

Notice

Date: May 11, 2018

To: General Authorities; General Auxiliary Presidencies;
Area Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District
Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents; Elders
Quorum Presidencies; Stake and Ward Relief Society,
Young Men, and Young Women Presidencies

From: Priesthood and Family Department (801-240-2134)

Subject: Additional Frequently Asked Questions about Ministering with Strengthened
Melchizedek Priesthood Quorums and Relief Societies

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The enclosure to the First Presidency letter “Ministering with Strengthened Melchizedek Priesthood Quorums and Relief Societies,” dated April 2, 2018, included a number of questions and answers to help implement the changes announced in the April 2018 general conference.

Answers to additional questions are included with this notice. These questions and answers have also been added to the page of frequently asked questions at ministering.lds.org.

This notice is being translated and will be distributed to units identified as Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Cebuano, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Haitian, Hungarian, Ilokano, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kekchi, Kiribati, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Malay, Marshallese, Mongolian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tahitian, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese. If leaders need this notice in languages not listed above, they may contact the Area Presidency. Area leaders can forward requests to the Priesthood and Family Department at ext. 2-2933.

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Ministering with Strengthened Melchizedek Priesthood Quorums and Relief Societies

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Additional Frequently Asked Questions, May 11, 2018

Quorums and Relief Societies

1. Does the focus on the elders quorum and Relief Society strengthen the role of the bishop and the ward council?

Yes. The bishop is the presiding high priest and “provides guidance and counsel to other leaders in the ward” (*Handbook 1*, 2.1.1). He reviews and approves ministering assignments. Under the direction of the bishop, the ward council continues in its essential role to “help individuals build testimonies, receive saving ordinances, keep covenants, and become consecrated followers of Jesus Christ” (*Handbook 2*, 4.4). The strengthened elders quorum and Relief Society—represented by their presidents, who are members of the ward council—will increase the effectiveness of that council.

2. To what quorum do members of temple, mission, and missionary training center presidencies belong?

These brethren are members of their ward elders quorum.

3. In a stake, are high priests who serve in a branch presidency members of the high priests quorum?

No. High priests serving in branch presidencies in a stake are not members of the high priests quorum. Members of the high priests quorum are only those whose callings in the stake presidency, in a bishopric, on the high council, and as a functioning patriarch require them to be high priests.

4. Are elders serving in a bishopric (for example, in a young single adult stake) members of the high priests quorum?

No. Elders serving in a bishopric are not members of the high priests quorum.

5. Should elders quorum presidencies visit or interview quorum members once a year (see *Handbook 2*, 7.3.2)—in addition to holding quarterly ministering interviews?

Yes. As part of their overall responsibilities, elders quorum presidencies should interview quorum members relative to all priesthood duties—including the well-being of the priesthood holder, his spouse, and his family—at least once a year. These interviews can be held throughout the year. This discussion should not be combined with a ministering interview in which a companion is also present.

6. Who can help elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies accomplish the work of salvation?

Elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies may organize members to help accomplish the work as needed. For example, they may call members to lead and assist with such work as service, temple and family history, sharing the gospel, and welfare.

7. Can a ward have more than one elders quorum or Relief Society?

Yes. In the spirit of Doctrine and Covenants 107:89, when a ward has an unusually large number of active Melchizedek Priesthood bearers, leaders may organize more than one elders quorum. In such cases, each quorum should have a reasonable balance in terms of age, experience, and priesthood office and strength. Similar principles apply to Relief Society.

Ministering

8. How does ministering apply to the members of the high priests quorum?

Under the direction of their bishop, the presiding high priest in the ward, the members of the high priests quorum and their families have ministering brothers and sisters assigned to them by their elders quorum and Relief Society.

Because stake presidencies and bishoprics are responsible for all members of the stake or ward, these brethren are not generally assigned as ministering brothers to specific individuals or families. High councilors and functioning patriarchs may be assigned, based on local circumstances, as determined by the stake president. If they are assigned, it would be by their elders quorum president under the direction of the bishop of their wards.

In addition to other important responsibilities such as presiding high priest and common judge in Israel, bishops have a specific responsibility, along with their counselors, to care for the youth. Doctrine and Covenants 107:15 reads, “The bishopric is the presidency of this [the Aaronic] priesthood, and holds the keys or authority of the same.” *Handbook 1*, 2.2, states, “Members of the bishopric watch over and nurture young men and young women in the ward.”

Similarly, the stake president, as the presiding high priest of the stake, is “the primary spiritual leader in the stake” (*Handbook 1*, 1.1.1) and “presides over the work of salvation” (*Handbook 1*, 1.1.2).

9. Can elders quorum and Relief Society presidents call additional counselors to help with ministering?

No. A president has two counselors. If leaders find that additional help is needed, they can counsel with their bishop about calling one or more ministering secretaries. These ministering secretaries may be assigned, for example, to schedule ministering interviews and to help prepare a quarterly report of interviews.

10. What is the role of ministering coordinators and supervisors?

The callings of ministering coordinator and ministering supervisor have been discontinued. Those who have been called to these positions should be released.

11. Who conducts ministering interviews?

Each member of elders quorum and Relief Society presidencies conducts ministering interviews. Even in a large ward, leaders will find that interviews are manageable when a few are held each week by each presidency member. Ministering interviews do not need to be long to be effective.

12. When during the quarter do leaders hold ministering interviews?

Ministering interviews can and should be held *throughout* each quarter—and not reserved for the last week or last month of the quarter. As leaders hold interviews regularly, they will find that they can accomplish the spiritual and temporal purposes of ministering.

Including Youth in Ministering

13. Can young men and young women be assigned to minister with adult companions?

Yes. The guidelines in the recent document “Preventing and Responding to Abuse” allow for ministering companionships with youth assigned as companions to adults. “Ministering” is not considered an “activity” or “class,” as referred to in those guidelines.

Leaders should use inspired judgment when assigning youth as ministering companions. Adult companions should avoid situations that might be misunderstood. They should exercise care regarding isolated one-on-one situations so that youth have a safe and rewarding experience with ministering. Additionally, wisdom should be exercised in not assigning youth to difficult home or family situations.

14. Should all Mia Maids and Laurels have ministering assignments?

Mia Maids and Laurels may be invited to minister. Parents and leaders counsel with each young woman, and when her circumstances are such that she can and is willing to serve, she may be given a ministering assignment. Young women serve as companions to Relief Society sisters.

15. Who communicates ministering assignments to youth?

With the bishop’s approval, a member of the Relief Society presidency extends ministering assignments to Mia Maids and Laurels. And, with the bishop’s approval, a member of the elders quorum presidency extends ministering assignments to teachers and priests.