

THE CHURCH OF
Jesus
Christ

Native American
Outreach Handbook

Nations Running Together
Side by Side

2008

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Preface

But a Seer will I raise up...I will give him power...to the convincing them of my word which shall have already gone forth among them.

2 Nephi 3:11

The Native American Outreach Committee (NAOC) is an authorized entity under the Quorum of Seventy Evangelists of The Church of Jesus Christ (headquarters Monongahela, PA, USA). The committee has evolved over time with the expansion of the missionary work among what we commonly refer to as the Seed of Joseph (descendants of Joseph of Egypt, Jacob's son) or, as they are known by the governments in the Americas, Native Americans, First Nations People, American Indians, or Indigenous People of the Americas.

The NAOC serves The Church by providing guidance, resources and coordination assistance to further the presentation of the Gospel Restored message to all Native Americans/First Nations.

This handbook is an important resource document in fulfilling this priority outreach of The Church of Jesus Christ.

And thus they were instruments in the hands of God in bringing many to the knowledge of the truth, yea, to the knowledge of their Redeemer.

Mosiah 27:36

Introduction

This handbook is about having the right plans and the right tools to effectively and efficiently accomplish what we have come to know as The Church's Divine Commission. That commission is to bring the Gospel Message to the House of Israel beginning with the Native American populations. There is an old saying that to him who has a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. So, how important is having the right tools and the right plans? We believe that you will concur with the NAOC in presenting and implementing practical guidance within a united understanding of this mission and its priority importance expressed by the leadership of The Church of Jesus Christ.

What We Have Today

- A commitment to the vision of The Church of Jesus Christ Restored in these latter days and its Divine Commission;
- An understanding of our role in taking the message of Jesus Christ to the House of Israel and the restoration of all the tribes of the House of Israel, beginning with the House of Joseph;
- Our willingness to be used as instruments in the hands of God, according to His will and pleasure;
- Our willingness to be trained so as to do the best job we can;
- Our willingness to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit and the Priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ in an adopted, dynamic strategic plan¹;
- That there is a role for everyone in this great work; and
- A willingness to accept the fact that success is measured by how many people learn of the great things God has in store for them, not how many obey the Gospel.

This handbook will reinforce these precepts.² It is a source of inspiration, encouragement, education, confirmation and direction. It will be both a reference tool and practical guide. It will be dynamic, changing when necessary and adapting to changes in the work. Of course, the most important part of using it is to do so prayerfully and humbly.³ And remember, there is a blessing in this effort for us if we bring the message to the House of Israel. ⁴

Inspirational Message

How about two case studies to demonstrate the importance?

In the 17th chapter of 1 Nephi, we are told about Lehi and his little colony's eight-year journey through the wilderness. They suffered much and when they reached the seashore, they rejoiced greatly. However, their journey was not over it was only beginning. God wanted them to cross the great sea that lay before them. To do so, God told Nephi to build a ship.

8. And it came to pass that the Lord spoke unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters.
9. And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to smelt, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?
10. And it came to pass that the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore, that I might make tools.

¹ See Appendix F for more about the strategic plan.

² Isaiah 28:10

³ James 4:6,10

⁴ 3 Nephi 16:3

11. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make a bellows wherewith to blow the fire, of the skins of beasts; and after I had made a bellows, that I might have wherewith to blow the fire, I did smite two stones together that I might make fire.

Notice that Nephi received most of what he needed from the Lord, but he still had to work hard. The Lord gave him the vision, showed him the ship plans, and where to find ore. Nephi had to dig the ore, melt it down in a furnace (after starting a fire) and create tools.

As much faith as Nephi showed, his brothers took the opposite view. They had no faith; not in God's direction, nor in Nephi's abilities. They called him a fool. Their doubts may have been supported by the fact that Jerusalem is not near any great seas and it is about 20 miles from the Sea of Galilee (actually a small lake). We have no evidence that Nephi had ever seen an ocean-going ship, let alone been on one.

1. And it came to pass that they did worship the Lord, and did go forth with me; and we did work timbers of curious workmanship. And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship.
2. Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me; wherefore, it was not after the manner of men,
3. And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things.

God gave Lehi a vision and the promise of a choice land for his family; and God gave Nephi the position of “project manager” to execute His plan to achieve the vision. When the project was finished what was the testimony?

4. And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceeding fine; wherefore, they did humble themselves again before the Lord.

Closer to home there is a wonderful testimony of God's direction recorded in volume two of A History of The Church of Jesus Christ. This experience of Apostle Ishmael D'Amico shows God's unchanging character. Brother D'Amico wrote:

In the month of August 1924, we began to build a regular church building. ...I was entrusted with seeing that a lot and building materials were bought. I had to quit my job at Ford [Motors] for six months. Since there were few men in The Church, the work could not be done very fast. I can truly say that God did much to help us build The Church. There were times when we did not know how to do certain jobs and the Lord would reveal it to us. For instance, we had difficulty putting in the windows . . . the hinges . . . were of a strange type to us. We finally had to give up in despair. I felt discouraged and so I decided to go to God in prayer to show us how to put these things on the windows. I went into another room and I earnestly implored God's help. When I was through praying, I looked up and saw a white arm with a hinge in its hand. It demonstrated several times how the hinges should be placed. It then disappeared. I returned to the brethren and showed them how to put the hinges on the windows and as the arm had demonstrated, likewise did we and we had no difficulty. This experience proved to us that no matter what kind of trouble we are having, God is always there to help us, if we but take the time to call upon Him. It was a blessing to know that God was with us in the building of our church. A History of The Church of Jesus Christ, Volume Two, p 199; My Testimony by Ishmael D'Amico, p. 23-24)

In the Book of Psalms, a very wise man wrote, “Except the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain.”⁵ There is an old hymn that has the

⁵ Psalm 127:1

following verse: “Except the Lord conduct the plan, the best concerted schemes are vain and never will succeed.”⁶

So, we clearly see the following:

- God provides the vision.
- God gives plans.
- God gives direction.
- God gives strength.
- We perform the labor for God.
- We exercise faith and trust.
- God provides success.

If we follow these points, there shall be success, not of us, but as Ammon explained to his brother, Aaron:

I do not boast in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God.

Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever.

Yea, they [their brothers who were converted] were encircled about with everlasting darkness and destruction; but behold, he has brought them into his everlasting light, yea, into everlasting salvation; and they are encircled about with the matchless bounty of his love; yea, and we have been instruments in his hands of doing this great and marvelous work.

Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord? Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy, and of his long-suffering towards the children of men? Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel. *Alma 26:11, 12, 15, and 16*

The question before us is: Are we capable of performing the task God has given us? We echo the words of Nephi:

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord gives no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commands them. *1 Nephi 3:7*

And thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled. And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness. *1 Nephi 17:3*

⁶ Saints Hymnal, number 16

Mission

Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ

The mission of The Church of Jesus Christ, as directed by Jesus Christ, is to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to obey everything commanded by Christ in the Scriptures.

Mission to the Native American Populations

The Church has been given a special commission to preach the Gospel Restored to the Native Peoples of the Americas who we understand to be descendents of the Tribe of Joseph, one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, as chronicled in the Scriptures. In the Book of Mormon the descendants of Joseph are often referred to as the Seed of Joseph and it is recognized that they have been scattered throughout the Americas, the isles of the seas and to unknown locations throughout the world. Therefore, all of the missionary programs of The Church incorporate this special commission in their teachings and sermons.

Project Objective

It is our objective to let every Native American know the great message of Redemption and Restoration that God has for them, as prescribed by the Scriptures⁷ and as affirmed by latter-day revelation.

All important projects have specific objectives. Ours is no different. This objective is noted above and throughout this handbook. The repetition that you notice occurs by design.

Our objective is Mormon's prayer: "And my prayer to God is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God, yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightsome people."⁸

Stakeholders

These are all of the people who have a keen interest in the project to be undertaken and in seeing its accomplishment. In this case, it includes the members of The Church of Jesus Christ; the descendents of Israel, especially those upon the land of America, whom we commonly call Native Americans or First Nations People; and all other people who have yet to hear or render obedience to the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Within The Church of Jesus Christ there are various stakeholders. The General Priesthood is one of these. The members of this body are called to minister the Word of God and to perform the holy ordinances. Another is the Quorum of Seventy Evangelists. Their particular duty is to spread the Restored Gospel throughout the domestic and foreign lands and to strengthen and build it up wherever they can. There is also the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, whose main function is to watch over The Church, protect and preserve the Faith and Doctrine and to lead, guide and inspire the membership and priesthood.

There are also other ordained offices: teachers, deacons, and deaconesses, each with their special functions. Alongside The Church are its auxiliaries, the Sunday Schools of the branches and missions, the Missionary

⁷ 2 Nephi 3:11; 3 Nephi 5:23

⁸ Words of Mormon 8

Benevolent Association with its local, regional and general organizations; and the Ladies Uplift Circle, with its local, regional and international circles.

All of these stakeholders hold fast to the Faith and Doctrine of The Church and seek to do their part or parts to accomplish the tasks at hand.

The next stakeholders, and somewhat unbeknownst to them, are the Native Americans, American Indians, or People of the First Nations of America.⁹ Sometimes they are referred to as the People of Lehi or Lamanites. Their stake in this great project is that they need to receive four important messages:

1. They need to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Savior;¹⁰
2. They are of the House of Israel;
3. God has not cast them off,¹¹ but will gather them together;¹² and
4. We shall all together build a New Jerusalem upon this land during a time of great peace.¹³

Sponsors of the Work

A sponsor is the owner of the project, or is the person or group of people concerned with the project objectives. In our case, the lead sponsor is God. We are working for Him to reclaim His ancient covenant people. Another sponsor is The Church of Jesus Christ, including the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, the Priesthood, and all of the members. Simply put, we all have a vested interest in the outcome of the project, since its successful completion will lead to the establishment of the New Jerusalem and the blooming of the Peaceful Reign.¹⁴

⁹ More about their actual lineage will be provided later

¹⁰ Romans 11:25; Ezekiel 11:16, 17; Micah 4:7; Zechariah 10:6; Isaiah 56:8; 1 Nephi 22:12, 25; 2 Nephi 6:11; 3 Nephi 16:12; 20:13, 18

¹¹ Romans 11:1, 2; 2 Nephi 7:1; 10:20; Psalms 94:14; Isaiah 40:9

¹² 2 Nephi 30:2, 5; Romans 11:26; 1 Nephi 10:14; 15:14; 2 Nephi 10:2; Mormon 5:9

¹³ Habakkuk 2:14; Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:9; 65:25; 3 Nephi 21:23-25; Micah 4:3

¹⁴ The term Peaceful Reign was coined by our church in the late 1940's and should be considered a revelation from God.

Preparing Ourselves

The following is a synopsis of what we must know, understand, and perform.

General Church

1. Call of solemn assembly for fasting and prayer of the ministry¹⁵
2. Adopt a program with unity of the ministry
3. Design and publish uniform resource materials (handbook, flyers, CDs/DVDs)
4. Inform the membership of the plan
5. Provide training at all levels of The Church
6. Implement the plan with monitoring milestones
7. Communicate successes and accomplishments
8. Design and establish pilot programs that can be used throughout The Church

Regions and Branches

1. Call solemn assembly of elders and membership¹⁶
2. Install organizational structure of plan at all levels
3. Provide training phases (awareness, strategies/methods)
4. Implement plan
5. Monitor milestones

Individuals

1. Fast and pray for God's inspiration in your life
2. Read, study and know the Word of God (Gospel, Restoration of Israel)
3. Meet with your ministry to discuss your desire to serve
4. Be a strong, contributing member in your branch or mission first
5. Begin and demonstrate life of service in your home, branch, and community
6. Communication skills development – be prepared to listen and to witness
7. Study to know your audience
8. Live a healthy life style (physical, emotional, and financial health as well as spiritual).
9. Build a strong family unit
10. Discuss desires with your family to serve as a family or in Youth In Action¹⁷
11. Submit application-to-serve form to the respective committee¹⁸

Preparation for and Maintenance of the Work

Before any large project begins, it is important for the participants to understand their role, duties and responsibilities. Preparing and honing your skills is important; in this way God can truly use you as an instrument in His hands. There are several ways to accomplish this goal. Here are a few.

¹⁵ Joel 1:14

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Possibly Seniors In Action someday

¹⁸ The form is to come.

Understand the latter-day vision of The Church of Jesus Christ and the Divine Commission. The vision we have is summed-up in the word restoration: restoration of the Gospel and Authority of God; restoration of the House of Israel, beginning first with the House of Joseph¹⁹; and restoration of the peaceful condition that was known as the Ancient of Days.²⁰

Have a thorough understanding of the Bible and Book of Mormon as the Word of God (pray and study)! Know the books within, the concepts expressed, the prophecies and the teachings, especially of Jesus. As well, strive to live as an obedient servant of God, doing His will, keeping His commandments, and walking humbly before Him.²¹

Understand your place in the fulfillment of the vision and what you have to offer to assist in its fulfillment (what gifts and talents you can bring to the work). People often do not know their own gifts and talents. If that is the case for you, simply ask others in your branch; they'll know. And whatever gifts and talents you have, seek to magnify or multiply them. Remember Jesus' parable of the three people given 'talents' to care for while their master was away. Two of them worked hard and doubled their master's money (100 percent return on his investment – quite impressive). The third simply hid it in the ground. The master scolded that person and said he could have at least given it to the bankers and earned some nominal amount of interest. The lesson is that two of them stepped out on faith and attempted great things. Some gifts or talents may need constant care (like playing the piano or guitar – practice, practice, practice). The same is true for spiritual and intellectual gifts and talents.

Receive direction, training and encouragement from the Priesthood to work independently, dependently and interdependently, and know when to do each. Independently you should be able to study the scriptures, fast and pray, and offer your assistance to others. Dependently know when to refer a matter to a higher authority, i.e., do not make promises that cannot be kept or may require full branch, region or General Church backing or leadership. Interdependently means working with others, as a team (for example, never visit anyone alone). Sometimes it may mean laying the groundwork for someone else to build on, building on someone else's foundation, or sharing in both roles.²²

Be accountable for what you know and what has to be accomplished. Meet the expectations given to you by the Priesthood. Accountability is a tough topic today. Many want liberty or authority, but not accountability. Accountability is defined as being subject to giving an account of your actions or being answerable to someone. Some would like to think that they answer to no one. However, that concept is far from the truth. Jesus referred to accountability at least three times.²³ Once for the words we speak and twice for our actions. He explained it as giving account of our stewardship. In the Letter to the Hebrews it speaks of our accountability in these words: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.²⁴

The bottom line is this: if we are performing the work of the Lord, we are accountable to the Lord to accomplish it in the best manner possible.²⁵ And while we are on this earth, we are accountable to The Church (as God's kingdom here) and to worldly governments.²⁶

¹⁹ 1 Nephi 15:20; 2 Nephi 3:12, 24; 6:11; 10:32; 30:5, 8; 3 Nephi 5:25; 16:12; 20:13; 29:1; Words of Mormon 8; Mormon 5:9; 7:5; 9:36; and Ether 13:8

²⁰ See Religious Experiences and Expectations, Wm. Cadman, pg 24

²¹ 2 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Peter 1:14; 1 Nephi 22:30; Mosiah 5:5; Micah 6:8;

²² 1 Corinthians 3:10

²³ Matthew 12:36; 18:23; Luke 16:2; Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 4:1

²⁴ Hebrews 13:17

²⁵ Luke 17:10; 1 Corinthians 4:1-6

²⁶ Romans 13:3

Remember what great things are in store for Joseph. This item was touched upon above, but it cannot be stressed enough. We have a message for Native Americans that God has great things in store for them. More important than receiving their land of inheritance back, they have the opportunity to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Redeemer. Additionally, they will have an opportunity to build a New Jerusalem, a holy city unto God.²⁷

Maintain a supply of General Church-approved materials and keep them handy; you never know when you may need them (for example, keep some in your car).

- Bibles
- Books of Mormon
- NAOC approved flyers and handbills
- NAOC CDs and DVDs with music, messages, and images of the Gospel Message
- Jew & American Indian pamphlets
- Faith & Doctrine pamphlets
- Apostasy & Restoration pamphlets
- American Indian Moses books

Opportunities

Look for all types of opportunities to make a difference, but be guided by the Holy Spirit. Consider implications (be prayerful and careful); do not commit The Church or others.

- Be prepared to share.
- Share in their efforts – that is, work for them and then with them in their natural-physical work.
- Share your testimony of the message when the opportunity arises, but do not pressure or appear pushy.²⁸ (Remember, sincerity first.)
- Share church printed material.
- Share an invitation to more activities (Church gatherings, printed material, etc.).
- Share your time if they invite you to meetings, activities, etc.

Be prepared to personally commit.

- Consider ramifications / consequences for you and your family.
- Be ready for long-term commitment.
- Commit only yourself (if greater commitment is required report same to your Branch or Region Missionary Operating Committee – RMOC).
- Work hard for them and eventually with them, as opportunities arise.
- Expand opportunities where feasible, reasonable and possible (many currently established Native American mission fields need laborers to maintain and expand their work)

Utilize the following methods of approach (when feasible):

- Understand their lifestyles.
- Understand their history and heritage.
- Know their similarities and/or differences between Nations (don't over generalize about their customs or culture).

²⁷ 3 Nephi 21

²⁸ A good practice is to be able to explain your testimony or the beliefs of The Church within 60 seconds, as that may be all the time you have.

- Know some of their legends and prophecies that are related to our beliefs.
- Understand the meaning of “nursing mothers and fathers.”²⁹

Approaches to missionary work:

- Friendly contact, acquaintances, relatives
- Chance meetings inspired by God³⁰
- Visitation to reservations, localities, community centers, etc.
- Attendance at Pow Wows, festivals, museums, etc.
- Print media (within Church guidelines; check with your RMOC)
- Electronic media (under direction of your RMOC)
- All other possibilities (as God inspires)

The Basic Story

Know the story completely and remember it always³¹ and start by completing the following table. (A good recommendation is to write the above items on a 3x5 index card, bookmark them in your Scriptures, or create an index page in your Scriptures with the references listed. Keep your notes handy for quick reference and study.³²)

| Purpose | Scriptural Reference |
|--|----------------------|
| God’s covenant to Abraham | |
| The covenant continued through Isaac and Jacob | |
| Jacob’s name is changed to Israel | |
| Israel’s 12 sons | |
| Story of Joseph and how he saved Israel | |
| Story of Moses and the People of Israel | |
| Captivities | |
| Story of Lehi | |
| Israel in America – Nephites and Lamanites | |
| Christ in America | |
| Book of Mormon | |
| Restoration | |
| Future expectations of Israel, beginning with Joseph | |
| Gentile Church’s role | |
| The Choice Seer | |
| Gathering of all of Israel | |
| Building of Zion and New Jerusalem | |
| Peaceful Reign | |

²⁹ Isaiah 49:23; 1 Nephi 21:23; 1 Nephi 22: 8; 2 Nephi 6:7; 10:9

³⁰ Acts 8:26-29; 16:14; Alma 8:19, 20

³¹ Romans 10:15; 1 Corinthians 1:17; Galatians 1:8; and Revelation 14:6, 7

³² Some electronic devices are also good for storing and studying these topics; consider whichever method works best for you.

Suggested Readings

Besides reading and knowing the Scriptures, we need to also read and understand other Church literature and Native American writings. For example, take time to read the experiences God has given us regarding this work that are recorded in the two volumes of our history. See Appendix A for an expanded listing.

Keep up to date with Native American news and events by perusing newspapers, magazines and the Internet. Some Internet sites offer automatic e-mailings that include news-worthy items.

Historical Perspective of the Message

For all important projects the scope of work must be established, that is, what work needs to be accomplished. It could be called our mission statement to the House of Israel. In The Church of Jesus Christ we call it our Divine Commission.

The Commission began with the advent of the Restoration. When the messenger of God spoke to Joseph Smith, Jr., he told of the ancient record hid in the nearby hill, written by the ancient inhabitants on the land of America. These people had come from Jerusalem and were brought here by the Hand of God. As descendants of Israel and more particularly, descendants of Joseph, son of Jacob, the record was primarily for them.³³ An important aspect of this revelation was that Israel would be gathered to their homelands, or their lands of inheritance.

That message was renewed throughout the years, including a revelation given to The Church in 1861, when the Lord spoke and said, “Thus saith the Lord, ‘I will purify my church, and my Servants shall go and preach the Gospel to the Indians of America. Go, saith the Lord, and I will go with you.’”³⁴

The same year, the gift of tongues was spoken and the interpretation was given as:

I have told you to go and preach my word saith the Lord God of Hosts: Therefore you must go to the right and to the left, to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south; you must do your part and I will do my part. Go and the gifts and blessings shall go with you. When you go to the Indians tell them that Jesus Christ died to save them. Tell them they are the seed of Abraham. Tell them what I did for their forefathers when they were carried away captive into Babylon how that I brought them again into their own land and tell them that I will again gather them to their own lands, for I the Lord have spoken it.³⁵

Articulating that same commission, Apostle William Cadman, Sr. wrote in 1899, in the pamphlet *Religious Experiences and Expectations*, that “He [God] would have none other than the true Gospel taken to the seed of Joseph; that this people had the Gospel purer than any other people and that he would employ this people for the accomplishment of that purpose.”³⁶

The Church then further defined the commission when it reprinted the *Faith and Doctrine* in 1977.³⁷ Article 19 states: “Moreover, God will remember His covenants to the House of Israel and bring them to a knowledge of the fullness of the Gospel.”

³³ Title Page of the Book of Mormon

³⁴ A History of The Church of Jesus Christ by William H. Cadman, pg. 32

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ *Religious Experiences and Expectations* by William Cadman, pg. 11

³⁷ Editions prior to 1977 the Article was not divided into four parts.

There are four subparts to this article of faith. Part A notes that: “We believe in the restoration of Israel as it is spoken of by the prophets, and that God will use men as His instrument for its accomplishment in this age, as He did in ages past.”

Part B. states: “We believe that God will employ this Church for that purpose.”

Part C states: “We believe, also, that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

Finally, Part D. states: “We believe that the aborigines, or native Americans, upon this hemisphere [western hemisphere encompassing North, Central and South America] are a part of Israel, descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, and that this land of America is theirs by an original God-given right.”³⁸

The commission of The Church was clarified at the General Conference of October 1976 by passing the following resolutions:³⁹

The Church recognizes that in our day the Gospel has been restored, first to the Gentiles and that we must continue to preach it to all who will listen and accept it.

Based on the accepted doctrine of The Church, the restoration of Israel, commencing with the seed of Joseph, has the highest priority and should be reflected in the missionary plans and programs of The Church

The conclusion of the matter may be summed up with this revelation. A Native American brother was awakened from his sleep hearing the audible words, “Come unto me, O my people. It is time to build Zion.”⁴⁰

Therefore, we can clearly see that our errand⁴¹ was ordained of God, foretold by the prophets, confirmed at the dawning of the Restoration, and affirmed in our day and time. It is directed to his ancient covenant people so that He may fulfill his promise to Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel, and to Lehi, and to Lehi’s son, Joseph.⁴²

We need to know what we believe, why and how we are grounded in the Scriptures. The best starting point is our Faith and Doctrine. For additional information and understanding, study the book *A Dissertation of the Faith and Doctrine* by Apostle V. James Loalvo. Other church literature may follow (see Appendix A for a list of suggested readings). To do any missionary work or outreach, it is critical to be fully grounded in our beliefs and practices. We all know the admonition that the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy:

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.⁴³

This area cannot be emphasized enough. Learning is life long. Take the time to study and meditate on the Word of God. Be prayerful during your studies; seek to understand first the teachings of Jesus, and then the mysteries of God.⁴⁴

³⁸ See *A Dissertation of the Faith and Doctrine* of The Church of Jesus Christ, V. James Loalvo, for the complete articles and subparts, as well as an expounding of the meaning, pg. 117-146.

³⁹ As recorded in *The Church’s Divine Commission*, Apostle Robert Watson, pg. 23

⁴⁰ Ibid. also see Psalm 102:13, 16; Isaiah 35:10; 51:11

⁴¹ Jacob 1:17

⁴² 2 Nephi 3:4, 5, 16, 22-25

⁴³ 2 Timothy 2:15

⁴⁴ Matthew 11:29; Deuteronomy 5:1; Psalm 119:71, 73; Isaiah 1:17; 29:24; Matthew 9:13; Jeremiah 12:14-17; and Mark 13:28

In addition to all of the learning there is action. A good place to start is prayer, and fasting and prayer. Good works are important as well. Notice Jesus' and His Apostles' teachings:

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. *Matthew 5:16*

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
2 Timothy 3:17

Who gave himself [Jesus] for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. *Titus 2:14*

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. *Hebrews 10:24*

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. *James 3:13*

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.
1 Peter 2:12

Not sure what those “works” are? Apostle James answers somewhat succinctly:

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. *James 1:27*

In other words, think of others. Consider the words of Jacob, son of Lehi, when he noted that we should “think of your brethren like unto yourselves and be familiar with all...”⁴⁵

Mormon said it was easy to discern (or judge) between good and evil. He said:

But behold, that which is of God invites and entices to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which invites and entices to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.

For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which invites to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.
Moroni 7:13, 16

Therefore, you will be appropriately prepared to do the Great Work of the Lord through study, meditation, prayer, fasting, and good works.

⁴⁵ Jacob 2:17

Outreach Design and Protocol

This section outlines the protocol of our outreach. One of the definitions of protocol is “a code prescribing strict adherence to correct etiquette and precedence (as in diplomatic exchange and in the military services).”⁴⁶ In this handbook, it will define correct handling of the missionary outreach endeavor we are undertaking, so as to keep good order,⁴⁷ get the job done in a timely and effective manner, and keep everyone involved and up to date.

The Five-Phase Program

As a point of reference, below is the five-phase program presented by the NAOC and adopted by the Quorum of Seventy. It is felt that this five-step program presents a new, comprehensive approach to satisfying The Church of Jesus Christ’s Divine Commission to the Native American.

Phase 1: Spreading the Seed (i.e., initial contact by sharing the message)

- Distributing flyers, pamphlets, advertisements of all type, Web-sites, newspapers, journals, mass mailings, etc.
- Attendance (and participation) at Pow Wows, Native American gatherings, visiting Urban Centers, etc.
- Success is measured by number of distributed materials and contacts made.

Phase 2: Saints Witnessing (i.e., meaningful sharing of message, targeting Native Americans who have responded to initial contact) Native Americans and Non-Native Americans witnessing together

- Meaningful discussion, teachings, more detailed explanations of the mission of the church, and more church literature
- Invitation to church gatherings and continued contact through phone calls, e-mails, face-to-face meetings (possibly calling on other members of local branches)
- Success is measured by number of contacts and meaningful exchanges.

Phase 3: Nations Running Together Side By Side – Native Americans and Non – Native members going to Native Americans (i.e., servings as mentors or stewards to Native Americans where the seed [message] has germinated and grown); working together as one team (Native American and Non-Native American); and working with and through Region Committees and local branch teams.

Phase 4: Discipleship/Mentorship (conversion; those seeking membership through obedience to the Gospel).

- Further involvement of Regions and branches
- Consideration of recommendation of New Works to Region MOC
- Placement of membership in appropriate church organization
- Sustaining membership

Phase 5: Coordination with Choice Seer – Where the Native American stops at this time in his/her belief system the Choice Seer will convince the Native Americans. “The Lord has predetermined what the work of this “Choice Seer” shall be. It is written that he should have power to convince the Seed of Joseph about the truth of the Restored Gospel.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 14:40; Colossians 2:5

⁴⁸ Dissertation on the Faith and Doctrine by V. James Loyalvo, Page 137

Basics About Outreach

Generally missionary work in The Church operates in two spheres. One is sending out two or more Evangelists or Elders to the mission field who begin a work by preaching and teaching the Gospel whether by invitation or inspiration.⁴⁹ The second is follow-up work by the Priesthood due to a member sharing his or her testimony with a relative, neighbor or acquaintance.

The work may be initiated from the General Church level (Quorum of Seventy Evangelists) or from the Region level (Region Evangelists or Region Priesthood). In either case, or in the case of a work starting from a member sharing their testimony, everyone's assistance is needed. There is a lot of work – more than can be handled by the Ministry alone.⁵⁰

When it comes to Native American Outreach, there are two avenues. One is ongoing efforts in established fields (such as Muncey, Six Nations, San Carlos, Pinetop, and Tse Bonito). These works are managed and cared for by Region Missionary Operating Committees (RMOC). And there are already abundant opportunities for involvement in those places.

The second is new efforts designed to bring as many Native Americans in contact with the message as possible, with appropriate follow-up when interest is shown. These efforts can be initiated by branches working through their RMOC, regions working with their RMOC or RMOC working with the NAOC.

Outreach Plan Details

In general, the NAOC provides printed materials, data management (locating and Native American centers and reserves and tracking outreach efforts), publicity of the work, information reporting, pilot programs, and correlating the work geographically with the seven regions, who in turn work through their RMOC and Region NAOC. The NAOC does reserve the right to counsel with RMOCs and branches, so as to assure consistency, continuity, and effectiveness of effort and resource usage. Additionally, if a work can be done in an area not serviced by a branch or Region, the NAOC may initiate the work and then service it.

Each branch may have its own Native American Outreach team, depending on circumstances, consisting of volunteers interested in sharing and working with Native Americans in their locality. Local teams will meet as often as necessary, sometimes for organizing, strategizing, and planning; often for prayer and spiritual direction; but mostly for action! How the team is organized will be left to the branch (it is suggested that at a minimum a team leader and a record-keeper are selected and these positions can be filled by either brothers or sisters, ordained or non-ordained members, whatever works best in the branch; of course, all under the guidance and counsel of the branch Priesthood).⁵¹ All branch NAO teams will inform the RMOC of their activities and work in a collaborate manner to proper usage of resources.

The NAOC will provide contacts (names, addresses, etc.) from time to time; the teams can seek out more (the more the better) within their locality. (A “sales” warning here – never “burn” leads, that is, don't be too hasty and waste them.) Be prayerful before approaching a contact so that you make the most of it. Seek God's inspiration and guidance. A salesman also knows that the hardest sell is when the customer or consumer does not know or believe they need the product or service. God knows the heart and mind of all people and He can soften the hard hearted, open the ears of the spiritually deaf, and bring sight to the spiritually blind. We are to exercise faith and do His will; He will do the rest.

⁴⁹ Luke 10:1; Acts 10:1-35; 16:9, 14

⁵⁰ Jeremiah 16:16; Matthew 9:37, 38; Luke 9:62

⁵¹ Nehemiah 4:6; Romans 8:28

Reporting Contacts and Activities

Reporting activities and results is critical to make the most of the efforts at all levels. The reports tell the NAOC what is working and what is not. It provides a general understanding of the progress that is being made. Finally, it shows where to expend more or less effort. Another consideration is that reports provide the basis for maintaining a history of the work and a method of sharing with the Saints what great things the Lord is doing. Finally, they measure The Church's completion rate (how much has been done and how much remains to be done).

The branch teams will report to the Region Native American Outreach Committee every six months prior to their Region Conference (probably January 31 and July 31) summarizing activities (see appendix B). The team will share any special requests with the Branch Priesthood, who will determine the next course of action in conjunction with the RMOC. All branch teams need to be aware to not commit The Church or any church resources to any activities or support without branch Priesthood or RMOC concurrence.

The Region NAOC reports to the RMOC (see appendix C) who will consider the results of activities and requests and will then recommend a course of action (support, assistance, expansion, etc.). Communications is a two-way street, from the branch teams to the RMOC and NAOC and back to the branch teams, particularly noting what can or cannot be done.

The RMOC will forward its report to the NAOC (with any additional information; again see appendix C) on a semi-annual basis (March 31 and September 30). The NAOC will submit a semi-annual report to the Quorum of Seventy prior to General Church Conference.

Pow Wows and Other Native American Gatherings

If the Native American event is open to the public, then attendance is open to the Saints. Depending on the situation opportunities will vary. A general public affair is not an ideal situation for sharing the message. It is more suited to meeting and greeting Native Americans and relationship building. Allow the Spirit of God to direct your conversation. Be observant and listen. Too much talking is a "turn-off" for many people.

There may be occasions when The Church of Jesus Christ will have the opportunity to operate a concession stand or kiosk at an event (check with the sponsors ahead of time, as some require plenty of advance notice of your interest to participate). In those instances, it is important to follow the sponsor's rules and regulations. Check with the NAOC for successful strategies and items available as "give-aways."

Finally, there are non-public gatherings in which The Church received a special invitation. Conduct and conversation should be especially guarded at these affairs, so as to show respect for the hosts and other guests. Make use of opportunities offered, but do not assume that this gathering is a one-time opportunity and you feel to tell the entire story of The Church. Again, be prayerful and allow the Spirit of God to guide you.

An added note: do not attend any function alone; The Church recommends traveling and visiting with another brother or sister.

Following-up with Contacts and Activities

If you find a contact outside of your branch area, pass it on to your Region Native American Outreach Committee. In turn, if it is outside of the Region, they will pass it on to the NAOC for disposition. As point

of clarification, a “location outside a Region” would include any geographic area either adjacent to or at a distance from our current branches and missions, where there is no branch or mission related activities or planned missionary work. If indeed it is adjacent to a pre-existing Region, the Region closest to or with greatest interest would be given the opportunity to take lead of that missionary effort.

The following scenario may help:

- A lead is identified with the Nez Perce Nation, Northern Idaho which is a state located in the Southwest Region of The Church.
- We have no current branches or missions close to this lead. The closest in the Southwest Region is the Denver Mission. The Modesto Branch in the Pacific Region is about the same distance.
- The NAOC interacts with the Southwest Region to provide background information and materials and to determine if they have the resources to proceed. If it does not feel ready to follow through, the Southwest Region requests assistance through the NAOC to the Pacific Region NAOC and the Quorum of Seventy Evangelists.
- A final plan is implemented once those who are ready to go are identified.
- The resources for the Nez Perce Nation outreach, as well as population, history, culture and other important socio-economic background information are provided.
- The visit takes place.
- A report is forwarded to the appropriate NAOC.
- The next step depends upon the response from those contacted.

(See Appendix D for additional details to the overall outreach plan adopted by The Church.)

About the Descendents of Joseph

Lineage – Joseph, Son of Jacob

So far we have alluded to who the Native Americans are. Let us explore it a little more deeply. We are specifically told within the Book of Mormon that Lehi was a descendant of Joseph, the son of Israel. Lehi, his family and others were directed to leave Jerusalem. His son, Nephi, directed by God, built a ship and they crossed the Atlantic Ocean arriving in Central America approximately 600 years before the birth of Christ. Even Jesus, when he appeared in the Land Bountiful of ancient America, confirmed that they were of the House of Joseph.⁵² Some people are confused by the words of Amulek when he mentions that Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh. But for our purposes, it is not necessary to make the determination of who in Lehi's party was a descendant of Manasseh and who was a descendant of Ephraim. Lehi clearly stated that "For it suffices me to say that we are descendants of Joseph."⁵³ Review the Scriptures provided in the footnote and you will clearly see that Joseph is the important person.

Confirming Joseph's presence in America is the prophecy uttered by his father, Jacob, as follows.

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him, but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel).

Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.

The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren. Genesis 49:22-26

Judah

Also among the descendants of Lehi were the descendants of another colony brought to America approximately 600 BC that included Mulek, the youngest son of Zedekiah, King of Judah. Based on the King James Version of the Bible, Zedekiah was a descendant of King David (of the tribe of Judah). Now we should not be surprised by this fact. There is a purpose for all things and God fully knows the purpose of these people being brought to America.⁵⁴ Nephi wrote, "Wherefore, I, Lehi, prophesy according to the workings of the Spirit which is in me, that there shall none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord."⁵⁵

In the Book of Helaman, it clearly states that, "Now the land south was called Lehi and the land north was called Mulek, which was after the son of Zedekiah [tribe of Judah]; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north, and Lehi into the land south."⁵⁶

⁵² 1 Nephi 5:14; 6:2; 46:23; 3 Nephi 10:17; 15:12; Ether 13:6-10

⁵³ 1 Nephi 6:2

⁵⁴ See article in Gospel News, *Why Mulek*, for a possible explanation.

⁵⁵ 2 Nephi 1:6 (Read the remainder of Lehi's words, which clearly indicate that no matter who is brought to this land, they must serve the Lord and accept Jesus as their Messiah)

⁵⁶ Helaman 6:10

Other Tribes of Israel

We cannot confirm that there are or are not other tribes mixed in with Joseph, but we do have the words of Jesus when he appeared in America. He said, “And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.”⁵⁷ Now this prophecy may only be a reference to a future gathering or it may refer to others brought to America at various times.⁵⁸

Other Considerations

Occasionally, people ask about Zoram, the servant of Laban, who came in Lehi’s colony. As we read, he came as a free man, married one of the daughters of Ishmael, and became Nephi’s friend, as well as brother-in-law. It was not unusual for the Israelites to have servants from their own tribe or from one of the other eleven tribes. This servitude is considered in the purpose of the Jubilee year.⁵⁹

Therefore, the conclusion of the matter is that Jesus considers the ancient inhabitants of America as descendants of Joseph and that the promises made to him will be fulfilled by God through The Church of Jesus Christ in these latter-days.⁶⁰

Another question in the minds of some is determining “pureness” of Native Americans. This problem, too, will be left to the Lord. He knows who they are and whether someone is “full-blooded” Native American or some percentage of Native American which is acceptable to God; it is not our concern at this time.

Lamanites

Lehi had four sons when he left Jerusalem and two more were born to his wife Sariah in the wilderness. After a number of years, a great division took place among Lehi’s descendants. One group included four of Lehi’s sons (Sam, Nephi, Jacob and Joseph) and was commonly called Nephites. The other group consisted of Lehi’s two oldest sons (Laman and Lemuel) as well as the sons of Ishmael (another family that came with Lehi). This group was commonly referred to as Lamanites. Over time, great wars raged between the two people, with the lesser people, Nephites, maintaining their independence and freedom with the help of God. The Lamanites turned away from God and were cursed. This situation remained until Jesus Christ made his appearance in the Land Bountiful, after which the two nations joined together and were one people.

Approximately 200 years after Christ’s visit, a new group of disbelievers developed and took the name Lamanites. Eventually, the remaining faithful group became known as Nephites, but they fell into wickedness. A final war was waged and the known Nephites were destroyed. Today, we sometimes refer to Native Americans as Lamanites, although, biologically speaking, we cannot ascertain if they are descendants of Laman, Lemuel or any of the other sons of Lehi or Ishmael. Adding a little confusion to the matter is the inclusion of the Mulekites and the descendants of Zoram. Once again, we generally state (as did Lehi and Jesus Christ) that Lehi and his colony were descendants of Joseph. Since we cannot be sure who is who, we generally avoid using the term Lamanites when referring to Native Americans.

⁵⁷ 3 Nephi 21:23

⁵⁸ We do not know what tribe(s) Ishmael, his wife, or his sons’ wives were from.

⁵⁹ Leviticus 25th chapter

⁶⁰ 3 Nephi 16th, 20th, and 21st chapters, as well as 29:1; Mormon 3:17; 5:10-20; Ether 12:22;

Their Locations

Where are the Native Americans/First Nations People? They are scattered throughout North, Central and South America. Their population shrunk dramatically after the arrival of the Europeans, who brought with them both biological and sociological diseases. The Native American population, especially in the United States, declined throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. It was not until the 20th century that their numbers began to rebound.

One of the atrocities perpetrated upon Native Americans in North America was the establishment of reservations, i.e., land reserved for Native American Nations. It is unbelievable that governments (speaking in general terms) could take all of the land and decide that a small portion should be given back to the rightful owners. We need to be cognizant of this fact, as well as prophesies concerning it as found in the Book of Mormon.⁶¹

Reservations can be found in most states in the United States and throughout the Provinces of Canada as well as in portions of Central America, Caribbean and South America. There are a few exceptions. Historically the United States moved the Native Americans off their lands in the east and placed them west of the Mississippi River. However, that relocation was short lived and an “Indian Territory” was established (today the State of Oklahoma). That situation had an even shorter life and now, other than reservations, Native Americans only own a small fraction of the land they once held.⁶²

Today, many Native Americans can be found in urban settings, particularly in large cities. Often they establish community centers to minister to their own and preserve their heritage and culture. For example, The Church of Jesus Christ has had a long-term relationship with the Council of Three Rivers Center, where our members have worked for and with the Native Americans. Sometimes when the Nation does not have its own land, it appeals to the federal government to recognize its organization and allow it to operate much like a reservation, but without the dedicated land.

Most reservations are operated by an elected chief or some other elected official, much like a city or county. The executive director of an urban center is usually selected by its Board of Directors.

Besides the two groups mentioned above there are enclaves of Native Americans that have neither dedicated land nor a federally or state-recognized organization. Some of these are in the process of becoming recognized by government agencies or are organizing “tribal” offices.

Finally, there are individuals everywhere – on planes, in shopping centers, at libraries, in schools or factories. This situation is why we often speak of being ready “in season or out.”⁶³ And there are some who are even hidden from our view or knowledge today. However, we have knowledge of enough of them to keep us quite busy and, of course God knows where they all are.⁶⁴

⁶¹ 1 Nephi 13:14; 15:17; 22:8; 2 Nephi 1:11; 6:11; Helaman 15:12; 3 Nephi 16:8; 20:15; 21:2

⁶² Although today some nations are either purchasing land or suing for land guaranteed by treaties.

⁶³ 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15

⁶⁴ 3 Nephi 17:4; 1 Nephi 22:25; 3 Nephi 16:5;

History, Languages, Culture, and Socio-economics

Any discussion of culture should begin with the recognition that we all have cultural norms. It's like when you travel to another geographic area and a person says to you that you have an accent. You think to yourself, 'An accent?' Culture is the same way. You may not realize your own culture as others do – just as you see theirs. One example of differences in cultures between Native Americans and European Americans is the concept of land ownership. In general, Native Americans did not and do not believe one person can own the land. The Native Americans knew you could not buy land for personal ownership and thought the payments the colonial intruders gave were simply gifts. Yet, in general, people of European descent think it is a normal fact of life. You can see why the early settlers thought they were getting some real bargains for land.

Another example: traditionally, Native Americans did not proselytize each other (i.e., a member of the Navajo Nation would not try to convince a member of the Apache Nation to follow the Navajo way). The Gospel, however, is all about proselytizing (“...go ye into all the world...”⁶⁵).

Not only do we have American culture to deal with, we also have Church culture, such as a dress code (white shirt and tie with a jacket or suit coat for men). So the sooner we recognize our culture, the easier it will be to understand their culture. Our goal is not to change their culture, it is to deliver the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the message God has asked us to give them regardless of their culture.

Native American/First Nations Culture

Native American/First Nations' cultures are as diverse as the number of First Nations. This handbook cannot cover all the possibilities and even if more space was given to the topic, it could not do justice to the subject. Instead it is incumbent upon each member to observe and understand the culture they are dealing with. Be open to the culture. You may prepare by reading some books or periodicals on the subject, or getting to know one or more of the people from that nation. In the end, you should seriously consider Apostle Paul's admonition in his letter to the Saints in Corinth:

For though I am free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.⁶⁶

It is clearly understood that Paul did not mean he participated in any sins, only that he tried to reach men and women in a way that they could relate to and understand. He took it upon himself to adjust and adapt, not for them to do so. There is an old quote, “When you are at Rome live in the Roman style; when you are elsewhere live as they live elsewhere.”⁶⁷ In no way should this advice imply that we take on the culture of another nation when that culture (or tradition) conflicts with the word of God. We must be careful not to offend the Native American we are speaking with, but even more important is not to offend God by participating in an activity that is clearly contrary to God's commandments.

⁶⁵ Mark 16:15

⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 9:19-23

⁶⁷ Attributed to Ambrose of Italy, 339 AD - 397 AD

Evolving Culture

Another point to make is that cultures evolve. Notice the changing use of the neck tie over the last 200 years from a simple black bow to a long and colorful knotted scarf. Similarly, some of the culture of Native Americans has changed due to environmental factors. Home types have dramatically changed due to the developments around the people and, in some instances, placement on reserves. Clothing and food have changed as well, adapting to what is available and not what was traditionally worn or eaten. This evolution neither reduces the importance of their culture, nor the importance of our understanding it.

Tolerance is the key word. Tolerance means sympathy or indulgence for beliefs; practices differing from or conflicting with one's own; or, the act of allowing something.⁶⁸ We need to be tolerant (non-judgmental) of the culture until they “come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”⁶⁹ Tolerance does not mean acceptance. You may be tolerant of actions or beliefs without accepting them as your own. This situation may occur from time to time. It is similar to the fact that as a Gentile you do not have to participate in certain ordinances of the Law of Moses.⁷⁰

If you are questioned about a specific cultural activity or custom, answer in an understanding manner. For example, if you are asked about the appropriateness of smoking the peace pipe, do not respond that we do not believe in the use of tobacco for any purposes. Instead, say something like, ‘I understand its importance to you and your people. The Scriptures speak of practices that some call rituals; I can see the similarities.’⁷¹

Additional Considerations

In the same vein, do not compare one nation to another, unless the Native American questions you. For example, don't say, ‘Yes, that ritual is just like XYZ Nation over there.’ In general, European culture often thinks in comparison terms that other cultures do not. Today there has been a backlash in some foreign lands against cultural norms of the United States. Some foreign countries place limits on how many American movies can be shown because they feel that American culture is erasing or superseding their own; therefore we need to be respectful of others' culture.

Avoid sounding “enlightened” about Native American culture by talking about their legends, customs or way of life, unless they initiate the conversation; they are looking for sincerity, not intelligence. You may inadvertently speak about something that is holy without knowing it. Imagine how you would feel if someone came up to you in a crowd and started talking about how you eat bread to represent someone's flesh. Another reason is that you may not be accurate in your assessment of the culture, which might offend your listener. For example, the Nation may have a custom of not mentioning the name of someone who recently died. Being unaware of this tradition you may decide to provide a long explanation of how wonderful this person was, mentioning their name again and again. A final reason is the person you are speaking with may not be as familiar with their history, legends, or customs as you are and you may make them feel uninformed or, even worse, inferior.

Keep in mind that as much as we like to speak, there are others who like to be silent. Too many probing questions (which are taught in modern communications skills) may be opposite of the culture of the Nation you are working with.⁷²

⁶⁸ Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

⁶⁹ Ephesians 4:13

⁷⁰ Those who are of Israelite descent may approach this topic differently; see Acts 15:6-21

⁷¹ For examples see Leviticus 23:42-43; Nehemiah 8:14-17; and 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 3 Nephi 20:8; and Moroni 4:3

⁷² Psalm 107:43; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; and 2 Timothy 4:5

These pointers are not to scare you. Instead they are guideposts to help you avoid pitfalls that could derail your true intent, i.e., bringing them to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, understanding who their forefathers were, and telling them what's in store for them in the future. Stay focused on the purpose and be content to be silent on other topics.⁷³ Simply put: acknowledge, honor, respect.

⁷³ Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:8; and Hebrews 13:5

Historical Perspectives

Several sources are used to provide a historical perspective for the Native American populations of the Americas.

The Bible

The Bible presents the history of God's intervention with mankind and His Gospel with the people of Israel, primarily from the House of Judah. It describes the prophecy concerning the descendants of Joseph, Jacob's son, which would include a distant land with blessings greater than all before him.

The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon presents a history of God's intervention with individuals who transitioned from the Old World and built societies and cultures in the New World now known as North, Central, and South America. These people include:

- An expedition from the Tower of Babel approximately 2200 BC known as Jaredites
- Descendants of Joseph who leave Jerusalem, before its destruction and exile. These people traversed across lands and oceans to the Americas under the leadership of Lehi and Nephi approximately 600 BC.
- An expedition of descendants of King Zedekiah under the leadership of his son, Mulek, who are of the House of Judah
- Expeditions of people both by land and by sea from their main communities in ancient America which were never heard of again.⁷⁴

Archaeological and Secular History

Evidence shows civilizations in the Americas prospered and thrived. Some disappeared and only their artifacts remain; others, only their temples and related structures. In general, there has not been a definitive comparative study into the remnants of the descendants of Lehi in the new world and the historical-archeological evidence that has been uncovered in America today. It is important to remember that we learn new information each day and the day will come when God will reveal all. Until then, we see glimpses of the ancient civilization that were spoken of in the Book of Mormon.⁷⁵

- Olmecs – The Olmecs, as they are called by archaeologists, appear to have had a civilization corresponding to the people we know as the Jaredites of the Book of Mormon record. Jaredite names have been identified in the Olmec cultural sites.
- Mayans and Aztecs – These peoples appear to have a record both in sites and artifacts along with traditions of generations continuing to live in the region. Their records appear to match the record found in the Book of Mormon covering from 600 BC through the 5th century AD.

⁷⁴ Alma 63:5-8

⁷⁵ 1 Corinthians 13:12; See Appendix A for additional references, such as books "Cry of the Ancients" and "He Walked the Americas".

- Other historical sources – Many Native American Nations and historical sites across the continents appear to provide evidence that other migrations may have taken place both coming into and going out of parts of the Americas. (See appendix A for additional reading material on these subjects.)

Tribal Traditional History and Prophecy

Many Native American Nations have shared some of their traditional history and prophecies telling of their origins and of the future. We can only mention a few here. Many cultural characteristics, languages, artifacts and buildings also have been identified in the Americas as having roots and connections in Hebrew culture.⁷⁶

The Navajo tell of several “worlds” from which they emerged. The final epoch of time is told to be a time of peace.

The Haudenosaunee (also known as the "League of Peace and Power"; the "Five Nations"; the "Six Nations"; or the "People of the Long House") tell of a Prophecy of Deganawidah. Most striking within this prophecy is the mention of a ‘choice seer.’

At the time they were watching the two serpents locked in this battle, a great message would come to them, which would make them ever so humble, and when they become that humble, they will be waiting for a young leader, an Indian boy, possibly in his teens, who would be a choice seer. Nobody knows who he is or where he comes from, but he will be given great power, and would be heard by thousands, and he would give them the guidance and the hope to refrain from going back to their land and he would be the accepted leader.⁷⁷

The Hopi tell of their history on this land. After a terrible destruction, the Great Spirit, Massau, visited them. He told them how to live at peace and to worship the Great Spirit. In the end times, there would be great destruction once again followed by a long time of peace. An Indian leader would interpret records from the Hopi and many tribes from around the world who would gather. The messages on these records would all be the same.

Keep in mind that these “legends” or “prophecies” are not part of our Scriptures, but may from time to time run parallel with our beliefs that are found in the Bible and Book of Mormon. They are useful in finding common ground when speaking with someone who does not accept the Bible or the Book of Mormon, but obviously they are not replacements for either book.

Consider using terms that Native Americans may recognize or be familiar with. Some of our Native American Saints have pointed out words such as “Great Spirit” (Alma 18 or 22); “Mother Earth” (2 Nephi 9:7, Mosiah 2:26, and Mormon 6:15); or Oneida (Alma 32:4). Even the concept of a reservation is mentioned in the Book of Mormon, such as the land set aside for the people of Anti Nephi Lehi (Alma 27:22).

⁷⁶ See Appendix A for reference material, including “American Indian Moses” and “Cry of the Ancients”.

⁷⁷ <http://www.manataka.org/page243.html>

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. I have met a Native American in my community or while on a vacation/trip. What should I share about The Church's Divine Commission, with this individual and/or family? With whom should I share the information regarding this contact? What is the next step?

A1. First, don't be pushy or insensitive (hopefully, you have studied this handbook and have applied its recommendations, suggestions and tips). Is it a good time to speak to the Native American? If it is a good time to speak to the Native American then carefully share the message God has given us to share.

If you have it with you, share the NAOC brochure or a Jew and American Indian pamphlet. Provide your name, address and phone number to them (have business cards ready to hand out). If appropriate, ask for their name and address to send additional materials (remember to respect their privacy).

Information you collect should be recorded locally and then submitted to your Region committee. They in turn will forward the information to the NAOC for analysis and storage.

The reception you receive after sharing the message will dictate your next steps. If received openly, possibly an invitation to explain more about the message in greater details or possibly an invite to The Church. Check with your Regional NAOC for guidance and assistance.

Q2. I'm an Elder or Evangelist of The Church, and I am convicted by the message from the Apostles regarding the Divine Commission. What is my next step to get involved in this important priority of The Church? Should I drive out to a reservation and/or Urban Indian Center just to get going with this important message?

A2. Don't drive anywhere! Check with your Region to see what opportunities are available right now. If there are none where you are located, determine if a Branch NAOC should be formed. If so, contact your Region for assistance. The NAOC can provide contact names and addresses if you have none.

Q3. I'm a Native American, and you are telling me that Jesus Christ is for Native Americans and that I am of the House of Israel. How should I know if this is true just because you are telling me that you feel convinced of this?

A3. Please, don't simply take our word for it, call upon God in the name of Jesus Christ and He will reveal to you through the Holy Spirit the truth of all things, including our message. Read the Bible and the Book of Mormon and allow them to speak to your heart.

Q4. I'm a Region President, RMOB Chairman or other officer and I now know that thousands of Native Americans live somewhere within our Region. What do I do to get our region/quorum/committee ready to be able to pursue The Church's Divine Commission?

A4. First, understand the accepted protocol of The Church. Second, request the NAOC to assist you with the development of a Region committee. Then coordinate efforts through the Region committee into the branches. The NAOC will provide contacts

in localities where there are Saints willing to labor. Remember to record and report your activities and contact information back to the RMOC and NAOC.

Q5. Should I have business cards printed? How about my own brochures or pamphlets?

A5. With today's technology, you can print your own business cards on a personal computer. You can also use the services of a local print shop. We recommend that the cards focus on the message (with scriptural reference) and not on you, i.e., your name, address, and phone number should not be prominent. The General Church will make available for purchase appropriate flyers, brochures, pamphlets and DVDs.

Q6. What should I do if I'm asked to provide assistance or money to a Native American organization?

A6. First, make no promises. Second, refer such matters to your branch team or region committee.

Q7. What happens if I approach a Native American and they are not interested?

A7. If you approached them prayerfully and humbly, and have followed the Spirit and the counsel in this Handbook, then you have done the best you could. Sharing the message is the primary goal. You should still forward to your branch or Region the fact that you had contact with this person and what the outcome was, as the General Church is tracking this information very carefully.

Q8. I'm a young person in The Church. I feel a burning desire to help. What should I do?

A8. Praise God! We need all the help we can get, especially from those who feel that burning desire in their hearts. First, read this Handbook and follow its counsel (preparation). Second, be prayerful and seek God's counsel (direction). Third, ask your branch or region what you can do to help right now (guidance). And fourth, continue to sharpen your knowledge and skills (improvement).

Q9. What kind of missionary work can I do?

A. It's best to be open to God's call and The Church's needs. Some missionary work comes disguised in "work overalls."⁷⁸ In established "works" there are needs for vehicle drivers, class teachers, facility maintenance help, member visitation, and so forth. Anything that may be needed in a branch may be needed in a mission field.

In other situations, it may be that you are called upon to distribute flyers or brochures, man a kiosk⁷⁹ station, or go door-to-door explaining our beliefs and inviting them to a special meeting or presentation.

Other talents may be utilized, such as musical instruments and singing. For example, the Region may have a tent meeting near a Reserve where music would be a wonderful attraction.

⁷⁸ This statement is an adaptation of Thomas Edison's statement about opportunity.

⁷⁹ Kiosk is from a Turkish word taken from the Persian word for portico. It means a small structure with one or more open sides that are used to vend merchandise (as newspapers) or services; or small stand-alone device providing information and services on a computer screen.

What is important is to feel the desire to serve the Lord and His Church, and use any and all talents the Lord has given you to further the Gospel among the Native Americans.

Q10. Can I do missionary work wherever I want?

A10. The better question is, “Where does the Lord need me?” The answer to that question may be your own neighborhood, an established mission field, or another location away from your home. It is important to seek God’s guidance AND the counsel of the Priesthood in charge of the work among the Native Americans. Begin with contacting your Region committee. Included in the “where” question is the “how.” It may be that you do not leave your home, but perform important tasks that assist The Church, the NAOC, or individual missionaries from your home.

Q11. What personal factors influence my service?

A11. There are a number of factors, whose importance varies, depending on the location of the mission work. Number one is personal commitment – which is critical. Make the commitment in your heart, your mind and your soul. Know that this work is the one for you and that you will follow it through to its end. This does not mean that you exclude everything else from your life; quite the contrary: it really means that you must be like a long distance runner and pace yourself. King Benjamin said, “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.”⁸⁰

A second factor is health: spiritual, natural, and emotional. Spiritual health is important as your beliefs may be challenged by others. You need to be convicted of heart and have a solid understanding of why you are doing this work (this handbook should help). Above all, BELIEVE and KNOW. There is no replacement for faith, belief, and knowledge.

Natural strength may be important as you do not want to wear out during your labors, either for the short term (day to day) or long term (year to year). Watch your food intake, do some exercises (of course, remembering the Apostle Paul’s admonition⁸¹) and consider your overall well-being.

Third is emotional health. The goal of this work is to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the Native Americans and to share the great things God has in store for them as descendants of Joseph and Israel. Your message may not be received and it may be rejected outright, but our goal is to share it with them. That may mean working with them for a long time and not having very many opportunities to share the message. Or it may mean simply handing out flyers and then later seeing them blowing around on the ground. Do not be discouraged. The important point is trying; God will provide the success. Also, remember to maintain a strong and stable home life. It profits no one for you to be so committed to a work that your family disintegrates; the loss may be greater than any gains you may perceive.

Finances may also impact your missionary desires. Over indebtedness may hinder your ability to travel or be away from your job or employment. It may also cause friction with family members (you spend money you do not have on a work that you feel is personally

⁸⁰ Mosiah 4:27

⁸¹ 1 Timothy 4:8 – “For bodily exercise profits little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

important). Discuss any and all missionary endeavors with your family and obtain their willing support.

Your natural employment may enhance or adversely affect your missionary goals and work. Some jobs are highly stressful, take you away from your family, force you to work evenings and weekends, or do not provide for paid time off. These jobs may interfere with your desire to serve the Lord in a mission field. Something to consider is seeking employment that develops skills that you can use both for your employer and for The Church.

Speaking of skills, obtain as much training and education as you can, with an eye towards using it for the Lord. Examples of these skills are too numerous to mention here, but consider a foreign language as one of them. As all good workers, you, too, should have a “tool kit” of skills, education, and experience, from which you can draw. The Apostle Paul is an excellent example. He was fluent in several languages, he was a Pharisee of the highest education, he was well read (quoting other writers), and knew the tent-making trade. All of these proved useful in his service to God.

Q12. Is there an age requirement or limit?

A12. Absolutely not! Children have been known to help distribute flyers (under parental or guardianship supervision) and the more mature have been known to make great sacrifices and serve out their remaining days before the Lord in a mission field. The true test is desire and commitment. There is a need for all and there is a place for everyone. Consider the needs of The Church and the skills you have to offer.

Q13. Can families participate in missionary efforts?

A13. Absolutely! Often times it is better to perform the work as a family, showing those you are trying to reach that everyone is committed to the work and that there is a place for everyone in the work of the Lord. With that said, please keep in mind that there may be situations where it is better that only ordained Brothers perform the missionary work, and it may be that only Evangelists are included.

Q14. Who covers my expenses while in the mission field?

A14. There are several answers to this question depending on where the mission field is and what is required in that location. For example, if the distance to be traveled is far and requires hotel accommodations, ask the committee sending you what the budget allocation is for travel, food, and accommodations (the committee could be your Region NAOC, Region MOC, or the NAOC). On the other hand, to help The Church, you may want to cover these costs yourself.⁸² Think of it this way, if everyone could cover their own expenses how much more work could get done!

Q15. What is required of me?

A15. It is good to have active involvement in your local branch/mission, have an active history of offering testimony and prayer, maintain a positive, cheerful attitude, be prayerful, have humility, and have a sound knowledge of the Gospel, The Church operation and the reason for our involvement with the Seed of Joseph.

⁸² If you decide to cover the costs from your own funds, please submit a travel expense report anyways, so that the RMOC/NAOC knows what it cost to perform this labor. Also, it may be possible that expenses you incur and pay are tax deductible – check with your tax advisor.

A Few Experiences

Chance Meeting?

Chief Clinton Rickard, from the Tuscarora Nation, was instrumental in opening the border between Canada and the United States for Native Americans. A brother first met Chief Rickard at one of the crossing parades that the Indians held each year in celebration of the border opening.

After spending some time in the brother's home in 1961, Chief Rickard invited the brother to attend the Counsel of the Six Nations that was held in Scranton, Pennsylvania. It was their first assembly in 200 years! The brother, an Evangelist, who was accompanied by a Teacher, was given the opportunity to address the counsel and present the latter-day message to those assembled regarding the great things God has in store for them.

Dream Received by Brother Charles Brown (circa 1873)

He dreamed that himself and some other brethren heard men rapping in the coal mine there for help; they listened and concluded that these men were closed in by a fall that had taken place in the mine, and went to work to accomplish their deliverance; they finally ceased their efforts and left these men to die. After a considerable time had elapsed, and it was supposed these men were all dead, these brethren heard them [buried miners] rapping again; they [the brethren] were much astonished to find that they were still living, and aroused themselves to make another effort to accomplish their deliverance. The second effort was successful. In a short time they found a place, where by moving a few cars of loose coal, they effected an entrance, and carried these parties out to the light of day. They were wrapped in blankets and had the appearance of Indians. These saints offered prayers to God on their [Indians] behalf, which were soon answered, and they [Indians] revived. One, I remember, turned out to be a woman, who arose and glorified God and almost immediately was transformed into one of youth and beauty, and richly adorned, entirely beyond description.⁸³

Dream Received by William Cadman, Senior (circa 1880's)

I dreamed that I was in some building, seemingly a dwelling house. I opened a door for the purpose of entering into another room. I met Jacob, the father of Joseph in the doorway. I knew him instantly as a familiar acquaintance. He spake to me (as I understood) in his own language. I understood his words and answered him (understandingly) in the same language. He then complained to me, very sorrowfully, concerning the hardships of his descendants, and seemed in very great distress and trouble concerning them. His countenance became sadder as he proceeded, until he seemed a very pitiable creature of misery and distress. My mind was then wonderfully opened up on the prophecies pertaining to the gathering of Israel and I was enabled to expound them to him extensively. As I did so his countenance changed and gave evidence that his heart and soul were overflowing with unbounded joy and satisfaction. At this juncture, I grasped his hand and shook it energetically shouting loudly, "Well might the prophet say, 'Jacob shall not now be ashamed – neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he sees his children the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.'"⁸⁴

⁸³ Religious Experiences and Expectations by William Cadman, 1899, Page 7-8

⁸⁴ Religious Experiences and Expectations, William Cadman, pg. 23; also see Isaiah 29:22, 23

Excerpts from a Native American Testimony

The following excerpts from a personal testimony provide several important points. First, it shows the importance of understanding culture of a Native American. Second, it shows the importance of accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Third, it provides a glimpse into the work of The Church from a very different perspective.⁸⁵

I present these thoughts with great respect for those who are in the leadership position of The Church of Jesus Christ. I also present this as a sister in Jesus Christ, who I know is my Lord and Savior.

Before I begin, it is customary to make a proper introduction. I would like to introduce myself as Loretta Brutz. I am a Navajo (Dine, ‘The People’) from Window Rock, Arizona. I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ in Tse Bonito, New Mexico. I have lived there for most of my life. As a Dine woman, I am of the Ashihi Clan (Salt Clan), born for the Kinyaa’aanii clan (Standing Towering House Clan). My maternal grandfathers’ clan is Too ahiglinii clan (Two Streams that become one Clan) and my paternal grandfathers’ clan is Too’ dich’nii clan (Bitter Water Clan). I know that most people do not understand why I would introduce myself this way, but I feel that our Lord Jesus Christ would understand because HE was from the tribe of Judah and was the Lion of Judah. He would know that as a people, kinship and closeness of family binds one together and saves one’s culture, values and beliefs. It is because of this value system that I present my thoughts.

To fully understand the Native peoples, we must first attempt to understand the history of a people who were indigenous to this country before Christopher Columbus landed on the shores of America. It is believed that the Native People resided in great numbers on this continent at the time. It is from this point on that our numbers began to dwindle due to the wars, diseases and unjust annihilation of our Native Peoples. It is also from this point on that our culture, language, and belief systems and traditional way of life was reduced to nothing or was being threatened with extinction, not to mention the loss of our lands.

From the 1800s, the order of the government was to assimilate the Native People by taking away the young and to put them in boarding schools where they were stripped of their identity and language (they were not allowed to speak their native language). The parents were also put on reservations, a place where they were no longer able to provide for their families like they were used to and no longer able to maintain family ties and their responsibilities.

My family personally experienced the boarding school. Both of my parents have experienced this life and had a difficult time in this internment. My father was taken away at the age of 5 years and did not return to his home until the age of 13. He came home to find that his parents were no where to be found. He had lost his Native language, but acquired other languages (Spanish and other tribes) during the summer months while in school. My father eventually relearned his language and regained the traditional ways of the “Dine” (Navajo).

These experiences may have had a greater impact, or impacted various tribes differently, depending on where they were located, and the timeline of the assimilation process may have been in effect at different times for others. In any case, this time in history was a sad time for Native Americans and First Nations people. The scars run deep and numerous that the healing process is still not complete, it seems. To put it in a perspective that you might be

⁸⁵ Written by Sister Loretta Ruth Brutz, November 2006.

able to picture, it has been described much like what the Jewish people experienced in the 1940s. Craig Steven Smith describes in his book, *Whiteman's Gospel* that "well over six million Jews lost their lives at the hands of Hitler's regime. The pain still lingers for countless numbers of Jews as they look to this painful part of their past" and "...before the European migration to this land, there were anywhere from eight to twelve million aboriginal people covering the landscape of North America. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, the population had dwindled down to just over two hundred thousand." The events of the two groups of people are distant in its timing, but continues to plague the minds of those who still remember and will not forget. That is why the scars run so deep!

Now that we have gone through a brief history of the Native Americans, the residual effects have been devastating. The resulting effects of the past have brought about alcoholism, suicide, lack of education and jobs, to name but a few; and the problems are numerous and escalating. These social ills have touched a majority of the families in one way or another. This is the present and is what now exists for the Native Peoples. I have only brought forth a glimpse of what is present on my reservation and can only speak for myself in this matter; but I would venture to say that this is probably prevalent in just about a majority of the reservations throughout the U. S. and Canada.

I do know that it is only through the Love of Jesus Christ who died on the cross for me and suffered more than I can ever know is the one and only answer. The link, I believe, is also through the two groups described above. We will finally be at peace, I believe, when eventually the two "cousin brothers" realize their connections to each other and to Jesus Christ. When the two finally realize that the suffering that Jesus Christ endured for us all was much greater than we can ever imagine or even compare to.

The Church gives us hope, not only for forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ; but it also gives us hope as a people (Natives) to have a connection with GOD and Jesus Christ because of who we are. We have an identity that is not always realized by all Native Americans and First Nations People. However, it is up to us to look forward to the promise set forth by God concerning our individual purposes, our role in The Church locally and worldwide. Together we must go forward with this hope at the forefront with Jesus Christ as our Leader.

In the meantime, please be patient with the Native Americans and First Nations people as they walk through life carrying a burden of the past that has been placed upon them. And also know that what is left of our language, culture and traditional ways are still a part of our spiritual lives. We continue to respect the old ways of our people and I know that, that way still has a connection to the Biblical culture of old. Just know that the Native peoples have the potential to do the work of the Lord, too, when the time comes.

My prayer is that there will continue to be a bridge, a broader bridge of understanding and communication between The Church and the Native Americans and First Nations People.

I would also solicit your prayers, too, on behalf of the Native Americans and First Nations People. Just like the dream that was had concerning the attack of the wolf upon The Church, this same wolf is attacking our Native People. Pray that we may have enough spiritual force to stand with GOD against the evil one!

1 Nephi 16:29

And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things.

Alma 37:6

Behold I say unto you, that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass; and small means in many instances doth confound the wise.

Moroni 9:6

And now, my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this temple of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.

Appendix A
Suggested Reading List

| Church Literature | Native American Books | Native American Periodicals | Native American Web Sites |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Bible | He Walked the Americas | Indian Country Today | http://www.cumbavac.org/Native_American.htm |
| Book of Mormon | Cry of the Ancients | Native American Times | NativeTimes.com |
| Dissertation of the Faith & Doctrine | Warriors of the Rainbow | Indianz.com | IndianCountry.com |
| Religious Experiences & Expectations | Custer Died for Your Sins | Indians.org – American Indians in the News | http://www.owlstar.com/dailyheadlines.htm |
| History of The Church volumes 1 & 2 | White Man's Gospel | Cherokee Observer | |
| American Indian Moses | The Grieving Indian | | <i>See separate NAOC document listing many other websites; these are only some news sites.</i> |
| Jew & American Indian | Black Elk Speaks | | |
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| | | | |

Feel free to add to this list and submit additions to the NAOC Secretary

Appendix B
Additional Do's and Don'ts

The following are some simple reminders of what to do and what to avoid. This table is not exhaustive, so when in doubt, error on the quiet, humble side.

| Do's | Don'ts |
|---|--|
| Be a good listener. | Don't ask too many questions or appear pushy. |
| Accept their point of view. | Don't argue or bring up controversial subjects. |
| Display patience if opportunities do not seem to come quickly. | Don't expect quick results or successes. |
| Accept their culture. | Don't put down other religions or cultures. |
| Look for opportunities to become involved in their programs and activities. | Don't try to control or take over their programs or projects – work in harmony. |
| Walk, talk and act sincere and humble. | Don't sound preachy |
| Speak in terms they understand (that's why knowing their culture is important). | Avoid Church terminology that they might not understand, i.e., Seed of Joseph, Lamanites, etc. |
| Maintain the great message the Lord has given us. | Do not espouse your personal beliefs. |
| Express the message sincerely, discretely, and at the opportune time. | Don't push for conversion – that's God's job. |
| Accept them for who they are; be tolerant. | Don't try to change them to be like us. |
| Discuss the Good News. | Don't discuss politics. |
| Speak of good things. | Avoid rhymes or songs that use Native Americans as counting devices, i.e., "One little, two little, three little..." |
| Help children understand that Native American Peoples have a wide variety of physical features, attributes, and values as do people of ALL cultures and races. | Avoid images or references to Native American peoples as mascots, i.e., "Redskins", "Indians," "Chiefs," "Braves," etc. Avoid the European names given to First Nations such as Iroquois instead of Haudenosaunee or Navajo instead of Dine. Finally, be aware that there is a difference between North American Indian and American Indian (for government purposes). |
| Invite a Native American guest speaker/presenter to gatherings (or your class or for a school assembly). Contact a local Native American organization or your library for a list of these resources. Offer an honorarium, gift, or donation to those who visit. | Understand that not all Native American Peoples have "Indian" surnames, but familiar European and Hispanic names as well. |
| Research the traditions and histories, oral and written, of Native Americans before attempting to teach these. | When teaching ABC's, avoid "I is for Indian" and "E is for Eskimo." |
| Present Native American Peoples as having unique, separate, and distinct cultures, languages, beliefs, traditions, and customs. Research authentic methods and have the proper materials for any crafts. | Don't trivialize Native American culture in craft activities, i.e., toilet-paper roll kachinas or "Indian dolls," paper bag and construction paper costumes and headdresses. Realize that many songs, dances, legends, and ceremonies of Native American Peoples are considered sacred and should not be "invented" or portrayed as an activity. |
| Understand the term "Native American" includes all peoples indigenous to the Western Hemisphere. A 1996 survey revealed that more American Indians in the United States still preferred American Indian to Native American. Nonetheless, most American | Avoid referring to or using materials which depict Native Americans as "savages," "primitives," "The Noble Savage," "Red Man," "Red Race," "simple," or "extinct." See above about using their nation name (such as Haudenosaunee). |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Indians are comfortable with Indian, American Indian, and Native American, and the terms are now used interchangeably. The continued usage of the traditional term is reflected in the name chosen for the National Museum of the American Indian, which opened in 2004 in Washington, D.C.</p> | |
| <p>Depict Native American peoples, past and present, as heroes who are defending their people, rights, and lands; present Native American Peoples as appropriate role models to children.</p> | <p>Correct and guide children when they "war whoop," use "jaw-breaker" jargon, or employ any other stereotypical mannerisms.</p> |
| <p>Teach Native American history as a regular part of American History and discuss what went wrong or right.</p> | <p>Avoid manipulative phrases and wording such as "massacre," "victory," and "conquest" which distort facts and history.</p> |
| <p>You should use materials and texts that outline the continuity of Native American societies from past to present.</p> | <p>Avoid materials and texts which illustrate Native American heroes as only those who helped Europeans and Euro-Americans, i.e., Thanksgiving.</p> |
| <p>Understand and impart that the spiritual beliefs of Native American Peoples are integral to the structure of our societies and are not "superstitions" or "heathen."</p> | <p>Avoid the assumption that a Native American person knows everything about all Native Americans. Avoid offensive terms such as "squaw." Always use respectful language.</p> |
| <p>Avoid the assumption there are no Native American people in your presence. As of the 2000 census eight of ten Americans with Native American ancestry were of mixed blood.</p> | <p>Native American people should not be singled out and asked to describe their families' traditions or their peoples' culture(s).</p> |
| <p>As recently as the 1970s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was still actively pursuing a policy of "assimilation", dating at least to the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. The goal of assimilation — plainly stated early on — was to eliminate the reservations and steer Native Americans into mainstream U.S. culture. In July, 2000, the state adopted a resolution of "termination" for tribal governments. In another state Native Americans face a unique problem, as the state has no federally recognized tribes, largely due to its first registrar of the state's Bureau of Vital Statistics. He believed that the state's Native Americans had been "mongrelized" with others. A law passed by the state's General Assembly recognized only two races, "white" and "colored". He then pressured local governments into reclassifying all Native Americans in the state as "colored", leading to the destruction of records on the state's Native American community.</p> | <p>Don't assume that persecution and mistreatment of Native Americans was only in the 19th century, but that it continues until today, in various ways and manners. Don't contribute to the persecution by ignoring or speaking against their rights.</p> |
| <p>Use books and materials which are written and illustrated by Native American people as primary source materials: speeches, songs, poems, and writings, which show the linguistic skill of a people who have come from an oral tradition.</p> | <p>Avoid materials which use non-Native Americans or other characters dressed as "Indians."</p> |

Appendix C.1.
Branch NAO Team Semi-annual Report

Branch:

Region:

Report Period:

What general activities did you perform this past six months? (Be as detailed as possible.)

How would you evaluate those activities? (Excellent results, good results, fair results, or poor results. Be honest – it’s the only way we will learn.)

Give as accurate a number as possible for each of the following performed with Native Americans/First Nations People:

| Description | Number |
|--|--------|
| Flyers distributed | |
| Pamphlets distributed | |
| Books distributed (specify name below) | |
| Bibles distributed | |
| Books of Mormon distributed | |
| Centers or Reserves visited | |
| Testimonies shared | |
| In-depth conversations | |
| Invitations to attend church | |
| First-time attendance of church | |
| Continued attendance | |
| Conversions | |

We're not evaluating you based on the numbers; we just want to track The Church's activities.

If the NAOOC does not have the contact information for the Native Americans (Centers or Reserves), please provide separately.

What assistance do you need/require?

Any problems or difficulties encountered? Are they resolved?

What experiences would you like to share with the NAOOC or The Church?

Please update any changes in local leaders of your team, including phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses.

Submitted by:

Date:

Forward to the Region NAOOC

Appendix C.2.
Region NAOC & MOC Semi-annual Report

Reporting Period:

Region:

Items A-F are completed by the RNAOC and items G-J are completed by the RMOC and forwarded to the NAOC

What general activities were performed in your Region this past six months? (Be as detailed as possible.)

How would you evaluate those activities? (*Excellent results, good results, fair results, or poor results. Be honest, it's the only way we will learn.*)

Give as accurate a number as possible for each of the following performed with Native Americans/First Nations People in your Region (tally the reports from Branches and the Region's own activities):

| Description | Number |
|--|--------|
| Flyers distributed | |
| Pamphlets distributed | |
| Books distributed (specify name below) | |
| Bibles distributed | |
| Books of Mormon distributed | |
| Centers or Reserves visited | |
| Testimonies shared | |
| In-depth conversations | |
| Invitations to attend church | |
| First-time attendance of church | |
| Continued attendance | |
| Conversions | |

We're not evaluating you based on the numbers; we just want to track The Church's activities.

If the NAOC does not have the contact information for the Native Americans (Centers or Reserves), please provide these separately.

What assistance do you need/require? Of that, what assistance will the Region or RMOC provide?

Any problems or difficulties encountered that you need assistance with?

Any additional comments by the RMOC?

What experiences would you like to share with the NAOC or The Church?

Please update any changes in Region NAOC and MOC Officers, including phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses.

What suggestions do you have for the NAOC?

Submitted by:

Date:

Appendix C.3.
Personal Report Form

Names of those involved:

Event or activity (as specific as possible):

Native American Nation:

Location:

Mailing address:

*E-Mail address:

*Telephone:

Your activities (what you did, include time of day, type of handouts or other activities, and number reached):

Outcomes (what happened, how were you received, opportunity for more or follow-up; again, be specific):

Assistance required, if any (type, amount, location, etc.):

Follow-up planned:

Other comments:

Submitted by:

Submit a copy to your RMOC as soon as possible.

** Indicates optional information; do not press for any information.*

Appendix D

1. OPERATIONAL PURPOSE AND DESIGN:
 - The General NAOC is structured to facilitate the Vision and Mission of The Church regarding the Divine Commission to the House of Israel beginning with the Seed of Joseph, commonly known as Native Americans and First Nation Peoples.
 - United States – current
 - Canada – current
 - Other countries in North, Central and South America – consider for future
 - The NAOC is authorized by the Quorum of 70 Evangelists and the General Priesthood to operate directly reporting to the Q70 Officers.
 - The NAOC reports directly to the Q70 with operational and financial requirements.
 - The NAOC works directly with the Region Officers of the General Church.
 - The NAOC will develop and adopt a Mission Statement with an Action Plan

2. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP:
 - MEMBERS – Seven members consisting of a Chair - Admin, Chair - Outreach, Vice Chair – Admin, Vice Chair - Outreach and three Native Americans
 - Apostle Liaison (One)
 - Q70 President and Vice President
 - Chairs will be recommended by the NAOC and approved by the Q70.
 - The Native Americans will be appointed by the NAOC Officers
 - Committee support staff, as needed, will be selected by the Committee (such as secretary, financial officer, publicity, editors, data management, contacts, and others as identified). Staff will be selected from the general membership according to skills and talents.

3. OPERATIONS:
 - The General NAOC of The Church of Jesus Christ, world headquarters in Monongahela, Pennsylvania will design an overall strategic plan which extends a request to present the Restored Gospel message of the Plan of Redemption and the Restoration of the House of Israel to every identified Native American Nation, tribe, reservation, urban center and organization.
 - The NAOC provides the leadership in creating and maintaining a clearing house and database for informational resources related to native Americans/First Nations and related inspirational materials, including archaeological and historical information and current events.
 - The NAOC provides technical and resource support in the development and implementation of Region NAOCs at the request of the Region MOCs.
 - Technical and resource support may include the formation, training and mentorship for ‘mission teams’ at the Region level.
 - Support can also be provided in the development of parallel sub committees found in the NAOC.
 - The NAOC provides coordinating support services to RNAOCs in seeking resources for personnel and material needs.
 - Create Informational Resource Database
 - Generate data on Nations, reservations, history, current status, needs, etc.
 - Generate information on Native – urban centers, publications, pow wows, etc.
 - Region NAOCs – Each Region will implement a NAOC as a subcommittee under the umbrella of the RMOC.
 - The NAOC will request funding for development, gathering, and distribution of support resource materials for the regions and its own operating needs; all of which are to be submitted through the Q70.

- Region NAOCs will continue administrative and financial management and oversight of designated works within their geographic areas (designated Native American works may include branches, missions, and new works serving Native American members, communities and centers).
 - Region NAOCs will report to the NAOC semiannually or as needed.
 - The Region MOCs and Region NAOCs are invited to all NAOC meetings to provide input, guidance and assistance, as needed or requested.
 - Officers of the GMBA and Ladies Uplift Circle will be invited to NAOC meetings.
4. METHOD OF APPROACH – [See Handbook and NAOC Plans]
5. OTHER STEPS
- Detailed action plan and timeline
 - Recruiting and training of enthusiastic members of all ages to work with Native Americans will occur throughout the phases noted above
 - Collection of suggestions, ideas, recommendations and feedback to further develop and enhance the Pilot Operational Plan

Appendix E.

As was mentioned earlier, sometimes Native American legends or prophecies can provide common ground from which to start a conversation when the other party is not a believer in the Bible or Book of Mormon, or as a means to show the connection with prophecies in the Scriptures. The following are excerpts that allude to other events and people that may be helpful.

Mohawk Prophecy of the Seventh Generation

According to the prophecy of the Seventh Generation, seven generations after contact with the Europeans the Onkwehonwe would see the day when the elm trees would die. The prophecy said that strange animals would be born deformed and without the proper limbs. Huge stone monsters would tear open the face of the earth. The rivers would burn. The air would burn the eyes of man. According to the prophecy of the Seventh Generation, the Onkwehonwe would see the time when the birds would fall from the sky. The fish would die in the water. And man would grow ashamed of the way that he had treated his Mother and Provider, the Earth. Finally, according to this prophecy, after seven generations of living in close contact with the Europeans, the Onkwehonwe would rise up and demand that their rights and stewardship over the Earth be respected and restored. According to the wisdom of this prophecy, men and women would one day turn to the Onkwehonwe for both guidance and direction. It is up to the present generation of youth of the Kanienkehaka to provide leadership and example to all who have failed. The children of the Kanienkehaka are the seventh generation.

Excerpts of Deganawidah's Words

When Deganawidah was leaving the Indians in the Bay of Quinte in Ontario, he told the Indian people that they would face a time of great suffering. They would distrust their leaders and the principles of peace of the League, and a great white serpent was to come upon the Iroquois, and that for a time it would intermingle with the Indian serpent as a friend. This serpent would in time become so powerful that it would attempt to destroy the Indian, and the serpent is described as choking the life's blood out of the Indian people.

And then the Indian revives and crawls toward the land of the hilly country, and then he would assemble his people together, and they would renew their faith and the principles of peace that Deganawidah had established. There would at the same time exist among the Indians a great love and forgiveness for his brother, and in this gathering would come streams from all over - not only the Iroquois but from all over - and they would gather in this hilly country, and they would renew their friendship.

And Deganawidah said a great message would come to them, which would make them ever so humble, and when they become that humble, they will be waiting for a young leader, an Indian boy, possibly in his teens, who would be a choice seer. Nobody knows who he is or where he comes from, but he will be given great power, and would be heard by thousands, and he would give them the guidance and the hope to refrain from going back to their land and he would be the accepted leader. And Deganawidah said that they will gather in the land of the hilly country, beneath the branches of an elm tree.

Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations Delivered October 25, 1985 by Leon Shenandoah, Tadodaho, Haudenosaunee.

Listen to the words of the Creator given to the first United Nations - the Haudenosaunee - over 1,000 years ago. "The Chiefs of the Haudenosaunee shall be mentors of the people for all time. The thickness of their skins shall be seven spans, which is to say that they shall be proof against anger,

offensive action, and criticism. Their hearts shall be full of peace and good will, and their minds full of a yearning for the welfare of the people. With endless patience, they shall carry out their duty. Their firmness shall be tempered with a tenderness for their people. Neither anger nor fury shall find lodging in their minds, and all their words and actions shall be marked by calm deliberation." In every nation there are wise and good people. These should be appointed Chiefs. They should be the advisors of their people and work for the good of all the people, and their power comes from the "Great Peace." A chief must never forget the Creator of mankind, never forget to ask the Creator for help. The Creator will guide our thoughts and strengthen us as we work to be faithful to our sacred trust and restore harmony among all peoples, all living creatures, and Mother Earth.

We were instructed to carry a love for one another and to show a great respect for all the beings of this earth... In our ways, spiritual consciousness is the highest form of politics. When people cease to respect and express gratitude for these many things, then all life will be destroyed, and human life on this planet will come to an end. These are our times and responsibilities. Every human being has a sacred duty to protect the welfare of our Mother Earth, from whom all life comes. In order to do this we must recognize the enemy - the one within us. We must begin with ourselves. We must live in harmony with the Natural World and recognize that excessive exploitation can only lead to our own destruction. We cannot trade the welfare of our future generations for profit now. We must abide by the Natural Law or be victims of its ultimate reality. We must stand together, the four sacred colors of humans, as the one family we are, in the interest of peace. We must abolish nuclear and conventional weapons of war. When warriors are leaders, then you will have war. We must raise leaders of peace. We must unite the religions of the world as the spiritual force strong enough to prevail in peace. It is no longer good enough to cry, "Peace."

We must act peace, live peace, and march in peace in alliance with the people of the world. We are the spiritual energy that is thousands of times stronger than nuclear energy. Our energy is in the combined will of all people with the Spirit of the Natural World, to be of one body, one heart and one mind for peace. We propose, as a resolution for peace, that October 24th be designated as a Day of Peace, and a world cease-fire take place in honor of our children and the Seventh Generation to come.