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Keith A. Erekson

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A New Era of Family History Work:  
Teaching Family History Successfully in a Ward Setting

by Keith A. Erekson, M.A.¹

Accepting an assignment to teach other ward members about family history work can be daunting. You may not feel qualified to teach, or you may think that there are others who have more experience than you do. Your interest in the subject may have begun only recently when you received the assignment. There are so many resources—handbooks, publications, and websites—that you most likely wonder which ones to use and in what order to present them. There is also the challenge of actually teaching another person.

When approached about the prospect of learning about family history work, some members will claim that a distant relative has “done it all already.” Others will feel that their current load of work, family, and social life is much too heavy, and they don’t have the time, money, or desire to become an expert researcher and travel to Europe. There will certainly be a few members who think that family history work is complicated, a feeling compounded by their unfamiliarity with computers. And there will be those who have already attended a Sunday School class and who didn’t get much out of it the first time and don’t particularly enjoy listening to a teacher drone on and on about his or her own family history research.

When I was called as a ward family history consultant I had experiences with each of the above sentiments. In time, however, with the assistance of interested leaders and fellow consultants—as well as divine guidance—the family history work in my ward unfolded in a marvelous way. We witnessed the truth of Elder Russell M. Nelson’s conviction that “a new era of family history work has arrived.”⁴ At the ward level individuals can be inspired, hearts turned, lives changed, and lasting progress achieved. As teachers expand their vision of the teaching process, they will begin to involve leaders and train teachers in order to more effectively teach ward members how to accomplish their family history work.

Expanding Vision

The most essential part of teaching ward members about family history is not a technique or a resource, it is your own vision of what can happen and your understanding of what you can do to bring about the desired end. The members who tell you they are busy, uninterested, or all done are most likely saying that they know that family history work is an essential part of the mission of the Church, but that they don’t know how to go about it. To be most effective, family history teachers should follow two principles that will expand their vision of their role and pursue practices that encourage individual members to do their family history work.

The first principle of family history work that can expand your vision is to immerse yourself in the doctrine. Church leaders often speak about the doctrine of temple and family history work in General Conference, and there are many inspiring scriptures throughout the standard works.⁴ The Church Handbook of Instructions provides a doctrinal introduction to its discussion of family history responsibilities.⁴

Immersing oneself in the doctrine of family history work has a practical impact on your teaching. When I made my first attempt to teach family history, I prepared a single lesson about doctrine that I hoped would inspire the learner so that we could then focus...
on the practical details of family history work. However, I soon learned that this approach is not very effective. Members and teachers alike should continually study and reflect on the doctrinal reasons for the practical work they perform. In this way, the doctrine serves as a continual inspiration throughout the lifelong process of teaching and performing individual research. Studying the doctrine of temple and family history work prepares both teacher and researcher to receive inspiration in their work.6

A second principle that will expand your vision of the teaching process is to understand—and teach—that family history work is accomplished through many activities. The Church Handbook of Instructions explains that all members are responsible to “receive their own temple ordinances,” to “hold a current temple recommend and go to the temple regularly,” and to “participate in family history work.”7 Beyond this, Elder Dallin H. Oaks has explained that “there are many tasks to be performed,” and that “all members should participate by prayerfully selecting those ways that fit their personal circumstances.”8 Members may feel impressed to keep a journal,9 prepare a personal or family history,10 or involve their young children.11 Some may want to learn how to do research in extended generations, while others may prefer to organize a family reunion and record family stories on tape.12 Family history work is accomplished through things as simple as creating photo albums and visiting relatives.13 In this endeavor, Elder Oaks counseled that “our effort is not to compel everyone to do everything, but to encourage everyone to do something.”14

The most effective way to encourage another person to perform personalized family history work is to teach on an individual basis. President Harold B. Lee, eleventh President of the Church, often counseled members to survey large fields and cultivate small ones. One member who was particularly influenced by this counsel, President Gordon B. Hinckley, explained that “he was saying that we must know the big picture and then assiduously work on the particular niche assigned to each of us, and that in doing so we concentrate on the needs of the individual.”15 Instead of trying to pack your classroom with students, teach members and families individually by going to their homes, finding out about their circumstances, and helping them do their own family history.16 When a teacher takes this approach, students are more likely to feel that it is exciting to learn about their own family. Teachers who take an individualized approach will discover that many current members are converts or the children of converts. Even families that have a long history of membership in the Church will be surprised to discover that their family history has been virtually untouched since the 1970s when there was a great emphasis on each family completing a four-generation pedigree chart. Since that time new sources have become available, old sources more accessible, and temple submission requirements more attainable. By working individually with a member’s family records, family history teachers can make their teaching more relevant.

A family history teacher who understands that each learner may perform individualized family history work will also desire to teach in a clear and simple way. One of the most discouraging things a teacher can do for a student is to present a subject in an overly complicated manner. A short time ago, I picked up a family history publication with a subtitle describing its contents as containing “simple steps.”17 Teachers may feel that presenting a “complex” subject makes them appear smarter because of their mastery of complexity. It is more likely, however, that a teacher who teaches in a convoluted manner possesses a convoluted understanding of the subject. Teaching that family history is complicated causes members to incorrectly assume that they need to become expert genealogists. By teaching simply and clearly, you can teach and show members that everyone can accomplish the basic principles of family history work.

Finally, the best way to teach members is to actually do their family history work with them.18 Help them fill out a pedigree chart, show them how
to record their information on family history software, go with them to the temple to perform temple ordinances. Members will leave your class (or you will leave their home) and they will feel satisfied that they have made some progress in cultivating their own small field. It is always more exciting to learn about your family than to listen about someone else’s.

Involving Leaders and Training Teachers

Possessing a vision of what can be accomplished allows a teacher to focus his or her efforts on two essential processes: involving and training leaders and teachers, and teaching ward members. While both processes should unfold simultaneously I will address them separately so that each may be clearly understood. The first essential element of teaching family history in a ward setting is to involve ward leaders. The bishop holds the keys for building the kingdom in the ward and has specific responsibilities to oversee and encourage temple and family history work. When I began to oversee family history instruction in my ward I met with the bishop to consider what should be done. He invited me to present my ideas at the next meeting of the bishopric, and as it happened the stake presidency dropped in for a visit and learned of our plans as well. Thus, from the beginning we were blessed to work under the direction and with the support of both ward and stake leaders—a blessing that is vital to the success of our work. Family history leaders and teachers should coordinate their efforts with ward leaders to answer three important questions: What should happen in the lives of those I teach as a result of this instruction? Which specific principles should be taught? How should these principles be taught?

There are many ways that family history instruction can influence the lives of those you teach. The answer to this first question may come directly from stake or ward goals. It may also come from prayerful consideration of the scriptures and handbooks or from recent direction at general or regional conference. Our ward combined six specific stake goals with the handbook counsel that “members should identify three to five generations of their ancestors.” The bishopric expressed its desire by way of a letter addressed to all ward members and delivered by home teachers: “It is the desire of the bishopric and leadership of the ward that every member of the ward gain a testimony of the importance of family history work, and gain the skills necessary to perform their own work and to help others perform their work.” Thus, our ward expected members to be able to both complete and teach others how to complete family history work.

Having decided upon a desired end for our instruction, we began to consider the second question—which specific principles we should teach. We turned first to principles in A Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work, but as we taught members in their homes we found that the booklet had at least two limitations. First, it is organized as a self-help resource for members, and not as a teaching outline for teachers. Second, the booklet does not incorporate the host of additional family history resources that are currently available. In light of this dilemma, the family history consultants in my ward worked to integrate A Member’s Guide with other Church-produced family history resources into a usable teaching outline that breaks teaching into four lessons designed to encourage individual members by teaching doctrine, doing family history work, and setting goals.

Each visit is intended to be about fifty minutes long (so that it could be taught during the Sunday School time period), though when members get excited the lessons could last up to two hours—they don’t let the consultant go without showing them one more thing! In terms of doing family history, members fill out a pedigree chart during the first visit to see how much they know off the top of their heads. When they realize that they don’t know as much as they would like, we set a goal to contact the family history expert in their family to obtain as much information as possible.

During the second visit, the consultant helps the member understand the information received from the family history expert and begin a personal PAF file. In the third visit, the consultant helps the member prepare names for temple work using PAF
and TempleReady. At this point, members should be able to complete the basics of family history work. The final visit is flexible, intended to help ward members work in an area of family history that they feel impressed to work: researching in extended generations, keeping a journal, organizing family information, or interviewing living relatives. Along the way, the consultant introduces members to resources—publications, websites, and family history centers—that are helpful at the appropriate time. The teaching outline provided a uniform system for teaching specific family history principles to ward members, but we also had to decide how to teach the principles.

Support for teaching the principles came at three levels: ward leaders, family history leaders, and family history consultants. Much of the responsibility for carrying out family history work in a ward rests upon the high priest group leader. Our ward was composed of newly married college students, so we did not even have a high priest’s group. Instead, we adapted the guidelines to fit our situation. The bishop called me as a “ward family history leader” and assigned me the duties normally carried out by the high priest group leader: to coordinate family history work in the ward, and to supervise the ward family history consultants. In order to coordinate family history work more effectively, I attended priesthood executive committee meetings and ward council meetings. Once a month I reported on the work of family history consultants. We decided to measure our progress with three indicators: 1) the number of families who completed instruction from consultants, 2) the number of families currently receiving instruction, and 3) the number of names submitted for temple ordinance work. Each of the indicators examined a different part of the work, and it was a benefit to have three, because each month at least one of the three showed progress. We found that progress in teaching people is exponential—very slow at first and for quite some time, before it catches on and grows quickly.

The family history principles also need to be implemented within the ward family history leadership. We have called as many as fifteen couples at a time to be ward family history consultants. In addition to meeting the demand for family history instruction, this practice helped meet several other objectives as well. First, it is a good calling to give members shortly after they move in because it allows them to get involved quickly, without prohibiting their receiving additional callings in the future. Most important, the calling is in the handbook and is a meaningful way to accomplish the mission of the Church, so ward leaders do not have to make up “ward greeter” or “hymnbook coordinator” callings. I visited newly called consultants in their homes to welcome them and orient them to the ward program. I presented them with a one-page summary that outlined my duties, their responsibilities, resources, and expectations. Then, I assigned the newly called consultant to a previously trained consultant for training. Thus, consultants learned through the same process by which they eventually taught members. The training process unfolded exponentially: I trained a consultant, then the two of us trained two more, and the four of us trained four more, and so forth. All of the consultants met together approximately every three months to share success stories and to be trained in additional family history skills.

The training ward and family history leaders received was ultimately put into practice by ward family history consultants. Using the teaching outline, ward consultants met with members in their homes to teach individualized family history lessons intended “to help members identify ancestors for whom information is readily available and provide temple ordinances for them.” The outline served as a guide for teachers, though teachers were flexible and adapted the pace of teaching to the needs of the member. We emphasized meeting at convenient times, and generally hoped to give one lesson at least every two weeks. This allowed members to reach their goals, and teachers expected to teach a family over the course of two to three months. Our chapel has a family history center, and in order to provide a common convenient hour for teaching, we did not teach family history in a “class” setting during Sunday School. Instead, the bishop recommended that members and their consultants meet in the Family
History Center for their lesson. This has helped because sometimes it was the only time during the week that busy members and consultants could get together. Thus, during the Sunday School time period, there are often several “classes” going on in the center as consultants help members do their family history work.

Teaching Ward Members

Involving leaders and training teachers lays the necessary foundation for teaching ward members. At the time I started training the first consultants, I placed a message in the ward newsletter to let members know what was coming. In addition to getting members thinking, it is important to cultivate within them a desire to act. With this end in mind, we discovered three principles that yielded great results: 1) Begin with the bishop, 2) Integrate—don’t isolate family history, and 3) Teach those who want to be taught.

The reasons for beginning with the bishop are quite obvious: he is the head of the ward, he oversees family history work in the ward, and he can be your greatest example. Bishops are very busy, but offer to help him by making the effort to teach him and his family first. Once you help the bishop prepare a name for temple work, you will find you never need to ask him for assistance again! I worked with two bishops in our ward, both of whom were so excited by their own family history work that they kept asking me if I wanted to call more consultants, or if I wanted to present a family history sacrament meeting. Our bishop challenged all ward members to receive the consultants, and excitement for the work really began with him. After teaching the bishop, ward consultants have taught the Elder’s quorum presidency, Relief Society presidency, class teachers, and so forth. Teaching ward leaders is a sure-fire way to spread enthusiasm for the work.

The second principle that makes a difference in recruiting members to teach is to integrate family history work, instead of isolating it. Isolation presents family history work as another task that busy members are required to do. Integrating family history work allows family history to be a part of everything that the ward and individual members do. For example, all members already attend sacrament meeting, and family history can be integrated into this regularly scheduled meeting in various ways. One Sunday, the sacrament meeting topic was family history work. A consultant shared a talk about the ward family history program, and a ward member shared an inspiring personal success story. Their message was essentially, “I thought family history work was hard, but the consultants visited me in my home and helped me with my work, and . . . it is wonderful.”

Another simple way to integrate family history work is through the ward announcement bulletin. For example, on mother’s day we placed an announcement suggesting that when members called their mothers after the meeting that they ask about their mother’s mother—a simple way to integrate family history into something members already do. Members attend Sunday lessons in Sunday School, Priesthood, and Relief Society that often discuss principles of family history or temple work. After such a lesson a ward consultant can briefly add (with permission of quorum or Relief Society leaders, of course), “This was a wonderful lesson . . . as a ward family history consultant I can help you act on the things we have been taught today.” One of our most successful Sunday attempts in Priesthood meeting involved food. When the men arrived in the meeting room there were muffins on the table and I had written on the chalkboard, “Enjoy a Treat from the Family History Consultants: Salvation for the Living!” After the meeting started and many of the men sat happily fed, the bishop challenged every brother who had enjoyed a muffin to sign up for a visit from the ward family history consultants.

Outside of Sunday meetings, there are other ways to encourage members to accept a teaching visit from consultants. Relief Society Home, Family, and Personal Enrichment meetings can center on family history, or a meeting about family home evening could include a workshop on “Family History in Family Home Evening.” In our ward, the female consultants worked with Relief Society leaders and organized a meeting about family history work. The
Relief Society leaders were happy to have a break from planning and organizing, and the sisters in the ward already attend the meeting—they didn’t have to go out of their way. On another occasion, we integrated family history work into a ward activity. Knowing that very few ward members would attend a “family history activity,” we coordinated with the ward activities committee to host a big barbecue. The delicious food and fun activities brought nearly the whole ward out, and the consultants shared a brief video about the joy of family history work.

Successful integration of family history work into ward activities will encourage members to request to be taught. I knew that I didn’t want to have to track people down and force them to listen. Thus, whenever family history work was integrated into regular ward activities, I always passed around a piece of paper for members to sign up for more assistance with their own family history work. I also found that introducing members to the bells and whistles of Personal Ancestral File—photos, printing options, and the ease of data entry—caught their interest. Excitement is contagious, and after a while ward members did more to spread excitement than consultants did. Class teachers who had taken a name to the temple couldn’t refrain from sharing their excitement during their lessons. During fast and testimony meeting at least one ward member would always mention the joy of family history work. I remember that one time a member shared a particularly motivating experience and the person seated in the row behind me tapped me on the shoulder and asked to receive a consultant! At times, there were more members who wanted to be taught than our consultants could actually teach. I tried to mitigate this challenge by giving the first family history lesson to several families at the same time. I followed up with each until they were ready for the second lesson, and then assigned them to work with an individual consultant. Thus, consultants spent their time teaching people who had asked to be taught and were willing to learn.

A New Era of Family History Work

In this essay I have outlined several key principles that have been successful in teaching family history in a ward setting. I have recommended that family history leadership can achieve their goals by expanding vision, involving leaders and training teachers, and teaching ward members. By actively—and patiently—applying these principles in our ward, we found that our success grew exponentially over time. After one year, four-fifths of our members were involved in family history work in some form or another. Fifty-one families had been taught in their homes by a ward consultant, while twenty-one additional families were working through the process. Over the course of the year we called twenty-eight consultants, and by the end of the year ward members had submitted over 1200 names for temple work. Since that time, the program has been adopted in four stakes, and family history consultants in fourteen states from California to Massachusetts have applied the ideas.

While we measured part of our success by the three chosen indicators, we experienced a greater success that is immeasurable, but certainly felt. Working together on their family history work, family members were able to “grow closer, develop greater love and harmony, focus on temple ordinances and covenants, and feel the Spirit of the Lord in greater measure.” They experienced the fulfillment of President Hinckley’s promise that there would be less selfishness and contention with greater love and spirituality. With personal reasons to attend the temple, members had more opportunity to “recall their own covenants, gain greater insight into the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel, and serve others.” In so doing, they affirmed the testimony of Elder D. Todd Christofferson, who taught that by doing family history work, “we are testifying of the infinite reach of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

Helpful Family History Resources

Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders, Section 9: Temple and
A New Era of Family History Work

*Family History Work.* Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998 [35709].


Helpful Teaching Resources


Notes

1 The author would like to thank Carolyn Erekson for strengthening this article with her thoughtful suggestions.


3 Boyd K. Packer, “The Bishop and His Counselors,” *Ensign,* May 1999, 63. Church missionary work has recently been reorganized to operate at the ward level, see The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to General Authorities; Area Authority Seventies; Stake, Mission, and District Presidents; Bishops and Branch Presidents, 28 February 2002.


5 *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), 261-70. *Book 2* is distributed to ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders. The section of *Book 2* that discusses family history work is also available separately as *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders, Section 9: Temple and Family History Work* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998), and is available through Church Distribution (number 35709). I refer to both publications simultaneously as *Book 2* [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”].


7 *Book 2* [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”], 262.


9 Spencer W. Kimball, “The Angels May Quote from It,” *The New Era,* October 1975, 4-5. See also “Journals,” in *Family Home Evening Resource Book*
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(Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1983), 199-200.


18John 7:17.

19A checklist to facilitate the simultaneous accomplishment of both processes may be found in Appendix A.

20Bishop’s responsibilities for family history work are listed in *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 1: Stake Presidencies and Bishoprics*, 12. Members of the stake presidency have similar responsibilities, see page 4. For high council members, see *Book 2 [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”]*, 264-5.

21These questions are taken from *Teaching, No Greater Call: A Resource Guide for Gospel Teaching* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1999), 98-99.

22*Book 2 [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”]*, 262.

23Letter from the Bishopric of the BYU 147th Ward, July 1999. A sample letter is included in Appendix B.

24I drew up a one-page outline and then my wife and I taught the principles to another couple. Based upon our experience and feedback from the couple, I drafted the first version of a comprehensive teaching outline. This outline was given to six more family history consultants, who then taught families using the outline. After each consultant had experience with the outline, we all met to share feedback, and I prepared another draft. This process of teaching, feedback, and revision occurred four times until we came up with an outline that we finally felt comfortable with.

We ordered numerous copies of the Church resources and gave them to every member we taught. We encouraged members to keep the information in a binder for future reference.

The responsibilities of the high priest group leader are outlined in *Book 2* [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”], 266. See also *Book 2* [Section 1, “Melchizedek Priesthood”], 164.

In addition to bishoprics and high priest groups, Elders’ Quorum presidencies also have responsibilities for carrying out family history work in the ward, see *Book 2* [Section 1, “Melchizedek Priesthood”], 164. Additionally, family history work can help accomplish the purposes of Relief Society, *Book 2* [Section 3, “Relief Society”], 193; Aaronic Priesthood, *Book 2* [Section 2, “Aaronic Priesthood”], 177; Young Women, *Young Women Personal Progress: Standing as a Witness of God*, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2001), 16, 28, 30, 35, 51, 58; and Primary, *Book 2* [Section 5, “Primary”], 229.

Ward family history consultant responsibilities are outlined in *Book 2* [Section 9, “Temple and Family History Work”], 266.

At times, this training came from stake family history consultants, see *Ibid.*.


Stakes in Provo and Salt Lake City, Utah, and California have applied the teaching outline and program tips. Other states (cities) include Arizona (Mesa), California (Flintridge, San Dimas), Colorado (Arvada, Littleton), Indiana (Columbus), Iowa (Iowa City), Kansas (Cherryvale), Maryland (Owings Mills), Massachusetts (Lunenburg, Springfield), Ohio (Cleveland Heights), Oklahoma (Chickasha), Texas (Fort Worth), Utah (North Ogden, Orem, Provo, Salt Lake, Willard), Virginia (McLean), Washington (Enumclaw, Kent, Seattle, Spokane).


Appendix A

Training Teachers

☐ Call (or designate) a ward family history consultant to be the ward leader.*

☐ Train the leader in the ward program (this training may come from ward/stake leaders).

☐ Call (or select) a second consultant for the ward leader to train.

☐ Upon completion of the training, both leader and consultant may train another consultant until all consultants are trained in the same way.

☐ As consultants are trained, assign them to teach members who have asked to be taught, and who have obtained information.

☐ Follow up with the consultants each month, and report to the bishopric each month.

☐ Call and train consultants as the number of interested ward members increases.

* This leader may be the high priest group leader or designated assistant.

Teaching Ward Members

☐ While consultants are being trained, begin to let members know what is happening, and discover which ward members would like a consultant to visit them in their homes and teach them about family history work (a sign-up list passed around any class will do).

☐ Make arrangements for a consultant to teach the bishop and his family as soon as training is completed.

☐ Teach an introductory lesson to several members at once. Instruct them to obtain current family history information from family members. Note: It may take a while for members to obtain this information, so give the lesson as soon as possible to allow them time to obtain their own information.

☐ Follow up with ward members to find out when they obtain family information.

☐ As soon as a ward member obtains his/her family information, assign a consultant to teach the member.

☐ Continue to discover other ward members who are interested in learning about family history work. Be creative and have fun.
Appendix B

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the importance of temple ordinances for the living and the dead in these words: “Let me assure you that these are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect” (D&C 128:15).

This saving work is accomplished as members identify their own kindred dead, request temple ordinances if needed, and provide these ordinances by proxy if possible. It is the desire of the bishopric and leadership of the ________ Ward that every member of the ward gain a testimony of the importance of family history work, and gain the skills necessary to perform their own work and to help others perform their work. In accordance with this desire the ward has established the following goals:

Each ward member should hold a current temple recommend and go to the temple regularly. Regular temple attendance helps members recall their own covenants, gain greater insight into the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel, and serve others (see D&C 76:5-10; 124:41).

Each ward member should begin or continue keeping a personal journal.

Each ward member should bring together documentary evidence on himself/herself (birth certificate, marriage license, etc.).

After documenting himself/herself, each ward member should move forward, documenting children; and backward, documenting parents and grandparents.

As a beginning, members should identify three to five generations of their ancestors and each member should submit at least one name to TempleReady.

Each ward member should complete the family history lessons while in the ward.

In order to accomplish these goals, there are a number of resources available to members.

_A Member’s Guide to Temple and Family History Work._ This booklet provides instructions on how to start identifying ancestors and providing ordinances for them.

_Ward family history consultants._ Consultants can help members identify and submit names of ancestors.

_Family History Centers™._ These centers provide extensive resources to help members identify their ancestors. The nearest Family History Center™ is located__________ and the hours are ____________.

_Family History Computer Programs._ These programs help members identify their ancestors and prepare their names for temple ordinances. A free copy of _Personal Ancestral File_ can be downloaded from the Church’s official website, www.familysearch.org.

All members should be engaged in some aspects of temple and family history work throughout their lives. In the words of President Hinckley, “We are responsible for the blessing, the eternal blessing, of all who have lived upon the earth, the uncounted, unnumbered generations of men and women who have lived upon the earth, all who today live upon the earth, and all who will yet live upon the earth. How great is our responsibility. We must stand a little taller and work a little harder to accomplish it” (Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley, 640).

As ward members serve their ancestors in this way, the promise of Elijah is fulfilled as their hearts are turned to their fathers (see D&C 110:15), and they become saviors on Mount Zion (see Obadiah 1:21).

(See _Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2_, pp. 261-70)