thought that was such a great quote from Ruth and that she was relieved at the limitation put on women in their lifetime, that her daughters would not have to deal with that pressure. Which is really funny, because Alice became such a prominent leader and would have experienced an awful lot of that pressure in her life. So, as I said, I was pretty excited to find a poem that she wrote when she was nine, and so this is from a book, I've shared from it before called, Homespun Rhymes. So, this is a collection of children's poetry, all written by women that was part of the Birth Offering Stories. And so there's a little bit of prophetic-ness in the Birth Offering Stories. Families would send money in before the book was ever published. So, it's basically in today's language, crowdfunding. They believed enough in these resources that they were willing to spend money before it even happened. And this specific one, Homespun Rhymes, it's filled with poetry, and it's children's poetry. Some of it is just ridiculous, some of it's just really cute, but there's some that's pretty profound. And I thought nine year old Alice, this is the only child's poem included in this book. She was an adult when the book was put together, so she must have specifically liked this one. But it's called, "Come Spring Come." So, keep in mind, I'm sure a lot of you know nine year olds. Imagine these words coming from a nine year old, "Come, oh spring with your balmy breeze. Come, oh come spring, with your budding trees. Come, oh come spring, with your violets true. Come, oh come spring, with your troops of blue. Come, oh come

spring, through the forest dark, with Robin, with Song of the Robin and song of the Lark. Come, oh come spring, with your gentle rain, to aid the ripening of the golden grain. Come, oh, come spring, we have called you long, come through the wood paths with light and song. Simple, beautiful words, and when you look at the idea of being prophetic as words of comfort, so many people, it's winter here in the northern hemisphere, as we as we record this episode, so many people struggle with the shortened daylight, and here in the Midwest, the brown that's everywhere, and they need to grasp onto these words of hope. And so, for a child to put something so simple and beautiful to remember. Spring is coming. The colors are coming back. Things are going to get brighter very soon. I thought was just a lovely little thought a way to include a child as a prophet in our collection.

Karin Peter 49:10

Absolutely

Wendy Eaton 49:12

So, as we talked a little bit about Alice grew up to have quite a vibrant life, one of her children wrote a lot about her. And there's a Project Zion Podcast. It's episode 401, that's called, When Will the Little Woman Come Out of the House. So, this is an episode that was based on a Historic Sites Foundation lecture, which you could find on the Historic Sites Foundation YouTube page, so you have a couple ways you can either watch it or listen to it. And then he, Paul also wrote this, and it was included in the John Whitmer Journal. He wrote for other historical journals, and other people, besides her family, have written about her too. She's a fascinating woman to go look into.

Karin Peter 50:03

So I was really lucky to have Paul as a professor in seminary, and one of our favorite things to do in class was to see if we could divert him into telling stories, which turned out to be pretty easy, and he would tell marvelous stories about her, just really, really marvelous stories. So yeah, she had quite an impact on church leadership.

Wendy Eaton 50:26

She was, she was a remarkable woman. And we're, we're getting close to the close. I have one more woman that, another one that immediately came to mind, and it happens to be one of Alice's aunts. She had a lot of them, but this one Audentia Smith Anderson, who we've talked about before. We did an episode on her and her cousin Vida, with their hymn, "There's an Old, Old Path," and like I said, she's one of the first ones that also jumped to mind, and it's specifically because of something I found that she wrote in 1941 that was published in the Herald. So a very, very brief biography on Audentia and apologies to Blake Smith in advance, who's the one who transcribes and edits a lot of the episodes. When I did that episode on Audentia, the filters kept changing her name to Audentia. So, apologies, Blake, you're gonna have this Audentia, audacious issue again. She was a pretty audacious woman to begin with, but that's another story. So, a very brief biography on her. She was born in 1871 she was the second child of Bertha and Joseph Smith, though she had three older sisters from her father's first marriage. Eventually she would have 10 younger siblings, three of which, during her lifetime, would serve as presidents/prophets of the church. So talk about having influence with the church. You got your big sister watching over you as you lead a church. Her brothers were Fred, Israel and William, each serving as their sister probably watched on, keeping close eye on what they're doing. As a child,

she experienced the loss of four of her siblings, two, Kenneth and Blossom were infants when they died. Her little sister, Azuba died when Audentia was about 12 years old from a playground, an accident. And her older brother David died when he was about 16 and she was 14. He had always been a very sickly child, so the family it, it was incredibly sad to lose him, but they expected him to not make it to adulthood. Audentia married Benjamin Anderson in 1891, and they were the parents of seven children. And they also experienced the loss of children. They had three children die in fairly close years to one another. Two sons died in infancy, and a daughter who was about three years old. This daughter, her name was Inger, Viola. She was born just a few months before Aude lost her mother, Bertha. Inger died from diphtheria, which had been sweeping through Lamoni, Iowa at the time, and Audentia's younger sister, Lucy, also nearly died during that illness. And I share all those moments of grief because it sets the background for this incredible work of prose that I came across. So, printed in the October 25, 1941 Saints Herald is what I would describe, a devotion and a prayer and a work that fits that idea of prophecy so fully. It's titled, "Living Fearlessly," and it's short, so I'm going to read the whole thing to you as it appeared in the Herald. So quote, "Her grief was not very old. The blow had fallen suddenly, completely, and life as she had known it came with stunning finality to an end, but looking up and ahead, with quiet reliance upon God who had been her friend through all the years, she resolved to keep her chin up and not let sorrow intrude itself upon others. Throwing herself wholeheartedly into an activity of ministry, many came to receive generously of the joy, enthusiasm and encouragement emanating from her bright spirit and gentle understanding. Outwardly, she was calm, poised, happy and none but herself and her God knew of the moments of desolation and heartache she experienced. Hellos wet with the tears in the darkness, dry with the passing hours, and with the dawn comes new hope and new ability to carry on for one more day with smiles upon her lips and hands and heart ready with quick and tender uplift. Listen to the humble pleading which arises each morning to the source of her strength, Dear Father, give me grace and wisdom and courage to live fearlessly this day, from moment to moment. Ah, to live fearlessly. Should it not be the desire and prayer of every earnest Latter Day Saint." End quote, so Audentia doesn't say who the woman was that inspired that. Likely it was herself. It could have been her mother or grandmother, Emma. It could have been a friend or a sister or any other woman in her life, and that is what makes this so comforting and encouraging, because it literally could be written about any of us, and how often we go through intense grief and struggle, but we feel the expectation to continue giving of ourselves to others. And as for being prophetic, I think that prayer that she includes in there, this is what caught my eye, because today, Community of Christ has a Mission Prayer. And to me, there are very clear connections between Audentia's words and the words of that mission prayer. And that mission prayer, in case you're not familiar with it, "God, where will your spirit lead today? Help me to be fully awake and ready to respond. Grant me the courage to risk something new and become a blessing of your love and peace. Amen." Audentia, powerful words from a woman who doesn't get the accolades that I feel like she should get. She was a remarkable woman in everything that I know that she went through, and the influence she must have had on church leadership, with top leaders being three of her brothers for a number of years, she's a fascinating woman, and I really wanted to end with that little story from her.

Karin Peter 58:26

Thank you for doing that, Wendy, and for sharing all of the stories of the different prophetic voices that came from women in our journey as a people. So, before we bring our episode to close, I'm going to ask you two things. The first thing is, do you have any, like, last comments about any of the prophetic

women in this story? And then the second question is, do you have any inklings on, like, what our next episode might be? So give our listeners a little teaser on what might be coming.

Wendy Eaton 59:02

So, when I think about last comments, when we first started talking about this idea of prophetic woman, I have to admit, I was concerned. I did not think I was going to find hardly anything that would be the length of episodes that I tend to do. But then, as I thought about those definitions and all the stories of the women that we have covered and other stories that I have heard, and things that I myself have experienced, it really just opened the gates wide open, and the list of women grew. This one featured seven women, if you don't count all the other women adjacent that I mentioned. And as I was researching, I kept a running list next to me of other women, and I think I've got seven or eight other women that adjacent list. But then the other thing that I thought of in closing, I am so excited to have finally been able to talk about Pauline Frisby. She is a remarkable woman that I really wish that we knew more about, and the things that she led and did in her life, and if listeners happen to read the Herald and have their January, February issue of 2025 Herald. Wednesday Jones wrote a couple really great articles in that issue, I very much recommend that even though they spelled her name wrong it, she wrote two stories about diversity, and she includes that portion that I talked about with Brother Blue and Pauline talking on the conference floor, and then on the cover of the Herald, brother Blue's on there that there's another man who, forgive me, I don't remember who he is. I want to say it's John Garver, probably wrong on that one, but Pauline is the woman whose face is on the cover. So, I'm glad that people are going to get a chance to see her as well as read a few of the words that she spoke about. She's fascinating woman. I'm glad we've gotten a double hit of Pauline Frisby this year well,

Karin Peter 1:01:16

And who knows, maybe one of our listeners has some background in Michigan, and might know a little bit more about Pauline that she that they would be willing to share with us.

Wendy Eaton 1:01:25

Send them over. I would love to get more stories of her.

Karin Peter 1:01:29

Excellent. So, we've got seven or eight in the next episode, perhaps. So, we'll have another prophetic voices of women in Community of Christ history yet to come. So, I'm excited to hear who will talk about that time and as always, Wendy, thank you for joining us. I know it takes a great amount of research, and that part of your passion is being able to share about women in the story of the church in ways that are authentic, and so that we can hear their own voices, and we appreciate that commitment. And so we look forward to the next installment of this Cuppa Joe series, "Women in Community of Christ History." So listeners, if you have a question for Wendy, or perhaps suggestions of women from Community of Christ history that you'd like to hear about. You can reach her at her email, W, E, A, T, O, N, weaton@cofchrist.org, and for tonight, this is Cuppa Joe, part of the Project Zion Podcast. I'm Karin Peter here with Wendy Eaton, thanks so much for Listening. You.