

## Tribute to Levi S. Peterson

Dear Readers,

This journal completes Levi Peterson's twenty-volume editorship of *Dialogue*. I have had the privilege of chairing the board in both his first and last years and welcome this chance to say thank you on behalf of us all.

Levi Peterson is a man of love. He wrote in his autobiography that his mother's love infused him "with a propensity to affirm and take pleasure in human beings rather than to injure or begrudge them." A noted writer, he is also an editor deeply respectful of writers and of the process and import of writing, for him central to his instinctive need for purpose, "directional, a base, a determinate." Combined, these perspectives underpin Levi's leadership style to our authors, his staff, and our board: ever clear, kind, respectful, and exceedingly generous with both his material and personal resources.

Levi teaches by deed that charity can accompany the highest professional standards. He teaches by editorial selections that we strain to understand the inexplicable for the sheer joy of the effort and that we can respect the visions of others even if no visions enlighten us. Particularly in his own writings but also in the pages of *Dialogue*, he invites us to embrace the passions and the humor of the human condition as we embrace our fellows.

Mormonism has had few such astute observers as Levi. It has had few such loyal sons. With the accuracy of the historian and the compassion of the novelist, Levi sees our flawed lives and affectionately prods us to free our minds, engage our hearts, and make peace and beauty whenever possible.

Levi has explained that his "chief motive for providing an abundance of domestic detail in his biography of Juanita Brooks was to demonstrate how Juanita's achievement had been crowded into the complex and busy life of a wife, mother, and teacher." You should know that throughout his full-time editorship, Levi has also lived a complex and busy life as a husband, father, teacher and, especially, as a grandfather to two beloved boys facing health challenges. No aspect of Levi's commitments has suffered from this overload—he just hasn't slept much. We are grateful he has had excellent help, editorial and familial, from his lovely wife, Althea. It has been our pleasure to know her, too.

We thank Levi for his stellar contributions to the journal. We love him for being our hero and our friend. Working with Levi has been a joy.

Sincerely,  
Molly McLellan Bennion  
Chair, *Dialogue* Board of Directors