

# Family History Consultants: Keys to Success and Working with Leaders

Presented by: FamilySearch Staff

**Elder David Bednar:** *“This is the work of salvation. It’s not just indexing; it’s not just searching for names. These are people, sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. We are here to participate in the work of salvation in inviting all of these people to come unto Christ and receive the saving ordinances of the gospel. That’s who we are; that’s why we are here on the earth. I don’t know of a greater blessing than ultimately realizing that God trusts us and depends on us to do His work. It’s a remarkable spiritual experience when you do the work for your own ancestors and you take your family names to the temple to perform the ordinance work.”*

## Turning Hearts: Different View of Consultants and Family History

In many stakes the family history center is the center for family history work. But temple and family history work should start in the ward and stake priesthood councils. That is where the keys reside and that is where the work of salvation resides. The work of family history should be a resource to councils. The family history center is a vital resource but not the center of family history work.

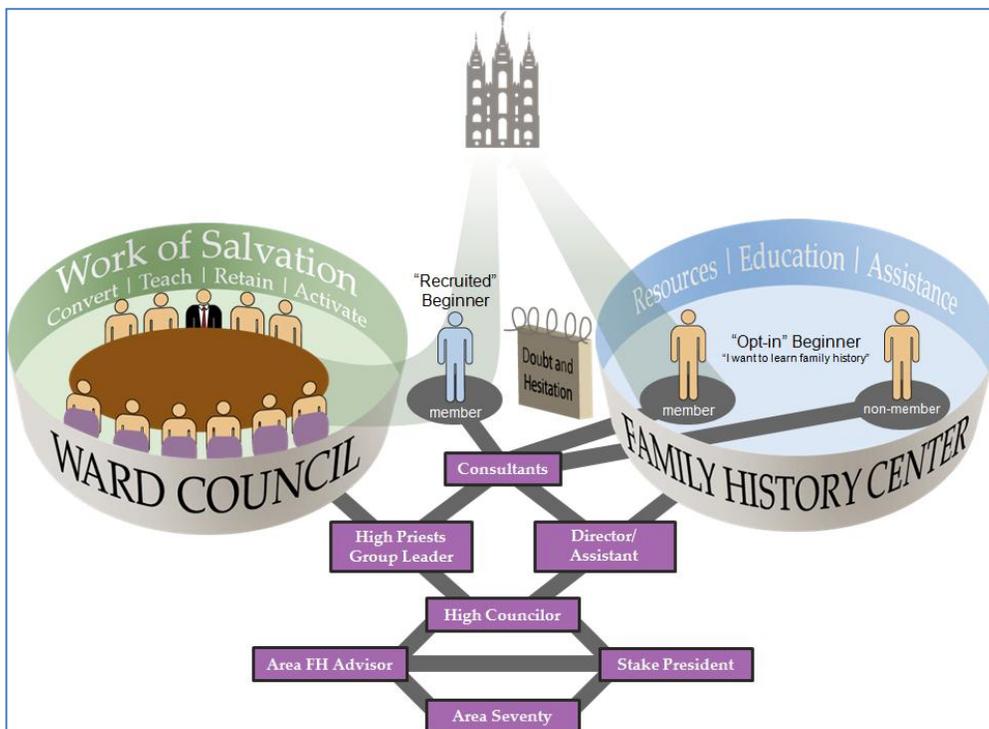
Family history consultants can be a resource to members in achieving this remarkable spiritual experience by helping them take a family name to the temple. Temple and family History work can be a support and resource to the bishop and ward council in the work of salvation in helping with:

- Member missionary work
- Teaching the gospel
- Convert retention
- Activation

## Turning Hearts or Turning Off

“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. If hearts have not been turned and members and leaders hear the term

*family history* they often “turn off” their listening and think of reasons for not participating in this sacred work. Why?



Leaders and members may:

- Feel like they already have too much to do and family history is just one more program.
- The perception that it is a huge time commitment, and cannot fit into their life.
- Feel guilty about not being involved in family history but are overwhelmed at what they need to do to get started.
- Rationalize that another family member is doing the work for them or the work has already been done.
- Rationalize that they will get involved in family history later in life; not right now.
- May fear going to the family history center.

## The Roles of a Family History Consultant

With all of the excuses listed above, the overarching reason members are not more involved in family history work is because their hearts are not turned toward the work of salvation. There are two roles a family history consultant can play. A consultant can play both roles, but the skill sets are different and the outcomes are different.

1. The first role is to support to the ward council in helping members take names to the temple. The outcome is to turn the hearts of the members. It is NOT to turn members into genealogists. The skill set is being able to teach and help members understand the doctrine of salvation and help them get a family name to the temple so that their hearts may be turned.
2. The second role may be to work in a family history center and educate, assist and show members the resources and tools such as new FamilySearch, FamilySearch, etc. to find more family names.

## Profile of a Family History Consultant

Family history consultants who do not work in a family history center do NOT need to be experts in family history research. However they should be:

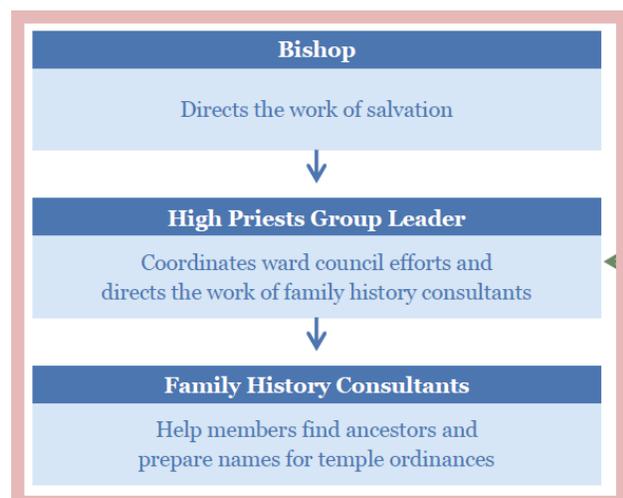
- Skilled teachers who work and communicate well with others
- Comfortable using the resources at FamilySearch.org and helping others use them. These resources include:
  - FamilySearch.org historical records
  - Family pedigrees
  - New.familysearch.org (how to submit a name to the temple)
  - FamilySearch Indexing

## Magnifying Your Calling

Whether you have just been called as family history consultant in your ward or you have been in the calling for a long time, there are things you can do to magnify your calling:

### Work with Leaders

Bishops hold the keys to family history work in the ward and direct the work of salvation. The High Priest Group leader coordinates ward council efforts and directs the work of family



history consultants. If ward leaders are not providing names of people in the ward to work with, then you consider ways to turn the hearts of your ward leaders. Consultants help ward leaders learn about family history so they can share it with those they serve. You should 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.
- Demonstrate how family history can help them in their calling to minister to those they serve.

### **Work with Members**

If consultants do not have assignments from ward leaders, ponder and pray on how to take the **initiative** and reach out to select 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.
- Answering family history questions from ward leaders and members.

### **More Ideas**

- **Develop a plan to turn the hearts of the ward council, bishop, and High Priests Group Leader.** First meet with your High Priests Group Leader to determine the best approach.
- **Develop a plan for members assigned by the ward council on getting family names to the temple for ordinance work.** If members are not comfortable with technology do the research and prepare the names for the members.
- **Create a fan chart for members of the ward council** using TreeSeek.com. You will need to sign in with the member's LDS Account, so make sure they have one and do that for you. This will show them the gaps in their family tree.
- **Offer to Give presentations in Priesthood meeting and Relief Society.**
- **Involve the youth.** Plan a family history activity for Mutual. See [familysearch.org/fhy](http://familysearch.org/fhy) for more ideas.
- **Ask to speak in sacrament.** Focus on how you can help turn the hearts of the members of your ward by helping them find and take family names to the temple.
- **Include your contact information** in the Sacrament meeting program, ward newsletter, or bulletin board.
- **See page 21 in "To Turn the Hearts" for more ideas.**
- **Other ideas:**

## What if?

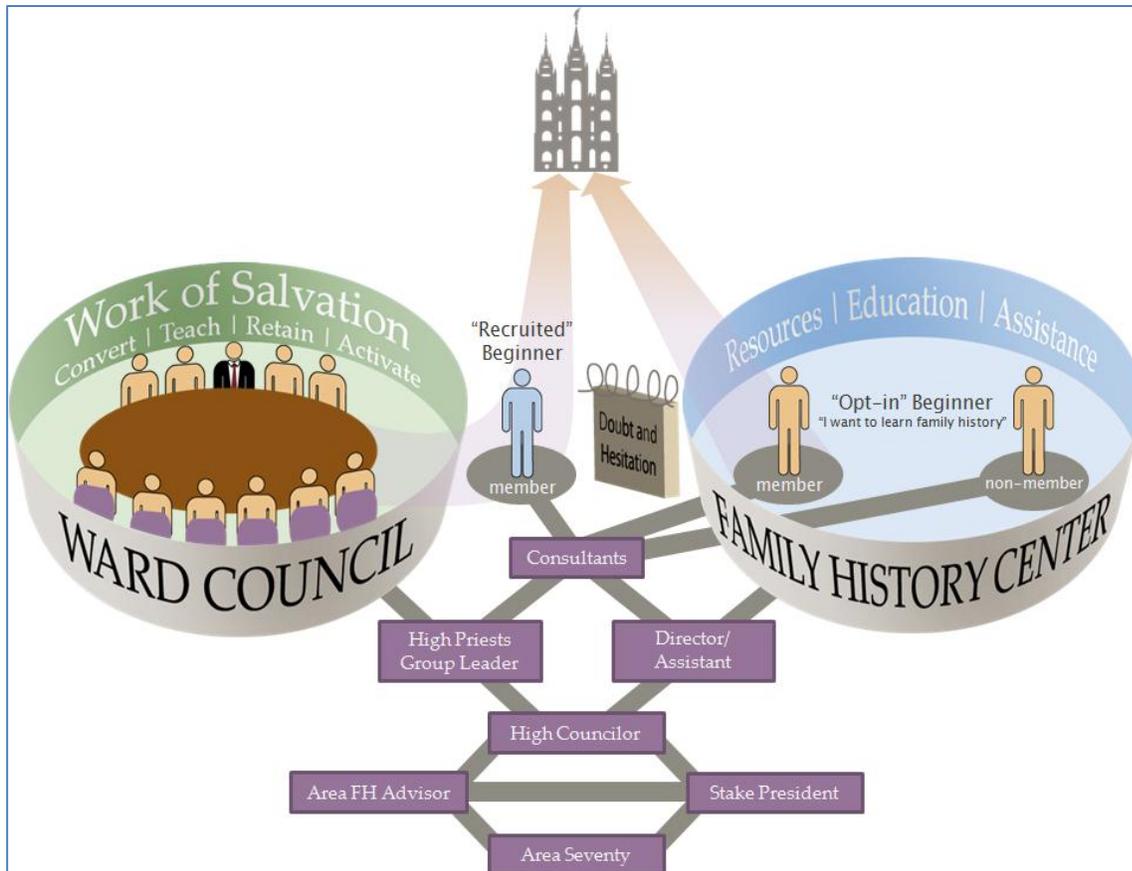
Even as family history consultants we can think of several reasons why it is hard to magnify our calling. The following is a guide when you find yourself thinking of the “what if’s.”

What if...	Then you could...
I'm brand new to my calling as a family history consultant. What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First understand what your calling entails and why it is important               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ask for help and advice from your High Priest Group Leader</li> <li>○ Read “To Turn the Hearts” guide and watch the DVD</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Learn how you can work to “turn the hearts” of your ward leaders and members (see the next box)</li> </ul>
I'm brand new to the calling. I'm overwhelmed with all of the “help” available online. Where should I start? What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to <a href="http://www.familysearch.org/serve">www.familysearch.org/serve</a></li> <li>• Click on “Training for Family History Consultants”</li> <li>• Start with:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “To Turn the Hearts” guide and accompanying DVD (New)</li> <li>○ Training for Family History Consultants (New)</li> <li>○ Youth and Family History (New)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• As time permits, review the rest of the training and help as you need it</li> </ul>
My High Priests Group leader knows less about my calling than I do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the initiative to share the “To Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD with your HPGL and bishop</li> </ul>
My ward council doesn't understand my calling and how I can be a resource in helping them in their callings. For example: member missionary, activation, convert retention, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the initiative to meet with your High Priests Group Leader and share the “To Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD</li> <li>• With your HPGL, decide how to present the information from the “Turn the Hearts” guide and DVD with the bishop and ward council.</li> <li>• See page 21 in “To Turn the Hearts” for more ideas.</li> </ul>
Even after I've explained my calling and how I can help the ward council, they are not providing me with names of people to help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the <b>initiative</b> to pray about who in the ward you can help.</li> <li>• Think of new converts or part member families.</li> </ul>
I live in an area where most of the members of my ward come from pioneer ancestors. They think the temple work has all been done.	<p>Prayerfully consider ways to turn hearts by getting members of your ward to get a name to the temple. You could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a “Helper” find a name for them to take to the temple</li> <li>• If you find a biography of one of their ancestors, share it with the member.</li> <li>• Teach them there are many ways they can participate in family history</li> </ul>
I don't know how to use new.FamilySearch.org, FamilySearch.org, or FamilySearch Indexing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Register for new.FamilySearch.org, FamilySearch.org and FamilySearch Indexing.</li> <li>• Use the helps available to learn how to use them including going to your family history center and taking classes.</li> </ul>
I've been asked to work with the youth in the ward. What resources are available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to <a href="https://lds.org/fhy">https://lds.org/fhy</a></li> <li>• There are many excellent resources for getting youth involved in family history</li> </ul>

# The Family History Center: A Vital and Relevant Resource

FamilySearch Staff

Family history centers are a vital resource in the work of salvation. Centers should work together with priesthood leaders to help with member missionary work, convert retention, activation, and teaching the gospel. The following illustrates how family history centers are an integral part of the work.



## Family History Consultants

There are two roles a family history consultant can play. A consultant can play both roles, but the skill sets are different and the outcomes are different.

1. The first role is to support to the ward council in helping members take names to the temple. The outcome is to turn the hearts of the members. It is NOT to turn members into genealogists. The skill set is being able to teach and help members understand the doctrine of salvation and help them get a family name to the temple so that their hearts may be turned.
2. The second role may be to work in a family history center and help members use the tools such as new FamilySearch, FamilySearch, etc. to find more family names.

## Turning Hearts At Home

Some members may hesitate going to a family history center. They may have the impression that family history centers are for trained genealogists. Before you invite members to a center, make sure their “hearts are turned.” This 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. Help members get started by focusing on the temple and taking one name to the temple. To do this:

- Use new FamilySearch to determine which of their ancestors need temple ordinances.
- Use FamilySearch and other resources to expand lines up and laterally. Consultants working in the family history center may help the consultants in the ward do this.
- Make sure members have early success.
- Get them excited about finding out more

Turning hearts happens when members participate in finding, clearing names and doing the ordinances for ancestors in holy temples. If hearts are turned, members will want to learn more about their ancestors. Members learn line upon line as they explore records, resources, and methods for finding more information.

## Turning Hearts at a Family History Center

Once members’ hearts are turned they may desire to visit a family history center as the next step in finding more ancestors. Family history centers are a valuable resource available to bless the lives of members as well to provide a valuable service to the community. Family history centers give members and community patrons access to:

### Genealogical Resources

A family history center is genealogy centered. This is where members and patrons of the community can go to access:

- ***Family History Center Portal.*** You must be at a family history center to get access to this tool. You can get free access to:
  - **Premium subscription websites** like Ancestry.com, findmypast.com, etc.
  - **FamilySearch.** Where you can discover your family history for free.
  - **FamilySearch Indexing.** You can contribute to indexing digital records.
  - **FamilySearch Microfilm Ordering.** You can order film online and have it sent to a family history center near you.
- ***Microfilm and microfiche readers.***

To find a family history center near you, go to: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) >FamilySearch Centers> type your address.

### Classes and Workshops

Family history centers can provide classes and workshops for local patrons. Centers can host large family history events that include the whole community. Soon the FamilySearch Center site will list for each

center: days and hours of operation, available services, current classes or events, etc. The staff can customize the information they want posted. Also available are:

- **Online research Courses.** Learn the basic methods and key resources to start your family history. There are over 300 courses available with more regularly added. To get to these courses, go to: [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) >Learn> Choose an online course.
- **Tech Tips.** Technology tips for genealogists and family historians. To get to Tech Tips, go to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)> Learn > scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Tech Tips.

### **One-on-One Assistance**

At family history centers you can get:

- **One-on-one assistance from trained center staff members.** Staff will help you with your research questions. Also available from home or at the center is:
  - **FamilySearch Research Wiki.** This is a free family history research advice for the community by the community.
  - **FamilySearch Forums.** Helpful family history research and FamilySearch product information provided by experienced FamilySearch patrons.
- **(Coming soon) Live research help** on familysearch.org. You can access live chat or live telephone help on your research. To do this: Go to familysearch.org> conduct a search> on the results screen, scroll to the bottom of the screen > help links are available on the left hand side.

### **Ideas for FamilySearch Center Staff**

As a family history center staff, there are many things you can do to make your center more effective for those just starting their family history, youth, and those who attend often. The following are some ideas to consider:

#### **Family History Center Directors**

- Consider ways to better leverage family history centers to assist patrons with:
  - Genealogical resources
  - Classes and workshops
  - One-on-One help
- Get more traffic to your center; market your center by reaching out to:
  - Ward and full-time missionaries
  - Local public relations people
- Improve the look of your center; centers are inseparably tied to temples and need to look, feel, and function like they are.
  - Organize, clean up and de-clutter
  - Remove un-needed signs
- Change from a center designed for the past into a center designed for the future
  - Focus on groups and linking to priesthood needs
  - Create and embrace new training
- Meet annually with the high councilor and facilities manager assigned to your center for improved internet connection and other needs
- Improve communications

- Stay up-to-date on your email
- Share success stories and ideas with headquarters

### Family History Center Staff and Consultants in Local Units

- Think of ways you can involve youth more with temple and family history work. Use [lds.org/familyhistoryyouth](http://lds.org/familyhistoryyouth) or [lds.org/fhy](http://lds.org/fhy) for excellent resources.  
*“I believe the youth are not only willing and able to do genealogical research, but they are a good means of giving life to the whole program.” Ezra Taft Benson*
- Family history center patrons should expect a friendly, accurate, and timely experience when working with family history consultants in their home and in a family history center.
- Family history consultants can use the Ask, Find, and Teach process to help members with their questions.



- Become proficient in new FamilySearch and FamilySearch so you can help members take the names of ancestors to the temple.
- Become familiar with:
  - FamilySearch Indexing
  - FamilySearch Research Wiki and Forums
  - Online Research courses

### Other Ideas and Notes

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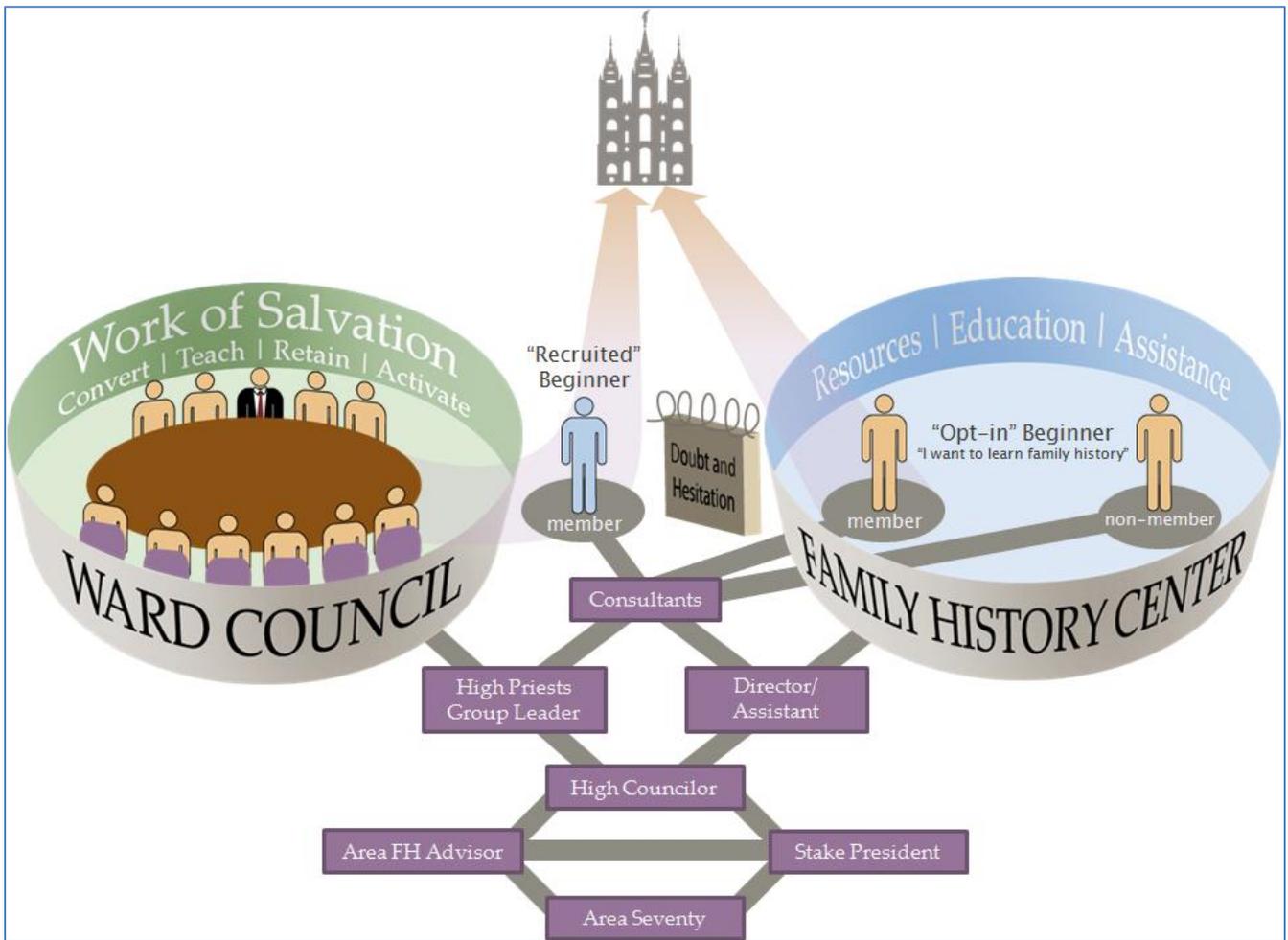
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# Priesthood Leaders: Utilizing Family History in the Work of Salvation

FamilySearch Staff

## Family History: A Resource for Strengthening Members

Family history can help leaders accomplish the work of salvation both for the living and the dead. Leaders have the keys and inspiration to use temple and family history work as a way to strengthen members and their families. They can help others build testimonies and receive saving ordinances, keep covenants, and become consecrated followers of Christ



## **Work of Salvation Centered: Ward Councils**

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. Ward councils play a key role in this great work when they consider how temple and family history work can be a resource in accomplishing the many aspects of the work of salvation, including the following:

### ***Missionary Work***

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. See pages 13 and 14 in “To Turn the Hearts” for ideas on how ward council members, including the ward mission leader, can encourage members to invite friends and family members to use family history in member missionary work.

### ***Convert Retention***

Those new members who do temple and family history work will have their testimonies strengthened because of the Spirit that attends the work. A 2001 study showed that new converts who do baptisms for their deceased ancestors in their first six months as members are more than twice as likely to still be active after 18 months than those who did not have temple experiences. See pages 13 and 14 in “To Turn the Hearts” for ideas on how Ward council members could use family history to help with convert retention.

### ***Activation***

As ward council members prayerfully identify less-active members, then use temple and family history work as a “means of bringing salvation unto them.” 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. For more ideas, see page 15 in “To Turn the Hearts.”

### ***Teaching the Gospel***

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 ordinance and participate actively in family history and temple work. Holding a temple and family history class is a good way to increase participation and interest in family history. For more information see pages 17 and 18 in “To Turn the Hearts”

## **Family History Centers: Genealogy Centered**

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.

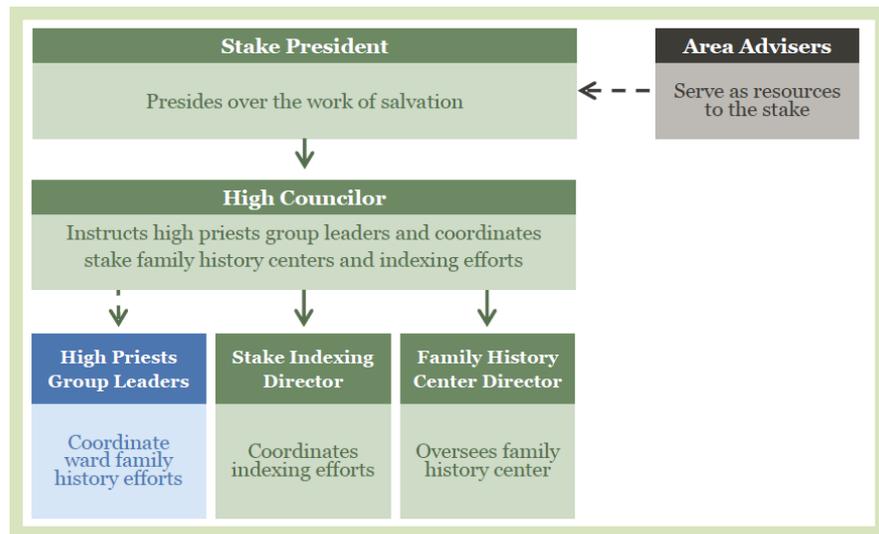
Family history centers give members and community patrons access to:

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

For more information on family history centers see pages 9 and 10 of “To Turn the Hearts.” Also come to the next class

## Stake Leadership

For more information on stake leadership, including stake indexing and family history centers, see pages 6 to 11 in “To Turn the Hearts.”



## High Councilor Assigned to Temple and Family History Work

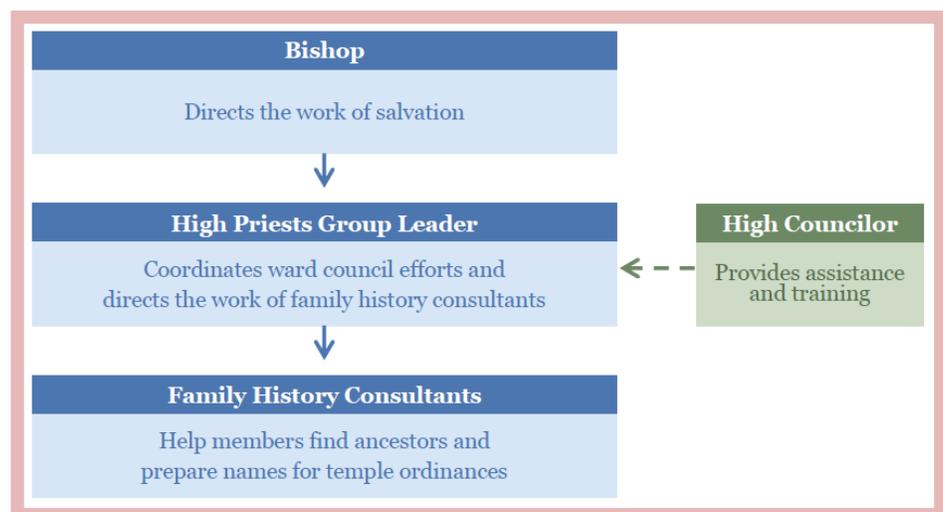
The high councilor (or councilors) assigned to temple and family history work coordinates temple and family efforts in the stake.

For more information, see page 7 of “To Turn the Hearts.”



## Ward Leadership

For more information on ward leadership, see pages 12 to 21 in “To Turn the Hearts.”



## Area Leadership

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

## Area Family History Advisor

Area family advisors are a valuable resource to priesthood and family history leaders and can help them accomplish their goals. For more information on Area Leadership, see pages 22 and 23 in “To Turn the Hearts.”

## 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:

### Discover

Leaders can 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](http://FamilySearch.org) [consultants can help you do this]
- Performing ordinances in the temple for their deceased relatives.

### Teach

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 the 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

## More Ideas

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