

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Without Them, We Cannot Be Made Perfect

By Elder David P. Homer, Switzerland

Area Seventy

During the final years of his life, the Prophet Joseph Smith reflected frequently regarding the importance of vicarious ordinances for the dead.¹ In fact, he considered work for our ancestors to be so important that he taught, “Their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.”²

It is easy to see how vicarious work done for our ancestors allows them to be made perfect because, without us, they would not be able to receive the ordinances necessary for their salvation. What may be more difficult to understand is how “our dead” can help to make us perfect? While that reference may be a general concept denoting the dead of all who are living, it may also have a more personal meaning encouraging each of us to find “our [personal] dead” because doing so will help us to progress.

Finding ancestors brings into our lives the spirit of Elijah, which refines and strengthens us. I know this from personal experience. Extensive genealogy done by members of my family makes finding ancestors for whom temple ordinances can be performed a real challenge. Recently, a friend who is an expert in family history

helped me find an ancestor who had previously not been found. It is difficult for me to describe what I felt that day. As we prepared her name for the temple I was overcome. It seemed as though she had been waiting for a very long time. I felt the refining influence of the Spirit. Like those who listened to King Benjamin, my heart seemed to change.³ I wanted to be a better person. I wanted to be faithful, so that one day I could see her and thank her for touching my life.

Finding our ancestors also strengthens us because, as we study their lives, we see lessons that apply to ours. In the winter of 1847, Russel King Homer was among the struggling Saints in Winter Quarters who were preparing to trek with Brigham Young to Utah later that year. Three days before the party was to leave, Elder Heber C. Kimball, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, approached Russel and asked him to make a sacrifice. Russel was to remain behind and was asked to donate his wagon, teams and supplies so others could go in his place.⁴

It must have been challenging for Russel to see others take his things and leave. However, rather than resist or resent his situation, he simply moved on, trusting all would be for the best.

Over the next few years he helped thousands of Saints make final preparations and cross the plains to Utah. Finally, in 1859, he made his final trip, leading a handcart company west, where he settled with his family and lived out the remainder of his days.⁵

When life hands me disappointment, or requires I do something that is challenging, I remember my great-great-grandfather Russel King. Rather than resist or resent the challenges that come my way, I can move on like he did and trust that all will be for the best. In a very real way, the experiences and lessons of his life can help me to improve mine.

No wonder the Prophet Joseph reflected so frequently on this foundational doctrine. Finding “our dead” is critical to our salvation because it brings the Spirit into our hearts and teaches us lessons that improve our lives. The doctrine is critically important to us because “they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead.” ■

NOTES

1. See Doctrine and Covenants 128:1.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 128:15.
3. See Mosiah 5:2.
4. See William E. Homer, *History of Russel King Homer* (2015), 61.
5. See Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel, history.lds.org/overlandtravel.



Elder David P. Homer

LOCAL NEWS

A Closer Look at the UK's New Area Seventies

By Jessica Chapman

This past general conference, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, a member of the First Presidency of the Church, presented the names of 36 new Area Seventies, including two men from England, Elder Karl D. Hirst and Elder K. Roy Tunncliffe.

Karl Douglas Hirst was born in Bury, Lancashire, on February 28th 1972, and married Claire Elizabeth Wright in 1993. They are the proud parents of six children. In 1996, Elder Hirst received a bachelor of law degree from Lancaster University and has worked as a barrister since 1997. He also received a master's degree in business administration from the Alliance Manchester Business School in 2016. Elder Hirst has served in many Church callings, including as a full-time missionary in the England London South Mission, as a regional Young Men leader, as a member of a bishopric, as a bishop, and also as a stake president. Elder and Sister Hirst currently live near Northampton.

Kenneth Roy Tunncliffe was born in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, on September 1st 1968. He married Vanessa Hill in 1992, and they were blessed with three children. Elder Tunncliffe received a bachelor of arts degree in English and history in 1998 from Keele University and worked for Nova-Innovene, a petrochemical company from 1998 to 2007. He began

working as the regional director for Seminaries and Institutes with the Church Educational System in 2007. Since joining the Church in 1986, Elder Tunncliffe has served in a number of Church callings, including as a full-time missionary in the England Leeds Mission, as area Young Men leader, as a counsellor in a bishopric, as a bishop, as a high councillor, as a stake president, and as a high priests group leader. Elder and Sister Tunncliffe currently live in York.

There are eight quorums of the Seventy, and the members called serve as special witnesses of Jesus Christ, proclaim the gospel, and build up the Church throughout the world.



Elder Karl D. Hirst



Elder K. Roy Tunncliffe

They work under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As Area Seventies, Elder Hirst and Elder Tunncliffe will work on assignment throughout the Europe Area of the Church. ■

Self-Reliance Services

By Karen Gardner

On 28 January 2017 the graduation ceremony for the completion of the pilot course of the “Empowerment-Plus: Interfaith Social Cohesion and Enterprise Project” was held.

Professor Brian Grim of the Religious Freedom and Business Foundation and a practicing Catholic has been working extensively with Church headquarters and Self-Reliance Services to formulate

an initiative to help those experiencing a wide range of socio-economic risks, including displacement, unemployment, isolation, crime, addiction and radical extremist violence. Church self-reliance materials have been adapted into a multi-faith format.

The Empowerment-Plus initiative will field interfaith teams throughout the world that reach out to and



Some recent participants in the "Empowerment-Plus: Interfaith Social Cohesion and Enterprise Project."

were all very shy, we were all from different religions, we were all very different people, but as the weeks went on we developed a really deep bond, not only with the participants as the mentor and mentee but also among the whole group. We developed quite a bond."

Sir Alex Ferguson presented certificates of course completion at the graduation ceremony and gave an inspirational address outlining how his principles empowered him as a manager, making him aware of the needs and worth of all those who worked for him. He also stated that when his team lost, he would tell them off that evening, pointing out where they had gone wrong specifically and then would never talk of it again. But his office would be open on Monday morning to offer advice and help as needed. (Reminiscent of Doctrine and Covenants 121:43.)

Self-reliance materials are available to all Church members in wards and stakes. ■

mentor at-risk individuals, imparting and empowering skills and networks by using an Empowerment-Plus toolkit to be used in groups.

The test pilot for the initiative was conducted at the Catholic Chaplaincy of the University of Manchester. Three young adults from the Manchester YSA Ward (Marianne Orndal, Mark Ashton and Oliver Mann) volunteered to participate in the group, and three members of the Manchester England Stake (Angela Griffith, Matt Evans and Ben Dixon) acted as mentors for the group, along with five students from the Catholic community and four from the Muslim community.

Father Tim Byron of the Catholic Chaplaincy said, "So much goodness has come out from this, and it has been wonderful to see how much the group wanted to share and give to each other. The resources are so good, and we are excited to be taking them out to Beirut next month, and then we will be rolling them out to many countries."

Professor Grim stated, "So many people do interfaith dialogue, but this dialogue has the potential to change the world—it is not just empty talk but has real purpose. It has been wonderful to see these young people from different backgrounds finding common ground."

Hinna Parvez, co-ordinator of Manchester Empowerment-Plus, said, "I have been overwhelmed by the success of the pilot. It has been so worthwhile, and it has been fascinating to see it evolve."

Sister Griffith, a group mentor, stated, "When we first started the process, we

Plymouth Stake Sisters' Day Helps Local Charities

By Dorothy Martin

On 18th March a group of 80 younger and older women met together at the Plymouth England Stake Centre as they celebrated 175 years since the founding of

the women's organization of Relief Society. The theme of Relief Society is 'Charity Never Faileth', and certainly this was put into action on the day. The age of those in attendance ranged

from 8 years to the not-so-young, all working together with one purpose in mind, to help three local charities:

Age UK Plymouth—Craft packs for the elderly who live in three local care homes in Plymouth were created. The packs included felt animals, Easter and birthday cards for the elderly to assemble or create and Easter eggs for decorating.

Shekinah Mission in Devon—Packs for those who use the mission included essential basics, such as toiletries, warm hats, sweets and so on. Hand-made cushions were also donated for the new extension to the premises.

The Haven, Torquay, and St. Petroc's in Cornwall—Packs of essential items were put together for homeless people. Cards of inspiration and hope were created and inserted into each pack.

Finally, sweets, treats and planted seeds in pots were distributed to elderly and housebound members of the Church around the Plymouth area.

Naomi Harris, the stake Young Women president for Plymouth, made the following statement: "I just thought it was wonderful to see women of all ages working together with a common goal of reaching out to serve those in our local communities and within our Church. Those not in attendance served by donating items for the packs, experienced women taught younger volunteers how to sew pillowcases, and messages of hope and encouragement were written by old and young. The event had a lovely



FIONA IVES

Chrissie Edmonds (left) and Lucy Edmonds (right) at the Plymouth stake Sisters' Day

feeling of positivity and a reminder that we can all serve, no matter what our circumstances are". ■

NEWS FROM WALES

Knitting for Refugees by the Newcastle Emlyn Ward

By Oceane Kemp

Following a talk last summer by the Relief Society president of the Newcastle Emlyn Ward, President Amy Wilcox gave a lesson focussed on the talk 'I Was a Stranger' by Linda K. Burton, former Relief Society General President! During that lesson the sisters were invited to set a goal of knitting at least 50 items that would be useful to the refugees in Syria, such as scarves, hats and so on. The Spirit that day was strong, and the sisters willingly agreed to accept the challenge to help those in need.

For the next five months, the sisters made time in their busy lives and knitted. The young women were encouraged to join in and set one activity a month to spend time with the sisters to learn to knit. Some sisters, together with Primary children, met one afternoon a month to come together and knit either using modern looms or the more traditional way with needles. The time spent knitting helped the sisters relax, feel the Spirit, and let the love of the Saviour be shown through them

in practical ways. By the deadline of November, the sisters and young people had knitted together a total of 177 scarves, hats, blankets and jumpers. Not only had the sisters exceeded their goal and provided service to those in need but had also increased the temporal self-reliance of their families.

Surely it can be said of the women of Newcastle Emlyn that they did 'something extraordinary.'² ■

NOTES

1. See Linda K. Burton, "I Was a Stranger," *Ensign*, May 2016, 13–15.
2. Emma Smith, in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), xi.



Sisters of the Newcastle Emlyn Ward with the knitted items for refugees

Porthmadog Branch Open Its Doors

By Christopher Jones

Members of the Porthmadog Branch, Chester England Stake, celebrated the opening of their new meetinghouse by inviting the public to an open house, with special invitation to Mrs. Liz Saville-Roberts, MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd, and members of Porthmadog and Penrhyndeudraeth Town Councils. Displays in Welsh and English on family history, service in the community, families, humanitarian aid and the youth and women's programmes were on show around the building, with tours given by local members and missionaries.

"My overall impression of you and your new chapel is one of sheer joy,"

commented one visitor after attending the event.

Christopher Jones, currently serving in his 6th year as branch president, commented, "After many years of meeting in community venues in the area, from Barmouth to Penrhyndeudraeth, it is such a blessing to us to have a place of our own here in Porthmadog. The Church has been in the area since the late 1840s, and it is a special privilege to honour that legacy, as well as look to the

Mrs. Liz Saville-Roberts, MP, is presented with a pack of Church information by branch president Christopher Jones.



future. We have so much to offer the community, and now we have somewhere to do it.”

Mrs. Saville-Roberts spent considerable time in conversation with members and leaders. Along with other visitors, she was invited to make up a hygiene kit for a refugee, and in all, close to 50 kits were completed at the event. These were given to local refugee charity CEFN for transport to a camp in Greece. CEFN representative Caron Dukes, who attended the event, was delighted at the continued support. “The Church members all do such good work, not only with refugees but the homeless and elderly. I helped by knitting plastic carrier bags into blankets. It was only a row, but every little helps.”

Visitors were also invited to index genealogical records for the online database. Under the guidance of 14-year old Aedan Jones of Criccieth, both Mrs. Saville-Roberts and Mr. Selwyn Griffiths, chair of Porthmadog Town Council, indexed details of probate records from the 1700s, from Beddgelert, Dolwydellan and Trawsfynydd.

Some forty members of the congregation were available to explain their role and purpose and important beliefs. Through holding the open house, Porthmadog congregation members hope to have shared a little of what is important to them and how they serve in the communities in which they live. ■

Keeping the Faith—Glenys Bloodworth

By Pauline Evans

Glenys Bloodworth, who will be 86 later this year, was born in Blaina, Gwent, Wales. She is a member of the Merthyr Tydfil 1st Ward, Merthyr Tydfil Wales Stake, and is a convert of 8 years.

Her parents, Elsie and John Phillips, had a simple faith and brought her up to believe in a God who had created all things. Glenys met her husband, Graham, at a dance when she was 16 and he was six years older. He was just home on “demob” leave. They married just before Glenys’s 20th birthday and had 46 wonderful and blessed years together. Glenys attended Presbyterian chapel, and Graham respected her faith but visited the Presbyterian chapel only on special festival days. Yet his last words every night were “Said your prayers, love?”

Glenys says, “Thirteen years after Graham died, the elders came to my door. It was only two or three months after my Presbyterian chapel had closed. I think Heavenly Father knew I was ripe for harvesting. The elders were a joy, but I wasn’t ready to give up my oh-so-familiar faith! They tried so hard and I was very stubborn. When eventually I was persuaded to attend church, it was ‘Glenys, please will you come. Elder Davies is going home to America next week. He has to give a talk in church before he goes. He would be so happy if you would be there to hear him!’ Of course I went, and the only

times I have missed church since was during heavy snow and recently when I spent two months in hospital”. She was baptised in December 2009. “It was the start of a new life for me. I had a future, a dream of going to the temple and being sealed to my Graham—a future, and I was 78 years old!”

A year later the same elder who had baptised Glenys stood proxy when she was sealed to her husband, Graham, in the temple.

On the 5th November 2011, Aaron Jones, then the bishop of Glenys’s ward, issued a scripture reading and marking challenge for the Book of Mormon.

“Those of you who know me know I have an absolute horror of writing on books, any books, especially books of scripture. I told bishop I couldn’t accept the challenge, and he offered to print out the pages separately so that I could do it.

“I said, ‘No, Bishop, it will still be scriptures. But if I can prove that I have read it, will you accept that?’

“How are you going to do that?” he said.

“I thought, the Book of Mormon is not very big, I can write it! According to the reading schedule we were provided with, we should finish the book on the 4th March 2013. Well, I did finish before that date, and by this time I was addicted to this scripture copying, so I carried on through the



Sister Glenys Bloodworth

Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price and through the Articles of Faith. Then I did 'Preach My Gospel' and last, but certainly not least, the Bible. And all that took me until 12th July 2015. I spent 3 hours writing every day and often much more! I must admit the Bible was a real challenge!

"I was asked why I would want to write something which is already written. Well, I needed to know so much more than I did know. It seemed to me that this writing could be a good way to learn. I am so glad I have finished it, and I must say thank you, Bishop Aaron Jones, for giving me this chance to acquire more knowledge.

"I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church, and everything I have learned in the past few years has brought me such peace of mind and contentment that I long to pass on. I am so grateful for the gospel in my life and the knowledge that the Lord loves me and for the strength my dreams give me. I am a very happy Mormon!" ■

For the Strength of Youth

By James McCrudden

For those who know it well, the For the Strength of Youth (FSY) conference is a game changer; youth, young single adults, and teachers come together for a week of Christ-centred learning, socialisation and growth that can truly change the course of someone's life.

For those who don't know FSY so well, it can admittedly appear a little strange; what's with all the cheesy dancing? four hundred youth and YSA all in one building? You must be crazy! We want to invite those who haven't experienced FSY to come to know it and witness its changing influence. The promises of FSY are like many in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—if we will "experiment upon [the] word" (Alma 32:27) and have faith that we can learn and grow, miracles can and will happen for the youth and all those who are involved.

There are 3 week-long UK sessions of FSY in 2017 running back-to-back from the 5th-26th of August at Nottingham University; we need enthusiastic and kind YSA who are ready to learn and serve—particularly male YSA. Please see the website www.fsy-europe.org

for more details about the requirements to get involved as a counsellor at FSY and to submit applications. The For the Strength of Youth conference will be in its 11th year in the UK when we come together this summer—that's 11 years of life-altering experiences for which we are exceptionally grateful and proud, and we invite you to be an integral part.

No one comes away from FSY unchanged. There we learn to be kinder, more hopeful, and ever closer to the Saviour in an environment that is safe, welcoming, and yes—enthusiastic to the point of over-excitement! By the end of the week, we send home youth who have grown in friendships and testimony and who have gained incredible memories.

For myself, this will be my 4th year serving as FSY staff and my 7th experience overall. I can only add my witness to many others that I have felt the power of FSY and have been personally touched by the influence of the Holy Ghost that permeates there.

We look forward to meeting more of you and invite you to contact us should you have any questions. ■



Coventry Members Find a Name

By Neil Plumbley

Around sixty members of the Coventry England Stake recently came together for a temple and family history activity with one single purpose—to find the name of an ancestor that each could take to the temple.

The event was organised by Judith Macfarlane, the lead family history centre director. She said, “What a fantastic program this is! The promises that are ours are amazing as we strive to find a name, take it to the temple and then teach others to do the same.”

After opening presentations about signing up for partner website access, how to share temple cards with others and tagging and editing family photos, the attendees were split into groups based on their experience with family history. The two groups were led by family history consultants from units around the stake.

Both groups worked to find a name they could take to the temple using a variety of search methods, including descendency search on the FamilySearch website. On finding a name, the members were able to immediately print off the temple card and hang a leaf on a specially prepared tree before returning to their laptops to start again.

Lorraine Grant adding a leaf to the tree at the Coventry temple and family history activity



KENNETH ROWLEY

Within the hour, more than 30 new names were found, and those members who were unsuccessful went home with renewed enthusiasm to find a name later.

The event concluded with an activity about collecting family memories, and President Monson’s ‘Temples Are a Beacon’ video was shown. ■

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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