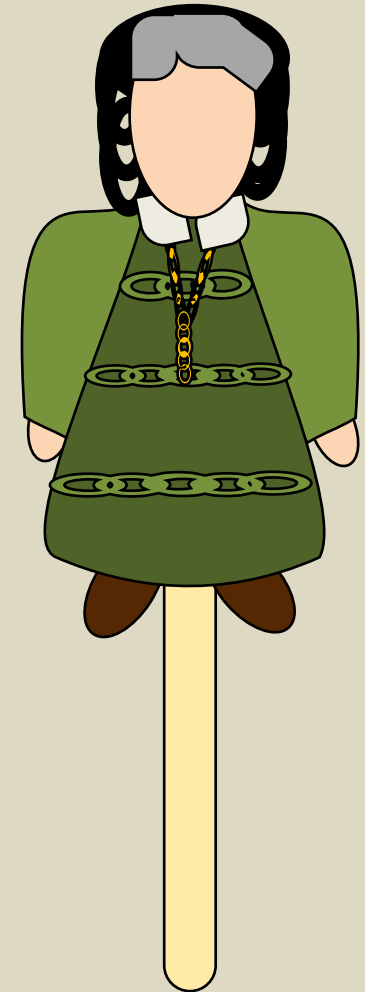
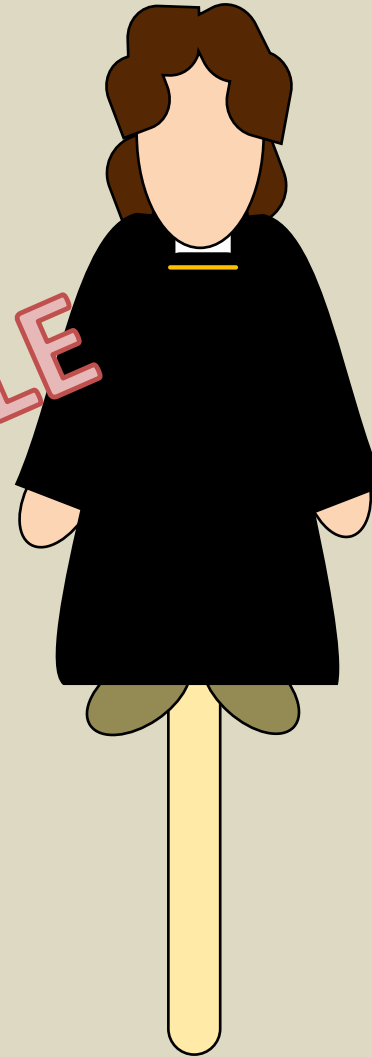
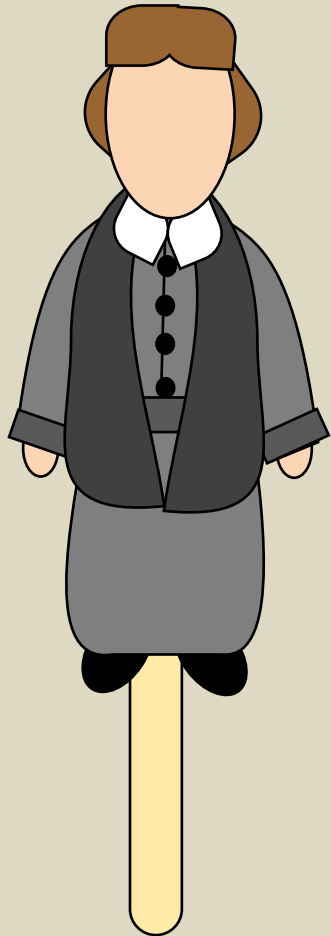


Baptism Testimonies

Voices of the Restoration

Popsicle Stick Activities



SAMPLE



Wilford Woodruff



Phebe Woodruff

Phebe Woodruff was living near Nauvoo when Joseph Smith began teaching about baptism for the dead. She wrote about it to her husband, Wilford, who was serving a mission in England:

“Brother Joseph ... has learned by revelation that those in this church may be baptized for any of their relatives who are dead and had not a privilege of hearing this gospel, even for their children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. ... As soon as they are baptized for their friends they are released from prison and they can claim them in the resurrection and bring them into the celestial kingdom—this doctrine is cordially received by the church and they are going forward in multitudes, some are going to be baptized as many as 16 times ... in one day.”

Wilford Woodruff later said of this principle: “The moment I heard of it my soul leaped with joy. ... I went forward and was baptized for all my dead relatives I could think of. ... I felt to say hallelujah when the revelation came forth revealing to us baptism for the dead. I felt that we had a right to rejoice in the blessings of Heaven.”

Phebe Woodruff letter to Wilford Woodruff, Oct. 6, 1840, Church History Library, Salt Lake City; spelling and punctuation modernized.

Wilford Woodruff, “Remarks,” *Deseret News*, May 27, 1857, 91; punctuation modernized.

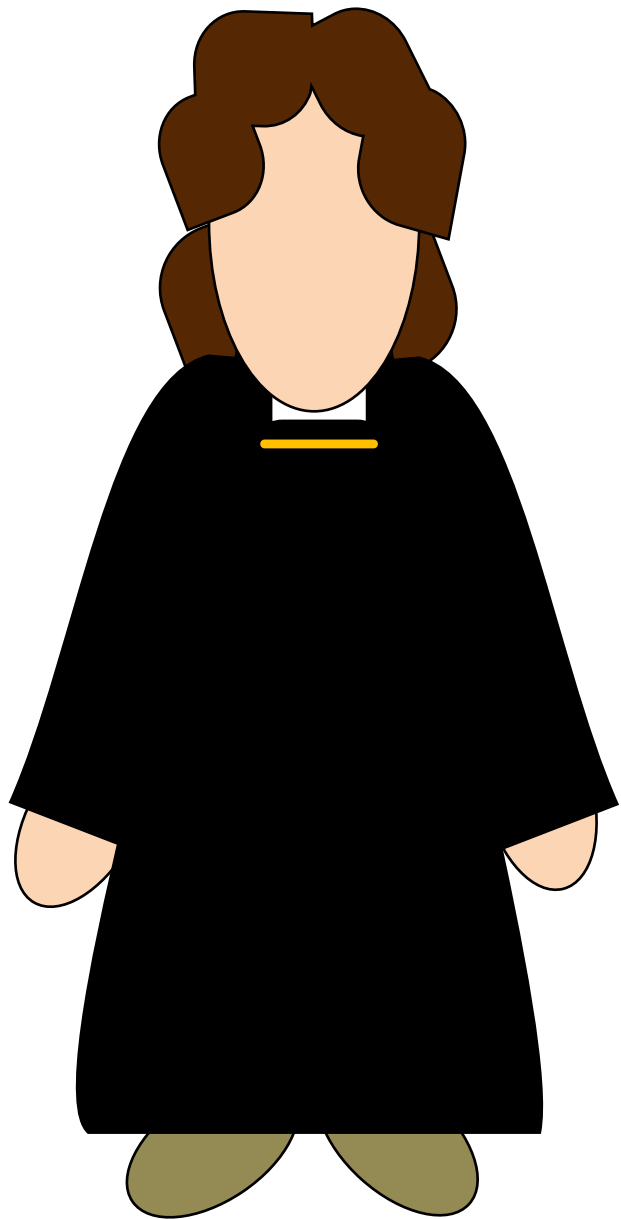


Vilate Kimball

Like Sister Woodruff, Vilate Kimball heard about baptism for the dead while her husband, Heber, was away preaching the gospel. She wrote to him:

“President Smith has opened a new and glorious subject ... which has caused quite a revival in the church. That is, being baptised for the dead. Paul speaks of it, in first Corinthians 15th chapter 29th verse. Joseph has received a more full explanation of it by Revelation. ... It is the privilege of this church to be baptised for all their kinsfolks that have died before this Gospel came forth; even back to their great-Grandfather and Mother. ... By so doing, we act as agents for them; and give them the privilege of coming forth in the first resurrection. He says they will have the Gospel preached to them ... but there is no such thing as spirits being baptised. ... Since this order has been preached here, the waters have been continually troubled. During conference there were sometimes from eight to ten Elders in the river at a time baptising. ... I want to be baptised for my Mother. I calculated to wait until you come home, but the last time Joseph spoke upon the subject, he advised every one to be up and a doing, and liberate their friends from bondage as quick as possible. So I think I shall go forward this week, as there is a number of the neighbors going forward. Some have already been baptised a number of times over. ... Thus you see there is a chance for all. Is not this a glorious doctrine?”³

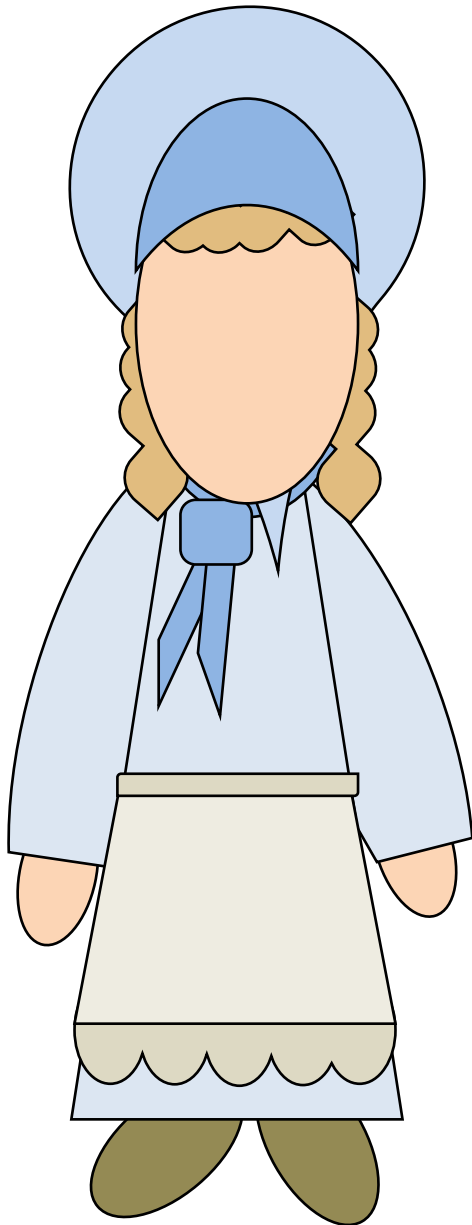
Vilate Kimball letter to Heber C. Kimball, Oct. 11, 1840, Church History Library, Salt Lake City; spelling and punctuation modernized.



Phebe Chase

Once the baptismal font was completed in the Nauvoo Temple, baptisms for the dead were performed there instead of in the river. Phebe Chase, a resident of Nauvoo, wrote to her mother about the temple, describing the baptismal font as the place where “we can be baptised for our dead and become saviors on Mount Zion.” She went on to explain that in this font, “I have been baptised for my dear father and all the rest of my dead friends. ... Now I want to know what your father’s and Mother’s names are so that I can release them, for I desire to relieve the Dead. ... The Lord has spoken again and restored the ancient order.”

Phebe Chase letter, undated, Church History Library, Salt Lake City; spelling and punctuation modernized. When the Saints first began performing baptisms for the dead, individuals were sometimes baptized in behalf of ancestors of both sexes. It was later revealed that men should be baptized for men and women for women.



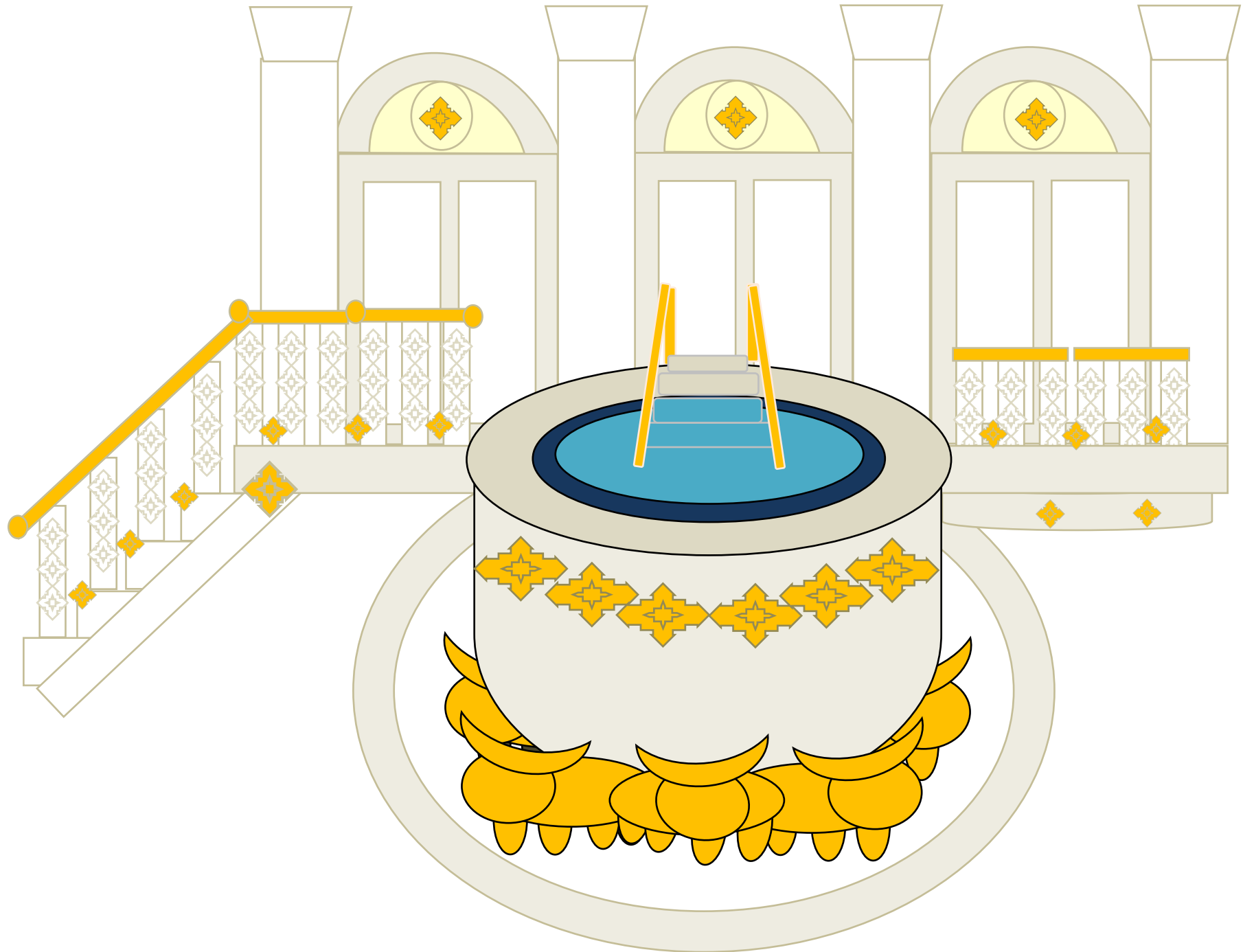
Sally Carlisle Randall

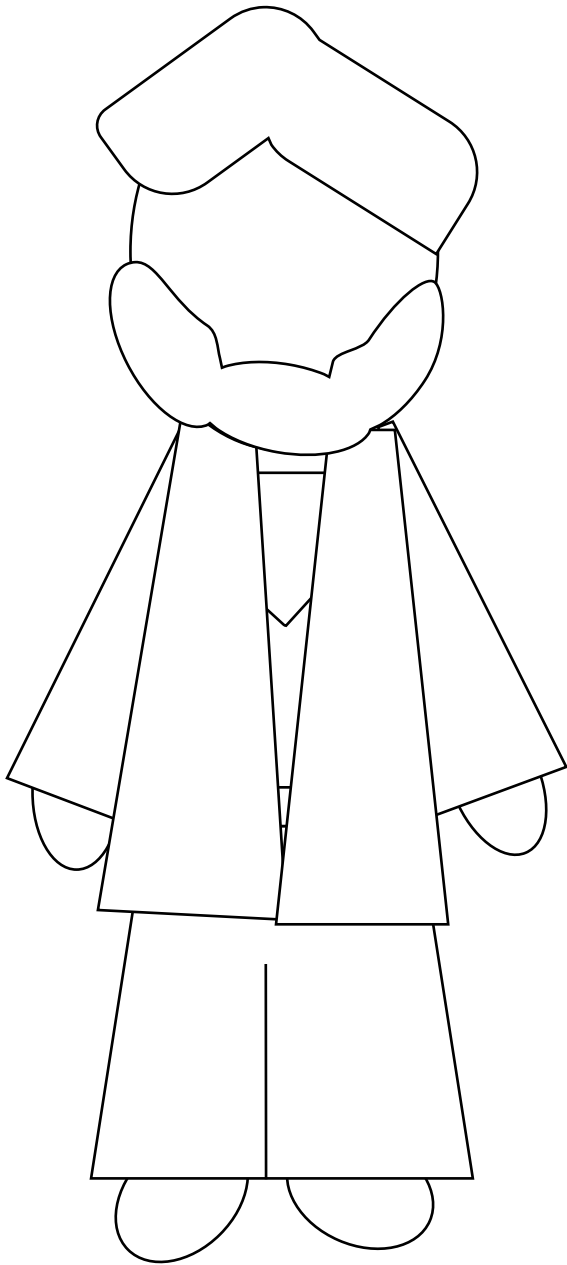
In writing to her friends and family about baptism for the dead, Sally Randall recalled the passing of her son George:

“Oh what a trying time that was to me and it seems yet that I can not be reconciled to have it so, but ... his father has been baptised for him and what a glorious thing it is that we believe and receive the fulness of the gospel as it is preached now and can be baptized for all of our dead friends and save them as far back as we can get any knowledge of them.

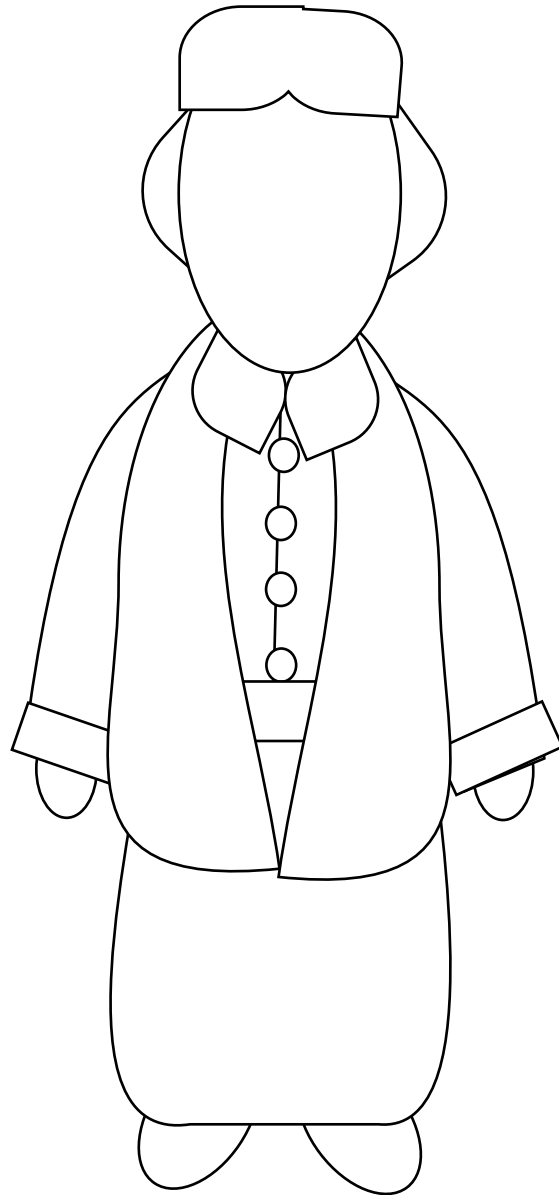
“I want you should write me the given names of all of our connections that are dead as far back as grandfathers and grandmothers at any rate. I intend to do what I can to save my friends and I should be very glad if some of you would come and help me for it is a great work for one to do alone. ... I expect you will think this is a strange doctrine but you will find it to be true.”⁵

Sally Randall letter, Apr. 21, 1844, Church History Library, Salt Lake City; spelling and punctuation modernized.

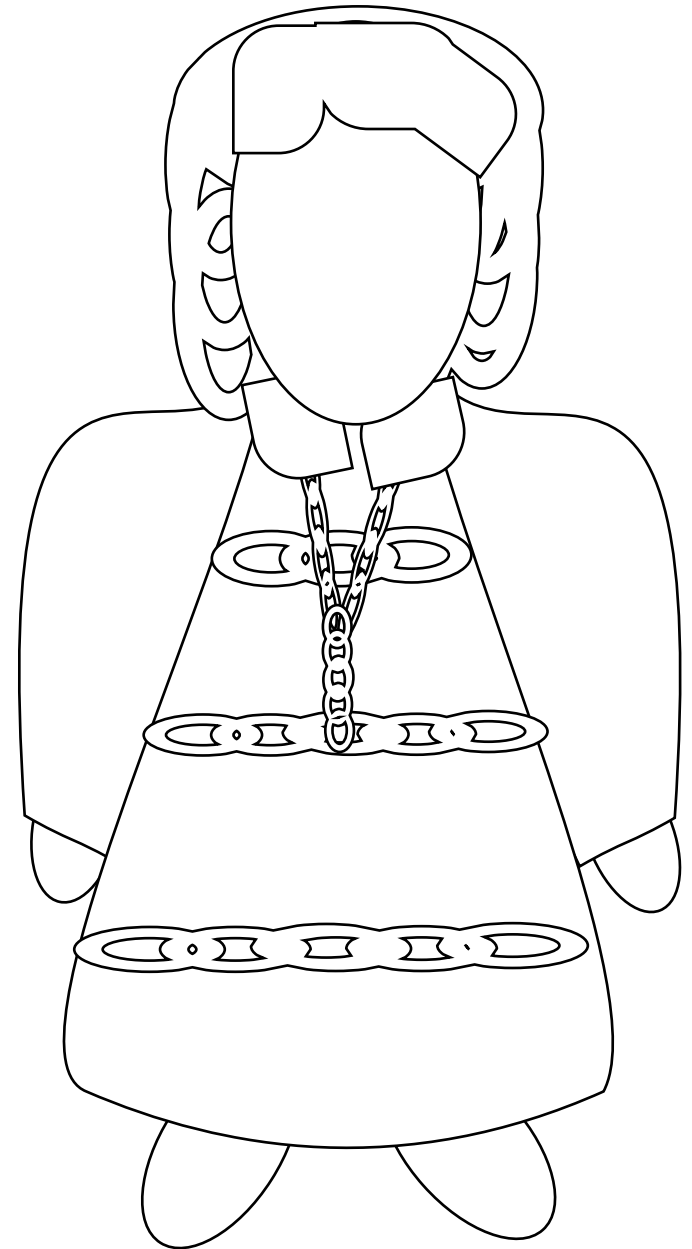




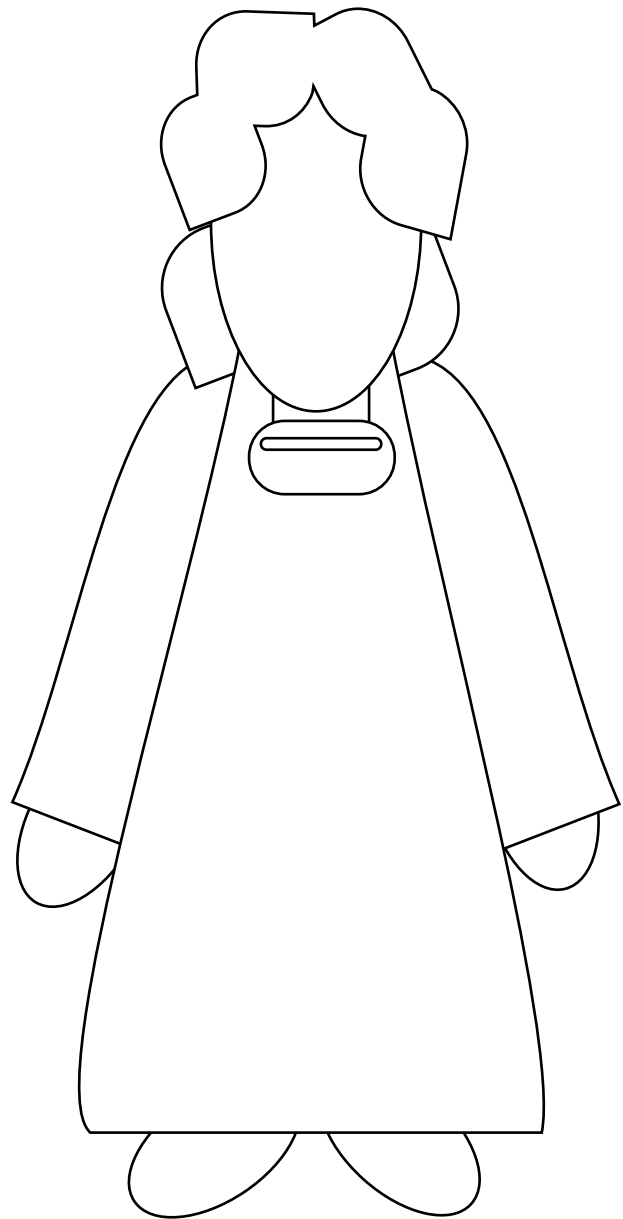
Wilford Woodruff



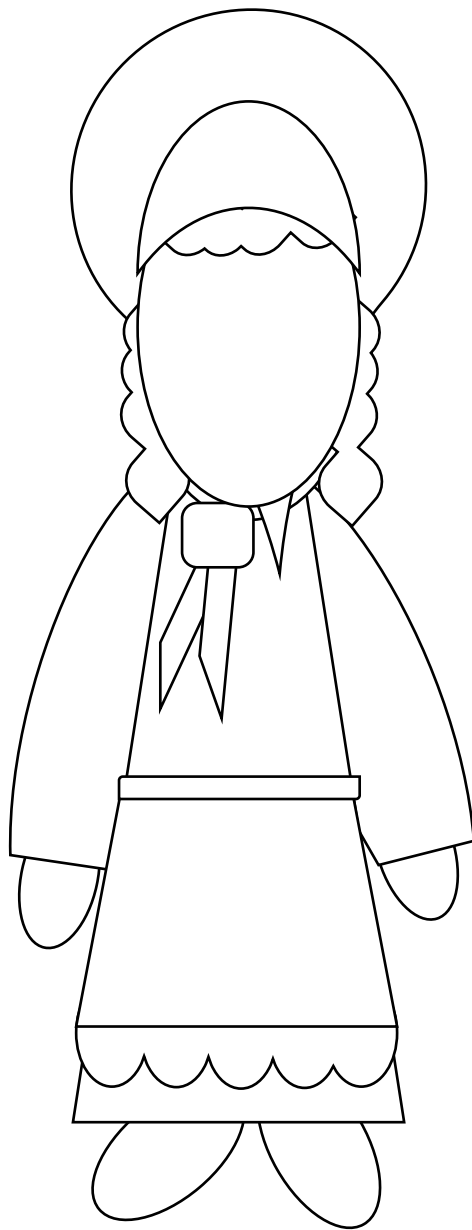
Phebe Woodruff



Vilate Kimball



Phebe Chase



Sally Carlisle Randall