

dard design concept based on pragmatic functionalism. However, some individualistic plans have been used to conform to special geographic or cultural requirements. Regardless of the resulting style or plan, a Latter-day Saint meetinghouse still serves the same function as the New England meetinghouse—as a multipurpose center for worship and cultural activities.

C. MARK HAMILTON

MEETINGHOUSE LIBRARIES

Meetinghouse libraries in the wards and branches of the Church are provided to assist Latter-day Saints in both learning and teaching the gospel, whether in Church meetings or at home. Instructional materials are indexed to correlate with the Churchwide curriculum and are designed to enrich lives, helping people develop spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually.

An integral part of each meetinghouse, the library ideally contains selected books, pictures, flannel board stories and flannel boards, audiocassettes and players, videocassettes and players, a photocopier, a typewriter, screens, and projectors for the available videocassette tapes, filmstrips, and slides. Additional teaching resources include supplies such as easels, maps, charts, indexes, paper, and chalk. Ward members are allowed access to virtually all library materials for both teaching and home use.

Printed materials in the library typically consist of the standard works, doctrinal works by Church authorities, copies of the current hymnal and children's songbook, current and back issues of Church magazines, copies of current and past lesson manuals for all courses of study, general conference reports, and guide books for self-instruction in genealogical or family history work.

Learning and teaching aids are available for the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, Church history, Church leaders, FAMILY LIFE, and other resources used in the Church organizations. Many of these materials are prepared under the Church's CORRELATION guidelines.

The librarian and one or more assistants, who are called to the work by the ward BISHOP, instruct members about available items and how to use them. The librarian is normally trained by both the

previous librarian and the stake or regional librarian. The librarian orders needed supplies normally from a Church DISTRIBUTION CENTER, planning the order in coordination with ward organization leaders, and subject to an established budget.

Teachers in Church organizations use the library most heavily on worship days. During the week, ward members may draw on library resources for family activities, FAMILY HOME EVENINGS, FIRESIDES, and other occasions.

BETH M. MARLOW

MEETINGS, MAJOR CHURCH

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are a meeting-going people. When the Church was organized, the instruction was given, "It is expedient that the church meet together often" (D&C 20:75). The pattern for meeting every SUNDAY to pray, speak, and partake of the SACRAMENT or "Lord's Supper" was established immediately, following the Book of Mormon norm (Moro. 6:5–6). The pattern of holding a Church CONFERENCE every three months also began in 1830 (D&C 20:61–62). Since that time other meetings have been added to the Church agenda. The main meetings on Sunday are (1) SACRAMENT MEETING; (2) SUNDAY SCHOOL; and (3) concurrent PRIESTHOOD quorum meetings for men and RELIEF SOCIETY for women, with children under twelve years of age simultaneously attending PRIMARY. Young women meet in their own sessions, while young men of equivalent age are in priesthood meeting.

In addition, families are expected, usually on Monday evening, to meet in their own homes in a FAMILY HOME EVENING, which can include instruction from a Church-prepared manual, an activity, and refreshments. Most families also use this evening as a time to discuss family concerns and make plans for the week. Single Latter-day Saints are encouraged to participate with nearby family groups or in groups of their peers.

Besides the meetings for all members, there are special meetings related to Church CALLINGS. For example, a presidency of three plus a secretary or clerk meet regularly to oversee the many functions of a stake and its wards. Then within each ward are the bishopric, priesthood quorums, Sunday School, Relief Society, Primary, Young

Women, and so forth. Each of these presidencies typically also holds a planning meeting each week. Even though there are many meetings, leaders are encouraged to spend less time in meetings and more time in service.

Most Church meetings are formally organized with hymns, prayers, sermons, lessons, and/or instructions. To involve teenagers and children, many meetings use participative methods such as discussion groups, panels, case studies, and role playing.

In all conferences—ward, stake, regional, and general—Church leaders give presentations of counsel and inspiration. Special meetings are held during the year for the priesthood (e.g., stake and general priesthood meetings), and for the women of the Church (general meeting). There are likewise seminary meetings for participating teenagers attending high school, missionary meetings for those on MISSIONS, and meetings for temple workers, scout leaders, activity directors, nursery teachers, and Sunday School workers. The Latter-day Saint culture flourishes on the principle of meeting together often in order to “be prepared in all things” (D&C 88:80).

In business and planning meetings, there is an attempt to have everyone contribute, but those with official status usually conduct the proceedings and have the most decisive influence. These meeting patterns extend worldwide and are a major part of the cohesiveness that keeps Mormons in touch, involved, acquainted, and united in the common cause of building the KINGDOM OF GOD on earth.

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WILLIAM G. DYER

MELCHIZEDEK

[*This entry consists of two articles: LDS Sources, a discussion of what is known of Melchizedek from Church scripture and revelation, and Ancient Sources, a historical view of Melchizedek from ancient writings and traditions.*]

LDS SOURCES

As a king and HIGH PRIEST of the Most High God (Gen. 14:18), Melchizedek holds a place of great honor and respect among Latter-day Saints. An example of righteousness and the namesake of the higher PRIESTHOOD, he represents the scriptural ideal of one who obtains the power of God through FAITH, REPENTANCE, and sacred ORDINANCES, for the purpose of inspiring and blessing his fellow beings.

Melchizedek was evidently a prince by birth, for he became king of Salem (later JERUSALEM—Gen. 14:18; Ps. 76:2), where he reigned “under his father” (Alma 13:18). “Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire” (JST Gen. 14:26). Yet the people among whom he lived “waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness” (Alma 13:17).

Though living among a wicked people, Melchizedek “exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God” (Alma 13:18). This priesthood was after the order of the COVENANT that God had made with Enoch (JST Gen. 14:27), and Melchizedek ruled both as king and priest over his people.

As high priest, some of his functions were keeping “the storehouse of God” where the “tithes for the poor” were held (JST Gen. 14:37–38), giving blessings to individuals such as ABRAHAM (JST Gen. 14:18, 25, 37), preaching repentance (Alma 13:18; cf. 5:49), and administering ordinances “after this manner, that thereby the people might look forward on the Son of God . . . for a remission of their sins, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord” (Alma 13:16; JST Gen. 14:17). With extraordinary goodness and power, Melchizedek diligently administered in the office of high priest and “did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days” (Alma 13:18). Consequently, Melchizedek became known as “the prince of peace” (JST Gen. 14:33; Heb. 7:1–2; Alma 13:18). “His people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven” (JST Gen. 14:34). His Hebrew name means “King of Righteousness.”

For ALMA₂ and several biblical authors, the order of the priesthood to which Melchizedek was ordained was of prime importance. It was this