

TO THE POINT

**What is
the significance
of Pioneer Day?
Is it celebrated all
over the Church?**

No matter where you live, July 24 is a good time to remember what early Latter-day Saints did for us all.

Pioneer Day commemorates the arrival of the first group of Mormon pioneers to the Salt Lake Valley, on July 24, 1847. In Utah it is an official state holiday, and the associated celebration, including a parade, is referred to as Days of '47. It is a time for recognizing all people who have contributed to building the state, regardless of religion or background.

In addition, Latter-day Saints in various locations worldwide may join in recognizing the pioneer heritage we all share.

Some communities hold pageants, parades, concerts, and handcart treks as part of the commemoration. Elsewhere, the remembrance may be as simple as a family outing or a personal moment of reflection. No matter where Church members live, no matter if there is a formal celebration or just a minute of thought, it is an appropriate time to remember what early Latter-day Saints did for us all, including local pioneers who strengthened the Church where you live.



President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “What a joy and privilege it is to be part of this worldwide Church and be taught and uplifted by prophets, seers, and revelators! . . . As the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is now being embraced around the world, we are all pioneers in our own sphere and circumstance.”¹ **NE**

*What pioneer stories inspire you?
Let us know at newera@ldschurch.org.*

NOTE

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Heeding the Voice of the Prophets,” *Ensign*, July 2008, 5.

Why does the Church put such an emphasis on service? Why can't we just have fun?

The gospel of Jesus Christ places great emphasis on helping our fellowmen. It is not enough to sympathize with someone in need—it is our responsibility to act. “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22).

The Savior taught, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40), and King Benjamin taught that “when ye are in the service of



your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). Serving others shows our dedication to the Lord and to the well-being of His children.

Service doesn't just help others. It can also lead to our own spiritual growth. When we serve in callings and do other service, we not only strengthen others but also become better people.¹

What's more, service can be a lot of fun if you approach it with the right attitude. Think of your talents and skills and how you can use them to help others. Individual service is rewarding, and you can also enjoy serving with friends! Gather a group of people together, and brainstorm how you can serve in a new and creative way. You'll be amazed at how fulfilling service can be. **NE**

NOTE

1. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Lift Where You Stand,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 56.

Whom do I talk to about getting a patriarchal blessing?

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “A patriarchal blessing is a very unique and remarkable privilege that can come to the faithful members of the Church

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having sufficient maturity to understand the nature and the importance of such blessings. . . . Like many blessings, they must be requested by the person or by the family of the one desiring the blessing.”¹

If you feel spiritually ready to receive your patriarchal blessing, you should first make an appointment for an interview with your bishop or branch president, who will determine your readiness and worthiness. If he feels you are ready, you will receive a recommend. You may then contact your stake patriarch to schedule an appointment. **NE**

NOTE

1. James E. Faust, “Your Patriarchal Blessing,” *New Era*, Nov. 2005, 4.

What do you want to know? E-mail your questions to newera@ldschurch.org. Please put “To the Point” in the subject line.