

THE CHURCH IS *HERE?*

I joined the Church at age 36, and at times I felt spiritually strong. Other times I just went through the motions. Between a hectic work schedule, my wife starting a new career, poor health, and other challenges, I began to struggle spiritually. I attended church and helped teach the deacons quorum, but that was all I could bring myself to do. I couldn't find the strength to open my scriptures or kneel to pray.

I was still struggling when I left on a business trip to northern Chile. From the airport in Copiapó, we drove two hours to the site for a solar installation project in Chile's Atacama Desert. I was surprised by how remote this region was, only red desert for miles and

miles. The loneliness of the landscape was startling.

After being on-site for about a week, we drove to the nearest town for supplies. There I saw a building that caught my eye. I asked the driver to pull over. The building had beautiful grounds that were surrounded by a black wrought-iron fence. On the front of the building was a familiar sign, "La Iglesia de Jesucristo de los Santos de los Últimos Días," or "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"The Church is *here?*" I thought. I was amazed that the Church had made it to this remote part of the world. I took a picture of the meeting-house and texted it to my wife. Her

response had a profound effect on me: "Heavenly Father is aware of His people everywhere."

This was a direct message for me from my Heavenly Father. In the stress of living day to day, I had forgotten, and needed to be reminded, that Heavenly Father loves all His children. He loves those Saints in that small and remote town in the middle of the desert, and He also loves me.

That night I knelt and thanked Heavenly Father for the blessings He had given me that day. Knowing that He loves me has helped me rebuild my spirituality, and it continues to strengthen me each day. ■

Jon Evans, California, USA

As we drove to the nearest town for supplies, a building we passed caught my eye.

