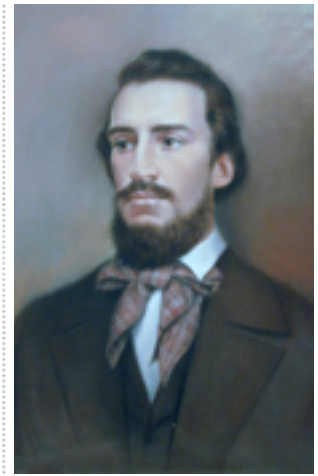


## PURSUPE PEACE ON EARTH: JOSEPH SMITH III



Joseph Smith III's childhood home, the "Mansion House," also served as a hotel. Photo by Val Brinkerhoff



Joseph Smith III

### JOSEPH SMITH III

The life experience of Joseph Smith III offers lessons related to how we can become living examples of Christ's peace. For young Joseph, the path toward peace, reconciliation, and healing of the spirit was a slow and painful journey when it came to forgiving a man who had threatened his mother's life.

While growing up in Nauvoo, Joseph's home also served as a hotel that his mother, Emma, managed. Emma took exception to the relationship between a male and female boarder and asked them to move out. The man responded by pulling a gun on Emma. Both Joseph and his stepfather were away from the home and unable to come to Emma's aid. When Joseph learned of the incident, he became furious and developed a deep hatred for the man who had threatened his mother. As the years passed, his loathing for the local man grew deeper and deeper.

Years later, his bitter feelings and disgust for the man were an uncomfortable sentiment as Joseph Smith III became an ordained minister of the church. In his memoirs he shared that when he began to

preach and share the Lord's Prayer, the words "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" would haunt him because of his deep hatred for the man who had threatened his mother's life. Over time and through humility, Joseph was eventually able to forgive the man. He took this experience as a life lesson and reminder of Christ's teachings. Joseph believed his personal struggle with reconciliation and healing of the spirit eventually led him to become a better minister to others:

*I had a clearer understanding of what men were prone to feel of any unworthy nature... than I could have obtained had I not had this experience and learned to know what it was to hate a fellow-being. The knowledge helped to make me humble, and to exercise sympathy and charity for others struggling under like feelings... Hatred is a cruel destructive, and unlovely thing, and wholly unbecoming a Christian.*

Joseph Smith III's life experience is just one example of early church members pursuing peace on earth.

Life lessons of Joseph Smith III and his family are shared with tens of thousands of visitors each year at the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois. The Community of Christ historic site includes the Mansion House, Homestead, Red Brick Store, Nauvoo House, and Visitor Center.