

Millions Sustain New Church Leaders in Solemn Assembly

Members of the Church around the world met in meetinghouses and homes by satellite, television, radio, or Internet to sustain in solemn assembly the new President and First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 5, 2008.

President Thomas S. Monson and his counselors in the First Presidency, President Henry B. Eyring and President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, were announced on February 4, 2008, following the passing of President Gordon B. Hinckley on January 27. However, the 178th Annual General Conference of the Church held on April 5 and 6, 2008, was the first opportunity that members of the Church as a whole had to sustain their new leaders.

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles were also sustained during the solemn assembly originating

in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City. Elder D. Todd Christofferson was sustained as the newest member of that quorum. Members also sustained the other General Authorities and general auxiliary leaders of the Church.

Elder L. Whitney Clayton of the First Quorum of the Seventy was called to fill the vacancy left in the Presidency of the Seventy by Elder Christofferson's call.

Fifteen men were sustained as new members of the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy, along with the sustaining of a new Young Women general presidency. (See accompanying biographical information.) Two members of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, Elders Craig C. Christensen and William R. Walker, were sustained to the First Quorum of the Seventy. Additionally, 38 new Area Seventies were called to serve in their respective areas of the





Church. (See pages 4–7 for a complete list of those called and released during general conference.)

President Monson is the first Church President sustained in a solemn assembly held in the Conference Center. According to Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy, Church Historian and Recorder, the Prophet Joseph Smith and his presidency were sustained in a solemn assembly held in the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836. Brigham Young and his presidency were first sustained on December 27, 1847, in the Kanesville Tabernacle at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Beginning with President John Taylor on October 10, 1880, every

President until President Monson had been sustained in a solemn assembly held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

“While Church members in early solemn assemblies were able to participate only by attendance in the Tabernacle,” Elder Jensen says, “in recent years congregations around the world have participated via satellite broadcast, with stake presidencies observing the vote of the congregations. Beginning in 1945, Church members listening to the proceedings of conference in their homes have been asked to sustain the new President wherever they may be.”

The Old Testament first records the Lord instructing the Israelites to hold solemn assemblies at the Feast of

the Passover (see Exodus 23:14–17; Deuteronomy 16:8, 16) and the Feast of Tabernacles, also called the Feast of Booths, the Feast of Ingathering, or Sukkot (see Leviticus 23:33–36; Nehemiah 8:18).

“For members of the Church, sustaining Church officers is not a passive act of casting a vote,” says Elder Jensen. “Sustaining in a solemn assembly indicates a willingness to offer continued faith, prayers, and support for the new Church President.”

Elder Jensen points out that a solemn assembly is not the only time members are asked to sustain Church leaders. A sustaining vote is taken as part of general conferences, stake conferences, and

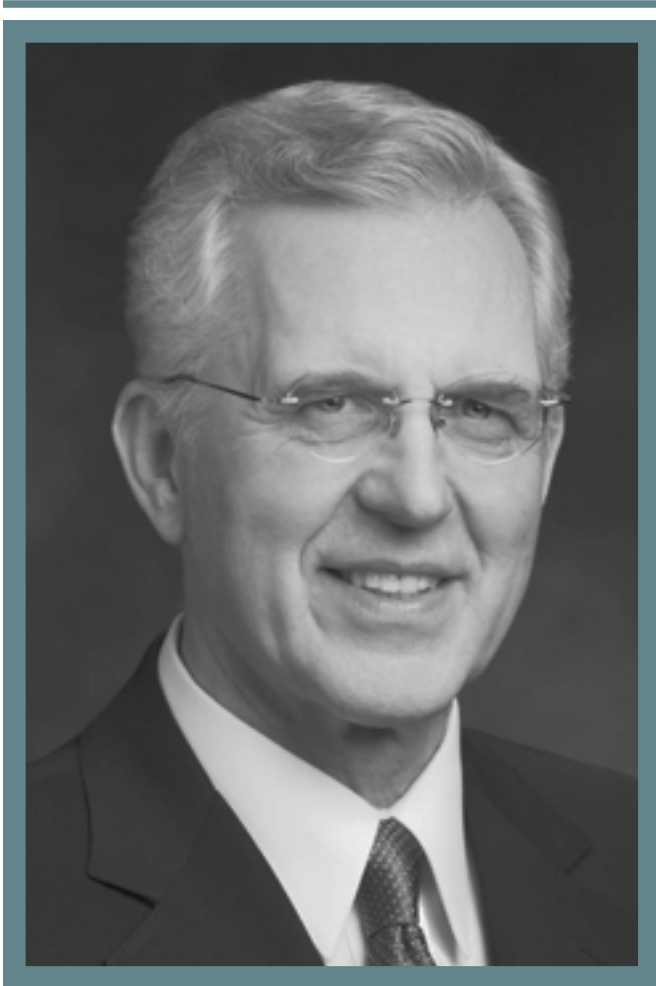
ward or branch conferences.

“As members regularly sustain the leadership of the Church, they will have an opportunity to renew the commitments they made in this solemn assembly,” Elder Jensen says.

More than 100,000 people attended sessions at the Conference Center, with millions more watching or listening by television, radio, satellite, and Internet broadcasts.

Sessions of the April general conference were translated and broadcast in as many as 92 languages, more than any preceding general conference. ■

Text, audio, and video versions of the conference are available at LDS.org.



Elder D. Todd Christofferson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

There's something you can learn from everyone," says Elder David Todd Christofferson, newly called and sustained member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "I haven't found anybody—in or out of the Church—I couldn't draw something from that made me better."

Learning from the best that others have to offer is something Elder Christofferson has done his entire life, beginning with his parents.

Born to Paul Vickery Christofferson and Jeanne

Swenson Christofferson on January 24, 1945, Elder Christofferson was raised in Pleasant Grove and Lindon, Utah, USA. He says he and his four younger brothers enjoyed a childhood that was "idyllic" and "wholesome."

"We had a very secure, happy home life," he remembers. "Father and Mother showed us how to live according to the pattern of the gospel."

At the beginning of high school, Elder Christofferson moved with his family to

Somerset, New Jersey, USA. There he found new places, new people, and new opportunities.

"I enjoyed friendships and relationships with people from all over and with all kinds of religious beliefs," he says. "The interactions were very positive."

Following high school, Elder Christofferson attended Brigham Young University for a year before leaving to serve a full-time mission in Argentina. There, he says, he learned from "two exceptional mission presidents," President Ronald V. Stone for the first several months of his mission and President Richard G. Scott (now Elder Scott, a fellow member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles) for the remainder of his mission.

Of Elder Scott, Elder Christofferson remembers: "We learned to be exacting of ourselves, as he was of himself. He always focused on the higher possibilities of being able to grow more and do more and accomplish more. Because of that, we began to see a higher vision of ourselves, the work, and

what we could accomplish."

When he returned from Argentina, Elder Christofferson again enrolled at BYU, where he studied English and became involved in student government and intramural athletics. He also met and married his wife, Katherine (Kathy) Thelma Jacob; they married at the end of their junior year on May 28, 1968, in the Salt Lake Temple. Today they have five children and eight grandchildren.

Elder Christofferson graduated from BYU with a bachelor's degree in 1969 and then pursued a law degree at Duke University. Upon graduating in 1972, he was hired as a law clerk for Judge John J. Sirica, serving during the Watergate proceedings.

"It was an exciting experience for a first job out of school," Elder Christofferson says. "I saw some of the best and some of the worst in the legal profession all mixed together. But that experience showed me what good legal work could do, and that gave me confidence and aspiration."

Elder Christofferson spent





his legal career working first at a law firm and then as in-house counsel for banks and other corporations, mostly in the Eastern United States. What he most enjoyed about those years, Elder Christofferson says, “was association with good people of all walks of life and all faiths. I found that a lot of people really do want to help others and are dedicated to making that happen.”

Elder Christofferson was called in 1993 to serve as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, a period he describes as “very formative.” His assignments took him briefly to the North America Southwest Area and the Mexico South Area.

Elder Christofferson fondly remembers conducting interviews during the reorganization of one particular stake in Mexico. “One of the people we interviewed was a very humble man, small in stature. We had a good interview, and I gave him an *abrazo* [hug]. After this man went out, he said to the stake president, *‘La autoridad me abrazó.’* [‘The authority hugged me.’] He said it over and over. That experience taught me to appreciate the small things that people do. It

also taught me that you can always do something to help others feel valued as a son or daughter of God.

“You really can learn something good from every contact and every association,” he adds. “Hopefully, we’re doing the same for others.”

Elder Christofferson was called in 1998 as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, where he served until his call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He says that when he first received his new calling from President Thomas S. Monson, it initially “seemed impossible.”

“The responsibility seems overwhelming as I contemplate it. But I have had wonderful tutors as I have worked in the Quorum of the Seventy and with members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles over the last 15 years. And I have the additional reassurance of knowing that the Lord has always sustained me. In every crisis, in every transition, in every need I’ve ever had, He’s been accessible through prayer. I have trusted in Him and have not been disappointed. Surely His promises are still in place. I know that He’ll give me the help I need here too.” ■

Elder L. Whitney Clayton

Of the Presidency of the Seventy



Along with being raised in a loving home, two pivotal events in Elder Lyndon Whitney Clayton’s life have made all the difference, he says. One was serving as a missionary in Peru. The second was marrying his wife, Kathy Ann Kipp, on August 3, 1973, in the Salt Lake Temple. They are parents of seven children.

“Our children joke that time at home with Mother and Dad often turns into spontaneous family firesides,” says Elder Clayton. “And that is a fairly accurate description.” The Clayton family loves to sit and discuss a wide variety of subjects; they also love to sing together.

Elder Clayton was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, on February 24, 1950, to L. Whitney Clayton Jr. and Elizabeth Touchstone Clayton. He grew up in Whittier, California, USA, received a bachelor’s degree in finance from the University of Utah and a law degree from the University of the

Pacific in California.

In 1970 he was called to serve in the Andes Mission in Peru. It was there that he learned to love studying the scriptures. “One of the great joys of my life is a quiet hour each day studying the scriptures,” he says. “I find great comfort and peace and guidance in that.”

Elder Clayton has served as branch president, bishop, mission president’s counselor, and Area Seventy. Serving as bishop in a Spanish-language ward in Santa Ana, California, “was a tremendous blessing,” he says. “It enhanced my ability to see that those who keep the commandments are happy.”

He has found the same to be true in his travels as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. “No matter where people live in this world, the Lord will bless them if they keep the commandments,” he says. “Those who put their trust in Him will find that He will enrich their lives in every way.” ■

Elder Marcos A. Aidukaitis

Of the Seventy



When Elder Marcos Antony Aidukaitis's oldest son was eight, he drew a picture of his family for a school assignment. At the time, Elder Aidukaitis was putting in long hours as general manager of a company in São Paulo, Brazil. "I was working a lot and was traveling to many places around the world," he recalls.

Elder Aidukaitis was noticeably absent from his son's illustration. "Where is your father?" the teacher asked the boy. "Oh, he's working," he replied.

For Elder Aidukaitis, the experience was a wake-up call. "I changed jobs and fixed what had to be fixed," he says, renewing his efforts to put family first.

Elder Aidukaitis was born to Antony Aidukaitis and Maria Dittrich Aidukaitis on August 30, 1959, in Porto Alegre, Brazil. His father, baptized in 1940, was the first member of the Church in his family, as was Elder Aidukaitis's wife, Luisa Englert Aidukaitis.

Elder and Sister Aidukaitis were married on January 13, 1986, less than a month after he baptized her. They were sealed in the Provo Utah Temple the following year. They are the parents of five children.

Elder Aidukaitis, who served in the Brazil São Paulo South Mission from 1979 to 1981, says his mission changed his life. It enhanced his love for the Savior, prepared him to serve his family and his Heavenly Father, and, he says, "gave me the courage to teach and baptize my wife."

Following his mission, he earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA, both from Brigham Young University, where he played on the soccer team. After graduating he went to work as an executive for multinational companies, first in the United States and then in Brazil, eventually opening his own business.

Prior to his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Aidukaitis served as president of the Brazil Brasilia Mission, Area Seventy, stake president, regional welfare agent, and high councilor. ■

Elder Gérald Caussé

Of the Seventy



Elder Gérald Caussé loves people.

"As a stake president in Paris, France, I met a lot of people from all parts of the world," he says. "As I served them, I discovered that we are all of one heart and one testimony when it comes to the gospel."

Serving as an Area Seventy in the Europe West Area at the time of his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Caussé has also served in a bishopric, as a high priests group leader, and as a counselor in a stake presidency.

Born in Bordeaux, France, on May 20, 1963, to Jean Caussé and Marie-Blanche Bonnet Caussé, Elder Caussé moved to Paris when he was 19. There he served one year of military service in a NATO Agency. He began dating Valérie Babin when they were in the same ward in Paris. Both were from faithful LDS families, and they had known each other since they were children. They were sealed on August 5, 1986, in the

Bern Switzerland Temple, and they are now the parents of five children.

Elder Caussé, who has had a long career in the food industry, received a master's degree in 1987 from ESSEC, a business school in Paris. At the time of this call he was a managing director and on the board of a company that deals with food distribution to catering and supermarket chains.

Elder Caussé developed a love for music when he began taking piano lessons at age seven. Today, singing and instrumental music fill the Caussé home, with every family member playing the piano, violin, or cello.

"When Jesus chose His Apostles, several of them were fishermen, and they immediately left their nets and followed Him," says Elder Caussé. "I see the Church working today the same. I feel that my calling is from the Lord through His prophet, President Thomas S. Monson. I too will follow the Savior." ■

Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge

Of the Seventy



Elder Lawrence Edward Corbridge acknowledges his reliance on the Lord.

“Christ is our only hope and our every hope and the only way that we can do all He has asked us to do,” he says. “We can have full confidence that He will help us succeed.”

Elder Corbridge has gained this testimony from years of Church service, including as bishop, high councilor, stake president, and president of the Chile Santiago North Mission from 2002 to 2005.

Born on April 6, 1949, to Ivan Corbridge and Agnes Howe Corbridge, Elder Corbridge was raised in Provo, Utah, USA. From 1968 to 1970 he served full-time in the Argentina North Mission.

He received a bachelor of science degree in business management and a juris doctorate degree from Brigham Young University. After graduation he began a career in law, and at the time of his call

to the First Quorum of the Seventy, he was a shareholder and senior attorney at a Salt Lake City law firm.

He married Jacquelyn Shamo in the Provo Utah Temple on December 21, 1974. As a young man, Elder Corbridge spent the summers working on cattle ranches in Idaho and Utah, where he learned to love the outdoors, a love he shares with his wife and five sons through various activities, including rock climbing, river rafting, skiing, and snowboarding.

“Knowledge, character, and relationships, especially with family, are among the few things in life that really matter,” he says. Another is “to remember Christ always.”

Elder Corbridge continues: “We covenant every week to do just that when we partake of the sacrament. We sometimes fall short. Yet the Lord says to look to Him in every thought. So whether we are working to support a family, being a mother and a homemaker, or lying in a hospital bed with six months to live, that is still our essential challenge—to remember Him and to do what He would do.” ■

Elder Eduardo Gavarret

Of the Seventy



Considering his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Eduardo Gavarret testifies, “Sometimes events that don’t seem significant come together like a puzzle to prepare you.”

Elder Gavarret was born on May 11, 1956, in Minas, Uruguay, to Juan Gavarret and Elsa Inzaurrealde Gavarret. He served as a missionary in Paraguay and Uruguay from 1975 to 1977 and upon his return married Norma Beatriz Gorgoroso on October 20, 1978. They were later sealed in the São Paulo Brazil Temple.

Elder Gavarret graduated in business administration from the Escuela Superior de Administracion Empresas in 1986. In 2000 he received a master of business administration degree in marketing from INPG (Instituto Nacional de Pos-graduação) in Brazil.

“Looking back, I can see the hand of the Lord in my life, moving me from one place to the next and from one calling to the other in

order to serve Him better,” says Elder Gavarret.

While serving as a bishop in Paraguay, he joined a pharmaceutical company that moved him to Bolivia to start a new branch. There he was called as president of a new stake, then as a regional representative. When the company moved the family to Peru to open another new branch, he was called as an Area Authority. The company moved them again, this time to Brazil, where he served as an Area Seventy. He later served as mission president.

“Calls are not about holding positions,” Elder Gavarret says. “Calls help us draw nearer to Christ. They are means to an end, not the end. In them we must seek inspiration, learn to pray, and focus on others rather than ourselves.”

At the time of his call, he was the general manager of a pharmaceutical company in Lima, Peru. He and his wife have three children.

“When Christ is the center of our lives, everything else falls into its place,” Elder Gavarret says. “All is in His control.” ■

Elder Carlos A. Godoy

Of the Seventy



February 4, 1961, in Porto Alegre, Brazil, to Moacir Godoy and Ivone Poersch Godoy. He joined the Church in 1977 and later served a full-time mission in São Paulo. He and Mônica, whom he met at a summer youth conference shortly after he joined the Church, were married in 1984 in the São Paulo Brazil Temple.

Elder Godoy received a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Pontificia Universidade Católica and a master's degree in organizational behavior from Brigham Young University. He spent his career in various business positions before starting his own company.

Elder Godoy has served as bishop, high councilor, mission president, and Area Seventy. He says that through these opportunities to serve, he has learned more about the process of "becoming" and looks forward to learning in his new calling.

"I feel a sense of inadequacy," he says, "but I know that the Savior is guiding this work and that He can help all of us become more like Him." ■

Your family can become your closest friends," says Elder Carlos Augusto Godoy, recently called to the First Quorum of the Seventy. "You might move away from other friends, but family is consistent."

Elder Godoy speaks from experience. Because of educational opportunities, professional positions, and Church assignments, Elder Godoy; his wife, Mônica Soares Brandão; and their four children have lived in many places, including Porto Alegre, Brazil; São Paulo, Brazil; Provo, Utah, USA; and Belem, Brazil.

Even before his assignments took him across his country and abroad, Elder Godoy appreciated close family relationships. It was in accompanying his younger sister to a Church activity that he was first introduced to the gospel of Jesus Christ. That experience led to his meeting with the missionaries and being baptized a month later.

Elder Godoy was born on

Elder James J. Hamula

Of the Seventy



Brigham Young University with a degree in political science and philosophy. He then earned a master of arts in political philosophy and a juris doctorate, also from BYU. At the time of his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, he worked as an attorney in Mesa, Arizona, USA.

It was in Arizona that Elder Hamula met his wife, Joyce Anderson. They were married in the Mesa Arizona Temple on April 27, 1984, and are now parents of six children. Their two youngest sons, twins, were born while Elder Hamula was serving as president of the Washington D.C. South Mission.

Elder Hamula has also served as a bishop, stake president, and Area Seventy. "All my experiences in the Church have been refinements of that singular experience as a young man of 18 preparing for my mission," he says. "That was the foundation of it all." ■

If there is anything that qualifies me for this calling it is the testimony that I gained at age 18 while I prepared for a mission," says Elder James Joseph Hamula. "I had a most remarkable experience where I received a strong witness of the divinity of the Lord and of His Church."

Born on November 20, 1957, in Long Beach, California, USA, to Joseph and Joyce Hamula, Elder Hamula remembers reading the account of the First Vision. He read of how the young Joseph Smith wanted to know what was right, and felt that he too needed to go to the Lord in prayer. "So I knelt at my bedside and earnestly prayed to the heavens. And in response I got an answer that was as clear and as unmistakable as anything that I've experienced in life. I got up off my knees knowing that the Church was true."

After serving in the Germany Munich Mission, Elder Hamula graduated from

Elder Allan F. Packer

Of the Seventy



Elder Allan Forrest Packer remembers that as a boy of 10 or 12, he didn't always feel that he was getting answers to his prayers. One day while working with his father, Boyd K. Packer, now President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, young Allan expressed his concern.

His father taught him by analogy, saying that pilots don't use their parachutes every time they fly, but they are still in the practice of wearing them. President Packer encouraged his son to continue to pray, to be patient, and to have the faith that when an answer was needed, he would have one.

"That lesson helped me through the early years of developing my testimony," says Elder Packer, recently called to the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Packer was born in Brigham City, Utah, USA, on July 7, 1948, to Boyd Kenneth Packer and Donna Smith Packer. Although he and his

wife, Terri Bennett Packer, are both native Utahns, they met in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, where they attended high school. Following Elder Packer's mission to the Andes Mission and Colombia-Venezuela Mission, he and Terri were married in the Salt Lake Temple on June 1, 1970. They are the parents of 8 children and have 17 grandchildren.

Elder Packer received a bachelor's degree in electronics engineering technology from Brigham Young University. He has worked in business and has served as a vice president for several companies.

Elder Packer has also served in numerous Church callings, including bishop, Scoutmaster, counselor in a stake presidency, president of the Spain Málaga Mission, and as a Young Men general board member.

"I know the work is true," Elder Packer says. "The Savior is our Redeemer. He opened the door and gave us the opportunity to return to our Father. I'm honored to be able to help Him do His work." ■

Elder Kevin W. Pearson

Of the Seventy



April 10, 1957, to Wayne F. Pearson and Velda Labrum Pearson. Later he received a bachelor of science degree in finance from the University of Utah and a master of business administration degree from Harvard University. Prior to his call as a mission president, he was working as CEO of a health care information company.

At the time of his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Pearson was serving as the president of the Washington Tacoma Mission. His prior Church callings have been invaluable in preparing him for his calling today. He has served as a full-time missionary in Finland, a ward Young Men president, elders quorum president, high councilor, and bishop. Elder Pearson married June Langeland on June 24, 1980, in the Salt Lake Temple. They have six children. ■

Elder Kevin Wayne Pearson believes that if we truly understand the principle of faith, the Lord can do wonders in our lives.

"I grew up thinking if I was smart enough or strong enough or fast enough or hardworking enough, somehow I could control any situation," he says. "The reality is, we cannot control all the circumstances of our lives. We simply have to trust the Lord and learn to have faith in Him that everything will work out for the good. When you do that, the Lord will make you capable."

As a mission president, Elder Pearson often taught his missionaries about five challenges that can overcome or weaken faith if faith isn't continually strengthened. He says, "You've got to get rid of doubt, distraction, disobedience, discouragement, and lack of diligence in order for your faith to be effective."

Elder Pearson was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, on

Elder Rafael E. Pino

Of the Seventy



For Elder Rafael Eduardo Pino, the strength of his testimony and the power of his conviction that Jesus is the Christ trace back to two key events. One of them was reading the Book of Mormon for the first time at age 17.

“The missionaries asked me to read just a few passages,” he says, “but I couldn’t stop reading it. I carried it around with me everywhere I went. Every time I read it, I felt those same feelings of joy and peace. I am a witness that the system God established to prove the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon works, just as it says in Moroni 10. I received a testimony that the Book of Mormon is true by the power of the Holy Ghost.”

The second key event for Elder Pino was serving a full-time mission in the Venezuela Maracaibo Mission. Even though Elder Pino served in numerous Church callings prior to being sustained to the First Quorum of the

Seventy, including as bishop, high councilor, stake president, mission president, and Area Seventy, he is quick to emphasize the importance of his missionary service. “Each calling helps prepare you for future service,” he says, “but the things that are most important to me have their root in the mission field. I still receive blessings from having served a full-time mission.”

Elder Pino was born in Valencia, Venezuela, on October 27, 1955, to Arturo Pino and Josefina Gimenez de Pino. He received a certificate in administration in Caracas, Venezuela. Elder Pino has worked for the Church in a variety of capacities since 1980. He and his wife, Patricia Monica Villa Dassler, were sealed in the Washington D.C. Temple on March 31, 1981. They are the parents of three children. ■

Elder Gary E. Stevenson

Of the Seventy



After what he describes as “a knee-buckling experience,” Elder Gary Evan Stevenson is grateful for the call to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy.

“My initial thoughts after receiving this call were deep feelings of inadequacy, but at the same time I was filled with a sense of duty,” Elder Stevenson says. “We hear so often that the Lord will qualify those whom He calls, and He will have to do that for me.”

Elder Stevenson was born on August 6, 1955, in Ogden, Utah, USA, to Evan Stevenson and Jean Stevenson. He attended Utah State University, where he graduated in business administration and also met his wife, Lesa Jean Higley. They were married on April 20, 1979, in the Idaho Falls Idaho Temple and are the parents of four sons.

Together, Elder and Sister Stevenson have established a pattern of service in their lives and firmly believe that true happiness is found through service to others.

“When you are serving others, you are serving the Lord,” Elder Stevenson says. “That precept permeates our lives and allows us to bring joy to others and ourselves.”

They have most recently served together as Sunday School teachers in their ward in Providence, Utah, USA. Elder Stevenson also served as president of the Japan Nagoya Mission in addition to serving as a young missionary in southern Japan, as a bishop, and in a stake presidency.

Having grown up in a gospel-centered home, Elder Stevenson honors diligent parents for teaching him early about hard work. As the president of a health and fitness equipment company that he helped start as a young college graduate, Elder Stevenson believes hard work is a necessary principle in all aspects of life.

“Hard work applies in our professions and Church callings and has great application in missionary work,” he says. “We may not be blessed with extraordinary abilities, but anyone can work hard to accomplish great things.” ■

Elder José A. Teixeira

Of the Seventy



Elder José Augusto Teixeira of the First Quorum of the Seventy was part of the harvest that took place when Latter-day Saint missionaries were allowed into Portugal in late 1975. In 1976 his parents, Fernando Teixeira and Benilde Teixeira, and the rest of the family were introduced to the restored gospel, and the whole family was baptized in 1977.

Prior to that, Elder Teixeira attended his church regularly, assisted during worship, and did everything expected of a young believer. But he had questions about his faith.

When the missionaries invited him to read the Book of Mormon and pray about it, he did. “That was the beginning of my testimony of the Book of Mormon and of Joseph Smith,” he says.

Elder Teixeira was born on February 24, 1961, in Vila Real, Portugal, but grew up in the old university city of Coimbra, which is where he joined the Church at age 16.

Like all converts, he was faced with decisions about friends. Fortunately, his friends soon came to accept his new standards. “They knew when I came into the circle that there were certain things that could not be done,” he recalls.

Following service in the Portugal Lisbon Mission, Elder Teixeira joined the Portuguese Air Force and was stationed in Oeiras as part of a NATO international unit. While there, he was called as the Church’s public affairs director for the country. At a training meeting, he met the Lisbon stake’s public affairs coordinator, Filomena Lopes Teles Grilo, who also lived in Oeiras. They were married in the Bern Switzerland Temple on June 5, 1984, and are the parents of two sons and one daughter.

Elder Teixeira has degrees in accounting and business administration and prior to this call was an international controller for the Church, stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. Elder Teixeira has served as a district president, stake president, Area Seventy, and president of the Brazil São Paulo South Mission. ■

Elder F. Michael Watson

Of the Seventy



Thirty-eight years of working with apostles and prophets on a daily basis has only strengthened the testimony of Elder Frank Michael Watson of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Watson served as Assistant Secretary, then Secretary, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from 1970 to 1972. Beginning in 1972 he served as Assistant Secretary to the First Presidency and since April 1986 has served as Secretary to the First Presidency.

“What I have seen in that personal, day-to-day interaction through the years has only increased my testimony,” he says. “There is no question in my mind that God lives, Jesus is the Christ, and whomever He has called is His prophet for that time.”

Elder Watson was born on March 9, 1943, in Spring City, Utah, USA, to Frank C and Genniel Baxter Watson. He served a full-time mission to the Northeast British Mission from 1962 to 1964, followed

by military service from 1966 to 1969, one year of which was in the Republic of South Vietnam. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Utah State University.

He married Jolene Mann on September 3, 1965, in the Salt Lake Temple. They are the parents of 12 children. He has served as elders quorum president, stake mission president, bishop, stake president, and sealer in the Bountiful Utah Temple.

“I’ve associated with General Authorities all these years, but being one among them is a humbling experience,” he says. After having worked with them for so long, Elder Watson is desirous of simply being in a position to strengthen others’ testimonies of the prophets and apostles and of the mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■

Elder Jorge F. Zeballos

Of the Seventy



Just 12 years after Elder Jorge Fernando Zeballos was born on July 19, 1955, the first Latter-day Saint missionaries came to his hometown of Ovalle, Chile, in 1967.

The four North Americans walking around town piqued his curiosity, as did a favorable interview with them in the local newspaper. When the missionaries began playing in a local basketball league, Jorge, who loved basketball, followed their games with interest. Once he managed to slip behind the officials' table to catch a glimpse of their team roster. Surprisingly, all were named "Elder."

When a classmate told young Jorge that he and his family had joined the missionaries' church, Jorge asked if he could come too. He attended meetings faithfully for seven months before the missionaries discovered that Jorge had not been taught or baptized. With the permission of his parents, Alberto Zeballos and Ines Zeballos, that was soon remedied.

Later, while at Santa Maria University in Valparaiso, Jorge met Carmen Gloria Valenzuela. "When I saw her for the first time, I knew I was going to marry her," he recalls. "It was very strange, because I already had my mission call, and she was not a member." Within a few weeks she was taking the missionary discussions, and he baptized her before leaving to serve in the Chile Concepción Mission.

Jorge and Carmen corresponded during his mission, began a courtship afterward, and were married on June 26, 1982, in the São Paulo Brazil Temple. They are the parents of five children.

Elder Zeballos has a degree in civil engineering from Santa Maria University and a master of business administration degree from Brigham Young University. Prior to his call as president of the Chile Concepción South Mission in 2005, he was a manager of corporate affairs for a mining company in Chile. Elder Zeballos, newly called to the First Quorum of the Seventy, has also served as a bishop, stake president, regional representative, and Area Seventy. ■

Elder Tad R. Callister

Of the Seventy



Resolved to go wherever the Lord sends him, Elder Tad Richards Callister testifies that serving the Lord brings many blessings.

"The Lord helps you even when you feel inadequate," Elder Callister says. "Every calling is bigger than the person, and the Lord offers His help. Though His guidance is quiet and gentle, He does not leave you alone."

Elder Callister was born to Reed Callister and Norinne Callister on December 17, 1945, in Glendale, California, USA. He has served as a full-time missionary in the Eastern Atlantic States Mission, bishop, stake president, regional representative, Area Seventy, and was serving as president of the Canada Toronto East Mission when he received his call to the Second Quorum of the Seventy.

Serving as a mission president has been an experience beyond description for Elder Callister, who most enjoys spending time with his family.

"You learn to love the missionaries almost as though they are your own sons and daughters," he says. "They constantly rise to your level of expectations, and they seem to have unlimited potential."

After earning a bachelor's degree in accounting from Brigham Young University, a law degree from UCLA, and a master's degree in tax law from New York University, Elder Callister practiced law for 34 years with a family law firm in the Los Angeles, California, area.

Applying principles learned in both professional and personal matters, Elder Callister says, "The practice of law has been a good discipline to learn to analyze the core of a problem, recognize not to jump to conclusions, and understand you need to get all the facts before making a decision. Likewise, I believe the Lord expects you to do your homework in the process of seeking personal revelation."

Elder Callister and his wife, Kathryn Louise Saporiti, met while attending BYU and were married in the Los Angeles California Temple on December 20, 1968. They are the parents of six children. ■

Elder Kent D. Watson

Of the Seventy



In looking back over his life, Elder Kent D. Watson has always felt he was a believer and that he always had a testimony, but there was one event that had a profound effect on him.

“The decision I made as a young man to go on a mission has affected all facets of my life,” says Elder Watson, recently called to the Second Quorum of the Seventy.

He received a call to the Southern Far East Mission and served in Taiwan. “As a result of my mission I changed from being a mediocre student to a good student,” he continues. “It was because of my mission that I met my wife. I was introduced to her by a former mission companion. It was because of my mission that I studied Chinese. It was because of my mission that I found a profession in which I had an enjoyable career. It was because of my mission that our family has had the opportunity to live in several cities.”

Elder Watson earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees

from Brigham Young University and spent his professional career as a certified public accountant, eventually becoming the chair and CEO of an international accounting firm.

Elder Watson also had the opportunity to return to his mission area with his wife to serve as president of the Taiwan Taichung Mission and interim president of the Taiwan Kaohsiung Mission. Working with so many young missionaries has given him confidence in the strength of the youth in the Church.

Elder Watson has served in a number of other Church callings, including as a bishop and a counselor in a stake presidency.

Elder Watson was born in Cedar City, Utah, USA, to Lorenzo Dee Watson and Joyce Watson on May 8, 1943. He married Connie Lingmann on August 23, 1967, in the Salt Lake Temple, and they are the parents of five children. ■

Elaine S. Dalton

Young Women General President



As a young girl, Elaine Schwartz Dalton found a great joy in dancing.

But as a young mother with six children, she found that dancing seemed impractical, so she started running as a way to enjoy movement each day. At first she would run 10 steps and then walk 10 steps until she could run a mile. Since that modest start, she has run 18 marathons.

“Running gives me a time to be still in my mind and contemplate life,” says Sister Dalton. It’s one hour when she can think about the scriptures she has just read.

Sister Dalton was born in Ogden, Utah, USA, on November 1, 1946, to Melvin Leo Schwartz and Emma Martin Schwartz. She married Stephen Eugene Dalton on September 13, 1968, in the Salt Lake Temple. She earned her bachelor’s degree in English from Brigham Young University. She has served on the Young Women general board and as first and second counselor in the Young

Women general presidency. She has also served as a stake Young Women president, Laurel adviser, adviser to a young single adult Relief Society, and Relief Society teacher.

As the new Young Women general president, Sister Dalton says, “My key message to the young women of the Church is the same thing they hear from their parents every time they walk out the front door: ‘Remember who you are.’”

She hopes to help young women understand that they are daughters of their Heavenly Father, who loves them. “They say that in the Young Women theme every week, but for so many young women, it has not entered their hearts,” Sister Dalton says. “Once a young woman understands that she is a daughter of God, it defines all her other relationships.”

She encourages them to be pure. “One of the major works they have been reserved to perform is temple work,” she says. “No wonder Satan is raging, distracting young women from being worthy. Be pure. There is power in a pure life.” ■

Mary N. Cook

First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency



As she repeats the Young Women theme with young women throughout the world, Mary Nielsen Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, is grateful to know that she is a daughter of God.

"My father passed away in November 2007, and I believe the Lord was willing to carry me through this trying time," Sister Cook says. "We teach our young women that we are all daughters of God; this sacred experience reconfirmed that He knows and loves me individually."

Born on June 8, 1951, to Kenneth Nielsen and Fern Swan Nielsen, Sister Cook grew up in Midvale, Utah, USA, and offers her experiences as an example to young women who face times of uncertainty in their lives.

"I was not married until I was 37, and I know a lot of the concerns and fears that women face," Sister Cook says. "You have to have faith and the courage to continue moving forward,

despite uncertainty."

She married Richard E. Cook on July 16, 1988, in the Salt Lake Temple and is now the stepmother to 4 children and step-grandmother to 17 grandchildren.

"Having a good education has been a great help in my life," says Sister Cook, who received bachelor's and master's degrees in speech pathology and audiology as well as an EdS (education specialist) degree from Brigham Young University. "It has better prepared me to serve as a mother and to serve in the Church."

Sister Cook served as a full-time missionary in Mongolia with her husband, whom she calls her best friend. She previously served as second counselor in the Young Women general presidency and on the Young Women general board.

Sister Cook believes it is important to focus on individuals. "We want each young woman to stand as a witness of Christ," Sister Cook says. "Those aren't just words. We need to help give her the will and the confidence to be a righteous daughter of God." ■

Ann M. Dibb

Second Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency



When asked what experiences best prepared her for being called as the second counselor in the Young Women general presidency, Ann Monson Dibb responds with a broad smile and a generous laugh, "Motherhood! And being a daughter!" She quickly adds, "And applying the Savior's teachings in my life."

Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, on June 30, 1954, to Thomas S. Monson and Frances J. Monson, Sister Dibb has learned through many sweet experiences that "Heavenly Father is mindful of what I need" but that "we have to trust in the Lord and in His timetable."

She hopes that young women will apply one of her favorite passages of scripture, Proverbs 3:5-7: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

While attending Brigham Young University, Sister Dibb

met her future husband, Roger Dibb, whom she married in the Salt Lake Temple on March 5, 1974. They are the parents of four children. Sister Dibb focused her energies on taking care of the home. However, when her children were a little older and she felt the timing was right, she began taking a few classes each year, eventually graduating with a degree in elementary education.

Sister Dibb has served in a variety of Church callings in each of the auxiliaries. She was serving on the Young Women general board prior to her calling to the Young Women general presidency.

She believes that truth resonates with all people, and that we can all feel the Spirit through the teachings of our leaders. "I learned as a young woman that you can hold onto the prophet's testimony as you make the effort to gain your own," she says. "Everyone has access to that if you open your heart and want to be taught by the Spirit." ■