

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MINISTRY MEETING

1. The Life and Ministry Meeting will proceed as outlined in the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* and according to the instructions that follow.

2. **Opening Comments:** 3 minutes or less. Each week, after an opening song and prayer, the Life and Ministry Meeting chairman will generate anticipation for the program to follow, including highlighting one of the questions to be considered during the Treasures From God's Word section of the meeting.

3. Treasures From God's Word:

- **Talk:** 10 minutes. The theme and an outline of two or three main points are provided in the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. This talk is to be assigned to an elder or a qualified ministerial servant. When a new Bible book is scheduled in the weekly Bible reading, a video will be played to introduce it. The speaker may draw parallels from the video to the theme. However, he should be certain to cover the additional points noted in the workbook.
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** 8 minutes. This is a question-and-answer part to be handled by an elder or a qualified ministerial servant. Those called on should offer comments of 30 seconds or less.
- **Bible Reading:** 4 minutes or less. This part will be assigned to a brother. The student should read the assigned material without giving an introduction or a conclusion. The meeting chairman will be especially interested in helping students to read with accuracy, understanding, fluency, proper sense stress, modulation, appropriate pausing, and naturalness.

4. **Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry:** During the first week of every month, the Prepare This Month's Presentations part will be presented in place of the three student assignments. At times, the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* may provide specific settings and instructions for the student presentations, such as telephone witnessing or public witnessing.

- **Prepare This Month's Presentations:** 15 minutes. Videos of model presentations will be shown and discussed to prepare the congregation to offer the magazines or the featured publication. This part will be assigned to an elder or a qualified ministerial servant.
- **Initial Call:** 2 minutes or less. This student presentation may be assigned to a brother or a sister. When assigned to a brother, the assistant should be a member of his family or a brother in the congregation. The student should choose a greeting appropriate for the area.
- **Return Visit:** 4 minutes or less. This student presentation may be assigned to a brother or a sister. When assigned to a brother, the assistant should be a member of his family or a brother in the congregation. The student and assistant may be seated at a table or be standing.
- **Bible Study:** 6 minutes or less. This student presentation may be assigned to a brother or a sister. When assigned to a brother, the assistant should be a member of his family or a brother in the congregation. The student and assistant may be seated at a table or standing. From time to time, elders may receive this assignment.

5. **Living as Christians:** After an opening song, the next 15 minutes of this section will consist of one or two parts designed to help the audience to apply God's Word. Unless otherwise indicated, these parts may be assigned to elders or qualified ministerial servants, with the exception of local needs parts, which should be handled by elders.

- **Congregation Bible Study:** 30 minutes. This should be assigned to a qualified elder.

6. **Concluding Comments:** 3 minutes or less. The Life and Ministry Meeting chairman will review particularly helpful points from the meeting and will preview material to be considered the following week. He should mention the point from the *Life and Ministry Meeting Answer Sheet (lma)*. He might mention a question that will be posed on the next week's meeting, giving the brothers something to think about and watch for. He might indicate, by way of a reminder, the names of the students who are assigned to give parts the next week, provided there is time for this. Unless otherwise indicated, any necessary announcements should be made and any necessary letters should be read to the congregation by the chairman during his concluding comments. If any announcements cannot be made or letters cannot be read in the time allotted for the chairman's concluding comments, he should conserve time in other ways or ask the brothers handling parts on the Living as Christians section of the meeting to abbreviate their parts as necessary. (See paragraph 8.) The meeting will conclude with song and prayer.

7. **Counsel:** Following each of the four student assignments, the Life and Ministry Meeting chairman has approximately one minute to provide commendation and counsel based on the *Ministry School* book. When the chairman introduces a student's assignment, he will not announce the point of counsel that the student is working on. However, when the student's presentation is finished, and after some appropriate words of commendation, the chairman may announce the point that the student is working on and state why the student did well on that point or kindly explain why it would be beneficial for the student to give that particular point further attention. According to the need of each student, additional constructive counsel based on the *Ministry School* book may be given privately after the meeting or at another time, either on the assigned speech quality or on another aspect of the presentation. The chairman should update the counsel form in the student's *Ministry School* book and advise the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer accordingly.—See paragraphs 11 and 14 for instructions regarding the role of the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer and the auxiliary counselor.

8. **Timing:** No part should go overtime, nor should the remarks of the Life and Ministry Meeting chairman. The student assignments should tactfully be stopped when the time is up. If other parts on the meeting go overtime, private counsel should be given by the auxiliary counselor. The entire meeting, including songs and prayers, should last 1 hour and 45 minutes.

9. **Visit of Circuit Overseer:** When the congregation has the visit of the circuit overseer, the program should proceed as described in the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* with the following exceptions: The Congregation Bible Study portion of the Living as Christians section will be replaced with a 30-minute service talk given by the circuit overseer. Prior to the service talk, the Life and Ministry Meeting chairman will review the program just held, preview the following week's program, make any necessary announcements, and then introduce the circuit overseer. After the service talk, the circuit overseer will conclude the meeting with a song of his choice.

10. **Week of Assembly or Convention:** During the week of an assembly or convention, no congregation meetings are held. The material scheduled for meetings during such weeks should be considered individually or as a family.

11. **Life and Ministry Meeting Overseer:** An elder selected by the body of elders will serve as the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer. He will be responsible for ensuring that this meeting is well-organized and handled according to these instructions. He should maintain good communication with the auxiliary counselor. As soon as the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* for a given month becomes available, the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer will make the student assignments for that month. The student assignments include the Bible Reading assignment during the Treasures From God's Word section and the Initial Call, Return Visit, and Bible Study assignments during the Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry section. (See paragraph 4.) Guidelines for those enrolling as students are set forth in the *Ministry School* book, page 282, and these guidelines still apply to the Life and Ministry Meeting. Each of the student assignments, including the counsel point

the student is working on, should be distributed *at least three weeks prior* to the date of the assignment by means of the *Our Christian Life and Ministry Meeting Assignment* (S-89) form. (Please note that some of the points of counsel on pages 79-81 of the *Ministry School* book will not apply to the Bible Reading assignment or to demonstrations.) Information regarding student assignments for the month should also be conveyed to the appropriate Life and Ministry Meeting chairmen and, if applicable, to the appropriate counselor for an auxiliary class.

12. Life and Ministry Meeting Chairman: Each week, one elder will serve as the chairman for the duration of the Life and Ministry Meeting. He will be responsible for preparing the introductory and concluding comments. He will also introduce all of the parts and, depending on the size of the body of elders, he may be responsible for handling certain parts on the meeting as well. The body of elders will determine which elders are qualified to fill this role. The qualified elders would normally be assigned as chairmen periodically. Depending on local circumstances, the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer may be used as chairman more frequently than the other qualified elders. If an elder is qualified to conduct the Congregation Bible Study, likely he is also qualified to serve as the meeting chairman. Please keep in mind, however, that the elder who serves as chairman will be required to offer loving and helpful commendation and counsel to those who have student assignments. The chairman is also responsible for ensuring that the meeting concludes on time. (See paragraphs 6 and 8.) If the chairman wishes and if there is adequate space, a standing microphone may be positioned on the platform so that he may introduce each ensuing part while the brother giving the part is taking his position at the speaker stand. Likewise, the chairman may wish to sit at a table on the platform when introducing the student assignments and offering counsel. This may conserve time.

13. Coordinator of the Body of Elders: The coordinator of the body of elders will make assignments of all meeting parts other than the student assignments. This includes the assignment of the meeting chairman for each week from among those approved by the body of elders. In cooperation with the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer, the coordinator of the body of elders should ensure that a copy of the assignment schedule for the entire meeting is posted on the information board.

14. Auxiliary Counselor: Whenever possible, it is good to use an elder who is an experienced speaker to fill this role. The auxiliary counselor's responsibility will be to give private counsel, if needed, to elders and ministerial servants regarding any speaking assignments they may handle, including parts on the Life and Ministry Meeting, public talks, and conducting or reading at the *Watchtower* Study or Congregation Bible Study. (See paragraph 8.) If there are a number of elders in the congregation who are capable speakers and teachers, then a different qualified elder may serve as the auxiliary counselor each year. It is not necessary for the auxiliary counselor to offer counsel after each assignment.

15. Auxiliary Classes: Depending on the number of students, congregations may hold auxiliary classes for the student assignments. Each auxiliary class should have a qualified counselor, preferably an elder. Where necessary, a well-qualified ministerial servant may fill in. The body of elders should decide who may serve in this capacity. The counselor should follow the procedure described in paragraph 7. If auxiliary classes are held, students should be asked to go to the auxiliary classrooms following the Digging for Spiritual Gems portion of the Treasures From God's Word section of the meeting. They should rejoin the rest of the congregation following the Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry section of the meeting. Since videos of sample presentations are considered during the first meeting of the month, no auxiliary classes will be held then, except for foreign-language groups.

16. Videos: Selected videos will be used in connection with this meeting. These will be made available to elders (and, in some cases, ministerial servants) in the "Event Media" section of jw.org. On occasion, videos such as those demonstrating sample presentations may be played at meetings for field service after they have been shown at the Life and Ministry Meeting.