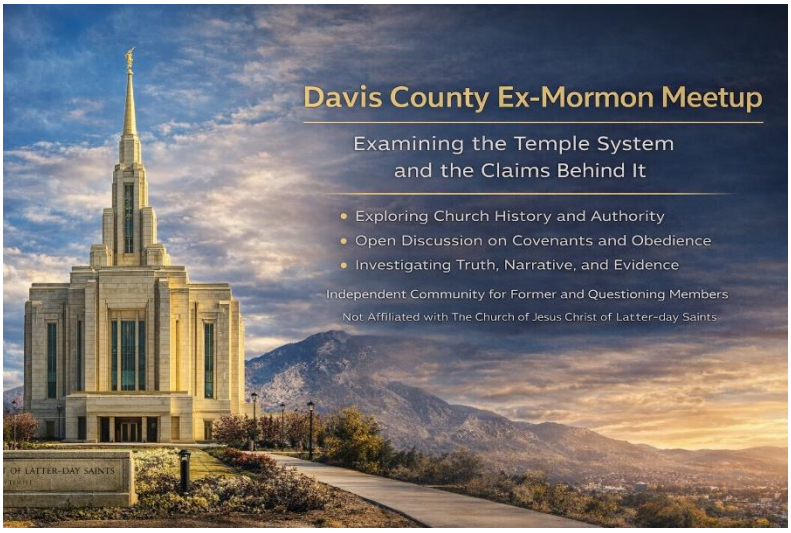
Davis County Ex-Mormon Meetup Open Letter (390 Members)



Knowledge Creates a Duty to Act: Not Merely a Duty to Disclose[1]

An open letter to the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and governing corporate leadership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:

We charge that your institution has reached a point at which continued historical revision without corresponding institutional action is ethically indefensible. Your own Gospel Topics Essays, historical publications, silent revisions to your Book of Mormon, and Temple Endowment establish institutional knowledge of foundational difficulties in the narratives on which you solicit faith, money, labor, obedience, and life-altering covenants. We do not presume to know your private beliefs. We do insist that what your institution has officially acknowledged imposes a duty to act upon those who govern it.

The principle is straightforward: The greater the authority an institution claims over another person's life, the greater its Duty of Candor concerning the evidence supporting that authority. Disclosure is the beginning of accountability, not its completion. Greater is its duty to act to correct the consequences of misleading claims.

THE KNOWLEDGE THAT REQUIRES A RESPONSE

The following are not claims that every historical or theological question has been conclusively settled. They are facts and unresolved contradictions your institution knows, acknowledges, or has publicly confronted, and therefore cannot responsibly dismiss:



1. Book of Mormon production. Accounts of Joseph Smith dictating with a seer stone placed in a hat,[2] while the plates remained covered, correct the familiar picture of translating visible characters from gold plates. The Church must confront the difference between the historical process and the impression its teaching creates.

2. Book of Abraham. The surviving Egyptian papyri do not yield the published English Book of Abraham by ordinary linguistic translation. Calling the papyri a possible catalyst for revelation does not resolve the discrepancy with the historical translation claim.[3]

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[1] The greater the authority an institution claims over another person's life, the greater its Duty of Candor concerning the evidence supporting that authority. Top LDS Church leadership is duty bound to act on their knowledge. This knowledge cannot responsibly be ignored without being guilty of **negligence**, a knowing failure of duty to act. When silence maintains a falsehood, silence itself becomes deceit. This is the textbook definition of **dereliction of duty**: **2026-10-25 Invitation**

[2] Church Leadership has disclosed in the Gospel Topics Essays and by its quiet revisions to the Book of Mormon (BofM), and by President Nelson's demonstration (0:51) of how the BofM was produced, what leadership knows and acknowledges.

[3] LDS Essay on the Book of Abraham (Annotated) ⌂

3. Book of Mormon ancestry and DNA. Genetic evidence overwhelmingly locates major Indigenous American ancestry in ancient Asian populations. The Church's defense is misleading because it relies upon scientific uncertainties: genetic drift, founder effects, population bottlenecks thereby preserving the inability to exclude every conceivable hypothesis. The argument invents a claim the Book of Mormon does not make that the Israelite population was small. Hence a very small Israelite DNA contribution might have disappeared genetically. The argument becomes unfalsifiable by asserting improbabilities. N**ormal scientific caution is wrongly used to manufacture disproportionate uncertainty.**[4]



4. Joseph Smith's secret relationships. The Church acknowledges plural relationships involving secrecy, young women, and women married to other men. The questions of meaningful consent, Emma Smith's knowledge, dependency, and the use of prophetic authority cannot be erased by labeling every relationship "marriage."[5]

5. Misleading denials and the Manifesto. Official accounts acknowledge "carefully worded denials" of plural marriage and new plural unions after the 1890 Manifesto. An institution must examine what ordinary hearers reasonably understood, not merely whether a technical distinction can defend the words.[6]

6. Race and prophetic authority. The Church disavows former racial explanations for restrictions on Black members while acknowledging the restrictions' leadership origins. It must account for teachings once advanced with prophetic authority, their harms, and the implications for claims of reliable divine guidance. Any racial reconciliation needs to include the Lamanite dark skin curse woven throughout of the Book of Mormon story.[7]

7. First Vision and foundational narratives. Multiple surviving accounts differ in important particulars. Faithful interpretations are possible; so are critical ones. Members deserve the underlying record and a clear separation of documentary evidence from institutional harmonization.[8]



8. Mountain Meadows and obedience. Modern Church history acknowledges Latter-day Saint perpetrators, militia participation, deception, and mass killing. Institutional responsibility requires examination of leadership rhetoric, authority structures, subsequent concealment, and the culture of obedience: not solely whether a direct order from Brigham Young survives.

THE AUTHORITY YOU CONTINUE TO EXERCISE

You require or solicit tithing; administer baptisms, Temple ordinances, and covenants; call young people to missionary service; discipline and excommunicate members; and make consequential representations concerning marriage, family, salvation, and eternal destiny. Those acts are not morally insulated from the evidence bearing on the authority under which they are performed.

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[4] LDS Essay on the Book of Mormon: DNA Studies (Annotated) ⌂
Navajo DNA ⌂ (12:59), DNA Reveals Their True Ancestry, Year 2003

[5] Marrying Wealthy Orphans: The Inheritance of Maria and Sarah Lawrence. An extraordinary ethical conflict of interest
The Fanny Alger Affair: Adultery Disguised as Marriage
A Moral Critique of Joseph Smith's Secret Marriages to the Partridge Sisters, Francis N Henderson, June 2025
LDS Essay on Polygamy/Polyandry in Kirtland and Nauvoo (Annotated) ⌂

[6] LDS Essay on Polygamy/Polyandry in Utah (Annotated) ⌂

[7] LDS Essay on Race and the Priesthood (Annotated) ⌂

[8] LDS Essay on Joseph Smith's Multiple First Vision Accounts (Annotated) ⌂

A prospective convert, missionary, tithe payer, or first-time Temple participant should not have to discover critical qualifications only after making the commitment. Quietly placing essays on a website is not equivalent to affirmative, intelligible disclosure at the moment informed consent matters. Nor does a revised footnote repair an institution-wide representation that continues unchanged in lessons, missionary conversations, and customary practice.

THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, now Community of Christ, has undertaken substantial institutional reform: opening priesthood ordination to women beginning in the 1980s, broadening participation, changing its name in 2001, and reorienting its public mission toward peace, reconciliation, and inclusion. Its reforms are neither a perfect template nor proof that every historical dispute has been resolved. They do establish that a Restoration church can reconsider inherited authority, doctrine, and practice, and make consequential changes rather than treat institutional continuity as its supreme obligation.

OUR DEMAND: DEFINE THE REMEDY, THEN ACT

We are not prescribing the precise theological, ecclesiastical, financial, or corporate remedy. That responsibility belongs to those who claim authority to govern the Church. We demand that you publicly acknowledge the full scope of these issues, commission an independent and transparent review of their implications for present claims and practices, publish a reasoned plan for corrective action with responsible decision-makers and a timetable, and report publicly on implementation. Invite scrutiny by historians, ethicists, affected members, and critics who are not financially or ecclesiastically dependent upon your approval.

The Church is not entitled to decide what the individual gets to know. Nor is it entitled to postpone correction indefinitely while continuing to collect the benefits of the authority under examination.

Every ongoing demand for obedience or sacrifice[9] increases the urgency. You cannot simultaneously claim extraordinary authority over conscience and deny extraordinary accountability for what you know. Age, tenure, tradition, sincerity, and the discomfort of institutional change are not exemptions from duty. Leaders who are unable or unwilling to confront the obligation should make room for leaders who will.

We use "dereliction of duty" here as an ethical charge, not as an allegation that a specific criminal or civil offense has been adjudicated. The charge becomes compelling when those empowered to correct known misrepresentations instead perpetuate the compliance those representations induce. The test is no longer whether you can publish another explanation. It is whether you will take decisive, accountable, remedial action.

-- The End --

[9] https://www.temple-temptations.com/ The deepest problem with the Mormon Temple Endowment is not that its ceremonies are unusual, secret, or partly derived from Freemasonry. But its problem is moral when the Endowment begins by elevating Obedience into sacred law. The Temple Endowment is changed to correct some, but not all of its ethical errors. For example, the Oath of Vengeance is removed; the Throat slitting penalty is removed; the wife's connection to God through her husband is removed. However, **sacrifice is virtuous when it is freely chosen. Hence, the deeper problem remains uncorrected in the Endowment, that the Law of Obedience cannot make sacrifice virtuous when duty compels one to make it**.

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This document is a personal statement of religious history, opinion, and commentary. It is not affiliated with or endorsed by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The terms "LDS," "Mormon," and "Mormonism" are used in their common historical and descriptive sense.

Miscellaneous Links

All links from Invitations. (390 Members)

2026-11-08-OpenLetterDutyToAct

Duty of Candor

Temple Temptations site pdf copy here.

https://www.temple-temptations.com/

Exit Statement of Francis Nelson Henderson

"The Grand Deception" Art Carpenter's comparison of the New Testament KJV to LDS doctrines.

https://www.fnhenderson.us/

www.wasmormon.org.