

AFRICA SOUTHEAST LOCAL PAGES

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

The Divine Pattern of Loving and Serving Others

By Elder Joseph W. Sitati

First Counselor, Africa Southeast Area Presidency

“As disciples of Christ, we can each respond to the invitation to love and serve one another in a higher and holier way: in our personal ministry as His disciples; in our eternal callings as parents, husbands, wives, or children; and in our priesthood given callings to serve others in the Church.”

In the early days of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, the Lord gave a pattern to the Prophet Joseph Smith about how the elders He had chosen are to serve. He said:

“And again, I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not

be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations—

“Wherefore he that prayeth, whose spirit is contrite, the same is accepted of me if he obey mine ordinances.

“He that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek and edifieth, the same is of God if he obey mine ordinances.

“And again, he that trembleth under my power shall be made strong, and shall bring forth fruits of praise and wisdom, according to the revelations and truths which I have given you.

Elder Joseph W. Sitati



“And again, he that is overcome and bringeth not forth fruits, even according to this pattern, is not of me.

“Wherefore, by this pattern ye shall know the spirits in all cases under the whole heavens.

“And the days have come; according to men’s faith it shall be done unto them” (Doctrine and Covenants 52:14–20).

Putting our trust and faith in the Lord, always having humility of heart before Him, and observing to keep the covenants we have made with Him are essential for us to obtain the blessings we seek in all that we do in His name.

At an earlier time, the Lord taught that this pattern of service is founded upon love, and that it is the pattern that the Father had taught Him, and by which their relationship is governed. Then, as in our time, the Lord invited His disciples to serve according to this divine pattern:

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me . . .

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you . . .

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have



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kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love . . .

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:4, 7, 10, 12–14).

Let us review a few examples of how the divine pattern of loving and serving works between the Father and the Son.

The Father testified that in the pre-mortal council, the Son sought to do the will of the Father, and to honor Him by sustaining the Plan of Salvation and offering to pay the personal price needed to fulfill it:

"But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever" (Moses 4:2; see also Abraham 3:23–28).

At the beginning of the restoration of the gospel, the Father and the Son appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Father testified of His love for the Son, and bore record of Him:

"When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

The resurrected Son testified to the Nephites that He was in the world not to pursue His own purposes, but to fulfill the will of the Father.

"Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me" (3 Nephi 27:13).

As He served His mortal ministry, the Father sent angels to minister to and strengthen the Son during times of trial and great physical and spiritual stress, as well as during times of joy. Here are four examples:

As He began His ministry after fasting for forty days, and after being tempted of, and rebuking the devil (see Matthew 4:10–11);

On the mount of transfiguration when Moses and Elias appeared to Him as translated beings, and the Father's voice testified to Peter, James and John of His love for the Son (see Matthew 17:3–5);

As He prayed and suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane (see Luke 22:41–44);

As He appeared to the Nephites in great joy after His resurrection (see 3 Nephi 17:15–25).

The Lord testifies of the divine pattern of loving and serving one another:

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14–15).

The divine pattern of loving the Lord and serving one another has been set before us—and He invites us by the voice of His living prophet on earth, President Russell M. Nelson:

"Ministering is a higher, holier way to care for God's children . . . Ministering brothers and sisters who love the Savior by keeping [the] two great commandments will come to know His infinite love for them and for those to whom they minister . . . They . . . will become more like Him. They will teach His doctrine, bear witness of its truth, and care for the people assigned to them with the pure love of Christ" (General Conference Leadership Meeting, October 2018).

As disciples of Christ, we can each respond to the invitation to love and serve one another in a higher and holier way: in our personal ministry as His disciples; in our eternal callings as parents, husbands, wives, or children; and in our priesthood given callings to serve others in the Church. Applying the divine pattern of serving will bless those we serve, and secure for each of us the blessings that we seek in the covenants we have made with the Lord. ■

Joseph W. Sitati was sustained as a General Authority Seventy in April 2009. He is married to Gladys Nangoni; they are the parents of five children.

LOCAL PRIESTHOOD LEADER MESSAGE

Love and Service

By Elder W. Jean-Pierre Lono

Area Seventy



Elder
W. Jean-Pierre
Lono

“Christlike service is a service given sincerely to someone who is in need, and for which we expect no reward.”

Jesus Christ taught that love and service to others are important patterns for growth in our Father’s eternal plan. The Saviour, himself, has a perfect ability to love and serve—and he demonstrates His own example in a love characterized by the services He gives to the children of men.

My dear brothers and sisters, love is a commandment. One day as Christ was busy teaching, a scribe asked him: “Which is the first commandment of all?”

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

“And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:28–31).

These two commandments are greater than the others. When we love God and our fellowmen, we do all we can to make them happy, and hence

we keep all the other commandments. We are his disciples only when we have love one to another (including our enemies) and we are taught to be unselfish and charitable.

Harold B. Lee, President of the Church from 1972 to 1973, said: “If you want to love God, you have to learn to love and serve the people. That is the way you show your love for God” (“Stand Ye in Holy Places,” General Conference April 1973; *Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 189).

Christlike service is a service given sincerely to someone who is in need, and for which we expect no

reward. It may be that you have not been asked—or that it is unpleasant and requires great effort on our part. It may be that it has to be given at a time when it is difficult for us to give it. No matter the circumstances, this is a service that we should give just because we love our Heavenly Father’s children.

We have promised the Lord to “bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; . . . to mourn with those that mourn; . . . comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:8–9). We have the responsibility to seek the needy, assist them with love and kindness without being asked or commanded to do so (see Doctrine and Covenants 58:26–29).

Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church from 1973 to 1985,



pointed out that: “Service to others deepens and sweetens this life while we are preparing to live in a better world. It is by serving that we learn to serve. When we are engaged in the service of our fellowmen, not only do our deeds assist them, but we put our own problems in a fresher perspective. When we concern ourselves more with others, there is less time to be concerned with ourselves! In the midst of the miracle of serving, there is the promise of Jesus that by losing ourselves, we find ourselves!” (“Chapter 8: Selfless Service,” *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 79–88).

In our 2019 Area Plan, we have a key purpose to “Love, Serve and Teach One Another.” To do so, we should be with our fellowmen, strengthen them, invite them one by one to join the only true Church of Jesus Christ, teach them the power of repentance and the truths contained in the Book of Mormon—and help them to endure to the end.

To be ministering brothers and sisters is to be a blessing from the Lord to others by our works of love and service to others, to bear their burdens, mourn with those that mourn, to comfort those that stand in need of comfort. We have the obligation to seek after those that stand in need of rescue. Then we should help them, without being urged or commanded to do so. This is the essence of ministering. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it

unto me” (Matthew 25:34–40). This is the rule of proximity.

For us to have joy and happiness, we must start with being good examples ourselves—and by having the proper spirit. God will help us to radiate love, charity, and service! We are daughters and sons of our Father in Heaven, who leads us with His gospel in order to reconcile us with Him through our obedience to His commandments.

In 2018, our dear prophet, Russell M. Nelson, revealed to us the way in which the hearts of men must draw closer one by one to serve others with love and through ministering, this is the Christ’s way of lifting and strengthening us. I testify that ministering is a spiritual activity, a missionary service that brings together the children of Heavenly Father and helps

them draw closer to Him. His Holy temple is our ultimate goal.

We must focus on inspired ministering to individuals and families. Our role is to provide an organized effort, a joint effort, and guided effort to serve individuals, families, and our communities.

Our Christian duty is to implement these things using the 2019 Area Plan, which provides us with a vision to carry out one of its 3 key priorities: “to love, to serve and to teach one another.”

In this plan, the verbs “to deepen and to establish” are centered on Jesus Christ and his gospel in order to strengthen one another. ■

W. Jean-Pierre Lono was named an Area Seventy in April 2014. He is married to Mukwakaya Angel Tshisekedi; they are the parents of eight children. Elder and Sister Lono reside in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN AFRICA SERIES

History of the Church in Africa: Did You Know?

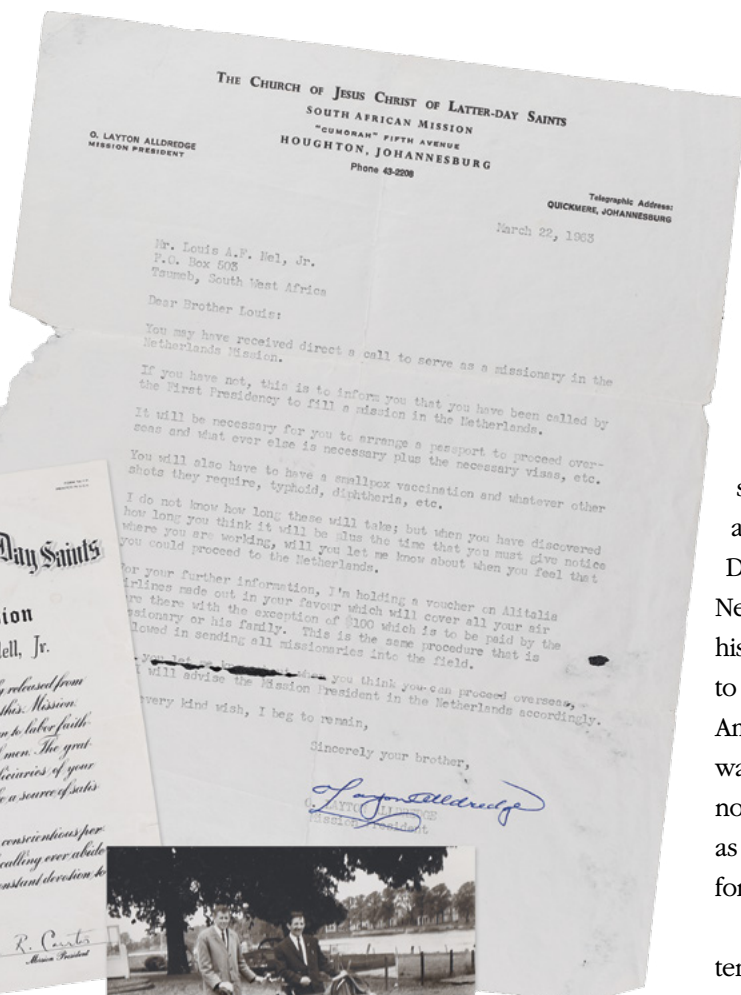
By Africa Southeast Area Church History Department



Each year thousands of young men and young women—along with hundreds of senior couples—receive and accept calls from the prophet to serve as missionaries in various locations and capacities around the world. Historically, mission calls have been

received as a large white envelope containing a signed letter from the prophet. Now, in recent months, mission calls are sent digitally by email. But in earlier days of the church, mission calls came in a variety of ways. In some cases, a call was extended personally by the

Personal letters and documents in the possession of his daughter, Debra James (née Nell).



prophet. During his presidency, Brigham Young asked men to stand at general conference and their call was announced over the pulpit.

In March 1963, a young South African man received a letter from O. Layton Allredge, who at the time was serving as the South African Mission President. (This was the only mission of the Church operating on the African continent at that time.) President Allredge was following up to make certain that Louis Andries Francois Nell had received a mission call letter from Salt Lake City. Indeed, Louis had. Weeks earlier he had received a letter in which he had been called to serve a mission in the Netherlands.

While a number of South Africans were serving locally in the Johannesburg mission, Louis was the first native-born African to serve a mission outside the continent of Africa. He was a relatively recent convert, who—along with his parents and two siblings—had been baptized in September 1960.

Missionaries today receive documents with detailed lists of items to bring, arrangements to make, and instructions for travel. However, the letter from President Allredge simply stated that Louis should get his affairs in order, determine what vaccines were required and receive them, and obtain a travel visa. Louis was also instructed

to notify President Allredge about when he might be ready to leave directly for his mission.

After preparations had been completed, President Allredge sent Louis a travel voucher for an airline ticket and notified President Don Van Slooten, President of the Netherlands Mission, that Louis was on his way to Amsterdam. Louis travelled to Europe via Rome and arrived in Amsterdam on May 6, 1963, where he was assigned to serve in Assen, a small northern Dutch town. With Afrikaans as his native language, it was fairly easy for him to learn the Dutch language.

Having been unable to receive his temple ordinances before departing—as there was no temple in Johannesburg in 1963—he and his missionary companion received travel permission from President Van Slooten to visit the London Temple a few months after arriving in the mission field so that he could receive his temple endowment.

Louis served in the Netherlands Mission for two and a half years, after which he returned home to South Africa. Later he met and married Lesley Anne Louise Cook, with whom he raised a family. He continued to serve faithfully in the Church until his death in 2003.

While the process of receiving and accepting a mission call has become more uniform, the call to serve goes out to every worthy member of the church to help bring the gospel to people throughout the world. ■

Sentiments of Praise and Gratitude for the Newly-Dedicated Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo Temple



*Reagan
Kalonji*

"As I attended the temple dedication ceremony, I really felt the spirit of the Lord." —Reagan Kalonji



*Mawonda
Bibann*

"It is a great blessing and privilege for us to have a temple here." —Mawonda Bibann



*Didier
Mutombo*

"I remember one guest [during the temple open house] in the celestial room. She was crying, and she said, 'This was the place I was looking for to come and look for peace—a place of serenity, where I can talk to God. This is a place where I should be.'" —Didier Mutombo



*Rachelle
Bunda*

"I am happy because on the 23rd of April I will be getting sealed to my husband in the temple." —Rachelle Bunda



*Dieumerci
Kalonji*

"Members of the Church here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been preparing themselves spiritually. I have seen great excitement as I have met with some members for temple recommendations. I also see their commitment and excitement as they attend temple preparation classes." —Dieumerci Kalonji (Bishop, Gombe GB Ward)



*Henriette
Mulombo*

"My family will go to the temple and we will be united together with our ancestors. I am filled with joy." —Henriette Mulombo



*Gacia
Kyungu*

"The presence of the temple here in our country is proof of God's love for the Congo. Now that this temple is here in our land it will be much easier to perform ordinances with the temple being so close." —Gacia Kyungu

"Today is a memorable and blessed day. It makes me think of the day [30 August 1987] when an Apostle, Elder Marvin J. Ashton, dedicated the land [of the Congo] for the preaching of the gospel." —Lendo Van Damme (Kinshasa Stake Patriarch) ■



*Lendo
Van Damme*

“A Great Blessing to the Land and Its Inhabitants”

By Hermès Itina Mayamba

“From the press conference with journalists, through the open house, the youth devotional, to the temple dedication itself—we have witnessed historical moments. We could feel a heavenly presence.”

In October 2011, while serving a full-time mission in South Africa, I received a phone call from Sister Catherine Wood, our mission president’s wife. All merry and bright, she told me that President Thomas S. Monson had just announced the construction of a temple in my home town, Kinshasa. I remember shouting—with joy with tears flowing down my cheeks—in gratitude to the Most High for the blessing of having a temple in my country.

Eight years later, having married and been sealed to Rachel Tshimungu in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple in 2014, I am the father of two children. Together as a family we have witnessed the fulfillment of this great miracle—not only in our country, but also and especially in our own lives. We watched as the temple rose from ground level until, finally, the Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo Temple was dedicated on Sunday, April 14, 2019 by Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

My family and I are very blessed for having participated in the events preceding the dedication of the temple. We felt the Spirit of the Lord in

abundance. At the temple open house, my mother, Mary Noël Kona Bukasa—currently a less active member of the Church—testified: “This temple is truly a House of God, I felt like I was in paradise.” Our neighbors who also attended the open house, said: “It is a perfect house—as if we were in heaven.”

My callings as Public Affairs Director for the eleven Kinshasa stakes—on the one hand—and as second counselor

in the Kinshasa Stake Presidency—on the other hand—have allowed me to have both an external insight (from opinion leaders and media) and an internal one (from Church members) on the temple. “A great blessing to the land and its inhabitants.” From the press conference with journalists from more than 53 Kinshasa television and radio stations, through the open house, the youth devotional, to the temple dedication itself—we have witnessed historical moments. We could feel a heavenly presence.

I testify that the temple is the House of God. I confirm that all countries included within the temple district generally, and the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular, are being exceedingly blessed. Surely, this temple brings a peace to a part of the world where it is really in need.

The Prophet Isaiah saw our day and wrote: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths” (Isaiah 2:2–3).



Hermès with his family

I know that through the Atonement of Christ and His restored gospel, we can access all the blessings promised in the holy scriptures. I testify that it is through the ordinances we perform in the holy temple and the associated covenants, that the power of godliness is fully manifest in our lives.

My heart is full of joy and gratitude for this wonderful gift from the Father unto us his living children and those who have preceded us and who are now on the other side of the veil. ■

Hermès Itina Mayamba is Second Counselor in the Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo Stake.

Answer to Prayers—In Due Time

By John Koyengule

“Today I live about five to ten minutes away from the temple. Even without transportation means, I still am able to go there.”

I have been a member of the Church for more than ten years. As an officer in the Democratic Republic of the Congo military, I have experienced tremendous difficulty arranging to travel from my home to attend the Johannesburg South Africa Temple and to participate in sacred ordinances there. Over the years I made several requests to my superior officers for permission

to travel to South Africa with my family, but still it was difficult to leave Kinshasa given the regime changes which had taken place in our country.

After several attempts to persuade through my chain of command—still without success—I made a decision to discuss the situation with our local priesthood leaders to seek their guidance and direction. Together we pleaded for divine help. Then one day, I was reading 1 Nephi 3:7, which says: “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.” I realized even more that by always obeying the commandments of the Lord, God provides the means for His children to accomplish the things which He has commanded them.

Then a few years later, at the October 2011 General Conference, then Church President Thomas S. Monson announced plans for the construction of the Kinshasa Temple. At that moment I was far away—more than 1700 km from my home, which is in Kinshasa. My wife Guylaine Kakudji Koyengule, filled with joy at hearing the announcement, phoned to tell me the news—and it was really a day of great joy for me and my family.

After this announcement we looked forward to the groundbreaking and



John with his wife, Guylaine

construction. And now our Kinshasa Temple has just been dedicated!

Today I live about five to ten minutes away from the temple. Even without transportation means, I still am able to go there. I know that Heavenly Father truly listens to His children’s prayers and that He answers in due time. I also know that the temple is the House of the Lord and that through the covenants we make with our Heavenly Father in His house—the temple—we will be saved. ■

John Koyengule is a member of the Gombe GB Ward, Kinshasa Democratic Republic of the Congo Stake.