

Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

TEMPLE SPOTLIGHT



Manila Philippines Temple

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) dedicated the Manila Philippines Temple in September 1984. The beautiful six-spire building has an exterior of brilliant white ceramic tiles and is surrounded by majestic palm trees and colorful vegetation.

The temple's open house was held shortly after two hurricanes ravaged the Philippines. Despite the storms, the events went on as planned. On September 3, 1984, a tour for dignitaries was held. On the following day, when the temple opened for public tours, “a

beautiful heavenly spectacle was unfurled over the temple,” said Jovencio Ilagan, executive secretary of the temple committee during its construction. “The sun, in all its brilliance, was seen through a corona of varying colors. . . . At one point, the center spire with the statue of the Angel Moroni was seen at the center of the corona. Almost a hundred people at the temple grounds attest to it. Many were in tears.”¹

NOTE

1. In John L. Hart, “3 Temples Open to Public in a Week—a First Ever,” *Church News*, Sept. 16, 1984, 3.

The Manila Philippines Temple was the first temple built in the Philippines. Construction on the country's second temple began in 2007 in Cebu City.

Entering a Beautiful Place

Before I became a member of the Church, I lived near the Manila Philippines Temple. Every time I passed it, I marveled at the grandeur of the beautiful edifice. I could never see the name of the Church, but I had a feeling of wanting to enter that place.

Years later I went to Hawaii, where I met the missionaries and was baptized. When I returned to Manila, I was surprised to learn that the building I had long wished to enter was one I *could* enter if I was worthy. I was overjoyed.

When I did enter the temple, I felt I was a little above the earth. Everything was beautiful, almost heavenly. I feel so blessed to have the privilege to go inside the temple.

Joanna Velayo-Munda, Philippines



Feeling the Spirit of the Temple

When I was called to be a member of the high council, the stake president expressed his desire for more members to go to the temple on the days assigned for our stake. Transportation was a problem, so the first thing he did was arrange for a bus to pick up the members at all the ward buildings in the stake and also bring us back when the day was over.

There was another problem, however. Many mothers could not attend because they didn't have anyone to watch

their children. As we discussed the possibility of having some of the young women from the stake help care for the children, I realized that we could call a stake nursery leader. I proposed the idea to the stake president. He suggested that we call new converts to serve as assistants to the nursery leader so they could feel the spirit of the temple. When these ideas were put into action, we had great stake temple attendance.

Cristian Robles, Chile

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD

Greece

Rigas Pofantis and Nicholas Malavetis had been looking for religious truths for three years when they happened upon a newspaper article in 1898 that discussed Mormonism. They were intrigued and wrote to Church headquarters to learn more. Church leaders dispatched the president of the Turkish Mission to visit and teach the pair in Greece. In 1903 Nicholas Malavetis died, but two years later, Rigas Pofantis again wrote to Church headquarters and asked to be baptized. Church leaders again sent the Turkish Mission president, who baptized Brother Pofantis and five others, including Nicholas Malavetis's widow.

The first missionaries arrived in Greece six months after these first baptisms, but beginning in 1909, the Church suspended missionary work there for nearly 70 years, due in part to political unrest in the area. In the meantime, military personnel stationed in the area began to share the gospel with the



In recent years Mars Hill, the location of the Apostle Paul's sermon in Acts 17, has been the site for testimony meetings, service projects, and celebrations of exemplary Greek citizens.

Greek people. Still, progress was slow; when the Athens Branch replaced the servicemen's Church unit in 1967, Church rolls included 80 members in the branch but only eight Greeks.

In 1972 Elder Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, dedicated Greece

for the preaching of the gospel. Since that time several developments have encouraged Church membership growth, including the publication of a Greek translation of the Book of Mormon in 1987, the creation of the Greece Athens Mission in 1990, and the dedication of the first meetinghouse in Greece in 1999.

Membership (2009)	661
Districts	1
Branches	5



INCLUDING EVERYONE IN FAMILY HOME EVENING

- Invite every family member to fulfill an assignment.
- Prayerfully plan lessons and activities that involve the whole family.
- Let children share what they are learning in Primary. It could be a song, a scripture, or a game to learn a gospel principle.
- Ask family members to suggest topics for future lessons. Make a list; then address the topics over time.
- Don't force family members to participate. Try to create a welcoming environment in which thoughts and ideas can be shared.



In upcoming issues, watch for family home evening ideas for single members and for families without children.



TEMPLES BY THE NUMBERS

- 130: temples in operation.
- 21: temples announced or under construction.
- 1: city in the world that has two temples within its borders, South Jordan, Utah. "You may ask why we favor Utah so generously. It is because the degree of activity requires it,"¹ President Gordon B. Hinckley said when he announced the Oquirrh Mountain Utah Temple in October 2005, the fourth temple in the Salt Lake Valley.
- 34: temples dedicated in 2000, the most dedicated in a single year.
- 85: temple dedications performed by President Hinckley over his lifetime, the most by any Apostle in this dispensation. President Hinckley also performed 10 rededications.
- 685,000: people who attended the Draper Utah Temple open house. The temple was dedicated in March 2009.
- 6,800: square feet (682 sq. m) in the Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Mexico Temple, the smallest temple in the Church.
- 331,032: square feet (30,754 sq. m) in the Salt Lake Temple, the largest temple in the Church.
- 169: stakes and districts assigned to the Manila Philippines Temple District, serving more wards and branches than any other temple district in the Church.



NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Opening Remarks," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 5.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

Growing up in rural Arizona, Spencer W. Kimball learned to work hard at an early age. Grandson of the Apostle Heber C. Kimball (1801–68) and son of a stake president, Spencer also developed a strong testimony and deep devotion to the gospel.

When he was a boy, it was often Spencer's duty to ride atop the hay wagon, tramping down the hay as his older brothers pitched the hay up. It was hot, dusty, scratchy work, but he did it—except when the church bell rang

to signal the beginning of Primary, which at that time was held during the week. He had a perfect attendance record and was not going to miss. His brothers had other ideas and began pitching the hay onto the wagon even faster. When they noticed the hay was piling up, Spencer was halfway to Primary.

Spencer W. Kimball went on to serve as a missionary, a bishop, and a stake president before his call to the apostleship in 1943. His work ethic was legendary, despite a number of serious illnesses

that included a heart attack and throat cancer. He urged Church members to lengthen their stride, and his personal motto was simply “Do it.” Because of his health, some thought Spencer W. Kimball's administration as President of the Church might be brief. But he presided over the Church for 12 years, during which time the number of operating temples doubled, the number of missionaries increased 50 percent, and the priesthood was extended to all worthy male members.



See his Gospel Classics article, “The Certainty of the Resurrection,” on page 28.



His unwavering devotion to the gospel and his strong work ethic carried Spencer W. Kimball from humble beginnings in rural Arizona to the leading councils of the Church. His administration as President of the Church was marked by significant growth in temple building and missionary work. Left: With his wife, Camilla (1894–1987).

