

## Women's Quest for Equality: An LDS Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
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850 BC Women Unclean After Birth. Leviticus 12:2-5. "If a woman have conceived seed, and born a **man child**; then she shall be unclean seven days . . . And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she bear a **maid child**, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six [66] days."

Because the mother was unclean for seven days, the required ritual circumcision of all male offspring took place on the eighth day after birth.

850 BC Easy for Men to Divorce Wives in Old Testament. Deuteronomy 24:1-4. "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that he find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of hi house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord . . ."

No Provision in Old Testament for Wife to Divorce Husband. "A woman's legal position in Israel was weaker than a man's. Though a husband could divorce his wife for 'some uncleanness in her,' no law is given suggesting that a wife could divorce her husband." ("Woman," *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 2003, 1679.)

850 BC Jealousy Test if Husband Suspects Wife Has Been Unfaithful. Numbers 5:11-31 carefully spells out the steps a man may take if he thinks his wife has been unfaithful. A priest prepares and gives to her "the bitter water that causeth the curse" (apparently a poisonous substance of some kind). "And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, that, if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman shall be a curse among her people.

And if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed."

Wife Could Not Require Same Test of Her Husband. "Wives could be required to take a jealousy test if they were suspected of unfaithfulness to their husbands, but no law is given permitting a wife to require the same of her husband." ("Woman," *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 2003, 1679.)

AD 35 Women Stoned for Adultery; Not Men. John 8:1-11 tells of a woman who was taken in adultery, "in the very act." "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou?" they ask of Jesus. Since both the woman and her partner "were caught in the very act," it is clear that the man was also caught. But following the Law of Moses, only the woman was taken to the scribes and Pharisees to be put to death. Jesus responded, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.'" When all of the accusers remove themselves, Jesus says to the woman, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." (John 8:1-11.)

AD 55 Women Should Keep Silence in Church. 1 Corinthians 14:34-5. "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

AD 55 Women's Heads to Be Covered in Church. 1 Corinthians 11:3-6. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prosephieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man." [Note, however, that it was all right for a woman to prophesy if she had her head covered.]

AD 400 Only Three Women Mentioned by Name in the Book of Mormon. The ancient prophets and scribes in the New World recorded one-thousand years of history in what became the Book of Mormon. Oddly, only three women are named by name: Sariah, wife of Lehi; Isabel, the harlot (Alma 39:3); and Abish, the Lamanitish woman (Alma 19:16). This does not count three other Old Testament women who are referred to: Eve, Sarah, and Mary. (Lynn Matthews Anderson, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1994, p. 186.)

1000 Primogeniture. "Primogeniture is the right, by law or custom, of the firstborn male child to inherit the family estate, in preference to siblings. In the absence of children, inheritance passed to collateral relatives, usually males, in order of seniority of their lines of descent. The eligible descendants of deceased elder siblings take precedence over living younger siblings, such that inheritance is settled in the manner of a depth-first search. The principle has applied in history to inheritance of real property (land) as well as inherited titles and offices, most notably monarchies." (*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primo-geniture*; accessed June 7, 2014.)

Reason for Primogeniture. "The law of primogeniture in Europe has its origins in Medieval Europe; which due to the feudal system necessitated that the estates of land-owning feudal lords be kept as large and united as possible to maintain social stability as well as the wealth, power and social standing of their families." (*Ibid.*)

Recent Changes. "Variations on primogeniture modify the right of the firstborn son to the entirety of a family's inheritance or, in the West since World War II [1945!] with the wider promotion of feminism, eliminate the preference for males over females. Most monarchies in Europe have eliminated male preference in succession: Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The United Kingdom passed legislation to establish gender-blind succession in 2013 . . ." (*Ibid.*)

1611 Male Words Used in King James Bible. The scholars (all male) who translated the Bible into English and produced the King James Version in 1611, often used male words for universal concepts. "In 258 places in the King James Version of the Bible, the word "man" is used when in the Hebrew, Greek, or Latin versions, a gender-neutral, or gender-inclusive word is used." (Enid S. DeBarthe, *Restoration Studies V: A Collection of Essays About the History, Beliefs, and Practices of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 1993, p. 83.)

1836 Separate Seating in Kirtland Temple. At the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836, women sat in the balcony while the men sat on the main floor. (Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*, 1985, p. 58.)

Also True in Salt Lake Tabernacle. Seating was separated by gender in the Salt Lake Tabernacle until after the Manifesto in 1890. This served a functional purpose, however, since outsiders could not see how many wives a man had by looking at those who sat next to him. There was a curtain down the center aisle that separated men and women.

1838 Wilford Woodruff's Wife Heals Him. "I was still sick in the morning. I had Prayers & was much better after my wife laid hands on me and asked the Lord to heal me." (*Wilford Woodruff Journal*, March 30, 1838.)

1842 Relief Society to Be A Kingdom of Priests. The Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes for 30 March 1842, Upper Room, Red Brick Store, state: "Pres. Joseph Smith arose—spoke of the organization of the society . . . . All must act in concert or nothing can be done, that the society should move according to the ancient Priesthood, hence there should be a select society, separate from, all the evils of the world, choice, virtuous and holy. Said he was going to make of this society a kingdom of priests as in Enoch's day—as in Paul's day—that it is the privilege of each member to live long and enjoy good health." (Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 1980, p. 110.)

1845 Relief Society Just Gets in the Way. When the saints left Nauvoo, the Relief Society organization was allowed to disappear. When women kept asking about it, Brigham Young responded: "When I want Sisters or the Wives of the members of the church to get up Relief Society I will summon them to my aid, but until that time let them stay at home and if you see Females huddling together veto the concern and if they say Joseph started it tell them it is a damned lie for I know he never encouraged it." (Speech dated 9 March 1845, Seventies Record, LDS Archives; cited in *Sisters in Spirit*, Edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson, 1987, p. 163.)

1847 Don't Wash Dishes, as Some Men Do. Wilford Woodruff recorded this sermon of Brigham Young's at Winter Quarters in 1847: "I know that the women generally rule there [sic] Husbands & the Children their Mothers. But when a woman undertakes to rule me I want Her to be so secret about it that I Cannot Catch Her at it. Now I do not want the Brethren from my remarks to abuse there wives but treat them kindly: Do there Heavy lusing [sic] but don't wash there dishes as some men do." (*Wilford Woodruff Journal*, Feb. 16, 1847.)

1849 First Woman Doctor in America. In October 1847, Elizabeth Blackwell was accepted as a medical student by Hobart College, then called Geneva Medical College, located in upstate New York. Her acceptance was a near-accident. The dean and faculty, usually responsible for evaluating an applicant for matriculation, were not able to make a decision due to the special nature of Blackwell's case. They put the issue up to vote by the 150 male students of the class with the stipulation that if one student objected, Blackwell would be turned away. The young men thought this request was so ludicrous that they believed it to be a joke, and responding accordingly, voted unanimously to accept her. . . . On 23 January 1849, Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to achieve a medical degree in the United States. The local press reported her graduation favourably, and when the dean, Dr. Charles Lee, conferred her degree, he stood up and bowed to her" ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Blackwell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Blackwell); accessed June 6, 2014.)

1854 Wiillard Richards Blessed by Wives and Twelve. Wilford Woodruff recorded on January 31, 1854 that President Willard Richards had been given a special blessing. "This I promised him once while the Twelve and all his wives were administering to him at the same time." (*Wilford Woodruff Journal*, January 31, 1854.)

1856 Wives Can't Know More than Husbands. One woman recorded this sermon delivered April 27, 1856, by President Young: ". . . a woman be she ever so smart, she cannot know more than her husband if he magnifies his Priesthood. That God never in any age of the world endowed woman with knowledge above the man and when a woman has in any instance a message from God [it is given] to man and 'tis because of the Priesthood." (*Not By Bread Alone: The Journal of Martha Spence Heywood*, Edited by Juanita Brooks, p. 122.)

1856 Do Your Husband's Will. Brigham Young preached in 1856: "Sisters, do not ask whether you can make yourselves happy, but whether you can do your husband's will, if he is a good man. . . . You can, at least, teach your children faith, and pay attention to knitting stockings, making their clothing, &c.; see that the chickens are taken care of, that the milk is cleanly milked from the cow, and that the children are made comfortable. And if your husband is here or there, do not fret yourselves, whether he leaves you or not. If he is a good man, he can take care of himself, and will safely return to you again. . . . Another great cause of dissatisfaction is that so many women are such noble women, and know so much more than their husbands. They say, 'This man is not capable of leading me.' That is a positive proof to me that that man does not know his ability and calling. I will acknowledge that many women are smarter than their husbands. But when people are married, instead of trying to get rid of each other, reflect that you

have made your choice, and strive to honor and keep it. Do not manifest that you have acted unwisely, and say that you have made a bad choice, nor let anybody know that you think you have. You made your choice; stick to it, and strive to comfort and assist each other.” (Brigham Young, 21 Sep. 1856; *Journal of Discourses*, 9:38-40.)

1856 Weak-Minded Females. Brigham Young advised the Saints in March 1856, when U.S. troops were marching towards Salt Lake City: “Do not be frightened because a few rotten, corrupt scoundrels in our midst cry out, ‘O the troops are coming, and that will be the end of Mormonism,’ in order to deceive the weak-minded females.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 3:278.)

1857 Women Have Less Light and Knowledge than Men. At the October 1857 general conference, Elder Lorenzo Snow said: “It requires a great exertion on the parts of wives to keep pace with their husbands. You all perceive more imperfections in those around you than you do in yourselves. It is much more difficult for wives to learn than it is for husbands, because women have not the degree of light and knowledge that their husbands have; they have not the power over their passions that their husbands have; therefore they have to suffer one for another until they get power over themselves like unto those that have advanced more fully in the knowledge of our God.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 5:315-16.)

1857 Your Husband Is Your Lord. At the October 4, 1857 general conference, Apostle Erastus Snow announced: “Do the women, when they pray, remember their husbands? Do you pray for brother Brigham? Yes, you should always pray for him. But when you pray for him, do you pray also for your own husband, that he may have the inspiration of the Almighty to lead and govern his family as the lord? Do you uphold your husband before God as your lord? ‘What!—my husband to be my lord?’ I ask, Can you get into the celestial kingdom without him? Have any of you been there [apparently alluding to the Celestial Room of the temple in Nauvoo]? You will remember that you never got into the celestial kingdom without the aid of your husband. If you did, it was because your husband was away, and some one had to act proxy for him. No woman will get into the celestial kingdom, except her husband receives her, if she is worthy to have a husband; and if not, somebody will receive her as a servant.” (Erastus Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, 5:291.)

We Do Not Want Such Women in Israel. “. . . and if there is a woman in any family whose children dishonour their father, I will show you a woman that dishonours her husband and shows him disrespect, from which the children take their example. We do not want such women in Israel; we do not want their offspring, nor anything that pertains to them, except they repent.” (*Ibid.*)

1857 Address Men Before Women. On March 1, 1857, Elder Orson Hyde addressed a congregation in Great Salt Lake City: “Dear brethren and sisters . . . Had I copied the style of address adopted by the fashionable world, I might have said, ‘Ladies and gentlemen,’ placing the fair in the van, but as this would only be to reverse the order of our being through life’s thorny way, ordained and established by heaven’s law, I have felt, and still feel, to observe the spirit of that law and that order, not only in my manner of address, but in all the varied duties, responsibilities, and pleasures of life. The hypocritical respect lavished upon females by the etiquette of the world, in pushing them forward, and in exciting their vanity by making them most conspicuous in all the novels and romances which, like so much trash, have flooded society and cursed the land, is only to make them a more easy prey to the unbridled sensuality and the ungodly lusts of their benighted authors. . . . The order of heaven places man in the front rank; hence he is first to be addressed. Woman follows under the protection of his counsels, and the superior strength of his arm. Her desire should be unto her husband, and he should rule over her. (Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:257-8.)

1860s If Children Fail, Fault is the Mother’s, Not the Father’s. Brigham Young was quoted as saying: “I will tell you the truth as you will find it in eternity. If your children do not receive impressions of true piety, virtue, tenderness, and every principle of the holy Gospel, you may be assured that their sins will not be required at the hands of the father, but of the mother.” (“Our Children,” *Women’s Exponent* 15, no. 24 [May 15, 1887], 189.)

1862 Men Are Superior. In June, 1862, Brigham Young spoke in the Tabernacle: “I do not believe in making my authority as a husband or a father known by brute force; but by a superior intelligence—by showing them that I am

capable of teaching them. . . .and if the Lord has placed me to be the head of a family, let me be so in all humility and patience, not as a tyrannical ruler, but as a faithful companion, an indulgent and affectionate father, a thoughtful and unassuming superior; let me be honoured in my station through faithful diligence . . . . When the servants of God in any age have consented to follow a woman for a leader, either in a public or a family capacity, they have sunk beneath the standard their organization has fitted them for; when a people of God submit to that, their Priesthood is taken from them and they become as any other people. I shall humor the wife as far as I can consistently; and if you have any crying to do, wife, you can do that along with the children, for I have none of that kind of business to do. Let our wives be the weaker vessels, and men be men, and show the women by their superior ability that God gives husbands wisdom and ability to lead their wives into his presence.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 9:307-8.)

1869 Extraordinary Position of Eliza R. Snow. “Jill Mulvey Derr, a research historian and associate professor of Church History at BYU, summarized Eliza R. Snow’s position: “By the time she reached her mid-sixties, Eliza R. Snow was in an extraordinary position for an American woman, extraordinary for any woman in any age. She wielded phenomenal religious power: charismatic power (as prophetess, she exercised the gifts of tongues, prophecy, and healing); liturgical power (as priestess, she presided over women who ministered temple rites in the Endowment House); and ecclesiastical power (as presidentess, she directed the work of Latter-day Saints women within the Church organization). Insofar as imperfect mortals rise to such stature, she was the female counterpart of prophet, priest, and king.” (Jill Mulvey Derr, “Form and Feeling in a Carefully Crafted Life: Eliza R. Snow’s ‘Poem of Poems’” *Journal of Mormon History* 26:1 [Spring 2000], p. 29.)

1862 Women Not to Read Novels. In 1862, Brigham Young preached: “There are women in our community, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, and sixty years of age, who would rather read a trifling, lying novel than read history, the Book of Mormon, or any other useful print. Such women are not worth their room. It would do no good for me to say, Don’t read them; read on, and get the spirit of lying in which they are written, and then lie on until you find yourselves in hell.” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 9 [January 26, 1862], p. 173.)

1869 Women First Voted in Utah Territory. “The Mormon issue made the fight for women’s suffrage in Utah unique. In 1869 the Utah Territory, controlled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, gave women the right to vote. Sarah Young, the niece of Brigham Young, was the first woman to legally vote in the United States, due to a municipal election held on February 14, 1869 (Wyoming had recognized women’s right to vote earlier that year, but had not yet held an election). However, in 1887, Congress disenfranchised Utah women with the Edmunds–Tucker Act, which was designed to weaken the Mormons politically and punish them for polygamy. At the same time, however, certain activists, particularly Presbyterians and other Protestants convinced that Mormonism was a non-Christian cult that grossly mistreated women, promoted women’s suffrage in Utah as an experiment, and as a way to eliminate polygamy. The LDS Church officially ended its endorsement of polygamy in 1890 and in 1895 Utah adopted a constitution restoring the right of woman suffrage. Congress admitted Utah as a state with that constitution in 1896.” ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's\\_suffrage\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_suffrage_in_the_United_States); accessed June 4, 2014.)

1870 Married Women’s Property Act Let Women Keep Property Instead of Husbands. The Married Women’s Property Act 1870 was “an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom that allowed women to be the legal owners of the money they earned and to inherit property. Before 1870, any money made by a woman either through a wage, from investment, by gift, or through inheritance automatically became the property of her husband once she was married. Once a woman became married her property was no longer her own and her husband could choose to dispose of it whenever he thought suitable: “Thus, a woman, on marry-ing, relinquished her personal property—moveable property such as money, stocks, furniture, and livestock--- to her husband’s ownership; by law he was permitted to dispose of it at will at any time in the marriage and could even will it away at death” ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Married\\_Women's\\_Property\\_Act\\_1870](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Married_Women's_Property_Act_1870); accessed June 6, 2014.)

By 1900 U. S. Women Gained Control of Property. “In the early years of the United States, following British law, women’s property was under control of their husbands, with states gradually giving women limited property rights. By 1900 every state had given married women substantial control over their property.” ([womenshistory.about.com/od/marriedwomensproperty/a/property\\_rights.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/marriedwomensproperty/a/property_rights.htm); accessed June 6,

2014.)

1874 Women to Honor Their Priesthood. On June 28, 1874, President Brigham Young preached, “Now brethren, the man that honors his Priesthood, the woman that honors her Priesthood, will receive an everlasting inheritance in the Kingdom of God.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 17:119.)

1874 Women Can't Leave a Righteous Man. “I have said a number of times, and I will say again, to you ladies who want to get a bill of divorce from your husbands, because they do not treat you right, or because you do not exactly like their ways, there is a principle upon which a woman can leave a man, but if the man honors his Priesthood, it will be pretty hard work for you to get away from him. If he is just and right, serves God and is full of justice, love, mercy and truth, he will have the power that is sealed upon him, and will do what he pleases with you. . . . If you want a bill of divorce give me ten dollars, so that I can put it down in the book that such a man and such a woman have dissolved partnership. Do you think you have done so when you have obtained a bill of divorce? No, nor ever can if you are faithful to the covenants you have made. It takes a higher power than a bill of divorce to take a woman from a man who is a good man and honors his Priesthood it must be a man who possesses a higher power in the Priesthood, or else the woman is bound to her husband, and will be forever and ever. You might as well ask me for a piece of blank paper for a divorce, as to have a little writing on it, saying We mutually agree to dissolve partnership and keep ourselves apart from each other, &c. It is all nonsense and folly; there is no such thing in the ordinances of the house of God; you cannot find any such law. . . . There is a law for you to be obedient, and humble and faithful.” (Brigham Young, June 28, 1874, *Journal of Discourses*, 17:119.)

1877 First Woman Doctor in Utah. “In the fall of 1874, Romania Pratt sold her most prized possession, a piano, for enough money to travel East. Her destination—the Women’s Medical College of New York. Such a journey was a daring undertaking back in that day and age for a sheltered Mormon wife and mother of five. But Romania was determined to become a doctor. The young woman felt a deep commitment to helping the sick and injured. She also felt a personal responsibility to answer Church President Brigham Young’s command: ‘Women must come forth as doctors in these valleys of the mountains.’ So Romania said goodbye to friends, family and to that beloved piano and embarked on a new career as a frontier physician. . . . The lack of expertise that all too often prevailed in Deseret was a source of great worry to Brigham Young. He and other Church leaders also decried the idea of male physicians ministering to the needs of women. . . . Enough women doctors also had to be trained so they could serve their gender and preserve feminine modesty.” ([jared.pratt-family.org/parley\\_family\\_histories/romania\\_bunnell\\_first\\_woman.html](http://jared.pratt-family.org/parley_family_histories/romania_bunnell_first_woman.html); accessed June 6, 2014.)

1878 Organization of Primary In 1878, Aurelia Spencer Rogers of Farmington wrote to Eliza R. Snow about the possibility of starting an organization for children. Eliza wrote back that she had met with President John Taylor and Pres. Joseph F. Smith, and they agreed with the idea. Eliza then noted: “We think that at present, it will be wisdom to not admit any under six years of age, except in some special instances. You are right—we must have the girls as well as the boys—they must be trained together.” (Larry E. Morris, *A Treasury of Latter-day Saint Letters*, 2001, pp. 144-5.)

1879 General Priesthood Meeting Open to Women. On at least one occasion (the general priesthood meeting of the October 1879 general conference) women were explicitly invited to attend. At the afternoon session, on October 7, 1879, President Taylor announced: “There are some other things I would like to touch upon, but as the time has already expired, and as there will be a Priesthood meeting to-night in this tabernacle, to which the young and the old of both sexes are invited, I will defer speaking further until then.” (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 22, p. 4.)

1890 Don't Let Wives Govern in Home. At a conference in Morgan, Utah on Feb. 17, 1890, apostle Abraham H. Cannon noted: “I also spoke to the brethren and told them to stand at the head of their families and not allow their wives to govern and rule over them. At the close of this meeting, . . . the expression of the brethren was that they would endeavor to obey the counsel given . . .” (*Candid Insights of a Mormon Apostle: The Diaries of Abraham H. Cannon, 1889-1895*, edited by Edward Leo Lyman, 2010, p. 66.)

1892 Decision: Sisters Not to Lay Corner Stones of RS Buildings Without Priesthood. Sept. 2, 1892. “I was at the President’s office where the President [Wilford Woodruff] desired the opinion of the brethren as to whether it would be right for the sisters to lay the corner stones of their relief society buildings without the assistance of the brethren of the Priesthood. All of the Presidency, and Apostles [Lorenzo] Snow, [Franklin D.] Richards, [John] H[enry] Smith and myself thought it scarcely the proper thing to do.” (*Candid Insights of a Mormon Apostle: The Diaries of Abraham H. Cannon, 1889-1895*, edited by Edward Leo Lyman, 2010, p. 354.)

1894 Apostle Decides Not to Attend Meeting with a Woman Speaker. Aug. 26, 1894; Sunday. “I did not attend the tabernacle services because a woman—Mrs. Ellen Foster—was to talk, and also because I desired to read.” (*Ibid.*, 542.) Foster “was an attorney and suffragist who spoke at the 1892 Republican National Convention. She became president of the Women’s Republican Association and legal counsel for the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, later an employee of the U. S. Justice Department.” (*Ibid.*, 542, f42.)

1896 First Woman Elected to a State Senate in U.S. “Martha Maria Hughes Cannon, noted physician and the first female state senator in the United States, was born 1 July 1857 near Llandudno, Wales . . . . From an early age Mattie desired to study medicine, and worked to that end as a schoolteacher and typesetter while attending the University of Deseret. After her graduation with a degree in chemistry in 1875, she attended the medical school at the University of Michigan from 1878 to 1881, and practiced medicine for a short time in Algonac, Michigan. In 1882 she earned a B.S. from the Auxiliary School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania, and received a diploma from the National School of Elocution and Oratory. After graduation Mattie returned to Salt Lake City where she was resident physician at the fledgling Deseret Hospital from 1882 to 1886. Mattie married Angus M. Cannon, twenty-three years her senior, on 6 October 1884, becoming the fourth of his six plural wives. . . . Mattie practiced medicine in Salt Lake and taught nursing courses. She also took an active interest in local politics and woman suffrage, attending the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 as part of a delegation of Utah women. In a much publicized election, Mattie was one of five Democrats running as ‘at large’ candidates for state senator from Salt Lake County. Among the Republicans for the office was her husband Angus [who was president of the Salt Lake Stake. She got more votes than he did.] She was elected on 3 November 1896, becoming the first woman ever elected to that office in the United States. [Utah became a state in January 1896.] She served two terms in the legislature and was particularly involved with issues of public health. After leaving the legislature she served as a member of the Utah Board of Health and as a member of the board of the Utah State School for the Deaf and Dumb. . . . She died in Los Angeles on 10 July 1932.” (*historytogo.- utah.gov/people/marthahughescannon.html*; accessed June 4, 2014.)

1896 Women Not to Participate in Prayer Circle Meetings. On Jan. 30, 1896, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve ruled that women should not have their own prayer circles, nor participate with their husbands in prayer circle meetings. Now hardly remembered, at the time there were many prayer circle groups throughout the Intermountain West, and large numbers of men participated. (D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*, 1997, p. 797.)

Exception in 1958. “There was one occasion in 1958 when Elder Joseph Fielding Smith authorized members of the newly organized Smithfield (Utah) Stake Prayer Circle to include their wives in a prayer circle meeting once a year.” (*BYU Studies*, Fall 1978, p. 95.)

1898 First Single Sister Missionaries Called. On March 16, 1898, Pres. George Q. Cannon said that through missionary service of unmarried young women, “some kind of solution would be found to the problem so often discussed, ‘What shall we do with our girls?’” On April 21, 1898, Amanda Inez Knight and Lucy Jane Brimhall, arrived in the British Mission, the first unmarried women to serve as full-time missionaries. Previously lady missionaries were married women who were set apart as companions to their husbands, usually mission presidents. (D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*, 1997, p. 799.)

1900s New Ward and Stake Leaders Voted on Without Women Present. Originally, and until at least the 1930s, ward and stake leadership changes were made during priesthood-only meetings. When the men had selected (or later, ratified) the selections, then women were admitted for the regular meetings.

One Example: New Cottonwood Stake in 1914. In November 28, 1914, the Granite Stake was divided, creating the new Cottonwood Stake. “At 10 a.m. we met with the general priesthood; there were over 1,100 brethren present. The Stake was voted by them to be divided in two—Granite the northern part and Cottonwood the southern part. Uriah G. Miller was made President of the new stake and W. E. Erikson and Jos. Lindsay—both bishops—his counselors. The nominations for the several stake offices were unanimously sustained [and] I made a short talk and so did Bro Lyman. Then the sisters were admitted and we partook of the sacrament.” (*Danish Apostle: The Diaries of Anthon H. Lund, 1890-1921*, edited by John P. Hatch, 2006, p. 557.)

1905 Women Set Apart to Bless Expectant Mothers. The secretary to the First Council of the Seventies recorded this discussion in 1905: “Oct 17th, We did the unusual thing in promoting friendship and fellowship especially among the sisters. After talking with the Presidency of the Church and getting their approval, we called together the Relief Society Presidency and selected a few faithful and devoted sisters and set them apart to go among the sick and women in their period of maternity to wash and annoint and bless their sisters and gave counsel to be wise and use these gifts to inspire faith and greater cohesion among the sisters of the ward and hope it may be a blessing to those desirous of such ministrations.” (*Diary Excerpts of John M. Whitaker*; Vol. II, pp. 598-599, Oct. 17, 1905.)

1916 Women in Europe Given Priesthood Assignments in World War I. In June of 1916 Elder George F. Richards left to preside over the European Mission. As World War I broke out, he reorganized 33 branches, replacing the American elders with local members. He called women to officiate in auxiliary organizations, including the Sunday School and Young Men's MIA, and assigned them to do branch teaching and to pray and preach in meetings. (Thomas Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 1986, p. 232.)

1920 Women Win Right to Vote in U.S. “Passed by Congress June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920, the 19th amendment guarantees all American women the right to vote. Achieving this milestone required a lengthy and difficult struggle; victory took decades of agitation and protest. Beginning in the mid-19th century, several generations of woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered a radical change of the Constitution. Few early supporters lived to see final victory in 1920.” (“19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Women's Right to Vote.” National Archives; [archives.gov/historical-docs/](http://archives.gov/historical-docs/) accessed June 4, 2014.)

Women Still Can't Vote in Several Countries. Women in Switzerland did not get the right to vote until 1971. Women in Saudi Arabia and several other Muslim nations still do not have the right to vote.

1921 Consideration for an All-Girls School in New Zealand. “Touring the all-boys Maori Agricultural College [while on his worldwide tour of missions, Elder David O.] McKay had been so impressed that he encouraged local leaders to find a possible site for a similar all-girls school.” [However, it did not happen.]

1940s Impact of World War II on Women. During World War II several million women entered the workforce for the first time, taking over jobs previously held by men who went off to fight the war. This included jobs that previously had been “off-limits” to women. One of the famous posters of the time showed “Rosie the Riveter,” who was helping out the war effort by working on a factory assembly line building airplanes. Almost 400,000 women served in the U. S. military during the war, taking over clerical and nursing positions to free up men for combat. The war also effectively ended the previous cultural custom of having women stay confined in their homes during the last half of their pregnancies. [I recall my own surprise walking in downtown Ogden during the war, and frequently seeing obviously pregnant women, something I had never seen in church or our neighborhood. RW] (“World War II: Women and the War,” [www.womensmemorial.org/](http://www.womensmemorial.org/); accessed June 7, 2014.)

1940s Gradual Dropping of Sexist Titles. For much of American history, positions held by women have had the suffix “-ess” added to the male title: seamstress, poetess, presidentess, princess, waitress, Jewess, Negress, proprietress, laundress, adulteress, aviatrix, priestess, temptress, etc. By the mid-1900s, those words

became offensive to many people, and were gradually dropped. One holdout has been “actress,” probably because of the Academy Awards “Best Actress” category. Increasingly, though, female movie stars are referred to as “actors.”

1940s Girls Collected Fast Offerings. During the Second World War, girls collected fast offerings in some wards. Women have also prepared the sacrament tables (see below). President Heber J. Grant once authorized boys with no priesthood to pass the sacrament when ordained boys were unavailable. (*BYU Studies*, Spring 1976, p. 395.)

1949 Do Not Try to Be Anything Else than Good Mothers and Good Homemakers. As late as 1949, at the Relief Society general conference, Pres. J. Reuben Clark announced: “We of the Priesthood are out in the world. We meet all kinds of conditions. We are engaged in something of a battle from day to day, trying to secure those things which maintain life. We do not have much time with you, nor with the children, and so we must look to you, and do look to you . . . to build the home and make it a home. . . . I hope the Lord will bless you in your labors. I hope he will bring to each of you a realization of what you ought to be, and what you ought to do. And do not try to be anything else but good mothers and good homemakers, for that will exhaust all the time, all the effort, and pay the greatest dividends of anything else you can do in the world.” (J. Reuben Clark, “The Prophet’s Sailing Orders to Relief Society,” *Relief Society Magazine* 36 [December 1949]:797-98.)

1949 Adult Sunday School Manual. In 1949, the Church introduced the new *Gospel in Action* lesson manual, for use in the adult Sunday School class. “Forty-five biographies were given in the manual; and while half [or more] of the people attending Gospel Doctrine classes were presumably women, 42 of the biographies were of men, and only three were of women.” (Gregory A. Prince, *Leonard Arrington and the Writing of Mormon History*, 2016, 228.)

“Davis Bitton said that reminded him of the phrase on the dust jacket or introduction of Rodney Turner’s book *Woman and the Priesthood* which says, ‘This is a history of woman from the time of Adam to the present.’” (*Ibid.*, 229.)

1950 Relief Society Should Not Get Involved In Equal Rights for Women. Jan. 25, 1950. “Marianne [Clark Sharp, First Counselor in the General Relief Society Presidency, and Pres. J. Reuben Clark’s daughter] called about the bill for equal rights for women. Pres. Clark suggested they keep out of it; there will be some of the women who will think it is a fine thing.” (*The Diaries of J. Reuben Clark, 1933-1961, Abridged*, Privately published, 2010, 151.)

1950 Women and Girls Not to Prepare the Sacrament Table. “The directive ‘Prepare Sacrament Table’ did not appear in an official list of ‘Assignments for Ordained Teachers’ until 1933. Prior to these instructions, ‘women and custodians usually prepared the sacrament table.’ In 1950, the Presiding Bishopric requested that preparing the sacrament table not be delegated to ‘LDS girls or their mothers.’ However, in a 1955 list, ‘Suggestions for Aaronic Priesthood Bearers Officiating in the Sacrament Service,’ the Presiding Bishopric stated that, ‘where desired,’ young women could care for linens and trays after the meeting.” (Matthew R. Lee, in review of William G. Hartley, *My Fellow Servants: Essays on the History of the Priesthood*, Provo, BYU Studies, 2010; *The Journal of Mormon History*, 39:3, Summer 2013, 261-62.)

1951 First Woman Becomes Private Secretary to Church President: Clare Middlemiss. Shortly after President David O. McKay became President of the Church, he “informed his colleagues that D. Arthur Haycock, who had served as private secretary to the two previous church presidents, would be reassigned as an assistant to Joseph Anderson, secretary to the First Presidency. In Haycock’s place, McKay retained his personal secretary of sixteen years, Clare Middlemiss. Never before (or since) had the private secretary to a church president been a woman. During the subsequent nineteen years, Middlemiss would become arguably the most powerful woman in the history of the church, and would chronicle McKay’s activities in unprecedented detail.” (Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 2005, p. 2.)

Some Leadership Unhappy About It. President McKay’s eldest son said of Middlemiss: “She was devoted to Father and did everything she could to protect him, and in the process aroused the antagonism of

nearly everybody else, including the members of the Twelve. One such member was senior Apostle Harold B. Lee, who told a fellow General Authority, ‘It’s interesting . . . that I have to go through a non-priesthood-bearer to get certain things done in my assignment.’” (Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David . McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 2005, p. 407.)

1953 Official Policy: Married Women Not Allowed to Work for the Church. The First Presidency officially voted that married women would not be hired by the Church, and any single women working for the Church had to be dismissed if they got married. This included faculty at BYU. (*Confidence Amid Change: The Presidential Diaries of David O. McKay, 1951-1970*; edited by Harvard S. Heath, Signature Books, 2019, 76.)

1960s First Married Women Hired by the Church. During the early 1960s, under President Henry D. Moyle’s supervision, “Salaries and fringe benefits for church employees were upgraded, and rather to President Moyle’s surprise, President McKay approved the employment of married women.” (Richard D. Poll, *Working the Divine Miracle: The Life of Apostle Henry D. Moyle*, edited by Stan Larson, 1999, 193, 8.)

1963 Equal Pay Act. “When the Equal Pay Act was signed into law by President Kennedy in 1963, women were earning an average of 59 cents on the dollar compared to men. While women hold nearly half of today’s jobs, and their earnings account for a significant portion of the household income that sustains the financial well-being of their families, they are still experiencing a gap in pay compared to men’s wages for similar work. Today, women earn about 81 cents on the dollar compared to men — a gap that results in hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost wages. For African-American women and Latinas, the pay gap is even greater.” (U. S. Department of Labor, [www.dol.gov/equalpay/](http://www.dol.gov/equalpay/); accessed June 4, 2014.)

1970s Priesthood Correlation Limited Women’s Responsibilities. With the implementation of the Priesthood Correlation program of the 1970s, “the consequences for all the auxiliaries were the same: fewer responsibilities, loss of autonomy, restricted organizational power, and little contact with auxiliary leaders at the local level. The changes enhanced the institutional role of the priesthood, emphasized the role of priesthood-bearing fathers as heads of the smallest unit of church organization, and restricted the institutional role of women, especially at the highest levels of church administration. Among other things, the Relief Society no longer published its own magazine, and it lost responsibility for adoption and foster home care (the program was merged with the Indian Placement and Youth Guidance programs under what eventually became Social Services). The Primary, another female-headed auxiliary, lost responsibility for the Primary Children’s Hospital. The all-woman hospital board headed by the Primary president was dissolved, and a new board of trustees for the Health Services Corporation was appointed. Although the General Primary president was appointed to this board, the committee was composed primarily of men.” (Marie Cornwall, “The Institutional Role of Mormon Women,” *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives*, Edited by Cornwall, Heaton and Young, 1994, pp. 256-7.)

Went Against American Cultural Change. “The tradition of women leading women became lost in an emphasis on priesthood line and priesthood authority. . . . Since women were not ordained, their only institutional role was to ‘support the priesthood.’ The change did more than subordinate women; it also implied that their contribution, although necessary, was of secondary importance to the work of men. These changes occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, decades of great change for women in American culture. At the very time that women generally were pressing for greater influence in social institutions, the women of Mormonism found themselves outside the hierarchy, with little input on governing councils. . . . In the institutionalized modern version of Mormonism the title Mother in Israel came to mean giving birth to and raising children and lost its broader meaning of contributing to building the Kingdom of God and establishing Zion.” (*Ibid.* p. 258.)

Women’s Advances Declined with Death of President McKay. Within months of the death of president David O. McKay in 1970, “the fortunes of the Relief Society began to change. . . . male church leaders discontinued the *Relief Society Magazine*, cancelled independent Relief Society fund-raising events including bazaars, and directed that Relief Society bank accounts be closed and the monies turned over to

male-controlled general and local accounts.” (Gregory A. Prince, *Leonard Arrington and the Writing of Mormon History*, 2016, 233.)

Role of President Lee’s Correlation Program. Alice Smith, a member of the Relief Society General Board, reported to Church Historian Leonard Arrington on Sept. 15, 1978 about the discouragement felt by the Board members: “Alice said the deterioration of the Relief Society began under President [Harold B.] Lee, under his Correlation program, and that many of his appointees are still functioning and still operating under his philosophy. [They are] continuing to trim and trim power and authority from the Relief Society.” (Leonard J. Arrington, *Confessions of a Mormon Historian: The Diaries of Leonard J. Arrington,, 1975-1997, Vol. 2: Centrifugal Forces, 1975-80*, edited by Gary James Bergera, Signature Books, 2018, 2:621-22.)

1972 Title IX Requires Equal Facilities and Funding for HS and College Girls’s Athletic Programs. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities which receive Federal financial assistance. While sports are not even mentioned in the Act, high school and college athletic programs soon became the major focus. Schools everywhere had to balance the number of sports activities offered to males and females. The Utah High School Activities Association added girls’ basketball as a required offering, amid much grumbling from male coaches. [I recall the first Region girls’s basketball tournament, held at Cottonwood High School, for large schools in the Salt Lake Valley, to decide which team would go to the State tournament. Most of the girls had not frequently played competitively before. As I recall, the score at half-time was 6-2. There were lots of scoffers who said it would never work. [RW] (“Title IX and Sex Discrimination,” [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix\\_dis.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html); accessed June 4, 2014.)

Impact of Title IX at BYU. “As a result of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972, the BYU administration also undertook to hire more women and equalize salaries of men and women.” (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 15.)

1975 Presidential Scholarships at BYU No Longer Limited to Men. “In 1967, BYU’s highest academic scholarship, always named after the current Church President, was established and awarded to fifteen male students only. Beginning in 1975, twelve of these presidential scholarships were awarded to men and twelve to women. (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 14.)

1978 Women Approved to Pray in Sacrament Meetings. In 1978 the question arose regarding whether women ought to be able to pray in sacrament meetings. According to President Kimball’s statement in the Regional Representatives meeting on 29 September 1978, to find an answer to that question the brethren consulted the scriptures. Since they found no scriptural reason to prohibit women’s praying in sacrament meetings, the existing policy was changed. Women have, since then, been allowed to pray in any meeting they attend. (*Deseret News*, Sept. 29, 1978.) Deacons could pray prior to then, but not the Relief Society President.

1978 First Time a Wife Present for Ordination of Husband to Apostle. At the conclusion of the Sunday afternoon session of the October 1978 general conference, “Elder and Sister [James E.] Faust were taken to the temple, where he was instructed in his duties, ordained an apostle, and set apart as a member of the Council of the Twelve. At the conclusion of the meeting, he was told by members of the Twelve that this was the first time that the wife of a member of the Twelve had been present for her husband’s ordination.” (James P. Bell, *In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust*, 1999, p. 132.)

1978 Women Speaking at General Conference. “It was in October 1978 that Elaine Cannon and Barbara B. Smith began to speak in general conference. Cannon was one of the first women in forty [49] years to speak in general conference.” Lucy Mack Smith spoke in the first general conference in 1845, in the Nauvoo Temple. Zina D. H. Young, third general Relief Society president, spoke on Oct. 8, 1879. The next time women spoke in general

conference was in October 1929, when the presidents of the Relief Society (Louisa Yates Robison), Young Women (Ruth May Fox), and Primary (May Anderson) addressed the conference. The next women speakers came 49 years later, when Cannon and Smith spoke. (Mary Jane Woodger, *The Journal of Mormon History*, Fall 2014, 40:4, 198-9.)

1970s Women's Research Institute Established at BYU. "In the late 1970s, as more and more matters concerning women required answers, the Relief Society presidency with the approval of their advisors and the cooperation of BYU, established A Women's Research Institute." ("Relief Society in the Twentieth Century," *Out of Obscurity: The LDS Church in the Twentieth Century*, 2000, p. 318.)

1980 Greater Recognition for Girls in Sacrament Meeting. "In an attempt to match some of the attention given young men who received priesthood advancement and Scouting awards, the Church [in 1980] instructed wards to announce the presidencies of Young Women classes, acknowledge the graduations of girls from one age group to another, and make presentation of girls' achievement awards in sacrament meeting." (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 14.)

1980 Women Leaders Begin Sitting on Stand at General Conferences. "In 1980, the First Presidency began inviting the general presidencies of the Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary to sit on the stand at general conference." (Edward W. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, 2005, p. 166.) They did not have assigned seating, but joined with the wives of the apostles and First Presidency at the side of the hall.

1980s Women Writing Articles as Men. An acquaintance of mine, Mable Jones Gabbot (who wrote the words to "In Humility, Our Savior," hymn #172), told me while we were serving on a manual-writing committee for the Church, that she had been assigned to write articles for the *Friend* and *New Era*, using a man's name to indicate more priesthood input into those two Church magazines. [RW]

1981 Young Women Lesson Manuals Distorted. Lavina Fielding Anderson made a study of manuals being used in the Young Women's program in 1981. These were her findings regarding the Merrie Miss B Manual: "Merrie Miss girls are encouraged to help their brothers or friends honor the priesthood—an important principle—by the following practices: they are to encourage deacons to attend meetings, not plan activities that would interfere with the boys' assignments, let brothers take charge of decision making 'under the direction of mother, when father is not present,' leave him the bathroom on Sunday morning, press his clothes, shine his shoes, and help him memorize scriptures (Merrie Miss B Memo for lesson 11). The image is of a 12-year-old deacon to whom everyone in the family, including the mother, defers, who expects the family schedule to revolve around him, who requires personal body service, who cannot study without an audience/tutor, and who will not carry out assignments and attend meetings unless he is 'encouraged' to do so and has no competition from other activities. It also implies that women are in charge of the spiritual life of the family, must 'manage' the boys and men in their spiritual responsibilities, must defer, and must provide actual physical services before their men will meet their obligations.

"The manual gives no examples of girls striving for intellectual or scholastic achievement. There are no women missionaries. No girls play sports. No boys play musical instruments. Only boys earn money. Only boys save lives. Boys learn to read topographic maps and compasses and test their skills on hikes. Girls glue crushed aluminum foil and string in patterns on the back of cardboard mirrors, which are to remind them to always have pleasant faces. In our urban society, being pleasant may actually be a more useful skill than reading a topographic map, but I wonder what the eventual impact on a girl becomes when she is told, overtly and covertly, that her most important job is to become pleasing and pretty." (Lavina Fielding Smith, *Sunstone*, Vol. 6, No. 6, pp. 14-15.)

"In the entire Primary and Young Women's curriculum, there was only one example of a woman who had graduated from college." (*Ibid.*, p. 15.)

1983 Most LDS Women Will Have to Be Breadwinners. "Ten percent of LDS women who are between the ages of 18 and 30 will be widowed before age 60. Thirty-five percent will be divorced before sixty. Three percent will

never marry. And 45% will be the primary breadwinner in their homes before age sixty-five. Nationwide, nine out of ten women will work outside their homes at some point in their lives. Eighty percent of working women are concentrated in low-wage jobs." (*Deseret News*, Nov. 6, 1983, p. 4, Church News Section.)

1983 Women on Church Business Boards. In 1983 the Church-owned Deseret Book Company placed Grethe Peterson on its board of directors, the first woman to serve on that board. By 2002, the president of Deseret Book was a single woman, Sherri L. Dew. (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 16.)

1983 Notify Husbands Before Calling Women to Positions. "Not all change moved in the same direction. Some women objected to the 1983 *General Handbook* instruction that leaders calling a woman to a Church position should first consult her husband, 'to show respect for authority in the home,' while at the time no consultation with a wife was advised before calling a man to a position in the Church." (Edward W. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, 2005, pp. 166-67.)

"More recent instructions recommend meeting with both spouses to extend a call." (*Ibid.*, p. 167.)

1983 One-Third of Membership is Single. Most members, 97%, will marry at some time during their lives. However, at any given time, 30% of the membership over eighteen is single—having never married, having lost a marriage partner to death, or having divorced. In other words, about one-third of all Church members do not have a living marriage partner at any given time. (*Church News*, Nov. 6, 1983, p. 4.)

Over Half of Women in Church are Single. "In a church where more than half of our women are single, we need to tread carefully when claiming a parallel between motherhood and priesthood." (Neylan McBaire, FAIR Conference, Aug. 2, 2012, Sandy, Utah; *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 45:3 (Fall 2012), 86.)

1984 First Two Women Appointed Assistant Tabernacle Organists. In 1984 Bonnie Goodliffe and Linda Margetts were both appointed as assistant tabernacle organists, to assist the four men who were serving as full-fledged organists.

An article in 2011 noted: "Richard Elliott, Clay Christiansen and Andrew Unsworth are full-time organists, a position that has been held by only 13 people since the organ was built in 1867. Linda Margetts and Bonnie Goodliffe are part-time organists who work with the training choir and also in rehearsing and performing with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for weekly broadcasts, tours, LDS conference meetings and take part in daily organ recitals at Temple Square." (Carma Wadley, "Tabernacle organists serving a higher purpose," *Deseret News*, Aug. 6, 2011.)

Four years later, 1988, Bonnie Goodliffe became the first woman to accompany the Tabernacle Choir as an organist on the weekly choir broadcast. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 23, 2019, B1.)

1986 Women with Non-LDS Spouses Can Receive Temple Ordinances. "In February 1986, church leaders made a policy change that allowed a woman to receive temple rites even if her husband was not a Latter-day Saint—a move that was widely celebrated." ((Matthew L. Harris, *Thunder from the Right: Ezra Taft Benson in Mormonism and Politics*, 2019, 221.) He had to consent to her wearing garments, however.

1987 Mothers Not to Be in the Marketplace. In a special satellite broadcast address in 1987, later distributed as a church pamphlet, President Ezra Taft Benson said: "Contrary to conventional wisdom, a mother's calling is in the home, not in the marketplace. . . . It was never intended by the Lord that married women should compete with men in employment. . . . Wives, come home from the typewriters, the laundry, the nursing; come home from the factory, the café." (President Ezra Taft Benson, *To the Mothers in Zion*, 1987.) He made no exceptions for single mothers, or those whose circumstances made them the bread-winner in the family.

Different Counsel Given by Elder Faust. Interestingly, at a devotional address given at BYU on Feb. 12, 1985, Elder James E. Faust told the young women: “You should work very hard to prepare for your future by gaining marketable skills. . . . The struggle to improve the place of women in society has been a noble cause and I sincerely hope the day will come when women with equal skills will be fully equal with men in the marketplace.” (Elder James E. Faust, *Ensign*, September 1985, p. 16.)

1989 Only Priesthood Holders Can Stand in Circle During Baby Blessings. It was long a practice in the Church that when a baby was being given a name and blessing, non-member or non-priesthood-holding fathers were invited to stand in the circle during the blessing. In recent years, when women asked if the baby’s mother could also stand in the circle, the *Handbook of Instructions* was changed so that only those holding the Melchizedek priesthood are now authorized to be in the circle. That change was made in 1989. (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 6.)

1990s U.S. Military Broadly Increases Positions Open to Women. “Over 40,000 women served in the 1991 Gulf War and engaged with enemy forces on an unprecedented level. On September 5, 1990, the U.S.S. *Acadia* left San Diego for the Persian Gulf. Of the 1,260 on board, 360 were women. It was the first time American men and women shipped out together in wartime conditions. The 1991 Gulf War was also the first war where women served with men in integrated units within a warzone. . . . In February 2012, after a yearlong review, the Pentagon announced women would be permanently assigned to battalions. In these ground units, women would be assigned to such critical jobs as radio operators, medics, and tank mechanics. However, many women have already served in those jobs, in temporary status, due to demand in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Pentagon's new ruling only made these job assignments official and still upheld the ban on women serving in combat tank units, Special Operations commando units and the infantry. Regarding the policy shift, Anu Bhagwati, Service Women's Action Network director, urged, "It's time military leadership establish the same level playing field to qualified women to enter the infantry, special forces, and other all-male units. . . . The playing field was in fact leveled in January 2013, when Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that the ban on women serving in combat roles would be lifted.” ([www.infoplease.com/us/military/women-history.html](http://www.infoplease.com/us/military/women-history.html); accessed June 4, 2014.)

1990s Wives of Area Authorities Set Apart for Auxiliaries. “The wives of area presidencies are formally set apart as ‘adjunct’ members of the Relief Society, Primary, and Young Women auxiliary organizations and have responsibility for these organizations in church areas where they are called to serve with their husbands.” (Marie Cornwall, “The Institutional Role of Mormon Women,” *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives*, Edited by Cornwall, Heaton and Young, 1994, p. 260.)

1991 Utah Ranked Last in Percent of Female College Students. On April 17, 1991 the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that Utah ‘ranks last in proportion of students who are female’ throughout the United States. This is the result of Utah’s ‘traditions that inhibit the educational progress of women.’ It may also reflect the economic necessity for young women to work while their husbands complete their own education. (D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*, 1997, p. 887.)

1992 Women Twice as Likely to Marry Outside the Church. “There are more than twice as many LDS women as LDS men married to spouses of another faith.” (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow, 1992, 4:1531.)

1993 Women Should Be Given More Involvement. Elder M. Russell Ballard, in the October 1993 general conference, admonished priesthood leaders to involve women more fully in ward councils: “In a recent council meeting with the presidencies of the women’s auxiliaries, the sisters told me that very few women in the Church express any interest in wanting to hold the priesthood. But they do want to be heard and valued and want to make meaningful contributions to the stake or ward and its members that will serve the Lord and help accomplish the mission of the Church. For example, not long ago we were talking about the worthiness of youth to serve missions. President Elaine Jack said, “You know, Elder Ballard, the sisters of

the Church may have some good suggestions on how to better prepare the youth for missions if they were just asked. After all, you know, we are their mothers!" The sisters' suggestions can help equally regarding temple attendance and a host of other matters with which priesthood leaders may be struggling. Brethren, please be sure you are seeking the vital input of the sisters in your council meetings. . . . In these perilous times, we need the cooperative effort of men and women officers in the Church because absolute vigilance is required on the part of all who have been entrusted to help watch over the kingdom." (*Ensign*, Novem-ber, 1993, p. 76.)

Women Can Do More Than Wait on Tables. In November 2000, Elder M. Russell Ballard spoke at a missionary/ward leadership meeting in Atlanta. "He focused his remarks on how we should work to achieve a 'balanced effort.' He shared a story of when he was in England for a stake conference. He noticed a sister walking by with a tray of juice and biscuits [cookies] to serve to members of the stake presidency between conference sessions. Elder Ballard asked who she was. She responded that she was the Stake Relief Society President. Elder Ballard then asked her how she enjoyed her calling. She said, 'Do you really want to know?' She then stated, 'When will the brethren learn that the women of the Church can do more than wait on tables?'" Elder Ballard went on to say that that experience inspired him to write a book on councils [i.e. *Counseling With Our Councils*]. (*LDS News*, Nov. 20, 2000.)

1994 Mission Presidents' Wives are Now Set Apart. "The church now recognizes both husbands and wives in calls extended to the husband as a mission president (both husbands and wives are 'set apart,' and both are now pictured in the *Church News*, for example." (Marie Cornwall, "The Institutional Role of Mormon Women," *Contemporary Mormonism: Social Science Perspectives*, Edited by Cornwall, Heaton and Young, 1994, p. 260.) Also, the short biography of each new mission president, printed in the *Church News*, now includes a short biography of the wife.

1995 Proclamation on the Family Issued. The formal Proclamation on the Family was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995. It includes this statement: "By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteous-ness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as **equal partners**." [Emphasis added.]

1996 Women Are the Ultimate Creation. President Gordon B. Hinckley told an audience of young adults in Colorado Springs on April 14, 1996: "I know that I am a child of God, part of His plan of creation, and that Adam is my father. . . . [But] there was one after that, and that was Eve. She was the crowning crea-tion. Don't you young men ever think that you're so smart in comparison with young women. The Lord created you . . . and then, as His prime creation, He created woman—Eve, she was the sublime, ultimate in all of His creations. Don't any of you young men develop any kind of a superiority complex. It isn't scriptural." (Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward With Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 1996, p. 526.)

1999 Utah Last State to Have Majority Female College Graduates. "Utah is the last state in the nation to make the shift from more male graduates to more female graduates with bachelor degrees, according to the Utah System of Higher Education 1998-1999 report. 'Utah is the last to make the shift because of the role assignment that is given to men and to women,' said Diane Spangler of the BYU Psychology department. 'LDS culture discourages women from having careers,' Spangler said. Women became the predominate gender on Utah college campuses between 1998 and 1999. Now approximately 52 percent of graduates are women and 48 percent are men." (*BYU NewsNet*, May 23, 2000.)

1999 Few Women Teach Religion at BYU. During the 1999-2000 school year, the Department of Religious Education at BYU consisted of 69 men and 5 women. That means men accounted for 93.3 percent of the instructors, and women, 6.7 percent. (*BYU NewsNet*, Jan. 26, 2000.)

1999 Ward Clerks and Assistant Clerks Must Hold Priesthood. In 1909 the *General Handbook of Instructions* stated: “Whenever local conditions are such that the ward clerk is not able to perform all his duties promptly and to the satisfaction of the bishopric of the ward, and a competent male deputy clerk is not available, the bishopric may engage the services of a woman deputy clerk, who should be assigned a certain class of the ward clerical work . . .” By 1921, this paragraph had been amended to read that the ward clerk “should hold the priesthood, but, where circumstances may require it, he may be assisted by a woman.” From 1921 to 1940, women were acceptable “where circumstances may require it.” The next revision of the handbook, in 1944, stated that the ward clerk should “hold the priesthood. . . . In large wards, it may be advisable to appoint an assistant.” No mention was made of the gender of the assistant. In 1963, for the first time, the handbook stated in emphatic italics: “*They must hold the Melchizedek Priesthood.*” The 1976 *General Handbook of Instructions* allowed for Aaronic Priesthood assistants when Melchizedek Priesthood holders were not available. The 1999 *Church Handbook of Instructions* states that any assistant ward clerks “should hold the priesthood and be worthy to have a temple recommend.” (Lavina Fielding Anderson, *Sunstone*, Vol. VI, No. VI, pp. 13-14.)

1999 Breaking Ground for New Temples. With the announcements of numerous new temples, groundbreaking ceremonies are frequently in the news. Typically (as for instance, the ceremony at the Reno Nevada Temple), the *Church News* includes a picture of ten or twelve priesthood leaders lined up with shovels for the ground-breaking. No women are shown, even though well over half of all temple attenders are women. If a crowd shot is included, it typically shows young children who have been invited to turn a shovelful of dirt after the men are finished. Since ground-breaking can hardly be considered a priesthood function, it seems odd that women are excluded. After seeing the picture of the Reno Temple ceremony, I asked the Seventy who conducted the meeting (he and I were in the same ward) why no women were involved. He responded simply that he had never thought of it one way or the other. A command decision has been made, however, because in all of the recent dedication pictures, women are prominently visible in the first round. [RW]

2000 Shrinking the Role of Relief Society. (1) For a time, most wards had a separate building paid for and maintained by the Relief Society for their exclusive use. (The first such R.S. building was erected in 1868.) Later, a Relief Society room was established in each ward building, furnished by the Relief Society itself, out of its own funds.

(2) The Relief Society had handled the sale of temple and burial clothing since 1876. That function was transferred to the Presiding Bishopric in 1981.

(3) The *Women's Exponent* was published from 1872 to 1914. Then the *Relief Society Magazine* was the official magazine of the organization from 1914 to 1970. In 1970 it ceased publication as the *Ensign* became the official magazine for all adult members. The Relief Society had its own songbook through the 1960s and sponsored active “Singing Mothers” choirs on the ward, stake and general level. These choirs were terminated in 1976.

(4) The Relief Society established, funded and managed hospitals, including Deseret Hospital (1882-1895) and Cottonwood Stake Maternity Hospital (1924-1963). It provided nursing education and operated a home for unmarried working girls in Salt Lake City (1913-1921).

(5) The Relief Society sponsored quarterly stake Relief Society conferences beginning in the mid-1880s and an annual churchwide conference. These conferences ended in 1975.

(6) The adoption of the consolidated meeting schedule in 1980 moved the weekly Relief Society meeting from a weekday morning of ninety minutes to a fifty minute slot on Sunday. The changes greatly reduced social interaction among the women. The block schedule further meant that women who were officers or teachers in the Young Women or Primary could not attend Relief Society.

(7) Until correlation, the Relief Society set its own curriculum. The Correlation committee took over the curriculum in 1963. Relief Society manuals were written by curriculum writing committees that answered to the Correlation Committee rather than to the Relief Society.

(8) From the start, Relief Society was a voluntary, financially self-sustaining group that actively raised funds to operate an extensive system of charitable endeavors. From 1970 on, ward bishops allocated funds from the ward budget. In 1971 dues were abolished and all LDS women automatically became members at age 18.

(9) The Relief Society ran a professional social work program along with employment and adoption

services until these functions were taken over in 1969 by the Unified Social Services Department, responsible to the Presiding Bishopric.

(10) From 1937 to 1986, the Relief Society ran the Mormon Handicraft shop. In 1986, Church-owned Deseret Book took over the shop.

(11) Through Belle Spafford's tenure the Relief Society general president had reported directly to the President of the Church. As part of the Correlation emphasis on priesthood line authority, her replacement (Barbara B. Smith) reported to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, who served as an intermediary.

(12) "With the spread of the Church into underdeveloped countries, humanitarian assistance, tradition-ally a special concern of the Relief Society, increased in importance. But the Relief Society, despite its name, played no special role. The First Presidency, Presiding Bishopric, and the area presidencies, managed humanitarian assistance, although the Relief Society responded to requests and assignments. (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, pp. 6-11.)

Also True for YW and Primary. The same pattern seen in the loss of autonomy and self-direction for the Relief Society can also be seen in the Young Women and Primary organizations, the other two auxiliaries affecting women in the Church.

Limited Input from Women. In an undated comment, feminist Lynne Kanavel Whitesides noted: "One time, somebody from the Relief Society general presidency came to my house and talked to a group of women about what we needed to do to make some changes in the Church. She had been in the presidency for five years at that point and asked us, 'How many times do you think the prophet and the Relief Society president meet? Now I think most members of the Church would think that at least once a month the head of the Church and the head of the women's organization would meet, but within five years they had not met—even once! Even Mrs. America got a moment with the prophet!" (Philip Lindholm, *Latter-day Dissent: At the Crossroads of Intellectual Inquiry and Ecclesiastical Authority*, Greg Kofford Books, 2011, 9.)

Pendulum Has Swung too Far. In light of these changes, it is interesting to note minutes of a First Presidency meeting held August 29, 1978, during President Kimball's administration: "In recent years the authority and responsibility of the Relief Society has diminished, coincident with the increased emphasis on priesthood direction and control. It was the feeling of the Presidency that the pendulum has swung too far and that there is a need to give more recognition, authority and responsibility to sisters. (Edward L. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, CD working copy, 2005, Chapter 17, p. 12.)

Don't Call it Priesthood Correlation of Relief Society. "In 1976, an internal memorandum, probably sent with [Kimball's] approval, urged Church leaders to avoid referring to 'Priesthood correlation' when discussing Young Women and Relief Society programs because this phrase could be misinterpreted as indicating men are more important." (Edward W. Kimball, *Lengthen Your Stride: The Presidency of Spencer W. Kimball*, 2005, p. 165.)

2000 First Woman Vice-President at BYU. The first woman ever appointed as a vice-president at BYU was chosen in May, 2000, and will fill her new position on June 1, 2000. "The announcement came Thursday, May 18 when Merrill J. Bateman named Janet S. Scharman as the new vice president over Student Life. Scharman currently serves as the assistant Student Life vice president and Dean of Students. 'In the past, BYU has had female assistants and associate vice presidents, but Jan Scharman is the first female vice president at BYU,' said Janet Rex, the information manager of University Communications." (*BYU NewsNet*, May 23, 2000.)

2001 Does BYU Discriminate Against Female Faculty? "Colleen Whitley's first teaching stint at BYU ended when she was fired for getting married. Hired by the English Department as Colleen Keyes in 1966, she married a few months later—and more changed than her name. 'Suddenly, my whole situation shifted,' she said. After cutting

insurance benefits for her husband, BYU terminated Whitley a year after she was hired. ‘They said they were doing this because they wanted women to stay home and have children,’ she said. . . . Now [2001], more than 30 years later, BYU is hiring women as full-time faculty at a rate of 3 percent per decade. As of Fall Semester 2000, women accounted for 18.5 percent of the faculty. . . . Equal opportunity, though, hasn't come easy. Whitley remembers how she was denied such faculty perks as a parking pass and free tuition for her husband. Plus, she made half of what her male counterparts earned. Only in recent years has BYU brought women's salaries up to par with men, said Earlene Durrant, president of the Faculty Women's Association.” (*BYU NewsNet*, April 11, 2001.)

If BYU continues hiring women as full-time faculty at a rate of 3 percent per decade, it will take just over one hundred years [2102] for them to reach parity with men.

2001 Are BYU Male Students Sexist? “Complaints of harassment and sexist attitudes among BYU graduates attending the University of Utah's Medical School have led BYU to take steps to change the attitudes and worry that the medical school will accept fewer BYU graduates as a result. The complaints came to BYU's attention when the medical school's associate dean, Victoria Judd, complained to BYU officials about the attitudes. This led to an internal memo from BYU's Dean of Biology and Agriculture, Kent Crookston, sent to the college's staff and a letter of apology from 24 BYU professors. According to an article [Feb. 28, 2001] in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Judd met with some BYU officials in an impromptu meeting in early January and expressed her concerns over the attitudes, which she said seemed to mostly originate with former BYU students. That meeting led Dean Crookston to send an email message on January 13 to all college personnel describing the meeting. In the message, which Crookston released to the *Tribune* on Monday, he said, former BYU students had ‘flagrantly belittled female students, challenging their fit in a professional program that rightfully belongs to men, asserting that women ought to get on with the business of raising children.’ As a result, BYU professor William Bradshaw and a group of 24 other faculty members wrote a letter of apology to Judd, promising to ‘eliminate these unfortunate attitudes.’ ‘Thank you for making us aware of this problem, and accept our apologies for the limited vision of those persons in your program who make wrongful judgments about medical training for women.’ (*Mormon News*, Feb. 28, 2001; citing *Salt Lake Tribune*, Feb. 28, 2001, p. A1.)

2001 Church Programs Not Balanced? “The LDS priesthood system, which gives every twelve-year-old boy an office and responsibility, is brilliant and has much to do with LDS strength. Long term, an issue will be, how about the girls? How about the women? As an outside observer, I do not believe the Primary, Sunday School, and Relief Society track for girls and young women is remotely comparable to the programming available and the responsibilities given to boys and young men.” (Richard Ostling, author of *Mormon America: The Power and the Promise*, 1999; interviewed in *Sunstone*, April 2001, p. 80.)

2002 Institute Teachers Virtually All Male. The *Spring Semester 2002 Class Schedule* for the Institutes of Religion in the Salt Lake Area includes a picture of each of the regular (salaried) faculty members. There are 72 instructors shown. All but two are men. One woman serves at the LDS Business College Institute. The other is in charge of “Specialized (Simplified) Classes” at the Hartvigsen Center for the mentally retarded. (Of the 26 salaried faculty assigned to the Institute at the University of Utah, none is a woman.) Other staff members, listed as “Volunteers” include both men and women, but no pictures are included.

At the University of Utah, eight sections of “Preparing for a Celestial Marriage” are taught. Seven are taught by men, and the eighth is team taught by a man and a woman, both volunteers.

The *one* salaried woman at a regular institute teaches a total of eight classes. Three of them are “Women of the Scriptures.” That particular course is not offered anywhere else in the nine institutes making up the Salt Lake Area.

2002 Huge Girls' Camp in Heber Valley. “The LDS Church is nearing construction of a vast multi-million dollar camp facility high in the mountains east of Heber City. The 8,441-acre tract, known as the Lake Creek Camp, will primarily be used as a girl's camp.” (*Provo Daily Herald*, December 4, 2000, p. A1.)

Will Serve Young Women of Church. “The new camp has been officially named the “Heber Valley Camp.” “The Heber Valley Camp is being created by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to serve the needs of Young Women, families, and Church groups in central and northern Utah. This beautiful new camp is located on a spectacular tract of land covering more than 8,000 acres in the mountains southeast of Heber, Utah. Elevation of the camp ranges from 7,500-10,000 feet. The first two camps were completed during the summer of 2003. Two more were added in 2004. Construction will continue for several years. When completed, the Heber Valley Camp is expected to have the capacity to host over 5,000 people at a time. While its primary purpose is to serve the young women of the Church, it is also available to be used by other Church and family groups when not in use by the Young Women.” (*Lds.org website*, March 22, 2005.)

Over 150 Young Women Camps. A document in 2010 noted that the church “owns or manages over 150 properties dedicated for Young Women Camp. Although most of these properties are in the United States, some are operated in Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and other countries. Some of these properties are immense, with thousands of acres and camping space for thousands of young women at a time. Some have large lodges, cabins, or dormitories, with indoor plumbing, hot showers, and commercial kitchens. Many other properties are much smaller, with simple improvements, such as a covered pavilion, basic restroom facilities, an outdoor amphitheater, fire pits, outdoor water spigots, and picnic tables.” (D. Michael Quinn, *The Mormon Hierarchy: Wealth & Corporate Power*, Signature Books, 2017, 128.)

2004 Additional Funding for Youth. In April 2004 the Church announced that local unit budget allowances were being increased to help wards and stakes in the U. S. and Canada, to fund activities for children, youth, and young single adults. The increase was in addition to the current amount of \$48 per person attending sacrament meeting. It was made retroactive to the start of 2004. The amounts were as follows: \$25 per child (8-11) based on average attendance at Primary; \$50 per youth (12-17) attending YM/YW; and \$25 for young single adults (18-30), based on average sacrament meeting attendance. This substantial addition was made to assure that wards “have adequate funds to support a broad scope of youth activities,” including cultural events, summer camps, conferences, social activities, athletic programs, dances, and socials. (Letter from the Presiding Bishopric, dated April 6, 2004, circulated to wards and stakes.)

2009 Perpetual Education Fund Impacts Women. “Diane Card, principal outside legal counselor for inter-national matters for the Perpetual Education Fund said each of the 42 countries where the fund is involved requires a nuanced knowledge of banking, tax and charitable-donation laws in order for the fund to be legally administered. Thus far, the fund has benefitted more than 34,000 people, 49 percent men, 51 percent women, with an average age of 26. ‘The Perpetual Education Fund is an inspired program, and I’m thankful for the opportunity I have to be a part of this,’ Card said.” (*Mormon Times*, February 14, 2009.)

Number Enrolled Reaches 52,000. At the ten-year mark for the PEF, the *Church News* reported that those currently enrolled now add up to some 52,000 students in around 50 countries. “Today the program is made up of 47 percent men and 53 percent women. Of the men, 80 percent of the participants are returned missionaries and 82 percent of all participants work while going to school. On average, education and skills training takes 2.6 years, and the average total loan for one participant is about \$1,800.” (*Church News*, July 23, 2011, p. 7.)

2009 Boys Receive More Church Funds than Girls. Throughout the United States and Canada, for 2009 [and, presumably, long before then], the budget provided by Church headquarters for wards and branches gave Young Women 60 percent of the amount given for Young Men. This was true for every unit. The same remains true for 2014. The reason given is that the Boy Scout program is more expensive than the girls’ program. That begs the question, though: “Why aren’t we providing as elaborate (and therefore more expensive) program for the girls?”

2011 Marriage Partners are Equal. President Gordon B. Hinckley said in general conference: “Any man in this Church who . . . exercises unrighteous dominion over [his wife] is unworthy to hold the priesthood.” President

Thomas S. Monson told priesthood holders in general conference: “Your wife is your equal. In marriage neither partner is superior nor inferior to the other. You walk side by side as a son and a daughter of God. She is not to be demeaned or insulted but should be respected and loved.” (April 2011 general conference priesthood session.)

2011 First Women’s History Post Created in Church History Dept. In 2011, the LDS Church History Department posted a job opening for an official position specializing in women's history. It was unprecedented in Mormon history. By 2016, the new post had expanded to include four women. [Other women had worked in the Church History Dept. earlier, but not formally assigned to Women’s history.] “The hiring of these four women is evidence the Church History Department has embraced two major, current approaches to women's history, [Linda] Tait said. ‘The compensatory approach is the idea that women have been left out of history in the past, and that we need to recover and make women visible, we need to compensate for the lack of women in the record by focusing specifically on women and women's history. The impetus behind having women's history specialists, like we do here in the department, is that we've got to have some balance, and that women's history has got to be an area of focus so we don't lose sight of that. . . . The other approach is what I'd call integrative,’ Tait said, ‘so the idea [is] that we're going to simply treat women and women's voices and women's stories as part of the larger narrative. It's not some separate history of its own, but it's integral to telling the whole story of history.’ ‘History needs to be told,’ [Kate] Holbrook added, ‘in a way that integrates what men were doing with what women were doing.’” (Tad Walch, “Women hired by LDS Church History Department making huge strides in Mormon women's history.” *Deseret News*, Feb. 7, 2016.)

2011 Half of Women Who Leave Mormonism Cite Women’s Issues as a Significant Reason. “In 2011, a comprehensive survey of over 3,000 people who had lost their belief in the gospel revealed that 47 percent of those respondents cited women’s issues as a ‘significant’ reason for their loss of faith. The percentage of women who cited this specific issue as being the primary reason for their loss of faith was higher, at 63 percent. Additionally, 70 percent of single women who have lost their faith ranked women’s issues as significant.” In November of 2011, Elder Marlin Jensen [Church Historian] confirmed that church members are ‘leaving in droves’ and that ‘since Kirtland,’ the Church has not seen the exodus which we are now experiencing.” The survey data “support the conclusion that tens (if not hundreds) of thousands of women each year are unable to maintain their church activity because they cannot internally reconcile their position within the church organization. . . . The bottom line is that women’s role in church governance is a primary reason many people are telling themselves it is okay to leave, and at the very least we should be distraught that this issue opens the door to the way out.” (Neylan McBaire, FAIR Conference, Aug. 2, 2012, Sandy, Utah; *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 45:3 (Fall 2012), 72-3.)

2011 Pantyhose: No Longer Required of Sister Missionaries or Women at Church Offices. “A collective high-pitched hallelujah likely went up recently among Mormon women when the LDS Church changed its policy to allow female employees in the church's Salt Lake City headquarters to forsake their pantyhose and go barelegged. This follows a similar move from last summer, loosening the pantyhose requirements for "sister missionaries," young LDS women spreading the faith full time across the globe. The pantyhose requirement was particularly onerous to young women serving in tropical climates such as Brazil and Uganda, where the nylon would cling uncomfortably to sweaty legs. On top of that, these young women are now allowed to wear "brighter colors, patterns and even accessories," according to a story at [ldsliving.com](http://ldsliving.com). The move was intended "to make sister missionaries' appearance more inviting to investigators [potential converts]. "The church also is allowing sister missionaries to shorten their skirts above mid-calf but are still required ‘to cover the knees when sitting or standing,’ the story said. ‘Sisters are still required to maintain their appearance of modesty, wearing conservative outfits that consist of professional suits, skirts, blouses, jackets, sweaters and dresses.’” (Peggy Fletcher Stack, “Pantyhose begone: LDS female employees give thanks,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 12, 2011. <http://archive.sltrib.com/article.php?id=15039001&itype=storyID>.)

2012 Utah Has Largest Gap Between Men and Women with College Degrees. “Utah has the largest gap in the nation between male and female college-graduation rates, according to the Utah Department of Workforce Services. The difference for college-educated Utah men and Utah women was 6.0 percentage points. New Jersey showed the next highest gap at 2.7 percentage points, while the national average was 1.3 percentage points. [Pamela] Silberman said a key issue in women's graduation rates is students who drop out of school due to marriage or pregnancy. She said it has as much to do with "the realities of life crashing in" as it does the many female students who enter college with

no expectation of completing their degrees. She said Utah's divorce rate, which is comparable to the national average, combined with the state's high drop-out rate for women makes for an alarming number of under-educated women in the workforce. "Women need to go into it with an expectation of getting some degree," she said. "We have a very high percentage of working mothers in the state." (*Deseret News*, July 30, 2012.)

2012 Missionary Surge as Age Requirement Lowered. The Church added 58 new missions this year as the number of missionaries jumped from 58,700 in October 2012 to 80,000 in October 2013, following church President Thomas S. Monson's announcement lowering the minimum age for missionaries. Sister missionaries make up the biggest part of the LDS Church's missionary surge—the number of sister missionaries soared from 8,100 in October 2012 to 19,300 in October 2013, according to the Church. That is an increase of 140 percent. (*Deseret News*, Oct. 16, 2013.) By mid-December 2013, the number of missionaries serving exceeded 83,000, and should continue to expand for about three years, before dropping briefly.

2013 First Prayers by Women in General Conference. At the April 2013 general conference, a woman opened one session with prayer and another woman closed a later session with prayer, breaking a taboo that has stood from the very first general conference until 2013. Both women were members of auxiliary general presidencies.

(Note: A woman, Dana Haight Cattani, noted in an article in *Sunstone* that protests against various discriminatory Church policies are effective and can pay off. She states: "Did the January 2013 online campaign Let Women Pray trigger Jean Stevens' benediction in the April 2013 General Conference? Church spokesman Scott Trotter took pains to imply that the decision had been made months before Church leaders received 1,600 letters on this topic. His explanation strains credulity. What else could have prompted the abrupt break in tradition after 183 years? A coincidental revelation?" (Dana Haight Cattani, *Sunstone*, Spring 2016, Issue 180, 19.)

2013 BYU Hires First Woman with Small Children. "Brigham Young University's ancient-scripture department has hired its first married woman with young children as a tenure-track professor. Amy Easton-Flake comes to the Mormon-owned school with a doctorate in American literature and women's studies from Brandeis University—plus a 2-year-old, a 6-month-old and plans for more children. 'No married woman with small children has ever, ever been hired in a tenure-track appointment in the College of Religious Education at BYU,' writes Valerie Hudson, a former BYU professor who now teaches international affairs at Texas A&M University. 'It was widely understood that there was a prohibition against this,' Hudson writes in the summer 2013 issue of *Square Two*, a Mormon-related journal, 'for a 'righteous' LDS mother of small children would not be working outside of the home—and only 'righteous' LDS women would be welcome to teach and thus serve as a role model in the College of Religious Education, which supplies religious instruction to every single BYU student.' Ironically, a married woman with small children could work as a secretary in the department, Hudson writes, 'and that has certainly happened many times over the years. But you could never work as a tenure-track professor.' This same policy—and irony—against married women with children under 18 is in place in the LDS Church's Seminary and Institute programs, she notes, "which have likewise 'let go' any married woman teacher who becomes pregnant, or, indeed, refused to hire young married women in the first place with the rationale that they would eventually become pregnant and would have to be terminated.' A young mother can teach seminary as a volunteer, but not as a paid worker. Hudson sees the hiring of Easton-Flake as coming on the heels of choosing Camille Fronk Olson in 2011 as the first female department chair in the College of Religious Education—and a harbinger for the future. 'Surely those programs cannot now justify maintaining a different standard than that of BYU, can they?' she writes. "Doesn't BYU set the standard?" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 27, 2013.)

2013 Sister Missionaries Given Leadership Positions. April 2013. "With the wave of women serving missions, the LDS Church has also created a new supervisory role called the 'Sister Training Leader,' choosing some female missionaries to train others and participate in previously all-male mission leadership councils. In a denomination that has provided few managerial opportunities to women, such changes may have far-reaching and positive future effects in normalizing female leadership." (Jana Riess, *The Next Mormons: How Millennials are Changing the LDS Church*, 2019, 40.) Elders are no longer zone leaders over sister

missionaries. The sisters now have their own zone leaders. This in turn led to another significant policy change. Sister missionaries are now able, along with male missionaries, if any, to attend ward priesthood leadership meetings with the bishopric. Women have not attended that meeting in the past.

2013 General Priesthood Meeting Broadcast Live for First Time. In a marked change from the past, the Priesthood session of October general conference was broadcast live, so that anyone interested could tune in and see and hear what the messages were about. The priesthood session now joins the Women's session, held the Saturday before general conference, in being broadcast live for anyone to watch. Further, the women's session is now for all women and girls over age eight, rather than being alternated between Relief Society and Young Women. Lowering the age to eight allows older girls in Primary to participate as well.

2014 Few Women Hired at BYU College of Religious Education. "As of January 2014, the BYU website, [www.byu.edu](http://www.byu.edu), listed 67 full-time faculty in the College of Religious Education, six of whom were women." (Gregory A. Prince, *Leonard Arrington and the Writing of Mormon History*, 2016, 487 f41.)

2014 Portraits of LDS Women Leaders Added in Conference Center. "Visitors to the LDS Church's Conference Center in downtown Salt Lake City now will see portraits of nine LDS women's leaders. A church spokes-woman said the decision is the result of conversations about giving more visibility to women in the church. Conversations about giving more visibility to women have been going on for some years. "The decision to have the sister leaders of the church be more visible in the Conference Center is just one outcome of those conversations," said LDS Church spokeswoman Jessica Moody [also a new development]. The large and significant new portraits are hanging on the third floor, near a hallway display of busts of prophets of the Church. (*Deseret News*, March 19, 2014.)

2014 Response to "Ordain Women" Lobby. On March 17, 2014, the Church Public Affairs Department wrote a letter to several women representing the "Ordain Women" organization, who are pushing to have women receive the priesthood. The letter, released to the press, was addressed to "Dear Sisters." It stated that ordination of women to the priesthood was simply not going to happen. Interestingly, the pointedly friendly letter was signed by "Jessica Moody, Public Affairs, on behalf of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." I do not recall any Church public affairs bulletins being issued by female spokes-women prior to this past year, when several have appeared. ([www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/](http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/article/); March 17, 2014.)

2014 New York Times: Wave of Sister Missionaries is Changing LDS Church. "DAEJEON, South Korea—Ashley Farr, once Miss North Salt Lake Teen USA, is the first in her family's long line of Mormon women to become a missionary, and in December she embarked on her new life in this gray corner of Asia. She packed her bag according to the church's precise instructions: skirts that cover the knee, only one pair of pants, earrings that dangle no longer than one inch, and subtle but flattering makeup, modeled in photos on the church's website. Sister Farr, as she now is called, had left behind the student entrepreneurship competitions she was helping to run in Utah and paused her relationship with her boyfriend, far away in the Philippines, as they served his-and-her missions. . . . Ms. Farr, 21, is part of the biggest gender change in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in memory. After the church lowered its age requirement for female missionaries in October 2012 to 19 from 21, so many women have signed up—23,000, nearly triple from the total before the change—that many Utah colleges suffered sharp drops in enrollment, and the standard image of a Mormon missionary, a gangly young man in a dark suit, was suddenly out of date. In the coming years, these women are expected to fundamentally alter this most American of churches, whose ruling patriarchs not long ago excommunicated feminist scholars and warned women not to hold jobs while raising children. Church leaders have been forced to reassess their views because Mormon women are increasingly supporting households, marrying later and less frequently, and having fewer children. And for the first time, waves of women like Ms. Farr are taking part in the church's crucial coming-of-age ritual, returning home from their missions with unprecedented scriptural fluency, new confidence and new ideas about themselves." (*New York Times*, March 1, 2014.)

2014 Unmarried Woman Named to Head Cambridge Institute of Religion. "The LDS Church has named Barbara Morgan to head its LDS Institute of Religion in Cambridge, Mass. Women rarely oversee Mormon institutes

of religion, and Morgan's selection is believed to be highest-profile appointment to such a job for an LDS woman. Morgan will take a year leave of absence from her position in the religion department at Brigham Young University before taking over in September in Massachusetts, according to a statement on BYU's Religious Studies Facebook page. 'She will be teaching institute classes, serving on the Harvard Interfaith Council, and being the religious adviser (chaplain) for LDS students at Harvard, MIT, Wellesley and other universities and colleges in the Boston area,' the statement said. Morgan, who has a doctorate in instructional psychology, is not married and has no children—following the requirement for women within the Church Educational System. 'Church policy precludes women with children in the home from teaching seminary or institute full time,' says LDS Church spokesman Cody Craynor." (*Salt Lake Tribune*, March 25, 2014.)

2014 Women's Auxiliaries Included on General Authority Chart in May 2014 *Ensign*. For many years, there has been a two-page spread at the center of the *Ensign* reporting on the April and October General Conference, showing a picture of all the general authorities as of that conference. In the May 2014 *Ensign*, which reported on the April 2014 general conference, a separate row of photos at the bottom of the chart shows all the General Officers of the Church, including the presidencies of the Sunday School, Young Women, Relief Society, Primary, and Young Men. This is the first time these fifteen people have been included with the general authorities. (*Ensign*, May 2014, 72-3.)

2014 Women's Auxiliaries Presidencies Given Prominent Seating in Conference Center. At the April 2014 general conference, for the first time, the presidencies of the women's auxiliaries were prominently seated, front and center, directly behind the floral arrangements behind the podium. Anyone attending or watching conference could not miss them. The women wore brightly colored outfits that immediately made them stand out from all the men—in their dark suits—filling the leadership seats. Interestingly, at the general priesthood meeting, which was filled to capacity, as usual, the seats earlier assigned to the women's presidencies were left empty.

2014 Women Lead Prayer Meetings in Temple. I volunteer at the Salt Lake Temple in the baptistry each week. Each time, at the start of our shift, one of the brethren conducts a short prayer meeting, including announcements and business, a brief spiritual message and a prayer. Starting in May, 2014, the women assigned to the baptismal clothing area were invited to join with us. It was further announced that the brothers and the sisters would take turns conducting the meeting and offering the message and prayer. [RW]

2014 BYU Adds First All-Female a capella Group. "BYU's Vocal Point now has a female counterpart. The university has officially adopted the all-female a cappella group Noteworthy as an official performing group, an advancement that has been a long-time goal of the group. 'This is huge for the group,' said former member Janae Klumpp. 'A lot of us had to work really hard outside of school, not getting credit, and we loved it. Now it's nice because we get credit. We'll have less rehearsal times, but we have a good director. We can advertise on campus now—a lot of really big pluses that will help the group improve as a whole.' Noteworthy alumna and former director Amy Whitcomb said she is excited for the permanency BYU will bring to the group. 'It's exciting to see that there will be a consistency and a longevity and that (Noteworthy) is not going to die,' Whitcomb said. 'It's being recognized as an awesome life force for good, and it's going to keep going with BYU's support. That's huge and the biggest blessing.' Keith Evans, who was part of Vocal Point from 2008 to 2013, will be the director of the group. Klumpp called Evans a 'top-notch a cappella master' and said she is excited for him to be directing. Evans said he is looking forward to working with Noteworthy. . . . 'I'd say a big goal . . . is going to be raising the bar in terms of the quality of music, product and professionalism the group has,' Whitcomb said. 'Having BYU's name affiliated with the group will give more of a responsibility to really be the best. I know that that's going to be a big goal—to up the quality—and we're going to see some huge improvements.'" (*Salt Lake Tribune*, September 4, 2014.)

2014 Set of Paintings of 11 Courageous Women from the Bible Added to Conference Center. "Visitors to the Conference Center in Salt Lake City will see 11 new paintings of courageous women from the Bible on the west side of the plaza level. The oil paintings are the works of artist Kathleen Peterson, who lives on an 80-acre farm with her husband in central Utah's rural Spring City. Peterson, the mother of four grown children and a grandmother, paints in her home. Her latest paintings tell the stories of strong women from the Bible, including Mary, mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the Samaritan woman at the well and Eve." (*mormonnewsroom.org*; September 24, 2014.) The others

include Deborah (a “prophetess”), Esther, Miriam and the pharaoh’s daughter, the woman with an issue of blood who touched Jesus’s robe, five daughters requesting help from Moses, and the widow’s mite. It is a sign of the historic status of women in the past that a majority of subjects selected to be honored are not even named in the Bible.

2014 Subtle Changes During October General Conference. “Mormon feminists may have been surprised by some subtle changes in vocabulary and approach Saturday night at the general women’s meeting for all LDS females age 8 and older. Dieter F. Uchtdorf addressed the female audience—. . . not just as ‘sisters’ but also as ‘blessed disciples of Jesus Christ.’ In a speech about living out one’s faith joyfully, Uchtdorf, second counselor in the LDS Church’s governing First Presidency, referred twice to women as ‘daughters of heavenly parents,’ alluding to the Mormon belief in male and female deities. And, for the first time, the charismatic German leader described the meeting as the opening session of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ 184th Semiannual General Conference. Until now, General Conference has referred only to the two-day gatherings held during the first weekends of April and October, with the women’s meeting seen as a separate event. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 28, 2014.)

Saturday night’s meeting also featured the first-ever prayer at a session of General Conference by a black woman, offered by South African Dorah Mkhabela, a member of the LDS Young Women’s General Board. These changes come in the wake of wide-ranging conversations about the role of women in the LDS Church, including efforts by Ordain Women, a movement pushing to open the church’s all-male priesthood to females. Women prayed for the first time at General Conference in April 2013, and female LDS leaders decided a year later to unite the women’s auxiliaries into a single meeting to parallel the men’s priesthood meeting. Some feminists also have urged church leaders to talk more openly and often of a Heavenly Mother, who is considered equal to Heavenly Father. . . . Neill F. Marriott, second counselor in the Young Women General Presidency for girls between ages 12 and 17, discussed how Mormon women and girls can use their influence for good. . . . In a soft Southern accent, Marriott said, ‘We have our own roles on the earth—from daughter, mother, leader and teacher to sister, *wage earner*, wife, and more.’” (*Ibid.*) Emphasis added.

2014-

2015 Wives of General Authorities Given Greater Prominence. Over the last year or so, the Church has quietly begun featuring the wives of general authorities to a greater degree than previously. The wives now go with their husbands on Church assignments around the world. They often speak at the meetings where their husbands speak. Both spouses shake hands with those who gather around to greet the visiting authorities. The *Church News* now has pictures of the couple instead of just the priesthood bearer. Following general conference sessions, the cameras now show the apostles and seventies greeting their wives as they now walk out together, arm in arm or holding hands. The wives are sometimes quoted in the press coverage.

2014 Church Approves First Women as Non-Military Chaplains. “‘I preach every Sunday in an Interfaith Service. I am a Pastoral Counselor, wife, mom and grandma. I’m a chaplain. I’m a Mormon.’ That is what Chaplain Tami Harris wrote Oct. 7 when she started her first “I’m a Mormon” profile at Mormon.org. Harris, of Provo, was the first non-military female chaplain in the LDS Church and has been serving and pastoring troubled teens since 1989. . . . It was just this past June when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints officially announced it has approved the centralized endorsement of all chaplaincies, including female chaplains. It was reiterated at last week’s chaplain’s seminar and training that runs in tandem with the October General Conference of the LDS Church. ‘This is a big deal,’ Harris said. ‘When I first started there was no one to ask how to do it, no manual.’ Harris said there was a special session for [mainly military chaplain’s] spouses at the Relief Society Building in Salt Lake City. Rosemary M. Wixom, General Primary president, spoke. ‘My husband and two other men were sitting with all these women,’ Harris said. ‘Before this year, he would sit all alone. He’s a pioneer.’ . . . ‘As the first female chaplain in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, what I do in my career could be seen as odd—even impossible for a faithful Mormon woman,’ wrote Harris on her ‘I’m a Mormon’ profile. . . . Harris is not the only female LDS chaplain out there. There are a few throughout the country at various universities, healthcare facilities and hospice organizations. In July 2013, LDS couple David and Janis Rowberry of Las Vegas retired as chaplains at Georgetown University in Washington—the nation’s oldest Catholic university. In a church statement on chaplaincy, Frank Clawson, director of

military relations for the LDS Church, described the overall purposes of the chaplaincy. Clawson's office will now service non-military chaplains following the recent endorsement. . . . LDS Church member Deborah Hampton is the chaplain at Salt Lake Regional Hospital (formerly Holy Cross Hospital). . . . For those who are interested and can pass the qualifications, Brigham Young University offers a graduate chaplaincy program, which Clawson said the LDS Church is very pleased with. . . . The church does not have a complete count of non-military chaplains, but said there are more than 25 serving full-time in healthcare, and numerous serving part-time in hospice service. There are 21 Border Patrol chaplains, nine Civil Air Patrol chaplains and at least three university chaplains. ‘We really didn't know who were out there,’ Clawson said. ‘The centralized endorsement provides opportunity for that review.’” ([Provo] *Daily Herald*, Oct. 13, 2014.)

2014 Women with Minor Children May Now Be Hired as Seminary and Institute Teachers. “LDS mothers with children at home are now eligible for full-time employment as teachers in the church's seminary and institute programs. . . . ‘We previously had not employed women who have minor children at home, in consideration of their important role as mothers,’ [a spokesman] said. ‘While we continue to recognize that contribution that they make in their homes, we also recognize that sometimes their personal and family circumstances require them to work.’ The church employs more than 2,000 full-time seminary and institute teachers around the world.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 15, 2014.)

2014 Female Teachers Having Children Will Not Be Asked to Resign. The new ruling will allow women who teach seminary and institute to stay in their positions if they give birth to children. Previously, they had to end their employment when children were born.

2014 Divorcees (Male and Female) May Be Considered for Employment. “Administrators also deleted a policy that made divorcees ineligible for employment as full-time teachers. Now those who remarry after a divorce may be considered for employment.” (*Ibid.*)

2014 Young Women General Board Members Not Just from Utah. “On Feb. 3, [2014] Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women’s general president announced that given the international growth of the Church, the time was right to call women to the general board who represent the global membership of the Church. In the past, general boards have been made up of women who lived locally. The new Young Women general board now consists of four women from Utah who assist the presidency in more immediate ways at headquarters. They serve, with the help of teleconferencing, with five women who live in Brazil, Peru, Japan, South Africa and New York City.” (*Church News*, Dec. 28, 2014, 13.)

2015 Number of Children No Longer Listed. Starting in 2015, Church news reports quit listing the number of children of couples being called as mission presidents and wives. For many years, the number of children of each couple called was listed immediately after the names, before any other biographical information. This format was sometimes also used when announcing new temple presidents and matrons.

2015 Small Change in Reporting New Mission Presidents and Wives. Up until recently, when the *Church News* showed pictures of newly called mission presidents, with their wives, the man was always named first, even if the photo showed the wife first. Recently they have started listing first the one who shows up first in the submitted photo, even if it is the wife.

2015 Female Reporters Can Now Attend General Priesthood Meeting. “The LDS Church announced that they would be allowing female reporters to attend the historically all-men’s Priesthood Session of General Conference, which is a move that met with approval from Ordain Women—which is a group advocating for changes to what they see as gender inequality within the LDS Church. While the all-men’s meeting is broadcast live on TV, women have not been traditionally allowed to attend the session in person.” (*Fox 13 News*, March 28, 2015.)

2015 Talks from Women’s Session of Conference Now Printed at the Front of Ensign The May 2015 *Ensign* included each of the talks given at the April General Conference. There was one change in the report that has not

happened before. Now that the Women’s Session has been officially designated as the first session of General Conference, the talks of the women were moved from the back of the *Ensign* to the front, reflecting that new status.

2015 Ward Councils to Plan Future Sacrament Meetings. “Until recently, weekly LDS worship services were planned exclusively by Mormon lay leaders who form a congregation's three-man ‘bishopric.’ Soon LDS women will begin to have a role—along with the bishop and his two counselors—in setting the tone and focus of such worship. . . . Bishoprics, who are responsible for planning sacrament meetings, are being asked to counsel with ward councils about their proposed plans for future sacrament meetings. Among the LDS leaders' recommendations was the idea that a ‘ward council,’ which consists of male and female leaders in the congregation, could help plan Sunday sacrament meetings. Traditionally, the bishopric has chosen the service's topics and themes and then assigned speakers to address those ideas. ‘The contribution of all ward council members will add spiritual insight to the plans being considered by bishoprics,’ [a spokesman] said, ‘while bishoprics will be continue to be responsible for approval of plans.’” (Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 17, 2015.)

2015 General Authorities Getting Much More Input from Women. Michael R. Otterson, managing director of the LDS Church Public Affairs Department, spoke in August at a two-day FairMormon conference in Provo, and made this comment: “There is ‘momentum inside the church organization’ on women's issues and to address inequities. The Priesthood Executive Committee [now] has six women on it. The ‘Brethren try to embrace women's voices.’ To that end, the Public Affairs Department created a ‘women's outreach group’ with about eight ‘highly professional, faithful, seasoned women.’” He added further that his department answers to a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' committee, made up of two apostles, a senior member of the Seventy, the presiding bishop, the church's legal counsel and “a female officer,” which he did not further define. (Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 10, 2015.)

2015 Three Key Priesthood Councils Add Women as Permanent Members. “Top women officers in the LDS Church took a giant step forward Tuesday when they became permanent members of what previously were three key ‘priesthood councils.’ Bonnie L. Oscarson, the church's Young Women president for girls between ages 12 and 17, has been named to the . . . Missionary Executive Council. Linda K. Burton, president of the church's Relief Society for adult Mormon women, will serve on the Priesthood and Family Executive Council. Rosemary M. Wixom, president of the Primary for children 11 and under, will join the Temple and Family History Executive Council. From time to time, leaders in the all-male Mormon priesthood have asked the women's advice on certain issues, but these women were not on these high-ranking committees as sitting members.” (Peggy Fletcher Stack, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 18, 2015.)

2015 Priesthood Executive Council Name Changed. Church leaders changed the name of the Priesthood Executive Council to the Priesthood and Family Executive Council and invited the church's Relief Society General President, Sister Linda K. Burton, to sit on the council.” (*Deseret News*, Aug. 17, 2015.)

Women Auxiliary Leaders Showing Up Everywhere. A small but significant change has taken place this past year or so. Various women’s auxiliary presidency members are showing up, and being reported on, at events that previously involved only general authorities. Recent examples are events at the various BYU campuses, broadcasts of youth conferences or YSA groups, open houses for Christmas tree lighting ceremonies at temples, gatherings for family history enthusiasts, Education Week events, Area conferences, official visits from headquarters to mission fields around the world, etc. If a general authority is appearing at the United Nations, or meeting with diplomats anywhere, or taking part in an international conference or gathering, at least one women’s auxiliary presidency member is sure to be there as well. This is a very new development.

2016 Small Steps Continue: New Primary Song Mentions Esther. “Mormon feminists are celebrating a few more small steps toward gender equality in their Utah-based faith. February's edition of the *Friend*, the LDS Church's official magazine for children, features an article titled ‘Savannah the Engineer’ about a young girl who enters—and whose team wins—a battery-powered-car-designing contest. The issue also highlights lots of ethnically diverse faces and stories. . . . The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also recently unveiled a new song for children, ‘I’ll

Stand Tall,' which names and honors not just men, but a female figure from the Bible. The piece's first verse sings about a young shepherd David, who slew the giant Goliath. But the second stanza centers on Esther and how she saved her Hebrew people." (Peggy Fletcher Stack, "Mormon Feminists Score Small Gains," *Salt Lake Tribune*, Feb. 3, 2016, B1.)

2016 *Deseret News Summarizes Recent Progress Made by LDS Women*. The *Deseret News* featured an article summarizing the progress of women in Mormonism. They observed that "the church is deliberately working to raise the visibility of women. Many of the changes are unmissable. Women leaders now regularly give prayers at the church's global general conferences, during which they also sit in the center of the stand. Their portraits hang in the Conference Center, and the women's session has become an official part of general conference. Perhaps most visual are the 20,000 young sister missionaries serving around the world, a result of a decision to lower the missionary age for women to 19. . . . Less conspicuous outside the church but deeply meaningful within the faith are expanded roles for the wives of mission presidents, new leadership roles for sister missionaries and increased emphasis on contributions by women who are members of every local ward and stake councils. Last year, the church added the women who lead the faith's worldwide organizations for women, teenage girls and children to the church's key, leading executive councils. Those women's leaders travel the world, training local priesthood leaders and ministering to members of all ages. Church leaders like Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve also recently have made clear that women exercise priesthood authority without ordination. And in October, the church released a new official essay that certified its doctrinally distinctive teachings about a Mother in Heaven." (Tad Walch, "Women hired by LDS Church History Department making huge strides in Mormon women's history." *Deseret News*, Feb. 7, 2016.)

2016 *New Church Books Highlight Role of Women in LDS Church History*. On Feb. 29, the Church will publish *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History*. "The book, a history told through the documents of the early years of the church's women's organization, will be the first title from the Church Historian's Press outside of the Joseph Smith Papers project. Harvard professor Laurel Thatcher Ulrich called the book 'a signal contribution to religious studies (and) women's history . . . In my view it is the most important work to emerge from the Mormon press in the last 50 years.'" Next year will see the publication of *At the Pulpit: Latter-day Saint Women Speak, 1831-2014*. "[Jenny] Reeder is working with Janiece Johnson on a book about women witnesses to the Restoration, which includes a chapter on women's experiences with the 11 witnesses to the Book of Mormon. . . . Among numerous other projects, Holbrook, Reeder, Tait and [Brittany] Nash also are part of the Mormon Women's History Initiative Team, and the foursome is working together as a team on a project they cannot yet disclose." (Tad Walch, "Women hired by LDS Church History Department making huge strides in Mormon women's history." *Deseret News*, Feb. 7, 2016.)

2017 *Girls Will Now Attend Priesthood Preview Meeting for 11-Year-Olds*. The First Presidency has announced a change for 11-year-olds: "The annual priesthood preview meeting to introduce 11-year-old boys to the priesthood will now become a combined temple and priesthood preparation meeting for 11-year-old girls and boys. According to information now published at *primary.lds.org*, the purpose of this meeting is to help children understand the blessings of temple service, priesthood service and making and keeping covenants. One topic will be encouraging 11-year-olds to receive a limited-use temple recommend." (*Deseret News*, Dec. 15, 2017.)

2018 *Council Leadership Meetings*. Following instructions sent out by the First Presidency, at the first stake conference in every stake following the April 2018 general conference, the regular Saturday afternoon stake priesthood leadership meeting was expanded to a stake council leadership meeting, with ward and stake presidencies from the Relief Society, Young Women, and Primary organizations in attendance. This ended, at least temporarily, the century-long practice of having only men attend the stake leadership session. Time will tell if this becomes standard.

2018 *More Women than Men at BYU Law School*. For the first time in its history, the incoming 2018-2019 class at the Brigham Young University Law School will include more women (54) than men (50). (*mormonland@sltrib.com* via *icontactmail1.com*; Sept. 27, 2018.)

2018 Sister Missionaries in Every Mission Can Now Choose to Wear Dress Slacks. “All female missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are now allowed to wear dress slacks, the church announced Thursday [Dec. 20, 2018]. The changes take effect immediately. The change came about from safety concerns, according to a press release. . . . Sister missionaries can wear pants year-round if they choose. The change will also allow missionaries in colder areas to keep warm, according to the release, and will make it easier for them to ride bicycles. Wearing dress slacks is optional. Female missionaries must still wear skirts and dresses to temple services and during Sunday worship services, mission leadership and zone conferences and to baptisms, according to a press release from the church. Sister missionaries in about half of the church’s worldwide missions had previously been allowed to wear dress slacks during wet seasons to protect from mosquito-borne viral diseases like dengue fever, Chikungunya and the Zika virus.” (Braley Dodson *Daily Herald*, Dec 20, 2018.)

2019 Women and Girls (and Boys) Can Now Act as Witnesses of Temple Proxy Baptisms, and Ward Baptisms. In another move toward gender equity, women, and girls with temporary recommends, can act as official witnesses at baptisms and at temple sealings. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 3, 2019.)

Bishop, Not a Counselor, to Oversee Young Women. “Young Women presidents will now report to and counsel directly with the bishop of the ward. . . . In the past, this assignment could be delegated to a counselor, but going forward, Young Women will be a direct responsibility of the one who holds presiding keys for the ward.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 6, 2019, A7.)

Young Women Theme Revised. “In another step on the gender-equity front, [the Church] revised the Young Women theme Saturday night, changing ‘we are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves us, and we love him,’ to ‘I am a beloved daughter of Heavenly Parents, with a divine nature and eternal destiny.’” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 6, 2019, A1.)

Budgets for Youth Must Be Equal for Girls and Boys. “. . . congregation budgets for youth activities must be divided ‘equitably’ between the number of boys and girls. Because of Boy Scouts—from which the church officially will sever ties at year’s end—more money often went to Young Men in the past.” (*Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 6, 2019, A7.)

Today Church is Making Progress. “For all the resistance to it, the women's revolution may turn out to be the most significant revolution in history, if for no other reason than it has the potential to affect the liberation of the entire human race. . . . While there are still some instances of gross chauvinism and insensitivity, there are signs—in official programs, publications, and policies, and in the attitudes of individual Church leaders—that we are making progress. And women are beginning to shake the foundations. . . . Who knows what will happen with women in the Church's future? Whatever it is, one thing is certain: we can never go back to where we were, and that's good.” (Robert A. Rees, LDS Bishop, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1987, 18.)

A Galileo Moment. “And eventually we will get around to creating a Galileo moment when we cease to see maleness as the center of the universe with femaleness orbiting around it, but instead see male and female—mortal and divine—doing a dance of true partnership.” (Carol Lynn Pearson, “Why I Stay.” *Sunstone*, March 2014, Issue 174, 31.)