vise the performance of priesthood ordinances and sacraments; (3) extend callings to members to staff ward organizations; (4) administer the programs of the Church in the ward, conduct meetings and maintain order in the Church organization and structure; (5) manage the financial affairs of the ward (including receiving local donations to the Church and transferring funds to Church headquarters, and supervising all expenditures of Church funds); (6) oversee the care and protection of the ward meetinghouse and other ward physical facilities that the Church owns or leases; (7) carry out Church disciplinary procedures for serious violations of moral law and Church standards; (8) foster a sense of community among ward members, with a special emphasis on fellowshipping new members; and (9) encourage members to perform their religious responsibilities. Bishoprics are requested to do whatever is needed to encourage Church participation and religious activity among all ward members.

The bishopric is responsible for calling and conducting all of the executive meetings of the ward, including a weekly bishopric meeting, a weekly priesthood executive committee meeting, and various meetings to plan and coordinate youth activities and train youth leaders. Bishoprics also divide responsibility and attend the leadership and training meetings of each auxiliary organization they supervise (see primary; relief society; Sunday school; young men; young women).

After prayerfully considering recommendations from ward organization leaders who request members to serve in teaching, leadership, and other service callings, the bishopric decides whom to call, and issues the invitation to serve. The bishop delegates supervisory responsibility for the various auxiliary organizations, maintenance of membership records, receipting of financial contributions to the Church, and certain matters pertaining to Church education. The bishop cannot delegate such duties as counseling members involved in serious transgressions, convening disciplinary councils, presiding over the priest quorum in the ward, performing civil marriages for members of the ward, and conducting tithing settlement (an annual, personal report by ward members concerning the donations they have made).

The bishopric has the primary responsibility for developmental programs involving the youth in the ward. This entails promoting and attending activities for the youth, interviewing young men and women regularly, and overseeing the work of adults called to assist in teaching or planning activities. Activities are designed to provide youth with opportunities for recreation, service, and the application of religious principles to everyday life. The bishop focuses his efforts on the young men and women aged sixteen through eighteen, and assigns his counselors to work with youth aged twelve through thirteen and fourteen through fifteen. The bishop is to interview all young persons in the ward individually at least once each year (usually near their birthdays), and the counselors are to interview those twelve through sixteen years old at least annually. The bishop is the only member of the bishopric who discusses individual matters of personal worthiness with the youth.

Those who serve in a bishopric are expected to live with honesty, integrity, and devotion to their spiritual commitment. Their example of Christian service is essential to the quality of their influence among all ward members.

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DAVID C. BRADFORD

BISHOP’S STOREHOUSE

The bishop's storehouse system is a network of Church-owned and -operated commodity resource centers that function much like retail stores, with the major difference that goods cannot be purchased but are given to needy individuals whom local LDS bishops judge to be worthy and deserving of Church assistance. Recipients are invited to work or render service in various ways in exchange for goods to avoid allowing the goods given to be a form of dole.

The storehouse stocks basic food and essential household items, produced largely from Church agricultural properties, canneries, and light manufacturing operations. The entire system, where practical, is vertically integrated, from farming and harvesting through processing and distributing. All work is performed by Church volunteers and re-
As defined by Church doctrine, the concept of the bishop’s storehouse is founded on the belief that members of the Church should care for themselves and for each other. This is done, first, in families and, second, through the Church. Members are discouraged from seeking assistance from governmental or other social agencies.

The implementation of the mutual help program has varied considerably according to the economic conditions of the members and the organizational structure of the Church. At various times, distribution of goods has occurred through bishops, tithing offices, or bishop’s storehouses. Utilization of the storehouse concept received intense emphasis during the United Order effort of the 1870s. From that time forward, most wards maintained their own storehouse until the introduction of regional storehouses (1934–1936). Storehouses figured prominently in the Church’s effort to care for its people during the economic depression of the 1930s and formed the basis for a more systematic approach to shared assistance.

After World War II, the Church welfare system, centered in the storehouse, evolved into an integrated and complex Church-wide production and distribution system. A higher level of coordi-

Participants and is largely independent of the commercial economy. The contribution of time, talents, and resources of the membership of the Church in various areas sustains the storehouse.

The concept of the storehouse and the Church welfare services emerged from scriptural principles, elucidated by a series of revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith beginning in 1831, a year after the Church was organized. In one revelation, Church members were directed to “remember the poor, and consecrate [their] properties for [the poor’s] support” (D&C 42:30). The goods and money thus contributed were to be “kept in [the Lord’s] storehouse, to administer to the poor and the needy” under the direction of the local presiding leader, the bishop (verse 34). Bishops were charged to seek donations as well (D&C 104:15–16; Welfare Services Resource Handbook, p. 9).

Food and many other necessities are given to needy members, upon recommendation of a local bishop, from over 110 Bishop’s Storehouse facilities.
nation between welfare farms, dairies, and canneries was established, and a wider range of goods became available. The Church established central storehouses to supply regional storehouses. In the 1970s, with the maturing of the storehouse system, the Church selectively introduced local production and storehouses in areas outside the United States where need and resources warranted. The storehouse system is also available for assistance in cases of disaster (see CALAMITIES AND Disasters; EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS).

Presently, the entire Bishop's Storehouse Resource System operates with efficiency and quality equal to commercial commodity activities, but maintains its spirit of volunteer service and local administration. While the bishop's storehouse system effectively assists thousands of people every year with material necessities, its additional value lies in the character development and spiritual growth of both givers and receivers.

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R. QUINN GARDNER

BLACKS

The history of black membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can be divided between the era from 1830 to June 1978 and the period since then.

HISTORY. Though few in number, blacks have been attracted to the Church since its organization. Early converts (such as Elijah Abel) joined during the 1830s; others (such as Jane Manning James) joined after the Saints moved to Illinois. Among those who came to Utah as pioneers were Green Flake, who drove Brigham Young's wagon into the Salt Lake Valley, and Samuel Chambers, who joined in Virginia as a slave and went west after being freed. Throughout the twentieth century, small numbers of blacks continued to join the Church, such as the Sargent family of Carolina County, Virginia, who joined in 1906; Len and Mary Hope, who joined in Alabama during the 1920s; Ruffin Bridgforth, a railroad worker in Utah, converted in 1953; and Helvécio Martins, a black Brazilian businessman, baptized in 1972 (he became a General Authority in 1990). These members remained committed to their testimonies and Church activities even though during this period prior to 1978 black members could not hold the Priesthood or participate in Temple Ordinances.

The reasons for these restrictions have not been revealed. Church leaders and members have explained them in different ways over time. Although several blacks were ordained to the priesthood in the 1830s, there is no evidence that Joseph Smith authorized new ordinations in the 1840s, and between 1847 and 1852 Church leaders maintained that blacks should be denied the priesthood.

Samuel D. Chambers (1831–1929) and his wife Amanda Leggroan (c. 1908). Chambers was converted in Mississippi in 1844 and came to Utah in 1870 after the Civil War. For eighty-five years he was faithful and loyal to the Church. He served joyfully and was deeply respected.