

Church Leaders Celebrate Welfare, Announce Temples

More than 100,000 people attended the five sessions of the 181st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, while millions more watched or listened via TV, radio, satellite, and Internet broadcasts.

Members around the world participated in the conference in 93 languages. Audio, video, and text of the broadcast are already online in many languages at conference.lds.org and will be made available on DVD and CD.

President Thomas S. Monson opened the conference by announcing the locations of three new temples—Fort Collins, Colorado, USA; Meridian, Idaho, USA; and Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada—which will bring the number of temples announced or under construction to 26. Currently, 134 temples are in operation.



Above: A young man harvests grapes at the Madera, California, USA, Church-owned vineyard, which produces raisins for the Church welfare system. **Lower left:** A family attends a satellite broadcast of general conference in Coimbra, Portugal.

President Monson also emphasized the importance of missionary work, saying, “Missionary work is the life-blood of the kingdom.” Some 52,000 missionaries currently serve in 340 missions throughout the world.

On Saturday afternoon, 10 new General Authorities and 41 Area Seventies were sustained, while 34 Area Seventies were released. In addition, Elder Don R. Clarke of the Second Quorum of the Seventy was called to serve in the First Quorum of the Seventy. The 2010 Statistical Report showed that Church membership now tops 14 million.

A number of talks given during the two-day conference centered on the theme of Church welfare and the Church’s unique welfare program—celebrating its 75th year in 2011.

On Saturday, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, announced that to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the welfare program, members worldwide are invited to participate in a day of service activity. The day of service should be held on a ward or stake level sometime during the year. Local leaders should decide the details of each project, and members are encouraged to invite others to participate as appropriate.

President Monson closed the conference with his Easter testimony of Christ: “At the last moment, [Jesus Christ] could have turned back. But He did not. He passed beneath all things that He might save all things. In doing so, He gave us life beyond this mortal existence.” ■