



Community of Christ  
Historic Sites Foundation

### **We Share... A Vision**

In 1843, four missionaries departed Nauvoo, Illinois for the South Pacific. As Noah Rogers, Addison Pratt, Benjamin Grouard, and Knowlton Hanks sailed across the ocean, Knowlton grew increasingly ill and passed away in the arms of his friends. The remaining missionaries eventually reached French Polynesia where they eagerly explored the islands, interacted with the people, and baptized many willing converts.

Nearly twenty years later, two RLDS missionaries, Charles Wandell and Glauod Rodger stopped off in Tahiti for ship repairs on their way to Australia. While in Tahiti, they stumbled upon a local church member who led them to a thriving congregation known as "Tiona," from the Tahitian word for "Zion." They took their seats while the chapel filled with worshippers singing in Tahitian, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning!" The missionaries rejoiced at having discovered people familiar with the Restoration story and they soon united with the Reorganization.

When news from Tahiti reached North America, the excitement was contagious! A palm tree was included in the new church seal to represent the church presence in French Polynesia and the Ohio branch meeting in Kirtland Temple named themselves Siona after their sister branch in Tahiti. Then as now, the vision of Zion, the Peaceable Kingdom, calls us onward wherever we might be in the world.