husband sought relief from his familial responsibilities, President Young consistently counseled him to do his duty and not seek divorce from any wife willing to put up with him.

Contrary to the caricatures of a hostile world press, plural marriage did not result in offspring of diminished capacity. Normal men and women came from plural households, and their descendants are prominent throughout the Intermountain West. Some observers feel that the added responsibility that fell early upon some children in such households contributed to their exceptional record of achievement. Plural marriage also aided many wives. The flexibility of plural households contributed to the large number of accomplished LDS women who were pioneers in medicine, politics and other public careers. In fact, plural marriage made it possible for wives to have professional careers that would not otherwise have been available to them.

The exact percentage of Latter-day Saints who participated in the practice is not known, but studies suggest a maximum of from 20% to 25% of LDS adults were members of polygamous households. At its height, plural marriage probably involved only a third of the women reaching marriageable age—though among Church leadership plural marriage was the norm for a time. Public opposition to polygamy led to the first law against the practice in 1862, and, by the 1880s, laws were increasingly punitive. The Church contested the constitutionality of those laws, but the Supreme Court sustained the legislation (see Reynolds v. United States), leading to a harsh and effective federal antipolygamy campaign known by the Latter-day Saints as “the Raid.” Wives and husbands went on the “underground” and hundreds were arrested and sentenced to jail terms in Utah and several federal prisons. This campaign severely affected the families involved, and the related attack on Church organization and properties greatly inhibited its ability to function (see History of the Church: C. 1877–1898). Following a vision showing him that continuing plural marriage endangered the temples and the mission of the Church, not just statehood, President Wilford Woodruff issued the Manifesto in October 1890, announcing an official end to new plural marriages and facilitating an eventual peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Earlier polygamous families continued to exist well into the twentieth century, causing further political problems for the Church, and new plural marriages did not entirely cease in 1890. After having lived the principle at some sacrifice for half a century, many devout Latter-day Saints found ending plural marriage a challenge almost as complex as was its beginning in the 1840s. Some new plural marriages were contracted in the 1890s in LDS settlements in Canada and northern Mexico, and a few elsewhere. With national attention again focused on the practice in the early 1900s during the House hearings on Representative-elect B. H. Roberts and Senate hearings on Senator-elect Reed Smoot (see Smoot Hearings), President Joseph F. Smith issued his “Second Manifesto” in 1904. Since that time, it has been uniform Church policy to excommunicate any member either practicing or openly advocating the practice of polygamy. Those who do so today, principally members of fundamentalist groups, do so outside the Church.

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POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES

The first presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have developed policies, practices, and procedures to give order and continuity throughout the units of the Church and to provide guidelines for its leaders. These guidelines, poli-
cies, and procedures have been formalized in the General Handbook of Instructions, which is distributed to priesthood leaders of the Church. The handbook is revised and brought up to date from time to time to keep instructions current. The following statements have been selected as samples from the latest edition of that handbook (1989), and references are to section and page numbers in that edition.

MORAL ISSUES

Abortion. "Abortion is one of the most revolting and sinful practices of this day. Members must not submit to, be a party to, or perform an abortion. The only exceptions are when—
1. Pregnancy has resulted from incest or rape;
2. The life or health of the woman is in jeopardy, in the opinion of competent medical authority;
3. The fetus is known, by competent medical authority, to have severe defects that will not allow the baby to survive beyond birth" (11-4).

As far as has been revealed, a person may repent and be forgiven for the sin of abortion (see Abortion).

Abuse and Cruelty. "Members who abuse or are cruel to their spouses, children, or other family members violate the laws of God and man" (11-4; see Abuse, Spouse and Child).

Artificial Insemination. "Artificial insemination with semen from anyone but the husband is discouraged. . . . Artificial insemination of single sisters is not approved" (11-4; see Artificial Insemination).

Chastity and Fidelity. "God’s standard for sexual morality has always been clear: ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery’ (Ex. 20:14). In modern and . . . ancient times God has commanded all of his children to lead strictly [chaste] lives before and after marriage—intimate relations being permissible only between a man and a woman legally and lawfully married. Accordingly, intimate relations outside of marriage are out of harmony with God’s eternal plan for his children. To be morally clean, a person must refrain from adultery and fornication, from homosexual or lesbian relations, and from every other unholy, unnatural, or impure practice" (11-4; see Chastity, Law of; Marriage).

Donation of Sperm. "The donation of sperm is discouraged" (11-4).

In Vitro Fertilization. "In vitro fertilization using semen other than that of the husband or an egg [from anyone] other than the wife is discour-

aged. However, this is a personal matter that ultimately must be left to the judgment of the husband and wife” (11-4).

Rape or Sexual Abuse Victims. "Victims of the evil acts of others are not guilty of sin.” Church officers should help victims of rape and other sexual abuse “regain their sense of innocence and overcome any feelings of guilt” (11-5).

Sex Education. "Parents have primary responsibility for the sex education of their children. Teaching this subject honestly and plainly in the home greatly improves the chance that young people will avoid serious problems. . . . Where schools have undertaken sex education, it is appropriate for parents to seek to ensure that the instructions given their children are consistent with sound moral and ethical values” (11-5; see Marriage; Sex Education; Sexuality).

Suicide. People who take their own lives “may not be responsible for [their] acts. Only God can judge such a matter” (11-5; see Suicide).

Surgical Sterilization (Including Vasectomy). “Surgical sterilization should only be considered (1) where medical conditions seriously jeopardize life or health, or (2) where birth defects or serious trauma have rendered a person mentally incompetent and not responsible for his or her actions. Such conditions must be determined by competent medical judgment and in accordance with law. Even then, the person or persons responsible for this decision should consult with each other and with their bishop (or branch president) and receive divine confirmation through prayer” (11-5).

Surrogate Motherhood. The Church discourages surrogate motherhood (11-5).

MEDICAL AND HEALTH ISSUES

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). "Local leaders should encourage members with AIDS to consult competent medical authority. Leaders and members should treat a member who has AIDS with dignity and compassion. Though AIDS can afflict innocent victims, the principal guides to safety are chastity before marriage, total fidelity in marriage, abstinence from any homosexual relations, avoidance of illegal drugs, and reverence and care for the body” (11-5; see AIDS).

Euthanasia. "A person who participates in euthanasia—deliberately putting to death a person suffering from incurable conditions or diseases—violates the commandments of God” (11-5; see Prolonging Life).
**Organ Transplants.** The decision of whether to will one’s personal body organs or authorize “the transplant of organs from a deceased family member [rests with] the individual or the deceased person’s family. The decision to receive a donated organ should be made with competent medical counsel and confirmation through prayer” (11-6; see ORGAN TRANSPLANTS AND DONATIONS).

**Prolonging Life.** “When severe illness strikes, Church members should exercise faith in the Lord and seek competent medical assistance. However, when dying becomes inevitable, it should be looked upon as a blessing and a purposeful part of eternal existence. Members should not feel obligated to extend mortal life by means that are unreasonable” (11-6; see PROLONGING LIFE; PURPOSE OF EARTH LIFE; LDS PERSPECTIVE).

**Stillborn Children.** “Although temple ordinances are not performed for stillborn children, no loss of eternal blessings or family unity is implied. The family may record the name of a stillborn child on the family group record followed by the word stillborn in parentheses. Memorial or graveside services may or may not be held as determined by the parents” (11-6; see STILLBORN CHILDREN).

**Word of Wisdom.** In addition to avoiding the use of tea, coffee, and alcoholic beverages, members should not misuse legal drugs and “should not use any substance that contains illegal drugs or other harmful or habit-forming ingredients” (11-6; see ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES; COFFEE; DRUG ABUSE; TEA; WORD OF WISDOM).

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

**Church Discipline.** “The purposes of Church discipline are to (1) save the souls of transgressors; (2) protect the innocent; and (3) safeguard the purity, integrity, and good name of the Church. It includes giving cautions in private interviews, imposing restrictions in probations, and withdrawing fellowship or membership” (10-1). Church discipline is administered by leaders of local congregations; it can affect only a person’s standing in the Church. “A person who is disfellowshipped is still a member of the Church, but is no longer in good standing. . . . A person who is excommunicated is no longer a member of the Church and cannot enjoy any membership privileges” (10-5). “All persons who are excommunicated, disfellowshipped, or placed on formal probation by a disciplinary council have a right to appeal the decision” (10-8).

The bishop, or another appropriate priesthood leader, should continue to help a disciplined person return to full fellowship in the Church (see DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES).

**Funerals.** “When a funeral service is held in a Church building or conducted by a Church officer, it is a Church meeting. A member of the bishopric conducts the service. . . . Bishops may offer the use of Church meetinghouses for the funeral services of nonmembers. Such services may be held in the manner prescribed by the deceased person’s church and, if the family desires, may be conducted by a clergyman of that church, provided the service is dignified and appropriate” (2-7; see BURIAL; CREMATION; DEATH AND DYING).

**Income Taxes.** Church members in any nation are to obey applicable tax laws. “If a member disapproves of tax laws, he may attempt to have them changed by legislation or constitutional amendment, or, if he has a well-founded legal objection, he may attempt to challenge them in the courts. A member who refuses to file a tax return, to pay required income taxes, or to comply with a final judgment in a tax case is in direct conflict with the law and with the teachings of the Church” (11-2; see CIVIC DUTIES; CIVIC RIGHTS; CONSTITUTIONAL LAW; LAW).

**Political Action.** “The Church does not endorse political parties or candidates. Branch, ward, or stake meetinghouses and other Church facilities, and Church directories or mailing lists must not be used in any way for political purposes.” (11-2; see CHURCH AND STATE; CIVIC DUTIES; CIVIC RIGHTS; CONSTITUTIONAL LAW).

**Prayers.** “Both men and women may offer prayers in Church meetings” (11-3; see MEETINGS, MAJOR CHURCH; PRAYER).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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**POLITICS**

[Included in this entry are four articles:]

- Political History
- Political Teachings
- Political Culture
- Contemporary American Politics

The first article traces the history of the political issues in which The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints