

Member - Missionary Exchange Program

Introduction

The Member - Missionary Exchange Program was implemented in such a way as to improve the overall coordination of the exchanges, enhance the spiritual experience for each companionship, and strengthen the members. The exchanges are intended to reach out to investigators and the less active, members who once held a growing testimony of the gospel. For reactivation visits, a special discussion was created by the Mission President.

Implementation

A. Key Individuals

The successful implementation of the Member - Missionary Exchange Program involves four key individuals working together with and by the spirit.

1. Bishop / Branch President

The bishop / branch president is to be the spiritual leader for the Member - Missionary Exchange Program. His responsibilities with respect to the Exchange Program include:

- a. Along with his counselors and the PEC members, prepares a list of individuals to be visited. These individuals should come from several pools of people.
 - Investigators. Investigators for whom an appointment was already made should be visited.
 - Recent converts. Recent converts can be taught the new member lessons and are often times a source of new investigators.
 - Less active members. Less active members once held a testimony and that testimony can be rekindled. Less active members who accept the invitation to return to church and keep the commitment should continue to be visited and strengthened in the gospel.
 - Less active members who warmly received previous visits but have not yet committed to return to church.
- b. The bishopric / branch presidency and PEC members should suggest lessons or subjects for discussion for specific individuals if inspired to do so.
- c. Preside at and conduct a brief spiritual meeting prior to the exchanges. In this meeting, the companionships are paired and visit assignments are made. This meeting should begin with a prayer inviting the spirit to abide with and lead each companionship.
- d. Preside at and conduct a brief meeting at the conclusion of the exchanges where each companionship returns and reports.
- e. Follow up in PEC and Ward / Branch Correlation Council to ensure that the needs of the individuals coming from the exchange visits are being addressed. These might

include; do they have a friend, do they have a calling, are they being nourished in the gospel?

2. Exchange Coordinator

An Exchange Coordinator should be called and set apart by the bishopric / branch presidency. This calling involves several significant responsibilities.

- a. Calls and schedules appointments for each member - missionary companionship. These appointments should be coordinated with the confirmed appointments that the Full Time Missionaries already have for the evening. The calls to schedule appointments must be made in advance and confirmed the evening before the visits. Back-up appointments should be made in case one of the other appointments is not kept. The bishopric / branch presidency will provide a list of individuals to be called.
- b. Prepares and maintains a record of the exchange visits. The record should include such entries as; date, individual visited, the companionship, lesson taught or topic discussed, the challenge that was issued, was there a commitment to attend church the following Sunday, can a return visit be made, and did the individual attend church the following Sunday.
- c. Reports to the bishop / branch president on the progress of the exchanges and commitments kept.
- d. The bishop / branch president should not be the Exchange Coordinator.

3. Full Time Missionary / Ward Missionary

The Full Time Missionary / Ward Missionary is to teach the lesson during the visit. Examples of lessons include:

- Investigator discussions
- New member lessons
- The special discussion created by the Mission President for reactivation
- Lessons to review specific subjects or needs raised by the individual in a previous visit
- A special lesson / challenge from the bishop / branch president (commitments for regular scripture study, personal prayer, Family Home Evening, preparing for temple attendance, etc.)

4. Member

The member in the member - missionary companionship is responsible for the following:

- Bear testimony during the visit
- Using the commitment pattern, ask the individual, "Will you come to church this Sunday?" This must be in the form of a direct question to the individual rather than an expression of "We'd sure love to see you at church this Sunday."
- Assist the missionary in teaching the lesson as the spirit dictates or as asked by the missionary.
- Provides the report to the bishop / branch president at the brief meeting held at the conclusion of the visits.

Members should be assigned to participate in the exchange visits, to a specific date and time, by the priesthood leader or auxiliary leaders. Do not ask for volunteers. The assignments to participate during a given month should be given to the member at the first of that month, rather than the Sunday before the visit. Where possible, all members of the unit should receive an assignment to participate rather than using the same few members over and over. The blessings from participation should be shared with everyone in the unit.

B. The Visit

The members and missionaries should meet at the chapel or another central location at a specific time. Meeting at 7:00 pm will permit the member to have some time with the family before the exchange. This brief meeting is presided over and conducted by the bishop / branch president. In this meeting, the companionships are assigned, appointments distributed, and special instructions given. A prayer should be offered at the start of this meeting, asking for guidance by the spirit in the evening visits. This meeting should conclude about 7:15 pm.

At the start of the visit, the member should take the lead, introducing everyone, and letting the individual know that the Full Time Missionary has a short lesson. During the visit, the member should participate in the lesson as requested by the Full Time Missionary or as inspired by the spirit. At the conclusion of the lesson, the member should bear their testimony and ask the individual if they will come to church the next Sunday. If a challenge has been given to the individual, get a commitment and then follow-up on that challenge.

The member - missionary companionship should conclude the visit in time to return to the chapel at about 8:45 pm. The bishop / branch president should hold a brief meeting and ask each companionship to report on the visit and commitment received. This report out meeting should conclude at about 9:00 pm with a prayer.

C. Thoughts for Success

The success of the Member - Missionary Exchange Program is very dependent upon the enthusiasm of the bishop / branch president and other leaders in the unit. Some points to remember.

1. The visits should be repetitive, especially if the individual let the companionship in or did not tell them not to come back. If visits have been made to everyone in the unit, start over. Go back and visit them again.
2. The exchange visit is not to be a Home Teaching visit to active members. On the other hand, the exchange visit should be recorded as a Home Teaching visit.
3. With permission from the Mission President, consider including the Full Time Missionaries from surrounding units in the exchanges. This can have a significant impact on the number of visits made.
4. Wards should consider holding the exchanges at least twice a month. Branches should consider exchanges each month if travel and logistics permit.

5. Share success stories with the members of the unit. As members return to church and converts are baptized, help the members see the great influence they have had in this program. There will be an increase in the number of baptisms and reactivations. The Lord will bless you.
6. Organization of the visit assignment is important to enable each member - missionary companionship to be successful. There are many ways that these can be. One suggestion that may be helpful is to make use of a form that is provided to every companionship the evening of the visit. An example of a form is provided in the attachment to this program outline.

Member - Missionary Exchange

Date: _____

Companionship: Member: _____
Missionary: _____

Individual to Visit: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Family Members: _____

Subject for Visit: _____

Previous Commitment: _____

Concerns or Problems: _____

Commitment Accepted: _____

- Outline for Visit:
- a. Introduction
 - b. Follow-up on prior commitment
 - c. Here on assignment from bishop / branch president with a message
 - d. Message delivered
 - e. Testimony of principle taught
 - f. Ask for commitment to principle taught
 - g. Invite to church
 - h. Leave with a prayer