Church Handbook of Instructions

Book 1

Stake Presidencies and Bishoprics

2006

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Contents

Introduction

The Lord admonished, "Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence" (D&C 107:99; see also D&C 105:10).

Church leaders should seek personal revelation to help them learn and fulfill the duties of their callings.

Studying the scriptures and the teachings of latter-day prophets will also help leaders learn and fulfill their duties. The Lord has admonished leaders to treasure up in their minds continually the words of God so they will be receptive to the influence of the Spirit (see D&C 84:85).

Leaders also learn their duties by studying the instructions in Church handbooks. These instructions can facilitate revelation if they are used to provide an understanding of principles, policies, and procedures to apply while seeking the guidance of the Spirit.

Introduction to the *Church Handbook of Instructions*

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* consists of two books:

- *Book 1: Stake Presidencies and Bishoprics.* For the most part, this book includes information that only stake presidencies and bishoprics need. However, other stake and ward leaders may have access to this information as needed for reference.
- *Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders.* This book provides instructions for administering priesthood quorums and auxiliaries. It also provides instructions on Church programs, activities, leadership, and selected policies. This publication is bound as a single book for stake presidencies, bishoprics, high priests group leaders, elders quorum presidents, and auxiliary presidents. Individual sections are published for leaders who do not need the entire book.

Updates and Supplements to Instructions

Occasionally the information in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* will be updated or supplemented through letters, notices, and other communication from the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric. When this occurs, leaders should write the changes in their copies of the handbooks. Leaders should keep handbooks and these supplementary materials together.

Questions about Instructions

Leaders who have questions about information in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* or about issues that are not addressed should direct the questions to their immediate presiding authority.

Application in Branches, Districts, and Missions

Unless the context shows otherwise, the terms *bishop* and *bishopric* in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* refer also to branch presidents and branch presidencies. The terms *stake president* and *stake presidency* refer also to district presidents and district presidencies. References to wards and stakes usually apply also to branches, districts, and missions.

Distribution of *Book 1*

Book 1: Stake Presidencies and Bishoprics should be distributed as follows:

- General Authorities, Area Seventies, general Church department heads, general auxiliary presidencies, directors for temporal affairs (1 copy each)
- Temple presidency (4 copies)
- Stake presidency (5 copies)
- Bishopric (4 copies)
- Mission presidency (3 copies)
- District presidency (5 copies)
- Branch presidency (3 copies)

Book 1 has been prepared solely for use by general and local Church officers to administer the affairs of the Church. The entire book should not be duplicated. However, the stake president or bishop may authorize portions to be duplicated for high councilors and others as needed.

When Church officers who have a copy of *Book 1* are released, they should give the copy promptly to their successor or to their presiding authority.

List of Items Referenced

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* refers to many other Church-produced materials. An alphabetical list of these materials is provided below. If item numbers have been assigned, they are included in this list rather than in the text of the handbook. Most of these materials are available through Church Distribution Services. Contact information is provided below:

Distribution Services
1999 West 1700 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84104-4233
Telephone: 240-3800 (Salt Lake City area)
1-800-537-5971 (U.S. and Canada)
1-801-240-1126 (other countries)
Internet: www.ldscatalog.com

Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God booklets (deacon, 36412; teacher, 36413; priest, 36414)

Aaronic Priesthood Ordination Record and Certificate form (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, the record and certificate are printed in local units; in other areas the item number is 35857)

A Guide to Seminary and Institute Graduation Exercises (32372)

A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work (36795)

Annual History for Stakes and Districts (32299)

A Parent's Guide (31125)

Application to the First Presidency form (35789)

Baptism and Confirmation Certificate (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, the certificate is printed in local units; in other areas the item number is 35920)

Baptism and Confirmation Record form (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, the form is printed in local units; for full-time missionaries and areas that do not have record-keeping software, the item number is 35919)

Basic Unit Program Guidebook (36717)

Bishop's Order for Commodities forms (33585 and 31422)

Branch Guidebook (31179)

Certificate of Appointment (33120)

Child Blessing Record and Certificate form (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, the record and certificate are printed in local units; in other areas the item number is 35856)

Children's Songbook (35395)

Church Name and Logotype Guidelines for Local Units (35654)

Confidential Report on Proposed Temple Ordinance Workers form (34449)

Directory of General Authorities and Officers (available electronically only)

Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood, Part B (31112)

Endowed from on High: Temple Preparation Seminar Teacher's Manual (36854)

Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property (United States and Canada) (35860)

Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property (outside the United States and Canada) (36485)

Family Guidebook (31180)

Family Home Evening Resource Book (31106)

For the Strength of Youth (pamphlet, 36550; card, 36551)

Gospel Principles (31110)

Hymns (31243)

Identification and Prevention of Suicidal Behavior (32253)

Information and Suggestions for Patriarchs (31257)

Instructions for Clothing the Dead Who Have Received Their Endowments (31461)

Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled DVD (54616)

Limited-Use Recommend (32602)

Meetinghouse Artwork Brochure (34826)

Melchizedek Priesthood Record and Certificate form (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, the record and certificate are printed in local units; in other areas the item number is 35858)

Military identification tag for LDS servicemen and servicewomen (33118)

Military scripture set (31197)

Missionary Handbook (35996)

Missionary Recommendation packet (36549)

Missionary Tuberculosis Screening Report form (31966)

Mission President's Handbook (36203)

Needs and Resources Analysis form (32290)

Needs and Resources Analysis Supplement form (32291)

New Member Report form (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, this form is printed in local units; in areas that do not have this software, the form is sent to local units by the administration office; the form does not have an item number)

New Patriarch Recommendation form (31674)

Officers Sustained forms (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, these forms are printed in local units; in areas that do not have this software, the forms are sent to local units by the administration office)

Patriarchal Blessing Recommend (32017)

Performance Contract form (33811)

Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service (36617)

Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple (36793)

Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse (35665)

Preventing and Responding to Spouse Abuse (35869)

Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders' Guidebook (31178)

Principles of the Gospel (36447)

Progress Record form (36985)

Protect the Child: Responding to Child Abuse videocassette (53364)

Providing in the Lord's Way: A Leader's Guide to Welfare (36922; also available online at providentliving.org)

Recommendation for New Bishop form (31747)

Recommendation for New Counselor to Stake President form (31746)

Recommendation for Part-Time Church-Service Missionary form (35813)

Recommend for Living Ordinances (32601)

Recommend to Perform an Ordinance form (32595)

Report of Administrative Action form (32427)

Report of Church Disciplinary Action form (33493)

Request for Contact form (32387)

Request for Ordinance Information form (32388)

Request for Supplemental Financial Assistance for Full-Time Missionary form (31964)

Responding to Abuse: Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders (32248)

Scouting Handbook (United States, 35814; Canada, 35810)

Serving Your Country (brochure, 35937; videocassette, 53675; DVD, 01684)

Stake and District Audit of Membership Records form (35584)

Stake and District Organization Application form (34203)

Teaching Guidebook (34595)

Teaching, No Greater Call (36123)

Temple Recommend (32600)

Temple recommend book (*Recommends to Enter the Temple*; 32599)

Tithing and Other Offerings form (31592)

Tithing Declaration Report (in areas that have Church record-keeping software, this form is printed in local units; in areas that do not have this software, the form is sent to local units by the administration office; the form does not have an item number)

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference (36863; the item number for units to order this publication as a no-charge item is 37054)

Understanding and Helping Those Who Have Homosexual Problems: Suggestions for Ecclesiastical Leaders (32250)

Ward and Branch Organization Application form (34202)

Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: The Patriarch (booklet, 25240; DVD, 25241 090)

Young Women Personal Progress book (36035)

1. General, Area, and Regional Administration

General Church Administration

First Presidency

The President of the Church is the prophet, seer, and revelator. As the senior apostle and president of the Melchizedek Priesthood, he presides over the entire Church (see D&C 107:8, 65–67, 91–92). He is the only person on earth who may use (or authorize another person to use) the apostolic keys of the priesthood for governing the entire Church (see D&C 43:1–4; 81:2; 132:7). He is also the only person on earth who is authorized to receive revelation for the entire Church (see D&C 28:2; 132:7).

The President's counselors are also prophets, seers, and revelators. The President and his counselors form the Quorum of the First Presidency of the Church (see D&C 107:22).

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are "special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world" (D&C 107:23). They act under the direction of the First Presidency "to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations" (D&C 107:33). They "open the door [to the nations] by the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ" (D&C 107:35).

The Twelve direct the calling of stake patriarchs (see D&C 107:39). They also "ordain and set in order all the other officers of the church" (D&C 107:58).

Along with the First Presidency, the Twelve are prophets, seers, and revelators. They also hold the keys of the kingdom of God on earth (see D&C 27:12–13; 110:11–16; 112:30–32).

Quorums of the Seventy

Members of the Quorums of the Seventy are "called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world" (D&C 107:25). They work "under the direction of the Twelve . . . in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations" (D&C 107:34). In their quorums, the Seventy are presided over by the Presidents of the Seventy (see D&C 107:93–94).

Those who are called to the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy are designated General Authorities, with jurisdiction throughout the Church. Those who are called to other Quorums of the Seventy are designated Area Seventies, with jurisdiction limited to the areas in which they are assigned. Area Seventies are assigned to quorums according to geographic location.

Members of the Quorums of the Seventy may be assigned to preside at stake conferences, create and reorganize stakes, set apart stake presidencies, and ordain and set apart bishops. In addition, they may be assigned to tour missions and assist with training in stakes, missions, and districts. They may be given other responsibilities as needed.

Presiding Bishopric

The Presiding Bishopric is the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood of the Church (see D&C 107:15). Under the direction of the First Presidency, the Presiding Bishopric also administers the temporal affairs of the Church (see D&C 107:68).

Area Administration

The Church is divided into geographic areas for administrative purposes. An area is the largest geographic division of the Church.

Presidency of the Seventy

The First Presidency assigns the Presidency of the Seventy to supervise designated areas of the Church under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve.

The Presidency of the Seventy holds the keys of presidency over the Quorums of the Seventy.

Area Presidencies

The First Presidency assigns Area Presidencies to preside over selected areas of the Church under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve. Area Presidents are usually assigned from the First or Second Quorum of the Seventy. Their counselors may be assigned from any Quorum of the Seventy.

Area Seventies

Area Seventies serve under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presidents of the Seventy, and the Area Presidency where they are assigned. Area Seventies are assigned to areas and quorums according to geographic location.

1. General, Area, and Regional Administration

Regional Administration

Areas of the Church are divided into regions *for welfare purposes only.* When creating or restructuring welfare regions, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency obtains the concurrence of the Presiding Bishopric and the Welfare Executive Committee.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency organizes a regional welfare committee for each welfare region. The composition and responsibilities of this committee are outlined on pages 60–61.

2. Stake Administration

Purpose and Organization of a Stake

Most geographic areas of the Church are divided into stakes. A stake normally is composed of five to twelve wards and branches. The term *stake* comes from the prophecies of Isaiah, who described latter-day Zion as a tent or tabernacle that would be held secure by stakes (see Isaiah 33:20; 54:2). The stakes of Zion are places of security that protect all who enter.

The purpose of a stake is to be "a defense, and . . . a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out . . . upon the whole earth" (D&C 115:6). Stakes are gathering places where Church members can serve and strengthen each other, become unified, and receive priesthood ordinances and gospel instruction.

Stake Presidency

The stake president holds the priesthood keys to preside over the stake and direct the work of the Church in the stake. He and his counselors minister to stake members in love, helping "bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).

The stake president has four principal responsibilities in presiding over a stake:

1. He is the presiding high priest in the stake and president of the stake high priests quorum.
2. He is a common judge.
3. He directs the Church welfare program and operations.
4. He oversees finances, records, reports, and properties.

These responsibilities are outlined in this section. The stake president and his counselors should seek the Lord's guidance in fulfilling them.

The stake president should delegate many assignments to his counselors, high councilors, the stake clerk, the stake executive secretary, and assistant stake clerks. This allows him to concentrate on duties that he alone should ordinarily do.

If the stake president is absent, ill, or otherwise unable to perform his duties, a counselor may act in his place temporarily except as noted in this handbook. The counselor is to consult with a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area President if he has questions about acting for the stake president.

Presiding High Priest

The stake president has the following responsibilities as the presiding high priest in the stake. His counselors assist him.

Teach the Gospel

Members of the stake presidency are teachers. They teach the gospel in meetings, classes, and interviews. They should also bear their testimonies often.

The stake president and his counselors base their teaching on the scriptures and the words of the latter-day prophets (see D&C 42:12; 52:9). They teach by the power of the Spirit, strengthening members' faith in the Savior and their commitment to obey His commandments (see D&C 42:14; 43:15).

Members of the stake presidency oversee others who teach the gospel in the stake. They ensure that teaching is effective and doctrinally correct. They also encourage members to study, teach, and live the gospel at home.

For more information about teaching, see pages 300–306 in *Book 2*.

Instruct Leaders

Members of the stake presidency instruct leaders in doctrines, responsibilities, policies, and procedures. This instruction should inspire leaders to grow spiritually and seek the Lord's guidance in fulfilling their callings.

Resources for instructing leaders include the scriptures, teachings of the latter-day prophets, Church handbooks, and other Church-produced training materials.

Oversee Efforts to Accomplish the Mission of the Church

Missionary Work (Proclaiming the Gospel). Members of the stake presidency have the following responsibilities for missionary work:

They set an example in sharing the gospel and fellowshipping new members. They also encourage members to participate in these efforts.

They assign a high councilor to assist them in overseeing missionary work. He is an important resource to them in missionary matters. He may be assigned to coordinate and follow through on much of the administrative work. He may also be assigned to plan and conduct training for ward mission leaders, ward missionaries, and ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders, in coordination with bishops.

They ensure that priesthood leaders and others are instructed in their missionary responsibilities.

They ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings relating to missionary work are taught regularly in stake and ward meetings.

The stake president oversees bishops in their missionary, retention, and activation responsibilities. He ensures that each ward has an effective ward mission plan, that a capable ward mission leader and an appropriate number of ward missionaries have been called, and that missionary coordination meetings are being held in the ward.

In his monthly interviews with bishops, the stake president asks for a report on the progress of investigators, new members, and less-active members in the ward. He and the bishop discuss plans and goals for these individuals. The bishop should bring a copy of the Progress Record form, maintained by the full-time missionaries, for this discussion. The bishop should also bring copies of the New Member Report form and the ward mission plan to review as needed.

The stake president interviews and recommends prospective full-time missionaries. He also sets them apart before their missions and interviews and releases them at the completion of their missions. (See pages 91–102.)

The stake president meets regularly with the full-time mission president to share reports on the progress of the work and to coordinate the use of full-time missionaries in the stake as follows:

1. *Number and location of missionaries.* The mission president determines the placement of missionaries within the mission. In consultation with bishops, the stake president may recommend the number and location of full-time missionaries to be assigned within the stake. The mission president then assigns missionaries according to their availability and other considerations.
2. *Assistance in activation efforts.* The stake president and mission president work together to make full-time missionaries available to assist local leaders in their efforts with less-active members. The mission president informs the stake president of the missionary support that he can make available. The stake president, in consultation with bishops, determines how much missionary support is needed. For information about full-time missionaries helping with activation efforts, see page 310 in *Book 2*.
3. *Assistance in training.* The stake president may ask the mission president for help in training local leaders and members, including ward missionaries. The mission president may involve the full-time missionaries in this training.
4. *Meals and housing for missionaries.* The stake president and mission president determine whether and to what extent Church members should provide meals and housing for missionaries.

Where there are large numbers of stakes in one mission, coordinating council meetings may be used to coordinate these matters (see page 60).

When requested by the mission president, the stake president may interview or counsel individual missionaries.

The stake presidency's responsibility for new members and less-active members is outlined on page 308 in *Book 2*.

Spiritual and Temporal Welfare (Perfecting the Saints). Each member of the stake presidency should set an example in spiritual welfare by praying, serving, keeping covenants, and striving for virtue and holiness in his own life (see Moroni 10:32–33; D&C 38:24). The stake presidency sets the spiritual tone in the stake.

One of the stake presidency's most important responsibilities is helping members build spiritual strength. The stake presidency should pray continually for guidance in this effort. Suggestions include teaching and testifying of the gospel, teaching members to pray and study the scriptures, emphasizing the importance of the family, helping members prepare to receive all essential ordinances and keep the associated covenants, providing opportunities to serve, making meetings edifying, and showing love by ministering to members individually.

Members of the stake presidency set an example in temporal welfare by striving to become self-reliant and by caring for the poor and needy. They also encourage members in these efforts.

Members of the stake presidency teach stake, ward, and quorum leaders their welfare responsibilities. The stake president takes special care to instruct bishops in the principles and policies of administering welfare assistance. As part of his monthly interview with each bishop, the stake president inquires about the welfare of individual ward members and discusses the use of fast offerings and the welfare assistance given to members.

Members of the stake presidency ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings relating to welfare are taught regularly in stake and ward meetings.

For information about welfare doctrines and principles, see pages 255–58 in *Book 2*. For information about the stake presidency's responsibilities to direct the Church welfare program and operations, see pages 8–10 in this book. This information is also available in *Providing in the Lord's Way: A Leader's Guide to Welfare*.

Temple and Family History Work (Redeeming the Dead). Members of the stake presidency oversee temple and family history work in the stake. They also set an example in doing this work. This includes regularly attending the temple where circumstances allow, identifying their kindred dead, and providing temple ordinances for them.

Members of the stake presidency assign one or more high councilors to assist them in overseeing temple and family history work.

They ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings of temple and family history work are taught regularly in stake and ward meetings. To help encourage members to participate, they share their testimonies and experiences relating to this work.

They help members prepare to receive their own temple ordinances. They also encourage members to identify their kindred dead and provide temple ordinances for them.

They interview stake members for temple recommends as outlined on pages 75–79. They also teach bishoprics how to conduct these interviews and issue recommends. They encourage members to attend the temple regularly where circumstances allow.

They determine whether the stake should participate in family record extraction and whether the stake should request a family history center.

For more information, see pages 75–89 in this book and the "Temple and Family History Work" section of *Book 2*.

Preside over the Melchizedek Priesthood

Members of the stake presidency have the following responsibilities in presiding over the Melchizedek Priesthood in the stake:

1. Serve as the presidency of the stake high priests quorum; the stake president is the quorum president (see page 163 in *Book 2*).
2. Oversee elders quorums (see page 163 in *Book 2*).
3. Oversee ordinations to the offices of elder and high priest (see pages 39–41 in this book).
4. Preside over the stake priesthood executive committee and the stake Melchizedek Priesthood committee (see pages 315 and 316 in *Book 2*).
5. Oversee home teaching (see pages 168–70 in *Book 2*).
6. Oversee efforts to minister to new members and less-active members (see pages 307–10 in *Book 2*).

Oversee the Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women

Members of the stake presidency have the following responsibilities in overseeing Aaronic Priesthood holders and young women in the stake:

1. Preside over the stake Aaronic Priesthood committee and the stake Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women committee (see page 316 in *Book 2*).
2. Oversee the stake Young Men and Young Women organizations.
3. Instruct bishoprics in their responsibilities for Aaronic Priesthood holders and young women.

For more information, see pages 178–79 and 214–15 in *Book 2*.

Direct the High Council

See pages 10–11.

Preside over Stake Committees and Councils

The stake president presides over the stake priesthood executive committee, stake council, stake welfare committee, and stake Melchizedek Priesthood committee.

The stake president usually assigns one of his counselors to preside over the stake Aaronic Priesthood committee, stake Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women committee, and stake committee for single members. The stake president or an assigned counselor is chairman of the stake public affairs council.

For information about these committees and councils, see pages 315–17 in *Book 2*.

Conduct Stake Business

The stake president conducts stake business with General Authorities and Area Seventies and receives counsel and instructions from them. He also oversees the goals and plans for each part of stake activity. When needed, he recommends the creation, division, or changing of boundaries of stakes and wards (see pages 167–71).

Oversee Callings and Releases

See pages 45–58.

2. Stake Administration

Oversee Stake Auxiliaries and Programs

The stake presidency oversees the stake auxiliary organizations:

Relief Society (see page 194 in *Book 2*)

Young Men (including Scouting, where authorized; see pages 178–79 in *Book 2* and the *Scouting Handbook*)

Young Women (see pages 214–15 in *Book 2*)

Primary (see pages 229–30 in *Book 2*)

Sunday School (see page 241 in *Book 2*)

The stake president oversees the stake Relief Society. He assigns his counselors to oversee the other auxiliaries under his direction. He also assigns a high councilor to be an adviser to each auxiliary presidency (assigning a high council adviser is optional for the Relief Society; if one is assigned, the stake president should continue to oversee the stake Relief Society personally with the high councilor's assistance).

The stake presidency ensures that the following Church programs are implemented in the stake and, if necessary, adapted to local circumstances. The stake president usually assigns primary responsibility for each program to one of his counselors. He also assigns a high councilor to help oversee each program (except military relations and except Church magazines if the stake executive secretary or someone else is assigned this responsibility).

Activities committee (see pages 271–76 in *Book 2*)

Church magazines and *Church News* (see pages 283 and 284 in *Book 2*)

Meetinghouse libraries (see pages 285–88 in *Book 2*)

Military relations (see pages 137–38 in this book)

Music (see pages 289–94 in *Book 2*)

Physical facilities (see pages 163–65 in this book)

Seminary and institute (see pages 129–34 in this book)

Single members (see pages 125–28 in this book)

Preside over Stake Meetings

The stake presidency plans the stake meetings listed on pages 61–63 in this book and pages 315–17 in *Book 2*. The stake president presides at these meetings unless a General Authority or Area Seventy attends. The stake president's counselors may conduct these meetings and may preside if the stake president is absent.

Oversee the Stake Patriarch

The stake president presides over the stake patriarch and should develop a close relationship with him. Guidelines for calling, ordaining, instructing, and overseeing the stake patriarch are provided in the following paragraphs. For information about patriarchal blessings, see pages 42–44 and the booklet *Information and Suggestions for Patriarchs*.

Calling, Sustaining, and Ordaining a Stake Patriarch. The Quorum of the Twelve directs the calling of stake patriarchs (see D&C 107:39). To recommend a man to be called as a stake patriarch, the stake president completes a New Patriarch Recommendation form and submits it to the Quorum of the Twelve. In making this recommendation, he should fast and pray for the Spirit to direct him. The recommendation should be approved by his counselors.

A man whom the stake president recommends as stake patriarch should be a worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holder. He should be mature in the gospel and the Church, a worthy husband and patriarch in his own home, and sensitive to guidance from the Spirit. He should have received his own patriarchal blessing, and normally he should be age 55 or older. He must be married.

If the Quorum of the Twelve approves the recommendation, the stake president may be authorized to interview and call the patriarch, present his name for a sustaining vote at the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting, and ordain him. Because the calling of patriarch is an office of the Melchizedek Priesthood, a patriarch is ordained, not set apart.

A stake president may not assign a counselor to ordain a patriarch. Nor should he invite others to stand with him during the ordination of a patriarch.

Calling a Second Stake Patriarch. The Quorum of the Twelve normally does not approve calling a second patriarch for a stake unless the present patriarch is unable to give the number of blessings requested or has been given nonfunctioning status (see page 7). Nor does the Quorum of the Twelve normally approve an additional patriarch simply because a stake is geographically large or includes members who do not speak the majority language. If a stake includes members who speak different languages, bishops and stake presidencies may authorize them to go to a patriarch in a nearby stake who can give the blessing in the member's own language.

Instructing a Newly Called Stake Patriarch. The stake president instructs a newly called patriarch in the sacred, revelatory nature of the office before the patriarch begins giving blessings. The stake president carefully reviews with him the instructions in *Information and Suggestions for Patriarchs* and *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: The Patriarch.*

Supervising the Work of the Stake Patriarch. The stake president supervises the work of the stake patriarch as outlined in *Information and Suggestions for Patriarchs.* He should not delegate this responsibility to one of his counselors. Patriarchs benefit from a close relationship with their stake president.

The stake president interviews the patriarch at least twice each year. He also reviews blessings the patriarch has given at least twice a year. As needed, the stake president may make general suggestions regarding the content of the patriarch's blessings. The stake president also discusses the patriarch's feelings about the work, the health and welfare of his family, and any other matters on which the patriarch seeks or needs counsel.

The stake president ensures that copies of transcribed blessings are given promptly to recipients. He also ensures that at least every two years the originals of all blessings are sent to Church headquarters at the following address:

Patriarchal Blessings
50 East North Temple Street, Room 215E
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3421

Nonfunctioning Status for a Patriarch. The ordination of a patriarch is for a lifetime, so he is not released. However, he may be given nonfunctioning status, excusing him from giving blessings.

If a patriarch is incapacitated by age or illness, as determined by the stake president or the patriarch, the stake president writes a recommendation to the Quorum of the Twelve that the patriarch be given nonfunctioning status. If the recommendation is approved, the patriarch's name is not presented for a sustaining vote at the next stake conference when Church officers are sustained. The stake president notifies bishops not to send members to that patriarch. The stake president also ensures that all the blessings the patriarch has given are sent promptly to the recipients and to Church headquarters at the address given above.

A patriarch is also given nonfunctioning status if he leaves to serve a mission, is absent from his home for other reasons, moves to a different stake, or is approved to be called to a position of Church administration (see "Patriarchs Who Are Called to Another Church Position" in the next column). In such circumstances, the stake president sends written notification to the Quorum of the Twelve and follows the instructions in the previous paragraph.

A patriarch who has been given nonfunctioning status may continue to give patriarchal blessings to his lineal descendants (children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren) if the stake president determines that he is able to do so. The stake president should review these blessings and ensure that copies are sent to Church headquarters.

Returning a Patriarch to Functioning Status. To return a patriarch to functioning status, the stake president interviews him carefully and sends a written recommendation to the Quorum of the Twelve. If the recommendation is approved, the patriarch's name is presented for a sustaining vote at the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting.

Patriarchs Who Move to a Different Stake. If a patriarch moves to a different stake, his status becomes nonfunctioning. He should contact the president of the new stake as a courtesy to inform him of his residence there. If the stake president wants him to serve as a patriarch in the new stake, he contacts the patriarch's former stake president to confirm the patriarch's worthiness and past service. The new stake president then follows the procedure in the preceding paragraph.

If the stake president decides not to recommend having the patriarch serve in the new stake, the patriarch is given nonfunctioning status as explained in the previous column. However, the stake president should notify the Office of the Quorum of the Twelve of the patriarch's new address in the stake.

Patriarchs Who Are Called to Another Church Position. A patriarch may not be called to serve in a position of Church administration, such as bishop, high councilor, or stake president, unless the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve approve the call. Such a request is rarely approved. If it is approved, the patriarch is given nonfunctioning status as explained in the previous column.

Confidentiality of Patriarchal Blessings. To protect the confidentiality of patriarchal blessings, the stake president ensures that the patriarch understands that after the printed copies are prepared for the recipient and the blessing book, the audio recording of the blessing should be erased.

If there is an electronic copy of the text of the blessing, it should be deleted from all computer storage, including any storage devices to which it may have been copied.

If the computer is to be turned over to anyone else, either by sale, for salvage, or for use by others, the patriarch should ensure that previously deleted blessings cannot be recovered through any technical means. This should be done by either reformatting the hard drive or running a cleaning utility that will eliminate the possibility of recovering the text.

Direct the Perpetual Education Fund Program

In countries where Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) loans are approved, the stake president administers the program for his stake under the direction of the area PEF committee. He directs efforts to seek out worthy young adults, particularly returned missionaries, and encourages them to develop a plan for a career and schooling.

When a person requests a PEF loan, a member of the stake presidency interviews him or her for worthiness and need.

PEF efforts are coordinated with the Church Educational System, Church Employment Resource Services, and others who assist in the stake.

For more information about the PEF program, see page 135.

Direct Public Affairs Efforts

The stake presidency directs public affairs efforts in the stake. Members of the stake presidency also have primary responsibility for the Church's good standing in the community and for relationships with civic and community leaders. The stake president serves as the primary Church spokesman to the news media on matters that pertain to the stake.

The stake president or an assigned counselor organizes and oversees the stake public affairs council. The stake president may also be designated by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency to be chairman of a multistake or national public affairs council.

For more information, see pages 295–98 in *Book 2.*

Perform Civil Marriages

The stake president may perform civil marriages where legally authorized by local government authority. For instructions, see "Civil Marriage" on pages 83–84. He may not assign this to a counselor.

Respond to Accidents and Other Serious Situations

The stake president should be notified promptly of any injuries, illnesses, accidents, and property damage that occur on Church property or are the result of something that happened during a Church-sponsored activity in the stake. In these situations he should follow the instructions on pages 164–65.

Refer Legal Matters

See page 178.

Common Judge

As a common judge, the stake president conducts worthiness interviews (see page 23), counsels stake members (see pages 25–27), and administers Church discipline (see pages 105–23). He may also be asked to certify the worthiness of Church employees (see page 174).

Direct the Church Welfare Program and Operations

Oversee Welfare Assistance in Special Circumstances

Welfare assistance is administered by bishops. However, in the following circumstances a bishop must receive special approval before providing welfare assistance.

Medical Expenses That Exceed $5,000. If the total Church payment of a needy member's medical expenses is expected to exceed $5,000, the stake president's approval is required before the bishop may commit to pay health care providers. The stake president may authorize the bishop to pay up to a total of $10,000. Outside the United States and Canada, Area Presidencies may decrease the $5,000 and $10,000 limits as circumstances warrant.

In the United States and Canada, the Presiding Bishopric's approval is required if the total Church payment of a needy member's medical expenses is expected to exceed $10,000. If the stake president feels that Church payment may be justified, he submits a recommendation for the Presiding Bishopric to consider. He submits this recommendation through Welfare Health Services (1-801-240-3635 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3635).

Outside the United States and Canada, the stake president contacts the Area Presidency for instructions if Church payment of a needy member's medical expenses is expected to exceed the amount a stake president may authorize. The Area Presidency may authorize expenditures of up to $25,000. If the Area Presidency feels that expenditures exceeding this amount may be justified, they submit a recommendation for the Presiding Bishopric to consider. They submit this recommendation through Welfare Health Services (1-801-240-3635 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3635).

When the Church provides assistance with medical expenses, the member or family should be designated as the party responsible for payment.

Other Special Medical Circumstances. Fast-offering funds may not be used to help pay for medical care that is beyond the usual and customary practice unless priesthood leaders have received approval in advance from the First Presidency in each case (see page 19 for principles about providing medical care).

Fast-offering funds may not be used to help pay for medical care that is received outside the administrative area of the Church where the member's ward is located unless priesthood leaders have received approval in advance from the Presiding Bishopric in each case (see page 19).

If the bishop feels that Church payment of medical expenses in either of these special circumstances may be justified, he counsels with the stake president. If the stake president agrees, he may submit a recommendation for the presiding councils to consider an exception. He submits this recommendation through Welfare Health Services (1-801-240-3635 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3635).

Welfare Assistance for Bishops and Stake Presidents. When a bishop or members of his immediate family need welfare assistance, he reviews the needs and the proposed assistance with the stake president. The stake president's written approval is required before the bishop may sign a bishop's order for Church welfare assistance or expend fast-offering funds for himself or for immediate family members. If fast-offering funds are used, the stake president reviews the bills that the fast offerings will pay. A similar procedure is followed when obtaining help for the bishop or his immediate family through Church welfare operations.

When a stake president or members of his immediate family need welfare assistance, he contacts the bishop of the ward in which he resides. The bishop follows the principles and guidelines governing welfare assistance as he would for any other Church member.

Keep Needs and Assistance Confidential

The stake president should keep confidential the needs of members and the help that is provided.

Assist Bishops If Fast-Offering Expenditures Exceed Contributions

See page 20.

Preside over the Stake Welfare Committee

See pages 315–16 in *Book 2*.

Organize the Stake Bishops' Welfare Council

See page 63.

Participate in the Regional Welfare Committee

See pages 60–61.

Be the Agent Stake President for Welfare Operations

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency appoints an agent stake to each bishops' storehouse, cannery, home storage center, employment resource center, production project, Deseret Industries store, and other welfare operation or project in the area. The agent stake president is accountable to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. The agent stake assignment usually changes every three to five years.

All stakes that are served by a welfare operation, not just the agent stake, may be called on to provide volunteer labor for it. These efforts are coordinated in regional welfare committee meetings or coordinating council meetings (see pages 60–61).

Organize an Agent Stake Operating Committee

When a stake is assigned to oversee a Church welfare operation, the president of the agent stake organizes an agent stake operating committee. This committee is composed of the stake president or an assigned counselor, the stake bishops' welfare council chairman, the stake Relief Society president, the manager of the operation, and other specialists as needed. This committee meets regularly to provide priesthood guidance and support to the operation manager, to ensure that the operation serves needy members appropriately, and to coordinate volunteer labor.

Prepare for and Respond to Emergencies

The stake president directs the stake welfare committee in preparing a stake emergency response plan. This plan should be coordinated with similar plans in the welfare region and community. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency provides guidelines for preparing the plan.

The stake welfare committee makes assignments for carrying out the stake's emergency response plan. The committee periodically reviews and updates these assignments.

During an emergency, the stake presidency receives reports from the bishops on the condition of

Church members and Church property. The stake presidency then reports to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

During an emergency, Church leaders should make the services of the Church available to civil authorities. Church leaders should also take independent action in behalf of Church members as needed.

With approval from a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency, Church buildings, except temples, may be used as shelters, first-aid stations, feeding locations, and recreation centers during emergencies. Stake and ward welfare committees ensure that buildings are maintained and protected from destruction and vandalism. Committee members also ensure that those using the buildings observe Church standards of conduct, including the Word of Wisdom, while they are in the building.

During an emergency, the stake president oversees public information that is released locally by the Church, ensuring that it is accurate and timely. He may respond to questions from the media, or he may assign a stake public affairs director or assistant to do so. He also may serve as the local Church spokesman or may designate a spokesman. The stake president reviews and approves all news releases given by the spokesman. He also gives proper recognition to civil authorities and relief agencies.

Assign a Bishop to Assist Transients

Where there are two or more wards in the vicinity, the stake president may appoint one bishop to handle all requests from transients. This helps avoid duplication and confusion.

Where large numbers of transients are seeking assistance, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may request approval from the Presiding Bishopric to call a Church-service worker to handle such requests. When possible, the man who is called should have served as a bishop, be experienced in helping the needy, be familiar with the use of Church welfare resources, and serve under the direction of the bishops' storehouse manager. Exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by the Presiding Bishopric.

Provide Support to Members in Prisons, Hospitals, and Other Institutions

Stake presidents are encouraged to provide support to members in prisons, hospitals, and other institutions within their boundaries. They should do so within priesthood channels and according to the guidelines established by the Church and the institutions.

The stake president determines the support that is to be provided at each institution. He also supervises the support, assisted by other local priesthood leaders. If the stake needs help providing service to institutions within its boundaries, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may assign one or more nearby stakes to assist.

The stake president or an assigned bishop may call a priesthood holder to oversee the support that is given to members at these institutions. In prisons, men should be called to work with male inmates, and at least two men, two women, or a husband and wife should be called to work with female inmates.

Worship services for members in prisons, hospitals, and other institutions may be simplified as necessary to meet the needs of those involved. Services usually follow the same format as sacrament meeting except that the sacrament is not administered to inmates in prisons. As an exception to Church policy, when services are held in prisons, inmates may participate by offering prayers or giving talks regardless of their religious affiliation or standing in the Church.

Other support that may be given to members in these institutions includes counseling, home teaching, visiting teaching, Sunday School classes, family home evening, seminary or institute classes, and other special programs.

In collaboration with the Priesthood Department at Church headquarters, LDS Family Services is responsible for materials and professional resources to assist those in correctional institutions and their families. For assistance from LDS Family Services, call 1-801-240-3646 or contact a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

Oversee Finances, Records, Reports, and Properties

See pages 139–65.

High Council

The stake presidency calls twelve high priests to form the stake high council (see D&C 102:1). Elders may be considered to serve on the high council but must first be ordained high priests. (District councils may be composed of elders and high priests.) The stake presidency may call military chaplains who live in the stake to serve as high councilors.

Under the direction of the stake presidency, high councilors help oversee the work of the Church in the stake. They have the following advisory and administrative responsibilities:

1. Represent the stake presidency in high priests groups, elders quorums, wards, and branches.

2. Serve as advisers to stake auxiliary presidencies. Assist the stake presidency in fulfilling their responsibilities for missionary work in the stake. Help oversee temple and family history work and the Church programs listed on page 6.
3. Serve on the stake priesthood executive committee, stake council, and stake welfare committee. Serve on the stake Melchizedek Priesthood committee or stake Aaronic Priesthood committee as assigned.
4. Participate in stake disciplinary councils.

These responsibilities are explained in detail on pages 163–64 in *Book 2*.

The high council does not meet unless a member of the stake presidency is present.

Clerks

Every stake should have a qualified, functioning stake clerk. One or more assistant stake clerks may also be called. If assistant stake clerks are called, the stake presidency may assign them to various parts of stake record keeping, such as financial records, reports on member participation, and historical records. Other assignments that are given to clerks include overseeing Church materials in the stake and serving as the stake technology specialist.

The stake clerk is called and set apart by the stake president. Assistant stake clerks are called and set apart by the stake president or an assigned counselor. Clerks are trained by the stake presidency and work under their direction. Assistant stake clerks also work under the direction of the stake clerk.

The stake clerk and assistant stake clerks should be Melchizedek Priesthood holders who are worthy to have a temple recommend.

All clerks should have unquestionable integrity and demonstrate a willingness to follow the Lord's commandments. They should be honest and careful record keepers. They should also be capable teachers and administrators. The clerk who is assigned to finances should be qualified to handle financial matters. Calling clerks who meet these qualifications will help ensure that they have the Spirit of the Lord with them as they work with Church finances and records.

The duration of clerks' service should be sufficient for them to learn their duties, magnify their callings, and preserve continuity in their work. They do not need to be released when a stake presidency is reorganized.

The stake clerk's responsibilities are outlined on pages 139–41 and 153. The responsibilities of assistant stake clerks are outlined on pages 141–42 and 153 in this book and page 284 in *Book 2*.

Stake Executive Secretary

The stake president or an assigned counselor calls and sets apart a stake executive secretary. The executive secretary should be a Melchizedek Priesthood holder who is worthy to have a temple recommend.

The executive secretary is an assistant to the stake presidency. He meets with the stake presidency and prepares meeting agendas as instructed. He also attends meetings of the stake priesthood executive committee, stake council, and stake welfare committee.

He coordinates stake business between the stake presidency and high council. He also schedules appointments for the stake presidency. He distributes copies of Church publications and correspondence promptly.

He reviews the status of home teaching in the stake with the stake presidency.

He coordinates the Church magazine subscription efforts in the stake unless the stake president assigns this responsibility to someone else (see page 284 in *Book 2*).

He advises the stake presidency of members who are entering the military or are already in military service. Under the direction of the stake presidency, he may help coordinate Church orientation for stake members who are entering the military (see page 138).

He instructs ward executive secretaries as requested by the stake president or by bishops.

3. Ward Administration

Purpose and Organization of a Ward

During His mortal ministry, the Savior organized His Church and established congregations of believers. Members of His Church met together to worship, learn the gospel, and serve and strengthen each other.

As in the ancient Church, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are organized into congregations. Large congregations are called wards. Small congregations are called branches. The purpose of these congregations is to help all people "come unto Christ, and be perfected in him" (Moroni 10:32).

Bishopric

The bishop holds the priesthood keys to preside over a ward and direct the work of the Church in the ward. He and his counselors minister to ward members in love, helping "bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39).

The bishop has five principal responsibilities in presiding over a ward:

1. He is president of the Aaronic Priesthood.
2. He is the presiding high priest.
3. He is a common judge.
4. He administers the Church welfare program.
5. He oversees finances, records, and the use and security of the meetinghouse.

These responsibilities are outlined in this section. The bishop and his counselors should seek the Lord's guidance in fulfilling them.

The bishop should delegate many assignments to his counselors, the ward clerk, the ward executive secretary, assistant ward clerks, and quorum and auxiliary leaders. This allows him to concentrate on duties that he alone should ordinarily do.

If the bishop is absent, ill, or otherwise unable to perform his duties, a counselor may act in his place temporarily except as noted in this handbook. The counselor is to consult with the stake president if he has questions about acting for the bishop.

Presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood

The bishopric is the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood in the ward (see D&C 107:15). The bishop is also president of the priests quorum in the ward (see D&C 107:87–88). The bishopric should study passages in the scriptures and instructions in the handbooks that pertain to the Aaronic Priesthood. The bishop and his counselors have similar responsibilities for young women in the ward as they have for Aaronic Priesthood holders.

Members of the bishopric watch over and nurture young men and young women in the ward. They help Aaronic Priesthood holders accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood (see pages 177–78 in *Book 2*). They help young women live the Young Women values (see pages 211–12 in *Book 2*). They help all youth live the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*.

The bishopric oversees Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Young Women classes. The bishopric also oversees the ward Young Men and Young Women organizations. The bishop presides over the ward Aaronic Priesthood committee and bishopric youth committee.

For more information, see pages 180–81 and 216–17 in *Book 2*.

Presiding High Priest

The bishop has the following responsibilities as the presiding high priest in the ward. His counselors assist him.

Teach the Gospel

Members of the bishopric are teachers. They teach the gospel in meetings, classes, and interviews. They should also bear their testimonies often.

Members of the bishopric base their teaching on the scriptures and the words of the latter-day prophets (see D&C 42:12; 52:9). They teach by the power of the Spirit, strengthening members' faith in the Savior and their commitment to obey His commandments (see D&C 42:14; 43:15).

The bishop and his counselors oversee and support others who teach the gospel in the ward. They ensure that teaching is effective and doctrinally correct. They also encourage members to study, teach, and live the gospel at home.

For more information about teaching, see pages 300–306 in *Book 2*.

3. Ward Administration

Instruct Leaders

Members of the bishopric instruct leaders in doctrines, responsibilities, policies, and procedures. This instruction should inspire leaders to grow spiritually and seek the Lord's guidance in fulfilling their callings.

Resources for instructing leaders include the scriptures, teachings of the latter-day prophets, Church handbooks, and other Church-produced training materials.

Oversee Efforts to Accomplish the Mission of the Church

Missionary Work (Proclaiming the Gospel). Efforts to share the gospel are most effective when they are ward centered and ward directed. As the presiding high priest, the bishop is responsible for the work of sharing the gospel, retention, and activation in the ward. His counselors, the ward mission leader, and others assist him, but his personal participation and leadership are essential.

Members of the bishopric set an example in sharing the gospel and fellowshipping new members. They encourage and oversee others in these efforts, giving direction as needed.

Members of the bishopric ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings relating to missionary work are taught regularly in ward meetings and classes. They plan spiritually uplifting sacrament meetings that members feel comfortable inviting others to attend.

The bishopric helps prospective full-time missionaries prepare to serve missions. The bishop interviews and recommends worthy ward members to serve as full-time missionaries (see pages 91–102).

The bishopric oversees the priesthood executive committee and ward council in developing and implementing a ward mission plan (see *Preach My Gospel,* page 220). Based on this plan, the bishopric coordinates the ward's missionary, retention, and activation efforts. The Progress Record form, which is maintained by the full-time missionaries, is a valuable resource for planning and coordinating this work. As needed, the bishopric makes assignments to help investigators, new members, and less-active members.

The bishop calls a ward mission leader, and the bishop or his counselors call ward missionaries. Members of the bishopric direct the efforts of the ward mission leader. He is an important resource to them in developing and implementing the ward mission plan and in following through on missionary matters.

The bishopric receives regular reports from the ward mission leader on the following efforts of ward members, ward missionaries, and full-time missionaries: sharing the gospel, teaching, fellowshipping, strengthening new members, and activation.

The bishop and his counselors get to know investigators and oversee efforts to fellowship them. The bishop meets with them personally before they are baptized, but he does not interview them for baptism or determine their worthiness.

A member of the bishopric usually presides at convert baptismal services in the ward. He or the ward mission leader usually conducts the services (see page 35).

The bishopric ensures that each new member is confirmed in a sacrament meeting of the ward as soon as reasonable after baptism (see page 36).

The bishopric oversees efforts to minister to new members and help them sustain their activity. These responsibilities are outlined on pages 308–9 in *Book 2.*

The bishopric oversees the assistance that full-time missionaries give priesthood leaders in activation efforts (see page 310 in *Book 2*).

In monthly interviews, the bishop reports to the stake president on the progress of investigators, new members, and less-active members in the ward. He and the stake president discuss plans and goals for these individuals. He should bring a copy of the Progress Record form, maintained by the full-time missionaries, for this discussion. He should also bring copies of the New Member Report form and the ward mission plan to review as needed.

Spiritual and Temporal Welfare (Perfecting the Saints). Each member of the bishopric should set an example in spiritual welfare by praying, serving, keeping covenants, and striving for virtue and holiness in his own life (see Moroni 10:32–33; D&C 38:24). The bishopric sets the spiritual tone in the ward.

One of the bishopric's most important responsibilities is helping members build spiritual strength. The bishopric should pray continually for guidance in this effort. Suggestions include teaching and testifying of the gospel, teaching members to pray and study the scriptures, emphasizing the importance of the family, helping members prepare to receive all essential ordinances and keep the associated covenants, providing opportunities to serve, making meetings edifying, and showing love by ministering to members individually.

Members of the bishopric set an example in temporal welfare by striving to become self-reliant and by caring for the poor and needy. They also encourage members in these efforts.

Members of the bishopric teach priesthood and auxiliary leaders their welfare responsibilities. They also ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings relating to welfare are taught regularly in ward meetings. For information about the bishopric's responsibilities to administer the Church welfare program, see pages 16–21 in this book. This information is also available in *Providing in the Lord's Way: A Leader's Guide to Welfare.*

Temple and Family History Work (Redeeming the Dead). Members of the bishopric oversee temple and family history work in the ward. They also oversee the high priests group leader, who coordinates this work in the ward. Where there is no high priests group leader, a member of the elders quorum presidency is assigned to fill this role.

Members of the bishopric set an example in doing temple and family history work. This includes regularly attending the temple where circumstances allow, identifying their kindred dead, and providing temple ordinances for them.

Members of the bishopric ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings of temple and family history work are taught regularly in stake and ward meetings. To help encourage members to participate, they share their testimonies and experiences relating to this work.

Members of the bishopric help members prepare to receive their own temple ordinances. They also encourage members to identify their kindred dead and provide temple ordinances for them.

Members of the bishopric ensure that a sufficient number of family history consultants are called to meet the needs of the ward. These consultants may be brethren or sisters. The bishopric works with the high priests group leader, the priesthood executive committee, and the ward council to identify people whom the consultants may assist in their family history work. The bishopric ensures that a family history consultant contacts new members soon after their baptism to help them gather information to provide baptisms for their deceased ancestors.

Members of the bishopric interview ward members for temple recommends as outlined on pages 75–79. They also help less-active members and endowed members who have not renewed their recommends for an extended time prepare to go to a temple. The bishop regularly organizes temple preparation seminars for these members (see page 75).

For more information, see pages 75–89 in this book and the "Temple and Family History Work" section of *Book* 2.

Coordinate the Work of the Melchizedek Priesthood

The bishop and his counselors work closely with the elders quorum president and high priests group leader in watching over quorum and group members, building strength in the quorum and group, and ensuring that the work of the priesthood is accomplished.

Members of the bishopric oversee home teaching in the ward (see pages 168–70 in *Book* 2). They also oversee efforts to minister to new members and less-active members (see pages 307–10 in *Book* 2).

At least quarterly the bishop holds priesthood interviews with the elders quorum president and high priests group leader.

Preside over Ward Committees and Councils

The bishop presides over the ward priesthood executive committee, ward council, ward welfare committee, ward Aaronic Priesthood committee, and bishopric youth committee. The bishop usually assigns one of his counselors to preside over the ward committee for single members. For information about these committees and councils, see pages 317–19 in *Book* 2.

Conduct Ward Business

The bishop conducts ward business with the stake presidency and receives counsel and instructions from presiding authorities. He also oversees the goals and plans for each part of ward activity.

Oversee Callings and Releases

See pages 45–58.

Oversee the Performance of Ordinances and Blessings

The bishop oversees the administration of the sacrament, blessing of children, baptism of eight-year-old members of record, confirmation, and ordination to Aaronic Priesthood offices.

The bishop usually initiates recommendations to the stake presidency for brethren to be ordained elders or high priests (see page 39). These ordinations are performed under the direction of the stake president.

Instructions for performing ordinances and blessings are outlined on pages 29–42.

Oversee Ward Auxiliaries and Programs

The bishopric oversees the ward auxiliary organizations:

Relief Society (see page 196 in *Book 2*)

Young Men (including Scouting, where authorized; see pages 180–81 in *Book 2* and the *Scouting Handbook*)

Young Women (see pages 216–17 in *Book 2*)

Primary (see pages 230–31 in *Book 2*)

Sunday School (see pages 241–42 in *Book 2*)

The bishop oversees the ward Relief Society. He assigns his counselors to oversee the other auxiliaries under his direction.

The bishopric ensures that the following Church programs are implemented in the ward and, if necessary, adapted to local circumstances. The bishop usually assigns primary responsibility for each program to one of his counselors:

Activities committee (see pages 271–76 in *Book 2*)

Church magazines and *Church News* (see pages 283 and 284 in *Book 2*)

Meetinghouse library (see pages 285–88 in *Book 2*)

Military relations (see pages 137–38 in this book)

Music (see pages 289–94 in *Book 2*)

Physical facilities (see pages 163–65 in this book)

Seminary and institute (see pages 129–34 in this book)

Single members (see pages 125–28 in this book)

Preside over Ward Meetings

The bishopric plans the ward meetings listed on pages 63–67 in this book and pages 317–19 in *Book 2*. The bishop presides at these meetings unless a member of the stake presidency, a General Authority, or an Area Seventy attends. The bishop's counselors may conduct these meetings and may preside if the bishop is absent.

Perform Civil Marriages

The bishop may perform civil marriages where legally authorized by local government authority. For instructions, see "Civil Marriage" on pages 83–84. He may not assign this to a counselor.

Conduct Funeral and Burial Services

The bishop, or an assigned counselor in his absence, conducts funeral and burial services for ward members and for others as requested (see pages 68–69).

Respond to Accidents and Other Serious Situations

The bishop should be notified promptly of any injuries, illnesses, accidents, and property damage that occur on Church property or are the result of something that happened during a Church-sponsored activity in the ward. The bishop should notify the stake president. Additional instructions are provided on pages 164–65.

Refer Legal Matters

See page 178.

Common Judge

The bishop is "to be a judge in Israel, to do the business of the church, to sit in judgment upon transgressors upon testimony as it shall be laid before him according to the laws, by the assistance of his counselors, whom he has chosen or will choose among the elders of the church.

"This is the duty of a bishop. . . .

"Thus shall he be a judge, even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion" (D&C 107:72–74).

As a common judge, the bishop conducts worthiness interviews (see pages 23–24), counsels ward members (see pages 25–27), and administers Church discipline (see pages 105–23). He may also be asked to certify the worthiness of Church employees (see page 174) and of applicants for Perpetual Education Fund loans.

Administer the Church Welfare Program

The office of bishop carries with it a special mandate to care for the poor and needy (see D&C 84:112; 107:68). The bishop's responsibilities for caring for the needy and administering the Church welfare program are outlined in this section. The bishop is assisted by his counselors; Melchizedek Priesthood, Aaronic Priesthood, and Relief Society leaders; and home teachers and visiting teachers.

Basic Welfare Principles in Caring for the Poor and Needy

Through the Church, the Lord has established a way to care for the poor and needy and help them regain their self-reliance. When Church members are doing all they can to provide for themselves but still cannot meet their basic needs, they should first turn to their families for help. When this is not sufficient, the Church stands ready to help.

The bishop is entrusted with the sacred responsibility of using Church funds and commodities to care for the poor and needy members of the ward. He determines who should receive such assistance and how it should be given. In making this determination, he should bear in mind that the temporal circumstances and needs of members vary from country to country. A family that might be considered needy in one location might not be considered so if they lived elsewhere. Also, members who are considered poor by some often do not view themselves as being poor.

In determining which Church members need help and what help to provide, the bishop should seek inspiration while applying the following basic welfare principles:

Strengthen Needy Members. The objectives of Church welfare assistance are to (1) help members become self-reliant and stand independent of all welfare assistance, regardless of its source; (2) help members become stronger spiritually and learn to provide for others; and (3) build integrity, self-respect, dignity, and soundness of character in each person who receives help.

Give Temporary Help. Church assistance is normally given to meet temporary needs as members strive to become self-reliant. It is intended to help people help themselves and develop independence, not dependence. Even the disabled, aged, and others who may require long-term assistance should be given opportunities to do all they can to help themselves.

Assist with Necessities. The Church helps needy members by providing the goods and services they need to sustain life. In general, needy members should be assisted with basic life-sustaining necessities common to most members of the ward.

The Church does not provide the means to maintain an affluent standard of living. Members who are temporarily unable to provide for themselves may need to alter their standard of living until they are self-reliant. They should not rely on Church welfare to insure them against temporary hardship or to allow them to continue their present standard of living without interruption.

Provide Opportunities to Work. Work is a spiritual and temporal necessity. When members receive Church welfare assistance, the bishop gives them opportunities to work to the extent of their ability for the assistance they receive. When they work for assistance, they remain industrious, maintain self-respect, and increase their ability to be self-reliant (see page 19).

Seek Out the Needy

The bishop should be aware of the temporal circumstances of needy ward members and ensure that those in need receive proper care. It is not enough to assist only when asked. The bishop should seek out the poor and the needy. He should also be aware of the conditions of single parents, the aged, the disabled, the fatherless, the widowed, and others who have special needs.

The bishop can identify needy ward members in many ways. One way is through promptings of the Spirit. He should listen for the Spirit to prompt him to inquire about members' well-being and to reveal undisclosed needs.

The New Testament teaches that "pure religion . . . is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (James 1:27). Seeking out the poor and needy will often require bishops and those who assist them to visit ward members in their homes.

The bishop may also identify welfare needs during meetings of the ward priesthood executive committee, ward council, and ward welfare committee. Interviews with the elders quorum president, high priests group leader, and Relief Society president also help him identify welfare needs.

Home teachers and visiting teachers can also help identify welfare needs. They should inquire about the well-being of those whom they visit. They report any welfare needs to their priesthood or Relief Society leader, who reports them to the bishop.

Under the direction of the bishop, home teachers and visiting teachers can help members assess the causes of welfare needs, prepare plans to fulfill the needs, assess resources that could lead toward self-reliance, and provide encouragement. When possible, home teachers and visiting teachers also help meet these needs.

Determine What Assistance to Render

The bishop determines how much assistance to provide as Church welfare and when and how to provide it. Individual circumstances vary, so he should seek guidance from the Lord for each situation. He should also be guided by established welfare policies.

To determine what welfare assistance to provide, the bishop considers the causes of members' needs. He also evaluates what members have done and may do to provide for themselves and their families.

Completing a Needs and Resources Analysis form may help the bishop determine what assistance to provide. If the circumstances are complicated and additional information is needed, bishops in the United States and Canada may consider using the Needs and Resources Analysis Supplement form.

When appropriate and without breaking confidences, the bishop may include the Relief Society president in determining what assistance to provide. He may assign her to visit members to assess their needs and suggest how to respond to them. This may include preparing an itemized list of basic food and clothing needs. It may also include preparing a Bishop's Order for Commodities form for the bishop to review. The bishop's signature on this form authorizes service at a bishops' storehouse or purchases from a local vendor. The Relief Society president's role in making these visits is explained more fully on pages 208–9 in *Book 2*.

Generally, the bishop assists only those members who currently live within his own ward's boundaries.

Individuals who are not members of the Church are usually referred to local community resources if they need welfare assistance.

Render Assistance

The following guidelines will help the bishop provide appropriate welfare assistance.

Draw upon the Lord's Storehouse. The Lord's storehouse includes the time, talents, skills, compassion, consecrated materials, and financial resources of faithful Church members. The bishop is the Lord's agent in using these resources to assist the poor and needy (see D&C 42:34). As he uses these resources to care for the needy in the Lord's way, both givers and receivers are blessed (see D&C 104:16; Acts 20:35).

1. *Fast offerings.* Fast offerings are a primary resource of the Lord's storehouse. The bishop uses fast offerings to provide necessities to needy members. With these funds the bishop may provide food, clothing, shelter, medical assistance, or other life-sustaining aid. Following are some guidelines for how bishops should administer fast-offering assistance:

   All payments of fast-offering funds are to be approved by the bishop.

   It is preferred that the bishop provide members commodities rather than give them money or pay their bills. If necessary, fast offerings may be used to buy the commodities. Members then can use their own money to pay their obligations. If members do not have money to pay all of their immediate and essential obligations, the bishop normally makes payments directly to the provider of the goods or services, not to the person being assisted.

   The bishop may not loan fast offerings to members, and members are not required to repay welfare assistance they receive from the Church. When members are again in a position to do so, they should be encouraged to contribute generously to the fast-offering fund.

   The bishop may not use fast offerings to pay off members' consumer debt or obligations incurred in business failures or speculative ventures.

   For information about using fast-offering funds to pay a needy member's medical expenses, see page 19.

   Any fast-offering assistance to the bishop or his immediate family members must first be approved in writing by the stake president (see page 9).

   Two authorized signers should always sign checks that are written for fast-offering assistance. The authorized signature card, where used, should be up-to-date and should be submitted to the Church administration office.

   The payee of a check or the person being assisted should not be related to either of the persons who signs the check. Nor should the payee of the check or the person being assisted be one of the persons who signs the check.

   For information about the law of the fast, see page 20. For information about gathering and accounting for fast offerings, see page 155.

2. *Other ward resources.* In caring for the needy, the bishop also directs the use of ward resources other than fast offerings, including the time, talents, skills, compassion, and consecrated materials of ward members. He does this by directing the ward welfare committee; by counseling, as appropriate, with high priests group, elders quorum, and Relief Society leaders; by asking families, home teachers, and visiting teachers to serve the needy in specific ways; and by using resources made available by the stake welfare committee.

3. *Other Church welfare resources.* In some parts of the world, the Church has established welfare operations. These include Church employment resource centers, Deseret Industries stores, bishops' storehouses, canneries, home storage centers, grain storage facilities, and a variety of commodity production projects. The Church also contracts with LDS Family Services to provide counseling, foster care, assistance to unwed parents, and adoption services to members.

Where these welfare operations and contracted services exist, they provide resources that bishops can use to help the poor and needy. If a bishop needs information about such resources in his area, he should contact the chairman of the stake bishops' welfare council or his stake president.

Use Appropriate Non-Church Resources. Members may use appropriate services in the community to meet their basic needs. These services may include hospitals, physicians, and other sources of medical care; job training and placement services; services for disabled persons; professional counselors or social workers; domestic violence centers; and alcohol or drug treatment services. The bishop and the ward welfare committee should become familiar with the resources that are available in the community. Members should be reminded to maintain gospel standards while using such services.

In some instances, members may decide to seek welfare assistance from the government. The bishop should advise members to comply with any laws that regulate the receipt of non-Church assistance, especially while receiving Church welfare assistance. Bishops should be careful not to duplicate welfare assistance.

Regardless of the source of assistance, members should avoid becoming dependent on these sources and strive to become self-reliant. Where possible, they should work in return for the assistance they receive.

Help Needy Members Obtain Medical Care. The bishop may help arrange and pay for medical care for needy ward members. In deciding whether the Church should help pay these expenses, the bishop determines whether the care is necessary based on sound medical advice. He also determines whether family members are able and willing to assist. In addition, he determines whether the member is fully using insurance, government assistance, and other available benefits.

If the bishop feels that the Church should help pay a needy member's medical expenses, he asks the health care providers if they will reduce their fees. He ensures that the Church promptly pays the expenses it has agreed to pay. When the Church provides assistance with medical expenses, the member or family should be designated as the party responsible for payment.

The bishop may not pay more than $5,000 of a needy member's medical expenses unless authorized by the stake president as outlined on page 8. Outside the United States and Canada, Area Presidencies may decrease the $5,000 limit as circumstances warrant. (In districts, when expenses exceed the limit of what the branch president may authorize, he normally refers the matter to the mission president, not the district president.)

When fast-offering funds are used to help pay for a needy member's medical care, the care should be consistent with what is normally provided in the local culture. Fast-offering funds may not be used to help pay for medical care that is beyond the usual and customary practice unless priesthood leaders have received approval in advance from the First Presidency in each case.

Any medical care that is paid for with fast-offering funds should be obtained at the nearest appropriate medical facility within the administrative area of the Church where the member's ward is located. Fast-offering funds may not be used to help pay for medical care that is received outside the administrative area unless priesthood leaders have received approval in advance from the Presiding Bishopric in each case.

If a bishop feels that a special medical circumstance may justify seeking approval for Church payment of medical expenses, he counsels with his stake president. If the stake president agrees, he may seek this approval as outlined on page 9.

Fast-offering funds may not be used to pay for medical or health care that is ethically or legally questionable. Another restriction on using fast-offering funds for medical care is outlined in "Self-Awareness Groups" on pages 184–85.

Give Work Assignments to Members Who Receive Assistance

The bishop strives to give work assignments that are meaningful. Ideally, needy members are given assignments that allow them to serve others. The bishop ensures that members are given the instruction they need to fulfill their assignments.

When giving a work assignment, the bishop asks the members to commit themselves to fulfilling it. If they are reluctant or refuse to work, he should help them understand that work assignments are given to bless them.

There are many creative ways to provide work opportunities. Bishops may include the ward welfare committee in compiling a list of such opportunities. Where local Church welfare operations exist, they may provide work opportunities and training for people who need Church assistance.

Administer Fast Offerings

Encourage Members to Live the Law of the Fast. The bishopric encourages ward members to fast each fast Sunday for two consecutive meals and to contribute a fast offering at least equal to the value of the food they would have eaten. If possible, members are encouraged to be generous and give much more than the value of two meals.

The bishopric teaches members that fasting and contributing fast offerings will bless their lives and the lives of the needy. These principles should be taught in priesthood meetings, Relief Society and other auxiliary meetings, home visits, and sacrament meetings. The bishop also teaches these principles in temple recommend interviews and tithing settlement interviews.

Oversee the Gathering and Accounting of Fast Offerings. See page 155 in this book and page 186 in *Book 2*.

Use Fast Offerings to Render Assistance. See pages 18–19.

Consult with the Stake President in Special Circumstances

Fast-Offering Expenditures That Exceed Contributions. When fast-offering expenditures will exceed contributions in a ward, the stake president counsels with the bishop to make sure that he and ward members correctly understand and apply the principles of self-reliance and providing for the poor and needy. Procedures for obtaining additional fast offerings from the Church are outlined in instructions sent to stake and ward financial clerks.

Surplus Fast Offerings. Procedures for remitting surplus fast offerings to the Church are outlined in instructions sent to stake and ward financial clerks.

Special Medical Circumstances. See pages 8–9, 19.

Welfare Assistance for Bishops and Stake Presidents or Members of Their Immediate Families. See page 9.

Preside over the Ward Welfare Committee

See page 318 in *Book 2*.

Participate in the Stake Bishops' Welfare Council

See page 63.

Serve on the Stake Welfare Committee

The stake president assigns the bishop who is chairman of the stake bishops' welfare council to serve on the stake welfare committee. A suggested agenda for this committee's meetings is provided on pages 315–16 in *Book 2*.

Keep Needs and Assistance Confidential

The bishop should keep confidential the needs of members and the help that is provided. He should be careful not to embarrass members who need assistance. If he asks the Relief Society president or others to help, he shares only the information they need to fulfill their welfare duties. He also instructs them to maintain confidentiality. This helps safeguard the privacy and dignity of members who are being assisted.

Prepare for and Respond to Emergencies

The bishopric directs the ward welfare committee in preparing a ward emergency response plan. This plan should be coordinated with similar plans in the stake and community.

When emergencies arise, home teachers contact the families and individuals assigned to them and assess their condition and needs. Home teachers report to the elders quorum presidency and high priests group leadership, who report to the bishop. The bishop then reports to the stake presidency the condition of members and Church property. This system may also be used to communicate messages from the stake presidency or bishopric.

During an emergency, Church leaders should make the services of the Church available to civil authorities. Church leaders should also take independent action in behalf of Church members as needed. For information on using Church buildings during emergencies, see page 10.

Supplemental equipment, food, clothing, and services are available through bishops' storehouses, Deseret Industries, and LDS Family Services agencies where they are established. During emergencies, the bishop should request these commodities or services as needed.

Assist Transients

The bishop may assist members and others who are transients, but he should be discerning about the type and amount of assistance he gives. When possible, he contacts the bishop of the person's home ward before providing assistance.

Where there are two or more wards in the vicinity, the stake president may appoint one bishop to handle all requests from transients. This helps avoid duplication and confusion.

Individuals who are not members of the Church are usually referred to local community resources if they need welfare assistance.

Protect against Welfare Fraud and Abuse

Bishops should protect against welfare fraud and abuse. In the United States and Canada, bishops who have concerns about welfare fraud or abuse may call the bishops' help line (1-801-240-7887 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-7887). Bishops may also call the help line to verify a person's membership in the Church before giving welfare assistance. Outside the United States and Canada, bishops should contact the administration office.

Receive Humanitarian Aid Funds

The bishop receives members' contributions to the Church's humanitarian aid fund. Members make these contributions using the Tithing and Other Offerings form (see page 156). Members should contribute without designating how the funds should be used.

Oversee Finances, Records, and the Use and Security of the Meetinghouse

See pages 139–65.

Clerks

Every ward should have a qualified, functioning ward clerk. One or more assistant ward clerks may also be called as needed. If assistant ward clerks are called, the bishopric may assign them to various parts of ward record keeping, such as financial records, membership records, reports on member participation, and historical records. The bishopric also assigns a clerk to oversee Church materials in the ward.

Ward clerks and assistant ward clerks are recommended by the bishop and called and set apart by a member of the stake presidency. They are trained by the bishopric and by stake clerks. They work under the direction of the bishopric. Assistant ward clerks also work under the direction of the ward clerk.

The ward clerk and assistant ward clerks should be priesthood holders who are worthy to have a temple recommend. The ward clerk and the assistant ward clerk assigned to finances should hold the Melchizedek Priesthood.

All clerks should have unquestionable integrity and demonstrate a willingness to follow the Lord's commandments. They should be honest and careful record keepers. They should also be capable teachers and administrators. The clerk assigned to finances should be qualified to handle financial matters. Calling clerks who meet these qualifications will help ensure that they have the Spirit of the Lord with them as they work with Church finances and records.

The duration of clerks' service should be sufficient for them to learn their duties, magnify their callings, and preserve continuity in their work. They do not need to be released when a bishopric is reorganized.

The ward clerk's responsibilities are outlined on pages 142–43 and 154. The responsibilities of assistant ward clerks are outlined on pages 143 and 154 in this book and page 284 in *Book 2*.

Ward Executive Secretary

The ward executive secretary is recommended by the bishop and called and set apart by a member of the stake presidency or an assigned high councilor. He should be a Melchizedek Priesthood holder who is worthy to have a temple recommend.

The executive secretary is an assistant to the bishopric. He meets with the bishopric and prepares meeting agendas as instructed. He also attends meetings of the ward priesthood executive committee, ward council, and ward welfare committee.

He coordinates ward business between the bishopric and other leaders. He schedules appointments for the bishopric. He also distributes Church publications and correspondence promptly.

He reviews the status of home teaching in the ward with the bishopric.

He coordinates the Church magazine subscription efforts in the ward unless the bishop assigns this responsibility to someone else (see page 284 in *Book 2*).

He assists with matters pertaining to the Church Educational System, such as seminary and institute registration.

He keeps a current list of the names and addresses of ward members who are in the military and circulates this list to the ward welfare committee. He also informs the stake executive secretary when members plan to enter the military.

4. Interviews and Counseling

Interviews

Each stake president and bishop is "a judge in Israel" (D&C 107:72). By this authority he conducts worthiness interviews and priesthood interviews. He represents the Lord in conducting these interviews. Accordingly, he should seek to bless members and help them live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

General Instructions for Worthiness Interviews

Stake presidents, bishops, and (when authorized) their counselors conduct worthiness interviews as outlined in this section. They should prepare spiritually so they can be guided by the Spirit during these interviews. They should also seek the power of discernment. This is a spiritual gift that will help them discern truth, as well as a member's needs (see D&C 46:27–28).

Worthiness interviews should be private. For example, a husband and wife are interviewed separately for temple recommends.

Careful listening is important during worthiness interviews. The member of the stake presidency or bishopric should give full and sincere attention to the person being interviewed. The interviewer also makes sure that the member understands the questions being asked. He sets aside enough time to conduct the interview in a dignified, unhurried manner.

General Instructions for Priesthood Interviews

Stake presidents, bishops, and their counselors regularly interview the priesthood leaders who report to them. One purpose of these interviews is to receive an accounting of the leader's responsibilities. Another purpose is to help the leader set goals and make plans to accomplish them. Where applicable, budgets and expenditures are also reviewed during these interviews.

The person who conducts a priesthood interview should instruct, encourage, and inspire leaders in their efforts to fulfill their callings. He should also express gratitude and strengthen the leader in his personal and family life.

Interviews Conducted by the Stake President

The stake president conducts the following interviews with stake members:

1. For temple recommends (see pages 75–79).
2. For recommendation of full-time missionaries and for release of missionaries who have returned home (see pages 93, 100, and 101–2).
3. For callings to serve as counselors in the stake presidency, as patriarchs, and as bishops, when authorized.
4. For callings to serve as elders quorum presidents and stake clerks.

The stake president holds a monthly priesthood interview with each bishop. He also interviews the stake patriarch at least twice each year (see page 7).

Interviews Conducted by the Stake President or His Counselors

The stake president or an assigned counselor conducts the following interviews with stake members. Before interviewing a person for any of the purposes listed below, the member of the stake presidency ensures that the person has been interviewed or cleared by the bishop. If a counselor encounters serious matters, such as transgressions that require confession, he should refer the member to the stake president without delay.

1. For temple recommends (see pages 75–79).
2. For ordination to the offices of elder and high priest (see page 39).
3. For callings to serve in Church positions (see pages 45–58).
4. For an endorsement to enroll at a Church university or college (see page 133).
5. For an endorsement to participate in the Perpetual Education Fund loan program (where the program is approved).

Members of the stake presidency hold regular priesthood interviews with each elders quorum president and high priests group leader in the stake.

Interviews Conducted by the Bishop

The bishop conducts the following interviews with ward members:

1. For temple recommends (see pages 75–79).
2. For recommendation of full-time missionaries (see pages 93 and 101–2).
3. For ordination to the offices of elder and high priest when authorized by the stake presidency (see page 39).

4. For annual tithing settlement (see page 155).
5. For callings to serve as ward auxiliary presidents.
6. For baptism and confirmation of eight-year-old children who are members of record or who are not members of record but have at least one member parent or guardian (see pages 32–33).
7. For ordination to the office of priest.
8. For callings to serve as his assistants in the priests quorum.
9. For youth (see "Guidelines for Youth Interviews" on this page).
10. For an endorsement to enroll or continue enrollment at a Church university or college (see pages 133–34).
11. For patriarchal blessings (see pages 42–44).

At least quarterly the bishop holds priesthood interviews with the elders quorum president and high priests group leader.

Interviews Conducted by the Bishop or His Counselors

The bishop or an assigned counselor conducts the following interviews with ward members. Only the bishop resolves concerns about chastity and associated moral matters in these interviews. If a counselor encounters serious matters, such as transgressions that require confession, he should refer the member to the bishop without delay.

1. For temple recommends (see pages 75–79).
2. For callings to serve in the ward (see pages 45–58).
3. For callings to serve as deacons or teachers quorum president and counselors (however, only the bishop may set apart the deacons or teachers quorum president). For callings to serve as deacons, teachers, or priests quorum secretaries.
4. For 12-year-old children as they advance from Primary. (During this interview, the bishop or assigned counselor also interviews the boys to determine whether they are worthy and prepared to receive the Aaronic Priesthood. He interviews the girls in preparation for entering the Young Women program.)
5. For ordination to the offices of deacon and teacher.
6. For youth (see "Guidelines for Youth Interviews" on this page).
7. For young single adults, single adults, and students (usually annually; however, acting with inspiration and wisdom, the bishopric may adjust the frequency of these interviews).
8. For seminary or institute graduation (if the bishop feels that an interview may be necessary to determine the person's worthiness for graduation).
9. For brethren who desire to act as voice in performing an ordinance in another ward but do not have a temple recommend. (If the person is worthy, the bishopric member fills out and signs a Recommend to Perform an Ordinance form.)
10. For members entering military service (see page 137).
11. For endorsement to participate in the Perpetual Education Fund loan program (where the program is approved).

Guidelines for Youth Interviews

The bishop interviews each young man and each young woman in the ward at least annually. If possible, he interviews each 16- and 17-year-old young man and young woman twice annually. In addition, six months after the annual interview with the bishop, counselors in the bishopric interview each young man and young woman who belongs to the Aaronic Priesthood quorum or Young Women class the bishop has assigned them to oversee.

Leaders should encourage parents to stay close to their children and to counsel them, allowing local Church leaders to act in a supporting role.

In large wards, bishops, acting with inspiration and wisdom, may adjust the frequency of interviews. Some youth may need added attention, while others may need less frequent interviews than are suggested, though all should be interviewed at least annually.

Interviews are excellent teaching opportunities and can be spiritual experiences for youth. Members of the bishopric should express love and listen carefully. They should encourage youth to talk rather than doing most of the talking themselves.

Matters for discussion should include the growth of the young person's testimony of Heavenly Father, the mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and the restored gospel. The importance of sustaining the President of the Church and other general and local Church leaders should also be discussed.

Another matter for discussion should be the importance of obeying the commandments, particularly:

1. Praying regularly in private and with the family, studying the scriptures, honoring parents, and paying a full tithing.

2. Being modest in dress and action, refraining from any kind of sexual activity, and refraining from reading, listening to, or viewing pornographic material.
3. Obeying the Word of Wisdom and refraining from using illegal drugs and misusing other substances.
4. Refraining from using the name of the Lord in vain and from using vulgar expressions and other degrading language.
5. Attending priesthood and sacrament meetings, participating in other Church meetings and activities, and fulfilling assignments given by the priesthood quorum or Young Women class presidency.

The bishopric may want to refer to the scriptures, *For the Strength of Youth,* and *True to the Faith* during discussions about gospel principles and obeying the commandments.

While interviewing young men, the bishopric member gives special attention to their preparation for a full-time mission. He discusses being worthy, studying the gospel, building a testimony, and preparing financially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Bishopric members should be sensitive to the circumstances under which young men are honorably excused from full-time missionary service (see pages 94–95).

The bishop and his counselors encourage young women to support young men in accepting mission calls. Young women of eligible age who desire to serve a mission may do so, but they should not be pressured to serve (see page 92).

Members of the bishopric ensure that youth understand the blessings of temple covenants and temple marriage and the requirements for receiving these blessings.

When interviewing a young man for priesthood ordination, the bishop or his assigned counselor discusses the blessings of holding the Aaronic Priesthood and the duties of the office to which the young man will be ordained, as revealed in Doctrine and Covenants 20:46–60 (see also pages 175–76 in *Book 2*). In all interviews with young men, the bishopric member emphasizes the importance of accomplishing the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. He also emphasizes the importance of completing the Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God program. He evaluates each young man's progress and encourages him. During this part of the interview he may want to review the young man's *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* booklet.

When interviewing a young woman, the bishopric member emphasizes the importance of incorporating the Young Women values and the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* in her daily living (see pages 211–12 in *Book 2*). He also emphasizes the importance of completing the Personal Progress program. He evaluates the young woman's progress and encourages her.

When interviewing youth of seminary age, the bishopric member emphasizes the importance of regular attendance at seminary and the blessings that come from active participation.

When discussing moral cleanliness, the bishop adapts the discussion to the understanding of the youth. He also ensures that the discussion does not arouse curiosity or experimentation.

Other Interviews

Interviews for Convert Baptisms

See pages 32–33.

Interviews of Persons to Be Readmitted by Baptism and Confirmation

For instructions on interviewing persons who have been excommunicated and want to be readmitted by baptism and confirmation, see page 119.

For instructions on interviewing persons who have had their names removed from Church records and want to be readmitted by baptism and confirmation, see pages 149–50.

Counseling

As judges in Israel, stake presidents and bishops counsel stake and ward members who seek spiritual guidance, who have weighty personal problems, or who have committed serious transgressions. The stake president or bishop may not delegate counseling of this kind to his counselors except in the most urgent cases when he is absent.

Church members should make a diligent effort, including earnest prayer and scripture study, to find solutions and answers themselves. If they still need help, they should counsel first with their bishop. If necessary, he refers them to the stake president. Local leaders should discourage members from calling, visiting, or writing to Church headquarters about personal matters (see pages 178–79).

The stake president and bishop are entitled to the discernment and inspiration necessary to be spiritual advisers and temporal counselors to ward members who need such help. They should prepare spiritually before counseling a member by seeking the power of discernment and the guidance of the Spirit. This guidance usually comes as impressions, thoughts, or feelings. The Spirit often prompts leaders to remember teachings from the scriptures and from latter-day prophets.

Leaders should frequently use the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets as they counsel. These inspired words should be used with sensitivity, love, and warmth. They should be used to inspire and encourage, not to coerce or cause fear.

The stake president or bishop should schedule adequate time for appointments. Members should not feel that he is too busy and can devote only a few minutes to them. He should also help members feel comfortable as the appointment begins.

If the stake president or bishop does not feel prepared to counsel a member, he should schedule another appointment. Between appointments he should seek guidance through study, prayer, and, if necessary, fasting. He may also confer with his priesthood leader.

The stake president or bishop should counsel members privately in his office. When meeting with a woman, he should ask a priesthood holder to be in an adjoining room, foyer, or hall. He should avoid circumstances that might be misunderstood.

The stake president or bishop should avoid making decisions for those he counsels. Instead, he helps them make their own decisions with the Lord's guidance.

The stake president or bishop should also avoid immediately offering solutions to those he counsels. To the extent possible, he helps them analyze and resolve their own problems or questions in the context of the doctrines of the gospel and the plan of salvation. Ideally, he teaches members how to find solutions and strength from the scriptures on their own.

When counseling, the stake president or bishop asks questions to help him understand the member's situation, though he should avoid unnecessary probing. Questions usually should bring out feelings and thoughts rather than *yes* or *no* replies. Members should do most of the talking.

While members talk, the stake president or bishop should listen carefully, giving full and sincere attention. Listening is vital in establishing confidence and trust. People often need someone they trust to listen to them as they work through their challenges and problems.

If a member has transgressed, the stake president or bishop firmly and lovingly helps him or her repent. He teaches that repentance includes exercising faith in Jesus Christ, having a broken heart and contrite spirit, recognizing and forsaking sin, seeking forgiveness, making restitution, and demonstrating a renewed commitment to keep the commandments. If necessary, he imposes informal Church discipline or initiates formal discipline. He should be familiar with the circumstances that may necessitate Church discipline and the procedures for initiating it (see pages 105–23).

When counseling members, the stake president or bishop helps them take preventive action to resist temptations. For example, members who are courting, are having difficulty in their marriages, are separated or divorced, or are struggling with minor moral problems may be protected and strengthened by counseling designed to help them guard against transgression. Presiding officers need not wait for members to seek such help but may call them in for counseling.

If a member needs professional counseling or therapy, the stake president or bishop should select or recommend a professional who will work in harmony with gospel teachings and principles. Leaders may work through LDS Family Services where it is available.

No priesthood officer is to counsel a person whom to marry. Nor should he counsel a person to divorce his or her spouse. Those decisions must originate and remain with the individual.

When a marriage ends in divorce, or if a husband and wife separate, they should always receive counseling from Church leaders. One or both may also need Church discipline if they have committed serious transgressions in connection with the divorce or separation.

Members who are separated from their spouse or are going through a divorce should be counseled not to date until their divorce decree has become final according to law.

The stake president or bishop may give a priesthood blessing if the member who is being counseled sincerely wants one.

Keeping Confidences

During and after their term of service in a calling, leaders must keep confidences about matters discussed when interviewing and counseling. A breach of confidence can damage trust, testimonies, and faith. A leader must not discuss confidential matters with others, including his counselors and wife, unless he receives consent from the person he is interviewing or counseling.

If a counselor in the bishopric or stake presidency encounters matters that need to be discussed with the bishop or stake president, he should explain this to the member and refer the member to the bishop or stake president without delay.

If a person moves to a new ward or stake, the presiding officer of the unit from which he or she moved may need to share information about unresolved transgressions or concerns about worthiness with the person's new presiding officer. Doing so is not considered a violation of confidentiality.

Responding to Abuse

While interviewing or counseling a person, a priesthood leader may become aware of incidents of abuse of a child, spouse, or other person. Abuse cannot be tolerated in any form. Guidelines for responding to abuse are provided on page 186.

5. Ordinances and Blessings

General Instructions

An ordinance is a sacred act, such as baptism, that is performed by the authority of the priesthood. The ordinances of baptism, confirmation, Melchizedek Priesthood ordination (for men), and the temple endowment and sealing are required for exaltation for all accountable persons. These are called the saving ordinances. As part of each saving ordinance, the recipient makes covenants with God.

Priesthood blessings are important for the blessing, comfort, and encouragement of God's children.

Brethren who perform ordinances and blessings should prepare themselves by living worthily and striving to be guided by the Holy Spirit. They should perform each ordinance and blessing in a dignified manner, making sure it meets the following requirements:

1. It should be performed in the name of Jesus Christ.
2. It should be performed by the authority of the priesthood.
3. It should be performed with any necessary procedures, such as using specified words or using consecrated oil.
4. It should be authorized by the presiding authority who holds the proper keys (normally the bishop or stake president), if necessary according to the instructions in this section.

A priesthood leader who oversees an ordinance or blessing ensures that the person who performs it has the necessary priesthood authority, is worthy, and knows and follows the proper procedures. Leaders also seek to make the ordinance or blessing a reverent and spiritual experience.

When ordinances or blessings are performed in sacrament meeting, the bishop ensures that they are performed properly. To avoid embarrassing a priesthood holder, the bishop quietly corrects errors only if essential elements of the ordinance or blessing are incorrect.

Participation in Ordinances and Blessings

Only brethren who hold the necessary priesthood and are worthy may perform an ordinance or blessing or stand in the circle. Those who participate are usually limited to priesthood leaders, close family members, and close associates such as home teachers. For more detailed information about who may participate in a priesthood ordination, see pages 39 and 41.

When several brethren participate in an ordinance or blessing, each one places his right hand lightly on the person's head (or under the baby being blessed) and his left hand on the shoulder of the brother to his left. The practice of inviting large numbers of family, friends, and leaders to assist in an ordinance or blessing is discouraged. When too many participate, it can become cumbersome and detract from the spirit of the ordinance.

Family members are usually invited to attend when a person receives an ordinance or blessing.

Leaders encourage worthy fathers who hold the necessary priesthood to perform or participate in ordinances and blessings for their own children.

Performing an Ordinance or Blessing in Another Ward

To act as voice when naming and blessing a child, baptizing or confirming a person, ordaining a person to a priesthood office, or dedicating a grave, a priesthood holder who is outside his own ward should show the presiding officer a current temple recommend or a Recommend to Perform an Ordinance form (obtained from his bishopric).

Teaching How to Perform Ordinances and Blessings

Priesthood leaders teach brethren how to perform ordinances and blessings. Leaders also help fathers be prepared and worthy to perform ordinances and blessings for family members.

Priesthood leaders ensure that brethren have access to instructions on how to perform priesthood ordinances and blessings. Sources of these instructions are listed under the following heading.

Instructions for Ordinances and Blessings

In addition to this section, instructions for performing most ordinances and blessings are published in the "Melchizedek Priesthood" section of *Book 2* (pages 171–74). Instructions for ordinances that Aaronic Priesthood holders may perform are also published in the "Aaronic Priesthood" section of *Book 2* (pages 190–92).

Instructions for ordinances and blessings are also provided in the *Family Guidebook* (pages 18–25) and in *Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood, Part B* (pages 42–47). Priesthood leaders ensure that brethren have copies of one of these publications.

Priesthood leaders should not produce or use publications that give instructions for ordinances, blessings, or prayers unless the First Presidency has authorized such publications.

Interpreting and Translating Ordinances and Blessings

If necessary, a bishop may ask a worthy priesthood holder to interpret orally an ordinance or blessing into a language that the recipient understands. If a worthy priesthood holder is not available, the bishop may ask a worthy woman to do the interpretation.

The bishop may also ask a worthy priesthood holder to interpret an ordinance or blessing if the recipient is hearing impaired. If a worthy priesthood holder is not available, the bishop may ask a worthy woman to do the interpretation.

For information on translating patriarchal blessings, see page 44.

Records of Ordinances

When a person receives a saving ordinance or priesthood ordination, a clerk from the ward where the person's membership record is held should (1) obtain information about the ordinance or ordination and (2) ensure that this information is recorded on the person's membership record and certificate.

The complete date that the following ordinances were performed should be recorded on a person's membership record: baptism, confirmation, priesthood ordinations, temple endowment, and temple sealing. For Melchizedek Priesthood ordinations, the name of the person who performed each ordination should also be recorded.

Recording the Words of Ordinances and Blessings

Patriarchal blessings are recorded and transcribed. The exact wording of other ordinances and blessings is not recorded in writing or by recording device. However, a family may record father's blessings.

Photographs and Video Recordings of Ordinances and Blessings

No one should take photographs, motion pictures, or video recordings of priesthood ordinances or blessings or of baptismal services.

Ordinances for Adopted Children

After a legal adoption is final, adopted children receive ordinances in the surname of their adopting parents. An older child who is adopted and who has been baptized is not baptized again. The ward clerk changes the membership record to conform to the decree of adoption.

For information about the sealing of adopted or foster children, see pages 86–87.

Ordinances for Persons Who Have Mental Disabilities

When contemplating ordinances for a person who has a mental disability, priesthood leaders and parents prayerfully consider the person's wishes and degree of understanding. Ordinances should not be withheld if the person is worthy, wants to receive them, and demonstrates an appropriate degree of responsibility and accountability. Living persons whose disabilities cause them to have the mental capacity of little children may not be accountable (see D&C 29:46–50). The saving ordinances do not need to be performed for these individuals.

If leaders determine that a person should receive an ordinance, they help him or her understand and prepare for it in a private, appropriate setting.

For information about baptism for persons who have mental disabilities, see page 33. For information about priesthood ordination, see page 41. For information about patriarchal blessings, see page 43. For information about temple ordinances, see pages 77 (living members) and 88 (deceased persons). A bishop should consult with his stake president if he has questions about specific persons. The stake president may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency if necessary.

Ordinances and Blessings Performed by and for Persons Who Have Physical Disabilities

Persons who have physical disabilities such as the loss of one or both arms, paraplegia, quadriplegia, or hearing impairment may perform and receive ordinances and blessings. Leaders make the necessary arrangements for these persons to participate in a way that their disabilities allow. If there are questions that local leaders cannot resolve, the stake president refers them to the Office of the First Presidency.

Persons who are hearing impaired may communicate through sign language when performing or receiving an ordinance or blessing. If an ordinance or blessing is performed under the direction of a presiding officer, he ensures that the recipient can understand it through an interpreter or by other means (see the previous column).

Procedure When an Ordinance Is Not Valid

Ordinances for Which There Is No Valid Record

For record-keeping purposes, an ordinance is not considered valid unless at least the correct year it was performed is recorded on the membership record. If the date is missing or incorrect, the ordinance can be validated by the member showing the bishop the original certificate that was issued when the ordinance was performed. The bishop then asks a clerk to record this information on the membership record.

If the member cannot provide the certificate, a ward clerk can ask for a search of Church records (available only for records submitted before 1984) by completing a Request for Ordinance Information form.

If the information cannot be found in Church records, the bishop or clerk may try to verify the ordinance by obtaining the testimony of two witnesses. The two witnesses should:

1. Have been 10 years of age or older when the ordinance was performed.
2. Have seen and heard the ordinance.
3. Be Church members of record at the time they give their testimony.
4. Give their testimony in writing, stating either *(a)* the complete date the ordinance was performed or *(b)* the year it was performed and the person who performed it.
5. Sign their written testimony in the presence of a member of a bishopric or a higher Church authority.

If this testimony is obtained, the bishop may authorize a clerk to record or correct the date on the membership record.

If the ordinance is not verified by an original certificate, a search of Church records, or the testimony of witnesses, it must be performed again to be considered valid.

If the member has received other ordinances after having received an invalid ordinance, they must be ratified by the First Presidency to be considered valid. The stake president (or the bishop under his direction) may request ratification by sending a letter to the Office of the First Presidency.

Ordinances That Were Received Out of Sequence

An ordinance is not valid if a person received it out of sequence. For example, the endowment of a male member is not valid if he received it before receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood. However, the First Presidency may ratify such an ordinance. To request ratification, the stake president (or the bishop under his direction) sends a letter to the Office of the First Presidency.

Ordinances That Were Performed before the Appropriate Age

An ordinance is not valid if it was performed before the appropriate age. For example, a baptism is not valid if it was performed before the person was eight. If no other ordinances have been received based on the invalid ordinance, it should be performed again. If other ordinances, such as priesthood ordination, have been received based on the invalid ordinance, those ordinances and the invalid ordinance must be ratified by the First Presidency to be valid. To request ratification, the stake president (or the bishop under his direction) sends a letter to the Office of the First Presidency.

Records of Ordinances That Were Performed Again

If an ordinance was performed again to become valid, a clerk records the date it was performed again on the membership record even if it will appear out of sequence with the dates of other ordinances on the membership record.

Naming and Blessing Children

General Guidelines

"Every member of the church of Christ having children is to bring them unto the elders before the church, who are to lay their hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, and bless them in his name" (D&C 20:70). In conformity with this revelation, only worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders may participate in naming and blessing children. Priesthood leaders should inform members of this instruction before their children are named and blessed. While preserving the sacred nature of the blessing, leaders should make every reasonable effort to avoid embarrassment or offense to individuals or families.

Children normally should be named and blessed during fast and testimony meeting in the ward where the parents are members of record.

Babies Who Were Born Out of Wedlock

Children who were born out of wedlock may be blessed during fast and testimony meeting. Or, if a family prefers, the bishop may authorize Melchizedek Priesthood holders to bless the child in the home, with a member of the bishopric presiding.

Babies Who Are Critically Ill

If a newborn infant is critically ill, a Melchizedek Priesthood holder may perform the naming and blessing in the hospital or at home without previous authorization from the bishop. A person who does this should notify the bishop promptly so necessary records can be made.

Babies with a Nonmember Parent

When either of a child's parents is not a member of the Church, the bishop should obtain verbal permission from both parents before the child is blessed. He explains that a membership record will be prepared for the child after the blessing. He should also tell them (1) that ward members will contact them periodically and (2) that when the child turns eight, the bishop or the ward missionaries will visit them and propose that the child be baptized.

Instructions for Naming and Blessing a Child

When blessing a baby, Melchizedek Priesthood holders gather in a circle and place their hands under the baby. When blessing an older child, brethren place their hands lightly on the child's head. The person who gives the blessing:

1. Addresses Heavenly Father.
2. States that the blessing is performed by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Gives the child a name.
4. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.
5. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Record and Certificate of Blessing

When a child is to be blessed, the ward clerk prepares a record and certificate of the blessing according to instructions on the form. After a child is blessed, the bishop and ward clerk ensure that the child's parents receive a certificate of the blessing.

If a baby is born out of wedlock, the name on the membership record and certificate of blessing should match the name on the birth certificate or civil birth registry. If a birth certificate or civil birth registry does not exist, the naming conventions of the local culture are used.

Baptism

Under the direction of the presiding authority, children should be baptized on or as soon after their eighth birthday as reasonable. Converts should be baptized when they have met the qualifications on pages 252–53 in *Book 2*.

Preparing Children for Baptism

Bishops give special attention to seven-year-old children in the ward, ensuring that their parents, Primary leaders and teachers, and home teachers help them prepare for baptism. Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society leaders also encourage parents to teach and prepare their children for this ordinance. When children reach age eight, the bishop makes sure they have every opportunity to accept the gospel and be baptized.

Baptismal Interviews

An authorized priesthood leader or missionary interviews each person before baptism as outlined in this section.

Eight-Year-Old Children

The bishop interviews each eight-year-old child who is a member of record. The bishop also interviews eight-year-old children who are not members of record if they have at least one member parent or guardian.

Converts

Convert baptisms are defined as baptisms of (1) persons ages nine and older who have never been baptized and confirmed and (2) children age eight whose parents are both nonmembers or whose parents are being baptized and confirmed at the same time as the child.

The full-time missionary district leader normally interviews these baptismal candidates. The zone leader conducts the interview if the person was taught by the district leader.

Former members who are readmitted by baptism and confirmation after excommunication or name removal are not considered converts. Missionaries may not interview them for baptism (see pages 119–21 and 149–50).

Authorization by the mission president is required before a prospective convert may be baptized if the person:

1. Has submitted to, performed, paid for, arranged for, or encouraged an abortion.
2. Has been convicted of a serious crime (note that baptism of a person who has committed murder, has been involved in the practice of plural marriage, or has undergone an elective transsexual

operation requires the approval of the First Presidency, as explained on this page and page 34).

3. Has committed a homosexual transgression.

In these instances, the mission president conducts a searching interview and issues a baptism and confirmation record form if he determines that the person has repented and is worthy. If necessary, the mission president may authorize one of his counselors to conduct the interview in cases of abortion. A separate authorization from the mission president is required for each interview. When a counselor conducts one of these interviews, he reports to the mission president, who may then authorize or deny the baptism.

Each prospective convert should meet with the bishop before baptism. However, the bishop does not interview such candidates for baptism or determine their worthiness.

Instructions for Baptismal Interviews

The person conducting the baptismal interview should use the following questions, with the guidance of the Spirit, to determine whether the candidate meets the qualifications described in D&C 20:37 (see also Mosiah 18:8–10 and Moroni 6:1–4). These questions apply to all baptismal candidates but should be adapted to the age and maturity of the candidate. For example, because children are sinless and have no need to repent until the age of accountability, the bishop should adapt the questions accordingly.

1. Do you believe that God is our Eternal Father? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of the world?
2. Do you believe the Church and gospel of Jesus Christ have been restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith? Do you believe that [current Church President] is a prophet of God? What does this mean to you?
3. What does it mean to you to repent? Do you feel that you have repented of your past transgressions?
4. Have you ever committed a serious crime? If so, are you now on probation or parole? Have you ever participated in an abortion? a homosexual relationship?
5. You have been taught that membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints includes living gospel standards. What do you understand of the following standards? Are you willing to obey them?
   a. The law of chastity, which prohibits any sexual relationship outside the bonds of a legal marriage between a man and a woman.
   b. The law of tithing.
   c. The Word of Wisdom.
   d. Keeping the Sabbath day holy, including partaking of the sacrament weekly and rendering service to others.
6. When you are baptized, you covenant with God that you are willing to take upon yourself the name of Christ and keep His commandments throughout your life. Are you ready to make this covenant and strive to be faithful to it?

Persons Who May Not Be Accountable

Persons who have mental disabilities and cannot knowingly repent may be considered by the bishop as not accountable. These persons need not be baptized, regardless of their age. They are "saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven" (D&C 137:10; see also Moroni 8:8–12).

If a person later demonstrates an understanding of repentance and an appropriate degree of accountability and desire, he or she may be baptized. If a person was baptized but later becomes mentally disabled, the baptism is still valid.

For additional guidelines, see page 30. For information about the membership records of persons who may not be accountable, see page 147.

Minors

A minor child, as defined by local laws, may be baptized only with the consent of the custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s), preferably in writing, and only if there is clear evidence that he or she understands the baptismal covenant and will make every effort to keep it through obeying the commandments, including faithfully attending Church meetings.

Children Whose Parents Are Divorced

A child whose parents are divorced may be baptized only with the permission of the parent(s) with legal custody. If the mother has custody and has remarried, and if the child is not formally adopted but has assumed the surname of the stepfather, the child may be baptized in the name by which he or she will be known. However, the child's legal name, as defined by local law or custom, should be recorded on the membership record and the baptism and confirmation certificate.

Adults Involved in Plural Marriage

Adults who have previously encouraged, taught, or been involved in the practice of plural marriage and who desire to be baptized must first receive clearance from the First Presidency. Mission or stake presidents should make such requests in writing to the Office of the First Presidency. The request should provide information about the individual's past involvement in plural marriage and his or her subsequent repentance and current family situation.

Children Whose Parents Have Practiced or Are Practicing Plural Marriage

Children of parents who have practiced or are practicing plural marriage must receive approval from the First Presidency to be baptized. The mission president or bishop may request this approval when he is satisfied that the children (1) accept the teachings and doctrines of the Church and (2) repudiate the teachings upon which their parents based their practice of plural marriage. The mission president submits the request through a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. The bishop submits the request through the stake president.

Persons Who Are Married

A married person may not be baptized without the consent of his or her spouse.

Persons Who Have Been Excommunicated or Had Their Names Removed from Church Records

Persons who have been excommunicated may be readmitted into the Church by baptism and confirmation. Instructions are provided on pages 119–21.

Persons who have had their names removed from Church membership records may be readmitted by baptism and confirmation. Instructions are provided on pages 149–50.

Persons Who Have Been Involved in an Abortion

See pages 32–33.

Persons Who Have Been Convicted of Crimes

Persons who have been convicted of crimes and seek baptism for the first time or baptism for readmission into the Church are not baptized until they complete their terms of imprisonment. Those who have been convicted of felonies or any crimes of immoral character should not be baptized until they have also completed their terms of parole or probation resulting from their convictions (unless the First Presidency has granted an exception). They are encouraged to work closely with local priesthood leaders and to do everything they can to become worthy of baptism.

Full-time missionaries are not to teach people who are in prison or jail.

A person who has been convicted of murder, or who has confessed to it even in private confessions to a priesthood leader, may not be baptized unless the First Presidency gives permission. The request for permission must include all pertinent details as determined during a personal interview by the mission president (if the person is seeking baptism for the first time) or bishop (if a former member is seeking readmission). As used here, murder does not include police or military action in the line of duty. Abortion is not defined as murder for this purpose.

Persons Who Have HIV Infection or AIDS

Persons with HIV infection or AIDS are treated as anyone else who expresses faith in God, repents, requests baptism, and is living the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Articles of Faith 1:1 and 1:4).

Persons Who Are Considering or Have Undergone a Transsexual Operation

Persons who are considering an elective transsexual operation should not be baptized. Baptism of a person who has already undergone an elective transsexual operation requires the approval of the First Presidency. The mission president may request this approval if he has interviewed the person, found him or her to be otherwise worthy, and can recommend baptism. However, such persons may not receive the priesthood or a temple recommend.

Baptismal Fonts

Missionaries coordinate their use of a baptismal font with the agent bishop or another person designated by the stake presidency. The schedule for using a font should permit missionaries to baptize once a week or more often, if necessary. However, missionaries should not expect to use a font at unreasonable times. No charge is made for using a baptismal font.

A responsible adult should be present while the baptismal font is filling and remain until it is empty and secured. The font should be drained and cleaned immediately after each baptismal service. Appropriate safety precautions should be taken whenever water is in the font.

When the font is not in use, all access doors to it should be closed and locked.

When a baptismal font is not available, any body of water that is safe may be used for a baptism if it is large enough to immerse the person and to permit the priesthood holder who performs the baptism to stand in the water with the person. Water is not dedicated for baptisms.

Clothing for Baptism

A person who performs a baptism and a person who is baptized wear clean, white clothing that does not appear transparent when it is wet. An endowed person wears the temple garment under this clothing while performing a baptism.

Local units should have baptismal clothing available and should not charge for its use. This clothing is purchased with budget allowance funds. The bishop may ask members to clean and mend the clothing.

Baptismal Services

Baptismal services should be simple, brief, and spiritual. Normally, ward or stake leaders conduct monthly baptismal services for all eight-year-old children of record in the ward or stake. Members should not request special or individual times or prescribe the content of baptismal services.

Services That Involve Only One Ward

For Eight-Year-Old Children of Record. A member of the bishopric presides over baptismal services for eight-year-old children of record when the services involve only one ward.

A member of the bishopric oversees the planning of these baptismal services. A member of the bishopric may conduct the services or assign the ward mission leader to conduct. Primary leaders may help plan the services under the direction of the bishopric.

For Converts. Where possible, a member of the bishopric should attend each convert baptismal service. When the services involve only one ward, he presides unless a member of the stake presidency attends.

Under the direction of the bishopric, the ward mission leader usually works with the full-time missionaries to plan these baptismal services. A member of the bishopric or the ward mission leader usually conducts the services. If none of these ward leaders are available, full-time missionary district or zone leaders may plan and conduct the services with the approval of the mission president.

Services That Involve More Than One Ward

For Eight-Year-Old Children of Record. A member of the stake presidency presides over baptismal services for eight-year-old children of record when the services involve more than one ward. A member of the bishopric from each of the wards involved should attend.

The stake presidency may assign a high councilor to oversee the planning of services for eight-year-old children and to conduct the services. Primary leaders may help plan these services under the direction of the presiding officers.

For Converts. A member of the stake presidency usually presides over baptismal services for converts when the services involve more than one ward. However, the stake presidency may authorize a high councilor or bishop to preside. A member of the bishopric from each of the wards involved should attend.

When baptismal services for converts involve more than one ward, the stake presidency usually asks (1) the high councilor who is assigned to missionary work or (2) a bishop to work with the full-time missionaries in planning the services. This high councilor or bishop usually conducts the services.

Scheduling Baptismal Services for Converts

Baptismal services for converts should be scheduled when it is convenient for them and when they have committed to be baptized. Baptisms should not normally be delayed past this date unless the investigators are not yet prepared. Baptisms of family members should not be delayed so the father can receive the priesthood and perform the baptisms himself.

Baptismal services for converts should be scheduled through the ward mission leader. If a service is scheduled on a Sunday, it should be held at a time that minimizes interference with regular Sunday meetings. Baptismal services should not be scheduled on Monday evenings.

People who are invited to a baptismal service may include the person's family members, other close relatives, close friends, priesthood leaders, home teachers, visiting teachers, auxiliary officers and teachers who will be working with the new member, other ward members, and investigators who are being taught.

For further instructions about baptismal services, including an outline of what a service may include, see pages 253–54 in *Book 2*.

Witnesses of a Baptism

Two priests or Melchizedek Priesthood holders witness each baptism to make sure it is performed properly. The baptism must be repeated if the words are not spoken exactly as given in Doctrine and Covenants 20:73 or if part of a person's body or clothing is not immersed completely.

Instructions for Performing a Baptism

Under the direction of the presiding authority, a worthy priest or Melchizedek Priesthood holder may perform the ordinance of baptism. To do so, he:

1. Stands in the water with the person to be baptized.
2. Holds the person's right wrist with his left hand (for convenience and safety); the person being baptized holds the priesthood holder's left wrist with his or her left hand.
3. Raises his right arm to the square.
4. States the person's full name and says, "Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen" (D&C 20:73).
5. Has the person hold his or her nose with the right hand (for convenience); then the priesthood holder places his right hand high on the person's back and immerses the person completely, including the person's clothing.
6. Helps the person come up out of the water.

Baptism and Confirmation Record

After determining that a candidate is prepared for baptism, the person who conducts the interview fills out the baptism and confirmation record according to instructions on the form. The confirmation information is completed at the time of confirmation (see "Baptism and Confirmation Record and Certificate" in the next column).

Confirmation

General Guidelines

A person receives the ordinance of confirmation after he or she has been baptized (see D&C 20:41). A person becomes a member of the Church only after the ordinances of baptism and confirmation are both completed (see John 3:5; D&C 33:11).

The ordinance of confirmation is performed under the direction of the bishop. He ensures that the confirmation is performed as soon as reasonable after baptism. Eight-year-old members of record may be confirmed at the baptismal service or in a sacrament meeting of the ward in which they live, preferably a fast and testimony meeting. Converts are confirmed in any sacrament meeting of the ward in which they live, preferably the Sunday following their baptism. Converts are not confirmed at the baptismal service.

The bishop or one of his counselors participates in the confirmation. When missionary elders have taught a convert, the bishop may invite them to participate in the confirmation.

The bishop does not conduct a separate interview for confirmation.

Instructions for Performing a Confirmation

Under the direction of the bishopric, one or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders may participate in this ordinance. They place their hands lightly on the person's head. Then the person who performs the ordinance:

1. States the person's full name.
2. States that the ordinance is performed by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Confirms the person a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
4. Uses the wording "Receive the Holy Ghost."
5. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.
6. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Welcoming New Members

See page 146.

Baptism and Confirmation Record and Certificate

Before a person is confirmed, the bishop or ward clerk completes the confirmation information on the baptism and confirmation record according to instructions on the form.

After a person is confirmed, the ward clerk distributes copies of the baptism and confirmation record as instructed. Proper distribution is essential for creating or updating membership records. The ward clerk also prepares the baptism and confirmation certificate. The bishop signs the certificate and gives it to the member (or to a parent or guardian if a child was confirmed).

For instructions on preparing a baptism and confirmation certificate for a child whose parents are divorced, see page 33.

If a child's parents are divorced, his or her legal name, as defined by local law or custom, should be recorded on the membership record and the certificate.

Sacrament

General Guidelines

Church members meet on the Sabbath to worship God and partake of the sacrament (see D&C 20:75; 59:9). During this holy ordinance, they partake of bread and water in remembrance of the Savior's flesh and blood and to renew their baptismal covenants (see Matthew 26:26–28; Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 14:20–25; Luke 22:15–20; 3 Nephi 18; Moroni 6:6).

Under the direction of the bishopric, priesthood holders bless the sacrament and pass it to members of the congregation during each sacrament meeting. Aaronic Priesthood holders usually perform these duties. Under the direction of the bishopric, the deacons quorum president has the privilege and responsibility to invite others to help pass the sacrament. When there are not enough deacons, he should counsel with a member of the bishopric to determine who may be asked to assist.

Generally, teachers and priests in the Aaronic Priesthood should be invited to pass the sacrament before Melchizedek Priesthood holders are invited to do so. Where there are sufficient numbers of Aaronic Priesthood holders, Melchizedek Priesthood holders should not be invited to bless and pass the sacrament on a regular schedule.

Every priesthood holder who participates in this ordinance should understand that he is acting on behalf of the Lord. The bishopric encourages priesthood holders to ponder the Savior's Atonement as they prepare, bless, and pass the sacrament. The bishopric also ensures that priesthood holders have a reverent, dignified manner as they participate in this ordinance.

Those who bless and pass the sacrament should dress modestly and be well groomed and clean. Clothing or jewelry should not call attention to itself or distract members during the sacrament. White shirts and ties are recommended because they add to the dignity of the ordinance. However, they should not be required as a mandatory prerequisite for a priesthood holder to participate. Nor should it be required that all be alike in dress and appearance. Bishops should use discretion when giving such guidance to young men, taking into account their financial circumstances and maturity in the Church.

The sacred nature of this ordinance justifies the greatest care and preparation to ensure order and reverence. Assignments to bless and pass the sacrament should be made in advance. Those who participate should be seated reverently before the meeting begins.

The passing of the sacrament should be natural and unobtrusive, not rigid or overly formal. Those who pass the sacrament should not be required to assume any particular posture or action, such as holding the left hand behind the back. The process of passing the sacrament should not call attention to itself or detract from the purpose of the ordinance.

Priesthood holders should wash their hands thoroughly with soap or a disposable towelette before preparing, blessing, or passing the sacrament.

A priesthood holder who has committed a serious transgression should not prepare, bless, or pass the sacrament until he has repented and resolved the matter with his bishop.

Although the sacrament is for Church members, the bishopric should not announce that it will be passed to members only, and nothing should be done to prevent nonmembers from partaking of it.

Preparing the Sacrament

Worthy teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may prepare the sacrament. Before the meeting begins, those who prepare the sacrament should make sure that bread trays with unbroken bread, water trays with cups filled with fresh water, and clean tablecloths are in place.

Sacrament tablecloths should be white, nontransparent, clean, and pressed. Sacrament trays should be kept clean. Sacrament trays and cups are available from Church Distribution Services (see page xiv for contact information).

Blessing and Passing the Sacrament

Worthy priests and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may bless the sacrament. Worthy deacons, teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may pass the sacrament.

As the congregation sings the sacrament hymn, the priesthood holders who will bless the sacrament reverently stand, remove the cloth that covers the bread trays, and break the bread into bite-sized pieces. When they finish breaking the bread, they should sit down and join in singing the remainder of the hymn. Vocal solos or instrumental selections may not replace this hymn.

Following the hymn, the person who blesses the bread kneels and offers the sacrament prayer for the bread. The sacrament prayers were revealed by the Lord (see D&C 20:77, 79; Moroni 4–5). The bishop makes sure they are spoken clearly, accurately, and with dignity. If the person who blesses the sacrament makes an error in the wording but corrects it himself, no further correction is required. If the person does not correct an error, the bishop indicates that he should repeat the prayer correctly. In doing so, the bishop should be careful to avoid causing embarrassment or distracting from the sacred nature of the ordinance.

After the prayer, deacons or other priesthood holders pass the bread to the congregation in a reverent and orderly manner. The presiding officer receives the sacrament first. The bishop (or a counselor in his absence) presides at the sacrament meeting unless a General Authority, Area Seventy, or member of the stake presidency is sitting on the stand. A high councilor does not preside and does not receive the sacrament first.

While the presiding officer is receiving the sacrament, others who are passing the sacrament may walk to their designated places.

After a priesthood holder hands a sacrament tray to a member, others may pass the tray from one to another for convenience.

When brethren finish passing the bread, they return the trays to the sacrament table. Those officiating at the sacrament table replace the cloth over the bread trays and uncover the water trays. The person who blesses the water then kneels and offers the sacrament prayer for the water (see D&C 20:79), substituting the word *water* for *wine*.

After the prayer, deacons or other priesthood holders pass the water to the congregation. When they finish, they return the trays to the sacrament table, wait for the officiators to cover the trays, then reverently take their seats.

Everyone who attends the meeting should be reverent during the entire ordinance of blessing and passing the sacrament. No music should be played during the prayer or while the sacrament is being passed.

Sacrament for Members Who Are Unable to Attend

See "Sacrament Services in Unusual Situations" on page 65.

Consecrating Oil

One or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders must consecrate olive oil before it is used to anoint the sick or afflicted. No other oil may be used. To consecrate oil, a priesthood holder:

1. Holds an open container of olive oil.
2. Addresses Heavenly Father.
3. States that he is acting by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
4. Consecrates the oil (not the container) and sets it apart for anointing and blessing the sick and afflicted.
5. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Members should not take consecrated oil internally or apply it on afflicted parts of the body.

Administering to the Sick

Only Melchizedek Priesthood holders may administer to the sick or afflicted. Normally two or more priesthood holders administer to the sick, but one may perform both the anointing and the sealing alone if necessary. If consecrated oil is not available, a blessing may nevertheless be given by the authority of the priesthood without the anointing.

A worthy father who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood normally should administer to sick members of his family.

Brethren should administer to the sick at the request of the sick person or of those who are vitally concerned so the blessing will be according to their faith (see D&C 24:13–14; 42:43–44, 48–52). Melchizedek Priesthood holders who visit hospitals should not solicit opportunities to administer to the sick.

If a person requests more than one blessing for the same illness, the priesthood holder need not anoint with oil after the first blessing. Instead, he gives a blessing by the laying on of hands and the authority of the priesthood.

Administering to the sick has two parts: (1) anointing with oil and (2) sealing the anointing.

Anointing with Oil

The anointing is done by one Melchizedek Priesthood holder. He:

1. Puts a drop of consecrated oil on the person's head.
2. Places his hands lightly on the person's head and calls the person by his or her full name.
3. States that he is acting by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
4. States that he is anointing with oil that has been consecrated for anointing and blessing the sick and afflicted.
5. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Sealing the Anointing

Normally, two or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders place their hands lightly on the head of the person. The one who seals the anointing:

1. Calls the person by his or her full name.
2. States that he is sealing the anointing by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.
4. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Conferring the Priesthood and Ordaining to an Office

General Principles

To participate in an ordination, one must have equal or higher priesthood authority than is to be given in the ordinance. For instance, an elder should not stand in the circle when a high priest is ordained or when a man is set apart to an office that requires him to be a high priest.

An ordination is an opportunity to pronounce a blessing, not to give counsel or instruction. That is done afterward when a person is taught his duties.

An ordination need not be expanded into a formal meeting. It is not necessary to have prayers or testimonies or instruction when someone is ordained.

Melchizedek Priesthood Offices

Stake President's and Bishop's Responsibilities

The stake president oversees the conferral of the Melchizedek Priesthood and ordination to the offices of elder and high priest. However, the bishop usually initiates recommendations for these ordinations. With the approval of the stake presidency, the bishop interviews the member as instructed on the Melchizedek Priesthood record form. Before doing so, he should carefully review the person's membership record to verify that it does not include a comment about an ordinance restriction or unresolved Church discipline.

After the bishop interviews the member, the stake president or one of his counselors conducts a thorough, searching interview as instructed on the Melchizedek Priesthood record form. He also makes sure the member understands the oath and covenant of the priesthood and agrees to live by it (see D&C 84:33–44).

After the interview, the stake presidency asks the high council to sustain the decision to ordain the person. A member of the stake presidency then presents the person for a sustaining vote in a general session of stake conference or in a stake general priesthood meeting (see D&C 20:65, 67; 26:2; 42:11). The person should stand while the congregation gives a sustaining vote. The member of the stake presidency may say:

"We propose that [name] receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and be ordained an elder [or we propose that (name) be ordained a high priest]. Those in favor may manifest it by the uplifted hand. [Pause briefly for the sustaining vote.] Those opposed, if any, may manifest it. [Pause briefly to allow for a dissenting vote, if any.]"

The person who is being presented should participate in the sustaining vote. If more than one person is being presented, they usually may be sustained as a group.

If a member in good standing gives a dissenting vote, a member of the stake presidency confers with him or her in private after the meeting. The officer determines whether the dissenting vote was based on knowledge that the person is guilty of conduct that should disqualify him from being ordained to the priesthood office.

Some brethren may need to be ordained before they can be presented in a general stake meeting. When this occurs, they are presented in their ward sacrament meetings for a sustaining vote. Their names are then presented in the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting to ratify the ordination.

When the necessary interviews and approvals are completed, the ordination is performed according to the instructions on page 41.

Elders

Worthy brethren may receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and be ordained elders when they are at least 18 years old. However, because of individual circumstances, such as a young man's maturity, school graduation, and desire to continue with peer-group associates, the bishop may allow a worthy 18-year-old to remain a priest for a period of time. By age 19, all brethren should be affiliated with the elders quorum as elders or with the high priests group or elders quorum as prospective elders.

Before brethren ages 18 and older leave home for reasons such as school, employment, or military service, they should be ordained elders if they are worthy.

Recently baptized brethren ages 18 and older are ordained elders after they have served as priests, developed sufficient understanding of the gospel, and demonstrated their worthiness. No specific time as a member is required.

High Priests

Brethren are ordained high priests when they are called to a stake presidency, high council, or bishopric or when otherwise determined by the stake president. As an exception, bishops' counselors in student wards need not be ordained high priests.

Aaronic Priesthood Offices

Bishop's Responsibility

The bishop oversees the conferral of the Aaronic Priesthood and ordinations to the offices of deacon, teacher, and priest. Worthy brethren may be ordained at the following minimum ages:

Deacon, age 12

Teacher, age 14

Priest, age 16

The bishop or an assigned counselor interviews brethren who are to be ordained deacons or teachers to determine if they are worthy. The bishop interviews brethren who are to be ordained priests. Before interviewing a young man for priesthood ordination, a member of the bishopric obtains permission from the young man's parents or guardians.

If a member is found worthy in an interview, the person who conducts the interview completes the Aaronic Priesthood record form. The bishop or one of his counselors presents the member in sacrament meeting for the sustaining vote of members (see D&C 20:65). This should follow the pattern for presenting brethren for Melchizedek Priesthood ordination (see page 39). If a member in good standing gives a dissenting vote, a member of the bishopric confers with him or her in private after the meeting.

After the sustaining vote, the ordination is performed by or under the direction of the bishop according to the instructions on page 41.

Young Men Whose Parents Are Divorced

A young man whose parents are divorced may be ordained to Aaronic Priesthood offices only with the permission of the parent(s) with legal custody. If the mother has custody and has remarried, and if the young man is not formally adopted but has assumed the surname of the stepfather, he may be ordained in the name by which he is known. However, the young man's legal name, as defined by local law or custom, should be recorded on the ordination certificate.

Recently Baptized Brethren

Brethren ages 12 and older who have recently been baptized should receive the Aaronic Priesthood and be ordained to the appropriate office soon after they are confirmed. Before receiving the priesthood, they must be interviewed for worthiness and presented in sacrament meeting for a sustaining vote (see the previous column). Brethren ages 16 and older are ordained priests. Brethren ages 19 and older are also considered prospective elders (see the next heading).

Recently baptized brethren need to be interviewed by the bishop and sustained by a vote of ward members in a sacrament meeting before they are ordained to an Aaronic Priesthood office. Therefore, they are not ordained on the day they are baptized or confirmed.

Baptisms of family members should not be delayed so the father can receive the priesthood and perform the baptisms himself.

Prospective Elders

A prospective elder is a male Church member, age 19 or older, who does not hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. Married brethren who are younger than 19 and do not hold the Melchizedek Priesthood are also prospective elders.

The bishop interviews prospective elders regularly and works closely with other priesthood leaders in the ward to prepare them to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. Where possible, high priests should be given primary responsibility for home teaching and working with prospective elders.

If a prospective elder is not already a priest, he should be ordained a priest as soon as he is worthy. He does not need to be ordained a deacon or teacher first. He may be ordained an elder when he has developed sufficient understanding of the gospel and demonstrated his worthiness.

For more information about prospective elders, see page 168 in *Book 2*.

Unusual Circumstances

Brethren Who Have Not Lived in the Same Ward for at Least One Year

If a male member has not lived in the same ward continuously for at least one year, the bishop contacts the prior bishop to certify the member's worthiness before approving him for Aaronic Priesthood ordination or recommending him for Melchizedek Priesthood ordination.

If a person is ordained while he is living away from home temporarily, and if his membership record is still in his home ward, the bishop of the ward where he is ordained advises the bishop of the home ward so the membership record can be updated. The certificate of ordination is prepared in the ward where the ordination is performed.

Brethren in Young Single Adult Wards, Single Adult Wards, and Student Wards

Worthy brethren ages 18 and older in young single adult wards, single adult wards, and student wards should be ordained elders. Brethren who are not ordained elders are affiliated with the elders quorum as prospective elders.

Military Servicemen in Isolated Areas

If a serviceman is at sea for an extended time, or if his duty station is in a war zone or is not within the boundaries of a stake or mission, usually he is ordained in the ward that has his membership record. In most cases this is the ward that supports the duty station.

As an exception, if it is not feasible for such a serviceman to be interviewed or ordained in the ward that has his membership record, his service member group leader may meet with him. If the group leader feels that the serviceman is ready to be ordained, he makes a written recommendation to the presiding officer of the Church unit that oversees the service member group. For ordination to Aaronic Priesthood offices, the presiding officer may authorize the group leader or a Latter-day Saint chaplain to interview the person and oversee the ordination. For ordination to the office of elder, the stake or mission president may authorize a Latter-day Saint chaplain to interview the person and oversee the ordination. All ordinations should be sustained or ratified as explained on pages 39 and 40.

Brethren Who Have Mental Disabilities

Priesthood leaders decide whether brethren who have mental disabilities should receive the priesthood. If the member lives with his parents or guardians, priesthood leaders consult with them. To be ordained, a member who has a mental disability should first demonstrate an appropriate degree of accountability and an understanding of responsibility. Priesthood holders who have such disabilities should be assisted so they can participate as fully as possible.

Brethren Who Have Been Readmitted by Baptism and Confirmation

For instructions about ordaining brethren who have been readmitted by baptism and confirmation after being excommunicated or having their names removed from the records of the Church, see "Ordination after Readmission" on page 121.

Members Who Have Undergone a Transsexual Operation

Members who have undergone an elective transsexual operation may not receive the priesthood.

Instructions for Performing an Ordination

When the necessary interviews and approvals are completed:

1. The stake president (or someone under his direction) may ordain the person to the office of elder, or he may authorize another worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holder to do so. Only Melchizedek Priesthood holders may stand in the circle.
2. The stake president (or someone under his direction) may ordain the person to the office of high priest, or he may authorize another worthy high priest to do so. Only high priests may stand in the circle.
3. The bishop (or a counselor under his direction) may ordain the person to the office of deacon, teacher, or priest, or he may authorize a worthy priest or Melchizedek Priesthood holder to do so. Only priests and Melchizedek Priesthood holders may stand in the circle.

To perform a priesthood ordination, one or more authorized priesthood holders place their hands lightly on the person's head. Then the priesthood holder who performs the ordination:

1. Calls the person by his full name.
2. States the authority by which the ordination is performed (Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood).
3. Confers the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood, unless it has already been conferred.
4. Ordains the person to an office in the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood and bestows the rights, powers, and authority of that office. (Priesthood keys are not bestowed in conferring the priesthood or ordaining to one of these offices.)
5. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.
6. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Record and Certificate of Ordination

After a Melchizedek Priesthood ordination, the stake president and stake clerk ensure that the Melchizedek Priesthood ordination record and certificate are completed and distributed according to instructions on the form.

After an Aaronic Priesthood ordination, the bishop and ward clerk ensure that the Aaronic Priesthood ordination record and certificate are completed and distributed according to instructions on the form.

For instructions on preparing an Aaronic Priesthood ordination certificate for a young man whose parents are divorced, see page 40.

Father's Blessings and Other Blessings of Comfort and Counsel

Father's blessings and other priesthood blessings are given to provide direction and comfort as guided by the Spirit.

A father who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood may give father's blessings to his children. These blessings may be especially helpful when children go to school, go on missions, get married, enter military service, or face special challenges. A family may record a father's blessing for family records, but it is not preserved in Church records. Parents should encourage their children to seek father's blessings in times of need.

Worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders may also give blessings of comfort and counsel to other family members and to others who request them.

To give a father's blessing or another blessing of comfort and counsel, one or more worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders place their hands lightly on the person's head. Then the priesthood holder who gives the blessing:

1. Calls the person by his or her full name.
2. States that the blessing is performed by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Blesses the person as the Spirit directs.
4. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Dedicating Graves

A person who dedicates a grave should hold the Melchizedek Priesthood and be authorized by the priesthood officer who conducts the service. To dedicate a grave, he:

1. Addresses Heavenly Father.
2. States that he is acting by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Dedicates and consecrates the burial plot as the resting place for the body of the deceased.
4. Prays that the place will be hallowed and protected until the Resurrection (where appropriate).
5. Asks the Lord to comfort the family and expresses thoughts as the Spirit directs.
6. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

If the family prefers, a graveside prayer rather than a dedicatory prayer may be offered, preferably by a Melchizedek Priesthood holder.

Setting Apart Officers and Teachers

See page 47.

Dedicating Homes

Church members may dedicate their homes as sacred edifices where the Holy Spirit can reside and where family members can worship, find safety from the world, grow spiritually, and prepare for eternal family relationships. Homes need not be free of debt to be dedicated. Unlike Church buildings, homes are not consecrated to the Lord.

To dedicate a home, a family might gather and offer a prayer that includes the elements mentioned above and other words as the Spirit directs.

Patriarchal Blessings

Information about patriarchal blessings is provided in the following paragraphs, on pages 6–8 in this book, in *Information and Suggestions for Patriarchs*, and in *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting: The Patriarch*.

Preparing for the Blessing

Every worthy, baptized member of the Church is entitled to and should receive a patriarchal blessing, which provides inspired direction from the Lord. Church leaders and parents should encourage members to obtain their blessings.

The bishop interviews members who want to receive patriarchal blessings. If a member is worthy, the bishop issues and signs a Patriarchal Blessing Recommend. The recommend must also be signed by a member of the stake presidency if the blessing will be given by a patriarch who lives outside the member's stake (such authorization may be given only as outlined in "Giving Blessings to Members outside the Stake" in the next column). A member must take the signed recommend to the patriarch to receive a blessing.

When issuing a Patriarchal Blessing Recommend, the bishop ensures that the member is of sufficient age and maturity to understand the meaning and importance of the blessing. Ideally the member should be young enough that many important decisions in life are still ahead, though older adults should also be encouraged to receive their patriarchal blessings. Priesthood leaders should not establish a minimum age for a member to receive a patriarchal blessing.

The bishop helps members understand the sacred nature of this blessing. He emphasizes the importance of being spiritually prepared to receive it.

Where possible, a missionary should receive a patriarchal blessing before beginning missionary service. If this is not possible, the missionary should receive a recommend from his or her bishop and receive the blessing while at a missionary training center.

If a missionary arrives in the mission without having received a patriarchal blessing, the mission president is authorized to interview him or her and issue a Patriarchal Blessing Recommend. He then contacts the stake president in the nearest stake in which a patriarch can give a blessing in a language the missionary can understand. If this is not possible, the missionary may need to wait until he or she returns home to receive a patriarchal blessing.

A new convert should understand the basic doctrines of the Church before receiving a patriarchal blessing.

If a member has a mental disability, the bishop may issue a recommend only when, in consultation with the parents, he believes there is a sufficient level of understanding. Members should keep in mind that a patriarchal blessing is for the recipient and not for the parents.

Receiving the Blessing

Members should go to the patriarch with a prayerful attitude and in Sunday attire. They may fast, but fasting is not required.

Each patriarchal blessing is sacred, confidential, and personal. Therefore, it is given in private except that a limited number of family members may be present.

Church members should not compare blessings and should not share them except with close family members. Patriarchal blessings should not be read in Church meetings or other public gatherings.

If a patriarchal blessing does not include a declaration of lineage, the patriarch may later give an addendum to declare lineage. An addendum becomes part of the original blessing and should be attached to it.

Giving Blessings to Members outside the Stake

A stake patriarch normally gives patriarchal blessings only to members in his stake. However, he may give blessings to members outside of his stake in the following circumstances:

1. A patriarch may give patriarchal blessings to his own lineal descendants (children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren) regardless of where they live. The member must have a recommend signed by the bishop. If the member lives in a different stake than the patriarch, the recommend must also be signed by a member of the stake presidency.
2. A member who lives in a stake that does not have a patriarch or where the patriarch is unable to give blessings may go to a patriarch in a nearby stake. The member's recommend must be signed by the bishop and a member of the stake presidency. A member who lives in a mission district may also go to a patriarch in a nearby stake. The recommend should be signed by the branch or district president and the mission president.
3. A member who speaks a language that is different from the language of the stake patriarch may go to a patriarch in a nearby stake to receive a blessing in his or her own language. The member must have a recommend signed by the bishop and a member of the stake presidency.

Blessings for Members Entering the Military

When worthy members of the Church enter military service, priesthood leaders encourage them to receive their patriarchal blessing before reporting for active duty.

If it is not possible for a member to receive a patriarchal blessing before leaving, he or she can receive it from a patriarch where the temporary duty station is located. To do this, the member presents a recommend from the bishop of his or her home ward to a member of the stake presidency where the temporary duty station is located.

If a member entering the military does not have a recommend from the bishop of the home ward, he or she may receive a recommend from the bishop of the ward where the temporary duty station is located. That bishop interviews the member for worthiness and contacts the home-ward bishop before issuing a recommend.

After either of these bishops has signed a recommend, a member of the stake presidency interviews the person and signs the recommend if he or she is worthy.

Translation of Patriarchal Blessings

The Church does not provide translations of patriarchal blessings. Nor are members encouraged to translate patriarchal blessings, since it is difficult to convey the inspired depth of meaning and feeling of a blessing. Nevertheless, if a member desires to have a patriarchal blessing translated into another language, it is his or her responsibility to find a trusted and worthy member of the Church who can provide the translation. The translator should be carefully selected, skilled in the language, and capable of understanding the spiritual nature and confidentiality of the blessing.

Translated copies of blessings are not filed at Church headquarters.

Obtaining Copies of Patriarchal Blessings

A person who has received a patriarchal blessing should carefully safeguard the copy he or she receives. However, if it is lost or destroyed, another copy may be obtained from the patriarch if he still has the original in his binder of blessings. If the original has been sent to Church headquarters, a copy may be obtained from:

Patriarchal Blessings
50 East North Temple Street, Room 215E
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3421
Telephone: 1-801-240-3581

Those requesting copies should supply the full name and birth date of the person who received the blessing and their relationship to that person. If possible, the name of the patriarch and the approximate date of the blessing should also be included. A small fee to cover copying charges may apply within the United States and Canada.

Chart of Ordinations

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Interviewed and Ordained By
Patriarch	Stake presidency	Quorum of the Twelve	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	A member of the First Presidency or Twelve, or the stake president with written approval from the Quorum of the Twelve
High priest	Bishop and stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Interviewed by the bishop and by the stake president or an assigned counselor; ordained under the direction of the stake president
Elder	Bishop	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Interviewed by the bishop and by the stake president or an assigned counselor; ordained under the direction of the stake president
Bishop	Stake presidency	First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Ward members in sacrament meeting	A General Authority or Area Seventy, or the stake president with written approval from the First Presidency
Priest	Bishop	Bishopric	Ward members in sacrament meeting	Interviewed by the bishop; ordained under the direction of the bishop
Teacher or deacon	Bishop	Bishopric	Ward members in sacrament meeting	Interviewed by the bishop or an assigned counselor; ordained under the direction of the bishop

6. Callings and Releases

This section outlines the doctrines and procedures relating to callings and releases. A Chart of Callings is provided on pages 49–58, listing each Church calling and specifying who recommends a person, who approves the recommendation, who sustains the person, and who calls and sets apart the person. Callings that are listed on the chart are filled according to local needs and as members are available.

Doctrines of Callings and Releases

A person must be called of God to serve in the Church (see Articles of Faith 1:5). These callings come as the Holy Ghost inspires presiding officers to issue them. Releases from Church callings should also come by inspiration, except when a person's change of residence necessitates a release or when a calling is for a specific time period, such as full-time missionary service.

Members who are called to most Church positions should receive a sustaining vote before they begin serving. In the scriptures this is called "common consent" or being "appointed by the voice of the church" (D&C 26:2; 28:13; 38:34; 41:9). Members who are called to most Church positions should also be set apart before they begin serving (see D&C 42:11).

The Lord has instructed each person to "labor in his [or her] own calling" (D&C 84:109). Members should magnify their callings by serving diligently (see D&C 84:33; 107:99).

Determining Whom to Call

General Guidelines

Church leaders call all willing members to Church positions. Members are richly blessed as they demonstrate their love for the Lord and for others by serving in Church callings.

Leaders seek the Spirit's guidance in determining whom to call. Leaders also consider the member's worthiness, ability, willingness to serve, and personal or family circumstances. Leaders try to ensure that the calling will benefit the people being served, the member, and the member's family.

Although service in Church callings requires sacrifice, it should not compromise a member's ability to fulfill family responsibilities. If possible, a member is called to serve in only one calling, in addition to assignments as a home teacher or visiting teacher.

Leaders should keep information about proposed callings and releases confidential. Only those who need to know, such as an auxiliary president who oversees the person, are informed before the person is presented for a sustaining vote. A person who is being considered for a calling is not notified until the calling is issued.

When a calling will be extended by or under the direction of the stake president, the bishop should be consulted to determine whether the member is worthy and whether the calling would be appropriate. The stake presidency then asks the high council to sustain the decision to issue the calling, if necessary according to the Chart of Callings on pages 49–58.

When a young man or young woman will be called to a Church position, the bishopric obtains approval from the parents or guardians before issuing the calling.

Leaders may extend a Church calling only after (1) a person's membership record is on file in the ward and has been carefully reviewed by the bishop or (2) the bishop has contacted the member's previous bishop to determine that the member is worthy and to verify that his or her membership record does not include an annotation or a comment about unresolved Church discipline.

New Church members should be given an appropriate calling or responsibility as soon as possible.

Nonmembers may be called to some positions, such as organist, music director, and assistant Scout leaders. Nonmembers may not be called to teaching or administrative positions.

Recommendations and Approvals for Callings

The Chart of Callings on pages 49–58 indicates who may make recommendations for each calling and who gives approval. In some cases, priesthood and auxiliary leaders are asked to make recommendations to their stake presidency or bishopric. They should approach this responsibility with prayerful consideration, knowing that they can receive guidance from the Lord about whom to recommend. However, they should remember that final responsibility to receive inspiration on whom to call rests with the stake presidency or the bishopric.

Stake presidents and bishops should carefully evaluate each recommendation, recognizing that it has been prayerfully considered. As needed, they may request another recommendation.

Stake Callings

The stake president is called by an assigned General Authority or Area Seventy. The stake president recommends brethren to be called or released as counselors in the stake presidency. Instructions are provided on the Recommendation for New Counselor to Stake President form. The stake president may interview, call, and set apart a counselor, or release a counselor, after receiving written approval from the First Presidency.

Guidelines for calling stake patriarchs are provided on page 6.

The stake president oversees the calling of members who serve in other stake positions (see pages 49–51 in the Chart of Callings).

Ward Callings

The stake presidency recommends brethren to be called or released as bishops. Instructions are provided on the Recommendation for New Bishop form. When recommending a person to serve as bishop, the stake presidency should carefully observe the principles set forth in 1 Timothy 3:2–7. It is not appropriate for the stake presidency to solicit recommendations or to conduct surveys among ward members with respect to who might be considered for a call to serve as bishop.

Before a new bishop may be interviewed, called, ordained, or set apart, his recommendation must be approved by the First Presidency. The stake president may extend the calling after he receives written approval from the First Presidency. With this approval, the stake president may also ordain and set apart a bishop after ward members have given a sustaining vote (see "Ordaining and Setting Apart Bishops" on pages 47–48). The approval of the First Presidency is also required before a stake president may release a bishop. The stake president may not assign these responsibilities to a counselor.

The stake president oversees the calling of counselors in the bishopric, ward executive secretaries, ward clerks, and assistant ward clerks.

The bishop oversees other callings in the ward as shown on pages 53–56 in the Chart of Callings.

Elders Quorum and High Priests Group Callings

The stake president oversees the calling of elders quorum presidents and their counselors and of high priests group leaders and their assistants (see page 52).

The elders quorum president and high priests group leader oversee the calling of quorum or group secretaries, instructors, and committee chairmen (see page 52). The bishop should give approval before brethren are called to these positions.

Extending a Calling

The Chart of Callings on pages 49–58 outlines who may extend each calling. After receiving the necessary approvals, an authorized leader conducts a personal interview to determine the member's worthiness and willingness to serve. If the member is worthy and willing, the leader extends the calling. The leader normally invites the spouse of a married person to be present and give support when the calling is extended.

A leader who extends a Church calling should explain its purpose, importance, and responsibilities. He also encourages the member to seek the Spirit of the Lord in fulfilling the calling.

A leader who extends a Church calling should tell the member the name of the person to whom he or she is directly accountable and should emphasize the need to support leaders. He also outlines the meetings the person should attend and describes the handbooks, manuals, and other resources that are available to help the member. He may identify special concerns or challenges of the calling and may invite the member to ask questions about it.

Leaders should ensure that the manner in which they extend a calling is consistent with its sacred nature. Callings should be extended in a dignified, formal manner, not in a casual setting or manner.

Sustaining Members in Church Callings

Members who are called to most Church positions should receive a sustaining vote before they begin serving. The Chart of Callings on pages 49–58 indicates whether a sustaining vote is needed and what congregation should give it.

The leader who oversaw the calling, or a priesthood officer he authorizes as outlined below, presents a person to the congregation for a sustaining vote:

1. A General Authority or Area Seventy presents the names of a new stake president and his counselors to stake members. A stake president may present his counselors' names when the First Presidency authorizes him to do so.

2. A member of the stake presidency or a priesthood officer under their direction presents names to stake members for changes in other stake callings.
3. A member of the stake presidency presents the names of a new bishop and his counselors to ward members. A member of the stake presidency or a priesthood officer under their direction presents names to ward members for changes in the ward executive secretary, ward clerk, and assistant ward clerks.
4. A member of the stake presidency or a priesthood officer under their direction presents names to elders quorum or high priests group members for changes in their leadership.
5. A member of the bishopric presents names to ward members for changes in ward organizations.
6. A member of the bishopric presents names to Aaronic Priesthood quorum members for changes in quorum leadership and to Young Women class members for changes in class presidencies.
7. A member of the elders quorum presidency or high priests group leadership presents names to quorum or group members for changes in secretaries, instructors, and committee chairmen.

The person who conducts the sustaining first announces who was released from the position and asks members to give an expression of thanks for the person's service (see page 48 for suggested language).

When presenting a person for a sustaining vote, an authorized priesthood officer asks him or her to stand. The officer may say:

"[Name] has been called as [position], and we propose that he [or she] be sustained. Those in favor may manifest it by the uplifted hand. [Pause briefly for the sustaining vote.] Those opposed, if any, may manifest it. [Pause briefly to allow for a dissenting vote, if any.]"

The person who is being presented should participate in the sustaining vote. If more than one person is being presented, they may usually be sustained as a group.

If a member in good standing gives a dissenting vote when someone is presented to be sustained, the presiding officer or another assigned priesthood officer confers with the dissenting member in private after the meeting. The officer determines whether the dissenting vote was based on knowledge that the person who was presented is guilty of conduct that should disqualify him or her from serving in the position. Dissenting votes from nonmembers need not be considered.

When, as an exception, new stake officers need to begin their service before the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting in which they would normally be sustained, they should be sustained in the sacrament meetings of the wards and branches of the stake. These sustainings should be kept to a minimum. When they are necessary, members of the stake presidency or high council usually need not travel to wards solely for that purpose. They may conduct the sustainings in their home wards or as part of other assignments.

Setting Apart Officers and Teachers

Members who are called to most Church positions should be set apart before they begin serving. The Chart of Callings on pages 49–58 indicates whether a setting apart is needed and who is authorized to perform it. Presidents are set apart before their counselors.

Under the direction of the presiding authority, one or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders, including a worthy father or husband, may participate in a setting apart. They place their hands lightly on the person's head. Then the priesthood holder who acts as voice:

1. Calls the person by his or her full name.
2. States that he is acting by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Sets the person apart to the appropriate office in the stake, ward, quorum, high priests group, or class.
4. Confers keys on those who are entitled to receive them. (In stakes and wards, only stake presidents, bishops, and quorum presidents receive keys of presidency when they are set apart. The word *keys* should not be used when setting apart counselors, high councilors, high priests group leaders, presidents of auxiliary organizations, the bishop's priests quorum assistants, or teachers in an organization.)
5. Gives a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs.
6. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

A setting apart need not be expanded into a formal meeting. It is not necessary to have prayers or testimonies or instruction when someone is set apart.

Ordaining and Setting Apart Bishops

If a man who is called as bishop is not a high priest, the stake president should see that he is ordained a high priest before ordaining him a bishop.

If the man was ordained a bishop previously, he needs only to be set apart as bishop of the ward.

After the First Presidency has approved the recommendation of a man to serve as bishop (see page 46), they authorize a General Authority, Area Seventy, or stake president to ordain him and set him apart. The authorized priesthood officer:

1. Calls the man by his full name.
2. States that he is acting by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood.
3. Ordains the man a bishop (unless he was previously ordained).
4. Sets him apart to preside over the ward and to be the president of the Aaronic Priesthood and the priests quorum, emphasizing his responsibilities for the Aaronic Priesthood and for young women in the ward.
5. Confers on him all the keys, rights, powers, and authority of the office of bishop, referring specifically to the bishop's duties as a common judge in Israel and as the presiding high priest in the ward.
6. Adds words of blessing as the Spirit directs.
7. Closes in the name of Jesus Christ.

Releasing Members from Church Callings

Releases from Church callings are made by the same level of authority that extended the callings. To issue a release, an authorized leader meets with the member personally, informs him or her of the release, and expresses appreciation for the service. The leader also asks the person to return any current, usable materials so they can be given to the successor. Only those who need to know are informed of a release before it is announced publicly.

The same congregation that sustained a person gives a vote of thanks when the person is released. An authorized priesthood officer may say:

"[Name] has been released as [position], and we propose that he [or she] be given a vote of thanks for his [or her] service. Those who wish to express their appreciation may manifest it by the uplifted hand." No dissenting vote is called for.

When a president, bishop, or high priests group leader is released, the counselors or assistants are released automatically. Others who hold positions in the organization, such as secretaries and teachers, are not released automatically.

Chart of Callings

Stake Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By[1]	Called and Set Apart By
Stake president	An assigned General Authority or Area Seventy	An assigned General Authority or Area Seventy	Members in stake conference	An assigned General Authority or Area Seventy
Counselors in the stake presidency	Stake president	An assigned General Authority or Area Seventy, or written notification from the First Presidency	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	An assigned General Authority or Area Seventy, or the stake president with written approval from the First Presidency
Stake executive secretary	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Stake president or an assigned counselor
Stake clerk	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Stake president
Assistant stake clerks	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Stake president or an assigned counselor
High councilors	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Stake president or an assigned counselor
Stake patriarch	Stake presidency	Quorum of the Twelve	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	A member of the First Presidency or Twelve, or the stake president with written approval from the Quorum of the Twelve
Stake patriarch who is already ordained but has moved to another stake	Presidency of the stake into which he has moved	Quorum of the Twelve	Members in stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting	Not ordained or set apart to begin service in a new stake
Stake auxiliary presidents (Young Men, Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School)	Stake presidency (in consultation with the high council adviser)	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor

[1]When, as an exception, new stake officers need to begin their service before the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting in which they would normally be sustained, they should be sustained in the sacrament meetings of the wards and branches of the stake (see page 47).

6. Callings and Releases

Stake Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By[1]	Called and Set Apart By
Counselors in stake auxiliary presidencies, secretaries, and other auxiliary leaders	President of the stake auxiliary (in consultation with the high council adviser)	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake physical facilities representative (high councilor)	Assigned by the stake presidency; not called, sustained, or set apart.			
Stake activities committee chairman (high councilor)	Assigned by the stake presidency; not called, sustained, or set apart.			
Stake cultural arts and physical activities directors	Stake activities committee chairman	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake activities committee specialists	Stake activities committee chairman	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]
Stake sports officials and officials coordinator	Stake activities committee chairman	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]
Stake director of libraries	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake family record extraction director and assistant directors	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake family history center director	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake director of public affairs	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake public affairs assistants	Stake presidency or stake director of public affairs	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake public affairs specialists	Stake presidency or stake director of public affairs	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]

[1] When, as an exception, new stake officers need to begin their service before the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting in which they would normally be sustained, they should be sustained in the sacrament meetings of the wards and branches of the stake (see page 47).

[2] The stake president determines whether members who are called to serve in these positions should be set apart.

Stake Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By[1]	Called and Set Apart By
Stake music adviser (high councilor)	Assigned by the stake presidency; not called, sustained, or set apart.			
Stake music chairman	Stake music adviser (high councilor)	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake music specialists	Stake music chairman	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]
Stake single member representative(s)	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Members in stake conference	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Stake auditors	Chairman of the stake audit committee (counselor in the stake presidency)	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor[2]
Stake welfare specialists (including stake employment specialist)	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]
Stake building specialist for water conservation (as needed)	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Not sustained	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor[2]

[1] When, as an exception, new stake officers need to begin their service before the next stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting in which they would normally be sustained, they should be sustained in the sacrament meetings of the wards and branches of the stake (see page 47).

[2] The stake president determines whether members who are called to serve in these positions should be set apart.

6. Callings and Releases

Melchizedek Priesthood Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
President of the stake high priests quorum (stake president)	See "Stake Callings," page 49.			
Counselors in the stake high priests quorum (counselors in the stake presidency)	See "Stake Callings," page 49.			
Ward high priests group leader	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Group members	Stake president or an assigned counselor
Assistants to the ward high priests group leader	Group leader (in consultation with the bishop)	Stake presidency and high council	Group members	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Elders quorum president	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Quorum members	Stake president
Counselors in the elders quorum presidency	Quorum president (in consultation with the bishop)	Stake presidency and high council	Quorum members	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
High priests group and elders quorum secretaries, instructors, and committee chairmen	Group leader or quorum president	Bishop and group leadership or quorum presidency	Group or quorum members	Group leader or an assigned assistant; quorum president or an assigned counselor
Home teachers	Home teaching is a priesthood responsibility of elders and high priests. Accordingly, these brethren are *assigned* as home teachers by quorum and group leaders. They are not called, sustained, or set apart.			

Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Wards

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Priests quorum president (bishop)	Stake presidency	First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Ward members	A General Authority or Area Seventy, or the stake president with written approval from the First Presidency
Assistants to the priests quorum president	Bishop (priests quorum president)	Bishopric	Quorum members	Bishop
Teachers and deacons quorum presidents	Bishopric	Bishopric	Quorum members	Called by the bishop or an assigned counselor; set apart by the bishop
Counselors in the teachers and deacons quorum presidencies and quorum secretaries	Quorum presidents	Bishopric	Quorum members	Bishop or an assigned counselor

Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Wards (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Priests quorum adviser (ward Young Men president)	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop
Teachers and deacons quorum advisers (counselors in the ward Young Men presidency), assistant advisers, and ward Young Men secretary	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Home teachers	Home teaching is a priesthood responsibility of teachers and priests. Accordingly, these brethren are *assigned* as home teachers. They are not called, sustained, or set apart.			

Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Branches in Stakes

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Priests quorum president (branch president, who acts as the priests quorum president)	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Branch members	Stake president
Other Aaronic Priesthood callings	See "Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Wards," pages 52–53, substituting *branch president* for *bishop* and *branch* for *ward*.			

Ward Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Bishop	Stake presidency	First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Ward members	A General Authority or Area Seventy, or the stake president with written approval from the First Presidency
Counselors in the bishopric	Bishop	Stake presidency and high council	Ward members	Stake president or an assigned counselor
Ward executive secretary	Bishopric	Stake presidency and high council	Ward members	Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor
Ward clerk and assistant ward clerks	Bishopric	Stake presidency and high council	Ward members	Stake president or an assigned counselor
Ward mission leader	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop
Ward missionaries	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor

Ward Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Ward auxiliary presidents (Young Men, Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School)	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop
Counselors in the ward Young Men presidency (teachers and deacons quorum advisers), assistant advisers, and ward Young Men secretary	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Counselors and secretaries in ward auxiliaries (except Young Men)	Auxiliary president	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Advisers, teachers, or instructors; music directors; and other callings in ward auxiliaries (except Young Men)	Auxiliary presidency	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Relief Society visiting teachers	Relief Society visiting teachers are *assigned* by the Relief Society president, under the direction of the bishop and in consultation with her counselors. Visiting teachers are not called, sustained, or set apart.			
Temple preparation seminar teacher(s)	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Boy Scout leaders	Aaronic Priesthood quorum advisers and assistant advisers are called as Boy Scout leaders.			
Cub Scout leaders	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Young Women class presidents	Bishopric (in consultation with the Young Women presidency)	Bishopric	Class members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Counselors in Young Women class presidencies and class secretaries	Class president	Bishopric	Class members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward activities committee chairman	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward cultural arts and physical activities directors	Ward activities committee chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]

[1] The bishop determines whether members who are called to serve in these positions should be set apart.

Ward Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Ward activities committee specialists	Ward activities committee chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]
Ward sports coaches and officials	Bishopric, Young Men president, Young Women president, or ward activities committee chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]
Ward magazine representative	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]
Ward music adviser (member of the bishopric)	Assigned by the bishop; not called, sustained, or set apart.			
Ward music chairman	Ward music adviser	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward music director and ward organist or pianist	Ward music chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Priesthood music director and pianist or organist	Ward music adviser (member of the bishopric)	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward choir director and accompanist	Ward music chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward choir president	Ward music chairman	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]
Meetinghouse librarian (where two or more wards occupy a meetinghouse)	Meetinghouse library coordinating committee (a member of each bishopric in the building)	Bishops of all wards in the meetinghouse	Members of all wards in the meetinghouse	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward librarian	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Assistant ward librarians	Bishopric or ward librarian	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Family history consultant; ward family record extraction workers	Bishopric (in consultation with the high priests group leader)	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward building representative	May be a member of the bishopric whom the bishop appoints. If so, the person is not called, sustained, or set apart. If the ward building representative is not a member of the bishopric, the person is called and set apart by the bishop or an assigned counselor.			

[1] The bishop determines whether members who are called to serve in these positions should be set apart.

Ward Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Ward single member representative(s)	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor
Ward welfare specialists (including ward employment specialist)	Bishopric	Bishopric	Ward members	Bishop or an assigned counselor[1]

[1] The bishop determines whether members who are called to serve in these positions should be set apart.

Branch Callings in Stakes

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Branch president	Stake presidency	Stake presidency and high council	Branch members	Stake president
Other branch callings	See "Ward Callings," pages 53–56, substituting *branch president* for *bishop* and *branch* for *ward*.			

Full-Time Missionaries

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Full-time missionaries	Bishop and stake president	President of the Church	Not sustained	Called by the President of the Church; set apart by the stake president

Mission Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Mission president	General Authority or Area Seventy	First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Not sustained	Member of the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve
Counselors in the mission presidency	Mission president	Area Presidency or a member of the Presidency of the Seventy	Ratified in district conference in all districts	Member of the Area Presidency or Presidency of the Seventy, or the mission president under their direction
Mission executive secretary and mission clerk	Mission president	Mission presidency	Ratified in district conference in all districts	Mission president

Mission Callings (continued)

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Mission auxiliary presidencies are not recommended. However, if the mission president feels that they are needed to assist district auxiliary leaders, they may be called as shown below.				
Mission auxiliary presidents	Mission president	Mission presidency	Ratified in district conference in all districts	Mission president
Counselors in mission auxiliary presidencies	Mission auxiliary president	Mission presidency	Ratified in district conference in all districts	Mission president or a priesthood officer he assigns

District Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
District president	Mission president	Area Presidency or a member of the Presidency of the Seventy	Members in district conference	Mission president
Counselors in the district presidency	District president	Mission presidency	Members in district conference or district general priesthood meeting	Mission president or an assigned counselor
District councilors; district executive secretary, clerk, assistant clerks, and auxiliary leaders	See "Stake Callings," pages 49–51, substituting *district president* for *stake president* and *district* for *stake*.			

Elders Quorum Callings in Branches in Missions

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Elders quorum president	Mission presidency or district presidency	Mission presidency or, when authorized, district presidency	Quorum members	Mission president or, if assigned, district president
Counselors in the elders quorum presidency	Quorum president	Mission presidency or, when authorized, district presidency	Quorum members	Mission president or, if assigned, district president or another priesthood officer
Elders quorum secretary, instructor(s), and committee chairmen	Quorum president	Branch president and quorum presidency	Quorum members	Quorum president or an assigned counselor
Home teachers	Home teaching is a priesthood responsibility of elders. Accordingly, these brethren are *assigned* as home teachers by the elders quorum presidency. They are not called, sustained, or set apart.			

Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Branches in Missions

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Priests quorum president (branch president, who acts as the priests quorum president)	Mission presidency or district presidency	Mission presidency	Branch members	Mission president or, if assigned, district president
Other Aaronic Priesthood callings	See "Aaronic Priesthood Callings in Wards," pages 52–53, substituting *branch president* for *bishop* and *branch* for *ward*.			

Branch Callings in Missions

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Branch president	Mission presidency or district presidency	Mission presidency	Branch members	Mission president or, if assigned, district president
Counselors in the branch presidency	Branch president	Mission presidency or, when authorized, district presidency	Branch members	Mission president or, if assigned, one of his counselors, the district president, or one of the district president's counselors
Branch executive secretary, branch clerk, and assistant branch clerk	Branch presidency	Mission presidency or, when authorized, district presidency	Branch members	District president or a priesthood officer he assigns
Branch auxiliary leaders and other callings	See "Ward Callings," pages 53–56, substituting *branch president* for *bishop* and *branch* for *ward*.			

Military Service Member Group Callings

Office	Recommended By	Approved By	Sustained By	Called and Set Apart By
Service member group leader	Stake presidency or mission president	Stake presidency and high council or mission presidency	Group members	Stake president or mission president
Assistants to the service member group leader	Group leader	Stake presidency and high council or mission presidency	Group members	Stake president or mission president or a priesthood leader either of them assigns

7. Meetings

This section summarizes instructions on Church meetings. It describes (1) meetings that include a full congregation, (2) leadership meetings primarily for stake presidencies and bishoprics, and (3) funerals.

Meetings that are specific to an organization, such as quorum, Relief Society, Young Men, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School meetings, are described in that organization's section of *Book* 2.

Meetings that include leaders of more than one organization are described on pages 315–19 in *Book* 2.

In addition to the meetings outlined in the handbooks, presiding authorities occasionally may call other meetings and define their composition and purpose.

Doctrines Relating to Church Meetings

The Savior has commanded His people to meet together often (see Mosiah 18:25; 3 Nephi 18:22). He promised, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Church meetings are held to worship, pray, renew covenants, perform ordinances, teach and exhort, learn, sing, conduct business, and strengthen associations as brothers and sisters in the gospel.

One of the most important meetings is sacrament meeting (see D&C 59:9). The scriptures also speak of conferences and other public meetings (see D&C 20:61; 46:3). Regular Sunday meetings and conferences of the Church are open to members and nonmembers (see 3 Nephi 18:22; D&C 46:3–5).

General Guidelines

Leaders plan and conduct meetings "as they are led by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God" (D&C 20:45; see also D&C 46:2; Moroni 6:9). They should use an agenda to help them focus on each meeting's purposes and use time effectively, but they should remain open to promptings of the Holy Ghost and comments of those in attendance.

Leaders should ensure that Sunday meetings are not so numerous that there is little time for parents and children to be together on that day. Where possible, leaders should avoid scheduling Sunday meetings other than those in the standard three-hour schedule, leadership meetings in the early mornings, and occasional firesides in the evenings so parents may be with their children.

General guidelines for planning and conducting meetings are provided on pages 314–15 in *Book* 2.

Principles of Effective Church Council and Committee Meetings

When councils or committees meet, the presiding officer outlines the matters being discussed and then invites ideas and suggestions from others. He helps others participate fully in the discussions, decisions, and plans. He considers their suggestions carefully in making plans and giving assignments.

Council and committee meetings should focus on accomplishing the mission of the Church and planning how to strengthen individuals and families. Time spent on calendaring and other administrative business should be minimal.

General Meetings

General Conference

General conferences are held in April and October to refresh and renew the faith of members, to instruct and edify, and to conduct Church business.

General Relief Society Meeting and General Young Women Meeting

A general Relief Society meeting is held each year for Relief Society sisters. A general Young Women meeting is held each year for young women ages 12 to 18, their mothers, and their leaders.

Area Meetings

Area Council Meeting

Members of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may hold area council meetings periodically to instruct Area Seventies and others as invited. These meetings are also used to correlate, plan, and resolve matters affecting an area. Agenda items include discussions on missionary work, spiritual and temporal welfare, and temple and family history work.

7. Meetings

Coordinating Council Meeting

The Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency is responsible for coordinating councils. Normally they designate an Area Seventy to serve as chairman of each council. The Area Seventy convenes one coordinating council meeting after each general conference. When there is a clear need, one or two additional coordinating council meetings may be held each year.

Stake presidents and mission presidents should attend each of these meetings. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may attend as needed. Temple presidents may also be invited to attend as needed. District presidents are not usually asked to attend unless they are nearby.

The purposes of these meetings are to (1) instruct and edify priesthood leaders, (2) coordinate the work of stakes and missions, and (3) coordinate multistake matters. Stake and mission presidents should counsel together as equal participants in these meetings.

The agenda for coordinating council meetings may include:

1. Instruction requested by the First Presidency and the Twelve.
2. Items submitted by stake and mission presidents.
3. Missionary matters, such as *(a)* coordinating efforts to find, teach, and baptize investigators and to retain new members; *(b)* increasing member participation in missionary work; and *(c)* coordinating the number and location of missionaries, their assistance in activation efforts, and their assistance in training local members.
4. Multistake matters, such as welfare, Church education, family history, temple work, public affairs, activities, travel practices, and other matters as needed. Separate multistake meetings should not be held to coordinate such matters.

Area Perpetual Education Fund Committee Meeting (Outside the United States and Canada)

In areas where Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) loans are approved, a member of the Area Presidency is designated to organize the area PEF committee and be its chairman. This committee consists of the chairman, the Church Educational System area director (who is vice-chairman of the committee), the area welfare manager, the employment resource service manager (where available), the director for temporal affairs, and the area controller. An area legal adviser may be invited to join the committee as needed.

This committee meets regularly to review the progress of the PEF initiative. These meetings are used to coordinate efforts to train and sustain PEF participants, service PEF loans, and expand efforts to seek out others who need assistance. This committee provides a semiannual report to the Area Committee of the Twelve and to the managing director of the PEF Department.

In areas with multiple countries that have been approved for the PEF program, a local country committee may be formed. The chairman is designated by the Area President. That committee meets periodically and makes reports to the area PEF committee to ensure that the country program is operating properly.

Multistake Meetings

In the past, stake presidents and other stake leaders in many areas have been required to attend multistake meetings in which welfare, Church education, family history, public affairs, and other matters have been coordinated. Except as noted below, such meetings should be discontinued. These matters should be covered in the coordinating council meetings that are conducted by Area Seventies, or through letters or other communication.

The following multistake meetings will continue:

Regional welfare committee (for stakes served by welfare operations; see the next heading).

Local Church board of education (where a released-time seminary serves more than one stake; see page 131).

Regional Welfare Committee Meeting

Areas of the Church are divided into welfare regions. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency obtains the concurrence of the Presiding Bishopric and the Welfare Executive Committee when creating or restructuring welfare regions.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency organizes a regional welfare committee for each welfare region. Committee members include all stake presidents (or assigned counselors), all chairmen of the stake bishops' welfare councils, and all stake Relief Society presidents in the welfare region. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency appoints a stake president to be chairman of the committee. He also calls a regional welfare specialist to be the executive secretary of the committee.

This committee meets twice each year. The agenda may include the following items:

1. Receive instructions in welfare matters and plan how to implement instructions from the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.
2. Coordinate welfare activities, such as balancing donated labor assignments among stakes and planning responses to emergencies.
3. Discuss other welfare matters, such as fostering self-reliance, caring for the needy, and encouraging fast-offering donations.
4. Review the services of Church welfare operations where they exist.
5. Review the status of stake emergency response plans. Ensure that an assigned priesthood leader has met with civil authorities in each community to coordinate emergency response plans of the Church and the community. Designate a director of public affairs to answer questions from the media and to review and approve news releases during emergencies.

Where travel is difficult or long, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may ask fewer stake bishops' welfare council chairmen and stake Relief Society presidents to attend this meeting.

Local Church Board of Education Meeting

See page 131.

Meeting with Stake Presidents or Other Key Leaders

In addition to coordinating council meetings (see page 60), a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may occasionally gather stake presidents or other key leaders in small groups, as needed, to resolve specific issues or provide needed instruction. Care should be taken not to overburden stake presidents with unnecessary meetings.

Stake Meetings

The stake president oversees stake meetings. He presides at these meetings unless a General Authority or Area Seventy attends. His counselors may conduct stake meetings and may preside if he is absent. Stake meetings should not conflict with Sunday ward meetings.

Stake Conference

Each stake holds two stake conferences during the year as scheduled by the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. In most parts of the world, the stake president presides at one stake conference and an assigned General Authority or Area Seventy presides at the other.

In some stake conferences, a satellite broadcast may be incorporated into the Sunday general session. This broadcast will include instruction by General Authorities. When a satellite broadcast is used, that conference takes the place of the stake conference at which a General Authority or Area Seventy would have presided.

The primary purpose of stake conference is to help the Saints build faith and testimony. All talks and music should be planned with this purpose in mind.

Another purpose is to conduct stake business. In one stake conference each year, a member of the stake presidency presents general, area, and stake officers to be sustained, using the Officers Sustained form. He also presents the names of stake officers who have been released so the congregation can give an expression of thanks for their service. This sustaining is conducted in the first stake conference each year unless a satellite broadcast is incorporated into that conference. In that case, the sustaining is conducted in the second stake conference.

If stake officers are called or released between stake conferences, they should be presented for a sustaining vote or an expression of thanks in the next stake conference unless this has been done in ward sacrament meetings as outlined on page 47. Brethren who have been recommended for ordination to the offices of elder and high priest are presented for a sustaining vote in either stake conference. For instructions, see pages 39 and 46–47.

Each stake conference normally includes the following meetings:

1. A meeting of the General Authority or Area Seventy (if assigned), stake presidency, stake executive secretary, and stake clerk.
2. A priesthood leadership meeting, including the General Authority or Area Seventy (if assigned); stake presidency; high council; stake executive secretary; stake clerk (and assistant clerks as needed); stake Young Men presidency (and secretary as needed); bishoprics; ward executive secretaries; ward clerks (and assistant clerks as needed); high priests group leaders, assistants, and secretaries; elders quorum presidencies and secretaries; ward mission leaders; and ward Young Men presidencies (and secretaries and assistant advisers as needed).

3. A Saturday evening session for all members of the stake who are 18 years of age and older. Temple presidents, stake patriarchs, and full-time mission presidents or their representatives who attend should sit on the stand. Depending on local circumstances, this session may be held on Sunday if approved by the presiding authority.

   Instruction is under the direction of the presiding authority. When a General Authority or Area Seventy will preside, the stake president may be invited to suggest topics to him. When the stake president will preside, he and his counselors select topics.

4. A general session held on Sunday for all members and interested nonmembers. Temple presidents, stake patriarchs, and full-time mission presidents or their representatives who attend should sit on the stand. More than one Sunday general session may be held if facilities are not adequate to seat everyone in the same session. Primary children attend this session with their families, not in a separate meeting.

   If a satellite broadcast is incorporated into this session, it will be timed to allow approximately 15 minutes at the beginning of the meeting for an opening hymn, an invocation, and local Church business. After the broadcast, the congregation will have a closing hymn and a benediction.

Planning and Conducting Stake Conference

The presiding officer directs all conference planning. He approves all conference participants and all musical selections well before the conference weekend.

The stake president conducts the Sunday general session. His counselors may conduct other conference meetings.

The stake president speaks in the Sunday general session of the conference unless that session incorporates a satellite broadcast. His counselors speak in conference sessions as determined by the presiding authority.

Planning includes making arrangements for adequate seating, ushering, and parking. Stake leaders may assign priesthood quorums and groups, including prospective elders, to provide these services.

Music for Stake Conference

See pages 289–91 in *Book 2*.

Stake General Priesthood Meeting

The stake presidency convenes a stake general priesthood meeting twice a year, once in each half. All Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood holders in the stake are to attend.

The stake presidency uses these meetings to instruct and inspire priesthood holders. The presidency prayerfully selects the topics for these meetings to meet the needs of those who attend.

In these meetings the stake presidency also conducts stake priesthood business, such as:

1. Presenting the names of brethren who have been recommended for ordination to the offices of elder and high priest and asking for a sustaining vote (see page 39).
2. Presenting the names of newly called stake officers and asking for a sustaining vote (see the Chart of Callings, pages 49–51, for guidelines about who is to be presented for this vote).

Stake Priesthood Leadership Meeting

See page 315 in *Book 2*.

Stake High Priests Quorum Meeting

See page 167 in *Book 2*.

Stake Presidency Meeting

The stake presidency meets weekly. The stake executive secretary and stake clerk attend; the clerk records minutes. The stake president may invite others to attend as needed.

During this meeting, members of the stake presidency consider all matters affecting the stake. They also plan how to strengthen individuals and families. They evaluate wards, high priests groups, elders quorums, auxiliaries, programs, and activities. They also make plans to implement instructions from the scriptures, Church leaders, and handbooks.

During this meeting, members of the stake presidency identify members to call to Church positions (see pages 45–46). They also review bishops' recommendations of members to serve missions and of brethren to be ordained elders or high priests.

Other agenda items for this meeting could include reporting on assignments, planning meetings, reviewing the stake calendar, and reviewing the stake budget.

Stake Priesthood Executive Committee Meeting

See page 315 in *Book 2*.

Stake Council Meeting

See page 315 in *Book 2*.

Stake Welfare Committee Meeting

See pages 315–16 in *Book 2*.

Stake Melchizedek Priesthood Committee Meeting

See page 316 in *Book 2*.

Stake Aaronic Priesthood Committee Meeting

See page 316 in *Book 2*.

Stake Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women Committee Meeting

See page 316 in *Book 2*.

Meeting with Bishoprics

The stake presidency meets regularly with bishoprics to instruct them and to review directions and policies. The stake presidency, all bishoprics, the stake executive secretary, and the stake clerk attend this meeting. If desired, the stake president may limit the meeting to bishops only.

Stake Bishops' Welfare Council Meeting

The stake bishops' welfare council is composed of all bishops in the stake. The stake president appoints one bishop to be chairman of the council. In consultation with the stake president, the chairman arranges meetings, prepares agendas, leads discussions, and arranges for instruction. The stake president attends council meetings occasionally to give instruction. A stake clerk also attends and takes minutes. If needed, the regional welfare specialist may be invited to attend.

The council meets at least quarterly. During these meetings, council members receive instruction in welfare matters. They also exchange ideas and experiences relating to their welfare responsibilities.

Matters for discussion could include trends in fast-offering contributions, welfare needs and resources, and welfare assistance. Council members could also identify work opportunities for members who receive welfare assistance. In addition, they could identify ways for priesthood quorums and the Relief Society to help meet welfare needs in the stake. They also could identify agencies and services in the community that could be used to assist members. In addition, they review instructions received at regional welfare committee meetings.

In areas where there are Church welfare operations, such as an employment resource center, a home storage center, or a bishops' storehouse, the stake bishops' welfare council evaluates the services and management of the operations.

If the stake president has assigned one bishop to oversee assistance to transients, council members could discuss how to coordinate this assistance.

The stake bishops' welfare council does not make policy. However, the council may make recommendations to be considered by the stake presidency.

Stake Committee for Single Members Meeting

See page 316 in *Book 2*.

Stake Public Affairs Council Meeting

See page 317 in *Book 2*.

Ward Meetings

The bishop oversees ward meetings. He presides at these meetings unless a member of the stake presidency, a General Authority, or an Area Seventy attends. His counselors may conduct ward meetings and may preside if he is absent. Presiding authorities should be invited to sit on the stand.

Schedule for Sunday Meetings

Sunday meetings provide vitally important time for members to partake of the sacrament, worship, learn the gospel, learn their duties, and give service. Interested nonmembers may attend these meetings as appropriate.

Wards are to hold the following Sunday meetings in one three-hour period (for meeting schedule options, see the "Sunday Meeting Schedules" chart on page 74):

1. Sacrament meeting
2. Priesthood meeting (for all priesthood holders, prospective elders, and unordained young men of Aaronic Priesthood age; see page 66)
3. Relief Society (for all women ages 18 and older and for younger women who are married)
4. Young Women (for young women ages 12 to 18)

5. Primary (for children ages 3 through 11; also for children ages 18 months through 2 years if a nursery is organized and parents want their children to attend)
6. Sunday School (for those ages 12 and older)

Sacrament Meeting

Purposes of Sacrament Meeting

Each sacrament meeting should be a spiritual experience in which members of the Church renew their baptismal covenants by partaking of the sacrament. Other purposes of sacrament meeting are to worship, receive gospel instruction, perform ordinances, conduct ward business, and strengthen members spiritually.

Planning and Conducting Sacrament Meeting

Members of the bishopric plan sacrament meetings and conduct them in a reverent and dignified manner. They oversee the administration of the sacrament, select topics for talks and music, select and orient participants, and invite members to give opening and closing prayers.

A sample sacrament meeting agenda follows:

1. Prelude music (see page 289 in *Book 2* for guidelines)
2. Greeting and welcome
3. Acknowledgment of presiding authorities or visiting high councilors who are attending
4. Announcements (if possible, most announcements should be printed so they do not take time in sacrament meeting; the bishopric may give essential announcements briefly before the opening hymn)
5. Opening hymn and prayer
6. Ward and stake business, such as:
    a. Sustaining and releasing officers and teachers (see pages 46–47 and 48)
    b. Recognizing eight-year-old children who have been baptized and confirmed
    c. Recognizing children who advance from Primary (see page 231 in *Book 2*)
    d. Presenting names of brethren to receive or advance in the Aaronic Priesthood (see page 40)
    e. Presenting the Duty to God Award and the Young Womanhood Recognition (see pages 190 and 227 in *Book 2*)
    f. Presenting names of new ward members (see page 146)
7. Naming and blessing children (usually in fast and testimony meeting) and performing confirmations
8. Sacrament hymn and administration of the sacrament
9. Gospel messages, congregational singing, and special musical selections
10. Closing hymn and prayer
11. Postlude music

The bishopric ensures that sacrament meetings begin and end on time and are not overprogrammed.

It is not necessary to hold a prayer meeting before sacrament meeting.

The bishopric and the speakers should be in their seats at least five minutes before the meeting begins so they can be spiritually prepared for a worshipful experience.

Leaders should set an example of reverence during the time before sacrament meeting. This is not a time for conversation or transmission of messages. Prelude music should be subdued, encouraging a spirit of worship. Members should be taught to make this a period of prayerful meditation as they prepare spiritually for the sacrament.

The bishopric encourages families to arrive on time, to sit together, and to be reverent during sacrament meeting.

Occasionally something unexpected may arise during the meeting that the presiding officer feels needs to be clarified. When this occurs, he should make any clarification that is needed, being careful not to cause embarrassment.

Blessing and Passing the Sacrament

The bishopric ensures that the sacrament is blessed and passed in a reverent and orderly manner. The sacrament table should be prepared before the meeting begins. Instructions for preparing, blessing, and passing the sacrament are on pages 37–38.

Selecting Topics for Talks and Music

The bishopric selects topics for talks and music in sacrament meetings. Talks and music should focus on gospel subjects that ward members most need to build faith and testimony.

Selecting and Orienting Participants

Selecting Participants. The bishopric selects members to participate in sacrament meetings. Most opportunities to participate should be given to ward members. If the bishopric invites members from outside the ward to speak, the guidelines on pages 177–78 should be followed.

Members of the bishopric regularly invite youth ages 12 to 18 to speak in sacrament meeting. Youth should speak briefly (about five minutes each) on assigned gospel subjects. They should prepare their own talks, though the bishopric may encourage parents to help. In addition, the bishopric may call a speech specialist to help youth learn to prepare talks and speak in public. The speech specialist is a member of the activities committee.

Missionaries are normally invited to speak in a sacrament meeting just before they depart and when they return (see pages 97 and 100–101). The bishopric plans these meetings. Sacrament meetings are not devoted to missionary farewells.

The bishopric schedules high councilors to speak as assigned by the stake president (usually once each month, though the stake president may adjust the frequency of such assignments according to the needs of the ward).

The bishopric schedules one sacrament meeting each year for the Primary children to take part in a Primary program (see page 237 in *Book 2*).

Occasionally the bishopric may invite the full-time missionaries who are serving in the area to speak.

The bishopric may not turn sacrament meetings over to auxiliaries or outside musical groups. However, auxiliaries may be invited to participate in the meeting under the bishopric's direction.

Members of the bishopric should extend invitations to speak in sacrament meeting well in advance of the meeting.

Orienting Participants. Members of the bishopric orient sacrament meeting participants. They review the purposes of sacrament meeting and explain that all talks and music should be in harmony with the sacred nature of the sacrament.

When inviting members to speak, a member of the bishopric explains clearly the topic and the length of time the person should speak. He counsels speakers to teach the doctrines of the gospel, relate faith-promoting experiences, bear witness of divinely revealed truths, and use the scriptures (see D&C 42:12; 52:9). Speakers should teach in a spirit of love after prayerful preparation. They should not speak on subjects that are speculative, controversial, or out of harmony with Church doctrine.

Members who participate in sacrament meeting should stay until the meeting ends.

Prayers

See page 67.

Music

Prelude and Postlude. See page 289 in *Book 2*.

During Sacrament Meeting. The bishopric selects or approves music for sacrament meetings. Music and musical texts are to be sacred, dignified, and otherwise suitable for sacrament meeting. Music in sacrament meeting is for worship, not for a performance that brings attention to itself. Guidelines for determining whether music is appropriate are provided on pages 289–90 in *Book 2*.

Opening and closing hymns are usually sung by the congregation. The sacrament hymn is always sung by the congregation.

Audiovisual Materials

Audiovisual materials such as prerecorded music, video recordings, overhead transparencies, computer presentations, and slides should not be used in sacrament meeting. An exception may be made to use appropriate recorded accompaniment if a piano, organ, or accompanist is not available.

Sacrament Service in Unusual Situations

Every member needs the spiritual blessings that come from partaking of the sacrament. Occasionally members may be unable to attend sacrament meeting because they are confined to a home, nursing home, or hospital. The bishop may assign priesthood holders to prepare, bless, and pass the sacrament to these members.

Occasionally members may be unable to attend sacrament meeting because of distance to the meetinghouse. Under unusual circumstances, the bishop may give authorization for a sacrament service to be held away from the meetinghouse. The priesthood holder whom the bishop authorizes to conduct the service must be a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood or hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. He also must be worthy to bless and pass the sacrament. The bishop's authorization is also required if the service will be attended by members of more than one family. The priesthood holder who directs the service reports to the bishop when the service has been held.

When members are traveling or temporarily residing away from their home wards, they should make an earnest effort to attend sacrament meeting and other Sunday meetings in a ward or branch of the Church.

Sacrament services should not be held in conjunction with family reunions or other outings.

Fast and Testimony Meeting

Usually on the first Sunday of each month, sacrament meeting is a fast and testimony meeting. General conference and stake conference may necessitate holding fast and testimony meeting on a different Sunday.

Under the bishop's direction, in this meeting children may be named and blessed and confirmations may be performed before the sacrament is blessed and passed.

After the sacrament, the bishopric member who is conducting bears a brief testimony. He then invites members to bear heartfelt testimonies and to relate faith-promoting experiences. The bishopric encourages members to keep their testimonies brief so more people may have the opportunity to participate.

It may be best to have younger children learn to share their testimonies in settings such as family home evening or when giving talks in Primary until they are old enough to do so unassisted in a fast and testimony meeting.

Priesthood Meeting Opening Exercises

All priesthood holders attend brief opening exercises together before separating for their quorum or group meetings. A member of the bishopric conducts. Opening exercises should include an opening hymn and prayer. They may also include priesthood business, instruction, brief announcements, introduction of new members, additional hymns, and special musical selections.

The elders quorum president and high priests group leader sit with the bishopric during opening exercises.

Priesthood Quorum and Group Meetings

After opening exercises, priesthood quorums and groups meet to conduct business, learn priesthood duties, and study the gospel. Bishopric members normally attend Aaronic Priesthood quorum meetings, though occasionally they attend Young Women classes. Sometimes the bishopric may combine the elders quorum and high priests group, Aaronic Priesthood quorums, or all priesthood holders for instruction during this time.

Other meetings should not be scheduled during priesthood quorum and group meetings.

For more information about these meetings, see pages 167–68 and 185 in *Book 2*.

Young Men Meetings

See pages 183–84 in *Book 2*.

Relief Society Meetings

See pages 200–202 in *Book 2*.

Young Women Meetings

See pages 219–21 in *Book 2*.

Primary Meetings

See pages 233–35 in *Book 2*.

Sunday School Meetings

See page 243 in *Book 2*.

Ward Conference

The stake presidency schedules and directs a ward conference once a year in each ward. Members of the stake presidency, high council, and stake auxiliaries take part in ward conference sessions as the stake president directs. The purposes of ward conference are to refresh the faith of ward members, provide instruction, conduct business, and evaluate activity.

The main session of ward conference is held during sacrament meeting. Normally the agenda for this sacrament meeting is similar to that of others. The stake president presides, and the stake presidency usually plans the meeting. A member of the bishopric usually conducts. Before the sacrament, a member of the stake presidency or a designated priesthood officer uses the Officers Sustained form (prepared by a ward clerk) to present the names of Church officers to ward members for their sustaining vote. After the sacrament, speakers normally include the bishop and stake president.

The ward usually holds regular priesthood and auxiliary meetings as part of ward conference. Stake leaders may give instruction and assistance during these meetings.

In connection with ward conference, the stake presidency meets with the bishopric to review the status of individuals and organizations in the ward and to plan for improvement. This meeting need not be held on ward conference Sunday.

Bishopric Meeting

The bishopric usually meets at least weekly. The ward executive secretary and ward clerk attend; the clerk records minutes. The bishop may invite others to attend as needed.

During this meeting, members of the bishopric consider all matters affecting the ward. They also plan how to strengthen individuals and families, especially young men and young women, the needy and the aged, unordained brethren, single parents, and children. They evaluate quorums, auxiliaries, programs, and activities. They also make plans to implement instructions from the scriptures, Church leaders, and handbooks.

During this meeting, members of the bishopric identify members to call to serve in the ward. They also identify which members are coming of age to be eligible for ordinances, including priesthood ordinations. In addition, they identify whom to recommend to the stake president to be ordained elders and high priests and to serve as missionaries.

Other agenda items for this meeting could include reporting on assignments, discussing how to improve gospel teaching and learning, planning meetings, reviewing the ward calendar, and reviewing the ward budget.

Ward Priesthood Executive Committee Meeting

See page 317 in *Book 2*.

Ward Council Meeting

See pages 317–18 in *Book 2*.

Ward Welfare Committee Meeting

See page 318 in *Book 2*.

Ward Aaronic Priesthood Committee Meeting

See page 318 in *Book 2*.

Bishopric Youth Committee Meeting

See pages 318–19 in *Book 2*.

Ward Committee for Single Members Meeting

See page 319 in *Book 2*.

Missionary Coordination Meeting

The ward mission leader plans and conducts a weekly missionary coordination meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to coordinate the missionary, retention, and activation efforts of the full-time missionaries and ward members. Others who should attend this meeting include the full-time missionaries (where available), the ward missionaries, an assistant from the high priests group leadership, a counselor from the elders quorum presidency, and a counselor from the Relief Society presidency.

In this meeting the ward mission leader reviews in detail the progress of each person listed on the Progress Record form. He coordinates visits and teaching appointments with investigators, new members, and less-active members.

Support for full-time missionaries, including transportation and meals, is coordinated in this meeting.

This meeting is also used to plan baptismal services after consultation with the bishopric.

Prayers in Church Meetings

Men and women may offer prayers in Church meetings. Prayers should be brief and simple and should be spoken as directed by the Spirit. All members are encouraged to respond with an audible *amen* at the end of a prayer.

Members should express respect for Heavenly Father by using the special language of prayer that is appropriate for the language they are speaking. The language of prayer follows different forms in different languages. Some languages have intimate or familiar words that are used only in addressing family and very close friends. Other languages have forms of address that express great respect. The principle, however, is generally the same: members should pray in words that speakers of the language associate with love, respect, reverence, and closeness. In English, for example, members should use the pronouns *Thee*, *Thy*, *Thine*, and *Thou* when addressing Heavenly Father.

The bishopric should avoid the pattern of having a husband and wife pray in the same meeting. This may convey an unintentional message of exclusion to those who are single. Members who are not often called upon should be included among those who are invited to pray. If appropriate, bishops may want to caution those who pray not to sermonize or pray at great length.

In some areas, the person who offers a prayer has been asked to read a scripture aloud before the prayer. This practice should be discontinued.

Funerals

Preparation

When a Church member dies, the bishop visits the family to comfort them and offer assistance from the ward. He may ask his counselors to accompany him. The bishop offers help in notifying relatives, friends, and associates of the death. He also offers help in planning the funeral service, preparing a suitable obituary, and notifying newspapers of the death. In addition, he may offer to help make mortuary and cemetery arrangements according to local laws and customs. As needed, he may offer help from the ward in providing local transportation for the family.

The bishop notifies the Melchizedek Priesthood leader who is responsible for the family so he and other brethren (including home teachers) can assist the bereaved family. Such assistance could include dressing the body of a deceased male for burial, safeguarding the home during the funeral, and providing other support.

The bishop also notifies the Relief Society president so she and other sisters (including visiting teachers) can assist the family. Such assistance could include dressing the body of a deceased female for burial, helping with flowers, tending small children, safeguarding the home during the funeral, and preparing meals (see pages 207–8 in *Book 2*).

Temple Burial Clothing

See page 81.

Preparation of the Meetinghouse

Priesthood leaders are responsible for seeing that the meetinghouse is prepared for funerals. It should be open and available to funeral directors at least one hour before the scheduled times for the viewing and funeral. The meetinghouse needs to be clean and brought to appropriate temperature and light levels. The sound system should be activated and tested. Overflow chairs may need to be set up and arranged. At a time when feelings are very sensitive, a well-prepared meetinghouse may be a source of comfort and consolation to family members.

Funeral Services for Members

If a funeral for a member is held in a Church building, the bishop conducts it. If it is held in a home, at a mortuary, or at the graveside, the family may ask the bishop to conduct it. A funeral conducted by the bishop, whether in a meetinghouse or in another location, is a Church meeting and a religious service. It should be a spiritual occasion in addition to a family gathering. The bishop should urge members to maintain a spirit of reverence, dignity, and solemnity during a funeral service and at gatherings connected with funerals.

When a bishop conducts a funeral, he or one of his counselors oversees the planning of the funeral. He considers the wishes of the family as he works with them to plan the services. He ensures that the services are simple and dignified, with music and brief addresses and sermons centered on the gospel. Video recordings and slides should not be used as part of the service. For suggestions about music in funeral services, see page 290 in *Book 2*.

If a viewing is held immediately before the funeral service, the bishop should conclude it at least 20 minutes before the service begins. The obituary should include the times when the viewing will begin and end.

After the viewing, a family prayer may be offered if the family desires. This prayer should conclude before the funeral is scheduled to begin so it does not impose on the time of the congregation assembled in the chapel. The casket should be closed before it is moved to the chapel for the funeral service.

Funerals should start on time and, as a matter of courtesy to those who attend, should not be too long. Funerals that last more than one and one-half hours place an undue burden on those attending and participating.

It is appropriate for participants in a funeral to pay tribute to the deceased. However, such tributes should not dominate the funeral service. Funerals provide an important opportunity for speakers and music to teach the gospel and testify of the plan of salvation. Members of the family are not required to speak at funerals.

A member of the stake presidency, a General Authority, or an Area Seventy presides at funeral services he attends. The person conducting should consult him in advance and recognize him during the service. The presiding officer should be extended the opportunity of offering closing remarks if he desires.

Funeral services are not normally held on Sunday.

If the bishop is not able to attend, he may assign one of his counselors to conduct the funeral and graveside services.

Burial

At least one member of the bishopric should accompany the cortege to the cemetery. If the grave is to be dedicated, the bishopric member, after consulting with the family, asks a Melchizedek Priesthood holder to do so according to the instructions on page 42. If the family prefers, a graveside prayer rather than a dedicatory prayer may be offered, preferably by a Melchizedek Priesthood holder.

Financial Policies

Church members who conduct or take part in funeral services should not accept fees or contributions, whether the service is for a member or a nonmember.

In some cases, bishops can arrange with morticians to provide respectable burial services at cost when expenses are paid from Church fast-offering funds.

Funeral Services for Nonmembers

Bishops may offer the use of Church meetinghouses for the funeral services of nonmembers. Such services generally may be held in the manner prescribed by the deceased person's church. However, rituals of other churches or of outside organizations may not be performed in a Church meetinghouse. If the family desires, the service may be conducted by a clergyman of the person's church, provided it is dignified and appropriate.

Chart of Stake Meetings

Meeting	Purpose	Participants	Frequency
Stake conference	Help stake members build faith and testimony; conduct stake business	General Authority or Area Seventy (if assigned), stake presidency, all members in the stake, and missionaries	Twice each year
Stake general priesthood meeting	Instruct and inspire priesthood holders and conduct stake priesthood business	All Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood holders in the stake	Twice each year
Stake priesthood leadership meeting	Teach priesthood leaders their duties, increase their abilities, and build their faith	Stake presidency; high council; stake executive secretary; stake clerk (and assistant clerks as needed); stake Young Men presidency (and secretary as needed); bishoprics; ward executive secretaries; ward clerks (and assistant clerks as needed); high priests group leaders, assistants, and secretaries; elders quorum presidencies and secretaries; ward mission leaders; ward Young Men presidencies (and secretaries and assistant advisers as needed); and others as invited	Twice each year
Stake high priests quorum meeting	Conduct quorum business and instruct quorum members in their duties	All high priests in the stake	At least annually
Stake presidency meeting	Review, plan, and consider all matters affecting the stake	Stake presidency, stake executive secretary, stake clerk, and others as invited	Weekly
Stake priesthood executive committee meeting	Receive instruction, counsel together, give reports, and conduct business	Stake presidency, high council, stake executive secretary, stake clerk, and others as invited	At least twice monthly, where feasible
Stake council meeting	Receive instruction, counsel together, give reports, and coordinate planning of all stake programs and activities	Stake presidency; high council; stake executive secretary; stake clerk; stake Young Men, Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School presidents; and others as invited	At least quarterly
Stake welfare committee meeting	Receive instruction, counsel together, give reports, and coordinate stake welfare matters	Stake presidency, high council, stake executive secretary, stake clerk, stake Relief Society presidency, chairman of the stake bishops' welfare council, and others as invited	At least quarterly

Chart of Stake Meetings (continued)

Meeting	Purpose	Participants	Frequency
Stake Melchizedek Priesthood committee meeting	Plan how to help the stake presidency supervise elders quorums and high priests groups	Stake president (chairman), one counselor in the stake presidency (vice-chairman), and assigned high councilors	Regularly
Stake Aaronic Priesthood committee meeting	Plan how to help members of the stake presidency fulfill their responsibilities for the Aaronic Priesthood; correlate and supervise stake and multiward Aaronic Priesthood programs and activities, including Scouting activities	A counselor in the stake presidency (chairman) and assigned high councilors	Regularly
Stake Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women committee meeting	Plan stake-sponsored combined activities for young men and young women	The counselor in the stake presidency who is the chairman of the stake Aaronic Priesthood committee (chairman), high council advisers to the Young Men and Young Women, stake Young Men presidency and secretary, stake Young Women presidency and secretary, and others as invited	Regularly
Meeting with bishoprics	Instruct bishoprics and review directions and policies	Stake presidency, bishoprics, stake executive secretary, and stake clerk	Regularly
Stake bishops' welfare council meeting	Instruct bishops; exchange ideas and experiences; review trends in fast-offering contributions, welfare needs, and welfare assistance; review welfare resources in the community; and evaluate Church welfare projects	All bishops and branch presidents in the stake; the stake president appoints one bishop to be chairman; the stake president attends occasionally	At least quarterly
Stake committee for single members meeting	Coordinate stake activities for single members ages 18 and older	A counselor in the stake presidency (chairman), the high council adviser to single members, the stake Relief Society president, the stake single member representative(s), and the ward single member representative(s)	Regularly
Stake public affairs council meeting	Plan and supervise stake public affairs efforts	A member of the stake presidency (chairman), the stake director of public affairs, a community relations assistant, a media relations assistant, and specialists as needed	Usually monthly

7. Meetings

Chart of Ward Meetings

Meeting	Purpose	Participants	Frequency
Sacrament meeting	Partake of the sacrament, worship, receive gospel instruction, perform ordinances, and conduct ward business	All ward members	Each Sunday
Fast and testimony meeting	Partake of the sacrament, worship, perform ordinances, and bear testimonies	All ward members	Usually the first Sunday of each month
Priesthood meeting	Teach the gospel, teach priesthood duties and blessings, conduct quorum or group business, share testimonies, and build unity and brotherhood	All priesthood holders, prospective elders, and unordained young men of Aaronic Priesthood age in the ward	Each Sunday
Relief Society	Teach the gospel, strengthen faith, share testimonies, and build unity and sisterhood	Women in the ward ages 18 and older (and younger women who are married)	Each Sunday
Relief Society home, family, and personal enrichment meeting	Strengthen faith in Jesus Christ; teach parenting and homemaking skills; socialize, learn, and be uplifted	Women in the ward ages 18 and older (and younger women who are married)	Quarterly at a time other than on Sunday or on Monday evening
Young Women	Teach the gospel with an emphasis on applying gospel principles in daily life	Young Women leaders and young women ages 12 to 18	Each Sunday
Primary	Teach children the gospel and help them learn to live its principles	Primary leaders and teachers and children ages 18 months through 11 years	Each Sunday
Sunday School	Teach the gospel and strengthen members in living its principles	Sunday School leaders and teachers and ward members ages 12 and older	Each Sunday
Ward conference	Refresh the faith of ward members, provide instruction, conduct business, and evaluate activity	Stake presidency, stake auxiliary leaders, assigned high councilors, bishopric, and ward members	Annually
Bishopric meeting	Plan, review, and consider all matters affecting the ward	Bishopric, ward executive secretary, ward clerk, and others as invited	Usually at least weekly
Ward priesthood executive committee meeting	Receive instruction, counsel together, give reports, and make plans	Bishopric, ward executive secretary, ward clerk, high priests group leader, elders quorum president, ward mission leader, Young Men president, and others as invited	Weekly

Chart of Ward Meetings (continued)

Meeting	Purpose	Participants	Frequency
Ward council meeting	Receive instruction, counsel together, give reports, and coordinate planning of all ward programs and activities	Ward priesthood executive committee; ward executive secretary; ward clerk; Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School presidents; activities committee chairman; and others as invited	At least monthly
Ward welfare committee meeting	Receive instruction and plan how to help prevent and meet welfare needs in the ward	Ward priesthood executive committee, ward executive secretary, ward clerk, ward Relief Society presidency, and others as invited	At least monthly
Ward Aaronic Priesthood committee meeting	Direct the work of the Aaronic Priesthood in the ward	Bishopric, one of the bishop's priests quorum assistants, teachers and deacons quorum presidents, and Young Men presidency and secretary	Regularly
Bishopric youth committee meeting	Identify needs of youth in the ward; plan how to meet needs, how to help youth live Church standards, and how to encourage participation in Church meetings and activities; plan youth activities	Bishopric, one of the bishop's priests quorum assistants, teachers and deacons quorum presidents, Young Women class presidents, Young Men and Young Women presidents, and others (such as counselors in quorum and class presidencies) as invited	Usually monthly
Ward committee for single members meeting	Consider the needs of single members, encourage participation in quorum and Relief Society activities, and plan activities for single members	A member of the bishopric (chairman), a member of the high priests group leadership, a member of the elders quorum presidency, a member of the Relief Society presidency, and the ward single member representative(s)	Regularly
Missionary coordination meeting	Coordinate missionary, retention, and activation efforts of full-time missionaries and ward members	Ward mission leader, full-time missionaries (where available), an assistant from the high priests group leadership, and a counselor from both the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies	Weekly

7. Meetings

Sunday Meeting Schedules

Plan 1

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">50 min.</td><td colspan="2">General ward priesthood meeting opening exercises</td><td>Opening exercises</td><td>Opening exercises</td><td rowspan="4">Primary
(including nursery)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Melchizedek Priesthood</td><td>Aaronic Priesthood</td><td>Relief Society</td><td>Young Women</td></tr>
<tr><td>10 min.</td><td colspan="4">Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>40 min.</td><td colspan="4">Sunday School classes</td></tr>
<tr><td>10 min.</td><td colspan="5">Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>70 min.</td><td colspan="5">Sacrament meeting</td></tr>
</table>

3 hours The exact timing of breaks between meetings is flexible according to local needs.

Plan 2

<table>
<tr><td>70 min.</td><td colspan="5">Sacrament meeting</td></tr>
<tr><td>10 min.</td><td colspan="5">Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>40 min.</td><td colspan="4">Sunday School classes</td><td rowspan="4">Primary
(including nursery)</td></tr>
<tr><td>10 min.</td><td colspan="4">Break</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">50 min.</td><td colspan="2">General ward priesthood meeting opening exercises</td><td>Opening exercises</td><td>Opening exercises</td></tr>
<tr><td>Melchizedek Priesthood</td><td>Aaronic Priesthood</td><td>Relief Society</td><td>Young Women</td></tr>
</table>

3 hours The exact timing of breaks between meetings is flexible according to local needs.

8. Temples and Marriage

A bishop should consult with his stake president if he has questions about temples and temple work that are not answered in this section. The stake president may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency.

Preparing to Receive Temple Ordinances

Temple ordinances and covenants are sacred. Members who enter a temple should be worthy and should understand the purposes and eternal significance of temples. They should also understand the solemn and sacred responsibilities they assume as they participate in temple ordinances and make covenants.

Temple Preparation Seminars

The bishop organizes and oversees temple preparation seminars for new members, less-active members, and endowed members who have not renewed their recommends for an extended time. The purpose of these seminars is to help members prepare to receive the ordinances and blessings of the temple. The high priests group leader and elders quorum president assist the bishop. Instructions are provided in the "Temple and Family History Work" section of *Book 2* and in *Endowed from on High: Temple Preparation Seminar Teacher's Manual*.

Temple Orientation

Members who are preparing to receive their temple endowment or who are preparing to be sealed should carefully read the booklet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*. The bishop provides this booklet to members who receive a Recommend for Living Ordinances and encourages them to read it carefully before scheduling an interview with the stake or mission president. The stake or mission president should use the booklet as the basis for counsel and instruction when interviewing the members.

Making Plans to Go to a Temple

Each stake and mission is included in a temple district. Members may go to any temple, but leaders should encourage them to go to the temple in their own district. Group visits to temples outside the assigned temple district are discouraged.

Endowment, Marriage, or Sealing

Members who are planning to go to a temple for their own endowment, marriage, or sealing should contact temple officials in advance to schedule the ordinances.

Baptisms and Confirmations for the Dead

Before taking a group to a temple to be baptized and confirmed for the dead, the bishop or stake president (or someone under his direction) makes arrangements with temple officials. The bishop assigns at least one adult to accompany each group. These adults should have valid temple recommends and be the same gender as members of the group. If brethren are needed to officiate in the baptistry, they must be endowed. They do not need to be set apart as temple ordinance workers. Priests and unendowed elders may not officiate.

Quotas for Temple Attendance

Priesthood leaders encourage members to set personal goals for temple attendance and to go to the temple as often as circumstances allow. However, leaders should not set quotas for temple attendance for wards and stakes or for individual members. Nor should leaders establish reporting systems for temple attendance.

Translation Assistance

If members will need translation assistance in a temple, they should contact temple officials in advance to ensure that such assistance is available.

Child Care at Temples

Temples are equipped to care only for children who come to be sealed to parents or to witness sealings of living brothers and sisters. Other children should not be brought to a temple.

Recommends to Enter a Temple

A member who is eight or older must have a valid recommend to enter a temple. A valid recommend admits a member to all temples. The three types of temple recommends are listed below:

1. *Temple Recommend* for members receiving their own endowment and for previously endowed

members. This recommend authorizes a member to participate in all temple ordinances.

2. *Recommend for Living Ordinances* for members receiving their own endowment, those being sealed to a spouse, and those being married in a temple for time only. This recommend may be used only with a valid temple recommend.
3. *Limited-Use Recommend* for unendowed members (see pages 78–79).

Children under eight who are to be sealed to their parents or are to observe the sealings of their living brothers and sisters to their parents do not need recommends. However, the family needs to take to the temple a family group record showing the relationship of the child to the family.

Safeguarding Temple Recommend Books

Priesthood leaders who have temple recommend books should safeguard them carefully. No unauthorized individuals should have access to these books.

Disposal of Outdated Temple Recommends

Stake, mission, and temple presidents (and their counselors who are authorized to conduct temple recommend interviews) should retrieve expired temple recommends when issuing new recommends to worthy Church members. These outdated recommends should be shredded.

General Guidelines for Issuing Recommends

Authorized Church officers conduct worthiness interviews for temple recommends as outlined in the temple recommend book. Church officers are responsible to see that no unworthy person enters the house of the Lord.

Temple recommend interviews must be private. They should not be rushed. Interviewers should not add any requirements to those that are outlined in the temple recommend book.

In Wards and Branches in Stakes

The bishop, his counselors as authorized by him, or the branch president interviews ward or branch members and issues temple recommends to those who are worthy. The bishop or branch president personally interviews members who (1) are preparing to receive their own endowment, (2) are planning to be married or sealed in a temple, or (3) have not lived in the ward or branch continuously for at least one year. Only in the most urgent cases when he is absent may the bishop authorize one of his counselors to issue recommends in these circumstances. Before a recommend is issued in any of these three circumstances, the bishop should carefully review the person's membership record to verify that it does not include a comment about a sealing or ordinance restriction or unresolved Church discipline.

Following the interview by a member of the bishopric or by the branch president, a member of the stake presidency interviews the person and signs the recommend if the person is worthy. The stake president personally interviews members who are receiving their own endowment and members who are planning to be married or sealed in a temple.

In Branches in Mission Districts

In mission districts, the branch president interviews branch members and issues temple recommends to those who are worthy. Before he issues a recommend to a member who is to receive the endowment or be married or sealed in a temple, he should carefully review the person's membership record to verify that it does not include a comment about a sealing or ordinance restriction or unresolved Church discipline.

Following the interview by the branch president, a member of the mission presidency interviews the person and signs the recommend if the person is worthy. The mission president personally interviews members who are receiving their own endowment and members who are planning to be married or sealed in a temple.

The district president does not interview members for temple recommends.

In Isolated Areas

A temple president may interview and sign a recommend for a member who lives in an isolated area that would require unusual travel expense or difficulty for the member to meet with a member of the stake or mission presidency. The temple president first confers with the stake or mission president. In these cases, the bishop or an authorized counselor already should have interviewed the member and signed the recommend. This policy applies also to members in the military who are in isolated areas and have been interviewed by the bishop of their home ward or the ward that supports their duty station.

A temple president may interview and sign a recommend for a member who lives outside an organized stake or mission. No other interview is needed.

Members Who Have Not Lived in the Same Ward for at Least One Year

If a member has not lived in the same ward continuously for at least one year, the bishop contacts the prior bishop to certify the member's worthiness before interviewing the member for a temple recommend. This includes members of young single adult wards, single adult wards, and student wards. It also applies to members who seek limited-use recommends (except new converts; see instructions on pages 78–79 for issuing limited-use recommends).

Newly Baptized Members

A waiting period of at least one full year after confirmation is required before a worthy adult may be endowed. When issuing temple recommends for new members to be endowed, priesthood leaders should ensure that the date the endowment will be received is at least one full year from the member's date of confirmation, not from the date of baptism. Only the First Presidency may authorize exceptions. During a person's first year of membership, the bishopric may issue a limited-use recommend according to the guidelines on pages 78–79.

Members Receiving Their Own Endowment

Instructions for issuing a recommend to a person who is receiving his or her own endowment are in the temple recommend book. A man must hold the Melchizedek Priesthood to receive his temple endowment.

Most single members will be interviewed for a recommend for their own endowment when they are called as missionaries or when they are to be married in a temple. Single members in their late teens or early twenties who have not received a mission call or who are not engaged to be married in a temple should not be recommended to receive their own endowment. However, they may receive limited-use recommends to perform baptisms for the dead (see pages 78–79). The desire to witness temple marriages of siblings or friends is not a sufficient reason for a young adult to be endowed.

Worthy single members who have not received their endowment in connection with a mission or marriage may become eligible to receive the endowment when the bishop and the stake president determine that they are sufficiently mature to understand and keep the sacred covenants made in a temple. Such eligibility should be determined individually for each person rather than using routine criteria such as reaching a certain age or leaving home for college or employment.

A worthy member who is married to an unendowed spouse, whether the spouse is a member or nonmember, may receive his or her own endowment when (1) the bishop receives the written consent of the spouse and (2) the bishop and stake president are satisfied that the responsibility assumed with the endowment will not impair marital harmony.

Unendowed Prospective Missionaries

Bishops should not issue temple recommends to young, unendowed prospective missionaries until they have received a mission call from the President of the Church.

Missionaries

See page 100 and the *Mission President's Handbook.*

Members Who Have Disabilities

Endowment. Members who have physical disabilities may receive their own endowment.

Melchizedek Priesthood holders and sisters who have mental disabilities may receive their own endowment if the bishop determines that they have gained sufficient mental capacity to understand it and to make and keep the associated covenants. The bishop should seek the direction of the Spirit in making this determination. If the member lives with his or her parents, the bishop counsels with them.

Sealing to Parents. Persons with mental disabilities who are eight or older and are sufficiently accountable must be baptized before being sealed to their parents. Those who are not accountable do not need to be baptized before being sealed. Bishops refer questions about specific cases to the stake president, who may refer the questions to the Office of the First Presidency.

Members older than 21 who do not have sufficient mental capacity to understand the endowment may be sealed to parents without being endowed.

Work for the Dead. Members who have disabilities may do temple work for the dead if they (1) have sufficient mental capacity to understand the ordinance and (2) can care for themselves without help or are accompanied by relatives or friends who can provide the help needed.

Blind Members. Blind members should have members of the same gender accompany and assist them. Guide dogs are not permitted in temples.

Issuing Recommends in Special Circumstances

After Divorce, Separation, or Annulment

If a member has been divorced or legally separated or has had a marriage annulled since last receiving a temple recommend, the bishop and stake president may feel impressed to carefully interview the member prior to the expiration of the recommend to ensure continued temple worthiness. Events leading to the breakdown of the marriage may be reviewed. If the member has not committed a serious transgression, a temple recommend may be retained or renewed according to the usual procedure.

Members Who Have Been Readmitted by Baptism and Confirmation after Excommunication or Name Removal

Members Who Were Not Previously Endowed. After baptism and confirmation, these members may be issued limited-use recommends to do baptisms and confirmations for the dead as outlined on this page and page 79. There is no waiting period. Brethren must be ordained to the priesthood before they may be issued limited-use recommends.

These members may not be issued recommends to receive their own endowment until one full year after their baptism and confirmation.

Members Who Were Previously Endowed. These members may not be issued recommends, including limited-use recommends, until their temple blessings are restored through the ordinance of restoration of blessings (see page 122).

Members Who Have Committed a Serious Transgression

A member who has committed a serious transgression may not receive a temple recommend until he or she has repented. The waiting period between the transgression and the issuing of a recommend is left to the bishop's discretion. It should be sufficient to determine that the person has genuinely repented.

Members Who Have Undergone a Transsexual Operation

A member who has undergone an elective transsexual operation may not receive a temple recommend.

Members Whose Close Relatives Belong to Apostate Groups

Bishops and their counselors must take exceptional care when issuing recommends to members whose parents or other close relatives belong to or sympathize with apostate groups. Such members must demonstrate clearly that they repudiate these apostate religious teachings before they may be issued a recommend.

Issuing Limited-Use Recommends

General Guidelines

The bishop, his counselors as authorized by him, or the branch president may issue limited-use recommends to worthy unendowed members as follows:

1. For members ages 12 and older to be baptized and confirmed for the dead.
2. For single members ages 8 through 20 to be sealed to their parents.
3. For single members ages 8 through 20 to observe sealings of their living brothers and sisters to their parents.

The same standards of worthiness apply to those who receive limited-use recommends as to those who receive other temple recommends. Male members ages 12 and older must hold the priesthood. It is not necessary to have been a member for one year to receive a limited-use recommend.

When issuing a limited-use recommend, a member of the bishopric or the branch president interviews the person individually. A member of the stake presidency or mission presidency does not interview the person if the recommend is being issued only for baptisms and confirmations for the dead.

The bishopric or the branch president may issue limited-use recommends for groups or individuals. Before a recommend is issued for a group, each person must be interviewed separately. When issuing a limited-use recommend, the member of the bishopric or the branch president crosses out or cuts away any blank lines on the recommend so other names cannot be added.

If a member has not lived in the same ward continuously for at least one year, the bishop contacts the prior bishop to certify the member's worthiness before interviewing the member for a limited-use recommend.

Limited-Use Recommends for Baptisms and Confirmations for the Dead

Members ages 12 through 20 are normally listed *as a group* on a limited-use recommend if they are going as a group to be baptized and confirmed for the dead. Group recommends are used for only one temple visit. They are left at the temple, where they are destroyed.

Members ages 12 through 20 may be issued *individual* limited-use recommends that they retain if they are frequently baptized and confirmed for the dead. If parents take children ages 12 through 20 to do baptisms for the dead, children in the same family may be listed on one recommend.

Limited-use recommends that are issued to unendowed members who are 21 or older or who are married must be *individual* recommends. These recommends may be used only to perform baptisms and confirmations for the dead.

For information about scheduling baptisms and confirmations for the dead, see page 75.

Limited-Use Recommends for Sealing Living Children to Parents

Single members ages 8 through 20 are issued limited-use recommends to be sealed to their parents or to observe the sealing of their living brothers and sisters to their parents. All children under the age of 21 must be born in the covenant or sealed to their parents in order to observe such sealings. Members who are married or are 21 or older must have been endowed before they can be sealed to their parents or observe the sealing of living brothers and sisters to their parents.

Recommends may be issued for individual children or for a group of children in the same family. The same recommend may be used to list children who are being sealed and children who are observing. Children under 8 do not need recommends for these purposes. However, the family needs to take to the temple a family group record showing the relationship of the child to the family.

The approval of the First Presidency is necessary to issue limited-use recommends to children who wish to observe the sealings of their brothers and sisters if the children who wish to observe the sealings do not live the majority of the time in the same home as the children who are to be sealed.

Lost or Stolen Recommends

The bishop should ask members to notify him promptly if a recommend is lost or stolen. Procedures for reporting lost or stolen recommends are in the temple recommend book.

Unworthy Recommend Holders

If the bishop determines that a member who has a valid recommend is unworthy, he immediately requests the recommend from the member. If the member refuses to return it, the bishop notifies the stake president at once. The stake president informs temple officials in his temple district (and in nearby districts if necessary) according to instructions in the temple recommend book.

Temple Clothing and Garments

Clothing to Wear to a Temple

Members who go to a temple should wear clothing that is suitable for the house of the Lord. They should avoid wearing casual clothes, sports attire, and ostentatious jewelry.

Obtaining Temple Clothing and Garments

Members change to white clothing in a temple to participate in the ordinances. Endowed members are encouraged to purchase their own temple clothing for use when performing temple ordinances. This sacred clothing may be purchased through Church Distribution Services (see page xiv for contact information). Some temples also have temple clothing available for rent. If a temple does not have rental clothing, members need to bring temple clothing with them.

Templess maintain a limited supply of temple clothing that full-time missionaries may use without charge when they receive their own endowment, while they are in missionary training centers, and when they are authorized to participate in temple ordinances while serving in the mission field.

The distribution and sale of garments requires the authorization of the First Presidency. Garments are available in a variety of styles and fabrics. They may be purchased through Distribution Services. Members who have special needs may contact Distribution Services about special orders (see page xiv for contact information).

When necessary, bishops and stake presidents should instruct members in how to purchase temple clothing and garments. Assistant stake and ward clerks may help provide this instruction and help members order the clothing.

Making Temple Clothing

Members may make their own temple aprons only if they use the approved apron embroidery and sewing kit that is available through Church Distribution Services. Temple garments and temple ceremonial clothing may not be made.

Clothing to Wear for a Temple Marriage

See page 82.

Wearing and Caring for the Garment

Church members who have been clothed with the garment in a temple are obligated to wear it according to the instructions given in the endowment. When issuing temple recommends, priesthood leaders should teach the importance of wearing the garment properly. Leaders also emphasize the blessings that are related to this sacred privilege. These blessings are conditioned on worthiness and faithfulness in keeping temple covenants.

The garment provides a constant reminder of the covenants made in a temple. When properly worn, it provides protection against temptation and evil. Wearing the garment is also an outward expression of an inward commitment to follow the Savior.

Endowed members should wear the temple garment both day and night. They should not remove it, either entirely or partially, to work in the yard or for other activities that can reasonably be done with the garment worn properly beneath the clothing. Nor should they remove it to lounge around the home in swimwear or immodest clothing. When they must remove the garment, such as for swimming, they should put it back on as soon as possible.

Members should not adjust the garment or wear it contrary to instructions in order to accommodate different styles of clothing. When two-piece garments are used, both pieces should always be worn.

The garment is sacred and should be treated with respect at all times. Members should keep their garments clean and mended. They should not alter the garment from its authorized design. Nor should they display it or expose it to the view of those who do not understand its significance.

As members carefully follow these principles, they will be guided by the Holy Spirit in considering their personal commitment to wear the garment.

Garments and Temple Clothing for Members Who Have Disabilities

For members who are bedfast or who have severe physical disabilities, necessary adjustments may be made in wearing the garment. If recommended by a member's bishop, a garment designed like a hospital gown is available by special order for those who are bedfast.

Shorter temple robes are available to meet the needs of members who are in wheelchairs.

Wearing the Garment in the Military

If members who enter military service have been endowed, bishops should make sure they understand the following guidelines.

When possible, endowed members in the military should wear the garment the same as any other member. However, members should avoid exposing the garment to the view of those who do not understand its significance. When conditions make this unavoidable, members should seek the guidance of the Spirit and use tact, discretion, and wisdom. It may be best to lay the garment aside temporarily and put it on again when conditions permit. However, mere inconvenience in wearing the garment does not justify laying it aside. Special colored garments that are compatible with some military uniforms are available (see "Ordering Special Garments" below).

When military regulations prevent a member from wearing the garment, the member's religious status is not affected, provided he or she remains worthy. If members in military service are unable to wear the garment because of military regulations or circumstances beyond their control, it is their privilege, right, and duty to wear it again as soon as circumstances permit.

Ordering Special Garments

Members in the military should consult with their individual services on requirements that garments must meet (such as one-piece or two-piece, color, or neckline style). To place special orders or receive assistance in selecting garments for special circumstances, members may contact Distribution Services (see page xiv for contact information).

A two-piece desert tan colored garment with a crew neck and T-shirt top that meets the specifications of the Church and the United States Army is available through Distribution Services. This special military garment should be worn with the battle dress uniform when required by military regulations.

A two-piece white cotton garment with a crew neck is also available.

Military services that require a different color of T-shirt than desert tan may purchase approved military T-shirts and send them to Distribution Services to be marked individually. White or desert tan garment bottoms may be worn with the service-specific colored tops.

Certain synthetic fibers worn next to the skin may create serious hazards for airmen and others who may be exposed to fire. All nylon and polyester blend materials fall into this category. Military authorities have indicated that cotton is a much safer fabric for these individuals to wear. A 100-percent cotton crew-neck garment is available for these members.

Questions about Wearing the Garment in the Military

If members in the military have questions about wearing the garment, they may write or call:

Military Relations Division
50 East North Temple Street, Room 2048
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-6080
Telephone: 1-801-240-2286
E-mail: pst-military@ldschurch.org

Disposing of Garments and Temple Clothing

To dispose of worn-out temple garments, members should cut out and destroy the marks. Members then cut up the remaining fabric so it cannot be identified as a garment. Once the marks are removed, the fabric is not considered sacred.

To dispose of worn-out temple clothing, members should destroy the clothing by cutting it up so the original use cannot be recognized.

Members may give garments and temple clothing that are in good condition to other worthy endowed members. The bishop can help identify those who might need such clothing. Under no circumstances should members give garments or temple clothing to Deseret Industries, bishops' storehouses, or charities.

Temple Burial Clothing

Where possible, endowed members should be buried in temple clothing when they die. Where cultural traditions or burial practices make this inappropriate or difficult, the clothing may be folded and placed next to the body in the casket.

Only members who have been endowed may be buried in temple clothing. An endowed person who stopped wearing the garment before his or her death may be buried in temple clothing if the family so requests. An endowed person who has committed suicide may be buried in temple clothing. However, persons whose blessings have not been restored after excommunication or name removal may not be buried in temple clothing.

Temple clothing that is used for burial need not be new, but it should be clean. The member's own temple clothing may be used.

Bishops and Relief Society presidents should know what temple clothing is available for burial and how to dress a deceased member in temple clothing.

A member who is to be buried in temple clothing may be dressed by an endowed family member of the same gender. If a family member is not available, the bishop assigns an endowed man to dress a deceased man. The bishop asks the Relief Society president to assign an endowed woman to dress a deceased woman. Guidelines for dressing deceased members are provided in *Instructions for Clothing the Dead Who Have Received Their Endowments.* Leaders may obtain these instructions from Church Distribution Services (see page xiv for contact information).

In some areas only a licensed funeral director or an employee of the director is allowed to handle a deceased body. In these cases, an endowed family member or an endowed person who is assigned by the bishop or Relief Society president should ensure that the clothing has been properly placed on the body.

Although the Church does not normally encourage cremation, the body of an endowed member who is being cremated should be dressed in temple clothing if possible.

In areas where temple clothing may be difficult to obtain in time for burial, stake presidents should keep on hand at least two complete sets of medium-sized clothing, one for a man and one for a woman.

If temple clothing is not available, a deceased endowed member is clothed for burial in the garment and other suitable clothing.

Marriage

Church leaders encourage members to qualify for temple marriage and to be married in a temple. Where temple marriage is not possible because of personal circumstances or legal requirements, leaders may perform civil marriages as outlined on pages 83–84.

A couple who are planning to be married must obtain a legal marriage license that is valid in the place where the marriage is to be performed.

Temple Marriage

The purpose of a temple marriage, referred to in the scriptures as "the new and everlasting covenant of marriage" (D&C 131:2), is to seal a husband and wife for time and eternity, depending on their faithfulness. Through this ordinance, a couple's children may also be part of their eternal family. Only a marriage that has been sealed in the temple and confirmed by the Holy Spirit of Promise can be eternal (see D&C 132:7).

A man and woman must each be endowed before they may be married and sealed in a temple. They must each have a valid Recommend for Living Ordinances and a valid temple recommend.

Who Performs a Temple Marriage

Bishops and stake presidents encourage members to have temple sealers perform their marriages rather than asking General Authorities.

Who May Attend a Temple Marriage

Only members who have received their own endowments and have valid recommends may attend a temple marriage. Couples should invite only family members and close friends to be present for a temple marriage.

Appropriate Dress for a Temple Marriage

The bishop should review the following guidelines with each bride and bridegroom well in advance of the wedding. It is especially important to review the guidelines for temple wedding dresses with each bride and her parents before they make or purchase the dress. The bishop should also make the following information about brides' dresses available to the Relief Society and Young Women presidencies so they can help members be informed of the expectations far in advance of the actual events.

Brides' Dresses. All dresses that are worn in the temple should be white, long-sleeved, modest in design and fabric, and free of elaborate ornamentation. Sheer fabric should be lined. Women's pants are not permitted in the temple. Brides' dresses should not have a train unless the train can be removed for the temple ceremony.

Formal Wear and Flowers. Tuxedos, dinner jackets, cummerbunds, formal headwear, and boutonnieres and other flowers are not appropriate in a sealing room or during a sealing ceremony. This applies not only to those who are being sealed, but also to their guests. If desired, formal wear and flowers may be worn outside for photographs after the ceremony.

Wedding Guests. Couples should not ask their wedding guests to dress in white unless the sealing room must be entered through the celestial room. Members who come to a wedding directly from an endowment session may wear ordinance clothing.

Exchanging Rings after a Temple Marriage

Exchanging rings is not part of the temple marriage ceremony. However, couples may exchange rings after the ceremony in the room where the ceremony takes place. To avoid confusion with the marriage ceremony, couples should not exchange rings at any other time or place in a temple or on temple grounds. However, after their temple marriage, a couple may exchange rings at locations other than the temple. If such an exchange is made, the circumstances should be consistent with the dignity of their temple marriage. The exchange should not appear to replicate any part of the marriage ceremony, and the couple should not exchange vows.

Special Meeting for Guests Who Do Not Have Temple Recommends

A couple may arrange with their bishop to hold a special meeting for relatives and friends who do not have temple recommends. This meeting provides an opportunity for those who cannot enter a temple to feel included in the marriage and to learn something of the eternal nature of the marriage covenant. The meeting may include a prayer and special music, followed by the remarks of a priesthood leader. No ceremony is performed, and no vows are exchanged.

No other marriage ceremony should be performed following a temple marriage.

Marriage of Members Who Need a Cancellation of Sealing or a Sealing Clearance

See "Applying for a Cancellation of Sealing or a Sealing Clearance" on page 85.

Marriage in a Temple for Time Only

Marriage in a temple for time only may be performed only when all of the following requirements are met:

1. The man and the woman are each already sealed to a spouse who is deceased.

2. Neither the man nor the woman has been involved in any divorce while a member of the Church.
3. Both the man and the woman have current temple recommends and have been issued a Recommend for Living Ordinances.
4. Temple marriages are legal marriages in the country where the temple is located and the couple has a valid marriage license.

Bishops should encourage such worthy couples to marry in a temple.

A marriage in the temple for time only will not be authorized for a woman who is in the process of seeking a cancellation of sealing.

For the policy on sealing a couple who were married in the temple for time only, see "Sealing after Temple Marriage for Time Only" on page 86.

Civil Marriage

When temple marriage is not possible because of personal circumstances or legal requirements, leaders may perform civil marriages as outlined below. A civil marriage does not endure beyond mortal life.

Civil marriages should be performed in accordance with the laws in the place where the marriage is performed.

Civil marriages and related religious ceremonies should not be performed on Sunday or at unusual hours.

Who May Perform a Civil Marriage

Members who are planning a civil marriage may invite any of the following presiding officers of their Church units to perform the marriage ceremony if civil law authorizes the officer to do so: stake president, mission president, bishop, or branch president. An LDS military chaplain on active duty may also perform the ceremony. Unless contrary to legal requirements, a Church officer may perform a marriage for a member of his unit outside the boundaries of that unit.

Those who have been released from these offices may not perform marriages. Other Church officers are not authorized to perform civil marriages.

Civil Marriage for Members from Other Units

Church officers, except LDS military chaplains who are on active duty, may not perform marriages for Church members when neither marriage partner belongs to the Church unit over which the officer presides. Any exceptions require the approval of the First Presidency in each case.

Civil Marriage for Nonmembers

Authorized Church officers may perform marriages for nonmembers without receiving special approval.

Where to Perform Civil Marriages

Civil marriages are preferably performed in the home of a family member or in a Church building rather than at a commercial wedding chapel or other public place. Marriages in a Church building may be performed in the chapel, the cultural hall, or another suitable room. The person who performs the ceremony determines the location.

Civil Marriages That Must Be Performed by a Public Official or in a Public Place

Some areas require that a marriage ceremony be performed by a public official. Some require that the ceremony be performed in a public building or another public place. In these cases, a temple sealing necessarily follows the civil marriage as soon as possible (see "Sealing of Living Members after Civil Marriage" on pages 84–85). If the couple will not be sealed, the bishop or stake president may conduct a brief religious ceremony after the civil marriage. In this ceremony he gives counsel to the couple and gives Church recognition to their marriage. The instructions in this section on the use of Church buildings and the simplicity of ceremonies should be followed.

Civil Marriage Ceremony

Civil marriage ceremonies should be simple, conservative, and in harmony with the sacredness of the marriage covenants. There should be no extravagance in decorations or pomp in the proceedings. Video recorders and cameras may not be used in the chapel. For suggestions about music for civil weddings, see page 290 in *Book 2*.

Before performing a civil marriage, a Church officer may counsel the couple on the sacred nature of the marriage covenant and may add other counsel as the Spirit directs.

To perform a civil marriage, a Church officer addresses the couple and says, "Please take each other by the right hand." He then says, "[Bridegroom's full name and bride's full name], you have taken one another by the right hand in token of the covenants you will now enter into in the presence of God and these witnesses." (The couple may choose or nominate these witnesses.)

The officer then addresses the bridegroom and asks, "[Bridegroom's full name], do you take [bride's full name] as your lawfully wedded wife, and do you of your own free will and choice covenant as her companion and lawfully wedded husband that you will cleave unto her and none else; that you will observe all the laws, covenants, and obligations pertaining to the holy state of matrimony; and that you will love, honor, and cherish her as long as you both shall live?"

The bridegroom answers, "Yes" or "I do."

The Church officer then addresses the bride and asks, "[Bride's full name], do you take [bridegroom's full name] as your lawfully wedded husband, and do you of your own free will and choice covenant as his companion and lawfully wedded wife that you will cleave unto him and none else; that you will observe all the laws, covenants, and obligations pertaining to the holy state of matrimony; and that you will love, honor, and cherish him as long as you both shall live?"

The bride answers, "Yes" or "I do."

The Church officer then addresses the couple and says, "By virtue of the legal authority vested in me as an elder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I pronounce you, [bridegroom's name] and [bride's name], husband and wife, legally and lawfully wedded for the period of your mortal lives.

"May God bless your union with joy in your posterity and a long life of happiness together, and may He enable you to keep sacred the covenants you have made. These blessings I invoke upon you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

"You may kiss each other as husband and wife."

A Church officer who performs civil marriages in his Church capacity may not accept fees.

A Church officer who performs a civil marriage for members must send a letter to the bishop(s) of the home ward(s) of those he has married. This letter should include all information needed to update membership records. He also must comply fully with legal requirements for reporting and record keeping.

Marriage after a Spouse's Death or after a Divorce or Annulment

A member who has been sealed to a spouse may remarry after the spouse's death or following a divorce or annulment. A member's divorce proceedings must be final according to law before he or she may remarry.

Worthy members in these circumstances may also be sealed according to the guidelines under "Sealing Policies" on this page through page 86.

Wedding Receptions

A wedding reception may be held in a Church building if it does not disrupt the schedule of regular Church functions. However, these receptions may not be held in the chapel unless it is a multipurpose area. Receptions should not be held on Sundays or on Monday evenings.

Those in charge of the reception are responsible for cleaning the areas they use in the building.

Sealing Policies

Sealing ordinances include covenants that can bind families together for eternity. These ordinances include (1) sealing of a husband and wife and (2) sealing of children to parents.

Stake presidents should contact the Office of the First Presidency or the temple in their temple district for guidance in special circumstances related to sealings that are not covered in these instructions.

Sealing of a Husband and Wife

Sealing of Living Members after Civil Marriage

A husband and wife who were married outside a temple may be sealed after one full year from the date of the civil marriage. However, this one-year waiting period does not apply to worthy couples in the following cases:

1. The temple in which the couple will be sealed is in a country that requires a civil marriage and does not recognize a marriage in the temple.
2. The couple live in a country where there is not a temple and the laws of the country do not recognize a marriage performed outside the country.
3. An unchaperoned couple's travel to a temple will require one or more overnight stops because of distance.
4. A couple could not be married in a temple because one or both had not been a member of the Church for one year at the time of their civil marriage. They may receive their endowments and be sealed any time after both have been members for at least one year.

In the first three cases, worthy couples should receive their endowments and be sealed as soon as possible after their civil marriage.

If a civil marriage must be performed before the temple sealing for one of the reasons listed on page 84, the civil marriage should take place in the temple district of the temple in which the couple is to be sealed.

Worthy couples who were married in a civil ceremony and have been members of the Church for at least one year may receive their own endowments and participate in all other temple ordinances except their marriage sealing any time within the year following civil marriage.

Only the First Presidency may grant exceptions to the preceding policies. The stake president may seek an exception if it appears to be justified. The couple should not go to a temple to be sealed unless they are notified that the First Presidency has granted an exception. They should bring this notification with them.

When issuing recommends to a couple for sealing after a civil marriage, priesthood leaders should be sure the civil marriage was valid.

Sealing of Living Members after Divorce

Women. A living woman may be sealed to only one husband. If she is sealed to a husband and later divorced, she must receive a cancellation of that sealing from the First Presidency before she may be sealed to another man in her lifetime (see "Applying for a Cancellation of Sealing or a Sealing Clearance" in the next column).

Men. If a husband and wife have been sealed and later divorced, the man must receive a sealing clearance from the First Presidency before another woman may be sealed to him (see "Applying for a Cancellation of Sealing or a Sealing Clearance" in the next column). *A sealing clearance is necessary even if (1) the previous sealing has been canceled or (2) the divorced wife is now deceased.*

Sealing of Living Members after a Spouse's Death

Women. A living woman may be sealed to only one husband.

Men. If a husband and wife have been sealed and the wife dies, the man may have another woman sealed to him if she is not already sealed to another man. In this circumstance, the man does not need a sealing clearance from the First Presidency unless he was divorced from his former wife before she died (see the previous heading for the policy in cases of divorce).

Applying for a Cancellation of Sealing or a Sealing Clearance

A woman who has previously been sealed must receive a cancellation of that sealing from the First Presidency before she may be sealed to another man in her lifetime. A man who has been divorced from a woman who was sealed to him must receive a sealing clearance from the First Presidency before another woman may be sealed to him (see "Sealing of Living Members after Divorce" in the previous column).

If the bishop and stake president decide to recommend that a cancellation of sealing or a sealing clearance be granted, they submit an Application to the First Presidency form. This form is available from the Office of the First Presidency in the United States and Canada. It is available from the Area Presidency in other areas. Instructions are on the form. Before submitting the application, the stake president should be sure that the divorce is final and that the applicant is current in all legal requirements for child and spousal support related to the divorce.

If a member has requested a cancellation of sealing or a sealing clearance, he or she may not schedule an appointment for a temple marriage or sealing until receiving a letter from the First Presidency giving notice that the cancellation or clearance has been granted. The person should present this letter at the temple.

Removing a Restriction against Temple Sealing

If a person commits adultery while married to a spouse to whom he or she has been sealed, he or she may not be sealed to the partner in the adultery unless the sealing is authorized by the President of the Church. Such authorization may be requested after the couple have been married for at least five years. The request may be submitted with an application for cancellation of sealing or sealing clearance.

A couple who desire the lifting of a sealing restriction may seek an interview with their bishop and stake president. If these leaders feel to recommend removal of the restriction, they may write letters to the First Presidency summarizing their recommendations and commenting on the applicants' temple worthiness and the stability of their marriage for at least five years. The couple should also write a letter of request to the First Presidency. The stake president should submit all of these letters to the First Presidency.

Sealing after Temple Marriage for Time Only

Couples who are married in a temple for time only are usually not sealed at a later time. For such a sealing to occur, the woman must first receive from the First Presidency a cancellation of her previous sealing. Such requests are considered only in exceptional circumstances. If a bishop and stake president feel that a cancellation may be justified, they may submit an Application to the First Presidency form.

Sealing of Deceased Members

Deceased Women. A deceased woman may be sealed to all men to whom she was legally married during her life. However, if she was sealed to a husband during her life, all her husbands must be deceased before she may be sealed to a husband to whom she was not sealed during life.

Deceased Men. A deceased man may have sealed to him all women to whom he was legally married during his life if they are deceased or if they are living and not sealed to another man.

Deceased Couples Who Were Divorced. Deceased couples who were divorced may be sealed by proxy. These sealings often provide the only way for children of such couples to be sealed to parents. See page 88 for a restriction if either the husband or wife was excommunicated or had his or her name removed from Church membership records at the time of death.

Effects of Excommunication or Name Removal

After a husband and wife have been sealed in a temple, if one of them is excommunicated or has his or her name removed from Church membership records, his or her temple blessings are revoked. However, the sealing blessings of the innocent spouse and children are not affected.

Sealing Children to Parents

Children Who Are Born in the Covenant

Children who are born after their mother has been sealed to a husband in a temple are born in the covenant of that sealing. They do not need to receive the ordinance of sealing to parents. Being born in the covenant entitles children to an eternal parentage, depending on their faithfulness. However, it does not guarantee that children will be sealed to their natural parents if the parents or children are not faithful.

If a woman who has been sealed to a former husband remarries, the children of her later marriage are born in the covenant of the first marriage unless they were born after the sealing was canceled or after it was revoked due to excommunication or name removal.

Children Who Are Not Born in the Covenant

Children who are not born in the covenant can become part of an eternal family by being sealed to their natural or adoptive parents. These children receive the same right to blessings as if they had been born in the covenant.

A child may be sealed only to two parents—a husband and wife—and not to one parent only.

Members who are married or are 21 or older must have been endowed before they may be sealed to their parents or observe the sealing of living brothers and sisters to their parents.

Adopted or Foster Children Who Are Living

Living children who are born in the covenant or have been sealed to parents cannot be sealed to any other parents.

Living children who have been legally adopted and were neither born in the covenant nor sealed to former parents may be sealed to their adoptive parents after the adoption is final. A copy of the final adoption decree should be presented at the temple; a court decree granting legal custody is not sufficient clearance for a sealing. There is no obligation to identify the natural parents of these children.

First Presidency approval is necessary for a living member to be sealed to foster parents. This requirement applies even if the natural parents of the foster child are unknown and cannot be identified by reasonable effort. Priesthood leaders may assist members in making these requests.

Adopted or Foster Children Who Are Deceased

A deceased adopted person usually is sealed to his or her adoptive parents.

A deceased foster child usually is sealed to his or her natural parents.

Sealing of Living Children to One Natural Parent and a Stepparent

A living unmarried child under 21 who was not born in the covenant or sealed previously, and who has not been adopted, may be sealed to one natural parent and a stepparent if (1) the natural parent to whom the child is being sealed has legal custody of the child and (2) the other natural parent has given signed consent. A court decree granting legal custody is not sufficient clearance for a sealing. The signed consent must (1) name the child and the parents to whom the child will be sealed and (2) be presented at the temple.

If the other natural parent is deceased, or if that parent is missing and reasonable efforts to find him or her have failed, no consent is required. The temple president can approve the sealing to be completed subject to future review.

A living endowed member who is over 21 or is married and was not born in the covenant and has not been sealed to parents may be sealed to one natural parent and a stepparent if the natural mother and father are not sealed to each other.

Children Who Are Born Out of Wedlock

A living child who is born out of wedlock may be sealed to both natural parents without special approval after the parents have been sealed in a temple.

A living child who is born out of wedlock may be sealed to one natural parent and a stepparent when at least one of the following conditions applies:

1. The child marries.
2. The child reaches the age of 21.
3. The child's other natural parent is deceased.
4. The other natural parent has given signed consent for the sealing.
5. The rights of the natural father or mother have been terminated by legal process, such as an adoption proceeding.

If the child's other natural parent is missing, and if reasonable efforts to find the parent have failed, no consent is required. The temple president can approve the sealing to be completed subject to future review.

Children Conceived by Artificial Insemination or In Vitro Fertilization

Children conceived by artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization are born in the covenant if their parents are already sealed. If the children are born before their parents are sealed, they may be sealed to their parents after their parents are sealed to each other.

Status of Children When a Sealing Is Canceled or Revoked

Children who are born in the covenant or sealed to their parents remain so even if the sealing of the parents is later (1) canceled or (2) revoked by the excommunication or name removal of either parent. Children who are born after their parents' sealing is canceled or revoked are not born in the covenant. These children need to be sealed to their parents after their parents' blessings are restored (if applicable) and any other obstacles are removed.

Temple Ordinances for the Dead

General Guidelines

Generally, members may perform temple ordinances for deceased persons one year or more after the date of death without regard to the person's worthiness or cause of death. Bishops should explain this waiting period to members who plan to perform temple ordinances for deceased family members. Members who have questions should contact their bishop. He may direct questions to the stake president.

Ordinances that are performed for the dead are effective only if the deceased person chooses to accept them and becomes qualified to receive them (see D&C 138:19, 32–34).

For basic instructions on identifying ancestors and preparing their names for temple work, see *A Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work.*

Members Unable to Go to a Temple before Death

The one-year waiting period for temple ordinances does not apply to worthy members who would have gone to a temple but were prevented from doing so in life for reasons beyond their control.

Members Who Died within One Year of Baptism or Civil Marriage

If a worthy member dies within the year after being baptized and confirmed, temple ordinances may be completed when one year has passed since these ordinances were received.

If a worthy member dies within one year of a civil marriage, the sealing of the couple may be performed when one year has passed since the marriage.

Stillborn Children (Children Who Die before Birth)

Temple ordinances are not performed for stillborn children, but no loss of eternal blessings or family unity is implied. The family may record the name of a stillborn child on the family group record followed by the word *stillborn* in parentheses. For more information about stillborn children, see page 185.

Children under Eight Who Died

No baptism or endowment is performed for a child who died before age eight. Only sealings to parents are performed for such children. If the child was sealed to parents while he or she was living, or if the child was born in the covenant, no vicarious ordinances are performed.

Deceased Persons Who Had Mental Disabilities

Temple ordinances for deceased persons who had mental disabilities are performed the same as for other deceased persons.

Persons Who Are Presumed Dead

Temple ordinances may be performed for a person who is presumed dead after 10 years have passed since the time of the presumed death. This policy applies to (1) persons who are missing in action, are lost at sea, or have been declared legally dead; and (2) persons who disappeared under circumstances where death is apparent but no body has been recovered.

In all other cases of missing persons, temple ordinances may not be performed until 110 years have passed from the time of the person's birth.

Persons Who Have Taken Their Own Lives

Unless they were excommunicated or had their names removed from Church membership records at the time of death, persons who have taken their own lives may have temple ordinances performed for them one year or more after the date of death.

Persons Who Were Excommunicated or Had Their Names Removed from Church Records

First Presidency approval is required to perform temple ordinances for deceased persons who, at the time of their death, were excommunicated or had their names removed from Church membership records.

Restoration of Temple Blessings (after Excommunication or Name Removal)

Endowed persons who were excommunicated (or who had their names removed from Church membership records) and were later readmitted by baptism and confirmation can receive their temple blessings only through the ordinance of restoration of blessings. Such persons are not endowed again, since these blessings are restored through the ordinance. For information about performing this ordinance for the living, see page 122.

First Presidency approval is required to perform this ordinance for the dead.

Verifying Ordinances Necessary to Receive the Endowment

For the Living

A living person whose baptism and confirmation are not recorded on Church membership records may not be endowed until the baptism and confirmation are verified, ratified, or performed again. Brethren whose Melchizedek Priesthood ordination is not recorded must also have it verified, ratified, or performed again. Procedures are outlined on page 31. That page also explains the procedure to follow if a living person is endowed without a valid record of baptism or if a male is endowed without a valid record of Melchizedek Priesthood ordination.

For the Dead

Sometimes a deceased person's baptism that was performed while he or she was living cannot be verified after a diligent search. If an unverified baptism was relied on to perform the person's endowment, the person must be baptized and confirmed by proxy. It is not necessary to perform the endowment and sealings again.

Temple Ordinance Workers

Process of Calling

Recommendations for prospective temple ordinance workers may come to a temple president from ward or stake leaders, ordinance workers, his personal knowledge and contacts, and the guidance of the Spirit.

When a temple president identifies a member whom he would like to consider calling as an ordinance worker, he sends a Confidential Report on

Proposed Temple Ordinance Workers form to the member's bishop (one form for each couple or individual). If the bishop feels that the member is worthy and the calling would be suitable, he completes the form and sends it to the stake president. If the stake president concurs with the temple president and the bishop, he signs the form and sends it to the temple president.

After the temple president receives a completed form, a member of the temple presidency interviews the person. When so inspired, he calls those who are able to serve and sets them apart. He notifies the stake president of each calling.

The bishop and stake president must not inform members that they are being considered for this calling. Their first notification comes when a member of the temple presidency interviews them.

Qualifications

To be considered for callings as temple ordinance workers, members must:

1. Be endowed, comply with temple covenants, and qualify to hold a temple recommend.
2. Be experienced in living gospel principles.
3. Be mature in their knowledge of the restored gospel.
4. Have belonged to the Church for at least one year.
5. Not have received formal Church discipline or a restoration of blessings within the past five years.
6. Be in good health.
7. Be emotionally stable.
8. Be respected in the community.
9. Be married, if a male over 30 years old (widowers excepted).
10. Not have been divorced, after baptism, within the past five years.
11. Never have received formal Church discipline for sexual abuse or had their membership record annotated.

Restricted-Service Ordinance Workers

Mothers who have minor children living at home and brethren who are serving in bishoprics, branch presidencies, stake presidencies, or district presidencies, as well as brethren who are serving as Area Seventies, may not be called as regular temple ordinance workers. However, outside the United States and Canada they or any worthy members who meet the qualifications listed above may be called as restricted-service ordinance workers. They function in this assignment only when the need exists with organized groups from their own Church units. They may also function with groups that have special language needs. Any exceptions to these policies require the approval of the First Presidency.

Restricted-service ordinance workers are called and set apart the same as regular ordinance workers. No distinction of title is made when they are set apart, but the member of the temple presidency who extends the calling and sets them apart explains the restriction.

9. Missionary Service

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

The Call to Serve

Full-time missionary service is a privilege for members who are called through inspiration by the President of the Church. Missionary service is literally service to the Lord and His Church. Its objective is not primarily the personal development of a missionary, although righteous service invariably produces that result.

The calling to serve a full-time mission is extended to those who are worthy and able to accomplish it. Full-time missionary service is not an entitlement or a "rite of passage" in the Church. Nor are individuals sent on missions to be reactivated or reformed.

Missionaries who represent the Lord and His Church must be properly called and set apart (see D&C 42:11). They should meet the qualifications outlined in section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants (see also D&C 88:121–26).

Missionary candidates must be living worthy, exemplary lives. They are required to be morally clean and otherwise worthy to be the Lord's representatives (see D&C 38:42).

Missionaries invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end (see *Preach My Gospel*, page 1).

Missionaries also work with Church leaders and members in the areas where they serve to help establish the Church. Missionaries are a valuable resource to local leaders in helping new members and less-active members enjoy the full blessings of membership in the Church.

Preparing Full-Time Missionaries

Preparation for missionary service should begin early. This preparation should be a high priority for parents, Church leaders, and teachers. Bishops and stake presidents have an especially important responsibility to help identify and prepare worthy, qualified members for full-time missionary service.

While leaders may help all eligible members prepare for missionary service, they should give special attention to preparing young men, particularly those who seem uncertain about serving. The Lord expects every able young man to prepare for full-time missionary service.

Church leaders should let young members know what will be expected of them when they serve missions. Leaders should also let parents know what will be expected so they can help their children prepare for service.

Church leaders and parents should ensure that prospective missionaries are prepared spiritually, physically, emotionally, and financially.

Preparation for missionary service should include studying the gospel and building a testimony. It is important that prospective missionaries study the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, to learn the doctrines of the gospel.

The bishopric should call youth leaders who love missionary work and who will help youth learn the gospel, have experiences that build faith, and cultivate a desire to serve the Lord. Leaders should teach young men about the joys and blessings of missionary service.

Exemplary returned missionaries should be invited to speak about missionary work in sacrament meetings and other meetings. Leaders should also encourage youth to attend seminary to assist with missionary preparation.

Leaders should provide opportunities for prospective missionaries to serve in the Church. Leaders should also encourage them to work with full-time missionaries and to share the gospel with friends and relatives. Young men should regularly be given opportunities to teach the gospel in their quorum meetings and in other settings.

Prospective missionaries should receive training through home teaching, the Teaching the Gospel course, and missionary preparation classes. The main resources for missionary preparation classes are the scriptures, the *Missionary Handbook*, and *Preach My Gospel*.

High priests group meetings, elders quorum meetings, and Relief Society meetings should occasionally be used to teach parents how to help their children prepare to serve as missionaries.

As part of preparing members for missionary service, stake presidents and bishops should ensure that prospective missionaries and their families understand the principles and policies in this section and are committed to following them. The bishop should also review the *Missionary Handbook* with prospective missionaries as outlined on page 95.

Age and Term of Service for Full-Time Missionaries

Men

All worthy single men ages 19 through 25 who are physically, mentally, and emotionally able should be encouraged to serve full-time missions. Full-time missionary service is a priesthood responsibility of these brethren. They are called to serve for 24 months.

Women

Worthy single women ages 21 and older who are physically, mentally, and emotionally able may be recommended to serve full-time missions.

Single women ages 21 through 39 are usually called to serve for 18 months. These sisters can make a valuable contribution in the mission field, but they should not be pressured to serve. Bishops should not recommend them for missionary service if it will interfere with imminent marriage prospects.

Single women ages 40 and older are usually called to serve for 12 or 18 months. If they receive assignments outside their country of residence, they are called for 18 months. Bishops and stake presidents should take special care to ensure that these sisters are in good enough health to serve effectively as full-time missionaries. Assignments are outlined on page 102.

Couples

Bishops and stake presidents should prayerfully consider which couples in their units could be called to serve as full-time missionaries. Bishops may interview them to determine availability, ask them to prepare for a full-time mission call, and help them complete and submit the recommendation forms.

Couples are usually called to serve for 12, 18, or 24 months. A 6-month term of service will be considered only for those in special situations such as seasonal occupations. Couples serving outside their country of residence are called for at least 18 months. Qualifications and assignments for couples are outlined on pages 101–2.

Members Who Are Not Eligible for Full-Time Missions

The following members are not eligible to serve full-time missions:

1. Those who are not worthy as outlined under "Worthiness" on pages 93–94.
2. Those who would have to leave dependent children in the care of someone else.
3. Young couples who are still in child-bearing years.
4. Those who have been members of the Church for less than one year.
5. Those who are in debt and have not made definite arrangements to meet their obligations.
6. Those who are on legal probation or parole. (If priesthood leaders have questions concerning this restriction, such as for a person who is on probation for a minor offense, they may contact the Missionary Department.)
7. Those couples who have serious unresolved marital problems.
8. Those who are HIV positive.
9. Those who have been convicted of sexual abuse.

In addition, the following members are not normally recommended to serve full-time missions:

1. Brethren ages 19 through 25 and sisters ages 21 through 39 who have been divorced.
2. Sisters who have submitted to an abortion, or brethren or sisters who have performed, encouraged, paid for, or arranged for an abortion. This policy does not apply to persons who were involved in an abortion before they were baptized or for one of the reasons outlined on page 185.
3. Brethren who have fathered or sisters who have given birth to a child out of wedlock, regardless of whether they have any current legal or financial responsibility for the child.
4. Members who are not physically, mentally, or emotionally able to withstand the rigors of full-time missionary service (see "Physical, Mental, and Emotional Challenges" on pages 94–95).

If priesthood leaders believe that unusual circumstances or situations may warrant an exception, and if they can recommend that an exception be made, the stake presidency may submit a request for the First Presidency to consider it. Such a request should be submitted through the Missionary Department and should include specific details of the situation. Bishops and stake presidents should not request exceptions that are unwarranted or that they do not endorse.

When members do not qualify for full-time missionary service, priesthood leaders should give them appropriate Church callings in their stake or ward, or recommend them as Church-service missionaries (see pages 102–3), to help them grow and experience the blessings of service.

Ensuring Worthiness and Ability to Serve

Bishops and stake presidents have the serious responsibility to identify worthy, qualified members who are spiritually, physically, and emotionally prepared for full-time missionary service and whom they can recommend without reservation.

Missionary service demands faith, desire, and consecration. Missionary candidates should have an eagerness and a desire to serve the Lord as His ambassadors. They should be filled with "faith, hope, charity and love" and have "an eye single to the glory of God" (D&C 4:5).

Missionary work is rigorous. It demands strength and vitality, mental sharpness and capacity. Missionary candidates must be physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of doing this work.

Missionary work demands clean hands and a pure heart. Missionary candidates must be morally worthy in every respect. If the life of a missionary candidate needs reforming, that must happen well before the person is recommended for missionary service. Because adequate repentance may take some time, some young men may need to wait until they are older than 19 to serve missions (see "Worthiness" on this page).

The bishop and stake president should not submit a recommendation until they are satisfied that the candidate is physically, mentally, and emotionally able to serve. However, these leaders must be careful not to place excessive requirements on missionary candidates. They should realize that the work of the Lord is done by ordinary people who work in an extraordinary way.

If the bishop and stake president have concerns about whether a person is able or worthy to serve a mission, they should counsel together and discuss the concerns with the individual and his or her parents. This will help avoid the devastating feelings that can result if a recommendation is returned or a missionary is sent home for failure to meet these standards.

Interviews

The bishop and stake president conduct thorough, searching interviews with each missionary candidate. If they have questions about a person's worthiness or ability to serve, the stake president may inquire of the Missionary Department (telephone 1-801-240-2179 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-2179) or the Area Presidency.

Only in the most urgent cases when the stake president or bishop is absent may either of them authorize a counselor to conduct a missionary recommendation interview.

Worthiness

Repentance of Serious Transgressions

A prospective missionary who has been guilty of adultery, fornication, heavy petting, homosexual activity, other sexual perversions, drug misuse, serious violation of civil law, or other serious transgressions must repent before he or she may be recommended for missionary service. The member must also be worthy to enter the temple before he or she may be recommended.

The bishop and stake president confirm that the member is free of transgression for a sufficient time to manifest genuine repentance and prepare spiritually for the temple and a sacred mission call. This period could be as long as three years for multiple serious transgressions and should not be less than one year from the most recent serious transgression. Mere confession and refraining from a sin for a period of time do not on their own constitute repentance. There must also be evidence of a broken heart and contrite spirit and of a lasting change of behavior.

Bishops and stake presidents teach prospective missionaries that to qualify for the needed guidance of the Spirit, they must resolve transgressions before entering the mission field. Unless there are unusual circumstances, missionaries who are found to have entered the mission field without resolving serious transgressions with the bishop will be released early and returned home (see "Belated Confessions" on page 94).

Extended Pattern of Serious Transgressions

Individuals who have been promiscuous with several partners or who have been with one partner over an extended period of time in either a heterosexual relationship outside of marriage or a homosexual relationship will not be considered for full-time missionary service. Stake presidents and bishops should help these individuals repent and should help provide other meaningful ways to serve the Lord.

In cases where priesthood leaders believe that unusual circumstances or situations may warrant an exception, the stake presidency may submit a request for the First Presidency to consider an exception. Such a request should be submitted through the Missionary Department and should include specific details of the situation and a letter from the candidate explaining the nature of his or her repentance. Bishops and stake presidents should not request exceptions that are unwarranted or that they do not endorse.

Homosexual Activity

A candidate who has participated in homosexual activity during or after the last three teenage years will not normally be considered for missionary service. In rare cases the stake president may submit a request that the First Presidency consider an exception if there is strong evidence of complete repentance and reformation and if the candidate has been free of transgression for a sufficient period of time. This period of repentance should be at least one year and may be as long as three years if the acts occurred several times or over an extended time or if the person was the aggressor. Such a request should be submitted through the Missionary Department for the consideration of the First Presidency.

A professional evaluation (normally arranged through LDS Family Services) and an HIV test will be required whenever a candidate has been involved in homosexual activity.

If a person was victimized or participated in early-age same-sex experimentation and has no current indication of homosexual tendencies, he or she may be considered for full-time missionary service. Submission of the missionary recommendation forms does not require any further clearance beyond that of the stake president.

Belated Confessions

Bishops and stake presidents should explain to missionary candidates that if a full-time missionary confesses a serious transgression that he or she committed before entering the mission field, the missionary will be released early and returned home.

Physical, Mental, and Emotional Challenges

Missionary work is demanding. Members who have physical, mental, or emotional challenges that would prevent them from serving effectively are not called to full-time missionary service. Experience indicates that those who, for example, suffer from serious emotional instability, are severely impaired visually, require a wheelchair or crutches, or are dependent on others to perform normal daily tasks should not be recommended for full-time missionary service.

Candidates for missionary service who have previously had significant emotional challenges must be stabilized and confirmed to be fully functional before being recommended. A candidate who is dependent on medication for emotional stability must have demonstrated that with the medication he or she can fully function in the demanding environment of a mission before being recommended. The candidate must also make a commitment to continue taking the medications unless otherwise authorized by a professional health care provider. A list of medications that are being taken should be included in the missionary recommendation forms.

Young missionaries who are significantly overweight experience difficulties dealing with the rigorous physical demands of a full-time mission. These difficulties also affect their companions. Stake presidents and bishops should be sensitive and wise in considering whether individuals should be recommended for full-time missions when their weight will adversely affect their service. If prospective missionaries are significantly overweight, local leaders should counsel with them about reducing their weight before the missionary recommendation forms are submitted. For weight guidelines, the bishop or stake president may contact the Missionary Department or the administration office.

If the bishop and stake president are unsure about recommending a member who has any of these challenges, they may consult with the Missionary Department (telephone 1-801-240-2179 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-2179). Bishops and stake presidents should not request exceptions that are unwarranted or that they do not endorse.

If a member who has serious challenges strongly desires to serve a full-time mission but does not qualify, the bishop and stake president express love and gratitude for the member's willingness to serve. They also explain that because of the circumstances, the member is honorably excused from full-time missionary service for his or her own benefit and to avoid placing undue demands on mission leaders and companions.

These members should be encouraged to pursue such important endeavors as education, career development, temple preparation, and temple marriage. For those who have a strong desire to provide additional service, the bishop may counsel with the stake president to identify local opportunities for Church or community service. See pages 102–3 for information about Church-service missionaries.

Medical Limitations

A prospective missionary who has a serious medical limitation, including limitations due to injury or illness, can be considered only with the recommendation and advice of a competent medical authority. Before submitting the recommendation forms, the stake president should consult with the Missionary Department (telephone 1-801-240-2179 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-2179).

Review by the Area Medical Adviser

Outside the United States and Canada, missionary recommendation forms are submitted through the Area Presidency. Under their direction, the area medical adviser reviews all recommendation forms and identifies any unresolved medical and dental conditions or immunization issues that could affect the candidate's ability to serve or the nature of the assignment.

If the area medical adviser feels that treatment is needed before a person is able to serve, he reviews the situation with the Area Presidency. They may return the missionary recommendation forms to the stake president, who ensures that the necessary treatment is arranged for. When the medical condition is resolved, the stake president may resubmit the forms.

Review of the *Missionary Handbook*

As part of ensuring that a missionary candidate is worthy and able to serve, the bishop should review the *Missionary Handbook* with him or her. The bishop should ensure that the candidate understands and is committed to abiding by the guidelines in that handbook, including those about conduct, language, dress and grooming, music and other media, computers, finances, staying together as companions, avoiding inappropriate contact with children and members of the opposite sex, obeying local laws and customs, and communicating with family members.

Financing Full-Time Missionary Service

The primary responsibility to provide financial support for a missionary is with the individual and the family. Generally, missionaries should not rely entirely on others outside of their family for financial support.

Missionaries and their families should make appropriate sacrifices to provide financial support for a mission. It is better for a person to delay a mission for a time and earn money toward his or her support than to rely entirely on others. However, worthy missionary candidates should not be prevented from serving missions solely for financial reasons when they and their families have sacrificed according to their capability.

The Ward Missionary Fund

The ward missionary fund is used solely for supporting full-time missionaries as outlined in this section. Ward missionary funds should not be sent directly to single full-time proselyting missionaries. Nor should ward missionary funds be used to fund any missionary activities in the ward or stake.

Stake presidents and bishops should inform missionaries and others who contribute to the ward missionary fund that these contributions, including those that are prepaid, cannot be refunded.

Church leaders and members should not ask those outside the boundaries of their own Church units to contribute missionary financial support, except for family members.

Financing Single Full-Time Proselyting Missionaries

Equalized Contribution

The Church has equalized the contribution required for the service-related expenses of missionaries whose home wards are in designated countries. The equalized contribution applies regardless of where these missionaries are called to serve.

The equalized contribution applies only to the following full-time proselyting missionaries:

1. Single men ages 19 through 25
2. Single women ages 21 through 39
3. Single women ages 40 and older who are serving in proselyting assignments or in mission offices

The equalized contribution does not apply to full-time missionary couples, nonproselyting missionaries, or Church-service missionaries.

The amount of the equalized contribution is identified in instructions from Church headquarters. For each single full-time proselyting missionary from his ward, the bishop ensures that the monthly contribution is available in the ward missionary fund. These contributions are made by missionaries or by their parents, other family members, and friends. If necessary, the stake president or bishop may ask members within the stake or ward boundaries to help support these missionaries by contributing to the ward missionary fund. Budget and fast-offering funds may not be used for missionary support.

Each month Church headquarters or the administration office withdraws the equalized contribution from the ward missionary fund.

Personal Funds

The service-related expenses of the missionaries who are listed under the previous heading are covered through equalized contributions, but additional expenses are paid with personal funds. These expenses include clothing purchases and repairs, bicycle purchases and repairs, medical costs not paid by the mission, and approved telephone calls home. Other personal expenses, which should be kept to a minimum, might include photo processing, souvenirs, gifts, fines, and damage to apartments or vehicles caused by missionaries' misconduct or negligence.

Assistance from the General Missionary Fund

Assistance from the General Missionary Fund may be requested to provide supplemental financial support for missionaries who are unable to provide the full support amount for their mission. For a missionary to qualify for such assistance, all of the following criteria must be met:

1. The missionary's home ward is not in a country designated by the Church to participate in the equalized contribution program.
2. The missionary is a single proselyting elder ages 19 through 25 or a single proselyting sister ages 21 through 39. This assistance is not available for couples or for sisters ages 40 and older.
3. The missionary, parents, other family members, and ward and stake members are contributing according to guidelines established by the Area Presidency. (Using these guidelines, stake presidents and bishops work with missionary candidates and their families to establish a specific financial support commitment, based on appropriate sacrifice by the missionary and the family.)
4. The missionary has his or her own scriptures and missionary clothing, including garments, and has resolved any medical and dental needs.

To request assistance for a missionary who meets these criteria, the bishop completes a Request for Supplemental Financial Assistance for Full-time Missionary form and submits it with the missionary's recommendation forms.

Financing Missionary Couples, Nonproselyting Missionaries, and Church-Service Missionaries

Expenses of the following missionaries are not financed through equalized contributions. These missionaries are responsible to pay their own expenses directly from their own resources:

1. Full-time missionary couples
2. Sisters ages 40 and older who are not in proselyting or mission office assignments
3. Church-service missionaries

These missionaries may not contribute to the ward missionary fund for their own use.

Although these missionaries may not contribute to the ward missionary fund for their own use, full-time missionary couples and sisters ages 40 and older who are not in proselyting assignments may receive financial assistance from the fund when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The missionary's home ward is in a country designated by the Church to participate in the equalized contribution program.
2. The missionary and his or her family do not have adequate means to provide support.
3. Funds are available in the ward missionary fund.

Medical Insurance

All missionaries are strongly encouraged to maintain any existing medical insurance during their missions. This conserves Church funds and helps missionaries avoid having to prove insurability after their missions.

Submitting Recommendation Forms for Full-Time Missionaries

The bishop and stake president ensure that all missionary recommendation forms are prepared completely and accurately. The bishop or stake president sends these forms to the Missionary Department 60 to 90 days before the missionary candidate is available to begin a mission. Recommendation forms for couples may be submitted up to six months before their availability date. Instructions are provided on the recommendation forms.

When recommending couples for full-time missions, leaders may confidentially recommend specific types of assignments for consideration. However, they should not make commitments about the assignment a member will receive. Missionary candidates should be willing to accept any assignment.

Missionaries are called from their home wards. However, the bishop of an away-from-home ward, such as a student ward, may process a missionary recommendation for the home ward. To do so, he must (1) obtain permission from the bishop of the home ward, (2) ask him about the candidate's worthiness, in preparation for conducting a worthiness interview, and (3) ask him for a letter endorsing the recommendation. The name of the home ward and stake, the names of the bishop and stake president of those units, and the unit number of the home ward should be included on the recommendation.

The procedure outlined above helps ensure that all issues pertaining to worthiness, physical and emotional health, financial support, and point of departure have been resolved before a recommendation is submitted to the Missionary Department. The president of the away-from-home stake ensures that this procedure is followed and that the letter from the home-ward bishop is submitted with the recommendation.

If the bishop of the home ward processes a recommendation for a missionary who has not lived in the ward continuously for at least one year, he should confer with the bishop of the other ward before proceeding.

Neither the stake president, the bishop, the missionary candidate, nor the family should make any announcement about a mission call before the call is received.

After Full-Time Missionaries Are Called

The bishop continues to monitor the missionary's progress after the mission call is received to ensure that he or she remains worthy of the sacred calling. Bishops and stake presidents must instruct missionary candidates plainly regarding the seriousness and the consequences of immorality after a missionary has received a call.

The bishop ensures that newly called missionaries continue to prepare to serve. He also ensures that they comply promptly with all instructions they receive from Church headquarters, such as securing passports, applying for visas, and acquiring appropriate clothing for the mission assignment. Newly called missionaries should also read or reread the Book of Mormon before beginning their missions.

Sacrament Meetings, Open Houses, and Publicity

The bishopric may invite newly called full-time missionaries to speak in sacrament meeting before they depart. However, the bishopric should make it clear that the meeting is a regular sacrament meeting and is not devoted to a missionary farewell. Family members and friends are not invited to speak. Other departing missionaries or other members may be invited to speak in the same sacrament meeting. The bishopric should ensure that each missionary has sufficient time to deliver a spiritual message.

The bishopric plans and conducts these meetings. As in all sacrament meetings, talks and music should be worshipful, faith promoting, and gospel oriented. The regular time of the sacrament meeting should not be extended.

Although it is valuable to have missionaries speak in sacrament meeting, such programs should not dominate the sacrament meeting schedule to the exclusion of other valuable subjects and speakers.

Members should avoid practices that may detract from the sacred nature of a mission call or create unnecessary expense. Such practices include holding open houses for missionaries (except for family gatherings), sending formal printed announcements or invitations, printing special sacrament meeting programs, and forming reception lines at the meetinghouse after sacrament meeting.

Bishops review these guidelines with newly called missionaries and their families well before the departure date.

Personal Temple Endowment

Where possible, unendowed missionaries should receive their own temple endowment after they receive their mission call.

Setting Apart Missionaries

The stake president sets apart all full-time missionaries before they depart for a missionary training center (MTC) or directly to the field. Only in the most urgent cases when he is absent may the stake president assign one of his counselors to set apart a full-time missionary.

The mission president sets apart full-time missionaries who are called from districts in his mission. However, if it is not feasible for him to do so, he may assign one of his counselors to set apart a missionary. The district president does not set apart full-time missionaries.

A young man should have the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred upon him and be ordained an elder before he is set apart as a missionary. If he needs to be set apart before his ordination can be sustained in a stake conference or stake general priesthood meeting, he is presented for a sustaining vote in his ward sacrament meeting. His name is then presented in the next general stake meeting to ratify the ordination.

The missionary is set apart as near as possible to his or her departure date. Even if the missionary will be traveling for some time between departure from home and arrival at the MTC or in the field, the stake president should not expect MTC leaders or other priesthood leaders to set apart the missionary.

A day or two before the missionary is set apart, the stake president conducts an interview to determine whether he or she is still worthy. This interview is also a good time to review the missionary's current medical status. If the missionary is not worthy or if there are serious unresolved medical problems, he or she is not set apart. The stake president notifies the Missionary Department (telephone 1-801-240-2179 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-2179).

The setting apart should be a special occasion. The missionary's family and close friends may attend. The stake president speaks briefly to help them feel the sacredness and importance of the missionary's call.

The stake president follows the usual procedure for setting apart (see page 47). First he sets the person apart as a missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints assigned to labor in the mission to which he or she has been assigned. Then he adds a priesthood blessing as the Spirit directs. He may invite worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders, such as the missionary's father, to stand in the circle.

When a missionary is set apart, the blessing should not be recorded. However, the missionary is encouraged to record in a personal journal the date of the setting apart, the name of the stake president who officiated, and the words of blessing and counsel that were especially meaningful.

The stake president advises the missionary that after being set apart, he or she is a missionary and should live by missionary standards.

Transportation

The Church pays the expenses of full-time missionaries to travel to and from the field. For those who attend an MTC, the Church pays for their travel to the MTC and to the field. Travel arrangements are sent soon after the mission call.

When serving in their country of residence, couples and single women ages 40 and older may take their own vehicles with them. They are responsible for maintaining their vehicles, including insurance, repairs, and fuel. These missionaries will be given a travel allowance for the expense of driving their own vehicles to or from the field.

Missionary Departures

Immediate family members may go to the MTC with the missionary, but they are not expected to do so. Families who must travel long distances are discouraged from going to the MTC. Extended family, friends, and ward members should not go to the MTC.

Families are discouraged from going to airports for missionary departures when missionaries leave the MTC.

Transporting Items to a Mission

Missionaries should not transport personal belongings of others to the mission field. Occasionally members ask missionaries to take items such as medications or special eyeglasses to the mission field if they are not available there. If such requests are made, the bishop or stake president should direct them to the Missionary Department.

Full-Time Missionaries in the Mission Field

Meals and Housing

The stake president and mission president determine whether and to what extent Church members should provide meals and housing for missionaries.

Placement of Missionaries

The mission president determines the placement of missionaries within the mission. However, stake presidents, in consultation with bishops, should recommend the number and location of full-time missionaries to be assigned within the stake. The mission president then assigns missionaries according to available resources.

Full-Time Missionaries Working with Less-Active Members

See page 4 in this book and page 310 in *Book 2*.

Full-Time Missionaries in Branch Leadership Positions

With the approval of the mission president, missionary couples may on occasion serve in branch leadership positions. However, it is generally preferable for them to serve in a training capacity to help the local members fulfill these responsibilities.

In rare cases, younger full-time missionaries may serve in branch leadership positions. However, such assignments require the approval of the mission president and should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration of all other options. If couples or younger missionaries are given such assignments, they should serve only until a suitable member can be called.

When full-time missionaries are assigned to leadership positions in branches, including branch president, they are not set apart. The authority to act in any position in the mission is inherent in their setting apart as a full-time missionary. If they perform a function that requires priesthood keys, such as conducting a baptismal interview or presiding over a branch, they do so by assignment and the delegation of authority.

Requests to Support Members Financially

Full-time missionaries and their families must not be asked to provide financial support for members who live in the area where the missionaries are serving.

Fasting

Missionaries should not ask friends, relatives, or members of their home wards to join them in special fasts for investigators.

Missionaries' Communication with Their Families

Telephone Calls

Under the direction of the mission president, missionaries may telephone their parents at Christmas and on one other occasion during the year, usually Mother's Day or another significant holiday. Mission presidents, stake presidents, and bishops should encourage missionaries and parents to keep these calls brief, preferably no longer than 30 or 40 minutes.

E-Mail

As an alternative to regular mail, missionaries may use e-mail to communicate with their families on preparation day, according to guidelines that have been approved in the mission.

Medical Disability

If a missionary in the field (including a missionary training center) suffers a physical or emotional disability that prevents effective missionary service, he or she is returned home for treatment. A representative of the Missionary Department will explain to the stake president whether the missionary has been released or placed on medical leave and what steps should be taken.

Death of a Family Member

If a member of a missionary's immediate family dies, the Church encourages the missionary to remain in the field. However, if the family insists that the missionary return home, the missionary may be allowed to return at the family's expense. The stake president may request such an exception through the Missionary Department.

Membership Records, Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and Contributions

Missionaries Who Serve under the Direction of a Mission President

The home ward keeps the membership records, accepts any tithing contributions, and records the tithing status of full-time missionaries who serve under the direction of a mission president. Missionaries pay fast offerings through the ward in which they are serving.

Missionaries Who Serve under the Direction of a Temple President or Area President

Full-time missionaries who serve under the direction of a temple president or an Area President receive any needed ecclesiastical support, including temple recommends and counseling, from the temple president or Area President.

Missionaries at Church Headquarters Who Do Not Serve under the Direction of a Mission President

Membership records of full-time missionaries at Church headquarters who do not serve under the direction of a mission president should be in the ward where they live during their service. Normally they pay their tithing and other offerings through that ward. However, if they have moved from their home ward to serve at Church headquarters, they may pay tithing through their home ward if necessary. The bishop of the ward in which they live during their service interviews them for temple recommend renewals and provides any other needed ecclesiastical support.

Mission Presidents

See page 146.

Release of Full-Time Missionaries

Missionaries should complete the full term of service for which they are called. Under normal circumstances, neither they nor their parents should request early releases or extensions of service.

Missionaries should travel directly home from their missions. Any other travel is permitted only when the missionary is accompanied by at least one parent or guardian.

The Church discourages parents from picking up missionaries. However, if parents request this privilege, they should understand that:

1. Their plans must be based on the release date established by the mission president.
2. They should not request a change in the release date to accommodate other travel plans or commitments.
3. They should inform the mission president or the Church Travel Office at least three months in advance if they plan to travel with their missionary.
4. They are expected to make their own travel arrangements, including lodging and meals.

Missionaries must dress and conduct themselves according to missionary standards during travel from their missions because they are not released until they report to their stake presidents. They should not impose on members, missionaries, or other missions as they travel home.

Temple Recommends

All qualified, endowed missionaries should have a valid temple recommend when they are released. If a returning missionary's recommend is about to expire, the mission president conducts a temple recommend interview as part of the final interview and issues the recommend. Such recommends require only the interview of the mission president and the signatures of the president and the missionary.

If a missionary who is sent home early because of a belated confession or a disciplinary action holds a temple recommend, the mission president asks for the recommend. The bishop and stake president may issue a new temple recommend when the person is worthy.

Arrivals at Airports

Only immediate family members should go to the airport to pick up missionaries returning at the completion of their missions.

Interviews, Reports, and Callings

The stake president releases returning missionaries from missionary service and gives them the release certificate he has received from the mission president. He commends them for their service and invites them to report on their mission. He also inquires about their conduct while traveling home.

When the stake president releases missionaries, he also interviews them. This interview is an important opportunity to help missionaries build on their mission experiences and commit to continue on a lifelong path of spiritual growth and service. The stake president should devote enough time to these interviews to:

1. Discern missionaries' strengths and needs, then help them set goals and make plans that will build on the good habits they have developed and will have power in their daily lives.
2. Review the importance of doing what is necessary to continue feeling the Spirit daily.
3. Encourage missionaries to choose and prepare for their life's work.
4. Ask missionaries to commit to be full-tithe payers, be active in the Church, and serve faithfully in Church callings and assignments throughout their lives.
5. Encourage them to maintain high standards of conduct, including dress and grooming.

The stake president also encourages young returning missionaries to live worthy of and prepare for marriage in the temple. However, he should not suggest or imply that they should be married within a specified time.

Missionaries also report to the stake priesthood executive committee (stake presidency and high council). Soon after this report, the bishopric of the home ward schedules missionaries to speak in a sacrament meeting. They should be given sufficient time to share spiritual experiences and bear testimony. Their talks should build faith and encourage youth to serve missions. The stake presidency may also assign them to speak in other sacrament meetings as companions to high councilors.

The stake president counsels returning missionaries to teach the gospel in talks they give. As they speak in sacrament meetings, they should share experiences that strengthen faith in Jesus Christ, build testimonies, encourage members to live and share the gospel, and illustrate gospel principles. They should avoid travelogues, inappropriate stories about their companions or others, disparaging remarks about the areas in which they served, and other matters that would be inappropriate for a servant of the Lord to discuss in the sacred setting of a sacrament meeting.

Priesthood leaders should promptly call recently returned missionaries to Church positions. Elders quorum and Relief Society leaders should also assign every returned missionary as a home teacher or visiting teacher.

Tuberculosis Testing

Where testing is available, all returning missionaries should be tested for tuberculosis. A copy of the form for reporting the results of this test is sent, with the release certificate, by the mission president to the stake president. The missionary and the stake president should follow the instructions on the form.

Full-Time Missionary Assignments for Senior Couples and Sisters

This section applies to the following missionaries who serve full-time (at least 32 hours per week) away from home or at home:

1. Couples
2. Single women ages 40 and older

Identifying Prospective Senior Missionaries

Bishops and stake presidents prayerfully identify senior couples and sisters in their units who might be recommended for full-time missionary service. The bishop meets with these members and encourages them to serve missions. He helps them complete the missionary recommendation forms as outlined on pages 96–97.

Couples who are recommended for full-time missionary service must no longer be engaged in full-time employment. If the couple will be serving away from home, they must not have any dependent children living at home. Bishops and stake presidents should take special care to ensure that couples are in good enough health to serve effectively as full-time missionaries.

Information on missionary opportunities for full-time senior missionaries can be found on the Internet at LDS.org. Stake presidents and bishops can use this information to identify opportunities for members they are encouraging to serve. The bishop may confidentially recommend specific assignments for these members. However, he should not make commitments about the assignments a member will receive. Missionary candidates should be willing to accept any assignment.

General Authorities, mission presidents, temple presidents, and Church department heads may also identify senior couples and sisters who might be recommended for full-time missionary service. The names of these members should be submitted to the Missionary Department. Representatives of the Missionary Department will then contact the stake president. He confers with the bishop to consider each prospective missionary's health, the ability and willingness to serve, and other circumstances. The bishop then meets with the members and encourages them to complete their missionary recommendation forms. If the recommendation is approved, the President of the Church issues a letter of call.

Where there are large concentrations of members, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency coordinates with stake presidents to identify senior couples and sisters who could fill local full-time missionary needs in mission offices, visitors' centers, employment centers, family history centers, temples, and Church Educational System offices. Senior missionaries for these assignments could include those who are not able to leave their homes but desire to serve at least 32 hours per week. These missionaries may receive live-at-home mission calls from the President of the Church. Recommendations for such missionaries are submitted in the normal manner.

Those who can serve fewer than 32 hours per week may still be given local assignments and are called by their stake president as specified under "Church-Service Missionaries" on pages 102–3.

Bishops, stake presidents, and others who are encouraging senior couples and sisters to serve missions should understand that these members may have some anxiety because of false preconceptions about what will be expected of them. Leaders can reassure prospective senior missionaries that they will not be asked to meet the same standards in work hours or other activities that are expected of younger missionaries. Senior missionaries will be allowed some flexibility in setting their own goals and schedules based on personal needs, the requirements of their assignments, and guidance from the person who presides over them.

Health Insurance for Senior Missionaries

Full-time missionary couples and sisters ages 40 and older are responsible for their own health care expenses and must have adequate health insurance for their mission assignments. If the insurance coverage of those living away from home is not adequate for their assignment, Deseret Mutual Benefits Administrators (DMBA) will send them information on additional insurance they may purchase. Missionaries who need additional coverage but do not enroll in the DMBA plan must provide proof of adequate coverage before their service begins.

Assignments for Senior Missionaries

To the extent possible, all full-time missionaries should participate in sharing the gospel. Senior missionaries may also be asked to help train leaders, fellowship new members, and work with less-active members. In addition to these basic assignments, full-time missionary couples and sisters ages 40 and older may receive in their call letter one or more of the following assignments. Some sisters under age 40 may also receive these assignments:

1. Leadership
2. Church Educational System
3. Family history
4. Humanitarian services
5. Mission offices
6. Area administration offices
7. Facilities management
8. Farm management
9. Public affairs
10. Temples
11. Visitors' centers and historic sites
12. Welfare services
13. Perpetual Education Fund

In response to local needs, these special assignments may be changed in consultation with the headquarters departments that supervise the original assignment.

For information about senior missionaries serving as officers in local units, see page 99.

Releases of Senior Missionaries

Release letters and certificates for senior missionaries are prepared under the direction of the person who oversees their assignment. As with all full-time missionaries, these missionaries are released by their stake president.

Church-Service Missionaries

Church-service missionaries are part-time missionaries. They serve at least 8 hours a week but fewer than 32 hours and live at home. They are called by their stake president as outlined in the following paragraphs. These callings are normally for 6 to 24 months. The use of Church-service missionaries is not intended to diminish emphasis on full-time missionary service.

Church-service missionaries work for Church departments at Church headquarters or at other locations throughout the world. Except for those serving in mission offices, Church-service missionaries do not usually serve under the direction of a full-time mission president.

Identifying Church-Service Missionary Opportunities

Church-service missions may be used as an alternative when worthy members are not able to serve full-time missions because of physical, mental, or emotional challenges (see pages 94–95). For those who have a strong desire to provide additional service, the bishop may counsel with the stake president to identify local Church-service missionary opportunities. Examples of possible assignments are listed below:

Church Educational System: receptionist, office work, or computer support at seminaries and institutes

Welfare: bishops' storehouses, canneries, Deseret Industries, and employment centers (additional opportunities in the Salt Lake City area: Deseret Manufacturing, Humanitarian Center, Welfare Square)

Farm management: Church-owned farms and ranches

Building maintenance for meetinghouses

Special projects: locally available resources

Church Office Building (Utah only): clerical, receptionist, family history center, data entry, mail room, print shop, distribution center, member locator, maintenance, computer support

Stake presidents, bishops, and members are encouraged to use the following resources to identify and obtain information about Church-service missionary opportunities:

In the United States and Canada:

Internet: www.lds.org/csm
Telephone: 1-801-240-4914

Outside the United States and Canada:

Internet: www.lds.org/csm
Telephone or write the administration office

As with full-time missionaries, the bishop and stake president ensure that each prospective Church-service missionary is worthy to hold a temple recommend. They also ensure that he or she is physically and emotionally able to perform the duties of the calling. Prospective missionaries should be able to support themselves financially, including all medical expenses.

Recommending Church-Service Missionaries

The bishop interviews members who may be interested in serving as Church-service missionaries. He and the member should identify a suitable Church-service opportunity on the Internet at LDS.org. Next, they contact a representative of the department or other entity that posted the position to determine whether it is still available and if the member is able to fulfill the requirements. This contact information is posted on the Web site with the position.

If the Church-service opportunity is still available and the member is eligible, the bishop and the member complete a Recommendation for Part-Time Church-Service Missionary form. The bishop notes the recommended service opportunity, signs the form, and forwards it to the stake president. The stake president then interviews the member for worthiness, signs the form if he approves, and sends it to the director of Church-service missionaries at Church headquarters or to the local coordinator for Church-service missionaries in his area.

Calling Church-Service Missionaries

Church-service missionaries are called by their stake president and set apart by their bishop. After the recommendation form has been processed at Church headquarters or with the local coordinator, the stake president is notified so he can extend the calling. The stake president advises the bishop of the calling and asks him to set the missionary apart.

After the calling is issued, the missionary contacts the Church department representative to work out pertinent details.

Bishops and stake presidents should give appropriate recognition to members who are called as Church-service missionaries. This includes communicating their callings to members of the ward or stake. It also could include inviting them to report on their service in appropriate meetings.

Transportation

Church-service missionaries provide their own transportation.

Training and Supervision

Church-service missionaries are supervised by and trained under the direction of the department in which they serve. Normally they are not trained at a missionary training center.

Medical Expenses

All Church-service missionaries are entirely responsible for their own medical needs, including dental and eye expenses and prescription drugs.

Extensions

Near the end of the assigned period, the term of service may be extended if the missionary wants to extend and the service is still needed. The extension may be for varying increments, not to exceed 30 months in total service. The department coordinator reviews the extension request with the stake president. If the stake president approves the request, he advises the missionary and notifies the missionary's bishop.

Release of Church-Service Missionaries

Toward the end of a Church-service mission, the department coordinator informs the stake president when the mission will end. At the conclusion of the mission, the stake president releases the missionary and advises the bishop.

At least six months should pass before those who are released receive another Church-service mission call. Exceptions must be approved by the stake president.

Church-Service Missionaries in Stake and Ward Callings

Church-service missionaries are encouraged to serve in stake or ward callings at the discretion of local leaders as long as these callings do not interfere with the Church-service missionary assignment.

Callings That Are Not Processed as Church-Service Missions

Callings to assist with activation efforts or to help strengthen members in wards should be made by local leaders. These callings should not be processed as Church-service mission calls. This guideline applies even if members will serve outside their home wards.

Volunteer Service

Many opportunities for Church service are available for members, including those who do not hold a current temple recommend, and for nonmembers. These individuals are volunteers rather than missionaries. They may serve in areas such as family history centers, family record extraction, welfare production projects or canneries, and Scouting if qualified for Scout registration.

10. Church Discipline

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

In this section, references to transgressors are in the masculine gender but also include the feminine.

Purposes of Church Discipline

The purposes of Church discipline are (1) to save the souls of transgressors, (2) to protect the innocent, and (3) to safeguard the purity, integrity, and good name of the Church. These purposes are accomplished through private counsel and caution, informal probation, formal probation, disfellowshipment, and excommunication (see pages 108–10).

Save the Souls of Transgressors

The first purpose of Church discipline is to save the souls of transgressors by helping them repent (see D&C 1:31–32; 19:13–20; 42:37; 64:12–13). When people do not repent, they are exposed to the demands of eternal justice (see Alma 34:16). When they exercise faith unto repentance, God forgives them, granting mercy through the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Alma 42:23; D&C 58:42). Through this process they may once again become clean and worthy to inherit the kingdom of God (see 3 Nephi 27:19; Moses 6:57).

Church discipline can facilitate repentance by helping transgressors recognize and forsake sin, seek forgiveness, make restitution, and demonstrate a renewed commitment to keep the commandments. Informal Church discipline often is adequate for this purpose (see pages 108–9). However, in some instances the only way to encourage true repentance is to convene a disciplinary council (formerly called a Church court) and consider formal discipline (see pages 109–10). Without formal discipline, some transgressors may never experience the change of behavior and change of heart necessary to qualify them for redemption through the Atonement, for "none but the truly penitent are saved" (Alma 42:24).

Protect the Innocent

The second purpose of Church discipline is to protect the innocent. With inspiration, a priesthood leader should act to protect Church members when a transgressor poses a physical or spiritual threat to them, such as by physical harm, sexual abuse, drug misuse, fraud, or apostasy (see Alma 5:59–60).

Safeguard the Integrity of the Church

The third purpose of Church discipline is to safeguard the purity, integrity, and good name of the Church. Consequently, transgressions that significantly impair the good name or moral influence of the Church may require the action of a disciplinary council.

Responsibility for Church Discipline

God does not overlook sin, and His servants cannot ignore evidence of serious transgressions (see Mosiah 26:29; D&C 1:31). Stake presidents, bishops, mission presidents, district presidents, and branch presidents are called and set apart to be judges in Israel (see D&C 107:72–74). They are to "judge . . . by the testimony of the just, . . . according to the laws of the kingdom which are given by the prophets of God" (D&C 58:18).

Church leaders are to help members avoid transgression. If a member commits a serious transgression, leaders administer Church discipline in a spirit of love so it can bless the life of the transgressor. To do this, leaders must be guided and inspired by the Lord.

Church discipline is administered in the ward or stake that has the transgressor's membership record (see "Jurisdiction in Special Circumstances" on page 106 for exceptions). Church leaders' responsibilities for initiating and administering Church discipline are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Stake President

The stake president has authority over the Church discipline of all members in a stake. However, bishops normally administer Church discipline unless evidence indicates that a person who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood is likely to be excommunicated. In that case, the stake president convenes a stake disciplinary council. When a stake president convenes a disciplinary council, the participation of the stake presidency and high council is required as outlined in "Stake Disciplinary Councils" on page 112.

High Council

The high council participates whenever a stake president convenes a disciplinary council (see pages 112, 114, and 120).

Bishop

The bishop administers most Church discipline. He has authority for the discipline of all members in his ward, except the excommunication of a member who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood.

The bishop must confer with the stake president and obtain his approval before convening a disciplinary council. If evidence indicates that a Melchizedek Priesthood holder is likely to be excommunicated, the bishop immediately transfers the matter to the stake president.

When a bishop convenes a disciplinary council, it must include all three members of the bishopric (see page 112).

Branch President in a Stake

A branch president in a stake may administer Church discipline as authorized by the stake president. He may receive general authorization to administer informal Church discipline. He must receive authorization in each case to convene a disciplinary council and administer formal discipline.

If evidence indicates that a Melchizedek Priesthood holder is likely to be excommunicated, the branch president immediately transfers the matter to the stake president. If a branch disciplinary council recommends excommunication of a member who does *not* hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, the stake president's approval is required before the decision is final.

When a branch president in a stake convenes a disciplinary council, it must include all three members of the branch presidency (see page 112).

Mission President

The mission president administers or oversees Church discipline of members in mission branches and districts. If time or distance prevents him from personally convening a disciplinary council for one of these members, he may authorize three Melchizedek Priesthood holders to convene it as outlined on page 112. If this disciplinary council recommends excommunication, the mission president's approval is required before the decision is final.

The mission president also administers Church discipline for full-time missionaries who commit serious transgressions in the mission field. Before convening a disciplinary council for a full-time missionary, the mission president reviews the matter with a General Authority in the Missionary Department (in the United States and Canada) or with the Area Presidency (outside the United States and Canada). The mission president may not convene the disciplinary council until he receives authorization from a General Authority in the Missionary Department.

District President and Branch President in a Mission

A district president or branch president in a mission may administer Church discipline as authorized by the mission president. He may receive general authorization to administer informal Church discipline. He must receive authorization in each case to convene a disciplinary council and administer formal discipline.

Jurisdiction in Special Circumstances

If a member who needs Church discipline moves to another ward before action is taken, the bishops of both wards consult to determine where the disciplinary action should be taken. They consider such matters as the accessibility of key witnesses and the need for continuing efforts to encourage repentance and restoration to full fellowship. If the bishops determine that the bishop of the former ward should take the disciplinary action, he retains the membership record until the action is taken. Otherwise he transfers the membership record and confidentially informs the bishop of the current ward of the circumstances that warrant Church discipline.

If a member is living away from home temporarily (attending school or serving in the military, for example), his bishop at the place of temporary residence may counsel him or place him on informal probation. However, this bishop should consult the bishop of the home ward before initiating formal disciplinary action.

If a full-time missionary commits a serious transgression that is not revealed until after he has been released, the bishop of his current ward confers with the stake president and mission president. If evidence indicates that a member who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood is likely to be excommunicated, the stake president convenes a disciplinary council. Otherwise he may authorize the bishop to convene a disciplinary council.

Confession

Repentance requires that all sins be confessed to the Lord. "By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them" (D&C 58:43). Members should also confess to their presiding officer if they have committed serious transgressions. Members who voluntarily and completely confess transgressions demonstrate that they have begun the process of repentance.

Presiding officers should respond to confessions with love and understanding. If a sin that is confessed may be serious enough to require formal Church discipline, the presiding officer explains this to the member.

Presiding officers should encourage members to seek the Lord's forgiveness, forsake the transgression, and make restitution.

Restitution

As part of the restitution required for repentance, transgressors should do all they can to restore what their transgression has taken from others. They should also seek forgiveness from the people they have wronged. The repentance of a married person who is involved in a sexual transgression usually should include confessing to and seeking forgiveness from his spouse. A young unmarried person who commits a sexual transgression should be encouraged to inform his parents.

Repentance may include disclosure to government authorities. If confidential information indicates that a member has violated applicable law, the bishop or stake president should urge him to report the matter to appropriate government authorities. However, the member should be counseled to seek competent legal advice before reporting. To obtain guidance on local laws that govern reporting abuse, see the instructions on page 186.

Disclosure of the identity of others who participated in a transgression should be *encouraged* as part of the repentance process, especially when this can help Church leaders encourage those participants to repent.

Disclosure of the identity of others who participated in a transgression may be *required* when it is necessary to restore or protect persons who have been or may be seriously injured as a result of the transgression. For example, a sexual transgressor who has been exposed or who has exposed others to a sexually transmitted disease must make the disclosures necessary to protect others. Predators may need to be identified to protect potential victims. A transgressor who holds or has held a prominent position of trust may need to be identified to Church leaders for the spiritual protection of members.

Investigation

A bishop interviews any member of his ward who is accused of a serious transgression. If the member denies an accusation that the bishop has reliable evidence to support, the bishop (or the stake president if he will preside over the disciplinary council) gathers further evidence that would confirm or disprove the accusation. The presiding officer may conduct the investigation himself, or he may assign two reliable Melchizedek Priesthood holders to do so. However, leaders should not investigate individuals or matters while they are the subject of investigation by law enforcement authorities. For guidance in such circumstances, the stake president should confer with the Office of General Counsel as instructed in "Legal Matters" on page 178.

Priesthood leaders who conduct an investigation should not use methods that are unbecoming to priesthood holders or that could result in legal action. For example, they must not use electronic surveillance devices, hidden cameras, or tape recorders. They also must not maintain a watch on a member's home.

Communication with Aggrieved Victims

When there is an aggrieved victim (such as for incest, child abuse, or spouse abuse), the presiding officer of the upcoming disciplinary council should contact the victim's current bishop or stake president. If the victim's current bishop or stake president already knows about the situation, the two leaders determine whether it would be helpful and appropriate for the victim to be given an opportunity to provide a written or oral statement about the known or alleged misconduct and how it has affected the victim and his or her family.

Any interview with an aggrieved victim for this purpose should be conducted by his or her current bishop or stake president. Inquiries about a victim who is under 18 years of age should be made through the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Great care must be taken to avoid causing further trauma, especially with a victim of sexual or physical abuse. In the United States, Canada, and selected other countries, the Church has established a help line for cases that involve abuse. Priesthood leaders should call the help line for guidance in such cases (see "Abuse and Cruelty" on page 186).

Confidentiality

Bishops, stake presidents, and their counselors have a solemn duty to keep confidential all information that members give them in confessions and interviews. The same duty of confidentiality applies to all who take part in Church disciplinary councils. It includes what is said in the presentation of evidence and in deliberations. Confidential information must not be shared with anyone except authorized ecclesiastical leaders.

Information received in a member's confession cannot be used as evidence in a disciplinary council without the member's consent. When necessary, a bishop attempts to persuade the member to give this consent. He explains that refusal reflects a lack of contrition and repentance, preventing justice and mercy from operating fully for the good of the transgressor. If consent is not given, the bishop can still impose informal discipline on the basis of the confession. A lack of consent to use a confession in evidence does not prevent a disciplinary council from proceeding on the basis of other evidence.

If a bishop learns that a Church member outside his ward may have been involved in a serious transgression, he informs that member's bishop confidentially. When members of different wards transgress together, and when one has disclosed to his bishop the identity of the other transgressor, the bishop to whom the disclosure was made consults with the bishop of the other member.

If civil authorities challenge the confidentiality required of a clergyman, the priesthood leader who is challenged should seek legal advice from the Office of General Counsel at Church headquarters (telephone 1-801-240-6301 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-6301) or from local legal counsel in Church area offices.

Informal Church Discipline

A bishop or branch president normally administers informal Church discipline. His counselors do not participate, and no disciplinary council is held. Except for the most serious transgressions, informal discipline may be sufficient for genuinely repentant persons (especially those who have confessed voluntarily), first offenders, those who have not violated temple covenants by their transgression, and those with significant mitigating circumstances (see D&C 42:25–26 and pages 117–18).

Informal Church discipline includes (1) private counsel and caution and (2) informal probation.

Private Counsel and Caution

Private counsel and caution may be sufficient discipline for members who have committed minor transgressions and are genuinely repentant.

Presiding officers counsel members to resist temptation and help them take preventive action to resist specific temptations. Such counseling often helps members who have committed minor moral transgressions guard against major transgressions. Such counseling also helps protect and strengthen those who are courting, are having difficulty in their marriages, or are separated or divorced. Presiding officers need not wait for members to seek such help, but may call them in for counseling.

For more information about counseling, see pages 25–27.

Informal Probation

Informal probation is a means for a presiding officer to restrict some of a transgressor's privileges of Church membership in ways that the officer specifies. Such restrictions may include suspending the right to partake of the sacrament, hold a Church position, exercise the priesthood, or enter a temple. If the privilege of entering a temple is suspended, a member should give his temple recommend to the presiding officer for the period of suspension. Wisely administered and humbly received, informal probation can be effective in helping a transgressor repent.

In less serious cases, a presiding officer may determine that a member needs a more active rather than a less active exercise of the privileges of Church membership. In these cases, informal probation may include positive conditions such as regular Church attendance, regular prayer, and reading selected scriptures or Church literature.

Informal probation is not an option when priesthood leaders administer Church discipline for a member who has been involved in any of the serious transgressions listed on page 120.

A bishop normally does not inform anyone of a decision to place a member on informal probation. No official record is made of such decisions, but the bishop may make private notes for his own use. He should keep these notes secure and destroy them after the probation concludes. If a bishop is released or if the member moves to a new ward before informal probation ends, the bishop may inform the new bishop to the extent necessary for the new bishop to supervise the remaining probation.

When a member on informal probation makes specified progress and meets prescribed conditions, the presiding officer may end the probation. If the member does not make this progress and meet the conditions, additional disciplinary action may be needed.

Formal Church Discipline

Formal Church discipline is administered in a disciplinary council (see "Disciplinary Councils" on pages 110–17). This discipline is ecclesiastical, not civil or criminal. It can affect only a member's standing in the Church (see D&C 134:10).

At times, formal discipline is the only way to help a transgressor repent, to protect the innocent, or to safeguard the purity and good name of the Church. A presiding officer who is unwilling to proceed in such cases is not fulfilling his responsibilities as a common judge. Presiding officers should approach formal discipline with a prayerful desire to help, not to condemn.

Formal Church discipline includes formal probation, disfellowshipment, and excommunication.

Formal Probation

Formal probation is an action taken by a disciplinary council to restrict or suspend some of a transgressor's privileges of Church membership in ways that the council specifies. These restrictions could include or go beyond those imposed by informal probation. Positive conditions similar to those imposed by informal probation could also be prescribed (see page 108).

Formal probation is not an option when priesthood leaders administer Church discipline for a member who has been involved in any of the serious transgressions listed on page 120.

When a member on formal probation makes specified progress and meets prescribed conditions, the presiding officer may convene another disciplinary council to consider ending the probation (see pages 119–21). If the member does not make this progress and meet the conditions, the disciplinary council may continue probation or take more severe disciplinary action.

Disfellowshipment

A person who is disfellowshipped is still a member of the Church but is no longer in good standing. Disfellowshipment is a severe action that may be adequate for all but the most serious transgressions.

A person who is disfellowshipped may not hold a temple recommend, serve in a Church position, or exercise the priesthood in any way. He should be encouraged to attend public Church meetings if his conduct is orderly, but he may not give a talk, offer a public prayer, partake of the sacrament, or participate in the sustaining of Church officers. The presiding officer may impose additional restrictions, such as staying away from pornographic materials and other evil influences. He may also impose positive conditions such as regular Church attendance, regular prayer, and reading selected scriptures or Church literature.

Disfellowshipped members are encouraged to pay tithes and offerings, to continue wearing temple garments if endowed, and to seek a return to fellowship in the Church through sincere repentance and righteous living.

Disfellowshipment is intended to be temporary but usually lasts at least one year. When a member shows true repentance and satisfies the conditions imposed, the presiding officer may convene another disciplinary council to consider restoring him to full fellowship (see pages 119–21). If a member does not repent, the disciplinary council may continue disfellowshipment or consider excommunication.

Excommunication

A person who is excommunicated is no longer a member of the Church. Excommunication is the most severe Church disciplinary action. As directed by the Spirit, it may be necessary for:

1. Members who have committed serious transgressions, especially violations of temple covenants (see "Considerations in Church Discipline" on pages 117–18).
2. Members who have been disfellowshipped and have not repented and for whom excommunication seems to offer the best hope for reformation.
3. Members whose conduct makes them a serious threat to others and whose Church membership facilitates their access to victims.
4. Church leaders or prominent members whose transgressions significantly impair the good name or moral influence of the Church in the community that is aware of the transgression.

Excommunication is mandatory for murder (as defined on page 110) and is almost always required for incest.

A person who is excommunicated does not enjoy any privileges of Church membership. He may not wear temple garments or pay tithes and offerings.

He may attend public Church meetings if his conduct is orderly, but his participation in such meetings is limited the same as for disfellowshipped members.

Excommunication almost always lasts at least one year. If a person shows true repentance and satisfies the conditions imposed while he is excommunicated, he may be readmitted by baptism and confirmation. The readmission process is explained on pages 119–21.

For information about the effects of excommunication on temple sealings, see pages 86 and 88.

Disciplinary Councils

Because formal Church discipline is ecclesiastical, not civil or criminal, court procedures of the state or nation do not apply. However, procedures in a Church disciplinary council must be fair and considerate of the feelings of all who participate.

When a Disciplinary Council Is Mandatory

A disciplinary council *must* be held when evidence suggests that a member may have committed any of the following transgressions.

Murder

As used here, *murder* refers to the deliberate and unjustified taking of human life. It requires excommunication. It does not include police or military action in the line of duty. Abortion is not defined as murder for this purpose. If death was caused by carelessness or by defense of self or others, or if mitigating circumstances prevail (such as deficient mental capacity), the taking of a human life might not be defined as murder. Bishops refer questions on specific cases to the stake president. He may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency if necessary.

Incest

As used here, *incest* refers to sexual relations between a parent and a natural, adopted, or foster child or a stepchild. A grandparent is considered the same as a parent. Incest also refers to sexual relations between brothers and sisters. It almost always requires excommunication. Bishops refer questions on specific cases to the stake president. He may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency if necessary.

Child Abuse

As used here, *child abuse* refers to a sexual offense against a child or physical abuse of a child. If priesthood leaders learn of or suspect child abuse, they should follow the instructions on page 186.

Apostasy

As used here, *apostasy* refers to members who:

1. Repeatedly act in clear, open, and deliberate public opposition to the Church or its leaders.
2. Persist in teaching as Church doctrine information that is not Church doctrine after they have been corrected by their bishop or a higher authority.
3. Continue to follow the teachings of apostate sects (such as those that advocate plural marriage) after being corrected by their bishop or a higher authority.
4. Formally join another church.

In such cases, excommunication may be necessary if repentance is not evident after counseling and encouragement.

Priesthood leaders must take disciplinary action against apostates to protect Church members. The Savior taught the Nephites that they should continue to minister to a transgressor, "but if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people" (3 Nephi 18:31; see also Mosiah 26:36).

Total inactivity in the Church or attending another church does not constitute apostasy. However, if a member formally joins another church, excommunication or name removal may be necessary if formal membership is not ended after counseling and encouragement.

Serious Transgression While Holding a Prominent Church Position

A disciplinary council must be held for a member who commits a serious transgression while holding a prominent Church position, such as Area Seventy; temple, mission, or stake president; patriarch; or bishop. As used here, *serious transgression* is defined as a deliberate and major offense against morality. It includes (but is not limited to) attempted murder, rape, sexual abuse, spouse abuse, intentional serious physical injury of others, adultery, fornication, homosexual relations, deliberate abandonment of family responsibilities, robbery, burglary, theft, embezzlement, sale of illegal drugs, fraud, perjury, and false swearing.

Transgressor Who Is a Predator

A disciplinary council must be held for a member who commits a serious transgression that shows him to be a predator with tendencies that present any kind of serious threat to other persons.

Pattern of Serious Transgressions

A disciplinary council must be held for a member who demonstrates a pattern of serious transgressions, especially if prior transgressions have resulted in Church discipline.

Serious Transgression That Is Widely Known

A disciplinary council must be held for a member who commits a serious transgression (as defined under "Serious Transgression While Holding a Prominent Church Position" on page 110) that is widely known.

When a Disciplinary Council May Be Necessary

Serious Transgression

Formal Church discipline may be necessary for any member who commits a serious transgression as defined under "Serious Transgression While Holding a Prominent Church Position" on page 110.

Abortion

Presiding officers review carefully the circumstances of members involved in abortions. Formal Church discipline may be necessary for members who submit to, perform, encourage, pay for, or arrange for abortions. However, Church discipline should not be considered for members who were involved in an abortion before they were baptized or because (1) the pregnancy resulted from forcible rape or incest, (2) the life or health of the mother was in jeopardy, or (3) the fetus was known to have severe defects that would not allow the baby to survive beyond birth (see page 185). Bishops refer questions on specific cases to the stake president. He may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency if necessary.

Transsexual Operation

Church leaders counsel against elective transsexual operations. If a member is contemplating such an operation, a presiding officer should inform him of this counsel and advise him that the operation may be cause for formal Church discipline. Bishops refer questions on specific cases to the stake president. He may direct questions to the Office of the First Presidency if necessary.

When a Disciplinary Council Is Not Necessary

A disciplinary council normally is not necessary in the following instances.

Failure to Comply with Some Church Standards

A disciplinary council should not be held to discipline or threaten members who do not comply with the Word of Wisdom or whose transgressions consist of omissions, such as failure to pay tithing, inactivity in the Church, or inattention to Church duties.

Business Failures or Nonpayment of Debts

Leaders or members should not use the threat of Church discipline as a form of harassment or as a device to settle business controversies. Business failures and nonpayment of debts are not reasons for convening a disciplinary council. However, a disciplinary council may be held for deceptive practices, false representations, or other forms of fraud or dishonesty in business transactions.

Civil Disputes

Disciplinary councils should not attempt to resolve disputes over property rights or other civil controversies. However, if such a dispute involves accusations that a member has committed acts that would justify Church discipline, the accusations should be treated like any other accusations of transgression.

If Church leaders are asked to help settle civil disputes, they should act as unofficial, private advisers and should not involve the Church.

Passage of Time

If a member voluntarily confesses a serious transgression that was committed long ago and his faithfulness and service in the intervening years have demonstrated full reformation and repentance, a disciplinary council often is unnecessary. See "Time between Transgression and Confession" on page 118.

Possible Decisions

A disciplinary council can reach any of the following decisions:

1. No action. A disciplinary council can reach this decision even if a transgression has been committed. As part of this decision, the member may be given cautionary counsel or referred to his bishop for an interview that might lead to informal discipline.

2. Formal probation (see page 109).
3. Disfellowshipment (see page 109).
4. Excommunication (see pages 109–10).

If discipline is imposed, the presiding officer interviews the person regularly. The officer counsels him in love, helps him repent, and encourages him to live so he may again enjoy the full blessings of Church membership.

Leaders Who Are to Participate

Stake Disciplinary Councils

All three members of the stake presidency and all twelve members of the high council participate in a stake disciplinary council. If a counselor in the stake presidency is unable to participate, the stake president calls a member of the high council to take the counselor's place. If a high councilor is unable to participate, the stake president calls a high priest in the stake to take the high councilor's place. If the stake president is unable to participate, the First Presidency may authorize one of his counselors to preside in his place. If filling one vacancy creates another, the presiding authority fills it as prescribed in this paragraph.

Ward Disciplinary Councils

All three members of the bishopric participate in a ward disciplinary council. If the bishop is unable to participate, he refers the case to the stake president, who convenes a stake disciplinary council. The bishop may not assign a counselor to convene or preside over a disciplinary council. If a counselor in the bishopric is unable to participate, the bishop may ask a high priest in the ward to take the counselor's place. If a high priest is unavailable, the bishop refers the case to the stake president, who convenes a stake disciplinary council. In these circumstances, as with other stake disciplinary councils, the participation of the stake presidency and high council is required as outlined above.

The bishop always consults with the stake president and obtains his approval before convening a disciplinary council.

Branch Disciplinary Councils in a Stake

A branch president in a stake may convene a disciplinary council when authorized by the stake president. All three members of the branch presidency participate in the disciplinary council.

Mission Disciplinary Councils

When a mission president holds a disciplinary council for members or full-time missionaries under his jurisdiction, he appoints two Melchizedek Priesthood holders to assist him. A disciplinary council in a mission follows the procedures and exercises the authority specified for a disciplinary council in a stake, except that a high council does not participate.

If time or distance prevents a mission president from personally holding a disciplinary council for a member under his jurisdiction, he may authorize three Melchizedek Priesthood holders to convene a mission disciplinary council. Normally the presiding officer is the member's district president or branch president (see "District and Branch Disciplinary Councils in a Mission" below).

A mission president must preside over disciplinary councils for full-time missionaries in his mission. Before doing so, he must receive authorization from a General Authority in the Missionary Department (see the *Mission President's Handbook*).

District and Branch Disciplinary Councils in a Mission

A district president or branch president in a mission may convene a disciplinary council when authorized by the mission president. District councils do not participate in disciplinary councils.

General Instructions about Participation

If a transgressor objects to the participation of a counselor in the bishopric or stake presidency, the presiding officer evaluates the objection. If the presiding officer concludes that the objection is reasonable in fact or appearance, the counselor should not participate. If the transgressor objects to the bishop, the disciplinary matter must be referred to the stake president. If the transgressor objects to the stake president, or if the stake president feels that he cannot be impartial in the matter, he consults the Office of the First Presidency.

If a member of a bishopric, stake presidency, or high council or a clerk has a legal duty because of his occupation (such as a law enforcement officer) to report to government authorities facts that are likely to be disclosed in a disciplinary council, he should not participate.

Notice and Scheduling

Presiding officers should not schedule a disciplinary council until (1) they have had adequate time to determine the relevant facts and (2) they and the transgressor and the aggrieved parties have had adequate time to give unhurried consideration to the consequences of the transgression.

Notice of a Disciplinary Council to Consider Imposing Church Discipline

The presiding officer gives a member written notice of a disciplinary council that will be held in his behalf. This notice should be addressed to the member by his full name and signed by the presiding officer. It should state:

1. That "the [stake presidency or bishopric] is considering formal disciplinary action in your behalf, including the possibility of disfellowshipment or excommunication, because you are reported to have [set forth the charge in general terms, such as 'been in apostasy' or 'participated in conduct unbecoming a member of the Church,' but do not give any details or evidence]."
2. That "you are invited to attend this disciplinary council to give your response and, if you wish, to provide witnesses and other evidence in your behalf."
3. That "the disciplinary council will be held on [date and time] at [place]."

Two Melchizedek Priesthood holders deliver the notice to the member personally and privately with courtesy and dignity. The members who deliver the notice must give the clerk of the disciplinary council a signed statement certifying that the member was notified and describing how he was notified.

If the notice cannot be delivered in person, it may be sent by registered or certified mail, with a return receipt requested.

A member who is incarcerated when the council is to be held is notified as specified in the preceding paragraphs, with one exception: since he will not be able to attend, he should not be invited. However, the letter should invite him to send evidence in his behalf, including a written response about the crime with which he has been charged and, if applicable, convicted. The letter may also invite him to tell how he feels about continued fellowship or membership in the Church.

Notice of a Disciplinary Council to Consider Ending Church Discipline

See page 120.

Procedures of the Council

Councils to Consider Imposing Church Discipline

The stake president, bishop, mission president, district president, or branch president conducts the disciplinary council. He also rules on the procedures that are followed and the evidence that is presented.

A clerk records the proceedings of the council as a basis for completing the Report of Church Disciplinary Action form, but he does not participate in the discussion or decision.

The presiding officer helps the member prepare for the disciplinary council by explaining its purpose and procedures. If the member has confessed and given consent, the presiding officer explains that the confession will be used in the council. He also explains the consequences of the decisions the council may reach.

Immediately before the council begins, the presiding officer tells his counselors (and the high council if it is a stake disciplinary council) whom it is for and what the reported misconduct is. If necessary, he explains the procedures of the council to these leaders. The person is then invited into the meeting and introduced.

The council is opened with prayer. Then the presiding officer or someone designated by him states the reported misconduct and asks the member to respond by admitting or denying it.

If the member denies the reported misconduct, the presiding officer or someone designated by him presents the evidence of the misconduct. This evidence includes the written or oral statements of witnesses, reliable documents, and the substance of the member's confession (if he has confessed and given consent). The member must be given an opportunity to question the witnesses against him. (If witnesses are unable to attend, see page 117.)

The member then presents his response. He may bring in witnesses one at a time, submit other relevant evidence, comment on the evidence, and make any other statements he wants to make.

Witnesses should be Church members unless the presiding officer has determined in advance that a nonmember witness will respect the purposes and procedures of a Church disciplinary council. Witnesses wait in a separate room until they give their evidence. The presiding officer asks them not to talk with each other about the matter either before or after they testify.

The presiding officer and his counselors may ask questions of the member or witnesses in an orderly, polite manner, avoiding argument. Questions are to be brief and limited to the essential facts of the case.

When all relevant matters have been presented, the presiding officer excuses the member and, with his counselors, prayerfully deliberates over what action to take. The presiding officer is the judge, and he makes the decision through inspiration. If his counselors have a different opinion, he listens and seeks to resolve the differences so the decision can be unanimous.

If there is not enough evidence to justify formal Church discipline but the presiding officer feels that the matter should not be concluded at that time by a decision of no action, he may adjourn the council temporarily to seek additional evidence.

After reaching a decision, the presiding officer may invite the person back into the council meeting to inform him of it. If the decision is formal probation, disfellowshipment, or excommunication, the presiding officer explains the terms and conditions imposed by the decision, tells the person in a spirit of love how to overcome those restrictions, and offers other appropriate instruction and counsel.

If the person holds a valid temple recommend and the right to enter the temple has been withdrawn, he gives the recommend to the presiding officer at this time, unless he has already done so.

The presiding officer explains the person's right to appeal (see page 115) and closes the meeting with prayer.

If the person does not attend the council, the presiding officer informs him of the decision and gives instruction and counsel by meeting with him or by other means if necessary.

Video or audio recordings of disciplinary councils should not be made.

Councils to Consider Ending Church Discipline

See pages 119–21.

High Council Participation

Stake disciplinary councils always include the high council. The basic principles governing the participation of the high council, including the casting of lots to determine the order of speaking, are stated in Doctrine and Covenants 102:12–23.

The following paragraphs provide additional instructions on questions that have arisen as stake presidencies and high councils have applied these principles. Except as stated in these paragraphs, up to the time of deliberation the procedures for a stake disciplinary council are the same as those prescribed for other disciplinary councils.

It should be remembered that a Church disciplinary council is not organized as a criminal trial and does not follow the procedures of such a trial. The high council is not a jury.

During the presentation of evidence, any member of the high council may ask questions in an orderly, polite manner, avoiding argument with the member or witnesses. Questions are to be brief and limited to the essential facts of the case.

After all the evidence has been presented, the appointed high councilors present their views of the matter. They are not prosecutors or defenders. They are councilors, responsible to see that the evidence is examined in its true light before the council. Each is to speak "according to equity and justice" (D&C 102:16). One-half of those appointed to speak are responsible "to stand up in behalf of the accused, and prevent insult and injustice" (D&C 102:17).

The accused member and the accuser (if any) are then given another opportunity to speak, after which they are excused from the council room.

After hearing any additional comments from the high council, the stake presidency withdraws from the council room to confer in private. After consultation and prayer, the stake president makes the decision and invites his counselors to sustain it.

The stake presidency then returns and announces the decision to the high council. The stake president asks the high councilors as a group to sustain his decision. The high council cannot veto the decision; it is binding even if it is not sustained unanimously. However, if one or more high councilors object to the decision, the stake president should make every effort to resolve the concerns and achieve unanimity. He may recall witnesses for further questioning. If necessary, the disciplinary council may again review the evidence, but not in the presence of the member.

Written Notice of the Decision

After a Council Has Imposed Church Discipline

The presiding officer ensures that a person who is placed on formal probation, disfellowshipped, or excommunicated by a disciplinary council receives prompt written notice of the decision and its effects, even if he has been advised orally. This notice should consist of a general statement that the person has been placed on formal probation, disfellowshipped, or excommunicated for conduct contrary to the laws and order of the Church. It also could include counsel to help the person come back into full fellowship in the Church. The presiding officer does not give the person a copy of the Report of Church Disciplinary Action.

After a Council Has Ended Church Discipline

See page 121.

Announcement of the Decision

When announcing Church discipline, leaders must consider the feelings of the transgressor's innocent family members and the needs of innocent potential victims.

A decision to place a member on informal probation is not announced.

A decision to place a member on formal probation may be announced to those who need to know as determined by the presiding officer.

A decision of disfellowshipment or excommunication is announced only to those who need to know. The principles and procedures in the following paragraphs govern such announcements.

No announcement is made if a decision is being appealed, unless the presiding officer of the disciplinary council concludes that an announcement pending appeal is necessary to protect potential victims, to support the healing of victims (although victims' names are not announced), or to safeguard the name of the Church.

The bishop announces the decision in confidence in ward priesthood executive committee meeting to guide priesthood officers who might otherwise consider the disciplined person for Church service, offering prayers, or giving talks or lessons.

The bishop advises the ward Relief Society president in confidence when a member of the Relief Society has been disciplined or was a victim.

If a case concerns (1) the preaching of false doctrine, (2) a transgressor whose predatory tendencies seriously threaten other persons, or (3) other flagrant transgressions (such as plural marriage, cultist teachings to attract a following, or ridicule of Church leaders), then, with the approval of the stake president, the bishop announces the decision in meetings of the elders quorum, high priests group, and Relief Society in his ward. In such cases the stake president may also need to authorize a broader announcement, such as in a stake priesthood meeting or to the Melchizedek Priesthood brethren and Relief Society sisters of other wards in the stake. In some cases the presiding officer may find it beneficial to notify some or all of the victims and, when necessary, their families that the transgressor has been the subject of a disciplinary council.

When an announcement of Church discipline is necessary, it is limited to a general statement that the person has been disfellowshipped or excommunicated for conduct contrary to the laws and order of the Church. The officer who makes the announcement asks those who hear it not to discuss it with anyone. Announcements of disfellowshipment or excommunication do not require a sustaining vote.

To dispel rumors, a bishop or stake president may need to announce that a disciplinary council considered charges against a member but that no action was taken.

Appeals

A person who has been excommunicated, disfellowshipped, or placed on formal probation by a disciplinary council may appeal the decision. An appeal of the action of a ward disciplinary council is to the stake presidency (and high council). An appeal of the action of a stake disciplinary council is to the First Presidency. An appeal of the action of a branch or district disciplinary council is to the mission president. An appeal of the action of a disciplinary council presided over by a mission president is to the First Presidency.

If a person who has been disciplined wants to appeal the decision, he should specify in writing the alleged errors or unfairness in the procedure or decision. The person should present the appeal within 30 days to the presiding officer of the disciplinary council that made the decision. If a bishop or branch president presided over the council, he forwards the appeal with the Report of Church Disciplinary Action and other relevant documents to the stake or mission president. If the stake or mission president presided over the council, he forwards the materials to the First Presidency.

The decision on the appeal may be to (1) let the initial decision stand, (2) modify the initial decision, or (3) direct the disciplinary council to rehear the matter. In addition, the First Presidency may refer an appeal to another priesthood officer or body for review (with or without receiving additional evidence) and resubmittal to the First Presidency with a recommendation.

Reports on Disciplinary Councils

The presiding officer asks a clerk to summarize the proceedings of the disciplinary council on a Report of Church Disciplinary Action form. The form provides instructions on how to complete it, whether to retain or submit it, and how to submit it.

Membership Records after Discipline Has Been Imposed

Members Placed on Formal Probation

Formal probation is not noted on a membership record.

Disfellowshipped Members

Disfellowshipment is noted on a person's membership record. The administration office makes this note and provides an updated record after receiving the Report of Church Disciplinary Action.

If a disfellowshipped member moves, the bishop transfers the membership record to the new ward. The record will notify the new bishop that the person has been disfellowshipped. The bishop may also contact the bishop of the new ward to communicate relevant information about the disciplinary action.

Excommunicated Members

When a person is excommunicated, his name is removed from the membership records of the Church. The administration office takes this action after receiving the Report of Church Disciplinary Action.

Although a person who is excommunicated no longer has a membership record, the presiding officer of the disciplinary council asks for his consent to retain his name and address so Church leaders can continue to assist him. The presiding officer does this with genuine love and concern at a time when the excommunicated person is most likely to consent. This may be immediately after the person is told of the excommunication decision or at a later time. If the person consents, this is noted on the Report of Church Disciplinary Action.

If an excommunicated person moves after consenting to have the Church maintain contact with him, the bishop contacts the bishop of the new ward, gives him the person's name and address, and communicates relevant information about the disciplinary action.

If an excommunicated person moves after not giving consent to have the Church maintain contact with him, the bishop contacts the bishop of the new ward, identifies the person involved, and indicates that a disciplinary council has been held and that the person has requested that no further information be shared and no contact be made. The request of the excommunicated person should be respected until there is a change of mind.

Records with Annotations

See page 147.

Procedures in Exceptional Circumstances

Conduct Examined in Criminal or Civil Courts

Normally a disciplinary council is not held to consider conduct being examined by a criminal trial court until the court has reached a final judgment. In some cases it may also be appropriate to delay disciplinary proceedings until the period of appeal has expired or the appeal has been rejected.

Criminal charges may or may not necessitate Church discipline. Acts that constitute serious crimes under local law normally would be considered serious transgressions. However, minor offenses under local law, such as traffic violations or unintentional failure to comply with technical government regulations, normally would not. Criminal charges that have serious moral overtones may warrant Church discipline even if a criminal court dismisses these charges for technical reasons. Acts such as fornication, adultery, or abortion are serious transgressions though they may not be crimes under local law.

When a member is convicted of a crime or found guilty in a civil action for fraud or other dishonest or immoral conduct, the judgment of the criminal or civil court is a sufficient basis for holding a Church disciplinary council. A finding of guilt in a court may be considered as evidence of guilt for purposes of Church discipline. Reliable evidence submitted to a court may also be considered in a Church disciplinary council.

To avoid implicating the Church in legal matters to which it is not a party, leaders should avoid testifying in civil or criminal cases reviewing the conduct of members over whom they preside. For specific guidelines, see "Legal Matters" on page 178.

Church leaders should not try to persuade alleged victims or other witnesses either to testify or not to testify in criminal or civil court proceedings.

Notice of Criminal Court Conviction

If a member has been convicted of a crime involving conduct that might threaten the well-being of other persons or of the Church, the presiding officer of the Church disciplinary council should promptly send to the Office of the First Presidency a written statement about the nature of the offense and the sentence imposed by the criminal court, even if a disciplinary council does not impose formal discipline.

Reporting Embezzlement of Church Funds

If a person is disciplined for embezzling Church funds, the presiding officer should report it as outlined on pages 161–62.

Party or Witness Unable to Attend

If a party or essential witness is unable to attend a disciplinary council, the presiding officer invites him to submit a written statement. Such a statement may be considered as evidence. When necessary, the party or witness may be questioned further, in writing or orally.

Preserving Evidence

If a witness will not likely be available for a possible future disciplinary council, the presiding officer invites him to write his testimony for use when needed.

Evidence When Adultery Is Charged

If a person who is accused of adultery denies the charge and the matter is being considered in a disciplinary council, revelation requires that "every word shall be established against him or her by two witnesses of the church" (D&C 42:80). "Two witnesses" means two separate sources of evidence. This could include the personal evidence of a participant and some other source of evidence of the member's guilt.

Questions about Procedure

If a bishop is unsure of the procedures to follow in administering Church discipline, he consults his stake president. If a branch president is unsure of procedures, he consults his stake or mission president. A stake or mission president should refer unresolved procedural questions to the Office of the First Presidency.

Questions about Decisions

Local presiding officers should not expect General Authorities to tell them how to decide difficult matters. Decisions on Church discipline are within the discretion and authority of local presiding officers as they prayerfully seek guidance from the Lord.

First Presidency Authority

The First Presidency has ultimate authority over all Church discipline. Decisions of the First Presidency take precedence despite any rules or procedures to the contrary.

Considerations in Church Discipline

The following paragraphs list some of the factors that leaders may need to consider in reaching decisions on formal and informal Church discipline. These factors are listed in order from those that suggest stern discipline to those that suggest more lenient discipline. None of these factors dictates any particular decision. They are only aids to a decision that must be pursued prayerfully and guided by the Spirit of the Lord.

Violation of Covenants

If a transgressor has been endowed, he has made covenants to live a higher standard of behavior than applies to those who have not been endowed. Violating these covenants magnifies the seriousness of the transgression. Therefore, endowed persons who commit adultery or fornication (including homosexual relations) are subject to stern Church discipline.

Adultery is a more serious sexual transgression than fornication because adultery involves a violation of marriage covenants. See also "Removing a Restriction against Temple Sealing" on page 85.

Position of Trust or Authority

If a transgressor occupied a position of trust or authority (such as parent, bishop, or teacher) that was violated by the transgression, the seriousness of the transgression is magnified. For example, incest is a most serious form of sexual transgression for a parent because it violates the sacred trust of parental authority. Embezzlement is a most serious form of theft because the transgressor has been trusted with funds; it is a particularly serious offense when it involves Church funds. See also "Serious Transgression While Holding a Prominent Church Position" on page 110.

Repetition

If a transgression that was previously confessed and seemingly forsaken is repeated, the repetition may be viewed as part of a pattern of conduct, even though the earlier transgression had been resolved with Church authorities. As the Lord warned those

He had forgiven, "Go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return" (D&C 82:7).

Magnitude

The seriousness of a transgression is measured in part by the number of sinful acts and the number of persons injured. The number of persons who are aware of the transgression also affects its seriousness.

Age, Maturity, and Experience

Presiding officers should consider a transgressor's age, maturity, and experience when administering Church discipline. The Lord revealed, "For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation" (D&C 82:3).

Leniency is often appropriate for those who are immature in the gospel. Leniency may also be appropriate for young members who are involved in a moral transgression if they forsake the sin and manifest sincere repentance. However, young members who persist in immoral conduct may require formal disciplinary action.

Interests of the Innocent

When administering and announcing discipline, presiding officers should consider the interests of innocent victims and the transgressor's innocent family members.

Time between Transgression and Confession

If a transgression occurred many years before it was confessed, the presiding officer carefully considers the intervening circumstances. If the sin was not repeated and the member has lived righteously in the interim, his conduct during the intervening time can show that he has forsaken the sin. In this instance, confession may complete rather than start the process of repentance.

Voluntary Confession

Voluntary and complete confession demonstrates a repentant attitude, which may favor leniency. An admission of guilt after a person has been accused of or interviewed about a transgression is less indicative of repentance. A person who admits guilt when interviewed by a bishop shows greater repentance than one who tries to deceive and admits guilt only when confronted with evidence.

Evidence of Repentance

Normally, evidence of repentance is the most important single factor in determining how to accomplish the first purpose of Church discipline: saving the soul of the transgressor. Genuine repentance is demonstrated more reliably by righteous actions over a period of time than by intense sorrow during a single interview. Judgments about the adequacy of repentance require spiritual discernment. Factors to consider include the nature of the confession, depth of sorrow for the sin, success in forsaking the sin, strength of faith in Jesus Christ, faithfulness in obeying other commandments, truthful communications to Church officers, restitution to injured persons, obedience to legal requirements, and willingness to follow the direction of Church authorities.

Fellowshipping

The bishop's role as a common judge does not end when a member has been disciplined. It continues until the person returns to full fellowship and, when necessary, receives a restoration of blessings. Disciplinary action should be the first step on the way back to the full blessings of Church membership. Church leaders and members should be anxious to help a person who has been disciplined to repent so he can enjoy these blessings. The bishop oversees these efforts.

The time just after a person has been disciplined is difficult and critical for the person and his family. During this time, priesthood leaders and other Church members should be patient and sensitive to the needs of those involved and should give special encouragement and assistance. The bishop should frequently interview the person and, if necessary, his spouse.

The bishop sees that mature, caring home teachers and visiting teachers are assigned to a person who has been disfellowshipped or excommunicated and to his immediate family members. In some cases, couples may be assigned. Home teachers and visiting teachers should make regular contacts and see that the person, his spouse, and other family members receive the counsel and fellowship they need during this critical period of anguish, repentance, and healing.

If a person who has been disciplined moves from the ward before he has returned to full fellowship and received a restoration of blessings, the bishop informs the person's new bishop of the discipline and what remains to bring the member back to full fellowship and blessings. The bishop makes this same contact for excommunicated persons who have consented to be assisted by Church leaders (see page 116 for guidelines in such situations).

Ending Formal Probation, Disfellowshipment, or Excommunication

Determine Jurisdiction and Participation

To consider ending formal probation, disfellowshipment, or excommunication, a presiding officer where the person currently lives must convene a disciplinary council. The council should have the same (or higher) level of ecclesiastical authority as the council that took the initial disciplinary action. For example:

1. If a bishop presided over the disciplinary council that administered the discipline, the person's current bishop normally presides over another council to consider changing the person's status.
2. If a stake or mission president presided over the disciplinary council, a stake or mission president presides over another council to consider changing the person's status. Any exceptions to this policy require the approval of the First Presidency.
3. If a branch president in a mission presided over the disciplinary council and the disciplined person later lives in a stake, the person's current bishop normally presides over another council to consider changing the person's status (see paragraph 5 below for an exception).
4. If a district president in a mission presided over the disciplinary council and the disciplined person later lives in a stake, the stake president presides over another council to consider changing the person's status. Any exceptions to this policy require the approval of the First Presidency (see also paragraph 5 below).
5. If a district or branch president in a mission presided over a disciplinary council that excommunicated a Melchizedek Priesthood holder (with authorization from the mission president), and the excommunicated person later lives in a stake, the stake president presides over another council to consider readmitting the person into the Church. Any exceptions to this policy require the approval of the First Presidency.

A bishop needs the approval of the stake president to convene a disciplinary council to consider changing a person's status. In a mission, a branch or district president needs the approval of the mission president to convene such a disciplinary council.

Review the Proceedings of the Initial Council

The current presiding officer reviews the proceedings of the initial disciplinary council. These proceedings are summarized on the Report of Church Disciplinary Action form.

For disfellowshipped or excommunicated persons, the presiding officer requests a copy of the original report from the Office of the First Presidency.

For members on formal probation, the presiding officer obtains a copy of the report from the presiding officer of the unit where the initial disciplinary action was taken.

Interview the Person

The presiding officer interviews the person thoroughly to determine the strength of his faith in Jesus Christ, the extent of his repentance, and whether the conditions specified in the initial disciplinary action have been met.

Determine Status of Civil or Criminal Court Action (If Necessary)

If a person who has had Church discipline has been convicted of a crime or found guilty in a civil action of fraud or other dishonest or immoral conduct, a disciplinary council should not be held to consider changing his Church status until he has fulfilled all terms and conditions of any sentence imposed by legal authorities. These conditions may include imprisonment, probation, parole, and fines or restitution. Exceptions require the approval of the First Presidency.

Contact the Presiding Officer Where Action Was Taken

If the presiding officer has questions or concerns as he reviews the report of the initial disciplinary council, he may consult with the current presiding officer of the unit where the council was held to see if he knows the circumstances and can provide clarification.

When there is an aggrieved victim (such as for incest, child abuse, or spouse abuse), the presiding officer of the disciplined person must contact the current presiding officer of the unit where the initial disciplinary action was taken. If that officer already knows about the situation, the disciplined person's presiding officer should seek his opinion on the advisability of a proposed change of status for the disciplined person. This discussion must take place before a disciplinary council is held to consider reinstating the disciplined person to full fellowship or readmitting him into the Church.

Contact the Priesthood Leaders of Aggrieved Victims

The presiding officer of the upcoming disciplinary council should contact the current bishop or stake president of any aggrieved victim. If the victim's current bishop or stake president already knows about the situation, the two leaders determine whether it would be helpful and appropriate for the victim to be given an opportunity to provide a written or oral statement about how the disciplined person's misconduct has affected the victim and his or her family. A victim may also comment on evidence of the person's repentance since the disciplinary action was taken.

Any interview with an aggrieved victim for this purpose should be conducted by his or her current bishop or stake president. Inquiries about a victim who is under 18 years of age should be made through the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Great care must be taken to avoid causing further trauma, especially with a victim of sexual or physical abuse. In the United States, Canada, and selected other countries, the Church has established a help line for cases that involve abuse. Priesthood leaders should call the help line for guidance in such cases (see "Abuse and Cruelty" on page 186).

Give Notice of the Disciplinary Council

The presiding officer notifies the person of the date, time, and place of the disciplinary council where his change of Church status will be considered so he can attend or submit a written statement if he desires.

Convene and Conduct the Disciplinary Council

The presiding officer convenes and conducts the disciplinary council. The person is invited into the room, the council is opened with prayer, and the presiding officer or someone designated by him states the purpose of the council. The presiding officer then asks the member questions about what he has done to repent and about his commitment to the Church and the strength of his testimony.

In a stake disciplinary council that is convened to consider ending Church discipline, the role of the high council is much the same as outlined on page 114, but it is not necessary for high councilors to draw lots or to speak before the council.

When all relevant matters have been presented, the presiding officer excuses the member and, with his counselors, prayerfully deliberates over what action to take. See pages 113–14 for instructions about these deliberations and about informing the member of the council's decision.

A disciplinary council may either end or continue Church discipline, but it cannot place a disfellowshipped member on formal probation.

If First Presidency approval is not necessary to end the discipline prescribed in the case, the presiding officer may end it himself. If First Presidency approval is necessary (as outlined below), the conclusion of the council can be only a recommendation to the First Presidency and not a final decision.

Complete and Submit a Report

See page 116.

Apply for First Presidency Approval (If Necessary)

If the person was disfellowshipped or excommunicated for any of the following reasons, or if he committed any of these transgressions after being disfellowshipped or excommunicated, the approval of the First Presidency is required before he may be reinstated to full fellowship or readmitted by baptism and confirmation:

1. Murder (as defined on page 110).
2. Incest (as defined on page 110).
3. Sexual offense against a child or serious physical abuse of a child by an adult or by a youth who is several years older than the child.
4. Apostasy (as defined on page 110).
5. Committing a serious transgression while holding a prominent Church position (as defined on page 110).
6. An elective transsexual operation.
7. Embezzlement of Church funds or property.

In these circumstances, the disciplinary council is conducted as stated previously. No preauthorization from the First Presidency is required. If the disciplinary council recommends a change in status, the presiding officer may notify the person of this recommendation. He should explain that the person's status cannot be changed until the First Presidency gives written approval of the recommendation.

To submit a recommendation to the First Presidency, the presiding officer completes each step on the Application to the First Presidency form. In the

United States and Canada, this form is available from the Office of the First Presidency. In other areas it is available from the Area Presidency.

The stake or mission president sends (1) the completed application form, (2) the Report of Church Disciplinary Action form, and (3) any necessary attachments (such as letters that are required on the application form) to the Office of the First Presidency or to the Area Presidency if the unit is outside the United States and Canada. The Office of the First Presidency will notify the stake or mission president of the decision.

Give Written Notice of the Decision

The presiding officer ensures that after the disciplinary council, the person receives prompt written notice of the decision and its effects, even if he has been advised orally.

Readmitting Excommunicated Persons by Baptism and Confirmation

When all approvals have been received, a person who was excommunicated may be readmitted into the Church. After baptism, the person is confirmed a member of the Church as in any other confirmation. The bishop prepares a Baptism and Confirmation Record, noting on the form that the ordinances are for readmission.

Church Activity after Readmission

Members Who Were Not Previously Endowed. From the time of their baptism and confirmation, these members may participate in Church activity just as a new convert would.

Members Who Were Previously Endowed. From the time of their baptism and confirmation until their blessings are restored as outlined on page 122, these members may participate in any Church activity that is permissible for an unendowed member who does not hold the priesthood. However, they may not wear temple garments, receive a temple recommend, or participate in vicarious baptisms for the dead until their blessings are restored.

Ordination after Readmission

Brethren Who Previously Held the Priesthood but Were Not Endowed. Immediately after baptism and confirmation, these brethren have the priesthood conferred upon them and are ordained to the priesthood office they held at the time of excommunication (see "Instructions for Performing an Ordination," page 41). In this circumstance, a sustaining vote of members is not required. The bishop records the ordination information in the spaces provided on the Baptism and Confirmation Record so it can be properly recorded at Church headquarters. See also "Membership Records after Discipline Has Ended" below.

Brethren Who Previously Held the Priesthood and Were Endowed. After baptism and confirmation, these brethren are not ordained to any priesthood office and may not perform ordinances until their priesthood and temple blessings are restored. See "Restoration of Blessings" on page 122.

Temple Recommends after Readmission

See page 78.

Membership Records after Discipline Has Ended

After Formal Probation Has Ended

No change is made to the membership record because formal probation is not recorded on it.

After Disfellowshipment Has Ended

After a person has been reinstated to full fellowship, the administration office removes the notice of disfellowshipment and provides an updated membership record.

After Excommunication Has Ended

After a person is readmitted by baptism and confirmation, the stake president or bishop submits a copy of the baptism and confirmation record, usually with the Report of Church Disciplinary Action form.

If the member was not endowed before excommunication, the administration office provides the ward a membership record that shows the member's original baptism and other ordinance dates, with no reference to excommunication.

If the member was endowed before excommunication, the administration office provides the ward a membership record that shows the new baptism date and includes the message "Restoration of Blessings Required." After the member's blessings are restored, the administration office provides another updated membership record that shows the member's original baptism and other ordinance dates, including endowment (and current priesthood, if applicable), with no reference to excommunication.

Annotations

Although membership records do not mention formal probation and do not mention disfellowshipment or excommunication after discipline has ended, they may include annotations until the First Presidency authorizes their removal (see page 147).

Restoration of Blessings

Endowed persons who were excommunicated and later readmitted by baptism and confirmation can receive their priesthood and temple blessings only through the ordinance of restoration of blessings. Such persons are not ordained to priesthood offices or endowed again, since all priesthood and temple blessings held at the time of excommunication are restored through the ordinance. Brethren are restored to their former priesthood office, except the office of seventy, bishop, or patriarch.

Only the First Presidency can approve the performance of the ordinance of restoration of blessings. The First Presidency will not consider an application for this ordinance sooner than one year after the person is readmitted by baptism and confirmation.

To submit a recommendation to the First Presidency, the presiding officer completes each step on the Application to the First Presidency form. In the United States and Canada, this form is available from the Office of the First Presidency. In other areas it is available from the Area Presidency.

The stake or mission president sends the completed application form and any necessary attachments (such as letters that are required on the form) to the Office of the First Presidency or, if the unit is outside the United States and Canada, to the Area Presidency. The Office of the First Presidency will notify the stake or mission president of the decision.

Performance of the Ordinance

If the First Presidency authorizes the restoration of blessings, they assign a General Authority or stake president to interview the applicant. If the applicant is found worthy, the assigned General Authority or stake president performs the ordinance to restore the person's blessings.

In designated areas, when an Area President receives authorization from the First Presidency to conduct an interview for restoration of blessings, he may delegate the authority to an Area Seventy who is serving as one of his counselors. When assigned, this Area Seventy may then conduct the interview and perform the ordinance if the applicant is worthy.

For the Dead

See page 88.

Retention of Records

The presiding officer should destroy copies of paper and electronic records relating to a disciplinary action after the ward receives an updated membership record or other notification of action on the record. When such notification is received, the clerk immediately informs the bishop and stake president. If a disciplinary council has imposed formal probation, the presiding officer retains the records of the council until the matter is resolved.

The stake or mission president should destroy copies of records relating to the submission of an Application to the First Presidency form after he receives notification that Church headquarters has received the application.

Documents Required at Church Headquarters for Confidential Actions or Applications

Required Documents	Action or Application: Administrative action (name removal)	Disfellowshipment	Excommunication	Ending disfellowshipment (not requiring First Presidency approval)	Readmission (not requiring First Presidency approval)	Ending disfellowshipment (requiring First Presidency approval)	Readmission (requiring First Presidency approval)	Restoration of blessings	Cancellation of sealing	Sealing clearance
Report of Administrative Action form	✓									
Letter from the person requesting name removal	✓									
Copy of the letter from the bishop informing the person of name removal	✓									
Copy (or copies) of the membership record	✓	✓	✓							
Report of Church Disciplinary Action form		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Copy of the letter notifying the person of the disciplinary council		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Certification of delivery of the letter notifying the person of the disciplinary council		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Copy of the letter to the person stating the decision of the council		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Baptism and Confirmation Record form					✓					
Application to the First Presidency form						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Letter from the applicant						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Letter from the applicant's bishop						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Letter from the applicant's stake president						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Letter from the applicant's present spouse						✓	✓	✓		
Letter from applicant's former spouse (if applicant was married to a former spouse at time of disfellowshipment or excommunication)						✓	✓	✓		
Letters from victims of child abuse (if they are now 18 years of age or older)						✓	✓	✓		
Letter(s) from the applicant's former sealed spouse(s)									✓	✓
Letter from the bishop of the person to whom the applicant plans to be sealed									✓	✓

11. Single Members and Students

Single Members in the Church

The family is central to our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. Temple marriage—the sealing of husband and wife for time and eternity by the authority of the priesthood—is a sacred privilege and obligation that every able member of the Church should have as a goal. The Church strongly counsels members, especially men, not to put off or avoid marriage.

Faithful members who do not have the opportunity of marrying in this life will have every opportunity for the blessings, exaltation, and glory that will come to those who enter into and honor the covenant of eternal marriage.

Church members who have never married or are divorced or widowed make up a significant portion of Church membership. Priesthood leaders should be aware of the needs of these members and provide each person with opportunities for growth and service.

Single members in the Church comprise two groups: young single adults (ages 18 through 30) and single adults (ages 31 and older). This section of the handbook is intended to guide Church leaders in ministering to these members. While single members may, at times in their lives, feel a need to participate in wards or special activities for single members, all members of the Church should associate together as "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19).

Conventional Stakes and Wards

Single members are encouraged to participate in the regular activities and programs of their conventional stakes and wards. These units provide a full range of Church experience and offer opportunities to serve, teach, lead, and associate with people of all ages. They also reinforce the important role of the family and the home in the gospel plan.

Stake Leaders' Responsibilities for Single Members

The stake presidency and other stake leaders consult with single members to determine their needs and make plans to help meet them. The stake president assigns a high councilor to help oversee stake activities and programs for single members.

The stake presidency organizes a stake committee for single members, with a member of the stake presidency as chairman. For information about this committee's meetings, see page 316 in *Book 2*.

Where enough single members reside in a stake, one or more stake single member representatives may be called by the stake presidency or another priesthood officer under their direction. These representatives serve on the stake committee for single members.

Ward Leaders' Responsibilities for Single Members

The bishopric, other priesthood leaders, and Relief Society leaders consult with single members to determine their needs and make plans to help meet them. Ward leaders should consider the needs and interests of single members regularly in leadership meetings. Ward leaders should also include single members in meaningful callings, assignments, and activities. In addition, leaders should prayerfully assign home teachers and visiting teachers who will faithfully visit and care for single members.

If needed, the bishop may organize a ward committee for single members, with a member of the bishopric as chairman. For information about this committee's meetings, see page 319 in *Book 2*.

Where enough single members reside in a ward, the bishopric calls one or more ward single member representatives. These representatives serve on the stake and ward committees for single members.

Meetings and Activities

Priesthood and Relief Society Meetings

Quorum and Relief Society leaders should be sensitive to the needs of single members, particularly when lessons include topics such as marriage and children. Occasionally single members may meet in special quorum and Relief Society classes that focus on pertinent topics such as preparation for missionary service, the temple endowment, and temple marriage.

Home Evening Groups

The bishopric may organize one or more home evening groups for single members who do not have children in the home and do not live with their

11. Single Members and Students

parents. If possible, the bishopric appoints a single priesthood holder to lead each group. If a ward has few single members, the stake presidency may authorize bishoprics to organize home evening groups that cross ward boundaries. Resources for home evening lessons include the scriptures, the *Family Home Evening Resource Book, Gospel Principles, True to the Faith,* and other approved Church materials.

Sunday School Classes

Each ward that has enough young single adults may have a separate class for them during Sunday School (see page 244 in *Book 2*).

Institutes of Religion

Young single adults are invited to participate in institute of religion classes and activities. Some institute classes may be taught in the stake by volunteer teachers who are recommended by the stake presidency and appointed and supervised by the local Church Educational System (CES) representative. Classes are held at institutes or other Church facilities. For more information, see pages 132–33.

Gospel Study Classes for Young Single Adults

The stake presidency or bishopric may organize gospel study classes for young single adults. These classes may be held at times other than Monday evening or the regular Sunday meeting schedule. They are not considered institute of religion classes.

Special Stake and Ward Activities

Single members should be offered stake and ward activities such as firesides, dances, choirs, priesthood preparation seminars, temple preparation seminars, temple visits, cultural events, and sports.

In stakes, the stake committee for single members normally plans and conducts these activities, obtaining the stake presidency's approval for each one. In wards, the ward committee for single members normally plans and conducts these activities, obtaining the bishopric's approval for each one.

Only single members, assigned Church officers, and single nonmembers who are willing to abide by Church standards may participate in these activities. A person who is separated from his or her spouse or is seeking a divorce may not participate until the divorce decree has become final according to law.

Activities for single members are to comply with the policies and guidelines on pages 276–80 in *Book 2*.

Multistake Activities

With the approval of a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency, multistake activities may be held to allow single members opportunities to meet together, socialize, and serve without leaving the ecclesiastical care of their bishop. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency appoints a priesthood leader to preside over a multistake committee that plans these activities. The committee may include stake and ward single member representatives.

Funding

Normally, funding for stake and ward activities for single members comes from the local unit budget allowance. This funding should be consistent with the policies outlined on pages 159–61.

Minimal fees may be assessed for optional activities if necessary to cover costs. However, leaders should ensure that all single members have the opportunity to participate in approved activities without incurring unnecessary costs.

Single Member Wards

Creation and Membership

Most single members are best served as members of conventional wards. However, in some exceptional situations, units for single members may be organized. After prayerful consideration, priesthood leaders may recommend creating a young single adult ward or (more exceptional) a single adult ward. Guidelines and procedures for making these recommendations are provided on pages 167–70. Those pages also provide guidelines about who may be members of these wards.

Leadership

Bishops of young single adult wards and single adult wards should be married men of mature judgment who live in the stake. Their counselors should be married high priests; normally they should live in the stake. Other ward officers and teachers are called from among the single members of the ward.

Student Stakes and Wards

Creation and Membership

A stake president may recommend creating student stakes and wards as outlined on pages 167–70.

Those pages also provide guidelines about who may be members of these wards.

Leadership

Stake presidencies, high councilors, and bishops of student units should be married men of mature judgment who are established residents of the community. In student wards, a bishop's counselors should be mature, married students who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. They do not need to be high priests. As an exception, brethren who are not students may be recommended to serve as counselors if necessary.

Other ward officers and teachers are called from among the students in the ward. These callings give them opportunities to develop leadership skills and give service. However, students should not be given Church responsibilities that would unduly interfere with their studies.

Policies for Young Single Adult, Single Adult, and Student Units

Church Organization and Program

Young single adult, single adult, and student units should use the regular program of the Church as much as possible.

Temple Recommends

See pages 75–79.

Priesthood Ordinations

See pages 39–41.

Missionary Recommendations

See pages 96–97.

Leaders' Membership Records

Membership records of the following brethren and their families normally remain in the home ward:

1. Brethren who are called to serve in the bishopric of a young single adult or single adult ward.
2. Brethren who are called to serve in the stake presidency, on the high council, or in the bishopric of a student ward or stake.

The home ward is responsible for the tithing, other offerings, and temple recommends of these leaders and their families.

Tenure of Service

Normally brethren serve no more than three to five years in assignments that keep them away from their home wards. This limitation includes cumulative service in different assignments.

Cooperation

Officers of conventional stakes and wards should cooperate fully when members are requested to serve in units for students and single members. The following guidelines apply:

1. A member who is requested to serve in the stake presidency of a student stake usually should be made available.
2. A member who is requested to serve on the high council of a student stake usually should be made available unless he is presently serving in a stake presidency or as a bishop.
3. A member who is requested to serve as bishop of a young single adult, single adult, or student ward should be made available unless he is presently serving in a stake presidency or as a bishop. A member who is requested to serve as a bishop's counselor should be made available unless he is serving in a stake presidency or bishopric.

Supervision by Stake Leaders

Members of the stake presidency supervise leaders of young single adult, single adult, and student wards the same way they supervise leaders of conventional wards. High councilors and stake auxiliary leaders also work with leaders of these wards in the same way they work with leaders of conventional wards.

Welfare Assistance

Occasionally a bishop may find it necessary to meet the temporary welfare needs of single members and students in his ward. To do so he follows the principles on pages 16–21 in this book and on pages 255–58 in *Book 2*.

Students who face prolonged financial difficulties may need to leave school temporarily to resolve them.

Finances and Budgets

The bishopric encourages members to pay a full tithing and contribute generous fast offerings. Bishoprics should follow current financial policies and procedures as directed by the stake presidency, the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency, and Church headquarters.

Home Teaching and Visiting Teaching

See pages 168–70 and 202–4 in *Book 2*.

Records and Reports

Single members and students should make sure their membership records are moved to the ward where they are members. Leaders and clerks should take special care to keep records current. For additional information, see pages 139–51.

Activities

See pages 276–80 in *Book 2*.

Home Evening Groups

The bishopric may organize home evening groups similar to the way they are organized for single members in conventional wards (see pages 125–26).

School Breaks

If possible, student wards should function during school breaks. A student ward that has few members during school breaks may meet with an adjacent student ward. The wards keep separate records, reports of attendance, and finances.

Dating or Get-Acquainted Businesses for Single Members

See page 177.

12. Church Educational System

Programs of the Church Educational System

The Church Educational System (CES) consists of four programs:

1. Religious education (seminaries and institutes of religion)
2. Institutions of higher education (in the United States only)
3. Elementary and secondary education (in some areas outside the United States)
4. Continuing education (in the United States and Canada only)

In addition, CES assists priesthood and Relief Society leaders in the Church's literacy effort.

General Administration of the Church Educational System

Church Board of Education

The Church Board of Education oversees and provides direction for the operation of seminaries, institutes of religion, elementary and secondary education, and continuing education.

Boards of Trustees

A Board of Trustees is established for each Church university and college: Brigham Young University, Brigham Young University–Hawaii, Brigham Young University–Idaho, and LDS Business College.

The Church Board of Education and each Board of Trustees is composed of the First Presidency, other General Authorities, and general Church officers but functions separately in guiding each CES entity.

Commissioner of the Church Educational System

Under the direction of the Church Board of Education and Boards of Trustees, the Commissioner of the Church Educational System supervises all CES programs.

Responsibilities of Priesthood Leaders

Presidency of the Seventy or Area Presidency

Members of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency ensure that priesthood leaders fulfill their responsibilities in relation to Church education as outlined in this section. When a member of the Presidency of the Seventy oversees an area, he may personally coordinate Church education matters with CES administrators or assign an Area Seventy to do so. In other areas, the Area Presidency coordinates Church education matters with CES administrators.

Where a released-time seminary serves more than one stake, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the assigned Area Seventy may designate a stake to be responsible for the released-time seminary local Church board of education (see page 131).

Where an institute of religion serves more than one stake, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, the assigned Area Seventy, or the Area Presidency may designate a stake to be responsible for the institute of religion advisory council (see page 132).

Stake Presidency

The stake presidency encourages and monitors the participation of eligible stake members in CES programs. High councilors and the stake executive secretary can assist.

The stake presidency regularly includes Church education matters on the agendas of stake leadership meetings. The CES representative may be invited to attend the Church education part of these meetings.

The stake president verifies the worthiness of each CES employee and volunteer in his stake as outlined on page 130.

A member of the stake presidency presides at seminary and institute graduation exercises (see page 133).

The stake president or one of his counselors interviews stake members who seek approval to enroll at Church universities or colleges (see page 133).

Where a seminary or institute serves only one stake, the stake president oversees all aspects of Church education.

Where a released-time seminary serves more than one stake, one of those stakes may be designated by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the assigned Area Seventy to be responsible for the released-time seminary local Church board of education. The president of the assigned stake designates a member of the stake presidency to serve as chairman (see page 131). Each of the other stakes that is served by the released-time seminary may be represented by a member of the stake presidency or a high councilor. Local Church board of education meetings may be held once or twice a year. Attendance of stake presidents is not required.

Where an institute of religion serves more than one stake, one of those stakes may be designated by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, the assigned Area Seventy, or the Area Presidency to be responsible for the institute of religion advisory council (see page 132). The stake president of the assigned stake designates a member of the stake presidency to serve as chairman.

Where there are no separate CES facilities, the stake presidency ensures that facilities are available for seminary and institute classes (see page 133).

High Councilors

The stake president may assign high councilors as seminary and institute of religion advisers. They encourage enrollment, assist with recommendations for CES volunteers, arrange for CES meeting facilities, publicize CES firesides, help plan seminary and institute graduation exercises, and act as liaisons between the stake president and the CES representative. The stake president may also assign a high councilor to attend meetings of the released-time seminary local Church board of education or institute of religion advisory council.

Bishopric

The bishop and his counselors personally encourage (1) all youth of the appropriate age to participate in seminary and (2) all single postsecondary students to participate in institute. Married postsecondary students and their spouses may be invited to participate in institute as their time and circumstances allow. Young single adults of the appropriate age (generally 18–30) may also be invited to participate in institute as their needs and interests may be served.

Members of the bishopric are responsible for the enrollment of those who are eligible for seminary and institute. The CES representative should provide enrollment information and attendance reports to priesthood leaders.

The bishopric regularly includes Church education matters on the agendas of ward leadership meetings.

The bishop recommends members to be appointed as volunteer seminary and institute teachers (see "Volunteers" in the next column).

The bishop or an assigned counselor determines whether a person is worthy to graduate from seminary or institute (see page 133).

The bishop interviews and recommends ward members who seek approval to enroll or continue enrollment at Church universities or colleges (see pages 133–34).

Volunteers

CES volunteers include teachers and stake supervisors. Volunteer teachers are an integral part of CES. Stake supervisors may be appointed where needed to help administer CES programs within the stake.

The bishop consults with the stake presidency to recommend members to be appointed as volunteers. In consultation with priesthood leaders, CES representatives appoint, supervise, provide inservice, and release volunteers.

Each volunteer of the Church Educational System must be worthy to hold a temple recommend. The stake president verifies this before the beginning of CES service and annually thereafter.

Religious Education

Under the direction of the Church Board of Education and the Commissioner of the Church Educational System, CES religious education programs are supervised by a full-time administrator. Under his direction, full-time CES representatives are assigned for each ecclesiastical area throughout the world. Priesthood leaders should direct requests or questions about CES programs to their CES representative.

Objective

The objective of religious education in the Church Educational System is to assist individuals, families, and priesthood leaders in accomplishing the mission of the Church by:

1. Teaching students the gospel of Jesus Christ as found in the standard works and the words of the latter-day prophets.
2. Teaching students by precept and example so they will be encouraged, assisted, and protected as they strive to live the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Providing a spiritual and social climate where students can associate together.
4. Preparing youth for effective Church service.

Enrollment

Enrollment of youth and young adults in seminary and institute programs is the responsibility of priesthood leaders, with assistance from CES representatives.

CES personnel are authorized to request appropriate information about potential seminary and institute students from ward records.

There is no fee for either seminary or institute enrollment.

Seminaries

The seminary program offers weekday religious instruction for youth who attend public, private, or home schools. Seminary also assists parents and priesthood leaders in encouraging youth to serve missions and marry in the temple.

Types of Seminary Programs

Daily Seminary. Daily seminary classes are held outside of school hours. Students in daily seminary meet each day school is in session.

Released-Time Seminary. With the approval of the Church Board of Education, released-time seminary, which holds classes during school hours, can be established in some areas of the United States and Canada.

When justified by the needs of the students and under the discretion of the released-time seminary local Church board of education, a released-time seminary class could be offered before or after school.

Home-Study Seminary. Home-study seminary can be organized where students cannot attend a daily class because of distance or other factors. It is usually organized within the ward. CES-prepared materials are provided for weekday study at home. Students attend one or more classes each week under the direction of a volunteer teacher to discuss their studies.

Home-study students from several wards can meet together occasionally for instruction under the direction of the CES representative. Under the direction of stake Young Men and Young Women leaders, an activity could be held in conjunction with this instruction.

Classes should not be held on Sunday.

Released-Time Seminary Local Church Board of Education

Where a released-time seminary serves more than one stake, a released-time seminary local Church board of education is organized under the direction of the stake assigned by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or an Area Seventy (see pages 129–30). This board consists of the chairman (a member of the stake presidency of the assigned stake), the seminary principal, and a member of the stake presidency or a high councilor from each of the other stakes served by the seminary.

The released-time seminary local Church board of education meetings may be held once or twice a year. Attendance of stake presidents is not required. Members of the council approve and correlate seminary calendar items, make plans for enrolling youth in seminary, report on enrollment and attendance trends, coordinate graduations, and discuss any challenges facing the seminary.

Members of the released-time seminary local Church board of education approve seminary council officers and members, clear them for worthiness, and see that they are properly called and set apart.

Courses of Study

The courses of study for seminary are Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History.

Class Materials

The CES representative provides class materials for seminary teachers and students. These include teacher and student manuals, audiovisual materials, bookmarks, and so forth. Teachers and students are responsible to obtain their own scriptures.

Classroom Materials

If a meetinghouse library is available, volunteer teachers should be aware of its resources and be encouraged to use them. These resources may include chalk and eraser (or whiteboard markers and eraser), paper, pencils, tape, tacks, pictures, and Church-produced audiovisual materials.

Activities

Seminary activities should be limited. Any activities that are held are generally conducted on seminary class premises and during normal seminary class hours. Any request for exceptions should be approved well in advance by the local priesthood leaders and the released-time seminary local Church board of education.

Seminary activities must comply with the policies and guidelines on pages 276–80 in *Book* 2. No money should be collected from students for activities.

Institutes of Religion

Institutes of religion provide weekday religious instruction for single and married postsecondary students. Young single adults of the appropriate age (generally 18–30) are also welcome to attend. In addition to religious instruction, institutes provide students with opportunities to grow spiritually through service, social interaction, and leadership training. Institutes also assist parents and priesthood leaders in encouraging youth to serve missions and marry in the temple.

Institute of religion programs are established under the direction of priesthood leaders and CES when there are sufficient numbers of LDS postsecondary students. With appropriate approval, priesthood leaders and CES representatives may also organize institute classes in local Church units.

Institute classes generally meet twice a week for 50 minutes or once a week for 100 minutes. At the discretion of the institute director, independent study courses can be made available for students who are unable to attend institute classes.

In countries where Perpetual Education Fund loans are approved, institutes assist in the process according to established guidelines. Applicants must enroll in and attend institute to be eligible for PEF loans.

Location and contact information about institute programs worldwide is available on the Internet at www.ldsces.org or through the local CES representative.

Institute of Religion Advisory Council

Where an institute of religion serves more than one stake, an institute of religion advisory council is organized under the direction of the stake assigned by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, the assigned Area Seventy, or the Area Presidency (see page 130). This advisory council consists of the chairman (a member of the stake presidency of the assigned stake), the institute director, and the student council presidency.

The institute of religion advisory council organizes and directs the institute of religion student council. It also approves and correlates the annual student activity calendar (including any travel) and approves the expenditure of funds for student activities. No money should be collected from students for activities.

In the United States and Canada, the Institute Men's Association (IMA) and the Institute Women's Association (IWA) can be organized to meet local needs. The institute advisory council approves all chapters and chapter advisers for these organizations. Chapter presidencies are called, set apart, and released by or under the direction of the chairman of the advisory council. Additional information about IMA and IWA is available from the institute director.

Institute of Religion Student Council

The institute of religion student council may consist of a president, vice president(s), a secretary, and (if needed) a limited number of council members. Members of the council are called, set apart, and released by or under the direction of the chairman of the advisory council.

Members of the student council encourage enrollment and attendance in institute classes. They also plan and implement all institute activities approved by the advisory council. The student council coordinates activities with the stake young single adults.

Latter-day Saint Student Association (LDSSA)

The Latter-day Saint Student Association (LDSSA) can be organized where it will give Latter-day Saint college students formal recognition and an organization to provide service on campus.

Officers for LDSSA are called and set apart in the same way as the institute of religion student council members.

Class Materials and Credit

Institute classes must use approved CES course materials and teachers. The CES representative provides class materials for institute teachers. In some areas, manuals are also made available for institute students. Teachers and students are responsible to obtain their own scriptures.

Credit earned for institute classes may be transferred to other institutes. Under certain circumstances, credit may also be transferred to Church universities and colleges.

Activities

Institute activities are planned by the institute of religion student council and must be approved by the advisory council. Institute activities must comply with the policies and guidelines on pages 276–80 in *Book 2*.

Funding for institute activities comes from CES budgeted funds. The institute advisory council approves the expenditure of funds for student activities and coordinates the activities with the stake young single adults. No money should be collected from students for activities.

Facilities

Wherever possible, CES sites and facilities are to be shared with other Church units or departments. Where there are no CES facilities, the stake presidency ensures that facilities such as meetinghouses or members' homes are provided for seminary and institute classes. The rental of facilities for daily or home-study seminary classes is not authorized.

Audiovisual Materials

When CES classes are held in a meetinghouse, audiovisual curriculum materials are stored in the meetinghouse library. The meetinghouse library also supplies the audiovisual equipment needed for these classes.

Materials for Those with Disabilities

Special religious education materials for students who have reading problems or other disabilities are available to assist seminary and institute students. The CES representative can provide information about ordering these materials.

Graduation

Students must complete certain academic requirements and have a priesthood worthiness clearance in order to graduate from seminary or institute. Worthiness determination is made by the bishop or an assigned counselor (see page 24). CES verifies that the student has met the academic and attendance requirements.

A member of a stake presidency presides at seminary and institute graduation exercises. A member of a stake presidency or a high councilor, assisted by a CES representative, should plan these exercises. For additional information, see *A Guide to Seminary and Institute Graduation Exercises.*

Institutions of Higher Education

The Church sponsors four institutions of higher education: Brigham Young University, Brigham Young University–Hawaii, Brigham Young University–Idaho, and LDS Business College. Under the direction of a Board of Trustees and the Commissioner of the Church Educational System, they are supervised by a full-time university or college president. Information about admissions and academic programs can be obtained from the local CES representative, from the Internet at www.ldsces.edu, or from the schools' admissions offices:

Brigham Young University
Admissions Office
A-153 ASB
Provo, UT 84602
Telephone: 1-801-422-0005

Brigham Young University–Hawaii
Admissions Office
55-220 Kulanui Street
Laie, HI 96762
Telephone: 1-808-293-3738

Brigham Young University–Idaho
Admissions Office
120 Kimball Building
Rexburg, ID 83460-4104
Telephone: 1-208-496-1022

LDS Business College
For a current mailing address, call 1-801-524-8100

Endorsement to Enroll at Church Universities and Colleges

Church universities and colleges are centers of higher education, but more important they are communities of faith and commitment where students develop and nurture firm testimonies of the restored gospel. To help ensure that those who attend Church institutions of higher education are living by Church standards and will continue to do so, prospective and continuing students must receive endorsements from priesthood leaders as outlined in the following paragraphs.

Endorsement to Enroll at a Church University or College

Students who plan to enroll at Brigham Young University, Brigham Young University–Hawaii, Brigham Young University–Idaho, or LDS Business College must receive endorsements from their bishop and a member of their stake presidency to be eligible for admission.

Non-LDS students who wish to apply must receive this endorsement from clergy of their own faith or from an LDS bishop.

Endorsement to Continue Enrollment at a Church University or College

After being admitted to a Church institution of higher education, students must receive an annual endorsement from the bishop of the ward they attend while in school. A non-LDS student must receive an annual endorsement from (1) the local ecclesiastical leader if the student is an active member of the congregation, (2) the bishop of the LDS ward in which the student currently resides, or (3) the nondenominational BYU chaplain. Students who do not have this endorsement may not register for the next academic year.

Instructions for Endorsement Interviews

The bishop or member of the stake presidency conducts a private interview with each student. Instructions for these interviews are on the application provided by the school.

Leaders should not endorse those who are less active, unworthy, or under Church discipline. Leaders should work with these members to help them qualify for an endorsement in the future.

Elementary and Secondary Education (in Some Areas outside the United States)

The Church provides elementary or secondary education at a few long-established locations in Mexico and the Pacific Islands. No new programs are anticipated.

Under the direction of the Church Board of Education and the Commissioner of the Church Educational System, these schools are supervised by full-time CES administrators and provide both secular and religious instruction. Students who attend these schools must receive an ecclesiastical endorsement to enroll and to continue attendance each year.

Continuing Education (in the United States and Canada Only)

Some of the continuing education programs that are available through CES in the United States and Canada are listed below:

1. Campus Education Week
2. Adult Religion Classes
3. Especially for Youth
4. Scripture Seminars
5. Youth and Family Programs

Continuing education programs are not funded by Church budgets and must be financially self-sustaining. Therefore, fees are assessed to participants. Information about these programs can be obtained from the Internet at www.ce.byu.edu or from the local CES representative.

13. Perpetual Education Fund

Introduction

The Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) and the Church's Perpetual Education Fund Department have been established to assist worthy young adults with educational needs. In approved areas of the Church, this initiative provides these members with the support and resources necessary to improve their lives through additional education and improved employment. The PEF embraces eternal principles, including the importance of education, integrity, hard work, and self-reliance. It encourages members to become "one," as all are invited to give of their means to build the fund. In this way, an ever-increasing number of youth may be served. (See D&C 38:24–27; 104:15–18.)

Opportunities for Participants

Through the PEF program, returned missionaries and other young adults—men and women, married and single—are inspired to expand the vision of their possibilities and choose promising careers that are needed in their own communities. They learn to select nearby schools that will help qualify them for their chosen occupations. They also discover how best to use their own finances and other local resources to attend those schools. If additional help is needed, a student may apply for a PEF loan to pay a portion of the educational costs. The student commits to repay the loan so others may be blessed through the fund.

Organization and Coordination

The PEF works through the existing organization of the Church. In areas where the program is approved, an area PEF committee, chaired by a member of the Area Presidency, directs it. Participants are interviewed and encouraged by their local priesthood leaders. In addition, participants receive specific instruction, guidance, and support through their local institute of religion and the Church's Employment Resource Services where available. Details of the training and application process, as well as specific requirements and policies, are available from the Area Presidency.

For information about the stake president's responsibilities for the PEF program, see "Direct the Perpetual Education Fund Program" on page 8.

Questions about the PEF program may be directed to the Perpetual Education Fund office:

Perpetual Education Fund Department
50 East North Temple Street, Room 832
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-1501
Telephone: 1-801-240-0541
E-mail: perpetualeducationfund@ldschurch.org

Contributions to the Fund

See page 156.

Area Perpetual Education Fund Committee Meeting

See page 60.

14. Military Relations

Purpose of the Military Relations Program

Stake presidents and bishops help make the blessings of Church participation available to members who serve in the military. The military relations program consists of (1) support from stakes and wards, (2) Church orientation for members who enter military service, and (3) organization of wards, branches, or Latter-day Saint service member groups as outlined in this section.

Stake Military Relations Leadership

If military installations or members serving in the military are located in a stake, the stake presidency has the responsibilities outlined below. If such installations are located in a mission rather than a stake, the mission president fulfills these responsibilities.

A member of the stake presidency oversees pre-military service Church orientation in the stake. He makes sure it is offered to all members who are entering military service. The stake executive secretary may help coordinate this orientation.

Where needed, the president of a stake where a military installation is located organizes a ward, branch, or service member group for military personnel and their families. Guidelines are provided on page 138. For each of these units, the stake president also calls, sets apart, and oversees a bishopric (when authorized by the First Presidency), branch presidency, or service member group leader and assistants. The stake president may designate a ward to support each service member group as needed.

The stake president should provide each bishop, branch president, or group leader with a Certificate of Appointment and a letter that outlines his responsibilities and authorizes him to preside over the unit and to conduct meetings. The stake president may contact the Church's Military Relations Division for sample letters (see page 138).

The stake president should provide contact information for bishops, branch presidents, and group leaders to the Church's Military Relations Division.

A member of the stake presidency should develop a working relationship with the senior chaplain at each military installation in the stake. The chaplain should be given the names and telephone numbers of stake and ward leaders so he can provide this information to newly arriving members and use it if there is an emergency, such as illness or death of a Church member at the installation.

The stake president conducts an annual interview with each LDS chaplain who lives within his stake boundaries. The purpose of this interview is to determine the chaplain's well-being and worthiness to serve. The stake president also interviews each chaplain's spouse annually.

The stake president may call an active-duty LDS chaplain to serve as a high councilor or in another appropriate calling in the stake in which he is stationed. If a chaplain is not called as a high councilor, the stake president should invite him to attend stake priesthood executive committee meetings regularly to report on the activities of Church units and on activation efforts at the military installation. Stake presidents should not call chaplains to preside over wards, branches, or service member groups if such callings would conflict with the chaplains' military duties. Chaplains should not be called to positions that require proselyting.

Ward Military Relations Leadership

A member of the bishopric interviews ward members before they leave for military service. He ensures that they have an opportunity to attend pre-military service Church orientation (see page 138). He calls an instructor, preferably someone with recent military experience, to provide the orientation. Resource materials for the orientation may be obtained from Church Distribution Services.

When a member enters military service or is transferred to a new location, a member of the bishopric helps him or her identify the Church unit nearest the new duty station. Information on meeting times and locations for LDS Church services on military installations is available from the Church's Military Relations Division (see page 138).

Priesthood leaders in the home ward should correspond regularly with each ward member who is away in military service. They should also encourage families to ensure that family members in the military receive the *Ensign* or *Liahona*. The *Church News* is also available for those who read English.

Each bishop is responsible for Church members who are assigned to a military installation within the boundaries of his ward. He notifies the senior chaplain of the ward's meeting schedule, meeting location, and contact person so the chaplain can give this information to Church members at the installation.

Pre-Military Service Church Orientation

As resources are available, the pre-military service Church orientation may include viewing the *Serving Your Country* and *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* video recordings. As part of this orientation the member should also receive a military scripture set, an LDS identification tag, and the *Serving Your Country* brochure. If a member did not receive the pre-military service Church orientation before arriving at basic training, the bishop, branch president, or service member group leader who is responsible for those in training should provide it as soon as possible after the member arrives on base.

Organizing Wards, Branches, or Service Member Groups

Members in military service should participate in the wards or branches at or near their military installations. When that is not feasible, the president of the stake or mission where the military installation is located organizes a ward, branch, or Latter-day Saint service member group for military personnel and their families at the installation. When organizing a ward or branch, the stake president should follow the instructions in "Creating, Changing, and Naming Church Units" on pages 167–70.

A ward, branch, or service member group should be established in any of the following circumstances:

1. There is not an organized Church unit within a reasonable distance of a military installation to which members are assigned.
2. Attendance at local ward meetings is not feasible because members are participating in training or other military exercises where they are restricted to the installation.
3. The members' military unit is deployed or will be deployed for contingency operations to a location where the Church is not organized, where the local Church unit cannot accommodate the members because of a different language, or where attendance at local meetings is not feasible.

   For those deploying on contingency operations, a group leader's kit containing resource materials may be ordered from Church Distribution Services. Deployed group leaders should contact the Church's Military Relations Division to order additional Church materials.
4. Members belong to Reserve or National Guard units and participate in weekend drills or annual training exercises.

Generally, a ward or branch rather than a service member group is established if there is a need to support both military members and their families. A ward or branch may also be established if there is a long-term need to provide Church services and programs for military members who are attending basic or advanced training or who are on a remote assignment without their families. Depending on the need, Church programs may be limited in scope and complexity.

Coordination with the senior installation chaplain is necessary to arrange for meeting times and use of base facilities. If there is not an installation chaplain assigned to the base, the stake president should consult with the commanding officer.

Service Member Group Leadership and Chaplains

For information about responsibilities of service member group leaders and chaplains, see the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org and the *Principles of the Gospel* book for members in military service.

Missionary Service and Military Obligation

In countries that have mandatory military conscription (draft), bishops and stake presidents must consider how these laws apply to individuals who desire to serve a mission. In the United States military, a person who joins the active-duty military before serving a mission must complete his enlistment obligation before he can serve a mission. Those in the Reserves or National Guard may be able to serve a mission following the completion of basic and advanced training. For additional information, leaders may contact the Church's Military Relations Division (see contact information below).

Other Information

Records of Members in Military Service. See page 146.

Patriarchal Blessings. See pages 43–44.

Ordination in Isolated Areas. See page 41.

Temple Recommends in Isolated Areas. See page 76.

Wearing the Garment in the Military. See pages 80–81.

Ordering Special Garments. See pages 80–81.

For questions related to military service that are not answered in this handbook, leaders may contact the Church's Military Relations Division:

Military Relations Division
50 East North Temple Street, Room 2048
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-6080
Telephone: 1-801-240-2286
E-mail: pst-military@ldschurch.org

15. Records and Reports

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

Purposes of Church Record Keeping

The Lord places great importance on record keeping in the Church. One of the first commandments He gave Joseph Smith when the Church was organized was, "There shall be a record kept among you" (D&C 21:1). Keeping records has been a commandment in all dispensations, and this important work continues in our time.

Accurate records help leaders get to know members and identify their needs. For example, records can help leaders identify who may need special care in becoming more active in the Church or becoming worthy of temple blessings. Accurate records also help leaders evaluate progress in accomplishing the mission of the Church. This evaluation can help leaders make plans for improvement.

These purposes of record keeping are similar to the purposes that Moroni suggested: "And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God" (Moroni 6:4).

Another important purpose of record keeping in the Church is to maintain a record of the saving ordinances that each person receives.

Leaders should provide instruction on how to use Church records to help accomplish the purposes outlined above.

Types of Records

The following types of records are kept in Church units:

Reports on member participation. These reports include information about meeting attendance, visits to members, activity and priesthood office of new members, and temple recommend status of endowed members (see pages 143–45).

Membership records. These include the name and address of each member, as well as information about the member's birth, parentage, and ordinances (see pages 145–48).

Historical records. These include information about officers who are serving, accomplishments, challenges, faith-building experiences, and other notable events (see page 150).

Financial records. These include information about tithes and other offerings and costs for activities and supplies (see pages 153–62).

Stake Record-Keeping Leadership

Stake President

The stake president oversees stake record keeping. He may assign his counselors and clerks to do much of this work under his direction.

The stake president ensures that stake clerks and stake and ward leaders are taught their record-keeping responsibilities. He also ensures that they follow Church policies and procedures in completing their assignments.

The stake president oversees stake clerks in preparing records and reports. He meets with the clerks to review these materials; to ensure that they are accurate, complete, and on time; and to sign those that require his signature. A counselor may review and sign reports in the stake president's absence.

The stake president assigns clerks to follow up on all audit concerns within 30 days of the audit.

He oversees the preparation of the Annual History for Stakes and Districts (see page 150).

He ensures that people who have access to records and reports protect the privacy of individuals (see pages 150–51).

Stake Clerk

A stake clerk is called as outlined on page 11. The stake president may assign him responsibilities such as those outlined below. Assistant stake clerks may be called to help (see page 141).

Record-Keeping Responsibilities

The stake clerk provides administrative support to the stake presidency. He records minutes of stake leadership meetings. He also reminds the stake presidency of items that need follow-up or further consideration.

The stake clerk (and assistant stake clerks as assigned) prepares stake records and reports. These include financial records (see pages 153–62), membership information (see pages 145–48), and historical records (see page 150). He ensures that records and reports are accurate, complete, and on time.

The stake clerk (and assistant stake clerks as assigned) meets with the stake president to review records and reports. He provides information from these materials to help leaders identify (1) the needs of members and organizations, (2) the availability of resources, such as finances and priesthood strength, and (3) trends, strengths, and weaknesses.

The stake clerk should become familiar with the record-keeping programs on Church computers where they are available. He also grants access rights to family history computer programs, when required, to high councilors assigned to oversee temple and family history work.

The stake clerk (and assistant stake clerks as assigned) may design and print boundary models to use in proposing realignment of stake and ward boundaries. He may also complete forms for proposed boundary changes.

When a new ward is created, a ward is discontinued, or a bishop is released, the stake clerk oversees the transfer of ward records, correspondence, and accounts.

The stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk prepares the Officers Sustained form for the first stake conference of each year, unless that conference is a satellite broadcast. In that case, he prepares the form for the second stake conference. The completed form is included in the stake's annual history.

The stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk ensures that certificates for Melchizedek Priesthood ordination are prepared and distributed properly.

The stake clerk helps the stake president record information for stake disciplinary councils (see pages 113 and 116).

The stake clerk should carefully follow current policies and procedures to safeguard Church funds and to ensure that Church records are current and accurate. He should immediately notify appropriate priesthood leadership of any improprieties affecting Church funds or records.

If the stake has a Church-approved Web site, the stake clerk, an assistant stake clerk, or another member may be assigned by the stake presidency to maintain and update the site. For information about approved Web sites for local units, see page 175.

Review of Ward Records

The stake clerk (and assistant stake clerks as assigned) reviews ward records and reports to ensure that they are accurate and complete. He resolves record-keeping problems before giving reports to the stake president. He works directly with ward clerks and assistant ward clerks to resolve minor problems. He discusses serious problems with the stake president or, at the stake president's request, the bishop.

The stake clerk meets with each ward clerk twice each year. The stake clerk or assistant stake clerks may also meet with assistant ward clerks as needed. These meetings are held to ensure that (1) membership records are updated promptly and accurately, (2) certificates of blessing, baptism and confirmation, and priesthood ordination are given to ward members, and (3) the ward's annual history is kept current and is submitted to the stake at the end of each year (see "Historical Records" on page 150).

Record-Keeping Instruction

As requested by the stake president or a bishop, the stake clerk instructs assistant stake clerks, ward clerks, and assistant ward clerks to ensure that they receive all the training they need to accomplish their record-keeping responsibilities. Assistant stake clerks may also help instruct ward clerks and assistant ward clerks.

Instruction on record keeping is especially important when clerks are newly called, when a Church record-keeping program is introduced or updated, and when records are not completed properly. New ward clerks and assistant ward clerks should be instructed within 30 days of when they are called.

Stake clerks and assistant stake clerks may help priesthood and auxiliary leaders instruct secretaries.

Record-keeping instruction can be given individually and during priesthood leadership meetings, ward conferences, and other times as necessary.

When instructing clerks or secretaries, stake clerks help them understand how information from records and reports can help leaders.

Stake clerks ensure that other clerks and secretaries obtain the materials they need to fulfill their responsibilities.

Audits

The stake clerk should be knowledgeable of audit procedures and reports. Assistant stake clerks should also be knowledgeable of audit procedures and reports for their area of responsibility. These clerks work with ward clerks and assistant ward clerks to ensure that any membership, financial, or historical record-keeping problems are resolved.

For information about audits of Church finances, see pages 161–62.

Each year the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk conducts an audit of membership records in each ward. For information about these audits, see "Audits of Membership Records" on page 148 and the Stake and District Audit of Membership Records form.

Stake Historical Records

The stake president assigns the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk to prepare the Annual History for Stakes and Districts. For more information, see "Ward Historical Records" on page 143 and "Historical Records" on page 150.

Assistant Stake Clerks

Record Keeping

Assistant stake clerks may be called as outlined on page 11. The stake presidency may assign these clerks to each part of stake record keeping, such as financial records (see pages 153–62) and historical records (see page 150). The stake presidency may also assign assistant stake clerks to share most other record-keeping responsibilities of stake clerks as outlined earlier in this section. Assistant stake clerks work under the direction of the stake presidency and the stake clerk.

Assistant stake clerks should carefully follow current policies and procedures to safeguard Church funds and to ensure that Church records are current and accurate. These clerks should immediately notify appropriate priesthood leadership of any improprieties affecting Church funds or records.

Church Materials

The stake presidency assigns an assistant stake clerk to become familiar with Church-produced resource materials and know how to order them from Church Distribution Services (the stake clerk could be given this assignment if necessary). This clerk should also know how to order garments and temple clothing. He instructs clerks who have similar responsibilities in wards. He also coordinates efforts to help stake members be informed about these materials and know how to obtain them. For more information about this clerk's responsibilities, see page 284 in *Book 2*.

Computers

The stake presidency assigns an assistant stake clerk to be the stake technology specialist (the stake clerk could be given this assignment if necessary). This clerk has the following responsibilities for managing Church computers in the stake, including those in family history centers:

He takes direction from the stake presidency about acquiring, placing, sharing, reassigning, scheduling, and disposing of all stake computer hardware and software.

He supports the stake presidency, bishoprics, auxiliary leaders, family history consultants, seminary and institute instructors, and others who use computers in Church meetinghouses.

He serves as the primary contact for technology services and electronic devices in all Church meetinghouses in the stake.

He serves as the primary contact with Church headquarters concerning computer hardware, software, and guidelines.

He supervises and instructs others who help manage Church computers.

He orders, installs, supports, and arranges for repairs to Church computers. He should have appropriate passwords to all Church computers and software in the stake.

He provides support for the initial setup of computer workstations and printers; for maintenance of computer hardware, operating systems, and software; and for Internet connections (where authorized).

He maintains a current inventory of all computer hardware, with serial numbers, models, capacities, and physical locations.

He ensures that (1) computers, software, and confidential Church information are secure, (2) data files are backed up regularly, and (3) backup files are stored away from the building (see pages 150–51 for more information about protecting confidential information). He should not access the confidential records of membership or financial systems except as requested by the bishop or stake president.

He ensures that Church computers are protected from viruses and improper use. Church computers should not be used for private purposes; nor should privately owned software be installed on them.

He ensures that software installed on Church computers complies in every way with licensing agreements.

He ensures that data is completely destroyed on computers that are retired from Church units. He runs special software furnished by the administration office for this purpose.

He should be familiar with the general policies for Church computers on page 175. He should also be familiar with guidelines for obtaining and managing Church computers. These guidelines are available from the administration office. They provide information about matters such as computer hardware and software, donated computers, Internet and online networks, repairs, disposal of computers, stolen or damaged computers, security, and scheduling.

In some cases, ward clerks may be asked to help the clerk who is assigned to be the stake technology specialist.

Ward Record-Keeping Leadership

Bishop

The bishop oversees ward record keeping. He may assign his counselors and clerks to do much of this work under his direction.

The bishop ensures that ward clerks and quorum, group, and auxiliary leaders are taught their record-keeping responsibilities. He also ensures that they follow Church policies and procedures in fulfilling these responsibilities.

The bishop oversees ward clerks in preparing records and reports. He meets with the clerks to review these materials; to ensure that they are accurate, complete, and on time; and to sign those that require his signature. A counselor may review and sign reports in the bishop's absence.

The bishop oversees the preparation of the ward's annual history (see pages 143 and 150).

He ensures that people who have access to records and reports protect the privacy of individuals (see pages 150–51).

Ward Clerk

A ward clerk is called as outlined on page 21. The bishop may assign him responsibilities such as those outlined below. Assistant ward clerks may be called to help (see page 143).

Record-Keeping Responsibilities

The ward clerk provides administrative support to the bishopric. He records minutes of ward leadership meetings. He also reminds the bishopric of items that need follow-up or further consideration.

The ward clerk (and assistant ward clerks as assigned) prepares ward records and reports. These include reports on member participation (see pages 143–45), financial records (see pages 153–62), membership records (see pages 145–48), and historical records (see page 150). He ensures that records and reports are accurate, complete, and on time.

The ward clerk (and assistant ward clerks as assigned) meets regularly with the bishop to review records and reports. He provides information from these materials to help leaders identify (1) the needs of members and organizations, (2) the availability of resources, such as finances and priesthood strength, and (3) trends, strengths, and weaknesses.

When compiling reports on member participation, the clerk reviews information submitted by ward organizations to ensure that it is accurate and complete. He resolves record-keeping problems before giving the report to the bishop. He works directly with secretaries to resolve minor problems. He discusses serious problems with the bishop or, at the bishop's request, the organization leader.

The ward clerk should become familiar with the record-keeping programs on Church computers where they are available. He or an assistant ward clerk provides membership directories, lists, and rolls received from the administration office or produced by Church record-keeping software to the bishopric, to other priesthood leaders, and to auxiliary leaders. He may also be asked to help the clerk who is assigned to be the stake technology specialist (see "Computers" on pages 141–42).

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk provides members copies of their Individual Ordinance Summary for their personal records and for help in accessing family history and other Church services, as requested. He prints these summaries using Church record-keeping software. In areas that do not have Church record-keeping software, he may request copies from the administration office.

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk prepares the Officers Sustained form for ward conference and includes the completed form in the ward's annual history.

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk ensures that certificates of blessing, baptism and confirmation, and priesthood ordination are given to ward members.

The ward clerk helps the bishop record information for ward disciplinary councils (see pages 113 and 116).

The ward clerk should carefully follow current policies and procedures to safeguard Church funds and to ensure that Church records are current and accurate. He should immediately notify appropriate priesthood leadership of any improprieties affecting Church funds or records.

If the ward has a Church-approved Web site, the ward clerk, an assistant ward clerk, or another member may be assigned by the bishopric to maintain and update the site. For information about approved Web sites for local units, see page 175.

Record-Keeping Instruction

The ward clerk coordinates record-keeping instruction for assistant ward clerks and for quorum, group, and auxiliary secretaries. He ensures that they receive instruction when they are newly called, when a Church record-keeping program is introduced or updated, and when records are not completed properly.

When instructing assistant clerks or secretaries, the ward clerk helps them understand how information from records and reports can help leaders.

The ward clerk ensures that assistant clerks and secretaries have the materials they need to fulfill their responsibilities.

Ward Historical Records

The bishop assigns the ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk to prepare the ward's annual history. This clerk prepares the history under the direction of the bishopric. The stake clerk provides additional instructions to ensure that accurate and meaningful histories are recorded. For more information, see page 150.

Assistant Ward Clerks

Record Keeping

Assistant ward clerks may be called as outlined on page 21. The bishopric may assign these clerks to each part of ward record keeping, such as financial records (see pages 153–62), membership records (see pages 145–48), reports on member participation (see pages 143–45), and historical records (see page 150). The bishopric may also assign assistant ward clerks to share most other record-keeping responsibilities of ward clerks as outlined earlier in this section. Assistant ward clerks work under the direction of the bishopric and the ward clerk.

Assistant ward clerks should carefully follow current policies and procedures to safeguard Church funds and to ensure that Church records are current and accurate. These clerks should immediately notify appropriate priesthood leadership of any improprieties affecting Church funds or records.

Church Materials

The bishopric assigns an assistant ward clerk to become familiar with Church-produced resource materials and know how to order them from Church Distribution Services (the ward clerk could be given this assignment if necessary). This clerk should also know how to order garments and temple clothing. He coordinates efforts to help ward members be informed about these materials and know how to obtain them. For more information about this clerk's responsibilities, see page 284 in *Book 2*.

Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders oversee record keeping in their organizations. They may assign secretaries to do much of this work under their direction. They meet regularly with secretaries to ensure that records are accurate, complete, and on time.

Priesthood and Auxiliary Secretaries

See pages 166, 182, 197–98, 217, 232, and 242 in *Book 2*.

Reports on Member Participation

Reports on member participation consist of weekly, monthly, and quarterly information that helps leaders focus on the progress and needs of members. All members of record (as defined on page 145) are included in these reports.

Components of Reports

Attendance Reports

Sacrament Meeting. Attendance at sacrament meeting is recorded by the ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk. The attendance count is the number physically present in the meeting.

Sunday Priesthood and Auxiliary Meetings. Attendance at high priests group, elders quorum, and Relief Society meetings is recorded by the group, quorum, or Relief Society secretary. Attendance at Aaronic Priesthood quorum meetings and Young Women classes is recorded by quorum and class secretaries and compiled by the ward Young Men and Young Women secretaries. Attendance at Primary is recorded by the teachers and compiled by the Primary secretary.

Only those for whom the unit has membership records are counted as attending. Unlike sacrament meeting, those who are unable to attend because of another Church assignment are recorded as attending these meetings. Full-time missionaries serving from the ward are counted as attending priesthood or Relief Society meetings. For more information, see pages 170, 189–90, 207, 226, 238, and 244 in *Book 2*.

Home Teaching and Visiting Teaching Reports

See pages 170 and 207 in *Book 2*.

Quarterly Report

The Quarterly Report is submitted to the administration office each quarter. It includes information for only the last month of each quarter. However, the stake president or bishop may request this information monthly.

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk prepares the report under the direction of the bishop. By the 10th of the month following the end of each quarter, quorum and auxiliary leaders or secretaries give attendance information for the previous month to the clerk so he can include it on the report. The elders quorum and high priests group also give home teaching information for the previous month, and the Relief Society gives visiting teaching information. The bishop reviews the report for accuracy and makes sure the clerk submits it on time.

Information about submitting the report is outlined below.

Stakes Where All Wards Use Church Record-Keeping Software. In these stakes, a clerk from each ward prepares the report on the computer and transmits it electronically to the administration office according to instructions on the report. Clerks should print, distribute, and retain copies as needed.

Stakes Where One or More Wards Do Not Use Church Record-Keeping Software. In these stakes, each ward that uses Church record-keeping software follows the instructions in the previous paragraph. Each ward that does not use Church record-keeping software receives a paper copy of the Quarterly Report from the administration office at the end of each quarter. This copy has membership and enrollment numbers preprinted on it. A clerk from each ward fills in the blank spaces and sends the completed report to the administration office according to the instructions on the report. Clerks should distribute and retain copies as needed.

Stakes Where None of the Wards Uses Church Record-Keeping Software. In these stakes, each ward receives a paper copy of the Quarterly Report from the administration office at the end of each quarter. This copy has membership and enrollment numbers preprinted on it. A clerk from each ward fills in the blank spaces and sends the completed report to the stake according to the instructions on the report. Clerks should distribute and retain copies as needed.

The stake also receives a paper copy of the Quarterly Report from the administration office. This copy has the membership and enrollment numbers preprinted on it for each ward in the stake. After receiving reports from the wards, the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk completes the stake report, reviews it with the stake president, and sends it to the administration office within 30 days of the end of the quarter.

Membership Lists

Membership lists provide important supplemental information to reports on member participation. These lists are produced by the administration office or by ward computers. They include information about members of the ward who are of age for ordinances. They also identify young men of missionary age. In addition, the lists identify which men hold the Melchizedek Priesthood and which members are endowed. Lists for the bishopric's youth interviews are also available.

Using the Information

Leaders should serve and nurture all members, but reports on member participation can help identify which individuals and families need the most care. Every number and statistic in a report represents an individual member who has unique needs. Leaders should seek direction from the Lord as they consider whom to reach out to and what help to provide.

Using information from participation reports, leaders can identify attendance patterns that help them focus attention on those who need help and those who are most likely to respond to activation efforts.

Information from participation reports also helps leaders determine which members are missed regularly by home teachers or visiting teachers. Leaders can then take steps to make sure these members are visited.

Participation reports can help leaders identify which members should be considered for priesthood ordinances and full-time missionary service. These reports also help leaders determine which recent adult male converts have not been ordained, which adult converts did not attend priesthood or Relief Society meetings during the month, and which adult members have not been endowed. With this information, leaders can plan how to help members prepare to receive ordinances and how to encourage attendance.

Participation reports also help leaders focus attention on endowed members who do not have current temple recommends.

Percentages in participation reports may be used to show trends, such as whether activity is increasing or decreasing. However, percentages should not be used to compare one ward with another, one quorum with another, or one person with another. Ward and individual circumstances are unique.

When monitoring attendance, leaders should consider that some members may be on Church assignments outside the ward. Other members may be required to work on Sunday or may be away for vacations and other reasons. Leaders should also keep in mind members who are ill, members who are confined to their homes or to health-care facilities, and members who are giving care on Sunday to those who are confined.

Membership Records

Membership records include members' names and addresses, as well as ordinance and other vital information. The ward should have a membership record for each member living within the ward boundaries. Membership records are to be kept in the ward in which the member lives. Exceptions, which should be few, require the consent of the bishops and stake presidents involved and the approval of the Office of the First Presidency.

Membership records are the only means of recording ordinances and other official actions in the permanent records of the Church. Therefore, the bishop makes sure that clerks keep accurate records and send updated information promptly to the administration office. It is especially important to record ordinance information, promptly request records of members who move into the ward, and promptly transfer records of members who move from the ward.

Before a member is interviewed for a Church calling, ordination to a Melchizedek Priesthood office, or a temple recommend, the bishop should carefully review the person's membership record to verify that it does not include an annotation, a comment about a sealing or ordinance restriction, or a comment about unresolved Church discipline.

Members may not have copies of membership records. Under no circumstances may membership records be given to anyone other than the bishop or a clerk.

Although members may not have copies of their membership records, they are encouraged to have copies of the Individual Ordinance Summary for themselves and for any dependent children living at home. Each year, clerks or bishopric members review these summaries with members in accordance with the data privacy policy on pages 150–51. This review could be done as part of annual tithing settlement. If errors are found, a clerk ensures that they are corrected on the membership records.

In areas where units have Church record-keeping software, clerks can print each member's Individual Ordinance Summary. In other areas, leaders or clerks may request copies of these summaries from the administration office.

The administration office provides handbooks or other detailed instructions for creating and updating membership records. Some general principles are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Names Used in Church Records

A person's full legal name, as defined by local law or custom, should be used on membership records and ordinance certificates. Initials and nicknames should not be used on membership records.

Members of Record

For statistical and reporting purposes, the following individuals are members of record. Each of them should have a membership record:

1. Those who have been baptized *and* confirmed.
2. Those under age nine who have been blessed but not baptized.
3. Those who are not accountable because of mental disabilities, regardless of age.
4. Unblessed children under age eight when *(a)* at least one parent is a member of the Church and *(b)* both parents give permission for a record to be created. This includes children of converts. (If one parent does not have the appropriate legal rights for the child, the permission of the parent who has those rights is sufficient.)

After a person is baptized and confirmed, the administration office sends a new or updated membership record to the unit.

A person age nine or older who has a membership record but has not been baptized and confirmed is not considered a member of record. However, the bishop keeps the membership record until the person is 18. At that time, if the person chooses not to be baptized despite being given every opportunity, the bishop, with written permission from the stake president, cancels the membership record. However, records of unbaptized members who are considered not accountable because of mental disabilities are not canceled.

Records of New Ward Members

When membership records are received in a ward and when converts are baptized and confirmed, a member of the bishopric introduces and welcomes the new members in the next sacrament meeting. He reads each person's name, invites the person to stand, and asks members of the congregation to show by the uplifted hand that they accept the members in full fellowship in the ward. Records of family members are read together. If a member knows any reason why a person may not be entitled to full fellowship, he or she should talk to the bishop privately.

After children who are members of record are baptized and confirmed, a member of the bishopric announces each child's baptism and confirmation in sacrament meeting. These children are not presented for acceptance into the ward because they are already members.

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk meets with new ward members soon after they arrive to review the Individual Ordinance Summary for accuracy. If errors are found, a clerk ensures that they are corrected on the membership records.

Records of Members Who Move or Are Temporarily Away from Home

Ward leaders, home teachers, or clerks obtain the forwarding addresses of members as soon as they become aware that members intend to move. Leaders of the new ward should contact members as soon as possible after they move in.

If a clerk cannot find out where members have moved, he sends the membership records to the administration office, where efforts to locate the members will continue.

When a person moves from a ward for more than three months, a clerk normally moves the membership record to the new ward. As an exception, the record is not moved if the member intends to return after leaving for temporary seasonal or employment purposes that may last longer than three months.

When a person moves from the ward for less than three months and intends to return, the membership record is kept in the home ward. The home ward also maintains the member's financial records.

If local leaders are uncertain about where a membership record should be (such as for a member in prison), they should keep the record in the ward that can best meet the member's needs.

Records of Members Serving outside Their Home Ward

Mission and Temple Presidents

The membership records of mission presidents and their wives should stay in their home ward unless their children accompany them in the assignment. If children accompany them, the records of the mission president, his wife, and his children should be sent to the ward where they live during their mission.

The membership records of temple presidents and their wives should stay in their home ward.

Other Church Assignments

If members have Church assignments outside their home ward, their membership and financial records are kept in the home ward. If assignments require members to move from their home ward for three months or more, and if their children accompany them, their membership records are moved to the new ward.

Full-Time Missionaries

See pages 99–100.

Records of Members Who Live in Hospitals or Homes for the Aged

The records of members who live in hospitals or homes for the aged and infirm are kept in the ward that can best serve them. In most cases this is the ward where the hospital or home is located. Ward leaders make sure these members receive the full program of the Church to the extent possible.

Records of Members in Military Service

When a member enters military service for training, the membership record is kept in the home ward until the member is assigned to a more long-term duty station. At that time the member should contact the home ward and provide the name and address of the new ward so a clerk can move the membership record.

If a member is at sea for an extended time, is deployed in a war zone, or is not within the boundaries of a stake or mission, the membership record is usually kept in the ward that supports the duty station.

Records of Members Who Do Not Have a Permanent Address

Members who travel extensively and do not have a permanent address should consult with the bishop at their place of primary residence and designate a home ward. That ward keeps the membership records, and ward leaders should maintain contact with the members. Financial contributions and tithing declarations should be made to that ward.

Records of Members Who Have Mental Disabilities

If the bishop determines that a person who is at least eight years old is not accountable, he instructs a clerk to indicate *Not Accountable* in the baptism section of the person's membership record (see also page 33). The clerk sends the update to the administration office. The record should not be canceled.

Records of Members Who Have Hearing Impairments

Members who use sign language and their families may choose to have their Church membership records in one of the following places: (1) their home ward, (2) a designated host ward within a geographic area to which a group for the hearing impaired is assigned, or (3) a ward or branch organized for members who are hearing impaired.

Records of Adopted Children

Records of adopted children and their adoptive parents may be created or updated only after the adoption is final. The name on the membership record should conform to the decree of adoption.

Records of Babies Who Were Born Out of Wedlock

See "Record and Certificate of Blessing" on page 32.

Records of Children of Divorced Parents

If a child's parents are divorced, his or her legal name, as defined by local law or custom, should be recorded on the membership record and on certificates of priesthood ordinances and blessings.

Records with Special Comments

The bishop and a clerk review the records of new ward members for special comments that the administration office may have added. When records include such comments, the bishop contacts the administration office as needed and takes appropriate action.

Records with Annotations

In areas where the First Presidency has given authorization, an annotation may be placed on the record of a member whose conduct has threatened the well-being of other persons or of the Church. An annotation helps the bishop protect Church members and others from such individuals. When a bishop receives an annotated membership record, he should follow the instructions in the annotation.

Church headquarters will automatically annotate a person's membership record in any of the following situations:

1. The stake president or bishop submits a Report of Church Disciplinary Action showing that the person was disciplined for incest, sexual offense against or serious physical abuse of a child, plural marriage, an elective transsexual operation, repeated homosexual activities (by adults), predatory conduct, or embezzlement of Church funds or property.
2. The stake president or bishop submits written notification that the person has been criminally convicted for one of these transgressions.
3. The stake president and bishop jointly submit written notification that the person has committed one of these transgressions before or after excommunication or name removal.

In addition, the stake president and bishop may jointly recommend that a person's membership be annotated for other conduct that threatens the well-being of other persons or of the Church.

In all cases, annotation of membership records is removed only with First Presidency approval upon request of the stake president.

Requests for Contact on Membership Records

If a member moves and the bishop feels a need to share information with the member's new bishop, he instructs a clerk to place a request for contact on the record before sending it to the new ward. When a bishop receives a membership record with such a request, he should contact the previous bishop as soon as feasible.

Records from the "Address Unknown" File

When a member's record has been in the "address unknown" file and the member is subsequently located, a message will be included with the membership record when it is sent to the ward. The bishopric and quorum leaders are encouraged to visit these members as soon as possible and to provide additional fellowshipping. Full-time missionaries may also be asked to visit and fellowship these members.

Move Restrictions on Membership Records

If a member moves while Church disciplinary action or another serious concern is pending, the bishop or another authorized priesthood leader may contact the administration office and ask for a move restriction on the membership record. A move restriction may also be requested in cases of welfare abuse.

A record that has a move restriction will not be moved to a new unit until the priesthood leader who requested the restriction authorizes it to be removed.

Recording and Correcting Ordinance Information

The ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk ensures that accurate information about saving ordinances and priesthood ordinations is recorded on membership records. Instructions are provided on pages 32, 36–37, and 42.

Preparing Certificates for Ordinances and Blessings

Priesthood leaders ensure that certificates are prepared and distributed as soon as possible after the blessing of a child, baptism and confirmation, and priesthood ordination. These certificates are a member's only Church source for the names of those who performed the ordinance or blessing. Leaders encourage members to safeguard these certificates, explaining that they may be irreplaceable if they are lost or destroyed.

Recording and Correcting Civil Information

Civil information (name, parents' names, date of birth, marriage information, date of divorce, and places where these events occurred) is recorded on membership records. If members see that this information is incorrect on their Individual Ordinance Summary, they may ask the clerk to have it corrected on their membership records. If official documents are available, a bishop may want to review them to verify the accuracy of a requested correction.

Special Situations

For special situations that are not addressed in this section, such as records for common-law marriages, leaders should see membership records instructions or contact the administration office.

Audits of Membership Records

Each year the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk conducts an audit of membership records in each ward. The stake president may call others who are experienced in membership record keeping to assist with these audits. A stake representative should contact the administration office to obtain audit materials. Audits should be completed by June 30 of each year.

In addition to these audits, the bishop should assign one or more clerks in the ward to conduct an annual review of Individual Ordinance Summaries with members as explained on page 145. If errors are found, a clerk ensures that they are corrected on the membership records.

Removing Names from Church Membership Records

An adult member who wishes to have his or her name removed from the membership records of the Church must send the bishop a written, signed request (not a form letter). A request that Church representatives not visit a member is not sufficient to initiate this action.

The bishop makes sure that a member who requests name removal understands the consequences: it cancels the effects of baptism and confirmation, withdraws the priesthood held by a male member, and revokes temple blessings. The bishop also explains that a person can be readmitted to the Church by baptism and confirmation only after a thorough interview (see "Readmission after Name Removal" on pages 149–50).

If the bishop is satisfied that the member understands these consequences and is not likely to be dissuaded, he completes a Report of Administrative Action form and forwards it to the stake president. The bishop forwards the member's written request and membership record with the form.

If members of the stake presidency determine that the bishop has followed established procedures, they ask him to send the member a letter stating that his or her name is being removed from the records of the Church as requested. The letter should state the consequences of name removal. It should also state that the request for name removal can be rescinded only if the member sends the stake president a written request for recision within 30 days (the stake president's name and address should be included). If a member demands that his or her name be removed immediately from Church records, the 30-day waiting period may be eliminated.

If a member demands immediate name removal or does not request a recision within 30 days, the stake president submits the completed Report of Administrative Action form and other documents requested on the form. Instructions for submittal are on the form. The person's name is then removed from the membership records of the Church.

A minor who wishes to have his or her name removed from the records of the Church must follow the same procedure as an adult with one exception: the written request must be signed by the minor (if over the age of eight) and by the parent(s) or guardian(s) who have legal custody of the minor.

If two or more family members want their names removed from the records of the Church, they need to prepare only one written request. However, a Report of Administrative Action form should be completed and signed for each person who has requested name removal.

If a member requesting name removal threatens legal action against the Church or Church leaders, the stake president should follow the instructions on page 178.

Requests for name removal should be acted on promptly as outlined above. The Report of Administrative Action form and all supporting documentation should be submitted in a timely manner.

Name Removal and Suspected Transgression

A request for name removal should be acted upon whether or not priesthood leaders suspect or have evidence of transgression. Any allegations or evidence of unresolved transgressions should be noted on the Report of Administrative Action form so priesthood leaders may resolve such matters in the future if the individual applies for readmission into the Church.

Effects of Name Removal on Temple Sealings

See pages 86 and 88.

Announcement of Name Removal

In some cases a bishop may need to announce that a person's name has been removed from the membership records of the Church. The announcement merely states that the action was taken at the person's request. The announcement should not use the word *excommunication*. The guidelines under "Announcement of the Decision" on page 115 apply.

Readmission after Name Removal

After name removal, a person must be baptized and confirmed to be readmitted into the Church. If the person was an adult when his or her name was removed from Church membership records, readmission is usually not approved until at least one year later.

When a person requests readmission, the bishop or stake president requests a copy of the Report of Administrative Action form that accompanied the request for name removal. This copy is available from the Office of the First Presidency. After reviewing the form, the bishop interviews the person thoroughly. He inquires about the reasons for the name removal request and the desire for readmission. He also determines whether any unresolved transgressions may have been committed before or after name removal.

If the person was on formal probation or was disfellowshipped at the time of name removal, a disciplinary council is held to consider the request for readmission.

If the bishop finds that before name removal the person committed transgressions that warranted disciplinary action but were not resolved, he should not approve a request for readmission until he is satisfied that the person has repented of those and any subsequent transgressions. No disciplinary council is held.

If the person committed any of the transgressions listed under "Apply for First Presidency Approval" (see page 120), either before or after name removal, the approval of the First Presidency is required for readmission. If the person is readmitted after committing any of the transgressions listed under "Records with Annotations" (see page 147), either before or after name removal, an annotation will be made on the new membership record.

A person who requests readmission must meet the same qualifications as others who are baptized (see the Baptism and Confirmation Record book). When the bishop is satisfied that the person is worthy and sincere in wanting to be readmitted, he prepares a baptism and confirmation record, noting on the form that the baptism is for readmission. After baptism, the person is confirmed a member of the Church. The confirmation may be performed during the baptismal service or during a sacrament meeting.

Priesthood ordination, temple recommends, membership records, and the ordinance of restoration of blessings are handled the same as for an excommunicated person who has been readmitted by baptism and confirmation (see pages 121–22).

Historical Records

The stake president is responsible to see that a meaningful and accurate annual history is submitted to the administration office each year. Instructions are provided on the Annual History for Stakes and Districts form.

The stake presidency oversees the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk in preparing the annual history. The bishopric oversees the ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk in preparing the ward's annual history.

Annual histories should include faith-promoting events that take place in the lives of members and in Church units. These histories should also include other important events, meetings, challenges, and accomplishments of members and of the stake or ward. In addition, the histories should include copies of the Officers Sustained forms from the stake and ward conferences held during the year.

Those who prepare these histories should provide enough detail to give a clear understanding of events and their effects on those who are involved. The histories should be compiled throughout the year to ensure that they contain accurate information.

Annual histories should not include any private or confidential information. For example, they should not include:

1. Minutes from presidency or bishopric meetings.
2. Any mention of Church discipline.
3. Financial information, such as unit budgets, financial statements, and tithing reports.
4. Private information about unit members, such as birth dates, street addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
5. Names of unit members receiving welfare assistance.

Ward histories should be submitted to the stake clerk or the assistant stake clerk who is preparing the stake's annual history by January 15. The completed ward histories should be included in the annual stake history.

The clerk reviews the completed annual history with the stake president and submits it as indicated on the Annual History for Stakes and Districts form.

Area or country histories of the Church are optional. If Church members have the desire and qualifications to write such histories, Church leaders might encourage them to do so on their own initiative.

If a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency decides to have a history of an area or country prepared at a significant time, such as part of a special historical event, they may call members to assist. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may contact the Family and Church History Department for written guidelines for developing area or country histories. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency provides that department two copies of such histories.

Other historical records are selectively retained by the Church Archives, "for the good of the church, and for the rising generations" (D&C 69:8). Questions about the historical value of records may be addressed to:

Church Archives
50 East North Temple Street, Room 227E
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3420
Telephone: 1-801-240-2272
E-mail: churcharchives@ldschurch.org

Confidentiality of Records

The records of the Church are confidential, whether they exist on paper, in computers, or in other electronic media. These include membership records, financial records, minutes of meetings, official forms and documents (including records of disciplinary councils), and notes made from private interviews.

Leaders and clerks are to safeguard Church records by handling, storing, and disposing of them in a way that protects the privacy of individuals. Leaders ensure that information that is gathered from members is (1) limited to what the Church requires and (2) used only for approved Church purposes.

Leaders should provide information from Church records and reports only to those who are authorized to use it. Information that is stored electronically should be kept secure and protected by a password (see "Protection" on page 151). Leaders ensure that such data is not used for personal, political, or commercial purposes. Information from Church records, including historical information, may not be given to individuals or agencies conducting research or surveys.

Membership directories that are distributed to members should include only names, addresses, and telephone numbers, and, if members give permission, e-mail addresses (see "Directories" on page 177). Membership lists that have more information, such as age and membership status, may be given only to authorized stake and ward leaders.

For additional guidelines, see "Records Management" below.

Records Management

Stake and ward leaders should make effective records management a part of their record-keeping procedures. Three important areas of records management are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Protection

All information should be protected against unauthorized access, change, destruction, or disclosure. Church records, reports, and backup copies of computer software programs and data should be kept in a safe place. Highly sensitive records, including computer printouts and electronic storage media, should be kept in a locked drawer or cabinet in the leader's office when they are not being used.

To protect confidential membership and financial information on computers, leaders should use the password features of Church record-keeping systems. Passwords should be written down and kept in locked files away from the computer. They should be changed periodically and always when leaders and clerks are released. If members use stake and ward computers for family history work, they should not have access to membership or financial information.

Many countries have enacted data protection laws. These laws regulate the processing of personal data, such as the information contained in membership records or other records that identify individuals. To determine the extent to which such laws govern local management of Church records or to obtain direction in specific instances, local Church leaders should consult either (1) membership records personnel at the administration office or (2) the data privacy officer at the following e-mail address:

dataprivacyofficer@ldschurch.org

Retention

Records should be kept only as long as they are needed for administrative and legal purposes. Leaders who have specific questions about how long to keep records should consult record-keeping instructions or the administration office.

Disposition

Records that are outdated or no longer needed should be destroyed in such a way that the information cannot be retrieved or reconstructed. Diskettes and any other electronic storage devices that contain membership or financial information should be destroyed rather than erased and used for other purposes.

Records that have potential historical value should not be discarded, destroyed, or placed in the meetinghouse library. Questions about the historical value of records may be addressed to the Church Archives (see contact information on page 150).

16. Finances

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

General Church Financial Leadership

The Council on the Disposition of the Tithes, composed of the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric, oversees all finances and property of the Church and determines the disposition of tithes and other offerings (see D&C 120; Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 74).

Stake Financial Leadership

Stake President

The stake president oversees stake finances. He may delegate much of this work to his counselors and clerks. He should read all instructions from the administration office about Church finances.

The stake president ensures that stake funds are properly handled and accounted for (see pages 156–58). He ensures that Church funds are never mixed with personal funds.

The stake president ensures that all clerks in the stake and all stake and ward leaders are taught their responsibilities for finances. He also ensures that they follow Church policies and procedures in fulfilling these responsibilities. He regularly counsels with leaders and clerks concerning their personal temporal circumstances and their responsibilities for the sacred funds of the Church.

The stake president teaches members to pay a full tithe and give generous offerings (see pages 154–56).

The stake president manages the stake budget and expenditures (see pages 159–60). He regularly reviews budgets and expenditures with bishops, stake clerks, and stake leaders. He ensures that budget allowance guidelines are followed in the stake (see pages 159–60).

The stake president ensures that the stake and wards follow any applicable tax regulations to preserve the Church's tax-exempt status (see page 162).

The stake president ensures that the stake audit committee is organized and functioning properly. He also reviews audits of stake and ward financial records. The stake president ensures that audit concerns are resolved (see pages 161–62).

Stake Clerk (or Assistant Stake Clerk)

The stake president assigns the stake clerk or an assistant stake clerk to help with stake financial record keeping. This is an important calling to help account for and protect the sacred funds of the Church. The financial record-keeping duties of this clerk are outlined below and explained further in instructions from the administration office.

With a member of the stake presidency, a stake clerk receipts income properly (such as funds collected from members for optional enrichment activities or from other stakes for multistake activities). Any funds received should be given to a member of the stake presidency for safekeeping until the funds are receipted. A stake clerk also accompanies the member of the stake presidency who deposits the income.

This clerk prepares checks or disbursement approval forms and makes sure stake financial obligations are paid promptly. Each month he reconciles the checking account and the local deposit bank account, if any, and funds in the "Other" category. If necessary, he helps wards reconcile their checking accounts and funds in the "Other" category.

He helps the stake presidency prepare the annual stake budget and keep track of the stake budget allowance (see pages 159–60). He also helps the stake president keep track of missionary funds in the stake.

He makes sure the stake is complying with all applicable tax laws (see page 162). He also participates in periodic audits by stake auditors and takes corrective actions as needed (see pages 161–62).

Ward Financial Leadership

Bishop

The bishop oversees ward finances. He may delegate much of this work to his counselors and clerks. He should read all instructions from the administration office about Church finances.

The bishop ensures that ward funds are properly handled and accounted for (see pages 156–58). He

16. Finances

ensures that Church funds are never mixed with personal funds.

The bishop ensures that all clerks in the ward and all ward leaders are taught their responsibilities for finances. He also ensures that they follow Church policies and procedures in fulfilling these responsibilities. He regularly counsels with leaders and clerks concerning their personal temporal circumstances and their responsibilities for the sacred funds of the Church.

The bishop teaches members to pay a full tithe and give generous offerings (see this page through page 156).

The bishop manages the ward budget and expenditures (see pages 159–60). He regularly reviews budgets and expenditures with ward clerks and ward leaders. He ensures that budget allowance guidelines are followed in the ward (see pages 159–60).

The bishop ensures that the ward follows applicable tax regulations to preserve the Church's tax-exempt status (see page 162).

The bishop should be available to answer questions during audits of ward financial records (see pages 161–62).

Ward Clerk (or Assistant Ward Clerk)

The bishop assigns the ward clerk or an assistant ward clerk to assist with ward financial record keeping. This is an important calling to help account for and protect the sacred funds of the Church. The financial record-keeping duties of this clerk are outlined below and explained further in instructions from the administration office.

Each week a clerk helps a member of the bishopric account for all tithes and other offerings. He accompanies the member of the bishopric who deposits these funds in a bank. He also submits or transmits the related donation reports to the administration office.

The clerk assigned to assist with financial record keeping prepares checks or disbursement approval forms and makes sure ward financial obligations are paid promptly. This clerk also helps prepare the annual ward budget (see page 159).

Each month this clerk reconciles the ward checking account, funds in the "Other" category, and any other financial records required. He also informs the bishop of (1) the status of ward expenditures in relation to the budget allowance and (2) the amount of funds in the ward "Missionary" and "Other" categories.

Each year this clerk prepares and organizes records to help the bishop conduct tithing settlement. He also helps the bishop prepare the Tithing Declaration Report. In addition, he produces and distributes Year-to-Date Tithing and Offerings Statements and year-end summaries to members.

This clerk should participate in financial audits by stake auditors and take corrective actions as needed (see pages 161–62).

Contributions by Members

Church leaders should teach members the principles of tithes and other offerings and encourage members to live these principles. Nonmembers may also make contributions to the Church. Tithes, other offerings, and other contributions are described in the following paragraphs.

Tithing

Definition of Tithing

The First Presidency has written: "The simplest statement we know of is the statement of the Lord himself, namely, that the members of the Church should pay 'one-tenth of all their interest annually,' which is understood to mean income. No one is justified in making any other statement than this" (First Presidency letter, Mar. 19, 1970; see also D&C 119:4).

Who Should Pay Tithing

All Church members who have income should pay tithing, with the following exceptions:

1. Members who are entirely dependent on Church welfare assistance.
2. Full-time missionaries. (However, missionaries should pay tithing on personal income beyond the amount they receive for their support.)

A person who has been excommunicated may not pay tithing or other offerings to the Church.

If mission presidents have income that should be tithed, they normally pay tithing in the ward where their membership records are located (see page 146). However, if they are serving outside their own country and their membership records are in the ward where they are residing, they should generally make tithing contributions directly to Church headquarters.

When and How to Pay Tithing

Local leaders should encourage members to pay tithing as they receive their income. However, members who wish to pay annually may do so.

Members give their tithing and a completed Tithing and Other Offerings form to a member of the bishopric. See also "In-Kind Donations, Including Tithing" in the next column.

Use of Tithing Funds

Bishops may not use tithing funds for any purpose. All tithing funds must be remitted to the administration office (see D&C 120).

Tithing Settlement

The bishop holds tithing settlement near the end of each year. In urgent cases when the bishop is absent, the stake president may authorize one of the bishop's counselors to conduct tithing settlement.

All members should attend tithing settlement to make sure their contribution records are correct and to declare to the bishop their status as tithe payers. All members of a family should attend tithing settlement. In addition to reviewing records of members' tithing, fast offerings, and other donations, during tithing settlement the bishop can discuss the principle of tithing with them, encourage them to give a generous fast offering, and discuss other relevant matters. At the time of tithing settlement, a clerk or a member of the bishopric could also review the Individual Ordinance Summary with members (see page 145).

Instructions for tithing settlement are provided by the administration office.

Fast Offerings

Each month members should contribute fast offerings that are at least the equivalent value of the two consecutive meals not eaten during the fast. When possible, members are encouraged to be generous and contribute much more than this amount.

To contribute fast offerings, members give the offering and a completed Tithing and Other Offerings form to a member of the bishopric. Members may also give the offering and form to Aaronic Priesthood holders who are assigned to collect fast offerings each month and who take the offerings to the bishopric. Members should not give other contributions to these Aaronic Priesthood holders.

When Aaronic Priesthood holders are assigned to collect fast offerings, they should do so in pairs when possible. If distance or other circumstances make it necessary, Melchizedek Priesthood holders may assist them. For more information about Aaronic Priesthood holders collecting fast offerings, see page 186 in *Book 2*.

Members should contribute fast offerings without designating how the funds should be used. Bishops may not enter into arrangements or make commitments to give a member's fast-offering contribution to an individual or family or to use it for a special purpose that the donor designates.

Mission and temple presidents contribute fast offerings to the ward where their membership records are located.

Guidelines for using fast-offering funds are provided on pages 16–20.

In-Kind Donations, Including Tithing

The Church normally discourages paying tithing in kind. It is preferable for members to dispose of the property themselves and then pay tithing in cash. However, the payment of tithing in kind may be accepted in certain cases and may be a common practice in some areas of the world.

The Church accepts (1) stocks, bonds, or other securities that are marketable immediately and (2) some marketable real estate. Before accepting these contributions, local leaders should receive approval from the administration office. If members want to contribute any other items, the bishop should clear it with the stake president. The stake president should contact the administration office for approval before authorizing the bishop to accept the items.

Missionary Funds

Financing Missionary Service

See pages 95–96.

Contributing to Missionary Funds

Members may use the Tithing and Other Offerings form to contribute to Church missionary funds.

Contributions to the ward missionary fund are used solely to support full-time missionaries from the ward or stake as outlined on pages 95–96. Stake presidents and bishops should inform missionaries and others who contribute to the ward missionary fund that these contributions, including those that are prepaid, cannot be refunded (see page 156).

Contributions to the General Missionary Fund help spread the gospel in ways such as providing partial financial support for missionaries who need it to supplement contributions from themselves, their families, and the ward missionary fund. For more information about the General Missionary Fund, see page 96.

16. Finances

Contributions to the General Book of Mormon Fund are used to provide copies of the Book of Mormon for full-time missionaries as needed.

Stake presidents and bishops should send missionary funds and other funds that exceed reasonable stake and ward needs to the General Missionary Fund at the administration office. Bishops or individuals may contact the administration office for further information about contributions to the General Missionary Fund.

Humanitarian Aid

Church humanitarian work assists people in dire need throughout the world. Those who desire to contribute to the Church's humanitarian aid fund may use the Tithing and Other Offerings form. The ward remits these contributions according to instructions provided by the administration office. Donations may also be sent directly to Church headquarters at the following address:

Humanitarian Services
50 East North Temple Street, Room 701
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-6800

LDS Philanthropies

LDS Philanthropies is a department of the Office of the Presiding Bishopric that correlates, encourages, facilitates, and accepts voluntary philanthropic contributions to the Church and its related organizations and activities. Assistance in making contributions may be obtained by contacting LDS Philanthropies at Church headquarters at the following address:

LDS Philanthropies
15 East South Temple Street, Room 200E
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-6911

Perpetual Education Fund

The Perpetual Education Fund (PEF) assists worthy young adults who need help in qualifying for employment opportunities in their own countries by providing career training and educational loans in approved countries. Those who desire to contribute to this fund may use the Tithing and Other Offerings form. The ward remits these contributions according to instructions provided by the administration office. Donations may also be sent directly to Church headquarters at the following address:

Perpetual Education Fund Department
50 East North Temple Street, Room 832
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-1501

Applications for PEF loans are available through institutes of religion in approved countries (see page 135).

Contributions Not to Be Refunded

When tithes and other offerings are given to the Church, they belong to the Lord, to whom they are consecrated. These offerings include all contributions to the ward and general missionary funds. The essence of all such contributions is that they are freewill offerings, made without reservation of purpose, retention of control, ownership in any form, or expectation of any benefit by the donor other than the Lord's blessings.

It is therefore improper to refund missionary or other contributions to contributors. To do so not only violates the spirit of freewill offerings but may also cause legal and income tax complications in some countries for both the contributor and the Church.

Confidentiality of Tithing and Other Offerings

The amount of tithing and other offerings paid by a member is confidential. Only the bishop and those who are authorized to handle such contributions should know the amount. Stake presidents and bishops are not to announce the total amount of tithing received.

If necessary, the bishop may tell the elders quorum president or high priests group leader whether individual members of their quorum or group are full-tithe payers, contributors to the tithing funds, or exempt. Quorum presidents and group leaders must keep this information confidential.

Handling and Accounting for Funds

The stake president and bishop ensure that all Church funds are properly handled and accounted for according to current financial instructions. General principles are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Receiving Tithing and Other Offerings

The Lord has given bishops the sacred trust of receiving and accounting for the tithes and other offerings of the Saints (see D&C 119; 42:30–33).

Only the bishop and his counselors may receive tithes and other offerings. Under no circumstances should their wives, other members of their families, clerks, or other ward members receive these contributions. The only exception is when Aaronic Priesthood holders are assigned to collect fast offerings. These brethren give the fast-offering envelopes directly to a member of the bishopric.

Ward members should give contributions to a member of the bishopric in a sealed envelope with a properly completed Tithing and Other Offerings form enclosed. Church members should not place their tithes and other offerings in a contribution box. Checks should be made payable to the ward, not to the bishop or the Church.

Verifying Tithing and Other Offerings

Contribution envelopes should be opened and verified on Sunday, except during tithing settlement, when they are opened and verified on the day they are received. Two persons—a member of the bishopric and a clerk, or two members of the bishopric—should open each envelope together to verify that the funds enclosed are the same as the amount written on the Tithing and Other Offerings form. If the funds and the written amount differ, the contributor should be contacted as soon as possible to resolve the difference.

Depositing Tithing and Other Offerings

A member of the bishopric and another priesthood holder, usually the clerk who helped verify the donations, prepare the deposit.

Those who deposit funds should use, where available, (1) deposit bags that are locked when funds are counted and are opened only by the bank or (2) other tamper-resistant deposit bags. A clerk or member of the bishopric should check with the administration office or the local bank for availability of such deposit bags.

Where a 24-hour bank depository is available, the bishopric member, accompanied by the other priesthood holder, deposits the funds in the bank on the same day the funds are opened and verified.

Where a 24-hour bank depository is not available and the bank is closed on Sunday, the bishop designates a Melchizedek Priesthood holder, normally a bishopric member, to make the deposit at the bank the next business day. The person who makes the deposit is accountable for these funds. He should:

1. Ensure that the funds are kept secure until they are deposited at the bank.
2. Obtain, when the deposit is made, a bank-certified deposit receipt showing the date and the amount of the deposit.

Where a 24-hour bank depository is not available, the bishopric member and a clerk should complete the following procedure on the next Sunday before processing any donations for that day:

1. Compare the bank-certified deposit receipt to the previous week's deposit records to verify that the correct amount was deposited.
2. Sign the deposit slip and file it with the other donation information.

Stake presidents and bishops must be certain that Church funds are not deposited to the account of an individual or mixed with personal funds.

Safeguarding Church Funds

Members who are responsible for Church funds must never leave them in the meetinghouse overnight or leave them unattended at any time, such as during meetings and activities.

Receipting Tithing and Other Offerings

The administration office sends stakes and wards instructions for issuing receipts for tithing and other offerings.

Receipts to members who donate in kind (noncash tithing and other offerings) are issued only by the administration office. These receipts show no monetary value for the items contributed.

Receiving and Managing Budget Allowance Funds

See pages 159–60.

Managing Stake and Ward Checking Accounts

Each stake normally has one general checking account. The stake president manages this account, though his counselors and clerks may assist him. If the stake has a physical facilities account, the administration office will provide instructions for using it.

All ward funds are handled through one checking account. The bishop manages this account, though his counselors and clerks may assist him.

Each check must have two authorized signatures. Usually the stake president, his counselors, and the clerk assigned to finances are authorized to sign checks for the stake account. Usually the bishop, his counselors, and the clerk assigned to finances are authorized to sign checks for the ward account.

Although counselors may be authorized to sign checks, they should not do so unless the stake president or bishop has approved the expenditure.

A check should not be signed until it is filled out completely.

The stake president or bishop should make sure the bank statement for the stake or ward checking account is mailed directly to his home, not to the meetinghouse or a clerk's home. He should open each statement promptly, review it, and give it to the clerk to be reconciled. The clerk should sign the reconciliation. The stake president or bishop then reviews and signs the reconciliation. Finally, he reviews the monthly financial statement or report and ensures that it is reconciled.

Checkbooks and blank checks should be stored in a locked file or cabinet. They must not be left unattended when they are not locked securely. If any blank checks are missing, the stake president or bishop immediately reports the numbers of these checks to the administration office. He also requests a stop payment on the missing checks.

Stakes and wards that have checking accounts may not have savings accounts. Quorums, auxiliaries, and Scout organizations may not have checking accounts, savings accounts, or petty cash funds. Their budgeted expenses are all paid through the stake or ward checking account.

The instructions that apply to the use of checks also apply to the use of other financial payment methods.

Managing Stake and Ward Funds Not Held in a Checking Account

This section applies to units outside the United States and Canada that do not manage their funds through a checking account. Instead, these units have cash working funds, savings accounts, or bank accounts accessed by a debit card.

The administration office provides specific guidelines for these units to follow. Some basic control principles are outlined below:

1. A unit should have only one cash working fund, savings account, or debit card bank account.
2. The funds should be controlled by the stake president or bishop.
3. Money from cash working funds, savings accounts, or debit cards should not be used until two authorized people have signed a cash disbursement approval form. This form should not be signed until it is filled out completely.

   Supporting documents such as invoices, bills, or receipts should be attached to the cash disbursement approval form. If funds are advanced to a member, he or she should also sign the form, acknowledging the receipt of the money and noting the date and the amount. The member should then provide supporting documentation for the funds spent and return any unspent funds.
4. If there is a bank statement, it should be delivered directly to the stake president or bishop, not to the meetinghouse or a clerk. He should open each bank statement promptly, review it, and give it to the clerk to be reconciled. The clerk should sign the reconciliation. The stake president or bishop then reviews and signs the reconciliation.
5. The stake president or bishop reviews financial reports and ensures that they are reconciled.
6. The stake president or bishop maintains custody of cash working funds.
7. Cash working funds should be stored in a wallet, pouch, or other container that is separate from personal funds. Such storage containers must be physically safeguarded at all times. Church funds and personal funds should never be mixed.
8. Cash working funds should be counted monthly by two authorized signers. The counts and signatures should be documented on forms provided by the administration office. Any fund shortages should be reported immediately to the area controller.
9. Church funds are never to be borrowed or used for personal purposes.
10. All disbursements should be recorded promptly, and all bills, receipts, or other documents supporting the disbursements should be retained.

Keeping Financial Records

Stakes and wards should keep current, accurate financial records. These records can help stake presidents and bishops account for and protect the sacred funds of the Church. These records are also necessary for preparing budgets, managing the budget allowance, and providing information to members on their financial contributions.

For information about the use and retention of records and reports, clerks should refer to instructions from the administration office. Financial records should be retained for at least three years plus the current year. However, local laws may require longer retention periods.

Budget and Expenditures

Stake and Ward Budgets

Every stake and ward prepares and operates on a budget. The stake president manages the stake budget, and the bishop manages the ward budget, though each may assign a counselor to supervise it under his direction.

No stake or ward expenses may be incurred or paid without the presiding officer's authorization. Stake presidents regularly review ward expenditures with each bishop as part of the monthly priesthood interview.

Stake presidencies and bishoprics should begin preparing budgets well before the beginning of each calendar year as follows:

1. Review the amounts spent during the previous year to be sure recurring expenses are considered.
2. Ask organizations to estimate their budget needs in detail.
3. Compile the budget, using wise budgeting practices, being equitable, and ensuring that projected expenses do not exceed anticipated budget allowance funds.

It is not necessary to call for a sustaining vote to accept the budget.

Budget Allowance

The budget allowance provides general Church funds to pay for the activities and programs of stakes and wards. It eliminates the need to receive budget contributions from members. Faithful payment of tithes has made the budget allowance possible.

Allocation of Budget Allowance Funds

The administration office allocates budget funds based on attendance in the following categories:

1. Sacrament meeting
2. Young men
3. Young women
4. Primary children ages 8–11
5. Young single adults

The stake president determines how much of the funds are allocated to the stake and to the wards. He ensures that the stake and wards are funded fairly and adequately as permitted within these guidelines.

The stake president works with bishops in a unified, cooperative manner. If unforeseen changes occur that may necessitate altering original budget allowances, he makes sure that fair adjustments are made.

The bishop oversees the allocation of budget allowance funds in the ward. He ensures that ward organizations are funded fairly and adequately.

Priesthood leaders make every effort to ensure that the level of budget allocations and activities for the Young Men and Young Women organizations are equitable.

General Principles and Guidelines

Most questions about the budget allowance can be answered by applying the basic principles that are outlined below. The stake presidency and bishopric should teach these principles to priesthood and auxiliary leaders.

The budget allowance was created to reduce the financial and time burdens on members. If necessary, priesthood and auxiliary leaders should reduce and simplify activities to stay within the allowance. Activities should have little or no cost, should build testimonies, and should provide meaningful service to others.

Stake or ward budget allowance funds should be used to pay for all Church activities, programs, and supplies. Members should not pay fees to participate (exceptions may be made for annual camps and enrichment activities as explained on page 160). Nor should they provide materials, supplies, rental or admission fees, or long-distance transportation at their own expense. In addition, members should not be charged for class manuals. Activities in which many members provide food may be held if doing so does not place undue burdens on members.

Members who want to contribute additional funds to the Church may not designate them for the stake or ward budget. Instead, leaders should encourage them to contribute the funds to fast offerings, missionary funds, or other authorized donation categories.

Stake presidents and bishops make sure budget allowance funds are spent wisely. Funds should be used to bless people and to further gospel purposes. Leaders also ensure that all expenditures are within the allowance. The success of the budget allowance depends on the efforts of local priesthood leaders to monitor and control Church finances and expenses.

Unneeded budget allowance funds should not be spent. Unused ward funds are returned to the stake. Unused stake funds are returned to the administration office. Some unspent funds may be retained if

16. Finances

they are needed for specific activities that are planned for the next year.

For the budget allowance to succeed, it is important that quarterly reports are accurate and on time. Also, each ward's Tithing Declaration Report for the previous year should be (1) reconciled to deposits made by the ward and (2) sent to the administration office each year as instructed by that office.

The budget allowance does not include expenses for building construction, maintenance, telephones, utilities, or computers. These expenses are paid from general Church funds according to current guidelines.

For more details about the budget allowance, see the current budget allowance instructions, which are available from the administration office.

Funding Special Activities and Equipment

Special Stake and Multistake Activities

Local leaders are encouraged to hold stake and multistake activities that provide opportunities to develop unity and friendships, especially among youth and young adults. A broad scope of such activities may be held, including cultural activities, athletic programs and events, dances and socials, and camps.

Local leaders should ensure that they budget adequate funds to support an appropriate number of stake and multistake activities. These funds should come from the local unit budget allowance.

For more information about activities, see pages 271–80 in *Book 2*.

Travel for Activities

Long-distance travel for Church activities is discouraged. Units should not carry over significant portions of the budget allowance from one year to the next to be used for travel expenses. For Church travel policies, see pages 279–80 in *Book 2*.

Youth Conferences

Youth conferences should be funded from the budget allowance. Members should not be asked for more money.

Annual Camps or Similar Activities

The Church encourages one annual extended Scout camp or similar activity for young men ages 12 to 18 and one annual camp or similar activity for young women ages 12 to 18. The Church also encourages one annual day camp for Scouts ages 8 through 11 (see the *Scouting Handbook*, page 4).

If there are not sufficient stake and ward budget funds, leaders may ask participants to pay for part or all of this one annual camp or similar activity by individually earning their own money. If funds from participants are insufficient, the stake president or bishop may authorize group fund-raising activities that comply with the guidelines on page 161.

In no case should the expenses or travel for these camps or activities be excessive. Nor should the lack of personal funds prohibit a member from participating.

Equipment for Annual Camps

If possible, equipment that the unit needs for annual camps is purchased with budget allowance funds. If these funds are insufficient, the stake president or bishop may authorize group fund-raising activities that comply with the guidelines on page 161. Such activities may not be used to purchase equipment or uniforms for individuals. Nor may they be used to fund other activities.

Scouting

Scouting activities and awards for young men ages 8 through 17 are funded from the budget allowance. If necessary, an exception may be made for one annual Scout camp or similar activity as explained in "Annual Camps or Similar Activities" on this page.

Where Scouting is authorized, the Church pays all or part of the following registration fees:

1. For boys and young men ages 8 through 17.
2. For Scout leaders.
3. For unit chartering.

Registration and chartering expenses are paid from the stake general checking account. The Church provides these funds in addition to the budget allowance.

Optional Enrichment Activities

Units may sponsor optional enrichment activities that are presented by Church-related entities. Such activities include Church university performance groups and periodic major cultural events. Members may be charged a modest fee to defray the costs of such events if the program is entirely optional, the cost is not burdensome, and the event is not used to raise funds. Budget funds may be used to help those who want to attend but are unable to pay.

Fund-Raising

Fund-raising activities are not normally approved because expenses for stake and ward activities are paid with budget allowance funds. As an exception, a stake president or bishop may authorize group fund-raising activities only when necessary to help pay for annual camps and equipment as outlined on page 160.

If a fund-raising activity is held, it should provide a meaningful value or service. It should be a positive experience that builds unity.

Contributions to fund-raising activities should be voluntary. Priesthood leaders should take special care to ensure that members do not feel obligated to contribute.

Stakes and wards that sponsor fund-raising activities should not advertise or solicit beyond their boundaries. Nor should they sell products or services door-to-door.

Examples of fund-raising activities that are not approved include:

1. Activities that would be taxable.
2. Activities completed with paid labor, either by employees or by contract.
3. Entertainment for which the stake or ward pays an orchestra, entertainers, or others for their services; when admission is charged; *and when the intent of the activity is to raise funds.*
4. The sale of commercial goods or services, including food storage items.
5. Games of chance, such as raffles and bingo.

Any exceptions to these instructions must be approved by the administration office.

The Friends of Scouting fund drive in the United States will continue as a separate, voluntary solicitation.

Audits

Stake Audit Committee

The stake president appoints a stake audit committee consisting of one of his counselors as chairman and two other stake members who understand financial matters. The counselor who serves as chairman generally should not sign checks or otherwise be involved in stake financial record keeping. Committee members should not be stake auditors and should not perform stake or ward financial record keeping.

Stake Auditors

The chairman of the stake audit committee calls at least two stake auditors. The stake auditors should be trustworthy Church members who are experienced, if possible, in accounting or auditing. They should be approved by the stake presidency and high council, but they are not sustained and usually are not set apart.

The Auditing Process

Stake auditors audit financial records of the stake, wards, branches, and family history centers twice each year. Auditors ensure that tithing and other contributions are properly recorded, Church funds are properly accounted for and protected, and financial records are complete and accurate. The unit's presiding officer and clerk assigned to finances should be available to answer questions during audits.

The stake president, stake audit committee, and stake clerk assigned to finances review finished audits. They sign the audit reports and ensure that the originals are sent to the administration office to arrive by the due date. They also ensure that any exceptions disclosed by an audit are promptly corrected.

Local Unit Area Auditor/Trainer

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency calls a local unit area auditor/trainer for each area. In the United States and Canada, he reports to the Church Auditing Department. Outside the United States and Canada, he reports to the member and statistical records manager. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may also call assistant auditor/trainers.

The primary responsibility of local unit area auditor/trainers (and their assistants where called) is to provide training on audits and financial policies to priesthood leaders, clerks, audit committees, and stake auditors. They also follow up on missing audits and high-risk audit exceptions and perform special audits as assigned.

Embezzlement of Church Funds

If a person has embezzled Church funds, the stake president or the chairman of the stake audit committee should be notified promptly. He notifies the Church Auditing Department (or the area financial controller if the unit is outside the United States and Canada). The Auditing Department (or area financial controller) sends a loss report form to the stake president or the chairman of the audit committee. He

16. Finances

makes sure the form is properly completed and submitted.

If a major misuse of funds is discovered, the stake president or chairman of the audit committee also notifies a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

Stake Clerk or Assistant Stake Clerk Assigned to Finances

The stake clerk or the assistant stake clerk assigned to finances ensures that other clerks in the stake and wards are properly instructed in financial record keeping. He should be aware of audit findings. He also helps clerks promptly resolve any problems disclosed by audits.

For More Information

More information on audit committees, auditors, and audit procedures is included on the stake and ward audit report forms and instructions. Stake audit committees and auditors may direct questions to the Church Auditing Department (or area financial controller):

Church Auditing Department
50 East North Temple Street, Room 1687B
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-2200
Telephone: 1-801-240-4018 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-4018

Taxes

The tax information in this section applies only in the United States and Canada. If priesthood leaders in the United States and Canada need additional information, they should contact:

Tax Administration
50 East North Temple Street, Room 2223
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3620
Telephone: 1-801-240-3003 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3003

Priesthood leaders outside the United States and Canada should contact the administration office to resolve questions on taxes.

Tax-Exempt Status

The Church normally is exempt from paying sales, property, income, and other taxes because it is a religious organization. Church buildings and other property are to be used for the purposes of worship, religious instruction, and other Church-related activities. Facilities are not to be used for political, business, or investment purposes as outlined on page 181. To do so violates laws that permit tax exemption of Church property.

It is important that stake and ward leaders follow these guidelines to preserve the Church's tax-exempt status. If one stake or ward misuses the Church's tax-exempt status, other Church units could be affected.

Sales and Use Tax

Sales and use tax laws and how they apply to the Church vary from state to state. Leaders should check local tax laws to see whether the Church is exempt or must pay such taxes.

Property Tax

The Tax Administration Division files all property tax exemptions and pays all required property taxes. No action is required by local leaders.

17. Physical Facilities

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

Purpose

Church physical facilities programs provide and maintain meetinghouses to help the Church fulfill its mission. Meetinghouses should (1) provide a spiritual setting for members to worship and (2) present an image of reverence and dignity in the community.

Organization

Physical Facilities Department

The Physical Facilities Department of the Church oversees the maintenance of existing meetinghouses and the construction or acquisition of new meetinghouses.

Administration Offices

Administration offices are extensions of the Physical Facilities Department. Professional staffs help local Church leaders with physical facilities matters as needed.

Multistake facilities management groups have been established to do physical facilities work under the direction of the administration office.

Stake Presidency

Members of the stake presidency ensure that Church facilities are appropriately used, cared for, and protected. They teach leaders and members their responsibilities for using and caring for these facilities. They assign a high councilor to be the stake physical facilities representative. They meet with him as needed to review needs and projects.

Stake Physical Facilities Representative

The stake physical facilities representative (a high councilor) assists the stake presidency in physical facilities matters as follows:

He helps teach and implement meetinghouse use and care standards.

He coordinates the distribution and control of keys.

He coordinates the instruction of ward building representatives in their duties.

He participates in annual meetinghouse inspections conducted by representatives of the administration office, unless the stake presidency designates an alternate to participate.

Stake Building Specialist for Water Conservation

As needed, the stake presidency or an assigned high councilor may call a stake building specialist for water conservation for each meetinghouse and recreational property in the stake. These specialists work under the direction of the stake physical facilities representative. This could be an opportunity for the participation of prospective elders, less-active members, and responsible Aaronic Priesthood youth.

These specialists assist the local facilities management group in watering lawns, trees, and shrubs. They test and operate irrigation controls and other water fixtures according to training provided by the facilities manager. They follow guidelines from the facilities manager on the frequency and duration of watering periods. They monitor the lawn at each property and adjust the irrigation system based on current weather conditions and watering needs.

Agent Bishop

If more than one ward meets in a building, the stake presidency assigns one bishop to be the agent bishop. He coordinates assignments for member participation in meetinghouse care and maintenance. He also coordinates safety and security procedures for the meetinghouse. In addition, he coordinates scheduling of the building with the stake and other wards that use it, though he may assign another member to do the scheduling.

Bishopric

Members of the bishopric are responsible for the use, care, and security of the meetinghouse. They teach ward members how to use and care for it. They organize member participation in meetinghouse care and maintenance, making assignments as needed. They also distribute meetinghouse keys.

Members of the bishopric ensure that appropriate safety precautions are taken in the meetinghouse and on the grounds (see page 164).

Ward Building Representative

Each ward should have a ward building representative. The bishop may appoint a member of the bishopric to serve in this position, or the bishopric may call another member to do so.

The ward building representative helps the bishopric with meetinghouse responsibilities such as energy conservation, safety, security, snow removal (if applicable), and member participation in cleaning and maintenance. He takes care of building-related needs during meetings, activities, and emergencies. If needed, he receives instruction from the stake physical facilities representative in operating sound, heating, air conditioning, and other building systems.

Members

Priesthood leaders should emphasize that member participation is a key factor in meetinghouse care and maintenance. Members are encouraged to provide individual or group services, depending on their skills and abilities.

Administration of Stake Physical Facilities

Use and Care of Meetinghouses

With help from the administration office, stake and ward programs for physical facilities ensure that meetinghouses and grounds are always neat, clean, attractive, and in good repair. Church facilities should reflect proper care and respect in every way.

Meetinghouse Maintenance and Inspection

Representatives of the administration office inspect each meetinghouse annually. The stake physical facilities representative, or an alternate who is designated by the stake president, participates in these inspections. He should have full authorization to act on behalf of the stake presidency in this capacity. Those who participate in these inspections identify building maintenance needs and make plans for repairing or renewing its systems and components and for making other needed improvements.

Meetinghouse Planning

The stake presidency provides information to help the administration office prepare and update a master plan of projected needs for future building sites and new or additional meetinghouse space.

Energy and Water Conservation

The Church incurs substantial utility costs for meetinghouses. Although stakes and wards do not bear these costs directly, leaders should ensure that lighting, heating, air conditioning, equipment, and water are used as economically as possible. Leaders should encourage those who use the meetinghouses to turn off lights and equipment when they are not needed and to follow other energy and water conservation practices.

In addition, leaders are encouraged to follow the energy and water conservation initiatives of local governments.

As needed, a stake building specialist for water conservation may be called for each meetinghouse and recreational property in the stake (see "Stake Building Specialist for Water Conservation" on page 163).

Safety, Security, Emergencies, and Loss Prevention

Priesthood leaders should instruct members, especially women and youth, not to be alone in an unlocked Church building.

Leaders should take reasonable measures to keep hallways, stairs, stairwells, exit doors, utility rooms, and sidewalks free of obstructions and other hazards. Leaders also ensure that hazardous materials or flammable items such as equipment fuel, hay, straw, and cornstalks are not used or stored in meetinghouses (see also "Decorations" on page 182).

Leaders control key distribution and establish effective building lockup procedures. They also see that interior classrooms and other rooms that do not contain valuable items are left unlocked.

Leaders ensure that local emergency telephone numbers for the police, fire department, and ambulance are posted on or near each telephone with brief instructions. They report intruders to the police immediately.

Accidents

The bishop and stake president should be notified promptly of:

1. An accident, injury, or illness that occurs on Church property or is the result of an occurrence during a Church-sponsored activity.
2. A missing person who was participating in a Church-sponsored activity.

3. Serious damage to private, public, or Church property that occurs during a Church-sponsored activity.

In these situations, leaders should observe the applicable guidelines listed below:

1. Render first aid. If a person needs medical care beyond simple first aid, contact emergency medical services, the bishop or stake president, and the parent, guardian, or other next of kin. In case of a missing person or fatality, immediately notify local law enforcement authorities and cooperate fully with them.
2. Provide emotional support and show empathy and concern.
3. Do not encourage or discourage legal action against the Church, and do not make commitments on behalf of the Church.

If a person has been seriously injured, if private or public property has been seriously damaged, or if legal action is threatened, the stake president (or the bishop under his direction) promptly:

1. Notifies the Risk Management Division at Church headquarters if the unit is in the United States or Canada (telephone 1-801-240-4049 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-4049; after business hours or on weekends, call 1-801-240-1000 or 1-800-453-3860, and the operator will contact someone immediately).
2. Notifies the administration office if the unit is not in the United States or Canada.

The stake president (or the bishop under his direction) should refer questions about claims against the Church to the Risk Management Division or the administration office.

Damage to Church Property

If Church property is seriously damaged, leaders should notify the facilities management group or the administration office.

Policies on Using Church Buildings and Other Property

See pages 181–83 and *Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property*.

18. Creating, Changing, and Naming Church Units

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

Creating, Changing, or Discontinuing Church Units

Church units include stakes, districts, wards, and branches. They are created, changed, or discontinued only when the need is clearly demonstrated.

The following guidelines are intended to help ensure that units are divided only when they are sufficiently strong. Dividing a unit prematurely can weaken it before it becomes a center of strength. Premature divisions can also overburden members.

Stakes and Districts

Stakes are created from mission districts or by dividing existing stakes. In the United States and Canada, stakes generally should have a minimum of 3,000 members and five wards. In all other countries, stakes generally should have a minimum of 1,900 members and five wards. There is no fixed minimum number of members or branches needed to create a district.

All new stakes must have at least 24 active, full-tithe paying Melchizedek Priesthood holders, in addition to the required minimum of 15 such brethren in each ward in the stake.

To propose creating a stake or district, changing its boundaries, changing its name, or discontinuing it, the stake or mission president completes a Stake and District Organization Application form and marks any proposed boundary changes on a map. In the United States and Canada, stake and mission presidents can obtain an application form and a unit map from the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee support staff at Church headquarters (telephone 1-801-240-3500 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3500). In other countries, stake and mission presidents can obtain application forms and unit maps from their administration office. If unit maps are not available from that office, leaders should obtain two standard, detailed maps with street or town indexes and use them to clearly identify unit boundaries.

A stake president who is proposing a stake change or a mission president who is proposing the creation of a stake from a mission district gives the completed application and maps to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. The proposal must have the written endorsement of the presidents of each affected stake or mission.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency reviews all applications to ensure that instructions and guidelines have been followed. Before endorsing a proposal for a district to be made a stake, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency ensures that the unit is well above the minimum guidelines and has been functioning at the desired level of maturity and strength. If the member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency endorses the proposal, the application and maps are submitted to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee. Approval is given only by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.

Wards and Branches in Stakes

Wards and branches in stakes are created from existing wards or from branches in stakes or missions. The stake president uses the same procedures for creating a branch as he does for a ward.

In the United States and Canada, wards generally should have at least 300 members. In all other countries, wards generally should have at least 150 members. There is no fixed minimum number of members needed to create a branch.

All new wards must have at least 15 Melchizedek Priesthood holders who are active in the Church, full-tithe payers, and capable of serving in a priesthood or auxiliary position. Normally all new wards must have at least one active, full-tithe paying Melchizedek Priesthood holder per 20 members. Requests for exceptions may be submitted in areas where this may not be possible.

To propose creating a ward or branch in a stake, changing its boundaries, changing its name, or discontinuing it, the stake president completes a Ward and Branch Organization Application form and marks any proposed boundary changes on a map. Instructions for obtaining the application form and maps are provided under "Stakes and Districts" on this page.

The stake president gives the completed application and maps to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. The proposal must have the written endorsement of the presidents of each affected stake or mission.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency reviews all applications to ensure that instructions and guidelines have been followed. Before endorsing a proposal for a branch to be made a ward, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency ensures that the unit is well above the minimum guidelines and has been functioning at the desired level of maturity and strength. If the member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency endorses the proposal, the application and maps are submitted to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

When new wards are created, the stake president should also complete a Recommendation for New Bishop form for each bishop being recommended. This form should be submitted with the proposal. In the United States and Canada, this form can be obtained from the Office of the First Presidency. In other countries, it can be obtained from the administration office.

Branches in Missions

To propose creating a branch in a mission, changing its boundaries, changing its name, transferring it, or discontinuing it, the mission president completes a Ward and Branch Organization Application form and marks any proposed boundary changes on a map. Instructions for obtaining the application form and maps are provided under "Stakes and Districts" on page 167. The mission president gives the completed application and maps to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may give final approval or denial of a proposal to (1) create a branch in a mission, (2) discontinue it, or (3) change its boundaries if the change does not affect an adjacent district, mission, or stake. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency must send copies of approved applications and maps to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee at Church headquarters before a unit number can be assigned.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may endorse but not give final approval of a proposal to (1) change the name of a branch in a mission, (2) transfer it to another district, mission, or stake, or (3) change its boundaries if the change would affect an adjacent district, mission, or stake. If the member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency endorses the proposal, the application and maps are submitted to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency may endorse but not give final approval of a proposal to create or change a mission branch for young single adults, single adults, students, members who speak nonnative languages, members who have special needs, or members in the military. If the member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency endorses the proposal, the application and maps are submitted to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Nonnative Language Wards and Branches

Priesthood leaders should carefully foster the welfare of members within their boundaries who do not speak the predominant language. In circumstances where the conventional ward cannot provide for the needs of a nonnative language group, and when a language barrier exists among a sufficient number of members in a stake, the stake president may recommend that a nonnative language ward or branch be created. Such a ward generally should have at least 250 members. There is no fixed minimum number of members needed to create a branch.

Nonnative language units are created or changed using the procedures that are outlined in "Wards and Branches in Stakes" on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Single Member Wards and Branches

Young Single Adult Wards and Branches

Creation. Most young single adults are best served as members of conventional wards. In some exceptional situations, units for young single adults may be created. If a stake includes 125 or more single members ages 21 through 30 who want to attend a young single adult ward, the stake president may recommend that such a ward be created. He may recommend that a young single adult branch be created if 50 or more unmarried members ages 21 through 30 live in the stake and want to attend.

If there are too few members to create a young single adult ward in one stake, stake presidents may recommend creating a young single adult ward with membership from more than one stake. If the First Presidency approves the recommendation, the ward may include young single adults who are members of two or more (usually limited to four) stakes. These stakes must be contiguous to the stake where the young single adult ward is located. The ward will be the responsibility of one of the participating stakes, as assigned by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

Young single adult units are created or changed using the procedures that are outlined in "Wards and Branches in Stakes" on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Membership. Generally, young single adult wards should not have more than 250 members. Membership is restricted to those who live within the stake(s) authorized to participate in the ward.

Members who are eligible to attend a young single adult ward may choose to be members of that ward or remain in their conventional ward. Membership records should be in the ward the person is attending.

Membership in a young single adult ward should be viewed as a temporary preparation for serving in a conventional ward. Members of young single adult wards normally should return to a conventional ward when they are married, when they reach the age of 31, or when warranted by other circumstances.

Single parents with children at home normally remain in their conventional ward so the children will have the benefit of Primary and youth programs. However, the parents may attend the activities of the young single adult ward.

Unmarried members ages 18 through 20 who live with their parents normally remain in their conventional ward. If they live away from home, they may attend a young single adult ward.

Single Adult Wards

Creation. In the exceptional circumstance that a stake includes 150 or more single adults ages 31 and older who want to be members of a single adult ward, the stake president may recommend that such a ward be created. Single adult wards are created or changed using the procedures outlined in "Wards and Branches in Stakes" on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Membership. Members who are eligible to attend a single adult ward may choose to be members of that ward or remain in their conventional ward. Membership records should be in the ward the person is attending.

Single parents with children at home normally remain in their conventional ward so the children will have the benefit of Primary and youth programs. However, the parents may attend the activities of the single adult ward.

Student Stakes, Wards, and Branches

Creation. A stake president may recommend that a student stake be created when 1,500 or more members, married or single, attend a college or university located in his stake.

A stake president may recommend that a student ward be created when 125 or more members, married or single, attend a college or university located in his stake and want to attend a student ward.

Student units are created or changed using the procedures outlined on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Membership. Single students who live in housing that is located on campus or owned by a university should be members of a student ward if one exists at the institution. Single students who live away from home but off campus may choose to be members of a student ward or of the conventional ward where they reside. If there is more than one student ward in the area, and if students choose to attend a student ward, they should be members of the ward that includes their living quarters in its boundaries.

Unmarried students who live with their parents normally remain in their conventional ward.

Unmarried members who are not students do not normally attend student wards. Exceptions may be made in stakes that do not have a single member ward if the bishop of the home ward feels that it would be in the member's best interest to belong to a student ward. Such exceptions must be approved by the parents (where appropriate), by both bishops, and by both stake presidents.

Married students may choose to be members of a student ward or of the conventional ward where they reside.

Special Needs Wards and Branches

Wards or branches may be created for groups of members who have special needs, such as hearing-impaired members or members in care centers, residential treatment programs, or prisons. These units are created or changed using the procedures outlined in "Wards and Branches in Stakes" on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

Military Wards and Branches

Members in military service normally participate in the wards or branches near their military installation. However, a military ward or branch may be organized when there are sufficient numbers of military personnel in an area and when at least one of the following statements applies:

1. The military personnel are in a foreign country where they do not understand the language spoken in the local ward or branch.
2. The military personnel are unable to leave the military installation because of training requirements or other restrictions.

Military wards and branches are created or changed using the procedures outlined in "Wards and Branches in Stakes" on pages 167–68. Approval is given only by the First Presidency.

When a stake or mission president organizes a military ward or branch that meets on a military installation, he should be aware that members who are not associated with the military will probably not be allowed to attend on the installation.

If the number of Latter-day Saints on a military installation does not warrant the creation of a military branch, local leaders should establish a service member group. For information on service member groups, see page 138.

Naming Church Units

When necessary as new units are created, local leaders are invited to submit unit names to a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. They review all proposed unit names to ensure that the instructions and guidelines have been followed. If they endorse the proposal, it is submitted to the Boundary and Leadership Change Committee for review. All final decisions for naming Church units are made by the First Presidency.

Stakes and Districts

The name of a stake or district should uniquely identify it from other stakes or districts. Generally, names of existing stakes and districts should not be changed.

The first word of the stake or district name is the name of the city where the headquarters of the stake or district is located.

In the United States and Canada, the second word is usually the state or province in which the stake or district is located. In other countries the second word is usually the name of the country. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Office of the First Presidency. (One such exception is that stakes in Salt Lake City do not include the word *Utah*.)

When the name of a city is repeated in the name of its state, province, or country, the name of the state, province, or country is not used as part of the stake or district name. Examples are shown below:

Colorado Springs East Stake, *not* Colorado Springs Colorado East Stake

Guatemala City Central Stake, *not* Guatemala City Guatemala Central Stake

Idaho Falls Eagle Rock Stake, *not* Idaho Falls Idaho Eagle Rock Stake

Mexico City Azteca Stake, *not* Mexico City Mexico Azteca Stake

When more than one stake or district is in the same city, the third word is an identifying characteristic, such as a compass direction (*North, South, East,* or *West*), the name of a community, or the name of a geographical feature that is within or adjacent to unit boundaries. Other directional terms (such as *Southwest*), names of people, numbers, or segregating terms (such as *Spanish* or *Hearing Impaired*) should not be used.

Wards and Branches

The name of a ward or branch should uniquely identify it so that people in the community can recognize and locate it. The name should be chosen carefully so it will not need to be changed later. Generally, names of existing wards and branches should not be changed.

The ward or branch should be named after a city, subdivision, neighborhood, street, or geographical feature that is within or adjacent to unit boundaries. The name of only one city, subdivision, neighborhood, street, or geographical feature should be used in the unit name. If there is more than one ward or branch with the same name, a number should be added as part of the name, such as Montevideo First Ward, Montevideo Second Ward, and Montevideo Third Ward. The name of the ward or branch should be in the language of the area. If the language does not use the Roman alphabet, a translation using Roman characters should be included. Compass directions (such as *East* or *Northwest*), names of people, and segregating terms (such as *Spanish* or *Hearing Impaired*) should not be included in the name.

Basic Unit Program

Units of the Church are at different stages of development and have different needs. As authorized by the Area Presidency, the Basic Unit Program may be used for establishing and organizing the Church where any of the following conditions apply:

1. The Church is in its beginning stages.
2. Members are scattered.
3. The number of members is small, and leadership is just beginning to develop.
4. Wards and stakes are not yet organized.
5. Members have special language needs or other special needs.

Units in the Basic Unit Program are typically small branches. These branches may be created when there are two or more families in an area and at least one of the members is a worthy priest in the Aaronic Priesthood or a worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holder.

Guidelines for the Basic Unit Program are provided in the *Basic Unit Program Guidebook.* Other helpful information for all branch leaders is provided in the *Branch Guidebook, Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders' Guidebook, Family Guidebook,* and *Teaching Guidebook.*

Growth of Church Units

The organization, auxiliaries, and programs of a Church unit should grow only as fast as the size and maturity of the unit permits. Leaders should not try to organize all the programs outlined in this handbook unless they have the strength of leadership and the number of members needed to do so. Trying to develop the full program of the Church prematurely can overburden members and may lead them to withdraw from Church activity.

19. Church Policies

For units in the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* in this section refers to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City.

For units outside the United States and Canada, the term *administration office* refers to the Presiding Bishopric administration office or service center that serves the unit.

This section consists of five parts, each of which includes subtopics in alphabetical order:

1. General Authority and Area Seventy policies
2. Administrative policies
3. Policies on using Church buildings and other property
4. Medical and health policies
5. Policies on moral issues

General Authority and Area Seventy Policies

Autographs and Photographs

Church members should not seek the autographs of General Authorities or Area Seventies, including signing in their scriptures, hymnals, or programs. Doing so detracts from their sacred callings and the spirit of meetings. It also could prevent them from greeting other members.

Members should not take photographs of General Authorities or Area Seventies in chapels.

Privately Published Writings

Members should not ask General Authorities or Area Seventies to coauthor or endorse Church books or other Church writings.

Recording Talks or Addresses

Church members should not record talks or addresses that General Authorities and Area Seventies give at stake conferences, missionary meetings, or other meetings. Members may record broadcasts of general conference on home equipment for personal, noncommercial use.

Statements Attributed to Church Leaders

From time to time, statements are circulated that are inaccurately attributed to leaders of the Church. Many such statements distort current Church teachings and are based on rumors and innuendos. They are never transmitted officially, but by word of mouth, e-mail, or other informal means. Church members are encouraged never to teach or pass on such statements without verifying that they are from approved Church sources, such as official statements, communications, and publications.

Any notes made when General Authorities, Area Seventies, or other general Church officers speak at stake conferences or other meetings should not be distributed without the consent of the speaker. Personal notes are for individual use only.

Administrative Policies

Accidents and Other Serious Situations

See pages 164–65.

Activities

See pages 276–80 in *Book 2*.

Adopted Children and Their Natural Parents

Local Church leaders should discourage adopted children and their adoptive parents from seeking to identify the children's natural parents. When adopted children have genetic or medical problems, the family may seek medical information about the natural parents but should be discouraged from seeking their identities.

Adoption and Foster Care

Members who are seeking to adopt children or provide foster care should strictly observe all legal requirements of the countries (and their governmental subdivisions) that are involved. They are encouraged to work through licensed, authorized agencies. Leaders should not become involved in bypassing such agencies to help place children privately or independently. Such placements are not sanctioned by the Church and may violate local laws.

For information about placing children for adoption, see "Unwed Parents" on pages 188–89.

Audiovisual Materials

Members may use audiovisual materials such as compact discs, audiocassettes, DVDs, videocassettes, and slides in Church settings with the following restrictions:

1. They may not be used during sacrament meetings (although appropriate recorded musical accompaniment may be used if a piano, organ, or accompanist is not available).
2. They may not be used if such use is restricted by copyright (see pages 175–77).
3. They may not be used if they contain material that is not suitable for Church settings.

Audiovisual materials that meet these criteria may be used in the chapel during meetings other than sacrament meeting if they are an important part of the meeting.

Bible

The Church uses the King James Version of the Bible for English-speaking members. The First Presidency has stated:

"Many versions of the Bible are available today. . . . The most reliable way to measure the accuracy of any biblical passage is not by comparing different texts, but by comparison with the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelations.

"While other Bible versions may be easier to read than the King James Version, in doctrinal matters latter-day revelation supports the King James Version in preference to other English translations" (First Presidency letter, May 22, 1992).

Ideally, English-speaking members should use the LDS edition of the King James Bible. This edition includes the Topical Guide; footnotes; excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation; cross-references to the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price; and other study aids.

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve have selected an edition of the Bible for preferred use in many non-English languages. Members should use this edition of the Bible. It is available through Church Distribution Services.

Book of Mormon

The Church discourages rewriting the Book of Mormon into familiar or modern English. The First Presidency has said:

"When a sacred text is translated into another language or rewritten into more familiar language, there are substantial risks that this process may introduce doctrinal errors or obscure evidence of its ancient origin. To guard against these risks, the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve give close personal supervision to the translation of scriptures from English into other languages and have not authorized efforts to express the doctrinal content of the Book of Mormon in familiar or modern English. (These concerns do not pertain to publications by the Church for children.)" (First Presidency statement, *Ensign*, Apr. 1993, page 74).

Church Employees

Church employees are to uphold Church standards at all times. To begin or continue employment, they must be worthy to have a temple recommend. This includes employees of the Church Educational System and Church universities and colleges.

Periodically representatives of the Church Human Resource Department will contact stake presidents or bishops to verify the temple worthiness of current or potential Church employees. These requests may be written or made by telephone and should be responded to promptly.

Church employees must comply with employment laws. Local leaders should contact their administration office for information on applicable laws.

Church Name and Logotype

The Church's name and logotype are registered trademarks and should be used according to the following guidelines.

The written name of the Church (not the logotype) may be used in local units when all of the conditions listed below are met:

1. The activity or function with which the name is associated (for example, a sacrament meeting program) is officially sponsored by the unit.
2. The name of the local Church unit is used as a prelude to the name of the Church (for example, Canyon View Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints).
3. The typeface does not imitate or resemble the official logotype.

The Church's logotype is to be used only for official Church applications. Local units may use it only on publications and materials they officially sponsor.

Only the official logotype should be used (see the front cover of this handbook). Members should not re-create the logotype with fonts from their computers. Copies of the logotype that may be photocopied or scanned are provided in *Church Name and Logotype Guidelines for Local Units.*

The name of the local unit should always accompany the logotype, but the logotype should not be used as part of a phrase or sentence. For example, the following phrase shows inappropriate use of the logotype: "Presented by the Canyon View Ward of [logotype]."

The logotype should be large enough to be easily read but not so large that it dominates an item. It should be surrounded by sufficient open space so it can be seen clearly. It should not be mixed, overlapped, or placed close to other patterns, symbols, logos, or competing elements.

The logotype should not be used as a decorative element or a computer screen saver.

The logotype should be displayed with good contrast. It should not be shaded or printed in a bright color.

The logotype should not be used in any personal, commercial, or promotional way, such as on family history books, T-shirts, buttons, or banners.

Examples of acceptable and unacceptable uses are provided in *Church Name and Logotype Guidelines for Local Units*.

Church Web Sites

The Church has established a number of global Web sites and e-mail networks. There may also be Church-sponsored country or area Web sites, stake and ward Web sites on LDS.org, and e-mail services for priesthood leaders and missionaries. Church Web sites and other network services contain approved content, meet the legal requirements of copyrights and privacy, and can be recognized by the presence of the Church logo. *No other Church Web sites are authorized.* This restriction includes but is not limited to temples, missions, visitors' centers, auxiliaries, quorums, classes, Scout units, and committees for special events.

The Church has developed an approved Web-site format that can be tailored by each stake and ward where approved. This system is the only authorized way for local Church units to have a presence on the Internet. It includes news and announcements, calendars, leadership and membership directories, and facilities scheduling. Only these approved items are available on the site. No other information should be added. Participation is voluntary.

Stake presidents who want their stakes to participate should obtain a form from the Member and Statistical Records Division at Church headquarters:

Member and Statistical Records Division
Attn: Local Unit Web Sites
50 East North Temple Street, Room 1320
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-5300
Telephone: 1-801-240-3500 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3500
E-mail: msrmail@ldsmail.net

Computers

As authorized by the Church's presiding councils, some Church units are provided computers for purposes such as record keeping and family history. The stake president oversees the placement and use of computers in the stake. Guidelines for obtaining and managing Church computers are available from the administration office. These guidelines provide information about matters such as computer hardware and software, donated computers, Internet and online networks, repairs, disposal of computers, stolen or damaged computers, security, and use by ward members.

Where necessary, stake presidents should arrange to make ward and stake computers available for members to use family history software programs. Ward and stake computers are not authorized for other personal uses.

Since these computers are used for confidential Church records, Church record-keeping programs should be password protected to prevent unauthorized access when the computers are being used for other purposes (see pages 150–51 for more instructions about protecting confidential information). Computers should be placed so bishopric members and clerks can process members' weekly contributions in privacy.

For restrictions on duplicating computer software, see page 176.

The stake presidency assigns an assistant stake clerk (or the stake clerk if necessary) to be the stake technology specialist. He manages Church computers in the stake, including those in family history centers. These responsibilities are outlined on pages 141–42.

Copyrighted Materials

Copyright is protection given by law to the owners of original works of authorship that are expressed in a tangible form, including:

1. Literary, musical, dramatic, and choreographic works.
2. Works of art, photography, and sculpture.
3. Audiovisual works (such as movies and videos, CDs, and DVDs).
4. Computer programs or games.
5. Internet and other electronic databases.

Only copyright owners may authorize duplication (copying), distribution, public performance, public display, or derivatives of their work. Using a work in any of these ways without authorization from the copyright owner is illegal and dishonest.

A user of a work should assume that it is protected by copyright. Published works usually include a copyright notice such as "© 1959 by John Doe." (For sound recordings, the symbol is ℗.) However, even works that do not have this notice may be protected by copyright. Furthermore, the fact that a publication is out of print does not nullify its copyright or justify duplicating, distributing, performing, displaying, or making derivatives of it without permission.

The Church's Intellectual Property Office (IPO) assists in processing requests to use copyrighted information in Church materials or programs, including materials that are copyrighted by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. (IRI). IRI is a separate, nonprofit corporation that owns the intellectual property of the Church.

The following questions and answers may help members understand and abide by copyright laws when using copyrighted materials at church and at home. If members have questions that are not answered in these guidelines, they may contact:

Intellectual Property Office
50 East North Temple Street, Room 1888
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3011
Telephone: 1-801-240-3959 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3959
Fax: 1-801-240-1187
E-mail: cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org

Can I copy pictures from Church magazines? Pictures in Church publications may usually be copied for Church, home, and family use. However, they may not be copied for commercial purposes without specific written permission from the IPO. If a picture is restricted from being copied, words such as "may not be copied" will appear in the credits for the image. Internet use follows the same general guidelines.

Can I copy published Church materials? Church publications may usually be copied for Church, home, and family use. However, no commercial use may be made of Church materials without specific written permission from the IPO.

Can I copy music? Special copyright laws apply to music. Generally, a person may copy music from *Hymns* and the *Children's Songbook* for Church, home, and family use except where a restriction against copying is expressly noted on the hymn or song. Members should never copy music that has been purchased from commercial sources unless they receive written permission from copyright owners.

Can I alter, copy, or segment Church-produced audiovisual materials? No. Church-produced audiovisual materials should be used in accordance with prescribed instructions in the manuals and on the packaging materials.

Can I copy materials not owned by the Church? No. Copyright laws govern the use of privately owned materials. Most often there are restrictions giving the conditions the public must follow before copying intellectual property. These restrictions are usually listed near the beginning of a publication. Church members should carefully follow all local laws and not violate national or international copyright laws.

Can I show commercial audiovisual products at Church functions? Generally not. Church members should not violate warnings and restrictions placed on commercial audiovisual products. Using commercial audiovisual products at Church functions would be considered a public performance and would require a public performance license.

Can I download or duplicate computer software and other programs for Church use? Generally not. Computer programs and other software may not be duplicated or downloaded unless all licenses have been appropriately purchased. As an exception, Church family history programs may be downloaded at no charge.

Can I download or distribute materials that I find on Church Web sites? The Church has created several Web sites, such as LDS.org, Mormon.org, and FamilySearch.org. All material found on Church-owned Web sites, including visuals, text, icons, displays, databases, and general information, may be viewed, downloaded, and printed only for personal, family, and Church use unless otherwise indicated. Material from these sites may not be posted, transcribed, or distributed to other Web sites or computer networks without permission from the IPO. Church-owned sites and any information on these sites, including the names and addresses of those who have submitted information, may not be used for selling or promoting products or services, soliciting clients, or any other commercial purpose.

For additional information, see the rights and use information associated with the Web sites.

What permission is needed to present musical and theatrical productions? Productions that are owned by the Church or IRI may be performed in Church settings without permission from Church headquarters. If a copyrighted production is not owned by the Church, members must obtain the copyright owner's permission to perform all or part of it in a Church setting. Usually the copyright owner requires fees or royalties even if no charge is made for the performances. All presentations should have the approval of local priesthood leaders.

Counseling

See pages 25–27.

Dating or Get-Acquainted Businesses for Single Members

Dating and get-acquainted businesses often promote their services to single members of the Church. Church meetinghouses, classes, or programs may not be used to promote private business ventures, including dating and get-acquainted businesses or services. Lists of Church groups or other information about members should not be given to such businesses.

Directories

Stake and ward directories may be published according to the following instructions:

Names, addresses, and phone numbers may be included in a directory only if they are listed in a commercial telephone directory or, if they are unlisted, if the member gives permission. E-mail addresses may be included only with the member's permission.

Stake or ward budget funds are used to pay for directories. Directories may not contain advertising.

Leaders should not distribute directories outside the stake or ward boundaries or permit their use for commercial or political purposes.

The beginning of each directory should include a statement that it is to be used only for Church purposes and should not be copied without permission of the bishop or stake president.

E-Mail for Priesthood Leaders

The Church has established an e-mail system for communicating with priesthood leaders and for them to communicate with each other. Priesthood leaders will be notified when this system is available to them.

Emigration of Members

Generally, Church members are encouraged to remain in their native lands to build up and strengthen the Church. Opportunities for Church activity and for receiving and sharing the blessings of the gospel are increasing greatly throughout the world. Missionaries should not ask their parents, relatives, or others to sponsor members who wish to emigrate to other countries.

Experience has shown that those who emigrate often encounter language, cultural, and economic challenges, resulting in disappointment and personal and family difficulties.

As members throughout the world remain in their homelands, working to build the Church there, great blessings will come to them personally and to the Church. Stakes and wards throughout the world will be strengthened, making it possible to share the blessings of the gospel with an even greater number of Heavenly Father's children.

Members who emigrate to any country should comply with applicable laws.

When coming to the United States or other countries on student or tourist visas, members should not expect to find jobs or obtain permanent visas after entering that country.

To be considered for Church employment in any country, a person must meet all conditions of immigration and naturalization laws. The Church does not sponsor immigration through Church employment. Any exceptions require advance approval from the First Presidency.

Fast Day

A proper fast day observance includes abstaining from food and drink for two consecutive meals, attending fast and testimony meeting, and giving a generous fast offering to help care for those in need.

Fund-Raising

See page 161.

Gambling

The Church opposes gambling in any form, including government-sponsored lotteries. Members are urged to join with others who have similar concerns in opposing the legalization and government sponsorship of any form of gambling.

Guest Speakers or Instructors

The bishop's approval is required before guest speakers or instructors may participate in any ward meeting, including auxiliary meetings. The stake president's approval is required for such participation in stake meetings.

The bishop or stake president should carefully screen guest speakers or instructors and the subjects of their presentations (this may include contacting the person's bishop). He ensures that:

1. Presentations are in harmony with Church doctrine.
2. Guest speakers or instructors are not paid a fee, do not recruit participants, and do not solicit customers or clients.
3. The travel expenses of guest speakers or instructors are not paid either with local unit budget funds or by private contributions.
4. Presentations comply with the guidelines for using Church facilities (see "Policies on Using Church Buildings and Other Property" on pages 181–83).

Income Taxes

Church members are obligated by the twelfth article of faith to obey the tax laws of the nation where they reside (see also D&C 134:5). Members who disapprove of tax laws may try to have them changed by legislation or constitutional amendment. Members who have well-founded legal objections may challenge tax laws in the courts.

Church members who refuse to file a tax return, pay required income taxes, or comply with a final judgment in a tax case are in direct conflict with the law and with the teachings of the Church. Such members may be ineligible for a temple recommend and should not be called to positions of principal responsibility in the Church. Members who are convicted of willfully violating tax laws are subject to Church discipline to the extent warranted by the circumstances.

Laws of the Land

Church members should obey, honor, and sustain the laws in any country where they reside or travel (see D&C 58:21–22; Articles of Faith 1:12). This includes laws that prohibit proselyting.

Legal Matters

When legal help is needed for Church matters in the United States and Canada, the stake president should contact the Office of General Counsel at Church headquarters (telephone 1-801-240-6301 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-6301). Outside the United States and Canada, stake presidents should contact the administration office to obtain local legal counsel.

To avoid implicating the Church in legal matters to which it is not a party, Church leaders should avoid testifying in civil or criminal cases reviewing the conduct of members over whom they preside. In the United States and Canada, a leader should confer with the Church's Office of General Counsel if he is subpoenaed, is considering testifying in a lawsuit, is asked to communicate with attorneys or civil authorities regarding legal proceedings, or is asked to offer verbal or written testimony. Outside the United States and Canada, leaders should contact the administration office to obtain local legal counsel in these situations.

Church leaders should not try to persuade alleged victims or other witnesses either to testify or not to testify in criminal or civil court proceedings.

Lotteries

See "Gambling" on page 177.

Mail from Church Headquarters

Some businesses and individuals send local leaders promotional items that might appear to be official Church correspondence. To distinguish official Church correspondence from other correspondence, it is always conveyed personally by Church leaders, in a letter from Church leaders on Church letterhead stationery, or by announcement in a Church publication. Only these items require Church leaders' attention and action.

Mail Sent to Church Headquarters

Local leaders should place a return address on all letters and other items of correspondence sent to Church headquarters, in addition to the return address on the envelope in which the item is sent.

Members' Communication with Church Headquarters

Members of the Church are discouraged from making telephone calls or writing letters to General Authorities about doctrinal issues or personal matters. With an ever-increasing Church membership, responding personally to these inquiries presents an almost insurmountable task and would make it difficult for General Authorities to fulfill the duties for which they alone are responsible. The General Authorities love the members of the Church and do not want them to feel that they are without the support and guidance they need. However, all things need to be done with wisdom and order.

The Lord has organized His Church so there is accessible to every member a bishop or branch president and a stake, district, or mission president who serve as spiritual advisers and temporal counselors. By reason of their callings, these local leaders are entitled to the spirit of discernment and inspiration to enable them to counsel members within their jurisdiction (see the "Interviews and Counseling" section on pages 23–27).

Members are encouraged to turn to these leaders when they need counsel or have doctrinal questions. Members and local leaders will be blessed as they pray and counsel together to resolve matters of concern to them. Members should also be encouraged to seek guidance from the Holy Ghost to help them in their personal lives and in their family and Church responsibilities.

In most cases, any correspondence from members to General Authorities will be referred back to their local leaders. Priesthood leaders who need further clarification about doctrinal issues may write in behalf of their members to the First Presidency.

Members' Occupations, Professions, and Affiliations

Baptism into the Church, priesthood ordinations, and the issuing of temple recommends are based on the personal worthiness of each individual as established by a careful interview. Members of the Church should endeavor to be involved in activities and employment upon which they can conscientiously ask the blessings of the Lord and which are consistent with the principles of the gospel and the teachings of the Savior.

Other Faiths

Much that is inspiring, noble, and worthy of the highest respect is found in many other faiths. Missionaries and other Church members must be sensitive and respectful toward the beliefs of others and avoid giving offense. Mission presidents and other priesthood leaders who have questions about relationships with non-Christian faiths should contact a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency.

Overnight Activities

See page 278 in *Book 2*.

Political and Civic Activity

While affirming the right of expression on political and social issues, the Church is neutral regarding political parties, political platforms, and candidates for political office. It does not endorse any political party, political platform, or candidate. Nor does it advise its members how to vote. However, in some exceptional instances the Church does take a position on specific legislation.

Candidates for public office should not imply that their candidacy is endorsed by the Church or its leaders. Church leaders and members should avoid statements or conduct that might be interpreted as Church endorsement of any political party, platform, or candidate.

As citizens of their countries and communities, Church members are urged to be full participants in political and governmental affairs, including involvement in the political party of their choice. Members are also urged to be actively engaged in worthy causes to improve their communities and make them wholesome places in which to live and rear families.

Members are encouraged to register to vote, to study issues and candidates carefully and prayerfully, and to vote for individuals whom they believe will act with integrity and will most nearly carry out their ideas of good government. Latter-day Saints have a special obligation to seek out, vote for, and uphold leaders who are honest, good, and wise (see D&C 98:10).

Church members are urged to be willing to serve in elected and appointed public offices in local and national government.

Members are encouraged to participate as responsible citizens in supporting measures and candidates that strengthen society morally, economically, and culturally. They are also encouraged to support measures that are designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

Church members, including those who hold public office, should not imply or give the impression that they represent the Church as they work for solutions to social or community problems.

Church records, directories, mailing lists, and similar materials may not be used for political purposes. Church facilities may not be used for political purposes except for voter registration or polling where there is no reasonable alternative (see page 181).

Postal Regulations

In the United States and some other countries, it is a violation of postal regulations to place any material without postage in or on mailboxes. This includes ward or stake newsletters, announcements, flyers, and other Church-related materials. Church leaders should instruct members and missionaries not to place such items in or on mailboxes and encourage them to find appropriate ways to distribute these materials.

Privacy of Members

Church leaders are obligated to protect the privacy of members. Church records, reports, directories, and similar materials may not be used for personal, commercial, or political purposes (see also pages 150–51).

Referring to the Church and Its Members

As the Church grows across boundaries, cultures, and languages, the use of its revealed name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (see D&C 115:4), is increasingly important in our responsibility to proclaim the name of the Savior throughout all the world. Accordingly, references to the Church should include its full name whenever possible. Following an initial reference to the full name of the Church, the contractions "the Church" or "the Church of Jesus Christ" are acceptable.

Referring to the Church as "the Mormon Church," "the Latter-day Saints Church," or "the LDS Church" is discouraged.

When referring to Church members, it is preferable to use the phrase "members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." As a shortened reference, "Latter-day Saints" is preferred and "Mormons" is acceptable.

The word *Mormon* will continue to be used in proper names like the Book of Mormon or the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. It will also continue to be used as an adjective in phrases such as "Mormon pioneers." In addition, it may be necessary to use the word *Mormon* to identify the Church as it is commonly known in some countries.

Research Studies in the Church

The Church's only authorized research agency is the Research Information Division of the Correlation Department. Representatives of this department use questionnaires and interviews to obtain information on issues of concern to General Authorities. When Church-authorized researchers contact members by mail or phone, they provide the Church's toll-free number and a contact name at headquarters. In addition, they always allow the respondent the option of not answering any or all of the questions on the survey.

Church meetings may not be used for collecting information by unauthorized persons or agencies. Nor should the names of Church members be made available to such persons or agencies. If local leaders want to verify the authorization of questionnaires or interviews, they should contact the Research Information Division (telephone 1-801-240-2727 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-2727).

Safety in Church Welfare Operations

Many Church welfare operations have equipment and machinery that can cause injury if it is not used properly. Agent stake operating committees and managers of welfare operations should ensure the safety of the employees and volunteers. Workers should be instructed regularly in safety practices. The work environment should be inspected periodically, with health and safety hazards corrected. Adequate supervision should always be provided to ensure that workers follow instructions, use tools and equipment properly, and avoid hazardous behavior.

Normally those who work at welfare operations should be 16 or older. Those who operate equipment should be mature, adequately trained, and experienced in using the equipment. Only adults may operate power equipment.

The operations manager should report accidents to Welfare Services (1-801-240-3001 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-3001) and the Risk Management Division at Church headquarters (see page 165 for contact information).

Sales Agents

Local leaders should not accept the claims of sales agents that the Church or a Church leader has authorized them to call on local leaders or members to sell their products.

Satellite and Video Equipment

Church satellite and video equipment may be used only for noncommercial, Church-related purposes as authorized by the stake presidency or bishopric. This equipment may not be used to record television, cable, or satellite programs that are not sponsored by the Church. Nor may Church satellite equipment be used to view non-Church programs. Members may not direct the antenna from one satellite or transponder to another without authorization from Church headquarters.

Only people who are trained to operate the equipment may do so. Youth may help operate it only if they are supervised.

All equipment is to be locked securely when not in use. It may not be removed from the building for home or personal use.

Solicitation of Funds

The established programs of the Church provide financial assistance for worthy individuals and appropriate causes. Church assistance is administered by bishops, who are familiar with the circumstances and can prevent duplicate assistance and abuses. Therefore, members should not solicit additional financial assistance from Church headquarters or from local leaders or members.

If members receive a request for funds, they could respond by saying that they have contributed in their own wards to provide funds for assistance according to established principles of Church welfare.

Symposia and Similar Gatherings

The Church warns its members against symposia and similar gatherings that include presentations that (1) disparage, ridicule, make light of, or are otherwise inappropriate in their treatment of sacred matters or (2) could injure the Church, detract from its mission, or jeopardize its members' well-being. Members should not allow their position or standing in the Church to be used to promote or imply endorsement of such gatherings.

Taxable Activities

Ward and stake leaders should ensure that local Church activities do not jeopardize the Church's tax-exempt status. For guidelines, see "Fund-Raising" on page 161 and "Policies on Using Church Buildings and Other Property" on this page.

Travel of Men and Women Together

A man and a woman may travel as a pair to Church meetings or assignments only if they are married to each other or are both single. For other Church travel policies, see pages 279–80 in *Book 2*.

Policies on Using Church Buildings and Other Property

Church buildings and other property are to be used for worship, religious instruction, and other Church-related activities. Church property should not be used for commercial or political purposes, which would violate laws that permit its tax exemption. Nor may property be used for other purposes that would violate these laws. Examples of uses that are not approved are listed below:

1. Renting or leasing Church facilities for commercial purposes.
2. Promoting business ventures or investment enterprises, including posting commercial advertising or sponsoring commercial entertainment.
3. Buying, selling, or promoting products, services, publications, or creative works or demonstrating wares.
4. Holding unauthorized fund-raising projects (see page 161).
5. Hosting speakers or instructors who are paid a fee, who recruit participants, or who solicit customers or clients while giving seminars, lessons, aerobics classes, and so on. Exceptions may be made to use meetinghouse pianos and organs for paid private instruction (see page 294 in *Book 2*).
6. Holding athletic events that are not sponsored by the Church, including practices.
7. Holding political meetings or campaigns. As an exception, Church facilities may be used for voter registration and as polling places at the request of voting officials if:
   a. There is no reasonable alternative.
   b. The officials and voters maintain Church standards in the building.
   c. The event will not pose physical danger to the building.
   d. The event will not harm the image of the Church.

Use of Church property should not pose significant risk of harm to participants or to the property. Nor should it unduly expose the Church to liability or disturb surrounding neighbors.

For more detailed instructions on using and caring for Church buildings and other property, see *Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property* or contact the administration office.

Artwork

Artwork in Church buildings should be of high quality and depict subjects that are appropriate in a house of worship. It should also be properly framed. Church-approved pictures can be obtained through the facilities management group or from Church Distribution Services.

Pictures and other artwork may be placed in appropriate locations in the meetinghouse. However, they may not be placed in the chapel or near the baptismal font. Statues, murals, or mosaics are not authorized. This policy does not apply to works of art that have been on display for many years in the chapels of existing meetinghouses.

If artwork of poor quality is offered, local leaders should tactfully decline accepting it for display in meetinghouses.

Decorations

Decorations for Christmas, other holidays, and other similar occasions may be placed temporarily in the foyer or cultural hall of a meetinghouse, as approved under the direction of the stake presidency. With the exception of flowers, decorations may not be placed in the chapel area of the meetinghouse. Nor should the exterior of the meetinghouse or the grounds be decorated.

Decorations must be modest and inexpensive and must not be a fire hazard. Hay, straw, palm fronds, other dehydrated materials, and candles may not be used. If Christmas trees are used, they should be artificial or properly fireproofed and displayed without electric lights or candles. Local fire and safety codes and ordinances should be observed.

Dedicating Buildings

All new meetinghouses, as well as major additions that contain a chapel, a cultural hall, or an area larger than the existing structure, should be dedicated as soon as possible after the project is completed.

Smaller buildings such as mission homes, institutes, seminaries, and classroom or office additions to meetinghouses may also be dedicated if local leaders desire.

Final approval for dedication is given by a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency in coordination with the administration office. A member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency works with the stake or mission president and indicates who is responsible for dedicating the building.

The program for a dedicatory service should be in keeping with the purpose of the event. It should not be lengthy or include extensive musical presentations. Sufficient time should be provided for the assigned leader to speak and to dedicate the building. Following the dedicatory prayer, there should be an appropriate hymn or musical selection and a short prayer to close the service.

Dedicatory prayers of buildings may be recorded with permission from the presiding authority.

Emergencies

During an emergency, the stake presidency determines whether or not to hold regular ward meetings.

In a community-wide emergency or disaster, the stake president may assist legitimate disaster relief agencies by allowing meetinghouses to be used as emergency shelters. The Church retains control, and those who use a meetinghouse under these conditions should maintain Church standards. For more information, see page 10.

Energy and Water Conservation

See page 164.

Firearms

Churches are dedicated for the worship of God and as havens from the cares and concerns of the world. The carrying of lethal weapons, concealed or otherwise, within their walls is inappropriate except as required by officers of the law.

Fires and Candles

Open flames and lighted candles may not be used in Church buildings.

Flags

The national flag may be flown on the grounds of Church property at any time as long as it conforms to local custom and convention. The national flag may be displayed inside Church buildings on special occasions, such as patriotic programs. Genuine patriotism does not require displaying the national flag continuously in places of worship.

Groundbreaking Services

After a new building project is approved, local leaders may conduct a groundbreaking service in preparation for the construction. This service is not to be held on Sunday.

Historic Preservation

All questions about placing Church-owned property or buildings on national or local historic preservation lists or registries should be directed to Church headquarters through a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency. For questions about marking, commemorating, or preserving other sites, artifacts, works of art, or documents, contact the Family and Church History Department at 1-801-240-4648 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-4648.

Meetinghouse Construction, Rental, or Purchase

For policies about construction, rental, or purchase of meetinghouses, see *Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property*.

Meetinghouse Plans

The Church has prepared a variety of standard meetinghouse plans to fit the circumstances and needs of members throughout the world. When a new meetinghouse is to be constructed, a suitable standard plan is selected. That plan outlines the policy for the rooms, features, and equipment that are included in the meetinghouse.

Monday Nights

See page 278 in *Book 2*.

Overnight Lodging or Camping

Church meetinghouse properties may not be used for overnight lodging, camping, or slumber parties.

Parking Lots

Use of Church parking lots should comply with the guidelines on page 181. In addition, Church parking lots should not be used for commuter parking without permission from the administration office.

Photographs and Video Recordings in Chapels

Taking photographs or making video recordings in chapels is not permitted.

Property Rights and Ownership

All property assigned to or held for the benefit of local units belongs to the Church, not to the units. Nevertheless, local units have broad autonomy in using Church-owned property, including buildings, land, and other property, subject to the ownership and policies of the Church.

Recreational Property Administration

For information about administration of recreational property, see *Facilities Management Guidelines for Meetinghouses and Other Church Property*.

Serving Areas

The serving area in Church meetinghouses is not intended for food preparation or cooking unless it is part of a lesson, demonstration, or other instruction. When food is to be served in the building or on the grounds, it should be prepared elsewhere and brought to the meetinghouse, where it may be kept warm or cold until it is served.

Signs

The name of the Church is to be displayed on all meetinghouses and other Church buildings in the approved language and logo. It is to be mounted on the building. Under certain conditions the name of the Church may also be mounted on the grounds on a stand-alone sign.

Storage

The only storage allowed in meetinghouses is for maintenance items and other approved supplies and equipment. Welfare commodities and other such items may not be stored in meetinghouses.

Materials such as gasoline, propane, matches, and camping gear should be stored in buildings that are separate from the meetinghouse.

Cars, recreational vehicles, and other personal equipment may not be stored on Church property.

Using Meetinghouses outside of Stake Boundaries

All meetinghouses within reasonable distance of a ward must be occupied to their designed capacity before additional facilities will be provided. When necessary, stake presidencies, in consultation with a member of the Presidency of the Seventy or the Area Presidency, may assign wards to use meetinghouses in an adjacent stake. More than one stake may use a stake center if it is conveniently located.

Medical and Health Policies

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

See "Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)" on page 184.

Autopsies

Autopsies may be performed if the family of the deceased gives consent and if the autopsy complies with the law.

Cremation

Normally, cremation is not encouraged. However, in some countries the law requires it. The family of the deceased must decide whether to cremate the body, taking into account any laws governing burial or cremation. Where possible, the body of a deceased member who has been endowed should be dressed in temple clothing when the body is cremated (see "Temple Burial Clothing" on page 81). A funeral service may be held.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia is defined as deliberately putting to death a person who is suffering from an incurable condition or disease. A person who participates in euthanasia, including so-called assisted suicide, violates the commandments of God. (See also "Prolonging Life" in the next column.)

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

Members who are infected with HIV or who have AIDS should be treated with dignity and compassion. If infection has resulted from transgression of God's laws, the Church advocates the example of the Lord, who condemned the sin yet loved the sinner and encouraged repentance. Members should reach out with kindness and comfort to the afflicted, ministering to their needs and helping them find solutions to their problems.

Although HIV and AIDS can afflict innocent victims, the principal safeguards are chastity before marriage, total fidelity in marriage, abstinence from any homosexual relations, avoidance of illegal drugs, and reverence and care for the body.

Attendance of people with HIV infection or AIDS at Church meetings does not pose a serious health problem. Public health authorities affirm that HIV has not been transmitted through casual contact in homes, schools, churches, or places of work.

Those who occasionally may need to clean up blood or render first aid should learn and follow the recommendations of the local health department.

For information about performing ordinances for people who are infected with HIV or who have AIDS, see page 34.

Hypnosis

The use of hypnosis under competent, professional medical supervision for the treatment of diseases or mental disorders is a medical question to be determined by competent medical authorities. Members should not participate in hypnosis for purposes of demonstration or entertainment.

Medical and Health Practices

Members should not use medical or health practices that are ethically or legally questionable. Local leaders should advise members who have health problems to consult with competent professional practitioners who are licensed in the countries where they practice. Fast-offering funds may not be used to help pay for medical care that is beyond the usual and customary practice unless priesthood leaders have received approval in advance from the First Presidency in each case (see pages 8–9).

Organ and Tissue Donations and Transplants

The donation of organs and tissues is a selfless act that often results in great benefit to individuals with medical conditions. The decision to will or donate one's own body organs or tissue for medical purposes, or the decision to authorize the transplant of organs or tissue from a deceased family member, is made by the individual or the deceased member's family.

The decision to receive a donated organ should be made after receiving competent medical counsel and confirmation through prayer.

Prolonging Life

When severe illness strikes, members should exercise faith in the Lord and seek competent medical assistance. However, when dying becomes inevitable, it should be seen as a blessing and a purposeful part of eternal existence. Members should not feel obligated to extend mortal life by means that are unreasonable. These judgments are best made by family members after receiving wise and competent medical advice and seeking divine guidance through fasting and prayer.

Self-Awareness Groups

Many private groups and commercial organizations have programs that purport to increase self-awareness, self-esteem, and spirituality. Some groups promise to enhance individual agency or improve family relationships. Some offer "experiential" or "empowerment" training.

Some of these groups have falsely claimed or implied that the Church has endorsed their programs. However, the Church has not endorsed any such enterprise, and Church members are warned against believing such claims. The fact that the Church has not formally challenged such an enterprise should not be perceived as a tacit endorsement or stamp of approval.

Church members are also warned that some of these groups advocate concepts and use methods that can be harmful. In addition, many such groups charge exorbitant fees and encourage long-term commitments. Some intermingle worldly concepts with gospel principles in ways that can undermine spirituality and faith.

These groups tend to promise quick solutions to problems that normally require time and personal effort to resolve. Although participants may experience temporary emotional relief or exhilaration, old problems often return, leading to added disappointment and despair.

Church members should not participate in groups that:

1. Challenge religious and moral values or advocate unwarranted confrontation with spouse or family members as a means of reaching one's potential.
2. Imitate sacred rites or ceremonies.
3. Foster physical contact among participants.
4. Meet late into the evening or in the early-morning hours.
5. Encourage open confession or disclosure of personal information normally discussed only in confidential settings.
6. Cause a husband and wife to be paired with other partners.

Church leaders are not to pay for, encourage participation in, or promote such groups or practices. Also, Church facilities may not be used for these activities. Local leaders should counsel members that true self-improvement comes through living gospel principles. Members who have social or emotional problems may consult with priesthood leaders for guidance in identifying sources of help that are in harmony with gospel principles.

Stillborn Children (Children Who Die before Birth)

Grieving parents whose child dies before birth should be given emotional and spiritual support. Temple ordinances are not performed for stillborn children. However, this does not deny the possibility that a stillborn child may be part of the family in the eternities. Parents are encouraged to trust the Lord to resolve such cases in the way He knows is best. The family may record the name of a stillborn child on the family group record followed by the word *stillborn* in parentheses. Memorial or graveside services may be held as determined by the parents.

It is a fact that a child has life before birth. However, there is no direct revelation on when the spirit enters the body.

Word of Wisdom

The only official interpretation of "hot drinks" (D&C 89:9) in the Word of Wisdom is the statement made by early Church leaders that the term "hot drinks" means tea and coffee.

Members should not use any substance that contains illegal drugs. Nor should members use harmful or habit-forming substances except under the care of a competent physician.

Policies on Moral Issues

Abortion

The Lord commanded, "Thou shalt not . . . kill, nor do anything like unto it" (D&C 59:6). The Church opposes elective abortion for personal or social convenience. Members must not submit to, perform, pay for, arrange for, or encourage an abortion. The only possible exceptions are when:

1. Pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.
2. A competent physician determines that the life or health of the mother is in serious jeopardy.
3. A competent physician determines that the fetus has severe defects that will not allow the baby to survive beyond birth.

Even these exceptions do not justify abortion automatically. Abortion is a most serious matter and should be considered only after the persons responsible have consulted with their bishops and received divine confirmation through prayer.

The Church has not favored or opposed legislative proposals or public demonstrations concerning abortion. However, the First Presidency encourages members, as citizens, to let their voices be heard in appropriate and legal ways that will evidence their belief in the sacredness of life. (See *Ensign*, Mar. 1991, page 78.)

Church members who submit to, perform, pay for, arrange for, or encourage an abortion may be subject to Church discipline.

As far as has been revealed, a person may repent and be forgiven for the sin of abortion.

Abuse and Cruelty

The Church's position is that abuse cannot be tolerated in any form. Those who abuse or are cruel to their spouses, children, other family members, or anyone else violate the laws of God and man. All members, especially parents and leaders, are encouraged to be alert and diligent and do all they can to protect children and others against abuse and neglect.

Members who have abused others are subject to Church discipline. They should not be given Church callings and may not have a temple recommend. Even if a person who abused a child sexually or physically receives Church discipline and is later restored to full fellowship or readmitted by baptism and confirmation, leaders should not call the person to any position working with children or youth unless the First Presidency authorizes removal of the annotation on the person's membership record.

In instances of abuse, the first responsibility of the Church is to help those who have been abused and to protect those who may be vulnerable to future abuse. Victims of sexual abuse (including rape) often suffer serious trauma and feelings of guilt. Victims of the evil acts of others are not guilty of sin. Church leaders should be sensitive to such victims and give caring attention to help them overcome the destructive effects of abuse.

Stake presidents and bishops should make every effort to counsel those who have been involved in abuse. Members may also need professional counseling. When appropriate, bishops should contact LDS Family Services to identify resources to provide such counseling in harmony with gospel principles. If the transgressor is an adult who has committed a sexual transgression against a child, the behavior may be very deep-seated and the process of repentance and reformation may be very prolonged.

In the United States, Canada, and selected other countries, the Church has established a help line to provide guidance to bishops and stake presidents in cases of abuse (in the United States and Canada, the telephone number is 1-801-240-1911 or 1-800-453-3860, extension 2-1911). If one of these leaders becomes aware of physical or sexual abuse involving Church members, or if he believes that a person may have been abused or is at risk of being abused, he should call the help line. He will be able to consult with social services, legal specialists, and other specialists who can help answer questions and formulate steps that should be taken. In countries that do not have a help line, stake presidents and bishops should contact the Area Presidency for guidance. A bishop should also notify his stake president of instances of abuse.

If confidential information indicates that a member's abusive activities have violated applicable law, the bishop or stake president should urge the member to report these activities to the appropriate government authorities. Leaders can obtain information about local reporting requirements through the help line. Where reporting is required by law, the leader should encourage the member to secure qualified legal advice.

To avoid implicating the Church in legal matters to which it is not a party, leaders should avoid testifying in civil or criminal cases or other proceedings involving abuse. For specific guidelines, see "Legal Matters" on page 178.

For additional information, stake presidents and bishops may refer to the booklet *Responding to Abuse: Helps for Ecclesiastical Leaders* and the pamphlets *Preventing and Responding to Spouse Abuse* and *Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse*. The video *Protect the Child: Responding to Child Abuse* also outlines the responsibilities of leaders and other members in preventing and responding to child abuse. All ward councils are asked to view the program and discuss it according to the guide on the back of the video jacket.

Adoption and Foster Care

See pages 173 and 188–89.

Artificial Insemination

Artificial insemination with semen from anyone but the husband is strongly discouraged. However, this is a personal matter that ultimately must be left to the judgment of the husband and wife. Responsibility for the decision rests solely upon them.

Artificial insemination of single sisters is not approved. Single sisters who deliberately refuse to follow the counsel of Church leaders in this matter are subject to Church discipline.

For information about the sealing of children who were conceived by artificial insemination, see page 87.

Birth Control

It is the privilege of married couples who are able to bear children to provide mortal bodies for the spirit children of God, whom they are then responsible to nurture and rear. The decision as to how many children to have and when to have them is extremely intimate and private and should be left between the couple and the Lord. Church members should not judge one another in this matter.

Married couples should also understand that sexual relations within marriage are divinely approved not only for the purpose of procreation, but also as a means of expressing love and strengthening emotional and spiritual bonds between husband and wife.

Chastity and Fidelity

The Lord's law of moral conduct is abstinence from sexual relations outside of lawful marriage and fidelity within marriage. Sexual relations are proper only between husband and wife, expressed within the bonds of marriage. Adultery, fornication, homosexual or lesbian relations, and every other unholy, unnatural, or impure practice are sinful. Members who violate the Lord's law of moral conduct or who influence others to do so are subject to Church discipline (see First Presidency letter, Nov. 14, 1991).

Euthanasia

See page 184.

Homosexual Behavior

Homosexual behavior violates the commandments of God, is contrary to the purposes of human sexuality, distorts loving relationships, and deprives people of the blessings that can be found in family life and in the saving ordinances of the gospel. Those who persist in such behavior or who influence others to do so are subject to Church discipline. Homosexual behavior can be forgiven through sincere repentance.

While opposing homosexual behavior, the Church reaches out with understanding and respect to individuals who are attracted to those of the same gender.

If members have homosexual thoughts or feelings or engage in homosexual behavior, Church leaders should help them have a clear understanding of faith in Jesus Christ, the process of repentance, and the purpose of life on earth. Leaders should also help them accept responsibility for their thoughts and actions and apply gospel principles in their lives.

In addition to the inspired assistance of Church leaders, members may need professional counseling. When appropriate, bishops should contact LDS Family Services to identify resources to provide such counseling in harmony with gospel principles.

For additional suggestions, stake presidents and bishops may refer to the booklet *Understanding and Helping Those Who Have Homosexual Problems: Suggestions for Ecclesiastical Leaders*. See also "Same-Gender Marriages" in the next column.

In Vitro Fertilization

In vitro fertilization using semen from anyone but the husband or an egg from anyone but the wife is strongly discouraged. However, this is a personal matter that ultimately must be left to the judgment of the husband and wife. Responsibility for the decision rests solely upon them.

For information about the sealing of children who were conceived by in vitro fertilization, see page 87.

Occult Affiliation

Members should not engage in forms of so-called Satan worship or affiliate in any way with the occult. "Such activities are among the works of darkness spoken of in the scriptures. They are designed to destroy one's faith in Christ, and will jeopardize the salvation of those who knowingly promote this wickedness. These things should not be pursued as games, be topics in Church meetings, or be delved into in private, personal conversations" (First Presidency letter, Sept. 18, 1991).

Pornography

The Church opposes pornography in any form. Indulgence in pornography damages individual lives, families, and society. Such indulgence also drives away the Spirit of the Lord. Members should avoid all forms of pornographic material and oppose its production, dissemination, and use.

Prolonging Life

See page 184.

Same-Gender Marriages

Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. The Church accordingly opposes same-gender marriages and any efforts to legalize such marriages. Church members are encouraged "to appeal to legislators, judges, and other government officials to preserve the purposes and sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman, and to reject all efforts to give legal authorization or other official approval or support to marriages between persons of the same gender" (First Presidency letter, Feb. 1, 1994; see also "Homosexual Behavior" in the previous column).

As a doctrinal principle, based on the scriptures, the Church affirms that marriage between a man and a woman is essential to God's plan for the eternal destiny of His children. The powers of procreation are to be exercised only between a man and a woman who are lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

Any other sexual relations, including those between persons of the same gender, undermine the divinely created institution of the family. The Church accordingly favors measures that define marriage as the union of a man and a woman and that do not confer legal status on any other sexual relationship.

While opposing same-gender marriage, the Church reaches out with understanding and respect to individuals who are attracted to those of the same gender. See also "Homosexual Behavior" on page 187.

Sex Education

Parents have primary responsibility for the sex education of their children. Teaching this subject honestly and plainly in the home will help young people avoid serious moral transgressions. To help parents teach this sensitive and important information, the Church has published *A Parent's Guide*.

Where schools have undertaken sex education, parents should seek to ensure that the instructions given to their children are consistent with sound moral and ethical values.

Sperm Donation

The donation of sperm is strongly discouraged.

Suicide

It is wrong to take a life, even one's own. However, a person who commits suicide may not be responsible for his or her acts. Only God can judge such a matter.

Leaders should counsel and compassionately console the family members of a person who has committed suicide. The family, in consultation with the bishop, determines the place and nature of a funeral service for a person who has died under such circumstances. Church facilities may be used.

A person who has seriously considered suicide or has attempted suicide should be counseled by his or her bishop and may be encouraged to seek professional help. For more information, see *Identification and Prevention of Suicidal Behavior*.

Surgical Sterilization (Including Vasectomy)

The Church strongly discourages surgical sterilization as an elective form of birth control. It should be considered only if (1) medical conditions seriously jeopardize life or health or (2) birth defects or serious trauma have rendered a person mentally incompetent and not responsible for his or her actions. Such conditions must be determined by competent medical judgment and in accordance with law. Even then, the persons responsible for this decision should consult with each other and with their bishop and should receive divine confirmation of their decision through prayer.

Surrogate Motherhood

Surrogate motherhood is strongly discouraged.

Unwed Parents

Church members who are involved in pregnancy out of wedlock are encouraged to go to their bishop. By virtue of his priesthood office and calling, he can counsel with them as they make important decisions that affect their own well-being and that of the child. He can also help them begin the process of repentance. Because of the social and emotional issues inherent in such situations, the bishop should consider referring the unwed parents to LDS Family Services (where available), regardless of whether they choose to marry, place their child for adoption, or keep the child without getting married.

The First Presidency has stated:

"Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by parents who provide love, support, and all the blessings of the gospel" (First Presidency letter, June 15, 1998).

"Parents and priesthood and auxiliary leaders are encouraged to teach members to live chaste and virtuous lives and prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple. Children sealed to parents have claim upon the blessings of the gospel beyond what others are entitled to receive.

"When a man and woman conceive a child out of wedlock, every effort should be made to encourage them to marry. When the probability of a successful marriage is unlikely due to age or other circumstances, unwed parents should be counseled to place the child for adoption through LDS Family Services to ensure that the baby will be sealed to temple-worthy parents. Adoption is an unselfish, loving decision that blesses both the birth parents and the child in this life and in eternity.

"Birth parents who do not marry should not be counseled to keep the infant as a condition of repentance or out of a sense of obligation to care for one's own. Unwed parents are not able to provide the blessings of the sealing covenant. Further, they are generally unable to provide a stable, nurturing environment which is so essential for the baby's well-being. Unmarried parents should give prayerful consideration to the best interests of the child and the blessings that can come to an infant who is sealed to a mother and father" (First Presidency letter, June 26, 2002; see also "Adoption and Foster Care" on page 173).

If LDS Family Services agencies are not available, leaders should encourage the confidential placement of the child for adoption with a temple-worthy couple through a local licensed agency. LDS Family Services and most other licensed agencies are designed to protect the interest of the child, screen the adoptive couple before placement, and provide needed supervision and counseling.

If an unwed parent decides to keep the child, leaders and other members should treat the parent and child with compassion and concern. Leaders should encourage the parent to have the child given a name and a blessing (see page 31).

For information about whether young women who have children out of wedlock should attend Relief Society or Young Women meetings, see pages 207 and 227 in *Book 2*.

LDS Family Services has established a toll-free help line (1-800-537-2229) for unwed parents and others to obtain help regarding pregnancies and related matters. Help line staff members provide sensitive, confidential counseling based on gospel principles. The help line is available in all areas of the United States and Canada. Members and nonmembers may call the number directly or call the local LDS Family Services agency. If leaders do not know the number of the local agency, they may call the help line to obtain that information.

Victims of Rape and Sexual Abuse

See "Abuse and Cruelty" on page 186.

Index

Index

P

Q

R