

A young man in a marching band uniform is playing a saxophone. He is wearing a white helmet with a silver band, a black jacket with white stripes, and white gloves. The background is a clear blue sky with some greenery visible at the bottom.

# THE New Era

SEPTEMBER

2009

**COVER STORY:**  
**STAYING IN STEP,**  
**P. 10**

**WHY ARE WE**  
**MISSIONARIES? P. 2**

**CHEERING FROM A**  
**WHEELCHAIR, P. 16**

**FROM SCOTLAND TO**  
**THE TEMPLE, P. 24**

**COLUMBINE: TEN**  
**YEARS LATER, P. 38**

**The First Presidency:**

Thomas S. Monson,  
Henry B. Eyring,  
Dieter F. Uchtdorf

**The Quorum of  
the Twelve Apostles:**

Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry,  
Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H.  
Oaks, M. Russell Ballard,  
Richard G. Scott, Robert D.  
Hales, Jeffrey R. Holland,  
David A. Bednar, Quentin L.  
Cook, D. Todd Christofferson,  
Neil L. Andersen

Editor: Spencer J. Condie  
Advisers: Keith K. Hilbig,  
Yoshihiko Kikuchi, Paul B.  
Pieper

Managing Director:  
David L. Frischknecht  
Editorial Director:  
Victor D. Cave  
Graphics Director:  
Allan R. Loyborg

Managing Editor:  
Richard M. Romney  
Assistant Managing Editor:  
Janet Thomas  
Associate Editors:  
David A. Edwards,  
Paul VanDenBerghe  
Publications Assistant:  
Sally J. Odekirk  
Editorial Intern:  
Julia Woodbury  
Editorial Staff: Susan Barrett,  
Ryan Carr, Jenifer L. Greenwood,  
R. Val Johnson, Adam C. Olson,  
Laurel Teuscher

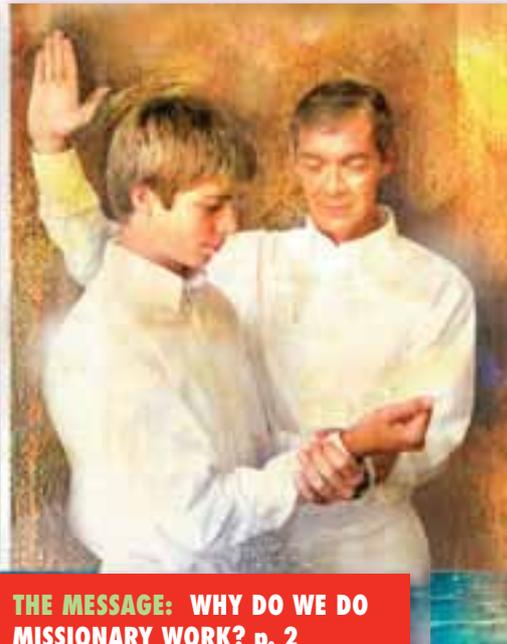
Managing Art Director:  
M. M. Kawasaki  
Art Director: Brent Christison  
Senior Designer: Fay P. Andrus  
Design and Production Staff:  
Collette Nebeker Aune, Eric P.  
Johnsen, Scott M. Mooy, Jane  
Ann Peters, Scott Van Kampen

Printing Director:  
Craig K. Sedgwick  
Distribution Director:  
Randy J. Benson

© 2009 by Intellectual  
Reserve, Inc. All rights  
reserved. Periodicals Postage Paid  
at Salt Lake City, Utah. The *New  
Era* (ISSN 0164-5285) is published  
monthly by The Church of Jesus  
Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 E.  
North Temple St., Salt Lake City,  
UT 84150-3220, USA.

POSTMASTER: Send address  
changes to Distribution Services,  
Church Magazines, P.O. Box  
26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-  
0368, USA.

Canada Post Information:  
Publication Agreement #40017431.



**THE MESSAGE: WHY DO WE DO  
MISSIONARY WORK? p. 2**

**The Message:  
Why Do We Do Missionary Work? 2**

Elder Dallin H. Oaks

*We do missionary work in order to baptize  
and confirm. That is the doctrinal basis of  
missionary work.*

**Scripture Lifeline:  
Cast Off Thine Afflictions 4**

Jennifer Ricks

*Stuck with a broken leg, I read one  
scripture that changed my attitude.*

**Gospel Classics:  
Baptism Comes First 6**

Elder David B. Haight

*Missionaries are 600 times more successful  
when members participate.*

**Mormonad:  
Let Us Give You a Hand 9**

**Marching On 10**

Jacob S. Fullmer

*Ryan Pegram is taking steps to apply  
the lessons he learned in band.*

**A Rebel No More 12**

Name Withheld

*A missionary befriends a young man  
who hates going to church.*

**In Tune:  
The Book of Mormon  
Has Come Forth 13**

Janice Kapp Perry and Bonnie Hart Murray

**Questions and Answers 14**

*“My Christian friends believe in the Bible,  
but they don’t understand why we have the  
Book of Mormon. What can I tell them?”*

**Cheering Each Other On 16**

Jacob S. Fullmer

*Two friends helped make Brittany  
Crockett’s dream come true.*

**Friends Tend to Become Like You 21**

José María Marquez Blanco

*Talk to your friends about the gospel.*

**From the Field:  
A Timely Testimony 22**

Dan Barker

*A missionary sees the results of a  
chance meeting.*

**Temple Teens in Aberdeen 24**

Paul VanDenBerghe

*Scotland youth look forward to making  
the trip to the temple.*



**WHO IS READY? p. 30**

## Water Polo and Prayer 28

Preston Johnson

*For one young swimmer, following the example of his roommate changed his life.*

## Who Is Ready? 30

Allison Lee Burton

*My prayers were answered in a most unexpected way.*

## The Extra Smile 33

## Running Together 34

Sean Johnson

*Twin runners find their strongest support in each other.*

## What's Up? 36

## Columbine: Ten Years Later 38

Liz Carlston

*Is there anything to be learned after a great tragedy?*

## What Joseph Smith Taught: Friendship 41

*What does it mean to be a true friend?*

## The Deacon's Baseball 42

Mark Petrey

*His prize ball was ruined by some poor choices.*

## Instant Messages 44

## We've Got Mail 48

## Poem: Finding Cumorah 49

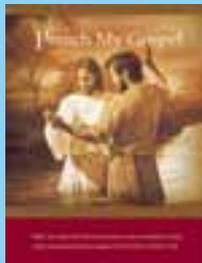
Nani Lii S. Furst

## Photo 49

Welden Andersen

*Text and visual material in the New Era may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA; e-mail: cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org.*

# What's Online



### Wondering how to share the gospel with your friends?

Go to **Mormon.org** for basic answers about Church beliefs and doctrines or to **PreachMyGospel.Lds.org**

for a guide to sharing the gospel, including how to use the Book of Mormon.



### Looking for great Church videos?

There are many available online. For example, go to **MormonMessages.org** to find Church videos or to **Temples.Lds.org** for a link

to a video on why we build temples.



### Need to keep track of what you earned this summer?

Go to **ProvidentLiving.org** to print a worksheet and read tips about using your money wisely.



### Searching for more information and uplifting messages?

At **NewEra.Lds.org** you'll find links to these, as well as Mormonads, videos, music, games, downloads, Q&As, and

cartoons. You'll also find links to *For the Strength of Youth*, *Personal Progress*, and *Duty to God*.

**The New Era Magazine**  
Volume 39, Number 9  
September 2009

*Official monthly publication for youth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

#### Editorial Offices:

New Era  
50 E. North Temple St.  
Rm. 2420  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

#### E-mail Address:

[newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)

#### To Change Address:

Send old and new address information to:  
Distribution Services  
P.O. Box 26368  
Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.  
Please allow 60 days for changes to take effect.

*Cover: Ryan Pegram marches to the right beat. See "Marching On," p. 10.*

*Cover photography and art: Lydia Viana (front) and Richard M. Romney (back)*

#### TO SUBMIT MATERIAL:

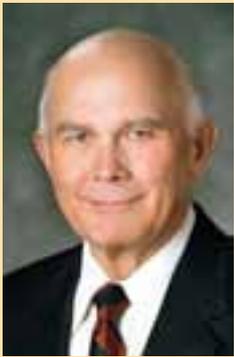
Send stories, articles, photos, poems, and ideas online at **[newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org)**. Click Submit Your Material, and fill in the form. Or e-mail or mail them to the Editorial Offices address above. For return, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

#### TO SUBSCRIBE:

**By phone:** Call 1-800-537-5971 to order using Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express.  
**Online:** Go to [www.ldscatalog.com](http://www.ldscatalog.com). **By mail:** Send \$8 U.S. check or money order to Distribution Services, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Visit us online at  
**[www.NewEra.Lds.org](http://www.NewEra.Lds.org)**

# Why Do We Do Missionary Work?



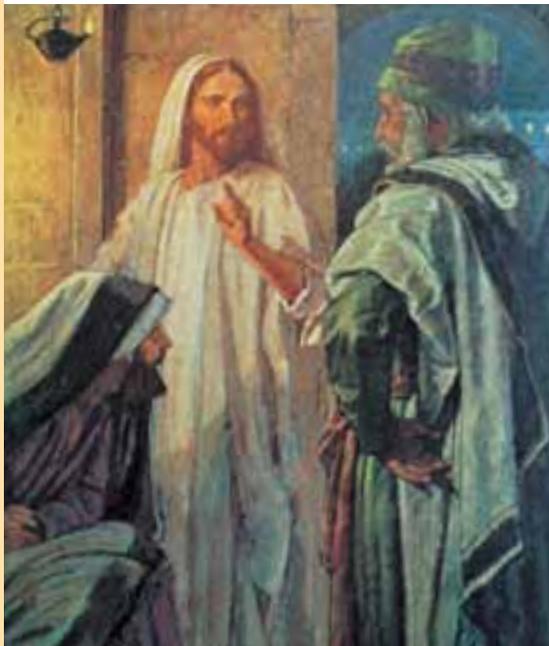
*The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer.*

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**T**he doctrinal basis of missionary work is contained in the Savior's statement to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The "kingdom of God" referred to here is the celestial kingdom.

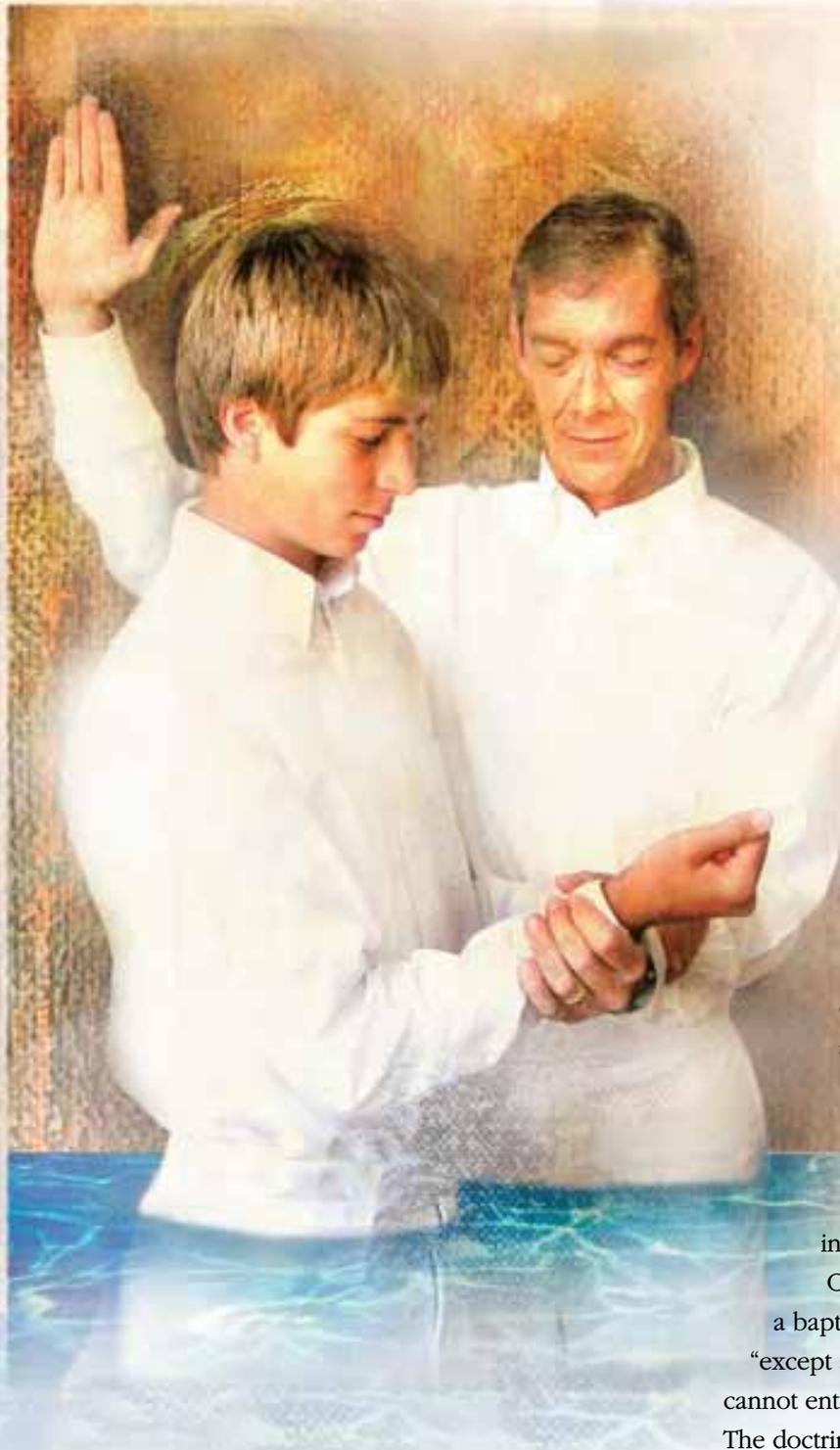
We do not preach and teach in order to "bring people into the Church" or to increase the membership of the Church. We do not preach and teach just to persuade people to live better lives. We honor and appreciate the



many ministers and others who are involved in the kind of ministry that makes bad men good and good men better. That is important, but we offer something more. One can qualify for the terrestrial kingdom instead of the celestial kingdom without the aid of this Church. We are concerned with a higher destination.

The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer. We preach and teach in order to baptize the children of God so that they can be saved in the celestial kingdom instead of being limited to a lesser kingdom. We do missionary work in order to baptize and confirm. That is the doctrinal basis of missionary work.

The restored gospel gives us added knowledge about Jesus Christ and His doctrine. But the uniqueness of our message is not just added knowledge. The requirement of baptism reminds us that the truths we teach are not academic. The restored gospel consists of doctrines *and ordinances*. We proclaim that baptism is necessary in order to redeem us from sins according to the conditions prescribed by the Redeemer and that only priesthood holders of this Church have the God-given authority that transforms the act of immersion in water into an ordinance



**O**nly the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

prescribed that condition, again and again. His sacrifice paid the price for my sins, and He has prescribed the conditions upon which I can be saved by His payment. That is reason enough for me.

As the prophets of this dispensation have told us, the missionaries’ purpose of being in the mission field is to save souls, to baptize converts, which is to open the doors of the celestial kingdom to the sons and daughters of God.

No one else can do this.

Other churches cannot do it.

Good Christian living cannot do it.

Good faith, good desires, and good reasoning cannot do it.

Only the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

The doctrinal basis of missionary work is the word of God, revealed in every age, that man cannot be saved in the celestial kingdom without the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that the only way to lay claim to the merits of that Atonement is to follow the command of its author: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you” (Acts 2:38). We are called to assist in this great effort. **NE**

*From an address given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 23, 1992.*

of the everlasting gospel. Our preaching and teaching is unto baptism.

Baptism is a requirement, but why? Why is it necessary to be baptized in this way and by one holding particular authority? I do not know. But what I do know is that the remission of sins is made possible only by the atoning sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and that He has

BY JENNIFER RICKS

*A single sentence  
in 2 Nephi made  
all the difference.*

**J**ust a few months before I turned 14, I broke my leg. I was in a full-leg cast for two weeks and a shorter cast that came to my knee for four more. Because of my injury, I went to the last two weeks of school on crutches, and I couldn't go on the girls' camp backpacking trip or our family boating trip. I needed help getting in and out of the car, and my siblings weren't very happy that I always needed the front seat so I would have room for my cast. Overall, I was miserable. I couldn't walk, run, or play with my friends, and I was tired and in pain much of the time.

One day I was in the car with my mom and my brother. We were on the way home from running several errands. We stopped

at one more store so my mom could quickly pick something up. She and my brother went into the store, and I opted to stay in the car. It wasn't worth it to get out my crutches for such a quick trip. I had felt dejected all that day. I felt like I couldn't do anything for myself except sit around. I couldn't have any fun, and I felt like a burden to everybody around me.

At the peak of feeling sorry for myself, I noticed a copy of the Book of Mormon in a pocket of the car door. The missionaries had asked us to keep this copy in the car so we would have it handy to give away if the opportunity came. I pulled the book out and opened it to a random page. As I looked down, my eyes focused on the first few

# CAST OFF THINE

verses of 2 Nephi 2. As I read, I felt like these words in the second verse were written for me, for this very moment: “Thou knowest the greatness of God; and he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain” (2 Nephi 2:2). In a moment when I felt afflicted and miserable, Heavenly Father spoke to me through the Book of Mormon and told me that He cared about me and that everything was going to be OK.

When my mom and brother returned to the car, I was smiling. They probably noticed the change, but I felt too quiet and peaceful inside to explain everything to them. I put the Book of Mormon back in its place, but I kept looking at it and remembering the words of Lehi that had brought me so much comfort. I also kept smiling. I couldn't help but think that the missionaries' request for our family to keep a copy of the Book of Mormon in our car wasn't just for investigators.

At home, I pulled out my personal scriptures. I turned to 2 Nephi 2:2 and marked in red the words that had comforted me. A couple of months later I could walk and run just fine because my leg was healed. Of course, other trials came into my life later on. Many times when I feel alone and miserable, I remember how I felt that day waiting in the car. I still often turn to the passage marked in red in my scriptures, and I always find comfort there. **NE**



# AFFLICTIONS

# BAPTISM COMES FIRST



*Elder David B. Haight served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for 28 years. In this October 1976 general conference address, he encourages Latter-day Saints to share the gospel so that others can enjoy the blessings of a “forever family.”*

*What about the millions of our Heavenly Father’s children who, if they were baptized, could receive blessings which would lead to becoming an eternal family?*

**BY ELDER DAVID B. HAIGHT (1906–2004)**  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**T**he family home evening manual . . . has a most inspiring first lesson. The theme is “Families Are Forever.”

Families are instructed to place a number of items on a table, among which are a marriage certificate, a temple recommend, a picture of a temple, and a baptismal certificate. . . .

Church members know that all of these items placed on the table have a relationship to temple marriage and the possibility of a

“forever family.” . . . I would like to highlight one of those items on the table—the baptismal certificate.

A “forever family” requires that couples possess baptismal certificates, be worthy members of the Church to qualify for temple recommends, and possess a marriage certificate signifying a celestial marriage. Now what about the millions of our Heavenly Father’s children who, if they were baptized, could receive blessings which would lead to becoming an eternal family?

Our full-time missionaries are having increasing success in all parts of the world in bringing souls into the waters of baptism. But their success could be multiplied many times if they had the enthusiastic cooperation of the members of the Church. It would



seem most members of the Church have a built-in reluctance to share the gospel with their friends and neighbors. Many of us take pride in referring to the growth of the Church or the success of the worldwide missionary effort but have never fellowshipped an acquaintance or a neighbor. When returning mission presidents are asked, “How could you have had more conversions in your mission?” we hear the same reply: “If only we could get the members to assist the missionaries by preparing their friends and neighbors to receive the elders.”

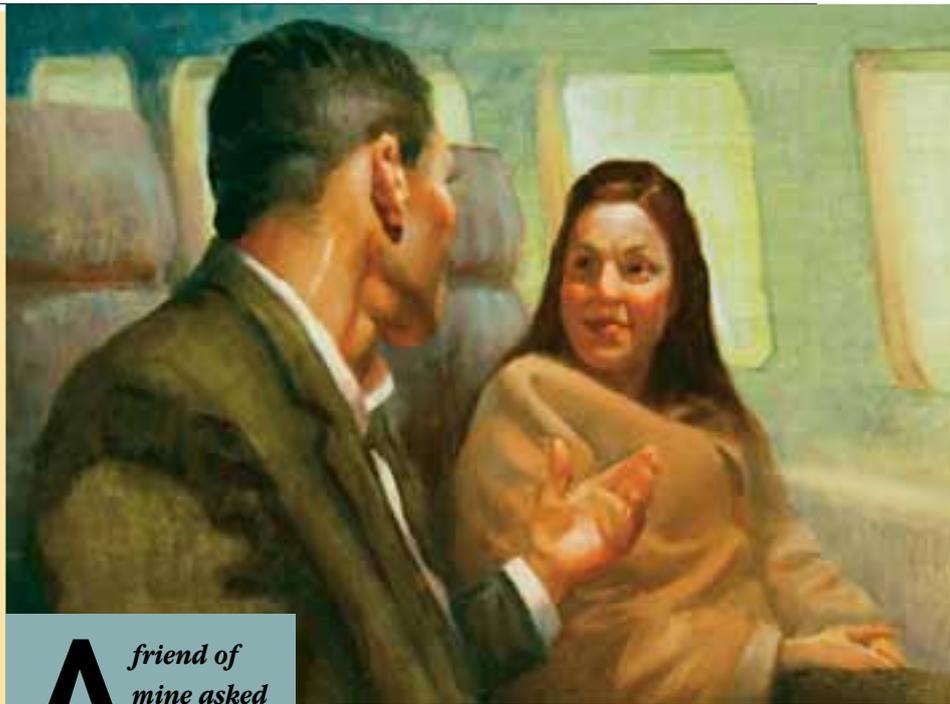
Have we forgotten our obligation? Have we forgotten what the Lord said?

“Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor. Therefore, they are left without excuse” (D&C 88:81–82). . . .

[Our missionaries] are trained to teach the gospel, to teach in an orderly, inspired manner, which hopefully leads to baptism. To a missionary, every hour is precious and must be productive. Do you realize missionaries baptize about one person for every 1,000 homes they tract? These same missionaries will baptize 600 people for every 1,000 who are taught in the homes of members—600 times more converts when members participate with conviction.

More of these exciting young servants of the Lord are in your wards and branches than ever before. Missionaries are going out better trained, better prepared, with higher hopes and aspirations. Every family that has accepted the gospel is obligated to share it with its neighbor. We can interest people in the gospel by just being natural and sincerely showing our love for them. . . .

On an airplane flight, a friend of mine engaged a lady in conversation. He told her about his trip to Anderson, South Carolina, to visit a fourth cousin because he was seeking information concerning some of his ancestors. He



**A** friend of mine asked a fellow passenger, “Would you like to know why I am interested in my ancestors who died long ago?”

asked this lady sitting next to him, “Would you like to know why I am interested in my ancestors who died long ago?”

“Yes, I would,” she replied.

“I was trying to find information about my forebears so I could perform certain work for them in the temple. Do you know where the Savior was during the three days His body lay in the tomb following the Crucifixion?”

“No. Where?”

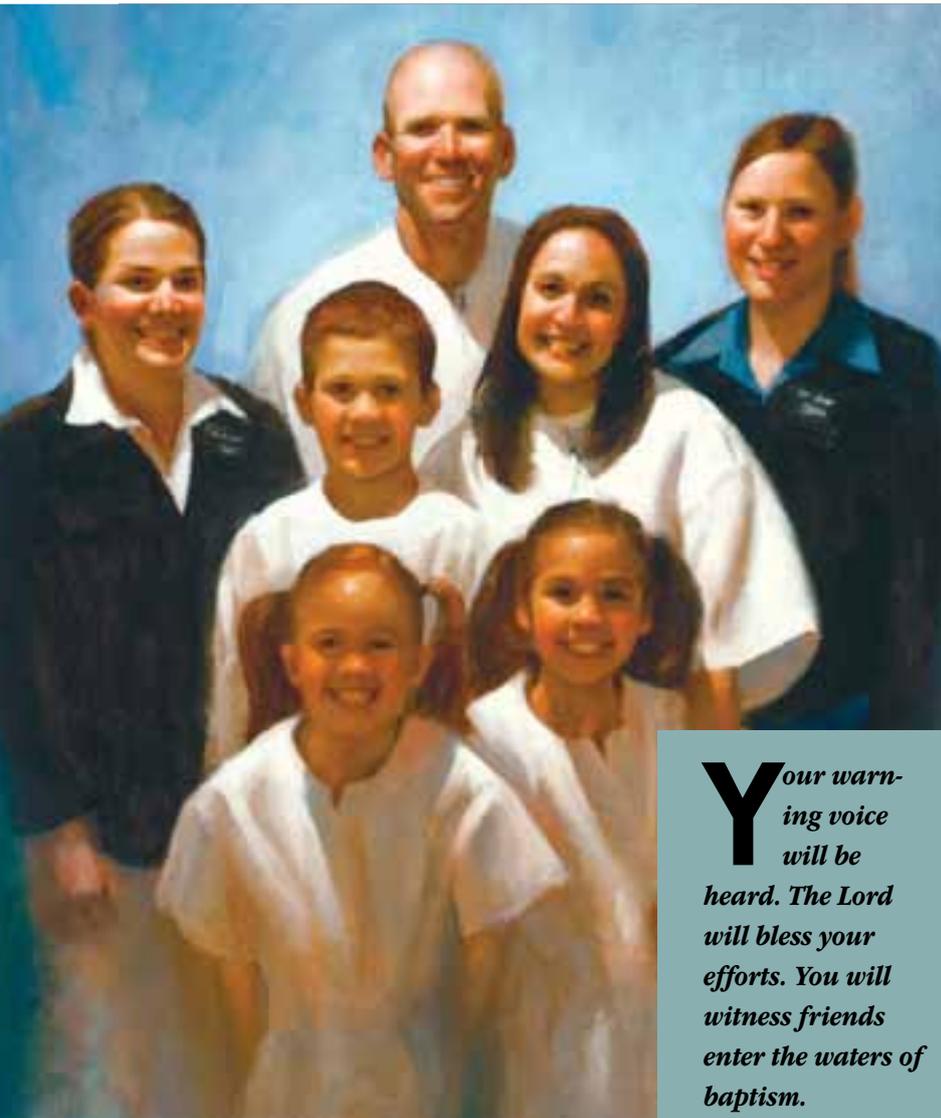
He continued, “Peter, the Apostle, said Christ preached to the spirits in prison who were disobedient in the days of Noah.” And then he said, “Now, do you think the Savior of the world would spend three days preaching to such people if they could not do anything about it?”

“No, I don’t. I have never thought of that,” she said.

He proceeded to explain baptism for the dead and the Resurrection. He quoted Paul: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Corinthians 15:29).

“Do you remember the phrase ‘until death do you part’ being used when you were married? Your marriage contract ends when either of you dies.”

She replied, “I guess that’s right, but I had never thought of it that way.”



**Y**our warning voice will be heard. The Lord will bless your efforts. You will witness friends enter the waters of baptism.

He continued, “My wife died the forepart of last month, but she is my wife eternally. We were married by one having the priesthood authority to bind in heaven that marriage performed here on earth. We belong to each other eternally; and furthermore, our children belong to us forever.”

Just before landing he said to her, “Do you know why we met? It is so you too can learn about the gospel and be sealed to your husband, your children, and your progenitors for eternity—to become an eternal family.”

Soon after this incident, he mailed a copy of Elder LeGrand Richards’s book, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, to this lady and her family and tucked his name card inside. The name of this woman eventually found its way to some full-time lady missionaries laboring in her city in Pennsylvania. After the missionaries’ first contact with

her, they wrote, “The lady we called upon was extremely gracious. You should have seen the light in her eyes when she met us. [The gentleman she met on the plane] had planted a most fertile seed with his testimony and confidence that he and his loved ones would be together after this life. As missionaries we felt at peace. We were impressed that the Lord would attend our efforts because this family was prepared.”

Now to you I would say, do you remember the essentials of a “forever family”: baptismal certificates, temple recommends, marriage certificate? But first your friends and neighbors must have a baptismal certificate. . . .

The Lord declared:

“For all men must repent and be baptized. . . .

“And by your hands I will work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance, and . . . may come unto the kingdom of my Father” (D&C 18:42, 44).

If you will involve your whole family—pray as a family for success; select a family to fellowship; set goals and dates for accom-

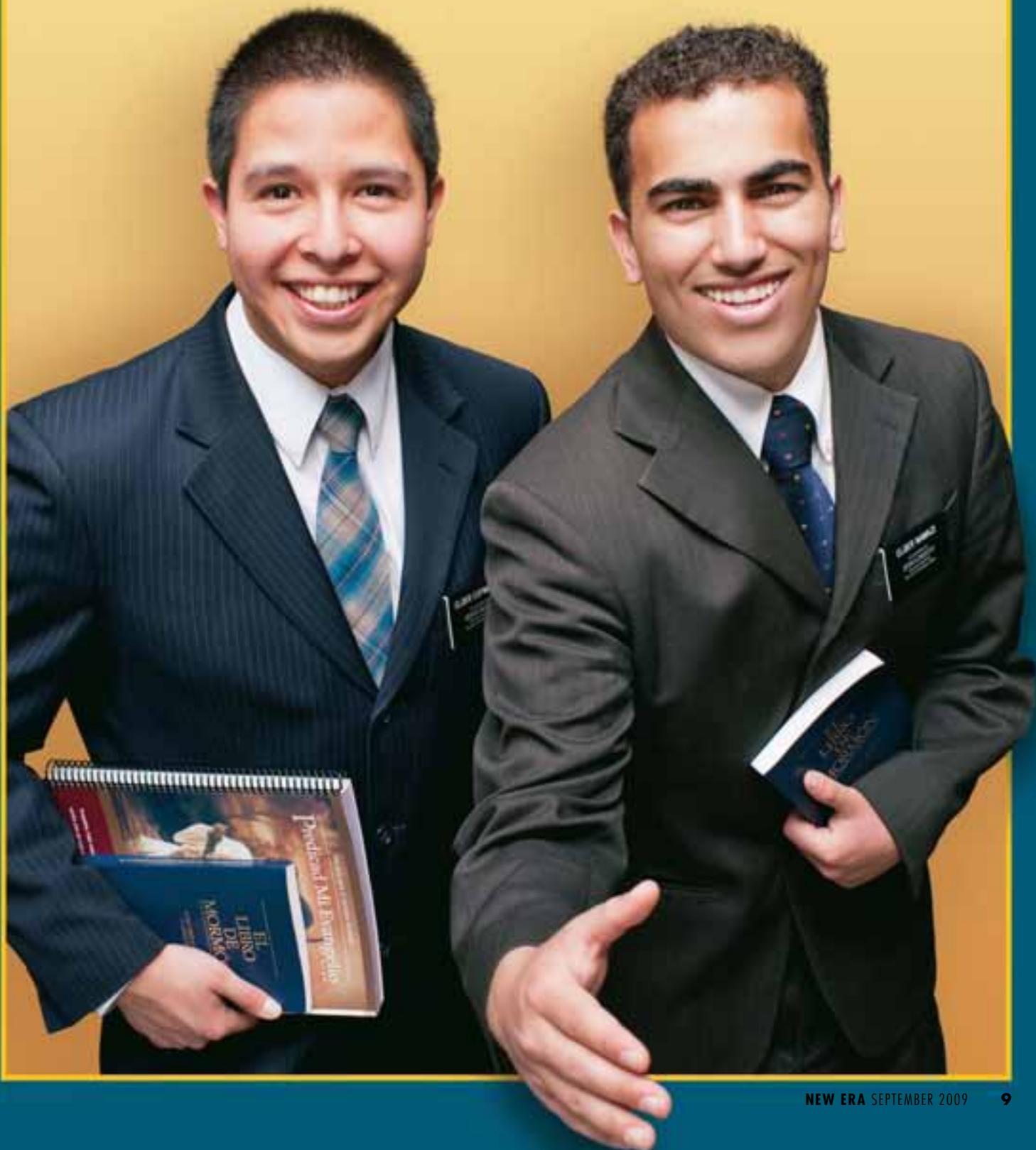
plishment; commit yourselves to do whatever is appropriate; then fast and pray, and then pray and fast—I promise you that your warning voice will be heard. This is the day when the harvest is ripe, the press is full. The Lord will bless your efforts. You will witness friends enter the waters of baptism.

The lives you touch may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel. Families are forever, I testify to you in all humility, in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen. **NE**

*From an October 1976 general conference address; citations, punctuation, paragraphing, and capitalization standardized.*

# LET US GIVE YOU A HAND

AS FULL-TIME MISSIONARIES, WE ARE READY TO TEACH THE GOSPEL.  
PLEASE INTRODUCE US TO YOUR FRIENDS. (SEE D&C 18:15.)



# Marching ON



**Name:** Ryan Pegram  
**Age:** 17  
**Instrument:** Tenor Saxophone  
**Location:** Colleyville, Texas  
**Accomplishments:** Woodwind captain over 75 people. His school band, the L.D. Bell Blue Raider Band, won U.S. nationals in 2007, and took 2nd in 2006 and 2008. He plans to attend Southern Virginia University.  
**Favorite Scripture:** D&C 122:7

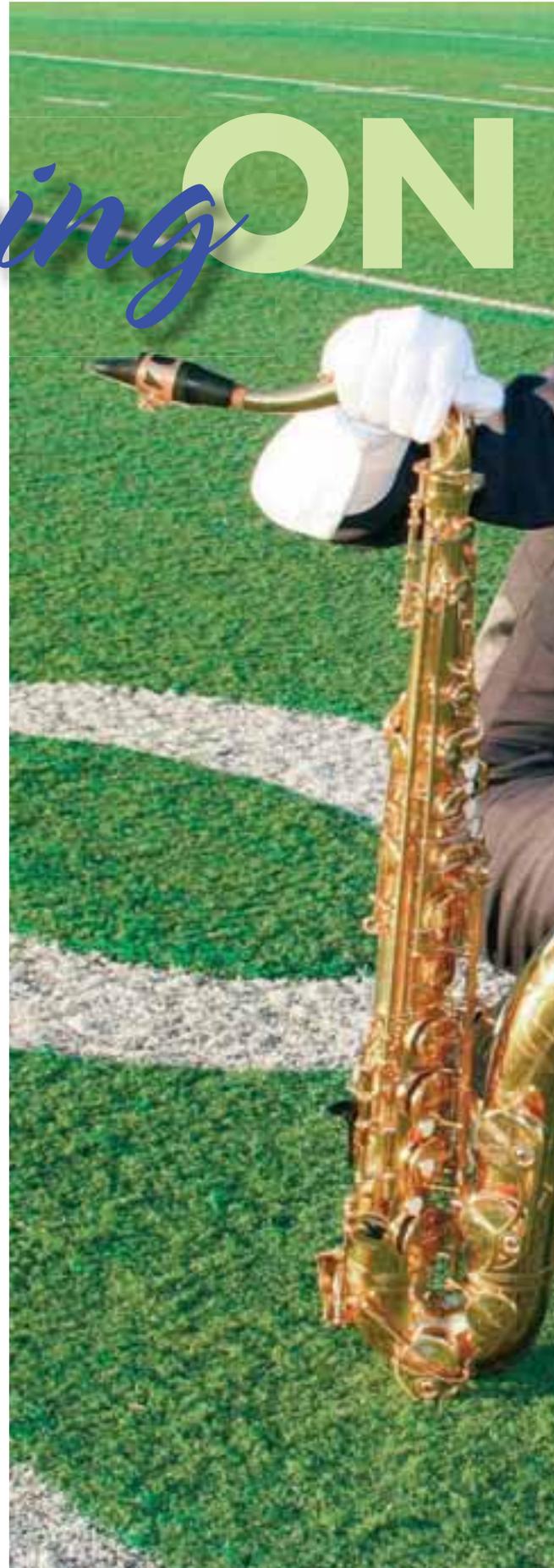
**A**fter participating in one of the most winning high school marching bands in the nation, Ryan Pegram says winning isn't everything. Sharing the joy of the journey is what matters most.

**How did you first get interested in marching band?** I grew up with the L.D. Bell High School band when my sister entered the program. I remember going to one of her first competitions. I was blown away! I always admired watching her march with the other kids.

**How popular is marching band in Texas?** We're a school of about 1,800 kids, and more than 300 of those are in band. It's a huge deal here to be in the Bell band. We have the most medals out of any other band in the country since 2000, which is 23 medals. I was in the band for 10 of those.

**How does living the gospel help you in life?** When we do what we should, we're blessed. For example, I found out *not* going to early morning seminary was more of a burden than going. When I went, my attitude and overall performance during band and throughout my school day changed dramatically for the better.

PHOTOGRAPHS INDIA VIANA



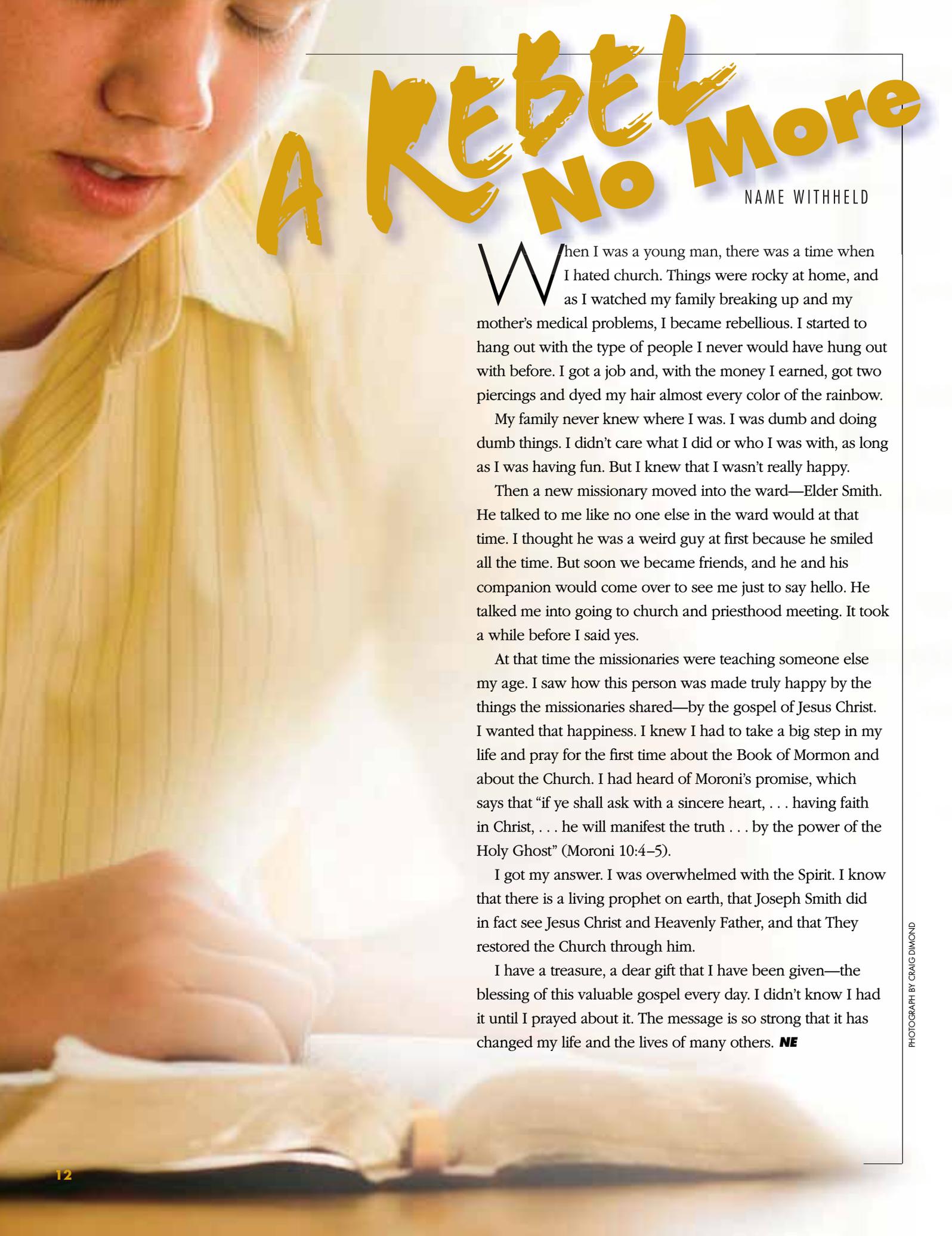


**What lessons from band apply in your everyday living?** Band taught me how to work hard for something. Enduring to the end will pay off. We're only on this earth once, so we might as well learn all we can and make the most of it. Some people are in band just for a shiny medal. But the medal doesn't matter in the long run. There are goals much more important than any activity you do in school, like living your life worthily.

I loved working to live up to the band's reputation. The same thing applies to being members of the Church. Those who follow the Church's teachings are known to give off a light that few people can describe. We must remember what we stand for, that people will look at us and want to have exactly what we have. It is a good thing, but a huge responsibility. I plan on living up to that name.

**What advice do you have on listening to uplifting music?** It's tough for teens to find enjoyable music that meets Church standards. But I feel empowered when I listen to good music. After feeling that, it's silly to want to listen to anything below Church standards. I sometimes watch a video of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and when I see them so absorbed in what they are singing, it's pretty hard to deny the power of the Holy Spirit and how our choice of music affects how we feel. **NE**

—As told to Jacob Fullmer

A young man with short hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is looking down at an open book. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a church interior with pews. The title 'A REBEL NO MORE' is written in large, yellow, brush-stroke style letters across the top of the page. The man's face is partially visible on the left side of the frame.

# A REBEL NO MORE

NAME WITHHELD

When I was a young man, there was a time when I hated church. Things were rocky at home, and as I watched my family breaking up and my mother's medical problems, I became rebellious. I started to hang out with the type of people I never would have hung out with before. I got a job and, with the money I earned, got two piercings and dyed my hair almost every color of the rainbow.

My family never knew where I was. I was dumb and doing dumb things. I didn't care what I did or who I was with, as long as I was having fun. But I knew that I wasn't really happy.

Then a new missionary moved into the ward—Elder Smith. He talked to me like no one else in the ward would at that time. I thought he was a weird guy at first because he smiled all the time. But soon we became friends, and he and his companion would come over to see me just to say hello. He talked me into going to church and priesthood meeting. It took a while before I said yes.

At that time the missionaries were teaching someone else my age. I saw how this person was made truly happy by the things the missionaries shared—by the gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted that happiness. I knew I had to take a big step in my life and pray for the first time about the Book of Mormon and about the Church. I had heard of Moroni's promise, which says that "if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, . . . having faith in Christ, . . . he will manifest the truth . . . by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 10:4–5).

I got my answer. I was overwhelmed with the Spirit. I know that there is a living prophet on earth, that Joseph Smith did in fact see Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father, and that They restored the Church through him.

I have a treasure, a dear gift that I have been given—the blessing of this valuable gospel every day. I didn't know I had it until I prayed about it. The message is so strong that it has changed my life and the lives of many others. **NE**

# THE *Book of Mormon* HAS COME FORTH

Majestically ♩ = 108-112

Words by Bonnie Hart Murray  
Music by Janice Kapp Perry

1. The Book of Mor-mon has come forth from pre-cious plates of gold. The  
 2. The Book of Mor-mon teach-es truth from pro-phets wise and just: Mo-  
 3. To those with faith in Je-sus Christ, the Ho-ly Spir-it guides, And  
 4. An-oth-er wit-ness now pro-claims that Christ was born on earth, And

re-cords, hid-den long-a-go, an an-cient sto-ry told— A  
 ro-ni, Al-ma, Ne-phi too, who spoke as from the dust. O,  
 man-i-fests the truth and light that in this book a-bides. Mo-  
 came un-to His oth-er sheep to show their price-less worth. We

tale of might-y na-tions, a mes-sage of great worth, The  
 come and hear, ye na-tions, the mes-sage now re-vealed: A  
 ro-ni made this pro-mise— a mes-sage hea-ven-sent— To  
 love the Book of Mor-mon, it tes-ti-fies with might, O,

gos-pel in its full-ness now rolls forth to fill the earth.  
 wit-ness of our Sav-ior, Lord, a pro-ph-ey ful-filled.  
 all who will sin-cere-ly ask and pray with real in-tent.  
 come ye Jew and Gen-tile, too, and learn of Je-sus Christ!

Copyright © 2007 by Bonnie Hart Murray and Janice Kapp Perry. All rights reserved.  
 This song may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use.  
 This notice must be included on each copy made.

Isaiah 29:4  
 Moroni 10:3-5

**“My Christian friends believe in the Bible, but they don’t understand why we have the Book of Mormon. What can I tell them?”**

**T**he answer to your question is found in the Book of Mormon itself.

What is the purpose of the Book of Mormon? Read its title page and D&C 20:1–12.

How do you explain simply to someone what the Book of Mormon is? Read the introduction to the Book of Mormon.

What did the Lord say about those who think there should be no more scriptures beyond the Bible? Read 2 Nephi 29.

What Book of Mormon chapters would be good for your friends to read first? It depends on their interests, but 2 Nephi 31; Alma 32; 3 Nephi 11; and Moroni 10 are powerful chapters.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul taught, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established” (2 Corinthians 13:1). The Book of Mormon does just that: it is another witness of Jesus Christ, establishing His word, His gospel.

For more help on this question, see *Preach My Gospel* (2004), chapter 5, and *True to the Faith* (2004), pages 157–58. **NE**

**It Testifies of Jesus Christ**



I would tell your friends that the Book of Mormon is a sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas.

Like the Bible, it testifies of Jesus Christ. However, it clarifies doctrines taught in the Bible. It is a book of scripture brought to light in these times by God’s power to help a dark world come to know Jesus Christ.

*Ashley B., 18, Colorado*

**It Is Like the Bible**



The Book of Mormon is a lot like the Bible. It talks about prophets who communicated with God to lead His people, just like Moses led the children

of Israel. And after Christ ascended into heaven, He visited the people in the Americas and performed miracles, just like He did in the New Testament.

*Matthew T., 15, Virginia*

**Invite Them to Read It**

I would just tell them the truth about the Book of Mormon and how it came to be. You

You don't have explain to them all the details, but you could challenge them to prayerfully read a bit of it.

Tanner M., 16, Utah

### **An Account of Christ in the Americas**

Tell them that the Book of Mormon is a second witness and testament of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. It is not meant to replace the Bible but to enhance our understanding of the doctrines presented in it. The Book of Mormon was written by ancient prophets for us, in our time, to strengthen us. It is an account and a witness that following His Resurrection, Jesus Christ visited and ministered in the Americas as well as in Jerusalem. This fortifies the truth that the gospel of Jesus Christ is for everyone, everywhere.

Amelia H., 18, Ohio

### **A Record of the "Other Sheep"**



You can refer your friends to John 10:16. This scripture is talking about the people in the ancient Americas and how Jesus Christ will teach them too. You could refer them to its cross-reference in the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 15:21.

Breann P., 16, Utah

### **More Teachings**



It's great that your friends already believe in the Bible. You're already over the first hurdle. Now, to get over the second, explain that Jesus Christ speaks to all His children, not just those in Jerusalem, and that the Book of Mormon contains His

teachings to those in the Americas.

Explain that the Book of Mormon isn't a new Bible but teachings from Jesus Christ so we can learn more.

Katie N., 16, England

### **We Believe**



I think the best answer is in the introduction to the Book of Mormon. It begins: "The Book of Mormon is a volume of holy scripture comparable to the Bible. It is a record of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of the Americas and contains, as does the Bible, the fulness of the everlasting gospel." The Bible is a record of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of the Old World. The Book of Mormon is a record of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, but they are very similar. You can also quote article of faith number eight.

Astraya J., 13, Utah

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

How can your friends get a copy of the Book of Mormon? If you don't have one to share, you can ask your ward or branch leaders or local full-time missionaries. Or your friends can request a copy through **Mormon.org**. Click the Free Media link.

### **NEXT QUESTION**

**"All I feel is emptiness when I pray. How do I know my prayers are being heard?"**

**Send us your answer and photo by October 15, 2009.**

**Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org), click Submit Your Material, and then select Questions and Answers.**

**You can also write to us at:**

**[newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org)**

**or**

**New Era, Q&A, Prayer**

**50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420**

**Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024**

**USA**

### **NEmore**

Got questions? We've got answers. Go to **[newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org)**.



### **ANOTHER TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST**

*testify that the Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ and that it will lead us to come closer to Him. I testify that the Book of Mormon testifies of the Bible and restores precious truths taken from it. I testify that the Book of Mormon leads us to make commitments and feel that love which will lead us toward living better lives. And I testify that by earnest prayer we may know that the Book of Mormon is true."*

**President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Why the Book of Mormon?" *New Era*, May 2008, 9.**

BY JACOB S. FULLMER

*When two high school cheerleaders made a move to help someone else, they had no idea how much it would help them as well.*



# CHEERING EACH OTHER ON

**T**he basketball arcs through the air and whips through the net. A timeout is called. Before play starts again, the cheering intensifies. As it morphs into words, however, it becomes clear the crowd isn't cheering for the team. "We love Brittany! We love Brittany!" bounces around the gym as a quiet girl on the sideline starts to blush.

Brittany Crockett is this year's honorary cheerleader at Syracuse High School in northern Utah. As the other cheerleaders roll through a line of backflips and handsprings, she speeds to the center of the court, closes her eyes, and does a 360 in her wheelchair.

Brittany has muscular dystrophy. And her experience as a cheerleader is proof of just how powerful kindness and determination can be.

## **In the Beginning**

When Brittany was only one year old, she was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, a

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY







**B**rittany has been excited about cheerleading since junior high. She believed she could do it from her wheelchair. But it wasn't until high school that friends got involved and she was finally given a chance. She has returned the favor by strengthening everyone around her. In fact, the football team was so grateful to her that they all signed a game ball (below), which she keeps on her shelf.

disease that slowly weakens the muscles until they don't work correctly. Doctors told her parents she wouldn't live another year. Fourteen years later, doctors again told her the same thing. But Brittany does try to beat the odds in just about everything.

"One time when I was little and I had more strength, I tried to stand up. I was so mad. I said to myself, 'I am going to beat this and that's that!'" she says.

With that kind of determination, trying out for the cheerleading squad didn't seem too tough. After all, Brittany is pretty much like everyone else her age, except for a few things, like her new high-powered wheelchair. Her friends talk about it like it's a brand new car.

Another difference is that when Brittany misses school because of her health, she would rather be in class than at home. And while some teens her age might obsess over fashion, she doesn't even know her own shoe size, a consequence of being physically unable to put them on. Because the disease weakens all of her muscles, she can't perform some simple things we take for granted, like being able to cough without the aid of a machine.

### Cheering with Her

Brittany first became excited about cheerleading in junior high. It looked to her like something she could handle. As high school started, she didn't forget that feeling.

"She constantly mentioned it. Over and over again I would hear, 'I wish I could do that,'" her mom says. "And then one day, she said, 'I want to do it.'" And with that conviction, her parents started asking around



to see what that would take.

At first, the school district said no, over concern for Brittany's health and safety. "We just kind of accepted it and moved on," Brittany says. She planned to ask again the following year, but then, a surprise phone call let her know she wouldn't have to wait.

"We had heard this girl with muscular dystrophy wanted to be a cheerleader," says Kaitlyn Glauser. Though nervous about being told no herself, she recruited the help of another friend and fellow

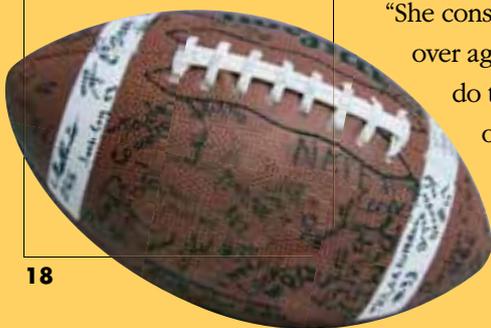
cheerleader, Elleny Swanson. Then the two of them did what cheerleaders are taught to do—rally support.

They generated an explosion of excitement from administrators and students alike. The district reconsidered and said with so many people urging her on, they approved. But the biggest shock came when they broke the news to Brittany.

"I just wasn't ready for it," Brittany says. She had nearly forgotten about her wish while Kaitlyn and Elleny had been asking for permission. "We wanted to make her dream come true," Elleny says.

And as her dream came true, some of the school's dreams did, too. With Brittany on the sidelines, the football team went from two wins and 11 losses the previous year, to qualifying for the state semifinals the next year. Believe it or not, the team won every game Brittany cheered for and lost every one she couldn't attend.

"The cheerleaders started calling me their lucky charm. I'd get calls, 'You've got to come! You've got to come so we can win!'" Brittany says.



## THREE CHEERS FOR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND CHURCH

There's a sign over Brittany's bed that reads, "See yourself as God sees you." That's a good summary of what others have done for her and of what she has done for friends, family, and ward members.

"At church, the other kids just take her situation and run with it," says Brittany's mother, Heidi. "They come up with ideas on how to involve her, more than I ever could."

"Her circumstance has helped us to see the very best in those around her," says her father, Doug. "She is included in a great circle of friendship."

"Brittany is an example of unwavering optimism," says fellow West Point Eighth Ward member Emily Davis, 13. "If you're having a bad day, seeing how happy she is makes your day better," says another ward member, Caitlin Steed, 12.

Brittany finds joy in simple things like studying the scriptures or walking the dog with her little sister, Ashley. "I know the time will come when my physical problems will be resolved," Brittany says. "I just don't know when, so in the meantime I try to find the blessings in my life."

With faith in her Heavenly Father, she is both cheerful and cheering others along.



**W**hether it's  
at a game  
(right) or

after practice (below),  
Brittany finds herself  
surrounded by respect  
and love, and she  
reflects them to others.  
"She's really made an  
impact on all of us,"  
says Ellen Swanson.  
"She has the light  
of Christ in her, and  
everyone knows it.  
Having that influence  
on the team was the  
extra good thing that  
we needed."

#### **NE**more

For more photos and a video of Brittany and her family and friends, go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).

#### **Giving Back**

It would be fine if the story ended there, but don't forget that those who give service often feel the most served in return.

At games, the student body chants for Brittany as loud as they cheer for the team—if not louder. Her contagious happiness and "feisty side" create a lot of incentive for the squad members to become better individuals.

Brittany, on the other hand, is humble when talking about her own contributions. "All I've done is just be on the squad. I feel like I need to give them something." The girls will tell you otherwise.

"She does so much for the squad. It makes us better people because Brittany is there. We love having her with us," Ellen says. Their focus on helping one another has helped get rid of any high school "drama" between the girls. "We're all very best friends," Ellen says.



"I don't think we really knew how big this was going to be," Kaitlyn admits.

These youth learned a little more about what the Savior meant when He taught, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mark 8:35).

"Bringing Brittany on the squad had an impact on our whole school, not just our squad—and not just Brittany's life," Ellen says. "It was so cool

to see how a community could come together because of one girl. That's when you realize what it's all about. It's all about giving back."

And all this happened because two young women, and then a group of high school teens, gave up thinking about themselves by going out of their way to include someone else. That's the kind of high school history we all want to be a part of. **NE**



*Our friends can influence us. But when we live the gospel, we can also influence them.*

# FRIENDS TEND TO BECOME LIKE YOU

BY JOSÉ MARÍA MARQUEZ BLANCO

I always admired the changes my brother's example brought about in some of his classmates. Through their friendship with him, they had become better people. Because of his example, I knew that the saying "Be careful whom you choose as friends because you will have the tendency to become like them" can sometimes also mean "Be careful whom you choose as friends because they will have a tendency to become like you."

All through school, I had had the same group of friends. But one year, a new student started at our school, and unlike me, he was popular. But I still somehow became his friend. In the months following, we became closer until we were best friends.

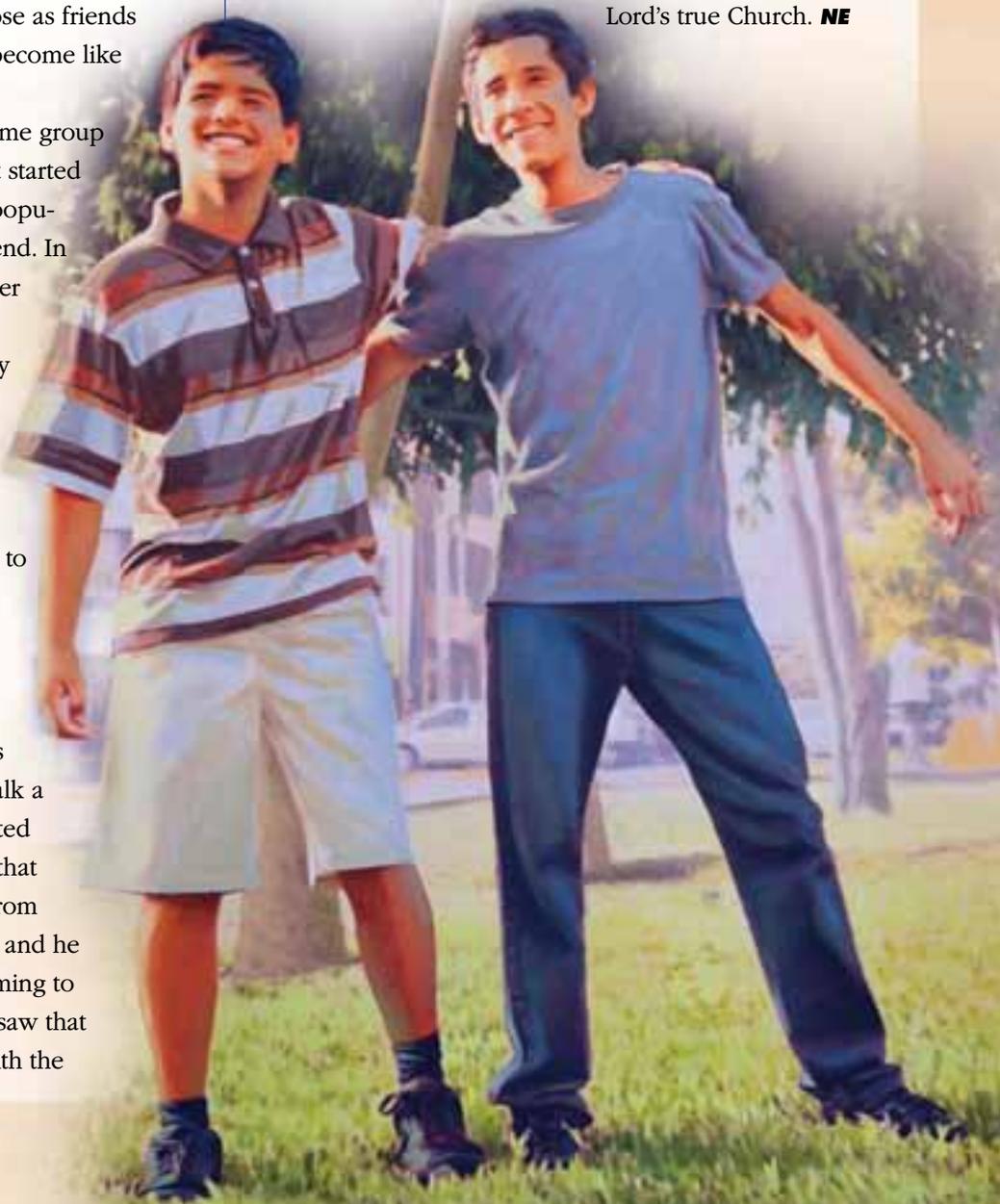
I was in the habit of going to seminary immediately after school. One day he asked me where I went every day. I decided to explain all about the Church, but from the look on his face, I realized this wasn't the best way to talk to him. So I stopped talking so insistently.

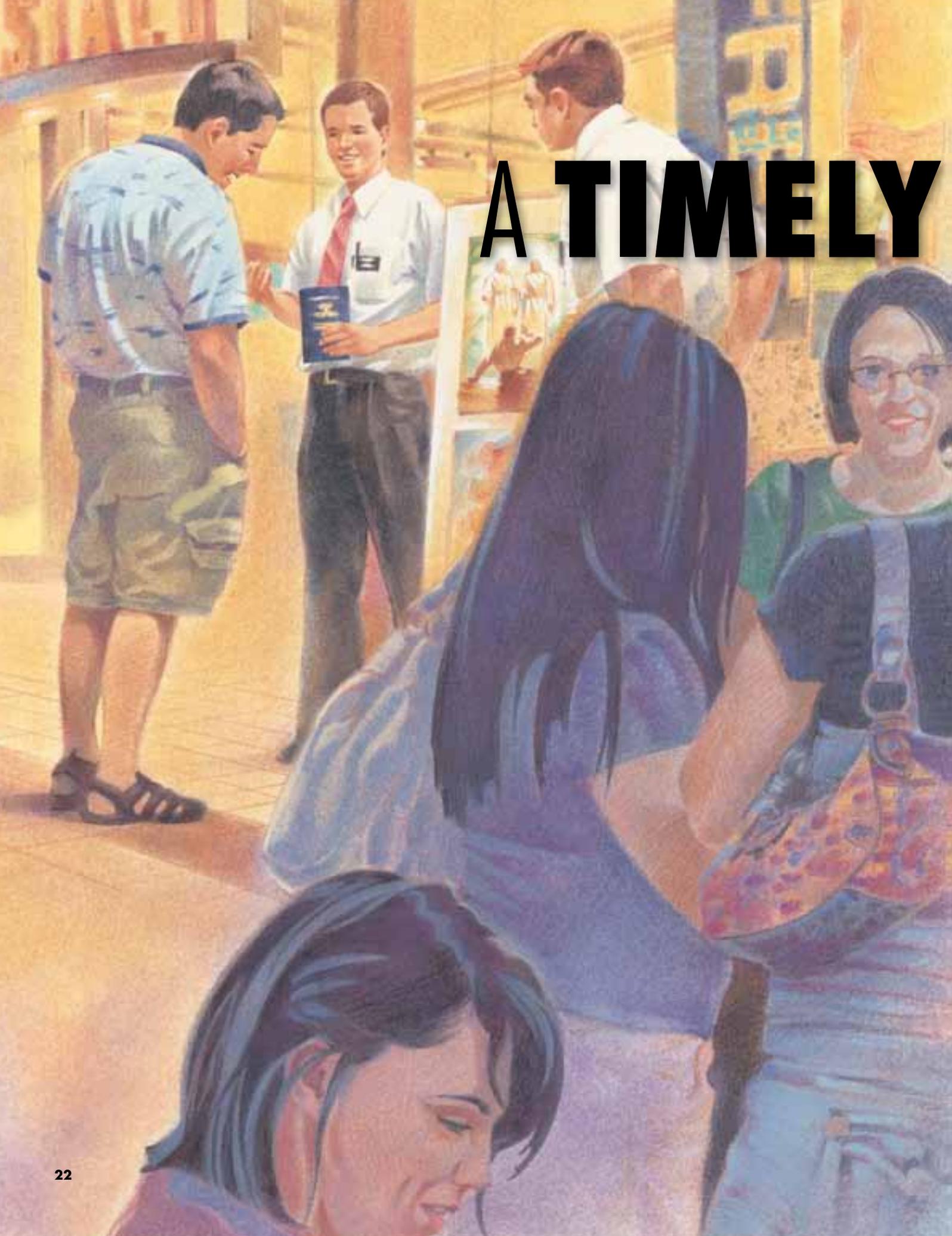
A few months later the elders were coming over to my house at the same time some friends and I were meeting there to do homework. This friend was one of them, so I asked the elders to talk a little about the Church. He was interested in what they were saying. He realized that some things in my life were different from what he and other friends were doing, and he wanted to find out why. He started coming to church, Mutual, and seminary, and he saw that all my Church friends were like me, with the

same principles. Soon he decided to be baptized.

At his baptism, the bishop asked him to bear his testimony. He stood and said: "I am here today thanks to a friend and how different he was from other people. I hope that everyone will see the differences in all of you too."

I hope we can all try to be friends with others, whether they are like us or not. We never know who is going to have the tendency to become, like us, a member of the Lord's true Church. **NE**





# A TIMELY

# TESTIMONY

*Why should I bear my testimony to someone who just wanted to laugh at me?*

BY DAN BARKER

**A**s a new missionary serving in the Massachusetts Boston Mission, I realized that I could not simply testify of what my dear parents knew to be the truth. I had to have my own conviction of the truth of the gospel and the Book of Mormon.

I remember the day well. I was praying, and a fire filled my soul. Never before or since has the Holy Ghost warmed me to the same magnitude. I knew, without a doubt, that what I had been taught regarding the gospel and the Book of Mormon was indeed the truth. I could now go on with a firm resolve and conviction.

I had only been out six months and my companion only about a month. We decided on this particular day to set up a street board in the mall with a First Vision/Book of Mormon theme. Partway through the day a man came over to us, and I proceeded to walk him through the street board presentation. As I was concluding the discussion this individual began to chuckle. I asked him what he found so amusing.

He replied, “Let me see—God, angels, and a 14-year old boy. Yeah, right!”

I was at a loss as to my next move. I felt that he would not be teachable, but the Spirit whispered to bear my testimony of Joseph Smith and his calling in bringing forth the Book of Mormon. I did so and thought little more about the incident.

In the fall of that year, I was transferred to another town. Since there was a small branch there at the time, it was not uncommon for my companion and me to speak in church often. This particular Sunday was no different.



As I was sitting on the stand waiting for the meeting to begin, I noticed a small family of four walk into the chapel. They were by themselves, and I assumed that they were visiting.

At the end of the meeting, a number of the branch members were congratulating my companion and me on our talks. Again, I noticed the man of this family patiently waiting at the perimeter of the small group of members. Finally, he extended his hand to me and thanked us for our message. He said to me that he could tell by the look in my eyes that I had no idea who he was but that he knew me well. He asked me if I recalled a number of months ago being in the Newington Mall and talking to an individual about the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith and having that individual laugh at me.

It all came flooding back to me. Yes, I did remember. He said he was that man. He first apologized for treating me the way he had and then told me that when I bore my testimony of my conviction in the Book of Mormon, he felt something inside, an emotion he had never experienced before. He pondered for some time my words to him, and then he finally felt impressed to look up the elders in his town. He and his family gained a testimony of the Book of Mormon and the gospel and were baptized.

It was on this day that I realized that if the Holy Ghost could put the right words into the mouth of an unrefined missionary such as myself, then by the same Spirit others would come to know the truth of this great book. More than ever, I knew the Book of Mormon changes lives just as it had mine months earlier as a new missionary. **NE**

# Temple Teens in Aberdeen



*For the youth of the Aberdeen Scotland Stake, an annual visit to the temple is a life-changing experience.*

**BY PAUL VANDENBERGHE**  
Church Magazines



**I**would not miss it for the world," says Bethany Gilmour, 17, of the Bridge of Don Ward. "That one week at the temple strengthens my testimony more than anything. And it keeps me wanting to come back

every year. There are things I've learned on these temple trips that will stay with me for the rest of my life—things that will help me make the right choices in my life."

This is just the kind of statement Aberdeen Scotland Stake president Christopher Payne said to expect if you asked the youth of his stake about their annual visit to the Preston England Temple. He wasn't exaggerating.

Every summer the 60 to 70 young men and young women of the Aberdeen stake, along with their adult leaders and some young single adults from the stake, make the 6½-hour drive to Preston, England. There they spend 6 days at the temple. Every morning they're in the baptistry for baptisms and confirmations; afternoons they're busy with activities and service projects; evenings they're gathering for firesides and scripture study. Their temple week ends with a testimony meeting that usually lasts about four hours. But the truly remarkable thing about these 6 days at the temple is how they affect the other 359 days of the year.



***When these youth got together to discuss their annual visit to the temple, one after another agreed that things in life just seem to line up better for them when they are doing their best to keep the Lord's commandments. There's something special about these teens, and you can see it in their faces.***



## Temple Worthy All Year

The changes the temple brings in the lives of these youth are not short-term; they're a long-term transformation. Melanie Bews, 17, of the Aberdeen Ward says it this way: "The day you leave the temple you're preparing to go on the next trip. Throughout the whole year you're being worthy for something. You're striving to be worthy to go to the temple again." Melanie talks about a presentation from the stake youth leaders that included a poster with eight steps to help prepare them for the temple. "I used it as a checklist to make sure I was doing as much as I could to prepare. There were some things on the list I hadn't been doing which I started to do, like keeping a separate journal for spiritual experiences. That is one thing I've continued doing still."

Nathan Cumming, 18, of the Elgin Branch says, "My temple preparation really goes hand in hand with my mission preparation." He explains that his daily prayers and scripture study are more meaningful because he is focused on his goal of



being worthy. "Before this last temple trip, I was praying a lot more," he says. "I struggle sometimes with confidence and shyness. So to prepare for this temple trip, I was praying for confidence to socialize more with people because I've never been very good at that." He's now confident these experiences will help him be a more effective missionary.

Mylie Payne, 15, of the Aberdeen Ward explains how preparing for the temple has become more personal for her over the years: "In previous years we've done group fasts to prepare for the temple." Now Mylie takes the initiative on her own. "This year I fasted myself to get the most out of the trip and help strengthen my testimony." She also talks about the change in how she studies the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon: "I am trying to understand the scriptures in much more depth and detail. In particular, when I come to the parts about baptism, I really try to study and understand them."

Bethany Gilmour sums it up this way: "I take what I've learned from the temple trip with me every day. When I come home, I think about the next trip. I think about what I've learned from the previous one and what I can do throughout the year to keep those feelings I felt at the temple with me throughout the year until the next one."



### Highlights of the Highlight

“The temple trip is the highlight of the year,” says Hope Fraser, 18, of the Bridge of Don Ward. “Everyone looks forward to it.” But within that highlight of the year are highlights for each youth who attends. What stands out in Hope’s memory of this year’s visit to the temple was the special Laurel meeting. “It was amazing,” she says. “We were meant to be talking about dating and situations you’re not meant to get into. We ended up talking about the gratitude we felt towards each other.” It was an experience that even the Laurel advisers remember with fondness.

James Bowcutt, 18, of the Elgin Branch says the highlight of his service in the temple was having the chance to be baptized for some of his ancestors. For some time before the trip

James carried with him the names of his earlier family members for whom he would be doing baptisms. “I could read the names and really get to know them. I actually felt that they belonged to me, and I was proud to have my family names in my hands,” he says. “I definitely felt a stronger connection with people beyond the veil.”



***The days spent at the Preston England Temple are both full and fulfilling. Each morning the youth are in the baptistry; then they’re busy with service projects and firesides. And there is also time for fun activities such as football.***



Mylie Payne talks excitedly about being able to serve at the temple, not only by performing ordinances inside but by cleaning and weeding outside. “I loved being able to serve on the grounds. There was something special about making the Lord’s house seem even more beautiful,” she says. “It was amazing.”

“My favorite part was spending time with friends but not going shopping,” says Melanie Bews. “It was so fun to spend time with my friends around the temple and to get to know them better and build memories that are not so worldly. The best was spending time with each other while building our testimonies.”

The highlight mentioned most often by the youth was the testimony meeting. Janine Gall, 17, of the Buchan Ward says, “Even though the testimony meeting was long, it wasn’t paining at all. It felt like it only lasted about 10 minutes.” She adds that “it was good to hear other people’s testimonies to strengthen yours and to come closer to each other as youth. Because we are such a small community of youth, we need to get to know each other better, and I think we do that very well at the temple.”

## Unity and Support

Even though they *are* a small community of Latter-day Saint youth, the young men and women of the Aberdeen stake are strong. Simon Robertson, 18, of the Aberdeen Ward says that during the year “we are all spread apart, but when we’re at the temple, we feel like one family. We’re all so happy because we’re at the temple, and we feel the Spirit almost constantly. Personally, I feel so peaceful at the temple. It gives me a stronger resolve to not only live the gospel but to live it better. I see what we can achieve when we are together. I want to try to feel that all the time.”

Janine Gall explains that “the nearest young woman to me is about 45 minutes away. It’s nearly impossible to meet up for activities or seminary, and so it’s hard to stay spiritually strong all the time. So I really enjoy going to the temple because it’s like a spiritual top off. My friends can uplift me at the same time as I can uplift them.”

Whether it’s sitting together in white as they wait to be baptized and confirmed, reading the scriptures together under the statue of the angel Moroni high atop the temple’s spire, or pulling weeds together on the temple grounds, these youth pull *together*. Paige Payne, 13, of the Aberdeen Ward remembers one activity that not only brought them closer together but also got them all soaking wet: “We were pulling weeds. They were growing

around some sort of plant, and we had to clear all the weeds—and there were millions. It was pouring rain, so we got all muddy. And we were on a slope, so every time you tried to walk, you would slip. It was really fun. The temple workers couldn’t believe we kept working. Since we were all doing it together, it sort of strengthened us all.”

Ethan Fraser, 18, of the Bridge of Don Ward adds that having friends who are strong in the gospel makes a difference in his everyday life. “I like that I’ve got great friends in the Church,” he says. “I know that if I go through trials, there is someone there to support me.”

## The Difference

President Payne tries to explain just what it is that makes the youth of the Aberdeen stake so special. They go to church and to activities; they attend seminary; they strive to live the gospel. It’s what the youth in every other stake he’s lived in are also doing.

“Then I moved to the Aberdeen stake, and I went on my first temple trip,” he says. “Now it’s something I plan my whole year around. And the reason I do is because I see what happens to our youth. I believe this temple trip is what keeps the Spirit in the lives of these youth. They talk all year long about the temple trip. We ask them, ‘Are you going on the temple trip?’ And they say, ‘I wouldn’t miss it for the world.’

“Going to the temple—standing in that holy place—changes them. Not just for that day or for that moment, not for that hour or that week. It changes them forever.” **NE**



# Water Polo and PRAYER

BY PRESTON JOHNSON

*I thought Sam was one of the coolest guys I had ever met.*

*I wondered why he continued to kneel and pray at night when his parents weren't there to make him.*

A few years ago I attended a summer swim camp at Brigham Young University in Provo. Growing up in Tennessee, I didn't have many LDS friends. I was so excited to fly west to meet other kids who shared my faith and passion for swimming. Little did I know that my decision to go to this camp would change my life.

Everyone attending the camp was given a dorm room and a roommate. My roommate, Sam, was on the water polo and swim teams at his high school in Southern California.

He also just happened to be one of the coolest guys I've ever met. Within five minutes of talking, I felt like we were best friends.

Sam talked to everyone. He radiated confidence and people were drawn to him. He made more friends in a few hours than I had made in my entire life!

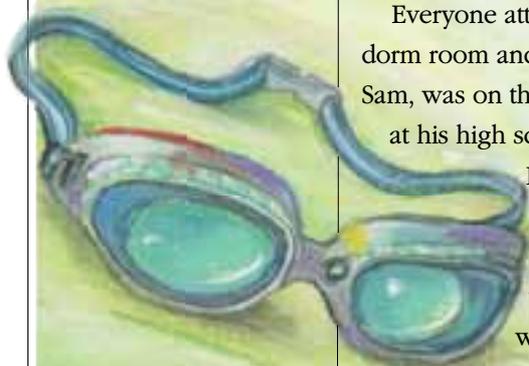
That night, Sam and I were in our dorm room getting ready for bed. I was about to turn the lights off when Sam quietly knelt down beside his bed and offered a silent prayer. I was blown away! How could someone so popular and so good at sports be humble enough to get on his knees and pray at night? I turned the lights off and lay in bed thinking about what I had just witnessed.

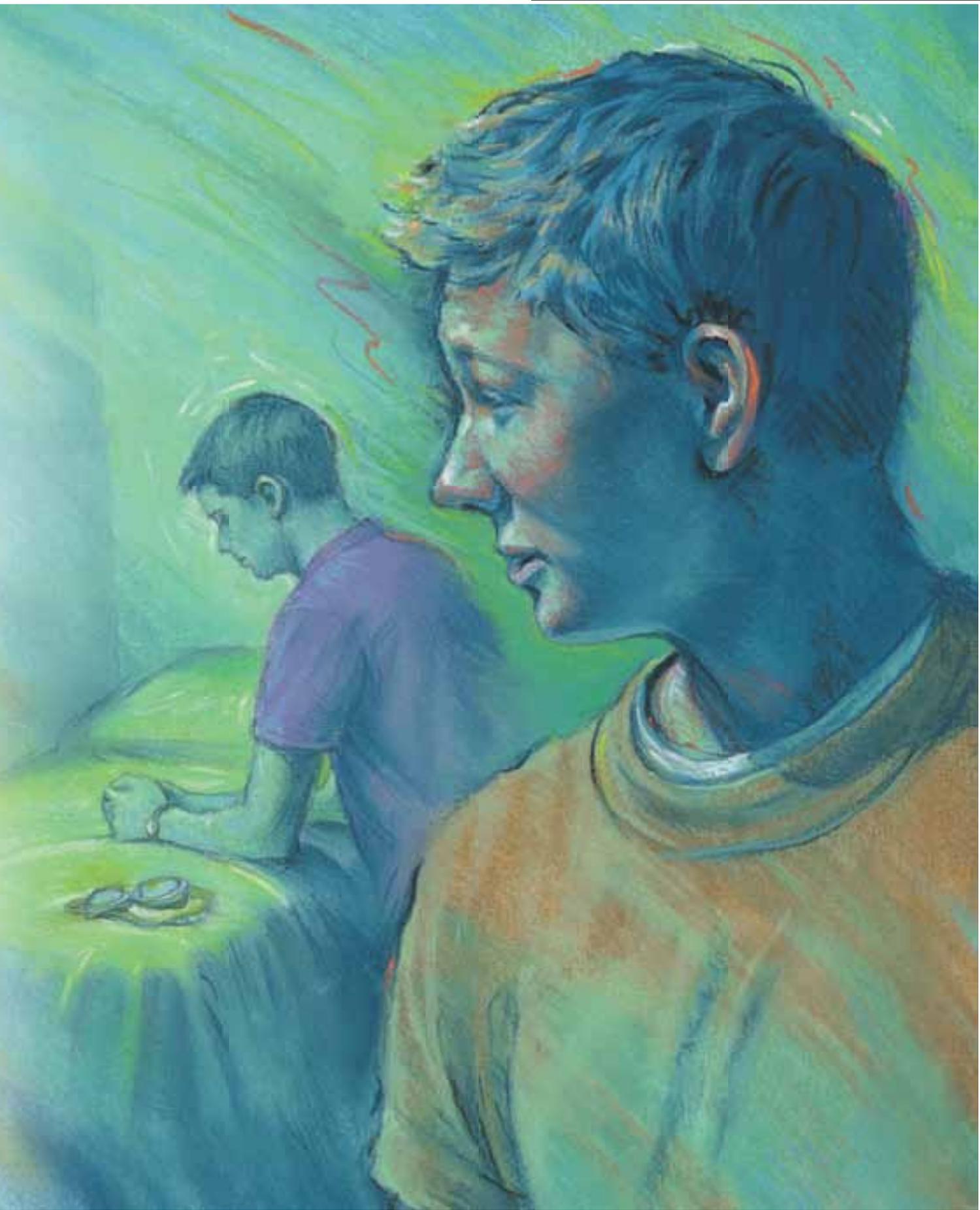
The next day, I saw my friend in a whole new light. I wondered why he continued to kneel and pray at night when his parents weren't there to make him. I started to have my own personal prayers. At first, I just prayed while lying in bed. Then I built up the courage to pray kneeling. I would turn the lights off, kneel, pray, and jump into bed in one fluid motion.

As I started to gain confidence in myself, my prayers grew longer and more sincere. My spiritual strength increased with every prayer. I realized what Sam had was spiritual strength. He radiated that strength with love toward other people.

By his example, Sam inspired me to pursue water polo, and I later had the wonderful opportunity to play for the University of Tennessee. But more importantly, through his simple example of praying each night, he inspired me to continually strengthen myself spiritually through prayer. (See Alma 37:6-7.)

Serving as a missionary in the Idaho Pocatello Mission, I pray more than ever before. Every time I kneel in prayer I remember my friend Sam, who taught me by example to "set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer" His strength and comfort (Daniel 9:3). This is one way that I can achieve the divine potential that God sees in me. **NE**





# WHO

## Is Ready?

*I thought my friend was prepared to hear the gospel, so why did I get this prompting?*

BY ALLISON LEE BURTON

**D**uring my senior year of high school, I prayed for the Spirit to lead me to someone ready to hear the gospel. I had a friend in mind as I prayed. This friend of mine, Ashley (name has been changed), had expressed some interest in my religion, and she already held herself to the same standards as Latter-day Saint youth. I was convinced this was the time she needed to hear the gospel.

I was serving in my Laurel class presidency at the time, and during a bishopric youth committee meeting, I received a strong impression to suggest to the bishop that we have a missionary activity in Mutual. I felt impressed that the youth of our ward should invite nonmember friends to this activity for a question-and-answer session with the missionaries serving in our ward. My bishop enthusiastically set up the activity with the elders, and I was sure that this was the answer I had been praying for. Now Ashley could come and learn more about the gospel in an environment where she would not feel any pressure. I was confident that after Ashley came to the question-and-answer activity, she would be touched by the Spirit, ask to receive the missionary lessons, and in about a month would be baptized and confirmed a

member of the Church.

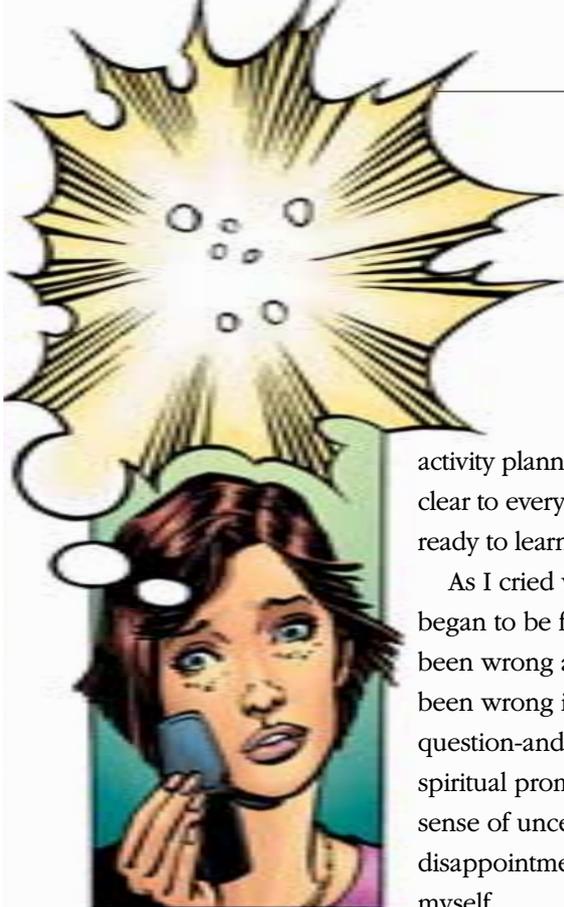
Now my prayers turned to how to ask Ashley to the activity. I prayed to serve as an instrument in the Lord's hands to introduce His plan and gospel to someone prepared to receive it. At school I invited Ashley to the activity, and she said she would ask her parents if it was all right with them.

Later that afternoon, I received a call from Ashley. She told me her parents were definitely OK with it. In fact, she explained that before her parents married, her father had lived with two LDS roommates and was very impressed with how they lived. I was overjoyed because the only obstacle I had envisioned was whether or not Ashley's parents would be OK with her pursuing another religion.

As I continued to pray about the upcoming missionary activity, I felt a calm reassurance that I was indeed an instrument in the hands of the Lord and that He was pleased I had acted on the prompting at the bishopric youth committee meeting. I looked forward to the activity with great anticipation. Ashley and I had been friends for many years, and I was excited to play a part in her introduction to the gospel and, of course, her resulting conversion.

On the morning of the activity, I received a phone call from Ashley. She had changed her mind and was no longer planning to come to the activity. I was devastated and confused. I had been praying for Ashley, I was sure she was ready, and she was the whole reason I had thrown myself into missionary mode. I also felt embarrassed. During the





***t had to be Ashley! Of all the people I knew, she seemed the most likely to accept the gospel.***

activity planning process, I had made it very clear to everyone that my friend Ashley was ready to learn and accept the gospel.

As I cried with frustration in my room, I began to be filled with self-doubt. If I had been wrong about Ashley, then maybe I had been wrong in believing that the missionary question-and-answer activity was actually a spiritual prompting. Engulfed in a teenage sense of uncertainty, anger, self-pity, and disappointment, I decided to skip the activity myself.

A few weeks later, as I was walking through the school library, my friend Brian asked me if I wanted to come to his baptism. Brian and I didn't have any classes together that year, so it had been quite a while since I had seen or spoken with him. The previous year we had sat next to each other in a history class and had partnered up for a class project. Our project topic, randomly assigned by our teacher, was "Joseph Smith and the Mormons." I remembered Brian had been quite interested in the topic as we did our research. However, he also liked to joke around, saying things like, "Remind me which wife number your mom is" and "There is going to be this fun party this weekend, but oh, wait—you're Mormon, so you would be no fun to go with." Thus, I initially dismissed his baptism invitation as another joke at the expense of my religion. He did not seem like the type ready to join a church with such "restrictive standards."

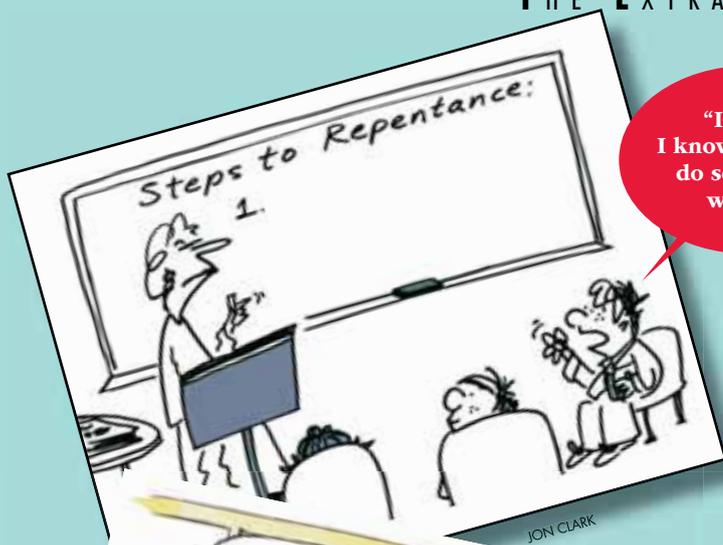
But the next words out of his mouth stunned me as he described the whirlwind of the past few weeks of his life. He explained

overhearing a fellow classmate and member of my ward invite someone to a question-and-answer activity at the Mormon church. When the person receiving the invitation declined, Brian asked our classmate if he could come along instead. Following the activity, he immediately began taking the missionary lessons. He read the Book of Mormon. He prayed about it. He knew it was true. He really was getting baptized, and if I wanted to, I was welcome to come. After all, he said, I was the one who introduced him to Joseph Smith and the Mormons.

In quiet amazement I realized that the Lord had heard my prayers. He was using me as an instrument in His hands to find someone He had prepared to hear and accept the gospel. It had never occurred to me to invite Brian to meet the missionaries because he did not seem, in my opinion, ready. Not like Ashley.

At that humbling moment I realized how vital it is that I act on all promptings I receive by the Spirit. Although I continue to pray that Ashley will be ready for the gospel, I learned a significant lesson from the unexpected outcome of my attempt at sharing the gospel with her. The Lord always has a purpose for the promptings He gives us, and I do not need to know or guess what it is. Instead, it is my responsibility to carry out the prompting confidently and resolutely. As I pray for missionary opportunities, act on promptings, and accept the Lord's will, rather than trying to impose my own, I can more fully serve as an instrument in the hands of God and help build His kingdom. **NE**

THE EXTRA SMILE



JON CLARK

"I know!  
I know! First you  
do something  
wrong!"



ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

"I'm confused  
as to why this is in  
our Young Women  
theme.  
Nothing about nature  
is divine."



RYAN STOKER

"We're playing  
Noah's ark."



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

**NEmore**  
See a differ-  
ent Extra Smile  
online every  
week at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).

# RUNNING

BY SEAN JOHNSON

*There's no sibling rivalry, even when these twins race against each other.*

**T**hey've been running together since they were eight years old. At first, Nachele and Natalie Stewart would run around the neighborhood together. Today, they run in state and national track championships—and win. They helped the Spanish Fork High School track team become state champions three times, and in 2008 they were invited to compete in the exclusive Nike Outdoor Nationals, where Nachele took home the bronze in the 800m and Natalie took home the silver in the 400m. Although they often compete against each other in the same events and each tries her best to come out on top—often breaking the other's record—Nachele and Natalie remain best friends and are happy to see each other succeed.

## What do you love about running?

*Nachele:* It's hard work. But the sense of achievement that comes from putting hard work into something and seeing positive results is an amazing feeling. What you reap is what you sow. In order to reap great things, you have to sow great time and effort.

*Natalie:* I love the competition, the adrenaline. I just love staying in shape and being healthy.

## After you've tucked your running shoes away in your locker for the day, what do you like to do?

*Nachele:* I'm a big reader. I love to read, and my favorite book is *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I love to spend time with friends and family.

*Natalie:* I love crafts, puzzles, and reading.

## Why is family important to you?

*Nachele:* Families are ordained of

God. My family is the biggest support system in my life. They are always there for me and have never failed me.

*Natalie:* I can go to any member of my family for anything, and they will help me. It's nice to know there is always someone there to help.

## How do you maintain a good relationship off the track when you're often competing against each other?

*Nachele:* It's all about perspective.

Running isn't the most important thing in life, so why would I want to damage an eternal relationship with Natalie by having

negative, mean, or competitive thoughts about her? I find more value in giving her support and congratulations in her endeavors than focusing on if she beats me in a race or not.

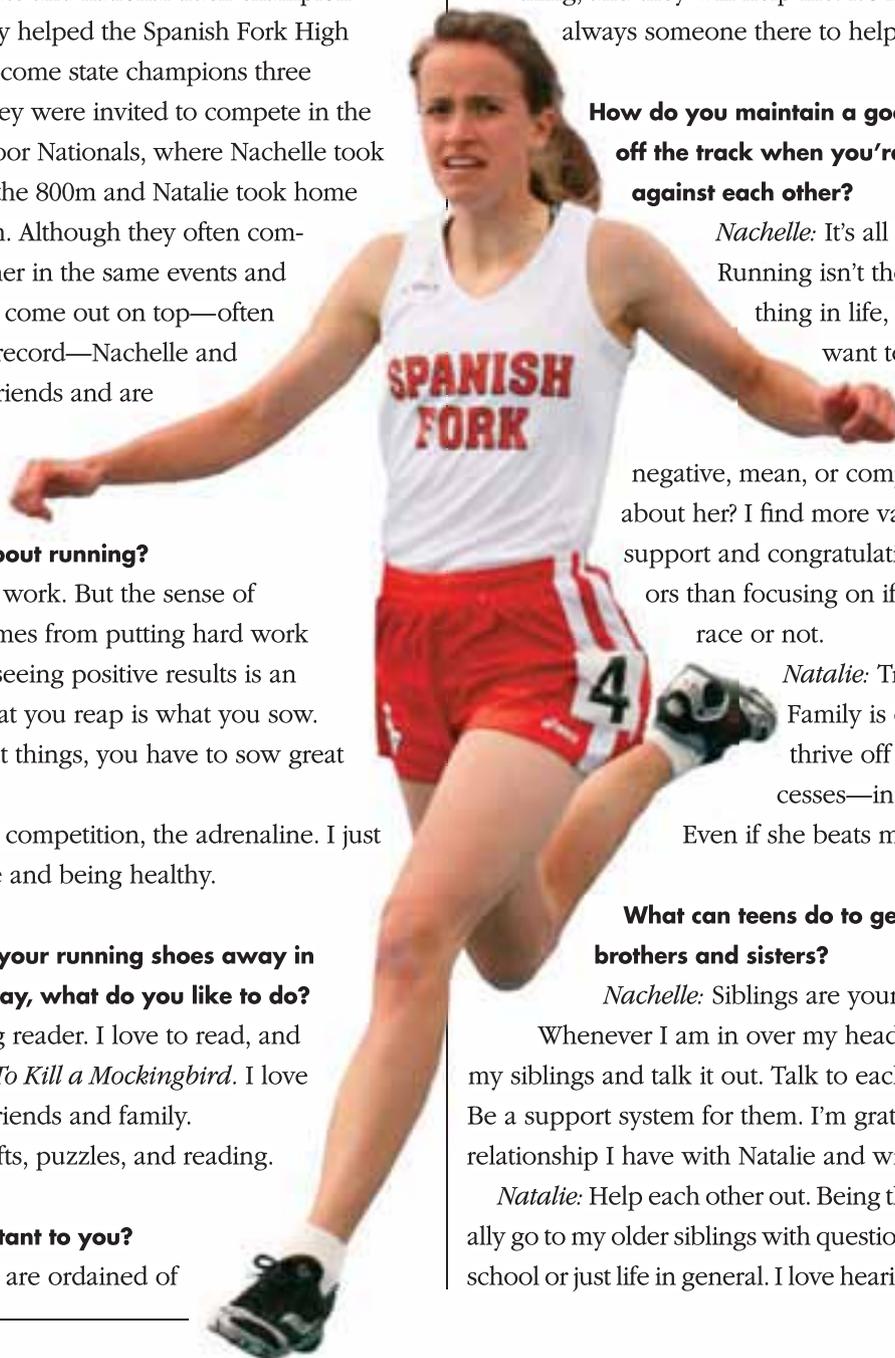
*Natalie:* Track is just a sport. Family is everything. We both thrive off each other's successes—in sports and in life. Even if she beats me, I still love her.

## What can teens do to get along with their brothers and sisters?

*Nachele:* Siblings are your link to reality.

Whenever I am in over my head, I will go to one of my siblings and talk it out. Talk to each other about things. Be a support system for them. I'm grateful for the close relationship I have with Natalie and with my other siblings.

*Natalie:* Help each other out. Being the youngest, I usually go to my older siblings with questions or concerns about school or just life in general. I love hearing their advice. **NE**



# TOGETHER



**A**lthough on the track they're fierce competitors, twin sisters Nachele (above left and on facing page) and Natalie (above right and on this page) are the best of friends. At graduation (above), at home, at church, and in everyday life, they cheer each other along.



# HYMN

## VOCABULARY #4

**D**o you know the meaning of that hymn you just sang? Choose the correct definition for each of the following words that can be found in one or more of our hymns.

**A. Repose (Hymns, no. 159, and eight others)**

1. To strike or hit
2. Construct
3. Rest or sleep
4. A meal

**B. Affable (Hymns, no. 307)**

1. Angry or mean
2. Friendly or good natured
3. A reddish hue
4. Humorous or funny

**C. Fetters (Hymns, nos. 17, 4)**

1. A restraint, such as chains or manacles
2. Shrubs or bushes
3. A person who steals
4. A person who prays

**D. Transcendent (Hymns, no. 14)**

1. Sweet smelling
2. Floating or flying
3. Immovable
4. Exceptional or above the ordinary

**E. Cloven (Hymns, no. 207)**

1. Having four feet
2. Beaten or mixed together
3. Split or divided in two
4. Flattened

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER

Answers: A3, B2, C1, D4, E3

# THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

**T**he first missionaries to go overseas were sent to England in 1837, only seven years after the Church was founded. A group of seven missionaries arrived in England on July 19, 1837, preached in Preston, and baptized 9 new converts on July 30. By the next week, 41 more converts were baptized.

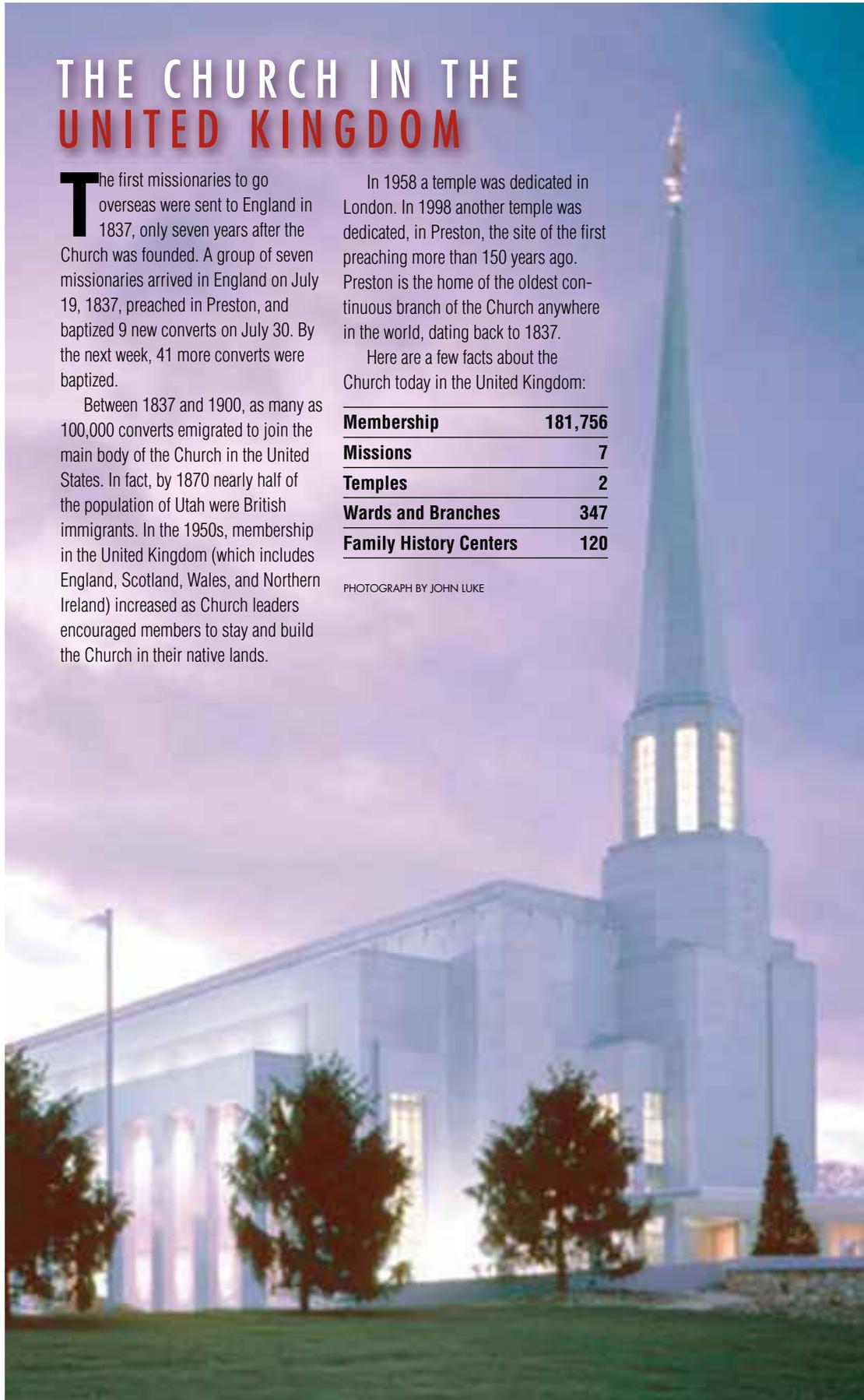
Between 1837 and 1900, as many as 100,000 converts emigrated to join the main body of the Church in the United States. In fact, by 1870 nearly half of the population of Utah were British immigrants. In the 1950s, membership in the United Kingdom (which includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) increased as Church leaders encouraged members to stay and build the Church in their native lands.

In 1958 a temple was dedicated in London. In 1998 another temple was dedicated, in Preston, the site of the first preaching more than 150 years ago. Preston is the home of the oldest continuous branch of the Church anywhere in the world, dating back to 1837.

Here are a few facts about the Church today in the United Kingdom:

<b>Membership</b>	<b>181,756</b>
<b>Missions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Temples</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Wards and Branches</b>	<b>347</b>
<b>Family History Centers</b>	<b>120</b>

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE



# HIKING TO NAUVOO . . . PENNSYLVANIA!

Last year the Williamsport Pennsylvania Stake Laurels hiked through the little village of Nauvoo—but not in Illinois. They hiked through Nauvoo, Pennsylvania, and learned about its history. The Williamsport stake covers a large area encompassing 11 counties, and some of the girls are the only members in their entire high school. So learning about once-thriving congregations of early Latter-day Saints within their present-day stake boundaries is inspiring to them.

“Even my nonmember friends find our Church’s history interesting, because it often predates their groups and organizations,” said Elizabeth Meng of the Lewisburg Ward. “People here are into historical sites, so naturally they’re interested in our Church’s early growth here.”

The young women stopped to talk to an elderly man at the edge of the road on the outskirts of Nauvoo. Earl, age 70, a lifelong resident confirmed that his Nauvoo community was a Mormon settlement during the 1840s and named after the Mormon city in Illinois. “Our borough was named Nauvoo by a prominent Mormon leader,” he said. When asked what he thought the word *Nauvoo* meant, he was unsure and thought it might be a Native American word. Earl seemed pleased to learn that *Nauvoo* is Hebrew and means beautiful, a place of rest and beauty.

In addition to the Saints in Nauvoo, Liberty Township, the young women researched previous branches in Rutland and Columbia Townships. In Ridgebury Township, they learned there is a road called Mormon Lake Road that leads past Mormon Hill to Mormon Lake, where it is believed early members performed baptisms. Next year, the young women are planning a hike to Mormon Lake.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE WILLIAMSPORT PENNSYLVANIA ST.

## BY THE NUMBERS

# 52,494

Number of full-time missionaries who were serving worldwide in 2008.

## WHAT'S UP?

### MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE



**Matthew 5:14–16** is my favorite scripture because it helps me remember, especially when I'm not at home or at church, that I have a responsibility to be an

example. Through me, many can know about the Church.

**Laura Z., 15, Lima, Peru**

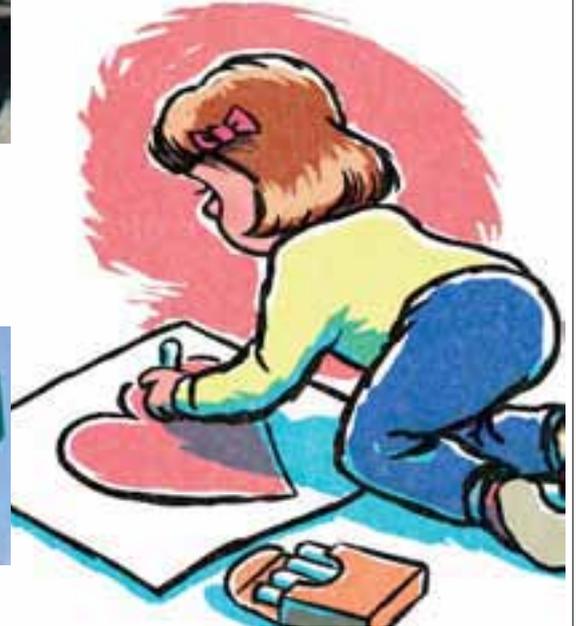
Tell us about your favorite scripture in one or two sentences. Go to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and click on Submit Your Material.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON

*“The fundamental purposes for the gift of agency were to love one another and to choose God.”*

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Tender Mercies of the Lord,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 101.**

ILLUSTRATION BY BRAD TEARE

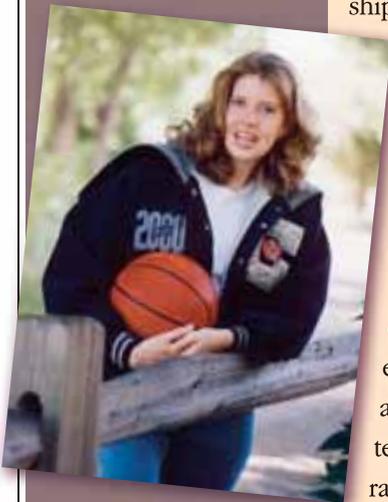


# Columbine: TEN YEARS LATER

BY LIZ CARLSTON

*What I learned in the wake of a national tragedy changed my life.*

**I** was a basketball player at Columbine High School when the tragic shootings occurred. It was only through trust in the Lord that I finally was able to let the hurt go away.



*The resurrected Savior asked Mary, "Why weepst thou?" at His tomb. There will be times when we also weep, and the Lord will comfort us too.*

—Littleton, Colorado, April 20, 1999

In high school I played power forward on Columbine High School's girls' varsity basketball team. The weekend before prom I met with my coach to set expectations for the upcoming season, which would be my senior year. Coach Sanders and our team had just completed our first winning season in 12 years. He showed our team how to work together and be united. I admired his leadership and kindness. I didn't know that would be the last time I'd see him alive.

The following Tuesday, two male Columbine seniors carried out an attack on our school that was the worst school shooting in U.S. history. I was in my trigonometry class when the massacre began. Suddenly, fire alarms went off, and in a confused panic, teachers escorted us outside to wait. We watched as ambulances, police cars, and a SWAT team surrounded our school. When the rampage ended, 13 people had been murdered and 25 others were injured, some very seriously. Coach Sanders died of gunshot wounds while saving students by clearing out the crowded lunchtime cafeteria.

I was one of the lucky ones who didn't see the actual violence or have to live with the gruesome images that replay in a person's mind afterward. I did have to deal with the death of friends, and I had to learn how

to be sensitive about letting others grieve at their own pace.

The day after the attack, my bishop met with all of us who had experienced the terror. For a long time, he and I sat in his office and cried together. I asked him why such a horrible thing had happened to us. After a few moments of quiet consideration, he asked me to read from the Doctrine and Covenants. "Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation. For after much tribulation come the blessings" (D&C 58:3-4).

It didn't make sense that Heavenly Father would let this happen. My pain was too raw to see any blessings. But I knew there had to be something in these verses, since they were the ones my bishop wanted me to read.

Ten years have passed since the Columbine shootings. I've gone on to receive college degrees, serve a mission, and now work in a job I enjoy. When I reflect on the events surrounding the infamous shooting, three lessons rise to the surface.

## **The Atonement Is Real**

No one got to say goodbye before the victims were taken from their families, although many attended the funerals in a variety





*had to dig deep to understand the turmoil that was going on in my mind so I could find a healthy way to address it. I relied on prayer, friends, and family and trusted in the Savior's healing Atonement to mend my wounded heart.*

of churches to show respect and gratitude for their lives. The services rang with emotional eulogies and were biting with sadness and hurt. Many believed those goodbyes were permanent. Because of what my parents had taught me and what I had learned in church and seminary, I knew that their deaths were not the end.

Salvation is possible because of Jesus Christ's Atonement. The Savior paid the ultimate price for our redemption and happiness (see Luke 22:42). I know that we will always receive heavenly help to see us through our trials—the big, splashy, front-page ones and the poignant hurts that only we know about individually.

#### **Trust in the Lord**

After the shooting, the question “Why did I have to experience this?” often passed through my mind. I had lost my innocent view of the world, the luxury of feeling safe and the ability to readily trust people. It was unfair that my basketball coach and my friends were taken from me. I often didn't know how to respond to others who were hurting and I felt guilty and angry in my inadequacy. It was hard to believe that after this tribulation any blessing could come.

Because my self-pity and anger smoldered for so long, it was hard to recognize them as problems, let alone get rid of them. People thought I was difficult and found it hard to get along with me. I had to dig deep to understand the turmoil that was going on in my mind so I could find a healthy way to address it. I didn't work through these issues alone. I relied on prayer, friends, family and trusted in the Savior's healing Atonement to mend my wounded heart.

I had to give up feeling sorry for myself and learn again to trust others. Columbine helped me become more empathetic and patient, more compassionate and loving, and more full of hope and joy. My experience is that no matter what happens to us during life's journey, it all turns out right in the end. If we take every question and every burden to the Lord, He promises that as we learn of Him our questions will be answered. He also promises that as we take His yoke, His name, upon us our burdens will become light (see Matthew 11:29–30). Finally, I could stop punishing myself and let the hurt go away.

#### **Fear Not; Be Full of Light and Hope**

Tumultuous events are all around us in the form of depression, natural disaster, terror, or even things as simple as gossip or disappointment. I can't comprehend how the Columbine gunmen could sink into a place so dark that they felt justified in killing. I feel sorry for them because they didn't know how to escape their mental turmoil. Though we live in a scary world, it is critical to know that we need not fear. We're entitled to the power and peace of the Spirit as we live righteously. This is the Lord's promise and He always keeps His promises.

“Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. . . . Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not” (D&C 6:34, 36).

I've learned to let go of fear. I trust the Savior. I trust my Heavenly Father. I know we are all in His caring, merciful hands. We cannot control others or the world around us, but as children of God we can control how we respond to adversity. Cultivating a faith-filled perspective and uplifting thoughts tends to push out the negative and defeating ones. Anyone can turn on a light in a dark room; we create light and hope in the world as we choose to be happy. **NE**

# FRIENDSHIP

*The Prophet Joseph Smith taught what it means to be a true friend.*

**T**he Prophet Joseph Smith endured many trials, but he had friends who supported him and even suffered with him. In good times and bad, he showed deep gratitude for his friends, and he showed his friendship through his firm loyalty, kind words, and selfless acts. Here are some of Joseph Smith's teachings on friendship.\*

## TRUE FRIENDS ARE FAITHFUL

*"How good and glorious it has seemed unto me, to find pure and holy friends, who are faithful, just and true, and whose hearts fail not. . . .*

*. . . I hope I shall see [my friends] again, that I may toil for them, and administer to their comfort also. They shall not want a friend while I live; my heart shall love those, and my hands shall toil for those, who love and toil for me, and shall ever be found faithful to my friends. Shall I be ungrateful? Verily no! God forbid."*

## FRIENDSHIP UNITES US

*"I don't care what a man's character is; if he's my friend—a true friend, I will be a friend to him, and preach the Gospel of salvation to him, and give him good counsel, helping him out of his difficulties.*

*"Friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of 'Mormonism'; [it is designed] to revolutionize the world, and cause wars and contentions to cease and men to become friends and brothers."*

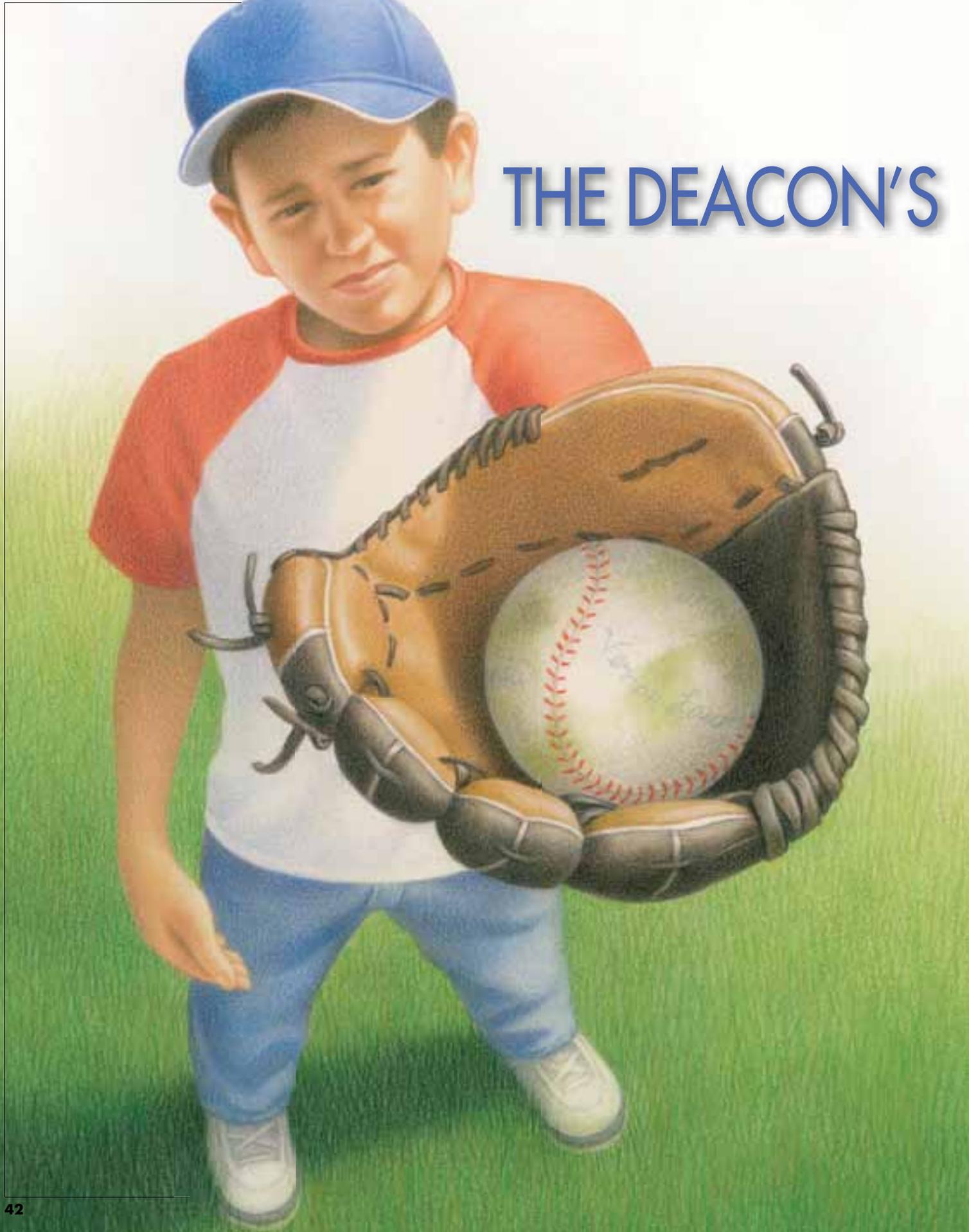
*"That friendship which intelligent beings would accept as sincere must arise from love, and that love grow out of virtue."*

## SAINTS ARE TRUE FRIENDS

*"We should cultivate sympathy for the afflicted among us. . . . Although [a person is] a stranger and afflicted when he arrives, he finds a brother and a friend ready to administer to his necessities."*

*"I would esteem it one of the greatest blessings, if I am to be afflicted in this world, to have my lot cast where I can find brothers and friends all around me."*

\* From *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 461–66.



# THE DEACON'S

# Baseball

BY MARK PETREY

*Mint condition,  
signed by a World Series  
team—but my friends wanted to  
use it in a game.*

Buried in the sock drawer of my dresser is a baseball. Sometimes while looking for an elusive missing sock, I'll pull that baseball out, roll it around in my hand, and examine it. At first glance, it's a normal, slightly used baseball, but it's actually much more.

In the 1960s my family was living in the suburbs of Pittsburgh. We lived in a diverse neighborhood. My friends were all of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, which led to some pretty deep discussions even as grade schoolers. But the one thing we all agreed on was baseball and the Pittsburgh Pirates.

In 1960, the Pirates won the World Series, beating the Yankees in a close series. One pitcher for the Pirates was Vernon Law. The media had dubbed him "The Deacon," because he was Mormon. He went to the same meetinghouse as I did, and I was friends with his kids. After the Pirates won the World Series, "The Deacon" brought a bunch of signed baseballs to hand out at church. The balls had been signed by most of the team including Roberto Clemente, Smoky Burgess, Bob Skinner, Bill Mazeroski, Dick Groat, and, of course, Vernon Law. I was lucky enough to get one of the balls. On the ride home from church, I couldn't wait to show my friends. That ball became my pride and joy. I placed it on the dresser in my bedroom, where I could admire it every day.

Summer meant playing baseball. Games would go on for hours with no limit on innings. Sometimes the scores would run into the hundreds! We would play in empty lots, someone's backyard, or in the street. One thing that always seemed to present a challenge for us was actually finding a ball to play with. Pittsburgh is very hilly and

wooded. A wild throw or foul tip could land deep in the trees, never to be found. We lost lots of balls.

On one muggy afternoon, we were trying to get a game up, and as usual we couldn't find a ball anywhere. One of my friends suggested that we use my prized, signed ball. I resisted but eventually gave in to the pressure and ran home to get my 1960 Pirates World Series ball.

After the game, I took the ball home, examining it carefully. It had a few scrapes and grass stains on it, but I thought it wasn't too bad. Still, I felt sick to my stomach. I put it back on the dresser where it sat until the next time we needed a ball. This time it was a little easier to use it. It already had a few scrapes on it; a few more wouldn't do a lot of harm.

Each time it became easier and easier to justify using the ball. After a while, the names were totally covered in grass stains. It was pretty scuffed up. I tried to clean it with some soap and water, but that made it worse. I didn't want to see the ball anymore, so I put it in a drawer, out of sight. I was embarrassed and ashamed of what I'd done and didn't want to be reminded every day. I'd taken one of my prized possessions and ruined it for a stupid game. I've kept that ball all these years, still in my dresser drawer.

As I roll it around in my hand, I can still visualize the names written on the clean, white leather. The names are almost invisible now, covered with stains, or rubbed off by use. I suppose I keep the ball as a reminder of the foolishness of youth or the consequences of bad choices. The lessons are there to be learned. How easily we sacrifice our most valuable possession for fleeting enjoyment. How easily we give in to peer pressure. My baseball can never be restored to its original condition. But if we sin, the Lord Jesus Christ, through His Atonement, gives us the opportunity to repent and have Him clean the grass stains and scuff marks off our souls and restore them to a spotless condition. **NE**

# CHANGE OF HEART

LEROY FISCUS

I was invited to go on a camping trip with all the priests in my stake the summer before I left for college. I had just recently come back to Church after three years away. I had an extremely small testimony when I arrived at the stake center ready

to go camping. I cared more about sleeping and remote-control cars than I did about the Lord. I had no clue what the trip was about, but I knew deep down I needed to go on it.

Through the entire trip my testimony kept strengthening. Every experience I had kept pushing me forward. I broke down in tears daily as I felt

the Spirit touch me. On the last day of the trip, all the dirty and smelly priests gathered in the smallest branch meetinghouse I had ever seen. One by one we all shared our testimonies. When it was my turn to stand up, I felt the Spirit so strongly I started shaking. I could not stop crying, but I knew I was doing the right thing. I needed to share the testimony I had gained on this trip.

All the boys from my ward turned around and looked at me as I shared the precious gift I had been given.



# ON THIS SACRED SPOT

BY RACHEL BAGGIORE

I could see they felt the Spirit, and this made the Spirit feel even stronger within me. I then knew, without a doubt, I was a child of God, and I had made the right decision to be baptized into the true Church of God. I knew at that moment I needed to become the best person I could be, so I would be able to be a loyal servant in the hands of the Lord.

I will always remember the looks on the faces of the priests in my ward as I shared my testimony that day. Every time I look back at that moment, I am touched by the Spirit. I had never born my testimony before that day, nor had I received one I could share. But in that week I had grown more than I had grown since I was baptized six years earlier. I experienced the change of heart I had only read about. I had become fully converted. **NE**

## A DEACON'S DUTY

BY HAO-CHEN WU

**T**he first time I passed the sacrament as a deacon, I was nervous from start to finish. I was worried I would walk in the wrong direction or go to the wrong row. I had looked forward to passing the sacrament for as long as I could remember. I would watch the deacons every week. They looked so dignified.

I made it through my first week without messing up, and now I'm not nervous anymore. Instead, when

**O**ne summer I participated in the Hill Cumorah Pageant in upstate New York. What a blessing it was to go to the Hill Cumorah every day and feel the love of the Lord pour over me, testifying again and again that the Church is true, and that the things Joseph Smith said happened really did occur here on this sacred spot.

One night near the end of my stay, I drove over to the Palmyra temple and parked outside the gates, shut off

the engine, and just listened to the still, small voice of the Spirit. A cluster of stars winked in the sky above me, while just down the road lay the Sacred Grove.

A feeling of peace confirmed that I was truly on sacred ground. The Spirit testified to me that the Lord knew and loved me, just as He knew each individual star in the heavens. He knew me just as years ago He knew a seemingly insignificant 14-year old boy named Joseph Smith. **NE**



I pass the sacrament, I feel reverent and happy. I feel the Spirit when I'm passing the sacrament.

The sacrament is an important time when we think of Jesus Christ and what we can change or do better. A deacon can help others concentrate during the sacrament by dressing properly, being reverent, walking slowly, holding the sacrament trays carefully, and not joking around.

I have four younger brothers. Now that I have received the priesthood,

I try harder not to argue with my brothers. I help them more. It's very important to be a good example to them. If I'm not, they might think the priesthood isn't important. But it is. I have changed because of holding the priesthood.

To be a good priesthood holder, you need to keep the commandments, treat others well, and remember you're still a priesthood holder even at school and at home—not just on Sundays. **NE**

# MY MISSIONARY SUMMER

BY TIFFANY ANNE DEMINGS

I had prayed strongly for a missionary experience ever since my first year at girls' camp. Each young woman was given a Book of Mormon to write our testimonies in and was encouraged to pray for a missionary experience. For four years, I looked to give someone my Book of Mormon.

One Sunday as we set up for Young Women, my leader asked me if I would befriend her niece who was coming from Texas to visit for the summer. I didn't know what to do, so I did just what she asked me to. I started being a friend. After a while, I forgot about giving away my Book of Mormon. I had a new

friend. The more I got to know Gianna, the better friends we became. It wasn't long until we started discussing our different religions. The more questions she asked, the more I wanted to share. I found myself turning to the scriptures all of the time. I could tell the things I read were truly words from God.

I started getting more out of the scriptures. Not only were those questions helping Gianna, they

were also helping me to gain a stronger testimony of truths I'd grown up with. It wasn't just my scripture reading that improved, I also had more meaningful prayers. I prayed fervently to find the answers, and be the friend she needed. As a result, I came closer to my Heavenly Father.

I never had to send in mission papers. I never had to go tracting or teach any lessons. Nobody even accepted the offer of the Book of Mormon. But I think I had one of the best missionary experiences anyone could have. Like many missionaries, I was strengthened in the gospel as I tried to share it. I became closer to Heavenly Father and learned to study the scriptures as I tried to answer questions. I came to appreciate people of other faiths. Best of all, I gained a friend I will always love while sharing the dearest thing to my heart. **NE**



# I KNOW IT IS TRUE

BY PETER  
AMO A-OHENAKWAH

Since my childhood I have heard members of the Church bear testimony of the Book of Mormon. I thought the words “I know it is true” were just traditional words that every member recited. It wasn’t until I entered the mission field to serve in Nigeria that I learned the truth behind the words.

One night my companion and I were returning home. We were riding our bicycles on a dark, untarred road that had deteriorated because of rain. Due to the water and the condition of the road, my companion crashed and fell off his bike. His clothing, his scripture bag—everything he had—was stained and wet.

When we finally reached our apartment, we carefully cleaned and dried

everything damaged in the accident—except for the two copies of the Book of Mormon that remained in his bag after our day of proselytizing. I thought we didn’t need to worry about those copies because we had so many more in our apartment.

Several months after the incident, I was looking for a way to fix my torn hymnbook cover. I came across the stained copies of the Book of Mormon we had abandoned on a shelf and saw

that the covers would be good for fixing my hymnbook. But as I was about to cut the covers off the books, I was pierced in my heart: “Is this not the book you are preaching about? Is this the way to treat it? What would your investigators think?” I sat down and pondered for a long time. Then, instead of cutting the covers, I cleaned them with soapy water, dried them, and carefully placed them back on our bookshelf.

From this experience I came to know that for a long time I had been living on a borrowed testimony of the Book of Mormon, even though I had attended seminary and institute. I have since come closer to this book, and I value it much more. I realize that our conviction of the sacredness of the Book of Mormon comes as we get to know it through experiences of the heart. By reading, pondering, and applying the teachings of the Book of Mormon, I have come to know it is true. **NE**

# JUST SAY THANK YOU

Once I was arguing with my mom and felt pretty bad. So, I decided I would pray. Although I was in a bad mood and didn’t want to be spiritual, I knew praying would end up with me getting happy and less argumentative. So right there at the table, after my mom left, I started my prayer. “Dear Heavenly Father, I’ve come to you tonight because . . .”

No, I opened my eyes and

unfolded my arms. That sounded weird. I tried my second attempt. “Heavenly Father, I need . . .”

That also sounded strange. Now that I think of it, the opening to my prayers had only one problem, and I am glad I tried again because I felt Satan urging me to stop and give up my prayer to ask Heavenly Father for help. “Dear Heavenly Father—”

Suddenly I had a prompting to say thank you! So I did, and all the

many things I could thank my Father in Heaven for started spilling from my head. When I was done thanking Him, I then discussed the problem at hand. My prayer lasted 25 minutes. In the end I made sure to close in the name of Jesus Christ. After my prayer I felt a wonderful peace inside me, the warm spiritual feeling that I know our Heavenly Father and parents love me and that I am a child of God. **NE**

BY VONDA WINFREE

**BAPTISMS FOR THE DEAD**

I enjoyed the article “Why Do We Baptize for the Dead?” (Mar. 2009). One of the things I enjoyed in this article is the mention of Christ preaching to the dead in the period of time between his death and Resurrection. I find it especially reassuring that He would take time to do this when He had just returned to His Father. Thank you for putting articles like this in the magazine.

*Eli P., Utah*

**MORMONADS**

Thank you very much for the continuing publication of the Mormonads. Recently I put up all of the small-sized Mormonads in the hallways in our stake center during a regional youth dance. It was interesting to see some of the youth go up and down the hallways to see which ones they would find next. Our DJ, a longtime veteran of Church dances, told me that some of the youth made a special effort to thank him for the good job and that no one argued or complained when he declined to play certain songs. They just chose different songs for him to play. I don't know if there is a correlation between this behavior and the Mormonads, but I like to think it wasn't a coincidence.

*Catherine M., Utah*

*Mormonads can be downloaded at [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org).*

**INDEXING HELP**

Thank you for the article “Indexing Mania” (May 2009). I was able to go online and start indexing. It's very rewarding and interesting.

*Anna Lee W.*

*I don't know where  
I would be  
without the gospel.  
Thank you  
for helping me  
realize that.*

**MISSION PREPARATION**

My mission began in May, and the March 2007 issue of the *New Era* helped me in my preparation to serve. I've come to know more of the greatness of my call to serve the Lord for two years. I love to share it with those who are also preparing for their mission. I'm excited to join with the other missionaries spreading the message of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

*Bentley L., Philippines Butuan Mission*

**ISSUE ON EDUCATION**

Thank you so much for the article “Real-Life Education” in the April 2009 issue. I've been struggling with school and was being too hard on myself for not getting perfect grades. This article really helped me look at the real importance of education, and that it's not the grade that shows up on your report card.

Our Young Women leaders have challenged us to read the magazine each month cover to cover. I can't say I'm perfect at it, but the stories I do read inspire me so much and strengthen my testimony. I don't know where I would be without the gospel. Thank you for helping me realize that.

*Lori T., South Carolina*

Thank you for the article “Five Easy Ways to Make School Hard and Five Hard Ways to Make School Easy” in the April 2009 issue. It helped me through the tough days at school. I carry around a copy of the issue in my school bag and when I think that a topic is getting too hard, I pull it out and reread it. I also enjoy the music printed in the magazine because now I can play Church music that isn't in the hymnbook and that also relates to the youth as well as to older people.

*Kimberley T., New Zealand*

*We love hearing from you. Write to us by going online to [newera.lds.org](http://newera.lds.org) and clicking Submit Your Material.*

*Or you can e-mail us at [newera@ldschurch.org](mailto:newera@ldschurch.org) or write to New Era, 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024.*





## FINDING CUMORAH

*Manchester County, New York, 1823*

BY NANI LII S. FURST

Late September  
washes a season's green  
beyond field and village  
and age seventeen;  
only leaves rinsed in afterglow  
stir at Joseph's homespun  
passing.

He once knelt in  
April grove,  
drenched with that glory  
of Father and Son.

Then summer  
wove roots through  
his harrowed soul  
as those parched by mockery  
claimed the heavens  
closed.

Autumn wind  
shimmers into the trees,  
quickenning vision  
of his pending task;  
these hands will  
lift voices  
silenced by stone,  
fullness like morning  
tide gathering  
home.



### **BEHIND THE SCENES**

How do you cheer from a wheelchair? That's what Brittany Crockett did thanks to a group of cheerleaders at Syracuse High School in northern Utah. Brittany, who has muscular dystrophy, nonetheless dreamed of becoming a cheerleader. So two girls on the squad, Kaitlyn and Ellen, decided to make it happen for her. When the *New Era* went to a basketball game to see the cheerleaders in action, it was fun to see Brittany roll onto the floor. She joined in the routines in her own way and got the crowd going. We'll never forget when the whole gym started chanting, "We love Brittany."

*Read more about Brittany in "Cheering Each Other On," page 16.*

SEE US ONLINE AT [WWW.NEWERA.LDS.ORG](http://WWW.NEWERA.LDS.ORG)