

*Sixth Annual Brigham Young University Church History Symposium*  
The Religious Studies Center

# The History of Latter-day Saint Missionaries and Missionary Work

Saturday, March 5, 2011

Conference Center, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

Chairs: Fred E. Woods and Reid L. Neilson

One of the greatest strengths of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been its vibrant missionary program. Less than six months after the organization of the Church, the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith the importance of gathering the elect (D&C 29:7). Later in his ministry, Joseph challenged the Saints to not let “a single corner of the earth go without a mission” (*HC* 5:368). Since the early days of the Restoration, many Latter-day Saints have taken this charge seriously, and as a result, hundreds of thousands of Church members have preached the gospel of Jesus Christ—“to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.”

The Brigham Young University Church History Symposium for 2011 has as its theme the history of Latter-day Saint missionaries and missionary work. Potential topics are endless, but symposium organizers anticipate looking at early rank and file missionaries who labored at home and abroad as well as those who opened up the work internationally in the 20th century and in recent decades. Many topics could be considered, including the origins and development of proselytizing techniques and programs, including preaching with the Book of Mormon, the Anderson plan, the “Mr. Brown” lessons, and *Preach My Gospel*. But the symposium would also like to consider lesser-known aspects of missionary work, including international tracts which were used besides the well-known works of Orson and Parley Pratt. Papers are also invited on such topics as the role of Church periodicals in missionary work, as well as on mission magazines and newsletters and the use of modern technology in spreading the good news. Other topics may include the training of mission presidents, the history of the Salt Lake City Mission Home and the MTC, as well as a study of visitors centers and historic sites in declaring the message of Mormonism. In addition, a careful look at the impact of couple missionaries in distant lands as well as the heroic labors of sister missionaries must not be overlooked. Further, early, important international missionaries such as Dan Jones in Wales or Gudmundur Gudmundsson in Iceland should not go unnoticed, as well as other pioneers who labored in global spheres and distant regions beyond North American borders to lesser known corners in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South America, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Rim. Each of these areas merits closer study.

Please submit a one-page proposal and curriculum vitae by August 1, 2011, to Professor Fred E. Woods, 365E Joseph Smith Building, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602. Or send it electronically to [fred\\_woods@byu.edu](mailto:fred_woods@byu.edu).