

Core Doctrines



THE NATURE OF GOD God is often referred to in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as our Heavenly Father because He is the Father of all human spirits and they are created in His image (see Genesis 1:27). For Latter-day Saints, God the Father, His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost constitute the Godhead, or Trinity. Latter-day Saints believe God is embodied, though His body is perfect and glorified.

CHRISTIAN The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a Christian church but is neither Catholic nor Protestant. Rather, it is a restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ as originally established by the Savior in the New Testament of the Bible. Latter-day Saints believe God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to save all mankind from death and their individual sins. Jesus Christ is central to the lives of Church members. They seek to follow His example by being baptized (see Matthew 3:13–17), praying in His holy name (see Matthew 6:9–13), partaking of the sacrament (see Luke 22:19–20), doing good to others (see Acts 10:38) and bearing witness of Him through both word and deed (see James 2:26). The only way to salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ.

DIVINE PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY Latter-day Saints believe that divine authority was lost in the ancient church after the death of the apostles and required a restoration by divine intervention. They affirm the priesthood authority

was restored to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the first half of the 19th century — a literal act through angelic visitations from the resurrected John the Baptist in 1829 and later through the appearance of the resurrected ancient apostles Peter, James and John. Today, all Latter-day Saints who hold the priesthood trace their authority directly to these visitations and bestowal of the priesthood of God on Joseph Smith and early leaders of the Church. The “apostolic keys” of priesthood authority today — by which is meant the right to direct the Church — are believed to be vested in the modern apostles in the same way that the ancient apostles had the authority to direct the early church.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION Baptism into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints requires full immersion in water by a person who holds the priesthood authority to baptize. It is the means by which people join the Church. Those who are baptized into the Church are cleansed of their previous sins and promise to live the principles of the gospel. A person becomes a member of the Church only after he or she is both baptized and confirmed. A person is confirmed a member of the Church after baptism by a priesthood holder who puts his hands on the head of the person and blesses him or her to “receive the Holy Ghost.”

MODERN PROPHETS AND CONTINUING

REVELATION Modern apostles and prophets are a distinctive characteristic of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Church members view senior Church leaders — Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and the presidents of the Church that followed — as prophets of God in the same way they view Abraham, Moses, Isaiah and the apostles in the day of Jesus Christ. Russell M. Nelson is the current president and prophet of the Church. Members believe The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a restoration of the Church originally established by Jesus Christ during His mortal lifetime. Part of that restoration includes living prophets and apostles. Along with modern prophets comes continuing revelation and additional scripture. Joseph Smith is perhaps best known for his translation of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ and for laying the

foundation of the Church in the 19th century. Successive presidents of the Church since then have made their own distinctive contributions.

PLAN OF SALVATION To describe the trajectory of human existence, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints uses the term “plan of salvation.” This “plan” refers to the design God has employed to help us grow, learn and experience joy. It addresses the fundamental questions “Where did we come from?” “Why are we here?” and “Where are we going?” Scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint teach that all human beings are children of God and lived with Him before this earth life. God presented a plan by which we could obtain physical bodies and a period of earthly experience. Central to this “plan of salvation” was the role of Jesus Christ, who, as the Savior, would help mankind overcome the costs of our mortal learning. During mortality, we exercise our God-given right to make choices and live in ways that draw us closer to God or away from God. At death, our spirit leaves our deceased body. While our bodies remain on the earth, our spirits will reside in a state of rest or in a state of learning until the day of resurrection and judgment, when all will be judged by a perfectly merciful and just God. We will inherit a place in a realm of glory corresponding to our faithfulness. While all human beings will receive the gift of immortality, or an eternal union of the body and spirit, God desires for us to live in such a way that we also receive the gift of exaltation — eternal life with our families in God’s presence.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints affirms that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.

HEALTH PRACTICES Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are known for their healthy lifestyles. A health plan for the Church was first written down in 1833 by President Joseph Smith, and he presented it to early members specifically as a revelation

from God. Today, Latter-day Saints refer to these health guidelines as “the Word of Wisdom.” Among the provisions of the health code: no alcoholic drinks, no smoking or chewing of tobacco, and no “hot drinks” — believed to refer specifically to tea and coffee. “Wholesome herbs,” along with fruits and grains, are specifically recommended. Meat is to be used “sparingly.” The Church also interprets the misuse of drugs — illegal, legal, prescription or controlled — as a violation of the health code.

TITHING AND CHARITABLE DONATIONS For Latter-day Saints, tithing is a natural and integrated aspect of their religious belief and practice. By the biblical definition, tithing is one-tenth, and Church members interpret this as a tenth of their “increase,” or income, annually. It is paid on the honor system. No one asks to see income statements or pay slips. Tithes and other charitable donations help the Church carry out its mission of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, caring for the poor and strengthening members’ faith and commitment to Jesus Christ.

MISSIONARY PROGRAM The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ missionary program is one of its most recognized characteristics. Latter-day Saint missionaries can be seen on the streets of hundreds of major cities in the world as well as in thousands of smaller communities. The missionary effort is based on the New Testament pattern of missionaries serving in pairs, teaching the gospel and baptizing believers in the name of Jesus Christ. Currently, more than 65,000 missionaries serve worldwide.

VOLUNTEER MINISTRY The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints functions in large measure because of the unpaid volunteer ministry of its members. In thousands of local congregations or “wards” around the world, members voluntarily participate in “callings” or assignments that provide meaningful opportunities to serve one another. It is common for Church members to spend 5–10 hours a week serving in their callings. Some callings, such as a bishop, women’s Relief Society president, or stake president may require 15–30 hours per week.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Families Can Be Together 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.



Mesa Arizona Temple Fact Sheet



Location: 101 S Lesueur, Mesa, AZ 85204

Original Plans Announced: October 3, 1919

Original Groundbreaking: April 25, 1922

Original Dedication: October 23, 1927

Renovation Construction Began: May 2018

Rededication: December 12, 2021

Architect: Young and Hansen

Contractor: Porter Brothers Inc.

Landscape Architect: GCBS and LOCI Design

Decorative Frieze: Artist—A.B. Wright
Sculptor—Torleif Knaphus

Temple Exterior Finishes: Gladding McBean

Lighting Design: Ciana Lighting

Property Size: 20 acres

Building Size: 75,000 square feet

The Mesa Arizona Temple was the ninth temple constructed by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was originally dedicated in 1927. This is the second refurbishment for the 94-year-old temple. It was rededicated in 1975 by President Spencer W. Kimball, an Arizona native, following expansion and remodeling. In addition to the temple in Mesa, there are five other operating temples in Arizona. They include Gila Valley, Gilbert, Phoenix, Snowflake and Tucson. After its second rededication the Mesa Temple will serve approximately 83,000 members from 29 stakes in the Mesa area (a stake is similar to a diocese). There are currently 252 temples operating, announced or under construction throughout the world.

EXTERIOR FEATURES

BUILDING: The original design was decided through a competition won by the firm Young and Hansen. The temple has a simple form and neoclassical detailing. The exterior is articulated by a series of tall, square columns that project slightly from the center of each elevation. The temple is decorated on its corners with frieze panels that depict Latter-day Saint beliefs about the gathering of Israel from the four corners of the earth as prophesied by Isaiah in the Old Testament of the Bible.

SPIRE: The temple is one of six temples without a tower or spire. The height of the two-story center section of the temple is 53 feet.

LANDSCAPING: One of the main goals of the landscape design was to create an unobstructed view from Main Street to the temple. The existing Visitors' Center was relocated across the street to create this view. Existing olive trees and other ornamental trees were carefully preserved where possible and relocated with other greenery to beautify the site. To the north of the temple is a large open area that is designed to accommodate large crowds and theatrical staging for the annual Mesa Arizona Easter Pageant.

FOUNTAINS: The temple has two water features, a large reflecting pool on the north side of the temple and a

small one on the west outside the main entrance. The basin of the fountain is paved in granite stone quarried in India.

WINDOWS: The new windows match the material and style of the original windows while incorporating a double-paned insulating glass system that improves energy efficiency. Like many early temples, the Mesa Arizona Temple did not originally have stained glass exterior windows, and this simple historic look is maintained today.

INTERIOR FEATURES

CARPETING: Period-appropriate Axminster carpet patterns are used in the ordinance areas of the temple. Area rugs also hearken back to the neoclassical styling of the period. Carpet colors include golds, creams, a variety of greens and hints of lavender. Bloomsburg Carpet Inc. manufactured these historical carpets.

STONE: One of the defining design elements in the original temple are the checkerboard floor patterns. This pattern has been reintroduced in the main entries to the temple along with the grand foyer and adjoining spaces. Another distinctive element of the temple is the tall stone bases and wainscots in many of the rooms. These wainscots have been maintained or replicated in original spaces, which had been taken out in previous remodel projects. The stone was quarried from Spain, Turkey and Missouri and fabricated in Portugal.

PAINTING: The decorative paint colors are based on the original paint schemes for the temple, which includes over 50 colors. Ornamental plaster mouldings are accented by shades of green, gold and lavender, with gold leaf highlights in ordinance rooms, the grand stair and the historic grand foyer.

MURALS: The baptistry and grand stair feature murals that are original to the temple. These murals were cleaned and repaired by Parma Conservation. The baptistry murals were painted by J. Leo Fairbanks with assistance from his father and his brother. They include a depiction of the baptism and confirmation of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at the Susquehanna River. The mural in the grand stair was painted by Lee Greene Richards and depicts Joseph Smith preaching to the Native Americans and the baptism of Native Americans.

CHAMFERS AND WALL TRIM: Another historic feature of the temple is the use of 45-degree chamfers on many details throughout the building. Designers also used perimeter wall trim that outlined the walls of each room. Both this wall trim and chamfer design are incorporated throughout the temple as unifying elements.

LIGHTING: Historic fixtures original to the building were restored and reused where possible. New lighting was designed to match the original lantern-shaped fixtures in many of the rooms.

SKYLIGHT: The ceiling in the grand Stair features the temple's original art-glass skylight with amber and pale blue glass. The skylight has a central oval shape and a radial motif in each corner that extends from a square piece of translucent stone.

MILLWORK: Many of the details from the original millwork have been replicated in the new design throughout the temple. These include the historic column, urn and scroll details. All of the millwork was fabricated by Crown Custom Millwork.

DOORS AND HARDWARE: The doors of the temple are plain sliced walnut, which was the species of wood used for the original doors. The original door detailing was restored by Crown Custom Millwork. New door hardware created to match the historic door hardware was made by Rocky Mountain Hardware.

FURNITURE: The furniture and fabrics throughout the building are designed to fit the neoclassical style. Marquetry patterns and designs within the stained wood tables, consoles and seating are featured. The urn and other architectural elements have been incorporated into some of the pieces of furniture and fabrics. Stained wood to match the rest of the millwork in the temple architecture has been used along with golds, creams, greens and lavender-hued fabrics.



Mesa Arizona Temple Visitors' Center



The new Mesa Temple Visitors' Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a unique place for people throughout Arizona to learn about and celebrate Mesa's diverse history.

When guests enter the Center, located across the street from the Mesa Temple, they are greeted by huge block letters spelling out "Mesa" and murals covering the walls that honor the area's early settlers. The Center has interactive multimedia experiences that immerse guests in Mesa's rich spiritual heritage built by Native Americans, Hispanic migrants, and Mormon pioneers.

Tanner Kay, the product manager and experience creator for the Visitors' Center, explained, "Young people want to learn about Mesa's history from other young people who actually lived it. That's why we created Mesa Friend cards, where young people share the history of their ancestors with guests. Guests can use the Mesa Friend cards to scan at various exhibits throughout the Center to discover more about Mesa natives. These friends will guide guests through Mesa's story, which is also their story."

For example, through one Friend Card, Caitlynn shares the experience of her grandparents, Gabelo and Enriquetas, who traveled to Mesa from Mexico. After her grandparents experienced a difficult and uncomfortable two-day trip, the people of Mesa "hugged them with their

kindness," she says. They helped her grandparents with food and gave them a place to stay so that they could be married in the Mesa Temple.

After learning about Mesa's history, guests might want to learn more about their own family history. The upper floor of the Center has numerous computers for community members to participate in and learn about their family heritage. Trained family history volunteers are available to assist in specific family related projects, including document preservation and research.

Free to the public and open daily, this modernized Visitors' Center is also specially designed to help young adults feel a spirit of belonging. Kay says, "We spent time with young adults in Mesa to learn how to create a space that works for them. And we listened! That's why you see a variety of comfortable spaces here, like a kitchen to share food with friends, and individual quiet pods where you can have a private moment to meditate."

In addition, the Visitors' Center will help answer questions about the Mesa Temple and will explain why these sacred buildings are important to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Guests can see an exact-scale model replica of the temple with cutout views of each room. Nearby displays explain key doctrines taught within the temple that focus on the teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ. For example, guests will learn that the temple is a place where members make promises with God called covenants. These include trying to become more Christlike. Members believe that by keeping these promises and by following the commandments of God, they will be blessed with joy.

"I think visitors of all faiths and ages will find the Visitors' Center welcoming, interesting, and educational," says Mesa's mayor, John Giles. "I am excited for people who visit Mesa to have the opportunity to understand the rich history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Mesa Temple and the city's cultural heritage. The

new Visitors' Center is in a prominent location on Main Street near a light rail stop and will be a welcoming spot for both locals and out-of-town visitors."

There is something for everyone at the Center, including play areas for children, a desert art wall begging to be colored, and a chalkboard that prompts visitors to answer thoughtful questions. The goal of the Center—which provides all information and experiences in both English and Spanish—is for guests to find a sense of community, learn about their rich heritage, and be reminded that they are all God's children. The Mesa Visitors' Center will officially open to the public on Saturday, August 14, at 9:00 a.m.



History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Mesa



Considering what it must have taken to withstand a harsh, arid environment and to maintain life in the desert—as well as to build homes for their families and establish a community—it's obvious that early Arizona settlers who were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had an abundance of two things: fortitude and faith.

The sacrifices of these men and women who pioneered Arizona by giving up existing comforts and beginning anew are some of the most poignant stories of the American West. Their greatest motivation was a personal desire to maintain their faith through obedience to Church leaders. So, when they were asked to go, they went; when they were asked to stay, they made a home and a legacy.

The first members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in what is now Arizona marched with the Mormon Battalion in the winter of 1846. This was a group of men and women who had volunteered at the request of the US government to prepare to fight in the Mexican-American War, although their journey ended up being a peaceful one.

More members of the Church began arriving in Arizona in the 1870s. They were sent from their homes in Utah by Church leaders to explore and colonize the Arizona territory.

The settlement of Mesa began with the migration of two groups of Latter-day Saints. The first group consisted of 15 wagons, led by Daniel Webster Jones. This group found their way to an area about 20 miles east of Phoenix along the Salt River and established the community of Lehi in 1877. They began digging ditches so they could grow crops. They would be known as the Lehi Company. Since 1970, this area has been included in City of Mesa boundaries.

The second group—the Mesa Company—with 25 wagons led by Francis M. Pomeroy came in 1878. The Mesa Company was encouraged by Henry C. Rogers, who had been with the Lehi Company. He wrote of fertile soil (when water could reach it) and said, "The Spanish speaking people here call this the Valle del Sol (Valley of the Sun). . . . With this naming I can find no fault for sunshine we do have aplenty."

Mesa—Spanish for table—was founded in 1878 on the bluff above the Salt River. These settlers discovered an extensive irrigation system established by the first inhabitants of the Salt River Valley, now referred to as Hohokam. While time had practically erased most of these canals, outlines of the system could be seen, and, when re-dug, would provide the lifeblood of water. After arriving here and spending nine months of backbreaking toil through summer's blistering heat, this small group of pioneers carved out a 12-mile canal to bring river water to the parched soil of the "Mesa."

When the population grew to 300, local citizens petitioned for a local form of government, and in 1883 Mesa was incorporated as a village. In 1897 it would become a town, and in 1929 it would become a city.

A monument was erected on Main Street at the south end of Pioneer Park in 1988, honoring four men considered the "founding fathers" of Mesa: Charles I. Robson, George W. Serrine, Charles Crismon, and Francis M. Pomeroy. Their statues hold the tools they labored with: a shovel, a gun, a spirit level, and a map of the townsite. A mother and her child—without which a community is impossible—also appear as part of the monument.

The area grew, and, for decades, devout members of the Church in Arizona longed for a temple for sacred temple ordinances. The closest temple was in St. George, Utah, causing young couples desiring to be married there to travel by wagon, and the well-trod path became known as the Honeymoon Trail.

In 1918 Church president Heber J. Grant announced the decision that Mesa would be the location of the first temple in Arizona. In a single month following the announcement, \$125,000 was pledged by local residents. But, in 1920, a depression came along, and plans were delayed.

Undaunted by adversity, Church leaders moved forward with their plans and on April 25, 1922, ground was broken on a 20-acre lot bordered by Main Street, Hobson, First Avenue and LeSueur. The design was inspired by Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

Instead of a formal open house, tours were offered during the last two years of construction. From May 1925 until its dedication in October 1927, an estimated 200,000 people visited the structure.

The Arizona Temple's dedication was a four-day event and newspapers across the country reported on it, stating that "5,000 of the faith and 5,000 of the friendly" attended the first day's gathering, and, on the second day, a choir of 300 Americans, Indians and Mexicans on the temple roof gave a public concert of "simple thanks and praise."

The Arizona Temple opened in 1927, dedicated by Church President Heber J. Grant. It dominated Mesa's skyline for decades and was often called a "sermon in stone."

In 1945 the temple began offering sessions in Spanish—the first to present in a language other than English.

In 1974 the temple was closed for renovation after serving the Saints in Arizona, as well as a number of neighboring

southern states as far as Florida and much of Mexico, for 47 years. After the renovation was complete, the temple was open to the public for two weeks, in which more than 205,000 visitors toured the temple.

In April 1975 Church President Spencer W. Kimball performed the historic rededication, as this was the first time a temple had been reopened and rededicated.

President Kimball had deep Arizona roots, having been a long-time resident of Thatcher, a small town in eastern Arizona. He became the 12th president of the Church in 1973, serving in that position until his death in 1985. In his dedicatory address in 1975, he recalled that he sang on the roof of the temple with the St. Joseph Stake Choir for the original dedication in 1927.

Other Church leaders with ties to the area include Delbert L. Stapley of Mesa, who became a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles in 1950. He served until his death in 1978.

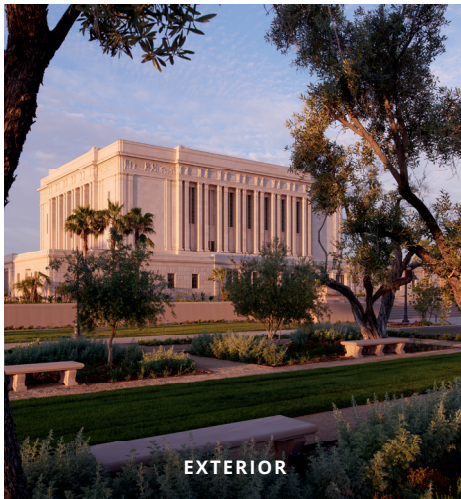
Five more temples were built and dedicated in Arizona in the last 20 years: In Snowflake in 2002, the Gila Valley in 2010, Gilbert and Phoenix in 2014, and in Tucson in 2017. As these other temples were built, the original Arizona temple became known as the Mesa Arizona Temple.

Under the direction of Church President Russell M. Nelson, Church officials announced that the Mesa Arizona Temple would close in 2018 for major renovation of the building and surrounding grounds.



Mesa Arizona Temple

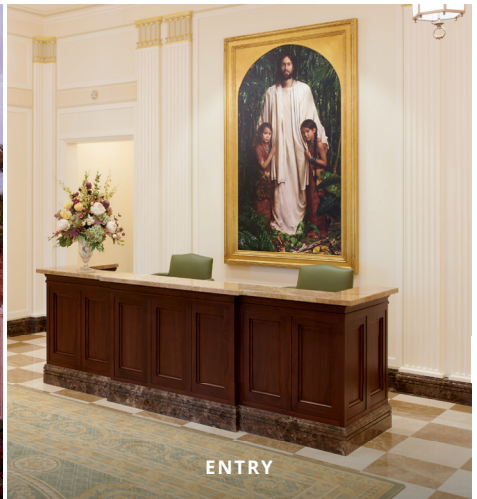
The following images and more are available at Newsroom.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.



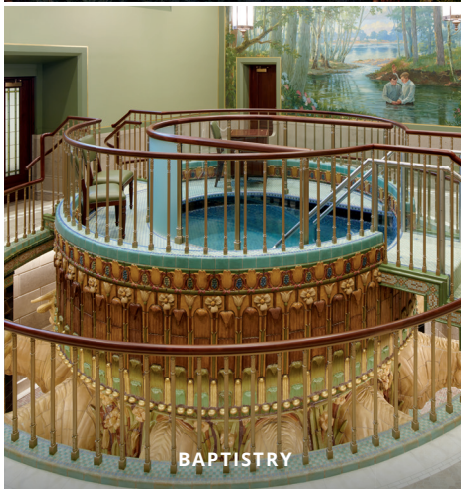
EXTERIOR



EXTERIOR



ENTRY



BAPTISTRY



INSTRUCTION ROOM



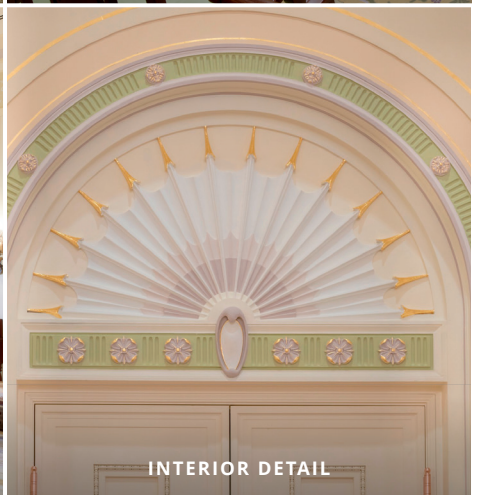
SEALING ROOM



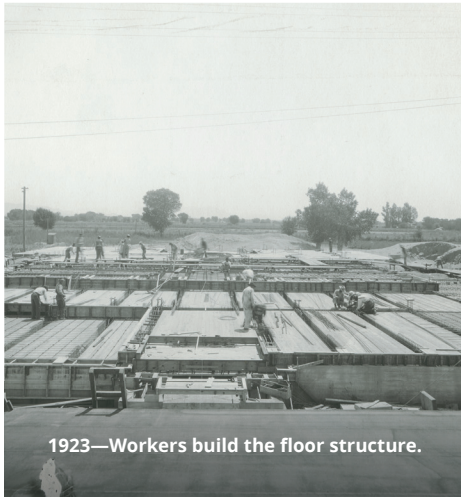
CELESTIAL ROOM



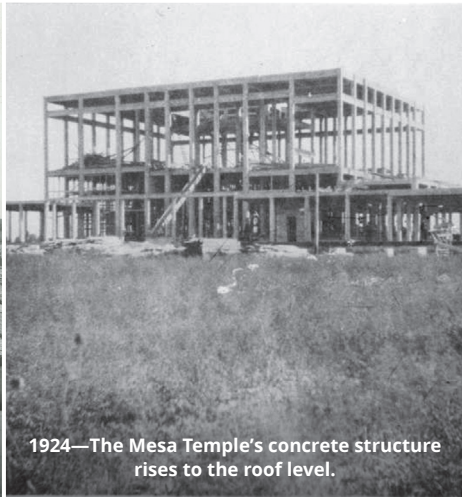
BRIDE'S ROOM



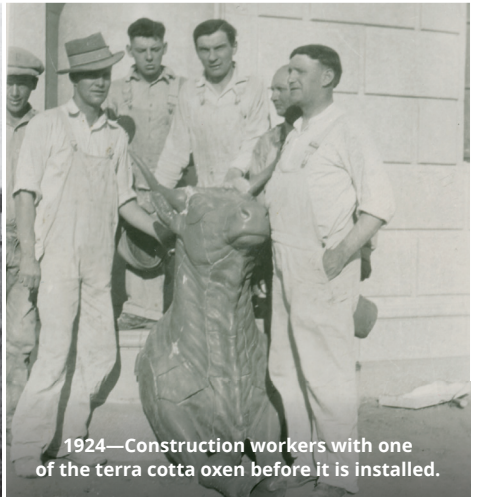
INTERIOR DETAIL



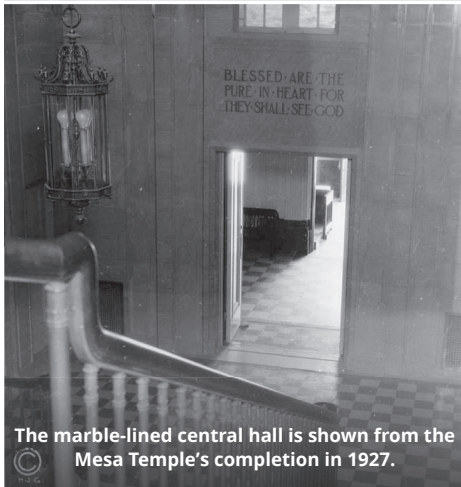
1923—Workers build the floor structure.



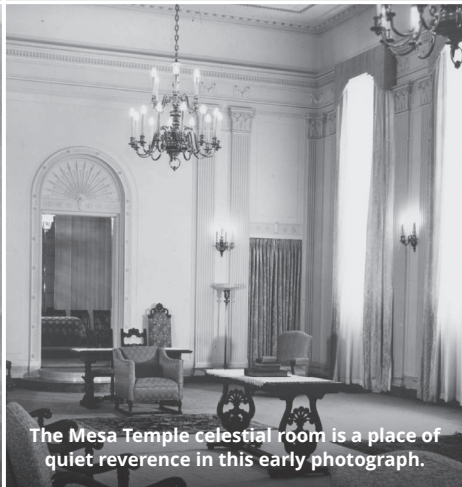
1924—The Mesa Temple's concrete structure rises to the roof level.



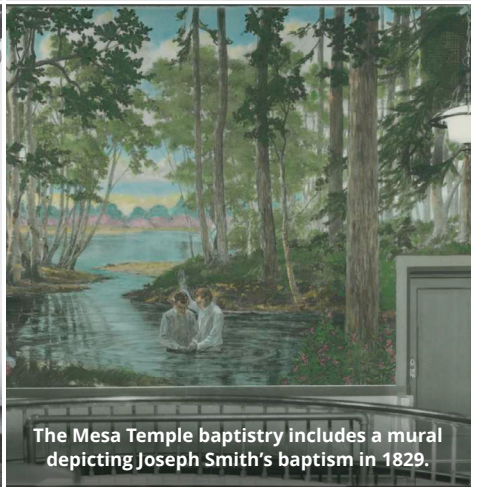
1924—Construction workers with one of the terra cotta oxen before it is installed.



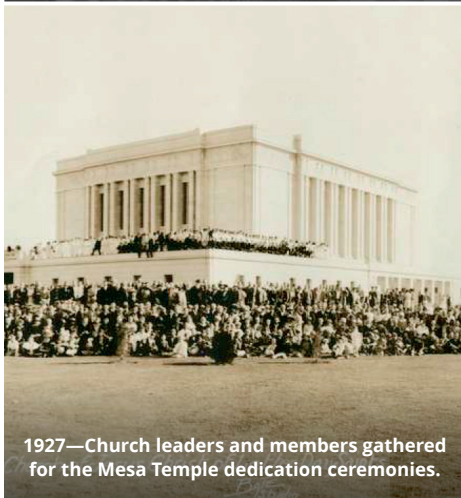
The marble-lined central hall is shown from the Mesa Temple's completion in 1927.



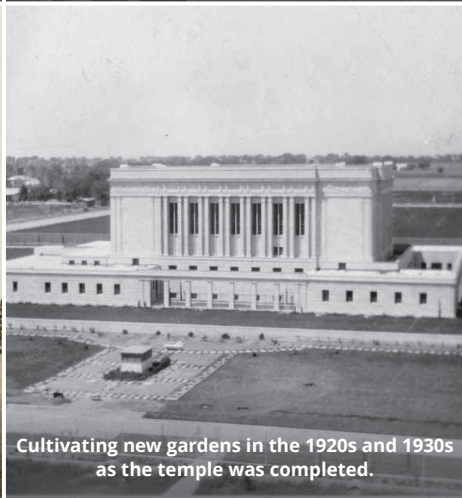
The Mesa Temple celestial room is a place of quiet reverence in this early photograph.



The Mesa Temple baptistry includes a mural depicting Joseph Smith's baptism in 1829.



1927—Church leaders and members gathered for the Mesa Temple dedication ceremonies.



Cultivating new gardens in the 1920s and 1930s as the temple was completed.



Citrus groves and green landscape surrounded the Mesa Temple site in 1950.



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

President Dallin H. Oaks

FIRST COUNSELOR IN THE FIRST PRESIDENCY



President Dallin H. Oaks, first counselor in the First Presidency and President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has served as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since May 1984.

He is a native of Provo, Utah, and was born August 12, 1932. He and his late wife, June Dixon Oaks, are the parents of six children. She died 21 July 1998. On 25 August 2000, he married Kristen M. McMains in the Salt Lake Temple.

Elder Oaks is a graduate of Brigham Young University (1954) and of The University of Chicago Law School (1957). He practiced law and taught law in Chicago. He was president of Brigham Young University from 1971 to 1980, and a justice of the Utah Supreme Court from 1980 until his resignation in 1984 to accept his calling to the apostleship.

He has been an officer or member of the board of many business, educational, and charitable organizations. He is the author or coauthor of many books and articles on religious and legal subjects. In May, 2013, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty awarded him the Canterbury Medal for “courage in the defense of religious liberty.”



Elder Ronald A. Rasband

QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES



Elder Ronald A. Rasband was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on October 3, 2015. He had been serving as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy since 2005 and was serving as the senior president of the Presidency of the Seventy when called to the Twelve. Elder Rasband was named a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 1, 2000. He has served as a counselor in the Europe Central Area Presidency,

president of the Utah Salt Lake City Area, executive director of the Temple Department; and has supervised the North America West, Northwest, and three Utah areas as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy.

Elder Rasband attended the University of Utah. In 1995, Utah Valley University awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Business and Commerce. In 1976 he joined Huntsman Container Company as sales representative, and in 1987, he was appointed President and Chief Operating Officer of Huntsman Chemical Corporation.

When he left Huntsman Chemical Corporation in 1996 to serve as a mission president in New York, he was also serving as a member of the Board of Directors.

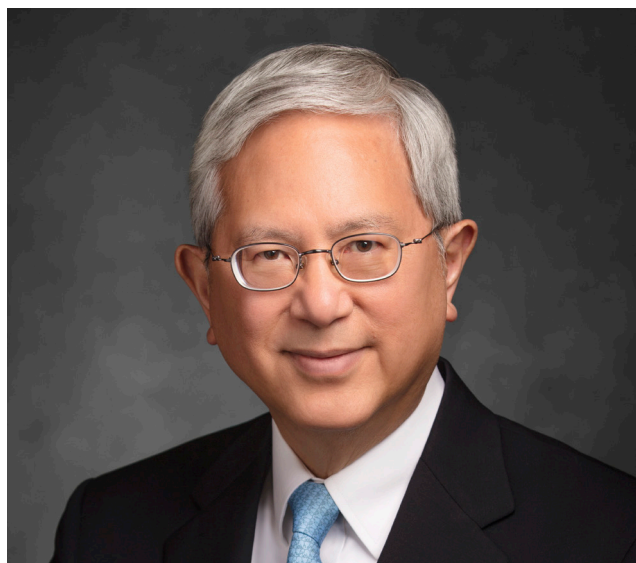
Elder Rasband has held numerous Church callings, including full-time missionary in the Eastern States Mission (1970-1972), Temple Square missionary guide, bishop, and member of the Church's Sesquicentennial Committee. He presided over the New York, New York North Mission from 1996 to 1999.

Elder Rasband was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1951. He married Melanie Twitchell in 1973. They are the parents of five children.



Elder 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, 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.



Kevin R. Duncan

GENERAL AUTHORITY 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.



Elder Paul B. Pieper

GENERAL AUTHORITY SEVENTY



Elder Paul B. Pieper was sustained as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 2, 2005. He has served in the Europe East, Middle East, and Mexico Areas, as

well as at Church headquarters in the Family History, Curriculum, and Priesthood and Family Departments. He is currently serving as a member of the America Southwest Area Presidency. Elder Pieper was trained as an attorney. He worked in Latin America, Asia, and the former Soviet Union with law and management consulting firms during his professional career.

Elder Pieper has served in a number of Church callings, including full-time missionary in Monterrey Mexico, high councilor, counselor in a stake presidency, and president of the Russia St. Petersburg Mission (2004–2005).

Paul Bowen Pieper was born in Pocatello, Idaho, on October 7, 1957. He married Melissa Tuttle in November 1979. They are the parents of six children.



SISTER REYNA I. ABURTO

Relief Society Presidency



Sister Reyna I. Aburto was called in April 2017 as the second counselor in the general presidency of the Relief Society, the Church's organization for its six million female members ages 18 and older. She was born in Nicaragua to Noel Blanco and Delbi Cardoza and married Carlos Aburto of Mexico in the Jordan River Utah Temple in 1993. They are both converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and they have three children and two grandchildren.

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

Sister Aburto says two major incidents from her childhood greatly impacted her life: surviving an earthquake that destroyed her home and killed her older brother, and living through a period of civil unrest in Nicaragua in the late 1970s. Through these difficult experiences of loss, uncertainty and fear, she learned relationships, family, love and faith are our most precious possessions. In 1989, after going through a difficult time in her life, she was invited by Latter-day Saint missionaries to attend church in California. She was hesitant at first, but recalls feeling safe and at home the moment she stepped into the meetinghouse. A few weeks later, at age 26, she was baptized. She says she has "never stopped marveling at the beauty of the gospel," calling her membership in the Church a huge privilege and gift.

Sister Aburto served on the Primary general board from 2012 to 2016, where her responsibilities included coordinating resources for children in the Church with disabilities, involvement in the Scouting program, improving Primary web content and providing trainings to Church leaders in the United States and Mexico. Her family attended Spanish-speaking congregations until 2013, when they began attending their neighborhood English-speaking ward, and she has served extensively in the Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, Sunday School and Scouting organizations in her ward and stake (diocese). Sister Aburto says her husband, Carlos, is her "best friend" and her "biggest support," and they enjoy spending time with their children and grandchildren.

