

FIND OUT WHAT THE LORD WANTS

By Charla Woodbury

As a single mother with seven young children, how could I possibly serve as ward organist?

One Sunday our bishop asked to speak with me after church. My seven children, ages 5 to 12, waited outside his office while we talked.

As I had suspected, the bishop called me to serve in the ward. What I had not suspected was that he would call me to serve as ward organist.

I was a new member of the ward, and I was a single mother. I would have no one to sit with my children while I played during sacrament meeting. Besides, I did not think I played well enough for the calling.

“I can see your difficulty,” the bishop said, smiling. “I have pointed out your situation to the Lord, but the inspiration still came strongly that you should have this calling. It is up to you to decide whether to accept it. Go home and find out what the Lord wants you to do.”

I followed his guidance. I humbled myself and included my dilemma in my prayers. As I prayed, the Holy Ghost filled my heart with such unspeakable joy that I could not deny that my calling had come from the Lord.

At that moment, I changed my prayers. I asked Heavenly Father how I could handle my family during sacrament meeting. In my mind’s

eye, I could see the meeting ruined by distracted children and poorly played organ music.

We held a family council, where I explained my concerns about the calling. The children took turns expressing their feelings, and we took a vote.



The voting was unanimous that I should accept the calling.

I told the children I needed their help. I explained how much I loved them and how distracting it would be if they were irreverent or noisy while I played. Could they govern themselves?

I explained that after I had played the prelude music, opening hymn, and sacrament hymn, I could slip down and sit with them—provided they sat on the front row. I got permission to invite some of them to sit in the choir seats close to the organ, but I told them they had to be reverent. Sitting there would be a privilege they would keep with their good behavior.

When I accepted the calling, the bishop gave me a special blessing—that I could play well and that our family would be blessed for our obedience.

It took a while before my organ playing became acceptable to my ears, but through help from the Spirit, I improved quickly. The year I served as organist was one of our best years of attending church together as a family.

We all worked together for a common goal—the thing, in Nephi’s words, “which the Lord hath commanded” (1 Nephi 3:7). As a result, He blessed us for it. ■

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