

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

The Blessings and Power of the Priesthood

By Elder Joaquim Moreira, Portugal

Area Seventy

Recently our daughter Ruth began her mission in the Brazil São Paulo South Mission. Before she went to Brazil, we went as a family to the Madrid Spain Temple so that she could receive her endowment ordinances. We had an experience that united our whole family.

In preparation for our temple trip, we gathered the family with the main purpose of organizing the names of our ancestors in order to perform the salvation ordinances in their behalf.

Through this experience we lived some unique family moments. We felt a very strong love for each one of them and the desire to be together with them one day in eternity, sharing with each other the experiences we had on this earth.

Temple ordinances are a sacred and formal act performed by priesthood authority and are essential to our exaltation. Our Heavenly Father never forgets His children, remembering equally the ones that are still in this life and the ones that have passed away.

Through this experience we confirmed that “we are His children. . . . He loves us. . . . He wants to communicate with us,

and we can communicate with Him through sincere prayer.”¹ We also felt the fulfilling of the scripture, “Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.”²

In this last dispensation, great are the expectations regarding the establishment of Zion. Enjoying the blessings and the power of the priesthood is an essential step for these important events.

The blessings pertaining to the priesthood that benefit all humanity in this dispensation include:

- The Restoration of the gospel.
- The true knowledge of God, our Eternal Father.
- The importance of understanding moral agency in our lives.

In order for all of Heavenly Father’s children to obtain this knowledge, the Savior has said, “Behold, I will hasten my work in its time.”³

For us to hasten His work, it is crucial to perform the



Elder Joaquim Moreira

ordinances of salvation here on earth. It is through sacred ordinances, such as baptism and confirmation, that we learn about God’s power and love and thus feel His influence in our lives.

The priesthood power only can be seen in action:

“Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet,

before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

“And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

“If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.”⁴

Included in the fulfillment of this promise of Elijah the prophet, we have the appearance of the Book of Mormon, which mentions in its title page, “Which is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know . . . that they are not cast off forever.”

Because of these promises, I have studied all the great things the Lord has done unto Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our fathers, so that I could better understand the present time and act in the work of salvation of both the living and the dead. Thus my heart developed a great desire to participate in missionary work and in the rescuing and laboring for the performance of the salvation ordinances in behalf of my ancestors.

I have a vivid remembrance of the day when I was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church. And the first action taken by me and my brother was to do our family's genealogy. As we discovered their accomplishments and their sacrifices, the love we felt for each one of them was something unforgettable. The faith that led us to visit civil registry offices and acquire new data increased our testimonies and faith in Jesus Christ and created a sense of eternal family unity.

I am eternally grateful to know that a 14-year-old Joseph Smith decided to ask God the Eternal Father "which of all the sects was right."⁵ Thus I have been able to enjoy the blessings and power of the priesthood in my life and in my family's life. ■

NOTES

1. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 31.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 84:20.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 88:73.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 2:1–3.
5. Joseph Smith—History 1:18.

Rowland and Barbara Elvidge— Service in Public Affairs

By Joyce Farnsworth

Being called in 2008 as the first national directors for public affairs for the United Kingdom was a daunting task for Brother and Sister Elvidge. It was a move to provide priesthood direction at the country level to the work of bringing the Church out of obscurity.

The first stage was to build up a national public affairs council which would include specialists in media, interfaith relations, business and community work, along with IT skills to support Church websites.

Other important goals included helping the stakes establish strong public affairs councils and encouraging stake and ward leaders on the importance of public affairs in building and strengthening the Church in their areas. Engaging in the community and proclaiming who we are and what we stand for have made a difference in attitudes towards the Church. The establishment of multi-stake councils dividing the UK into groups has helped in training and bringing together stake public affairs councils.

Brother Elvidge commented, "Over the years the media has moved from speculative sensationalism to being more balanced and responsive in



COURTESY OF BRO AND SISTER ELVIDGE

reporting objective news about the Church. It has been encouraging to see a steady increase in local media stories and radio interviews. Nevertheless we have learnt that one cannot drop one's guard when working with the media. Being able to provide a media cutting service to stakes has been a great bonus and has broadened the understanding of how the press perceives us and what they will accept."

Brother and Sister Elvidge also noted that broadening the scope and understanding of Mormon Helping Hands, the NHSBT blood drives and working with the Royal British Legion have done a great deal to bring the Church out into the open. They have helped to convey that we follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and serve our fellow men.

"Our interfaith relations in parts of the country have certainly improved; we have members serving on religious education

Bro Rowland Elvidge and Sister Barbara Elvidge, former UK national directors of public affairs

councils and interfaith councils. Our members even hosted a seminar in the Manchester Harris College in Oxford to commemorate the anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible. This brought us to the attention of many leading academics.

“In 2013 significant steps were made in political circles. We were invited to prayer breakfasts at the House of Commons, where politicians and church leaders meet every year. Our meetings on the Commons, Lords and with government

departments have been very encouraging, especially when we have been able to share how we contribute to the well-being of society in general.”

The Church now gives out Family Value Awards to prominent UK citizens who have made significant contributions in preserving values that support the proclamation on the family.

Brother and Sister Elvidge were reflective concerning their service. “We will miss the work of course, but it is comforting to know that the work will continue

forward in safe hands. We will always treasure the happy times we spent serving in public affairs.”

Brother and Sister Elvidge were released as the national public affairs directors at the end of last year. Previous callings include London temple president and matron, mission president for the England Bristol Mission, Area Seventy and stake president. They continue to reside in St. Albans and are the parents of six children, 25 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. ■

Interfaith Musical Evening

By Sylvia Anderson

On a spring Sunday evening a musical event involving a range of faith groups was held at Southwark Cathedral, London, including members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This followed attendance last summer by a member at a forum about community service which was organised by Southwark Cathedral Faith group. The musical evening was a way of continuing the momentum, and members of different faiths were invited to perform short songs or instrumental pieces.

Verona Briscoe, music leader of the Manna Road Gospel Choir, was approached and readily agreed to participate. The group consists of members from the Wandsworth Stake who have performed at many different events.

The evening began with opening remarks from a member of the Cathedral clergy about the place of music as part of spiritual life. This was followed by musical performances from members of the Hindu and Sikh faiths and from different Christian denominations, including our own. The Sikh group

consisted of children who not only sang but played musical instruments in a very impressive way. One of the members of the Manna Road Gospel Choir introduced the group by giving a brief explanation about the Church and the role of music as part of worship. They performed three songs, ending the event with ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ sung in Swahili.

The evening was a great success, enjoyed by all. Learning was gained and friendships were developed. ■

Members of the choir from right to left: Ashleigh Wright-Mitchell, Martha Cabia, Sonia Osei-Iduma, Haley Wright-Mitchell, Verona Briscoe, Sylvia Anderson. Back: Colin Ceres.



Benjamin Hunter, a Testimony in Music

By Dawn Keogh

There are two words which ably describe 18-year-old Benjamin Hunter from Glasgow: enthusiastic and talented. You might even say that, for Benjamin, performing is in his blood. One of seven siblings, Benjamin is a third generation Latter-day Saint, and musical talent runs in his family. Inspired by his grandparents and other family members who are professional musicians, Benjamin found a love for music and performance at an early age and began to study musical theatre.

In December 2012, encouraged by his bishop, he somewhat reluctantly attended an audition for a forthcoming Church production which he didn't know much about and didn't have high expectations of. That production was the British Pageant, and it changed Benjamin's life forever. A four-hour-long audition secured him a key role of narrator in this momentous production, and provided him with one of the most spiritual experiences of his young life. When Benjamin talks of his pageant experience, it is still with enormous enthusiasm and gratitude; he recalls that as he talked with audiences before and after each performance, he began to feel a desire to serve a mission and felt that he was learning skills that would help him to teach the gospel.

Benjamin's performance in the pageant caught the eye of director and writer David Warner, who invited him to go to Salt Lake City, where he participated in a three-month-long production called *Saviour of the World*, staged at the Conference Centre. While he was there, Benjamin also took part in the annual Christmas concert performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. He describes both events as 'scary' but uniquely spiritual.

Inspired by his experiences, Benjamin wanted to find a way to express his testimony and feelings



COURTESY OF MARIE BARBER

Benjamin Hunter performing in the British Pageant

but didn't know how, until one day he read in the Doctrine and Covenants, "For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (25:12). Feeling inspired by the scripture, Benjamin decided to record a small selection of songs on a short album called *Secret Prayer*. For Benjamin, the most important aspect of this work is not the music or the production but the feeling of testimony he wanted to express through the music.

As Benjamin prepares to serve a mission, he continues to share his testimony through musical performance. He is currently working on a scaled-down production of *Saviour of the World*, which will be performed in the Glasgow Stake, and no doubt as they watch his performance, audiences will agree that the words 'enthusiastic' and 'talented' certainly describe this young man. ■

Mormon Missionary Choir—an Easter Concert

By Margo McClumpha

An historical and spiritual event occurred in Edinburgh on Saturday 12 April, 2014. That historic moment was an Easter concert by the Mormon Missionary Choir of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in St Giles Cathedral, one of Scotland's oldest cathedrals.

In 1637 King Charles I introduced a new service book to the Scottish church. It was to replace the old Book of Common Order known as Knox's Liturgy. Ministers were commanded to follow the new Book of Common Prayer and read sections from it.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF IAN MCCLUMPHA

On Sunday, 23 July 1637, at a service in St Giles, the dean read from the new book.

The congregation was in an uproar. Tradition has it that Jenny Geddes stood up and threw her stool at the dean, shouting, "Dost thou dare say mass at my lug?"

No stool was thrown at the Mormon Missionary Choir. Members of the Church probably never expected to hear a Mormon choir perform in St Giles in their lifetime.

Choir members were identified on the back of the programme along with a short description of



Full-time missionaries from the Edinburgh Scotland Mission perform an Easter concert at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh.

their group: "The Mormon Missionary Choir is an ad-hoc group drawn from a complement of over 200 young missionaries between the ages of 18 and 25 who volunteer in all areas of Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Changes in assigned areas need to be made to accommodate these arrivals and departures so the choir, taken from those presently in Scotland, have had a short window of less than a month to receive their music, practice and perform."

The choir had previously performed in LDS churches in Glasgow and Dundee and also at St Paul's Cathedral in Dundee.

A reverence descended on all present in St Giles. As each missionary sang, their testimony was heard in every note. Their young faces glowed with the sure knowledge that "He lives."

The acoustics in the cathedral added to their performance. The sounds of the harp, violin, cello, flute, trumpet and, of course, the bagpipes were magical in the sense that they invited the Spirit and touched the hearts of their audience. On that special day in Edinburgh, the Mormon Missionary Choir was our conduit to the hearts and souls of those present in St Giles.

Of that day, people in Scotland and from overseas will say, "I heard the Mormon missionaries sing and I will never forget how it made me feel." Perhaps lives will be changed; an individual may become converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints because of an Easter concert. Their final performance was at the stake centre in Edinburgh, where a large audience were held spell-bound by their music and the spoken word. ■

Inspirational Women at International Women's Day

by Laura Whitney

There are many daily deeds that go unnoticed by most people, accomplished by tireless hands that steadily pull progress forward along its path. But occasionally, someone recognises these hands and the hearts that guide them. This is what happened for many women in Edinburgh on 8th March at the International Women's Day festival.

As a part of the festival, several local women were nominated by their communities for an Inspirational Local Woman award. One of the nominees was Cathy Ahmed of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Cathy Ahmed has been taking in Chinese children and fostering or raising them for over twenty years. She has had countless children through her home, without any financial compensation for the love and time she devotes to them. Throughout the years, she has added more than just Chinese children to her lot by helping children from a variety of nationalities, but especially those who are struggling to adjust to Scotland.

"If anybody wants help, I try and be there for them," Cathy explains. She is also involved in several women's and children's groups, including a Women's International group and a Speak Easy group for women of different cultures. "I try to be friends with as many cultures as I can," she says.

Cathy Ahmed has won a few awards for her work already, including an award for speaking about women in poverty and another for being the best volunteer at an art centre, where she spends time every week. Almost every day of the week sees her volunteering in a different group or project.

Cathy's membership in the Church has helped motivate her in all of her work. "I always have faith [inside] my house," she says. She believes that becoming close



COURTESY OF CATHY AHMED

Cathy, pictured on the extreme R, receiving her nomination award at the International Women's Day festival in Edinburgh

to so many other cultures has only increased and strengthened her love for her own faith. "It doesn't matter what culture you are—it's all the same faith."

Eight women were nominated for the same award, which was finally presented to Nassim Azad. Those attending the festival also heard short lectures on issues women face in today's society and an address by guest speaker Eileen Chan-Hu, head of the Chinese Welfare Association in Belfast. Several booths promoting organizations led by or for women and encouraging unity in Edinburgh were also a part of the event. ■

Norwich Stake Donates Clothes to Greek Mental Health Hospital

By Franz Sidney

When members in the Norwich area bade farewell to Nick and Kay Manning of the Kings Lynn Ward, little did the couple know that they would soon be drawn into providing help and support to many in a most significant way. Elder and Sister Manning were called to serve a full-time mission in the Greece Athens Mission of the Church and had not been in Athens long when they became aware of a serious issue in one

of the local mental hospitals. Many of the patients were sadly lacking many of the necessities of life, including clean and suitable clothing and underwear. Furthermore, as the recession was taking its toll in Greece, hospitals had funding cut and were finding it hard to pay employees as well as provide food and basic necessities to patients.

In February 2014 the Mannings commented on the desperate situation in Athens in an email

conversation with a member of the Norwich congregation. The news spread quickly, and within a few days an area-wide appeal was launched by the women's organisation, Relief Society, to supply underwear and pyjamas for many of the older patients.

Setting aside their own worries and financial difficulties, families in the area rallied to the call, and large amounts of clothing were collected. Due to the sensitive political situation in the country, specific arrangements had to be made for the shipping and delivering of these items. The donations were finally delivered and gratefully received in March 2014.

The following message was sent by the hospital director, Dr Kimon Probonas, to thank the Norwich members for the donations:

“On behalf of everyone here at Palladio hospital of mental illnesses, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for your initiative to help patients in need. Unfortunately there are a lot of patients abandoned by their families and our effort to help them has limitations. Thank God there are TRUE humanitarian missionaries who are willing to assist and help us in our struggle to make the lives of these patients as pleasant as possible. We are truly grateful for your contribution and I wish that your shining example is followed by as many people as possible so that our work becomes easier and our world a better place!”

“With our sincere gratitude on behalf of all the managing staff, Dr med Kimon Probonas” ■

Elizabeth Whittaker

By Debbie Singh-Bhatti



Elizabeth Whittaker from the Worksof Ward, Sheffield Stake

At an age when most of us would be thinking about taking it easy, 87-year-old Elizabeth Whittaker of the Worksof Ward, Sheffield Stake, is doing nothing of the sort! A member of the Church since 1981, she was already approaching retirement age when she entered the waters of baptism, but there is nothing retiring about this mother of two who has spent most of her life as a single parent.

Keenly interested in politics, Elizabeth found that joining the Church strengthened her resolve to make a difference as she fought a couple of local government seats and served as governor of three schools, where she campaigned to get Christian religious instruction back into daily assemblies.

Six months into her Church membership, Elizabeth experienced her first taste of Relief Society service when she was invited to help clean and iron for a sister with a newborn baby. “I’ve never liked housework much, but doing it for someone else felt completely different. I actually

BY SHIRLEY BOYCOTT



Sisters of the Norwich Ward with the donated items for Greece

BY DEBBIE SINGH-BHATTI

enjoyed it!" she remembers. "Serving makes me feel happy. There is something good about bringing a smile to someone's face."

At the ripe old age of 70, Elizabeth joined a convoy of Latter-day Saints delivering aid equipment and supplies to the people of Croatia. She shared around-the-clock driving of an ex-NHS ambulance with two others and was the oldest driver to make the trip.

Elizabeth's life hasn't been easy. She was told in her patriarchal blessing that she would "pass through the refiner's fire", but one thought has kept her strong: "Heavenly Father never allows us to have more problems than we can cope with."

"Sometimes I feel that I'm not very useful," she confides, "but when I start to feel that way I remind myself to be grateful for what I can still do and for what I have." It was that sense of gratitude—at having her vision restored following operations to remove cataracts—that prompted her to crochet an altar cloth for the newly constructed Preston temple some 15 years ago.

She is a keen family historian and volunteered for 22 years at the stake family history library and continues to conduct her own research.

Other things that Elizabeth "can still do" include feeding the missionaries regularly, attending and participating in Church meetings and socials, fulfilling her visiting teaching assignment and hosting

a weekly craft club, which she helped form.

She also loves to share the gospel. No workman passes her door without being offered a Book of Mormon, and she is in the habit of leaving pass-along cards on restaurant tables and of dropping off past copies of the *Ensign* at doctors' surgeries! "I'm so grateful for the missionaries who brought me the gospel," she says. "The least I can do is share my testimony with others."

Continuing to use and exercise her own unique talents and abilities is Elizabeth's way of showing the Lord she is grateful for her life, despite its hardships, and of bringing a smile to the face of those she serves. ■

TRYING TO BE LIKE JESUS

"I feel my Saviour's love when I do the right thing, like helping my mum and tidying when I have been told to do things. The best is I do what the Lord tells you to do. I do lots of good, my mummy says. . . . I think I have been the best in my life. One day I got a glow stick." ■

Elsie: Age 6, Preston Ward



BY JANICE PEERS

Elsie from the Preston Ward

Editor's Note

The editors, **Jason Watling** and **Debbie Twigger**, invite all news stories, articles and photographs to be sent to ukiensign@ldschurch.org. Stories should be in Microsoft Word, 350–500 words, with photographs in jpg format, around 3–4mb in size. Stories for the News section should be submitted as close to the event as possible.

The signed written permission of all participants in the photograph, as well as the photographer, is required for the Church to use the article.

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