



WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

TELEPHONE 020 8906 2211

SDH:SSM March 21, 2011

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Attending the Pioneer Service School abroad

Dear Brothers:

We are finding that there are an increasing number of regular pioneers who request attendance at a Pioneer Service School abroad. We therefore feel it is an appropriate time to write and explain the procedure involved in making these arrangements and provide some suggestions that will help with our administration in the branch office.

It is understandable and preferable for students to attend a class in a language in which they can gain the greatest benefit. As you know, all Pioneer Service Schools in Britain and Ireland are conducted in English, so we appreciate why many make the wise decision to attend a class in another country in their mother tongue. During the last two years we have therefore arranged for regular pioneers to attend classes in Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and Taiwan.

What should you do if a regular pioneer in your congregation wants to attend a Pioneer Service School and requests attendance in a class in another country? The service committee should write to the Pioneer School Desk providing information about this request. Please provide the full name of the pioneer and their pioneer identification number and whether or not they will require accommodation. It would also be helpful to receive details concerning any preference as to where in the country they would like to attend the school. For instance, it may be that they would like to associate with pioneers from a previous congregation or use the opportunity to stay with family or friends.

If we agree that the pioneer qualifies to attend the Pioneer Service School, we will write to the branch office of the desired country and ask them to make the necessary arrangements. In some instances it may not be possible to attend in the country of origin, but another country may be hosting classes in the desired language. As soon as that branch office confirms that the pioneer may attend we shall correspond with you, providing details relating to the venue and dates of the class.

All the arrangements should be made between the respective branch offices. You should not write to another branch office directly or encourage the pioneer to contact a circuit overseer who may be instructing at a class in another country unless we ask you to do so. Pioneers should not assume that it is possible for them to attend. *They should not book flights until we have confirmed the arrangements.* Also, those attending the school for a second time may not have sufficient years of full-time service required to be enrolled in a school for that country.

As you will appreciate, a great deal of administration is involved in making the arrangements for regular pioneers to attend the Pioneer Service School in another country. We would therefore be grateful if you could keep in mind the following reminders:

- Prior to confirming the dates and venue that the pioneers would like to attend, please make certain they can have the time off from their secular employment.
- Do the dates coincide with a circuit visit, assembly, or convention they may wish to attend?
- If required, can they obtain a valid visa in time for the class? Do they have a current passport?
- Are there health problems or family situations that would make it very difficult for them to attend a class abroad?
- Can they afford the financial cost of travelling to another country?
- If a pioneer is pregnant or has special needs, have matters been considered in a practical and realistic way?
- Do they *really* want to attend a school in another country?

Please be assured that we are very pleased to make arrangements for our regular pioneers to attend the Pioneer Service School in other countries. We also fully appreciate that “time and unforeseen occurrence” can befall all of us and often the best made plans have to be altered. (Eccl. 9:11) Yet we believe that if careful consideration is given to the above-mentioned points by bodies of elders, *prior to writing to our branch office*, all will benefit.

Thank you for your cooperation and for giving this matter your close consideration. If you have any questions about pioneers attending schools in other countries, please do not hesitate to contact the Pioneer School Desk in the Service Department and we will be pleased to help.

We take this opportunity to send our warm brotherly love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watch Tower B. & J. Society
OF BRITAIN

cc: Travelling overseers

PS to the secretary:

This letter should be retained in the congregation’s file with other correspondence related to pioneers and it replaces the letter to all bodies of elders (for Britain only) dated ST:SK February 1, 2008, which should be removed from the file and destroyed.