



Correlation: The Turning Point (1960s)

Michael A. Goodman

Correlation has a long history of starts and stops, successes and setbacks. Often misconstrued as solely related to curricular issues, correlation has had a much broader focus from the beginning. President Harold B. Lee stated that one of the primary purposes of correlation was to place “the Priesthood as the Lord intended, as the center core of the Kingdom of God, and the auxiliaries as related thereto; including a greater emphasis on the Fathers in the home as Priesthood bearers in strengthening the family unit.”¹

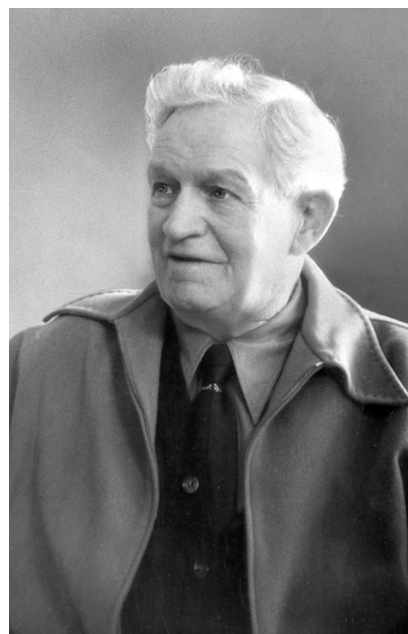
Though the vision has been large as eternity, the work of the kingdom for the first century was largely local in focus and readily directed by the presiding brethren at Church headquarters. Though missionaries were sent throughout the world starting as early as 1830, most converts were encouraged to emigrate soon after their conversion. Though some converts stayed in their native lands, the Church’s international

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presence was relatively small. The work became far more challenging as the Church continued to expand both numerically as well as geographically. The auxiliary organizations were created in an effort to better serve the needs of an ever-expanding membership. Relief Society, Sunday School, Young Men, Young Women, and Primary became vital organizations to help the presiding authorities meet the needs of the members worldwide.² By the end of the nineteenth century, the administration of the Church had grown much more complex, and at times the leaders struggled to minister to and manage the growing membership and organizations meant to serve them. Correlation in the twentieth century served as one of the primary means of helping the presiding authorities in Salt Lake City guide the Lord's work.

Early Attempts at Correlation

President Joseph F. Smith began the work of correlation at the beginning of the twentieth century. He created the General Priesthood Committee on Outlines on April 8, 1908, and appointed recently called Apostle David O. McKay as the chair.³ The committee's major assignment was to write the curriculum for priesthood quorums and groups. The committee was also tasked to help the priesthood "understand its duty, . . . assume its own responsibility, . . . magnify its calling, and fill its place in the Church, to the uttermost."⁴ In 1912, President Smith organized the Correlation Committee and once again assigned Elder McKay as the chair.⁵ "The purpose of the committee was to prevent the unnecessary and undesirable duplication of work [of all kinds] in the various auxiliaries of the Church. . . . and for the general purpose of unifying the work and advancing the cause of each organization."⁶ By 1916, the Social Advisory Committee was formed with Elder Stephen L Richards as chair.⁷ The work of this committee overlapped with the work of the Correlation Committee. As a result, by the beginning of 1921, these two committees were merged to form the



President David O. McKay, chair of the General Priesthood Committee and Church correlation. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

Amalgamated Correlation–Social Advisory Committee. The committee members worked for several more years before being released in 1922.

The next effort at correlation focused largely on Church curriculum and again involved Elder McKay. In 1928, while serving as both Apostle and the general superintendent of the Sunday School, Elder McKay announced that the curricula of all quorums and the Sunday School would be reviewed and authorized by a common committee.⁸ In 1938, the First Presidency organized the Committee of Correlation and Coordination and asked three members of the Twelve (Elder

Joseph Fielding Smith, Stephen L Richards, and Albert E. Bowen) to take the lead.⁹ This committee worked together for only a few years, and little was documented regarding the work they accomplished.

March 29, 1940, proved to be a watershed moment in the correlation efforts of the Church. President J. Reuben Clark Jr., under assignment by President Heber J. Grant, called the leaders of the Relief Society, Sunday School, Young Men, Young Women, Primary, and the Genealogy Society together and presented detailed instructions on correlation principles. A follow-up letter entitled the Memorandum of Suggestions and signed by all three members of the First Presidency was sent thereafter.¹⁰ This memorandum largely summarized past and current correlation challenges and outlined suggestions on how best to address each of them. The principles contained

in this document still guide correlation work today. At this meeting, President Clark announced the formation of the Union Board of the Auxiliaries with President George Q. Morris, then general superintendent of the Young Men Mutual Improvement Association, as the president.

Four years later, the First Presidency again set up a committee to evaluate all Church publications. In a letter dated August 9, 1944, the First Presidency formed the Committee on Publications, made up of Elders Joseph Fielding Smith, John A. Widtsoe, Harold B. Lee, and Marion G. Romney. “The function of this Committee is to pass upon and approve all materials . . . to be used by our Church Priesthood, Educational, Auxiliary, and Missionary organizations in their work of instructing member of the Church.”¹¹ The First Presidency also named a Reading Committee to assist the Committee on Publications. The First Presidency gave strict guidelines that were to be used to evaluate all published materials.

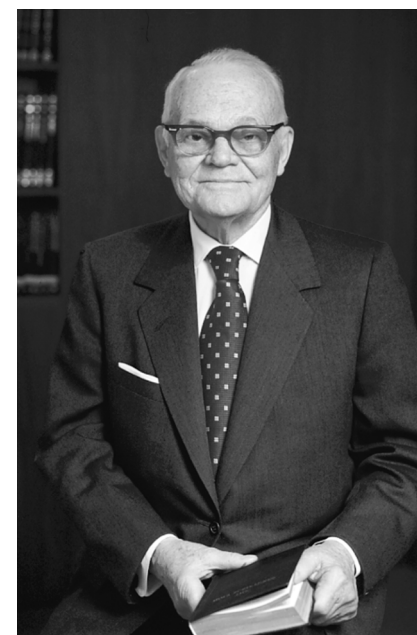
One of the final attempts at correlation in the first half of the twentieth century began on December 15, 1947. The First Presidency assigned Elder Lee to head a committee of Apostles to look at work in the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums and the auxiliaries and recommend changes.¹² In 1948 and again in 1949, Elder Lee suggested a redesign of the ward teaching program to bring it under the supervision of the Quorum of the Twelve.¹³ Nothing was changed at the time, however. With the end of World War II, the Church began to expand internationally at a dramatically faster rate. This expansion further exacerbated the challenges facing the Church. As Elder Lee once stated, “The problem of correlation becomes more acute as the Church grows and develops.”¹⁴

Though many correlation ideas would have to wait until the 1960s and 1970s to come to full fruition, the principles were taught as early as the first decade of the 1900s. And when the needs became acute, the work of correlation was set to proceed on the foundation laid over the first sixty years of the twentieth century.

Beginning of the Modern Era of Correlation

On March 24, 1960, the modern era of correlation officially began. With the continued national and international growth of the Church, the challenges of ministering to an ever-increasing membership from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City also continued to grow. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve sent a letter authorizing the General Priesthood Committee, directed by Elder Lee, to begin a study of the curriculum of both priesthood and auxiliary organizations. In September 1961, Elder Lee and the General Priesthood Committee organized the All-Church Coordinating Council (ACCC) made up of several members of the Twelve, the Presiding Bishop, the heads of each auxiliary, secretaries, and ultimately the heads of each of the four standing priesthood committees.¹⁵ Elder Lee, the members of the Twelve who would be chairs of three age-group correlation committees, and their secretaries formed the Correlation Executive Committee (CEC).¹⁶ Antone K. Romney, brother of Marion G. Romney and a BYU education professor, served as secretary.¹⁷

At the first meeting of the ACCC on October 11, 1961, Elder Lee announced the creation of three age-group correlation committees headed by a member of the Twelve, each supported by a staff-level secretary.¹⁸ The children’s committee was to direct the correlation of all curriculum for members from birth to age eleven; the youth committee, age twelve to roughly twenty; the



President Marion G. Romney, member of the All-Church Coordinating Council. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

adult committee age twenty and older. Marion G. Romney was named chairman of the adult committee, with Reed H. Bradford as secretary, Richard L. Evans was named as chairman of the youth committee with Daniel H. Ludlow as secretary, and Gordon B. Hinckley was named chairman of the children's committee with B. West Belnap as secretary. These committees, functioning under the guidance of the CEC and ACCC, became the primary mechanism to bring about a correlated curriculum in the Church. Their stewardship included correlating all curriculum developed for the priesthood quorums and the auxiliaries.

In June 1962, Elder Lee stressed the importance of fully defining the priesthood and its scope. He said, "When you get the priesthood fully defined it is going to be comparatively easy for us to define where [each auxiliary] fits in."¹⁹ Defining and promoting the work of the priesthood largely became the responsibility of four standing priesthood committees: the home teaching committee, the missionary committee, the genealogy and temple committee, and the welfare committee. These committees were created and staffed between March and June 1963. Early on it was made clear that these committees were actually subcommittees of the General Priesthood Board, made up of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.²⁰ Their day-to-day work, though, was strongly associated with correlation and specifically with Elder Lee—both in his role as the chair of the General Priesthood Committee and as the CEC chair. In fact, the chairs of each priesthood committee became standing members of the CEC in January of 1964, and the managing directors who served under them attended when invited.²¹ Each committee consisted of about twenty-five members and a chair.

These correlation councils and priesthood committees played a central role in the correlation effort. The three main goals of correlation were to place the priesthood where the Lord directed in the revelations, to put the family back at the center of the Church's efforts, and to correlate the material used by organizations to teach the gospel to both members and nonmembers. To achieve these goals, the CEC focused

on four major initiatives throughout the sixties: home teaching, family home evening, priesthood training and enrichment, and curriculum correlation. This history will discuss these four major initiatives.

Home Teaching

Though correlation would ultimately entail many aspects of Church governance, in the early 1960s it centered on what would come to be known as home teaching. The original name of the home teaching program was the Priesthood Correlation Program.²²

Home teaching actually dates back to the very beginning of the Church. From the days of Joseph Smith, teachers have visited the homes of members.²³ They have been called teachers, acting teachers, block teachers, ward teachers, and ultimately home teachers. Their duties have been defined by the scriptural injunction "to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them; and see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; and see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty" (D&C 20:53–55). The efforts and effectiveness of these programs, however, have varied greatly. By the mid-1900s, ward teachers were largely supervised by the Presiding Bishopric because the program was considered an Aaronic Priesthood responsibility.

Church authorities had long seen a need for greater correlation between the Quorum of the Twelve and the Presiding Bishopric.²⁴ A main issue was the lack of priesthood quorum oversight of the various versions of home teaching. By the 1950s, ward teaching had largely moved away from the concept of watching over and having responsibility for the welfare of families to simply going into the homes of members and sharing a message. This is not to suggest that ward teachers did not offer a meaningful service. However, the brethren were desirous of strengthening the efforts of the priesthood in watching over and ministering to the families of the Church. In November 1960, the

Presiding Bishopric was asked to work with the Quorum of the Twelve to develop a “vigorous ward teaching program.”²⁵

On March 22, 1961, Elder Lee presided over a meeting of the General Priesthood Committee in which they reviewed the final draft of the revised ward teaching program entitled “Priesthood Correlation Program.”²⁶ That year fourteen stakes tested the new program under the guidance of a committee made up of the members of the Twelve. This program was turned over to the Correlation Executive Committee, who further fine-tuned it in preparation for Churchwide implementation. The program was first presented privately to President McKay and then to the combined First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, who gave their approval on August 30, 1962.²⁷ After several months, the final program was approved by members of both the Correlation Executive Committee and the All-Church Correlation Council (on January 9 and 25, 1963, respectively).²⁸ In the General Priesthood Meeting in October 1962, President Romney gave an excellent overview of the new program:

Now, priesthood correlation, as we are using the term here, contemplates all that is now being done in ward teaching and much more. It unites under one undertaking many activities. It requires that attention be given to every member of every family, particularly to those who need special encouragement to live the gospel. It means much more than a perfunctory visit once a month. It includes:

1. Periodic visits to every family by two priesthood bearers;
2. Laboring with Melchizedek Priesthood bearers to build spiritual and temporal “strength”;
3. Laboring with inactive and overage members of the Aaronic Priesthood under 21;
4. Activating and bringing into full church participation senior members of the Aaronic Priesthood and their families;
5. Fellowshiping and bringing into full activity recent converts, new arrivals, and all inactive church members;

6. Encouraging all parents and other family heads to maintain genuine Latter-day Saint homes in which are practiced and taught the sanctifying principles of the gospel.²⁹

After the program was presented to the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, President McKay is reported to have said, “The program has been refined, and it is now the job of the various organizations of the church to make it work, not to say that this or that cannot work, but to see that those parts of any program which are affected will fit in and correlate with the Home Teaching Program. It is a home-centered, priesthood-centered program which embodies all.”³⁰

The name of the program was officially changed in March 1963 to the “Home Teaching Program.”³¹ This initiative was at the heart of the correlation effort to restore the priesthood to the center of the work of the ministry and to focus on the family. The home teachers were to be the means of supporting the family and connecting them to the priesthood. All other programs, whether priesthood-based or auxiliary-based, were to be correlated through the home teachers to the individual families. Home teachers were to be assigned by the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums under the direction of bishops or branch presidents. Home teachers would then report any needs they could not personally meet to their quorum leaders, who would share these concerns with the bishop. The bishop could then access all of the resources of the ward council to help the family.

Family Home Evening

The concept of setting apart one night as a family night has a long history. Most historians point to a program in the Salt Lake City Granite Stake directed by President Frank Y. Taylor as the formal beginning of the practice. For some years before the official inauguration of this program, the Granite Stake leadership had prompted stake members to devote at least one night a week to the “gathering of their

children around their own fireside to teach them the principles of the gospel.”³² On October 16, 1909, President Taylor formally initiated the family night program within his stake. President Joseph F. Smith was one of the keynote speakers at that meeting. In April 1915, the First Presidency formally introduced the program to the entire Church. In the First Presidency letter, family night was recommended as a once-a-month practice.³³ Following this introduction, several Church leaders, including Heber J. Grant and George Albert Smith, periodically commended family night to the Saints. Sometimes family night was referred to as a monthly program and sometimes as a weekly program.³⁴ The name also changed periodically. In the late 1940s, it was referred to as the family hour. Up through the early 1960s, leaders struggled to get the majority of Church members to hold family home evening on a consistent basis.³⁵

Home night was first formally discussed by the Correlation Executive Committee on December 12, 1962.³⁶ The program was seen as a perfect opportunity to fulfill all three major correlation objectives by putting the correlated curriculum directly into the hands of parents to enable them to teach the gospel to their families. Also, family night was thought to be closely tied to home teaching, the centerpiece of correlation at that time. On January 29, 1963, an assignment was made to undertake a study of the history of family night in the Church. Discussions also began regarding the development of a formal home-based curriculum.³⁷

Elder Lee noted that at the time the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve approved age groupings and curriculum outlines, it was decided that there should be a formal plan for teaching the gospel in the home.³⁸ In April 1964, the correlation committee secretaries requested approval to develop a formal family night curriculum to be used beginning in January 1965. Forty-eight lessons—about one per week—were planned.³⁹

In addition to developing a family night curriculum, the Correlation Executive Committee planned several steps to introduce and promote

family night. A film entitled *Of Heaven and Home* was approved to reintroduce the program to the Church. An instructional filmstrip was planned and announcements were included in Church periodicals during the last quarter of 1964. Plans were made to develop lessons for priesthood and Relief Society meetings as well as for home teachers to bring into the home that would provide support to parents in their efforts to hold regular family nights. It was suggested that one sacrament meeting a month could be dedicated to a monthly family night theme.⁴⁰ As can be seen, the priesthood and auxiliaries were seen as aids to help parents more fully bring the gospel into their homes. Family night was the first attempt to bring the Church curriculum into the home, with the support of priesthood and auxiliary programs.⁴¹

In August 1964, the official name of the family night program was changed to family home evening.⁴² Leaders suggested that each ward, under the direction of the stake president, designate one night a week as the official night for family home evening. The following month Elder Lee expressed a concern with holding family home evening on a weekly basis. He agreed it was ideal but worried that with so few members holding family home evening on a monthly basis, it may be a better idea to start with a monthly schedule and then move toward a weekly schedule later. They agreed to delay any public announcement until Elder Lee could counsel with President McKay. In the meantime, the correlation secretaries were asked to do further research on previous First Presidency statements regarding family home evening to make sure they were in line with what the First Presidency had counseled. The following month Elder Lee reported that President McKay wanted family home evening held on a weekly basis from the very beginning and asked correlation to proceed with their original plans.⁴³ Forty lessons had already been written, and they planned to finish the last lessons within two weeks. The 1965 family home evening lesson manual contained forty-six lessons and was distributed to families through home teachers.

With the home evening program officially initiated, the correlation committee worked to ensure that new curriculum would be ready for 1966–69. The goal of the curriculum was to help members develop closer relationships with their families and with Heavenly Father. A set of guidelines in accordance with the Blue Book—the committee’s guidebook to a correlated curriculum—were proposed to guide the production of curriculum manuals each year.

Exactly who would be responsible for writing the family home evening manuals was a question which the Correlation Executive Committee wrestled with for several years. From 1965 through 1968, lessons were written by a three-member committee supervised by Elder Bruce R. McConkie with the assistance of Daniel Ludlow. Each year, to provide continuity, one member was released and another added. As early as 1966, the proposal was made to place family home evening under the priesthood home teaching program, then supervised by President Romney.⁴⁴ This recommendation was ultimately approved, and the family home evening committee was placed under the direct supervision of the priesthood home teaching committee in January 1969.⁴⁵ Leaders recommended that each stake set aside one evening every week for family home evening for the entire stake. Finally, in September 1970, a priesthood bulletin statement announced that family home evening would be held on Monday night throughout the Church.⁴⁶

Priesthood Training and Enrichment

From the very beginning of correlation, Church leaders recognized the need for the priesthood to assume its proper place in the Lord’s kingdom. At the April 1906 general conference, President Joseph F. Smith prophesied:

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 every need may be met and satisfied through the regular organizations of the Priesthood.⁴⁷

Thus the instruction to direct the work of correlation was given to the General Priesthood Committee, with Elder Lee as its chairman.

Besides general Church governance, the work of the priesthood was divided into four areas of focus, as explained previously. The missionary, genealogy and temple, home teaching, and welfare committees were formed in March of 1963. Apostles chaired the first three and the Presiding Bishop chaired the welfare committee. The chairman and managing directors of each priesthood committee were added to the CEC to make sure that the priesthood curriculum and other training would be in line with the overall correlation program. This meant that by January of 1964, six of the Quorum of Twelve and the Presiding Bishop were members of the CEC.

These priesthood committees were tasked with creating curriculum for priesthood instruction as well as providing specific training and direction to help priesthood leaders fulfill their responsibilities. As early as 1964, these committees were already providing written curricula for the priesthood quorums in each of the four areas.⁴⁸ By 1965, a Melchizedek Priesthood manual was completed that was designed to teach priesthood holders their duties in all four areas. These committees continued to provide the curriculum for both the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood groups and quorums throughout much of

the decade. They also were charged to help develop the Melchizedek Priesthood handbook. This handbook was updated regularly and included instruction in the four focus areas. It also included information on ordinances and ceremonies and a large section on ward councils.⁴⁹ This handbook became a model that Elder Lee said was to be used by every curriculum writer.

Priesthood committees also provided general, regional, and stake training and instruction. As early as April 1963, the priesthood committees were assigned to attend stake conferences on an alternating basis to provide instruction in their areas of responsibility. Though it was recognized that all priesthood holders had some responsibilities for each of the four areas, the brethren also saw some specialization by priesthood quorums. Home teaching was the responsibility of all Melchizedek Priesthood quorums, missionary work was associated with the Quorums of the seventies, genealogy with high priests, and welfare with elders quorums.⁵⁰

Regional representatives. Though progress was made in revitalizing the priesthood, the challenge of how to deal with the geographic and numeric growth of the Church remained. In 1941, there were 138 stakes in the Church. By 1967, there were 435 stakes and 1,200 more stake conferences.⁵¹ This growth would only accelerate in the future, making it even more difficult to provide training and leadership. Elder Lee spent May 7, 1967, at home recovering from surgery and pondering how to address this challenge.⁵² The Church had previously been regionalized for welfare and other purposes into seventy regions (with as many as twelve stakes per region). With this concept in mind, Elder Lee recorded the basic concept of regional representatives of the Twelve in his journal.⁵³ On May 16, Elder Lee dictated a memo “relative to the future role of priesthood committee representatives and the desirability of vesting them with a designated priesthood authority by naming ‘regional coordinators’ in the seventy regions of the Church.”⁵⁴ By May 30, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve approved the concept. Two days later, correlation leaders met to discuss the need



*President Thomas S. Monson, member
of the Adult Correlation Committee.
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for a new level of Church leadership. Elder Lee asked the CEC members for ideas regarding how to most effectively organize the change.⁵⁵

By the October 1967 general conference, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve unanimously approved the calling of regional representatives of the Twelve. These leaders were called on a service basis. They continued to work and live in their homes, but were asked to train and help direct the work within their geographic areas. The leaders determined that most of the priesthood committee members would be released by the end of

the year, with many being called as regional representatives.⁵⁶ The official announcement was given by the First Presidency in general conference. There would be two regional conferences held each year. General auxiliary leaders would conduct training at regional conferences and would no longer attend stake conferences.⁵⁷

Under the direction of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, the CEC and ACCC became the main bodies used to implement these changes. For the next three years, the committees worked out the details regarding how regional representatives would function and be trained. At first, their training was developed by the adult correlation committee under the leadership of Elder Thomas S. Monson.⁵⁸ By September 1967, Elder Lee created a leadership committee, separate from the adult correlation committee but still chaired by Elder Monson, to continue developing priesthood leadership training for regional

representatives and local leaders.⁵⁹ Wendell J. Ashton, James E. Faust, Neal A. Maxwell, Hugh W. Pinnock, and Rex A. Skidmore ultimately served on this committee under Thomas S. Monson. The regions would be reconstituted to more evenly divide stakes throughout the church. Instead of 70 regions, there would be 108 regions composed of one to six stakes.⁶⁰ A letter was sent to all stake presidents inviting them to attend the October 1967 general conference to receive training on the concept of regional representatives and to be introduced to their new regional representative.

By January 1968, the authority and responsibility of regional representatives was clarified. Regional representatives were not responsible for every aspect of Church work within stakes and wards, and they held no direct-line authority. They were also not to attend stake conferences unless authorized to do so by the Twelve. However, they were explicitly asked to provide training and leadership in the four priesthood programs and to conduct regional meetings.⁶¹ In April 1968, Elder Lee explained that regional representatives worked on three separate levels. They had administrative responsibility over the four priesthood programs and, by appointment of the Twelve, were to attend and train at stake conferences. They were to be a training resource, though not a line authority, when working with stake presidents. And finally, they had no responsibility in some areas, such as temples and patriarchs. In summary, they were representatives of the Twelve for the purpose of training and providing priesthood leadership, especially as it pertained to the four priesthood areas.

Curriculum

Since the early 1900s, there had been at least eight attempts made by different committees to correlate the curriculum of the Church.⁶² In 1960, Antone K. Romney, secretary to the CEC, was asked to lead a research committee to study the past correlation attempts and each organization's current curriculum throughout the entire Church. Their

final study and recommendations were presented in July 1961.⁶³ They recommended that all curricula be correlated according to three age-groups by three correlation committees. These committees would work with, but not supplant, the existing organizations. The suggestion to correlate curriculum by age cannot be originally attributed to the research committee: that recommendation first came from the First Presidency in 1940 to the Union Board of the Auxiliaries, the correlation organization at that time.⁶⁴ However, it had not yet been implemented.

Each organization was told to proceed with their planned 1962 curricula but charged to have their proposed 1963 curricula reviewed by a correlation Reading Committee. The children's committee created the pamphlet *Curriculum for Children*, the youth committee created the pamphlet *Proposed Curriculum for Youth*, and the adult committee created the pamphlet *Instructional Curriculum for Adults*.⁶⁵ These would ultimately form the basis of the Blue Book, the term used to refer to the "Proposed Curriculum of Instruction by Age Group." Once approved, this document guided all future efforts by the CEC, ACCC, and Correlation Committees to correlate the curriculum. President McKay and members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles unanimously approved the Blue Book on June 21, 1962.⁶⁶

With these guidelines in place, writers were called to begin working on curricula for the priesthood while the auxiliaries continued to work on their own curricula. Elder Lee stressed the importance of having all curricula reviewed by the correlation committees in order to assure that the curricula fit the guidelines established by the Blue Book.⁶⁷ Though the hope was to have all curricula reviewed as early as 1963, the target date for a fully correlated curriculum was 1965.⁶⁸ Each committee was to review all curricula for its age-group. As a final check, the three secretaries of each age-group committee were to read all curricula from every age-group before it was brought to the CEC for final approval. If there were conflicts between any organizations (be they priesthood or auxiliary), the issue would be brought to the member of the Twelve who was the chairman of that age-group's committee. He would then

resolve the conflict in conjunction with the originating organization or bring it to the CEC.⁶⁹

In one of the correlation meetings, the committee shared an example of how the Primary would work through the correlation process. The writers for the Primary were to create a curriculum proposal based on the guidelines contained in the Blue Book. After the Primary president approved it, she would then send it to Elder Lee, who was the chair of both the CEC and the reading committee. Elder Lee would pass the proposal on to the correlation age-group secretaries. The secretaries would bring it to their respective committees for review. They would pass their recommendations back to the secretaries of each age-group committee, who would review the proposal one last time before resubmitting it to Elder Lee. Elder Lee would then instruct the Primary president to work with the Apostle who was the chair of the children's committee to resolve any differences before submitting the curriculum to the publications committee.⁷⁰

As was the case in earlier attempts to correlate the curriculum, this did not always work flawlessly. There were constant struggles to produce curricula in a timely manner. In fact, fully correlated curricula for adults and youth did not appear until 1967. The children's curriculum took an additional year.⁷¹ Often, the challenge was working everything through the review process in a timely fashion. Other times, there were differences of opinion between writers, leaders of organizations, and the correlation committees. In certain instances, organizations were given two or even three years to fully adopt correlation recommendations. Elder Lee constantly stressed the need for everyone to be involved in the process from the beginning in order to come up with the most effective curricula possible. By the end of the 1960s, this had largely been accomplished. It was also determined that curriculum would be written and used on a rotational basis rather than writing completely new curriculum for each organization every year.⁷²

Conclusion

The changes to Church curriculum mirrored the other substantial changes brought about in the name of correlation. It took years for many of these changes to come to fruition, and it was difficult for some to accept them. Faithful members had labored for years on the early Church boards and in the auxiliaries. These members cherished their service, and some struggled to see things change.⁷³ The leaders right on up through Elder Lee and President McKay realized this. There was a constant theme throughout the meeting minutes of the need to proceed with caution. This caution sometimes meant that whole portions of the program were held off for substantial periods of time, not because of any known problem with the new program but out of sensitivity to those who would be affected by the changes. However, ultimately the changes the presiding brethren saw necessary were carried through.

At the October 1971 general conference, President Harold B. Lee, then serving as a counselor to President Joseph Fielding Smith, summarized many correlation accomplishments during the past decade:

Even as I repeat them now it seems unbelievable that we have been able to do what we have done in this time: priesthood home teaching; family home evening; unified social services; the expansion and clarification of the missionary responsibilities of the seventies quorums; expansion of the home-study seminary course; bishops' training course; priesthood teacher development; libraries and how to use them; definition of a closer relationship between the Aaronic Priesthood and the MIA; improving and making more effective preparation, editing, translating, and distributing of teaching materials, and the distribution to meet the deadlines at seasonal beginnings; introduction of a Church-wide library program; the experimental study of the Church membership all over the world to achieve a feeling of closer relationship with the full Church program; the correlation and clarification

of the LDS Student Association role to meet the unmet youth needs using the existing structure rather than a separate professional staff; and the correlation of military relations programs using existing Church structure instead of professionals. So we go on and on, and all of this under the direction of the Twelve, as I have already explained, acting under the responsibility given by the First Presidency; and you, their brethren, are to carry this to the ends of the earth so that these things might be implemented in every part of the world—a tremendous responsibility.⁷⁴

Even that list is not complete. The correlated music program, new schedules for Church meetings, stake and ward PEC and ward council meetings, the position of executive secretary at both the ward and stake level, Church athletics, the prospective elders program, consolidated and correlated reporting systems, priesthood bulletins and a new *General Handbook of Instructions*, consolidation of Church magazines, and a general Church budget could also be included.⁷⁵ So many things which we now take for granted were developed at this critical time.

Correlation encompassed much more than curricular issues. What had begun at the turn of the century under the leadership of Elder McKay truly came of age under the leadership of Elder Lee. In the middle of his efforts, Elder Lee once stated, “I have never seen the will of the Lord manifest itself more than in the last two years. President McKay has said on occasion that nothing more important has happened in his entire administration than this correlation work. May we not falter, and may we not grow weary, and may our task not become burdensome, but may we receive that divine assurance as we pursue our course step by step.”⁷⁶ Elder Lee constantly reminded his fellow laborers that they worked under the guidance and direction of the First Presidency. On several occasions he admonished those who served under him to stay within the bounds which the First Presidency had set. Before every major initiative, the meeting minutes indicate that they did not move

forward until after the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve had given guidance and approved their decisions.

Though correlation may have been the mechanism that helped to bring about the changes, the effort operated under the guidance and direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. It was largely directed by Harold B. Lee throughout his service as an Apostle, member of the First Presidency, and Church President. As his biographer said, “Some historians may well argue that President Harold B. Lee’s most significant lifetime work for the Church, though not generally understood by the membership, was the reorganization of the kingdom under the direction of President David O. McKay.”⁷⁷

The history of correlation clearly shows President McKay’s, President Lee’s, and other leaders’ fingerprints. But to see correlation as they saw it is to see the hand of God moving his work forward. Almost all those who were associated with the changes created through correlation spoke of the divine direction they received. President Lee exclaimed: “We have been receiving as pertinent and important divine direction as has ever been given to the Church in any similar period in its history through the prophet and leader who now presides as the President of this Church. You may recognize it in some of the developments we know as the correlation program. You have seen it being unraveled bit by bit, and you will see and hear more of it.”⁷⁸

Referring to the correlation program, Marion G. Romney explained, “We know that it has been developed by assignment of the First Presidency under the spirit of revelation; those of you who have been close to use will know this is so. We will continue to work under the spirit of the Lord.”⁷⁹

The leaders often spoke of correlation as much more than a simple reorganization. They saw in correlation the Lord’s preparation for the future of his kingdom. President N. Eldon Tanner expressed this view when he said, “Priesthood Correlation is the closest blueprint yet in mortality to the plan presented in the Grand Council of Heaven before the world was created and is the most effective utilization thus

far of special keys given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple.”⁸⁰

President Monson, who was part of the correlation process from the early 1960s, stated that “the battle plan whereby we fight to save the souls of men is not our own. It was provided . . . by the inspiration and revelation of the Lord. Yes, I speak of that plan which will bring us victory, even the Correlation Program of the Church.”⁸¹ Though the period from 1960 to 1972 saw some of the greatest achievements in this battle plan, history shows that those achievements came as a result of the inspired work that began at the turn of the century. It has been stated that Church correlation did not spring forth, Minerva-like, in the mid-1960s. It came line upon line, precept upon precept, born of necessity and from a long history filled with both inspiration and the best efforts of all involved.

Notes

1. Harold B. Lee, regional representatives seminar, 2–3, in Bruce C. Hafen, *A Disciple's Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002), 325.
2. The Relief Society was organized in March 1842 by the Prophet Joseph. The Sunday School was organized December 9, 1849, by Brigham Young. The Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association was organized on November 28, 1869, as the Young Ladies' Retrenchment Society. The Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association was formed on June 10, 1875, also by Brigham Young. Finally, the Primary was organized on August 25, 1878, by John Taylor.
3. Dale Mouritsen, “Efforts to Correlate Mormon Agencies in the Twentieth Century: A Review,” 1974, 6, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
4. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1906, 3.
5. Gregory A. Prince and Wm. Robert Wright, *David O. McKay and the Rise of Modern Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 2005), 141.

6. Joseph F. Smith, in Marion G. Romney, “The Basics of Priesthood Correlation” (address, General Priesthood Board meeting, Salt Lake City, November 15, 1967), 2.
7. Minutes of the Social Advisory Committee, 1916–20, Church History Library.
8. Prince and Wright, *Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 142.
9. First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, letter, January 1939, in Antone K. Romney, “History of Correlation of L.D.S. Church Auxiliaries,” F.
10. Grant, Clark, and McKay, “Memorandum of Suggestions,” in Antone K. Romney, “History of the Correlation,” G.
11. Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark Jr., and David O. McKay to Joseph Fielding Smith, John A. Widtsoe, Harold B. Lee, and Marion G. Romney, August 9, 1944, in *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, vol. 6, ed. James R. Clark (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975), 209.
12. First Presidency and Council of the Twelve, temple meeting minutes, January 22, 1948, in Antone K. Romney, “History of the Correlation,” H.
13. L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 365.
14. Harold B. Lee, as quoted by Marion G. Romney in “Correlation Items,” Church History Library, 3.
15. Minutes of the Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, volume 1, Church History Library, 7 (hereafter Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65). See also correlation chronology as reflected in Minutes of the Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, comp. Carol H. Cannon, Church History Library, 1 (hereafter Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71).
16. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 14–15; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 1.
17. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 10; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 1.
18. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 9; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 1.
19. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 36. A similar but inferior paraphrase (although it is quoted, it varies from the meeting minutes) is found in Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 2: “Bring the priesthood

- back where it should be, according to the revelations, and then determine the relationship of the auxiliaries to the priesthood.”
20. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 93.
21. Marion G. Romney was asked to chair the home teaching committee with Presiding Bishop John Vandenberg as vice-chair; Spencer W. Kimball was asked to chair the missionary committee; Howard W. Hunter, the genealogy and temple committee; and Bishop John H. Vandenberg, the welfare committee.
22. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 46–47.
23. “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith: Elder William Farrington Cahoon,” *Juvenile Instructor*, August 15, 1892, 492–93.
24. Prince and Wright, *Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 142.
25. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 367.
26. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 367.
27. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 371.
28. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 69–77; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 4.
29. Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, October 1962, 77–78.
30. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 84.
31. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 81; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 4.
32. Robert E. Larson, “Factors in the Acceptance and Adoption of Family Home Evening in the LDS Church: A Study of Planned Change” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1967).
33. “Home Evening,” Editors’ Table, *Improvement Era*, April 1915, 733–34.
34. George Albert Smith, in Conference Report, April 1926, 145–47.
35. Larson, “Factors in the Acceptance and Adoption,” 19.
36. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 65; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 4.
37. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 78.
38. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 170.
39. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 175.
40. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 176; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 12.
41. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 194.
42. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 207. In Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, this date is incorrect. The minutes say that the name was changed in June 1964, but although it was suggested in June, it was not voted on and accepted until August.
43. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 221; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 12.
44. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 141.
45. Minutes of the Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, volume 2, Church History Library, 295 (hereafter Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72); see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1969–71, 27.
46. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 382–83; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 31.
47. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1906, 3.
48. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 154–55; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 9.
49. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 138–39.
50. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 130; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 7.
51. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 160.
52. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 373.
53. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 373.
54. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 373.
55. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 160.
56. Hafen, *Disciple’s Life*, 323.
57. Hafen, *Disciple’s Life*, 323.
58. Hafen, *Disciple’s Life*, 320–21.
59. Hafen, *Disciple’s Life*, 320–21.
60. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 211.
61. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 229.
62. See Michael A. Goodman, “Correlation: Putting First Things First,” in *A Firm Foundation: Church Organization and Administration* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2011), 319–38.
63. Prince and Wright, *Rise of Modern Mormonism*, 149.
64. Grant, Clark, and McKay, “Memorandum of Suggestions,” G.

65. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 33–34.
66. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 47; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 3.
67. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 148; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 10–11.
68. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 87.
69. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 167.
70. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1961–65, 166–73.
71. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 12–13; see also Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1960–71, 19.
72. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee, 1966–72, 348.
73. For further details on some of the struggles and how they were addressed, see Goates, *Harold B. Lee*; Hafen, *Disciple's Life*; Prince and Wright, *Rise of Modern Mormonism*.
74. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 368.
75. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 368–69.
76. Minutes, Correlation Executive Committee Meetings, 1961–65, 128.
77. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 363.
78. Harold B. Lee, in Conference Report, October 1964, 137.
79. Marion G. Romney, “Church Correlation” (address to seminary and institute of religion faculty, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, June 22, 1964).
80. N. Eldon Tanner (speech, Priesthood Genealogy Committee training meeting, December 1963), quoted in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, ed. Arnold Garr, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 251.
81. Thomas S. Monson, “Correlation Brings Blessings,” *Relief Society Magazine*, April 1967, 247.