

Ministering Principles

GETTING HELP TO HELP OTHERS

How do we involve others when we need help in our efforts to minister?

Participate in ministering interviews and first-Sunday council meetings.

When multiple sclerosis confined Kathy to a wheelchair, she found she needed assistance each night getting from her chair to her bed. The job was too big for any one member. So the elders quorum counseled about her situation and decided to make a schedule to help her each evening.¹

As we come to know the needs and strengths of those we serve, we may find that we need help to help meet their needs. Ministering interviews and first-Sunday council meetings are two opportunities to discuss how to appropriately involve others.

Ministering Interviews

These quarterly interviews between ministering sisters and the Relief Society presidency or ministering brothers and the elders quorum presidency are the only *formal* report we make regarding

those we minister to. The interview is an opportunity on at least a quarterly basis to (1) counsel about the strengths, needs, and challenges of assigned families and individuals; (2) determine what needs the quorum, Relief Society, or ward council might assist with; and (3) learn from leaders and be encouraged in ministering efforts.

The elders quorum president and the Relief Society president communicate important needs directly to the bishop and will receive counsel and direction from him.

You can find more information about ministering interviews at ministering.lds.org.

Making Ministering Interviews Meaningful

In supporting President Russell M. Nelson's statement that the ministering program will be a hinge point on which the course of the Church will swing, Elder

“Ministering Principles” articles are intended to help us learn to care for one another—not to be shared as messages during visits. As we come to know those we serve, the Holy Ghost will prompt us to know what message they might need in addition to our care and compassion.



JESUS INVOLVED OTHERS

Jesus fed a multitude of 5,000 people from five barley loaves and two small fishes. Read John 6:5–14 to identify how many times the Savior involved others in this act of ministering.



Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught, “The realization of his vision . . . might be predicated upon how well ministering brothers and sisters are taught and engaged in the ministering interview.”²

Four tips for ministering brothers and sisters:

- Go to the interview seeking counsel. Be ready to learn.
- Be prepared to discuss needs that you may need help meeting.
- Focus on the individual’s strengths and abilities, not just needs.
- Contact the presidency to counsel between quarterly interviews as needed.

Five tips for leaders:

- Interviews don’t need to be long, but schedule enough time to visit in a place that allows for a meaningful conversation.
- Take the opportunity to minister to the ministering brother or sister.
- Don’t ask questions that give the impression you’re simply counting visits or checking off a contact (“Did you get your ministering done?”). Do ask questions that reinforce desired behaviors (“What prompting have you felt as you’re prayed for the

family? What happened when you acted on those promptings?”).

- Sincerely listen and take notes.
- Counsel together. Ministering companionships are entitled to revelation for those they are assigned to minister.³

Questions and Answers about Ministering Interviews

What is a ministering interview?

It is a discussion between ministering brothers and a member of the elders quorum presidency or between ministering sisters and a member of the Relief Society presidency in a setting that allows them to seek and receive inspiration from the Holy Ghost. As a result, ministering brothers and sisters can be inspired to watch over, love, teach, and comfort in the Savior’s way.

Do these quarterly interviews need to be in person?

Typically they are conducted in person, but they could be held by phone or online when meeting face to face is impractical. Generally, both companions would participate in the interview when appropriate.

What is the purpose of a ministering interview?

Ministering interviews are an opportunity for ministering brothers and sisters to review current situations, make future plans, and get needed help to the individuals or families they minister to. It’s a chance to talk about what resources the quorum and Relief Society can provide.

How do I deal with confidential or sensitive issues?

Ministering brothers and sisters share confidential information only with the elders quorum or Relief Society president—or directly with the bishop. Confidential or sensitive information should not be shared in first-Sunday council meetings.

You can watch training videos showing ministering interviews at ministering.lds.org.

Counseling about the needs of others is at the heart of ministering interviews. See the Ministering Principles article, “Counsel about Their Needs,” in the September 2018 issue.



First-Sunday Council Meetings

In addition to ministering interviews, first-Sunday council meetings are another way to involve others in ministering. In Relief Society and elders quorum meetings, inspiration can come to those in attendance through the Spirit and from others in the group.

The purpose of a council meeting is to:

- “Counsel together about local responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges;
- “Learn from each other’s insights and experiences; and
- “Plan ways to act on impressions received from the Spirit.”⁴

Council meetings are more than discussions: the meetings lead us to act as individuals or as a group as inspired by the Spirit. Members can feel a desire to accomplish the Lord’s work as a result of these meetings.

Invitation to Act

“Our prayer today,” said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “is that every man and woman—and our older young men and young women—will [be] more deeply committed to heartfelt care for one another, motivated only by the pure love of Christ to do so.”⁵ ■

NOTES

1. See *Mormon Messages* video “Lift,” [lds.org/media-library](https://www.lds.org/media-library).
2. Gary E. Stevenson, in “Ministering Interviews” (video), [ministering.lds.org](https://www.ministering.lds.org).
3. See Russell M. Nelson, “Ministering,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 100.
4. *Come, Follow Me—For Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society*, in *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 140; also available at [comefollowme.lds.org](https://www.comefollowme.lds.org).
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Be With and Strengthen Them,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 103.