

By Sally Johnson Odekirk

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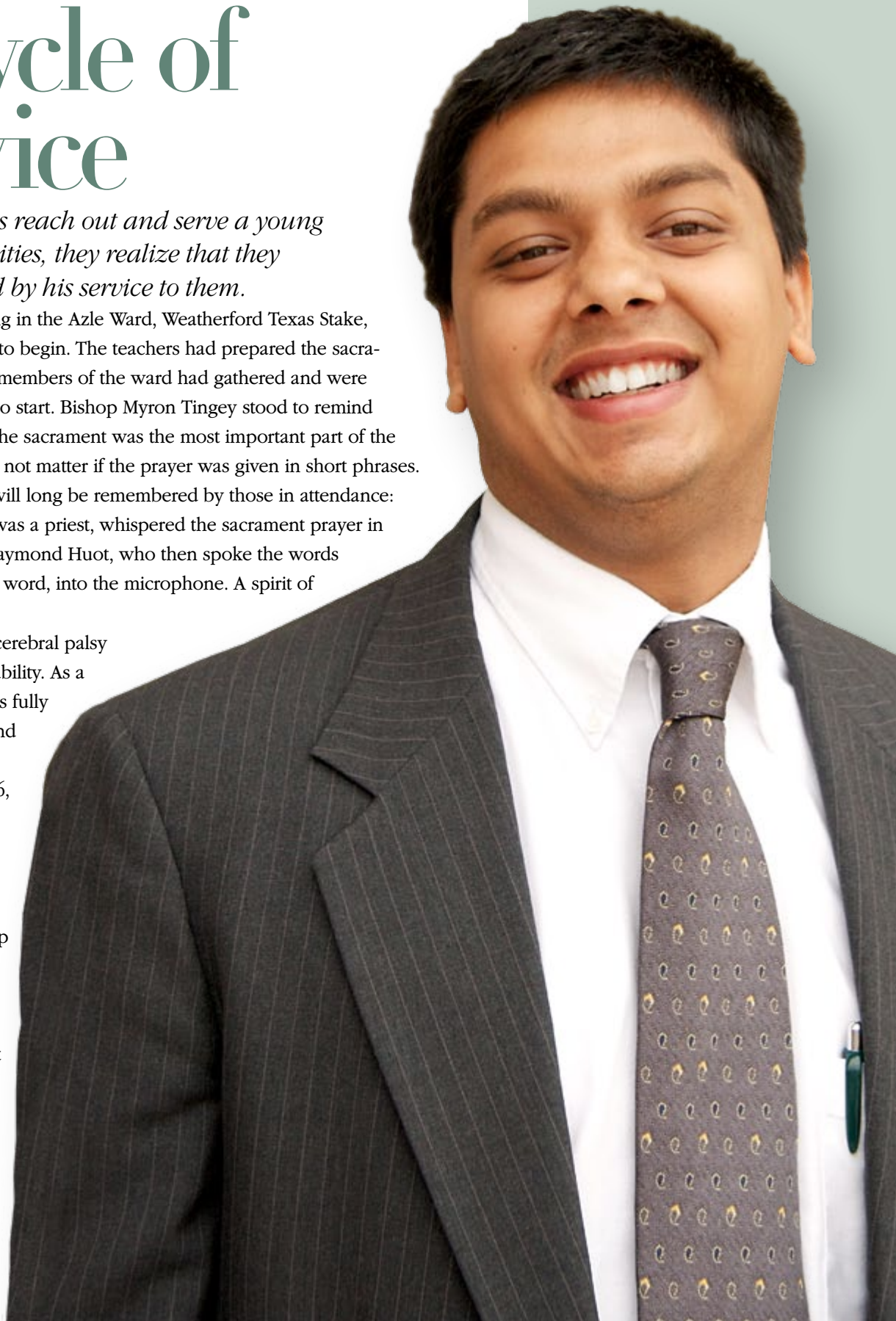
# A Cycle of Service

*As ward members reach out and serve a young man with disabilities, they realize that they have been blessed by his service to them.*

Sacrament meeting in the Azle Ward, Weatherford Texas Stake, USA, was about to begin. The teachers had prepared the sacrament table, and members of the ward had gathered and were ready for the meeting to start. Bishop Myron Tingey stood to remind the congregation that the sacrament was the most important part of the meeting and that it did not matter if the prayer was given in short phrases. What happened next will long be remembered by those in attendance: Danny Oldroyd, who was a priest, whispered the sacrament prayer in phrases to his friend Raymond Huot, who then spoke the words of the prayer, word for word, into the microphone. A spirit of love filled the chapel.

Raymond has mild cerebral palsy and an intellectual disability. As a young teenager, he was fully involved in Scouting and Young Men activities, and when he turned 16, he wanted to be able to offer the sacrament prayer. Bishop Tingey suggested having one of the other priests help him.

“It was inspiring to see his determination to fulfill that simple yet sacred calling,” Danny remembers. “His sincerity could easily be seen, and the support of the ward and its





***Raymond, shown here with his fellow ward members, says, “I can’t read or write, but I can be an example.” He set an example in Scouting by earning his Eagle Scout Award (see photo on facing page).***

leaders was a key to his growth and success.”

“We learned that cooperation can help everyone participate,” says Bishop Tingey. “And there is joy in serving others.”

It’s been that way ever since Raymond and his family moved into the ward: members reach out to help Raymond achieve his goals, and in return he teaches them how to love and to persevere in the face of difficulty.

“Raymond knows how to make the most of his challenges,” says his father, Don Huot. “He helps the ward think more positively about life because they see what he can do. He made lots of friends in the Young Men program. If he ever had any questions, he just asked his friends, and they helped him.”

### **A Friend to All**

Don and Robin Huot adopted Raymond when he was 10 months old, knowing that he would have some challenges. But as Raymond grew, he determined not to let his disability hold him back. He has learned how to be outgoing and kind to those he meets.

Raymond was 12 years old when his family moved into the Azle Ward. “When we first moved here I sat in the back of the classroom like a hermit,” he says, “but the whole ward helped me grow.”

It started with the young men. Jared Abraham, who was a deacon at the time, recalls befriending Raymond. “I took him under my wing because he has a gift of childlike innocence that we’re all attracted to,” says Jared. “He’s also fun to talk to and be around.”

A few years later Danny Oldroyd moved into the ward with his family, and it was Raymond’s turn to welcome a newcomer.

“It was great to have someone to break the ice in the new ward,” Danny remembers. “For a 14-year-old boy, moving to a new place isn’t easy, but Ray helped make it easier.”

As Raymond progressed through the Young Men program, ward leaders and friends helped him fulfill his priesthood responsibilities, including his calling as teachers quorum president.

“The other boys realized that he needed help in some areas,” says Robin. “But at the same time, they were willing to follow him when he was in a leadership position.”

During high school he was a water boy and trainer for the local football team and had a lot of friends who responded to his warmth and enthusiasm. “People comment all the time on how much they love him,” adds Robin. “I think it’s because they reciprocate what they get from him.”

## An Eagle Scout

In addition to Young Men and school activities, Raymond was also actively involved in the Boy Scout program. “When he was exposed to opportunities through Scouting, learning new things opened the world to him,” says Debra Oldroyd, who was the ward Scouting advancement chair when Raymond became a Boy Scout. “He also helped the other boys realize that they could work and have fun as a group.”

Ward Scout leaders worked with the Longhorn Council of the Boy Scouts of America to make sure that Raymond could meet the requirements to earn his Eagle Scout Award.

“We only needed two considerations for Raymond,” Bennett Hortman, Raymond’s Scoutmaster, explains. “We provided a scribe for him, and he required a flotation device for water activities. He earned 21 badges, and he did every one according to regular requirements. He also held leadership positions in the troop; I knew that if he was in charge, he was there 100 percent.”

For his Eagle project, Raymond worked with an organization to photograph, fingerprint, and document children so that this information will be available to police if a child comes up missing. Because Raymond is so well known and liked in the community, many of his friends participated to support him.

## Missionary Work

When Raymond turned 19 he had a strong desire to serve a mission. Bishop Kent Talbot, stake president Tom Carver, and President Wright Thurston of the Texas Fort Worth Mission worked together to make a local service mission possible. Raymond proselytized with the full-time missionaries three days a week and served in the Dallas Texas Temple once a week.

“Raymond served with great enthusiasm for 12 months,” says President Talbot, now a member of the stake presidency. “His parents, the ward members, the missionaries, and the mission president were very supportive.”

“We went into homes, taught people, and gave priesthood blessings,” Raymond says. “I also helped the missionaries get member referrals by visiting with my high school



friends, coaches, and teachers; that was the best way for me to help them. I still go out with the missionaries and bear my testimony.”

## All About Service

One of Raymond’s friends, Paul Sexton, says that Raymond is all about service. Raymond shows love and energy as he works with the 11-year-old Scouts as an assistant Scout leader and serves as a home teacher. “He is actively involved in home teaching—he encourages others to go home teaching, makes the appointments to visit his families, checks up on them during the month, and truly loves them,” Robin says.

“When you have a problem, he will spend however long it takes for you to feel better,” says his sister Ramona. “He really brings the whole ward together because he notices others who aren’t as social, so he talks to them and helps them feel like they belong.”

His friend Danny sums up Raymond’s impact on those around him: “He has helped me to understand that we can find joy from the simplest things in our lives. He has also shown me that we should not doubt the ability of those around us. The Lord does not doubt our abilities, and neither should we.” ■

For more information on members with disabilities, read “Six Myths about Members with Disabilities” at [disabilities.lds.org](http://disabilities.lds.org).