



New Leaders Sustained at General Conference

Members of the Church around the world participated by Internet, radio, television, and satellite during the 179th Annual General Conference held on April 4 and 5, 2009.

During the conference, which was broadcast in 94 languages, the First Presidency announced the calling of a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a new member of the Presidency of the

Seventy, and new members of the Seventy. The First Presidency also announced the reorganization of the Young Men and Sunday School general presidencies. (See page 27 for a list of those sustained and released.)

Elder Neil L. Andersen, senior member of the Presidency of the Seventy, was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to fill the vacancy left by the

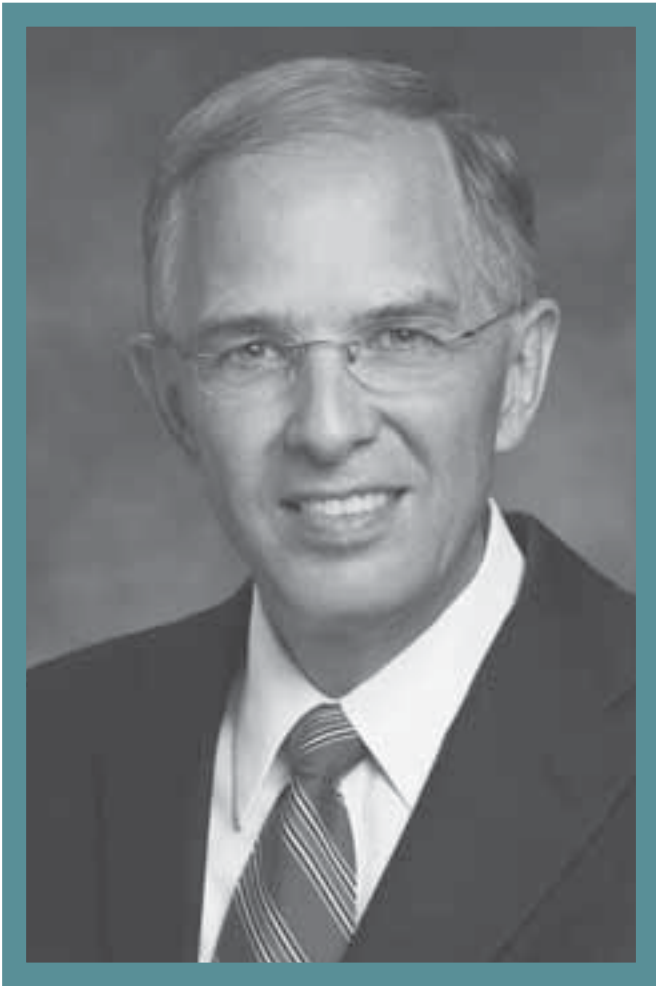
passing of Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) last December. (See biography on page 133.)

Elder Donald L. Hallstrom of the Seventy was called to the Presidency of the Seventy. (See biography on page 134.)

Six men were called to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy. Called were Elder Mervyn B. Arnold of the Second Quorum of the Seventy (see Elder Arnold's

biography in *Ensign* and *Liabona*, May 2003), Yoon Hwan Choi, Brent H. Nielson, Dale G. Renlund, Michael T. Ringwood, and Joseph W. Sitati (see biographies beginning on page 135).

Seven men were called to serve as members of the Second Quorum of the Seventy (see biographies beginning on page 137), 38 were released as Area Seventies, and 40 new Area Seventies were called. ■



Elder Neil L. Andersen

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

During the 16 years Elder Neil Linden Andersen has served as a General Authority, he has often heard President Monson teach that “whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies” (Thomas S. Monson quoting Harold B. Lee, “Who Honors God, God Honors,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 50). Now more than ever, Elder Andersen is holding on to those words.

Elder Andersen, who has been serving as the Senior

President of the Seventy, explains: “No one is prepared for a call such as this. It is overwhelming, and I feel very inadequate. I pray that the Lord will find me sufficiently humble and moldable, that He can shape me into what I must become.”

Born on August 9, 1951, in Logan, Utah, USA, to Lyle P. and Kathryn Andersen, Elder Andersen credits his years working alongside his family with instilling important values. “On a small family

farm, everyone in the family contributes. It is a blessing to learn early that work is a fulfilling part of life.”

At 19, Elder Andersen was called on a mission to France, where the deep devotion of the members and the converting power of the Book of Mormon fortified his growing testimony.

After returning from his mission, Elder Andersen excelled at Brigham Young University, being named a Hinckley Scholar and being elected student body vice president.

It was there that Elder Andersen met the person who would have perhaps the greatest influence on his life: his future wife, Kathy Sue Williams. The two were married in the Salt Lake Temple on March 20, 1975.

“Once I married her,” Elder Andersen says with a warm smile, “the standards in my life went way up—being absolutely consistent in prayer and scripture study, keeping the commandments with precision. Her influence upon me and our children is

phenomenal. She has a pure and disciplined faith.”

After graduating from BYU in 1975, Elder Andersen received a master’s degree in business administration from Harvard University in 1977. He and Kathy returned to Kathy’s childhood home in Florida, where he pursued business interests in advertising, real estate development, and health care. Later he served as the Tampa Florida Stake president.

In 1989, at age 37, Elder Andersen was called back to France—this time as president of the France Bordeaux Mission. “Our four young children were courageous in facing a new culture and language, and we witnessed close up the Lord’s hand at work in building His kingdom,” he says.

Elder Andersen was called to the First Quorum of the Seventy in April 1993 at age 41. Including his years as a mission president, he has served 10 of the past 20 years outside the United States on Church assignments. “We have loved the wonderful



people of the Church across the world,” he says. “The faith, devotion, and testimony in every land has been a bright example for us.”

For four years, Elder and Sister Andersen lived in Brazil, seeing the Lord’s work flourish as never before and adding lifelong friends from a new continent. Later, Elder Andersen assisted the Twelve in the supervision of Mexico and Central America. When serving at Church headquarters, he directed the Church Audiovisual Department, supervising the filming of *The Testaments of One Fold and One Shepherd* and overseeing the initial development of *Mormon.org* in 2001.

Elder Andersen gratefully acknowledges that he has had the extraordinary opportunity to learn under the tutelage of the First Presidency and the Twelve these past

16 years. “President Monson has been a wonderful teacher to me and many others, as he has taught us to reach out to others as the Savior would,” he says. “He has constantly emphasized that there is no greater joy than knowing you have been an instrument in the Lord’s hand to answer an honest prayer.”

While very humbled by the call to the holy apostleship, Elder Andersen expressed in general conference his firm testimony of the Savior. “I take solace,” he said, “that in one qualification for the holy apostleship where there can be no latitude extended, the Lord has deeply blessed me. I do know with perfect and certain clarity through the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, the Beloved Son of God” (“Come unto Him,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 78). ■



Elder Donald L. Hallstrom

Of the Presidency of the Seventy



The Church service of Elder Donald Larry Hallstrom of the Presidency of the Seventy has combined his deep-rooted testimony with a lifelong affinity for the peoples and cultures of the world.

Born in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, on July 27, 1949, to James and Betty Jo Lambert Hallstrom, Elder Hallstrom had a childhood rich in multicultural experiences. His friends were from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Samoa, and Tonga. “We all shared different foods and traditions, and we all accepted each other,” he recalls.

At age five he heard President David O. McKay (1873–1970) speak in the Honolulu Stake Tabernacle. “When the congregation sang, ‘Who’s on the Lord’s side? Who?’ (“Who’s on the Lord’s Side,” *Hymns*, no. 260), I wanted to stand up and say, ‘I am! I am on the Lord’s side!’” he says. He later became president of that stake.

After serving in the England Central Mission from 1969 to 1971, Elder Hallstrom attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where he met Diane Clifton of Alberta, Canada. They married in the Cardston Alberta Temple on July 22, 1972, and have four children. Elder Hallstrom graduated with a degree in economics and returned to Hawaii, where he was president of a real estate consulting firm.

Called to the First Quorum of the Seventy in April 2000, Elder Hallstrom has served in Area Presidencies in the Asia North Area and most recently the Asia Area, which includes China, India, and 23 other countries—and half of the earth’s population.

Elder Hallstrom is deeply touched by the pioneering Saints who live in the vast “frontier of the Church,” many making long journeys to the nearest temple.

“I’m continually inspired by the faith and courage of people who rise above earthly culture and accept gospel culture,” he says. “It is remarkable to see people establish the gospel in their own lives and in their own families.” ■

Elder Yoon Hwan Choi

Of the Seventy



Elder Yoon Hwan Choi of the Seventy says two 14-year-old boys brought his family into the restored Church.

Elder Choi was born on May 18, 1957, to Dong Hun Choi and Jeung Soon Lee. His father allowed Elder Choi and his siblings to choose any Christian religion, but they often argued over their different beliefs during dinner. His father wanted to change this. Impressed by the Mormon religion of Elder Choi's 14-year-old brother, the family listened to the missionaries. After learning about another 14-year-old, Joseph Smith, they were all baptized.

Growing up, Elder Choi dreamed of becoming a general in the Korean army. So when his bishop asked him to speak about preparing for a mission, Elder Choi said no. Another young man spoke instead, which made Elder Choi feel guilty.

"The Holy Ghost told me I needed to serve a mission," he says. He prepared for and

served two years as a missionary, interrupted halfway through by three years of mandatory military service. To this day, Elder Choi says he and his wife, Bon Kyung Koo, "never deny anything that comes from the Lord."

Elder Choi completed a bachelor's degree in business information management from BYU-Hawaii in 1988 and a master's degree in business information systems and education from Utah State University in 1989. He was an instructor at both universities, a sales manager, and an investment director for a venture capital company. He was a regional manager for temporal affairs for the Church in Korea.

Elder Choi and his wife were both born and raised in Seoul, Korea. They were married on September 25, 1982, and sealed one year later in the Laie Hawaii Temple. They have three sons. Before Elder Choi's call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, he served as bishop's counselor, bishop, high councilor, stake mission president, stake president's counselor, stake president, and Area Seventy. ■

Elder Brent H. Nielson

Of the Seventy



Elder Brent Hatch Nielson of the Seventy says his family's motto has been the Savior's admonition, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

He says the scripture "defines how we feel about our lives. When you do these things first, everything else seems to work out."

When he was 27, Elder Nielson was called to be a bishop. At age 30, he was called into the stake presidency, and he served in stake presidency positions for 20 years as his six children grew up.

"Our greatest love is our children," says Marcia Ann Bradford Nielson, Elder Nielson's wife. "In addition to the gospel, our children give us the greatest happiness."

Sister Nielson says that even though her husband had many responsibilities, he has been an incredible father. He always took time to be

with their children, she says. Some of their family's favorite activities have been traveling and boating.

She and Elder Nielson were married in June 1978, in the Salt Lake Temple. The family has lived in Twin Falls, Idaho, USA, for 30 years.

Elder Nielson was born to Norman and Lucille Nielson in Burley, Idaho, on December 8, 1954. "I was raised by wonderful parents," Elder Nielson says.

Prior to his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Nielson served as a full-time missionary in Finland, a ward Young Men president, a high councilor, and an Area Seventy in the Idaho Area.

Elder Nielson received a bachelor of arts degree in English at Brigham Young University in 1978. In 1981 he received a juris doctor degree from the University of Utah. Since 1985 he has been an attorney and partner in a law firm. ■

Elder Dale G. Renlund

Of the Seventy



Elder Dale Gunnar Renlund learned early that nothing is more important than following the Lord. His parents, Mats and Mariana Renlund, taught him this principle by example. They met in Stockholm, Sweden, shortly after the end of World War II, and they wanted to marry, but only in the temple. They left their homes in Finland and Sweden, immigrated to Utah, and were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.

Born on November 13, 1952, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, Elder Renlund was raised in a home where the blessings received from following the Lord's counsel were cherished. He was also blessed to live in his parents' homeland twice: once as a teenager when his carpenter father was called to Sweden on a Church-construction mission and several years later as a full-time missionary for the Church in Sweden.

Elder Renlund met his wife, Ruth Lybbert, in their

home ward. In June 1977 they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. Together with their daughter they have built a tightly knit family that works, plays, and serves together.

"We love doing things as a family," Elder Renlund explains. "Everything we do is geared that way. If we play golf, we play as a threesome and share the same score."

Elder Renlund earned a bachelor's degree and doctor of medicine from the University of Utah and completed his training in internal medicine and cardiology at Johns Hopkins University. He dedicated his medical career to the subspecialty of heart failure and transplantation medicine as a teacher, researcher, and clinician.

Before his call to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Renlund served as a bishop, stake president, high councilor, and for nine years as an Area Seventy in the Fifth Quorum of the Seventy. He and his family currently reside in Salt Lake City, Utah. ■

Elder Michael T. Ringwood

Of the Seventy



Toward the end of his mission in Seoul, Korea, Michael Tally Ringwood spent a day with an ill, apartment-bound companion, which provided an additional opportunity for study, reflection, and prayer.

"I felt that I needed reassurance," says Elder Ringwood, now a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy. After praying for as long as he had ever prayed, the reassurance hadn't come. It didn't come when he turned to scripture study either. But finally, when Elder Ringwood turned to his missionary journal, the confirmation came.

"In every entry I read, I had written something significant about the Spirit. The message that came to me was this: 'I have told you many times. How much more assurance do you need?' That was the answer to my prayer. I realized that these witnesses had happened repeatedly and often. The Lord had always been there. He was reminding

me that I had felt the Spirit and the testifying of the Holy Ghost."

That lesson has served Elder Ringwood throughout his life and callings as bishop, high councilor, high priests group leader, Young Men president, Scoutmaster, stake president, and president of the Korea Seoul West Mission.

Prior to his call as a General Authority, Elder Ringwood worked as an executive for several corporations. He has also served as a member of the Board of Advisers at the Brigham Young University School of Accountancy.

Elder Ringwood was born on February 14, 1958, in Provo, Utah, USA, to Howard Lee and Sharon Lee Ringwood. He grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah, and attended BYU, where he received a bachelor of arts degree in accounting in 1983. He married Rosalie Nelson on December 27, 1982, in the Jordan River Utah Temple. They are the parents of five children. ■

Elder Joseph W. Sitati

Of the Seventy



Elder Joseph Wafula Sitati believes that happiness comes by doing the simple things of the gospel over and over again. “I don’t second-guess the counsel of our Church leaders,” he says. “When I do what they ask, things always work out fine.” Doing those simple things is what unites us with our Savior, he says, and “the essence of that unity begins with our families.”

Born on May 16, 1952, in Bungoma, Kenya, to Nathan and Lenah Sitati, Elder Sitati was 34 when a business associate invited him, his wife, Gladys Nangoni, and their five children to attend church in his home. The family had become disillusioned with organized religion but felt something special with this small group of Latter-day Saints. So they returned week after week. Six months later, in 1986, the family joined the Church.

“Even before we were baptized they asked us to give talks and to teach in church,”

he says. He felt compelled to know that what he was saying in front of his children was correct. Slowly he came to recognize the Spirit, and staying connected with the Spirit has been a constant goal.

Elder Sitati earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Nairobi in 1975; he also holds a diploma in accounting and finance. He worked in several positions with a global oil and gas company. More recently he served as the Church’s international director of Public Affairs in Africa.

Elder and Sister Sitati were married in July 1976 and sealed in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple in December 1991. They reside in Nairobi, Kenya.

At the time of his call to the First Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Sitati was serving as president of the Nigeria Calabar Mission. Before that, he served as a counselor in both a branch and mission presidency and as a branch president, district president, stake president, and Area Seventy. ■

Elder Wilford W. Andersen

Of the Seventy



Elder Wilford Wayne Andersen of the Seventy “has a real touch with the human heart,” said his wife, Kathleen Bennion Andersen. “I think one of his greatest strengths is that he’s nonjudgmental and people feel comfortable around him.”

Elder Andersen was born on August 22, 1949, the third of eight children, to Darl and Erma Farnsworth Andersen in Mesa, Arizona, USA, where he was living at the time of his call. Elder Andersen said he learned to love people from different backgrounds from his father, who worked with people of many faiths, and his mother, a native of Chihuahua, Mexico, who taught him her native language.

Elder Andersen believes that he gained his testimony the same way Alma described the process in Alma 32. As a boy, the seed was planted in his heart.

“I felt the first stirrings early on,” he says. “The seedling has

continued to grow throughout my life. It has become a tree and has borne fruit. I have partaken of the fruit, and it has filled my life with joy.”

Elder Andersen was serving in the Sixth Quorum of the Seventy as an Area Seventy in the North America Southwest Area when he was called to the Second Quorum of the Seventy on April 4, 2009. His previous Church callings include president of the Mexico Guadalajara Mission from 2002 to 2005, stake president and counselor, stake executive secretary, high councilor, bishop and counselor, and full-time missionary in the Argentina South Mission.

Elder Andersen met his wife through a mutual friend. They married in the Provo Utah Temple in April 1975 and have nine children. Elder Andersen received a bachelor of science degree in business management at Brigham Young University in 1973 and a juris doctor degree from the J. Reuben Clark Law School in 1976. Since 1979 he has been a managing partner of a real estate investment firm. ■

Elder Koichi Aoyagi

Of the Seventy



When Elder Koichi Aoyagi was 17 years old growing up in Matsumoto, Japan, he joined his high school's English club. One day on his way to school, a young man standing on the street handed him a slip of paper as he rode by on his bicycle. The paper was an invitation for free English classes. The young man was a Latter-day Saint missionary.

"I had never known anyone so positive, so cheerful, so optimistic" as these missionaries, Elder Aoyagi says. "I wanted to be just like them." He began attending church in Matsumoto, where the members impressed him with the same spirit of joy and love. He was baptized and confirmed in 1962.

After attending Kanagawa University in Tokyo for two years, Elder Aoyagi returned home because his family's business went bankrupt. His parents were no longer able to pay for his schooling. This incident opened the way for him to serve a construction

mission in the Northern Far East Mission from 1965 to 1967. One year later, after working three jobs to save money, he was called to serve a full-time proselytizing mission to the same area, from 1968 to 1970.

Elder Aoyagi married Shiroko Momose, a member from his first branch in Matsumoto, in September 1970; they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple later that year. After earning a license from the Japan Real Estate Academy, he worked as a real estate and construction manager in the Asia North Area office in Tokyo. He has also worked as a sales chief and sales manager for two other companies in Japan.

Before being called to the Second Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Aoyagi served in many callings, including branch, stake, and mission president; bishop; sealer; and Area Seventy.

Elder Aoyagi was born on March 24, 1945, to Mitsuo Yagasaki and Sueno Aoyagi. He and Sister Aoyagi have four children and live in Chiba-ken, Japan. ■

Elder Bruce A. Carlson

Of the Seventy



Although Elder Bruce Allen Carlson of the Seventy wasn't able to participate in the Church until he was 16 years old, his growing spirituality afterward was strengthened as his mother taught him and his two siblings through reading the scriptures and singing gospel hymns. This initial religious instruction gave him a spiritual foundation that has carried him throughout his life.

Elder Carlson was born on October 3, 1949, in Hibbing, Minnesota, USA, to Clifford and Helen Carlson. He spent most of his childhood moving throughout the northern half of the state as his father was promoted within the Minnesota Forestry Department. When the family moved to Brainerd, Minnesota, Helen Carlson (who had been baptized in her youth) was finally able to take her children to a small branch of the Church that met nearby.

After his conversion Elder

Carlson received a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Minnesota, Duluth, in 1971, graduated from U.S. Air Force Fighter Weapons School at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, USA, in 1979, and earned a distinguished graduate master of arts degree from U.S. Naval War College in 1989.

A member of the United States Air Force, Elder Carlson flew fighter aircraft for a large portion of his 37-year career. Other assignments included several senior staff positions at the Pentagon and in Washington, D.C. With his wife, Vicki Lynn Martens, whom he married on August 8, 1972, in the Salt Lake Temple, and their three children, Elder Carlson has dedicated his life to serving those he loves and loving those he serves.

Elder Carlson has served as elders quorum president, bishop, high councilor, and as an adviser to the Church's Military Advisory Committee. He was serving as a Sunday School teacher in his home ward in San Antonio, Texas, USA, when he received the call to the Second Quorum of the Seventy. ■

Elder Bradley D. Foster

Of the Seventy



Elder Bradley Duane Foster of the Second Quorum of the Seventy can trace the beginnings of his testimony to listening to his parents' testimonies.

"My grandfathers on both sides were immigrants when they came to America as new members of the Church from Germany and from England," says Elder Foster. "They suffered greatly in doing so. I gained a testimony by listening to my parents tell me stories about their parents and what they sacrificed for the Church. As a young boy, I believed their words."

He was born in Idaho Falls, Idaho, USA, on March 5, 1949, to Dewain and Melba Foster. Elder Foster grew up in the neighboring community of Rigby. He served a full-time mission in the Texas South Mission. His testimony was further strengthened during his mission when he met a minister of another religion who told the young missionary that the only people who were to go to heaven were

the members of his small church in Texas.

"I couldn't imagine our Heavenly Father being that unkind to the rest of us. That night as I prayed to my Heavenly Father, He bore witness to my spirit that His plan and His love were for everyone. I knew then our message to the world was true."

Upon returning from his mission, Elder Foster attended Ricks College (now Brigham Young University–Idaho), focusing on preveterinary studies. In 1971 he started his own agriculture business in Rigby. He married Sharol Lyn Anderson on May 14, 1971, in the Idaho Falls Idaho Temple. They are the parents of four children. He has served as a member of the Idaho Potato Commission, the Northwest Farm Credit Board of Directors, and on the President's Advancement Council at BYU–Idaho.

Elder Foster has served as elders quorum president, stake mission president, bishop, high councilor, stake president, and president of the California Arcadia Mission. ■

Elder James B. Martino

Of the Seventy



Just three months after James Boyd Martino joined the Church in 1968, a friend invited him to meet with a minister of another faith. The minister bombarded him with questions, only a few of which he could answer.

Although the experience shook him, 17-year-old James didn't let the minister deter him—or his commitment to the Church. Rather, he says, "my testimony then was like a prescription medicine that has to be shaken to be effective. The experience motivated me to study the gospel and grow in my faith."

Elder Martino, recently called as a member of the Second Quorum of the Seventy, says that studying the gospel has blessed him ever since that time.

Elder Martino was born to Frank Nilson and Betty Jean Newman Martino on March 28, 1951, in Denton, Texas, USA. He married his childhood sweetheart, Jennie Marie Barron, in the Ogden Utah

Temple on August 18, 1973, one year after she joined the Church. They are the parents of five children.

Elder Martino received a bachelor's degree in business from Brigham Young University in 1974. Following graduation, he worked for a family apparel company. He was president and CEO of the company from 1989 to 2000.

At the time of his call, Elder Martino was living in Aubrey, Texas, USA, and serving as a member of the Sixth Quorum of the Seventy in the North America Southwest Area. Prior to that assignment, from 2000 to 2003, he served as president of the Venezuela Maracaibo Mission.

Elder Martino's other Church service has included serving as a full-time missionary in the Guatemala–El Salvador Mission, stake executive secretary, stake Young Men president, seminary teacher, bishop, stake president, high councilor, and mission president's counselor. ■

Elder Kent F. Richards

Of the Seventy



Elder Kent Farnsworth Richards of the Seventy believes that selfishness will keep us from living a fuller life. “Stay away from selfishness,” he says. “You’re a lot more fulfilled as you look outside yourself.”

After 32 years as a surgeon in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, where he was born and raised, Elder Richards says he has been prepared for Church service by learning to take care of people’s physical needs.

“As a physician, what I’m really doing is trying to figure out ways I can be of service to them,” he says. “That’s what we do in the kingdom.”

Born to C. Elliott and Margaret Farnsworth Richards on February 25, 1946, Elder Richards married Marsha Gurr in August 1968 in the Salt Lake Temple. They reside in North Salt Lake, Utah, USA, and are the parents of eight children. Throughout his life, he has tried to maintain a family focus, believing that life’s

greatest happiness comes from family.

“I remember as a young father hearing Elder Richard L. Evans (1906–71) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles say, ‘Hobbies none, just my sons.’ That was a lesson to me that I needed to first pay attention to my family.”

Elder Richards received a bachelor’s degree in medicine in 1969 and a medical doctorate in 1972, both from the University of Utah. Along with practicing medicine, he has been a clinical professor at the University of Utah, chair of the department of surgery for LDS Hospital, and senior vice president and member of the board of trustees at a health care organization.

Before his call to the Second Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Richards served a full-time mission to the Southern Mexican Mission and served as Scoutmaster, elders quorum president, bishop, high councilor, stake president, and president of the Texas San Antonio Mission. ■

Elder Gregory A. Schwitzer

Of the Seventy



As a doctor specializing in emergency medicine, Elder Gregory Allan Schwitzer of the Seventy has cared for many with life-threatening injuries and has been blessed to see the kindness of our Heavenly Father in helping them and their loved ones at these trying crossroads.

“I have held the hands of many patients who have passed through the veil,” he says. When faced with their mortality, many turn to their Heavenly Father, “because He is ultimately the hope they grasp for.”

Elder Schwitzer was born on April 2, 1948, to Harvey and Gloria Schwitzer in Ogden, Utah, USA, where he also grew up. He served a full-time mission in the North German Mission. He graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in biology in 1972 and received his medical degree in 1975, both from the University of Utah. He did postgraduate work for five years as part of the United States Army

Medical Corp at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Denver, Colorado, USA.

Elder Schwitzer and his wife, Jo Ann Elizabeth Rawsthorne, were married on June 24, 1972, in the Ogden Utah Temple. They are the parents of five children.

While their youngest son was serving a mission in Germany, they received a call in the middle of the night telling them that their son had suffered a massive brain hemorrhage and was not expected to live. “Through the miraculous hand of the Lord, his life was spared after 12 surgical procedures,” said Elder Schwitzer. “Over a period of years, we have seen a full recovery. When you have the blessings of the Lord like that in your life, there is no way you could refuse Him any service He would ask of you.”

Prior to his call to the Second Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Schwitzer served as a bishop, high councilor, stake president, and president of the Russia Yekaterinburg Mission. ■

Russell T. Osguthorpe

Sunday School General President



Teaching is an essential key to any success we have as a church," says Russell Trent Osguthorpe, newly sustained as Sunday School general president. "Much of what we call leadership is really teaching. I see the Sunday School as the teaching improvement arm of the Church."

Brother Osguthorpe is a teacher both by profession and inclination. He holds multiple degrees from Brigham Young University, including a PhD in instructional psychology.

Currently Brother Osguthorpe is a professor in the Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology at BYU. He also serves as director of the university's Center for Teaching and Learning, whose goal is to improve student learning and to help faculty teach to their potential.

Born on December 4, 1946, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, to Wesley and Iva Russell Osguthorpe, Brother

Osguthorpe served a mission in Tahiti. On August 7, 1969, he married Lola "Lolly" Sedgwick in the Salt Lake Temple. They are the parents of three sons and two daughters.

Prior to serving as president of the South Dakota Rapid City Mission, Brother Osguthorpe served as stake Young Men president, counselor in a bishopric, branch president at the Missionary Training Center in Provo, and as president of a BYU student stake. At the time of his call, Brother Osguthorpe was serving in the Fifth Quorum of the Seventy.

"I have seen the Lord's hand so often and in so many ways," Brother Osguthorpe says of how his testimony has developed. "Even as a child I knew that divine help was with me. It was the same on my mission to Tahiti. I've had moments as a father when I knew the Lord was directing me. And when I served as a mission president, watching the Lord magnify missionaries was a constant daily reminder of the power and love of God." ■

David M. McConkie

First Counselor in the Sunday School General Presidency



While David Merrill McConkie, first counselor in the Sunday School general presidency, has had few opportunities to serve in the Sunday School, his years of priesthood leadership have provided an important perspective on gospel teaching.

"The doctrine is fundamental to all that we do and all that we are," he says. "We develop faith through learning and understanding the doctrine and then keeping the commandments. You can't keep the commandments until you know what they are."

Keeping the commandments has been a priority since early in Brother McConkie's life. Born on October 13, 1948, to France Briton and Beth Merrill McConkie in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, Brother McConkie grew up in Bountiful, Utah, before being called to the South Africa Mission.

He married JoAnne Albrecht in September 1971

in the Salt Lake Temple. They are the parents of seven children. At the University of Utah he earned a bachelor's degree in history in 1974 and a juris doctor in 1977, when he joined a Salt Lake-based law firm.

He has served in the Aaronic Priesthood, Sunday School, and as a bishop, high councilor, and counselor in a stake presidency. He was stake president at the time of his call. During his service, he observed the important role that teaching plays in the Church. "Every leader and every parent in the Church is a teacher," he says.

The most important responsibilities of a teacher, Brother McConkie says, are listening to and following the promptings of the Spirit. "There are many teaching techniques, but more important than them all is being sensitive to the whisperings of the Spirit to know what the Lord would teach. Then the teacher can become an instrument in the Lord's hands to lift burdens and answer prayers. That should happen in every class in the Church." ■

Matthew O. Richardson

*Second Counselor in the Sunday School
General Presidency*



Matthew Ottesen Richardson never planned on becoming an educator. Naturally, he was a bit surprised when he realized the Lord seemed to be preparing him for a lifetime of teaching.

“I’ve learned to allow myself to be molded for my good,” he says. “Our Father in Heaven has a grander view of all things, including the intimate details of my life.”

When Brother Richardson returned in 1982 from the Denmark Copenhagen Mission, he started teaching Danish at the Missionary Training Center to support his studies at Brigham Young University. In July 1983 he married Lisa Jeanne Jackson in the Salt Lake Temple. Soon after, friends encouraged him to try teaching seminary.

“We thought I would teach for a year and get that out of my system. One year turned into seven, and teaching is still not out of my system,” he says. “It took me by surprise.”

He received a bachelor’s

degree in communications and completed master’s and doctorate degrees in the field of educational leadership, all from BYU. Brother Richardson thought he had found his life’s calling teaching seminary full-time, but he feels the same enthusiasm as a professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU, where he served four years as an Associate Dean of Religious Education. His years in the classroom bring the experience of both a student and a teacher to his new calling.

Born on December 12, 1960, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, to Edward Milton and Andrea Lovina Ottesen Richardson, he has served as a Young Men president, in elders quorum presidencies, as a Sunday School instructor, bishop, and on the Young Men/Young Women curriculum writing committee. He and his family live in Orem, Utah.

At the time of this call, the youngest of his four children asked, “Will Dad still be able to play catch?” Brother Richardson, a devoted father, husband, and teacher, promised there will still be time for catch. ■

David L. Beck

Young Men General President



During his years of service, David LeRoy Beck has interviewed a lot of youth in the Church, and he has a high opinion of them.

“I’ve had the experience of sitting with them privately and having them open up their hearts, and they are extraordinary,” the new Young Men general president says. “I feel the love our Heavenly Father has for them and how precious they are to Him. So many of them are heroes to me, because they are so faithful even when they are challenged.”

Brother Beck has served as president of the Brazil Rio de Janeiro North Mission, stake president, bishop, high counselor, counselor in the bishopric, elders quorum president, and Primary worker. He was a ward mission leader in Bountiful, Utah, USA, at the time of his call.

Born to Wayne and Evelyn Moon Beck on April 12, 1953, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, Brother Beck was 10 years old when his father was called

to preside over the Brazil Mission, and both his parents and the full-time missionaries served as role models. “I caught the excitement of this work as a young man,” he says. He later served as a full-time missionary in the Brazil North Central Mission.

“I hope the young men of the Church will be faithful and qualify for the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods and all of the great blessings of the temple,” he says. “I would love every young man who is able to experience the joy of bringing souls to Christ through full-time missionary service.”

Brother Beck married Robyn Ericksen in the Salt Lake Temple in 1976. They have four children. “We love spending time together,” he says. Brother Beck is an executive with a manufacturing and distribution company and serves on the board of a technical college. He received a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering and a master’s degree in engineering administration from the University of Utah. ■

Larry M. Gibson

*First Counselor in the Young Men
General Presidency*



When Larry Miner Gibson graduated from high school, he decided to hike into Havasupai, Arizona, USA, in the Grand Canyon, where he spent several days reading the Book of Mormon and praying about and pondering on his testimony. He says he cannot remember a time that he did not know the Church was true, but he wanted to make sure he had a solid focus and foundation before going out into the world.

“Some very sacred things happened during that experience,” he says, “that helped me as I went away to school and then on a mission.”

He served a full-time mission to the British South Mission from 1966 to 1968, married Shirley Barton in the Manti Utah Temple in September 1968, and has served in various Church callings. At the time of his call he was serving as stake president, and he previously served as a stake president’s counselor, high counselor, bishop, and

ward and stake Young Men president.

Brother Gibson graduated with a degree in computer science and business from Brigham Young University in 1971. He received his master’s degree in information science from BYU in 1974.

He has been president and CEO of several technology companies and most recently was executive vice president and CTO for a Fortune 500 company.

The Gibsons and their six children enjoy scuba diving, hot air ballooning, cycling, hiking, camping, and traveling. He and his wife currently live in Highland, Utah.

Brother Gibson was born on February 26, 1947, in Boulder City, Nevada, USA, to Robert Owen and Thais Miner Gibson. ■

Adrián Ochoa

*Second Counselor in the Young Men
General Presidency*



As a young man, Adrián Ochoa Quintana came to an understanding of the need for humility in his life that has provided him with a strong focus ever since.

“The first time I read Alma 32:15, I learned that if you follow promptings without being forced to be humble, you will receive many blessings,” Brother Ochoa recalls. “When I decided to follow that promise, my life received a whole new direction.”

As second counselor in the Young Men general presidency, Brother Ochoa recognizes the need to continue to strive to be humble.

Brother Ochoa was born in San Francisco, California, USA, on March 7, 1954, to Eduardo and Consuelo Ochoa. His youth was spent between Los Angeles, California, and Chihuahua, Mexico. The experiences gained in these two places have been valuable later in his life.

Brother Ochoa has worked in advertising and film production in the United States

and Mexico and developed multiple marketing campaigns for some of the top 500 companies in the world. He credits his time in Los Angeles as an opportunity to learn how the media works. Likewise, he believes his time in Mexico allowed him the opportunity to “breathe different air” and spend time in nature. “It was the best of both worlds,” he says.

His interest in media led him to a bachelor’s degree in communications and master’s degrees in business and marketing.

As a young man, he was called to serve a special public affairs mission in Mexico, where he met with government leaders and used the media to preach the gospel.

Brother Ochoa and his wife, Nancy Villareal, who were sealed in the Mexico City Mexico Temple, live in Highland, Utah. They have five children. Brother Ochoa has served as high priests group leader, stake president, area public affairs director, Area Seventy, and president of the Honduras San Pedro Sula Mission. ■



The new Gospel Art Book will make gospel art available for a fraction of the cost of the existing Gospel Art Kit.

Gospel Art Book Designed for Worldwide Audience

To meet the growing demand to make gospel-related art available to families and teachers around the world, the Church has created a 137-page *Gospel Art Book* that costs a fraction of what the existing Gospel Art Kit costs. The book comes with indexing and scripture references in 8 languages and inserts for 50 additional languages.

“The *Gospel Art Book* is a wonderful new resource for teaching the gospel—both in families and in the Church,” said Cheryl C. Lant, Primary general president. “All of us, and especially children, are visual learners. Seeing these beautiful pictures captures our attention, keeps our focus, and teaches us many unspoken principles of the gospel. We also know that seeing

helps us to feel, or in other words, invites the Spirit into the learning process.”

The new *Gospel Art Book* will cost U.S. \$3.50 inside the United States and Canada (or U.S. \$1.50 each for a case of 20). Outside of the U.S. and Canada, the book will cost U.S. \$1.50. By comparison, the existing Gospel Art Kit costs about U.S. \$30.

“We designed this to make it as inexpensive as possible,” said Michael Madsen, Curriculum Planning and Development specialist. “We tried to price it so that every member of the Church could have a copy of the book.”

The 8.5 by 11 inch (22 by 28 cm) spiral-bound book contains art depicting scripture stories from the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of



Mormon, and Church history, as well as photos showing other aspects of the Church and gospel. Some of the pictures in the book are *Adam and Eve Teaching Their Children*, *Christ Ordaining the Apostles*, *Enos Praying*, *The First Vision*, *Young Girl Speaking in Church*, *The Articles of Faith*, *Salt Lake Temple*, and *Latter-day Prophets*.

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president, said the book is a great improvement over the kit. While the kit was heavy, difficult to transport, and came apart in pieces, the book is easy to transport, small enough for someone to put into a bag and carry to church, and the pieces stay together.

“It can be used in every classroom; it could be used in

Primary sharing time; it could be used in family home evening, in family scripture study and devotional; it could be used in personal study,” Sister Beck said.

Brother Madsen added that the book could be used in Sunday School or as an additional resource in seminary and institute classes. Parents could use the book at bedtime to share a scriptural account with their children or to help quiet their children in church.

In an interview promoting the *Gospel Art Book*, Elder Spencer J. Condie of the Seventy illustrated the power of visual aids by pointing out that one of the paintings featured in the book also hangs on the wall

in President Thomas S. Monson’s office. President Monson has referred to times when he looks at that painting and asks himself, “I wonder what the Savior would have me do.” With his thoughts turned to the Savior, he receives inspiration and answers to many of his questions.

“That can happen to each of us,” Elder Condie said.

“I would hope [the book] will be found in every home and in every classroom,” Sister Lant said. “It can bless our teaching and bless our lives as we work to grow in faith and testimony and as we strive to lift others and strengthen our families.”

The *Gospel Art Book* is available through Church Distribution or online at gospelart.lds.org. ■