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Volume 50, issue number 1, of BYU Studies begins with a philosophical look at what it means to be Mormon: what is the nature of the faith that binds a very diverse group of members? Joseph Spencer looks at four historical models of discourses that are present in Mormonism. Next is an article about the importance of music in Christian worship, written by a Catholic scholar in England. Next, an astronomer explains the life cycle of stars and notes that Joseph Smith's revelation on stars (found in the Book of Moses) was decades ahead of the science that would confirm that stars come into existence and pass away. An article collects Latter-day Saint Church leaders' teachings about Heavenly Mother, affirming her role as a creator and divine parent of humankind. Next, a classical scholar shows that four ancient utopian communities had elements of covenant-making and strict commandments. This issue also features a selection from a newfound document written in 1871 by William McLellin that tells about McLellin's interviews of the Book of Mormon witnesses. Another document piece presents a letter of a Scotsman describing St. Louis in 1840, including a description of Mormonism. Finally, this issue contains personal essays, poetry, and book reviews.

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