

Elder Ballard Returns to Caribbean

More than 30 years ago Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated the Dominican Republic and opened the land for missionary work. In November 2009 Elder Ballard returned to the area to witness how the gospel has flourished. He reminisced about his visit to the Caribbean in 1978, saying, “When we arrived, there were only 26 members in the Dominican Republic, and most had been members only a short time.”

Since then, the Church in the Dominican Republic has grown to more than 110,000 members.

“They are as wonderful . . . as we have anywhere in the world,” Elder Ballard said. “They radiate the power of having the gospel in their lives.”

Thousands of Church members gathered in meetinghouses throughout the Caribbean to hear Elder Ballard’s words translated into various languages including Dutch, French, Haitian, and Spanish.

Elder Ballard urged the Saints to keep the commandments, pay an honest tithe, and be worthy to enter the temple.

He counseled that by doing these things, they would be blessed.

“Our Father in Heaven will pour blessings out upon you that you never dreamed possible because you are His; you are His sons and His daughters.”

To watch a video about Elder Ballard’s visit, go to <http://newsroom.lds.org/ldsnewsroom/eng/news-releases-stories/video-church-grows-in-the-dominican-republic>. ■

Chorale’s Singers Get Up to Speed

In 1999 President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) made a request that the Mormon Tabernacle Choir—already a world-renowned choral group—continue to “get better and better.” In response to this call, the choir, made up of volunteer LDS singers, implemented a training school and singing group called the Temple Square Chorale.

The Temple Square Chorale and training school are held each year from January to April following annual choir auditions. In the chorale, new choir members practice music chosen by Ryan Murphy, associate director for the choir, and members are given feedback on how to use their voices within the ensemble.

The training school is a 16-week academic class, instructing chorale members on music theory, sight-reading, chorale ensemble singing, and other skills, explained Cherilyn

Worthen, director of the school. “[The program] is similar to a small missionary training center where we help prepare them to go out and be musical missionaries,” Sister Worthen said.

Sight-reading and music theory skills are especially essential for singers to keep up with the fast pace of the Tabernacle Choir’s rehearsals.

“It takes substantial training to acquaint new singers with the musical, vocal, and logistical demands of the choir,” said Brother Murphy.

The most recent auditions for the Tabernacle Choir brought

400 submissions by hopeful singers to Temple Square, and of the hundreds of applicants, 78 were accepted.

New members, along with second-year choir members, make up the Temple Square Chorale.

The experience in the chorale culminates in a final performance, held at the end of the program. This year’s performance will be on April 23 and 24, accompanied by the Orchestra at Temple Square. The chorale will perform *Lord*



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Nelson Mass, a work composed by Joseph Haydn in 1798.

Upon graduation from the Temple Square

For more than 10 years, the Tabernacle Choir has used the Temple Square Chorale as a training school to improve new choir members’ abilities.

Chorale program and training school, singers may finally call themselves official members of the Tabernacle Choir.

Auditions for the Tabernacle Choir will next begin in July. Applications may be found at www.mormontabernaclechoir.org ■

Article by Lauren Allen, Church Magazines