

Liahona



WHY WE NEED THE CHURCH

The Lord Leads His
Church through
Prophets and
Apostles, page 12

Building Zion,
Providing in the
Lord's Way, page 24

Reaching Our Divine Potential
Together, page 18

THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Salt Lake City Utah



ity



The administrative center of the Lord's restored Church is clustered around Temple Square in the heart of Salt Lake City. Some buildings of interest include:

- 1. Church History Library:**
Archives for the preservation of latter-day Church history.
- 2. Church Office Building:**
Central offices for various Church departments.
- 3. Relief Society Building:**
Headquarters for the Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society General Presidencies.
- 4. Church Administration Building:**
Offices for the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and some members of the Seventy.
- 5. Joseph Smith Memorial Building:**
Originally a hotel, now contains a theater for Church films, restaurants, Church administrative offices, and a chapel.
- 6. Salt Lake Temple:**
Before it closed in December 2019 for renovations, it was one of 166 operating temples worldwide. It will reopen in 2024.
- 7. North Visitors' Center:**
Helps welcome 3 to 5 million visitors to Temple Square each year.
- 8. Salt Lake Tabernacle:**
Home of the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square.
- 9. Church Museum of History and Art:**
Helps tell the story of the Church through art and artifacts.
- 10. Family History Library:**
The largest genealogical library in the world.
- 11. Conference Center:**
Current site of general conference, seats 21,000 people; also used for concerts and cultural events.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUXE





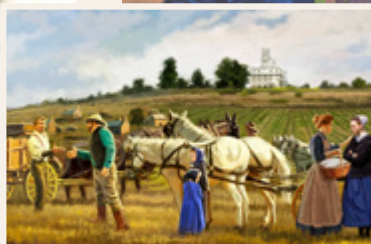
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Extraordinary Daughters of God
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And the Lord Called His People Zion
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The Blessings of Church Membership

This year we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the visit of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith. Ten years after the First Vision, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, providing the ordinances, gospel teachings, and priesthood authority necessary for our salvation.

As the world becomes increasingly secular, however, many people wonder why organized religion is necessary. They feel that they can be close to God in settings outside of a church. While it is true that we can feel the Lord's Spirit in many places, this issue of the *Liahona* explores a few of the reasons the Lord organized His Church and how His restored Church focuses our learning and amplifies our individual responses to His Spirit for good in our day.

As I note in my article on page 24, Church members are following the teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith to "feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, . . . to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other." In my work with Latter-day Saint Charities, I've witnessed the tremendous contributions the Church is making in more than 100 countries each year. Thanks to small donations from Church members, our brothers and sisters throughout the world have been blessed with the necessities of life and much more.

On page 12, President Dallin H. Oaks explains why the Lord leads His Church through prophets and apostles, and on page 18, Sister Jean B. Bingham, with whom I serve in the Relief Society General Presidency, shares a message about the influence of women and how we help each other reach our divine potential by working together in the Church.

May God bless us as individuals and as a people to continue ministering in a higher and holier way until the Savior comes again.

Sister Sharon Eubank

First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency

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David Green

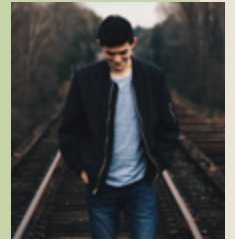


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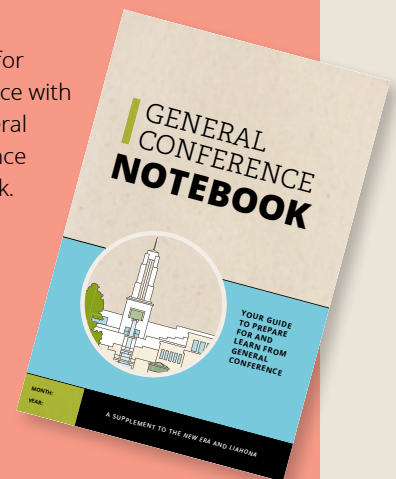
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Feeling left out? As children of God, **we all belong in His Church.** Read from young adults about how **they found a place.**



Youth

Prepare for conference with the General Conference Notebook.



Children *Friend*

Learn to **pray as Enos** did. Read about members of the Church in Samoa.



MARCH'S DIGITAL-ONLY ARTICLES



Meeting the Prophet Taught Me to Stop Overthinking the Gospel

By Nelesoni Mailei

A young adult from Australia shares insight from meeting President Nelson.



Coming Back to the Church into Welcoming Arms

By Rachelle Wilson

This young convert from New Zealand shares what made the biggest difference in her coming back to the Church.



How to Survive Sunday as an Introvert

By Aspen Stander

Going to church as a more introverted person can feel lonely. But this young adult shares how she has thrived.



How I Know the Prophet Is Called and Led by God

By Anne Vadly Louis

A young member from Haiti tells how meeting an Apostle impacted her testimony of living prophets.

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BELONGING TO THE CHURCH IS LIKE . . .

To help commemorate the 200th anniversary of the First Vision, in this issue we celebrate the blessings of belonging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Here are three ways Church leaders have described belonging to the Church.



BEING A MONARCH BUTTERFLY

“Like the monarch butterflies, we are on a journey back to our heavenly home, where we will reunite with our Heavenly Parents. Like the butterflies, we have been given **divine attributes** that allow us to navigate through life. . . . Like them, if we knit our hearts together, the Lord will protect us . . . and will make us into a beautiful kaleidoscope.”

Sister Reyna I. Aburto, Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, “With One Accord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 78.

BEING A LIFELINE TO OTHERS

“When we keep our covenants, it may make us different from others in our culture and society, but it gives us access to inspiration so we can think of different solutions, different approaches, different applications. We aren’t always going to fit in with the world, but **being different in positive ways can be a lifeline to others who are struggling.”**

Sister Sharon Eubank, First Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency, “Turn On Your Light,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 8.



BEING IN A CHOIR

“It is by divine design that not all the voices in God’s choir are the same. It takes variety—sopranos and altos, baritone and basses—to make rich music. . . .

“. . . **Don’t abandon your role in the chorus.** Why? Because you are unique; you are irreplaceable. The loss of even one voice diminishes every other singer in this great mortal choir of ours, including the loss of those who feel they are on the margins of society or the margins of the Church.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Songs Sung and Unsung,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 49, 50.





Ulisses and Emilia Maio

Porto, Portugal



Emilia Maio's sister, Custodia, was born with significant handicaps. Fifteen years ago, Custodia came to live with Emilia and her husband, Ulisses. As a family, they have learned that selfless family service is a great source of joy.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Emilia:

Of course it was hard in the beginning. I had to leave my job to take care of my sister. But it has been a blessing. When Ulisses and I were first married, we discovered we couldn't have children. Custodia is like a child sent from God for us to take care of. In many ways, she helps fill the void we feel being childless. She's loving and caring. She loves to laugh and loves going to church. She is a joy.

Ulisses:

Serving my family has always spiritually uplifted me. Although we do not have as much alone time as a couple, we are close to each other spiritually. We are closer as a family. The whole time we have seen the hand of the Lord helping us. He has showed us miracle after miracle. We are truly blessed.

DISCOVER MORE

See more about Ulisses and Emilia's journey of faith, including additional photos, in the online or Gospel Library version of this article at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/3206.

Ministering Principles

MINISTERING THROUGH TEMPLE SERVICE

When we help others enjoy the blessings of the temple, we are ministering.

Temple attendance is worth the effort. President Russell M. Nelson taught that “the temple is crucial to our salvation and exaltation and to that of our families. . . .

“ . . . Each one of us needs the ongoing spiritual strengthening and tutoring that is possible *only* in the house of the Lord.”¹

Attending the temple requires managing our time, responsibilities, and resources, as well as being spiritually prepared. We are ministering when we identify the barriers that keep our brothers and sisters from the temple and help them find solutions.

The Temple Is a Blessing Anyone Can Enjoy

A recently returned missionary, Meg, was walking toward the doors of the Kona Hawaii Temple when she noticed a young woman sitting alone on a bench outside. Meg felt that

she should speak to the young woman, but she wasn’t sure what to say. So she asked about the meaning of a tattoo on the young woman’s ankle. That began a conversation that allowed the young woman, Lani, to share her story.

Lani told Meg about her struggle to return to full participation in the Church, the nice members who were helping her, and her hope to someday be sealed to her baby daughter.

Meg invited Lani to come sit in the temple waiting room with her. They would not be able to go further into the temple yet, but they would be able to cross the threshold. Lani agreed, and they went together through the main doors. A temple worker showed them to a bench beneath a painting of the Savior.

As they sat together, Lani whispered, “I really wanted to come into the temple today, but I was nervous.” Because Meg followed the Spirit, she helped answer Lani’s silent prayer.



SHARE YOUR MINISTERING EXPERIENCES

Send us your experiences as you have ministered to others or have been ministered to. Go to liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click "Submit an Article or Feedback."

Ideas to Help Those without a Recommend

Even those who don't have a temple recommend yet can be blessed by the temple.

- Share your feelings about how the Lord has blessed you through temple work.
- Invite someone to attend a temple open house or visitors' center. Find upcoming open houses at temples.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
- Take a virtual tour of the Rome Italy Temple with Elders David A. Bednar and Ronald A. Rasband. (At ChurchofJesusChrist.org, search for "Two Apostles Lead a Virtual Tour of the Rome Italy Temple.")



You can scan this QR code to watch a video of a temple open house.



You can scan this QR code to watch Elder Bednar and Elder Rasband give a virtual tour of the Rome Italy Temple.





Make Temple Attendance Easier for Others

Even for members with a temple recommend, attending the temple can be a challenge. Some may need to travel long distances. Others may have small children or aged family members who need care. We can work together to make temple service possible for everyone.

Leola Chandler felt overwhelmed by caring for her ill husband and their four children. So she decided to set aside time each Tuesday to attend a nearby temple. It became a source of peace and power in her life.

One day she heard that a few elderly sisters in her ward desperately wanted to attend the temple, but they had no means of transportation. Leola offered to give them a ride. For the next 40 years, she rarely went to the temple alone.²

Leola was blessed, and she blessed others when she offered to take them with her to the temple.

Ideas to Help Others Attend the Temple

How can you help others get to the temple more often? You might find that the same ideas help you too.

- Go together. Offer to provide or arrange for transportation for someone. It might encourage someone else to attend the temple too.
- Ask members of your family or ward to help you perform ordinances for your ancestors, especially when you have lots of family names ready for ordinances.
- Offer to babysit so parents can attend the temple. Or arrange to take turns watching each other's children. (For more ideas, read "Temple Night Simplified: 6 Tips to Make Temple Trips Easier" [digital-only article], *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Jan. 2018.)

You can scan this QR code to read "Temple Night Simplified: 6 Tips to Make Temple Trips Easier."



When the Temple Is Far Away

Chandradas “Roshan” and Sheron Antony of Colombo, Sri Lanka, decided to be sealed in the temple. Their friends Ann and Anton Kumarasamy were so excited for them. But they knew that getting to the Manila Philippines Temple wasn’t easy or cheap.

Roshan and Sheron had saved their money and booked flights months in advance to get a flight they could afford. Finally, the day came. However, during their layover in Malaysia, they discovered that to continue on to the Philippines, they either needed a visa or needed to fly on a different airline. It wasn’t possible to get a visa, and they couldn’t afford to buy tickets on another airline. But they couldn’t bear the thought of returning home without being sealed.

Unsure what else to do, Roshan called Anton. Anton and Ann desperately wanted to help. They were one of the few couples in Sri Lanka who had been sealed in the temple, and they knew what a blessing it was. But they had recently used their savings to help a family member in need, and they didn’t have enough money to help Roshan and Sheron buy tickets for a new flight.

In Sri Lanka it is customary for the groom to buy the bride a gold necklace so that she will have some money if her husband dies. Ann decided to sell her necklace to help buy the new tickets. Her generous gift made it possible for Roshan and Sheron to make their temple appointment in Manila.

“I know the value of a temple sealing,” Ann said. “I knew Sheron and Roshan would be a great strength to the branch. I didn’t want them to miss this opportunity.”³



Ideas to Help Those Who Can't Visit the Temple

You may be called to minister to those who can’t get to the temple often or at all because of distances or costs. But you can still find ways to help them appreciate the blessings of the temple.

- Teach or participate together in a temple preparation or family history class.
- Give them a photo of a temple to hang in their home.
- If you have been in the temple, share your feelings about your experience and your testimony of temple ordinances.
- Help them learn more about the covenants they have made and how to keep them. Consider using “Understanding Our Covenants with God: An Overview of Our Most Important Promises,” in the July 2012 *Ensign* or *Liahona*. ■



You can scan this QR code to read
“Understanding Our Covenants with God.”



NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Becoming Exemplary Latter-day Saints,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 114.
2. See LaRene Gaunt, “Finding Joy in Temple Service,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 8.
3. Ann and Anton were able to get their necklace back after they were reimbursed by the Church’s General Temple Patron Assistance Fund, which gives one-time financial assistance to Church members who otherwise could not afford to attend the temple.





The Lord Leads His Church through
Prophets and Apostles



**By President
Dallin H. Oaks**

First Counselor
in the First
Presidency

Editors' note: President Oaks teaches that the Savior organized His Church to help God's children qualify for exaltation. This article explores how the Lord accomplishes that purpose through prophets and apostles who are authorized to act in His name.

The work of the Lord requires an organization led by the Lord through leaders He has chosen and authorized and whom He directs in carrying out His purposes. Scriptural history shows that such leaders have been either a prophet or prophets and apostles. This was the pattern in the years of covenant Israel and in the meridian of time, and it continues in the restored Church of Jesus Christ.

The Lord Leads His People through an Organization

Our Heavenly Father's purpose is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life" of His sons and daughters (Moses 1:39). In this dispensation, He does this through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose purpose is "to help individuals and families qualify for exaltation."¹

"The great and compelling triad of responsibility laid upon the Church," President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) taught, is "to, first, carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of the earth; second, to implement that gospel in the lives of the membership of the Church; and, third, to extend through vicarious work its blessings to those who have passed beyond the veil of death."²

In our day many seem to want spirituality or religion but think they can have it without any religious organization. Those who think they can achieve this apart from a formal organization ignore the well-recorded history of what the Lord Jesus Christ established to assure the continuity and effectiveness of His gospel and teachings. As Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reminded us in a notable general conference talk five years ago, "In the meridian of time, Jesus organized His work in such a way that the gospel could be established simultaneously in multiple nations and among diverse peoples."³ That organization included the Apostles and other officers described in the New Testament.

Why is an organization required to accomplish the purposes of the Lord? Though our Savior loves and helps us individually, to accomplish His purposes for the whole body of God's children—especially His covenant people—He acts through an organization led by prophets and apostles.



The organization of the Church of Jesus Christ must have leaders chosen by Him and given the power and authority to declare His will to His people.

30 AD JESUS CHRIST and TWELVE APOSTLES

Only through an organization can the individual members of what the Apostle Paul called “the body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:27) receive the opportunities they need to achieve the spiritual growth that is the purpose of their creation. And only an organization with different talents and a variety of efforts can achieve what is necessary to accomplish the Lord’s work.

Things that can be accomplished only through organized groups of believers include major efforts to help the poor, to proclaim the gospel in all the world, and to build and maintain temples. The Prophet Joseph Smith said God’s objective in gathering His people was “to build unto the Lord a house whereby He [can] reveal . . . the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation.”⁴

An organization is also needed to achieve the Lord’s commandment to “be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine” (Doctrine and Covenants 38:27). President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency has taught that we cannot achieve that oneness—that unity—as individuals. “We must seek it and qualify for it with others. It is not surprising then,” he observed, “that God urges us to gather so that He can bless us.”⁵

Individual believers also need to experience religion through a religious organization because only in this way can we be

authoritatively reproved or chastened for sin and error. That chastisement is essential for our spiritual growth (see Doctrine and Covenants 136:31; 101:4–5; see also Mosiah 23:21–22).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) gave another reason for religious or spiritual persons to be organized: “because random, individual goodness is not enough in the fight against evil.”⁶

The Restored Church of Jesus Christ Is Governed by Prophets and Apostles

The organization of the Church of Jesus Christ must have leaders chosen by Him and given the power and authority to declare His will to His people.

“Ye have not chosen me,” the Savior taught, “but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit” (John 15:16). The Bible is clear on who chooses prophets and apostles. In the Old Testament this is clearly seen in the callings of Moses and Samuel, and in the New Testament it is seen in the callings of the Twelve Apostles and the Apostle Paul (see Exodus 3; 1 Samuel 3; Mark 3; Acts 9). These leaders did not volunteer, and they were not elected by believers.

The Bible also shows that religious leaders must have the authority of God’s priesthood, which is conferred by one already holding that authority. The Bible descriptions of the callings and authorizations of Aaron, of members of the Twelve Apostles, and of the Seventy illustrate this principle (see Exodus 28:1–4; Mark 3:14–15; Luke 10:1, 17). Priesthood authority did not come from reading the scriptures or from



1835 JOSEPH SMITH and TWELVE APOSTLES

a desire to serve. And the ordination that confers priesthood authority comes from the heads of the Church, and it is known publicly (see Doctrine and Covenants 42:11).

In the Old Testament, the spiritual leaders were *prophets*. They are described in three different roles. Some were holy men performing a prophetic function for their posterity, like Abraham. Some were leaders exercising political as well as priestly power, like Moses and Joshua. Most were performing their prophetic role independent of patriarchal or political position, like Samuel and Isaiah. The Book of Mormon reports the same three positions of prophets, such as Lehi (patriarch), King Benjamin (political leader), and Alma the Younger (after he relinquished his position as the chief judge) (see 1 Nephi 1–2; Mosiah 1–6; Alma 4–5). However, it is clear that all the prophets who preceded Jesus Christ called the people to repentance, and, most of all, they prophesied of the coming Messiah.⁷

The office of Apostle is first identified in the New Testament, when the Savior called Apostles as He organized His ministry to proclaim, baptize, and heal. The Apostle Paul wrote that the Church of Jesus Christ is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20). Jesus also called Seventies and sent them forth to minister (see Luke 10:1, 17), and He authorized the calling of other officers, such as pastors and teachers (see Ephesians 4:11).

A paramount function of Apostles in the Church that Jesus established was to hold the keys of the priesthood. When the Savior promised the Apostle Peter “the keys of the kingdom



TODAY RUSSELL M. NELSON and TWELVE APOSTLES

of heaven,” He described this as the power that “whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 16:19). In other words, the keys assure heavenly effect to the authorized actions of priesthood authority on earth. Apostles who hold the keys of the priesthood have the right and responsibility to preside over and direct the activities of the priesthood of God and the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth.⁸ This includes the performance and supervision of the essential ordinances of the gospel.

As part of their responsibilities, prophets and apostles have the prophetic duty and gift to teach the truths of the gospel and to testify as “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world” (Doctrine and Covenants 107:23). They identify truth and error and authoritatively state, “Thus saith the Lord.” President J. Reuben Clark Jr. (1871–1961), First Counselor in the First Presidency, declared that Apostles “have the right, the power, and the authority to declare the mind and will of God to his people, subject to the over-all power and authority of the President of the Church.”⁹

As servants of the Father and the Son, apostles and prophets teach and counsel as directed by the Holy Ghost, with no desire other than to speak what is true and to encourage all to follow the pathway to God’s blessings, including His ultimate destiny for all of His children: eternal life, “the greatest of all the gifts of God” (Doctrine and Covenants 14:7). Their voices can be trusted.

President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said: “In today’s world,



There is one clear, unpolluted, unbiased voice that you can always count on. And that is the voice of the living prophet and the apostles.



where 24 hours a day television and radio commentators spew forth conflicting opinions, where marketers compete for everything from your money to your vote, there is one clear, unpolluted, unbiased voice that you can always count on. And that is the voice of the living prophet and the apostles. Their only motive is ‘the everlasting welfare of your souls’ (2 Ne. 2:30).”¹⁰

Access to the teachings of apostles and prophets is both a blessing and a great responsibility. The blessing is the ready access to what the Lord would have us hear. The responsibility is that this access to the Lord’s teachings makes us accountable to hear and to heed those teachings. Unfortunately, some believers fail in this responsibility. Not surprisingly, many in the world reject the fact that God gives apostles and prophets the authority and inspiration to speak in His name. Even more reject prophets and apostles because they deny the existence of God or the existence of absolute right and wrong.

Fortunately, many choose to believe and follow the teachings of prophets. They receive the promised blessings. President Russell M. Nelson has taught this: “God’s long-established pattern of teaching His children through prophets assures us that He will bless each prophet and that He will bless those who need prophetic counsel.”¹¹

Prophets and Apostles Act through Councils

The Lord leads His Church through prophets (plural) and apostles (plural), as they act through councils. There are many illustrations of this.

The Lord calls one prophet to initiate a new dispensation. Then, when that new restoration grows and matures, doctrine and policies for the group are revealed and taught through an organization led by apostles and prophets. Thus, as the restored Church grew and matured in this final dispensation, the Lord revealed that its most important business and most difficult

cases should be decided by a council of the First Presidency and Twelve Apostles (see Doctrine and Covenants 107:78–79). There, every decision “must be by the unanimous voice of the same” (Doctrine and Covenants 107:27). Otherwise, they would not be “entitled to the same blessings which the decisions of a quorum of three presidents were anciently” (Doctrine and Covenants 107:29).

All of this shows the Lord’s direction that His Church must be governed by councils of apostles and prophets. This protects and promotes the unity that is essential in the Lord’s Church.

“The Lord in the beginning of this work revealed that there should be three high priests to preside over the High Priesthood of his Church and over the whole Church,” President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) taught in the general conference where he was sustained as President of the Church.¹² He affirmed the importance of *three* high priests in the presidency by declaring “that it is wrong for one man to exercise all the authority and power of presidency in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.”¹³ He added, “The Lord never did intend that one man should have all power, and for that reason he has placed in his Church, presidents, apostles, high priests, seventies, [etc.].”¹⁴

The reference to the plural, *prophets* and *apostles*, is also prominent in this familiar teaching by President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972): “There is one thing which we should have exceedingly clear in our minds. Neither the President of the Church, nor the First Presidency, nor the united voice of the First Presidency and the Twelve will ever lead the Saints astray or send forth counsel to the world that is contrary to the mind and will of the Lord.”¹⁵

To become the official doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ, the individual teachings of apostles and even prophets need to be affirmed through the process of approval by other apostles and prophets. This is illustrated in the Bible in the approving action of the Apostles when Peter reported his revelation to take the gospel to the gentiles (see Acts 11:1, 18). Similarly, when the dispute over the need for circumcision was brought to the Apostles, Peter reminded them of the significance of the revelation he had received, and the council then approved and settled the dispute with a confirming epistle to the Church (see Acts 15).

Similarly, in the restored Church, doctrine is not canonized until the body of the Church has received it by the law of common consent (see Doctrine and Covenants 26:2, 28:13). That principle was revealed in 1830 and has been applied since that time.¹⁶ This practice, which had not been followed by churches existing during the period we call the Apostasy, protects gospel truths from being altered or influenced by private ideas or individual opinions.

Finally, the essential unity on doctrine among different leaders is preserved by the long-standing rule that questions addressed to individual Apostles or other authorities about doctrine or policy that is not clearly defined in the scriptures or handbooks are to be referred

to the First Presidency (see Doctrine and Covenants 124:126).¹⁷

Prophets and Apostles Witness of Jesus Christ

During his ministry, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught this: “As God governed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as families, and the children of Israel as a nation; so we, as a Church, must be under His guidance if we are prospered, preserved and sustained.”¹⁸

This article has described how the Lord has done His work through the ages and how this pattern and procedure continues in our own day. As the Apostle Peter taught, “all the prophets” have given “witness” of Christ (Acts 10:43). In our day, the Lord continues to do His work through prophets and apostles who are authorized to act in His name to do His work to bring to pass the eternal life of man. ■

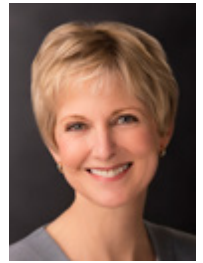
NOTES

1. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 2.2.
2. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 118.
3. D. Todd Christofferson, “Why the Church,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 108 (this talk is a valuable source for the first part of this article); see also David A. Edwards, “We Need Christ’s Church,” youth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 416.
5. Henry B. Eyring, “Our Hearts Knit as One,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 69.
6. Neal A. Maxwell, “Why Not Now?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 13.
7. See Bible Dictionary, “Prophet.”
8. See *Handbook 2*, 2.2.
9. J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Boyd K. Packer, “The Twelve Apostles,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 6.
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13. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 176–77.
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15. Joseph Fielding Smith, “Eternal Keys and the Right to Preside,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 88.
16. See Doctrine and Covenants, introduction to section 138; explanations to Official Declaration 2; and Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 202.
17. See James E. Faust, *Reach Up for the Light* (1990), 28–29; see also Doctrine and Covenants 68:4 and its explanation in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie (1954), 1:185–86.
18. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*, 161.



These paintings by female Latter-day Saint artists depict the influence and many roles of women.





By Jean B. Bingham
Relief Society
General President

Extraordinary Daughters of God

Reaching out in small and simple ways can bless our families and others in extraordinary ways.

Editors' note: As we look at why we need the Church, Sister Bingham explains how belonging to an organization like the Relief Society helps us fulfill our divine potential through opportunities to participate together in the Lord's work of salvation.

My story is quite ordinary. Growing up, I loved learning, but I was never the top student in any class. I cannot boast of any expert skills. I play the piano but only enough to stumble through a hymn. I love to visit art museums, but my artistic talents are limited to doodling designs in my notebooks. I can sew a wearable skirt, but tailoring a suit is definitely beyond my ability.

Although I was blessed with good health and loved to run through the park or swim in the lake, I didn't participate in school sports at any level. I was never asked to the prom, and I wasn't the president of anything. I was never one of the popular group, and one strikingly attractive friend once scrutinized my features and said, "Well, you'll never be beautiful, but you could be cute." In other words, I was just average.

Some of you may relate to these kinds of experiences, feeling that you are also just average—maybe even less than average. If you're human—and particularly, female—you have probably experienced those times of self-doubt and discouragement that you are not all that you want to be.

And yet, even in my ordinariness, Heavenly Father saw value and has helped me begin to develop the gifts and graces He knows will help me become all that He has designed me to be. Know that your Heavenly Father will provide all that *you* need to



become extraordinary as a daughter of God. Every one of us can be spectacular because of our unique bundle of talents and abilities.

Unlike in the world, in His kingdom there is no winner's platform that has room only for one or two. *Each* of His daughters has been taught and prepared and gifted premortally with marvelous potential to become a queen in the celestial kingdom.

Your Potential for Greatness

What do you want to accomplish in your life? What are your goals and aspirations? If your long-term goal is to enter the celestial kingdom to live forever with our Heavenly Parents and with loved family members, that singular focus will take you farther than you now think is possible (see 1 Corinthians 2:9).

You have incredible potential for good because you are a covenant daughter of Heavenly Parents. The evidence of your inherent potential for greatness is the simple fact that you were born on the earth because you made the choice in the premortal world to accept Heavenly Father's plan of salvation and to follow the example of His Son, Jesus Christ. And because Jesus Christ was willing to take upon Himself the sins and infirmities—or inadequacies—of each of us (see Alma 7:11–13) and fulfilled that sacred trust through His infinite Atonement, we can have every confidence that we can become all we were divinely designed to be. As we make and keep sacred covenants, we demonstrate our desire to fulfill that divine potential. We know we cannot do this on our own, but through Heavenly Father's love and the Savior's grace, we can accomplish all that is required for exaltation.

That thought sustained me when I was called to be Relief Society General President. Knowing that I do not have all the wisdom and ability to fulfill what is required, I nevertheless take comfort and strength from the knowledge that God "has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth" (Mosiah 4:9) and that if we just try, just do our best, imperfect as that will be, the Lord "will be on [our] right hand and on [our] left, . . . and [His] angels round about [us], to bear [us] up" (Doctrine and Covenants 84:88). All He requires is "the heart and a willing mind" (Doctrine and Covenants 64:34). As we are obedient to His commandments, we will be strengthened to accomplish all that is required in this life as well as for entrance into His kingdom in the life hereafter. The choice to become a disciple of Jesus Christ gives us the opportunity to wield a more-than-might-be-expected influence on those around us.

No matter where we live, the makeup of our family, the size of our bank account, or how long we have been a member of the Church, we can each be a powerful influence for good. Living with integrity at home and in the community, using a gentle voice and kind words with a challenging child or difficult co-worker, demonstrating your standards by your modest way of dressing, and reaching out of your comfort zone to become acquainted with those who live around you are just some of the many simple actions we can take that will influence others to also rise to a higher plane.

Those who are familiar with the history of the settlement of frontier areas around the world know that many towns began as haphazard gatherings of rough men who came to do business and find their fortunes. It wasn't until women arrived in increasing numbers and insisted on establishing churches and schools and an orderly environment that real progress was made on what could be called civilized living.

"From age immemorial, societies have relied on the moral force of women," said Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "While certainly not the only positive influence at work in society, the moral foundation provided by women has proved uniquely beneficial to the common good. Perhaps, because it is pervasive, this contribution of women is often underappreciated. . . . Women bring with them into the world a certain virtue, a divine gift that makes them adept at instilling such qualities as faith, courage, empathy, and refinement in relationships and in cultures."¹

Women are given gifts that allow them to see the details as well as the big picture, often at the same time. Discover those gifts and use them, dear sisters!



I remember President James E. Faust (1920–2007) telling us in his rich yet humble voice: “You sisters do not know the full extent of your influence. You sisters enrich all of humanity. . . . Each woman brings her own separate, unique strengths to the family and the Church.”²

What Does Relief Society Mean to You?

As adult female members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, you and I belong to one of the oldest and largest women’s organizations in the world. With more than 7.1 million sisters around the globe, we have a bond that can be eternal.

Relief Society is more than a class on Sunday. As President Faust taught, it is a divinely established sisterhood. It is a place of learning. It is an organization whose basic charter is caring for others as expressed in our motto, “Charity Never Faileth.”

“Membership in Relief Society . . . provides a home away from [our] heavenly home, where [we] can fellowship with others who share [our] beliefs and values.”³

There have been bumps and challenges along the way. If you have had

a less-than-comfortable experience at Relief Society, remember that we are all learning. It is a safe place for sisters to bring their questions and for those who are searching for identity and purpose. It is a place that will help us blossom individually and improve collectively.

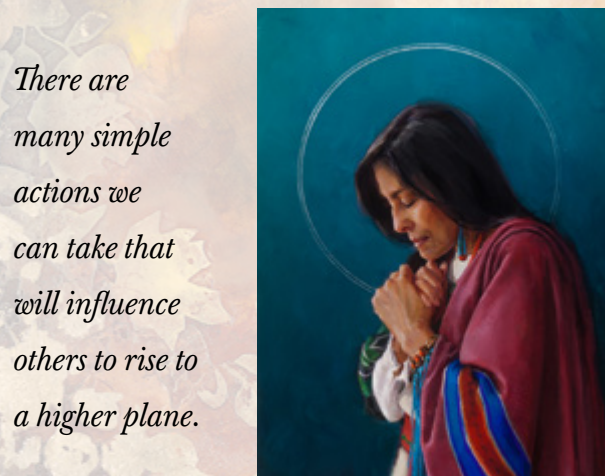
If you are familiar with the updated Relief Society purpose statement, you know that “Relief Society helps prepare women for the blessings of eternal life as they increase faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and His Atonement; [as they] strengthen individuals, families, and homes through ordinances and covenants; and [as they] work in unity to help those in need.”⁴

So, number one, we work to fulfill our divine potential. To do that, we “all work together” to love, “to cheer and to bless in [the Savior’s] name.”⁵ We participate in the work of salvation, which includes member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel⁶—all things which you are already doing.

Where Do We Start?

Where and how do we do this work? As we put our arm around a shy sister at church, as we reach out to a young woman who is struggling, as we work to feed and clothe and teach a child on a daily basis, as we share what makes us happy about the restored gospel with our neighbor, as we attend the temple at an inconvenient time, as we work to develop our talents with the goal of being an instrument for the Lord—all of these actions and many more acts of simple but meaningful service are part of the work of salvation. *That* is our mission, and it truly is vast,⁷ but it *is doable* when we each do something—and keep at it!





*There are
many simple
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a higher plane.*

As Emma Smith, the first Relief Society General President, said in 1842, “We are going to do something extraordinary.”⁸

For instance, a busy young mother in Arizona, USA, wondered what she could do to help a newly arrived refugee family in her community. She soon learned that she could give them a few things for their empty apartment. When she and her children visited the family to bring the items, she realized that the mother had no purse to carry her personal belongings. She knew that she and many of her friends had extra purses, so she posted a request on social media. That simple beginning has blossomed into a warehouse full of items needed by just-arriving families and helped create a sweet bond between these women of different faiths.

Sister Eliza R. Snow, the second Relief Society General President, testified regarding the blessings of Relief Society: “If any of the daughters and mothers in Israel are feeling in the least [limited] in their present spheres, they will now find ample scope for every power and capability for doing good with which they are most liberally endowed.”⁹

So, what extraordinary thing will you choose to do? Choose something according to your available time and resources. “Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means . . . ; but be diligent” (Doctrine and Covenants 10:4). Whether your work of salvation is largely in the home at this time in life or your influence extends to a global scale, or somewhere in between, the Lord is pleased with your efforts when you are focused on serving God’s children and the eternal goal of returning to Him as a new and improved version of your spiritual self. As Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles phrased it so succinctly, “Exaltation is our goal; discipleship is our journey.”¹⁰

As we go forward in this journey of discipleship, may we each determine to reach out in small and simple ways that bless our families and others in extraordinary ways. May we treasure our relationships in this divinely designed organization and come to know and follow Jesus Christ, whose teachings and perfect example will lead us back to our Heavenly Father. ■

From an address given at BYU Women’s Conference on May 5, 2017.

NOTES

1. D. Todd Christofferson, “The Moral Force of Women,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 29.
2. James E. Faust, “What It Means to Be a Daughter of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 102.
3. See James E. Faust, “What It Means to Be a Daughter of God,” 100.
4. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 9.1.1.
5. “As Sisters in Zion,” *Hymns*, no. 309.
6. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.
7. See “As Sisters in Zion,” *Hymns*, no. 309.
8. Emma Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 14.
9. Eliza R. Snow, in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 44.
10. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “It Works Wonderfully!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 23.



By Sharon Eubank
First Counselor in
the Relief Society
General Presidency



AND THE LORD CALLED HIS PEOPLE

ZION

May we fulfill the prophetic charge to build Zion—to be of one heart and one mind, dwell in righteousness, and strive to have no poor among us.

Editors' note: As a member of the Relief Society General Presidency and president of Latter-day Saint Charities, Sister Eubank shares here her unique perspective on how the purpose and organization of the Church can help us work together to eradicate poverty in our communities and in our hearts.

When people visit the Church's Humanitarian Center in Salt Lake City, I often ask them to read aloud a statement made by Joseph Smith that hangs in the lobby: "[A member of the Church] is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to provide for the widow, to dry up the tear of the orphan, to comfort the afflicted, whether in this church, or in any other, or in no church at all, wherever he finds them."¹

The statement was made at a time when the Church was severely in debt, leaders were settling converts into a new country, and the Nauvoo Temple was under construction. How could the Prophet Joseph possibly consider providing for the poor in *this* Church, let alone any other? But even under those dire circumstances, Joseph understood that the care of those in need must *always* be a central focus of the Lord's covenant people.



A Vision of Zion

One of the first tasks Joseph undertook after organizing the Church in April 1830 was an inspired translation of the Bible. I have often wondered why. At this critical juncture in the Church's history, why would he work on retranslating Genesis? That book was already so well-known. But part of that translation work eventually became the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price, with precious details of critical doctrinal importance to the modern Church.

These chapters revealed the experiences of Moses and Enoch, which are in some ways remarkably similar to Joseph's own experience. Each prophet was called by the Lord to do a great work. The Lord showed each of them His creations so they could better envision their part in the plan (see Doctrine and Covenants 76; Moses 1; 7). A summary of their overarching task could be stated as follows: **Gather Israel as a priestly nation, build Zion, and prepare to welcome Jesus Christ.**

But how is such a thing to be accomplished? Enoch gives a succinct answer: "And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of *one heart* and *one mind*, and *dwelt in righteousness*; and there was *no poor among them*" (Moses 7:18; emphasis added).

A central part of the latter-day mission of the Church is to eradicate the poverty that exists in our communities and in

our hearts; establish a unified Zion; and prepare the people for the return of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Providing in the Lord's Way

Trillions of dollars have been expended by governments and organizations in the last century to eradicate poverty. Yet for all of the well-intentioned work, a great deal of it has been unsuccessful and wasted. Why? Because it inadvertently created dependency instead of ability.

The Lord's way is to build both givers and receivers, to allow people to be agents for themselves, and to exalt the poor in "that the rich are made low" (Doctrine and Covenants 104:16). We sometimes call this *self-reliance*, but it really means unleashing the divine power inside every individual to solve his or her own problems with the help of God, enabling them to in turn serve others.

Examples Old and New

Joseph Smith cheerfully practiced serving others in the Lord's way. James Leach and his brother-in-law, after looking for work in Nauvoo many days without success, determined to ask the Prophet for help. James recalled:

"I said, 'Mr. Smith, if you please, have you any employment you could give us both, so we can get some provisions?' He



viewed us with a cheerful countenance, and with such a feeling of kindness, said, ‘Well, boys, what can you do? . . . Can you make a ditch?’ I replied we would do the best we could at it.

“. . . When it was finished I went and told him it was done. He came and looked at it and said, ‘. . . If I had done it myself it could not have been done better. Now come with me.’ He led the way back to his store and told us to pick the best ham or piece of pork for ourselves. Being rather bashful, I said we would rather he would give us some. So he picked two of the largest and best pieces of meat and a sack of flour for each of us, and asked us if that would do. We told him we would be willing to do more work for it, but he said, ‘If you are satisfied, boys, I am.’

“We thanked him kindly and went on our way home rejoicing in the kindheartedness of the Prophet of our God.”²

A modern example of the same delicate balancing of generosity and self-reliance occurred in 2013 when Typhoon Haiyan swept through the central Philippines, damaging or destroying over a million homes. Rather than just handing out aid indiscriminately, which could result in dependency and waste, the Church applied self-reliance principles to help affected residents develop the skills needed to rebuild. Housing materials were purchased, and local Church leaders contracted with construction mentors. Residents in need of housing were provided with tools, materials, and training, while they furnished the labor to construct their own shelters. They then assisted their neighbors to do the same.

In the end, each participant received a vocational certificate attesting to their newly learned skills and qualifying them for key employment opportunities. This combination of aid coupled with on-the-job training not only built shelters—it built capability. It did more than just restore housing—it restored the people’s confidence in themselves.³

Small Contributions Matter

We don’t need to be wealthy to assist. A young man wrote about his experience with Joseph Smith: “I was at Joseph’s house . . . and several men were sitting on the fence. Joseph came out and spoke to us all. Pretty soon a man came up and said that a poor brother who lived out some distance from town had had his house burned down the night before. Nearly all of the men said they felt sorry for the man. Joseph put his hand in his pocket, took out five dollars and said, ‘I feel sorry for this brother to the amount of five dollars; how much do you all feel sorry?’”⁴

I recently met a 10-year-old boy from a rural community who was spending his own meager amount of money to buy a voucher that would provide



a polio immunization for a child. The boy had read about children who were paralyzed by polio, and he didn't want others to suffer from this disease. I was amazed at how much he had studied and how thoughtful he was about his small contribution.

Clearly each of us has something to give, regardless of our circumstances, and the true significance of our contribution cannot be measured solely by its monetary value.

The Power of Combining Hearts

If we are serious about our covenants, we will each strive to be of one heart and one mind, to live in righteousness, and to have no poor among us. This will knit our hearts together and help to reduce the inequities in the world. But there is an even greater power when people of the covenant combine their efforts: families, quorums, Relief Society, Young Women classes, and stakes can organize to address specific needs in their communities to tremendous effect.

The Church's humanitarian organization, Latter-day Saint Charities, combines many small efforts to aid people in emergencies around the world.⁵ Members of the Church generously contribute time, money, and expertise. Most of these contributions are modest: a small monetary donation or a few hours of volunteering. This becomes a modern parallel to the widow's mite (see Mark 12:41–44); these seemingly minor contributions show the world what widows and farmers and 10-year-old boys can do when they pool their resources and then ask the Lord to add His increase (see 1 Corinthians 3:6).

We have come a long way since the early days of the Church in building the conditions for Zion, but there is much yet to do. May God bless each of us to seek out those in need and do what we can to alleviate their burdens and strengthen their capacity. And may He also bless His Church to coordinate and magnify the individual efforts of its members and thereby fulfill the prophetic charge to build Zion—to be of one heart and one mind, dwell in righteousness, and strive to have no poor among us—until the Savior comes again. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 426.
2. James Leach, in "Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith," *Juvenile Instructor*, Mar. 1, 1892, 152–53; punctuation modernized; paragraph divisions altered.
3. See "Mormon Volunteers Building Homes for Typhoon Haiyan Victims," Feb. 21, 2014, newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
4. Andrew J. Workman, in "Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith," *Juvenile Instructor*, Oct. 15, 1892, 641.
5. See latterdaysaintcharities.org.

Ubon Ward Can Do It!

Our ward members were rarely all together—even at church. What could we do to bring everyone together?

By Akanit Sapprasert

A lot of members here in Thailand have difficulty coming to church because of required school meetings, bad weather (most of our members travel by motorbike), and distance. The members in my ward, the Ubon Ward, face all of these challenges and more, which makes attending church difficult.

One Sunday, I was wondering how we could help the members recognize the blessings of exercising the faith to worship together more often. The idea came to me, “What if we picked a Sunday to focus on getting every member to church that day?” If we were able to get everyone to come on the same day, it would allow members to really see and feel the strength of the ward.

Other leaders and members in the ward liked the idea and became involved in planning for it. We decided on a date, June 17, 2018—the Sunday closest to the anniversary of when the Ubon Thailand Stake was founded—and started sending messages about it through social media. We named the event “Let’s Come to Church on the Same Sunday! 200 Sacrament Meeting Attendance—Ubon Ward Can Do It.”

Practically the whole ward was involved in encouraging each other to come. Everybody kept sending messages persuading others to join the event. Members also invited returning members and friends who weren’t members. And so many people said yes!

We realized that this was more than just a fun event to see how many people could come. We wanted it to be an especially spiritual experience to help motivate members to make attending sacrament meeting a priority. So in the months leading up to the event, the bishopric encouraged people to avoid any activities that might minimize the importance of the sacrament or the worship of the Lord.

We even made bookmarks to help people remember the event and the Spirit that we knew would be there because of everyone’s efforts to attend. The bookmark had the name of the event and also a scripture: “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High” (Psalm 82:6). We chose this scripture because we wanted everyone to realize that they are children of God and have the potential to be like Him.

Members planned for a long time to all be able to attend on the set day. Finally, the day came. But so did obstacles. It rained heavily

the evening before and continued raining all through the night. Another obstacle for some members was that an important school meeting was happening at the same time as church.

We asked everybody to pray for these obstacles to be removed or overcome. At about 7:00 a.m. Sunday morning, the rain stopped. And when we arrived at church, we found those families who needed to go to the school meeting. When we asked them about their other meeting, they said, “We have to come to sacrament meeting first.” It was a great testimony to me of the importance of the Lord’s sacrament.

Members brought a lot of friends and neighbors to the meeting. One sister in the ward brought eight friends who had never been to

church before! As more and more people arrived, we needed to open the overflow room. The count of the sacrament attendance was 215 people! All through the meeting, I could feel that the Holy Ghost was with us and that God helped us to be successful in this endeavor.

After this amazing Sunday, the number of people who regularly attend sacrament meeting increased. This included three Melchizedek Priesthood holders who began attending church regularly with their families. One family even had two of their children baptized and confirmed the following month.

Our stake leaders saw what a good experience this was for our ward and decided to hold a similar event. For the stake event, the members in the stake each made a commitment to attend their own wards on the same Sunday. The event also had great success throughout the stake—I know that one ward in our stake had 208 people attend! I am so grateful for the blessings that I and my ward and my stake have received because of these events and for the Spirit we felt preparing for and participating in them. ■

The author lives in Isan, Thailand.



Weather, distance, and school schedules prevent many Thai members from attending church, so the Ubon Ward decided to set a date and encourage as many people as possible to attend.

“Inconveniently True”

The New York Pennsylvania Historic Sites Mission offers unique opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. We proselyte, teach, and baptize as other missionaries do, but we also have the wonderful assignment to teach about the sacred events that happened in these places.

We serve at the Smith family farm, the Book of Mormon publication site, the Hill Cumorah Visitors' Center, and the Peter and Mary Whitmer farm. We take guests around these sacred sites and help them become more familiar with the history and events surrounding the Restoration.

One day my companion and I gave a tour of the Smith family farm to a young family from Ireland. They were recent converts of only two years.

As we stood in the reconstructed

log home where Joseph Smith and his family lived in the spring of 1820, my companion and I recounted the important events in Joseph's childhood that led him to enter a grove of trees to pray to know which church he should join. We shared with them Joseph's experience when Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him and answered his prayer. We then asked them how they had felt when they first learned of Joseph Smith and his First Vision.

I expected them to express the same feelings most people share—that they felt a burning in their heart or that they knew that it must be true because the Spirit they felt was just so powerful. Instead, they said they felt it was “inconveniently true.” That made us pause for a minute. We asked them to explain what they had meant.

They told us that things had been good for them before they heard the gospel, and the idea of changing their comfortable lifestyle seemed like an inconvenience to them. But when they received a spiritual witness that it was true, they knew they had to make a lifestyle change.

Their interesting and sincere testimony impressed us. Because they really had a testimony of Joseph Smith and the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, they were willing to make inconvenient changes in their lives and join the Church. They did so because they knew those changes would be the best thing for their family!

I absolutely loved my mission. I have no doubt that the sites I served in are all sacred. Everything we say happened here really did happen. It is a miracle. ■

Taylor Crofts, Wyoming, USA

They felt the First Vision was “inconveniently true.” We asked them to explain what they had meant.



I Became 14 Again

While on business in Rochester, New York, USA, I decided to make the short drive to Church history sites in Palmyra, about 25 miles (40 km) away. I especially wanted to see the Sacred Grove.

At the time, I struggled with frustrations at both work and home, and I longed for a sacred experience of my own that would confirm to me in some majestic way that Heavenly Father was mindful of me.

This was years before the Hill Cumorah Visitors' Center and the Palmyra New York Temple were built. I parked near the Smith family home, got out of the car, and followed the signs to the Sacred Grove. With a prayer in my heart, I walked along the path through the trees. I pondered as I walked, and I even knelt to pray. I felt calm, but I saw

no pillar of light and felt no overwhelming emotion. My worries and concerns still weighed on my mind.

Somewhat disappointed, I made my way to the reconstructed log home where the Smith family had lived. I imagined them working, reading scriptures, and praying there. I visited the upstairs room and the kitchen, with its brick fireplace, wooden table and chairs, plank floors, and simple furnishings. I was struck by the thought that it was in a home like this that a 14-year-old boy lived when, full of questions, he determined to go and ask of God.

As I stood in the doorway, ready to leave, I looked toward the Sacred Grove. I knew that Joseph Smith had gone into the nearby woods, prayed, and saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Suddenly, compassion for

Joseph washed over me. It was as if I was feeling what Joseph had felt before he prayed. I lacked wisdom, but I knew that I could ask of God and receive answers (see James 1:4–5). I remembered how I had prayed with faith as a teenager and felt peace and reassurance. I felt that same hope and love fill my heart. It was as if I was 14 again.

I bowed my head and offered a silent prayer of gratitude. I had received my answer. Heavenly Father *was* aware of me. And if I continued to trust Him, He would continue to respond. ■

Richard M. Romney, Church Magazines



My Island of Faith

When I was a child on Robinson Crusoe Island, located 416 miles (670 km) off the coast of Chile, my parents taught my siblings and me about faith and perseverance.

One of their memorable lessons occurred during a torrential downpour one Sunday. My parents knew they had a commitment to keep with the Lord—they had to go to church. Our umbrellas were broken, so we only had jackets and boots to shelter us from the storm. My mother got the idea to cover us with plastic garbage bags. We weren't embarrassed to be the only people walking down the street in the rain. We knew we were doing what the Lord would have us do.

When we arrived at the house we used for a chapel, we realized that we would be the only ones attending that day. Many Sundays were like that. My father served as the branch president and often conducted meetings attended only by children and a few Relief Society sisters. He would also bless and pass the sacrament.

I miss those days we attended church as a family. Singing hymns together and learning about our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, remains a treasured memory. My heart

is still on Robinson Crusoe Island. All my childhood memories, including gospel teachings I received from my parents, occurred there.

With few members of the Church on the island, we didn't have the programs or resources many members enjoy. But my parents taught us to attend church, pray, and read the scriptures. I found strength and direction as I read the scriptures and had moments of personal revelation. I remember one Sunday in particular when I received confirmation to serve a mission.

When I was a college student in Viña del Mar, Chile, I remembered my parents walking to church with me in the sun, rain, hail, and wind. Each Sunday, this memory prompted me to get out of bed, get ready, and go to church—regardless of what was happening outside.

The gospel of Jesus Christ has been the center of my life as a child, missionary, and now as a wife and mother. Now that I have my own family, my husband and I will pass down to our children the faithful example of my parents. ■

Belén Aros, Coquimbo, Chile

***W**ere weren't embarrassed to be the only people walking down the street in the rain. We knew we were doing what the Lord would have us do.*



Should We Accept the Calling?

As parents of a toddler and a newborn, we had faced difficulty fulfilling Church callings. So when my husband was called to serve as the bishop of a young single adult ward, we were both filled with hesitation.

Questions flooded our minds regarding our ability to manage everything with the added responsibility. We found out a few days after receiving the call that I was pregnant with our third child. Due to my medical history, previous pregnancies had been difficult. As we discussed what we would expect over the next few months if my husband accepted the call, we weren't sure what to do. We began to pray earnestly for comfort and guidance.

At one point, my husband wondered if he should explain our situation to

the stake president and turn down the calling. This made the most sense to us, but as we prayed and fasted, we were reminded of the words of President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018): “When we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help” (“Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44).

Our hearts were comforted and our worries eased. We received the

assurance that this call did not come from the stake president. It came from the Lord, and He knew before we did that I was pregnant when the calling was extended. He could do more for our family than my husband could on his own if he did not accept this call.

With faith in our hearts, my husband accepted the call and we took each day as it came. My third pregnancy proved to be a great miracle, and our son was born healthy and strong. The years I spent attending our home ward with our children helped us grow closer not only as a family but also to fellow ward members as well. While my husband diligently labored in his calling, I learned to turn to my ward family for help with my children.

My husband and I are grateful to many faithful Saints and, most important, to our Heavenly Father for helping us as we strived to balance work, family, and service in the Church. ■

Norma-Jean Livai, Hawaii, USA



How Does Satan Try to Deceive Us?

Nephi warned us about three of the devil's deceptive tactics.

1. RAGE AGAINST THE GOOD (2 Nephi 28:20)

How does Satan get people to be *angry* about *good* things?

Here are some good things Satan may tempt people to be **angry** about:

- Traditional marriage and family
- Kindness and compassion for all, including those who are different from you
- Organized religion

How does Satan get people to be so *comfortable* that they *stop caring* about fighting against evil or *stop trying* to grow spiritually?

Here are some lies the devil may tell us to make us **apathetic**:

- All that matters is enjoying life and having cool stuff.
- Anything inconvenient or uncomfortable must be bad, so avoid it.
- As long as life *appears* to be going well, that's all that matters.

How does Satan get people to *stop believing* that *evil is real* and that *God will judge* us?

Here are some lies Satan tells us to convince us there's **no evil** and **no consequences**:

- This life is it, so live it up.
- If it feels good, do it.
- Look around. The wicked aren't being punished. So why not have fun like them?

2. EASE AND APATHY (2 Nephi 28:21)

3. NO DEVIL, NO EVIL, NO CONSEQUENCES (2 Nephi 28:22)

AVOIDING DECEPTION

Consider reviewing President Dallin H. Oaks's October 2004 general conference talk, "Be Not Deceived," to find his counsel on how to avoid being deceived.

(MARCH 2-8)

DISCUSSION

"To each member of the Church I say, keep on the covenant path. Your commitment to follow the Savior by making covenants with Him and then keeping those covenants will open the door to every spiritual blessing and privilege available to men, women, and children everywhere."

President Russell M. Nelson, "As We Go Forward Together," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2018, 7.

What blessing can we receive if we endure to the end? (See 2 Nephi 31:20.)

What is the gateway to the covenant path? (See 2 Nephi 31:17–18.) How do we show our willingness to follow the example of Jesus Christ and keep His commandments?

How do we progress along the path? (See 2 Nephi 31:16, 20; Mosiah 5:7–9.)

Sin takes us off the path.
How do we return? (See 1 Nephi 10:18; 3 Nephi 9:13–14.)

Jacob 1–4

(MARCH 9–15)

The prophet Jacob taught that the Jews' spiritual blindness came from "looking beyond the mark" (Jacob 4:14). How do we avoid looking beyond the mark?

What Is the Mark?

"[Some] are blinded because they are 'looking beyond the mark' (Jacob 4:14) when the mark is Christ."

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Jesus of Nazareth, Savior and King," *Ensign*, May 1976, 26.



How Do We Avoid "Looking beyond the Mark"?



What Does It Mean to Look beyond the Mark?

In archery, if you want to hit the target, you have to aim for it. Looking beyond the target will cause you to miss. That may be one reason the word *sin* in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *hamartia*, which means "missing the mark." What were the sins of the Jews noted in Jacob 4:14?

How Do We Hit the Mark?

"If our primary focus, thoughts, and efforts are centered on increasing our love for Almighty God and extending our hearts to others, we can know that we have found the right target and are aiming at the bull's-eye—becoming true disciples of Jesus Christ."

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Aiming at the Center," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Jan. 2017, 5.

Jacob 5–7

(MARCH 16–22)

In the allegory of the olive tree, the master of the vineyard finds his olive tree in a state of decay and says, “I will prune [the tree], and dig about it, and nourish it” (Jacob 5:4).

Throughout the allegory, the master and his servant visit the vineyard several times (see Jacob 5:15–18, 29–32, 37–42). Each time, the process of pruning, digging, and nourishing is repeated.

The master of the vineyard represents Jesus Christ. The tree and its branches represent His people. This allegory is much more than a story about trees and fruit. It is a powerful witness of God’s involvement in His children’s lives and the Savior’s mission and His love for all mankind.

What Can We Learn from the Allegory of the Olive Tree?



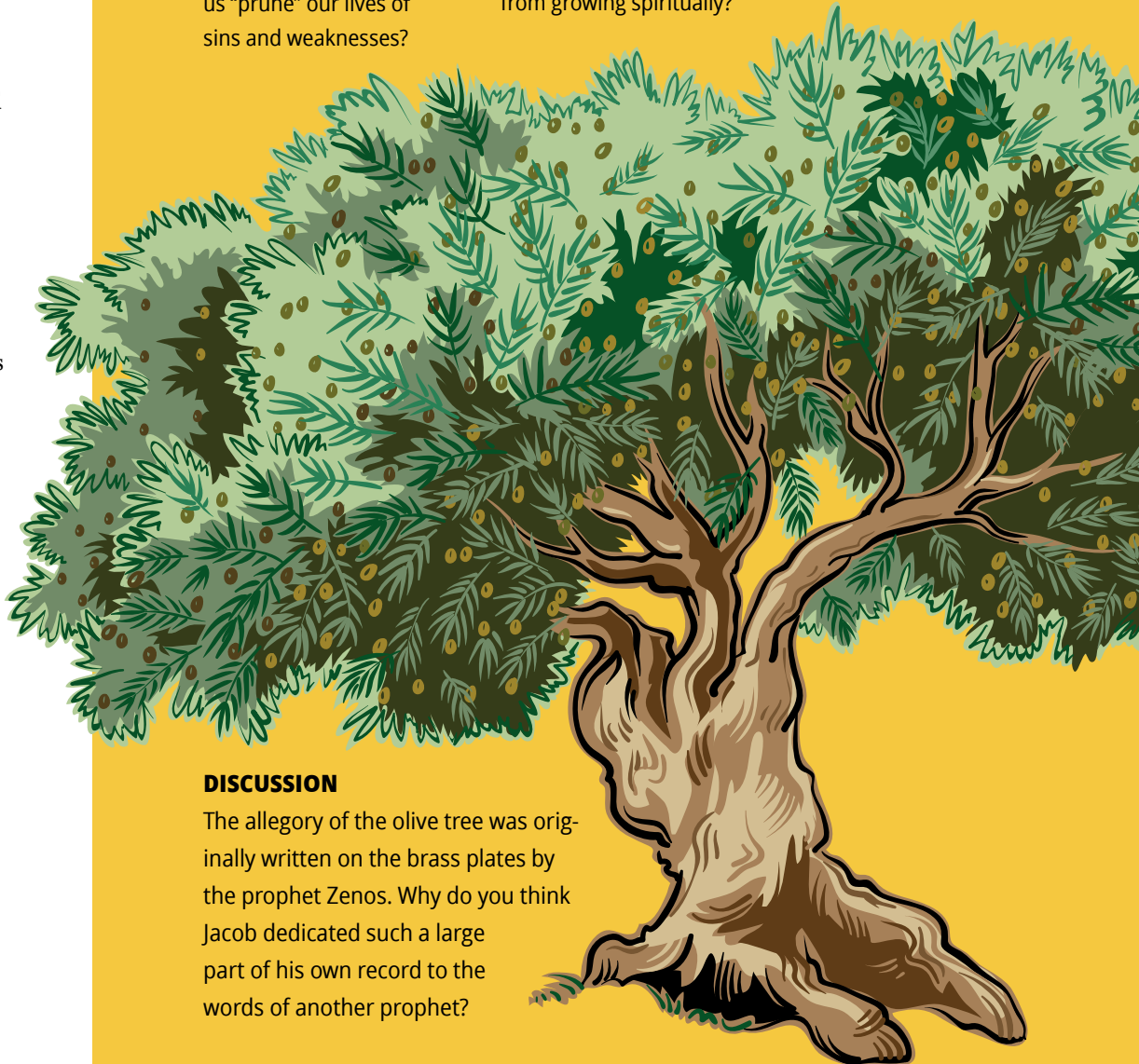
PRUNING removes dead branches and bad fruit from a tree. The master cut off the dead branches and cast them into the fire (see Jacob 5:9). How does God help us “prune” our lives of sins and weaknesses?



DIGGING includes clearing away obstacles, such as weeds, from around a tree. Digging ensures nothing will hinder the tree’s ability to grow. What obstacles keep us from growing spiritually?



NOURISHING keeps a tree healthy by providing minerals and other nutrients. Like trees, our spirits need nourishment. How can we nourish our spirits?



DISCUSSION

The allegory of the olive tree was originally written on the brass plates by the prophet Zenos. Why do you think Jacob dedicated such a large part of his own record to the words of another prophet?

WEEK

4

March 2020

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“When we
COVENANT ALL
we are, we can
BECOME MORE
than we are.”

Elder Gerrit W. Gong of
the Quorum of the Twelve
Apostles, “Covenant
Belonging,” 80,
emphasis added.

Our Need to Love and Minister

“We all know where we can
do better. There is no need
to repeatedly remind each
other, but there is a need
to love and minister to each
other and, in doing so, pro-
vide a climate of willingness
to change.”

Elder Hans T. Boom of the
Seventy, “Knowing, Loving,
and Growing,” 105.

COUNSEL FROM PRESIDENT NELSON

During general conference, President Russell M. Nelson gave important counsel to Latter-day Saints.

He encouraged youth to:

- “Qualify for limited-use temple recommends” (“Closing Remarks,” 121).
- Remember his invitation “to enlist in the Lord’s youth battalion” to gather Israel (“Witnesses, Aaronic Priesthood Quorums, and Young Women Classes,” 39).

He counseled women to:

- “Seek to understand what the Lord would have you know and do,” and “study prayerfully section 25 of the Doctrine and Covenants and discover what the Holy Ghost will teach *you*.”
- “Shift your focus away from worldly distractions,” and “embark upon and continue this lifelong process of consecrating your life to the Lord.”
- Teach the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and provide “input in family, ward, and stake councils.”
- Serve, pray, fast, study the scriptures, serve in the temple, and do family history work, all of which “will open the heavens to you.”
- “Study prayerfully *all* the truths you can find about

priesthood power,” beginning with Doctrine and Covenants sections 84 and 107. (See “Spiritual Treasures,” 77, 79.)

He encouraged all Church members to prepare for general conference in April 2020 by:

- Reading Joseph Smith’s account of the First Vision.
- Pondering how the Book of Mormon and the events since the First Vision have made a difference for us and our loved ones.
- Making the new Book of Mormon videos part of our individual and family study.
- Selecting our own questions, designing our own plans, and immersing ourselves “in the glorious light of the Restoration.” (See “Closing Remarks,” 122.)

All page numbers come from
the November 2019 *Liahona*.

DIVING DEEPER

Walking the Covenant Path

To keep the two great commandments, said President Dallin H. Oaks, “we walk a fine line between law and love—keeping the commandments and walking the covenant path, while loving our neighbors along the way. This walk requires us to seek divine inspiration” (“Two Great Commandments,” 75). Watch or read his talk and the talks by the following speakers for strength along on the covenant path:

- Elder Terence M. Vinson, who said, “What we need here is less Wi-Fi and more Nephi!” (“True Disciples of the Savior,” 9).
- Brother Stephen W. Owen, who encouraged us to seek “spiritual nourishment” by disconnecting from the world and connecting with heaven (“Be Faithful, Not Faithless,” 12).
- Sister Michelle Craig, who spoke about “four ways to increase your spiritual capacity to receive revelation” (“Spiritual Capacity,” 19).
- Elder Gary E. Stevenson, who said, “We must continue to be faithful and vigilant, for so is the only way to discern truth and to hear the voice of the Lord through His servants” (“Deceive Me Not,” 96).
- President M. Russell Ballard, who said, “One of the most important things we can learn in this life is how to emphasize our eternal spiritual nature and control our evil desires” (“Giving Our Spirits Control over Our Bodies,” 109).
- Elder Peter M. Johnson, who taught us how we can overcome three tools of the adversary: deception, distraction, and discouragement (“Power to Overcome the Adversary,” 110–12).

HOW TO . . .

Share the Gospel

When it comes to sharing the gospel, Sister Cristina B. Franco asked the following questions and then told members of the Church, “The answer to all of these questions is yes! We can do it!”

- “Can we invite a friend who is not of our faith to come to church with us on Sunday?”
- “Can we perhaps share a copy of the Book of Mormon with a relative or a friend?”
- “Can we help others find their ancestors on FamilySearch or share with others what we have learned during the week as we have been studying *Come, Follow Me*?”
- “Can we be more like our Savior, Jesus Christ, and share with others what brings us joy to our lives?”

Sister Cristina B. Franco, Second Counselor in the Primary General Presidency, “Finding Joy in Sharing the Gospel,” 85.



Inspiration at the Wharf

By Afatia Silaga

My family was hurting, and I had a four-hour wait for the boat home. It was time to pray.



I was a boat ride away from home when I got the news that there had been a big argument in my family earlier that day. A *very* big argument.

My wife was angry. My kids were angry. Everyone was hurt. And I didn't know what to do.

I had taken my work truck early that morning from my home island of Upolu, Samoa, and boarded the ferry

to Savai'i, Samoa. This trip takes several hours in each direction.

After I talked with my wife on the phone and heard the anger in her voice, I admit that I had a hard time thinking about coming home to this situation. I wasn't sure how I could help resolve so many hurt feelings in my family.

I pulled up to the wharf and began to pray. For the next four hours, I sat

in my truck, praying about my family while waiting for the boat home.

After a long time in prayer, I received a clear spiritual impression. "Just show your love to your children. *Show the love*. Tell them, 'I love you, and God loves you.'"

I've always gotten along with my kids. They know that I love them, and they know how much they mean to

me. But I understood clearly, through revelation, that showing even greater love would be the only thing to bring my family close again.

When I arrived home late that night, my wife was still very upset. “What are you going to do?” she asked me.

I told her about the revelation I received. I told her that I felt we needed to show our love even more clearly to our kids. “I believe that will be the key to heal the pain everyone is feeling,” I said. We decided to give it a try.

Now, this was the normal night for our weekly family council. Because of the argument, however, most of my family wanted to cancel it that week. My wife and I decided we would hold family council anyway.

At first, nobody said a word. I could tell there had been a lot of tears and emotional pain in my family that day.

Then my wife began talking. “I just want you to know how much I love all

of you,” she said. I watched the change in their body language. They had all been sitting on the edge of their chairs. But as soon as my wife started explaining how much she loved them, our children leaned back and relaxed. Soon they opened up as well. I also told them how much I love them and how glad I am that we are a family.

That solved the whole problem. It was incredible. All the anger was gone from our home, and we were able to fix what was broken.

Now, my family isn’t perfect. But we love each other very much. And we make time for each other. Whether it’s getting up early to read the scriptures together, going to church together, playing basketball together, sharing meals, or just listening to music together, we work hard to stay close.

Through it all, my wife and I know more than ever how important it is to show our love for our children. ■

LESSONS FROM THIS DAD

- Brother Silaga recognized that he wouldn’t be able to solve this problem on his own. He prayed for hours to seek revelation on how to help his family.
- The Silaga family centers their home in Jesus Christ. Despite busy schedules, they wake early for family scripture study. They hold family council weekly. They attend church. They do all they can to bring the blessings of the gospel into their home and family.
- Brother Silaga counseled with his wife before they spoke to the children about the argument.
- Brother and Sister Silaga regularly tell their children how much they love them.
- The Silagas work together, but they also play together. They exemplify the following counsel given by Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “In family relationships *love* is really spelled *t-i-m-e*, time. Taking time for each other is the key for harmony at home” (“Of Things That Matter Most,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 22).



Young Adults

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By Aspen Stander

Find these articles and more:

- At liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org
- In **YA Weekly** (under the Young Adults section in the Gospel Library)

Share Your Story

Do you have an amazing story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? If so, we want to hear from you! You can submit your articles or your feedback at liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Our Shared Struggle to Feel Like We Belong

Have you ever walked into a room and felt everyone's eyes shift in your direction? Or worse—felt like no one noticed you at all? I have. Those situations can be hurtful because within all of us is a yearning to belong.

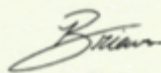
The gospel of Jesus Christ brings us together. But sometimes our differing circumstances can make it **hard to feel like we belong**. Among the many individuals who make up the Church, there are new converts who might be **trying to find their way**. On page 44, I share how my perspective on belonging and fulfilling the Lord's expectations of us changed.

There are also many like Jodi and her husband, whose struggles with infertility or **other trials can make them feel like they don't belong**. Read her story on page 46.

In digital-only articles, Rachelle shares how welcoming members made all the difference when she came back to church. Eric teaches that **we're all needed** in the body of Christ, and Aspen shares how to belong and thrive at church as a more introverted person.

The Church is full of people who don't feel like they belong. You might be one of them. But **we all can do our part** to make every member feel welcome. Because belonging isn't a matter of circumstance—it's a matter of who you truly are and who you are striving to become like. As children of God, we all belong in Christ's Church.

Sincerely,
Brian S. King



PHOTOGRAPH FROM GETTY IMAGES



New Members: This Is Where You Belong

Are you trying
to meet
the wrong
expectations?



By Brian S. King

When you meet someone, how do you introduce yourself? What things are important to your identity? My name is Brian. And I belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But I haven't always felt like I belonged.

I joined the Church my first year of college. What seemed like only moments after my baptism, well-intended members started asking, "Will you serve a mission?" A mission wasn't something I had been able to give serious thought to yet. But I felt like the expected answer was yes.

Am I Enough?

Just over a year after I joined the Church, I received my call to serve in England and arrived eager to teach. But within a few days, I realized how homesick I was. I was not prepared to serve a full-time mission.

While discussing my feelings with mission president, he felt impressed to sing, "There Is Sunshine in My Soul Today" (*Hymns*, no. 227) over the phone. It struck me as a little odd, but it brought me feelings of light and warmth.

And yet a week later I was on a plane heading home. I wrestled with my feelings the entire flight. I felt overwhelmed worrying about what others might be thinking about my choices. I was angry at myself that I didn't serve a full two years—after all, I had left behind friends and family and postponed school to serve a mission. I had endured so much heartache, and now it just felt like Heavenly Father had abandoned me in my time of need. I wondered if I even belonged anymore because I hadn't lived up to every expectation.

Come as You Are

A week after coming home, my best friend's family invited me over to watch a session of general conference. It was the last thing I wanted to do. But I went.

Halfway through the session, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland walked to the podium and said, "There is sunshine in my soul today"—the same thing my mission president had unexpectedly sung two weeks earlier. The Spirit whispered, "This is the Church you belong in." Over the next 15 minutes, my entire perspective changed.

It's easy to feel like we don't belong when we feel like we've fallen short of each others' expectations. But we all fall short (see Romans 3:23). And yes, God says there is still a place for each of us in His Church (see 1 Corinthians 12:20–23).

Elder Holland taught during that conference talk: "'Come as you are,' a loving Father says to each of us. But He adds, 'Don't plan to stay as you are'" ("Songs Sung and Unsung," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2017, 51). God wants us here no matter who we are or what we've done because it allows Him to help us change who we'll become (see 3 Nephi 18:22).

Before hearing Elder Holland's talk, I thought belonging meant meeting every expectation. Now I understand better that the Lord's Church isn't for those who are already perfect but to help perfect those who aren't. And when you are trying to follow Him, you belong in His Church. ■



Brian S. King is a family studies major at Brigham Young University. He was born and raised in rural North Carolina, USA, where he enjoys spending time in the mountains.

FIVE THINGS I wish I would have known as a new member:

1. **Be yourself.** Your unique personality and gifts strengthen the Church as a whole (see 1 Corinthians 12).
2. **Join in.** Surrounding yourself with others who share your values will help you stay on the covenant path.
3. **Go to the temple.** Spending time in the temple—or preparing to go—will help you keep an eternal perspective.
4. **Focus on what's most important.** When things get overwhelming, focus on keeping and preparing for covenants.
5. **Be patient with yourself.** Don't judge yourself against others as you progress at your own pace.



Belonging in the Church through the Lens of Infertility

By Jodi King

Dealing with infertility made me feel like I didn't have a place at church.

I never felt like I didn't belong at church until my husband, Cameron, and I began struggling with infertility.

The children and families who had typically brought me joy to see at church now started causing me grief and pain.

I felt barren without a child in my arms or a diaper bag in hand. In Relief Society, playgroups were announced, moms chatted, and it seemed every lesson tied back to motherhood.

I felt lost.

I didn't have a child to bring to playgroup. I didn't have personal stories to share about rearing my child in the gospel. I desperately wanted to be a part of the

conversations about motherhood and to make friends with the sisters in my ward, but I felt like there was no connection between us because I wasn't a mother.

The hardest Sunday was our first one in a new ward. Because we didn't have kids, we were asked if we were newlyweds and when we planned on starting a family. I had gotten pretty good at answering these questions without letting them affect me—I knew they weren't meant to be hurtful.

However, on this particular Sunday, answering those questions was especially hard. We had just found out, after being hopeful, that we were—yet again—not pregnant.





I walked into sacrament meeting feeling downtrodden, and answering those typical “get to know you” questions was hard for me. During the sacrament, I scanned the congregation looking for other young couples without children whom my husband and I could relate to. We didn’t see anyone else.

But it was Sunday School that truly broke my heart. The lesson—intended to be about the divine role of mothers—quickly shifted gears and became a vent session. My heart sank and tears silently flowed down my cheeks as I heard women complain about a blessing I would give anything for.

I bolted out of church. At first, I didn’t want to go back. I didn’t want to experience that feeling of isolation again. But that night, after talking with my husband,

we knew we would keep attending church not only because the Lord has asked us to but also because we both knew that the joy that comes from renewing covenants and feeling the Spirit at church surpasses the sadness I felt that day.

We All Feel Like We Don’t Belong at Times

That experience happened four years ago. Time has passed. And I still don’t have a baby in my arms or a diaper bag in my hand, but I know now more than ever that I do belong in church.

While processing my own grief, I’ve become more observant of those around me. I still scan the congregation, but now I try to notice those who might have come to church feeling like they don’t belong. And I’ve learned that we all feel like we don’t belong at times.

In the Church, there are widowed, divorced, and single members; those with family members who have fallen away from the gospel; people with chronic illnesses or financial struggles; members who experience same-sex attraction; members working to overcome addictions or doubts; recent converts; new move-ins; empty-nesters; and the list goes on and on.

Now I try to notice those who might have come to church feeling like they don’t belong.

Each of us may feel that our trials or circumstances prevent us from belonging, but the truth is that our unique lives and our individual adversities are actually what make us belong in Christ's Church the most.

We Belong with Our Savior

The purpose of being a member of the Church is to follow Him. We belong with our Savior, and so we belong in His Church. He has told us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

The Savior invites us to come unto Him—no matter our circumstances. We come to church to renew our covenants, to increase our faith, to find peace, and to do as He did perfectly in His life—minister to others who feel like they don't belong.

There might be times when I'm the only one in Relief Society who doesn't have children. And times when people still ask why we don't have children. Those times may be difficult, but for as many difficult experiences, there are even more joyful ones.

Feeling the Spirit at church and showing my love for my Savior will always surpass any feeling of being alone. I know there is peace in Christ. I know there is healing in attending church. I know we're blessed as we keep going. Our trials may be different from others' at church, but our personal experiences can help us become more empathetic to others who may feel like they don't belong. And as a result, those experiences can unite us.

I know that by sharing my testimony and opening my heart, I can help others come to understand that they—and each and every individual—belong in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■



Jodi King grew up in Iowa, USA, and will always call it home. She met and married her husband while attending Brigham Young University. She currently teaches kindergarten and also works as a virtual assistant.



YOUNG ADULTS

**DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU
DON'T BELONG?**

*Young adults share how they
have developed a sense of
belonging in the Church.*

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YOUTH

**USE THIS MONTH'S
CONFERENCE
NOTEBOOK AS YOU
PREPARE FOR, LISTEN
TO, AND LEARN
FROM GENERAL
CONFERENCE!**

PARENTS

**TEACHING KIDS TO
PRAY LIKE ENOS**

F12–F13,
F20–F23

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



March 2020

The children's section of the *Liahona*, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

the Friend



Learn about
ENOS!

See pages F12–13, F20–23

How Does Heavenly Father Speak to Us?

Here are some of the ways we can hear Him:



**By President
Dallin H. Oaks**
First Counselor in the
First Presidency

Heavenly Father can speak to us in many different ways. When Joseph Smith prayed about which church was right, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him and talked to him face to face. But usually Heavenly Father speaks to us through the Holy Ghost. He gives us thoughts in our mind and feelings in our heart.



A feeling that Jesus loves us and that the gospel is true



A feeling of comfort when we are sad or lonely



A happy feeling after we have repented



A good feeling when we hear beautiful music or see inspiring art



A peaceful feeling that something is a good choice



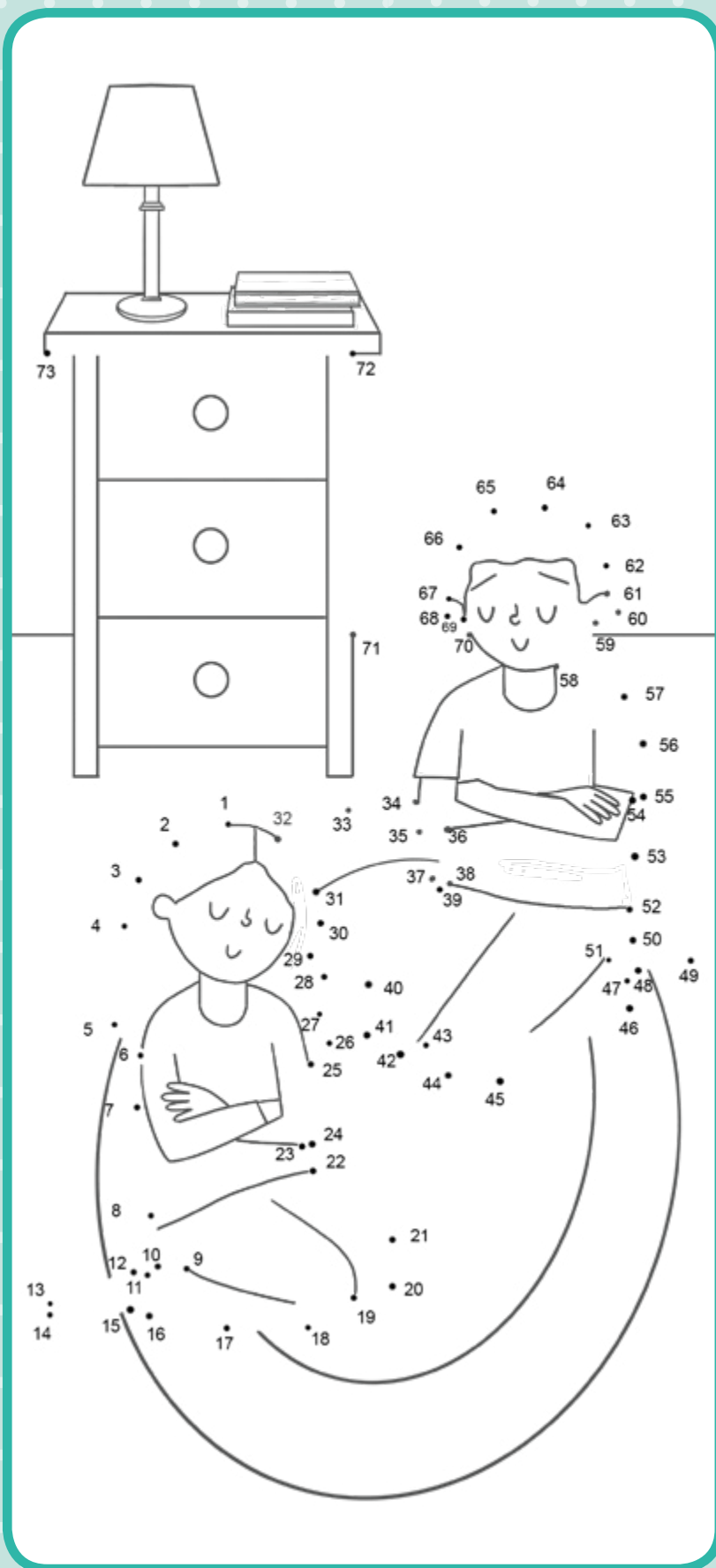
A warning feeling that something is wrong

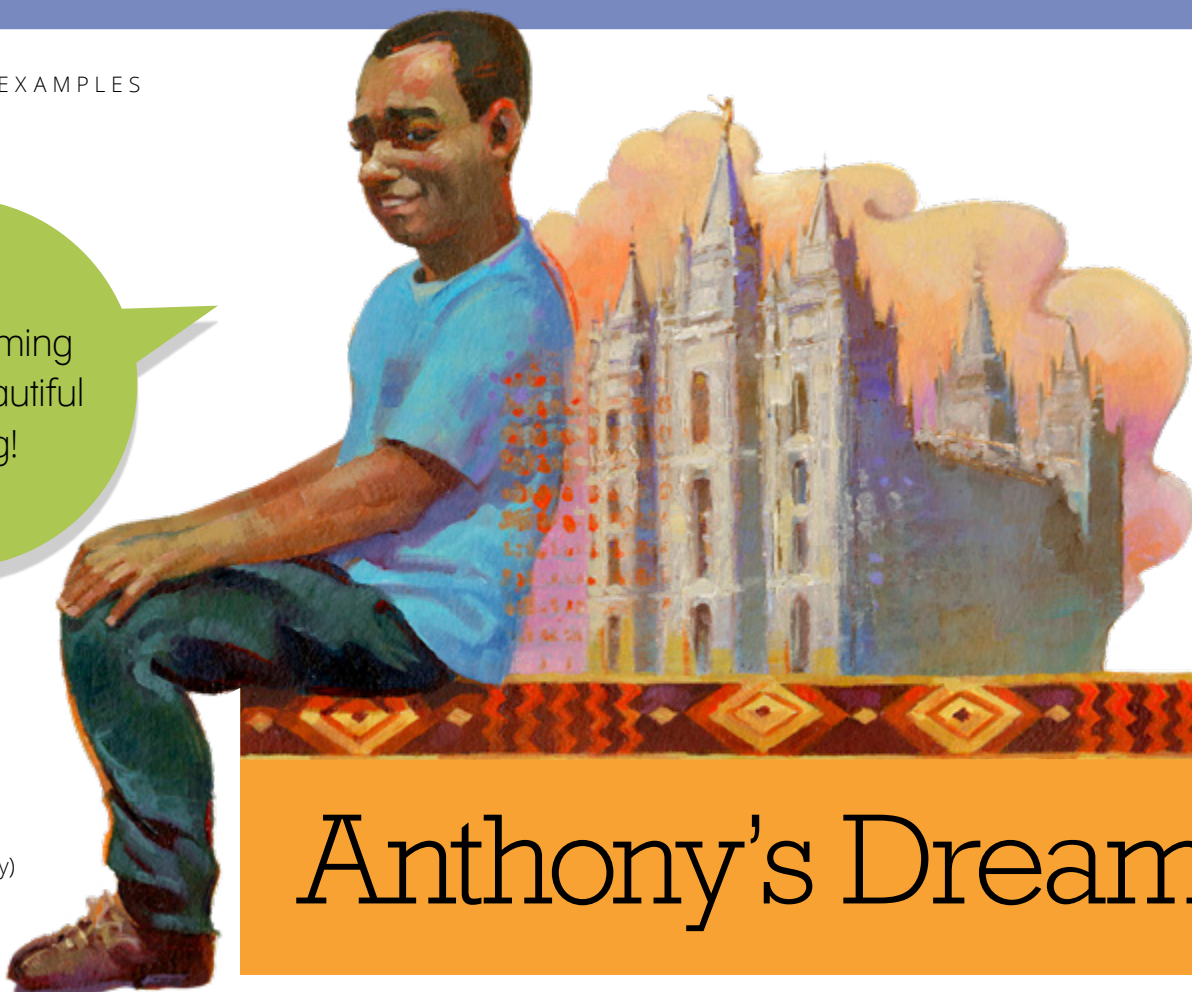


Choose the Right and Listen

When Heavenly Father speaks to us through the Holy Ghost, it's called "revelation." Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ don't give us revelation about everything we do. But we don't need to worry. If we're trying to choose the right and listen to the Holy Ghost, They will help and guide us when it's important. ●

Adapted from "Eight Ways God Can Speak to You," New Era, Sept. 2004, 4–8.





I kept dreaming about a beautiful building!

By Katie Morrell
Church Magazines
(Based on a true story)

Anthony's Dream

Anthony was surprised when he woke up. This was his third time having the same dream! In his dream, a tall man had shown him a beautiful building. *What could it possibly mean?*

As a schoolteacher, Anthony had visited many places outside his village in Nigeria. The building from his dream didn't look like anything he had seen before. Maybe it didn't actually exist. But there was just something special about it.

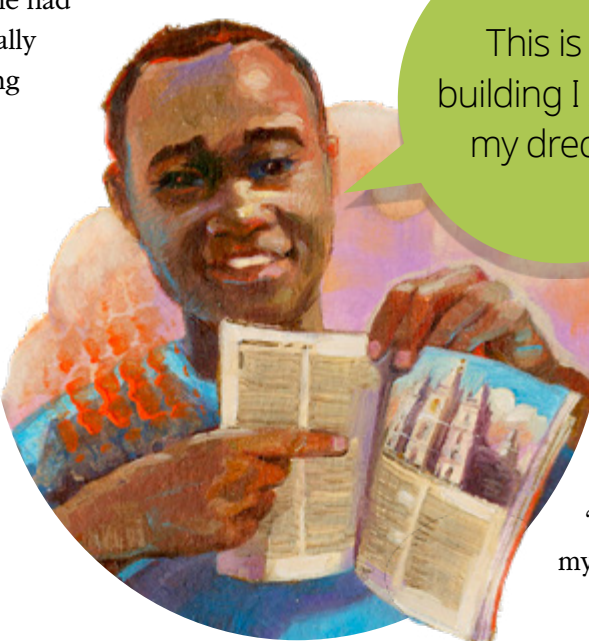
As years passed, Anthony still thought about his dream, but he was worried about other things. A war started in Nigeria. It wasn't safe for Anthony and his wife and children to leave their house. But it was hard being inside all day. Anthony missed seeing his friends and students.

One day Anthony found an

old magazine in his house. When he opened it, he saw something that looked familiar. It was the beautiful building from his dream! It *was* real.

The building belonged to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *I've never heard of that church before*, Anthony thought. He wanted to learn more about it, but because of the war, he still couldn't leave his house. He would have to wait.

When the war finally ended, Anthony sent a letter to the Church's headquarters in Salt Lake City. He asked if they would send missionaries to teach him and his family. "Can you build your church in my town?" Anthony wrote. "Please



This is the building I saw in my dreams!



I built
this little chapel
so we could
have a place
to meet!

send me scriptures so I can teach the other villagers.”

Anthony was sad when he received a letter from Church headquarters: “Right now we don’t have any missionaries in your country.” Back then, most black men couldn’t hold the priesthood. And the Church wasn’t organized in much of Africa.

But Anthony was good at waiting on the Lord’s timing. Even though he couldn’t get baptized yet, he kept his faith strong.

The Church sent Anthony and his family the Book of Mormon and other Church books. Anthony studied the books and taught what he learned to the other villagers.

So many people were interested in the gospel that Anthony wanted a place for everyone to meet.

On a road lined with banana trees, Anthony built a little chapel with a blue door and shutters. The front of the building read, “Nigerian Latter-Day Saints.”

Years went by. Then one day Anthony heard wonderful news. God told the prophet that *all* worthy men could have the priesthood. The Church was sending missionaries to Anthony’s village!

The missionaries were surprised to find a church building and so many people ready to be baptized. They were amazed at the faith of Anthony and the other villagers.

“It has been a long, difficult wait,” Anthony told the missionaries, “but that doesn’t matter now. You have come at last.”

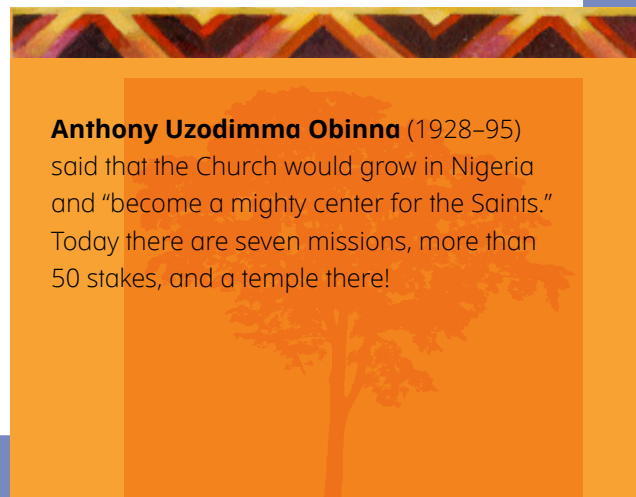
Anthony was the first person baptized in the Ekeonumiri River in Nigeria. When the new branch was organized, he was called to be the branch president. His wife, Fidelia, was the Relief Society president. They were sealed together in the temple years later.

Anthony continued sharing his faith with others. He often told people that the seed of the gospel planted in Nigeria would grow into a great tree. The world would be surprised by its growth.



Baptized
at last!

Anthony was right. Today there are more than 170,000 members of the Church in Nigeria—and a beautiful temple! The gospel seed Anthony helped plant continues to grow around the world today. ●



Anthony Uzodimma Obinna (1928–95) said that the Church would grow in Nigeria and “become a mighty center for the Saints.” Today there are seven missions, more than 50 stakes, and a temple there!

Hello from Samoa!



Talofa!
 ("Hi" in Samoan), we're
 Margo and Paolo.
 Join us as we visit Samoa!



Many people in Samoa live in *fales*, which are houses without walls. Cooking is done over a fire outside.



Samoa is an island nation in the Pacific Ocean. It has two main islands and four smaller islands.



People in Samoa love to sing! These children are getting ready to sing in Primary.

O LE EKALESIA A
IESU KERISO
 O LE AU PAIA O ASO
 E GATA AI

Here's how to say
 "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" in Samoan: *O Le Ekalesia a Iesu Keriso o le Au Paia o Aso e Gata Ai.*



Many people raise pigs and chickens and use dogs for hunting.





Coconuts are a popular food in Samoa. Everyone helps harvest them and remove the outer covering. The shells are often burned as fuel for cooking fires.



Meet some of our friends from Samoa!



I love to sing the Primary songs. My favorites are "Mother, Tell Me the Story" and "I Am a Child of God."

Mary V., age 5, Savai'i, Samoa



I know Heavenly Father hears and answers my prayers.

Alex S., age 11, Upolu, Samoa

**Are you from Samoa?
Write to us!
We'd love to hear from you.**



**Thanks for
exploring Samoa
with us. See you
next time!**

Because they live on islands, Samoans are never far from the ocean.



Music for a Better Day

By David Dickson
Church Magazines
(Based on a true story)

Elizabeth kicked an empty coconut shell down the dirt road. She frowned as it rolled away. Today had not been a good day.

Not at all!

Lagi said something mean to her at school. Later, the other kids laughed when she did a math problem wrong in front of the class. And then her art project got ruined.

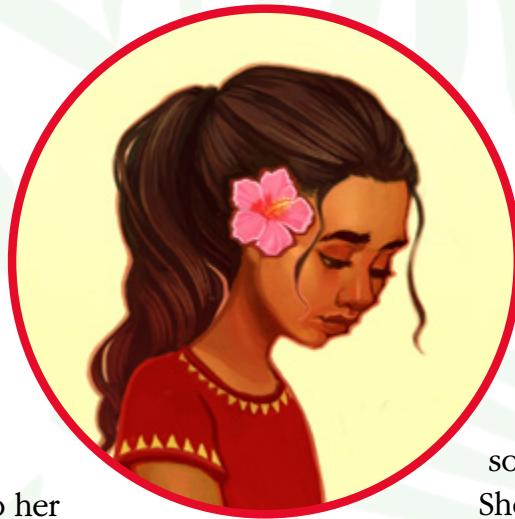
"It's not fair!" Elizabeth said. Who invented bad days anyway?

Elizabeth plucked a pretty hibiscus flower. At least that was one good thing today. Even on a bad day in Samoa she could find beautiful flowers all over.

She twisted the pink flower into her hair and walked home.

"*Talofa!*" Dad said. "How was your day?"

Elizabeth looked down. "Not good." She walked past the noisy pigs in their yard and sat



next to Dad on the porch.

Dad sat and listened as she told him all about her hard day.

"I'm so sorry," Dad said, hugging her. "I've had days like those. Want to know something that helps me?" She nodded. "Yes, please!"

He started singing a song that Elizabeth knew well. Dad sang this beautiful love song to Mom all the time.

She laughed and pushed on his shoulder. "Daa-aad!"

He grinned. "I'm serious! Good music helps me feel better. And, speaking of music . . ."

Elizabeth knew what he was going to say. It was time to practice piano.

More than anything, Elizabeth wanted to learn piano so she could play songs in church. She already loved singing with her family. Especially with Dad. But playing piano was harder. Her fingers had to work to find the notes.

"I don't know if I feel like practicing today," she said.

Dad stood. "Try to think about what you're playing. Hymns can help us feel closer to God."

Then he took off his sandals and went inside to help with dinner.

Elizabeth took off her sandals and went inside too. Dad chopped vegetables while Mom stirred the stew.

The sheet music for "Fa'afetai i Le Atua" sat on the keyboard. Elizabeth loved this Samoan hymn. It was all about giving thanks to God.

Elizabeth turned on the electric keyboard and started playing. "Think about what you're playing," Dad had said.



So she did. She thought about all the things she was thankful for. Her family. Her house. Music. Beautiful Samoa.

Her fingers started to find the notes more easily. After a while, her feelings began to change. She felt peace. Elizabeth smiled. She was feeling the Holy Ghost!

The sound of chopping stopped. Dad started humming. He stood next to her and began to sing.

She kept playing, and Mom joined in too. Elizabeth kept thinking about all the ways God blessed her and her family.

At the end, Dad leaned down and asked, "Feeling any better?"

"Yes!" she said. "You were right. Good music *did* make my day better!" ●



What helps you feel better on hard days?

Hay Fields and Priesthood Blessings



By Elder
Jack N. Gerard
Of the Seventy

“The Comforter . . . is the Holy Ghost” (John 14:26).

When I was a boy, my family had a small farm with cows and fields. Growing up on a farm was hard work.

One hot summer day, my brother and I were working in the field. The wind was blowing hard, and there was a lot of dust in the air. I had bad allergies, and the dust from the hay sometimes made me sick. My eyes were watering. It was hard to breathe. My nose even started to bleed because I’d rubbed it so much.

When my mother came out to the field and saw me, she told me to come inside the house. She had me lie on the couch with a wet cloth on my face. A few minutes later, she came back with two farmers. They were wearing overalls covered in hay dust.

The farmers were members of our ward. They placed their hands on my head and started to give me a blessing. My dad wasn’t a member of the Church then, so he didn’t hold the priesthood. But I’ll never forget the feeling I had as those other good men blessed me. It was warm, peaceful, and calming. And I didn’t feel so sick anymore.

Later in life, I realized that feeling was the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is sometimes called the Comforter. I like that name because it was the Holy Ghost that brought me comfort. It made me feel better on the outside and on the inside.

The Holy Ghost is a great blessing. Look for the comfort the Holy Ghost brings and try to have it with you every day. ●

From an interview with Eliza Broadbent



Comfort from the Holy Ghost

There are many ways you can feel comfort from the Holy Ghost. This maze shows just a few. Can you find a path through the maze?



START



"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).



→ FINISH



I Can Pray

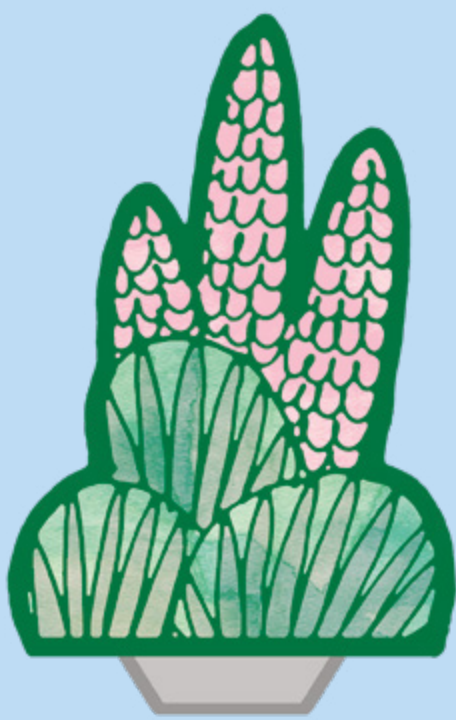
Enos prayed all day and night.
Read about it in Enos 1 in the story "Enos Prays."

When You Pray

- Start with "Dear Heavenly Father."
- Thank Him for blessings.
- Tell Him about your life.
- Ask Him for what you need, for people who need help.
- End with "In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."
- Take time to listen for His voice.

You may not hear God's answers in other ways, but God's answers take time. But God always answers.

Glue on these pictures in a small box on top of cardboard to make a scene of Enos praying.



Like Enos

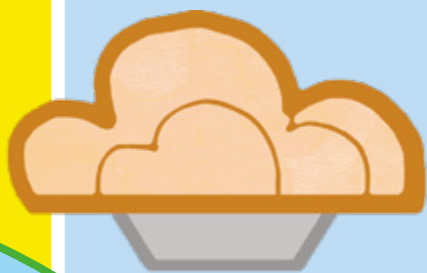
and heard God's voice!
in the Book of Mormon or
"prayed" on page F20.

ay:

Heavenly Father . . ."
blessings.
our day or your feelings.
you need or pray for people
time of Jesus Christ, amen."
to the Holy Ghost.

voice as Enos did, but you can receive
like through thoughts or feelings. Sometimes
God *always* loves you!

or tape
ures in a
r on a piece
d to make a
nos's story.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ADAM KOFORD



Show and Tell



When I was baptized, I felt very happy to take this great step, knowing that by being baptized and confirmed, I was following Jesus.

**Sary Del Mar R., age 8,
Valle del Cauca, Colombia**



It is a nice day when the family sits together to watch general conference.

Faith M., age 9, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



I like general conference because I get to watch the prophet speak and share his testimony. He

helps me understand what our Heavenly Father wants me to do.

Fuki M., age 10, Shizuoka, Japan



We should pray to Heavenly Father to help us.

**Yohann P., age 8,
Brittany, France**



I love Heavenly Father. He likes when I do good things. I am grateful to Him for everything He gives me.

Vlad, age 4

An important part of Heavenly Father's plan is family. I want to live with my family forever in heaven. We all pray together, strengthen, and help each other. I love my family.

Katya, age 10



Find It!

This family enjoys working together to gather food to eat. Can you find 15 coconuts?
Then find the other hidden objects.



By Marissa Widdison

Church Magazines

(Based on a true story)

Isabelle loved to pray! In the morning she said a “good morning” prayer. She thanked Heavenly Father for the sunshine and a new day.

At lunchtime Isabelle told Heavenly Father about her day so far. She prayed for help to be nice to her sisters when they got home from school.

At bedtime Isabelle’s family prayed together. They always started by talking about people who might need extra blessings.

Tonight Daddy said, “Please pray for Uncle Dan. He lost his job.”

Isabelle felt sad. She didn’t know a lot about grown-up work, but she knew that losing a job was bad. She loved her uncle. He made yummy popcorn. And last time he came over, he had showed her how to do a cartwheel!

PRAYING for Uncle Dan



"I'll pray for him to find a job," Maria said. She was one of Isabelle's older sisters. It was her turn to pray out loud for the family.

The next day, Isabelle asked Daddy if Uncle Dan found a job yet.

"Not yet," Daddy said. "Sometimes prayers aren't answered right away."

"So should we keep praying for him?" Isabelle asked.

Daddy nodded. "That would mean a lot to Uncle Dan."

Every day, Isabelle and her sisters kept praying for Uncle Dan. They prayed for him to find a job. They prayed for him to have

enough money for what he needed. They prayed for him to feel loved.

Isabelle was glad she could help Uncle Dan with her prayers. Praying for him made her feel happy and strong.

They helped Uncle Dan in other ways too. One day they helped Uncle Dan clean his house. Another day, Isabelle and Mommy stopped by to watch a movie with Uncle Dan.

Weeks went by. Finally, Daddy had good news.

"Uncle Dan has two job interviews this week!" Daddy said.

Isabelle felt happy inside. She was glad she could pray for the people she loved. ●



Who can you pray for?

When I listen to the prophets,
my faith in
Jesus Christ
grows strong!

(See Jacob 4:6.)



Jesus's Helping Hand



Arsen, age 9

Once we went to a children's play center. One of the activities was a very tall hill, which you had to climb up using a rope. I tried to do it many times, but I could only make it three-quarters of the way. Just before I could reach the top, I would fall and slide down to the bottom of the hill.

I felt like I would never be able to reach the top. Then an employee quickly climbed up the hill and gave me her hand from there. With her help, I easily got to the top.

At that moment I thought about Jesus. He does the same for us. When we do the best we can but still aren't reaching our goal, He gives His helping hand to us. This experience was very spiritual for me, and I will remember it all my life. ●

Enos Prayed



Enos was hunting in the forest. He started thinking about God.

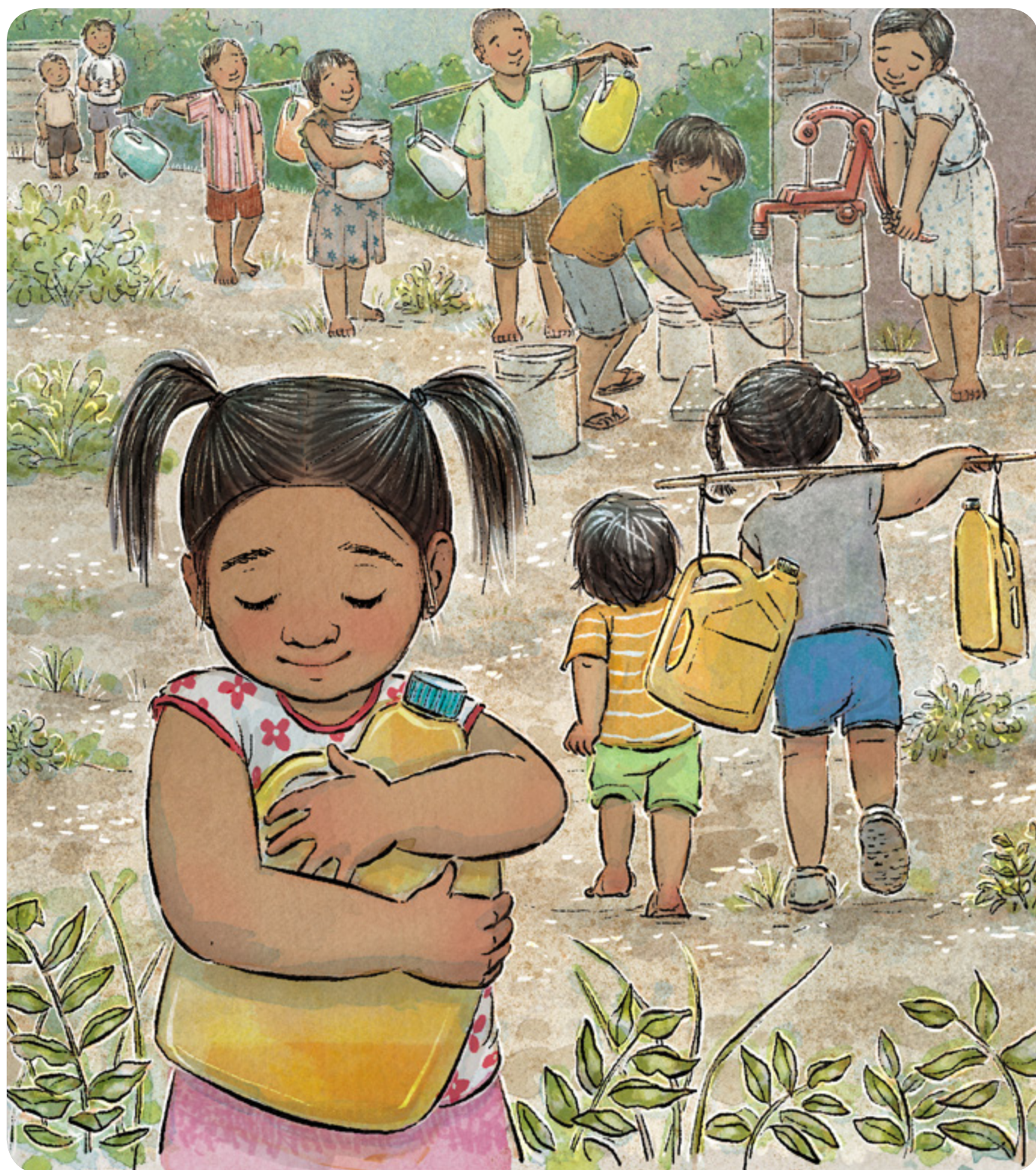


He wanted to know God better. So he prayed. He heard God's voice!

God said that because Enos had faith in Jesus, his sins were forgiven. Enos was happy. But he didn't stop praying.



Enos prayed for his friends. He prayed for his enemies. He prayed about the scriptures. He kept praying for a long time!



I can pray to God anytime, anywhere. I can help other people by praying for them. ●

Read about this story in the book of Enos.

Enos Prayed with Faith



Who needs your prayers today?

Dear Parents,

This month's magazine tells the story of Enos. His parents taught him about the gospel many times. Finally, their words "sunk deep" into his heart (Enos 1:3). We should share our testimonies with our children often. We never know when our words will make a difference.

How many times can your family find the word "pray" in this issue?

God is happy when you talk with Him!

The Friend

HOW TO SEND YOUR CHILD'S ARTWORK OR EXPERIENCE TO THE *FRIEND*

Go to liahona.ChurchofJesusChrist.org and click on "Submit an Article or Feedback." Or email it to us at liahona@ChurchofJesusChrist.org along with your child's name, age, city of residence, and this permission statement: "I, [insert your name], give permission to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to use my child's submission in the Church magazines, on Church websites and social media platforms, and possibly in Church reports, print products, videos, publications, and training materials." We can't wait to hear from you!



Find the Liahona hidden inside!

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ON THE *FRIEND* COVER
Illustration by Ben Simonsen