

Seventies Hall

Nauvoo, Illinois, United States of America

The Seventies Hall in Nauvoo was created as a meeting place for the Seventies, a quorum organization in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that focuses on missionary work. It was built in 1844 on land donated by Edward Hunter, a member of the LDS faith in Nauvoo.

During construction of the hall, a tornado leveled one of walls. Brigham Young instructed the workers to rebuild the wall, making it one additional brick thicker.¹ After it was completed in late July 1844, the hall also became the first library in Nauvoo, housing many books brought from abroad by returning missionaries. When the Saints moved west, the books were removed from the Seventies Hall and used to establish in Utah the first library between Missouri and California. The main floor was also used as a lecture hall and as a chapel for church meetings, while the second floor contained the library and office for the seventies. The hall was dedicated by Brigham Young in December 1844, although it had already been in use for several months. In early August 1844, it was in the Seventies Hall that Sidney Rigdon presented to the other leaders of the Church his claim that he should be a “guardian” over the Church.²

After the Saints left Nauvoo to travel west, the Seventies Hall became the meeting place for another denomination before the second floor was removed and the structure used as a schoolhouse. Sometime before 1897, the building was leveled. In the 1960s, the site was bought by Nauvoo Restoration, Inc., and in 1971-72, a replica of the original building was erected on the original foundation. Today, a museum of Nauvoo artifacts resides on the second floor, and the main floor has been restored to as it appeared in the 1840s.

SOURCES

¹ Arnold K. Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, Richard O. Cowan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, (Deseret Book Company: Salt Lake City, Utah, 2000), 1091.



The Seventies Hall

*Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress
Prints & Photographs Division*

² Stanley B. Kimball, “Heber C. Kimball and Family, the Nauvoo Years,” *BYU Studies*, Vol. 15, Number 4, Summer 1975, 471.

JOHN TAYLOR’S ACCOUNT OF THE DEDICATION OF THE SEVENTIES HALL¹

“Thursday, December 26th, 1844. I attended the dedication of the Seventies Hall. The services commenced under the direction of President Joseph Young, who organized the meeting in the following order. The stand was occupied by the seven presiding presidents of the Seventies; and the Twelve or as many of them as were present. The senior president of Quorum was seated on the right, the choir of singers on the left, and the brass band in front.

The second and third quorums in order, which their families, might in turn participate in the privilege of the dedication, according to their respective quorums, there being fifteen quorums, whose claims were equal, two of which convened

in the Hall each day, beginning with the second and third. The excellent melody of the choir and Band, mingled with the devout aspirations of a congregation of all Saints, gave the commencement of their services an air of interest, felicity, and glory, at once feeling, touching, pathetic, grand, and sublime.”

SOURCES

¹ Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and T. Jeffrey Cottle, *Old Mormon Nauvoo and Southeastern Iowa*, (Santa Ana, California: Fieldbrook Publishing, 1991), 131-132.

DEDICATORY PRAYER OF THE SEVENTIES HALL¹

“Thou god who dwellest in the midst of thine own kingdoms, and doest thy pleasure in the midst of the same. We realize that we are thy children although we have long wandered from thee. Yet we feel that it is thy good pleasure to bless us, when we come unto thee with hearts of humility. Therefore we desire to present ourselves before thee as dutiful children to an earthly parent, knowing that we are thine and ask thee for those things we need. We feel, our Father, that we are in a world of darkness, trouble, and death, where we cannot behold thy glory; yet we come unto thee in the name of Jesus Christ, thy son, and ask thee to forgive our sins and past offences.

Fill us with thy spirit, and accept our praise, while we dedicate ourselves unto thee, and as we have approximated to behold this beautiful morning, the day in which begins a new year, do thou, our Heavenly Father, look down in compassion upon us, the creatures of thy care and protection, who dwell upon thy footstool. Increase our knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, that we, thy servants, may be enabled to administer salvation to thy people, even as thou hast committed a dispensation of the same unto us; and while we call

on thy name we desire union in thy presence, our Father, to dedicate unto thee this Hall the ground upon which it stands, and all things that appertain unto it. We ask thee to let thy blessing rest upon thy servant Edward Hunter, our beloved brother, who has donated to us the ground upon which this sacred edifice has been erected. We pray thee to enrich him and his family, not only with the good things of this world, but with the riches of eternity also.

We ask thee, our Father, to accept the dedication of our hearts this morning, and may we feel the prelude of that power and authority with which thy servants shall be clothed, when they shall go forth and open the door of salvation to the nations and kingdoms of the earth; even thy servants, the Seventies, upon whom the burthen of thy kingdom does rest, and to whom the keys of the same shall be committed from time to time. We now dedicate this hall unto thee, our Father, and ask thee in the name of thy son Jesus Christ, to sanctify it and make it holy, and may no foul spirit be suffered to enter it, but may it be filled with thy spirit that it may be called the gate of heaven, and may all who enter within its doors be made to feel thy love and power.

We ask thee to pour out thy spirit upon the Presidency of the Seventies; wilt thou endow them with knowledge and understanding that they may be enabled to instruct thy servants over whom they are called to preside; and do thou let the same blessings flow freely upon each quorum, that all thy servants may be filled with thy spirit and become mighty men before thee that they may go forth and gather the pure in heart, Zion redeemed and Jerusalem rebuilt. -Help us, O Lord to separate ourselves from all iniquity, that evil doers may not exist in our midst, but may this people become a holy people, peculiar to thyself, to show forth thy praise in all the world.

Our Father in heaven, we humbly beseech thee to shield and protect us in this city; provide for and sustain us by thy power, that we may be enabled to accomplish the work which thou hast

commanded us to do. Assist us to build the Temple and Nauvoo House; that the truth and light of the everlasting gospel may shine forth from this place, to the honor and praise of thy holy name. Regard in mercy the quorum of the Twelve, at whom the arrows of the destroyer are directed. Preserve them O Lord, by thine own omnipotent power, that they may stand in holy places and be enabled to disseminate the knowledge of thy kingdom to the inhabitants of the earth; wilt thou sustain us, our Father that we may perform and accomplish the mighty work whereunto we are called.

We feel to lament and mourn the loss of our beloved brothers Joseph and Hyrum the Prophet and Patriarch, whom thou hast suffered to be martyred for the testimony of the truth; but we thank thee our Father, that although they have been taken from us for the present, yet that same spirit which animated their bosoms, the fruits of which is peace and charity, still remains amongst thy people.

We now commit ourselves into thy care, and ask thee to guide and control us by the council of heaven, through all the shifting and various scenes of mortality, that the number of our days may be filled up in usefulness, and we be prepared for that exalted station and rest that remains for the people of God, and the honor, praise, and glory of our salvation, we will ascribe unto thee for thine; is the kingdom, power, and glory, worlds without end: Amen.”

SOURCES

¹ Dean C. Jessee, “The John Taylor Nauvoo Journal: January 1845–September 1845” (1983), *BYU Studies*, Vol. 23, Summer 1983, 7-9.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Address:

Parley St & Bain St
Nauvoo, Illinois 62354

Hours of Operation:

May - August:

Monday Through Saturday - 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Sunday 10:30 AM - 6:00 PM

September - April:

Monday Through Saturday - 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Sunday 12:30 AM - 5:00 PM

GPS Coordinates:

N40° 32.604' W91° 23.706'

Phone Number:

1-888-453-6434

Admission:

Free

