



By Sara D. Smith

Karen Lillywhite slipped into the back of the room and quietly found a seat among her fellow temple workers, who shifted to make room for her. They greeted each other happily and softly, enjoying the atmosphere before the meeting that would begin their Saturday morning shift at the Provo Utah Temple. The meeting's hymn, prayer, and messages brought a spirit of peace that Karen and the other workers could take with them while participating in sacred ordinances during the next five hours.

Karen, a student at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, USA, volunteered to serve in the temple because she wanted to do the Lord's work. Even though Karen has had to miss some activities and a little study time while she works in the temple on Saturdays, she does not regret dedicating her time to service.

"I love being able to spend so much time in the house of the Lord serving others," Karen says. "There are things that you can learn from the perspective of a temple worker that are different from what you learn as a patron. Getting

An illustration of a mountain valley. In the foreground, a group of people in formal attire are walking along a path. To the left, an American flag stands on a tall pole. The background features steep, rocky mountains with patches of green and autumn-colored trees under a blue sky with light clouds.

Temple Service and Unexpected Blessings

Workers in the Provo Utah Temple have learned that giving their time to serve the Lord and His children brings abundant blessings.

both perspectives opens up a lot of revelation and understanding for me.”

Karen says that every part of her life has been blessed by the temple. Serving as a temple worker motivates her to live the gospel more fully and has brought her closer to the Lord and to those with whom she serves.

One of the things Karen appreciates most about her service in the temple is her association with others. “I’ve gotten to know the other temple workers and the patrons that come regularly to my shift,” she explains. “One sister

comes to the temple each week and stays for hours, bringing a beautiful spirit with her. I have met some incredible individuals who inspire me and bless my life.”

Karen is one of thousands of Church members who serve in temples around the world. No matter where they serve, these temple workers learn what Karen and those who serve with her in the Provo Temple on Saturday mornings have realized: temple work brings abundant blessings not only to their own lives, but also to their families and to those for whom the temple work is vicariously done.

Renewal of Strength

The Provo Utah Temple is one of the busiest temples in the world. It serves a highly concentrated population of Latter-day Saints, including the missionaries at the Provo Missionary Training Center and the students of two universities. Many of the workers in this temple are young couples, students, and recently returned missionaries.

One of these younger workers is Jenny Perkins, who started working in the temple soon after returning from her mission in Russia. Jenny works alongside her parents, Jack and Toni, and enjoys learning from them as they serve together. When Jenny considered discontinuing her shift because she was overwhelmed with school, Toni taught her about the blessings that come from temple service.

“My mother reminded me that if I was willing to sacrifice for the Lord and exercise a little faith, He would make up the difference. Now I can testify that this is true,” explains Jenny. “Working in the temple helped clear my mind so I could finish my other work more accurately and efficiently.”

Her father, Jack, has noticed similar blessings. Over the past few years, he has worked extra hours each week in his employment and has held Church callings that required much of his time. But as he has immersed himself in temple service, he has felt his strength renewed.

“I am renewed by the time I spend working on behalf of other people,” Jack says. “Everything else I do in the other six days would be more of a burden if I didn’t spend that time in the temple doing service.”

Happiness in Serving

As a young girl growing up in Brazil, Natalina Durelli would look at pictures of



Serving in the temple draws us closer to the Savior by helping us reflect on His love.

the Salt Lake Temple and dream of visiting a temple herself. She had joined the Church with her family, and at the time there were no temples in South America.

Her dream became a reality when the São Paulo Brazil Temple was built near her home. She was present when the temple was dedicated in 1978.

“I had the privilege of singing in the choir that provided music for the dedication,” she remembers. “It was a wonderful season of my life and helped strengthen my desire to be closer to the temple.”

Natalina wanted to serve a full-time mission but was unable to do so because of family obligations. After she received her endowment, she volunteered as a temple worker, and this service became her mission. She served every Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. while working full time and taking classes.

“I was grateful that I was blessed with the energy to be on my feet in the temple for so many hours,” she says. “I remember coming home exhausted physically and emotionally, but with a testimony of the temple and the work we do inside those walls.”

Thirty years later, Natalina, now living in Utah, became a temple worker once again. She has faced many trials in her life, but serving others in the temple brings her peace.

“I have found that working in the temple helps me overcome discouragement,” she says. “While serving others, I don’t have time to feel unhappy.”

An Extra Measure of Blessings

When they first were called to work in the Provo Utah Temple, Joel and Elaine White hoped to serve in the baptistry on a week-day evening. But the temple president, then

Merrill J. Bateman, had something else in mind for them.

President Bateman asked them to serve as ordinance workers on the shift that needed the most help—the Saturday shift from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. They were hesitant, both to take on the responsibilities of an ordinance worker and to give so much time on their only free day. But they chose to serve where they were needed and have been blessed abundantly.

With their new temple shift, the Whites initially struggled to fit in tasks they usually completed on Saturdays, so they soon dedicated weeknights to chores like laundry and shopping.

“We have been blessed to be more efficient with our time,” says Joel. “Giving our Saturdays may look like a sacrifice, but it has not been anything of the sort. The Lord has given us an extra measure of blessings.”

Now there isn’t any other day they would rather work in the temple. Saturdays are busy, so the Whites look forward to helping hundreds of temple patrons participate in sacred ordinances. One of the greatest blessings the Whites have seen from their service is in their family.

“It has brought us closer together,” says Joel. “We have experienced a bit of what it will be like to be together for eternity. Serving with my wife has helped me see her more clearly, more as the Savior does. That helps me be more empathetic and focused on her instead of on myself. We encourage our adult children to make temple attendance central in their lives because that makes the Savior central in their lives.”

At one point, one of their sons struggled to stay strong in the gospel. The Whites wanted to help him but weren’t sure how. They continued to serve as best they could and turned their situation over to the Lord.

One morning while Elaine was working in the temple, another worker told her that a patron wanted to talk to her. She turned in the direction the worker pointed and was filled with joy as she realized she was looking at her son.

“Surprise, Mom!” she heard him say. He had worked with his bishop to build up his testimony and be worthy to enter the temple.

“He was so happy,” Elaine remembers. “He made a complete change and has developed a love for the temple.”

The Whites have learned that serving faithfully brings blessings.

“Heavenly Father cares about what is important to us,” Elaine says. “That doesn’t mean all of our problems will be solved, but we will receive help. I have learned that when we are serving the Lord, He will hear us and bless us.”

An Act of Love

For ordinance workers in the Provo Utah Temple and throughout the world, serving is an act of love.

“My ability to love has increased,” says Toni. “As a temple worker, wherever I am or whatever I am doing in the temple, I have the ability and responsibility to reflect the love of the Savior. As I practice doing that in the temple, I am better able to reflect on His love outside of the temple.”

All who participate in temple work reflect the love of the Savior by helping extend the blessings of the gospel to all of Heavenly Father’s children.

“The prophets have told us to do temple work,” says Toni. “If you can’t work in the temple right now, you can serve as a patron or do family history work. The sacrifices we make for temple work allow the Savior’s sacrifice to reach more people.” ■



STEP WITHIN THE SACRED HOUSE OF GOD

“I am satisfied that every man or woman who goes to the temple in a spirit of sincerity and faith leaves the house of the Lord a better man or woman. There is need for

constant improvement in all of our lives. There is need occasionally to leave the noise and the tumult of the world and step within the walls of a sacred house of God, there to feel His spirit in an environment of holiness and peace.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “Of Missions, Temples, and Stewardship,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 53.