

## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE



In June 1978, a letter went out to members and leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world announcing that “the long-promised day has come.” That day—that promise—extended to all worthy members of the Church all of the privileges and blessings of the priesthood and holy temple, without regard for race or color.

With that revelation, the era of priesthood and temple restriction based on race came to a close, but the questions and repercussions surrounding the policy reverberate still. The Church has provided an important resource with answers to many questions about the background, context, and aftermath of the priesthood revelation in its essay “Race and the Priesthood,” available at [topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.topics.churchofjesuschrist.org). This collection of essays seeks to add to that body of knowledge by sharing reflections, insights, and experiences regarding the priesthood

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restriction from those for whom it is most personal—namely, from Black members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

As we explore delicate questions regarding a policy that has led to pain, heartbreak, and even anguish, inevitably we will encounter a wide variety of individual reactions and responses. At the heart of so many disparate cries to the Lord for understanding and faith, however, we find the same yearning: “Stay Thou nearby.” Whether in joy or pain, wherever we are in our journey toward understanding, no voice can bring peace to our souls like the Savior’s. These essays from Church leaders who have navigated rough waters invite you to come and stay close to Christ, who offers healing and hope when none else can.