The Plano Texas Stake Preparedness Challenge

For July—“Be Guardians”

“And it came to pass that he rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole.“ (Alma 46:12)

Captain Moroni, a great military hero from the Book of Mormon had good insight into the level of commitment and dedication that were necessary to preserve freedoms for his family and his countrymen. To remain free in this, the “promised land,” we must do all we can to guard our freedoms and insure them for our posterity. We must worship God and keep His commandments. We must be grateful to those who have risked (and are risking) their lives to safeguard our lives and freedoms. Each July 4th we celebrate the anniversary of our country’s declaration of freedom from the tyranny our land was once under.

Spiritual Goals:

**First Spiritual Goal: Make twice daily personal prayer a habit. Set aside time for twice daily family prayer as well.** The first line of a well-loved Hymn asks, “Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?”(Hymn # 140).Before we begin each day, we must first think to pray. Before we retire each night, we must pray as well.

**Second Spiritual Goal: Hold weekly Family Home Evenings with your family**.

For $3.50 you can order the Gospel Art Book to aid you in teaching the Gospel to your family. It has an index listing scriptures to accompany each of the 137 pictures. This and other teaching helps are available through the online store at: [www.store.lds.org](http://www.store.lds.org). Click on “Home and Family” and then on “Strengthening Families.” The Gospel Art Book is on page 2 (right after the Preach My Gospel manuals). Picture # 79, entitled: “Captain Moroni Raises the Title of Liberty” goes along with our scripture this month and would work well in a Family Home Evening lesson on July’s theme: “Be Guardians.”

**Third Spiritual Goal: Have daily personal and family scripture study.** The suggested scripture reading for the month of July is Alma 25 through Alma 44. If this does not fit in with your family, go at your own pace or select other scriptures to fit your family needs.

**Fourth Spiritual Goal: Do family history and Temple work.** Fulfill the Plano Stake Goals of spending at least **one hour in indexing** each month, **one hour of family history** each month and of **taking one family name to the temple each year.** Make plans to attend the temple regularly. If you do not currently possess a temple recommend, see your Bishop or Branch President to determine what you need to do to obtain one.

Financial Objectives:

**First Financial Objective: Inventory your possessions and the items in your home for insurance.** We have included an inventory form in the “Resource” section for this month on the “Preparedness Challenge” tab of the Stake Preparedness website ([www.preparednessplano.org](http://www.preparednessplano.org)). Your insurance company may have its own form for you to use. As accurately as possible log in what you own, when and where it was purchased, and the purchase price. Get in the habit of keeping receipts.Take pictures of your home and possessions to help document how your home is constructed and what you have inside and outside your home in the event you need to replace your home and/or your possessions. Store your inventory and pictures in a safe deposit box and/or fire proof safe.

**Second Financial Objective: Continue working on your financial goals.** Continue making and living by your budget. Work toward reducing and getting out of debt. Continue to build your savings.See [www.providentliving.org](http://www.providentliving.org) for more information and help on financial planning. Click on “Finances.”

Emergency Preparedness Tasks:

**First Preparedness Task: Plan for emergency shelter and bedding.** If possible, have a tent (or tents) that can be quickly taken with you if you need to evacuate your home. The size(s) would depend on the number in your household. Tents should be easy to set up and take down. A tarp or ground cover is recommended for protection against cold and dampness. Sleeping bags for family members are needed for evacuation. They are rated for different levels of protection against the cold. You may wish to have two per person, one for winter, another for summer. Extra blankets are good to have on hand for keeping warm when sheltering in place. For your 72 hour kits and car emergency kits, there are small rescue blankets (and sleeping bags) that reflect back a high percentage of your body’s heat. These are very compact and inexpensive. Find them at emergency preparedness and/or camping stores. Also available from the same sources are small tube tents. These offer limited protection from the elements or animals. They come with a rope and must be set up between two trees or posts (which may not be available).

**Second Preparedness Task: Store Summer Foods.** Keep a record of what your family eats for one or two weeks during the summer. Purchase and store a three month supply of these items or reasonable substitutes. For example, if you eat a lot of sandwiches made with lunch meats, purchase canned or freeze-dried meats, chicken, or tuna fish. Cold cereals may be more appealing than hot cereals in the summer. Stored unopened in their original packaging (at 74° or below), they are generally good beyond their “Best By” date. You could also opt to store the ingredients to make homemade granola to be eaten cold. See the Granola recipes in the “Resource” section for June on our Stake preparedness website: [www.preparednessplano.org](http://www.preparednessplano.org) (under the “Preparedness Challenge” tab). A simple Granola recipe (and other recipes using food storage ingredients) can be found in the pamphlet “All is Safely Gathered In—Family Home Storage Basic Recipes.” Find an electronic copy at: [www.lds.org/bc/content/shared/english/pdf/callings/welfare/104587\_06600\_000\_RecipesBrchr\_pdf.](https://www.lds.org/bc/content/shared/english/pdf/callings/welfare/104587_06600_000_RecipesBrchr_pdf.pdf?lang=eng). Don’t forget to store canned, dehydrated, or freeze-fried fruits and vegetables.

**Final Note: “Be Guardians “against excess heat, harmful insects, and poisonous plants.**  Visit these web sites: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/), [www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on\_people.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks/avoid/on_people.html), and [www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-118/pdfs/2010-118.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-118/pdfs/2010-118.pdf) . During warmer months you may wish to increase your emergency water storage to account for water lost in perspiration. This is especially important should air conditioning become unavailable. Make sure your 72 Hour kits have clothing that can help you stay cool during summer. Clothing made from natural fibers (e.g. cotton), that is lightweight, light colored and loose fitting works best to prevent overheating. Brimmed hats protect you from the sun’s harmful rays. Keep sunblock and insect repellent on hand for home use and in your 72 hour kits. Long sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and close-toed shoes provide some protection from insects such as ticks. They also help guard against exposure to Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, and Poison Sumac.