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COVID-19 and Temples

Keep your temple covenants and blessings foremost in your minds and hearts. Stay true to the covenants you have made.

My beloved brothers and sisters, we have truly had a spiritual feast. How grateful I am for the prayers, messages, and music of the entire conference. Thanks to each of you for joining with us, wherever you are.

Early last year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic and our desire to be good global citizens, we made the difficult decision to close all temples temporarily. During the ensuing months, we have felt inspired to reopen temples gradually through a very cautious approach. Temples are now being opened in four phases, adhering strictly to local government regulations and safety protocols.

For temples in phase 1, qualified couples who have previously received their own endowments can be sealed as husband and wife.

For temples in phase 2, all ordinances for the living are performed, including one's own endowment, the sealing of husband and wife, and the sealing of children to parents. We have recently amended provisions of phase 2 and allow our youth, new members, and others with a limited-use recommend to participate in proxy baptisms for their ancestors.

For temples in phase 3, those with scheduled appointments may

participate not only in ordinances for the living but also in all proxy ordinances for deceased ancestors.

Phase 4 is a return to full, regular temple activity.

We are grateful for your patience and devoted service during this changing and challenging period. I pray that your desire to worship and serve in the temple burns more brightly now than ever.

You may be wondering when you will be able to return to the temple. Answer: Your temple will be open when local government regulations allow it. When the incidence of COVID-19 in your area is within safe limits, your temple will be reopened. Do all you can to bring COVID numbers down in your area so that your temple opportunities can increase.

Meanwhile, keep your temple covenants and blessings foremost in your minds and hearts. Stay true to the covenants you have made.

We are building now for the future! Forty-one temples are presently under construction or renovation. Just last year, despite the pandemic, ground was broken for 21 new temples!

We want to bring the house of the Lord even closer to our members, that they may have the sacred privilege of



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attending the temple as often as their circumstances allow.

As I announce our plans to construct 20 more temples, I ponder and praise pioneers—past and present—whose consecrated lives have helped to make this history today. A new temple will be built in each of the following locations: Oslo, Norway; Brussels, Belgium; Vienna, Austria; Kumasi, Ghana; Beira, Mozambique; Cape Town, South Africa; Singapore, Republic of Singapore; Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Cali, Colombia; Querétaro, Mexico; Torreón, Mexico; Helena, Montana; Casper, Wyoming; Grand Junction, Colorado; Farmington, New Mexico; Burley, Idaho; Eugene, Oregon; Elko, Nevada; Yorba Linda, California; and Smithfield, Utah.

Temples are a vital part of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness. Ordinances of the temple fill our lives with power and strength available in no other way. We thank God for those blessings.

As we close this conference, we again express our love for you. We pray that God will shower His blessings and watchcare upon each of you. Together we are engaged in His sacred service. With courage, let us all press on in the glorious work of the Lord! For this I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■