The ward budget continues to cover costs of
general operations, materials, and activities of the
wards and stakes. Each unit of the ward organiza-
tion prepares annually a detailed estimate of
needs, which the BISHOPRIC then uses to develop a
ward budget proposal. The BISHOP presents this
for a sustaining vote of the ward membership at
a special meeting, and then submits the proposal
to the stake, from which it goes to Church head-
quarters.

ROBERT J. SMITH

WARD COUNCIL

The ward council (formerly known as the Ward
Correlation Council) is the meeting of local leaders
wherein the doctrines of the gospel are turned into
plans of action. The shared activities that help turn
ward members into a community of Saints are co-
ordinated by the ward council. This council is com-
poved of the ward PRIESTHOOD EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE and the presidents of the ward
AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS, and the chair of the
Activities Committee. These leaders coordinate
the efforts of all ward quorums and organizations to
support the families of the Church, meet the needs
of individuals from all age groups, and provide
Christian service. The BISHOP presides in this
monthly meeting, where ward programs are re-
viewed and activities are proposed. The bishop
may invite other individuals to participate in the
ward council as necessary. Approval of activities is
based on such matters as their appropriateness,
the ability to conduct them without additional cost
to ward members (see TITHING), and how well an
activity will strengthen ward members. For exam-
ple, if HOME TEACHERS were to discover that a
group of elderly members felt neglected, and if
youth leaders reported that they were searching
for a service project, an activity could be planned
that would place the youth in the service of the elderly.

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DENNIS L. THOMPSON

WARD ORGANIZATION

A WARD is a geographically defined Church unit
organized to provide every member the opportu-
nity to find fellowship with the Saints and give ser-
vice to others. The ward is led by a BISHOP and two
counselors (see BISHOPRIC). An executive secretary
and ward CLERKS assist the bishopric with the tasks
of RECORD KEEPING and management. PRIEST-
HOOD and AUXILIARY presidencies (a president
and two counselors) are assigned to attend to vari-
ous needs of ward members. Other leaders super-
vise missionary activities, provide gospel instruc-
tion, and help ward members with temporal
needs, such as searching for employment. Fre-
quent social and service activities involve adults
and youth.

Typically, the administration of the ward is
carried out in a weekly bishopric meeting attended
by the bishop, his two counselors, and his execu-
tive secretary. These same men hold a weekly
WARD PRIESTHOOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meet-
ing with the HIGH PRIEST group leader, the
ELDERS quorum president, the ward mission
leader, and the YOUNG MEN president. They con-
sider such matters as ward TEMPLE attendance,
FAMILY HISTORY activity, missionary work, HOME
TEACHING, and member activation. When the
female RELIEF SOCIETY president attends this
meeting (at least monthly) for a discussion of the
temporal needs of ward members, it becomes the
ward welfare services committee. The Relief Soci-
ey president helps the bishop coordinate appro-
priate assistance and COMPASSIONATE SERVICE to
the sick, the aged, the lonely, and the needy.
Under her direction, monthly home visits are
made to each adult woman in the ward in which
brief gospel instruction and encouragement are
given (see VISITING TEACHING). Once each month
this ward welfare services group becomes the
WARD COUNCIL when joined by the SUNDAY
SCHOOL president, the YOUNG WOMEN president,
the PRIMARY president, and the activities commit-
tee chairman. The ward council discusses and
plans all ward activities and correlates the services
and programs of the Church in relation to individu-
als and families. Historically, youth usually have
been given leadership roles in planning their own
activities and in helping with events to which all
ward members are invited. Since the mid-1970s,
youth leadership has been nurtured on a monthly
basis by the bishopric in the bishopric youth committee meeting, where youth activities and service projects are planned. Often members of a ward activities committee are called to supervise and carry out special wardwide events as requested by the bishopric.

Since 1980, when the Church adopted the consolidated meeting schedule, each ward holds three general meetings during a three-hour block of time on Sunday. In SACRAMENT MEETING family members worship together, renew covenants through partaking of the sacrament, and listen to talks and sermons based on the scriptures. During a second hour, Sunday School classes are held in age groups from twelve to adult. Each year in the adult classes, one of the standard works of scripture is studied: OLD TESTAMENT, NEW TESTAMENT, THE BOOK OF MORMON, THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS, and the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. During a third hour Priesthood quorums, Young Women, and Relief Society meet separately, where youth, men, and women are taught how to put gospel principles into action in everyday life. Priesthood quorums and the Relief Society are the service arms of the ward. Their members provide the volunteer help necessary to implement the plans made by the bishopric and auxiliary leaders. Adult holders of the priesthood attend quorum meetings according to whether they are HIGH PRIESTS or ELDERs. Young men (ages twelve to eighteen) meet in AARONIC PRIESTHOOD quorums for DEACONS (ages twelve and thirteen), TEACHERS (ages fourteen and fifteen), and PRIESTS (ages sixteen to eighteen). The Young Women are organized in age groups similar to the Young Men: Beehives (ages twelve and thirteen), Mia Maids (ages fourteen and fifteen), and Laurels (ages sixteen and seventeen). From age eighteen, women are members of the Relief Society, a benevolent society dedicated to caring for the needy and to assisting in spiritual, social, and personal development. Relief Society lessons focus on spiritual living, home and family education, compassionate service, and social relations.

Concurrent with the Sunday School and the men's and women's activities, the PRIMARY organization holds a nursery for children from ages eighteen months to three years, and classes for those three through eleven years of age, where children are taught lessons about Jesus Christ and the scriptures and are involved in singing and speaking.

Special activities (service projects and socials) are held for the women and youth on a day other than Sunday. The Relief Society holds a monthly evening meeting in which the sisters are taught home management techniques and skills.

The bishop is responsible for the finances of the ward, and is assisted in this matter by a financial clerk. Ward activities are either financed locally by individual contributions of ward members, or by a system wherein each ward receives an operating budget from general tithing funds based on the number and level of activity of its members. There are to be no other fund-raising activities.

The ward organization is a tool to help assure that Church activities complement, rather than compete with, family activities; that social activities are inclusive, rather than exclusive; and to nurture those who feel that geographic boundaries are artificial and thus exclude them from Sabbath day association with longtime Church friends.

Ideally, the ward organization becomes the means of creating an intimate religious community where the work of the kingdom of God on earth is carried out by every member in a lay ministry. Through the ward organization members teach the gospel, perform the ordinances, provide fellowship with the saints, and in all ways nurture one another in the faith.

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L. ROBERT WEBB

WARD WELFARE COMMITTEE

Certain officers of each WARD form the ward welfare committee, headed by the BISHOP. Through his priesthood CALLING, the bishop is entrusted with the sacred responsibility to know the temporal circumstances of his ward members and to ensure that proper care is given to those in need (D&C 84:112).

The bishop is assisted in these efforts by his two counselors, the HIGH PRIESTS quorum group leader, the ELDERS quorum president, the YOUNG MEN president, the RELIEF SOCIETY presidency,