The First Presidency: Thomas S. Monson, Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry, Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland, David A. Bednar, Quentin L. Cook, D. Todd Christofferson, Neil L. Andersen

Editor: Paul B. Pieper Advisers: Keith R. Edwards, Christoffel Golden Jr., Per G. Malm

Managing Director: David L. Frischknecht Evaluation, Planning, and Editorial Director: Vincent A. Vaughn Graphics Director: Allan R. Loyborg

Managing Editor: Brittany Beattie Assistant Managing Editor: Janet Thomas Associate Editors: David A. Edwards, Paul VanDenBerghe Publications Assistant: Sally Johnson Odekirk Editorial Intern: Elyse Alexandria Harris Editorial Staff: Mindy Raye Friedman, Susan Barrett, Ryan Carr, Jenifer L. Greenwood, R. Val Johnson, Adam C. Olson

Art Director: Brent Christison Senior Designer: Fay P. Andrus Design and Production Staff: Nicole Erickson, Collette Nebeker Aune, Eric P. Johnsen, Scott M. Mooy, Jane Ann Peters, Scott Van Kampen Prepress: Joshua Dennis

Printing Director: Craig K. Sedgwick Distribution Director: Evan Larsen

© 2011 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. The *New Era* (ISSN 0164-5285) is published monthly by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431.



CHRISTMAS AT THE MTC, P. 2

The Message: Christmas at the MTC

Elder L. Tom Perry The greatest joy we have is seeking out those in need and sharing the joy of Christmas with them.

Thoughtful Gifts

5

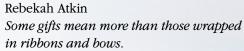
6

9

10

14

2



What Is Mighty Prayer?

Kersten Campbell One young woman wanted to find the answer to this question.

How I Know: The Lord Poured Out Blessings

Kim Koung

A young convert to the Church chose to serve a mission and found that his family was blessed.

The Power of a Friend

Melissa Merrill

Two young people from Kansas had their lives changed because of their close friends.

In Tune: Softly Falls the Evening Light

Janice Kapp Perry and Orrin G. Hatch

Questions & Answers

"How can I keep a positive attitude about the future?"

Three Great Reasons to Give Thanks 18

John Hilton III and Anthony Sweat Three reasons why being grateful is a good idea.

What Did You Get for Christmas? 21

Lauren Meese What one young woman received warmed her and gave her a sense of belonging.



LEARNING FROM NATURE, P. 29

A Sure Witness

Elder Carl B. Pratt It suddenly became clear that Joseph Smith was a prophet and the Book of Mormon was the word of God.

Finding a Message in the Music 24

Elyse Alexandria Holmes

Performing in a stake production of Savior of the World *had a profound effect on these California teens' testimonies.*

Dancing by the Light of a Christmas Tree

Amy Jones

Dancing alone by the glow of Christmas lights helped a young woman realize her worth.

Learning from Nature

Mindy Raye Friedman The joy and trust between one young man and his falcon also teaches lessons about life.

This Shall Be a Sign unto You30Whitney HinckleyProphecies throughout ancient scripturestestify of the Savior's birth.

Mormonad: You Are Never Alone

Gospel Classics: Lessons from the Master

Elder Marvin J. Ashton Let us follow the light of Jesus Christ.

To Be Forgiven Is a Gift

22

28

29

33

34

David Alexander When a young teen broke his brother's prized glasses, he wondered if he would be forgiven.

What's Up?

The Extra Smile

They Should Change

Francisco Javier Lara Hernández Just exactly who was the one who needed to change attitudes?

Instant Messages



The precious gift of eternal life; He lives!; the family matters most; Christmas doesn't end.

INSTANT MESSAGES, P. 44

Meet Brother Joseph

Did you know all these things about the Prophet Joseph Smith?

From Church Leaders: How to Prepare for the Sacrament 48

Elder Dallin H. Oaks The ordinance of the sacrament makes the sacrament meeting the most sacred and important meeting in the Church.

Poem:

Waterfalls in Winter Pat Diane Buckner

> **Photo** Justin John Soderquist

36

38

41

42

44

47

49

49

The New Era *Magazine Volume 41, Number 12 December 2011*

The monthly magazine for youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Editorial Offices:

New Era 50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2420 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

E-mail Address: newera@ldschurch.org

To Change Address: Send old and new address information to: Distribution Services P.O. Box 26368 Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA. Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

Cover: Teens participate in the production Savior of the World. See "Finding a Message in the Music," p. 24.

Cover photograph: Nancy Reynolds

Text and visual material in the New Era may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; e-mail cor-intellectualproperty@ ldschurch.org.

TO SUBMIT MATERIAL:

Send stories, articles, photos, poems, and ideas online at **newera.lds.org**. Click "Submit Material," and fill in the form. Or e-mail or mail them to the Editorial Offices address above. For return, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

TO SUBSCRIBE: By phone: Call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express. Online: Go to store.lds.org. By mail: Send \$8 U.S. check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Visit us online at **NewEra.lds.org**.

1