



Elder L. Whitney Clayton

Senior President of the Seventy

At a young age, Elder L. Whitney Clayton learned to love work and family. Early every Saturday, his father, a physician, would leave to attend to medical duties. Before he left, he would write on a chalkboard a list of all the chores to be done that day. When he returned he would join his sons and work side by side with them. From his father, Elder Clayton learned a work ethic that has blessed his life.

Elder Clayton's family also knew that dinner meant family time. "We talked about politics, what was happening at school, the neighborhood, the gospel, and the Church. . . . It was a wonderful ingredient of growing up." Having mealtime discussions is a practice he and his wife have followed with their own children.

Elder Clayton was named Senior President of the Seventy on October 6, 2015. He replaces Elder Ronald A. Rasband, who was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Clayton was sustained as a General Authority Seventy on March 31, 2001. He has served as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy since 2008 and had supervisory responsibility for areas in Utah. He assisted Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in supervising the Africa Southeast and Africa West Areas. He also serves as a member of the Public Affairs Committee. He served as a counselor in the South America South Area Presidency in 2002–2003 and as president during 2003–2006.

Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, in 1950, he married Kathy Ann Kipp in 1973, in the Salt Lake Temple. They are the parents of 7 children and the grandparents of 20 grandchildren.

Elder Clayton earned a bachelor's degree in finance at the University of Utah and a law degree at the University of the Pacific. He was an attorney in California, USA, from 1981 to 2001.

He has served as an Area Seventy, regional representative, mission president's counselor, high councilor, bishop, stake mission president, and Gospel Doctrine teacher. He served as a full-time missionary in Peru from 1970 to 1971. ■



Elder Gerrit W. Gong

Presidency of the Seventy

Elder Gerrit W. Gong, recently called to serve in the Presidency of the Seventy, remembers a prompting that came to him while he was serving as a missionary in Taiwan.

An investigator came into sacrament meeting. "I felt inspired to write him a short note in Morse code which said something like, 'Welcome to sacrament meeting. Happy to see you here!'"

The investigator happened to be a radio operator and was delighted to receive the message. "I was amazed that something I had learned years earlier could help me . . . to reach a certain individual in a particular way," says Elder Gong.

Learning and reaching out to others have been the course of Elder Gong's life since childhood, when he learned Morse code as a Boy Scout. In 1977 he received a bachelor of arts degree in Asian Studies and in University Studies from Brigham Young University, in 1979 he received a master of philosophy degree, and in 1981 he received a PhD in international relations from Oxford University.

Elder Gong has served in numerous Church callings, including high councilor, high priests group leader, stake Sunday School president, seminary teacher, bishop, stake mission president, stake president, and Area Seventy. At the time of his call as a General Authority Seventy in 2010, he had been serving as a member of the Fifth Quorum of the Seventy in the Utah South Area.

In 1985 Elder Gong served as special assistant to the undersecretary of state at the U.S. State Department, and in 1987 he worked as special assistant to the U.S. ambassador in Beijing, China. From 1989 to 2001 he served in several positions at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

Gerrit W. Gong was born in Redwood City, California, USA, in 1953. He and his wife, Susan Lindsay Gong, are the parents of four children and have three grandchildren. Elder Gong's grandparents immigrated to the United States from China. He has traced his ancestry back 33 generations to First Dragon Gong, born A.D. 837 in southern China during the late Tang dynasty. ■