



East-Siberian Mission (ESM) Headquarters  
Photo courtesy of East-Siberian Mission.

# East Siberian Mission

---

## JÓN HJÖRLEIFUR STEFÁNSSON

Jón Hjörleifur Stefánsson, M.A.,  
is a Ph.D. candidate, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

---

The East Siberian Mission was a Russian church unit that covered a large part of East Siberia from 1911 to 1921.

### Territory and Statistics

Period: 1911–1921

Territory: The Amur (until 1913), Kamchatka (until 1913), Primorskaya (until 1913), Sakhalin (until 1913), Transbaikalia, and Yakutsk Oblasts, and the Irkutsk and Yeniseysk Governorates

Membership (1915): 60

Churches (1915): 3

## Origin of Seventh-day Adventist Work in the Territory

By 1906, the Adventist mission had reached Asian Russia and the European denominational organ *Zions-Wächter* listed a new “Russio-Asian Field” in the German Union.<sup>2</sup> Siberia became part of the East Russian Mission in 1907 and the Siberian Mission in 1909.

## Organizational History

In 1910 the Asian Russian church units were reorganized. The East Russian and Siberian Missions were dissolved and the Siberian Union Mission was organized. It comprised the East Siberian, Ural, Turkmenistan, Volga, and West Siberian Missions. The changes went into effect at the start of 1911. The East Siberian Mission’s territory was the Irkutsk and Yeniseysk Governorates, and the Amur, Transbaikalia, and Yakutsk Oblasts, as well as “the coast territories” (probably Kamchatka, Primorskaya, and Sakhalin). The initial membership was 22. Epifan Gnädjin served as minister.<sup>3</sup>

During World War I and the Russian Civil War, church organization shook, was abandoned, or went unreported. Consequently, the East Siberian Mission was constantly re-assigned to different parent fields, and eventually went unreported in the *Yearbook*. In 1914 the Mission was listed under the European Division Missions.<sup>4</sup> At the start of that year the Amur, Kamchatka, Primorskaya, and Sakhalin Oblasts were cut off and organized into the Amur Mission.<sup>5</sup> In 1916 the Mission was listed in the West Russian Union,<sup>6</sup> again under the European Division Missions in 1917,<sup>7</sup> and in the Siberian Union Mission in 1918.<sup>8</sup> From 1919 to 1921 there were no reports on Siberia in the *Yearbook*.

In 1920 or 1921 the Siberian Union was organized.<sup>9</sup> The East Siberian Mission became the East Siberian Conference with the same territory, except Yeniseysk Oblast was transferred to the Central Siberian Conference.<sup>10</sup>

## List of Presidents

Minister: Epifan Gnädjin, 1911.

Director: Epifan Gnädjin, 1912–1918.

## SOURCES

*Annual Statistical Report*. Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1915.

“Bericht der Traktat- u. Missionsvereine des Sibirischen Unionfeldes vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1911.” *Zions-Wächter*, May 1, 1911.

Conradi, Ludwig R. “Progress in the European Division.” *ARH*, November 10, 1910.

*Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1905–1923.

“Vierteljahrsbericht der deutschen Union-Konferenz vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1906.” *Zions-Wächter*, May 7, 1906.

## NOTES

1. For period and territory, see the article; for membership and churches, see *Annual Statistical Report* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1915), 8.?
2. The cities listed are apparently all in the Caucasus, however (for instance, Sochi, Sochumi, and Yerevan), which does not, at least by modern definitions, constitute part of Siberia. “Vierteljahrsbericht der deutschen Union-Konferenz vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1906,” *Zions-Wächter*, May 7, 1906, 154. The church unit’s name was given as the “Asiatic Russian Mission” in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1906), 75.?
3. For organizational changes and statistics, see Ludwig R. Conradi, “Progress in the European Division,” *Review and Herald*, November 10, 1910, 7; “Siberian Union Mission,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1911), 110–11; “Bericht der Traktat- u. Missionsvereine des Sibirischen Unionfeldes vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1911,” *Zions-Wächter*, May 1, 1911, 197.?
4. “East Siberian Mission,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1914), 122.?
5. “Amur Mission,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1915), 124.?
6. “East Siberian Mission,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1916), 123.?

7. "East Siberian Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1917), 132.?
8. "East Siberian Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1918), 134.?
9. "Siberian Union," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1922), 103.?
10. "Central Siberian Conference" and "East Siberian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1923), 110.?

---

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000