

Naomi Burford

The 2022 Book of Mormon Foundation interns had the privilege of spending a week traveling to the church historic sites in Palmyra, New York, and in Kirtland, Ohio. We spent an entire day in Palmyra, traveling to the Martin Harris home, Hill Cumorah, the Smith family farm, the Sacred Grove, and the E.B. Grandin Book of Mormon publication site. After touring the Smith farm, our group walked to the Sacred Grove, adjacent to the farm. I anticipated having a memorable experience in this special, historic place. For some time, I have been praying God would grant me a testimony of the Book of Mormon and a testimony of Jesus Christ. Although I already believe in the Book of Mormon and Jesus, I hoped to experience something to help increase my faith in Him and the church with which I am associated. I also hoped I would have an experience which would help me witness to someone when they ask me why the Book of Mormon is true and how I know it to be so. Although the day had been rainy, we noted that the rain stopped as we went into the grove. We prayed and sang the song, “Ancient Words.” After we prayed as a group, our directors gave us about an hour to go off by ourselves and spend time in meditation and prayer. As I walked, I felt I should kneel beside a bench that wasn’t too far from where we had entered the woods. After I knelt and started to pray, I began to cry. I felt that the Holy Spirit was with us in the woods. I asked God to forgive me of my sins, and I asked Him for a testimony of the Book of Mormon and to know Jesus more intimately. A little later, I felt I should go to a log that was a short distance away. As I stood beside it, I prayed some more, but soon some people started coming up the path. I felt I needed to find a different spot to spend some quiet moments listening. Before long, I found another log that was a short distance off the path. As I sat there listening, I felt the Lord was talking to my mind in a still small voice. I felt some chastisement for what I haven’t been doing and what I need to do. At one point, I felt the Lord was telling me that His word is true; I believe He meant the Book of Mormon. At times I wanted to say something, but I felt a restraint that I needed to sit quietly and listen to Him. After some time, I felt I should get up and walk some more. During my walk, I talked to Him and praised Him. It was a great experience being in the grove that day. I learned it is important to make your requests known unto God, but it is equally important to listen and hear what He has to say. I am grateful to the Lord for what He has done, what He does from day to day, and what He will yet do. I am very grateful to the Lord that He gave us this wonderful opportunity to come to Him in this beautiful place known as the Sacred Grove and to grow closer to Him.

