

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Labouring Together in the Lord's Vineyard

Elder Mark Gilmour, England

Area Seventy



Elder Mark Gilmour

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with the sisters and elders who were preparing to enter the mission field at the Preston Missionary Training Centre. I showed them a picture taken from my experience as a young missionary in the Austria Vienna Mission. It was a photo of me standing in a vineyard with a caption reading “labouring in the vineyard” which led to a discussion about one of my favourite parts of the Book of Mormon, the allegory of the olive tree as recorded in Jacob 5. In the allegory, the House of Israel (the olive tree) is scattered across the earth (the vineyard)¹ and then after a period of apostasy, the Lord of the vineyard, who is Jesus Christ, gathers them safely home.

My favourite section of this chapter starts with verse 70. The Lord of the vineyard sends his servant, identified in Doctrine and Covenants 103:21 as the prophet Joseph Smith, along with the other ‘few’ servants to labour in the vineyard with all their might for this last time. This signifies the beginning of the dispensation of the fulness of times and the ongoing restoration where we labour together alongside the Lord of the vineyard, even Jesus Christ².

What a wonderful insight and comfort to know that we are not working alone, nor is this the missionaries’ work or just the members’ work, it is the work of the Lord and He has sent

us all, missionary and member, to gather Israel. Prophets and apostles of this dispensation have repeatedly told us that “now is the time for members and missionaries to come together . . . [and] labor in the Lord’s vineyard to bring souls unto Him.”³

President Russell M. Nelson spoke of this great gathering work in these latter days at the worldwide youth devotional in June 2018. He said:

“these surely *are* the latter days, and the Lord is hastening His work to gather Israel. That gathering is the most important thing taking place on earth today. Nothing else compares in magnitude, nothing else compares in importance, nothing else compares in majesty. And if you choose to, if you

want, you can be a big part of it. You can be a big part of something big, something grand, something majestic!

“When we speak of the *gathering*, we are simply saying this fundamental truth: every one of our Heavenly Father’s children, on both sides of the veil, deserves to hear the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁴

In verses 52 to 68 the Lord of the vineyard explains the work that will be involved in the gathering or grafting in the branches of the olive tree. He calls upon the servants to “dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more”⁵ “that all may be nourished once again for the last time.”⁶ During our discussion together, I asked those young missionaries



WOODCUT BY BRAD TEARE

Allegory of the olive tree



Olive grove in Rome, Italy

to describe in one word what this combined effort of gathering Israel as missionaries and members working together looks like. Those words included terms such as love, kindness, friendship, trust, understanding, acceptance, happiness and joy.

Alma and Amulek in the city of Ammonihah are a great example. Alma, the missionary, builds upon the teachings of Amulek just as our full-time missionaries are set apart and trained to do, but it is Amulek (the member) who gains the attention of the people.⁷

I testify that as we accept the invitation from the Lord to labour side by side with Him and with each other in this great gathering, we will become more like the true disciples of Christ and experience that blessing of joy that He has promised.⁸ ■

NOTES

1. Jacob 5:14.
2. Jacob 5:72.
3. Thomas S Monson, Welcome to Conference, *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 4.
4. See Russell M. Nelson and Wendy W. Nelson, "Hope of Israel" (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
5. Jacob 5:64
6. Jacob 5:63
7. Alma 10:12 (See Chapter 9–14)
8. Jacob 5:75; See also Jeffrey R Holland, "Be With and Strengthen Them," *Ensign*, May 2018, 101-103.

LOCAL PAGES

Let's Make Someone Happy Today

By Dee Bates

My wife died in 2015 at the age of 90. She was beginning to show signs of Alzheimer's. This is an entry from my journal that I wrote soon after she died.

It seems as though each morning we go through the same thing over and over. I say, "Good morning, how are you?" She replies, "Well, I am up." "How did you sleep last night?" Usually it is, "I didn't sleep very well." One morning as I was getting dressed, she was already dressed and sitting on the bed. When I finished, I sat down on the bed beside her and she asked me, "Now what exciting thing should we do today? Where would you like to travel?" This has been a question that she has asked quite often lately. I have learned to carry on the conversation, even though I know that there is not very much that we can do given our limitations. I said, "Why don't we go to England and see some of the countryside where our ancestors lived?" or "Let's go to Hawaii, lie on the beach and soak up some sunshine."

She replied, "You know, what we should do today is do something nice for someone that will make them happy. There is not much we can do at our age but there ought to be someone we know who needs a lift, something simple that we can do that will make their day a happy one. How about baking some bread or making a card from our computer programme for our good neighbours Farrell and Marene Thomas who do so much for us?" She then said, "It is too late, as we gave our bread mixer away. I think I remember giving it



Dee's wife

to Rachel, but I think we still have another bread mixer from Uncle Arlin." I looked around the house and there it was. But then she couldn't remember the recipe for the delicious French bread that she has made for so many years. We went to the family cookbook that was printed many years ago and found Marsha's recipe. Our first batch turned out beautifully, and we found a great card. "It's people like you that make neighbourhoods like ours such a great place to live." Farrell always says to me, "For all the things we do for you, don't give us money just give us dough." So that is what we did, we were happy, and they were very happy.

Then I thought of our friend Clair Empy who has a bad heart and can't

get out and do very much. “Why don’t we visit him and take a card? I know he would like to read my book from St Mary’s Preflight School where we both attended.” He was a Navy pilot, so we have a lot in common. So, we spent some time on the computer and found a great card to take to him. “Hey Clair! Flip on your switches, adjust your flaps, rev up your engines, and check your maps. Soar high! Skim low! Do some loops and spins! Have a day filled with high-flying!” I know he and his wife enjoyed the visit, the book and the card. His wife has a big beautiful organ and she played some music for us. So, it was a nice visit for us and them.

I went out in the front yard where there was a thick layer of leaves on the ground. I thought, “I don’t know how I can rake up all those leaves.” I started, and then sat in a chair to take a break. Then the woman across the street came over with a rake in hand and started raking leaves. Then her two boys came home from school and they pitched in and she told me, “You just sit in the chair”, and they’d finish raking up the leaves. Then another neighbour came over and before I knew it, all the leaves were in bags and hauled off. I baked some cookies and we found a card that told the story of my rescue, “You didn’t just say, ‘Let me know if there’s something you’d like me to do—you just pitched right in.’ This comes to say thanks and to let you know just how much you’re appreciated.”

Then we thought of three great teachers we have in the ward and how

nice it would be to let them know how much we appreciate them. We baked some more bread and found a card that expressed our feelings for them; “The ability to teach others is a special gift, and we want to thank you for sharing it with us. You’ve made a big difference in our lives.” It is amazing what a loaf of bread and a little note can do for all of us.

Then we thought of our good bishop and his wife. We found an award certificate that we printed out:

“The greatest bishop award presented to Bert and Chris Wannacutt from the Little Cottonwood 5th Ward members on Nov. 27, 2011.” We presented it to him Sunday morning and he was thrilled. He said, “You can’t imagine what this means to me; it couldn’t come at a more critical time.”

So, we had a good week doing something simple to give someone a happy day. As a result, mother and I were happy too. ■

Barrow Open House

By Jane McDonell

Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven; the investment of time, talent and effort by many certainly brought forth the blessings to Barrow Ward in Cumbria.

Barrow Ward members had worked hard for many weeks, sewing and

embroidering table cloths and ‘scrap-booking’ (i.e. arranging personal and family history in the form of a book). The elders quorum president meticulously prepared and edited an hourlong video about the history and building of the Barrow chapel and designed promotional posters and flyers. Some members and missionaries were in the chapel almost every day in the week prior to the open house, clearing out cupboards, cleaning and tidying. The grounds were swept and cleaned, trees and shrubbery pruned, windows cleaned, and flowers arranged. Invitations and fliers



Tia McCabe, aged 12, newly baptised member, Tia’s nonmember friend Liam, & Sister Kelley Duke, visiting from Scotland.

were hand-delivered to all the local schools. Hundreds of flyers and posters were distributed. Through their joint efforts ward members became better bonded.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Barrow attended the first day of the open house and were impressed. The family history centre received visitors; some said they would be back.

Members from other wards in the stake attended, as well as local less-active members with nonmember children, who are now waiting to be baptized.

The open house culminated with the ward conference. The congregation,



Sister Rasmussen (missionary from Colorado) Sister Dunlavy (missionary from Utah, now on her way home) Sister Ruth Johnson (stake RS president, from Lancaster) Sister Mcdonnell (YW secretary)

double its usual size, heard spiritually uplifting talks and a wonderful musical presentation given by the ward

brethren and sister missionaries. The Relief Society president served delicious homemade soups at the munch and mingle on that Sunday. ■

We, The Ministering Angels

By Norman R Clarke

*To you my sons, the priesthood bearers,
To you my sons, the armour bearers,
Gird up your loins and seize the day.
Minister unto God's children in the Saviour's way.*

Embrace the work, go forth with zeal.

We, the sons who hold the workers seal.

We, the builders and guardians of Zion,

To whom the people can look to and rely on.

To rescue, restore the troubled heart,

*Love and compassion to impart.
To the lonely one in need and despair,*

To the rescue we go, armed with love and care.

We labour together for what is true and right

That we may gain acceptance in God's sight,

That we may all arise as if as one

And sing our praises to God's Holy Son. ■



From left to right: Brother Les Wright from Chorley Ward, Brother Terry Brookes (family history consultant) Bishop McDonnell, Mayoress McEwan, Mayor Bill McEwan, Sister Walton (current missionary in Manchester Mission), Sister Maureen Wells (RS secretary), Sister McDonnell (YW Secretary), Sister Peggy Wright from Chorley.

God Loves Me?

By Chris Woodward

In the late 1970s, my wife and I lived in an area of Tunbridge Wells that would rarely be visited by full-time missionaries. Nevertheless, on Saturday, 3 February 1979, two sister missionaries came knocking. I went to the door and found myself caught up in a conversation about families. “Could we visit tomorrow evening to tell you about our Church’s programme for strengthening families?” At the time we had two young sons, aged two and four.

It so happened around Christmas of the previous year I had a work experience that caused me much reflection; I had become preoccupied by concerns about my purpose in life. I concluded that my priority was doing the best that I could for my family. So, I could not help being drawn in by the missionaries’ approach and agreed to their request.

I told the missionaries during our discussions that I did not believe in God. Jenny was of a similar view. But for God, this was a triviality. Without going into the wonderful early-conversion experience of those weeks, I will just say I became absolutely convinced that I had a Heavenly Father. We were baptised early in March of that year.

But there is a little more to the story. I had first met representatives of the Church in the summer of 1966, a year before Jenny and I married. I had taken advantage of a cheap chartered flight and a \$99 three-month



SISTER NANCY BANKS OR SISTER ALICE SMITH

Chris & Jenny Woodward,
with sons David and Jason



FAMILY MEMBER

Chris Woodward—
in more recent times

Greyhound ticket to visit the USA (and Mexico) between my second and third year of university in London. On the journey, I chose to visit Salt Lake City; I remembered vaguely having watched, back in the mid 1950s, an old black-and-white film made in 1940 starring Dean Jagger as Brigham Young—the seagull event particularly came to my mind, and that sparked my interest in visiting. I did the customary visit to Temple Square and talked to missionaries who explained the origins of the Church. The subject came up of the temple and the constraints that, at the time, were placed on people of African ancestry.

This was a significant concern for me. Although born near London, I had gone to British-colonial Africa with my parents in 1950 (initially to Nigeria and then to Southern Rhodesia). All my school years were spent in Africa and I only returned to England in

1964 to attend university. One of my biggest concerns in moving out of then-colonial Africa, was to make sure I did not carry any prejudice towards my fellow black Africans. Now, here I was in the summer of 1966 in Salt Lake City hearing something from the missionaries that jarred me. I left Temple Square concluding that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints could never be for me.

But, in June 1978, under the leadership of President Spencer W. Kimball, the Church issued the proclamation announcing that every worthy member of the Church was entitled to the full blessings of the gospel. This was about not long before the missionaries knocked on our door. The rest is history, so to speak. Without wanting to overstate it, I concluded that my Heavenly Father, back in 1966, had put me on his to-do list and sought me out when the time was right. ■

David Archuleta Visits North West Youth and YSA

By Chelsea Craven

Youth and young single adults had the privilege of meeting singer-songwriter and actor David Archuleta at the Chorley Stake Centre on 23 February 2019. At 16, David Archuleta became a star during the seventh season of *American Idol*, a televised singing competition in The United States of America. He received 44 percent of votes cast, placing him as runner-up in the 2008 season.

David shared his story and experiences in following the spirit which led him to enter *American Idol* and to serve a mission in 2012 in Rancagua, Chile.

He started by sharing how he learned to recognise and understand the feelings he had, which he believed came from God, before he was led to audition for the television competition.



David encouraged those in attendance to listen to the still small voice and to practice the lessons taught by parents and the Church to follow good promptings and to pray to God about their feelings and to ask for direction.

He told them that God cares about the little things—things weird and small, like going to audition for a television competition—and that God knows them. He said that he felt like praying for guidance and understanding during his journey in this competition; reading scriptures helped him in more ways than one, which is why he was inviting those at the meeting to do the same.

David then talked about the second biggest life-changing prompting he received during his singing career—when he decided to go on a mission.

After explaining the difficulties encountered when he made this decision, he sang a song he wrote about his experience with trusting the promptings from God. It began with these words, “I’m ready. I’m ready for a change. I’m not afraid to lose and leave it all behind.”

With happiness beaming from his face, David then spoke about his mission and how it strengthened his relationship with God. During his mission, David sang the song “Glorious” for the Church’s *Meet the Mormons* motion picture. His mission did not end his career.

The meeting with the youth ended with more songs and more experiences finishing with David’s testimony: that by small and simple things God is involved in his life. Later that day, David shared his story with missionaries in the Preston Missionary Training Centre.

David continues to work on his music career, inside and outside the Church, including recently working on a project in London, United Kingdom, before touring the United States of America in spring 2019. ■



Miracles with President Checketts

By James Farnell

The new President of the England London Mission—Dave Checketts, gave young single adults hope for miracles as he shared his personal family witness of a miracle.

It was great to have Jake Davey, Ella-Jane Baldock and President Checketts speak to the YSA from a number of stakes. Both Jake and Ella-Jane have recently returned from missions with Jake serving in South Africa and Ella-Jane in Turkey. Each spoke of the fruits of the gospel.

President Checketts spoke on ‘Miracles and the Power of Faith.’ He told of tragic circumstances that had occurred recently with his family. He was very open about his concerns and his worries, but he spoke with confidence and faith in the Lord. His love for the Lord was evident.

A few things came to mind: There are times where all we can do is trust in God. We will all face circumstances that will be out of our control but by placing our trust in our Father in Heaven, we are leaving it with Him.

Faith is an action word. It means that we actively do something about what we believe in. When we leave it with Him, we are acting upon our faith and saying as did the Saviour, “not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

This is what I was reminded of during the fireside. Whilst struggling through our toughest moments we need to work with our Heavenly Father and pass our concerns to Him as a show of real faith.

President Checketts said, “There are many ways that you can live your life, brothers and sisters. And there will come times of struggle and there are some things that aren’t part of the plan. . .

“Our message to the world is that miracles have not ceased, and God intervenes in the lives of men and women.

“Living by faith is the richest and fullest way to live.



Deborah and President David Checketts

“Feed the good wolf by praying, reading, going to church and to the temple. Ponder the blessings you have.” ■

RootsTech

By Delynn Bodine

RootsTech has announced its conference is going international, beginning with the United Kingdom in 2019. RootsTech will host an event

in London 24–26 October 2019 at the ExCeL London Convention Centre.

“We are incredibly excited to take the learnings and excitement of RootsTech to London and to our friends in the United Kingdom and beyond,” said Steve Rockwood, FamilySearch International CEO.



“Interest in one’s family discovery is growing throughout the world, particularly throughout Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia and this event will provide many people who are unable to attend the conference in Salt Lake City with the same excitement, resources, learnings and motivation to discover more about their families and themselves.”

The RootsTech London convention will follow a similar model that has been proven successful over the past nine years in Salt Lake City, Utah. It will offer more than 150 informative lectures taught by industry experts, inspirational keynote sessions, entertainment, and an exciting exhibit hall where vendors from around the world will display family history technology and services.

“This event model has proven to be a great way for people to engage in family history, regardless of age or genealogical skill level. Everyone is welcome at RootsTech,” said Jen Allen, event director.



“We are excited to further position RootsTech as a global community for anyone to discover their family and to deepen their sense of belonging that we all yearn for.”

The RootsTech London convention will not replace the annual conference in Salt Lake City but will serve as an additional RootsTech event. All sessions of the RootsTech London conference will be conducted in English. For more information see the RootsTech London website <https://www.rootstech.org/london>.

About RootsTech

RootsTech, hosted by FamilySearch, is a global conference celebrating families across generations, where

people of all ages are inspired to discover and share their memories and connections. This event has become the largest of its kind in the world, attracting tens of thousands of participants worldwide. ■

New *Ensign* Article Submission Website

By Chelsea Craven

We are introducing a new way to submit stories to be published in the *Ensign* United Kingdom inserts. This will make sharing your stories more fun and simple.

The website was created by Jason Watling after requests to make it easier to submit stories. On the home page, towards the bottom, are all the required forms that you need to download and then upload with your submission. This keeps everything in one place, and with one click, you can send all attachments to the editing team.

The *Ensign* UK inserts are for your stories shared in your own voice. Please use this tool to uplift each of our brothers and sisters in our faith within the UK.

We will post how-to videos to help you navigate through the website. The URL for the website is <http://ensignsubmissions.co.uk>. If you have questions, contact us through the LDS UK Facebook page ([facebook.com/ChurchOfJesusChristUK](https://www.facebook.com/ChurchOfJesusChristUK)) or by email at UKIEnsign@ChurchofJesusChrist.org. ■