

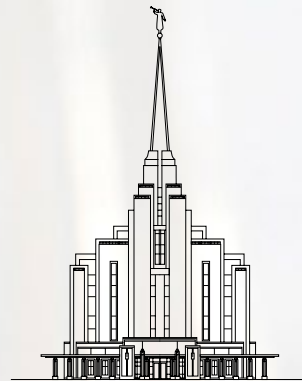


# BREAKING NEW

*At the groundbreaking of a new temple, I resolved to start building a better life.*

By Breanna Bennett Olaveson

# GROUND



I stood at the top of the hill and waited eagerly for the service to begin. It seemed my entire hometown was here, gathered on a few acres of land that would soon be home to a temple of the Lord.

After a few men spoke to the crowd, I watched them and others near the front use shovels to turn over some dirt. It seemed like such a simple thing. But as I watched the groundbreaking for the Rexburg Idaho Temple, I realized they were doing more than moving dirt around. The hardened ground needed to be softened before there could be room for the temple, and I knew I could learn from that.

I was a good kid, but I realized that if there had been a temple on that spot at that moment, I wouldn't be ready to go inside. I evaluated my life, relationships, and habits and found myself lacking. As members of the community continued to turn over dirt, I resolved to break new ground in my life. I was 17, just a few classes away from high school graduation and the technical "adulthood" that came with it. A small swelling of urgency started in my stomach and spread.

In the weeks following the groundbreaking, I made some changes. I had friends who didn't help me to be my best, so I decided to stop spending time with them. I didn't like breaking those ties, but I knew it was necessary. That same week, the temple's solid foundation appeared on the recently broken ground.

Over time, I made new friends. I kept busy with school activities. I read my scriptures more. I was making progress. And the temple construction was progressing, too. As I drove past the temple before going to a basketball game with my new friends, I noticed part of its framework had appeared.

But making changes wasn't always easy. Some days I didn't want to read my scriptures. But when I got

discouraged, I looked at the temple going up piece by piece. Every day it got a little closer to perfection. And with hard work, so did I.

Months went by, and I started college at BYU-Idaho. I felt more grown-up, more prepared to go to the temple, which was progressing in its construction. During my first week of class, the figure of the angel Moroni was placed atop its spire. With that piece in place, it was impossible to tell from the outside whether the interior of the temple was prepared for the ordinances that would be performed there.

That, too, reminded me of myself. I was 18. I was happy and pursuing my college education. But even though I was worthy of a temple recommend, I knew there were more preparations to make before I was ready to receive all the blessings of the temple.

I no longer had friends I needed to stop spending time with. I didn't need to break any particularly bad habits. But I did need to learn more about my Savior, and while the interior of the temple was being completed, I was also changing inside. I took religion classes and served in my Church callings. I reached out to others. And through the experiences of young adulthood, I became more committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

On February 10, 2008, I returned as a college sophomore to the same hill I had visited as a high school senior. Many of the same people were there, but I didn't feel like the same person. As I sat beside my parents in the newly completed Rexburg Idaho Temple, I reflected on how far I'd come in the years since the groundbreaking. I sang the hymn "The Spirit of God" (*Hymns*, no. 2), and I knew that unimaginable blessings still awaited me in that holy house.

The temple was ready and dedicated to the Lord. And so was I. **NE**