

HAWAII, THE CHURCH IN

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been in Hawaii since 1850, when Elder Charles C. Rich, an apostle, called ten LDS men from the gold mines of northern California to open missionary work in the Sandwich Islands, now Hawaii. Within several months five of the elders left the mission, but George Quayle Cannon, Henry William Bigler, James Keeler, William Farrer, and James Hawkins remained. Initial conversions came on the island of Maui, where the first branch was organized in the Kula District, near Pulehu, on August 6, 1851. The Church made remarkable headway, with more than 4,000 Hawaiian convert members in fifty-three branches by late 1854. By this time, several small schools were under way, meetinghouses were constructed, and the *BOOK OF MORMON* had been translated into the Hawaiian language by Elders Cannon and Farrer and Jonatana H. Napela, a local member. It was printed in 1855. In 1990, the 49,000 members of the Church in Hawaii, both native Hawaiian and others were found in thirteen stakes, constituting more than a hundred *WARDS* and *BRANCHES*. A *TEMPLE* has served members in Hawaii since November 1919.

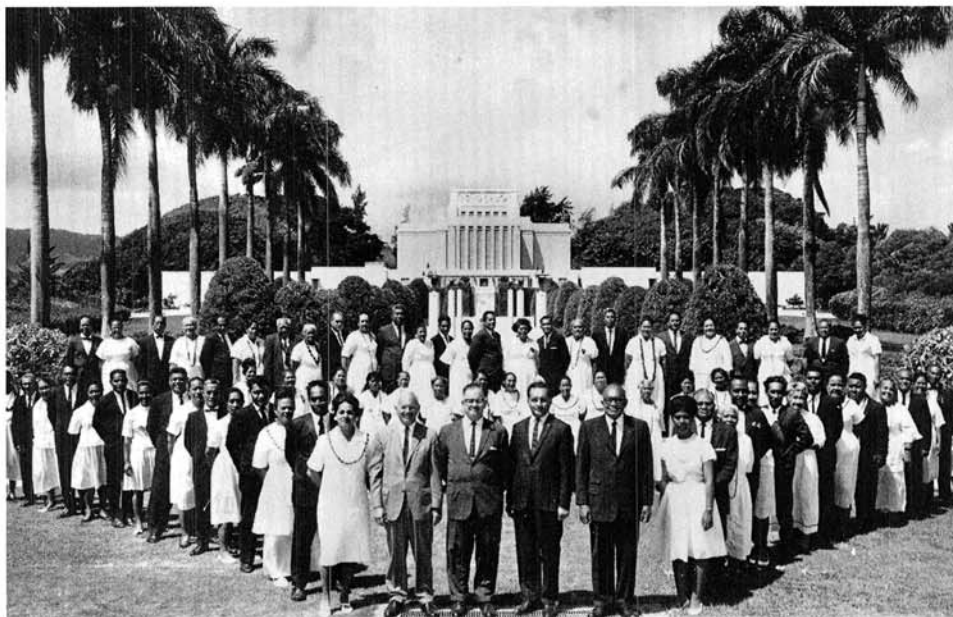
Following the pattern established elsewhere, an attempt was made to gather the Hawaiian Saints

to a local *ZION*. A village, called the City of Joseph, was established on the island of Lanai in 1854. However, the project failed, at least partly because of environmental conditions. In addition, with the most devoted Hawaiian members having moved to Lanai, the branches on other islands were weakened, and the Church fell into decline. This trend became severe when the Mainland missionary leaders were called back to Utah in 1858 because of the *UTAH EXPEDITION*.

This leadership vacuum opened the way for the adventurer Walter Murray Gibson to run the Church on Lanai and elsewhere as his personal political kingdom from September 1861 until 1864. He was excommunicated from the Church in April 1864 for introducing many false doctrines, including selling offices in the priesthood.

Shortly thereafter, President Brigham YOUNG sent Francis Asbury Hammond and George Nebeker to Hawaii to buy property for a new gathering place. On January 26, 1865, the Church purchased for \$14,000, a 6,000-acre plantation at Laie on Oahu island for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the members. Laie remains the focal point of LDS activities in Hawaii though strong stakes have also developed in Honolulu and in other areas.

Since 1865, there have been five major developments in the history of the Church in Hawaii:



The Oahu Stake Samoan choir posed in the 1960s in front of the Hawaii Temple. This choir was one of several patterned after the Tabernacle Choir. The temple, dedicated November 27, 1919, is located at Laie, on the northeast shore of Oahu.

First, on June 1, 1915, President Joseph F. SMITH dedicated a site at Laie for the Hawaii Temple. Four and a half years later, on November 27, 1919, his successor, President Heber J. GRANT, dedicated the completed structure, the first LDS temple outside the North American continent.

Second, President Grant organized the Oahu Stake on June 30, 1935, with Ralph E. Woolley as president.

Third, for the benefit of the Japanese people in Hawaii, President Grant formed the Japanese Mission in Hawaii in 1937, with Hilton A. Robertson as president. Its name was changed to the Central Pacific Mission in 1942. By 1949 missionaries of the Japanese/Central Pacific Mission had baptized 671 Americans of Japanese ancestry into the Church, and thousands of others have joined the Church since then. Many of these converts and their children have held important positions in the Church. Adney Yoshio Komatsu was the first of that group to be called as a GENERAL AUTHORITY.

Fourth, in September 1955 the Church College of Hawaii was founded under the direction of President David O. MCKAY. Initially a junior college, it was made a four-year school in 1959 and



LDS congregation and meetinghouse in Hawaii, 1915. Mormon missionaries arrived in the Sandwich Islands in 1850.

was renamed Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus in 1974. Two thousand students, mostly from the Pacific and the Asian Rim, attend.

Finally, the Church founded the POLYNESIAN CULTURAL CENTER at Laie in November 1963 to preserve and present the cultures of Polynesia and to provide employment for the college students. The center has grown to become Hawaii's number-one paid attraction, drawing nearly a million visitors a year.

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HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe that Jesus Christ is personally the Head of the Church, leading and guiding it by REVELATION (D&C 10:69; 3 Ne. 21:22).

According to the New Testament, God gave Jesus authority to be “the head over all things to the church” (Eph. 1:22; cf. 2:20; Col. 1:18). For Latter-day Saints, the restoration of the Church was similarly initiated in 1820 when God the Father, following an ancient pattern, appeared in vision with his Son Jesus Christ, who instructed Joseph SMITH (JS—H 1:17; see Matt. 3:17; 2 Pet. 1:17–18; 3 Ne. 11:7). The Savior gave information and counsel to Joseph on that and later occasions.

Latter-day Saints affirm that subsequent revelations to his prophets have verified that Christ was and is both the Head of the Church and the author of its restoration and development (JS—H 1:30–42; D&C 1:1; 20:1, 37). No mortal, including the PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH, considers himself to be the head. In fact, the President and all Church leaders consider themselves servants called by Christ or his authorized agents to represent him by teaching, training, and edifying members of the Church and by taking the gospel message to those not in the Church.

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