

By Sarah Petersen



Temple

FACTS, STATS, AND INTERESTING STORIES

At the end of 2012, there were 140 temples in operation (1 under renovation), 14 under construction, and 14 announced. In your lifetime the number of temples has more than doubled. This is very different from 30 years ago, when some members of the Church made it their goal to visit every temple (26 temples had been dedicated by the end of 1983).¹ Here are several interesting facts, stats, and stories you could find if it were possible to go on a tour of today's temples.

THE ANGEL MORONI

The statue of Moroni is a figure of respect rather than worship because of the role that he played in the Restoration. By holding the trumpet to his mouth, Moroni symbolizes the spreading of the gospel (see Matthew 24:31).

The scriptures state that the Savior will come from the east at the Second Coming (see Matthew 24:27). Whenever possible the angel Moroni figure is placed facing eastward.²

The original Nauvoo Temple was the first temple to have an angel

placed on the top. This angel was different from today's version because it was designed as a weathervane. The angel appeared horizontally with a horn pressed to his lips and a book in his hand.

After the completion of the Salt Lake Temple in 1893, non-LDS sculptor Cyrus Dallin was asked to create a new design, one that most angel Moroni statues are patterned after today. Dallin wrote that his experience with the project "brought me nearer to God than anything I ever did. It seemed to me that I came to

know what it means to commune with angels from heaven."³

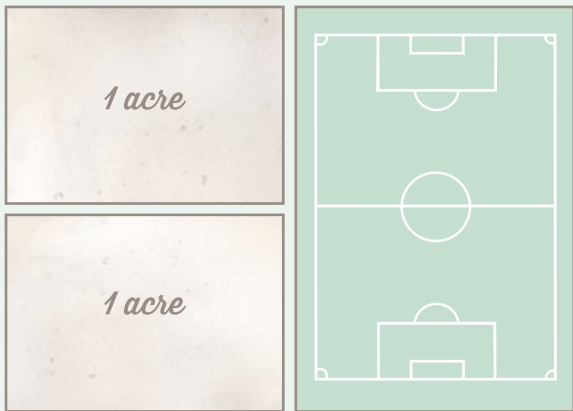
Later, the statue was designed to be holding the gold plates; only five temples feature this style: Los Angeles California, Washington D.C., Seattle Washington, Jordan River Utah, and Mexico City Mexico. The statue of Moroni placed at the Hill Cumorah Monument was also designed with gold plates but does not have a trumpet.

A new design of the angel Moroni statue has been created for the smaller temples where Moroni is holding a scroll. The scroll represents the everlasting gospel spoken of by the Apostle John (see Revelation 14:6).⁴

In addition, seven temples do not currently have a figure of the angel Moroni: St. George Utah, Manti Utah, Laie Hawaii, Cardston Alberta, Mesa Arizona, Hamilton New Zealand, and Oakland California.

5 LARGEST Temple Grounds

1. Washington D.C. Temple (52 acres)
2. Sacramento California Temple (47 acres)
3. Hamilton New Zealand Temple (34 acres)
4. London England Temple (32 acres)
5. Manti Utah Temple (27 acres)



Two acres fit snugly into one soccer field.



TEMPLES WITH THE Most Sealing Rooms

1. Jordan River Utah
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2. Portland Oregon and Seattle Washington
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3. Mexico City Mexico, Washington D.C., and Provo Utah
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4. Logan Utah
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5. Los Angeles California and Idaho Falls Idaho
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Temples DEDICATED ON THE SAME DAY

There have been four times when two temple dedications were performed on the same day.

Halifax Nova Scotia	Memphis Tennessee	Nashville Tennessee	Montreal Quebec
NOVEMBER 14, 1999	APRIL 23, 2000	MAY 21, 2000	JUNE 4, 2000
Regina Saskatchewan	Reno Nevada	Villahermosa Mexico	San José Costa Rica



Bern Switzerland Temple



Hong Kong China Temple

TEMPLE STORIES

Bern Switzerland Temple

The Bern Switzerland Temple was the first temple built where English is not the main language. It was announced on July 1, 1952, and dedicated on September 11, 1955, but prophecies of this international temple were made several years before. In August 1906, President Joseph F. Smith visited Zurich, Switzerland, and predicted that “the time would come when temples to the Most High would be built in various countries of the world.”⁵ At that time all four temples in operation were in Utah. Another prophecy was made by President Heber J. Grant in 1923: “I have no doubt in my mind that temples of the Lord will be erected in Europe, none whatever.”⁶

Hong Kong China Temple

In 1991 the First Presidency asked the Asia Area Presidency to begin searching for a temple site in Hong Kong. If the Church were to build a temple in Hong Kong, it would have to be built before July 1, 1997, which was when the People’s Republic of China would resume government control.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) arrived in Hong Kong on July 25, 1992, to approve a site for the temple. After visiting six different locations, President Hinckley discussed his feelings with the local stake presidents and decided that none of the locations would work. At 6:45 a.m. President Hinckley called the Area Presidency and asked to meet in his hotel room at 8:00 a.m. After they arrived, President Hinckley “then shared, on a sheet of white paper, a detailed drawing. During the night, he had envisioned a building of about eight floors above ground, with the temple on the top floors and other functions housed on the lower floors. . . . This concept of multiple use, President Hinckley explained, would depart from tradition in that all other temples in the Church at that time were stand-alone buildings.”⁷

President Hinckley returned to Salt Lake City and presented the new design to the Temple Department. The architects saw an opportunity to expand the building and created a plan that would be nearly twice the size originally designed by President Hinckley. The plans were completed and sent to Hong Kong for approval, but after negotiations with the officials, the building plans were



- Temples that have been dedicated
- Temples announced or under construction



denied. Remembering the experience they had earlier with President Hinckley’s first design, the Area Presidency immediately recommended that the Church return to his drawing. This plan quickly received approval, and the Church began construction on the temple. The Hong Kong China Temple was dedicated on May 26, 1996, by President Hinckley. **NE**

Sarah Petersen lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See temples.lds.org.
2. See Wendy Kenney, “Looking Up to Moroni,” *New Era*, Nov. 2009, 24–28.
3. In “Angel Moroni Statues Atop Mormon Temples Are More Than Decoration,” <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/angel-moroni-statues-atop-mormon-temples-are-more-than-decoration>.
4. See Bill Boyle, “Statue of Angel Moroni placed on top of temple,” *Church News*, May 23, 1998, 4 (<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/31074/Statue-of-Angel-Moroni-placed-on-top-of-temple.html>).
5. Marba C. Josephson, “A Temple Is Risen to Our Lord,” *Improvement Era*, Sept. 1955, 686.
6. Alberta Temple dedications proceedings, 242, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.
7. Monte J. Brough and John K. Carmack, “How the Hong Kong Temple Came to Be,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2006, 60.



WHY DO TEMPLES DOT THE EARTH?



“As part of the planned destiny of the earth and its inhabitants, here our kindred dead are also to be redeemed. Families are to be sealed together for all eternity. A welding link is to be forged between the fathers and the children. In our time, a whole, complete, and perfect union of all dispensations, keys, and powers is to be welded together. For these sacred purposes, holy temples now dot the earth.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Creation,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 85.