

NOTE ON IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY

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Editing this issue, I have thought much on both identity and community. I want to assure *Dialogue* readers that we remain committed to being a place of continued connection, vibrant welcoming, and life-affirming discussion. In this era when so many forces seek to divide us, we are dedicated to being a force for unity.

Earlier this fall, President Russell M. Nelson called for members to use the Church's full name rather than its nickname "Mormon." Those of us in the broader Mormon studies community have spent countless hours discussing this issue, and I believe all of us tend to be fairly united in our desire to be respectful to the institutional Church's directives. Nevertheless, this call does raise challenges regarding identity and community that all of us recognize.. Given those challenges, *Dialogue* has determined that it will use the full name of the Church when an author is speaking specifically of the institution itself.. However, there are many times when articles we publish refer to something beyond the institutional Church: rather, they reference the broader culture, to a community of people who may or may not participate in that institutional Church but who continue to identify with that culture in one way or another, or to another church that originates with Joseph Smith like the Community of Christ. Because *Dialogue* is a forum for this broader culture, our subtitle will remain *A Journal of Mormon Thought*. I also hope you will forgive us when we falter. We were already working on the present issue and many of the essays printed here were already typeset at the time of President Nelson's address, so we ask for your patience that we have not consistently applied these standards.

I hope too that all Church members will follow the counsel given by Hal Boyd, Special Assistant to the Managing Director of Church Public Affairs, at a recent conference held at Utah Valley University to use charity and compassion with those of us who may not “get it right.”¹ We do not need yet another thing to divide us. Instead, we at *Dialogue* seek to build compassion, connection, and community. We thank you for your support in 2018, and invite you to continue with us as we welcome 2019!

1. “What’s in a Name: ‘Mormons,’ ‘Latter-day Saints’ and the Politics of Self-identity,” Nov. 14, 2018, https://www.uvu.edu/ethics/events/whatsinaname_panel.html.