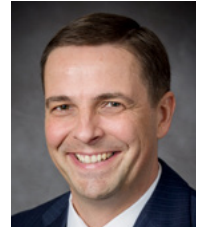


UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

A New Year with Faith in Christ

By Elder Axel H. Leimer, Germany
Area Seventy



Elder
Axel H. Leimer

We live in times of great commotion. The daily news and our own personal challenges could make our courage fail and cause fear to overtake us.¹ But prophets have taught that faith dispels fear and brings a brightness of hope.² The scriptures define faith as a confidence and trust in Jesus Christ.³ We trust that He is the Son of God and that through the Atonement He has the power to save us.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel.⁴ It gives us the power to:

- please God;⁵
- receive help and direction from Him;⁶
- receive answer to prayer and have the truth manifested unto us;⁷
- have our hearts changed;⁸
- repent and be baptized;⁹
- receive forgiveness;¹⁰
- witness mighty miracles;¹¹
- receive strength;¹²
- be healed;¹³
- be saved;¹⁴
- look upon God and live;¹⁵
- cleave unto good things;¹⁶
- help parents teach their children;¹⁷ and
- endure to the end.¹⁸

Faith is a great positive power that can lift us above the clouds of worry and help us become whole in Christ. Access to faith is not limited to those who are already strong, nor does it depend on outward profession or

position. Instead, it is accessible to all who choose to follow Christ and His simple doctrine: repent and be baptized.¹⁹ Once we have chosen to embrace that gospel and to act in that doctrine,²⁰ even the weakest of us are made strong.²¹ “Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from heaven that comes as we choose to believe and as we seek it and hold on to it.”²² “When we choose to follow Christ in faith rather than choosing another path out of fear, we are blessed with a consequence that is consistent with our choice.”²³

If you choose a renewal of your faith in this new year, you can follow some simple steps.

First, get to know and love the Savior. You can start by hearing or reading His word.²⁴ Resolve to not miss out on attending church or reading the scriptures, in particular the Book of Mormon. Read the Book of Mormon with the intent of getting to know the Savior better. You may want to underline any reference that relates to His attributes and teachings.

Second, as your faith grows, resolve to live by His teachings.

“When we have faith in Christ, we accept and apply His Atonement and His teachings. We trust Him and what He says. . . .

“We believe in Christ, and we believe that He wants us to keep all His commandments. We want to show

our faith by obeying Him.”²⁵

Once we come to know Him, we will have an increased desire to keep his commandments.²⁶ The Savior simply taught, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”²⁷ This teaching is as powerful as it is simple. We should keep the commandments not out of fear but motivated by love. The Lord is inviting us to keep His commandments and to value His law as the apple of our eye and to write them upon the tablets of our hearts.²⁸ In foretelling the new covenant in the latter days, the Lord said, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”²⁹

As the world continues to change and men’s hearts fail them, there is strength and peace to be found in faith in Jesus Christ. Christ offers to make our burden light.³⁰ May we, as the weakest of the weak, take hold of that source of strength and experience a new year with increased faith and an increased confidence in our own salvation. ■

NOTES

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:89–91.
2. See 2 Nephi 31:20.
3. See Guide to the Scriptures, “Faith,” scriptures.lds.org.
4. See Articles of Faith 1:4.
5. See Hebrews 11:6.
6. See 1 Nephi 7:12; 16:28; Moroni 7:26.
7. See Mosiah 27:14; Moroni 10:4; Doctrine and Covenants 10:47, 52.
8. See Mosiah 5:7.
9. See 2 Nephi 9:23.
10. See Enos 1:3–8.
11. See 2 Nephi 26:13; Ether 12:12; Moroni 7:27–29, 34–38.

12. See Alma 14:26; Ether 12:27–28, 37.
13. See 3 Nephi 17:8.
14. See Ephesians 2:8; 2 Nephi 25:23; Mosiah 3:12.
15. See Helaman 8:15.
16. See Moroni 7:28.
17. See Doctrine and Covenants 68:25.
18. See Doctrine and Covenants 20:25, 29.
19. See Doctrine and Covenants 10:67.
20. See Doctrine and Covenants 101:78.
21. See Ether 12:27; Doctrine and Covenants 1:19; 133:58.
22. Neil L. Andersen, “Faith Is Not by Chance, but by Choice,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2015, 65.
23. Quentin L. Cook, “Live by Faith and Not by Fear,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 73.
24. See Romans 10:17.
25. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 61, 62.
26. See 1 John 2:3.
27. John 14:15; see also John 15:10; Mosiah 13:14; Doctrine and Covenants 46:9; 124:87.
28. See Proverbs 7:2–3.
29. Jeremiah 31:33.
30. See Matthew 11:30.

LOCAL NEWS

York Interfaith Group Considers ‘What Happens after Death?’

By Mark Cosens



COURTESY OF THE BISHOPS

Brother and Sister Keith Bishop, national interfaith advisors for the Church in Great Britain

Recently, more than 60 members and friends of the York Interfaith Group met at York Medical Society Rooms to consider the afterlife. Included in the audience were the Imam (Muslim), Senior Nuns (Bar Convent), Rabbi (Progressive Jews) and other faith leaders, including Buddhist, Hindu, Protestant, Catholic, Quaker and Bahá'í. Some audience members were agnostics, seeking answers to life's deepest questions. As would be expected, warmth and respect were apparent between the various speakers. This was one of a series of events as similar interfaith dialogues occur monthly, where different faiths can present their beliefs about a given topic.

This event was organised by Mark Cosens, multi-stake public affairs director in York. Ninety-five-year-old Joyce Pickard (Quaker) chaired the discussion, which followed on from a special birthday party held in her honour and attended by the Lord Mayor of York, the Sherriff of York and their consorts.

One of the presenters was Keith Bishop, national interfaith advisor for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He spoke about death not being the end, preliminary and final judgments, destinations in the spirit world (paradise or spirit prison), resurrection through Jesus Christ and opportunities for afterlife progression. He read from the Book of Mormon to help illustrate the doctrine that he was teaching.

Interfaith events are excellent opportunities for Church representatives to clarify beliefs and tactfully testify of truth and create a good impression. They are also occasions when the Holy Spirit can touch hearts, inspire minds, prompt further questions and help brothers and sisters from other faiths to better understand the Lord's Church and its members. ■

Mormons and Sikhs Work Together

By Debbie Twigger

Around 50 members from the Northampton England Stake joined with local Sikhs to help clear land and prepare for the building of a Gurdwara at St James Mill in the centre of Northampton. The members from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were delighted to be able to help and work with another faith on this important project.

Michael Ellis, MP for Northampton North, came to see the work in progress on Saturday where women, men and youth aged 16 years and over helped cut back overgrowth, paint the outside fence and clear out the shell of the building for the Gurdwara. Mr Ellis remarked that “it was a real pleasure today to visit the site of the new Sikh Gurdwara in Northampton. A big community turnout!”

Arthur Newbury, a member of the stake public affairs council and active in the community, stated, “In May 2014 I attended a meeting of community leaders and first met Amarjit where I heard about the new temple site. This gave me an idea for a Helping Hands activity, and after two years the purchase of the land enabled the project to come to fruition. I felt very humbled by this great day, and I believe the Lord opened the doors for this to happen.”

The local leader of the Sikh faith, Amarjit, commented that it was a great day indeed!



Members of the Northampton England Stake with Michael Ellis, MP, pictured centre, and Sikh faith members at site for new Gurdwara

Police Community Engagement Officer DC Rachel Packman visited the project and remarked, "It was a good turnout of about 80 people. The cooperation between these two faith groups reflects the wider picture in Northampton, where the majority of all faith and community groups respect each other's views and try and help each other where possible."

Interfaith relations between Church members and other faiths have developed recently with attendance at the Northampton Interfaith Forum meetings, including an invitation by the Dialogue Society to a dinner to mark the end of Ramadan to Tony Twigger, director of public affairs in the stake. ■



A Royal Invitation

By Kate McColgan

On 12th July 2016 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was represented by Julie Jones on the South Wales Interfaith Council at the Royal Opening of the 5th session of the Welsh Assembly (the Senedd).

While hundreds of well-wishers at the grand opening welcomed Her Majesty, the Queen, and Prince Philip,

accompanied by the Prince of Wales and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, only 240 guests were invited to sit down to a three-course meal that included leading members of the Interfaith Council.

In view of the Welsh Assembly's relative infancy (the Senedd is just four years old), devolution has given Welsh Mormons an opportunity to increase their contribution to positive interfaith, government and community

relationships, along with heads of other faiths. Following the rapid progress of the Interfaith Council over the past two years, the Church has now forged stronger links with other Christians in Wales and across the faith spectrum.

On 17th October, a number of members from the Church in Cardiff were invited to join 450 other guests from all sections of the community and faiths at a sit-down dinner at



The South Wales Interfaith Council at the Royal Opening of the Welsh Assembly

Cardiff City Hall hosted by the Muslim Council of Wales.

Entitling her remarks “Working Together for the Common Good—Faith in the Future”, Sarah Joseph

OBE, a convert to Islam since aged 16, gave an impassioned speech about how we in the room were a powerhouse who could change the way people viewed what was otherwise

a bleak and often scary future. We, as a whole, could provide the hope critically needed and should not confine this care to a single group.

Then Karen Armstrong OBE FRSL, former nun and now religious writer and thinker, championed her “Charter for Compassion”, launched in 2009, which recognised that in fact all faiths had a similar golden rule of “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”, emphasising that this was the secret to peace and harmony. ■

NEWS FROM SCOTLAND

Member Speaks at the Opening of Scottish Parliament

By Douglas Yates and Des Waddington

On September 20th Douglas Andrew Yates (Irvine Ward, Paisley Scotland Stake) was invited to offer the ‘Time for Reflection’ at the commencement of Parliament. The invitation came via a nomination by Interfaith Scotland, with whom the Church has been working very closely.

After a brief tour of the Parliament building and an introduction to the House Speaker and Presiding Officer, Ken MacIntosh, Douglas was introduced to the house before delivering his remarks. His comments reflected those given by Area President Patrick Kearon in his general conference address of April 2016 and touched on the plight of those who are refugees and what should be our response as Christians. Douglas commented, “It was a privilege to represent

the Church and present to the Scottish Parliament what was an abbreviated version of Elder Kearon’s remarks.” Those who are invited to offer the ‘Time for Reflection’ are given guidelines to follow, and contributors are limited to 400 words and a time limit of no more than 4mins. “As I considered what I should say, I felt that I wanted to represent the current teachings of the Brethren. I also wished to mention the Book of Mormon and quote from it as well as from the Bible. I wanted it to be on record that a verse of scripture from the Book of Mormon was quoted on the official proceedings of Parliament.”

After giving his speech, Douglas and his wife, Julie, along with Anne Edwards, Assistant MSDPA for Scotland, met with Ruth MaGuire MSP and were

From left to right: Douglas Yates, Julie Yates and Ken MacIntosh, House Speaker and Presiding Officer at the Scottish Parliament



COURTESY OF ANNE EDWARDS

able to discuss the Church’s role in the community and express a desire to help more. Sister Yates said, “It is nice to see the Church gaining recognition for its teachings and good works. It’s a measure of the progress we have made in our relations with other faith groups and government leaders that we have been extended this invitation today.” ■

A Moment in Time

By Margo McClumpha

Many years ago, Maureen McIntyre and her husband, Ian, visited Kenya, where they saw a scale of poverty that they had never seen before. They witnessed firsthand the poor health of the children and the lack of basic facilities. When they arrived back home in Scotland, Maureen could not forget the hunger in the children's eyes or the poverty that children and adults were enduring from day to day.

As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Maureen felt that she had to do something to help those children. So in 1998, Maureen and Ian founded the Educate the Children charity. Their vision was to ensure that children in Africa had their needs met, their rights upheld, and their dreams fulfilled through education. They set up the charity and a sponsorship programme, which enabled them to offer the poorest children in Utange, near Mombasa, access to education. As the numbers of children grew, family, friends and sponsors helped to build a school. Computers and other equipment were included in the new facilities, as was water and electricity.

Maureen named the school Jolaurabi after her three grandchildren, John, Lauren and Abigail. Family has always been important to Maureen and Ian, and the children of Africa have become part of their family.

So far, over 600 children have been given the opportunity to gain

an education. Another 100 students are in secondary school education, which became possible through the generosity of many people who sponsored the children.

Maureen and her family are continually working to meet the needs of the children. The ever-growing need for funding has become a constant in their lives. Without it, they know the children will be unable to have an education and will be reduced to living a life without hope for the future. The Educate the Children charity is the bridge for the children to walk across to a much larger world that may hold educational opportunities for them.

Maureen formed a singing group in Kenya called the Singing Children of Africa. In 2006, she brought the group

to the United Kingdom for a twelve-week tour. The colourful clothing, the wide, beaming smiles, the singing and the wonderful dancing of the children captivated the public. The money raised as a result of the tour funded the building of an orphanage for those children whose parents had died.

The Singing Children of Africa toured again in 2007, 2008, 2015 and in 2016. On tour, the children experience a life much removed from their own in Africa. They make friendships, and on occasion they meet the individuals who sponsor their education. These are special moments for the child and the sponsor.

The money raised on the current tour will help to expand the school, giving more children the gift of education. Many of the sponsors and volunteers of the charity are from a variety of faith groups.

This is a remarkable story of two people who, in a moment of time, decided they had to do something for the children of Africa. The story does not end there. Jean Logan, also a member of the Church and one of Maureen's close friends, has travelled to Africa several times with her. On one of those journeys, Jean was prompted to take a copy of the Book of Mormon, which she gave to Maureen to use as a missionary tool. The result of Jean's prompting was the establishment of three branches of the Church.

Maureen remarked following her recent trip to Africa, "I sat in church, not one seat empty. There must have been over a 100 people there and so many priesthood

The Singing Children of Africa pictured with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland



COURTESY OF YVONNE CRAIG

holders. I thought back to the one Book of Mormon Jean Logan was prompted to take—that was where it all started”.

Maureen was motivated by her strong Christian beliefs to make a difference in the lives of children who live on another continent. This effort has required time and sacrifice and the

constant pushing and searching for funding to help these children achieve an education. It took the heart and soul of a husband and wife who motivated their family, friends and many volunteers to change the lives of children on another continent. Time and distance have no relevance when the gospel of Jesus Christ is in action. ■

A Talent of His Own

By Margo McClumpha

Ben Shanks, a fifteen-year-old member of the Dalkeith Ward in the Edinburgh Scotland Stake, recently played the prelude music on the organ at the stake conference for the first time. Some youth may find it a daunting experience to play before a large audience at stake conference. Ben has confidence in his ability to play the organ and maintained that confidence as he played. In this family of six children, three boys and three girls, musical ability is encouraged and nurtured as a family.

Ben’s mother, Jenny, explained that all of her children have sung in musicals and in music groups as they have grown up. Each of her children, whose ages range from ten to eighteen, can act as choristers if called upon to do so. Some of the instruments used by the family include recorders, piano, organ, violin, ukulele and double bass.

Ben is a self-taught musician who later had lessons to increase his musical ability. His siblings have followed his example. His mother remarked, “He is quite amazing. He is much more accomplished than I was at his age.” Ben has been called as the ward organist. His grandfather Chris Allen is extremely proud of his grandson’s abilities. His grandmother remarked, “He seems to breathe music. He feels the music, and his fingers indicate those feelings as they move over the keyboard.”

Interfaith Community Concert for the Archie Foundation

By Sandra Wood

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Aberdeen played host to an interfaith community concert as a fundraiser for the Archie Foundation for sick children, held on North Anderson Drive on Saturday, 24th September.

Members of the Unitarian Church, the Roman Catholic Holy Family School, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

Saints all took part in an evening of song and dance, with performances from a barbershop choir, the Sweet Adelines and the Pam Dignan Dancers.

In attendance at the event were members of the Quaker Church, the Anglican Church and the Church of Scotland.

Home bakes were for sale at the interval, which raised over £220 00. ■

From left to right: Rob Harrop, piano; Alison Hegdol, piano; Sister Christenson, soloist; Arthur Bruce, violin; Helen Merrill, piano; Ella McCafferty, dancer; Abby Twigger, violin; Lydia Speth, piano; Mike Merrill, musical director



ADAM WARE

Fife Interfaith

By Frank Bowness

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have always been great supporters of interfaith relationships, and this is reflected in one of the basic doctrines of the Church, which states, “We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may” (Articles of Faith 1:11).

An example of this can be found in Fife, Scotland, where the Fife Interfaith Group was founded in 2004. Church members began supporting the group in 2008, and now two of them serve on the committee.

Rachel Watson, from Dunfermline Ward and also a member of the Fife Interfaith Group, thought that, to raise the profile of the group, they should form a choir and perform at the Fife Diversity Week Gala in Kirkcaldy. With some trepidation, the choir went ahead with their plans. The programme for the choir started with a medley of three Negro spirituals, then followed a Muslim hymn, and this was followed by “All Things Bright and Beautiful” and “Amazing Grace”, after which a hymn sheet was passed out to enable community singing. Members of the audience were encouraged to stand and sing with the choir.

The performance was so well received that choir members intend to rehearse a repertoire and perform at other events in the future. ■



The Fife Interfaith Choir, which includes 6 members of the Church



Talented musician Ben Shanks from the Dalkeith Ward

Ben likes classical piano and organ. Mother and son often have jam sessions together, with each playing on separate pianos. Ben's long-term goal is to attend university. Until then, he has time to consider if his career path will include music. ■

SHAZIA AHMAD

Fun Family History Day

By Sylvia Anderson

Janice Bailey of the Catford Ward, London England Wandsworth Stake, responded to the continuing emphasis being placed by Church leaders on family history work by organising a “Fun Family History Day.” Wanting to attract as many members of the public as possible, Janice began by arranging for the event to be advertised in local newspapers. Subsequently, she placed flyers in the local library and community centres and, with the help of the youth of the Church, posted them through many letterboxes. Around 32 people attended the event, which was viewed as a great success.

To make the day as useful as possible to those who attended, a variety of different workshops and presentations were included. Whilst help was available to those who were just getting started with researching their own family trees, support was also available for those who had already begun but who wished to develop their skills. Specialists were brought in from the Family History Centre at the National Archives in Kew, London. They included Elder and Sister Curley, who presented on researching in the British Isles and using the many tools on the Church’s own FamilySearch website. Sharon Tomlin gave a presentation on researching Caribbean records, which now include a range of Caribbean Islands. Elder and Sister Cherrington presented on getting started on FamilySearch, which holds an extensive number of records that

Sister Curley, pictured on the right, with a visitor at the Family History Day



are made freely available online to everyone.

One of the workshops focussed on raising awareness about indexing and how to do it. Put simply, FamilySearch indexing is a project that makes it possible for historical records of events such as births, deaths and marriages to be searched on FamilySearch. Karen Adams, who led this workshop, said, “I feel that the indexing of historical records is vital to family history work. So many people have been able to find their ancestors because the names are available on the FamilySearch website.” Anyone wishing to join the volunteer effort to index records can obtain further

information at familysearch.org/indexing/about.

Commenting on the “Fun Family History Day” event, Janice said, “My purpose in organising the event was to give people the opportunity to connect with their ancestors by informing them of the range of resources available and how to use them”. Janice added, “My love of family history work began when, following a detailed search of microfilm records at the National Archives, I found the marriage certificate of my great-grandparents who were married in Jamaica. My father had known very little about his grandparents, and it was a very special moment when I was able to share that information with him.” ■

Editors’ Note

The editors, **Jason Watling** and **Debbie Twigger**, invite all news stories, articles and photographs to be sent to ukiensign@ldschurch.org. Stories should be submitted in Microsoft Word, 300–500 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 and author, is required for the Church to use the article.

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