

On Jan 8, 1987 Bishop Trost called Merlin and me in and asked us to accept a call from the Stake to do temple work as patrons. This was to be a minimum of 4 ordinances, of our choice, each month. We accepted the call but decided right then not to be “minimums” but would go each week and do one Sealing Session and one Endowment session. No release time for this calling was given and we have never received a release so have been doing it ever since, except for the time we served as missionaries in CA.

After a year Merlin decided he would like to serve our Sealing sessions with Dr. L. Steven Richards, who was a Sealer and who had done a 6-bypass heart operation on Merlin in 1986. This was arranged and the Sealing group included the Dr.’s wife, Annette, and it was a really joyful experience. He was never rushed and would take time to explain doctrine and symbolism of the ordinance.

We have served under many Sealers and they are not all equal in ability or understanding, of course. At the present time we serve one session under Joseph Jack and with his wife Elaine Jack, who is a former General Pres. of the R.S... they are really neat, too.

There have been some interesting and some funny names encountered doing Sealings. One was PEDRO THE FIRST, THE CRUEL KING OF CASTILE.....his wife was named Hermantruda and I was acting as her proxy and didn’t want to say “yes” as being willing to give myself to him as a wife. I made the mistake of saying how I felt and we had a Sealer at that time who had no sense of humor and he didn’t appreciate such levity.

Another was King-----,The Fat. I looked him up in the encyclopdia and it said he was not a good king.

Another was when we were sealing daughters to parents and the last name was Baker and they had named her “Lowly” and I thought that was not nice! Another was a man whose last name was “Odd”. I asked the Sealer how it was spelled, thinking it might be “Aud”, but it was just plain, old “Odd” I told one of the ordinance worker sisters and she said, I don’t know if it is OK to tell jokes in the temple dressing room or not, but there was this man whose last name was Odd and he went through life getting teased and hating it, so when he was about to die he instructed those in charge that all he wanted on his headstone was date of birth and date of death, and nothing else. It was done that way and when people going through the cemetery, upon seeing the headstone, would shake their heads and say, “Isn’t that odd?”

About Mar 1998 the temple president called us in for an interview to see if we were in a position to be called as ordinance workers. At that time Merlin's mother was still alive and he was spending much time involved in her care and was also doing tutoring with the Literacy Action Program, so we couldn't do it. The Temple Pres. said he understood, and that he would not issue a call, so we didn't need to feel we were turning a call down. He said that the Temple also needed patrons and they appreciated what we were doing in that area. Then he asked if we could give 4 hours per week in service. We said "Yes" and on Apr. 1, 1998 we started working in the Temple laundry and have continued doing that to the present time.

They have paid workers to handle all the washing end of it, but volunteers do all the folding of all the clothes rented by patrons. Every time something is used it gets washed.....everything, shoes, sox, ties, aprons, veils, hats, dresses, slips, robes, sashes, garments, baptismal suits, towels, shields and etc. That amounts to lots of washing and folding and bagging or putting on shelves and etc. Merlin and I have done a little bit of almost everything but we are mostly a team on the sashes. I use an ironer (mangle) and can handle 4 sashes at a time. As they go around the hot barrel they pile up rather neatly in an accordion type fold under the barrel, then I put them on the table next to the folding machine that Merlin runs. This folds them the right size to fit in the bags for renting out, or for storing in drawers. Most days we spend the entire 4 hours doing this, and when things are really busy we don't even get through all of them.....and that is just one little part of a great big job. They could use more volunteers if someone is interested. They also need people to sew and mend, to answer phones and other things I don't know about. It is work that needs doing so we are glad we can help. We have met lots of nice people there who have become our friends.

There are perks that come with being volunteers. One really neat one is being included when they hold the annual Devotional on the 4th floor of the Temple in what is called the Assembly Room. It is a huge room with spiral staircases, two pulpits (one in each end) one for the Melchezidek Priesthood and one for the Aaronic Priesthood. There is balcony seating as well as main floor seating. The woodwork and hardwood flooring are just gorgeous. On the outside of the temple where you see tall windows with big oval windows above them, this is the 4th floor. Those oval windows are opened if needed, and men walk on a slanted area to get to them. They pivot

to open. Anyway, it is a privilege to get to attend these Devotionals.

The first one we attended had Pres. Hinckley as the speaker! He said he was so tired of having to write talks that had to be timed almost to the minute the fit Conference schedules and etc. that he was just going to talk to us about some of his experiences from the past. He was so relaxed and mellow (or appeared to be). He told us about his earlier days when he was called to be Jack-of-all-abilities to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. He started out in an empty room with an OLD typewriter, on an old desk with an uneven leg that needed a book under it, and an old chair. He was known as “the Slave” to everyone else. He related how some years later he was given the assignment to figure out how the Temple ceremony could be used in different languages as it was becoming increasingly needful as more and more non-English speaking people were ready to receive their endowment. He worked and worked on this problem then concluded it would have to be on film where each language could be inserted. Then there was the problem of where to film such a sacred ordinance. It couldn’t be anywhere where there was a chance of its being seen by people not holding a Temple recommend.

Elder Hinckley was inspired to have it filmed on the 4th floor of the Temple. This meant that they had to bring in all the props to make it look like the Garden of Eden.....rocks, flowers, trees etc. and that was what they did. He said that the upholstered chairs and benches on the raised ends of the room, were covered with sheets to protect them and some times he was so tired he would lift up an end of a sheet and crawl under it to sleep for awhile. The filming took a long time, and when it was completed it was about the time that the Freiburg Temple in the Russian part of Germany was ready for use and he told how much of a miracle it was for the church to have received permission to build a temple there with all the Russian restrictions on religion, privacy, private ownership and etc.

Bonita asked me if I have had any really spiritual experiences during these years of temple attendance and I told her I’m afraid I am too in tune with the world and don’t deserve special witnesses.