

THE New Era

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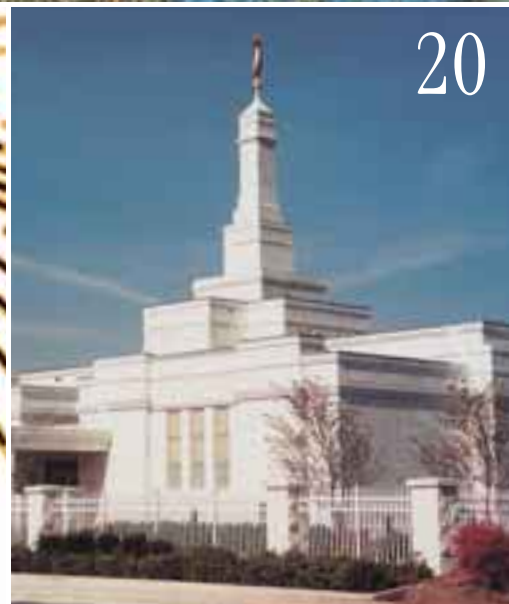
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THE SPIRIT OF



by President
Gordon B. Hinckley

I am asking that we stop seeking out the storms and enjoy more fully the sunlight.

There never was a greater time in the history of the world to live upon the earth than this. How grateful every one of us ought to feel for being alive in this wonderful time with all the marvelous blessings we have. . . . And on top of all that is the Restoration of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with all of the keys and authority, with all the gifts and blessings, with all the organization and doctrine of all previous dispensations all brought into one. And you and I are partakers of that marvelous restoration (from *Church News*, Aug. 14, 1999, 7).

I see so many good people everywhere—and there’s so much of good in them. And the world is good. Wonderful things are happening in this

world. This is the greatest age in the history of the earth. . . .

We have every reason to be optimistic in this world. Tragedy is around, yes. Problems everywhere, yes. . . . You can’t, you don’t, build out of pessimism or cynicism. You look with optimism, work with faith, and things happen (from *Ensign*, June 1995, 4).

Truth will triumph

I suppose you have heard the story of the absent-minded professor who went shopping and lost his umbrella. Discovering his loss, he retraced his steps. At the first three stores on which he called, the clerks denied having found his umbrella. At the fourth store the clerk handed him the missing umbrella. He grumbled, “Thank goodness for an honest man. The other three told me they didn’t have it.”

I am inclined to think that notwithstanding the gains we see in the work of the Lord, notwithstanding the reformation we see in the lives of many



Optimism



people, we are prone to emphasize the problems and disregard the progress.

I [am] an optimist concerning the work of the Lord. I cannot believe that God has established His work in the earth to have it fail. I cannot believe that it is getting weaker. I know that it is getting stronger. . . .

I have a simple and solemn faith that right will triumph and that truth will prevail. I am not so naive as to believe there will not be setbacks, but I believe that “truth crushed to earth will rise again” (from *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1969, 97–98).

Be happy

I have a great and compelling sense of gratitude and optimism about the youth of the Church. In saying this, I do not wish to imply that all is well with all of them. There are many who have troubles, and many who live far beneath the high expectations we have concerning them.

But even considering these, I have

great confidence in our young people as a whole. I regard you as the finest generation in the history of the Church. I compliment you, and I have in my heart a great feeling of love and respect and appreciation for you (from *New Era*, Sept. 1993, 4).

I have little doubt that many of us are troubled with fears concerning ourselves. We are in a period of stress across the world. There are occasionally hard days for each of us. Do not despair. Do not give up. Look for the sunlight through the clouds. Opportunities will eventually open to you. Do not let the prophets of gloom endanger your possibilities (from *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 4–5).

The Lord has said: “Wherefore, lift up thy heart and rejoice, and cleave unto the covenants which thou hast made” (D&C 25:13).

I believe He is saying to each of us, be happy. The gospel is a thing of joy. It provides us with a reason for gladness. Of course there are times of sorrow. Of course there are hours of concern and

We all worry. But the Lord has told us to lift our hearts and rejoice. Cultivate an attitude of happiness. Cultivate a spirit of optimism. Walk with faith.



I have a great and compelling sense of gratitude and optimism about the youth of the Church. I have great confidence in our young people as a whole. I regard you as the finest generation in the history of the Church.

anxiety. We all worry. But the Lord has told us to lift our hearts and rejoice. I see so many people . . . who seem never to see the sunshine, but who constantly walk with storms under cloudy skies. Cultivate an attitude of happiness. Cultivate a spirit of optimism. Walk with faith, rejoicing in the beauties of nature, in the goodness of those you love, in the testimony which you carry in your heart concerning things divine (from *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 91–92).

The good news

Let us not partake of the negative spirit so rife in our times. There is so much of the sweet and the decent and the beautiful to build upon. We are partakers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel means “good news!” The message of the Lord is one of hope and salvation! The voice of the Lord is a voice of glad tidings! The work of the Lord is a work of glorious accomplishment!

In a dark and troubled hour the Lord said to those He loved: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

These great words of confidence are a beacon to each of us. In Him we may indeed have trust. For He and His promises will never fail (from *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 6).

Be positive

I am asking that we stop seeking out the storms and enjoy more fully the sunlight. I am suggesting that as we go through life we “accentuate the positive.” I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good, that we still voices of insult and sarcasm, that we more generously compliment virtue and effort. I am not asking that all criticism be silenced. Growth comes of correction. Strength comes of repentance. Wise is the man who can acknowledge mistakes pointed out by others and change his course.

What I am suggesting is that each of us turn from the negativism that so permeates our society and look for the remarkable good among those with whom we associate, that we speak of one another’s virtues more than we speak of one another’s faults, that optimism replace pessimism, that our faith exceed our fears. When I was a young man and was prone to speak critically, my father would say: “Cynics do not contribute, skeptics do not create, doubters do not achieve (from *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 2–4).

Let us go forward in this glorious work. How exciting and wonderful it is. I do not know how anybody can feel gloomy for very long who is a member of this Church. Do you feel gloomy? Lift your eyes. Stand on your feet. Say a few words of appreciation and love to the Lord. Be positive. Think of what great things are occurring as the Lord brings to pass His eternal purposes. This is a day of prophecy fulfilled, . . . this great day in the history of this Church. This is the day which has been spoken of by those who have gone before us. Let us live worthy of our birthright. Keep the faith. Nurture your testimonies. Walk in righteousness, and the Lord will bless you and prosper you, and you will be a happy and wonderful people (from *Ensign*, Aug. 1996, 61). **NE**

REMEMBERING

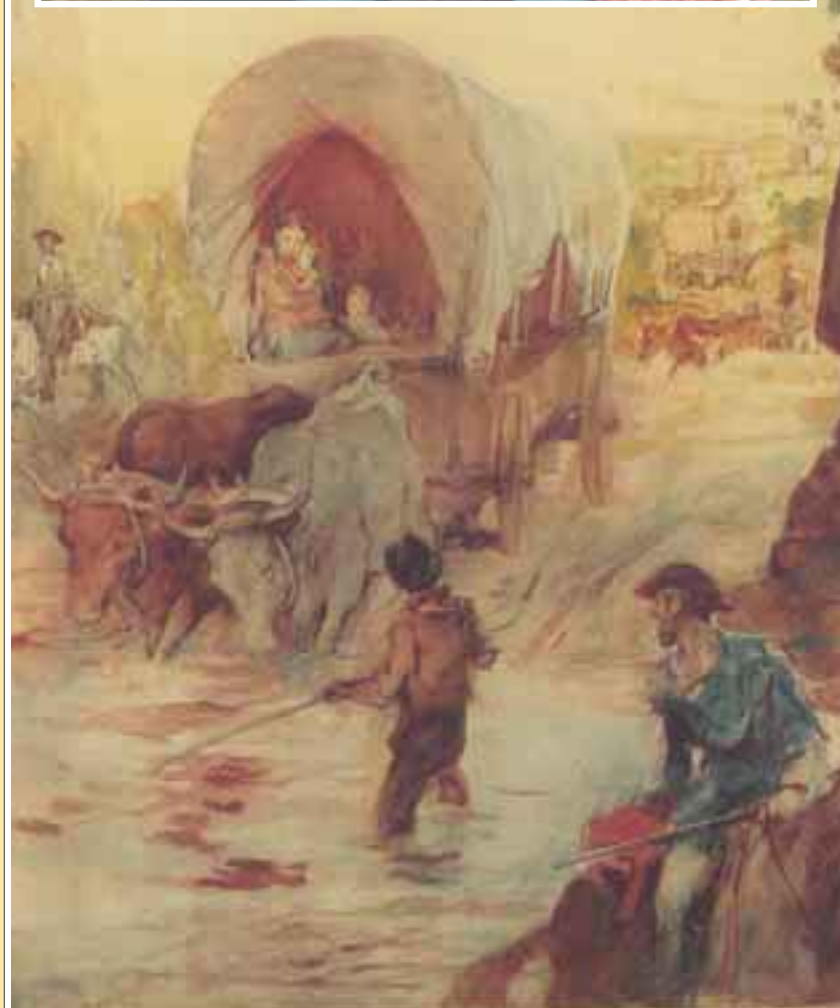


Starting in 1847, in one of the most monumental feats of modern time, the Latter-day Saints, led by their prophet Brigham Young, crossed the 1,300-mile stretch of wilderness of the American continent to establish a city where they could worship God in the way they desired. The willingness of these early Saints to leave behind their homes and newly completed temple in Nauvoo continues to serve as an inspiration and example for us now as we choose to live our lives committed to following the prophet.

On July 24, 1847, while suffering from mountain fever, Brigham Young saw the Salt Lake Valley for the first time. Wilford Woodruff, who accompanied the prophet, recalled his words to be, “This is the right place, drive on.” By December of 1847, nearly 2,000 pioneers were already in the valley. And before the railroad was completed in 1869, making travel easier, a total of 80,000 pioneers had made the trip by wagon, pulling handcarts, and on foot.

While serving in the Quorum of the Twelve, President James E. Faust said, “How can we pay our debt of gratitude for the heritage of faith demonstrated by pioneers in many lands across the earth who struggled and sacrificed so that the gospel might take root? How is thankfulness expressed for the intrepid handcart pioneers who, by their own brute strength, pulled their meager belongings in handcarts across the scorching plains and through the snows of the high mountain passes to escape persecution and find peaceful worship in these valleys? How can the debt of gratitude possibly be paid by the descendants of the Martin and the Willie and the other handcart companies for the faith of their forebears? . . . The descendants of these pioneers can partially settle the account by being true to the cause for which their ancestors suffered so much to be part of” (*Ensign*, May 1990, 87). **NE**

Inset: Elder M. Russell Ballard with children of the Faith in Every Footstep wagon train in 1997.



The DEBT You OWE

We are all blessed by the faithful lives of those who have gone before us.

As a young man of Primary and Aaronic Priesthood age, I attended church in the grand old St. George Tabernacle, construction for which had begun in 1863. During very lengthy sermons I would amuse myself by gazing about the building, admiring the marvelous pioneer craftsmanship that had built that striking facility. Did you know, by the way, that there are 184 clusters of grapes carved into the ceiling cornice of that building? (Some of those sermons were really long!) But most of all I enjoyed counting the window panes—2,244 of them—because I grew up on the story of Peter Neilson.

In the course of constructing that tabernacle, the local brethren ordered the glass for the windows from New York and had it shipped around the cape to California. But a bill of \$800 was due and payable before the panes could be picked up and delivered to St. George. Brother David H. Cannon, later to preside over the St. George Temple being built at the same time, was charged with the responsibility of raising the needed funds. After painstaking effort, the entire community, giving virtually everything they had to these two monumental



by Elder
Jeffrey R. Holland
of the Quorum of the
Twelve

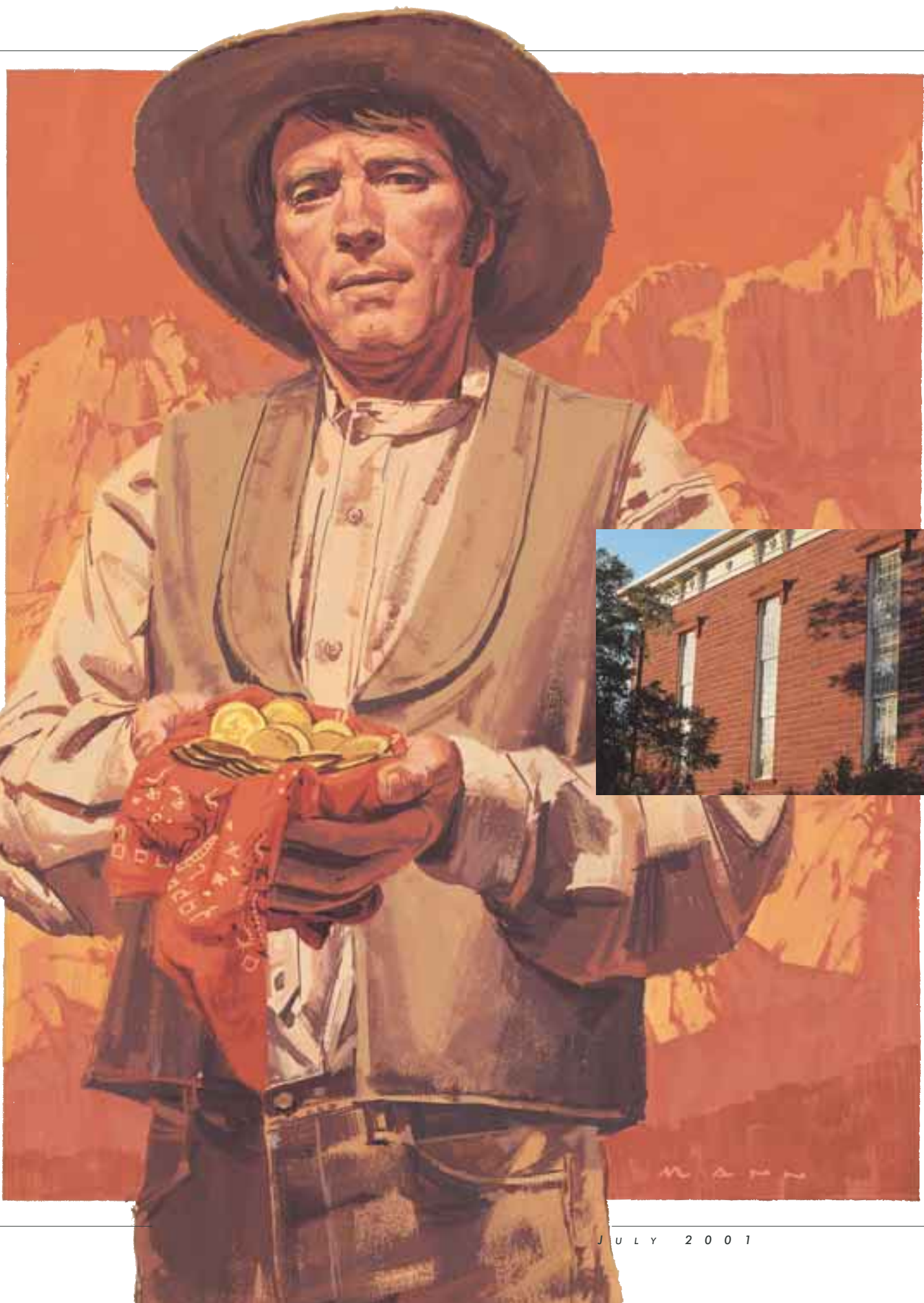
Answering
the
prompting
of the Holy Spirit,
people like Peter
Neilson made
sacrifices that
have blessed
generations.

building projects, had been able to come up with only \$200 cash. On sheer faith Brother Cannon committed a team of freighters to prepare to leave for California to get the glass. He continued to pray that the enormous balance of \$600 would somehow be forthcoming before their departure.

Living in nearby Washington, Utah, was Peter Neilson, a Danish immigrant who had been saving for years to add on to his modest two-room adobe home. On the eve of the freighters' departure for California, Peter spent a sleepless night in that tiny house. He thought of his conversion in far-off Denmark and his subsequent gathering with the Saints in America. After coming west he had settled and struggled to make a living in Sanpete. And then, just as some prosperity seemed imminent there, he answered the call to uproot and go to the Cotton Mission, bolstering the pathetic and sagging efforts of the alkali-soiled, malaria-plagued, flood-bedeveled settlers of Dixie. As he lay in bed that night contemplating his years in the Church, he weighed the sacrifices asked of him against the wonderful blessings he had received. Somewhere in those private hours he made a decision.

Peter's decision

Some say it was a dream, others say an impression, still others simply a call to duty. However the direction came, Peter



Neilson arose before dawn on the morning the teams were to leave for California. With only a candle and the light of the gospel to aid him, Peter brought out of a secret hiding place \$600 in gold coins. His wife, Karen, aroused by the predawn bustle, asked why he was up so early. He said only that he had to walk quickly the seven miles to St. George to give \$600 to Brother David H. Cannon.

As the first light of morning fell on the beautiful red cliffs of southern Utah, a knock came at Brother Cannon's door. There stood Peter Neilson, holding a red bandanna which sagged under the weight it carried. "Good morning, David," said Peter. "I hope I am not too late. You will know what to do with this money."

With that he turned on his heel and retraced his steps back to Washington, back to a faithful and unquestioning wife, and back to a small two-room adobe house that remained just two rooms for the rest of his life. (See Andrew Karl Larson, *Red Hills of November*, 1957, 311–13.)

One man's commitment

John R. Moyle lived in Alpine, Utah, about 22 miles as the crow flies to the Salt Lake Temple, where he was the chief superintendent of masonry during its construction. To make certain he was always at work by 8:00 A.M., Brother Moyle would start walking about 2:00 on Monday mornings. He would finish his work week at 5:00 P.M. on Friday and then start the walk home, arriving there shortly before midnight. Each week he would repeat that schedule for the entire time he served on the construction of the temple.

Once when he was home on the weekend, one of his cows bolted during milking and kicked Brother Moyle in the leg, shattering the bone just below the knee. With no better medical help than they had in such rural circumstances, his family and friends took a door off the hinges and strapped him onto that makeshift operating table. They then took the bucksaw they had been using to



On an artificial leg he had carved for himself, Brother Moyle walked the 22 miles to the temple and, with chisel in hand, hammered out the declaration "Holiness to the Lord."

cut branches from a nearby tree and amputated his leg just a few inches below the knee.

When against all medical likelihood the leg finally started to heal, Brother Moyle took a piece of wood and carved an artificial leg. First he walked in the house. Then he walked around the yard. Finally he ventured out about his property. When he felt he could stand the pain, he strapped on his leg, walked the 22 miles to the Salt Lake Temple, climbed the scaffolding, and with a chisel in his hand hammered out the declaration "Holiness to the Lord." (See "Two Traditions of John Rowe Moyle," in *Biographies and Reminiscences*, ed. Gene A. Sessions, 1974, 202–3.)

A debt of gratitude

Whether longtime member or newest of converts, we are all the beneficiaries of such faithful forebears. My mind goes back 167 years to a little handful of women, older men, and those children that could labor who were left to keep construction going on the Kirtland Temple while virtually every man well enough to do so had undertaken a relief march of 1,000 miles to aid the Saints in Missouri. The records indicate that quite literally every woman in Kirtland was engaged in knitting and spinning in order to clothe the men and boys laboring on the temple.

Elder Heber C. Kimball wrote, "The Lord only knows the scenes of poverty, tribulation, and distress which we passed through in order to accomplish this." It was recorded that one leader of the day, looking upon the suffering and poverty of the Church, frequently went upon the walls of that building by day and by night, weeping and crying aloud to the Almighty to send means whereby they might finish that building ("Extracts from H.C. Kimball's Journal," *Times and Seasons*, 15 Apr. 1845, 867).

We are a blessed people, and I feel an overwhelming debt of gratitude. I thank my Father in Heaven for blessings unnumbered and incalculable, first and foremost being the gift of His Only



Begotten Son, Jesus of Nazareth, our Savior and King. I testify that Christ's perfect life and loving sacrifice constituted literally a King's ransom, an atonement willingly paid, to lead us not only from death's prison but also the prisons of sorrow and sin and self-indulgence.

I know that Joseph Smith beheld the Father and the Son and that this day is a direct extension of that day. I owe much for the precious knowledge of which I testify here. I owe much for the priceless heritage that has been given to me. Indeed I owe everything, and I pledge the rest of my life in giving it. **NE**

Adapted from an April 2000 general conference address.

OUR PRIVILEGE



“Today we are not called to pull handcarts through the snow-swept plains of Wyoming. However, we are called to live, foster, and teach the gospel

of Jesus Christ. It is our privilege to invest our means and our time to bless others. Each one of us must do all we can to preserve our Latter-day Saint way of life. A vital part of this preservation is a willingness to set aside personal desires and replace them with unselfish sacrifice for others” (*Ensign*, May 1992, 77).

—Elder M. Russell Ballard
of the Quorum of the Twelve

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

After his life-changing injury and a lengthy hospital stay (right, inset), David's first job was to become as independent as possible. Then he settled down to achieving as much as possible.

by Jane Forsgren

It may take wheels to do it, but David Eves is moving forward to make his dreams a reality—including a mission.

David Eves discovered firsthand how quickly life can change when, on September 20, 1997, he and his friends went four-wheeling at Kolob Canyon in southern Utah.

"We'd been driving all day when we hit a bump and lost control," says David. "I remember flying through the air, then waking up in excruciating pain. When I saw my friends looking down at me and told them I couldn't feel my legs, I knew I would never be the same."

After being life-flighted to LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City and undergoing eight hours of surgery to stop internal bleeding and to secure two titanium rods in his back, David spent the next three months fighting for his life.

An avid football, basketball, and track star, David, of the LaVerkin Second Ward, LaVerkin Utah Stake, was no stranger to pain, but soon he was faced with a new challenge: he couldn't hold his food down or speak. His body weight dropped from 170 to 100 pounds over a two-month period.

The days and nights grew longer. "I wanted to get off the morphine, but the pain was unbearable," David recalls. "I asked my dad to read to me from the Book of Mormon, and as he did a miracle happened. The spirit of that book brought so much peace, I was able to rest."

But David was not improving. Jill Eves became alarmed at her son's severe weight loss and, pleading with the Lord for inspiration, knew a specialist must be called immediately. Sure enough, the doctor discovered and repaired a hole in David's esophagus, and David came home two weeks later.

His father, Raymond, had taught him two important secrets to obtaining goals: give it your all and never quit. David was used to giving his all, so it was no



surprise when he was back at school the following Monday.

"Looking like an alien with my body cast and neck brace, I could see how different I was. I had absolute faith I would get better, but soon realized I was completely unlike the other 800 kids in my school. After that first hard week, though, I knew I could do anything I wanted; I just had to find a different way."

When his brother suggested he run for student body president a few months later, David again gave it his all. "Vote for someone with skills and wheels!" posters lined the school halls, and soon David went from jock to school leader. "That year was awesome," he says. "I felt it was the perfect preparation for my mission."



Photography by the author and courtesy of the Eves family



Missionaries usually have their mom's love and support. David also had his mom's cooking, since his address as a welfare missionary was also his home address. (Above) Elder Eves spent his mornings at the Deseret Industries in St. George, tutoring trainees working on their high school and G.E.D. certificates.



Nothing made David's therapy more important than his determination to serve a mission. Although some of his friends said serving a mission wasn't necessary, since he was in a wheelchair, David didn't buy it. "I knew the Lord wanted me to serve, so I decided I would do everything in my power to make that possible."

Before long, he could shower and dress himself, drive his car, and negotiate his way anywhere. In fact, after his doctor said it was impossible, David learned to strap on a brace he calls his exoskeleton and walk, using crutches extending from his hands, by moving his shoulders to push his body forward. With no sense of balance or ability to feel the ground under him, this is an incredible feat—one for which the students and parents honored him with a standing ovation at high school graduation exercises.

After graduation David couldn't wait to turn 19 and send in his mission papers. His doctor attached a note verifying he was totally independent.

But it was not to be. Instead of a calling, David's letter informed him he

could not serve a full-time proselyting mission.

"When I heard this, I was crushed," remembers David. "I had worked so hard, and it seemed it was all taken away from me in just a matter of seconds." Even though David had given it his best, he felt strongly he must continue to pursue a mission. An interview was arranged with Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve, who lovingly assured David there was a mission for him.

One week later he was called to serve a welfare mission at the Deseret Industries (D.I.) in St. George. Nothing had prepared him for such a call. "To tell the truth, I was disappointed." But he kept hearing these words to the song, "I will go, I will do," run through his head and knew the Lord wanted him there.

"I look back now and think how foolish I was. I had no clue what a blessing this mission would be," David says.

Not only has David been blessed, but his sense of humor and positive attitude touched each of the 250-plus people

whose lives have been uplifted and changed through D.I.'s self-sufficiency and missionary programs. "Whenever we were having a bad day, we'd just come and find Elder Eves," says Debbie Kelly, a trainee. "When we saw how happy and positive he was, even in a wheelchair, we'd ask, 'What are we complaining about?'"

While serving his mission, Elder Eves spent mornings tutoring trainees working on their high school and G.E.D. certificates. "He helped me so much," says Brandy, a single mom working to learn the skills necessary for upgraded employment. "I couldn't have passed my math section without him."

But to David, tutoring wasn't just about teaching educational skills. He loved his students. "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," he says. The relationships he developed with his students reached higher levels, like teaching the six missionary discussions to Rita Roberts, another trainee.

"He helped me understand the gospel step by step, because I'm a slow learner," Rita says. "And I knew I could count on him for anything. He and his family helped me move twice. You couldn't get a better person—not just in the classroom, but everywhere. He's cool and unique."

Besides tutoring staff members, David was responsible for many devotionals at the D.I.

"One day it was Elder Eves's turn to give the devotional. Everyone was there but him. In a few minutes, in he came, walking with his braces. There wasn't a dry eye in the room as he talked to us about overcoming adversity and working with your hand in God's to accomplish any goal," says Sister Scott, a welfare missionary at D.I.

While David loved serving at D.I., his missionary efforts didn't stop there. In the evenings, he went team teaching with the full-time missionaries, resulting in several baptisms, one where he was asked to perform the baptism.

"I figured if she had enough faith to ask me to baptize her, I had enough faith to find a way to do it," remembers Elder Eves. And so on January 1, 2000, being strapped in his shower chair, Elder Eves said the baptismal prayer and lowered

Robin Rasmussen into the water. No one will ever forget the spirit present that day.

David brings a feeling of hope and peace everywhere he goes. But it's his great sense of humor that endears him to everyone he meets. "I learned early on that if others see me joking about being paralyzed, they are more comfortable around me. When they realize I'm happy because of the gospel and my many blessings, the whole wheelchair thing disappears and they see me as a person."

And counting blessings is what Elder Eves concentrates on. "The one thing my mission taught me more than anything else is how blessed I am. When I saw the problems some of these people at work deal with, my heart went out to them and I wondered if I could do what they do. I have a family who loves me, I have the gospel, and I have had the opportunity to serve the Lord on a mission. I couldn't ask for more," he says.

David is currently attending Dixie State College on a full scholarship and exercising on his bike and braces. "I work out in those leg braces every day to keep my legs stretched, so that when I do walk again I'll be ready," he says, with the same fervor with which he bears his testimony.

"I love the scripture in Doctrine and Covenants 121:7-8: 'My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high.' I know Joseph Smith was the prophet of the Restoration and that Jesus Christ is our Savior and loves each of us. Sometimes when we're going through hard times, it seems like we're alone, but we're really not. He's right there with us. And with this knowledge, everything else falls into place." **NE**



After a full day at Deseret Industries, Elder Eves spent his evenings working with the full-time missionaries assigned to his area. One young lady, Robin Rasmussen (above), asked that Elder Eves be the one to baptize her. Standing in his "exoskeleton" (below), David is flanked by two of his greatest supports—his parents.

Q & A

“I’m not exaggerating when I say that there are no LDS young people to date in my area. Wouldn’t it be all right to date nonmembers?”

NEW ERA

First of all, this would be a great topic to discuss with your parents and your bishop or branch president, and we encourage you to do so. Now, having said that, here are some things to consider.

For the Strength of Youth says this about dating: “Because dating is a preparation for marriage, date only those who have high standards, who respect your standards, and in whose company you can maintain the standards of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (p. 7). And President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “Your chances for a happy and lasting marriage will be far greater if you will date those who are active and faithful in the Church” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 41).

Our dictionary defines a date as “a social engagement between two persons that often has a romantic character” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.). We like that definition because it points out two major aspects of dating. One is social—being with friends, learning to get along with different personality types, developing conversation and other social

Ask your parents and Church leaders for guidance.

Date only those who share your goals and standards.

Try to focus on the social, not the romantic, aspects of dating until you might consider marriage.

Consider if dating is really necessary at this time in your life.

Temple marriage should be your goal.

Pray to know what is right and to have the strength to do it.

READERS

Before you consider dating nonmembers, try fellowshipping them to church and see how they feel about it. What you find may be a strong indication of whether you should consider dating them.

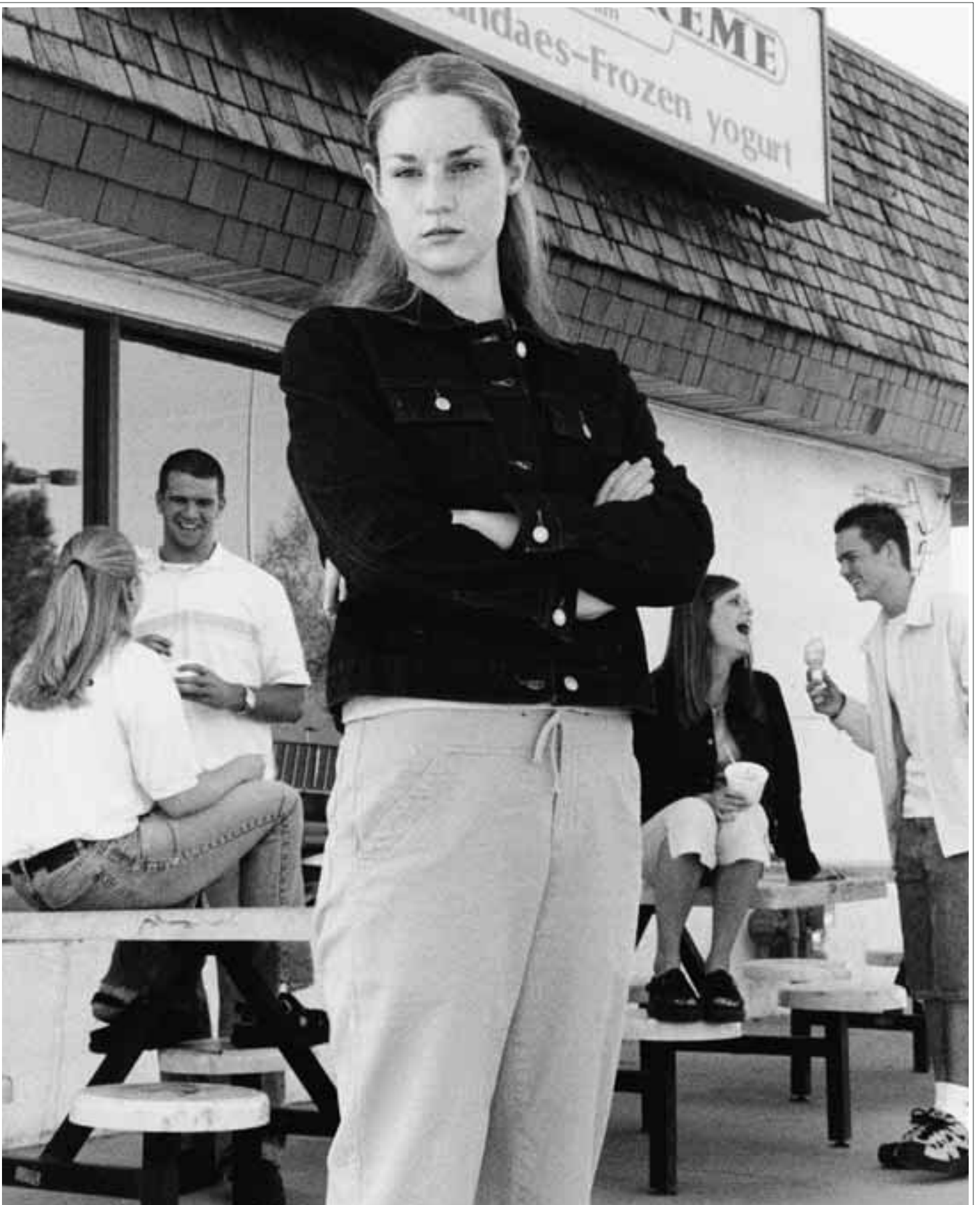
Ben Watson, 18
Kimberly, Idaho



Here in England, members in a ward usually live far apart, and it is difficult for the youth and young single adults. But the wait is worth it. You will receive so many blessings and you will realize how wonderful a relationship that includes the Spirit can be. My current boyfriend is the first LDS young man I have ever dated, and the difference between him and all my previous experiences is phenomenal! I urge you to wait and date an LDS boy or girl.

Sarah Wood, 19
Oxford, England





skills. This is the aspect of dating you should focus on until you reach the age where you might consider marriage. Group dating is ideal for this purpose.

The other aspect of dating, the romantic part, can be very appealing, especially when there's someone you are attracted to. It doesn't help that the media—and many of your fellow teens—focus on romance and physical attraction. But this is where the real danger is.

Those romantic feelings can become very strong. And once they have developed, they can overrule your own common sense as well as the teachings and advice of your parents and Church leaders. If you don't place yourself in a position to be influenced in that way, you are much safer. That's why it's such a good idea not to date one person exclusively until you are ready to settle down.

President Spencer W. Kimball counseled: "Do not take the chance of dating nonmembers, or members who are untrained and faithless. . . . One cannot afford to take a chance on falling in love with someone who may never accept the gospel (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, 241–42; italics added).

If you don't have the opportunity to associate with other LDS youth, consider if dating is really necessary at this time in your life. Many people don't date until they go to college. The fun, social aspect of dating is as easily achieved by participating in wholesome activities with worthwhile friends. And there's none of the awkwardness and social pressure that often accompany dating.

If you date someone who doesn't hold high standards, the romantic feelings you may develop for that person could pressure you to compromise your standards. Temple marriage should be your goal. If you avoid dating situations where you may feel pressure to compromise your standards—even if it means postponing dating—the Lord will bless you. **NE**

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.



“While you should be friendly with all people, select with great care those whom you wish to have close to you. They will be your safeguards in situations where you may vacillate between choices, and you in turn may save them” (*New Era*, Jan. 2001, 11).

—President
Gordon B. Hinckley

What you really need to do is pray. Though a simple tool, it is most effective. Also, make sure that every person you intend to date knows your standards and won't try to lower them.



Abby Scott, 16
St. George, Utah

Date only those nonmembers who have high standards, who respect your standards, and in whose company you can maintain the standards of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Elder Offiong Udoh, 21
Ghana Accra Mission

I think nonmembers are great friends. However, I have personally set a goal not to date them. It has often been said that you marry the people you date. If that's the case, I might risk the opportunity to get married in the temple and the possibility of returning back to my Father in Heaven. That's one risk I'm not willing to take.



Shelley Nebeker, 16
Eagle River, Alaska

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and where you are from. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger.

Q&A, *New Era*
50 East North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

QUESTION

I'm about to receive my patriarchal blessing. I'm a little nervous. What are good ways to prepare for it?

Please respond before September 1, 2001.

DON'T BE A DUMMY



A MANNEQUIN WEARS WHATEVER THE WORLD IS
SELLING. YOUR STANDARDS ARE HIGHER THAN THAT.

A TEMPLE of Our Own



How exciting is it to finally have a temple near where you live? We'll let the kids in Oklahoma and Michigan tell you.

by Matthew Baker
and Laury Livsey

Four years ago, the Church had just dedicated its 50th operating temple, the St. Louis Missouri Temple. Four months after that temple was dedicated, President Gordon B. Hinckley explained in the October 1997 general conference that after prayerful consideration, the Church had decided to begin a plan to construct smaller temples that would have “all of the facilities to administer all of the ordinances. They would be built to temple standards, which are much higher than meetinghouse standards. They would accommodate baptisms for the dead, the endowment service, sealings, and all other ordinances to be had in the Lord’s house for both the living and the dead” (Ensign, Nov. 1997, 49).

Since that historic announcement, members in many areas of the world have begun to experience the blessings of temples that are nearby and convenient.

Last year, the Boston Massachusetts Temple became the Church’s 100th operating temple. Since then, many other temples have been announced, dedicated, or are being built. The New Era recently traveled to two areas—Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the day the temple there was dedicated, and Detroit, Michigan, after that temple had been dedicated—to see how these temples have affected the lives of the youth in the area.







“There are many areas of the Church that are remote, where the membership is small and not likely to grow very much in the near future. Are those who live in these places to be denied forever the blessings of the temple ordinances? While visiting such an area a few months ago, we prayerfully pondered this question. The answer, we believe, came bright and clear” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 49).

—President
Gordon B. Hinckley

Oklahoma City Oklahoma Temple

When members were invited to join a special choir that would sing at the Oklahoma City Oklahoma Temple dedication, Mary Brunson jumped at the chance. Singing? Absolutely. Mary enjoys doing it and is quite proficient. She’s so into performing and singing that she has a sticker that says “Drama Queen” on the bumper of her car. “I really love to sing,” she says.

So after months of practice for the special event on July 30, 2000, she compared the differences between performing on stage and singing at this occasion.

“It was worship here today,” she says after the first of four dedicatory sessions. “In a play you go out and perform. When I perform, it is pretending. Singing in the choir was not pretending. This was real. This is something that will stay with me.”

She’s speaking about both her experience at the dedication and the white marble temple that sits on the outskirts of Oklahoma City.

The choir

In the spring of 2000, the Oklahoma City Oklahoma East Stake organized the choir. Mary saw it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. So did Ben Harrison and Jonathan Pierce. It didn’t hurt that all three are friends who love to sing—friends who were able to support and encourage each other during rehearsals.

“When we started practicing in the spring, the temple dedication didn’t seem real. It seemed so far in the future,” says Ben, 16, of the Choctaw Ward. Mary, Ben, and Jonathan stopped by the temple site at various stages of construction, watching the sacred building go up. With each passing month, the reality of the temple increased in their minds. Weekly choir practices in preparation for the dedication also helped.

“I really think it will draw us a lot closer to the Church having a temple here,” says Jonathan, 18. “We won’t have to drive all the way to Dallas.” Or Manti. Before the Dallas Texas Temple was built

in 1985, the Oklahoma City members were in the faraway Manti Utah Temple district. For Jonathan’s family, temple visits have gone from a two-day journey to a four-hour trip to the 20-minute drive of today.

As Mary, Ben, and Jonathan walk around the temple grounds after the first dedicatory session, they all seem a little in awe of what has just occurred. Maybe at one time having a temple in Oklahoma didn’t seem real. But the three realize they just took part in something they know they’ll remember forever.

A lifetime of memories

“This was an experience you can look back on and remember most clearly because of how unique it was,” says Jonathan. “I really liked singing ‘God So Loved the World.’ Watching President [James E.] Faust put the mortar in the cornerstone and then singing that hymn made me realize God does so love the world that He is going to dot the world with temples.”

All three are also in agreement that they often assumed Oklahoma would never have a temple. But after President Hinckley’s 1997 announcement, it wasn’t long before the temple that will serve members in parts of Kansas, Arkansas, Texas, and Missouri—as well as Oklahoma—was announced.

“This is such a great thing,” says Ben, standing near the temple entrance. “There were times when I thought Oklahoma didn’t have enough members to have a temple. But I’ve seen that we actually are strong, and the temple shows me how strong we can become.”

All three also believe the presence of the temple will help the youth in the area stay stronger in the Church. “A lot of teenagers do drift from the Church when they get to high school,” says Jonathan. “I really believe more boys will go on missions



Before the Oklahoma City temple was built, (from left) Mary Brunson, Jonathan Pierce, and Ben Harrison were part of the Dallas Texas Temple district. When their own temple neared completion, the three signed up to sing praises in the special choir organized for the dedication.



“Come to the temple.’ If not now, come soon. Pray fervently, set your lives in order, save whatever you can in hopes that that day may come. . . . The temple transforms the individual and makes abundantly worthwhile any efforts made to get there. For some who live at great distances from a temple, the temples will come to you before you might come to them. Keep your faith and your hope and determine that you will come—that you will be worthy and that you will come to the temple” (*The Holy Temple*, pamphlet, 1982, 1).

—President
Boyd K. Packer
Acting President of
the Quorum of the
Twelve

from Oklahoma if they’re able to go through the temple that they can call their own.”

They’re also sure of one thing. “We’re going to wear the temple out,” says Ben.

Detroit Michigan Temple

Twice a year, before the sun came up on Saturday morning, the youth from the East Shores (Michigan) Ward would pile into cars and vans. For the next four or five hours they would sleep, sing, play games, and anticipate their destination: the Toronto Ontario Temple. They would spend the afternoon doing temple work, then pile back in the vehicles and arrive home late in the evening.

Now the East Shores youth travel to the temple six times each year, but the travel time has been cut to about 25 minutes since the Detroit Michigan Temple was dedicated in October 1999.

Blessings

When President Gordon B. Hinckley gave the dedicatory prayer at the Detroit Michigan Temple, he prayed that the people who performed the temple work, as well as those who had passed away, would be blessed. With the temple so close, the East Shores youth have had plenty of opportunities to experience the blessings of temple work.

Many of the East Shores youth were at the temple when President Hinckley gave the dedicatory prayer. At that time, they had many expectations of what it would be like to have a temple so close. Now, more than a year later, they are looking back to see if their expectations were met.

Great expectations

When the Detroit temple was announced, Jessica Ellison, an East Shores Mia Maid, could hardly wait. “I remember the exciting feeling of knowing there would be a temple closer and we’d get a lot more chances to go.”

Michael Oniones, a teacher, shared in the excitement. “I knew it would be a lot easier to do the things we used to do at Toronto and other temples because it

would be in our own backyard. We could go whenever we wanted.”

Jessica and Michael got their wish.

“We go every other month now,” says Erin Coons, a Mia Maid. “The Young Men and the Young Women switch; the girls go one month, and the next month the boys go.”

This is quite a change from the twice-a-year trip to Canada. But even though the temple is so close, the East Shores youth say going there is like entering another world.

Coming together

Although the greatest expectation the youth had was to attend the temple more often, they have been flooded with other blessings.

In the temple, sacred work is performed that connects families through the generations. The East Shores youth say that, as they work in the temple together, they forge strong bonds with each other.

“You get to know the girls in your ward better because you go together,” Erin says.

The friendship the Young Men and Young Women develop as they attend the temple is stronger than with their other friends because of the important work they do in the temple.

“There aren’t many people you get to share such a spiritual thing with,” says Krista Lyke, a Laurel. “There’s a bond with those girls that you don’t have with your outside-church friends.”

A missionary now

One blessing that wasn’t expected by the East Shores youth was the opportunity the temple would present for sharing the gospel. But when a granite building with a gold angel appears on one of the main streets in town, people ask questions.

Erin took two of her friends through the temple during the open house. “Even though they weren’t extremely interested in learning more,” Erin says, “it just felt nice to share with them what I believe in.”



When a granite building topped by a gold angel appears on one of the main streets in town, people ask questions. And those questions give the youth of the East Shores Michigan Stake a chance to talk with their friends about the Church.



W Since the Detroit Michigan Temple was built, the East Shores youth and their leaders (opposite page) have attended the temple every month. They realize that if they are not diligent, the nearness of a temple can make it easier to procrastinate going.

A greater respect

The Detroit temple is one of the new, smaller temples. Since there is minimal staff, those attending are expected to help keep it clean. This means that when the youth finish with baptisms, they wipe around the baptismal font, help do the laundry, and make sure everything is left in order.

“It makes it more personal to you because you’ve taken care of it,” Jessica says.

Some of the cleaning responsibilities may not seem very pleasant, like cleaning the bathrooms. But, as Mike says, since it’s the temple, it’s a privilege, not a chore. “If you clean the bathroom, people may not think that’s so great,” Mike says, “but still, you’re cleaning the bathroom in the temple, and even to be in the temple is a great thing.”

Challenges

When Moses was leading the Children of Israel through the wilderness, fiery flying serpents came down and bit them. After they had been bitten, the Lord presented a way for them to be healed. All they had to do was look at a serpent on Moses’ staff (Num. 21:8–9). “And because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished” (1 Ne. 17:41).

Since the Detroit temple has been built, the East Shores youth say it is quite easy to attend. But as it was with the people who died from the fiery serpents because the cure was so easy, it is also easy to say, “The temple is close by; I can go any time; I’ll skip this month and go next month.”

“We have to go to the temple on Tuesday or Thursday because we save the weekends for other stakes and wards that aren’t close,” says Krista. “So you have to change your priorities, because, if you’re in sports and you have a practice, you have to decide what’s more important, your practice or going to the temple.”

“Life doesn’t stop for you,” says Chris Young, a teacher. “Being closer to the temple does make it easier, but you still have to plan for it.”

Blessings closer to home

The East Shores youth say they are enjoying the blessings President Hinckley prayed for in the dedicatory prayer. One of the things he prayed for was that the temple would “shine as a bright and welcome light, a refuge from the storms and stresses of the world.”

Jessica, like the rest of the youth, says the temple has done that. “When you get to go, you don’t have to worry about anything. You feel so calm and special, and you don’t have the worldly matters to deal with anymore.”

As more temples are built around the world, more youth are enjoying the blessings and feelings of the Spirit that come with frequent temple attendance. “I feel that feeling more now,” says Mike. “Before we had to go far, to Canada. And now that the temple is closer, the feeling is closer.” **NE**





Prayer

WAS THE KEY

Those lost keys were a worry. I really needed them, but I had no idea where they could be.

by Christian Neumann

Maybe it was a small problem, but it mattered a lot to me, so I decided to turn to the Lord, and learned a big lesson.

Not long ago I went to school early on my bike as usual, because I am a crossing guard (*skolepatrulje*) at my school in Copenhagen, Denmark. We have to start at 7:45 A.M., and at 8:00 we go to our class. This particular day I took off my equipment in the basement when we finished and was the first to enter my classroom.

One of the boys from my class tried to block my way, and I fell. He fell on top of me, and my bike keys, which I usually

carry on a chain around my neck, fell off.

Unfortunately, I didn't notice that they came off. A girl from my class found the keys, took them, and put them in another girl's bag. But she forgot to tell me. When the teacher came in, everybody forgot everything about the incident.

School ended at noon that day because my German teacher was ill. When I went to my bike, I found out my keys were not around my neck. I emptied my bag, but no keys. I tried to think when I could have lost my keys but didn't remember anything. I felt sick, and it seemed as if my brain stopped.

I had to go back and ask one of the teachers to let me call my dad. He came and took me and my locked bike home. He wasn't very happy that I had lost my keys.

When I went to bed that night, I was





wondering if I would ever find my keys again. I was very worried, because if I didn't find them, I would have to walk to school, and a new key was very expensive for me. Suddenly the thought came to me that I always could pray to Heavenly Father because He could help me and He knew where the keys were.

I got up, fell on my knees, and asked Him to help me find my keys.

The next day in school my math teacher asked me why I was so silent. I told him I had lost my bike keys.

Right then the girl who took the keys suddenly remembered that she had picked them up, so she asked the girl next to her to look in one of the small pockets in her bag. My keys were there.

I know to some people losing a set of keys may not seem very important. But to me it was very important, and I also think it was important to Heavenly Father. I know we can always ask Him for help when we need it. **NE**

“Yes, every test, every trial, every challenge and hardship you endure is an opportunity to further develop your faith. Faith can be fortified through prayer. Prayer is the powerful key to making decisions, not only concerning your physical body, but concerning all other important aspects of your life. Humbly seek the Lord in prayer with a sincere heart and real intent, and He will help you” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 75).

—Elder
Russell M. Nelson
of the Quorum
of the Twelve

Doing the HARD JOBS

They served with heart, might and mind, rake, brush, and hammer—all for children whose smiles they'd never see.

Summers in San Antonio, Texas, can get hot, very hot. But this particular Saturday in July, the temperature was record breaking, well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. And best of all—yes, best of all—most of the teens in the San Antonio Texas Stake were lost.

They had forgotten themselves, their own aches and pains, their own problems and worries, and even the heat. They were lost in service to a group of children they would never meet face to face. They were refurbishing the play areas, grounds, and buildings of Providence House, a day-care facility devoted to children with life-threatening illnesses.

Because of the children's illnesses, the group would not be allowed to meet those who would benefit directly from their work.

For these teens, their youth conference was devoted to service, the true kind of service that is given with no thought of reward, even the reward that comes from seeing the smiling faces of children. They had chosen to dress modestly, even though temperatures had virtually never been higher. They chose to work outside or inside until every job was finished. And they chose to work with an attitude that they hoped would please their Heavenly Father.

The adult leaders took every precaution. They made sure teens had plenty to drink and were taking rest breaks in the shade or inside in the air conditioning. They even broke out a shaved-ice machine to serve plenty of cooling, flavored ice. They had also worked carefully with the director of Providence House in identifying exactly what needed to be done so the correct

Even the play houses needed new coats of paint, so nothing at this home for seriously ill children was left undone.

by Janet Thomas



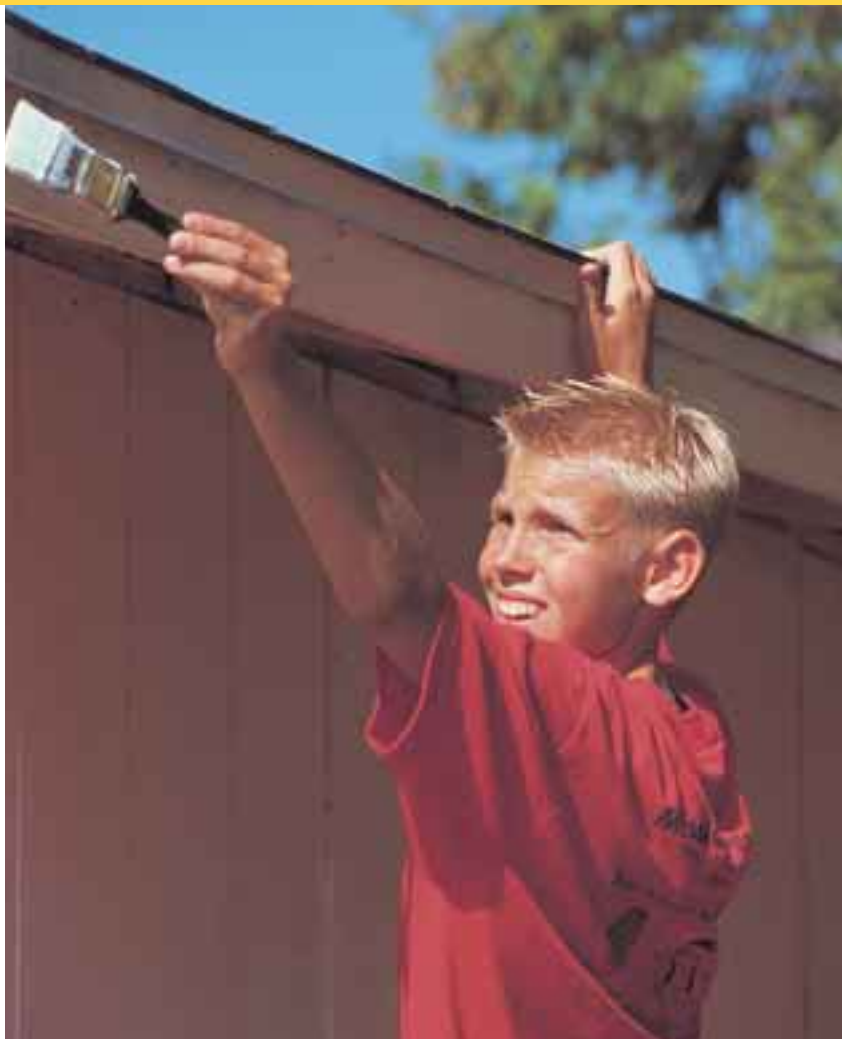


materials and tools were on hand.

Carol Bova-Rice, the executive director of Providence Home and Family Services, said, "I cannot find the words to express our appreciation. Other groups have offered to help, but they didn't want to do big things. With this group, we planned what really needed to be done in advance, no matter how big. It's wonderful."

Taking their theme from the scriptures, the stake youth council agreed on the title "Mission Possible." They liked the idea that individually they could not accomplish much but "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). They were particularly excited about combining the usual youth conference dances and barbecues with an outstanding service project. They wanted something substantial so the teens could really pull together to accomplish something big, something that would be memorable, and something that would teach a great lesson of Christlike service.

Hannah Clark, one of the teen co-chairs of the youth conference, explained, "There are some people that need our help. That's where we need to come in and be like Christ. We need to serve. That is the pure love of Christ. It's charity. That is the way to do it, by serving, even if we can't see them and even if we don't even know who they are. We are becoming more the way that



we should be when we do those things.”

“We’ll have to visualize the children coming in,” said Chris Weirich, another youth co-chair, “and seeing the new things in a room, the new murals, all the new materials, the repainted play equipment, the new grow boxes; you just have to visualize it. You won’t see them, but you can still feel their excitement.”

On youth conference Saturday, Providence House was bustling. Everyone was assigned a group, and each group was assigned a job. Because of the red T-shirts issued for youth conference, the scene was literally a sea of moving, shifting colors. Everyone had a cleaning rag, a paintbrush, a broom, a vacuum, a hammer, or a rake in hand. Every spot that needed cleaning was cleaned. Everything that needed a new coat of paint was painted. Every weed was pulled. Every toy was sterilized. Every shelf in the storage closets was stacked with donated food or supplies. The San Antonio Stake youth had indeed taken on the big things.

Even as hot and tired as they were, by early afternoon nearly everything had been finished. The group returned to the stake center for a testimony meeting. One after another, they spoke about the things close to their hearts, about giving service without complaint, about how positive they were about the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.



The sea of red shirts was in constant motion except for group photos (far left) and snow cone breaks (left). Otherwise, the San Antonio Texas Stake youth were always hard at work.



Grow boxes (above) will allow the children the joy of growing small gardens. Esther Crandall (above, right) holds a few of the blankets she made for the center.

Sandra Clark summed up how she felt, saying, “I’ve never been so sore and so happy with everything that’s going on around me. So many things were done with the right spirit this weekend.”

There were some nice, unexpected moments. Brant Ellsworth mentioned one. “When we first got there, we were digging the holes for the grow boxes. Some girls were weeding along the fence, and they started singing. It was so beautiful. They were doing a hard job and singing as they were doing it. It made me think of the pioneers. They didn’t know how their actions would affect other people. They didn’t see us or know how much we appreciate the things they did for us. I felt that same spirit while we were working.”

Two girls, working in the building that houses the nursery and the offices, paused to look at some small metal stars engraved with first names and attached to the wall.

“What are these for?” they asked.

These represent the children at the center who have died from their illnesses, they were told. Suddenly, all the work and effort in such extreme conditions seemed like such a small thing. They had found those that the scripture speaks of when it says, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:40). **NE**

SERVICE PROJECTS

While planning things that needed to be done at Providence House, several items on the list became good ideas for one person to take on as a Laurel project or as part of an Eagle Scout project.

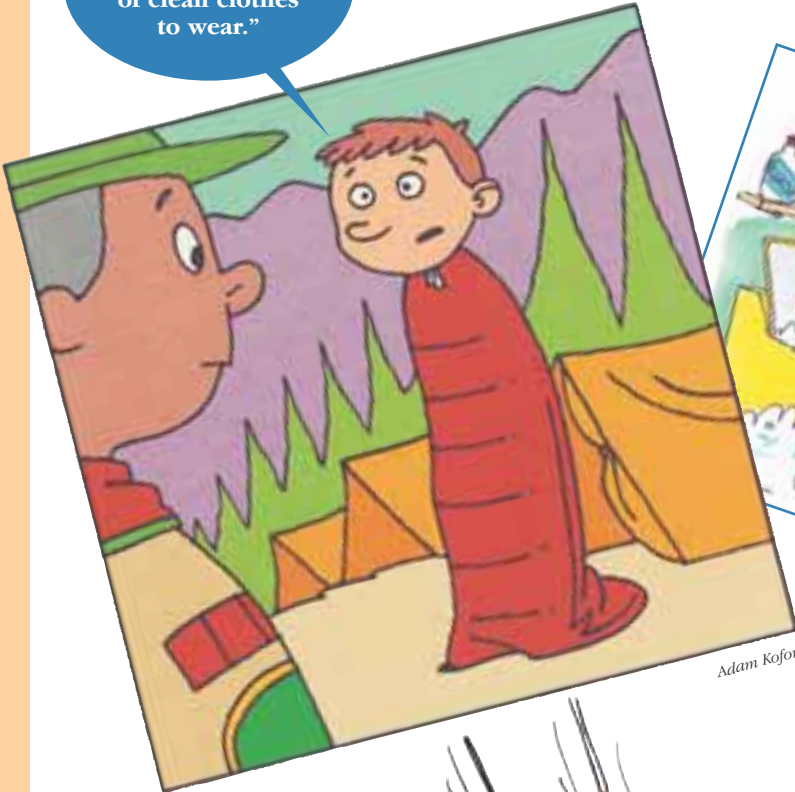
Steven Ellsworth took on the canned-food drive. Checking with the center about its specific needs, Steven set a goal to collect 750 cans. He also created a Web site to keep stake members informed about youth conference and about what specifically was needed for the food drive.

Amy Kreiger accepted the assignment to create school boxes suitable for the children at the center. She organized painting and assembling the boxes and arranging for the school supplies to go inside.

Megan Baillio was excited to take on the redecorating of several rooms used for children who stay overnight. She worked with her mother in learning to sew quilt tops and curtains for the rooms. She organized groups at the youth conference to tie the quilts.

Esther Crandall accepted the assignment to make baby-sized blankets for the center. She worked with her mother to learn to make blankets with decorative edgings.

“Oh, I’m not stuck. I just ran out of clean clothes to wear.”



Adam Koford

“Great, Elder. Thanks to you we now have the cleanest apartment in the mission.”



Ryan Stober

“Is it just me, or are we singing this song faster than usual?”



Val Chadwick Bagley

BE CLEAN

“Only we can control our appetites and passions. . . .
 “In its simplest terms, self-mastery is doing those things we should do and not doing those things we should not do. It requires strength, willpower, and honesty. . . .
 “One of the great foundations of personal power is purity. . . . With all my heart I urge you wonderful young people not to take a secret shame with you to your marriage. You may never be able to forget it. You will want to go through life with the strength that comes from a clear conscience, which will permit you one day to stand before your Maker and say, ‘My soul is pure.’ Self-denial is not restrictive. It is liberating. It is the pathway to freedom. It is strength. It is an essential element of purity” (*Ensign*, May 2000, 44).
 —President James E. Faust
 Second Counselor in the First Presidency



FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

“We have faith, we live by faith; we came to these mountains by faith” (*Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 1997, 106).

Brigham Young spoke these words shortly after entering the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847, 154 years ago. The valley was barren, but Brigham Young and his company believed their vision of the desert blossoming as a rose could be made real through their faith and hard work.

Brigham Young said, “We had not the least encouragement—from natural reasoning and all that we could learn of this country—of its sterility, its cold and

frost, to believe that we could ever raise anything. . . . We had faith that we could raise grain; was there any harm in this? Not at all. If we had not had faith, what would have become of us? We would have gone down in unbelief . . . and should never have raised anything” (*Brigham Young*, 104–5).

But the Saints did have faith. They escaped the persecution of the mobs and were greatly blessed in Utah. “There never has been a land, from the days of Adam until now, that has been blessed more than this land has been blessed by our Father in Heaven; and it will still be blessed more, if we are faithful and humble, and thankful to God” (*Brigham Young*, 106).

WRITE AWAY!

Last November, President Gordon B. Hinckley gave the youth of the Church some Bs to be concerned about: Be humble, be prayerful, be grateful, be smart, be clean, and be true (see *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 4). We want to hear what you’ve been doing to follow the prophet’s counsel. Send your true story about keeping your standards high, in 1,200 words or less, to *New Era*, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City Utah, 84150. Or e-mail us at cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org.





THIS IS NOT A CRASH COURSE

Car crashes are the number one cause of death for teenagers in North America. And summer is when the fatality rate is the highest. It's not that all teens are bad drivers, but inexperience and the tendency to take more risks than other drivers combine to make them more likely to be in an accident. Here are some ways you can be safer when you drive:

- ✱ Don't push yourself into driving if you don't feel prepared yet.
- ✱ Buckle up! Nearly two-thirds of young people involved in fatal car crashes were not wearing their safety belts (U.S. Department of Transportation).
- ✱ Don't doze and drive. If you're sleepy pull over and take a nap, or have someone else who's awake drive. Or if you're a passenger, you can help keep the driver alert.
- ✱ Be courteous and cautious.
- ✱ Cell phones are another danger when you drive. Using one while driving increases the risk of having an accident four-fold (Consumers Union of U.S., Inc.).
- ✱ Keep your car well maintained; it needs more care than just a regular trip to the gas station.
- ✱ Turn down the music, and ask your friends to let you concentrate. Teen drivers with three or more passengers are three times more likely to get into a fatal accident than those driving alone (American Medical Association).
- ✱ Be extra careful when you drive at night. Most accidents involving teens occur after dark, especially on weekend nights (U.S. Department of Transportation).

BRITISH PIONEERS

July is also a month to celebrate British pioneers. The first nine British members were baptized into the Church on July 30, 1837, in the River Ribble in Preston, England; less than two weeks had passed since the first seven missionaries came to England on July 19. They faced much opposition, but by the next April, there were 1,500 members in England, and the gospel was spreading to all the British Isles. By 1851, there were nearly 33,000 members in the United Kingdom and Ireland—there were only 12,000 in Utah.

About 100,000 converts left England to join the Saints in America between 1837 and 1900. And by 1870 British immigrants made up half of Utah's population. Church membership in the United Kingdom now exceeds 174,000, and the Saints there have been blessed with two temples and a missionary training center.





Quickly shoving the bare wires back into the hole in the machine, Jake passed the little doorway of the huge fiche reader. He came to a dead stop. Something was flickering inside.

by W. Dave Free

Find Annie Hicks? Why? Who was she, and why should Jake care?

Pass the ketchup, will you, Mom?
 “How do you ask, Jacob?”
 replied his mother, holding the ketchup for ransom.

“Come on, Mom! I’m in a hurry. Just pass me the ketchup!”

“Not until you ask for it properly, young man!”

For an instant, Jake thought of eating his hamburger and fries without ketchup, but the thought vanished as he looked at the near masterpiece he had created on the plate before him. All that was missing was the ketchup. With just a hint of exaggeration, he gave in and said, “Please, mother dearest, if it’s not too much to ask, would you mind passing the sweetened tomato sauce my direction?”

“That’s better.” His mom smiled and handed him the ketchup before continuing. “Oh, I almost forgot. Brian called to remind you to bring the name of one of your ancestors to activity night tonight. He said something about going to the Family History Center. Anyway, I got out some books so you can pick a name.”

Jake took a big bite out of his burger and began to respond. In unison, his mom, dad, two little sisters, and little brother reminded him not to talk with

his mouth full. As soon as he was able, he continued, “Don’t worry about the name, Mom. I’ve been to the Family History Center before, so I’m going to the gym with Brett tonight.”

Jake’s dad cleared his throat, and the chatter around the table stopped like a switch had been flipped. “Son, I’m not going to tell you what you have to do, but the right place to be tonight is at activity night with the rest of your quorum. You can make your own decision, but you know where you should be.”

“Aw, Dad!” Jake dragged out the words with his best whining tone. “We go every year, and it’s always the same. A little old lady tells us how exciting genealogy is and *if* we listen real close we will have the ‘opportunity’ to use one of the fish machines.”

“Fiche, Jake, microfiche machines,” his mother corrected.

“Fish . . . fiche . . . whatever. Last year the most exciting thing that happened was when Doug Brown started rewinding his microfilm and then walked off. When it got to the end of the tape, it was flipping around making all kinds of noise. People came running from everywhere to see what had happened.”

Jake’s little brother and sisters laughed, and his parents smiled, but his dad didn’t give in. “Lots of information is on computers now, Jake. They don’t use those ‘fish’ machines as much



ANNIE'S WORDS

The river crossing described in the story is based on the Martin handcart company's crossing of the North Platte River.

The rescue of the "fine young chap" (Annie's words) and her testimony were taken from her unpublished autobiography, which is in the possession of family members. The conclusion of the rescue story is heart wrenching. The young boy Annie pulled from the river insisted on searching for firewood that night for his widowed mother. "When he had been gone a long time, a search was made for him, and he was found frozen to death with his sticks in his arms."

anymore. You need to go."

Jake started to respond, but his dad held up his hand. "You make your own decision, son. You know what I think you should do."

As the quorum arrived at the Family History Center, Jake dug his hand into his pocket and pulled out the piece of paper his mom had given him. Unfolding it, he read the name: Annie Hicks. A girl! His mom had given him a girl's name! Brian had bragged all the way to the center about his ancestor the Civil War hero. Most of the rest of the guys claimed to be related to one king or another. Doug even claimed he was related to Elvis. And here was Jake with the name of some unknown girl.

"This is going to be even worse than I thought," he grumbled as he walked in the door.

Jake's dad was right about one thing. Where the microfiche machines used to be, there were now several computers with bright screens. Racks of shiny compact discs sat next to them on the tables. The microfiche machines remaining were all huddled in a small back room. The door to the room was roped off with a sign that read "Please Ask for Assistance."

As the family history consultant welcomed the quorum and began to talk about the new software, Jake drifted toward the back of the group. He didn't want to be the one who had to use his ancestor's name as a demonstration. Finding a comfortable spot against the doorway to the back room with the microfiche machines, he settled down for the wait. He tried to listen for a few minutes, but from the back he could barely hear, and his attention soon turned to the 'fish' machines in the room behind him.

Poor machines, he thought, all those years they did just what they were supposed to and now their only reward is to be quarantined like they have some rare disease. Without thinking, he stepped over the rope and began to wander among the machines.

In the darkest corner, Jake discovered a monster of a fiche reader. It wasn't a table-top model like the others but stood

by itself on the floor—like a picture-taking booth. It even had a little black curtain across its door to keep out the light. Curious, Jake began to walk around the machine. His inspection, however, was cut short as he tripped over its power cord. Bending to plug it back in, he realized that he hadn't just unplugged it; he had ripped the wires right out of the machine.

Jake groused under his breath. "I should have just gone to the gym." He quickly shoved the bare wires back into the hole in the machine and headed for the safety of the crowd. As he passed the little doorway of the huge fiche reader, he came to a dead stop. Something was flickering inside. Hoping he hadn't started an electrical fire with the bare wires, Jake slipped inside the machine to investigate. As he sat down, the little black curtain quietly closed behind him.

Jake would have jumped up and run, but the screen of the microfiche reader flickered on. "Well, at least it still works!" he said out loud. Almost as if in response to his voice, a computerized voice said, "Please state the name of the person you wish to find."

Wow! Pretty high-tech, Jake thought.

"Please state the name of the person you wish to find." The machine repeated.

"Okay, okay! I'll state it!"

"Please state the name of the person you wish to find."

Jake rolled his eyes and said nothing as he dug the folded piece of paper from his pocket and read the name out loud: "Annie Hicks."

The next thing Jake knew, he was cold, so very, very cold. Snow was blowing in his face, and an ice cold wind cut through the thin, coarse jacket he was now wearing. His legs were covered by very thin, gray wool pants with patches on both knees. He couldn't feel his feet and had to lift them out of the snow to see if they were still there. His high-top, cross trainers had been replaced by old-fashioned boots. But the toes of the boots were completely worn through, revealing the red wool socks that now covered his frozen toes.

Taking in his surroundings, Jake became aware that he was standing on

the bank of a wide river. There were people on both sides of the river pulling and pushing handcarts and shivering in the cold. Those on the opposite side of the river appeared to be waiting for their turn to walk down into the water and cross to Jake's side. Jake shivered involuntarily as he looked at the sheets of ice floating on the cold, gray water.

"What is this?" was all he could say before he heard a cry for help.

"My boy, my boy! Somebody save my boy!" The cry came from the far side of the river, and Jake focused on a woman with several children gathered around her. She was screaming and pointing at a boy, no more than 10 or 12, being carried downstream with their handcart by the force of the current. For an instant, Jake was frozen in terror as he watched the tragedy unfold before him. It seemed hopeless. Then he noticed someone from his side of the river racing down the bank toward the boy. The rescuer jumped into the water, splashed out to the boy, and pulled him and his handcart toward the safety of the shore.

Something finally clicked within Jake, and he ran down to the bank of the river. He reached the water just in time to help pull the boy and his rescuer up onto the bank. With chattering teeth, the boy thanked the rescuer over and over again, "Thank you, Annie! Thank you, Annie!"

For the first time, Jake realized that the rescuer was a young girl not much older than himself. As he reached out his hand and pulled her out of the water, he asked, "Annie? Annie Hicks?"

She looked at him for a moment with a quizzical look on her face and then replied in an English accent, "Why of course it is. Have you had a bump on your head today? Now quit looking at me that way, and let's get this poor chap back to his family and into camp." Jake smiled sheepishly, took hold of the handcart, and pulled it up the hill toward the rest of the company.

As he walked into the camp, Jake realized it was like none other he had ever seen. There were four to five hundred men, women, and children, all



in wet and frozen clothes. From what Jake could see, few, if any, had dry clothes to change into. Some were trying to clear away snow and set up tents, but the ground was too frozen to drive the tent pegs. One or two small fires burned, but there wasn't any additional firewood in sight. There were a few people eating, but what they ate looked like nothing more than a flour paste. Jake thought about the masterpiece burger and fries he had eaten for dinner. It probably would have fed half the camp.

"How are these people going to survive the night?" he wondered aloud as he helped Annie pull her cart into camp. Annie looked at him but didn't respond. As they passed cart after cart, he began to wonder if they would ever find Annie's

Jake stared at the pathetic collection of people struggling through the snow. "How are these people going to survive the night?" he wondered aloud as he helped Annie pull her cart into camp.



A book was opened. On the page was her name without a mar or blemish against it. She told Jake, “This is the right way. Walk in it.”

family. “Where’s your family’s camp?” he finally asked.

Annie stopped pulling and studied him closely before responding. “My family is in England. They disowned me the day I was baptized. I don’t expect that I will ever hear from them again.” As she spoke she laid down the handcart handle and turned to unpack her few belongings.

“You, you’re here by yourself?” Jake’s disbelief and shivering caused him to stammer. After all, here was a girl, no older than himself, pulling a handcart across the country in the middle of winter without her family.

“No, I’m not by myself,” Annie responded matter-of-factly. “I’m surrounded by my brothers and sisters, and God is with us.”

“But how, Annie? How can you keep going without your family and with so much suffering?”

Now Annie stopped working and looked directly across the handcart at Jake. “From the moment I heard the gospel, I knew it was true. The day after I was baptized, my family heard of my baptism and told me some of the vilest stories about the Mormons. They said if I joined the Mormons I would be ruined for life. That night I prayed with all my heart to know the truth. I prayed, ‘Dear Lord, do not let me do wrong. Let me know tonight, dear Father; let me know tonight.’ I immediately was comforted by a wonderful dream. A book was opened to me, and the leaves were turned in rapid

succession until the page with my record was found. On the page was my name without a mar or blemish against it. A loud clear voice spoke to me saying, ‘This is the way. Walk ye in it.’ When I woke the next morning, I laughed for joy to think that I had been heard and answered. I told my folks that it had been made known to me that Mormonism was right, and I would follow it.”

She hesitated for a moment and Jake looked down. A warmth burned within him that even the most severe cold couldn’t stop. Annie stepped around the corner of the cart and touched him on the sleeve. “This is the right way, Jake. Walk in it.”

In an instant, Jake was back in the Family History Center. He was sitting on the floor where the huge machine had been. There was no sign of the machine. He had his own clothes on, but his toes tingled like they did whenever they were thawing out. Jake shook his head a few times to clear his thoughts. He could hear the family history consultant continuing his presentation. “Now, does anyone have the name of an ancestor we can use as an example?”

Jake jumped up and ran toward the group, “Right here! I have one right here!” **NE**

STARTING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said doing work for the dead “more nearly approaches the vicarious sacrifice of the Savior Himself than any other work” (*Ensign*, Jan. 1998, 73). Here are a few suggestions on how to get started on your family history:

*Start with you. A personal journal is a simple and easy way to begin.

*Find out from your parents and grandparents about their own lives and about the lives of the ancestors whom they remember. If it hasn't already been done, be sure to record the information you get (see comment on Personal Ancestral File below).

*Get a box. Use your file box to organize the items you will need to begin your record. These items include your birth certificate, baby book, journals, photos, achievement certificates, and anything else representing important events in your life.

*Create a photo album. Remember to include the dates and names of people pictured.

*Keep gathering. Once you have all

your own information recorded, you can begin to work on organizing your parents' and siblings' information. Family group sheets and pedigree charts are the best way to keep your information organized; you can ask your ward or stake family history consultant about how to get them and fill them out.

*Read *A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work*. It is available in your ward library or through Church distribution centers.

*Become familiar with the programs and Internet sites produced by the Church to help you in your efforts. Personal Ancestral File is the program you will use the most to organize your information, and you can download it free from familysearch.org.

*Always remember the main ingredients in your family history work will be prayer and commitment. And your

main goal is to ensure your ancestors receive the ordinances of the temple.

You're never too young to start.

GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS?



Through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have been given so much. What are some ways to show gratitude for our many blessings? Send your ideas to Idea List, *New Era*, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150. Or e-mail us at cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org. Please send your ideas by September 1, 2001.

Contributed by the Don Sparhawk family



ELDER, THEY WILL LOVE YOU



Elder LeGrand Richards, former Apostle and author of *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, was known throughout the Church for his love of missionary work. Here he gives just one of the reasons why it is so rewarding.

by Elder
LeGrand Richards
(1886–1983)

When I was a young man, before I was even ordained a deacon, I went to one of our ward meetings, and two missionaries reported their missions in the Southern States. When I left that meeting, I felt like I could have walked to any mission field in the world, if I just had a call.

And I went home, went into my bedroom, and got down on my knees, and asked the Lord to help me to live worthy so that when I was old enough I could go on a mission. And when the train finally left the station in Salt Lake and I was headed for the little land of Holland, the last thing I said to my loved ones was, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

Love for missionaries

Before I left on that mission, President Anthon H. Lund, who was then a counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, talked to us missionaries, and he said, “The people will love you. . . . They will love you because of what you bring to them.” I did not understand that then, but before I left Holland, I went around saying good-bye to the Saints and the converts whom I had brought into the Church, and I shed a thousand tears, as compared to what I shed when I told my loved ones good-bye.

For instance, in Amsterdam I went into a home where I had been the first missionary there, and the mother, looking up into my face with tears rolling down her cheeks, said, “Brother Richards, it was hard to see my daughter leave for Zion a few months ago, but it’s much harder to see you go.” Then I

thought I could understand what President Lund meant when he said, “They will love you.”

I went to tell a man good-bye. He stood erect in the uniform of his country. He got down on his knees and took my hand in his and hugged it and kissed it and bathed it with his tears. And then I thought I could understand what President Lund meant.

Joy of serving a mission

Now I have labored so much with the missionaries. I have been on four missions, and presided over two, and I have toured many missions. I love to hear those young men bear their testimonies. For instance, a young man in Oregon in our testimony meeting said there wasn’t a company in this world that could pay him a large enough salary to get him to leave his missionary work.

I received a letter here from a missionary from Idaho. He wrote this:

“There is no greater work than that of missionary work. . . . My life is dedicated to serving the Lord. My heart is overflowing as are the tears of joy that are now coming from my eyes. There is nothing so wonderful—nothing—as tasting the joy and success of missionary labors.”

After all the missionary service I have had, I wouldn’t want to raise a boy and not have him go on a mission, for his good and because I think we owe it to the world to share with them the truths of the gospel. **NE**

Adapted from an October 1978 general conference address.



Painting by William Hole



“**W**hy have these great missionaries and others like them been willing to sacrifice . . . to answer the call to serve? It’s because they have a testimony of Jesus Christ. . . . And because they are faithful to their callings, thousands will revere their names throughout the eternities” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 42).

—Elder
Harold G. Hillam
of the Quorum
of the Seventy

CHANGING

Growing up, nearly everyone I knew belonged to the same church I did. In Ireland, suddenly I was in a small minority, and it really opened my eyes.

by Matthew Baker

When I was in the majority, how many times had I unthinkingly excluded someone else?

A trip to Ireland sounded like an exciting vacation to me. I didn't mind leaving home for a year while my dad taught at a university before returning to his job at Snow College.

When we arrived in Ireland and began preparations to attend school, I realized that not only would my siblings and I be the only Latter-day Saints in the school, but we would also be among the small group of

non-Catholic students. This would be a big change from the predominantly LDS school I attended in Ephraim, Utah.

Although I was excited for school to start, there was one problem: we didn't know what time new students were to arrive on registration day. The registration schedule wasn't listed in the local paper, and it wasn't posted at the school. On a whim, we showed up late in the morning.

Although we had guessed and been successful, we wondered how everyone else knew when to arrive, so my dad asked the woman in line in front of us. Her answer taught us a lesson. "Well, they've announced it in church the past four weeks."

PLACES



The church she referred to was Mass, the Catholic worship service.

Growing up in a predominantly Latter-day Saint community, I hadn't been exposed much to other religions. And since I had grown up as a member of the majority religion, I now wondered how many times I had unconsciously made the same type of assumption—that everyone was a member of the Church.

I thought of the people I knew at my school in Utah who weren't members of the Church and wondered how many times they had been left out of activities just because they didn't go to the same church I went to. I had never intentionally discriminated, but I

wondered if they felt excluded.

During that year of school I wore a school uniform every day. I learned Catholic prayers and attended Mass as part of the school curriculum. I took a class about Catholicism and listened each week when the priest came to tell our class stories from the Bible.

All of my friends at school in Ireland accepted me despite our religious differences. And as I learned more about their religion, they learned more about mine. There were times I felt left out because everyone but me knew of a certain activity or had heard a story in the dark. But all those times reinforced my decision to be more aware of my



thought of those I had known in Utah who were not Latter-day Saints. Had I been guilty of unintentional discrimination like I was now experiencing?



classmates at home who were not LDS.

My dad thought it was important for us to understand the beliefs of the two major religions in Ireland so we would understand the people in our community. The topic of family home evenings and family discussions that year was often centered on the beliefs of the Catholic and Protestant churches. My parents taught us to respect the beliefs of others and, at the same time, to live the principles we believed.

At the end of the year none of my friends had been converted to the Church, but my testimony had grown as I tried to live my religion. I did learn that I could be tolerant of people who had different beliefs than mine without endorsing their beliefs. I learned that if I respected the religious differences of my friends and lived my religion in a way that merited respect, my religious beliefs would earn the same respect that I gave. **NE**

ACCEPTANCE

Although we desire the world to hear the restored gospel, we also respect the right of others to decide if they wish to accept it or not.

The 11th article of faith declares our respect for the right of all people to choose what they believe and how they worship: “We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.”

There are many good people who belong to other religions, and we have much in common with them. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints often works with other faiths on humanitarian projects and other efforts to improve the common good.

But there are many lifestyles that run counter to the revealed teachings of the Church. The line between accepting people and accepting their beliefs and actions can easily be confused. Be careful not to fall for the mistaken belief that valuing other people means you must also endorse their actions or lifestyle.

President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “We cannot condone the sin, but we love the sinner” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 89). We are all children of the same God, and He loves everyone—the sinner and the saint. We are commanded to do the same.

There are many who simply don’t know the teachings of the restored gospel and therefore can’t live them (see 2 Ne. 9:25). We can’t judge people by what they don’t know. We must try to love everyone as our neighbor.

Creative ideas for using this issue of the New Era.

Family Home Evening Ideas

□ Read aloud one of the anecdotes from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's article on page 8. Talk about the sacrifices the pioneers made to establish the Church. As a family, decide on a sacrifice you can make that will strengthen the Church—perhaps you could use money earmarked for something fun to buy copies of the Book of Mormon for the missionaries, or use the time you had set aside for a fun outing to serve a less-active family and invite them to church.

□ Read the article about temples on page 20. Obtain a world map and mark where each temple is located or is under construction. If the Internet is available, go to the official church website at www.lds.org. Click on *News Media Resources*, then *Quick Facts and FAQs*. Under *Statistical Information*, click on *Temples of the Church* for an official temple list. Also, a temple schedule, listing the operating temples, is available from the distribution center.

Member Missionary Ideas

□ Read Elder LeGrand Richards's article on missionary work on page 44 and choose a favorite passage. Use the quotation as a way to begin a letter to a missionary and express your gratitude for the work he or she is doing. This kind of letter would brighten any missionary's mailbox.

Young Women and Young Men Mutual Activities

□ Read "Go Fiche" on page 38. Then read the Idea List on page 43 for ideas on how you and your class or quorum can get started on family history. If the Family History Center in your stake is close enough to visit, arrange for a tour and some instruction on how to get started. Set a goal to take a family name to the temple on your next temple trip.

Seminary Devotional Idea

□ President Hinckley is an optimist. Read the article on page 4 and choose one or two of your favorite quotations to share with the class. Bring a large rock to class and hold it very close to your face. Explain that the rock is the only thing you can see. Then hold the rock at arm's length and explain that if you put problems in proper perspective, they seem much more manageable. Challenge the class to develop a spirit of optimism.

Personal Improvement

□ "Changing Places" on page 46 deals with becoming educated about the beliefs of others. Write a short list of questions about the religious beliefs of someone you go to school with and arrange for a time to discuss them. Listen politely and avoid confrontation. Be prepared to answer a few questions about your own beliefs as well.

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Worth looking at again

Thank you for publishing “A Promise Kept” in the January 2001 *New Era*. When I received it, I put the magazine under my bed, but I never read it. In our Young Women meeting that Sunday, our teacher read that article. A few hours later, my grandmother died. I was very sad, so I pulled out the *New Era* and read the article again. Thanks.

*Tallia Tanner
Grouse Creek, Utah*

A great impact

Thank you for putting out the *New Era*. It has impacted my life greatly. Whenever I need guidance or am feeling depressed, I can always count on the magazine to fill my spirit and let me know there are other teens like me who have similar trials and problems. Thank you so much.

*Chanelle Chin
Wailuku, Hawaii (via e-mail)*

New reader

I just started Young Women last November and began receiving the *New Era*. I read that issue all night and couldn't put it down! I like it very much. Keep up the good work.

*Emily Sweeney
State College, Pennsylvania (via e-mail)*

Good guide

We would really like to express how good a guide the *New Era* is. It teaches young people, as well as young adults, the way they should be living their lives. It also provides inspiration and enlightenment for people of all ages.

*Elder Michael Gross and
Elder Michael Borup
Australia Melbourne West Mission*

Reassuring

Thank you for the great magazine you put out each month. I always look forward to the beginning of the month so I can read the *New Era*. The posters are a good reminder of what I should be looking out for and doing, and the stories are good also. It's reassuring to

“I used to read the Friend, and now I look forward to the uplifting stories in the New Era.”



know that there are teenagers who go through the same things I do.

*Samuel S. Packard
Big Sur, California*

Good advice

I want to thank you for your article in the January 2001 *New Era*. “The Art of Juggling” has really helped me a lot. I have been having a lot of difficulty trying to keep up with all of the things in my life. I have been praying for help to organize my life and for good tips and words of wisdom. This article provided some more good advice. The *New Era* always helps me a lot. The Lord has answered my prayers in many more ways than one. So I just want to say thank you for your beautiful articles in this magazine.

*Simone Lansing
Fernie, British Columbia, Canada
(via e-mail)*

New Era's new reader

I am an 11-year-old who loves the magazine. I used to read the *Friend*, and now I look forward to the uplifting stories in the *New Era*. They make me think a lot, and I appreciate it.

*Kristin Keene
LaPorte, Indiana (via e-mail)*

Correction

The name of a Seattle-area stake in “Steps in Time” (Feb. 2001) was misspelled. The correct name is the Lynnwood stake. The New Era apologizes for the error.

*We love hearing from you. Write us at
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*Or e-mail us at
cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org
Submissions may be edited for length
and clarity.*





by Welden Andersen

MARY'S OXEN

by Mary Jo Westenhaver

It was your privilege to bear silently
the burden of wood and flesh,
to breathe the dust
stirred by hooves and wheel on your trek.
Your mistress urged you on,
and you bravely complied,
as if sensing the approaching Zion
that filled her heart with zeal.

A tribute to Mary Fielding Smith



*“There are
some people
who need
our help.
That’s where
we need to
come in and
be like
Christ. We
need to
serve.”*

*See “Doing
the Hard
Jobs,”
p. 30.*