

*FOR STAKE AND WARD LEADERS*

# Encouraging Senior Missionary Service

15-Minute Presentation and Resources

# ENCOURAGING SENIOR MISSIONARY SERVICE

## 15-Minute Presentation and Resources

### Intended For:

- Adult members at stake conferences, elders quorum or Relief Society meetings, or other gatherings promoting senior missionary service

### Purpose

- To heighten awareness of away-from-home and live-at-home mission opportunities for senior members of the Church
- To encourage seniors to actively prepare for and respond to the invitation to serve missions
- To acquaint senior members with resources for exploring mission possibilities and beginning their own missionary recommendation process
- To encourage members to seek the guidance of the Spirit in following what President Russell M. Nelson calls “our divine mandate—that of preparing ourselves and the world for the Second Coming of the Lord” (“A New Normal,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, November 2020, 119)

### Preparation

- Read, ponder, and prepare spiritually to present these materials.
- Become familiar with the senior missionary website ([seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org)).

### Suggested Topics to Be Presented

1. Missionary service will bless you, your families, and the Church. Share the great blessings promised to those who choose to serve the Lord.
  - Mature members can provide a powerful example of faith to their families by serving a mission. By acting on the call to serve, they

set an example for their children and grandchildren that “in this family we serve missions!” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “We Are All Enlisted,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, November 2011, 46). This will create a legacy of faith in their families.

- The presenter may share a personal experience of how someone’s family has been blessed by another’s missionary service; or they can use Elder Robert D. Hales’s quote below (p. 4).
2. Types of senior missions — The Brethren have expanded senior missionary possibilities to allow for a variety of missionary needs and circumstances. All senior missionaries must be temple worthy.

**Senior missionaries** typically serve away from home and devote themselves full-time to their mission.

- Couples or single sisters may serve.
- They may not have dependents or be employed.
- The ecclesiastical leader is the president of the mission, temple, historic site, or area to which the missionaries are assigned.
- Some may be assigned to live at home and serve locally. Others may live at home and serve remotely.

**Senior service missionaries** live at home and serve locally or remotely from their home.

- Couples, single sisters, or single brothers may serve.
- Spouses do not always need to serve in the same assignment.
- They may have dependents living at home and may be employed.
- Their ecclesiastical leader is their stake president, and they report to the manager of the

service assignment.

- Time commitment is based on availability and the needs of the assignment, with a minimum number of hours per week fixed by the Area Presidency (typically 8 hours in the US and Canada).
  - Service missionaries may provide remote support from their home to an operation or mission across the world.
3. Senior missionaries have flexibility to serve differently from young missionaries.
    - Tracting is not required.
    - Learning a foreign language is not required.
    - Maintaining the same rigorous schedule is not required.
    - Senior missionaries may communicate with loved ones at home as often as they desire.
  4. Preparation for any great endeavor, including a senior mission, begins early.
    - Set a date, whether individually or as a couple, to serve a mission. Place the date where you will see it every day to remind you of your goal.
    - A goal without a plan is just a wish. Plan and prepare now! Wise planning will ensure that financial and family obligations allow for a senior mission.
    - If health or other circumstances prohibit serving away from home, you may consider serving a service mission while living at home.
    - Share examples of senior service opportunities in your specific stake or area.
  5. The Church has helpful online resources to aid in planning and preparation.
    - [Seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://Seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org) is an interactive and comprehensive website that lists thousands of missionary and service missionary opportunities. Senior members can enter information about their talents, skills, finances, etc., to direct them to appropriate opportunities.
    - The opportunities to serve are as diverse as the men and women who make up the membership of the Church. “If ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work” (Doctrine and Covenants 4:3).
  6. Invite the congregation to explore the website, watch the videos, explore available options, and pray about when they will be ready to serve the Lord as missionaries.
  7. Seniors can initiate a conversation with their bishop or branch president about a mission; they do not need to wait to be approached.
  8. The need for senior missionaries has not diminished.
    - There is a significant need for senior missionaries in your own area and all over the world.
    - The number of senior missionaries serving fills less than half of the needed positions, which leaves Area Presidents, mission presidents, and Church department leaders without the support they need.

## Scripture Resources

Matthew 25:34–40

Luke 10:30–37

1 Nephi 3:7

1 Nephi 13:37

Mosiah 2:17

Doctrine and Covenants 4

Doctrine and Covenants 31:3, 5

Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28

## Reference Material

**Russell M. Nelson, “Senior Missionary Moments,”**  
*Ensign*, April 2016, 66–67.



“The truth is, no senior missionary finds it convenient to leave home. Neither did Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, or Wilford Woodruff. They had children and grandchildren too, and they loved their families just as we do. But they also loved the Lord and wanted to serve Him. Someday we may meet these stalwarts who helped to establish this dispensation. When we do, we will rejoice that we did not seek the shadows when we should have served. ...

“If you are tempted to think you’re not needed, let me reassure you that you are. There is not a mission president in the Church who would not love to have additional couples serving in his mission. Seniors strengthen the younger elders and sisters. They provide support that helps others to serve better in their own responsibilities. And can you imagine what it means to a leader who has only been a member for a few years to have ready access to seasoned Church members? Senior couples are often a literal answer to the prayers of bishops and branch presidents.”

**Russell M. Nelson, “Senior Missionaries and the Gospel,”** *Ensign or Liahona*, November 2004, 81.



“At general conference in October 1925, President Heber J. Grant issued a clarion call for ‘men of mature years and sound judgment, who have had experience in the preaching of the gospel, . . . to go forth and labor in the mission field’ [in Conference Report, Oct. 1925, 10].

“As I extol the work of senior missionaries, I realize that there are many more who would like to serve but are not able to do so. Limitations imposed by age or by poor health deserve realistic appraisal, as do the important needs of family members. When desire burns within yet such limitations exist, you can extend your service through others. They can be your arms and legs, and you can provide needed funds. Still others can contribute time and talents as live-at-home missionaries. Each will be pleasing to the Lord, and each will receive His praise.”

**Jeffrey R. Holland, “We Are All Enlisted,”** *Ensign or Liahona*, November 2011, 46.



“We need thousands of more couples serving in the missions of the Church. Every mission president pleads for them. Everywhere they serve, our couples bring a maturity to the work that no number of 19-year-olds, however good they are, can provide. . . .

“Bishops and stake presidents, discuss this need in your councils and conferences. Sit on the stand in your meetings and prayerfully look into the congregation for impressions about those who should receive a call. Then counsel with them and help them set a date for service. Brethren, when that happens, tell your wives that if you can leave your recliner and the remote control for a few short months, they can leave the grandchildren. Those little darlings will be just fine, and I promise you will do things

for them in the service of the Lord that, worlds without end, you could never do if you stayed home to hover over them. What greater gift could grandparents give their posterity than to say by deed as well as word, 'In this family we serve missions! '"

**Vaughn J. Featherstone, "Too Wonderful for Me,"** *Ensign*, September 1998, 15–16.



"Some couples have a great misconception that missionaries must be doctrinarians, scriptorians, and proselyters and have missionary experience. Some mistakenly feel they will knock on doors all day and be subjected to the same hourly commitments and disciplines which younger missionaries are expected to abide. This is not so. . . .

"Our generation must do something that no other generation has ever done. We need thousands of couples desperately. . . .

". . . What a marvelous and sacred legacy we could bestow upon our children and our children's children."

**Robert D. Hales, "Couple Missionaries: A Time to Serve,"** *Ensign*, May 2001, 25, 27.



"What is the best way to teach our children—and grandchildren—light and truth? What is the most important way to set our families, both immediate and extended, in order? Is it possible that in spiritual matters our example speaks louder than our words? Temple marriage, family prayer, scripture study, and family home evening are all vitally important. But there is another dimension—the dimension of service. If we are willing to leave our loved ones for service in the mission field, we will bless them with a heritage that will teach and inspire them for generations to come. . . .

". . . It is proper for a mature sister [or brother] or couple to let their priesthood leaders know that they are willing and able to serve a mission. I urge you to do so."

**James E. Faust, "Acting for Ourselves and Not Being Acted Upon,"** *Ensign*, November 1995, 47.



"The Lord has a great work for each of us to do. You may wonder how this can be. You may feel that there is nothing special or superior about you or your ability. ...

"The Lord can do remarkable miracles with a person of ordinary ability who is humble, faithful, and diligent in serving the Lord and seeks to improve himself. This is because God is the ultimate source of power."

**Henry B. Eyring, "Act in All Diligence,"** *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 63.



"Plead that the Spirit will show you what the Lord wants you to do. Plan to do it. Promise Him to obey. Act with determination until you have done what He asked. And then pray to give thanks for the opportunity to serve and to know what you might do next."

## Videos

"Senior Missionary Opportunities" (2 minutes, <https://seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/srsite/help/training>) highlights the different types of senior missionary opportunities. [Download here.](#)

"Senior Missionary Service" (5 minutes, <https://seniormissionary.ChurchofJesusChrist.org/srsite/help/training>) shows how members can start exploring and planning for senior missions and addresses some common fears and challenges. [Download here.](#)

