

AFRICA SOUTHEAST AREA LOCAL PAGES

AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Don't Forget to Pray

By Elder Dale G. Renlund, Area President

As my wife and I have traveled throughout sub-Saharan Africa and to the islands of the Indian Ocean, we have attended many Church meetings. We have heard talks and testimonies that have been inspiring and uplifting. Additionally, we have been deeply touched by the prayers we have heard. We have come to recognize that the Saints in the Africa Southeast Area know how to pray. I have learned much by listening to those prayers.

Natural and Instinctive Prayer

When I listen to our members pray, I feel as though they know to whom they are praying. That not only makes a big difference, it makes all of the difference. As stated in the Bible Dictionary: "As soon as we learn the true relationship in which we stand toward God . . . then at once prayer becomes natural and instinctive on our part" (Bible Dictionary, "Prayer"). For our Saints who understand that God is our Father and that we are His children, prayer does indeed seem natural and instinctive.

When a natural prayer is offered, content is more important than grammar. Fluency in a particular language is not necessary. Prayers do not need to be long to be effective. Expressing gratitude to our Heavenly Father for life and life's simple necessities invites the Spirit. I believe God loves hearing that someone is "so much grateful."

I have learned that asking God for specific blessings or specific answers to questions allows God to be more specific in His answers and blessings. As further stated in the Bible Dictionary: "Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is not to change

the will of God but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant but that are made conditional on our asking for them."

Purposeful Prayer

Mighty prayer leads to a mighty change of heart. Praying with all the energy of heart requires mental and emotional focus. Prayer is a form of work and is the way by which we obtain the highest of all blessings (see again the Bible Dictionary).

When we pray in the appropriate way, when we give adequate time to receive answers, and especially when we ponder the challenges facing us, we are sometimes inspired as to what we should pray for. This happened to the Nephite disciples of the Savior who prayed without ceasing, ". . . and they did not multiply many words, for it was given unto them what they should pray" (3 Nephi 19:24).

This inspired way of praying requires us to be repentant and worthy. The Lord said, "And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done. But know this, it shall be given you what you shall ask" (D&C 50:29-30).

Nephi knew that if he did the best he could, trying his utmost to live righteously, God would give him what he asked for if he did not ask amiss (see 2 Nephi 4:35). This means that aligning one's will to that of God allows God to respond to petitions. When our prayerful petitions align with God's will, we can receive what we seek. God granted that blessing to Nephi, son of Helaman, that he would receive what he asked for because God trusted



**Elder Dale G.
Renlund**

him to not ask for that which was “contrary” to God’s will (see Helaman 10:5).

Receiving Answers to Prayer

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught us how answers to prayers come. Understanding what Elder Scott taught enables us to have greater confidence in ourselves and in God. Elder Scott said:

“[God’s] answers will seldom come while you are on your knees praying, even when you may plead for an immediate response. . . . He will reply in one of three ways. First, you can feel the peace, comfort, and assurance that confirm that your decision is right. Or second, you can sense that unsettled feeling, the stupor of thought, indicating that your choice is wrong. Or third—and this is the difficult one—you can feel no response.

“What do you do when you have prepared carefully, have prayed fervently, waited a reasonable time for a response, and still do not feel an answer? You may want to express thanks when that occurs, for it is an evidence of His trust. When you are living worthily and your choice is consistent with the Savior’s teachings and you need to act, proceed with trust. As you are sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit, one of two things will certainly occur at the appropriate time: either the stupor of thought will come, indicating an improper choice, or the peace or the burning in the bosom will be felt, confirming that your choice was correct. When you are living righteously and are acting with trust, God will not let you proceed too far without a warning impression if you have made the wrong decision” (“Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 9, 10).

Elder Scott’s instruction helps us understand how the Lord answers prayers. Answers to prayers require not just effort on our part, but also patience. We must never get discouraged. Heavenly Father wants us to express our hopes

and our fears. He wants us to receive blessings. He wants us to pray.

Encouraging Prayer

Ironically, when we need to pray the most, we are sometimes least likely to pray. When the most challenging times have occurred in my life, I have sometimes not felt like praying or I have felt that my prayers were rather useless. Yet, I needed desperately to pray. I believe that the diminished desire to pray occurs most often when we have made mistakes, when we are angry, depressed, or emotionally hurt.

President Brigham Young’s counsel was wise and clear on this issue. He said, “It matters not whether you or I feel like praying, when the time comes to pray, pray. If we do not feel like it, we should pray till we do.” He said that we should pray even if we have “not [a single] particle of the spirit of prayer in [us],” that when it is the time and place to pray, we should simply tell our knees to bend and to do so at once. We should pray even if all we can say is, “God have mercy on me a sinner.” President Young also taught, as only he could, “If the Devil says you cannot pray when you are angry, tell him it is none of his business and pray until that species of insanity is dispelled and serenity is restored to the mind” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, Chapter 6: “The Communication between God and Man,” p. 45).

Experience has taught me, and my testimony is, that Nephi was right when he said, “For if you would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray. But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint” (2 Nephi 32:8–9).

If we do so, our Heavenly Father will pour out His blessings upon us, we will draw closer to Him, and we will be filled with the hope and peace that comes only through His Son, Jesus Christ. ■

I Chose to Serve

By Elder Maer Emanuel Gonçalves de Carvalho

My mother was baptized in Portugal in 1989 by a missionary who devoted two years of his life to serve the Lord and bless my family.

My brother and I enjoyed listening to Book of Mormon stories which my mother shared with us when we were little. She used to put Book of Mormon stories on the walls of our room and we loved them! We had a little box where we put our money for our missions when we grew up.

We had family prayers every day and my mom read the scriptures to us. We sat in the living room every Sunday morning from 9:00 to 12:00 for our Sunday meeting (because there was no church in Dundo City, a little and lovely town in northeast Angola) to pray, sing, and listen to the stories that Mom read to us.

I came to Luanda from Dundo to study when I was 14 and attended church there. I studied the Book of Mormon and gained a testimony of it when I was 16.

When I was 18, I finished high school and was part of a music group called Dream Boyz Angola. The band was very successful, and I did not even think of serving a mission.

Everything changed because I had a testimony and I had to share it.

I submitted my mission papers and received my call in April 2012 to serve in New Zealand in July 2012. The dates began to change because I could not receive my visa. I fasted and prayed but did not receive an answer.

I decided to concentrate on my music group, and our success increased to such an extent that we were known throughout the whole country.

In November 2012 I received news that my visa had been denied. I thought of giving up serving my mission. A few days later I received the news that my mission had changed to South Africa Cape Town



PHOTOGRAPH BY SISTER JANET REBER

Mission, but now I no longer had the interest to serve.

My band was approached by many record companies with offers that could help me and my family financially. I had to make the final decision to serve or not. I knew I had to serve and could feel it!

I came across a young boy whom I introduced to the Church and baptized. Being in his presence motivated me to think of serving my mission again!

I began to reflect on the love Heavenly Father has for me, how blessed my family is to have the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, and what my life would have been like if that missionary had not made the decision to serve.

I prayed a lot and read the scriptures daily.

I chose to serve a mission because I know that this gospel is true and could not keep its blessings only to my family; I also had to share it with the children of God that needed the truth.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:81 says: “Behold, I sent to you to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbour.”

Serving a mission is a commandment and a privilege which gives one the opportunity to grow spiritually and be the person the Lord desires him or her to be.

I know God gives commandments to His children so they can be happy; to serve is not just a commandment, it's a mission.

Missionaries leave their eternal families behind for two years so other families can be forever. ■

Elder de Carvalho holds up his genealogy.

Bloemfontein District South Africa Becomes a Stake

By Elder Randall Knudsen

On May 19, 2013, members of the Bloemfontein District in South Africa gathered for their conference with great anticipation and excitement. Elder Carl B. Cook, First Counselor in the Africa Southeast Area Presidency, presided over the conference assisted by Elder Jacques A. van Reenen, Area Seventy. The

building was filled to capacity.

Elder van Reenen announced that with the creation of the stake, everyone holding a district calling was automatically released. The branch presidencies of the five units that became wards were released, and bishops would be called. In addition, Elder van Reenen presented the

names of the new stake presidency for the Bloemfontein South Africa Stake and they were sustained as follows: Gerrit Grobler, president; Thabiso Isaac Ntsomotho, first counselor; and Newton Thamsanqa Nyatshoba, second counselor.

Kamohelo Godfrey Mejaele has been called as a stake clerk and Tiiisetso Stephen Motsamai as a stake executive secretary.

The members were commended on following the directions of their leaders by

*Members
of the new
Bloemfontein
South Africa
Stake*



PHOTOGRAPH BY SISTER PATRICIA KYLE



The newly formed stake presidency from left to right: Thabiso Isaac Ntsomotho, Gerrit Grobler, Newton Thamsanqa Nyatshoba

increasing their faith and keeping the commandments. They were encouraged to catch the “missionary wave” and prepare to go and serve missions so they would be carrying their responsibilities as a new stake. They were also encouraged to attend the temple and to go forward and claim their blessings through obedience.

The following units are now part of the new Bloemfontein South Africa Stake: Blomanda Ward, Bloemfontein Ward, Kimberley Ward, Rocklands Ward, Thaba Nchu Ward, Botshabelo Branch, Leribe Branch, Maseru Branch, Masianokeng Branch, Phahameng Branch, Welkom Branch.

The Bethlehem Branch and the Phuthaditjhaba Branch were transferred from the Bloemfontein South Africa District and became mission branches in the South Africa Durban Mission. ■

Water Wells Dug at Idugo Island

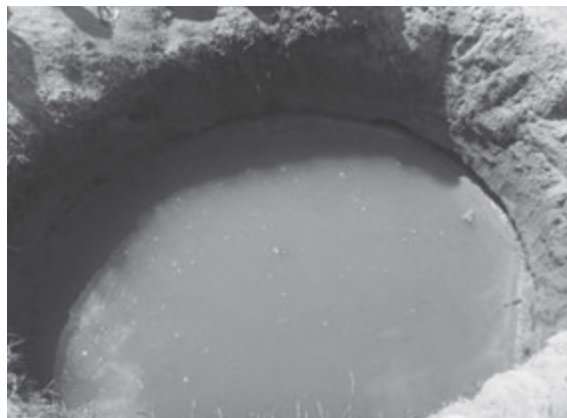
By Elder and Sister Louthan with Elder and Sister Wollenzien

On November 28, 2012, water wells were handed over to the community of the Idugo Island at an official ceremony.

Idugo is a balmy tropical island on the Mozambican coastline in the mouth of the Sopinho River. This island has no running water, electricity, roads or vehicles of any kind. People travel to and from this island in dugout canoes or hand-made boats.

The people have been getting their water for hundreds of years from shallow hand-dug wells which are continually filled with silt and debris, providing muddy, hard-to-access water. During the rainy season, water becomes much polluted from the runoff caused by the rain. Cholera, diarrhea and other diseases result from the contaminated water.

A typical muddy well the community of Idugo used before the construction of the new wells.



Humanitarian missionaries Elder and Sister Wollenzien were alerted to this island’s need through another senior couple, the Osborns, who were serving in Quelimane, Mozambique. The Wollenziens visited the island with Elder and Sister Merkley, water specialists for the Church. They met jointly with the leaders of the island to discuss the situation and agreed on a solution that would bring the island clean water:

1. The Church would provide all the materials and tools and instruction needed to build 10 shallow, cement-lined, hand-dug wells with steel lids. They would also provide hygiene and sanitation training to the eight different villages; two villages needed two wells. The 10 wells would serve over 1,000 people each.

A newly finished well.





PHOTOGRAPH BY SISTER DONNA VIOLEZZIEN

Members of the community gather around their new well at the closing ceremony.

2. The people of each village would provide all the labor necessary for the building of the wells.
3. The project had to be done in the very driest season of the year when the water table was lowest to assure adequate supplies in the future.

Members of the Church from Maputo and Florencio Rocha Amizade from Quelimane (with family residing on the island), were contracted to teach and

help each village build its wells.

Many attended from the communities, and government officials came from Zambezia Province and the City of Quelimane. Each community was given a stamped certificate verifying their ownership of the entire well.

At the closing ceremony several local men expressed appreciation for learning how to make bricks, as well as how to work with cement and reinforcing steel. They were also grateful for learning to use a level, shovel,

tape measure, saws, and all the everyday tools they would use in construction. They knew that there were other jobs they would be able to get with their newly gained skills.

The people on the island gained another important skill—that of working together as communities.

Recent reports after a heavy rainy season indicate that since December 2012 there has been no diarrhea or cholera in the villages with the wells. ■

Sister Missionaries Outnumber Elders

By **Sister Janet Reber**

For the first time in the history of the South African Missionary Training Centre, sister missionaries outnumber the elders. ■

Sister	Graves, Jessica Marie	South Africa Johannesburg Mission	United States
Sister	Ntuli, Nonhlahla Nomahlubi	Zambia Lusaka Mission	South Africa
Sister	Gehring, Chelsea Corinna	South Africa Johannesburg Mission	United States
Sister	Clifford, Kaitlyn Beth	South Africa Johannesburg Mission	United States

Sister	Nyambita, Magreth Ayo	South Africa Johannesburg Mission	Tanzania
Sister	Webster, Kelsey Jo	Zambia Lusaka Mission	United States
Sister	Jaker, Phoena	Zambia Lusaka Mission	Uganda
Elder	Pauni, Latu Ikkakoula	Zambia Lusaka Mission	United States
Elder	Adams, Austin	England London Mission	Cape Town
Elder	Dettamanti, Rocky Dante	Zambia Lusaka Mission	United States
Elder	Kolditz, Devin Andrew	South Africa Johannesburg Mission	United States

From left to right back: Elder Pauni, Elder Adams, Elder Dettamanti, Elder Kolditz; left to right middle: Sister Graves, Sister Ntuli, Sister Gehring, Sister Clifford, Sister Nyambita, Sister Webster, Sister Jaker; seated: Sister Reber and President Reber



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK WOCKE

South African Missionary Training Centre Gets New Soccer Field

By Sister Janet Reber

The soccer field was started February 22, 2013, and completed on May 17, 2013. The work was contracted out to a private company.

The soccer field will be used by the SAMTC missionaries, the Roodepoort, Florida, and Ruimsig Wards, Johannesburg elders on P-day, young

single adults (YSA), and the Roodepoort Stake. Multistake activities will also be held periodically on the property, so many will benefit from the new field.

Missionaries at the MTC carried the goal posts onto the field and were ready to play soccer immediately. ■

Missionaries were excited for some fun playtime.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SISTER JANET REBER



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SISTER JANET REBER

Elder and sister missionaries put the new soccer field to the test.