



## Church Programs in Transition

The basic priesthood and auxiliary organizations of the Church had their origins in the nineteenth century. Priesthood quorums as well as the basic local units—stakes and wards—were established by the Prophet Joseph Smith. However, most auxiliary organizations—the Relief Society, the Sunday School, the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (YMMIA), the Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Association (YLMIA),<sup>1</sup> and the Primary—were added or reemphasized during the era of Brigham Young. Although the Sunday School and Relief Society traced their beginnings back to Joseph Smith’s era, each of these organizations received expanded emphasis and became a regular part of local units Churchwide under the leadership of Brigham Young. A lesser known auxiliary, the Religion Class, had its beginning in 1890, when a Utah law prohibited religious instruction in public schools and the Church provided gospel classes for elementary-school children one afternoon each week. Many programs sponsored by these organizations, now familiar to Latter-day Saints, experienced such significant development during the era of President Joseph F. Smith that a person who had been active in the Church prior to 1890 would scarcely be able to recognize

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its programs a quarter century later. Historian Thomas G. Alexander has referred to this period in Church history as an era of “transition.”<sup>2</sup> These changes not only affected the work of the priesthood and the auxiliaries but had an impact on the Saints’ basic meeting pattern as well.

### **Developments in Sacrament and Fast Meetings**

The scriptures have directed that members of the Church meet together often to instruct and strengthen one another and to partake of the sacrament (see Moroni 6:5–6; D&C 20:75; 43:8–9; 59:9–10). Although the basic objectives have remained constant, the pattern of these meetings has changed over the years to meet varying needs and conditions.

In 1852, Brigham Young directed the Saints to meet “each sabbath at 10 a.m., and 2 p.m.,” and indicated that “in the evening, the several quorums of the priesthood would assemble to receive instructions.” Each Thursday, they were to meet at 2:00 p.m. “for prayer and supplication.” In addition, a special fast meeting was to convene at 10:00 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month.<sup>3</sup> On this occasion, the Saints were asked to bring offerings to the bishop for the relief of the poor. This meeting pattern would characterize the Saints’ activities through the next several decades.

By the 1890s, in some of the larger centers, such as Salt Lake City and Provo, the custom was to hold just one worship service at a central location on Sunday afternoons, and the sacrament was administered in these community-wide meetings rather than in the separate wards. Speaking at general conference in 1894, however, President George Q. Cannon directed that the administration of the sacrament should be moved to the regular Sunday-evening services held in each ward. In this way, “the Bishops of the wards . . . could carry out the requirement which forbids that the unworthy shall partake of the sacred emblems” as is set out in 3 Nephi 18.<sup>4</sup> Thus, just prior to the administration of Joseph F. Smith, the ward sacrament meeting finally became the standard Churchwide practice.

By 1896, new patterns of life made a shift in the fast day advisable. During pioneer times, the Saints generally had lived in agricultural communities where most people were of the same faith, making a midweek fast meeting possible. By the end of the century, however, an increasing number lived in urban centers and worked for non-Mormon employers, making it awkward to disrupt their workday to attend a fast meeting. The First Presidency, in which Joseph F. Smith was

Second Counselor, observed that attendance at these meetings “dwindled to such an extent that comparatively few have the opportunity of attending them.” They therefore concluded that “Thursday as a day of fasting and prayer in the Church no longer serves the object for which it was intended.” Consequently, the monthly fast day was shifted to the first Sunday of each month. Afternoon fast meetings were to include the administration of the sacrament, the bearing of testimonies, the blessing of children, and the confirming of those who had been baptized. The First Presidency indicated, “We feel assured that excellent results will follow the giving of members of the Church an opportunity to bear their testimony to each other and to seek for the gifts which the Lord has promised to those who keep His commandments.” The First Presidency cautioned that “care should also be taken on such occasions to see that the wants of the poor are relieved by the contributions of the Saints in their behalf, that no cry of the indigent or suffering shall arise from our land in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.” The First Presidency also discouraged Sunday-afternoon meetings in the Tabernacle, as well as stakewide fast meetings elsewhere, so that “all the members of the ward, including the aged and infirm, and others who are unable to go to the Tabernacle, [have] an opportunity to participate in the fast meeting and share in the blessings of the occasion.”<sup>5</sup>

### **The Auxiliaries Expand**

The opening years of the twentieth century witnessed rapid expansion of both the priesthood organizations and the auxiliaries. Joseph F. Smith not only served as President of the Church but also presided as superintendent over the Sunday School and the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association. The pattern of having the President of the Church also be the executive of these organizations had developed just a few years earlier. Wilford Woodruff was already serving as superintendent of the YMMIA when he became President of the Church in 1887. When the Sunday School became a Churchwide organization in the 1860s, Brigham Young called George Q. Cannon to be superintendent, a position in which he served until his death in 1901. At that time, Lorenzo Snow, in the last year of his administration as President of the Church, also became superintendent of the Deseret Sunday School Union. This same dual role undoubtedly gave President Joseph F. Smith a keener awareness of and greater involvement in the work of the auxiliaries, which in turn probably contributed to his favorable view on expanding the scope of their work.

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From its beginnings on March 17, 1842, the Relief Society's prime objective was charitable or compassionate service. Throughout the nineteenth century, its meetings emphasized sewing or other projects directly related to assisting the needy. In 1902, however, Relief Society leaders felt a need to provide expanded educational opportunities for the sisters, and the "mother's class" became a regular part of the society's program.

At first, local Relief Societies provided their own study materials, but in 1914, the Relief Society general board began providing uniform lessons for these weekly classes. A pattern soon developed: the lessons would feature theology in the first week of the month, and then the Relief Society would study homemaking, literature, and social science, respectively, during the other weeks.<sup>6</sup>

President Joseph F. Smith was interested in the Relief Society's work and was convinced of its divine origin. He asserted that worldly organizations "are men-made, or women-made," but he was convinced that the Relief Society "is divinely made, divinely authorized, divinely instituted, divinely ordained of God to minister for the salvation of the souls of women and of men."<sup>7</sup>

The Sunday School also expanded the scope of its work under President Smith's leadership. Richard Ballantyne's objective in 1849 for establishing the first Latter-day Saint Sunday School in the Rocky Mountains had been to carry the gospel message to the children in the Church. The Sunday School remained a children's organization throughout the nineteenth century and into the early years of President Joseph F. Smith's administration. Its focus on children is reflected in hymns still sung today over one hundred years later: "List! the merry children singing! / What a pleasing, joyful sound! . . . From the books of revelation / We are taught while yet in youth. . . . Here we meet with friends and neighbors; / Parents too are in the throng."<sup>8</sup> "Oh, blessed hour! communion sweet! / When children, friends, and teachers meet."<sup>9</sup> Note that the adults in these hymns were identified from the point of view of the children, as either teachers or parents. The first Sunday School class for adults was not inaugurated Churchwide until 1906. Significantly, it was called the "parents' class."<sup>10</sup>

David O. McKay had a profound impact on Sunday School development. As a young returned missionary at the turn of the century, he was called to be a member of the Weber Stake Sunday School superintendency in Ogden and to give particular attention to instruction. He introduced refinements in teaching methods, such as defining lesson goals, outlining materials, using teaching aids, and applying of

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the lesson to daily life. Students were sorted into “grades” according to age, and a specific course was developed for each group throughout the stake. As general superintendent of the Sunday School, President Joseph F. Smith was undoubtedly well aware of these improvements in nearby Ogden. In 1906, when Elder McKay was called to the Council of the Twelve, President Smith asked him to become one of his assistants in the Sunday School general superintendency. In this latter position, Elder McKay was able to promote the Ogden improvements throughout the entire Church.

During the following years, a “clear-cut departmentalization”<sup>11</sup> of Sunday School work into classes for specific age groups was accompanied by an improvement of published lesson materials.<sup>12</sup> Following George Q. Cannon’s death in 1901, the Sunday School purchased the *Juvenile Instructor* from the Cannon family. Originally, the magazine itself had been the instructor of the youth; the Sunday School now transformed it into a resource for teachers, the group with whom the magazine’s title increasingly came to be identified.

The Primary program continued relatively unchanged. Children met one afternoon each week for religious activities. The new Religion Class began meeting during these years, involving many of the children in Primary; students attending public elementary schools met at their ward chapel on a different afternoon each week, with the program focusing on instruction rather than activity.

### **The Priesthood Reform Movement**

At the height of this rapid auxiliary expansion, President Joseph F. Smith looked forward to a time when the priesthood organizations would again occupy a position of preeminence. At the April general conference in 1906, he declared:

We expect to see the day, if we live long enough (and if some of us do not live long enough to see it, there are others who will), when every council of the Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will understand its duty, will assume its own responsibility, will magnify its calling, and fill its place in the Church, to the uttermost, according to the intelligence and ability possessed by it. When that day shall come, there will not be so much necessity for work that is now being done by the auxiliary organizations, because it will be done by the regular quorums of the Priesthood. The Lord designed and comprehended it from the beginning, and He has made provision in the Church whereby

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every need may be met and satisfied through the regular organizations of the Priesthood. It has truly been said that the Church is perfectly organized. The only trouble is that these organizations are not fully alive to the obligations that rest upon them. When they become thoroughly awakened to the requirements made of them, they will fulfill their duties more faithfully, and the work of the Lord will be all the stronger and more powerful and influential in the world.<sup>13</sup>

Interestingly, David O. McKay, who would figure prominently in the fulfillment of this prophecy, was sustained as a member of the Council of the Twelve at this same conference.

Records indicate that during the later nineteenth century, priesthood meetings had been held at varying intervals. Most quorums met monthly, and Melchizedek Priesthood meetings were not necessarily connected to any particular ward. Customarily, these meetings were held on different weeknights rather than Sunday. In many rural areas, the quorums did not meet at all during the farming season. With such infrequent and often irregular meetings, the priesthood quorums' effectiveness declined.

Under President Joseph F. Smith's leadership, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presiding Bishopric, and especially the First Council of the Seventy took steps to remedy these deficiencies and to revitalize the priesthood organizations. This "priesthood reform movement" was to have a far-reaching effect on the priesthood quorums as well as the auxiliaries.<sup>14</sup>

At the general conference held April 4–6, 1908, President Joseph F. Smith reported, "Several very important movements have been inaugurated of late among us for the advantage of the Saints, and especially for the benefit and advancement of those who are associated with the various quorums of the Priesthood. I desire to mention the effort that is being made by our Seventies in their organization of classes and schools for the instruction of the members of their quorums, that they might be qualified for the great work of the ministry to which they are dedicated." Nevertheless, President Smith also expressed concern over some other aspects of the priesthood program. "The Elders' quorums should also be looked after, and those who preside in them [should be] vigilant and faithful in looking after those entrusted to their care, and are subject to their direction and counsel." And concerning the Aaronic Priesthood, he noted, "Efforts are also being made to organize and put to usefulness the quorums of the Lesser Priesthood." He then added, "We

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should look after our boys who have been ordained Deacons, Teachers, and Priests in the Church. We should find something for them to do in their callings.”<sup>15</sup>

Responding to President Smith’s charge, the Presiding Bishopric wrote to the First Presidency two days after the conference closed, proposing that a general board be called to assist the Bishopric in preparing lesson outlines for the Aaronic Priesthood quorums.<sup>16</sup> That same day (April 8, 1908), the First Presidency and the Twelve met and appointed a committee, including Elder David O. McKay and others, to prepare lesson materials for the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood organizations.<sup>17</sup> In reference to the suggestion that a special board be formed for the Aaronic Priesthood quorums, President Joseph F. Smith observed that the Twelve Apostles themselves “constitute the priesthood board.”<sup>18</sup>

At an important meeting of the Priesthood Committee on Outlines held June 5, 1908, Elder David O. McKay was named committee chairman. He submitted several recommendations which were to have a profound impact on subsequent priesthood developments. Although the practice of ordaining young men to the Aaronic Priesthood had become increasingly common since 1877, there was not yet a fixed schedule for moving from one office to another.<sup>19</sup> In order to facilitate the committee’s work in developing meaningful lessons, Elder McKay suggested that the Aaronic Priesthood be divided into grades (as had been done in the Sunday School and MIA) by ordaining young men as deacons at twelve, teachers at fifteen, priests at eighteen, and elders at twenty-one years of age. At that time, individuals officially became adults at age twenty-one. In subsequent years, these ages were modified from time to time.

One of the committee’s most far-reaching recommendations was for the inauguration of weekly ward priesthood meetings. They were to be held Monday evenings for at least one hour and forty-five minutes. All groups would meet in an opening session before separating for individual quorum activities. A minimum of one hour should be spent in separate quorum sessions, with the lesson occupying thirty-five minutes and the balance of the time being devoted to “practical work,” including the assigning of duties. These plans recognized the importance of learning of the duty and then acting in performance of duty (see D&C 107:99–100). The committee supplied a detailed agenda for the weekly sessions in the wards as well as for monthly stake priesthood meetings.<sup>20</sup>

The new program went into effect at the beginning of 1909. In their New Year’s greeting to the Church, the First Presidency observed: “Special attention

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is called to the weekly meetings of the priesthood quorums in all the wards. We believe this movement will not only increase the proficiency of the priesthood by reason of its educative features, but by bringing all the brethren together once a week they will acquire the habit of regular activity as servants of the Lord. It has the additional advantage of putting the bishop in communication with every home once a week. We like the idea of these weekly reunions of the fathers of the ward with their sons and associates.”<sup>21</sup>

The inauguration of weekly ward priesthood “classes” did not do away with the long-standing pattern of monthly quorum meetings. The *Improvement Era* explained, “For the convenience of men who belong to quorums that are widely scattered, and who could not come together frequently for instruction, owing to the distance to be traveled, a system of ward priesthood meetings has been introduced by the presiding authorities of the Church which divides quorums that are located in more than one ward into ward classes; but this arrangement does not contemplate excusing men from coming together in quorums as the Lord has commanded.”<sup>22</sup> This system, with two kinds of meetings, couldn’t help but be confusing.

Inertia needs to be overcome in getting any new program moving. By 1913, only 76 percent of the priesthood bearers were even enrolled in the weekly ward classes, and only 22 percent attended. The specific figures for each office were as follows: high priests, 34 percent; Seventies, 26 percent; elders, 15 percent; priests, 17 percent; teachers, 14 percent; and deacons, 23 percent.<sup>23</sup> Monday evenings interfered with evening chores, especially in farming areas, so Sunday morning gradually became the preferred time for ward priesthood meetings.<sup>24</sup> “The shift of priesthood meeting from Monday night to Sunday morning,” one historian noted, “not only helped priesthood attendance but had also boosted activity in Sunday School. In fact, in light of the results, the MIA considered shifting its meeting to Sunday as well.”<sup>25</sup>

### **New Emphasis for the MIA**

The Young Men’s and Young Ladies’ Mutual Improvement Associations followed similar but generally separate courses of development during the nineteenth century. Unlike today’s Young Men and Young Women organizations, the MIAs included adults as well as youth. Brigham Young’s goal in establishing these organizations was to develop faith through promoting public speaking and testimony bearing. As their programs developed, four areas of emphasis emerged: theology,



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science, history, and literature. The pattern of regular weekly meetings was established by the late 1880s, and by 1890, class discussion had replaced lectures. With this new format came the half-hour “preliminary program,” featuring musical numbers, short talks, and other contributions by members of the associations. Until the early twentieth century, all ages met in a single class, but by 1903, most MIAs had been graded into “juniors” and “seniors.” In 1911, the YMMIA adopted the Boy Scout program for its younger group, and shortly thereafter the YLMIA developed its own Beehive Girls program.<sup>26</sup>

At first, the local associations met on various evenings, although Tuesday was most common. In some areas, especially in the country, where it was difficult to get good attendance on a weeknight, the MIA met on Sunday evenings. In 1898, the two general boards officially recommended Tuesday evening.<sup>27</sup>

Originally, the two MIAs met separately. This was consistent with the wishes of Brigham Young, who, interestingly, did not want the sessions to degenerate into “courting meetings.”<sup>28</sup> Within a short time, however, in some areas, the Young Men’s and Young Ladies’ Associations began meeting together, and “the very evil that the President said would ensue, from admitting the young ladies as members [of the Young Men’s Associations], is to be observed in many places,” noted the *Contributor*. “The boys go to meeting to take the girls home, and the girls go to be taken.”<sup>29</sup> Following the turn of the century, the move to unite the two associations gained impetus: “Bishops and young men pleaded . . . for the assistance and presence of the girls to help their own associations, and to draw out the boys. As ever, the girls consented, though not always convinced that they were gainers in the new arrangement.”<sup>30</sup> By 1914, the practice of both MIAs meeting together had become the rule.

As early as 1891, the YMMIA and YLMIA sponsored a monthly “conjoint” meeting in addition to their regular weekly sessions. Normally held on fast-Sunday evenings, these meetings featured the best materials from the previous month’s work in each organization. These were “the one means of letting parents see what their children [were] learning in the associations.” Therefore, the young people themselves were to take the lead in planning and conducting the sessions and were to be prepared at a moment’s notice to speak, perform a musical number, and so on.<sup>31</sup>

The advent of regular priesthood meetings had a direct impact on the Mutual Improvement Associations. As noted earlier, theological study was one of the

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areas regularly stressed in MIA work. In 1908, however, when lessons began to be prepared for the priesthood quorums, the MIA's emphasis on theology no longer seemed necessary. Thus the YMMIA general board resolved, "Owing to the fact that the priesthood quorums have formally taken up a study of theology, the YMMIA should take up educational, literary and recreative studies permeated by religious thought. That music and art be encouraged and that social culture and refinement of manners constitute an important part of our endeavor, . . . that athletic work be encouraged and established wherever practicable."<sup>32</sup>

The YLMIA followed a similar course. Thus the MIAs were redirected into an emphasis on cultural and social programs, which would be a prime characteristic of their work during the twentieth century.

### **Meeting Special Needs**

The Progressive Era of the early twentieth century was a time when many churches and other organizations were beginning to respond to newly felt social and educational needs. In this spirit, the Relief Society organized its Social Services Department in 1919. Beginning in 1904, the Church addressed the needs of one specific group. In that year, under the direction of President Joseph F. Smith, the Church created the Society of the Aid of the Sightless. The Church charged it with the responsibility of publishing literature for the blind, "aiding in their education, endeavoring to improve their condition, becoming interested in all that pertains to their welfare," and cooperating with others to accomplish these ends through education and legislation.<sup>33</sup>

The lack of braille scriptures, hymns, or lesson materials was a substantial obstacle to blind Latter-day Saints' becoming fully involved in Church activities. Largely through the efforts of Albert M. Talmage (a blind brother of Elder James E. Talmage) and his wife, Sarah, the society worked to fill this void. Beginning in 1912, a monthly braille periodical, the *Messenger to the Sightless*, published religious and general-interest materials.

Publishing the Book of Mormon in braille was an important project for Albert and Sarah. They had to prepare the metal printing plates by hand. They thoroughly moistened the special braille paper before embossing the dots with their hand-operated press. They then hung completed pages to dry on clotheslines that had been strung all around their home. These pages were distributed piecemeal to eagerly waiting readers.

## Seminaries

With the growth of free, tax-supported high schools, enrollment declined in the Church's own academies, where students were required to pay tuition. By 1911, there were more Latter-day Saint youth attending public schools than were attending Church schools. President Joseph F. Smith was quite concerned about this trend. He explained that the Church continued to spend a substantial share of its tithing funds to maintain Church schools so that "true religion, . . . undefiled before God the Father, may be inculcated in the minds and hearts of our children while they are getting an education, to enable the heart, the soul and the spirit of our children to develop with proper teaching, in connection with the secular training."<sup>34</sup>

The Church therefore inaugurated a part-time religious education program similar to the Religion Classes but directed to high school students. The first "seminary" was opened in 1912 at Granite High School near Salt Lake City. The start of the first seminary was done on recommendation by the presidency of the Granite Stake. Joseph F. Merrill, the member of the stake presidency in charge of education (and future member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles), had based his ideas for the new program on "religious seminaries he had seen in Chicago."<sup>35</sup> The new program quickly proved to be an effective way to supplement the secular education students were receiving in public high schools, and within a few years, several more seminaries were opened, primarily in Utah. Thus, in the early twentieth century, the Church was conducting two distinct types of educational programs: full-time schools—the academies—providing secular as well as religious instruction, and part-time religious education—the Religion Classes and seminaries—which supplemented secular instruction in public schools on the elementary and secondary levels, respectively.

## Local Initiative

Individual stakes sometimes made refinements or launched programs that were subsequently adopted Churchwide. For example, David O. McKay's improvements in Ogden Sunday Schools and Stake President Merrill's idea for a seminary have blessed Latter-day Saints worldwide.

In 1909, the Granite Stake in Salt Lake Valley inaugurated a "home night." President Joseph F. Smith became acquainted with this stake program and gave his wholehearted support as he accepted the invitation to speak at a Granite

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Stake gathering in which this new program was being introduced. Six years later, President Smith and his counselors launched the program churchwide. The First Presidency directed, “We advise and urge the inauguration of a ‘Home Evening’ throughout the Church, at which time fathers and mothers may gather their boys and girls about them in the home and teach them the word of the Lord.” These gatherings could include music, prayer, scripture reading, discussions of gospel principles and family issues, activities, and refreshments. The Presidency promised, “If the Saints obey this counsel, we promise that great blessings will result. Love at home and obedience to parents will increase. Faith will be developed in the hearts of the youth of Israel, and they will gain power to combat the evil influence and temptations which beset them.”<sup>36</sup>

### **Reflections**

During Joseph F. Smith’s era, there were significant developments in Church meetings and activities.

#### **Regular Church Meetings before 1890**

	Sunday	Weekdays	
Morning	Sunday School for children only	Relief Society work meetings	Fast meeting (first Thursday)
Afternoon	Sacrament meeting on community basis	-	Primary
Evening	-	Young Men’s MIA	Young Ladies’ MIA
Individual quorum meetings (at various times and on various days)			

#### **Regular Church Meetings after 1920**

	Sunday	Weekdays	
Morning	Ward priesthood meetings Sunday School (including adults) Fast meeting (first Sundays)	Relief Society with lessons	-
Afternoon	Ward sacrament meeting	Religion classes	Primary
Evening	MIA conjoint meeting (fast days)	Mutual Young Men’s and Young Women’s	Genealogy meeting

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The rapid expansions of priesthood, auxiliary, and other programs heightened the need for coordination among them. Unwanted duplication needed to be avoided and gaps in their collective programs filled. By 1907, representatives from the Religion Class, Primary, Sunday School, and the Young Ladies' and Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations (no representative of Relief Society was mentioned) formed a Committee of Correlation and Adjustments. This body sought to define the relative roles of the priesthood and auxiliaries. They considered the priesthood quorums best adapted to formal theological study, while religious instruction in the Sunday School would be less rigorous and would emphasize moral training. The MIAs should promote "religious feeling and sentiment" and cultivate social qualities and cultural refinement, giving attention to recreation for the youth. The committee recognized the home as being best suited to the teaching of the gospel and encouraged the other organizations to support the home in this role.<sup>37</sup> The committee's recommendation that the programs of the Religion Class and the Primary be combined would be carried out in 1929. Similarly, their proposal that the *Improvement Era* (published by the YMMIA), the *Young Women's Journal* (magazine of the YLMIA), and the *Instructor* (the Sunday School's periodical) be combined would not be fully accomplished until 1971. The recommendation that the home be placed at the center of the Church was reemphasized in a statement by the First Presidency in 1940, and this idea would become a major focus of Priesthood Correlation beginning in the 1960s.

The restructuring of Church programs during and just before the administration of President Joseph F. Smith set the basic pattern for Church organization that would remain mostly unchanged for more than half a century. These meetings, activities, organizations, and publications have been a significant source of blessings to the Latter-day Saints as they look forward to the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### *Timeline*

- 1830 Church organized
- 1842 Relief Society organized in Nauvoo
- 1866 *Juvenile Instructor* first published by George Q. Cannon
- 1890 Religion Classes organized

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- 1894 Sacrament shifted from communitywide to ward meetings
- 1896 Fast day shifted from Thursday to Sunday
- 1897 Conference reports and *Improvement Era* inaugurated
- 1901 *Juvenile Instructor* becomes official organ of the Sunday School
- 1902 *Children's Friend* first published by the Primary; Mothers' Classes added to Relief Society
- 1904 Society for the Aid of the Sightless organized
- 1906 Class for adults added to Sunday School; President Smith anticipates emphasis on priesthood
- 1907 Committee on Adjustments recommends consolidations
- 1908 General Priesthood Committee called; David O. McKay recommends ordination to Aaronic Priesthood offices at specific ages
- 1909 Weekly ward priesthood meetings commence; MIAs shift emphasis to cultural and other activities
- 1910 *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* inaugurated
- 1911 YMMIA adopts Boy Scout program
- 1912 First seminary opened in Salt Lake City
- 1914 YM and YLMIA start meeting together
- 1915 *Relief Society Magazine* instituted; First Presidency urges regular family home evenings

## **Notes**

1. This organization was originally known as the Young Ladies' Department of the Cooperative Retrenchment Association; after other changes, it was finally named Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association in 1934.
2. Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930*, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2012).

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3. Thomas Bullock, "Minutes of the General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Held at New Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, April 6, 1852, 10 a.m. President Brigham Young Presiding," *Deseret News*, April 17, 1852, 2.
4. "Morning Session," *Deseret Evening News*, April 9, 1894, 4.
5. James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965–75), 3:282–83.
6. Relief Society general board, *History of Relief Society, 1842–1966* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1966), 34–49.
7. Quoted in *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), 65–66.
8. Robert B. Baird, "Welcome, Welcome, Sabbath Morning," *Hymns* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 280.
9. George A. Manwaring, "'Tis Sweet to Sing the Matchless Love," *Hymns*, no. 177.
10. George R. Hill, "Deseret Sunday School Union," *Improvement Era*, November 1956, 800–801, 849–50.
11. Hill, "Deseret Sunday School Union," 850.
12. Hill, "Deseret Sunday School Union," 800ff.
13. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1906, 3.
14. See William Hartley, "The Priesthood Reform Movement, 1908–1922," *BYU Studies* 13, no. 2 (Winter 1973): 137–56. See also Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, chapters 6–8.
15. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1908, 5–6.
16. Presiding Bishopric to the First Presidency, April 8, 1908.
17. First Presidency to Presiding Bishopric, April 8, 1908.
18. Quoted by Harold B. Lee, in Conference Report, April 1963, 85.
19. See Lee A. Palmer, *Aaronic Priesthood through the Centuries* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1964), 391–95.
20. Report from the General Priesthood Committee on Outlines to the First Presidency and Twelve, September 29, 1908.
21. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:195.
22. "Priesthood Quorums' Table," *Improvement Era*, May 1911, 841.
23. "Priesthood Quorums' Table," *Improvement Era*, May 1913, 737.
24. Hartley, "Priesthood Reform," 144–45.
25. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 118.
26. Marba C. Josephson, *History of the YWMIA* (Salt Lake City: The Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, 1955), 174–210; Leon M. Strong, "A History of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, 1875–1938" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, 1939), 21–120; Bertha S. Reeder, "The Growth of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association," *Improvement Era*, November 1956, 804ff.
27. Susa Young Gates, *History of the YLMIA* (Salt Lake City: YLMIA General Board, 1911), 137–38.
28. "The General Superintendency," *Contributor*, May 1880, 181, quoted in Strong, "YMMIA," 174–75.
29. "Membership and System," *Contributor*, October 1880, 28, quoted in Josephson, *YWMIA*, 175.
30. Gates, *YLMIA*, 138.

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31. Jeanette Petterson, "Officers' Notes: Convention Topics," *Young Woman's Journal*, February 1908, 79, quoted in Josephson, *YWMIA*, 178, 188–89; Strong, "YMMIA," 82–84.
32. YMMIA general board minutes, 1908, quoted in Strong, "YMMIA," 79; see also Hartley, "Priesthood Reform," 147.
33. Society for the Aid of the Sightless, minutes, 1–2, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
34. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, October 1915, 4.
35. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 177.
36. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 4:338–39.
37. Quoted in Josephson, *YWMIA*, 182–84.