
The Church has also opposed legalized GAMBLING, including state-run lotteries (“Church Opposes Government-Sponsored Gambling,” Ensign 16 [Nov. 1986]:104–105), and has made moral arguments against liberalizing access to alcoholic beverages.

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POLYGENY

[The main article on this subject is Plural Marriage. Under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, some members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints began to practice plural marriage, also referred to as “celestial marriage.” This was viewed as a divine commandment to “raise up seed unto” God (Jacob 2:30). The revelation of God concerning eternal marriage is DeC 132. See Doctrine and Covenants: Sections 131–132. The latter also contains strong warnings against marital infidelity. See Adultery; Chastity; Marriage: Eternal; and Sexuality.

On the federal and public opposition to Mormon polygamy, see Antipolygamy Legislation; Legal and Judicial History of the Church; Mormons, Image of; and Reynolds v. United States. On attitudes of Mormon women toward polygamy, see Retrenchment Association and Woman’s Exponent.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints officially discontinued the practice of plural marriage in 1890. See Manifesto of 1890.

Some schismatic groups have not accepted the revelation of God to Wilford Woodruff, fourth President of the Church, ending Church-sanctioned plural marriage and therefore continue the practice today. See Fundamentalists.

See generally History of the Church: c. 1844–1877 and c. 1878–1898; Smith, Emma; Smith, Joseph; Teachings of; Snow, Eliza R.; Woodruff, Wilford; and Young, Brigham.]

POLYNESIAN CULTURAL CENTER

The Polynesian Cultural Center is located in Laie, Hawaii, on the north shore of the island of Oahu. It is a 42-acre visitor attraction owned and operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the purpose of preserving and sharing the heritage of Pacific island cultures while providing employment, scholarships, and grants to students at the adjacent Brigham Young University—Hawaii.

In seven authentically recreated villages, representative dwellings, furniture, and artifacts from Fiji, old Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Maori New Zealand, and the Marquesas Islands are featured in a landscape of island foliage and lagoons. Visitors may observe or participate in demonstrations of arts, crafts, dances, music, games, and food preparation presented by villagers and performers, many of whom come from the cultures they portray. Various kinds of island cuisine are available in restaurants and snack bars. Daytime and evening shows and concerts are held on the grounds and in the 2,773-seat amphitheater. An IMAX theater with an ultra-large screen shows cultural and educational films shot on locations in the South Pacific.

Precursors to the present production consisted mainly of a hukilau—a fishing festival with luau and entertainment. That production was begun by Church members in the 1940s and continued for several years in Laie. In 1959 students and faculty at the Church College of Hawaii (now Brigham Young University—Hawaii) organized “Polynesian Panorama,” a production of songs and dances that played regularly to audiences in Waikiki.

In 1962 Church President David O. McKay authorized construction of the present center. Special “labor missionaries” donated their skills, using building materials from Hawaii and the other islands represented. The original 12-acre center opened on October 12, 1963. Hugh B. Brown, a counselor to President McKay in the Church’s FIRST PRESIDENCY, presided at the opening ceremonies. In 1975–1976 the center was redesigned and greatly enlarged.

The labor missionaries helped realize the dream of Matthew Cowley, an apostle who worked for years with the Latter-day Saints in New Zealand, when he said, “I hope to see the day when my Maori people will have a little village at Laie
with a beautiful carved house. . . . The Tongans will have a little village out there, and the Tahitians and Samoans—all those islanders of the sea!” (O’Brien, p. 73).

The center is a nonprofit organization that attracts almost a million visitors a year. It is administered locally by a president and governed by a board of directors chaired by a member of the Church’s Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

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CHARLES JAY FOX

POLYNESIANS

Polynesia is most frequently identified as those Pacific islands lying within an enormous triangle extending from New Zealand in the south to Hawaii in the north and the Easter Islands in the extreme east. The major Polynesian ethnic groups include Hawaiians, New Zealand Maoris, Samoans, Tongans, and Tahitians.

A basic view held in the Church is that Polynesians have ancestral connections with the Book of Mormon people who were descendants of Abraham and that among them are heirs to the blessings promised Abraham’s descendants (see Abrahamic Covenant). Since 1843, the Church has undertaken extensive missionary efforts in the Pacific islands, and large numbers of Polynesians have joined the Church (see New Zealand; Oceania).

The belief that Polynesian ancestry includes Book of Mormon people can be traced back at least to 1851, when George Q. Cannon taught it as a missionary in Hawaii (he was later a counselor in the First Presidency). President Brigham Young detailed the belief in a letter to King Kamehameha V in 1865. Other Church leaders have since affirmed the belief, some indicating that among Polynesian ancestors were the people of Hagoth, who set sail from Nephite lands in approximately 54