

# UK & IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

## AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

### The Power of the Book of Mormon

By Elder Jose L. Reina, Spain

Area Seventy

During these times of trial and tribulation when we most need to feel the Spirit and stay strong, we need to remember the words of President Ezra Taft Benson regarding the Book of Mormon: “There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the straight and narrow path.”<sup>1</sup>

When I found the Church at the age of 20, my missionaries—Elder Daniel Grigg and Elder Thayne Whipple—invited me to read chapter 11 of 3 Nephi in the Book of Mormon. When I began reading it I felt the power President Benson talked about. I had the same experience as Parley P. Pratt when he said he couldn’t stop reading the book. As I read it, its teachings about the gathering of Israel moved me in a powerful way. When I finished chapter 10 of Moroni I couldn’t help but start reading the book again, but this time I started at the beginning. When

I got to 3 Nephi 11, the peace and joy I felt motivated me to make better decisions in my life.

Reading the Book of Mormon has helped me during the most difficult moments of my life. I’ve read it from cover to cover at times when I’ve most needed to feel its power and inspiration, like when I was in the MTC, when I was called as stake president, when I had to prepare a conference talk, or when President Gordon B. Hinckley challenged us to read it in August 2005. In each one of these instances its influence has had an incredible impact on me. Not only have I felt this power as I read it from beginning to end, but I also feel its deep influence when I read its stories in any moment or circumstance. I remember when my daughter, Lidia Maria, and I decided to read it together. We spent several days on the introduction and had sacred experiences that she and I will never forget. The Book of Mormon united and strengthened us tremendously.

Just like the prophet Enos who, after having received forgiveness for his sins felt a desire for the



Elder  
Jose L. Reina

welfare of his brethren, or like the prophet Lehi who, upon tasting the fruit of the tree of life wanted his family to partake also, I too have felt the need to share the Book of Mormon. In his unforgettable talk “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,” President Benson said, “God . . . has revealed to me the absolute need for us to move the Book of Mormon forward now in a marvelous manner.”<sup>2</sup>

The Book of Mormon has helped me to share the gospel. Every time I have given away a copy of the Book of Mormon, my testimony has been strengthened because I’m exercising my faith and following the counsel of the prophet. In each instance the Lord has guided me and helped

me so that each person has accepted the book with gratitude. I pray that one day I will know the effects each of these valuable gifts has had in the lives of others.

I like to remember the example of Elena Henriquez, who kept a copy of the Book of Mormon in her store and took advantage of every opportunity she could to ask her customers, “Do you like to read?”

President Benson said, “The Book of Mormon was written for our day. The Nephites never had the book; neither did the Lamanites of ancient times. It was meant for us.”<sup>3</sup>

I know that if we follow our prophets and read the Book of Mormon daily, we will find strength and power to face any situation. We will feel how the Holy Ghost accompanies us day and night. Our testimony of Jesus Christ will become stronger and our desire to please Him will motivate all our actions. May the Lord help us to not treat the Book of Mormon lightly (see D&C 6:12) so we can receive all the blessings He has prepared for us. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

## NOTES

1. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986.
2. Ezra Taft Benson, “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988.
3. Ezra Taft Benson, “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986.

## Local Charities Benefit from BYU Singers’ Tour

By the Assistant Editor and Erich Weidmann



PHOTOGRAPH BY DEBBIE TWIGGER

**Bishop Eliot Reeves of the Bletchley Ward; CEO of Willen Hospice, Paul Hinson; and Bishop Nick Bail of the Milton Keynes Ward with the assistant editor.**

**A cheque for £1500 is handed to the CEO of Julia’s House, a hospice for sick children, by Tobias Ellwood, MP, and Poole Church leader John Crew.**

Last spring the Brigham Young Singers, a group of 42 young singers from Utah, USA, performed on a 13-date tour around the South of England and Wales. As a result, a number of local charities benefitted from



PHOTOGRAPH BY ERICH WEIDMANN



*The BYU Singers perform at the historic Gloucester Cathedral to help raise funds for the Cobalt charity.*

funds raised by local stakes, and friendships were forged in the local community.

The young university singers travelled 50 miles north of London on the first date of the tour to the new city of Milton Keynes at The Church of Christ the Cornerstone in the city centre. This prestigious venue, opened by Her Majesty the Queen 20 years ago, is a multi-faith church in the heart of the city which hosts many events for the community. The BYU Singers' concert was a charity event with all profits going to Willen Hospice, which provides care for those with long-term illnesses. A cheque for almost £1200 was later handed to the CEO, Mr. Paul Hinson, by the two local bishops, Eliot Reeves and Nick Bail, from the proceeds of the concert.

The concert, in the presence of the Mayor of Milton Keynes,

Councillor Alan Richards and the Chief Executive of Willen Hospice, Paul Hinson, had an enthusiastic audience of 300 eager to hear the young singers, including Elder Craig T. Wright, Area Seventy, and Rowland Elvidge, National UK Director of Public Affairs, and his wife.

In Poole, Dorset, the recipient was Julia's House, the Dorset Children's Hospice, a unique nondenominational children's hospice, where Poole Church leader John Crew, with MP Tobias Ellwood and family, were delighted to present a cheque for nearly £1500 to the CEO, Martin Edwards. Tobias Ellwood is the Member of Parliament for Bournemouth East and Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Europe Minister. The funds were raised through a benefit concert given by the Brigham Young University Singers, and organised by the

local stake. The concert given in Southbourne was just one stop on a tour taken by the BYU Singers and was well attended by people of many faiths with the single purpose being to support Julia's House.

Following a successful concert by the BYU Singers last May at Gloucester Cathedral in aid of the Cobalt charity, a health, mind and body scanner has now been purchased, one of only seven in the country. Cobalt is a registered charity working with the NHS and with offices next door to the Cheltenham Stake Centre. It was decided that this would be a good cause to donate funds to from the recent concert, attended by over 450 people (60 to 70 percent nonmembers). John Snell, director of public affairs for the Gloucester area, was invited to attend the recent unveiling of the scanner to the public. ■

# Building Bridges—National Church Leaders Meet with Muslim Aid

By Shawna Windom

National Church leaders Elder Clifford T. Herbertson (Area Seventy) and Rowland and Barbara Elvidge, (national public affairs directors) recently met with key leaders of Muslim Aid, an international relief and development organisation at their international headquarters in London. They were given a warm welcome and a tour, which included being shown the extensive network of this, the second largest Islamic relief organisation in the world. Muslim Aid has an extensive network providing much-needed food, shelter and healthcare in those areas of the world where there is devastation, drought and disasters.

During the past three years LDS Charities, established by the Church in 1996 to enhance Church involvement in relief and development activities throughout the world, has provided assistance valued at over \$6.6 million US dollars (£4.2 million British Pounds) with Islamic partner organisations to 14 countries. The projects include emergency relief in response to drought, earthquakes, fires, flooding, displacement and mudslides. Wheelchairs have been distributed with training along with assistance for hospitals, orphanages and soup kitchens.

Humanitarian aid has also sponsored literacy projects for entrepreneurs in many of these countries, and it is anticipated that this visit will lead to a developing close relationship in the future. For more information see <http://www.ldscharities.org>. ■

## Northampton Stake Offers a Helping Hand to Local Children

By Anthony Twigger

When Claire Hirst, wife of Northampton stake president Karl Hirst and mother of six children, discovered help was desperately needed in her local preschool, she immediately thought of the Helping Hands service programme. In the beautiful Northamptonshire village of Brixworth, the challenge of repairing the previously used Victorian school building, now called The Centre, commenced. It could only be achieved over the half-term break, whilst the children were off school.

As Sister Hirst recalls, “I became a member of the preschool committee in October last year as my son, Reuben, goes to the preschool. At the first meeting I attended, the long list of maintenance jobs that needed doing was discussed. The committee did not have sufficient funds to cover the cost of all the jobs and had no known contacts for people who would carry out the work voluntarily. I got the impression that this list had come up several times before and was just getting longer and longer. I felt very strongly that we could help and so gave them a brief explanation of the Church’s Helping Hands



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ROWLAND ELVIDGE

*Pictured from left: M. Walayat Khokhar, Manager; Hamid Azad, Assistant CEO; Elder Clifford Herbertson, Area Seventy and Rowland and Barbara Elvidge, UK public affairs directors at the headquarters of Muslim Aid.*



service. They were very interested and asked me to find out if our members would be willing to take on the preschool as one of our projects.”

So the preschool gave the Northampton and Duston Ward members a list of jobs, and members chose the things they felt could be tackled in the half-term break. All the walls of the main building, a previous school, were painted, as well as the woodwork, window frames and doors in the main hall, downstairs kitchen and bathrooms. A large hole in the kitchen ceiling was repaired and painted. The bathroom taps and toilets were replaced. The youth from four wards, including Kettering and Huntingdon, removed the hundreds of staples from the notice boards around the hall and made them ready for painting. Extra lighting was put in the bathrooms as the original lighting left it quite dark in there and the children didn't like to use them saying they were scary! Broken floor tiles were replaced in the main hall. The bathrooms had new flooring and skirting boards as they were water damaged.

Outside the building, the large, muddy raised bed was weeded, some plants were removed, and then a membrane and bark chippings were put down to cover the whole area. This made it suitable for the children to play on, the idea

**Youth and adults of the Northampton stake at the Brixworth preschool Helping Hands project.**

**The finished interior of The Centre, Brixworth.**



being that it would be a mini-beast area where the children could weave in and out of the larger, established bushes there. Large areas of ivy were cleared from the wall that separates the centre from the Saxon church car park. Last summer there was a problem with wasp nests throughout the ivy so the removal has made it much safer for the children. A broken window frame was repaired, guttering was replaced or repaired and overgrown trees were cut back.

About 110 members helped over the half-term week, donating around 430 hours of service between them.

Emma Hindes, the preschool supervisor, was absolutely delighted with the results, especially as it was all achieved over one week. “We are just overwhelmed by the amount of work that was done. We can't express what a difference this will make to the staff and children at the preschool,” she said. As she wrote to Claire, “We are so very grateful for all your hard work. It's difficult to believe that so many members from your Church group were willing to give up their spare time to help us out. It's amazing!”

Claire remarks, “Every time I dropped my son, Reuben, off at school for at least two weeks after the work was complete, she (Emma) thanked me again for all we'd accomplished.” ■

## The British Pageant—“Truth will Prevail”

The Local Pages’ editors asked Stephen C. Kerr, president of the British Pageant committee, to answer our questions regarding the forthcoming British Pageant to be held July 31 to August 10 on the grounds of the Preston Temple, Lancashire.

### *1. What is the British Pageant and why is it being held?*

The peoples of Britain and Ireland are not strangers to the concept of holding a pageant to commemorate some event or other in our past. Likewise, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has a tradition of staging pageants to commemorate our Church history and to present the story of the Restoration of the gospel. Most of these pageants have been held or are held in North America, but this summer, for the first time, there will be a Church pageant held in the British Isles. When those first missionaries arrived in Great Britain in the summer of 1837 they came, in the words of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith to Heber C. Kimball, “to proclaim my gospel and to open the door of salvation to that nation.” This mission to England and in turn to Scotland,

Wales and Ireland was the beginning of the global missionary effort that we see growing and accelerating all around us today. The pioneer members of the Church became the stalwart members of the

Church; they emigrated to Zion in their tens of thousands, and the Church was built upon their faith, their courage and their strength. To a very large extent what we enjoy today as Latter-day Saints in the 21st century is due to them, and we owe them a debt of gratitude. So the pageant is, in a sense, our loving tribute to our ancestors. Much of the dialogue in the pageant is taken from the original journals of those early members. Their words of faith and testimony will live again this summer as they are heard again as spoken by the British and Irish Mormons of this century. They are deeply meaningful and moving.



**Stephen C. Kerr, president of the British Pageant**

**Members at the audition for the core cast callback.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN DUVAL

*2. Is this event for the neighbouring stakes or for all the British and Irish members?*

The British pageant is for all of the members of the Church in these islands; we include the Saints in all parts of England, in Scotland, in Wales, in Northern Ireland and in Ireland. There will be a limited number of tickets for every performance—there will be nine performances of the pageant, one performance per evening—and we want as many people as possible to experience the British pageant. We especially want our younger members—our children, the youth and the young single adults—to have the opportunity not only to experience the pageant as a spectator but also to participate in the pageant. The pageant portrays not only the beginnings of the Church in the British Isles; it is the story of the beginnings of the Church in Europe. From whichever part of the British Isles or Ireland that you come from, you will find an historic character in the pageant that you will be able to relate to. It is the story of all of us. It is our story.

*3. Can you give readers an idea of the content of the British pageant?*

The pageant begins by putting the story of the coming of the first Mormon missionaries to England into context. The peoples of these islands have throughout their long story demonstrated a profound attachment to the principles of freedom and truth. The pageant portrays something of those who have given everything for the sake of religious freedom—for example, William Tyndale, the man who sacrificed so that the Bible could be translated and published in the English language. His faith and courage along with the faith and courage of many others is commemorated in the opening scenes of the pageant. Thereafter we see the scenes of the early missionaries arriving in Liverpool and then coming to Preston. We see the first baptisms performed in the River Ribble and then the beginnings



PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN DUWALL

***The British Pageant will be performed in the area adjacent to the Preston Temple.***

of the Church. Through the words of the journal entries of those early converts and the missionaries, we learn of their faith and testimony and we see the miracles that followed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*4. Is it too late for individuals to participate?*

We have been through an extensive process of auditions and we now have filled the core cast positions—those are the main speaking parts in the pageant—and we have filled the two family casts. We need two family casts, one for each of the two weeks that the pageant will run. That's about 400 people in all. The auditions themselves have been powerful spiritual experiences. People have come to the auditions and have been asked to read from scripts that they had never touched before, but in reading the words of the script—comprising the original words of the early converts—many of our members have been deeply moved. It is no exaggeration to say that for some who came to read for parts in the pageant the auditions themselves have been life-changing events. However, it is not too late even now for members of the Church to volunteer to help. For the hundreds who will perform on stage we need at least the same number again (indeed more!) to help stage the performances. And most important of all, we need the members of the Church to come to the pageant and we hope that our fellow members will bring their family and friends—especially those who have not been to church for a while or who are not members of the Church at all.

### 5. How can tickets be obtained?

Each stake in the United Kingdom and Ireland has a stake pageant leader. The stake pageant leader is the source of the tickets. There will be 1500 tickets for the seated areas for each performance, and I'm afraid it will be a case of booking seats as early as possible because demand is already high, as you might expect. But the tickets are available through your local stake pageant leaders. Nearly all of the stakes have also booked coaches to bring members to the pageant at a minimal cost, and again this is something for you to ask about in your ward or branch. The tickets are free of cost.

### 6. Will accommodation be available?

For those who are performing in the pageant or are helping to stage the pageant there will be some guidance on where to get low-cost accommodation, but the pageant organisation itself does not provide accommodation or guidance on accommodation to those who are coming to watch the pageant. Again, this might be something that stake pageant leaders have considered doing in your locality.

## Request for Submissions for "Our Page" (children's section) in the *Liahona* magazine

The *Liahona* needs children's submissions for "Our Page"! Children ages 3 to 12 can submit drawings, photos, testimonies, and experiences. Drawings may be of their homes, families, the world around them, temples, scripture stories—almost any subject. However, no drawings of the Saviour, please. Please include the child's name, age, and gender and ward and stake name. Also, parental permission

to publish the submission must be included (email is acceptable). Submissions may be made in any language, and can be made online at [liahona.lds.org](http://liahona.lds.org); by email to [liahona@ldschurch.org](mailto:liahona@ldschurch.org) with "Our Page" in the subject line; or by mail to:  
*Liahona*, Our Page  
50 E. North Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024,  
USA ■

### 7. Where can we find additional information?

The best place for up-to-date information on the British pageant is our website which is <http://www.britishpageant.org>. We also have a Facebook page which is kept up-to-date and a Twitter account where there are regular 'tweets' about pageant news and happenings.

Please become a part of this momentous event. Nothing like this has ever been attempted by the Church before and the faith and support of every member of the Church in the United Kingdom and Ireland is needed for it to be a success. We are grateful for the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and their generous sponsorship which has in the first place allowed the pageant to happen at all. ■

## Editor's Note

Please submit all stories and photographs to the editors, Jason Watling and Debbie Twigger at [ukiensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ukiensign@ldschurch.org). Stories should be in Microsoft Word format. Photographs should be in jpg format. It would assist the editors in processing photos if the pictures did not require a large amount of memory.

We need the signed permission of all participants in the photograph, as well as the photographer for the Church to use the article and photograph. A form will be sent out upon receipt of the article or it can be obtained from us in advance or from your stake media specialist/stake director of public affairs.

More stories can be found online at <http://www.lds.org.uk> by clicking on United Kingdom & Ireland Church News and Events and at <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org.uk> for media and the public. There is also a UK Church Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/LDSUK>.

Send all stories and photographs for the websites and Local Pages to [ukiensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ukiensign@ldschurch.org) ■