

NEW ZEALAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

The Importance and Power of Holding a Temple Recommend

By Elder Keith P. Walker

I distinctly recall my first-ever temple recommend and our first time attending the temple. We were married in 1980, and soon after I was taught the gospel and joined the Church.

In 1983 my wife and I were living in Adelaide. We had moved there to take up a new position with work, relocating from Perth.

Marilyn was expecting our first child when we went to see the bishop to receive our temple recommends. There were no temples in Australia at that time, and most families made great personal and financial sacrifices to travel to the closest temple in New Zealand.

We were a young married couple with a new baby on the way and no money. We did not know when or how we would ever be able to afford to travel to New Zealand to attend the temple. However, we both had the desire to be married in the house of the Lord for time and all eternity and have our children born in the new and everlasting marriage covenant.

As we exercised our faith by being worthy and prepared to

receive our temple recommends, a miracle took place in our lives. Soon after we received our recommends, my employment circumstances changed, and I was invited to travel to Sydney for a short-term assignment, which then resulted in my being offered a new position in Queensland.

Literally the windows of heaven were being opened. The new position offered me greater career opportunities, as well as further opportunities for Church service. As a result of our move interstate, we were able to travel to New Zealand to fulfil our dream.

What an unforgettable and amazing experience it was to see the lights of the temple for the first time. It was a cold, wet, and dark August night when we finally came around the bend travelling along the “Mormon mile” to see the temple lit up like a beacon in the dark night sky. We both stood silently and awestruck as we looked out at the temple from the balcony of our temple apartment, looking forward with anticipation as we prepared to enter the temple for the first time.



Elder Keith P. Walker

We both went to sleep that night like two children on Christmas Eve, looking forward with excitement to the next morning for the gifts that were awaiting us.

We read in Mosiah chapter 2 that as King Benjamin addressed his people, “they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which king Benjamin should speak unto them” (Mosiah 2:6).

Our attendance and participation in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection

Marilyn and I knew that what we had learnt and were taught in the temple was important, but we did not fully appreciate and understand how both of us, and

the new family we were starting, would be protected by the spiritual power associated with the temple covenants we were entering into. As our family continued to grow, the blessings of holding a temple recommend, attending the temple whenever we could, and continuing to be worthy to attend the temple would literally become a protection and shield against the influence of the adversary and the trials we would have to ultimately face and endure.

President Boyd K. Packer stated:

“The house of the Lord, bathed in light, standing out in the darkness, becomes symbolic of the power and the inspiration of the gospel of Jesus Christ standing as a beacon in a world that sinks ever further into spiritual darkness. . . .

“No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the family history research that supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.

“Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection, both individually and as a people.

“So come to the temple— come and claim your blessings. It is a sacred work.”¹

The sealing power that binds on earth and in heaven

On a recent trip to the Holy Land, my wife and I were able to literally stand in a place where the Saviour taught and prepared His Apostles to receive the keys and authority to bind on earth and in heaven, when He was to later depart from this life. Today there stands a brass statue of Peter on the coast of Galilee for all who visit this area to see him holding these keys symbolising the priesthood power and authority which he was given by Jesus Christ.

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? . . .

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon

this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:13, 16–19).

Peter, who held that sealing power at the time, also had the authority and power to bind and seal on earth or loose on earth.

Today that power and authority belong to the President of the Church. No one can get it except from the prophet, seer, revelator, and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Temples are beacons and a source of spiritual power

The Hamilton New Zealand Temple was a beacon on that August night in 1983, when we were attending the temple for the first time. It has continued to become the centre of spiritual strength in both our lives. Despite the challenges, trials, and opposition we experience in our lives, the temple has been a source of resistance and great spiritual power to us.

At the cornerstone dedication for the Logan Temple, President George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency said: “Every foundation stone that is laid for a Temple, and every Temple completed according to the order the Lord has revealed for his holy Priesthood, lessens the power of Satan on the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness, moves the heavens in mighty power in our behalf, invokes and calls down upon us the blessings of the Eternal Gods, and those who reside in their presence.”²

Whenever we have been faced with important decisions or we have become overwhelmed with things in our lives that have weighed us down, we have often found ourselves in the temple. It has become a place of refuge for us from the storms of life’s trials. Whenever we are safe within the walls of the temples, we know that we are “out of the world.”

Turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and children to the fathers

The Prophet Joseph Smith received a vision in the Kirtland Temple in 1836, as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16, where Elijah returns



IMAGE COURTESY OF ELDER KEITH P. WALKER AND USED WITH PERMISSION

The Walker family enjoy the blessings of being sealed together through multiple generations.

and commits the keys of this dispensation as promised by Malachi to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.”

This vision foreshadowed the great work to be done in the temples of the Lord in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times, for all the redemptive work of the dead through baptisms and other temple ordinances, and the sealing of the children to their parents and those of their posterity.

We are eternally grateful for our temple endowments and the covenants we have received that have been the

greatest blessing and investment of our eternal potential.

As we reflect on kneeling at the holy altar in the temple to be sealed as husband and wife for all eternity, this has become a reality for us, as an eternal family with our children and grandchildren.

Through sacrifice, hard work, and devotion, raising our children and supporting them in raising their children, we see the impact it is having on their lives over three short generations spanning 35 years.

As our decisions and the saving temple ordinances have allowed us to become

an important link in the lives of our ancestors who have gone before us, this is also the same link that binds those of our posterity who follow after us. We and our posterity are joined forever, thereby having the hearts of the

fathers turned to the children.

At this time of the hastening of the work of salvation, our living prophet has directed us through revelation to go to the house of the Lord to receive our covenants. There will be

no blessings withheld for those who are faithful and endure to the end. ■

NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer, "The Holy Temple," *Ensign*, Oct. 2010, 32, 35.
2. George Q. Cannon, in "The Logan Temple," *Millennial Star*, Nov. 12, 1877, 743.

LOCAL PAGES

"Mormon Helping Hands" Volunteers Serve Westport Community

By Mormon Newsroom

Over 100 yellow-vested volunteers lent a helping hand in Westport, New Zealand, during a recent Mormon Helping Hands service project.

The enthusiastic group travelled by bus and vans from Nelson, Blenheim, Hokitika and Greymouth to serve the community of Westport, tidying up the Orowaiti Cemetery and helping repair the Kawatiri Walkway at Westport's North Beach.

President Trevor Charles Kohu, leader of the Nelson District of the Church, explained, "We partnered with the friends of the Kawatiri Walkway. I issued the call for volunteers and was happy to see so many members, including families and our youth, show up eager to serve the community of Westport."

Approximately fifty of the volunteers worked with Westport Deep-Sea Fishing School students to trim back overgrowth of blackberry and gorse bush along the walking path and to

transport gravel used to repair holes.

The remaining volunteers mowed grass from walkways, cleaned headstones, and did general weeding and cleanup at the Orowaiti Middle Cemetery.

Before heading back to their respective homes, volunteers enjoyed a barbeque and competitive games of volleyball at the local Westport Latter-day Saint Chapel.

"A lot of community work was done, friendships were made," said President Kohu. "And those who participated, although they would have felt tired on the way home, would have felt the joy of serving."

Mormon Helping Hands provides organized opportunities for Church members to give their time and talents to bless those in need, beautifying city streets, parks, schools, and recreational areas, and to serve in other ways. ■



Porirua Latter-day Saint Women Focus on Self-Reliance

By Carol Ann Wallace

A group of Latter-day Saint women in Porirua, New Zealand, gathered in March for an activity to promote self-reliance.

The project was planting herbs in jars. These herbs will be used in their home recipes and in times of an emergency.

This was the first of several activities planned throughout the year to help families become more resourceful and self-sufficient.

Haley Galo, who helped organise the activity, said, “One of our goals this year is to ensure

our families are able to support themselves and others in an emergency. Growing our own food is part of that plan. The herb jars will provide seasoning for our food as well as beautify our homes.”

Suzanne Galo, leader of the Relief Society in the Porirua area, said, “These gatherings, outside of our regular Sunday meetings, help unify us and give us a sense of belonging. We can come together to work on worthwhile projects as well as socialise and share joys and sorrows.” ■

Relief Society sisters from Porirua plant herbs.



New Pacific Area Church History Advisers Looking Forward to Looking Back

Auckland, New Zealand

New Pacific Area Church history advisers for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Tina and Lindsay Dil, say that despite some feelings of inadequacy, their past experiences have taught them that “when you get stuck in, what you need comes.”

They have learned this lesson over the years as parents of four children, as grandparents of 10 grandchildren, and in their professional and Church service experiences.

Brother Dil ran a funeral business for many years and has served in a volunteer capacity as a bishop, stake president, mission president and Area Seventy. Sister Dil has also served in numerous leadership positions in the Church, including as president of ward and stake Relief Society organisations and as a leader in the Ghana Cape Coast Mission alongside her husband.

The Dils’ last Church assignment was to organise a young single adult conference for over 700 young people in Auckland earlier this year.

Tapping into their many years of leadership and other experiences, the Dils will work with national Church history advisers throughout the Pacific region, gathering historical information and artefacts.

“The goal of Church history worldwide is to collect, preserve and share information and physical items that help us remember as well as inspire us, thus strengthening gospel influence in our families and throughout the world,” Brother Dil says.

Brother Dil says he and his wife see Church history “as more than just a nice thing to do.”



IMAGE COURTESY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Lindsay and Tina Dil, recently called as Pacific Area Church history advisers

Referring to comments made by President Henry B. Eyring, First Counsellor in the First Presidency of the Church, Brother Dil said, “Remembering (through our own journals and through gathering and sharing Church history) helps us remember God’s kindnesses to us and builds testimonies.”¹

Quoting Elder Marlin K. Jensen, former Church Historian and Recorder, Brother Dil said, “Remembering in the way God intends is a fundamental and saving principle of the gospel.”²

“Where would we be without a record of Joseph Smith’s First Vision or the scriptures, which are essentially historical accounts?”

Also citing Elder Jensen, Brother Dil asks, “How many missionaries are encouraged by President Gordon B. Hinckley’s story about how when he was a discouraged young missionary, his father wrote to him: ‘Dear Gordon, I have your recent letter. I have only one suggestion: forget yourself and go to work’? One seemingly unimportant moment in time can bless many into the future if it is recorded and shared.”³

“Our challenge now,” Brother Dil says, “is to help Church leaders throughout the Pacific Area to believe the same thing, so they will give it a priority and call capable and inspired people to do the work.”

Sister Dil said, “Our work will be with country Church history advisers throughout the Pacific Area, encouraging them to gather recent inspirational material from their countries and also gather oral histories and older historical stories and artefacts. We are blessed in the Pacific to be getting a Church history centre at Temple View, Hamilton, where we will have easy access to our Pacific Area history. We hope families and Church groups will strengthen testimonies by visiting these centres often.”

Sister Dil added, “We have just begun to realise how our lives are going to be personally blessed as important spiritual events unfold in the area.” ■

NOTES

1. See Henry B. Eyring, “O Remember, Remember,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 67.
2. Marlin K. Jensen, “Remember and Perish Not,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 36.
3. See Marlin K. Jensen, “Remember and Perish Not,” 38.

Latter-day Saints Send 2,000 Food Boxes to Vanuatu

By Mormon Newsroom

Auckland, New Zealand

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Auckland, New Zealand, packed and sent 2,000 food boxes to Port Vila, Vanuatu.

The aid was distributed to people in the cyclone-ravaged Pacific nation.

Each food box contained flour, rice, canned fruit, beans, corned beef, fish, crackers, raisins, noodles, chocolate milk powder, and a can opener. The containers can also be used for other purposes, such as carrying water.

The boxes were assembled by “Mormon Helping Hands” volunteers from the Latter-day Saints’ Auckland New Zealand Mt. Roskill Stake.

The Church chartered an Air New Zealand airbus A320 to transport 600 of the boxes immediately after the cyclone. The remaining boxes were sent via commercial flights and by ship. On 28 March, 570 six-person tents were also shipped.

Supplies, including machetes, axes, hammers and corrugated iron roofing nails,

were purchased by the Church in Vanuatu to assist people as they rebuild their homes. A thousand refillable water containers with purification filters were sent to Vanuatu from the Church’s headquarters in Salt Lake City.

Additionally, Latter-day Saint leaders in Port Vila purchased 5,000 personal care kits to be distributed to the people of Vanuatu. Each kit includes a toothpaste tube, a toothbrush, soap and other hygiene items.

The Church also purchased and distributed seeds, so families can begin to replant their home gardens. Many people in Vanuatu rely on what they can grow themselves for food and income.

The purchase and delivery of food and other aid supplies are

made possible by the donations of Latter-day Saints and others around the world.

Elder Kevin W. Pearson, Pacific Area President, said, “We love our brothers and sisters in Vanuatu and hope to help them through this challenging time.

“We are grateful for our Church volunteers and others from government, community and business groups with whom we are working as we support the people in Vanuatu.” ■

Elder Kevin W. Pearson, Pacific Area President, and Church materials management specialist Grant Stone, with one of the 2,000 food boxes that were assembled and sent to Vanuatu after the cyclone. The food is for people in Vanuatu who are recovering from the devastating impact of Cyclone Pam.



IMAGE COURTESY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Facing Our Fears (“Giants”) from Within

In facing life’s fears, we must draw upon our faith and skills to live. Biblical David, seemingly devoid of fear, faced the terrifying giant Goliath (see 1 Samuel 17). He had to overcome his fear first before he could defeat Goliath. It was his faith and preparation—a slingshot and stones—

that overcame his fear and defeated Goliath.

Life is filled with fear-ridden experiences. Fears often appear gigantic and overwhelming. However, most fears are founded in unresolved worries about future events, worrying about career, education, who to marry, health challenges, employment, or dealing with a crisis, for example.

Are there Goliaths in your life waiting to be defeated?

David relied not only on his faith in God but also on his skills—with the slingshot—honed over many years. David’s sling was a curious choice of weapon, particularly against a giant. However, when combining his skill with faith, the weapon became lethal.

How can we face our giants today?

Develop power in faith through regular, sincere prayers and diligent scripture study. Then apply your learning through unselfish service.

Learn how your brain can work against you even when you are not particularly worried. When you’re anxious, the brain tries to address the anxiety. When left unchecked, the brain can create a sense of doom. We become over vigilant and try to figure out what’s wrong. The brain then scans for all possible things that could go wrong.

Learn to separate real worries from just normal thoughts and emotions. List your worries and separate them into two groups titled “productive” and “unproductive” worries. The productive worries you can deal with right away (e.g., “I’m going to be late”), while unproductive worries are the ones you can’t do anything about (e.g., getting old; learn to accept it). ■

