To Turn the Hearts

(D&C 110:15)
Overview

Purpose of This Guide

This guide describes how leaders can organize, lead, and implement temple and family history work in wards and stakes. It describes how family history can be an integral part of the ward council’s efforts for the salvation of souls. It also describes how leaders can strengthen themselves and others through participation in the work.

This guide gives details not found in Handbook 2: Administering the Church, and it replaces the Administrative Guide for Family History referenced in section 5.4.7 of the handbook. It is designed for stake presidencies, bishoprics, high priests group leaders, high councilors who have been assigned to coordinate family history, and other members of stake and ward councils. Elders quorum presidents use this guide in wards or branches that do not have a high priests group leader. The guide also contains information about how family history consultants, stake indexing directors, family history center directors, and area family history advisers can help ward and stake leaders implement family history efforts.

To use this guide, study and ponder the relevant information to receive inspiration on how to make family history work part of your personal life and your ward or stake leadership responsibilities. Use the notes column on each page to record your impressions. Follow the guidelines outlined in this book, and put into action the unique impressions you receive.

To Turn the Hearts DVD

The To Turn the Hearts DVD (08885) provides a video presentation that demonstrates the principles taught in this guide. It includes real-life examples of how the leaders in one stake used temple and family history work to strengthen individuals and families. It also includes instructional videos that describe the temple and family history responsibilities of stake and ward leaders and those with family history callings.

The DVD can be viewed for individual study or in council meetings to initiate discussions and planning for temple and family history efforts. The videos on the DVD are also available in the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org.

FamilySearch

FamilySearch is the name used by the Church to describe its family history efforts, products, and services to the general public. FamilySearch.org is the name of the primary website where patrons can discover, preserve, and share their family histories.

Application in Branches, Districts, and Missions

For administrative purposes, the terms bishop and bishopric in this guide refer also to branch presidents and branch presidencies. The terms stake president and stake presidency refer also to district presidents and district presidencies. References to wards and stakes usually apply also to branches, districts, and missions.
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**Blessing Lives through Temple and Family History Work**

“Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent . . . to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.”

*Doctrine and Covenants 110:14–15*

The Spiritually Refining Nature of This Work

“To turn the hearts” means that individuals and families feel a spiritual awakening as they serve their deceased relatives and experience the joy of being active participants in a fundamental part of Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation (see D&C 138:56). Participation in temple and family history work touches the soul as the Holy Ghost bears witness to the eternal nature of families.

“Elijah came to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the children to the fathers. With that, natural affection between generations began to be enriched. This restoration was accompanied by what is sometimes called the Spirit of Elijah—a manifestation of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of the divine nature of the family.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson  
In Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 43; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 34

Members who engage in this work are inspired to live gospel-centered lives and are more likely to participate in personal and family prayer, personal and family scripture study, and regular family home evening. Typically, when members participate in temple and family history work, they are more likely to participate in all other Church meetings.

“In my own family, some of our most sacred and treasured experiences have occurred when we have joined together in the temple to perform sealing ordinances for our deceased ancestors. . . . The all-important and crowning blessings of membership in the Church are those blessings which we receive in the temples of God.”

President Thomas S. Monson  
In Conference Report, Apr. 2011, 87; or *Ensign*, May 2011, 93
Blessing Lives through Temple and Family History Work

Introduction

Blessing Lives through Temple and Family History Work

“No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the family history
research that supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more
power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.”

President Boyd K. Packer


Family History Can Help Leaders Accomplish the Work of
Salvation Both for the Living and the Dead

Leaders can use temple and family history work as a way to strengthen
members and their families. Leaders consider ways to use family history in:

• Missionary work
• Convert retention
• Member activation
• Teaching the gospel

This guide provides examples of how this can be accomplished.

Now Is the Ideal Time for Temple and Family History Work

On April 3, 1836, the prophet Elijah appeared in the Kirtland Temple and
restored the keys of the sealing power, fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi that
had been declared to Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:38; D&C 110).

“It is tremendously significant to me that this declaration, this
repetition of the wondrous words of Malachi concerning the
work for the dead, was given to the boy Joseph four years
before he was allowed to take the plates from the hill. It was
given before he received either the Aaronic or Melchizedek
Priesthood, before he was baptized, and well before the
Church was organized. It says much concerning the priority of this work in
the plan of the Lord.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley

Elijah’s appearance to the Prophet Joseph Smith marked the beginning of temple and family history work in this dispensation. In our day, temple and family history work has accelerated. Technological advances have enabled FamilySearch to provide temple and family history records online, making them easily accessible to members worldwide. Temples are available to more members in more places.

Church members continue to grow in their capacity to understand and use new methods to prepare names for the temple. With more records accessible to more people and new tools embraced by a rising generation, the time has fully come “to turn the hearts” of God’s children.

Leadership of Temple and Family History Work

Priesthood leaders provide doctrinal and administrative direction to temple and family history work. Their direction is essential to lead members to the temple through family history efforts. They teach members and encourage them to attend the temple and participate in family history work.

Priesthood leaders’ responsibilities include the following:

- Stake presidents hold the keys for this work and therefore preside over and direct temple and family history efforts in the stake.
- Bishops hold the keys for this work and therefore direct temple and family history efforts in the ward.
- High priests group leaders have the primary responsibility to coordinate the ward council’s efforts to encourage and enable temple and family history work in the ward.

Priesthood leaders and all other members of ward councils encourage members for whom they have responsibility to do the following:

- Receive their own temple ordinances and help immediate family members receive them as well.
- Hold a current temple recommend and go to the temple as often as circumstances, including family needs, allow. Unendowed adults and youth ages 12 and older, including new members, are encouraged to obtain a limited-use temple recommend and be baptized and confirmed for the dead.
- Participate in family history work by identifying their deceased relatives, requesting temple ordinances for them if needed, and performing the ordinances themselves if possible.
• Preserve records of their own lives and the lives of their ancestors, including journals, personal histories, family photos, and other family history records.

### Doctrinal Study

- Malachi 4:5–6
- Ephesians 1:10
- Doctrine and Covenants 2
- Doctrine and Covenants 110
- Doctrine and Covenants 128
- Doctrine and Covenants 138
- *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (36793)

### Additional Resources

Register online at FamilySearch.org/serve to receive access to additional resources specifically for priesthood leaders.
Blessing Lives through Temple and Family History Work

Discover

“And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers... He was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy” (1 Nephi 5:16–17). Like Lehi, leaders can quickly discover for themselves the power of family history by:

- Studying and pondering the doctrine of temple and family history work.
- Viewing records and preparing ordinances for their deceased relatives at FamilySearch.org.
- Performing ordinances in the temple for their deceased relatives.

Teach

President Boyd K. Packer taught, “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior” (Ensign, Nov. 1986, 17).

Leaders teach members the doctrine of temple and family history work. They testify that it is a fundamental part of the work of salvation.

Leaders inspire members to discover the joy of temple and family history work by teaching this doctrine and testifying of the blessings of participating in this work.

Enable

Leaders determine the best way to invite members to participate in temple and family history work and the best way to help them do the work.

Leaders provide the necessary resources to assist members in temple and family history work, including:

- Called and trained family history consultants.
- Family history classes, events, and activities.
- A family history center, if decided upon by the stake.
- A FamilySearch indexing effort, if decided upon by the stake or ward.

Leading Members to the Temple through Family History Work

As members do family history work, they are inspired to make the temple an important part of their lives. The direction and testimony of leaders is essential in leading members to the temple through family history efforts. Below are three things that leaders can do:
**Stake Leadership**

“For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”

*Romans 14:9*

**Stake President and His Counselors**

The stake president presides over the work of salvation in the stake, which includes temple and family history work. Stake presidents can use temple and family history work as a way to strengthen members and their families. Stake presidents consider ways to use family history to help with missionary work, convert retention, member activation, and teaching the gospel. Stake leaders should review the “Ward Leadership” section for examples of ways to use family history in these efforts.

The stake president and his counselors set an example by teaching the doctrine of temple and family history work and testifying of the blessings that come from participating in this work. They encourage stake members to identify their deceased ancestors and provide needed temple ordinances for them. They ensure that stake leaders use family history to help accomplish stake goals. They direct temple and family history efforts and events in their stake councils.

The stake presidency may assign one or more high councilors to oversee temple and family history work. Below is an example of how family history is organized at the stake level.
Stake Councils

As stake councils focus on the work of salvation, they should consider how temple and family history work can be an important resource in accomplishing the many aspects of the work of salvation. Stake councils do the following:

- Assist with stake temple and family history plans, goals, and events.
- Determine how temple and family history can help stake auxiliaries accomplish the work of salvation, including member missionary work, convert retention, activation, and teaching the gospel.
- Determine how stake activities such as stake service projects, celebrations, youth conferences, and young adult activities can be enriched by incorporating family history efforts into the events.

High Councilor Assigned to Temple and Family History Work

The high councilor (or councilors) assigned to temple and family history work coordinates temple and family history efforts in the stake. He oversees family history work in three ways.

Instructs High Priests Group Leaders

The high councilor instructs high priests group leaders and elders quorum leaders in their temple and family history responsibilities. He ensures that the stake, the wards, and the high priests groups and elders quorums are organized to do temple and family history work.

Coordinates FamilySearch Indexing

If the stake chooses to organize a stake FamilySearch indexing program, the high councilor oversees the program. If requested by the stake presidency, he may recommend an individual to be called as the stake indexing director.

Coordinates Stake Family History Resources

The high councilor oversees all family history centers in the stake. If requested, he may recommend to the stake presidency individuals to be called as family history center directors or assistant directors. He makes assignments to wards, through high
priests group leaders, to provide family history consultants to staff family history centers in the stake. For multistake family history centers, high councilors from participating stakes work together to help oversee the centers and provide family history consultants and funds.

Because family history centers are important to the community and serve many people who are not Church members, the high councilor works also with the stake’s public affairs representatives to involve the community in family history events.

In stakes where leaders, including high councilors, participate actively in family history, name submissions to the temple are double the average of stakes that do not have strong leader participation. (Taken from analysis of 2010 FamilySearch data.)

FamilySearch Indexing

Benefits of Indexing

FamilySearch indexing is a way for the Church to make its immense collection of genealogical records available to the public. Volunteers use the tools available at FamilySearch.org to create easily searchable indexes to the records. The indexed records are then made available through FamilySearch.org. Indexing can be done by virtually anyone, young and old. It touches the lives of both those who do the indexing and those who use the indexed records. Some of the benefits of indexing include:

- It provides a way for individuals to more quickly search for and find their ancestors.
- It provides opportunities for service. Members—including those who are less active, homebound, or elderly—can do indexing in their homes.
- It provides an opportunity for youth and young adults to participate in family history work.

Indexing in Stakes and Wards

While individuals can do indexing on their own, “the stake presidency may determine that it would be beneficial for stake members to work together in an indexing program” (Handbook 2: Administering the Church [2010], 5.4.7). If the stake chooses to establish an organized FamilySearch indexing effort, it is coordinated by the high councilor who oversees family history work in the stake.
The stake presidency, in consultation with the high councilor, recommends an individual to be called as the stake indexing director. Assistant directors may also be called. The director trains and supports members in their indexing efforts, coordinates members’ efforts, and is given rights to the indexing program’s reports in order to keep track of the stake’s participation. The director provides regular updates on the stake indexing effort to the high councilor.

Members of the stake may be called to serve as indexers. They are called at the ward level and directed at the stake level.

Wards may choose to organize a ward indexing effort if there is no structured FamilySearch indexing effort in the stake.

Stake and ward leaders have discretion in how they organize FamilySearch indexing efforts. Leaders organize indexing efforts in ways that best fit the needs of their members.

Leaders can help with indexing efforts by:

- Encouraging members to volunteer and participate, whether on their own or as part of an organized effort.
- Inviting local community members to use the indexed records through FamilySearch.org and to assist with indexing efforts.
- Assigning consultants, including youth, to help others learn indexing.

A teenager explained how participating in indexing blessed her life:

“I know that I’m helping to find people that maybe wouldn’t have had the chance to have their work done. . . . It’s cool to know that even if I don’t go to the temple for them myself, I can help them get there” (Amanda Pace, in Mindy Raye Holmes, “Indexing Mania,” *New Era*, May 2009, 19).

Family History Centers

Purposes of Family History Centers

The Church has established thousands of family history centers throughout the world. Leaders use family history centers as a resource to bless the lives of members as well as to provide a valuable service to the community.

Family history centers operate under priesthood direction. The assigned high councilor responsible for temple and family history work, under the direction of the stake presidency, oversees all family history centers in the stake.
Family history centers give members and community patrons access to family history resources, including:

- Genealogical resources
- Classes and workshops
- One-on-one assistance

As stake leaders seek to accomplish specific public affairs goals, they view family history centers as a unique and effective way to enhance the Church’s position in the local community. The majority of the patrons who use family history centers are not members. A community patron explained how her life had been blessed by a family history center:

“I think the center is just fantastic, and I love having access to the records from Salt Lake City . . . When I find something, I wish I could say ‘I found it,’ but it is like God put it there. I’m not a Mormon, but one of the things I really do feel in my heart is that this is something that God wants done” (Myra Sims, in LaRene Gaunt, “Family History Wellspring,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1993, 24).

Family History Center Staff

The assigned high councilor ensures that the staffing needs of family history centers in the stake are met. For multistake family history centers, high councilors from participating stakes work together to help oversee the centers and provide family history consultants and funds.

Family history centers are staffed by individuals who have specific skills in teaching, doing family history research, and using FamilySearch technology. Staff members include:

- Family history center director and assistant directors, if needed. Directors and assistant directors are recommended to serve by the stake presidency and are approved by the stake presidency and the high council. The stake presidency may ask the assigned high councilor for a recommendation.

- Family history consultants. The high councilor coordinates through bishoprics and high priests group leaders to assign enough family history consultants to staff family history centers in the stake. Consultants are called by bishoprics.
• Volunteer members of the general public. These individuals may serve in centers with the approval of the high councilor. There are many skilled individuals in the community who are willing to serve when given the opportunity.

Establishing, Relocating, or Closing a Center

If the stake presidency is considering establishing, relocating, or closing a family history center, they contact their area family history advisers. The stake submits a Request to Create, Relocate, or Close a Family History Center form to the area adviser. The area adviser reviews the request with the Family History Department.

Additional Resources


• FamilySearch.org, which provides more information on FamilySearch indexing.

• Family History Center Operations Guide (34051), which contains more information on family history centers, available in the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org.
**Ward Leadership**

“For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, [for] they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.”

*Doctrine and Covenants 128:15*

**Bishop and His Counselors**

The bishop directs the work of salvation in the ward, which includes temple and family history work. Bishops can use temple and family history work as a way to strengthen members and their families. Bishops consider ways to use family history to help with missionary work, convert retention, member activation, and teaching the gospel. Bishops should read through the entire “Ward Leadership” section for examples of ways to use family history in these efforts.

The bishop and his counselors set an example by teaching ward members the doctrine of temple and family history work and testifying of the blessings that come by participating in this work. The bishopric ensures that the high priests group leader acts as the coordinator of the ward council’s temple and family history work.

Below is an example of how family history is organized at the ward level.
How the Ward Council Strengthens the Ward through Temple and Family History Work

Temple and family history work is not only about redeeming the dead. This work is actually an integral part of one great work—the work of salvation (see Ephesians 1:10). As ward councils focus on the work of salvation, they should consider how temple and family history work can be a resource in accomplishing the many aspects of the work of salvation. Ward councils do the following:

- “Strive to help individuals build testimonies, receive saving ordinances, keep covenants, and become consecrated followers of Christ (see Moroni 6:4–5)” (Handbook 2, 4.4).
- Determine how temple and family history work can help the ward accomplish the work of salvation, including member missionary work, convert retention, activation, and teaching the gospel.

Member Missionary Work (See Handbook 2, 5.1)

Family history allows Church members to share a gospel topic with friends and neighbors of other faiths in a nonthreatening way. Most people have a natural interest in families. Throughout the world, the hearts of millions of people have turned to their ancestors. Ward council members, including the ward mission leader, can encourage members to invite friends and family members to:

- Talk about their own family history, which can help individuals feel the Spirit and develop interest in the message of the restored gospel.
- Learn why the Church emphasizes family history by visiting mormon.org/family-history.
- Use the Church’s free family history resources, including FamilySearch.org and local family history centers. The Church has the world’s largest collection of family history and genealogical resources.
- Attend a family home evening about family history or a family history event.

The ward mission leader works closely with full-time missionaries, ward missionaries, and the ward council to consider other ways to use family history in missionary work (see Preach My Gospel [2004], 163–65).

One stake created pass-along cards with the message “Tell Me about Your Family” for members to give to their friends and neighbors. The members then invited individuals and families who showed interest to attend a family history event.
open house or a family home evening about family history. The stake president explained how these efforts were successful:

“Family history is a nonthreatening way to have members of other faiths come into our homes and meetinghouses and build relationships with us. . . . We’ve struggled to involve members in missionary work. But we’ve had more member participation in this family history approach than anything else we’ve tried” (in Christopher K. Bigelow, "Using Family History as a Missionary Tool," Ensign, Oct. 2000, 29).

Convert Retention (See Handbook 2, 5.2)

Temple and family history work is an effective way to help the ward with the retention of new members. Those new members who do temple and family history work will have their testimonies strengthened because of the Spirit that attends the work. Ward council members could ensure that:

- The family history consultant or the home teacher or visiting teacher establishes friendships with new members by assisting them with their family history.
- New members are “nourished by the good word of God” (Moroni 6:4) when they receive the Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work, attend a family history class, learn the doctrine of temple and family history work, and experience the joy of doing temple work for their ancestors.
- New members are given opportunities to serve by obtaining a limited-use recommend and performing baptisms for the dead or by participating in FamilySearch indexing.

A new member explained how temple and family history work strengthened him:

“It wasn’t long after my baptism that I was invited to attend the ward’s family history class, and as a result I was able to submit four generations of my ancestors to the temple. It was a moving experience to go to the temple and be baptized and confirmed in their behalf” (Phil D. Reinoehl, in “Becoming Part of the Fold,” Ensign, June 1999, 67).
Activation (See Handbook 2, 5.3)

As ward council members prayerfully identify less-active members who are most likely to return to activity, they use temple and family history work as a “means of bringing salvation unto them” (3 Nephi 18:32). As the hearts of less-active members are turned to their deceased relatives in need of ordinances, they will be motivated to obtain a current temple recommend and go to the temple.

The ward council assigns dedicated home teachers and visiting teachers to minister to less-active members. These home teachers and visiting teachers, as well as family history consultants and other ward members, can be encouraged to:

- Invite less-active members to talk about their own family history, which can help them feel the Spirit and turn their hearts to their deceased relatives.
- Help members use FamilySearch.org to create and view their own family pedigree, find historical records, and discover a new ancestor (with help from a family history consultant if necessary).
- Invite members to a family home evening about family history, a local family history center, or classes and events about family history provided by the ward or stake.

The following was related by a branch president who saw the blessings of the branch’s efforts to involve members in temple and family history work:

“As members’ hearts are turned to their deceased relatives, they will be motivated to obtain a temple recommend and go to the temple.”

“Family history gets at the core of life, and people feel the Spirit. . . . More than half of the adults in our branch are now temple recommend holders who attend regularly. The benefits are worth any effort. The level of unity and harmony among our members has increased. Attitudes have changed. I see more dedication, faithfulness, harmony, and better self-esteem among our members. I can see changes in the relationships among husbands and wives and children. These improvements spread throughout the branch” (Harold St. Croix, in LaRene Porter Gaunt, “Leading the Way,” Ensign, Jan. 1995, 59).
Temple and Family History Work
(See Handbook 2, 5.4)

Under the direction of the bishop, members of the ward council discuss and develop a plan to encourage members to participate more fully in temple and family history work. They identify specific individuals and families who could most benefit from being involved in the work. They determine specific ways in which this work can strengthen all members—adults, youth, and children. The high priests group leader coordinates these efforts.

Adults. To help adult members, the ward council can:

- Consider which ward members could be invited to participate in temple preparation seminars.
- Review the progress of individual members who are preparing to receive the ordinances of the temple.
- Ensure that new members are contacted by family history consultants soon after their baptism to help them identify deceased ancestors and provide needed temple ordinances for them. The consultants should work with the new members’ home teachers and visiting teachers in these efforts.
- Consider setting family history goals, such as encouraging members to participate in indexing projects or inviting members to identify one of their deceased relatives and then perform temple ordinances for him or her.
- Assign ward organizations to plan activities that allow members to learn about the resources available at FamilySearch.org.

Youth. Temple and family history work can strengthen youth and young adults by giving them service opportunities, positive activities on which to spend their time, opportunities for spiritual growth, and a testimony of the work. Youth often have technical and social networking skills that are well suited for this work. They can become natural leaders in this work because of those skills. The family history skills that youth develop will serve them during their full-time missions and throughout their lives.

Members of the ward council and youth leaders can involve youth in family history by:

- Encouraging them to help others learn how to use FamilySearch.org for a Duty to God or Personal Progress project.
• Encouraging them to set goals to find an ancestor’s name and be baptized for that ancestor in the temple.
• Finding ways to teach the doctrine of family history and temple work during youth activities and conferences.
• Creating activities, games, and projects designed to help youth learn about their ancestors.
• Assigning responsible young men and young women to help others use family history technologies. For example, young men could assist families they home teach to use FamilySearch.org and thereby magnify their calling to “teach, expound, exhort” (D&C 20:42).

Children. Children can learn more about themselves as they learn about their ancestors. Primary leaders can plan Primary lessons and activities that instill in children a love for family history. Such lessons and activities could include:

• Organizing a sharing time when the children create an artistic four-generation pedigree chart.
• Planning an activity day when the children learn several facts about one of their ancestors and share them with others.
• Encouraging the children to keep their personal histories by writing in journals and keeping family letters and photos.

Teaching the Gospel (See Handbook 2, 5.5)

Members of the ward council help the bishop ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings of family history and temple work are taught regularly in ward meetings. They encourage members to receive their own temple ordinances and participate actively in family history and temple work.

Each family can receive the Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work to use in the home and in family history classes.

Holding a temple and family history class is a good way to increase participation and interest in family history. The class can be used to help with ward activation, retention, and missionary efforts. Anyone may be invited to attend the class. The ward council may decide to invite certain ward members.

The class is taught by an effective instructor, who may or may not be a family history consultant. The class may be taught during Sunday School or at another time that is more convenient for members. It is taught under the direction of the bishopric rather than the Sunday School president.
Lessons are generally conducted as workshops in which members actually complete their own family history work, either on the computer or on paper. Where feasible, class participants should have access to computers. Many meetinghouses are currently being equipped with wireless Internet connections.

The number of class participants should be limited to the number who can be given personal help. The class can be repeated as often as necessary to accommodate all who desire to attend.

Family history consultants can provide personal help to participants during the class as well as after the class in members’ homes or family history centers.

Resources available for the class include the *Instructor’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work*, the accompanying *Temple and Family History Course DVD*, and the *Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work*. Leaders should go to the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org to find additional resources.

**High Priests Group Leader**

The high priests group leader coordinates the ward council’s efforts to encourage temple and family history work in the ward. He is accountable to the bishop for the results of these efforts. He also directs the work of family history consultants. He receives assistance and training from the high councilor assigned to temple and family history work.

In wards or branches where there is no high priests group leader, the elders quorum president or another assigned Melchizedek Priesthood holder in the ward council fills this role.

**Coordinates the Ward Council’s Efforts**

The high priests group leader coordinates the ward council’s efforts as he:

- Works with the ward council to develop a plan to encourage individuals and ward auxiliaries to participate more fully in temple and family history work.
- Consults with each member of the ward council to determine specific ways that temple and family history work can be used to help the members of their organizations.
Ward Leadership

- Encourages members of the ward council to discuss temple and family history matters in their meetings.
- Organizes ward temple visits.

Directs the Work of Consultants

The high priests group leader directs the work of family history consultants as he:

- Recommends members to be called and set apart as family history consultants, as requested by the bishopric.
- Works with the bishopric to ensure that enough consultants are called to meet the needs of the ward.
- Provides assignments to consultants, including assignments to work with certain ward members.
- Ensures that consultants are properly prepared to perform their callings and makes them aware of the training resources at FamilySearch.org/serve.

“If I were a bishop again, my approach would be to charge the high priests group leader with the responsibility to lead out in the ward council on this subject. I would ensure that we had one or more . . . family history consultants who were ‘people persons’ who could work under his direction. . . . I imagine that in the course of a year we could help at least ten families. In five years, we could have a corps of fifty families active at some level in family history and its attendant temple work. That to me would be a successful, well-run program.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson
Religious Educator, vol. 6, no. 2 (2005), 10–11

Family History Consultants

The bishopric and the high priests group leader determine how many family history consultants are needed in the ward. The high priests group leader directs their efforts.

Consultants are skilled teachers who work and communicate well with others. While consultants need not be experts in family history research, they should be comfortable using the resources at FamilySearch.org and helping others use them. These FamilySearch resources include family pedigrees, historical records, and the FamilySearch
indexing program. Youth can be called to serve as consultants when their technology skills can be helpful in assisting others.

Consultants register at FamilySearch.org/serve to receive information, training, and updates from the Church.

**Working with Leaders**

Consultants help ward leaders learn about family history so they can share it with those they serve.

Consultants take the initiative to reach out to leaders by:

- Helping them work on their own family history so they can perform temple ordinances for their deceased relatives.
- Demonstrating how family history can help them in their calling to minister to those they serve.

**Working with Members**

Consultants take the initiative to reach out to members, especially those who are not comfortable using technology, by:

- Helping a few individuals or families at a time to work on their own family history so they can perform temple ordinances for their deceased relatives. The most effective place to do this is in members’ homes. The ward council could determine specific individuals or families for the consultant to work with. The high priests group leader assigns these families to the consultant.
- Answering family history questions from ward leaders and members.

**Other Assignments**

Some consultants have experience and skills that particularly suit them for additional tasks, such as:

- Serving in family history centers.
- Assisting members and other consultants in more advanced research efforts.
- Training other consultants.
Additional Resources

- See the *Family History Consultant’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* for more information on family history consultants. It is located in the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org.
- View or download the family history class resources from the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org.

Additional Ideas for Ward Leaders

Ward leaders can become more knowledgeable about family history by:

- Inviting a family history consultant to visit them and their families to help them get started with or continue their family history.
- Registering for and exploring FamilySearch.org so they can be aware of the resources there and share them with others.

Ward leaders can use FamilySearch indexing to help ward members by:

- Inviting those receiving welfare assistance to accept an assignment to do indexing.
- Using indexing or other family history activities to help those who struggle with addictions.
- Inviting those who must spend long periods of time away from home to serve in the Church through indexing or other family history activities.

Ward leaders can also inform members of the part-time and full-time missionary opportunities available to help with FamilySearch. Members may serve in this way from their own homes. For further information, see FamilySearch.org/mission.


**Area Leadership**

“Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad. . . . Let the dead speak forth anthems of eternal praise to the King Immanuel, who hath ordained, before the world was, that which would enable us to redeem them out of their prison; for the prisoners shall go free.”

*Doctrine and Covenants 128:22*

Area Temple and Family History Leadership

The Presidency of the Seventy or Area Presidency oversee temple and family history work in the area. They teach the doctrines of the work. They also teach leaders their temple and family history responsibilities.

The Area Presidency or Area Seventies call a sufficient number of area family history advisers to assist stakes with family history work.

Area Family History Advisers

Area family history advisers work closely with the Area Seventies and coordinating councils. Generally, priesthood holders or couples are called to serve as area family history advisers. The Church’s Family History Department provides orientation and training for the new advisers. The department will contact new area advisers after being notified of their callings.

Area family history advisers do the following:

- Consult with Area Seventies, stake presidencies, and high councilors on how family history can serve as a resource to help achieve overall goals for those whom they serve.
- Provide training in temple and family history to stake leaders and others within stakes and wards.
- Provide information to area leaders on the Church’s direction and plans for family history work.
- Inform the Family History Department about family history needs and activities within the area and its stakes. Area family history advisers partner with the department to meet those needs.
• Work with the Family History Department to provide family history mission opportunities to members within the area.

• Help with public affairs efforts that include temple and family history work.

Area family history advisers play an important role in helping an area succeed with its temple and family history goals. The following experience was related by a stake president who witnessed the effect of a dedicated area adviser in helping his stake learn to use FamilySearch tools.

The area adviser visited stake priesthood and family history leaders to help them understand that family history is a resource to bless lives and further the work of salvation. He inspired the leaders by speaking about how FamilySearch tools could help them with their leadership responsibilities, as well as with their individual family history work. He explained the registration process for FamilySearch and encouraged the leaders to begin learning about the new software. He then spent considerable time answering individual questions.

The help provided by the area adviser generated excitement among the leaders. This excitement was passed on to the stake members. Later, the area adviser was the main speaker at a stake family history seminar attended by about 300 members. He encouraged and inspired the members to continue their family history efforts.

### Additional Resources

New area family history advisers should register online at FamilySearch.org/serve to receive communications from Church headquarters and have access to training.
## APPENDIX

### Chart of Family History Callings

#### Stake Callings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Recommended By</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Sustained By</th>
<th>Called and Set Apart By</th>
<th>Coordinated By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family history center director and assistant director</td>
<td>Stake presidency</td>
<td>Stake presidency and high council</td>
<td>Members in stake conference</td>
<td>Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor</td>
<td>Assigned high councilor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stake indexing director and assistant director</td>
<td>Stake presidency</td>
<td>Stake presidency and high council</td>
<td>Members in stake conference</td>
<td>Stake president or an assigned counselor or high councilor</td>
<td>Assigned high councilor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family history Church-service missionary (works from home)</td>
<td>Stake president and bishop submit a recommendation form</td>
<td>Family History Department</td>
<td>Stake president calls and then authorizes the bishop to set apart</td>
<td>Family History Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ward Callings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Recommended By</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Sustained By</th>
<th>Called and Set Apart By</th>
<th>Coordinated By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family history consultant</td>
<td>Bishopric (in consultation with high priests group leader)</td>
<td>Bishopric</td>
<td>Ward members</td>
<td>Bishop or an assigned counselor</td>
<td>High priests group leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Area Callings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Recommended By</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Sustained By</th>
<th>Called and Set Apart By</th>
<th>Coordinated By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area family history adviser</td>
<td>Area Seventy or Area Presidency</td>
<td>Area President or President of the Seventy</td>
<td>Area President, President of the Seventy, or an assigned Area Seventy</td>
<td>Area Seventy and Family History Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Help with Family History

If leaders have questions about family history work or about how to establish and administer family history programs, they may contact their area family history adviser.

If additional help is needed, leaders may contact FamilySearch by telephone (toll-free) or e-mail:

Telephone: 1-866-406-1830 (North America)

A list of toll-free numbers for other areas of the world is available online at contact.FamilySearch.org.

E-mail: support@FamilySearch.org

Online Resources and Computer Programs

Church family history online resources and computer programs help members identify their ancestors, link them into families, and prepare ancestors’ names for temple ordinances. The majority of these resources are available through FamilySearch.org, the Church’s family history Internet site.

Where computers with Internet access exist in the stake or ward, or where family history programs are installed on stake or ward computers, the stake presidency and bishopric ensure that these computers are available for members to use at reasonable times and that other administrative programs and data are properly secured.

Priesthood leaders meet with the stake technology specialist to ensure that Church computer policies are followed and that computer access is secure to prevent inappropriate use.

Resources

The following resources are mentioned in this guide. Distribution Services item numbers are shown in parentheses.

- *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (08702)
- *To Turn the Hearts DVD* (08885)
- *Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (36795)
- *Family History Consultant’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (online resource available in the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org)
- *Instructor’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (35804)
- *Temple and Family History Course DVD* (54102)
- *Family History Center Operations Guide* (online resource available in the Serving in the Church section of LDS.org)
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