OTHER FAITHS

In August 1852, while the Church was still struggling to establish itself in the western United States, President Brigham Young issued a bold call for missionaries to go to China, India, Siam (Thailand), and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The seventeen missionaries who were sent formed some of the earliest contacts that LDS members had with non-Christians (see Asia, The Church in). Because of civil wars, rejection, and language and cultural difficulties, the work in most countries lasted only months; however, work in India continued until 1856. Although some attempts were made in the early twentieth century, the Church did not undertake further significant efforts to establish itself in non-Christian nations, including Asia, until after World War II.

Stimulated by experiences of LDS servicemen in Asia during and after the war, the Church established missions in East Asia at the end of the 1940s. Since then, wards and stakes led by local members have been established in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Philippines; temples have been built in all of these places except Hong Kong.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Church expanded into such Southeast Asian nations as Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia, and in the South Asian nations of India and Sri Lanka. Although small beginnings have been made in some Muslim countries, Church growth in such countries has been limited.

LDS health services programs in the Philippines and refugee assistance in Thailand have been favorably received. High-level contacts with government officials in many countries have elicited a positive response to the values of the Church and its members. Overall, the Church has made consistent efforts to remain sensitive to and abide by local laws and customs, including regulations based on religious sentiment.

Church growth in Africa has principally taken place in the last quarter of the twentieth century, particularly following the 1978 revelation allowing all worthy males to hold the priesthood (see Africa, The Church in; Doctrine and Covenants: Official Declaration—2). Congregations have been established in several countries, and Church membership is growing rapidly. In recent years, the Church has joined various charitable organizations in sending famine relief to stricken nations on the African continent (see Economic Aid).

In an educational vein, missionary training centers teach many foreign languages and courses on the religions and cultures of non-Western countries, and for educational purposes "culturegrams" have been developed that are now used by U.S. government agencies. In addition, courses on world religions are regularly taught in institutions of higher learning. Moreover, symposia on Islam and on the religions of Africa have been hosted at Brigham Young University, with a number of distinguished religious leaders and scholars participating.

In many countries, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is viewed as an American church. However, Church leaders have strongly emphasized that it is universal, a church for all people everywhere (see World Religions [Non-Christian] and Mormonism). A powerful presentation by President Spencer W. Kimball in 1974 stressed the responsibility of the Church to share the gospel with all of God's children (Ensign 4 [Oct. 1974]:2–14). Consequently, in the last half of the twentieth century the Church has made its most significant efforts to establish itself throughout the world.

Generally, the LDS outreach to non-Christians has had a positive, invigorating effect on members of the Church, has strengthened Church membership significantly, and has brought about increased awareness of cultural differences as well as a willingness to work within those differences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


SOREN F. COX

INTERNATIONAL GENEALOGICAL INDEX™ (IGI)

The International Genealogical Index™ (IGI) is a vital records index, which at the beginning of 1990 contained more than 147 million names of deceased persons from the 1500s to about 1875. The IGI lists individuals alphabetically according to place of birth/christening or marriage, and clusters similarly spelled surnames under a standard spelling.

The Church publishes the IGI to assist genealogical research and help members determine
whether temple ordinances have been performed for deceased ancestors. Countries such as England (47,155,000 entries), Mexico 24,205,000, Germany (18,675,000), the United States (18,660,000), Scotland (10,745,000), and Finland (5,045,000), as well as more than ninety other nations are included.

Available on 9,200 microfiches and on compact disk, the IGI can be searched at the FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY, Salt Lake City, or at any of the nearly 1,400 LDS FAMILY HISTORY CENTERS located in various parts of the world. Patrons can purchase copies of the microfiche in sets by region, state, or country from the Family History Department, LDS Church Headquarters, Salt Lake City, UT 84150, or copy up to 500 entries to a holding file that can be printed or copied to diskettes for home use.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GERALD M. HASLAM

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINES

In 1967 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints began unifying the foreign language magazines that were being independently published to serve its Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Norwegian, Spanish, and Swedish-speaking missions to give its magazines similar editorial content and a general format. This unification of content greatly reduced redundant staff efforts in the various mission offices and provided Church-approved materials for all issues. The resulting Unified Magazine was renamed International Magazines in 1974, an umbrella title that in 1990 covered twenty different magazines, each with its own language-specific title. An editorial staff in Salt Lake City chooses materials from the Church's three English publications, Friend, New Era, and Ensign, that will appeal to international readers of all ages and prepares those and other original articles for international publication.

An English version, Tambuli, is prepared in Salt Lake City, and film of the completed layouts, containing both text and art is shipped for local printing in the Philippines. Similar print-ready film is prepared in Salt Lake City for other language editions and is then sent to various printing sites around the world. Some of the translations are prepared in Salt Lake City, but most in the local areas. The various editions contain from eight to sixteen pages of local Church news that is gathered, edited, and printed in the language areas.

The idea of publishing local, foreign-language magazines for Church members started in Wales in 1846, a year before the Mormon Pioneers moved into the Salt Lake Valley. Dan Jones edited and published thirty-two issues of Prophesyd y Jubili, Neu Seren y Saints (Prophet of Jubilee, New Star of Saints), filled with doctrinal and historical articles, messages from Church leaders, and replies to attacks from antagonists of the Church. Other magazines followed. The first issues of Skandinavien Sjonerne (Scandinavian Star) in Denmark, L'Etoile du Deseret (The Star of Deseret) in France, and Zions Panier (Zion's Banner) in Germany were all published in 1851. In subsequent years the Church has published magazines in other languages, with the larger number beginning in the twentieth century. In 1990 the Church is increasing the number of its foreign language periodicals.

For a fuller list of Church magazines and newspapers, see Church Periodicals chart in the Appendix.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BRIAN K. KELLY

INTERVIEWS

Church leaders conduct a variety of interviews essential to the administration of the Church and the nurturance of members. Interviews of Church members are conducted to determine personal worthiness, approve participation in religious ceremonies and ORDINANCES, assess needs, issue calls to service, listen to members' concerns, receive an accounting of performance in a Church assignment, and record a member's status regarding the payment of TITHING.

Worthiness is required of those who are to serve in Church CALLINGS, represent the Church as missionaries, and attend the temple (see TEMPLE RECOMMEND). An interview is used in each of these situations to determine the member's willingness to serve and worthiness to participate. For example, when a person prepares for BAPTISM