

# Nice to Matcha | Prophet-President Designate | Stassi Cramm

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Community of Christ, Prophet President, Stassi Cramm, First Presidency, discernment, Council of Twelve, World Conference 2025, spiritual practice, divine guidance, mission and action.

## SPEAKERS

Robin Linkhart, Stassi Cramm

### **Robin Linkhart** 00:29

Welcome to Nice to Matcha, a Project Zion Podcast series where we meet new people, leaders, movers and shakers. I'm your host, Robin Linkhart, and today I'm here with Stassi Cramm, who has been called to serve as Community of Christ, Prophet-President. If that call is sustained in legislative session at the 2025 World Conference, Stassi will be ordained during the Sunday evening Conference worship service one June, 2025. It is so great to have you with us today Stassi!

### **Stassi Cramm** 01:07

It's really great to be here, Robin, with you. I always appreciate the opportunity to chat with you and to connect with the listeners of Project Zion. I appreciate all that your team does to share information with members and friends of Community of Christ, it really is a gift.

### **Robin Linkhart** 01:23

Thank you so much. So today, let's just start with the basics and take a minute to introduce yourself to our listeners.

### **Stassi Cramm** 01:33

Sure, I feel like I've shared some of this before, so I'll just keep it really simple. My permanent residence for both me and my husband Steve, is in Independence, Missouri, and we also have a home, though, in Boston, Massachusetts. So, we spend some of our time in each place. And we're in Boston because of our daughter's family, primarily our three grandchildren. And in fact, this household will be relocated to Cincinnati, Ohio after World Conference. So, if World Conference weren't enough, we're facing a big move as well. But we enjoy being able to provide them support when we are not needed in Independence or other places in the church. We also have a son in Tokyo, Japan, and we got to spend Christmas with him and his girlfriend and their dog, and so that was truly enjoyable. And as of this April, I will have been a full-time minister with Community of Christ for 25 years. I can't believe how fast this time has flown by. I've held a lot of different positions with the church during this time, and currently serve as a counselor, along with Scott Murphy, supporting President Steve Veazey.

### **Robin Linkhart** 02:51

Thanks for that great introduction, Stassi. And it's always fun to hear about your three little grandkids that are growing like little weeds, right?

**Stassi Cramm 02:58**

Yeah, so fun. I could talk all the, our whole time on that.

**Robin Linkhart 03:02**

I hear you at this point of the interview, we usually invite new leaders to share their life story, but as you noted, you have been a guest on Project Zion many times over the years, and we do have your story in our podcast archive and so listeners, we will provide links in the show notes so that you can hear more about Stassi. Today, instead, my question is this: as you look back, where do you see the major points of decision in your life that changed your life trajectory in ways that set your course on the path that brings you to this place on the journey?

**Stassi Cramm 03:45**

Yeah, so it's always interesting to look backwards, and to relive in your mind and heart different moments in time. I often see the Holy Spirit at work in my life better retrospectively than sometimes I do in the moment. This is one of the reasons why I really appreciate the prayer of examine as a spiritual practice. When I was growing up, women could not be ordained, so I never considered working for the church as a career path. Instead, I followed my interest in math and science for my career, and yet, at the same time, I always knew I would be actively engaged with Community of Christ wherever I lived. Like many people, I was shaped and formed through quality youth programming, including camping ministries. And when I became a young adult, I wanted to give back by supporting the next generations of youth. Being loved and supported by my first adult congregation, when my husband and I relocated to California, it was the Lancaster California congregation in that was part of the Mohave District, and that congregation is actually no longer open, but they sure left a lasting legacy through me and Steve. And their love and support made a huge difference in our journey as disciples. If they had not welcomed me and Steve with open arms, perhaps my path would have taken a different direction. We were far from home, and having them as a second family made all the difference as we kind of made our way as adults and professionals in the world. So my first two calls to priesthood came through the Lancaster pastors. I was called first to priest and then to elder. And interestingly, when my call to elder was presented, the pastor said something like, this is just one stop along your journey of ministry, so make the most of it, but don't get too comfortable in it. I think of that a lot. That was actually Jack Kirkpatrick's brother-in-law was the pastor at that time. And so, he and his wife were just really significant mentors for us. When my call to high priest was presented, Jerry, who had presented my call to elder, just kind of smiled. And, when I told him about it, because he didn't present the high priest call. Jack did that, and I remember this deep awareness that a career change might be on my horizon, and that scared me. I guess it was because everyone that I knew that was a high priest worked for the church, and so I even said in my response letter to Jack that I was accepting the call to be a high priest, but that I was not really open to considering full-time employment, so I was trying to make sure I shut that door and kept it really locked. But that didn't last very long. It wasn't too long before Bill Barnhard and Jack Kirkpatrick reached out to me about full-time employment. It was after I had been ordained, and Jack, I think, gave some space given what I had written in my letter. But then they arrived on our doorstep, and that was a big ask, and it felt like a major shift in the pathway that my family was going to

be taking, and I've explained that in other interviews and how much I depended on Steve for making that decision for our family. So I won't repeat that, but that was such an important fork in the road. When we decided to say yes to full-time employment with the church, Steve and I agreed that we were saying yes to do what the church needed me to do as much as possible. And of course, like church work always happens when they ask you to do something, your family gets to go along for the ride, and it's so much easier when you have their support. And so that yes, it has been really important, and that commitment bubbled up again for me when the most recent call was presented.

**Robin Linkhart 08:10**

Just a little background information for listeners. Bill Barnhard was the director of Human Resource Ministries at that time, right, And Jack Kirkpatrick was your field apostle?

**Stassi Cramm 08:22**

He was, and Bill was also the president of the high priest quorum, I think, at that time. And so, yeah, he was there, I think, primarily as HR, and then Jack as my field apostle. And I said, Jerry, but Jerry Giddens was the name of Jack's brother in law that was really important to us and and his wife, uh, Jack's sister, Lois, so lots of family connections there, with the Kirkpatricks.

**Robin Linkhart 08:47**

Yeah, and I love the way you talk about the Lancaster congregation, because that is so important in the lives of young adults that often move away from home as they start careers and and how that plays out in their life can make such a huge difference.

**Stassi Cramm 09:04**

Yeah, it was so instrumental. And I mean, if, if there was like one spot, it's hard to narrow down to like one spot, but that in particular, that just solidified my relationship with the church, because they embodied everything that I believe the church was called to be and is still called to be.

**Robin Linkhart 09:23**

Yeah. Okay, so as you look back on your life now, what has uniquely prepared you for this role, Prophet-President?

**Stassi Cramm 09:34**

Wow, you always ask the hardest questions. And I think, Oh, I think this one's particularly hard because I don't actually know that I'm uniquely prepared. I know there are many, many gifted ministers in the church who are great leaders, and I think that's partially why when I first was presented with the call, there was this overwhelming initial feeling of both surprise and uncertainty and inadequacy that just kind of washed over me. Kind of the why me question? But what I can say in response to your question is that I'm trying to live faithfully into responding to this call, and as I've done that, just for my own spiritual reflections and my own kind of personal encouragement, I made a list of gifts that I kind of turned to when my head and my heart are kind of fighting with the call. So, one is I've had the privilege of sharing in ministry in a variety of positions, and I feel like that gives me a wonderful understanding of how the church currently works, but I also feel like it gives me insights into how we might be able to continue to improve how we respond to, and support mission in the world. Secondly, my different

positions have given me a chance to visit the church in many places around the world, and thanks to all of your listeners who support worldwide mission tithes, because those worldwide mission tithes both supported me in my positions and also allowed that travel to take place. So, by traveling, I've had the privilege and opportunity to work closely with leaders from various contexts, and so I feel like my world view of our collective mission is not complete, but it continues to grow, and I'm just so grateful for the opportunities that I've had to kind of think and see beyond my own experiences. Third, I want to acknowledge that I've been blessed by supporting President Steve, with Scott and I've learned a lot about leading the church through this process. That's helped with both administrative understanding and practical understandings, but also being able to walk with Steve in his discernment roles has been very formative in my own spiritual formation and journey as a disciple. Fourth, I am a committed lifelong learner. If I could be forever enrolled in an, in an academic program, I would be, because I love the structure and the discipline associated with assignments, and meeting learning objectives, and expanding what we know. I am positive that I do not know everything I need to know for this new position, but I am certainly open and willing to continue to learn. Fifth, I really do have a deep, undeniable connection with God that goes back as far as I can remember. I told my spiritual director recently that I think I was actually blessed with a faith gene. My life as a disciple has certainly not been perfect by any stretch of the imagination, and my path of the disciple has had many wanderings in places that I'm sure God would have preferred I did not go. But in the midst of all of that, I have never doubted God's unconditional love for me and for the world. And, I guess the last thing I would add my sixth item, and probably the best answer, is the simple one, and that goes back to kind of the commitment Steve and I made when I started full-time employment with the church, where we said, 'if you need me, God, and the church articulates that need, then here am I. Send me.'

**Robin Linkhart 13:57**

I really love that response, Stassi, thank you so much that that last if you need me, God here on my send me is is such a powerful thing. And as you were talking, I'm reminded that you have a plethora of Steves in your life. I mean, at one time, Bishop Steve Graffeo was in the Presiding Bishopric. Your husband is Steve, Steven Cramm and the Prophet-President is Steve Veazey. So listeners, in case

**Stassi Cramm 14:25**

We had Steve Newby as the controller, we I had a lot of Steve's, I have to always clarify what Steve I'm talking about, or I get the weirdest looks from people.

**Robin Linkhart 14:35**

Right, so listeners, if you're if you got lost for a minute and the Steves, we hope that helps, helps you sort through everything. Okay, so your list of six is is really great. I I'm sure that that will connect with a lot of listeners as they reflect on their own faith journey and and how their relationship with themselves and with the Divine has has played out. So, from this vantage point, what do you now recognize, as you look back, on divine whisperings or some sense of vision or call pointing to where you find yourself now?

**Stassi Cramm 15:19**

Yeah. So, as I mentioned, I often see the Spirit's work more in my rear view mirror than through my windshield. I guess my experience is a lot like the poem, "Footprints in the Sand," where the person

gets discouraged, because at the most difficult points in life, they see only one set of footsteps, and then God explains, well, 'yeah, that's because I was carrying you at those times.' So, looking backwards is maybe somewhat easier. So, as I look back, in the summer of 2023, that was a really difficult time. Both Scott and I were at reunions when we got the call from Kathy Cackler-Veazey, that President Veazey was having troubles, and so as Scott and I learned that Steve's health challenges were going to keep him from completing the discernment process, we suddenly felt very responsible for what would happen next. We hadn't really been thinking about it that much. We'd been trying to make space for Steve to do discernment, and we had reflected with him at various times as he was working through his own discernment. But suddenly now we found ourselves with the process shifting, and we suddenly went into full Administrator role, trying to make sure that the Council of Twelve Apostles were well supported and had everything they needed to move through a discernment process together. So, we were trying to remove barriers. We were trying to make sure that budgets were sufficient for extra travel. We were trying to create space as we cleared certain things off of people's calendars, so that they had more time. We felt our job was to provide support, to stay out of the way of the Council and to make sure that the overall process had integrity. Because of this focus, I did not spend really any time in the last few months of 2023 thinking about who would be called. My focus was on how the process was going to unfold in bringing forth that calling to the church. So, once the call was presented, people kept asking, did you know it was coming? And that caused me to spend time looking backwards. And so, you know, I kind of looked way back and realized that through my years at youth camps, I was often encouraged by various mentors about my sensitivity and sensing the spirit and helping others connect. One evangelist kept telling my parents that I had a special role to play. And of course, at that point in time again, women were not ordained ministers, so, I don't know that just never really settled in on me later then, and I shared this in my interview with the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation. So, I apologize, listeners, if this is a repeat for you, but it really was important to me, the same evangelist provided my blessing. It was Robert Grunwald, who is actually Steve Jones's father in law back in the day. And in my evangelist blessing, he shared these words. He said, Stacy, your heavenly Father has touched you more than most people have ever been touched, not necessarily the fact that you are a chosen one, but the fact that you have opened yourself and have come to Him earnestly and believing in your father's desires. When your heavenly father finds chosen vessels, then he grants unto them the wisdom and knowledge of the kingdom. You have those gifts. You have that commitment. Cherish them and treat them as a prized possession, a pearl of great price. Gosh, it's hard for me to even read those words now. Through my life, these words have taken on different meanings. So, like most of our evangelist blessings, when we go back to them, they speak to us in different ways at different times, but in this moment, they truly are giving me courage to move onward with this call, and through all of these experiences, I see the sprinklings of the Spirit preparing me and and Steve, my Steve, my husband, Steve, to be able to say, yes.

**Robin Linkhart 19:55**

Wow, that's such a powerful, powerful story. And I. Looking back on our lives, as you say, at different points on the journey, we find things that we didn't recognize at the time, or they they connect in ways that are just so so powerful, like what you just shared. And on the heels of this deep spiritual experience, it may seem odd to take this little sidebar question, but so often as full-time ministers, we can be so consumed by the doing of ministry and church life, and we're just wholeheartedly into

providing support, that sometimes we can neglect the being in the continuing needs of our of our own souls. So Stacey, how do you nurture your relationship with God?

**Stassi Cramm 20:48**

Yeah, I really appreciate the this question, Robin, and I appreciate your observations of how we can neglect the, you know, the being and the doing. So, I feel like truer words have never been spoken. I've also, you know, had people talking to me about this current call. And, you know, and some people will be like, Oh well, we can see you as president. But, you know, I don't know about the prophet part. Are you spiritual enough and? And other people are like, Oh well, I can see the Prophet part. But are you presidential enough and and perhaps, you know, even though those words have like greater meanings, you know perhaps the presidential and the prophet sort of represent the being and the doing and the need to hold those in balance. As you said, serving as a full time minister with the church often means that you get really buried in the doing. And sometimes the dueling, the dueling, sometimes the doing causes us to duel with the darkness that really comes up in church life. And sometimes because we're immersed in the darkness and dealing with the not so pleasant things, so that other people can stay more focused on the light, we forget to center ourselves in the light. You also see people at their worst when they are scared, angry, frustrated, feeling out of control. Most of the letters we get are not ones of telling us what a great job we're doing, often those letters, as you well know Robin, are more about what people are not happy about, and that can feel really overwhelming. So, through the years, I've learned to read my own rhythm of how I'm doing staying connected to God and centered on Christ's mission. I can feel it in just my temperament, when maybe I'm a little bit more short tempered, or my ability to to look at certain situations from different perspectives becomes very narrow and limited. So, when I feel like things are too intense and overwhelming, and it feels like that, the answer is that I really have to work harder. I've come to learn that sometimes that's the time that I need to pause the most and rest in the Spirit. So sometimes, when there's just that sense of drive and that sense of oh my gosh, I've got all these deadlines and so much to do. I just have to pause and rest in the spirit. Years and years ago, I took a beginner sailing lesson, and one of the things that they taught you before they sent you out into kind of the ocean on their little sunfish was, if you get in trouble, let go of the sail, which is very counter intuitive. So, I sailed out that day, and everything was fine, and I got a little bit down the beach, and of course, as can happen near the ocean, kind of stronger winds started to come in, and suddenly I felt like very overwhelmed, and I knew I was going to capsize this little sunfish, and then I was going to have to figure out how to get it set back up. And anyways, a lot of drama and a lot of stress. And then I remembered, when you are feeling this way, let go of the sail. And I literally had to, like, force myself to let go of the rope that I was scrambling to pull on so hard. And I did. And then all of a sudden, the sunfish righted and the sail just flopped in the wind. Of course, I wasn't going anywhere, but I also wasn't dumped into the ocean. And so, that has been a really good lesson for me. And so, when I need to let go, if you will, and just pause, I found that there are different spiritual formation and practices. One, I mentioned the prayer of examine, and I find that spiritual practice very helpful. And in fact, I often wake up early in the morning and I will just lay quietly in bed. Steve's usually still sleeping, I will anticipate the day, but I will also use that as a time to reflect backwards and to look at the previous day. As I mentioned, I often see the Spirit's works in my rear view mirror. And so, it's a chance to recognize that no matter how difficult the previous day might have been. Where were those moments of blessings that I can draw upon as I look forward to the opportunity of a new day? Also, I travel a lot, and so when I am I immerse myself in music and use that to center and focus. If people could hear what I'm

listening to, they would probably think I'm crazy, because I can get on a four hour flight and listen to one song over and over and over again for that whole four hour period, and it just sort of becomes a mantra for me, and at different points, you know, the songs that I turn to are different ones, but it just allows that space of being present and, of course, dwelling in the word and spending time with scriptures is another really important element for me. I mentioned sharing with my spiritual director, I think, a moment ago and that has been a process that I recently restarted. So, I found that meeting with someone once a month provides me a level of accountability. So, it forces me to make sure that I am pausing and giving appropriate attention to the being and not getting too drawn into the doing, which can be so compulsive when there's so many things that need to be accomplished. So, for me, keeping my cup filled is important, but not only for me, it's important for my ministry, and for those I support and lead, but it's also important for everyone. So, I hope your listeners will take this as just a quiet reminder that no matter how busy life is, and no even if we're really, really busy doing really God-like work, we need to pause and keep our own cups filled.

**Robin Linkhart 27:24**

Thanks so much for that and lots of great, practical, spiritual disciplines that folks could integrate into their own life. Okay, so now we're at the point where we would love to hear about the experience of receiving your call to serve as Community of Christ Prophet-President.

**Stassi Cramm 27:49**

So, I already mentioned how Scott and I had been focused in the last months of 2023 on making sure there was a credible process that had integrity and making space for the Council of Twelve to do the work of discernment. So, as we did that, we had made arrangements for the Council of Twelve to have a retreat as they came to the final stages of their discernment work. And Robin, you could probably tell us more about that retreat than I could. And so, what Scott and I had arranged with Mareva and Richard was that at the end of that retreat, they would call us and let us know how things had gone. The plan was to have a name by the end of that retreat, and so they were going to let us know if that had been achieved. As we were setting up a time we were going to do it on Sunday, while they were at the airport waiting for their flights. And there was kind of a joking question about Mareva saying, 'Well, what if one of you are the one that has been called and we need to present the call? Should we call both of you? And how will that work if we're going to report to you the name that we've come up with? So, should we call just the one who was called? Should we call both of you?' And so, we all kind of laughed that nervous laugh, and Scott and I agreed that we were fine, that if either one of us had the call being presented to us, that it was okay for the other one to be present. And we're kind of like, well, if we were planning to meet with both of us, and then you only call one of us, then the other one's gonna know anyways. So we might as well all do it together. And we all kind of laughed and moved on. We didn't really dwell on it. But again, looking backwards, I do think that in that moment when that got named, there was sort of this weird, I don't know, like, almost that, like flip in your stomach, where it's like, oh my gosh, you know, what, what if it is one of us, or what if it is me? And I hadn't really been thinking about that, because we had worked so hard on process and not on who. So, as the time for the Council of Twelve retreat came to an end, we hadn't heard anything the whole week, so we we didn't know what that really meant. We hoped that meant that everything was going well. And we had said that we would keep Saturday afternoon and evening open, just in case mariva and Richard wanted to meet earlier because of their flight schedules on Sunday. So, then on Friday, I don't remember whether

it was Mareva or Richard, but we heard that they would not need to be meeting early, so that they would just plan on talking to us on Sunday. And so, we're like, Okay, that's great. We'll, we'll keep Saturday open, just in case, but we'll plan on on Sunday. And we said we'd continue to monitor our email. Then out of the blue on Saturday, both Scott and I got an email that the Council of Twelve were done, and Mareva and Richard were wondering if we could still meet on Saturday. So, we set up the Zoom meeting and as I connected to the zoom, I had kind of just that passing thought of, this is the moment. This is an important moment, you know, for the church, I don't know, this wave of gratitude for the work that the Council of Twelve had been doing, and just the awareness that they had come to a name. And so, I had this deep gratitude for the presence of the Spirit, you know, working with the Twelve, and in that moment, there was just kind of this flash of, 'it's not me is it.' and I just kind of wrote that off as my ego getting the better part of me, and sort of dismissed that. And so, I went about my, you know, the next couple of hours. And then, I told my husband that I had a meeting with Richard and Mareva and Scott. And so I came upstairs into my office and hopped on to the Zoom call. And they were, you know, both already online, waiting for Scott and I to join. And they were very kind in that they did not really delay sharing the news. So, Mareva explained that the Council of Twelve had come to a unanimous agreement, and that they would share more about the process, but first they wanted to share the name. The call got, like, really quiet and, you know, and Mareva kind of took a deep breath, and we were on Zoom, so, you really can't tell who's looking at who on Zoom, but it felt like she was looking at me, and I just felt like, like these loving, penetrating, you know, look from Mareva. And then she said something along the lines, because I don't really remember the exact words that, on behalf of the Council of Twelve, she was presenting a call to me for my prayerful consideration. And I think she said my name, because I also think she was realizing that we couldn't tell who she was pointing at. And so, you know, she then proceeded to share her testimony, both personally, but also collectively, on the Council's experience and the level of assurance that that she felt like the Council had come to and how that felt like a blessing of the Spirit. And then Richard shared his testimony, and Scott was, like, so gracious and so supportive. I mean, he was kind of like your big brother grinning like ear to ear, and he shared his confirmation that he was not the least bit surprised, and that he was, you know, very affirming. And he also let Mareva and Richard know that he would reach out to Steve, and share the news with Steve. So honestly, I don't remember the details of, you know, at that point of really, what exactly was said, or anything beyond that, because my head was like, really swimming. So, this was late in December of 2023 it was before Christmas, and Mareva asked if I could determine my response before the sixth of January, because that's when the Council of Twelve were scheduled to meet again if they needed to discern another name. And so, I said I could meet that deadline, and I thanked everyone for the kind words and their deep trust, and we ended the call. So, I went downstairs, and my husband was there, and so was my son-in-law, and they were hanging out and goofing around and and so I had already, of course, told my husband that I was meeting with Scott and Richard. And so, for the first few minutes, I kind of goofed around, and I must have seemed really detached, because Steve kind of looked at me and he was like, they just presented a call to you to serve as the next president, didn't they? And I didn't tell him that. And so, I was like, No. And then he looked at me again, and I was like, Yes. And he was like, so how are you feeling? I was like, I don't know. I mean, I feel overwhelmed, I feel inadequate. I feel honored and privileged, you know, I feel so many things. So our son-in-law left. He goes. I feel like this is a time that you guys need to, you know, spend some time alone, and so, Steve and I just kind of journeyed and talked about, you know, our experiences through the years and, you know, and then we kind of went on with our our day. And so a couple days had passed. And you

know, Steve, who always speaks truth into my confusion. He was like, look, let's just face the facts. There is nothing that's going to keep you from saying yes. He's like, I realize that you need to come to grips with it. I need, I realize you need to wrap your head around it. But we agreed a long time ago that we would do what God needed us to do, and that we would trust the church to express that need. And so, he was like, you just need to send in your acceptance and let the Council of Twelve have a happy Christmas without the worry of you saying no, and then you can get your head wrapped around it, you know, over the holidays. So, Steve is sometimes so wise, not always, but sometimes, when I really need him to, he is so wise. And so, I went ahead and drafted my response and sent it in to Mareva and Richard, who then shared it with the Council, and here we are.

**Robin Linkhart 37:25**

Thank you so much for sharing, Stassi. What a wonderful story and an opportunity for all of us to have a little window into what, what that was like for you. And I just want to say thank you so much on behalf of the whole church, for saying yes, and I Oh yeah, and I do realize this is still very new in a lot of ways, and there is a long journey yet to come. So far, how has this new chapter in your ongoing adventure with God, How has it changed things for you?

**Stassi Cramm 38:04**

Yeah, so I mean, in some ways it's changed everything, and in other ways it's changed nothing. So, let me explain what I mean. So obviously, a little over a year has passed now, and in that time I've needed to continue to fulfill my duties as a member of the First Presidency, supporting Steve and working with Scott on operations and leadership of the church. And so, kind of what I was doing previously continues, you know, to carry on and has been unfolding over the past year. However, during that same time I've needed to give significant attention, and needed is it's almost like I have not been able to help but give significant attention to where I sense God is leading the church. And it's almost like everything I do now I see it with old eyes, but I also see it with new eyes, and I I feel like I've been trying to, like, open up my heart, my mind, my soul, to hear from the prophetic voice as it's articulated through others, as you know, as that still voice that that echoes inside of yourself in all of the ways that that the divine guides and leads us. And then there was like this sudden realization that there was going to be a lot of changes at the 2025 World Conference. And so suddenly I found myself spending a lot of time really listening for who God was calling to help make the vision that was unfolding a reality through the leading quorums of the church. So that began, of course, with having conversations with current members of the leading quorums and determining what their desires, and plans, and hopes were. And then, as I started to recognize where there were going to be openings, then that led to considering calls. So, as your listeners likely know, I've shared two pastoral letters with the church that talk about both releases from the Leadership Council that will occur at the 2025 World Conference, as well as presenting calls to the leading quorums that will be officially presented if my call is approved. So, if my call is approved by World Conference, I'll be ordained on Sunday night, and at the end of that worship service, I will read an official letter of counsel with the calls that have been testified to through the pastoral letters. So, over the past several months, current and incoming leaders have spent a lot of time together discerning God's vision for the future. We've been blessed by the wisdom and experience of those who have been around the tables for a long time, and then we've been blessed with the new perspectives of those who are stepping into new roles, or who are joining the Councils for the first time. And we've talked a lot about how the church can be part of God's unfolding vision in the world, and how

we can work together as leaders, and what we need to help the church focus on as the first faithful steps to take as we come out of Conference. So, all of that, I think, has been unfolding, you know, because of the leadership transition that we find ourselves in the midst of. And in addition to these important tasks, the current presidency continues to provide leadership and guidance day to day as we respond to a world that is filled with a lot of chaos and anger and divisiveness. There are just so many things happening around the globe right now, and yet it feels like it continues to be a world where our call to proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love and peace is as important today as it was when we were called into being. So, like I said, everything's changed and nothing's changed.

**Robin Linkhart 42:33**

Wow. So in the middle of all of that and and we realized we are at one moment in time today together, but I just want to ask you, how do you see God moving in the world, and how does that connect with our movement and with the heart of God's vision for all creation?

**Stassi Cramm 42:55**

Yeah, that's a great question, and I'm going to quote from scripture, and I think people will kind of recognize this source. I see God moving in the world when people are hungry and others give them food. I see God moving in the world when people are thirsty and others give them something to drink, or when people are strangers and others welcome them. When someone is naked and others give them clothes, or when someone is sick and someone takes care of them, or when someone's in prison and someone visits them. So for me, God is moving in the world when people love God themselves and others, including their enemies. And for me, I think love is expressed when people are compelled to work for justice that helps bring about God's vision of shalom. And I feel like what that, that is, what the church has been, is and continues to be all about. How do we help create these communities and these ways of being in relationship with one another, that respects the value of each one, that wants to make sure that each one's basic needs are met, that takes care of the world and the earth around us, and that really helps God's vision for the earth come into life.

**Robin Linkhart 44:30**

Yeah, that really echoes the prophetic voice of timeless truths that have served from [Yeah, exactly] over eons of time, and never more true than today, as you say, wow. So, what are your hopes for a Community of Christ into the future?

**Stassi Cramm 44:54**

Oh, that's a super easy question. Well, I have so many hopes for Community of Christ into the future, and I'll just do a little plug right now, perhaps that's a separate podcast that we can explore beyond World Conference. But for now, I would like to point to some words that President Veazey shared with the church in 2017 in his "Time to Act" sermon that just keep bubbling up for us in a variety of ways, and these words for me are so prophetic, and they still continue to compel my vision for the church. He said, "our chief purpose is to birth, nurture and multiply communities of disciples and seekers engaged in spiritual formation, compassionate ministry, and action. This basic blueprint, spiritual formation, community, compassionate ministry and action is true to the vision of Christ. Everything else, like organizational structure, resources, funding methods, congregational forms, etc, etc, should support

this primary purpose." So I think those words are as true today as the day that Steve shared them with us. And I am committed to help Community of Christ live into God's purposes for us as we continue to grow in our faithful embodiment of our identity, mission, message and beliefs in tangible ways in the various places where we all live and serve. I believe with my whole heart, mind and soul, that God called us into being, that God walks with us today, and that God is guiding us into the future, and I look forward to that future with hope as we go together.

**Robin Linkhart 47:11**

What last words might you have to share with us today Stassi?

**Stassi Cramm 47:17**

So, I will unabashedly and without, you know, without any shame, invite everyone to come to World Conference. So, the end of May, early June, is the 2025 World Conference for Community of Christ. And your voice and vote are important as we seek to listen to the collective prophetic voice. I hope that everyone can try to make arrangements to attend in person. I think it will be very much worth the time and expense. But if that's not possible, then I would strongly encourage people to participate as much as they are able online, we are indeed called into a new chapter in our journey, and we need everyone for this journey as we work together, following where the Spirit is leading.

**Robin Linkhart 48:16**

Stassi, I just want to thank you for sharing time with us today, for being so fully present and open and vulnerable and authentic.

**Stassi Cramm 48:26**

Well, thank you, Robin, for the opportunity. I always enjoy chatting with you, and I hope your listeners are blessed as they kind of listen in to our conversation.

**Robin Linkhart 48:36**

They surely will be blessed as I have been today spending time with you. Listeners, if you would like to hear more from Stassi, check out episode 55 where she shares her life story and ongoing faith journey with God. Stassi has been a frequent guest on our Coffee Buzz series, featuring archived updates from Community of Christ First Presidency. Look for links in today's show notes to learn more about World Conference 2025 and be sure to register to attend the event in person or online. As always, a very special thanks to all of you our listeners for spending a portion of your day with us. This is your host, Robin Linkhart, and you are listening to Project Zion Podcast. Go out and make the world a better place. Take good care. Bye, bye.