

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Edition - September 2012

Board of Publications
Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
Independence, Missouri

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REFERENCES: Throughout this publication, references to “The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” are made simply as “Reorganized Church History.” Similarly, references to “History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints” are made simply as “Utah Church History.”

VOLUME ONE
of the History of the Church of Christ, being

AN OUTLINE HISTORY
of the
CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Temple Lot)

by Apostle B. C. Flint
General Church Historian

Original Publication in 1953

* * *

Revised and Prepared for Publication
by the
Board of Publications
Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
Independence, Missouri

In this latest edition of “An Outline History of the Church of Christ,” published here as Volume One of this edition of the “History of the Church of Christ,” some spelling errors were found and corrected as well as some errors in content such as dates, etc. With the exception of spelling corrections, all such content errors are corrected and footnotes are provided explaining the correction.

Board of Publications, February 2012

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The above is a picture of the previous church building on the Temple Lot. It was dedicated on Sunday, April 6, 1902, with appropriate ceremony. It stands on the site of the first meeting house which was burned. It is the second structure ever built on the Temple Lot.

The White Church On the Temple Lot by Vida E. Smith Yates

Hushed and Waiting here you stand;
 The beauty of your Site on every hand.
 Sturdy and unafraid;
 Your years of service not yet done.
 The same unbroken silence unto every one.
 To you they come, hope failing, Faith grown pale;
 Frightened, baffled, helpless, hurt –
 May they find here a flame of hope;
 A Fire for Faith that lies an ashen heap;
 A sure and steadfast Light ahead.
 Courage to live, and try again
 Because of God's love,
 And Where you stand.

An Outline History of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)

INTRODUCTION

There are in existence a number of histories written by the various divisions of the Restoration into which the Church broke up at the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These give much of the detail of events transpiring from the inception of this work down to more recent times. Because of that fact, we feel, since these are available, that to spend time on incidents not strictly in the line of the real activity and progress of the movement would be merely a repetition of what is already available. A short, concise history that can be placed in the hands of readers and students as soon as possible is primarily the object of this present publication.

However, in studying closely these historical works, we find that, oftentimes, because of the factional, partisan interest which these histories represent, discrepancies may sometimes appear. This is not said with any desire to reflect discredit upon the authors of such histories. Our regard for this great Latter-day Restoration gives us the desire to make this present production as accurate as it can possibly be made. In this we wish to remain as far removed from partisan bias as possible, and to tell the story dispassionately, letting the responsibility for error in conduct, if there be such, rest exactly where it belongs, giving special favor to none. For instance, we are closing this brief history with the year 1950, and we realize that between this date and the date 1820, when the young Prophet went into the woods to pray, a record has been made, which we will tell as briefly, as accurately, and as truthfully as we possibly can, realizing that in this, as in all our ministerial labors through a long life of gospel service, we are not laboring to please any man or set of men; but we are laboring in the interest of God's work, and to Him we are amenable first of all. It is to Him that we will have to give a final account.

In this work, we are using as source material the following recognized historical works: "Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors," by his mother, Lucy Smith; the "Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet," by Edward Tullidge; "An Address to all Believers in Christ," by David Whitmer; "Church History" (Reorganized, 4 volumes); "Utah Church History"; "Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith," by Joseph Fielding Smith (This latter is a compilation of the teachings and sermons of Joseph Smith

during his lifetime. It is verbatim and unedited. It is drawn from such works as: "Manuscript History," "Journal History of the Church," "Documentary History of the Church," Evening and Morning Star, Times and Seasons, "Far West Record," Messenger and Advocate, etc.).

In addition to these, we are using the reprint of the original Evening and Morning Star; the various editions of the "Doctrine and Covenants," including the 1835 edition and the second European Edition, published in Liverpool in 1849; first edition of the "Book of Commandments," published in 1833; and the late work, "A New Witness for Christ in America," by Kirkham. As we proceed, we will seek to bring every available work that we can find to our aid, in order that we may have as valuable a history as it is possible to produce, yet not giving undue attention to any one phase of the work, but in as brief a space as possible, tell our story.

This history has been compiled by Apostle B. C. Flint, General Church Historian, and the committee appointed by the Conference to review, revive, and prepare the same for publication.

Apostle B. C. Flint, General Church Historian
Church of Christ, Temple Lot

REPORT OF THE REVISING COMMITTEE

The Committee appointed by the Ministers' Conference to review and revise the history manuscript has devoted painstaking care in an effort to see that the successive steps in the history of the Church of Christ are as fully covered as a condensed history of this kind would permit.

In addition to source materials named by the General Church Historian, the Committee has had access to and has used material from various old records, such as the Vermillion (Indiana) Branch Record; the Crow Creek Record; Church Record of the Church of Christ in Zion; Large Church Record of Church of Christ; Old Record; Record No. 2; Old Church Record No. 3; Church Record No. 5; "Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt" and various papers and documents hitherto held by private parties.

These records were especially valuable in tracing the history of the Church of Christ through a period from the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum in 1844, to the year 1925, of which there has been so little information available to the student of history; though there is much

of detail, which is of interest and importance, contained in these records, that must wait for some future historical account more complete and exhaustive in its nature. The effort has been made in this brief narrative to present a concise and comprehensive study of the events bridging over that period of time known as "the dark and cloudy day," of which little has heretofore appeared in print, to connect the events preceding and following that period. No claim is made to perfection in the production of this little volume, but an earnest effort has been made to enlighten and inform.

Arthur M. Smith, Chairman
Leon A. Gould
Clarence L. Wheaton
- Revising Committee

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Chapter 1

Early Beginnings

In writing a history of the Church of Christ we should first examine the reasons for, or need of, such a work being established.

This need seemed to grow out of the conditions prevailing in the religious world in the early years of the nineteenth century, and their connection with the religious history of the ages back to the time of the Savior's sojourn in the world and among men.

The Scriptures known as the Bible contain, particularly in the New Testament, an account of the personal work of Christ. It outlines the origin and formation of the Church of Christ as it was fashioned by the Christ himself. It shows the consequences of obedience to the principles of the gospel of Christ as he gave them to his followers in that day. It records the gifts and blessings that followed the believer in that day and time, and it makes the painful prediction that this beautiful order was not to continue in unbroken progression down through the ages, but that instead, even in a very short time after the ascent of Jesus into the heavens, there would be an apostasy, or falling away. A text or two of Scripture will illustrate this falling away. In Acts 20:28-30, we read:

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Also in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, we read:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

It would hardly be in place to discuss at length this apostasy or falling away of the Church in this work, except to merely mention the fact that this shows very clearly that the bible does not teach that the Church of Christ was to continue on the earth down through the ages, but was to go into apostasy because evil men would arise, even from among the members of the Church of that day, and pervert the right way, abrogating the authority of its ministry to represent God.

This, however, does not mean that there would never again be a Christian dispensation in the world or that men later would not return to God and enjoy the blessings of the Church. In other words there was to be a complete restoration of the Testament church and gospel for Christ in teaching about the end of the world and his second coming makes this declaration:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. – (St. Matthew 24:14).

The manner of this restoration of the gospel is given us in this language:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice. Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.... – Revelation 14: 6, 7.

This then invites us to examine the history of the world from then on, to discover identifying conditions that would indicate the natural trend of events, as portrayed in these scriptures. First, we find all of the conditions of the apostasy mentioned being literally fulfilled in history subsequent to this time. Later we see an attempt to revive primitive Christianity by what is known as the Reformation, through the efforts of good men opposing the priestcraft that was an outstanding manifestation of the apostasy into which Christianity had fallen. Such men as Luther, Wesley, Calvin, Knox, Zwingli, the Waldenses, Albigenses, and others did much to break down the bondage of religious bigotry and intolerance that prevailed everywhere, as an expression of Christianity. None of these men, however, claimed to effect a complete Restoration, such as is contemplated in the scriptures we have cited; but they did produce a state of religious freedom that would render it possible to receive the gospel in its fullness when God should bring about a complete restoration of all that was lost as a result of the apostasy.

We are now ready to begin our story of the great Restoration of these latter days, which will include the bringing into being of the Church of Christ fashioned exactly like it was established by the Master himself, when He said He would build His church, in the New Testament times.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, and in the eastern part of our country, there was a good deal of unusual religious unrest and activity. Various new sects were springing up everywhere. These were the conditions foretold would exist when the God of heaven should again set His hand the last time to restore His work as it was in the beginning.

The twentieth chapter of Matthew speaks of five periods of time which might be termed dispensations of the gospel. There was to be the early morning hour, or the time of Adam; the third hour of time, Abraham's time; the sixth hour of time, or Moses' time, and there was to be an eleventh hour of time, pointing to the time of the end, or the last hour of the gospel ministry, - the last time the gospel would be on earth before the second coming of Christ. That would be our time.

Of that day and time the Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 18:1, 7), speaks of a land "Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" which would be "beyond the sea." To the west of Africa and Europe. By standing at Jerusalem with Isaiah and looking beyond the shores of Africa, beyond the sea we find America, the New World, stretched out like two great wings of a bird from pole to pole. No other place could fit the description thus given in this prophetic utterance. On this distant land "an ensign" was to be lifted up to the nations, just "afore the harvest," or the second coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This ensign was to be the gospel restored, and the harvest, the end of the world, (Matt. 13:39).

In view of this and other prophecies of a similar nature, there is no doubt but what the study of them led the Rev. Robert Reid, A.M., to say in 1828:

And perhaps it may not be improper for us to indulge the hope that as the land in which we live was the birthplace and the nurse of civil liberty; so also in America, true religion shall first begin to flourish. - Seven Last Plagues, page 217, Pittsburg, Penn. (Taken from "Marvelous Work and a Wonder," by Daniel McGregor.)

In view of the above, the place seemingly which would be logical for God to manifest himself and restore His work and church would be America, the land of the free, a choice land above all other lands, a place which in its very inception was devoted to the proposition that all men should be

equal, and where God could speak (because men were free to hear), and where religious freedom would be a part of the foundation of our great nation on this “land of Joseph,” the son of Israel whose blessings were to prevail above those of his predecessors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (See Genesis 49:26).

In short this was to take place at the time of the end, spoken of by both Old Testament and New Testament prophecy. The reformers with prophetic vision saw the time when the gospel in its fullness would again be restored to earth, and when an angel from God would make his appearance (see Rev. 14:6, 7). We find many of the great reformers and scientists telling of a restoration and re-establishment of God’s work in its entirety. Luther, Wesley, Campbell, Roger Williams, Sir Isaac Newton and others, all looked forward, according to their recorded predictions, to the time when God would arise and set up his kingdom, and would “send forth new apostles to plant churches anew,” and a body of men would rise up and “turn their attention to the prophecies, and insist on their literal interpretation, in the midst of much clamor and opposition.” (See “Wesley’s Sermons,” Newton’s Our Race News Leaflet, No. 90 by Totten, Williams’ “Prophetic Times,” vol. 2, and others.) The time for the fulfillment of these predictions, ancient and modern, had now come.

Living in the hill country of north central New York, was a family by the name of Smith. It was composed of the parents, Joseph Smith, Sr., and Lucy Smith his wife, and nine children, whose names are as follows: Alvin, Hyrum, Sophronia, Joseph, Jr., Samuel, William, Catherine, Don Carlos, and Lucy. This Smith family was just ordinary country folks, like all of their neighbors; and apparently, until the startling events of our story began to occur, they seemed to enjoy the good will of their neighbors, and little else was known of them. However, about the year 1820, there was a great religious revival in the community where the Smiths lived. They with others attended these meetings; here we will let the third son, Joseph, tell the story:

I was born in the year of our Lord 1805, on the 23rd of December, in the Town of Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont. My father, Joseph Smith, Sen., left the State of Vermont, and moved to Palmyra, Ontario (now Wayne) County, in the state of New York, when I was in my tenth year. In about four years after my father’s arrival at Palmyra, he moved with his family into Manchester, in the same county of Ontario....

Some time in the second year after our removal to Manchester, there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. It

commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of country, indeed the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people, some crying, "Lo, here," and some "Lo, there;" ... A scene of great confusion and hard feeling ensued; priest against priest, convert against convert, so that all the good feelings one for another, if they ever had any, were entirely lost in a strife of words, and a contest of opinions.

I was at this time in my fifteenth year. My father's family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith and four of them joined that church; namely, my mother Lucy, my brothers Hyrum, Samuel Harrison and my sister Sophronia.

During this time of great excitement my mind was called to serious reflection and great uneasiness; but though my feelings were deep and often pungent, still I kept myself aloof from all those parties, though I attended their several meetings as often as occasion would permit; but in process of time my mind became somewhat partial to the Methodist sect, and I felt some desire to unite with them; but so great was the confusion and strife among the different denominations that it was impossible for a person young as I was and so unacquainted with men and things, to come to any certain conclusion....

While I was laboring under the extreme difficulties, caused by these parties of religionists, I was one day reading the Epistle of James, first chapter, fifth verse, which reads, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not and it shall be given him." Never did any passage of Scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart.... At length I came to the determination to "ask of God," concluding that if he gave wisdom to them who lacked wisdom, and would give liberally and not upbraid, I might venture. So in accordance with this my determination to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt.

It was on the morning of a beautiful day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

After I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction, not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being

from the unseen world, who had such marvelous power as I had never before felt in my being, just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun; which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, (pointing to the other), "this is my beloved son, hear him."

My object in going to enquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right. That I might know which to join. No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong,) and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight: that those professors were all corrupt. "They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade me to join with any of them: ... When I came to myself again I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven.

Some few days after I had this vision, I happened to be in company with one of the Methodist preachers who was very active in the before mentioned religious excitement, and conversing with him on the subject of religion, I took occasion to give him an account of the vision which I had had. I was greatly surprised at this behavior, he treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there was no such thing as visions, or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the Apostles, and that there never would be any more of them. I soon found, however, that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution which continued to increase, and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world; yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a hot persecution, and this was common among all sects, all united to persecute me.

It has often caused me serious reflection both then and since, how strange it was that an obscure boy of a little over fourteen years of age, and one too who was doomed to the necessity of obtaining a scanty maintenance by his daily labor, should be thought a character of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the most popular sects of the day, so as to create in them a spirit of the hottest persecution and reviling. But strange or not, so it was, and was often cause of great sorrow to myself. However, it was nevertheless a fact that I had had a vision. I have thought since that I felt much like Paul when he made his defense before King Agrippa and related the

account of the vision he had when he “saw a light and heard a voice,” but still there were but few who believed in him; some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad; and he was ridiculed, and reviled; but all this did not destroy the reality of his vision. He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise; and though they should persecute him unto death, yet he knew and would know unto his latest breath, that he had both seen a light, and heard a voice speaking to him, and all the world could not make him think or believe otherwise.

So it was with me, I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two personages, and they did in reality speak unto me, or one of them did; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying I had seen a vision yet it was true, and while they were persecuting me, reviling me, and speaking all manner of evil against me for so saying, I was led to say in my heart. Why persecute for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision, and “Who am I that I can withstand God” or why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen, for I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dare I do it; at least I knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dare I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God and come under condemnation. – *Times and Seasons*, March and April, 1842, vol. 3, No. 10, pp. 726, 727, 728; and vol. 3, No. 11, pp. 748, 749

The above story coming from the Prophet Joseph Smith himself, gives us his testimony of the early beginning of the great latter-day work, now known as the eleventh hour dispensation, or Restoration of the gospel of Christ.

The important thing about this whole narrative is that it is in complete harmony with what we would naturally expect from the teachings of the Scriptures and the fulfillment of the prophecies therein. Furthermore, the intense and bitter persecution which was visited upon this young man from Palmyra, New York, also agrees with the story wherein Stephen the first Christian martyr, in rebuking the Jews, said: “Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.” (Acts 7:52, 53).

Chapter 2

Joseph Smith’s Second Vision and What Came of It

In our first chapter we gave an account of the early beginning of the Latter-day Restoration Movement, which was later to revolutionize the

whole religious world. An old book was published in 1824, entitled “A VIEW OF ALL RELIGIONS AND THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES, Of All Nations At The Present Day,” Compiled and Selected By Thomas Robbins, Minister of the Gospel in East-Windsor, Conn. This was only four years after Joseph Smith startled the world with his announcement that an angel from heaven had visited him and given instructions concerning the restoration of the gospel, as promised in Scripture. At that time, according to this work, there were only thirty-six religions of all kinds in the whole world. And since the coming forth of the great Restoration of after days the religions of the world have increased and multiplied until they now number up into thousands. Surely, this Restoration was the “little stone,” of Daniel 2:44, that was to break in pieces” all of the kingdoms of the world, etc.

We will now let the Prophet Joseph Smith continue his narrative of his experiences, following his first vision. He says:

I had now got my mind satisfied so far as the sectarian world was concerned, that it was not my duty to join with any of them, but continue as I was until further directed; I had found the testimony of James to be true, that a man who lacked wisdom might ask of God, and obtain and not be upbraided. I continued to pursue my common avocations in life until the twenty-first of September, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-three, all the time suffering severe persecution at the hands of all classes of men, both religious and irreligious because I continued to affirm that I had seen a vision. During the space of time which intervened between the time I had the vision, and the year of eighteen hundred and twenty-three (having been forbidden to join any of the religious sects of the day), and being of very tender years, and persecuted by those who ought to have been my friends, and to have treated me kindly and if they supposed me to be deluded to have endeavored in a proper and affectionate manner to have reclaimed me, I was left to all kinds of temptations, and mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors and displayed the weakness of youth and the corruption of human nature, which I am sorry to say led me into divers temptations, to the gratification of many appetites offensive in the sight of God. - Times and Seasons, vol. 3, No. 11, April, 1842, p. 749

Here we may digress briefly to notice something about the above statement by Joseph Smith. The statement, that he had fallen into error and did many things offensive to God, has been seized upon by the enemies of the work as being an admission, on his part, of the many things charged against him by his enemies. He had written a letter to Oliver Cowdery, dated October 28, 1834, and published in the Messenger and Advocate, vol. 1, pp. 10, 11. In this letter he says:

Having learned from the first number of the Messenger and Advocate that you were not only about to “give the history of the rise and progress of the Church of the Latter Day Saints;” but that said history would necessarily embrace my life and character, I have been induced to give you the time and place of birth; as I have learned that many of the opposers of those principles which I have held forth to the world profess a personal acquaintance with me, though when in my presence, represent me to be another person in age, education, and stature, from what I am.... During this time, as is common to most all youths, I fell into many vices and follies; but as my accusers are, and have been forward to accuse me of being guilty of gross and outrageous violations of the peace and good order of the community I take this occasion to remark that though, as I have said above, “as is common to most, or all youths, I fell into many vices and follies.” I have not, neither can it be sustained in truth, been guilty of wrong doing or injuring any man or society of men; and those imperfections to which I allude, and for which I have often had occasion to lament, were a light, and too often a vain mind, exhibiting a foolish and trifling conversation. This being all, and the worst that my accusers can substantiate against my moral character. I wish to add, that it is not without a deep feeling of regret that I am thus called upon in answer to my own conscience, to fulfill a duty I owe to myself, as the cause of truth, etc.... I only add that I do not, nor ever have pretended to be any other than a man, subject to passion, and liable, without the assisting grace of the Saviour, to deviate from the perfect path in which all men are commanded to walk....

Signed, Joseph Smith, Jr.

Also, while on the subject of Joseph Smith character we might call to the attention of the reader, what some of his more honorable opponents have to say, because it is a fact, that while Joseph was being persecuted and slandered very generally, it is also true that there were men, who were bitterly opposed to Joseph’s claims and teachings, yet who were honorable in their opposition. Just a few to illustrate: first, S. M. Smucker, “History of the Mormons, or Latter Day Saints,” pp. 182, 183, who says:

If he were an imposter, deliberately and coolly inventing, and pertinaciously propagating a falsehood, there is this much to be said, that never was an imposter more cruelly punished than he was, from the first moment of his appearance as a prophet to the last, Joseph Smith, in consequence of his pretensions to be a seer and a prophet of God, lived a life of continual misery and persecution. He endured every kind of hardship, contumely, and suffering. He was derided, assaulted, and imprisoned. His life was one long scene of peril and distress, scarcely brightened by the brief beam of comparative repose which he enjoyed in his own city of Nauvoo. In the contempt showed upon his head his whole family shared. Father and mother, brothers, wife, and friends, were alike involved in the ignominy of his pretensions, and the suffering that resulted.

He lived for fourteen years amid vindictive enemies, who never missed an opportunity to vilify, to harass, and to destroy him; and he died at last an untimely and miserable death, involving in his fate a brother to whom he was tenderly attached. If anything can tend to encourage the supposition that Joseph Smith was a sincere enthusiast, maddened with religious frenzies, as many have been before and will be after him – and that he had strong and invincible faith in his own high pretensions and divine mission, it is the probability that unless supported by such feelings, he would have renounced the unprofitable and ungrateful task, and sought refuge from persecution and misery in private life and honorable industry. But, whether knave or lunatic, whether liar or true man, it cannot be denied that he was one of the most extraordinary persons of his time, a man of rude genius, who accomplished a much greater work than he knew; and whose name, whatever he may have been while living, will take its place among the notables of the world.

So speaks a man who, while in his book is second to none in its denunciation of the work of Joseph Smith, yet is honorable enough to give some credit of honesty to the Prophet in his efforts. Another such an honorable opponent is Josiah Quincy, of Harvard University, who published a book in 1885 entitled, “Figures of the Past.” He says this:

It is by no means improbable that some future text book, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: “What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen?” And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants. History deals in surprises and paradoxes quite as startling as this. The man who established a religion in this age of free debate, and who was and is today accepted by hundreds of thousands as a direct emissary from the Most High, such a rare human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory by unsavory epithets. Fanatic, imposter, charlatan, he may have been; but these hard names furnish no solution to the problem he presents to us. Fanatics and imposters are living and dying every day, and their memory is buried with them; but the wonderful influence which this founder of religion exerted and still exerts, throws him into relief before us, not as a rogue to be criminated, but as phenomenon to be explained.

Joseph Smith, claiming to be an inspired teacher, faced adversity such as few men have been called to meet, enjoyed a brief season of prosperity such as few men ever attained, and finally, forty-three days after I visited and saw him, went cheerfully to a martyr’s death. A fine looking man, is what the passer-by would instinctively have murmured upon meeting the remarkable individual who had fashioned the mold upon which was shaped the feelings of so many thousands of his fellow mortals. But Smith was more than this, and one could not resist the impression that capacity and resource were natural to his stalwart

person. I have already mentioned the resemblance he bore to Elisha R. Potter of Rhode Island, whom I met in Washington in 1826. The likeness is not such as would be recognized in a picture, but rather one that would be felt in an emergency. Of all men I have met, these two seemed the best endowed with that kingly faculty which directs, as by intrinsic right, the feeble and confused souls who are looking for guidance ... On the right hand, as we entered the house, was a small and very comfortable, or comfortless barroom, all the more comfortless, perchance, for its being a dry barroom, as no spirituous liquors of any kind were permitted in Nauvoo.... Polygamy, it must be remembered, formed no part of the alleged revelations upon which the social life of Nauvoo was based.

There are others of the same tenor, but we feel that the above two extracts are sufficient, in a brief history like this, to show that the general hatred of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his mission, were here and there marked by friendly defenses.

Also it might not be amiss, to note that Joseph Smith's own estimate of the meaning of a prophet may not accord fully with the opinions held even by members of the Restoration. Here is what he has to say on the subject:

Wednesday, Feb. 8th, 1843. This morning I read German, and visited with a brother and sister from Michigan, who thought that a "prophet was always a prophet;" but I told them that a prophet was a prophet only when he was acting as such.... - "Documentary Church History," vol. 5, p. 265

After these sidelights we will now resume Joseph's story of his second vision. He writes:

In consequence of these things I often felt condemned for my weakness, and imperfections; when on the evening of the above-mentioned twenty-first of September (1823 B.C.F.), after I had retired to my bed for the night, I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies, and also for a manifestation to me, that I might know of my state and standing before Him; for I had full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation as I had previously had one.

While I was thus in the act of calling upon God I discovered a light appearing in the room which continued to increase until the room was lighter than noon-day, when immediately a personage appeared at my beside standing in the air for his feet did not touch the floor. He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly ting could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant, his hands were naked and his arms also a little above the wrist. So also were his feet naked, as were his legs a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but

this robe, as it was open so that I could see into his bosom. Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person.

When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Nephi (Moroni), (See footnote, Utah Church History, vol. 1, pp. 11) that God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil, among all nations, kindreds, and tongues; or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people. He said there was a book deposited written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang.

He also said that the fullness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants. Also that there were two stones in silver bows, and these stones fastened to a breastplate constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim, deposited with the plates and the possession and use of these stones was what constituted seers in ancient or former times, and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book. After telling me these things he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi; and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles. Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books, he quoted the first verse thus, "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud yea and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble, for they that cometh shall burn them saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

And again he quoted the fifth verse thus, "Behold, I will reveal unto you the priesthood by the hand of Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." He also quoted the next verse differently, "And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers, if it were not so the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." In addition to these he quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, saying that it was about to be fulfilled. He quoted also the third chapter of Acts, twenty-second and twenty-third verses precisely as they stand in our New Testament. He said that that prophet was Christ, but the day had not yet come when "they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people," but soon would come.

He also quoted the second chapter of Joel from the twenty-eighth to the last verse. He also said that this was not yet fulfilled but was soon to be. And he further stated the fullness of the Gentiles was soon to come in. He quoted many other passages of Scripture and offered many explanations which cannot be mentioned here. Again he told me that when I got those plates of which he had spoken, (for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled, I

should not show them to any person, neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim, only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them, if I did I should be destroyed. While he was conversing with me about the plates the vision was opened to my mind that I could see the place where the plates were deposited and that so clearly and distinctly that I knew the place again when I visited it. After this communication I saw the light in the room begin to gather immediately around the person of him who had been speaking to me, and it continued to do so until the room was again left dark except just around him, when instantly I saw as it were a conduit open right up into heaven, and he ascended up until he entirely disappeared. – *Times and Seasons*, April, 1842, vol. 3, No. 12, pp. 753, 754

The same vision was repeated twice more on that wonderful night of the twenty-first of September, 1823. In each vision the same information was given, except that at each visit the angel gave added instructions as to the work that was to be done, also the warning that these were the latter days in which the calamities and judgments of God would be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth because of their heart wanderings from God. He was also warned that his object in obtaining the plates must not be for any personal gain or emolument for himself or family, but strictly for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God in these latter days.

After the last visit of this heavenly messenger and his departure the new day of the twenty-second of September was beginning to break.

This spiritual experience so weakened the physical body of the young Prophet, that on the day following the vision, while working with his father in the field he appeared fatigued, and he was advised by his father to return to the house to lie down. In attempting to climb over a fence between there and where he was working he fell exhausted, whereupon the angel again visited him and told him to return and tell his father the whole experience of the night before. This he did and his father accepted it unquestioningly and wanted his son to be very careful to do exactly as he had been commanded by the angel.

Here the Prophet describes the hill, now commonly referred to as the “Hill Cumorah,” a hill about midway between the villages of Palmyra and Manchester. This hill is really a striking spectacle as it rises abruptly out of an almost level plain. The north end is really a regular “hog back” very narrow at the top; and it was here, a little on the west side of the northern end, that the stone box containing the plates was found. The young Prophet says that the cover of the box was a large flat stone covered around the edges with the sod of centuries. This stone, thick in the center

and thinner at the edges, covered a stone box in which lay the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breast-plate. The box was put together with some kind of cement and had four small stones forming four posts, one in each corner, and on which rested the above mentioned articles. On this first visit Joseph was permitted to see all of this, but was forbidden to take them out as the time for their being given to the world had not yet come. He was, however, commanded to visit the place once each year, for four years, evidently with the object of keeping him in close touch with what was to be the chief purpose of his life, namely, the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Church of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel as given to mankind by the Master himself.

In the interim of the years that elapsed between his seeing the plates and the time for their coming forth, Joseph was engaged in working at whatever was offered as a means of obtaining a livelihood during this time he was hired to work for a man by the name of Josiah Stool. This was near the state line of Pennsylvania, in New York. This old gentleman had heard about an old Spanish silver mine in the neighborhood of Harmony, Pennsylvania, and had hired Joseph to help him dig for this mine. And here it may be noted, was the foundation for the story, told by his enemies, that he was a “money digger.”

It was while engaged by Mr. Stool that he went to board with Mr. Isaac Hale in the neighborhood. This Mr. Hale had a daughter Emma, with whom Joseph fell in love and later married. It was also during this period that Joseph’s oldest brother Alvin fell ill and died.

Chapter 3

The Book of Mormon

When the young Prophet Joseph Smith announced to the world that an angel had told him that a record was to come forth which was written on metal plates and hid in a hill near his home; and that, if faithful, he was to be the instrument in the hands of God, by which this record was to be given to the world, it created the most intense excitement, especially in the religious world.

To those who had sufficiently studied the Scriptures, this excitement was mingled with joy, because the prophecies contained in the Bible made it very plain that such a record was to come forth. Thus these promises made

to the young Prophet enabled them to welcome any added light that might be thrown on the written word.

To others, who were not so informed, or who were blinded by sectarianism and its intolerance, the above announcement created intense opposition, and further added to the persecution until it eventually became merciless in expression to the extent that we find every subterfuge imaginable being used to discredit both the new record and its contents.

However, notwithstanding all the opposition that has, through the years, been hurled at this book, which is known as *The Book of Mormon*. It has stood every test and is today accepted by thousands of good Christian people all over the earth, as an added witness for Christ. Hence, its whole story from the time of its discovery to the present time, is one of the most interesting in all world history, and has become a real American saga. Continuing the Prophet's own account of that already recorded in our last chapter, we read:

At length the time arrived for obtaining the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate; on the twenty-second day of September, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, having went as usual at the end of another year to the place where they were deposited, the same heavenly messenger delivered them up to me, with this charge that I should be responsible for them; that if I should let them go carelessly or through any neglect of mine I should be cut off; but that if I would use all my endeavors to preserve them, until he, the messenger should call for them, they should be protected.

I soon found out the reason why I had received such strict charges to keep them safe, and why it was that the messenger had said that when I had done what was required at my hand, he would call for them; for no sooner was it known that I had them than the most strenuous exertions were used to get them from me; every stratagem that could be invented was resorted to for that purpose; the persecution became more bitter and severe than before, and multitudes were on the alert continually to get them from me if possible but by the wisdom of God they remained safe in my hands until I had accomplished by them what was required at my hand, when according to arrangements the messenger called for them, I delivered them up to him, and he has them in his charge until this day, being the second day of May, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight. – *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, No. 13, p. 773, May, 1842

As will be noted, Joseph Smith obtained the plates September 22, 1827. However, according to his record, we are informed that nothing was done about the translation of them until in December of that year. This was largely due to the intense persecution and the determined efforts of the

enemies of the work to steal the plates from the Prophet. In order to escape them he was compelled to move to the home of his wife's parents, in Pennsylvania, where he transcribed a number of the characters of the Book of Mormon; and by February, 1828, had translated quite a number of them by the use of the Urim and Thummim.

In the meantime, a Mr. Martin Harris, living near Palmyra, had befriended him and given him the sum of fifty dollars to help him go where he would be unmolested in his work.

The story we are told up to this time is not only conclusive evidence that Joseph Smith did actually have the plates, though there were all kinds of stories afloat that the whole thing was a hoax, and that there were no plates; but it also shows the lengths to which the forces of evil were willing to go to destroy the work of God; because Joseph and his family were under the continual necessity of protecting the plates by every means they were able to devise, hiding them in the most strategic manner that their minds were able to conjure. So if there were no plates, why try so hard to destroy something that did not exist? It also shows how very important it was to the forces of darkness to prevent the coming forth of the new record of Scripture; also, how very necessary it was to have this important testimony of the Master's visit to the ancient Americans brought to light, for it would add to the testimony as to His divinity as the Son of God.

After Joseph Smith had obtained the plates and transcribed a number of the characters with their translation, he sent Martin Harris, who was till aiding him in the work, to prominent professors of languages for the purpose of getting their testimony relative to the correctness of the work that he was doing.

One of these was Prof. Charles Anthon of New York City. Mr. Harris tells us that when he presented the transcript with the translation to him, Prof. Anthon pronounced the characters to be a combination of Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic, also that the translation was a correct translation, and told Mr. Harris that if he would bring the manuscripts or plates to him that he would help in the translation, and he gave Mr. Harris a certificate certifying to the genuineness of the work shown him.

However, when he asked Mr. Harris how Joseph Smith came by the plates, and Mr. Harris told him it was a religious work and that part of the plates were sealed he said: "I cannot read a sealed book." He then asked to

see the certificate that he had given to Mr. Harris. When Mr. Harris took it out of his pocket and handed it to him he tore it up, remarking that there was no such thing as the ministering of angels in these days.

However, one interesting feature of this story is that Prof. Anthon afterward wrote two letters; one to E. D. Howe of Painsville, Ohio, dated February 17, 1834, and another in 1841 to an Episcopal minister of New Rochelle, New York, and in both of these, while he denies Mr. Harris' statement about the certificate, he does admit the visit of Mr. Harris and its purpose. So, while we are thus left in a measure without the benefit of the evidence contained in that certificate, yet when taken in connection with the general prejudice of that time against the work, which would make it a popular thing to do to deny any such certificate, the fact remains that Prof. Anthon DOES admit Mr. Harris' visit, and since Mr. Harris' testimony was had in 1828, it would seem that Prof. Anthon was a long time realizing that he had been the alleged victim of a dupe, such as he styled Mr. Harris in the above mentioned letters. Also, it is doubtful that Mr. Harris knew, or the Professor knew of the statement in the 29th chapter of Isaiah and 11th and 12th verses; wherein just such a circumstance is predicted, where a sealed book is delivered to an unlearned man, who would object because he was not learned, and where "words" of the book were to be presented to a learned man and he was to say that he could not read it because "it was sealed."

Furthermore, the history of the progress of the translation of the book is also very interesting. On April 15, 1828, Joseph began the translation and Martin Harris was his scribe. They completed one hundred sixteen pages of manuscript by June, 1828, when Mr. Harris requested the privilege of showing it to six of his friends, among them his wife, who was opposed to his helping Joseph either financially, or as scribe. Joseph had been warned not to let any part of the work go out of his hands until it was completed, but because of the strained situation that was developing in the Harris household, he finally yielded to Martin Harris' importunities. The result of this was just what the enemies of the work wanted. They now had in their hands that which they considered would enable them to thwart Joseph in his work, and later did try to publish it in a periodical called the "Palmyra Reflector," and called, "Dogberry Papers of Winter Hill."

As the result of this disobedience on the part of Joseph Smith in letting some of the work go out of his hands, he lost it, and he was severely rebuked and the plates and the Urim and Thummim were taken away from

him and he was left to his human responsibility. However, he was so distressed over his error that through fasting and prayer these things were restored to him about September, 1828, according to Lucy Smith's history. "Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors." (See chapter 27, pp. 146-150.)

There is however, very little reference to any work of translation being done between July, 1828, and April, 1829. The evidence indicates that, after receiving the plates and the Urim and Thummim back, Joseph's wife, Emma, did do a little writing for him, but that Joseph was now under the necessity of laboring for a time to support his family, and that because of these circumstances, they prayed that God would send them a scribe. And on April 5, 1829, Oliver Cowdery, who had practiced law some and had been a school teacher, appeared at the Smith home, indicating that he had been sent to act as a scribe. Up to that time these two men had not met. (See Lucy Smith's History, chapter 28.) Here is Cowdery's account of this meeting and what it resulted in:

Near the time of the setting sun, Sabbath evening, April 5th, 1829, my natural eyes for the first time beheld this brother. He then resided in Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania. On Monday the 6th, I assisted him in arranging some business of a temporal nature and on Tuesday, the 7th, commenced to write the Book of Mormon. These were days never to be forgotten – to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom. Day after day I continued, un-interrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, "INTERPRETERS," the history or record called the "Book of Mormon." – Cowdery's Letter No. 1

History divulges the fact that persecution was constantly dogging the path of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

In June, 1829, David Whitmer, who lived near Waterloo in New York, took his team and wagon and brought Joseph and his family to the Peter Whitmer home at Fayette, Seneca County, New York, where they finished the work of translation. The manuscript was finished, according to Francis W. Kirkham, by the first of July, and was in the printer's hands by August, 1829. (See A New Witness for Christ in America, p. 30.) Hence by June when Whitmer came for them the work of translation was largely completed. Although Whitmer was not an eye witness to the entire translation, it is true that he did write some after they had removed to his father's home at Fayette. Furthermore, all of those directly connected with

the work of translating from June, 1828, up to the time of its completion, which includes Joseph himself, his mother Lucy, his wife Emma, and his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, all testify that it was all done by the Urim and Thummim.

Another matter of interest is found in the fact, that when translation was resumed after Joseph had received the plates and Urim and Thummim back, a command from the Lord was given not to try to reproduce that part which was lost and in the hands of the enemies of the work. Joseph was told that these enemies had already garbled what they had stolen so as to seek to create confusion and retard the work. But because the untranslated plates contained a complete history of the people involved there would be plenty to enable him to translate a complete record of their history. In the book itself we are told of at least two sets of records that have been kept by those ancient people. One was the ministerial record and the other the historical record.

But while Joseph was enabled to produce a true account of the ancient Americans, instead of making confusion of his work, it did work havoc for those who were preparing to publish their garbled concoction. They had prepared with great acclaim to publish the work, under such flaming announcements as "The Gold Bible, Joseph Smith, Jun., author and proprietor, is now in press and will shortly appear. Priestcraft is short-lived," etc. However, since Joseph had by that time obtained a copyright, he was enabled to prevent any further publishing of a plagiarized version of the Book of Mormon by its enemies.

The Book of Mormon was completed, and was offered for sale by March, 1830. It is therefore easy to check up on the various attempts to mutilate any portion of the story as to its coming forth or the incidents connected therewith.

For a number of years opponents of the Book of Mormon were able to discourage investigators of the work by calling to their attention a story that one Rev. Solomon Spaulding had written, a story about the ancient inhabitants of America, which he had left in a printing office in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and that Sidney Rigdon, then a young man, was connected with this printing office and had made a copy of this manuscript, and later, in connection with Joseph Smith, published the Book of Mormon as an enlarged version of the old Spaulding story, which he had named, "Manuscript Found." Spaulding was born in Ashford, Connecticut in

1761, and wrote his book in 1812, and died in 1816, or when Joseph Smith was about eleven years of age.

However, the Spaulding Manuscript, lost for a number of years, was later discovered in the possession of a Mr. L. L. Rice in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1885, and was placed in the library of Oberlin College, Ohio, by Mr. Rice. It was later published by both the Reorganized and Utah Latter Day Saint Churches, in order that those interested might obtain this published copy and make a comparison between the Spaulding Manuscript Story and the Book of Mormon. Such a comparison fully vindicates the claims of the Book of Mormon, and shows definitely that there is no connection between these two books. In regard to this matter we present the following letter from Mr. James H. Fairchild, who was President of Oberlin College at that time:

Oberlin College, O., Oct. 5th, 1896

Mr. B. C. Flint

Dear Sir: The Inter-Ocean had no authority from me for the statement that the Book of Mormon was copied from a manuscript of Solomon Spaulding's. We have in our College library a manuscript by Spaulding, one which he was accustomed to read to his neighbors in Conneaut, O., when he lived there eighty years or more ago. The manuscript has on a blank page the certificate and names of several of these neighbors who heard it read. It bears no resemblance to the Book of Mormon. The manuscript has been published by the Mormons of Salt Lake City, and also by the Josephite Mormons of Iowa. You could doubtless, by sending to either point, obtain a copy.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Jas. H. Fairchild

Chapter 4

The Book of Mormon: “The Stick of Joseph”

In our last chapter we discussed the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the obstacles that were thrown in its way by its enemies to prevent it being generally read and believed. We will now open it and examine its contents, together with the Biblical prophecies pointing to its need and the place it should occupy.

In Ezekiel the 37th chapter, and the 16th to the 19th verses, we read of two records, called “sticks.” The one stick or record was to be for the House of

Judah, and the other was for the House of Joseph. The Bible very evidently is the record or “stick” of Judah; and, since the two sticks or records should become one some day, it would naturally follow that at the appointed time of the Lord, the two records would be associated together in the carrying on of the work of God.

All the way through the Old Testament, great promises are made to Joseph the son of Israel; in fact they were to prevail over and above the promises made to his predecessors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Joseph’s land is described in such a way that it points directly to America, where his progeny would grow into a mighty people, and become a multitude of nations, which promise gives us a Bible background for the Book of Mormon.

We learn from reading the Book of Mormon, that it is a record, first of a family of the descendants of Manasseh (the son of Joseph, born in Egypt, unto him and his wife Asenath, an Egyptian princess), who left Jerusalem prior to the time it was destroyed and its inhabitants carried to Babylon during the reign of Zedekiah. This family consisted of Lehi and his wife, and four sons and their wives, Ishmael and his family, and Zoram, who was the servant of Laban (another descendant of Manasseh) who held the history of the House of Joseph which was engraven on plates of brass. Laban, because of his wickedness, was slain in order that the record might come into legitimate hands. This little band of emigrants were instructed how to build a ship and with it come to a land, described in the Bible as a “Land shadowing with wings,” (Isa. 18.) and otherwise described as “Joseph’s Land,” (Deut., 33).

In the Book of Mormon also is a history of an earlier colony that came to America following the flood, when in Genesis 11:8, we are told that God scattered the inhabitants of the earth out over the face of the entire world, which would include America. The descendants of Lehi, in time came to be classed as two peoples, the Nephites and the Lamanites, descendants of two of the sons of Lehi. Later they came upon evidence of this earlier emigration, and obtained a record of them and their history, and this history is included in the Book of Mormon and is called the Book of Ether.

The Book of Mormon, like the Bible, is a book of books. There are fifteen in all, and these were written by twenty-five authors. The book covers a period of from six hundred years before Christ to four hundred years after

Christ, together with the twenty-two hundred years before Christ when the first emigrants from the Tower of Babel came to this continent.

We could here spend much time in a study of American archeology, which in actual detail vindicates every claim made by the Book of Mormon, in that it shows that the very people spoken of in the book actually lived and made history on this great American continent; but we will leave that to a study by itself, as we are undertaking to briefly analyze the Book of Mormon as a part of the history of the great Restoration movement, which includes the coming into being of the restored Church of Christ.

The Mission of the Book of Mormon Vindicated

In the preface to the Book of Mormon, by the Prophet Mormon, he gives the mission of the Book of Mormon to be the “convincing of Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ.”

In the contents of the book we find that Christ did indeed visit this continent of America after His resurrection and ascension and that He here organized His Church and endowed it with the same gifts and blessings as were given to Christ’s church in Palestine. This fulfills the statement of the Savior in Matthew 15:24, where he says: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel.” Hence, since some of the ancient Americans were of the house of Israel, descendants of Joseph through his son Manasseh, they were entitled to the ministry of Christ the same as were the Jews in Palestine.

Therefore, we are not surprised to find that when the Book of Mormon is presented to those whom it is intended to benefit that light and understanding regarding the mission work of Christ is engendered and disseminated among all such who will believe and accept the story it tells.

It is indicated in the book itself that there were to be a number of witnesses, not only to the book and its nature, but also witnesses of the angelic messenger who was to bring it to light. We have already noticed the testimony of the young Prophet Joseph Smith as to the wonderful vision he had, and of the angel’s visit to him upon various occasions following the night of September 21, 1823, when he was visited three times in succession, by the last writer of the Book of Mormon, the Angel Moroni. Subsequent to that time this angel went with him to the Hill Cumorah in New York and gave to him the plates containing the record, which he was to translate by the Urim and Thummim. This angelic

messenger made the promise to him that he would also appear to others in order that they might add their testimony to that of Joseph Smith. We will here give their testimony:

Testimony of Three Witnesses

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shewn unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment sea of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Oliver Cowdery
David Whitmer
Martin Harris

Later eight other men saw the plates and handled them, though they did not see the angel, so we have:

The Testimony of Eight Witnesses

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shewn unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands: and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shewn unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the

plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer
Jacob Whitmer
Peter Whitmer, Jr.
John Whitmer
Hiram Page
Joseph Smith, Sen.
Hyrum Smith
Samuel H. Smith

Thus we see that God foresaw the need of such witnesses because He knew the evil designs of men who would seek to discredit the work that He was bringing forth in these latter days, for the restoration of the gospel of Christ, and the setting up of His church anew. He was able to give the witness individually to every honest heart who would comply with the requirements of the gospel, though He well knew the incredulity of the human mind in the acceptance of supernatural things during the times in which they might transpire. People, seemingly, will accept the supernatural, if it is relegated so remotely in the past that there is no way of proving it false. So we see, that the Christian world today will accept without question the miraculous birth of the Son of god, and criticize and condemn the Jews of that day for their failure to accept Christ as the Messiah; yet if the same thing happened today, they would do no better than the Jew of that other age. Also we have John's unsupported testimony of what happened on the Isle of Patmos, and find it generally accepted.

In addition to the testimony of the eight witnesses who saw and handled the plates, and also that of the three witnesses who not only saw and handled the plates, but who also saw the angel, we have the testimony of thousands of good honest Christian men and women who through the years have had the good fortune to know the book and to believe it to be of divine origin, and an invaluable companion to the Bible.

In the more than one hundred years that the Book of Mormon has been in circulation, it has made history in the national and religious progress of nations.

Henry Wallace, former Vic-President of the United States, said in an address before the New York National Bank Fair in New York City, concerning the books which had, had a powerful effect upon the Western and especially the American world of affairs;

“Of all the American religious books of the nineteenth century, it seems probably that the Book of Mormon was the most powerful. It reached perhaps only one per cent of the United States, but it affected this one percent so powerfully and lastingly that all people of the United States have been affected.” – New York Times, page 3, November 5, 1937. Quoted from “Foreword” of “Jesus Christ Among the Ancient Americans,” by Paul Hanson.

The increase in the study of archeology, which has brought to light such a volume of outstanding knowledge of the ancient Americans, their customs, religion, etc., has given ample proof of the origin of some as being of the seed of ancient Israel, and so made America the most interesting land upon the face of the earth, as the following shows:

My archeological studies convince me that the Book of Mormon was inspired, for it contains many archeological and historic facts which were absolutely unknown at the time it was written. – A. H. Verrill, author of *Old civilizations of the New World*; Quoted from lecture by Roy Weldon, Warrensburg, Missouri

Added to the above, the American Indian has come into his own as an object worthy of study and interest. His traditions, his characteristics, and his physical make-up mark him as being what the Book of Mormon informs us was his origin. It also predicts his destiny. The Indians in all parts of America have traditions of a lost book of Scripture, and when the Book of Mormon is presented to them they recognize it at once as having all the ear marks of such a book. An example: some years ago while laboring among the Iroquois Six Nations near Brantford, Ontario, Canada, we became very well acquainted with many of their prominent men, among them a Mohawk, who was a member of the Indian Council at Oshweken, in the center of the Six Nations Reserve. This man asked us about the lost book of Scripture as he had a copy in his possession, that had been given him by some transient missionaries, but which he had made no effort to learn about up to that time. His question was: “Is there anything in this book which you tell us is the Indian’s Bible that tells of three good men who never die?” I asked him for his story and he told it like this: “An old warrior lay dying in his teepee, and being alone because of the superstition of the Indians relative to death, his friends on the outside heard him muttering, as they supposed, to himself, when to their surprise he appeared in their midst and said he wasn’t going to die, because while he lay there three good men beautifully dressed came to him and brought fruit, vegetables and herbs, and said that their work was to remain always on earth and do good.”

I took this man's Book of Mormon and read to him about the work of Christ among the ancient Americans wherein He chose twelve disciples in the organization of His church in the same manner as He did in organizing His church among the Jews in Palestine. In this story we are told that when Christ was about to leave them and ascend again to heaven that He called His disciples to Him and asked them what their desires should be; and nine of them asked that, when they had finished their work here, they might be released and come to Him in His kingdom. Three hung their heads and feared to express their desires, and Christ discerning their wish told them that they need never taste death, but like John the beloved disciple, they might remain on earth till He should come again, and during that time minister to the children of men, be among the Gentiles and the Gentiles would know it not.

When I read this story to the Old Mohawk, he said: "that is exactly the story as we have it in our traditions." This incident is mentioned to show that the Book of Mormon has made remarkable history, not only among the white nations of the earth who have come in contact with it and compared it with the stories divulged through a study of archeology, but more especially is it beginning to take its place among those to whom it is particularly addressed, the descendants of the ancient Americans. There is a wealth of just such material constantly coming to us from all sources.

That Christ actually was here in America among the ancient inhabitants is amply proven by their traditions that this great WHITE GOD of the air visited nearly every part of this continent. Among the ancient Mayas he is known as Quetzalcoatl; among the ancients of Guatemala, as Gucumatz; and among the Incas of South America as Viracocha, as well as others, and in every instance he is described as a bearded white man, and a wonderful teacher, who went away in the clouds and promised to return at some future day.

Chapter 5

The Church of Christ is Organized, or Restored

During the period covered in the preceding chapters, a number of revelations had been given, sixteen in all; and they were given with the intent that divine direction might be had concerning the very important matters involved. For instance, some of these revelations were given to

individuals and others were general in character. In one given in July, 1828, Joseph Smith was rebuked for yielding to Martin Harris' importunities concerning the one hundred and sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon translation, that Mr. Harris took home with him and lost. Joseph had been forbidden to let any of this matter go out of his hands to anyone until finished. In another revelation given in March, 1829, we find these words:

And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envyings, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old. – “Book of Commandments” 4:5

This clearly indicates that the Restoration of the latter days was to be complete in every way, and in all of its parts. Not only were the ancient records of the early inhabitants to come forth; but also the gospel in all its power, as enjoyed by the people of God in the days of Christ as taught in the New Testament, was to be restored, and the Church of Christ was to be again established, as the language implies; “Like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old.” So, in another revelation given in June, 1829, Joseph Smith and his associates David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery were instructed to begin the choosing of twelve apostles in order that the church might indeed be like the church in the time of Christ. We quote as follows:

And now, Oliver, I speak unto you, and also unto David, by way of commandment: for behold I command all men everywhere to repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with the same calling with which he was called.... And now behold, there are others which are called to declare my gospel, both unto Gentile and unto Jew: Yea, even unto twelve: ... And now behold I give unto you, Oliver, and also unto David, that you should search out the twelve which shall have the desires of which I have spoken; and by their desires and their works, you shall know them. – “Book of Commandments” 15:10, 11, 27, 42

Thus, in the sixteen revelations received during the years 1828 and 1829, everything was being set in order for the great work that was about to come forth.

While the young Prophet and seer, Joseph Smith, was translating the writings on the plates, and Oliver Cowdery was acting as his scribe, they had learned from the text which they were translating that baptism in

water for the remission of sins was enjoined as a part of the gospel, and was essential to salvation. This troubled them, and their statement is that they felt the need of complying with all the commandments of God! And here we will let Joseph Smith tell the story as it happened:

We still continued the work of translation, when in the ensuing month, (May, eighteen hundred and twenty-nine), we on a certain day went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord respecting baptism for the remission of sins, as we found mentioned in the translation of the plates. While we were thus employed, praying, and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying unto us, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion, for the remission of sins, and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." He said this Aaronic priesthood had not the power of laying on of hands, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter, and he commanded us to go and be baptized, and gave us directions that I should baptize Oliver Cowdery, and afterwards that he should baptize me. Accordingly we went and were baptized, I baptized him first, and afterwards he baptized me, after which I laid my hands upon his head and ordained him to the Aaronic priesthood, and afterwards he laid his hands on me and ordained me to the same priesthood, for so we were commanded. – *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, No. 19, pp. 865, 866, Aug., 1842

From the above account it might appear that these men were ordained twice, once by the heavenly messenger and again by each other. However, while we are not informed in detail as to this matter, the answer may be found in the idea that the messenger was a spiritual being, and so there was a necessity of having both a human or literal ordination as well as a spiritual one. Again, in this matter Lucy Smith in her history gives a little different account, although there is doubtless no conflict as to what really happened. Here is her account:

One morning they sat down to their work, as usual, and the first thing which presented itself through the Urim and Thummim, was a commandment for Joseph and Oliver to repair to the water, and attend to the ordinance of baptism. They did so, and as they were returning to the house, they overheard Samuel engaged in secret prayer. Joseph said that he considered this as a sufficient testimony of his being a fit subject for baptism; and as they had now received authority to baptize, they spoke to Samuel upon the subject, and he went straightway to the water with them, and was baptized. – "Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors," p. 155

Following the baptism of Joseph and Oliver, by each other, they tell of the wonderful outpouring of God's Spirit and power after they were baptized. Both having the gift of prophecy whereby they were enabled to see the marvelous future of the work then just having its beginning. This included the form of organization of the church. In this connection we feel that the poetic description of this event as given by Oliver Cowdery is well worthy of inclusion. He says:

On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer spake peace to us, while the veil was parted and the angel of God came down clothed in glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the gospel of repentance! What joy! What wonder! What amazement! While the world was racked and distracted, - while millions were groping as the blind for the wall, and while all men were resting upon uncertainty, as a general mass, our eyes beheld - our ears heard.

As in the "blaze of day;" yes, more - above the glitter of the May sunbeam, which then shed its brilliancy over the face of nature! Then his voice, though mild, pierced to the center, and his words, "I am thy fellow servant," dispelled every fear! We listened - we gazed - We admired! 'Twas the voice of an angel from glory - 'twas a message from the "Most High!" And as we heard we rejoiced, while His love enkindled upon our souls, and we were rapt in the vision of the Almighty! Where was room for doubt? Nowhere; uncertainty had fled, doubt had sunk, no more to rise, while fiction and deception had fled forever!

But, dear brother, think, further think for a moment, what joy filled our hearts and with what surprise we must have bowed, (for who would not have bowed the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under his hand the Holy priesthood, as he said: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." - Reorganized Church History, vol. 1. pp. 37, 38; also Messenger and Advocate, vol. 1, pp. 15, 16

We are here giving the version as found in the Reorganized Church History. However by comparison we find no conflict with the other histories covering the above incidents.

It will also be noted that Samuel H. Smith, brother of the Prophet Joseph, was the third person baptized under the restored gospel. David Whitmer in his book, "An Address to All Believers in Christ," claims that he, Whitmer, was the third one baptized, but in this we are certain that he was mistaken because these baptisms occurred in May, 1829, and Whitmer does not enter into our story until in June of the same year.

After the above events began to take place, there was a gradual opening up of the work along all lines. Ministers of the various denominations began to seek interviews, but not with the idea of learning of the truths of the marvelous things that were being claimed as having been enjoyed; but in order to trap these young men, new in gospel discussions, and so cause confusion, and if possible destroy the work so evidently beginning to arouse public interest. In this it seems that the Spirit of God was given in sufficient degree that they were able to withstand every onslaught, as a result honest souls became interested and baptisms became frequent.

Also the time was now approaching for the fulfillment of the promise of the higher priesthood being given. They had for some time been giving this matter solemn prayer, and at length, at a meeting in the house of Peter Whitmer, Sr., the Lord spoke to them. Here we again quote Joseph's words:

We had not long been engaged in solemn prayer, when the word of the Lord came unto us in the chamber, commanding us: that I should ordain Oliver Cowdery to be an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ, and that he also should ordain me to the same office and then to ordain others as it should be made known unto us from time to time; we were however commanded to defer this our ordination until such times as it should be practicable to have our brethren, who had been and who should be baptized, assembled together, when we must have their sanction to our thus proceeding to ordain each other, and have them decide by vote whether they were willing to accept us as spiritual teachers, or not, when also we were commanded to bless bread and break it with them, and to take wine, bless it and drink it with them, afterwards proceed to ordain each other according to commandment, then call out such men as the Spirit should dictate, and ordain them, and then attend to the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, upon all those whom we had previously baptized; doing all things in the name of the Lord. – Times and Seasons, vol. 3, p. 915

It must be remembered that according to Joseph's own account, all of this as mentioned in the above occurred in the month of June, 1829, and at the same time the revelation calling out the twelve apostles was given. In the following spring, on April 6, 1830, the foregoing instructions were carried out and the church was organized. Concerning the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith wrote:

While the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, we still continued to bear testimony, and give information, as far as we had opportunity; and also made known to our brethren, that we had received commandment to organize the church, and accordingly we met together

for that purpose, at the house of the above mentioned Mr. Whitmer (being six in number) on Tuesday the sixth day of April, A. D., one thousand, eight hundred and thirty.

Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our heavenly Father we proceeded, (according to previous commandment) to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in the things of the kingdom of God, and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a church according to said commandment which we had received. To these they consented by unanimous vote. – Times and Seasons, Oct. 15, 1842, vol. 3, No. 24, p. 944

After the brethren had expressed their willingness to accept Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery as their “teachers,” and their desire to be organized into a church in harmony with the command of God and the laws of the state of New York, Joseph then laid his hands upon Oliver Cowdery and ordained him “an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of this Church;” then Oliver Cowdery laid his hands on the head of Joseph and ordained him “an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of this Church,” (see chapter 24, “Book of Commandments”) after which they took bread and wine and blessed it, and partook of the Lord’s supper; they also laid hands on all those present who had been baptized previous to this date, that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and be confirmed members of the Church of Christ.

It is true that some historians give the name of the church to which Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained, as “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints;” but this is quite impossible, since that name was not known at that time; and in fact was not known till eight years after the event of the organization of the Church. Authorization for the name, “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints” can be found in the Utah Church “Doctrine and Covenants,” Section 115. The account of this ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, is given in the “Book of Commandments,” chapter 24, and “Doctrine and Covenants” (Reorganized), section 17, as “The Rise of the Church of Christ,” this being the name of the Church at that time. On this question of church organization we here quote from a noted historian:

The translation of the Book of Mormon being finished, Smith and Cowdery go to Palmyra, secure the copyright, and agree with Egbert B. Grandin to print five thousand copies for three thousand dollars.... The title page is not a modern production, but a literal translation from the last leaf of the plates, on the left-hand side, and running like all Hebrew writing.

And now in a chamber of Whitmer's house, Smith, Cowdery, and David Whitmer meet, and earnestly ask God to make good his promise, and confer on them the Melchisedec priesthood, which authorizes the laying-on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Their prayer is answered; for presently the word of the Lord comes to them, commanding that Joseph Smith should ordain Oliver Cowdery to be an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ, and Oliver in like manner should so ordain Joseph, and the two should ordain others as from time to time the will of the Lord should be made known to them. But this ordination must not take place until the baptized brethren assemble and give to this act their sanction, and accept the ordained as spiritual teachers, and then only after the blessing and partaking of wine....

The rise of the Church of Jesus Christ in these last days is on the 6th of April, 1830, at which date the church was organized under the provisions of the statutes of the state of New York by Joseph Smith, Jr., Hyrum Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Samuel H. Smith, and Peter Whitmer.... The first public discourse, following the meetings held in Whitmer's house, was preached on Sunday, the 11th of April, 1830, by Oliver Cowdery, who the same day baptized in Seneca Lake several persons, among whom were Hyrum and Katherine Page, some of the Whitmer's, and the Jolly family. – Bancroft's History of Utah, pp. 63-67

From Andrew Jensen's "Church Chronology" we quote the following under the heading of 1830, April:

Tues. 6. The Church (afterwards named by revelation the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) was organized according to the laws of the State of New York, in the house of Peter Whitmer Sen., at Fayette, Seneca Co., N. Y., with six members, namely, Joseph Smith, Jun., Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer, Jun., Samuel H. Smith and David Whitmer. Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery ordained each other elders – the first elders in the Church – according to commandment from God. They then laid hands on all baptized members present, "that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and be confirmed members of the Church." The Holy Ghost was poured out upon them "to a very great degree." Some prophesied and "all praised the Lord and rejoiced exceedingly." – p. 4

While we recognize that there is some disagreement among writers as to the time and place of the first ordination to the Melchisedec Priesthood, and also the time and place of the organization of the church, the predominant and most authentic sources of information definitely establish the fact that there were two meetings at the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen., which was in Fayette Township, Seneca County, New York, and which still stands. The first meeting was in June, 1829, when instruction was given as to how to proceed with the organization of the Church. The second meeting was on April 6, 1830, when the instruction given in June was carried out, and the Church was organized according to the statutes of the state of New York.

Chapter 6

The Church Grows

No sooner was the infant church formally organized than it began regular ministerial work, both in organizing local branches or churches, and going out as missionaries.

The first sermon preached for the organized body, was preached by Oliver Cowdery April 11, 1830, in Father Whitmer's house at Fayette. This was followed up by a number of ordained men, and converts began to come in very rapidly. Also the work soon began to gather into its ranks other men of recognized standing as ministers and spiritual leaders. Included among these were the two Pratts, Orson and Parley; Sidney Rigdon, Lyman Wight and many others.

Parley Pratt, Sidney Rigdon, and Lyman Wight had been associated together with the Campbells, Walter Scott, and Barton W. Stone, in the developing of the movement inaugurated by Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Parley Pratt was the first of these to accept the gospel as restored by the angel to Joseph Smith, and he had no more than come into the church than he began to launch out and seek to interest his former associates in the new found source of divine truth.

The first conference of the Church was held June, 1830, and from there the work spread rapidly, and many were baptized, wherever the ministry went.

No sooner was the ministry energetically prosecuting their ministry in the various ways outlined for them, than the adversary also became more active and the most bitter persecution began. Also, within the church, schism began to rear its head, as was to be expected. Even while the Book of Mormon was being prepared for the printer, one of the new members Hiram Page by name, found a peculiar stone with which he claimed to receive divine revelations, and kindly disciplinary measures were necessary in order to keep the church free from confusion and disorder. At the September conference of 1830 the question of the seer stone was taken up and disposed of as follows:

At length our conference assembled; the subject of the stone mentioned in a previous number was discussed and after considerable investigation, Brother

Page, as well as the whole church who were present renounced the said stone, and all things connected therewith, much to our mutual satisfaction and happiness. – Times and Seasons, vol. 4, No. 10, p. 146

Because of the fact that the elders early learned that the Book of Mormon was a record of the ancient Americans, and also because the so-called American Indians were the descendants of those early people, their thoughts immediately turned toward the Indian people and a missionary program to the Indians was at once started.

In answer to prayer revelation was received directing Peter Whitmer, Jr., Oliver Cowdery, Ziba Peterson, and Parley P. Pratt, to go on a mission to the Indians. They started west in October of 1830.

They first stopped at Kirtland, Ohio, because here was where some of Parley P. Pratt's former ministerial associates were living. They found Sidney Rigdon the pastor of a group of people, thirteen families in all, living in a community type of society, wherein they had all things in common. Sidney Rigdon was soon converted, and was baptized with his wife November 14, 1830. Others in this group were Edward Partridge, and Lyman Wight. The entire thirteen families came into the church as a result of this first series of meetings. The missionaries soon left Kirtland for the then Far West, and their group was now augmented by a doctor by the name of Frederick G. Williams, who is described as a very kind, spiritually minded man; and being a physician, his company was greatly desired.

Passing through Buffalo, New York, the missionaries had found a tribe of Indians, and left with them two copies of the Book of Mormon.

After leaving Kirtland for the west, this brave group of God-serving men, during that cold winter of 1830 and 1831, passed through a wild frontier, where they seldom found a settler to provide them with necessities, and they tell us that they waded through snow so deep that it was almost up to their arm pits, and their food ran so low at times that all they had to eat was a little corn bread frozen stiff, and frozen pork, which they often ate raw, because they had no means of cooking it. For drink all they had was melted snow. Yet these hardy pioneer missionaries pushed on to their destination, which was indicated to them as being, "on the borders of the Lamanites," and that was understood to be the western boundary of Missouri. At that time this was as far as white civilization had penetrated. Also while they doubtless knew it not, this was also the "heart of

America,” and was later designated as the center place of Zion, or the Zion of latter days, for the seed of Joseph, who was the son of Jacob.

They began their work with a tribe of Delaware Indians just over the Kansas River in what is now the state of Kansas. Here they found an old chief, who treated them very kindly and assembled his people to hear the message the white missionaries had for them. They were thus enabled to leave a few copies of the Book of Mormon among these people. Though some may assume their work had no lasting results, the reason for this no doubt is that, like in all history that man has made, he sees the end without realizing the necessary steps that must be taken to reach that end. The work of God is so stupendous, and its magnitude so great, that it seems difficult for man to visualize and evaluate the methods necessary for the carrying into effect the things God has outlined to him. This is a striking example of man’s failure to first lay a foundation before he begins to fabricate. It is very true that a very important part of the Restoration movement, is the carrying of the gospel to scattered Israel, but it is also true that preliminary work is almost always indicated before the grand goal is reached.

Leaving the missionaries in the west where they went to convert the Indians, we return to the base of the work in the east. Before leaving on his mission Parley P. Pratt had baptized his brother Orson, and in November, 1830, we find Orson Pratt coming to see Joseph to inquire if it were the Lord’s will for him to work in the ministry, and if so, where. Joseph made it a matter of prayer, and as a result told Pratt to go to preaching the gospel at once. He was therefore ordained and soon became the most eloquent preacher of that region.

In December, 1830, Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge came from Kirtland to see Joseph. They, too, wanted to know what their duties were. Rigdon was told to assist the Prophet in translating the Bible, because they had been shown that the copies of the Scriptures then in use had been so badly mutilated by the translators; and as they had been told in the Book of Mormon, that many plain and precious things had been taken out of the Bible as they now have it. Sidney was to act as scribe for Joseph in this work. There was so much persecution hounding them in Fayette, where they were then living, that they were given a revelation to go to Ohio. As a result of this revelation Joseph says that, accompanied by his wife, they went with Brethren Rigdon and Partridge to Kirtland, in January, 1831, and were lodged in the home of Newel K. Whitney, where they were

treated very kindly. By that time the local church in Kirtland had several hundred members.

Early in 1831, John Whitmer was made Church Historian, but speaking of his work Vida Smith, in her “Young People’s History,” makes this comment:

Had he kept as busy at that work as the missionaries were in theirs, the Church History would today be full and interesting; but what hindered him, we cannot tell; the history we get as written by him is meager.

After arriving in Kirtland, Ohio, they were kept busy with the gathering in and settling of the many members who began to migrate to that place, until Kirtland became the real headquarters of the Church. In April, 1831, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon resumed the translation of the Bible. In February, 1831, a revelation was given concerning the material interests of the Church, and Edward Partridge was indicated as being the first Bishop of the Church.

In June, 1831, a general conference was held in Kirtland. A very great many attended this conference from all over the country where the Church had been established, and by then we learn from the various historians that the Church had grown to over a thousand members. At this conference new and strange things were introduced. Among them the setting aside of men to be High Priests (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 193). Here also real active missionary work was inaugurated and the elders were told to go out two by two and proselyte the entire world.

The mission to the Indians was renewed, but by this time disaffection had begun to enter in and some of the elders apostatized and refused to go on the missions assigned them. Among these were Jacob Scott, Edson Fuller, and William Carter. However, twenty-six elders did start out and, by different routes, they all reached Missouri, which had been indicated as their destination. Missouri had already been indicated as the place for the Zion of latter days (see “Book of Commandments” 59:48, 49, 69, 70). Oliver Cowdery, wrote from “Kaw Township, Missouri,” May 7, 1831. This is supposed to be somewhere between Kansas City and Independence. His letter gave a glowing description of his missionary experiences, and fired the whole church body with zeal.

Soon the whole body was directed to go to Missouri. Before leaving Kirtland, Joseph was visited by a man by the name of W. W. Phelps. He accepted the gospel and was ordained an elder and was instructed to

associate himself with Oliver Cowdery in writing books and literature, as he was a printer, and qualified for this work, and the need of such works was now sorely felt. Elders Thomas B. Marsh and Selah Griffin started out immediately for Missouri.

June 19, 1831, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Edward Partridge, W. W. Phelps, Joseph Coe, Martin Harris, A. S. Gilbert and his wife left Kirtland for Missouri. They traveled by wagon, canal boats, and stages, to Cincinnati, Ohio. From that city they went by steamboat to Louisville, Kentucky. Here they waited for three days for a steamer to take them to St. Louis, Missouri. At St. Louis they separated, Joseph Smith, Martin Harris, W. W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, and Joseph Coe walking the entire distance from St. Louis to Independence, Missouri. They arrived in Independence about the middle of July, 1831. Elders Rigdon and Gilbert and his wife came up the Missouri River by steamer and reached Independence a few days later (see John Whitmer History, Chap. 9, pp. 33, 34).

In commenting on the experiences of these early pioneers going to their western Zion, Vida E. Smith in her history makes this interesting statement:

They were treated with unkindness and abuse by many because they believed in the Book of Mormon. Yet they enjoyed many blessings. They made it a rule to read as often as possible from the Bible, and to pray. They were glad to meet the brethren, (those who had preceded them to that land) but they found everything different from the country they had left....

What these brave men suffered who took that hard journey to Missouri cannot by any of us be even guessed at. Lyman Wight's account of that Journey, kept daily, gives us a faint idea. They baptized many, and fifty miles from Independence, John Murdock was left sick, and Lyman Wight pushed on to Independence. Securing a horse, he went back after Elder Murdock. He held him on the horse, walking by his side back to the city of hope. This was in August (1831).

Chapter 7

The Idea of Zion; The Temple

Almost from the beginning of the Restoration movement, the idea of a material Zion has been regarded as a fundamental feature. This doubtless

springs from the statement found in the Book of Mormon, Book of Ether 6:1-8, where speaking of the land of America as the “Choice land,” and the place for the New Jerusalem, we read these words:

And now I Moroni, proceed to finish my record concerning the destruction of the people of whom I have been writing. For behold, they rejected all the words of Ether; for he truly told them of all things, from the beginning of man; and that after the waters had receded from off the face of the land, it became a choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord; wherefore the Lord would have that all men should serve him, who dwell upon the face thereof; and that it was the place of the New Jerusalem, which was to come down from God out of heaven, and the holy sanctuary of the Lord. Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land; and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after that it was destroyed, it should be built up again a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in time of old, but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built up unto the house of Israel. And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, for which things there has been a type; for as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph, that he should perish not; wherefore the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built up upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come, when the earth shall pass away.

It will be noticed in this, that a literal city, “like unto the Jerusalem of old,” should be built up upon the land of Joseph to the seed of Joseph. Also that it should be like the Jerusalem of old, in that it should contain a holy sanctuary of the Lord; or in other words, a temple.

When the early missionaries to the Indians, as already mentioned in previous chapters, reached the “border of the Lamanites,” which brought them to the vicinity of Independence, it was revealed to them, not only to them but to the Prophet Joseph Smith himself, that Independence was the center place of Zion, and also the place for the temple to be reared by the seed of Joseph in the land of Joseph, or America. A revelation was given in June, 1831, which in part reads as follows:

Behold, thus saith the Lord unto the elders whom he hath called and chosen in these last days, by the voice of his Spirit, saying, I the Lord will make known unto you what I will that ye shall do from this time until the next conference, which shall be held in Missouri, upon the land which I will consecrate unto my people, which are a remnant of Jacob, and them who are heirs according to the

covenant. Wherefore, verily I say unto you, let my servants Joseph and Sidney take their journey as soon as preparations can be made to leave their homes, and journey to the land of Missouri. And inasmuch as they are faithful to me, it shall be made known unto them what they shall do; and it shall also, inasmuch as they are faithful, be made known unto them the land of your inheritance. – “Book of Commandments” 54:1-4

The following revelation was given in Independence, July 1831:

Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints; wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence, is the center place, and the spot for the temple is lying westward upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse. – Millennial Star, vol. 14, supplement, p. 72; “Doctrine and Covenants” 57:1

In this same revelation, W. W. Phelps was commanded to locate a residence in Independence and establish a printing office for the church there. Then, early in August another revelation was given which had much to do with the matter of inheritance and the method of their allotment, etc., and also concerning the dedication of the lot for the temple: “And let my servant Sidney Rigdon consecrate and dedicate this land, and the spot for the temple, unto the Lord,” etc.

On the second of August, Joseph Smith aided the saints who had recently come from Colesville, New York, in laying the logs for the first house in Kaw Township, twelve miles west of Independence. This was the beginning of the establishment of Zion, and was attended with elaborate ceremonies. The exact place where this house stood is now uncertain, but is believed to be somewhere near Brush Creek and the Paseo, near the Plaza in Kansas City.

On the third of August, eight elders met to dedicate the spot for the temple according to the revelation given concerning this work. Seven of them are named as follows: Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Edward Partridge, W. W. Phelps, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris and Joseph Coe. Prayer was offered and the 87th Psalm was read. The service was very solemn and impressive. In this connection the following statement by John Whitmer, Historian for the Church of Christ, is of interest:

I hereby give a copy of the proceedings of the laying of the first log of the city of Zion. “After many struggles and afflictions, being persecuted by our

enemies, we received intelligence by letter from our brethren, who were at the East, that Br. Joseph and Sidney, and many other elders were commanded to take their journey to this land, the land of Missouri. Which was promised unto us should be the land of the inheritance of the saints, and the place of the gathering in these last days. Which intelligence cheered our hearts and caused us to rejoice exceedingly.

“And by special protection of the Lord, Br. Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, in company with eight other elders, with the church from Colesville, N. Y., consisting of about sixty souls arrived in the month of July and by revelation the place was made known where the temple shall stand, and the city should commence. And by commandment twelve of us assembled ourselves together, viz, Elder Joseph Smith, Jr., the seer; Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Newel Knight, William W. Phelps, and Ezra Booth, who denied the faith. On the second day of August 1831, Br. Sidney Rigdon stood up and asked saying: Do you receive this land for the land of your inheritance with thankful hearts from the Lord? Answer from all, we do. Do you pledge yourself to keep the laws of God on this land, which you have never kept in your own land? We do. Do you pledge yourself to see that others of your brethren who shall come hither do keep the laws of God? We do. After prayer he arose and said, I now pronounce this land consecrated and dedicated to the Lord for a possession and inheritance for the saints (in the name of Jesus Christ having authority from him). And for all the faithful servants of the Lord to the remotest age of time. Amen.

“The following day eight elders viz: Joseph Smith, Jr., Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, Peter Whitmer, Jun., Frederick G. Williams, William W. Phelps, Martin Harris, and Joseph Coe, assembled together where the temple is to be erected. Sidney Rigdon dedicated the ground where the city is to stand; Joseph Smith, Jr., laid a stone at the northeast corner of the contemplated temple in the name of the Lord Jesus of Nazareth. After all present had rendered thanks to the great Ruler of the universe Sidney Rigdon pronounced this spot of ground wholly dedicated unto the Lord forever: Amen.” – John Whitmer History, chap. 9, pp. 33, 34, par 2-9

One of the early saints to return to Independence was Roderick May, a member of the Reorganized Church. He stated to Inez Davis in the Historian’s office at the corner of Lexington and River Boulevard, that he came to Independence in 1884, and that Doctor W. E. McClellan took him and showed him where the temple was to stand.... He said that McClellan told him that although he was not here at the dedication that he was here soon afterward and that a few loose stones were gathered together on the spot at the time of the dedication and oil poured on them (Statement of Inez Davis).

On the fourth of August, the first conference was held; and on the seventh the first funeral in the land of Zion was held over the remains of Sister Polly Knight, wife of Joseph Knight, Sr.

Thus the saints began to establish themselves in what they hoped to make the material Zion of these latter days, in the land of Joseph to the seed of Joseph. It will be noted that the “spot” west of the courthouse that was dedicated on the third of August, 1831, for the building of the temple, had not been bought by the Church. It was on a plot of land belonging to the State of Missouri, and afterward purchased by one Jones H. Flournoy, a man whom we later find among the bitter persecutors of the saints.

In an attempt to buy the lot that had been dedicated they found that Mr. Flournoy would not sell just the amount of ground sought, but the record in the courthouse shows that on December 19, 1831, a tract of land comprising sixty-three and a fraction acres was purchased by Edward Partridge, from Mr. Jones H. Flournoy and his wife. When later platted this included the lots Nos. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22, all of which are now included in the Temple Lot of the present day.

Of the importance of the Temple, we read this, in a revelation given in September, 1832:

A revelation of Jesus Christ unto His servant Joseph Smith, Jr., and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high; yea, the word of the Lord concerning His church, established in the last days for the restoration of His people, as He has spoken by the mouth of His prophets, and for the gathering of His saints to stand upon mount Zion, which shall be the city New Jerusalem; which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jr. and others, with whom the Lord was well pleased. Verily, this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation; for verily, this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house....

At the dedication of the Temple Lot, a stone was laid to mark the northeast corner of the “spot” to be occupied by the temple building, and this stone was found in 1929 when excavation was started for the temple and is now on display in the office of the Church of Christ, with headquarters on the Temple Lot.



The above is a very good picture of the stone marker found on the north line of the Temple foundation May 18, 1929, which was laid by Joseph Smith and seven companions August 3, 1831. This stone was found forty feet west of the northeast corner of the present foundation site. The markings on the stone indicate it was placed forty feet west of the corner, yet it would definitely mark the corner of the Temple.

Chapter 8

Publication Begins

Early in the progress of the new church the importance of the printed page was recognized as a very necessary adjunct to the ministry of the Restoration, and in our last chapter we learned that W. W. Phelps, who was a printer by trade, was told to establish himself in Independence, Missouri, in order that printing of church literature might be started. He was also told in September, 1831, (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 219) to stop at Cincinnati, Ohio, on his way west and procure a press and printing materials.

Also at Hiram, Ohio, the provision had been made for the printing of the revelations that had been given to the Church, in book form, to be called the "Book of Commandments". It was ordered that ten thousand copies be printed as the first issue. Later this number was reduced to three thousand.

This however, while the first ordered, was not the first printing venture undertaken. A monthly paper, which they called *The Evening and the Morning Star* was started as soon as possible. The editor was W. W. Phelps; but a board of publication was also selected, consisting of Joseph Smith, Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, John Whitmer, and W. W. Phelps. John Whitmer, as Church Historian, had made a brief record of events, so his work was recognized in connection with the printing interests of the Church.

The first issue of *The Evening and the Morning Star* was for June 1832. We will give here a brief extract from its prospectus to show the objectives that were then considered as vital to the progress of the work:

... It is announced that the *Star* will be devoted to unfolding the meaning of the revelations of God from the earliest times to the present, but more especially those revelations which God has given in the present dispensation; that God made choice of Israel in ancient times through whom to make known His will unto mankind; but owing to transgression Israel was taken captive and scattered among all nations; God, however, promised that in the last days He would gather Israel then scattered, and bring them again into their own lands where they would be wonderfully prospered.

The time for the accomplishment of these things is rapidly approaching. It will be attended with the sore judgments of God upon the wicked. And as in all past ages, before allowing judgments to fall upon the wicked, God has sent them a word of warning and an opportunity to repent, so too in the crisis pending the Lord will not bring the threatened calamity upon mankind without sending forth due warning. "Therefore, in the fear of Him (the Lord), and to spread the truth among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, this paper is sent forth, that a wicked world may know that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, who shall come to Zion, will soon appear." **The Evening and Morning Star**, in addition to being a herald of Israel's return to the favor of God, and a messenger of the everlasting gospel – will also contain whatever of truth or information that will benefit the Saints of God temporally as well as spiritually, "without interfering with politics, broils, or the gainsayings of the world." It is also announced that from the *Star* press it may be expected, as soon as wisdom directs, that there will be issued, "many sacred records which have slept for ages." The *Star* was to be a royal quarto sheet, issued monthly, at one dollar a year, until it should be deemed proper to publish oftener. - Footnote, Vol. 1, p. 259, U. C. History

The prospectus was issued in February, and signed by W. W. Phelps. The June issue of the *Star* contained in addition to the Articles of Faith, the following interesting articles: "To Man." "To the Church of Christ Abroad in the Earth." "Common Schools," "the Elders in the Land of Zion, to the

Church of Christ Scattered Abroad,” “To the Elders of the Church of Christ, Who Preach Good Tidings to the World,” “Foreign News,” etc. Among “Notices” items, it was announced that they were also publishing a weekly paper entitled, “Upper Missouri Advertiser.”

The location of the printing office of the Star was situated within twelve miles of the west line of the State of Missouri, which was then the western limits of the United States. It was about 120 miles west of any other newspaper press in the United States. It was two and a half miles south of the Missouri River, 280 miles by land and 500 by water west of St. Louis. - Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 277; Evening and Morning Star, vol. 1, No. 1, p. 6, June, 1832

Concerning the coming out of the first number of the Star, the Prophet Joseph Smith had this to say:

As soon as I could arrange my affairs, I recommenced the translation of the Scriptures, and thus I spent most of the summer. In July, we received the first number of the “Evening and the Morning Star,” which was a joyous treat to the saints. Delightful indeed, was it to contemplate that the little band of brethren had become so large, and grown so strong, in so short a time as to be able to issue a paper of their own, which contained not only some of the revelations, but other information also, – which would gratify and enlighten the humble inquirer after truth. So embittered was the public mind against the truth, that the press universally had been arrayed against us; and although many newspapers published the prospectus of our paper, yet it appeared to have been done more to calumniate the editor, than give publicity to the forthcoming periodical. Editors thought to do us harm, while the saints rejoiced that they could do nothing against the truth but for it. – History of the Church, (Utah) vol. 1. p. 273

While things were thus going nicely at first with the publishing interests of the Church in Independence, persecution was becoming ore bitter in the east. In Kirtland Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were mobbed, tarred and feathered one evening, and nearly killed. The leaders of the mob were the ministers of the various religious sects of the neighborhood, chief among whom, to his everlasting discredit, may be mentioned one Simonds Ryder, who had left the Church and become a Campbellite minister. He had been converted to the Restoration because of a prophecy concerning China, that seemed to have had a very literal fulfillment. His excuse for apostatizing was that in making reference to him, they misspelled his name making it “Rider” instead of Ryder. In this he claimed that in persons who claimed to be possessed of the spirit of prophecy they

certainly should not misspell a man's name. This is mentioned to show the flimsy foundation there was, even at that early beginning, to find cause for persecution.

The bitter persecution which overtook the saints in Missouri, made the life of the Star very short and turbulent. There were just fourteen numbers printed, before the printing office was razed and the equipment destroyed. It was later revived in Kirtland, Ohio, in December, 1833, after the saints were driven out of Jackson County, Missouri. The original fourteen numbers were also reprinted, but with many alterations.

The first and perhaps the most important book published by the Church was a book containing many of the revelations that had been given to the Church, and was called, "The Book of Commandments." This book consisted of one hundred and sixty pages and was made up of sixty-five of the revelations, the last one being the revelation of September, 1831. The preface to the book, however, was given in November of that year.

There was objection to the printing of the revelations in book form by some of the early leaders, among whom was David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. The objection was on the grounds that since the revelations were sacred and designed for the guidance of the saints, to print them in a book and give the book to the reading public would throw these revelations into the hands of the enemies of the Church and so become a menace to their safety. Subsequent history revealed the fact that such a fear was not unwarranted. On the other hand, because of the importance of the matters contained in the revelations, it was felt that, in order that the membership of the Church might profit by what the Lord had given, these things should be in a form so that they would be accessible to all. Joseph Smith was therefore appointed to prepare the revelations for publication, and at a conference at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831, the "Preface" was given (see "Book of Commandments," chapter 1). Also at this conference the following provision were made:

This special conference at Hiram on November 1, should receive larger notice. The number of copies in the edition of the "Book of Commandments" to be printed was considered, and the decision reached that ten thousand should be published. The conference lasted two days. In the afternoon of the first day of the conference, according to the minutes of the meeting, the Preface to the "Book of Commandments" was "received by revelation." The same afternoon, the following occurred: "Brother Joseph Smith, Jun., said that inasmuch as the Lord had bestowed a great blessing upon us in giving commandments and revelations, he asked the conference what testimony they were willing to

attach to these commandments which would shortly be sent to the world. A number of the brethren arose and said they were willing to testify to the world that they knew that they were of the Lord.

In the second day's proceedings of the conference it is recorded: "The revelation of last evening read by the moderator (this was Oliver Cowdery). The brethren then arose in turn and bore witness to the truth of the "Book of Commandments"; after which Brother Joseph Smith, Jun., arose and expressed his feelings and gratitude concerning the commandments and preface received yesterday." – Utah Church History, vol. 1. p. 222, footnote

Opponents of the "Book of Commandments" who wish to exonerate Joseph Smith from any blame connected with sending possibly incorrect copies of the revelations to Missouri, say that while the committee was working on the copies for publication, Joseph, himself, was away attending three special conferences, so did not know of any changes that might have been made in them, and that this committee did make alterations, etc. However, from the above extract from the Far West Record, we see that these conferences were held right there in Hiram, and were concerned with the arranging of the revelations to be printed; but we will find one more from the same source. Here is Joseph Smith making a statement concerning this matter:

The "Book of Commandments" and Revelations was to be dedicated by prayer to the service of Almighty God, by me; and after I had done this, I inquired of the Lord concerning these things, and received the following:

Here follows a revelation given in November, 1831, (see "Doctrine and Covenants," Reorganized, Section 69) which appoints John Whitmer to accompany Oliver Cowdery to Independence, Missouri, with the revelations for the purpose of having them published. Joseph Smith then continues as follows:

My time was occupied closely in reviewing the commandments and sitting in conference, for nearly two weeks; for from the first to the twelfth of November we held four special conferences. In the last which we held at Brother Johnson's, in Hiram, after deliberate consideration, in consequence of the book of revelations, now to be printed, being the foundation of the Church in these last days, and a benefit to the world, showing that the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom of our Savior are again entrusted to man; and the riches of eternity within the compass of those who are willing to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; therefore, the conference voted that they prize the revelations to be worth to the Church, the riches of the whole earth, speaking temporally. – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 235

This connects Joseph Smith up personally with the whole preparation of the revelations for publication, as he had been in conference with others for twelve whole days going over this matter, and so was not somewhere attending conference on other matters. However, to clinch this matter still further we have the following:

In the minutes of the special conference of November 12th, spoken of in the foregoing by the Prophet, occurs the following account of what took place in addition to what the Prophet has written: "Brother Joseph Smith, Jun., said one item he wished acted upon was that our brothers Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer and the sacred writings which they have entrusted to them to carry to Zion – be dedicated to the Lord by the prayer of faith.... Voted; that Joseph Smith, Jun., be appointed to dedicate and consecrate these brethren and the sacred writings and all they have entrusted to their care, to the Lord. Done accordingly.... Voted; that in consequence of the diligence of our brethren, Joseph Smith, Jun., Oliver Cowdery, John Whitmer, and Sidney Rigdon in bringing to light by the grace of God these sacred things, - (they) be appointed to manage them according to the laws of the Church and the commandments of the Lord." – Far West Record, pp. 18, 19, see Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 236

This should be sufficient to convince the most critical, that the genuineness, and sacredness of the revelations as they were appointed to be printed as the "Book of Commandments," had the full endorsement of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

At a council held at Independence, Missouri, in May, 1832, the number of copies to be printed was reduced from ten thousand, as had previously been decided upon at the conferences at Hiram, Ohio, to three thousand. Further it is indicated in the Reorganized Church History, vol. 1. p. 298, that Joseph Smith felt that the books would sell if bound only in paper covers.

Another thought in support of the idea of the Revelations as they appear in the "Book of Commandments" being original, and genuine, and correct as coming from the Prophet Joseph Smith, is found in the fact that many of them, and parts of others, were printed in The Evening and the Morning Star before their publication in book form, and in each and all of them they are in full agreement with the revelations as published in the "Book of Commandments," and in regard to the original publication we have this from Joseph Smith himself:

The following errors we have found in the commandments, as printed; Fortieth chapter, tenth verse, third line, instead of corruptible, put corrupted. Fourteenth verse of the same chapter, fifth line, instead of respecter to persons,

put respecter of persons. Twenty-first verse, second line of the same chapter, instead of respecter to, put respecter of. Forty-fourth chapter, twelfth verse, last line, instead of hands put heads. – Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 300

These few typographical errors found by Joseph Smith in the revelations as printed are found in a letter written by him on June 25, 1833, and while the manuscript of the book was in the printer's hands.

The reason we are thus explicit in going over this matter is because there has been a great deal written in controversy, with reference to whether the revelations as found in the "Book of Commandments" are the correct originals as they were given to Joseph Smith. The reason for this controversy, is that later, in 1835, a new and changed edition of the revelations appeared under the name of "The Book of "Doctrine and Covenants"." In this later edition there are found over one thousand changes both in wording and doctrinal teachings, as against the version found in the "Book of Commandments," the proponents of the later version claiming that this version contains the revelations in their original form. In this connection all we have to say is that since this later version appeared after radical changes HAD BEEN MADE in doctrine and practice, in the Church, even in the change of the name of the Church, we feel that the great preponderance of evidence is in favor of the version of the revelations as they first appeared, and as they evidently had the endorsement of the Prophet and his associates at the time of their publication.

However, since this controversy has appeared in print, we are happy to leave this matter in the hands of those who may read the evidence, feeling assured that in this way the truth will be fully vindicated.

Another matter that has caused much controversy is with regard to whether the "Book of Commandments" was ever completed, the claim made by the proponents of the "Doctrine and Covenants" version being that the mob destroyed the print shop while the book was in process of being issued and that a few loose leaves were gathered up in the street where the material of the shop was scattered, and that that is all that was saved of the original issue of the "Book of Commandments;" but again we find the facts to be the reverse of this. David Whitmer, who was closely associated with the work at the time, says that the book was complete, and copyrighted, and that a number were in circulation at the time, and his

possession of a copy gives support to his claim. In fact, at the present time there are copies of that original issue in existence. In support of this we present the following:

MEMORANDUM

To the Librarian of Congress,
From the Order Division,
December 18, 1911

Referring to letter from Mr. John R. Haldeman
Independence, Missouri, dated Dec. 12th, 1911.

The Library of Congress still possesses the copy of the "Book of Commandments" mentioned by the writer obtained by exchange from the New York Public Library. The system under which we exchange our duplicates is one that gives us quantity for quantity or quality for quality, but always in the aggregate. It does not imply an interchange of individual volumes.

When the "Book of Commandments" was received it was priced at twenty-five dollars and we gave in exchange a number of books whose combined values amounted to this sum. Our copy lacks the title page and parts of pages 17-18, but has otherwise the full number of 160 pages.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred W. Ashley
Chief Order Division

(Zion's Advocate, vol. 2, No. 6, P. 6, July 15, 1925, "The Book of Commandments," by C. L. Wheaton.)

Again:

The New York Public Library
Astor Lenox and Tilden Foundations
Office of the Director, 476 Fifth Avenue, New York, November 30, 1911.

Mr. John R. Haldeman
800 South Park Avenue
Independence, Missouri

Dear Sir:

In answer to your note of the 27th instant I have to say that this library at one time had a copy of the "Book of Commandments" that had belonged to David Whitmer, as evidenced by letters filed with the book by a former owner, Mr.

Berrian. This copy lacked the last page and was exchanged by us, going to the Library of Congress at Washington. Before this exchange was made we had secured from a local dealer a perfect copy of the work. This copy has no marks of previous ownership. It consists of 160 pages and the last paragraph on page 160 reads as follows:

“47. For verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim.”

Trusting these notes may serve your purpose, I remain,

Very respectfully,
H. M. Lyemberg
Reference Librarian

(Zion's Advocate, vol. 2, No. 6, p. 6, July 15, 1925, "The Book of Commandments," by C. L. Wheaton.)

Added to the above we have a copy of the copyright of the book which shows that everything connected with the issuing of the "Book of Commandments" was carried to a full and legal conclusion and the book placed in circulation, for the last of which we note the following, which shows the books to have been printed and in circulation.

On February 2nd, 1833, an order was sent into the office of The Evening and the Morning Star for a copy of the "Book of Commandments," and so published in the March, 1833, number. On July 2nd of the same year, the Presidency sent direct for a shipment of a whole box of the Books of Commandments, as follows: "Consign the box of Books of Commandments to N. K. Whitney and Co., Geauga Co., care of Kelly and Walworth, Cleveland, Cuyahoga Co., O." – Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 303

The printing establishment of W. W. Phelps and Company was not demolished until July 20, 1833.

We have here presented enough to prove that the "Book of Commandments" contained the original genuine revelations, also that it was printed complete and in circulation before the mob destroyed the printing establishment.

We now have as publications of the Church: The Book of Mormon; The Evening and the Morning Star; and the "Book of Commandments"; and later there were a number of other publications among which may be named, The Times and Seasons, The Millennial Star, The Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate, and others.

Chapter 9

Persecution Increases

With the beginning of colonization by the saints in Missouri, the introduction of a printing establishment, and other evidences of a permanent settlement in the state, the feelings of the native Missourians grew increasingly hostile. Especially was this true, because the new comers were for the most part from the eastern part of our country, and were anti-slavery in sentiment, while, at that time, Missouri was still a slave state. All of these things were factors in the terrible and bitter persecution that overtook the saints, and finally drove them from the state. Yet while what is here stated may be true, the real outstanding cause of persecution, was the faith of the saints, which seemed peculiar to the natives of the country.

In support of this idea we quote from a publication that was started to counteract the influence of *The Evening and the Morning Star*, which began to have a wide circulation. This new so-called “anti-Mormon” publication was called the *Western Monitor*, and in its editorial for August, 1833, we find this inflammatory article:

To rid themselves of the sect of fanatics called Mormons; ... This singular sect of pretended Christians; ... they now number twelve hundred in this (Jackson B. C. F.) County.... Elevated, as they mostly are, but little above the condition of our blacks, either in regard to property or education; they have become a subject of much anxiety on that part, serious and well grounded complaints having been already made of their corrupting influence on our slaves. We are daily told, and not by the ignorant alone, but by all classes of them, that we (the Gentiles), of this county are to be cut off, and our lands appropriated by them for inheritances. Whether this is to be accomplished by the hand of the destroying angel, the judgments of God, or the arm of power, they are not fully agreed among themselves.

They openly blaspheme the Most High God, and cast contempt on his holy religion, by pretending to receive revelations direct from heaven; by pretending to speak unknown tongues by direct inspiration; and by divers pretences derogatory to God and religion and to the utter subversion of human reason. What would be the fate of our lives and property, in the hands of jurors and witnesses, who do not blush to declare, and would not upon occasion hesitate to swear, that they have wrought miracles, and have been the subjects of miraculous and supernatural cures, conversed with God and his angels, and possess and exercise the gifts of divination and of unknown tongues and fired with the prospect of obtaining inheritances without money and without price – may be better imagined than described.

One of the means resorted to by them, to drive us to emigrate, is an indirect invitation to the free brethren of color in Illinois, to come up like the rest, to the land of Zion. True, they say this was not intended to invite, but to prevent their emigration; but this weak attempt to quiet our apprehension, is but a poor complement to our understanding. – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 395, par. 96, 97

A brief analysis of the above extract from the Western Monitor reveals several interesting facts. First it alleges that the saints were intemperate in the claims they made with reference to the application of their “consecration law.” This, in short, was their first grounds for complaint, because to interfere at any time with the material possessions of any community, as alleged, naturally brings resentment. Second, the charge that the saints were on a level with the slaves in intellect and general education is amply refuted by the facts in the case. In a history of the United States, by J. W. Buel, he, in discussing the case of the saints in Missouri, makes this statement on page 600:

The anti-Mormon population round about, become excited and determined to rid themselves of their prosperous neighbors.... This extraordinary growth and the peculiar manners and doctrines of the saints, aroused the hatred of the people round about, who, in abilities, refinement and culture were by no means the equal of the Mormons.

The third charge of the enemies of the saints, that they (the saints) believed in an unchangeable God, who would treat His children in this age the same as He had done in any other dispensation of time, upon the same conditions of obedience to the gospel of Christ, is quite generally accepted by religions of various sects at the present day. Yet the whole charge shows that it was the orthodox ideas of the saints along Scriptural lines that made up the sum total of the grounds for the bitter persecution of that day. As an example, we may call attention to the fact, that in this day, a reprint of the very copies of The Evening and the Morning Star that aroused such bitter and unreasoning persecution in 1833, will now be read in any community in America, and no fault will be found with a single statement therein. Besides the criticism of the beliefs of the saints in Missouri, as found in the extract from the Western Monitor would be equally applicable against the saints of New Testament times.

There is one more item of interest in connection with this preface to the great and bloody persecution of the saints, in that day, which is that many critics now claim, that it was a belief in, and practice of, the doctrine of

polygamy which later plagued the Church, which brought about the persecution. The facts are that the worst persecution overtook the Church long before that abominable doctrine was even heard of, and in support of this position we will call attention to a statement by Elder George Q. Cannon, a believer in that doctrine, and himself a polygamist. He says:

A prevalent idea has been that this prejudice against us owes its origin and continuation to our belief in a plurality of wives; ... Joseph and Hyrum Smith were slain in Carthage jail, and hundreds of persons were persecuted to death previous to the church having any knowledge of this doctrine. – A sermon, June 11, 1871, Journal of Discourses, vol. 14, pp. 165, 166

This all then indicates that the persecution of the saints, from 1833 to 1839, when they were eventually driven out of Missouri, was purely religious persecution, and the only just charge that can be brought against the saints in Missouri, at that period, was an unwise boast of the things they believed God was going to do for them in a material way. True, there were some rather fantastic claims made, and some efforts to establish a peculiar state of society; peculiar at least to the natives of Missouri. But as to actual crime, nothing can be proven. That they did finally take up arms and try to protect themselves, goes without question; but even in this, they were following the advice given by government officials to whom they made petitions for redress. And before going into a discussion of the so-called “war” itself we might call attention to the views of a bitter though honorable opponent to the teaching of the saints. In the Seventh Revised Edition of P. P. Pratt’s “Voice of Warning,” put out by the Reorganized Church in 1884, and on pages 140 and 141, quoting a letter from a Professor Turner of Illinois College, who, writing about the troubles of the saints in Missouri, says this:

Who began the quarrel? Was it the Mormons? Is it not notorious, on the contrary, that they were hunted like wild beasts, from county to county, before they made any desperate resistance? Did they ever, as a body, refuse obedience to the laws, when called upon to do so, until driven to desperation by repeated threats and assaults from the mob? Did the State ever make one decent effort to defend them as fellow citizens in their rights, or redress their wrongs? Let the conduct of its governors, attorneys, and the fate of their final petitions answer. Have any who plundered and openly massacred the Mormons ever been brought to the punishment due to their crimes? Let the boasting murderers of begging and helpless infancy answer. Has the State ever remunerated, even those known to be innocent, for the loss of either their property or their arms? Did either the pulpit or the press throughout the State raise a note of remonstrance or alarm? Let the clergymen who abetted, and the editors who encouraged the mob answer.

This criticism by an honorable opponent covers the ground in a general way as to what really happened to the saints during that terrible period of persecution and slaughter. However, we feel that some of the details of those times should appear in this work, as it covers much history of the State of Missouri and those troublous times.

The principal objection, added to the saints claim that Missouri was to be the land of their inheritance, seemed to be the fact of their having a means of spreading their views in a monthly paper, and so the Missourians were soon organized into mobs, who demanded that *The Evening and the Morning Star* be abated. This was early in the year 1833. By the latter part of July of that year, the mob tore down the print shop of W. W. Phelps and Company, pried their type and threw fixtures and materials into the street, broke the press and tore down the building. Also the general store of Gilbert and Whitney was destroyed, but they made an agreement with the mob to enable them to save the stock of their store, but were not to bring any more goods into the City of Independence. Edward Partridge and a Brother Allen were tarred and feathered, and the saints were ordered to leave Jackson County forthwith. They asked for time to arrange their affairs, but were told that fifteen minutes was all the time they would be granted.

So twelve hundred men and women and children were driven from their homes, in the dead of winter, because after the destruction of the print shop in the latter part of July, there was no abating of the persecution all the remainder of that fall of 1833. They appealed to the governor of the state but received no relief. They then tried to appeal to the government at Washington, but while they were recognized as being a persecuted people, the slow wheels of legal justice gave the mob all the time they needed for their nefarious plans. Also in keeping with what we have quoted from Prof. Turner of Illinois College, these mobs were generally led by leading ministers of the various sects of the day.

From the *Millennial Star*, vol. 17, p. 435, we learn that the estimated loss in property to the saints thus driven out of Jackson County, Missouri was approximately \$175,000.00. This consisted of two hundred houses burned or otherwise destroyed, furniture, and live stock, and crops. Late in November the bank of the Missouri River was a motley camp of helpless refugees who had been driven from their homes, and the inclement weather caused many deaths.

In describing the cruelty of the mob Lyman Wight, in an affidavit, found in *Millennial Star*, vol. 20, p. 506, says this:

I saw one hundred and ninety women and children driven thirty miles across the prairie in the month of November, with three decrepit men only in their company; the ground was thinly crusted with sleet, and I could easily follow on their trail by the blood that flowed from their lacerated feet on the stubble of the burnt prairie. This company, not knowing the situation of the country or the extent of Jackson County, built quite a number of cabins that proved to be in the border of Jackson County. The mob infuriated at this, rushed on them in the month of January, 1834, burned these scanty cabins and scattered the inhabitants to the four winds, from which cause many were taken suddenly ill and of the illness died.

Another instance of untold cruelty regarding the expulsion from Jackson County is related by Newel Knight, in his *Journal*, "Scraps of Biography," pages 84, 95. He says:

I must not omit to mention one act of cruelty, which, if possible, seems to surpass all others. In one of the settlements (in Jackson County) were four families of very old men, infirm and very poor. They seemed to think that they would not be molested and so remained behind, but no sooner did the mob learn of it, than they went to their houses, broke their windows and doors, and hurled great stones into their rooms, endangering their lives; thus were those poor old men and their families, driven before the ruthless mob in mid-winter. These men had served in the Revolutionary War – a Brother Jones had been one of Washington's body guard – but this availed them nothing, for they were of the hated people. Thus were all the saints compelled to flee into Clay County, where the sympathies of the people were extended to them.

From Jackson County the saints found asylum in Clay County for a time; but it was not long until the wild stories that had been put afloat against them in Jackson County began to arouse the citizens of Clay County also and soon the old persecution began anew; besides, some of the saints had tried to get back into Jackson County in an attempt to retrieve some of their lost property. This, of course, only added to the hatred of the Missourians against the saints. It was therefore only a short time until they were asked to get out of the county of Clay. In this connection it was suggested that a new county called Caldwell be opened up especially for the saints. This was due to the action of a long time friend of the saints, Alexander H. Doniphan. He was an attorney and he went to the state Capitol at Jefferson City, and sought to get two new counties carved out of the northern part of the state; one exclusively for the saints and one for anyone else. The law providing for these counties was passed and the saints received the news with joy because now they felt that they might

have peace. A site for a town was laid out as a sort of county seat. This was called Far West, and since the county now belonged to the saints, they chose their own county officers and other officials necessary for their well being. Also because of the wildness of the country and the necessity of protection, the arms that had been taken from them, were duplicated by the state.

These things seemed to guarantee peace and freedom from persecution, but as the number of saints increased through migration from the east, they began to settle in other surrounding counties, Davies (the county carved out at the same time as Caldwell), Ray, Carroll, and other adjacent territory. In these various counties the saints began to make permanent homes. Also, at this time, the saints were organized into a regular State Militia, with Lyman Wight as Colonel. It did not help the cause of the saints so far as removing the prejudice of the Missourians was concerned. It did, however, furnish an excuse for the mobbers to organize themselves into military companies and give their depredations the color of legitimate warfare.

Alexander Doniphan was also a General with military authority, and he advised the saints to now fight for their rights, in fact, he commissioned the "Diahman boys," as the militia under Lyman Wight was called, to go up into Daviess County and stop the robbing and plundering of the homes of the saints there. This action resulted in open war, and at the so-called "Battle of Crooked River," Captain David Patten, one of the Twelve Apostles, was killed.

During this time Joseph Smith had come to Far West, and on July 4, 1838, a big celebration was held at Far West. Joseph was president of the day and Sidney Rigdon made a very inflammatory speech wherein he defied the mob, and made threats. This was very unwise, and since Governor Dunklin had been succeeded at the last election by Lilburn W. Boggs who was a sworn enemy of the saints, their situation became really serious. Then at Gallatin, county seat of Daviess County, there was to be an election, where a very serious fight took place, which further inflamed the mob. Besides all this, Governor Boggs had appointed Gen. S. D. Lucas, one of the bitterest enemies the Church had, and who had helped drive the saints out of Jackson County, as head of the army, and who came to Far West and took charge of the military forces there. Here, to appease the mob, George M. Hinkle went to meet the officers of the Missouri Army. The saints understood this to mean that some sort of truce was to be

entered into, and so Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, P. P. Pratt, Lyman Wight and Geo. W. Robinson went with Hinkle to meet the Missouri Army: and imagine their surprise when Colonel Hinkle said to General Lucas, Wilson and Doniphan: "Gentlemen, these are the prisoners I agreed to deliver up to you." Nothing could have pleased the mob more than this act of treachery on the part of Hinkle. Accordingly a court martial was called, and the following order given:

Brigadier General Doniphan; Sir:

You will take Joseph Smith and the other prisoners into the public square at Far West, and shoot them tomorrow morning.

Signed, Samuel D. Lucas,
Major-General Commanding

To the above order, to his everlasting credit may it be said, Doniphan sent the following reply:

It is cold blooded murder. I will not obey your order. My brigade shall march for Liberty tomorrow morning, at eight o'clock; and if you execute those men, I will hold you responsible before an earthly tribunal, so help me God!

A. W. Doniphan, Brigadier General

In this, General Doniphan was fully justified, because a court martial is confined to the trial of military offenders, and in this case the only one who had a military commission among those prisoners was Lyman Wight. The others being civilians were not amenable to military, but to civil courts. It was also about this time that Gov. Boggs issued his infamous order to drive the "Mormons" from Missouri or exterminate them, and to which Gen. Doniphan replied that "the days of extermination are over."

In all of the above we are giving a general outline of the events of that period. Full details may be found in any of the larger histories available. However, before we close this chapter of dark deeds we will record just two more, and these two form the darkest blot on the fair name of Missouri, or even the nation of the United States.

Haun's Mill Massacre

Not far from Far West a member of the Church from Wisconsin, by the name of Jacob Hawn, had established a grist mill and blacksmith shop on the little stream called Shoal Creek. Around him had gathered a few

families, who were recent comers to Missouri, so no charge could possibly be brought against them as having been in any way participants in the previous trouble, even were it admitted that the saints may have been in the wrong in some things, concerning the treatment they had received.

These settlers at Haun's Mill were such recent immigrants that some of them had not yet provided themselves with permanent homes, but were living in tents or the covered wagons that had brought them into this pleasant little valley. So while the saints in the little village were attending their various domestic affairs, in the afternoon of October 30, 1838¹, not thinking of any imminent danger, suddenly out of the woods rode a company of soldiers shooting and shouting. The little band scattered, trying to find a place to hide. Some ran to the blacksmith shop which was made of logs, but which did not furnish a very good hiding place because there was no chinking between the logs. As a result many were shot and killed.

One little boy by the name of Sardius Smith had hid behind the bellows of the shop, from whence he was dragged by the mob, and, with his mother pleading for his life, a brutal mobber put the muzzle of his gun at the very mouth of the boy and literally blew his head off. This child was only ten years old, but the blood-lusting soldier said that "nits make lice," which was the excuse given for this act of brutality. Another case, an old man who had been a soldier in the Revolutionary War and who had fought under Gates and Washington, while telling of his service to his country and begging for his life, was first shot and then hacked to death with a corn knife.

After finishing their slaughter the so-called soldiers rode away leaving a shambles behind them. Those who were not killed feared to show themselves lest the mob might return at any time. However, they were spared further molestation, and when morning came they did their best to care for the wounded, and since they had no means of providing decent burial for their loved ones who had been slain, they gathered up the dead bodies, and as there was an old unfinished well in the village, the bodies were dropped into this well after which some hay was placed over them and the place filled with earth.

¹ Date changed from October 29 to October 30 for the 2012 edition of the Outline History to accurately reflect the date of this event according to Joseph Smith's own recorded history, per the Church of Christ General Church Historian.

These things, and the associated outrages perpetrated against the saints, of that day brings us down from the early part of 1833, when the expulsion from Jackson County began, to the fall of 1838. This was also the final effort of the saints to make their homes in Missouri, and we next find them settling on the banks of the Mississippi in Illinois; but before they were finally expelled from the state there was one final effort made to destroy the Church leaders. Furthermore, the leaders of these mobs in the various places where atrocities were perpetrated were members of the state legislature, ministers of the various denominations, and others whose hatred led to the terrible scenes of slaughter and suffering. One infamous name should here be given, and that was the preacher, Bogard.

This last act of fiendishness was the capture of all the leaders, Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, P. P. Pratt, Morris Phelps, Luman Gibbs, Darwin Chase, Norman Sherer, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin and Alexander McRae, who were all first taken to Independence, Missouri, and paraded through the street on exhibition. They were also permitted to visit the Temple Lot, and then were consigned to various jails. Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin, Alexander McRae and Sidney Rigdon were consigned to the old stone jail in Liberty, Missouri; and the rest were put in the jail at Richmond, in Ray County. Sidney Rigdon, became so ill that he was spared the lot of the others, and was left chained to his son-in-law, Geo. W. Robinson, in Richmond.

This sealed the fate of the saints, so far as making any further attempt to remain in Missouri, and they soon became a band of refugees fleeing towards Illinois.

Those in the jails were under sentence to be shot, but finally after six months of the winter of 1838 and 1839, those in Liberty jail were permitted to escape, and finally made their way to their families (what was left of them) in Illinois.

However, while in Liberty jail their suffering was intense, and at one time there was an attempt made to feed them on the flesh of their slain brethren. This the fiends styled "Mormon beef." The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith the character of this vile type of food, and so they were spared the eating of it.

Chapter 10

The Human Side

It is not to be supposed that because God had sent an angel to Joseph Smith, Jr., and had restored the everlasting gospel of the Son of God, that this meant that there would not still be the human element to contend with; and also that oftentimes it might be necessary for the Lord to rebuke and chasten His people. This situation seems to have been found very early in the infant church of this latter-day dispensation. The innovations and changes that the leading men of the Church allowed to enter in that would cause division and contention, were the things that, at the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr., brought about the factionalism which now divides the Church of the Restoration.

In support of this we will cite an instance or two where God did step in and warn of the consequences of failure to comply fully with the gospel law. In a revelation given to Joseph Smith Jr., in July, 1828, we find this language:

Remember, remember, that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men; for although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet, if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will, and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him. Behold, you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember, also, the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them; and behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men: for behold, you should not have feared man more than God, although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words, yet you should have been faithful and he would have extended his arm, and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble. – “Book of Commandments,” 2:2, 3

Again in a revelation given in September, 1832, only two years after the Church was organized, we find this added warning:

And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received, which vanity and unbelief hath brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written, that they may bring forth fruit meet for their Master's kingdom,

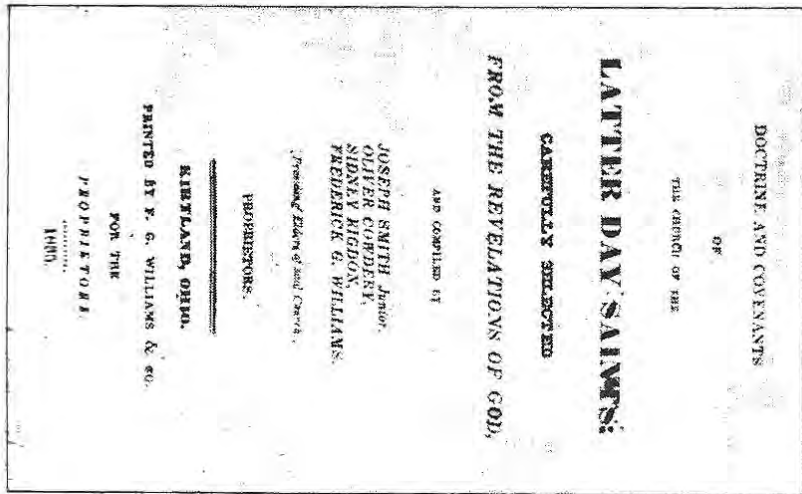
otherwise there remaineth a scourge and a judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion; for, shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay. – “Doctrine and Covenants,” 83:8

Hence, according to the above warnings, when we make an examination of the work through the years, we see complete fulfillment of the promised punishment for disobedience. The result has been factionalism, division, hatred, and all of the evils that were there mentioned as being the reward for disobedience. We will notice a few of these and the results that follow.

In our first chapter we gave a brief history of the terrible persecution and suffering of the saints in Missouri. While this was taking place there, other things were taking place in other parts of the Church, especially in Kirtland. They, too, suffered terrible persecution, but not to the extent that the Missouri folks did. However, their suffering was no less hard to bear. But it was here at Kirtland that we find many radical changes taking place, and we will record a few, the baneful influence of which is still divided latter-day-saintism.

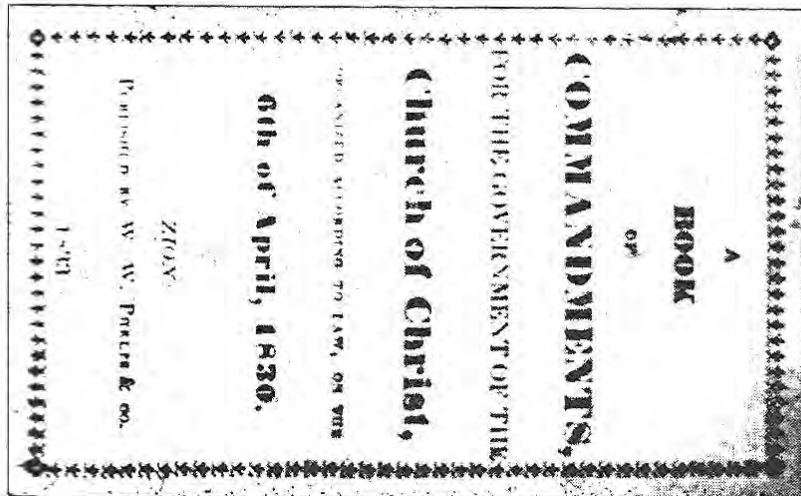
We will remember the publication of the revelations in book form, and called the “Book of Commandments.” We will also remember the care with which these revelations were guarded, and how sacred they were regarded, and how the Prophet dedicated them to God before they were permitted to be published. Yet we find that in Kirtland, in 1835, an entirely new book came out, containing purportedly the same revelations, but in which over a thousand changes had been made, both in wording and in principle. This was due to the change that they themselves had made in the divine order of the Church of Christ, organized on the 6th day of April, 1830. This new book was called the “Doctrine and Covenants” of the Church of the Latter Day Saints.” In the book itself we find a very radical change on the title page. The following photogravures give us a very interesting comparison of the title pages of these two books (see the following photogravures).

In these title pages we find two distinct changes, which we will notice in detail. First, the name of the Church. The Church organized April 6, 1830, was the “Church of Christ,” nothing more, nothing less. For proof of this see chapter 24, “Book of Commandments,” concerning its organization.



At the right is a photog-
ure print of the title page of
the first edition of the Book of
Commandments, published in
1833, by the Church of Christ,
established April 6, 1830.

At the left is a photogravure
print of the title page of the Doc-
trine and Covenants of The
Church of the Latter Day Saints,
published at Kirtland, in 1835,
by the Church of Latter Day
Saints, organized August 17,
1835, at Kirtland, Ohio.



In all histories in existence it is conceded that on May 3, 1834, the name, "The Church of Christ," was dropped, and the name, "The Church of the Latter Day Saints" was substituted. We find in the minutes of a conference held in Kirtland, Ohio, May 3, 1834, the following:

Minutes of a conference of the Elders of the Church of Christ, which Church was organized in the township of Fayette, Seneca County, New York, on the 6th of April, A. D., 1830.

President Joseph Smith, Jr., was chosen moderator, and Frederick G. Williams and Oliver Cowdery were appointed clerks.

After prayer, the conference proceeded to discuss the subject of names and appellations, when a motion was made by Sidney Rigdon, and seconded by Newel K. Whitney, that this church be known hereafter by the name of "The Church of the Latter-day Saints." Remarks were made by the members, after which the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Resolved, that this conference recommend to the conferences and churches abroad, that in making out and transmitting minutes of their proceedings, such minutes and proceedings be made out under the above title.

Resolved, that these minutes be signed by the moderator and clerks and published in the Evening and Morning Star.

Joseph Smith, Jun., Moderator
 Frederick G. Williams, }
 Oliver Cowdery } Clerks

Another change or innovation is found in the claim that Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and Frederick G. Williams were the presiding elders of the Church. This is also a vital change from the original order. We find that some time in 1832 a new order in the priesthood was instituted, whereby three men were elevated over the Twelve in a quorum called "A First Presidency."

It will be remembered that in June, 1829, a revelation was given commanding the choosing of twelve disciples (see "Book of Commandments," chapter 15) as the leading ministers of the Church; and two, perhaps three, were so ordained (see "Book of Commandments," chapter 24.) The revelations show that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had been ordained apostles, and since the command to choose out the apostles was given to Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, where it is indicated that they were called to the same office as the Apostle Paul, it

may be possible that David Whitmer had also been ordained an apostle. The revelation also limits the number of apostles to twelve because the wording is: “Yea, even UNTO twelve. The word “unto” is emphasized because that word limits the number of apostles twelve. Yet, in the new and changed form of the revelation as found in the “Doctrine and Covenants,” the word “unto” is omitted, and this omission was made after they had introduced the quorum of three over the Twelve. There was no revelation that provided for a First Presidency up to this time. This change in the order of priesthood also necessitated other changes in the revelations. One of these changes is found in a revelation given in March, 1829, and in it a whole paragraph is omitted. This paragraph reads as follows:

And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envying, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old. – “Book of Commandments,” 4:8

In view of the changes that had been made it is very evident why this entire paragraph was omitted. A quorum of three, called a First Presidency, over the Twelve Apostles, would not make the Church like the one taught by the disciples in days of old because neither among the Jews where Christ first established His Church in Palestine, nor among the Nephite Church in America do we find such an office.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12:28, in speaking of the form of organization in those “days of old,” says: “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers,” etc. And in America, Christ chose twelve and set them over the church as its first grade of ministers.

Furthermore, the origin of the First Presidency in this dispensation is highly questionable. In Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 244, Joseph is quoted as saying:

On the 26th (April, 1832) I called a general council of the church (in Missouri) and was acknowledged as the president of the high priesthood, according to a previous ordination at a conference of high priests, elders and members, held at Amherst, Ohio, on the twenty-fifth of January, 1832

In commenting on this the Reorganized historian makes the observation that this was a very meager mention of so important an event. But he seeks

to explain the matter by saying that such an office is provided for in their Book of “Doctrine and Covenants,” section 17, verse 17. However, in examining this, we find that as already stated, the “Doctrine and Covenants” did not exist prior to 1835, and this ordination was supposed to have taken place in January, 1832. The revelation known as Section 17 is indeed in the “Book of Commandments,” in its original form, as chapter 24, and also appeared twice in the Evening and Morning Star, a year apart, and verse 17, which provides for the duties of a First Presidency, does not appear in any of these three publications of it. In fact, it was injected into the revelation AFTER the office of presidency had been created.

The Utah Church Historian makes the following explanation of changes made in the revelations:

Some of the early revelations first published in the “Book of Commandments,” in 1833, were revised by the Prophet himself in the way of correcting errors made by the scribes and publishers; and some additional clauses were inserted to throw increased light upon the subjects treated in the revelations, and paragraphs added, to make the principles of instructions apply to officers not in the Church at the time some of the earlier revelations were given. The additions of verses 65, 66, and 67 in Sec. 20, of the “Doctrine and Covenants” is an example. – Utah Church History, Period 1, vol. 1, p. 173

Verses 65, 66, 67, sec. 20 of the Utah “Doctrine and Covenants,” are the same as verses 16 and 17, section 17, of the Reorganized “Doctrine and Covenants,” which are as follows:

No person is to be ordained to any office in this church, where there is a regularly organized branch of the same, without the vote of that church; but the presiding elder, traveling bishops, high councilors, high priests, and elders, may have the privilege of ordaining, where there is no branch of the church that a vote may be called. Every president of the high priesthood (or presiding elder), bishop, high councilor, and high priest, is to be ordained by the direction of a high council, or general conference.

In looking further into the history of that time, it would seem that so important an innovation should have received some degree of publicity. Today, in all groups of the Restoration, who have a First Presidency over the Twelve, the selection of a president is accompanied by considerable ceremony and announcement. Yet in this first instance, when every reason for its existence should have received unusual notice, we find just this one statement by the Prophet himself that speaks of such an ordination.

The Evening and Morning Star began its publication in June, 1832, and was the official organ of the Church, yet it was as silent as the grave on

the matter. Also, as already noted, John Whitmer had been chosen as General Church Historian, and he makes no mention of it. So, if it ever really occurred, it was given very little notice, yet, it made necessary the changing of the wording of several of the revelations regarding the organization of the Church.

Another radical change was made in the choosing of the Twelve Apostles. We have already noticed that in June, 1829, a revelation was given to Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, commanding them to choose out twelve to be apostles. They did nothing about it. Whitmer, in his book, says they were waiting for Joseph Smith to give further instructions concerning the matter, so it was not until 1835, three years after the innovation of a First Presidency, that they began to choose the Twelve and then the extravagant promises that were made to the men indicate that much, if not all, of the early humility that characterized the action of the leaders, had disappeared, and the idea of place and position had become very important. Also in this selection, it will be noted, that none of the three mentioned in the revelation of June, 1829, are included in the number of men selected. The record does tell us that Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had been ordained apostles, and we are inclined to believe that this was their one and only ordination to the higher priesthood.

All of the above is abundant evidence of a change, not only in the form of organization, but also in the spirit by which they were led.

We have mentioned some of the major changes that were permitted to enter into the early church of that day. These seemed to open the door for still greater departures later on. Had there been no First Presidency over the Twelve, there would have been no vacancy in that office at the death of Joseph Smith. In other words, had he remained in the apostolic quorum, to which we have evidence proving his ordination, his death would have merely created a vacancy in the quorum; whereas, when he became an exalted leader above all others, his death would naturally produce a clamor for supremacy among his associates. And so it was that it also provided grounds for factionalism, as each claimant to being Joseph Smith's successor would obviously have a following.

Chapter 11

The Church Expands

Perhaps no religious denomination grew with greater rapidity than did the church of the Restoration. From the date of its organization, April 6, 1830, to the death of Joseph Smith in 1844, only fourteen years, the estimate given by the Prophet himself was approximately 180,000 to 200,000. These figures are furnished by the late historian of the Reorganized Church, Elder Heman C. Smith, and taken from the "History of Religious Denominations," page 409, and Times and Seasons, vol. 6, p. 547, and published in the work, "True Succession in Church Presidency," p. 60.

Whether a growth so rapid and spectacular could be a healthy growth is a question. It would naturally seem that with a growth so rapid, that there was a strong possibility of much schism entering in, with such a large variety of religious views that would necessarily accompany this influx of human beings. This, too, tends to support the idea that this large influx of individuals, with many varied ideas on religion, was the real cause of the division and factionalism that entered in and split the saints asunder at the death of Joseph Smith.

At any rate, we find that while the saints were undergoing the terrible and merciless persecution and slaughter in Missouri, and other places, that the ministers of the Restoration were unusually valiant in pushing the work, and martyrdom usually attracts righteous thinking people. So we find the work growing by leaps and bounds, not only throughout the United States, where it began, but also it reached out into foreign countries. On July 23, 1837, the first sermon of the Restoration was preached in England. The names of the missionaries involved in this first foreign mission, were Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Joseph Fielding, and Willard Richards. They started from America for that field June 13, 1837. The work in the British Isles grew with the same rapidity as it had done in America, and the Millennial Star, a paper that became one of the leading periodicals of the Church, was published in that mission.

Added to the mission in Europe, there was also one started to Canada, and this included two of the Presidency in its personnel. They were Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. The other member of this missionary group was Thomas B. Marsh, president of the Twelve Apostles.

With the phenomenal growth of the Church, missions were soon established in a very general way. It went from state to state, in the United States, and from country to country, until there was scarcely a country in the whole civilized world where the gospel of the Restoration had not been heard, and even in the isles of the sea. At one time eleven of the twelve Apostles were in the European mission, principally in the British Isles.

However, as has already been mentioned this rapid increase and growth had a peculiar effect on the work in general, and new and foreign growths early began to fasten themselves on the new church. One of these that may be mentioned was that at a conference held in Kirtland, beginning October 3, 1837, the number of members of the First Presidency was raised to seven, by the addition of four more men to act as counselors to the President. Great changes were also made in the Quorum of Twelve, as some of these men had become dissatisfied with the changed form of government. On this we have from the pen of Joseph Smith himself, the following. – Reorganized Church History, vol. 2, Page 120

During my absence Warren Parish, John F. Boynton, Luke Johnson, Joseph Coe, and some others united together for the overthrow of the church. I returned to Kirtland on or about the 10th of December (1837) soon after which this dissenting band openly and publicly renounced the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, and claimed themselves to be the old standard, calling themselves the Church of Christ, excluding that of **saints** and set me at naught, and the whole church, denouncing us as heretics, not considering that the **saints** shall possess the kingdom according to the Prophet Daniel.

John F. Boynton and Luke Johnson were apostles and Warren Parish was the private secretary of Joseph Smith. Upon examination of the above complaint of Joseph, we see that the principal offense of these brethren was their objection to the name of the Church, and also the assumption of Joseph Smith to being a First President, over the Twelve, because it will be noticed that he says they “set me at naught,” and in a very vehement defense of the new order at the same time, we find Brigham Young taking a leading part.

As another outstanding enterprise of those years of development, we find that a revelation had been given in June, 1833, to build a house dedicated to the Lord (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 1, p. 293.) In this move we find Sidney Rigdon an active moving spirit. So on July 23, 1833, we find them laying the corner stone in Kirtland. Little, however, was done with actual building until 1835, when we read in Vida E. Smith’s “Young People’s History” on page 190:

In Kirtland, the Temple was still the most important work to be done with their hands, and the people voted to go on and work at it until it was finished. Sidney Rigdon, at a meeting there, was appointed to lay hands on and bless those who worked on the building or helped in any way towards building the Temple. This was done Sunday afternoon, March 8, 1835.

In this work of the Temple, Sidney Rigdon appears to have taken the keenest delight; oftentimes at night, he went to the unfinished Temple to pray and weep for the fulfillment of God's promise to build this Temple.

(It should be noted that in the revelation itself, that building is not designated as a temple.)

At a meeting Thursday, June 25, 1835, in less than an hour, \$6,232.50 was subscribed for the Temple building. At that time there were approximately fifteen hundred persons attending church in Kirtland, most of whom were members of the Church. Later in the fall we find a man by the name of Noah Packard lending one thousand dollars for the Temple building. We are told of the extreme sacrifice that the saints of Kirtland and the Church in general underwent to produce that Kirtland Temple. It was finished and dedicated on Sunday, March 27, 1836.

That so-called Temple still stands and is in the possession of the Reorganized Church. Its outstanding peculiar appointments is an everlasting monument to the very peculiar notions and ideas that had, at that time, gained foothold in the church of the Restoration. The appointments of the Kirtland Temple seem to have been after the teachings of the Mosaic covenant, with the exaltation of priesthood authority, and so we find that the consequences of these new innovations responsible for the changing of the original program included the necessity of making changes in the revelations as they were originally given. And it was also during the construction that many very good and useful men were lost to the Church. It seemed to be a turning point in the progress of the work, and that not in the best interests of the purity of the gospel in its original simplicity, as at first given. Concerning this phase of the work we again find Vida Smith-Yates, in their "Young People's History," telling us this:

There were many councils held in Kirtland, now. The Twelve and Seventy were learning their new duties, and more of the Seventy were ordained.

We fear that many of those indicated "new" duties were altogether too new. New not only to those times but new also to the gospel story as a

whole. And while it finally gravitated down through the entire mass of the Church, it seems that for a time, these “new” things were largely confined to the Kirtland group, where Sidney Rigdon still had limited control and power.

On February 28, 1835, the first Seventies were ordained. There were about forty-five of them. Later a Council of High Priests was formed into a High Council.

These things are not mentioned with the intent of discrediting the idea of the divinity of the Latter-day Restoration, but merely to honestly keep the record straight. They also show that the Lord fully understood that it was weak humanity that He had to deal with in committing again to mankind, in its fullness, the gospel of His dear Son, and so we find Him giving the warning in a revelation given September 23, 1832, as follows:

And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received, which vanity and unbelief hath brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written. – “Doctrine and Covenants,” 83:8

We are fully convinced that wherever the gospel was being preached, at the times involved in this record, and the people obeyed the principles of the gospel, that God recognized them and bestowed His divine Spirit.

Chapter 12

An Asylum in Illinois

When the saints were driven out of Missouri they fled to Illinois, crossing the Mississippi at Quincy. The Illinois people seemed to give them a cordial welcome and treated them kindly. At Quincy the people promised to give the saints work and they also gave food and other care to the sick, and invited them to settle in their community and make it their home. Up the river about fifty miles, there was a little village on the banks of the Mississippi called Commerce. In this village there were three frame houses, two block houses, and a large stone house. There was also a log house on the Hugh White farm just south of Commerce. This farm had one hundred and thirty-five acres in it, which Joseph Smith bought on May 1,

1839; and the Church also bought a farm from Dr. Isaac Galland just west of the White farm. These two farms cost the Church fourteen thousand dollars. A committee was also elected to purchase more land that could be used for the settlement of the saints. The little town of Nashville across the river from Commerce was bought, and there were twenty thousand acres connected with it. This was on June 24, 1839.

The land surrounding Commerce was mostly swamp land and, while the saints began to improve and build up the country for habitation, there was much sickness among the refugees from the Missouri persecution. The last Church leader to be released from a Missouri prison was Parley P. Pratt. This was on July 4, 1839.

The saints began their work of resettlement by hastily throwing up log houses, living in tents and covered wagons while this work was going on.

Just before the saints left Quincy to settle at Commerce, a conference was held on the Presbyterian camp ground near Quincy, March 17, 1839, and here a number of leading men of the Church were expelled. History gives no reason for this expulsion, except a refusal to follow in all of the new ideas that had found lodgment among the saints. Among those expelled were W. W. Phelps, Frederick G. Williams, Thomas B. Marsh, John Corrill, Reed Peck, Burr Riggs, Geo. M. Hinkle and Sampson Avard.

In August, 1839, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt and Hiram Clark started for their mission in England, where the work had previously been started. In September others of the Twelve started on missions. A number more men had been ordained Seventies and they too went out to do missionary work.

The next conference of the Church was held, beginning April 6, 1840, at Commerce. At this conference Commerce was made the headquarters of the Church and the name of the town was changed to Nauvoo, which Joseph Smith said was a Hebrew word meaning a beautiful place.

With the establishment of Nauvoo as the headquarters of the Church it began to take on the atmosphere of a city. A letter was dispatched to Hon. Robert Johnstone, Second Assistant Postmaster General, at Washington, presenting the name of Geo. W. Robinson as Postmaster of the new city of Nauvoo. This petition was granted and Robinson became the first Postmaster. Robinson was a son-in-law of Sidney Rigdon.

In November of 1839, a new paper had appeared in Nauvoo, or Commerce, as it was yet called at that time. This new paper was the Times

and Seasons, with Don C. Smith and Ebenezer Robinson as editors.

At this conference seventy-five persons were baptized, and fifty had been received into the Quorum of Seventies. Also at this April, 1840 conference, Elders Orson Hyde and John E. Page were appointed to go to Palestine. On April 15, Elder Hyde started on this mission, and sailed from New York on February 13, 1841. Circumstances hindered Elder Page from going with him.

In May, 1840, the first issue of the *Millennial Star* was sent out from Manchester, England, Parley P. Pratt, Editor. Following the activities of the two Pratts, Parley and Orson, it seems that they were the most active and successful of all of the missionaries of that time. We find Parley Pratt just out of a Missouri prison in July, 1839; leaves Nauvoo for New York in August of that year; is still laboring in that vicinity in November, 1839, and now in May, 1840, he is editing a paper in Manchester, England.

At this time another very interesting phase of Church work was begun. Whether intentionally or by direction of the Spirit of God, it is certain that those early leaders recognized that the time had come to bring the restored gospel direct to this great head of the Gentile nations; and so we find, late in 1839, a delegation of ministers headed by Joseph Smith himself, going to Washington to lay the gospel before the very heads of the nation. In the very beginning of the ministry of Christ, He, with His disciples, took the message to the House of Judah, and because of their rejection of the message, Christ said it should then go to the Gentiles. So in this Gentile dispensation of the gospel, we now find it being taken directly to the heads of our nation.

On October 28, 1839, the High Council of Nauvoo appointed Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigdon, and Elias Higbee as delegates for the Church, to importune the President and Congress of the United States for redress of grievances.

The next morning the delegates left Nauvoo for the city of Washington, where they arrived November 28, where in the course of several weeks the petition was presented to a Senate Committee, of whom General Wall was chairman.

The report made by Mr. Wall was submitted to the "Twenty-sixth Congress – First Session – In the Senate of the United States, March 4th, 1840. Submitted, laid on the table, and ordered to be printed, the following

report, made by Mr. Wall” (Here the committee made a somewhat lengthy report reviewing the petition of the saints, and closed their report as follows):

The committee therefore report that they recommend the passage of the following resolution:

Resolved, That the committee on the judiciary be discharged from further consideration of the memorial in this case; and that the memorialists have leave to withdraw the papers which accompany their memorial.

During the intervening weeks from November 28, 1839, to March 4, 1840, Joseph Smith preached upon various occasions in Washington, and adjacent points. He also interviewed President Martin Van Buren, who listened with “great reluctance” to his message, and then said: “Gentlemen, your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you;” and “If I take up for you I will lose the vote of Missouri.”

Joseph Smith returned home, and reached Nauvoo March 4, the same day the Senate took action on Mr. Wall’s report. See Utah History of the Church, chapters 1, 2, and 3, Period 1, vol. 4, for a full account.

Chapter 13

Nauvoo

When we take into consideration the history that was made at this place subsequent to its beginning, the very name “Nauvoo” takes on significant meaning. From a mere hamlet of about a half dozen house in 1839, when it was known as Commerce, in less than a year it had grown to over three thousand inhabitants, and more coming all the time until the death of Joseph Smith in 1844, only four years later, it had grown to be the largest city in the state of Illinois, with upwards of one hundred thousand citizens.

Late in the fall of 1840, a committee consisting of Joseph Smith, John C. Bennett, and R. B. Thompson went to Springfield, Illinois, with the object of having Nauvoo incorporated as a city with a city charter. This charter was signed by Governor Carlin, on December 16, 1840. Abraham Lincoln was a member of the State Legislature that granted this charter, and Stephen A. Douglas was Secretary of State and also signed the charter.

This charter granted all rights enjoyed by any city. It was to have the usual city government; a university; and a militia, to be known as “The Nauvoo Legion.”

On February 1, 1841, the first election under the new charter was held. John C. Bennett was elected Mayor; Daniel H. Wells, William Marks, Samuel H. Smith and N. K. Whitney, Aldermen; Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, C. C. Rich, J. T. Barnett, Wilson Law, D. C. Smith, J. W. Green and Vinson Knight, councilors.

On February 3, 1841, the council met and organized the "University of Nauvoo," and the "Nauvoo Legion." Joseph Smith was made Lieutenant General, in charge of the Legion, and the lesser officers were those of other members of the city council. The Legion was not to be a Church organization, but merely a part of the State Militia.

The first council elected a Board of Regents for the new university, and selected Professor James Kelley, A. M., alumnus of Trinity College, Dublin, as the first President of the University. They were not able to provide the buildings necessary for the University as they had planned, but did make a very good beginning, and the Department of English Literature and Mathematics of the University of the City of Nauvoo was immediately put in operation under the tuition of Professor Orson Pratt.

The next project was to provide a good hotel, and the Nauvoo House was planned and started. This was to be a regular hotel with the exception that no intoxicants were to be sold, and no barroom of the ordinary type was to be permitted. This was in keeping with the general trend along moral lines. Whatever may have developed later, it is certain that these leaders intended to make Nauvoo a model city in every way.

By this time, the Church was spreading its influence in many lands. On May 27, 1840, Edward Partridge, the first bishop of the Church died and is buried in the old cemetery nearly Nauvoo. On July 19, 1840, W. W. Phelps, who had been expelled, was reunited to the Church (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 2, p. 460).

While these things were going on in Nauvoo, the saints in Manchester, England, were having a conference, and at that conference there were 5,850 members present, and at the same time there was a shipload of eight hundred heading for Nauvoo. Over on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River they held a conference August 7, 1841, and there were seven hundred and fifty members reported there. So by now in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man, there were many members. Also

Orson Hyde was on his way to Palestine. After his return, he and George J. Adams were appointed as missionaries to Russia.

But to return to Nauvoo. With its growth, many new and unheard of innovations began to make their appearance. John C. Bennett was a leading politician in the state of Illinois, when he came and united with the church. It was his political experience that made the Church leaders trust and respect him. He was a physician, and also quite a military man, and a high degree Mason. It was not long therefore, until he began to wield a very unhealthy influence on Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Seemingly the freedom from persecution that the saints had undergone in Missouri, soon caused them to become quite puffed up and egotistical. The fact of their wonderful success and growth made them begin to feel immune from further molestation.

The military prestige that they enjoyed under the management of the Nauvoo Legion soon made them bold and aggressive. Then under the leadership of John C. Bennett, a high Masonic Lodge was organized in Nauvoo and both Joseph and Hyrum Smith became High Masons, and a splendid Masonic Temple was built. Then in the national election of 1844, Joseph Smith offered himself as a candidate for President of the United States, and Sidney Rigdon became a candidate for the office of Vice-President. These political aspirations were bad both for themselves and the Church, and had much to do with what later followed. Aspirations usually lead to jealousies, and jealousies lead to factionalism and division.

On August 12, 1841, quite a little excitement was created in the new city of Nauvoo when the Indian Chiefs, Keokuk, Kishukosh, and Appanoose, with about one hundred lesser lights and their families came across the river from Iowa in boats. Yet, when they did not see Joseph Smith, whom they knew, among the committee sent to meet them, they refused to land, and stayed in their boats until Joseph came down to the shore. Then the Indians landed and marched with the people to the grove by the Temple. This grove was where the saints were holding their meetings, and here Joseph preached to them. He had given Keokuk a Book of Mormon some years before this. Keokuk said, "I look rough, but I also am a son of the Great Spirit." They then went back to their reserve in Iowa, after they had partaken of a feast spread for them by the saints, in the grove. All through the history of the Restoration, incidents like the above had been interspersed among the events connected with the work.

Another thing of interest was the mission of Orson Hyde to Palestine, and a peculiar prophetic prayer that he offered on the Mount of Olives, On October 24, 1841. We will give some extracts from that prayer, as it fits so fully with the divine mission of the Restoration and its general purpose.

The Prayer

Oh Thou! who art from everlasting to everlasting, eternally and unchangeably the same, even the God who rules in the heavens above, and controls the destinies of men on the earth, wilt Thou not condescend, through thine infinite goodness and royal favor, to listen to the prayer of Thy servant which he this day offers up unto Thee in the name of Thy holy child Jesus, upon this land, where the Son of Righteousness sat in blood, and Thine Anointed One expired.

* * *

Now, O Lord, Thy servant has been obedient to the heavenly vision which Thou gavest him in his native land; and under the shadow of Thine outstretched arm, he has safely arrived in this place to dedicate and consecrate this land unto Thee, for the gathering together of Judah's scattered remnants, according to the predictions of the holy prophets – for the building up of Jerusalem again after it has been trodden down by the Gentiles so long, and for rearing a Temple in honor of Thy name. Everlasting thanks be ascribed unto Thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast preserved Thy servant from the dangers of the sea, and from the plague and pestilence which have caused the land to mourn. The violence of men has also been restrained, and Thy providential care by night and by day has been exercised over Thy unworthy servant....

O Thou, who didst covenant with Abraham, Thy friend, and who didst renew that covenant with Isaac, and confirmed the same with Jacob with an oath, that Thou would'st not only give them this land for an everlasting inheritance, but that Thou would'st also remember their seed forever. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, have long since closed their eyes in death, and made the grave their mansion. Their children are scattered and dispersed abroad among the nations of the Gentiles like sheep that have no shepherd, and are still looking for the fulfillment of those promises which thou didst make concerning them, and even this land, which once poured forth nature's richest bounty, and flowed, as it were, with milk and honey, has to a certain extent, been smitten with barrenness and sterility since it drank from murderous hands the blood of Him who never sinned.

Grant, therefore, O Lord, in the name of Thy well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to remove the barrenness and sterility of this land, and let springs of living water break forth to water its thirsty soil. Let the vine and the olive produce in their strength, and the fig tree bloom and flourish. Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs; let it again flow with

plenty to feed the returning prodigals who come home with a spirit of grace and supplication; upon it let the clouds distil virtue and richness, and let the fields smile with plenty. Let the flocks and herds greatly increase and multiply upon the mountains and the hills; and let Thy great kindness conquer and subdue the unbelief of the people. Do thou take from them their stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh; and may the sun of Thy favor dispel the cold mists of darkness which have beclouded their atmosphere. Incline them to gather in upon this land according to Thy word. Let them come like clouds and like doves to their windows. Let the large ships of the nations bring them from the distant isles; and let kings become their nursing fathers, and queens with motherly fondness wipe the tears of sorrow from their eyes.

Thou, O Lord, did once move upon the heart of Cyrus to show favor unto Jerusalem and her children. Do Thou now also be pleased to inspire the hearts of kings and the powers of the earth to look with a friendly eye towards this place, and with a desire to see Thy righteous purposes executed in relation thereto. Let them know that it is Thy good pleasure to restore the kingdom unto Israel, raise up Jerusalem as its capitol, and constitute her people a distinct nation and government, with David Thy servant, even a descendant from the loins of ancient David, to be their king.

Let that nation or that people who shall take an active part in behalf of Abraham's children, and in the raising up of Jerusalem, find favor in Thy sight. Let not their enemies prevail against them, neither let pestilence or famine overcome them; but let the glory of Israel overshadow them, and the power of the highest protect them; while that nation or kingdom that will not serve thee in this glorious work must perish, according to Thy word – Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. – Reorganized Church History, vol. 2, p. 553

We have not given the entire prayer as it is very lengthy. However, the parts which we have given above, are so striking in the light of subsequent events, that we are led to feel that there was doubtless inspiration in it. We are not insisting that it was because of this prayer, nor perhaps in direct answer to it, that we see its fulfillment; but be that as it may, it was less than a decade before the rains began to fall in Palestine, after centuries of famine and drought that had overwhelmed the land. The fact that so much of this prayer DID find a literal fulfillment in subsequent years makes us feel that it should occupy a place in our history. As evidence of this we quote the following:

I know not whether you are aware of the fact, but it is one that is fully authenticated, that the "latter rain" returned last year to Mount Zion – a rain, that had been withheld, so far as our information goes, ever since the dispersion of the people; and He who has brought back the "latter rain" in its season, will also give the "former rain" in its season; and these returning showers of earthly blessings are the harbingers of returning showers of

spiritual benedictions from on high. – Rev. Hugh Stowel, in Scottish Presbyterian Magazine, 1853

I arrived in Indiana a few days since, from the Eastern Continent; I stopped at Joppa nearly the whole winter. For my part I was well pleased with the country. It is certainly a land of most wonderful fruitfulness with a delightful climate, producing everything if properly cultivated, and from two to three crops a year. They have grain, fruit and vegetables all the year round; in fact, I never was in such a country before; I have seen much good country in Europe and America, but none to compare with Palestine; its fruitfulness is uncommon, and the climate the most delightful, even in winter. I did not see the least sort of frost, and vegetables of every sort were growing to perfection in gardens. It is a fact that the rain and dew are restored; recently (in 1853), the former and latter rains were restored, to the astonishment of the natives. – Louis Van Buren, Sr., November 14, A.D. 1867; see Parsons' Text Book, pages 205, 206

Another enterprise that was soon started in the new city of Nauvoo was the erection of a magnificent Temple. It was on the eleventh birthday of the Church, April 6, 1841, that the corner stone of the proposed Temple was laid. The ceremony was on very much the same order as was enacted in similar services elsewhere. The authorization for this Temple is found on page 278, vol. 4, Utah Church History. Much of the timber material for this Temple was obtained from the pineries of Wisconsin. These logs were sawed into lumber at Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and floated down the Black River to the Mississippi and from there on down to Nauvoo. Today, in the little city of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, on the banks of the Black river, is an obelisk, on which is a bronze plaque, containing the legend that this was the spot on which stood the sawmill where the lumber was sawed. Also in the history of the little town there is a very interesting account of the work of those early members of the Church. Wrightsville, a rural community about four miles north of Black River Falls, was named after two Wright brothers, who, it is said, were members of the Church in that day.

Several new and strange doctrines found lodgment among the saints in Nauvoo in that early day. Baptism for the dead was taught and practiced for a time in the Mississippi River, but there was to be a font in the new Temple, where this rite was to be performed. This doctrine was an innovation and is not accepted by the Church of Christ as being scriptural.

John C. Bennett soon showed his real character which gave color to his claim, after being expelled from the Church, that he never did accept, in good faith, the teachings of the Restoration, but ingratiated himself in the

good graces of the leaders and joined the Church merely to get on the inside and learn about its teachings and practices. He was the first Mayor, as already noted, but he did not hold that office long; but was expelled from the office, and Joseph Smith took his place. This was on May 17, 1842.

Bennett secretly taught a sort of spiritual wife doctrine, and it was this that later developed into the doctrine of polygamy. However, by this time Free Masonry had gained such a grip on the leaders that its secrets made it impossible to stamp out this growing evil until too late; and Joseph Smith went to his death before its full meaning and origin had aroused the saints.

Another strange thing began to be taught. At the funeral of an Elder King Follet, Joseph Smith had preached the funeral sermon and introduced the idea of a plurality of gods. (See *Times and Seasons*, vol. 7, No. 15, pp. 612-617, August 15, 1844.) All these strange teachings ripened into full bloom after the death of Joseph Smith, and the saints who followed Brigham Young had gone to Utah beyond the jurisdiction of the U. S. government, where they could practice these strange things unmolested.

On the claim that the saints needed self-protection, because of the terrible persecution that had been meted out to them in Missouri and Ohio, one Sampson Avarad was an instrument with others in organizing a secret band, tied together by oaths and passwords, and called the "Danites." Avarad was later expelled from the Church, but others who had become members of this Danite band still carried on; and when they got into the "wild and woolly west," where there was little governmental restraint, made quite a record of lawlessness and crime. Among these were O. Porter Rockwell and Bill Hickman.

About this time (1842) ex-Governor Boggs, who had been such a bitter persecutor of the saints in Missouri, while he was governor, was shot while sitting in his house in Independence, by an unknown assailant. However, because of the still bitter hatred of the saints that was maintained by the Missourians, the blame for this attack was laid onto the Danites, and that they operated under the orders of the Prophet Joseph Smith himself. Joseph Smith was arrested, and an attempt was made to have him extradited from Illinois to Missouri, by the then Governor of Missouri. A trial was held and in spite of the unfriendly feeling that seemed to be gaining even in Illinois against the saints, it was found impossible to connect Joseph Smith, in any way, with this attempt on Bogg's life.

However, because of political intrigue, and Masonic secrecy, and traitors in the ranks of the saints, and the new and strange doctrines that were being taught which caused others who had remained faithful to the original faith to become disaffected – because of these things, conditions were ripening for the final tragic outcome that we will introduce in the next chapter.

The question is often asked: “Was the Nauvoo Temple ever finished?” In answer to this question we present the testimonials of men who were on the grounds during that period, and are qualified to testify, as follows:

I lived at Nauvoo from 1839 to 1866; with the exception of the time between September 12, 1846, and February 19, 1847. I knew of the work being done on the Temple at that place from the time it began until the building was burned in 1848. It was not finished. The basement was fitted for occupation, and the baptismal font was ready for use. The auditorium on the first floor was completed sufficiently to be seated and occupied for assembly purposes. The stairway on the south side was completed for use. The auditorium on the second floor, the stairway on the north side, nor any other portion of the building except those above named were completed; though the small rooms above the second floor auditorium were used by President Young and the resident Church authorities for various purposes.

As a boy and man I visited the building both while it was being built and after the work on it stopped, was all over it from the cellar to the dome, many times with visitors from abroad, and with comrades, after the saints left the city and while David La Barron had charge, attended meetings in it both for worship and for political purposes, and know from actual personal observation that the temple at Nauvoo was not finished. I know, too, that it was matter of common talk among members of the Church that changes were made in the designs after the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith; and that those portions that were completed so as to be occupied were not in accordance with the original plans.

Joseph Smith
(President Reorganized Church)

* * *

Lamoni, Iowa, June 26, 1897

Inasmuch as the subject of the temple built by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at Nauvoo, Illinois, has been in controversy in the past and sometimes of late called up; and as some have claimed that the temple was finished according to the revelation or command of God, and endowments legally given therein, I wish to make a statement and leave my testimony in history that perhaps it may correct an error, and free some minds which may be in doubt upon the matter.

When a boy I was privileged to wander all over the building, and sometimes when the man in charge did not feel like climbing up the many flights of stairs, which led to the cupola to show visitors the wonderful building and beautiful view to be had from the dome, he requested me to show them. I well remember that on one of those occasions I ventured out of the small door on the east side of the rounded top which was covered with bright tin. I walked all around it, and as I approached the door the gentleman whom I was guide to caught me and drew me in, and lectured me for my imprudence, declaring that he would not dare do it.

The offices in the corner to the left of the main entrance on the ground floor were finished, but not furnished. The auditorium or main meeting room was temporarily finished; the seats and pulpit were only temporary.

The upper auditorium; the plastering was not done, the floor was only the rough boards, intended only for the lining, was laid, and from this floor upward the stairs, except in the tower, or circular main stairs, were also only temporary; the upper floor which was to have been divided into numerous rooms was laid, and partitioned off with cotton factory cloth, and used for some purposes before the saints were driven away.

I was told that the cloth of those partitions was subsequently used for wagon covers, by the saints in their journey across the plains.

To my knowledge the temple never was finished, and those who have been led to believe it was, have been deceived. I make this statement freely for the benefit of the present and future generations.

Alexander H. Smith
Audubon, Minnesota, July 2, 1897

(Reorganized Church History, vol. 2., pp. 563-565.)

Joseph Smith and Alexander H. Smith, whose testimonies are given above, were two of the sons of Joseph Smith the Prophet. Here follows an excerpt from remarks made by President Brigham Young delivered at the Temple, St. George, Utah, January 1, 1877:

We reared a temple in Kirtland, but we had no basement in it, nor a font, nor preparations to give endowments for the living or the dead. It was left by the saints before it was completed, they going to Missouri. Joseph located the site for the Temple Block in Jackson County, Missouri, and pointed out the southeast corner of the temple in the year 1831; also laid the corner stone for a temple in Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri. These temples were not built. We built one in Nauvoo. I could pick out several before me now that were

there when it was built, and know just how much was finished and what was done. It is true we left brethren there with instruction to finish it, and they got it nearly completed before it was burned; but the saints did not enjoy it. – Journal of Discourses, vol. 18, pp. 303, 304; Reorganized Church History, vol. 2, p. 566

Chapter 14

The Martyrdom and What Followed

The terrible storm of prejudice and hate that had followed the young latter-day Prophet from the time he first announced the wonderful story of the angel's visit to him, revealing the fact that the last dispensation of the gospel of Christ was about to be ushered in, and that he was to be the instrument of its presentation, had not abated in the least; and now was about to burst forth in all of its fury, and bring about the martyrdom of that young man. There were a number of outstanding factors that were instrumental in bringing about this last sad scene.

In the first place he had given his confidence too freely to men who proved to be false friends; and in this way he had been influenced to permit the entry into the Church of strange and unscriptural doctrines and practices. This, of course, would naturally create division. Then he had espoused, the mysticism of Free Masonry, thus binding himself to the protection of some of the afore-mentioned false friends, among whom was John C. Bennett, who was responsible for the introduction of Masonry into Nauvoo; as a result of which Free Masonry became an outstanding feature of the social life of Nauvoo, and a large and elaborate Masonic Temple was built there. Joseph Smith was a party to the introduction of a so-called endowment service with secret grips and passwords, which produced a new order in the Church, which they borrowed largely from Free Masonry. This plagiarism cost him his standing in the Masonic order, and we find prominent Masons among his worst enemies. Then his political aspirations also caused a further dissension and division; and, finally, following the expulsion of Bennett from the office of Mayor of Nauvoo, and Joseph Smith's succession to that office, these things acted to strongly segregate and unify the various forces that were forming with the object of his overthrow and final elimination.

The insurgent forces within the Church, among whom were some of the leading men, among them one of Joseph Smith's counselors in the First Presidency, Wm. Law, and his brother Wilson Law, Dr. Robt. Foster, and

Francis and Chauncey Higbee (sons of the old Judge Elias Higbee, who had so often defended Joseph when hailed into court) – these men, with others, undertook to expose the evils that they felt were finding support in the Church; assayed to publish a paper to expose these evils. This paper was called the Nauvoo Expositor. It was so inflammatory and contained such glaring charges of misconduct against Joseph Smith and his immediate associates, that it created excitement almost verging on open warfare.

That there may have been some truth in the charges made, is doubtless true, but since it was the product of an element already sworn enemies to the Prophet, the matter was called before the city council, who promptly pronounced the sheet a nuisance, and ordered the Mayor to suppress it. This was a very serious error, because Joseph Smith himself was that Mayor, and it was against him that the most of the charges were directed. The Mayor, however, ordered the Marshall, John P. Green to carry out the council's orders. This was promptly done. Green and his deputies went to the Expositor office and destroyed the entire establishment.

Thereupon, Francis M. Higbee went to Carthage and had Joseph Smith, Samuel Bennett, John Taylor, W. W. Phelps, Hyrum Smith, John P. Green, Stephen Perry, D. B. Huntington, Jonathan Harmon, J. P. Harmon, John Lytle, J. W. Coolidge, H. D. Redfield, Porter Rockwell and Levi Richards arrested on a charge of riot. This ended the Nauvoo Expositor. There was only one issue published. These men were all tried by the Nauvoo courts and set free; but the affair had struck directly at a very strongly entrenched American tradition, that of the freedom of the press.

On June 14, Joseph Smith sent a full report of the affair to Gov. Thomas Ford of Illinois. Joseph offered to stand further trial before a court appointed by the Governor himself. There was no time for this, however, because excitement had reached such fever heat that mobs were rising up everywhere, and dire threats were filling the air. This caused Joseph and Hyrum to go over into Iowa to get away from the mobs; but the Governor sent them word that he would have the militia protect them, so they returned, and went to Carthage and gave themselves into the hands of the officers. However, Joseph had been shown that this was the end, and so on leaving for Carthage he made that memorable statement: "I am going as a lamb to the slaughter, but I am calm as a summer's morning; I have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward all men – I shall die

innocent, and it shall yet be said of me, He was murdered in cold blood.” This statement was to be literally fulfilled, as we shall see.

It was on June 24, 1844, that the men went before Judge R. F. Smith, Captain of the “Carthage Greys,” a military body similar to the Nauvoo Legion. Here they offered security for their appearance to be present at the first convening of the court. They started for Carthage, and when within four miles of the place they met Captain Dunn and some soldiers, who had an order from Gov. Ford for the “state arms” at Nauvoo. Joseph signed the order for the arms, but Captain Dunn feared to go into Nauvoo without the prisoners present, so they all returned to Nauvoo, where the arms were procured; then all marched back again to Carthage, arriving about midnight. On the morning of the twenty-fifth, they saw the Governor, and he pledged the protection of the State to the prisoners.

Joseph Smith and his brother, Hyrum, were lodged in the old jail at Carthage, and with them John Taylor and Willard Richards of the Twelve. The prisoners were all lodged in an upper room of the jail.

The Governor had gone to Nauvoo, to assure the citizens of the safety of the prisoners in the jail at Carthage, but he had left only eight men in charge of the jail, all of whom were enemies to the prisoners. At about 5 o'clock p.m., on the 27th of June, a howling mob of about two hundred men with their faces painted black and yellow, soon overcame the guard, stormed up the stairway in the jail, and began shooting. Hyrum Smith was killed instantly by a ball that came through the door. Joseph ran to the window. He was shot, and fell to the ground, and the mob took him and set him up against the well curb in the yard, and several bullets were fired into his body. John Taylor, who was in the room, was also quite seriously wounded.

Thus fell Joseph Smith, the Prophet of these latter days. He was only in his thirty-ninth year; and when the work of his life is assessed, it will be seen that few men have, in a long life time accomplished a fraction of the work he did. Beginning as a lad of less than fifteen when he had his first vision in the woods near his father's house, he obtained and translated that wonderful record of Scripture, the Book of Mormon; corrected by inspiration the entire Bible; organized a Church, which at his death, numbered upward of two hundred thousand souls; preached to a large part of America; and all the time was fleeing from blood-thirsty mobs who sought his life. Mistakes he made, of course, because he was a mere human being the same as all men; but with a vigor and stamina, and a

fearlessness rare in any man. It may well be said, that in spite of the human weaknesses mentioned, he was truly a man of God, and the direct emissary from the Most High, with the gospel dispensation to be committed to mankind in these latter days.

The reaction following the assassination of Joseph and Hyrum Smith was surprising. Panic filled the air. In a short time the village of Carthage was almost uninhabited. The mob and the citizens fled like frightened rabbits, fearing reprisals from the saints.

There is a story connected with the massacre of the leaders that gives color to the cause of this panic, as recorded. The phenomenon of Joseph Smith as a man and his wonderful career, led scientists to feel that the dissection of his physical body might reveal something that might be of value to their philosophy. For this reason it was feared that his body might be mutilated; and evidently there was reason for this fear, if the story that comes to us from the scene of the massacre, is true; and we have reason, because of the action of the mob, immediately after Joseph was killed, to give real credit to it. It is, that as soon as Joseph had been riddled with bullets, a burley Missourian with a black painted face, and a large knife, was about to sever the head of Joseph from his body, when a sharp flash, as of lightning, flew between him and his victim, hurling the knife from his hand and nearly paralyzing the man. At this sight, the men who had wielded the guns in the murder, dropped their guns, and stood for a time transfixed like statues. They then fled from the scene in mortal terror. This story does not come to us from any of the saints, because there were none there to witness it. Joseph and Hyrum were dead, and Taylor and Richards were still in the room where the prisoners were first incarcerated. The story comes from the mob itself. They seemed to feel that they had done an unholy thing, as they certainly had done.

Subsequent events, however, showed the needlessness for the fear that had gripped the people of Carthage and also the vicinity of the city of Nauvoo, because there was no attempt made, in any way, to retaliate against the action of the mob.

The bodies of the slain were washed and prepared to be returned to their homes in Nauvoo. The wounded were cared for, and instead of war and bloodshed over this brutal murder, an unusual season of mourning pervaded the entire countryside, over the fate of the slain martyrs. A peculiar and ironic episode is connected with this scene of bloodshed;

while this murder was taking place in Carthage, Governor Ford was in Nauvoo haranguing the populace, and even took dinner with Emma Smith, wife of the man he had promised to protect with the State Militia, and who at the very time was in jail, and was so soon to meet his death.

When the Governor was riding back to Carthage after his visit to Nauvoo, he met the messengers coming to Nauvoo with the news of the massacre. Fear seemed to fill the Governor's heart, and he immediately took what steps he could to quiet what he felt would be a righteous uprising of the saints in Nauvoo. In this, however, he had no need to fear, because instead of retaliation, the leaders still in Nauvoo simply advised the saints to be quiet, and leave the judgment of the murderers in the hands of a just God.

On the other hand an event transpired that rather refutes the charges of the traitors within the Church, who had largely been responsible in arousing the mob spirit, and who had published the Nauvoo Expositor. History reveals the fact that these men fled to cover immediately after the news of the tragedy reached them. What was the matter? Did they measure the friends of Joseph and Hyrum in their own category, and did they thus fear treatment such as they evidently were willing to mete out to those they had charged with such evils?

At any rate there seemed to be nothing to fear from the saints. Two men came to Nauvoo with the bodies of the slain men. Slowly they drove the wagon holding the dead Prophet and his brother over the beautiful country side from Carthage to Nauvoo. They were met with a sorrowing multitude; and after the bodies had been prepared for burial they were placed in the large dining room of the Nauvoo Mansion, where they lay in state, and where a whole Church passed before their bier in mourning. From an address by Lyman Wight, a life long associate and friend, we glean this estimate of Joseph Smith:

Joseph Smith, the "author and proprietor" of the Book of Mormon, the founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was six feet two inches high, of a form and figure difficult to surpass among the human family. He was a man possessed of a great share of good humor. As great a lover of his country as could be found among men. Often spoke of the Government as being the most admirable on earth. Wept over the mob of Missouri and Philadelphia alike. He often wept that mobs should arise under the glorious institutions of the United States. Always spoke highly of our chief magistrates, and those who administered the laws.

We give this estimate of the character and power of the Prophet Joseph Smith, from a friend and associate, feeling that this appraisal of the

man is due, regardless of what we may think of some of his mistakes and errors. Had we been in his place, would we have made less mistakes?

Even in death his body was not free from his enemies, who wished to mutilate it, as already said, so he slept in an unknown and unmarked grave until just within the recent past few years.

After the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith there was comparative peace and quiet, but this was not to last very long, and mob violence soon broke out anew; and the saints at Nauvoo were again forced to leave their homes and flee before the mob. There seemed to be no place where they could settle for any great length of time, where they might enjoy the boasted privilege of this country to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience.

The first exodus of the saints from Nauvoo toward the West began February 4, 1846. In this group there were four hundred covered wagons. The second group started September 7, 1846, and the once beautiful city of Nauvoo was all but deserted so far as the saints were concerned. The temple, still unfinished, was burned to the ground October 9, 1848 (see "Jensen's Chronology," p. 36). For a time, three stone pillars stood as silent sentinels over the ruins, not only of the wrecked structure of wood and stone, which had been the pride of this people, but of the hopes and aspirations of the Church which lay in ashes.

Chapter 15

Factionalism Arises

Now that the Prophet and President of the Church was dead, the Church was thrown into confusion, and some of the strange innovations that had crept into it began to make their consequences felt. Outstanding among them was the placing of a President over the whole Church, and above the Twelve Apostles. We can find nowhere in history where Joseph Smith was ever ordained to any higher office than that of apostle, and had he remained there, in that office, his death would merely have made a vacancy in that quorum of men. There had been a number of changes made there already, as we have noticed, and no great ripple was produced by these changes; but now, when the office that had come to be regarded as "The Head," was made vacant, there was an immediate clamor of claims for a successorship. The Church **MUST** have a human head!

In the midst of this confusion, Sidney Rigdon, the remaining member of the First Presidency, succeeded in having a conference called on the 8th day of August, 1844. His intention obviously was to present his claim to the successorship, since he was already a member of the First Presidency. However, it seems that he had succeeded in losing much of his popularity; and so when Brigham Young, who was the President of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, advised the conference that they could not appoint a seer, prophet and revelator, but that God must do that, his advice met with the approval of the Conference; and, under the domination of Brigham Young, they voted to place the Church under the immediate direction of the Twelve Apostles. This was a consistent and logical method of disposing of the matter. No one could find fault with the Twelve being in charge of the Church. That was as it was first intended, before the First Presidency idea was born. Furthermore, had the Twelve remained in charge of the Church, it would have been a Scriptural arrangement; but none of those leaders had any intention of this being a permanent arrangement, as subsequent events so plainly demonstrated. The Presidency idea had taken too deep root; and so, many leaders were anxious to fill the place left vacant by the dead Prophet.

Factionalism sprang into being, and the Church was rent asunder. When we use the word **factions** in connection with the groups that came into being under the various leaders that soon presented their claims, we do so advisedly, because Webster defines the word **faction** to mean, "A party in disloyal opposition." Hence, when we examine the teachings of the various claimants to the successorship, we find that in each group there were many of the outstanding features that were characteristic of the work as it was in the closing scenes in Nauvoo during the lifetime of the Prophet. All, however, were in disloyal opposition to the work as it was in the beginning, before the many strange doctrines were taught, and when there were no First Presidencies, High Priests, etc., etc.

So we find that almost immediately following the August, 1844, conference, some of the leading men, and others, arose with claims to being designated as the successor in the Presidency of the Church, and as prophets, or spiritual leaders.

When Sidney Rigdon's claims were rejected at that conference, he returned to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in October of 1844, and resumed publication of the paper called the Messenger and Advocate, claiming that it was the continuation of the paper of that name formerly published in

Kirtland, Ohio. During the month of April, 1845, he effected a full and complete church organization, with himself as First President, Samuel Jones and Ebenezer Robinson as his Counselors; Carvel Rigdon as Presiding Patriarch; Elders Samuel Bennett, Hugh Herringshaw, Jeremiah Hatch, Jr., James Blakeslee, Josiah Ells, Benjamin Winchester, Wm. Small, E. R. Swackhammer, D. L. Lathrop, Joseph M. Cole, G. W. Robinson, and Wm. E. McLellin as apostles. Others were set apart as seventies, together with a number of men to fill the various orders of priesthood. Later, when Rigdon's movement began to go to pieces, it was revised to a certain extent by Wm. Bickerton, who was one of Rigdon's converts in 1845. Bickerton was not a member of the Church in Joseph Smith's lifetime.

The next group of importance was that in Wisconsin and Michigan under the leadership of James J. Strang. Strang claimed to have a letter from Joseph Smith appointing him as his (Joseph's) successor in the Presidency of the Church. Strang also claimed an ordination under the hands of an angel to the office left vacant by the death of the martyred Prophet. Strang gained quite a following and also effected a full and complete organization. He introduced a number of new ideas, peculiar to his own personal views. However, we do find a number of names familiar to the old original church among his membership. It is also well to keep these in mind because we will have use for them when we come to consider subsequent history.

Lyman Wight, one of the original Twelve, obtained a following down into Texas. Wight, however, never claimed for his group that it was the Church, nor a new organization of it. He merely claimed that it was a branch of the Church.

Following the death of Joseph Smith, we find David Whitmer having a revived interest in the Church. We find Wm. E. McLellin and Hiram Page journeying to the home of David Whitmer in Richmond, Missouri, in 1847; and that prior to that time McLellin had addressed a letter to Whitmer, in which he recognized Whitmer as a prophet, seer and revelator. Assembled together in this home we find McLellin, Jacob and John Whitmer and Hiram Page, together with David himself. These men arrived at David Whitmer's home on September 4, 1847. Four days later we find them all engaged in a rebaptism service. David was then ordained prophet, seer and revelator, and made the president of the church. McLellin ordained Page and John Whitmer High Priests, and then Page

and McLellin together ordained John Whitmer to be counselor of the prophet, David Whitmer. Later we find the Whitmers repudiating this above mentioned organization; and still later we find David with his brother John attempting another organization. Even at this day we find a lone follower of David Whitmer occasionally in various parts of the country.

The largest group of those who composed the Church at the death of Joseph Smith, went with Brigham Young to the West.

It is not our purpose in this brief history to follow the fortunes in detail of any of the groups. However, since some of these have grown large, and are still making history, it becomes necessary to note some of the leading features and conditions that have come into being through the years, and which will enable us to follow as clearly as we can, the final evolution of the original faith, as it is demonstrated by the passing of time; and in this it will necessarily follow that the History of the Church of Christ, will, in large measure be interwoven with the developments and evolutions of the entire body of the Restoration Movement.

For a time following the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the saints seemed stunned. The leaders advised them to remain quiescent, and to make no move until later developments. They were counseled to stay in Nauvoo and finish the building of the Temple. There was also an attempt made to continue missionary work to the extent that it had been outlined prior to the death of the Prophet. For instance, Wight's hegira into Texas, as already mentioned, was to continue his mission as it had been appointed him.

However, after the death of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, there was no cessation of the persecution that had begun a couple of years previous, so there was a continual evacuation of saints from the city. On January 21, 1845, the legislature at Springfield, Illinois, revoked the Nauvoo charter. This was the final act of disgrace to the once beautiful city.

On October 9, 1848, the beautiful Nauvoo Temple was burned. However, by this time the saints had evacuated the city. All through the years of 1845 and 1846, the saints were leaving their homes in Nauvoo, where once there had been such promise of peace and security. How sad that the leaders had permitted such evils to enter in, that did much to scatter and divide the flock. By 1847 the main body of the saints were a band of disillusioned and discouraged refugees. Yet, wherever the spirit of the

gospel had been enjoyed, the fires of zeal and faith burned brightly, and they were able to keep the movement from being completely destroyed.

But to return to the movement of the saints westward, under the leadership of a majority of the Twelve, with Brigham Young at its head. None of the direct descendants of the Prophet Joseph Smith went with that body. They remained in Nauvoo and vicinity.

The trek of the saints driven from Nauvoo, across the territory of Iowa, occupied the greater part of the year 1846. Landmarks of this trek are still found, especially at Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah, where they stopped long enough to plant crops for the benefit of those who would come later. They had moved in caravan fashion, with covered wagons, etc. Late in the fall they reached the Missouri River at what is now Council Bluffs; and there, and across the river, they made their Winter Quarters. During this winter the suffering was intense, and about six hundred perished, mostly children. In the old Mormon graveyard upon the hill northwest of Omaha, above the old town of Florence, lie hundreds of these old time saints, many in unmarked graves. Added to this, the entire course of their trek across the territory of Iowa was dotted with the graves of those who “fell by the wayside.”

During the year 1847 we find the leaders going on farther west in quest of a spot for a new Zion. California had been first contemplated as being the place of a final settlement; in August, 1847, they arrived in the valley of Great Salt Lake in the territory of Utah. Here Brigham pronounced the site as being the place. Utah at that time was not a part of the United States. But on February 2, 1848, “By the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico, Upper California, including what is now Utah, was ceded to the United States.” (Church Chronology, by Andrew Jensen, p. 35.)

On the 6th of August, the whole company of the Twelve were rebaptized and reordained. They thus affected an entirely new church. On August 8, 1847, the entire camp of two hundred twenty-four were rebaptized. Later some of these returned to Winter Quarters, Nebraska. (See “Life of Brigham Young,” by Tullidge, p. 182.) December 5, 1847, Brigham Young was voted in as President of the church, at Winter Quarters, Nebraska.

For the next couple of years there was nearly a constant stream of immigrants from Winter Quarters, north of what is now Omaha, in Nebraska, across the plains and mountains to the new Zion in the West.

This includes the famous hand cart pilgrimage that later became a saga of the Great West. Nothing like it was ever attempted in American history before.

The part of the valley now occupied by Salt Lake City was a barren desert. There were no natural resources, such as would be considered necessary for the habitation of man. The soil, however, was very fertile when furnished with the needful amount of moisture. In the development of such a raw wilderness, Brigham Young soon showed himself to be a real pioneer; and when the city was laid out, streams of fresh water were brought down from the mountains, and the thirsty soil was made to produce in abundance. This, however, all took time, and before it was finally accomplished there was much untold suffering.

Having established themselves in the new Zion, where they at last seemed free from persecuting enemies, the leaders became ruthless in their government of the membership. A despotism of the most tyrannical type was soon set up; and since their numbers were constantly being augmented by foreign immigrants, they soon became a government by themselves. They set up the State of Deseret, with Brigham Young as Governor. In ecclesiastical matters the priesthood became supreme, and woe unto the wayward one who refused to "obey counsel."

Here in their desert fastnesses they were able to bring into the fore the new and strange doctrines that had had their infancy back east amid a more cosmopolitan type of community life. In 1852, Brigham Young brought out the so-called revelation on polygamy, which he claimed he had kept under lock and key for eight years, and now enjoined obedience to it. It is alleged that the first child known to have been born in polygamy was Oscar Young, a son of Brigham Young; but this was prior to the public promulgation of the doctrine. This child was born in Winter Quarters, Nebraska.

Another doctrine that now became orthodox was the "Adam God" theory, which taught that Adam was God, and grew out of the plurality of gods idea that had been hinted at in Nauvoo.

Another doctrine that seemed to grow and become necessary to control the heterogynous population was called "Blood Atonement." Here is where the Danites became useful in carrying out the orders of the priesthood, ostensibly to prevent and quell apostasy. This terrible doctrine, according to the preachments of Brigham Young, Jedediah N. Grant, Heber Kimball

and others, is found in the volume known as "The Journal of Discourses," a work made up largely of the sermons of Brigham Young and his associates. By this doctrine, it was taught that after one was baptized, the only way then to have their sins remitted, if they fall away, was to have their blood shed, in short, theological murder. (See Journal of Discourses, vol. 4, pp. 219, 220; Deseret News, vol. 6, p. 297.)

During the early years of the reign of terror in Utah, under a strict enforcement of the orders of the priesthood, the church there grew and was unmolested, until the situation began to leak out and reach the ears of the Gentiles of the East. Whereupon, the government at Washington, sent an army under Gen. Albert Sidney Johnson, to the territory to seek to bring about some semblance of civilized order. This failed in its mission; but with the westward flow of civilization, Salt Lake City was soon brought to its senses; and polygamy and its kindred evils were soon brought into disrepute. But it was not until 1890 that a Manifesto was issued by President Woodruff, abandoning polygamy (see Saints' Herald, vol. 37, p. 689.) (Utah, "Doctrine and Covenants," p. 256.)

Another doctrine that had found prevalence in the latter part of the life of Joseph Smith was the idea of proxy baptism, or baptism for the dead. This doctrine is still very fundamental in Brighamite philosophy.

We have given perhaps more notice to the Utah faction than is due; but we feel that the readers of these chronicles should be made fully acquainted with the teachings that were apostate in their origin, and so would cause, in contradistinction, the primitive faith of the Restoration to stand out in clear relief.

Among others, J. J. Strang was one of those who aspired to leadership at the death of the Prophet, as has been stated. He was baptized February 25, 1844. He made his claim that he was appointed Joseph's successor, based on a letter received from the Prophet, written from Nauvoo, June 18, 1844. He further claims that he was ordained by an angel, June 27, 1844, the day that the Prophet was slain. He claimed to have found certain plates, which he called the plates of Laban, and from which he translated the Book of the Law. It is probable that it was from the Book of the Law that he imbibed the doctrine of polygamy which he introduced among his followers in 1851.

He built up the city of Voree, Wisconsin, which is now called Spring Prairie. It was at Voree that he organized the church with himself as

president. In 1849 and 1850 Strang removed his headquarters from Voree to Beaver Island on Lake Michigan. June 16, 1856, Strang was shot by two of his followers. He was removed from Beaver Island to Voree, where he died July 9, 1856. (See Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, pp. 36, 745.)

In addition to the factions mentioned here there were other lesser ones, under the leadership of C. B. Thompson, Alpheus Cutler, Wm. B. Smith and others. Most of these have been swallowed up in the larger groups now in existence.

Chapter 16

The New Organization

Throughout Wisconsin the Strangite movement had drawn many of the old time saints, together with newly baptized members, into various local groups, scattered quite generally over the state, and also over into Michigan.

One of the larger of these groups was at a place in southern Wisconsin that in the early days was called Zarahemla, or the Yellowstone local branch. This place later became known as Blanchardville, which name it still bears. This movement attracted some who had been connected with the Church before the death of Joseph Smith, among these were Zenos H. Gurley, Sr., Jason W. Briggs, H. H. Deam, Wm. Marks and W. W. Blair, who became quite active in the organizing of a new Church in 1852, known as the NEW ORGANIZATION, which still later, or in 1860, was again reorganized into what is now known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Concerning these men and their work we quote the following:

After the death of Joseph Smith, Elder Gurley investigated the claims of various leaders, and finally accepted those of J. J. Strang, as being the most reasonable. A letter written by him from Gananoque, Canada West, November 6, 1849, and published in Gospel Herald, vol. 4, p. 187, indicates that he was then on a mission to Canada in the interest of the organization under Strang. On January 1, 1850, he again wrote from Landsdown, Upper Canada, (see Gospel Herald, vol. 4, p. 262.) Still engaged in the same work. A letter written January 10, 1840, from Pittsburgh, Canada West, manifested faith and zeal in his work. March 15, 1850, he wrote from St. Lawrence, New York, that he was assisting brother Silsby in organizing the brethren and helping them get ready for Beaver. (Ibid., vol. 5, p. 22.) He was present at a conference held at

Voree, Wisconsin, June 1 and 2, 1850, and in these minutes we find this entry: "Bro. Z. H. Gurley was sent to the northeastern parts of Wisconsin, on the presentation of President Strang." It was probably while on the mission thus appointed that Elder Gurley raised up the Yellowstone branch, the members of which helped to form the nucleus of the Reorganization (which was first known as the New Organization.) An account of this we give in the words of one of the participants, Elder Eli Wildermuth, now of Plano, Illinois: –

"In the latter part of the year 1850, Zenos H. Gurley, Sr., stopped to rest a few days with an old friend near Yellowstone, Wisconsin. He was called upon to preach the funeral sermon of a little child of David and Anna Wildermuth. This was the first sermon ever preached in that vicinity by a Latter Day Saint. Mr. and Mrs. Wildermuth were so well pleased with the doctrine advocated at the funeral by Elder Gurley that they earnestly invited him to remain awhile and preach in the neighborhood. The elder consented and began to hold services in private houses. After hearing a few sermons David Wildermuth, and his wife, two sons, E. C. and E. M., and one daughter, and two old ladies gave their names for baptism. Sometime, either in the latter part of August or first part of September, they were immersed in the Yellowstone Creek. These seven formed the nucleus of what afterwards became a large and flourishing branch, the members of which later on made the first move towards the reorganization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." - Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, pp. 744, 745

Associated with Z. H. Gurley were such men as Jason W. Briggs, H. H. Deam, Wm. Marks and W. W. Blair.

J. W. Briggs, considered the "Founder of the Reorganization," (see Origin of the Reorganized Church by Joseph F. Smith, Jr.) was with Brigham Young from the death of Joseph Smith till 1846. At this time he left Brigham Young and accepted the leadership of J. J. Strang, and remained in fellowship with him till 1850, and in 1851 was chosen to be an apostle in Wm. Smith's organization. He withdrew from the Reorganization in 1886. - Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, pp. 737, Saints' Herald, vol. 33, pp. 249

H. H. Deam was with Strang in 1848. (See Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 735.) Wm. Marks was with Strang from 1847 till 1850 and was ordained to the office of Counselor to Strang as instructed by revelation. (See Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, pp. 723-4.) W. W. Blair was baptized by Wm. Smith, October 8, 1851, and continued in association with the William Smith faction till 1852. William Smith had been an apostle under Strang. - Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 727; 39, 43

These men soon began to consider the possibility of establishing a New Organization. As a result, we quote the following from the pen of Zenos H. Gurley, as reported in the True Latter Day Saints' Herald, vol. 1, p. 51.

The church here having publicly renounced Strang and acknowledged the “legal rights” of the Seed of Joseph, thought best, as several of our brethren were living at Beloit and in its vicinity, to appoint a conference at that place. Accordingly, the first conference held by us was at the Newark Branch, on the 12th and 13th of June A. D. 1852.... Conference was organized on the 12th of June, agreeable to previous appointment, choosing Jason W. Briggs, to preside....

At this conference the following resolutions were adopted:

No. 1. Resolved, That this conference regards the pretensions of Brigham Young, James J. Strang, James C. Brewster, and William Smith and James Wood’s joint claim to the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as assumptions of power in violation of the law of God, and consequently we disclaim all connection and fellowship with them.

No. 2. That the successor of Joseph Smith, Jun., as the presiding high priest in the Melchisedec Priesthood, must of necessity be the seed of Joseph Smith, Jun., in fulfillment of the law and promises of God. – Reorganized General Conference Resolutions, p. 3

The genesis of the doctrine of lineal priesthood seems to have come from the teachings of Wm. B. Smith as found in the Millennial Star.

In the Millennial Star for May 1, 1846, in a letter by James Kay, we find that Wm. B. Smith, was then advocating the idea of lineal priesthood; and that Joseph Smith, eldest son of the Prophet Joseph was supposed to take his father’s place as prophet, seer, and revelator, and president of the church; and that he, William, as the remaining brother of the slain prophet was to act as a sort of “Prince Consort,” to occupy until the natural heir came of age sufficiently to take up the duties of that office. Later, William Smith, associated himself for a time with Strang, and as a result of this contact, the idea of lineal priesthood began to be disseminated among the Wisconsin saints; and so, when they became disillusioned by Strang, they began to advocate the doctrine of lineal priesthood, with the idea that young Joseph would come and take his father’s place. This claim was predicated upon two outstanding circumstances: First, the claim was made that the Prophet Joseph Smith had twice blessed his son Joseph, and had thus set him apart to be his successor. Once in Liberty jail, and again at the grove in Nauvoo.

The second basis for the claim is found in a purported revelation given in February, 1831, “Doctrine and Covenants,” sec. 43, and “Book of Commandments,” chapter 45. This revelation, in part, reads as follows:

O hearken, ye elders of my church, and give ear to the words which I shall speak unto you: for behold, verily, verily I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you, to receive commandments and revelations from my hand. And this ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

But verily, verily I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead; and this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations, or commandments; and this I give unto you, that you may not be deceived, that ye may know they are not of me.

Analyzing the above we see that the right to receive revelations and commandments was restricted to Joseph Smith, to whom the revelation was given, and also to whomsoever he (Joseph) should appoint; and coupling that with the alleged claim that Joseph DID bless and set his son apart as his successor, the proponents of the lineal priesthood idea made the claim that successorship in the office of Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and President of the Church is confined to the first Prophet of the church and his son, Joseph Smith the third.

However, when we come to examine the origin of the New Organization that was forming in Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois, we find them violating the whole procedure enjoined in this revelation above mentioned; even to throwing themselves open to the deception that is warned against in the revelation.

The history is as follows: A meeting was held in January, 1853, in Zarahemla (Blanchardville), Wisconsin. At this meeting or conference a revelation was received by Henry H. Deam, as follows:

Verily thus saith the Lord, as I said unto my servant Moses, "See thou do all things according to the pattern," so I say unto you. Behold the pattern is before you. It is my will that you respect authority in my church, therefore let the greatest among you preside at your conference. Let three men be appointed by the conference to select seven men from among you, who shall compose the majority of the Twelve, for it is my will that that quorum should not be filled up at present. Let the President of the Conference assisted by two others, ordain them. The senior of them shall stand as the "representative." Let them select twelve men from among you and ordain them to compose my High Council. Behold ye understand the order of the Bishopric, the Seventies, the Elders, the Priests, Teachers and Deacons. Therefore organize according to the pattern, behold I will be with you unto the end, even so, Amen. – True Latter Day Saints' Herald, vol. 1, p. 55

By this it will be seen that these “new” organizers forgot, or disregarded, the revelation that they claim as their divine source for lineal priesthood, and instead of waiting for God to speak through the individual they claim is indicated in the revelation of February, 1831, as being the sole mouthpiece for God following the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr., a revelation is given to an entirely different man who made no claim to being appointed to that office by the Prophet, notwithstanding that in that revelation it is expressly stated that for revelations or commandments to come through any other source, would be false and deceptive.

In April of 1853, they held a conference, and proceeded to organize according to Deam’s revelation, thus perfecting a complete “New” church organization. We are entirely justified in making this statement, because they, themselves, at first called themselves the New Organization. In January, 1860, there appeared the first issue of the True Latter Day Saints’ Herald, and on the title page of the second issue, for February, 1860, appears this legend:

The True
Latter Day Saints
HERALD
Published by
The New Organization
of the
Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter Day Saints

Also Jason W. Briggs, one of the organizers of the “New” organization, testified in the Temple Lot suit, as follows:

I do not think the name of Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was known at that time, but it was known by that name subsequently. It was not known by that name until 1860, according to my recollection. – Abstract of Evidence, Temple Lot Suit, p. 398

In connection with the testimony of Jason W. Briggs, we cite the following:

Articles of Association adopted by “The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” at a general meeting of the members of said church, held at Plano, in the county of Kendall, in the state of Illinois, on the 21st day of October, A. D., 1872.

Article 1. The name of this association and organization shall be “The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” and shall be incorporated under the laws of Illinois, under and by that name. The church adheres to the doctrines and tenets of the original “Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” as organized by Joseph Smith (the martyr), now deceased, on the 6th day of April, A. D. 1830, as the same has been reorganized by Joseph Smith, now of Plano, Illinois, with the advice and assistance of Jason W. Briggs, Zenos H. Gurley, William Marks, Sen., Israel L. Rogers, Isaac Sheen, and many others.” ... – Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 709

From the date of the “New” organization, 1853, to 1860, repeated efforts were made to persuade young Joseph Smith to come and associate himself with the New Organization, but without success. At first he repulsed them. He was at that time a young man living in Nauvoo, Illinois. However, at their conference held at Amboy, Illinois, in April, 1860, “Young Joseph” did come with his mother (wife of the slain Prophet), and at that conference did unite himself with the New Organization, which was later to be known as “The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.”

Let us look at this successorship matter for a moment. Since this group was an entirely new organization, whoever became its First President would be the first officer in it to hold that office, hence could not possibly be a successor to anybody. He could not be a successor to his father in that office because his father had never been President of the New Organization. The church that his father was Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and First President in, was the church that went west under the direction of the majority of the Twelve; so for “Young” Joseph to be his father’s successor, he would have to take the place in the organization which was made vacant by the death of his father. The fact that much evil was practiced in that group does not alter the situation, because most of those evils had their inception prior to the Prophet’s death; and there were, even then, old time members protesting those evils.

At the organization in April, 1853, we find that the seven men indicated in Deam’s revelation, to be apostles, were ordained. Their names were: Zenos H. Gurley, Sr., Henry H. Deam, Jason W. Briggs, Daniel B. Rasey, John Cunningham, George White and Reuben Newkirk. There were also twenty men ordained Seventies. We are told in volume three of the Reorganized Church History, by Heman C. Smith, that conditions at this April, 1853 conference, showed a great deal of bitterness and ill feeling which characterized the meeting, and all of this arose over the idea of whose authority was the highest.

A little side light may be thrown on all this, when we consider the type of individuals composing this conference. Doubtless there were some very good men among them; but we find that Jason W. Briggs, the outstanding leader of that day soon drifted away. The younger Gurleys also became disaffected. Henry Deam and others who associated themselves with him, taught a rebaptism, and drew away a party known as "The Deam Party."

The coming of Joseph the son of the Prophet to that people, raised the standards of the group to a plane of, not only respectability and dignity, but to spiritual acceptance with God as well; and this in spite of their peculiar organization, and because there were among them men of God, who gave their all to the furthering of the cause of Christ. The stories of valiant gospel service rendered by these good men will always stand out in religious history.

They made sacrifices such as few have made in the annals of missionary service. They faced mobs, and risked their lives in every conceivable way in order that the Restoration story might be brought to the people of the world. In this they made openings in every civilized part of the globe, and today they rank as the second largest faction of the great latter-day Restoration. They also have their world headquarters now in their large auditorium in Independence, Missouri.

While we chronicle this record of achievement, by this group, we must also record the fact that seemingly as a result of their success, the old, old story of man's propensity to let prosperity turn their heads, has had the same effect here.

An outstanding reason for this is due to the very unscriptural form of organization, as already mentioned as having been the cause of the overthrow and scattering of the saints subsequent to the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Success seemed to make them proud, intolerant, and conceited, and their First Presidency became autocratic and despotic, until within just the recent past an entirely new doctrine of Supreme Directional Control in the hands of the Presidency became the order. We mention these things here, notwithstanding they come much later in their history than the time of which we write.

Chapter 17

The Church Continues

Following the expulsion of the saints from Missouri in the late 1830's and their finding refuge in the state of Illinois, where settlements had been previously made in various parts of that state, there were in the vicinity of Woodford County, Illinois, a number of locals, such as Bloomington, Half Moon Prairie, Eagle Creek, and others. There was also a branch at Vermillion, Indiana, which was organized in May 1832. These continued to function as local churches of the old Church, as it was before the death of the Prophet. In an old record of the Church of Christ we find that Granville Hedrick was baptized at Crow Creek in 1843. Jedidiah Owens was baptized in Tazwell County, Illinois, in 1832, by Hervey Green, was confirmed at Old Fremont, Illinois, and was ordained an elder the same year, by Hervey Green.

We might here mention the names of some of the old time members and ministers. John E. Page (who was one of the Twelve Apostles during the lifetime of Joseph Smith); David Judy, who joined the Church in 1831, and had been ordained elder in the days of Joseph the Prophet, and was among the saints who were driven out of Missouri in the early day; Zebulon Adams, who had been a high priest since 1833; Dennis Burns, C. E. Reynolds, A. C. Haldeman, Wm. Eaton, and wife, Ann M. Hess, Nancy Bradley, and many others; all of whom were members of the Church prior to the death of Joseph Smith (see Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 2, p. 31.) Many others had united with them later.

According to the Crow Creek Record, we find this with reference to the resuming of regular activities following the death of the Prophet:

THE RECORD AND HISTORY OF THE CROW CREEK BRANCH
OF THE
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST (of Latter Day Saints),
Which was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830.

A meeting was held at the home of Granville Hedrick at Half Moon Prairie, in the winter of 1852. There was preaching by David Judy. Three elders were present at this meeting.

The minds of those present were deeply concerned because of the iniquity which had found its way into that portion of the Church which had

migrated to California and Salt Lake City. They seemed to be yet somewhat in doubt as to the truthfulness of the rumors that were reaching them concerning the evils being practiced. However, when they were assured of the truthfulness of these rumors, they declared themselves as being unalterably opposed, and asserted their withdrawal from fellowship with all who were indulging in these evils.

In the spring of 1853, another meeting or conference was held at the home of Adna C. Haldeman, in Bloomington. At this meeting they declared themselves “free from all wicked factions, and united upon the pure principles of the Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints.)” At this meeting Reuben Parkhurst was made clerk, “and recorded the names of the following brethren: David Judy, A. C. Haldeman, Granville Hedrick, Jackson Downing and Reuben Parkhurst.” (The Crow Creek Record.)

Following this meeting a number of other meetings were held during the summer and fall of 1853, which were well attended; the object being the hunting up of scattered members, and renewing the covenants of the Lord.

In the month of October, 1853, another conference was held at the house of David Judy. There were a number of preaching services, and much was said again relative to the innovations extant in the various factions. They declared themselves free from all such, and pledged themselves to stand by the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the “Doctrine and Covenants,” and to build upon the truths contained in these books. Those enrolled at this conference were as follows: Jedidiah Owens, A. C. Haldeman, David Judy, Granville Hedrick, Charles Reynolds, Mary Judy; and two by baptism, Melissa Haldeman, and Eliza Ann Hedrick. (See Crow Creek Record.)

Following this a number of meetings were held, of which no minutes were kept, until June 7 and 8, 1856, a meeting was held at the home of John Hedrick in Marshall County, Illinois.

In the following month of September, 1856, another meeting was held at the home of Zebulon Adams. Later, another meeting was held at the same place: Sugar River near the town of Atlanta, in Logan County, Illinois. By looking at the map of Illinois, it will be seen that these various places mentioned were quite close together in that part of the state of Illinois, so that the general term of being the Woodford County saints, near Bloomington, is not inappropriate.

In the month of April, 1857, a meeting was held at the home of John Hedrick. At this meeting, Elder Granville Hedrick was set apart as the presiding elder of the church.

In the following June a meeting was held at David Judy's, and Mary Judy was rebaptized. Also at this meeting, John E. Page and W. W. Blair were in attendance, investigating the claims of the Church there assembled. Two months later there was another meeting at Granville Hedrick's. At this meeting a Bro. Eaton and his wife, and J. T. Clark were rebaptized. The record does not show why these parties were rebaptized. The following month, September 12, 1857, a two day meeting was held at John Hedrick's. At this meeting a number were baptized, and others united with the Church. (See Crow Creek Record.)

At this point it might be well to insert a declaration of the attitude of the Church of Christ members, thus forming in Illinois, toward the validity of the baptism of those in other groups. In the Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 4, p. 62, we find this in the issue for October, 1864, and captioned:

Who Are Members of the Church

When the publication of the TRUTH TELLER was commenced, it was not, nor is it now, the design of the publishers to devote its columns to the exposing of the false positions and doctrines of any particular division of the Church. In the first number of the TRUTH TELLER no direct allusion was made to any particular party, believing as we then did, and now do that every person, no matter with what division they were identified, if they were a proper subject for baptism at the time they were baptized, and the ordinance of baptism was administered to them by one who had acknowledged authority from Jesus Christ to administer the law of his Kingdom, all such persons thus obeying the all important commandments of Jesus Christ, enters his new and everlasting covenant, they become new creatures, they are in Christ, they are born again. Having obeyed his commandments, every such person becomes members of the new and everlasting covenant, and they remain in Christ until they alienate themselves by transgressing the laws of the Kingdom of which they are members. No person comes into Christ without consent of their will, coupled with an act of obedience to the laws of his Kingdom. No person goes out of Christ without the consent of their will. A person in the covenant may wander, their minds may become darkened, they may get out of the way **not** willingly but **ignorantly**, they "have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

In view of these truths, we feel it our duty to address as brethren, all who have from their hearts obeyed the commandments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by which they became members of his Kingdom, "for by one spirit are we all baptized into Christ." It was not required at the commencement of the

rise of the Church of Christ, of those who applied for membership that they should believe any particular person should be the President of the Church, they were only required to confess Christ, obey the laws of adoption by which they migrated from the kingdom of Nature, (of which they were members) into the Spiritual Kingdom of Jesus Christ. to be more explicit with regard to the several subjects that is now agitating the minds of the readers of the HERALD (at Plano, Ill.) and the TRUTH TELLER, our belief is that as many of the members of the "new organization" as have obeyed the principles of adoption into Christ, the law of adoption having been administered to them by those who were in authority of Christ's Kingdom, are our brethren according to the new and everlasting covenant.

It is in view of these facts that we are able to know why it is that honest members of every division that has grown up in the Church of Christ are blessed with the gifts promised in the gospel to those who believe. Not understanding these facts have been the cause of many honest and accepted members going astray, in uniting themselves with the different divisions that now exist, they have seen in these different division its members enjoy many of the promised gifts, taking it for granted that they as a part were right because many of them were thus blessed when in fact it is no evidence at all in support of the claims advocated by the leaders and aspirants of the party.

If the existence and enjoyment of these spiritual gifts promised to the believer is evidence of the truth of the different organizations, whether they be "new" or old, then every organization that has come into being claiming to be the Church organized by Joseph Smith would be right, for there can be testimony in abundance adduced to prove that members of every organization that we have any knowledge of, that has been effected by members of the Church established by Joseph Smith in 1830, do enjoy the gifts of the gospel and even among the Brighamites, many of the honest, tho' deceived enjoy to some extent the promised blessings. The divisions who claim that J. J. Strang, Wm. Smith, Colons Brewster, Sidney Rigdon are successors of Joseph Smith, enjoy the gifts to some extent, some more than others. Hence it will be seen that it is no evidence that any of these parties are right because its members enjoy the promised gifts, no matter when they obeyed the gospel. The existence of these very essential and promised gifts prove this and nothing more than this, that those who enjoy them are accepted believers in Christ, no matter to what division they belong. May God the eternal Father, hasten the day when division and discord shall cease when the honest in heart in every land shall be united, when they all shall speak the same thing.

From the above quotation from the Truth Teller in that early day, it will be seen that from the very beginning the Illinois continuation of the Church of Christ considered themselves as, not only a remnant of the original Church, but that as such remnant they might become a nucleus around which all saints might gather and, unhindered, continue to build up the cause of the restored gospel.

It will also be noted in the above extract that members of the “New” organization that had its beginning in the early 1850’s in southern Wisconsin, and which we discussed briefly in our previous chapter, were considered as being desirable gospel associates.

Following the meetings in 1857, a number of meetings were held, of which no minutes were kept. However, there is evidence that in all of these meetings, the continual effort was to revert as closely as possible to the original faith as it was given in the beginning, back in 1830. Now, it was a matter of gathering in all of the old members and giving new impetus to the work, not as a new organization, but to take up the tangled threads that had been broken by apostasy.

At the various meetings or conferences held during the years 1857, 1858 and 1859, a strong stand was taken against certain evils that had crept into the work, such as “Baptism for the Dead,” “Polygamy,” “Lineal Priesthood, in the Presidency of the Church,” and others. They also accepted as a rule of faith, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the first edition of the “Doctrine and Covenants”.

December 24, 1860, a conference was held at the house of Bro. A. C. Haldeman, in Bloomington, at which conference the matter of the name of the Church was discussed, advocating a return to the original name, The Church of Christ. During 1861, four conferences were held, two in Livingston County, one at Bro. James Bradley’s, and one at Bro. Wm. Eaton’s.

At the November, 1862, conference, John E. Page, one of the apostles in the Church before the death of Joseph Smith, came forward and formally united with the Church.

A conference met at the home of G. Hedrick in the month of March, 1863.

There were present, three high priests, two elders, one deacon and three members. Conference opened by prayer.

The subject of church funds for the support of the ministry was the principal subject for consideration, and after much investigation, it was resolved in conference that this Church of Christ, in order to support the ministry of the gospel and provide for the temporal necessities – adopt a tax system which shall be equal to every member.

Resolved that this Church shall pay into the Church treasury from one to five per cent advalorem as the Bishop may decide or direct upon all assessed

property according to the assessment made by the state government for term of one year, for the year 1853 beginning the year on the 6th of April 1863 and ending 1864, on April 6th. – The Crow Creek Record

This method of raising funds for the support of the Church was in use for many years, and was called the “assessment plan.”

It will be noted that the name “Church of Christ” is used. The question of a return to the original name, as used by the Church previous to 1834, had agitated the minds of the saints, and had been discussed at length. The name “Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints)” was eventually discarded and the original name came into use.

At a conference held May 17, 1863, at the home of Wm. Eaton, John E. Page was elected president of the conference. At this conference John E. Page ordained Granville Hedrick, David Judy, Jedidiah Owen, and Adna C. Haldeman to the office of Apostles, in the Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints) thus forming a quorum of five apostles.

At a conference held July 18, 1863, at the home of Wm. Eaton, it was proposed to proceed to ordain someone as President of the High Priesthood. We quote from the Crow Creek Record, as follows:

Bro. J. E. Page then nominated Granville Hedrick to that office. It was then put to vote and agreed to by all present. After some arrangements as preparatory, Bro. John E. Page, David Judy, Jedidiah Owen, Adna C. Haldeman, who were apostles, and Zebulun Adams, High Priest, Bro. James Bradley, Jr., an elder, and Bro Wm. Eaton, a deacon, all being assembled, Bro. John E. Page then proceeded and laid hands upon Granville Hedrick in company with the rest, and ordained him to the office of First Presidency of the Church to preside over the high priesthood, and to be a prophet, seer, revelator, and translator to the Church of Christ.

The above proceedings were certified to in a written document and signed by John E. Page, and Wm. Eaton as Clerk.

In all of this it will be seen that the Illinois group was still committed to some of the errors that were in the Church prior to the death of Joseph Smith. Among these was the idea of a First President over the Twelve; the change in the name of the Church, although they used the term “Latter Day Saints” parenthetically. They also accepted the first edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. However, as time went on we find them gradually passing out from under these errors.

Chapter 18

Church of Christ and the New Organization

History indicates there was a very friendly relationship existing between the Church of Christ and the New Organization (later called the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.)

In June 1857, we find W. W. Blair, who was one of the leading men of the New Organization, attending a conference of the Church of Christ held at the home of Mr. Judy near Mackinaw, Illinois; and at the close of this conference Granville Hedrick and Jedidiah Owens returned with Mr. Blair to attend the conference of the New Organization held at Zarahemla, Wisconsin, October 6, 1857 (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 636; also Crow Creek Record, conference of June, 1857).

The good feeling that had existed is shown by the statement of W.W. Blair that Mr. Hedrick rode with him in his buggy to this conference (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 637).

Brother Hedrick and Brother Owens were kindly “received as the representatives of the saints in Woodford County, Illinois, and vicinity, and the right hand of fellowship was given them.” – Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 233. Mr. Blair’s statement in the Abstract of Evidence, p.144 was that he recognized this as a mere courtesy, since, he states, “they had a temporary organization only.”

Up to this time it is evident they were endeavoring to find some common grounds upon which these two groups could become united. As a result of this effort we find the following motion that J. W. Briggs was appointed to co-operate with Brother Hedrick in writing a pamphlet setting forth the true position of our doctrine.” – Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 234

We also find a resolution of this conference, as follows: “Resolved that the Church meet in conference at Crow Creek, Woodford County, Illinois, on Christmas day (1857)” – Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 234. No minutes of such conference can now be found.

Following the conference of the New Organization, October 6, 1857, we find W. W. Blair and E. C. Briggs attended a conference of the Church of Christ held at Bloomington, Illinois. We quote as follows:

I conferred with Elders J. W. Briggs and Z. H. Gurley relative to this matter, and by their request I went down in company with Elder E. C. Briggs, to the Hedrick conference at Bloomington.... At Bloomington we were very kindly entertained by Mr. A. C. Haldeman, whom I then could fellowship as a brother. The conference (composed of perhaps twenty persons) appointed Mr. Hedrick their president. – Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 637

A friendly feeling still existed between the groups. The committee appointed by the conference of the New Organization to write the pamphlet “setting forth the true position of our doctrine,” did not accomplish the task; and this may have been the beginning of the rift which separated these two groups so widely. We note on page 235, volume 3, Reorganized Church History, the following resolution as touching the work of this committee:

Resolved, Jason W. Briggs be and is truly exonerated from acting in connection with Granville Hedrick, of Bloomington, Illinois, in writing out matter for publication as directed by the previous fall conference.

It is quite evident the question of lineal succession in Presidency going from father to son, as set forth by the New Organization, was one of the questions of difference between the two groups. In connection with this we now present an extract from a document drawn up by the Church of Christ in Illinois, under date of March 5, 1857, which is as follows:

STATE OF ILLINOIS, March 5, 1857

A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND SEPARATION

By the Faithful Members of the Church of Jesus Christ

Therefore for the love of God the Eternal Father, and for the love of the **truth**, which has come through Jesus Christ, God’s only beloved Son, to whom be all praise and honor:

We the Elders and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the (State of Illinois) who have often assembled in conference, for the last four years at different times and in many places, and also have declared our independence and separation from all those apostate and polluted characters who teach or practice polygamy, called the spiritual wife system or an thing like unto it – we do hereby repeat our declaration again and order the same to be printed by our agent or agents; declaring that we have no fellowship in union or association with any such person or persons who teach or practice the doctrine of polygamy under any system whatever or anything like unto it....

Our foundation is upon God’s holy word given by the will of the Father thorough Jesus Christ the beloved Son; by revelation to his holy prophets and apostles for salvation, and is contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon and first

edition (of) the Book of covenants given for a standard of faith rule and practice to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Upon this **Rock and Platform of Jesus Christ** we stand and profess to build, by the mercy and grace of God, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is our head. (Blessed be the Lord our God.)

We also hold and maintain that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter (Day) Saints is designed to consist of all such as have been regenerated or born again of the water and of the Holy Spirit of God through faith in Jesus Christ, **(by faith in his name)** according to the gospel covenant, having their minds renewed by the holy Spirit of promise unto **good works**; and also seek to keep the commandments of God in living and walking in obedience to his written word as is recorded in the Holy Bible, Book of Mormon, and book of covenants and all such as do according to these things are fit to be called saints and members of the church and body of Christ.

We believe that all those who transgress the laws of God and still persist in their wicked and sinful ways have only alienated themselves from the Church of Christ; and that it does not disqualify the membership of those who have kept the covenant in living and walking according to God's holy precepts; any more than treason by a part of our legislature would destroy our national government while there is a sufficient number of good and faithful citizens found in it who would discharge their duty in the execution of our wholesome laws and that the constitution and laws of our national government are not changed, nor dead because some have transgressed them; while there are others who are living and maintaining her constitutional rights.

Neither is the gospel covenant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the saints made void because some have departed from the faith.

Therefore we declare our independence upon primitive ground because our church organization is founded wholly upon first principles as given by revelation in the beginning to this church, which was organized in the year of our Lord 1830, and we the high priests, elders and members unitedly do maintain that we are founded upon the same church organization, having received the fullness of the everlasting gospel together with all the authority that is requisite to teach and practice the same, see Book of covenants, section 13 first to last; Sec. 85 par. 2 and 3; Sec. 22 par. 1; sec 18 par. 9; Sec. 2 par. 8, 9 and 13 to 16. (Note: All quotations from latter-day revelation in this document, are from the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants.") These references are but a small portion of what might be given, but we hope the brethren will search those sacred pages for themselves, candidly and prayerfully that they may know assuredly by the help of god that the premises we profess to occupy are according to God's written word; we believe that God has a remnant of ordained ministers (who have not fallen with apostasy) such as high priests, elders, teachers, deacons, etc., whose right it is to unite their efforts as gospel ministers in co-operation together according to God's written word and renovate and save the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

It will be noted in the foregoing document is the position of these saints at that time. They had accepted the doctrine of First Presidency as it had been taught before the death of Joseph. And at this time there was no evidence to be found concerning the change in revelations that provided for a First Presidency in the Church. They had accepted the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants" which contained the changed revelations, and it was not till many years later that they became acquainted with these changes. They then repudiated the First Presidency, refused to accept the "Doctrine and Covenants," and based their faith and belief on the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and such revelations as are in harmony with these two books.

That the Church of Christ based its tenants of faith and practice upon the Bible and Book of Mormon, as their standard, we quote the following:

... It has been before stated that the principles of the faith and doctrines which were given for the foundation of this church are recorded in the Bible and Book of Mormon, which is the rock and pillar of the foundation of this Church of Christ, which was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830. – Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 1, p. 8

Several years afterwards, or in 1871, the friendly attitude between the two groups, and the extending of the "right hand of fellowship" to Granville Hedrick, caused some misunderstanding, and we find action being taken to remove Brother Hedrick's name from the records of the New organization (see Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 613).

In regards to this action we quote from the minutes of the semi-annual conference of September 20, 1871, held at Council Bluffs, Iowa, as follows:

A committee, consisting of J. M. Putney, James Caffall, and Ralph Jenkins, was appointed to investigate any cases which might be presented.

On the 24th they reported, and their report was acted upon as follows:

Committee on cases for trial reported as follows: "to the President and brethren in conference assembled: - We your committee on cases that might be presented for us to adjudicate, beg leave to report that the secretary of the church presented before us the evidence in the case of the Reorganized "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints versus Granville Hedrick, and finding no evidence that Granville Hedrick ever united with said church, as a member, we declare he is not a member thereof." J. M. Putney, chairman.

On motion it was resolved that we receive and endorse the report of the committee in the case of “Granville Hedrick, and that the committee be discharged. – **Saints’ Herald**, vol. 18, p. 636, and also quoted from the Reorganized Church History, vol. 3, p. 631

This should be conclusive evidence that Granville Hedrick nor the Woodford County, Illinois, saints were never a part of the New Organization, or the Reorganization; but that they maintained a separate organization as a remnant of the original Church established in 1830.

Chapter 19

The Return

August 16, 1863, Granville Hedrick gave a revelation in which it was indicated that those who had been scattered because of their “iniquity” should begin to be gathered back to Missouri. From this revelation we quote the following:

... I the Lord will make known your duty and preparation toward your brethren wheresoever you shall be required to labor before me in your duty and calling – thus saith the Lord. Amen. – Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 1, p. 6

On April 24, 1864, another revelation was given to Granville Hedrick in which it was indicated that conditions would so have changed in Missouri by the year 1867 that it would be possible for the saints to begin to return to that state, from which they had been driven by the mob in the 1830’s. This would mean that the attitude of the Missourians would have so softened toward the saints that they could now return and live in peace and enjoy their rights as citizens and neighbors. In the July, 1864, number of the Truth Teller appeared the revelation of April 24, 1864, from which we quote the following:

Hear, O ye people, and hearken to the counsel of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who are called by My name and keep My commandments, you who have sought to know My will concerning My people, who have professed My name, and entered into the new and everlasting covenant to keep all the counsels and commandments of the only true and living God; hear, then, these things which are revealed unto you by the power of His Holy Spirit; prepare, O ye people, yourselves in all things, that ye may be ready to gather together upon the consecrated land which I have appointed and dedicated by My servant Joseph Smith and the first elders of My church, in Jackson County, state of Missouri, for the gathering together of My saints, that they might be assembled in the day of My chastening hand, when your Lord will pour out His wrath and indignation upon the ungodly. And inasmuch as My church and

people have been driven and scattered, therefore take counsel of Me, your Lord and director, who says unto you: Prepare yourselves and be ready against the appointed time which I have set and prepared for you, that you may return in the year A. D. 1867, which time the Lord, by your prayers and faithfulness in all things, will open and prepare a way before you that you may begin to gather at that time.... – Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 1, p. 4

Accordingly the Illinois saints began to make preparation for such a return. In this a very peculiar circumstance arose. When this revelation appeared in the Truth Teller, the August 15, 1864, number of the True Latter Day Saints' Herald, (page 49) the publication of the New Organization came out with a warning to the saints entitled: "The Time for the Gathering Announced." In this warning it was stated definitely that: "We should caution all our readers against going to that land before God commands His saints to go there, by His prophet Joseph. If any go there before that time, they may expect the judgments of god will come upon them." – The Evening and the Morning Star, vol. 13, No. 7, p. 2

Yet strange as it may seem, no such revelation has been given through that source down to the present day, and that too in spite of the fact that the Reorganized Church is now making its headquarters in Independence, Missouri. Did the judgments of God follow them? Or did they finally accept the revelation given by Granville Hedrick?

After receiving the revelation of Granville Hedrick, given April 24, 1864, in which they were instructed to prepare for the gathering to Jackson County, Missouri, we find, in spite of many hindrances, and much opposition, that by the winter of 1866-67, the saints in Woodford County, Illinois, began their migration to Missouri.

A caravan was formed consisting of several covered wagons, which traveled in the dead of winter across Illinois and Missouri to the Missouri River, arriving at Independence, Missouri, in February, 1867.

When the first caravan reached the Missouri River, opposite Blue Mills, they found the river frozen from shore to shore, and covered with several inches of snow and slush. Some of the members hesitated about crossing for fear the ice would break through and property and lives would be lost.

Elder Geo. P. Frisbey, who seemed to be in the lead, admonished them that the Lord promised to "prepare the way" for their return, and expressed his faith by driving out on the ice amidst much anxiety and the prayers of the other members of the caravan. He proceeded on his journey, the

wheels of his heavy wagon leaving a deep track in the melting snow, until he reached the Jackson County side of the Missouri. A great cheer went up from the others, and one by one they spaced their wagons, and proceeded to follow the track of Elder Frisbey, until all had safely crossed on the ice without loss of life or property. They landed near Blue Mills, which is northeast of independence, Missouri, and from there proceeded to their destination. Those who made this return to "Zion" were the following:

Jedidiah Owens, John H. Hedrick, Chas. E. Reynolds, Alma Owens, John T. Clark, George P. Frisbey, Mary C. Frisbey, Carey C. Frisbey, Albert M. Montgomery, Geo. F. Hedrick, Daniel IS. Bauder, Elizabeth A. Hedrick, Sarah A. Montgomery, Lucinda Frisbey, Mary A. Frisbey, Amelia Bauder, Amanda Reynolds, Sabetha Owens, Clementina Laing, Hervey W. Nesbitt, Mary A. Nesbitt, G. W. Gifford, Elizabeth Gifford, Sarah J. Hubbard, Samuel Hocken, "America Hocken, "Amanda I. Carr, Thomas Davenport, Mary Davenport, Sidney Cocks, Isaac Laing, Isaac Frisbey, Thos. F. Burns, Wm. Brown, Jane Brown, Lewis H. Walker, David A. Frampton, Loney A. Frampton, Lony J. Frampton, Nathaniel Frampton, Richard Hill, Elizabeth Hill, Adna C. Haldeman, Granville Hedrick, Eliza A. Hedrick, David Judy, Wm. E. McLellin, Isaac Bailey, Mary Rebecca Bailey, Ann Hill, Lydia Ann Frisbey, Sarah Bailey, Serriah Reynolds, Mellisa Haldeman, Martin H. Haldeman, Harriet Bauder, Wm. Eaton. – (The Church Record of the Church of Christ in Zion, pp. 1, 2.) From the record of the Church for that time we quote the following:

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH PROCEEDINGS

The first general council of the Church was called in Jackson County, state of Missouri, on the 3rd day of March, A. D. 1867, at the house of Brother John T. Clark. Council opened by prayer by Bro. Jedidiah Owens, when the following business was transacted:

Brother John T. Clark was nominated and unanimously elected clerk for the Church and ordered to procure a well bound book to be used as a Church Record. Whereupon the amount of \$2.55 was donated to be expended for the purchase of the aforesaid book, which amount, with the addition of 45c was expended in procuring said book. Also the following named brethren were appointed as a committee to draft resolutions for the better security and safeguard of the Church in the future against the numerous impositions and frauds that is liable to be imposed upon the Church. Said committee to report to the next council to be held at the house of Bro. J. T. Clark, on the 17th day of March, inst. Names of the committee was John T. Clark, Jedidiah Owens, John H. Hedrick, Alma Owens, George P. Frisbey. On motion, the council adjourned to meet as above. John T. Clark, clerk. – Church Record of the Church of Christ in Zion, p. 13

From the above we find that this remnant of the early Church of Christ was the first to return to Missouri after the expulsion of the saints in 1838. The Church being established in Missouri once more, its members began to carry out their plans for the redemption of the land of Zion, by the purchase of lands, concerning which event we quote:

We were pioneers in a return movement to Missouri, our members being the first bank of “Mormons” to return to Independence since the expulsion in 1833, and publicly avow their identity.

Shortly after our arrival, and acting under the counsel of Granville Hedrick, our people began the purchase of the ground known as the “Temple Lots,” that Joseph Smith and others dedicated in 1831 for the building of the temple of the Lord. This ground is still in the name and custody of the Church of Christ, and is being sacredly held for the holy purpose in view in its dedication. Efforts in the courts and otherwise have been made from time to time to induce our people to yield possession, but without avail.

In the annals of the Reorganized Church we note the following:

Returning to the Land of Zion

The saints began returning to the County of Jackson and state of Missouri, in the year 1867. The above statement of facts I gathered when writing up the history of the Independence district, a few years ago. – Parsons’ Text Book, p. 314

We will here present a diagram showing the process that was followed in their efforts to repossess themselves of this spot of ground, the dates of purchase, etc.

In order that a full understanding may be had concerning the various transfers of the plot of ground involved, it will be necessary to give a brief history of the whole list of transactions. The first man to own this land was Jones H. Flourney, who bought eighty acres of land from the state of Missouri for two dollars an acre. This was on December 12, 1831. Six days later he sold sixty-three and a fraction acres to Edward Partridge for \$130.00.

According to a revelation given to Joseph Smith in July, 1831, a “spot” was indicated upon which the temple was to be erected in Joseph’s land which reads as follows:

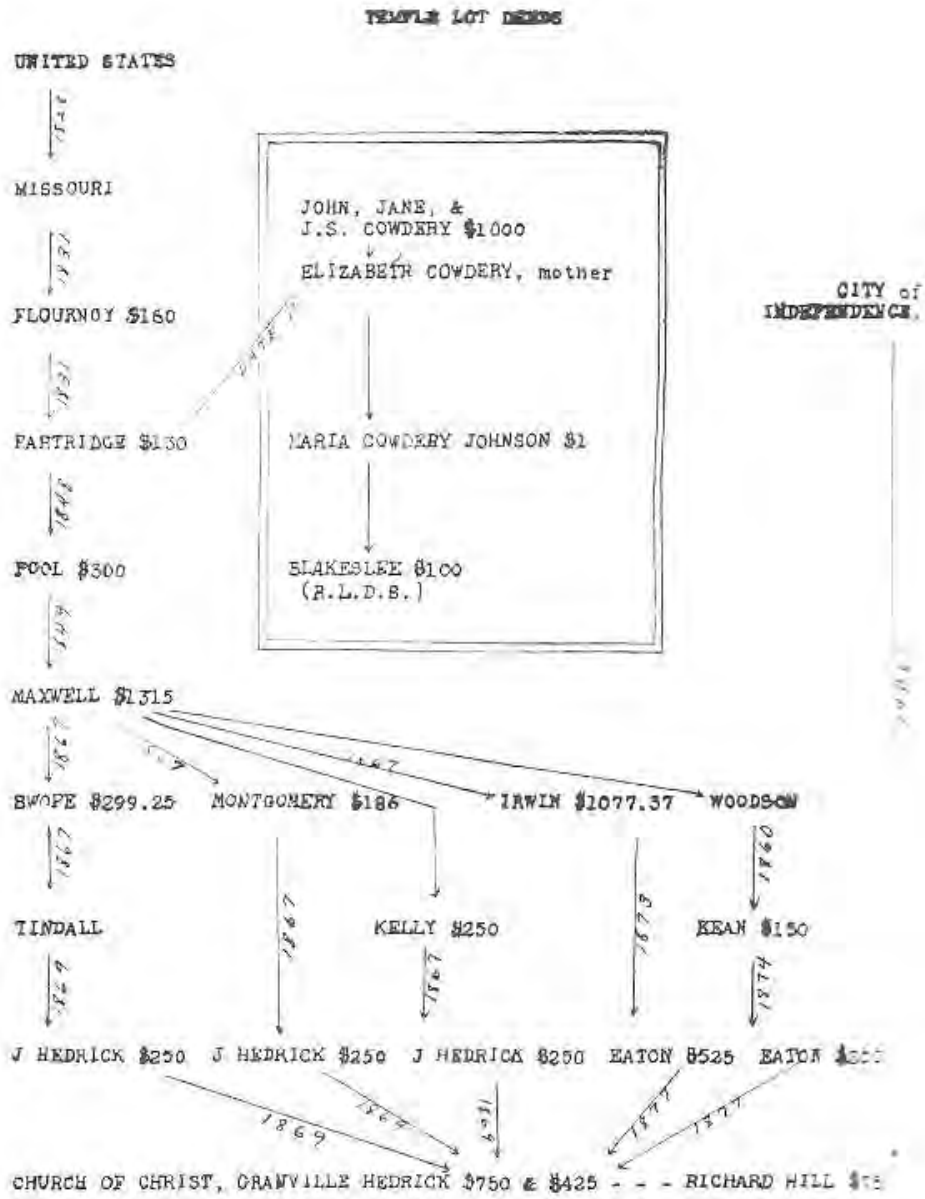
... Behold, the place which is now called Independence, is the center place, and the spot for the temple is lying westward upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse; wherefore it is wisdom that the land should be purchased by the saints; ... - Reorganized Church History, vol. 1. p. 203

The dedication of this spot, as has already been mentioned, was on August 3, 1831. Thus it will be seen that had the saints bought the land immediately, it never would have found its way into other men's hands. At the time Flournoy deeded the land to Edward Partridge, he had not himself made final payment for the land. His deed to Partridge was given on December 18, 1831, and Partridge filed the deed the same day. Flournoy made his final payment to the State of Missouri May 29, 1833, at which time he received his patent from the state. A record of the recording of this Flournoy patent or deed can be found in the Recorder's office in Independence, Missouri, Box 163, pp. 60, 61. In this record you are referred back to Book H which gives the record of this patent to Flournoy by the governor of the state of Missouri.

Edward Partridge, of course, with the rest of the saints, had to flee for their lives under the eviction order of Gov. Boggs. On May 27, 1840, Edward Partridge died, and on May 5, 1848, Lydia Partridge, widow of Edward Partridge, and her three children, gave a quit claim deed to a Mr. James Poole. Purchase price, \$300. See Book N, p. 200, Recorder's Office, Courthouse, Independence, Missouri.

The little village of Independence had grown and it seemed necessary that at least part of this original farm belonging to Edward Partridge should be added to the growing town. Mr. John Maxwell, who owned the property in 1851, entered into an agreement with Samuel H. Woodson by which Woodson obtained an interest in this interesting property. They plotted what is now known as the Woodson-Maxwell Addition to the city of Independence. During this time it had been sold and resold many times.

Deeds Diagram



The “spot” which had been dedicated as the place where the temple was to stand was now on one of these lots. This spot was on lot 15, and surrounding it in the same block are lots 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22. The order in which these lots were purchased by the Church is as follows: Lot 15 was sold first to Adolphus W. Keen and Susan Keen, November 23, 1860; was then sold to Wm. Eaton, March 7, 1874. In 1859, at a sheriff’s sale, John Kelley had purchased lot 16. At his death the administrator of his estate sold this lot to John H. Hedrick, December 12, 1867. On December 8, 1870, Joseph C. Irwin purchased lots 17, 18, 19 and 22. July 9, 1873, Wm. Eaton purchased from Mr. Irwin these same lots. Lot No. 21 was first purchased by Thomas H. Swope, March 14, 1867, which was later sold to John Hedrick, September 24, 1867. On November 5, 1877, Wm. Eaton and Mary Eaton, his wife, sold to Granville Hedrick as trustee in trust for the Church, lots 15, 17, 18, 19 and 22, in the Maxwell-Woodson Addition to Independence. On November 8, 1869, John H. Hedrick and wife, Elizabeth Ann Hedrick, sold to Granville Hedrick trustee in trust for the Church of Christ, lots 16, 20 and 21. This plot of ground is what is now known as the Temple Lot. These transactions show legal ownership without a cloud on the title of any lot.

On the diagram there is found a center square, indicating a deed from Partridge to three of Oliver Cowdery’s children. In this connection it is interesting to note that the genealogy of Oliver Cowdery gives the names of no such children as are found in the so-called deed. On page 173 of the Cowdery Genealogy by Meiling, 1911, we find the following list of the Cowdery children by his wife Elizabeth, the only wife he ever had:

Marie Louise, born August 11, 1835; Elizabeth Ann, born November 14th, 1836, Josephine Rebecca, born March 21, 1838. Oliver Peter, born August 8, 1840. Adeline Fuller, born September 28, 1844. Julia Olive, born May 27, 1846.

This would indicate that the purported deed was a forgery. It is not dated, and was not filed until 1870. Upon this deed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints based their claim, and went to court to obtain possession of these temple lots in 1891, which court was presided over by Judge John F. Philips, of the Circuit Court of the United States, for the Western District of Missouri.

In this trial, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, who were plaintiffs in the suit, were awarded title to the Temple Lots. An appeal by the defendants, the Church of Christ, was made to the United

States “circuit Court of Appeals at the December, 1894, term of court. This court reversed the decision of the lower court and awarded the ownership of the property to the defendants, the Church of Christ. This is found in the Federal Reporter No. 70, page 179. A later attempt was made by the Reorganized Church to appeal the case to the Supreme Court of the United States, on a writ of certiorari, but this appeal was denied. For further study of this suit we quote the following:

“Prior to the entering of the suit against the Church of Christ, we find some interesting bits of history of events transpiring in the Reorganized Church in preparation thereto.... On July 6, 1884, a church was dedicated by them in the east part of the city of Independence, Missouri. (Reorganized Church History, vol. 4, p. 455.) on January 3, 1887, a committee composed of. G. Pitt, F. W. Barbee, F. C. Warnkey, C. A. Bishop and Joseph Luff, was appointed to secure a lot for a large church building (Reorganized Church History, vol. 4, p. 554.) On June 9, 1887, the said church obtained a quit claim deed from Marie Louise Cowdery Johnson, only surviving child of Oliver Cowdery. (This deed was based on the quit claim of her mother which was filed June 22, 1886, see page 51-52 of the Abstract).

This quit claim deed from the daughter of Oliver Cowdery was filed June the 9th, and on June 11th of the same year (1887), the Reorganized Church filed an injunction against the Church of Christ to force them from possession. The Church of Christ refused to yield to their demands, consequently the claims of the Reorganized Church were permitted to lay from 1887 to 1891, at which time they filed suit for possession of the property in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Western Division of the District of Missouri, before Judge John Philips. The case then dragged along for a period of about three years, and on the 16th of March, 1894, a decision was rendered in favor of the Reorganized Church. Evidently this decision with its famous “Rights of succession” clauses was prepared by the counsel of that church, for we find that in less than four days after it was given, the Reorganized Church was circulating printed pamphlets containing the same, far and wide....

The Church of Christ took an appeal from this decision, to the Circuit Court of Appeals, which court quashed the lower court’s decision and upheld the title and possession of the Church of Christ. This was in 1895. Later, during the same year, on appeal by the Reorganized Church to the Supreme Court of the United States, the Appellant Court’s decision was sustained and the Reorganized claims were disallowed.... – (That Interesting Spot of Land West of the Court House, pp. 13 and 14.)

Concerning the value of this (Cowdery) deed to the Reorganized Church we find that the United States circuit Court of Appeals in 1895, which reversed the lower court’s decision (on which the Reorganized Church base their boast of “succession” by court action), made this statement:

“In our opinion, the equitable interests so acquired by the alleged Cowdery deed, whatever may have been its nature was not sufficient to support an action for recovery from an adverse occupant who claimed under an independent title.”

That is what the Appellate Court said. Not laches. Not that we have possession by “squatter’s rights.” Not indeed! It says that they did not have sufficient equitable interests, howsoever acquitted, to support their claims. But that is not all that was said by this **court**:

“There is another reason ... that deed although purported to have been executed by Partridge in the month of March, 1839, was not recorded until February 7, 1879, (1870) prior to which date no one seems to have been aware of its existence. The original deed was not produced at the trial of the case, and the evidence failed to show who had possession of the same, or whether it was still in existence.”

* * * * *

“We conclude therefore that in view of the open denial of the trust, for more than twenty years, the Reorganized Church have acquiesced too long in the assertion of adverse rights to be now heard to complain, even if we should concede that they were not guilty of laches, before the deed to the Cowdery children was discovered and placed on record, and before the alleged trust affecting the property became known.”

* * * * *

Summing up the evidence concerning this Cowdery deed, we learn, (a) that it was uncertain in the mind of the court as to when it was executed, (b) that its existence seemingly was unknown for nearly forty years, (c) that it was in conflict with the deed made by the Partridge heirs to James Pool, thus setting up an “adverse” trust that was not “sufficient to support action for recovery from an adverse occupant who claimed under an independent title.” (d) that it was made out to three minor children which was never acknowledged by Cowdery or his widow, concerning which no record of them exists except in this alleged deed. If they did exist then there would have been nine children instead of six as stated by Oliver Cowdery himself. (e) though this deed purported to have been executed in March, 1839, yet it was not filed until February, 1870....

In view of these facts, we can see why the Appellate Court said,” ... In accordance with these views herein expressed the decree of the circuit court will be reversed, and cause will be remanded, with directions to dismiss the bill of complaint.” (Federal Reporter, vol. 71, pp. 250-251.) – (that Interesting Spot of Land West of the Courthouse, pp. 19, 20.)

We will now resume the story of the Church of Christ after settling in Independence, subsequent to 1867, when the return began. They continued to come in from the various parts of the country, and settle in and around the city of Independence. They also later built a small house on the Temple Lot, and announced this as their general headquarters, and from there began to branch out and do missionary work.

When it became evident that the revelation of Granville Hedrick was indeed true, and that the old time hatred of the Missourians had abated, members of the Reorganization began also to venture in this direction. We will leave them to inform us as to whether the “Judgments of God” have followed them in so doing. At any rate the opportunity for both groups making history from that point on has been ample. Of the Illinois group, Granville Hedrick himself did not settle in Missouri, but went farther west in the vicinity of Gardner, Kansas, and started farming. Others took up the work in Independence, and continue to this day, with the Temple Lot still their headquarters.

Chapter 20

Church of Christ Establishes Headquarters in Missouri and Holds Out the Olive Branch of Peace

The Church of Christ having again established themselves in Missouri, and having secured possession of the Temple Lot, thus beginning the fulfillment of the word of the Lord, “that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple,” etc., the next step was to provide homes and a place of worship. A perusal of the records of land transactions in the area of Independence will reveal that these members of the Church purchased many plots of ground, in the vicinity of the Temple Lot, for home sites. At a conference held April 7, 1884, over which David Judy presided, a resolution initiating a move to construct a chapel was adopted:

Resolved that the members of this branch of the Church of Christ lay themselves under obligation to fast and pray for a special favor of the Lord in reference to the building of a house of worship on the Temple Lots. – Church Record of the Church of Christ, p. 57

At the conference of April 6, 1885, this question was again considered, and a committee appointed to receive funds: "Motion made and seconded that Bro. Hill and Bro. Gifford be appointed to receive all moneys that may come into their hands to build a church." – (Ibid. p. 60.)

During the afternoon session of the April 6, 1887, conference a committee was appointed to have charge of the construction and location of the building: "moved and Seconded, that a committee of three be appointed to superintend the building of a house of worship and to locate the same on the temple grounds. Brn. Hill, Owen, and G. P. Frisbey chosen as such committee." (Ibid. p. 65)

At various times this committee reported their progress (see Ibid. p. 68), until the time of the Elders' conference, held October 5 and 6, 1889, at Independence, the following report was made:

The building committee made a final report as follows: "Total amount of cash and work received, \$377.41.

Paid out to build and finish the meeting house, \$377.41."

R. Hill, A. Owen, G. P. Frisbey, Committee.

M. & S. the report be accepted and committee discharged. Carried. – (Ibid. p. 119.)



The building shown in the above cut is the first chapel built upon the Temple Land. Its construction was authorized at the April 6, 1887 Conference, and the building was completed and the final report of the committee accepted and committee discharged at the October 1889 Conference. Few of the adult members of the congregation shown remain; but some of the children are still members of the congregation. The building was burned September 4, 1898.

The record does not show, so far as we can find, the actual dedication of this “house of worship,” but from that time (1889) the Church of Christ began to hold regular meetings and conferences at that place until during the night of Sunday, September 4, 1898, the chapel was burned to the ground by an enemy of the Church, of which the following is an account:

Our Meeting House Burned

Between one and two o'clock, Sunday night, September 4, (1898), some workmen engaged in moving a building discovered our meeting house on the temple lot, to be on fire. An alarm was given and the fire department responded, and soon had a stream of water playing upon the burning building, but the fire had gained such headway that only ruins were left to mark the site of our little chapel. The worst part about the fire is that it was the work of a fire bug in the person of W. D. C. Pattyson, the same individual who had destroyed the fence surrounding the lots. He had been released from prison on Friday, and lost no time in again attempting to force his claims upon the Church; meeting with no better success than formerly attended his efforts, he left the ground threatening what he would do. No more was seen of him until about an hour after the fire when he appeared at the county jail and asked the jailor to lock him up as he had burned the church. He was locked up, and Monday morning he again confessed the deed in the presence of Bro. G. W. Soeble and a county official.... – Searchlight, vol. 3, No. 8, p. 254, 255

During these years a definite missionary program was inaugurated, in which their work was expanded into the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Indian Territory (Lamanites), Tennessee, Utah and Canada.

As early as October 4, 1884, the Church of Christ sought to hold out the olive branch of peace to the members of the Restoration which had found asylum with the various division of the Church.

As set forth in a previous chapter (the “Church Continued,” chapter 17), the Church of Christ manifested an early disposition to bring about a reconciliation of all the scattered members of the Restoration, and in an article quoted from the Truth Teller, entitled, “Who Are members of the Church,” the early elders set for this position:

In the first number of the Truth Teller, no direct allusion was made to any particular party, believing as we then did, and now do, that every person, no matter with what division they were identified, if they were a proper subject for baptism at the time they were baptized, and the ordinance of baptism was administered to them by one who had acknowledged authority from Jesus Christ to administer the laws of His kingdom, all such persons thus obeying

the all-important commandment of Jesus Christ, enters his new and everlasting covenant, they become new creatures, they are in Christ, they are born again....
 – Truth Teller, vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 62, 63

Through the years this attitude continued and committees were appointed by the Church of Christ to contact the various groups with the object in view of affecting a more friendly relationship along these lines. In the conference of October 6, 1885, the following action was taken:

Resolved that in answer to a friendly request by the brethren of the Reorganized Church to arrange for an investigation of differences of doctrines as held to, the following names were unanimously adopted as said committee: Richard Hill, Granville H. Hedrick, and G. P. Frisbey. – Church Record of the Church of Christ in Zion, p. 58

From the history of the Reorganized Church we find they appointed similar committee to confer with the Church of Christ. This committee consisted of W. W. Blair, S. Maloney and I. L. Rogers, and reported back to the Reorganization, as follows:

We, your committee appointed to confer with a committee of the Church known as “Hedrickites” report that we met with said committee – Elder Richard Hill, Geo. Frisbey, and Geo. Hedrick – at the home of Bro. Stephen Maloney, and after a free interchange of views, it was agreed to arrange with the Independence Branch of the church for a free, Christian-like discussion in their chapel in this city, in respect to questions of doctrine and church government which exist between the two societies, if found agreeable to the will and wishes of said branch. W. W. Blair, chairman, Stephen Maloney, Israel L. Rogers. – Reorganized Church History, vol. 4, p. 480-1

This joint committee met together frequently in an effort to reach a better understanding of their respective difference. In the conference of the Church of Christ, September 4, 1891, provision was made for a letter to be sent to the church in Utah, the Reorganized Church, and also the Whitmerites, for a similar purpose as the following shows:

Sunday, November 24, 1891. Letters to W. Woodruff, Joseph Smith, and J. C. Whitmer suggesting that delegates be appointed at the next April conferences to meet at a time and place agreed upon to present the claims and doctrines of their respective churches and try to come to a unity of the faith, was read and approved by the unanimous vote of all the members of the Church. Geo. P. Frisbey, Clerk. – Church Record of Church of Christ in Zion, p. 182

In the Searchlight for February 1, 1897, we find an article which is a historical account of the proceedings of these councils which should receive large notice. In this joint meeting between these two committees

fourteen points of agreement were reached, which indicate common ground upon which this committee attempted to reach an understanding. The men who participated in this council did not have authority as delegates from their respective bodies by which either church would be bound to these agreements. The men who represented these churches were leading men of the Church of Christ and the Reorganization. The following are the fourteen points of agreement:

Minutes of a conference held in the Church of Christ on the temple lot, Independence, Mo., January 16, 18, 19 and 20, 1897, there were present of the Church of Christ, Bro. Richard Hill, J. R. Haldeman, G. P. Frisbey, G. D. Cole and J. A. Hedrick.

Of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ, Bro. Joseph Smith, Alexander Hale Smith, Rhoderic May, W. H. Garrett, and Geo. E. Harrington.

The assembly was organized at 2 p. m. by the selection of President Hill to preside and W. H. Garrett, clerk.

After prayer, the object of the meeting was stated to be for the purpose of interchange of thought regarding the difference existing between the two organizations, that there might be a unity of effort in the prosecution of the work of the Lord.

It was agreed, so far as the fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ are concerned, both organizations believe the same, as per copies of epitome hereto attached.

Agreed: that the Book of Mormon is a divine record, and that the redemption of Zion must be by purchase.

That what is known as the "King Follett Sermon," and the Book of Abraham, are not accepted as a basis for doctrine.

Agreed; that we believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and the restoration of the "Ten lost tribes."

Agreed; that the city of Zion will be built at Independence, MO., and that the saints of God will gather there.

Agreed; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and that the earth will be restored to its paradisiacal glory.

Agreed; we believe in the restoration of the gospel and the angel message through Joseph the Seer.

Agreed; that we believe that there are individuals in the different factions, who hold the priesthood.

Agreed; that where there are six or more regularly baptized members, one of which, who is an Elder, Priest, Teacher or Deacon, there the Church exists.

Agreed; that an organization is necessary, and such an organization as the number of members and the will of God enables them to attain to.

Agreed; that wherever a branch exists, the power of the church extension exists also to its fullest extent, when acting in accordance with the law.

Agreed; that any man holding the priesthood and possessing the prophet qualifications, may be chosen by the church, by acting in accordance with the law, to act in any specific position.

Agreed; that the law of consecration is necessary is necessary to the establishment of Zion.

Agreed; that faith and righteousness are the chief essentials for the possession of the Melchisedec priesthood.

Agreed; that the foregoing fourteen (14) agreements represent all the conclusions reached in this council....

Richard Hill, chairman; W. H. Garrett, clerk.
- Searchlight, vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 98, 99.)

It will be noted that the Utah church and the Whitmerites did not have a representative at this conference.

Again in 1900, another joint session was held. This council reaffirmed the agreements of the former committee with slight alterations and amendments, and adopted a further series of agreements, and adjourned; no permanent mutual working basis was then established; but a much better understanding of the grounds held by each organization was gained (see Evening and Morning Star, vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 1-4, August 15, 1904).

During the latter part of 1917 a joint committee composed of Elders Geo. D. Cole, Clarence L. Wheaton and James M. Hartley, of the Church of Christ, and Elders Francis M. Sheehy, Walter W. Smith and Mark H. Siegfried of the Reorganized Church met.

The former articles of agreement were adopted with slight alterations and amendments. The whole ground of difference was reviewed in a spirit of candor and brotherly solicitude for the welfare and progress of Zion. The

committee met again January 27, 1918, when additional articles of agreement, and a plan for submitting these articles for the approval of the two organizations at the April general conferences was adopted. We quote from the General Conference Resolutions of the Reorganized Church, for April 8, 1918, No. 783:

Agreement of Working Harmony (with Church of Christ)

1. Agreed, that we believe in the restoration of the gospel and the angel's message through Joseph the Seer.
2. Agreed, that so far as the fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ are concerned, both organizations believe the same, as per copies of epitome attached.
3. Agreed, that the Book of Mormon is a divine record, and the redemption must be by purchase.
4. Agreed, that we endorse the revelations contained in the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants".
5. Agreed, that we endorse the revelation found in the letter from Joseph Smith, the Seer, to W. W. Phelps concerning the one "mighty and strong," dated November 27, 1832.
6. Agreed, that we endorse the articles on Marriage and of Governments and Laws in General, in the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants".
7. Agreed, that we believe that there are individuals in the different factions who hold the priesthood.
8. Agreed, that where there are six or more regularly baptized members, any one of which is an elder, there the church exists.
9. Agreed, that an organization is necessary and such an organization as the number of members and the will of God enables them to attain to.
10. Agreed, that wherever a branch exists the power of church extension exists also to its fullest extent, when acting in harmony with the law.
11. Agreed, that any man holding the priesthood, and possessing the proper qualifications, may be chosen by the church, by acting in accordance with the law, to act in any specific position.
12. Agreed, that faith and righteousness and the call of god, are the chief essentials for the possession of the Melchisedec priesthood.

13. Agreed, that in the opinion of this council, in order to accomplish the work of the Lord committed to his people, it is necessary for them to unite in one organization, in harmony with the law of God.
14. Agreed, that the city of Zion will be built at Independence, Missouri, and that the saints of God will gather there.
15. Agreed, that the principle of consecration is necessary to the establishment of Zion.
16. Agreed, that the law of Christ requires that every man be made a steward, and that none are exempt from this law who belong to the church of the living God, whether officer or member, and that all shall be equal in temporal things, and that not grudgingly, in order to be united according to the law of the celestial kingdom; and that the time has fully come to apply this law in Zion; and that we will labor together to see that it is enforced as soon as possible.
17. Agreed, that we believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and the restoration of the "Ten Lost Tribes."
18. Agreed, that Christ will reign personally upon the earth and the earth will be restored to its paradisiacal glory
19. Agreed, that the question of who the one "mighty and strong" is, whether Christ or man, be left an open question until further revelation from God shall definitely determine who it is.
20. Agreed, that the doctrine of baptism for the dead "by proxy" be not taught as a part of the faith and doctrine of the church unless commanded by a revelation accepted by the church.
21. Agreed, that what is known as the "King Follett Sermon," and the Book of Abraham be not accepted as the basis for doctrine.
22. Agreed, that the branch of the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot, which was presided over by Elder Granville Hedrick and his successors, shall be continued, and that no change be made in the custody of the Temple Lot.
23. Agreed, that all other minor points of difference in belief and practice, that may exist between the officers and members of the two organizations, be left to the elders for settlement as they assemble in counsel from time to time.
24. Agreed, that whereas the Church of Christ, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of latter Day Saints consist of members who have been baptized by men holding authority, conferred by ordination under the hands of servants of god, called during the ministry of Joseph Smith, who have remained true to the original faith of the church, organized April 6, 1830, and, whereas, both organizations stand for and maintain the same fundamental doctrine and

practice, and have the same purpose and ideal in their church government and work; therefore, be it mutually agreed, that each recognize the standing of the other as representing Christ, the Master, and the priesthood of each as legally constituted, and the administration of each as equally binding before god, when done in accordance with the law.

Resolved, that these articles of agreement be submitted to the general conferences of both organizations, which are to be held April 6, 1918, at Independence, Missouri, for approval as a working basis of harmony between the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

This agreement of Working Harmony was adopted April 8, 1918, by the Reorganized Church.

These articles of agreement were formally adopted by the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot, March 31, 1918 (see General Church Record, pp. 257-266).

Following the adoption of the "Working Agreement" by the Church of Christ in March, 1918, it was moved and seconded that these resolutions along with the history (preamble), be entered upon the record. This resolution "carried," and "the Elders" were to "be a committee to continue with this work of investigation," which also carried (see Large Record Church of Christ, p. 266).

This committee, consisting of Elders Clarence L. Wheaton, Alma O. Frisbey, A. E. Himes, and T. J. Sheldon, continued to meet in joint council with representatives of the Reorganized Church for several years.

Concerning this agreement we quote from an article by Pres. E. A. Smith, of the Reorganized Church, as to the feelings of that organization. He said:

This means of course, that all vexed questions of doctrine, baptism, and priesthood, were carefully considered by the best intelligence that the church could assemble at a General Conference, both among the priesthood and the delegates.

Though arguments might be advanced upon both sides of the question, as is usually the case, this assembly conceded that our Church of Christ brethren had established their claims so far as may be involved in tracing baptism and priesthood back to the fundamental doctrines of the church and have been guilty of no moral lapse. In fact, in the face of adroit efforts to bribe and seduce them from their trust, they have kept themselves clear of evil forces and designing men. Hence no charge of apostasy from the original faith could

be supported, were there any among us inclined, at this time to make such a charge. – From an editorial by Pres. Elbert A. Smith, Saints' Herald, vol. 65, No. 17, April 24, 1918

In the Saints Herald for April 17, 1918, President Frederick M. Smith and Elder W. W. Smith, who were members of the Committee on Working Harmony made similar statements. These facts are simply brought out to show that the Church of Christ was recognized by others as properly functioning and under recognized authority of God after the return in 1867, and so generally considered.

It will be noted that Article 4 of this agreement provided that we endorse the revelations contained in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants." This particular "agreement" was a carry-over from the work which had been adopted by the early elders of the late 90s who at the time were more or less committed to that position. In the intervening years (1900 to 1917), the Church of Christ had come into possession of material, as exposed in reprinting of the Evening and Morning Star (1831-1832), which proved that many hundreds of alterations had been made in the revelations as there published and as they appeared in the "Book of Commandments," as compared with the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants."

The committee of the Reorganized Church was well aware of the position of the Church of Christ on this issue, for it was discussed during the joint sessions prior to 1918, but it was agreed to let it stand as originally adopted by the previous committee until such time as the present committee could make a review of the changes, and make recommendations accordingly.

With this reservation, the Church of Christ allowed this Article 4 to stand; the following 1918 conference met, and by their action began an earnest effort to analyze the changes made in the revelations.

It was agreed, as means of expediting their work to consider these changes in two separate forms. First, by comparing the revelations as they were found in the two books, i.e., the "Book of Commandments" and the 1835 edition of the "Doctrine and Covenants." Second: that after this comparison was finished, that they would analyze these changes as to the effect they may have had upon the faith and practice of the church.

With this understanding, the joint-council session continued their work from time to time until the April conference of 1921. During this period

the first phase of the committee's work in regard to the changes in the revelations was completed, and the secretary of said joint council, Elder Arthur Allen, had compiled his report of the alterations noted, consisting of 35 pages in parallel columns.

When this report was made, Walter W. Smith, at the time pastor of the Stone Church, took the liberty of making an attack upon the Church of Christ relative to its position upon the revelations from his pulpit, in which he ridiculed his fellow members of the joint council, and attempted to ignore the work of the past two years (1919-1921), and insisted that we adhere to the Doctrine and Covenants. To this unprecedented action, Elder Clarence L. Wheaton asked the privilege of making a reply from the same pulpit, which was denied. The result was that a meeting was held on the Temple Lot, a reply was made, and at the conference of the Church of Christ, held April 2, 1921, the following action was taken clarifying our position:

Whereas, the position of the Church of Christ with reference to the 1835 edition of the Book of covenants is not fully understood,

Therefore, be it resolved, that we endorse the revelations as contained in that edition except where they differ from the way they were printed in the Book of Commandments, and The Evening and Morning Star. That where such differences occur, such revelations shall be considered upon their merits. – Large Record, Church of Christ, p. 306

From then on until about 1926 no further meetings were held by these committees, and the second phase of their work was never completed. These joint council meetings were broken off at that time. However, the Church of Christ has always maintained a committee on church relationships.

Chapter 21

The Publications of the Church of Christ

While the Church of Christ was still in Illinois, they began the publication of a monthly paper called the Truth Teller, which made its appearance in July of 1864, at Bloomington, Illinois, with Elder Granville Hedrick as its Editor. On the title pages of each issue, this legend was printed:

THE TRUTH TELLER – Will advocate the Primitive Organization of the Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints), which was organized on the 6th

day of April, 1830, and maintain her doctrines in all Truth: Also an exposition of all the False Doctrines that have been imposed upon the Church.

The first twelve numbers of this periodical were issued from Bloomington, Illinois, from July 1864 to June 1865. Publication was then suspended for three years, to be revived June 1868, at Independence, Missouri, where it continued for two issues, making fourteen in all. During this time the greater part of its columns were taken up with controversy with the two major factions of the Restoration. It will be interesting to note that beginning with the January 1865 issue, the legend of the Truth Teller was changed to read:

THE TRUTH TELLER – Will advocate the Primitive Organization of the Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints) which was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830, and maintain the Divinity of the Bible and Book of Mormon, and also, that Joseph Smith was once a great and true Prophet of God.

From that time forward, the tone of the Truth Teller changed, from an aggressive and combative spirit to a more affirmative presentment of its claims, during which time many fine articles were published for the enlightenment of mankind. This publication was maintained by donations, and a subscription of one dollar per year, with Adna C. Haldeman acting as Business Manager.

Financial distress made it necessary for the Church of Christ to cease publication of a paper for a number of years, when The Searchlight made its appearance for the first time on February 1, 1896, “devoted to the interests of the Church of Christ in Zion.” The Searchlight continued publication until its suspension in March, 1900. Elder John R. Haldeman, son of Adna C. Haldeman, was its Editor, with Elders George P. Frisbey, George D. Cole and James A. Hedrick as the Board of publication. The subscription was 25¢ per year. Much of the space of this periodical was devoted to the famous Temple Lot Suit, between the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church, and the History of Joseph Smith.

Following the Searchlight, we find The Evening and the Morning Star appearing upon the horizon of Restoration publications in the month of May, 1900, with Elder John R. Haldeman as its Editor, and Elder Abraham L. Hartley as its Business Manager. The first article appearing in this new publication of the Church of Christ deserves notice, as it marks the beginning of a new era. From it we quote the following:

Our Aim

Some 68 years ago in this same city of Independence, Mo., the first number of the Evening and Morning Star was published in the interests of the church of Christ. W. W. Phelps was its Editor. Its avowed objects as stated in its prospectus was a devotion “to the revelations of God, as made known to his servants by the Holy Ghost, at sundry times since the creation of man, for a restoration of the House of Israel.

“Therefore, in fear of Him and to spread the truth among all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples, this paper is set forth, that a wicked world may know that Jesus Christ the Redeemer who shall come to Zion, shall soon appear unto them who look for him.”

* * * * *

It is a matter of history that the paper was not long permitted to pursue the policy mapped out, but that only a few months passed until its publication was ended, its type and press destroyed, and the building that housed it razed to the ground.

Its office in 1832 was but a few steps from the public square. The present office of The Evening and Morning Star will be in the Church of Christ building on the Temple Lot and this paper which you are now reading was printed on the famous Temple Lot in an office specially designed and fitted for the purpose.

This first number of the resuscitated Evening and Morning Star is therefore entitled to more than passing notice, for it bears the distinction of being the first and only sheet ever actually printed on the Temple Lot in Independence. – The Evening and Morning Star, vol. 1, No. 1, p. 1, for May 15, 1900

In this article it will be noted that the printing “office in 1832 was but a few steps from the public square.” This was true, for the old Star office was located on South Liberty Street, just behind the present Chrisman-Sawyer Bank Building.

The Evening and Morning Star was issued continuously from the Temple Lot from May, 1900, to the latter part of 1916. During this time a Reprint of the old Evening and Morning Star was printed as part of the current publication, over a period of two years, from June, 1911, to June, 1913.

From the summer of 1916 to May 15, 1922, the Church was again without a church paper. On this last date, May 15, 1922, the present publication, Zion’s Advocate, made its appearance. It was “published under the direction of the General Church Authorities at Independence, Missouri, at

the printing plant of Elder Clarence L. Wheaton. The Board of Publication was C. L. Wheaton, Andrew Himes, and A. O. Frisbey. Clarence L. Wheaton was its first Editor, and A. O. Frisbey Business Manager. In 1923, Elder T. J. Sheldon became the Associate Editor with Clarence Wheaton. Through the years since, the editors have been Daniel McGregor, H. E. Moler, Louise Palfrey Sheldon, E. E. Long, Leon A. Gould, Metta Anderson, B. C. Flint; and at the present time Wm. A. Sheldon, grandson of T. J. Sheldon is the Editor, with Margaret Wheaton and Edith Bell Case as Associate Editors, Nicholas Denham being the Business Manager. The Board of Publications consists of Nicholas Denham, Forest Maley, Denver Chapman, Louise P. Sheldon and LeRoy Wheaton.

The Advocate has thus far had the longest life of all, appearing monthly (except for a short period when it was a semimonthly) from the time of its beginning in May, 1922, to the present time, November, 1950, a period of nearly thirty years.

Chapter 22

Through the Years

In addition to their specific work of repossessing the temple lots, they continued to prosecute their missionary work in a rather remarkable manner considering the fewness of their numbers. The Searchlight shows missionary activities, and an occasional baptism, not only among the few members at Independence, but also in the states of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, and some missionary work by Elder D. J. David in Kentucky.

At a Quarterly Conference of the Church of Christ in Zion, held in July, 1896, as found in the Searchlight for August of that year, the secretary's report showed a membership of 55, with eight elders, and two priests constituting the ministry of the Church at that time. A noteworthy part of the report of that conference shows that this little group was shouldering a bill of court costs in the Temple Lot Suit of \$7,630.31. Of this sum \$2,539.80 was recovered from other parties to the suit, which left the tidy sum of over \$5,000.00, as the amount that it cost them to defend and retain possession of the Temple Lot.

At the semi-annual conference held in October, 1896, it appears that as a result of baptisms the membership had increased to 66, with the priesthood

remaining the same as at the previous conference.

At the regular General conference of the Church beginning April 6, 1897, the five branches reporting were Independence, Vera Cruz, Bald Knob, and Sweden in Missouri, and Glen Roy in Ohio. At this time the membership had risen to 100. The finances also seemed to be in a healthy condition.

At this conference a resolution was adopted requiring the observance of the "Word of Wisdom," as a qualification for the missionary arm of the Church. Also at the same conference, two men were ordained priests, and one man to the office of deacon.

April 6, 1898, was the next general conference. By this time two new locals had been organized, and, seemingly, two locals previously reporting had become amalgamated. There were six locals reporting as follows: Independence Local, 71 members; Glen Roy, 7 members, Sweden, 8 members; Bald Knob, 8; Fox Hollow, 12; Scioto, 12; and scattered members, 6, making a total of 124. At the General Conference of 1899, in April, the membership had increased to 139, with one new local being organized.

One interesting fact of the period covered in this chapter, is the reports of the various missionaries who were laboring in the field. Among them was one, J. W. Johnson, who seemed to be about the most active, and did much of the baptizing of that period; but in the Searchlight for November there is an obituary notice of the funeral of this brother, which indicates that following his useful career in the Church of Christ he had gone over to the Whitmerites, and was buried by one of their elders. We mention this merely to show that all through the history of the Restoration many good men were very unstable in their allegiance.

During the years that followed, we note that two general conferences were held annually. The regular one in April, beginning with the 6th of that month, which was the birthday of the Church of Christ; then there was the semi-annual conference held in October. And while notices of these conferences appeared regularly in the Star, there were no minutes of these conferences published. We will try to follow the sequence of these activities, however, because they show the progress being made.

An important step taken at the April, 1901 conference was a report coming from Independence Local with reference to establishing a "storehouse" in

Independence. The report was presented by a committee of three, viz; “Elders Hill, Frisbey, and Haldeman. The report contained the following provisions:

Independence, Missouri, April 4, 1901

To the Church of Christ, in Zion: We your committee appointed to formulate plans for the establishment of a store house for the church beg leave to make the following suggestions:

First, that the management of the store be supervised by a committee of three members of the church, who shall be known as the “store house committee.”

2nd. That the necessary capital to purchase the stock and conduct the business be raised in the same manner as was the funds used in defending the Temple Lot suit.

3rd. That the store house shall keep for sale such staple articles as are usually kept in grocery stores, excepting tobacco in any form.

4th. That goods be sold to any who wish to buy; said sales to be for cash only.

5th. That all goods brought shall be paid for when purchase.

6th. That a reasonable profit shall be added to the cost price of each article sold.

7th. That each person in charge of the store may have free use of the type, material and press belonging to the Church of Christ and that such free use shall be his sole compensation for the care of the store house until such times as the business of the store house will justify the payment of a salary for its care.

8th. That donations of articles of food, wearing apparel, money or other articles of value may be made to the store house committee who shall use such donations for the benefit of the church.

9th. That whatever profits shall arise from conducting the store shall be used SOLELY for enlarging stock of goods, relieving the needy in the church and for the support of families of missionaries who are unable to support themselves.

10th. We recommend that the store be established and located in the building on the Temple Lot at as early a date as is practicable. We also recommend that when the store is established all members of the Church should buy their goods of it as much so as possible. After a thorough discussion of the matter, final action was deferred until the presiding elder should call the conference together again. – Evening and Morning Star, vol. 1, No. 12, p. 3

Concerning this project, the record shows that at the succeeding conference this committee did report, but we find no record of any definite steps being taken to establish such a storehouse.

On September 4, 1898, "Geo. P. Frisbey, David J. David, and John R. Haldeman were appointed a committee to solicit subscription of money to build a new place of worship." (Minutes Large Record of Church of Christ, p. 15) And at the October, 1898 conference the following actions was taken:

M. & S. that this conference recommend the Independence branch to erect a building on the Temple Lots. Said building to be two stories in height, 30 feet in width, 54 feet in length; the upper part of said building to be used for a place of meeting worship and counsel, and the lower part to be used for store, for printing and for such other purposes, as may in the future be determined upon; said building to be constructed of wood and of such height as the building committee may decide upon. Carried.

M. & S. that the new building be erected upon the site of the old one. Carried.

And subsequent resolution provided that "said committee shall not incur any indebtedness for the church," etc. – Large Record of the Church of Christ, p. 17

From then on this committee carried on the work of building a new place of worship and gathering funds to pay for the same. By March, 1900, the construction had progressed to the point where two more rooms were finished and thrown together as a place of worship." – Searchlight, vol. 5, No. 2, March 1900

On Sunday, April 6, 1902, we find that the (then) present building on the Temple Lot was dedicated with appropriate ceremony. – The Evening and Morning Star, vol. 2, No. 11, March 15, 1902

By April, 1902, a baptismal font had been made on the lawn. The donors were James Hartley, Geo. Soehle, and Geo. P. Frisbey. It was lined with brick and cement. This is not the font now on the lot, as the record shows that the first font was on the south side of the church

In the month of May, 1902, Elders Frisbey and Haldeman undertook to open up the work of the Church of Christ in Lamoni, Iowa. A few additions to the Church were the result.

June 17, 1902, at a special conference the store house committee reported,

and at this conference all of the financial affairs of the Church were placed in the hands of this committee. It was also provided that the raising of funds, for any purpose, should be by the assessment plan.

In the January, 1905, number of the Evening and Morning Star appears an item from the Kansas City Journal announcing the purchase by the Utah Church of property in Independence. It comprises the present eighteen acres now held by them, but the reporter of the Journal obtained the information from the Utah committee that they hoped later to obtain the three acres known as the Temple Lot, and the sum of \$10,000 was mentioned. To this report, the editor of the Evening and Morning Star appends the following note:

(Note by the Editor) The Church of Christ was asked to put a price on the Temple Lot, and it was estimated that \$50,000 would be paid for the site of the Temple. An offer of fifty millions would have no more effect than did the offer of \$50,000, as the Temple Lot is not for sale at any price. – The Evening and Morning Star, vol. 5, No. 9, p. 4.

The July, 1905, issue of the Evening and Morning Star announced the release of the incendiary, W. D. C. Pattyson from the insane asylum at St. Joseph. Pattyson was the man who burned the Church building on the Temple Lot, his claim being that he was called of God to keep the Temple Lot free from any encumbrances of any kind. Later in June, 1906, Pattyson was again committed to the asylum because of another attempt by him to burn the present building on the Temple Lot.

At the April 6, 1905 conference, Elder Geo. D. Cole made a lengthy report of his work in Ohio and Kentucky, which gives us an interesting sidelight upon the missionary activities of that period. From his report we take the following:

I wish to give a general report of my work during the time I have been away from home. I have preached public discourses, 263. There were 49 appointments made that I could not fill through sickness and deaths, and other causes over which I had no control...

During that time I baptized and confirmed 27 souls, the Lord helping me. I have organized branches of the Church of Christ, the Fox Hollow branch in Ohio, 31 members, and the Seney branch in Kentucky, 14 members. I have ordained four elders and one priest.

I have preached in 49 different houses in Kentucky, and Ohio, public and private houses. A part of the time I have been sick; (about three months.) ...

Brethren, I am not yet tired or discouraged, and still desire to continue in the work. I have perfect confidence in the position we occupy relative to the Church of Christ and am sure of its final triumph if all will do their duty. Pray for me that I may be able to do my duty under all circumstances and continue in the work unto the end.

Your Bro. in hope of Zion's redemption,
George D. Cole

(The Evening and Morning Star, vol. 5, No. 12, p. 3, April, 1905)

At the April, 1906 conference, Brother Cole reported extensive labor in the same area, and the baptism and confirmation of 14 additional members. – Evening and Morning Star, vol. 6, No. 12, p. 3, April 1906

In a series of resolutions reported in the minutes of the Large Record of the Church of Christ, beginning on page 57, we find that action was taken to secure the vacating of Kansas Street from the west line of River Boulevard to Electric St., and to procure a three-cornered piece of ground lying north of the Temple Lot, and the temple Lot committee was given power to act (see page 70). Committee reported progress, report accepted, and committee sustained (see pages 78, 79.)

July 15, 1906, it was moved, seconded and carried, “that the deed that was to be drawn between the City of Independence and the Church of Christ be drawn in the form of the old deed, except that it be for this Branch of the Church on the Temple Lot, and that Richard Hill be trustee and his successor.” (Page 80.) The triangular lot was deeded to the Church of Christ by the City of Independence, July 17, 1906, consideration, \$75.00. A summary of these transactions was published in the Evening and Morning Star, vol. 7, No. 3, p. 1, July 1906.

In the September, 1906 issue, The Evening and Morning Star gives its program as follows:

The Evening and Morning Star has advocated and will continue to advocate the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as contained in the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the 1835 edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

It will contend for the primitive organization of the Church of Christ, as set up by the Savior, in the land of Palestine, and among the ancient Nephites, upon the American Continent.

It claims that Joseph Smith, Jr., was divinely inspired to engage in the restoration of the Primitive Church of Christ, as established by the Savior and his apostles, but driven into the wilderness" through persecutions: that through Joseph Smith's weakness, and the failure upon the part of his brethren to render proper aid and support, he was unable to accomplish all the work necessary to the complete organization of the people of God.

It will advocate, as the duty of all true members of the true Church of Christ to complete, as far as it may now be permitted, the work unaccomplished by Joseph Smith.

It will urge the necessity of all true lovers of Zion to unceasingly labor for her redemption; for the scriptural organization of the people of god; for the erection of the temple in Independence, Mo.: the gathering of god's covenant people and the upbuilding of the city of the Saints of God.

In the July, 1907, issue of The Evening and Morning Star, the store house committee recommended a bishop be ordained to care for the finances of the Church. This report occupies a large part of the July issue of The Evening and Morning Star, and is dated December 16, 1906. in it is discussed much history of the early part of the Church, wherein it is indicated that early in their history Edward Partridge was made a bishop. Also much was said in comparing the doctrines of one-tenth as a tithe and the law of consecration. Bishop A. O. Frisbey was selected and ordained at a conference held Nov. 10, 1907. (See Large Record of the Church of Christ, p. 93.)

In June, 1909, at a regular meeting of the Church of Christ held in the Church building on the Temple Lot, a resolution and petition was drafted to the Circuit Court of Jackson County, providing for the trusteeship of the Temple Lots to be changed from one member to three members, Richard Hill, who was the present trustee, was associated with Geo. P. Frisbey and James A. Hedrick to act as the Board of Trustees for the Temple Lot. (see Large Record, Church of Christ, p. 113)

At the death of Richard Hill, February 9, 1911, John R. Haldeman, was appointed to succeed him on the Board of Trustees, the following April. (see Large Record, Church of Christ, p. 139)

In 1911, The Evening and Morning Star began a reprint of the old original fourteen numbers of The Evening and Morning Star published in Independence in 1832 and 1833, which was destroyed by the mob at the time the saints were being persecuted, and later driven from the state. There is, however, some difference of opinion as to how complete this

destruction was. Some eye witnesses are on record as saying that they entire establishment was wrecked, the presses broken, the type pied and destroyed completely; yet in the Millennial Star, vol. 14, p. 683, we find Joseph Smith stating as follows:

The mob sold the materials, or rather gave "Davis and Kelley" leave to take the Evening and Morning Star establishment, to Liberty, Clay County, where they commenced the publication of The Missouri Enquirer, a weekly paper.

During this period there seems to have been little change in the general activity of the Church, and also no unusual numerical growth. Elder Richard Hill seems to have held the office of general Presiding Elder for the greater portion of the time. Later, Geo. P. Frisbey was made Presiding Elder, and still later Elder John R. Haldeman.

John R. Haldeman was also Editor of The Evening and the Morning Star up to the time of his sudden death, December 21, 1912. He was also Presiding Elder of the Church at the time. These items are all taken from the conference report that appeared in The Evening and the Morning Star.

Following the death of Elder Haldeman, Jas. Hedrick became Editor of the Star. Geo. D. Cole was elected to preside over the Church, April 6, 1913, succeeded in turn by Al L. Harley. A. L. Hartley succeeded Jas. Hedrick as Editor of the Star, in 1916.

There is one incident of this time that we feel is worthy of notice in our chronicles, and that is the vision of Elder Geo. D. Cole, which appeared in the Star for March, 1916. This vision was had shortly after he united with the Church somewhere near the year 1870. We give it as he relates it himself. He says that he was visiting at the home of A. C. Haldeman at the time, and the vision was as follows:

Not long after we had retired for the night, and all was quiet I seemed to realize that I was (on) the Temple Lot high up in the air standing on a rock. It was night. I could see it plain although it was just an ordinary starlit night. And finding myself suddenly placed on that rock, for I seemed to wake up just as I was placed standing upright on it. I could not see anything supporting the rock up there in space, neither did it seem as though it was unreasonable or strange and I had no fear of it falling. But I being so high began to totter as if I would fall without support of some kind, and without looking for other help I lifted my hands to God and appealed to him for help. And when I did I became steady, calm and without fear although I was very high up. And as I called on god for aid a voice just behind my right shoulder said to me, That is the only way you will ever be able to stand. The voice was kind, mild but impressive. It became light as if the sun was up as he was talking to me. I turned to my right,

facing the northeast, for at first I was facing the west, and as I turned I seen a stump somewhere near the west end of where the building now stands on the Temple Lot (but at that time there was not anything on the lot, not even a switch nor a fence.) The stump was about three feet high and two and a half across the top. It was a beautiful stump. A small branch grew out of the stump near the top about twelve inches long, with about six or seven large healthy looking buds on it ready to put forth when the time comes; for this was impressed on me that that was the mind and purpose of the Lord. And as I looked steadfast upon it the voice said. "That is the Church of Christ that was organized on the 6th of April, 1830."

I was impressed that the tree had become defective, for which cause the tree had been removed, a small part of the blemish or defect extended a short distance down from the top of the stump as though in cutting of the tree a part was left in the stump on the south side about as broad as the hand. Notwithstanding it was only about or looked to be two and a half feet across the top of the stump, there was quite a number of people on top of it moving around, and I knew, or seem to know the most of them. there was some engaged in joking, treating lightly their surroundings and as they would near that affected place in the stump they would raise an axe to strike in it in their light minded career, but just as they would start to let fall the axe something would hinder or stop them, I was impressed again that if the Lord didn't hinder them they would destroy it, also. I said: Lord, where is the top? He said, Look! I looked just across the road running east and west, just north of the Temple Lot, and there lay the butt of the tree, and he said it was cut off as the Church, but not as individuals. I seen the scar of the axe on the butt end of the tree. The top extended miles and miles and as it extended north from the Temple Lot the top gradually bent to the west until the extreme top was lying in a westerly direction.

I could see that the tree was dead and the leaves were wilted and turning brown. While I was still standing on that stone up in the air, He said, Look. I looked towards the dead tree. He said Behold the elders of Israel. I looked and seen that the day will come when the messengers of the Lord will go through that dead top. It seemed to me that they were pruning the tree, but not as we prune a tree, for we would bring from it the dead branches, but they did bring out the green twigs from the dead tree....

We are including this vision as a part of our history, because it so strikingly indicates the future work of the Church of Christ, from that time on. All of its parts have become a part of that which is to happen in the not distant future. This vision has been published in Zion's Advocate a number of times, and in some instances analyzed. In 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921-2-3-4-5 and 6, the elders of latter-day Israel did go through the dead tree represented by the other groups of so-called Mormonism, and have brought out many spiritually "green twigs."

Chapter 23

The Dawn of a New Era for the Church of Christ

The period beginning in 1916 marked the event of a new era in the Church of Christ at the April conference of that year it became necessary for the Church to take steps to correct some of the confusion that was arising, due to the desire of some to dominate the Church contrary to the democratic principles of the Scripture, concerning common consent and majority rule.

A small minority for several years, after the death of Jr. R. Haldeman, had been opposed to many of the progressive things which had been inaugurated during his lifetime. The result was a factional strife which divided the congregation into cliques headed by different elders to the detriment of the work. Growing out of this situation, Elder A. L. Hartley was chosen as Presiding Elder, and he endeavored to bring the dissenting groups closer together. This condition was finally out in the open at a conference held November 14, 1915, at which time some became so contentious that the business was disrupted by a refusal to keep within the bounds of orderly procedure. This confusion brought the conference to an abrupt close and an adjournment was ordered.

By the time of the April conference of 1916, conditions began to be better, and we note that a report of the board of Publication stated: "We have been able to issue a paper each month and have increased the circulation. The paper has been self-sustaining and paid its own way. We hope to see it continued." This had reference to *The Evening and the Morning Star*, which by now had been reduced in size.

A move was also made at this conference "to get out of debt to the world and get in closer touch with one another so as to work in a collective body for the temporal and spiritual advancement of the church." At the adjourned session of this conference it was also resolved "that a man's political views shall not be made a test of fellowship in the Church of Christ." This action grew out of the conditions above cited that had caused division among the membership.

On August 13, 1916, Elsie Stafford was received into the Church of Christ by baptism. It was he who proposed a matter of receiving members from the Reorganized Church, on their original baptism, into the Church of Christ by transfer.

At the September 30, 1916, conference, a matter of business came before the Church in the form of a note given by the trustees of the Church to cover the cost of paving River Boulevard. It was found to be necessary to petition the Jackson County Court to bring about a change in the manner of selecting the trustees, and providing that these trustees could be changed by the Church without giving notice to the Court.

During the January term of Court a decree was rendered in behalf of the Church in which they were permitted to select their trustees without the sanction of the court as hitherto. On January 21, 1917, a conference was held, and this decree was approved. By action of that same conference, George P. Frisbey and Jas. A. Hedrick were removed as trustees, and Elders A. L. Hartley and Clarence L. Wheaton were selected to fill vacancies. Elder Geo. D. Cole was also sustained as one of the trustees, thus having three trustees for the Temple Lot properties.

On January 28, 1917, Elder A. L. Hartley, who had been Presiding Elder for several years, passed away, and Elder Clarence L. Wheaton was chosen to succeed him in that office. Elder Wheaton had been assistant to Elder Hartley for some time.

The question of transfer of membership came before the priesthood of the Church of Christ in the fore part of March, 1917, and by resolution, was referred to the conference of the Church on March 31, 1917, and was adopted as follows:

Inasmuch as the elders of the Church of Christ in joint council with the elders of the Reorganized Church (See Searchlight, page 98, January 1897) agreed that they believed that there were individuals in the different factions of the Latter-day faith who held the priesthood.

Therefore be it resolved that those who are desirous of uniting with us on their original baptism, that the matter be referred to a court of Elders of the Church of Christ, and if it be proven that they were baptized by those holding the priesthood that we extend to them the right hand of fellowship; otherwise they will have to be baptize by those of this Church of Christ who hold the priesthood authority., - (Large Record, pp. 238, 239.)

By reference to the minutes of a conference held on November 10, 1912, we find that the Church had taken a similar action at that time:

The question of authority was taken up, and agreed as follows: We have no official knowledge concerning the Utah and Reorganization Church which would justify us in recognizing purported ordinations performed by them. However, should any not holding fellowship with the Church of Christ, be able

to prove to the entire satisfaction of the whole Church that he received and held the priesthood through pure channels, he would be given due credit by our people. – Old Record, p. 150

At the April conference of 1913, this action was again affirmed as follows:

Resolved, “The authority question be taken up and it was agreed to stand by minutes as recorded in November 10, 1912 minutes, which was agreed upon as being the position of the Church of Christ. Carried unanimously.” – Ibid. p. 153

By these actions the way was opened by which this Church of Christ would implement its belief “that there were individual in the different factions of the Latter-day faith who held the priesthood,” and thus were our brethren according to the new and everlasting covenant.

During this period, 1916-1917, quite a few of the members of the Church had organized themselves into a group called Zion’s Co-operative Industrial Association, for the purpose of establishing a more equitable means of living. An acreage was leased south of Independence, and several of the brethren, under the direction of Bishop A. O. Frisbey and Chas. N. Denham, carried on a farming project; others of the group engaged in their regular occupations, contributing the monetary assets of the society, in which all enjoyed the results of their joint labors together, and thus were able to demonstrate that the “all things common” or consecration law could be carried out successfully if a group were determined to do so. At the April 17, 1918, conference, the entire assets of this society were turned over to the Church to be administered by the Church. This proved to be a fatal mistake, for officers were chosen to administer its affairs who were opposed to co-operative efforts of this kind, and they soon liquidated the assets of the project, and closed out its affairs, much to the dissatisfaction of those who had so enthusiastically given it to the Church in the hope that their demonstration would inspire others to carry on its work. – Large Record, pp. 239-241

During the summer of 1917, provision was made to “hold union meetings with the Reorganized Church” during the summer months. This series of meetings, which were well attended, and held to create a better understanding between the churches, continued until the first part of September following, when, as a result of “dissatisfaction” on the part of some in the Church of Christ, the union meetings were discontinued on September 9, 1917. – Large Record, p. 241

During the month of January, 1918, several persons were received from the Reorganized Church on their original baptisms, namely, Fred Koehler, Willard Atwell and Willard Stafford. As before stated, the Working Agreement between the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church was adopted by the general churches of each organization by April, 1918. During the succeeding summer several transfers from the Reorganized Church were received, namely, sister Jennie Crabb, of Sawyer, Idaho; Brother and sister T. J. Sheldon; the priesthood of Brother Sheldon being recognized in the office of Elder. From then on others followed their example and likewise began to identify themselves with the Church of Christ.

At the conference of 1919, held April 6 to 28 of that year, a move was carried out to again institute a general organization of the Church, due to the increase of membership and priesthood, and their scattered condition. At this time a "school of the ministry" was established, with Elder T. J. Sheldon in charge. Elder Clarence L. Wheaton was chosen as Presiding Elder of the General Church; Elder Andrew Himes, as Secretary, and Elder J. J. Teeters as treasurer. Elder T. J. Sheldon was elected in charge of missionary work. Following this action missionary work was begun in the "regions round about" Independence, and Elder Wheaton started a series of meetings in the present Fairmount district east of Kansas City, which continued for a period of two or three years.

Prior to this 1919 conference, "priesthood meetings" had been the order of ministerial meetings, but at this time a general organization was formed, and provision was made for delegate representation at the session of April 9, 1919, by appointing a committee of three to outline procedure. (See page 39, of Record No. 5.) This committee reported verbally April 6, 1920, and were sustained to continue their work. – Ibid. p. 42

During 1919, a number of "priesthood meetings" were held in lieu of the form of general conferences of elders which had prevailed during the past. Due to the influx of members from the Reorganized Church the influence of some of the doctrines of that church began to be felt, and we find an effort being made to establish an order of "presidents" over the various priesthood offices. This effort however did not reach the stage where a "first presidency" with counselors, such as is set up in the Doctrine and Covenants became fastened upon the Church. Among some of the interesting features of this innovation was the fact that while they provided for a "Presiding Elder" as a "mouthpiece" to the Church through whom

“revelation to govern the body of the Church,” etc., was to be received, they refused to endorse such revelations as were thus given, even after days of fasting and prayer.

It was during this time that the revelation of March 11, 1919, was given to the Church through Elder Clarence L. Wheaton, then president or presiding elder of the Church, which since has been widely used for the purpose of advancing the work of the Church of Christ. Though given in answer to fasting and prayer, which lasted over a period of several weeks, we find that after the contents of this revelation were submitted to the various groups of the priesthood, that no endorsement of it was made (See page 31, Record No. 5). Later, the Church of Christ, by conference action provided that all revelations must stand on their own merit, and the arbitrament of time, as they may be in harmony with the bible and Book of Mormon, and that endorsement is expressed in the action growing out of such revealments.

With these conditions prevailing, the General Conference of April 6, 1919, bid fair to become a very interesting occasion. To this conference, representatives from the Independence Branch were sent, and reports from the local secretary, Young People’s Society, Temple Lot committee, and ministry, etc., were received. It was also provided that the first number of the Re-print Evening and Morning Star should again be printed, as the first issue had been depleted and full files could not be provided to meet the demand for them. At the conclusion of this conference, April 28, 1919, Elder Wheaton was elected as “President of the Church,” but no provision was made for an ordination to such office, nor for counselors, it was merely a modified “presidency” or the election of a Presiding Elder over the general Church.

At a “general conference” held on September 30, 1919, the committee on church relations between the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church was appointed to renew talks with the Reorganization, “to investigate and examine the manuscript of the “Book of Commandments” and John Whitmer Records.” (See page 41, Record No. 5.)

At the April, 1920, General Conference, Elder Andrew Himes was elected to succeed Clarence L. Wheaton as the president of the church, and an attempt was made to ordain such an officer as a high priest. It was also provided at a “priesthood meeting” held March 13, 1921, that an elder of the Independence Branch should be ordained as a bishop. In neither case were there any efforts made for ordinations at that time.

At the regular General Conference held April 6, 1921, Elder Himes, the "president" of the Church, made a lengthy report including several recommendations: i. e., to provide for a church paper, to provide for a General Church Recorder, to provide for the keeping of genealogies, and the providing of suitable certificates of baptism in triplicate for filing purposes, also urging greater liberality in funds to carry on a more intensive missionary program. Elder T. J. Sheldon also made a similar report, and among other things recommended that a church paper should be published and suitable tracts written on a number of questions. Out of these recommendations grew the provision for Zion's Advocate, and later the Articles of Faith and Practice, both of which have stood the test of time, and have become standard material for missionary purposes in the Church of Christ. (See pages 56-7, Record No. 5.)

A Board of Publication was selected, consisting of Elders A. O. Frisbey, T. J. Sheldon and A. Himes. They were to select the Business Manager and Editor. Clarence L. Wheaton was selected as its First Editor, and A. O. Frisbey as its Business Manager.

At an adjourned session of the conference that year, held at Independence, Mo., on June 5, 1921, a committee which had previously been appointed to compile a set of Rules of Representation in General Conferences, reported their labors. These rules as adopted by that conference, being lengthy, will not be given here; but they provided for a delegate system of representation, based on the unit of one delegate for each six members of a local church or a fraction thereof (see page 64, Record No. 5).

At the conference of April 6, 1922, steps were taken to provide missionary work in Canada and foreign lands. At the October conference of that year, arrangements were made for the writing of a series of tracts on the following subjects: "First Principles," "the Organic Law of the Church," "The City of Zion," "Building the Temple," "The Law of God Given to Govern The Temporal Affairs of Man," "The Gospel and the Millennium of Christ;" these tracts to be endorsed by the elders of the Church. Some articles were so written, and appear in the early numbers of the Zion's Advocate, and some were printed in tract form. At this same conference, provisions were made for the organization of local churches, with a "presiding elder, local bishop, or bishop's agent, priest, teacher, and deacon, and an extension of these lesser offices as the needs may demand."

The conferences of 1923 and 1924 followed much of the same trend, and we see a broadening of missionary effort being carried out. As a result,

more unity prevailed among the ministry than for some time, and many were added to the Church membership.

The result of these efforts were further reflected by the reaction of many of the membership of the Reorganized Church, who began to grow restless under the dictates of Supreme Directional Control with Effective Discipline that was being fastened upon that body of the Restoration by its First Presidency. During the time of the late Joseph Smith, a more democratic and benevolent form of government was enjoyed by these people, in spite of the handicap of a first Presidency who claimed the right of office through lineal right which brought about an Ecclesiastical-Monarchy unparalleled in the annals of religion. However, with the death of Joseph and the accession of his son Dr., Frederick M. Smith to the Presidency, quite a different situation arose. Frederick M. Smith was a college man and a modernist. His program was as different from that of his father as it could possibly be. Innovation after innovation was introduced, beginning with the year 1916. Older and experienced men of the ministry were set aside for young inexperienced college men, and in a very short time confusion and disintegration set in.

In 1924, the doctrine of Supreme Directional Control vested in the First Presidency, with Effective Discipline, was advanced. The idea that revelation from God was not a direct communication, but was a result springing from the higher powers of man, in himself, to the point that where man arose to intellectual heights within himself he could envision the mind of God, and this, and this alone constituted revelation from God. Of course, the old time ministry could not accept such a philosophy, and so the spirit of inquiry became very general, the first question being, Whence comes such rare authority and power in a Presidency the next question was naturally, Where do we get the idea of a First Presidency of three over the twelve apostles? A search of Scripture failed to reveal any such office having its origin in New Testament times, or among the ancient Nephites in the American church established by Christ.

This condition of affairs among the Reorganized ministry caused them to begin an intensive study of church history. This study soon divulged the fact that the origin of a First Presidency over the apostolic council was, in itself, a very vague and conflicting innovation. There was not even the foundation of a revelation providing for such an office to be found in the early revelations to the Restoration Church, until 1835, or three years after the introduction of a Presidency.

To assist in this study, the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot continued to publish matter concerning the early rise of the Church, showing the genesis, and the fallacy, of a presidency over the apostles, and other matters.

With matters of this kind in existence, it was easy for those who had become aroused over the radical changes taking place in the teachings and practice of the Reorganization, to see an opportunity to continue their adherence to fundamental Restoration doctrine and practice. True, as would be expected, the Church of Christ was not infallible by any means in its ideas either; but as to their claims to being a remnant of the old original Church, their position was unanswerable.

Under the confused conditions existing through the years from 1916 on, faithful members and ministry were looking for a place where they could continue in the faith that they knew to be true. The Church of Christ on the Temple Lot furnished such a refuge. Added to this, the labors through the years by committee action, as well as General Conference action in both groups, in which both the Reorganized Church and the Church of Christ had adopted articles of agreement, which recognized that the membership and priesthood of both groups sprang from valid original sources; and, in consequence of which such priesthood and membership were equal, when conforming to the law of god, challenged the attention of those willing to investigate the position of the Church of Christ.

Beginning with the year 1916 there began a steady flow of transfer from the Reorganized Church. This stream was slow at first, because the saints were wary, and, having become disillusioned, they were anxious to exercise care. Soon some leading members like Elder and Mrs. T. J. Sheldon, Daniel McGregor, F. F. Wipper, Samuel Wood, T. E. Barton, Otto Fetting, Walter Gates, James E. Yates, A. M. Smith, B. C. Flint, Wm. F. Anderson, T. J. Jordan, Leon A. Gould, R. M. Maloney, J. E. Bozarth, E. E. Long, and many others made their application for membership in the Church of Christ.

Now, real numerical growth began in the Church of Christ. The Elders of Israel, according to Elder Cole's vision were now pruning out the green twigs from the dead tree in earnest.

At the October 6, 1925 conference, at the 2 p. m. session, the following was adopted by unanimous vote:

Resolved, that this Church of Christ accept nothing purporting to be a revelation from God, past, present, or future, as a revelation from God, save that which is in harmony with both the bible and the Book of Mormon. Be it further resolved, that if there be any ruling, understanding, or resolution conflicting herewith, that it be hereby rescinded. – Record No. 5, p. 85

On the October 8, 1925, of the fall conference, a resolution was adopted which abolished the office of Presiding Elder. During the afternoon session of the same day, a desire was expressed in a resolution to perfect the organization in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and the Book of Mormon; and it was also resolved:

That we petition the Lord for direction as to the choosing of the Apostles, and such other matters as he may see fit to impart unto us. - Record No. 5, p. 86

In harmony with this action the conference engaged in a session of prayer, and toward the close of the session the following was received through Elder Daniel McGregor:

Verily thus saith the Spirit, in order that the Church of Christ may be prepared to more effectively occupy, it is the wish of the Spirit that my servants H. E. Moler, and F. F. Wipper, shall be a committee to select a Committee of Three, who shall serve as Apostles before me. – Record No. 5, p. 86

On October 11, the committee appointed to select the Committee of Three, reported that they had failed to arrive at a decision. It was then resolved:

That in the interim, a committee of five be chosen to have oversight of the Church and over all the work pertaining to the Church.” – Record No. 5, p. 89

Nominations were made, and the following were selected as the Committee of five: Elders Daniel McGregor, H. E. Moler, F. F. Wipper, C. L. Wheaton, and Andrew Himes.

At this conference, Otto Fetting and A. O. Frisbey were associated with Bishop T. J. Sheldon, as a committee of three in charge of finances of the Church.

During this period the Church of Christ grew rapidly, and from a membership of a couple of hundred in 1915, by 1926 it had grown to several thousand, and continued to grow. Local churches sprang up in most of the states of the United States, and some in Canada. From Wales, England, Scotland, Holland and Germany came expressions of desire to transfer membership from the Reorganized Church to the Church of Christ.

Amid this growth a General Conference was held in April, 1926, and by revelation seven men were called to be apostles. These were the first so called since back in the days of the saints near Bloomington, Illinois, when five men were so ordained by John E. Page, who was one of the Apostles in the Church prior to the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The man chosen and ordained at the Spring Conference of 1926, were, Daniel McGregor, H. E. Moler, Samuel Wood, C. L. Wheaton, F. F. Wipper, Otto Fetting, and Norris Headding. One of the seven chosen as apostles was not present, but was ordained the following June. These men were assigned fields of ministerial labor, and some of them began work in the mission fields.

It seemed that the unity of desire and understanding that then prevailed was an assurance of continued prosperity. The Church had now taken on definite missionary shape, and the main thought that seemed to prevail was one of united effort to push onward. The Advocate grew in size and circulation. Thus at the close of the year, 1928, the Church of Christ was looking up in every way.

Brother Wipper's service as a member of the quorum of Twelve was short-lived because of certain beliefs which he entertained; he was unable to serve the Church further, and in September, 1926, he tendered his resignation as a member of the Council of Twelve, and as Editor of the Advocate, and withdrew from the Church. He was successful in leading a few of the members away with him, even some of the old original membership, or those who had not come to the Church of Christ from other groups.

Daniel McGregor, who had been the Editor prior to F. F. Wipper's apostasy, was now returned to the Editorship of the Advocate, and Sister Louise Sheldon was given an assignment to be his associate.

At the April, 1927, General Conference, three more men were added to the Apostolic Quorum. They were Elders T. J. Sheldon, Walter F. Gates and A. M. Smith. They were ordained April 10, 1927. This made the total number of apostles, at this time, nine; because with F. F. Wipper's defection there had already been one vacancy.

The year 1927 was to witness another vacancy in the Council of Twelve, in the death of Apostle Daniel McGregor, who passed away October 3, 1927, at the home of Apostle Otto Fetting, in Port Huron, Michigan. The April conference had made provision for the ordination of Elder Thos. E.

Barton to the Apostolic Quorum, and he was ordained April 12, 1928.

Another incident of this period was a number of public discussions with leading representatives of the Reorganized Church. In Wisconsin, Elder Flint had received a challenge from Elder L. G. Holloway for a debate to be held in Lancaster, Wisconsin. Being employed in the Wisconsin State House at Madison, Elder Flint was unable to get the time off for this discussion, so he sent the challenge to Apostle C. L. Wheaton, then in the field, and the challenge was accepted, and the debate began November 6, 1927, and continued two weeks. From there Wheaton met Holloway and J. F. Curtis, both, at Black River Falls, Wisconsin.

A further debate was held between Clarence L. Wheaton and Mr. J. F. Curtis, at DeKalb, Ill., in January (?) of 1928, at which time a stenographic report was made. Many members transferred to the Church of Christ as the result, and since that time the Reorganized Church has refused to meet representatives of this Church in public. All of these encounters resulted in gains for the Church of Christ.

At the 1928 April conference three more men were called to be Apostles, thus filling the Council. The men so called were James E. Yates, E. E. Long, and B. C. Flint. These men were ordained during the year. The only one present at the conference was B. C. Flint, and he was ordained at a conference session, April 10, 1928. At this conference provision was made to send a missionary to the British Mission.

During this period Elder Otto Fetting claimed to be visited by a heavenly messenger, whom he later identified as John the Baptist. These purported visitations began in February, 1927, and continued for a number of years. At first the Church gave credence, reservedly, to the story told by Elder Fetting, for the information that was furnished by this supposed Messenger seemed to be in harmony with what the Church believed concerning the building of the Temple on the Temple Lot. This messenger claimed that the time for the building of the Temple was at hand, and gave some instruction concerning the size of the Temple.

By the April 1929 conference, the messenger visits had become quite frequent, and by this time the directions for the Temple had become so specific, that plans for sod breaking according to directions had been arranged for. Accordingly on April 6, 1929, before a large gathering of saints of all groups in Independence, Missouri, on the Temple Lot, Bishop A. O. Frisbey broke the sod for the Temple. It was to be ninety by one

hundred and eighty feet in size. Following this sod breaking, plans for the erection of the building were immediately set in operation.

However, this occasion, which was meant to be a history making and outstanding event, was sadly marred by the very sudden death of Apostle T. J. Sheldon, of cerebral hemorrhage.

While the work on the Temple excavation was going on, following the 1929 conference, an interesting discovery was made. The stone markers that had been placed to mark the spot and dimensions of the Temple, and which had been placed there by Joseph Smith and his associates at the time the spot for the Temple was dedicated on August 3, 1831, were unearthed, and are now on exhibition in the Church of Christ building on the Temple Lot.

Later during the year Apostles Fetting and Gates began to advocate and practice a new and arbitrary doctrine. This was that in their interpretation of the so-called twelfth message of the messenger, whom Otto Fetting claimed had been coming to him periodically up to this time, now required every one to be rebaptized, for the “sins and traditions of men.” This doctrine took root, and many members of the Church were rebaptized. A special conference was held in October of that year (1929) to study the doctrine and its implications. The result was that, regardless of the fact that the conference overwhelmingly rejected the idea of rebaptism, Apostles Fetting and Gates defied the conference and continued to teach and practice the innovation. This resulted in the disfellowshipping of these men, whereupon, in April, 1930, they proceeded to organize a new church, and took nearly one-third of the membership of the Church, which by this time had reached the number of about four thousand souls. All of this naturally affected the progress of the temple project.

The 1930 conference of the Church of Christ filled the vacancy in the Council of Twelve caused by the death of Brother T. J. Sheldon, also the two vacancies made by the defection of Fetting Gates, with Elders W. F. Anderson, C. W. Morgan, and E. J. Trapp of Gloucester, England. It also made provision for a Bishopric of seven men, instead of the three-men Bishopric then in office.

Samuel Wood was sent to England to ordain Elder Trapp to the Apostleship. However, here again dissension was ready to break out. Wood seems to have become imbued with the “One Person Godhead” heresy, and made that a part of his teaching while in Britain on this, his

second trip over there. This resulted in creating a serious division among the membership of that country. They had already been disturbed and divided by the defection of Fetting and Gates, and a number had been rebaptized and become members of the Fetting group. Now this new heresy of there being no trinity in the Godhead, again caused a split over there. A special conference was held by the Apostolic Quorum in Independence, Missouri, and again they were met with defiance; and Apostles Samuel Wood, C. W. Morgan and E. J. Trapp, who were teaching this new cause of division were dismissed from the Council, and Samuel Wood was disfellowshipped after an Elder's Court trial, and E. J. Trapp left the Church. C. W. Morgan was excommunicated for heresy in 1950.

For the next year or two there was little change in the procedure of the Church, the principle interest being the work on the Temple there was some change made in the type of conferences. In an effort to have a more representative meeting of the saints, a Ministers' Conference, and a People's Conference by referendum, was adopted. At the conference of 1934, Norris Headding was released from the Council of Twelve for inactivity and the use of tobacco.

At the 1935 conference, Apostle B. C. Flint and his wife were selected for the British Mission. They were successful in breaking down some of the causes of division and also baptized a number.

At the 1936 conference four more men were called to the Apostolic Quorum to fill the vacancies made by the apostasies of the men following the various innovations. The four called were Elders R. M. Maloney, Leon A. Gould, J. E. Bozarth, and T. J. Jordan. Bren. Gould, Bozarth and Jordan were ordained later in the year. R. M. Maloney was ordained the following April, 1937. At this (1936) conference also, the Fetting messages were rejected. This caused another vacancy in the Twelve, as E. E. Long resigned from the apostleship.

Later, called to fill vacancies in the Apostolic Council, Elder R. R. Roberson was ordained, April 1942, and in August 1942, W. F. Jordan was ordained. This filled the Council again, as H. E. Moler had resigned a couple of years prior to this time.

As a result of World War II, it was found to be impracticable to hold annual General Assemblies during the years of 1944 and 1945; but a conference was held in April, 1946, and each year since then.

At the 1946 conference Apostle R. M. Maloney resigned from the Council of Twelve, and asked to be released; and the assembly by unanimous vote granted his request and gave him an “honorable release with our prayers and blessings.” Apostle Maloney died March 2, 1947, at the age of 85. Apostle B. C. Flint was chosen General Church Historian at the 1947 conference. Another vacancy in the Council of Twelve was caused by the resignation and death of Apostle J. E. Bozarth, Apostle Bozarth died during the 1950 conference, at the age of 80 years.

These two vacancies were filled at the 1950 conference by two young men, who were called by revelation. They were Elders Don W. Housknecht and William A. Sheldon. Elder Sheldon is a grandson of the former Apostle T. J. Sheldon, who passed away during the time of the 1929 conference.

This chapter brings the history up to and including the year 1950, but because of the Church’s belief in the teachings of the Book of Mormon, and the many promises contained therein relative to the Remnant of the House of Israel, through Lehi, scattered upon this land, and how they shall come to a knowledge of their fathers, and be brought it unto the Covenant, through the teachings of this sacred record, it is thought best to add a chapter concerning the work among the Lamanites.

The following chapter therefore, records the efforts from the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, since the beginning of the Restoration through the period covered by this history, in a very brief and limited manner, which throws some interesting sidelights upon the zeal of early missionaries, as well as later ones, and the reaction of our Lamanite brethren, as the light of the gospel began to touch their hearts and minds. A more detailed account of this important feature of our work must wait for some future time.

Chapter 24

Church of Christ Mission to the Lamanites

To the Church of Christ, the mission to the Lamanites is a real and necessary part of the missionary work. Through its representatives thousands of tracts and many copies of the Book of Mormon have been distributed among them.

In less than six months after the Church was established on the 6th of April, 1830, a special conference was held at Fayette, New York.

During this conference, which continued three days, the utmost harmony prevailed, and all things were settled satisfactorily to all present, and a desire was manifest by all the saints to go forward and labor with all their powers to spread the great and glorious principles of truth....

At this time a great desire was manifest by several of the Elders respecting the remnant of the house of Joseph, the Lamanites, residing in the west – knowing that the purposes of God were great respecting that people, and hoping that the time had come when the promises of the “Almighty in regard to them were about to be accomplished, and that they would receive the Gospel, and enjoy its blessings. The desire being so great, it was agreed that we should inquire of the Lord respecting the propriety of sending some of the Elders among them, which we accordingly did.... – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 118

This bit of history stresses the great importance which Joseph Smith, Jr., and the early elders of the Church placed upon the missionary work among the Lamanites. Following their efforts to learn the will of the Lord concerning this matter, a revelation was given to Oliver Cowdery, at Fayette, N. Y., where this conference was being held, in September, 1830, which seemed to be the headquarters of the Church of Christ, which among other things provided:

... And now, behold I say unto you, (Oliver), that you shall go unto the Lamanites and preach my gospel unto them, and cause my church to be established among them ... – “Book of Commandments,” 30:7

At the same time a revelation was given to Peter Whitmer, Jr., which revealed that he too was to go and preach to the Lamanites.

... Behold I say unto you, Peter, that you shall take your journey with your brother Oliver.... For I have given unto him to build up my church among your brethren, the Lamanites.... – “Book of Commandments,” 32:1, 4

Later in the month of October, 1830, a revelation was given to Parley P. Pratt, making known his work in the mission field:

... And that which I have appointed unto him (P. P. Pratt), is that he shall go with my servants Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jun., into the wilderness, among the Lamanites.

And Ziba Peterson, also, shall go with them.... – “Doctrine and Covenants,” 31:1

This missionary team, consisting of four of the Elders, i.e., Oliver

Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson, lost no time in arranging their affairs to go on this all-important mission:

... Immediately on receiving this revelation, (the one to Pratt), preparations were made for the journey of the brethren therein designated, to the borders of the Lamanites, and a copy of the revelations was given them.... – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 120

Of this mission to the Lamanites, Parley P. Pratt has this to say:

... After traveling for some days we called on an Indian nation near Buffalo; and spent part of a day with them, instructing them in the knowledge of the record of their forefathers. We were kindly received and much interest was manifested by them on hearing the news. We made a present of two copies of the Book of Mormon to certain of them who could read, and repaired to Buffalo, thence we continued our journey, for about two hundred miles, and at length called on Mr. Rigdon. – “Autobiography of P. P. Pratt,” p. 49

This was the first recorded instance of the Book of Mormon being presented to any of the Lamanite tribes. In the spring of 1831, Pratt returned from this mission and gave Joseph Smith Jr., and the elders, who had assembled in a conference, held at Kirtland, Ohio, in June, 1831, a verbal report of the activities of this mission.

Under date of May 7, 1831, in a letter addressed from Kaw Township, Missouri, where Kansas City, Missouri, now stands, Elder Oliver Cowdery, wrote to the brethren, in which he tells that he had “lately (been) informed of another tribe of Lamanites.... called the Navashoes,” (Navajos). – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 182

Again we call attention to the writings of B. H. Roberts, Historian of the Utah Church, for he gives us a very vivid account of this work among the Lamanites, which for its importance, should be included in this account:

THE MISSION TO THE LAMANITES. – As the “mission to the Lamanites” is a very prominent event in early Church history, it is proper that the labors of the brethren engaged in it should be spoken of more fully than appears anywhere in the Prophet’s narrative, and at this point, following the letter of Oliver Cowdery, seems as appropriate a place as will be found to speak of it. It has already been said that the brethren of the mission called upon the Catteraugus tribe, near Buffalo, New York. After leaving Kirtland, on their journey westward, they visited the Wyandot tribe of Indians near Sandusky, Ohio, with whom they spent several days. “We were well received,” writes Elder Parley P. Pratt, “and had an opportunity of laying before them the record of their forefathers, which we did. They rejoiced in the tidings, bid us Godspeed, and desired us to write to them in relation to our success among the

tribes further west, who had already removed to the Indian Territory, where these expected soon to go. – Utah Church History, vol. 1, p. 183

On the journey of these elders west, and their hardships we give you the account of Elder Pratt:

... We traveled on foot for three hundred miles through vast prairies and through trackless wilds of snow – no beaten road; houses few and far between; (this was west of St. Louis), and the bleak northwest wind always blowing in our faces with a keenness which would almost take the skin off the face. We traveled for whole days, from morning till night, without a house or fire, wading in snow to the knees at every step.... We carried on our backs our changes of clothing, several books, and corn bread and raw pork.... After much fatigue and some suffering we all arrived in Independence, in the county of Jackson, on the extreme western frontiers of Missouri, and of the United States.

This was about fifteen hundred miles from where we started, and we had performed most of the journey on foot, through a wilderness country, in the worst season of the year, occupying about four months, during which we preached to tens of thousands of Gentiles and two nations of Indians; baptizing, confirming and organizing many hundreds of people into churches.... – “Autobiography of P. P. Pratt,” pp. 54-55

After thus arriving in Independence, Missouri, these brethren went about the business of setting up their mission, and making plans to cross the “frontier,” which is now the State of Kansas. Of this matter Parley P. Pratt writes:

... Two of our number now commenced work as tailors in the village of Independence, while the others crossed the frontier line and commenced a mission among the Lamanites, or Indians.

Passing through the tribe of Shawnees we tarried one night with them, and the next day crossed the Kansas River, (the Kaw), and entered among the Delawares. We immediately inquired for the residence of the principal Chief, and were soon introduced to an aged and venerable looking man, who had long stood at the head of the Delawares, and been looked up to as the Great Grandfather or Sachem of ten nations or tribes.

He was seated on a sofa of furs, skins and blankets, before a fire in the center of his lodge.... As we entered his cabin he took us by the hand with a hearty welcome, and then motioned us to be seated on a pleasant seat of blankets, or robes.... a tin pan full of beans and corn boiled up together, which proved to be good eating, (was set before us); although three of us made use alternately of the same wooden spoon.

There was an interpreter present and through him we commenced to make

known our errand, and to tell him of the Book of Mormon.... We asked him to call the council of his nation together and give us a hearing in full. He promised to consider on it till the next day.... Next morning we called again on Mr. Anderson, the old chief, and explained to him something of the Book. He was at first unwilling to call his council; made several excuses, and finally refused, as he had ever been opposed to the introduction of missionaries among his tribe.

We continued the conversation a little longer, till he at last began to understand the nature of the Book. He then changed his mind; became suddenly interested, and requested us to proceed no further with our conversation till he could call a council. He dispatched a messenger, and in about an hour had some forty men collected around us in his lodge, who, after shaking us by the hand, were seated in silence; and in a grave and dignified manner awaited the announcement of what we had to offer. The chief then requested us to proceed; or rather, begin, where we began before, and to complete our communication. Elder Cowdery then commenced as follows:

Aged Chief and Venerable Council of the Delaware nation; we are glad of this opportunity to address you as our red brethren and friends. We have traveled a long distance from towards the rising sun to bring you glad news; we have traveled the wilderness, crossed the deep and wide rivers, and waded in the deep snows, and in the face of the storms of winter, to communicate to you great knowledge which has lately come to our ears and hearts; and which will dot the red man good as well as the pale face.

Once the red men were many; they occupied the country from sea to sea – from the rising to the setting sun; the whole land was theirs; the Great Spirit gave it to them, and no pale faces dwelt among them. But now they are few in numbers; their possessions are small, and the pale faces are many.

Thousands of moons ago, when the red man's forefathers dwelt in peace and possessed this whole land, the Great Spirit talked with them, and revealed His law and His will, and much knowledge to their wise men and prophets. This they wrote in a Book; together with their history, and the things which should befall their children in the latter days.

This Book was written on plates of gold, and handed down from father to son for many ages and generations.

It was then that the people prospered, and were strong and mighty; they cultivated the earth; built buildings and cities, and abounded in all good things, as the pale faces now do.

But they became wicked; they killed one another and shed much blood; they killed their prophets and wise men, and sought to destroy the Book. The Great Spirit became angry, and would speak to them no more; they had no more good and wise dreams; no more visions; no more angels sent among them by

the Great Spirit; and the Lord commanded Mormon and Moroni, their last wise men and prophets, to hide the Book in the earth, that it might be preserved in safety, and be found and made known in the latter day to the pale faces who should possess the land; that they might again make it known to the red man; in order to restore them to the knowledge of the will of the Great Spirit and to His favor. And if the red man would then receive this Book and learn the things written in it, and do according thereunto, they should be restored to all their rights and privileges; should cease to fight and kill one another; should become one people; cultivate the earth in peace, in common with pale faces, who were willing to believe and obey the same Book, and be good men and live in peace.

Then should the red men become great, and have plenty to eat and good clothes to wear, and should be in favor with the Great Spirit and be his children, while he would be their Great Father, and talk with them, and raise up prophets and wise and good men amongst them again, who should teach them many things.

This Book, which contained these things, was hid in the earth by Moroni, in a hill called by him, Cumorah, which hill is now in the State of New York near the village of Palmyra, in Ontario County.

In that neighborhood there lived a young man named Joseph Smith, who prayed to the Great Spirit much, in order that he might know the truth; and the Great Spirit sent an angel to him, and told him where this Book was hid by Moroni; and commanded him to go and get it. He accordingly went to the place, and dug in the earth, and found the Book written on golden plates.

But it was written in the language of the forefathers of the red man; therefore this young man, being a pale face, could not understand it; but the angel told him and showed him, and gave him knowledge of the language, and how to interpret the Book. So he interpreted it into the language of the pale faces, and wrote it on paper, and caused it to be printed, and published thousands of copies of it among them; and then sent us to the red men to bring some copies of it to them, and to tell them this news. So we have now come from him, and here is a copy of the Book, which we now present to our red friend, the chief of the Delawares, and which we hope he will cause to be read and known among his tribe; it will do them good.

We then presented him with a Book of Mormon.

There was a pause in the council, and some conversation in their own tongue, after which the chief made the following reply:

“We feel truly thankful to our white friends who have come so far, and been at such pains to tell us good news, and especially this new news concerning the Book of our forefathers; it makes us glad in here” – placing his hand on his heart.

“It is now winter, we are new settlers in this place; the snow is deep, our cattle and horses are dying, our wigwams are poor; we have much to do in the spring – to build houses, and fence and make farms; but we will build a council house, and meet together, and you shall read to us and teach us more concerning the Book of our fathers and the will of the Great Spirit.”

We again lodged at Mr. Pool’s told him of the Book, had a very pleasant interview with him, and he became a believer and advocate for the Book, and served as an interpreter.

We continued for several days to instruct the old chief and many of his tribe. The interest became more and more intense on their part, from day to day, until at length nearly the whole tribe began to feel a spirit of inquiry and excitement on the subject.

We found several among them who could read, and to them we gave copies of the Book, explaining to them that it was the Book of their forefathers.

Some began to rejoice exceedingly, and took great pains to tell the news to others, in their own language.

The excitement now reached the frontier settlements in Missouri, and stirred up the jealousy and envy of the Indian agents and sectarian missionaries to that degree that we were soon ordered out of the Indian country as disturbers of the peace; and even threatened with the military in case of non-compliance.

We accordingly departed from the Indian country and came over the line, and commenced laboring in Jackson County, Missouri, among the whites. We were well received and listened to by many; and some were baptized and added to the Church.

Thus ended our first Indian Mission, in which we preached the gospel in its fullness, and distributed the record of their forefathers among three tribes, viz.: the Catteraugus Indians, near Buffalo, N. Y., the Wyandots of Ohio, and the Delawares west of Missouri. – “Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt,” pp. 56-61

The following, appearing in the Utah Church History telling of a visit of the Pottawatomie Indians to Joseph Smith at Nauvoo in 1843, is an extract from an article from Wilford Woodruff’s Journal:

... The Indian orator arose and asked the Prophet, if the men who were present were all his friends. Answer, “Yes.”

He then said – “We as a people have long been distressed and oppressed. We have been driven from our lands many times. We have been wasted away by wars, until there are but few of us left. The white man has hated us and shed our blood, until it has appeared as though there would soon be no Indians left. We have talked with the Great Spirit and the Great Spirit has talked with us.

We have asked the Great Spirit, to save us and let us live; and the Great Spirit has told us that He had raised up a great Prophet, chief, and friend, who would do us great good and tell us what to do; and the Great Spirit has told us that you are the man, (pointing to the Prophet Joseph). We have now come a great way to see you, and hear your words, and to have you tell us what to do. Our horses have become poor traveling, and we are hungry. We will now wait and hear your word.”

The Spirit of God rested upon the Lamanites, especially the orator. Joseph was much affected and shed tears. He arose and said unto them: “I have heard your words. They are true. The Great Spirit has told you the truth... I am your friend and brother, and I wish to do you good. Your fathers were once a great people. They worshipped the Great Spirit. The Great Spirit did them good. He was their friend; but they left the Great Spirit, and would not hear His words or keep them. The Great Spirit left them, and they began to kill one another and they have been poor and afflicted until now.

“The Great Spirit has given me a book, and told me that you will be blessed again. The Great Spirit will soon begin to talk with you and your children. This is the Book which your fathers made. I wrote upon it (showing them the Book of Mormon). This tells what you will have to do. I now want you to begin to pray to the Great Spirit. I want you to make peace with one another, and do not kill any more Indians; it is not good. Do not kill white men; it is not good; but ask the Great Spirit for what you want, and it will not be long before the Great Spirit will bless you, and you will cultivate the earth and build good house like white men. We will give you something to eat and to take home with you.” etc. – Utah Church History, vol. 5, p. 480

Under these circumstances we can see why the early church had such a tender feeling toward the Lamanites, and the joy that came to those who labored among them.

After the Church of Christ returned to Missouri in 1867, and established its headquarters at Independence, we find that it again turned its attention to missionary work, and not the least in importance was a revelation to the elders, given by Chas. Hall through a gift of tongues in the conference of April 7, 1889, as follows:

Thus saith the Spirit to you my servants who are called and sent by the direction of the Spirit of God to the remnants of the house of Joseph. Remember, remember how great is the responsibility that rests upon you. Be very faithful and humble. Keep my commandments and you shall be preserved. I will prepare the way before you, and you shall be instrumental in the hand of God of doing great good among the remnants of the house of Joseph. Be not alarmed or disturbed because of the trial and difficulties you will have to pass through. Be faithful and the Spirit shall support you and qualify you for the work you are called to do. Amen. – Old Record No.2, p. 95

On April 2, 1889, Elders George D. Cole and James Haldeman were “ordained” and sent on a mission to the Lamanites. We hear very little of the activities of the brethren in this mission, but in June, 1889, they were released from this mission as to working together and T. J. Franklin and Elder Cole were again appointed to labor as the Spirit directed in the regions round about. (See *Ibid.* p. 98.)

At the April conference of 1890, we find that Elder Cole reported a baptism of seven, and Elder Franklin had baptized four. (See *Ibid.* p. 120.) At the conference of December 6, 1890, Elder Cole reported the organization of a branch at Bald Mountain (Kansas) which was among the Lamanites consisting of eight members including one priest. (See Record No. 3, p. 153.) Elder T. J. Franklin also gave an encouraging report concerning his labors in Indian Territory. (See *Ibid.* p. 153.) During this same time Elder Cole reported his labors while on another mission to the Indians and thought good was done. (See Old Record, No. 2, p. 127.)

At the October 3, 1891, conference Elder Cole reported his labors at Bonner Springs, Kansas, and his willingness to go to our church in the Indian nation (Bald Mountain branch). (See Record No. 3, p. 160.)

At the April 6, 1892, conference Elder Cole again reported his work among the Indians, where he labored six weeks and baptized two. (See Record No. 3, p. 165.)

At the conference of April 6, 1895, Elder Cole again reports his work at Bald Mountain, Indian Territory. (See *Ibid.* p. 176.)

Elder Cole was provided means to go to Indian Territory. (See *Ibid.* p. 177.)

A committee was appointed at the October 6, 1896 conference to raise funds for subscription to send Elder Cole to Indian Territory. (See *Ibid.* p. 183.)

Through his efforts a number of local churches were raised up, both among the “Gentiles and Lamanites”.

At the April conference of 1929, Apostle C. L. Wheaton was appointed to have charge of “Indian Missions in the United States and Canada.” Since then he has labored at various times in Oklahoma, Washington, Montana,

Nebraska and the Dakotas; also in Eastern Canada and the Northeastern States. In 1948 he labored quite extensively among the Navajos; and at the close of this history period, 1950, was under appointment as Missionary in Charge of the work among the North American Indians.

In the latter part of 1948 he went on a mission to the Navajo Indians of the Southwest, where, due to the severe winter and the needs of the people, he was able to distribute several tons of clothing and other relief supplies.

Growing out of this experience, he introduced measures before the General Conference of 1949, petitioning the President of the United States to take steps to relieve the terrible oppression of these people. This effort, with that of other Christian-minded people of the nation, helped to spur an appropriation of over \$88,000,000 for the purpose of rehabilitation of the Navajo and Hopi Indian people.

Other men of the ministry have also done considerable work among the Lamanites; and more extensive work among them in the future is in contemplation.

VOLUME TWO
of the History of the Church of Christ

The years 1950 through 2008

Apostle Roland L. Sarratt
General Church Historian

Apostle Donald E. McIndoo
Guest Historian

“The Mission of the Church of Christ to Native Americans”

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PREFACE

History is of great worth to mankind. Being able to reflect back to an earlier time in one's own life, can give perspective to how and why things are as they are. Looking back beyond one's own existence can bring purpose and objectivity into present day affairs.

Compiling data for this history, though it be a mere fifty year period, was an experience challenging the human will to ask: What is there worthy of history to record? After the fact, when all the compiling has been done and the script written, the question is still there. Now, reality says, it is all worthy to record, if for no other reason, to teach us that there are examples of both good and bad in our past from which we might learn. So if the reader finds, in this book, things uninteresting or inappropriate for church history, perhaps we can take lessons in what we do in history making today.

In perusing the history of the Church of Christ from 1830 to the present, one can see reality. That reality is in the fact that the Lord has preserved His church through it all. When human wills and errors reigned, the Lord's hand was there to prevent total loss.

There were times, in the past one hundred seventy plus years, when this church became almost nonexistent. Miraculously, there were the few humble followers of Christ who shouldered their responsibility with faith in the Lord.



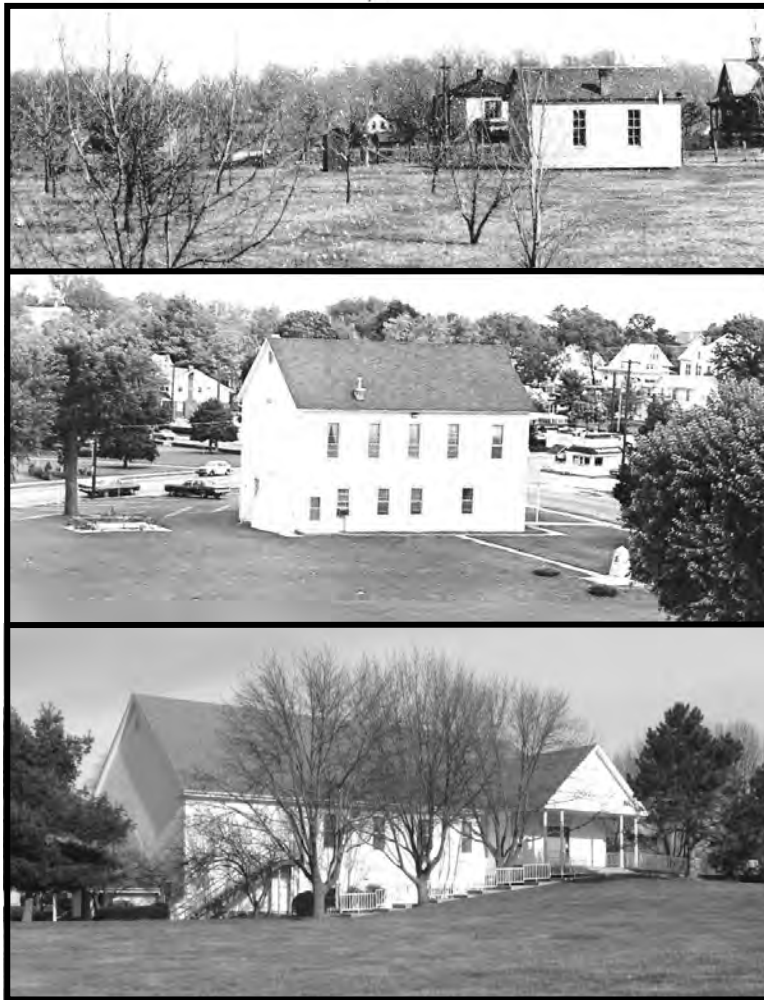
**Apostle Roland Sarratt
and his wife, June**

Their labors saved this church from being swallowed up by those who would have taken it into the darkened state of apostasy. Only by the grace

of God has this church survived the ever present mist of deception. By His grace, this church has had the divine strength to arise to the task of carrying the gospel of Christ to the world in these last days.

We do have a history which reveals human errors, but we also have a history which manifests the authority of Jesus Christ to stand firm against all evils and to remain steadfast in the work of the Lord.

Roland L. Sarratt
General Church Historian



The three Church of Christ Headquarter's Buildings at
River and Lexington Streets, Independence, Missouri:
First: 1889-1898, Second: 1902-1990, Third: 1992



1950 Church of Christ Conference

INTRODUCTION

The following is a statement written and signed by the former General Church Historian, Apostle Archie F. Bell, and his associate historians, Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton and Elder M. Harvey Seibel:

We will quote the resolution carried by the Conference of 1959 pertaining to General Church Historian and two Advisory Associates:

To The General Conference April 6, 1959
Of the Church of Christ

Greetings:

The Council of Twelve presents the following resolution for consideration and adoption:

Whereas there is an apparent need for a more complete history of the Restoration of the Church of Christ, and

Whereas it is necessary to keep abreast of current historical events, and

Whereas the present system of a Board of Historians has proven unsatisfactory, due in part to the following reasons:

(a) It is difficult for more than one individual to write the history.

(b) Alternating membership of the board is not conducive to continuity of effort.

Therefore, be it resolved:

That we recommend to the Conference that the Board of Historians be discontinued, and that we further recommend the election of a historian and two advisory associates, whose terms of office shall continue jointly for a period of four years.

The compilation of historical matter, both current and past, with the view of producing a more complete history of the church, shall be the primary responsibility of the historian.

His associates shall be permitted to examine matter, advice and edit such matter as may be determined suitable for publication.

The majority decision of the historian and his associates, as to manuscript content, shall prevail.

The historian and associates shall be under the supervision of the Council of Twelve.

Any historical material of value whatsoever shall be kept in the custody of the Library Board, to be at call of any Historian or Historical Board that may arise in the future, so that this material is not lost.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Sec'y.
Council of Twelve Apostles

In view of the above resolution, we are writing a history of the Church of Christ with headquarters on the Temple Lot. All material used will be from published accounts of the happenings. When the Master of men spoke of building His church, He spoke of it in the singular form. We, therefore, will write of other subjects as they pertain to, or may have an influence on, the Church of Christ.

Some happenings in other churches of the Restoration may be used in our history if they have some bearing on the Church of Christ.

The same will be our intention concerning churches of the world. Some may join together and become one church under one name. Some happenings among them may be interesting and informative to the Church of Christ.

The Master of men gave the following commandment, "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." If we are to watch, we must know what is taking place in the world that will in any way have an effect on the Church of Christ, and keep those happenings on record.

It is believed by the Church of Christ that the American Indian will perform a great work for Christ, not only for his own people, but for all

believers in Christ. It is our intention to keep abreast of the happenings among them the best that we can, whether they are of a religious nature or of a civil nature.

The Tribes of Israel have been scattered over the face of the earth and lost as far as history is concerned. The Scriptures promise that the time will come when they shall be gathered home to the land of their inheritance. Some of the Jews have gone to Jerusalem and surrounding territory. They have established a nation called Israel. They will have to qualify by what is in the Scripture: "Every one that is called by my name." If not, then will come to pass the thing that Christ stated, "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. For I will gather all nations (United Nations?) against Jerusalem to battle."

It is our intention to keep record on all this as well as the gathering home of the Lost Tribes.

The Arabs will have a part in this. We will try to keep a record on what they do.

There is an organization which is an avowed enemy to Christianity. It is known as Communism. It is believed that we should keep a close watch on their activities in order to be forewarned.

There are events affecting the Americans. This would also affect the Church of Christ, either directly or indirectly.

Then, last but not least, there are the signs which foretell the coming of Christ. We will try to keep record on these.

We hope that all of this will be a benefit to the reader.

Sincerely in the work for Christ,

Archie F. Bell, General Church Historian

Clarence L. Wheaton, Advisory Associate

M. Harvey Seibel, Advisory Associate

This document was among some material passed on to me along with a few pages of manuscript written by Brother Archie Bell. The undertaking

of such a work as including events of world history, although important in the fulfillment of prophecy, would be a rather monumental task. Also it would be inconsistent with the former recordings in the Outline History up to 1950.

The succeeding General Church Historian, Apostle Robert H. Jensen, indicated his intention of not following through with the inclusion of world events. He, however, did not leave any written material in the way of a manuscript of his own or any compiled research or notes. Therefore it has been left to me and my associate historians to research, compile and write as we are inclined to do. Each of us has written what we have felt to write. It has been my intention to write a manuscript starting with the year 1950 to the present somewhat consistent in style and content as “An Outline History of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)” written by Apostle Bert C. Flint.

There are additional subjects which were not included in Brother Flint’s history which I have included here. To be able to give those subjects a full accounting, I went back to their beginnings which predated 1950. Also I divided the writings according to subject rather than a strict sequence of events.

The last chapter of Brother Flint’s history, chapter 24, is entitled “Church of Christ Mission to the Lamanites” which gives a brief account of the work of the Church of Christ missionaries among the native Americans (Indians) from 1830 to 1950. As a continuation of that subject of history, the first part of Section I of this volume was researched, compiled and written by Apostle Donald E. McIndoo, a missionary who has spent many years working with the Native Americans for the church. Primarily his work has been in Mexico among the Mayan Indians. He has contributed a great deal to the success of that work. Through my suggestion and request, Brother McIndoo has written an essential part of the Church of Christ history from the early 1950s up to the present which has to do with the missionary work among Native Americans.

Roland L. Sarratt



Apostle Donald McIndoo and his wife, Betty

SECTION I.

MISSIONARY WORK OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1.

The Mission of the Church of Christ to Native Americans

Clarence and Angela Wheaton Work Among the Navajo People

No aspect of the latter-day work carries more significance to the Church of Christ than does its prophetic mission to the indigenous peoples of America. Jesus, himself, prophesied that the Book of Mormon would "... come forth from the Gentiles ..." unto the Native Americans in the last dispensation of time (see III Nephi 9:91). The fulfillment of this single mission foreshadows yet greater events that the Lord shall bring to pass.

Some of these are as follows:

1. The liberation of Jerusalem (see III Nephi 9:85-91).
2. The building of the New Jerusalem (see III Nephi 9:57-59 and 10:1-3).
3. The gathering of all Israel (see III Nephi 9:93; 10:4-7; Rom. 11:25-32).

Is it, therefore, any wonder that one of the first revelations received by young Joseph Smith pertains to this vitally important mission our Lord Jesus Christ intended for His Church, restored in the latter day? This revelation was given to our founding fathers in July of 1828:

“...for this very purpose are these plates preserved which contain these records, that the promises of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to his people; and that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name; and that through their repentance they might be saved: Amen.” -
“Book of Commandments” II:6

Many of the elders of the Church of Christ had long labored among the various tribes of Native Americans as opportunities were presented. The closing pages of the *Outline History* informed us that the Conference of 1929 had appointed Apostle C. L. Wheaton to be the Missionary in Charge of “Indian Missions in the United States and Canada”.

In January of 1949 Apostle Wheaton, part Delaware himself and a member of the League of Nations, Pan American Indians, received a letter from Howard La Hurreau, a member of the Church of Christ and of the Central Committee of the League. In this letter La Hurreau writes, “*It gives me great pleasure to tell you, you are our League’s High Priest (Chaplain - dem). You will be happy to know you were elected by 100% vote of the Council, Dec. 4th.*”
(From the files of C. L. Wheaton.)

Just a few days later, on January 19th, Apostle Wheaton and his wife, Angela, accompanied by Brother Alma Frisbey, were on their way to a mission among the Navajo people of the Southwest. It had been a terrible winter for the Navajo, many of whom lived in remote portions of the high plateau region of northern Arizona and New Mexico. Isolated by heavy snows, their livestock starving to death, the Navajo people were in dire need of assistance.

A portion of that assistance was forthcoming with the arrival of the Wheatons. Only with God's help could they have made their way over snow-packed roads to some of the isolated villages they visited, bringing supplies of food, medicine, clothing and farm machinery. They ministered to both the temporal and spiritual needs of these people in their ancient homeland, preaching with the aid of an interpreter, administering to the sick and dispensing needed material assistance. As a result of their efforts several sincere people among the Navajo were to come into the bonds of Jesus Christ. Quoting from a bulletin printed later in Independence, Missouri, we read the following:

"Elder and Mrs. Clarence L. Wheaton ... have recently returned from a six week missionary and relief trip into the heart of the Navajo Indian country, where they distributed a large supply of clothing, medicines and other relief supplies furnished by relief workers of the Reorganized Church and the Church of Christ and friends of the Indian cause." - From the files of C. L. Wheaton.

The April Conference of the Church of Christ instructed Apostle Wheaton to appeal to the President of the United States for assistance to the Indian peoples. The Wheatons had carefully chronicled the plight of the Navajo in both word and photo. Their appeal to the President did not fall on deaf ears. In May of 1949 Apostle Wheaton received a letter from President Harry Truman:

"My dear Mr. Wheaton:

With further reference to my letter of April 20, 1949, I am sending you a report on "the Navajo" which was prepared at my suggestion for the consideration of the Congress. It recommends measures which are along the line of suggestions contained in your letter."

(From the files of C. L. Wheaton.)

The Lord Opens a New Door to Native America

The October 1950 issue of the *Zion's Advocate* contained an article from the *Kansas City Times*. This was a book review published February 28, 1942. It told of an expedition to Chiapas, Mexico by Dana and Ginger Lamb. In their book they mentioned a lost city which contained a library written on golden plates. This was enough to fire the imagination of any Latter-Day Saint.

If that were not enough, the Wheatons, during a trip among the Navajo people in the spring of 1950, met a Navajo explorer and archaeologist, Mr. Antoni Nez Bah. Nez Bah told the Wheatons of studying in just such an unknown, walled city, inhabited by a tribe of white Indians, located deep in the tropical wilderness of Chiapas. The existence of such a city was also attested to by members of the League of Pan-American Indians, of which Brother Wheaton was a member. You can well imagine the magnitude of interest aroused within a people who believed in the divinity of the Book of Mormon by thoughts of such a city and such a library.

The Wheatons invited this Navajo gentleman to speak to an assembly of interested persons in Independence, which he did later that year. Mr. Nez Bah lectured for three nights and then was a guest speaker at the Temple Lot church on Sunday, September 10th. Great interest was kindled among members of the Church of Christ and the Reorganized Church. Then the Navajo who helped kindle the fire now fanned the embers by promising to guide the Wheatons into the jungles of Central America for a visit with the Great White Chief of the white Chicaragua tribe and thus verify Nez Bah's story. Interest was sufficient to provide for support of a journey by the Wheatons to visit this lost city, The fall of 1950 saw all the arrangements being made for the adventure, only to run into a great obstacle, for the Navajo now declined to guide the Wheatons. At wit's end, Apostle Wheaton took his problem to his old friend from the League of Pan-American Indians, Howard La Hurreau.

La Hurreau thought of no one who could guide the Wheatons on their quest. As a matter of interest, in an interview on June 15, 1951 La Hurreau is quoted (from the files of C. L. Wheaton.) as saying the Navajo "...*broke his vows in speaking to the Mormon people ... about the sacred city and especially by offering to take any of them to the City of the Star God.*" At this point in the narrative it is well to remember that God works in strange and marvelous ways to bring to pass His divine purposes.

What La Hurreau did provide Apostle Wheaton was to prove far more valuable than a guide to an ancient city, for he gave him a letter of introduction to the last reigning king of the Maya people in Yucatan, Nemensio Xiu (pronounced 'Shoo' - dem). This elderly gentleman, born about 1887, was the twenty-second generation of the royal Xiu family. He now lived in Ticul, Yucatan, which is only ten miles from the ancient city of Mani founded by his illustrious ancestor, Tutul Xiu, when the Maya

moved there from Uxmal. - De Landa, Friar Diego, *Yucatan before and After the Conquest*, Translated with notes by William Gates, pp. 142 – 147

Late in January of 1951 the Wheatons left Phoenix, Arizona as they started their long odyssey into Mexico. After many days of travel and many wonderful discoveries, they arrived at last in Comitán, a city in the jungles of Chiapas, Mexico. The Wheatons had a talent in quickly finding everyone in a new town that could speak English and were always well received by a hospitable people. As there were no roads leading into the isolated peninsula of Yucatan at that time, one of their new-found friends offered to fly them in his private plane to the city of Campeche on the western edge of the Yucatan Peninsula where he had business concerns.

Arriving in Campeche on February 24th, they quickly caught a bus that would take them to Muna, Yucatan where they hoped to find someone to carry them on to nearby Ticul. They had a map which also showed a road leading from Santa Clara to Ticul, and since this village came first, against hundreds of Spanish words of advice which they could not understand, they got off the bus in Santa Clara and set their luggage beside the road. Alone, and in the tropical darkness, Clarence began to walk the trail that led into the town. A pickup pulled up near him and he was greeted by a man who could speak English. The kindly bus driver had sent a note to him asking his help in getting the poor, confused *gringos* to Muna. In Muna they were able to catch a ride to Ticul and arrived late that same night. They went immediately to the home of Nemensio Xiu, only to find they could not communicate with him. A member of Xiu's family helped them find a room in which to stay and the assistance of Ramiro Lara, who had worked in New York City and would act as interpreter. This kind gentleman proved to be a friend and help to all those who would come to Mexico representing the Church of Christ.

The next day Ramiro Lara, their new friend and interpreter, came with Xiu to the home where the Wheatons were staying. As they discussed their purpose for being there, neither of the gentlemen seemed to be knowledgeable about such a city as they sought.

In her diary, Angela Wheaton made this simple notation: "Xiu said he was calling a meeting at his house for Sunday afternoon for the people to hear Howard's (la Hurreau) letter, and to meet Clarence, an officer of the League of Nations ..." Clarence and Angela thought this meeting would

help them in their quest to find the ancient walled city, but it was destined to have a much greater significance.



Lorenzo Ek, Nemensio Xiu and Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton standing in front of the Xiu home in Ticul, Yucatan in 1951.



This is the group of Maya leaders who met in the back yard of the Xiu home to meet Apostle Wheaton on his first visit to Mexico in February 1951.

At this meeting Apostle Wheaton was given the opportunity to explain to those assembled his reasons for wanting to find such a city. He spoke to them about the Book of Mormon and its promises to the Indian people.

Passages of the book were read and translated into Maya by Lara. There was great interest and excitement among those gathered in the Xiu's home.

One gentleman, Francisco Zapote, laid his hand upon the book and said, "This book is a treasure to be cherished." (Taken from Angela Wheaton's diary.) Another meeting was arranged for the following Sunday at the Xiu home. They wished to prepare a feast for their new friends, and to this meeting leaders from the surrounding towns and villages were to be invited.

Dionisio Xiu, eldest son of the king and next in line for leadership of the Maya, was brought by his father to see the Wheatons a few days later. He had been out in the forests preparing for the next planting of corn when the Wheatons had arrived. He embraced Apostle Wheaton with joy, then bowed as he kissed the hand of Sister Wheaton. His warmth was the result of a vision he had seen three weeks previously in which he had seen two people come from North America to teach his people about the great White God who had visited America long ago. Now, meeting the Wheatons, he recognized them as the people he had seen in his vision.

Sunday arrived, hot and humid, and as the Wheatons were preparing to go once again to Xiu's home for the announced meeting, the Spirit seemed to whisper to Brother Wheaton that he should take his Book of Mormon. Weighed down by the oppressive weather, he thought it to be a needless weight and was not going to take it. Again the Spirit whispered to his consciousness. Then his wife spoke up, "Clarence, you'd better take your Book of Mormon with you this morning; you may need it." (*Whispers From the Dust*, an unpublished book by Clarence and Angela.) That settled the matter, and with the book in his pocket they started off.

When they arrived at the Xiu home they found the courtyard behind the house filled with men, accompanied by a few women, dressed neatly in the traditional white clothing of the Maya. The meeting opened formally with a song by Dionisio Xiu, accompanied by guitars and drums. This was followed by an exchange of greetings and the reading of the membership cards of the League of Nations, Pan American Indians. Those present asked Brother Wheaton to be sure that Nemensio Xiu be continued as their representative. After such formalities, Nemensio Xiu stood to his feet and asked Clarence to speak to them. Now he understood why he was to bring his Book of Mormon with him.

He took the book from his pocket and had Ramiro Lara read and translate into Maya the passage from III Nephi, Chapter 5 concerning the first appearance of Jesus Christ among their forefathers. An animated and excited discussion in Maya followed the reading of this passage. Old Xiu arose and stated this was the same account recorded in their ancient records that had been destroyed by “the black-robed priests”. (He was referring to the year 1562, when the Spanish Inquisitor, Diego de Landa, came to old Mani, the city of his forefathers, and burned the ancient Maya library.) He said this account had been handed down by word of mouth over the generations since that time. Then he took the Book of Mormon in his hand, turned and addressed those present: “This is our book. It is ours.” – “Whispers from the Dust,” an unpublished book by Clarence and Angela Wheaton

How marvelously does our Lord work! The Wheatons now had opportunity to meet two brothers, Susano and Sabino Cabrera, from the nearby town of Dzan, five miles east of Ticul. These men, together with another brother, had been traveling in the jungles of Yucatan some thirty-five years before this meeting with the Wheatons. Susano tells the story. (His story is taken from a tape recording made in 1957 by Apostle E. L. Yates. Susano related the story in Maya and it was then translated into Spanish by Elder Renan Chuc. A part of this story appeared in an article by E. L. Yates in the Zion’s Advocate of 1958.) One morning they were preparing to break camp and continue on horseback to a town some distance away when an incredible sight met their eyes, something they had never before seen. Into their camp walked a tall, light-skinned man dressed in a white robe and barefoot. His long, fair hair and beard, his penetrating green eyes were certain to gain the rapt attention of these Mayan youth. He told them he had been sent by God to prophesy to the people of Bolonchén.

When he left them he quickly disappeared down the trail. It occurred to the startled youth that they were also going in this direction. Why not permit this unusual stranger to ride their spare horse? Quickly packing and mounting their horses they started after him, but they never encountered the stranger on that trail leading to Yaxché, the next town on their way. At noon the young men arrived in Yaxché and inquired about “the prophet”. They were told he had arrived in the town about seven that morning and had told the people he must go on to Bolonchén.

The tired boys mounted their sweating horses and continued onward, arriving in Bolonchén that evening. Imagine their amazement to hear that

the stranger had arrived in this same town about eight o'clock that very morning. They were told that he was to speak to the people of Bolonchén the following morning. Tired, and wishing to hear the preacher again, they spent the night with a relative in the town. Their main intent was to determine if this unusual person was, indeed, a prophet of God.

The following morning the plaza was filled with people. There were people upon the roof tops and perched in the surrounding trees, all waiting to hear the words of this stranger who said he had been sent by God. He arrived in the center of the plaza and began to preach, speaking with a voice that all could hear. "God has sent me," he began. "I come to tell you the truth, and all they who believe shall have salvation." He repeated the words of warning given by Jesus to His followers when He told them to beware of false Christs and false prophets. He told them of many things that were to take place, telling them of a great hurricane that would one day destroy the Caribbean port of Chetumal. He spoke of a time when grasshoppers would eat all the corn, causing such a scarcity there would be no seed to plant. He prophesied of a second great war which would engulf the world. (Remember, as this was taking place World War I was raging.) "After the year 1937," he told them, "you will see all these things I have come to tell you."

The highlight of his prophecy was not lost on the Cabrera brothers, for it also spoke of Ticul, their neighboring town in Yucatan, and a man well-known to them. "You shall know that one day," spoke the prophet, "the gospel shall be brought to the home of Nemensio Xiu." Imagine the thoughts of these brothers when, in 1937, Chetumal was destroyed by a terrible hurricane. Again they were caused to contemplate the words of the prophet when the people of Yucatan suffered a great famine because of a plague of grasshoppers. When the world was engulfed in a second world war, they were again reminded of the words of the prophet. And now came notice from the home of Nemensio Xiu that they were invited to hear two people from North America. Is it any wonder that Susano and Sabino Cabrera were present and listening with rapt attention to the message of the Book of Mormon that day early in March of 1951? Certainly not, for the Lord had most dramatically prepared their hearts that they be ready to receive the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As the meeting seemed to be drawing to a close, Brother and Sister Wheaton told their attentive hosts they must soon leave, for their new friends in Ticul had found a guide who would lead them in their search for

the walled city in the jungle. All who were present urged them to return quickly. They implored the Wheatons to bring them Bibles and Books of Mormon in Spanish. Susano concludes his narrative: "Clarence asked us if we would like to form a group in the bonds of the gospel, and we responded that we would. So he organized us into the Church of Christ. This took place in the town of Dzan." (This organization of which Susano spoke was in reality the organization of a Sunday School, as there was yet no ministry in Yucatan. We will read more about this in the next chapter.)

The guide who was located to help the Wheatons in their quest for the walled city of white Indian people was a young Yucatecan man who worked in the jungles of Tabasco and Chiapas, Mexico in the mahogany lumber industry. He promised he would guide them for ten pesos a day. On March 6th of 1951 the Wheatons left Yucatan as they had arrived several weeks earlier, traveling by bus. In the city of Campeche at the western edge of the Yucatan Peninsula, they boarded a train that would carry them westward toward the jungles of southern Mexico.

They disembarked from the train at the jungle town of Tenosique, Tabasco. On March 10th they began their Odyssey into the ancient land of the Maya. They left with four mules and two young Mayan men, Pedro and Ignacio, as their guides. On the second day of their journey, Angela Wheaton celebrated her 54th birthday dining on roasted monkey killed that day by one of the guides. Each day ended with the same tiring ritual, removal of the ticks accumulated during that day and the treatment of insect bites which had them looking as if they had just come down with a bad case of measles.

Six days after their departure, the Wheatons had entered Guatemala and arrived at the ruins of the ancient Mayan city of Piedras Negras. In those six long days of travel they had covered a distance of only thirty miles as the crow flies, but they were not flying with the crows; they were on mules climbing and winding their way through impenetrable jungle terrain. Streams were crossed on logs; great rivers in dugout canoes as the mules swam for their lives.

On March 19th they arrived at the camp of some Lacandon Indians. There were only three men in the tribe and a number of women and children, so a polygamous relationship existed. This had resulted from an inherited disease that made the birth of male children rare among these people.

Though greeted hospitably on their arrival, the situation seemed to become less and less friendly as the night wore on and the men sat around their late night fire. At the suggestion of their guides the return trip began early the next morning. Six days later found them again in Tenosique. From this point, the Wheatons again boarded the train to return to their auto, which had been left in Comitán, Chiapas.

The Wheatons had left the United States in an attempt to locate a city which sounded to them as if it might support some of the historical facts connected with the restoration of the church and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. All their efforts to achieve this romantic, yet noble, end came to naught in the depths of the Guatemalan rain forest. Yet what they did achieve was of far greater value than their wildest speculations. They had been instrumental in achieving that which had been prophesied by Jesus Christ, planned and set in motion by the Lord long before their own involvement.

The Gospel Work is Organized

January of 1952 finds the Wheatons again in Yucatan. They had received many invitations to tell the story of the Book of Mormon. On most of these visits Ramiro Lara had made himself available to translate. Now, as well, they had Spanish copies of the Bible and the Book of Mormon to use, so the people could read the Scriptures in their own language. Just what a remarkable change this was to the people of Yucatan was made evident to me when I heard a Mayan elder of the Church of Christ read to his congregation the beautiful prophecy from the 9th Chapter of Isaiah about the coming of Jesus Christ: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light...." He then explained to the young people of the congregation how this also applied to them: "Before the coming of Don Clarencio Wheaton to Yucatan, none of us had ever held a Bible in our hands and knew nothing about the true Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Traveling to the village of Dzan they were met by over 250 people eager to learn about the Gospel and hear about the Book of Mormon. Such meetings were conducted in most of the villages near Ticul. By mid-February the Wheatons noticed that there were fewer people in attendance at their meetings. The people in Dzan explained that it was because the Catholic priests had threatened to excommunicate anyone who

participated in such meetings. This was the beginning of a persecution that grew in intensity proportionately to the measure of success of the Gospel work.

Soon after their arrival in Yucatan during this second visit, the Wheatons met a young man named Fernando Ojeda. This young man, just in his teens, visited the Wheatons in their home and often accompanied them on their journeys to other villages. He impressed the Wheatons greatly and was to be instrumental in the growth of the work among the Maya. He spoke both Spanish and Maya fluently and was learning English as well. Fernando demonstrated a true gift for languages, had fine musical talent and possessed great leadership capabilities. Since the laws of Mexico did not permit a foreign-born minister to baptize, or otherwise perform any ordinances of the Gospel, it was the Wheaton's desire to take Fernando with them to the United States, where he could be baptized and perhaps be prepared to minister the Gospel.

The young man's father gave the Wheatons permission to take his son to the United States, but complications arose in the family and he was not able to go with them at this time. On the 17th of February, 1952 a delegation from the village of Dzan, which is five miles east of Ticul and the home of Susano and Sabino Cabrera, came to see the Wheatons. They had with them a petition signed by forty-three people asking the Church of Christ to send a minister to their village and to two other villages where Apostle Wheaton had held services. All these people had been disfellowshipped from the Catholic Church because of their continued interest in the Church of Christ. Fernando's father, although a Catholic himself, gave his son permission to travel to these villages and teach the people from the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Such efforts by lay people are still very common in Mexico, where many villages are without any ministry.

In a letter to their old friend, Howard La Hurreau, who had first given them the letter of introduction to the Mayan patriarch, Nemensio Xiu, the Wheatons wrote the following:

“Relative to our trip down south this time we had a very fine missionary trip into Yucatan, and look forward to returning there again this Fall for possible (sic) a six months stay. While there this last time we were very kindly received by the Xius and left them as being the best of friends. We succeeded in laying the foundation for three Sunday Schools, which we left in charge of a fine

young Mayan friend who could speak English, Maya and Spanish.” - *Whispers From the Dust*, an unpublished book by Clarence and Angela Wheaton

Thus began the apprenticeship of Fernando Ojeda in a work prophesied long before in the Book of Mormon. Left on his own, this zealous young man taught the Scriptures, organized choirs and increased interest in the Church of Christ in all the villages which surrounded Ticul.

The historic Xiu family that had been so instrumental in opening the Gospel work in Yucatan never came into the church; nevertheless, the Lord had used them to bring to pass His mighty work. The elder Xiu shortly thereafter passed away. His son, Dionisio, who had received the vision about the coming of the Wheatons with the Gospel, was shortly to be killed in an unfortunate accident. The twenty-two generations of the kingly reign of the Xius had come to an end just as a new priesthood was commencing among the Mayan people.

The successful work of Fernando Ojeda brought increasing persecution to the faithful believers. As they gathered in thatch-roofed homes for their meetings, a great procession of hundreds would leave the large Catholic church on the plaza and assemble by candlelight in the street outside the home where services were to be held. The next half-hour would bring a rain of rocks upon the roof of the meeting place. So noisy was the stoning that nothing could be accomplished within except the singing of hymns. But wonderfully, the hymns always prevailed and as the tired rock-throwers departed for home the meeting would commence. It was not uncommon to see some of these same people stay behind, enter the grounds and stand outside to hear the teaching or preaching within. Occasionally several would remove their hats and enter the home to participate in the service.

On one occasion in the autumn of 1953, on a scheduled meeting night in Dzan, the Catholic community waited on the main street for Fernando Ojeda to disembark from the old bus that came from Ticul. There was talk that he would be killed. In the darkening night, old Sabino Cabrera ran barefooted through the jungle to warn Fernando not to come for services that night. Sabino had not yet returned to Dzan when the bus finally arrived, so the believers did not know if Fernando had been warned or not. Fearing he was on the bus, some of the young men pushed their way through the crowd to meet him and offer some protection if possible. When the crowd realized that Fernando was not on the bus they vented

their anger on these young men. They were knocked to the ground and beaten, then dragged by their hair to the local jail where they were incarcerated for the night. Was such persecution to hinder the growth of the Gospel work? Absolutely not! As the persecution increased, even so did the Lord raise up more and more zealous, yet humble, believers.

The Church is Established in Yucatan

By the year 1953 the Wheaton's dream for young Fernando had been realized. He had been able to come to the United States where he became fluent in English and his understanding of the Restored Gospel was greatly expanded. On March 8, 1953, Fernando was baptized in Phoenix, Arizona. Later that year he was called to be an elder in the Church of Christ and ordained by Apostles Arthur Smith, Leon Gould and Clarence Wheaton. He was to serve the church in Yucatan as an elder, a pastor and later as an evangelist, to which office he was ordained in 1955. Before the year 1953 was over there were more than thirty newly baptized members of the Church of Christ in the village of Dzan and several men had been called to the ministry.



Shown here are some of the first members of the Church of Christ in Dzan, Yucatan, baptized in the summer of 1953. On the back row, from left to right are Sabino Cabrera, Susano Cabrera, Filemon Manrique and Fernando Ojeda.



This photo, taken in December of 1953, shows some of the first members of the Church of Christ who were baptized in 1953.

Early in December of 1953, Apostle Wheaton made another trip to Yucatan accompanied by a newly ordained elder, Don McIndoo. Don had just been discharged from the U.S. Coast Guard after two years of active duty during the Korean War. Now, without a job or other commitments, the invitation to accompany the long-time friend of the family on a church mission to the Mayan people seemed the realization of a lifetime of interest and longings.

Ten years earlier Don's young life almost came to an abrupt end because of a terrible amoebic infection. Although the doctors despaired of his chances for living, God had other plans for the young man just graduated from elementary school. During his six months of hospitalization and recuperation Don had read every book in the small Phoenix city library about native American peoples, their ancient civilizations and many an adventure, which had unfolded in the forests and jungles of tropical America.

Now he found himself standing in a crowded third-class bus bouncing over the rough roads of Mexico's southern state of Veracruz. Fellow passengers included not only local people traveling to the next town, but their chickens, turkeys and pigs as well. Though Apostle Wheaton was accustomed to such varied experiences, every moment brought a new adventure to his young companion. Late that evening the bus jolted to a halt near the plaza of the little port of Coatzacoalcos. Clarence and Don

had come to the end of the road. In the rapidly fading twilight they hurriedly sought the shelter of a local hotel near the riverfront.

As the clerk opened the door and sought for a light switch in the darkness, a musty odor assailed their nostrils. The dim light suspended from the ceiling revealed mold-covered walls and two poorly made old iron beds. It wasn't the kind of place one would wish to spend a lot of time, so Apostle Wheaton and Don weren't the least upset when the night clerk awakened them at 3:30 a.m. for the next leg of their journey.

Long before the first light of day they crossed the great Coatzacoalcos River in a large dugout canoe powered by an outboard motor. As the first rays of sunlight warmed the tropical forest they boarded the five-car train that would carry them through the jungles to the ancient Spanish port of Campeche on the western coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. Well, it was supposed to carry them to Campeche; however, the old engine grew tired somewhere in the jungles of Tabasco and rested there for two days. On board was a group of four young musicians who did their best to keep the travelers in the first class car entertained during this forced rest stop. Before leaving that beautiful tropical paradise, all the food in the dining car had been eaten and now the Indians who had come out of the jungle were doing a booming business selling their native foods.

Eventually the city of Campeche was reached and the two missionaries watched their luggage loaded on top of the old bus which would carry them to their next stop, Mérida, Yucatan. Upon their arrival, imagine the surprise of Apostle Wheaton when the unloaded baggage didn't reveal his own luggage. It had been off-loaded somewhere along the way. As was custom, it wasn't until a substantial reward had been offered that the local police were able to locate the missing bags. Now the two could continue on their way to Ticul, the center of the on-going missionary activity.

The two missionaries were totally dependent upon young Fernando Ojeda on many occasions. Don, encountered real religious persecution for the first time, was confronted by the antagonism of a local Mayan shaman and began to develop an appreciation of the difficulties involved in moving into a different cultural setting. He learned of the Maya's highly developed sense of humor as he celebrated his 24th birthday with his new friends. Breaking the special *piñata* they had prepared for him, it was not candy that tumbled out, but a large iguana that landed on his shoulder. There was

one more thing he developed on this first journey to Yucatan, an undying love for these Mayan people and a great respect for their dedication and commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Friendships which would last a lifetime were quickly developed.

During those winter months the construction of the first church building was begun in Dzan. Brother Sabino Cabrera, one of the young men whose hearts had been prepared to receive the Gospel by their experience with the “prophet” so long before, donated the land for the construction. On his property were the remains of an ancient Mayan temple that provided ready-cut stones for the foundation and walls. Now Apostle Wheaton’s years of experience as a carpenter came into use as he added the frame and metal roof to the new house of worship.

This first trip to Yucatan was an educational experience for Elder McIndoo. Here he first encountered the difficulties of traveling and ministering the Gospel in a land that used a language different than his own. He quickly learned that a year of high school Spanish doesn’t qualify one to preach, hardly even visit, in that tongue.

The following year saw the first of many weddings take place in the new church building. The happy young couple were two of those first members baptized the year before. With his musical talent, Elder Fernando Ojeda was able to organize a choir, both in Dzan and Ticul. To this day those members who had been taught by Fernando are readily recognized by their knowledge of our hymns, their ability to harmonize and their love of music. Apostle Clarence Wheaton and his wife, Angela, made several trips a year to Yucatan to supervise and assist in the growth of the church.

In the summer of 1954, Elder Don McIndoo, and his wife, Betty, were assisting the Wheatons and Elder Ojeda with the work in Yucatan. Regular services were now being held in three neighboring towns, Dzan, Ticul and Pustunich. There was hardly a service without some form of persecution taking place. The young American couple found it easier to travel the rocky and muddy five miles to Dzan on rented bicycles than in their auto, so this was their primary mode of travel. Later they were to learn that a plan had been formulated to ambush them on the road to Dzan. On their bicycles they would have been an easy target, but it was learned that the Wheatons were going to arrive shortly, so the ambush was delayed until all the missionaries could be taken out of the way simultaneously.

A few weeks later Brother and Sister Wheaton, driving to Dzan with a truck filled with young people from Ticul, were ambushed by two men with shotguns. After the truck passed, the men stepped into the road and fired two rounds of shotgun pellets at the back window. Once again, the blessings of the Lord prevailed. Just as the guns were fired, the rear wheels of the truck hit one of the numerous protruding slabs of limestone and bounced high in the air. All the pellets struck the double-walled back doors of the truck just below the window and no one was even slightly injured. An interesting sidelight is that this attack was common knowledge to the people of Ticul and the perpetrators were well-known. I was told many years after the incident that one of the gunmen got what he deserved for, while hunting deer, he fell from the tree and his shotgun discharged, blowing off his leg.

The Church Grows

After several years laboring in this field, Brother and Sister Wheaton were sent by the church to labor in Israel for three years. Now Apostle E. Leon Yates was placed in charge of this field. Brother Yates had previously traveled to Yucatan with Apostle Wheaton in 1955, so the work was not completely new to him. However, the work was expanding now and his travels took him farther and farther from the original endeavor in Dzan and Ticul.



Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton
and his wife, Angela



Apostle E. Leon Yates
and his wife, Francis

Brother Yates realized it was time to retire from the Phoenix Fire Department and devote full time to his missionary travels. For many years he was accompanied by his wife, Frances, on their extended trips to Mexico. While the tools of Brother Yates were primarily the Bible and Book of Mormon, his wife always carried to Yucatan her sewing machine. Clothing and stuffed animals she made on this machine thrilled both children and their parents. Her love and kindness, the reading of Spanish stories, which she brought from the States for the children, are remembered by many to this day.

Before the decade came to an end, there were church groups well-established in a number of towns and villages. The missionary zeal of the new converts carried them to other towns where they had relatives or friends. All this while persecution continued and grew even more severe in some of the small villages, such as the henequen plantations that were scattered throughout Yucatan. Here the people were dependent upon the plantation owners for both work and housing. In the village of Uayalcéh, for example, a young elder, Eusebio Yam, came from Ticul to bring the Gospel to friends and family members. Since the owners forbade any religion other than Catholic in the village, Elder Yam entered the town by night. Services were held behind closed doors and shuttered windows late at night. A single candle provided just enough light to read and study the scriptures.

As the number of believers and converts grew, they were often incarcerated in the town jail. Elder Yam was forbidden to enter the plantation village. Another elder of the Church of Christ, Cayetano Alfaro of Ticul, now picked up the burden of this ministry. Elder Alfaro was a baker and traveled to nearby towns to sell the breads he daily made in the large oven in his back yard. Now, carrying two five-gallon tins of his products on a stick over his shoulders, he also came to Uayalceh to sell, and then remained to conduct services with the believers. The plantation overseer exerted greater and greater pressure on the little band of believers. Eventually Isidro Koyoc, in whose home services were held, decided it was time to leave this place where there was no freedom of religion. Isidro and his son, Plácido, together with their families, left the village with all their earthly belongings on their backs. They traveled a great distance and worked in several places before settling down on the outskirts of the friendly town of Yobain where they were well-received.

Having obtained work at the local henequen plantations, they built their one-room homes and began holding services. The little group, consisting of several families, decided they needed to cooperate in a project that would provide them with a pulpit, a guitar and a gasoline lantern. They pooled their meager resources - four chickens were donated and a pen was built to hold them and await the increase. That first night a fox got in the pen and killed two of the chickens. But they were not to be denied, and before long a guitar accompanied the beautiful hymns sung in the warm light of a Coleman lantern. This little congregation warmly received Brother and Sister Yates, as well as all the ministry of the church.

Today the growing congregation of Yobain meets in a lovely and immaculately maintained church building, constructed with the aid of their brothers and sisters of the United States with whom they deeply feel a warm and Christian bond. The congregation is pastored by Elder Plácido Koyoc M., grandson of Isidro Koyoc who led the Saints to this haven in search of freedom to worship the Lord.

Back in Uayalcéh, the little group of believers who remained behind were held together by a zealous and faithful young woman named Ester Tuyúb. She gathered the group together, taught Sunday School, led prayer meetings and generally encouraged the little band not to lose heart or give up hope. The visiting elders were now aided in their travel to Uayalcéh by Apostle Yates and his wife. As a result, the plantation owners threatened

them also with death if they continued evangelizing in the village. Apostle Yates wisely took these threats to the American Consulate in Mérida. The proper authorities were advised of the treatment being afforded the members of the newly established church. These authorities went to the offending towns and informed the principals that such actions would no longer be tolerated. The Gospel work entered into a quieter and more peaceful era and continued to prosper.

Today the village of Uayalcéh houses a beautiful church building and is pastored by Elder Felipe Uluác, the son-in-law of Ester, the young woman who had held the church together during its darkest hours. This congregation is blessed with a large and enthusiastic group of young people. Many of these devoted young people joined the church in opposition to the desires of their parents. Sister Ester acts as a beloved confident and mentor to the young women of this group who are spiritually isolated from their families.

Early in the fall of 1967 the Council of Apostles received a letter from the Saints in Yucatan:

“The members and friends of the Church desire that when you receive this humble letter it will transmit to you their memory of the love you were able to disburse among us...and inform you of what happened here on the passing of the hurricane Buelah this past month. It destroyed our homes, uprooted our limited crops and killed our little domestic animals, leaving us in complete misery. Thinking of our families, there is nothing we can do but trust to the will of Christ. The members and friends of our beloved Church come to you begging that you may help us on this occasion in which we remain abandoned.” - Zion’s Advocate, December 1967, p. 183



Baptism of Roger Can by Apostle E. L. Yates on his first visit to Mexico in 1955.



The congregation of Dzan, Yucatan shown in front of the first Church of Christ in Mexico, completed in the winter of 1955.

Brother and Sister Yates quickly left their home in Missouri to find means of helping the brethren in Mexico. They arrived in Yucatan on the 12th of October. With some of the brethren from Ticul and Dzan they soon made a visit to Kopté, one of the villages hardest hit by the hurricane. Loaded in the camper with their passengers was 600 pounds of corn for the residents of this community. It seemed as if all the townspeople of Kopté were at the church service that night. The borrowed building was full to the seams and those unable to enter were listening at the windows and doors. After the service Brother Eucario Pool asked the people if they wished to continue with such services, and they indicated their desire to do so. (E. L. Yates' Diary.)

Corn is the staple of the Maya diet. With it tortillas are made, and these tortillas are used to eat small amounts of soup, beans, squash, chicken or eggs. Now the people of Kopté had no corn, and without the corn there are never enough of the other food products to maintain health. Seeing the great need of these humble people, Brother Yates wrote an impassioned letter to the Church at large, requesting assistance for the impoverished people of Kopté. This plea was published in the December issue of the *Zion's Advocate* that year and the aid flowed into the church and on to Yucatan.

The months of December and January saw Brother Yates able to deliver load after load of corn to the townspeople of Kopté. At times he had to remove the camper from his pickup and drive great distances to purchase the needed corn. About four tons of corn were delivered to the village. Apostle Yates made Brother Eucario Pool the person in charge of dispensing this corn to the villagers as it was needed. Brother Pool asked him for some guidelines as to its use: Should it be distributed just to members of the Church of Christ or was it to be given to the Catholic families as well? Brother Yates, in typical fashion, answered this question with his own terse question: “Do Catholics get hungry?”

There was a marvelous response to this humanitarian effort. For years, one could not enter the town of Kopté without being greeted by hundreds of friendly salutations. A more important response was made known to Brother Yates on his first visit in January. At that time he was shown a large piece of land which the people had donated for the building of a church. Two days later, on January 4, 1968, on a subsequent visit, *“a legal document was read showing that the piece of land had been legally nationalized for a church to be built.”* - E. L. Yates' Diary

During that year a church was built by the townspeople of Kopté and remains the meeting place of an active local of the Church of Christ to this day.

The great adversary to God's work is ever watchful. As the external persecution diminished, there arose some problems within the membership of the church. Several of the ministry and members of a few congregations became at odds with one another and with the missionary in charge of the field. Charges were made against him to the General Church, and the Church, at one point, had to send an investigative committee to look into these problems. Once again the services of Ramiro Lara, Brother Wheaton's original translator, proved to be very helpful to this committee, none of whom spoke Spanish. The missionary in charge of the field was exonerated of any wrongdoing. However, a number of the members and several valuable ministers among the Maya people became discouraged by the events and left the church. One of those who withdrew from the church in 1963 was Elder Fernando Ojeda who had been so very helpful in the first years of the work among the Maya.

These were dark days for the work in Yucatan. Had Apostle Yates not been a strong and determined person, the work could have easily stagnated

and disintegrated completely. But this was the Lord's work; He had prepared His people for it and established it. He had protected and led His people during those beginning years and it would not be permitted to falter now. New ministry were called and a humble, yet strong elder of the church, Cayetano Alfaro, was ordained to the office of Evangelist in 1968 and helped Brother Yates maintain and advance the gospel work into many new areas.

The ordination of Brother Alfaro presented yet another test of faith to Apostle Yates and his wife. It was still against Mexican law for a foreign minister to perform official acts in that country. For this reason, on February 9, 1968, Brother Yates, his wife, Elder Vicente Poot and Elder Alfaro crossed the southern border of Mexico into British Honduras (present day Belize - dem) to care for the ordination. Upon leaving Mexico Brother and Sister Yates had to temporarily give up their visas and their car permit. Then they were told they would have to go to the Mexican Consulate in Belize City to obtain new ones. Since this was a Saturday they would have to wait until Monday to go to the Consulate. This, in turn, caused them many complications with the Immigration and Customs officials of British Honduras. In their endeavor to resolve these problems, Brother and Sister Yates had to wade through miles of Latin American red tape. In the process they had given up their visas, their car permit and even their birth certificates, none of which had been returned to them. At this point they could not prove their identity, nor even that they had ever been born (this is not a light or humorous matter in Latin America).

Their traveling companions returned to their homes, but Brother and Sister Yates had to remain in British Honduras. Most of their possessions were back in their room in Yucatan and they had to live in their vehicle on the Caribbean beach of British Honduras.

Under less stressful circumstances this might be the dream of many a tourist, but Brother Yates was not a tourist, he was a missionary with important responsibilities to fulfill. The time weighed heavily upon his shoulders. Three days later they finally obtained their visas and headed for the border. Arriving at the Immigration checkpoint their papers were again confiscated by the officials and they were told they must obtain special permission to enter Mexico from the Mexican Consulate in Belize City.

After waiting for yet another three days, the Consul told them they were not permitted into the country because they had on record that E. L. Yates was “*a director or member of the Central of Independence, Missouri.*” - E. L. Yates’ Diary

The Consul also stated that this organization was the Ku Klux Klan. He further stated that Brother Yates had insulted his government by giving corn to the hungry; the Mexican government had not asked for help and did not need such help. It is obvious that some enemy of the Church, someone familiar with the work of Brother Yates and the location of the General Church had filed these preposterous charges against him to impede the work of the Gospel. It would take seventeen days to handle all the red tape, find passage for their vehicle back to the United States on a “banana boat” and fly back to Miami, Florida. The threat of potential arrest hung heavily over Apostle Yates as he continued his ministry among the Maya people. Only his great love for these people and the Gospel of Jesus Christ kept him returning to minister to them for more than another decade.

For more than twenty years Brother and Sister Yates devoted their energy, time, resources and prayers to this work of the Lord. In 1970 Elder Don McIndoo, now a school teacher and absent from Yucatan for sixteen years, was able to travel with Brother Yates during the summer months. This was to prove very important to Don, as he could now benefit first hand from all the experience of Apostle Yates. He was able to intimately know the people and their needs, improve his very limited Spanish and, above all, maintain his love for the work in Yucatan as had each of the others who had labored there.

During the continued ministry of Apostle Yates in Yucatan there were times when his arrest and expulsion from the country seemed imminent. At times his freedom was guaranteed only by Divine intervention. An example of one such instance occurred when he and Elder McIndoo were driving to the town of Chunhuhú in the territory of Quintana Roo to attend a church service that night. On the next morning they had to leave this town early because they had an appointment for a service in Peto, a town back in Yucatan. To return to Yucatan they had to pass through an Immigration checkpoint, the same authorities that had threatened his arrest previously.

DANGER

Elder McIndoo was driving as they entered Quintana Roo and Brother Yates was sitting in the passenger seat. Suddenly he sat upright with a startled look on his face; he had just experienced an open vision. In this vision he was shown the very checkpoint they had recently passed and would meet again on the morrow. In the heavens above the checkpoint on the highway, he saw printed, the word "DANGER" in large letters. No stranger to experiences with the Holy Spirit, Brother Yates knew the Lord had warned him of impending danger at this checkpoint. After the services in Chunhuhú that evening, the two began a long journey that would allow them to enter Yucatan by another, lesser used route. They traveled until midnight, caught a few hours sleep and were on the road again before daybreak. They had to travel many miles on an unknown, unpaved *sac be* (white limestone road) to reach their destination. Fifteen minutes before Sunday School was to begin they arrived at the home where services were to be held, very tired but safe.

During the winter of 1970-71, Apostle Yates went to Yucatan accompanied by Apostle William Sheldon. Each trip found the missionaries going to a village, Naranjal, deep in the jungles of Quintana Roo. It required a twelve-mile walk over jungle trails. The village consists of some twenty thatch-roofed homes scattered over a ten acre area. This work was opened by Elder Vicente Poot. Here services are held in the large home of Antoliano Canché from about seven until eleven in the evening.

Our Mayan elders are ever ready to teach and preach the restored gospel. When Brother Yates preaches in Spanish, they translate the sermon into Maya, as there are many people in the small villages who do not speak Spanish. When Brother Sheldon was asked to preach, he did so in English and Brother Yates translated the sermon into Spanish and one of the elders then translated it into Maya. This makes for a long service, but the people of these villages are unencumbered by the time limitations to which we are accustomed. As there is no electricity in these villages, there is little work, no radio or television programs to serve as a distraction. The homes are only illuminated by candlelight.

In the year 1974 two Mayan elders of the church, Vicente Poot and Plácido Koyoc Yam, were called and ordained to the office of evangelist.

The work of the Gospel expanded into the three states of the Yucatan Peninsula, Campeche, Yucatan and Quintana Roo. With aid from the General Church, a number of church buildings were built and furnished in the states of Yucatan and Quintana Roo. Before the end of the twentieth century the Church of Christ had constructed twelve church buildings in the two states and a large reunion facility constructed in Mérida which the congregation of that city uses for their local services.

The coming of the 1980's found Apostle Leon Yates, who had labored in this field for the better part of three decades, no longer able to travel to Yucatan. The newly ordained apostle, Don McIndoo, who had been in joint charge of this field with Apostle Yates for several years, now traveled there with the assistance of Elder James E. Yates. This decade would see another young man, Elder Alvin J. Moser III, begin to labor in Yucatan. Brother Moser was a nephew of Apostle Leon Yates and had often listened to the stories of his experiences in Yucatan as Brother Yates ministered in his home. At an early age he had desired to have a part in this work and now the opportunity was presented.

Brother Moser was soon to be called and ordained as an apostle and given joint charge of this field with Brother McIndoo by the Conference of 1990. Apostle Moser's rapid grasp of the Spanish language was both a surprise and a joy to the people and he has continued an active ministry among them. Apostles Moser and McIndoo were assisted by many other members of the ministry from the United States during the final two decades of the twentieth century. A number of lay members of the church have also visited in Yucatan and aided in the work there by their presence, their love and spiritual influence.

During the latter part of the 1980's, Elder Plácido Koyoc Yam and his son, Priest Plácido Koyoc Matú, conceived of a series of special classes for young men who could benefit by a more intense study of the Church and its beliefs. It was their thought that these men could one day be of great help to their pastors. During the January, February and March visit of Brothers McIndoo and Moser, this first series of classes was initiated. Each Sunday about twenty young men from a number of different locals arose early enough to arrive in Yobain by 10:00 a.m. The women of the Koyoc family, assisted by other ladies of the Yobain congregation, saw to it that all were fed between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. Then began a four-hour session of intense study.

What a joy it was to see these young people so eager to learn! They gave their only free day to come to class and paid their own transportation costs at great sacrifice to themselves. The students were furnished with notebooks, printed lessons, dictionaries, Bible dictionaries and concordances. Young men who had completed six years or less of formal education now immersed themselves in studying and learning. Within a few years five of those who participated in these classes were called to the office of elder, priest or teacher in the Church of Christ under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the work of the Gospel began to blossom as never before. Today, four of those men now serve as pastors of their congregations.

In February of 1991 a wonderful celebration was held in the town of Dzan. Here was the place the work really had been introduced forty years before by Brother Clarence Wheaton and his wife, Angela, with the help of young Fernando Ojeda. Here, behind the first church building constructed by the Church of Christ in Mexico a fortieth anniversary ceremony was conducted. Almost all of the thirteen congregations in Mexico were represented at this joyous occasion, the first of what would become an annual February reunion.

There were over three hundred people in attendance and thirteen of them were from the United States. Apostles Jay Moser and Don McIndoo were present, accompanied by their wives, Chris and Betty. Two members of the General Bishopric, Elders Leslie Case and Smith Brickhouse, were in attendance, along with Bill and Karin Malone. Elder Richard Wheaton, whose parents had initiated this wonderful work was able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. A quartet consisting of Allen and Czerna Kauffman and Rodger and Martha Bruner joined many local groups in singing beautiful songs of praise to our Lord. Young Brother Plácido Koyoc Matú was in charge of the meetings and Brother McIndoo gave the principal address, rehearsing the marvelous events which led up to the establishment of the Restored Gospel among this ancient people of Israel in fulfillment of prophecy. It was a memorable occasion for all present.



The Mayan ministry of Yucatan, Mexico with Apostle Donald McIndoo: Placido Koyoc Matu, Vicente Poot, Fernando Castillo, William Serralta, Placido Koyoc Yam, Roger Can, Melchor Ku, Sergio Uluac, Jose Moo.



The dedication of the Reunion facility of the Church of Christ on October 20, 1996.



The annual Youth Camp of 2003



The annual Youth Camp of July, 2004 at Rancho Jacinto Canek,
near Dzan, Yucatan.

The Mayan ministry of Yucatan has become very self-sufficient and well-organized. During the early part of his decade land had been purchased near the highway that encircles the city of Mérida and construction begun

of a reunion facility for general activities. In October of 1996 members from ten of the locals gathered for the dedication of this facility.

The ministry use this facility for their monthly conference for planning purposes. They have organized two annual reunions at the reunion facility in Mérida and conduct an annual three-day Youth Camp which is well attended and highly motivational to the young people of Yucatan and Quintana Roo. This Youth Camp has closely bonded together the widely scattered local congregations as nothing else had done before.

These young people now look forward to the presence of the Dan Lawrence family for this annual event. Brother and Sister Lawrence, with their son, Jesse, have assisted in this work each summer since 2001. Brother Lawrence helps in the teaching of classes, while his wife, Manon, directs music classes and organizes a choir. Her efforts are greatly appreciated by a people who love music.

Several other church-wide activities are now held on a regular basis, an annual Christmas program and several reunions for the younger children. Such activities are usually held at the Church of Christ Reunion facility in the capital city of Merida, since it is more accessible to all those who have to travel by bus or taxi. The children's reunions are supervised by Plácido Koyoc Matú and his father, Plácido Koyoc Yam, and the classes are taught by the more mature and zealous participants of the Youth Camp. Most importantly, the little children love it and look forward to it.

The four elders from Yucatan who are under General Church appointment, Plácido Koyoc Yam, Plácido Koyoc Matú, Vicente Poot, and Roger Can have participated in the April Ministers' Conference, Missouri Reunions, the Teen Challenge Youth Camp and the August Ministers' Conference in the United States. Both the Yucatan ministry and the church in the States have been blessed by this annual participation.

In the meetings of the Council of Apostles prior to the 1998 Conference, the Holy Spirit moved upon several of the Council members and there was a calling to this office that would fill the vacancies which had long existed. Wonderful testimony of the divinity of this calling was given to all present. Two of those called were Mayan elders from Yucatan, Plácido Koyoc Yam and Plácido Koyoc Matú. Elder Plácido Koyoc Yam received a powerful witness to the divinity of his calling as he was studying for a

class he was to teach at the July Youth Camp in Mexico and was ordained to that office during the Missouri reunion in August of 1998. His son, Plácido Koyoc Matú, was ordained the following year. They now share the responsibility for the work in Mexico and throughout Central America. They have made trips to Belize, Guatemala and Honduras.

The Cherokee Nation

In the summer of 1974, Elder M. Harvey Seibel and Sister Lovita G. Seibel arrived at the home of Brother Seaborn (Seab) Bradley and Sister Sallie Bradley in anticipation of establishing a missionary outreach among the Cherokee in the Big Cove area of Cherokee, North Carolina. The spiritual events leading up to this moment caused faith to buoy up in the heart and soul of this elderly missionary couple as they were graciously welcomed into the home of this previously unknown brother and sister in Christ.

Brother Harvey had just completed the exhaustive work of writing and publishing his work, "Priesthood Through The Ages." In the final weeks of the printing of this book, Harvey was already considering where he could best serve the Lord upon its completion. He made it a matter of prayer, a vigil night after night. One night he received an answer to his continual petition before God. He heard the words, "Go to the apostle!" As he contemplated these words, he could not determine to which apostle he was being directed to go, so he continued to pray for direction. Finally, as the work on his book drew to a conclusion, he was further instructed, "The apostle is Don Housknecht; the work is with the Cherokee."

Upon visiting with Brother Housknecht, Brother Harvey was presented with the names of Brother and Sister Bradley. In corresponding with Sister Bradley, a warm welcome was extended to the Seibels. The appointed time soon arrived and the Lord's missionaries were on their way to their final mission, arriving at the doorstep of the Bradleys. Brother Tom Bradley provided a space for their small trailer.

When the Seibels arrived at their home, the members of the Bradley family were already members of the Church of Christ. Sister Sallie gives her testimony of how this came to be. "... we were both born, raised and lived all of our lives in Cherokee, North Carolina, nestled in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains (The Land of the Big Smoke), on the Qualla

Indian Reservation. We both held to the Christian morals and beliefs and were raised to believe in God, and still Seab would not embrace and join any of the local churches because, he said, 'They are all after the same thing, our money, and none are right!' Seab 'kept his distance' as he felt 'there is something wrong, and they weren't practicing the Christian principles as they should.' My heart was sad over this condition and I prayed long and hard that we would some day find a church which we could embrace, one that we could love, and join, and raise our family in. In 1949, my prayers were answered. R. R. Robertson, an Apostle of the Church of Christ (TL), came to Cherokee to visit with my boss, Mr. Ralph Hatcliff. We were invited to a home preaching service, which we attended. After the service, Seab said to me, 'Now there is a church I could join!'" - Gould, Samuel, an unpublished document, "History of the Church of Christ (TL) – Calico Local"

It was during this time that Seab, Sallie, and their son Tom were baptized into the Church of Christ. This was Brother Robertson's last missionary trip prior to his passing from this life. Brother Overcast, Apostle Joe Kidd and Apostle Don Housknecht continued to hold services in the Bradley home during the ensuing decades.

The years of labor that followed this initial meeting of the Seibel and Bradley families seemed without a lot of promise as measured by man. Meetings were held in the Bradley home. Brother Seibel took classes to learn the Cherokee language and witnessed to all who would listen about the Restored Gospel. A decision was jointly made by Seab, Sallie, Harvey and Lovita to construct a church building and commence conducting services. The Bradleys donated a parcel of land for the building, and Brother Harvey began drawing up plans.

The building was constructed with donated materials and labor. Sister Sallie bought the bricks for the foundation and Brother Harvey bought the cement and dug the trenches for the foundation. When the foundation had set, Brother Harvey began the framing of the building and Sister Sallie provided the materials for the floor. Once the flooring was in, services were conducted in the evenings for all who would attend. During the days, Brother Harvey labored under extreme difficulty because of advanced age and several physical handicaps which beset him.

As the building neared completion, Brother and Sister Seibel returned to their home for a brief visit. Meanwhile Sister Sallie pushed forward with

the project. She paid for the electrical wiring to be installed. What a wonderful surprise for the Seibels when they returned! While they hung the lighting fixtures, Sr. Sallie had the water hooked up from their mountain cistern. She also procured bathroom fixtures, chairs, tables, double doors for the entrance and a pulpit.

The Seibels were now able to move their small trailer next to the church building. The missionary efforts were exciting as the first two candidates for baptism came forward. Sister Inez Wolfe and her youngest son, Eric Wolfe, were baptized on August 21, 1977. In 1978, the long-awaited day for the dedication of the mission church finally arrived. There were forty-five people in attendance, and Brother Bushyhead provided the dedication message. The service was followed by a potluck dinner on the church grounds. A glorious time was had by all present.

As the work of building came to a close, Brother Seibel prayed earnestly for direction. One night he received an open vision, in which he saw a large fallen tree which spread through the Big Cove area. As he watched, two vibrant green spruce trees sprang up behind the fallen tree. He was made to know that the fallen tree represented the Baptist faith in this area and that the two green trees were the first two baptisms that had taken place.

As time passed, our brother and sister continued to pray, wanting to know what their efforts might bring forth. That night they received an answer to their prayers, "If you remain faithful in your charge, I will raise up a faithful priest to carry the work forward." Sister Lovita Seibel was given a vision of a young man walking the mountainous paths as heavenly light fell around him. She was given to know his name would be Samuel. This knowledge gave the elderly couple strength to continue on with their efforts.

Brother Samuel Gould, and his wife, Linda, together with their two children began visiting whenever Sam's work allowed. On the weekend in September, 1977 that Linda decided to unite with the Church of Christ, she was visited by Apostle Leon Yates who announced that "the day had arrived for her baptism". This was the third baptism in the little congregation.

In April of 1978, Brother Sam and his wife, Linda began to earnestly assist in the work in Cherokee. On June 19, 1978, the Calico Local was formally

organized with eight charter members. Elder M. Harvey Seibel was elected as pastor of the new Local.

Brothers Seibel and Gould made a systematic approach to spreading the Gospel. They made a map that showed every home in the Big Cove area. Their intention was to visit each home at least once every year. About this time, the group was visited by Apostle William Sheldon. Through him Brother Sam was called to be a Priest in the Church of Christ. During their visits they encountered a woman, Mildred Wolfe, who began to attend services. She was made to know that she needed to be baptized into the Church of Christ. She was baptized by Priest Sam Gould in June of 1981.

A year later a missionary outreach program was begun. Brother Peter Gould was assisting Elder Harvey Seibel in visiting a new subdivision. Unknown to them, the ladies of the neighborhood had all gathered in the first home that was to be visited. When the two brethren arrived on the doorstep, they were encountered by all the women wielding their brooms. The two brothers beat a hasty retreat to their automobile.

During the following year Brother Harvey Seibel was diagnosed with prostate cancer. His desire was to complete that year's outreach, and then return to Missouri with his family. Young Brother Samuel felt the great burden of the work that was now falling upon his shoulders. That very night a heavenly vision brought him joy and reassurance. During the year, 1982, the work continued, but with no elder present to direct it. Over the next few years there continued to be from five to thirty-five people in attendance at the services. At the April Conference, Brother Sam Gould was ordained to the office of elder in the Church of Christ.

That summer Peter Gould, who had been going to college, returned to the work, accompanied by his new bride. The two brothers began a systematic visitation of a list of 200 persons they had made. They concentrated their efforts on working with the youth. Sam's daughter, Betsy, was the first to be baptized. Later, Brother Peter was called to the office of Priest by Samuel. The calling was accepted by the congregation and Peter was ordained.

While driving home from their weekly visits, Brother Sam felt directed to ask Peter to pull the car off the road next to the river. He left the vehicle

and stood on the bank of the river. Then he stooped to get a handful of sand, which he threw into the river with these words, "*The water delivered to this land will become as dry as the sand cast upon these waters for the next three years, and then the waters of life will again gush forth upon the hills of my people.*"

Both Samuel and Peter were astonished at the strange words and wondered at their meaning. It would not be long before the meaning became clear. The next week Brother Sam met alone with Brother and Sister Bradley in their home. They discussed the apparent lack of progress in the work. Then the Bradleys expressed the thought that things might improve if Sam discontinued carrying his Book of Mormon everywhere they visited and to all the church services. They said a number of people would attend if he would do that. Brother Samuel told them he would fast and pray over the matter.

He realized that if he were to lay aside the Book of Mormon, God's covenants with Israel could never be fulfilled. The following Sunday morning he delivered that thought to the congregation. The reaction was swift in coming: The Bradleys would no longer take part in the services nor support the work financially. Brother Samuel was broken-hearted, and only the comfort of the Holy Spirit brought him sufficient joy and strength to continue his efforts. Sam and his family continued to make the three-hour journey from their home to Big Cove in order to give services, attended by just his family.

One Sunday morning, as he was preparing for the journey, he was given a vision. He saw an elderly lady, her head bent low in grief and despair. As he pulled up to the church, he suddenly realized that the lady he had seen was his sister, Sallie Bradley. He went on directly to their home. As he entered the home, he saw Sister Bradley just as he had seen in the vision. He announced, "*I have come to give you my love in hug.*" With those words, he did just that. To their joy, the Bradleys began to attend services once more. The other members, and their children, began attending as well. The membership of the Calico Local increased to fifteen precious souls.

Brother Sam soon began a special event, a fair booth at the annual Cherokee October Festival. Over the years this missionary activity has touched many lives. The average year finds fifty-four names taken for

follow-up visits and communication, and numerous tracts and Books of Mormon placed in the hands of people from many tribes around the country.

This was a happy time for the two young ministers. They were fully engaged in the labor, making the 300-mile drive to Puryear, Tennessee to hold services, as well as holding services in Cherokee, North Carolina. During this period Brother Seaborn Bradley suffered a crippling stroke that kept him bed ridden for three years, even though he received marvelous blessing through administration.

As a new decade was ushered in, Brothers Sam and Peter Gould felt directed to sell their properties and move to the Independence area until further directed. Even though they made the move, their efforts among the Cherokee did not cease. Brother Sam felt directed to begin a special ministry to the youth of the Cherokee. The concept of a “Cherokee Witness” group of young people was put into action. During the years 1993, 1994 and 1995 a Cherokee Witness took place.

The year 1995 saw another great blessing for the work here in Cherokee; Elder Gale Brantner, of Michigan, now made his home here and was able to conduct regular services once again. The ordinances of the Gospel; baptisms, the blessings of children and administration of the sick brought blessings to the growing congregation. Brother Gale and his wife, Alice, labored with love among the Cherokee as had the others before them. The young people were to become more active in the General Church as Gale and Alice brought them to participate in the annual Youth Camp in Missouri.

Brothers Sam and Peter led a group of young people to the Michigan Reunion to get a spiritual kickoff. Then the young people, together with supplies and adult leaders, made the journey to Cherokee. Here Book of Mormon classes, testimonies by the youth and other services took place for three days. Then the group returned by way of Puryear, Tennessee to hold services among our people there.

A special project accompanied each of the annual Witness programs; a “Church Painting” project, a “Church Roofing” project and a “Church Ditch Digging” project to bring water to the church building. Of the twenty-three Cherokee youth who attended these Cherokee Witness

sessions, a number have joined together with the Church of Christ.

In the year 2002, Elder Gale Brantner was taken from us by an untimely death, but the Cherokee Local is still being sustained by visiting ministry who make great efforts to keep the congregation nourished by the Word of the Lord. The afore-mentioned special activities are still maintained by Brother Sam Gould and many elders who aid in this work.



The Calico Local Church of Christ, Cherokee, North Carolina. Elder Adam Porter, far left; Sister Sally Bradley, center; Elder Gale Brantner, right.



The Local Church of Christ at Zamorano, Honduras.

Honduras, Central America

In 1979 a terrible civil war was raging in Nicaragua. This war ended with a new government with communist leanings taking over the country. The United States, with fears of another communist nation in the hemisphere, began aiding a group of rebels, known as the *contras*. Again the nation was engulfed in civil war. As a result of the Sandanista revolt in 1979 and now the contra rebellion, many poor people had become relocated in refugee camps in neighboring Honduras.

A member of the Church of Christ from Minnesota, Sister Nana Gill, was actively involved in a group known as Christ in the Americas, or CITA. This group participated in many humanitarian efforts for the refugees who had fled to refugee camps in Honduras. For many years Sister Nana Gill, sometimes accompanied by other church members, labored among the poor people of southern Honduras. Her husband, Priest John Gill, was a schoolteacher and able to assist in that work during summer months. It would be impossible to list all the valuable services this group performed among the poor people of this area. Among the services rendered were tons of supplies delivered to poor families, many homes built for the homeless and people in need of specialized medical treatment brought to the United States for surgery. Sister Gill became adept at arranging for all these special services.

By the year 1997 the original CITA group consisted of just a very few persons. John and Nana Gill, accompanied by Elder Darin Crull of Missouri, were now able to hold church services in a number of homes and there was a lot of interest shown. Several people of the area became converted to the Gospel and were baptized. Since there were now members of the Church of Christ in Honduras and Guatemala, the Conference of 1997 added Central America to the missionary field of Apostles Moser and McIndoo. This conference also appointed Evangelists Plácido Koyoc Yam and Vicente Poot, as well as Elders Roger Can and Plácido Koyoc Matú, all of Yucatan, to labor in this field under the supervision of the missionaries in charge.

In the autumn of 1997 Brother John Gill retired from his teaching position and sold his farm in Minnesota. He and his wife, Nana, their younger sons and another married son, Ronnie Gill, moved to Honduras and established residence. Elder Darin Crull also established residence in Honduras at this

time. The two Gill families each had a home built and began holding Book of Mormon classes and English classes in the evenings and church services on Sundays. These classes and services were all well-attended. The first new members of the Church of Christ were baptized during 1997.

In January of 1998 Brother McIndoo and Elder Ken Oar made a trip to Central America, visiting members of the church and interested persons in Guatemala, Belize and Honduras. On the 27th of January the new Zamorano, Valle de Jamastran local of the Church of Christ was organized by Apostle McIndoo and a full slate of officers was elected. Brother John Gill was elected as the pastor of the local, as Elder Crull was not sure of his permanent residence. Brother Gill also made arrangements to hold services in several other villages. Each of the meetings, as well as the Sunday services at the Gill home, was attended by many people. Such interest is the direct result of the years of Christian service the Gills had rendered to the people of Honduras.



In January of 1998 the Local of Zamorano, Honduras was formally organized on the front porch of member, Jenaro and Leyda Garcia.



While the church building was being constructed, church services were held on the front porch of the John and Nana Gill home.

In October of 1998, Apostle Moser and Teacher Andrew Brown made another trip to Honduras. They were joined by Elder Plácido Koyoc Matú of Yucatan. These trips were the beginning of a sustained effort by the General Church to support the new congregation in Honduras and the humanitarian work begun by the Gill family. It was quite obvious that our Spanish-speaking ministers from Yucatan would be a great help in ministering the Gospel in the nations of Latin America. After spending more than ten days walking the dusty roads of southern Honduras to minister the ordinances of the Gospel, Brother Andy Brown returned to Phoenix, while Brothers Moser and Matú traveled to Guatemala to meet with church members, the Dennis Trudgen family, residing in Guatemala City. During his assignment to the American Embassies in Guatemala and Mexico City, the Trudgens have maintained close ties to our members in Honduras and Mexico.

The departure of these missionaries from Honduras coincided with the arrival of Hurricane Mitch on the northern coast of that nation. On October 27th this terrible hurricane moved inland and stalled over Central America. Its terrible winds and inundating rainfall wreaked disaster on the nations of Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Hurricane Mitch was the most disastrous storm ever to strike Central America, leaving more than 10,000 dead, hundreds of thousands homeless, without drinking water and food, while the nation's transportation and communication systems were in ruins.

Members of the Church of Christ turned to the Lord in prayer for their loved ones in these nations. A week later the Gills were able to call their children in Minnesota and let them know they were well, but in desperate need of financial assistance to begin helping the poor families who lived around them. Church groups and individuals responded to their plea with thousands of dollars sent to help these needy people.

Four trips each year were being made by the ministry from the US. These trips included visits by the apostles in charge of the area, aided by a number of elders of the church, such as Ken Oar, Randy Sheldon, Robert Oldham and Marvin Carroll. Services were held in several surrounding villages; Jutiapa, Congo and Chirinas.

Brother Ronnie Gill began holding scripture studies on a daily basis in homes of interested persons in Zamorano, Danli and Sartenejas. His wife, Joanie, was daily helping the women of the Zamorano Local with classes on cooking and baking, as a means of financially supporting the activities of the church.

During the year 2000 construction was begun on the first Church of Christ building for the members in Zamorano. The manual labor for the construction was provided largely by the members of the church. This building was completed and dedicated in a joyous service on the first of October in the year 2000. Apostle Alvin Moser happily cared for this dedication service.

The tireless efforts of Brother Ronnie Gill soon took him onto the dangerous roads in the nearby mountainous regions of Honduras. In addition to Sartenejas, he began visiting such villages as Oculi, Rio Abajo and Piedra Colorada. Not being a minister, Ronnie did not preach but, rather, gave in-depth lessons to answer any, and every, question that was put to him.

In a pre-conference meeting of the apostles in the year 2002, Brother Ronnie Gill was called by revelation to the eldership of the Church of Christ. There were many testimonies to this calling. Brother Ronnie was ordained to the office of elder on July 14, 2002.

Elder Ronnie Gill called a special business meeting in Oculi, Honduras in September of 2002. After a brief introduction by Bro. Ronnie and an

explanation of the responsibilities of a Local Church and its officers, an election of officers was held and a full slate of officers was elected. Bro. Ronnie was elected as the pastor of the local. Apostle Don McIndoo formally organized the new local of Oculi.

Some urgent medical problems forced Bro. John Gill to return to the United States for surgery. This surgery resulted in a long stay and several successive surgeries. In his absence Elder Ronnie Gill was elected to be the pastor of the Zamorano Local as well as the Oculi Local. Ronnie is ably assisted by his brother, Tommy Gill, who works with the young people, teaches Sunday School in Zamorano and assists in a number of other church activities in Zamorano.

The Work Opens Among the Mohawk People

On the Mohawk Reservation in upper New York State there is a mission of the Church of Christ. This Akwesasne Local had its beginning in the early 1980's. The work began with Sister Theresa Lazore Guthrie, who was a member of the Reorganized Church and a part of the Indian Ministries delegation to their World Conference. She became friends with another Native American woman, Clara Nichols, or Little Pigeon. During every conference Clara would go to the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot and offer an apology for the way the young people of her church treated the Temple Lot property. She always felt that this was holy ground and should not be desecrated by playing and picnicking on the grounds.

In April of 1980, Clara was ill and could not attend the conference. She asked Theresa to take her place and make the annual visit to the Church of Christ. As she did so, Theresa met Apostle William Sheldon and was excited by the things he told her. Sister Theresa invited him to visit her on the St. Regis Mohawk Indian Reservation. At that time Theresa was a member of an RLDS mission at Akwesasne. They had a membership of about twenty-five people, including some who lived across the border in Canada. Theresa invited Brother Sheldon to attend her services and teach the true gospel of Christ. Brother Sheldon was anxious to be able to share the truth with these native people of the House of Israel, known as the Mohawk Indians

Brother and Sister Sheldon continued to visit this small group of people for the next several years, spending several weeks with them each

summer. They were accepted with open arms and became as family. Teaching the gospel and bringing these souls to repentance was his primary concern. His pure love and patience were greatly needed by this group that had strong roots in the Restoration, even though having been misguided. However, the seeds of truth he planted were nurtured by the Lord, and within a few years he began baptizing people beginning with Theresa. Others were baptized in the years to follow, although some later left the church.

Around 1985, Bill and Lillian Zabriskie came to Akwesasne. Bill and Theresa had become friends through their association in the Reorganized Church. She had invited him several times to come to Akwesasne. He thought about going but was not sure what he should do. After much praying, he had a spiritual dream one night. In his dream he was preaching and Theresa was the only one in the congregation whose face was clear to him. He felt this was the answer to his prayers, so they moved to Akwesasne. After meeting Brother Sheldon one summer and studying the gospel with him, Bill also was converted and baptized into the Church of Christ.

Brother Zabriskie's roots go back to the early days of the Restoration. In 1988 Bill was called and ordained an elder in the Church of Christ. He became the pastor of the new Akwesasne Local. His quiet and loving spirit enabled him to contact and influence several of the Mohawk people toward a greater purity of life and toward the Church of Christ.



Family members and friends of Sister Theresa Guthrie met together regularly to study the gospel.



The Akwesasne Local was organized July 24, 1988, with Elder Bill Zabriskie as pastor.



The Akwesasne Local Church building next to the Tarbell home in Hogansburg, New York.



Brandon Tarbell, the grandson of Sister Theresa Guthrie, was ordained an elder October 3, 2004 by Apostle Smith Brickhouse and Elder Mike Bevaart.

The Akwesasne Local was officially organized on July 24, 1988, by Apostle Sheldon. Property was donated by the Tarbell family and a church building was constructed in 1994. The church building was dedicated in that same year. The Local was growing and three new families were added that same year. Within a few years Brother Zabriskie moved to Missouri, leaving the little Local without a pastor. Because of an illness within his family, Brother Sheldon was unable to continue his missionary visits to New York. Now the new Local had to rely upon visiting ministry whenever they were free to come.

In 1991 the Conference appointed Evangelist Hubert Yates and his brother, Elder Jim Yates, to labor in this field. They visited the Akwesasne Local at least once every year and continued doing so as of the year 2000. They have helped to nurture and stabilize this small group. Apostle Smith Brickhouse was assigned to this area to continue the work Brother Sheldon had started ten years earlier. In July of 1996 he helped to organize the first Akwesasne reunion, which has become an annual event looked forward to by this small and faithful group. Elder Ken Oar has been a frequent visiting minister through the years, and Elders Max Spencer, Rodger Bruner, Keith Hoare, Priest Bill Malone and Apostle Mike McGhee have been visiting ministers, bringing the Word of the Lord, administering the Sacrament and other ordinances to this small Local.

There have been many struggles for this small group of the Body of Christ, having a heritage in the Restoration Gospel, but more importantly,

a heritage with the House of Israel. Their numbers are few, but they remain faithful, meeting regularly for Sunday School and having preaching services by use of cassette and video tapes when no ministry is present. This Local maintains a kinship with their brothers and sisters in Ontario and Nova Scotia. They often combine their efforts to support one another and share in the visiting Ministry. This is but one little area of the Lord's vineyard, but being a part of the Body of Christ and knowing it is Christ's true church keeps this Local faithful, active and diligent as they await the growth that will come when the House of Israel is redeemed.

In 2004 Brother Brandon Tarbell, grandson of Sister Theresa Guthrie, was called and ordained an elder. He has willingly and adequately shouldered the responsibility as pastor of the local church.

Back to *Dinetah* (Land of the Navajo)

It is sad to record that with Apostle Wheaton's attention focused on the missionary endeavor in Yucatan, and then in Israel, the work he had begun among the Navajo people was not carried on. Those he had baptized did attend several reunions in Colorado during the closing years of the 1950's, but their spiritual edification was not actively pursued. It wasn't until 1988 that the ministry in Phoenix, Arizona, began to work again on the Navajo Reservation.

During the summer of 1988, Elder Hubert E. Yates made provision with the Navajo tribal authorities to occupy a booth at the Navajo Fair held in Window Rock, Arizona. This is an annual event that is attended by over 100,000 Native Americans, the vast majority of whom are Navajo. It was a busy summer: tracts and other printed material were written and published, tapestries were made to hang in the booth and plans were developed by the participating ministry. On the Saturday previous to the Fair the Phoenix congregation met in fasting and prayer for the success of this new venture. The following Tuesday found Brothers Hubert Yates, James E. Yates, Sr., Jay Moser and Don McIndoo setting up and decorating the booth they would occupy for the next five days from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. During those five days thousands of pieces of literature were handed out and a list of names of interested persons was made which would be followed up in the future.

Those who participated in this first of many Navajo Fairs were wonderfully surprised at the openness and friendliness of the Navajo

people. It was a genuine pleasure to visit with them. Although a great number of these people yet follow their ancient traditions, they were at all times polite and courteous. They opened each of their events with sincere prayer and were not bashful to speak of religious feelings. We repeat here an experience which one young Navajo man told us about.

He was a member of the LDS Church and went to Independence, Missouri to visit the Church's historic sites in that area. This is his testimony: "After visiting several of the sites I was driving up toward the Temple Lot. As I got near the Temple Lot in my mind's eye I could see a vertical shaft of light surrounding it and rising to the heavens. As I drove into this area it was a spiritual experience I could feel."

Again in 1989, as in subsequent years, the ministry maintained a booth at the fair. This time Elder Richard Wheaton and his wife, Velma, joined them. As Brother Wheaton was now working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Fort Defiance, they had made their home in nearby Gallup, New Mexico. This was very helpful since he could now follow up more closely on contacts that were made at the fair. The following year the local ministry were joined by Brother Plácido Koyoc Matú of Yucatan. Brother Plácido can speak English and was a real drawing card to our booth. Brother Wheaton also took him to visit with Hopi friends he had on the Hopi Reservation.

In 1991, Elder Joel Yates made a commitment to visit our new friends on the Reservation at least one week each month. This is a huge Reservation with great distances to drive over very poor roads and it takes a lot of time to visit the widely scattered families who had invited us into their homes. Various members of the priesthood from Phoenix and Independence assisted Brother Yates in his travels on the Reservation. During this period a number of parents asked that their little children be blessed, homes were blessed, a great number asked for administration and Brother Hubert E. Yates performed several weddings for people who were living out of wedlock and had been convicted of the error of their ways. Close ties were developed between the ministry of the Church of Christ and a number of Navajo families.

In the spring of 1992, Elder Ken Oar, of Phoenix, felt the Holy Spirit was calling him to labor full time among the Navajo people. He bore his testimony to the Council of Apostles during their December meetings in

Phoenix and was appointed by the Council to labor full time on the Navajo Reservation. This appointment was continued by subsequent conference actions. Brother Oar traveled thousands of miles each month to minister to Navajo families, teach classes in homes, preach in rented Chapter Houses and render temporal assistance. He also met regularly and held classes with a Navajo family that lives in the Phoenix area. In 1993 the Young People's group from Phoenix met with the ministry in the Chapter House at Red Valley, Arizona. Here they took part in a two-day Church Vacation School. Members of the priesthood taught the older participants, some of our young people taught the smaller children and two interested Navajo women taught their Native Arts for our craft classes. In the evenings the Navajo youth would come to our campsite to fellowship, eat supper, sing and play volleyball. Everyone seemed to enjoy this event.

This activity in Red Valley proved beneficial in another way, as well. A neighbor was at the Chapter House at this time to do her laundry. Two of her small children came in and participated with us. This woman was the means of providing the church with another opening in that area. For several years Elder Marvin Carroll, from Grand Junction, Colorado, held regular services in her father's home in Red Valley.

In September of 1997, the General Church purchased a used mobile home that was placed on the property of one of the interested families in the Fort Defiance area. This mobile home provides housing for the visiting missionaries while they are on the Reservation and a place for Sunday services to be conducted. During 1998 four members of one family were baptized into the Church of Christ. That summer four Navajo young people participated for the first time in the church's Teen Challenge Youth Camp in Missouri.

It was determined by the missionaries who worked in this field that the limited number of contacts that seemed productive did not merit the time spent on the reservation while the work in Yucatan and Honduras was increasing all the time. Regular visits on the reservation were suspended and those involved devoted more time to the work in Honduras and Mexico. However, the family which joined the church is still regularly being ministered to. One contact that has been made is a family that lives in the Phoenix area and they attend services at the Phoenix Local.

2. Missionary Work in Other Foreign Countries

The Work in Wales in the 1920s – 1950s

The missionary work in Europe was begun by Apostle Samuel Wood with his wife in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Apostle B. C. Flint, accompanied by his wife, Sister Freda Flint, followed up that work in 1935 spending over ten months in Wales. There had been some discouraging times in that field with some of the members falling away from the faith. The Flints succeeded in saving the mission by their timely visit.



Bishop Sam Beacham and his wife, and Apostle Bert C. Flint and his wife, Sister Freda, in Tynybryn Tonrefail, Wales, in 1935.



Apostle Arthur M. Smith and his wife, Sister Minnie Smith

During the 1950's Apostle Arthur M. Smith was given the European Mission as part of his field. He, and his wife, Sister Minnie Smith, made three trips by boat to Europe. Their first trip was in August, 1953, the second, July, 1956 and the third, May, 1959. Brother Smith organized a local church at Gilfach Goch in Wales with Elder Silvanus Mason as pastor on December 20, 1953. They had also organized a Sunday School in Garden Village where there had been an active group at one time. The Smiths spent several months each trip they made among the Welsh people in an effort to reestablish the church there.

A communication from Wales was sent to the 1960 Ministers' Conference and recorded in the minutes. That small mission was the result of much work during the past several decades.

To the Conference, Greetings:

As the Pastor of the Church of Christ in Wales, I am sending a little report of the work during the last twelve months. I think it only right you should know, and I am sure you would like to know, how we get on. I am sure you will agree with me that we have made some progress. First of all, you will be glad to know that we have formed a Sunday School. We have six children coming

regularly, and the exchange to tapes, which I am sure we have all enjoyed. We hope to continue this. Thanks to Bro. Maley who wrote in suggesting to give it a try, and I am sure you agree it has worked well, and we are going to continue. We also sent one to Bro. and Sr. Wheaton in Israel, which they were very grateful (for), and we have also received one from them. It's wonderful the blessings we can have through the Gospel. During the past year we had a visit from Bro. and Sr. Smith. We have not grown in number, but the number we are, are very happy, and we ask an interest in your faith and prayers that we shall remain faithful and humble and that together we shall pray for a revival in our church work, and that we shall sing, "Lord, send a revival in our Church Work and let it begin in one." We pray that the Spirit shall be with you during the Conference as it was in the upper room of Jerusalem, so whatever shall be said and done shall be a blessing to our Heavenly Father.

In Gospel bonds, Silvanus Mason, Pastor
(1960 Conf. Min. p. 67)

After the death of Brother Silvanus Mason, the work in that field diminished to the point that there were no active members left to visit and that mission was lost to the Church of Christ.



Memories of the Holy Land

Apostle Clarence Wheaton, Sr. with his wife, Angela.

Clarence and Angela Wheaton Travel to Israel

Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton was placed in the general church office for the conference year of 1957/1958 "...to enable him to make preparation for going to the Holy Land (Palestine) next year, to labor for three years." The Council of Apostles made this recommendation to the 1958 Ministers' Conference which, after considerable discussion, was approved:

Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton to be appointed as provided by the conference last year, and "inasmuch as the 1957 conference approved of Bro. Clarence L. Wheaton going to the Holy Land (Palestine) for three years in accord with the Joint Council recommendation, if this conference approves of this appointment it made, we the Council of Twelve assure you that he will go with our blessing and the support of our prayers." - Conf. Min. 1957 p.77; 1958 p.76, 77

In July, 1958, Apostle Clarence Wheaton, accompanied by his wife, Angela, traveled by ship from New York to Haifa, Israel. Although they spent some time in Jerusalem, they found living conditions cheaper and better in Petah Tikvah which is nearer to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Wheatons had intended to stay three years, but due to the dangerous conditions and the disinterest of the people there to their extensive efforts, they appealed to the 1960 Ministers' Conference to bring them home early. The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1960 Ministers' Conference to provide transportation for Apostle Clarence Wheaton and his wife, Angela, to return home from Palestine which was approved by the conference. They returned home sometime in 1960. (See 1960 Conf. Min. p.67)

Although their desires and intentions were good, the church was caused to believe that this was not the time to send a missionary into that country to spread the fullness of the gospel of Christ among those people. (See Zion's Advocate, Oct. 1958, Jan., March, June, 1959, and July, 1960)

William Anderson's Experience in Nigeria

For reasons unknown, Apostle William F. Anderson traveled alone to Nigeria, West Africa in the late 1950s. He arrived in Port Harcourt to find there was no public transportation to Abak where his contact lived. A man at the airport took him there without charge. The conditions were very primitive and only a few of the men could understand English.

Brother Anderson soon learned that their interest in the Church of Christ was not in the gospel of Christ but more in material things such as furnishing them a hospital, schools, motorcycles, etc. After some efforts to teach them our beliefs, Brother Anderson became very seriously ill with the worse form of malaria. He was taken to a Catholic hospital where he was given around the clock care. The doctors did not expect him to live, but with their continued care he did survive and returned home.

The 1959 Ministers' Conference voted to send \$300.00 to the Catholic hospital with a letter of appreciation for their care of Brother Anderson. The hospital staff responded with a very kind letter to the Church of Christ. (See Zion's Advocate June & July, 1959)

A Missionary Trip to the British Isles

A missionary report by Apostles William Sheldon and E. Leon Yates on a five week trip to the British Isles was submitted to the 1972 Ministers' Conference. In response to contacts made at the church, Brothers Sheldon and Yates first went to Glasgow, Scotland by plane June 15, 1971, and later to London, England. The result was that two young men were baptized, Derek Farrell in Glasgow and Stephen Gutman of London. They also visited Elder Silvanus Mason in Wales. Although there was some success, the hope of opening the work in the British Isles was not realized at that time. Brother Sheldon expressed himself thus:

As a result of our experiences in Scotland, England and Wales, we are more than ever convinced that the fullness of the Gentile times has come in, signifying a complete rejection of the fullness of the gospel. Of course, there will be one here and two there, in fulfillment of Jeremiah 3: 14, "...I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."- 1972 Conf. Min. p. 2-5

Missionary Trips to Europe

Apostle William Sheldon and his wife Doris made an extensive trip into Europe beginning in September, 1983, visiting church members and various contacts. They visited the Schut family in Enschede, The Netherlands, Brother and Sister Kuhnlein at Nurnberg, West Germany and Joseph Andre and his wife in Brussels, Belgium. The work in that area was promising at that time with the hope of making more contacts in various countries of Europe.



Apostle William Sheldon with his wife, Doris

In June, 1990, Apostle William Sheldon and Elder Leslie Case (member of the General Bishopric) traveled to Enschede, The Netherlands. They visited and ministered to the church members there. Later, the Schut family joined another Restoration church and our contacts with the people in that area ceased.

3.

An Appeal Made to Expand the Missionary Work

The Council of Apostles submitted a document to the 1993 Ministers' Conference soliciting the interest of the church membership and ministry to prayerfully support the effort proposed by the apostles in expanding the missionary work as stated in their report:

Greetings:

1. The Council of Apostles has given much prayerful thought to the expansion and improvement of our missionary programs. The thrust of our efforts this conference year will concern three primary goals:
 - a. Increase the work among Native American people.

- b. Initiate a work among Restoration people.
- c. Increase our ministry to the isolated members.

2. We are, as always, dependent upon the church for your support. Increased missionary activity often means additional expense. We ask a continued interest in your prayers. More specifically, we ask that there be fasting and prayer that the Lord will call additional ministry, for there are places in both the U.S. and Mexico where we have groups without the benefit of local pastors. There are vacancies within the Council of Apostles and the seventy Evangelists which only the Lord can fill. Let us fast and pray that the Lord would prepare the hearts and minds of Israel to receive the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and that He will actively direct our missionary efforts.

3. To initiate this missionary effort the Council of Apostles asks that all missionary appointees plan to meet with the Council in the auditorium at 12:45 P.M. on Wednesday, April 7, 1993.

Respectfully submitted,
Smith N. Brickhouse
(1993 Conf. Min. pp. 11, 12)

The Council of Apostles submitted a report to the 1994 Ministers' Conference concerning the efforts made to expand missionary activities for the past year:

Greetings:

At the 1993 April Ministers' Conference, we, the Council of Apostles, presented a letter stating our intentions of expanding and improving the missionary programs of that conference year. Of the three goals listed in that letter we wish to report the following activities of the ministry:

1. Increase the work among Native American peoples.
 - a. A Vacation Bible School was held at the Cherokee Reservation in North Carolina.
 - b. A Church of Christ booth was set up at the Cherokee Fair.
 - c. A new church building was built on the Mohawk Reservation in New York and an increase of missionary activity has been made among those people.
 - d. Regular and extensive missionary efforts have been made among the people of the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona.
 - e. A three-day Revival was held in Yucatan including special efforts to contact inactive members and people who had shown interest in the church.
 - f. A research was made of the various cultures and traditions of several tribes of the Native Americans and a presentation was given at the August Ministers' Conference of 1993.

2. Initiate a work among Restoration peoples.
 - a. Information was obtained concerning the various Restoration churches and a presentation was given at the August Ministers' Conference of 1993.
 - b. Greater efforts were made to follow up contacts made at the church's Visitors' Center.
 - c. Visits were made to various ministry of other Restoration churches to present the Church of Christ story.
 - d. Meetings were held with other Restoration church ministry to compare beliefs and to share common interests in prophecies pointing to the latter days.
 - e. Contacts through the Zion's Advocate mailing list were made.
 - f. Some Church of Christ ministry have contacted and spoken to Restoration church groups.

3. Increase our ministry to isolated Church of Christ members.
 - a. Greater efforts were made to visit church members in Texas, Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina.
 - b. Some of our church ministers who travel on business trips on their jobs have made special efforts to contact members in the area in which they travel. Plans are being made to continue this year to fulfill our goals listed above with additional helps and programs.
 1. Set up additional booths at fairs.
 2. Use more audio/video aids.
 3. Open a " Shoe Box Program" among Native American children.
 4. Use more written and phone correspondence.
 5. Develop a stronger sense of community (Zionic attitude) in our local churches.

An additional goal that we are considering is the developing of a program to contact Diaspora Jews particularly here in the United States. We feel that the time is near that the gospel of Christ is to go to all the House of Israel.

We very much appreciate your support and prayers this past year in these endeavors and we feel that your help has made it possible for the accomplishments that have been made. Again we ask for your help in this way that we all may unite in the Lord's work. Let us continue to fast and pray that the Lord will call more laborers into the field of harvest.

Respectfully submitted,
 Smith N. Brickhouse
 (1994 Conf. Min. pp. 18-20)

One of the principle efforts of missionary work through the years was to make contact with "Restoration" peoples. Two of the elders had made special efforts to visit various churches and became acquainted with individuals. Knowing them personally made it possible to learn what they believed and these brothers became valuable links between this church and

other churches of the Restoration. There were many communicative efforts made to reach out to the various individuals who found they could not accept the changes being made in their church.

During the 1980s it was anticipated that there could be quite an influx of new members into this church. However time has proven it was not to happen. The success was minimal. While work among the Restoration peoples lessened, due to their lack of interest in this church, greater interest has increased among other peoples.

Great effort was made and many prayers offered in response to the requests made by the apostles. Not all of the results were as successful as expected or desired, but time proved that the Lord heard the prayers and took notice of the sincere labor performed.

Although it might not have appeared so at the time, in retrospect, we can see that this was an exercise of faith in the promises of the Lord which is necessary in obtaining true success. The Lord was preparing His servants and His church for the future.

The beginning of that future came in 1998 when the Lord called more apostles to fill the vacancies. He endowed His servants with a greater vision of carrying His gospel to the world.

The Council of Apostles gave a report of the accomplishments made during the conference year to the 1999 Ministers' Conference. There had been considerable work among the youth and the Native Americans. A video was made for the Visitors' Center and an official WEB page for the church was developed. - See 1999 Conference Minutes pp. 10, 11

A greater evidence, of the Lord's answer to the prayers came when peoples in other lands began contacting this Church of Christ. Their desires were divinely motivated and they readily accepted and obeyed the fullness of the gospel of Christ when it was preached to them. The desire of the servants of the Lord to take "this gospel of the kingdom" in all the world began to bear fruit unlike anything the church had experienced for many years. An evangelical spirit has stirred the hearts of this people and great has been the result. May God be praised!

4.

Missionary Activities in the New Millennium

There was much apprehension expressed around the world concerning the new millennium, 2000. The scare of “Y2K” made news and various alarmists gave warnings of power failures and other disasters. The membership of the Church of Christ was also concerned but admonition was given to “..seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33) The year 2000 arrived with only the usual happenings.

The official Church of Christ web page went on line during the 1999-2000 conference year. This has proved to be a valuable tool in making contacts with potential converts. Numerous questions have been asked which have given the missionaries opportunity to visit both by e-mail and in people’s homes. - See 2000 Conference Minutes p.9

Missionary Work Begins in Kenya, Africa

The new millennium brought a greater meaning to world-wide outreach to the Church of Christ. In their report to the 2000 Ministers’ Conference, the Council of Apostles gave a brief account of a contact in Africa which proved to be a significant opening for the Church in that part of the world.

The church receives a great deal of correspondence with inquires about the church. We try to address those inquires as appropriately as possible. One such correspondence has led to a great deal of written exchange with a group in Kenya, Africa. Some of our literature and the Book of Mormon have been sent to these people. They have stated their interest in the Church of Christ and extended the opportunity to us to come and minister to them, teaching them the Gospel of Christ and the beliefs of the Church of Christ. It is our desire the Lord will prepare the way for us to visit these people and bring them the Restored Gospel during the coming conference year. We seek the prayers of all the members of the church in this endeavor. - 2000 Conf. Min. p.9

Two significant testimonies have given spiritual evidence that the missionary work was to open in Africa. Apostle Brian McIndoo wrote his experience in an article in the August, 2000 issue of the Zion’s Advocate and also included the testimony of Sister Margaret Moraa of Kisii, Kenya:

In the fall of 1998, while I was still employed with the City of Phoenix Police Department, I sat at my desk one morning doing paperwork when I had an unexpected experience. In my mind I had a perfect understanding of a great work in Africa of which I was involved. I distinctly could see a large number of people coming from every direction out of a tropical jungle to a gathering place. These people came with great enthusiasm to hear the gospel taught to them by the Church of Christ. After a few moments the experience ceased, but a vivid recollection of the event remained. I pondered the scene for some time then tried to dismiss the experience, knowing full well we had no plans or contacts in Africa. I reasoned within myself that I must have been thinking about the work in Honduras, Honduras being a tropical area where people seem to be eager to hear the gospel preached.

The memory of this event never seemed to fade from my mind. I would occasionally mention to my wife how I would be going to Africa some day, which was usually met by a response that questioned my sanity. During the following months the Lord unmistakably revealed it was time for me to retire, and since it was not a financially sound concept I would have to put my trust in Him.

In the town of Kisii, located in Kenya, lives a young mother named Margaret Mora Osaka. Margaret had been praying and searching for a church which taught the gospel according to Christ's doctrines and not man's. As close as I can estimate, in the fall of 1998, Margaret also had an experience, which I will relate.

During the night the Lord spoke to her and directed her to go to her father's home where she would find a particular book in his library. She was to contact the church on the inside cover. Margaret recognized the book from seeing it in her youth. She tells when she was young and lived at home her father would get her up in the mornings to help him read and study Christian books.

Margaret did not want to get up and study with her father because she wanted to grow up and be a policewoman or a nurse, so she did not need to know all this. Her father was a Methodist Bishop who desired to do much studying and needed her to help him read these books printed in English. Margaret's father, Brother Osaka, had been given this book in the 1960's by a traveling missionary named Ripley, whom we suspect belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ, (Bickertonites). When Margaret opened the book she found on the inside cover that it had been published by the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), in Independence, Missouri. Margaret spoke to her father about the experience, and he encouraged her to do as the Lord had directed and contact this church.

Margaret composed a letter asking for information on the beliefs of the Church of Christ, (Temple Lot), and mailed it off to the P. O. Box listed in the book. Apostle William Sheldon received the letter at the Visitors' Center and responded to the request by sending several church tracts, including The Articles of Faith and Practice. Margaret learned from these tracts of our belief

in the Book of Mormon. She knew her father had one in his library and the two of them got the book out to look it over. Brother Osaka began to read the Book of Mormon and found many wonderful and comforting words in it. Then he began to share scripture from the Book of Mormon with others in the Kisii area. This enraged the people of his village, who believed the Book of Mormon to be a devil worshipping book. One night the Lord revealed to him that there were people laying in wait to kill him when he left his house. This revelation was true; inasmuch as a band of men divided into four groups had surrounded his home so he could not escape. He went out of his house with only a torch (flashlight). The men threw a spear and a knife and shot an arrow at him but all missed. He shined the light at them and they ran in fear.

Back in America, William Sheldon had given Margaret's name and address to Apostle Smith Brickhouse, secretary for the Council of Apostles. Apostle Brickhouse began writing Margaret and sent a letter telling her he was sending a copy of the Book of Mormon.

Meanwhile the persecutions in Kisii were getting worse for those using the Book of Mormon. Margaret was afraid to pick up the package containing the Book of Mormon, since the Post Office there opens all packages to examine their contents. Her father told her not to worry, but to go get the book and they would read it together. So she got the book and they read it and found it taught the gospel of Christ, not devil worshipping. Further communications were made and the Church of Christ was invited to Kisii to teach them the gospel.

We sent notice that the Church of Christ would accept the invitation and come to Kenya. Margaret went to the villages surrounding Kisii, telling the leaders of independent groups meeting together and worshipping that they needed to hear what the Church of Christ was bringing to Kisii, and how the Lord had directed her to contact us. With some reluctance, because we believed in the Book of Mormon, they agreed to meet us.

On May 7th, 2000, Brother Smith Brickhouse and I attended the first service in Kisii, Kenya. We met with Margaret, her husband Samwel, her father Osaka and mother Nina in the village of Kababe. We walked out across a field cleared out of a tropical jungle, to a congregation of about a hundred people who came from their villages located in all directions around Kababe. I marveled, as I now looked upon the very image I had experienced and had ingrained in my mind since the fall of 1998.

In May of 2000, Apostles Smith Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo made an investigative trip to Kenya, Africa. After their return they made a report and their recommendations to the Council of Apostles, which we quote in part:

The Council of Apostles
Report on: Kenya, Africa

Dear brothers,

In April you had appointed us to make an investigative trip to Kenya Africa, to follow up on the invitation extended to the Church of Christ to come and minister to those in the Kisii area. This report is to provide you with an update on the work that has been done there thus far and our recommendations to proceed with the work there.

Let us give you some background information about the area.

Kenya is a country along the East Coast of the African continent. Kenya gained independence from Great Britain in the 1960's. They appear to have a reasonably stable government, who was very much aware of our presence in their country. Their government supports churches coming to Kenya because they believe the churches will help them make it a better place for their citizens to live. To help assure this contribution to the society, they have placed some requirements on churches that operate in their country, one of which is they must be registered and regularly submit reports to the government on what the church is doing as a public service to the community.

There are 42 tribes in Kenya; Kisii tribe is one of the largest, and they live in what is called the Kisii highlands which covers about 50 square miles and has a population of 3.6 million people. The Kisii tribe speaks the Kisii language first, Swahili is their second language and most of them speak it, whereas English is a third language and not all are able to speak it.



Lessons held in Sengera on May 27, 2000,
by Apostles Smith Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo.



A class held in Kisii Town in May, 2000, by Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse.



First baptism service in Kisii, Kenya, Africa May 26, 2000



Second baptism service in Kisii, Kenya, Africa May 28, 2000

All of our meetings were conducted with one of them acting as an interpreter to give the message in Kisii. Most everyone has their own small farm to raise their food to eat, but to get cash they sell part of their crop along the sides of the roads. It goes without saying, these people live in poverty, living in small mud huts with grass or tin roofs, with no electricity or running water. Most travel is done by foot, but taxi's, (small pick up with camper shell, used to transport about 25 people at a time) are available on the main roads, once they walk 1 to 5 miles to get to them. Taking a taxi from outlining villages into Kisii town, or to another village could cost 30 to 100 shillings one way. To rent a vehicle for a day costs 5000 shillings. (Exchange rate 70 shillings per one US dollar). If one is walking or driving anything but a four-wheel drive vehicle, there is a race to get it done before about 3:00 PM. Each day, at mid-afternoon the heavy rain rolls in causing their mud and red clay roads to become rutted rivers and so slick the vehicle slides off the road. Transportation is very difficult to come by for these people and proved to be our biggest expense on this trip.

Most of these villages have services and have one man they call their pastor. Some of the pastors are self-appointed while others have attended seminaries. Several of these pastors had attended our meetings, and some have been baptized into the Church of Christ, with an understanding they do not hold priesthood authority. They have a good command of the scriptures in the Bible and a great desire to serve God with authority, but are willing to wait for a calling to come from God by revelation before performing ordinances. They have agreed to continue to meet with the people in the villages and teach them the things we have been teaching, while continuing to study the Church tracts, and the Book of Mormon. Many of these men are part of a committee elected by the people in Kenya to help us coordinate and continue the work (further information on this committee to follow).

Now let us account for our time expenditures on this thirty-one day trip.

The flight to the international airport at Nairobi in Kenya takes about twenty-seven hours including a five to seven hour lay over in London. The flights are usually during the nights, so one loses four days on air travel, then one day travel by car each way between Nairobi to Kisii, totaling six days for travel. We held services and classes in twelve different locations or villages. During those times we preached seven sermons, two funerals. Seven days of our trip we held all day classes. We set aside three days to attend to administrative work, and two days for research. We set one day aside for fasting and prayer, and another day to hold a Sacrament Service with every member of the Church of Christ in the country in attendance as well as eighteen non-members. We conducted five administrations, and held three separate baptismal services, wherein we baptized and confirmed twenty-six people, four women and twenty-two men.

We also had two meetings with an elected committee of representatives from the various villages in order to plan and arrange for meetings and the

continuation of the work in our absence. We conservatively estimate we ministered to more than 1500 people while in Kenya, and many of them we ministered several times. There was a group of about twenty that followed us and attended almost every meeting, class and service we conducted, even if it meant walking several miles to the road where they could be picked up by the vehicle we hired. After the meetings they often returned home in the rain, and sometimes not being able to get home because of the adverse weather conditions.

We would like to share a few of the testimonies and statements made by some of the people we met with.

Sister Alice testified how Bro. Osaka had come to her house when her child was very sick, and read to her from the Book of Mormon and she received a great deal of comfort from it. The child is still sick, but she has peace within herself. She took the book to the hospital to read from it to her son, but she would hide it under her clothing. After reading how it taught Christ, she now lays it on the table for all to see. Alice had also asked us to teach them what they should do, and asked us not to let them do things wrong because we were afraid to tell them.

Nina Osaka told us how she and her little child had been sick for some time and how medicine would not help. On the day of our fasting and prayer, she and the child were suffering greatly when the Lord spoke to her, "These are the servants of the Lord, have them pray for you". After they were administered to, the child was healed and Nina was doing much better, her pains are now bearable.

Nina's father, a Seventh Day Adventist, stood and told how he had heard the Book of Mormon taught devil worshipping. He had come to our first week of classes, and heard us teach the true doctrines of God. He testified, we were doing a good work here in Kenya. We learned through another source, that he had stood up in the Seventh Day Adventist church who had been teaching their people that we were devil worshippers. This man testified to them, the Missionaries of the Church of Christ and the Book of Mormon were not devil's tools, but are teaching the gospel of Christ and God.

Brother George stood to tell us that we need to teach them how to be the Church of Christ, and do not be afraid to answer us the way the Lord directs. He said they are making specific requests to us, but sometime the Lord says yes, sometimes no, and sometimes to wait, implying they would be willing to accept any of those answers.

Our recommendations for the work in Kenya:

1. Continue to have us minister to the members and villages in Kisii, Kenya.
2. Make a minimum of three trips, for a minimum of 30 days per conference year.

3. Resolve transportation problem, by purchasing a suitable vehicle for our needs in Kenya and leave it with a responsible member to maintain and use according to our directions in the continuation of the work in our absence.
4. Continue to support the outreach being done by the committee, elected by the members in Kenya, with our approval.
5. Register the Church with the Kenya government.
 - a. Establish an office (East Africa Office of the Kanisa La Kristo)
 - b. Establish communications (phone, computer) in Office
 - c. Obtain an address for the Church , (P.O. Box number)
6. Translate and print selected tracts into Swahili
7. Purchase Bibles in their language (Kisii, and Swahili) to use while giving classes.
8. Send Books of Mormon as needed, we have already sent 30 copies.
9. Purchase Book of Mormon selections that are printed in Swahili by the LDS church, and send them to Kenya.
10. Start an auxiliary fund for the work in Africa that can be used at the discretion of the missionaries.
11. Financially help with the construction of a church building on the land donated in Kababe.
12. Use willing ministry to help continue the work in all of our established fields in the US/Canada, giving us additional time to nurture the new missions in Africa, Mexico, Honduras or wherever the Lord chooses to send us in these last days.
13. Continue outreach outside Kisii in other areas of Kenya and other countries in East Africa.
14. Look to establish contacts in U.K. that can be developed, as all trips to Africa stop over in this area and it would be a minimal expense to stay and work there also.
15. Eventually use other ministry in the work in East Africa.
16. For the Council of Apostles to recommend to the Zion's Advocate staff to create and send out an abbreviated version of the Zion's Advocate to those in distant foreign lands, possible on a quarterly bases.

Respectfully submitted for you consideration;

Brian E. McIndoo
Smith Brickhouse

Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse made three trips to Kenya, Africa during the 2000/2001 conference year. Moses Ohuru Chuma was called and ordained to the office of elder and a local church was officially organized at Kisi, Kenya. Their report to the 2001 Conference included additional information indicating their success in Africa:

During our initial trip in May of 2000 we met with a small group of leaders from various villages in the Kisii Highlands. Most of our meetings were held at a hall we rented in Kisii town. For the first three weeks we spent every day

teaching them about the Restoration of Christ's Church, the Restored Gospel, the Plan of Salvation, and the practices and beliefs of the Church of Christ. During the fourth week some of these leaders were baptized and joined the church. We established a committee from among these members and asked them to go into the villages and teach the things we had taught them, preparing the way for us to return and teach in the villages surrounding Kisii.

We made our second trip in September and October, 2000 teaching in twelve different villages. Many of these meetings were held on the side of a mountain under the shade of a tree with the people coming out of the fields to hear us preach. We could not help but feel like we were living in the times of the Apostles during the Bible times. We held a two-day seminar in Kisii town and asked that two people from each village attend, but we were faced with 67 people that got up at the first light of the day and walked several miles to attend the meetings and hear the teachings. During these meetings we took time to have an ordination service for Brother Moses Ohuru Chuma, who was called to be an Elder. With an Elder available as one of the members an official local was established.

We came to be well known in the Kisii area resulting in many of the churches trying to stop our efforts by making false accusations about us. These accusations would not only turn the people away from listening to us, but also put our lives in danger. In addition we were also called into the office of an Investigator for the District Commissioner. He commanded us to cease all activities until we are legally registered with their government. The Lord was with us and the Investigator reversed his own decision and agreed to let us carry on with our teachings. Despite the fears from the accusations made against us, many people still came to hear Christ's gospel taught and before we left we held several baptism services. During this trip we also made a contact in the town of Narok, located in the bottom of the Rift Valley and the capital among the Maasai people. We received an invitation to preach there at the Inland Kenyan Church. We spent one Sunday there and were able to preach to a congregation of about 400 people. We also made a trip to Luoel Land and taught among that tribe also.

On our third trip in January and February 2001, we arrived the day after the young son of two of our members had died. We were able to financially assist them as well as perform the funeral service. Although a sad situation, this funeral gave us exposure to many of the community leaders and churches, dispelling the rumors and false accusations made against us. We met in 15 different villages with 18 congregations of people for services. In most villages where we have members there is a congregation that meets regularly in a temporary shelter, has elected leaders, officers and teachers. After having ample opportunity to teach in these congregations we held several more baptism services. There has been two missionary trips made to the country of Tanzania, which neighbors Kenya, and another trip is planned when we return. We also made contact with a group in Nairobi and plans are made for us to teach there also upon our return.

The experience of this past year will long live in our memories as we witnessed the hand and power of the Lord working among the people as well as directing and protecting us on a daily basis. During the three trips we baptized 247 people, blessed thirty-two babies, performed one ordination, conducted dozens of administrations, preached two funerals, attended and spoke in behalf of the Church of Christ at three other funerals. We also purchased a vehicle, set up a church office in Kisii, and submitted our registration request to the government. We have made plans and have begun preparing for a woman's seminar and a youth camp during the next year.

Conversion to the Church of Christ does not come without consequence to many of these people. Sister Margaret Moraa left a well paying job as an office manager for another church when she joined the Church of Christ. Moses Ohuru Chuma lost his job as a teacher at a Baptist school when they learned of his conversion. One other lady was asked to never return to her church after she met with us, and rumors were spread about her that put her at risk, however she invited us to come to her home and teach anytime we have the opportunity.

In addition to the budget money approved by the 2000 General Conference, which is provided from the tithing received by the Church, through the generosity of many church members, we were able to do many special projects and assist the people in Africa, which would not have been possible otherwise. Using special donations to the Africa Fund we provided capital to help Margaret begin a pineapple business, and for Moses to lease a spot of land to grow maize and to purchase a cow so he could feed his little children and sell part of the milk. We assisted the Kineni local in putting a down payment on a piece of property where they desire to construct a church and also began construction on one building that would shelter the congregation from the elements and have began plans for other congregations to so construct such a building.



Apostle Brian McIndoo in Kenya with a Land rover



The people gathered to hear the gospel in Kababe, Kenya.

Missionary Work Begins in the Philippines

In March of 2001, Apostle William Sheldon informed the Council of Apostles of a contact which could result in a missionary trip to the Philippines. He read the letters of inquiry from two gentlemen and his reply to them to the Council members. The Council of Apostles made this a matter of prayer before acting upon it.

Later it was decided that two of the apostles, Brothers Frank Fann and Alvin Moser, would follow up on the correspondence and report back to the Council of Apostles. This was done and these two brothers made plans to travel to the Philippines to present the Gospel of Christ to those people.

Brothers Fann and Moser arrived at Davao City, Mindanao, Philippines on Sunday, July 8, 2001. They were met by a group of people with a sign that said, "Welcome The Pals from Phoenix Arizona, Bro. Alvin Moser and Bro. Frank Fann, Missionaries from the Church of Christ." Prudencio Alameda and Demetrio Indangan, their interpreters, were their main contacts.

Although Brothers Fann and Moser were very cautious at the beginning, they were soon reassured, through the Holy Spirit, that many of these people were sincere in their pursuit of the truth. The Brothers made three trips to the Philippines during the conference year 2001-2002, in July, November and February. During each trip people accepted the restored

gospel and were baptized. On the third trip, Brother Charles Brantner accompanied them as a representative of the General Bishopric. On that trip Brothers Prudencio Alameda, Demertio Indangen and Roger Manali were each called to the office of elder, and, on March 10, 2002, they were ordained.



Apostles Frank Fann and Alvin Moser were greeted at the Davao City Airport by a large group of people holding a big sign welcoming the missionaries.





First baptism in The Philippines: Prudencio Alameda baptized by Apostle Frank Fann.



The second baptism service was held at Panabo.



The third baptism service was held at Cabilao



The fourth baptism service resulted in thirty-eight baptisms during the first trip to the Philippines.



Elders and their wives in the Philippines: Roger and Florencia Manali, Prudencio and Lolita Alameda, Demetrio and Remedios Indangan.

The success of this work was attributed to the Lord in the missionaries' report made to the 2002 April Ministers' Conference:

Greetings:

We would like to express our gratitude for the opportunity that you have given us to take the Gospel to the Philippines. We know that God paved the way for

us, by preparing the Philippine people to receive the message of the restored gospel. We were blessed because they believed with little effort, the message that we gave to them. We have had an exciting year and a very profitable year. We were blessed many times while laboring there, by feeling the power of God working with not only those people but with us also.

We were able to make three trips to the Philippines this year resulting in the baptism of 205 souls. Brothers Prudencio Alameda, Demetrio Indangan and Roger Manali were called and ordained to the office of Elder. We blessed many children and administered to many.

Please continue to pray for the brothers and sisters in the Philippines, for they have a hard life but are striving to live the Gospel of Christ. Pray for we who will continue to minister to their needs and endeavor to further spread the word in the Philippines.

Again thank you for your support and for your prayers.

Yours in Gospel bonds,

Frank Fann
Alvin Moser

(2002 Conf. Min. p.10)

The missionary work of Apostles Smith Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo in Africa continued to grow rapidly the second year. Michael Otero was called to the office of Elder, and ordained October 21, 2001 by Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse, giving them two resident elders in Kenya. There began to be a need for other ministers of the U. S. to join them as they began to reach out into other nations of Africa:

To the 2002 April Minister's Conference

Greetings,

It has been our pleasure during the past conference year to serve the Lord and represent the Church of Christ on the continent of Africa. During the past year we have made three trips to Africa laboring in the countries of Kenya and Tanzania. Two of these trips, we traveled together and during the month of September we were accompanied by our wives (Susan Brickhouse & Becky McIndoo). On the third trip of this year Elder Andy Brown and his son Andrew Brown accompanied Brian McIndoo. The people were much appreciative and enthusiastic about meeting other members especially the women and youth from America that cared enough to come meet with them.

We spent our time in Kenya conducting group study sessions and holding services among the 16 congregations of members and the Kineni local, with the assistance of Elders Moses Ohuru and Michael Otero. On our last day in Kisii we were also able to organize another official Church of Christ local in the village of Misisita where Michael Otero is the pastor.

During the past year we met two times with a group of about 20 people in the country of Tanzania. They provided us opportunity to teach classes on the Restoration and the Book of Mormon. Elders Moses Ohuru and Michael Otero have taken one additional trip to meet with this group during our absence. We also spent a great deal of time answering their questions concerning the beliefs and practices of the Church of Christ. This group has shown an interest and plans have been made for our return to continue our teachings in the coming conference year.

The work continues to grow but the laborers are few. All the members in the Church of Christ can assist in the work in Africa by adding their prayers to ours that the Lord will prepare and call more ministry to labor among these people.

Plans are underway to construct five more buildings for congregations and bathrooms for the remaining buildings. We look forward to the opportunities and experiences, which lay ahead in the coming year in this area.

Respectfully submitted,

Smith N. Brickhouse, Brian E. McIndoo

(2002 Conf. Min. p.9)

The Council of Apostles submitted a report on the church's progress at the 2003 April Ministers' Conference. The increase of new contacts has promised more openings in various places for the Church of Christ. The following are some excerpts from their report:

We have continued to follow up on those contacts coming to the church by mail, through the Visitor's Center and the Church of Christ web site. These contacts have taken our missionaries into the states of Washington, Kentucky and Utah. Other contacts have placed them in communication with those in northern Canada, the Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Zambia, Peru, Spain, Columbia and New Zealand. We have developed new areas in our existing foreign missionary fields of Kenya, the Philippines and Honduras.

With the ordination of Elder Ronnie Gill, we have been able to establish the new local of Oculi in Honduras, and with the ordination of Elder Mike Bevaart

we now have an established local in Brantford, Ontario, Canada. We have begun the process of developing "missions" in Tanzania, Kenya, the Philippines and Mexico according to the Referendum action of 2002.

We have expanded our outreach to youth by not only supporting and assisting in the Teen Challenge Youth camp, but also conducted or assisted in additional youth activities in Kenya, the Philippines, Washington, New York, Michigan, Ontario and Mexico as well as a children's camp in Mexico, the Philippines and the Treasure Hunt Scripture Adventure in the USA. We have tried to encourage our youth to participate in the local congregations, write articles and many youth have been able to accompany us on missionary trips to areas of the United States and Mexico. - 2003 Conf. Min. p.9

Some excerpts, taken from the missionary report of Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse at the 2003 April Ministers' Conference, follows:

We have made a total of three trips to Kenya and Tanzania. During the April/May trip Brother Duane Ely was able to make arrangements on short notice in order to accompany Brother Brian McIndoo due to an unforeseen illness that prevented Brother Smith Brickhouse from going. Brother Rickey Olson was able to accompany both Brothers Smith Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo during the months of August/September. Our final trip was made in January/February and we were pleased to have our wives, Susan and Becky, go with us. The members there also appreciated very much to see some of the wives of the missionaries have a desire to know and worship with them. Upon our arrival in Kenya we always get a tremendous amount of support and help in organizing, coordinating and interpreting from our Brothers Elders Moses Ohuru and Michael Otero as well as Sister Margaret Moraa. There are also many other faithful and diligent members which are always ready to assist us where and when they can.

We had made extensive plans with the Elders, leaders, and committees before we leave and a great deal of work happens while we are not present. Although we were not in attendance, a very successful youth camp was held in Kisii Kenya. The camp was attended by youths from the congregations in the Kisii Kenya area as well as a town far north of Kisii called Kericho and the neighboring country of Tanzania. This proved to be an exceptional opportunity for outreach and opened the work in Kericho where we now have members. There have also been many members added to the congregations and locals in Kisii and with advent of the first baptisms in Tanzania where we now have a Mission.



Apostle Brian McIndoo, Elders Moses Ohuru, Michael Otero, Apostle Smith Brickhouse in 2003.



Sisters Becky McIndoo and Susan Brickhouse with some of the Sisters in Kenya, Africa.



Elders Moses Ohuru and Michael Otero, accompanied by Apostle Brian McIndoo, are teaching a group of Masai people in Kenya, Africa.



A baptism service with Apostle Smith Brickhouse officiating.



Elder Michael Otero, Sister Margaret Moraa, Elder Moses Ohuru Chuma and Priest Moses Nyamira Tucha

In 2002, Apostle Michael McGhee was given the field of the Asian Rim and Eastern Russia with Apostle Frank Fann. This allowed Apostle Alvin Moser to concentrate his work in Latin America, South America and the Caribbean.

Apostles Frank Fann and Michael McGhee submitted their report of their activities in the Philippines for the conference year of 2002/2003:

To the conference assembled,
Greetings,

Brother McGhee and I wish to report on our work in the Philippines. We have had an exciting year. It has been apparent to us that the Lord has touched the hearts and minds of the people. This year we have more than doubled the membership from 205 in March of 2002 to over 600 in March of 2003. This was not because of any great thing my brother and I did; only the Lord be praised.

We made three trips to the Philippines this conference year, and I must say that the hardest part is the trip itself. Twenty-four hours on an airplane is a bit much. On each one of the trips, we were blessed by the Lord, not only in the baptism of souls, but in the protection of my brother and I. We find that the Island of Mindanao is a very dangerous place, but we have felt safe and protected. The Lord has also protected our brothers and sisters there.

This year we organized three local congregations: one in Panabo City, one in Cabilao and one in Compostela. We also have 12 missions. Our three elders not only take care of our locals, but also spend everyday in travel to one of the missions or to scattered members. Brother McGhee and I admire the elders for their dedication to the work of the Lord.

On each trip we have three reunions so as to be able to see most of the membership. We bring the members to a central place in their area by truck. There will be as many as 80 people on a flat bed truck. We find this is cheaper than trying to go to each one of them. Most of our missions are back in the mountains, a two or three hour hike off of the road.

This year we have purchased property in Panalum, in Sabang, in New Opon, and in Pigdalahan. The Church of Christ Philippine Branch now owns 5 pieces of land.

We have put up buildings on 4 of the 5 properties. We are leasing an office in Panabo City and are leasing a church building in Compostela.

The young people held a 3 day camp this year and it was a large success. There were over 100 youth in attendance. We are planning to continue this practice on a yearly basis.

On our trip in November we were able to have our wives go with us (Carolyn Fann and Patricia McGhee). We must admit that their going did more for the work than Mike and I could do in a year. They were able to teach some classes to the women and to tell them of their role in the Church. The members were excited to think that even though there is danger and not any comforts, our wives would come to meet them.

We wish to thank all for your support, in prayers, in donations, and in the paying of your tithes. This has allowed for the Gospel to be taken to the Philippines.

All of your Brothers and Sisters in the Philippines send their love to you.

In the Love of Christ,

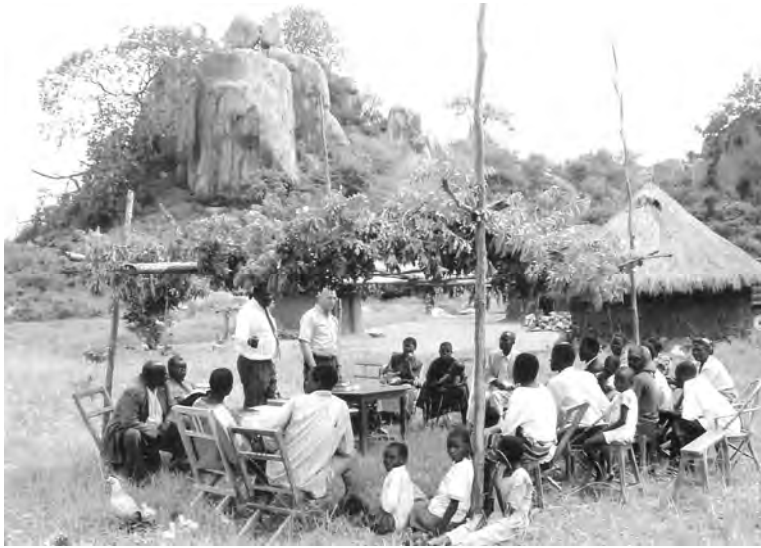
Frank Fann & Mike McGhee

(2003 Conf. Min. p.25)

Rapid Growth in Africa and the Philippines

The Council of Apostles submitted a report to the 2004 Ministers' Conference of the continued ministerial work done during the past conference year. In Africa, Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse, with the help of the local ministers, "... *have expanded the work in Kenya and Tanzania to many new areas and traveled to minister to people in Uganda, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia where we now have many church members.*"

They held a youth camp where hundreds attended. At this time they have two locals and forty-two missions across the continent of Africa. The ministers, from the U.S.A. who traveled with Brothers Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse to assist them, were Apostle Don McIndoo and Elder Rickey Olson.



Apostle Donald McIndoo preaching to a group in Tanzania, Africa in 2005.



A local Church of Christ in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2005.

In the Philippines, they have thirty-nine missions and three locals on the Island of Mindanao. They also reported: *“A successful youth camp was held and we have plans to expand upon it next year. Four days of leadership training were held with 45 leaders in attendance. A women's department has been established in two of the three locals with their intent to earn money to assist their congregations.”*

In their report to the 2005 Ministers' Conference, Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse told of the continued expansion of the work in Africa:

Due to the growth of the Church in Africa, we have had to revise our travel plans to include additional ministry. With one exception, we had traveled separately in an effort to reach out to new contacts and minister to the locals and missions in Kenya, Tanzania, and Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Nigeria. We are thankful for the willingness and personal sacrifice made by other ministry to accompany us on our individual trips. With the assistance of Apostles Alvin Moser and Joel Yates, Elders Gordon McCann and Robert Oldham, and Priests Duane Ely and Bill Malone, we made eight separate trips to Africa during the past year. On two occasions, some of the wives also accompanied the missionaries at their own expense, which proved to be a great blessing to the work.

Elder Prudencio P. Alameda, of the Panabo Local in Mendanao, the Philippines, submitted a report to the 2005 Ministers' Conference:

PRUDENCIO P. ALAMEDA Elder
CHURCH OF CHRIST (Temple Lot)
PANABO LOCAL

Reports

I. INTRODUCTION

Good morning to each and every one of you my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. I would to extend to you the best of wishes from our brethren in the Philippines.

I am very happy and overwhelmed to God for this great opportunity and privilege that you have given us with my wife to come in this beautiful place. Allow me also to thank Bro. Frank and his dear wife Carol, Bro. Mike and his lovely wife Pat, Bro. Jay Moser, Bro. Charles Brantner and Bro. Steve McGhee, who experienced the hardest travel in the rocky and slippery roads along with the very hot weather in our different mission in the mountainous areas.

I would also like to greet Bro. William Sheldon, the youngest among the Apostles, who had been our first contact and my deepest gratitude to our handsome Brother Moser that had been our connection from the USA to the wonderful place often called "Promise Land".

II. THE PHILIPPINES AND THE FILIPINOS

Philippines is an island country in the Southwest Pacific Ocean. It consists of 1,107 islands. The 11 largest islands make up more than 95% of the country. The people of the Philippines are called Filipinos. Their ancestors were migrants from Indonesia and Malaysia. Groups of these dark-haired, dark-skinned people formed small communities throughout the islands, and each group developed its own culture. As a result, the Philippines has a wide variety of languages, customs and ways of life. Traditional and modern ways of life contrast greatly in the Philippines.

Philippine food is a mixture of American, Chinese, Malay, and Spanish dishes. Most Filipinos eat rice at every meal and many dishes are highly seasoned. Each region has its own specialties. One popular dish, called Adobo, consists of Chicken and Pork cooked in soy sauce and vinegar.

The Philippine constitution guarantees freedom of worship. About 95% of the people are Christians, more than in any Asian country. About 85% of the population are Roman Catholics. The nation also has many Protestants, Muslims and members of the Philippine Independent Church and the Philippine Church of Christ (UCCP).

III. WHERE DO WE BEGIN

Before, we were just worshipping under the trees. We were fortunate enough if a school principal will permit us to use one of the classrooms in public schools. We were sometimes lucky to receive approval for the old-rotten rattan chairs that we asked from the municipality so that we have chairs comfortable enough to sit on.

IV. HOW DOES THE CHURCH OF CHRIST ARISE?

Due to this hard experience, some of our members left us and look for another church wherein they can have a permanent and comfortable place in worshipping. Because of our condition, I grabbed the opportunity of sending a letter to a missionary named William Sheldon. This man refers me to Apostle Alvin Moser. The story of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) in the Philippines begins here.

Alvin Moser and I were exchanging emails until we have agreed to welcome them as he and his companion will come over here in the Philippines.

July 2001, Saturday, the arrival of the long-awaited visitor has come. Everyone was excited to see them personally; as Alvin Moser emailed us that he will be with Frank Fann. I was wearing a red shirt and was beside a streamer welcoming them. When they saw the streamer, they waved to us and at the same time, we acknowledged them. We introduce each other and we had found out that the two of them were every handsome like the faces we had imagined in our minds.

After many hours of waiting, we proceed to our worship area that was sheltered by a tree. Many members of the Church are waiting to see them entering the place of worship.

V. HOW DOES IT AFFECT OUR DAILY LIVES?

From the time that we accepted the Church they were bringing, we already know the consequences it bear and were ready for it. But we did not expect to suffer more than what we had imagined. When some of my friends who are also Pastors heard that we were using the Book of Mormon, they instantly accused me of being cult. Even my own son! The first time that I heard about it, I felt hesitation of affiliating in this denomination, it even caused anxiety in my family. But God has a plan for everything that he opened my mind and explained to me the real thing about it. The greater part of it is the fact that they don't give salary to the leaders. Most of the Pastors I invited to listen backed out. As these trials turned up, a dream came to my senses as I was taking rest one night... I am climbing the highest mountain. As I reached its peak, I saw a rice field ready to harvest.

VI. WHAT ARE THE FRUITS IT YIELD?

In three years time, the Church of Christ in the Philippines grew to its full height and bear fruits as much as we can't imagine. We have reached 40 different missions and have organized 3 locals that are supervised by the three ordained Elders namely, Demetrio Indangan, Roger Manali and yours truly.

We sometimes happen to face accidents in reaching mountainous regions but the angels of the Lord are always there to guide our wheels.

Today, there are more than 1,700 Church of Christ members in the Philippines and many more are still waiting.

VII. HOW DOES THE CHURCH WORK?

Due to wide area of responsibility, Philippine work was divided into three (3) Zones that are headed by each local. Zone 1 is headed by Panabo Local, Zone 2 - Compostela Local and Zone 3 - Cabilao Local.

We do have lots of activities the whole week. Begins with Sunday morning Worship and in the afternoon, young people activities. They do recreational events, some moments of prayer that they held in different spots and places. Sometimes, they do it in the seashore or in the middle of the sea, etc. they are also preparing themselves, emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually for the upcoming Youth Camp. Mid-week Prayer meetings were usually done during Wednesdays. On Fridays, we do have Cottage Prayer meetings wherein we visit each member's house and do Bible studies and prayer. Special visitations are done for people who ask for the Elder's counsel and also want hands laid upon their heads. On the present situation, though few groups are disbanded but several are added. We had this continuity of growing and we believe that as this work comes from God, He will make it grow and prosper. It is because of God's grace and mercy that the work in the Philippines is blessed. We also did not fail to pray and thanking the Good Lord for those Brothers and Sisters who support the Philippine mission.

VIII. GOALS AND PLANS?

Because we believe in God's providence and blessings, we set goals for 2005-2006 that will encourage each member to take heed of the call of God. We pray that more locals will be organized, more elders will be ordained, that we can establish more missions. We also plan to have Medical Mission Outreach to the people in far-flung areas once in a year, and a one-week class for young peoples and leaders who want to have learning sessions in how to lead, read the Bible, preparing lessons and so on...

IX. CONCLUSION

I know that God will help carry it until we reach the greatest goal each of us aims to get. We are asking from the bounty of your heart to help us pray for everyone's strength that we can overcome all trials. May we grow in God's Plan-in His time.

X. PRAYER REQUEST

1. Pray for the Philippine workers.
2. Pray for the leaders and their families.
3. Pray for Panabo Church lot and building.

Prudencio and Lolita Alameda Visit the U. S. A.

From the report of Apostles Frank Fann and Michael McGhee of the activities in their field in the Philippines to the 2006 Ministers' Conference, we quote the following:

Brother Prudencio and Sister Lolita Alameda were able to follow Brother Frank Fann back to the USA to attend the 2005 April Minister's Conference. This provided valuable insight on how we conduct our meetings by "the voice of the people". In foreign countries the concept of Democracy is not ingrained and must be taught. Seeing and feeling is a better teacher than paper mechanics. They continue to share their experience back home and streamline their locals and missions to fit the Church of Christ structure.

In June an ambitious trip was planned with: Brother Charles Brantner traveling to provide the Bishops with first hand information; Brothers Andy Brantner and Jeff Oldham as Elders to gain foreign mission knowledge in case the need should arise in the future; Brother Cody Fann as a representative of youth in the USA, his gift of inspiration and organization continues to mold the youth group in the Philippines. This larger than normal contingent was able to cover all 70 locals and missions in one trip, something we have never been able to do before or since.

In October Brothers Frank Fann, Mike McGhee and Jay Moser began this trip with leadership Training. Leaders, selected by the called Ministry in the Philippines to head individual missions, were gathered together for three days training. Some of the subjects were: Book of Mormon, Church of Christ History and Organization, How to Teach and Exhort from the Scriptures, Christian Ethics, Stewardship, Records and Accountability, etc.

This Lord's work in the Philippines began over three years prior to this trip by Brothers Frank Fann and Jay Moser. This was Jay's first trip back in three years and he marveled at how the simple beginning of 33 members had blossomed.



Elder Prudencio Alameda and his wife, Lolita in 2005.



Sister Lolita Alameda, Elder Prudencio Alameda, Apostle Frank Fann and Sister Carolyn Fann at the Church of Christ Headquarters in Independence, Missouri, April, 2005.



Elders Roger Manali, Charles Brantner and Demetrio Indangan



Elder Andy Brantner baptizing a group of people in a stream with water buffalo nearby



Elder Jeffery Oldham baptizing a group of young people



Demetrio Indangan with his daughter, Ruth, Apostle Frank Fann, Raffy Vivas and Cody Fann, Frank Fann's grandson.

In February Brothers Frank Fann and Mike McGhee again traveled to the Philippines, this time with heavy hearts and a sense of caution. The work, or those performing the work, was changing, not of our choice, but the cause and effect of the physical body. Our Brother Prudencio Alameda who suffers from diabetes also began dialysis treatments. He is only a shadow of his former self, unable to minister literally 24/7 the way he was ready and able to do before. He is in need of your fervent prayers!

Our hearts continued to be saddened but our caution soon began to fade. We saw how the ministry and membership rallied to support our Brother Prudencio! The former caution gave way to renew hope as we saw that the ministry and membership not only rallied but also shouldered their rightful duties and responsibilities in service to the Lord and each other. The work that blossomed without is now growing and deepening within!

Elder Prudencio Alameda, one of the first contacts the Church of Christ had in the Philippines, passed away July 7, 2006 while Apostles Frank Fann and Mike McGhee were there. Brothers Fann and McGhee participated and conducted four funeral services for Brother Alameda which is customary in that country. Brother Fann gave this account of their last visit with him:

The July trip was one of sadness for us as our dear Brother Prudencio Alameda passed away. Brother McGhee and I were blessed to arrive in the Philippines just hours before his death and were able to see and visit with him one last time. The first thing he said when he saw us was, Lolita, get them a cup of

coffee. We will miss him. I am sure that the Lord will bless him for his part in starting the work in the Philippines. - 2007 Conf. Min. p.17

Brother Almeda's passing was a great loss to the work in the Philippines, but others have willingly contributed their steadfast efforts to carry forth the gospel among that people.

Apostles Expressed Concern to the 2006 General Conference

The Mission Report from the Council of Apostles to the 2006 General Conference expressed concern for the missionary work in the foreign fields. The economical conditions in the world have had an effect upon the Church of Christ. Some changes were needed to be made accordingly. Their report reflected both caution and hope for the future. We quote from their report:

The mission of the Church of Christ is to preach repentance to the entire world and to extend the Kingdom of Heaven through the preaching of the Restored Gospel. This belief is expressed in number 14 of the Articles of Faith and Practice. (The primary function of the general church, of which each local church is a component part, is missionary and the building up and extension of the Kingdom of God in all the world.) We feel the honor and responsibility to complete this work using the limited talents and resources our Lord has provided.

The Spirit (of God) is opening doors in many far away places. We are traveling to places we could never have dreamed nor planned. This is the Lord's work and we are all participants only by His Grace. We marvel that God can look at this little Church and continue using her to fulfill His purposes. Yet, this is the day and privilege He has given to this generation.

We hope that every member of the Church feels a part of God's work. The burden that is placed on the members from the United States and Canada is tremendous. It is a simple fact; we are only able to complete the work through your tithes and offerings. The economy of our nations is changing. Lost income and higher fuel costs have affected us all. The amount of donations is down in both the General Church and Local Church levels. However, the Lord has given us a small surplus of funds in our treasury, perhaps knowing that we would experience lean years. Our intent is to continue expansion of this work with caution and stricter controls over the expenditures of the mission work.

This year we have, after much consideration and prayer, made changes in the budget and in the General Church Appointments. We have lowered the limits of many line items, but at the same time, raised others and created new line items.

The changes in the appointments are extensive. This was done mainly because of growing impressions in the Council that we need to let the Lord make the full-time appointments. Yet we will continue to make provision for each of the priesthood who have represented the Church in the past to continue God's work. Our hope in the Lord is this: that He will see that we respect His ultimate authority and call an apostle, evangelists, elders, priests and teachers to labor in His vineyard. We call out to the Lord and admonish our men, both old and young, to prepare themselves before Him for the purpose of becoming called and instruments of His choosing.

The number of trips taken, time and dollars spent in the several regions we travel will vary. The work in every country is different. Those differences include: local cultures, local laws, local terrain, local highways, means of transportation, local spiritual needs, local academic abilities, the presence of regional opportunities and the local methods of operation. Another inescapable variation is the strength or weakness of the missionary who travels. We can not escape the reality of our human physical needs, due to age, health or strength. Many of the men we ask to travel for the Church have responsibilities at home and are limited in time. Each of these things affects the length of time or the number of visits needed in any area of the world. In reality everyone who travels voluntarily gives of their time and resources. For this reason we are grateful for their service.

We are very encouraged by the young men and women of the Church. Our youth outreach is paying dividends in increased participation and baptisms. Through Teen Camp, leadership classes and young families participating at the locals we have been greatly blessed. At times it seems there is a crying baby on every row in our churches. Isn't it wonderful? There is hope in North America also!

Our contacts are increasing in the United States and Canada. There is a renewed interest among some in North America. We feel that these opportunities should be pursued in their many isolated areas. We have a hope that some will turn into missions or locals in the future. This year in Altoona, Florida there is a new mission and we pray that God will bless this effort. We have continued to travel throughout the US and Canada, but will evaluate our trips to make prudent choices with the expenditures this year.

The apostles also reported that the Book of Mormon was successfully printed in Swahili for the African peoples. It is being distributed among our people and contacts in the nations of Kenya, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the Philippines, there were four callings and ordinations during the past year making a total of four elders, one priest and one teacher to care for the work there. In Honduras, Felix Isidro Rodriguez Torres was called and

ordained an elder and was elected pastor of the Oculi Local. His ministry will be a big help in that country.

In Kenya there were four men called to the priesthood and ordained, making a total of three elders, three priests and two teachers. There are 26 congregations there and each of the three locals has an elder. The Church of Christ is now registered in the nations of Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

During the summer and fall of 2007, Apostle Frank Fann suffered a life-threatening illness which kept him under doctors' care for several months. He underwent various procedures and an operation. Miraculously, he recovered and is determined to continue his missionary activities including traveling to the Philippines. We give thanks to the Lord for His healing power.

During the year of 2008, the Book of Mormon, translated into Kiswahili, was made available to the people in east Africa. Also the Book of Mormon was translated into Cebuano for the Philippine mission. This has helped to get the fullness of the gospel of Christ to the peoples of these countries.

The Work Opens in India and Missions are Organized

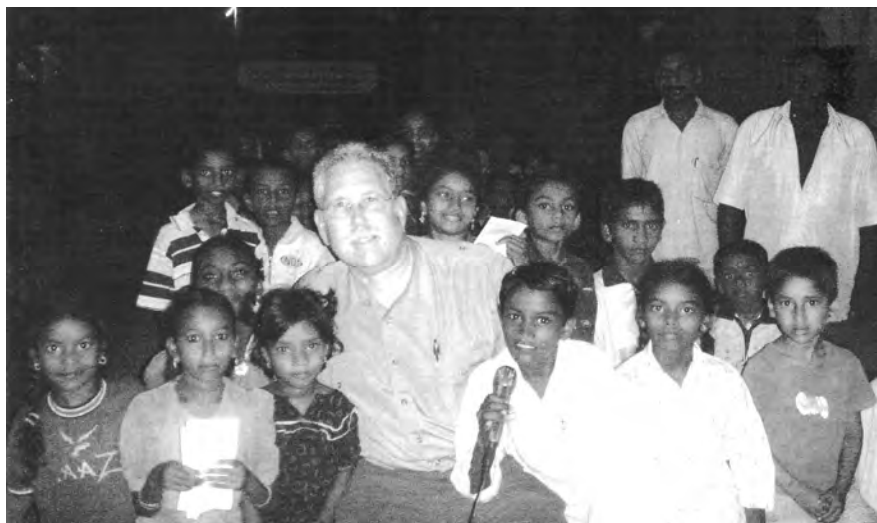
During the 2006-2007 conference year, the Church of Christ began to evangelize another nation, India. Here again the missionaries are confronted with another language, another race and varied customs different from most other countries and peoples.

Apostle Smith Brickhouse, Apostle Brian McIndoo and Elder Dennis Trudgen made three trips into India teaching the gospel to hundreds of people. There were two congregations in southern India originally. One in a medium-sized town named Rajahmundry and one in a village called Golaville.

The interests of the people in Rajahmundry were primarily temporal and when they did not receive their wants, they soon declined further worship with this church. The congregation at Golaville has continued faithfully and have met with the missionaries receiving the gospel of Christ. There is a mission of twenty-seven newly baptized members in southern India.



Apostles Smith Brickhouse and Brian McIndoo with Elder Dennis Trudgen working with the peoples of India both young and old (above photo and three following).





Contacts Made by Women

There were three memorable contacts made with this Church of Christ in the last several decades by women who were moved upon by the Lord to initially contact the church headquarters. Each of these contacts have

resulted in the establishment of strong local churches and continued missionary work. We give recognition to these dear sisters in the gospel:



Sister Theresa Guthrie

See *The Work Opens Among the Mohawk People* – pg. 231



Sister Joan Linington

See *Brant-Norfolk Local* – pg. 339



Sister Margaret Moraa Osaka

See *Missionary Work Begins in Kenya* – pg. 247

The Church of Christ Visits Jerusalem

In February, 2008, a group of Church of Christ members availed themselves of the opportunity to visit Jerusalem and the surrounding area. While there, they were given the opportunity to have a private sacrament service with the ministers of the church being in charge. Each of them testified it was a spiritual experience.

Brother Alvin Moser reported that while preparing for the sacrament service that Saturday morning, February 23, he was impressed with the fact that it had been a long time since a congregation of the Church of Christ met in Jerusalem to partake of the sacrament.

It was noted that 32 members of the Church of Christ were present including the following ministers: Apostles Alvin Moser, Smith Brickhouse, Brian McIndoo, Joel Yates, Elders Duane Ely, Mike Bevaart, Brandon Tarbell, Ken Oar, and Priest William Malone.



This picture was taken on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

SECTION II

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS, GENERAL CHURCH OFFICERS, LOCAL CHURCHES, GENERAL CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

1.

Auxiliary Organizations of the Church of Christ

General Sunday School Association

At the 1935 General Conference, a resolution was made establishing a General Sunday School Association as an auxiliary to the church. This organization has continued active through the years, writing quarterlies and various materials for Sunday Schools. They have met annually at conference time and have given their reports to the General Conference.

- Zion's Advocate Supplement. May, 1935 p.8

As a result of a matter concerning the General Sunday School Association, the 1952 General Conference appointed a committee of three to review and formulate a resolution to be brought back to the conference. The committee submitted the following report and resolution which was approved by the conference body reaffirming the 1935 action:

To the Conference Assembled:

We, the committee appointed to review the conference minutes respecting the General Sunday School Association and local Sunday Schools, find that there has been no changes made in the relationship of the Sunday Schools to the General Church from 1935 to the present date; therefore we recommend the following resolution for adoption and publication to all the Church of Christ:

Be it resolved that we adhere to the position of the Church as set forth in the Referendum Bill No. 4 in the Zion's Advocate Supplement April 1935, wherein the General Sunday School Association was determined to be an auxiliary and subject to the General Church.

Respectfully submitted, Denver G. Chapman, Arthur G. Smith, Clifford Surbrook

(1952 Conf. Min. p.69).

Young People's Christian League

During the 1939 Ministers' Conference a request was presented to provide for a young people's organization:

Recommendation for Provision for Young People's Activities in the Church
Whereas, there is a growing need for provisions to be made for a greater recognition and consideration of a department in the Church, that will provide for more adequate expression and activity for the young men and women of the Church,

Therefore, be it resolved that a committee of five consisting of members between the ages of 16 and 25 be appointed to make a survey by contacting the young people throughout the Church, and reporting to the Council of Twelve an outline and plan of operation, for inaugurating a department for their more active participation in the work of the Church, with these general thoughts in view:

1. Name of the department.
2. Object and goal of the department.
3. Officers of the department.
4. Rules governing the department.
5. Meetings and conventions of members of this department.

Most sincerely, Clarence L. Wheaton

The following were nominated to be on the committee: Jean Ritchison, Mildred Funk, Arthur Smith, Jr., Thomas Wheaton, Luella Richards.

Moved and seconded that these five be that committee. Carried.

(1939 Conf. Min. p. 80)

The "Young People's Department" made a report to the 1940 Ministers' Conference. An action was made "...that we elect a committee of three to be associated with the committee of the young people's department in the arrangement of such an organization as that has been requested." The members of that committee were Brother Rolland Sprague, Sister (Metta) Anderson and Sister (Louise) Sheldon. - 1940 Conf. Min. p. 70

As a result of this arrangement, a five page document was written up with the title, *Constitution of the Young People's Association of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)*. From the pages of the Zion's Advocate there was considerable activity in the newly formed group. In a notice from Brother Kenneth J. Smith in the March, 1941, Zion's Advocate the name "Young People's Christian League" appeared. Exactly when that name was given is uncertain but it has been used from that time forward.

For reasons unknown the organization was dissolved in February, 1943, but was renewed in 1946 with revised by-laws. The organization was continued from that time with the by-laws again revised on June 11, 1960, and again September 8, 1973.

In the beginning it appears that this organization was intended to have church-wide membership participation, but in more recent times the organization is only attended by members in the greater Kansas City area. The age limit has been consistent from the beginning, 13 to 30.

The official name of the organization is Young People's Christian League, but it is more frequently referred to as Y.P.C.L. It is an auxiliary of the General Church. They have functioned independently from the annual Ministers' Conference but usually they schedule a meeting during the conference. Except for a short time this organization has continued through the years and many of the young people of the church have taken part in the activities and benefited from them.

General United Workers

At the 1947 General Conference, a ladies' auxiliary was established under the name of "United Workers." This organization has been involved in many activities supportive to the church through the years which include helping the needy and raising funds for church buildings and missionary work. They have annually met and submitted their reports to the General Conference. Although there is a general organization, there are also local church organizations of United Workers who are active in their local churches. - 1947 Conf. Min. p.75, 77, 78

The School of the Ministry

During the 1947 Ministers' Conference, the School of the Ministry became an official auxiliary of the Church of Christ. However, the conference action was not sent to referendum.

To the Ministers' Conference Assembled
Greetings:

We, the undersigned, petition this Conference to recognize the School of the Ministry as an auxiliary of the General Church, with officers and duties defined.

Committee for the School of the Ministry
ARTHUR M. SMITH, Chairman. ARCHIE F. BELL, Secretary.

Be it resolved:

The School of the Ministry shall be composed of all ordained men of the Church of Christ.

The Board of the School of the Ministry shall consist of a chairman, an assistant chairman, and a secretary.

Their duties shall be:

To contact members of the Ministry of the church to determine and provide such subjects as are most desired, and determine who is best fitted to present those subjects; to make arrangements for school meetings; to distribute the subjects to the several members of the Ministry selected.

Such meetings of the School shall consist of the reading and discussion of these subjects, which when properly endorsed by the School of the Ministry shall be submitted to the Zion's Advocate for publication.

Committee for the School of the Ministry.

Brother Clarence L. Wheaton moved to grant the petition from the School of the Ministry as an auxiliary of the Church work and concur in their plans providing officers in the scope of their work. Seconded by Brother Joseph Yates, motion carried. - 1947 Conf. Min. p. 75

This organized body of ordained ministers of the church met during the annual conferences and usually gave a report to the conference which was received and recorded in the minutes. The conference limited the time the School of the Ministry could meet and there were times when they were only permitted to meet one hour during the conference. Then there was a period of time, starting in 1957, when there were no meetings and it appeared the School of the Ministry no longer existed.

Fourteen years later the rebirth of the School of the Ministry occurred. A resolution was passed at the 1971 Ministers' Conference to provide for the second day of business at the 1972 Ministers Conference to be for the School of the Ministry. - 1971 Conference Minutes p. 14

A resolution was made during the 1972 Ministers' Conference providing for the "School of Ministry" meeting the first Tuesday of conference. This action was sent to referendum as Bill #3 and passed. - 1972 Conf. Min. p. 14

A resolution was made at the 1979 Ministers' Conference discontinuing the School of the Ministry which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #4 which was passed:

Inasmuch as the intents and purposes of the "School of the Ministry" have not been of evident spiritual consequence as intended, after several attempts to this time,

Be it resolved that the "School of the Ministry" be discontinued at the conclusion of the General Conference of 1979.

Don Housknecht

(1979 Conf. Min. p. 18)

The Ministers' Conference

The Phoenix, Arizona Local made a request of the 1975 Ministers' Conference to adopt a resolution providing for an August Ministers' Conference which was approved. The first August Ministers' Conference was held August 20 through 23, 1975. - 1975 Conference Minutes p. 3, 4

At the 1976 Ministers' Conference a resolution to make the August Ministers' Conference an annual event was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed:

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION FROM
THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE OF THE MINISTRY

Greetings:

At a special conference of the Ministry, held August 20th through August 23, 1975, it was resolved that a:

"Special mid-year Ministers' Conference be held each year on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of the third week of August."

This matter carried by a vote of 30 to 0. It should be noted that this conference is intended for participation and attendance of the Ministry only, as it was in August 1975.

Therefore, the Council of Apostles recommends the adoption of this resolution, and that it be sent for a referendum vote of the General Church membership.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon Secy.
Council of Apostles
(1976 Conference Minutes p.11,12)

Due to the need to make changes on the appointed date for the August Ministers' Conference from time to time, a resolution was passed and sent to referendum by the 1997 Ministers' Conference as Bill #1 which passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the following action to be passed by this body and to be sent out for referendum.

RESOLUTION

Inasmuch as the date of the August Ministers' Conference needs to be altered from time to time,

And inasmuch as it is necessary to suspend the referendum rule to do so,

Be it resolved that the August Ministers' Conference be empowered to set the date of that conference year to year as is desired by that conference body, and that the rules governing the dates of the August Ministers' Conference in Referendum Bill # 1 of 1976 and Referendum Bill # 2 of 1980 be rescinded.

Respectfully submitted
Smith N Brickhouse, Sec. Council of Apostles
(1997 Conference Minutes p. 24, 25)

The 2005 August Ministers' Conference passed a resolution to move its annual meetings to follow the April Ministers' Conference. Thus the name August Ministers' Conference was not appropriate.

At the 2006 April Ministers' Conference a resolution was passed changing the names of the two conferences thus: the April Ministers' Conference was changed to "General Conference" and the August Ministers' Conference was changed to "Ministers' Conference." - Section III, page 277, Renaming of Conferences



The 2000 Ministers' Conference (August Ministers' Conference)

A Review of the Ministers' Conference Activities

Beginning in 1975 the August Ministers' Conference listed twenty-six items of priesthood concern. Generally these concerns indicated a need for greater outreach in missionary efforts, working with both scattered and local church members, and a greater effort to work with our young people.

In the 1976 August Ministers' Conference, committees were appointed to study certain subjects and bring back reports. This has been a practice which has proved to be beneficial to the conference.

The 1977 August Ministers' Conference passed an action to prepare a 5 inch by 8½ inch "Priesthood Guide Manual" whereby all documents approved by this conference could be placed in it for the use of the ministers. These manuals have been reproduced in quantity and are available to all ministers in the church. This has proved to be a great asset to the ministers in general and especially to those newly ordained.

Various suggested subjects have been listed on the annual agenda which give opportunity for the ministers to study prior to the discussion and/or actions to be made during the sessions of the August Conference. Some ministers have volunteered to make special presentations of subjects they have researched. These presentations are usually made during the evening sessions.

Although there have been disagreements expressed during the discussions on various subjects, there has been a willingness to hear the views of others which has been beneficial to the conference body. Through the years some very controversial subjects have been discussed and actions made concerning those subjects.

Various resolutions, which have been brought to the April Ministers' Conference, have been referred to the August Ministers' Conference for consideration. The August Conference has responded with certain recommendations made by that body. This practice has proved to be beneficial to the church generally.

The establishment of the August Ministers' Conference (Ministers' Conference) has been a growth process for the priesthood members of the church. It has also assisted the April Ministers' Conference (General Conference) by relieving the pressure that comes with having to act on the spot with extensive debate on doctrinal matters. The General Conference is still in control in whether or not the matter is to be sent to the voice of the people by referendum. The unhurried and prayerful consideration of the matter can be made by the ministers before it comes to the vote of the church. This appears to help avert tension and division which often occurred in the General Conferences in earlier times.

2. Ministerial Officers

Members of the Council of Apostles 1950 Through 2008

Elders Don W. Housknecht and William A. Sheldon were called as apostles during the 1950 General Conference and ordained April 11, 1950. They filled the vacancies in the Council of Apostles made by the resignation of Richard M. Maloney in 1946 and the resignation of John E. Bozarth in 1949. Apostle Housknecht was given the appointment to be associated with Apostle Leon A. Gould in Michigan and the Northeastern States Mission. Apostle Sheldon was given the appointment to be associated with Arthur M. Smith of Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska. Apostle Richard Maloney had served in the office of apostle since 1937 and Apostle John Bozarth had served since 1936.

The members of the Council of Apostles in 1950 and 1951 were: Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr., Bert C. Flint, William F. Anderson and William A. Sheldon all of Independence, Missouri; Arthur M. Smith of Ava, Missouri; Thomas E. Barton, Sr. of Hayden, Colorado; James E. Yates of Phoenix, Arizona; Leon A. Gould of Bemidji, Minnesota; Robert R. Robertson of Puryear, Tennessee; Don W. Housknecht of Fenton, Michigan; Thomas J. Jordan of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, and Francis W. Jordan of Viceroy, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The resignation of Apostle Francis W. Jordan of Viceroy, Canada, from the Council of Apostles was accepted by the 1952 General Conference. He had served in the office of apostle since 1942. - 1952 Conf. Min. p.68

Apostle James E. Yates passed away April 7, 1954. He had served in the office of apostle twenty-six years, being ordained in April, 1928.

On April 9, 1954, of that conference, the Council of Apostles made this recommendation:

We the Council of Twelve do recommend to the conference, that inasmuch as it has been made known to us by the Spirit, that Archie F. Bell of Ava, Missouri, and Leon Yates of Phoenix, Arizona, have been called to serve in the office work of an Apostle, that they be set apart and ordained to this office at the earliest date possible. - 1954 Conference Minutes p.68

The Council of Apostles made the recommendation to the 1955 Ministers' Conference to accept the request made by Apostle Don W. Housknecht to be released from the Quorum of Apostles which was approved by the conference:

Greetings:

In as much as there did come to the Council of Twelve through its Secretary, Apostle Archie F. Bell, a letter as of the date of August 31, 1954 from Apostle Don W. Housknecht, in which he expresses the wish "to be released from the Quorum of Twelve.

The Council of Twelve since that date have failed to change his mind or attitude in regard to his resigning from the Council; and

Whereas; In a letter recently received as of March 31, 1955 he still feels it his "duty to resign;" therefore the Council of Twelve Apostles recommend that his resignation be now accepted and he be released from all further obligation and responsibility as an Apostle of the Church of Christ.

Respectfully submitted,
 Arthur M. Smith
 Secretary of the Council of Twelve
 (1955 Conference Minutes p.68)



Members of the Council of Apostles: Leon A. Gould, William F. Anderson, William A. Sheldon, Thomas E. Barton, E. Leon Yates, Archie F. Bell, Don W. Housknecht, Bert C. Flint, Thomas J. Jordan, Arthur M. Smith and Clarence L. Wheaton.

The Council of Apostles made recommendation at the 1956 Ministers' Conference to reinstate Don W. Housknecht to the Council of Apostles which was approved:

Greetings:

The Council of Twelve, after prayerful consideration, do hereby recommend to this Conference that Brother Don Housknecht be now reinstated in the Council of Twelve.

Respectfully submitted,
Arthur M. Smith, Secretary of the Council of Twelve

(1956 Conference Minutes p.70)

Apostle Robert R. Robertson of Puryear, Tennessee passed away June 6, 1960. He had served in the office of apostle since 1942.

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1963 Ministers Conference concerning the call of Robert H. Jensen to be an apostle:

Greetings:

After careful and prayerful consideration of the call witnessed unto by the Spirit, we the Council of Apostles unanimously recommend to this Conference that Elder Robert H. Jenson of Bellevue, Nebraska, be set aside and ordained to the office of an Apostle in the Church of Christ, and that his ordination be provided for at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,
Council of Apostles
Archie F. Bell, Secretary
(1963 Conference Minutes p. 84)

The recommendation was approved by the conference and Brother Robert H. Jensen was set aside as an apostle April 12, 1963.

Apostle Arthur M. Smith passed away March 6, 1965. He had served in the office of apostle since April 10, 1927.

Apostle Bert C. Flint passed away January 7, 1966. He had served in the office of apostle since April 10, 1928.

The Council of Apostles sent a recommendation to the 1966 Ministers' Conference for Elder Marvin E. Ely to be set apart as an apostle which was approved:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the following:

That Marvin E. Ely of Grand Junction, Colorado, be set apart in the Church of Christ to the office of an Apostle; and

That this conference provide that the setting apart of Brother Ely take place during the Sacrament Service on Sunday, April 10th.

Respectfully submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secretary
Council of Apostles

(1966 Conference Minutes p. 8, 9)

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles to the 1967 Ministers' Conference concerning the setting apart of Joseph W. Kidd to the office of an apostle was approved and acted upon. The ordination was performed April 6, 1967.

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles unanimously recommends the following:

That in harmony with Divine call Brother Joseph W. Kidd of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, be set apart in the Church of Christ to the office of an Apostle, and that provisions be made for his ordination to that office.

Respectively submitted,

(signed) Archie F. Bell, Secretary
Council of Apostles

(1967 Conference Minutes p. 16)



The members of the Council of Apostles in 1968: William F. Anderson, E. Leon Yates, Leon A. Gould, Robert H. Jensen, Thomas J. Jordan, William A. Sheldon, Joseph F. Kidd, Archie F. Bell, Thomas E. Barton, Marvin E. Ely, Clarence L. Wheaton and Don W. Housknecht.

Apostle Thomas E. Barton passed away March 20, 1969. He had served in the office of apostle since April 12, 1928.

Apostle Thomas J. Jordan passed away June 7, 1969. He had served in the office of apostle since August, 1936.

Apostle William F. Anderson passed away October 13, 1971 at the age of 101 years. He had served in the office of apostle since April, 1930.

Apostle Leon A. Gould passed away October 23, 1971. He had served in the office of apostle since August, 1936.

The General Church Recorder's report for 1972 showed eight apostles. This was the least number of apostles in the Council since 1936.

In 1973, a call was given for Elder Roland Sarratt to be an apostle in a Council of Apostles' meeting. The manifestation concerning this call, given through Apostle E. Leon Yates, was presented to the Council of Apostles and Elders on April 9, 1975, which was accepted. It was then presented to the Ministers' Conference which also accepted it.

Moved that this body of Elders accept this manifestation or calling presented to us, of the calling of Bro. Roland Sarratt to the apostleship of the Church as divine and of God Almighty. - 1975 Conference Minutes p. 15

Because Brother Sarratt didn't feel he had sufficient evidence of the call himself, he was not ordained at that time.

A manifestation was given just prior to the 1975 Ministers' Conference calling four men to be apostles, one to be a bishop and one to be a Seventy. This manifestation was presented to the Council Apostles and Elders which considered it "... as not having been given of God." The Conference approved the decision of the Apostles and Elders. - 1975 Conference Minutes p. 16

Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr. passed away September 26, 1977. He had served in the office of apostle since April 10, 1926, fifty-one years.

The call of Evangelist Donald E. McIndoo to be an apostle was considered by a conference of Apostles and Elders April 5, 1978. They accepted the call as being of God and recommended to the 1978 Ministers' Conference that he be set aside to that office. The conference approved of their recommendation and the ordination was cared for on April 5, 1978.

Greetings:

In a special conference of Apostles and Elders, held April 4th, 1978, at 8:30 a.m., consideration was given to a calling of Bro. Donald E. McIndoo to the office of Apostle.

Seven testimonies were heard witnessing to the divine authenticity of the calling, in addition to the personal testimony of Bro. McIndoo.

It was properly moved and seconded that this body concur with the call as being of God. Motion carried, 23 approving, none opposed.

The Conference of Apostles and Elders now refers this calling to the April Ministers' Conference for its approval action.

Respectfully Submitted
Robert H. Jensen, Chairman
Gary A. Housknecht, Secretary
Conference of Apostles & Elders

(1978 Conference Minutes p. 8)

Apostle Joseph F. Kidd passed away August 6, 1978, at the age of 52 years. His untimely death was a great loss to the church because of the

potential service that he would otherwise been able to give to the Lord and to the church had he lived a more expected life span.

Apostle Archie F. Bell passed away March 16, 1980. He had served in the office of apostle since 1954. Prior to that he had served in the office of Seventy. His death left the Council of Apostles with six members, the smallest number since April 11, 1926. The reality of this seeming spiritual crisis brought to mind the repeated prayer by Apostle B. C. Flint that there be others called to take up the mantle of apostleship when the older generation must lay it down. It appears he discerned the forthcoming need of the favor of the Lord in calling of apostles and evangelists.

Having received personal verification of his call to be an apostle through the Holy Spirit, Elder Roland Sarratt was ordained to the office of apostle October 30, 1983, at Collins, Missouri, under the hands of Apostles E. Leon Yates and Don W. Housknecht.

On May 14, 1984 Apostle E. Leon Yates passed away. He had served in the office of apostle since 1954 and had been active in missionary work in Mexico since 1956.

The 1990 Ministers' Conference approved the recommendation of the Special Conference of apostles and elders on the call of Elder Alvin J. Moser to be an apostle. The ordination was cared for on April 3, 1990.

The Special Meeting of the Apostles and Elders held April 1, 1990, at the East Independence Local of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) would like to submit the following report of action:

The conference of Apostles and Elders has approved the calling of Bro. Jay Moser to the Council of Apostles as being a valid calling of the Lord.

We therefore return this report of action with a recommendation that the 1990 April Ministers' Conference approve of this calling and set aside time on Tuesday evening for the ordination.

Your Brothers in Christ,

Apostle Robert H. Jensen, Chairman
Elder Robert W. Oldham, Secretary

(1990 Conference Minutes p. 9)

The 1991 Ministers' Conference approved the recommendation of a Special Conference of Apostles and Elders to accept the call of Smith N. Brickhouse to be an apostle. The ordination was cared for on April 2, 1991 at 6:30 P.M.

Greetings:

The Special Conference of Apostles and Elders, which met earlier this date, wish to recommend to the 1991 April Ministers' Conference that the manifestation received during the Sacrament Service Sunday, March 31st, 1991, be deemed as being from God and that Elder Smith N. Brickhouse be set apart as an Apostle in the Church of Christ.

Your Brother in Gospel Bonds,

R. W. Oldham
Secretary for the Special Conference Apostles & Elders

(1991 Conference Minutes p. 22)

Apostle Don W. Housknecht passed away October 6, 1992, in Phoenix, Arizona. He was ordained as an apostle April 11, 1950.

The Council of Apostles scheduled their usual meetings prior to the 1998 Ministers' Conference. The events that took place during that time made significant changes in the personnel of the Council of Apostles. On Monday, March 30, 1998, Apostle Marvin Ely suffered a severe heart attack and passed away. His funeral service was held at the Temple Lot Church Thursday, April 2nd. He had served in the office of apostle since April, 1966.

The following statement was read at the Sunday Sacrament service April 5, 1998:

The members of the Council of Apostles, whose signatures appear below, wish to use this means to relate to the membership of the Church of Christ the spiritual experiences that occurred Saturday, March 28 and Monday, March 30, 1998 during our meetings.

After meeting with the General Bishopric until mid-afternoon on Saturday, we continued for a time in our business. We discussed the need for additional apostles in the council. This has been an increasing concern of ours and we have been fervently praying to the Lord to call out those of His choosing.

We reflected upon the commandment given to Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer to search out the twelve (“Book of Commandments” 15:42). As we continued in quiet discussion Brother Marvin Ely bore witness that he had spiritual discernment concerning Brothers Brian McIndoo, Mike McGhee, Placido Koyoc Yam, Frank Fann and Placido Koyoc Matu to be apostles. The Spirit of God rested upon us as those names were spoken and witnesses were given. Brother Alvin Moser bore testimony to the calling of Brother Joel Yates to be an apostle. Brothers Marvin Ely and Smith Brickhouse bore witness to the calling of Brother Joel Yates.

Each one present bore witness that the Spirit of God had rested upon us in that meeting and most of us wept. We had a season of prayer and dismissed for the evening.

On Monday morning we met in fasting and prayer. We opened with a hymn and prayer and the chairman read a scripture. After some discussion about our concerns for the church and some of our personal problems we knelt in a season of prayer. It was 11:45 when we arose. Brother Ely testified of the spirit of the callings of Brothers Brian McIndoo, Mike McGhee, Joel Yates, Placido Koyoc Yam and Frank Fann, and he said that Placio Koyoc Matu would also serve in the Council of Apostles. He had barely finished testifying to these calls when suddenly he asked for administration. Within a short time he was taken home to his reward.

We bear witness that the Lord answered our prayers and that He gave us six names even before Brother Ely was called home. Therefore we present the names of the following men as being called as apostles of Jesus Christ:
Brian McIndoo, Michael McGhee, Placido Koyoc Yam, Frank Fann, Placido Koyoc Matu and Joel Yates.

Signed: Smith N. Brickhouse, Alvin J. Moser, William A. Sheldon, Donald E. McIndoo, Roland L. Sarratt

Another statement, regarding Apostle Robert H. Jensen’s testimony concerning the calls, was also read:

Due to the fact that Apostle Robert Jensen was not able to attend the meetings of the Council of Apostles and was not present during the time that the calls of the apostles were given on March 28, 1998, arrangements were made by the apostles to call him by telephone during our meeting of April 1, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. A speaker phone was used so that all in the room could hear his voice.

The written statement concerning the callings of the six elders to be apostles was read and Brother Jensen wrote down the names. After verifying the names he repeated them to us and commented on each one. Concerning Brian McIndoo he said that for some time he had great anticipation that he would be called. Concerning Michael McGhee he said that for a long time he had felt that he would be called and for a longer time he had known that Frank Fann would be called. He also stated that he knew of further work to be done by

both of the Placidos and clarified to mean the call to the apostleship. Brother Jensen also testified to the knowledge that a call was to come to Brother Joel Yates although he knew in this case and the others that the call was to come through some one other than himself. Brother Jensen stated that he had the strongest witness of the calls to Brother Michael McGhee and Frank Fann but that didn't take away from the witness for the others. He said that for all these men he had a witness for their callings but that it had not been given to him to make the calls.

Brother Jensen acknowledged the fact that six names had been given and witnessed to by Brother Ely before he had passed away. He said that he felt that it was a confirmation to the truthfulness of the calls that the Lord would give six calls because the Lord knew the need before Brother Ely or any of us did.

Brother Jensen then restated his feelings that these calls were divinely given and wanted to cast his vote in favor of the calls.

Although Brother Jensen said that he had been to the doctor that morning and was physically weary, he demonstrated the ability to comprehend everything that was said and did not have to have any help from anyone there. It was evident to each of us that he was able to understand that statement as it was read to him. All of his statements were voluntary; in no way was he questioned or prompted during his comments to the calls.

Signed: Smith N. Brickhouse, Donald E. McIndoo, William A. Sheldon, Roland L. Sarratt, Alvin J. Moser

A special meeting of Apostles and Elders met on Tuesday afternoon, April 7, 1998 to consider the calls of the six elders to be apostles and brought to the conference Wednesday morning their statement of approval:

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

It is the conviction of those attending the meeting of the special Conference of the Apostles and Elders of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) that the manifestation calling Brothers Brian McIndoo, Michael McGhee, Placido Koyoc Yam, Frank Fann, Placido Koyoc Matu and Joel Yates as Apostles for Jesus Christ is true. And that it be recommended that these brothers be set aside to occupy in the Council of Apostles in the Church of Christ.

We would therefore recommend arrangements be made for their ordination and setting apart upon their acceptance.

Your Brothers in Gospel Bonds,
R.W. Oldham, Secy.
For the Special Meeting of the Conference of the
Apostles and Elders for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
(1998 Conference Minutes p.28)

Brothers Placido Koyoc Yam and Placido Koyco Matu are father and son who live in Yobain, Yucatan, Mexico. They were not present at the conference but word was sent to them of their calls. The other four brothers who were called each accepted his call. Their ordinations were cared for Wednesday evening, April 8, 1998. Apostles Brian E. McIndoo and Joel A. Yates lived in Phoenix, Arizona and Apostles Frank Fann and Michael E. McGhee lived in Independence, Missouri.

Brother Placido Koyoc Yam received evidence of his call a short time later and was ordained August 9, 1998. Brother Placido Koyoc Matu received evidence of his call some time later and was ordained April 4, 1999 during the Ministers' Conference. There was a full quorum of twelve apostles for the first time since the death of Apostle Thomas E. Barton in 1969.

Apostle Robert H. Jensen passed away September 13, 1999, after serving in that office since April 12, 1963. The eleven members of the Council of Apostles at the 2000 April Ministers' Conference were William A. Sheldon, Donald E. McIndoo, Roland L. Sarratt, Placido Koyoc Yam, Frank Fann, Smith N. Brickhouse, Michael E. McGhee, Alvin J. Moser, Brian E. McIndoo, Placido K. Matu and Joel A. Yates.

A special business meeting was called for the 2008 General Conference on April 9, 2008 at 6:30 P.M. to consider a recommendation by the Special Conference of Apostles and Elders which had met that day. The recommendation was for the call of Elder Duane L. Ely to be an apostle, which had been given during a season of fasting and prayer during the Ministers' Conference:



Ordination service, April, 1998:

Standing: Apostles William A. Sheldon, Smith N. Brickhouse,
Alvin J. Moser, Roland L. Sarratt, and Donald E. McIndoo
Seated: Frank Fann, Michael E. McGhee, Brian E. McIndoo and Joel A. Yates



Council of Apostles 2009: Frank Fann, Duane Ely, Smith Brickhouse, Donald McIndoo, Roland Sarratt, Brian McIndoo, Michael McGhee, Alvin Moser, Placido Koyoc Matu, Joel Yates, William Sheldon.
Apostle Placido Koyoc Yam was not present.

Recommendation from the April 9, 2008, special conference of Apostles and Elders:

To the 2008 Special session of the General Conference of the Church of Christ assembled:

Greetings:

The Apostles and Elders met in special conference in consideration of a spiritual manifestation through Apostle Roland Sarratt, calling Elder Duane Ely to the office of the apostleship, and resolved without opposition that this call was of the Lord, and that it be delivered to this conference with the recommendation that: "as a body, we accept this call."

Elder Peter Gould,
Secretary for the special conference of Apostles and Elders.
(2008 Conf. Min. p.36)

The call was accepted by the General Conference body and Brother Duane Ely was then ordained an apostle under the hands of Apostles Frank Fann and Brian McIndoo. With this ordination, the Church of Christ once more had twelve apostles.

Evangelists

The call of Brother Donald E. McIndoo to the office of Seventy was approved by the 1969 Ministers' Conference:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the following:

That the Conference approve of the ordination of Donald E. McIndoo, of Phoenix, Arizona, to the office of a Seventy, and that we delegate the missionary in charge of that field to see that the ordination of Brother McIndoo is taken care of.

Respectfully submitted,
Archie F. Bell, Secretary, Council of Apostles

(1969 Conference Minutes p. 14)

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1974 Ministers' Conference concerning the calls of two elders in Yucatan to be Evangelists which was approved:

Greetings:

Pursuant to the referral, by this body, to the Council of Apostles, of a previous recommendation regarding the ordination of two elders as Evangelists, we have considered the matter and offer the following:

Inasmuch as divine revelation has been given as to the calling and setting apart of elders Vicente Poot and Placido Koyoc Yam, therefore,

The Council of Apostles recommend that these two brethren be set apart to the office of Evangelist.

Respectfully submitted
William A. Sheldon, Secy.

(1974 Conference Minutes p. 15)

On April 8, 1980, a special conference of Apostles and Elders gave approval of a call for Elder Hubert E. Yates to be an Evangelist. This was reported to the 1980 Ministers' Conference which gave their approval. The ordination was performed during the conference. - 1980 Conference Minutes p.12

Elder Marvin M. Case was called to be an Evangelist and was ordained April 5, 1983, during the Ministers' Conference. - 1983 Conference Minutes p. 12

Seven Member General Bishopric Established

The establishment of a seven member General Bishopric, during the very eventful time of the late 1920s and early 1930s, was a great challenge for the membership of the Church of Christ. The abolishment of the First Presidency and the filling of the Council of Twelve Apostles, the undertaking of building the Temple, the Otto Fetting messages and the resulting split in the church, all required great efforts on the part of the ministers and the membership to keep the church in an organized forum to do business in their conferences.

Added to the situation was their effort to establish a storehouse committee also chosen from the eldership of the Church. The number of that committee was also seven with almost identical requirements as the seven members of the General Bishopric. With much determination they made rules and guidelines for themselves and their conferences were their workshops.

The 1927 General Conference officially adopted the Articles of Faith and Practice stipulating that there was not to be any changes made to them in compliance to one of the messages given through Apostle Otto Fetting. Later the Fetting messages were officially rejected by the church and the Articles of Faith and Practice have been revised and added to from time to time. One of the articles (later numbered 19) specified that the temporal affairs of the church are to be cared for by the General Bishopric:

We believe that the temporal affairs of the general church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the direction of the general conferences of the church. The temporal affairs of the local churches shall be administered by local bishops under the supervision and direction of the local congregations. - Zion's Advocate, April, 1927, page 64

At the 1928 General Conference, Alma O. Frisbey was retained as the bishop of the church. He chose for his two counselors Walter P. Buckley and Arthur W. Bogue. It is assumed they cared for the financial affairs of the church as indicated in the article passed by the previous conference.

Different than most of the other Restoration churches, the Church of Christ decided against a one man or three man body to care for the temporal affairs of the church, and established a seven man bishopric based upon the scripture as found in Acts 6:1-6:

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

A resolution was passed by the 1929 General Conference which established a body of seven men to care for the temporal affairs of the church, later to be known as the General Bishopric. During that conference seven men were appointed as bishops: Alma O. Frisbey, Walter P. Buckley, A. O. McArthur, Samuel Beacham, Arthur W. Bogue, Homer B. Curtis and Elias E. Richards.

Difficulties came early in the establishment of the seven man bishopric. At the 1930 General Conference, there were four vacancies in the bishopric. The following recommendation from the Council of Apostles was read and approved by the conference:

We recommend to the general conference that the office of A. W. Bogue, A.O. McArthur, Dr. H. B. Curtis and W. P. Buckley of the Bishopric shall be declared vacant and that we proceed to select others to fill their places. -
Zion's Advocate, July 1, 1930 p.115

During the conference year of 1929-30, A. O. McArthur, A. W. Bogue and H. B. Curtis withdrew their memberships from the church and W. P. Buckley was excommunicated. Two bishops were chosen and ordained during the 1930 General Conference: John T. Ford and Henry Johnson. There remained two vacancies.

As strange as it may seem, the five members of the General Bishopric did not receive, receipt and dispense monies. The 1930 conference chose Apostle Arthur M. Smith as Office Manager who in fact took care of the financial affairs of the Church. He continued in that office for three years and in 1933 Walter L. Gates was chosen to be Office Manager.

It appears that it took some time to make the transition from the duties of the separate elected Office Manager to the duties of the members of the bishops in actually handling the monies. In 1934, John R. McClain was chosen as Office Manager, although he was not a bishop at that time. In 1935, he was appointed and ordained a bishop and he continued as Office Manager. The actual transition of the bishops handling the monies was finally complete.

Also in 1934, Thomas J. Jordan was ordained as a bishop and served in that office until 1936 when he was called and ordained an apostle. Alva S. Wheaton was ordained as a bishop in 1935 along with John R. McClain. For the first time since 1929 there were seven bishops not counting Henry Johnson.

The records are not clear as to Henry Johnson's position after being ordained a bishop in 1930. It appears he had not retained his office as bishop as he was reappointed to that office in 1937 by conference action.

Until 1937, the members of the Board of Trustees were elected by the general conferences. At the 1937 General Conference, an action was made to assign the Board of Trustees for all general church property, including the temple lots, to the seven members of the General Bishopric. This action was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #13 which also passed:

Greeting:

As the committee appointed to draft suitable resolutions to be sent out to the referendum of the whole church relative to the trusteeship of property belonging to the general Church of Christ, such as the Temple Lots, etc., we wish to present the following for your consideration and approval:

"Whereas title has been vested in a board of trustees that have continued in custody of the Temple Lot property owned by the Church of Christ under the following terms of conveyance, i.e.,

"As trustee in trust for the aforesaid Church of Christ, and to their official successors as trustees in trust for the said Church of Christ, according to the laws and covenants of said Church . . . and the right of conveyance pertains to no other church of the same name or similarity of name than that which has been specified in this deed of which said Granville Hedrick is now this day and date the President of said Church of Christ, as being composed of associated members according to the laws and covenants of said Church, wherefore the said Church of Christ is the real party of the second part to this deed of conveyance as represented by the term, 'Trustees in trust' for said Church of Christ.

"Therefore, be it resolved, that this same title under the same conditions shall hereinafter be vested in the General Bishopric of the Church of Christ, as well as the title to all other real estate property of the General Church as trustees in trust for said Church of Christ."

Respectfully submitted, (Committee)
A.O. Frisbey, J.R. McClain, C.L. Wheaton

(Conference Minutes April 13, 1937)

In 1939 Alma O. Frisbey, Henry Johnson and Samuel Beacham were released from the General Bishopric and Daniel Ray Bryant was ordained as a bishop. In 1940 Alma O. Frisbey was reappointed as bishop, and Benjamin A. Winegar and Richard B. Trowbridge were ordained as

bishops. Brother McClain was replaced by Richard B. Trowbridge as Office Manager.

John R. McClain passed away in 1941. In 1942 Richard B. Trowbridge was released from the General Bishopric and it appears that Alma O. Frisbey resigned his office of bishop. C. Leroy Wheaton, Jr., John A. Sweem and Walter B. Davis were appointed and ordained as bishops. Davis was made Business Manager. Around this time the title, Office Manager, was replaced with Business Manager which incorporated the duties of the Business manager of the Zion's Advocate into the General Bishopric's duties.

The 1942 General Conference passed an action giving the duties of the General Bishopric which was sent to referendum as Bill No. 4 which was also passed:

Whereas the Articles of Faith provide that the "temporal affairs of the general church as to be administered by the General Bishopric under the supervision and direction of the General Conferences of the Church," therefore
Be it resolved:

That the Conference do hereby define the duties and requirements of the General Bishopric to be as follows:

1. To function as a quorum, the General Bishopric, which consists of seven men, must have an active majority of four.
2. The General Bishopric shall recommend to the Conference for appointment, one of their number, or a man of their choice, to represent them in the BUSINESS OFFICE of the General Offices, whom they shall require to give bond for the faithful performance of his duties. If they shall fail to recommend one whom the Conference shall approve, nomination may be made from the floor of the Conference.
3. The General Bishopric shall collect and receive monies for the General Church as provided and specified in our law. All monies shall be directed to be made payable to the Church of Christ (Temple Lot).
4. All monies shall be deposited into the funds for which they are designated.
5. The entire quorum of the General Bishopric shall be designated as trustee of trust funds. Their representative in the business office may not serve in this capacity. Loans shall not be made from any church funds.
6. Allowances shall be paid to all active missionaries' families from the general fund, at the rate of \$50 per month for wife, and \$10 per month for each child under 18 years, as long as funds are sufficient. In case of a shortage in the general fund all allowances shall be prorated, and not borrowed from any other fund.

7. Duties of the manager of the business office shall be:
- a. To collect and receive money in the business office as a representative of the General Bishopric. He shall give a receipt promptly for all monies received.
 - b. To disburse all monies collected and received, only under the direction of the General Bishopric, and only by check; all checks must be countersigned; each check must indicate the purpose for which it is written.
 - c. To serve as Business Manager of the Advocate.
 - d. To handle such correspondence received at the General Offices as pertains to business matters only. All other matter shall be directed to the proper departments.

Be it resolved that this Conference shall add these rules to the present rules which are now in force until the next General Conference.

This foregoing document has been approved by the Bishopric as amended, and has been recommended to the Conference for adoption.

Respectfully,

Signed, J.T. Ford, LeRoy Wheaton,
D. Ray Bryant, J.A. Sweem

(Conference Minutes November 16, 1942)

Benjamin A. Winegar was called and ordained a Seventy and therefore was released from the General Bishopric. The date of his release is unknown. John T. Ford passed away in 1946. Nicholas F. Denham and Edward H. Pohdola were ordained as bishops in 1947. Nicholas F. Denham was chosen as Business Manager. The seven bishops in 1947 were C. Leroy Wheaton, Jr., Nicholas F. Denham, Edward H. Pohdola, John A. Sweem, Alva S. Wheaton, Daniel Ray Bryant and Walter B. Davis.

The 1950 General Conference revised the Articles of Faith and Practice and changed article #19 to read thus:

19. We believe that the temporal affairs of the general church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the direction of the general conferences of the church and under the supervision of the Council of Twelve. The temporal affairs of the local churches shall be administered by local bishops under the supervision and direction of the local congregation.

(1950 Conf, Min. p. 74)

On April 13, 1953, Vance H. Harris was ordained as bishop. It appears that he filled the vacancy left by Alva S. Wheaton. Exactly when Brother Wheaton resigned from the bishopric is undetermined. Brother Harris was chosen as Business Manager at the 1954 General Conference. C. Leroy Wheaton, Jr. was chosen as Business Manager at the 1963 General Conference.

At the 1963 General Conference, a motion defining the duties of the General Bishopric relative to the control of the Temple Lot property was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed. - Conference Minutes, April 6, 1963, 2:30 p.m. session)

Walter B. Davis resigned his bishopric in 1964 and Oren A. Caviness was ordained in his place on April 11, 1964. D. Ray Bryant passed away November 22, 1976, and Leslie P. Case was ordained a bishop April 9, 1977. Vance H. Harris passed away February 2, 1978, and Alvin L. Harris, his son, was ordained a bishop April 22, 1979. Alvin L. Harris was chosen as Business Manager by the 1982 General Conference.

John A. Sweem passed away January 22, 1981, and Frank Fann, Jr., was ordained a bishop April 12, 1981. Oren A. Caviness passed away March 13, 1987, and Smith N. Brickhouse was ordained a bishop April 8, 1987.

Due to the destruction of the General Headquarters' building in 1990, plans were made to rebuild. Consideration to the rules governing the use and control of the new building brought forth an action at the 1990 General Conference which was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed. This action was a revision of the 1963 action which applied to the old building. - Conference Minutes, April 4, 1990, 10:00 a.m. session

Smith N. Brickhouse was called and ordained an apostle at the 1991 April Ministers' Conference and Charles W. Brantner was ordained a bishop April 3, 1991. Edward H. Pohdola passed away August 29, 1991, and Allen D. Kauffman was ordained a bishop April 7, 1992.

Frank Fann Jr. was called and ordained an apostle in 1998 and Rodger E. Bruner was ordained a bishop April 6, 1999. C. Leroy Wheaton Jr. passed away March 19, 2003, after serving nearly 61 years as a bishop. Rickey J. Olson was ordained a bishop April 17, 2003.

Allen D. Kauffman relinquished his appointment to the General Bishopric January 20, 2008. Jeffery R. Oldham was appointed in his place and ordained April 7, 2008.

Elder Nicholas F. Denham passed away September 29, 2008, at the age of 98. He had been a faithful member of the Church of Christ for 77 years, served as an elder for 67 years and served as a member of the General Bishopric of the Church of Christ for 61 years. His life was an example of willing and continued service to the Lord and to his brothers and sisters in the Church of Christ. Elder James H. Case was appointed in his place and ordained April 6, 2009.



Members of the General Bishopric April 3, 1991:
(back) Elders Frank Fann, Leslie Case;
(middle) Elders Charles Brantner, Nicholas Denham, Alvin Harris
(front) Elder C. LeRoy Wheaton



Members of the General Bishopric in 2003: (L-R) Elders Alvin Harris, Rodger Bruner, Rickey Olson, Charles Brantner, Nicholas Denham, Leslie Case, Allen Kauffman

Ministry Recognized

On Conference Sunday, April 2, 2000, Apostle William A. Sheldon, Elder/Bishop Clarence LeRoy Wheaton and Elder/Bishop Nicholas F. Denham were recognized for their more than half a century each of service as called ministers in the Church of Christ in the work of the Lord. Each was presented a plaque with the following inscriptions:

WILLIAM A. SHELDON

Ordained an Elder in the Church of Christ

April 12, 1942

And ordained an Apostle of Jesus Christ

April 11, 1950

CLARENCE LEROY WHEATON, JR

Ordained an Elder in the Church of Christ

April 13, 1941

And set aside as a member of the General Bishopric

November 17, 1942

NICHOLAS FRISBEY DENHAM

Ordained an Elder in the Church of Christ

April 13, 1941

And set aside as a member of the General Bishopric

April 12, 1947

This message was on each plaque in italics:

*On this date, April 2, 2000, the members
Of the Church of Christ express recognition
And appreciation for your many years of labor
And wish you the blessings of God
In your continued service.*

(May 2000 Zion's Advocate p.70)

Elected Officers

The **General Church Secretary** and the General Conference Secretary were two separate offices until 1964 when the duties clearly designated the General Church Secretary as being the secretary of all the General Conferences.

Brothers Forest Maley, Harvey E. Seibel and James A. Hedrick along with Sisters Velma Wheaton and Doris Ratterree served as the General Conference secretary in the 1950s, 1960s and up to the late 1970s. Brother Robert W. Oldham served an extended length of time, 1978 through 2001. Harvey E. Seibel was again elected and has served 2002 through 2008. The use of copy machines and computers has aided that work considerably in recent years.

The office of **General Church Recorder** has functioned with little regulation or rules for many years. During that time statistical reports were made by the Recorder which varied, but through past practice efforts were made to give reliable statistics to the membership.

Brother James M. Case, Sister Lois Harris, Brothers Roland Sarratt, Isaac Brockman Sr., C. Andrew Brantner, Rickey Olson and James E. Yates, Jr. have served consecutively as General Church Recorders since 1950. Brother Rickey Olson set up a computer program to meet the needs of recording the increased membership during his term of 2001-2003. In 2005 the General Church Recorder was given two assistants because of the additional work.

The elected offices of **Editor and Associate Editors** of the **Zion's Advocate** required much diligence in meeting deadlines, specific

regulations and team work. During the past half century, the church paper was a valuable tool in keeping the church membership informed of the work as well as providing spiritual nourishment through articles written by subject.

Among those serving as editors were Brothers William Sheldon, Archie Bell, Nicholas Denham, M. Harvey Seibel, Oren Caviness, Richard Wheaton, Kenneth Smith, Harvey Seibel, Roland Sarratt, Gary Housknecht, Michael McGhee and Gordon McCann.

Those, having special talents in leading the congregations in song as well as providing special music presentations, were elected to the office of **General Church Chorister**. Those serving in that special work were Sisters Metta Anderson, Marian Sprague, Brothers Thomas Maley, Forest Maley, Sisters Kathryn Matthews, June Sarratt, Konie Caviness, Martha Bruner and Manon Lawrence.

The **Board of Publications** has provided the church with many valuable publications for general information and for missionary outreach. Some of those serving on the board during the past fifty plus years are: Louise Sheldon, Nicholas Denham, Forest Maley, Denver Chapman, Leroy Wheaton, James M. Case, Vance Harris, Leslie Case, Robert Maley, Kenneth Smith, Leon Gould, Arthur Smith, M. Harvey Seibel, William Sheldon, Curtis Yates, Richard Wheaton, Oren Caviness, Frank Fann, Gary Housknecht, Ray Hunholz, Lawrence Beem, Warren Johnson, Marvin Case, Glenn Gill, Smith Brickhouse, Robert Oldham, Charles Brantner and Robert Hedrick.

The work of **General Church Historian** has been an important task in recording our unique beginnings and past struggles in remaining a functioning individual church. Those who have held the office of Historian are Apostles Bert C. Flint, Archie F. Bell, Robert H. Jensen and Roland L. Sarratt. The Associate Historians who have contributed to the work by compiling and writing their histories are Donna Moser and Harvey E. Seibel.

3. Local Churches

History of Local Churches in the Church of Christ

During the years from 1867 through the turn of the century, the Church of Christ did not grow in number comparable to some of the other Restoration churches. For a time there were some members still residing in the areas in Illinois and Indiana from where the people had migrated to Independence, Missouri. Eventually the church membership in Illinois and Indiana became non-existent. There were a few local churches organized in other areas during that period of time but they did not last.

The first few decades of the 1900s saw much growth in the Church of Christ. It is not known how many people transferred their membership to the Church of Christ from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or how many who later left the Church of Christ to return to the RLDS Church or go elsewhere. The increase in numbers was great as compared to what they had prior to the establishing of the provision for the transfer of membership. The rate of growth they experienced in the 1920s and 1930s was not as great in the following decades.

During the growth of membership in the 1920s and 1930s, there were a number of local churches organized in the United States and Canada. Due to the lack of records, there is little or no information available on some of the local churches that had once been a part of the church. On occasion, we might find a mention of a local church on an application for membership form or in a missionary report but otherwise the particulars of the organization have been lost. Our most reliable source has been the conference minutes and the church paper, *Zion's Advocate*.

In spite of the Great Depression in the 1930s and the effects of the Second World War in the early 1940s, the Church of Christ seemed to thrive in zeal in carrying the gospel to the world. By the 1950s things had settled down somewhat and those who were truly convinced that they were led by the hand of God to join this church became stalwarts in the work along with the original members. The church had spread out over the land and in

some foreign countries, but maintaining stability among the members was not easy.

To help in the situation a number of local churches were formed where there were ministry available to shepherd the flocks. Although we don't have available a record of all the local churches, we feel it necessary to give an account of what we have been able to obtain.

Temple Lot Local, Independence, MO

The oldest local church in the Church of Christ today is the Temple Lot Local, Independence, Missouri. Just when and how the local received that name is uncertain. Early on it was known as the Independence, Missouri Local. Apparently, when the second local church was organized in Independence, it became necessary to more readily distinguish between the two locals by giving the first local church the name, Temple Lot Local.

At one point in time the local church and the general church were all the same people. When the church began to grow in the 1920's it became necessary to distinguish between local church membership and general church membership. Other local churches began to be organized in various places outside of Independence. The Temple Lot Local has retained a sizeable membership and has continued to occupy the general church headquarters building.





The Temple Lot Local, Church of Christ, both above photos taken Sunday morning, December 31, 1989, the day before the burning of the church building.

There have been regular services held each Sunday and Wednesday evenings at the church. There have been many different elders who have served as pastor through the years which data would be rather difficult to search out and record at this time. Earlier the office of pastor was called presiding elder.

As a result of the burning of the general church headquarters building in 1990, the Temple Lot Local was displaced for nearly two years while a new church was being built. They were offered the use of the local YMCA for Sunday morning services and to join the East Independence Local for Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services. The Temple Lot Local contributed funds and some of the furnishings for the new church building.

There has been considerable growth in the local membership through the years and, until 1958, it was the home local for all the membership of the church in the greater Kansas City area. Because there was a large number of ministers in the one local, it was determined at that time to form another local church in Independence to more effectively reach out to the community.

East Independence, Missouri Local

On May 21, 1958, Apostle Archie Bell organized the West Independence Local with twenty-one charter members. Elder Kenneth Smith was elected

the pastor. The local moved from the temporary meeting place on Vermont Street to Sister Ora Derry's garage east of Independence. The name was officially changed to East Independence Local on November 17, 1958.



East Independence Local Church of Christ

They met in the garage for five years while they raised money, purchased a lot at 78 Highway and Holke Road, and built a church building. Members of the local did most of the actual work of erecting the building with Brother Curtis Yates taking the lead. The congregation met in the basement for a time before the auditorium was finished. The first service held in the auditorium was in January, 1964. The building was dedicated May 12, 1968.

Several families from Wisconsin moved to the Independence area in the 1970s and joined the East Independence Local which increased the membership considerably. Most of the elders who have been members of the local have served as pastor at one time or another.

An annex was built on the back of the church building in the early 1990s and later the auditorium and pews were renovated and classrooms were added in the basement. There have been many weddings and baptisms performed in the church through the years.

Ava, Missouri Local

A local church was organized at Ava, Missouri on July 18, 1933, by Apostle Arthur M. Smith with eighteen charter members. Elder Grant Burgin was chosen as pastor. There is no further history on this local church.

In October, 1939, a local was organized at Ava, Missouri by Apostle John E. Bozarth with fifteen charter members. Elder Archie Bell was chosen as pastor. There were two buildings, a log house and a school house, where this local met east of town in the 1950s and 1960s, and one converted house they had purchased in town where they met during the 1980s and 1990s. Pastors, other than Elder Archie Bell, were Elders Harvey Bell, Alexander Smith, Arthur G. Smith and Joseph F. Smith.

St. Louis, Missouri Local

A local church was organized October 17, 1939, in Ferguson, Missouri which came to be known as the St. Louis, Missouri Local. There were thirteen present and Elder Robert A. McClain was chosen as pastor.

A church building was erected on Clairmont Drive in Ferguson, Missouri and they held their first meeting in the new building July 12, 1942 with eighteen present. Elders Alton Shankle, Lawrence Nichols and August Schwegler were active ministers in the local through the years.

The St. Louis Local was an active local in that community for several decades. Eventually the local ceased to function and the building was sold.

Oak Hill/Houston, Missouri Locals

The Oak Hill Local of Houston, Missouri was organized by Apostle John E. Bozarth May 21, 1944 with 23 charter members. Elder Paul Mercer was chosen as pastor.

On August 5, 1973, the Houston, Missouri Local was organized with twelve charter members. Elder Oren A. Caviness was elected pastor. A beautiful new church was built across from the Keeney farm on highway 63 north of town. Besides Brother Caviness, Elders John Jones, Arthur Smith, Virgil Addie and David Keeney have served as pastors. Apostle Marvin Ely also served as pastor for a time.



Houston, Missouri Local Church

Georgeville/Cowgill, Missouri Local

On September 7, 1952, Apostle William Sheldon organized a local church in the area of Georgeville, Missouri. Later the local came to be known as the Cowgill, Missouri Local. Elder Daniel Ray Bryant was chosen as pastor.

A farmhouse was made into a church building, but later it was demolished and a new church building was built. Elder John Sweem was pastor for a time and then Brother Bryant's two sons, Gerald and Loren, alternately held the office of pastor.

Hamilton, Missouri Local

During the 1930s, the Hamilton, Missouri, Local church functioned for several years with Elder John T. Ford as pastor. It is uncertain when that

local church ceased to exist, but apparently when it ceased to function, there was a need for another local church in that area. Thus the Cowgill Local was organized.

Noel/Anderson, Missouri Local

The Noel, Missouri Local was organized June 20, 1954 at Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, by Apostle Archie F. Bell. Elder Louis V. Aldridge was chosen as pastor. A piece of property was purchased near Noel, Missouri and a small building was moved on it which was converted into a church. On October 9, 1955, the building was dedicated with a large group of members from various parts of Missouri.

As the local members began to move away from Noel, the local ceased to function. In the 1970s the Hitt and Leighton-Floyd families joined the church and became established in Anderson, Missouri. The Noel, Missouri Local became the Anderson, Missouri Local. A residence was purchased in Anderson and used for their church. Later a trailer home was purchased and set in Pineville, Missouri which also was used for their church for a time. The active elders of that local were Howard Leighton-Floyd, Albert Leighton-Floyd, Donald Hitt, Michael Hitt, Scott Harris and George Adams.

Collins, Missouri Local

There were several members of the Martin family who had joined the Church of Christ in the Collins, Missouri, area before the Sarratt family moved there in 1933. Missionaries came and held meetings there from time to time. The Sarratt family joined the Church of Christ by transferring their memberships in 1936.

The numbers grew and a Sunday School was formed. Starting in the late 1940s, Sunday School and services were held in the Burgess School house near the Sarratt farm north of Collins. Ministers came from Independence and elsewhere to conduct sacrament and preaching services. In 1955 Brother and Sister Sarratt moved to Collins and services were held in the homes of the members in that area.

On June 8, 1958, Apostle Archie Bell organized the Collins, Missouri Local with 23 charter members. Elder Joseph Yates was chosen as pastor.

Several church members moved from Phoenix, Arizona to the Preston, Missouri area and they joined the Collins Local Church.

On July 11, 1963, the Collins Local bought a church building in Collins from the Evangelical United Brethren Church which they dedicated October 13, 1963. Later they built an addition on to the building with a kitchen, classroom, restrooms and a baptismal font.

Besides Brother Yates, Elders Oren Caviness, Edward McIndoo, James Martin and Allen Kauffman have served as pastors of the local.



The Collins, Missouri Local Church of Christ

Warrensburg, Missouri Local

On October 30, 1927, a local church was organized at Warrensburg, Missouri, consisting of members of the church in Warrensburg and Knob Noster with Elder John E. Bozarth as pastor. There were seven charter members. It appears that local church ceased to exist after the death of Brother Bozarth.

A mission was organized in Warrensburg, Missouri, in October, 1980 with thirty-nine people attending. Elder George Brantner officiated in the meetings.

On October 9, 1983, Apostle E. Leon Yates organized the Warrensburg, Missouri, Local with twenty-seven charter members. Elder George Brantner was chosen as pastor. Besides Brother George Brantner, Elders Charles W. Brantner and Robert Eddy served as pastors.

On October 29, 1989, Apostle Roland Sarratt organized a new local under the name of Warrensburg, Missouri Local with nine charter members. Elder Eugene Gould was chosen as pastor. A church was built south of Warrensburg which was dedicated May 26, 1991.

On April 19, 1990, Apostle Roland Sarratt organized the Lone Jack, Missouri, Local with six charter members. Elder C. Andrew Brantner was chosen as pastor. This local was officially dissolved April 2, 2004, by Apostles Roland Sarratt and Michael McGhee.



New Warrensburg Local Church dedicated May 26, 1991

Holden/Calhoun, Missouri Local

On June 27, 1999, Apostles Roland Sarratt and Michael McGhee organized the Holden, Missouri, Local with fourteen charter members. Elder Bill Zabriskie was elected pastor. A dedication of the church building they were meeting in was held following the organization of the local.

After meeting in Holden for over a year, the local church moved to Calhoun, Missouri and began meeting in the homes. The name of the local was changed to the Calhoun, Missouri, Local.

Springfield, Missouri Local

On August 29, 1982, a mission of the Church of Christ was organized in Springfield, Missouri, with six resident church members. Elder Arthur

Smith took charge of the meeting with the missionary in charge, Apostle E. Leon Yates, present.

The Springfield, Missouri, Local was organized August 26, 1984, by Apostle Roland Sarratt with eight charter members. Elder Victor Bates was chosen pastor. The local met regularly in the members' homes until May of 2004, when they purchased a church building on Golden Avenue in Springfield.

Besides Brother Bates, pastors of the local have been Priest Martin Addie, Elders Arthur Smith and Matthew Case.



Springfield, Missouri Local Church purchased in 2004

The Bemidji, Minnesota Local

The Bemidji, Minnesota, Local was organized September 6, 1931, by Apostle James E. Yates with thirty charter members. Elder Leon A. Gould was elected pastor.

A church building was built and used for a time. Much later a trailer house was purchased and located near the highway. After considerable effort, the local was granted a permit to build a church building on donated land by the highway. The new building was sufficiently completed and dedicated July 7, 2003. The pastors in later years have been Elders Arlo Gould, Douglas Ferrier, Peter Gould, Samuel Gould and Winfield (Bill) Gould.



New Bemidji, Minnesota Local Church dedicated July 7, 2003

Council Bluffs, Iowa Local

On March 17, 1957, Apostle Leon A. Gould, responded to a request by Apostle Archie Bell, missionary in charge, and organized the Council Bluffs, Iowa, Local with eight charter members. Elder Robert H. Jensen was elected pastor. The local met in the members' homes for several decades.

Minneapolis, Minnesota Local

The Minneapolis, Minnesota, Local was organized on January 17, 1927, by Apostle Daniel MacGregor at the home of Brother George Spargo. Brother Arthur M. Smith was ordained an elder at that meeting. He was then elected pastor of the local.

(The above information was taken from the local church records. A letter from Arthur M. Smith printed in the Zion's Advocate for February, 1927, says the local was organized March 29, 1926 with twelve charter members which included three elders and one teacher. RLS)

The local leased and rented buildings to meet in and on occasion met in the members' homes. Several elders occupied as pastors through the years. Elder Thomas S. Maley was the last pastor and acted as shepherd of the flock for several years before his death in 1999. The local church has ceased to function after his death and has been officially disorganized.

Farmington, Minnesota Local

On July 28, 1991, the Farmington, Minnesota, Local was organized by Apostle Robert H. Jensen with nine charter members. Elder Merlin Eddy was chosen as pastor. The Eddy home became the meeting place for the local.

An activity which inspired the forming of this local was the practice of obtaining a booth at the annual Dakota County Fair for the Church of Christ. It was a means of spreading the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon. This was done faithfully for several years by the members of the church in the Minneapolis area.

Columbus, Ohio Local

On December 10, 1952, Apostle Don W. Housknecht organized the Columbus, Ohio, Local with Elder Elmer H. Jenkins as pastor. Elder Fred C. Welsh was elected assistant pastor.

Southern Ohio Local, Hamilton, Ohio

On October 13, 1996, the Southern Ohio Local in Hamilton, Ohio was organized with eight charter members. Elder Gerald M. Case was chosen as pastor. Apostle Smith N. Brickhouse was the missionary in charge.

Rockford, Illinois Local

A local church was organized at Rockford, Illinois, July 19, 1935, by Apostle William F. Anderson. Elder John A. Daer was chosen pastor. Brother Rolland Sprague was ordained a priest by Brothers Anderson and Daer at that meeting. With the passing of Brother Daer in 1938, and with Brother Sprague moving to Independence, Missouri, the local church ceased to function.

Puryear, Tennessee Local

On November 14, 1948, Apostle Robert R. Robertson organized the Puryear, Tennessee, Local with eleven charter members. Elder Rony Overcast was elected pastor. The local met in the members' homes until January 28, 1951, when they began meeting in the Foundry Hill Baptist

church building. Several reunions were held at Puryear starting in 1953 and continuing into the 1960s.

Knoxville, Tennessee Local

A local church was organized June 19, 1939, by Apostle John E. Bozarth at Knoxville, Tennessee, with seven members. Herbert Kidd was ordained an elder the same day.

Oak Ridge, Tennessee Local

The Oak Ridge, Tennessee, Local was organized by Apostle Robert Robertson February 26, 1953, with seven charter members. Elder Herbert Kidd was chosen pastor with Priest Joseph Kidd as assistant pastor.

Calico Local Church of Christ, Cherokee, North Carolina

On June 19, 1978, the Calico Local Church of Christ was formally organized by Apostle E. Leon Yates with eight charter members. Elder M. Harvey Seibel was elected as pastor of the new Local. A church building had been built on donated land near the home of the first church members in that area, Seab and Sallie Bradley. It was dedicated in 1978. Those who have carried on the work in that area are Elders Samuel Gould, Peter Gould and Gale Brantner. Other ministers hold services at that local when they make circuits through that area. - *Work Among Native Americans*, p. 41

Lancaster/Ellenboro, Wisconsin Local

In the 1920s and 1930s there were open debates held between ministers from the Church of Christ with ministers in the R. L. D. S. Church. As a result of a debate held in Lancaster, Wisconsin, between Apostle Clarence Wheaton of the Church of Christ and Elder L. G. Holloway of the R. L. D. S. Church, several people joined the Church of Christ.

A local church was organized November 19, 1927, at Ellenboro, Wisconsin, by Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton with ten charter members. Elder William Matthews was ordained an elder and was chosen as the pastor. He continued as pastor until ill health prohibited him to continue. We have no record of any elder taking his place as pastor, so when he passed away on November 28, 1942, we conclude the local ceased to function.

Black River Falls/Sparta, Wisconsin Local

On June 10, 1928, a local church was organized in Black River Falls, Wisconsin, by Apostle Bert C. Flint with Elder Frank Knapp as pastor. The Black River Falls, Wisconsin, Local continued to function for several decades.

At some point the local moved to Sparta, Wisconsin, where Elder Clyde Babcock was pastor in the late 1950s. Elder Isaac Brockman took his place as pastor for a number of years. A building was converted into a church in Sparta and several state reunions were held there. The Brockman, Olson, Taylor and Leikness families, and Brother and Sister Davies, moved from that area to Independence, Missouri, in the 1970s and early 1980s. That local church ceased to function as a result.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin Local

A local church was organized in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on September 7, 1952, by Apostle Bert C. Flint with Elder Raymond Hunholz as pastor. There were twelve charter members with two elders and a priest who cared for the work there for over twenty years.

In the late 1970s three families moved from the Milwaukee area to Independence, Missouri. As a result the local was officially disorganized February 24, 1982.

Cedar Springs/Ravenna, Michigan Local

A local Church of Christ, known as the Rockford Local, was organized in Edgerton, Michigan, in the West Memorial Church sometime prior to June, 1948, by Elder L. E. Welch. He was authorized to organize the local by the missionary in charge, Apostle Arthur M. Smith. Due to a fire, the local was moved to Sand Lake, Michigan and they met in the Spring Valley School house. They changed the name to the Sand Lake Local.

Brother Welch was pastor while he was in Michigan, but there wasn't a full time pastor until 1950 when Brother George Brantner was called and ordained an elder. The Brantners built an addition to their basement to accommodate services at their home. In 1962 the local bought the Foxville School house and church was held there. The local was renamed the Cedar

Springs Local. Brother Brantner was the pastor until 1969 when he and his wife, Sarah, moved to Missouri. The school house was sold, but the members continued to meet in their homes when ministers came to hold services.

Around the same time the Cedar Springs Local was active, there was a local church in Muskegon, Michigan. That local dissolved and some of the members joined the Cedar Springs congregation.

In 1986, the Cedar Springs Local was, in a sense, revitalized by electing Elder Gale Brantner as the pastor. The name was changed to the Ravenna, Michigan Local. A new building was erected in the area in 1988 and dedicated June 17, 1989, during the Michigan State Reunion. Elders Aaron Heath and Max Spencer also served the local church.

Grand Rapids, Michigan Local

On June 21, 1953, Apostle Arthur M. Smith organized a local church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the home of Elder Benjamin Bowman. Elder Bowman was elected pastor with Elder James Wilkinson as assistant pastor. The local was active for several years but eventually was dissolved when the members moved away or passed on to their rewards.

Wayland, Michigan Local

On June 23, 1953, Apostle Arthur M. Smith organized another local church south of Grand Rapids in Wayland, Michigan. Elder William Postma was chosen as pastor with Elder Henry Van Dine as assistant pastor. It is supposed that it is the original local that moved to Dorr, Michigan and later became the Hopkins, Michigan, Local.

Maple City, Michigan Local

On June 19, 1949, the Maple City, Michigan, Local was organized by Apostle Leon Gould with twenty-four charter members. Elder Peter Price was chosen as pastor. A church building was built on the lake and the first service was held May 4, 1952.

Elder Conley Addington served as pastor for a number of years. As the older generation passed away, there were a number of young families who took their place. Unfortunately most of them moved to Florida and

Alabama. In time, the building was removed and the meetings were held in the member's homes.

Hopkins/Bradley, Michigan Local

On May 22, 1965, the Dorr, Michigan Local officially changed its name to the Hopkins, Michigan, Local with Elder Laverne Lussenden as pastor. Still later the local moved to Bradley and the name was changed to the Bradley, Michigan, Local. They purchased a building in Bradley and dedicated it December 2, 1973. A fire destroyed that church building and they built a new building on the same lot. They dedicated their new church building October 1, 1995. Elders Laverne Lussenden and Adam Porter have served as pastors at the Bradley Local.



The Bradley, Michigan Local Church dedicated October 1, 1995

Wyandotte/Riverview, Michigan Local

Apostles James E. Yates and Arthur M. Smith organized the Wyandotte, Michigan Local July 13, 1936, with fourteen charter members. Elder Amos A. Surbrook was chosen pastor. A church building was built in 1942. This local continued active for several years becoming one of the largest local churches in the Church of Christ.

In the 1940s the name of the local was changed to the Riverview, Michigan, Local. After Brother Surbrook passed away, Elder Edward Pohdola became pastor. Eventually the membership decreased and the church building was sold. After Brother Pohdola's passing in 1991 the local ceased to function.

Flint, Michigan Local

The Flint, Michigan, Local was organized August 7, 1927, by Apostle Otto Fetting with eleven charter members, which included an elder, a priest and a deacon. It is believed that Elder E. M. Orton was the pastor.

They owned a basement church for a time, but sold it in 1945. They built a new church and began meeting in it in July of 1946. Elder Carl W. Morgan served as pastor of the local for a number of years. In later years Elder Edward Toulouse has occupied as pastor. In a note from Elder Adam Porter, he estimated the building was “sold in 2006. The area was getting bad around there and those there were not feeling safe in meeting there. We have meetings there often in homes.”



First meeting, in 1946, Flint Church of Christ on Utah Street

Downriver Branch of Trenton, Michigan

On June 21, 1968, Apostle William Sheldon organized the Downriver Branch in Trenton, Michigan, with nine charter members. Elder Tony Grzincic was chosen as pastor. After the Grzincic family moved to Missouri, the local ceased to function.

Stanwood, Michigan Local

The Stanwood, Michigan, Local was organized July 18, 1976, by Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton with eleven charter members. Elder Max Lee was chosen as pastor. A church building next door to the Lee home was purchased by the local.

Other Local Churches in Michigan

There were local churches in other cities of Michigan of which we have very little information: Keego Harbor, Lansing, Midland and Highland Park in Detroit.

Morgantown, West Virginia Local

A local church at Morgantown, West Virginia, was organized in the late 1920s or early 1930s and functioned as a local church for several decades. Elder Charles Wesley Joseph was active in the local during that time until his death in 1958. The local was officially disorganized August 3, 1969, by Apostle Don W. Housknecht.

Niagara Falls, New York Local

A local church was organized at Niagara Falls, New York July 20, 1926, by Apostle Otto Fetting, with seven charter members. Although the division caused by the uprising of the Fetting movement in 1929 may have had an effect upon the membership of this local, there were some who associated with Apostle Bert C. Flint when he worked in that area in the early 1930s. Elder Alex Warner and his wife, and Sister N. Brokenshire were active in supporting the ministers of this Church of Christ.

Akwesasne Local, Hogansburg, New York

On July 24, 1988, Apostle William Sheldon organized the Akwesasne Local at Hogansburg, New York, with nine charter members. Elder Bill Zabriskie was chosen pastor.

A beautiful church building has been built next to the Tarbell home for the local. For a time the local was without a pastor. In 2004, Brother Brandon Tarbell was called and ordained an elder. He now serves as pastor. - "The Work Opens Among the Mohawk People" - page 55

Providence/Cranston, Rhode Island Locals

In December of 1928, there was a mention of a local church business meeting in Providence, Rhode Island. Elders J. T. MacKinnon and P. X. Philbrick were chosen to be in charge of the local along with the election of several other officers. We do not have any follow up information on that local.

On February 26, 1930, the Cranston, Rhode Island Local was organized with twenty-two charter members. Elder Hebert B. Johnson was chosen as pastor. Brother Pasquale Ricciardi remodeled a house making it suitable for church and Sunday School. Apostle William F. Anderson was active among the people of that area and conducted series of meetings. Elder Herman Burlingame, Jr. served as pastor in later years. The local discontinued to function after his death in 1970.

Phoenix, Arizona Local

The Phoenix, Arizona, Local Church of Christ was organized January 25, 1928, with Elder Hubert A. Yates as Presiding Elder (pastor). A “protest group” of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had been formed by Elder James E. Yates in 1926. He and his wife, Sister Vida Smith Yates, joined the Church of Christ, and through his recommendation, the protest church was dissolved, with the members of that group also joining the Church of Christ.



Phoenix local Church of Christ, 2209 E. Harvard St., as it looked shortly after it was built in January 1932. It was small but adequate for many years.

Although the beginnings of the local church in Phoenix was small, it soon grew and with it came the callings of ministers who responded with willingness to serve the Lord and His people. Early in 1932, a little 24' X 30' church building was erected on Harvard Street in Phoenix. Later an annex was added and state reunions were held there. In time it became necessary to build a larger building to accommodate the membership and the annual reunions.

On November 28, 1975, at 7:00 p.m. a dedication service was held in the new local Church of Christ building at 2929 E. Siesta Lane in Phoenix, Arizona. Several of the charter members were present along with others who had become active members through the years.



Phoenix, Arizona Local Church of Christ - 1975

This local church has proved to be a spiritual oasis in a desert land to many souls. Following the example of the older generations, many of the younger generation have dedicated themselves to the work of the Lord by carrying the gospel to the world.

Orchard Mesa Local, Grand Junction, Colorado

On June 15, 1952, the Orchard Mesa Local was organized at Grand Junction, Colorado, by Apostle Robert R. Robertson with eleven charter members. Elder Marvin Ely was elected pastor. A church building was built and, later, an addition was built onto the church. The local has continued through the years and has held the Colorado state reunions there annually for several decades.



The Orchard Mesa Local Church of Christ in Grand Junction, Colorado.

Denver, Colorado Local

There was a functioning local Church of Christ in Denver, Colorado, in the early 1930s with twenty-nine members under the leadership of Elder Jesse Cruse. That local dissolved and on September 22, 1968, another Denver, Colorado Local was organized by Apostle Marvin Ely with Elder James Shaw as pastor. The membership of that local eventually moved away and that local has ceased to function.

Mogollon Local, Payson, Arizona

On September 18, 1988, Apostle Donald E. McIndoo organized the Mogollon Local at Payson, Arizona, with nine charter members. Elder Tom Karas was elected pastor and Elder Gordon McCann, assistant pastor. It has continued to function with ministers from the Phoenix, Arizona, Local serving as pastors.

Treasure Valley Local, Eagle, Idaho

A local church was organized at Boise, Idaho, by Apostle Marvin Ely on September 20, 1992. There were eight charter members and Elder LeRoy Coon was chosen as pastor. Later, the local took the name of Treasure Valley Local which is located near Eagle, Idaho. They have sponsored several church reunions. Elder Richard Bove has also served as pastor.

Colville, Washington Local

A local church was organized at Colville, Washington, January 11, 2004, by Apostle Joel Yates with eight charter members. Two men were ordained elders on that date: Harry Lloyd Shillam and Stanley Henry Buscher. Elder Shillam was elected pastor.

Columbia Falls, Montana Local

On June 24, 1970, Apostle Robert H. Jensen organized the Columbia Falls, Montana, Local with eleven charter members. Elder James L. Winegar was elected pastor. With the passing of the active ministers there, the local has ceased to exist.

Other Local Churches in Western States

There were some local churches in the western states which we have very little information. There was one in Sandpoint, Idaho, and one in Ogden,

Utah. Also in California, there was one in Los Angeles, one in Berkley and another in San Diego. The San Diego Branch of the RLDS Church was organized by Elder James E. Yates while he was a member of that church, but later he and several of that group transferred their memberships to the Church of Christ.

Oklahoma City Local

On April 12, 1981, the Oklahoma City Local was organized by Apostle Marvin Ely with six charter members. Elder Frank Fann was elected pastor. Elder Lawrence Beem has also officiated as pastor. The local has met in the members' homes.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada Local

A local church was organized at Toronto, Ontario, Canada, June 10, 1927, with sixteen charter members. Elder C. A. Spilsbury of Niagara Falls, New York, cared for the local for a time. Elder A. O. McArthur was elected as pastor in 1928. In 1929, he withdrew his membership from the Church of Christ and joined the Fetting movement with the majority of the members of the local following suit.

Six Nations Church of Christ Local, Oshweken, Ontario, Canada

On July 23, 1933, Apostle Bert C. Flint organized the Six Nations Church of Christ with eleven charter members. There were two elders, one priest and one teacher. Elder Hugh Beaver was elected pastor.

The work among those people thrived until 1935. Brother Flint and his wife were sent to Wales, the local church was neglected and, within a short time, it ceased to exist. Many of the members joined other "Restoration" churches. - Zion's Advocate, Nov. & Dec. 2002

Regina/Viceroy, Saskatchewan, Canada

There were two local churches organized in 1931 or 1932 in Saskatchewan Canada. The Regina and Viceroy locals were about a hundred miles apart and they were active locals for several years.

On September 13, 1970, Apostle Don W. Housknecht officially

disorganized the Regina Local and transferred the remaining members to the Viceroy Local. The particulars of the organizations of the locals are not available.

Brant-Norfolk, Ontario Local

On October 27, 2002, Evangelist Hubert Yates organized the Brantford, Ontario, Local (later renamed Brant-Norfolk Church of Christ) with eleven charter members. Elder Michael Bevaart was elected pastor.

The recent contact with these people had been through Sister Joan Linington who contacted Apostle William Sheldon in 1987. Her father, Bill Walton, had been a member of the Church of Christ in the late 1920s but was a victim of the 1930 split. He was reinstated after his daughter had contacted this Church of Christ.

In August, 2005, the local bought a church building in Teeterville, Ontario, and it was dedicated in October of that year. The members have been successful in contacting residents in that area and several have joined the church. - Zion's Advocate Nov.-Dec., 2007 p.111)



The Brant-Norfolk Local Church of Christ
in Teeterville, Ontario.

Gloucester, England Local

On December 8, 1929, Apostle Samuel Wood organized the Gloucester, England, Local Church of Christ with nine members. Elder Earnest John Trapp was chosen as pastor. This local was lost from the Church of Christ in the mid 1930s.

Gilfach, Goch Glam, Wales Local

On December 20, 1954, Apostle Arthur M. Smith organized the Gilfach, Goch, Glam, Wales, Local with Elder Silvanus Mason as pastor. The Local was active for several years, but with the passing of Brother Mason, the local has ceased to exist.

Dzan, Yucatan Local, Mexico

The first Church of Christ local in Mexico was organized by Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton September 27, 1953. There were two elders, two priests and one deacon. Elder Fernando Ojeda C. was elected pastor.

Zamarano, El Paraiso Local, Honduras

The first Church of Christ local in Honduras was organized by Apostle Donald E. McIndoo January 27, 1998. The pastor was Priest John Gill. (See "Honduras, Central America" page 193)

Kineni, Kenya Local, Africa

The first Church of Christ local in Kenya, Africa, was organized by Apostles Brian E. McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse October 15, 2000. Elder Moses Ohuru Chuma was elected pastor.

The following is a list of the Church of Christ local churches in foreign fields with the names of the pastors in 2007:

Dzan, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder William Serralta Chavez

Dzan, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Melchor Ku Ku

Kancabchen, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Jose' Esaul Ku

Kopte, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Roger C. Can G.

Mayapan, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Apostle Placido Koyoc Y.

Merida, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Apostle Placido Koyoc Y.

Motul, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Roger C. Can G.

Ticul, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Fernando Castillo

Tizimin, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Roger C. Can G.

Uayalceh, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Elder Felipe Uluac Pech

Yobain, Yucatan, Mexico Local

Pastor: Apostle Placido K. Matu

Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico Local

Pastor: Apostle Placido K. Matu

Chunhuhub, Quintana Roo, Mexico Local

Pastor: Priest Rolando Tuc

Zamorano, Honduras Local

Pastor: Elder Ronnie Gill

Oculi, Zamorano, Local

Pastor: Elder Felix Torres

Kineni, Kenya, Africa Local

Pastor: Elder Moses Ohuru Chuma

Misisita, Kenya, Africa Local

Pastor: Elder Michael Otero

Risa, Kenya, Africa Local

Pastor: Elder Simion Monari Nyangena

Compostela Local, Mindanao, The Philippines

Pastor: Elder Demetrio Indangan

Panabo City Local, Mindanao, The Philippines**Cabilao Local, Minanao, The Philippines**

Pastor: Elder Roger Manali

4.**Church Activities: Reunions, Rallies and Camps**

State reunions, local church rallies and various camps have all been a part of the Church of Christ activities which have done much to cause interest and growth in the church. Some state reunions occurred as early as the 1930s but the “great depression” and the Second World War prevented them from being an annual event. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the reunions became more frequent. Some reunions have had large attendance with people coming from long distances. Reunions in the United States and Canada have been held in Missouri, Arizona, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Idaho, Colorado, New York, Tennessee, Saskatchewan and Ontario. In later years there have been reunions in our foreign fields: Mexico, Honduras, Africa and the Philippines.

Centennial Reunion

A Centennial Reunion commemorating the dedication of Zion and the marking of the spot for the Temple was held August 1 through 10, 1931, at the headquarters building of the Church of Christ in Independence, Missouri. The program for the event was:

August 1, Organization Day

August 2, Centennial of the dedication of the land of Zion

August 3, Centennial of the Dedication of the Temple Lot, and the placing of the marker stones.

The rest of the time was devoted to services of a high devotional nature. The committee members in charge were Apostles A. M. Smith, E. E. Long and C. L. Wheaton, Sr.

Missouri Reunions

Missouri Reunions were held in the 1930s and 1940s in the General Church Headquarters building in Independence from time to time. In the 1950s through the 1970s the reunions were held annually at various places sponsored by different local churches in Missouri.

In 1982 arrangements were made for the Missouri Reunion to be held at one of the college dormitories in Warrensburg, Missouri. The church services were held at the East Hudson Conference center and meals were served in the adjoining dining area. Sister Jeanette Cunningham made the arrangements as she was employed by the owners of the facilities.

This arrangement worked out so well that the Missouri Reunion was held there until 1992 when the new headquarters church building in Independence was available. The reunion has been held in the new headquarters building since 1992 annually. It is one of the largest gatherings of the church in recent times because it follows the Teen Challenge Camp. Until 2006, the reunion was followed by the August Ministers' Conference.

Bemidji, Minnesota Reunions

A joint reunion of the northern districts of the Church of Christ, which included Canada, was held at the Bemidji, Minnesota, Local, starting in 1937 and continued up through the late 1940s. Starting in 2003 the Minnesota Reunions have been held at the Bemidji, Minnesota, Local from time to time.

Wisconsin Reunions

On August 19 through 21, 1949, the first state reunion in Wisconsin for the Church of Christ was held at Lima Center, a small town about fifty miles from Milwaukee. The Wisconsin reunions continued annually

through the 1950s, 1960s and into the 1970s being held at Lima Center or Sparta.

Tri-State Reunions

The Tri-State Reunions, which included Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa, were started in August 1979 at the Whitewater State Park in Minnesota and have continued annually at various parks and, on occasion, at the Bemidji Local Church in their new church building.

Michigan Reunions

Church reunions and gatherings have been common events in Michigan dating back to the 1930s. In more recent years the reunions have been annual events being held at the Maple City, Bradley and Ravenna Locals.

Michigan State Conferences

During the 1930s and 1940s the locals of the Church of Christ in Michigan held annual state conferences which brought the membership together in one place for business and fellowship.

Colorado Reunions

The Colorado Reunions have been held at the Orchard Mesa Local in Grand Junction for the last fifty years or more. This has been a special event to attend while our people vacationed in the mountains.

Phoenix, Arizona Reunions

Church of Christ Reunions have been held at Phoenix, Arizona, for many years dating back to the time the local church met in their church on Harvard Street. They have traditionally convened on the weekend after Thanksgiving Day each year giving thanks to the Lord as well as enjoying a time of reuniting in fellowship.

Idaho Reunions

The first Idaho State Reunion for the Church of Christ for many years was held at Cataldo in June, 1999. The members of that area, though few in

number, have continued to dedicate themselves to this activity for several years. They have enjoyed the fellowship of their brothers and sisters in the gospel from far and near as they meet together in a nearby campground.

New York State Reunions

The beginning of the New York State Reunions was in July, 1996, at the Akwesasne Local Church in Hogansburg. This special activity has continued through the years with much success. Friends and loved ones have come from Canada as well as from the United States to enjoy the fellowship and hospitality of the local church members.

Ontario Reunions

The Brant-Norfolk Local Church of Christ, formerly known as the Brantford Local, commenced having reunions even before the local was organized with the assistance and support of members from New York, Michigan, Nova Scotia and other states. With the purchase of the church building in Teeterville, they have good attendance at their reunions and much effort has gone into making it a memorable occasion.

Local Church Rallies

One or two day rallies have been held at various locals in Missouri: Collins Local, Houston Local, Springfield Local, Ava Local and Cowgill Local.

Nova Scotia Retreat

A Retreat was held by the church members in Nova Scotia in August, 2007. Members from that area and in Ontario, New York, Michigan and Arizona attended. The special efforts to make this gathering a success has paid off with it being an enjoyable occasion for all those who attended.

Missouri State Youth Camp/Camp For All Ages

The Missouri State Youth Camp was held August 5-7, 1977, and again October 8 & 9, 1977, at the Co-op house and grounds in the Preston, Missouri, area. This activity broadened to include all ages in 1979 at the same place. Its name then changed to Camp For All Ages. It has continued

as an annual event meeting at various camp grounds and parks in Missouri. Also there was a Camp For All Ages held in Arizona for a time.

Scripture Theme Camp

The “Scripture Theme Camp” was also established and has been active as an annual event for several years meeting at camp grounds. It has been sponsored primarily by the Temple Lot Local. There is also a Scripture Theme Camp held in Heber, Arizona.

Wake-Up Camp

The “Wake Up Camp” had its beginning in Bemidji, Minnesota in 1966 and lasted eleven years. On June 29 through July 1, 2001, a thirty-five year anniversary Wake Up Camp was held in the Bemidji area and continued for a time as an annual event held by the Bemidji Local Church. A brief history of the original camp was given thus:

“Wake-Up Camp was started way back in 1966 after much discussion about the need to help young people ‘wake up’ to their Christian responsibilities. It was started as a non-denominational Youth Camp and developed into a Family Camp for the Young and Young-at-Heart with mostly Church of Christ attendees. It continued annually through 1977 and varied in attendance from about forty to over one-hundred some years.

“It was held at George and Lovita Reed’s place (Reed’s Retreat) at Bemidji, Minnesota, an old farm and resort on the shores of Big Turtle Lake. The hayloft of the barn was the chapel, shared with the barn swallows and mosquitoes. Seating for the young was hay bales; chairs were allowed for the ‘young at heart.’

“Each day’s activities started with a 7 a.m. prayer service and usually ended with a song service and devotions, discussions and recreational activities. In-between were mini-sermons (some weren’t so ‘mini’), discussions and recreational activities.”



George and Lovita Reed at the 35 year anniversary of the Wake-Up Camp in Bemidji, Minnesota, area in June, 2001

Church Youth Camp Started in 1990

Elder Smith Brickhouse sent a letter to the Council of Apostles asking permission for him to establish a church youth camp. The Council invited Brother Brickhouse to meet with them on November 27, 1989, during the council meetings which were held in Phoenix, Arizona. Brother Brickhouse said that there were around fifty young people who were interested in a church youth camp. The apostles gave a verbal agreement to his proposal and later sent a written confirmation by letter.

Announcements were made in the Zion's Advocate starting in March, 1990, of the planned youth camp. The date set was August 5 through 10, just prior to the Missouri Reunion; the place was at Camp Far Westa near Far West, Missouri. The age limits were twelve through eighteen and the cost was \$75.00 for each person.

The first camp was so successful that it has been continued as an annual event coordinated with the Missouri Reunion and August Ministers' Conference. Many volunteers, ministers and non-ministers, have been available to teach appropriate subjects in classes and conduct proper activities for the young people. The attendance of the young people has been around one hundred each year.

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1991 Ministers' Conference that a "Teen Camp '91 be held Aug. 4th through Aug. 9th ... and that \$800 be budgeted for insurance coverage and made available to the camp leader." This recommendation was approved and has been a standing practice since that time. (See 1991 Conf. Min. p 10)

A statement, from one of the notices from the Teen Camp, gives appropriate information:

This camp is a cooperative effort by Church of Christ members, ministry and parents from several locals. Members and ministry from at least five locals will be participating in and conducting the five day camp. The purpose of the camp is to provide a setting for the youth in a moral Christian atmosphere. If you would like to help or offer financial support, contact the camp Director, Buzz Brickhouse.

Apostle Smith Brickhouse continued to be in charge of the Teen Challenge Youth Camp until 2002 when Elder Jeff Oldham, with the help of his wife Michelle, took the responsibility. It has proven to be a good activity which brings young people together at a time in their lives when they need an established bond in a conviction of the restored gospel of Christ.

Treasure Hunt Scripture Adventure

An announcement of a new church activity was made at the 2001 April Conference. This activity was for children too young to participate in the Teen Camp. It was held on the Thursday during the week of the Teen Camp. It was called the "Treasure Hunt Scripture Adventure!" Sisters Jennifer Yates and Holly McIndoo took charge of this special activity which has become a yearly event.

Women's Retreat Organized

A new activity was created by and for the women of the church under the name of "Women's Retreat" in January, 2003. Since that time it has become an annual event:

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Friday, January 17 & Saturday January 18, 2003

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my Salvation, on thee do I wait all the day." Psalms 25:5

To the Sisters of the Church of Christ (Ages 18 +):

In an effort to follow the teaching of scripture as found in Titus, chapter 2, we invite all women to join us for a Women's Retreat. This will be an overnight fellowship activity and details will be announced through the CCEG.

For further information, contact: Carrie Geier or Lana Hill

5. Church Headquarters Building Destroyed and Rebuilt

A Landmark Destroyed on Church Property

Late in the year of 1989, a strange event took place on the general church property of the Church of Christ. A well known landmark was destroyed, which could well have been an omen for the destruction of another landmark on the same property. The Examiner, the local newspaper of the Independence, Missouri, area, printed this article:

God Does Not Change...

On November 11, 1989, at 3:00 a.m., someone set fire to a grand old tree on the southeast section of the well-known Temple Lot. The tree had a hollow portion in the main trunk permitting the fire to burn, and keeping the fire department from extinguishing the blaze. The tree had to be cut down to put out the fire. The tree was approximately 109 years old.

This event marked the end of an era, destruction of Independence history, and significant change. In this fragile world, nothing stays the same. Man's daily life is marked with change. Only the gospel of Christ never changes. Like the last pioneer who faded from Independence, another sentinel of time has been removed. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will continue on in time, never changing.

This tree is believed to be the last of a grove planted on the Temple Lot in approximately 1880 by George Frisbey, one of the original pioneers who returned to Independence in 1867 from Illinois. These restoration leaders, following directions of a revelation from GOD, returned to Independence and purchased the Temple Lot properties, including the ground on which “The Old Tree” was to stand. Here these pioneers erected the Church of Christ and proceeded to follow the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The very land under the tree would be a focus of change.

In 1891, the famous Temple Lot was the subject of a controversy but the Church of Christ retained ownership by a court decision. In 1989, those that had sought ownership would give up their earlier beliefs and begin building their temple on a different site. One hundred years saw the growth and destruction of a tree. The same one hundred years saw a belief exist and be destroyed. As the ground is dugout, moved and buried with pipe and wire, molded and rolled and planted with bush and tree, the once serene meadow and plain is changed into man’s idea of beauty with thoroughfares to attract the visitor, the tourist, and the curious. Man will endeavor, strive, and ever change, but “...Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Heb. 13:8) We exhort all men to wait upon the Lord, His Grace, and Jesus Christ, and not run before Him. If we must change, we must return to the basics of the Gospel. Seek his direction. Depart from the world and its causes. Repent and be saved.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6:33)

(The Examiner, Saturday, December 9, 1989)



Permission by Price Publishing Co. This is a winter scene of the old tree about a year before it was destroyed. The RLDS Auditorium is in the background.

The Church of Christ Headquarters Building Burned

For several decades there had been conference actions and sets of plans drawn up for the erecting of a new church building on the General Church property adjoining the temple site. The plans never seemed to reach a point of materializing, but the need increased as the years passed.

Because of the larger attendance of the annual Ministers' Conferences, it became necessary to rent other facilities starting in 1983. Usually it was just for the Sunday service. The need for more space for the General Church offices and for the Temple Lot Local church usage for classrooms, etc., gave evidence that the building was entirely too small. However, sentimental attachments to the old building made it difficult to think in terms of removing it. Also it was a landmark to the area. It seemed that there was a reluctance to move forward in replacing it.

Over a period of time some improvements and much needed repairs were made to the building. New siding, new exterior trim and new roofing were installed along with some structural repair done. Air conditioning units were installed. New pews were purchased, carpeting was laid and redecorating was done in the auditorium and other parts of the building. All this seemed to indicate a stalemate in moving in the direction of replacing the building. Beyond our control and quite unexpectedly the situation changed.

A special service was planned by the Temple Lot Local for the Sunday evening of New Year's Eve, 1989. The East Independence Local was invited to share this service of special music and offerings. The auditorium of the old building was almost full. It was an enjoyable time of worship and fellowship. However it probably would have been much less remembered if it had not been the last service to be held in the old building.

During the morning of New Year's Day, 1990, Brother William Sheldon was notified by phone that a former member of the church had broken into the church building at the Temple Lot and had barricaded himself inside the building. The young man had called the police and informed them of what he had done and that he was armed with guns and hand grenades. He told them that the church building was on fire.

Brother Sheldon immediately went to the church and found that the city police and fire department were there. He was warned to stay across the street from the building as the police tried to persuade the man to come out and give himself up.

Brother Rodger Bruner, a city policeman and a member of the church, called Brother Alvin Harris, the pastor of the local church and also a member of the General Bishopric, and told him about the fire when the police were first called. After the arsonist had left the church, Brothers Harris and Bruner were allowed to retrieve some of the records from the building while it was still burning but were ushered out as it continued to burn.

“The Examiner,” a local newspaper, gave this report the next day:

Man Jailed On Arson Charge

The erratic behavior of an Independence man reached its climax around noon Monday as he danced on the stoop of a historic Independence church, his face striped with paint, while the building went up in flames. Friends and family members said his instability had intensified during the past few weeks.



New Years Day, 1990, the Church of Christ Headquarters' Building was burned by a former church member.
(Photo by Merrill Harris)



Examiner (continued)

“He told me recently that he would set fire to the church to cleanse it after the Russians invaded the area with chemical weapons,” William Sheldon, secretary and apostle for the Church of Christ-Temple Lot, said.

“He had private interpretations of scripture that were very specific to the current day. He believed he was acting as an agent for the Lord.”

The building was burned when a former member of the church...barricaded himself in the church at about 11 a.m. and telephoned police to tell them that he had a machine gun, bombs, a gas mask and hand grenades. Police later found no weapons.

Fire damage to the structure was immense, but church and police officials were able to salvage many of the most important church documents and landmarks.

One Independence firefighter suffered minor injury.

(The man) was charged this morning in Jackson County Associate Circuit Court with second-degree arson and second-degree burglary. Bond was set a \$35,000. A preliminary hearing is set for Jan. 10.

He pleaded not guilty to both charges. He told reporters: “I didn’t set any fire. I maintain my innocence.”

Dispatcher Patricia Mansfield said (the man) called 911 at about 11 a.m. and told her he was heavily armed and “wasn’t afraid to take somebody out with him if necessary.”

Mansfield tried to keep him talking while police set up a command post a block away from the building, which is at the corner of River Boulevard and Lexington Avenue.

Police said (he) hung up on dispatchers twice, but answered the telephone when police called him back.

Vernon Wilson, an evidence technician for the Police Department, helped coax (him) out of the 88-year-old building while smoke collected in the top floor of the all-wood church.

“I asked him about the fire,” Wilson said. “At one point he even put the phone down to go and check on the fire. He said he could see smoke and smell the fire, but he wouldn’t admit to setting it.”

But shortly before noon, dispatchers advised police that (the man) said he would surrender, so long as he was allowed to perform a dance on the porch.

“He was very concerned about the police beating him up. I assured him that this wouldn’t happen,” Wilson said.

By that time, thick streams of smoke were flowing from the building’s top floor.

“I think he was aware he’d better get out,” police Sgt. Ron Hagaman said.

His face painted with bright red, yellow and blue stripes, he emerged from the building wearing a trench coat and performed a brief dance on the church stoop, (Elder) Alvin Harris, church pastor, recalled.

“He was prancing around in circles, lifting his knees with his arms above his head,” Harris said. “It looked American Indian in nature.”

Harris and two other officers then ran into the building to salvage church records and artifacts while fire raged on the second floor.

“We saved a bunch of the church’s records, a lot of the day-to-day stuff...some of the computer materials that are used for the church headquarters, which was in the first floor of the building,” Harris said.

They also recovered unharmed two stones of historical significance for believers in the Book of Mormon. They were kept in glass-covered cabinets on the church’s first floor.

“Accelerant was spread in at least three corners of the second floor,” District Chief John Welchert said. “It’s too bad it had such a head start.”

It took firefighters more than an hour to control the blaze.

(The Examiner, Tuesday, January 2, 1990)

The Zion's Advocate for January, 1990, awaiting to be printed, had two notices added about the fire at the last minute:

By Apostle William A. Sheldon

On the morning of January 1, 1990, at approximately 9:30 or 10:00 A.M., the General Church Headquarters building on the Temple Lot (and home of the Temple Lot Local) in Independence, Missouri, was deliberately set afire by a former member of the Church of Christ, destroying the roof and the interior of the upper floor. For practical purposes, the building is no longer tenable and must be demolished.

This former member, now in jail and charged with arson and burglary, was baptized into another Restoration church shortly after being baptized a member of the Church of Christ (which, coincidentally, was exactly one year ago on January 1, 1989). Being informed that this was unacceptable to the Church of Christ, and being unwilling to acknowledge his error, he was informed that his membership in this church was no longer valid.

The torching of the building seems to have been through a delusion this former member entertained relative to a supposedly imminent invasion of the United States by enemy forces, which would signal a need for the Temple Lot to be cleansed by fire. This had been previously alluded to within the hearing of a few members of the Church.

At this writing, on January 1, 1990, the procedure for coping with this emergency has not been determined except for the assumption that members of the Temple Lot Local Church will feel free, and are invited to become actively engaged in the services at the Independence East Local church.

Undoubtedly, the insurance on the building against fire, etc. is far from adequate to facilitate the erection of a new building or to recover the loss of interior furnishings and other properties of the Church on the premises. However, all important Church documents survived.

It will be incumbent upon loyal members of the Church, who can do so, and are willing to sacrifice, to send donations toward the building of a new structure or the acquisition of other facilities as may be determined in the future. Such donations, may be sent to the Church "Building Fund" and specifically stipulated as being for replacement of the Temple Lot church building.

(Zion's Advocate, Jan., 1990, p. 3)

The other article was written by Elder Gary Housknecht, the editor of Zion's Advocate:

One item gets special care for a proper destruction:

I am writing this only hours from having witnessed the destruction of the church building resting adjacent to the Temple Lot (January 1-2, 1990), having reserved space in the Advocate at the last minute for the news bulletin and some pictures. It was truly a tear-jerking, emotional scene, yet one, not surprisingly, filled with much love and warmth among the numerous Church members who came to - well, to do whatever you do when one of the primary symbols of hope for your spiritual future goes up in flames. Yet, there were few really "burdened" faces, and there were numerous lighthearted conversations that I witnessed among our brothers and sisters.

Much blessing was given by the Lord in spite of the destruction. For example, the old pulpit, with hand carvings and many, many years of use by God's priesthood, was miraculously preserved - in spite of the fact that the fire was actually started just a few feet away! A metal music stand nearby was melted and the roof even caved in over the pulpit. So you won't be alarmed, the stone markers, nearly all of the books in the General Church library, and all important legal and historical documents were preserved.

Members, former members, and non-members have all pitched in with enormous help to salvage every last item of value from the structure - many taking vacation days off from work and others bringing their trucks and strong backs. The news media from Independence and Kansas City, including all three major television networks, have given much time to coverage of this historical event. Apostle Sheldon and Pastor (Elder) Harris have labored hard and long and have appeared respectably in several television newscasts and newspaper accounts.

The original structure built adjacent to the Temple Lot, in 1889, was also destroyed by an arsonist, also on a Monday (one or two A.M.), and also by a mentally disturbed man with a vendetta against the Church, September 4, 1898. The church building that was just destroyed, was built in 1902, and formerly dedicated on April 6 of that year. Another parallel is that both arsonists (1898 and 1990) had only recently destroyed other Church property (a wood fence surrounding the lot in 1898, and a beautiful 100+ year-old tree resting between the Temple Lot building and the RLDS auditorium, in 1989) and verbally threatened the destruction of the existing building when chance permitted.

I was given the charred remains of the American flag which formerly stood in the front of the sanctuary. The fireman said to contact the VFW (of which I am a member) so that the appropriate ceremony could be performed for its destruction.

Just as the American flag is a sacred symbol of the freedoms we cherish, the Temple Lot church was, to many, a symbol of that “hope” we should all have within us for our future life with Christ – our eternal salvation. Yet, the ceremony performed in the destruction of an American flag is a proud one, full of optimism and real hope for the future of this great nation. The same must be said for the destruction of this building.

While the building was sacred as a house of God, and will always hold a special place in the hearts of each of us – fond memories of many, many spiritual experiences within – it never-the-less was still just a “symbol,” a material object now gone. What remains is the REAL church – you and I, God’s people – not charred from the fire, not more distant from God because of this tragedy. Let us lift up our heads with hope and confidence that the Lord will once again perform His wonders, and use this occasion for the good of those that wait upon Him.

(Zion’s Advocate Jan. 1990, p. 11)

The local YMCA graciously offered the use of their building for Sunday morning services to the Temple Lot Local. This was accepted and the local church held their services there until December, 1991 when the new building was ready to be occupied. Their Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services were combined with the East Independence Local at their church building.

The next day after the fire, January 2, 1990, members and non-members gathered to begin removing salvageable items from the fire ravaged building. Trucks, pickup trucks, vans and cars took loads of boxes and furniture items to various homes and places of storage. Garages and basements became temporary offices and storage rooms for the church. The day to day activities of the general church required immediate attention and many details had to be worked out to maintain a normal routine. A trailer house was temporarily set on the north side of the parking lot as a visitors’ center and business office.

After the building had been stripped of all valuable contents and salvageable materials, it underwent a final demolition. On February 1, 1990, one month from the date of the fire, the building was pushed over by a bulldozer while various members watched at a safe distance. The rubble was cleaned up and, over a period of time, the trees and shrubs were removed from the building site. Much voluntary work was done during the cleanup process which cannot be adequately accounted for in this writing, but we are assured that God has taken notice of the desires and wills of each soul who has contributed to the work.

Plans for Rebuilding

Almost before the flames were extinguished on that fateful day, inspiration was given and plans were being drawn for a new building adequate to our needs. The Church of Christ was to retain its presence in this community and at this location. The members of the Church of Christ were assured that it is their inherent right to present the fullness of the gospel of Christ at this sacred place.

The facilities at the Salvation Army Camp Moka at 40 Highway and Lee's Summit Road in Independence, Missouri, were rented for both the 1990 and the 1991 Ministers' Conferences while plans were executed and a new building was being erected at the Temple Lot. For those years the pre-conference Solemn Assemblies were held at the East Independence Local Church.

At the 10:15 a.m. Business Session of the April 3, 1990 Ministers Conference a special presentation was given relative to the plans for rebuilding the headquarters church building:

Because of an incidental motion that was carried by this body during the 9:00 a.m. Business Session, April 2, 1990, to set aside this morning's business session, "as time to consider the proposal on the Temple Lot Building as the first order of business"; the chair turned the meeting over to the General Bishopric to present Mr. Herman Scharhag and Mr. Jeff Schroeder AIA with Herman A. Scharhag Company, Architects AIA.

Bro. Alvin Harris gave a small history of the happenings since the burning of our church building which was located on the Temple Lot and introduced the above noted gentlemen.

A set of proposed building plans and drawings were distributed to all in attendance.

The body offered both Mr. Herman Scharhag and Mr. Jeff Schroeder AIA with Herman A. Scharhag Company, Architects AIA an expression of our appreciation for their presentation.

The chair explained that during the afternoon session we would continue our subject matter by having a period of time that questions could be offered to the General Bishopric and a period set aside for suggestions that would be recorded and supplied to the General Bishopric.

(1990 Conf. Min. p. 16)

An enabling resolution to build a new church building was passed by the 1990 Ministers' Conference:

Greetings:

In consideration of constructing a General church headquarters building, it is moved that:

The proposal to build a new building at the site of the former Church of Christ building, located on the property immediately adjacent to the north side of the parcel of land known as the Temple Lot (200 South River Street) in Independence, Missouri, known as option 4, as it appeared in the Zion's Advocate, be approved in principle, this constituting authority to continue with the securing of detailed plans and whatever is required in any further bids within the approximate projected cost and fund availability.

As the matter of construction may commence and progress, any such additional approval required beyond this basic authorization shall be referred by the General Bishopric to the Council of Apostles for their action on behalf of the General Church between conferences, such additional approval to be limited to reasonable contractual cost over-run of the initially estimated cost, reasonably moderate refinements in design detail, materials to be used, and any further negotiations required by the city of Independence, again staying as close to the initially projected cost as possible and fund availability.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles
Leslie P. Case, Secy., General Bishopric

The 1990 Ministers' Conference approved a resolution submitted by the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric concerning the use of the General Church headquarters' building. This resolution was sent to referendum as Bill #1 and was passed:

To the 1990 April Ministers' Conference
of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)

Greetings:

In consideration of the use and control of a General Church headquarters building, it is moved that:

The Church of Christ (Temple Lot) headquarters building at 200 South River, Independence, Missouri, approved for building by the April 1990 Ministers' Conference, shall be for the housing of the General Church headquarters offices and a visitors' center, the General Church reserving the right at all times for the use of the structure for regular and special conferences, the

holding of gospel, evangelistic and educational series of meetings, baptisms and confirmations, marriages, wedding anniversaries and special events, State Reunions, other special services and social events as may be considered desirable and appropriate.

The General Bishopric shall retain all title and equity in the Temple Lot property, including the building, appurtenances, and all items of equipment and major furnishings, unless under a specific agreement of ownership by a second party with the General Bishopric, placed for continuing use in the building, and has the jurisdiction over said building and appurtenances at all times, and have no right to delegate such jurisdiction to any individual or group of individuals without the specific instructions from the general Conferences of the Church of Christ.

The local congregation of Independence, Missouri known as the Temple Lot Local, shall be extended the opportunity of the use, but not the jurisdiction, of the Headquarters building as a place of worship, local business meetings, baptisms and confirmations and other special services, marriages, wedding anniversaries and special events, and social events as may be considered desirable and appropriate.

The pastor of the Local church shall file with the secretary of the General Bishopric, a list of all regular worship services and business meetings. The baptismal font shall also be for their use, with due notice of its intended use as far in advance as possible, to be approved by the secretary of the General Bishopric.

The General Bishopric being informed of the schedule of meetings and the desired use of the font, shall be authorized to allow other Local Churches and groups in the Church to use the building and font, only when they are not thus being used. At all times there shall be discussion and cooperation between officers of the Local Church and the General Bishopric, that there may be no misunderstanding or possibility of conflict of interest. It is considered to be in the interest of impartiality that the Secretary of the General Bishopric not occupy at the same time as the pastor of the Local Church.

The General Church having the right at all times to reserve the use of the building for regular and special conferences, other worship and education meetings, etc., will so advise, at which times Local services in the building shall be temporarily suspended.

The Council and Quorum rooms shall be exempt from any and all Local Church use, unless specific permission is given on request to the secretary of the Council of Apostles for their room and the secretary of the General Bishopric for their room and the business office.

This resolution continues the spirit of the "Quit-Claim Deed" executed by the "Temple Lot Local" to the General Church in February 1941, and the General

Church Referendum Bill No. 1 of 1963.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy. Council of Apostles
Leslie P. Case, Secretary for the General Bishopric

(1990 Conf. Min. p. 19)

Ground Breaking Ceremony for the New Building

On Saturday, August 18, 1990 the ground breaking ceremony was conducted for the new headquarters building of the Church of Christ. Among those breaking the ground were Apostle William A. Sheldon, Elder Leslie P. Case and Elder Alvin L. Harris. Apostle Robert H. Jensen gave the ceremonial presentation. The following are some excerpts from that presentation:

History of the Buildings on the Temple Lot

This general area was dedicated on August 3, 1831, in accordance with divine Latter Day Revelation as the site of the City of Zion and the spot where the Temple of the Lord should be built, and that it should be held sacred unto the Lord forever. (Outline History of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), pg 45) Much history has since transpired from the days of the early people until this day. Many dreams in their minds have been for the ultimate benefit of peace and well being for all people everywhere, and a fulfillment of the Scriptural promises given through the ages.

The Church of Christ membership having begun in 1867 to reside in Independence made provision in Conference in 1884 (April 7) in a resolution to "...lay themselves under obligation to fast and pray for a special favor of the Lord in reference to the building of a house of worship..." on this site. (Outline History of the Church of Christ, (Temple Lot), pg 114).

The first small building was completed during 1889. Just nine short years later the building was burned on September 4, 1898 by an enemy to the Church. That same day plans were begun to build on the site, the new building to be considerably larger than the first because of the growing membership. This building was dedicated to the worship and service of the Lord Jesus Christ on April 6, 1902.

The second building stood for 88 years until January 1, 1990, also serving as the General Church Headquarters, wherein many people worshipped in sincere spiritual dedication all through the years, and received many blessings from

our Heavenly Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy spirit in fulfillment of the promises of the Holy Scriptures.

A New Building Planned

The incident of Requirement:

On that date of January 1, 1990, another enemy to the Church of Christ and, to many other churches set fire to the second building, resulting in sufficient destruction to require its total leveling and removal.

It seems inconceivable that one perverted person can rob many of the Lord's people of a place in which to worship and labor to share the Gospel with all who would be of a mind to listen and obey. When such an act of wicked violence occurs, many human emotions arise in rejection and rebellion of both the motives and the act.

None believe that the Lord caused the fire; but, He allowed it, and it had to have been for a purpose within Himself for the sake of His people. I am reminded of the words of an old hymn:

GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY

God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm.
Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs, And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take! The clouds ye so such dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head.
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast, Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flower.
Blind unbelief is sure to err, And scan His work in vain;
God is His own Interpreter, And He will make it plain.

The congregations of the Church of Christ had long outgrown the capacity of the former building. Many seemingly viable proposals for modification or rebuilding had been submitted for consideration over a period of many years, but the Conference memberships could not arrive at a decision. The Lord seemingly took away the problem of what to do.

Provisions for Building

The Church of Christ in General Conference on April 3, 1990 resolved to once again rebuild on the same site; and again, designating that a somewhat larger building should be built to accommodate the present requirements. This

building will also serve as a General Church Headquarters, with provision for General Church offices, Conferences, and worship services, baptism facilities, a kitchen and dining area, and a Visitors' Center.

A great deal of prayerful planning, design, and coordination with the City of Independence has been accomplished.

There have already been many willing and cheerful givers, contributing generously toward this planned building unto the Lord. To just mention one gift to the Lord as generous as any can be, it is from a dear little 82 year-old lady in my mission field who has been in the Church almost 60 years, and is now residing in a retirement home – she sent in a check for \$20.00; truly a proverbial “widow’s mite.” She has also sent some of her exquisite needle work to be sold with items from other’s in a planned craft sale to benefit the need.

And now, as we shall shortly commence construction, we encourage others to bring forth their gifts, whether it be money, materials, labor and other skills, and love to assist in the building of an house unto the Lord.

We have gathered here today to symbolically break the ground of the site of the former building of this Church, to mark the planning and decision to build anew.

The new building will not be ornate, but will have a modest beauty of it’s own to appropriately blend in with its surroundings. It shall have easy access to both levels, and even the grade of the land around it will also be in accordance with the current building requirements of the City of Independence.

We must always remember the words of King David in his Psalms: “Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.” (Psalms 134:1) “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it:..” (Psalms 127:1) And again: “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” (Psalms 122:1)

Once again it shall be our privilege to rise up anew and support this new building with our prayers and gifts unto the Lord. Let us remain ever faithful to our gracious God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(October, 1990 Zion’s Advocate pp. 134-136)



The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new headquarters building for the Church of Christ August 18, 1990, with Apostle Robert H. Jensen giving the presentation.

The General Bishopric submitted a “Report and Analysis for the “Temple Lot Project” to the 1991 Ministers’ Conference. This showed the remaining contract commitments and costs to complete the project at being \$325,508.00. The funds on hand and pledges totaled \$328,491.17. - 1991 Conf. Min. pp. 6-8

An action was made during the 1991 Ministers’ Conference to obtain a restraining order against the arsonist who set fire to the church building:

SECURITY OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST (Temple Lot) BUILDING

Be it Resolved that: The General Bishopric be instructed to secure a legally binding Restraining Order against the arsonist and his emissaries to prevent them from entering upon any property of the Church of Christ wherever located, or upon the property of any of it's members, or the harassment or threat against any members, from this time forth.

Robert H. Jensen
James E. Yates
(1991 Conf. Min. p. 27)

On Sunday, December 1, 1991, one year and eleven months after the old building was burned, the new Church of Christ Headquarters building was ready to occupy. Appropriately the first service held was a baptism service with four young people being baptized. The following service was a sacrament service. It was a great joy to be able to continue in service without limitations to time as was necessary at the YMCA where the Temple Lot Local had been meeting. The Temple Lot Local church greatly appreciated the use of the YMCA building during their time of need, but it was a joy to once again gather into the house of the Lord at the designated place.

The Dedication of the New Church Building

At the Sunday service of the 1992 Ministers' Conference the new church building was dedicated. The following is the printed program for that service:

A TIME OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION
FOR THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HEADQUARTERS BUILDING
AT THE TEMPLE LOT, INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI
April 5, 1992, 3:30 p.m.

Instrumental music prior to service:
Brother Dan and Sister Manon Lawrence

Hymn #1, "Let Us Go to The House of The Lord":
Congregation

Opening Prayer:
Elder Nicholas Denham

Choir Presentation:
Sister Martha Bruner, Director

A Sense of Direction:
Apostle Roland Sarratt

Our Heritage:
Apostle William Sheldon

“Bless This Church”:
Sisters Martha Bruner and Czerna Kauffman

Rebuilding The Church:
Elder Alvin Harris

“Surely The Presence of The Lord Is In This Place”:
Brother David and Sister Becky Rudd

Great Views of Things To Come:
Apostle Donald McIndoo

Hymn #252, “You May Sing of The Beauty”:
Congregation

Dedication Prayer:
Apostle Robert Jensen

“The Lord’s Prayer”:
Brother David Rudd, Brother Donald Gill
and Sister Martha Bruner

Closing Prayer:
Elder Leslie Case

We include here an excerpt from the dedication prayer:

Now, Oh God, we dedicate this house unto thee which we have builded with our hands and materials. We most earnestly beseech from Thee, Thy Divine blessing upon it, and Thy decree that it shall be kept safe from the storms of the earth and the heavens, and from the hands of adversarial powers and the

emissaries of evil that walk the earth seeking those and that which they might destroy. May thy power rest upon it, to keep it safe for Thy people, who shall desire to come to learn of Thee, and to worship Thee, to be blessed and strengthened in their spirit, and to be guided in all things and to testify to the world of Thy tender love and mercy and power of great majesty.

A final report was submitted to the 1993 Ministers' Conference by the General Bishopric on the New Building Project referencing their financial reports from 1990 through 1993:

TOTAL COST OF BUILDING PROJECT

<i>Jan. 90 – Mar. 90 Re: 1990 Conf. Minutes, p.11</i>	<i>\$10,608.87</i>
<i>Apr. 90 – Mar. 91 1991 Conf. Minutes, p. 7</i>	<i>284,848.13</i>
<i>Apr. 91 – Mar. 92 1992 Conf. Minutes, p. 17</i>	<i>321,428.39</i>
<i>Apr. 92 – Mar. 93 FY 93-94 records</i>	<i><u>37,046.60</u></i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$653,931.60</i>
<i>Jan. 90 – Mar. 93 Estimate donated labor</i>	<i><u>75,000.00</u></i>
<i>INVESTMENT IN BUILDING</i>	<i>\$728,931.00</i>

6.

The Use of E-mail in the Church of Christ

With the modern convenience of personal computers and the internet system, the Church of Christ moved into the new correspondence era of e-mail. Brother Gary Housknecht was instrumental in establishing the Church of Christ E-mail Group (CCEG) and later turned the responsibility over to his sister, Sister Rhea Housknecht. With the help of Sisters Joyce Harris and Barbara Kimball, this cooperative activity has been of great worth to the Church of Christ membership.

This has been a big factor in communicating prayer requests of the membership, and also non-members through the requests of the church members. It has been a means to make announcements of various church activities and also for the missionaries to give informal reports to the church members. The work in the foreign fields is reported on the spot, so to speak, giving the supporters an opportunity to know first hand what is happening. The members at home are able to be a part of the work by

sharing their love and prayers for the missionaries, the former converts and the people who are embracing the fullness of the gospel of Christ for the first time.

The following is a message communicated via e-mail from the CCEG which gives a more adequate description of this special activity:

What is the CCEG?

The Church of Christ E-mail Group is a private enterprise, independent of official church oversight. We are made up exclusively of members of the Church of Christ and their families. Although the CCEG is not sponsored by the Church of Christ, it is heavily acknowledged with active participation by over 70 church priesthood including ten of the apostles. We are not monitored or moderated except by our mutual cooperation and the practice of courtesies common to this medium. There are no dues, fees or other charges for membership.

The group exists for the primary purpose of enhancing communication between members of the Church of Christ throughout the world, providing an avenue for sharing our blessings, our needs and concerns. It has evolved to also be a valuable tool for announcing church events and activities, sharing missionary news, pertinent national and world news, scripture studies and the occasional inspired verse.

The Church of Christ E-mail Group was conceived in the fall of 1996, and officially born in January 1997 with about a dozen charter members. We were 100 members strong by June 1998 and 200 by December 1999. As we approach 300 CCEG participants, representing well over 600 Church of Christ members and their families, let us be thankful to the Almighty God for the blessings our new "neighborhood" has provided ... and each CCEG participant helps make it so!

Besides the CCEG, personal e-mail correspondence has been a big help for the ministry in scheduling meetings and various other activities. The Council of Apostles and the members of the General Bishopric have been able to communicate their business privately and much more quickly through this means.

SECTION III.

CONFERENCE ACTIONS, REFERENDUMS, POSITION STATEMENTS AND SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS

1.

Church Histories

Church History Manuscript

The General Church Historian's report to the 1951 General Conference indicated that a manuscript was nearly completed. An action was made "... that the Committee to review and revise the church history shall, in consultation with the Historian, review the manuscript; and that after such review, by the majority action of only the Review Committee, such revisions as deemed necessary shall be made and the History turned over to the Board of Publications for printing." The name given to the history was "An Outline History of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)". Apostle B. C. Flint was the historian. Apostles Leon Gould, Clarence L. Wheaton and Arthur M. Smith were the Review Committee.

(1951 Conf. Min. p.68, 69, 73-75)

Actions Taken to Prepare and Print the Church History

A report from the General Church Historian and the Committee to Review and Revise the historical manuscript was received and acted upon by the 1952 General Conference:

Greetings:

The Church Historian and the History Reviewing and Revising Committee hereby submit for your consideration the following report.

1. After three years of effort in preparing and compiling the material for a History of the Church of Christ, we are able to report we have a manuscript history compiled, consisting of 25 chapters; approximately 250 pages of type-written material, on which both the Historian and the committee agree will be of great worth to the Church.

2. This material or manuscript is now ready for the printer after a final proof reading can be had and a corrected copy prepared for the printer.
3. That in furtherance of this work, an index and table of contents as well as the numbering of the paragraphs is yet to be done.
4. We are agreed that this work should be carefully supervised during the printing by the committee for such work, that no changes should be made in the printing and proof-reading, and until this is accomplished the committee should not be discharged.

Most sincerely,
 Historian B. C. Flint
 Committee Arthur M. Smith, Clarence L. Wheaton, Leon A. Gould

Bro. LeRoy Wheaton moved as a substitute that we approve the report of the Historian and the Reviewing and Revising Committee; and concur in their recommendations with the exception of paragraph 4; and provide instead that the printing of this history shall be in the hands of the Board of Publications; and that proof reading shall be in the hands of the Committee to Review and Revise. Seconded by Bro. Rolland Sprague. Carried.

(1952 Conf. Min. p.70)

In the 1953 report of the Board of Publications, they gave this information concerning the printing of the Church History:

Our major concern was in securing a printer to publish the Church History and in formulating the style of type and binding for it. We were able to obtain the services of Lambert-Moon Printing Co., for 1,000 copies and the history will be off the press about May 1, 1953.

(1953 Conf. Min. p.52)

Board of General Church Historians Appointed

A resolution was passed that a committee of three be appointed as a Board of General Church Historians at the 1952 General Conference. Those elected were Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr., J. Maynard Case and Arthur M. Smith. An action was made to abolish the present Committee to Examine the Historical Manuscript after they have finished their work on the present manuscript. - 1952 Conf. Min. p.68 & 69

Church Historian and Two Associates Established

The Council of Apostles presented a document to the 1959 Ministers' Conference changing the Board of Historians to a Historian and two

Associates. The conference approved the document but the chairman ruled against it being sent to referendum. The conference did elect a historian and two associates which practice was continued until 1971.
(1959 Conf. Min. p.68)

An amendment to the conference action of 1959 concerning the historians was passed by the 1971 Ministers' Conference. The amended action was sent to referendum as Bill #2, which was passed.

The Council of Twelve presents the following resolution for consideration and adoption:

Whereas there is an apparent need for a more complete history of the Restoration of the Church of Christ, and

Whereas it is necessary to keep abreast of current historical events, and

Whereas the present system of a Board of Historians has proven unsatisfactory, due in part to the following reasons:

- (a) It is difficult for more than one individual to write the history.
- (b) Alternating membership of the board is not conducive to continuity of effort.

Therefore, be it Resolved:

That we recommend to the conference that the Board of Historians be discontinued, and that we further recommend the election of a historian and two advisory associates, whose terms of office shall continue jointly for a period of four years.

The compilation of historical matter, both current and past, with the view of producing a more complete history of the church, shall be the primary responsibility of the historian.

His associates shall be permitted to examine matter, advise, and edit such matter as may be determined suitable for publication.

The majority decision of the historian and his associates, as to manuscript content, shall prevail.

The historian and associates shall be under the supervision of the Council of Twelve.

Any historical material of value whatsoever shall be kept in the custody of the Library Board, to be at call of any Historian or Historical Board that may arise in the future, so that this material is not lost.

We recommend to the Historian that he endeavor to divide the work of

collecting historical data to be placed in the hands of the historian to be compiled in the history, and that any conflicting actions be rescinded.

Respectfully submitted,

William A. Sheldon, Sec'y. Council of Apostles

(1971 Conf. Min. p.11-13)

Church History for Young People

A report from the General Church Historian submitted to the 1990 Ministers' Conference, gave this information:

During the Conference year of 1989-1990 a history of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) for young people--mid-teens to young adults—has been started. A need for such a publication has been apparent for some time. It is believed that it will also be of interest to people of all ages.

Assistant Historian, Sister Donna Moser, has been developing a draft. Considerable work has been performed during the past year. The history will be based totally upon documentable facts, and be presented in a manner for easy reading and study.

Sister Donna Moser completed her history and it was printed in installments in the Hand of Fellowship, a paper published by the Phoenix, Arizona Local Church. Sister Moser continued working on church history and assisting the other historians until she passed from this life on October 14, 2002.

2.

Board of Publications

Duties of the Board of Publications Established

A recommendation from the Board of Publications was presented to the 1962 Ministers' Conference outlining the duties of the Board of Publications. This recommendation was approved by the conference and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which also passed.

**A BILL OUTLINING THE DUTIES OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS**

The Board of Publications has in the past found itself hampered in performing its duties, functions and operations by existing rules. Some examples are as follows:

1. The board found itself limited by former action which restricted the Board's right to correct grammar and punctuation in manuscript material submitted to the Board for approval and publication.
2. We found ourselves limited to accessibility of funds and their disbursement for publications.
3. In organization we found ourselves hampered by the past practice of having the General Church Business Manager acting automatically as chairman of the board. This not only has added to the manifold duties of the Business Manager but it also has denied the Board of Publications the right to choose its own chairman.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE FOLLOWING BILL OUTLINING THE FUNCTIONS AND OPERATIONS OF THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS BE ADOPTED:

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

A. OFFICERS

1. Five Elders
2. Two of the chairs on the Board are to be filled by one Bishop and one Apostle.

B. TERM OF OFFICE

1. To be elected in two pairs of two and one singly.

C. MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

1. Meetings to be held as appointed by the Chairman or by agreement of the members.
2. Chairman of the Board to be elected each year after General Conference appointments are made. The Secretary of the Board shall also be appointed at this time.

II. FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

A. PUBLICATIONS

1. Editing Rights
 - a. To edit all material for church publications except Zion's Advocate.
 - b. To correct grammar, punctuation and manner of presentation.
 - c. To check for doctrinal content.
 - d. To draft all church forms.

III. FUNDS FOR OPERATION

A. REVOLVING BOOK AND TRACT FUND

1. Books and tracts published are to be sold and the funds returned to the Book and Tract Fund for the publishing of new material.
2. The Board of Publications to establish prices to cover:
 - a. Postage and handling
 - b. Missionary copies
 - c. Cost of publication, etc.
3. Moneys of the Board to be handled by the Bishopric in a special fund and disbursed at the discretion of the Board of Publications.
 - a. The member of the Board of Publications who is a member of the Bishopric is to be able to give financial status reports to the, Board at their appointed meetings.
4. The Board of Publications cannot obligate themselves financially beyond the limits of the Book and Tract Fund.

B. STARTING APPROPRIATION OF THE BOOK AND TRACT FUND.

1. \$2,000.00
 - a. To be raised from present church funds.
 - b. All printing of books and tracts by the Church of Christ to be charged to this fund.
 - c. This fund can also be used to purchase books and tracts for resale.

BE IT UNDERSTOOD THAT:

All former action pertaining to the Board of Publication is to stand rescinded with the adoption of the above resolution or as may be amended.

(Signed) Kenneth J. Smith

(Signed) Vance H. Harris

(1962 Conf. Min. p.85)

Church of Christ Seal

Although an action was made at the 1966 Ministers' Conference to have the General Bishopric obtain a copyright or registration for the Church of Christ seal, it appears this was not accomplished. In time the responsibility of the use and protection of the seal was given to the Board of Publications.

It was reported during the 1990 Ministers' Conference that Brother Rick Olson had provided a professionally renovated copy of the Church of Christ seal. This was done due to the fact that the old seal had become blurred and somewhat hard to read. Brother Olson's seal was accepted by

the Board of Publications as the official seal excluding all others to keep from having confusion over which seal is the correct one. An action was made at the 1998 Ministers' Conference to "...reaffirm our commitment to exclusively use the official church seal, as it has been restored, on all our new prints of documents, stationery, books, etc., that stand as official church publications." This action was referred to the Board of Publications with the instruction that they investigate the matter and give a report in the Zion's Advocate.

In the September, 1999, Zion's Advocate an appropriate report from the Board of Publications was printed giving a brief history of the church seal and some specifics concerning the proper use of the seal. Based upon this information, a resolution was presented to the 2008 General Conference and was passed. It was then sent to referendum which also was passed giving the Board of Publications the official charge of maintaining the church seal:

Resolution on the Church of Christ Seal

Inasmuch as there is no binding action on record in the Church of Christ concerning the use of the Church of Christ Seal,

Be it resolved that the Board of Publications has the general guardianship and care of the official Church of Christ Seal and,

Be it resolved that the following statement be approved as a guide for the use of the Seal:

The Church of Christ Seal is designed to signify the approved and official nature of the documents representing the official activities and the approved statements, business and outreach of the Church. This applies to the Church of Christ seal in any language current or future. No private publication or unofficial correspondence should carry the Seal. Its use in print or in electronic media is limited to the following:

1. Approved periodicals of the Church published under the guidance of an editor and his staff currently elected by the Church conference.
2. Items approved by the conference elected Board of Publications as directed by a majority vote of the board.
3. official letters and documents necessary to the Business Manager, elected by the Church conference.
4. official letters and documents prepared by the members of the Council of Apostles, and Evangelists; other General Church officers, secretary of the General Bishopric, General Church Secretary, General Church Historian and General Church Recorder.

5. Business cards by ministry under Church appointment in good standing.
6. Official letters and documents prepared as necessary by local Pastors.

Be it further resolved that any and all former resolutions in conflict are hereby rescinded.

(Gen. Conf. Min. 2008, p.33)

Printing of the Book of Mormon

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1984 Ministers' Conference to authorize the Board of Publications to print our own Book of Mormon which was approved by conference action:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the approval of preparatory steps by the Board of Publications to publish the Book of Mormon, using the 1908 authorized edition as a basis, to be corrected by reference to the original manuscript, and including reference material with greater comparative use of Bible texts.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles

(1984 Conf. Min. p. 15)

The Board of Publications made a report to the 1987 Ministers' Conference on the progress of the printing of the Book of Mormon:

Publication of the Book of Mormon

A committee of three (namely: William A. Sheldon, Harvey E. Seibel and Amy Schrader) was appointed to the preparatory work on this project, which included all scriptural references from the King James authorized version of the Bible, from the Book of Mormon and from the "Book of Commandments."

Comparison of the text with the previously accepted "authorized edition" will reveal quite a number of changes in conformity with the original printer's manuscript; changes of no significance or alteration as to the sense of the text, but principally reverting to more archaic word usage such as "which" in place of "who". Again, these changes will render the text in language more nearly like the manuscript, and in doing so, we believe it to more accurately reflect the Hebraic culture of the ancient writers.

A preface has been prepared, together with other matter such as the statements of the three original witnesses and that of eight other witnesses, etc., at the front of the book. Also, study helps have been prepared for inclusion at the back, i.e., "Prophets and Leaders", "Other Notable personalities", and a "Topical Index."

Thus, the committee's work has been completed. Bro. James Hedrick has completed the preliminary set-up of all the above into computerized form, and we think with amazingly few corrections needed, despite the numerous changes required from the committee. The text and the reference material has been proofread three times, hopefully to incorporate all that was intended. All proof reading is complete except for the final page proofs, of which there is none at present.

A problem with completion of the project involves the presently serious health condition of Bro. Hedrick; yet he is determined, with God's help, to accomplish this enormous task. We request the diligent prayers of the saints in his behalf.

In order to take advantage of economy in publication, it is not expected under any circumstances to produce the book until the winter months of 1987-88. We expect to publish the book with an economical binding as presently available, and also with a good, durable binding; the selling price to be determined by cost plus a minimum handling and/or mailing charge. Previously donated monies to provide books as requested will be honored.

We wish to express appreciation to the following, as well as to formerly-named persons, for their labor of love on this book: Alvina Bell, Marvin and Edith Case, Doris Ratterree, Darleen Smith, Annie Spargo, and Stella Winegar. If we have failed to include others, we ask forgiveness; but God has not forgotten.

Respectfully submitted,
Board of Publications

(1987 Conf. Min. p. 3)

The Board of Publications made a follow-up report to the 1989 Ministers' Conference indicating the Book of Mormon would be ready for publication within the year:

Report on New Publication of the Book of Mormon

Because of circumstances beyond our control, some of which have been noticed previously, the project undertaken by the Church to publish its own Book of Mormon was halted for more than a year. Computer discs upon which the whole project was recorded and which were prepared by our late brother James Hedrick, were recently found to be unusable at the printing firm of his

employment. He had originally arranged for this firm to print the book on a cost-only basis. The matter remains as a tentative agreement at the present, in which the Board of Publications expects to obtain a firm commitment, or will have done so by this time.

Within the last month, arrangements have been made with the printing firm to obtain new discs from those existing, which enables them to continue the publication process. Brother Dan Hedrick has made final revisions of the text supplied by those of the appointed committee of preparation, i.e., William A. Sheldon and Harvey E. Seibel. These revisions were principally to bring the text into a fuller agreement with original manuscripts.

These revised discs are being supplied, as they are made ready, to the printing firm, which then obtains the new discs for use with their own equipment. As page proof galleys are then prepared, they are given to a former friend of James Hedrick, with whom he had arranged to prepare the final paging process. After a final proof-reading, these will be used in printing the book.

It is expected that this process will now proceed rapidly, and we hope that by Fall, we will have the Book of Mormon ready for distribution and sale. Please be patient, yet, for it has been a continual matter of concern for the committee and your Board of Publications.

Preparation Committee

(1989 Conf. Min. p. 3)

At the 1990 Ministers' Conference the Board of Publication gave its report with this information concerning the printing of the Book of Mormon:

Much of the Board's time and effort this year has gone into publication of the Book of Mormon. The work was presented in its entirety in February, 1990, by the preparation committee that had been appointed by the 1984 April conference. Publication is now in process and completed copies will be available within two to three months.

(1990 Conf. Min. p. 8)

Direction for the Board of Publications

The following resolution was passed by the 2006 April Ministers' Conference and sent to Referendum as Bill #3. It passed the necessary majority vote:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends to this body for its approval the following as direction to the Board of Publications:

The Book of Mormon as printed in 1990 and called the Independence Edition shall be republished as the authorized edition of the Church with whatever typographical errors corrected as may be noted in the text of the book, and that it be prepared as with the present perfect binding and also with a leatherette or leather binding as may be practical from an economic standpoint; that quantities of each binding be in accord with the Board's judgment as to need.

That the work of textual revision having been undertaken by the Board of Publications be prepared in a durable hard-copy form and binding, which copy shall be given to the Library Board for its display and use by student and/or historical perusal.

Respectfully submitted,
Council of Apostles, Smith N. Brickhouse, Secy.

(2006 Conf. Min. p.38)

3. General Church Secretary

The Duties of the General Church Secretary

A document entitled "Duties of the General Church Secretary" which was submitted to the 1964 Ministers' Conference by a committee was adopted and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which in turn was passed.

Greetings:

The committee consisting of past and present secretaries of the General Church and the Secretary of the Quorum of Apostles has considered the document referred to it by the business session of 2:00 p. m. April 7, 1964, and submits the following for your action:

DUTIES OF THE GENERAL CHURCH SECRETARY

1. Custodian of the Files of the Secretary of the General Church.
 - a. He shall be responsible for the care, filing and safekeeping of all conference minutes, documents and other material coming into his hands, and all correspondence addressed to and written by the General Church Secretary, except as provided for in paragraphs 4b and 4c.

b. He shall not give the original of any of the minutes, documents nor any correspondence of the General Church in his care to anyone. Excerpts from minutes may be given to any church member in good standing. Excerpts from these minutes may be given to non-members with the approval of the conference during conference, or approval through the secretary of the Quorum of Apostles between conferences. Excerpts from documents in the secretarial files may be given to members in good standing with the approval of the conference during conference, or approval through the secretary of the Quorum of Apostles between conferences.

c. The secretary's original copy files shall be kept in the general church building at all times.

d. The General Church Secretary shall set up and maintain a suitable set (not less than 3) of microfilm duplicates of all conference documents for research and study of the church membership. These microfilm duplicates need not be confined to the church structure and a full microfilm set shall be kept in another building for reason of fire or other loss.

This authorizes the secretary and General Bishopric to draw on treasury funds in reasonable amounts to implement this instruction.

e. Bonafide copies of the minutes shall be distributed to:

- Secretary of the Quorum of Apostles
- Secretary of the General Bishopric
- General Church Historian
- General Church Recorder
- General Church Library Board
- Zion's Advocate Editorial Staff
- Referendum Committee

2. Keeper of Register

a. He shall keep a list of the names and addresses of all standing committees.

b. He shall keep a list of the names and addresses of all permanent general church officials (Apostles, Seventies, Bishops).

c. He shall keep a list of all names and addresses of elective general church officials (Recorder, Business office Manager, etc.).

3. Notification

a. He shall notify the church through the Zion's Advocate, when and where the conference has voted that a general conference of the church will be held.

b. He shall notify officers, committees and delegates of their appointments and duties, and shall give the names of those on the committee and all papers pertaining to their work to the first nominated member of the committee, as soon as possible after the appointments are made. New members of standing committees need only a notification of appointment, naming other members.

4. Reports, Correspondence, etc.

a. He shall conduct all routine correspondence for the general church, as

pertaining to his office as General Church Secretary.

b. All correspondence on matters of doctrine, church organization, and policy is to be turned over to the secretary of the Council of Apostles for its handling.

c. All correspondence on matters pertaining to finance is to be turned over to the secretary of the General Bishopric for its handling.

d. He shall not at any time sign, as secretary of the church, any private correspondence or personal opinions.

e. He shall endorse on all reports, conference resolutions and correspondence, the date of their reception, and what further action was taken.

f. He shall keep the original of all conference resolutions, correspondence, reports and minutes in the secretary's files.

5. Conference Secretary

a. He shall be the secretary of all general church conferences during his tenure of office.

b. He shall provide that a record be kept of all conference program meetings, recording the type of services, those in charge, speakers (in preaching services), ordinances observed (ordination, administrations, etc.), and spiritual manifestations.

6. Agenda

a. He shall present the agenda at each business meeting.

7. Minutes

a. He shall keep a record of the proceedings of each business meeting. He shall keep a list of speakers to the subjects, for and against and not what each one said. This list is for the expediency of the chairman and secretary and is not to be incorporated in the conference minutes.

b. He may choose assistance as required.

c. Tape recorders or other facilities are permissible if desired as aids in making this record.

8. Term of office

a. He shall be elected to office for a term of one year by the annual ministers' conference.

b. His tenure in office shall begin at the completion of conference secretarial business at which time the retiring secretary shall transmit all secretarial papers to the incoming secretary.

Unanimously submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secretary of the Quorum of Apostles, James A. Hedrick, General Church Secretary, Forest Maley, Past General Church Secretary, Harvey E. Seibel, Past General Church Secretary

(1964 Conf. Min. p. 13)

4.

General Church Recorder

General Church Recorder's Reports

The General Church Recorder's report for the 1951 General Conference gave the numbers of ordinations for the 1950/1951 conference year thus:

Apostles	2
Seventies	6
Elders	8
Priests	3

The numbers of baptisms, transfers of membership, deaths or withdrawals were not reported. The total membership of the church was reported as 2273.

This report was the first written report by a General Church Recorder to be found printed in the conference minutes since 1933. From 1951 forward there has been a more full statistical report given by the General Church Recorder annually. - 1951 Conf. Min. p.69

Membership Forms for the General Church Recorder

The General Church Recorder, Sister Lois Harris, made a recommendation in her report of vital statistics to the 1959 Ministers' Conference, authorizing the Board of Publications to assist the Recorder in revising and making membership forms as well as establishing rules in the recording process. The conference approved of the recommendation but it was not sent to referendum. - 1959 Conf. Min. p75

Forms for General Church Recorder's office

The following resolution, concerning the General Church Recorder's work, was sent to Referendum as Bill #4 by the 2006 April Ministers' Conference and was passed by the necessary majority vote:

Whereas the current rate of Church growth is placing increased demands on the Recorders office, and

Whereas new members are being converted in countries that require church forms and documents as they relate to the Recorder's office in languages other than English, and

Whereas technology allows for easy creation and distribution of Church forms and documents, and

Whereas the General Church Recorder is responsible to provide appropriate forms and documents to members and priesthood as they relate to the Recorder's office,

Therefore be it resolved that the General Church Recorder have the authority to create and produce documents and forms relative to the recorder's office and to place the seal of the Church of Christ on those documents without restriction,

And be it resolved that this motion supersede all past Conference actions or parts of actions that are in conflict with this motion,

And further be it resolved that this motion be sent to referendum.

Moved by Elder Jim Yates, Jr.
Seconded by Elder Rickey J. Olson

(2006 Conf. Min. p. 44)

Resolution on Determining Membership for Referendum Count

A recommendation was made to the 1967 Ministers' Conference by the Council of Apostles giving instructions to the General Church Recorder in determining the membership of persons whose names appear on referendum ballots before they are counted. This recommendation was approved by the conference and sent to referendum as Bill No. 1 which in turn was passed.

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the adoption of the following resolutions:

Be it resolved that,
When a name is found on a referendum ballot, which can not be found in the

records of the General Church membership, it shall be the duty of the Referendum Committee to notify the General Church Recorder. The General Church Recorder shall, as soon as possible, attempt to ascertain if the person is a member of the Church of Christ by contacting him or the local Pastor, or the missionary in charge of that field. Upon reasonable certification of those who may know the facts, and after obtaining as much pertinent data as possible, the Recorder shall then enter the name upon the General Church Records, notifying the missionary in charge of the field of this action.

Respectfully submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secretary, Council of Apostles

(1967 Conf. Min. p. 5)

5. Referendum Committee

Referendum Ballots Be Mailed To Members

The Council of Apostles submitted a document to the 1958 Ministers' Conference concerning mailing of referendum ballots to church members which as approved by the conference sent to referendum as Bill #1 which also passed:

1. Whereas the present system of sending out the referendum ballots to the church for their vote, in the form of a supplement to Zion's Advocate, has not proved to be satisfactory, and since, throughout the years, this system has never given us more than a very small per cent of the real vote of the people of the church; and, Whereas we are admonished in the Book of Mormon, "Therefore, this shall ye observe and make it your law to do your business by the voice of the people" (Mosiah 13:36); therefore, that more people (members of the church) may be brought into closer touch with the church, and may be encouraged to be more active in response to the referendum ballots sent out to the church for their vote; and, that we may be assured that more of our members receive these ballots, other than the few subscribers to the Advocate, be it

2. Resolved, that from now on, all ballots sent out by the Conference to the people of the Church of Christ, shall either be printed or mimeographed in such a way and form that they may be sent out to the members of the Church as first class mail.

3. Missionaries in charge of fields, and the pastor and secretary of each local shall, upon adoption of this amendment to the referendum rules, send, to the General Church Recorder, the names and addresses of all members in their locality, or scattered members affiliated with them, to be made available to the Referendum Committee in sending out ballots. Ballots shall be sent to all scattered members, as far as information may be available from the Recorder's records.

4. Be it further resolved, that these ballots shall not be promiscuously distributed to individuals for the purpose of passing them on to others to vote on. If missionaries in their fields find members who have not received a ballot, they shall forward the names and addresses of said members to the Referendum Committee.

5. Be it further resolved, that the General Church Recorder, shall, at the earliest date possible, set up and establish a mailing list of the scattered members of the Church, and their addresses; this list to be divided by states. Such lists to be available to the missionary traveling in the various states so listed; and it shall become the duty of the ministry through the whole church, to send to the General Church Recorder all names and addresses of all saints who have not been recorded, or who may have changed their address very recently.

6. All former action in conflict with this document is hereby rescinded.

7. This resolution in no wise alters nor interferes with the Peoples Conference provision of the referendum.

(1958 Conf. Min. pp. 68, 69)

Rules on Referendum Ballots

The 1967 Ministers' Conference approved a resolution offered by the referendum committee on rules for referendum ballots and sent the action to referendum as Bill #4 which passed:

Resolved that the Referendum Ballot shall show the year involved, the Bill Number and Title, and the signature, address and vote of each voter.

In case a voter is not listed on the records of the General Church Recorder the Referendum Committee shall strike off his vote and notify the pastor of his local church or, in case of a scattered member, the missionary in charge of the field in which he resides. It shall be the duty of the pastor or the missionary in charge to make necessary inquiry and to determine the voter's membership status and furnish proper information to the General Church Recorder if the unlisted voter is found to be a member, that his name may be properly entered on the General Church Records.

This action rescinds any former action in conflict herewith.

Nicholas F. Denham for the Referendum Committee.
(1967 Conf. Min. p. 14)

Added Rules on Referendum Voting

A resolution was written and submitted to the 2004 April Ministers' Conference by the Council of Apostles concerning referendum voting for peoples outside the United States and Canada. This was sent to referendum and passed the needed majority:

RESOLUTION: REFERENDUM VOTING FOR COUNTRIES OTHER THAN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

INASMUCH as the growth of the Church of Christ in the world has given to us special challenges, and

INASMUCH as the laws of the Church make provisions for all the properly baptized members to participate in the government of the Church through the Peoples' Conference or Referendum, and

INASMUCH as the international mail delivery system does not provide timely delivery of referendum bills, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED,

1. That the Referendum Committee be empowered to have all referendum bills translated into the languages of all baptized members as needed, AND
2. That the Referendum Committee delivers copies of these referendum bills by any appropriate available means necessary to members outside of the United States of America and Canada. These means can include, but are not limited to, any special mail service, Fax, Email, Internet or hand delivery by a representative of the Church of Christ, AND
3. That this information will be disseminated under the direction of the Missionary or Missionaries in charge of the region. The Missionary or Missionaries in charge shall call meetings or appoint representatives of the general church, local pastors, local leaders, or elected local officials of the local churches or missions to call general meetings to deliver the Referendum bills and ballots to the members of the church, AND
4. That the representatives of the General Church shall be permitted to explain these bills. They shall to the best of their ability explain without bias the effects of a positive and a negative vote, AND

5. That the votes will be taken in the same manner and on the same type of ballot (language excepted) as required by the rules governing the Peoples' Conference, AND

6. That any two general church representatives, local ministry, locally elected church or mission officers having certain knowledge of the voting membership status shall sign a separate document, giving their title and certifying the validity of the signatures, AND

7. That the ballots with the certificate of authenticity shall then be sent by any secure technology, Fax service, hand delivered or delivered via any appropriate mail service in a sealed envelope to the General Church in accordance with the place, date and time designated by the rules governing the Peoples' Conference of the Church of Christ.

BE IT UNDERSTOOD THAT: this resolution amends our present rules governing the Peoples' Conference and Referendum voting for countries other than the United States of America and Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

Council of Apostles
Smith N Brickhouse, Sec.

(2004 Conf. Min. p. 34)

6. Audio and Visual Aid Committee

AVVAA Committee Established

The Audio, Video, Visual Aid and Archeological Committee was established during the 1972 Ministers' Conference with three, two and one year terms for the members, but the resolution was not sent to referendum. The 1973 Ministers' Conference did pass a resolution establishing the AVVAA Committee which was sent to referendum as Bill #2 which was passed:

Greetings:

The undersigned members of the Council of Apostles recommend the adoption of the following resolution and that it be sent out to referendum.

Whereas the Church of Christ (T.L.) has recognized the growing need of Audio, Video, Visual and Archaeological Aids, and whereas there was appointed at the April 1972 Conference of the Church of Christ, an Audio, Video, Visual Aids, and Archaeological Committee to further this study,

Therefore, be it resolved,

That we do hereby declare this to be a standing committee which shall consist of six members. The order of service is: two for three years, two for two years, and two for one year. Two shall be elected each following year for a term of three years.

Be it further resolved,

That said committee shall be empowered to receive funds, which shall be held by the General Bishopric under separate account for this purpose. This committee shall be empowered to receive or purchase the following: slides, books, tape recordings, developed films, archaeological materials, other related items of interest, and necessary equipment.

This committee is to be the custodian of the materials and equipment purchased or received, and it shall be their duty to classify, index, and prepare the same for the use of the missionaries, local churches, and others in the Church who may have need. These shall be available for aid in the presentation and explanation of the Scriptures.

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin E. Ely, William A. Sheldon, Archie F. Bell, Joe W. Kidd, Clarence L. Wheaton, E. L. Yates

(1972 Conf. Min. p. 8 & 1973 Conf. Min. p. 8)

AVVAA Committee Report

The AVVAA Committee gave a report of its activities to the 1973 Ministers' Conference. Among other activities, they developed a library of taped sermons to be distributed upon request which practice has been a big benefit to scattered and handicapped members through the years. The AVVAA Committee has done much to assist in the work of the church through the years.

Report from the Audio, Video, Visual Aid and Archeological Committee

Greetings:

The members of the Audio, Video, Visual Aid and Archeological Committee make the following report of our activities for the year 1972-73:

The formation of a tape library of sermons and music has been started and a

listing published in the Advocate and the Hand of Fellowship. A mailing list is being formed.

The Committee is working to develop a library of multimedia programs. Four such programs are in existence now.

We are working to complete a multimedia program on the Restoration of the Gospel through Joseph Smith. We wish to develop this in both English and Spanish.

The Committee has received from member, Vi Hening, a set of fourteen lessons based upon hymns which we wish to develop into Sunday School material.

One multimedia program on The Life of Christ has been produced in Spanish and sent to Mexico, together with a tape recorder and 35mm projector for showing it.

It is our desire in the coming year and each successive year to develop at least four programs on cassette tape and filmstrips, which can be used by locals, small groups, or even individuals that are isolated, for Sunday School classes, study groups or missionary work. We also feel the necessity of purchasing sufficient equipment (players and projectors) to make available to those groups which cannot afford to purchase it.

Respectfully submitted,
D. E. McIndoo, Chairman
(1973 Conf. Min. p. 11)

Duties Revised and Name Changed: AVA Committee

The 2008 General Conference passed a resolution clarifying some of the duties and responsibilities of the AVVAA Committee as well as renaming it. This was also passed by referendum:

To The General Church Conference 2008,

Whereas the AVVAA committee was established by conference and referendum action (Bill #2, 1973) and

Whereas the duties being placed upon this committee have changed since its inception and

To clarify the duties and responsibilities for current and future members of this committee

Therefore be it resolved that we adopt the following:

1. That the name of this committee be changed from the AVVAA Committee to the Audio and Visual Aid Committee (AVA Committee).
2. That this be a standing committee which shall consist of six members under the direction of the Council of Apostles. The order of service is, two for three years, two for two years, and two for one year. Two shall be elected each following year for a term of three years.
3. That expenses to accomplish our duties will be received from the General Bishopric according to the budget set by the General Conference.
4. This committee is to be the custodian of those materials and equipment purchased or received by the committee.
5. That this committee prepare and make arrangements for appropriate language sermons to be reproduced audibly from all Local Congregations and make them available to the General Church and the church at large. Also to attempt to contact the Pastors of the Local congregations and solicit copies of sermons that were given at his congregation and that he feels appropriate to be used as a missionary tool or spiritual instruction to scattered members. General Church funds via this committee's budget would be used to cover the associated costs, to reproduce such materials, but not to include the cost of recording equipment used at the various locals.
6. Develop and maintain a system of mailing sermons, studies etc. to isolated and scattered members.
7. Develop a "Library" of sermons and studies etc. in various formats to be available to scattered members and other interested parties that they may have easy access to.
8. Maintain a web page which will contain sermons and studies etc. in various formats which the church membership can have easy access to at their convenience
9. That this committee elect a chairperson each year so that communication with the committee and within the committee can be focused through this person.
10. That this committee is to delegate the various priority projects among themselves according to their individual interest and talents. Bi-monthly or quarterly phone meetings are to be encouraged so that the committee communicates, and progress of the various projects can be reported.
11. Other duties as assigned by the Council of Apostles will be given a strong priority in the committee's consideration of projects that will be developed.
12. That this committee insure that there is a qualified person available to operate the P.A. system during General Church meetings.
13. These guidelines will supersede any previous Conference and Referendum actions in conflict therewith.

Respectfully submitted

Michelle Yates AVVAA Chairman
Seconded by Elder Bob Hedrick

(2008 Gen. Conf. Min. p.31)

7. General Conference Coordinators

Duties of Conference Service Coordinators

The Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric made a recommendation to the 1979 Ministers' Conference on the Duties of the Conference Service Coordinators:

Greetings:

According to provisions of the Ministers' Conference of April 1978, the matter of the Conference Service Coordinator was referred to a joint council of Apostles and Bishops for recommendation, to be reported back as soon as practical. The following is offered for approval of the conference:

Duties of Conference Service Coordinators

The Conference Service Coordinators are to function at the annual Ministers' Conference and other special conferences under the general supervision of the Apostles. They are to be provided with necessary keys to the headquarters building by the office Manager prior to each conference, and these to be returned after completion of conference duties.

Specific duties are:

1. Prepare news items for press, radio and/or television as may be appropriate, or as may be directed by the Apostles or the Ministers' Conference; also conference announcements.
2. Arrange for housing of members to attend conferences.
3. Prepare car stickers for parking, and membership badges as needed.
4. Open front entrance door one-half hour prior to first service or meeting of each day, and prepare adequate heating or cooling of building as is possible.
5. Provide for clean-up and orderly arrangement of conference building prior to each day's meetings, or as required through the day.
6. Provide for assistance to kitchen committee in set-up and removal of tables and chairs for dining.
7. Coordinate youth recreation activity during the conference, in cooperation with Independence YPCL officers.
8. Be responsible for ushers at every meeting during conference.
9. Encourage proper conduct and language within Church building and on grounds during conference.

The coordinators may draw upon general church funds as required to fulfill these duties, up to \$100.00 for each conference, or more, if authorized by Joint Council.

These duties may be amended by Ministers' Conference as need appears.

Respectfully submitted for the Apostles and Bishops
 William A. Sheldon, Secy., For the Apostles
 Nicholas F. Denham, Secy., General Bishopric
 (1979 Conf. Min. p. 15,16)

8.

Correspondence Committee

Correspondence Committee Established

A conference appointed Correspondence Committee was established during the 1971 Ministers' Conference. This was not a referendum action but has continued to function with three elected members all in the United States: one for the eastern states, one for the central states and one for the western states. They are each elected for three years alternately.

Greetings:
 Church of Christ.

The council of Apostles recommends that the Conference of 1971 make provision for such a committee as suggested by the writers of said letter.

Respectfully submitted,
 Archie F. Bell, Secretary
 Council of Apostles
 Salem, Oregon
 March 11, 1971

To the Conference,
 Greetings:

We, the undersigned, do hereby submit the following suggestion:

That the church appoint a correspondence committee that would send a monthly letter expressing faith, hope, and fellowship to each isolated member.

We feel that by this means much good could be accomplished in keeping in touch with isolated members, thereby encouraging them to keep alive in the gospel and the church.

Interested in the progress of the Church are:

Emil Heeb, Milford C. Walberg, Nellie A. Walberg, Carrie M. Asher, Elsie L. Rousseau
 (1971 Conf. Min. p. 5-7)

9. Archive Committee

Archive Committee Established

An Archive Committee for the Church of Christ was established at the 2000 Ministers' Conference. The action was sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed the majority vote:

ARCHIVE COMMITTEE

Be it resolved that an Archive Committee for the Church of Christ be established and given duties as follows:

The Archive Committee will consist of three members: a member of the Council of Apostles, a member of the General Bishopric and a member of the Library Board.

The Archive Committee shall be a standing committee with a three-year term of office: one member to be elected each year.

The term of office for the first three members to be determined as follows: the apostle one year, the bishop two years and the member of the Library board three years.

It shall be the duty of the Council of Apostles, the General Bishopric and the Library Board to make the selection of the new member each year when a member's term of office expires subject to the approval of the conference.

The Archive Committee will be responsible for the collection, preservation, display of items and the publicizing of these displays.

Items are to be collected, inventoried and stored in the vault, Apostles' council room, library and appropriate display case.

Items to be considered for the archives: historical artifacts, books, pictures, documents, records, tracts, etc.

(2000 Conf. Min. pp. 17,18)

10. Committees and Boards

Rules For Standing Committees

A resolution on standing committees was passed by the 1936 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum as Bill #6 which also passed:

All standing committees or boards that have five members shall be nominated and elected as follows: the two receiving the highest vote, to hold office for three years; the two receiving the second highest vote, to hold office for two years; and the fifth for a period of one year. That all standing committees or boards composed of three members shall be nominated and elected as follows: the one receiving the second highest vote to hold office for two years, and the one receiving the third highest vote for a period of one year. All elections except those selected to fill unexpired terms shall be for a term of three years thereafter.

(1936 Conf. Min. p. 52)

Reports of Standing Committees

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles on standing committees was submitted to the 1969 Ministers' Conference which was adopted:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the adoption of the following:

Be it resolved, that hereafter all reports of standing committees shall be first submitted to the Council of Apostles two weeks before conference convenes in order that they might be able to include them in the tentative program of the Conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Archie F. Bell, Secretary, Council of Apostles

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 10)

Committees & Boards Required to Make Annual Reports

A resolution was made during the 1972 Ministers' Conference concerning committees and boards being required to make annual reports to the conference. This action was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed:

Bro. Richard A. Wheaton moved that all committees and boards, etc. of the Church empowered to expend General Church funds or collect the same shall be required to submit an annual report of their activities to include a financial statement of funds received and disbursed and submit to the Joint Council of Twelve and Bishopric at least one week prior to the opening of Conference a proposed budget for the ensuing year. Seconded by Bro. Ron Temple.

(1972 Conf. Min. p. 7,8)

11. Council of Apostles Duties and Prerogatives

Amended Action on the Duties and Prerogatives of the Twelve Apostles

At the 1967 Ministers' Conference, the Council of Apostles made a recommendation to amend the conference action of 1932 on The Duties and Prerogatives of the Twelve. The amendment was approved by the conference and the amended action was sent to referendum as Bill #3 which was then passed by the required two-thirds majority vote. The amended 1932 conference action reads as follows:

Defining Duties and Prerogatives of the Twelve

(1) The Quorum of Twelve is a body of ministers called Apostles, ordained of God and set in the church to preach the gospel, organize, set in order and establish the Church of Christ in all the world -- the supervising authority and general watchcare of all the Churches being resident within this collective body of ministers.

(2) A majority of seven constitutes a working quorum whose unanimous decision is binding in the interim between conferences in all matters of vital importance.

It being impractical for the quorum as a whole to travel in all the world, individual members of the quorum are assigned fields of labor for a given period.

In the event of an emergency arising in any missionary field of appointment, the one in charge may choose another Apostle, a Seventy, or an Elder as a witness, or to assist in the work of that field, subject to approval by the Council of Apostles.

Elder's expense and family allowance shall be provided if needed.

If it be the wisdom that the one selected be accompanied by his wife, funds shall be made available for additional expenses.

When and where territory has been assigned to individual members of the quorum such assignment includes supervision of missionary activity and the general watch care of all the churches in that field, and the rights of the one in charge of that field should and must be respected by members of the missionary force of the church, and any such disrespect of any individual shall be considered as unchristian like conduct; but in no case does the quorum relinquish any of its rights of general supervision.

In case of apparent maladministration, or transgression by overt act, the quorum may silence a member and cite him to trial by lawful procedure.

(1967 Conf. Min. p. 13)

12. Conference Minutes

Conference Minutes Limited to Affirmative Actions Only

The 1949 Conference passed an action for the secretaries of the conference to report only the actions that were affirmatively approved in the published minutes. This practice was observed for eight years. In 1958 the practice was discontinued. An instructive statement was made at the beginning of the 1949 Conference Minutes by the conference secretary, Brother Forest Maley, which indicated his “trepidation” of the action. - 1949 Conf. Min. p. 87, 88 & 1958 Conf. Min. p.71

The chairman of the April 10, 1958, 3:00 p.m. session ruled “...that anything ordered by this conference that doesn’t go out for referendum is just a yearly matter.” There appeared to be some confusion on this in past conferences. - 1958 Conf. Min. p.75

Action on Correcting Conference Minutes

A resolution on correcting conference minutes presented by the chairman and secretary of the 1964 Ministers’ Conference, April 11, 2:00 p.m. session was adopted. This action was not sent to referendum and did not become binding to the church. Nonetheless, the wording of the statement

seemed to indicate an absoluteness that answered a question concerning parliamentary procedure that needed to be resolved at that time.

Whereas there has been a misunderstanding on matters concerning what is to be recorded in the minutes, and as to the method of expunging something from the minutes, therefore be it resolved:

That it is the sense of this conference, that a matter is not the property of the conference until it has been moved and seconded, and properly announced by the chairman as being before the assembly for its consideration. When the motion is announced as being before the assembly, then and not until then, is it to be entered into the minutes.

Any motion ruled out-of-order by the chair and his decision upheld by the body, is not to be entered into the minutes.

It is further the sense of this conference that the chair does not have authority to rule a matter out-of-order and refer or commit it in any way other than order it returned to the author of the motion.

It is further the sense of this conference that there has been error committed along these lines, therefore be it further resolved that where the chair has ruled a motion out-of-order and has ordered it referred, and the assembly has upheld this decision, the ruling of out-of-order shall stand, but the order to refer shall not stand, and it shall be the duty of the conference to order such motions expunged from the record.

The parenthetical note by the secretary in the minutes of April 7, 1964, 10:00 a. m. session, should be expunged from the minutes by the conference.

(1964 Conf. Min. p.18,19)

Action On Publishing Conference Minutes

An action on publishing conference minutes was passed by the 1965 Ministers' Conference but it was not sent to referendum:

Greetings:

In order that the minutes of the conference may be more easily filed, preserved, and referred to:

And that the materials printed in the regular Advocate may be kept more missionary in nature and thereby more readily passed to the general public; Therefore be it resolved that:

The minutes of all regular and special conferences and similar publication of records be printed in a separate supplement form as published in June, 1964,

and that it shall be published in the same format as the regular issue of the Zion's Advocate.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard A. Wheaton, Editor

(1965 Conf. Min. p. 10)

Conference Minutes to be Published and Mailed Separately

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles to the 1978 Ministers' Conference regarding the printing of the conference minutes was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which was passed.

Greetings:

The 1977 Ministers' Conference made provision for the minutes of that conference to be sent to members only, rather than to be published as a supplement to Zion's Advocate, as in former years.

The Council of Apostles recommends that a similar procedure be followed in the publication of minutes for the 1978 Ministers' Conference.

We further recommend that the minutes of the April Ministers' Conference shall henceforth be published separately from Zion's Advocate publications. If approved by the conference, it will be necessary to send this as a referendum measure for approval by the Church at large.

Respectfully submitted,

William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles
Members: E. L. Yates, D. W. Housknecht, Archie F. Bell, Robert H. Jensen,
Marvin E. Ely

(1978 Conf. Min. p. 10)

The Council of Apostles made a clarification to the 1979 Ministers Conference regarding the intent of referendum Bill #2 of 1978 and submitted another action which was sent out as Bill #2 of 1979 which was passed.

Greetings:

Since Referendum Bill #2 of 1978 was incomplete in reflecting the intent of the April 1978 Ministers' Conference, the Apostles recommend for adoption through general Church referendum the following:

Minutes of the Ministers' Conferences shall be submitted only to members of the Church of Christ.

Thus, in connection with Bill # 2 of 1978, provision is made to publish conference minutes separately from Zion's Advocate and to be sent to Church members only.

Respectfully Submitted,

William A. Sheldon, Secy Robert H. Jensen
Archie F. Bell Marvin E. Ely
E. Leon Yates Don E. McIndoo

(1979 Conf. Min. p. 5)

13.

Compilation of Binding Actions

Committee Appointed to Compile Binding Actions

A resolution was passed by the 1977 Ministers' Conference to appoint a committee to compile referendum measures, etc. which are binding upon the church:

Greetings:

The undersigned members of the priesthood of the Church of Christ do hereby recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas, the Church of Christ has no existing compilation of referendum measures, resolutions, Quorum of Apostle Opinions, etc that are binding on the government of the Church today, or in any time past; and

Whereas, the Church of Christ believes, as stated by prior referendum measure in the Articles of Faith and Practice, number fifteen (15), that "local churches should govern their own affairs"; and

Whereas, that in order for any component part of the Church of Christ to properly govern itself in the affairs, ordinances and sacraments of the same, it needs a standard by which to so govern; and

Whereas, such referendum measures, resolutions and Quorum of Apostle opinions DO exist that ARE binding on the Church for the express purposes outlined above;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Conference appoint a committee of three, that are willing and able, to compile a complete listing of all referendum measures, resolutions and Quorum of Apostle Opinions, that, so far as they can determine, are binding on the Church of Christ in any way or form; and

That said committee work with the assistance and cooperation, and under the guidance of the General Church Secretary and the General Church Historian; and

That said committee submit their completed work, with supporting evidence, to the Quorum of Apostles no later than Dec 31, 1977, for their examination, and that the Quorum of Apostles then make their recommendation to the 1978 General Conference of the Church of Christ, as to their approval or disapproval of said compilation; and

That, pending vote of approval by the General Church, said compilation be made available to the ministry of the Church of Christ in loose-leaf notebook form, subdivided into topical categories and in alphabetical order; and

That the General Church Secretary be responsible for the updating of each copy of said book each year, by way of additions and/or supersedence as such are made binding and effective; and

That said book, or compilation, be entitled for convenient reference, "By-Laws of the Church of Christ."

Respectfully submitted: Gary A. Housknecht, Hubert E Yates, Donald E. McIndoo, Don W. Housknecht, Norman Warfield, Paul J. Lacy, Harold Gill, James E. Yates Sr., Hubert A. Yates

(1977 Conf. Min. p. 10)

The committee elected was Harvey E. Seibel, Velma J. Wheaton and J. Maynard Case.

Report of Compilation Committee Accomplishments

The General Church Secretary, Brother Robert Oldham, submitted a report to the 1980 Ministers' Conference on the work accomplished. The following is an excerpt from that report:

1. With the assistance of Sr. Amy Schrader the Micro-Fiche have been indexed and are available for usage by the general church. Each fiche has been indexed by year.
2. I have performed assorted research projects for a number of inquiries. These requests have been for specific information relative to past conference actions.
3. The Compilation Committee has given about 40 subject files to the Apostles in accord with the instruction of the 1977 Conference. We are continuing to prepare the balance of the subjects for the Reviewing Committee of the Apostles. The Apostles have appointed a Review Committee to summarize the manuscript and ready it to be placed in the format prescribed by the 1977 Conference. This Review Committee will consist of the General Church Secretary and Bro. Robert H. Jensen, who has been serving as an interim General Church Historian during Bro. Bell's incapacitation.
4. With the assistance of Bro. Smith N. Brickhouse, we have located the General Church Secretary files in the Church Headquarters. A portion of our conference minutes have already been placed in the fireproof file cabinets.

(1980 Conf. Min. p. 19, 20)

Compilation Committee Renewed in Their Task

The 1982 Ministers' Conference approved a resolution to renew the Compilation Committee in its task to extract conference and referendum actions that are binding upon the Church of Christ. A new committee of three was appointed: Sisters June Haines, Mary Lois Bryant and Trudy Grzincic. - 1982 Conf. Min. p. 12

Modern Technology

The 1985 Ministers' Conference made a significant move in advancing the Church of Christ toward modern technology. The General Bishopric was authorized to buy a computer for the church. - 1985 Conf. Min. p. 16

Conference Minutes Entered Into Computer

The Council of Apostles submitted the following report to the 1995 Ministers' Conference concerning the hiring of a Data Entry Clerk to

assist the General Church Secretary in entering the conference minutes and referendum actions into a data base for storage and researching:

Greetings:

During the Conference year of 1994/95 the Council of Apostles instructed the General Church Secretary to obtain the services of a Data Entry Clerk to help him to enter the conference minutes since 1920 and the referendum actions into a computer data base for storage and future use in researching the documents for a compilation of actions binding on the Church.

The Secretary has advised us that this data entry has been completed for a cost of approximately \$2900. This collection of information will now be used as a research tool in developing the compilation. We wish to thank the secretary and others who labored on this project this past year for their efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
Smith N. Brickhouse, Secy. Council of Apostles

(1995 Conf. Min. p. 14)

Council of Apostles Produced a Compilation of Binding Actions

During the intervening years of the extensive research and compiling of church minutes and referendums by the appointed committees, the Council of Apostles found much need of a compilation of binding actions readily available in matters at hand. The secretary of the Council of Apostles, Brother William Sheldon, commenced using the data available to make such a compilation and made copies available to the other apostles.

Eventually a committee of three, Apostles William Sheldon, Marvin Ely and Alvin Moser, worked together in determining binding actions and provided a reliable compilation which is used primarily by the apostles. Apostle Moser continues to update the compilation as changes occur. This compilation of binding actions is the only one available to the Church of Christ at this time.

14.

Actions Concerning Church Conferences

Convening Date of the Ministers' Conference Changed

A resolution changing the convening date of the Ministers' Conference was approved by the 1966 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum Bill #1 which also passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the adoption of the following by referendum vote of the church:

Resolved:

That all future Ministers' Conferences of the Church of Christ shall convene each year, beginning on the Sunday of the week in which the 6th of April occurs. This resolution rescinds all previous and conflicting resolutions and regulations pertaining hereto.

Respectfully submitted.

Archie F. Bell, Secretary, Council of Apostles

(1966 Conf. Min. p. 6)

Action on Parliamentary Procedure

An incidental motion was made at the 1982 Ministers' Conference concerning parliamentary procedure in the proper use of the action, "Previous Question." This motion was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #3 which passed the majority vote:

Bro. Gary Housknecht moved as an incidental motion that the Church of Christ adopt the following as parliamentary procedure with reference to the subsidiary motion entitled "Previous Question:"

The subsidiary motion "Previous Question", once it is properly on the floor with a valid second, cannot be debated, but will yield to the privilege of last speech if such had been previously requested and granted.

Further, that this procedure be sent out as a referendum matter for 1982.

Seconded by Bro. Tony Grzincic.

(1982 Conf. Min. p. 17)

Packets of Documents Provided at Conference

During the 1979 Ministers' Conference, an incidental motion was passed to provide copies of documents of matters coming before the conference to the members attending the conference. Since then it has become a regular practice to provide packets of documents at the beginning of each conference for each family which service has been graciously done by the secretary of the conference and various ones who assist him. This practice has greatly helped in expediting the business of the conference and also helped in keeping the membership informed as the business is conducted. - 1979 Conf. Min. p. 16

Proper Name of Church of Christ Annual Conference

A committee report was submitted to the 1972 Ministers Conference from Apostle Archie F. Bell, secretary of the Council of Apostles, and Harvey E. Seibel, General Church Secretary, concerning the name of the church conference:

Greetings:

We, your committee appointed by the Conference of 1971, offer the following report concerning the name of the Conference.

We have studied the minutes from 1935 through 1958. The 1939 minutes show that the Conference was referred to as the "Conference of the Ministry" six times, once each in article 2, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, and as "Ministers' Conference" four times, once in article 3 and twice in article 5 and once in article 15.

Article 19 of the Articles of Faith and Practice designates the Conference as the "General Conference of the Church."

Respectfully submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secretary, Council of Apostles
Harvey E. Seibel, Conference Secretary

(1972 Conf. Min. p. 2)

A quick check through the Conference Minutes by this historian has revealed the fact that the title of the published conference minutes used most includes the name Ministers' Conference. With the exception of a

few years, the published minutes from the late 1930s to 2006 have the name, Ministers' Conference. In the 1920s up to and including 1930, the name used was General Conference. The conference minutes of 1931 through 1935 used the name, General Assembly. For whatever reason, the name was changed to include the word Ministers' in 1936 becoming "General Ministers' Conference" and continuing through 1939. In 1940, they left off the word, General, and used Ministers' Conference.

For that reason, this historian has followed suit in referring to our annual church conferences as "Ministers' Conference" consistently throughout this history, with the exception of the added designation of "April Ministers' Conference." Only recently, that practice was changed when the 2006 Ministers' Conference adopted the following action. From that time forward the official name of the conference is "General Conference."

Renaming of Conferences

To avoid confusion of terms, a combined effort was made by the August Ministers' Conference and by the Council of Apostles to change the official names of the two conferences with the following resolution submitted to the 2006 April Ministers' Conference:

Be it resolved that the Conferences of the Church of Christ be renamed. The April Ministers' Conference will be known as the General Conference and

That the August Ministers' Conference be known as the Ministers' Conference and

That, both of these conferences shall continue to be governed under their present rules applying to those bodies.

(2006 Conf. Min. p.36, 37)

This resolution was sent to Referendum as Bill #1 and passed with a two-thirds majority vote.

15. Special Efforts Made for Conference

Pre-Conference Solemn Assemblies/Prayer Services

Printed in the July, 1967, issue of the Zion's Advocate was the notice of a Solemn Assembly to begin on July 31 following the Missouri Reunion. The motion and purpose of the Solemn Assembly was approved by the 1967 Ministers' Conference:

To the Conference assembled:

Whereas, By numerous prophecies we know that the day of the Lord is nigh at hand, and

Whereas, We know that great destruction will come upon all people before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and

Whereas, The Lord commands the Church of Christ today, as recorded in Joel 2:15-17, "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"

Therefore Resolved, That the whole membership of the Church of Christ, from the youngest child to the oldest member, be called to a solemn assembly, that a period of fasting may be sanctified unto our God.

Resolved, That this period of fasting and prayer be held on the Temple Lot.

Resolved, That we seek to lay hold on the promise recorded in Joel 2:32, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

Resolved, That all members of the Church of Christ, who are hindered by circumstances beyond their control from assembling on the Temple Lot, will dedicate the same period to fasting and prayer in their locals or in their homes, that the whole church may be united in one heart and one mind, that the guidance of the Lord may be made known to us, and that the power of Pentecost may cover us as the waters cover the sea, that the servants of the

Lord might go forth in boldness and power and speak the word without fear unto the utmost ends of the earth.

Elders M. Harvey Seibel
Robert H. Jensen

(1967 Conf. Min. p. 15)

At the 1968 Ministers' Conference a resolution was passed to hold a Solemn Assembly the three days prior to the 1969 April Ministers' Conference. This was the beginning of a tradition of annual pre-conference Solemn Assemblies which has continued through the years being held the two or three days prior to the April Ministers' Conference. (see 1968 Conf. Min. p. 11)

Conference Choir Performances

On April 6, 1958, the Church of Christ choir performed the cantata "Other Sheep I Have" which is a story of the Book of Mormon set to music. Sister Marion Sprague directed the choir and the soloists were Sisters Angela Wheaton, Ora Derry, Edna Smith, Kay Matthews, Brothers William Sheldon, Forest Maley and Nicholas Denham. Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr. recorded the music. The composer of the cantata, Louise Hills Lewis, was present at the performance. Brother Wheaton stated that this cantata had been performed before by the Church of Christ but apparently this was the first time it had been recorded.

At the 1980 Ministers' Conference, the Church of Christ choir performed "Other Sheep I Have" with Sister Martha Bruner conducting. The choir performance became a special event on the first day of conference beginning in 1979. Various cantatas have been performed under the direction of Sisters Bruner and Manon Lawrence which has been greatly appreciated. "Other Sheep I Have" was performed again at the 1996 Ministers' Conference.

Larger Facility Obtained for Conference Sunday

Due to the increase of attendance at the Sunday services of the April Ministers' Conferences, a resolution to provide for a larger facility for the 1983 conference was passed by the 1982 Ministers' Conference:

Be it therefore resolved, that the Conference Coordinators and at least one member of the Dining Hall Committee for the 1983 Ministers' Conference be instructed to locate and procure a facility at least 75% larger than the main auditorium located on the Temple Lot or the East Independence Local to be used for the services held on Conference Sunday. That if at all possible this facility should have accommodations to properly handle the feeding of this same body of people. That this facility be located in Independence as close as possible to the Temple Lot. That as soon as arrangements are secured this information will be published in the Zion's Advocate at least twice before the beginning of the 1983 Conference Sunday service.

(1982 Conf. Min. p. 13,14)

As a result of this action, a larger facility was rented for the first Sunday of the 1983 Ministers' Conference at the Mid-America 4-H/University of Missouri Extension Center Building in Independence, Missouri. For the next several years, the Church of Christ rented various facilities in the area large enough to accommodate the Sunday services of the conferences.

Youth Forum Established

For the 1994 Ministers' Conference, the Council of Apostles chose Apostles Donald McIndoo and Alvin Moser to set up a Youth Forum for the Monday evening of the conference at the East Independence Local Church. Brother Joel Yates was selected as youth leader with Brothers Bob Hedrick, Daniel Malone, Jeff Oldham and Sister Betsy Gould as planning committee.

The Youth Forum was successfully organized and a program of activities followed with a guest speaker. The Youth Forum has continued through the years to give opportunity for the youth attending the General Conference to meet together in discussions and activities. - 1994 Conf. Min. pp. 43, 44

16.

Difficult Matters at Conference

Efforts Made to Change the Annual Church Conference

A resolution on a delegate conference was passed by the 1957 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum. The referendum bill failed to pass the two-thirds majority required to become binding on the church. - 1957 Conf. Min. p.72-74

The 1958 Ministers' Conference sent a document entitled "The General Conference of Elders" to referendum as Bill #2 and a minority measure entitled "A Resolution to Change Our Present System of Conducting Our General Conference" as Bill #3. Neither bill carried the two-thirds majority required to become binding on the church. - 1958 Conf. Min. p.83-85

A session of the 1960 Ministers' Conference was given for the special purpose of considering a document to change our annual conferences from our present type of conference to a General Conference of Elders. The document was defeated by being laid on the table. - 1960 Conf. Min. p.73

For two years (1984 and 1985) the Ministers' Conference sent resolutions to referendum to change the conference to an Elders' Conference both of which failed to pass the two-thirds majority of the vote required. No further efforts were made to change the annual conference to a delegate or elders' conference since that time. - Conf. Min. 1984, p. 18, 19, & 1985, p. 18

A General Sunday School Association Quarterly Brings Reaction

The following action was made by the General Sunday School Association during its meeting in 1956:

Resolved that the General Sunday School Association recommend to the Conference that the manuscripts for Sunday School Quarterly material be submitted to the Board of Publications for examination as to their acceptability in matters of doctrine and not for editing. It is felt that the standard books should be used as a basis for judgment. It is also felt that composition is the prerogative of the authors under the supervision of the quarterly committee who are chosen to do this work on the basis of their comprehension of the needs and wishes of the General Sunday School Association. It is also felt that the editing can well be done by the Quarterly Committee or those to whom they may see fit to delegate this part of the work.

The officers gave out copies of the new quarterly to those in the assembly for their inspection and approval. The quarterly is entitled "Plain and Precious Things", and is "A study guide to the establishment of the Stick of Judah and the Stick of Joseph in one."

(1956 Conf. Min. p.72, 76)

The "new quarterly" brought a reaction from the Council of Apostles titled "A Declaration" which was printed on the last page of the December, 1956 issue of the Zion's Advocate:

A DECLARATION

To The Membership of The Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Scattered Abroad,
Greetings:

Eleven members of the Council of Twelve met in a special meeting, November 5, 1956. We began a careful and prayerful consideration of the quarterly, "Plain and Precious Things", the following day, examining it paragraph by paragraph. We spent seven sessions in this examination. The following is a report of our findings:

In the examination of the six principles of the Gospel, outlined in this quarterly, we found several misquotations of scripture. We found doctrines which were out of harmony with the teachings found in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

In view of the above findings, we recommend:

That where this quarterly, "Plain and Precious Things", is being used, that we should analyze its material in the light of what is set forth in the "General Epistle of the Council of Twelve", relative to the points of doctrine touching upon the final state of man, between this time and the convening of the next General Conference of the Church of Christ in April, 1957.

William A. Sheldon, Secretary
Council of Twelve Apostles

During this time there arose a controversy in the Church concerning the consignment of the souls of mankind after death and the final destiny of man. Although there had been a difference of beliefs on this subject in the church prior to this time, it appears this matter was pushed to the forefront which caused a major division on church doctrine. For the next several years the church was torn with debate and strife on this issue.

According to the affirmative actions of the 1957 General Conference minutes, very little was accomplished in the first twelve sessions. In the April 15, 1957, 10:00 a. m. session the following information is recorded:

Up to this time much of the discussion was of proposed action which stemmed from a study guide issued by the General Sunday School Association called "Plain and Precious Things" and a Declaration and an Epistle published by the Council of Twelve in the Zion's Advocate for December 1956. The agenda still contained a number of proposed actions bearing on the same thing.

The following document from the Council of Twelve was read:

Whereas,

It has come to the attention of the Council of Twelve that some of the membership of the Church of Christ think that the list of corrections on the tract, Plain and Precious Things, had first been given to the Board of Publications and the Sunday School Association, and that they had refused to make the proper corrections, and whereas

We, the Council of Twelve, want to try to correct this error in thought by stating, that we did not submit the Declaration and the list of corrections of the tract to them before it was published in the Advocate, and whereas

We, the Council of Twelve, are sorry that some have been injured through this oversight on our part, and whereas

The Church has been torn with dissension, strife and division as a result of the publication of the study guide, "Plain and Precious Things", and the resultant "Declaration" and "Epistle" from the Council of Twelve, each of which have contributed equally to the contention, etc.,

Therefore, be it resolved,

That this conference does herewith refuse to endorse either the Study Guide, or the directives growing out of it, and declare that from this time forward they shall not be further distributed in the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) as a guide of doctrine among us, on the subjects treated upon.

Bro. L. V. Aldridge moved that we adopt this resolution from the Council of Twelve as a substitute for the whole matter. Seconded by Bro. Clyde Babcock. Carried 41 to 18.

As a result of the above action, the Chairman ruled off the agenda several documents which bore on the issue.
(1957 Conf. Min. p.70)

From the 1957 minutes of the General Sunday School Association, an action was made relative to the issue:

Brother John E. Bell moved that we comply with the action of Conference on April 15, 1957, pertaining to "Plain and Precious Things" and all correspondence that entered therein. Seconded by Brother Marvin Case. Carried.
(1957 Conf. Min. p.76)

1961 Conference Business Cut Short

The 1961 Ministers' Conference convened on April 6. Business sessions were held for three and a half days when conference was abruptly

adjourned until April 6, 1962. Several documents had first reading only and very little business was accomplished.

A church court case was, by necessity, deferred until the 1962 Ministers' Conference. That conference cared for the matter by appealing to the Council of Apostles, the Bishopric, the Elders' Court and the conference appointed Investigating Committee to meet and settle their differences within a given time. This was accomplished without any further court action. - 1962 Conf. Min. p. 69-73, 86

Directive from the Council of Apostles

The following item was printed in the December, 1963 Zion's Advocate:

DIRECTIVE FROM THE COUNCIL OF APOSTLES TO THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Council of Twelve by virtue of the plain and concise teachings of the Scriptures as found in the Standard Books of our faith, are the regulating and executive council of the Church of Christ, as thus provided, "That all regulated human institutions which are governed by law, must have for their maintenance certain executive authority...and that in the "Christian dispensation, were given Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Elders and Teachers. (See Eph. 4:10-14). Thus the Church of Christ, having received for its official guide in its earliest existence a regularly ordained ministry of the most holy and divine disposition, wherein the primitive Church of Christ, by her own precepts and practices, has established an order of ministry of divine origin, and cannot with any other gospel ordinance of the Church of Christ." (Granville Hedrick, in An Address, Truth Teller, July 1864, page 7. See also Articles of Faith, par. 13; Evening and Morning Star, November, 1911, page 3, etc.)

From the Opinion adopted by the Twelve in 1926-27, and later confirmed by Referendum Bill No. 2, of 1935, which adopted by a vote of 308 to 28, we quote as follows:

"Be it further resolved that the Quorum of Twelve, in having the general oversight of the whole church, shall organize and set in order the various quorums, departments of (and) committees of the general church. In case any quorum shall be guilty of sedition, apostasy, maladministration or the projection of itself beyond its sphere into the affairs of another quorum or department of the work, the quorum of Twelve shall take such steps as are necessary to make the proper regulations and order to protect the general church, subject to the approval of the general conference." (par.3 of Bill No. 2).

“That the General Church is created and functions for the purpose of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and establishing Christian assemblies everywhere; and to promulgate a uniform system of teaching and practice of those virtues and ideals as set forth in the word of God and confirmed by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 14:18, 23).

“That in order to accomplish this object on the earth, God has placed in the church immediately under the direction of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the Quorum of Twelve Apostles who have the general oversight and watch care of all the churches; and in case of sedition or apostasy from the faith, to regulate and set in order as they may be directed by the word of God and the Holy Ghost.”

“That when it is considered necessary by the Quorum of Twelve to counsel or correct a condition in a local church, they may convene a council of the officers of the church affected subject to the voice of the congregation affected, except in cases where the majority are in flagrant transgression and in open disregard of the constitutional law that governs the church, when it shall be necessary for the Twelve to set in order and regulate in harmony with the law of God.”(Paragraphs 5, 6 and 11 of the Opinion adopted by the twelve, September 7, 1926, and adopted by the general conference, April 6, 1927, 2:30 Session).

Therefore, by the virtue of the authority thus vested in the Council of Apostles as set forth above, and because of some misunderstandings of the following points of doctrine, we wish to cite the ministry of the Church of Christ in all the world to the following principles of belief which have been accepted by the Church:

1. “We believe in the same organization as existed in the time of Christ and His apostles. The highest office in the Church is that of an Apostle, of whom there are twelve, who constitute special witnesses for Jesus Christ. They have the missionary supervision and the general watch care of all the churches...” (Articles of Faith, Par. 13).
2. “We believe that a New Jerusalem shall be built upon this land ‘unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph; (Ether 6:6-8, III Nephi 10:1-4), which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot.” (D. C. 83:1).
3. “We believe a temple will be built in this generation, in Independence, Missouri, wherein Christ will reveal Himself and endow His servants whom He chooses with power to preach the gospel in all the world...” (Articles of Faith. Par. 23).
4. “Revelations that have been given through Joseph Smith up to February 24, 1834, as contained in the “Book of Commandments” and the first edition of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that agree and harmonize with the Bible and Book of Mormon, are accepted as the word of God and are the Standard

and Law by which this church is governed.” (Old Church record (Large), page 36; and later reaffirmed by the April Conference 1921, (See Old Church Record).

5. The Bible and the Book of Mormon teaches that all mankind will be rewarded according to their works in the flesh with various degrees of reward or punishment, and this is later emphasized in latter day revelation given through Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon on February 16, 1832, and better known as the Vision. (1 Cor. 15:40-41; Book of Mormon, 1:86-87, page 695, Evening and Morning Star, Vol. 1, No. 2, page 2, July, 1832).

For the purpose of promoting a uniform system of teaching, the Council of Apostles hereby admonishes the ministry of the Church of Christ in all the world to conform their teaching and practices, relative to the foregoing beliefs, in harmony therewith, or refrain from teaching against them.

Respectfully submitted to the ministry of the Church of Christ, this 15th day of November, 1963.

Archie F. Bell, Secretary
Council of Apostles

The 1964 Ministers’ Conference passed this action relative to the “Directive”:

Bro. Harvey E. Seibel moved as a substitute to the whole matter that the ministry make a thorough study of the "Directive" and present these to the Conference of 1965 as a school for the ministry at which time we try to resolve our differences on this matter. Seconded by Bro. Isaac Brockman.

Vote on the substitute carried: affirmative 50, negative 7.
(1964 Conf. Min. p. 17)

A resolution postponing the study of the “Directive” was passed by the 1965 Ministers’ Conference:

That the ministry of this conference do not meet in a School of the Ministry to study the "Directive"...

That a special conference during the year 1966 be set during which ministers of this church will meet together in fasting and mighty prayer to petition God and Jesus to direct us.
(1965 Conf. Min. p. 2)

The chairman of the April 6, 2:00 p.m. session of the 1965 Ministers’ Conference ruled “...that the Directive of the Quorum of Apostles remains in effect.” - 1965 Conf. Min. p.2

A special ministers' conference was held August 1 through 4, 1966 to pray and fast over the matter concerning the Directive of the Council of Apostles. The minutes taken for that special conference were read and received by the April, 1967 Ministers' Conference. - 1967 Conf. Min. p.3-5

During that conference, a resolution was passed:

Moved to refer this question to a special conference of the ministry to be reported to the 1968 conference. The special conference would convene one week prior to the 1968 General Ministers' Conference.

The Special Conference sent to the 1968 April Ministers' Conference the following resolution which in turn was approved by that conference:

Resolved that the Ministers' Conference recommend to the Council of Apostles that the title of the writing by them (of Dec 1963), which is "Directive from Council of Apostles to Ministry of Church of Christ" be changed to read "An Opinion of the Council of Apostles", and that as an opinion, it be not binding on the Church as a law.

(1968 Conf. Min. p. 4, 5)

Committee Chosen to Consider Incorporation

The Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric made a recommendation to the 1954 Ministers' Conference thus:

"We recommend to the conference that we take such steps necessary to incorporate the Church of Christ."

Bro. T. J. Jordan moved to appoint a committee of three to take this matter under advisement and report back at the earliest possible date; and that they be authorized to seek legal counsel in connection with their investigation.

Seconded by Bro. Don W. Housknecht. Carried.

(1954 Conf. Min. p.68)

The members of the committee were Brothers Vance H. Harris, Nicholas F. Denham and C. LeRoy Wheaton. No further action was taken at that time.

A Holding Company for the Church Considered

The Council of Apostles and General Bishopric recommended to the 1975 Ministers' Conference that this church set up a holding company. This was referred to a committee of three, one apostle, one bishop and one elder (not of either quorum) to seek legal counsel in the matter. Those elected were: Archie F. Bell, apostle, Oren A. Caviness, bishop and Frank Fann, elder. - 1975 Conf. Min. p. 20

A report from the Council of Apostles and General Bishopric was made to the 1977 Ministers' Conference regarding the not-for-profit (holding company) proposal which indicated a near split decision on the matter by those two quorums. A resolution was passed which stated "...that it be the desire of this body that no not-for-profit organization be established by this church." - 1977 Conf. Min. p. 16

Procedure on Transfer of Membership Reaffirmed

A document entitled "A STATEMENT RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AND TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP" was approved and sent to referendum by the 1962 Ministers' Conference passing the two-thirds majority vote. In reconsidering that action, the 1963 Ministers' Conference sent to referendum a resolution rescinding the 1962 action and reaffirmed the former position. The 1963 referendum Bill #2 passed with a two-thirds majority vote.

Bro. C. LeRoy Wheaton moved: Be it resolved that in as much as Referendum Bill No. 1 of 1962, with reference to transfers, did not carry a clause rescinding former action, therefore, be it resolved that this bill is declared not valid nor binding upon the Church of Christ; be it further resolved, that we reaffirm our former action on transfer as set forth in Referendum Bill No. 19 of the 1936 conference and that this reaffirmation be sent out to referendum. Seconded by Bro. Richard A. Wheaton.

(1963 Conf. Min. p.84)

Transfers of Membership Reconsidered

An action was brought before the 1973 Ministers' Conference concerning transfers of membership from other "Restoration" churches into the

Church of Christ. The action was referred to the School of the Ministry of 1974. The 1974 School of the Ministry was unable to consider the matter on transfers of membership because of lack of time, so they deferred it to the 1975 School of the Ministry. The 1975 School of the Ministry brought a recommendation to the 1975 Ministers' Conference. A minority resolution regarding transfers of membership was also brought to the conference.

The 1975 Ministers' Conference deferred action on the matter regarding transfers until the 1976 Ministers' Conference to give opportunity for prayer and fasting. The 1976 Ministers' Conference deferred the matter of membership transferal to the 1977 Ministers' Conference with the same purpose of prayer and fasting. The Council of Apostles presented the 1930 Referendum action that was printed in the December, 1930 Zion's Advocate to the 1977 Ministers' Conference which was printed in the minutes for informational purposes. The conference followed suit to their previous actions and deferred the transfer of membership matter, but went one step further by deferring it for an indefinite period of time. The matter was not brought up again in the following conferences. - Conf. Min. 1973 p. 19; 1974 p.17,18; 1975 p. 17-19; 1976 p. 16; 1977 p. 4,5

17.

New Church Building Anticipated

Plans for New Church Building

A set of plans for a new church building on the General Church property adjoining the Temple Lot area was made and presented to the 1950 General Conference. An action was made for the Apostles, Bishops and Building Committee to meet and study the plans. - 1950 Conf. Min. p.71, 72

Building Fund for New Headquarters Building Established

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric to set up a building fund for a new general church building at the Temple Lot was sent to the 1960 Ministers' Conference, approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which in turn was passed.

Greetings:

The Joint Council of the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric find that, due to an oversight, the action of the 1957 Conference relative to the new building fund was not sent out to referendum. We therefore recommend that this matter be sent out to referendum and that in sending it out no change be made in it, as it was approved by the 1957 conference.

This action was as follows:

“We recommend that a building fund be set up to receive funds for a new building north of the present structure. The new structure to be approximately 50 by 100 feet, with a basement, vault and one story. The approximate cost to be \$100,000.

“We recommend that the General Bishopric be authorized to set aside \$2000, in addition to the \$683.50 in the present vault and building funds, into a special fund not to be used for any other purpose, and that they be authorized to solicit donations toward this fund.

“We further recommend that when the fund has reached \$50,000. that we proceed to draw up plans and obtain estimates to be approved by the conference before proceeding to build.”

Respectfully submitted

The Council of Apostles, William A. Sheldon, Sec.

The General Bishopric, C. LeRoy Wheaton, Jr., Sec.

(1960 Conf. Min. p.87)

Construction of Parking Lot

A recommendation from the General Bishopric on constructing a parking lot was approved by the 1967 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum as Bill #5 which passed:

Greetings:

The General Bishopric recommends that it be empowered to proceed to construct a parking lot on the north and west sides of the present building according to a sketch drawn up by the General Bishopric, in harmony with previous conference action and Joint Council action and in harmony with Independence City Code. The Bishops shall be authorized to accept donations or offerings toward the parking lot and that they shall not proceed to build it until sufficient funds are received and that these funds shall be kept separate and apart from tithes and other offerings.

Respectfully submitted
Nicholas F. Denham, Secretary, General Bishopric

(1967 Conf. Min. p. 15,16)

Funds were raised and the parking lot was built during the 1972/1973 conference year.

Plans for New Headquarters Building

On various occasions through the years the General Bishopric has been requested to make plans and follow through with the construction of a new church building or the remodeling of the old building with the goal of having a facility large enough to house the larger gatherings and provide adequate office and storage space. At the 1985 Ministers' Conference they made a report of plans for a building which would meet the needs with pictures and varied descriptions including an estimated breakdown of cost.

The Bishops investigated the possible restrictions of erecting a new building on the property because of the historic position and registration of the Temple Lot property. They were informed that the present structure is not on the historic site and the building can be altered or demolished and rebuilt as the owners choose. - Conf. Min. 1985, p. 21,22; 1986, p. 6; 1987, p. 17

18.

Relations Committee with R. L. D. S. Church

Relations Committee with R. L. D. S Church Revived

In 1970, Wallace Smith, President of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS), contacted the Church of Christ via Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton regarding the renewing of discussions between the two churches. The desired result would be a closer association through understanding the other church's teachings and practices. As a result, each church appointed a committee and the two committees met together in discussion of common beliefs periodically for the next several years.

The Church of Christ called their three member group, the Relations Committee, who was appointed by the Ministers' Conference. The members of that committee were Apostles Robert H. Jensen, Archie F. Bell and E. Leon Yates. The members for the Reorganized Church were Apostles J. C. Stuart and Paul W. Booth, and Franklyn S. Weddle of the Standing High Council.

At the 1980 Ministers' Conference, our committee gave a rather informative report worthy of historical importance because of the significant changes that began to occur in the Reorganized Church within the next few years. Their report indicated a great similarity of beliefs between the two churches at that time. - 1980 Conf. Min. pp. 3-5

For many years, the basic differences between the two churches had been the structure of church organization. This occurred in the 1920s when the Church of Christ had discontinued the belief in a "First Presidency" and abolished that office.

Relations Committee Reports

The report of the Relations Committee submitted to the 1985 Ministers' Conference revealed some significant changes about to take place within the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints which was not acceptable to the Church of Christ:

To: The Ministers' Conference.

During the past year the Relations Committee met once on August 18th with a similar committee from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS). This was a continuing contact maintained since 1970 at their invitation approximately on an annual basis for the purpose of exploring and comparing the beliefs of the two churches.

The main subject of discussion interest at the last meeting was the reported revelation by President Wallace B. Smith providing for the ordination of women to the priesthood. "Guidelines" are being developed to be used in the "calling and ordaining" of women. Only a presiding official shall be authorized to issue such a "call". It is anticipated that possibly all offices of the Priesthood shall eventually receive women.

Another point of inquiry was made by the Church of Christ committee relative to the present RLDS attitude toward membership in the National and World Council of Churches. It was stated that there is presently no active pursuit for

membership in either of those organizations. Certain activities of the State of Missouri Council of Churches are coordinated and participated in on a local association basis.

The RLDS Committee stated that the Book of Mormon is still held as a divine record of a portion of the Lord's people. Such recent statements concerning it, as it being "impossible to prove the historicity of the Book of Mormon", have been offered from a strictly academic standpoint as relating to contemporary scholarly methods of proving fact and incident occurrence. It was stated that they have not been issued to cast doubt within the Church of its divine origination.

The RLDS Sacrament still is not open to others as an authorized policy. Great care is exercised to determine the participant's eligibility to partake.

Such statements by the RLDS leadership concerning the desirability of "being in the midst of the mix" of world religious endeavor, were stated to not denote a trend toward abandoning the heritage of the Restoration, but rather, that they feel it increasingly important in these times to stand in the whole world as a shining light to all regardless of creed or nationality. An active effort is made to try to convince people not to stray away from their heritage in the Restoration.

Upon further inquiry, the RLDS Committee stated that the traditional Restoration belief in "the Trinity" remains a Church doctrine, notwithstanding the critical statement of certain dissidents of recent months.

The above referenced message ("revelation") also provided for an accelerated pursuit of planning for the building of a temple in the "Center Place". Its stated purpose shall be manifold, including "the pursuit of peace and the reconciliation and healing of the spirit."

The Relations Committee had no other occasion to contact other churches.

Robert H. Jensen, Chairman
Relations Committee

(1985 Conf. Min. p. 4)

The Relations Committee made its final report to the 1986 Ministers' Conference with additional information regarding the activities of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints:

TO: The Ministers' Conference

The Relations Committee during the past year met in August 1985 with representatives of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, composing a similar committee.

The meeting placed under discussion the new wave of criticism of everything the world attaches to the term "Mormonism". The consensus was that this greatly increased opposition is directly indicative of the advanced point of time in which we are now living. It portends the nearness of the time in which Christ shall return to the earth for the second and last time, at which time shall occur the resurrection of the righteous and the ushering in of the Millennial Reign by Christ for a thousand years of peace for His saints. It was suggested that instead of trying to answer every criticism, accusation and opponent, the better course is to continue to the greatest extent possible the positive teaching of Christ's Gospel.

The subject of ordination of women within the RLDS Church was also covered. The schedules for such ordinations had been set for November 1985, to occur in numerous areas simultaneously. One consideration was that thus no one would be burdened with the designation as having been the first one. Such ordinations later took place at the appointed time. The ordinations were placed upon those who had previously been nominated. Such ordinations will continue to extend to others as they are nominated and accepted by the respective area authorities.

A policy has been established to interview members of the Priesthood to determine their interest in continuing to represent the Church in a ministerial manner. Those who affirmatively respond shall be offered assistance in doctrinal instruction in the Temple School. Courses can be taken elsewhere that will be of help to their ministry. Because of the generally advancing educational level of the membership, they are asking for those to minister to them who have also received comparable training in the arts and sciences of today's society.

We were advised of the establishment of the Missouri Christian Leadership Forum. It is designed to address State-level matters only, and replaces the Missouri Council of Churches. It is anticipated that the RLDS Church will be associated with it in a full participation basis.

The RLDS Temple Planning Program is presented to their people with emphasis on the purposes for it--generally, the pursuit of peace and the reconciliation and healing of the Spirit. The temple to be built somewhere on the original 63 acre tract of land will be a complex of buildings for various functions--none of which will be secret. They are experiencing great pressures in fund raising because of the present distressful national and international economic conditions.

Another consideration to be had at the 1986 Conference will be the proposal of a statement that the divinity of the Book of Mormon does not depend upon the belief that Joseph Smith, Jr., received access to the plates from the hand of an angel.

No other meetings were held. The Relations Committee stands ready to respond to contacts from any religious bodies, and to refer to other

departments as may be appropriate.

Sincerely, In Gospel bonds
Robert H. Jensen, Chairman, Relations Committee

(1986 Conf. Min. p. 5)

Working Harmony Agreement with R. L. D. S. Church Rescinded

Although the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had rescinded the Working Harmony Agreement in 1926, the Church of Christ had not officially renounced their commitment. A resolution was made at the 1984 Ministers' Conference to rescind the Working Harmony agreement with the Reorganized Church which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2. The referendum passed the required two-thirds majority vote. - 1984 Conf. Min. p. 17,18

Relations Committee Abolished

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1988 Ministers' Conference to abolish the Relations Committee which was approved and which required only a conference action:

Greetings:

Inasmuch as the 1987 Ministers' Conference requested the Council of Apostles to report back to this conference as to the need of a Relations Committee, we wish to present the following brief report:

The Relations Committee had its beginning at the turn of the century "...to contact various groups with the object in view of affecting a more friendly relationship...", and continued to function in this manner through the years. In 1891, a resolution was passed that the respective churches "...try to come to a unity of the faith..." These efforts resulted in a document called "Agreement of Working Harmony", which was adopted by the RLDS Church and the Church of Christ in 1918 (this information comes from the Outline History, pp. 116-122). This agreement was later rescinded by the RLDS Church and by the Church of Christ still later in 1984 by referendum action.

Inasmuch as the Working Harmony has been rescinded, and in light of continuing changes and recent developments which negate the opportunity to effect a unity or working relationship between the Church of Christ and the major factions of the Restoration, the Council of Apostles recommends the

abolishing of the Relations Committee, with the understanding that if need arises the Council may appoint a committee to meet that need or opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles

(1988 Conf. Min. p. 18,19)

19.

Written Statements of the Council of Apostles

Opinions of Apostles on Sacrament Wine

There had been a controversy over the sacrament wine in the Church of Christ for several decades, and occasionally there were some serious problems. In 1988 the Council of apostles published an opinion on the subject in the Zion's Advocate:

AN OPINION OF THE APOSTLES REGARDING THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.” - Matthew 26:26-29

This ordinance of the gospel of Christ in which the believers receive of His body and blood ranks with that of baptism in sacredness and significance as a covenant of remembrance of Him.

“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” - 1 Cor. 11:24,25.

As we are told that “His commandment is life everlasting” (John 12:50) the observance of the Lord's Supper is not to be trifled with; when it is accepted through faith and righteous desire, we continue as the sons of God, joint heirs

with Jesus Christ. It must be received with thoughtful reverence, with pure desire and intent to obey all His commandments. Anything less than this reduces the matter to meaningless ritual at the best, which may well turn to one's condemnation; and to receive the Sacrament in unworthiness, having ought against a brother or to carelessly drift in disobedience from the way of holiness, is indeed a matter of divine displeasure to invoke the wrath of an offended God (see 1 Cor. 11:27-29). If it so be that we refuse to partake of His blood, as well as His body, our spiritual life is endangered because we have lost a communion with Him; His Spirit cannot remain with such.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” - John 6:53

This is a matter of grave concern to your servants, the Apostles. The matter usually revolves over the question of the wine which is used. There are those who will refuse the Sacrament unless it is fermented (with alcoholic content); on the other hand, there are some who will refuse the Sacrament unless it is unfermented grape juice. To those of the Ministry who are aware of this conflict, the matter should not be permitted indefinitely within the Church.

People on both sides of the issue are perfectly sincere in the belief of the righteousness of their attitude, yet it is plain that either one or both sides are wrong. It is our sober opinion, indicted by the Holy Spirit, that there is error in refusal to accept the Sacrament, whatever is offered as emblematic of the body and blood of Christ.

“It mattereth not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory.” - “Book of Commandments” 28:2

This is the word of the Lord to His Church in the latter days. Is there any who can refute this by either the Bible or Book of Mormon? Where is the commandment of our Lord that the wine must be fermented juice or the unfermented juice? By definition, and thorough research, wine is either fermented or unfermented, and it may be of the grape or other fruit, “The juice, fermented or unfermented of fruits or plants, used as beverage”—American College Dictionary (Random House). Why, then, should we place a stumbling block before another by insistence that it be the wine of our choosing, or refuse to receive it?

We plead with all who are a part of His body (the Church): when offered the sacrament, do not look upon those emblems, but look unto Christ, remembering His sacrifice for you. Reach forth your hand and partake gladly, knowing that it is by the communion of our spirit with His which will bless our obedience. This has been amply demonstrated by the fact that His Spirit has been generously given regardless of whether the wine was fermented or unfermented. We repeat: “It mattereth not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink...” This is not to be construed so liberally as to permit the use of water,

for the Lord's blessing is asked upon the wine. Under circumstances of present, abundant availability, the liquid used should be the fruit of the vine, preferably of the grape.

A common understanding is that wine is a fermented drink, yet we should not insist upon its use in the sacrament for reasons given here. Christ, himself, was accused of being a winebibber, and gluttonous, "a friend of publicans and sinners" (Matthew 11:19), showing that He partook of wine, and quite evidently in its fermented state; but it was unquestionably done in moderation. Our point in all this is: Let us cease any contention over the doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Contention over the points of the doctrine of Christ is expressly forbidden by Him (3 Nephi 5:29-31). Disobedience in this can only bring disfavor with God and finally condemnation.

One may justify himself in that he makes no issue with his brother or sister in the Church; but will he contend with his God? If he will refuse the Lord's bounty, so graciously offered, by which he may receive the Holy Spirit's indwelling, is this not offensive to God, in fact a contention with Him? God will look upon ignorance with unbounded compassion and tolerance, but He cannot do so with those who know His commandment and yet refuse.

The scribes and Pharisees of old were condemned of Jesus, saying: "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." Let us no longer be spiritually affiliated with such. In the absence of specific direction or commandment of our Savior, it is best to leave a mooted question alone, and to take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in simplicity and gladness as a little child, for except we learn to do this (that is, to become as a little child), "ye can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God." - 3 Nephi 5:40)

(Zion's Advocate August, 1988 pp. 112, 113)

In 1991, the Council of Apostles published another opinion regarding the sacrament wine:

OPINION OF THE COUNCIL OF APOSTLES CONCERNING THE SACRAMENTAL WINE

Inasmuch as there are those who have had, and may yet have a weakness in the use of alcoholic beverages, and also because we anticipate an influx of new members in the future from those we call Indians; and because there appears to be an inherent weakness within many of that race in the use of alcohol,

We your brethren of the apostles, declare that it is not wisdom to place a stumbling stone in the way of any who have such a weakness, who are members of the body of Christ, lest they should be overcome and fall once again into the physical and spiritual entrapment of the effects of alcohol because of our use of wine in our Sacrament services which contains this

element. Neither is it wise to introduce our member children to the use of alcoholic beverage in an age when such is a greatly increased temptation in our society.

“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” - Romans 14:21

Therefore, we recommend the use of unfermented, or non-alcoholic wine as the most desirable beverage in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, and urge that this become common usage in the Church.

William A. Sheldon, Secretary
Council of Apostles

(Zion’s Advocate November 1991 p. 163)

In 1993 the Council of Apostles published a clarification of the 1991 Opinion:

A CLARIFICATION OF THE INTENT OF THE 1991 OPINION OF THE APOSTLES

At the urging of some concerned members of the ministry, the Council of Apostles wishes to clarify some misunderstandings concerning the intent of the Opinion of the Council of Apostles as printed in the November 1991 issue of the Zion’s Advocate.

It should be noted that this opinion comes as a recommendation from the Council and is not intended to restrict the ministry in their right to choose the emblems used in the Sacrament service.

Your brethren of the Council truly desire to see the church come to a unity of the faith and practice in all matters and we encourage the church to pray and fast with us about this matter in harmony with a motion made in the 1981 Ministers’ Conference seeking “definite spiritual direction on this very important issue.”

In consideration of the above the Council of Apostles received spiritual direction that we, and all the church, must humble ourselves more completely in order that we might receive further spiritual direction in this, as well as other matters of concern.

Smith N. Brickhouse, Secretary
Council of Apostles

(Zion’s Advocate September 1993 p. 149)

Statement of Reaffirmation

The Council of Apostles submitted the following statement for the September, 1997 Zion's Advocate (page 167). An explanatory statement was printed thus: "It has come to the attention of the Council of Apostles that certain correspondence has been circulated among various church groups which has indicated that this church, the Church of Christ, is involved in uniting with some other church groups. We have felt it necessary to make a statement to allay any concerns that might be aroused due to that correspondence."

Statement of Reaffirmation

The Council of Apostles of the Church of Christ wishes to reaffirm the position of this church relative to its origin, its continuance and its right to individuality. We claim divine guidance and providence throughout the existence of this church since it was restored in these latter days. Our greatest claim is that of the favor of the Lord in preserving us as an independent organization whereby this church has escaped being swallowed up by those who would take possession of our property and seek to control our rights and freedom of worship.

This church, in its infancy, was pure, but by the designs and wills of men unauthorized offices were added bringing the threat of apostasy. The critical state of its existence was not obvious to the members until it fragmented, leaving the body of saints vulnerable to ambitious men to lead groups away into various places whereby they might continue their works of apostasy.

Those who were given discernment stayed firm in their convictions and sought the Lord for guidance. It was evident that the Lord favored certain ones but all were under a cloud of false teachings and practices for a time. It was no coincidence that a group of saints were preserved in a remote area during that critical time. At the command of the Lord they returned to Independence, Missouri and became established in that community. Being aware of the false doctrines that were being taught in various groups of the "Restoration", this group was caused to renounce those teachings and practices and to declare its independence from all the other "Restoration" churches as early as 1852.

Apostle Arthur M. Smith wrote in "A Brief History of the Church of Christ" thus: "So this group of the Restoration, now known as the Church of Christ, has steadily retraced its steps back to the original foundation of April 6, 1830; back to the organization that was 'by the will and commandment of God;' back to the original name, 'Church of Christ;' back to the original order of the priesthood, as it was established in the beginning of the church which we find agrees with the New Testament in all its teachings."

He also wrote: “We believe in the organization as set forth in a revelation given to Joseph Smith in March, 1829, as it was originally published. ‘And thus if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envyings, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old.’ “Book of Commandments” 4:5.”

Taking that revelation to heart the members of this church have declared this statement in the ‘Articles of Faith and Practice’: “We believe in the same church organization as existed in the time of Christ and His Apostles. The highest office in the church is that of an apostle, of whom there are twelve, who constitute special witnesses for Jesus Christ. They have the missionary supervision and the general watch care of all the churches.”

The Church of Christ has never been a part of any of the groups that separated after the death of Joseph Smith Jr. We have the unique claim that this church never rebaptized its members, it was never reorganized and it never split off from any other group. Therefore we are not a part or a fragment of a church. Historically this church is in direct line of the original church.

Again we quote from Apostle A. M. Smith: “We believe there are many within the membership of the different groups of the Restoration Movement that have been deceived in the teaching of the doctrines of men, who would welcome the truth if it were possible to reach them; to such we offer an open door to come ‘ask for the old paths, wherein is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.’ Jer. 6:16.”

The return and establishment of the saints in Independence, Missouri has long since been heralded as an act of God. As a result of obeying the will of God those saints were able to purchase the property commonly known today as the temple lots. Apostle A. M. Smith writes concerning that property: “The Church of Christ holds the Temple Lot property today by right of purchase; there is no mortgage or lien of any kind against this property; we do not hold this property by squatter’s rights, or any other right, except a clear title of purchase; neither are we holding this property for any other group of people, save the Church of Christ.”

For any who might suppose that this church, the Church of Christ whose headquarters are located at River and Lexington Streets in Independence, Missouri, would involve itself in any kind of merger at this point in time, let it be known that from the beginning, April 6, 1830, this church has retained its independence from all other church organizations. Further the Council of Apostles wishes to clarify the fact that this church body is not in any way involved in any act of joining or uniting with any other church or group of churches officially or otherwise. Neither have we commissioned anyone, minister or lay member, to represent this church in an effort to unite with any other church or group of churches.

Finally we wish to declare that any minister representing this Church of Christ who joins another church or group of churches no longer represents this church. His membership with this church ceases and he has no rights in this church when he joins another church organization.

The primary function of this church is missionary, i.e. converting souls to Christ. Jesus Christ is the head of the church and His church is not divided into factions. He has preserved his church intact for His own purposes and we are assured that in time He will prepare it as His bride for his return.

Position of the Council of Apostles on Some Issues

The Council of Apostles submitted the following item for publication in the January 2000, Zion's Advocate (page 8):

The Position of the Council of Apostles Regarding Some Issues of Today

The Apostle Paul gave a prophetic warning about the last days of mankind prior to the return of our Lord, Jesus Christ. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."- 2 Timothy 3:1-7

Paul accurately describes many of the issues we face daily in this life, sometime requiring us to make personal decisions as well as political decisions. We can see Satan's cunning and craftiness causing the values and morals of society to migrate away from God's word, often under false precepts of creating a better and more peaceable world. In an effort to assist the Body of Christ to remain focused on God's truth for mankind, we submit our position, based upon God's word, regarding some of the issues we face in this dispensation of time.

We believe in the sanctity of marriage as established by the Lord in the beginning as being a union between one man and one woman. Any other type of relationship such as homosexuality, polygamy, multiplicity of marriages, common-law marriage, and cohabiting are not sanctioned by God and are disharmonious with the plan for His creation. Jesus reaffirms God's perfect will concerning marriage, "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no

more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” - Mark 10:6-9

We believe a great deal of thought, prayer and consideration should be given to the selection of a mate. One should endeavor to find a companion who will help them to grow in the gospel. A mutual belief in Jesus Christ and His word will be the foundation upon which to build their relationship. As the prophet Amos asks, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Amos 3:3 Ample warning has been given to discourage the union of a believer and a non-believer in Christ, for their goals and priorities of this life are not the same. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” - 2 Corinthians 6:14

We believe in the sanctity of human life and consider it a precious gift, which was created in the image of God. The taking of human life by abortion as a means of birth control, euthanasia, violence or suicide are all disobedient to God’s commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.” Deuteronomy 5:17 We believe life begins in the womb, at the time of conception, and should end when the Creator calls upon the soul to depart this flesh, according to His will and purpose and return unto Him which gave life. This is not meant to condemn the use of deadly force for defense and preservation of your own life or that of another, or participation in war for the preservation of the nation’s liberty.

“Nevertheless, the Nephites were inspired by a better cause; for they were not fighting for monarchy nor power; but they were fighting for their homes, and their liberties, their wives, and their children, and their all; yea, for their rites of worship, and their church; And they were doing that which they felt was the duty which they owed to their God; for the Lord had said unto them, and also unto their fathers, That inasmuch as ye are not guilty of the first offense, neither the second, ye shall not suffer yourselves to be slain by the hands of your enemies. And again, the Lord has said that ye shall defend your families, even unto bloodshed; therefore for this cause were the Nephites contending with the Lamanites, to defend themselves, and their families, and their lands, their country, and their rights, and their religion.” Alma 20:50-52 Neither does it condemn the state’s right to effect capital punishment on those who showed a disregard for the sanctity of another’s life. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.” - Genesis 9:6 (see also Alma 19:99-101)

We believe God has granted man the gift of knowledge, skill and ability wherein he can perform medical procedures and create medicine which not only helps to preserve life but improve the quality of life for many of the afflicted. “And there were some who died with fevers, which at some seasons of the year was very frequent in the land; But not so much so with fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared, to remove the cause of diseases to which man was subject by the nature of the climate.” Alma 21:75, 76 These resources are to be used wisely

but with the understanding that our dependence is on the Lord as the Divine Healer.

We believe our bodies to be the temple in which the spirit dwells. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Corinthians. 3:16 For this reason we believe our body should be treated with respect for the way God has created it. Believers should not deface one's body by tattooing, body piercing, or adorning it with attire indicative of a godless person.

We also believe the internal body should not be desecrated by the use of alcohol, all tobacco products or illicit drugs. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." - 1 Corinthians 3:17

Furthermore we believe our bodies should be presented in modest and appropriate attire which would neither offend nor cause another to lust after the flesh. "And they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely;" - Alma 1:41

We believe our actions and conduct should exemplify Christ and be a light of truth unto all who see us. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." Romans 13:12, 13 Not only our actions but our words and manner of communication should show forth the light of Christ. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Corinthians 15:33 Today's society has made the use of profanity, slang, vulgarity and crass comments a common practice, not only among the commoners and criminals, but also among the leaders of nations and business. We need to resist being kindred to the common man of today, for each of our words fall upon the Lord's ears, and we will stand accountable. "But this much I can tell you, that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe to keep the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish." - Mosiah 2:49 (see also Matthew 12:34-37)

We believe in the support of our government by being a law-abiding citizen, paying taxes and seizing the opportunity to exercise our right to vote for those issues and candidates that support moral and Godly principles.

We believe no ruler exercises control except God permits; a nation, its rulers and people stand accountable for their choices. We as Christians, need to be obedient to the laws of the land, when these laws are not in contradiction to God's law, for this is God's decree. Those who resist authority also resist God. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth

the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." - Romans 13:1-7 (see also Colossians 1:16 and Mosiah 11:23-66)

We believe anti-government attitudes and militias should not be found in our midst. We acknowledge government as God's plan; submission is required and rebellion is deemed evil. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well." - 1 Peter 2:13,14

We believe using disruptive protests is contrary to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Satan's tools are anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, violence, deceit and overbearance. These are not appropriate qualities for believers. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)" 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4. Our weapons against the adversary are, "... truth ... righteousness ... gospel of peace ... faith ... salvation ... the Word of God ... and prayer..." - Ephesians 6:12-20 (see also Romans 12:17-21)

Not only is violent protest contrary to God's word, but it also shows a great lack of faith in God being mighty to deliver. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." - 2 Peter 2:9,10 (see also Alma 14:48-54)

We believe the entertainment industry exerts an ungodly influence upon our society and dominates too much of people's time through the medium of movies, television, professional sports, literature, music and the Internet. This industry has become most profitable by arousing and stimulating the human senses and carnal lusts through highly technical, fast pace, suggestive or seductive words and displays. These techniques can cunningly program, influence and instill the world's values in their audience rather than God's values. The Lord has created man to work. "Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: " - Exodus 23:12

The "rest" we are to engage in on the seventh day is a "rest" unto the Lord, not unto the flesh. Certainly we need to spend some time from the cares of our

labors, but the utmost care should be given that we are not finding our refuge in that which will influence our mind to evil. "... neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." 1 Timothy 5:22 We encourage the members of the Church of Christ to put into practice family activities which promote a simpler and less technical standard of life that will instill Godly values and thoughts. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." - Philippians 4:8

In a day where the majority of churches have an open communion, we believe the Lord has commanded us, through His written word, to practice a closed communion. "And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly, to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it, for whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; Therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood, ye shall forbid him;" - 3 Nephi 8:60,61

The reference to "unworthy" is not to mean we think of ourselves as being better than others, for as the text states, "... nevertheless ye shall not cast him out from among you, but ye shall minister unto him, and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name," v. 61 It does mean we have entered into a covenant with our Lord, through repentance and baptism under the hands of one with the authority to perform such an ordinance. The invitation is extended to all to be partakers in His sacrifice. "And if it so be that he repenteth, and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood;" - 3 Nephi 8:62

In conclusion, we believe those of the "body of Christ" are commissioned to be the light in a dark world, commanded to do those things which Christ himself would do, and to preach the truth and fullness of the gospel. We understand our position is in contrast to the general opinion of the world and not necessarily politically correct. Practicing the principles from the word of God concerning these issues will make us considerably different than the world. We have been called out of the world, called to be a peculiar people, called to be different than society because we live after the things of the Spirit, not the flesh. "I Therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." - Ephesians 4:1-3

To do this we must never depart from the written word of God. "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." - 2 Thessalonians 2:14,15

Respectfully Submitted,
The Council of Apostles

20. Conference Approved Statements

Statement on War

A committee appointed to prepare a statement of our attitude toward military service and our stand on war as a church offered the following resolution to the 1951 Ministers' Conference which was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed by majority vote:

Greetings:

The committee to consider the resolution concerning our stand on war beg to present the following resolution:

"Whereas, we, the Church of Christ, with headquarters on the Temple Lot, at Independence, Missouri, are opposed to war as declared in our Articles of Faith and Practice, paragraph 21, which reads as follows:

"We are opposed to war. Men are not justified in taking up arms against their fellows except as a last resort in defense of their lives and to preserve their liberty."

Therefore be it

Resolved, that this Church of Christ shall ever promote the proposition that war is in opposition to the best interests of man and God, whose will it is that man shall not kill, and that this Church of Christ does hereby lodge with the government of this country a proclamation of its stand upon these principles;

And be it further

Resolved, that this Church of Christ shall ever actively endeavor, through the medium of correspondence, or if it be necessary, through the efforts of special delegations, to gain for its people the right and privilege to be exempt from active combat duty, if they so choose, and to give their service, when called upon, in non-combatant positions, whereby they can render a greater and more complete service to God, to mankind, and to their country.

ARTHUR M. SMITH
CLARENCE L. WHEATON JR.
LEON A. GOULD

(1951 Conf. Min. p.70)

Prohibiting Use of Tobacco or Intoxicating Liquors

A resolution on the use of tobacco, narcotics or intoxicating liquors was approved by the 1969 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum as Bill No. 2 which in turn was passed:

Be it resolved that:

We recommend that any man using tobacco, narcotics or intoxicating liquors shall not be permitted to hold any ministerial license in the Church of Christ, and furthermore, any man who ordains a man using tobacco, narcotics or intoxicating liquors, shall be guilty of malfeasance in office.

This would not prevent the use of narcotics or liquors as prescribed by a licensed doctor of medicine. Further, this would not prevent the use of wine for sacrament.

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 14)

The Word *Faction* Defined

A definition of the word "faction" was submitted to the 1971 Ministers' Conference by the Council of Apostles which was approved.

The Word "Faction" Defined

Greetings:

Inasmuch as the Church of Christ with headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri, has often been referred to as a faction of the Restoration, which terminology in no wise applies to the Church of Christ as restored in 1830, by reason of definition of the word faction, as follows:

Faction: "A party seeking to further its own ends by unscrupulous methods--adverse actions contrary to original beliefs." Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, unabridged 1951.

Therefore, we affirm that the Church of Christ with headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri, is the true and lawful continuation of the Church established by Joseph Smith and others on April 6, 1830. It is in harmony with the said Church in origin, organization, doctrine, and teaching, which has continued unbroken from 1830 without the necessity of reorganization, never having been disorganized.

Be it further resolved that we encourage our members to refrain from referring to ourselves by the term faction.

Respectfully submitted,
Council of Apostles
Archie F. Bell, Sec'y.

(1971 Conf. Min. p. 8)

Statement of Accepted Scriptural References

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation regarding the acceptance of scriptural references for Church publications to the 1977 Ministers' Conference which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles has approved the following statement regarding acceptance of scriptural references for Church publications and recommends its adoption by the conference:

We believe that the word of God is contained in the authorized King James translation of the Bible, originally published in 1611 in England, insofar as it is translated correctly, with all other versions or translations left to stand on their own merit; and in the Book of Mormon; and in Latter Day revelations purporting to be of God, past, present or future, wherever they may be recorded, that agree therewith.

Respectfully submitted
William A. Sheldon, Secy, Council of Apostles

(1977 Conf. Min. p. 12)

Church of Christ Does Not Endorse Political Parties

The Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric made a recommendation to the 1979 Ministers' Conference concerning the Church of Christ not supporting political organizations which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed:

Greetings:

The following matter is hereby presented with the recommendation that it be ratified by this body:

Be it resolved that we of the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric affirm the position that the Church of Christ, headquarters on the Temple Lot, shall not endorse nor give support to specific political organizations nor politically-oriented organizations. This affirmation is not intended to prohibit personal political activity on the part of individual Church members.

William A. Sheldon, Secy, Council of Apostles
Nicholas F. Denham, General Bishopric

(1979 Conf. Min. p. 4)

Statement in Opposition to Violence and Militant Groups

The Council of Apostles submitted a document to the 1998 Ministers' Conference concerning violence and militant groups which was amended and approved by the conference. It was sent to referendum as Bill #2 and passed.

21. Letters To Government officials

Letter Draft to U. S. Senators

A letter draft to be sent to United States Senators was submitted to the 1969 Ministers' Conference by the Council of Apostles and was approved by the conference:

The Honorable (Full Name)
The United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator:

It seems most appropriate that the representatives of the people should have access to thinking and feelings of those whom they represent.

Current trends in governmental affairs have become of increasingly anxious concern to us, hence the need for this sort of expression. In particular there are two items to discuss: (1) the deterioration of public moral concepts and (2) the

growing antipathy of some toward the still new and emerging nation of Israel. These considerations are not necessarily unrelated.

Recent decisions of our Supreme Court have amply demonstrated the inability of this august body to define such simple basic concepts as right and wrong, as applying to civil affairs. We wish to draw your attention particularly to a decision regarding prayers in public schools. It seems obvious that there has been a yielding to the clamor of highly organized and noisy minority whose aims seems to be the destruction of every means the people have of making moral judgments. This, without the people as a whole having an adequate say ... as in clarifying legislation sent to referendum in the form of a constitutional amendment. We petition you to institute and foster remedial action in this matter.

Another symptom of moral decline is the great concern of the Supreme Court over the rights of obvious criminals contrary to the superior rights of the law-abiding citizen; taking the view that it is society which has wronged the criminal. Shall we go to the matter of dirty books, provocative movies, etc.? The next development could well be the LEFT is right and RIGHT is wrong; and the law-abiding citizen is at a disadvantage before his own laws.

While it seems the right of certain minority groups to try to divorce all standards of social and civic acceptability from any "taint" of religion, those who founded this nation were not so foolish. An examination of their views and public expressions will label most of them as religious men, though not necessarily of the same persuasion.

Should this program of de-religionizing our civic affairs succeed and our religious liberties be infringed, there remains only the finger writing on the wall, THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND ART FOUND WANTING. These are hardly attractive terms, nor a comfort to the minds of those who love our country.

Consider that at their origins most of our civil governments are either preceded by, or are directly based on moral concepts, religious and otherwise, found in documents of ancient date; prominent among which is the Holy Bible. This last book is almost universally accepted in this country as standard. It is the book on which oaths of office are solemnized. . ."so help me God." Certainly the Holy Bible in this nation's history is precedent enough.

People's striving toward the moral goals upheld in the Holy Bible has produced much good in our civil affairs and has lessened the burdens of the state. Devout Christians make very poor criminals. Yet criminality is now an ever-growing financial burden to the state. The peaceful ways fostered by Christian societies and other prominent religions such as the Jewish faith, Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. (excluding the recent upstart so-called Church of the Devil), can only bring benefit, peace and stability to the affairs of the nation. In the final analysis it is upon the individual and his moral concepts that the tranquility of the state rests.

While separation of civil and religious communities is commendable, our constitution never implied that they should be enemies, nor divergent in certain basic concepts of acceptable social behavior of their adherents. Unfortunately some people do not think so.

Many who have this bent for the destruction and/or restriction of religion also hold that the still new nation of Israel should not exist either. It remains to be seen whether or not this is related to the fact that three major world religions regard the area of this small nation in general and certain spots in particular as of sacred significance. The Holy Bible, existing for longer far than our nation, indicates that it will go hard with any nation which counters the emergence and stabilization of this nation of Israel. Recent history of the June War seems to fortify these ancient writings. As far back as the administrations of Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, our government has favored this new nation of Israel which has fulfilled so many promises of the Scripture.

We petition you to exercise your influence and vote to see that the stabilization of the nation of Israel is not impeded nor diminished. We further petition you to initiate and foster the bringing of instruction to the United States Representatives in the United Nations to do all in our nation's power to affect full and universal recognition of the nation of Israel as a free, independent and sovereign nation in harmony with past actions of the united Nations.

You are a busy office holder and we too have our appointed and chosen tasks. You will do us a great favor by advising us from time to time as to what you are doing and propose to do about these matters which concern us. Let us know what we can do to help.

Respectfully and sincerely,

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 14,15)

Letter Written to the President of the U. S. A.

It was approved by the 1976 Ministers' Conference that a letter be written to the President of the United States by the Council of Apostles in memoriam of the two hundredth birthday of this nation in appeal to turn the people of this land to God. The letter was printed in the June, 1976 issue of the Zion's Advocate, page 92. - 1976 Conf. Min. p. 12

22. Jurisprudence

Efforts Made to Revise the Jurisprudence

At the 1949 General Conference, the School of the Ministry made a recommendation to the Conference to appoint a committee of five to study the present rules of Jurisprudence and revise them. The Conference approved this recommendation and a committee was elected. The committee reported to the 1950 General Conference that it was unable to sufficiently consider the matter and asked for another year to make their study which was granted. - 1950 Conf. Min. p. 76

At the 1952 General Conference, the Committee on Jurisprudence reported that they had completed their work in revising the 1941 Jurisprudence. Action was made to receive their report and to have copies of their document printed and mailed to the membership with the Zion's Advocate. This matter was deferred to be the first order of business at the 1953 General Conference. - 1952 Conf. Min. p.74

The 1953 General Conference received the committee's report and discharged the committee. Final action on the Jurisprudence was deferred until 1954 and another committee was appointed to consider the Jurisprudence. That committee gave a report to the 1954 General Conference which was considered and tabled. The work of the committees on the revised Jurisprudence was not mentioned again in the conference minutes until 1962 when a new committee was appointed. - 1953 Conf. Min. p.52, 53; 1954 Conf. Min. p.69

Jurisprudence Reconsidered

A document on Jurisprudence was brought to the 1962 Ministers' Conference. A committee of five was appointed to consider the document. They requested additional time to more adequately examine the document which was granted. - 1962 Conf. Min. p. 74, 87, 88

A prepared document titled "Jurisprudence of the Church of Christ" was submitted by the committee for jurisprudence to the 1965 Ministers' Conference. It was approved by that conference and sent to referendum as Bill #2. The bill failed to pass the two-thirds majority vote. The document

was reduced in size and re-titled “Procedure Against Iniquity.” It was submitted to the 1967 Ministers’ Conference which was approved and sent to referendum. It was passed by the required two-thirds majority vote and became binding on the church. - Conf. Min. 1965 p. 12; 1967 p. 7-12

An amendment to the Procedure Against Iniquity, which contained scriptural references pertaining to the present jurisprudence, was presented to the 1970 Ministers’ Conference. Action was taken to refer this document to the Board of Publications to have it printed in pamphlet form for use as needed. - 1970 Conf. Min. p.10

A resolution to amend current church laws (Procedure Against Iniquity) was presented to the 1984 Ministers’ Conference which was sent to a committee of five to review and report to the 1985 Ministers’ Conference. Prior to the 1985 Ministers’ Conference the committee was to submit their findings to the Council of Apostles. The amendment, as was finally rendered, was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 by the 1985 Ministers’ Conference. The referendum was approved by a two-thirds majority vote. - 1985 Conf. Min. p. 13

Sin and Forgiveness Within the Body of Christ

At the 2001 April Ministers’ Conference, the Council of Apostles presented a document entitled “Sin and Forgiveness Within the Body of Christ” which was amended and sent to referendum as Bill #3. It passed the necessary two-thirds majority vote and rescinded the “Procedure Against Iniquity”:

Sin and Forgiveness within the Body of Christ

Be it resolved that the following document be adopted, which will supersede all previous conference and referendum actions pertaining to said procedure:

SIN AND FORGIVENESS WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST

A. The reasons for discipline within the Church of Christ:

Our Lord is a God of order, justice and righteousness.

It is the duty of the ministry and membership of the church to see that these qualities are reflected before the world.

B. The main purposes of discipline within the church are as follows:

The correction of errors within the members (II Timothy 4:1-4, II Corinthians 7:9-11) that they do not lose their hope of salvation (Alma 3:97, 98, III Nephi 5:67, 68).

The restoration of the sinner (Galatians 6: 1).

The reconciliation of brethren within the body of Christ (III Nephi 5:70-72 and Matthew 18:15).

To be a light to the unbelievers in the world (I Tim. 3:7, III Nephi 5:61, 63).

To protect members of the church from evil influences (Galatians 5:9; I Corinthians 5:5-8 and Hebrews 12:13-15).

To maintain the holy doctrine of Jesus Christ within His church (Titus 3:10-11)

C. Transgressions that could bring about the need for discipline in the church:

Scandalous or immoral conduct such as identified in Galatians 5:19-21, which would result in a loss of salvation for the individual.

The teaching of doctrines contrary to our profession of faith (Romans 16:17-18; Gal. 1:6-9).

Violation of the laws of the land (Hebrews 13:17; Titus 3:1).

Those actions which disturb the peace or cause divisions within the church as described in (II Corinthians 12:20 & III Nephi 5:30, 31).

D. What constitutes repentance?

Remorse and dedication of the heart to sin no more.

Remove oneself from the sin.

Confess ones faults.

Bring forth fruits meet for repentance

Have witnesses of such repentance.

Have a continuous walk in a righteous manner.

See references in Mos. 11:140; Luke 17:4; Mark 11:25-26; Alma 10:6; 12:4-5; Mat. 3:8; 8:11-12; 18: 15, Mi. 6:8; 1 Thess. 4:14; 5:22; Eph. 4:22-27; 5:4,11; Jude 1:7; Gal. 5:22-23; Isa. 1:18-20.

E. The following is the scriptural method for maintaining the body of Christ and dealing with such iniquity within the Church of Christ:**I. INITIAL EFFORT TOWARD RECONCILIATION**

1. If a member of the church has been offended or trespassed against by another member of the church, that individual should go to the offending party and endeavor to correct the situation. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone..." (Matthew 18:15).

2. If a brother or sister is found to have committed iniquity, it is the responsibility of a spiritual member of the church to attempt to restore that brother or sister to a godly life, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

3. If the problem is resolved, or if the offending person is brought to repentance "...if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15), "And if he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also; " (Mosiah 11:138)

II. A SECOND APPROACH WITH WITNESSES

1. If reconciliation or true repentance is not achieved by this first effort, "... then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established". (Matthew 18:16).

2. This effort to restore the sinner to a state of grace can be extended to more than one effort. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (II Peter 3:9) (See also Mosiah 11:201, 202)

III. INVOLVEMENT OF THE CHURCH

1. If the offending party still refuses to be reconciled to his brother or still remains in an unrepentant state. "...tell it unto the church:" (Matthew 19:17).

2. This shall be interpreted to mean the matter will now be handled by a group of ordained elders, which shall be designated hereafter as a Body of Judges. "Therefore it became expedient that those who committed sin that were in the church, should be admonished by the church." (Mosiah 11:112) "And they were strict to observe that there should be no iniquity among them; and whoso was found to commit iniquity, and three witnesses of the church did condemn them before the elders; " (Moroni 6:7)

3. Those who unsuccessfully endeavored to restore the offending party should document the matter in writing and deliver it into the hands of the pastor unless he has been involved in the process. In this case he should continue with this procedure by appointing a Body of Judges to hear the matter. In the absence of a pastor, or if the pastor fails to act or is the accused, it shall be delivered in writing to the missionary-in-charge from the General Church.

4. If a General Church official is accused of misconduct, the matter shall be delivered in writing to the Secretary of the Council of Apostles, or the senior member of the Council if the Secretary is the accused. It shall be the duty of the Council of Apostles to select the Body of Judges who shall hear this matter.

5. In cases where all authorities fail to act, or the accusations are against the Council of Apostles, the matter will be delivered in writing to the April Ministers' Conference, who may choose to appoint seven elders as a Body of Judges to hear the matter.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ELDERS WHEN ACTING AS A BODY OF JUDGES

1. This Body of Judges shall proceed as with the Spirit of Christ, doing all within their power to be fair, just and impartial. "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." (1 Timothy 5:21)

2. As the Body of Judges meets with the offending party, their primary objective is to bring about reconciliation between the parties involved, or a change of attitude and sincere repentance according to the Word of God. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1, 2)

3. This Body of Judges shall consist of two or three Elders. Our Lord was speaking of just this type of situation as He spoke to His disciples in Matthew 18, when He said, (v. 11) "... tell it unto the church." He then concluded, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:19, 20)

4. If ministers are available in the area where the problem exists, two or three Elders are to be appointed by the pastor. In the absence of a pastor, the Missionary-in-Charge may appoint these elders. There are some circumstances where a sufficient number of Elders are not available to form a Body of Judges. In such circumstances the Elders serving on this Body of Judges could be the pastor and/or the General Church missionaries. "The manner which the disciples, who were called the elders of the church, ordained priests and teachers." (Moroni 3: 1) (See also I Peter 5: 1 and Moroni 6:7)

5. This Body of Judges should impartially hear the testimony of all witnesses having firsthand knowledge of the matter and render a solution in accordance with the written Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit. "And they were strict to observe that there should be no iniquity among them; and whoso was found to commit iniquity, and three witnesses of the church did condemn them before the elders;" (Moroni 6:7)

V. THE DECISION OF THE BODY OF JUDGES

1. All meetings should begin with prayer, that all parties would be guided by the Holy Ghost. "And their meetings were conducted by the church, after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost;" (Moroni 6:9) (See also Matthew 18:19)

2. The solution of how to bring about a reconciliation of the parties involved or how to effect a sincere repentance, if necessary, should be carefully explained to everyone involved. "Therefore I say unto you, Go; and whosoever transgresseth against me, him shall ye judge according to the sins which he has committed; And if he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive

him also; Yea, and as often as my people repent, will I forgive them their trespasses against me. And ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses: for verily I say unto you, He that forgiveth not his neighbor's trespasses, when he says that he repents, the same hath brought himself under condemnation." (Mosiah 11:137-140)

3. If the offending party/parties refuse to hear the church or heed the solution rendered by the Body of Judges, they will no longer be numbered among the members of the church. The offending party must be informed in writing of the decision of the Body of Judges and the requirements for their repentance and return to the church. "And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things; And behold, their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith, The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people. For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life; and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand. And now my brethren, What have ye to say against this? I say unto you, If ye speak against it, it matters not, for the word of God must be fulfilled. For what shepherd is there among you having many sheep, doth not watch over them, that the wolves enter not and devour his flock? And behold, if a wolf enter his flock, doth he not drive him out? Yea, and at the last, if he can, he will destroy him. And now I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call after you; and if you will hearken unto his voice, he will bring you into his fold, and ye are his sheep; And he commandeth you that ye suffer no ravenous wolf to enter among you, that ye may not be destroyed. And now, I, Alma, do command you in the language of him who hath commanded me, that ye observe to do the words which I have spoken unto you." (Alma 3:98-107) "And if they repented not, and confessed not, their names were blotted out, and they were not numbered among the people of Christ; but as oft as they repented, and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven." (Moroni 6:8) (See also Matthew 18:17, Titus 3:10 and Mosiah 11:141-145)

4. In the event the party whose name was removed from the church later desires to repent and be restored to the body of Christ, he/she needs to comply with the solution for repentance rendered by the Elders who judged this matter. This desire should be made known to the Missionary in Charge and he shall refer it to the original Body of Judges who made the decision if possible. If not possible, the Missionary in Charge may request another Elder to assist, that through united prayer they may decide if the criteria set by the original Body of Judges has been complied with before reinstatement is granted. Rebaptism is not needed in a case where a former member is reunited with the church.

5. New evidence which would have affected the decision made by the Body of Judges should be given to the same Body of Judges for their consideration and decision.

VI. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

1. A record should be kept of all the proceedings, the testimony heard and the decisions rendered by the Body of Judges. "And their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way," (Moroni 6:5) This implies that any change in membership status should be recorded.

2. This record shall be sent to the Council of Apostles and any changes of membership status (baptism, withdrawals, disfellowship, reinstatement or death) will be forwarded to the General Church Recorder. This is in harmony with the practices of the church as recorded in Conference Action of April 13, 1928; Conference Action of April 11, 1932; Bill No. 1 of 1958 and Bill No. 1 of 1967.

VII. INFORMING THE BODY

1. In the event the decision of the Body of Judges is to remove the name of a member of a local congregation, that congregation will be notified of said decision. "And if they repented not, and confessed not, their names were blotted out, and they were not numbered among the people of Christ" (Moroni 6:8)

VIII. APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE BODY OF JUDGES

1. Any decision rendered by the Body of Judges hearing this matter that is not in accordance with the Bible and the Book of Mormon would be a cause for appeal. (See Outline History, page 139. "Resolved that this Church of Christ accept nothing purporting to be a revelation from God, past, present or future, as a revelation from God, save that which is in harmony with both the Bible and the Book of Mormon." (See also Bill No. 1, 1950 regarding the Rule of Faith.)

2. This appeal may be initiated only by an involved party, to include but not be limited to, the accused, the accuser, the pastor or the missionary in charge.

3. An appeal should be made in writing and given to the Council of Apostles together with all the supportive evidence. The Council of Apostles will examine all the written evidence and make a ruling in accordance with the Bible and the Book of Mormon. If any member of the Council of Apostles was a member of the Body of Judges, he shall be excused from rendering any decision on that appeal. The appellant will be notified in writing.

4. If the appellant wishes to appeal the decision of the Council of Apostles, the appellant may appeal in writing to the April Ministers' Conference for the appointment of an appellate court of Elders to judge the decision in accordance with the Bible and Book of Mormon. The appellate court of Elders will not be made up of the original Elders of the Body of Judges. The decision of the Appellate court will then be final on the matter and the appellant will be notified in writing. "Therefore choose you by the voice of this people, judges, that ye may be judged according to the laws which hath

been given you by our fathers, which are correct, and which were given them by the hand of the Lord. Now it is not common that the voice of the people desireth anything contrary to that which is right; but it is common for the lesser part of the people to desire that which is not right; Therefore this shall ye observe, and make it your law to do your business by the voice of the people... And I command you to do these things in the fear of the Lord:" (Mosiah 13:34-41)

(2001 Conf. Min. p. 33-40)

23. Youth Camp

Church Youth Camp Considered

A proposal for a church youth camp to be established was considered during the 1969 Ministers' Conference but an action was made to defer it until 1970. The reason to defer it is as follows:

1. In order that the members of this church might have ample opportunity to make this a matter of earnest prayer that the course we pursue might be in harmony with the will of God. (See II Nephi 14:12.)
2. In order that a committee of five might be appointed by this conference to look into all the necessary preparatory plans.
3. In order that a married couple might be appointed by each local church to consider the youth program and in turn meet with the above committee and report to the 1970 Conference.

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 10,11)

A Committee of five on Youth Camp was chosen: Marvin E. Ely, Paul Johnson, Donald E. McIndoo, Richard A. Wheaton and Oren A. Caviness.

The 1970 Ministers' Conference sent out a referendum as Bill #1 providing for the appointment of a Youth Camp Committee. This referendum was passed. A committee of five was elected: Marvin E. Ely, Oren A. Caviness, Donald E. McIndoo, Brad Wheaton and Randall Sheldon. - 1970 Conf. Min. p. 2, 5-7

The Youth Camp Committee gave a report of its activities to the 1973 Ministers' Conference:

Report of the Youth Camp Committee
To the Conference Assembled:

We the Youth Camp Committee wish to make the following report:

Circumstances that have existed since our last report have prevented us from purchasing land or the building of structures for this purpose. As time progresses, these obstacles increase due to the rising cost brought about by inflation. However, the ardor of our youth has not lessened in their desire to meet and associate with the other youth of the church.

It is the consensus of opinion of this committee that a Youth Reunion would be the best course to pursue for the time being. We find that in communicating with various individuals and groups of the young people that there is a great desire for a project of this nature. We further feel that under the proper supervision and sponsorship this would fill the need.

We continue to look forward to the time when we can establish a permanent site where the youth activities of the church can be held.

For the Youth Camp Committee
Marvin E. Ely, Oren A. Caviness, Randy A. Sheldon
(1973 Conf. Min. p. 10)

A resolution to rescind Bill #1 of 1970 which established the Youth Camp Committee was approved by the 1979 Ministers' Conference. The action to rescind was sent to referendum as Bill #5 which passed.

To the 1979 Conference Convened

Whereas, there is a Regional Youth Activity Coordinator appointed in each missionary field to coordinate and stimulate Christian youth involvement, and activity, and

Whereas, the initial purpose of Referendum Bill #1 of 1970, which set up the Youth Camp Committee, was to purchase land and establish a Youth Camp has been found to be impractical,

Therefore, be it resolved that Referendum Bill #1 of 1970, entitled RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH YOUTH CAMP COMMITTEE be abolished.

Respectfully submitted,
D. E. McIndoo
(1979 Conf. Min. p. 20,21)

Regional Youth Activities Coordinator

“The Committee On Ministry To And Involvement of Youth”, established by the 1977 August Ministers’ Conference, offered a resolution to the 1978 April Ministers’ Conference establishing a Regional Youth activities Coordinator. The conference gave its approval and sent it to referendum as Bill #1 which passed.

The 1982 April Ministers’ Conference approved an action to rescind Bill #1 of 1978 stating there has been no recognized need requiring the services of the Regional Youth Activities Coordinator and sent it to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed with the required two-thirds majority vote. - 1978 Conf. Minutes, p. 7 & 1982 Conf. Minutes, p.13

24. Financial Law

Committee to Study Financial Law

The 1959 Ministers’ Conference approved a document which established a committee to study the financial law of the church. A committee of five was elected: Nicholas F. Denham (bishop), E. Leon Yates and William A. Sheldon (apostles), M. Harvey Seibel, and Marvin Ely. Later during the conference Brother Nicholas Denham resigned from the committee and C. Leroy Wheaton was elected. This resolution to establish this committee was not sent to referendum as its function was temporary. - 1959 Conf. Min. p.71, 72

The Financial Committee, appointed in 1959, made a report to the 1960 Ministers’ Conference which was received. They were commended and urged to complete their work. The chair ruled the report be published in the Zion’s Advocate. Accordingly, it was printed in the conference minutes in the May, 1960 issue, page 71. No other reports were made by the Committee on Financial Law and the committee was dismissed by the 1964 General Conference.

REPORT OF FINANCIAL COMMITTEE

One year ago, by Conference action, the Financial Committee was created with the express function of pursuing an exhaustive study of all available religious and secular literature relative to certain economic systems such as tithing, all things common and consecration. The specific purpose of this research is to learn the will of God concerning the financial law of the Church of Christ and to avoid the many pitfalls of those who have had a zeal but not according to knowledge. The scriptures tell us that the time will come when men will kill us, thinking that thereby they are doing God's service.

Likewise, many times in the past men have turned all they had into various communal schemes, boasting to the world that it was of God, and have made a fetish of their peculiar mode of living; but these peculiar systems were not born of the wisdom of God but of the foolishness of man, and many of these bear even the earmarks of the madness of Satan. Lest we, as a people, fall into a similar madness through the insidious deceptions of Satan, it was deemed expedient to seek, through prayer and fasting and much study, to learn the will and counsel of God in this matter.

It was further stated in the above Conference action that their "findings, conclusions and recommendations be presented to the Conference in their fullness in the form of a complete monograph." In order to bring to a successful conclusion the project delineated in these conference instructions, the Committee has completed the study of about fifteen books, including the Bible, Book of Mormon and "Book of Commandments". Correspondence is also being carried on with contemporary groups interested in communal living. Pertinent data to the extent of one hundred and sixty-five pages of single-spaced typewritten pages have been collected. At the present time the monograph has not been prepared. The Committee estimates that at least another year will be required for the completion of this task. However, this schedule is well within the time allotted by the 1959 Conference, which states "that this Committee continue to function for one Conference year or until such a reasonable time that this work may be adequately and completely brought to a completion."

In lieu of the fact that the general church organization must continue to function, it is the consensus of the Committee that it is absolutely essential that the Saints of the Church of Christ willfully and wholeheartedly support the present system of tithing as recommended by former Conference action, regardless of whatever economic system under which they may choose to live, whether it be all things common, or the old garden variety of capitalism indigenous to the country as a whole.

Note the following Conference resolution relative to this point: "Any local or group of people in a local, desirous of doing so, may organize into cooperative associations for the advancement of their spiritual and economic welfare and the furthering of social equality and the principles of all things common

among themselves, may do so, in harmony with scriptures found in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and the Laws and Commandments given to the Church of Christ in these last days; and in harmony with the actions of the General Conferences of the Church of Christ, as follows: Resolved, that it is the sense of this body, that it be recommended for the acceptance of the church as a whole, that there be an observance of the principle of consecration of all our properties to the church, to be followed by tithing one-tenth of one's income."

(Adopted October 19, 1925)

Signed: E. L. Yates, Marvin E. Ely, M. Harvey Seibel,
William A. Sheldon, C. LeRoy Wheaton, Jr.

(1960 Conf. Min. p. 71)

25. Zion

A Study of Zion

During the 1953 General Conference the subject of Zion was considered as the result of a petition from the church membership in Canada. April 9 was set aside for that purpose and a committee was appointed to formulate a program for that day. T. J. Jordan, Leon A. Gould and Joseph Yates were chosen as the committee.

(See 1953 Conf. Min. p.51)

Church-Wide Study of Zion

A resolution was approved by the 1989 Ministers' Conference to establish a church-wide study of Zion and the four Brothers submitting the document were appointed as the committee:

Proposal for a Church-Wide Study of Zion Preamble

Whereas:

As members of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), and believers in the restored gospel in its entirety, the time has come for the Church of Christ as a whole to gather together and prepare for the establishment of Zion.

This will need to be done on both a temporal and spiritual level. There are many instances in our every day lives which indicate the nearness of the time in which we will need to gather together. The successful establishment of Zion will most certainly require total cooperation of all concerned. There will be no room for anyone who wishes to live differently.

Throughout the church, there have been numerous individual efforts made toward the establishment of Zion. Some have learned food production and preservation skills, some have collected books on self sufficiency subjects, and others have corresponded with like-minded people on the subject of Zion. All of these efforts have laid important groundwork towards Zion's successful implementation.

Scripturally we are admonished:

“And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end, they shall be lifted up at that last day and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the lamb.” - 1 Nephi 3:187-188

One should not expect that the establishment of Zion will just happen. We will need to be desirous of Zion before we can appreciate its successful fulfillment. Again we are admonished:

“Therefore, Woe be unto him who is at ease in Zion.” - 2 Nephi 12:30

Motion

Therefore, it is moved that there be a church wide effort made toward the spiritual and temporal establishment of Zion. To this end, it is proposed that a committee be established to study the many requirements necessary to establish a cooperative and self sufficient living condition as outlined in the scriptures. Among many requirements, it is moved that an orderly organizational plan be drafted as well as plans for a common storehouse.

Upon consideration of these needs, the committee will report on their findings to the August 1989 Ministers' Conference.

Robert Dewaele, Isaac Brockman, Sr., Eugene Gould, Robert H. Jensen

(1989 Conf. Min. p.29)

Report from the Committee to Study Zion

A report was submitted to the 1990 Ministers' Conference from the Committee to Study Zion:

Progress Report – Committee to Study Zion

In accordance with the conference action from the April 1989 Ministers' Conference, The Committee to Study Zion submits the following progress Report. A listing of the first year's accomplishments follows.

1. A compilation of verses in both the Bible and Book of Mormon has been prepared. These verses contain passages regarding both the Zion of old and the Zion yet to come. Many valuable lessons can be learned from these passages.
2. An announcement in the Zion's Advocate has been published which requested lists of books and other pertinent materials on the subject of Zion.
3. An article on the subject of Zion along with a questionnaire, designed to survey our peoples' abilities in regard to, and their desires toward the establishment of Zion.
4. Consideration has been given toward the mechanics of establishing a general storehouse. This storehouse would serve numerous purposes. It could provide for those people who would be in immediate need of food and other essential items as well as to cushion against the eventual hardships which are surely coming upon us. Considerable material has been gathered on this subject, and those who are interested in this material can obtain reproductions of it from Robert Dewaele, of the Committee.

Work to Be Accomplished

1. Articles on the "Gathering, and a Time to Prepare" will be submitted to Zion's Advocate in the near future.
2. Further collection of articles and scriptural references on the subject of Zion.
3. More concrete Proposals and ideas toward the establishment of a general storehouse.

These objectives can only be accomplished through wider spread interest and cooperation from all people interested in Zion. During the past several months, we have all witnessed a changing world environment which has come upon us at an almost unbelievable pace. The need for the establishment of Zion has never been greater. Only through concerted prayer and effort can we fulfill the commandment to establish Zion.

We should all look to the following verse for our inspiration: "And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost." - 1 Nephi 3:187

Sincerely,

Robert Dewaele
Chairman of the Committee to Study Zion

(1990 Conf. Min. p. 7)

Committee to Study Zion Re-established

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1998 Ministers' Conference to re-establish the Committee to Study Zion according to the rules of "Standing Committees." This was approved by the conference and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed the necessary two-thirds majority vote. A committee was appointed: Roland Sarratt, Charles Brantner, Andy Brantner, Richard Wheaton and Frank Fann. Brother Richard Wheaton resigned at the 2001 Ministers' Conference and Brother Glenn Gill was elected to fulfill his term of office.

Dear Brethren,

The Council of Apostles recommends for adoption the following,
Whereas:

We desire to follow the pattern established by Bill No# 6 of 1936, which reads as follows:

Resolution on Standing Committees.

We, your committee appointed to revise and bring in a report on resolution offered regarding standing committees hereby submit this report, as follows:

"All standing committees or boards that have five members shall be nominated and elected as follows: The two receiving the highest vote, to hold office for three years; the two receiving the second highest vote, to hold office for two years; and the fifth for a period of one year. That all standing committees of boards composed of three members shall be nominated and elected as follows:

The one receiving the highest vote shall hold office for three years; the one receiving the second highest vote to hold office for two years, and the one receiving the third highest vote for a period of one year. All elections except those selected to fill unexpired terms shall be for a term of three years there after."

And Whereas:

The 1989 Ministers' Conference established the following:

Original Motion (Page 30, 1989 minutes):

Therefore, it is moved that there be a church-wide effort made toward the spiritual and temporal establishment of Zion. To this end, it is proposed that a committee be established to study the many requirements necessary to establish a cooperative and self-sufficient living conditions as outlined in the scriptures. Among many requirements, it is moved that an orderly organizational plan be drafted as well as plans for a common storehouse.

Upon consideration of these needs, the committee will report on their findings to the August 1989 Ministers' Conference.

Conference Action Taken on Above Motion (Page 29, 1989 minutes):

Bro. Alvin Harris moved as a substitute motion that we accept the suggestion of this document and that the four movers and the seconders as authors of the document be appointed the designated committee to carry out the suggestion of the document. (This motion carried no opposing votes)

Therefore it is Moved:

That this conference re-establishes the present Committee for a Church-Wide Study of Zion in accordance with referendum rule #6 of 1936. This committee shall be called the Committee to Study Zion and have five members, one member to be an apostle and one member to be from the general bishopric, and shall be nominated and elected as follows: The two receiving the highest vote, to hold office for three years; the two receiving the second highest vote, to hold office for two years; and the fifth for a period of one year; and that subsequent terms of office be for three years; and

That the committee shall be directed to complete these tasks:

They shall complete the study of the many requirements necessary for Zion as outlined in the scriptures; and

They are further directed to submit this scriptural study on the subject of Zion to the Board of Publications for consideration; and

In addition, their task will include making an orderly organizational plan for a common storehouse and submitting it to the Bishopric for their consideration; and

They shall report their progress to each April Ministers' Conference for their consideration; and

That when these tasks are finished the committee shall be released or shall present to the April Ministers' Conference, for their approval and direction, recommendations for further study,

And further moved,

That this committee shall not act in any representative capacity outside the Church of Christ.

Smith N. Brickhouse, Secy.
(1998 Conf. Min. pp.8,9)

Final Report of the Committee to Study Zion

The Committee to Study Zion reported the completion of their assigned duties to the 2004 April Ministers' Conference and they requested to be disbanded as a committee. The Conference accepted their report and granted their request.

Greetings:

The Committee to Study Zion wishes to report that the expected work of this committee has been completed and requests to be dismissed.

A document entitled "The Hope of Zion" was submitted to the Board of Publications December 3, 2003. This document is a comprehensive study of the various aspects of Zion based upon the scriptures and available information.

A document entitled "The Storehouse" was submitted to the General Bishopric March 27, 2004. This document contained six parts: References, Mission, Points, Overview, Recommendation and Summary.

The referendum action of 1998 states, "That when these tasks are finished the committee shall be released or shall present to the April Ministers' Conference, for their approval and direction, recommendations for further study."

Unless the 2004 Ministers' Conference desires otherwise, we, the members of the Committee to Study Zion, request release from this committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Roland L. Sarratt, For the Committee to Study Zion

(2004 Conference Minutes p. 24)

26. Church Membership

Pastor Consulted Before Member's Status is Changed

A resolution was approved by the 1988 Ministers' Conference concerning membership and was sent to referendum as Bill #1. The referendum was passed by majority vote:

Greetings:

It is the practice within the Church that persons who want to transfer membership from one local to another local do so by contacting the locals involved in the transfer. The local recorder then notifies the recorder for the General Church.

When a current local member wishes to withdraw from the Church or otherwise wishes to alter his membership status, it should be through the local using the same process.

It is therefore moved that when the General Church (or any Church official) is notified of a member's desire to withdraw his membership, that the local involved be notified prior to the taking of any action. The final action on the Church records by the recorder should be taken only after concurrence with the local Pastor.

It is further moved that if this process is agreeable to the body, that this action be sent out to referendum.

Moved by: Alvin L. Harris
Seconded by: Loren D. Bryant

(1988 Conf. Min. pp. 25,26)

Rule on Church Membership

The Council of Apostles submitted a revision of the resolution on membership, as instructed by the 1991 Ministers' Conference, to the 1992 Ministers' Conference. The revised resolution was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #1. It passed the required majority vote:

RESOLUTION RE: MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Whereas, it has come to attention recently that there have been at least several individuals in the past who were baptized in this Church of Christ (Temple Lot) and have subsequently joined another church without notice to this Church of Christ; and,

Whereas it has been the policy and practice of this Church of Christ from the beginning of its existence to not allow membership in another church at the same time, because there is only "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism" of authority (Ephesians 4:5);

Be it Resolved that: This policy, practice and adherence to the Holy Scriptures of the Bible and Book of Mormon be designated as a standing rule of this Church, and;

Be it Resolved that: When it has been verified that a member has joined another church without notification to this church, that the pastor or the missionary in charge will give proper notice to the General Church recorder and then the said member be notified by the General Church Recorder of the withdrawal of their membership and their status.

(1992 Conf. Min. p. 23)

27.

Native American Indians

Indian Relations Committee

The 1953 General Conference approved a recommendation from the Council of Apostles to establish a committee of three as the Indian Relations Committee. This action was not sent to referendum but there was a committee appointed and it did function until 1955 when it was abolished by conference action. - Conf. Min. 1953 p.55, 61; 1954 p.73; 1955 p.69

Indian Missions Committee Established

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric to the 1968 Ministers' Conference concerning the establishing of an Indian Missions Committee was approved. A clarification was made concerning the tenure of office of the committee. The resolution was then sent to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed.

Greetings:

The Joint Council of the Council of Twelve and the General Bishopric recommends approval of following action and committee to carry it into effect:

Moved and seconded that the Joint Council set up a committee of two apostles and one bishop to develop and coordinate the program of establishing Indian Missions that can be self-supporting; that a fund of \$5,000.00 be set up to begin the program at once, to be used to support missionaries, establish missions or relief, etc., and that funds be solicited throughout the church to continue and enlarge the programs.

We affirm that the missionary side of the program be entirely in the hands of the Council of Apostles.

The Committee: Don W. Housknecht, Archie F. Bell, Nicholas Denham.

Respectfully submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secy., Council of Twelve
Nicholas F. Denham, Secy., General Bishopric

Greetings:

The Joint Council of the Council of Apostles and General Bishopric took under consideration the resolution referred back to it on the Indian Mission, for clarification of tenure of office of the committee. We recommend the adoption of the following:

It was moved that,

The committee be a standing committee with a 3 year term of office; one member to be elected each year. The term of office for the first three members to be determined as follows: the one receiving the highest vote to be for 3 years; the one receiving the 2nd highest vote to be for 2 years; the one receiving the smallest vote to be for 1 year. It shall be the duty of the Joint Council to make the selection of the new member each year, subject to the approval of the Conference.

The Joint Council, by unanimous vote, approved of this resolution being sent out as Referendum Bill No. 1.

The Joint Council by unanimous vote approved of the resolution that the names of the committee members be deleted from the Referendum ballot when it is sent out for the vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Archie F. Bell, Secy., Council of Apostles
Nicholas F. Denham, Secy. by Oren A. Caviness, General Bishopric (1968
Conf. Min. p. 10,11)

The Indian Missions Committee made a report to the 1969 Ministers' Conference concerning their activities for the year which was received:

REPORT

We your committee known as the Committee on Indian Missions, beg to report the following activities: We have met several times and tried to determine what would be the best way for this work among the Indians to have its beginning.

It was decided that an Elder must be located who would be able to spend full time at one location until the work was established there. This man is to be accompanied by his wife and family. They are to take up residence and establish address where they are placed. This Elder is to be approved by the Council of Apostles before he can be permitted to start this work.

We have contacted those of responsibility in the Government concerning our intentions and have received from them, valuable information. We have studied the possibilities in various places in the United States for opening up the work and feel that the prospects look very good.

We have an offer for tracts and pamphlets to be used in this work. We intend to screen them before submitting them to the Board of Publications.

We will try to keep you informed on the developments as they unfold. We petition the prayers of the saints that we may act wisely in the performance of this responsibility.

Respectfully submitted,
Don W. Housknecht, Nicholas F. Denham, Archie F. Bell

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 7)

Indian Missions Committee and Fund Rescinded

At the 2001 April Conference, an action was made to rescind Bill #1 of 1968 regarding the Indian Missions Committee. This action passed the conference and was sent to referendum as Bill #1 which also passed:

Therefore, be it resolved that Bill number 1 of 1968, establishing an Indian Missions Committee and the provision for the fund, be rescinded and the committee and fund be dissolve, and...be it further resolved that any rules in conflict with this resolution be hereby rescinded.

(2001 Conf. Min. p. 31)

The Longest Walk

The General Bishopric made a report to the 1979 Ministers' Conference of their involvement with a group of American Indians that came through

Independence, Missouri and visited the Church of Christ. This group referred to themselves as “The Longest Walk.” The following is an excerpt from the Bishops’ report:

Sometime after Conference, 1978 we were contacted in the office by two Indians who resided in Kansas City, telling about the "Longest Walk" representing 80 tribes and requesting help obtaining a place where they could hold a public meeting and possibly a place to camp while in this area. The local priesthoods were consulted, the Bishops were consulted and the Apostles available were consulted. We contacted the walkers at their camp in Kansas near Lawrence. Most of us were favorably impressed that their walk was peaceable and their petitions relative to certain bills before Congress were just. We were well aware that certain radical elements were continually trying to take over the movement, but were being kept under control. The Temple Lot Local agreed to sponsor a public meeting so the Indians could state their case. We read copies of the proclamations of the Governors of the states through which they had walked, welcoming them and asking all to cooperate in helping them along. We read the various news releases both pro and con. The Bishops decided to let them use the dining room for an information center while in this area. We contacted the city, obtaining the necessary permits.

(1979 Conf. Min. p.10)

The report gives details of the assistance given to help the Indians by both the Bishops and the Temple Lot Local. A financial report was included as well.

The end result of the “Longest Walk” in Washington D. C. caused some concern among some of the Church of Christ members because of the church’s involvement with the Indians. The Council of Apostles felt the need to address the matter by writing a statement which was printed in the October, 1978 Zion’s Advocate:

STATEMENT BY THE APOSTLES CONCERNING
THE LONGEST WALK MANIFESTO

This Church of Christ, headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri, as a religious body, has a great interest in the fair treatment of the American Indian people because of their heritage in the American continents, their cultures evolved from antiquity and their hopes for a democratic freedom with equal temporal, social and spiritual opportunities to enrich their lives. The position of this Church regarding the American Indian has never changed. We continue to be sympathetic toward their cause as a minority people seeking equality and justice under the law. The Church feels a responsibility toward helping all the nations of the American Indian to become a united people in serving God who gave them this land as an inheritance.

With reference to the document entitled "Affirmation of Sovereignty of the Indigenous People of the Western Hemisphere", presented the 22nd day of July 1978, by "The Longest Walk Manifesto", Washington, D. C., we can not accept the expressed general attitude of militancy and implied threats against the National Government of the United States as being within the due and prescribed processes of redress for alleged persecution or discriminations against peoples residing within the United States; nor can we give affirmation to the accuracy of some statements contained therein.

We wish it to be clearly understood that this statement refers to the above-referenced document, and does not in any way indicate a rejection of the Indian peoples of the Americas.

William A. Sheldon, Secy.,
Council of Apostles of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot)

American Indians Visit the Temple Lot

The Indian Missions Committee gave a report to the 1988 Ministers' Conference of a group of American Indians who visited the Temple Lot Church in response to an invitation:

The Ministers Conference
Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
Independence, Mo.

On February 18, two members of the Indian community, Percy Little Eagle and Sylvester Mesteth of the Sioux Nation, contacted the community explaining a program of raising funds and an awareness of the citizenry of the plight and needs of the Indian children of the U.S. The organization UNICEF had recently completed a world-wide flame run of three years to all nations calling attention to the need of children throughout the world in this day of war, drugs, and abuse. The flame was flown across the United States and the Indian nations were deprived of its benefits.

They have gained access to the flame and plan a run from the east coast to Council Groves, Kansas where it will be permanently lodged. The various tribes of the United States were to meet in Independence for a few days with regard to this event and while here they desired to hold a prayer circle on the Temple Lot with the holders of the property.

They further wished to have breakfast after the prayer meeting and get a better understanding of our views of the purpose of the Temple Lot and to give us the benefit of their views and of the need of their children who soon will be the active Indian people of tomorrow.

Peace is their hope and concern. Arrangements were made under the auspices of the committee to hold a prayer meeting and breakfast on Saturday, February

27, 1988, at 6:00 a.m. with Brother Nicholas F. Denham in charge. Due to Bro. Denham's illness, Brother LeRoy Wheaton was asked to take charge. Several Church of Christ elders were present as were several Indian elders such as Leon Shenandoah, chief of the Six Nations of New York, Jake Swamp, chief of the Hurons, Chovi S. Lo and Zarate of the Chumash (Khoo-mash) from California.

Due to airline schedules, the Indians were late in arriving and the prayer circle was not held but the breakfast was served with Apostle Roland Sarratt offering the blessing. A number of speeches were made by the elders of the Church and of the Indians.

Brother LeRoy gave the welcome address and Brother J. M. Case told of the Lord's choosing this spot for the building of the Temple and the pile of stones brought by the various tribes. Chief Jake Swamp and Chief Leon Sheandoah responded.

A spirit of brotherliness and friendship prevailed and the Indians went on to their next meeting at the Sermon Center.

On April 1, 1988, the committee met with Percy Little Eagle of the Sioux Nation. He reported that the primary need of the Indian people is spiritual help, but there is a need with temporal help as well. He has a goodly supply of clothing to be distributed to various tribes and asked for help with this distribution. The committee has agreed to give this help.

Respectfully submitted
Nicholas F. Denham, Secretary

(1988 Conf. Min. p. 13, 14)

28.

Temple Lot History

Plans for Centennial Commemoration 1867-1967

A resolution to provide for a Centennial Commemoration of the year 1867 was approved by the 1966 Ministers' Conference and a committee of five was appointed to make the arrangements:

A Resolution to Provide for a Centennial Commemoration
of the Return of the Church of Christ in the Year 1867

Preamble:

Whereas, there has been given to this Church of Christ the heritage of being the first group of the Restoration of the Gospel in these latter days to return to Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, after the expulsion of our brethren from this area in November 1833, therefore be it

Resolved, That a committee of five shall be appointed by this 1966 Ministers' Conference of the Church of Christ, to take into consideration and make the arrangements for a Centennial Program commemorating the occasion of our thus returning as the first band of believers of the Restoration movement, to Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, after the expulsion of the church in November 1833, and further, be it

Resolved, That Sisters Miriam Mason and Angela Wheaton shall be two members of this committee, augmented by one member of the Council of Twelve Apostles, one member of the General Bishopric; and the Pastor of the Church of Christ upon the Temple Lot; and

That funds for this Centennial shall be set up in the tentative budget for this year as per order of the Ministers' Conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Clarence L. Wheaton.
(1966 Conf. Min. p. 10)

The five committee members appointed were Clarence L. Wheaton (apostle), Nicholas Denham (bishop), Miriam Mason, Angela Wheaton and Elder Leslie P. Case, the pastor of the Temple Lot Local.

A notice of the Centennial Commemoration of the return of the Church of Christ to Independence, Missouri in 1867 was printed in the July, 1967, issue of the Zion's Advocate:

The Centennial Commemoration Committee and the Missouri Reunion committee met jointly during the recent General Conference and decided that the Centennial Commemoration would be held on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri, July 27-28, Followed on July 29-30, at the same location by the Missouri Reunion.

We plan, if possible, to have one or more covered wagons with appropriate signs on them to make the trip July 25th and 26th from the Missouri River crossing to the Temple Lot over the old route the returning Saints took one hundred years ago.

This is planned not only to commemorate and honor those early families of the Church of Christ who were the first members of the Restoration to return to

Missouri after the expulsion in 1833, but to acquaint those along the route and in our City of our Centennial Commemoration.



A reenactment of the returning of the saints to Independence included a team of horses and a covered wagon driven by Apostle Clarence Wheaton accompanied by his wife, Angela. People gathered in observance of the 1867-1967 centennial commemoration.

It is hoped that as many as possible will come and attend all these services, and help make this a consecrated and memorable occasion. You will find a warm welcome for you and your friends here.

Most sincerely,
Angela Wheaton, Chairman, Centennial Committee

Marker for the Temple Site

The 1966 Ministers' Conference passed a resolution to provide for a suitable marker at the temple site on the Temple Lot:

A Resolution to Provide for a Suitable Marker Upon the Site of the Temple

Preamble:

Whereas there has arisen in our midst in recent days those who would subvert the minds of people of the Restoration relative to the true location of the site for the temple as provided in latter day revelation as well as the scriptures as set forth in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, therefore be it

Resolved, that we, the Church of Christ, shall solicit funds for the purpose of placing a suitable stone marker, composed of native limestone and bronze plaques, to designate the "spot of land west of the courthouse" here in Independence, Missouri, known as the Temple Lot, which was dedicated August 3, 1831, by Joseph Smith and six elders, and

Resolved, that this marker shall be set upon a suitable concrete base and terraced in such way that drainage shall be in all directions, and that it shall bear at least four bronze plaques, i.e., one setting forth the date of purchase and dedication by the early church; one bearing the seal of the Church of Christ; one bearing the centennial dates of 1867-1967, marking the 100th anniversary of the return of this Church of Christ as the first latter day saints to return after the expulsion from Jackson County in 1833; and the fourth bearing the plaque of the Missouri Historical Society, indicating this as an early-day historical place, and be it further

Resolved, that a Committee of three be herewith authorized to solicit funds, draw up a suitable blueprint, obtain bids for said work, and then proceed to erect the same as soon as possible under the direction of the Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric.

Respectfully submitted
Clarence L. Wheaton

(1966 Conf. Min. p. 12)

The members of the appointed committee were Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr., Archie F. Bell and E. Leon Yates.

A report from the Temple Site Marker committee was received and approved by the 1969 Ministers' Conference:

Greetings:

We, your committee on the temple Site Marker, beg leave to report as follows:

Sensing the need of marking the northeast corner of the Temple as well as the spot where the stone marker had been placed in 1831 by Joseph Smith and others, we determined to provide some marker.

Due to the generosity of the Johnson and Son Monument Company of Independence, Missouri two markers of beautiful gray granite, valued at \$50.00 each were donated to the Church. These stones have been temporarily placed. They will be placed on a concrete base later.

We recommend that this Conference extend to the Johnson and Sons Company, a vote of thanks for their generous donation of these two stones.



Apostle Clarence Wheaton showing Apostle William Anderson the bronze plaques on the newly built marker for the temple.

We have not engaged in other activities concerning the Marker. It has been expressed that a group desire to beautify the Marker Site with some landscaping.

Most Sincerely,
Clarence L. Wheaton, E. L. Yates, Archie F. Bell

(1969 Conf. Min. p. 15)

Temple Site on the National Register

At the 1987 Ministers' Conference a motion was made concerning the name of the temple site in the National Register:

Brother Hubert Yates moved that our Bishops look into the possibility of changing the name of the Temple Site, which is shown in the National Register as the "Mormon Temple Site" to the Church of Christ Temple Site and that we fast and pray during the next conference year concerning the advisability of the five items listed in the report from the General Bishopric about a New Building.

Seconded by Bro LeRoy Wheaton.
The motion carried with two opposing votes.

(1987 Conf. Min. p. 16)

At the 1989 Ministers' Conference Elder Andrew Brantner submitted a report concerning the temple site giving particulars of what he had ascertained through research and his efforts to correct the matter:

Dear Saints,

This unsolicited report is intended to ease our hearts and unburden our minds so that our souls may prosper.

If you will recall, we received a report from the General Bishopric in the April Conference of 1987 wherein we were told that the "Historic Listing" of the Temple Lot is "Mormon Temple Site". We were told in the April Conference of 1988 that this could not be changed. I have done some research and respectfully submit my findings as follows:

1. The Historic name is indeed listed as Mormon Temple Site.
2. However, the Common name is listed as Temple Site.



This sign stands on the west side of River Blvd near the area where the Church of Christ has placed certain markers indicating the site where the Temple of the Lord is to be built.



Aerial view of the Temple Site with people standing together outlining the area.

The listing in the National Register of Historic Places is Temple Site, and this is the name that is attached to the Temple Site.

After several letters, a phone call to Jefferson City and some digging at the county Courthouse I found that the source of this problem began with the State Historical Researcher who used some questionable sources for information in

filling out the Nomination Form for an Historical Listing. This Nomination Form leaves much to be desired and shows an obvious lack of truth.

Now as errant as this Form may be, it was this Nomination Form that achieved the Temple Site Listing as an Historic Place. I doubt if much success would have been had, if not for the use (misuse) and stigma of the term "Mormon". It is a desirable thing to have the Temple Site listed as a Historic Place. Our nation in effect is admitting that it exists. Our state is acknowledging that it "is". All this in the face of the fact that up until 1976 there remained a law on the books to "exterminate all Mormons" from the state.

As it is true, we cannot change what has been. Nor should we. But we can give new direction to the future. Therefore I have taken the liberty to supply the Department of Natural Resources with documentation sufficient to refute these errors and provide historical truth relevant to the Church of Christ and the Temple Site. I have been assured that this information will be placed in the Temple Site file. Details of my research and correspondence can be had by inquiry.

Let me close by saying once more, that although the Historic name may be listed as the Mormon Temple Site on the nomination form, the official historical listing is "Temple Site."

May God bless each one,
Elder Andrew Brantner

(1989 Conf. Min. p. 20)

Forty Foot Marker Reset

A matter concerning the incorrect placement of the forty foot marker on the temple site was brought before the 1988 Ministers' Conference. Instead of 40 feet from the northwest corner of the temple site, it was 29 feet and 10 ½ inches. It was determined by conference action that the General Bishopric would have the marker reset at the correct distance. - 1988 Conf. Min. p. 19,20

The General Bishopric submitted a report to the 1989 Ministers' Conference on their findings and determinations concerning the Temple Site marker:

Greetings:

The General Bishopric has made a research on the placement of the Temple Site marker stones from old surveys and histories and has counseled with the Apostles. We wish to make the following report:

The 1931 survey and the 1981 survey agree on the location of the four corners within two inches, but the 1931 survey does not show the location of the “40 W 1831” stone. Since the marker that designates the location of the 40 W 1831 stone is 31.89 feet west of the north east corner marker, and there is no way to prove exactly where the stone was found, we will move the 40 ft. west marker to 40 feet west of the north east corner marker as soon as some cosmetic and beautification of the Temple Lot is completed.

The Apostles have prepared the explanation to any inquiring public about the move.

Respectfully Submitted
Leslie P. Case, Secretary for the General Bishopric

(1989 Conf. Min. p. 14)

Motion to Build the Temple

A document referred to as the “Motion To Build The Temple”, giving many quoted scriptures and references along with a list of articles printed in the Zion’s Advocate, was submitted to the 1990 Ministers’ Conference signed by 18 members of the church. By conference action the document was referred to the August Ministers’ Conference for their consideration.

A report from the 1994 August Ministers’ Conference was sent to the 1995 April Ministers’ Conference in response to the “Motion To Build The Temple”:

Greetings:

The August Ministers’ conference has reviewed the document “Motion to Build the Temple” sent to it by the April Ministers’ Conference of 1990 and the August Ministers’ Conference of 1994 offers the following statements as our report.

Inasmuch as the Lord has promised to establish upon this land a New Jerusalem (3 Nephi 3:187); inasmuch as the “spot” for His temple was marked and dedicated during the time of the early church and God’s people commanded to bring forth the cause of Zion (B. of C. 5:3), it is our witness that it is time for this people to labor with all their might, obedient to the commandments of the Lord in all things (Jacob 3:140), to carry this gospel of Jesus Christ found in the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon to the remnant of Jacob upon this land and to witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the

Son of the Living God to both Jew and Gentile; to come to a unity of the faith (Eph. 4:13) that we may become that holy nation and peculiar people, the pure of heart, that shall lay the foundation of Zion and build the Temple as directed by the Lord.

Therefore, we reaffirm the statement as given in Number 23 of the Articles of Faith and Practice as our statement of belief on this subject, i.e., "We believe a temple will be built in this generation, in Independence, Missouri, wherein Christ will reveal himself and endow his servants whom he chooses with power to preach the gospel in all the world to every kindred, tongue and people, that the promises of God to Israel may be fulfilled."

And that we as the body of Christ enter herewith into frequent fasting and earnest prayer that God will enable us to sufficiently prepare ourselves spiritually to be able to come to a full understanding of His requirements and directions concerning the establishment of the New Jerusalem and the building of the Temple of the Lord.

Respectfully submitted,
(signed) Peter P. Gould, Secy.
August Ministers' Conference

(1995 Conf. Min. pp. 8,9)

29.

Local Church Organizations and Missions

Referendum Passed on Local Church Organizations

The 1960 Ministers' Conference approved a recommendation from the Council of Apostles on local churches which was sent to referendum as Bill #1 which in turn passed becoming binding on the church:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the adoption of the following to be sent out for referendum vote of the church:

Inasmuch as there is not a clear understanding concerning the organization of a local Church of Christ among our members,

Therefore, be it resolved

That a local Church of Christ shall consist of:

1. Six or more regularly baptized members, one of whom is an Elder.
 2. A Pastor, who shall be the presiding official of the local. He shall be elected from among the Elders by the local church. In the event the Elder refuses to serve a priest may be elected by the local church body.
 3. A Secretary or Clerk, who shall take care of the secretarial work of the local church and keep its records.
 4. A Treasurer, who shall be the financial agent for the local church.
- Other officers and functional groups, such as a Sunday School, may be provided for as required.

There shall be a business meeting held at an agreed time, at least once a year. At this time, all officials of the local church shall be chosen by the vote of the members of the local. The Secretary or Clerk shall keep a full account of all business meetings in a record book.

A business meeting may be called at any time the local congregation may see fit, by giving at least two weeks notice of the meeting. Should the pastor deem an emergency business meeting necessary, he may call such meeting with notice suitable to his own judgment.

Respectfully submitted
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles

(1960 Conf. Min. p. 86)

Organized Locals and Missions of the Church of Christ

A document was presented to the April Ministers' Conference of 2002 by the Council of Apostles on the subject of organized locals and missions which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill # 1. It passed the necessary two-thirds majority vote:

Organized Locals and Missions of the Church of Christ

Be it Resolved:

Whereas, we have set forth in the Articles of Faith and Practice the criteria for an official Local to exist within the Church of Christ, it is well to set forth criteria for organized missions in which we also regularly minister.

Even though there are many similarities within groups that meet together there is a distinct separation between locals and missions. Only in an organized local can all the ordinances of the Gospel of Christ be found and performed due to the presence of an Elder among the congregation. However, in a mission,

accessing all the Gospel ordinances is only possible when a visiting minister is present. Within the body of the Church of Christ there are many locations where we have large numbers of members who are classified only as "members at large ". These groups should be encouraged to organize themselves to a point where they can hold regular meetings and studies promoting spiritual growth and fellowship and creating an atmosphere where the Lord may call one out or send forth one to be an Elder among the group.

In many cases where we have groups of members and our ministry often perform ordinances such as baby blessings and baptisms in obedience to the scriptures, we keep records of such events so we can continue to nourish them with God's word: "And their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith." Moroni 6:5

To assist in the continuation of caring for our members, it would be well to identify where these individuals are located and with what group they worship, rather than grouping them all together as "members at large."

The following are the qualifications for such groups to be categorized and recognized by the General Church as official Locals and Missions of the Church of Christ.

Locals

An organized local is where there are six or more regularly (properly) baptized members, one of whom is an elder, there the Church exists with full power of extension when acting in harmony with the law of God (Articles of Faith and Practice, #11)

Furthermore, we believe that local churches should govern their own affairs, and that general church officials should not dominate or interfere therewith. On invitation such general officers. may, with propriety, give counsel and assistance. Local congregations are subject to the Articles of Faith and Practice and must be governed thereby. (Articles of Faith and Practice, # 15) Referencing Conference Action of April 12th, 1928 and Bill #1 of 1960, the criteria for a local in the Church of Christ shall be as follows:

1. Six or more regularly baptized members, one of whom is an Elder. (An Elder may be a member and function as a pastor in more than one local with the stipulation that he is able to meet the needs of that body and hold regular meetings.)
2. A Pastor, who shall be the presiding official of the local. He shall be elected from among the Elders by the local church. In the event the Elder refuses to serve, a Priest may be elected by the local church body.

3. A Secretary or Clerk, who shall take care of the secretarial work of the local church and keep its records.
4. A Treasurer, who shall be the financial agent for the local church.
5. Other officers and functional groups, such as a Sunday School, may be provided for as required.
They will be established at the time of an Organizational meeting held by the Missionary in Charge, and baptized members who desire to be members of that Local will then be recorded and recognized as such by the General Church.
6. They will be established at the time of an Organizational meeting held by the missionary in Charge and baptized members who desire to be members of that Local will then be recorded and recognized as such by the General Church.

Missions

An organized mission is a location where there are at least six baptized members, which meet together regularly, but in the absence of Elders they must depend upon missionaries to perform the Ordinances of the Gospel. Missions are also subject to the Articles of Faith and Practice and are governed thereby.

Missions will operate under the supervision of the Missionary (s) in Charge of the area in which they are located. They will welcome in and receive ministering by General Church officials and visiting ministry whenever circumstances permit them being present.

The criteria for Missions in the Church of Christ shall be as follows:

1. There will be at least six baptized members.
2. They meet together on a regular basis to hold meetings such as Sunday School, prayer and testimony service, study classes, song service. Preaching and sacrament services will be held when visiting ministry are present and available.
3. They will hold their meetings at a predetermined location (home, rental building, church building, a plot of ground etc.).
4. The baptized members of the Mission will elect officers from among themselves, such as a leader or coordinator, secretary, treasurer, bishops' agent, Sunday School teachers etc.
 - a. A Leader will take charge of organizing and overseeing the services, coordinating with the Missionary in Charge, and make arrangements for visiting ministry to teach and preach to the congregation.
 - b. A Secretary or Clerk, who shall take care of the secretarial work of the Mission and keep its records.
 - c. A Treasurer, who shall be the financial agent for the Mission.
 - d. A Bishops' Agent will collect tithing from members, issue receipts and forward the funds to the General Church.
5. They hold regularly scheduled Sunday School classes for the children and adults alike.

6. They will be established at the time an organizational meeting is held by the Missionary in Charge, and baptized members who desire to be members of that Mission will then be recorded and recognized as such by the General Church.

Be it resolved that this Bill be sent out to Referendum.

Respectfully submitted,
Council of Apostles
Smith N Brickhouse, Secy.

(2002 Conf. Min. p.25-28)

30. Ministerial Provisions

Apostle May Choose a Seventy or an Elder to Assist

Two recommendations were sent to the 1954 Ministers' Conference from a special called council; the first one was approved by the conference and sent to referendum which was passed. The second recommendation (not quoted here) was not approved by the conference.

At the recent special called council of the Council of Twelve Apostles, General Bishopric and Seventy on April 2 and 3, 1954 the following resolutions were adopted to recommend to the Ministers' Conference. We present them for your consideration:

"We recommend to the conference of the Church that when the missionary in charge of a field shall see a need of increased missionary activity in that field he shall by the inspiration from God select a Seventy, preferably, or an Elder who is willing to go into that field, he shall so recommend to the Council of Twelve and after their approval and upon consultation with the General Bishopric find the funds for his family's needs are available, he shall be sent out." "Nothing in the foregoing shall deny the right of the Conference to appoint a Seventy to a field of labor."

(1954 Conf. Min. p.69)

Ministerial Office of Evangelist

An action changing the name of the office of Seventy to Evangelist was submitted by the Council of Apostles to the 1973 Ministers' Conference which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which was passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles submit the following for adoption, to replace that submitted under date of March 28, 1973, and which had been referred for our consideration. If adopted, it should be sent for Referendum vote of the Church. Be it resolved that the Church of Christ with headquarters on the Temple Lot go on record as believing that the Lord called Evangelists, of which there are seventy. The Evangelists are General Church officers belonging to the missionary arm of the Church and are to labor under the direction of the missionary in charge, in the various fields in which they abide, or to which they are appointed by the General Church. Their work is purely missionary and is not executive in the sense that they exercise supervisory oversight and watch care of the churches; neither is it judicial in the sense that they should seek to deal with disorders in locals that may come under their notice, but should report the same to missionary in charge.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles

(1973 Conf. Min. p. 8)

31. General Bishopric

Title And Equity of Church Property

A recommendation from the Council of Apostles regarding church property was approved by the 1963 Ministers' Conference and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the following to be sent out to referendum:

1. That the General Bishopric shall retain all title and equity in the Temple Lot property, including the building and appurtenances and has the jurisdiction

over said building and appurtenances at all time, and have no right to delegate such jurisdiction to any individual or group of individuals without the specific instructions from the General Conferences of the Church of Christ.

2. That the local congregation who assemble in the church building on the Temple Lot, in accordance with the Quit Claim Deed of February 7, 1941, shall have the use, but not jurisdiction, of said building as a place of worship and local business meetings only.

3. That the Pastor of the local congregation shall file with the Secretary of the General Bishopric, a list of all regular worship services and local business meetings to be held.

4. The baptismal fount is for their use, but due notice of its intended use shall be placed in the hands of the Secretary of the General Bishopric as soon as possible before using it.

5. The General Bishopric being thus informed of the schedule of meetings and use of the fount, shall be authorized to allow others to use the building and fount, only when they are not thus being used.

6. At all times there should be conference and co-operation between officers of the local church and the General Bishopric, that there may be no conflict of interest.

7. The General Church reserves the right at all times of the use of the structure for Special Conference, regular conferences, etc., at which times, local services shall be temporarily suspended in the building. The Chambers set aside for Council Rooms are exempt from any and all local church use, unless specific permission is given on request to the Secretary of the Council of Twelve for their quorum room, and the Secretary of the General Bishopric for their council room.

Respectfully submitted,
Council of Apostles
Archie F. Bell, Secretary

(1963 Conf. Min. p. 69; See page 218 for updated resolution)

Property Donated to Church for Personal Care

The General Bishopric made a recommendation to the 1968 Ministers' Conference concerning property donated to the church which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which was passed:

Greetings:

The General Bishopric wishes to recommend that when an individual, because of health reasons or otherwise, finds it advisable to leave his home and go to a rest home and desires to leave his home or property to the church and has not sufficient means to pay his entire expenses at the rest home, and the State is unable to assist him until his total assets have been used for his needs and have

been reduced to a given level, that the Ministers' Conference authorize the General Bishopric to receive and accept each property and administer the handling, maintaining, developing and disposing of such property as it may deem wise, and to take care of the affairs of the donor to the extent of the value of the property. We further recognize that there may be cases when aid to such individuals may be necessary to exceed the extent of the value of the property in getting the individual properly cared for.

Respectfully submitted
Nicholas F. Denham, Secy., General Bishopric

(1968 Conf. Min. p.12)

Action on Handling Property Rescinded

At the 2001 April Conference, an action was made to rescind Bill #2 of 1968, regarding the handling of property donated to the church, which was passed and sent to referendum as Bill #2. This was passed by two-thirds majority vote. - 2001 Conf. Min. p. 31& 32

Resolution on General Church Property and Money

The Council of Apostles made a recommendation to the 1979 Ministers' Conference regarding the handling of General Church property and money which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #6 which was passed:

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends the following statement for adoption through referendum action:

HANDLING OF GENERAL CHURCH PROPERTY AND MONEY

Conference and referendum action have authorized the General Bishopric to "...administer the handling, maintaining, developing and disposing..." of properties received by the Church of Christ, as set forth in Referendum Bill #2 of 1968*, and the administration of funds throughout the Church, as set forth by Referendum Bill #3 of 1931**.

It is the opinion of the Council of Apostles that this administration of duties by the General Bishopric is to be carried out, at all times, under the direction of the general conferences of the Church and under the supervision of the Council of Apostles, as required by Article #19 of the Articles of Faith and Practice of the Church of Christ ***, and Referendum Bill #3 of 1931.

The implementation of these regulations, which are binding upon the Church, will require closer and more constant communication and cooperation between the General Bishopric and the Council of Apostles than has been exercised in the past.

* "The General Bishopric wishes to recommend that when an individual, because of health reasons or otherwise, finds it advisable to leave his home and go to a rest home, and desires to leave his home or property to the Church, and has not sufficient means to pay his entire expenses at the rest home, and the State is unable to assist him until his total assets have been used for his needs and have been reduced to a given level, that the Ministers' Conference authorize the General Bishopric to receive and accept such property and administer the handling, maintaining, developing and disposing of such property as it may deem wise, and to take care of the affairs of the donor to the extent of the value of the property. We further recognize that there may be cases when aid to such individuals may be necessary to exceed the extent of the property in getting the individual properly cared for."

** "Duties of Bishops: They are ministers in spiritual service, whose duties include the gathering and administration of funds throughout the Church, under the general supervision of the Twelve, and have been called and ordained with that general understanding, as stewards and custodians of the moneys of the entire Church...."

*** We believe that the temporal affairs of the general church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the direction of the general conferences of the church and under the supervision of the Council of Twelve. The temporal affairs of the local churches shall be administered by local bishops under the supervision and direction of the local congregations."

Respectfully submitted
William A. Sheldon, Secy. Robert H. Jensen
Archie F. Bell Marvin E. Ely
E. Leon Yates Don E. McIndoo

(1979 Conf. Min. p. 21, 22)

(Note: The reference *above. Bill #2, 1968 was rescinded by Bill #2, 2001)

Disbursements of Aid

A resolution was made to the 1979 Ministers' Conference to govern the disbursement of aid which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #3 which was passed:

RESOLUTION GOVERNING DISBURSEMENT OF
GENERAL CHURCH AID MONEY

1. Money given in aid to one individual during a Conference year shall not exceed \$1000.00
2. Money given in aid to one group during a Conference year shall not exceed \$2000.00.
3. Requests in excess of the above limits shall be submitted for consideration to the Council of Apostles. The authority for final approval shall rest with the Council of Apostles, as set forth in the following previously adopted regulations:

Articles of Faith, No. 19. "We believe that the temporal affairs of the general church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the direction of the general conferences of the church and under the supervision of the Council of Twelve."

Referendum Bill No 3, 1931. Duties of Bishops: "They are ministers in spiritual service, whose duties include the gathering and ministration of funds throughout the church, under the general supervision of the Twelve and have been called and ordained with that general understanding, as stewards and custodians of the moneys of the entire church."
(1979 Conf. Min. p. 14, 15)

Budget Override for Aid

The General Bishopric submitted a resolution to the 1984 Ministers' Conference to increase the budget override from 20% to 50% which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1. The referendum passed the required two-thirds majority vote:

Greetings:

The General Bishopric wish to petition the 1984 conference to approve and send to referendum the proposition that the Apostles may increase an Individual Aid item by 50% instead of the 20% as allowed by our present provisions. This is to mean that the \$1000 per person could be increased to \$1500 with the approval of the Apostles. With today's medical expenses etc. some needs are more than we can now meet.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie P. Case, Secretary of the General Bishopric
(1984 Conf. Min. p. 15)

Base Amount of Aid Increased

The Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric submitted a resolution to the 1985 Ministers' Conference to increase the base amount of aid that

can be given to a church member which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #3. The referendum passed the required two-thirds vote:

To the 1985 Ministers' Conference
of the Church of Christ

The Council of Apostles and General Bishopric wish to recommend that the 1985 conference approve and send to referendum the proposition that the base amount of aid given to a church member encountering an extreme need may be extended by the General Bishopric to the amount of \$2,000 when it has been determined that community resources are not adequate to meet the need.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles
Leslie P. Case, General Bishopric

(1985 Conf. Min. p. 20)

Referendum Bill #2 of 2000 amended the foregoing action (Referendum Bill #3 of 1979) thus:

To increase the amount of aid that the Bishops are approved to give an individual from \$1000 to \$1500.

To add "family" as a part of the first category of aid that the Bishops are approved to give so the category reads "Aid to individuals, family, and groups." To set the limit for family aid at \$3000.

(2000 Conf. Min. p. 23b)

Resolution On General Church Budget

A resolution concerning the General Church budget was submitted to the 1980 Ministers' Conference which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1 which passed the vote of the people:

RESOLUTION -- GENERAL CHURCH BUDGET

The budget approved by a General Church Conference shall be binding for that Conference year, and shall be put into effect as follows:

1. The General Bishopric shall keep close account of the budgeted items through the year to see that no amount exceeds the approved budget.
2. If it appears the appropriation for any item will fall short, the General Bishopric shall notify the secretary of the Council of Apostles immediately.
3. The Council of Apostles may decide on the advisability of an increase of an item. If the amount of increase is over 20%, they will defer a decision to the next General Conference.
4. If the Council of Apostles deems emergency measures are necessary, they may call a special conference to deal with amendments to the budget.

(1980 Conf. Min. p. 14)

Home for the Aged Considered

A recommendation coming from the General Bishopric for a church owned home for the aged, needy and orphan children was considered and approved by the 1953 Ministers' Conference. - 1953 Conf. Min. p.54,55

In the General Bishopric's report to the 1954 Ministers' Conference, they gave this information which indicates the beginning of a fund for the home for the aged, etc.:

We have also provided for a fund of \$2,000.00 for offerings as a start for the home for the aged, needy and orphan children. We realize that this is only a beginning but feel that if you will come forward and support this over and above your regular tithes and offerings we shall soon see such a home in operation here at the center place.

(1954 Conf. Min. p.71)

Home for the Aged Fund Discontinued

The Council of Apostles and the General Bishopric presented a resolution to the 2007 General Conference to abolish the Home For The Aged Fund. This action was passed by the conference. As this fund was established by conference action only it was not required to be sent to referendum.

Greetings:

With regard to the Home for the Aged Fund that was created by Conference action of the Church, because of organic, economic and regulatory reasons imposed by civil authorities, we have been unable to implement the use of this

fund and also noting that this fund has only grown to \$37000 since the 1950's, the Apostles and General Bishopric recommend that this Conference abolish this fund and that all available money from that fund be transferred to the General Fund to be used by the General Bishopric in accord with established General Church requirements.

Respectfully submitted,

Council of Apostle , Smith Brickhouse, Secretary
General Bishopric, Leslie Case, Secretary

(2007 Conf. Min. p. 4, 5)

Term Joint Council Changed to Apostles and General Bishopric

The Council of Apostles submitted a resolution to the 1982 Ministers' Conference changing the use of the term "Joint Council" to "Apostles and General Bishopric" which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2. The referendum was approved by majority vote.

Greetings:

The Council of Apostles recommends for adoption the following:

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Whereas, there has come into frequent use by some in this Church of Christ the term "Joint Council", which is intended by the users to refer to an organizational entity composed jointly of the Apostles and the members of the General Bishopric;

And whereas, there has never been any Conference or Referendum action to authorize the use of such a term, or the establishment of such a designated body within this Church;

And whereas, such a term or organizational structure is without Scriptural foundation;

And whereas, Article 19 of the Articles of Faith and Practice establishes specific lines of responsibility and authority prohibiting such an unauthorized innovation;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that there has never authoritatively existed, nor shall there now be, any rightful use of any conceived application of the term "Joint Council";

And that any existing references in the General Church enactments shall hereby be changed to refer simply to the "Apostles and General Bishopric"; And Further, that each of the above referenced bodies of the Ministry shall function solely within the provisions of the Holy Scriptures and the Articles of Faith and Practice.

Respectfully submitted,
William A. Sheldon, Secy., Council of Apostles
(1982 Conf. Min. p. 16)

Report on Aid for the Elderly and Low Income Families

The General Bishopric researched and prepared a report to the 2002 April Ministers' Conference, on the subject of aid available for the elderly and low income families from various agencies and help outside the church, which was read and spread upon the minutes:

2002 April Ministers Conference Greetings:

The 2001 Referendum bill #2 requested that the Bishops prepare a report on the Agencies and help for the elderly. Much of this help is available to all ages who qualify for this assistance... The Bishops will give you any assistance that we can to get you in contact with the proper agency.

In Gospel Bonds,
Leslie P. Case, Secretary for the Bishops

The complete report is available in the 2002 conference minutes, pages 31 and 32

32.

Some Actions Established Prior to 1950, Rescinded

Bill #1 of 1943 Rescinded

The action, "Resolved that we send all main motions and all elections of officers and committees out to referendum" (Bill #1, 1943), was determined in 1978 to have been sent to referendum in error. An action to

rescind Bill #1, 1943 was sent to referendum by the 1978 Ministers' Conference which was passed by a two-thirds vote.

Bill #17 of 1937 Rescinded

An action passed in 1937 on "temporal plans" was reviewed in 1997. It was determined as not having been implemented or organized in the sixty years since it was passed by referendum. The 1997 Ministers' Conference passed an action to rescind Bill #17, 1937 which was sent to referendum and passed with a two-thirds majority vote.

Bill #4 of 1935 Rescinded

An action, titled "Invitation To Build The Temple" (Referendum Bill #4, 1935), was reviewed in 1998 and determined to be partially rescinded by former referendums. An action to totally rescind Bill #4, 1935 was sent to referendum by the 1998 Ministers' Conference and passed with a two-thirds majority vote.

Actions on Law of Consecration Rescinded

During the 2006 Ministers' Conference, a resolution was made and sent to Referendum as Referendum Bill #1 which was passed by 2/3 majority. The resolution consisted of this statement: "Resolved that we rescind any and all past conference actions concerning a Law of Consecration."

33. Songbooks

Song Book Committee Established

In the 1970 Board of Publications report, there was a mention of a Song Book Committee doing preparatory work for a Church of Christ Hymnal. The referendum of 1939 on printing a church hymnal was activated by the 1971 Ministers Conference and a committee of five was appointed:

Resolution on Hymnbooks

April 12, 1939

We your committee appointed to take into consideration the question of printing a hymnal, or songbook, for the Church of Christ, wish to make the following report:

We find there are no available funds in the Church treasury that can be used for such a purpose as printing a songbook at the present time. But we also find there is a very urgent demand for such a book throughout the Church, and feel that if the proper appeal should be made to the people a sufficient amount can be gathered within a short time to warrant an effort on our part toward such an end.

We therefore recommend the following:

A committee of three be appointed to devise ways and means whereby a suitable collection of songs can be printed and made available for the use of our churches.

We believe this can best be done by a committee empowered not only to solicit funds but to make the selections and to push the work forward till such a book is offered for sale to the church.

We suggest a committee be selected who, because of their nearness to each other, would not be hampered or delayed in their work; that the people of the Church be asked to send to such a committee not only financial aid, but also any choice song they think proper for such a songbook, as well as their favorites from the old songs that are already so well known among our people.

We suggest that the first collection of songs printed consist of as many of the songs selected by our former committee as they may believe advisable, and the words of all other songs be printed with the numbers of music given as found in the Saints' Hymnal, or Praises:

That this book be printed containing not less than one hundred pieces, with music as far as possible:

That the committee be a standing committee, with the object that more songs, with music, may be added to the first collection as fast as the money comes in for this work.

That the sale of the books shall become a perpetual fund to be used for this work only.

This committee was: J. T. Ford, A. M. Smith, M. L. Anderson.

Resolved, that the number composing the Hymnbook Committee be increased to five.

This Bill carried the referendum by a vote of 301 Yes; 19 No.
(1971 Conf. Min. p. 15)

The committee of five appointed was Larry Shaw, Don Housknecht, Nicholas F. Denham, Forest E. Maley and June Sarratt.

At the 1976 Ministers' Conference the New Hymnbook Committee, consisting of William Sheldon, Roland Sarratt, Larry Shaw, Helen Tissler and Lovita Seibel, gave the report that the hymnal was now completed. The conference received the report and discharged the New Hymnbook Committee:

Greetings:

The New Hymnbook Committee wishes to report completion of its work in preparing and publishing of our new hymnal entitled, ZION'S HYMNAL. After publication it was found that five of the hymns were incomplete. This was rectified by the preparation of inserts which included additional hymns. Insofar as we know, all books which have been sent out were provided with these inserts. This will be continued with future orders by the office secretary.

Whenever there is a new edition of the hymnal, the inserts may be easily included in the binding with the present numerical sequence, with the only significant labor required being to include the additional hymns into the index. We feel such future preparation may be accomplished through the Board of Publications. Therefore, we request that the Committee members be discharged and the Committee be abolished. Trusting that our labors have met with general approval, I am, in behalf of the committee,

William A. Sheldon, Chairman
(1976 Conf. Min. p. 6)

Printing of a Spanish Hymnal

A resolution to print a Spanish Hymnal was passed by the 1978 Ministers' Conference and a committee of five were elected to compile suitable hymns. Although work on this very special and needed project had been done through the years, the finished product wasn't realized until the 2005/2006 conference year.

In the Board of Publications report for the 2006 Ministers' Conference, this information is given: "A Spanish Hymnal has been printed through the tireless efforts of Sister Manon Lawrence, Brother Don McIndoo and many other brothers and sisters in both Yucatan and the United States." - 1978 Conf. Min. p. 9,10

34.

Articles of Faith and Practice

Some Articles of Faith and Practice Contained in the Handbook

A “Hand Book” was drafted and published as a supplement to the September, 1949 “Zion’s Advocate” with the intent of having a guide with conference resolutions and enactments for ready use. However it failed to be approved by the 1950 Ministers’ Conference, and after two more efforts, which failed in 1951 and 1952, it was not mentioned again in the conference minutes. - 1950 Conf. Min. p.70,71

Some amendments to the Articles of Faith and Practice contained in the Handbook, numbers 2, 17, 19 and 20, were acted upon by a separate resolution and was passed by the 1950 General Conference . That resolution was sent to referendum and passed. - Conf. Min. 1950 p.73, 74

Rewriting of Articles #20 and #17

The 2004 April Ministers’ Conference sent out for referendum as Bill #1 a resolution to reword article #20 of the Articles of Faith and Practice. This was passed by two-thirds vote. This affirmed that marriage is a union between one man and one woman which clarifies the position of the Church of Christ as not condoning same sex marriages:

At the 2006 April Ministers’ Conference, Article #17 of the Articles of Faith and Practice was revised and sent out to Referendum as Bill #2. It passed by a two-thirds majority vote:

The following are the twenty-five articles of faith and practice as printed by the Board of Publications in May, 2008:

ARTICLES OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

1. We believe in God the Eternal Father. who only is Supreme; Creator of the universe; Ruler and Judge of all; unchangeable and without respect of persons. (Isaiah 45:15-21; Malachi 3;6; Rev. 20:11-13; Moroni 8:19)
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, the manifestation of God in flesh, who lived, suffered. and died for all

mankind; whom we own as our only leader, Witness and Commander. (John 5:19-24; Heb.1:1-14; Alma 9:54-55; 3 Nephi 4:44-49)

3. We believe in the Holy Ghost. the Spirit of Truth. the Comforter, which searcheth the deep things of God, brings to our minds things which are past, reveals things to come, and is the medium by which we receive the revelation of Jesus Christ. (John 14:15-18, 26; 15:26; 16:13; Moroni 10:3-7)

4. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam's transgression, and that as a consequence of the atonement of Christ "all little children are alive in Christ. and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all they that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation. can not repent; and unto such. baptism availed nothing." (Rom. 2:6, 12-13; Mosiah 1:107; Moroni 8:25-26)

5. We believe that through the atonement of Christ all men may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel; vis. Faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ; Repentance and Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; Laying on of Hands for (a) Ordination; (b) Blessing of Children (c) Confirmation and the Gift of the Holy Ghost; (d) Healing of the sick. (John 3:16-17; Hel. 5:69-72, 6:1-2; 2 Nephi13:12~17; Moroni 8:29; (a) Acts13:1-3; (b) Mark 10:13-16; 3 Nephi 8:20-27; (c) Acts 8:14-17; Moroni 2:1-3; (d) Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-16)

6. We believe in the literal second coming and millennial reign of Jesus Christ; in the resurrection of the Dead. and in Eternal Judgment; that men will be rewarded or punished according to the good or evil they may have done. (Matt.. 16:27; Revelations 20:1-6, 12-15; 22:12; 1 Nephi 7:55--62; 2 Nephi 12:87-99; Alma19:66-69)

7. We believe in the powers and gifts of the everlasting Gospel; vis.: The word of wisdom; the word of knowledge; the gift of faith; the gift of healing; working of miracles; prophecy; discerning of spirits; divers kinds of tongues; interpretation of tongues. (Acts 2:4-11; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Moroni 10:8-14.18)

8. We believe the fruit of the spirit to be love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. (Gal. 5.22-23)

9. We believe that in the Bible is contained the word of God, that the Book of Mormon is an added witness for Christ, and that these contain the

"fullness of the Gospel." (B.C. 44:13; Ezekiel 37:15-20; 1 Nephi 3:157-166, 191-196)

10. We believe in the principle of continuous revelation; that the canon of scripture is not full, that God inspires men in every age and among all people, and that He speaks when, where, and through whom He may choose. (Amos 3:7; Acts 2:17-18; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Nephi 1:82-83)

11. We believe that where there are six or more regularly baptized members, one of whom is an elder, there the church exists with full power of church extension when acting in harmony with the law of God. (Acts 14:23; Outline History p.35; Ref. Bill # 1, 1960)

12. We believe that a man must be called of God by revelation, and ordained by those having authority, to enable him to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances thereof. (Luke 6:12-16; John 3:27; Acts 13:1-4; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4)

13. We believe in the same church organization as existed in the time of Christ and His Apostles. The highest office in the church is that of an apostle, of whom there are twelve, who constitute special witnesses for Jesus Christ. They have the missionary supervision and the general watch-care of all of the churches. (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Nephi 3:115)

14. The primary function of the general Church, of which each local church is a component part, is missionary and the building up and extension of the Kingdom of God in all the world. (Matthew 24:14; Mark 16:15-18)

15. We believe that local churches should govern their own affairs, and that general church officials should not dominate or interfere therewith. On invitation such general officers may, with propriety, give counsel and assistance. Local congregations are subject to the Articles of Faith and Practice and must be governed thereby. (Ref Bill #2, 1935, par. 3-8)

16. We believe the Church of Christ comprehends the true brotherhood of man where each esteems his brother as himself and wherein the divine command to "love your neighbor as yourself" is demonstrated by the prevalence of social equality. (Matt. 22:36-40; Gal. 5:14; 1 John 4:7-21; Mos. 1:48-49; 3 Ne. 12:11)

17. We believe that all men are stewards of their worldly possessions and goods and answerable to God both for how they are used and the manner

in which they are secured. We believe that all men are also stewards of their time and talents and are accountable to God for how they are used. We are to pay tithes and offerings to the Church as required by God with the promise of His blessings. We define a tithe as 1/10 of our increase. Offerings are donations above and beyond tithes. These tithes and offerings are to be used for the building up on the Kingdom of God in all nations, bringing all people to Jesus Christ through baptism. (Mark 12:41-44; Malachi 3:8-12; Gen. 28:20-22; 14:20; Heb. 7:4-6; Acts 10:1-4; 3 Nephi 11:11-15; Mosiah 2:37, 42-44; Mat. 28:18-20; Jacob 2:22-24; Alma 10:8; Deuteronomy 14:22)

18. We believe that men should labor for their own support and that of their dependents. Ministers of the gospel are not absolved from this responsibility, but when chosen or appointed by the church to devote their entire time to missionary work, their families are to be provided for out of the general church funds. The admonition of Christ that the ministry should not provide purse or scrip for their journey, but go trusting in God and the people is applicable. (Matt. 10:9-10; Luke 22:35-36; 1 Cor 9:16-18; 1 Pet. 5:2-3; Mos. 9:59-62)

19. We believe that the temporal affairs of the general church are to be administered by the general bishopric under the direction of the general conferences of the church and under supervision of the council of Twelve. The temporal affairs of the local churches shall be administered by local bishops under the supervision and direction of the local congregations. (Acts 6:2-6; Ref. Bill #3, 1931)

20. We believe in the sanctity of marriage as established by the Lord in the beginning as a union between one man and one woman. Any other type of relationship such as homosexuality, polygamy, multiplicity of marriages, common-law marriage and cohabiting are not sanctioned by God and are disharmonious with the plan for His creation. In case of a breach of this covenant by adultery (fornication), the innocent one may remarry. (Matt. 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-9; 1 Cor. 7:10-11; 3 Nephi 5:80)

21. We are opposed to war. Men are not justified in taking up arms against their fellows except as a last resort in defense of their lives and to preserve their liberty. (Alma 20:47-52)

22. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the ten lost tribes. (Isa. 11:11-12; Jer. 16:14-16; 31:10-12; Ezekiel 36:21-28; 3 Nephi 10:1-7)

23. We believe a temple will be built in this generation, in Independence, Missouri, wherein Christ will reveal himself and endow his servants whom he chooses with power to preach the gospel in all the world to every kindred, tongue and people, that the promises of God to Israel may be fulfilled. (Micah 4:1-2; Malachi 3:1-4; 3 Nephi 10:4; Ether 6:8)

24. We believe that a New Jerusalem shall be built upon this land "unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph.." "...which city shall be built, beginning at the Temple Lot." (3 Nephi 9:57-59,10:1-4; Ether 6:6-8; Revelation to Joseph Smith given Sept., 22&23, 1832)

25. We believe that ministry and membership should abstain from the use of tobacco, intoxicating liquors and narcotics, and should not affiliate with any society which administers oaths or covenants in conflict with the law of God, or which interferes with their duties as free men and citizens. (1Cor. 3:16-17; Ether 3:86-98)

35. Spiritual Manifestations

Conference of Apostles & Elders on Purported Revelations Established

A resolution concerning purported revelations was submitted by the Council of Apostles to the 1971 Ministers' Conference which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #1. This Bill failed to pass the two-thirds majority vote.

A rewrite of the document on purported revelations was submitted by the Council of Apostles to the 1972 Ministers' Conference which was approved and sent to referendum as Bill #2 which passed:

Greetings:

Disposition of Purported Revelations to the Church

Whereas,

It has come to the attention of the Council of Apostles that perhaps the membership of the Church did not understand the intent, or did not fully agree

with Referendum Bill No. 1 of 1971, and whereas,

This Bill has been revised to the extent that it is felt it will now meet with the approval of the membership, and whereas,

The purpose of this Bill is to remove the present imposed restriction, preventing the Council of Apostles from acting upon any revelation given to the Church, purporting to be from God, and whereas,

Under our present rules, the hands of the Council of Apostles are tied, preventing it from action in any way, even though God would give revealments, the nature of which should require immediate action, and whereas,

The statement is often used that: "purported revealments from God must stand on their own merits as they may be demonstrated by the arbitrament of time;" we believe this method has proven unsatisfactory.

Therefore, be it resolved,

That all written communications or oral manifestations purported to be divine, pertaining to the General Church, no matter through whom given shall first be referred to the Council of Apostles for their consideration and recommendations, except those received during Solemn Assemblies and general Conferences. In this event, they shall be presented to the Joint Council of Apostles and Elders assembled at the Conference, for their consideration and recommendations to the general Conference.

Actions taken by the Apostles in the interim between Conferences regarding spiritual manifestations are binding upon the church until the next general Conference, at which time they shall be submitted to the Joint Council of Apostles and Elders for their consideration and recommendation to the general Conference.

No manifestation shall be left to the arbitrament of time.

Be it resolved, that conflicting resolutions be herewith rescinded.

Respectfully submitted, For the Council of Apostles,

Clarence L. Wheaton, E. Leon Yates, William A. Sheldon, Archie F. Bell,
Marvin E. Ely, Joe W. Kidd, Robert H. Jensen

(1972 Conf. Min. p. 13)

Manifestation Given at 1968 Ministers' Conference

A purported manifestation was given during the sacrament service Sunday morning March 31, 1968, on the first day of the Ministers' Conference through Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton, Sr.

PURPORTED MANIFESTATION

Hearken unto me, O my people, who have taken upon you the name of my Son, Jesus Christ. Behold, I have looked upon your efforts. I have looked upon you in your trials and your difficulties and I know that those who would desire that they might destroy this work that I have given unto you to do, that they will not be permitted to accomplish that which they have done. Lo, Behold, a great and a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men, in which the gospel shall be carried with greater force and with greater power from this people than it has ever done before. Yea, behold, I say unto you through my Holy Spirit, be faithful to the trust which I have given to you. Seek me often in fasting and prayer and I will open the heavens to you that you might know that which I would have you to do. As you might be able to know the course which I would have you to pursue. Therefore, continue to seek me, O my people, for I love you. You are the apple of my eye. I have called you out from among the world, and though you may be little among the great divisions of this my work in these last days, yet I have a work for you to do that cannot be accomplished by any other. Therefore, in the name of my Son, Jesus Christ, I command you to go forth and be humble. Cast aside your contentions and strifes one with another and humble yourselves before me and I will open the heavens and I will give you those blessings which you stand in need of. Amen.

The action to receive this manifestation was worded thus:

Vote on motion as amended: moved and seconded that we receive this purported manifestation and spread it on the minutes, and that we observe our rule that such manifestations would rest on their own merits and the arbitrament of time. Carried.

(1968 Conf. Min. p. 14)

Revelation Given Through James E. Yates, May 1, 1927

The research conducted on the subject of transfers of membership from other Restoration churches into the Church of Christ brought forth a purported revelation given through James E. Yates in 1927 just prior to his joining the Church of Christ. The revelation was printed in the December,

1930, Zion's Advocate as a part of a proposed referendum. It was felt that this revelation was worthy to be printed in our conference minutes of 1973.

It should be noted that this revelation was not given in a congregation of the Church of Christ. The Church of Christ was referred to favorably in the latter part of the revelation. Therefore it is included in this history for all who desire the spiritual things of this work.

Word of the Holy Spirit in Answer to Fasting and Prayer,
at Independence, Sunday Morning, May 1, 1927

By James E. Yates

By the quickening power of my Holy Spirit, thus is given the word of the Lord to all who will open their souls to hear my voice, saith the Lord.

Your prayers are before me, ye who have asked that I shall lead you, and behold, I am willing to lead all my people who put their trust in me. But you must hear my voice if I am to be your leader indeed, and thus are you to know how to follow.

Ye have asked of me to know my will, yet will ye hearken when I shall speak? Will ye obey if my word shall conflict with the thoughts and beliefs of your imperfect humanity?

Behold, thus saith the Lord, I lead my people when they have courage to follow me and to keep my commandments.

By the Spirit in the hearts of all those who truly feel after me I have been with the various broken factions of my church to bless and to comfort and to shield my people from much of the power of evil.

And today do I declare that I, the Lord, will continue to give of my Spirit and blessing to those of every name and kindred, tongue and people who feel after me daily, and whose delight is to seek my ways.

But thus saith the word of the Lord to all my people everywhere, who will open their hearts to hear the voice of my Spirit as given through my servants in these words: Verily I have rejected the Reorganized Church with its sins and its follies and its system making, because they have departed from me, and by the deceptions of the wicked one of their leaders, have caused a defilement of much of mine heritage.

Yet in my love and compassion I will continue to feel after those among them whose spiritual vision is darkened; and inasmuch as they will come unto me and forsake the worldly idols that have been set up before them, I will surely

manifest myself unto them in might, and by the refreshing power of my Spirit in blessing.

But inasmuch as my people will continue to bow down before the idols of mammon and to submit their backs to the bearing of financial burdens for an institutionalism that I have not commanded, and which is contrary to the purity of my word and way, behold, inasmuch as my people will continue to yield themselves to the will of taskmasters whose plans I have not appointed, verily my Spirit will not always strive with them, and they must at last reap the results of their folly.

And verily, thus speaketh the Spirit to mine Elders everywhere, whose spirits have been burdened because you have beheld the havoc that hath been wrought in mine heritage, if you will now hearken to the voice of my counsel, behold the fire of my spiritual zeal shall be renewed in your hearts, and a spiritual refreshing from the throne of my glory shall descend upon you, and your joy shall be increased in the labors of my vineyard.

Verily, out of the broken fragments of my spiritual kingdom of the last days I have preserved unto myself a remnant for the carrying forward of my work unto its final completeness.

The people of this remnant of my church on the Temple land which has been consecrated to me, have not been wholly in accord with my will, neither do they at this day fashion all their work perfectly in me, but behold, for a wise purpose in me, your Lord and your Redeemer, I have held them in the hollow of mine hand.

Their priesthood and their ministry hath been preserved in me, and their ministrations among men I will continue to bless; for they are an instrument of mine own choosing.

Ye of my people and of my ministry have questioned the spiritual call of those men of the ministry chosen to be Apostles in this remnant of mine heritage. Verily, if ye will hear my word today I declare unto you, these are my chosen Apostles of this present day dispensation, and through their ministry, if they continue humble and faithful, and through this chosen of my broken heritage, I will from this day forward quicken their spiritual ministrations among the people, and will continue to use these servants of mine, and this remnant, to bear the message of life and salvation to the souls of men.

In the midst of many trials, and despite the human weakness of my servants who shall remain true to the trust given them, I, the Lord, will carry forward my work, and in mine own time, and in mine own way all shall at last be accomplished.

Thus speaketh the voice of the Spirit through my servant by whom I have chosen to deliver these words.

And they who shall hear the voice of my Spirit speaking herein unto their hearts, shall find witness in me, that I your Lord have truly spoken. And it is by my word all shall be judged at the last day.

Thus speaketh the voice of the Spirit unto all Saints who will hear and will heed my word, even so, Amen.

(1973 Conf. Min. p. 9)

Manifestation Given During the 1975 Solemn Assembly

A manifestation was given April 4, 1975 during the evening Solemn Assembly service through Elder Roland Sarratt. It was presented to the Apostles and Elders who accepted it as the word of God. It then was considered by the 1975 Ministers' Conference who approved of the decision of the Apostles and Elders:

Will this people hear the voice of the Lord? Will they heed His counsel? The Spirit of the Lord has come upon me. He has rebuked me. He has given unto me to say (I feel so insecure):

By what spirits have this people been guided, and what spirits have brought you into His house?

Do you know not that there are spirits in the world that Satan has flooded the earth with, and you have brought them to His house? Do you not know that the Spirit of Christ will not have company with those spirits? Therefore, He speaks in rebuke and not in compliment, and He asks not that you sympathize yourselves one with another, for in your sympathy you take away from the full strength of His counsel. Therefore, turn yourself to Him; strip yourself of these things. Melt your hearts. His compassion has been full, but have ye drawn upon it? Have you let the power of the Spirit that He would give unto you come unto you to correct your lives? Why has He chosen me, the weakest among you, to speak to you? Because it is the disposition of man to put his trust in the arm of flesh; and so, if there would be a strong man that would speak to you, you would put your trust in him and not in the Savior. For He comes to counsel with you, and He is nigh unto you now, but have ye heard? You counsel one with another in long exhortations, but not from the heart, and you have made this people heavy in their ears that they hear not. Therefore, be brief in your counsel, one with another, and speak not to soothe, for in your soothing you take away from the strength of His word. Let the word pierce you, for there it is that it will correct your ways. Amen.

(1975 Conf. Min. p. 14, 15)

Manifestation Given Through Apostle Don W. Housknecht

On April 2, 1984, a Special Conference of Apostles and Elders considered a manifestation presented by Apostle Don W. Housknecht and resolved that it was counsel of the Lord intended for the instruction of the ministry and not the general church. It was not printed in the minutes of the 1984 Ministers' Conference.

Revelation Given February 25th, 1984
Through Apostle Don Housknecht

Thus saith the Spirit unto such as have ears to hear and hearts to receive...

It is pleasing unto me that you have sought me in fasting and prayer, for I know of your travail and desire for good in the welfare of my church. Because thou art zealous for the cause of Zion and art seeking the keeping of my law and ordinances as you have received them at their deliverance, I speak now for your peace of heart and mind.

Because thou hast kept mine ordinances and call them sacred, I say that my church is resident within you as long as you change not from that which was given in the beginning. Remember that I am the Lord God and I change not and my Word gives witness to those who labor to maintain the integrity of my Word among my people in these last days, for they are few.

Therefore do I call forth to you to give an even more earnest heed to the use of gifts and treasures entrusted to your care that you become mine ambassadors to declare my truths and thus through you, accomplish my works in mine own way and that the glory of my Zion might appear.

But there are many whom have lost their first love and have not trusted in me nor found sufficiency in that provided in my law and ordinances but have rather sought the councils of worldly churches as an instrument to accomplish their end and twist mine ordinances to their own suiting and imaginations. They have used the revenues given for support of my Church in ways of their choosing wherein my law makes no such provision, not being content with plainness of the poor in Spirit. They have adopted the doctrines of other shrines outside my gospel that I no longer have a peculiar people content in my ways.

Your will to become separate from such has become my will to deliver you. Therefore let me glorify myself in you...but give heed and carefully, to this admonition.

Ye have asked my will be done and for the coming of my kingdom but you are not yet of sufficient strength to receive such, but shortly shall your desires be fulfilled if you continue to band together and council one with another in

fasting and prayer for in this shall you gain a kinship to my Son whom you have found to your joy, in a measure before unknown. Blessed are ye for your concern, but be patient and humble with that which you have found that it may come to glory and honor in me.

If you would be true to me and rise against men who usurp authority in mine house, ye must continue and not waver from humble firmness against usurping man if you would have my favor. Ye have not been without justification to stand against evil but remember to endure all things is not without reward.

Be wise in reasoning together that you run not before me, for as you sow so will you reap. Had you given a more earnest heed to my council in the days past, then those whom have been among you would have had greater strength and determination to stand in my ways, but being weak in faith they could not endure and they are gone from you and left their first love...be this a lesson to you. Be content with the things I have given you and use them to help deliver my church, and my glory shall shine forth in you and your true discipleship shall become a testimony in holiness before me.

This is my purpose in you through my gospel, that you show forth the praises of your Heavenly Father who hath brought you out of darkness into light, that I may reveal myself in you to glory and honor and sanctification of the just.

If one takes the right to lessen the sacredness of my ordinances or change the purpose of my laws to satisfy their own interpretations and ye consent to it, ye but corrupt the soil where ye have sown my word and growth is denied thereby.

If then in verity you desire that my kingdom be among you, plant the seed of kindness and the fruit pleasing unto me shall be forthcoming. Rid yourselves of the overabundance of earthly things and the heavenly things ye seek shall be my pleasure to give. That which you have sought for and that which you proclaim against shall be concluded if you agree as one to obey my council.

Verily this is my law, that you be pure in heart, a stranger to gossip, aware of faults within yourselves as in your neighbor and to deal kindly with both. Thus will Zion be a reality when thou canst live with your brother and love him because thou hast first loved me.

Before thou canst taste of common life together there must first come the trial of your faith. Prove me herewith saith your Heavenly Father and thou shalt be blessed above all peoples, much more than they who say and do not, and such as worship me with their lips and not their hearts.

Meditate day and night on my words as I have given them, and not make private interpretation of them but rely on my Holy Spirit to guide. Continue in fasting and meditations in prayer and I shall reveal my intents and purposes in

you from time to time. Take courage and be of good cheer and I will lead you into righteousness and never leave you alone.

This I leave with you, Saith the Spirit and mind of your Heavenly Father, Amen.

Manifestations Considered

In accordance with referendum Bill #2 of 1972, a special conference of the Apostles and Elders of the Church of Christ met in session on August 6, 2003 to consider four documents. Three of those documents were accepted by that body as being given of God. Their recommendations were brought to the 2004 April Ministers' Conference. That body approved the three documents as recommended by the Apostles and Elders which are as follows:

1. The vision given to the Church through Brother Marvin Carroll on March 30, 2003 in Grand Junction, CO, as delivered to the Church on April 9, 2003 in Independence, MO, be accepted as being of the Lord.

Vision given on Sunday the 30th of March 2003, at approximate 7:20 P.M, while at the service of the Church of Christ in Grand Junction, Colo.

At the commandment of the Lord given Tuesday, April the 8th late in the evening I was commanded in a very stern voice that on the morrow I would go up to the Church and deliver the message to the people of the Church of Christ along with the understanding and interpretation for the welfare of his people that they may know what is to pass, just the same as the Lord gave to me.

Note:

The time of this vision to take place is NOW, March and April of 2003. The place where this vision will take place is in Iraq in the Middle East.

The scene opens up to me and the first thing that I see is a big brown bear in a steel cage. The color of the bear is impressed upon me and the color is brown with an orange tinge to it. The color goes along with another scene in the vision.

As I am looking at this bear my eyes look beyond him and I see a storm, a big violent storm. As I look upon this storm I think that I am looking at a sand storm, as I look and watch I realize that it is not a sand storm at all, yes it is a storm, but what kind of storm? The thought comes to me, it is a war storm, a

war storm I think, strange, as I watch this scene, the storm is vibrating, in agitation, simmering, ready to break out, it has the same color as the bear, brown with an orange color.

I should mention, this storm went from one horizon to the other horizon, I could never see the end of it and it also went up into the sky as far as I could see. Again I'm impressed with this color, these two scenes are associated with each other, because of this color I understand they are alike or should I say, like one family that is related with another family. I continue to watch the scene and I am given understanding this war storm is the Arab nations, they are angry, frustrated, agitated, mad and upset.

The scene fades out and again I'm watching the bear, this time I see the bear completely and the steel cage. The bear is standing up with his paw's chest high, the bear is unable to sit or lay down due to the small cage, now I also see a little boy, say at the age of six or seven years of age. This boy has a stick in his hand that is about three feet long, it also has a sharp point on it, the boy is making good use of this stick jabbing the bear, yes this boy is having the time of his life, enjoying himself as he sticks the bear, the bear lets out a roar as it is jabbed, the bear is unable to get away from this boy due to the small cage, the boy just keeps jabbing the bear and delights in hearing the roar that the bear lets out as it is injured never realizing the danger it is in.

Let us understand the meaning of this little child. Little children never comprehend the rash acts they do, and they don't have the maturity, judgment, wisdom, or understanding of their acts. This is the condition of this boy never seeing the danger he was in. We should understand at this point the little boy also represents the United States of America.

At this time the scene changes some. The time has now moved into the future, how far I don't know, but it is in the future, as the scene unfolds, the bear somehow gets out of the steel cage. The bear no longer represents Iraq, at this time it represents Arab people or the Arab Nations, the bear is now on all four feet. One thing is on the mind of that bear and only one thing, that is to find the little boy that has been tormenting and hurting him, as the bear comes walking around the cage it is looking for that boy and sees him and makes a dash for him and grabs and mauls him viciously.

Let us remember what this boy is. It is the United States of America. When the bear grabs the boy we are now in America. The USA. is being invaded. The scene now fades out. One last thought comes to my mind, millions fall in combat, wives crying for their husbands, children crying for their parents, and they are not.

Let's remember the instructions given at the introduction of this Message. This is given for the information of his people that they may know what is to come.

2. The admonition given through Brother Marvin Carroll at the 2003 Colorado Reunion be accepted as a wise admonition from the Lord, and that the children of God take it into their hearts.

An admonition given through Elder Marvin Carroll at the Colorado Reunion 2003, an addendum to the vision he delivered at the 2003 April Ministers' Conference.

This message comes due to the worries of the Lords' people concerning the vision that was given at the conference of 2003.

Some of the people are worried, frightened, and upset not knowing what to do or which way to turn. The Lord has made a promise to his people of this Church of Christ. The promise is that the Lord will be there to help you in your trouble, tribulation, grief, worries, and anxieties of your heart.

I first want to say that this is not a vision or a dream, but only the words that came into my mind the last couple of weeks. To be obedient to the Lord I have put these thoughts on paper so that I wouldn't forget them.

The admonition is to you his people, in the coming conflicts upon this nation, there are those that are worried about the tumultuous times and the calamities that are ahead of us. I have wondered what shall we do? The Lord has assured me in a very strong way, if we only put our trust in the Lord, and keep his commandments, all will be well with us.

The first scripture that comes to me is in Luke 21 34-36 "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

I feel strongly that there are those present in the church that will not give heed to the words of the Lord as they should, they will think in their hearts that there will be sufficient time, or a more convenient place of their choosing. There isn't a more convenient time to repent and change our lives than now.

The people of this church must take a step up in the love, kindness, and charity that we should have. While some have done this there are those that haven't. We have those that speak with their mouth but their heart is not in it. You must search within your heart to answer if this means you.

The next scripture that comes to me is Mormon 2:6 "But behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked, that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children men unto bloodshed."

The Lord has made clear to me that we should not look at the conflict that is coming as many do. The Lord is going to do a great work, and we should turn the coin over and look at it from another angle. We are to look at the good that will take place after this conflict.

It is after this conflict that the House of Israel will begin to come into their rightful place, and the Church of Christ will have much of the hindering evil force removed from this land.

The next scripture that comes to me is Ether 3:94-100 "And now I, Moroni, do not write the manner of their oaths and combinations, for it hath been made known unto me that they are had among all people, and they are had among the Lamanites, and they have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, and also the destruction of the people of Nephi; 95 And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed, for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them, and yet he avenge them not; 96 Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shewn unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which were built up to get power and gain, and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you; 97 Yea, even the sword of the justice of the eternal God, shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction, if ye shall suffer these things to be; 98 Wherefore the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you, that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you, or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who build it up. 99 For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up, seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations and countries; 100 And it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people; for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents;"

The cleansing that shall come up on this land will free this nation from much of the evil that is present. The conflict that will take place will not be done in a corner, all you will have to do, is watch, nor will it take place in one night. It will take some of the world by storm, but it should not be that way for you because you are forewarned.

There will be several things that will come together at this time, it will be a very violent time, again the Lord has assured me in a very strong way, that all will be well for those that put their trust in the Lord: and keep his commandments.

The Lord has put a requirement or stipulation for his help. The Lord says that you must put your trust in him and keep his commandments. Let me repeat

this requirement, the Lord states you must keep his commandments and put your trust in him, and if you do this you will be protected from those things that are coming on the earth.

What greater promise can you receive than this? It must be remembered that the Lord has never failed to come to the help of his people in their time of trouble. The scriptures verify this truth in both the Book of Mormon and Bible showing how the Lord came to the assistance of his people. Today it is no different. The Lord will not leave you alone in the conflict that is to come.

Now we shall reason together, so that there shall be no doubt in your heart of the promise the Lord has made to you. Let us go back to the time of Moses and the people in the desert after they came out of Egypt. You remember how the serpents came among the people, and many were bitten and died. Moses made an image of the serpent and put it upon a pole, and those that were bitten only had to look upon this image and they lived. You know that many more died because they wouldn't look. All they had to do was look and be saved, but because it was so easy, many wouldn't look. Yet the salvation of the Lord was there, just the same as it is today.

Let us move back in time some more, to Noah and the flood. After the flood the Lord made a promise to Noah and their families of the earth that there would never be another flood upon the whole earth again. The Lord placed a bow in the sky to show His promise. Today you can see the bow when it rains, and we know the promise the Lord made is still valid today.

Let us move back in history more to the creation of man. The creation of man was really a marvelous thing. Created out of the dust He gave man two eyes to see with, two ears to hear with, a nose to smell with, a tongue to taste and speak with, a brain to think and reason with, and intelligence. Along with this the Lord gave him two arms and hands with fingers to manipulate things with, then he gave him legs and feet, to make him mobile, so he can go from here to there. What a creation the Lord made!

Now I want you to look at the person that is sitting beside you, and you are to touch them on the hand or arm and feel them, now that you have done this you know that they are real, just the same as you are, you can see them as well as you have felt them, so you can be convince that the promise of the Lord is just as real and sure as the person that is sitting beside you.

3. The experience of Brother Brian McIndoo in May 2003 while in Africa was accepted as spiritual direction for the Church.

During the month of May 2003 while on a missionary trip in Africa I felt concerned for the work and the lack of ministry to shepherd the flock. I awoke early one morning and with this concern was weighing heavily upon me, and I petitioned the Lord. In earnest prayer I asked Him to call additional ministry to help in this work, or tell me why He would not. The answer came almost

immediately. He revealed that they have not been sufficiently taught all that they needed to know. Then my mind was flooded with the knowledge that the church was failing a large portion of its members. The cause of our failure is we have not done everything in our power to provide Book of Mormons to the 1400 members in Africa and the Philippines who cannot read English. Yet our energy is being spent on trying to publish yet another English version of Book of Mormon. I was convicted of my own sense of responsibility to do all I can to teach them what they need. The names of many good and dedicated men to the gospel and the Church of Christ came to my mind that cannot and have not ever read the Book of Mormon because they cannot read our language and we should not expect them to.

Dream Given to Priest Glenn Orsted Received

A special conference of Apostles and Elders met April 3, 2007 to consider a spiritual dream given to Priest Glenn Orsted, December 5, 2006. It was accepted by the majority of that body and forwarded to the 2007 General Conference which in turn received it on the recommendation of the special conference body.

Greetings,

The Apostle and Elders having met in special conference in consideration of a spiritual dream received by brother Glenn Orsted resolved by a vote of 24 for and 5 opposed "that this vision that was given to brother Orsted is for the benefit of the Church of Christ." and further that it "be forwarded with a recommendation to be accepted by the 2007 April General Conference and spread upon their minutes."

Vision received by brother Glenn Orsted 12-05-06:

"I saw two images simultaneously before me. They were side by side. The first was a church building. It was clean and well maintained. There was nothing particularly spectacular about it. It was rather ordinary - not much different than the many small community churches we frequently see. I did not recognize it as any particular local of the Church of Christ that I had seen.

"I could see through the windows that there were people inside worshipping. At times they were kneeling, at other times sitting and at others holding song books. Although there was clearly activity inside, there was little activity outside. I could not hear anything from the church. Occasionally someone would exit or enter the church but otherwise there was no activity outside.

"As I watched storm clouds rolled overhead the church. The church was beat upon by wind, rain, lightning, and thunder but stood unchanged."

"As I was witnessing this image, beside it was an image of a large group of people. What I immediately noticed was the tremendous amount of activity and noise. People were walking about talking and singing. I noticed that they appeared happy and were smiling. The storm also came upon them and they dispersed and went in all different directions. They circled about, coming into the image, and then exiting back out.

"As I watched, the two images came together. The church did not change in design, but it did grow in size. Although the design of the church did not change, it was strikingly different. Now there was light emitting from the windows, and it appeared to glow or shine. I could hear hymns being sung and there were people going into and out of the church building. The storm clouds which had been over and around the church now rolled back. They were surrounding the church, but held at a distance."

The brethren of the special conference also resolved by a vote of 23 yes to 2 no, that we recommend the inclusion of the following comments by Brother Orsted in the publication of the minutes:

Comments by Brother Glenn Orsted:

"All I saw was the vision. However, as I witnessed it I believed that the church was representative of the church in the United States - rather solemn and quiet, but it was the foundation, the strength, and the backbone. It stood in the storms.

"The large group of people, I felt, were the converts of the world. Whether the ones we are currently encountering in foreign lands, the house of Israel, both, or others yet in the future, I could not say. However, I felt that they would be the spark that ignites the fire of the gospel. They would be the enthusiasm and the zeal.

"Both parts were necessary. The church was the foundation, strength and organization, but the fire of the Holy Spirit would come from this larger group and the image was not complete until they were together."

Submitted by Elder Peter Gould,
Secretary for the special conference of Apostles and Elders.

(2007 Conf. Min. p.29)

Dream Given to Elder Merlin Eddy Received

A special conference of Apostles and Elders met April 8, 2008 to consider a spiritual dream given to Elder Merlin Eddy sometime in June or July, 2006. It was accepted by that body with this recommendation: "We accept

this dream as being a warning to the members of the church by God, of our need to walk in humble obedience holding tightly to his word if we are to be kept from being swept away.” This was forwarded to the 2008 General Conference which in turn accepted it on the recommendation of the special conference body.

This is a dream that I had one night. I am not sure of the exact date but it was late June or early July. The dream was not long before the Tri-State reunion on 7 July 2006.

The scene in my dream was a vast expanse of clear ice. The ice was smooth and had no snow cover. Crossing this expanse of ice was a line of people. I could not determine who any of these people were but I could see that there were men and women, both young and old. Those that I saw were slowly walking in a single straight line, as if there was a path across the ice. All of the people on the path were carrying or pulling luggage. There were groups in this line of people that seemed to be family members and friends as I could hear some talking and laughing. I could not see the beginning of the line of people or any edge of the expanse of ice as it was beyond my sight. The destination of this line of people was a large rock island that I could see in the distance. On this rock island was built a structure that looked like a castle made of stone.

Suddenly, and without warning, a fierce wind blew across the line of people. The people were being blown off the path, as there was no traction on the ice. A few in the line were prepared and as the wind started they let go of the luggage they had and laid face down on the ice. Those that were prepared cried out to the others to let go of their luggage and lay flat on the ice, so the wind would not sweep them away. Some lay on the ice but would not let go of their luggage and as the wind caught the luggage, they continued to be blown off the path. Others were trying to crouch and walk into the wind but they were blown faster off of the path. I could hear screaming and crying for those who would not listen to those who were prepared and those who obeyed them, because they continued being swept off by the fierce and steady wind.

Those who were prepared for the wind had two picks, one in each hand, which they plunged into the ice and could hold themselves in place. Some held on to those with the picks and they were not swept away. I could see some that were close enough to the island that they could hold on to the rocky outcroppings and hold fast against the wind. But all of those that would not obey the cries of those who were prepared, and the cries of the obedient, were swept off until they were out of my sight. They would not let go of their luggage and lay down on the ice. There was much sorrow for the friends and family members that were swept off by the fierce and steady wind that suddenly swept across the path. This is where the dream ended.

(2008 Conf. Min. p.34)

36.

In Conclusion

This book contains some of the many works and efforts that have been performed by this people in the name of religion. It does not contain the many, many spiritual experiences that they have had personally and collectively which has motivated them in their cause of religion. Their dedication to the cause has been varied and perhaps somewhat misguided at times. It might appear that the Lord has dealt with us more in mercy than in justice.

For what it is worth, my testimony is that the Lord has preserved this church as His church for His own purposes and that He has had his hand in all the comings and goings of the people involved. At this time His hand can only be seen by the spiritual eye, but the promise is that He will make bare His arm before all the nations. His plans will be carried out by those who will heed His will and He will have a holy people to fulfill His work in these last days.

As a young man in the 1950's I heard a testimony that has been rather inspiring to me through the years. Seventy James Maynard Case told of a vision he had in the auditorium of the old Temple Lot church building during a service. He was sitting in the front right hand side when he saw a rosebud come down from the ceiling. It stopped right in front of him.

The pedals of the rosebud started to open but some of them had difficulty opening. They appeared to nearly tear as they tried to open. Brother Maynard started to reach out to help them but he was stopped from doing so. Finally all the pedals opened to a full rose with none of them damaged. Brother Maynard expressed, rather emotionally, the beauty of the rose. It was the most beautiful sight he had ever seen. He seemed to understand the meaning but didn't elaborate much upon it.

Those of us, who have lived through the last half century being involved or acquainted with this church, can say that this vision has described the

Church of Christ wherein certain difficulties occurred in the 1950s and 1960s when the pedals were nearly torn. Although we are not that beautiful rose as yet, we have evidence of a greater love within the body of Christ. Let us pray that the pedals will continue to open more freely to glorify God and His Son, Jesus Christ and that someday soon this church will be that beautiful rose that Brother Maynard saw.

Roland L. Sarratt



Seventy James Maynard Case with his wife, Bertha

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