

## **The Bishop as the Leader of the Missionary and Retention Effort in the Ward**

### Principles

The *Handbook* states:

“The bishop should delegate many assignments to his counselors, the ward executive secretary, the ward clerk, assistant ward clerks, and quorum and auxiliary leaders. This allows him to concentrate on duties that he alone should ordinarily do” (*CHI*, p. 11).

II. The First Presidency’s letter of February 28, 2002 states that the bishop should oversee “the development of investigators as well as the retention of converts, the effort of the full-time missionaries, ward missionaries, and ward officers and teachers.”

III. The March 2002 guidelines, “Centering Missionary Work in the Ward—Implementation” state:

“Efforts to share the gospel are most effective when they are ward-centered and ward-directed. The bishop will need to consider how he can delegate other duties to his counselors, as well as to members of the priesthood executive committee and the ward council, to enable him to devote time and attention to his responsibilities for conversion and retention.”

Clearly, the bishop needs to delegate more to his counselors, to free up time to fulfill his responsibilities as, in effect, the president of the ward mission.

# Missionary Work in the Ward

February 2005

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The following instructions have been approved by the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve and should be carefully reviewed and implemented. Please distribute copies promptly as follows:

STAKE (MISSION OR DISTRICT)	WARD (BRANCH)
Presidency (3)	Bishopric (3)
Clerk (1)	Clerk (1)
Executive secretary (1)	Executive secretary (1)
High council (12)	High priests (1)
Primary (1)	Elders (1)
Relief Society (1)	Mission leader (1)
Sunday School (1)	Activities committee (1)
Young Men (1)	Primary (1)
Young Women (1)	Relief Society (1)
	Sunday School (1)
	Young Men (1)
	Young Women (1)

## INTRODUCTION

In a letter dated February 28, 2002, the First Presidency announced that bishops and wards were being given increased responsibility for missionary work. Other letters dated March 28, 2002, and December 11, 2002, provided further instructions. The missionary manual *Preach My Gospel* (36617) also contains updated instructions on how full-time missionaries and ward and stake leaders coordinate their work. As a result of these changes, parts of the “Stake and Member Missionary Work” section in the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, are out of date and are replaced by the following instructions.

These instructions include several references to the Progress Record form (36985). This form is used to review the progress of individual investigators, new members, and less-active members. For more information about the Progress Record form, see *Preach My Gospel*, page 142.

## WARD MISSION PLAN

The priesthood executive committee, assisted by the ward council, develops a ward mission plan. The purpose of this plan is to encourage and organize missionary activities and to strengthen members in their

missionary efforts. The plan should include goals, initiatives, and activities to:

1. Invite people to be taught.
2. Teach, baptize, and confirm investigators.
3. Befriend and strengthen new members.
4. Support priesthood leaders in the activation of less-active members.

## Inviting People to Be Taught

The Lord has commanded every member to share the gospel (see D&C 88:81). The ward mission plan should include suggestions on how to encourage members to be personally involved in preparing people to be taught by the full-time missionaries. Every appropriate means should be used to invite people who are willing to listen to the message of the Restoration. Emphasis should be placed on inviting families whose members will come into the gospel together.

Suggestions for preparing people to be taught are found in *Preach My Gospel* (155–73, 220) and the “Stake and Member Missionary Work” section of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2* (250–52).

## Teaching, Baptizing, and Confirming Investigators

The full-time mission president holds the keys for convert baptisms. Under his direction, full-time missionaries have primary responsibility for teaching investigators. The bishop reviews the progress of investigators as they are taught, baptized, and confirmed.

Investigators are more likely to be baptized and confirmed and to remain active when they have close friendships with Church members. Whenever possible, members should participate with full-time missionaries when they teach investigators (see *Preach My Gospel*, 179). Members can be particularly helpful by sharing experiences and feelings and by bearing testimony. Teaching and developing friendships are most effective when investigators are taught in members' homes.

For additional suggestions on teaching, see *Preach My Gospel* (29–88, 175–94).

## Befriending and Strengthening New Members

President Gordon B. Hinckley has taught that every new member needs a friend in the Church, an assignment or responsibility, and gospel nurturing (see *Ensign*, May 1999, 108). The ward mission plan should outline how priesthood quorums, auxiliary organizations, and individual members can help befriend and strengthen investigators and new members during and after the teaching of the missionary lessons. Fellowship should be extended by all in the ward. The bishop and his counselors should prayerfully consider ways to help each new member feel welcome.

Part of the plan to strengthen new male members ages 12 and older should include receiving the priesthood. The bishop ensures that the Aaronic Priesthood is conferred on these brethren soon after they are confirmed.

For additional suggestions, see *Preach My Gospel* (213–23) and the “Gospel Teaching and Leadership” section of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2* (307–10).

## Helping Activate Members

The ward mission plan should also focus on how to help all members enjoy the full blessings of the Church. Accordingly, the plan should include suggestions on how to teach less-active members the gospel, invite them to attend Church meetings and activities, and help them participate in gospel ordinances and keep the associated covenants. The plan should also include suggestions for service and social activities that might bring less-active members closer to the Church.

As needed, the bishop may request that full-time missionary elders assist in home teaching and that full-time missionary sisters assist in visiting teaching part-member families and less-active members, or in otherwise visiting these members. Such visits are most effective when the full-time missionaries are accompanied by a member of the ward.

Normally, full-time missionary companionships should not be separated. However, they may be separated to go with different ward members when necessary to cover a large number of appointments.

For additional suggestions, see the “Gospel Teaching and Leadership” section of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2* (307–10).

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## STAKE AND WARD LEADERSHIP

Ward priesthood leaders have primary responsibility for missionary work. Stake leaders provide support, instruction, and accountability.

### Stake Presidency

Members of the stake presidency see that priesthood leaders and others are instructed in their missionary responsibilities. They also ensure that the doctrines and principles of missionary work are taught in the stake.

Members of the stake presidency monitor the progress of new members and review their status in regular meetings with priesthood leaders.

In monthly interviews with bishops, the stake president reviews the Progress Record form and discusses goals and plans for individual investigators, new members, and less-active members. He ensures that each unit has an effective ward mission plan.

The stake president meets regularly with the full-time mission president to coordinate the use of the full-time missionaries in the stake, including assistance they give in activation efforts. Where there are large numbers of stakes in one mission, this may be accomplished in coordinating council meetings. When meeting with the mission president, the stake president recommends the number and location of full-time missionaries working in the stake. He may also request assistance in training leaders and members. If necessary, one of the stake president’s counselors may represent him in these meetings.

### High Councilor

The stake presidency assigns a high councilor to help oversee missionary work. This high councilor reports on missionary work in stake priesthood executive committee and stake council meetings. He also helps the stake presidency plan and conduct training for ward mission leaders, or he may conduct this training himself under the stake presidency’s direction. At the request of a bishop, the high councilor may help instruct ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders and ward missionaries.

## **Bishopric**

The bishop directs the work of sharing the gospel, retention, and activation in the ward. He reports to the stake president on all of these efforts.

The bishop calls and sets apart a worthy, missionary-oriented Melchizedek Priesthood holder to serve as the ward mission leader. The bishop or his counselors call and set apart other members to serve as ward missionaries. The ward mission leader and ward missionaries should be sustained in sacrament meeting.

Members of the bishopric also have the following responsibilities:

They use the priesthood executive committee and ward council to develop and implement the ward mission plan and to coordinate missionary, retention, and activation efforts (see “Ward Mission Plan,” pages 1–2).

They regularly review the Progress Record form in priesthood executive committee and ward council meetings. As needed, they make specific assignments to help individual investigators, new members, and less-active members.

They get to know each investigator personally and oversee efforts to befriend and teach them.

They oversee efforts to minister to new members and sustain their activity.

They oversee the assistance of full-time missionaries in activation efforts.

A member of the bishopric usually presides at convert baptismal services in the ward. He or the ward mission leader usually conducts the services.

## **Ward Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders**

Ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders should know the status of each new and less-active member and see that they are personally ministered to (see *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 309). These leaders should ensure that home teachers and visiting teachers are assigned to strengthen and support new and less-active members, establish genuine friendships, and help them feel welcome in the ward.

At priesthood executive committee and ward council meetings, leaders should come prepared to discuss missionary, retention, and activation efforts.

## **Ward Mission Leader**

The ward mission leader helps the priesthood executive committee develop and implement the ward mission plan. He also has the following responsibilities:

He prepares agenda items on missionary work and retention for priesthood executive committee and ward council meetings. He reports on the progress of specific investigators and new members in these meetings. He also reviews the Progress Record form.

He conducts the weekly missionary coordination meeting (see page 4).

He makes sure that following baptism, the first four missionary lessons are retaught and that lesson 5 is taught (see *Preach My Gospel*, 29–88). He also provides priesthood and auxiliary leaders with regular reports of new members who need a Church responsibility.

He directs the work of the ward missionaries and instructs them. Under the direction of the bishop, he arranges for members to participate with the full-time missionaries as they teach investigators (see “Teaching, Baptizing, and Confirming Investigators,” page 1).

He organizes convert baptismal services in cooperation with the full-time missionaries, and he may conduct these services if assigned by the bishopric.

## **Ward Missionaries**

Ward missionaries are called and released by the bishopric. They serve under the direction of the ward mission leader. The number of missionaries should be sufficient to support missionary, retention, and activation efforts, including teaching with the full-time missionaries.

Ward missionaries may be priesthood holders, sisters, or married couples. They must meet the worthiness standards required for a temple recommend.

There is no specified term of service or specified number of hours per week for ward missionaries. They normally do not have other Church responsibilities, except for assignments as home teachers or visiting teachers, preferably to part-member and less-active families. They do not wear name tags.

Ward missionaries 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 unless they are husband and wife.

Ward missionaries have the following responsibilities:

They participate with the full-time missionaries in finding, befriending, and teaching investigators.

They participate in reteaching the first four missionary lessons and teaching lesson 5 to new members, in cooperation with the full-time missionaries and home teachers (see *Preach My Gospel*, 29–88). They also befriend less-active members and may teach them as assigned.

They attend the weekly missionary coordination meetings with the full-time missionaries (see the next column).

### **Priesthood Executive Committee and Ward Council**

Priesthood executive committee meetings are used to make decisions, give assignments, and ensure accountability. Committee members develop a ward mission plan that is focused on the needs of specific investigators, new members, and less-active members. They coordinate the efforts of priesthood quorums, auxiliaries, and missionaries in accomplishing the plan. They also give direction for the weekly missionary coordination meeting.

The ward council helps the priesthood executive committee prepare and implement a ward mission plan.

Missionary work, retention, and activation should be on the agenda of each ward council meeting.

As needed, the bishop may invite the full-time missionaries to attend part of the priesthood executive committee or ward council meetings when missionary work is discussed.

### **Missionary Coordination Meeting**

The ward mission leader plans and conducts a weekly missionary coordination meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to coordinate the missionary, retention, and activation efforts of the full-time missionaries and ward members. This meeting is attended by the full-time missionaries (where available), the ward missionaries, an assistant from the high priests group leadership, and a counselor from both the elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies.

In this meeting the ward mission leader reviews in detail the progress of each person listed on the Progress Record form. He coordinates visits and teaching appointments with investigators, new members, and less-active members.

Support for full-time missionaries, including transportation and meals, is coordinated in this meeting.

This meeting is also used to plan baptismal services after consultation with the bishopric.

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## FIRST PRESIDENCY STATEMENT ON SAME-GENDER MARRIAGE AND SAME-GENDER ATTRACTION

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*The Family: A Proclamation to the World*, issued by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in October 1995, declares that "marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and [that] the family is central to the Creator's plan for the destiny of His children." Any other relationship purporting to be "marriage"—including so-called "same-gender" marriage and any other sexual relationship between persons of the same gender, whatever its name— is contrary to His plan. There is no justification to redefine marriage; such is not our right. Those who try will find themselves answerable to God.

Nevertheless, our opposition to attempts to legalize same-gender marriage should never be interpreted as justification for intolerance or abuse of those who profess homosexual tendencies, either individually or as a group. Our hearts reach out to those who refer to themselves as gays and lesbians. We love them as sons and daughters of God. They are welcome in the Church, provided they follow the same God-given rules of chastity and fidelity that the Lord has made applicable to all.

We hope that responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere will promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society. We further hope that tolerance and brotherly love can replace fear and hatred among all people, regardless of sexual orientation or other differences.

This Letter is being translated and will be distributed to English and French units in Canada only. Distribution in these languages will be complete within two weeks. Unit leaders may request original copies from the Salt Lake Mail Operations Center (ext. 21990). If leaders need it in languages not listed above, they may contact the Area Presidency who can forward requests to Production Coordination at Church headquarters (ext. 22933).

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THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY  
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1000

December 28, 2004

To: General Authorities and the following leaders in the United States and Canada: Area Authority Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents

Dear Brethren:

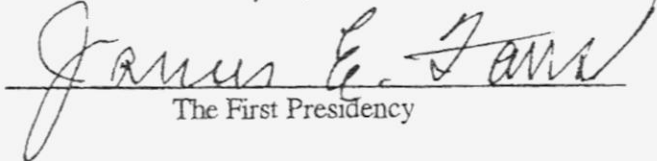
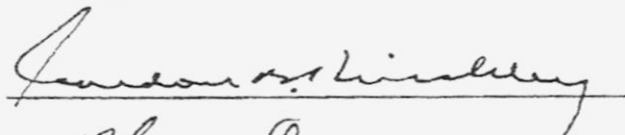
Church Group Travel in the U.S. and Canada

The *Church Handbook of Instructions* directs that "long-distance travel is discouraged." Inquiries about this instruction, especially as applied to youth groups, suggest the need for clarification for the many different circumstances that exist in the United States and Canada.

Stake and mission presidents should prayerfully consider the distance of the proposed travel and its effect on families, the potential to inspire and to strengthen faith, and the impact on the overall youth program of spending large sums on one trip. Additional counsel with respect to travel arrangements should be followed as directed in the *Church Handbook of Instructions* with the understanding that significant portions of the local unit budget allowance should not be used to cover travel expenses deferred from one year to the next.

The application of this directive in different locations in the United States and Canada could appropriately be discussed in a coordinating council. Such discussion should promote consistent practices among leaders in adjoining units.

Sincerely,

  
The First Presidency



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY  
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1000

November 3, 2004

To: General Authorities; Area Authority Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents

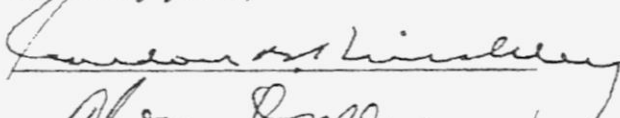
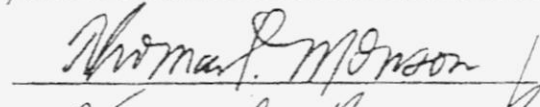
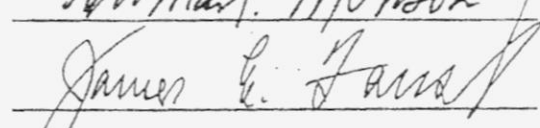
Dear Brethren:

High Priests' Responsibility for Prospective Elders

Effective immediately, responsibility for the progress of prospective elders is transferred to the high priests. Where there are no high priests or insufficient numbers of them, the elders quorum will retain this responsibility.

This change will further ensure that each prospective elder has a friend to fellowship him into the brotherhood of the priesthood. The change will also balance workloads better between elders quorums and high priests groups. As presiding high priest, the bishop continues to oversee and coordinate the efforts of the high priests group leader and elders quorum president in this work.

Sincerely yours,

  
  
  
The First Presidency



# High Priests' Responsibility for Prospective Elders

November 3, 2004

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The following guidelines are intended to help local priesthood leaders work more effectively with prospective elders. It is recognized that units of the Church are at different stages of development and have different needs. Local leaders should seek inspiration in implementing these guidelines, adapting them according to the needs and capacities of the units.

## Home Teaching

Where possible, high priests should be given the responsibility for home teaching prospective elders. Home teachers should give special emphasis to developing friendships with assigned prospective elders and finding ways to nurture and help them. When a good relationship already exists between an elder and a prospective elder, it is not necessary to assign high priests as his home teachers. (The full-time missionaries may also be invited to assist local priesthood brethren with this responsibility.)

The bishop should counsel with quorum and group leaders to determine if a prospective elder should be assigned as a home teaching companion to an elder or a high priest. Otherwise, Aaronic Priesthood young men (teachers and priests) should serve as junior companions to Melchizedek Priesthood holders.

The bishop should be kept informed about the status of prospective elders through regular meetings, interviews, and reports.

## Attendance

"The bishop consults with quorum and group leaders and each prospective elder to determine whether the [prospective elder] should meet with the elders quorum or the high priests group for instruction and activities. Each prospective elder is listed on the roll of the elders quorum or high priests group according to this determination" (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* [1998], 168).

When a prospective elder meets with the elders quorum, his home teacher should attend elders quorum meetings with him as other Church assignments permit. High priests who attend elders quorum meetings with prospective elders continue to report to the high priests group leader.

## Other

Older prospective elders who hold the Aaronic Priesthood and become active in the Church should be ordained elders, but they may meet with the high priests group (see *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 168). Typically, "brethren are ordained high priests when they are called to a stake presidency, high council, or bishopric or when otherwise determined by the stake president" (*Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 162).

High priests and elders should continue to separate for group or quorum meetings after priesthood meeting opening exercises. In some very small units, the high priests group and elders quorum may combine for instruction, but the two groups should not be considered one quorum. A high priest should not be called to serve as president of an elders quorum (see D&C 124:133-137; *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 164).

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
OFFICE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY  
47 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE STREET, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH 84150-1000

September 7, 2007

To: General Authorities; Area Seventies; Stake, Temple, Mission and  
District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents

Dear Brethren:

Members Receiving Their Own Endowment

The privilege of receiving one's temple endowment is a serious matter that should be extended only to those who are sufficiently prepared and mature enough to keep the covenants entered into.

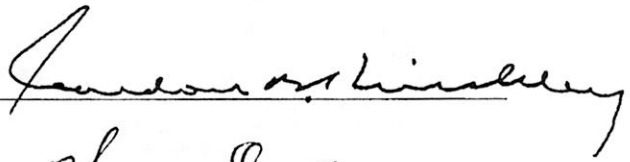
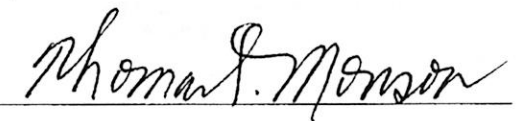
We continue to be concerned that an increasing number of young adults, 18 years of age and older, are obtaining temple recommends from their priesthood leaders to receive their own endowment without the immediate prospect of temple marriage or a full-time mission.

Single members in their late teens or early twenties who have not received a mission call or who are not engaged to be married in the temple should not be recommended to the temple for their own endowment. They can, however, receive a Limited-Use Recommend to perform baptisms for the dead. The desire to witness temple marriages of siblings or friends is not sufficient reason for a young adult to be endowed.

We are grateful for your efforts to prepare individuals to receive the sacred ordinances of the temple at the appropriate time.

Sincerely yours,

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

By   




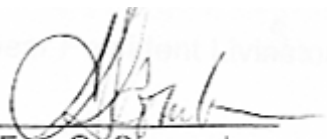
25 July 2007

*Building Use and Maintenance,*

We encourage members to make full use of Church Facilities. We would remind members to contact the booking agents for each building to schedule events and avoid conflicts. It is expected that all members will share in the upkeep of the buildings and groups or individuals using the buildings will have a clean up crew organized to leave the building in "Sunday ready" condition.

Students wishing to use the Saskatoon buildings for study purposes are authorized to do so under the following conditions.

- No trash is left around
- Building is left secure
- Use does not conflict with scheduled or booked events
- Chapel, Offices, Church computers, satellite, and Internet are off-limits
- No study material should be left unattended for extended periods



Eric G. Slocombe  
Stake President

# Saskatoon Sask. Stake

## Meeting House

### Do's and Don'ts

#### Grounds=

- 1-There should be no decorations on grounds or exterior

#### Building Inside =

- 1-Decorations must not be a fire hazard. Hay, straw, palm fronds, other dehydrated material, and candles may not be used.
- 1-Open flames and lighted candles may not be used.
- 2-There is no over night camping or lodging or slumber parties allowed in building
- 3-Taking photographs or making video recordings in chapel is not permitted.

#### Serving Areas =

chh bylaw

- 1-The serving area in church meeting houses are not intended for food preparation or cooking unless it is part of a lesson, demonstration, or other instruction. When food is to be served in the building or on the grounds it should be prepared elsewhere and brought to the meetinghouse, where it may be kept warm or cold until it is served.

- 1= Remember if you use it, wash it and put it away.
  - 2= Clear and wash counters.
  - 3= Clean the stove, (inside and out if used)
  - 4= Sweep the floor and spot clean or mop it.
  - 5= Leave soiled laundry in basket provided.
  - 6= Rinse and wipe out the sink.\
- 2 - There should be no serving of coffee, tea, drugs or alcohol in meetinghouses or on grounds area.
  - 3 - There should be no smoking on or near church property.

#### Gym and Stage

- 1= Christmas lights and streamers may be used in the gym and stage.
  - 2= Do not staple, pound nails or drill holes in floor or walls of gym or stage.
  - 3= Water or liquid of any sort should not be left standing on floor of gym or stage.
  - 4= All decorations should be dismantled and taken away before Sunday.
- Unless it is sanctioned by the Stake President:
- 5= No hanging from curtains.

#### Class rooms

- 1= May be used for dressing rooms, but need to be put back in order by Sunday, which means , chairs stacked neatly and floors cleaned and vacuumed if necessary.
- 2= Stake President's, Bishops and clerks offices not to be used.
- 3= Chapel area used only for Church services.

#### Parking Lots

- 1= Parking lots only used for parking vehicles.

#### Satellite and Video Equipment

- 1= the equipment may not be used to record television, cable, or satellite programs that are not sponsored by the church.
  - 2= Unsupervised youth and children may not operate it.
  - 3= All equipment is to be locked securely when not in use.
  - 4= It may not be removed from the building for home or personal use.
  - 5= Videos. Moves, D V D moves should not be played in church buildings.
- Unless church material.

6= music - church approved

THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Dear Bishoprics and PFR's,

The treatment and care of our buildings has become an issue in Saskatoon. It's a situation that is always being monitored by the FM Group and the Custodians who are charged with cleaning and maintenance according to the following principles. (from the Guidelines for Meetinghouses)

1. Each meetinghouse is dedicated to be a place of worship and learning and a refuge from the world.
2. A meetinghouse is a witness of faith in Jesus Christ and shows evidence of sacrifice and consecration by Church members.
3. People use meetinghouses to worship; learn gospel truths; perform sacred ordinances; socialize; perform music, dance, drama, and sports activities; and generally improve themselves. In all things, those who use the buildings should be blessed by coming.
4. The chapel is a special place in the meetinghouse where members enter in the spirit of reverence.
5. We all share the responsibility for maintaining and repairing.
6. We all care for the safety of others and should safeguard the meetinghouse.

Meetinghouse foyers should be attractive and inviting. Accordingly, all furnishings and artwork placed in the foyers should follow a standard. Flyers or advertising taped to the window or tables blocking or deflecting attention from the artwork depicting a devotion to Christ would not follow the standards as set out in the 2nd principle stated above. Anyone walking through the front doors should see a clear view of a comfortable, inviting, beautiful and peaceful atmosphere. It's where first impressions are made.

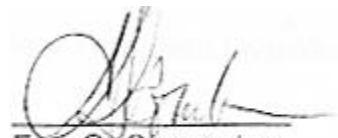
We will pursue other means of advertising. Please remove these kinds of things if you see them.

Chapels are a reverant and clean sanctuary. It is important that is always remain so. Members are encouraged to return all books and remove all items before they leave. PFR's or a member of the Bishopric will serve as examples but this task is more effectively shared among everyone at each Sacrament meeting. Try to foster the attitude away from "there's a cleaning crew every Saturday" or "someone else will get it".

Any activity in the Cultural Halls or involving the Kitchen should have a cleanup crew assigned so that it's condition can be left in a clean and organized state. **Booking agents** should ask for the name of who is leading this assignment before the booking is complete and recorded.

Please report any damage or other observations to any PFR so that it can be taken care of in a timely manner and the building kept in excellent condition.

Thank you,



Eric G. Slocombe  
Stake President

Kim Carlson

Stake Physical Facilities Representative