

Attending Weekday Primary
Carol Stewart
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Growing up in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints shaped my life with blessings and joy. From childhood, I knew the gospel was true because it was woven into every part of my life—week after week, I looked forward to church, singing with friends, and sharing smiles with my family. Those early years were full of warmth and happiness.

As a child, I didn't realize the enormous effort my mom poured into making Primary and Sacrament Meeting meaningful. She served in many callings—Primary President, Relief Society President, organist, and pianist—constantly planning lessons with handmade posters and visual aids. All this, while raising children and managing a busy household in the 1970s and 80s: sewing, cleaning, cooking, hosting parties, and always presenting herself with care. Rest was rare, yet she made every meeting feel magical.

Not long ago, my mom laughed as she reminded me that Sacrament Meeting in Sierra Vista, Arizona, started at 6:30 p.m. on Sundays—a challenge for little kids who needed to stay reverent all day. She filled the hours with flannel-board Bible and Book of Mormon stories, and my sister Jean and I created elaborate imaginary worlds with our dolls. To us, Primary was pure fun; we never realized how much she juggled or how tired she must have been.

Despite exhaustion, my mom managed to bake her famous cinnamon rolls, which my dad sold at Fort Huachuca for a dollar each. Her energy and devotion seemed endless. Our home was a hub for ward friends; their children became my lifelong companions, with bonds formed

through singing time, sharing time, and church activities. Those friendships and joint testimonies built a foundation that has supported us for decades.

Primary was different in the 1970s. Sunday classes came after Sacrament Meeting, and sometimes we received the sacrament during Opening Exercises. I remember watching my dad, who wasn't a preacher but was steady and faithful, pass the sacrament to me and my friends. His service as ward clerk and Gospel Doctrine teacher left a quiet legacy, and his playful spirit created unforgettable memories—like wild rides on the chair cart that resulted in bruises and laughter, and Thanksgiving stories full of scars and family humor.

Church and home blended seamlessly; our routines and service revolved around living gospel principles every day. Jean remembers those times fondly too—hand-motion songs, birthday celebrations, and the thrill of turning the filmstrip during sharing time. Seeing friends from other schools at weekday Primary was a testament to lasting connections and shared faith.

We invited neighbors to join Primary, and when they did, it made those moments even more special. Every child felt welcome, and we loved sharing our beliefs. Pioneer Day was a highlight, with my mom directing us in bonnets and decorated rooms, creating memories of learning through laughter. Jean's original CTR ring from 1978, received in the CTR-A class, became her symbol of commitment and faith—worn through her baptism and kept as a treasured reminder of “choosing the right.”

I attended Primary from 1976 to 1985, witnessing the shift from weekday meetings to the three-hour Sunday block. Although it reduced Primary time and traditions, the experiences stayed with us. Years later, when my children went to Primary, Jean and I marveled at all the

songs and routines they had never heard, showing them old photos and laughing at the differences.

Through all these years, Primary taught me that the gospel is not just part of life—it is the way we see life itself. Faith turns ordinary things into sacred ones: the sound of music, family laughter, and the scent of cinnamon rolls on Sunday morning. That legacy shaped how I raised my own children, passing down the spirit that faith isn't confined to Sundays—it's how we live every day.

Interviews:

Lynn C. Maynes, Mother (with permission to use information)

Jean K. Bair, Sister (with permission to use information)

Aaron R. Stewart, husband (with permission to use information)

Carol A. Stewart, Self

References:

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