

Nauvoo Illinois Temple

Doctrine and Covenants 124:26–44

And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people. Doctrine and Covenants 124:40

Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, like those in ancient times, are holy buildings dedicated to the Lord. A temple, also called the house of the Lord, is a place where worthy Church members receive sacred ordinances and make solemn covenants with God. In these holy temples, families are sealed together forever. Although design and location vary, the work accomplished in each of the Lord's temples is the same.

Heavenly Father established a plan so that the blessings of the temple could be offered to all His children. People who have received their own ordinances are encouraged to return to the temple often to act as proxies for those who have died without having the opportunity of going to the temple for themselves.

In 1841, the Lord commanded the Latter-day Saints to build a temple in Nauvoo, Illinois (see D&C 124:26–28). Anxious to receive the blessings of the temple, the Saints began work immediately. Within a year they were able to perform baptisms for their ancestors.

The Nauvoo Temple was built mainly by donated labor. Most men worked one day in 10 on the temple, and the sisters provided clothing and food for them. The Saints also donated about \$1 million to buy

building materials and supplies. It was a time of great sacrifice for them.

After Joseph and Hyrum Smith were martyred in 1844, the Saints knew they would soon be forced to leave Nauvoo. But they wanted to receive sacred ordinances and kept working on the temple. Rooms were dedicated as they were completed so that ordinance work could begin as soon as possible. The first full endowments were performed December 10, 1845, but the entire temple was not finished and formally dedicated until April 30, 1846. More than 5,000 members received their endowments before starting their journey west.

An arsonist's fire gutted the Nauvoo Temple in October 1848, and later a tornado severely damaged the remaining walls. Residents of Nauvoo then razed the temple and salvaged the stones from the walls.

On April 4, 1999, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that the Nauvoo Temple was to be rebuilt ("Thanks to the Lord for His Blessings," *Ensign*, May 1999, 89). Accordingly, a new temple, designed to look like the original, was constructed on the site where the first building once stood. The new Nauvoo Illinois Temple was dedicated on June 27, 2002.

Summary

Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are holy buildings dedicated to the Lord. A temple is also called the house of the Lord. It is a place where worthy Church members receive saving ordinances and make sacred covenants with God. In temples families can be sealed together forever. The Nauvoo Temple was the first temple in the latter days where endowments, sealings, baptisms for the dead, and other temple ordinances could be performed. Construction on the temple began soon after the

Saints came to Nauvoo; it was dedicated on April 30, 1846. Even though members were being driven from their homes by their enemies, more than 5,000 people received their endowments before they started the journey west. Eventually destroyed after the Saints left, the temple was rebuilt 150 years later and dedicated as the Nauvoo Illinois Temple on June 27, 2002.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS