

Administration of the Restored Church

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This is an inspiring sight indeed, and especially when one realizes who you are. I think I have said before to audiences in this building that you are the most blessed people in the world because you are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and you are citizens of a country where you enjoy liberty and freedom and can choose as you wish. Most of you have been raised in homes where you have been able to gain a testimony of the gospel; and you are attending the greatest university in the world, where the teachings of Jesus Christ are taught to you.

As we just mentioned, I should have been here last month, but I had laryngitis and was not able to speak. I appreciated very much Elder Ashton's substituting for me. He is a much younger man and a better speaker, and he is certainly liked by the youth throughout the Church. He chose a very difficult subject, but by research and exaggeration he did much better than the subject deserves. It seems that though one does not feel worthy of compliments he enjoys them.

I am very glad to be here with you this evening, and do hope and pray that the Spirit and blessings of the Lord will attend us while I discuss the subject I have chosen. Before doing so, however, I am very happy, and always honored, to bring to you the greetings and bless-

ings of President Kimball, the prophet of God. He loves the Lord's children and loses no opportunity to do what he can to help them, to bless them, and to assist them in preparing themselves for eternal life. It is a great privilege, opportunity, and blessing for me to be so closely associated with a prophet of God, and I join with him in wishing you the very best, and every success and happiness throughout the new year and always. Seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness will be of great help to you and assist you as you go forward in this program of working to gain eternal life.

What I hope to accomplish tonight is to help you understand and know that you belong to the church of Jesus Christ, which was founded on revelation and which still is directed by Jesus Christ through a prophet of God; and to let you see how the Church operates. Since this is a subject of great magnitude it will be necessary for me to deal with it rather sketchily and briefly.

N. Eldon Tanner was a member of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this fireside address was given at Brigham Young University on 8 January 1978.

I would remind you that, through revelation, we know that this earth was created for no other purpose than for you. For Eldon Tanner, for Dallin Oaks, for Mary Smith—and for each of you. Let us think of this in terms of individuals: the earth was created for *you*, that you might come to dwell here and prepare yourself through obedience to go back into the presence of our Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ, in the council in heaven, was chosen as the Savior of the world; and he came and gave his life willingly for us that we might enjoy eternal life. The Church as we have it today was established as a result of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appearing to that young boy, Joseph Smith; and from then on he was continually guided by revelation. We have the Book of Mormon—you know the story and I cannot take time to tell you about it—which was translated by revelation. The Aaronic Priesthood was restored by John the Baptist, and the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored by Peter, James, and John.

Regarding the establishment of the Church we read this:

The rise of the Church of [Jesus] Christ in these last days . . . by the will and commandments of God. . . .

Which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jun., who was called of God, and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church. [D&C 20:1–2]

We read further:

Behold, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ. [D&C 21:1]

We often hear the Church referred to as a democracy when, in reality, instead of being a church where the body is governed by people

elected as representatives, the Church is a theocracy where God directs his church through representatives chosen by him, as one of our Articles of Faith says: “We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof” (Article of Faith 5). That is the way in which Joseph Smith was chosen by the Lord as president of his church and set apart by those authorized by the Lord to do so.

It has always been a testimony to me, as I read the 107th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, to see how all offices of the priesthood were listed and the duties of each given to us. I should like to read a little more:

Of the Melchizedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the church, form a quorum of the [First] Presidency of the Church. . . .

And again, the duty of the President of the office of the High Priesthood is to preside over the whole church, and to be like unto Moses —

. . . Yea, to be a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet, having all the gifts of God which he bestows upon the head of the church. . . . [D&C 107:22, 91–92]

And again:

The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world. . . .

And they form a quorum [this is important] equal in authority and power to the three presidents [D&C 107:23–24]

The following is recorded in Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

President Smith next proceeded to explain the duty of the Twelve, and their authorities, which

is next to the present Presidency . . . ; also the Twelve are not subject to any other than the First Presidency, viz., "myself," said the Prophet, "Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams, who are now my Counselors, and where I am not [meaning the President of the Church], there is no First Presidency over the Twelve." [Joseph Fielding Smith, compiler, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 105–6]

At the death of Joseph Smith the Twelve became the presiding authority of the Church, with Brigham Young as president of the Twelve, and administered the affairs of the Church for three and a half years. Then Brigham Young was chosen as President of the Church, and he chose and ordained and set apart his counselors. Then there were three years and two months between his death and the installation of John Taylor as President of the Church. Following John Taylor's death it was one year and nine months before Wilford Woodruff was chosen, set apart, and ordained as President of the Church. Since then, just a few days have passed between the death of the President and the setting apart of the next President.

I would like to explain to you exactly what took place following the unexpected death of President Harold B. Lee on December 26, 1973. I was in Phoenix, Arizona, to spend Christmas with my daughter and her family when a call came to me from Arthur Haycock, secretary to President Lee. He said that President Lee was seriously ill, and he thought that I should plan to return home as soon as possible. A half-hour later he called and said: "The Lord has spoken. President Lee has been called home."

President Romney, who in my absence was directing the affairs of the Church, was at the hospital with President Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve. Immediately upon President Lee's death President Romney turned to President Kimball and said, "You are in charge." Not one minute passed between the

time President Lee died and the Twelve took over to preside over the Church.

Following President Lee's funeral, President Kimball called a meeting of the Apostles for Sunday, December 30, at 3 p.m. in the Salt Lake Temple council room. President Romney and I had taken our respective places of seniority in the Council, so there were fourteen of us present. Following a song, a prayer by President Romney, President Kimball, in deep humility, expressed his feelings to us. He said that he had spent Friday in the temple talking to the Lord, and had shed many tears as he prayed for guidance in assuming his new responsibilities and in choosing his counselors.

Dressed in our temple robes, we held a prayer circle; President Kimball asked me to conduct it and Elder Thomas S. Monson to offer the prayer. Following this, President Kimball explained the purpose of the meeting and called on each member of the Quorum in order of seniority, starting with Elder Ezra Taft Benson, to express his feelings as to whether the First Presidency should be organized that day or whether we should carry on as the Council of the Twelve. Each said, "We should organize now," and many complimentary things were spoken about President Kimball and his work with the Twelve.

Then Elder Ezra Taft Benson nominated Spencer W. Kimball to be the President of the Church. This was seconded by Elder Mark E. Petersen and unanimously approved. President Kimball then nominated his counselors: N. Eldon Tanner as first counselor, and Marion G. Romney as second, each of whom expressed willingness to accept the position and devote his whole time and energy in serving in that capacity. They were unanimously approved. Then Elder Mark E. Petersen, second in seniority in the Twelve, nominated Ezra Taft Benson as President of the Quorum of the Twelve. This was unanimously approved.

At this point all the members present laid their hands upon the head of Spencer W.

Kimball, and President Ezra Taft Benson was voice in blessing, ordaining, and setting apart Spencer W. Kimball as the twelfth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then, with President Kimball as voice, N. Eldon Tanner was set apart as first counselor and Marion G. Romney as second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. Following the same procedure, he pronounced the blessing and setting apart of Ezra Taft Benson as President of the Quorum of the Twelve.

There were then eleven members of the Twelve, and this would necessitate calling a new man to fill the vacancy in the Quorum. You may be interested to learn how the General Authorities are called. They are chosen by the President through inspiration and revelation as he considers the names of those who, at his invitation, have been recommended by members of the Twelve, together with those whom he might have been considering. Because of the inspiration and revelation involved, a General Authority is actually divinely appointed and is approved by the Council of the Twelve before being called and set apart.

I give you an example of how this works. Let me share with you an experience of President Heber J. Grant. While he was a member of the Council of the Twelve, when asked by the President of the Church to submit names, he repeatedly submitted that of a very good friend of his for consideration to fill existing vacancies among the Twelve. The man was never chosen, and President Grant is reported to have said at one time that if he ever became President of the Church and there was a vacancy to fill, he would call that man because he was so well qualified.

After he became President and it was necessary to fill a vacancy, he told the Lord that he knew whom *he* wanted, but that he wanted to select that man the Lord wanted and would like to have. The name of Melvin J. Ballard, whom President Grant knew slightly, but not

too well, came into his mind and kept recurring to let him know that he was the man who should be called; and he was nominated by President Grant and approved by the Twelve.

So let me give you my own experience. While serving as president of the Calgary Stake in Alberta, Canada, I was attending the general conference in Salt Lake City in October, 1960. On Friday evening I received a call at the Hotel Utah, where I was staying, advising me that President McKay wanted to see me Saturday morning—the next morning. Naturally, not knowing what he wanted, I slept very little that night. I met him in his office at the appointed hour. As I sat in a chair facing him, he looked me in the eye, put his hand on my knee, and said, “President Tanner, the Lord would like you to accept a call as a General Authority, as an Assistant to the Twelve.” Then he asked how I felt about it.

I do not know exactly what I said. I tried to assure him that I felt highly honored and very inadequate, but ready and willing to accept a call and to give my whole time and effort in the service of the Lord.

That morning my name was read, along with the names of Elders Franklin D. Richards and Theodore M. Burton, to be sustained as Assistants to the Twelve, with the other general officers of the Church. We were approved by the conference. Officers throughout the Church are selected in much the same way at their particular level.

At this point I might answer the question of how we deal with a dissenting vote. We had one at the October 1977 conference; some of you heard the proceedings and will remember that the dissenter wanted his vote recorded. This is the way we deal with a dissenting vote: all the people other than this one voted to sustain those who were presented, so I asked him to see Brother Hinckley. The purpose of asking him to see somebody is so that he can report why he was not prepared to support the slate of officers. That give him an opportunity, if

he knows some good reasons why a person should not be or is not qualified to be sustained, to tell the person assigned to see him; this person can then advise the First Presidency.

I should like to tell you of an experience I had when I was called to go to New Zealand to reorganize a stake. I had never met anybody living in New Zealand other than the president of the stake at the time. I asked for a list of the bishops and high council in that New Zealand stake, and as I read over the list I saw one name that just seemed to stand out. The name was Campbell. Each time I read the list I noticed it. Bishop Vandenberg was with me, and we interviewed all these people, after having prayed that we might be guided.

After all the interviews I said to Brother Vandenberg, "Let us call upon the Lord for direction." We did, and as we stood up I asked, "If you had the responsibility, whom would you choose as president of this stake?"

He said, "Bill Campbell." I had never mentioned his name to Bishop Vandenberg. This was another evidence that the Lord does direct these appointments.

Now let me outline briefly some of the activities of the Twelve. The Council of the Twelve is responsible for all the ecclesiastical matters of the Church under the direction of the First Presidency. It has the responsibility of overseeing all the administration of the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church carried on by members of the First Quorum of the Seventy. It has the responsibility of scheduling stake conferences throughout the Church and making assignments of the General Authorities to attend these different conferences, which are held weekly throughout the year except in July.

All of the General Authorities strive diligently to prepare themselves and to use the programs provided for the Saturday evening meeting as well as the general session on Sunday so as to motivate the people throughout the Church to better living. They meet with

the stake presidencies and the stake officers and discuss with them the progress they have made and ways and means of doing better. General Authorities are required to leave their families for at least two and sometimes three or four days to two weeks in order to fill conference assignments, tour missions, and so forth.

The Council of the Twelve also has the responsibility of planning seminars for new mission presidents and seminars once a year for the Regional Representatives. They are responsible for overseeing the work throughout the whole Church as it pertains to the ecclesiastical program. (As you will note, I later describe the work of the First Presidency does with the Twelve at their Thursday and other meetings.) The Twelve also meet regularly to hear the reports of the other General Authorities who have been out to stake conferences, and ways of improving the administration are discussed.

Before saying anything about the Seventy I should just like to repeat this to you. As the Church grew it was necessary to have assistance, and so it was decided to appoint some men as Assistants to the Twelve. Later, Regional Representatives of the Twelve were called who would be closer to the stake officers and could assist them directly.

It is interesting to note that it was in the 1970s that the Church had grown to a point where it was decided by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve to organize the First Quorum of the *Seventy*. At that time those who had been appointed as Assistants to the Twelve were ordained as Seventies and became members of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

More Regional Representatives were appointed, making it possible for the far-flung missions and stakes to have closer contact with those who had been chosen to assist in the administration of Church affairs. These Regional Representatives were men who had great experiences in administering the affairs of stakes, wards, and missions.

Now, regarding the Seventy we read: "The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve . . . , in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations" (D&C 107:34). May I read that again: "In building up the church and regulating *all* the affairs of the same in *all* nations." I shall say more about their responsibilities later.

The Patriarch to the Church gives blessings to members of the Church who may approach him for a blessing. As assigned from time to time, he also travels throughout the Church to give blessings in missions and areas where there are no patriarchs.

The members of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church are called, ordained, and set apart as any other General Authority except the President of the Church. Each member of the Presiding Bishopric may be called from any stake or mission in the Church. It is the duty of the Presiding Bishopric to preside over the temporal affairs of the Church as directed by the First Presidency.

I should like to explain to you how the Church is administered from headquarters. All matters pertaining to the administration of the Church come under the direction of the First Presidency, and the affairs are generally divided into three categories: First, those administered directly by the First Presidency; second, ecclesiastical matters administered by the Twelve under the direction of the First Presidency; and third, temporal affairs, as assigned to them, administered by the Presiding Bishopric under the direction of the First Presidency.

Let me list some of the things administered directly by the First Presidency: Area Conferences; Solemn Assemblies; Budgeting, Educational, Historical, and Personnel departments; temples; auditing; the Coordinating Council; and the Welfare Services.

Under the Twelve there are at present five departments. Each department is administered

by two or three Seventies, under the direction of the Twelve, with their staffs. They are, namely: Priesthood, Missionary, Genealogical, Leadership Training, and the Correlation departments. I shall endeavor to deal very briefly with only two or three of the departments. The Priesthood Department determines policies and procedures and provides training materials, manuals, and handbooks for the Melchizedek Priesthood, the Aaronic Priesthood, and the auxiliaries; supervises activity programs; and is responsible for Church magazines.

The Correlation Department, with its staff, checks all materials for study courses and magazines as to doctrine, coding, and so forth, and reports to the Correlation Committee, made up of the executive directors of each of these four departments plus the executive director of Correlation, together with the Presiding Bishop and the Commissioner of Education. Here all teaching and training materials are correlated with the idea of preparing the individual for temple work, missionary work, and responsibilities in different organizations of the Church, and preparing him for eternal life. This is the whole purpose of the Church, to prepare the individual for eternal life.

The Missionary Department provides missionary proselyting materials for preparing prospective missionaries and for use in the field, makes missionary assignments, and oversees the operation of visitors centers and other matters pertaining to the missionary program.

You may be interested in knowing how a missionary is called. A bishop should interview the prospective missionary before he talks to the parents about it so that he can determine the attitude and worthiness of the individual before anyone knows he or she is being considered. If he finds the person worthy and desirous of filling a mission, he discusses it with the parents; and then, if everything is in order, the bishop recommends him or her to the stake president, who also interviews the

individual as to worthiness and attitude. If found worthy and willing, he or she is recommended to the First Presidency.

In determining where he or she should be called to fill a mission, several factors are taken into consideration, such as the person's aptitudes as shown on the recommendation form and the missions which need missionaries at that time; and then, through inspiration, the person is called to the mission where he or she can best serve the Lord. He or she then receives a call from the President of the Church, and on receipt of the call each missionary is required to send a letter of response to the President.

I am reminded of a story about a missionary call which you may find of interest and which shows how the inspiration of the Lord directs this work. I could give you a dozen. But on one occasion, after the letters of call had been sent to a group of missionaries, the executive secretary of the Missionary Department received a telephone call from the mother of a boy who had received an assignment to a mission in the eastern part of the United States. The mother said that she and the father of the boy were extremely disappointed because the boy's father and grandfather had served missions in Germany, and they had expressed their desires that the boy also be called to a German mission.

The secretary asked the mother how the boy felt about it, and she replied that he was at school and that she had opened the letter in his absence. He did not yet know where he was to be called. The secretary expressed his surprise that the mother would open the only letter the boy might ever receive from the President of the Church and suggested that she call him back after the boy had read the letter.

The following day the mother called back most apologetically and said that the boy's reaction was one of complete satisfaction with the call. He had secretly been praying that he would *not* be called to a foreign mission.

Now regarding what we call decentralization: The great growth and expansion of the Church throughout the world has necessitated decentralization of administration, especially for the organizing and training of the members of the Church in developing areas—that is, where the Church is going forward in new areas. There are new branches, districts, wards, and stakes, comprised mostly of members who have had little if any experience in the administration of Church affairs. For example, in Caracas, Venezuela, which I visited about two years ago, the mission president called a meeting of the members. There were three or four hundred in attendance, none of whom had been in the Church longer than five years. Last year we organized a stake in Caracas, with the oldest member being in the Church only seven years. I am sure it is evident to everyone that much training and assistance must be given to this kind of organization in these developing areas.

To give you an idea of the growth in the Church from 1960 to 1976—that is, in the time that I have been a General Authority—the population more than doubled in those years. Outside the United States and Canada our membership has increased by 397 percent. In the last six years ward organizations outside the United States and Canada have increased from 278 to 892, and stake organizations from 48 to 143. Statistics as of September 1977 show the following totals: we have 862 stakes; 5,648 wards; 1,495 independent branches in stakes; 158 missions; and over 24,000 missionaries.

In order to meet and cope with our responsibilities, the world has been divided into zones and areas, presided over by Zone Advisers and Area Supervisors. Five of these zones and twelve areas are outside of the United States. All Zone Advisers and Area Supervisors, both in the United States and outside, are members of the First Quorum of the Seventy. The Zone Advisers of all zones throughout the world remain in headquarters.

Each Area Supervisor outside of the United States and Canada is assigned to live within his area.

Area Supervisors are over the Regional Representatives, who are made up, as I said, of experienced, qualified men chosen, where possible, from and living as near to the region as possible. Each Regional Representative works with several stakes and missions. This makes it possible for the leaders in the stakes and missions to be in close contact regularly with the Area Supervisors through the Regional Representatives, rather than to have to deal directly with headquarters in Salt Lake City; and the Area Supervisor is able to respond to and deal with many of the problems that need immediate attention. By this means much training and assistance can be given on the local level. The Area Supervisors report to the Zone Advisers, who in turn report to the Council of the Twelve.

Now, let us deal with the administration of the Presiding Bishopric. As I pointed out before, they are responsible for the administration of all the temporal affairs assigned to them by the First Presidency. This includes physical facilities, where they act as a service department to acquire land and to build and maintain buildings as required by the Ecclesiastical Division. They also supervise matters pertaining to finance, membership records, fast offerings, tithing, central purchasing, translation, and distribution. Then they have the heavy responsibility of directing the Welfare Services Department, whose vital program and policies are determined by the Welfare Services Committee comprise of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presiding Bishopric, and the Relief Society Presidency. Included in the Welfare Services program are the Deseret Industries operations throughout the world; stake, ward, and mission welfare programs; bishops storehouses; and so on.

In order to administer these things outside the United States and Canada there are

Presiding Bishopric Area Supervisors, who supervise these matters in the areas where they are assigned to live and over which they are responsible for the administration of the temporal affairs. Again, this makes it possible for the local people to get immediate attention for their problems, and provides proper training in all areas of administration. General Authority and Presiding Bishopric area supervisors cooperate fully in all matters.

We come now to the First Presidency, who meet every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday at 8 a.m. with a secretary who makes a complete record of all procedures. Their discussions include the correspondence which has been addressed to the First Presidency—which contains almost everything from questions about pierced ears to appeals from decisions of excommunication by the stake presidency and high council. There are questions about dress and grooming standards, hypnotism, Sabbath observance, scripture interpretation, sensitivity training, sealings, complaints against the local officers, reincarnation, donation of body parts to science or to others, cremation, transplants, legal matters, *ad infinitum*.

Besides these there are many other matters that need attention, such as the selection of new temple presidencies and decisions regarding when and where new temples should be built, and other matters to be discussed when meeting with the Council of the Twelve or the Presiding Bishopric. They also plan for the area conferences held throughout the world, and also solemn assemblies.

Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. they meet with the Expenditures Committee, which is made up of the First Presidency, four members of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric, where heads of different departments present their expenditure requirements for consideration, and allocations are made. Examples include requests by the Physical Facilities Department for acquisition of lands and of buildings

such as stake or ward houses, mission homes, visitors centers, and so on, and discussion of costs of maintenance. Also, the Presiding Bishopric presents requests for expenditures involving welfare projects.

Wednesday First Presidency meetings are used for hearing reports from heads of different departments that come directly under the First Presidency, such as the Historical, Personnel, and Public Communications departments. Appointments for important visitors are also scheduled for Wednesday mornings where possible. I am always impressed by the influence of the President of the Church has on these visitors as we receive direct and indirect feedback through correspondence or verbal reports.

Once a month on Wednesdays the First Presidency meets with the Combined Church Board of Education and Board of Trustees to deal with all matters affecting universities and colleges, institutes and seminaries, and other Church schools. Also on one Wednesday each month they meet with the Coordinating Council, which is composed of the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and Presiding Bishopric. There they discuss and decide on policies, procedures, and questions of administration to see that all divisions of responsibility are properly clarified and coordinated. Following this, they meet with the Welfare Services Committee, as mentioned previously.

On Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. they join with the Council of the Twelve in the upper room of the temple, where the Twelve have been convened since 8 a.m. It is in this room that the leadership of the Church has been directed by the Lord since the temple was completed. Here one experiences a special spiritual feeling, and at times senses the presence of some of these great leaders who have gone on before. Portraits of the twelve Presidents of the Church, and also of Hyrum, the Patriarch, hang on the walls. There are also paintings of

the Savior at the Sea of Galilee where he called some of his apostles, and others portraying his crucifixion and his ascension. Here we are reminded of the many great leaders who have sat in this council room, and under the direction of the Lord great decisions were made.

As the First Presidency enters this room at ten o'clock on Thursday mornings, we shake hands with all members of the Twelve, then change to our temple robes. We sing, kneel in prayer, and then join in a prayer circle at the altar, after which we change to our street clothes.

After discussing the minutes of the previous meeting, we consider such matters as the following: approval of changes in bishoprics as recommended by stake presidents—previously discussed in the meeting of the Twelve (you might be interested in knowing that during 1977 we approved an average of twenty-five to thirty new bishops every week); changes in stake, ward, mission, and temple organizations throughout the Church, including boundaries and officers; officers and administration of auxiliary organizations; matters brought in by the heads of different departments and our reports of stake conferences and other activities during the week, such as funerals, speaking engagements, and so forth. It is in this body that any change in administration or policy is considered and approved, and it then becomes the official policy of the Church. Let me relate an experience regarding these discussions.

I remember so well when a matter was being discussed where different members of the Twelve had differing views and expressed them freely. When President McKay summed up the discussion and said, "This is what I think we should do," I turned to the brother next to me and said:

"Isn't it wonderful to see how he always comes up with the right answer, and we all seem to feel that it is the right answer?"

My colleague turned to me and said, "You are listening to a prophet of God." This

is how we know that any decision that is made becomes the unanimous decision of the group, regardless of the feeling of any member prior to the decision.

On the first Thursday of every month the First Presidency meets with all the General Authorities—the members of the Twelve, the Patriarch to the Church, the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric. In this meeting all are advised of any changes in programs or procedures and instructed in their duties or responsibilities. The President calls on members to bear their testimony, after which we all dress in our temple clothes, partake of the sacrament, and have a prayer circle with all members present participating. At the conclusion of the prayer all, other than the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, are dismissed, and those remaining change to their street clothes and carry on with the regular business of the Thursday meetings. A recording secretary makes a report of all that is said and done.

Following each Thursday meeting the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve have lunch in a room assigned for that purpose. In this room we have a lovely picture of the Last Supper. This is a period of relaxation, and in conversation we exchange experiences and discuss matters of common interest. I could tell you some interesting discussions if I had time.

Friday at 9 a.m. the Presiding Bishopric meets with the First Presidency to give reports and discuss matters affecting the administration.

As you know, the Church has business corporations such as the Bonneville International Corporation, Beneficial Life Insurance Company, Hotel Utah, Zion Securities Corporation, *Deseret News*, and Deseret Mutual Benefit Association, operating in the interest of the Church and giving service to the public. Some have the erroneous idea that the Church pays no taxes. I would like to correct that impression and say that all Church-owned corporations pay taxes at the same rate as any other comparable corporation.

We hope and pray always—every day—that the Church is being administered as the Lord would have it administered by those who are placed in their responsible positions—the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Patriarch to the Church, the First Quorum of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric—and that the local officers may also be so blessed and directed. I bear testimony that the Church is directed by the Lord himself through a prophet of God and pray humbly that we may all appreciate that, appreciate our membership in the Church, and strive diligently to prepare ourselves for eternal life. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.