



## Growth in Membership and in Number of Missionaries Announced at General Conference

The membership of the Church has reached 15 million, President Thomas S. Monson announced at the opening session of the 183rd Semiannual General Conference on October 5, 2013. He also announced that since the lowering of the age for missionary service in October 2012, the number of full-time missionaries serving around the world has grown dramatically—from 58,500 to 80,333.

“The Church continues to grow steadily and to change the lives of more and more people every year,” President Monson said. “It is spreading across the earth as our missionary force seeks out those who are searching for the truth.”

He encouraged members and missionaries to join with one another in sharing the gospel. “Now is the time for members and missionaries to come together, to work together, to labor in the Lord’s vineyard to bring souls unto Him,” said President Monson, who has been serving as an Apostle for 50 years.

At the Saturday afternoon session, three members of the First Quorum of the Seventy—Elders John B. Dickson, Paul E. Koelliker, and F. Michael Watson—were honorably

released and given emeritus status, and Elder Kent D. Watson of the Second Quorum of the Seventy was also honorably released. In addition, Julio A. Angulo, 45, of Bogotá, Colombia; Peter F. Evans, 54, of Salt Lake City, Utah, USA; and Gennady N. Podvodov, 47, of Donetsk, Ukraine, were sustained as

Area Seventies. It was announced that César H. Hooker and Craig T. Wright had been released as Area Seventies.

Millions throughout the world watched or listened to the conference via television, Internet, radio, and satellite broadcasts. For the first time, the Saturday evening priesthood session was available on broadcast television and in real time on the Internet. More than 100,000 people attended the five sessions at the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 5 and 6. The conference was also available through various media in 95 languages and broadcast to 197 countries and territories.

President Monson concluded the conference with an appeal for Church members to show increased kindness toward one another and to “ever be found doing the work of the Lord.” ■



### PRESIDENT MONSON AN APOSTLE FOR 50 YEARS

The October 2013 semiannual general conference marked the 50th anniversary of President Thomas S. Monson’s call to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He was sustained as an Apostle on October 4, 1963, at the age of 36.

For additional information about President Monson’s life of service, see [lds.org/go/monson50years](http://lds.org/go/monson50years). ■

***Thomas S. Monson at the Tabernacle on Temple Square in 1963, moments before he was sustained as a General Authority.***