

# WE SUSTAIN OUR Leaders

**L**atter-day Saints believe that Jesus Christ Himself is the head of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He calls, through inspiration, prophets and apostles to lead His Church. The Lord has given these leaders authority to call others to serve in the Church, such as members of the Seventy. Apostles and Seventy extend callings to stake presidents, who call bishops, who call members to serve in various positions in their wards. Thus priesthood authority and revelation guide Church callings from the Churchwide level to local congregations.

We have an opportunity to sustain—support, help, pray for—each of these people in their callings. We indicate our willingness to do so by raising our right hands when their names are read to us in general conference, stake conference, ward or branch conference, or sacrament meeting. Raising our hands is a sign to us, to them, and to the Lord that we will sustain them.

Raising our hands to sustain someone is not like voting that person into

office. The person has already been called by the Lord to serve in that calling by one who has the priesthood authority to extend such a calling. Our sustaining is a vote of confidence in the person, because we recognize that he or she has been called of God through priesthood leaders we sustain.

We can sustain the General

Authorities and our local leaders and officers in several ways:

- By our faith and prayers in their behalf.
- By following their counsel.
- By helping when they ask us.
- By accepting callings they extend to us.

Sustaining our leaders is evidence of our goodwill, faith, and fellowship. ■



BELOW: PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY LESLIE NILSSON; PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY CRAIG DIMOND AND WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

1. We sustain the General Authorities of the Church.



2. We can show, by raising our hands, that we will sustain our local leaders and others who are called to serve us.



3. We sustain our leaders by following their counsel.



4. We sustain our leaders by accepting callings, for callings are extended to us “by those who are in authority” (Articles of Faith 1:5).



5. We sustain our leaders by praying for them (see D&C 107:22).

“You will all abide the pledge you have given to the Lord and to one another by the uplifted hand, that you all mean to uphold and sustain these officers in all these various organizations, that . . . you will do everything you can to help them, to benefit them, bless them, and encourage them in the good work in which they are engaged.”

**President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918),  
Teachings of Presidents of the Church:  
Joseph F. Smith (1998), 218–19.**

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For more information, see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), chapter 24; and *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: George Albert Smith* (2011), chapter 6.