

President George Albert Smith:

This is the opening session of the One Hundred Twentieth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are convened in the tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City.

All of the General Authorities of the Church are present. Elder Joseph Anderson is the clerk of the conference.

These services will be broadcast in the assembly hall over a loud speaking system and by television. All of the general sessions of the conference will be heard and seen in the assembly hall in the same way.

This service will be broadcast over station KSL, Salt Lake City, as will also the services this afternoon at 2:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.; and by arrangements through KSL, over the following stations:

In Utah: KSUB at Cedar City, KSVU at Richfield, KJAM at Vernal.

In Idaho: KGEM at Boise, KID at Idaho Falls, KEYY at Pocatello, KBIO at Burley.

In Oregon: KBKR at Baker, KSRV at Ontario.

By transcription, over KTYL at Mesa, Arizona, and KEXO at Grand Junction, Colorado.

These services will also be televised over the KSL television station, channel 5.

The calla lilies that you see here have been sent by the Berkeley Stake. We appreciate them very much.

The choir singing for this morning's session will be by the Brigham Young University choir with Elder John R. Halliday conducting, Elder Frank W. Asper at the organ.

We shall begin the morning services by the Brigham Young University choir singing: "Let The Mountains Shout For Joy."

The opening prayer will be offered by President Glen M. Bennion of the South Box Elder Stake, Brigham City, Utah.

The Brigham Young University Choir sang the hymn "Let The Mountains Shout For Joy."

The opening prayer was offered by Brother Glen M. Bennion, President of the South Box Elder Stake.

The Brigham Young University Choir sang "Allelujah, Christ Is Risen."

PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

One hundred twenty years ago today six members constituted the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Today more than a million souls claim membership in the Church, and this morning the Tabernacle is filled to overflowing, and many hundreds more are

in the Assembly Hall and on the grounds. It does not seem possible that so many people could be here this morning.

GEORGE B. MARGETTS

But there is one man missing, and I think you will all remember him. He always has been here; he has not failed, since I can remember, to be in a conference. He always has had a boutonniere in his coat. He came in from the north side of the stand to see that everybody was seated. In the providence of our Heavenly Father that good man has been summoned home. He has gone back to the God that gave him life. I refer to our faithful usher, George B. Margetts.

One by one we are going. The years are passing. A year ago I was only seventy-nine years old myself. Now I am eighty. There are those on the stand who are older than I. The Church is getting older, but fortunately, to take our places in the ranks are the younger people, not only of the Church, but who are coming out of the world into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the various nations of the earth.

BLESSINGS OF CONFERENCE

It is wonderful to be here this morning. It hardly seems possible that there would not be room for everybody on a busy weekday, but the Tabernacle is filled to capacity, and the thing that impresses me most is that our Heavenly Father is keeping his word when he said, if even two or three shall meet together in his name, he will be there to bless them.

But this morning we are here in great numbers, and this morning the Spirit of the Lord is here, and all of us who have come prepared to be edified under the influence of it will not go away disappointed.

CALLING OF JOSEPH SMITH

Conditions in the world remind us of the fact that our Heavenly Father, knowing what would occur—realizing that the people of the world were not paying attention to him, and that those who were in charge of religious worship in the various nations of the earth had disregarded his teachings—a little over a hundred and twenty years ago called a boy, not yet fifteen years of age, one who had not been spoiled by the philosophies of men, but one who believed in God sufficiently to go out in the woods and ask the Lord which of all the churches he should join. He was no doubt astonished when the Father and the Son appeared to him and told him to join none of them, that they were all astray.

As a result of that remarkable experience of Joseph Smith as a boy, we see in the world today hundreds of thousands of men and women who have turned to our Heavenly Father, who have under-

stood the purpose of life, and who have accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Today we have more than five thousand of our brothers and sisters of this Church scattered throughout the world as missionaries, urging the people of the world not merely to be satisfied with what they now have, but to seek the Lord and go on, with the promise that if they will do that, they may know the truth. The Lord himself has said,

If any man will do his [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. (John 7:17.)

Our work in the world, my brethren and sisters, is to reach out after all of our Heavenly Father's children at home and abroad; and if we will do that, the Spirit of the Lord will dwell in our souls; and we will be happy; and our homes will be the abiding place of his Holy Spirit.

NEED FOR REPENTANCE

When we realize the uncertainty that exists in the world today, realize that the strongest nations of the earth as well as the weaker ones are arming to the teeth preparing for war, we may know that it is only a question of time, unless they repent of their sins and turn to God, that war will come, and not only war, but pestilence and other destruction, until the human family will disappear from the earth.

The world does not know that brothers and sisters. Our Father's other children who are in different parts of the earth do not understand that—those who are not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They have an idea that they can legislate and fight it out, but there is only one way to enjoy peace and happiness in this world, and that is for the children of men to repent of their sins, turn to the Lord, honor him and keep his commandments. That is the only way.

Because the Lord knew that, one hundred and twenty years ago he established his Church, and from that time until now his sons and daughters have been going through the world pleading for the opportunity to share with their fellows the joy and happiness that results from keeping the commandments of God.

I am very grateful indeed to be here this morning. Since I was here with you last, I have not been in many parts of the world, but I have traveled, and I have found faithful members of the Church, found the wards and branches of the Church increasing in some sections to the point that their meetinghouses will not hold them. The result is that two wards, and in some cases three wards have to meet in the same house.

GROWTH OF CHURCH

Since world War II closed, we have built more than two hundred meetinghouses and dedicated them, and we are still build-

ing and are short of places in which our people may worship. The Church has increased during the past year more than any other year since it was organized. It is not our Church. It is the Church of Jesus Christ. God gave it the name, and it is flourishing. How happy we should be, not that we have increased in numbers in the organization that we belong to, but that more of our Father's children, more of his sons and daughters, have been brought to an understanding of the truth, and are coming into his organization that he prepared to teach us the way of life and lead us along the pathway of eternal happiness.

APPRECIATION FOR REMEMBRANCES

I want to take this occasion personally to thank you, my brethren and sisters, for your kindness to me. I have received a host of birthday congratulations and cards that it will not be possible for me to acknowledge, and if any of you do not receive any word of acknowledgment, I want you to know that I appreciate just the same your kind remembrance of me in my advancing years.

WORK OF THE LORD

This is the work of the Lord. This is the Church of Jesus Christ, and we have all the blessings that may be enjoyed by anybody anywhere in the world. That is what the Lord promised.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:33.)

As we sit here in comfort in this marvelous auditorium today, listening to the sweet strains of music of the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, listening to the voices of those who are called to address us, we do so in peace and quiet, not in anxiety, as is the case in so many places in the world. Here we are in the land of Zion, and in this part of it that our Heavenly Father set apart for the gathering of his people more than a hundred years ago. Ought we not to be grateful?

BLESSINGS TO FAITHFUL

I cannot understand how people can be other than happy under all these circumstances. Think of our opportunities. There is not a desirable blessing, and all blessings are desirable, that we may wish to have that we may not enjoy if we are faithful to God and honor our membership in his Church. He has promised us that all things will come to us if we are righteous.

This morning among the many things that we enjoy, we are meeting in this house, built during the poverty of the Latter-day Saints, erected for the worship of our Heavenly Father; and as I look over this audience, I see people from nearly every section of

the country and from parts of other nations of the world. We have the mission presidents who are here from their various fields of labor, as well as presidencies of stakes, bishops of wards, and presidents of branches. This audience is an example of a gathering of the Latter-day Saints.

I am sure that as we come together to worship we will go from here feeling grateful that we have had this privilege. Now again, may I say this is not the work of man. This is not the Church of Joseph Smith nor any of those who have succeeded him in the presidency. This is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, named by the Lord himself.

I bear you witness of it in love and with a desire that all of our Father's children may learn the truth and accept of it, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Joseph Anderson, Clerk of the Conference read the following report of changes and Statistical data:

CHANGES IN CHURCH OFFICERS
MISSION, STAKE, WARD, AND BRANCH
ORGANIZATIONS SINCE OCTOBER
CONFERENCE 1949

Mission Changes and New Presidents Appointed as Follows:

Matthew Cowley released from presiding over the Pacific Missions.

Alma Sonne released from presiding over the European Mission.

E. Wesley Smith released from presiding over the Hawaiian Mission.

Melvin A. Weenig released from presiding over the Central Pacific Mission.

Great Lakes Mission organized by division of Northern States Mission.

Hawaiian Mission and Central Pacific Mission consolidated to form the Hawaii Mission.

Waldo M. Andersen appointed president of Northern States Mission to succeed W. Creed Haymond.

Benjamin L. Bowring appointed president of Texas-Louisiana Mission to succeed Glenn G. Smith.

Lucian M. Mecham, Jr., appointed president of Mexican Mission to succeed Arwell L. Pierce.

John P. Lillywhite appointed president of the Netherlands Mission to succeed Cornelius Zappey.

Carl C. Burton appointed president of the Great Lakes Mission.

Golden L. Woolf appointed president of the French Mission to succeed James L. Barker.