



By President Thomas S. Monson

As We Meet Again

It is my prayer that we may be filled with the Spirit of the Lord as we listen to the messages today and tomorrow and learn those things the Lord would have us know.

It is good, brothers and sisters, to welcome you to the 181st Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

This conference marks 48 years—think of it, 48 years—since I was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles by President David O. McKay. That was in October of 1963. It seems impossible that so many years have come and gone since then.

When we're busy, time seems to pass far too quickly, and the past six months have been no exception for me. One of the highlights during that period was the opportunity I had to rededicate the Atlanta Georgia Temple on May 1. I was accompanied by Elder and Sister M. Russell Ballard, Elder and Sister Walter F. González, and Elder and Sister William R. Walker.

During the cultural celebration entitled "Southern Lights," held the evening prior to the rededication, 2,700 young men and young women from throughout the temple district performed. It was one of the most outstanding programs I have seen and had the audience on its feet several times for standing ovations.

The following day the temple was

rededicated in two sessions, where the Spirit of the Lord was with us in rich abundance.

During the latter part of August, President Henry B. Eyring dedicated the San Salvador El Salvador Temple. He was accompanied by Sister Eyring and by Elder and Sister D. Todd Christofferson, Elder and Sister William R. Walker, and Sister Silvia H.



Allred of the Relief Society general presidency and her husband, Jeffry. President Eyring reported that it was a most spiritual event.

In the latter part of this year, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf and Sister Uchtdorf will travel with other General Authorities to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, where he will dedicate our temple there.

The building of temples continues uninterrupted, brothers and sisters. Today it is my privilege to announce several new temples.

First, may I mention that no Church-built facility is more important than a temple. Temples are places where relationships are sealed together to last through the eternities. We are grateful for all the many temples across the world and for the blessing they are in the lives of our members.



Late last year the Provo Tabernacle in Utah County was seriously damaged by a terrible fire. This wonderful building, much beloved by generations of Latter-day Saints, was left with only the exterior walls standing. After careful study, we have decided to rebuild it with full preservation and restoration of the exterior, to become the second temple of the Church in the city of Provo. The existing Provo Temple is one of the busiest in the Church, and a second temple there will accommodate the increasing numbers of faithful Church members who are attending the temple from Provo and the surrounding communities.

I am also pleased to announce new temples in the following locations: Barranquilla, Colombia; Durban, South Africa; Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Star Valley,

Wyoming. In addition, we are moving forward on our plans for a temple to be built in Paris, France.

Details of these temples will be provided in the future as site and other necessary approvals are obtained.

I have mentioned in previous conferences the progress we are making in placing temples closer to our members. Although they are readily available to many members in the Church, there are still areas of the world where temples are so distant from our members that they cannot afford the travel required to get to them. They are thus unable to partake of the sacred and eternal blessings temples provide. To help in this regard, we have available what is called the General Temple Patron Assistance Fund. This fund provides a

one-time visit to the temple for those who otherwise would not be able to go to the temple and yet who long desperately for that opportunity. Any who might wish to contribute to this fund can simply write in the information on the normal contribution slip which is given to the bishop each month.

Now, brothers and sisters, it is my prayer that we may be filled with the Spirit of the Lord as we listen to the messages today and tomorrow and learn those things the Lord would have us know. This I pray for in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



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