

# COVID-19: Messages of Guidance, Healing, and Hope

*Members testify of seeing the hand of the Lord even during this season of changes, anxiety, and loss.*

**Editors' note:** As general conference began on April 4, images of the quiet Conference Center were reminders of the pandemic around us, but messages from our leaders focused on optimism and hope. Over recent weeks, we've received similar stories of faith from Church members around the world. The following pages contain excerpts from some of your stories, as well as information about additional articles online. With Christlike compassion, we can continue to help each other heal from the effects of this pandemic.

## **He Was with Me Then; He's with Me Now**

As I sat at home trying to calm my anxiety over what was going on in the world, I opened my journal randomly and landed on the following: "There are so many fears that come with getting up each day in this world, but with faith in the teachings of the gospel, we can put one foot in front of the other. . . . Faith always defeats fear."

I knew that I had just received powerful personal revelation and that Heavenly Father gave it to me through my own journal entries from several years before. I was blessed with a moment of peace and the knowledge that Heavenly Father was with me

back then, and He's right here with me now.

*Danette Gray, Utah, USA*

## **The Holy Ghost Can Work Online**

I felt inspired to begin holding seminary classes through group video chats. Two days before our city was placed under quarantine, our class had its first online lesson.

Some of the parents also joined our class, including those who aren't members. I held back my tears as we studied Mosiah chapter 2 together. We all felt the Spirit as we learned that serving others is also serving God. I learned a lot about receiving and

recognizing personal revelation. The Holy Ghost will manifest the truth of the gospel in many delivery formats. In spite of what's happening in the world, nothing can stop Heavenly Father's work for the salvation of His children from progressing.

*Marites Pineda, Mindanao, Philippines*

## **We Haven't Missed a Day of Seminary**

Even with everything that has happened with the coronavirus, I'm happy to say we have not missed a day of seminary! Teaching my classes over video chat poses some challenges, but I love watching parents and younger siblings listen in on our conversations. I love that it provides a sense of consistency and routine for our families, and I especially love that we can continue to bear witness to each other of Jesus Christ and His love for us.

*Mandi Crandell, Yigo, Guam*

## **Serving Those on Both Sides of the Veil**

I was serving as a senior sister missionary in the Missouri Independence Mission when Church meetings were canceled and we began self-isolating in our apartments. We used our phones and computers to keep in touch with members and to reach out to those we were working with, who didn't attend church regularly.

To keep busy, I decided to do some family history, even though for quite a while it has been difficult for me to find any new names. When I logged on to FamilySearch, I found a notification of a record waiting to be attached. That one record led me to find about 70 people in my line. After five days, the flow of names stopped. Later that



day, we found out we were all being released to go home. I am sad to leave, but I also feel blessed that I was able to serve family on the other side of the veil during this difficult time.

*Kim Nielson, Oregon, USA*

### **Doing Our Part to Keep the Lord's Work Moving**

As the missionaries in our area were advised to stay in their apartments, we have tried to do our part, inviting a friend to learn about the Church. The missionaries are sharing their lessons over the phone with our friend. We feel the strength of the Spirit in our home thanks to the technology we have today. It's been amazing to see the Lord's work still going on even with all of the challenges in the world.

*Elaina Reich, Washington, USA*

### **The Savior Hears Our Singing**

I serve as a Church-service missionary with the PathwayConnect program in the Kyiv Ukraine Stake. The leaders of the program decided to train all of us who lead in-person gatherings so that we could conduct them virtually. The very next day, the government announced quarantine measures in Kyiv.

I love the opportunity to gather together for PathwayConnect. And I love the opportunity to gather together to worship and sing together at home on Sundays. I am grateful for the assurance that where two or three gather in His name, He is there. No one knows how long we will be in quarantine in Kyiv, but we know that the Savior will hear our singing.

*Kateryna Serdyuk, Kyiv, Ukraine*

### **"It's Time to Take Your Family Back"**

When the news picked up concerning COVID-19, I felt like it was



dramatically overhyped. Then as days went on, I began to feel uneasy and even panicked about the future of our world.

One morning I couldn't get back to sleep and sat pondering what all of this was for. Then came the peace. The Spirit taught me that the Lord had given me a gift. "It's time to take your family back," He said.

Life gets so busy. This pandemic has given our family the opportunity to focus on what matters: the gospel of Jesus Christ. I can drown out some of those toxic influences in the world and focus on teaching my children to look to Christ. Our Father in Heaven

is ever mindful of us. I feel that now more than ever.

*Mary Ostler, Nebraska, USA*

### **The Lord Has Prepared Us for This**

When I was first told that Church gatherings were temporarily suspended, I was a bit distressed. But now I can see how the Lord has prepared us for this through His prophets. Home-centered gospel study can help us through trying times. I'm grateful that I can still partake of the sacrament on Sundays and access the words of the prophets. It's comforting to know that until we can gather together again, we can feel the same Spirit.

*Emma van As, Gauteng, South Africa*

### **We've Been Taught How to Worship**

As my husband and I participated in the ordinance of the sacrament in our home for the first time, I felt the Spirit so strongly that I had trouble singing the hymn we had chosen. In my 70-plus years of attending our worship services, I don't remember appreciating so deeply the blessings we have received through our membership and participation in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We have been taught how to worship and whom we worship. Yes, we miss the association with our fellow Saints and will be happy to return to "normal" as soon as possible, but I am grateful for the lessons we are learning in the meantime as we follow the prophet's counsel in our "home-centered, Church-supported" worship.

*Susan Preator, Montana, USA*

### **Finding Peace and Unity**

Having home evening is something that my son and I look forward to every week. We used to have members, friends, and missionaries over at

our house often. Then things changed drastically because of the pandemic. Now we have home evening with our friends over the phone. Through this time together we have been able to do many things that have brought us closer.

I am very grateful for our dear prophet, who invited us all to fast. Many of us were able to feel the power of unity and peace through that experience. In times like this, the peace we need comes from the Savior Jesus Christ.

*Roshene McKenzie, Kingston, Jamaica*

### God Is in Control

I started my mission just two and a half months ago. I was assigned to serve in Hermosillo, Mexico. Every day I had the opportunity to meet wonderful people who were prepared to receive the restored gospel. I felt that I was just beginning to fulfill my purpose when COVID-19 interrupted my mission.

It hurt to leave those people that I love so much, but I have also felt great peace and security because I know that God remains in control. I'm grateful that we have a prophet and Apostles to guide us in this time. Like many missionaries in the world, I am confident that this will not be the end of my mission. Soon I can again help move the Lord's work forward and continue being an instrument in His hands to bring more souls to repentance.

*Carolina Roman, Puerto Rico* ■

## Continue Exploring Online

**R**ead more stories about how members have responded to the effects of the pandemic on their lives with faith and hope.

### Need hope?

- Learn how members around the world have found hope that God is watching over us.
- Read about how members moved forward at other times in Church history when sacrament meetings were canceled.

### Need help?

- Learn how to recognize grief in yourself and how to mourn with those who mourn.
- Find out how others have adapted to worshipping at home.

### Need ideas?

- Get ideas for how you can continue to minister in these unique circumstances.
- Learn how other full-time missionaries have adjusted to changes in their assignments.

To read these stories and more, visit the special section of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*, "COVID-19: Messages of Faith." Find the section by visiting the magazines in the Gospel Library app or online at [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).



### Additional Helpful Resources for Parents

- The May issue of the *Friend* includes stories of children learning and serving.
- Open the Gospel Living app and recent issues of the *New Era* to see stories about youth moving forward in faith and finding unique ways to serve.
- Being confined together in closer quarters can be challenging. For ideas about building a stronger relationship with your spouse and family, check out these articles:
  - "Falling Out of Love . . . and Climbing Back In," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Jan. 2005.
  - "Nurturing a Love That Lasts," *Ensign*, Feb. 2000; *Liahona*, May 2000.
  - "For Peace at Home," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013.
  - "More Diligent and Concerned at Home," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009.
  - Sadly, some may react to this stressful time by abusing others. If you are being hurt, please explore the resources at [abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.abuse.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) and reach out for help. You deserve safety and respect.

### Discover More

- For the latest updates from the Church about the effects of COVID-19, go to [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).