

Harris Family Monument Dedication and Historic Commemoration
Dedicatory Prayer
Saturday, 20 June 2026; Mentor Municipal Cemetery, Mentor, Lake County, Ohio
Brent J. Belnap

Our Dear Father in Heaven, we have assembled as relatives and friends—exactly two weeks before the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America—in Mentor Cemetery in Mentor, Ohio. With deep gratitude for all who have helped make this moment possible through generous donations of time and means, we stand around this beautiful granite monument honoring American Revolutionary War soldier Nathan Harris, his wife Rhoda Lapham, their eight children, and their Harris ancestry. We thank Thee that we have been able to travel here safely to savor this moment together, and pray for Thy continued protective care during our historic commemoration activities until we are all able to return to our respective homes.

We gratefully recognize and honor the legacy of service of Nathan Harris and others to the cause of America's Independence. We thank Thee for the many others in our shared Harris lineage who emigrated to America in search of religious freedom. We thankfully acknowledge their sacrifices in fighting for the cause of liberty that brought us, their posterity, the precious gift of freedom enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, including freedom of religion that paved the way for the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the earth.

We thank Thee for the deep and lasting influence the Gospel of Jesus Christ has had on the Harris family from the earliest days of the Restoration. We rejoice in the exceptional faith and commitment that inspired Martin Harris to assist in bringing forth the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. We honor the devotion that brought the Harris family to this part of Ohio where they joined with other early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in building and caring for the first Temple to be built in this dispensation.

As grateful descendants of our courageous forebears, we thank Thee for all that unites as citizens of this blessed nation and for our country's bounteous goodness. Please continue to bless us as a nation and as a family.

Now, by the authority of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, we dedicate this monument and consecrate this ground as a lasting, loving memorial to Nathan Harris, Rhoda Lapham, their children Emer, Martin, Preserved, Solomon, Seville, Sophia, Lydia, and Naomi, and their noble ancestry. Let it serve as a tangible reminder to all who stop visit in years to come of their service to country, faith in God, and commitment to family. May this monument stand as a lasting tribute to our shared family heritage. Bless it to weather the elements well. Protect it from damage and desecration. Bless that this ground may be hallowed and protected until the Resurrection. May those who visit here be privileged to feel, according to their faith and righteous desires, if it be Thy will, the very presence of their forebears—and may we be privileged to have them think of us and, where possible, assist and encourage us from beyond the veil in our own earthly sojourns.

We love Thee, Father, and Thy Beloved Son. Strengthen our resolve to walk acceptably before Thee continually. Increase our resolve to do Thy will. Bless this day to be a lasting, special memory, we humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

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