

FIRST-SUNDAY COUNCIL MEETINGS

On the first Sunday of each month, quorum, group, and Relief Society meetings *will not include a lesson taught by a teacher*. Instead, presidencies or group leaders will lead a council meeting. Each quorum, group, or Relief Society

will 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.

Before the Council Meeting

- Leaders identify local responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges and prayerfully choose a topic to discuss.
- Everyone seeks the guidance of the Spirit.
- Everyone prepares to share thoughts and experiences.

During the Council Meeting

- Leaders invite members to share experiences acting on impressions they've had from previous meetings.
- Everyone counsels together about the topic, listens to each other, and seeks the guidance of the Spirit.
- Leaders summarize key points and extend invitations to act.

After the Council Meeting

- Everyone acts on impressions and invitations, together and as individuals.
- Everyone prepares to share their experiences in future meetings.



**"REVELATION IS
SCATTERED AMONG US."**¹

Elder Neil L. Andersen

"WE ARE HIS HANDS."²

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

NOTES

1. Neil L. Andersen, in Adam C. Olson, "Handbook Training Emphasizes Work of Salvation," *Ensign or Liahona*, Apr. 2011, 76.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "You Are My Hands," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2010, 68.

Principles of Counseling Together

Not all council meetings look alike. Let the Lord teach you. Here are some principles to get you started:

1. 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.
2. A council meeting should lead to action—individual and group plans, inspired by the Spirit, to act outside of the meeting to accomplish the Lord's work (see D&C 43:8–9).
3. Councils should use the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets and apostles, other General Authorities, and General Officers to guide and support the discussion. In this way, the words of inspired Church leaders can help quorums, groups, and Relief Societies address important needs.

4. Discussions should not touch on confidential or sensitive issues about individual members or families.
5. Even though the council meeting is led by a member of the presidency or group leadership, he or she does not dominate the sharing. The leader introduces an issue for discussion and invites everyone to share thoughts and experiences, as guided by the Spirit.
6. While no one should feel pressured to participate, everyone should feel safe sharing comments and ideas without fear of being criticized.
7. Where possible, sitting in a circle can help cultivate a spirit of sharing and open discussion.

Possible Topics for First-Sunday Council Meetings

Ideas for topics to discuss in council meetings may come from the ward council, presidency meetings, the area plan,

leaders' impressions from ministering to members, and impressions from the Holy Ghost. The topics below are suggestions only. Leaders may be aware of other needs that they feel inspired to address.

- How can we better prioritize all of our different responsibilities?
- How can we come closer to God and receive more guidance from the Spirit in our lives and in our homes?
- How will we share the gospel with our friends and neighbors? (see Alma 17).
- How can we protect ourselves and our families from inappropriate media and pornography? (see D&C 42:22–23).
- What will we do to help mentor and strengthen our children and the youth in our ward?
- How do we increase unity in our quorum, group, or Relief Society? (see Mosiah 18:19–22).
- How can we be more involved in family history work and temple worship?
- How do we invite the Lord's help as we seek answers to our questions and a deeper understanding of the gospel?
- How can parents become better leaders in the home?
- How can we strengthen our testimonies of the Lord and His gospel and help our families to be spiritually self-reliant?
- What does it mean to minister? How are we ministering to those around us? (see 1 Peter 4:11).

If possible, leaders may want to let members know about the topic in advance so they can come prepared to discuss it.

