

Mission Reports to the High Council

2017

January – May

Stephen and Terri DeJohn
England London Mission
2nd Ward

We served in Records Preservation at the National Archives. Since this was a government facility, we could not proselyte. However, we shared a lot about beliefs because many of the employees were curious about why we were volunteering. We grew very close to many of those we worked with every day. They were very kind to us and showed us treasured documents held at the Archives like their copies of the Declaration of Independence. The senior missionaries serving in Family Search were also in the same building and we were included in their activities and staff meetings and became close friends. We worked from 9-5 in the Archives Monday through Friday but on Saturdays we were free to explore London and we had a wonderful time learning about the history of our Mother country.

Our greatest experiences occurred in the Lea Valley ward where we were assigned. It was an hour and a half from our flat by bus, two subways and a mile walk. We loved the people and felt their love for us. We taught the youth and together studied the Book of Mormon.

Elder DeJohn: I was able to baptize a convert on the 24th anniversary of my own baptism. I was also able to confirm a new member who had been taught by the sister missionaries. I joined the church as an adult and although I had served as bishop, this was the first time I prepared the sacrament in sacrament meeting. It was a very sacred experience.

Sister DeJohn: I came to know that the Lord knew I was there when I noted that the death records I was filming were those people from a cholera epidemic that led Dr. John Snow to determine that this disease was spread by water. I had studied this event in high school and was witnessing the devastation. Then two weeks later, an unusual letter, which fell from a book, drew my attention to the death record of the Dr. Snow. It was though my Father in Heaven said, "Here, I thought you might like to see this."

Sister DeJohn's testimony: I know that I am a daughter of God and that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I can return to live with Him again. This knowledge gives me purpose and direction. It also brings great peace. As my faith in my Savior increases, I am able to trust that every experience I have can teach me something that will bring me closer to Him. I see this knowledge as a great gift I can share with others, that they too may find peace and happiness in this increasingly difficult world. I am grateful for a living prophet whom I support completely and for this the Church of Jesus Christ, who is at the helm. I love the Book of Mormon and find answers to my questions there. I have loved serving with my husband in the shortest year of my life, as time has flown by. I am grateful that I can claim the blessings of safety and protection

that were given to our family as we left and know that the Lord will continue to bless them as we serve.

Elder De John's testimony: I have a testimony of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the hands of the Lord's prophet Joseph Smith and the translation of the Book of Mormon. The truth of this has been impressed upon me even more in this mission as we studied the Book of Mormon with the Youth of Lea Valley Ward, as sister DeJohn and I read its pages daily along with our daily prayers. Through this mission, it was impressed upon me even more than ever before that the great apostasy is real

as we learned of corruption of many religions including the creation of the Church of England, developed by King Henry the VIII so he could create his own rules and doctrines, rather than the Lord's Doctrine given through His prophets.

I have a testimony of the Plan of Salvation and the Savior's Atonement. This had been impressed upon me even more through this mission as I was able to baptize a convert, Bless the Sacrament for the first time in Sacrament Meeting, and while filming the death records of an "unknown soldier" feeling through the Spirit of the Lord that the Savior knew this individual and atoned for his sins as well as my own.

I have a testimony of the importance of giving all we can to the Lord (by helping those beyond the veil). I have a testimony of the importance of serving a mission, as it brings one closer to the Lord and serving and loving others.

McKay Fackrell
Australia Melbourne Mission
1st Ward

The Australia Melbourne Mission was a wonderful place. As a Chinese missionary I was mostly around the Chinese people and the heart of the city. It was a beautiful wonderful place, and I love the people. Since the Chinese culture is predominately atheist we teach from the basics (and since my Chinese was not good). They are longing for this message, and I always felt blessed to help them find that in their lives.

In one of my areas we were having a hard time finding investigators. As we were calling one day through our Area Book we called Alan. He was reading in the Bible (the story of Peter sinking) right when we called. He was praying for a church to join. The next day we met, and thirteen days or so later he was baptized. Alan has already been baptized for over a year and is still faithful in the gospel.

I am grateful for this church. I know the gospel to be true. Heavenly Father lives and loves me, and through his son's Atoning sacrifice I can be happy. I love the Plan of Salvation, it is perfect. I am thankful for my trials and struggles. I know the Lord will provide a way.

Thomas Fackrell
Australia Brisbane Mission
1th Ward

I served in the Chinese program. The majority of our teaching was done to Chinese university Students and other foreigners. Our greatest service opportunities was helping students with their English. There is only one main area where many Chinese people live permanently, but the main way we found people to teach was through street contacting at malls. Brisbane probably has the fewest Chinese people among the Chinese-speaking calls.

In 3 Nephi 7, Nephi preaches to the wicked people not long before the coming of Christ. In verse 18 it says that his “faith on the Lord Jesus Christ was so great” that it was not possible for the people to disbelieve his words. After teaching an atheist Chinese student, Sara, for many weeks, I remember in one lesson I bore my testimony very strongly that she could know for herself that God was real. After a bit of a pause she finally replied, “...I...believe you.” Immediately I thought to 3 Nephi 7:18 and I felt the Spirit very strongly. (then I got transferred)

I know my Heavenly Father lives and loves me. I know he has a big plan for me, so He sent His Son. I know Jesus is the Son of God and my triumphant Redeemer who lives today. I know Joseph Smith saw them, and that he was a true prophet. I know the Book of Mormon is true. I know we are led by true prophets today, just like in the primitive church. It’s all true! I know these things for myself, independent of any man.



Jim and Rosalind Hoggan
MLS (Member Leader Support) Mission
2nd Ward

We served as full time missionaries in the Salt Lake South Mission. We attended the MTC in Provo for a week to help prepare us to serve in the wards in the Sandy Willow Creek Stake. Our assignment was to find and teach less active members and nonmembers. We worked closely with the young elders, with ward mission leaders and bishops. We attended conferences at the mission office, district and zone meetings with other MLS couples and the younger elders and sisters. We regularly attended Sacrament Meetings as well as Ward Council Meetings in the wards of our stake. The individual Ward mission leaders were very helpful in taking us to homes of less active members in their respective wards. We worked with many less active members in the stake. Our High Council Advisor, Steve Glick, was a great support

One of the people we worked with was Hans who had not been to church for twenty years. He accepted our challenge to attend Sacrament meeting for at least three times and his ward members welcomed him. He is now attending Sacrament meeting on a regular basis. Another person we worked with from the mid-singles ward has come back into activity. Brittany met with us and the elders on a regular basis for many months. She had become totally inactive as a teenager eighteen years ago. She is now preparing to go to the temple and receive her endowments. The Sunday that Brittany was able to take the Sacrament again, she asked us and the young elders to sit with her. It was a special experience for her and for us.

We both have strong testimonies of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that the keys of the Priesthood are again upon the earth. We have felt the Spirit many times as we have worked with the less-active members and nonmembers of the Willow Creek stake.

Jacob Neis Jensen
Denmark, Copenhagen Mission
? Ward

The mission consists of Denmark, Iceland, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. There are missionaries only on Iceland and Denmark. There are 5 million people in Denmark and 5,000 members of the church. The region is traditionally Lutheran, but essentially culturally atheist. Although most people say they are atheist, the Danish people have something deep in them that tells them there is something more. Although they are very secular they are extremely charitable and friendly.

The most sacred moments on my mission were always during my morning studies. One time in particular was while I was pondering eternal families. Through a series of promptings and feelings, I experienced the Holy Ghost in such a way that allowed me to receive a strong testimony of the eternal family, something I will never be able to deny.

Christ's Atonement was the most important event in his ministry, but another amazing part of his ministry was in his acts of service and the charity he manifested throughout. He showed us how to be happy. The Book of Mormon is true, Joseph Smith did not write it. The Holy Ghost is a real spiritual presence that is sent from God to guide us and comfort us when we need it.



Julie and Doug Moore
Washington Vancouver Mission
3rd Ward

We served as Member and Leadership Support (MLS) missionaries in the Washington Vancouver Mission. Our mission president assigned us to work with a Young Single Adult (YSA) ward, Springwater, in the Portland, OR stake and work with the bishop to determine how we could best assist. The ward consisted of YSA members living in the Portland, OR and Gresham, OR stakes. The ward membership had continual fluctuation, but generally ranged between 200-300 and had sacrament meeting attendance ranging between 35-85. We were also asked to watch over and assist the 24-28 younger missionaries serving in the Portland Stake area. We served in the Springwater ward for our entire mission of 18 months. We loved the YSA members and the bishopric members that we worked with. We were able to assist a number of the younger members with strengthening their faith in Jesus Christ and self-reliance aspects of their lives. We loved working with the younger missionaries and watching them grow and develop. We were able to participate with the missionaries in teaching many investigators, witnessing many baptisms, and fellowshiping/strengthening twelve new YSA members who were baptized.

There were many sacred moments. Reading Tad Callister's book, The Infinite Atonement was a spiritual treat. Attending baptisms and testimony meetings in our Springwater YSA ward were amazing. Being taught by both our mission Presidents, Derlin Taylor and Dennis McAteer were always sacred and inspiring. As a new

missionary, I had trouble adjusting to missionary life. I was homesick and missing my family and friends. Through His tender mercies, the Lord showed me His love and that He was aware of my feelings. He sent others to help me adjust. One example was when Elder Moore and I attended a regional planning meeting for a YSA activity. A little two year old girl came with someone also attending the meeting. When she saw me, she came right over and put her arms out for me to take her and hold her on my lap. I must have looked like her grandmother! Moments later she saw my black thumb nail (I had slammed it in a door at the MTC) and she bent down her little head and kissed my thumb better. It just melted my heart! Needless to say, it was like having one of our own grandchildren to hold.

Another example was meeting Elder Moore's second cousin at a baptism one Saturday evening. Sister Gross was playing the piano for the service. She told us she didn't usually do that, but had been asked to play that day and since she and her husband were waiting for their missionary call she thought she had better play. After the baptism, she and Elder Moore got talking since her maiden name was also Moore. They found out that their grandfathers were brothers! We kept in touch with her and her husband as they prepared for their mission. They ended up moving into the same apartment complex we were living in after their home sold quickly and they still had a few months before they were leaving for their mission in Nauvoo. They were so good to us and treated us like close family. On some P-days, we would get together to visit or do something fun. We spent our first Christmas eve in the mission field with them.

Through the power of the Holy Ghost, I have come to know the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught in His restored Church. I know that God is the Father of my spirit and that He knows and loves me. I know that I am on this earth for a purpose and that He has established a plan for me to return to His presence and live as an exalted family. I know that Jesus Christ was the firstborn of Heavenly Father and that the Atonement that he performed is central to our redemption and this plan of exaltation. I know that Jesus Christ established His church to help us perform ordinances that are required for exaltation. I know that the plan of salvation included a restoration of Jesus Christ's church by the prophet Joseph Smith. And, that in addition to restoring the church, Joseph Smith was commanded to translate ancient records of God's prophets on the American continent and publish the Book of Mormon which testifies of and expands our knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I know that since the time of Joseph Smith, the restored Church has continued to be led by prophets and God's prophet today is Thomas S. Monson. I know that following the Gospel of Jesus Christ and keeping the covenants that we have made with God will bring us joy and happiness in this life and exaltation in the world to come. Elder Douglas Moore Because of serving a mission, my testimony has grown immensely. Serving has strengthened my knowledge of the gospel and deepened my love for my Heavenly Father and His son, Jesus Christ. I know Christ is my Redeemer and Savior and that the Atonement was performed by Him that I and all mankind might have immortality, forgiveness and eternal life. I know that Joseph Smith was and is the prophet of the Restoration. How grateful I am for his courage and for translating the Book of Mormon

that we might have another testament of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the everlasting gospel. I know we are led by a true prophet today, even Thomas S. Monson. I am grateful for his example of loving service throughout his life. Doug Moore

Deloney Oliver
Idaho Boise Mission
7th Ward

The mission was the greatest learning experience. The people that I taught definitely laid a profound influence upon me. They were very humble, hard-working and hospitable towards everyone including us as missionaries. Even when they weren't interested, they were still willing to find ways to serve us.

The longest area that I was in was in Burley where I served for eleven months. The whole time that I was there, we weren't having too much success in baptisms. I was starting to feel discouraged and I felt like I wasn't a good missionary. Then we met Carlos. Carlos was so prepared for the gospel in his life. We had a really powerful lesson with him when we taught the law of chastity. He wanted to keep this commandment and all of the other commandments and accepted to be baptized.

Before the mission, I didn't really have a super strong testimony of Joseph Smith. I knew that he was a prophet, but there was something lacking in that testimony. As I've taught the Restoration more and more on my mission, the more my realization grew that without Joseph Smith and without the First Vision, we would not be here today. We would not have temples, the Book of Mormon and the Priesthood. Because Joseph Smith prayed, we have the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints here on the earth.

Hermana Danielle Shumway
Washington Kennewick Mission
9th Ward

My mission was the best ever. The area is famous for its farming – grapes, apples and cherries. The church is strong in Kennewick. Spanish work is strengthening in some parts of the mission. You can go all day and not speak English. The people are sweet, generous, and caring. They work hard and care for their families.

The sacrament meeting before Juan's baptism, we had a member pick him up. The meeting started and no Juan. I started praying and praying that he could be there for the sacrament even when the sacrament prayers were being pronounced. When is said "Amen" I looked up and there was Juan. I was so happy. He later told me of the feelings he felt as he partook of the sacrament. He told me of the experience he had as he truly felt repentance and forgiveness of his sins. Heavenly Father answers prayers and will forgive us as we seek Him with a humble heart.

I loved being a missionary and am incredibly grateful the Lord would allow me to be a small part in His work. I know the Lord has a plan and He is continually guiding us where we need to go. I love my Savior and will be forever proud to have served with His name in front of mine. I know the Lord loves us completely. As I've realized my part in this plan, I feel more love for others. This is His church.

Leanne Schmidt
Florida Fort Lauderdale Mission
6th Ward

I love my mission because I love the people of Southern Florida. Southern Florida has over 165 different countries represented. I met more people who weren't from Florida originally, than people actually from there. I loved it. Our mission was exactly obedient and as I learned the power of keeping simple things, my testimony was able to grow immensely.

My companion and I had been teaching this Brazilian kid. We had been teaching him for weeks without being able to give him a baptism date because he didn't want to feel pressured. He chose his own date for two weeks ahead. Then the spirit finally took over the lesson and he opened up to us more. My companion shared with him personal revelation that she had received in a lesson with him two weeks earlier, that he had had asked her in the pre-mortal existence to find him and teach him the gospel. As she shared this with him I observed his face. It was probably one of the strongest experiences of the power of the Holy Ghost I had ever felt.

Before my mission, I believed and felt good about the gospel and its principles. I felt that this church was true. But it wasn't until I served my mission and really had to figure it out that I can now testify without doubt that this is Christ's church. He is the Head. I know Joseph Smith was his chosen instrument to restore it. I know the Book of Mormon is the word of God. I know that Christ lives and I am so thankful for his atoning sacrifice.



Norris W. Webb
Philippine Area Office (Welfare)
2nd Ward

(Entered the MTC 14 January, 2015. Released 24 January, 2017) Our mission was in humanitarian relief. Most of our activities were in the large, northern island of Luzon. We worked from an office and live in a high-rise condominium about 14 kilometers away, in Quezon City, a large suburb on Manila. The Filipino people of Manila run the gamut from spectacular wealth to unbelievable poverty. We unearthed projects that could help the most people with the least amount of money. Generally, the projects we worked on (small farming projects, school improvement, neo-natal care and feeding) were part of a wider program. We invariably worked with partners in the humanitarian community to leverage our dollars for the most effective good. We did some travel by car and by airplane outside of Manila to complete some projects.

There were several projects involving service to terribly poor people but some of the biggest were in learning to work well with my companion and recognizing her skills. The child-like faith of the people was always moving. There were also sacred moments when people we were helping showed their gratitude, but I always thought the gratitude was misplaced. The gifts are from God and are made possible by hundreds of thousands of Saints who donate to the Humanitarian fund, in that way helping Heavenly Father help his children.

Heavenly Father watches over his missionaries; his love for us is very obvious from some of our experiences. Filipinos demonstrate the same child-like faith that we experienced on our first mission to Africa, and they are the pioneers of today's church, dealing with many of the same problems faced by the U.S. in the first two generations of the church. To see their love and gratitude to the Savior without regard to their own personal situations is transformational.

Finally, if you have not learned it before – or have recently forgotten – Jesus Christ helps us through tough times in a very personal and loving way. The program of the church for Senior Missionaries is inspired of God.

Carol Ann Webb
Philippines Area Office, Welfare Specialist
2nd Ward

Our instructions were different from the traditional mission many are called to serve. In fact, we were asked not to proselyte but to bare testimony of the Lord's goodness in our actions rather than in words.

We learned LDS Charities, for whom we worked, would cover: emergency relief for typhoons, sea surges, tsunamis, earth quakes, floods, landslides as well as refugee relief for families in Mindanao forced to flee from terrorists or political strife. That was just emergency relief. Our main assignment was to find projects to relieve the suffering of the poor, encouraging them to think and to engage in developing plans that would help lift them out of the poverty that held them hostage. Much of the time we would find partners with whom we could work on common goals. When we were not in the office filling out reports and forms in CHaS or Decision Point we were with our partners or on projects in the field, observing first-hand the humble living conditions of the majority of the people in the Philippines. They are beautiful people who will share what little they have with someone who has less. They never complain, but thank God in all things.

We were also asked to take on the responsibilities of the Area Welfare Manager for 3 ½ months while the new manager finished his assignment as Mission President in Quezon City. It was an honor that allowed us to work closely with other Area Managers as well as the DTA and the Area Presidency.

This assignment was the most difficult and the most rewarding of any the Lord has called us to do to date. We were not qualified, by the world's standards, for much of the work we were called to do. And, certainly if we were applying for a job, the local head hunters would not have given me the nod. But we were not working for the world, we were working for the Lord and he wanted us just the way we were. The gifts, talents and experience we had were enough for his purposes.

There was a specific assignment we were given that seemed impossible. We were about to tell the Manager we could not proceed when the thought of Nephi came into mind. I am sure he did not feel qualified for the work he was asked to do either. At that moment, we realized we were trying to do this on our own. We took our quandary to the Lord and then started to investigate ideas and options that came to our minds. One by one the problems were solved, doors were opened and people with experience crossed our path. The Lord was making a way through our efforts.

I will be forever grateful to the Lord for His patience with my weaknesses, which he did strengthen. As I mentioned this was not an easy assignment, but the Lord knows us, and now we

know we can do anything we are asked to do with His help. It's a great feeling. Yes, we may have to remind ourselves when again we face the unknown, but we know He is there to help us succeed. He is our guide and our stay and He does make a way. Serving a mission with my good husband in the Philippines was never on my bucket list, but neither was serving in Africa. When I think of what I would have missed if we had not accepted the calls to serve I shake my head in wonder. Wow, what great things the Lord can do.

I know God hears and answers our sincere prayers for help. He is aware of us, our strengths and our weaknesses. He magnifies his servants and enlarges their capacity and capabilities as He moves His work forward. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is His church. The Book of Mormon is a powerful tool to help us see His hand in all things. It testifies of Christ, that he is the Son of God. When we read it, we can see how faithful and true He is to those who love and serve him. It points a way for us to work through problems we face today. He is a God of miracles. The Holy Ghost testifies of Christ and helps us to see and feel His miracles. Joseph Smith saw God the Father and His son Jesus Christ. We have Prophets and Apostles on the earth today with the power and authority to guide Christ's church here and now. We can continue to enjoy the blessings and protection of Heaven as we keep the Commandments, follow our Prophet, repent of our sins and believe Christ.