

AFRICA SOUTHEAST LOCAL PAGES

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Enjoying the Blessings of the Temple

By Elder Ulisses Soares, First Counselor in the Area Presidency

The Johannesburg Temple, the first temple in South Africa, was recently renovated and is now in full operation. The temple ordinances are once again available to all members in order to provide them with the way to return to God's presence and to live with Him forever.

Building temples is one of our Heavenly Father's expressions of love for each of us, His children, thus providing a way for us to enjoy the blessings that He has reserved for those who are faithful and worthy to assume eternal commitments. Each temple that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints builds is a manifestation of the testimony that God lives and that He has a plan for blessing His children in all generations, and that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world, and that His atoning sacrifice makes possible the fulfillment of the plan of eternal life for all those who worthily live the gospel.

In the Guide to the Scriptures, we read that the temple is literally the Lord's house, which is why the front of each temple has the words, "Holiness to the

Lord." That is the main reason that temples are the most sacred places on all the earth, for the Lord Himself visits the temples, which have been erected in devotion to Him.

When I am in the temple, I have the strong impression that I am beyond the earth and that the solitary and unhappy world is very far from my mind. I feel completely immune to any maleficent influence of the world. When I think about the importance of the temple in my life, I see three distinct things that have helped me continue moving in the Lord's direction.

The Temple Is a Place of Instruction

The first is that the temple is a place of instruction. In this holy place, we learn in a gentle and sacred way about a loving Father's plan for His sons and daughters. We learn about the course we are on, from the premortal existence to mortality and beyond. The purpose of everything that is taught in the temple is to bring



Elder Ulisses Soares

to pass what the Lord said to Moses regarding His creation: "For behold, this is my work

and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). Everything is taught clearly and simply so that everyone may hear, learn, and be able to put into practice what has been learned. The clear understanding of the teachings received in the Lord's house and the determination to do everything in accordance

with what is taught are the essence of what will make it possible for us to receive the promises of eternal life. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once said, "I believe that if we could create in our minds a clear and true picture of eternal life, we would start behaving differently" ("The Gospel of Jesus Christ," *Liahona*, May 2008, 44–46). Brothers and sisters, it is in the temple that we create this vision of eternal life.

The Temple Is a Place of Personal Revelation

The second thing is that the temple is a place of personal revelation. When we enter the temple, our hearts should be

turned exclusively to the Lord, with sincere supplications, in order to come to an understanding about the things that can change our lives. My greatest and most important personal decisions are made after diligent consultation with the Lord in the temple. After much pondering and sincere prayer, a gentle and tender voice always comes to my heart. This is revelation. The most important decision of my life, which made it possible for me to establish a family in the gospel, was the one to marry my dear wife. What a great blessing it was to hear from the Lord that that young lady would make possible the realization of all my dreams and of the Lord's promise for our lives. I am very grateful for that revelation because she helps me maintain the vision of the blessings that will come from faithfully living the gospel. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) once said: "The temple is also a place of personal inspiration and revelation. Legion are those who in times of stress, when difficult decisions must be made and perplexing problems must be handled, have come to the temple in a spirit of fasting and prayer to seek divine guidance. Many have testified that while voices of revelation were not heard, impressions concerning a course to follow were experienced at that time or later which became answers

to their prayers" (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), "Temple Work," 635).

Each Person Entering the Temple Must Prepare

The third thing is the importance of properly preparing ourselves to enter the Lord's house. We are frequently taught that the temple is a sacred place and that the Lord asks that it be protected from desecration. Any person willing to prepare himself well for this privilege may enter, but we need to prepare ourselves physically, intellectually, and spiritually. Preparing ourselves to go to the temple and to make covenants with the Lord requires that we ask ourselves the same question that President Thomas S. Monson asked at the general priesthood meeting in April of this year: "Are my hands clean? Is my heart pure? Am I a worthy servant of the Lord?" ("Examples of Righteousness," *Liahona*, May 2008, 65–68). If our answers to these questions are in the affirmative, then the ordinances performed here will remain intact for eternity. Everything we do in the temple has eternal consequences. There, we deal with matters of immortality and eternity, and with our relationship with our divine Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Our hands must be clean, our hearts pure, and our thoughts dwelling on

the importance and beauty of eternity. This is a sacred place, literally "holiness to the Lord."

It Is a Privilege to Attend the Temple

Attending the temple and participating in its ordinances is a privilege to be obtained by those who are obedient to the laws and ordinances of the gospel and who are willing "to live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God." We should go to the temple only when we are fully qualified and satisfy the requirements that the Lord has set. Our temple recommend must be a certification that we are living in accordance with the covenants that we have made with the Lord and that we are striving to seek everything that is "virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy" (Articles of Faith 1:13) in our lives.

President Hinckley said that possessing a temple recommend is to possess something that is invaluable. "It says that we are faithful, that we are doing what we need to do, that we are living the gospel, that we are sustaining our authorities, that we are keeping the Word of Wisdom, that we are paying our tithing, that we are treating our families properly, that we are treating our neighbors well, that we are the kind of people we ought to be" (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997),

“Temple Recommends,” 631–32).

I bear my testimony that the gospel should be reflected in our lives by the way we live. We must diligently strive to merit the privilege of entering the Lord’s house.

I bear my testimony that this is the Lord’s house and that He regularly visits it and grants us this feeling of peace, which gives us the vision of what may be obtained if we are faithful in this life.

I bear my testimony that

the Savior lives, that He rose from the dead, and that He has provided a way for us to enjoy the promised blessings if we have a true change of heart and become more like Him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

LOCAL NEWS

Helping Hands Day 2012—Africa Southeast Area A–Z (Angola through Zimbabwe)

“Strengthening Families—Building Communities”

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the continent of Africa served their communities on Helping Hands Day 2012. Thousands of members and friends of the Church followed the Saviour’s footsteps in service on Saturday, 18 August 2012.

Workers wearing colourful Helping Hands vests often sported smiles even bigger than the smiles of those whom they served. Those vests punctuated activities from Angola through Zimbabwe and most countries in between.

Just a few of the many acts of service can be reported in the *Liahona*. Each recorded here represents countless other contributions made anonymously but with love to communities throughout the Africa Southeast Area.

Heartfelt gratitude is extended to each person who chose to give time, talents, and means returning service to their communities on Helping Hands Day.

Angola: By Paulina Lassalete

Thirty-seven members and friends of the Church in Luanda served for 148 hours painting and cleaning a school. According to Paulina

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PAULINA LASSALETE



Missionaries gather new brooms and mops to clean a school.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PAULINA LASSALETE



Helping Hands give a much-needed cleaning to a local school.

Lassalete, “Everyone was amazed at the Helping Hands activity!”

Public Television of Angola reported about the service. The Administrative Commission of Luanda is eager to have Church members help with community activities in the future.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ELDER AND SISTER TAYLOR



Helping Hands plant a garden for the Mochudi Resource Centre for the Blind.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ELDER AND SISTER BURTON



Burundi Bujumbura First Branch cleaned up the edge of a road.



Burundi Bujumbura Second Branch cleaned up an orphanage and prepared ground for a garden.

**Botswana, Mochudi Branch:
By Elder and Sister Taylor**

The Botswana Mochudi Branch sewed seeds of love as they planted a garden for the Mochudi Resource Centre for the Blind. Members planted seedlings and seeds in the garden plot which had been prepared earlier by the young men.

Many of the blind students were on hand to assist the Helping Hands of Africa from the branch. It was a successful day. The young blind students will now have the responsibility of caring for the garden and the vegetables that they grow.



COURTESY OF ELDER AND SISTER BURTON

Brother Methusela, Public Affairs Director in Burundi Bujumbura, responds to the media on Helping Hands Day.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ELDER AND SISTER EVANSON

A Cameroon Yaounde Branch clears and cleans up debris around the city hall.

Burundi

Bujumbura First Branch cleaned up a roadside while Bujumbura Second Branch cleaned up the grounds of an orphanage and prepared the soil for a garden. Smiles showed the members' appreciation for the opportunity to serve.

Cameroon

Yaounde experienced great success during Helping Hands Day as 130 members from



Members of a Cameroon Bastos Branch clean the area around city hall.



Musey Ward Helping Hands participants prepare to walk to Bolingani Hospital to clean.



Two sisters from the Cameroon Ekounou Branch clear grounds of the city hall.

four branches participated. Projects included cleaning up the areas around city halls of two communities and cleaning streets around two marketplaces.

Democratic Republic of Congo, Katuba Stake, Mampala Ward and Gecamines First Ward

Members replaced a roof for a family whose roof was swept away by a strong wind. Much to the astonishment of the family, the roof was replaced before the end of the day.

Democratic Republic of Congo, Ngaliema Stake, Musey Ward: By Bishop Adrien Kanyiki

Members and missionaries in the Musey Ward, Ngaliema Stake chose to clean the Bolingani Hospital on Helping Hands Day. Everyone walked through the Musey neighbourhood wearing Helping Hands vests, carrying brooms, mops



Langata Helping Hands scrub and clean.

and buckets, singing hymns on their way to the hospital.

Little is known about the Church in the neighbourhood, so this unique activity raised a lot of questions. The full-time missionaries have had the opportunity to make several appointments with people interested in the Helping Hands activity.

We know that God lives and inspires our leaders. We pray that there are more people influenced by our witness of the joy the gospel gives us when we live it.

Malawi: By Edward Matala

Blantyre First and Second Branches did general cleaning respectively at Chilomoni Clininc and Kampala Market. Ndirande Branch painted the Ndrandi police station, and Zigwangwa Branch



Langata Helping Hands plant seedlings for a garden.

painted in the Zingwangwa Clinic.

Malawi public affairs representative Edward Matale said, “We decided to do Helping Hands this year in these places because of the gesture these institutions do to the people in the communities in providing medical support to people of all walks of life and the protection we receive from the Malawi police service.

”Sanitation is one of the millennial development goals the government of Malawi is looking forward to achieving. So we helped



Some staff of Zingwangwa Clinic with members who painted the clinic on Helping Hands Day.

the government in making sure that people are buying and selling their produce in a clean environment.”

Mozambique, Nampula Branch: By Sister Debbie Osborn

Fifty-five members of the Mozambique Nampula Branch cleaned the grounds and chapel of the local hospital on Helping Hands Day. Everyone was very pleased to participate in the well-organized activity.

Namibia, Windhoek Branch and Katutura Branch: By Womba Nashiyaya

Some 140 members of Windhoek and Katutura Branches joined with 44 other community members to paint the wall of the Katutura Cemetery.

Windhoek Mayor Elaine Trepper, who also took part in the painting, said, “The cemetery should be understood as a homeland for family memorials that are a sustaining source of comfort to the living. A cemetery is a history of peoples’ perpetual record of yesterday and a sanctuary of peace and quiet today.”

Many broke into song as they painted. Those who participated radiated the sunshine of the beautiful day.

South Africa, Roodepoort Ward and South Africa Missionary Training Centre: By Gemma Faerch

The Roodepoort Ward partnered with Johannesburg City Parks to plants trees along Philips Ave in Florida.



Nampula Branch members mop the chapel of the local hospital on Helping Hands Day.



Windhoek Mayor Elaine Trepper paints a portion of the Katutura Cemetery wall while missionaries and others look on.



Helping Hands participants plant a tree seedling.

The morning was unusually cold, but Church members, a local Scout troop and missionaries from the adjacent Missionary Training Centre arrived bundled up and ready to participate in the service project.

With teamwork and the right tools the trees went in quickly and were given a good start with layers of compost and plenty of water. Young men and young women are in charge of watering the trees weekly. In years to come they will be able to show their children the trees they planted.

South Africa, Springs Ward: By Sister Susan Roberts

The Springs Ward worked together with Payneville Primary School to plant gardens and cover books for their library. It was a cold, blustery day but hearts were warm and hands were ready to work together in love and friendship. The Payneville School was started three months ago for the Payneville Township. There are 600 students enrolled, ages 5 to 18.

One of the teachers of the school said, "I would like the churches in our area to follow the Mormon

Munali Branch member Sydney Lubinda visits with Shapi Mwanza.



Church's example and be more hands-on with each other. It's time that South Africa . . . joins together as one. This has been a great day for our community."

Tanzania, Dar es Salaam

Helping Hands, including members and friends of the Church, planted 1,000 tree seedlings for the Mwabwepande flood victims in Dar es Salaam. The seedlings were planted at schools, hospitals and individual homes in the settlement.

Zambia: By Sister Vonda Louthan

Members of the Zambia Munali Branch did service in the home of Shapi Mwanza, who was blinded in an automobile accident. As parents cleaned and washed clothes, their children sang Primary songs to Brother Mwanza, who deeply appreciated the music, service and interaction.

Elder Bowers said, "It was the most touching thing I have seen in a long time."

The next day at church, many commented that they had never before had an experience like giving service to Brother Mwanza.

Zimbabwe, Bulwayo Stake, Mpopoma Ward: By Onward Mubwanda

Sixty ward members raked grounds, removed weeds, swept and mopped Mpopoma Community Hall. The spirit was strong throughout the service, which was motivated by love for the Saviour and willingness to follow His example.

Mpopoma Community Hall's caretaker was "amazed at the commitment of the members" and expressed "profound gratitude for their effort."

Zimbabwe, Nkulumane Third Branch: By Nigel Ndlovu

Members of Nkulumane Third Branch cleaned a local community clinic. "The staff of the clinic welcomed us with big smiles, but ours were much bigger in that all of us were happy to serve together the community.



Mpopoma Ward Helping Hands participants cleaned the building and grounds at Mpopoma Community Hall.

“We feel it was what the branch needed to strengthen the unity and build love among the members. As people came to the clinic for medical attention, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had the opportunity to share briefly about the Church and the desire to serve.

“Some even suggested having Mormon Helping Hands every week or every month just for the love of doing it!”

Zimbabwe, Tshabalala Ward: By Jabulani Mandava

The newly established Tshabalala Ward went about digging the flower beds, removing grass, sweeping the grounds and restoring the rockery around the Community Library. It was impressive to see what a difference came into the library grounds after just one day of service.

Miss Mathe, the local library representative, was all smiles as she noted, “The library grounds were in their best condition . . . since [I] started working there, all thanks to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” ■

Share a report of your experiences “Strengthening Families—Building Communities” on Helping Hands Day 2012. E-mail your story to Editorsa@ldschurch.org

Africa Southeast Area Important Dates: Reserve on your 2013 Calendar

- **6–7 April:** April general conference in Salt Lake City
- **20–21 April:** General conference broadcast to Africa Southeast Area
- **17 August:** Africa Helping Hands Day
- **5–6 October:** October general conference in Salt Lake City
- **12–13 October:** General conference broadcast in Durban
- **19–20 October:** General conference broadcast to Africa Southeast Area (except Durban) ■

Resources for Missionaries Returning Home

Resources for Missionaries Returning Home is a brochure now available to all missionaries serving in the Africa Southeast Area as they prepare for mission release. The 12-page brochure emphasizes the importance of gaining an education or technical training following a mission.

Returned missionaries are encouraged to prepare to support a family, and remain active in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To help achieve those worthy goals, the brochure gives resource information about:

- **Perpetual Education Fund (PEF)** available in several countries in the Africa Southeast Area

- **Employment Resource Centres (ERC)** including the Career Workshop and Self-Employment Workshop
- **Institutes of Religion** located throughout the area.

Mission presidents will review the above points with missionaries prior to their release and will give them a copy of the brochure.

Links to Internet sites in the brochure include:

- **PEF:** www.lds.org/pef
- **ERC:** www.ldsjobs.org
- **Institute:** www.institute.lds.org

Resources for Missionaries Returning Home may also be available at some institute classes. ■