

## Glossary: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

This glossary is also available on our website. We also have an accompanying in-depth subject knowledge essay, available both on our website and for download.

[In-depth subject knowledge essay](#)

[Glossary](#)

### Bishopric

**DEFINITION:** Three people who lead a ward (local congregation). This consists of a Bishop and two counsellors.

### Book of Mormon

**DEFINITION:** The Book of Mormon was published in 1830 by Joseph Smith, who proclaimed the restoration of priesthood authority and re-establishment of the true church of Jesus Christ. Latter-day Saints believe it is a history of God's dealings with certain peoples in the Americas, from Babel to the 5th century CE. The Book of Mormon is seen as the true and literal word of God and has a central place in Mormon doctrine and devotional life. It is where the unofficial name 'Mormons' comes from.

The Book of Mormon affirms key principles of the Bible, such as that Jesus is Christ, the gospel of faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The Book of Mormon is used alongside the King James Version of the Bible. There are two further scriptures: the Doctrine and Covenants (a collection of revelations to Joseph Smith and his successors) and the Pearl of Great Price (containing further revelations to Joseph Smith).

### Brigham Young

**DEFINITION:** After the death of Joseph Smith in 1847, the main body of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints followed Brigham Young (1801-1877), the president of the Quorum of 12 Apostles at the time. He established the Church on a successful foundation. In terms of influence, he is second only to Joseph Smith in the history of the Church.

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

**ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS:** Latter-day Saints

**DEFINITION:** The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints began in 1830. It was started by Joseph Smith and a small group of followers.

The basic beliefs are summarised in a set of 13 beliefs, the first of which, is that members believe in God the Father, his son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. However, Latter-day Saints see God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost as three separate beings rather than three aspects of one being. The beliefs of Latter-day Saints differ from most expressions of Christianity, in that Latter-day Saints believe in an additional revelation, considered to be another testament of Christ, called the Book of Mormon. This was revealed by God and translated by their founder, Joseph Smith (1805-1844). The Book of Mormon is used alongside the King James Version of the Bible. There are two further scriptures: the Doctrine and Covenants (a collection of revelations to Joseph Smith and his successors) and the Pearl of Great Price (containing further revelations to Joseph Smith).

The church is sometimes known as the Mormon church and its members as Mormons, but this is discouraged by the church itself.

## Joseph Smith

**DEFINITION:** Joseph Smith was born in Sharon, Vermont, in 1805. He stated that he had his first vision at the age of 14. By the age of 24, he had published the Book of Mormon and later dictated and wrote the Pearl of Great Price, and most of the Doctrine and Covenants. He founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on 6 April 1830, which was first called the Church of Christ. Joseph Smith and his brother were killed by a mob. He was martyred in the eyes of the members of the Church, who refer to him as 'the prophet' and see the most significant doctrines and practices of the Church as having been instituted in his lifetime.

## Latter-day Saints

**DEFINITION:** Shortened title, or name used to refer to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

## Mormon

ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS: Mormons (discouraged)

**DEFINITION:** A term not approved by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to refer to members of the church. The preferred term for members is members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Latter-day Saints. Terms to be avoided especially include 'the Mormon Church' or 'the LDS Church.'

## Ordinance

**DEFINITION:** A sacred ritual, or ceremony, by which members make covenants (promises) with God, such as baptism, the sacrament, and temple ordinances.

They involve the laying of hands by members of the priesthood, the invocation of the name of Jesus Christ and the authority of the level of priesthood, and then words of blessing, as inspired by the Holy Ghost.

## Restorationist

**ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS:** Restorationism

**DEFINITION:** The belief in the necessity of returning to first-century Christianity as lived and taught by Jesus and the Apostles.

## Stake

**DEFINITION:** A group of wards (local congregations) make up the stake. It is an organisational grouping.

## Temple

**ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS:** LDS Temple

**DEFINITION:** Whilst worship on the sabbath, Sunday, takes place in a local building, the most important place of worship for the LDS Church is the Temple. It is seen as the house of the Lord. There are currently 2 temples in the UK, with a third under construction.

Ordinances, such as eternal marriage, are held in the Temple. Only those who follow strict requirements of faithfulness are issued 'Temple recommends' after interviews with the ecclesiastical leaders of their ward and stake. They can then enter the Temple and receive the Temple ordinances, starting with washing and anointing. It is necessary to dress modestly to enter the Temple.

Churches are smaller places of worship that anyone can go to. They are used for ordinary Sunday worship and are open to all Mormons and any visitors who wish to go. They also usually include a recreation room, kitchen, classrooms, and more.

## Temple garment

**ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS:** Garments

**DEFINITION:** Temple garments are given after a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints member receives the Temple endowment. It is underclothing worn day and night, except when not practical, for example, while swimming. It is ordinary white underwear,

with no physical significance, although it is a modest under garment that covers the entire torso, upper arms, and the legs, to below the knee. It has a spiritual significance.

## **The Word of Wisdom**

**ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS:** Word of Wisdom

**DEFINITION:** A revelation received by Joseph Smith. It suggests aspects of healthy eating and also lists things that are forbidden, such as alcoholic drinks, tea and coffee and tobacco.

## **Ward**

**DEFINITION:** A local congregation of Latter-day Saints.