

MY SERVICE AS A SINGLE MEMBER

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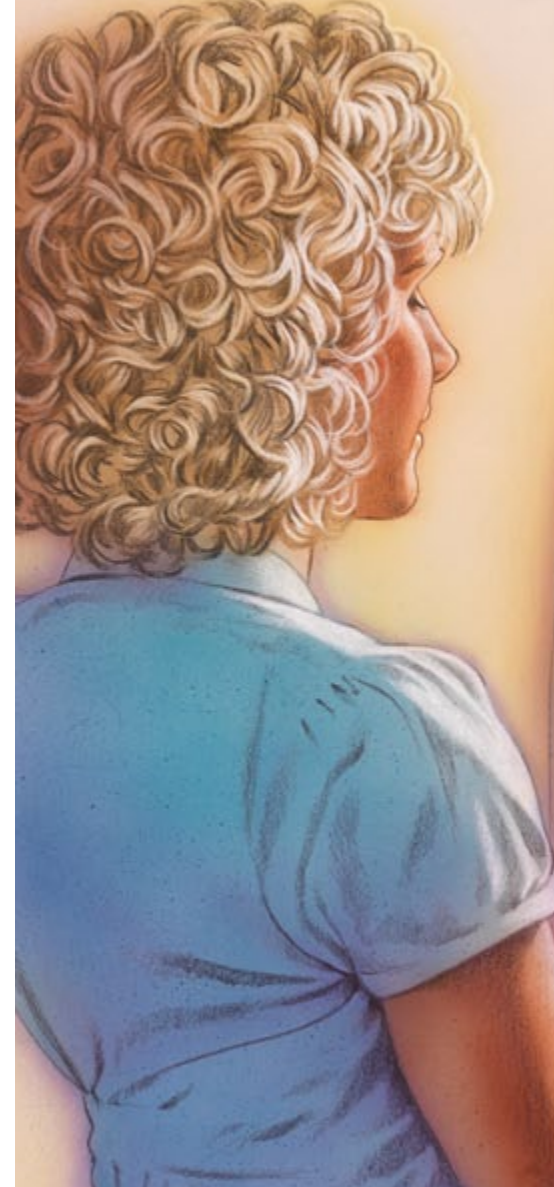
*When I received a new calling, I was stunned.
“Can I do that?” I asked myself.*

About seven years ago, when I was 29, I moved to Utah from Oregon, USA. After weighing my options, I decided to attend my local family ward, thinking I needed a change from the singles wards I had attended.

My parents raised me to always accept Church callings, so I made an appointment with the bishop to present myself as someone who wanted to be put to work. It wasn't long before I found myself teaching the five-year-olds in Primary, which I enjoyed. Five months later the bishop called me to be Primary president. I was stunned. “Can I do that?” I asked myself.

Being single and childless made me wonder if I was qualified to serve in that capacity. In my past experience with family wards, Primary presidents were happily married, accomplished, and devoted mothers. Remembering what my parents had taught me, however, I accepted the new assignment. The bishop truly took to heart the mandate that bishops are to “find meaningful callings for all young single adults.”¹ The calling may have been a little more meaningful than I was expecting, but I was grateful for it.

As I served in my new calling, I experienced many sweet, funny, and



inspiring moments with the children. One year, during Christmastime, we reenacted the Nativity for a special sharing time. We sang songs. We furnished robes and towel headdresses for the shepherds and for Joseph. We had tinsel garlands for the angels' heads. We made cardboard and foil-covered crowns for the Wise Men.

As we reenacted the Christmas story and sang the sacred songs of the season, I noticed the beautiful young girl who was portraying Mary. Her example of reverence and gentleness as she knelt, quietly holding the doll that represented the baby Jesus, touched my heart. The spirit of



that moment made me thankful to a loving Heavenly Father for our Savior and helped strengthen my testimony of His profound and loving mission. It also made me thankful for the tremendous blessing I had received in being called to serve and for an inspired bishop who helped to make that service possible.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, we read, “Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work” (D&C 4:3). Though this verse is usually associated with missionary work, I like to think that it can refer to any form of gospel-based service.

Regardless of marital or social

status, each of us is first and foremost a child of a loving Heavenly Father, who wants us to grow, belong, develop our talents, serve one another, and help one another return to Him.

The acceptance and love I felt in that ward was instantaneous and remains in my heart to this day. My desire to serve was recognized and utilized, many people reached out and welcomed me, and Heavenly Father truly blessed me. Because of kind and attentive leaders, I was blessed to teach and learn from some of His most wonderful children. ■

NOTE

1. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 16.3.3.



LOVING ATTENTION

“Although many single adult members are well-adjusted to life and its problems, they still need loving attention from the Church and its members to reaffirm their usefulness and the love that God has for each of them.”

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Welcoming Every Single One,” *Liahona*, Aug. 2007, 4; *Ensign*, Aug. 2007, 6.