

5.

The Work of Salvation in the Ward and Stake

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ are sent forth “to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men” (Doctrine and Covenants 138:56). This work of salvation includes member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel. The bishopric directs this work in the ward, assisted by other members of the ward council.

Although the bishop retains ultimate responsibility in these areas, he may delegate as follows:

- The ward mission leader coordinates member missionary work if one is called (see 5.1.1).
- If a ward mission leader is not called, a member of the elders quorum presidency leads missionary work for the ward.
- The ward temple and family history leader coordinates temple and family history work if one is called (see 5.4.1).
- If a ward temple and family history leader is not called, a member of the elders quorum presidency leads temple and family history work for the ward.
- A member of the Relief Society presidency may help with member missionary work. Another member of the presidency may help with temple and family history work.
- The Sunday School president may assist other ward leaders in improving gospel learning and teaching.

The bishop may assign one of his counselors to coordinate convert retention and the other to coordinate activation, or he may assign these responsibilities to the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies. Each priesthood or auxiliary leader

assists in furthering the work of salvation in his or her organization.

5.1

Member Missionary Work

5.1.1

Bishop and His Counselors

The bishop holds the keys for the work of salvation in the ward. With his counselors, he oversees member missionary work in the ward. However, he may assign the elders quorum president to lead member missionary work under his direction. Generally, the elders quorum president delegates this assignment to one of his counselors.

The member of the elders quorum presidency who leads member missionary work may function as the ward mission leader or may supervise the ward mission leader. Through inspiration, the bishop determines whether to call a ward mission leader or to have a member of the elders quorum presidency function in this role.

The Relief Society presidency may follow the pattern of the elders quorum, with a member of the presidency assigned to help with member missionary work.

The bishop directs the ward council in preparing and following a ward mission plan, as described in 5.1.8.

The bishop and his counselors may call and set apart other members to serve as ward missionaries.

The bishop and his counselors give priority to member missionary work. They teach the doctrines of missionary work regularly. They encourage ward members to work with full-time missionaries to

find, teach, and baptize investigators. They set an example by finding and preparing individuals and families for the missionaries to teach.

The bishop and his counselors help prospective full-time missionaries, including sisters and couples, prepare to serve missions.

5.1.2

Ward Council

Member missionary work is most effective when ward council members are fully engaged in the missionary effort. In quorums and auxiliaries, they encourage members to participate in missionary work in the following ways:

1. Find and prepare people to be taught.
2. Assist the missionaries when they teach (in members' homes, if possible).
3. Fellowship investigators.
4. Prepare themselves and their children to serve as full-time missionaries.

In ward council meetings, members of the council develop and review the ward mission plan (see 5.1.8). They review baptismal candidates, other investigators, and other matters from the Progress Record prepared by the full-time missionaries. They make plans to help each investigator progress. They offer counsel about those who might serve as ministering brothers or sisters to investigators who are preparing to be baptized and confirmed.

The bishop may occasionally invite full-time missionaries to meet with the ward council.

5.1.3

Ward Mission Leader

For information about calling a ward mission leader or having a member of the elders quorum presidency fill that role, see 5.1.1. If a ward mission

leader is called, he should be a Melchizedek Priesthood holder.

The person who serves in the role of ward mission leader has the following responsibilities:

He coordinates the ward's efforts to find, teach, and baptize investigators. He coordinates this work with the work of the full-time missionaries and ward missionaries. He may attend ward council meetings when invited. The bishop may ask him to lead discussions on missionary work.

He conducts missionary coordination meetings and directs the work of ward missionaries.

He arranges as many teaching opportunities for the full-time missionaries as possible each week.

He organizes convert baptismal services, assisted by the full-time missionaries (see 20.3.4).

He helps coordinate the confirmations of new members in sacrament meetings.

He participates with full-time missionaries in teaching and fellowshiping investigators.

He helps ensure that, soon after their confirmations, new members of appropriate ages receive limited-use temple recommends and new male members of appropriate ages are ordained to offices in the Aaronic Priesthood.

5.1.4

Ward Missionaries

The bishopric determines how many ward missionaries are needed in the ward. They counsel with the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies in making this decision. Ward missionaries serve under the direction of the bishopric and the ward mission leader (if called; see 5.1.1) or a member of the elders quorum presidency.

Priesthood holders, sisters, and married couples may serve as ward missionaries. They need not have assigned companions, but they should not go alone

when visiting in homes. A man and a woman do not make visits together as ward missionaries unless they are husband and wife.

Ward missionaries are called to a specified term of service, such as two years. They normally do not have other Church responsibilities, except for assignments as ministering brothers and sisters, preferably to part-member or less-active families. They do not wear name tags.

Ward missionaries find and prepare people for the full-time missionaries to teach. They also assist in fellowshipping and teaching investigators.

Ward missionaries visit members' homes to encourage members to seek missionary experiences, identify people the missionaries could teach, and prepare people to be taught.

5.1.5 Missionary Coordination Meeting

The ward mission leader (if called; see 5.1.1) or the member of the elders quorum presidency who leads missionary work conducts a missionary coordination meeting with the ward missionaries and the full-time missionaries. A member of the Relief Society presidency may assist. The meeting is held regularly. If full-time missionaries serve in several wards, they attend as often as circumstances allow.

In this meeting, the ward mission leader (if called) and assigned members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead missionary work coordinate the work of the full-time missionaries and the ward members. They may discuss implementing the ward mission plan, scheduling as many teaching appointments for the missionaries as possible, and arranging to have members present as often as possible when investigators are taught.

5.1.6 Members and Full-Time Missionaries Working Together

The mission president holds the keys for baptizing and confirming converts. Under his direction, full-time missionaries have the primary responsibility for teaching investigators. Full-time missionaries also conduct baptism and confirmation interviews for each candidate and authorize the ordinances to take place.

The bishop becomes acquainted with all investigators and follows their progress. Although he does not interview baptismal candidates, he meets with them personally before they are baptized. He also oversees ward members' efforts to fellowship them. Investigators are more likely to be baptized and confirmed and remain active when they have close friendships with Church members.

Normally, full-time missionary companionships are not separated to work with ward members. However, they may be separated to work with members when necessary to fill a large number of teaching appointments. In such cases, the ward mission leader (if called; see 5.1.1) or the members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead missionary work ensure that those who work as companions to full-time missionaries understand and accept mission rules. These leaders instruct ward members that they must never leave a full-time missionary without an authorized companion.

5.1.7 Baptismal Services and Confirmations

Baptismal services should be scheduled as soon as an investigator has committed to be baptized. The services should not normally be delayed past this date unless a person is not prepared. Baptisms of family members should not be delayed so the father can receive the priesthood and perform the baptisms himself.

A baptismal service offers the opportunity to find and encourage other investigators. Converts should be encouraged to invite their family members, other relatives, and friends. Church leaders and missionaries may also invite other investigators who are being taught, potential investigators, and leaders and members who will be working with the new members. Other ward members may also attend.

Converts are confirmed in a sacrament meeting in the ward where they live, preferably on the Sunday following their baptism.

Guidelines for baptismal services and confirmations, including guidelines for baptisms and confirmations of 8-year-olds, are found in 20.3.

5.1.8

Ward Mission Plan

Under the direction of the bishop, the ward council develops a ward mission plan. The ward mission leader (if called; see 5.1.1) or a member of the elders quorum presidency may lead this effort. A member of the Relief Society presidency may also help create and implement the plan.

The plan should be brief and simple. It should include specific goals and activities to help members of ward priesthood and auxiliary organizations participate in member missionary work, retention, and activation. The ward council coordinates the ward mission plan with the plans of the full-time missionaries assigned to the ward. The following steps may be helpful in this planning process:

1. Consider the needs and resources of the ward in member missionary work, retention, and activation, including the availability of full-time missionaries.
2. Set specific goals for member missionary work, retention, and activation to be accomplished within the next year.

3. Determine how to accomplish the goals. Leaders could plan ways to lift the ward's overall vision and attitude about missionary work. They could develop ideas for activities to help the full-time missionaries find, teach, and baptize more investigators. They could also plan ways to befriend and strengthen new members and improve the activation of less-active members.

The ward council reviews the ward mission plan regularly and revises it as needed.

5.1.9

Stake Leaders

5.1.9.1

Stake President and His Counselors

The stake president and his counselors give priority to missionary work. They teach the doctrines of missionary work regularly and encourage stake members to work with full-time missionaries to find, teach, and baptize investigators. They set an example by finding and preparing individuals and families for the missionaries to teach.

In his regular interview with each bishop, the stake president asks for a report on the progress of investigators in the bishop's ward.

The stake president meets regularly with the mission president to coordinate the work of full-time missionaries in the stake. Matters to discuss include the number and location of missionaries, the role of members in missionary work, the assistance of missionaries in retention and activation efforts, the assistance of missionaries in training local members, and meals, housing, and transportation for missionaries.

5.1.9.2**High Councilor Assigned to Missionary Work**

The stake presidency assigns a missionary-oriented high councilor to assist them in overseeing the stake's efforts to find, teach, baptize, and confirm investigators. He may lead discussions on these topics in high council meetings, stake council meetings, stake priesthood leadership meetings, and other stake meetings.

The high councilor assigned to missionary work orients ward mission leaders (if called; see 5.1.1) and members of elders quorum presidencies who lead missionary work. He also provides ongoing instruction and encouragement. With the stake president's approval, he may train ward leaders and ward missionaries.

5.2**Convert Retention**

New Church members need the support and friendship of Church leaders, ministering brothers and sisters, and other members. This support helps new members become firmly "converted unto the Lord" (Alma 23:6).

5.2.1**Needs of New Members**

The transition to Church membership is challenging for most people. It often involves embracing new religious teachings and a new way of life. All members of the Church, particularly new members, need three things to help them stay active in the Church: friendship, opportunities to mature and serve in the Church, and nourishing by the word of God (see Moroni 6:4). Under the bishopric's direction, priesthood and auxiliary leaders help new members in these areas.

5.2.2**Bishop and His Counselors**

The bishop has overall responsibility for convert retention. He interviews newly baptized brethren who are at least age 11 and turning 12 during the year to be ordained to the appropriate Aaronic Priesthood office. Brethren who are worthy to be baptized and confirmed are also worthy to receive the Aaronic Priesthood. The bishop also interviews new members who are at least age 11 and turning 12 during the year to receive a limited-use temple recommend soon after their confirmation. Both of these interviews are normally held within a week after confirmation. For male converts, the limited-use temple recommend interview should be held as part of the interview to receive the Aaronic Priesthood.

See *Handbook 1*, 3.4.14, for instructions on issuing limited-use recommends for new members. See *Handbook 1*, 16.7.2, for instructions on ordaining recently baptized and confirmed brethren.

The ward council assists the bishop in preparing new members to participate, where possible, in vicarious baptisms and confirmations for their deceased ancestors (see 5.2.3).

To help new members remain active in the Church, the bishop and his counselors have the following responsibilities. The bishop may assign one of his counselors or the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies to lead these efforts under his direction.

They oversee efforts to ensure that each new member receives fellowship.

They ensure that each new adult member receives a calling or other opportunities to serve.

They ensure that brethren who are at least age 11 and turning 12 during the year are ordained to the appropriate Aaronic Priesthood office soon after their confirmation, normally within a week. They also see that these brethren receive opportunities to exercise the priesthood. Brethren who are worthy

to be baptized and confirmed are also worthy to receive the Aaronic Priesthood.

The bishop and his counselors oversee the work of the elders quorum president in helping brethren ages 18 and older prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. 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.

5.2.3

Ward Council

Ward council members give special attention to the retention of new members throughout their first year of membership.

In ward council meetings, members of the council review their goals for convert retention as outlined in the ward mission plan (see 5.1.8). They discuss the progress of each new member and identify areas where he or she may need more support. They may use the New and Returning Member Progress form as a guide for this discussion. They counsel about ways to help new members feel the love of other members, the joy of serving in the Lord's kingdom, and the peace that comes through living gospel principles.

The ward council discusses ways to strengthen new converts. Ward council members may also suggest opportunities for service, such as temple and family history work.

5.2.4

Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders

As directed by the bishopric, priesthood and auxiliary leaders provide opportunities that help new members mature spiritually and remain active in the Church. For example, the Relief Society president assists adult female converts. The elders quorum president assists adult male converts. When more than one family member joins the Church,

priesthood and auxiliary leaders coordinate their efforts in ward council meetings.

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders may help new members in the following ways:

They help new members understand and apply the doctrines and principles in the missionary lessons.

They ensure that new members learn basic Church practices, such as how to bear testimony, pay tithing and other offerings, live the law of the fast, give a talk, perform priesthood ordinances, participate in family history work, perform baptisms and confirmations for the dead (where possible), and serve as ministering brothers and sisters.

They ensure that new members have access to the scriptures, the Church magazines, and any manuals they may need for the Church classes they attend.

They encourage new members to receive a limited-use temple recommend and to participate, where possible, in vicarious baptisms and confirmations for their deceased ancestors.

If new members are eligible for seminary or institute, priesthood and auxiliary leaders help them enroll.

When new members become eligible to receive temple ordinances, priesthood and auxiliary leaders help them prepare, either in a temple preparation seminar or in some other way.

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders may assign experienced members to help fellowship new members. Leaders might consider assigning members who relate well with the new members because of similar interests or because they have faced similar challenges.

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders (or members they assign) note each week whether recently baptized members who belong to their quorum or auxiliary are present in sacrament meeting. They make assignments to visit those who are not attending and invite them to attend the following week.

5.2.5**Ministering Brothers and Sisters**

Ministering brothers and sisters have important responsibilities to establish friendships with and care for new members. In consultation with the bishop, elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies assign dedicated members to serve as ministering brothers and sisters to new members.

When authorized by the mission president, full-time missionaries may assist in ministering to new members.

5.2.6**Ward Missionaries and Full-Time Missionaries**

While retention is primarily the responsibility of ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders, ward missionaries and full-time missionaries assist in this work. Ward missionaries teach the first four missionary lessons again to all new members (see *Preach My Gospel*, chapter 3). They also teach lesson 5. Ward missionaries may be assisted by the full-time missionaries as needed.

5.2.7**Influence of Other Ward Members**

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders encourage ward members to strengthen new members by showing love and establishing friendships. Ward members could invite recent converts to participate in gospel study and home evening in their homes. Ward members could also invite them to attend Church meetings, classes, and activities, providing transportation if needed.

5.2.8**Instruction for New Members**

The Gospel Principles class is no longer held. On Sunday, all new members and friends of the Church

are invited to attend classes and quorum meetings with the other children, youth, and adults in the ward.

Ward and full-time missionaries teach the lessons in chapter 3 of *Preach My Gospel*, before and after baptism. Ministering brothers and sisters and other members may attend these lessons to provide fellowship.

5.2.9**Stake Leaders****5.2.9.1****Stake President and His Counselors**

Members of the stake presidency oversee efforts to strengthen new members in the stake. They instruct and encourage other leaders in these efforts. They meet new members when they visit wards. They may occasionally hold a meeting for new members in connection with a stake conference.

In his regular interview with each bishop, the stake president asks for a report on the progress of new members in the bishop's ward.

In his regular meeting with the mission president, the stake president may give a report on the progress of new members in the stake.

5.2.9.2**High Councilors**

The high councilor assigned to missionary work may help teach and fellowship new members. He works with ward mission leaders (if called; see 5.1.1) and members of elders quorum presidencies who lead missionary work. He may also help prospective elders prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood.

5.2.9.3**Stake Auxiliary Presidencies**

Stake auxiliary presidencies may occasionally work with ward auxiliary leaders in teaching and fellowshiping new members.

5.3**Activation**

Ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders strive continually to help less-active members return to Church activity. The Savior said, “Unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them” (3 Nephi 18:32).

Less-active members usually still believe in the gospel, but they may be experiencing difficult trials that make them feel uncomfortable attending church. They also tend to have fewer friendships in the Church, so they are less likely to feel they are among friends when they go to ward meetings. Those who return to activity often do so when they see that something is missing from their lives. As a result, they realize that they need to make changes in the way they live. At such times, they need the love and friendship of caring, active Church members who accept them as they are and show genuine personal interest in them.

5.3.1**Bishop and His Counselors**

The bishop and his counselors have the overall responsibility for activation. They direct the efforts of priesthood quorums and auxiliaries to help less-active members rekindle faith and to ensure that returning members receive fellowship and support. They help returning brethren advance in the priesthood, and they help brethren and sisters receive

temple ordinances or become worthy to enter the temple again.

The bishop may assign one of his counselors or the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies to lead activation efforts under his direction.

5.3.2**Ward Council**

Under the bishopric’s direction, members of the ward council review their goals for activation as outlined in the ward mission plan (see 5.1.8). They share recommendations for ministering to less-active members in their organizations. By being continually aware of the needs and circumstances of less-active members, ward council members can discern when families and individuals might be ready to respond to an invitation to receive Church visitors, attend a Church activity, or participate in a temple preparation seminar.

The ward council prayerfully identifies the less-active members who are the most likely to return to activity. They also decide which leaders and members could best strengthen less-active members and build personal relationships with them. When more than one family member is less active, leaders coordinate their efforts in ward council meetings.

Ward council meetings regularly include reports on the progress of these members. As some members return to activity or decline invitations to return, the ward council identifies others who may be receptive. Leaders may use the New and Returning Member Progress form to keep track of these efforts.

5.3.3**Ministering Brothers and Sisters**

In consultation with the bishop, the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies assign dedicated ministering brothers and sisters to less-active members. These leaders focus their efforts on the

less-active members who are most likely to respond to invitations to return to activity.

5.3.4

Full-Time Missionaries and Ward Missionaries

The ward mission leader (if called; see 5.1.1), members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead missionary work, full-time missionaries, and ward missionaries assist with activation efforts. Teaching less-active members may create opportunities to teach their nonmember friends or relatives.

5.3.5

Gospel Principles Class

The Gospel Principles class is no longer held. On Sunday, all new members and friends of the Church are invited to attend classes and quorum meetings with the other children, youth, and adults in the ward.

5.3.6

Stake Leaders

5.3.6.1

Stake President and His Counselors

In his regular interview with each bishop, the stake president asks for a report on the progress of less-active members in the bishop's ward. The stake president and the bishop discuss the plans and goals prepared by the ward council for these members.

When the stake president and mission president meet to discuss missionary work, they may also discuss the assistance full-time missionaries can give in working with less-active members.

5.3.6.2

High Councilors

High councilors who work with ward Melchizedek Priesthood leaders may help teach and fellowship less-active members. They may also participate in efforts to help prospective elders prepare to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood.

5.3.6.3

Stake Auxiliary Presidencies

Stake auxiliary presidencies may occasionally work with ward auxiliary leaders in teaching and fellowshiping less-active members.

5.4

Temple and Family History Work

In temples, Church members receive ordinances and make sacred covenants that are essential for exaltation. Church members also go to temples to perform ordinances in behalf of deceased persons who have not received the ordinances.

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders teach ward members about the responsibilities and blessings of temple and family history work, as outlined in the following paragraphs:

They encourage members to receive their own temple ordinances and help family members receive theirs. Leaders teach members that the purpose of the endowment is to prepare for exaltation, not merely to prepare for marriage or a mission.

Leaders encourage each endowed member to hold a current temple recommend and go to the temple as often as circumstances and family needs allow. Leaders also encourage youth and unendowed adults, including new members, to have limited-use temple recommends and go to the temple often to be baptized and confirmed for the dead. Leaders do not establish quotas or reporting systems for temple

attendance. Each member determines his or her own level of participation in temple work.

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders teach members to participate in family history work by identifying their ancestral family members, requesting temple ordinances for them if needed, and providing these ordinances in the temple themselves if possible.

Leaders help members understand that they should not request that temple ordinances be performed for any unrelated person without the approval of the person's closest living relative. Leaders also help members understand that they should not make such requests for famous people who are not related to them or for people whose information has been gathered from unapproved indexing projects.

For information about calling a ward temple and family history leader or having a member of the elders quorum presidency fill that role, see 5.4.1.

5.4.1

Bishop and His Counselors

The bishop holds the keys for the work of salvation in the ward. With his counselors, he oversees temple and family history work in the ward. However, he may assign the elders quorum president to lead this work under his direction. Generally, the elders quorum president delegates this assignment to one of his counselors.

The member of the elders quorum presidency who leads temple and family history work may function as the ward temple and family history leader or may supervise the ward temple and family history leader. Through inspiration, the bishop determines whether to call a temple and family history leader or to have a member of the elders quorum presidency function in this role.

The Relief Society presidency may follow the pattern of the elders quorum, with a member of the presidency assigned to help with temple and family history work.

Assisted by members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead temple and family history work and the ward temple and family history leader (if called), the bishop and his counselors ensure that the doctrines and blessings of temple and family history work are taught regularly in ward meetings.

As the bishop meets with members, he helps them prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple and qualify to continue going to the temple as often as circumstances allow.

The bishop and his counselors encourage members to identify their ancestral family members and provide temple ordinances for them.

Other responsibilities of the bishopric related to temple work are outlined in *Handbook 1*, chapter 3.

5.4.2

Ward Council

In ward council meetings, leaders consider matters relating to temple and family history work. The ward temple and family history leader (if called; see 5.4.1) or members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies assigned to temple and family history work may be invited to discuss topics such as the following:

They discuss ways to help individuals and families receive the ordinances of the temple and go to the temple as often as circumstances allow.

They prayerfully consider ward members who may be invited to participate in temple preparation seminars or work with temple and family history consultants.

They discuss ways to help members participate in family history work.

They may discuss ways to use family history work to find people for the full-time missionaries to teach and to reach out to new members and less-active members.

5.4.3**Organizing Temple and Family History Work in the Ward****5.4.3.1****Elders Quorum Presidency and Ward Temple and Family History Leader**

The bishop may assign the elders quorum presidency to coordinate temple and family history work for the ward council. The Relief Society presidency may work closely with the elders quorum presidency and the temple and family history leader (if called) to encourage temple and family history work in the ward.

For information about calling a ward temple and family history leader or having a member of the elders quorum presidency fill that role, see 5.4.1.

The Melchizedek Priesthood holder who serves in the role of ward temple and family history leader:

- Coordinates the ward's temple and family history efforts, including the development and implementation of the ward temple and family history plan (see 5.4.3.2). He may attend ward council meetings when invited.
- Conducts temple and family history coordination meetings and directs the work of temple and family history consultants.
- Directs the work of helping members prepare for the temple and organizes temple instruction, activities, and trips.
- Coordinates with members of the ward council, the ward mission leader, and the full-time missionaries to provide family history experiences, especially for those learning the gospel, new and returning members, and children and youth preparing to receive a limited-use temple recommend.

- Under the direction of the bishop, works with the elders quorum presidency to assign consultants to serve in the family history center as needed.

5.4.3.2**Ward Temple and Family History Plan**

Under the direction of the bishop, the ward council develops a ward temple and family history plan that is brief, simple, and specific. The plan helps ward members gain a vision of temple and family history work.

The ward temple and family history leader or a member of the elders quorum presidency (see 5.4.1) may lead the plan's development. A member of the Relief Society presidency may assist. These leaders:

1. Consider needs and resources.
2. Set specific goals for temple and family history work for the year without establishing quotas or reporting systems for temple attendance.
3. Determine how to accomplish the goals. Plans should be brief and simple and could include involving new members, youth, and children; helping members enter four generations into FamilySearch; and, as invited by the bishop, helping members prepare to attend the temple.

The ward council reviews and updates the plan regularly.

5.4.3.3**Ward Temple and Family History Coordination Meeting**

To help coordinate temple and family history work, a ward temple and family history coordination meeting may be held. The meeting would be held regularly. The ward temple and family history leader, if called (see 5.4.1), conducts the meeting with ward temple and family history consultants. As often as circumstances allow, a member of the Relief Society

presidency and a member of the elders quorum presidency attend. On occasion, full-time missionaries could be invited.

The coordination meeting should not be long and focuses on helping people. The meeting need not always be held in person. Coordination can also happen through electronic means.

5.4.4

Temple and Family History Consultants

Ward temple and family history consultants serve under the direction of the ward temple and family history leader or a member of the elders quorum presidency (see 5.4.1).

These consultants:

- Help individuals and families discover their ancestors and gather names for temple ordinances.
- Help members prepare to attend the temple and may participate in temple instruction, activities, and trips.
- Attend temple and family history coordination meetings.
- Provide family history experiences, especially for those learning the gospel, new and returning members, and children and youth preparing to receive a limited-use temple recommend.
- When assigned, serve in a local family history center.

5.4.5

Temple and Family History Classes and Resources

5.4.5.1

Temple Preparation Seminars

Temple preparation seminars help members prepare to receive the ordinances and blessings of

the temple. These seminars are planned under the bishop's direction. They are taught outside of regular Sunday meetings at a time that is convenient for members. This course is organized under the direction of the bishopric and may be held at the meetinghouse or in a home.

Temple preparation seminars are especially helpful for new members, less-active members returning to Church activity, and endowed members who have not renewed their recommends for an extended time. The seminars may also be helpful for active members who are preparing to receive the endowment.

Under the bishop's direction, ward council members, assisted by members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead temple and family history work, prayerfully select members to invite to each seminar.

The bishopric calls one or more teachers, who may be a husband and wife. Lessons and instructions for organizing the course are in *Endowed from on High: Temple Preparation Seminar Teacher's Manual*. Participants in the seminar should receive their own copies of the booklet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*.

5.4.5.2

Family History Course

A family history course may be taught outside of regular Sunday meetings at a time that is convenient for members. This course is organized under the direction of the bishopric and may be held at the meetinghouse or in a home. The teacher is usually a ward temple and family history leader or consultant. He or she is assigned by the members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead temple and family history work. Classes are generally conducted as hands-on experiences for members to discover, gather, and connect their family members.

5.4.5.3**Access to Online Family History Resources**

The Church's online family history resources help members identify their ancestral family members, organize ancestral information, and submit requests for temple ordinances to be performed for these family members. The majority of these resources are available through the Church's family history Internet site, FamilySearch.org.

Where a stake or ward meetinghouse has computers with Internet access, or where family history programs are installed on stake or ward computers, the stake presidency and bishopric ensure that these computers are available for members to use at reasonable times. Temple and family history consultants can help schedule the computers and teach members how to use them.

Members who use Church administrative computers for family history work should not have access to membership or financial information.

5.4.6**Stake Leaders****5.4.6.1****Stake President and His Counselors**

The stake president and his counselors oversee temple and family history work in the stake. They ensure that the doctrines and blessings of this work are taught regularly in stake meetings.

As the stake president meets with members, he helps them prepare to receive the ordinances of the temple and qualify to continue going to the temple as often as circumstances allow.

The stake president and his counselors encourage members to identify their ancestral family members and provide temple ordinances for them.

Other responsibilities of the stake presidency related to temple work are outlined in *Handbook 1*, chapter 3.

5.4.6.2**High Councilor(s) Assigned to Temple and Family History Work**

The stake presidency may assign one or more high councilors to train the ward temple and family history leader (if called; see 5.4.1) and members of the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies who lead temple and family history work. As needed, these high councilors also coordinate the stake's efforts in FamilySearch indexing and at family history centers. They may be assisted by a stake temple and family history consultant.

5.4.7**Temple and Family History Resources in the Stake****5.4.7.1****FamilySearch Indexing Program in the Stake**

In FamilySearch indexing, participants use their computers to access images of documents such as census records, church registers, and vital records. From these images, they create automated indexes that are then made accessible through FamilySearch.org.

Individuals, including those who are not members of the Church, can do FamilySearch indexing on their own. However, the stake presidency may determine that it would be beneficial for stake members to work together in an indexing program. Such an effort can provide service opportunities for members who are less active or homebound. Youth may also participate.

5.4.7.2**Family History Centers**

Some stakes have family history centers, which exist primarily to help Church members identify their ancestral family members and provide temple ordinances for them. Community patrons are also welcome to use the resources at family history centers.

These centers provide access to the Church's micro-filmed family history records, to family history computer and Internet resources such as FamilySearch, and to training on how to do family history work.

5.5**Teaching the Gospel**

Jesus Christ is the Master Teacher. Members of the Church who are called and set apart as teachers receive a sacred trust and responsibility to follow His example and help God's children build their faith in Heavenly Father and the Savior and become more like Them. Those called as teachers are to teach with the power and authority of God.

Effective gospel teaching helps people grow in their testimonies and their faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. It strengthens members in their efforts to live according to gospel principles. When God's word is taught with spiritual power, it has a "more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than . . . anything else" (Alma 31:5). Priesthood and auxiliary leaders encourage effective teaching in their organizations. They remember that Church members attend meetings seeking the power, peace, and inspiration provided by the word of God.

5.5.1**Bishop and His Counselors**

The bishop and his counselors teach the gospel by the power of the Spirit and by personal example. They direct the ward council's efforts to ensure

that teaching in the ward is edifying and doctrinally correct.

5.5.2**Ward Council**

Under the direction of the bishopric, members of the ward council regularly counsel together about how to improve gospel learning and teaching in the ward. The bishop may invite the Sunday School president to lead these discussions and provide instruction.

5.5.3**Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders**

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders strive to teach the gospel effectively. They are also responsible for efforts to improve learning and teaching in their organizations. In these efforts, they may counsel with the ward Sunday School presidency.

5.5.3.1**Recommending Members to Serve as Teachers**

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders submit recommendations to the bishopric for ward members to be called to serve as teachers in their organizations. Leaders should recommend teachers who will strive to prepare lessons that will inspire class members to live according to gospel principles. In doing so, they follow the principles in 19.1.1 and 19.1.2.

5.5.3.2**Orienting Newly Called Teachers**

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders meet individually with newly called teachers in their organizations, preferably before each teacher's first lesson. In these meetings, leaders orient teachers as described in *Teaching in the Savior's Way*. Leaders also support teachers as follows:

They help teachers begin to become acquainted with class members, if needed. They give teachers a list of the class members and encourage teachers to learn class members' names. They also encourage teachers to build caring relationships with class members.

They help teachers understand how to use *Teaching in the Savior's Way*. They give each teacher a copy of the book and share a brief overview of its contents.

As needed, they help teachers understand how to prepare a lesson. They give teachers the approved curriculum materials for their classes and explain how to use them.

They invite teachers to participate in teacher council meetings (see 5.5.7).

5.5.3.3

Providing Ongoing Support for Teachers

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders develop a supportive and caring relationship with teachers. After their initial orientation meeting, leaders regularly meet with individual teachers to learn of the teachers' needs, discuss the needs of those they teach, and review the principles outlined in this section. They encourage teachers to set goals according to the article titled "Making a Plan to Improve Your Teaching" on pages 24–27 in *Teaching, No Greater Call*.

5.5.3.4

Ensuring That Teaching Is Edifying and Doctrinally Correct

Priesthood and auxiliary leaders carefully observe the learning and teaching during Sunday classes and other lessons. Leaders who do not regularly attend each class, such as members of the Sunday School and Primary presidencies, arrange with teachers to attend the classes occasionally. Based on their observations, leaders counsel with teachers on how to improve the learning in the classes.

Leaders ensure that teachers use the scriptures, the teachings of latter-day prophets, and the approved

curriculum materials as outlined in the current *Instructions for Curriculum*. They help teachers understand how to supplement the curriculum with Church magazines, particularly the general conference issues of the *Ensign* and *Liahona*.

5.5.4

Teachers and Leaders

As teachers and leaders teach the gospel, they are guided by the following principles.

5.5.4.1

Love Those You Teach

Teachers and leaders show love and sincere concern for those they teach. They learn class members' names. They review attendance information so they can be aware of class members who are not attending regularly. They may contact these members outside of class to encourage them in their participation.

5.5.4.2

Teach by the Spirit

Teachers and leaders seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost in preparing and teaching lessons. They seek this guidance by praying and humbly recognizing their dependence on the Lord. During lessons, they invite the Spirit by bearing testimony of the doctrines they teach.

5.5.4.3

Teach the Doctrine

Teachers and leaders use the scriptures, the teachings of latter-day prophets, and approved curriculum materials to teach and testify of the doctrines of the gospel. Approved curriculum materials for each class or quorum are listed in the current *Instructions for Curriculum*. As needed, teachers and leaders supplement curriculum materials with Church

magazines, particularly the general conference issues of the *Ensign* and *Liahona*.

5.5.4.4

Invite Diligent Learning

Teachers and leaders encourage class members to be responsible for their own gospel learning as individuals, in their families, and during class instruction. They encourage class members to bring their own copies of the scriptures to class where possible. Teachers and leaders provide opportunities for class members to actively participate in discussions, and they invite class members to live the gospel and receive the promised blessings.

5.5.5

Ward Sunday School President and His Counselors

Members of the ward Sunday School presidency serve as resources to help other leaders with efforts to strengthen gospel learning and teaching. They may be invited to assist leaders in orienting, instructing, and providing ongoing support for teachers.

5.5.6

Printed and Online Resources for Learning and Teaching

To help members improve in learning and teaching the gospel, the Church provides two publications: *Teaching in the Savior's Way* and the *Teaching Guidebook*. These resources are available in print, on ChurchofJesusChrist.org, and in the Gospel Library app. Other resources are also available on ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

5.5.7

Teacher Council Meetings

The ward council, with assistance from the Sunday School presidency, oversees teacher council

meetings. In most cases, a member of the Sunday School presidency leads the meetings; other ward members may be assigned to lead meetings on occasion. For more information, see *Teaching in the Savior's Way*.

Each ward holds quarterly teacher council meetings for teachers to counsel together about principles of Christlike teaching. Teachers attend teacher council meetings during the 50-minute class time on Sunday. The council meetings are held according to the following schedule:

- Priesthood, Relief Society, and Young Women teachers can attend on a first or third Sunday, as determined by local leaders.
- Sunday School teachers can attend on a second or fourth Sunday, as determined by local leaders.
- Primary teachers can attend on any Sunday, as determined by the ward Primary and Sunday School presidencies. If desired, Primary teachers may meet separately from other teachers to counsel about the unique needs of teaching children. More than one council may be held during a quarter for Primary teachers so they do not all miss Primary classes at the same time.
- In small units it may be difficult to hold teacher council meetings during regular Sunday meetings. In these units, teacher council meetings may be held quarterly in an expanded ward council that includes all teachers. Or they could be held outside of regular Sunday meetings.

5.5.8

Stake President and His Counselors

The stake president and his counselors teach the gospel by the power of the Spirit and by personal example. They direct efforts to ensure that teaching in the stake is edifying and doctrinally correct.