

# AFRICA WEST AREA

## AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

### Rely on the Atonement of Jesus Christ

By Elder Edward Dube

Second Counselor in the Africa West Area Presidency

Over two decades ago, I visited a sister in a Lusaka, Zambia hospital. She was in hospital because of her son who was in critical condition. Her son survived a fatal accident which claimed the life her husband, who died on the spot. I had traveled from Zimbabwe to console and give a word of comfort to this sister who was serving as the institute of religion instructor. Upon greeting and extending my deepest sympathy to Sister Carolyn Sifaya for the loss of her husband and for a dying son who was lying on bed almost lifeless, she smiled and said, “Brother Dube, I am grateful for the privilege we had as a family to be sealed in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is a great blessing in our lives.”

Sister Sifaya’s reliance on the Atonement of Jesus Christ enabled her to carry on when her burdens seemed too heavy and her pain too intense to bear. She truly depended upon “the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8). “It is through the grace of the Lord Jesus, made possible by His

atoning sacrifice, that mankind will be raised in immortality, every person receiving his body from the grave in a condition of the everlasting life. It is likewise through the grace of the Lord that individuals, through faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins, receive strength and assistance to do good works that they otherwise would not be able to maintain if left to their own means. This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts.”<sup>1</sup> Relying on the Atonement is the key to our success in this life. “Only through the Savior’s grace and mercy can we become clean from sin so that we can live with God again. This is possible through exercising faith in Jesus Christ, repenting, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.”<sup>2</sup> Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that “the enabling power of the Atonement strengthens us to do and be good and to serve beyond our own individual desire and natural capacity.”<sup>3</sup>



Edward Dube

Sister Sifaya’s son died a few days after my hospital visit. She assumed the role of a single parent in the most amazing way, using her meager salary as a school teacher to triple her income. She converted part of her house into a preschool, enrolled children from a nearby community, and worked day and night to ensure that her children got the necessary education in life. She continued serving faithfully in the Church, inspiring the institute students who attended her class. Her children excelled in education and some of them went overseas to pursue their studies. Well! Would you not call that success in life?



**President and Sister Kaku; Mission President, Port Harcourt Nigeria Mission.**

I have seen and observed how total reliance on the Christ's Atonement inspires others to discover who they really are, and how it unlocks the inner power, a driving force that aids them in their personal quest to do something about the things that matter most to them. My life has been greatly enhanced through this reliance, even in the midst of challenges including my father's untimely death and my mother's struggle with cancer, leading to her death, which were very painful experiences for me. The anguish I

have felt and observed comes from the pain of experiences that have taught me the need to keep my daily actions in line with what I hold to be most important in life. I am hopeful about the healing power that comes from knowing who I am and striving each day to live in harmony with the Lord's will. Picture with me, if you will, a loving Savior of the world with hands outstretched, inviting you and me: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28–30).

The Lord's invitation to come unto Him, to take His yoke through serving others, and to learn of Him, if applied constantly on a daily basis, will be beneficial and helpful in your life's quest. I am convinced that if you will test this, you will discover a powerful affirmation of the potential and power that lie within you. Such insights and experiences will shape not only your life, but also the lives of your children and grandchildren. Anthony and Doe Kaku, who are currently serving as mission president and companion in the Nigeria Port Harcourt Mission, shared that experiences with the



**Walter Ahadome, Madina 1<sup>st</sup> Ward.**

Atonement in their lives and in their children's lives exemplify the generational process which can be passed on throughout one's posterity. They explain, "We decided very early to make the daily studying of the Book of Mormon and the application of the principles we found in it a lifetime pursuit. This encouraged us to read and reread the Book of Mormon again and again since we got married and has helped influence our children to learn to sacrifice and devote their time for the Lord's work; ultimately resulting in our serving missions at the moment. Reading the Book

of Mormon has helped us have a better and clearer understanding of the Atonement of the Savior and has drawn us closer to Him. In applying the principles of the Atonement, chief of which are sacrifice and service, our children have learned from our example and have applied the principles in their lives.”

Walter Ahadome, a widower who is currently serving as a high priests group leader in the Madina First Ward, Accra Ghana Adenta Stake, has been applying the Atonement of Jesus Christ in his life through daily scripture study and weekly family home evenings. As he taught his children these principles, they were guided and inspired to

make good choices. He is now teaching the same principles to his grandchildren. He shares his experience: “Applying the Atonement of Jesus Christ in my life is influencing the choices of my grandchildren. In our weekly family home evening, we teach them how to love and know Christ. They hear us talk passionately about Jesus Christ, and they observe our reverence for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in our prayers and in sacrament meetings. It is important to teach children early in life to come unto Christ.”

While grappling with and teaching correct principles to our children over the years, my wife, Naume, and I have gained

a deeper appreciation of the vital role of how centering our lives on the Atonement of Jesus Christ has brought meaning in our lives and helped us understand more clearly that our governing values lie close to the heart of who we are as children of a loving Heavenly Father who “gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Will you rely on the Atonement of Jesus Christ and find peace, joy, and success in this life and in the life to come? ■

#### NOTES

1. Bible Dictionary, “Grace.”
2. *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 51.
3. David A. Bednar, “The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Ensign*, April 2012, 42–43; *Liahona*, 14–15.

## OUR HERITAGE

# A “Right Turn” That Made All the Difference

By Fred Antwi

**April 1986:** Chief Nana Asomobore the second—chief of a tribe in Ghana, passed away. Attending his brother’s funeral was Fred Antwi, who had a year prior been baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The burial would take place in six months, and, unknown to Fred, plans were being made by his sister, the queen mother, for Fred to take over the position of chief of the tribe. Just prior to the evening of the burial, Fred’s younger sister



Fred Antwi

came to inform him and said, “Do you know what plans the family has for you?” He replied, “No, not until I’m told.” She replied, “You are going to be the next of kin (new chief).” Fred was surprised and said emphatically, “No! My religion will not permit me.”

## Being a Chief in Ghana

To serve as a chief is an honor. A chief is respected in his villages and is the first contact man for the large extended family. The chief is the overall boss, and when he speaks, the people will do as they are instructed. A chief receives financial support, and whatever he feels he needs, it will be provided to him.

## Brother Antwi's Decision—the "Right Turn"

Fred relates the following upon hearing his sister's news: "That same evening, I took my car and drove to one of our elders in the village called Anyinamso, in the Ashanti Region near Kumasi, to inform him of what I had heard. He told me, 'Kofi, I am part and parcel of the plans. I know what they are saying, so there is nothing I can do to take you out from being a chief.' I said, 'Well Nana, you know I am a Christian and my religion will not permit me to be a chief because there are a whole lot of things that we do in terms of pouring of libations, slaughtering of all animals and other things which to me might not all go well.' Nana replied, 'Well, go back to your elder people and tell them that you are a Christian and from what you have said you can never be a chief.'

"I went back to inform the elders, but they ignored my message. The corpse was to be buried midnight, so around 7:00 p.m. we were on our way from Mpesetia to bury my late brother in Kumasi, at a place called Pankronu. I was driving along with all of the other family members in their own cars, and upon reaching Kwadaso, instead of turning left with the others, *I turned right leading to Cape Coast and sped off.*"

For the first six months there was no contact from the extended family. Fred later learned that had he gone to the burial, he would have been named as the next chief, putting him in a very difficult situation. He learned in time that his nephew, son of the queen mother, was named the next chief.

## Conversion—The Gospel Will Change Your Life for Good

What compelled Fred Antwi to give up this position of honor—one which many may esteem very desirable? Fred had found The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Firm in his testimony of the principles and doctrines of the gospel, Fred's course in life was changed. Brother Antwi had received the priesthood and was fully engaged in his calling as branch president, dedicated to the service of the Lord. Fred Antwi has continued to serve in district and stake presidencies, and as a couple, he and Sister Antwi were the first full-time West African missionaries called to serve in the Accra Ghana Temple. Currently, he serves as a historian in the Africa West Area.

## Brother Antwi Shares His Testimony of the Priesthood

"It was in this church that I first heard about this word *priesthood*. I was baptized and confirmed the same day, and the following week I was ordained a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood. When I was ordained, I was given some assignments as a priest and I practiced this until I was interviewed and ordained as an elder three months later. This priesthood of which we are talking is a gift and to me it's a privilege to have it. This is the priesthood which our Father in Heaven had in creating all that we see here on earth. And the priesthood has helped my family. Whenever any of them gets sick, I lay my hands upon his or her head, pray for him or her, and he or she receives healing. This priesthood is indeed true, and as we remain obedient and faithful, the priesthood is something that, if we truly and worthily administer, will help us in our families."

One does not have to be with Brother Fred Antwi for more than a few moments before his wonderful broad smile appears. His love for the gospel and the lasting change it has brought to him and his family's life is reflected in that smile. Truly, he made the "right" decision. ■

# The Dornor Family's Conversion

By Elder Truman R. Ballard

Ghana Accra Mission 2012–2014

When I met Albert Dornor, he had been taught by the missionaries for almost a year, had continually attended church, and loved the gospel. However, there was one struggle remaining: to be baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

As I met with him to help him make the covenant of baptism, he continued to postpone and decline to be baptized. It seemed that no matter how strong the Spirit was, or how great of a lesson we had, things weren't improving. It got to the point where every missionary has to decide to give their investigators time and spend their time with others, or to keep using the Lord's time as a missionary to teach those they have.

My companion, Elder Joseph Reed, and I decided we needed to give him some time, and as we did so, he continued to come to church; however, he still didn't progress. We continued to visit and encourage him, but we didn't use the Lord's valuable time to teach him.

About three months had passed, and we decided it was time to teach him again. As we did, surprisingly he told us how it had become apparent that

the Spirit wasn't constantly with him, but he felt it when we were around. One thing led to another, and miraculously he agreed to be baptized! On the other hand, he wouldn't commit to a date.

Taking a step back in time, about a month before accepting to be baptized, Albert's wife, Zenabu, was preparing to give birth. She was a first-time mother, a devoted Muslim, and nervous about her upcoming childbirth. At this time, Elder Reed and I were privileged to go proselyting with Elder Don R. Clarke of the Seventy. Elder Reed and I used this opportunity to take him to meet with our dear brother Albert. As we were meeting, Elder Clarke was strongly impressed to give our dear Sister Zenabu a blessing. She was blessed to give birth safely, and that the baby would be healthy and strong. She was also blessed that she would feel at peace and know of our Heavenly Father's love for her.

Sister Zenabu gave birth, all went well, and nothing more was thought of that visit to the Dornor family. Three months after the birth of their baby, after Albert had accepted to be baptized but wouldn't choose a date, Sister Zenabu showed up for sacrament meeting! It was quite a shock,

but rather a pleasant shock for a missionary.

After church we arranged our schedule to meet with her and her husband to see what created the desire in Sister Zenabu to attend church, because before that she hadn't had much of a desire to learn with us, and she was a faithful and devout Muslim.

As we went to visit her, we were surprised to hear from her husband, the literacy class teacher, and the Relief Society president that Sister Zenabu had born a very powerful testimony during both literacy class and Relief Society at church that day. We asked them to expound upon it, as Sister Zenabu didn't speak English, and we couldn't fully understand her Twi.

We were told that the day we went with Elder Clarke to give her a blessing was the day before she gave birth, which she was extremely nervous about. She had prayed to Allah (God) for peace. She had been told by the doctors that she would need a surgery (C-section) and that her blood count was low so she would need to be given blood. This only added to her anxiety about childbirth and brought anything but peace to her heart.

As we gave her a blessing, she said that she felt an immediate peace, and that she was no longer nervous for what lay ahead, as she felt something telling her deep inside that everything would be OK.

She then continued to tell us how when she went the next day to give birth that, to the shock of the nurses at the hospital, the surgery and blood were unnecessary.

Sister Zenabu said that at that very moment she gave birth, she remembered the peace she felt in her blessing, and how none of the previously stated procedures in the hospital were necessary. She came to know and feel that God does love her, and that His power must be and is only in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She told everyone there that “because I now know this, I am joining God’s church.”

As we heard this, we were overcome with love and gratitude for our Savior Jesus Christ and Father in Heaven, and both of our testimonies were strengthened, especially that God

answers the prayers of ALL His children, despite the religion or depth of belief that they have.

After this amazing experience, miracles began to unfold in the Dornor household as Sister Zenabu desired to be baptized. While she was anxiously preparing to do so, the Lord blessed her and strengthened her ability to learn English. As Zenabu was learning English and preparing to be baptized, her husband’s heart was coming around, and he also accepted a date to be baptized, although it was a month after his wife.

Miraculously, both Zenabu and Albert were baptized on their set dates, and they are both very committed members of the Lord’s fold here in Ghana, holding a handful of callings and magnifying each of them in every perspective.

It’s amazing to see the Lord’s hand in His work. Through thick or thin, His work will progress, and He always has His timing to bring His children that He has prepared unto His fold here on the earth. As we all learn to identify and accept the Lord’s timing in our lives as that is when miracles begin to unfold. I know that God is a God of miracles, that He loves us, and that He is always moving His work forward in countless ways, at diverse moments. I know that God hears and answers ALL of His children’s prayers. I know that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world and that He loves each and every one of us and He is there for us. I know that He lives, and that His Church today is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■

## YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS

# Liberia Young Single Adult Summit: Strong and Courageous

By Elder Denney L. Berrett

July 11 and 12 saw 173 young single adults from Liberia assemble at Ricks Institute in Virginia, Liberia, for the first Young Single Adult Summit ever held in Liberia. Each branch in the country had at least one person attend. Many friendships were made, and all had a great experience being

with other members of the Church and enjoying the beautiful setting of Ricks.

Those attending were provided great food, inspiring presentations on the theme “Strong and Courageous,” and fun activities. The program began with an orientation to Ricks Institute and the schedule for the Summit. A get-acquainted game was played to help everyone become familiar with one another. Everyone was divided into two groups—the red group and the blue group. They stayed with their group to play games and listen to speaker presentations.



The participants heard several motivating presentations. Sister Precious Freeman gave instruction on “Marriage and Family,” and Brother Nelson Kamayan spoke on “For the Strength of Youth.”

Games and activities were enjoyed by the young single adults. The games and activities included three-legged races, a spaghetti-noodle game, a balloon-cup game, a spoon-lime relay race, the “Master, Master” clapping game, and football (soccer). Time was also provided for everyone to mingle and make new friends and acquaintances. Many agreed that the opportunity to mix and mingle was a blessing to them.

The participants had the wonderful opportunity to hear from Elder Terrence Vinson, First Counselor in the Africa West Area Presidency, as well as President Roger Kirkham, president of the Liberia Monrovia Mission. It was a blessing for the YSA to have these two great priesthood leaders attend and share their powerful testimonies and love of the gospel.

The YSA were also inspired by Sister Lillian Martino, a young lady born in Ghana and later adopted by a Latter-day Saint family in the United States. She related her life story and how she has started a foundation called “Friends for Friends” which will help needy children in Ghana. She inspired the YSAs to set goals and work toward them.

The following are some of the comments given by attendees:

Brother Boakai Kamara said: “The talks and games were uplifting and fun. Meeting new people was so good. The Summit has motivated my behavior and strengthened my conversion. It has helped me cultivate my love and respect, and by doing so will help me come out with flying colors.”

Sister Angelina Kortor appreciated the words on dress and modesty and how applying those principles will appropriately show respect for Heavenly Father.

Brother Umaru Sesay made a comment that was shared by many others when he said that he was “grateful to come to the first ever Young Single Adult Summit in Liberia.”

Sister Grace Harris replied: “I enjoyed all the speakers, and Sister Freeman and Lillian Martino inspired me.”

Brother Emmanuel Paul said: “This was a great day! I was very inspired by Elder Vinson’s talk and to know that he was called as a Seventy. I felt the Spirit in this gathering.”

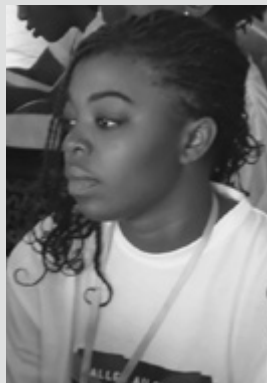
Sister Queenie Tugbeh summed up what many said when she said: “Being with the YSA of the Church and having an emphasis on the commandments was a highlight for me.”

The first Young Single Adult Summit in Liberia provided the opportunity to make new friendships, hear inspiring words to strengthen testimonies, have fun, and eat good food. ■

## Values I will strive to improve in 2015

### Lucidine G., 14, Riviera 1st Ward, Cocody Stake, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

For the year 2015 to come, I would like to improve myself in paying my tithing. I would also like to be a worthy and honest young woman. Above all I would like to magnify my calling and study the scriptures more, because I have to admit that it is something that I do not always do. I commit to work on those values.



### Phillipe B., 16, Abobo Ward, Abobo Stake, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

For the Year 2015, I would like to increase my knowledge of the scriptures because they contain the words of Christ. The words of Christ tell us what to do to come unto him to be more like him. To achieve that goal, I will focus on scriptures Study and attend morning Seminary. ■



## DOCTORS TIPS ON EBOLA

### Do's and Don'ts for Ebola

By Elder Grant Hill, MD

Area Medical Advisor, Africa West

**E**bola is a viral disease that is thought to be transmitted from infected bats to monkeys, gorillas, and humans. The current epidemic has a fatality rate of 52%, not the 90% reported in the media. The risk of acquiring infection is low and can essentially be eliminated by not coming into contact with an ill person's blood or bodily fluids, infected bush meat, or sick wildlife (especially bats, monkeys, and gorillas). This is NOT an airborne virus.

#### DO

1. Wash hands frequently with soap.
2. Use soap, bleach, sunlight, and drying for any dirty clothes; this easily kills the virus. A washing machine kills the virus.

3. Carry on with normal activity—you cannot get ebola by handling money, buying local bread, or swimming in a pool.

#### DO NOT

1. Touch very sick people without protection (gloves/masks/eye protection/gowns).
2. Handle a dead person without protection.
3. Eat or touch undercooked bush meat.
4. Touch bats, monkeys, or gorillas.

You will not become ill with Ebola if you do not come in contact with the body fluids of someone who is ill with Ebola. With proper precautions you will be safe. ■

## SUBMISSIONS FOR THE LIAHONA INSERT PAGES AND AREA WEB PAGES

We invite you to write and submit faith-promoting or testimony-strengthening stories or events that will be of general interest to the Saints in West Africa that we can use in the *Liahona* inserts or on the Area websites. Please email them to: [africawestwebsite@ldschurch.org](mailto:africawestwebsite@ldschurch.org)

Please include the following information:

- The name of the person who wrote the article
- Your contact information (telephone number and e-mail address)
- A high-resolution photo ■



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