The 54th conference of the Mormon History Association will be held June 6–9, 2019, in Salt Lake City, Utah. The 2019 conference theme “Isolation and Integration” highlights a continuing tension in the Mormon experience and commemorates the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad and John Wesley Powell’s first Colorado River exploration. When Latter-day Saints arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in July 1847, they crossed an international boundary in search of religious liberty, something they hoped to find in the isolation of the desert expanses of northern Mexico. As MHA returns to Salt Lake City in 2019, we remember historical moments which reflect the Mormon desire for isolation as well as a corresponding pull toward integration represented by the laying of the Golden Spike in northern Utah on May 10, 1869, and, two weeks later, the beginning of Powell’s charting of the mighty Colorado. In addition, the 1869 national discussion over granting Utah women suffrage led to their becoming the first to vote in the modern nation in early 1870, pulling them into the center of the national suffrage movement. Moreover, the Mormons’ imagined sense of isolation in the Great Basin did not account for the reality of their settlements being built on land already claimed by the region’s Native American inhabitants, thus perpetuating Native American dislocation and marginalization.

Isolation and integration are metaphorically rich concepts in Mormon history. The 2019 conference theme invites scholars to contemplate the duality of the Mormon yearnings to be a peculiar people (isolation) and the contradictory impulse to be accepted and “mainstream” (integration). The theme opens doors to possible conversations between Mormon history and broader histories of missiology, colonization, globalization, and lived religion, as well as investigation of these instincts as manifested in other Restoration traditions.

The Mormon History Association welcomes proposals from academic, professional, and amateur historians. Though the program committee will consider individual papers, it will give preference to proposals for complete sessions. Previously published papers are not eligible for presentation at MHA. Please send 1) a 300-word abstract for each paper or presentation and 2) a 1–2 page CV for each presenter, including email contact information. Full session proposals should also include the session title and a brief abstract outlining the session’s theme, along with a confirmed or suggested chair and/or commentator, if applicable. MHA strongly encourages individuals to seek to organize panels that reflect diversity of panelists in terms of gender, institutional, social, ethnic, and religious background.

The deadline for proposals is November 15, 2018. Send proposals to the program co-chairs at mhaslc2019@gmail.com. Acknowledgment of receipt will be sent immediately. Notification of acceptance or rejection will be made by January 15, 2019.