

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Ministering to the One

By Elder Adolf J. Johansson

Area Seventy

Whenever you feel like you are just another number, always remember you are number ONE.

A few years ago, we moved into a new ward. My ward priesthood leader assigned me a home teaching companion, and one of the families I was assigned to visit was a man who had been away from church for many years. He was less active and didn't want to come back to church even after our visits and invitations.

While I was away on an assignment to another country, I texted this dear brother with an encouraging message and another invitation to come to church. I assured him that if he needed a ride, my wife could pick

up him and his wife. While on my knees offering my prayers, I heard a buzz on my phone with his text message reply. The text read, "My wife and I have been talking and we feel like we are just another number in the Church."

While still on my knees, I prayed to Heavenly Father, saying, "Father, please, see this text. What should I say?" Just then an inspiring thought came to my mind. I replied with the message: "Dear brother, whenever you feel like you are just another number, always remember you are number ONE."



Elder Adolf J. Johansson

I didn't hear back from him that day, but when I returned home the following Sunday, I went to church and there was the dear brother and his wife. As I greeted him, he shook my hand and said, "I just had to come. I couldn't stay away."

As I think of this experience, I was so grateful to hear President Russell M. Nelson announce a significant change to home and visiting teaching during the Sunday afternoon session of April general conference.

President Nelson said: "We have made the decision to retire home teaching and visiting teaching as we have known them. Instead, we will implement a newer, holier approach to caring for and ministering to others. We will refer to these efforts simply as 'ministering.'"¹

To the Apostle Peter and to each of us the Lord says, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17). We do this as ministering brothers and sisters in a unified way under the direction of priesthood and auxiliary leaders.

We must include our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in our ministering. Said the Lord, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). As we prayerfully minister, seeking revelation and following inspiration, we will be



LOCAL PAGES

the voice of the Lord for His sheep to follow.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland also explained in the Sunday afternoon session of the April general conference some of the many ways we can minister to one another:

“As the First Presidency counseled years ago, do the best you can. In addition to whatever schedule you establish for actual visits, that calendar can be supplemented with telephone calls, written notes, texts, emails, video chats, conversations at Church meetings, shared service projects, social activities, and a host of possibilities in the world of social media. . . .

“ . . . We at Church headquarters don’t need to know *how* or *where* or *when* you make contact with your people; we just need to know and care that you *do* make it and that you bless them in every way you can.”²

In His simple but compelling parable of the lost sheep, the Saviour said, “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?” (Luke 15:4).

This is a reminder that whenever you feel like you are just another number, always remember that to the Lord you are number ONE. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering,” *Ensign*, May 2018, 100.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be With and Strengthen Them,” *Ensign*, May 2018, 102.



SUPPLIED

Faithful Wife Keeps Serving

By Shilo Kino

It was an unexpected love story for John and Julie Sennett.

Julie joined the Church in 1990 and she met John in 2004, soon after he was baptized.

It wasn’t until five years later that they met again at a singles fireside. John asked for Julie’s phone number and they began dating.

“He started taking me to Australian bush dances and colonial dances. He introduced me to all of these things and we had a really good time,” Julie said.

“John always said to me that he was looking for someone who loves God first. He loved the gospel and he honoured his priesthood.”

John and Julie are both from Adelaide, Australia, and were married in 2009. They were later sealed in the Adelaide Australia Temple.

“Even if we had bad moments, we made sure to always pray and read

scriptures together. We also made sure to attend the temple as often as we could. I just love that man so much.”

In 2015 they submitted their mission papers and were called to serve as preservation specialists for FamilySearch in Adelaide, at the State Records of South Australia Centre.

“We mostly worked with non-members and we became a family. Everyone loved John. He formed friendships with everyone.”

John also had a bicycle business, and he serviced bikes for the missionaries Tuesday and Thursday nights and during the day on some Saturdays.

However, halfway through their 23-month mission, tragedy struck.

“John loved hiking,” Julie said. “So on preparation day, we went on a hike, due to the records place being closed for a public holiday. We went to a small cliff front and began using a GPS to find out where we were. Then we realized we were in the wrong spot.

“John decided to go in another direction, and I began losing my footing because there was loose gravel. I had a prompting that it wasn’t safe, and John said to me, ‘You go over there and make a picnic. I will meet you back there.’

“My husband was a hiker and he was quite confident. But I watched him for a while because I was concerned. When I felt it was OK, I headed towards the picnic area.

“I heard a shuffling sound and I heard him say something . . . he had lost his footing. As I turned I watched his body tumble to the bottom of a 50-metre cliff. When he hit his head he was killed outright, as reported by an inquest later.”

“For a couple of months, it was hard to get through life,” Julie said.

After constant prayer and reading the Book of Mormon, Julie gained the courage to return to the mission field two months after John’s death. She finished the rest of their mission in February this year.

“I just kept reading three pages of the Book of Mormon every day as part of a mission challenge we undertook

and I found strength in that,” she said. “I felt like Heavenly Father was talking to me and Jesus was standing by me and they were getting me through this. I began to see a light. I thought about the people at the State Records of South Australia who knew us. I remembered the work we had started. I thought to myself, ‘I need to go back.’

“The mission is something we planned to do together. I also became aware of the people we got close to; I was concerned with how they were. I wanted to go back to see them.”

Julie has already served two service missions, one for CES (the Church Educational System) and one serving in the Adelaide mission office.



Julie gained the courage to return to the mission field two months after John's death.

This was her first full-time mission with her husband.

A mission is a road to the unknown, she said.

“The Lord is waiting to bless you. When you turn your life over to Him and serve Him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, He will surely bless you.

“Heavenly Father loves all of His children and wants to see them grow

and become closer together as a family and to work together to help one another. When you serve a mission, you become a different person.”

Julie loves going to the temple and undertook a self-reliance course soon after her mission. She now hopes to become a children’s writer.

“I have learnt more about my self through scripture study and prayer. Heavenly Father has blessed me with

a new journey,” she said. “I don’t know what I’m going to be doing after my books and writing, but I’m hoping I can serve other missions when the time is right.”

Julie is very grateful for the love and support she has received since John’s accident. “I’m deeply touched by all the support and especially those who continue to minister to me,” she said. ■

Melbourne Temple Receives New Statue

By Robin and Gloria Lloyd

Commuters traveling along Eastlink in Melbourne may have wondered about a gold statue seemingly standing among the treetops on their way to work. It’s a statue of the angel Moroni and is mounted on the spire of the Melbourne Australia Temple.

After a heavy hailstorm in Melbourne at the end of 2017, Steven Menzie, temple facilities manager, discovered some damage to the statue. Much of the gold leafing on the shoulders and trumpet of the iconic statue had been damaged, so it was determined that the statue needed to be replaced.

On Thursday morning 19th April, the damaged statue was lowered by crane, while a new one, which had been stored in Brisbane and

freighted to Melbourne, was securely mounted to the top of the Melbourne temple spire.

The entire exchange of statues was estimated to take about 4–5 hours.

Of the experience, Brother Menzie explained, “The angel Moroni is a significant part of the temple and we need to take great care that it comes down safely. It is a sacred responsibility and must be done properly.”

“Not all LDS temples have an angel Moroni on them,” continued Brother Menzie. “We are very fortunate that the temple in Melbourne has one to look over all of us.”

There are currently five LDS temples in Australia—Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth. ■



▲ *The entire exchange of statues took about 4–5 hours.*

▼ *A new statue of the angel Moroni on the Melbourne Australia Temple*



PHOTOS SUPPLIED

Celebrating a Loved Mother and Wife

By Shilo Kino

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Beloved mum and wife Tara passed away last September.

When Tara Arkins was 12 years old, she was diagnosed with bone cancer. Even after having the cancer removed, she was told by medical professionals that she could never have children. But Tara overcame all odds and gave birth to five beautiful children. Sadly, Tara passed away last September.

“This Mother’s Day will be a different one because it will be the first

Mother’s Day without my wife, without the children’s mum,” husband Sam said.

“It will be very special because we’ll be able to just reflect on all the happy times that we had. But it’s times like these when you really do reflect and think, ‘Well, I wish I hadn’t taken that for granted.’

“I know that our house has taken a little bit of a step back. Without my

wife, it’s been a good experience to take on both roles, but I know that mothers are special.”

Sam Arkins met Tara around 17 years ago at a BYU dance after he returned from his mission in Perth.

“The theme of the dance was an Australian theme, which is ironic because . . . Australia was in her blood and here I come along with an Australian accent—I think I swept her off her feet.”

Sam and Tara were married in the Sydney Australia Temple on 21 of March 2002.

“Tara knew her time on earth was very limited, and so she pretty much jammed as much in as she possibly could,” he said. “And whenever she walked into a room, everyone fell in love with her. She just had so many friends. She had this awesome love that just radiated, and it was something that I fell in love with. It was something that I just had to have.”

Tara’s heart condition was brought to their attention after she gave birth to their fifth child.

“We then had six years of no ramifications. No hiccups. Nothing. But it was in the last two years that we saw a rapid decline and her heart started to deteriorate more and more,” Sam said. “The doctors did all they could to keep her stable, but it just wasn’t her time to stay on this earth.

“It’s good having the gospel because we know that she has gone

to a better place. Tara kept saying to all the kids, 'You know that mum will always be with you', and we know that. We often feel her presence; we know that she's always watching us . . . we know that families can be together forever.

"There's been times in my life when I've . . . hit a brick wall and thought there's no way out. But knowing that I can be reunited again, knowing that someday I'll be able to see my wife

again—it's great to have that sort of knowledge. To know that there is a plan. The plan is simple. The Lord didn't make it complicated. He wants us all to return to live with Him again.

"And for those people who are going through similar trials and experiences—know that when we do get through this, we become extra strong. I know that our Saviour has set up this wonderful plan for us and that we can be reunited." ■

Lorin Nicholson was one of a select number of community members nominated to carry the Queen's Baton as it travelled from London to the Gold Coast for the opening ceremony of the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Lorin is a legally blind musician who travels extensively around Australia and the globe as a motivational speaker addressing a variety of corporations and young people. He has helped thousands of at-risk youth and young people through his inspirational messages of respect, inclusion, resilience and striving for excellence.

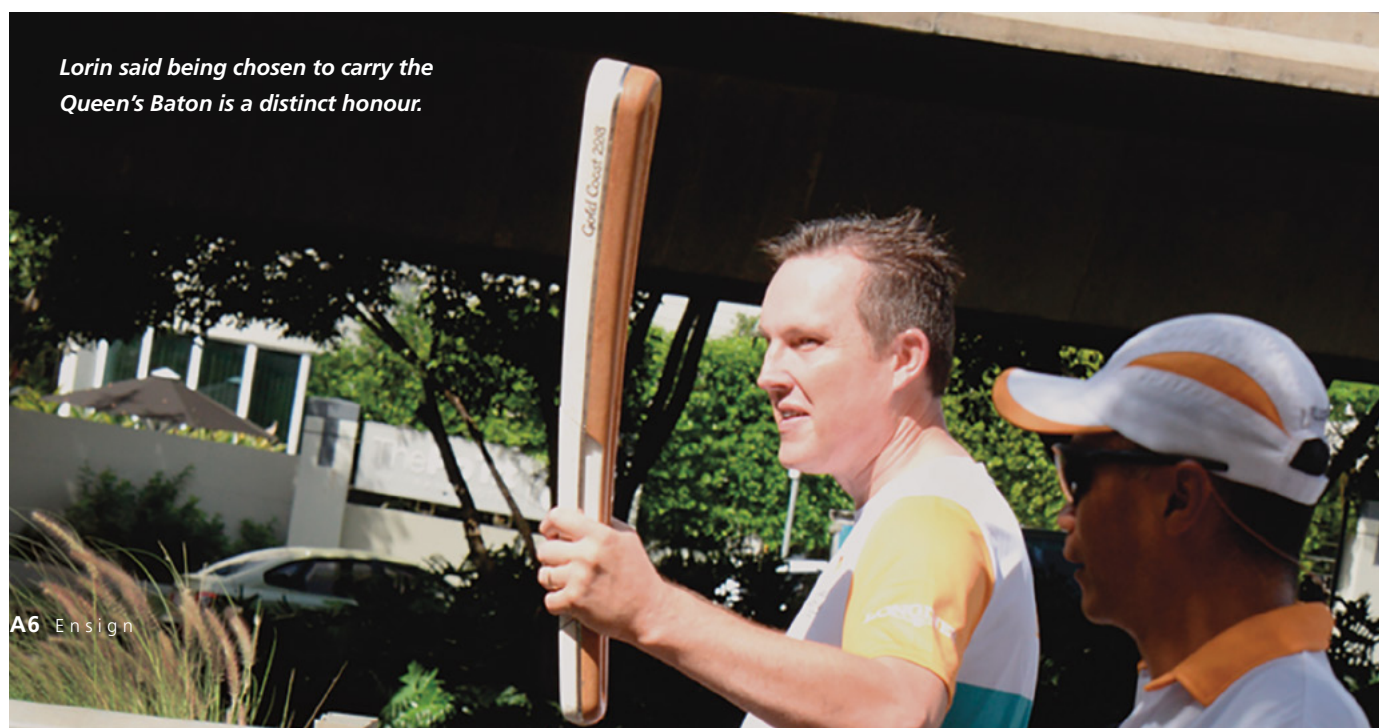
"A close musician friend of mine from Adelaide surprised me with the nomination," Lorin said. "With so many accomplished athletes and inspirational members of the community out there, it

Musician Chosen to Carry the Queen's Baton

By Mormon Newsroom

The people of Brisbane joined millions of others around the world as they shared the excitement of the

Queen's Batonbearer Relay (QBR) passing through the Queensland capital city on Easter Saturday.



was such an honour to even be considered.”

Once nominated, Lorin underwent a series of selection processes.

He continued, “When I found out I had been selected, I was so excited. However, I knew I couldn’t tell anyone for a couple of months. My mother was sadly in hospital with cancer at the time, and I knew she didn’t have much longer with us. I knew she would be very proud, so I secretly told her while I visited with her one afternoon. Unfortunately, Mum didn’t get to see me carry the baton, as she passed away before the big day, but I knew she was watching over me.”

Being chosen to carry the Queen’s Baton is a distinct honour for the father of four. “I feel very honoured and privileged to be a part of such a prestigious event and to represent Her Majesty the Queen, the Commonwealth and the community—it is something very special,” Lorin said.

Besides motivational speaking, Lorin also works in the health industry as a remedial therapist treating thousands, including Olympic and Commonwealth Games athletes, helping them to reach their physical peak and achieve their very best.

Lorin considers his blindness to be a blessing from the Lord, and he believes he has been fortunate to be able to live a life that has focused on helping others.

Lorin served a full-time mission in the Australia Melbourne Mission and has also served as bishop and branch

president. He currently serves as the first counsellor in the Brisbane Australia Cleveland Stake presidency. ■

High School “Makeover” Made Possible by Young Single Adults

By Mormon Newsroom

More than 90 young single adults in Perth banded together earlier this year in March to clean, tidy up and paint the pillars along the covered walkways surrounding Balga Senior High School’s quadrangle.

The youth worked enthusiastically over four hours to paint a total of 42 pillars in a variety of colours to visually lift and brighten the quadrangle environment.

“As a school community, we are truly grateful for the young people of your church to have responded to our appeal to help improve the visual amenity and environment of our aging school,” said Mr Mark Carton, principal of Balga Senior High School, Perth, Western Australia.

Mr Carton added, “What a marvellous response! It is wonderful to see your young folk working so well together.”

During a lunch provided for participants by the school, Mr Carton explained that Balga Senior High School was built in the sixties at a



More than 90 young single adults in Perth helped give Balga Senior High School a makeover.

time when population demands and social demographics were different.

Today, the school hosts more than 600 students representing 40 different racial and ethnic groups who have settled in Australia from around the world.

“It is vital that educational programmes evolve to meet these changing demands,” Mr Carton says, “and in that regard, the school has made great strides over the years to update

its systems and processes as well as seek to improve its physical facilities and amenities.”

The “makeover” service provided by the young single adults has helped to meet some of the school’s physical improvement goals and

brighten the environment for staff and students alike.

Service to others is a crucial characteristic of the followers of Jesus Christ, and this event offered a practical way for members of the Church to serve in their community. ■

CALL FOR ARTICLES

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