

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • AUGUST 2011

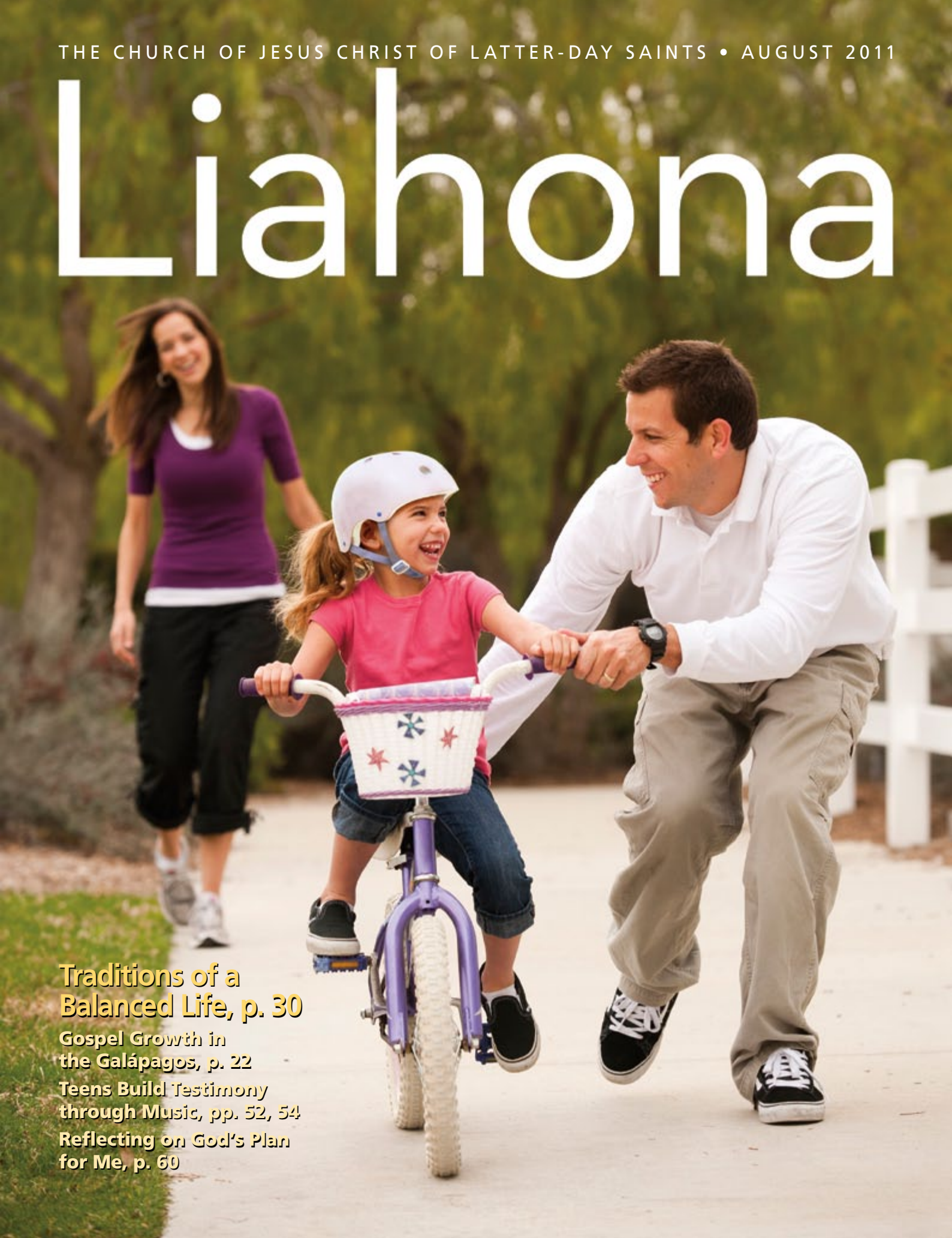
Liahona

**Traditions of a
Balanced Life, p. 30**

**Gospel Growth in
the Galápagos, p. 22**

**Teens Build Testimony
through Music, pp. 52, 54**

**Reflecting on God's Plan
for Me, p. 60**





First Blossom, by Annie Henrie

“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh

in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

“While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:35–36).



MESSAGES

- 4 First Presidency Message: Love at Home—Counsel from Our Prophet**
By President Thomas S. Monson
- 7 Visiting Teaching Message: A Society of Holy Women**

FEATURE ARTICLES

- 20 Two Pioneers across Two Centuries**
By Allison Ji-Jen Merrill
A century and a half apart but connected by faith.
- 22 Islands of Fire and Faith: The Galápagos**
By Joshua J. Perkey
The Church is flourishing in these extraordinary islands.

- 30 The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life**
By Elder L. Tom Perry
Four keys to achieving balance.

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 Small and Simple Things**
- 11 Serving in the Church: Can You Give Me a Blessing?**
By Jennifer Rose Maddy
- 12 We Talk of Christ: Taking His Name upon Me**
By Jacob F. Frandsen
- 14 What We Believe: God Sends Us to Earth as a Member of a Family**
- 16 Our Homes, Our Families: One Stalwart Pioneer, Many Generations Blessed**

- 18 Gospel Classics: Reach with a Rescuing Hand**
By President Gordon B. Hinckley

- 38 Latter-day Saint Voices**

- 74 News of the Church**

- 79 Family Home Evening Ideas**

- 80 Until We Meet Again: The Parable of the Banana Tree**
By Anton T. Kumarasamy as told to Linda J. Later

ON THE COVER

Front: photo illustration by Jerry Gams.
Back: photograph © iStockphoto.





42

42 Did He Really Ask Me *That*?

By Joelyn Hansen

Could someone as young as me fulfill this calling?



48

46 Questions and Answers

How can I respond when my friends say that no man can see God?

48 The Only True and Living Church

By Elder Dallin H. Oaks

What does it mean that our church is the only true Church?

52 A Song and a Prayer

By Adam C. Olson

Dillon knew where to turn when he needed help to hit the high note.

54 Singing in Singapore

By Michelle Hsieh and Cerys Ong

Testimonies and friendships were strengthened as teens performed a musical in Singapore.

57 Being Modern Pioneers

The Lord isn't asking us to walk across the plains; He's asking us to walk across the street to meet a neighbor.

58 Poster: There Is a Way Out



62

59 Special Witness: What Can I Learn from the Scriptures?

By Elder D. Todd Christofferson

60 Reflections

By Sheila Kindred

What does the future have in store for me?

62 Our Page

64 Bringing Primary Home: My Body Is a Temple of God

By Vicki F. Matsumori

66 Stories of Jesus: Jesus Blesses Children

By Diane L. Mangum

68 Finding People to Teach

Help the missionaries get to their teaching appointment.

69 Bright Idea

70 For Young Children



See if you can find the Liahona hidden in this issue.
Hint: fun in the sun.

Official international magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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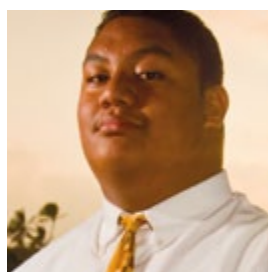
Liahona.lds.org

FOR ADULTS



The Church has recently been organized in the Galápagos Islands (see page 22). **View more photos** of Church members in the Galápagos at www.liahona.lds.org.

FOR YOUTH



Visit www.liahona.lds.org to hear **Dillon** (see page 52) sing a song from the Old Testament seminary soundtrack in Tonga.

FOR CHILDREN



Did you know there are about one million Primary children around the world? **Meet some of them** at www.liahona.lds.org.

IN YOUR LANGUAGE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at www.languages.lds.org.

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

Numbers represent the first page of the article.

Balance, 30

Callings, 42

Character, 30

Church history, 8, 16, 18

Conversion, 16, 20, 22, 39

Family, 4, 14

Finances, 41

Healing, 66

Heavenly Father, 46

Heritage, 60

Jesus Christ, 12, 66

Knowledge, 30

Missionary work, 22, 68

Music, 52, 54

Physical bodies, 64, 73

Pioneers, 18, 57

Prayer, 38, 52

Priesthood, 48

Priesthood blessings, 11

Relief Society, 7

Repentance, 58

Rescue, 18, 80

Sacrament, 12

Scripture study, 30, 46, 59

Service, 18, 22, 40, 42

Temple work, 22, 39

Testimony, 46, 48

Tithing, 70, 72

Unity, 22

Word of Wisdom, 30, 64, 73

By President
Thomas S. Monson



Love at Home

COUNSEL FROM OUR PROPHET

Blessed Family Life

“When we have sampled much and have wandered far and have seen how fleeting and sometimes superficial a lot of the world is, our gratitude grows for the privilege of being part of something we can count on—home and family and the loyalty of loved ones. We come to know what it means to be bound together by duty, by respect, by belonging. We learn that nothing can fully take the place of the blessed relationship of family life.”¹

Sharing Our Love

“Give your child a compliment and a hug; say, ‘I love you’ more; always express your thanks. Never let a problem to be solved become more important than a person to be loved. Friends move away, children grow up, loved ones pass on. It’s so easy to take others for granted, until that day when they’re gone from our lives and we are left with feelings of ‘what if’ and ‘if only.’ . . .

“Let us relish life as we live it, find joy in the journey and share our love with friends and family. One day, each of us will run out of tomorrows. Let us not put off what is most important.”²

Showing Our Love

“Brethren, let’s treat our wives with dignity and with respect. They’re our eternal companions. Sisters, honor your husbands. They need to hear a good word. They need a friendly smile. They need a warm expression of true love. . . .

“To you who are parents, I say, show love to your children. You know you love them, but make certain they know it as well. They are so precious. Let them know. Call upon our Heavenly Father for help as you care for their needs each day and as you deal with the challenges which inevitably come with parenthood. You need more than your own wisdom in rearing them.”³

Expressing Our Love

“To you parents, express your love to your children. Pray for them that they may be able to withstand the evils of the world. Pray that they may grow in faith and testimony. Pray that they may pursue lives of goodness and of service to others.

“Children, let your parents know you love them. Let them know how much you appreciate all they have done and continue to do for you.”⁴

What Is Most Important

“What is most important almost always involves the people around us. Often we assume that they *must* know how much we love them. But we should never assume; we should let them know. Wrote William Shakespeare, ‘They do not love that do not show their love.’ We will never regret the kind words spoken or the affection shown. Rather, our regrets will come if such things are omitted from our relationships with those who mean the most to us.”⁵

Bringing Heaven Closer

“May our families and homes be filled with love: love of each other, love of the gospel, love of our fellowman, and love of our Savior. As a result, heaven will be a little closer here on earth.

“May we make of our homes sanctuaries to which our family members will ever want to return.”⁶

A Prayer for Families

“Inasmuch as the family unit is under attack in the world today, and many things long held sacred are ridiculed, we ask Thee, our Father, to make us equal to the challenges we face, that we may stand strong for truth and righteousness. May our homes be havens of peace, of love and of spirituality.”⁷ ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

In one type of learning activity, “the teacher presents a question or situation and gives learners a short amount of time to freely suggest solutions or ideas” (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 160). As you read this article with the family, ask them to listen for counsel or ideas that impress them. Family members could then suggest ways to increase love in their home. Consider inviting the family to review these ideas in an upcoming family home evening.

NOTES

1. “A Sanctuary from the World,” *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Feb. 9, 2008, 29.
2. “Joy in the Journey” (Brigham Young University Women’s Conference, May 2, 2008), <http://ce.byu.edu/cw/womensconference/archive/transcripts.cfm>.
3. “Abundantly Blessed,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 112.
4. “Until We Meet Again,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 113.
5. “Finding Joy in the Journey,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 86.
6. “A Sanctuary from the World,” 30–31.
7. Dedicatory prayer for The Gila Valley Arizona Temple, May 23, 2010; in “The Gila Valley Arizona Temple: ‘Wilt Thou Hallow This House,’” *Church News*, May 29, 2010, 5.



YOUTH

Mother Rescued Us

By Patricia Auxier

When I was six, my little sister and I were watching our older sister's basketball game. My dad left, and then we decided that we wanted to go home with him, so we ran after him in the rain. When we couldn't find him, we went back to the gym to go home with our mom, but by the time we entered the gym, everyone in the building was gone.

I remember huddling in a

doorframe, trying to get my little sister and me out of the rain, praying that someone would come. Then I remember hearing the door to our red van slam shut, and we went running toward the sound. Then came one of the most vivid childhood memories I have: our mother enfolding us in her arms "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" (3 Nephi 10:4). My mother had rescued us, and I

I never felt more secure than I did at the moment my mother enfolded us in her arms.

never felt more secure than I did at that moment.

As I think of her influence on me, I see that my mother's life has pointed me toward the Savior and has shown me what it means to "lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees" (D&C 81:5). She relied on Jesus Christ, who gave her strength "beyond [her] own" ("Lord, I Would Follow Thee," *Hymns*, no. 220).

CHILDREN

Building a Happy Home

President Monson suggests ways we can build a happy home. Look through the article to find things you and your family can do to make a happy home.

Each time you find something you can do, write it in

one of the spaces provided. After you have found your first item, draw the part of the home listed next to the line. Find at least five ways you can build a happy home and draw the whole house and your family in it.

1. Walls _____
2. Roof _____
3. Door _____
4. Windows _____
5. Family _____



Faith • Family • Relief

A Society of Holy Women

Study this material and, as appropriate, discuss it with the sisters you visit. Use the questions to help you strengthen your sisters and to make Relief Society an active part of your own life.

Eliza R. Snow, second Relief Society general president, taught: “Paul the Apostle anciently spoke of holy women. It is the duty of each one of us to be a holy woman. We shall have elevated aims, if we are holy women. We shall feel that we are called to perform important duties. No one is exempt from them. There is no sister so isolated, and her sphere so narrow but what she can do a great deal towards establishing the Kingdom of God upon the earth.”¹

Sisters, we are not isolated nor is our sphere narrow. By accepting the gift of activity in Relief Society, we become part of what the Prophet Joseph described as a society “separate from all the evils of the world—choice, virtuous, and holy.”²

This society helps us strengthen our faith and grow spiritually by giving us leadership, service, and teaching opportunities. In our service a new dimension is added to our lives. We progress spiritually, and our sense of belonging, identity, and self-worth increases. We realize that the whole intent of the gospel plan is to provide an opportunity for us to reach our fullest potential.

Relief Society helps prepare us to receive the blessings of the temple, to honor the covenants we make, and to be engaged in the cause of Zion. Relief Society helps us increase our faith and personal righteousness, strengthen families, and seek out and help those in need.

The work of Relief Society is holy, and doing holy work creates holiness in us.

Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

From the Scriptures

Exodus 19:5; Psalm 24:3–4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Titus 2:3–4; Doctrine and Covenants 38:24; 46:33; 82:14; 87:8; Moses 7:18

What Can I Do?

1. How am I helping the sisters I watch over to cultivate and achieve “elevated aims”?
2. What am I doing to make my life “choice, virtuous, and holy”?

For more information, go to www.reliefsociety.lds.org.

NOTES

1. Eliza R. Snow, “An Address,” *Woman’s Exponent*, Sept. 15, 1873, 62.
2. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:570.
3. Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 4:605, 606.
4. Lucy Mack Smith, in *Relief Society*, Minute Book Mar. 1842–Mar. 1844, entry for Mar. 24, 1842, Church History Library, 18–19.

From Our History

Speaking to the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, the Prophet Joseph emphasized holiness, explaining that as sisters became pure and holy, they would have a marked influence upon the world. He explained: “Meekness, love, purity—these are the things that should magnify you. . . . This Society . . . shall have power to command queens in their midst. . . . The kings and queens of the earth will come unto Zion, and pay their respects.” Relief Society sisters living their covenants command the respect not only of noble people, but “if you live up to your privileges,” Joseph promised the sisters, “the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.”³

As the sisters participated in the work of serving and saving others, they became personally sanctified. Lucy Mack Smith, the Prophet’s mother, shared the good Relief Society could accomplish: “We must cherish one another, watch over one another, comfort one another and gain instruction, that we may all sit down in heaven together.”⁴



Small & Simple Things

"By small and simple things are great things brought to pass" (Alma 37:6).

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



Left: Kim Ho Jik (right) with Elder Harold B. Lee (center) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who was visiting Korea. Above: The Seoul Korea Temple, dedicated in 1985.

South Korea

The first missionary work in Korea began during the Korean War in the early 1950s, but Kim Ho Jik, one of the first Korean converts, was baptized in the United States. Kim was earning his doctorate degree when he joined the Church in Pennsylvania in 1951. Two of his children were among the first four people to be baptized in Korea, on August 3, 1952. Brother Kim later became a leader in the Korean government and was influential in helping missionaries enter South Korea.

In 1962 the Korean Mission was created, and the Book of Mormon was printed in Korean in 1967. South Korea's first stake, also the first stake in mainland Asia, was organized in Seoul on March 8, 1973. The Seoul Korea Temple, the first temple in mainland Asia, was dedicated in 1985.

In 2001 Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles presented a copy of "The Family: A Proclamation to the Word" to South Korea's prime minister, Lee Han-Dong.

THE CHURCH IN SOUTH KOREA	
Membership	81,251
Missions	3
Stakes	17
Wards and branches	142
Temples	1



Quiz

Wives of the Prophets

From Emma Smith to Frances Monson, the wives of Presidents of the Church have stood by their husbands as faithful helpmeets. Of these and other faithful women, Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “The Lord never sends apostles and prophets and righteous men to minister to his people without placing women of like spiritual stature at their sides.”¹ This quiz will help you learn some interesting details about the stalwart wives of eight latter-day prophets.

Answers on the next page.

1. This woman was baptized in 1834 and later traveled 1,000 miles (1,600 km) by herself to join the Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, USA. She promised her mother that she would return if she found the Church to be false, but she remained with the Latter-day Saints for the rest of her life.

2. This young woman’s future husband sought to impress her when they were teenagers by fixing up his parents’ yard in order to host a yard party equal in prestige to those of other, more wealthy neighborhood boys.

3. This woman loved reading from the time she was a young girl, often reading when she was thought to be sleeping, making up beds, or practicing the organ.

4. As an eight-year-old, this young girl went to the woods to pray. She prayed for her father, who didn’t have a firm faith in Christ. When her father came into the woods to hunt, he overheard her prayer. It softened his heart, and he became more faithful.

5. On this woman’s first date with her future husband, her father and mother both kissed her date’s cheek. When the young man looked

around for his date, she said only, “I’ll go get my coat.”²

6. This woman received training at the University of Utah and the Cincinnati College of Music, where she learned homemaking skills. She learned to love literature, drama, and the arts and became a fine musician.

7. As a college student, this young woman played the lead role of Viola in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* and was chair of the junior prom committee, president of the Girls’ Athletic Club, and student body vice-president.

8. This woman gave eloquent readings in Primary, complete with elocution and movements. Her husband later said of one of her readings, “I don’t know what it did to me, but I never forgot it. Then she grew older into a beautiful young woman, and I had the good sense to marry her.”³

NOTES

1. Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1966–73), 3:302.
2. See Thomas S. Monson, “Abundantly Blessed,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2008, 111.
3. See Jeffrey R. Holland, “President Gordon B. Hinckley: Stalwart and Brave He Stands,” *Liahona*, June 1995, 17; *Ensign*, June 1995, 10–11.



Emma Hale Smith



Flora Amussen Benson



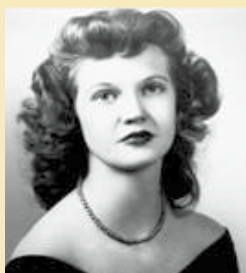
Marjorie Pay Hinckley



Phoebe W. Carter Woodruff



Lucy Woodruff Smith



Frances Johnson Monson



Camilla Eyring Kimball



Emma Ray McKay

Education: Increase Our Ability to Serve

The Lord and His Church have always encouraged education to increase our ability to serve Him and our Heavenly Father's children. For each of us, whatever our talents, He has service for us to give. And to do it well always involves learning, not once or for a limited time, but continually."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "Education for Real Life," *Ensign*, Oct. 2002, 17.



Suggestions for Lifelong Learning

- Read a good book.
- Take up a hobby you've always wanted to try.
- Attend wholesome cultural events.
- Study the assigned general conference talk or chapter in the *Gospel Principles* manual for Sunday lessons.
- Visit museums and historic sites.
- Observe the world around you: walk around your neighborhood, stargaze, watch animals in your area.
- Do family history work.
- Learn a new skill or sport.
- Visit the library to research a topic of interest.

For more on this topic, see True to the Faith (2004), "Education," 50–51.

QUIZ ANSWERS

WIVES OF THE PROPHETS

1. Phoebe W. Carter Woodruff, married to Wilford Woodruff
2. Lucy Woodruff Smith, married to George Albert Smith
3. Camilla Eyring Kimball, married to Spencer W. Kimball
4. Emma Hale Smith, married to Joseph Smith
5. Frances Johnson Monson, married to Thomas S. Monson
6. Emma Ray McKay, married to David O. McKay
7. Flora Amussen Benson, married to Ezra Taft Benson
8. Marjorie Pay Hinckley, married to Gordon B. Hinckley

CALL FOR CHILDREN'S STORIES

The *Liahona* is looking for true stories **written by adults** and based on the experiences of children from around the world. Stories must be based on actual events; however, names, dialogue, and minor details may be added or changed to help make the story complete.

The stories should show children learning and applying gospel principles in their lives, especially as the gospel helps them overcome real-life temptations and conflicts. The stories should reveal the thoughts and feelings of the child involved.

Experiences from your own childhood, those of your children, or incidents you have witnessed in the lives of children around you are good sources for story ideas.

Some topic ideas include faith, baptism, honesty, forgiveness, testimony, family home evening, following the prophet, helping others, following Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, or any of the principles in My Gospel Standards.

Submissions must include the author's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address (if available), ward or branch, and stake or district. E-mail stories to liahona@ldschurch.org or send them to:

Stories for Children

Liahona, Rm. 2420

50 E. North Temple St.

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

CAN YOU GIVE ME A BLESSING?

By Jennifer Rose Maddy

Church Magazines



ACCORDING TO THEIR FAITH

"Only Melchizedek Priesthood holders may administer to the sick or afflicted. Normally two or more priesthood holders administer to the sick, but one may perform both the anointing and the sealing alone if necessary. . . .

"Brethren should administer to the sick at the request of the sick person or of those who are vitally concerned so the blessing will be according to their faith."

Handbook 2: Administering the Church (2010), 20.6.1.

The snow was falling hard as I slowly drove up the hill. If I could just get to the top, I thought, I could make it home safely. But as I negotiated a curve, I saw a downhill car swerving out of control and coming straight at me. I had time only to scream before the impact, and then I blacked out.

I had no sense of how much time had passed when I tried to open my eyes. The snow bit at my face as it blew in through a shattered side window. I struggled to remember basic information, like where I had been going before the accident. Alone and frightened, I cried out from the throbbing pain in my shoulder and chest. I pleaded with Heavenly Father that my injuries wouldn't be too extensive and that I would be all right.

A few moments later I felt a hand holding mine. Instinctively, I grasped it. I opened my eyes and saw a man in a black coat and hat standing outside my crushed car. He said his wife had seen the crash from their

home, and he came to see if he could help. He held my hand and told me I would be OK.

I tried to ask the man if he was a Latter-day Saint, but all I could whisper was, "Can you give me a blessing?"

He said yes and then reached through the broken window and placed his hands on my head.

I don't remember what he said. But I remember thinking that I would be all right because I had received a blessing. I felt peace and comfort.

When the ambulance arrived, I lost track of the man. A few hours later I left the hospital with a broken rib and many bumps and bruises but no serious injuries.

That morning I had prayed that I would travel in safety, and at first I thought Heavenly Father hadn't answered my prayer. But I soon realized that He had and that He had not left me alone. My prayer was answered through a willing priesthood holder who lived just a

few steps away from the site of my accident, an accident which could have left me in a much more serious condition.

I wouldn't recognize the man's face if I passed him on the street. I wouldn't remember his voice if I heard him say hello. But I am grateful for this stranger who was worthy and willing to administer a priesthood blessing when I needed one. ■

Taking His Name UPON ME

By Jacob F. Frandsen

“There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:8).

PUTTING THE LORD FIRST

As we take the sacrament, we promise to take the Savior’s name upon us (see D&C 20:77). President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, explains: “That means we must see ourselves as His. We will put Him first in our lives. We will want what He wants rather than what we want or what the world teaches us to want” (“Be One,” *Liahona*, Sept. 2008, 5; *Ensign*, Sept. 2008, 7).

A few weeks into my mission, I began to feel lonely and a bit homesick. I loved being a missionary, but the work was much harder than I had anticipated. I missed my friends, my family, and all the familiar things I’d left back home. During my personal study one morning, I sat quietly, turning my missionary name tag over and over in my hands, thinking about how I longed for familiarity. I wished I could just hear somebody call me by my first name.

As I looked at my name tag, I noticed that although my first name was absent from the tag, I saw my family name, the name of the Church, and the name of the Savior printed on it. Suddenly I recognized something that changed both my outlook and my attitude. I realized that as a missionary I wasn’t there to represent myself. Instead I was serving to represent my family back home and, most

important, I was representing my Savior and His Church. I put the name tag on my shirt pocket, right over my heart. As I did so, I promised my Savior that I would more fully give Him a place in my heart and mind.

I didn’t miss hearing my first name after that morning. From then on I worked and served the best I could, proudly wearing my name tag every day. During the times I began to feel discouraged, I looked at my name tag, and it reminded me of my responsibility to follow Jesus Christ’s example.

I made an effort to take His name upon myself more fully and to become more like Him. As I did, I felt more love for my companions and those I served, my testimony was strengthened, and I found joy in missionary work. I began to forget myself and to focus on serving the Lord.

I’ve been home from my mission for several years now, but I still have the



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TAKE UPON US THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles helps answer this question in his general conference talk “Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ” (*Ensign*, May 1985, 80).

1. As we take the sacrament, we can willingly renew the covenant we made at baptism—to remember the Lord and keep His commandments.
2. We can proclaim our belief in Him to others (see D&C 18:21).
3. We can serve Him by doing the work of His kingdom (see Hebrews 6:10).

Consider sharing your testimony of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in family home evening, in testimony meeting, or with someone of another faith.

opportunity to take the Savior’s name upon myself. In fact, as members of the Church, all of us commit to take upon ourselves the name of Christ each Sabbath day when we take the sacrament. As we do so, we promise to represent our Savior the best we can and to strive to become more like Him. As King Benjamin taught: “I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ. . . . Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ” (Mosiah 5:8–9). By taking His name upon us, we can each find more purpose and joy in our earthly missions. ■

The Savior instituted the sacrament with His Apostles. He broke bread and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19–20).

We welcome your personal gospel experiences relating to the Savior’s ministry and mission. Please limit submissions to 500 words, label them *We Talk of Christ*, and e-mail them to liahona@ldschurch.org.

GOD SENDS US
TO EARTH AS A
MEMBER OF A

Family

Our Father in Heaven has a plan for us, and sending us to earth as members of a family is part of that plan. Adam and Eve were the first family on earth; our Heavenly Father brought them together in marriage and commanded them to have children (see Genesis 1:28). God wants His spirit children to receive a physical body. When parents bring children into this world, they are helping our Heavenly Father carry out His plan of salvation. They welcome into their family each new child as a child of God.

Our Heavenly Father knew that being a member of a family provides each of us the best opportunity to be loved and cared for while on earth. Families work together to learn self-control, sacrifice, loyalty, and the value of work. They also strive to learn to love, to share, and to serve one another (see Mosiah 4:14–15). Children learn to show love for their parents, to be obedient, and to try to live the kind of life that will bring honor to their family name.

As family members give encouragement and praise to one another, feelings of confidence and love grow. Successful families show hope and persistence in sustaining each family member in individual needs and in helping each other learn and work together in love. Their goal is to become a joyful, eternal family unit. ■

For more information, see *Gospel Principles* (2009), 207–11; and M. Russell Ballard, “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 41–44.

“Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. . . . The family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” Liahona and Ensign, Nov. 2010, 129).



**These are some activities
that will help us have happy,
successful families:**

*Pray together as
husband and wife.*



*Have family prayer every
morning and night (see
3 Nephi 18:21).*



*Attend Church meetings each
Sunday (see D&C 59:9–10).*



*Teach children the gospel
in weekly family home
evenings.*



*Study the scriptures
regularly as a family.*



*Learn to be kind, patient,
and charitable (see Moroni
7:45–48).*



*Do things together as a
family, such as eating dinner,
working together, going on
outings, and participating in
decision making.*

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID STOKER, CRAIG DIMOND, JOHN LUKE,
MATTHEW REIER, ROBERT CASEY, AND FRANK HELMRICH

ONE STALWART PIONEER,

MANY GENERATIONS BLESSED

Since the early days of the Church, members have been persecuted and ridiculed for their beliefs. One young woman who faced such persecution was Sara Elvira Eriksen. She was born in Drammen, Norway, in 1895. After gaining a testimony, she was dedicated to the gospel—a dedication that had more far-reaching effects than she could have imagined in her lifetime. Because of her courage and faith, her posterity now has the blessings of the gospel in their lives.

Like Sara, we may face obstacles in our lives that require us to take a stand for our testimony of Jesus Christ and His restored Church. Our choice to stand firmly by our beliefs can influence the lives of others, just as Sara's did. This is her story.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JANET BYLUND

When I was 15, my father and I took a walk one Sunday evening. Suddenly, my father stopped and suggested that we go to the Mormon Church. I was surprised, but out of curiosity I went with him. The choir was singing a beautiful hymn. I had never heard anything so touching.

After the song, a missionary stood up and gave a talk about the Godhead. He later talked to my father and me for a few minutes.

I didn't go back to church until one year later when I went to learn English from the missionaries. When each English class ended, we drifted into religious discussions. The missionaries taught me about the gospel and how to pray to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. They told me about the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and many other gospel principles.

All this was so new to me, yet it had a familiar sound. I studied the scriptures intently and prayed sincerely for enlightenment, which was given to me.

My father noticed a change in me. But when he realized that I was getting serious about the Church, he became angry and forbade me to go to church. I went anyway. Frequently he sent my brother to bring me home in the middle of Church meetings.

When I turned 17, my father asked me what I wanted for my birthday. I told him I wanted his approval to be baptized. He pounded his fist on the table and shouted, "Never!"

By this time my parents had joined a different church. My father sent the church's minister and others to talk to me, but I was firm in my testimony of the gospel. Father told me I was a disgrace to the family, and I was forced to leave home. I stayed at the home of a Relief Society sister for about a week. During that time my father's heart was softened, and he allowed me to come home.

Within several months my father realized that nothing could take away the testimony I had of the gospel, so he gave his consent for me to be baptized. My joy and happiness were so great that they made a deep impression on my father. He even wanted to go with me to Oslo to attend my baptism.

All through this time, my mother didn't say very much, but I could tell that she believed the gospel was true. We spent many hours talking about the gospel together.

However, the struggle was not over at home. My father wouldn't listen to me. I put pamphlets on his nightstand, as he always read long into the night. I invited the missionaries to our home often, and they talked to my father, but nothing seemed to help.

One day my father asked me, "Do you ever pray?" I told him that I prayed every day that his eyes would be opened to the truthfulness of the gospel. He responded that it was all from the devil but then said, "Let's pray together."

I said, "All right, you pray to your God, and I will pray to my God, and we will see which answers first." So we did.

Soon after that I started noticing that he was reading the pamphlets and the Book of Mormon. He went to church several times with me but would never talk about it or show me any change in his beliefs. Still, there was rarely a day when we didn't discuss different principles of the gospel.

One day, after three years of this, he told me he was going to Oslo and wanted me to go with him. When we arrived at the station, one of the local elders was there. I asked him where he was going.

The elder said, "Don't you know? I'm going to baptize your father."

I cried and laughed! One month later my mother and youngest brother were also baptized. My sister and her husband joined the Church a short time later, as did three of my brothers. ■

Sara Elvira Eriksen's faithful posterity in the Church now numbers in the hundreds. This account from her personal history was submitted by her children, Rose Anderson, Betty Farley, Aksel Tanner, and Janet Bylund.

REACH WITH A Rescuing Hand



By President
Gordon B. Hinckley
(1910–2008)

Gordon B. Hinckley was set apart as the 15th President of the Church on March 12, 1995. He pioneered the building of small temples, announcing 79 new temples during his presidency. President Hinckley is also remembered for traveling to visit Latter-day Saints in over 60 nations. The following article is excerpted from a general conference address he delivered on October 6, 1996. For the full address, go to conference.lds.org.

All of us need to be reminded of the past. It is from history that we gain knowledge which can save us from repeating mistakes and on which we can build for the future. . . .

I take you back to the general conference of October 1856. On Saturday of that conference Franklin D. Richards and a handful of associates arrived in the [Salt Lake Valley]. They had traveled from Winter Quarters with strong teams and light wagons and had been able to make good time. Brother Richards immediately sought out President Young. He reported that there were hundreds of men, women, and children scattered over the long trail from

Scottsbluff to this valley. Most of them were pulling handcarts. They were accompanied by two wagon trains which had been assigned to assist them. They had reached the area of the last crossing of the North Platte River. Ahead of them lay a trail that was uphill all the way to the Continental Divide with many, many miles beyond that. . . .

The next morning [President Young] came to the old Tabernacle which stood on [Temple Square]. He said to the people:

“ . . . Many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. . . .

“That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people.

“I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 12 or 15 wagons. I do not want to send oxen. I want good horses and mules. They are in this Territory, and we must have them. Also 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teams.

“I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains.*”¹

That afternoon, food, bedding, and clothing in great quantities were assembled by the women.

The next morning, horses were shod and wagons were repaired and loaded.



Stories of their rescue speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The following morning, Tuesday, 16 mule teams pulled out and headed eastward. By the end of October, there were 250 teams on the road to give relief.

Wonderful sermons have been preached from this pulpit, my brethren and sisters. But none has been more eloquent than that spoken by President Young in those circumstances.

. . . Stories of their rescue need to be repeated again and again. They speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ. . .

. . . We have some of our own who cry out in pain and suffering and loneliness and fear. Ours is a great and solemn duty to reach out and help them, to lift them, to feed them if they are hungry, to nurture their

spirits if they thirst for truth and righteousness.

There are so many young people who wander aimlessly and walk the tragic trail of drugs, gangs, immorality, and the whole brood of ills that accompany these things. There are widows who long for friendly voices and that spirit of anxious concern which speaks of love. There are those who were once warm in the faith but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast again at the table of the Lord.

My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray, that each of us . . . would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives.

I leave with you my beloved friends, my co-workers in this wonderful cause, my testimony of the truth of this work, the work of the Almighty, the work of the Redeemer of mankind. ■

Punctuation and spelling standardized.

NOTE

1. Brigham Young, quoted in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* (1960), 120–21.

TWO PIONEERS ACROSS TWO CENTURIES

By Allison Ji-Jen Merrill

Dear Ebenezer, you do not know me; we have never met. On November 17, 1830, you were born in Dunblane, Perthshire, Scotland, to Andrew Bryce and Janet Adams Bryce. They named you Ebenezer.

One hundred forty-three years later, I was born in Hualien, Taiwan. They named me Ji-Jen Hung.

You started to work in shipyards at age 10. Later you became an apprentice and were very skillful in your trade.

At age four I started to memorize times tables and the Chinese phonetic symbols. It was not easy, but I managed.

In the spring of 1848, you developed an interest in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, although your father, family, and friends did not share your enthusiasm. They did everything possible to persuade you to denounce the Church. Your father even locked up your clothes to keep you from attending Sunday meetings. But your faith was steadfast. In spite of persecution you struggled on.

On December 4, 1886, two American missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints knocked on the door of my father's house. Although Father let the missionaries visit regularly, he was never interested in the message. A few months later

he divorced Mother and remarried.

When Father informed the missionaries of the sad news of our broken family, he also told them not to come back.



The missionaries left a copy of the Book of Mormon with the address of the nearest church written on the inside cover and said, "We will always be your friends. If there is anything we can do for your family, come to this address, and you will find us there."

Saying good-bye to the missionaries that evening was difficult, for I had felt something precious in their message.

Stepmother moved in. She and Father became cruel, life became hard, and I became a cynical teenager.

One night, when I could take their horrible treatment no longer, I dashed

out the door in fear and hid in the rice fields, lonely, depressed, and hopeless. I wanted to run away, but I had nowhere to go.

Suddenly I remembered what the elders had said during their last visit. "First thing tomorrow, I am going back to find my friends!" I told myself, feeling a sense of inner peace for the first time in years.

Early the next morning I hopped on my bike and went downtown to the church, but the elders who had visited my family a couple of years before had returned home. Just when I was about to give up, two friendly ladies with the familiar black name tags on their coats approached me and introduced themselves.

Dear Ebenezer, despite your father's opposition, you were baptized in April 1848, the only convert in your family.

A month after I met the sister missionaries, I was baptized, in November 1988, the first convert in my family.

But Father and Stepmother made it difficult for me to attend church.

One day after I came home from a Young Women activity, Father stomped into the den, swore at me, grabbed my scriptures, and tore them into pieces. Flakes of white paper floated and drifted in the air, gracefully and gently landing on the floor, where my teardrops also fell.

*A Scottish boy. A Taiwanese girl.
A century and a half apart but bonded by faith.*

It was like a nightmare I could not wake up from.

When I turned 21, I expressed a strong desire to serve a full-time mission. Father responded by disowning me. On Chinese New Year's Eve, when most people went home to be with their loved ones, I was expelled from home.

Dear Ebenezer, when the persecution from your family and friends became unbearable, you decided to emigrate from Scotland to America to join the Latter-day Saints and cross the plains to Utah. Your father was furious. He commanded you to stay, but you were a deter-

mined young man. The day you boarded the ship was the last time you saw him.

Life as a 17-year-old immigrant was not easy for you, Ebenezer, but you managed.

Ebenezer Bryce helped build the Pine Valley chapel (below), completed in 1868. He also discovered the canyon that now bears his name, Bryce Canyon National Park (right), in southern Utah.



Your carpentry, millwright, and shipbuilding skills were immediately put to use. You were called to build a chapel in Pine Valley, Utah. Though you had never built a chapel before, you did not hesitate to accept the calling.

Today that building is the oldest Latter-day Saint chapel still in use.

Later you discovered the majestic natural amphitheater that now bears your name, Bryce Canyon National Park.

On June 4, 1994, I reported to the Taiwan Taichung Mission as a full-time missionary. I pinned a black name tag on my coat, just like the elders who had

come to visit my family years before. I was humbled. I was honored. I was blessed.

After my mission I emigrated to Utah, where I met my husband. We were married in the temple for time and all eternity. Through my husband's lineage, I became connected to you.

Dear Ebenezer, you don't know me. We have never met. But I have heard stories about you. Your feet never stopped traveling. Your hands never stopped working. Your heart never stopped believing. You never stopped serving. After all these years, your faithful example lifts me still. Thank you, dear Ebenezer. Thank you! ■





ISLANDS OF FIRE AND FAITH: The Galápagos

By Joshua J. Perkey

Church Magazines

Out beyond the broken field of blackened lava rock rises a great pillar of a boulder, a bastion against the ocean's cold saltwater spray. Looking closely, one realizes that the jagged edges are actually the heads of a dozen marine iguanas, huddling together like dragons to await the energy-imbuing heat of the morning sun. Some straggling iguanas await alone here and there near the rock's base, their great talons, sharp as knives and nearly as long as a woman's fingers, holding the rock with vise-grip efficiency.

But most gather in groups for warmth and safety, their leathery bodies instinctively supporting each other against the cold and the dark, helping one another in their common need. Here, on the Galápagos, islands born of fire, life takes on precious meaning. It is a land where science and faith intermingle, where we come to understand that we are all part of a common humanity. And here, members of the Church, like these marine iguanas, understand that strength comes from holding tight to their covenants as they forge a united course toward the Lord through faith, service, and sacrifice.

There is much more to the Galápagos Islands than lava rock, finches, tortoises, and tourism. It is an epicenter of faith, where service and sacrifice have resulted in extraordinary unity and strength of conviction.

How the Gathering Began

Early one morning while visiting Quito, Ecuador, tour guide and naturalist André Degel was taking a Sunday walk by a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse. The year was 1997, and though he was a member of the Church, he had been less active for years after moving to the Galápagos Islands. André remembered the comforting feelings of being in church and would often intentionally walk by a meetinghouse when he was in Ecuador. He didn't usually go inside. He just wanted to be near the building. "It made me feel better," he says, "like I was home."



Left: The islands of Santa Cruz (left) and Baltra (right) in the Galápagos. Above: Marine iguanas hold fast to a rock in Tortuga Bay, Santa Cruz.



Above: The bay and town of Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz. Below, from left: Sandra and André Degel with their niece Claudine; Mariana Becerra; the Palacios family; Oswaldo and Rosario Villón.

On this day sacrament meeting was just beginning. After a moment's hesitation, André decided to enter. It was a decision that ultimately would alter the destiny of hundreds of lives.

After the meeting the missionaries and members greeted André. He remembers the conversation fondly, especially about how surprised—and excited—they were to discover he was from the Galápagos.

At the time, there was no formal Church organization on the islands. In fact, priesthood leaders in Ecuador weren't even aware members lived there.

The missionaries didn't waste any time. They introduced André to the Quito Ecuador Mission president and made sure they had

André's contact information.

Shortly thereafter André returned home to Puerto Ayora, the largest town in the Galápagos, on the island of Santa Cruz. Soon the mission sent him two boxes of Church materials, including manuals for study. But perhaps most important, the mission president had acquired a list of members living on the islands, which André could use to help gather the Saints.

A quick review of the list surprised André.

"There were people on the list I knew, but I didn't know they were members of the Church," he explains.

At the same time, other members in Santa Cruz felt pricked in the heart to establish the Church there. All had moved to the Galápagos Islands looking for work. Now they were searching for each other.

The Call to Gather

For Mariana Becerra, life was hard before the Church was established there. She had been a member of the Church for only a couple of years when she came to the islands in 1990.





“There was no Church when I came,” Mariana says. “It was just my son and me. We held family home evening and tried to live the gospel. But the few other members I knew didn’t live according to gospel standards.”

David and Jeanneth Palacios had a similar experience. David had joined the Church as a teenager, and Jeanneth was baptized in 1993, just a year before the couple moved to the Galápagos.

“When we moved here, we didn’t know any other members. I thought we were the only ones. It was very difficult to live without the Church,” Jeanneth says.

“Then one day in 1997 André came to where I worked and said, ‘I’m looking for Jeanneth de Palacios. Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormon Church?’

“I felt as though the Lord had extended His hand and was gathering His sheep,” Jeanneth remembers. “And I said, ‘Yes, yes!’ I felt such happiness because we are not alone. We are more!”

Mariana adds, “It felt so good when André gathered us. We had something profound—something greater than friendship—as members of the Church.”

The Unity Within

Once André had gathered a core group, they began meeting together regularly. At first, there were only four families and friends.

“We would meet often, sometimes daily, mostly at my house,” André says. “We studied the books the mission had sent us and the Bible and the Book of Mormon.”

“It was a beautiful time,” says Araceli Duran. “We were very united. We would gather each week to study.”

“It is something that I will never forget,” says Jeanneth, “because there was such a sense of unity, such a feeling that our Heavenly Father loved us and knew that it was now that we needed to get together.”

They depended on each other, taught each other, and built their faith together. Soon their efforts were recognized, and an official branch was organized in early 1998.

Over time the branch grew, and the members needed more space. They rented a small house and then moved to a larger building that had been a hotel. In this larger building they grew to nearly



Below: Daniel and Angela Calapucha; Araceli Duran with her children; members of the Galápagos branch who helped build Elena Cedeño's house; the Galápagos Islands Branch meetinghouse.

100 members attending. Although the branch grew through activation efforts and people moving in, much of its strength came through converts.

Oswaldo Villón and his wife, Rosario, are such an example. Rosario was baptized in 2000 and has served as Relief Society president, Primary president, and Young Women president. Oswaldo, baptized just a year later, serves as elders quorum president. For both of them, the Church

brought a complete change of life.

"The Church saved me," explains Oswaldo. "Before, I lived in the world. I wasn't an alcoholic, but I drank like I was. When I joined the Church, these 25 people were my family. We were as united as could be. And we worked hard to help the branch grow."

Through the tireless efforts of Galápagos members, sacrament attendance often hovers between 100 and 120 members. In September 2009 they were rewarded with the dedication of a chapel.

The Power of Service

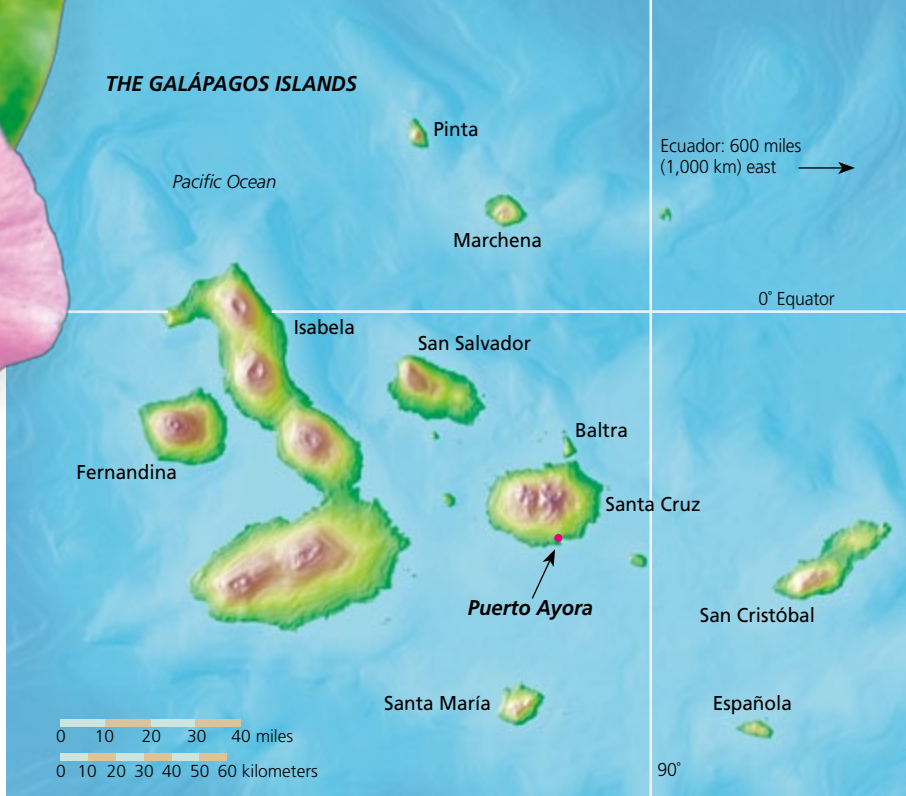
Some branch members and their families live in the lush highlands of Santa Cruz. It is here that the branch leaders decided to host a service project on September 4, 2010.

"As an elders quorum, each month we try to host one or two *mingas*," or service projects, says Oswaldo. "We hold them for the person who most needs the service. This time we are going to build a house for a sister."

Half of a house, actually. A week or so before, members had built the first half. This day over 20 of them spent six hours or more building the other half, including a kitchen, a water-collection system, and a walkway around the house. The modest home provides a place to live for Elena Cedeño and her children, who were not members of the Church at the time. All were extremely gratified by the time and effort the members gave. (Sister Cedeño and her son Sebastián were baptized in January 2011.)

"There is nothing better than serving the people who need it," Oswaldo says. And the look in his eyes, as well as that of the other branch members and the sister they served, testify of the unity such service yields.





What Really Matters

The service and interdependence among members in the Galápagos Islands that have created such unity led to rich blessings in 2007. That year David and Jeanneth Palacios escorted five branch families, nearly 25 people in all, to the Guayaquil Ecuador Temple.

“To see those families sealed, I felt as though we had been transported to the heavens,” says Jeanneth. “We felt the presence of the Lord so profoundly. All five of those families are very active today.”

On this visit to the temple, branch president Daniel Calapucha and his wife, Angela, were sealed, and their three children were sealed to them as well. “The temple totally transforms you,” President Calapucha says. “Truly, it is the house of the Lord. To be together as a family in the gospel of the Lord changes lives. That’s why I stay in this church. Having been sealed as a family, I no longer fear death. I no longer fear that I’m going to lose my family when I die.

“The temple has become the foundation for feeling and knowing that our Heavenly Father exists—and His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. It is a testimony that no one can take from me.”



THE PROVINCE OF THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

The islands constitute a province of Ecuador. Although roughly 97 percent of the land has been claimed as a national park, that leaves plenty of land for the 25,000 or so inhabitants to work in business, tourism, and agriculture.





Below: The Fueres family joined the Church in Otavalo, Ecuador, and later moved to the Galápagos Islands in search of work. Below right: Elena Cedeño (left) with her sister, Maria; with Maria's help, Elena joined the Church earlier this year.

What the Galápagos Teach Us

Every member of the Church in the Galápagos Islands is a modern pioneer. Almost all of the adult members are converts, many having joined within the past few years. And each is helping build the kingdom of God in a remote island where resources are scarce. Much of the food and all of the gasoline and industrial and technological products have to be imported. The local economy, though relatively productive, depends on that fickle merchant of fortune known as tourism.

Perhaps the most stable thing on the islands is the members' dedication to each other and to building the kingdom. That dedication is as remarkable as the ecological interdependence of the islands on which they live. The ecosystem in the Galápagos Islands depends on the health of living creatures—both as individuals and as a

species—interacting successfully with their natural environment.

As a tour guide and naturalist, André explains, “The Galápagos teach us that an ecosystem is like a living being. It’s like a body. It has pressure, fluids, and organs. If one of those things goes wrong, then everything suffers.”

The Galápagos Islands also teach us about the vast grandeur of God’s creations. Nothing is indigenous to the Galápagos. All life, plants, animals, and people are imports.

“If you think about it,” André explains, “the chances of life beginning here on the Galápagos are incredible. First, the lava rock had to decompose to the point where it would support life. Then freshwater sources had to develop. Then seeds had to arrive in a condition that would allow them to germinate. And they had to be able to pollinate each other.

“Then creatures had to arrive, whether floating on the water or flying or whatever. And members of each sex had to arrive at the same time and place and condition so that they could reproduce and find food and water. There are thousands of



species of animals in the Galápagos.

“Remember, the nearest land mass is 600 miles [1,000 km] away. For all of these conditions to be met is something of a miracle.”

And yet that is exactly what the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, caused to happen.

Just as an ecosystem thrives when all its members work in harmony, members of the Church form a kind of social and spiritual ecosystem. The members are individuals who are also part of ecosystems called families and wards and branches of the Church. Each member plays an integral role,

contributing to the salvation and exaltation of themselves, their families, and other members of the branch.

Individual decisions, like the one André made to attend church that day in 1997, can have a lasting impact. The combined decisions of the members to build the kingdom through selfless service may seem like nothing more than an old adage to some. But for the members in the Galápagos Islands, such decisions make all the difference in the strength of their convictions, the power of their unity, and their faith in their covenants. ■



THE RICHNESS OF THE LAND

Much of the land in the Galápagos Islands consists of hard, broken cobblestone of rough-hewn lava rock, split and made uneven by the passage of wind and water. Other areas are covered with pear cactus, palo santo trees, and brown and gray vegetation. On the younger islands, such as the mammoth Isabela, there is a feeling that you’ve walked back to the dawn of time.

But there is much vibrant life too, especially on the island of Santa Cruz. There, vast areas of mangrove trees grow along the shoreline. As the elevation rises inland to the north, the climate zone changes to a lush, verdant temperate zone, where abundant farming takes place, including the cultivation of tropical fruits and other crops.

“People think the Galápagos are just a land of rock, lava, and birds,” says branch president Daniel Calapucha. But, as he explains, they are blessed with ranches, cattle, and fruit trees.





By Elder L. Tom Perry
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



THE TRADITION OF A Balanced, Righteous Life

God bless you with the will and desire to be an example to the world and to live the balanced, righteous life He expects His children to live during their mortal probation.

At the beginning of the memorable musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye, the protagonist, introduces his story by saying:

“In our little village of Anatevka, you might say every one of us is a fiddler on the roof, trying to scratch out a pleasant, simple tune without breaking his neck. It isn’t easy. You may ask, why do we stay up here if it’s so dangerous? We stay because Anatevka is our home. And how do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in one word—tradition!

“Because of our traditions, we’ve kept our balance for many, many years. . . . Because of our traditions, everyone knows who he is and what God expects him to do.”¹

I and other older members of the Church have been privileged to live in a special time in Church history. The pioneer era has given us




great traditions. Because the very survival of the pioneers depended upon it, they developed a great spirit of togetherness. I am a third-generation descendant of a noble Mormon pioneer family,

but I have been able to enjoy the blessings of a modern home, automobile transportation, and a college education. My life was not so far removed from the life of the pioneer, however, and pioneer traditions continued to be practiced in our family, ward, and community.

In my boyhood home it was evident that Father and Mother loved each other and loved each of their children. They were unselfish in devoting the best part of their lives to the family. As a family we always had three meals a day together. The traditional-type home that I knew is less and less common today. We sometimes long for the “good old days.”

Our social activities centered on the ward or our local grade school. The ward turned out to watch our participation in athletic events. Ward



dances involved the entire family. Celebrations such as Christmas, Independence Day, Pioneer Day, and the county fair were community events that the entire family attended.

We also had family traditions. The experiences gained from these family traditions taught us basic principles. One fun tradition we practiced in our family had a lasting impression on us. When the children in the family reached the age of one, they were placed at one end of a room and the family at the other end. Where the family was gathered, four objects were placed on the floor: a baby's milk bottle, a toy, a small savings bank, and the scriptures. The child was then encouraged to crawl to the objects and select one of them.

I selected the bank and turned out to be a financial executive. My brother Ted selected the scriptures, was a great lover of books all his life, and became a lawyer. My brother Bob was the well-rounded member of the family. He crawled up and sat on the scriptures, picked up the bank and placed it right at his feet, and put the bottle in his mouth with one hand and held the toy in the other hand. He became an accountant. He lived a well-balanced life.

Using these four items as examples, I would like to discuss living a balanced life.

Our Body Is a Temple

The bottle of milk represents our physical health. The scriptures testify as to how important our physical bodies are to our eternal progress.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

The Lord sets a high standard for us in

telling us to consider our bodies a temple. I have had the privilege of accompanying the President of the Church to many temple dedications. Before a dedicatory service the President always wants to inspect the workmanship of the new temple, which is of the highest quality and beautiful in its design. The grounds around our temples are always the most attractive place in the communities in which they are constructed.

Go and stand in front of a temple. Study carefully the house of the Lord and see if it does not inspire you to make some improvements in the physical temple the Lord has given to you to house your eternal spirit. The Lord has established some basic standards for the governance of our physical bodies. Obedience to these standards remains as a requirement for ordination to the priesthood, for a temple recommend, and for holding a calling in the Church.

Sometimes we may feel that people will not be as accepting of us because of the high standards we have set for ourselves. Still, there are things we just don't do. We have the Word of Wisdom, which helps us to live a healthier life, a type of life that is conducive to our growth and well-being. We have standards, ideals, and a way of living that are the envy of much of the world. I have found that if you live the way you should live, people notice and are impressed with your beliefs and you have an influence on the lives of others.

I spent my career in the department store business. Because I was part of a management team, it was important for me to interact socially with local business organizations. The meetings with most of these organizations always started with a cocktail hour. It was a time to mix and get acquainted with



We have the Word of Wisdom, which helps us to live a healthier life, a type of life that is conducive to our growth and well-being.

the men who belonged to the organization. I have always felt uncomfortable in these social hours. At first I started asking for a lemon-lime soda. I soon discovered that lemon-lime soda looks like many of the other drinks. I could not build the impression I was a nondrinker with a clear soda in my hands. I tried root beer. It had the same problem.

Finally I decided I had to have a drink that would clearly mark me as a nondrinker. I went to the bartender and requested a glass of milk. The bartender had never had such a request. He went into the kitchen and found a glass of milk for me. Now I had a drink that looked very different from the alcoholic beverages the others were drinking. Suddenly I was the center of attention. There were a lot of jokes made of my drink. My milk was a conversation piece. I met more business leaders that evening than I ever had before at a cocktail hour.

Milk became my drink of choice at the cocktail hours. It soon became common knowledge I was a Mormon. The respect I received really surprised me, as did an interesting event that started to occur. Others soon joined me in a pure milk cocktail!

Dare to be different. Live up to the standards we are taught in the gospel.

“Good physical and spiritual health can help us to stay on the straight and narrow way,” said Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “The Lord gave his code of health in the Word of Wisdom, ‘a principle with promise’ that modern medical science continues to substantiate. (D&C 89:3.) All of God’s commandments, including the Word of Wisdom, are spiritual. (See D&C 29:34–35.) We need to nourish ourselves spiritually, even more than physically.”²

How grateful we should be for gospel teachings on the importance of keeping our physical bodies pure and worthy of housing our eternal spirits.

Toys of the World

We live in an interesting world. The desire for worldly toys seems to be overpowering. Developed nations are becoming so secular in their beliefs and actions that they reason a human being has total autonomy. They believe we do not have to give an account to anyone or anything except to ourselves and, to a limited extent, to the society in which we live.

The scriptures warn us, “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall

perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall” (D&C 1:16).

Societies in which this secular lifestyle takes root have a deep spiritual and moral price to pay. The pursuit of so-called individual freedoms without regard to laws the Lord has established to govern His children on earth will result in the curse of extreme worldliness and selfishness, the decline of public and private morality, and the defiance of authority. Amidst the bustle of the secular world, with its certain uncertainty, there must be places that offer spiritual refuge, renewal, hope, and peace.

In contrast to this secular lifestyle, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught us the importance of seeking knowledge from God:

Mortality is the time to learn first of God and the gospel and to perform the ordinances.





With that noble quality of trust comes the reputation of one who is honest and possesses integrity. These are character traits that will ensure a long and successful career.

“In proper sequence, first comes the knowledge of God and his program, which is the way to eternal life, and then comes the knowledge of the secular things, which is also very important. . . .

“Peter and John had little secular learning, being termed ignorant. But they knew the vital things of life, that God lives and that the crucified, resurrected Lord is the Son of God. They knew the path to eternal life. This they learned in a few decades of their mortal life. Their righteous lives opened the door to godhood for them and creation of worlds with eternal increase. For this they would probably need, eventually, a total knowledge of the sciences. But whereas Peter and John had only decades to learn and do the spiritual, they have already had nineteen centuries in which to learn the secular or the geology of the earth, the zoology and physiology and

psychology of the creatures of the earth. Mortality is the time to learn first of God and the gospel and to perform the ordinances. After our feet are set firmly on the path to eternal life we can amass more knowledge of the secular things. . . .

“Secular knowledge, important as it may be, can never save a soul nor open the celestial kingdom nor create a world nor make a man a god, but it can be most helpful to that man who, placing first things first, has found the way to eternal life and who can now bring into play all knowledge to be his tool and servant.”³

Seek after the things of God, where eternal rewards await you.

Banking on Good Character

The Savior, as recorded in Luke 14, taught us this lesson:

Personal, sincere involvement in the scriptures produces faith, hope, and solutions to our daily challenges.



“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

“Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

“Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish” (Luke 14:28–30).

As you prepare for the future, you must be certain that what you are putting into this mortal experience will enable you to finish strong and gain your eternal reward.

Our world today is increasingly fast moving and complex. There are always opportunities for individuals to play fast and loose. Many people like to play to activities that produce quick windfalls and often take advantage of others who try to play according to the rules established by good practices. This fast-moving world has heightened the temptation

for people to play the game with their own set of rules.

However, we must always answer to the law of the harvest. “For whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap; therefore, if ye sow good ye shall also reap good for your reward” (D&C 6:33). This is a law that will never be repealed.

“A man’s character is the reality of himself.—His reputation is the opinion others have formed of him.—Character is in him;—reputation is from other people—[character] is the substance, [reputation] is the shadow.”⁴

A good character is something you must make for yourself. It cannot be inherited from parents. It cannot be created by having extraordinary advantages. It isn’t a gift of birth, wealth, talent, or station. It is the result of your own endeavor. It is the reward that comes from living good principles and manifesting a virtuous and honorable life.

With that noble quality of trust comes the reputation of one who is honest and possesses integrity. These are character traits that will ensure a long and successful career. The greatest asset you can put into your bank is the reputation of being a person of trust.

Daily Scripture Study

In his writings concerning how he felt about the scriptures, Nephi said: “Upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children” (2 Nephi 4:15).

We find a wealth of conviction and knowledge from our scriptures: the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. We can find inspirational threads running through each of them. In our study we will easily recognize them.

The scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He lives and is our Redeemer and Savior. We should follow Him and show our love for Him by remembering Him and humbly keeping His commandments.

Through His Atonement we are able to repent and be cleansed. We are His covenant people and should always keep the covenants we have made.

We should have faith, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and endure to the end.

Personal, sincere involvement in the scriptures produces faith, hope, and solutions to our daily challenges. Frequently reading, pondering, and applying the lessons of the scriptures, combined with prayer, become an irreplaceable part of gaining and sustaining a strong, vibrant testimony.

President Kimball reminded us of the importance of consistent scripture reading when he said: “I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that . . . no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns.”⁵

Make a daily practice of studying the scriptures.

An Example to the World

My generation is dying off at a rapid rate. We are willing to pass the torch to a new and better-prepared generation of Latter-day Saints. We expect that they will:

1. Keep their wonderful physical bodies pure and holy as temples of God.
2. Place preeminence on spiritual learning and knowledge from God.
3. Be a trusted generation and use the foundation of eternal gospel truths to establish standards and values.
4. Seek learning from the eternal truths contained in the holy scriptures.

God bless you with the will and desire to be an example to the world and to live the balanced, righteous life He expects His children to live during their mortal probation. ■

From an address delivered on January 15, 2010, at Utah Valley University.

NOTES

1. Joseph Stein, Jerry Bock, Sheldon Harnick, *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), 2–3.
2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “The Straight and Narrow Way,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 65.
3. Spencer W. Kimball, *President Kimball Speaks Out* (1981), 90, 91, 92.
4. Henry Ward Beecher, in Tryon Edwards, comp., *The New Dictionary of Thoughts* (1944), 67.
5. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 67.



MAKE OUR HOUSE INVISIBLE

At the end of World War II, when I was 19 years old, enemy troops came to occupy my hometown in Europe. One evening my parents and I were sitting at our table when we heard a loud noise. We looked out through the blackout curtains, hung so that bombers couldn't detect our



house at night, to see enemy troops—along with their motorcycles, trucks, and tanks—coming into our village from two different directions. I was very frightened.

My father, always a faithful man, said simply, “Don’t be scared.” In the face of what was just outside our house, that was an extraordinary statement. We all knew that the soldiers would likely invade the neighborhood to pillage people’s homes. Father suggested that we kneel next to the couch and pray for Heavenly Father’s protection. He prayed, “Father in Heaven, please blind those soldiers. Make our house invisible so they won’t see it.”

After he prayed, my mother prayed. Then I prayed. Afterward, we returned to the table and cautiously looked out the window. We watched soldiers storm into every house on our street. Ours was the last one on the street. They approached our house but then passed our front gate and went to the next street. We watched them enter every house that we could see from our window.

After an invasion of about two hours, someone blew a loud whistle, and the soldiers returned to their vehicles. As they slowly left, we were tremendously relieved and knelt again, thanking Heavenly Father for His kindness and protection.

We looked out through the blackout curtains to see enemy troops coming into our village from two different directions. I was very frightened.

The next day I learned from a distraught friend that the soldiers had done terrible things in every house she knew of. When I told her that they had not come to our house, she was shocked. She said she had watched them go in our direction and that she knew of no homes in our sector that they had not entered. Our house was the only one the soldiers had left alone.

I know that Heavenly Father hears our pleas and answers them. Sometimes it seems that we might not ever receive an answer, and we wish that He would answer sooner. But I know that in our home 65 years ago, He answered right away. ■

Alice W. Flade, Utah, USA

I MISSED FEELING THE SPIRIT

When I was 16, I participated in a student foreign-exchange program for a year. I went from my home in Ukraine to a small town in Arizona, USA, where I stayed with a Latter-day Saint family. I had never heard of Latter-day Saints before.

The exchange program didn’t allow the family to preach to me, and I wasn’t allowed to meet with the missionaries. But I chose to attend church with my host family and participate in all Church activities.

I felt the Spirit with that family, and I felt much love at church. At that time I didn’t know that what I was feeling was

the Spirit, but my heart was touched.

When I returned to Ukraine, I missed that feeling very much. I remembered how my life was when I went to church and lived gospel teachings. I realized what was missing, but there was no church and no missionaries where I lived, so I thought I would never have that feeling again.

About four years later, however, some missionaries knocked on my door. I was so happy to see them. While they were out working, they had listened to the Spirit, which led them to my house. I’m so grateful they were obedient. I was baptized and confirmed soon afterward.

Since then I have been sealed in the Stockholm Sweden Temple to my husband, a returned missionary who is from Russia. And now there’s a temple in Kyiv. We plan to attend regularly.

The temple is the most amazing place on earth. It is a place where you can be close to Heavenly Father. I feel so grateful that in the temple we can receive one of the greatest gifts given to us by Heavenly Father: to be sealed as families for eternity.

I am grateful to the members of that Latter-day Saint family who helped me feel the Spirit, starting me on a journey that would lead me to a family of my own that is sealed together forever. ■

Victoria Mikulina, Russia

Note: To see an inspiring video about the youth cultural celebration for the Kyiv Ukraine Temple, visit LDS.org and search for “Kyiv Ukraine Temple video.”



Fortunately nobody was hurt in the accident. But the trailer hitch was bent like a pretzel, the windows were all broken, and our belongings were scattered everywhere.

On Sunday morning I found the local meetinghouse and sat down on the back row of the chapel just as sacrament meeting was starting. I prayed for the Spirit to be with my family at this difficult time.

At the conclusion of the meeting, one or two people introduced themselves to me, and I briefly explained what had happened. I then returned to where we were camped and spent the rest of the day helping clean things up.

On Monday morning we had started to clean again when all at once members of the ward I had attended started arriving, offering help. The owner of a local window store said he would replace all of the trailer windows at no charge, and a welder offered to straighten the hitch for free.

My father said little but was obviously amazed, Mom shed tears of gratitude, and my sister and I were thankful for the help. By the end of the day, we were ready to continue our trip to Idaho.

As a result of this experience, I learned that the promptings of the Spirit are real. I also know that our prayers are frequently answered by other people and that trusting the Lord will bring peace and joy to our hearts. ■

Dwight LeRoy Dennis, Utah, USA

GO TO CHURCH!

During my junior year of high school, I met a Latter-day Saint girl in my art class. She had a great influence on my life, and I was baptized a member of the Church.

After I graduated from high school, Mom and Dad decided to move from our home in California to Idaho, USA. We hooked our trailer to our truck and headed north. We had just passed through Lovelock, Nevada, when I started driving too fast down a small hill. Because there were no stabilizing bars to keep the trailer in place, it started whipping from side to side. I slammed on the brakes, and the trailer jackknifed, sending us through a borrow pit and leaving the truck tipped over one way and the trailer tipped over the other way.

Fortunately nobody was hurt. But

the outside and the inside of the trailer were a complete disaster. The trailer hitch was bent like a pretzel, the windows were all broken, and our belongings were scattered everywhere.

The highway patrol arrived and called a tow truck. Mom and Dad didn't know what to do. The little money they had went to the towing company. At this moment I felt the overwhelming impression that I should go to church the following day, Sunday. Dad, who was not a member of the Church, thought I was crazy. We had to gather our belongings and fix the trailer, and since he was crippled and in poor health, I was the main worker. But the impression to attend church persisted. I asked Mom to talk to Dad for me. She did, and surprisingly he consented.

SHOULD WE SELL OUR DREAM HOME?

In 1998 the Spirit was nudging me to sell our dream home, which we had completed and moved into just four years earlier. As our older children were beginning to graduate from high school and leave home, it became apparent that our house was larger and more costly than we needed. I had just gone through a job change that showed me how vulnerable my income was to possible disruption.

When I attended the priesthood session of general conference that October, I was struck by the words of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008). Speaking of our finances, he told priesthood holders, “The time has come to get our houses in order.” Then he warned, “There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed.”

Later in the talk he said: “It may be necessary to borrow to get a home, of course. But let us buy a home that we can afford and thus ease the payments which will constantly hang over our heads without mercy or respite for as long as 30 years.”¹

I told my wife about President Hinckley’s counsel, adding that I felt we should sell our house. To my surprise, she agreed.

Over the ensuing months, we prepared to sell our house and buy another one. It was a long, drawn-out process that involved much prayer and a family fast. Finally, a year later

we moved into our new home, which had a much lower monthly payment.

President Hinckley’s words did indeed prove prophetic. The following year the U.S. stock market peaked as the dot-com bubble burst. Several years of low interest rates then followed, which we used to our advantage to pay down our mortgage debt.

Now a new economic crisis is upon many countries throughout the world. President Hinckley’s words are just as

true today as they were in 1998.

How happy we are that we followed the counsel of the prophet and the promptings of the Spirit. We no longer have any mortgage debt, and we are happy to see our children living within their means.

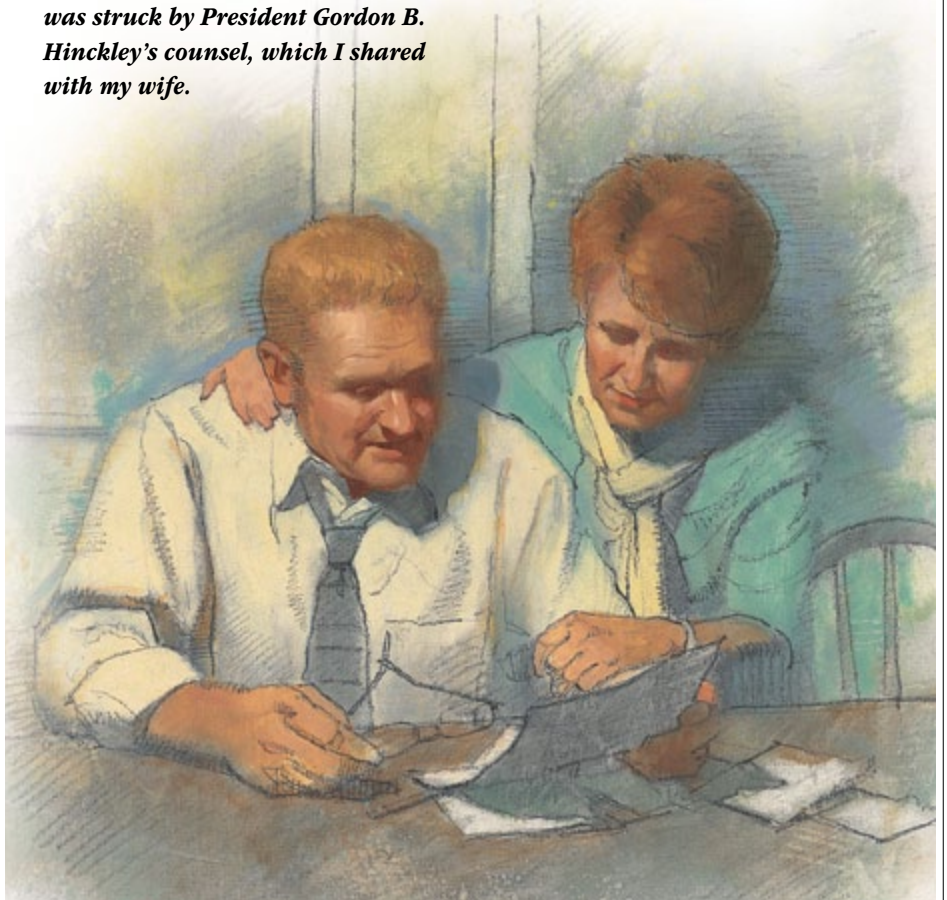
We look forward each general conference to the counsel of our Church leaders. We know that we will be blessed if we heed their direction. ■

Sullivan Richardson, Nevada, USA

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “To the Boys and to the Men,” *Liahona*, Jan. 1999, 65; *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 53.

When I attended the priesthood session of general conference, I was struck by President Gordon B. Hinckley’s counsel, which I shared with my wife.



Did He Really Ask Me *That?*

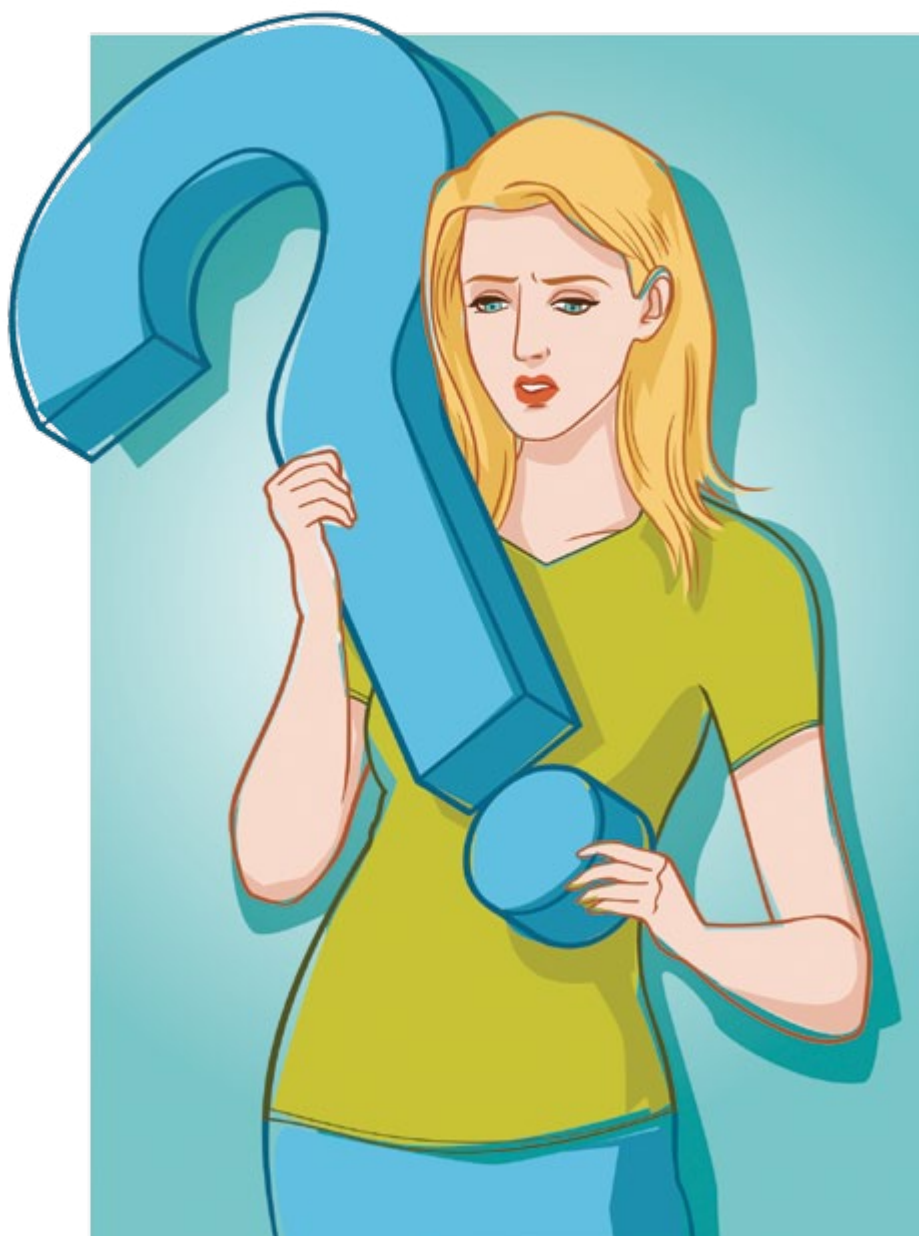
By Joelyn Hansen

I sat and stared in disbelief as Brother Jarman, a member of the branch presidency, waited for my answer.

Maybe he had meant to say *teacher* or *counselor*. But he hadn't. What I heard was correct; he had called me as the Relief Society president in our small branch.

I sat still for some time reflecting on my situation. I was just 27 years old and had never been married. I had recently moved to the area and was beginning a new job as a journalist. My leadership experience was limited. I had served in several callings over the years but never one like this.

Silently I asked myself if I was old enough or experienced enough or if I even had the ability to serve. What could I possibly offer the women of the branch?



I went home that night, knelt in prayer, and asked Heavenly Father for direction. After I finished my prayer, I was instantly drawn to look at my patriarchal blessing. I read this sentence: "You are to be about that work which you were assigned to do now, even while you are young."

As I read those words, I realized that this was not about my marital status, my age, or what I could do. It was about what the Lord *needed* me to do. I accepted the calling.

Through my calling I was able to help

While we may question our abilities to serve in a Church calling, the Lord knows us. If we are willing to serve, He can qualify us for His work.

people despite our different backgrounds. One woman in particular whom God led me to serve was a woman in her late 20s, a single mother of two children. It didn't take me long to realize that she and I had different lifestyles. I wasn't sure how to be her friend, but in time we did develop a friendship.

On another occasion I met with a less-active woman. I recall entering her home for the first time along with the missionaries and knowing that she had a testimony; she just needed a little bit of "kindling" to help it burn brighter. As we sat in her living room and listened to her, the Spirit was strong and prompted us to bear testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

In the following months she came to church sporadically. But I was continually led by the Spirit and bore my testimony to her. Today she is active and serving in the branch.

Those were some of the highlights of the calling, but the challenges were numerous. It was a struggle to feel like I was doing enough, to find balance between church and work, and to overcome feelings of inadequacy.

In the end I realized that much of what I was able to do was through the Spirit. I have since been released from the calling and have moved away from that city. But I have often reflected how that calling influenced the sisters—and me. Through it I came to the knowledge that I, as a young single sister, had something to offer others as we grew together in the gospel. Though I felt unqualified for the position, I worked hard to fulfill my calling. And as I did, I felt God's hand guiding me and qualifying me for His work. ■

Sustained by His Love

When I received the calling to serve as the student activities leader, I felt completely overwhelmed. I was shy and knew it would be difficult for me to plan activities. Feelings of inadequacy, nervousness, and depression consumed me.

In desperation I turned to Heavenly Father. "How can I do this?" I prayed. "I am small and weak."

Right then, a peaceful, small whisper entered my heart: "Go, my daughter. I love you."

That response from a loving Father strengthened me. Empowered by that prompting, I felt I could do anything. Knowing that He is aware of me, that He loves me, and that He will sustain me was all I needed to fulfill my calling effectively.

I know that whatever our struggles, Heavenly Father loves us and hears our prayers. As we go to Him, we can receive direction and encouragement as we strive to fulfill our callings.

Ye Kyung Koo, Korea

Fulfillment through My Calling

As a single adult, I have found I am able to contribute to my ward and find fulfillment as I serve in different Church callings.

I currently serve as the second counselor in the Young Men presidency.



SEEKING HELP FROM HEAVENLY FATHER

"I would urge all of us to pray concerning our assignments and to seek divine help, that we might be successful in accomplishing that which we are called to do. Someone has said that 'the recognition of power higher than man himself does not in any sense debase him.' He must seek, believe in, pray, and hope that he will find. No such sincere, prayerful effort will go unanswered: that is the very constitution of the philosophy of faith. Divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it."

President Thomas S. Monson, "To Learn, to Do, to Be," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 67.

Being in the Young Men organization has given me the opportunity to go with the deacons to collect fast offerings, meet with less-active members of the ward, and attend youth conferences and Mutual activities. I have also enjoyed going to the temple with the youth to perform baptisms for the dead. While serving in this calling, I have worked hard to help the young men grow into men by showing that I love and appreciate them. These experiences have helped me progress spiritually and have been a blessing in my life.

Mat Carter, Utah, USA

Called to Influence

When I was called to serve as the Mia Maid adviser in the Young Women organization, I doubted that I could fill the calling. I didn't think the girls would like me or learn anything from me, especially when I realized how different things are for them than they were when I was their age.

That feeling changed a few weeks into my calling when I attended a Young Woman event. At the event a mother expressed how grateful she was for the Young Women program because it strengthened her daughter against temptation. Her words helped me understand just how important my role really is.

I realized that my calling was about more than teaching lessons on Sundays and helping plan activities. It was a calling to help these young women prepare for the future—to go to the temple, serve in the Church, and be



As we accept opportunities to serve, we will find, as President Monson promised, that “divine favor will attend those who humbly seek it.”

good mothers. I needed to help them prepare for life.

Callings in the Church come from our loving Heavenly Father. He knows our needs and the needs of those we serve. Knowing that can help us have faith in Him and confidence in ourselves, even if we don't understand why we're given a particular assignment or when we don't feel sure about our ability to fulfill a calling. We can be grateful for our opportunities to serve and that we are worthy to have

a calling, and we can take the opportunity to learn as much as we can while we progress in the gospel.

Georgina Tilialo, New Zealand

Sharing My Testimony through Music

Although I was raised in the Church, I became less active when I was 18. Later, when I moved from eastern Germany to Frankfurt, I was invited to live with a member family. I knew this could be an opportunity for me to have a new start and become active in the Church again.

Soon after moving to Frankfurt, I was called as a presidency member of our area's center for young adults. The calling involved coordinating institute classes, family home evenings, and other activities. It required a lot of work, but it was worth it because the center is a great blessing to young adults in the area.

Because of this calling, I learned about and joined a young single adult choir. The choir went on a concert tour to Poland and the Czech Republic. It was a great experience, and I loved having the opportunity to share my testimony through music. I was even happier when I received an e-mail several weeks later telling me that someone had joined the Church as a result of one of our concerts.

As I worked to fulfill my calling, I was able to help strengthen the testimonies of others, and my own testimony of the gospel was strengthened as well. ■

Felix Seidl, Germany

RECEIVING HELP FROM OTHER SOURCES

A new calling can be overwhelming as you strive to learn your responsibilities. However, there are many resources you can turn to for help. These resources, along with praying for guidance and direction from Heavenly Father, will help you know how to fulfill your calling and bless the lives of others as you serve.



- **Handbooks.** Handbooks help explain responsibilities. When you receive your calling, begin by studying the handbook information for your specific responsibility.



- **The bishopric, branch presidency, or other leaders.** Don't be afraid to approach leaders to ask for help. This is a good way to learn what needs to be done.



- **Someone who has previously served in that calling.** These people may have experience or advice that will be useful to you. But remember that the calling is now yours and you can seek inspiration to help you serve effectively.



- **Church websites.** LDS.org includes a lot of information and resources. One place to start might be to select "Serving in the Church." Click on "Handbook 2" and then select a language.

“How can I respond when my friends say that no man can see God?”

Your friends have probably read the few verses in the Bible that say that man can't see God (see Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:14–16; 1 John 4:12). These verses seem to contradict other Bible verses that say that men—such as Jacob, Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah—have seen God (see Genesis 18:1; 32:30; Exodus 33:11; Isaiah 6:1).

Fortunately, we have the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, which clarifies the four scriptures that say that man can't see God. The Prophet's inspired revisions of those verses explain that *sinful* people can't see God—only those who believe. And even then, a righteous person must be changed—transfigured—to see God (see D&C 67:11). In the Pearl of Great Price account of Moses seeing God, Moses explains that it was his spiritual, not natural, eyes that saw God (see Moses 1:11).

You can let your friends know that “we believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly” (Articles of Faith 1:8). You can also bear testimony of Joseph Smith and of latter-day scripture, which helps us understand that “the pure in heart . . . shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

Spiritually See Him



Alma taught that every aspect of nature testifies of a supreme Creator due to its infinite complexities and harmonies (see Alma 30:44). This is a great opportunity for you to testify to your friends that you can feel His presence in your life every day through the Holy Ghost.

You can also explain that we do not need to see God in order to believe He is there. That is why we have faith. If we could see Him, there would not be much effort required to believe and follow Him throughout our lives. There will be a time when we will see Him on the other side of the veil. Until then, your belief is enough to spiritually see His hand in your life.

Janel E., age 18, Washington, USA

God Loves Me



A roommate once asked me how I could believe in something I could not see. I answered that it was because I can feel the Holy Ghost, who testifies that God knows me, and this increases my faith and brings peace to my soul. I cannot see Him, but I know He loves me because I have faith and I feel His Spirit.

Samuel P., age 18, Lara, Venezuela

Open Our Hearts

Few people have ever seen God while they were on earth, but we have all been affected. We see everything He has created, all the blessings He gives, and we can all feel His love. I feel it most when I bear my testimony. As long as we open our eyes and our hearts, we will see God all around us, as well as in each other, His children.

Katelyn E., age 16, California, USA

We Will Stand before Him



When my schoolmates ask why I believe in God if I have never seen Him, I explain that we have not seen God because it is not time for us to see Him. After we are resurrected, we will come before Him to be judged (see D&C 137:9). I then share my testimony and explain that having faith means believing and having hope. If they have faith, they will see God like I see Him—with the eyes of my heart.

Daiana V., age 18, Santa Cruz, Argentina

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

He Knew It Was True



One day my companion and I were teaching a couple, and we told them that the Father and the Son

had appeared to Joseph Smith in answer to his prayer. The man said that no one could see God. Immediately the alarm on my watch went off, letting us know that we needed to head home. We left their home that day without answering that statement.

The next day I read a scripture in the Bible that says, “If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision” (Numbers 12:6). I knew this scripture would help this brother believe.

The time of the next visit arrived, and we spoke about prophets. I showed him this scripture, and his countenance changed. His eyes filled with tears, and he said, “This is true. There are people prepared to see God.” Later we taught him about Book of Mormon prophets who have seen God, and he knew it was true.

Elder Diaz, age 25, Mexico Mérida Mission

Faith That God Exists

Normally we don’t see God, but you can feel His Spirit. He wants you to get to know Him by reading the scriptures and having faith in Him.

If you have faith in Him, you won’t have to see Him to know who He is and that He exists. Prophets, like Moses and Joseph Smith, who have actually seen God have had to be transformed to see Him.

Aaron F., age 12, Oregon, USA

Bear Testimony



A friend of mine once asked me this question, and I asked her where she had gotten this idea. She told me

that a man had shown it to her in the Bible. I then remembered John 1:18, where he says that no man can see the Lord. With the help of seminary, I remembered other scriptures in the Bible that say men like Moses and Jacob, being full of the Holy Ghost, saw God. And so I was able to answer my friend confidently and bear my testimony.

Luis M., age 17, Mato Grosso, Brazil



UNDENIABLE KNOWLEDGE THAT HE LIVES

“Cultivate a diligent desire to know that God lives.

”This desire leads us

to ponder on the things of heaven—to let the evidence of God all around us touch our hearts.

“With softened hearts we are prepared to heed the Savior’s call to ‘search the scriptures’ (John 5:39) and to humbly learn from them.

“We are then ready to ask our Heavenly Father sincerely, in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, if the things we have learned are true. Most of us will not see God, as the prophets have, but the still, small promptings of the Spirit—the thoughts and feelings that the Holy Ghost brings into our minds and hearts—will give us an undeniable knowledge that He lives and that He loves us.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Seeking to Know God, Our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 32.

NEXT QUESTION

“Pornography is ruining my life. What can I do to repent and break the addiction?”

Send your answer by September 15, 2011, to:

Liahona, Questions & Answers 9/11

50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Or e-mail: liahona@ldschurch.org

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

The following information and permission must be included in your e-mail or letter:

(1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent’s written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.



By Elder
Dallin H. Oaks
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH

Our first responsibility and purpose is to testify of Jesus Christ to a world that suffers to know of His divine mission. As my response to that great responsibility, I will speak about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the only true and living Church. In doing so I know I speak against the powerful tide of what is called “political correctness.”

The fashionable opinion of this age is that all churches are true. In truth, the idea that all churches are the same is the doctrine of the anti-Christ, illustrated by the Book of Mormon account of Koriath (see Alma 30). That account was given to teach us a vital lesson in our day.

A revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1831, soon after the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, spoke of those who had been given “power to lay the foundation of this church.” The Lord then referred to the Church as “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased” (D&C 1:30).

Because of this declaration of the Lord, we refer to this, His Church—our Church—as the “only true Church.” Sometimes we do this in a way that gives great offense to people who belong to other churches or who subscribe to other philosophies. But God has not taught

us anything that should cause us to feel superior to other people. Certainly all churches and philosophies have elements of truth in them, some more than others. Certainly God loves all of His children. And certainly His gospel plan is for all of His children, all according to His own timetable.

So what does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true Church?

Three features—(1) fulness of doctrine, (2) power of the priesthood, and (3) testimony of Jesus Christ—explain why God has declared and why we as His servants maintain that this is the only true and living Church upon the face of the whole earth.

1. Fulness of Doctrine

When Jesus Christ was upon the earth, He taught the fulness of His doctrine, which is the plan that our Heavenly Father has outlined for the eternal progress of His children. Later, many of these gospel truths were lost through being diluted by the principles or philosophies then prevailing in the world where Christianity was preached and through the manipulations of political leaders. We call this loss of the fulness of truth the Apostasy.

Many church denominations or philosophies that exist in the world today contain, in greater or lesser measure, truths revealed

What does it mean that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true Church?



Priesthood authority had to be restored by those resurrected beings who had held it in mortality. That priesthood authority, together with the keys necessary to direct its operations, are in this Church and no other.

by God in earlier days, along with a mixture of the philosophies or manipulations of men. We believe that most religious leaders and followers are sincere believers who love God and understand and serve Him to the best of their abilities. We are indebted to the men and women who kept the light of faith and learning alive through the centuries to the present day. We want all who investigate our church from other churches or systems of belief to retain everything they have that is good and to come and see how we can add to their understanding of truth and to their happiness as they follow it.

Because so much had been lost in the Apostasy, it was necessary that the Lord restore the fulness of His doctrine. That began with what we call Joseph Smith's First Vision.

The fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ begins with the assurance that we lived as spirits before we came to this earth. It affirms that this mortal life has a purpose. It teaches that our highest aspiration is to become like our heavenly parents. We do this by qualifying for the glorified celestial condition and relationships that are called exaltation or eternal life, which will empower us to perpetuate our family relationships throughout eternity.

The doctrine of Jesus Christ, understood in its fulness, is the plan by which we can become what children of God are supposed to become. This spotless and perfected state will result from a steady succession of covenants, ordinances, and actions; an accumulation of right choices; and continuing repentance. "This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God" (Alma 34:32). This is made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by obedience to the

laws and ordinances of His gospel.

The restored gospel of Jesus Christ is comprehensive, universal, merciful, and true. Following the necessary experience of mortal life, all sons and daughters of God will be resurrected and go to a kingdom of glory more wonderful than any mortals can comprehend. With only a few exceptions, even the very wicked will ultimately go to a marvelous—though lesser—kingdom of glory. All of this will occur because of God's great love for His children, and it is all made possible because of the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, "who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands" (D&C 76:43).

2. Power of the Priesthood

The second and absolutely essential characteristic of the "only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth" is priesthood authority.

The Bible is clear that priesthood authority is necessary and that this authority had to be conferred by the laying on of hands by those who held it. Priesthood authority did not come from a desire to serve or from reading the scriptures. When that priesthood authority was lost through apostasy, it had to be restored by those resurrected beings who had held it in mortality and who were sent to confer it. That happened as part of the Restoration of the gospel, and that priesthood authority, together with the keys necessary to direct its operations, are in this Church and no other.

As a result of our having the power of the priesthood, the leaders and duly authorized members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are empowered to perform the required priesthood ordinances, such as



We are not grounded in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies of men. Our testimony of Jesus Christ is based on the revelations of God to His prophets and to us individually.

baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the administration of the sacrament.

The keys of the priesthood, held by our beloved prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, and every other prophet and President of the Church, entitle him to revelation in behalf of the entire Church. This Church is “living” because we have prophets who continue to give us the word of the Lord that is needed for our time.

3. Testimony of Jesus Christ

The third reason why we are the only true Church is that we have the revealed truth about the nature of God and our relationship to Him, and we therefore have a unique testimony of Jesus Christ. Significantly, our belief in the nature of God is what distinguishes us from the formal creeds of most Christian denominations.

The Articles of Faith, our only formal declaration of belief, begin as follows: “We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.” We have this belief in the Godhead in common with the rest of Christianity, but to us it means something different than to most. We maintain that these three members of the Godhead are three separate and distinct beings and that God the Father is not a spirit but a glorified being with a tangible body, as is His resurrected Son, Jesus Christ. Though separate in identity, They are one in purpose.

Joseph Smith’s First Vision showed that the prevailing concepts of the nature of God and the Godhead were untrue and could not lead their adherents to the destiny God desired for them (see Joseph Smith—History 1:17–19). A subsequent outpouring of modern revelation clarified the significance of this fundamental truth and also gave us the Book of Mormon.

This new book of scripture is a second witness of Christ. It affirms the biblical prophecies and teachings of the nature and mission of Christ. It enlarges our understanding of His gospel and His teachings during His earthly ministry. It also provides many teachings by which we may know the truth of these things.

We are not grounded in the wisdom of the world or the philosophies of men—however traditional or respected they may be. Our testimony of Jesus Christ is based on the revelations of God to His prophets and to us individually. (See 1 Corinthians 2:1–5; 2 Nephi 28:26.)

So what does our testimony of Jesus Christ cause us to affirm?

Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God, the Eternal Father. He is the Creator of this world. Through His incomparable mortal ministry, He is our teacher. Because of His Resurrection, all who have ever lived will be raised from the dead. He is the Savior, whose atoning sacrifice paid for the sin of Adam and opened the door for us to be forgiven of our personal sins so that we can be cleansed to return to the presence of God, our Eternal Father. This is the central message of the prophets of all ages.

I solemnly affirm my testimony of Jesus Christ and the truth of His gospel. He lives, and His gospel is true. He is the Light and Life of the World (see D&C 34:2). He is the Way to immortality and eternal life (see John 14:6). To me, the miracle of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is incomprehensible. But the Holy Ghost has given me a witness of its truthfulness, and I can rejoice that I can spend my life in proclaiming it. ■

From an address delivered on June 25, 2010, at a seminar for new mission presidents.

A Song and a Prayer

When Dillon couldn't reach the high note, he reached even higher for the help he needed.

Dillon has a terrible problem: his greatest talent is also his greatest fear. "I love to sing," the 16-year-old Tongan says, "but not in front of people. I get too scared."

Imagine his mixed feelings when the Church in Tonga announced auditions for vocalists to record a Tongan version of the Old Testament seminary soundtrack. He was both excited and scared to death.

Three songs on the soundtrack require a male vocalist. After Dillon had sung the song for which he was auditioning, the producer surprised him by asking him to sing another of the songs on the soundtrack. As nervous as he was, he did it, and the producer said, "We found our boy."

Much to his excitement—and dismay—Dillon was offered the opportunity to record all three songs.

Dillon's Talent, Dillon's Fear

Dillon, a member of the Ma'ufanga Ward, Nuku'alofa Tonga Stake, excels in school. He's one of about 10 percent of Tongan students selected to attend the government school. He also enjoys seminary. "He wakes us up early so he can get to seminary," his mother, Malenita Mahe, says.

But singing is what he loves—though his family didn't even know he could until he was asked to sing a solo during a Primary program one year.

"Dillon's always been shy," his mother says.

He did so well in the Primary program that he was asked to sing during a conference of the Nuku'alofa Tonga Stake. After that he was hooked.

He told his mom, "One day I'm going to use my talent for God." After he was chosen to sing on the soundtrack, he told her, "Mom, I used my talent."

Dillon's older brother, Sione, says he tries to encourage Dillon to sing. "I would love to have the talent he does," he says. "Everybody wants him to share it."

"I like it when he sings," says his sister, Pea.

"I want to sing like him some day," says his nine-year-old brother, Paula.

Dillon is grateful for his family's support. "I love my family," he says. "I'm sure that with their help, I can make my weakness a strength."

Reaching Higher

As Dillon worked with the sound crew to record the songs, he struggled with one note. "I couldn't hit it," he says. "We rehearsed for hours."

Finally, exhausted and discouraged, he went home that night, knowing that the next morning he'd have to record the song.

"I went straight to my room and prayed to my Heavenly Father to help me," he says.

All he could think about was how important the soundtrack would be to the 50,000 members of the Church in Tonga, as well as thousands of others who speak Tongan around the world.

"It was one of the longest nights of my life," he says.

After a long night of prayer and a little bit of sleep, Dillon walked into the recording studio and hit the note.

"Hallelujah," he remembers saying. "I was happy."

Be Not Afraid

One of Dillon's favorite scriptures is Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

To hear one of Dillon's songs from
the Old Testament soundtrack,
visit liahona.lds.org.

Dillon put that promise to the test, and he learned it was true. "I tried my best. I put my best effort and heart into the songs so the listeners will be able to feel the Spirit."

As Dillon grows out of his fear and into his talents, he recognizes he has received a lot of help—not only from his family but from his Heavenly Father.

"I know," he says, "that God answered my prayers." ■





Singing in Singapore

Youth of the Singapore Stake learned the blessings of sacrifice and hard work by preparing a musical production.

By Michelle Hsieh and Cerys Ong

When the alarm went off at 5:00 a.m., 17-year-old Yee Mun Lim got out of bed and got ready for the day. She left the house at 5:20 for seminary. At 6:30 a.m. she hurried to school, where she stayed until 7:00 p.m. for classes and co-curricular activities. Then she rushed to the stake center by public transport to practice for the stake musical production.

This was the standard routine of most youth in the Singapore Stake every Friday for five months. Sometimes exhaustion and fatigue set in, but throughout the entire preparation for the musical production, *When a Prophet Speaks*, there were no complaints or regrets, because the youth felt that the sacrifices they made were worthwhile. “This is the most amazing, awesome, spiritually uplifting, fun-filled, and heart-warming event I ever took part in,” said Yee Mun, of the Singapore Second Ward.

How It All Started

“Our initial purpose was to unite the youth,” said Kate Loreto, the stake Young Women president. “We have youth in eight different wards and from various

cultural backgrounds. It's hard for them to interact with each other. So we thought, why not do a musical to bring them together?"

The leaders chose music inspired by the list of B's from President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008).¹ This music was chosen "so the youth could internalize the lyrics of the songs, feel the Spirit, and live the standards," said Connie Woo, the general director of the production. "We wanted to involve as many youth as possible," said Sister Woo. In all, 78 youth performed.

Perhaps not all of the youth came with the same motive at the beginning, but almost all of them kept coming to rehearsals because they enjoyed the friendship, the singing, and, most of all, the Spirit.

***Testimonies
and friendships
were strengthened
as youth
of the Singapore
Stake performed
together.***

also happy about how the youth looked.

Canden Petersen, age 15, of the Singapore First Ward was appointed choir president to help make sure that every practice ran smoothly. His responsibilities included assigning prayers, rallying and herding the youth for practices and games, and announcing seating on the stage. "I was also asked to have some young men help set up and take down the set and oversee the youth in fulfilling their assignments," he said. "I felt that this responsibility was good for the youth. Hopefully it helped them understand that the Lord calls leaders now, not just from among the adults. They can and should sustain their leaders whatever their age or experience level."



Amanda Ho



Olivia Hoe



Michael Lee



Yee Mun Lim



Canden Petersen

Getting Involved

After the theme was chosen and practices organized, the youth were assigned to different parts in the production and to different committees that suited their talents.

Ally Chan, age 18, of the Singapore Second Ward volunteered to help on the costume committee. "We needed to choose something that was modest, which was very important, and it had to be economical, youthful, and at the same time look good on the stage," she said. Not only did she learn how to make decisions based on gospel standards and working with others, but she was

Kandace Lim, age 18, of the Woodlands Ward helped by taking multiple roles, including being a member of the costume committee, the choreography committee, the photography committee, and also by singing a solo. About her many responsibilities, she said, "It was my mum who inspired me to take on these assignments. She taught me that if there's a chance to serve, just go for it. If you accept the task and put in your best effort, the Lord will definitely help you get through any difficulties you might face."

Besides these administrative responsibilities, performers were also needed. John Lee, age 17, of the Clementi Ward was one of the

brave souls to volunteer for a solo part. His reason was simple: “I just like to sing! And it makes me feel special.”

Ezra Tadina, age 17, of the Woodlands Ward didn’t feel like he could sing, so he found another way to contribute. “I chose to be involved,” he said, “and I am actually the one who narrated the part about being involved. I feel the message because I know it’s true.”

No Small Sacrifice

The practices extended from November 2009 until March 2010. During this time, the youth gathered at the stake center to rehearse every Friday night, except on holidays. The amount of time and commitment required of the youth was no small sacrifice, considering the strenuous schedule of a typical Singaporean youth.

First-year junior college student Olivia Hoe of the Bedok Ward chose to participate because “no matter how life throws mud at me, at the end of the day, it’s the gospel that’s going to keep me standing and pull me through the rubble. Knowing that there’s One who’s looking out for me and loving me completely gives me plenty of comfort, and I think that’s more than enough to get me going every day.”

Many of the youth had other commitments, but they knew that the Lord had laid a path for them. Such was the case of 16-year-old Amanda Ho of the Singapore Second Ward. “I had dance practice, which clashed with some of the rehearsals for this musical, but miraculously the school changed the practice schedule, which enabled me to turn up for the musical rehearsals,” she explained.

It’s Showtime

After months of practice, the show was finally ready to be performed. Thanks to the teens’



Kandace Lim



Ezra Tadina



Ally Chan



Cerys Ong



John Lee

enthusiastic promotion, more than 700 people showed up to watch them at three performances. As the youth shared their message through songs, dance, instrumental music, and their own testimonies, many in the audience were touched.

The group was also challenged to invite non-member friends to see their performance and to make it a missionary opportunity. Michael Lee, age 18, took this challenge seriously. “I invited six friends to come, and three of my schoolmates and a schoolteacher came,” he said. Their performances especially left an impression on his teacher. “He said that it was a great experience. He even requested a copy of the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. He said that he felt the energy through the many hopeful hearts of the youth.”

The leaders’ initial purpose of bringing the youth together was certainly fulfilled. “As I sat there and looked up at each of them during the performance, my heart was filled with joy,” Sister Woo said. “It was not about how good they looked, how well they sang and played, or how well they delivered the narrations. It was not about which school or country they came from. They were one.”

The Message in the Music

The musical helped many gain a stronger testimony. Some say they hum the tunes and sing the lyrics of the songs wherever they might be, and the message in the songs helps them get through their daily challenges. Many of them became not just good friends but spiritual supports who can lift each other up when the going gets tough. They can help each other stay on the narrow path and grow spiritually. ■

NOTE

1. The nine B’s are be grateful, be smart, be involved, be clean, be true, be positive, be humble, be still, be prayerful; see Gordon B. Hinckley, *Way to Be!* (2002); see also “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 30; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 4.

BEING Modern PIONEERS

Church leaders have taught us about the importance of the contributions we are making today.



We Are All Pioneers

I have no ancestors among the nineteenth-century pioneers. However, since the first days of my Church membership, I have felt a close kinship to those early pioneers who crossed the plains. They are my spiritual ancestry, as they are for each and every member of the Church, regardless of nationality, language, or culture. . . .

“As the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is now being embraced around the world, we are all pioneers in our own sphere and circumstance.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Heeding the Voice of the Prophets,” *Liahona*, July 2008, 3; *Ensign*, July 2008, 5.

The First Generation Blesses All

By being the first in your family to accept the gospel, you become the first generation, a chosen generation through which generations past, present, and future may be blessed. . . .

“ . . . In the Church we read and speak much about pioneers in early Church history. They were first-generation members just like you. . . .

“Their legacy can be yours as fellow members of the first generation. Be faithful, serve your fellowman, bless your family, and make proper choices. You are the first generation, a chosen generation to bless past, present, and future generations.”

Elder Paul B. Pieper of the Seventy, “The First Generation,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 11, 13.

We Are All Needed

We are all needed to finish the work that was begun by those pioneering Saints over 175 years ago and carried out through the subsequent decades by faithful Saints of every generation. We need to believe as they believed. We need to work as they worked. We need to serve as they served. And we need to overcome as they overcame. . . .

“ . . . The Lord isn’t asking us to load up a handcart; He’s asking us to fortify our faith. He isn’t asking us to walk across a continent; He’s asking us to walk across the street to visit our neighbor. He isn’t asking us to give all of our worldly possessions to build a temple; He’s asking us to give of our means and our time despite the pressures of modern living to continue to build temples and then to attend regularly the temples already built. He isn’t asking us to die a martyr’s death; He’s asking us to live a disciple’s life.

“This is a great time to live, brothers and sisters, and it is up to us to carry on the rich tradition of devoted commitment that has been the hallmark of previous generations of Latter-day Saints.” ■

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Truth of God Shall Go Forth,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 83, 84.

THERE IS A WAY OUT



When we sin, we paint ourselves into a corner. Repentance is the only way out.

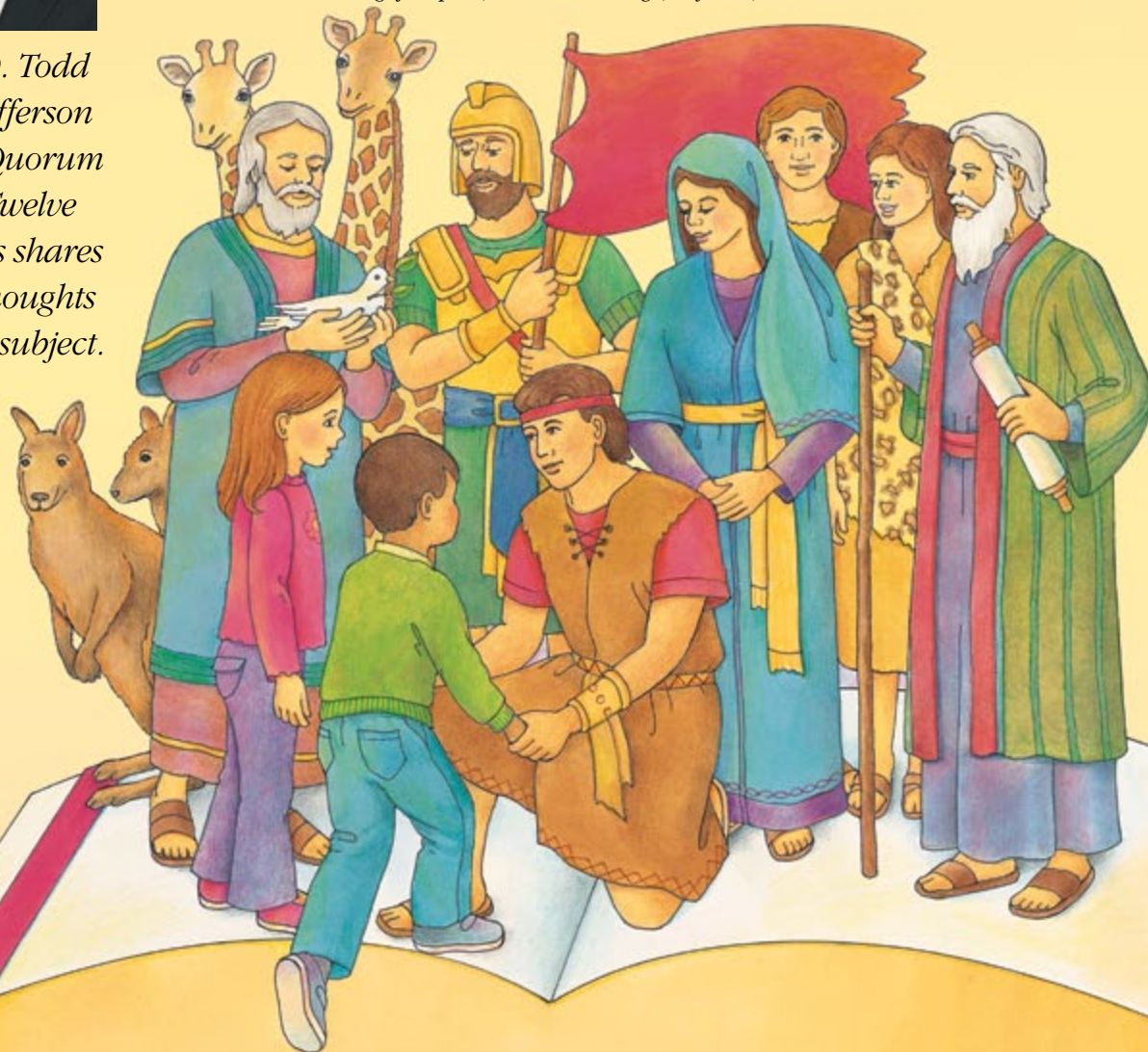


Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares some thoughts on this subject.

What can I learn from the scriptures?

The central purpose of all scripture is to fill our souls with faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ.

From "The Blessing of Scripture," Liahona and Ensign, May 2010, 33–35.



The scriptures enlarge our memory by helping us always to remember the Lord and our relationship to Him and the Father. They remind us of what we knew in our premortal life.

Scriptural accounts of the faith of others strengthen our own.

The words of prophets, which the Lord calls scripture, flow to us almost constantly by television, radio, Internet, satellite, CD, DVD, and in print. Surely with this blessing the Lord is telling us that our need for the scriptures is greater than in any previous time.

Scripture tutors us in principles and moral values. In scripture, we find vivid portrayals of the blessings that come from honoring true principles.

REFLECTIONS

"In God I have put my trust" (Psalm 56:4).

By Sheila Kindred

Based on a true story

I hung my schoolbag in the closet and saw my reflection in the full-length mirror on the door. I stopped and looked at my loose ponytail, my wrinkled shirt, and my sagging socks. Words from my Primary teacher came back to me: "You are a special daughter of our Heavenly Father. He has many blessings in store for you in your future."

I leaned forward and peered into the mirror, wishing I could see the future. What would I be like when I was 12 or 22? Would I be pretty? Would I be smart? Would I marry in the temple? Would I have beautiful children? These were my dreams, but were these the blessings God had in store for me?

"What are you looking at?" It was Mom's soft voice.

In the mirror's reflection I saw Mom standing behind me in the doorway.

"Me," I said. "It's just me in the mirror."

Mom came and looked over my shoulder. "Just you' is someone very special," she said.

"That's what my Primary teacher said. She said Heavenly Father has many blessings in store for me. What does my life have in store?"

"Come to my room. I want to show you something," Mom said.

In her bedroom Mom opened a small box and lifted out a silver handheld mirror.

"It's beautiful," I said, fingering the letter *B* etched on the back.

"This was my grandmother's mirror," Mom said. "When I polish this mirror, I try to imagine what Grandma Beatrice saw when she looked into it. Maybe at first she saw a young girl, like you, dreaming of her future.

"I can imagine the light of happiness she saw in her eyes when she looked at her long braids in the mirror before her baptism. Did you know she wasn't able to be baptized until she was 18 years old?"

I shook my head. "No."

"And then after her marriage to Grandpa, she had a baby daughter who lived only two days. I imagine the eyes she saw in this mirror then were swollen with tears.

"Many years after that, she would have seen her joyful reflection as she prepared to go to the temple to be sealed to her husband and three children.

"As an older woman, she may have used this mirror to place a hat on her head before going to her Relief Society meetings.

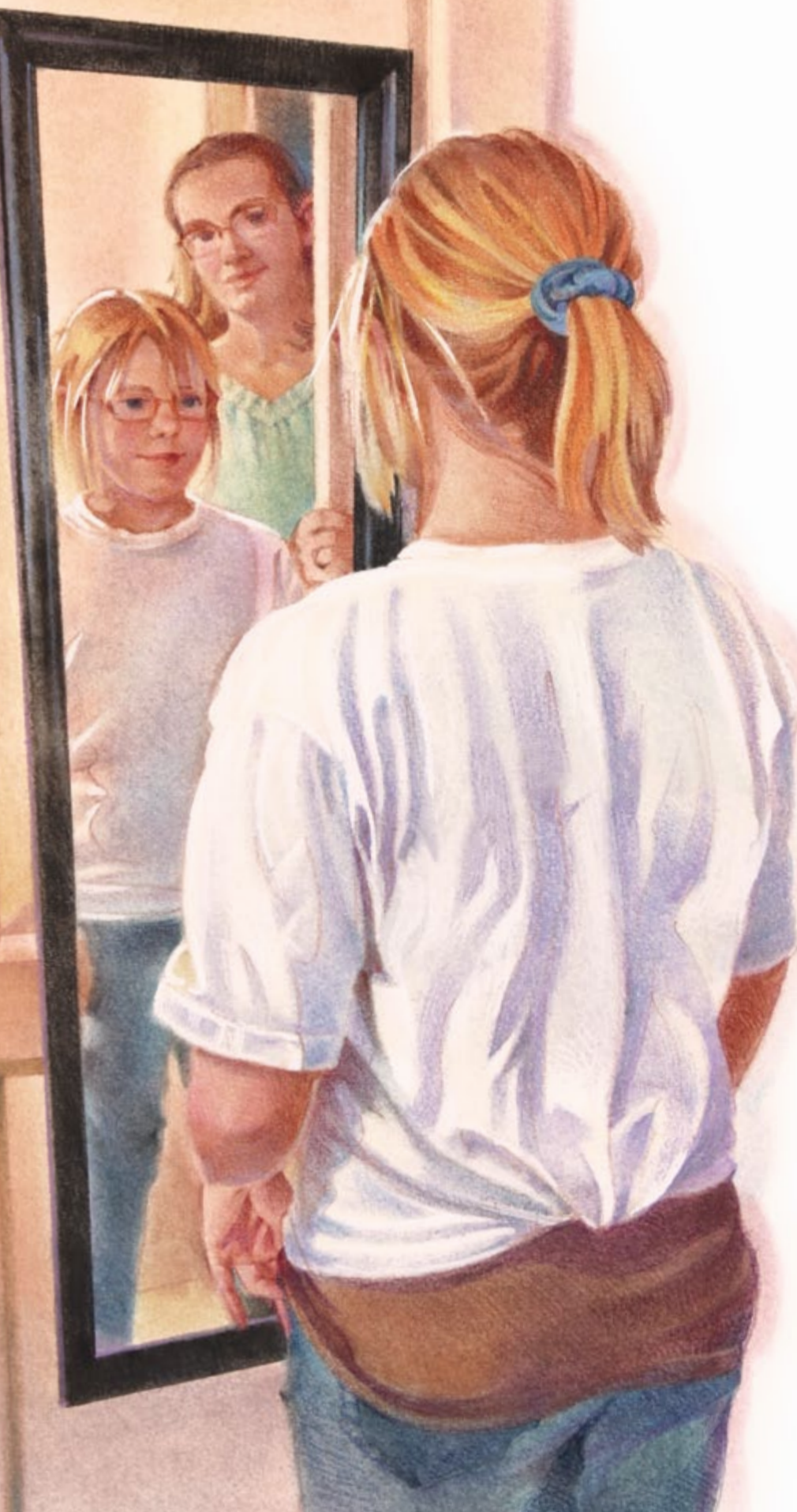
"And finally, as a gray-haired widow,



Search out your heritage. It is important to know, as far as possible, those who came before us. We discover something

about ourselves when we learn about our ancestors."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Constant Truths for Changing Times," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2005, 21.



she may have seen the brave determination in her eyes as she lived for many years alone but faithful to the end."

"Did Heavenly Father bless Great-Grandma?" I asked.

"Yes, He did," Mom said.

"Was Great-Grandma happy with her life?"

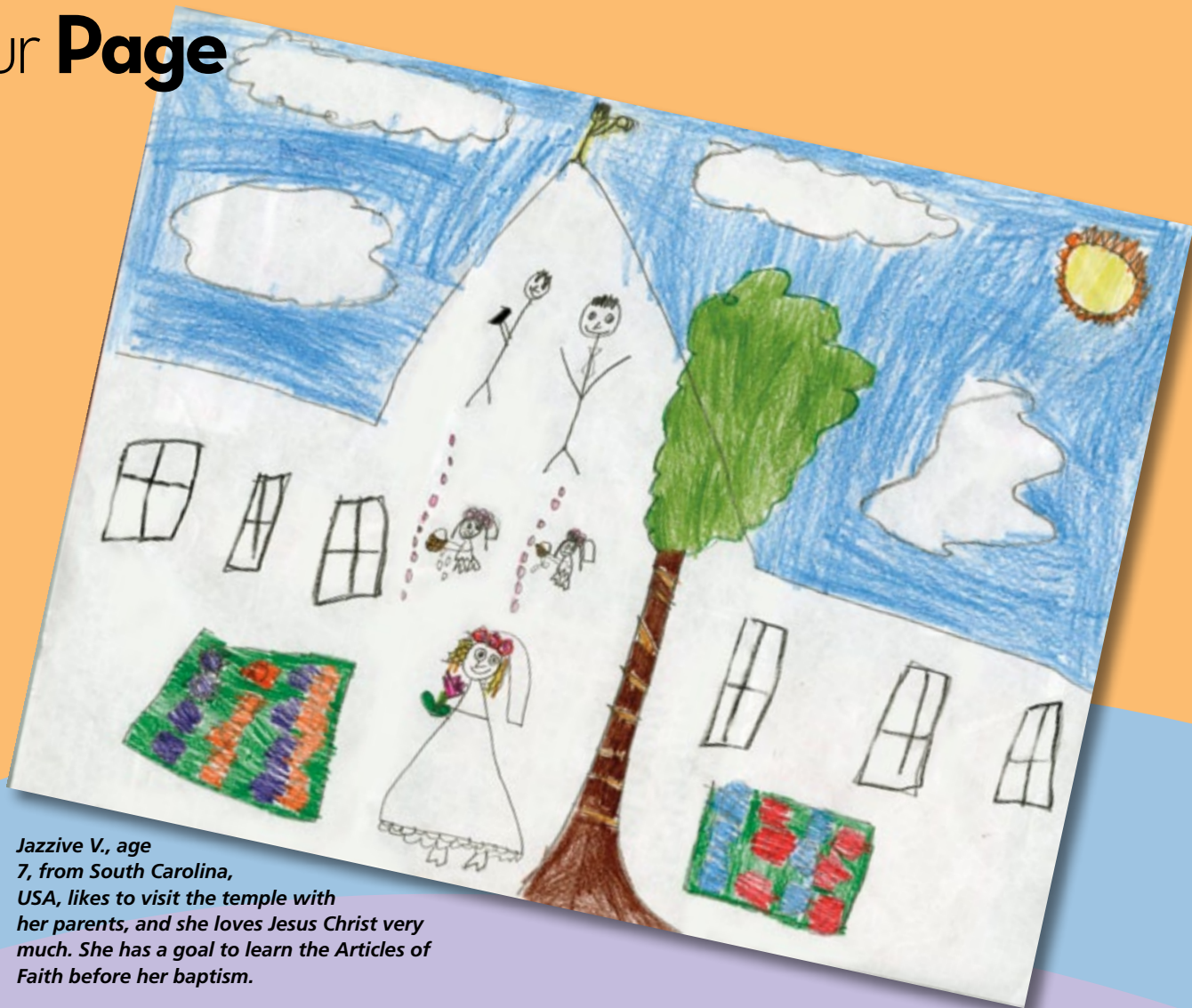
"Yes. It wasn't exactly as she planned. Some of it was very hard, but she put her trust in God, and those experiences helped her become more like Him."

"I guess I don't really need to see the future," I said, placing the silver mirror gently back in its box. "I'll just trust in Heavenly Father and follow Him."

"I'm sure God has a wonderful life in store for you," Mom said. "And if you follow Him, in the end, the face you see in the mirror will reflect His image. And that would truly be a dream come true." ■

Our Page

Jazzive V., age 7, from South Carolina, USA, likes to visit the temple with her parents, and she loves Jesus Christ very much. She has a goal to learn the Articles of Faith before her baptism.



I FELT THE SPIRIT

One evening, like every evening, I knelt down by my bed before going to sleep and prayed. But that night after I prayed, I felt happier than I have ever felt before. I know I felt the Holy Ghost that night.

Lisa E., age 12, Germany



Daniela M., age 8, from Costa Rica, likes to have family home evening and share with her family. She likes to play with her brother, Rodolpho. Her favorite color is fuchsia.



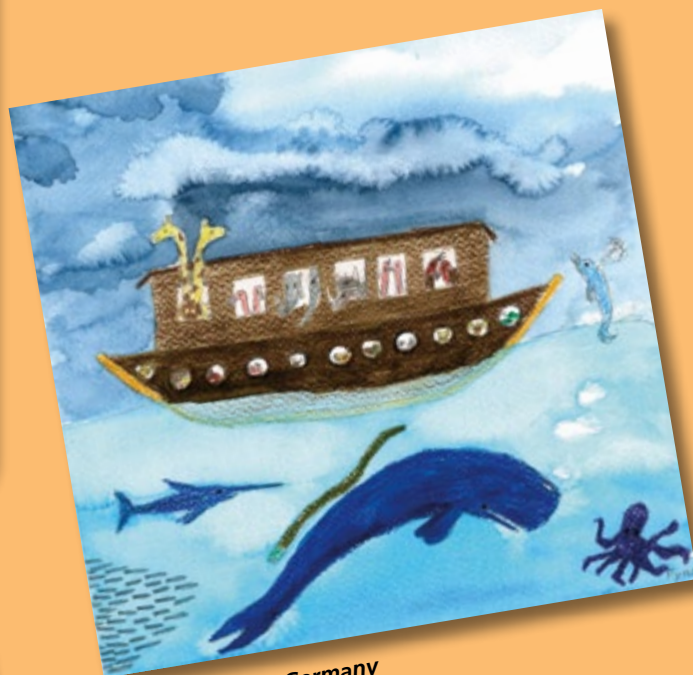
Rodolpho M., age 6, likes to read the scriptures about the birth of Jesus Christ. His favorite color is blue. He loves his parents because they take care of him and love him.



I CAN FEEL GOOD

When I do something wrong, I say I am sorry and try to do better. When I do what is right, the Holy Ghost helps me feel good. I want to always have that good feeling inside of me. In the Book of Mormon, when Alma the Younger did something bad, he repented and did what was right. He became a good example.

**Jared Y., age 5,
West Malaysia**



Fynn S., age 10, Germany



Valery R., age 11, Switzerland



Juan G., age 6, Ecuador

If you would like to submit an item for Our Page, e-mail it to liahona@ldschurch.org, with "Our Page" in the subject line. Each submission must include the child's full name, gender, and age (must be from 3 to 12 years old), plus the parent's name, ward or branch, and stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to use the child's photo and submission. Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

You can use this lesson and activity to learn more about this month's Primary theme.

My Body Is a Temple of God

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

By Vicki F. Matsumori

Close your eyes and picture a temple. What color is it? How big is it? Does it have any windows? Are there spires? How many?

All the temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are different. The Salt Lake Temple in Utah has gray granite walls and six spires. It looks different from the Cardston Alberta Temple in Canada, which has stone walls but no spires. Even though each temple looks different, all are beautiful and are built for the same purpose. They are places where special



ordinances take place that are needed for us to return to Heavenly Father.

You are like the temple. You are different from everyone else, but you too are a house for the Spirit of God—the Holy Ghost. The Apostle Paul said: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16–17). Your body is a temple for your spirit.

Just as you treat temples with respect, you should treat your body with respect. You can do this by

obeying the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89), by dressing modestly, and by keeping your body clean. You should also keep your heart and mind clean by reading, listening to, and watching only “things that are pleasing to Heavenly Father” (see My Gospel Standards).

When you are clean in mind and body, you can receive great blessings. ■

Activity

Find your way through the maze. When you get to a sign, choose the Yes or No path based on which helps you treat your body like a temple of God. Choosing the right paths will lead to the temple.

Draw pictures of four other things that are good for you. Cut out and place your pictures over the good-choice pictures in the maze.





Jesus Blesses Children

By Diane L. Mangum

Jairus and his wife sat beside their daughter's bed and worried. Their daughter grew sicker as each hour passed, and they feared she would die. They knew of only one more thing they could do to help her.

Jairus rushed out into the streets of Capernaum to try to find Jesus of Nazareth. Jairus knew that Jesus had healed people. Perhaps Jesus would come and heal his daughter.

Down near the seashore people gathered where Jesus had gotten off a boat. Jairus squeezed his way through the crowd until he was next to the Lord. Jairus fell on his knees and told Jesus that his daughter was sick and dying.

"I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live," Jairus begged.

Jesus agreed, and many people followed them.

A messenger rushed to meet them and told Jairus that his daughter was already dead. It was too late for Jesus to come and

help. Jesus said to Jairus, "Be not afraid, only believe."

When they got to the home of Jairus, there was loud crying and noise. Many people were in the house, wailing with sadness.

Jesus walked into the house and told them not to weep, because the girl was not dead but only sleeping. Some of the people laughed at Jesus. They knew the girl had died.

Then Jesus sent all the noisy people away. He took Jairus and Jairus's wife, along with His Apostles Peter, James, and John,



JAIRUS

Jairus was an important man in Capernaum. He was a ruler of the synagogue where all the Jews in the area went to worship.



MOURNING

When someone died in the time of Jesus, families paid people called mourners to come to their homes and cry loudly and play sad music on flutes. A person was buried within 24 hours after he or she died.

Damsel means a girl or young woman.

into the room where the girl was lying on the bed.

Jesus took the girl by the hand and said, “**Damsel**, I say unto thee, arise.”

The girl stood up. Her parents were astonished and rejoiced. Their daughter was alive!

There were other times when Jesus healed and blessed children. One day in Perea, many people gathered around the Savior, listening to Him teach. Some people brought their children to see Jesus and to be blessed by Him.

The disciples of Jesus saw the children and tried to send them away. Jesus was busy with many people, and the children did not seem important. But Jesus told the disciples, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.”

Then Jesus took each child in His arms. He put His hands on each one’s head and blessed them. Jesus told the adults that they needed to be humble like the little children. ■

From Mark 5:21–24, 35–43; 10:13–16.



Finding People to Teach

As missionaries pray, study the scriptures, and share their testimonies, they show their obedience and qualify themselves to receive the Lord's help. Use the directions in the key to help these missionaries find a family who wants to learn about the gospel. For example, when you see the missionaries praying, move to the picture on the right. ■

Start



Finish



Move right



Move left



Move down



BRIGHT IDEA



**“May we be . . . good
neighbors in our
communities, reach-
ing out to those of
other faiths as well as
to those of our own.”**

President Thomas S. Monson
From the April 2011 general conference

ILLUSTRATION BY MARYN ROOS



Just One Coin

By Chad E. Phares

Based on a true story

"Though my tenth seems small, it shows my faith and gratitude to him, the Lord of all" ("I Want to Give the Lord My Tenth," Children's Songbook, 150).

1. Daniel stared at the coin on his dresser. He had been looking at it for the last few minutes. It didn't look like very much.

Daniel, are you ready for church?

Yes, Dad. I'll be right there.

2. Daniel stuck the coin in his pocket and ran to catch up with his family.

3. When Daniel and his family arrived at church, he got a tithing slip and an envelope from outside the bishop's office.

Dad, can you help me fill this out?

Of course.

4. How much tithing are you paying today?

Not very much. Just this.

Daniel, is this 10 percent of the money you earned?

Yes.

Then this is perfect.

5. Daniel sealed the envelope and gave the tithing to the bishop. The bishop shook his hand.



Daniel wondered if the bishop would still have shaken his hand if he knew there was only one coin in the envelope.

6. I'm proud of you, Daniel. Paying tithing is a good choice.

I know, Dad, but it was just one coin.



7.

You never know what that one coin will pay for. Maybe it will pay to print one page in a Book of Mormon, or maybe it will help pay for one of the stones that is used to build a temple.



8.

Daniel had never thought of tithing that way before. He started to think of all the ways his tithing could help others.

I guess you're right, Dad. I'm glad I can pay tithing—even if it is just one coin.



How Tithing Is Used

Tithing is used to help with missionary work, build temples and meetinghouses, publish scriptures, and do many other things. Look at the drawings of some of the things tithing pays for. Circle the drawing in each column that is different from the others.

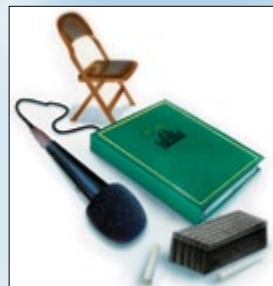
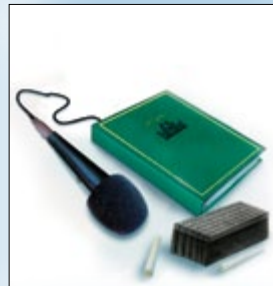
Missionary Work



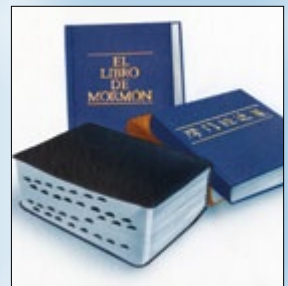
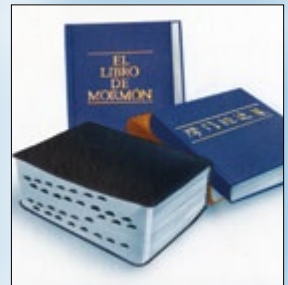
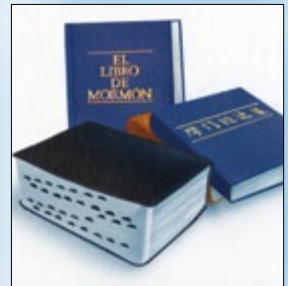
Temples



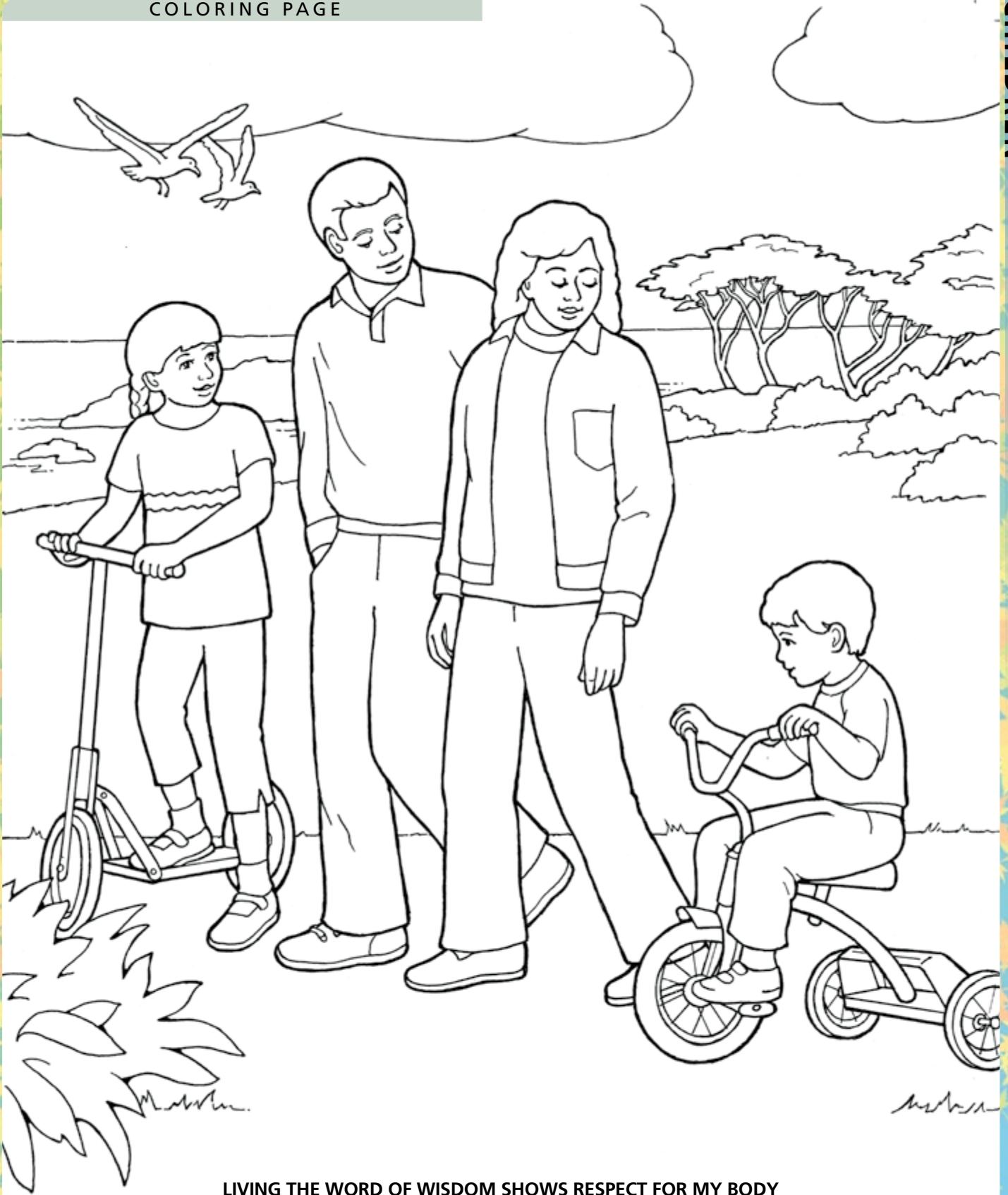
Meetinghouses



Scriptures



LEFT: ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOE FLORES



LIVING THE WORD OF WISDOM SHOWS RESPECT FOR MY BODY

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16–17).

Liahona* and *Ensign Focus on Book of Mormon in October Issue

The Church magazines periodically publish an issue focusing on a single important subject. This year the October issue of the *Liahona* and *Ensign* will be dedicated to the Book of Mormon.

The issue will focus on three important questions: What is the Book of Mormon? Why do we have the Book of Mormon? What does the Book of Mormon mean to me?

The issue will include the history of the Book of Mormon, members' personal experiences with it, suggestions for scripture study, and information on how it applies today. The testimonies of and insights into the Book of Mormon from the 15 living prophets and apostles, as well as all of the past Church Presidents, will be incorporated throughout the issue.

"There is strength in the testimonies of those who lead the Church," said Jenifer Greenwood, assistant managing editor of the *Liahona*. "Their testimonies are based on the Book of Mormon, the keystone of our religion. We have a great desire for members to feel those testimonies."

Members are encouraged to use the issue in two ways, said Elder Paul B. Pieper of the Seventy, Executive Director of the Curriculum Department.

"First, members and missionaries should review

it for their personal edification and to strengthen their testimonies of the Book of Mormon," he said. "Second, they should share the magazine with others, including less-active Church members and nonmembers."

"Our desire is for this issue to be a stepping-stone for people to actually open the Book of Mormon itself and rededicate themselves to it," Sister Greenwood said. "It's wonderful to talk about the Book of Mormon, to read about the

Book of Mormon, and to learn things about the Book of Mormon, but it's the Book of Mormon itself that converts, that gets people closer to God."

The Book of Mormon has withstood the tests of time, trial, and testimony and lies at the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"This issue has been prepared with the hope that it will bring inspiration to families and individuals as they seek to understand, practice, and share with others the teachings of the Book of Mormon," Elder Pieper said.

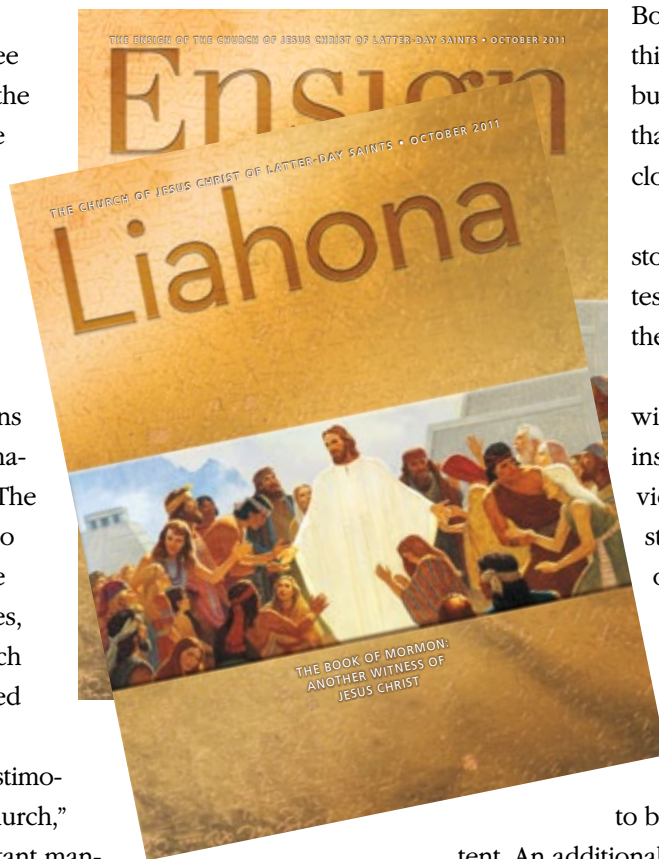
The October issue will be available in 42 languages.

All members are encouraged

to become familiar with its content.

An additional 39 languages will receive the First Presidency Message and Visiting Teaching Message from the issue. The full issue will also be available online in many languages on the *Liahona* and *Ensign* web pages.

Members who wish to subscribe, to give a gift subscription, or to obtain extra copies of the Book of Mormon issue can visit their nearest Distribution Services store or go to store.lds.org. ■



The October issue of the Liahona and Ensign will focus on the Book of Mormon.

New Mission Presidents Called to Serve

The Church announced the names of 127 new mission presidents earlier this year. The majority began their three-year calling in July of this year.

Mission	New President
Alaska Anchorage	N. Warren Clark
Albania Tirana	Andrew M. Ford
Alpine German-Speaking	Richard L. Miles
Argentina Buenos Aires West	Douglas B. Carter
Argentina Mendoza	Sergio E. Avila
Argentina Resistencia	Raymond S. Heyman
Argentina Rosario	Hugo L. Giuliani
Argentina Salta	Juan J. Levirino
Arizona Phoenix	R. Scott Taylor
Arizona Tucson	Roger E. Killpack
Arkansas Little Rock	Daniel Bay Gibbons
Baltic	Jeffrey G. Boswell
Benin Cotonou	Robert F. Weed
Bolivia Cochabamba	Dan L. Dyer
Brazil Brasilia	Helcio L. Gaertner
Brazil Florianopolis	J. Joel Fernandes
Brazil Fortaleza	Francisco A. Souza
Brazil Maceió	Mauricio G. Gonzaga
Brazil Manaus	H. Moroni Klein
Brazil Recife	Rubens C. Lanius
Brazil Rio de Janeiro	Geraldo Lima
Brazil Salvador	James W. Hart
Brazil São Paulo Interlagos	R. Pacheco Pinho
Brazil São Paulo North	Marcus H. Martins
Brazil São Paulo South	John S. Tanner
Brazil Vitória	J. Araújo Bezerra
California Anaheim	Bradford C. Bowen
California Arcadia	Jorge T. Becerra
California Fresno	Larry Gelwix
California Riverside	Paul F. Smart
California Roseville	John G. Weston
California Sacramento	H. Benson Lewis
California San Diego	Paul N. Clayton
California San Jose	W. Lincoln Watkins
California Ventura	Fernando R. Castro
Canada Vancouver	Karl M. Tillemann
Cape Verde Praia	Roberto F. Oliveira

Chile Concepción South	Oswaldo Martinez Carreño
Chile Osorno	John E. Rappleye
Chile Santiago North	Fred D. Essig
Colombia Cali	Jonathan M. Prince
Colorado Colorado Springs	J. Patrick Anderson
Colorado Denver North	Jerry M. Toombs
Côte d'Ivoire Abidjan	Z. Dominique Dekaye
Democratic Republic of Congo Kinshasa	Brent L. Jameson
Dominican Republic Santo Domingo East	Heriberto Hernandez
Dominican Republic Santo Domingo West	Raul Rodriguez Morel
Ecuador Guayaquil North	Lizardo H. Amaya
Ecuador Quito	Bruce E. Ghent
El Salvador San Salvador	David L. Glazier
El Salvador Santa Ana/Belize	I. Poloski Cordon
England Manchester	Robert I. Preston
Fiji Suva	Kenneth D. Klingler
Finland Helsinki	Douglas M. Rawlings
Florida Fort Lauderdale	Donald E. Anderson
France Paris	Franck Poznanski
Georgia Atlanta North	Mark A. Wolfert
Germany Frankfurt	Lehi K. Schwartz
Ghana Accra	Daniel K. Judd
Ghana Cape Coast	Jeffrey L. Shulz
Guatemala Guatemala City Central	M. Joseph Brough
Guatemala Guatemala City North	Edward D. Watts
Guatemala Guatemala City South	Larry Stay
Guatemala Quetzaltenango	Lewis Bautista
Honduras Tegucigalpa	Carlos A. Hernandez
Japan Kobe	Richard G. Zinke
Japan Sapporo	Eric C. Evans
Japan Sendai	Gary D. Rasmussen
Kentucky Louisville	W. Richards Woodbury
Korea Busan	Lynn A. Gilbert
Louisiana Baton Rouge	Jim M. Wall
Mexico Mexico City North	J. Dana Call
Mexico Mexico City Southeast	Raymundo Morales Barrera
Mexico Oaxaca	Enrique Leyva Jimenez
Mexico Puebla	Robert C. Reeves
Mexico Tijuana	Armando Carreón Rivera
Mexico Torreón	David Flores Villaseñor

Mexico Tuxtla Gutiérrez	Juan G. Cardenas Tamayo
Mexico Veracruz	Carlos W. Treviño
Michigan Lansing	Stephen H. Hess
Micronesia Guam	Stephen F. Mecham
Minnesota Minneapolis	Jordan W. Clements
Missouri Independence	Donald J. Keyes
Mongolia Ulaanbaatar	Jay D. Clark *
Nevada Las Vegas	Michael A. Neider
New Jersey Morristown	Jon M. Jeppson
New Zealand Auckland	Paul N. Lekias
New Zealand Wellington	Michael L. Kezerian
Nigeria Lagos	Edward K. B. Karkari
Nigeria Port Harcourt	Philip K. Xaxagbe
Ohio Columbus	Robert T. Nilsen
Oregon Eugene	Mark A. Young
Oregon Portland	C. Jeffery Morby
Pennsylvania Pittsburgh	Clinton D. Topham
Peru Chiclayo	Eduardo C. Risso
Peru Lima East	Nelson Ardila Vásquez
Philippines Angeles	David C. Martino
Philippines Cebu	Evan A. Schmutz
Philippines Davao	Ferdinand Pangan
Philippines Manila	Lyle J. Stucki
Philippines Olongapo	Roberto B. Querido
Philippines Quezon City North	Dennis R. Sperry
Philippines San Pablo	George E. Peterson
Philippines Tacloban	Jose V. Andaya
Romania Bucharest	Ned C. Hill
Russia Novosibirsk	Steven M. Petersen
Russia St. Petersburg	Jon Beesley
Russia Yekaterinburg	E. Kent Rust
Samoa Apia	Johnny L. Leota
Slovenia/Croatia	Edward B. Rowe
South Africa Cape Town	Mark I. Wood
South Africa Johannesburg	S. Craig Omer
South Carolina Columbia	Monte Holm
Sweden Stockholm	Gregory J. Newell
Tahiti Papeete	Benjamin T. Sinjoux
Tennessee Knoxville	Richard A. Irion
Tennessee Nashville	William L. McKee
Texas Dallas	Devin G. Durrant
Texas Houston	John C. Pingree
Texas Houston East	Thomas J. Crawford
Texas Lubbock	Arnold R. Augustin
Ukraine Donetsk	Vladimir Campero
Ukraine Kyiv	Jörg Klebingat
Venezuela Caracas	Vianey R. Villamizar
Washington Tacoma	Douglas W. Weaver
West Virginia Charleston	Bruce G. Pitt
Zambia Lusaka	Mikele R. Padovich ■

* Began serving in December 2010

New Area Leadership Assignments

The First Presidency has announced changes in area leadership assignments effective on August 1, 2011. As part of the changes, Elder Tad R. Callister was called to the Presidency of the Seventy. All members of Area Presidencies are members of the First or Second Quorums of the Seventy. ■

Presidency of the Seventy



Ronald A. Rasband
Assists in All Areas



Steven E. Snow
1. Utah North
2. Utah Salt Lake City
3. Utah South



Walter F. González
4. North America Southeast



L. Whitney Clayton
5. North America Northwest
6. North America West



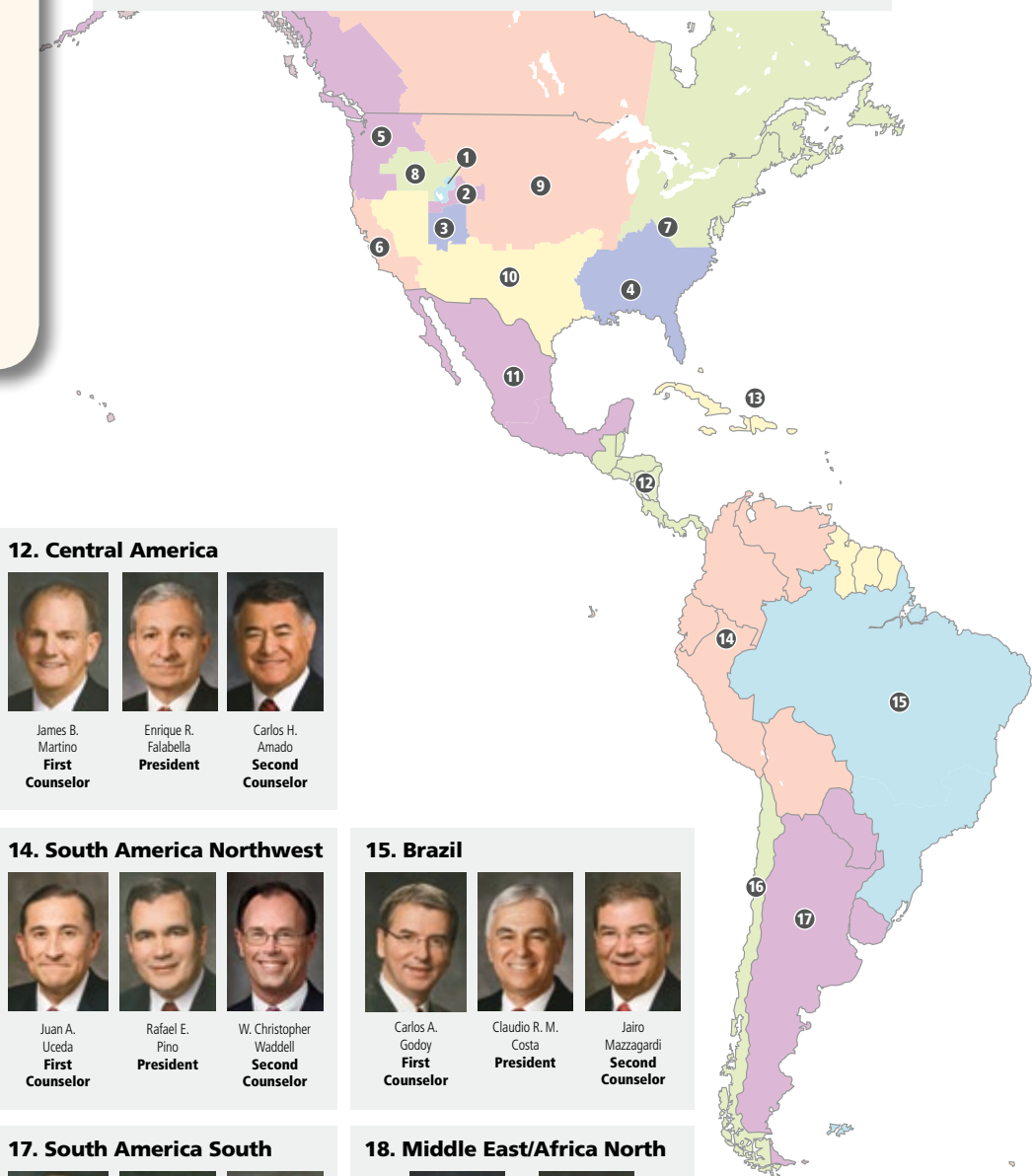
Jay E. Jensen
7. North America Northeast



Donald L. Hallstrom
8. Idaho
9. North America Central



Tad R. Callister
10. North America Southwest



11. Mexico



Benjamin De Hoyos
First Counselor



Daniel L. Johnson
President



Octaviano Tenorio
Second Counselor

12. Central America



James B. Martino
First Counselor



Enrique R. Falabella
President



Carlos H. Amado
Second Counselor

13. Caribbean



Wilford W. Andersen
First Counselor



Francisco J. Viñas
President



J. Devn Cornish
Second Counselor

14. South America Northwest



Juan A. Uceda
First Counselor



Rafael E. Pino
President



W. Christopher Waddell
Second Counselor

15. Brazil



Carlos A. Godoy
First Counselor



Claudio R. M. Costa
President



Jairo Mazzagardi
Second Counselor

16. Chile



Jorge F. Zaballos
First Counselor



Lawrence E. Corbridge
President



Kent F. Richards
Second Counselor

17. South America South



Marcos A. Aidukaits
First Counselor



Mervyn B. Arnold
President



Bradley D. Foster
Second Counselor

18. Middle East/Africa North



Bruce D. Porter



Paul B. Pieper

Administered from Headquarters

19. Europe



Gérald Causé
First Counselor



Erich W. Kopischke
President



José A. Teixeira
Second Counselor

20. Europe East



Larry R. Lawrence
First Counselor



Gregory A. Schwitzer
President



Randall K. Bennett
Second Counselor

21. Asia



Kent D. Watson
First Counselor



Anthony D. Perkins
President



Gerrit W. Gong
Second Counselor

22. Asia North



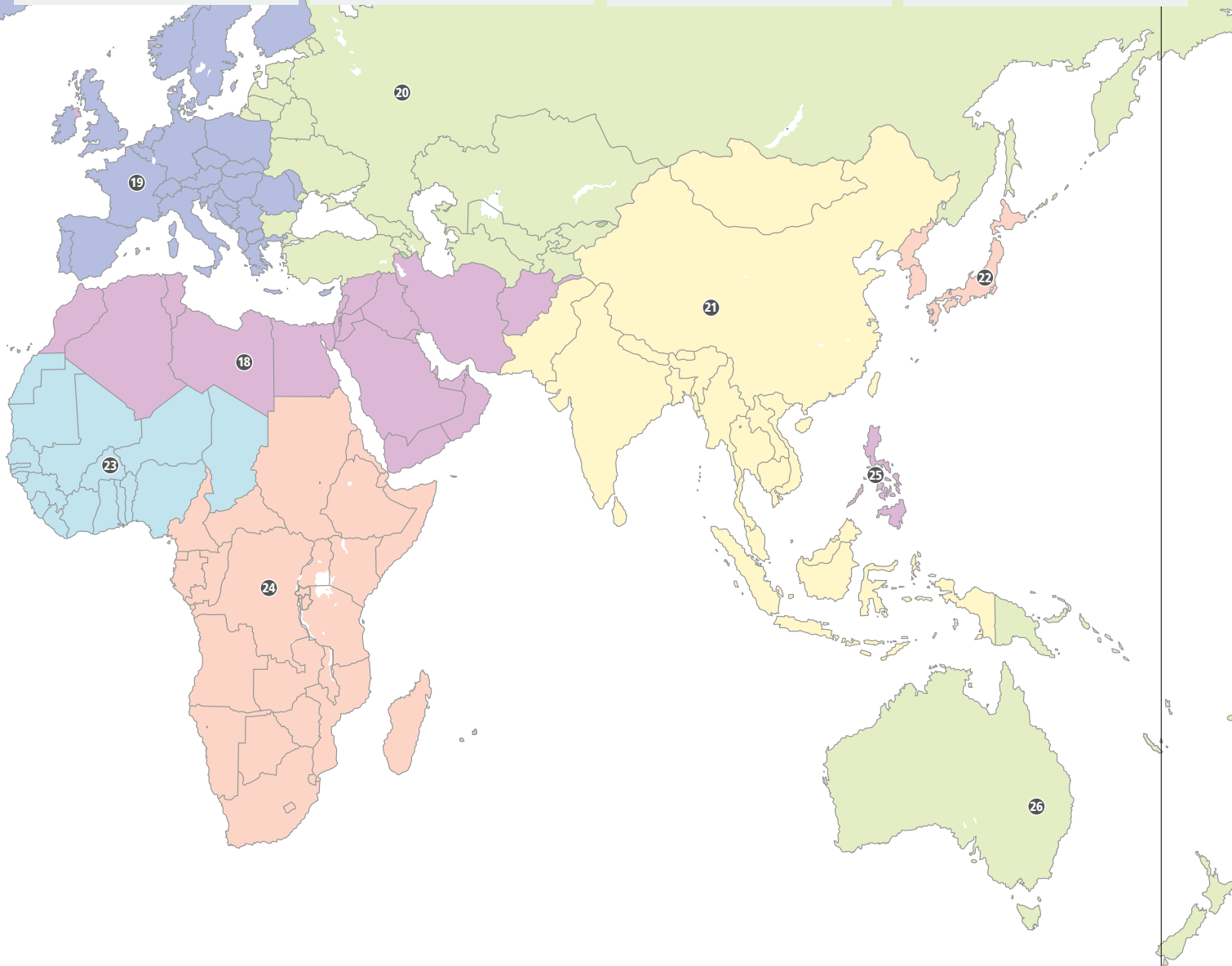
Michael T. Ringwood
First Counselor



Gary E. Stevenson
President



Koichi Aoyagi
Second Counselor



23. Africa West



Joseph W. Sitati
First Counselor



John B. Dickson
President



LeGrand R. Curtis Jr.
Second Counselor

24. Africa Southeast



Ulisses Soares
First Counselor



Dale G. Renlund
President



Carl B. Cook
Second Counselor

25. Philippines



Brent H. Nielson
First Counselor



Michael John U. Teh
President



Ian S. Arden
Second Counselor

26. Pacific



Kevin W. Pearson
First Counselor



James J. Hamula
President



F. Michael Watson
Second Counselor

Church Realigns Mission Boundaries

To better align resources to changing needs, the Church created five new missions and combined others with neighboring missions in 2011. The number of missions worldwide is 340.

The Church has created the following missions:

The Benin Cotonou Mission—comprising Benin and Togo—was created from part of the former Ivory Coast Abidjan Mission.

The Mexico Mexico City Southeast Mission comes from the realignment of the Mexico Mexico City East, Mexico Mexico City Northwest, and Mexico Mexico City South Missions.

The Peru Chiclayo Mission came from the Peru Piura and Peru Trujillo Missions.

A division of the Philippines Manila and Philippines Quezon City Missions created the Philippines Quezon City North Mission.

The Zambia Lusaka Mission was divided out of the Zimbabwe Harare Mission and will include the country of Malawi.

The following missions were consolidated:

The Canada Toronto East and Canada Toronto West were combined to become the Canada Toronto Mission.

The Connecticut Hartford Mission was absorbed into the Massachusetts Boston Mission.

The Florida Jacksonville, Florida Tallahassee, Georgia Atlanta, and South Carolina Columbia Missions were realigned to each include a part of the former Georgia Macon Mission.

The Portugal Porto Mission became part of the Portugal Lisbon Mission.

The France Paris and France Toulouse Missions were realigned to include the Switzerland Geneva Mission area. (In addition, the headquarters of the France Toulouse Mission were moved to Lyon, and the name of the mission was changed to France Lyon.)

The El Salvador San Salvador East and El Salvador San Salvador West/Belize Missions were realigned. The East mission is now the El Salvador San Salvador Mission, and the West is now the El Salvador Santa Ana/Belize Mission. ■

To see maps of the new missions, visit lds.org/church/news/2011-mission-boundary-changes.

WORLD BRIEFS

Church Continues to Provide Relief in Japan

Following the devastating 9.0-magnitude earthquake that struck Japan on March 11, 2011, the Church continues to provide supplies and relief throughout the country.

More than 150 tons of supplies from Church relief efforts have been distributed: food, water, blankets, bedding, hygiene kits, clothing, and fuel. More than 7,000 Church members have donated more than 60,000 work hours to relief efforts.

Nine Million Records from Hungary Added to FamilySearch

Of the 11.5 million new international records added to FamilySearch in March, 9 million of them are from Hungary.

The nine million already-indexed records were the first of three installments of Hungarian records that will be published over the next year. In addition to these records, new projects from Hungary are now available on FamilySearch for volunteers to index. ■

COMMENT

***Liahona* Has the Answers**

The *Liahona* has been a great blessing to me, to my family, and to all those I have the opportunity to speak with about the Church. Whenever I need counsel, I turn to the *Liahona*, and I always find the answer I need. The *Liahona* on the Internet is wonderful too—it helps me prepare for talks and lessons by saving me hours of research.

Maurilio Braz Santana, Brazil

A Guide for Those Who Seek

Each month when I read the *Liahona*, it gives me something more than I had before. It reminds me of the Savior's love for me and helps me improve. I know that this magazine is a guide for those who truly seek guidance.

Ange-Lorraine Kouadio, Côte d'Ivoire

Feels the Spirit of LDS Voices

The *Liahona* is better and better each month. I rejoice when I receive it, for I know with a surety that I will find inspiring messages in it. I particularly like Latter-day Saint Voices. I feel the Spirit when I read of those who overcome difficulties and temptations through the example and teachings of the Redeemer.

Sheila Uamba, Mozambique

Please send your feedback or suggestions to liahona@ldschurch.org. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity. ■

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.

"One Stalwart Pioneer, Many

Generations Blessed," page 16: As you share this article with your family, consider discussing how Sara's example influenced her father. Discuss how your example can influence those around you for good or for bad. Set a goal to be a "stalwart pioneer" every day.

"Did He Really Ask Me That?"

page 42: While reviewing the article, identify and compare the concerns felt by the Church members regarding their callings. Read President Monson's quote and then discuss ways to invite Heavenly Father's help in fulfilling your responsibilities. Consider reviewing the resources listed under "Receiving Help from Other Sources."

"The Only True and Living Church,"

page 48: Consider listing Elder Oaks's three

features that make

The Church of

Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints

the only true and

living Church on

the earth. Discuss

each feature and

how it blesses your family. You might consider

role-playing how your family can testify of these features to those of other faiths.

"Reflections," page 60: After you read the

article together, have each family member look in a mirror and tell what he or she sees.

Help each person realize that he or she is looking at a child of Heavenly Father. You may wish to discuss and bear testimony of how much He loves each of us and how important it is to place our trust in Him. You might consider reading together Psalm 56:4 and 1 Corinthians 2:9.



A Testimony Lesson

When my husband and I first got married, I was worried that family home evening with just the two of us would be awkward or would become repetitive. I thought we would run out of things to teach each other. But my husband surprised me on our first Monday night by saying, "I want to bear my testimony." He proceeded to share his testimony of the Savior and of marriage. After his testimony, I shared mine. It was an evening I will always treasure. Though he had not known of my concern about family home evening, he answered it, and I found that each family home evening was a spiritual experience to look forward to.

Since then testimony sharing has remained a tradition in our family home evenings. Though we now have a toddler and we tailor lessons to her, we also don't go without bearing our testimonies. I am excited for the day when I will be able to hear my children's testimonies and when I can teach them why testimonies matter. ■

Heidi Icleanu, Kentucky, USA

THE PARABLE OF THE BANANA TREE

By Anton T. Kumarasamy

As told to Linda J. Later

Banana trees are common where I live in Sri Lanka. They have soft trunks, which are easy to cut with a knife, but no one hurts the banana tree because it gives fine fruit.

Many years ago when I was small, there was a terrible storm. When it finally ended, I went outside and saw that one of our banana trees had blown over; it was uprooted and stripped of leaves. I thought cutting the trunk of the ruined tree would be fun, so I went to the house and found a knife. But just as I was about to strike, my grandfather stopped me.

“You mustn’t hurt the banana tree,” he said.

“But why?” I asked. “It’s not good anymore, and it would be fun.”

My grandfather said nothing but beckoned for me to follow him. He told me to cut a big stick. Then he brought me back to the yard where the banana tree lay. Though it appeared useless, we went to work pulling it upright. Once the trunk was straight, we braced the frail tree with the stick.

“Anton,” my grandfather said, “I want you to watch this banana tree every day and make sure it stays straight. Every day you will need to water it and give it nourishment.”

So every morning I checked the banana tree to make sure the trunk was straight.



The storm-damaged banana tree appeared to be dying. But with some love, care, and daily nourishment, it not only recovered but also bore fruit.

Every day I filled a water bucket and carefully poured it around the roots. I was diligent in giving the tree the nourishment it needed.

Soon there were blossoms and, shortly after that, bananas. When the fruit was ripe, Grandfather handed a banana to each member

of the family. I watched with pleasure as they peeled and ate them. No bananas ever tasted as good as those, and it brought me joy to see my family enjoying them.

That was many years ago, long before I found The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But the lessons I learned as I cared for the banana tree apply to my life today. In my Church callings as well as my medical practice, I often find people in difficult predicaments. Like that banana tree, these people are forsaken, stripped of beauty, and finished—even in their own eyes. When I think of giving up on them, I remember the sweetness of the fruit of that banana tree and find the courage to help lift them upright, brace them, nourish them, and care for them daily as the Savior would.

The bananas my family enjoyed were sweet, but the Book of Mormon tells of another kind of fruit—one that is “most sweet” and “desirable above all other fruit” (see 1 Nephi 8:11–12). We can find joy as we help those who are struggling to find their way through the mists of darkness and guide them to partake of the fruit that is sweet above all—the fruit of eternal life. ■



The Gathering, by Joshua Wallace Jensen

In 1997, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the pioneers on July 24, 1847, modern-day Latter-day Saint “pioneers” reenacted the trek from Winter Quarters, Nebraska, to the Salt Lake Valley. This image is based on that reenactment. The hymn “Come, Come, Ye Saints,” written by William Clayton in 1846, applies to both groups of pioneers:

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
’Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—All is well! All is well!
(*Hymns*, no. 30)



What keeps life in balance?

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles suggests four ways Latter-day Saints can create balanced, righteous lives:

1. Keep their wonderful physical bodies pure and holy as temples of God.
2. Place preeminence on spiritual learning and knowledge from God.
3. Be a trusted generation and use the foundation of eternal gospel truths to establish standards and values.
4. Seek learning from the eternal truths contained in the holy scriptures.

See “The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life,” page 30.