

# WHERE WE WERE NEEDED

By Wilfried and Laura Eyi

*A prompting to move to Brooklyn, New York, led us to service and blessings we never could have imagined.*

In 2013 we were living in Manhattan, New York, USA. We loved our ward. Because we were expecting our first child, we began looking for a larger apartment in the ward. We found one that seemed perfect, but it didn't feel right.

That spring, Laura started to feel that maybe we should move to Brooklyn. Wil wasn't so sure. We didn't know anything about Brooklyn, and Wil wanted to be close to his investment-banking job so that, given his long work hours, he had a short commute. We decided to pray about it and listen for an answer during general conference.

As we watched the talks on a laptop computer in our studio apartment, Elder Stanley G. Ellis of the Seventy shared an experience he had as a member of a stake presidency. He said that families moving into his stake in Texas, USA, would often ask which ward was best. Only once in 16 years did a family ask which ward needed help.<sup>1</sup>

We were touched by his story. It answered our prayers. So, instead of staying in a ward we loved, that we felt comfortable in, and that had a great nursery and Primary, we took Elder Ellis's advice to heart and prayed about where we should move.

At the time, we were serving as ordinance workers in the Manhattan New York Temple. One of the workers there knew New York City well. He suggested two wards where he thought we could help—*both in Brooklyn*.

The first ward was too far from Wil's work. The second one was closer, and we felt we had found the right place when we visited the ward's sacrament meeting. Many of the members were Haitian immigrants. Because Wil is from Gabon and speaks French, we thought the ward would be a great home for us.

## Remarkable Experiences

A few weeks later we found an apartment and moved in. Wil was soon called to serve in various

meaningful ways. Understanding the language took some time, but he felt blessed to quickly become proficient enough in Haitian Creole to help interpret for members during meetings and interviews. Laura was also blessed to serve in various capacities, and we became involved in missionary work.

One of the friends we made was a young investigator named Normil Romelus, who had come from Haiti to get an education. He would visit our home with the missionaries, and we would help teach him in French and Creole. After Normil was baptized, we sponsored him in the Church's Pathway program, where he met his future wife. Wil felt grateful to attend their marriage in the Manhattan Temple.

We also met a faithful sister who came to New York from Haiti to be treated for cancer. During her stays, the ward council did everything it could to help her and make sure she had what she needed, including transportation to and from her treatments. We were blessed to serve and visit her during

this time. We hoped for a better ending, but she passed away.

Those two experiences represent what the ward did for people—help them and lift them. We are grateful for these and other remarkable experiences.

### What Really Matters

We learned that when we serve the Lord and His children, He takes care of us. Our experiences in Brooklyn helped keep us grounded. They especially helped Wil care less about the fanfare of Wall Street and remember what matters most. In investment banking, almost everyone works on Sundays. Wil occasionally had to do catch-up work from home, but the Lord blessed us so that he never had to go into the office on Sundays.

When we moved to Brooklyn, we thought we were going to be one of only two families with young children in the ward. But the ward's boundaries changed two weeks after we



moved in, and several other young families also moved in.

Eventually, we intend to move to Gabon. We feel that our experiences in Brooklyn have helped prepare us to better serve the Church and people of Africa. We're thankful we

followed the prompting to move. The Lord blessed us—and continues to bless us—in ways we never could have imagined. ■

*The authors now live in Massachusetts, USA.*

#### NOTE

1. See Stanley G. Ellis, "The Lord's Way," *Ensign*, May 2013, 36–38.