

Mom taught all of her 13 children to play the piano, but I never made it easy for her. I remember lying on the piano bench whining, insisting it was too hard. I learned, but to say that I played well would be an overstatement.

Years passed. I married and my husband was accepted to dental school. As we prepared to move to Indiana, I felt frequent impressions to practice the piano. I feared it was because our new ward did not have enough pianists.

Sure enough, shortly after we settled into the ward, the bishop extended to me a calling to be the Relief Society pianist. My heart sank. I told him I didn't play very well but I would try. I fought tears as I left his office and cried all the way home.

After several sleepless nights, I concluded that I would simply tell the bishop that I had reconsidered. Even though my parents had taught me to always accept callings, I just couldn't do this.

Before calling the bishop, however, I talked it over with my husband, who encouraged me to at least try. He reminded me that I had yearned to play better and that this could be an opportunity to do so. I decided he was right.

I prayed fervently and asked for Heavenly Father's help. The words of Proverbs 3:5–6 came to my

mind: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

With those words in mind, I put my trust in Him.

The only hymns I could play were those without any sharps or flats. Unfortunately, those would get me through only a few weeks. When I talked to the former Relief Society pianist about my situation, she kindly offered to substitute for a month while I practiced. Another friend offered to watch my children so that I could focus on practicing.

The first week I played in Relief Society, I made so many mistakes that I could barely see through my tears. When I finished, I didn't want to come out from behind the piano. But the sisters in the ward were so encouraging that I kept trying.

As I continued to practice the piano—sometimes for more than two hours a day—I slowly began to improve. I'm still not an excellent pianist, but now I feel confident enough to volunteer when needed.

I'm thankful my loving parents taught me to accept callings. I was the Relief Society pianist for less than a year, but my testimony of and love for my Heavenly Father grew more than I ever could have imagined. I know that when we trust in Him, He will direct our paths, and we can see His hand in all things. ■

Piano Playing and Prayer

On my first Sunday as Relief Society pianist, I made so many mistakes that I could barely see through my tears.

By Heidi Owen

