and Edna Fluge Langeland, Norwegian-Americans, as TEMPLE PRESIDENT AND MATRON. Scandinavian members who have TEMPLE RECOMMENDS perform sacred TEMPLE ORDINANCES in their own languages there. It was the first place in Europe where Latter-day Saints could receive TEMPLE SEALINGS for time and eternity without first being married by civil authority. With stakes and wards in their countries and the temple in Västerhaninge, Scandinavian Latter-day Saints can enjoy the full program of the Church.

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JOHN LANGESL

SCHISMATIC GROUPS

Like any large religious body, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has had a number of variously disaffected members break away. Some have taken a group of members with them and started rival organizations, based on their interpretations of the teachings of Joseph Smith. There have been about 130 such groups; only a few have existed for more than ten years.

The first was known as the Pure Church of Christ, founded in 1831 by Wycam Clark, Northrop Sweet, and others. Asserting that Joseph Smith was a false prophet, Clark claimed that he was the true leader of the Church. The group held only two or three meetings and died out.

The most prominent schismatic group organized during Joseph Smith’s lifetime was the Church of Christ, established by Warren Parrish in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1837. A few months earlier Parrish was accused of embezzling funds from the Church’s bank, the Kirtland Safety Society, and was excommunicated. Alleging that Joseph had fallen from his divine calling as leader of the Church, Parrish claimed the authority to lead it.

He gained the support of three members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, some of the presidents of the Seventies, and several other influential leaders who had become alienated from Smith during the 1837–1838 economic crisis in Kirtland. That group broke up in less than a year (CCHC 1:403–407).

The death of Joseph Smith in 1844 produced another flurry of new groups seeking to take advantage of the loss of the Church’s leader. There were people in these organizations who agreed that Joseph Smith had been a true prophet, although many of them rejected or ignored some of the doctrines or practices he had established; the question in their minds was who was to take his place.

Joseph’s counselor in the First Presidency, Sidney Rigdon, was one of the first to press his claim, telling the Saints that there could be no successor to Joseph Smith and that he should be named guardian of the Church, to watch over it in Joseph’s name and build it up to the memory of the slain prophet. His claim was rejected by most members, who sustained Brigham Young and the
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Rigdon was excommunicated, and he returned to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he established the Church of Christ, which lasted less than two years. In 1863 he organized the Church of Jesus Christ of the Children of Zion. This group lasted into the 1880s.

In August 1844, James J. Strang, converted only a few months before Joseph Smith’s death, produced a letter supposedly from Joseph Smith appointing Strang to lead the flock (see forgeries), and claimed that an angel had appeared to him shortly after the martyrdom and ordained him to that calling. Strang was immediately excommunicated. A few weeks later, he moved with a group of converts to Voree, Wisconsin, the area he claimed as the new gathering place for the church. His followers included two apostles, John E. Page and William Smith (younger brother of Joseph Smith), and William Marks, former president of the Nauvoo Stake. For a short time, Martin Harris accompanied a Strangite leader on a mission to England.

Strang moved his group to Beaver Island, a small island in northern Lake Michigan, where in 1850 Strang was crowned king in an elaborate ceremony. There he established a theocracy that thrived for most of the decade with an estimated 3,000 members; he also continued the practice of plural marriage. On June 16, 1856, two assassins, part of a larger conspiracy, shot Strang; he did not appoint a successor before he died eleven days later. His group was broken up by the combined action of federal and local forces, and the majority was forcibly exiled from the island. A small remnant of Strang’s order, however, still exists in Wisconsin, Michigan, Colorado, and New Mexico (Van Noord, pp. 48–177, 233–66; Lewis, pp. 274–91).

A move toward creating a larger reorganization began early in the 1850s. Some former Strangites, including William Marks, Jason Briggs, and Zenas H. Gurley, met in 1850 to decide on a new leader. Briggs and Gurley had been members of William Smith’s group, called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which had been organized in 1846 after the excommunication of William Smith from the Strangites. Marks, Briggs, and Gurley were convinced that succession in the presidency of the Church must be lineal, descending from father to son. In an intense proselytizing effort, they drew to them a number of other Mormons and former Mormons in the Midwest of the same idea. A group met in Beloit, Wisconsin, on June 12–13, 1852, to organize. In 1853 they held another conference and apostles were chosen. In 1859 Joseph Smith III formally accepted the call to become the new president and prophet, and in April 1860 the group formally incorporated under the name of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Most of Joseph Smith, Jr.’s immediate family joined this church in the early 1860s, and many descendants remain active members today (Laumus, pp. 77–139).

Other groups broke away during Brigham Young’s administration in Utah. One of the most significant was the Godbeites, organized in 1868 under the leadership of William S. Godbe. Several years earlier, Godbe had joined with E. L. T. Harrison, Edward W. Tullidge, Eli B. Kelsey, William H. Shearman, and other disaffected Mormon businessmen and intellectuals to protest the economic self-sufficiency policy of Brigham Young. Godbe and his group favored a less structured society, free trade inside Utah Territory, and open trade with the outside world. Their social protest soon developed into a thorough rejection of doctrine and practice. They discarded all of the Church’s theological structure, claiming loyalty to no single prophet or set of scriptures. Instead, they proclaimed the universal brotherhood of man and the universal love of God. This led to involvement with the Spiritualist movement, popular in the nineteenth century. They participated in a number of séances, in the belief that they were speaking with deceased LDS Church leaders, Jesus Christ, and the ancient apostles. The Salt Lake Stake High Council excommunicated Godbe and Harrison on October 25, 1869. Others in the group eventually brought on their own excommunication. In 1870 they formally organized the Church of Zion, an openly anti-Mormon organization, both religiously and economically, which founded the Salt Lake Tribune. The movement failed to attract many new followers and died out by 1880 (Walker, 1974, 1982).

Other splinter groups have followed from time to time, especially following the termination of plural marriage in 1890 (for further discussion see fundamentalists).

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SCHOOLS

LDS theology places great importance on the acquiring of knowledge. This knowledge includes not only religious truth but truth in the sciences, arts, and humanities as well (TPJS, p. 217; D&C 131:6). Congruent with that value and throughout its history, the Church has established and operated numerous schools and universities to provide educational opportunities for its members.

Comprehensive higher education is offered at Brigham Young University (campuses at Provo, Utah; Laie, Hawai‘i; and Jerusalem, Israel) and Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. Correspondence study is also available at the secondary, college, and adult education levels through Brigham Young University. The LDS Business College in Salt Lake City offers postsecondary instruction in business and related fields. Full-time primary and secondary schools currently are owned and administered by the Church in the South Pacific and Mexico, providing education to approximately 10,000 students.

In the Pacific islands, two high schools, one large elementary school, and four meetinghouse elementary schools are operated in Samoa, two high schools in Tonga, one technical college and one elementary school in Fiji, one high school in Kiribati, and the Church College of New Zealand in Hamilton. Initially established to provide an educational opportunity for the Maori people, the college in New Zealand presently is a high school with college preparatory courses. Local teachers are hired on a full-time basis, and in a few cases full-time missionary couples with educational experience also provide instruction.

In Mexico City, the Benemerito campus offers secondary education (the last two years are college preparatory) and is the largest of all primary and secondary schools in the Church (2,300 students). The Juarez Academy in Juarez, Mexico, provides a high school education, and is the only remaining academy of those established between 1875 and 1911 (see ACADEMIES).

The Church’s schooling enterprises arose in response to concerns over the secularization of the schools, the need for trained teachers for public schools and trained leadership in the Church, LDS youth’s participation in other denominational schools, and youth leaving home for their schooling. The establishment of schools, and subsequently an educational system, drew the Church into a relationship with state public school systems.