

## **Biography—Reid L. Neilson**

Reid L. Neilson was appointed Assistant Church Historian and Recorder for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on January 22, 2015, by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Prior to his appointment he served for nearly five years as Managing Director of the Church History Department, overseeing the Church History Library, the Church History Museum, and the Granite Mountain Records Vault. He will continue to fulfill this executive role. In addition to serving on a number of Church committees, including the Historic Sites Executive Committee and the Scriptures Coordination Committee, Neilson sits on the editorial boards of the Deseret Book Company and The Joseph Smith Papers.

Neilson also worked as an assistant professor of Church History and Doctrine in Religious Education at Brigham Young University from 2006 to 2009. There he taught courses on Mormon history, the Doctrine and Covenants, and American Christianity, and received the university's prestigious Young Scholar Award. A decade before his academic appointment he worked as a consultant for Arthur Andersen's Strategy, Economics, and Financial Consulting Division in Los Angeles, California, from 1996 to 1998.

A prolific author and editor, Neilson has written many articles and book chapters and published two-dozen books dealing with Mormon and American religious history topics. His authored volumes include *Exhibiting Mormonism: The Latter-day Saints and the 1893 Chicago World's Fair* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Early Mormon Missionary Activities in Japan, 1901–1924* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010). His edited and coedited documentary histories and anthologies include *The Columbia Sourcebook of Mormons in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); *A Zion Canyon Reader* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2014); *To the Peripheries of Mormondom: The Apostolic Around-the-World Journey of David O. McKay, 1920–1921* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011); *Joseph Smith: Reappraisals after Two Centuries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); *Proclamation to the Pacific: Nineteenth-century Mormonism and the Pacific Basin Frontier* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2008); *The Mormon History Association's Tanner Lectures: The First Twenty Years* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); *The Rise of Mormonism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); and *Believing History: Latter-day Saint Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). He has twice won the Geraldine McBride Woodward Book Prize for the best book of the year on the international Church from the Mormon History Association.

Neilson received a bachelor's degree (international relations) and two master's degrees (business management and American history) from Brigham Young University and a PhD in Religious Studies (American religions) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He later completed the Harvard Business School's General Management Program.

As a graduate student and junior faculty member, Neilson received a number of fellowships, including the Luce Summer Seminar in Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative

Theology Fellowship from the Henry Luce Foundation, the Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents Fellowship from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the International Studies Scholar for Tomorrow Fellowship from the University of North Carolina, and the Archive of Restoration Culture Fellowship from Brigham Young University.

A native of Orange County, California, Neilson served as a young missionary in the Japan Sapporo Mission. Since that time he has toured over seventy countries with family and friends. He and his wife, Shelly, have four children and live in Bountiful, Utah.