

the proper way (Mosiah 23:17; D&C 20:73; 132:13; 2 Sam. 6:6–7). For example, Paul rebaptized certain Ephesians who had been previously baptized by an unauthorized person (Acts 19:1–6). King Limhi and many of his followers were converted to Christ and were desirous of being baptized, but they waited to receive that ordinance because the one with authority did not feel worthy (Mosiah 21:33–35).

A fourth fact concerning divine authority is that it was lost from the earth sometime after the resurrection and ascension of Christ into heaven (*see* APOSTASY), so a restoration of divine authority was needed (2 Thes. 2:1–4; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:1–7). In 1829 heavenly messengers, previously endowed with divine authority by Christ himself, conferred authority upon Joseph Smith and Oliver COWDERY as part of the RESTORATION of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*see* AARONIC PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF; MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD: RESTORATION OF). Members of the Church ordained to this authority now record their personal “line of authority.” This record indicates the path of ordinations connecting their priesthood authority to Jesus Christ himself.

Fifth, the authority to preside is efficacious for an individual only when it is accompanied by the COMMON CONSENT of the members of the Church over whom that person will preside (D&C 20:65; 26:2; 42:11).

Abuses of authority and authoritarianism are inherent in any organized system, and such abuses are especially associated with authority based solely on position, strength, or knowledge. Organizations such as the Church are sometimes perceived by outsiders as authoritarian, primarily because of confusion over the meanings of authority. If authority in the Church were based on politics, personal attributes, or expertise, then a charge of authoritarianism might have some validity. However, divine authority (definition 4) is inseparably connected to principles of righteousness, and when we “undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man” (D&C 121:37).

Members of the Church understand that the exercise of divine authority includes the responsibility to bless people and minister to their well-

being. Proper use of this authority is inconsistent with authoritarianism and the abuses of authority, so the negative connotations sometimes associated with authority are not generally present in the Church.

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AUTOPSY

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds that an autopsy may be performed if the family of the deceased gives consent and if the autopsy complies with the law of the community. The purpose of an autopsy is, where possible, to examine the results of trauma or disease recorded in the vital organs of the body so as to define the specific cause of death for the family, the community, and the professionals who attended the deceased. It also permits the training and instruction of those who continue the search for better ways of coping with disease. It is one of the methods whereby both those who die and those who examine them contribute to improving the quality of life and health of their fellow human beings.

FRANK D. ALLAN

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The LDS Church is characterized by two types of organizational entities: PRIESTHOOD QUORUMS and organizations auxiliary to the priesthood. Members of priesthood quorums, or groups of priesthood holders, along with those called to priesthood leadership positions, have the ecclesiastical responsibility and authority for carrying out the missions of the Church. The auxiliary organizations are complementary to priesthood line organization and exist primarily to assist the priesthood. The auxiliaries are the RELIEF SOCIETY (women, eighteen and older), SUNDAY SCHOOL (all members twelve and older), YOUNG WOMEN (twelve through eighteen),

YOUNG MEN (twelve through eighteen), and PRIMARY (all children eighteen months through eleven years).

Auxiliary organizations seek to provide gospel instruction, wholesome activities, the sharing of resources, settings where supportive friendships can form, and formal and informal opportunities for the sharing of faith and values. Each organization tailors its program to a specific age group and gender and provides members with opportunities for Christian service. Each has a set of leaders functioning at the ward, stake, and general levels of the Church organization, and ward and stake auxiliary leaders receive training each year at an auxiliary training meeting.

Although the Relief Society (1842) had roots in the early years of the Church's development, the auxiliary organizations developed as formal parts of Church structure after it moved to Utah in 1847. The Relief Society and the Sunday School were established Churchwide in the early 1860s by President Brigham YOUNG, followed by the Cooperative Retrenchment Association in 1869 (forerunner of the Young Women organization), and the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association in 1875 (forerunner to the Young Men organization). The Primary Association, emphasizing religious activities for children, began in 1878; weekday religion classes for children, emphasizing religious instruction, were instituted in 1890. These two entities were merged in 1929 to form the present-day Primary.

During the opening decades of the twentieth century, each auxiliary organization developed in its own way into a major facet of the Church programs for its members. Under the leadership of a presidency and board called at the general level of the Church to provide resources and direction to the local congregations, each auxiliary developed its own Churchwide curriculum, magazine, and set of regular meetings and activities. In addition, there was a general movement to structure classes and activities by age groupings. As each auxiliary expanded its program, it also developed a leadership structure staffed by the lay membership. Today, a presidency and board or staff are called at the ward level to implement the program and serve the members; at the stake level to provide leadership training and support and combine resources and activities; and at the general Church level to establish program guidelines and policies, develop materials and provide leadership.

In the early 1970s, an organization for SINGLE ADULTS was established at the general Church level under the direction of the Melchizedek Priesthood Committee. Its purpose was to develop programs and policies to address the needs and concerns of single adult members. Activities were instituted at the ward and stake level, and leaders were called to plan such activities. The general level was not continued beyond the 1970s, and local leaders and activities function under the direction of local priesthood and Relief Society leaders.

As the auxiliary programs expanded in the first half of the twentieth century, one of the challenges became coordinating and maintaining the relationship between the priesthood line of ultimate responsibility for the work of the Church and the auxiliaries as agents of the priesthood in accomplishing it. This challenge was recognized by President Joseph F. SMITH as early as 1906. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the Church has made significant efforts to structure and define its work so that the principle of priesthood governance can be fully realized (*see* CORRELATION OF THE CHURCH, ADMINISTRATION). The thrust has been to link the efforts of priesthood leaders and auxiliary leaders more closely and to align them with the priesthood channel of decision making and action. Specifically, at each level of the Church organization, auxiliary leaders are accountable to priesthood leaders rather than to the auxiliary organization.

Priesthood correlation provides more direct representation of the needs of all Church members in Church government. When properly implemented, it is the process through which women participate in the governance of the Church. Female leaders express their views, represent their concerns, and share in the decision-making process in partnership with men holding priesthood offices.

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