



## Family Home Evening Lesson

# Joseph Knight, Sr. Friend to Joseph Smith

This packet includes:

Story of Joseph Knight's friendship with Joseph Smith  
with photos of the Knight farm, home and cane.

Craft project for older children making Father Knight's wagon and horse



Coloring page for younger children with Father Knight's wagon and horse.



Suggested songs for this lesson:

Primary songbook p. 199 "I Have a Family Tree" or

Primary songbook, p. 94, "Family History – I am Doing It"

## Father Knight, Friend to Joseph Smith

Joseph Knight and Polly Peck were born more than 200 years ago in the state of Vermont. When they were teenagers, George Washington became the first president of the United States. Polly and Joseph got married and became the parents of 7 children, Nahum, Esther, Newel, Anna, and Joseph Jr., Polly and Elizabeth. They moved to New York near the Susquehanna River because many of Polly's brothers and sisters lived there, and there was lots of good farm land.

Joseph Knight bought a farm on a bend in the Susquehanna River where he built two mills for grinding grain into flour and two carding machines that help turn sheep wool into thread or yarn for weaving. Their home was in Colesville Township. A township isn't the same as a town, it was all farmland, and a group of farm neighbors that elected leaders, including a sheriff and judges.

There was so much work to do on the farm! The Knight family had a lot of land and a big family. There was food to grow, work to keep the mills going, and animals to take care of. The two oldest brothers got married and lived near their parents Polly and Joseph, and so did sisters Anna and Esther.



*The Joseph Knight Family home in Colesville*



*Some of the land that was the Knight Farm next to the Susquehanna River*



*The land that was once Joseph Knight's farm in Colesville, New York*

### **Father Knight hired Joseph Smith**

By the summer of 1826, Joseph Knight realized he needed some help working his farm. He hired a young man from Palmyra, New York who was 21 and had done some work for a neighbor. His name was Joseph Smith, and while he worked on the Knight farm for a season he moved in with the Knight family and shared a bedroom with Joseph Knight, who was 18 years old.



**This table a table in Joseph Knight farm house. Joseph Smith sometimes ate with the Knight family and often told them of his spiritual experiences.**

Joseph Smith came to be a great friend. In the evenings after the farm work was done, Joseph Smith would sit at the kitchen table and tell mother Polly and father Joseph, and other family members about some of the amazing things that had happened to him.

Joseph Smith told the Knight family about the vision he saw in the grove of trees near his home in Palmyra. He told them about the angel that had visited him and told him about gold plates that were buried in the hill called Cumorah that was near his home. Joseph Smith explained how he had seen the plates, but that the angel named Moroni told him to come back each year on the same day until it was the right time for him to get them. Father Knight was fascinated in these stories.

Joseph Smith also told the Knights about the beautiful young woman named Emma who lived in a nearby town where Joseph had worked before coming to the Knights. Sometimes Joseph Smith borrowed Father Knight's wagon to go see Emma. After Joseph Smith married Emma Hale, the couple went back to Palmyra to live with Joseph's Smith's parents, but the Knights stayed good friends and visited them.

Joseph Knight pondered a great deal about the things Joseph Smith had told his family. He was especially interested in the gold plates that Joseph talked about, and was so very curious to know if Joseph really would get them from the Hill Cumorah. Joseph Knight kept track of the time Joseph told him that he would be going back to get the plates.

When the time was coming close, Father Joseph Knight decided to take a little business trip over to Palmyra with his friend Josiah Stowell. Joseph Smith's parents, Joseph and Lucy Smith, allowed Joseph Knight and Josiah Stowell to stay at their home for the night. Joseph and Emma were living there, too.

### **Joseph Knight at the Smith home**

On the evening of September 21<sup>st</sup>, Joseph Knight put his horse in the barn and left his wagon next to the Smith home. Joseph Smith's mother Lucy fed everyone dinner and most of the family went to bed. Lucy Smith stayed up late to do some chores, and about midnight, Joseph Smith came and asked his mother if she had a small chest that could be locked with a key. Lucy said "no," she didn't have anything like that, and Joseph went outside to the barn. A few minutes later, Emma went out the door, wearing her bonnet and riding dress. Then Lucy guessed where they were probably going.

A lot of the men in the neighborhood were very interested in finding gold, and they sometimes went out to hunt for buried treasure. A few of those men heard whispers that Joseph Smith had seen plates of gold buried in the hill and that he might be going to get them soon. One of those men was a troublemaker and said he was going to find the plates first. So, on the night when Moroni told him to get the plates, Joseph decided he would wait until long after dark to go to the hill. Joseph Smith knew Father Knight was a good friend and that it would be all right if he borrowed his horse and wagon.

Quietly, Joseph Smith took Joseph Knight's horse from the barn and hitched him to the wagon. Emma got in and together they rode to the Hill Cumorah. Lucy heard them leave, and couldn't sleep, knowing where they were going. She stayed awake and prayed all night, but heard nothing from Joseph and Emma.

The next morning, Lucy was busy fixing breakfast when Joseph Smith's father came in the kitchen and asked where Joseph could be. He didn't know that Joseph and Emma had left in the night and hadn't come back yet. Lucy decided to keep that secret. She told Father Smith that Joseph and Emma would eat breakfast in a little while.

### **A missing horse and wagon**

Soon, Joseph Knight came into the kitchen, quite concerned. "My horse is gone," he exclaimed and said he couldn't find the horse anywhere, and he needed to head for home soon that very morning.

"Don't worry," said Lucy, "we'll find the horse. There are lots of little nooks and corners in the pastures." But soon Father Knight went out again and discovered his wagon was gone. He was alarmed and went back in the house to announce that both his wagon and horse must have been stolen!

Lucy again told Father Knight things would be okay, and asked him to go outside and visit with Father Smith for a few minutes, and when he did. Lucy Smith was so relieved that Joseph and

Emma returned from the Hill Cumorah, but Lucy was worried because they appeared to be empty handed. Maybe Joseph didn't get the plates after all.

Joseph came in and reassured his mother that he got the plates from the hill, and he showed her the interesting crystal-like stones that he also brought home, that he called the Urim and Thummim. He explained to his mother that the Angle Moroni had warned Joseph to not let anyone steal the plates so he hid them on the way home in a hollowed out log about 3 miles from their house.

Joseph Smith was worried and went to the log to get the plates out and he wrapped them in his coat and rode off on his horse. In the woods he was attacked by three different men, but he was able to fight them off and get home with the plates still wrapped in his coat.

When he got home, Joseph asked his mother Lucy to go get his father, Joseph Knight and Mr. Stowell to see if they could find the men who had attacked him. All the men went looking but didn't find anyone. Meanwhile, Joseph's brother Hyrum found a chest with a lock and brought it home to him, and Joseph locked up the plates.

In a few days, word got around town that Joseph Smith had valuable gold plates. Many people offered him money for them, or wanted to see them, but Joseph did as the angel told him and kept them hidden. For a time they were hidden under the stones in front of the fireplace.

After a few weeks Joseph and Emma moved back to Harmony, Pennsylvania near Emma's family to live, where the plates would be safe. When they moved, they hid the gold plates in the bottom of a barrel of beans so no one would find them. It took four days by wagon to get to their new home. When Joseph and Emma moved to Harmony they were also closer to the Knight family in Colesville.

After Joseph Smith got the gold plates he wanted to translate them with the Urim and Thummin, but that proved to be a challenge. Joseph needed to work to get food for he and Emma, they needed a home built, and translating was strange and new and took time. Emma's parents lived close by but didn't like Joseph at all. Joseph Smith needed help and so he and Emma rode the 20 or 30 miles to the Knight home.

### **Shoes, Paper and Fish**

Joseph and Emma asked Father Knight if he could help them. Father Knight didn't have a lot of money right then, but he gave them some food and a pair of shoes. A month later Joseph Smith, Sr. and Hyrum Smith came to visit the Knights, and the Knights and the Smiths all took a sleigh down to Harmony to see Joseph and Emma. Father Knight took some paper for Joseph to write on when he was doing his translating work. Paper was very expensive in those days.

A couple of months later Joseph Knight took his wife Polly in the sleigh to go visit Joseph and Emma, and the friends were so happy to see them. Time continued to be hard for Joseph and Emma. They had a little baby boy that died a few days after it was born, and they were so sad.

It was very hard for Joseph to work on the Book of Mormon translation and work to grow food or earn money, so they struggled.



*Joseph Knight took Joseph Smith paper to use for translating the Book of Mormon*

One day when Father Knight heard that Joseph and Emma were out of food, he took them a barrel of mackerel (fish) and some lined paper for writing. When Joseph Knight went back again, he found Joseph Smith was away from home looking for some work to earn money. Emma was so happy to find that Father Knight brought them 9 bushels of grain and 5 bushels of potatoes. That gift gave them enough food to last until the translation of the Book of Mormon was done.

### **True Friends**

When it was time for the Book of Mormon to be printed, Father Knight and some of his family rode over to Palmyra to see the book and get one of the first copies. A few weeks later when it was time for the Church to be organized, Father Knight and many of his family were there.

In June of 1830 Emma Smith and many in the Knight family wanted to be baptized she and Joseph came to the Knight farm for a group baptismal service with many of the Knight family members, including Joseph and Polly Knight. Before everyone was baptized, some angry neighbors in Colesville came shouting and insulting the group and stopped the baptisms. They could not be confirmed because the angry men had the sheriff take Joseph Smith to see a judge because they said he was disrupted the peace. Emma and the Knights were confirmed later.

For the rest of their lives, the Joseph and Polly Knight were true friends to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Knight family had great faith in the things he taught them and in the church Joseph Smith organized. When Joseph Smith asked them to leave their homes in Colesville and move

to Kirtland, Ohio, they did it. When Joseph Smith asked the Knights to move their families again to Missouri to help build a temple there, they did it.

When the angry mobs chased the Knight family from Missouri, they built new homes in Nauvoo. When Joseph Smith asked his friends Newel and Joseph Knight, Jr. to build mills in Nauvoo so the people could grind flour for bread, they did it. For years, the Knight family followed Joseph Smith as their prophet and leader.

One day in Nauvoo, the prophet Joseph Smith saw Father Knight walking down the street. Joseph Smith went up to his old friend, put his arm around him, and put a cane into his Joseph Knight's hand. "Brother Knight, you need this cane more than I do," said Joseph Smith. That cane was in the Knight family for many years until it was given to the Church History Museum.



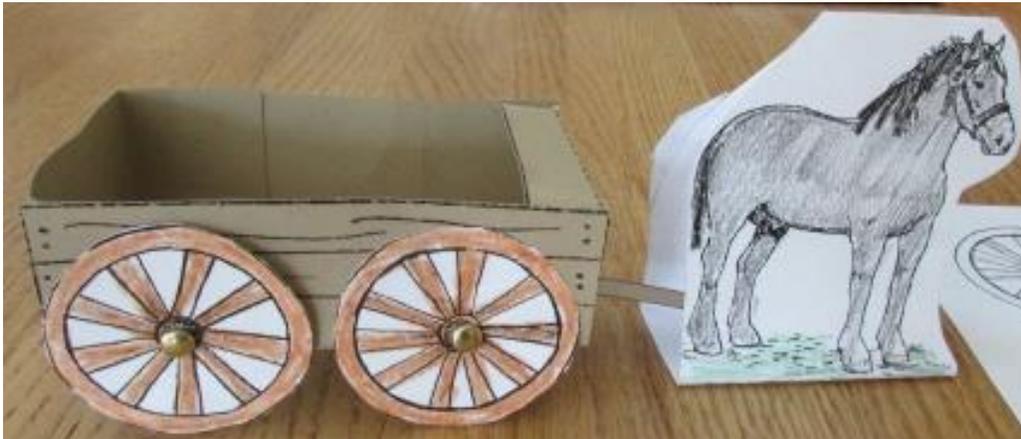
***In Nauvoo Joseph Smith gave his cane to his old friend, Joseph Knight, Sr.***



***Elder Steven Snow, Church Historian at the time, brought the cane Joseph Smith gave to Joseph Knight, Sr. to the Knight Family Reunion in 2014.***

## Craft – color or make Joseph Knight, Sr., wagon

Make a Horse and Wagon



Or color a horse and wagon

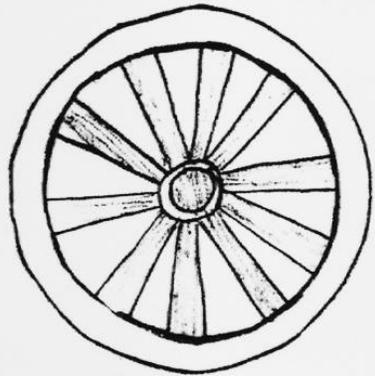
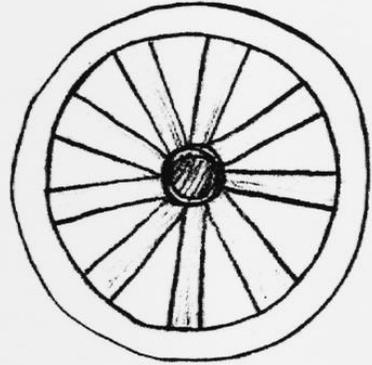
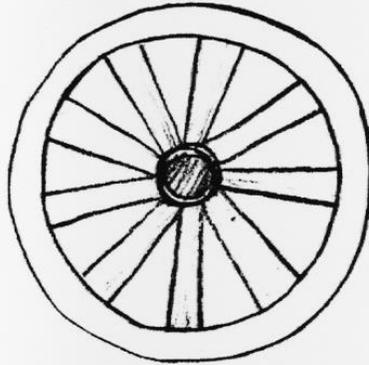
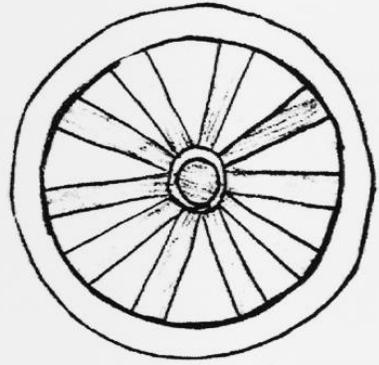
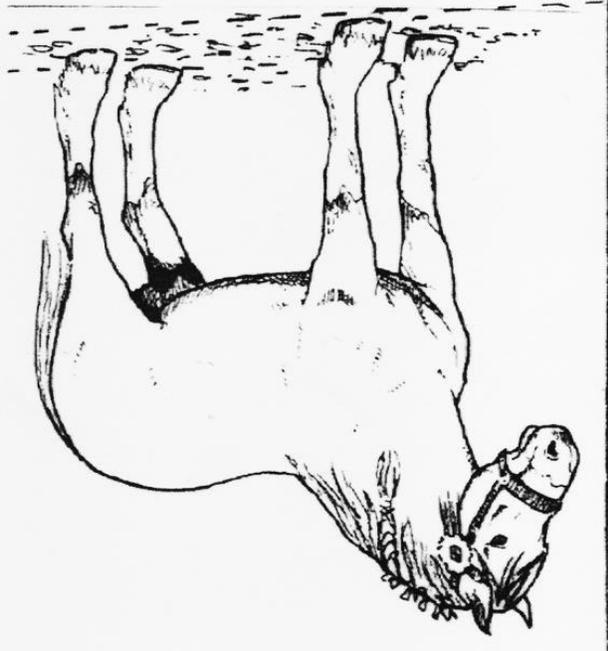
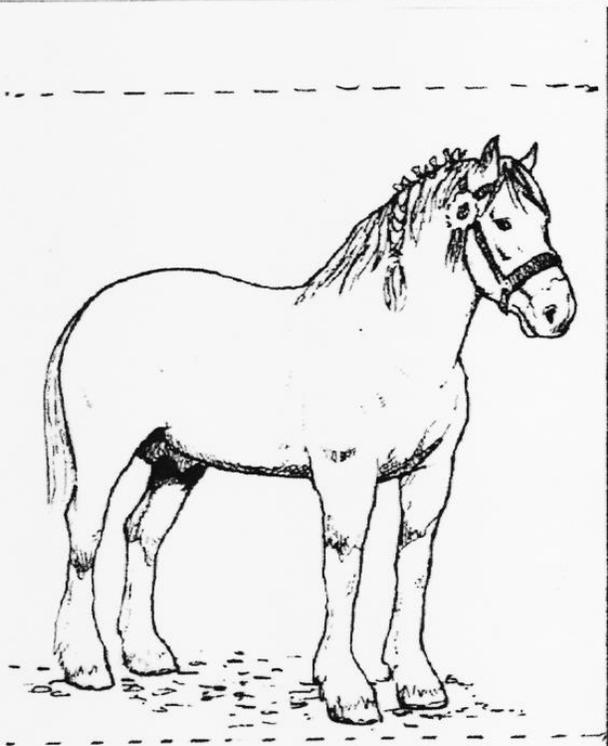


On the following pages are:

1. A coloring page with a horse and wagon. Children can draw a stick figure of Joseph Smith driving the wagon.
2. Make a 3D horse and wagon craft.

Copy on card stock the horse and wagon wheels. Child can cut out the wheels to attach to the wagon with brads. Cut along the solid line for the horse. Fold on dotted lines and secure with tape to make the horse stand up.

Copy on brown paper, or color the paper brown for the wagon.



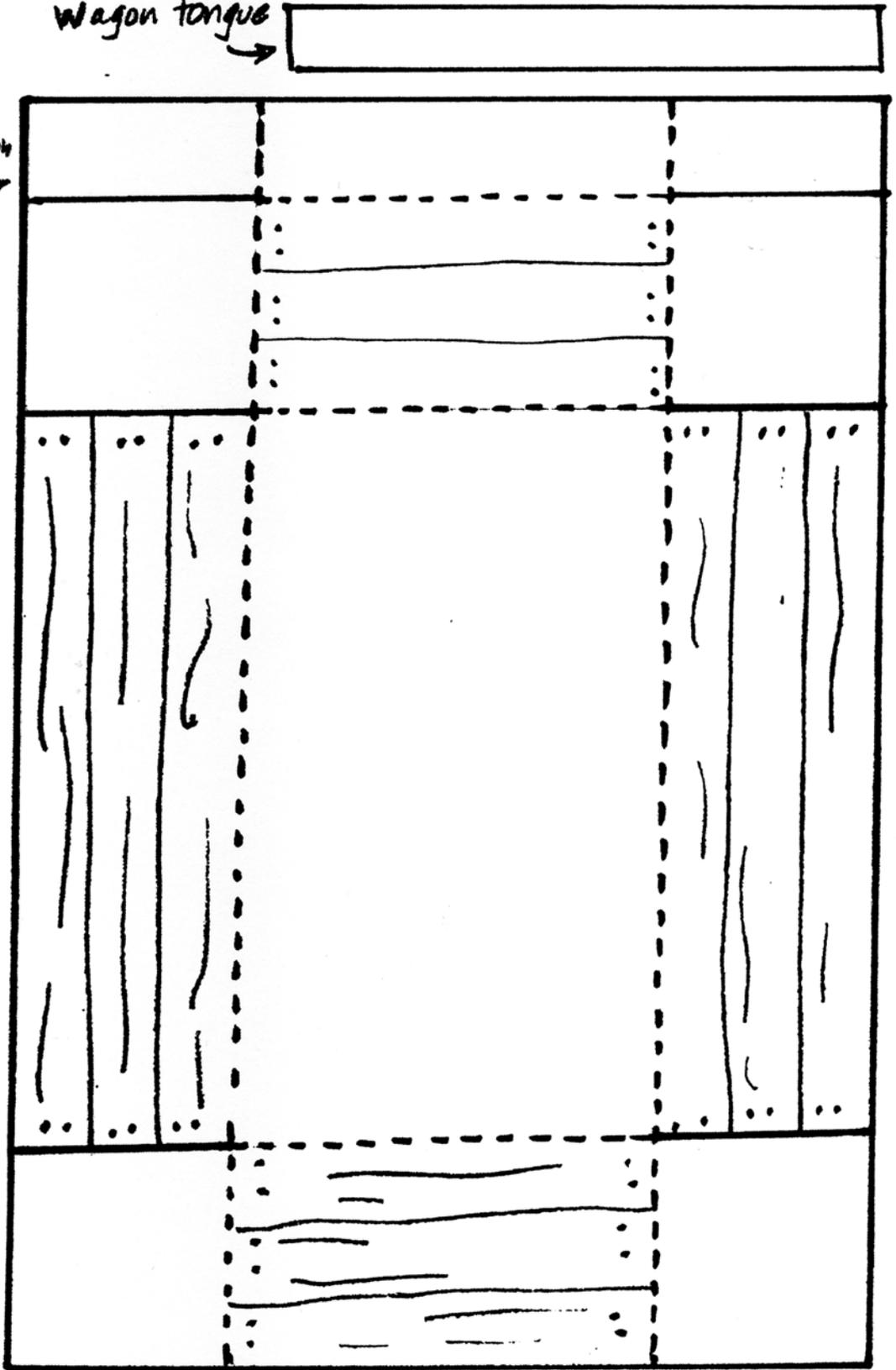
Wheels for Father Knight's Wagon  
and his horse.

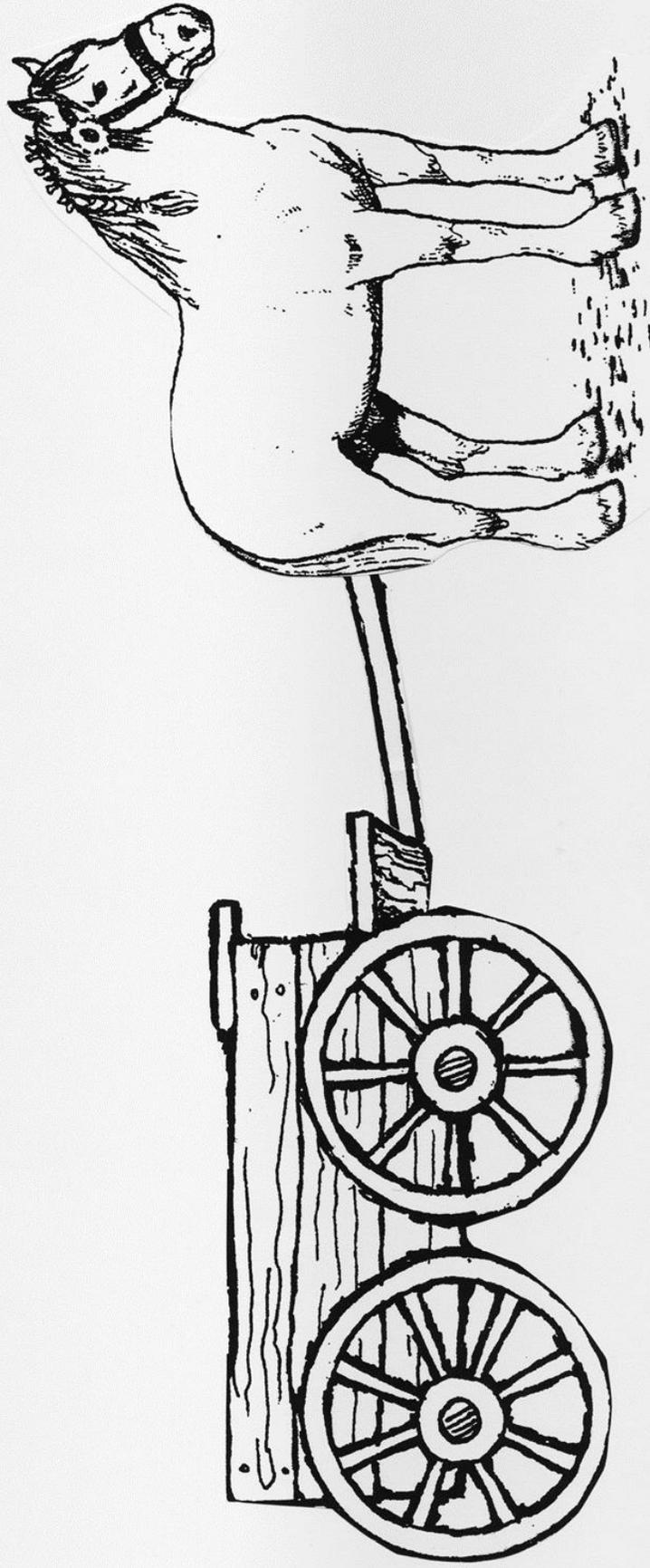
### Father Knight's Wagon

Copy the wagon and horse on cardstock. Color, and cut out along solid lines. Fold on dotted lines. Glue or tape wagon corners and above horse head together. Attach wagon wheels with brads or glue.

Seat on the front of wagon  
→

Wagon tongue  
→





Joseph Smith used Joseph Knight's wagon and horse to go get the gold plates from the Hill Cumorah.  
Color the wagon and horse and draw Joseph and Emma driving the wagon.