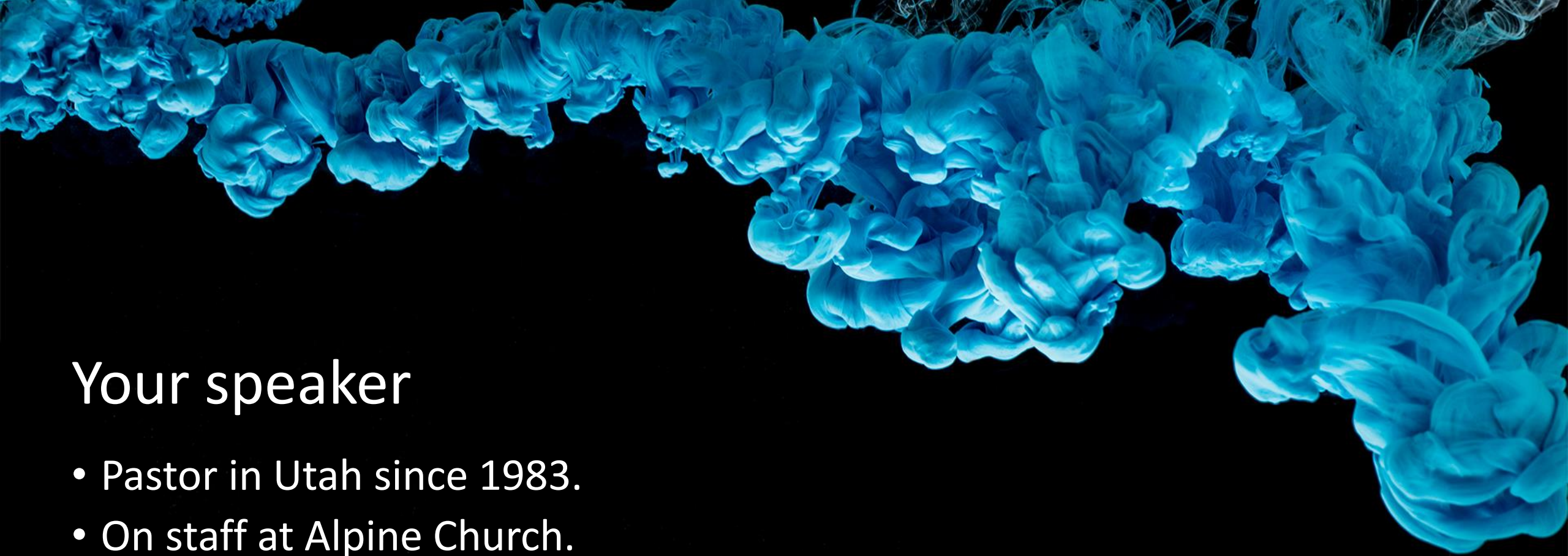




*Reaching Your
Mormon Neighbor*

 URBANA18

December 27 – 31, 2018 | St. Louis, MO | urbana.org



Your speaker

- Pastor in Utah since 1983.
- On staff at Alpine Church.
- Director of Utah Advance Ministries.
- Born & raised on active LDS family.
- Came to faith in Christ in college.
- Married to Sally → 5 adult children.



Mormonism and Traditional Christianity

- LDS Church doesn't want to be called "Mormon" anymore
- LDS people want to be thought of as Christians
- Our stance: respectful but w/ boundaries
- Be aware of terminology differences



LDS Attitude toward Historic Christianity

- J Smith's 1st Vision suggests antagonism
- Christianity is seen as apostate / inferior
- LDS Church seeks to convert people out of other churches



Who Are the Latter-day Saints?
Understanding Mormonism as a cultural identity.



Who Are the Latter-day Saints?

- Culture: “The particular ways of thinking, speaking and living that are shared by people with a common past and identity.”
- Ritual, folklore, customs, rites of passage, language patterns, vocabulary, art, music, food, architecture, dress, cultural identifiers, etc.



Who Are the Latter-day Saints?

- Family oriented
- Politically and socially conservative
- Value personal achievement
- Activity vs. theology
- Fiercely loyal to Church and leaders



Who Are the Latter-day Saints?

- Unique dietary restrictions
- Insularity
- Uninformed about other faiths
- Interested in converting you
- Expect you to attack their faith



Contextualization: The Apostolic Model

- “Presenting the unchanging truths of the gospel in a way that is intelligible within the unique and changing contexts of a particular culture and worldview.”



Contextualization: The Apostolic Model

- Model: Paul in Acts
- Acts 13:16-43 – Pisidian Antioch
- Acts 14:8-18 – Lystra
- Acts 17:16-34 - Athens



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Past: Treat Mormonism as a cult
 - The “rational apologetics” approach
- Analyze where beliefs fall short of Bible
- Refute false teaching with truth



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- New: Treat Mormonism as a culture
 - The “missiological” approach
- Missiology: “The study of how to intelligently articulate the Gospel and its life-changing power in a culturally appropriate manner”



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- New: Treat Mormonism as a culture
- Analyze culture
- Discern how people think about God
- Frame Gospel in ways that speak to that cultural mindset



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Narrative Theology
- LDS frame truth in key stories vs doctrinal propositions
- Aspiration: part of a great, cosmic story
- Strategy: share God's great story, connected with our personal and corporate stories



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Experiential Epistemology
- Epistemology: the question of how we know what is true
- Empiricism, authority, intuition, reason



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Experiential Epistemology
- LDS validate truth through spiritual experiences
- Aspiration: experiences that connect to God w/assurance
- Strategy: express truth using the language of experience



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Perfectionist Lifestyle
- LDS continually seek to prove worthiness for salvation to God and others
- Aspiration: desire to be righteous and worthy
- Strategy: share and model grace



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Persecution Complex
- LDS are sensitive to any perceived attack on their faith
- Aspiration: to be respected and validated
- Strategy: gently offer a positive message that sounds like good news



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Value of Family
- LDS put a premium on family life and family unity
- Aspiration: to be united with family forever
- Strategy: while valuing family, point them to the greater family we have in Christ



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Value of Community
- LDS pride in their shared identity, life, and history
- Aspiration: belonging, significance
- Strategy: point to a primary identity and community in Christ; live out authentic community



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Be an authentic friend
- Enter their world
- Invite them into your world
- Listen
- Stay humble and respectful



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Be aware of definitions
- Be sensitive
- Don't argue
- Share stories and experiences
- Get your facts straight



Sharing God's Good News with LDS

- Serve
- Persevere
- Stay grounded in your own faith
- Keep it positive and Christ-centered



The Challenge

It's very difficult to leave Mormonism.



The Opportunity

There have never been more people leaving Mormonism.

Will they become atheists?

Will they discover a whole new way to experience God?



Next Steps to Consider

Engage LDS friends in
conversations
Prepare yourself

spiritual

Come talk to me
Keep in touch
Come to Utah