

Ministering Principles

GATHERING ISRAEL THROUGH MINISTERING

Ministering is an opportunity to follow the prophet's counsel to gather Israel.

President Russell M. Nelson has invited us to help gather Israel—“the most important thing taking place on earth today.”¹

For those who want to be a part of this work of gathering Israel, ministering can be a wonderful opportunity. Because the Lord’s work of salvation is all one work, ministering is an inspired way to change people’s lives. Whether we are ministering to less-active members or inviting them to help us as we serve those outside of our faith, ministering provides opportunities to gather Israel.



Bearing One Another's Burdens

“Our sheep may be hurting, lost, or even willfully astray; as their shepherd, we can be among the first to see their need. We can listen and love without judgment and offer hope and help with the discerning guidance of the Holy Ghost.” —Bonnie H. Cordon²

“I quietly observed the woman sitting next to me on my 7:00 a.m. flight home. She had ordered an alcoholic drink before the plane had taken off, and when she asked me if I was married, my **negative judgments** of her began piling up.

“‘Yes, I have four children and four grandchildren,’ I answered with some pride.

“She then told me something that changed everything. Her husband had passed away the previous day after being in a coma for five days. Though she was an emergency physician, she had been unable to save him after he collapsed while on vacation.

“I was ashamed that my quick judgments were so far off the mark. What could I say to her? As I gathered my composure, I felt Heavenly Father **pour out His Spirit** so I could minister to this woman and share some of the precious truths of the gospel.

“I **learned** that though she didn’t attend any church, she believed in Jesus Christ and read the Bible. When I asked if she knew about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, she replied that she knew very little. I shared with her a general conference message by Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) titled, ‘The Eternal Blessings of Marriage,’ and then **testified** of eternal families and how Heavenly Father knows and loves each of us individually. I found that she was going to Hawaii, USA, where she had grown up, and I **encouraged** her to visit the Laie Hawaii Temple.

“We parted in the Salt Lake City, Utah, airport. I am so grateful that the Lord was able to use me, in spite of my faults, to reach a sister in need of love and comfort.”

John Tippetts, Utah, USA



PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER

“Negative judgments”

Being quick to judge can keep us from seeing divine potential (see Matthew 7:1).

“Pour out His Spirit”

Trust God’s promise to give us what to say in the very moment (see Doctrine and Covenants 100:5–6).

“Learned”

Ask what others believe, listen with compassion, and treat their beliefs with dignity.

“Testified”

Look for opportunities to share testimony of how the Lord has worked in your life (see Mosiah 24:14).

“Encouraged”

Invite them to act on truth so the Holy Ghost can testify to them (see John 7:17; Moroni 10:5).



PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER

“Visited me every month, despite her allergy to dogs”

How can you show that you care about those you minister to more than other things? (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:44).

“Questions”

Asking the right questions can help provoke self-assessment. Remember that our ministering has a purpose that goes beyond being social.⁴

“Waiting for me”

Everyone should feel welcome (see 3 Nephi 18:32).

“There at my side on my journey back”

Our support can make a significant difference to those who have stumbled to return to the Savior and be healed (see Hebrews 12:12–13).

Rescuing Returning Members

“With love as the motivation, miracles will happen, and we will find ways to bring our ‘missing’ sisters and brothers into the all-inclusive embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” —Jean B. Bingham³

“I had been inactive for at least six years when my husband and I moved to a new town. My new Relief Society president visited me, asking if she could send a sister to visit me. With some trepidation, I agreed. This sister **visited me every month, despite her allergy to dogs**—and I have a very affectionate dog! Her ministering continued for two years, and it had an enormous impact on me.

“Though her visits were usually purely social, occasionally she asked me **questions** that led us to spiritual conversations. These made me a little uncomfortable, but they prompted me to decide whether to go forward in the gospel or stay where I was. This decision was a struggle for me, but I chose to visit with the sister missionaries.

“On the day I went to attend sacrament meeting for the first time in six years, I was scared to go inside. When I walked into the church, my ministering sister was **waiting for me**, and she walked with me into the chapel. Afterward, she walked me back to my car, asking me what she could do to help me best as I grew closer to the Savior.

“My ministering sister’s time and love helped guide me back to activity, and I hold her efforts as one of the greatest gifts ever given to me. I’m so grateful she was **there at my side on my journey back** to the Savior’s Church.”

Name withheld, British Columbia, Canada

Ministering and Gathering

“In whatever ways seem natural and normal to you, share with people why Jesus Christ and His Church are important to you. . . .

“ . . . Your role is to share what is in your heart and live consistent with your beliefs.” —Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf⁵

Ministering and sharing the gospel go hand in hand. Here are some ways we can gather our friends and neighbors while we minister—or minister while we gather our friends and neighbors:

- **Serve together.** Look for opportunities to invite a friend or neighbor to join you in ministering to someone’s needs. Ask them to help you prepare a meal for a new mother, do yard work for an elderly neighbor, or clean the home of someone who is sick.
- **Teach together.** Consider inviting a friend or neighbor who doesn’t attend often to host a missionary lesson in their home for someone meeting with the missionaries, to support you in hosting a lesson in your home, or to go with you to a lesson in someone else’s home.

- **Reach out.** In addition to ministering to those to whom you are assigned, you can also reach out to others when you see a need. Offer to give them a ride to church meetings. Invite their children to youth or Primary activities. What other ways could you minister and gather?
- **Use the resources the Church has provided.** The Church offers many resources for members to help them with sharing the gospel. You can browse through the “Missionary” section in the Gospel Library app, watch the “Come and See” videos (at ChurchofJesusChrist.org/go/12011), and visit ComeUntoChrist.org for ideas on how to gather Israel in our communities. ■

NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), HopeOfIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.
2. Bonnie H. Cordon, “Becoming a Shepherd,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 76.
3. Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 106.
4. See “Ministering Principles: The Purpose That Will Change Our Ministering,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Jan. 2019, 8–11.
5. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Missionary Work: Sharing What Is in Your Heart,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2019, 17.

