

CHURCH ORGANIZATION IS DIVINE

New members of the Church often hear terms they have not heard before: priesthood keys, setting apart, laying on of hands, baptisms for the dead, Mutual, Relief Society, and so on. And they hear familiar terms used in unfamiliar ways: deacon, patriarch, bishop, counselors, sacrament, calling, release, testimony, ordinance, and many others.

If you find yourself in that situation, don't worry. The more you attend church, study the scriptures and lesson materials, and interact with Church members, the better you will

come to understand these terms. In the meantime, don't hesitate to ask members of your ward or branch; they would be glad to explain anything that doesn't make sense to you.

Terms like these are important because they reflect Church doctrine, policies, practices, and organization, which come from the scriptures and by revelation to modern prophets. The Savior leads His Church today by revealing His will to the First Presidency (the President of the Church and his two counselors) and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Church is organized today essentially the same way the Lord organized it when He was on the earth (see Articles of Faith 1:6). Just as in biblical times, we have prophets,

apostles, members of the Seventy, missionaries who go out two by two, and bishops and other local leaders.

All who serve in the Church are volunteers. They are called (asked to serve) by inspiration of their leaders. In time you will be given a calling—a responsibility, an opportunity to serve. As you accept it willingly and fulfill it to the best of your ability, the Lord will bless your efforts to serve His children. No matter your background, you can contribute valuable spiritual gifts. As a Church member, you are part of the “body of Christ” (see 1 Corinthians 12). Your contribution is important to the functioning of the Church. ■

For more information, see Moroni 6; Doctrine and Covenants 20; and “Church Organization” at [lds.org/topics](https://www.lds.org/topics).

FOUNDATION OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

“Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

Ephesians 2:19–20

Leaders in your ward serve in a presidency (a president and two counselors):



The bishop and his two counselors form the bishopric and preside over the ward.



The Relief Society presidency serves the women in the ward and helps strengthen their families.



The elders quorum presidency and the high priests group leaders serve the men in the ward and help strengthen their families.



The Primary presidency serves the children, and the Young Men and Young Women presidencies serve the youth ages 12–18.



The Sunday School presidency oversees Sunday School classes and helps improve gospel learning and teaching in the ward.