

# UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

## AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

### Bringing the Blessings of the Christmas Season to Those Around You and Our Responsibility to Invite

By Elder Christopher Charles, Great Britain

Area Seventy

My fondest Christmas memories as the youngest of four boys was the time spent with Mum and Dad at home with my brothers and their wives. I was the only single member of the family at that time.

I remember enjoying the chatter, the teasing, the laughter, the games and the delicious Cypriot food—stuffed vine leaves were my favourite! Yet, I cannot remember thinking about the real meaning of Christmas.

Of course, things are different now as we have the true gospel in our lives. My two daughters are grown with husbands of their own, and yet still the best moments are those which involve sitting around the table just being together.

And so it is for many as they take the opportunity to renew feelings of love with family at Christmas. Attempts to secularise this time of year do not seem to have affected that need to be together.

My wife and I served in the Greece Athens Mission between 2009 and 2012. How often we felt the need to do more in serving our fellow men. It was with these feelings that we decided to change our Christmas Day plans. Instead of a day of rest and

relaxation, we decided to ask all the missionaries to join with us in serving the membership and investigators in Athens by providing food and a lot of needed love at a time of dire economic upheaval in Greece:

“When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

It was touching to see the missionaries serving so lovingly and not eating themselves until everybody else was filled.

As I circulated among the members, they said that it was not the food that was important to them but the fact that they felt loved.

This is not the end of the story. At one point during the party, I went downstairs and saw a middle-aged woman peeking through our glass door in the foyer. I invited her to join us. At first she declined, but with encouragement she came in and within a few minutes, it was as if she was an established member enjoying the food and the festivities. It was just so heartwarming!

We were even more thrilled when a year later, we went back to Greece on assignment and she was there on Sunday. All it took was a simple smile and an invite!



*Elder Christopher Charles*

The truth is we cannot, should not let anyone pass us by without an invite. The answer can only be yes, no or maybe, but what if one says yes? What if these precious gems of our Heavenly Father actually say yes? We assist in opening the door of eternity for them, and how great shall be our joy with them in our Father's kingdom (see D&C 18:15–16).

This is the best time of the year to invite others to come unto Christ because many are happy to come to a carol service or a Christmas party but not what they consider to be a more formal service.

As a child, I sat at the table of my mortal father; as a man I sit at the table with my family. Now let others join us to sit at the table of our Heavenly Father. I testify of a Heavenly Father and His Son who only wish for us all to join Them at the feast.

I pray that this article may touch our hearts as the Holy Ghost invites us to act and bring endless Christmases in the gospel to others. ■

# Local Charity Receives Cheque from Mormon Choir

By Richard Auger

As part of members' desire to serve others, the Chelmsley Wood Ward's local leader, David Charmbury, from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints presented a cheque for £527.39 to the charity 'Solihull Carers'. The presentation took place at the opening of their new offices at the Solihull Fire Station.

'Solihull Carers' are part of the Carers Trust, formerly known as the Princess Royal Trust for Carers. The 'Solihull Carers' provide emotional support, information and advice to people who provide unpaid care for a relative or friend who is disabled, is frail,

or has a long-term illness.

The money was raised last December when customers at the Morrisons' Superstore in Castle Bromwich were treated to a festive sound provided by members from the Coventry congregations who formed a choir and sang carols over two days during the Christmas holiday. The choir consisted of 36 singers of all ages, the youngest being Melody Sankarsingh, who was just 2 years old!

Ben Yates from the 'Solihull Carers' commented, "We are extremely grateful for this generous donation. As a small charity

we rely, and continue to survive, due to organisations such as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The funds donated will benefit our Adult Carers Team greatly."

In response, David Charmbury said, "We are always actively looking for ways to make a positive contribution to our local community, and it is fantastic that we are able to make a donation to the 'Solihull Carers'." ■

*Left to right: Carol Sweeney (Adult Carer), Linda Bonfield (Adult Team Manager), David Charmbury (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), Paul Chandrasekharan Sabapathy CBE (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of West Midlands), Emily Hyett (Young Carer), Callum McCabe (Young Carer) and Steve Harris (Solihull Fire Service Station Commander)*



# Sensing an Opportunity for Service

By Sarah Robinson

The women of the Workington Branch presented 18 handmade sensory aprons, blankets and cushions to Jo Fell, CPN, on behalf of the 'Community Mental Health Team, Memory



*Back row—left to right: Nichola Duffy, Sarah Robinson, Sylvia Thompson, Rebecca Cunningham, and Abigail Spencer with the aprons, blankets and cushions for CPN—the Community Mental Health Team*

BEN YATES

SARAH ROBINSON



SARAH ROBINSON

**Some of the aprons, blankets and cushions made by members of the Workington Branch for the CPN**

and Wellbeing’ in September. The project was the idea of Nichola Duffy, a leader in Relief Society, who also works for the ‘Community Mental Health Team, Memory and Wellbeing’ and regularly witnesses firsthand the need for sensory stimulation for some adults with dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. She saw a need and recognised a way that the women from the Church could serve.

Not all the women were ‘sewers’, but many skills and talents were required, including having an eye for detail and good ideas for designing activities for fingers and hands, as well as sewing on buttons—lots of buttons! The women felt a great sense of unity as they participated, and they ranged in age from 7 to 82 years. In the space of just 6 weeks (during the school summer break), the project was completed.

Jo Fell said she was “delighted and overwhelmed by not only the quantity of objects, but the quality.” She said that she is looking forward to putting the items to good use to enrich the lives of adults in care and their families and thanked all who participated. ■

## Disability No Barrier to Service

By Sophie Rayton

Overcoming challenges is second nature to Jane Smith of the Cheltenham Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Jane was born with cerebral palsy, is a wheelchair-user and finds it difficult to do most ordinary tasks. But nothing was going to stop her from serving others and using her talents and abilities to bless the lives of those around her.

In 1987 Jane began weaving small woollen squares which could be crocheted together to make blankets. She started with a cardboard cut-out to interweave the squares but found this very difficult, so she obtained a wooden block which made

things much easier. At first Jane used her hands to pull and weave the wool but then, having lost the use of her hands, was not deterred and instead now uses her feet.

A full blanket uses about 200 weaved squares—Jane is able to create about four per week, making each blanket a true labour of love. Jane is helped in this work by her husband, Ross, who has his own challenges, and she appreciates the help occasionally given by ward members too.

Through this service Jane and Ross are able to express their love and support to others and have provided blankets for elderly people and mothers of young children now for over 25 years. ■



COURTESY OF JANE SMITH

**Jane Smith with her husband, Ross, and the blankets she has made for charity**

# Elder and Sister Pinegar— Directors of the London Temple Visitors' Centre

By Shawna Denny

After being called to serve a couple's mission in the Germany Berlin Mission, Elder Michael and Sister Rebecca Pinegar were surprised with an assignment change to serve as the London Temple Visitors' Centre directors.

"The change came one day after Sister Pinegar completed three months' training in German at the Senior MTC. We did not hesitate to accept the change, but we knew very little about what visitor centre directors do," said Elder Pinegar.

They said the blessings that followed their acceptance to serve in England have poured in, and they could not be more pleased with their assignment.

"We love England. We love its beauty and the beauty of the people we work with and meet on a regular basis. We couldn't be more pleased with our assignment," said Elder Pinegar. "We see miracles frequently. When missionaries bring their investigators and/or less-active members into the centre and we see their lives change, we know that the Spirit is the catalyst for that change."

Sister Pinegar said she had quite a remarkable role model who prepared her for her mission assignment. The daughter of Elder Bruce R McConkie, a former member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Sister Pinegar reflected fondly on the

spiritually nurturing home her parents created for her family.

"I do not remember one day in my life that we did not begin and end with prayer," said Sister Pinegar. "I'm confident that I learned prayer in the premortal realm and then came to my family where prayer was nurtured and fostered, under the righteous lead of my dad and mother. I came to know the blessing of talking with my Heavenly Father. I, little inconsequential me, could talk to the God of the whole universe, the most magnificent being of all. Even more amazing, He would talk back to me. That was embedded in my heart and has sustained my family and me."

Sister Pinegar also recalls reading the scriptures with her father and his love for the Book of Mormon.

"I can still hear his booming voice testifying of the Book of Mormon," said Sister Pinegar. "I remember sitting on the balcony of our home and reading it with him and having him tell me, 'Read slower.' He didn't say why, but I was glad because I wasn't the best reader and I was glad

*Elder and  
Sister Pinegar,  
directors of the  
London Temple  
Visitors' Centre*



COURTESY OF ELDER AND SISTER PINEGAR

I didn't have to read it fast. Now that I can read faster, I find it impossible to read the Book of Mormon quickly. I feel a need to absorb something that I missed when Daddy was trying to teach me to go slow and think."

She said her father's love and respect for her mother was always apparent. She never once heard him say anything amiss of or to her mother.

"My view of the family's being ordained of God and of the centrality of the family in God's eyes was fostered in my home. It just seems so natural, right and good," she said.

"Live above it" was one of the many catchphrases her father would tell her when something was troubling her. She said that this could be maddening because she wanted him to see the injustice in things, but he never got worked up over things that had little importance.

"I wasn't always great at living that advice," she said, "but I have certainly learned the value of it. I try to remember it and have often repeated it to my children. You just see things more clearly when you rise above them and then 'live above it'."

Sister Pinegar said the life of her father has had a huge impact on how she lives and serves others today.

"I try to walk the walk that my father walked because it promotes faith in my life and the lives of those I love," she said.

The Pinegars say Saturdays at the London Visitors' Centre are their busiest days. Besides scheduled tours, stake temple days and occasional visits from curious passersby, the Pinegars host at least two firesides a month, which can attract around seventy-five people.

"This fall, we are hosting a series of family history lectures with high-profile people from Great Britain coming as special guests," said Elder Pinegar. ■

## First Interfaith Event at Dundee Stake Centre

By Dawn Keogh



**Members of the Dundee Interfaith Group at the first Dundee Interfaith event hosted by the Church at the Dundee stake centre, with President Watson seated extreme left on the front row**

ROBERT BUCHAN

Putting aside the intense debate on the recent referendum on independence for Scotland, Dundee Interfaith Group (DIFA) held an event in August on the topic of 'Referendum and Faith'.

The aim of the event was to explore the implications of independence, or otherwise, for people of faith, and the event was the first Dundee Interfaith event to be hosted by the Church at the stake centre in Dundee. Jock Stein, a Church of Scotland minister; Lama Jigga, a Buddhist monk; and President Daryl Watson, president of the Dundee Scotland stake, were

invited to be guest speakers, and some of the thoughts they shared with the group included the need for hope and courage in living religious convictions and being active citizens, praying for and supporting righteous leaders and supporting religious freedom.

The event was attended by people of different religious groups, and one of the highlights of the evening was a shared meal which was contributed to by those attending. A spirit of goodwill and friendship characterised the evening as interfaith relations were strengthened and understanding shared. ■

# Dundee Branch— a History

By Evelyn Liston

A missionary couple assigned to the Dundee Scotland stake discovered an extraordinary connection to the Church in their new area of labour—and his name is Elder Reed Izatt. After a period of absence from the city due to the interruption of World War II, the Church was re-established in Dundee on 30th November 1947 by Elder Izzat, who has been friends with Elder and Sister Bylund since 1951. Serving as district president during part of his mission, Elder Izatt was delighted to supply Elder and Sister Bylund with photos and extracts of journals which showed the extent of the Church membership in those early days in Dundee—and it's fair to say that they were rather small beginnings.

The story is well known in Dundee Church history of early stalwart 'Granny McKenzie,' who had been a member before the war. Feeling inspired one evening to leave the cinema, she encountered two missionaries who had been sent to once again organise the Church in Dundee and who had been searching for her. In his journal, Elder Izatt records that the meeting to organise the Dundee branch



*Members from the Dundee branch in 1948, including the McKenzie family and Elder Reed Izatt*

COURTESY OF LOCAL DUNDEE MEMBERS

was held in the city square on a very cold, snowy November evening. They then went to a member's home to read the Book of Mormon and have some refreshments, and later they found an old record book of the former Dundee branch from 1844 in an old bookshop. Granny McKenzie attended the meeting, along with her daughter, Lou Leece, who still attends sacrament meeting in the Dundee Bingham Ward. Many members of Sister Leece's family, down to the seventh generation, are active Church members, and it would be true to say that she has great joy in her faithful posterity.

The pictures show the Dundee branch in 1947, principally the McKenzie family. Now there are two Dundee wards, with an average sacrament attendance of 250 between the two. ■

## Interfaith Fair— Fife College Kirkcaldy

By Evelyn Liston

Earlier this year, Frank Bowness of the Dundee Bingham Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a member of the Fife Interfaith Group in Scotland, was approached by a student, Jade Connor, to set up an Interfaith Fair in the St Brycedale Campus of Fife College in Kirkcaldy. Jade was very keen to set up the fair due to her own interest in Interfaith.

The Fife Interfaith Group was enthusiastic to rise to the challenge, and after approaching their own members, they were assisted by Colm Wilson, the group's link officer with Fife Council, to approach as many faiths and organisations as possible.

In the end there were 14 stalls at the fair representing the Episcopal Church, Church of Scotland, Roman Catholics, Buddhists, Islam, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Spiritualist Church, Baha'i, Christian Aid, Gideon Society, Scottish Church Heritage Society, Auld Kirk Kirkcaldy, Kirkcaldy Foodbank, and the Fife Interfaith Group.



Many students were milling around showing great interest in the various stalls and had some lengthy discussions with the faith leaders in attendance. The Church stall was manned by Andy Nelson of the Kirkcaldy Ward. Two copies of the Book of Mormon were handed out, and there was plenty of interest in the Church display and leaflets. ■



**Table display by the Kirkcaldy Ward at the Interfaith Fair held at St Brycedale Campus of Fife College in Kirkcaldy**

## Seminary Graduate in the British Isles Completes Studies in the Online Seminary Programme

by Carol McReynolds

Oliver Mann, 18 years, from the Leicester stake, is the first student to complete online seminary studies in the British Isles. Online seminary is a new addition to the existing daily and home-study seminary classes and is not meant to replace established daily classes but should be considered in situations where students cannot meet each weekday because of distance or other limiting factors.

Online seminary classes are recommended and preferred over home-study seminary where students have daily access to the required technology.

Students are led in a study of the scriptures and are able to answer questions, express feelings, and share their testimonies through feedback to their teachers and other students. They are able to have a daily seminary experience from home, while still interacting with other students and their teacher. An online lesson usually lasts between 30–45 minutes. Teachers and students are not necessarily online at the same time, but they are checking in with each other and giving daily feedback. Just as a daily seminary teacher would physically meet with a class in other areas, teachers are able to “meet” with their students through online communication.

One day a week students meet with their class—either physically

**Oliver Mann, from the Leicester stake, the first student in the British Isles to complete online seminary**



COURTESY OF OLIVER MANN

in the same location or, if that is not possible, as a group online that allows multiple students to video conference together. This gives the students the classroom experience and teachers the opportunity to interact face-to-face with their students.

Oliver Mann commented, “It has been a long but very rewarding journey. Although I didn’t have to wake up and be prepared for seminary early in the morning, online seminary required a different form of commitment. Coming home from school and work to then complete approximately an hour of scripture study was a cognitive challenge after concentrating for most of the day.

“Additionally there were times when I was distracted by the variety of entertainments available on my laptop, and it took a certain amount of willpower to close down the other tabs and focus on learning the gospel. But every single day I logged on and completed the activities with my heart fully committed I felt the Spirit confirm to me that this is Christ’s Church, and also received a deeper understanding of the scriptures I would study, in particular during my upcoming mission in Mesa, Arizona. I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to complete online seminary and learn about the many aspects of this gospel.” ■

# 80-Year-Old Member Still in the Scouts

By Linda Coulter

When Clements MacDonald, a member of Bangor 2nd Ward in the Belfast Stake, joined the Scouts as a 12-year-old boy, 68 years ago, his uniform was a pair of shorts, a shirt and a Mountie-style hat. Little did he think back then that, at the age of 80, he would still be attending Scouts. Over the years, however, Clem has found that being involved in the Scouting programme is so rewarding that he has refused to let his age stand in the way.

Clem first became a Scout leader in 1968 and was one of the original leaders of 13th

Bangor (LDS) Scout group. This group was organised in 1985, and Clem was a leader for nearly 20 years.

Nowadays, Clem heads out every Wednesday night to be a leader to the 35 or so energetic young boys of 12th Bangor. Graham Crawford, the father of Scouts James, Michael and Sam, commented, "Clem has been a consistent example of service over the years, always being there for the boys and not letting his age get in the way. In fact, at heart, I think he is still a teenage Scout". ■



CLARE MACDONALD

**Clements MacDonald, a member of the Bangor 2nd Ward and a Scout leader since 1968**

## TRYING TO BE LIKE JESUS

"I feel my Saviour's love when I be obedient to my parents to do jobs such as doing the recycling and Hoovering. I like to be the person who I am who is respectful and loving. I feel my Saviour's love when I come to church and Faith in God and read the scriptures and pray to my loving Heavenly Father. When I feel my Saviour's love I feel happy and calm. I love my Heavenly Father and Jesus.

"I know the Church is true and I know that Heavenly Father and Jesus love me. I know that Joseph Smith brought back the gospel truth to the Church to everyone. I'm glad I live in this beautiful world to know about the Church." ■

Seth: Age 11, South Ribble Ward



PIANICE PEERS

**Seth, age 11, from the South Ribble Ward, Preston Stake**

## Editor's Note

The editors, Jason Watling and Debbie Twigger, invite all news stories, articles and photographs to be sent to [ukiensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ukiensign@ldschurch.org). Stories should be in Microsoft Word, 350–500 words, with photographs in jpg format, around 3–4mb in size. Please submit stories for the News section 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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