

RLDS NAMES NON-SMITH SUCCESSOR

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints broke a 135-year practice in April by naming a prophet-president who is not a descendant of Joseph Smith Jr. At the April conference, W. Grant McMurray was selected to lead the church.

The transition for prophet-president McMurray was eased by resigning leader Wallace B. Smith, who had expressed his preference for McMurray several months before. On April 15, McMurray was voted nearly unanimously into the RLDS church's top office.

Smith will stay on as president emeritus after spending 18 years as the church's leader. Under his administration, the church began ordaining women, built its second temple (located next to its headquarters in Independence, Mo.), and expanded membership into 36 countries, claiming 245,000 members.

RLDS conferees also discussed a possible change in the church's name and debated the issue of homosexuality.

No consensus was reached on the name change. Some delegates strongly endorsed fuller participation of homosexuals within their congregations stating that the church's position on homosexuality is "just out-of-date [and] old-fashioned." Others actively opposed it, suggesting that "the next step could result in sanctioning acts such as bestiality and pedophilia." A task force had been formed last fall at the request of the First Presidency to look into the homosexual issue. However, this task force does not have a time frame, nor is it obligated to report to the World Conference.

—AMG

MEXICANS BLOCK MORMON TEMPLE

Following opposition from local Roman Catholics and concern over urban development issues, city officials in Monterrey, Mexico, have blocked construction of a temple by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. According to a Religious News Service report, "thousands of Catholics gathered signatures and purchased advertisements in newspapers protesting the temple construction."

In spite of the public protest, Monterrey officials maintain that their decision was not based upon the community's outcry, but that the plans for the construction of the structure "did not comply with the city's urban development laws."

The initial plan for building of what was to be the country's second Mormon temple began in an effort to accommodate the growing LDS population in Mexico. The temple was to accommodate the 200,000 Latter-day Saints who make up 49 congregations in northern Mexico. However, because of strict requirements imposed by the Mormon church upon its adherents, only a small fraction can get permission to enter the temple after its dedication. The LDS church claims a total membership of 720,000 in the Latin American country.

L. Don LeFevre, LDS representative, said "the church would work toward reaching an agreement with the Monterrey officials and dispelling misconceptions [about church doctrine and practice] within the community," the Religious News Service reported.

The country's only LDS temple is in Mexico City and was completed in 1983.

—MKG

RESURRECTION BATTLE WITH EFCA ENDS

The Evangelical Free Church of America recently reaffirmed its stand on the belief in the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and believers. The denomination's declaration, publicized in late January, has ended the serious concerns and criticisms of a number of evangelical scholars and a coalition of 155 apologetic and counter-cult ministries. Personal Freedom Outreach was part of the initial alliance of ministries that formed in October 1990.

The conflict arose from the writings of Professor Murray Harris of the EFCA's seminary, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (now Trinity International University) in Deerfield, Ill. Harris contended in two works, *Raised Immortal* and *From Grave to Glory*, that the nature of Christ's resurrection was one of "imma-

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