

Creating “Reaching Out to the One” Plans

Five years ago we created our Stake Purpose Statement which reads:

We invite all to come unto Christ and participate in the redemptive and enabling power of the Atonement. We encourage everyone to:

- **Seek personal revelation and conversion through regular study and prayer;**
- **Receive all saving ordinances and keep their associate covenants; and**
- **Progress, with our families, toward exaltation and eternal life.**

In order to have this great work move forward in a way that will bless the lives of a large number of Our Heavenly Father’s children we need to put forth our best efforts in planning and in carrying out our plans. Recently we have received inspired instruction from several leaders who have helped us understand the work that is before us and how to be successful in our efforts.

The purpose of this document is to outline a set of suggested steps that can be used in creating and implementing highly effective “Reaching Out to the One” plans.

Step 1

1. Provide copies of pages 4 – 12 of the “Leading a Great Ward Mission” booklet to each of the members of your Ward/Branch Council and invite them to study and ponder these pages, pray about how they apply to them and to come spiritually prepared to discuss this information at the next meeting of the Ward/Branch Council. (The pages can be copied from of the booklet “Leading a Great Ward Mission” on the “missionaryleaders.org” website)
2. Refer to page 10 of the booklet and review the paragraph that begins in the middle of the page. After this review make a decision about the frequency and content of your Ward/Branch Council Meetings in 2009. As the booklet points out, the greatest success occurs when two Ward/Branch Council meetings are held each month with one devoted exclusively to creating and then following the missionary (reaching out to the one) plan. Once you make this decision share it with the members of the Ward/Branch Council at your next meeting.
3. Hold the Ward/Branch Council meeting devoted entirely to discussing the promptings that members of the Council have received and begin the process of writing your “Reaching Out to the One” plan for 2009. The first step in the process is creating a Vision that describes what the ward or

branch will be like five years from now. This should be a short, clearly written statement that everyone in the ward or branch can understand and help accomplish. A good example appears at the top of page 8 in the "Leading a Great Ward Mission" booklet. It reads - "In five years we want two wards in Waltham, not one. Each ward will have more temple-worthy members than our present ward does today". Your statement should reflect what the leaders in your unit believe should occur. It should be something that will stretch people and require faith to accomplish, but it should also be achievable. If it is not achievable you will have little motivation to even try to reach the outcome that you describe.

4. The second thing to do during this meeting is to discuss and set a few preliminary Goals that will turn your Vision into reality. During 2009 we would like everyone to focus on three key areas: 1) Sacrament Meeting attendance 2) member referrals of people who the full-time missionaries are able to teach and 3) the number of essential saving ordinances performed. These Goals should be written in a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) manner. Here are examples of how your Goals should be written:
 - a. Increase average sacrament meeting attendance from the present 125 to 150 by the end of 2009.
 - b. Have 48 investigators who have been referred by ward/branch members taught by the full-time missionaries during the year.
 - c. Perform 60 sacred saving ordinances during the year.
 5. The third thing to do at this meeting is to invite Council members to commit to make the Vision and goals their own and to prayerfully determine what they will personally do to contribute to the accomplishment of the Ward/Branch Goals.
 6. As the final part of this meeting please ask Council members to meet with their presidencies to discuss and prayerfully ponder the Vision and Goals as well as what "Building Blocks" they want to accomplish during the year. Also ask them to bring these ideas with them to the next Ward/Branch Council meeting. (Information about Building Blocks can be found on page 8 and 9 of the booklet. A PowerPoint presentation, along with other helpful information, is also available on the missionaryleaders.org web site in the Creating a Ward Mission Plan section.)
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Step 2

Hold another Ward/Branch Council meeting to do the following:

1. Ask the Council members to share their feeling about the ward/branch plan and what personal success they have had in “inviting” since the last meeting.
2. Review, and, as needed, refine the Vision and Goals that were established during your first meeting. Make sure everyone agrees with these before moving forward with the rest of the planning process. If there are changes that need to be made, you should make them now because the Vision and goals will guide your activities as you move forward.
3. Discuss the proposed Building Blocks from each quorum and auxiliary leader. Ask the entire group to consider each idea to ensure that it follows the examples on pages 8 and 9 of the “Leading a Great Ward Mission” booklet. Please remember that one suggestion is that missionary work (inviting) should be naturally integrated into our existing activities and not be “extra work”. If additional ideas about these building blocks are needed, please refer to the Creating a Ward Mission Plan section of the web site.
4. At the conclusion of the discussion ask each member of the Council to take the feedback they have received back to their respective presidency meetings where they can again review the Vision, Goals and the proposed Building Blocks. Ask them to finalize their own Building Block and to return it to the Ward/Branch Clerk at least a week prior to the next Council meeting.

Step 3

Hold a third Ward/Branch Council meeting that is devoted to discussing your “Reaching Out to the One” plan. This meeting is designed to do the following:

1. Ask the members of the Council to share personal experiences they have had in “inviting” since the last meeting.
2. Review, and, as needed, refine the Vision and Goals that you established during your first meeting. Confirm that everyone is in agreement before moving forward to the next step of the planning process. If this is an area that the Council members are finding difficult you may want to view part or all the “The Mission of the Wilmington Ward” DVD for ideas.

3. Ask the Ward/Branch Clerk to provide written copies of the proposed Building Blocks so they can be reviewed and finalized.
 4. Prior to the meeting ask the Ward/Branch Clerk to create a tracking sheet with your Goals. This sheet should follow a similar format to the one at the top of page 11 in the booklet. Because we also want to increase the number of essential saving ordinances performed, each ward/branch should add this goal and the appropriate space to track results each month to the sheet.
 5. Read President Monson's counsel at the top of page 10 in the "Leading a Great Ward Mission" booklet and briefly discuss the importance of tracking progress toward goals. Then give everyone a copy of the tracking sheet and explain that this sheet will be updated monthly and discussed during each Ward/Branch Council Meeting. Ask members of the Council to commit to providing the necessary information for the monthly recaps and to implementing the building blocks.
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Step 4

During your next Ward/Branch Council Meeting please do the following:

1. Spend approximately 30 minutes evaluating the progress that has been made in achieving the Ward/Branch Goals. Include a discussion about each quorum and auxiliary's success in carrying out their Building Block activities.
 2. Confirm that the members of the Council and their presidencies are fully committed to accomplishing the Vision and Goals and discuss the need to make any adjustments.
 3. Review the tracking sheet that has been filled in with the monthly results and evaluate progress in reaching each of the three Ward/Branch Goals. Discuss successes and shortfalls to determine what should be done during the upcoming month.
 4. Establish plans to share your "Reaching Out to the One" plan with the members of your Ward/Branch.
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Step 5

Bishoprics and Branch Presidencies should share a copy of your plan with the member of the Stake High Council and the Stake Presidency member who has stewardship for your ward/branch. Ward/Branch Mission Leaders should send a

copy to the executive secretary. Please schedule a meeting with your High Council Advisor and Stake Presidency member to discuss your plan.

If after this meeting you feel that you want to make any modifications to your plan, you will want to share your reasons with the members of your Ward/Branch Council at your next Council meeting.

Step 6

Once you are happy with your plan, the next step would be to introduce it to your Ward/Branch members. During those meetings the objective would be to share the Vision, Goals and Building Blocks with those in attendance and help them understand how they can contribute. You should also ask them to commit to become personally involved in accomplishing the plan.

There are a number of additional resources available to help you prepare your presentations on the missionaryleaders.org web site. “The Mission of the Wilmington Ward” DVD also contains several segments that could be shown to help explain how to put the plan together.

Ongoing Activities

After everyone is aware of and involved in implementing the plan it is up to the Ward or Branch leadership to keep everything moving forward throughout the year. For Ward/Branch Councils “Reaching Out to the One” should either be the sole topic of one of your two meetings each month or it should occupy 20-30 minutes of your agenda if you only hold one meeting a month.

Each quorum and auxiliary presidency should make this a part of every presidency meeting that they hold and should ensure that the Building Blocks they have planned are fully implemented during the year. They should also encourage their members to pray for and actively seek opportunities to invite non-members and less active members to Church activities.

Leaders should include sharing stories about the challenges and successes of “inviting” in every meeting they conduct. Families should regularly share stories about their personal “inviting” experiences during family home evenings and at other times.

Every member of the Ward/Branch should participate in the 3 week “Teaching the Principles of Member Missionary Work” Sunday School class during the year. These lessons are available on the missionaryleaders.org web site.

Summary

We are convinced that “A great work is about to come forth” as we take all of the instruction that we have received and create Visions, set Goals, identify Building Blocks and make personal commitments to help Our Heavenly Father accomplish His great work of bringing to pass the eternal lives of His children.

Please contact a member of the Stake Presidency or the Stake High Council for clarification/direction.

As you embark on this work, we pray that you will find joy and excitement in the knowledge that great blessings will come to your ward family as you strive “in all diligence” to invite others to Come unto Christ. May we all be blessed and follow the example of the Master and reach out to the One.

The Stake Presidency