



Thomas Tolman
Family Organization
Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Mission Statement

The mission of the Thomas Tolman Family Organization is to promote love, unity, healing, forgiveness, friendship, and the spiritual and temporal welfare of all family members through effective family organization as follows:

- (1) Strive for true, accurate, and complete genealogical records of both our ancestors and living members “worthy of all acceptance” (See D&C 128:22, 24).
- (2) Increase gratitude for our family heritage and encourage all family members to pass on even greater heritage.
- (3) Document and share inspiring personal histories of both our ancestors and living members.
- (4) Preserve genealogical records and personal histories for future generations and make these records and histories available to all family members.
- (5) Provide all of the descendants of Thomas Tolman the opportunity to receive the blessings and saving ordinances of the temple.
- (6) Assist family members in their research and writing of personal histories.
- (7) Encourage family members to create strong and active family organizations built on principles of truth.

Vision

“Brothers and Sisters, I promise you protection for you and your family as you take this challenge to find as many names to take to the temple as ordinances you perform in the temple and teach others to do the same. And if you accept this challenge, blessings will begin to flow to you and your family like the power of the river spoken of by Ezekiel (See Ezekiel 47:1-5, 8-9) and the river will grow as you continue to perform this work and teach others to do the same. You’ll find not only protection from the temptations and ills of this world, but you’ll also find personal power: power to change, power to repent, power to learn, power to be sanctified, and power to turn the hearts of your family together and heal that which needs healing.” (Elder Dale G. Renlund, RootsTech 2016 Family Discovery Day)

The vision of the Thomas Tolman Family Organization is to assume a leadership role in helping families establish strong family organizations committed to fostering healthy family relationships through actively participating in family history work, family service, family reunions, and family preparedness— consequently reaping the promised blessings including personal power, protection, forgiveness, love, healing, and exaltation.

“Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”
(Excerpt from *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*)

Values

The Thomas Tolman Family Organization values those principles of truth that lead to lasting peace and happiness as contained in the gospel of Jesus Christ and as exemplified in the lives of our ancestors.

As related to family organizations and family history work, we value the following principles:

- **Leadership.** William O. Tolman, family genealogist from 1959 to 1980, was called by the First Presidency in 1962 to serve on the Church Genealogy Committee where he served for ten years. As part of his duties, he traveled with General Authorities on most weekends to attend Stake Conferences throughout the U.S. and Canada to talk on the Church’s family history program. General Authorities included Marion G. Romney, Spencer W. Kimball, Howard W. Hunter, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, LeGrand Richards, Eldred G. Smith, N. Eldon Tanner, Theodore M. Burton, Ezra Taft Benson, Franklin D. Richards, and Thomas S. Monson along with numerous other church leaders from the Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society General Boards. William O. Tolman not only talked the talk, but he also walked the walk. He along with other family leaders, organized and mobilized the family to accomplish the family history program of the Church.
- **Never too old or too young to get involved in family history.** Judson Tolman, the founder of the Thomas Tolman Family Organization, was nearly 77 years old when he gathered his family and the families of his two deceased brothers, Cyrus and Benjamin, and organized them into a family organization. Elderly family members bring wisdom and experience while younger family members are adept at using the technologies that allow us to hasten the work of family history.
- **Preservation of Records.** Prior to the information age and personal computers, our ancestors had the wisdom to gather and safeguard family genealogy records. They built the Thomas Tolman Family Genealogy Center in Bountiful Utah including a fireproof vault to safeguard the records. Today, preservation of the records is accomplished through preserving histories, genealogy data and temple ordinance information in FamilySearch. The family organization website maintains the family record of these histories and genealogy data at www.thomas.tolmanfamily.org.
- **Commitment.** William O. Tolman believed “the key to success is getting a lot of people to do a little.” Thus regular family work days were organized to invite cousins to commitment to

contributing a little of their time and talents. Today, much of the work can be accomplished from our homes, but the need for many hands to do a little remains.

- **Sacrifice.** Over the years, family members have sacrificed time and means to accomplish family history work. In 1978, the Thomas Tolman Family Genealogy Center was dedicated after over 21,000 hours of volunteer service hours and donations of \$70,000 which is equivalent to over \$255K in 2016. Many sacrificed much of their time to produce thousands of family names for temple ordinance work and hundreds of family histories. All this was accomplished when family history required painstaking efforts.
- **Stewardship.** While the Church and family are mutually supporting organizations, the family has primary responsibility to accomplish family history work. Elder Allan F. Packer explained, “Temple and family history work is part of living the gospel at home. It should be a family activity far more than a Church activity.” (CR, October 2014). Such family organization for family history work is part of legacy of the Thomas Tolman Family Organization which has been able to accomplish much more than would have otherwise been possible without a family organization.
- **Love of family.** Ultimately, this great work of family history is about love of family. Love of family means linking generations and tending to our roots and branches and healing that which needs to be healed.

Goals and Supporting Objectives

“It should be clearly understood that Satan will do all in his power to ruin any plan which calls for organizing families. He fully realizes that the success of the Church lies in Family Organization. If he can destroy the spirit of a family home evening, upset the harmony between family members, foil plans for reunions, projects, etc., he honestly believes he can still win. Families which are well organized are the most efficient organization on earth to destroy his efforts.”
(*The Savior, the Priesthood and You*, p. 171)

Goal 1: Ensure the Thomas Tolman Family Organization is maintained and administered in a professional, ethical, and efficient manner.

Supporting Objectives:

1.1 Maintain an active, functioning Executive Board including the positions of President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Relations Specialist, System Administrator, Historian, Family Genealogist, and other committees as necessary. Hold Executive Board meetings once per quarter and utilize technology to ensure effective communication and administration of the organization.

1.2 Update the Strategic Plan and Family Organization by-laws annually or as appropriate and publish them to the family organization website.

1.3 Maintain an annual financial report to account for all donations, income, purchases, and operating expenses of the family organization in accordance with standard accounting practices. Publish a summary of the annual financial report on the family organization website.

1.4 Maintain the family organization 501C3 non-profit status including filing an annual Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service by the 15th of May each year.

1.5 Develop a Common Operating Picture in Google Sheets to help manage the administrative issues of the organization and assist the Executive Board members to discharge their duties.

1.6 Develop Standing Operating Procedures for key tasks of the organization.

1.7 Increase family organization membership as follows: e-mail (2,000), Facebook subscribers (1,500), Instagram followers (1,500), and Twitter followers (1,500).

1.8 Maintain the family organization donation objectives on the family organization website and achieve stated objectives through inviting family members to make a donation.

1.9 Maintain the family organization website including the following tabs: our ancestors, get involved activities, about us, family store, contact us, and follow us.

“It is important for us also to cultivate in our own family a sense that we belong together eternally... We ought to encourage our children to know their relatives. We need to talk of them, make effort to correspond with them, visit them, join family organizations, etc.” (President Spencer W. Kimball, Family Organization and Records Pamphlet, Quarterly Stake Conference 1977, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

Goal 2: Encourage and help families organize themselves into efficient family organizations.

Supporting Objectives:

2.1 Encourage and assist families to organize themselves following the principles and heritage of the Thomas Tolman Family Organization.

2.2 Encourage and assist family organizations to participate in indexing, family histories, family genealogy records, and temple work.

2.3 Encourage family members to participate in family work days and family service projects to help accomplish family history work and lift those in need. Encourage families to share their experiences on the family organization social media sites.

2.4 Encourage family organizations to be spiritually and temporally self-reliant.

2.5 Encourage families to hold regular family reunions and virtual family reunions by providing reunion tips, reunion reports, etc.

“When the full measure of Elijah’s mission is understood, . . . it applies just as much on this side of the veil as it does to the other side of the veil. So, the hearts of you fathers and mothers must be turned to your children right now, if you have the true spirit of Elijah.” (President Harold B. Lee, Family Organization and Records Pamphlet, Quarterly Stake Conference 1977, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

Goal 3: Encourage family participation in indexing on FamilySearch.

Supporting Objectives:

3.1 Index one million records by 31 December 2020 under the Thomas Tolman Family Organization Indexing Group in FamilySearch.

3.2 Encourage all family members to participate in family indexing on a monthly basis.

3.3 Encourage family members to share indexing stories on the family organization social media sites.

3.4 Encourage family members to become arbitrators for FamilySearch Indexing.

“Much of the heavy lifting and hastening of the work of salvation for both the living and the dead will be done by you young people.” (Elder Quentin L. Cook, Roots and Branches, CR, April 2014)

Goal 4: Encourage each family member to upload their key stories, photos, documents, and audio on FamilySearch Memories and to post stories to the family organization social media sites. Encourage the principle of abridgement when documenting personal histories.

Supporting Objectives:

4.1 Educate family members on methodologies for writing personal histories through the family organization website. Emphasize the importance of genuine and accurate history.

4.2 Identify family members age 60 or older and ensure there is a plan in place for them to record their chronology and key personal stories.

4.3 Encourage all family members to write their personal history with a focus on key stories, photos, documents, audio, and video.

4.4 Encourage family members to share key personal history experiences on the family organization social media sites.

“While temple and family history work has the power to bless those beyond the veil, it has an equal power to bless the living. It has a refining influence on those who are engaged in it. They are literally helping to exalt their families.”
(Elder Russell M. Nelson, *Generations Linked in Love*, CR, April 2010)

Goal 5: Ensure key stories, photos, documents, and audio of ancestors are uploaded into FamilySearch Memories and shared on the family organization website and social media sites as appropriate. Consider the principle of abridgement when preserving these histories.

Supporting Objectives:

5.1 Identify all published histories of ancestors and ensure they are scanned and preserved on FamilySearch and the family organization website. Strive to preserve accurate and factual records.

5.2 Identify family history projects for publication including new editions of existing publications.

5.3 Invite family members to read family histories and capture their favorite stories on FamilySearch and share them on the family organization website and social media sites. Systematically, populate and organize FamilySearch Memories.

5.4 Develop 24 stories per year (8 for each of the three family lines: Judson, Cyrus, and Benjamin) to post on the family organization website and social media sites.

“I invite the young people of the Church to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. . . . I promise [that] you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary. As you participate in and love this holy work, you will be safeguarded in your youth and throughout your lives.”
(Elder David A. Bednar, *The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn*, CR, October 2011)

Goal 6: Encourage family members to find family ancestors including descendency research and take names to the temple to give them the opportunity to accept the saving ordinances of the temple.

Supporting Objectives:

6.1 Ensure Thomas Tolman Family Organization Tree data is uploaded into FamilySearch.

6.2 Maintain and share the Thomas Tolman Family Organization Family Tree information.

- 6.3 Assign specific research gaps to family members willing to participate in family research.
- 6.4 Resolve the birthplace and parentage of Thomas Tolman using all available means (e.g., DNA, online research, onsite research, etc.).
- 6.5 Determine the merits of onsite research to England for research for Thomas Tolman and other ancestors.
- 6.6 Encourage family members to find family members and take them to the temple to perform their temple ordinances. Emphasize the importance of meeting the Genealogical Proof Standard.
- 6.7 Encourage family members to release family names for the temple so the ordinances can be performed as soon as possible.

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(Elder David A. Bednar, The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn, CR, October 2011)