

## 14.

# Music

### 14.1

## Purpose of Music in the Church

In a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord said, “My soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads” (Doctrine and Covenants 25:12).

The First Presidency said:

“Inspirational music is an essential part of our church meetings. The hymns invite the Spirit of the Lord, create a feeling of reverence, unify us as members, and provide a way for us to offer praises to the Lord.

“Some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns. Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end” (*Hymns*, ix).

### 14.2

## Ward Music Leadership

#### 14.2.1

### Bishopric

The bishop and his counselors oversee ward music. They have the following responsibilities:

They call and set apart ward members to serve in music callings as outlined in this section.

They consult regularly with the ward music chairman to ensure that musical selections and instruments used in Church meetings are appropriate (see guidelines in 14.4.2).

They support a ward choir by encouraging members to participate and by making available a rehearsal time that is free of other ward conflicts.

They encourage members to participate in congregational singing.

They encourage members to use uplifting music in their homes (see 14.8).

#### 14.2.2

### Ward Music Adviser

A member of the bishopric serves as the ward music adviser. He supervises the music program in the ward, advises the ward music chairman, and represents the music program in leadership meetings.

#### 14.2.3

### Ward Music Chairman

A man or woman may serve as the ward music chairman. Under the direction of the ward music adviser, the ward music chairman has the following responsibilities:

Serve as a resource to the bishopric on music matters.

Arrange for effective, appropriate music in sacrament meetings and other ward meetings.

Serve as a resource to ward auxiliary leaders in providing music training and in meeting other music needs as requested.

Recommend and supervise music training programs in the ward (see 14.7).

Recommend and implement ward music activities as requested.

Recommend members to fill ward music callings as requested by the ward music adviser. Supervise those who serve in ward music callings.

The ward music chairman receives training and support from the stake music chairman as needed.

#### 14.2.4

### Ward Music Director

Under the direction of the ward music chairman, the music director recommends and conducts the congregational hymns for sacrament meetings and for other ward meetings as requested. One person may serve as both the ward music chairman and ward music director.

#### 14.2.5

### Ward Organist or Pianist

The ward organist or pianist provides prelude and postlude music and accompaniment for hymns at sacrament meeting and at other ward meetings as requested.

#### 14.2.6

### Ward Choir Director and Choir Accompanist

The ward choir director recommends music to be sung by the choir, directs choir rehearsals, and conducts choir performances (see 14.4.5).

The ward choir accompanist plays for choir rehearsals and performances.

#### 14.2.7

### Priesthood Music Director and Pianist or Organist

These callings have been discontinued.

## 14.3

### Adapting Ward Music to Local Conditions and Resources

The guidelines in this chapter may be adapted according to local needs. For example, in a small branch, the ward music chairman might also direct the choir and lead the music in sacrament meetings and in priesthood or auxiliary meetings. A pianist could play for sacrament meetings, choir, and priesthood or auxiliary meetings.

When no one can play the piano, the following resources may be useful:

1. CDs of hymns and children's songs are listed in the *Church Materials Catalog* and are available from Church Distribution Services.
2. Hymns and children's songs can be downloaded in MP3 format from the Church music Web site ([music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)).
3. Some meetinghouses are equipped with digital pianos that have hymns programmed into them.

Music training and keyboards may be available for those who serve in music callings or who may serve in the future (see 14.7).

## 14.4

### Music in the Ward

Appropriate music is a vital part of Church meetings, particularly sacrament meetings. Music that is carefully selected and properly presented can greatly enhance the spirit of worship. Music should be worshipful and fit the spirit of the meeting. Priesthood leaders determine what is suitable.

**14.4.1****Planning Music for Church Worship Services**

Members who serve in ward music callings work together to select appropriate music for worship services. When feasible, the bishop and his counselors choose meeting topics well in advance. This allows the music chairman, music director, and choir director to plan hymns, special selections, and choir performances that complement and reinforce the meeting topics. This also allows time for the bishop-ric to approve the musical selections in advance.

**14.4.2****Guidelines for Choosing Appropriate Music for Church Worship Services**

All Church music should be consistent with the following guidelines.

The hymns are the basic music for worship services and are standard for all congregational singing. In addition, other appropriate selections may be used for prelude and postlude music, choir music, and special musical presentations. If musical selections other than the hymns are used, they should be in keeping with the spirit of the hymns. Texts should be doctrinally correct. (See “Hymns for Congregations,” *Hymns*, 380–81.)

Secular music should not replace sacred music in Sunday meetings. Some religiously oriented music presented in a popular style is not appropriate for sacrament meetings. Also, much sacred music that is suitable for concerts and recitals is not appropriate for a Latter-day Saint worship service.

Music in Church meetings should not draw attention to itself or be for demonstration. This music is for worship, not performance.

Organs and pianos, or their electronic equivalents, are the standard instruments used in Church meetings. If other instruments are used, their use should be in keeping with the spirit of the meeting.

Instruments with a prominent or less worshipful sound, such as most brass and percussion, are not appropriate for sacrament meeting.

Live accompaniment is normally used in sacrament and other ward meetings. If a piano, organ, or accompanist is not available, appropriate recordings may be used (see 14.3).

Music in Church meetings should usually be sung in the language of the congregation.

**14.4.3****Standard Musical Elements in Church Worship Services****14.4.3.1****Prelude and Postlude Music**

Quiet prelude and postlude music creates an atmosphere of worship that invites the Spirit into Church meetings. The organist or pianist usually plays hymns or other appropriate music for five to ten minutes before and after a meeting. Playing hymns can help members review gospel teachings in their minds.

**14.4.3.2****Congregational Singing**

Most Church meetings are enhanced by the singing of hymns. Music provides a primary means by which members participate in Church worship services. Congregational singing has a unique and often underused power for unifying members as they worship together.

As appropriate, a priesthood leader may ask a congregation to stand for an intermediate hymn or a national anthem (see “Hymns for Congregations,” *Hymns*, 380–81).

**14.4.3.3****Special Musical Selections**

Musical selections may be presented by choirs, vocal and instrumental soloists, and small groups. Hymns and other appropriate selections may be used (see 14.4.2).

**14.4.4****Sacrament Meetings**

The bishopric approves music for sacrament meetings. Music and musical texts are to be sacred, dignified, and otherwise suitable for sacrament meeting. Music in sacrament meeting is for worship, not for a performance that draws attention to itself.

Opening and closing hymns are usually sung by the congregation (see “Selecting the Right Hymn,” *Hymns*, 380). In addition to using hymns that are already known and loved, members are encouraged to become acquainted with new or less familiar hymns. Music leaders should try to achieve a good balance between familiar favorites and hymns that are not as well known (see “Hymns for Congregations,” *Hymns*, 380–81).

The sacrament hymn is always sung by the congregation. It should refer to the sacrament itself or to the sacrifice of the Savior. Vocal solos or instrumental music may not replace this hymn. No music should be played during the sacrament prayer, while the sacrament is being passed, or as a postlude after the sacrament is passed.

Special musical selections or a congregational hymn may be scheduled after the sacrament or between speakers (see “Special Musical Selections” in 14.4.3).

If a musical program is presented, it should be simple, reverent, and short enough to allow a spoken message. Sacrament meetings should not be turned over to outside musical groups. Recitals, concerts, and pageantry are not appropriate in sacrament meeting.

**14.4.5****Choirs**

Every ward should make an effort to have an active ward choir that sings in sacrament meeting at least once a month. Ward members may participate voluntarily in the choir, or the bishopric may invite or call them to participate.

In a very small branch, a choir might consist of the entire congregation. In a large ward with many resources, the bishopric may call choir officers, such as a president, a secretary, a librarian, and section leaders.

Church choirs are encouraged to use the hymnbook as their basic resource because the hymns teach the truths of the restored gospel. Hymn arrangements and other appropriate choral works may also be used (see 14.4.2).

Information about using the hymns for choirs is provided in *Hymns*, pages 381–83. Additional information about conducting choirs is in the *Conducting Course* manual, pages 73–83.

Auditions are not held when organizing ward and stake choirs. Rehearsals usually do not exceed one hour.

In addition to the ward choir, Relief Society, priesthood, youth, children, and family choirs may be invited to sing hymns and other appropriate musical selections in Church meetings.

**14.4.6****Using Music in the Classroom**

Hymn singing can be an effective way to introduce or reinforce gospel principles taught in the classroom. Leaders should encourage teachers to use the hymns to enhance classroom instruction.

**14.5****Stake Music Leadership****14.5.1****Stake Presidency**

The stake president and his counselors oversee stake music. They call and set apart stake members to serve in stake music callings as outlined in this section.

**14.5.2****Stake Music Adviser**

The stake presidency assigns a high councilor to be the stake music adviser. Under the presidency's direction, he supervises the music program in the stake, advises the stake music chairman, and represents the music program in stake council meetings.

With the stake presidency's approval, the stake music adviser may call and set apart stake members to serve in stake music positions.

**14.5.3****Stake Music Chairman**

A man or woman may serve as the stake music chairman. Under the direction of the stake presidency, the stake music chairman has the following responsibilities:

Serve as a resource to the stake presidency on music matters.

Arrange for music and musicians for stake conference sessions and other stake meetings and events as requested.

As needed, provide training and support for ward music chairmen and serve as a resource to stake auxiliary leaders.

Recommend and supervise music training programs in the stake (see 14.7).

Recommend and implement stake music activities as requested.

**14.5.4****Stake Music Specialists**

Stake music specialists, including a stake organist, may be called as needed. These specialists may be assigned to provide music for a particular stake meeting every time that meeting occurs. They may also be assigned to provide music training (see 14.7) or to assist with music in stake activities.

**14.6****Music in the Stake****14.6.1****Stake Conferences**

Music for stake conference should be planned with the purpose of strengthening faith and testimony. The presiding authority at a stake conference reviews all proposed musical selections for the conference early in the planning stage.

Music for the general session of stake conference normally includes four selections. The congregation sings the opening and intermediate hymns. A choir may sing the other two selections, perhaps immediately before the first speaker and at the close of the meeting. At least one of the choir's selections should be a Latter-day Saint hymn or hymn arrangement. Choirs may be composed of ward choirs, or they may be special choirs of children, youth, priesthood holders, Relief Society sisters, or families.

For guidelines on choosing appropriate music, see 14.4.2.

**14.6.2****Stake and Multistake Choirs**

With priesthood leaders' approval, stake and multi-stake choirs may be organized for stake conferences, regional conferences, and other occasions, such as community events. After the performance, the choir is disbanded until other occasions arise. These choirs should not interfere with members' participation in ward choirs.

Standing community choirs directed by and consisting primarily of Church members are not sponsored by the Church. These choirs should not use references to the Church such as "LDS," "Latter-day Saint," or "Mormon" in their names. If stake priesthood leaders approve, community choirs may use Church buildings for rehearsals and performances, provided they follow Church standards and policies related to activities and finances.

**14.7****Music Training**

Learning basic music skills allows members to use their talents to serve in the Church. With the approval of priesthood leaders, stake and ward music chairmen may arrange for music training courses, seminars, and workshops. Music training programs may be provided for those who currently serve in music positions and those who may serve in the future. Participants could include stake and ward music directors, choir directors, pianists, and organists. Other interested adults and youth, including prospective missionaries, could also participate. No fee is charged for Church-sponsored training.

An annual pattern of music training could include music conducting courses, training for choir directors, ward keyboard courses, and stake or ward organ training courses. Music chairmen may consult with priesthood leaders and recommend qualified instructors who could provide this training. If a stake music specialist is not called to provide

training, ward choir directors could meet together to exchange ideas, or the stake presidency could request help from outside the stake.

The Conducting Course Kit and the Keyboard Course Kit provide instruction in basic music skills. The *Conducting Course* manual also provides instruction for organizing and conducting choirs. These resources are listed in the *Church Materials Catalog* and are available from Church Distribution Services.

When there is not a reasonable alternative, priesthood leaders may authorize the use of meeting-house pianos and organs for practice, paid private instruction, and recitals involving members of the units that use the meetinghouse. No admittance fee should be charged for recitals.

Ward music chairmen help find opportunities for developing musicians to use their talents and encourage them to continue developing their skills.

**14.8****Music in the Home**

Priesthood leaders and music leaders encourage Church members to use uplifting music in their homes, to have a copy of the hymnbook and the *Children's Songbook*, and to sing this music as families. Concerning music in the home, the First Presidency said:

"The hymns can bring families a spirit of beauty and peace and can inspire love and unity among family members.

"Teach your children to love the hymns. Sing them on the Sabbath, in home evening, during scripture study, at prayer time. Sing as you work, as you play, and as you travel together. Sing hymns as lullabies to build faith and testimony in your young ones" (*Hymns*, x).

Members may use Church-produced recordings to accompany singing and to help them learn the hymns and Primary songs. These recordings are

listed in the *Church Materials Catalog*. Members may also access the Church music Web site ([music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)) to learn and listen to Church music, learn basic music skills, and find other helpful music resources.

Parents should encourage their children to receive instruction in musical skills, enabling them to use their talents to serve in the Church.

The bishopric may occasionally assign sacrament meeting speakers to talk about using music in the home. Occasionally a family may sing a favorite hymn or Primary song as a musical selection in sacrament meeting.

## 14.9

### Additional Music Policies and Guidelines

#### 14.9.1

##### Other Music in the Chapel

Some cultural and recreational music may be presented in the chapel on weekdays. However, the cultural hall is usually a more appropriate setting for such music. Local priesthood leaders resolve questions about what music is appropriate in the chapel. Applause is not usually appropriate in the chapel.

#### 14.9.2

##### Obtaining and Using Music

An initial supply of hymnbooks is provided to new meetinghouses. Additional hymnbooks, choral music, and other music may be purchased with stake or ward budget funds. Priesthood leaders may invite stake and ward music chairmen to submit annual budgets for this music. Music that is purchased with budget funds is usually kept in the meetinghouse library and belongs to all units that share the library. The stake or ward music chairman may help librarians create an index of this music.

#### 14.9.3

##### Pianos, Organs, and Keyboards

Where an organ is available, it is normally used for prelude and postlude music and hymn accompaniment. A piano may be used for these purposes when an organ or an organist is not available.

Using the piano and organ at the same time is not standard for Church meetings. However, these instruments may be used together occasionally.

A portable electronic music keyboard may be used when a piano or organ is not available.

#### 14.9.3.1

##### Obtaining Musical Instruments

Church buildings are usually supplied with an organ, pianos, or electronic music keyboards. Priesthood leaders may consult the Purchasing Division at Church headquarters or the assigned administrative office for information about acquiring new or replacement instruments.

#### 14.9.3.2

##### Maintaining Musical Instruments

The agent bishop for each meetinghouse and the stake physical facilities representative (a high councilor) are to see that pianos and organs are tuned, maintained, and repaired as needed.

#### 14.9.4

##### Copyright Guidelines

See 21.1.12.

#### 14.9.5

##### Music for Weddings

A wedding ceremony that is held in a home or Church building might include prelude music, hymns, special musical selections, and postlude music. Civil marriage ceremonies should be simple,

conservative, and without pomp in the proceedings. When a wedding ceremony is held in a Church building, a wedding march is not appropriate.

**14.9.6**

**Music for Funerals**

See 18.6.5.

**14.9.7**

**Music for Baptismal Services**

See “Elements of a Baptismal Service” in 20.3.4.

**14.10**

**Online Music Resources**

For additional resources, see the Church music Web site ([music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://music.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)) and “Music Callings and Resources” in the Serving in the Church section of [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org).