

# Faithfully Maintaining Our Places of Worship



“In turn the workers in the house of Jehovah used it to mend and repair the house. . . . And the men did the work faithfully.”  
—2 Chron. 34:10, 12.

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To be studied by all who are members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses and who are Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servants. As you study this manual, please look up and read every scripture cited.

**This manual is for your use only while you are an Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servant. It may not be copied, duplicated, or distributed to others. At the conclusion of your service as an Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servant, this manual must be turned in along with all keys and any identification that may have been provided to you.**

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## **Introduction**

1. It is a grand privilege to be able to help our brothers by maintaining suitable places to worship Jehovah and to support the advancement of the good news. (Matt. 24:14) Thank you for making yourself available! Be assured that your willingness to serve is greatly appreciated by Jehovah and our brothers. (Isa. 6:8) Some of you serve far away from your families. Please be assured that we love you and that the many sacrifices you make to advance Kingdom interests do not go unnoticed.

2. Along with your privilege of service also come responsibilities. (Luke 12:48) This manual will explain what is expected of you as an Assembly Hall servant.\* Please remember that participating in this program involves adapting to procedures and customs that may require you to make adjustments in order to serve and work harmoniously with others. Also, please note that being an Assembly Hall servant and a member of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses does not give you any special designation that exalts you above your brothers.

### **Construction and Maintenance Organization**

3. The Worldwide Design/Construction Department (WDC), under the direction of the Publishing Committee of the Governing Body, oversees the scheduling and expediting of worldwide construction and renovation projects. This includes acquiring property for, planning, designing, engineering, constructing, renovating, and maintaining the organization's facilities. The WDC supervises the four Regional Design/Construction Departments (RDCs) located around the world. The WDC also provides the guidelines and procedures followed by the Local Design/Construction Departments (LDCs) located at each branch. The LDC organizes the actual construction and maintenance of Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, and other theocratic facilities within their branch territory under the direction of their local Branch Committee.

4. The operation and maintenance of Assembly Halls and other theocratic facilities requires a significant investment of time, effort, and dedicated resources. Proper maintenance is just as important as proper construction. Therefore, when the size of the facility warrants it, qualified brothers and sisters are appointed to serve as Assembly Hall servants in order to help oversee and coordinate the normal operation, cleaning, and maintenance of the building and grounds. Since the majority of this work is usually done by local volunteers and

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\* Please note that throughout this manual, we will be referring to Assembly Hall servants. However, Bible school facility servants who are not assigned to an Assembly Hall also receive a copy of this manual. The guidelines and principles herein apply equally to servants in each of these privileges of service.

nearby congregations, Assembly Hall servants also help organize congregation volunteer assignments and ensure that each volunteer is prepared for his or her assigned tasks. (2 Chron. 24:13) At times, Assembly Hall servants may be assigned to care for literature depots, school facilities, convention equipment depots, and the like, especially if the Assembly Hall complex is affected by these in some way. Assembly Hall servants usually live and work full-time at the site.

### **Program Requirements**

5. You were appointed as an Assembly Hall servant because you met the requirements and there was a need for your help. It is hoped that you will continue to qualify for this special privilege of service. (Gal. 5:22, 23) The finest assets to Jehovah's organization are mature, spiritual men and women. Thus, all Christians should strive to "have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong." (Heb. 5:14) Your continued progress as a spiritual person should be evident to all. (1 Tim. 4:15) How can you accomplish this? By making full use of all the spiritual provisions available to you and then applying what you learn.

6. Arrangements have been made for a number of spiritual programs that will help you to continue making progress. Depending on the number of servants assigned to your facility, arrangements for considering the daily text will vary. The arrangement may be to consider the daily text individually, as a married couple, or as a group each workday. At facilities where there are several Assembly Hall servants, all who serve as elders can have the privilege of conducting the text discussion. The branch will provide you with the Morning Worship Bible reading and *Yearbook* schedule to follow each weekday. Depending on local circumstances, you may at times be connected to the Morning Worship program conducted at Bethel. This program includes a prayer, followed by an upbuilding 15-minute discussion of the daily text. You are expected to attend unless you are ill or have the day off. (Please note that those who are not appointed as Assembly Hall servants are not invited to attend the Morning Worship program originating from Bethel unless they are approved overnight guests.) On days when a number of local volunteers are assigned to work at the Assembly Hall, a separate discussion of the daily text should be arranged locally with all who are volunteering.

7. Each week on Monday evening, the Bethel family has an encouraging consideration of *The Watchtower*. At times, a special lecture or program is presented afterward. Depending on local circumstances, you may be tied in to these programs or a recording of a program may be shown. We encourage you to make it a habit to study *The Watchtower* on Monday evening whether you are connected to the Bethel program or not.

8. At least once a year, a branch representative or a member of the Branch Committee will arrange an upbuilding visit with you. Furthermore, the branch will enroll Assembly Hall servants in the Pioneer Service School. You may also attend the meeting held by the circuit overseer with pioneers in connection with a circuit assembly if it is held at your Assembly Hall. However, since this meeting is generally held during your normal work period, you will need to take personal time away if you desire to attend.

9. We encourage you to be resolved to read a portion of the Bible every day of your life. (Ps. 1:1, 2; Acts 17:11) The importance of staying strong and progressing spiritually, 'making sure of the more important things,' cannot be overemphasized. (Phil. 1:10) Thus your life as a full-time servant will be purposeful, and you will be happy in promoting the interests of Jehovah's Kingdom.—John 13:17.

10. In addition, you will be assigned to a local congregation. Regularly attending and participating in all congregation meetings and supporting the field service activity are basic Christian requirements. Taking full advantage of these provisions is essential to your progress and spiritual growth and will enable you to be a blessing to others.—Ps. 22:22; Heb. 13:15.

11. In addition to being spiritual people, Jehovah's servants endeavor to be diligent, skillful workers. (Prov. 22:29) It is important to maintain the habit of being punctual and to give a full day of service to Jehovah. (Luke 16:10) Generally, your assignment should be 40 hours per week, consisting of five 8-hour workdays, Monday through Friday. When you are assigned to work on a weekend during a circuit assembly or regional convention, your work schedule for the following week will be adjusted accordingly, with one day off from work for each day you worked on the weekend. Local elders should be trained in Assembly Hall operations so as to help care for this responsibility during the majority of weekend events. By maintaining this schedule, you will have time on the weekends to care for important personal matters, including going in the ministry and attending meetings with your assigned congregation. At times, it may be necessary to work a few additional hours, for which there is no arrangement to have an equal amount of time off. It should always be a joy to serve our brothers.—Mark 9:35.

12. Jehovah hates what is bad, and so should we. (Ps. 97:10; Eph. 5:1) Jehovah's servants do not lie, steal, or become busybodies in other people's affairs. (Prov. 6:16-19; 26:17; 1 Pet. 4:15) It is expected that we will have long ago stopped any unclean habits or unscriptural practices that we may have had before learning the truth. (2 Cor. 7:1; Rev. 22:11) Our dealings with others should be honest and truthful at all times. Our speech should always be positive

and upbuilding, never profane or obscene. If a person has in his possession or makes use of pornography, morally corrupting music, or videos that feature violence, demonism, or sexual immorality, a determination will be made as to whether he qualifies to continue in special full-time service. It is important that we keep ourselves spiritually clean, avoiding anything that could blemish our clean standing before Jehovah.—Isa. 52:11; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16.

13. Alcoholic beverages may be used, but they must be used in moderation and in harmony with local legal guidelines. Heavy drinking and drunkenness are condemned by Jehovah and will not be tolerated. (Prov. 23:29-34; Eph. 5:17, 18) Overindulgence will call into question an individual's Christian qualifications and may result in his being asked to discontinue his service as an Assembly Hall servant.—Rom. 14:16-18.

14. Proper respect for the opposite sex and for the same sex must always be maintained. Jehovah condemns fornication, adultery, and homosexuality. (Rom. 1:26-28, 32; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) It is required that you leave the door of your residence wide open and be in a location where you are in full view of passersby if you are alone with one of the opposite sex who is not your marriage mate, parent, fleshly brother or sister, or other close relative. The same principle applies in office settings. (1 Tim. 5:2) If you come to know of anyone who has been involved in wrong conduct, you should urge the offender to bring it immediately to the attention of the overseer in charge. If he does not, then you are obligated to do so in order to keep the organization spiritually clean.—Lev. 5:1.

15. Out of consideration for the best interests of our brothers, good manners and a hospitable spirit should always be shown. Making too much noise in your place of residence shows a lack of respect for others and may disturb those trying to study or rest. Christian behavior calls for reasonableness and understanding. For example, if your roommate wants to sleep, it would be a kindness to turn off any music or the television. You should not enter someone else's residence without first knocking and being invited to enter.

16. Your dress and grooming should always reflect Christian standards, which "adorn the teaching of our Savior, God." (Titus 2:10) We should wear neat, clean clothes not only when attending meetings and assemblies but also when participating in daily activities. The clothes you wear while working at an Assembly Hall or other theocratic facility should be modest and well-kept and should not have slogans on them. The Assembly Hall overseer, visiting branch representatives, or other elders will give counsel to those needing improvement in these areas.

17. Branch representatives or LDC oversight will give needed counsel to any who cause problems, stir up trouble, assume an independent attitude, or

lord it over their brothers. (1 Pet. 5:1-3, 5) Those who are unwilling to accept counsel and be guided by God's spirit will be asked to leave special full-time service.

18. Regardless of the location where you serve, it is our desire to provide you with sufficient privacy, amenities, and security so that you will have a place to relax and do personal study. We appreciate your cooperation with and support for whatever arrangements are made for you. Your accommodations need to be kept clean and orderly, reflecting well on our worship. It is your responsibility to care for basic duties, such as daily making your own bed, removing all the trash, and cleaning and putting away all the dishes. In following the standard set at Bethel, you should properly clean your accommodations each week. Once every three months additional thorough cleaning projects should be done, and once each year a thorough spring cleaning should be done. Each Assembly Hall servant will usually be assigned to care for his own cleaning and laundry. Each single person or one mate of a married couple may use up to four work hours a week to care for these necessary tasks.

### **Being an Assembly Hall Servant Is a Serious Responsibility**

19. As an Assembly Hall servant, you should be able to plan for a reasonable and regular share in preaching the good news of the Kingdom along with the publishers in your congregation. However, if a conflict arises between your assignment and your activities in the congregation, naturally your work assignment should take priority. As a reminder, the following statement appears in your *Application to Become an Assembly Hall/Bible School Facility Servant in the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses*:

**“This application is an expression of my personal desire to become an Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servant in the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses. If accepted, I will give that assignment of service priority over all other activities. I will be diligent in taking full advantage of the provisions for study and discussion of God's Word that are made. I will also share regularly in the field service and in the meetings of the congregation that I attend. I will at all times conduct myself in full harmony with all the regulations that apply to Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servants—such as matters having to do with secular work and the high standards of dress and grooming—as well as the counsel of God's Word that applies to all Christians. I will be content and satisfied with the modest support that I receive from the Order as long as I am privileged to serve as an Assembly Hall/Bible school facility servant. Should I choose to leave the Order or should it be determined that I no longer qualify to serve in the Order, I will not expect any remuneration. (Matt.**

**6:30-33; 1 Tim. 6:6-8; Heb. 13:5) I recognize that the branch office has the right to determine if and when my membership should be terminated.”**

20. Each new Assembly Hall servant takes the “Vow of Obedience and Poverty for One Serving as a Provisional Member of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses,” the text of which includes the following:

**In harmony with the intensity of purpose reflected in the words of Ecclesiastes 5:4, I vow as follows:**

- 1. In the spirit of the inspired words of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8) and the prophetic expression of the psalmist (Psalm 110:3), to offer myself to do whatever is assigned to me in the advancement of Kingdom interests wherever and in whatever category of service I am assigned by the Order;**
- 2. While a member of the Order, to live the simple, non-materialistic lifestyle that has traditionally existed for members of the Order;**
- 3. To be submissive to the theocratic arrangement for members of the Order (Hebrews 13:17);**
- 4. To devote my best full-time efforts to my assignment;**
- 5. To abstain from secular employment without permission from the Order;**
- 6. To turn over to the local organization of the Order all income received from any work or personal efforts in excess of my necessary living expenses, unless released from this vow by the Order;**
- 7. To accept such provisions for Provisional Members of the Order (be they meals, lodging, expense reimbursements, or other) as are made in the country where I serve, regardless of the level of my responsibility or the value of my services;**
- 8. To be content and satisfied with the modest support that I receive from the Order as a Provisional Member as long as I am privileged to serve in the Order and not to expect any remuneration should I choose to leave the Order or should the Order determine that I no longer qualify to serve in the Order (Matthew 6:30-33; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5);**
- 9. To abide by the principles set out in God’s inspired Word, the Bible, in publications of Jehovah’s Witnesses, and in policies dispensed by the Order (including any manuals or guidelines specifically applicable to members of the Order in my category of service), and to follow the directions of the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses; and**
- 10. To accept readily any decision made by the Order regarding any aspect of my membership status.**

21. Because you took a vow of obedience and poverty when you became an Assembly Hall servant, you should not engage in secular employment while



under the vow. While taking personal time away from your assignment, you are released from your vow as it applies to secular work. However, there is no release from the vow during evenings or weekends of the regular workweek. To work secularly during an evening or weekend, at least one half day of personal time away must be used. If an emergency should arise in which you need to work, please feel free to explain the situation to the Branch Committee through the LDC.

22. If you find it necessary to discontinue your service as an Assembly Hall servant, please submit a notice in writing at least 30 days in advance. The notice should be submitted to the Branch Committee through the LDC. This will allow time to arrange for a replacement.

### **Safety**

23. It is essential that everyone give attention to safety at all times. Use proper safety equipment. Follow the organization's outlined instructions for maintaining a safe work environment while doing any maintenance. Report unsafe conditions to your overseer or to the LDC. Do not take chances nor allow others to do so. Your life and health, as well as that of our brothers, is important to us and to Jehovah.

24. You should not operate power tools, equipment, or vehicles without proper training and approval, as directed by the LDC. Do not take equipment or supplies for personal use without permission. Doing so is a serious matter that amounts to stealing and may result in a person being directed to discontinue serving as an Assembly Hall servant.

25. Recreation and relaxation have their place in our lives, but sometimes more brothers are injured when engaging in sports activities than when caring for their work assignment. So when engaging in recreation, guard against the competitive spirit, which calls for winning at all costs.—Gal. 5:26.

### **Personal Provisions**

26. Each month, Assembly Hall servants receive an allowance equivalent to that received by members of the Bethel family in the branch territory where they are serving. Since most Assembly Hall servants also must prepare most of their meals for themselves and care for personal needs (haircuts, dry cleaning, alterations, and so forth), the branch will provide an appropriate amount for these expenses, based on local circumstances. Additionally, Assembly Hall servants have a Personal Expense Account (PEA) to care for their personal needs and incidental medical expenses. This account is customarily credited once a year on January 1. The amount received is based on the number of complete months the person served as an Assembly Hall servant in the previous year and is equivalent to what is provided to Bethel family members in that branch territory.

27. If you choose to have a personal vehicle, you will be eligible for the Automobile Expense Account (AEA) arrangement. This program provides assistance with vehicle fuel expenses in connection with your congregation activity. Since donated contributions are used to fund this program, all should be conservation-minded when making transportation arrangements. Travel related to the following activities can be recorded for AEA reimbursement: meetings, elders' meetings, field service, shepherding, and assigned circuit assemblies. Travel distances that cannot be used toward AEA reimbursement include giving talks in other congregations, assisting other congregations, attending a regional convention, visiting friends, or other personal travel. An annual limit of 10,000 miles (16,000 km) is established as the maximum for which an allowance can be requested each calendar year. Those desiring to request an AEA allowance should report travel to the Accounting Department at the branch, according to the month that it was actually driven.

28. If the Assembly Hall has a branch-owned vehicle, a request may be submitted to the LDC to use it to attend meetings and engage in field service. If there are multiple Assembly Hall servants at a particular facility, the vehicle may be shared for theocratic use by all when it is not being used for Assembly Hall-related purposes. There is no arrangement to request AEA credit in such circumstances.

29. All Assembly Hall servants are granted 12 basic days of personal time away on September 1 for the new service year. A service year begins on September 1 and ends on August 31 inclusive. Those who are not transferring from another field of special full-time service and who begin serving as Assembly Hall servants after September 1 are given a prorated amount of basic personal time away for the remaining full months in the current service year. This is credited on a person's start date as an Assembly Hall servant. For example, one who starts special full-time service on March 1 would receive six days of personal time away upon his arrival, one day for each complete month left, March through August. One who starts special full-time service on June 5 would receive two days for each complete month left, July and August. A person who transfers from another field of special full-time service retains the personal time away he has already accumulated. You are normally allowed to arrange your personal time away when you prefer, but only after it has been credited. You are allowed to divide the time as you wish, subject to the requirements of your work assignment, but you may not take less than a half day at a time. Before planning any personal time away, you should be sure of how much time you have available. If the facility where you serve has only a limited number of Assembly Hall servants, you are responsible to make sure a qualified and

approved substitute will be able to care for your duties while you are away. The branch office will keep a record of your personal time away. Therefore, please endeavor to inform the LDC of your time away at least a week in advance. Personal time away may be accumulated from one year to the next. It is wise to save a few days for unexpected needs.

30. There is also a beneficial arrangement for granting additional personal time away each service year until a person reaches the maximum annual credit of 30 days. The two provisions for accumulating additional personal time away are explained below. All additional time is credited on September 1 for those in special full-time service. If a person enters special full-time service after September 1, none of the additional days described below will be prorated to him for that service year.

<b>Age on September 1</b>	<b>Additional Personal Time Away (days)</b>
45-46	6
47-48	7
49-50	8
51-52	9
53-54	10
55-56	11
57-58	12
59-60	13
61-62	14
63-64	15
65 and older	18

31. A seniority credit is based on the number of years a person has been in full-time service. For every two complete years a person has been in full-time service, he is granted one additional day of personal time away. Consider two examples. After a person has completed two years in full-time service, on September 1 he will be granted 12 basic days plus 1 additional day for his seniority, making a total of 13 days. A person who has completed 15 years in full-time service would be granted 12 basic days plus 7 additional days for his seniority, making a total of 19 days. If a person has had a break or breaks in his full-time service history, his seniority will be the combined total of days spent in full-time service assignments.

32. An alternative to the seniority credit is an age credit. Some Assembly Hall servants have not served for many years in full-time service and thus do not receive many additional days of personal time away based on their full-time service seniority. As shown in the chart on this page, those 45 years old and older may benefit from this age credit. For example, those reaching 45 years of age prior to completing 12 years of full-time service are granted six additional days of personal time away each year, the same as if they had completed 12 years

of full-time service. Those reaching 65 years of age prior to completing 36 years of full-time service are granted the maximum of 18 additional days of personal time away each year. As is true of the seniority credit, the age credit progressively increases every two years until a person reaches the maximum number of 30 days of personal time away per year. A person will receive either the seniority credit or the age credit, whichever is greater, on September 1.

33. As mentioned in paragraph 11, the workweek is similar to the regular Bethel schedule, and you are expected to work five 8-hour workdays. However, sisters who are 50 years old and older may return to their residence before the workday officially ends if they feel it is necessary. Or they may prefer to take a rest after the noon meal before returning to their assignment. If you do not have enough meaningful work at the Assembly Hall, especially during weeks when there are no spiritual events, please contact your overseer or the LDC for direction.—1 Cor. 15:58.

34. It could be that at some point a serious emergency may arise or some Scriptural responsibility may require you to spend additional time to help loved ones. You should discuss the matter with those in charge. The Branch Committee, consulting with the LDC, will consider the circumstances and determine whether time should be granted, especially to those who have been in full-time service for a number of years. Or the Branch Committee may suggest that accumulated personal time away be used or that your service be discontinued in order to render assistance.

35. All those in special full-time service may be granted one and a half days to attend a regional convention. The half day off could be used immediately before or after the convention for travel or rest. This provision may be used regardless of the distance of the convention from your assignment.

36. When your application was approved, it was with the understanding that you were strong and healthy, having no serious medical problems. Every effort should be made to keep yourself healthy by keeping your room clean, eating wholesome food, and getting sufficient rest. With respect to proper hygiene, cooperation on the part of all is essential. It is your personal responsibility always to use good judgment when eating and drinking, especially if you serve in a location where health problems may be more common. Be moderate in your habits. Every form of overindulgence should be avoided.—Prov. 21:17; 23:20, 21; Luke 21:34.

37. If you feel sick and are not able to report to work, please inform your overseer or the LDC. If it is necessary to call a doctor, you or the overseer should not hesitate to do so. If you face a situation in which medical care cannot be provided within the branch territory where you are assigned, the

Branch Committee may request approval from the Personnel Committee for alternate arrangements to be made for you. Arrangements for medical care at another branch should not be made personally. Additionally, it should not be assumed that the branch will cover the expense if you decide to make personal arrangements for medical care, be they conventional or alternative treatments.

38. If you had a preexisting health condition that may now require surgery, or if you have extensive dental or other health problems, it is not the responsibility of the branch to arrange for such matters. Such things should have been handled before you accepted the invitation to serve as an Assembly Hall servant. Similarly, if you now become chronically ill and are unable to keep the schedule and routine of activity, it would be better for you to discontinue your service as an Assembly Hall servant so that you can give close attention to your health.

39. First-aid supplies and equipment suitable for the size of the facility should be on hand. If a major accident occurs at an event, either a doctor's help will be obtained or the injured person will be taken to a medical facility. A full and accurate report should be provided to the Branch Committee.

40. At certain facilities, single people are invited to serve as Assembly Hall servants. As time passes, it may be that a single person determines that he or she would like to be married. (1 Cor. 7:36-38) After serving for at least a year or perhaps a number of years, an Assembly Hall servant may wish to marry someone who is also interested in this field of service. However, he should have in mind that he is relatively new after only one year, so it is not likely that approval would be granted to continue in service as an Assembly Hall servant with his marriage mate. If he decides that he would like to marry and both he and his future mate would like to serve as Assembly Hall servants, they should fill out new applications and submit them to the LDC to be processed in the usual manner. This would be true even if both of them are already in a form of special full-time service. They should endeavor to submit the applications at least three full months in advance of the wedding date.

41. Because of imperfection, problems with people or with your assignment may come up from time to time. Always follow the Scriptural counsel to settle them quickly and peaceably. Whenever possible, differences should be settled privately between those involved. (Matt. 5:23, 24) If this is not possible, then feel free to approach another experienced elder who may be able to assist you to settle the matter and preserve the peace. If the problem has to do with your assignment, then it would be best to talk it over with your overseer or the LDC. A married sister should always discuss a problem first with her husband.

### **Transferring to Another Facility**

42. There are many advantages to keeping you at the same facility, since you will become well-acquainted with its unique operation as well as with the local volunteers. However, at times the branch office may feel that Kingdom interests could best be served by asking you to transfer to another facility. Please be assured that much thought and prayer is put into such decisions and that every effort will be made to inform you in advance of any transfer.

43. If you are transferred to another assignment, be prepared to meet new challenges. The tendency may be to compare assignments. However, the expressions of kindness that may be extended in various ways at one facility should not be compared with those of another.

44. The costs of your transfer to another facility are paid by the branch. The most direct and economical transportation will be used. Any personal travel you may wish to do in conjunction with the transfer will be at your own expense. Also, you must use accumulated personal time away for any additional travel days required if you alter the itinerary.

45. If you transfer to another assignment or if you leave your assignment, the branch will pay up to \$750 (U.S.) per person to ship your personal belongings. Any additional items you may wish to take will be at your own expense.

### **Security**

46. We are sure you recognize that it is very important to keep alert to maintaining the security of the Assembly Hall, for we are living in critical times hard to deal with. Carelessness in handling the security of the facility will make it necessary to determine whether you should continue to be entrusted with this assignment. Your own trustworthiness and the love you have for your brothers should impel you to assist in keeping the Assembly Hall property a safe and secure place.

### **Other Reminders**

47. If a telephone or cell phone is provided for you, it should be used in connection with your work. It would be appropriate for you to contribute for any personal calls that you make. As far as possible, personal calls and congregation matters should be cared for during your time off. If you do receive a call while caring for your assignment, please make your conversation brief. The same principle applies to any communication tool, such as e-mail, the Internet, and mobile phones.

48. Many Assembly Halls have guest rooms for visiting speakers, circuit overseers, or others who have been assigned by the branch to stay there. When

the accommodations are not being used for their primary purpose, the Assembly Hall overseer or the LDC can approve those in special full-time service to spend a few nights in a guest room. Additionally, if circumstances allow, each Assembly Hall servant can request to have personal guests spend two or three nights in a guest room once each calendar year. All personal adult guests should be exemplary baptized Witnesses.

49. It is the responsibility of the circuit overseer to provide hospitality for guest speakers staying at an Assembly Hall, including transportation when necessary. If you decide to show hospitality at your own initiative, then you should care for these expenses. (Rom. 12:13) The organization will cover the costs of providing some basic food and beverage items in guest rooms.

50. All of our theocratic facilities are dedicated to Jehovah and are supported through the voluntary contributions of our brothers and sisters all over the world. Those contributions can be used more effectively when we are careful not to waste anything, be it food, water, electricity, or materials. That means that you and those with whom you serve should be conservation-minded. Turn off lights that are not in use. Make sure faucets are turned off properly. Take good care of the tools assigned to the facility so that they will last as long as possible. If tools or equipment are lost or broken, this should be reported immediately.

51. While we want you to feel at home, please keep in mind that someone else may use your accommodations in the future. Therefore, the LDC will decide how the accommodations in the Assembly Hall are to be used and what furnishings the branch will provide. Any work that you may want to have done beyond preventive maintenance and necessary repairs requires the approval of the LDC. This includes replacing finishes and minor renovations to the accommodations provided.

52. We encourage you to keep in touch with your loved ones, whether they are in the truth or not. Your family members, especially if they are Jehovah's Witnesses, are going to be interested in knowing how you are doing. In communicating with them, you should want to share the positive aspects of your assignment, allowing them to rejoice along with you in what Jehovah is accomplishing. You should not share matters that are confidential, nor should you spread gossip about others. Keeping confidences is a mark of a mature person.

### **Conclusion**

53. While there may be times when you get homesick or discouraged, do not allow negative thinking to cause you to conclude that your assignment is not the best place for you. If you get discouraged, speak with some of the

older, spiritually mature brothers and sisters who have served for many years as Assembly Hall servants or in other avenues of special full-time service. We feel sure that when you became an Assembly Hall servant, your friends and family were pleased to see your advancement in rendering sacred service to Jehovah. So do not give up, but keep persevering, looking for Jehovah's direction and blessing. Keep in mind that you are helping many people by your service.

54. We urge you to think in terms of not just a minimal amount of time as an Assembly Hall servant but, rather, a longer period in which you can be well-trained to make an excellent contribution to Kingdom interests. Since true happiness stems from things that have to do with spirituality, worship of God, and the fulfillment of God's promises, you will feel good knowing that you are pleasing Jehovah and that your actions are leading you to eternal life in God's new world.

55. Because the need for constructing and maintaining theocratic facilities is steadily growing, we encourage you to continue learning more skills, improving your abilities, and looking for more opportunities to reach out. Furthermore, we encourage you to share your skills and knowledge with others, so that they too may qualify to participate more fully in various avenues of sacred service.

56. We feel as did the Israelites in the days of Nehemiah when they were busy building Jerusalem's wall. Nehemiah 4:6 says that "the people continued to put their heart into the work." What was the secret of that fine heart condition? It is mentioned later at Nehemiah 8:10: "The joy of Jehovah is your stronghold." We certainly have every reason to be joyful workers. We have Jehovah's blessing. We have Jehovah's spirit, and joy is part of the fruitage of that spirit.—Gal. 5:22.

57. In the first month of his reign, Hezekiah expressed his zeal for the worship of Jehovah by reopening and repairing the temple. He organized the priests and the Levites to cleanse God's house. They did so in 16 days. (2 Chron. 29:16-18) Does this not remind you of the cleaning, maintenance, and repair work that keeps our Assembly Halls and other theocratic facilities in a condition that reflects well on our zealous worship of Jehovah?

58. What a marvelous privilege you have to be so actively involved in supporting theocratic interests at this late date in the time of the end! Your diligence in maintaining these Assembly Halls as beautiful places of worship certainly brings praise to our heavenly Father. (2 Chron. 34:10) It is our prayer that Jehovah will continue to bless your efforts to do all that you can in his service. Please be assured of our warm love and best wishes for you.

Your brothers,  
*Personnel Committee*