

# Washington D.C. Temple Renovation Fact Sheet



**Address:** 9900 Stoneybrook Dr.  
Kensington, Maryland 20895-3199

**Original Temple Announced:**

November 15, 1968

**Original Groundbreaking:**

December 7, 1968

**Original Dedication:** November 19–22, 1974

**Renovation Construction Start:**

March 5, 2018

**Public Open House Begins:**

Thursday, April 28, 2022

**Rededication:** Sunday, August 14, 2022

**Property Size:** 52 acres

**Building Size:** 156,558 square feet

**Building Height:** 288 feet, including the statue of the Book of Mormon prophet Moroni

**Renovation Architect:** John McConkie (Church architect) and CRSA Architects

**Interior Design:** Kathleen Bluth (Church designer) and CRSA Architects

**Contractor:** Okland Construction

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Washington D.C. Temple was the first temple built east of the Mississippi River since the Nauvoo Temple more than a century earlier. Most of the major Church history sites—including Palmyra, Kirtland and Nauvoo—are within the original boundaries of the Washington D.C. Temple district.

The groundbreaking for the original Washington D.C. Temple was held in 1968 and construction began in 1971. It was dedicated in 1974 by President Spencer W. Kimball and became the 16th operating temple of the Church.

At the time of the temple's dedication, the Washington D.C. Temple district included about 300,000 people living in the eastern United States, eastern Canada and the Caribbean. Church members in South America were also assigned to the Washington D.C. Temple. About 20,000 church members lived in the Washington, D.C., area. Many of these members were converts, which reflected the growth of the Church in the twentieth century. More than 750,000 people toured the temple during the open house in 1974, including many national government leaders.

## EXTERIOR FEATURES

**BUILDING AND SPIRES:** The temple's clean, vertical lines extend skyward, creating a sense of simplicity and design that honors and enhances its original architecture. The existing concrete structure features an exterior clad of Alabama white marble quarried in Sylacauga, Alabama. The six gold spires atop the structure make this temple the tallest in the Church.

**EXTERIOR ART GLASS:** A solid blaze of color lights the exterior art glass from the ground to the top of the temple. The colors begin with rich, vibrant shades of red and orange and ascend into clear tones of blue, violet and finally white. The glass was designed by Willet Hauser Architectural Glass of Winona, Minnesota.

**LANDSCAPING:** Ruppert Landscape of Laytonsville, Maryland, was responsible for the landscaping at the temple. The manicured grounds feature 260 trees, 5,073 shrubs and 3,911 perennials, each chosen to complement

native plants in the surrounding area. Annuals and green lawns cover 64,822 square feet of the site, enhancing the beauty of the naturally wooded site.

**FOUNTAINS:** There are two fountains on the temple grounds, both designed by Loci, CRSA and Water Design, all located in the Salt Lake City area in Utah. The main water feature, which is surrounded by a seat wall for guests, is complete with a light aggregate cap, based on the fountain's original design. The Visitors' Center water feature, made of a dark granite, creates a clear reflective surface that captures different angles of the temple in photographs.

**FENCE AND WALKWAYS:** The changes to the perimeter fence are limited to the vehicular entrance where the existing guard house was removed. New fence panels match the existing fence. The new site design encourages more use of the sidewalks surrounding the temple.

## INTERIOR FEATURES

**FLOORING:** White marble, quarried in Sylacauga, Alabama, and fabricated in Xaimen, China, is used for flooring and base throughout the temple. An arched motif adorns the celestial and sealing rooms' carpet carvings and was carved by Halfmoon Studio in Midvale, Utah. A custom cherry blossom motif decorates the carpet in the bride's room and was designed by Rugs International of Cartersville, Georgia, who also fabricated the blue and brown geometric-patterned wool area rugs found throughout the temple. Neutral colors are used in the main and stair tower areas of the temple. The carpet in the main areas of the temple was fabricated by Mannington, headquartered in Salem, New Jersey. The carpet in the celestial and sealing rooms was fabricated by Bentley Mills of Los Angeles, California.

**DECORATIVE PAINTING:** Gold leaf adorns the decorative line work on the walls of the sealing and celestial rooms, designed and installed by Finessed Finishes of Springville, Utah. Light blue and green decorative lines are found on the walls of the lobbies of each floor and in the bride's room. Characteristic pointed arches are seen throughout the temple and have been added to the ceilings in gold leaf in the sealing rooms as well as the oval opening in the celestial room.

**INTERIOR ART GLASS:** Improved lighting illuminates the original art glass representation of the Tree of Life just behind the reception desk. The art glass was designed and fabricated by Willett Hauser Architectural Glass of Winona, Minnesota. The new LED lighting makes the brilliant colors of the art glass visible to all who enter the temple.

**LIGHTING:** The main lighting fixtures are made of beveled cut glass with a frosted base, creating beautiful designs on the ceilings where they are hung. Swarovski crystal chandeliers made in Austria, patterned after the angular geometry of the temple itself, hang in the celestial and sealing rooms. All lighting was designed in partnership with CRSA and Ciana Decorative Lighting, located in Heber City, Utah, and was installed by Altmate Electric Inc. of Mt. Airy, Maryland.

**MILLWORK:** Quarter sawn Anegre wood creates an understated linear pattern similar to the temple's exterior architecture. It was fabricated in Tijuana, Mexico, and installed by Masterpiece Millwork and Door of Lindon, Utah.

**STAIR AND FONT RAILINGS:** Decorative metal railings have been replaced throughout the temple, honoring the original design. White painted overlapping arch balusters and satin brass rails found in the baptistry were fabricated and installed by Hercules Custom Iron, headquartered in Walkersville, Maryland.

**DOORS AND HARDWARE:** The original exterior decorative bronze doors are unique to this temple and have been restored. Eight bronze medallions by Latter-day Saint sculptor Franz Johansen portray the Big Dipper and North Star, the earth, the planets, the moon, the stars, the concentric circles representing eternity, the traditional temple sun face and seven concentric pentagons representing the seven dispensations. These medallions are also found on the sliding gates at the main entry. Escutcheons featuring a stylized three-dimensional casting of the temple towers are found on the interior doors. The interior doors and hardware are made of wood and brass.

**WALLS:** Most wall coverings in the temple are made of vinyl, except for the sealing room, which is made from silk fabric that is attached to a paper backing. This specialty wall covering in the sealing room is fabricated by

Weitzner and installed by Sparkle Painting of Franconia, Virginia. The design is a type of stylized arch that references the original arch motif that exists throughout the temple. C.J. Coakley Co., Inc. of Fairfax, Virginia, completed all the framing, drywall and plaster work in the building.

**ORIGINAL ARTWORK:** "Great Falls, Potomac River" by Brad Aldridge; "Historic River in Waterford Virginia" by Frank Magleby; "Silent Reflections" by Frank Magleby; "He Healed Them All" by Michael Malm; "Reverie at Daybreak" by Adair Payne; "Supreme Teacher" by Julie Rogers; "An Answer is Given" by Julie Rogers; "Washington D.C. Temple" by Keith W. Wilcox; "His Return" by Dan Wilson.



# A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Washington D.C. Area



**EARLY CHURCH HISTORY:** The story of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Washington D.C. is the story of gathering, growth, and commitment to public service. In 1839, Church founder and President Joseph Smith and Judge Elias Higbee came to Washington on behalf of persecuted Church members in Missouri. Ultimately the Church was forced to flee to Utah to escape continued opposition. After the Territory of Utah was created in 1850, two Church members served as official delegates to Congress in Washington. But it was Statehood for Utah in 1896 that propelled the first wave of elected members of Congress. Most Church trailblazers came in the early 1900s for employment in government and public service and then recruited and mentored others from the West.

The first official Church congregation was a small unit called the Washington Branch, organized in 1920. Church members met in homes and office space until November 5, 1933 when the first meetinghouse was dedicated in the District on 16th Street and Columbia Road. Called the Washington Chapel, it became an area landmark, known for its Utah marble, stained-glass windows, mosaic of Christ, basketball court, and neighborhood organ recitals. The gold statue of the angel Moroni, a Book of Mormon prophet, was removed from the spire when the building was sold in 1977.

**CHURCH GROWTH:** In 1938 there were five existing church congregations: Washington, Fairview, Baltimore, and two newly created branches Chevy Chase and

Arlington. The Greenbelt Branch was created soon after. Two years later, on June 30, 1940, the first stake was formed, the Washington Stake, which is an ecclesiastical unit similar to a diocese. This newly created stake consisted of six congregations stretching from Baltimore to Arlington. Ezra Taft Benson was the first president of the stake, and he later became the 13th President of the Church. After that first stake was created, as congregations expanded, additional stakes were added over time, and now all or part of 24 stakes can trace their origins to the Washington Stake.

The small group of Church members in this area a century ago has burgeoned to around 80,000 in the metropolitan area, and they are as internationally and culturally diverse as the region itself. Over the decades, some were transient, but others stayed and planted deep roots of public service.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Church members have always emphasized community service and love of neighbor. This was demonstrated most recently during the COVID-19 pandemic when the Church sent truckloads of food from warehouses in Salt Lake City to Washington-area foodbanks and pantries. Other Latter-day Saint initiatives include Day to Serve, JustServe.org, and free family history research assistance at Family History Centers. In partnership with groups such as the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAGHS), Church members utilized the Washington D.C. family history center to conduct family history research. Church members have served on the Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington (IFC) for 30 years, and the Festival of Lights at the Washington D.C. Temple Visitors' Center presents nightly musical performances during the Christmas season.

**WASHINGTON D.C. TEMPLE:** The Washington D.C. Temple, located in Kensington, Maryland, was dedicated by President Spencer W. Kimball November 19–22, 1974. The temple serves more than 120,000 Latter-day Saints in Washington, D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The temple closed March 2018 for extensive repairs and renovations and will be rededicated August 14, 2022.



# Temples Throughout the World

More facts and statistics can be found at [Newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://Newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

TOTAL NUMBER OF TEMPLES IN OPERATION: 173



## NORTH AMERICA

St. George Utah	Spokane Washington	Redlands California
Logan Utah	Columbus Ohio	Manhattan New York
Manti Utah	Bismarck North Dakota	San Antonio Texas
Salt Lake City Utah	Columbia South Carolina	Newport Beach California
Laie Hawaii	Detroit Michigan	Sacramento California
Cardston Alberta	Halifax Nova Scotia	Rexburg Idaho
Mesa Arizona	Regina Saskatchewan	Twin Falls Idaho
Idaho Falls Idaho	Billings Montana	Draper Utah
Los Angeles California	Edmonton Alberta	Oquirrh Mountain Utah
Oakland California	Raleigh North Carolina	Vancouver British Columbia
Ogden Utah	St. Paul Minnesota	The Gila Valley Arizona
Provo Utah	Kona Hawaii	Kansas City Missouri
<b>Washington D.C.</b>	Albuquerque New Mexico	Brigham City Utah
Seattle Washington	Louisville Kentucky	Calgary Alberta
Jordan River Utah	Palmyra New York	Gilbert Arizona
Atlanta Georgia	Fresno California	Fort Lauderdale Florida
Boise Idaho	Medford Oregon	Phoenix Arizona
Dallas Texas	Memphis Tennessee	Payson Utah
Chicago Illinois	Reno Nevada	Indianapolis Indiana
Denver Colorado	Nashville Tennessee	Provo City Center
Portland Oregon	Montreal Quebec	Philadelphia Pennsylvania
Las Vegas Nevada	Baton Rouge Louisiana	Fort Collins Colorado
Toronto Ontario	Oklahoma City Oklahoma	Star Valley Wyoming
San Diego California	Houston Texas	Hartford Connecticut
Orlando Florida	Birmingham Alabama	Tucson Arizona
Bountiful Utah	Boston Massachusetts	Meridian Idaho
Mount Timpanogos Utah	Winter Quarters Nebraska	Cedar City Utah
St. Louis Missouri	Columbia River Washington	Winnipeg Manitoba
Vernal Utah	Snowflake Arizona	Pocatello Idaho
Monticello Utah	Lubbock Texas	
Anchorage Alaska	Nauvoo Illinois	

Temples listed in chronological order by region

## CARIBBEAN

Port-au-Prince, Haiti  
Santo Domingo Dominican Rep

## MEXICO

Mexico City Mexico  
Colonia Juarez Chihuahua Mx  
Ciudad Juarez Mexico  
Hermosillo Sonora Mexico  
Oaxaca Mexico  
Tuxtla Gutierrez Mexico  
Tampico Mexico  
Villahermosa Mexico  
Merida Mexico  
Veracruz Mexico  
Guadalajara Mexico  
Monterrey Mexico  
Tijuana Mexico

## CENTRAL AMERICA

Guatemala City Guatemala  
San Jose Costa Rica  
Panama City Panama  
San Salvador El Salvador  
Quetzaltenango Guatemala  
Tegucigalpa Honduras

## SOUTH AMERICA

Sau Paulo Brazil  
Santiago Chile  
Lima Peru  
Buenos Aires Argentina  
Bogota Colombia

Guayaquil Ecuador  
Cochabamba Bolivia  
Caracas Venezuela  
Recife Brazil  
Porto Alegre Brazil  
Montevideo Uruguay  
Campinas Brazil  
Asuncion Paraguay  
Curitiba Brazil  
Manaus Brazil  
Cordoba Argentina  
Trujillo Peru  
Concepcion Chile  
Barranquilla Colombia  
Fortaleza Brazil  
Arequipa Peru  
Rio de Janeiro Brazil

## EUROPE

Bern Switzerland  
London England  
Freiberg Germany  
Stockholm Sweden  
Frankfurt Germany  
Preston England  
Madrid Spain  
The Hague Netherlands  
Copenhagen Denmark  
Helsinki Finland  
Kyiv Ukraine  
Paris France  
Rome Italy  
Lisbon Portugal

## AFRICA

Johannesburg South Africa  
Accra Ghana  
Aba Nigeria  
Kinshasa Democratic Republic of Congo  
Durban South Africa  
Praia Cape Verde

## ASIA

Tokyo Japan  
Manila Philippines  
Taipei Taiwan  
Seoul Korea  
Hong Kong China  
Fukuoka Japan  
Cebu Philippines  
Sapporo Japan  
Yigo Guam

## OCEANIA

Hamilton New Zealand  
Apia Samoa  
Nuku alofa Tonga  
Papeete Tahiti  
Sydney Australia  
Adelaide Australia  
Melbourne Australia  
Suva Fiji  
Perth Australia  
Brisbane Australia





# DAVID A. BEDNAR

*Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*



David A. Bednar was ordained and set apart as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on October 7, 2004. Prior to his call to the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Bednar served as an Area Authority Seventy, as an Area Authority, as a Regional Representative, twice as a stake president, and as a bishop.

Elder Bednar was born on June 15, 1952, in Oakland, California. He served as a full-time missionary in Southern Germany and then attended Brigham Young University, where he received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. He also received a doctoral degree in organizational behavior from Purdue University.

After completing his education, Elder Bednar was a professor of business management at Texas Tech University and at the University of Arkansas. He then served as the president of Brigham Young University-Idaho from 1997-2004.

Elder Bednar married Susan Kae Robinson in the Salt Lake Temple on March 20, 1975, and they are the parents of three sons.





# QUENTIN L. COOK

*Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*



Elder Quentin L. Cook was sustained as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on 6 October 2007. Called as a General Authority in April 1996, he served in the Second Quorum, the First Quorum, and the Presidency of the Seventy.

He previously served in the Area Presidency in the Philippines, as president of the Pacific Islands and the North America Northwest Areas, and as Executive Director of the Missionary Department.

Prior to his call to be a General Authority of the Church, he had been a managing partner of a law firm and president and CEO of a California Health Care System. He also served on the governing boards of a number of civic and business-related corporations.

He is a native of Logan, Utah, received a bachelor's degree in political science from Utah State University, with honors, and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from Stanford University. Utah State University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws degree.

Prior to his call as a General Authority, he also served the Church as a full-time missionary in the British Mission and as a bishop, stake president in the San Francisco California Stake, Regional Representative, and Area Authority in the North America West Area.

He married Mary Gaddie on November 30, 1962. They are the parents of three children and have eleven grandchildren.



# D. TODD CHRISTOFFERSON

*Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*



Elder D. Todd Christofferson was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 5, 2008. At the time of his call, he was serving in the Presidency of the Seventy. Earlier, he was president of the Mexico South Area of the Church, residing in Mexico City.

Prior to full-time Church service, Elder Christofferson was associate general counsel of NationsBank Corporation (now Bank of America) in Charlotte, North Carolina. Previously, he was senior vice president and general counsel for Commerce Union Bank of Tennessee in Nashville where he was also active in community affairs and interfaith organizations. From 1975 to 1980, Elder Christofferson practiced law in Washington, D.C., after serving as a law clerk to U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica during the trials and other proceedings known as “Watergate” (1972-74).

Born in American Fork, Utah, he graduated from high school in New Jersey, earned his bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University, where he was an Edwin S. Hinckley Scholar, and his law degree from Duke University where he was on the Duke Law Journal editorial board.

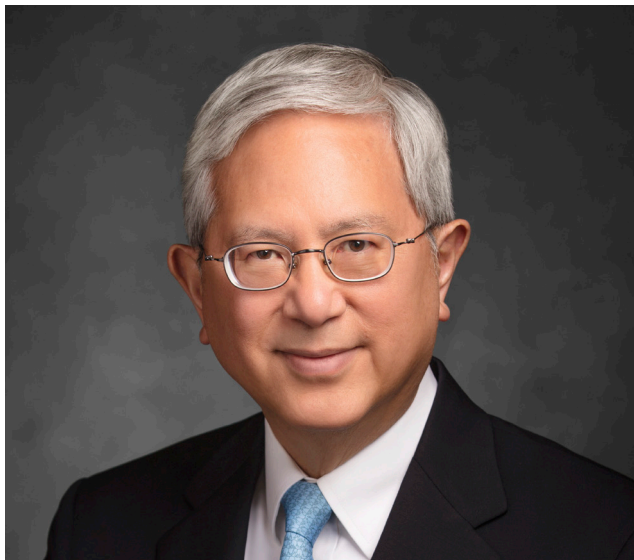
As a young man, he served as a missionary in Argentina.

Elder Christofferson and his wife, Katherine Jacob Christofferson, are parents of five children.



# GERRIT W. GONG

*Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*



Elder Gerrit W. Gong was sustained as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on March 31, 2018. He had served as a General Authority Seventy from April 3, 2010 until the time of his call to the Twelve. He was named a member of the Presidency of the Seventy on October 6, 2015. From 2011 to 2015, Elder Gong was a member of the Asia Area Presidency, headquartered in Hong Kong, and concluded that service as the Area President.

Elder Gong received a bachelor of arts degree in Asian and university studies from Brigham Young University in 1977. In 1979 he received a master of philosophy degree and in 1981 a doctorate in international relations from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes scholar. In 1985 he served as special assistant to the undersecretary of state at the U.S. State Department and in 1987 as special assistant to the U.S. ambassador in Beijing, China. From 1989 he served in several positions at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. He was assistant to the president for planning and assessment at Brigham Young University until April 2010.

Elder Gong has served in numerous Church callings, including full-time missionary in Taiwan, high councilor, high priests group leader, stake Sunday School president, seminary teacher, bishop, stake mission president, stake president, and Area Seventy.

Gerrit Walter Gong was born in Redwood City, California, on December 23, 1953. He married Susan Lindsay in January 1980. They are the parents of four children and three grandchildren.



# SHARON EUBANK

*Relief Society Presidency, First Counselor*



Sister Sharon Eubank is a general leader in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the First Counselor to Relief Society president Jean B. Bingham. Founded in 1842, the Relief Society is one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the world. The presidency helps provide leadership and resources for 7.2 million Relief Society members in 187 countries.

Sister Eubank is also the president of Latter-day Saint Charities, the humanitarian organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Latter-day Saint Charities provides emergency relief and long-term humanitarian assistance in 202 countries without regard to race, religion, ethnic origin, or political affiliation. Sister Eubank offers strategic leadership for signature programs, which include: refugee relief and support, maternal and newborn care, and clean water and food security.

In 2021 Sister Eubank was also named executive director of JustServe—a global, free, nonprofit platform that links volunteers with local community volunteer needs in an easy mobile app. The exchange is active in 5 languages and 13 countries, and its partnerships include global non-governmental organizations, national and state governments, and many strong and experienced faith-based organizations.

She has a strong conviction that a commitment to the two great commandments to love God and to love our neighbors is the very DNA of individual happiness and the foundation of peaceful growth in society.



# REYNA I. ABURTO

*Relief Society Presidency, Second Counselor*



Sister Reyna I. Aburto was called in April 2017 as the second counselor in the general presidency of the Relief Society. She served on the Primary General Board and in different callings in the Church.

She attended Universidad Centroamericana, where she studied industrial engineering, and holds a degree in computer science from Utah Valley University. She has worked in the language industry for more than 25 years and owns a small translation business with her husband.

She was born in Nicaragua and married Carlos Aburto of Mexico in the Jordan River Temple. They are both converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and they have three children and three grandchildren.





# RANDALL K. BENNETT

*Seventy*



Elder Randall K. Bennett was sustained as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 2, 2011. He served in the Europe East Area Presidency in Moscow, Russia, from 2011 to 2015 and as president of the Russia Samara Mission from 2007 to 2010. He currently serves as President of the North America Northeast Area.

Elder Bennett earned a doctor of dental surgery degree from the University of Alberta and a master of science specialty degree in orthodontics from Loma Linda University in California. During his professional career, Elder Bennett was involved in orthodontic treatment, research, teaching, and training.

Elder Bennett has served in a number of Church callings, including full-time missionary in the France Paris and France Toulouse Missions. Randall Kay Bennett was born in Magrath, Alberta, Canada, on June 17, 1955. He married Shelley Dianne Watchman in April 1977. They are the parents of four children.



# KEVIN R. DUNCAN

*Seventy*



Elder Kevin R. Duncan was sustained as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 3, 2010. At the time of his call, he had been serving as a member of the Fifth Quorum of the Seventy in the Utah South Area. He previously served as President of the Central America Area. He is currently serving at Church headquarters as Executive Director in the Temple Department.

Elder Duncan received a bachelor's degree in accounting, a master's degree in taxation, and a juris doctor from Brigham Young University in 1991. He began his career as a tax attorney in Seattle, Washington. In 1996 he founded CaseData Corporation, from which he retired in 2005.

Elder Duncan has served in a number of Church callings, including full-time missionary in Chile, temple ordinance worker, Church-service missionary as the associate international legal counsel in South America, president of the Chile Santiago North Mission, and Area Seventy.

Kevin Read Duncan was born in Ogden, Utah, on October 6, 1960. He married Nancy Elizabeth Smart in June 1986. They are the parents of five children.





# JACK N. GERARD

*Seventy*

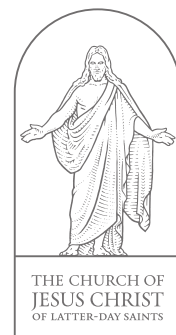


Elder Jack N. Gerard was sustained as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on March 31, 2018, at age 60. He previously served in the Sixth Quorum of the Seventy in the North America Northeast Area from 2010 to 2016. He is currently serving at Church headquarters as the Executive Director of the Church Communication Department.

Elder Gerard attended George Washington University, where he received a bachelor of arts degree in political science and a juris doctor degree. During his career he worked as president and CEO for several entities. He worked in the United States Senate and House of Representatives and served on multiple civic organization boards.

Elder Gerard has served in a number of Church callings, including full-time missionary in the Australia Sydney Mission, bishop, stake president, and—his favorite—ward nursery leader.

Jack Noel Gerard was born in Idaho Falls, Idaho, on December 15, 1957. He married Claudette Neff in 1984. They are the parents of eight children.



# Core Beliefs and Doctrines



**THE NATURE OF GOD** A central doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a belief in God the Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost. The three comprise the Godhead. They are one in purpose but separate beings.

**CHRISTIAN** The Church is Christian but is neither Catholic nor Protestant. Rather, it is a restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ as originally established by the Savior.

**DIVINE PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY** The Church emphasizes the need for divine authority. As Joseph Smith taught, “A man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof” (Articles of Faith 1:5). The authority to act in God’s name is called the priesthood.

**PRINCIPLES AND ORDINANCES** “The first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost [or confirmation in the Church]” (Articles of Faith 1:4). Since young children are incapable of sin, they are not baptized until the age of eight, when they begin to be accountable.

**CONTINUING REVELATION** Divine revelation for the direction of the Church comes from God through the President of the Church. The Presidents of the Church are viewed by Latter-day Saints as prophets in the same sense as Moses, Abraham, and Peter. In addition, parents can receive divine revelation for their families, and individuals are entitled to revelation for their personal lives.

**SCRIPTURES** The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ is divinely inspired scripture, as is the Holy Bible. They are used together with other approved scriptures: the Doctrine and Covenants, a compilation of revelations received since the time of the Restoration, and the Pearl of Great Price, a selection from the revelations, translations, and writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

**PURPOSE OF LIFE** Each of us is literally a child of heavenly parents, with whom we lived in a premortal existence. Through God’s divine plan, we come to earth to receive a physical body, gain experience, and prove ourselves worthy to return to God’s presence. Through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, all will be resurrected, and through His Atonement, all may partake of His love, mercy, and forgiveness. All have the potential to obtain eternal life, conditioned upon obedience to the Savior’s teachings and ordinances.

**FAMILY AND MARRIAGE** Family relationships are central to the gospel of Jesus Christ. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” issued by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1995, proclaims that “the divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally” (ChurchofJesusChrist.org). That is why the Church builds temples.

**MORALITY** The Church follows the Savior’s law of strict morality. Faithful Church members observe principles of honesty, integrity, obedience to local laws, chastity outside of marriage, and fidelity within marriage

between a man and a woman. The Church opposes abortion (with few exceptions), pornography, gambling, and same-sex marriage.

**HEALTH CODE** The Word of Wisdom, a health code revealed to Joseph Smith in 1833, cautions against using tobacco, alcoholic beverages, tea, and coffee and emphasizes the benefits of wise eating habits for physical and spiritual health. The Church interprets the misuse and abuse of all drugs—illegal, legal, prescription, or controlled—as a violation of God’s law.

**TITHING AND FAST OFFERINGS** The Church embraces the biblical pattern of tithing, which is contributing one-tenth of one’s income. Faithful members also fast for two meals once a month and donate the money they would have spent on those meals, or more, to help the needy. These generous offerings enable the Church to finance construction, education, missionary, welfare, and humanitarian efforts.

**MISSIONARY WORK** The Church accepts the Savior’s charge to “go . . . into all the world” and share the blessings of the gospel (Mark 16:15). Consequently, the Church has more than 50,000 full-time missionaries serving throughout the world. Most are college-age men and women, but many are retired couples. All have accepted an assignment from Church leaders and serve at their own expense for a year and a half to two years.

**CHURCH SERVICE** Prophets have taught that “when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints functions with a lay ministry, giving millions worldwide the opportunity to grow by rendering faithful Christian service to others.



# Families Can Be Forever



## **THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS**

The Church teaches that we all lived in a premortal state as children of heavenly parents. Each person comes to earth to gain a physical body and learn through the mortal experience. By obedience to God's commandments, each of us may return to His presence, where we will live eternally in a family organization.

A distinctive Latter-day Saint teaching is that marriage can be for eternity. Such marriages must be performed in a temple by authority from God, called priesthood. Latter-day Saint temples are not places of regular Sunday worship. They are sacred buildings for family-centered

sacraments and ceremonies, or ordinances. For these ordinances to remain in effect, a husband and wife must love and be faithful to each other throughout their marriage and continue to follow a course of Christian service and commitment throughout their lives.

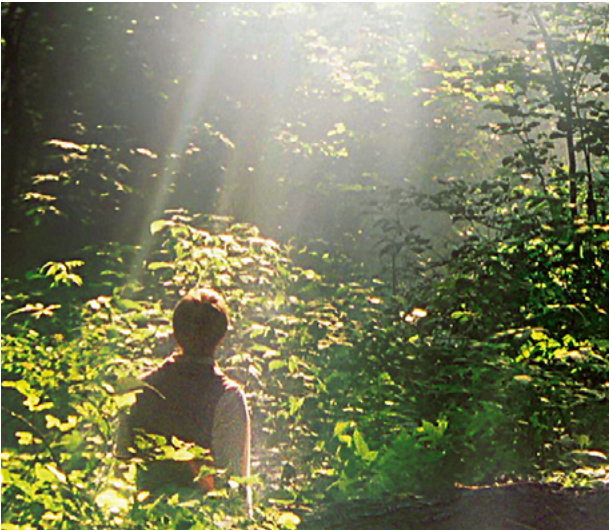
**TEMPLES AND FAMILY HISTORY** For millions of people who lived before the time of Christ or during the intervening centuries between the death of the Apostles and the Restoration of Christ's Church, these ordinances were not available. Even today, millions live and die without ever hearing the name of Jesus Christ or learning and accepting the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel He taught.

Provision must be made, then, for those who have died without the opportunity to receive those temple ordinances. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that all saving ordinances are performed on earth on behalf of the dead. Latter-day Saints stand as proxies for their own deceased ancestors in these sacred ceremonies, which include baptism, sealings of husbands and wives, and sealings of parents and children in eternal family units. These ordinances are only binding if willingly accepted by each individual.

Temples are central to Latter-day Saint belief. Members are taught that they have an obligation to trace their family tree and perform temple ordinances for their deceased ancestors.



# History



**THE FIRST VISION** One of the most influential events in religious history occurred during the spring of 1820, when two heavenly beings appeared to a young boy named Joseph Smith.

Joseph lived in New York in 1820, when a religious revival was sweeping the region. Confused by the conflicting claims of the various faiths, he went to the Bible for guidance and there found the counsel to “ask of God” (James 1:5).

In a wooded grove near the family farm, Joseph knelt to pray for guidance. In answer to his prayer, God, the Eternal Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph and told him to join none of the existing churches. Further, he was instructed that through him, God would restore to earth the Church originally organized by Jesus Christ, with all its truths and priesthood authority. Joseph Smith officially organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 6, 1830, in Fayette, New York.

**THE BOOK OF MORMON: ANOTHER TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST** In September of 1823, a resurrected being named Moroni appeared to Joseph and showed him a religious history of an ancient American civilization engraved on metal plates and buried in the ground. Joseph translated this record into English by the gift and power of God. Named for one of the ancient prophets who compiled it, the Book of Mormon was first published in 1830. Today it is available in more than 110 languages.

The Book of Mormon contains religious writings of civilizations in ancient America between about 2200 BC and AD 420. It includes an eyewitness account of the ministry of Jesus Christ on the American continent following His Resurrection in Jerusalem.

## **RESTORATION OF PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY**

Apostles and prophets in all ages have had authority from God, called priesthood, to act in His name. The original Twelve Apostles received the priesthood under the hands of the Savior Himself, but with their persecution and passing, that priesthood authority disappeared from the earth. An essential component of the Restoration, therefore, was the reestablishment of this authority. This was accomplished in 1829 when John the Baptist and Peter, James, and John—all resurrected beings—appeared and, placing their hands on the heads of Joseph and his associate Oliver Cowdery, restored this authority to the earth.

**GROWTH AND OPPOSITION** Like the ancient Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a missionary church. In the mid-19th century, converts were encouraged to gather with the Saints in America, but these growing groups of immigrants from Europe and the Eastern United States provided fuel for contention.

To escape this escalating turmoil, the Church moved from New York to Ohio, then to Missouri, and later to Illinois. In 1839 the Latter-day Saints established the community of Nauvoo, Illinois. But mounting suspicion and anxiety within neighboring communities fed an atmosphere of extreme agitation and distrust. Some began to call for the Latter-day Saints’ extermination.

At the height of this turmoil, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were shot to death by an armed mob in nearby Carthage, Illinois.

**BRIGHAM YOUNG AND THE WESTWARD TREK** Mobs attacked Latter-day Saint settlements in the region, burning crops, destroying homes, and threatening to exterminate the people. Church leaders knew another relocation would be necessary. This led to one of the most visionary and significant migrations in American history.

Brigham Young succeeded Joseph Smith as the leader of the Church. In 1846 he led the Latter-day Saints across the frozen Mississippi River into unsettled Iowa territory and eventually on to the remote valley of the Great Salt Lake, 1,000 miles to the west, arriving in July 1847.

During the next 22 years, an estimated 68,000 Latter-day Saints from around the globe flowed into this Great Basin refuge. Most crossed the plains in wagons, but nearly 3,000 walked pulling handcarts.

From the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young directed the establishment of more than 350 communities in western America.

**INTO THE MODERN ERA** When Utah gained statehood on January 4, 1896, Church membership totaled a quarter of a million, mostly in Utah. When Church membership reached a million in 1947—100 years after the desperate exodus from Nauvoo—it was still largely a North American organization. After 1947, however, worldwide growth accelerated.

At the end of 2020, the worldwide membership of the Church stood at 16.5 million, in 196 nations and territories, with only 40 percent living in the United States.

