THE New Era 2007

DECEMBER

COVER STORY:
SEASON OF LIGHT, PP. 2, 28
BEST GIFTS, P. 18
WHAT JOSEPH TAUGHT, P. 10
AND MORE GREAT CHRISTMAS STORIES
Words of the Prophet:  
A Glorious Season  
President Gordon B. Hinckley  
Christmas is more than trees, gifts, and twinkling lights. It is the love of the Son of God for all mankind.

A Prophet on the Earth  
Jade Swartzberg  
The story of my father’s journey to the truth has given me a greater perspective on ancient and modern prophets.

Sharing Christmas  
Daiana Melina Albornoz Díaz  
During our first Christmas as members of the Church, we learned that the holiday was meant to be shared.

In Tune:  
From Father’s Arms to Mother’s Arms  
Janice Kapp Perry and John V. Pearson

What Joseph Taught:  
God the Eternal Father  
Through revelation, Joseph Smith learned the true character of God.

Good Question, Trent  
Alex LaVelle  
Did I want to be baptized? All I needed was to be asked.

Q&A:  
Questions and Answers  
How can I strengthen my testimony to make sure I stay strong in the gospel?

Six Dollars and Change  
Seth L. Bryant  
If I helped one little girl, I wouldn’t have enough to buy presents for my own brothers and sisters.

The Extra Smile  
27

The Light of Truth  
28

Janet Thomas  
Light represents the truths of the gospel, especially the great truth that our Lord and Savior atoned for us.

Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ  
Elder Robert D. Hales  
Our faith is acquired through prayer with a sincere desire to draw close to God.

In a Word:  
Light of Christ  
37

What’s Up?  
38

A Giving Christmas  
Deborah Tolley Shatto  
I volunteered to buy a present for a needy family when my own family would go without.

The 2007 New Era Index  
43

Poem:  
First Snowfall  
Heather Anderson

Photo  
49

Elizabeth Taylor Frandsen

Text and visual material in the New Era may be copied for incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA, e-mail: cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org.
Our joy at this season is because the Savior Jesus Christ came into the world.

In each of us there is at Christmastime something of our childhood. We all revel in the fun of Christmas—of giving and receiving tinsel presents, of singing favorite carols, of feasting on goodies we never miss at other seasons, of gathering together as family and friends, all having a wonderful time.

But there is something else, something better, and that is to sit together as families and read again the fascinating story of the birth of Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem of Judea.1

A Season to Remember the Savior

It is proper during this season when we commemorate His birth that we remember the Lord Jesus Christ in reverence and with love. He has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. He has brought meaning to our mortal existence. He has given us the gift of eternal life.2

When all is said and done, when all the legions of the ages have passed in review, when man’s terrible inhumanity to man has been chronicled, when God’s great love for His children has been measured, then above all stands the lone figure of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of mankind, the living Son of the living God, the Prince of Peace, the Holy One.

Isaiah spoke of Him centuries before His coming: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

Nephi, long before the Master’s birth, was given a vision of His coming. He saw in that vision the mother of Christ, “a virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins” (1 Nephi 11:15).

Of her He was born in Bethlehem of Judea, and the angel said unto Nephi, “Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!” (1 Nephi 11:21).

And Nephi “beheld that he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory; and the multitudes were
Isaiah spoke of Him centuries before His coming: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).
gathered together to hear him; and . . . they cast him out from among them." And He "was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world" (1 Nephi 11:28, 33).

All of these ancient visions were fulfilled. He came to earth. He walked the dusty roads of Palestine, teaching the people, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, raising the dead, giving His life on Calvary’s cross, and rising on the third day to "become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20).

He had been the Creator of this earth, under His Father's direction, for as John records, "without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). He was the great Jehovah who spoke with the prophets of old.

He was the lowly babe who came to earth in the meridian of time and brought to us the gift of Christmas. He was the Resurrection and the Life, who brought to us the wonder of Easter.3

There would be no Christmas if there had not been Easter. The babe Jesus of Bethlehem would be but another baby without the redeeming Christ of Gethsemane and Calvary, and the triumphant fact of the Resurrection.

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal, Living God. None so great has ever walked the earth. None other has made a comparable sacrifice or granted a comparable blessing. He is the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. I believe in Him. I declare His divinity without equivocation or compromise. I love Him. I speak His name in reverence and wonder. I worship Him as I worship His Father, in spirit and in truth. I thank Him and kneel before His Beloved Son who reached out long ago and said to each of us, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).4

A Season of Increased Love

And so at this Christmas season, we sing His praises and speak our words of faith and gratitude and love. It is His influence in our lives that stirs within us more kindness, more respect, more love, more concern. It is because of Him and His teachings that we reach out to those in trouble, distress, and need wherever they may be.5

What a glorious season is this time of Christmas. Hearts are softened. Voices are raised in worship. Kindness and mercy are reenthroned as elements in our lives. There is an accelerated reaching out to those in distress. There is an aura of peace that comes into our homes. There is a measure of love that is not felt to the same extent at any other time of the year.6

Said Jesus: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." (Matthew 7:12.)

May I remind us at this Christmas season that if only each of us would reflect occasionally on that Christ-given mandate and make an effort to observe it, this would be a different world. There would be greater happiness in our homes; there would be kinder feelings among our associates; there would be much less of litigation and a greater effort to compose differences. There would be a new measure of love and appreciation and respect.

There would be more generous hearts, more thoughtful consideration and concern, and a greater desire to spread the gospel of peace and to advance the work of salvation among the children of men.7

A Season of Meditation

Christmas is more than trees and twinkling lights, more than toys and gifts and baubles of a hundred varieties. It is love. It is the love of the Son of God for all mankind. It reaches out beyond our power to comprehend. It is magnificent and beautiful.

It is peace. It is the peace which comforts, which sustains, which blesses all who accept it.

It is faith. It is faith in God and His Eternal Son. It is faith in His wondrous ways and message. It is faith in Him as our Redeemer and our Lord.

We testify of His living reality. We testify of the divinity of His nature. In our times of grateful meditation, we acknowledge His priceless gift to us and pledge our love and faith. This is what Christmas is really about.8

For each of you may this be a merry Christmas. But
more importantly, I wish for each of you a time, perhaps only an hour, spent in silent meditation and quiet reflection on the wonder and the majesty of this, the Son of God. Our joy at this season is because He came into the world. The peace that comes from Him, His infinite love which each of us may feel, and an overwhelming sense of gratitude for that which He freely gave us at so great a cost to Himself—these are of the true essence of Christmas.9

NOTES

At this Christmas season, we sing His praises and speak our words of faith and gratitude and love. It is His influence in our lives that stirs within us more kindness, more respect, more love, more concern.
I have always known that Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, came to earth 2,000 years ago and that we have a living prophet of God on the earth today. But my father, Roy Swartzberg, who was raised as a Jew, did not always know.

Growing up in an Orthodox Jewish home in South Africa, my dad knew about the Old Testament prophets, like Moses and Elijah, and he knew of the miracles they performed. When he heard about Moses parting the Red Sea or Elijah calling down fire from heaven, he marveled at the things these men could do for the people and wondered why there were no prophets on the earth today.

It was shortly after my dad’s bar mitzvah that he first heard about the Prophet Joseph Smith. At the time he was living with his Jewish grandparents. His mother had passed away, and his father had remarried and joined the Church.

One afternoon my dad’s older brother, Mark, sat down with him and told him that he had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He then told my dad about Joseph Smith, the First Vision, and the Restoration of the gospel and prophets to the earth. My dad says that something felt very right as he listened to his older brother bear testimony, and my dad already had faith in Heavenly Father and in prophets. To him, this was glorious news! There were prophets on the earth, and people once again spoke with God. He felt himself wishing it to be true.

After sharing his testimony with my dad, Mark invited him to pray about it. But as a Jewish boy, he had prayed only in Hebrew, standing up and facing in the direction of
Jerusalem, the Holy City. Mark explained how Latter-day Saints pray: kneeling, with arms folded to show reverence. This was new to him. He knelt to offer his first personal prayer to Heavenly Father.

Although the news about prophets felt right to my dad and he had a good feeling after his prayer, he did not decide to listen to the missionaries right away.

Soon he and his brother were sent to live with their step-grandparents, who were members of the Church. On Sundays the family would attend their Sabbath meetings, but my dad continued to go to the synagogue every Friday night and Saturday morning to observe the Jewish Sabbath.

He began, however, to attend Mutual activities with his brother, and when the seminary program was introduced in South Africa, he went to that too. There he learned about the Book of Mormon. The first scripture he ever memorized that wasn’t in Hebrew was 1 Nephi 3:7: “I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.”

The missionaries were diligent in visiting him once a week, and after a while he started attending sacrament meeting in addition to his synagogue meetings. Finally, as he gained a testimony of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, he decided to listen to the missionary lessons. My dad was baptized on Christmas Day in 1973—the first time he celebrated the Savior’s birth.

The story of my father’s journey to the truth has given me a greater perspective, and his testimony of prophets has become a part of my own. Today I wear a small Star of David necklace as a token linking me to the Jewish heritage that I am proud of, but it also represents faith. It is because my father had faith in prophets as a young teen that I am blessed with a similar faith.

I know that President Gordon B. Hinckley is a prophet today just as Moses was, and I am so grateful for that fact! The heavens are indeed open, and through revelation, communication with our Heavenly Father continues today as in days of old. NE
When I was 17, my mother had a sewing job for a doll factory. She worked from home, but she would go to the factory to get more to do and to turn in her work. The man she gave her sewing to had something special about him.

As my mother got to know him, she realized that something had happened to make him sad. She invited him to visit us, and he came that very day and spent several hours with us. We learned that he had come to Argentina from Brazil in search of work and had never returned to his home, as he wanted to.

Our family has a custom of inviting someone to spend Christmas with us, and in December we began, as we do every year, to discuss whom to invite as our guest. However, this Christmas was different for a special reason; it was the first we spent as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I thought of my mother’s co-worker right away but didn’t say anything. Later my mother mentioned that she wanted to invite him.

The next time my mother turned in her sewing, she asked him whom he was going to spend the holidays with, and he replied that he didn’t know. My mother told him how nice it would be if he would come to our house on Christmas Eve, and he said he would let her know.

Late on Christmas Eve, someone came to the door. When we answered, there stood my mother’s co-worker and his three-year-old son. It was exciting to meet this little boy and spend the evening with him. He had the loving spirit of his father. Our family felt like we had bells ringing in our hearts as we listened to the sweet singing of this little boy on Christmas Eve.

I am grateful for the gospel, which added to the spirit of our Christmas beginning that year and increased our family’s resolve to “remember . . . brotherly kindness [and] charity” (D&C 4:6).
From Father's Arms to Mother's Arms

Words by John V. Pearson
Music by Janice Kapp Perry

1. From Father’s arms to mother’s arms the infant Jesus came. And with this birth God sent to earth salvation in His name. But hold the Lamb of God, asleep, within a crib of hay. God sends His tiny miracle to save the world one day.

2. He wakes, so Mary gently takes her son and holds Him tight. In moth-er’s arms He’s safe from harm, from cold, and dark of night. To faithful shep-herds angels sing God’s won-drous news for men. Hasten the shep-herds run to see and kneel before the Lamb.

3. One day this tiny child will grow and be the King of Kings; But now He rests in Mary’s arms while lullabies she sings. One day this child will bring His sheep back to His Father’s arms; But now He sleeps, so Mary keeps her baby safe and warm.

Copyright © 1998 by John V. Pearson and Janice Kapp Perry. All rights reserved. This song may be copied for incidental, noncommercial home and church use. This notice must be included on each copy made.
The Prophet Joseph Smith once said, “I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world.” Today we can see that what the Lord brought about through him—the restoration of the gospel and Christ’s true Church—has indeed revolutionized the world.

The stories of Joseph Smith’s First Vision and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon have been told countless times by missionaries throughout the world. And many of his revelations and teachings, as well as his history, are widely available in the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price. Yet relatively few people, including Church members, have had more than glimpses of the vast breadth and depth of Joseph Smith’s teachings. But that’s about to change.

Beginning in 2008, adult members of the Church will be studying from Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, a book containing statements from the Prophet’s many sermons, letters, and journals, and well as other sources. Never have the teachings of Joseph Smith been as readily available and widely distributed as they will be in this book.

Over the next two years, the New Era will share many of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s teachings with you so that you too can become familiar with them and ponder them. We hope that you will recognize the foundation Joseph Smith laid for all that has come after him and that you will want to learn even more about him.

NOTE

JOSEPH SMITH’S GREAT CONCERN

“It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my mind.”

Joseph Smith, Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, 520.
Through revelation, Joseph Smith learned the true character of God and our relationship to Him.

In the spring of 1820, Joseph Smith’s First Vision ushered in the restoration of the gospel. Though many other revelations followed, that first event restored some remarkable yet simple truths about our Heavenly Father. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said, “In the short time of that remarkable vision Joseph learned more concerning Deity than all of the scholars and clerics of the past” (“The Great Things Which God Has Revealed,” Ensign, May 2005, 81). In the years that followed, Joseph’s understanding only grew. Here are some of the things he taught about God the Eternal Father.

GOD’S CHARACTER

“If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves. . .

“. . . If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by His power, was to make Himself visible,—I say, if you were to see Him today, you would see Him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man.”

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

“While one portion of the human race is judging and condemning the other without mercy, the Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; He views them as His offspring.”

From Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, 39–40.
My friend Trent was a little confused when I explained I couldn’t help pass the sacrament because I wasn’t even a member. That’s when the question came, “So . . . do you want to be baptized?”

My friend’s question finally made me think seriously about the Church.

I grew up in my mother’s home, but I eventually moved in with my father and stepmother, who were both members of the Church. They always lovingly invited me to go to church with them, but I always kindly said, “No, thanks.”

After a year, I finally decided to start going to church with them. I found out that it wasn’t as bad as I thought that it would be. The chapel was very close to the house, and I could enjoy the company of my parents and friends there. I kept going to church, but only because it was convenient.

One day, just before sacrament meeting, Trent, a friend of mine, came up and asked me, “Hey, Alex, do you want to help pass the sacrament?”

I was shocked at what he’d asked. “No, I’m not even a member,” I told him.

He seemed confused. “So, you’re not baptized?” he asked.

“No,” I said, “I’m not baptized.”

There was an awkward pause while he tried to think of something to say. Then the words finally came out, “So . . . do you want to be baptized?”

“No,” I answered simply. “No, I don’t want to be baptized.”

“Oh, I see,” he said. There was another awkward pause. Then he said, “Well, see you at Sunday School.”

I can just imagine how embarrassed and uncomfortable Trent must have felt as he returned to his seat, but what neither of us knew was that he’d planted a seed somewhere deep within me. When I sat down, I couldn’t get his question out of my head.

I thought to myself, “How ridiculous! Of course I don’t want to be baptized! There’s no way I . . . well . . .”

Then, for the first time in my life, I realized that I’d never found out for myself if the Church was true. Then I couldn’t help but ask myself, “Do I want to be baptized?”

One night I was off by myself and still thinking about Trent’s question. I knelt down and asked Heavenly Father to help me find the truth. As I thought about it, I felt strongly that I should investigate the Church. When I got home that night, I asked my stepmother if she could set up visits with the missionaries for me.
The elders came and explained the restoration of the gospel. They cleared up much of the misunderstanding I’d had about the Church and answered all my tough questions. They also gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon, and I fell in love with reading it. For weeks I carried it around in my pocket and read it every chance I had.

Deciding one night to act on Moroni’s challenge and promise, I prayed and asked my Heavenly Father if what I’d read was true (see Moroni 10:4–5). I felt a peaceful assurance come over me, and I knew in my heart that the Book of Mormon was true!

I ran upstairs, excited, and told my parents the answer to Trent’s question: “I do want to be baptized!”

On December 25th I had a very “white” Christmas. Not only was there snow on the ground, but I was also dressed in my white baptism clothes. A few weeks later, after receiving the Aaronic Priesthood, I went up to my good friend Trent and asked: “Can I help pass the sacrament?”
Your testimony will be strengthened when the Holy Ghost testifies to you of spiritual truths. Here are a few ways to invite the Spirit into your life:

**First, have effective daily scripture study.** Instead of forcing your eyes open for 15 minutes to quickly read your scriptures each night, really feast upon the words of Christ. As you study and ponder, your understanding will deepen, and you will feel the Holy Ghost, which will strengthen your testimony.

**Make sure you are worthy to have the Spirit with you.** Being worthy allows the Spirit to prompt you to act in ways that will be pleasing to Heavenly Father. You will also be able to feel the Spirit comforting you and assuring you that the gospel is true and that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love you. Taking the sacrament worthily each week will help you have the Spirit with you.

**Don’t overlook your sins, even the small ones.** For instance, don’t lie; try not to be critical of people; tell your brother or sister you are sorry for yelling. Sin pulls you away from the Lord’s Spirit. Get in the habit of thinking about your thoughts and actions and, when needed, sincerely repenting.

**Take some time to evaluate your testimony.** Do you have a firm personal testimony of the Savior, Joseph Smith, and the Book of Mormon? Or do you go to church because that’s where your friends are? Remember that the Church’s mission is to bring people to Jesus Christ. Build your testimony upon the rock of Christ, “a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build, they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).

**Finally, confirm to yourself what you know by sharing your beliefs with someone else.** As prompted by the Spirit, bear your testimony, whether in testimony meeting, to your friends or family, or to people you meet. As you do, your testimony will be strengthened, and you will truly desire to stay strong in the gospel. Even the strongest testimonies will weaken if they are not put to use.

However, remember that having a testimony is not enough to keep you...
from straying. It was only after the Lamanites gained a testimony and were *converted* unto the Lord that they “never did fall away” (Alma 23:6). The scriptures remind us to pray always and be careful not to fall into temptation (see D&C 20:32–34). Don’t be discouraged if the process of developing your testimony and strengthening your conversion is slow. As you rely on the power of the Holy Ghost, a firm conviction will come. NE

**READERS**

I received my testimony through scripture study and constant prayer. That is not where it all ended. I keep studying and praying and fasting. That gives me a fresh understanding of the gospel and keeps me in the strait and narrow path. I believe that with fresh understanding comes a stronger belief. The more you come to understand the gospel, the more you obey God’s commandments and stay true to the gospel. Beatrice C., 21, Zimbabwe

I think there is no better way to strengthen your testimony than to realize first that you need the gospel in your life. Examples of other members who testify that the Church is true help greatly as well. In addition, you can talk with your friends from your branch or ward about the gospel and what it means to them. If you do at least these things and ask Heavenly Father in your daily prayers with a real desire to increase your faith,
then He will answer you. He will give you the confidence and joy that come with accepting the gospel as an everlasting source of wisdom and happiness.
Maxim K., 22, Ukraine

Doing Duty to God or Personal Progress is one way to strengthen your testimony. Always attend Church meetings and Mutual, and always bear your testimony. Listen to your parents and Church leaders. Then you will feel the Spirit and know you are on the right track.
Earlson N., 20, Luzon, Philippines

As you are gaining a testimony and once you already have one, keep a scripture journal. Record your spiritual experiences. Record lessons or impressions you get from talks in church. Record anything that is special to you spiritually, even if at the time it seems insignificant. When you are doubting or in a spiritual slump, every experience you have written down will help lift you back up to where you want to be and help you have the Spirit to guide you.
Meagen J., 17, Virginia

I can strengthen my testimony and become strong against the enemy by praying, daily reading the scriptures, keeping the commandments of God, and always being grateful to Him. When I keep the commandments, I feel strong against the enemy, and I remember all the good experiences I have had in this gospel. Thus, my testimony increases and becomes unshakable against evil, and it becomes impossible for me to leave this true gospel of Christ.
Bárbara M., 16, São Paulo, Brazil

“Anything that does not draw us closer to God takes us away from Him. We have no middle ground, no foggy gray area where we can sin a little without suffering spiritual decline. That is why we must repent and come to Christ daily on submissive knees so that we can prevent our bonfires of testimony from being snuffed out by sin.”

Your testimony will get stronger gradually with the experiences you have. People rarely receive a testimony overnight. Your testimony will grow as you are willing to serve in the Church, keep the commandments, pray, fast, study the scriptures, attend Church meetings, and listen to others express their testimonies. If you do this, you will be blessed with moments of inspiration that will strengthen your own testimony. Also, don’t hesitate to share it with others.
Elder Alberto Aquino, 21, Guatemala
Guatemala City South Mission

At times I have doubted, but thanks to the power of prayer and the power of the Holy Ghost, I have strengthened my testimony that we really are all children of God. Satan will work hard to get you to doubt your testimony. Pray with all your heart to overcome those thoughts and also to help you remember when He has helped you before. He is always there to listen and help.
Saryn S., 17, Utah

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

NEXT QUESTION

“Every time I pray I say the same things. What can I do to make my prayers less repetitive and more meaningful?”

Send your answer by January 15, 2008 to New Era, Questions and Answers 1/08 50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420 Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org

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

FULL NAME

BIRTH DATE

WARD (or branch)

STAKE (or district)

I grant permission to print response and photo.

SIGNATURE

PARENT’S SIGNATURE (if you are under 18)
JOY TO THE WORLD
Simple reminders. The best gift I have ever received came from my grandmother and consists of two items: a pillowcase and a necklace with a locket. Although they are simple items, they mean a lot to me. My name is written on the pillowcase with glow-in-the-dark letters, and below my name it reads, “Did you think to pray?” Whenever I have jumped into bed without praying, the glow-in-the-dark words remind me to kneel and pray. The locket holds two pictures: one of me and one of the Savior. While the pillowcase reminds me to pray at home, the locket reminds me to be like the Savior at school and other places I go.

Paige I., Utah

The Best Christmas Gifts

are those that come from the heart and build our faith.

Christmas time is a season of giving, in memory of the gifts given by the Wise Men to the Christ child and the gift Christ gave us in the Atonement.

Excitement is in the air as we anticipate giving and receiving gifts. Gifts come in all sizes and shapes, but it seems that the best gifts are those that can’t be wrapped: gifts of service, family, faith, and testimony.

Enjoy the following memories from our readers of gifts given and received.

First Presidency devotional.

One of my favorite Christmas experiences took place when I had been a member of the Church for a year and a half. I listened to the First Presidency Christmas devotional. It’s always great to hear from the prophet, but during the Christmas season it was especially fantastic.

As we sat in the chapel and listened to the prophet’s words, we felt the Spirit very strongly. His words were meaningful, and I was able to better understand the true spirit of Christmas and the importance of loving our neighbors and rendering service.

Even more important, my testimony of Jesus Christ grew stronger that day.

When I was a child, I always got the gifts I wanted on Christmas, but I have never received a better gift than hearing from a prophet that Jesus Christ lives and that this is His true Church.

Alvaro M., Uruguay
**Homemade card.** I don’t earn much money, so I make the gifts I give to people. The best Christmas gift I have ever given was a card made by my hands. It was fun because I knew I was making it for someone I love. I used items around the house such as thread, needles, fabric, and card supplies.

Cassie W., Washington

**Paper stars.** I am half Thai and half American. I spent three years living in Laos, next to Thailand. For the first two years we were in Laos, my parents hired a pileang, or nanny, named Rojana, who took good care of me. Since she was Buddhist, I didn’t expect a gift from her at Christmas.

On Christmas morning I found a jar filled with at least a hundred tiny paper stars, folded so they were three-dimensional. They were blue and pink and glittery. Rojana had no money to buy me anything, so she spent hours folding those stars for a child who wasn’t her own.

It was a wonderful Christmas gift, a gift of time and dedication.

Faye H., Virginia

**Christmas as a family.** Before I joined the Church, I thought that Christmas was just a time when people wore new clothes and shoes and when there were colored, blinking lights. But one December after I joined the Church, I received a letter and a card from the missionary who baptized me. Among his many words, the following stood out to me: “Christmas is a day when we can be with our families to have a beautiful dinner and to eat together.” It was a short sentence, but it had great significance to me.

That day I called everyone in my family to see if they could all come to a great Christmas dinner. Many were surprised because we had never celebrated Christmas as a family before, but they all accepted the invitation. My sisters and I worked hard so that everything would turn out right for our first family dinner. Everything was simple, but my mother was very happy, and everyone was excited to be together.

That Christmas was the happiest one I had ever had, and it was made possible by a simple card and letter reminding me that Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of the Savior with my family. We have celebrated Christmas as a family ever since.

Gedolvo S., Brazil
My nephew’s presents. Some years ago we were gathered as a family to commemorate Christmas. All the adults and teens were busy with preparations for the family dinner. Amid this Christmas activity, my youngest nephew, Fabinho, asked me for a paper, colored pencils, and colored markers. Busy with Christmas preparations, I gave them to him, hoping he would entertain himself.

The time for dinner arrived, and after a prayer of thanksgiving, five-year-old Fabinho asked for everyone’s attention and gave each of us a little slip of paper that expressed his love with a colored picture and imprecise handwriting.

Everyone received a little note, even the uncle we saw only at Christmastime. Fabinho felt everyone was worthy of his attention and his careful, childlike efforts. His simple presents and attitude caused me to think of the Savior and His teachings that we should love our neighbor and give our best.

Ana F., Brazil

Care packages. A very special lady in our community began sending monthly packages to soldiers serving overseas. Every inch of these boxes was packed with food, personal care items, and words of gratitude in the form of cards, letters, and pictures.

In November, many hands colored pictures, wrote letters and cards, prepared the holiday cookies and candy, and shopped for just the right personal gift items. Imagine my delight as I gathered with other volunteers to vacuum seal the most delicious and eye-pleasing goodies I had ever seen! I felt an outpouring of love for those selfless, brave soldiers.

Are not the best gifts we can give to others those they cannot give themselves? Christ came to earth in the most humble of circumstances and gave us the gift of immortality and eternal life—gifts we were not capable of giving to ourselves or to others. When we give as He did, those gifts bring great joy.

Debbie A., Nevada

Many gifts. We have been given the gift of Christ’s sacrifice and His example of service. My scriptures are a gift because I read from them every day, and they help me with my struggles. My talents are gifts because they are what make me unique.

Sasha M., California
**Gift of memories.** My parents were struggling to start a new business the year I was 15, and money was scarce in our family. They believed in making the best of difficult circumstances, so we took a day trip to the land my dad was leasing to cut an evergreen desert bush for our Christmas tree and to enjoy a winter picnic together in the snow with homemade chili and hot chocolate.

My two sisters and I decided to put our money together to buy Mom and Dad something to lift their spirits. We bought a photo album and supplies, went home, and filled it with family pictures, starting with their wedding portrait. We had a wonderful time laughing and reminiscing together as we put our favorite photos in the album.

We each had one small present to open on Christmas morning, but it didn’t matter when we watched our parents’ eyes light up as they opened their gift. It was a memorable Christmas filled with love, laughter, and unity.

Sally O., Utah

---

**Gift on the doorstep.** I remember the first Christmas my family had when we moved to Australia. I was only seven or eight years old. When we woke up Christmas morning, we were delighted by the gifts our parents had brought with them to Australia. But we were in for a greater surprise. Outside our house on that Christmas morning was a sack of goodies! To this day we don’t know who brought it, and although I don’t remember every gift in the sack, I will always remember the feelings of peace and happiness that washed over me and my family. The sweet sack of goodies taught me a precious lesson—anonymous service brings joy to our souls.

Elder Vasu Nephi Chetty, New York New York South Mission

---

**Adoption.** Just before Christmas of 2004 we heard about a little girl who needed to be adopted. All of us children put on our Christmas wish list that we wanted a little sister. On December 11, our wishes came true when my younger sister came to live with us. That is the best Christmas gift I have ever had.

Carolyn R., Arizona
Living Christmas card.

When I served as a missionary in Brazil, all of our appointments fell through on Christmas night, so I suggested to my companion, “Let’s be a live Christmas card and visit our neighbors!” To my surprise, we were well received at every house. As we sang the wonderful hymns of Christmas and read their corresponding scriptures, I felt something extraordinary and profound. I understood more fully the love of the Savior, and I could see tears in the eyes of our neighbors who before had been so suspicious of us. After we returned home and had our dinner, I recorded the following in my journal: “Tonight we shared the birth of the King of kings with our neighbors. The Spirit magnified us and united us for eternity.”

Nivaldo P., Brazil

Christmas away from home. My favorite gift was my first Christmas away from home, when my parents, sister, and I went to visit my brother and his family.

We were used to family Christmases at our house, but this year my other siblings were going elsewhere, and we decided to visit my brother, Josh, and his family because they couldn’t come home. I wasn’t sure what to expect, and I thought that if we weren’t home for Christmas, it wouldn’t be fun. It seemed that Christmas just wouldn’t be the same. My parents, sister, and I had already opened our presents to each other before we left home.

When my brother picked us up at the airport, my four-year-old niece, Kialey, started to sing Christmas songs, and I started to feel better. On Christmas morning I enjoyed watching the faces of my nieces and nephews light up as they opened their presents. It was nice, instead of focusing on what I got, to look at others opening their presents and to feel their joy.

Hannah S., Montana

“The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love and of generosity and of goodness. It illuminates the picture window of the soul, and we look out upon the world’s busy life and become more interested in people than in things.”


**Gift of baptism.**

My companion and I had been teaching a 14-year-old girl named Martha, and she was nearly ready for baptism and confirmation. We had a few more lessons to teach, and she needed to stop working on Sundays so she could come to church. She loved what she was learning and believed it, but she worked for her aunt and was too young to get any other job. Martha struggled with the decision, so we taught her the blessings of the Sabbath day and encouraged her to pray. Christmas Eve was a rainy day, and when it was almost time to go home, we felt we should stop by and say hello to Martha. Almost before we knocked on the door, she came running out and hugged us, jumping up and down with enthusiasm. She said, “I don’t have to work on Sundays anymore! I’m coming to church! I’m going to get baptized!” Even the rain seemed wonderful after that. Christmas Eve seemed like the perfect time to see someone make the decision to devote her life to Christ. We were two of the happiest missionaries you’ve ever seen.

Erin B., Utah

---

**Family.** The best Christmas gift I ever received was when all of my brothers and sisters, my dad, and I were together for the first time in years. I love my family more than anything in the world, and it made my dad so happy, which made me happy.

Heather R., Utah

---

**Gift of health.** In October we heard the shocking news that our beloved stake president had suffered a heart attack and was in a coma. As the weeks passed, members of our stake prayed earnestly for him. The doctors were very concerned, but then he came out of his coma and drastically improved. He lives in my ward, and one Sunday before Christmas I walked into the chapel and was surprised to see him sitting on the stand. After the speakers gave their talks, the stake president came to the pulpit and told us that he could feel the strength of our prayers. As I looked at him, tears streaming down my cheeks, I realized his return to health was a great Christmas present for all of us.

Katie B., Washington
When the little girl asked if she had enough money, how could I say no?
It was December 23rd. The mall was dead after an exhausting day. My legs ached after walking the aisles all day at the music store where I worked.

My heart was warmed by the true spirit of Christmas evidenced by the light and laughter dancing in people’s eyes as they searched for gifts to show their love to those they adore.

I had also discovered the joy of giving. My only problem was I didn’t like shopping. Why was I working at the mall, then? The employee’s discount helped.

After the metal gate was partway down, signaling that we were closed, I got out the CDs I had selected for my brother and sister. I had tucked away the exact amount. It was the last of my money until my next paycheck. The money, $26 and change, was all I had and all I needed.

Just as I was about to complete my transaction, a little girl walked in. She was so little she had no need to duck under the metal gate.

I put down my CDs and asked, “Can I help you?”

She explained that her little brother wanted a popular cartoon video for Christmas, but all the stores were sold out.

“Well,” I said, “you’re in luck.”
Her face brightened as she exclaimed, “You mean you have one?”

It was always a fulfilling thing for me to take the customer right to the item they had been searching for. Straight to the video we went.

She saw it and ran toward it before I had a chance to get it. “This is the one I’ve looked for!” Carefully she turned the video over, looking at the cartoon figures on the back. It was then that I saw the price: $24.99.

Her eyes also migrated to the price sticker. “Is this enough?” she innocently asked, holding out her mittened hand that clasped some very crumpled dollar bills and change.

I took the warm dollars and smoothed them out slowly, hoping that they would multiply themselves somehow. “Is it enough?” she asked again. I didn’t say anything. How could I tell her?

Large tears welled up in her eyes as she realized why I kept silent. Discouragement washed over her face. With a sigh she asked, “What can I buy with this much?”

In the store there was no gift that six dollars and some change could buy—trust me; I looked. The only option, if she was to have her video, was for me to help her pay for it. Yet, if I did that, I would then be in her predicament: no presents with only six dollars and change.

A scripture came to my mind: “Knowest thou the condescension of God?” (1 Nephi 11:16). In my mind, I envisioned Christ descending from His heavenly throne, causing the tears of our shortcomings to be turned to tears of joy through His Atonement and payment of our deficit.

For the little girl it may have only been a moment, but for me that time of contemplation was a turning point. I saw a level of the glad tidings of great joy that I had left undiscovered.

I got down on my knees, at her level, and said, “You know, there is a way your brother can have his movie.”

A huge smile banished all sorrow from her face. “How?” she asked.

I took the clean, crisp $20 bill from my wallet and handed it to her. Through my new perception, I happily and thankfully watched her skip to the counter. Already on my knees, I took the opportunity to thank Heavenly Father for my Savior and His gift, which He taught me affectionately that night.

Can you put a price on a great understanding of the Atonement? I think not. I still lacked gifts for my siblings, except for some cheap demo CDs the music store was giving away. Though they weren’t what I had originally wanted to give, what they represented to me made them the best presents I’ve ever given.
“Hi there, little fella, is your father or mother home?”

“Hey! Those are for our home teachers!”

“If you want me to learn how to save money, how come you never give me more than I can spend?”

“Mom? Have you seen my notebook?”

“Mom? Have you seen my shoes?”

“Mom? Have you seen my lunchbox?”

“Have you seen mom?”

“Hi there, little fella, is your father or mother home?”
Each year as Christmas approaches, all around us seems filled with light—Christmas lights, candles, lanterns, luminarias. Light in all its forms seems the perfect representation of Christ and a way to celebrate His birth.

The scriptures are full of references to Jesus Christ our Savior as the light of the world. Light represents the truths of the gospel, especially the great truth that our Lord and Savior atoned for us and is the centerpiece of our spiritual lives.

As the Savior appeared, in a marvelous scene, to those living in the New World, He said, “And behold, I am the light and the life of the world;
Temple Square in Salt Lake City is known throughout the world. It is particularly attractive at Christmastime, with its thousands of twinkling lights, traditional nativity scene, carolers singing those songs so dear to us all, and, of course, the lighted statue of the Christus, which seems to say to the world, ‘The spirit of Christmas is indeed the Christ spirit.’ ”

“Now, what a wonderful season this is, this Christmas season. All of the Christian world, while not understanding the things that we understand, pauses for a moment and remembers with gratitude the birth of the Son of God.”


“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness” (John 12:46).
“While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:36).

“And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;

“Which light pro-ceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—

“The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things” (D&C 88: 11–13).

and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning” (3 Nephi 11:11).

In these quotes and scriptures, prophets, artists, and photographers have tried to put into their works and words the essential things we need to know about the Savior at this time of year and always.

We honor the birth of our King, our Savior Jesus Christ, the one who lights the way. As Christ declared to His disciples, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness” (John 12:46).
When the Savior was born, an angel of the Lord appeared to humble shepherds, announcing, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10–11).

But there is more to the Christmas story than the transcendent miracles of a new star in the sky and the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem. These marvelous occurrences were the culmination of centuries of prophecy and testimony from prophets of God. Without these prophecies, many may feel justified in not believing these miraculous events. But we have been given many witnesses of the birth, life, and mission of the Savior from prophets in every dispensation. Sacred records give us the prophecies of thousands of years—not only of the first coming of our Savior, but also of the Second Coming—a glorious day that will certainly, most assuredly, come.

Believing the Prophets

From the beginning of time, prophets have known that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, of His mortal mission, and of His Atonement for all mankind.

If we had lived in the days of these prophets, would we have believed on their words? Would we have had faith in the coming of our Savior?

In ancient America, Samuel the Lamanite prophesied that on the night of the Savior’s birth “there would be great lights in heaven, . . . insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day” (Helaman 14:3).

Many believed Samuel and confessed their sins, repented, and were baptized. But,
for the most part, the Nephites were blind to the “signs and wonders”; instead of heeding them, the Nephites “depend[ed] upon . . . their own wisdom, saying: Some things [the believers] may have guessed right, . . . but . . . it is not reasonable that such a being as a Christ shall come” (Helaman 16:15–18).

In those days and ours, some naysayers, called anti-Christians, convinced others that there was no need for a Savior and His Atonement. When Samuel’s prophecy was finally fulfilled and there was a “day and a night and a day, as if it were one day” (Helaman 14:4), what joy must have filled the hearts of those who had believed the prophets! “It had come to pass, yea, all things, every whit, according to the words of the prophets” (3 Nephi 1:20). A new star appeared, according to the prophetic promise. Those who believed on the words of the prophets recognized the Savior and were blessed to follow Him.

The prophecies of Christ’s first coming were fulfilled “every whit.” As a result, many throughout the world believe that the Savior did come and did live in the meridian of time. But there are still many, many prophecies yet to be fulfilled! We hear living prophets prophesy and testify of Christ’s Second Coming. They also witness of the signs and wonders all about us, telling us that Christ will surely come again. Are we choosing to believe on their words? Or, despite their witnesses and warnings, are we “walking in darkness at noon-day” (D&C 95:6), refusing to see by the light of modern prophecy and denying that the Light of the World will return to rule and reign among us?

Finding Faith

Throughout the course of my life, I have known many good and generous people who adhere to Christian values. However, some lack faith that He lives, that He is the Savior of the world, and that His Church has been restored. Because they do not believe in the words of the prophets, they miss the joy of the gospel and its saving ordinances in their lives.

I have a dear friend who, one day in a moment of brotherly tenderness, asked, “Elder Hales, I want to believe, I’ve always wanted to believe, but how do I do it?”

The Apostle Paul wrote, “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). The very fact that you are reading this message, during the Christmas season or any other time of the year, means that you are hearing God’s word. The first step to finding faith in Jesus Christ is to let His word—spoken by the mouth of His servants, the prophets—touch your heart. But it is not enough merely to let those words wash over you, as if they alone could transform you. You must do your part. Hearing requires an active effort—taking seriously what is taught, considering it carefully, studying it out in our minds. As the prophet Enos learned, it means letting others’ testimonies of the gospel “[sink] deep into [our] heart[s]” (Enos 1:3). Let us review Enos’s profound, faith-building experience:

First, Enos heard the gospel truths from his father. Second, he let his father’s teachings about “eternal life, and the joy of the saints” sink deep into his heart (Enos 1:3). Third, he was filled with a desire to know for himself whether these teachings were true and where he, himself, stood before his Maker. To use Enos’s words, “my soul hungered” (Enos 1:4). By having this intense spiritual appetite, Enos qualified himself to receive the Savior’s promise: “Blessed are all they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost” (3 Nephi 12:6). Fourth, Enos records, “I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul; and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens” (Enos 1:4). It wasn’t easy. Faith did not come quickly. In fact, Enos characterized his experience in prayer as a “wrestle which [he] had before God” (Enos 1:2). But faith did come. By the power of the Holy Ghost he did receive a witness for himself.

We cannot find Enos-like faith without our own wrestle before God in prayer. I testify that the reward is worth the effort. If you do these things sincerely and unceasingly, the words Christ spoke to His disciples will be fulfilled in your
life: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matthew 7:7).

**Gaining Strength through Faith**

Once we find the beginnings of our faith in Jesus, our Heavenly Father allows for our faith to be strengthened. This occurs in many ways, including through the experience of adversity. Our faith is acquired through prayer, with a sincere desire to draw close to God and trust in Him to bear our burdens and give us answers to life’s unexplained mysteries of the purpose of life: Where did we come from? Why are we here on earth in mortality? And where are we going after our mortal sojourn on earth?

When the challenges of mortality come, and they come for all of us, it may seem hard to keep believing. At these times, only faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His Atonement can bring us peace, hope, and understanding. Only faith that He suffered for our sakes will give us the strength to endure to the end. When we gain this faith, we experience a mighty change of heart, and, like Enos, we become stronger and begin to feel a desire for the welfare of our brothers and sisters. We pray for them, that they too will be strengthened through faith on the Atonement of our Savior.

Let us consider a few of these prophetic witnesses of the effects of the Atonement in our lives. As we do, I invite you to let them sink deep into your heart and fill whatever hunger may be in your soul.

“And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father...
and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, . . . that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed” (Moses 5:9).

Ammon witnessed, “Behold, I have seen my Redeemer, and he shall come forth, and be born of a woman, and he shall redeem all mankind who believe on his name” (Alma 19:13).

And finally, Joseph Smith—as a 14-year-old boy—exercised unwavering faith and followed James’s direction to “ask of God” (James 1:5). God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to him and gave him instructions. How glorious was this First Vision to the first prophet of this last dispensation! Sixteen years later in the Kirtland Temple, he was visited by the Savior again and testified, “We saw the Lord . . . and his voice was the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying: I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (D&C 110:2–4).

To all those whose souls are hungering for faith, I invite you “to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written” (Ether 12:41). Let their witness that the Savior gave His life for you sink deep into your heart. Seek a witness of this truth through the Holy Ghost in prayer, and then see your faith strengthened as you joyfully meet the challenges of this mortal life and prepare for life eternal.

Jesus Christ did come. He did live. And He will come again. That is a wonderful truth to carry in our hearts at Christmas and all year long.
The Light of Christ “proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space.” It is “the light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed” (D&C 88:12–13; see also verses 6–11). This power is an influence for good in the lives of all people (see John 1:9; D&C 93:2). In the scriptures, the Light of Christ is sometimes called the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, or the Light of Life.

The Light of Christ should not be confused with the Holy Ghost. It is not a personage, as the Holy Ghost is. Its influence leads people to find the true gospel, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (see John 12:46; Alma 26:14–15).

Conscience is a manifestation of the Light of Christ, enabling us to judge good from evil. The prophet Mormon taught: “The Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. . . . And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged” (Moroni 7:16, 18).

(See True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference, which you can read online at lds.org in the Gospel Library.) NE
WRITE AWAY!

Have you ever had a father’s blessing or other priesthood blessing? Maybe you’ve had one at the beginning of a new school year, or when you were going away from home for a time. The First Presidency has encouraged fathers to give these types of blessings to their children. We’d love to hear from you about occasions on which your father or other priesthood holder has given you a blessing.

How did your blessing help you? How did it strengthen your testimony? How did it strengthen your relationship not only with your earthly father but also with your Heavenly Father? Send your responses to us at:

New Era, Father’s Blessing
50 E. North Temple St.,
Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT
84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail: newera@ldschurch.org

However, please be wise. Do not write about sacred, personal experiences that call attention to you or the person giving the blessing.

A Balancing Act

Killian Stephens has found just the right balance for her life. A ballet dancer from San Rafael, California, Killian recently became the first ballerina to receive the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts Silver Award. She was presented a cash award by world-famous ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov and extended a full scholarship to the University of Arizona. Killian has also earned her Young Womanhood Recognition Award.

“It takes a lot of commitment to do all of the things you need to do as an active member of the Church and keep a rigorous training schedule,” she says. “But it can be done, and you don’t have to sacrifice the most important things in your life to do it.”

Killian uses the thirteenth-article-of-faith rule to balance Church standards and ballet. If a dance isn’t “lovely, of good report, or praiseworthy,” she won’t do it.

She also stays close to the most important people in her life. “It is your involvement with your family and your relationship with your Heavenly Father that will sustain you through the stresses of training,” she says.

“As we seek Christ, as we find Him, as we follow Him, we shall have the Christmas spirit, not for one fleeting day each year, but as a companion always.”

Teaming up with children from the Primary, the young women and young men of the Loomis Third Ward in the Rocklin California Stake participated in the first annual Christmas on Temple Hill at the Sacramento California Temple. The young choir was nearly 50 strong and performed a number of Christmas hymns.

Young men and women from the ward even took part as guest conductors for several songs. Other youth accompanied the singers with choir bells, guitar, flute, and clarinet. After the performance, the crowd of over 100 gathered in the chapel adjacent to the temple to sing hymns, watch a Christmas video on the Nativity, and enjoy refreshments.

One of the many friends in the community to attend who is not a member of the Church described the evening as a heartwarming “exhibit of the true meaning of Christmas.”
A Giving Christmas
BY DEBORAH TOLLEY SHATTO

My ward was providing Christmas for a needy family, but all the while I was wondering who could be more needy than my family.

Christmas was just two weeks away. We had just moved to Moab, Utah, and our family of 11 was living in a three-bedroom trailer without utilities. My parents’ company had gone bankrupt, and there was no back pay. The situation was dismal, to say the least.

My singles ward was planning a service project called “The 12 Days of Christmas.” The bishops in the stake had prayed and selected a family for us to help for 12 days. Considering my family’s situation, I was disappointed that no one had offered to help us. I agreed to buy a gift for a boy in the family, but I couldn’t help but wonder what my own brothers would get for Christmas.

The day came for me to purchase a gift for this boy, and I wanted to get him something special. I decided to go to the local department store to see what toys were popular. After 30 minutes I was getting discouraged because no toys seemed just right for the child.

Then a young boy came into the store. He was about the right age, and his appearance suggested that his family was probably struggling financially. I noticed the thrill on his face as he came across a train set. I knew I had found my gift.

As this little boy’s brother came into the store to get him, I realized that this was the boy I was buying the gift for. I knew this was Heavenly Father’s way of telling me that the stake had picked the right family to serve. I was glad that I had agreed to help them rather than
put my own needs first. But I had no idea that more blessings awaited my family.

My father found another job a couple of days before Christmas, and my parents managed to get a small gift for each child. And things were about to get even better.

The day before Christmas, a brother in the ward called the bishop and offered to rent a house to a needy family. It was a large, five-bedroom home with the utilities already working, and best of all, he didn't expect rent until the next month. The bishop told us about the house, and we moved in that very morning.

Around the corner from the house was a little bar. Someone there noticed us moving in and was touched by our situation. He started collecting donations and brought over a mug filled with cash from perfect strangers.

Another miracle occurred when my father left work for the night. The bosses were passing out Christmas bonuses, but my dad had only been there for two days, so he assumed he wouldn't get anything. He started to leave, and they said they had something for him. He was surprised to see that each of the men had given up part of their bonuses to share with our family. His company matched the donations. My dad was humbled by their generosity.

That evening, I helped drop off the gifts for our service project. When I got home, my mother told me about the mug of cash and the bonus from work. She had just finished when we heard horns honking. We ran outside and, to our further amazement, dozens of gifts decorated our lawn. We were touched and humbled by the love of strangers for our family. What began as a very meager Christmas had become, instead, a Christmas that we would never forget.

Later, as I thought about the events of the previous month, I realized that Heavenly Father knows each of us. He knows our needs, and He often uses others to meet those needs. But He blesses us the most when we put others first. When I sacrificed my family's needs to help another family, my family was blessed more than I could have imagined.
ACTIVITIES
Getting the Most from Your New Era, Aug, 12
Adair, Jill B.
Girl Called "Nine," A, Jan, 44
ADVERSITY
Girl Called "Nine," A, Jill B. Adair, Jan, 44
Sometimes It Rains, Christina Holt, Jul, 44
AGENCY (SEE CHOICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY)
All in My Family, Jeff Whittaker, Oct, 45
ANTI-MORMON LITERATURE
Q&A (anti-Mormon literature), Remmington, May, 46
Oct, 45
ACCOUNTABILITY
Good to Know, Kong Nhean, Jul, 44
Q&A (rules vs. agency), Nov, 14

ATTITUDE
Girl Called "Nine," A, Jill B. Adair, Jan, 44
Long Wait, The, Alexa Justesen, Apr, 32
What I Learned from Doing the Dishes, Sherrie Mackelpang, Jun, 30
Auxier, Patricia
Missionary Trio, Oct, 34
Save Her! Sep, 6

BALLARD, M. Russell
How to Prepare to Be a Good Missionary, Mar, 6
BAPTISM
Enduring to the Beginning, Maria Kaneva, Oct, 11
Beating the Blues, Apr, 27
Benzley, Caroline H.
Remembering Iowa, Jul, 18
Best Christmas Gifts, The, Dec, 18

BIBLE
Psalm 24:3-4, Nov, 11
Who Are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? Janet Thomas, Jan, 19
Bogardus, Robert M.
Did You Cheat? Jul, 6
Book for Brandon, A, Emilie Everett, Jun, 45

BOOK OF MORMON
Book for Brandon, A, Emilie Everett, Jun, 45
Bringing Abish to Life, Jade Swartzberg and Shari Whyte, Jun, 24

BROTHERHOOD
Brothers, Richard M. Romney, May, 30
Bryant, Seth L.
Six Dollars and Change, Dec, 24
Burton, H. David
More or Less, Nov, 2
Butler, Shanna
Chain Reaction, Jun, 34
Not Even Once, Aug, 26

CALLED TO SERVE
Elder Quentin L. Cook, Nov, 10
President Henry B. Eyring, Nov, 8
Cannon, Nerissa Dawn
Singing for Rose, Apr, 40
Cape Town's Record-Setting

CAREERS
In His Own Backyard, Sara Faust, Feb, 24
Cartwright, Andrea
Crash Course in Prayer, Jul, 45
Food for Thought, May, 44
Casper, Kayla
Turnaround, The, Feb, 6

CHAIN REACTION
Bryant, Seth L.
Six Dollars and Change, Dec, 24

CHRISTMAS
Best Christmas Gifts, The, Dec, 18
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Robert D. Hales, Dec, 32
Giving Christmas, A, Deborah Shatto, Dec, 40
Glorious Season, A, Gordon B. Hinckley, Dec, 2
Joy to the World (poster), Dec, 17
Light of Truth, The, Janet Thomas, Dec, 28
Sharing Christmas, Daiana Melina Albornoz Diaz, Dec, 8
Six Dollars and Change, Seth L. Bryant, Dec, 24

CHURCH HISTORY
My Journey to Faith, David Danz, Jun, 44
DeFord, Sally
da Silva, Sariah de Barros
D&C 121:45, Jan, 11
D
Dance, David
Coming unto Christ, Henry B.
Dear Dad Notes,
Melody
Day in the Life of a Missionary,
Davidson, John D. N., II
Daniel, Iyiewuare Erharuyi
Costa, Claudio R. M.
Cruz, Lehi L.
Crespo, John
Crash Course in Prayer,
Andrea
Caroline
Remembering Iowa,
M. Whitney Holyoak
If the Savior Stood beside Me,
Ferreira
Whitney Holyoak
Missing the World Cup,
Jun, 21
F
Ferry, Joseph
Fiel, Marilyn
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,
Robert D. Hales, Dec, 32
Finding My Father,
Aug, 11
Finding My Father, Aug, 11
Filled With Confidence,
Shantell C. Hales, Dec, 18
Five M’s of Missionary Work,
The Thomas S. Monson, Mar, 42
Food for Thought,
Andrea
Cartwright, May, 44
For a Burnt Offering,
Joseph Ray Brillianz, Sep, 40
For the Strength of Youth,
Real Confidence, Jan, 8
Forgiving My Father,
Aug, 11
Forgiving My Father, Aug, 11
Freedom to Dance,
The Adam C. Olson, Apr, 28
Friendly Conversation,
Laurie Wagley, Jul, 45
Friendly Invitation,
A, Chris Larson, Apr, 41
Friends
Chain Reaction,
Shanna Butler, Jun, 34
Friendly Invitation,
A, Chris Larson, Apr, 41
From Friends to Sisters to Companions,
Rebecca Mills and Brad Wilcox, Mar, 12
Missionary Trio,
Patricia Auxier, Oct, 34
Q&A (worrying about a friend not living gospel standards), Apr, 14
Valued Friends,
Carolyn J. LeDuc, Feb, 7
Friendship
Is Anyone Laughing? Russell Wilcox, Feb, 34
To the Point (jealous of friends), Sep, 31
Frogley, Linda
Looking Up, Nov, 45
From Friends to Sisters to Companions,
Rebecca Mills and Brad Wilcox, Mar, 12
Future Is Now,
The David A. Edwards, Sep, 42
F
Fast Enough,
Riley Lorimer,
Fasting
Testimony of Prophets,
The Jeffrey R. Holland, Oct, 44
The Two Wisemans,
Robert D. Hales, Aug, 30
The Best of Your Friends,
The Cayce Golding, Apr, 6
The Doctrine of the Priesthood,
The Roger E. Shimmin, Jan, 38
The Good Intentions,
Caitlin Jenkins, Feb, 41
The Great Question,
Marina’s Refrigerator, Emma E. Sánchez Sánchez, Feb, 22
The Living Prophet,
Janet<br>Paradise, Oct, 31
The Nineteen80s,
Chris<br>Bright, Oct, 29
The Perfect Friend,
Chris<br>Bright, Oct, 29
The Spirit of the Lord,
Rick Ashton, Oct, 29
The Tobacco Question,
Chris<br>Bright, Oct, 29
The Unbearable Lightness of Being,
When It’s Tottally Unbearable,
Carrie Smith, Oct, 30
The Way
Getting Along,
Feb, 9
Dear Dad Notes,
Emma E.
Mama’s Refrigerator,
Emma E.
Sánchez Sánchez, Feb, 22
Day in the Life of a Missionary,
A, Adam C. Olson, Mar, 36
Dear Dad Notes,
Melody
Warnick, Jun, 10
Death, Coping With
Girl Called “Nine,” A, Jill B.
Adair, Jan, 44
I Know Families Can Be
Forever,
Moisés Nefi Morales González, Jan, 43
What Cathy Knew,
Susan Winters, Apr, 18
Decision Making
Soccer or Mission?, Alexandre Machado Vasconcelos, Jun, 18
To Be Together,
Lowell M.
Snow, Jul, 40
Depression
Beating the Blahs, Apr, 27
Q&A (my friend seems depressed and perhaps suicidal), Feb, 14
Determined to Serve,
Richard M.
Romney, Mar, 48
Developing an Attitude,
Kimberly Webb, Oct, 46
Díaz, Daiana Melina Albornoz
Sharing Christmas, Dec, 8
Did You Cheat? Robert M.
Bogardus, Jul, 6
Dinger, Matthew
Two Wisemens, Apr, 10
Disabilities, Coping With
One Word at a Time, Timothy M.
Wilson, Oct, 31
Spraying to Success,
Lindsey Phillips, Nov, 34
Discipline
Freedom to Dance, The,
Adam C. Olson, Apr, 28
Don’t Face the World Alone,
Richard G. Scott, Feb, 2
Dress Standards
Dress for Success (poster),
Richard G. Scott, Feb, 28
Dress for Success (poster),
Rob D., Jun, 8
Dance, David
My Journey to Faith, Jun, 44
Dances
Night to Remember,
The Janet<br>Faust, Feb, 17
Died in the Life of a Missionary,
A, Adam C. Olson, Mar, 36
Dear Dad Notes,
Melody
Warnick, Jun, 10
Death, Coping With
Girl Called “Nine,” A, Jill B.
Adair, Jan, 44
I Know Families Can Be
Forever,
Moisés Nefi Morales González, Jan, 43
Callings, Bruce R. McConkie, Sep, 10
Get Help! Carol Ashby, Nov, 44
Getting Along, Feb, 9
Getting Even, Amy Weir, Aug, 43
Gifts to Bring Home from the Mission Field, Gordon B. Hinckley, Mar, 2
Gilbride, Kathy M.
He Understands, Jan, 43
Girl Called “Nine,” A, Jill B. Adair, Jan, 44
Giving Christmas, A, Deborah Shatto, Dec, 40
Glorious Season, A, Gordon B. Hinckley, Dec, 2
GOALS
Pulling Together, Adam C. Olson, Sep, 32
Going Somewhere? Riley M. Lorminer, Oct, 18
Good Question, Trent, Alex LaVelle, Dec, 12
Good to Know, Nhean Kong Serey and Phyllis Gunderson, Jan, 12
GOOD WORKS (SEE SERVICE)
Greenhalgh, Eric J.
Inspired to Bless, Feb, 9
Carol Ashby, Nov, 4
Get Help! Nov, 44
GOOD TO KNOW
Kong Nhean Alex

HEALTH
Henrichsen, Kirk B.
HEAVENLY FATHER
Hinckley, Dec, 2
Hinckley, Dec, 40
Shatto, He Understands, Jan, 43
Hinckley, Mar, 2
Mission Field,

Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Robert D. Hales, Dec, 32
He Knows the Way (poster), Jul, 17
Let Him In, Aug, 46
Light of Christ, Dec, 37
Light of Truth, The, Janet Thomas, Dec, 28
LINE UPON LINE
Abraham 3:22–23, Sep, 43
D&C 121:45, Jan, 11
D&C 4, Mar, 5
Psalm 24:3–4, Nov, 7
Tithing and Other Offerings, Apr, 46
Looking Up, Linda Frogley, Nov, 45
Long Wait, The, Alexa Justesen, Apr, 32
Lorimer, Riley M.
Fast Enough, Sep, 9
Going Somewhere? Oct, 18
Puppet Boys, The, Jan, 24
Take Care, Jul, 34
Worth of Weeds, The, May, 12
Lost, John D. N. Davidson II, Apr, 24
Lost Goat, The, Matthew B. Pearson, Jul, 24
Lundberg, Megan
That Glorious Feeling, Aug, 45

Holy Ghost
Coming unto Christ, Henry B. Eyring, Apr, 2
Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Boyd K. Packer, Jan, 2

HOME TEACHING
Knock Again, Sedley Parkinson, May, 8
Two Wisemans, Matthew Dingir, Apr, 10

HONESTY (SEE INTEGRITY)
Honor Earned, An, Jonathan Perez, Nov, 45
How to Prepare to Be a Good Missionary, M. Russell Ballard, Mar, 6

HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS
More or Less, H. David Burton, Nov, 2

HUMOR
Is Anyone Laughing? Russell Wilcox, Feb, 34

I Felt the Power, Peter V. Hilton, Oct, 32
I Know Families Can Be Forever, Mosés Nefi Morales Gonzáles, Jan, 43
I Took the Temple with Me, Cory Keate, Mar, 18

IDEA LIST
Beating the Blahs, Apr, 27
Fit to Serve, Mar, 35
Getting Along, Feb, 9
Getting the Most from Your New Era, Aug, 12
Getting the Most Out of Sacrament Meeting, Jun, 13
Overcoming Temptation, Jan, 23
Priesthood Power, May, 11
If a Bug Flies into Your Mouth, Aaron L. West, Sep, 24
If I Had Known at 19, Roger Terry, Mar, 54
If the Savior Stood beside Me, Sally Deford, Aug, 8
ILLNESS
Girl Called “Nine,” A, Jill B. Adair, Jan, 44
What Cathy Knew, Susan Winters, Apr, 18
In His Own Backyard, Sara Faust, Feb, 24
In Royal Courts, Sara Mason, Jun, 45

IN TUNE
If the Savior Stood beside Me, Sally Deford, Aug, 8
From Father’s Arms to Mother’s Arms, Janice Kapp Perry and John V. Pearson, Dec, 9
Tender Mercies of the Lord, Janice Kapp Perry, Apr, 13

INDIVIDUAL WORTH
To the Point (jealous of friends), Sep, 31
Worth of Weeds, The, Riley M. Lorminer, May, 12
Injured and Alone, Marli Walker, May, 34

INSPIRATIONAL

INSPIRATION
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Russell Hitchcock, Aug, 4
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Russell Hitchcock, Apr, 2
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Robert D. Hales, Dec, 32

IS ANYONE LAUGHING?
Russell Wilcox, Feb, 34

J Ennis, Caitlin
Making Grandpa Proud, Feb, 41

JESUS CHRIST
Blocking the Wind, Russell Hitchcock, Aug, 4
Coming unto Christ, Henry B. Eyring, Apr, 2
Finding Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Robert D. Hales, Dec, 32
He Knows the Way (poster), Jul, 17
Let Him In, Aug, 46
Light of Christ, Dec, 37
Light of Truth, The, Janet Thomas, Dec, 28

JOSEPH SMITH
God the Eternal Father, Dec, 11
Of Good Report, Aubri J. Pope, Feb, 28
What Joseph Taught, Dec, 10

JOY
Rejoice! jade swartzgberg, Aug, 6
Just a Little Violence? Aug, 40

Kaneva, Maria
Enduring to the Beginning, Oct, 11
Keate, Cory
I Took the Temple with Me, Mar, 18

Kowallis, Bart J.
Testing the Truth, Oct, 8

LANGUAGE
Thy Speech Reveals Thee, L. Tom Perry, Jul, 2

Larson, Chris
Friendly Invitation, A, Apr, 41
Larson, Kami
Members Make the Difference, Mar, 62
LaVelle, Alex
Good Question, Trent, Dec, 12
Lead Thou Me On, Alexena Rickes, May, 45

LEADERSHIP
Me? Relief Society President? jade swartzgberg, Nov, 26

LeDuc, Carolyn J.
Where Are the Needy? Apr, 8
Let Him In, Aug, 46
Let Virtue Garnish Thy Thoughts Unceasingly, Jeffrey R. Holland, Oct, 4

Liffeth, Whitney Holyoak
My Comfort, Apr, 41
Light of Christ, Dec, 37

Lorrimer, Riley M.
Fast Enough, Sep, 9
Going Somewhere? Oct, 18
Puppet Boys, The, Jan, 24
Take Care, Jul, 34
Worth of Weeds, The, May, 12

Lost, John D. N. Davidson II, Apr, 24
Lost Goat, The, Matthew B. Pearson, Jul, 24

Lundberg, Megan
That Glorious Feeling, Aug, 45

Mackelprang, Sherrie
What I Learned from Doing the Dishes, Jun, 30
Make Your Life a Legacy, Mervyn B. Arnold, Jun, 40
Making Grandpa Proud, Caitlin Jenkins, Feb, 41
Mama’s Refrigerator, Emma E. Sánchez Sánchez, Feb, 22

MARRIAGE
To the Point (education or marriage), Sep, 30
Mason, Sara
In Royal Courts, Jun, 45

MATERIALISM
Don’t Buy It (poster), Nov, 17

NEW ERA DECEMBER 2007 45
More or Less, H. David Burton, Nov, 2
McConkie, Bruce R.
Ordinary Men, Extraordinary Callings, Sep, 10
McKay, David O.
Test of One, The, Aug, 34
McQueen-Nobbs, Jeanette
Remember Me? Feb, 40
Me? A Sister Missionary? Taryn Salmon, Mar, 46
Me? Relief Society President? Jade Stueartberg, Nov, 26
McQueen-Nobbs, Jeanette
Media
Jade Me? Relief Society President?
Me? A Sister Missionary?
Merényi, Viktória
Members Make the Difference,
Meservy, Sharrah
Merits of Scouting, The,
Mills, Rebecca
Meyer, Marlene, and Patricia Auxier
Handcarts in Alaska, Nov, 18
Mills, Rebecca
From Friends to Sisters to Companions, Rebecca Mills and Brad Wilcox, Mar, 12
Missing the World Cup, Suzana Alves de Melo, Jun, 21
Missionary Mail, Connie Myers, Mar, 58
Missionary Preparation
Fit to Serve, Mar, 35
Gifts to Bring Home from the Mission Field, Gordon B. Hinckley, Mar, 2
How to Prepare to Be a Good Missionary, M. Russell Ballard, Mar, 6
I Took the Temple with Me, Cory Keate, Mar, 18
If I Had Known at 19, Roger Terry, Mar, 54
Inside the MTC, Danielle Nye Poulier, Mar, 26
Me? A Sister Missionary? Taryn Salmon, Mar, 46
Missionary Training Center (poster), Mar, 25
Q&A (I want to serve a mission but need stronger testimony), Mar, 22
To the Point (gaining a desire to serve a mission), Mar, 52
Your Call to Serve, David A. Edwards, Mar, 14
Missionary Service
For a Burnt Offering, Joseph Ray Brilliante, Sep, 40
Make Your Life a Legacy, Mersyn B. Arnold, Jun, 40
Me? A Sister Missionary? Taryn Salmon, Mar, 46
Soccer or Mission? Alexandre Machado Vasconcelos, Jun, 18
Symphony of One, Richard M. Romney, Aug, 18
Missionary Trio, Patricia Auxier, Oct, 34
Missionary Works
Book for Brandon, A, Emilie Everett, Jun, 45
Chain Reaction, Shanna Butler, Jun, 34
D&C 4, Mar, 5
Day in the Life of a Missionary, A, Adam C. Olson, Mar, 36
Five M’s of Missionary Work, The, Thomas S. Monson, Mar, 42
Friendly Conversation, Laurie Wagley, Jul, 45
Friendly Invitation, A, Chris Larson, Apr, 41
From Friends to Sisters to Companions, Rebecca Mills and Brad Wilcox, Mar, 12
Gifts to Bring Home from the Mission Field, Gordon B. Hinckley, Mar, 2
Lost Goat, The, Matthew B. Pearson, Jul, 24
Members Make the Difference, Kani Larson, Mar, 62
Missionary Trio, Patricia Auxier, Oct, 34
Name on the Tag, The, John Crespo, Mar, 63
Pass It Along, Stephen R. Born, Oct, 45
To the Point (handling challenging questions), Mar, 53
To the Point (talking to a best friend about the gospel), Mar, 53
Inspired to Bless, Eric J. Greenhalgh, Mar, 21
Missionary Mail, Connie Myers, Mar, 58
Remember Me? Jeanette McQueen-Nobbs, Feb, 40
Sharing Time (poster), May, 7
Three Little Notes, Iyiewuare Erharuyi Daniel, Mar, 63
We’ve Got to Find Her, Bruce C. Hafen, Mar, 32
Where Is Your Book of Mormon? David E. Sorensen, Feb, 42
Monson, Thomas S.
Five M’s of Missionary Work, The, Mar, 42
More or Less, H. David Burton, Nov, 2
Morales Gonzáles, Moisés Nefi
I Know Families Can Be Forever, Jan, 43
Muhlestein, Jordan
Serve It Forward, Jan, 28
Music (See Also in Tune)
Exemplary Performance, An, Viktória Merényi, Jul, 46
He Understands, Kathy M. Gilbride, Jan, 43
In Royal Courts, Sara Mason, Jun, 45
Lead Thou Me On, Aleyna Ricks, May, 45
Playing a Familiar Tune, Jade Stueartberg, Oct, 24
Right on Key, Danielle Nye Poulier, May, 24
Singing for Rose, Nerissa Dawn Cannon, Apr, 40
Symphony of One, Richard M. Romney, Aug, 18
My Battle with Pornography, Jul, 11
My Comfort, Whitney Holyoak Liffirth, Apr, 41
My Journey to Faith, David Dance, Jun, 44
Myers, Connie
Missionary Mail, Mar, 58
Name on the List, A, Sedley Parkinson, Nov, 30
Name on the Tag, The, John Crespo, Mar, 63
Night of the Test, The, Lehi L. Cruz, Sep, 44
Night to Remember, A, Janet Thomas, Feb, 30
No Match on Sunday, David M. Smith, May, 45
No One Stands Alone, Janet Thomas, Sep, 26
Not Even Once, Shanna Butler, Aug, 26
Nuckols, Cameron
Last Chapter, The, Aug, 45
Oaks, Dallin H.
Where Will It Lead? Aug, 2
Obedience
Q&A (Rules vs. Agency), Nov, 14
Testimony of Prophets, A, Claudia R. M. Costa, Oct, 28
Too Busy to Care, Annie Valentine Tingle, Jun, 8
Waves of Deception, R. Conrad Schultz, Nov, 40
You Can’t Work on Sundays?, Teri Eddy Topham, Sep, 36
Of Good Report, Aubri J. Pope, Feb, 28
Olson, Adam C.
Day in the Life of a Missionary, A, Mar, 36
Freedom to Dance, The, Apr, 28
Pulling Together, Sep, 32
One Special Leader, Sariah de Nobrega de Miranda, Aug, 36
Ordinary Men, Extraordinary Callings, Bruce R. McConkie, Sep, 10
Overcoming Temptation, Jan, 23
Packer, Boyd K.
Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Jan, 2
Unseen Power, The, May, 2
Parrkinson, Sedley
Knock Again, May, 8
Name on the List, A, Nov, 30
Pass It Along, Stephen R. Born, Oct, 45
PatrIarchal Blessings
Q&A (Learning from My PatrIarchal Blessings), May, 14
Peace
Peace on Earth (poster), Oct, 17
Pearson, John V., and Janice Kapp Perry
From Father’s Arms to Mother’s Arms, Dec, 9
Pearson, Matthew B.
Lost Goat, The, Jul, 24
Perez, Jonathan
Honor Earned, An, Nov, 45
Perfectionism
Q&A (Perfectionism), Sep, 14
Perry, Janice Kapp
Tender Mercies of the Lord, Apr, 19
Perry, Janice Kapp, and John V. Pearson
From Father’s Arms to Mother’s Arms, Dec, 9
Perry, L. Tom
Thy Speech Reveals Thee, Jul, 2
Perseverance
Ponder, Pray, Perform, Persevere, W. Craig Zwick, May, 40
Phillips, Lindsey
Sprinting to Success, Nov, 34
Play It Again, Sam, Janet Thomas, May, 18
Playing a Familiar Tune, Jade Stueartberg, Oct, 24
Please Take My Pain Away, Sharrall Meservy, Sep, 45
Poetry
Another Leaf, Vicki Lynn Giglio, Feb, 40
At Dawn, Kara Dixon Houser, Dec, 49
Escape, Sherrie Carter, May, 49
Everyone . . . and I, Susan St. Pierre, Oct, 49
Forgotten, The, Sharran Tullis Gill, Nov, 49
Imagine, Adrienne Thomas Erickson, Aug, 49
New Day, A, Anita Smith Lieberg, Sep, 49
Noonday, Christine Layton, Jan, 49
Perfect Day, The, Lara Deppe, Jun, 49
Simplicity, Jaana Olsen, Apr, 49
Summer Steam, Shawna Simpson, Jul, 49
To J.E.H. and Many Others, Peter B. Ball, Mar, 65
Ponder, Pray, Perform, Persevere,
**PORNOGRAPHY**

Pope, Aubri J.

**PRAYER**

Poulter, Danielle Nye

**POSTER**

**PRIESTHOOD, AARONIC**

President James E. Faust: A Priesthood Blessings

**PRIORITIES**

Priesthood Power, May, 11

**PRIESTHOOD BLESSINGS**

Inspired to Bless, Eric J. Greenhalgh, Mar, 21

Priesthood Power, May, 11

**PRIESTHOOD, AARONIC**

Name on the List, A, Sedley Parkinson, Nov, 30

Priesthood Power, May, 11

Unseen Power, The, Boyd K. Packer, May, 2

**PRIESTHOOD BLESSINGS**

**PRIORITY**

Are You Getting the Right Message? Aug, 17

Choose, Jun, 17

Don’t Buy It, Nov, 17

Dress for Success, Feb, 17

He Knows the Way, Jul, 17

How Firm Is Your Foundation? Sep, 17

Joy to the World, Dec, 17

Missionary Training Center, Oct, 25

Peace on Earth, Oct, 17

Savior of All, The, Apr, 17

Sharing Time, May, 7

What’s on Your Mind? Jan, 17

Poulter, Danielle Nye

Inside the MTC, Mar, 26

Right on Key, May, 24

**PRAYER**

Crash Course in Prayer, Andrea Cartwright, Jul, 45

Injured and Alone, Marli Walker, May, 34

Lost, John D. N. Davidson II, Nov, 24

Lost on the Ledge, Nathan Waitie, Apr, 24

Ponder, Pray, Perform, Persevere, W. Craig Zwick, May, 40

Testing the Truth, Bart J. Kouvalis, Oct, 8

“This Is Ace,” Ace Stryker, May, 22

**PREPAREDNESS**

Save Her! Patricia Auxier, Sep, 6

President James E. Faust: A Special Witness, Oct, 2

**PRIESTHOOD, AARONIC**

Name on the List, A, Sedley Parkinson, Nov, 30

Priesthood Power, May, 11

Unseen Power, The, Boyd K. Packer, May, 2

**PRIESTHOOD BLESSINGS**

**PRIORITY**

Are You Getting the Right Message? (poster), Aug, 17

Something Had to Give, Amelia Stone, Aug, 24

Too Busy to Care, Annie Valentine Tittle, Jun, 8

Prophet on the Earth, A, Jade Swartzberg, Dec, 6

**PROPHETS**

Prophet on the Earth, A, Jade Swartzberg, Dec, 6

Testimony of Prophets, A, Claudio R. M. Costa, Oct, 28

Pulling Together, Adam C. Olson, Sep, 32

Puppet Boys, The, Riley M. Lorimer, Jan, 24

Put Light in Your Life, James E. Faust, Jun, 2

Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Boyd K. Packer, Jan, 2

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

People doing wrong seem to be having fun, Jan, 14

My friend seems depressed and perhaps suicidal, Feb, 14

I want to serve a mission but need stronger testimony, Mar, 22

Concerned about a friend not living gospel standards, Apr, 14

Learning from my patriarchal blessing, May, 14

Afraid of falling away, Jun, 14

Anti-Mormon literature, Jul, 14

Keeping the Sabbath day holy, Aug, 14

Perfectionism, Sep, 14

Faith in Jesus Christ, Oct, 14

Rules vs. agency, Nov, 14

Strengthening testimony, Dec, 14

**REACTIVATION**

Knock Again, Sedley Parkinson, May, 8

Reaching for the Top, Janet Thomas, Jan, 30

Real Confidence, Jan, 8

Recognizing the Savior, Jade Swartzberg, Sep, 46

Rejoice! Jade Swartzberg, Aug, 6

RELIEF SOCIETY

Me! Relief Society President? Jade Swartzberg, Nov, 26

Remember Me? Jeannette McQueen-Nobbs, Feb, 40

Remembering Iowa, Caroline H. Benzley, Jul, 18

Remmington, David

Answer in Alma, The, May, 46

REPTANCE

Coming unto Christ, Henry B. Eyring, Apr, 2

Road Rash and Repentance, Nathan Richardson, Apr, 34

REVERENCE

Reverencing the Temple, Paul VanDenBerghe, Feb, 18

Reverencing the Temple, Paul VanDenBerghe, Feb, 18

Richards, H. Bryan

Windows of Heaven, The, Apr, 42

Richardson, Nathan

Road Rash and Repentance, Apr, 34

Ricks, Aleena

Lead Thou Me On, May, 45

Right on Key, Danielle Nye Poulter, May, 24

Road Rash and Repentance, Nathan Richardson, Apr, 34

Romney, Richard M.

Brothers, May, 30

Determined to Serve, Mar, 48

SYMPHONY OF ONE, Aug, 18

**SABBATH DAY**

Missing the World Cup, Suzanna Alves de Melo, Jun, 21

No Match on Sunday, David M. Smith, May, 45

Q&A (keeping the Sabbath day holy), Aug, 14

You Can’t Work on Sundays? Tere Eddy Topham, Sep, 36

**SACRAMENT**

Getting the Most Out of Sacrament Meeting, Jun, 13

One Word at a Time, Timothy M. Wilson, Oct, 31

**SACRIFICE**

For a Burnt Offering, Joseph Ray Brilliantes, Sep, 40

Salmone, Taryn

Me! A Sister Missionary? Mar, 46

Sánchez Sánchez, Emma E.

Mama’s Refrigerator, Feb, 22

Save Her! Patricia Auxier, Sep, 6

Schutz, R. Conrad

Waves of Deception, Nov, 40

Scott, Richard G.

Don’t Face the World Alone, Feb, 2

SCOUTING

Cape Town’s Record-Setting Scout, Paul VanDenBerghe, Apr, 20

Honor Earned, An, Jonathan Perez, Nov, 45

Merrit of Scouting, The, Kimikat Johnson, Apr, 41

**SCRIPTURE STUDY**

Abraham 3:22–23, Sep, 43

D&C 121:45, Jan, 11

D&C, Apr, 4, Mar, 5

Everyday Scriptures, Bethany E. Walker, Nov, 46

I Felt the Power, Peter V. Hilton, Oct, 32

Psalm 24:3–4, Nov, 7

**SCRIPTURES**

Answer in Alma, The, David Remmington, May, 46

Where Is Your Book of Mormon? Feb, 42

**SPIRITUALITY**

We’ve Got to Find Her, Bruce C. Hafen, Mar, 32

**SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Boyd K. Packer, Jan, 2

Turnaround, The, Kayla Casper, Feb, 6

**STANDARDS**

D&C 121:45, Jan, 11

**NEW ERA DECEMBER 2007**

47
not living gospel standards), Apr, 14
Real Confidence, Jan, 8
Thy Speech Reveals Thee, L. Tom Perry, Jul, 2
Stephenson, Rachel R.
Few Extra Inches, A, Jun, 22
Stoker, Justin
Where Your Heart Is, Oct, 44
Stone, Amelia
Something Had to Give, Aug, 24
Stryker, Ace
“This Is Ace,” May, 22
Swartzberg, Jade
Me? Relief Society President? Nov, 26
Playing a Familiar Tune, Oct, 24
Prophet on the Earth, A, Dec, 6
Recognizing the Savior, Sep, 46
Rejoice! Aug, 6
Swartzberg, Jade, and Shari Whyte
Bringing Abish to Life, Jun, 24
SYMBOLS
Simplicity of Symbols, The, David A. Edwards, Feb, 10
Symphony of One, Richard M. Romney, Aug, 18

Tadevosyan, Grigor A.

Exceptional Book, an Exceptional Answer, An, Oct, 22
Take Care, Riley M. Lorimer, Jul, 34
TALENTS
Bringing Abish to Life, Jade Swartzberg and Shari Whyte, Jun, 24
Playing a Familiar Tune, Jade Swartzberg, Oct, 24
Right on Key, Danielle Nye Pouler, May, 24
Symphony of One, Richard M. Romney, Aug, 18

TEMPLES
Peace on Earth (poster), Oct, 17
TEMPLE WORK
All in My Family, Jeff Whittaker, Oct, 45
I Took the Temple with Me, Cory Keate, Mar, 18
Long Wait, The, Alexa Justesen, Apr, 32
Reverencing the Temple, Paul VanDenBerge, Feb, 18

TEMPORARY, OVERCOMING
If a Bug Flies into Your Mouth, Aaron L. West, Sep, 24
Overcoming Temptation, Jan, 23
Test of One, The, David O. McKay, Aug, 34
Waves of Deception, R. Conrad Schultz, Nov, 40
Terry, Roger
If I Had Known at 19, Mar, 54
Test of One, The, David O. McKay, Aug, 34
Testing the Truth, Bart J. Kowallis, Oct, 8

TESTIMONY
How Firm Is Your Foundation? (poster), Sep, 17
Looking Up, Linda Frogley, Nov, 45
Of Good Report, Auri J. Pope, Feb, 28
Q&A (I want to serve a mission but need stronger testimony), Mar, 22
Q&A (strengthening testimony), Dec, 14
Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Boyd K. Packer, Jan, 2
Testing the Truth, Bart J. Kowallis, Oct, 8
What I Taught My Teacher, Lawrence J. Wynder, Feb, 21

TESTIMONY BEARING
Quest for Spiritual Knowledge, The, Boyd K. Packer, Jan, 2
That Glorious Feeling, Megan Lundberg, Aug, 45
Testimony of Prophets, A, Claudia R. M. Costa, Oct, 28
That Glorious Feeling, Megan Lundberg, Aug, 45
“This Is Ace,” Ace Stryker, May, 22
Thomas, Janet
Light of Truth, The, Dec, 28
Night to Remember, A, Feb, 30
No One Stands Alone, Sep, 26
Play It Again, Sam, May, 18
Reaching for the Top, Jan, 30

THOUGHTS
D&C 121:45, Jan, 11
Real Confidence, Jan, 8
What’s on Your Mind? (poster), Jan, 17
Three Little Notes, Iyiewuare Erharuyi Daniel, Mar, 63
Thy Speech Reveals Thee, L. Tom Perry, Jul, 2
Tinkle, Annie Valentine
Too Busy to Care, Jun, 8

TITHING
Tithing and Other Offerings, Apr, 46
Windows of Heaven, The, H. Bryan Richards, Apr, 42
To Be Together, Lowell M. Snow, Jul, 40

TO THE POINT
Education or marriage, Sep, 30
Gaining a desire to serve a mission, Mar, 52
Handling challenging questions, Mar, 53
Jealous of friends, Sep, 31
Talking to a best friend about the gospel, Mar, 53
Violent video games, Sep, 30
Too Busy to Care, Annie Valentine Tinkle, Jun, 8

TOPOLOGY
You Can’t Work on Sundays? Teri Eddy Topham, Sep, 36
Turnaround, The, Kayla Casper, Feb, 6
Two Wisemans, Matthew Dinger, Apr, 10

UNITY
No One Stands Alone, Janet Thomas, Sep, 26
Unseen Power, The, Boyd K. Packer, May, 2
Up in Smoke, Marilyn Fisk, Nov, 12

Valued Friends, Feb, 41
VALUES
Valued Friends, Feb, 41
VanDenBerge, Paul
Reverencing the Temple, Feb, 18
Cape Town’s Record-Setting Scout, Apr, 20

VIOLENCE
Just a Little Violence? Aug, 40
To the Point (violent video games), Sep, 30

VIRTUE
D&C 121:45, Jan, 11
Let Virtue Garnish Thy Thoughts Unceasingly, Jeffrey R. Holland, Oct, 4
Real Confidence, Jan, 8
What’s on Your Mind? (poster), Jan, 17

Wagley, Laurie
Friendly Conversation, Jul, 45
Waite, Nathan
Lost on the Ledge, Apr, 24
Walker, Bethany E.
Everyday Scriptures, Nov, 46
Walker, Laurie
Wonderful Truth, A, Jul, 9
Walker, Marli
Injured and Alone, May, 34
Warnick, Melody
Dear Dad Notes, Jun, 10

Whittaker, Jeff
Three Little Notes, Iyiewuare Erharuyi Daniel, Mar, 63
Thy Speech Reveals Thee, L. Tom Perry, Jul, 2
Tinkle, Annie Valentine
Too Busy to Care, Jun, 8

WORLDLINESS
Don’t Face the World Alone, Richard G. Scott, Feb, 2
Q&A (people doing wrong seem to be having fun), Jan, 14
Worth of Weeds, The, Riley M. Lorimer, May, 12
Wynder, Lawrence J.
What I Taught My Teacher, Feb, 41

You Can’t Work on Sundays? Teri Eddy Topham, Sep, 36
Your Call to Serve, David A. Edwards, Mar, 14

YOUTH CONFERENCES
Handcarts in Alaska, Marlene Meyer and Patricia Auxier, Nov, 18
Zwick, W. Craig
Ponder, Pray, Perform, Persevere, May, 40
The snow fell, at first, gray and wet, thick and heavy, almost like rain pouring down the doubts of a long winter, soaking into the parched, water-thirsty ground. I threw my head back, opened my mouth to catch the snowflakes, and the sky was dizzy—I was dizzy—the kind of dizzy when you realize that you aren’t afraid of falling, when you know you have found something that you had lost.
COMING NEXT MONTH

• New 2008 Mutual theme. What does it mean to stand steadfast and immovable?
• A closer look at Lehi’s journey in the desert.
• Why is gambling such a dangerous game?
• Seminary really does make you a morning person.

Just a few of the articles waiting for you in the upcoming January 2008 New Era.

SEE US ONLINE AT WWW.NEWERA.lds.ORG