

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

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Leaders Encourage Members to Tie Family History to the Temple

By Heather Whittle Wrigley
Church News and Events

In October 2012 the First Presidency issued a letter calling for members to use their own family names for temple work and outlining five main points to help members find greater fulfillment in doing family history and attending the temple.

Members can respond to the call to find, prepare, and share names for the temple by using the tools and resources offered on LDS.org and FamilySearch.org. The points outlined in the First Presidency letter are:

1. “When members of the Church find the names of their ancestors and take those names to the temple for ordinance work, the temple experience can be greatly enriched.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “Any work you do in the temple is time well spent, but receiving ordinances vicariously for one of your own ancestors will make the time in the temple more sacred, and even greater blessings will be received. The First Presidency has declared, ‘Our preeminent obligation is to seek out and identify *our own* ancestors’”

(“The Joy of Redeeming the Dead,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 93–94).

On LDS.org, learn more about why we are asked to prepare names from our own family to take to the temple by clicking on **Resources, Family History**, and **Why should we do temple work for our own ancestors?** (video located under **Why Do We Do Family History Work?**).

2. “Members with limited ability to do their own family history research are encouraged to perform vicarious ordinances with names provided by other members or by the temple.”

Many members of the Church have limited access to temples. Church leaders encourage these members to do what they can. Members without a temple nearby can pursue family history research and have the temple ordinance work done by others.

Other members may struggle with feeling that all of the family history research and work that can be done for their ancestors has already been done. These members are encouraged to continue to attend the temple, preferably taking with them family names of other members.

At lds.org/temples, **Find a Temple** can help you prepare for your next temple visit.

3. Youth and young single adults are especially encouraged “to use for temple work their own family names or the names of ancestors of their ward and stake members.”

“Do you young people want a sure way to eliminate the influence of the adversary in your life?” Elder Scott asked. “Immerse yourself in searching for your ancestors, prepare their names for the sacred vicarious ordinances available in the temple, and then go to the temple to stand as proxy for them to receive the ordinances of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. As you grow older, you will be able to participate in receiving the other ordinances as well. I can think of no greater protection from the influence of the adversary in your life” (“Redeeming the Dead,” 94).

Also in the Family History section of LDS.org, under **Getting Started**, find five steps to prepare family names for the temple.

4. Priesthood leaders should ensure that all members “learn the doctrine of turning their hearts to their fathers and the blessings of temple attendance.”

To Turn the Hearts is a leader resource guide provided as a supplement to *Handbook 2: Administering*



The Church has many resources available in print and online to help members understand the reasons for preparing family names for the temple and how to do it.

the Church to help ward and stake priesthood leaders support members in their responsibilities to seek after their dead and provide them the saving ordinances in the temple. It includes videos that document how some stakes have used temple and family history work to strengthen individuals and families.

Explore leader resources on LDS.org by clicking on **Resources, All Callings, Family History, and Leader Resources.**

5. Those with “large numbers of family names reserved [are encouraged] to release these names in a

timely manner so the necessary ordinances can be performed.”

There are currently 12 million names on FamilySearch.org that have been reserved by family members who intend to perform their ancestors’ ordinances themselves. Many names, however, have been reserved for years.

“[Ancestors] may not be very happy when they have to continue to wait for their ordinances to be performed,” Elder Scott said. “We encourage those of you who have a large reservation of names to share them so that members of

your extended family or ward and stake can help you in completing that work. You can do this by distributing temple cards to ward and stake members willing to help or by using the FamilySearch computer system to submit the names directly to the temple” (“Redeeming the Dead,” 94).

In the **Getting Started** section mentioned above, under **I Want to Share Names with Others**, click on **Watch Video**, then watch the video **Releasing Names for Temple Work** for information about sharing reserved names. ■