

International Diplomacy and the Church

IN THE PREFATORY SECTION of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord declared, “And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days” (D&C 1:4). The foundation of the Church’s international diplomacy is the great commission Christ gave to His faithful apostles as the resurrected Lord:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

[MATTHEW 28:19-20]

This commission was renewed with the restoration of the priesthood and the Church and is preeminently in the hands and under the direction of the living apostles. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord specified the responsibility of the apostles:

The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling.

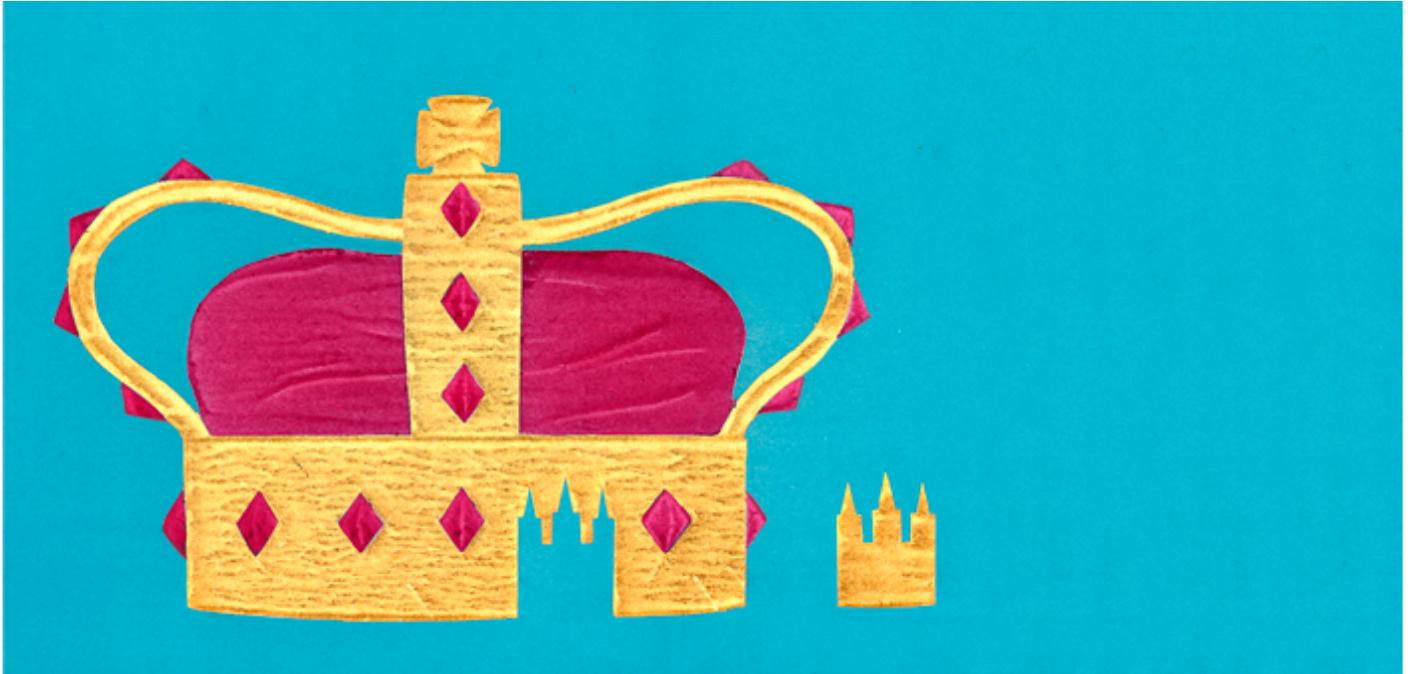
The Twelve are a Traveling Presiding High Council, to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church, agreeable to the institution of heaven; to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and secondly unto the Jews.

The Twelve being sent out, holding the keys, to open the door by the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. [D&C 107:23, 33, 35]

In this responsibility they are to call upon and to be assisted by the Seventy.

Although the restored Church was initially small and was concentrated within the United States, from the beginning the apostles were sent outside the center of the

Church and beyond the borders of the United States. The apostolic commission to proclaim the gospel and early community building laid the foundation for the diplomatic role of the Church in the twenty-first century.



No Events