

Celebrating 50 Years of the ENSIGN

The merging of the Ensign and Liahona is an example of how Church publications will always grow and adapt to better meet the needs of the Saints.

Early English Publications

Today's *Ensign* evolved from a rich heritage of Church publications like these (the year and location of creation are included with the title):

- 1832: *The Evening and the Morning Star* (Missouri, USA)
- 1839: *Times and Seasons* (Illinois, USA)
- 1853: *Journal of Discourses* (Liverpool, England)
- 1889: *Young Woman's Journal* (Utah, USA)
- 1897: *Improvement Era* (Utah, USA)
- 1915: *Relief Society Magazine* (Utah, USA)
- 1929: *Instructor* (Utah, USA)

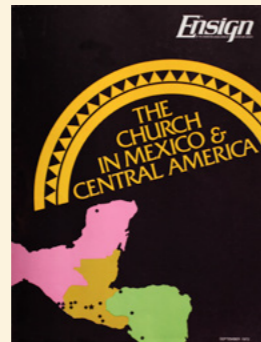


"The word *ensign* appears in ancient and modern-day scriptural texts, often about the last days when the Lord would raise up an ensign—which is **a banner, a symbol, a sign for others to see.** That great ensign is the Restoration of the gospel itself, the great prophesied marvelous work and a wonder of the Lord in the last days."—*Jay Todd, former managing editor*

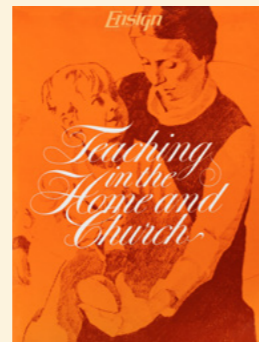
1971: The *Ensign*, *New Era*, and *Friend* replace former Church publications. An estimated 350,000 families receive the January 1971 *Ensign*, which includes a vinyl record with a message from President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972). (Listen to the recording at bit.ly/3KkcaM0.)



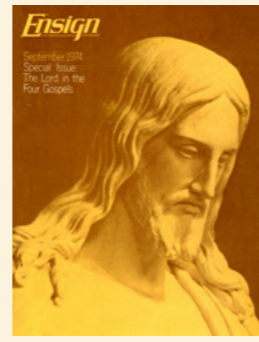
1971: Articles in braille are made available through the *New Messenger*, a compilation of material from the *Ensign*, *New Era*, *Friend*, and *Church News*.



1972



1973



1974: Recordings of *Ensign* articles are made available on cassette tapes through the Utah State Library for the Blind.

1974: General conference messages are published in the May and November issues.



1975



1976: The first *Ensign Talking Book*, produced on 8 rpm flexible records, replaces the *New Messenger* for members with visual impairments.



1977



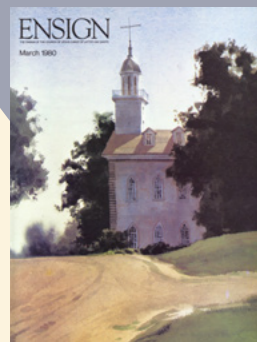
1978



1979

"One of the lasting habits I acquired at the *Ensign* was a love of general conference. Because we listened to every talk with pencils in hand, correcting the manuscript to reflect what was actually said, **I learned to listen to conference with my attention fully engaged.** I still do that today, and our children, and my wife's many seminary students, have learned to do the same."—*Orson Scott Card, former assistant editor*

1970s

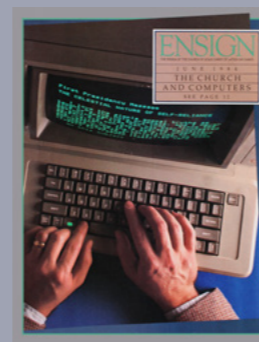


1980



1981

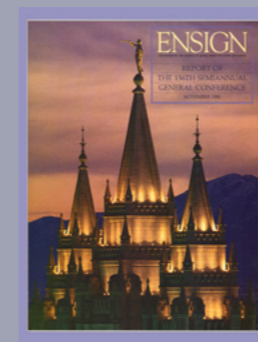
"When I started working at the *Ensign*, **we all used electric typewriters.** The designers had to send typescript out to be printed on photo-quality paper, then cut and paste it onto art boards by hand. The art boards were then sent to the press to be photographed and prepared for hot-type printing. I remember the first computers we got sometime in the '80s had green screens. Although no one who has worked for the magazines is perfect, you could never fault how hard we tried."—*R. Val Johnson, former managing editor*



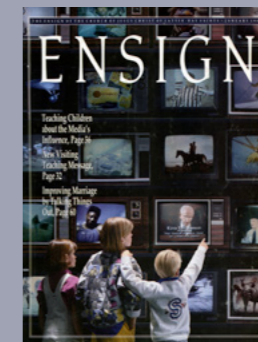
1984



1985



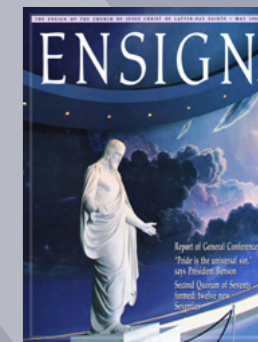
1986



1987



1988



1989

1980s

Visit ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/122010 for more stories from those who worked at the *Ensign*.