

Common Questions About the LDS Church

What does it mean to be a Latter-day Saint?

A Latter-day Saint is a modern-day follower of Christ. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is founded upon the gospel of Jesus Christ and our members strive to be modern followers of his teachings.

Why do you call yourselves “Mormons?”

The nickname “Mormons” was attached to the Church in its earliest years, and is actually derived from the Book of Mormon which we cherish as scripture, along with the Holy Bible.

Are Mormons Christians?

Yes, in every sense of the word. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is named after him and we believe that he is the Son of God and the Savior of all mankind.

What is the Book of Mormon?

Just as the Bible details the history of the Old World, the Book of Mormon is a record of the spiritual histories of people who lived in the New World, the Americas, beginning in 600 B.C. It is a record of Christ’s ministry after his resurrection and was translated by Joseph Smith from sacred records given to him by an angel sent from God.

Is it true that many members of your faith wear special underwear?

Yes. Not unlike devoted believers of other faiths, members of our church who make eternal promises in our temples receive a sacred garment that is considered a reminder and a protection to them. We regard it with the same reverence that is given to the sacred dress of an Orthodox Jew, or a Catholic Priest, or the dress and symbols of any other religion.

Is it true that Mormons practice Polygamy?

Polygamy is a part of the history of the LDS Church, but it is not tolerated in this day and was discontinued over a hundred years ago.

In the 19th Century, a minority of early members of the LDS Church practiced polygamy, as in biblical times. The custom helped the early Saints to take care of one another and bring forth a righteous generation in the wilderness of the West. Anyone participating in the practice today is excommunicated.

There are some groups who claim to be offshoots of our church that do practice polygamy today, but they are in no way connected with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Are African American members treated equally in the LDS Church?

Yes, in every way. Our faith is not only growing rapidly in African countries and communities, but it is a mission of the LDS Church to expand its vast library of genealogical records to help African Americans to find their family roots.

The history of the Mormon Church parallels the early history of America. African Americans were baptized and practicing members of the LDS Church as early as the mid- 1800's, but the unique lay priesthood of the Mormon Church was not extended to African American men until 1978.

Was the announcement really a “revelation?”

Yes. The announcement was presented with that importance and is treasured and respected today as a permanent part of our sacred scriptures.

Do you believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet and actually saw God?

Yes. Just as God spoke anciently with men who were called as prophets, we believe that God loves us enough to speak to us today. God has always chosen to work through his humblest of servants. We believe Joseph Smith’s record of his vision of God the father and his son Jesus Christ and his translation of the 531- page Book of Mormon are evidence of his calling.

Do Mormons believe that they will become Gods one day if they are obedient?

We believe that with God all things are possible. He is our Father in heaven. We are his children. With the Savior’s help and through his grace and atonement, we believe each of us has the capability to become more like God through obedience to his commandments.

Are there secret ordinances conducted inside of your temples?

No. Our temples are sacred, not secret. Temples are places where worthy couples can be united in eternal marriage, children can be sealed to their parents forever, and individuals can prepare for the great blessings of eternal life. Anyone that desires to become worthy to share in these blessings is welcome.

Every time a new LDS temple is built it is opened to the public for several months. After our temples are formally dedicated, we consider them to be sacred and they are open to any worthy Latter-day Saints. Weekly worship services are conducted in LDS chapels and they are always open to the public.

Why don't Latter-day Saints drink or smoke?

We believe that our bodies are sacred and should be strengthened by healthy, moderate living. In the 1830's the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation declaring that Latter-day Saints should avoid tobacco, alcohol and eat in moderation. The health code of the LDS Church is admired around the world.

What is the role of women in the LDS Church?

Men and women work shoulder to shoulder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in every congregation. Both are considered equal in the eyes of God and are blessed with different gifts and roles. While men are given the specific responsibility of bearing the priesthood, women are revered as creators, companions and leaders as well.

What is "Baptism for the Dead?"

We believe that families are meant to be together forever and that we all must be baptized to be reunited with our Heavenly Father. In our temples, baptisms can be done on behalf of ancestors who may have lived and never had the opportunity to know of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe it is their right to either accept or decline this blessing.

Do members of the Mormon Church support Mitt Romney for President?

The opinions of our members are diverse, and Mitt Romney will have to earn the votes of Americans who are LDS, as well as those who are not. Members of the LDS Church elected to public office represent all parties in state and national government, and it is the policy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to remain neutral in matters of party politics.

1-27-2008