

OUR KINGDOM SERVICE

MAY 1976

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FOR UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear Kingdom Publishers:

All of us very much enjoy offering the *Truth* book in the field, and that will be our privilege once again in the month of May. We thought you would enjoy hearing of some of the things that have happened in connection with this remarkable publication.

Since the *Truth* book was released in the summer of 1968, how many copies have been printed? Eighty million in 92 languages! No other book explaining the Bible even approaches the circulation of the *Truth* book; in fact, it is mentioned in the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Has it helped people to learn the truth? In 1968 the average number of publishers was 323,688 here in the United States; thus far this service year our peak is 577,362. Doubtless the vast majority of the 253,674 who have taken up the service of Jehovah since 1968 were assisted by a study of the Bible with the aid of the *Truth* book, and that is remarkable indeed.

The message presented so directly in the *Truth* book has in many cases had a powerful, life-transforming impact, as illustrated by the experience of one 16-year-old boy who received a copy late in 1971. At the time he was despondent, almost uncertain as to whether he desired to continue living, because of serious family problems and a selfish world that he could not understand and in which he found no place. In his reading of the book, the last paragraph caught his attention. "It made my heart leap; never had I heard of anything so wonderful." Despite the opposition of all of his family he made progress to dedication and baptism in just a short time. After graduation he began pioneering and has served for the past year now as a member of the Bethel family. Yes, this small book has given hundreds of thousands of persons hope and

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We Want to Help People

¹ Jehovah God has demonstrated unmistakably his desire to help people, for he gave the dearest treasure of his heart, his only-begotten Son, in behalf of mankind. (John 3:16) During Jesus' earthly ministry, which included his sacrificial death, he exhibited the same heartfelt desire to help people. (Matt. 8:3; 20:28) We want to imitate their example by helping people, and especially is it urgent because we are deep into the time of the end. It is not sufficient to supply people with Bible literature; they really need personal help to know and understand God's purposes, and we can give that help through a home Bible study.—John 17:3.

² How much time should we be spending in field service helping people? Since our circumstances vary greatly, the congregation does not set field service quotas or goals. Individually, though, we may find it beneficial to set goals for ourselves that take our circumstances into account. Jehovah, of course, requires that we render whole-souled service. (Matt. 22:37) Some may find that they can devote only a few hours a week, while others may be able to devote time several days each week in spreading the good news. Your circumstances may al-

low you to reach out and be a temporary pioneer or enter regular pioneer service. So we see, then, some are capable of much more than others because of better physical health and stamina, and greater freedom in life.—Mark 4:20.

³ Some of us may feel that preaching from door to door and conducting studies with people in their homes is something toward which we are not naturally inclined. Love for Jehovah and for people, however, enables us to overcome this feeling and to find joy in field service. And when we realize that we are helping people who are living in the shadow of death, we soon forget our concern over self. (Matt. 16:24; 11:28-30) Jehovah richly rewards those who give of themselves unselfishly.—Mal. 3:10.

"KINGDOM NEWS" DISTRIBUTION

⁴ During the first ten days of May we will be distributing the *Kingdom News*. Why? Because we want to help people. Former campaigns of tract distribution have been very successful in doing that. So we will make a united effort to distribute our congregation's entire allotment by May 10. It may be that as we place tracts we will find

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A Loving Provision to Help Us

¹ The Christian congregation in the first century prospered spiritually and expanded rapidly. Why? The Bible shows that one of the outstanding factors was the provision for traveling overseers to visit congregations. These visits helped the congregations to be "made firm in the faith and to increase in number."—Acts 15:22; 16:4, 5.

² There is no less need for such help today. Surely we appreciate that we are in the last days foreshadowed by the climactic events of the first century. More than ever we need to be made firm in the faith and encouraged to continue making public declaration of our hope. In addition to the loving assistance being given by local elders, circuit overseers are sent to help us congregationally and individually to be strong. But you may ask, "How can the visit of the circuit overseer help me personally?"

HOW HE HELPS US

³ He is an elder with spiritual qualifications. He has experience in dealing with a variety of problems and may be able to offer helpful sug-

gestions that will assist you in some way. His example in wise use of his time and energy may well motivate you toward stronger appreciation and whole-heartedness. Perhaps some of his comments in personal conversation will help you to develop a deeper, warmer relationship with Jehovah. Having an "interchange of encouragement" will likely aid you to be made more firm in the faith.—Rom. 1:11, 12.

⁴ His schedule of activity with the congregation is planned with your spiritual interests in mind. His Bible-based talks may help you to understand better its teachings and see how its principles can be applied in your everyday life. He gladly takes time to give you kindly encouragement if he sees that you are depressed. Counsel may be needed; he will be glad to give that, too, with genuine concern for your welfare and, above all, your relationship with Jehovah. By word and example he will endeavor to help you to appreciate your blessings, privileges and responsibilities more fully.

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YOUR SERVICE MEETINGS

WEEK STARTING MAY 2

12 min: Song 22. Introduction. Comments on May theme, "Depend Constantly upon the Hearer of Prayer." (Ps. 65:2) Include comments on Psalm 25:4. Earnest prayer is vital to a good personal relationship with Jehovah.

15 min: "Have Your Say in Your Heart." Warm talk based on March 1, 1976, *Watchtower* article, pages 133, 134.

18 min: "We Want to Help People." Question-and-answer coverage. In discussing paragraph 2, particularly help all to appreciate the importance of whole-souled service in accord with their individual circumstances. In covering paragraph 6, encourage local expressions of the added joy publishers have had in using the Bible.

15 min: Concluding comments. Experiences enjoyed in distributing current *Kingdom News* or in previous distributions. [Arrange for these ahead of time.] Encourage full weekend of distribution. Brief demonstration of offering tract. Try to put out your allotment. Publishers who will not be able to distribute all copies will give what they cannot use to the field overseer. If extra tracts are available at the time of the service meeting, publishers will be encouraged to take extra copies. Song 48 and prayer.

WEEK STARTING MAY 9

10 min: Song 50. Introduction. Discuss Colossians 4:12, emphasizing prayer on behalf of our brothers and the importance of doing what our circumstances permit in aiding our brothers.

15 min: "A Loving Provision to Help Us." Question-and-answer discussion. Throughout discussion ask publishers to comment on how circuit overseer's visits have helped and encouraged them.

23 min: "Presenting the Good News—By Arousing Interest in God's Word." After demonstrating first presentation draw out audience by using these questions as appropriate: (1) Why is it good to allow householder an opportunity to express himself in answer to initial question? (2) To what kinds of people will it likely appeal? (3) What is the advantage of turning directly to the Bible text? (4) How does this presentation arouse interest in God's Word?

Do the same with the second presentation. Throughout this entire part, the one conducting will have in mind helping all to see the need of preparing something definite to use in presenting the *Truth* book with the goal of starting a Bible study.

12 min: Concluding comments. Cover Question Box, congregation's field service report for April and accounts report. Song 56 and prayer.

WEEK STARTING MAY 16

8 min: Song 59. Discuss Romans 10:1, showing we should pray for those we seek to aid. One way we aid others is through Bible studies.

15 min: "Do You Really Want a Bible Study?" Question-and-answer coverage of article. Stress how obstacles to conducting a study can be overcome.

20 min: Various Ways to Start a Study. Chairman points out that there are numerous ways to start a study. Begin demonstration of study started on initial call with reading of Revelation 21:3, 4, using material from first

presentation under "Presenting the Good News." Direct attention to paragraph 3 on page 6 in *Truth* book, reading paragraph aloud up to 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Ask question "a" conversationally, without directing householder to bottom of page. Make literature offer after starting study. Chairman invites audience to comment about benefits of this approach.

Second demonstration begins with reading of Matthew 19:5, 6 (of second presentation) and book is offered. After book is accepted, tactfully take the initiative in showing the householder briefly what the Bible teaches about raising children, directing attention to paragraph 9 on page 173. Read it together, along with Proverbs 22:6. Ask question on paragraph 9 conversationally, drawing householder out. Get audience comments as to benefits of this approach.

Chairman encourages all to be alert to start studies on the initial call, if possible. If not, return promptly with scripture and paragraph in mind to start discussion, working gradually into a study. While it may require a number of calls to get study started, keep your objective in mind each time you return.

If you encounter a householder who already has the *Truth* book, the following suggestions can be used in starting a study. Demonstrate: Publisher reads Revelation 21:3, 4, presents book; householder states he has the book; publisher is pleased householder has the Bible study aid, directs attention to paragraph 3 on page 6. . . [Follow through as outlined above.]

Remember to be friendly and natural, having in mind our desire is to help people through Bible study service.

17 min: Concluding comments. Brief local experiences (lined up in advance) from several publishers stating how a Bible study was started with them, covering various ways study was started, such as in house-to-house work, on a return visit, through referral, by a relative, etc. Some questions might be used: What motivated you to start studying? How was the study started with you? What publication did you start studying first? Help audience to see there are many approaches. Inform congregation of number of studies they conduct with public. Encourage applying suggestions made this evening to start Bible studies. Song 67 and prayer.

WEEK STARTING MAY 23

10 min: Song 75. Introduction. Discuss value of praying with regard to those in spiritual need.—James 5:14-16.

20 min: Serving Jehovah Together. To be handled by an elder, with audience participation. Explain that elders very much appreciate privilege and responsibility that is theirs, want to aid and encourage flock in every way, rendering personal assistance when problems arise. Elders desire to be of even greater help, but often face time limitations. In addition to presiding over congregational meetings, shepherding and other congregational responsibilities, what basic Christian obligations do the elders have? (1 Tim. 3:5; 5:8; Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) We can help them by not unnecessarily adding to their load. They must handle weighty matters of a judicial nature but might enlist aid of other qualified ones in connection with other activities. All of us want to work and cooperate together in doing Jehovah's will so elders can care for all of their responsibilities, including public preaching and disciple-making work.

What can we do to cooperate with the elders? (Heb. 13:7, 17) may be able to discuss problem or question before or after meeting, when working with elder in field service; not always necessary that a personal visit be made, perhaps consuming much time, or phone calls at a late hour.) What attitude toward one another will be helpful? (1 Pet. 4:8; Gal. 6:1) When faced with problems, is it always necessary to go to an elder for help? [Older sisters may be of assistance to younger sisters, Titus 2:3-5; young persons should consult parents, Ephesians 6:1; wives should consult their husbands, Ephesians 5:22; all can check *Index* on Scriptural questions.] What are some things all of us should do before making weighty decisions? [Luke 6:12; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17] Should any of us always look to the elders to make final decisions for us? (Gal. 6:5) Because of loving concern for congregation, all elders wish they could do more, had more time, but must balance their responsibilities.—2 Cor. 11:28.

20 min: How Do You View Your Kingdom Hall? Audience participation on first part of insert down to "Planning for Expansion." Cover next two sections down to "Building a New Kingdom Hall" by talk.

10 min: Concluding comments. Cover highlights of the Branch Letter and appropriate Announcements. Outline arrangements for holiday witnessing on May 31. Song 77 and prayer.

WEEK STARTING MAY 30

7 min: Song 99. Introduction.

15 min: How Do You View Your Kingdom Hall? Summary of second half of insert, from "Building a New Kingdom Hall" to end. If it is thought advisable locally to spend additional time discussing this material, this can be done, according to need.

25 min: "Preaching Christ—Through Envy or Goodwill?" May 15, 1976, *Watchtower* article. To be handled by elder, with a good deal of audience involvement.

13 min: Concluding comments. If congregation is attending convention in June, may use some time to review appropriate points in convention insert in March issue of *Our Kingdom Service*. If assembly comes later, please adjust program at appropriate time prior thereto. Include points on field service for June. Song 104 and prayer.

Branch Letter

(Cont'd)

purpose, for it contains the truth that leads to eternal life.

Your hard work in field service, distributing literature and conducting studies, shows that you want to help people. It keeps us busy. We expect that you will place many thousands of books during May as you continue aiding people in great spiritual need. We wish you to know that we are ready to fill your orders and we are grateful for the privilege we have of helping in this way. May Jehovah bless our united efforts to his honor and the salvation of many more who may yet get to know and serve him.

Your brothers,
BROOKLYN BRANCH OFFICE

How Do You View Your Kingdom Hall?

LIKE an oasis in a parched land, the Kingdom Hall in each community serves as a place of spiritual refreshment. To this building come people of all walks of life to learn of Jehovah. They see this as a "house" that is dedicated wholly to the worship of our God Jehovah.

Is that how you personally view the Kingdom Hall? Do you look forward to the meetings, to the association with the brothers and sisters there, to assisting with the activities there?

Your Part in Caring for the Kingdom Hall

With the Kingdom Hall in use several times each week, there will naturally be a need for cleaning and maintenance. Do you appreciate the privilege you have of helping to keep it neat and clean? The Kingdom Hall should be cleaned according to a regular schedule, depending on its use and needs. All may have a share, even the children. In this way all will learn the responsibility attached to the upkeep of the Kingdom Hall, and will appreciate it more. How nice it is to step into a clean and neat Kingdom Hall and to invite new ones to such a hall!

Usually cleaning is arranged according to book study groups. The elders may wish to schedule groups to rotate weekly in looking after the cleaning under the direction of the book study conductor or another brother in the group. A list of things to be done in cleaning can be posted. Supplies and equipment should be on hand for use in doing the cleaning. A ministerial servant may be assigned to have general charge of Kingdom Hall upkeep, such as ordering supplies and checking on maintenance needs; but with all having a part in caring for the hall, the burden will not fall on just a few.

The general appearance of the Kingdom Hall should be monitored. Does it need new paint inside or out? Are there repairs needed? Does the yard or the parking lot need attention? If there is a lawn or shrubbery, these need regular care. Are there ways within the budget of the congregation to make the inside of the hall more attractive? Often little things can be done that are relatively inexpensive but that mean very much in making the décor more pleasing. Remember, a meeting place that is clean, furnished in a practical manner, and maintained properly is one that reflects well on Jehovah and his people.

Maintenance will be kept to a minimum if all are careful to avoid breaking equipment or damaging the furnishings. Chewing gum should never be disposed of by placing it under a chair. And you know that dropping gum or candy on the

carpet or floor, or spilling the baby's milk on it, or neglecting to wipe your feet on coming into the hall, are all things that make floor care very difficult. Some walls and chairs can easily be spotted or damaged. Carelessness can make an ugly eyesore, and to fix it may require much time and expense. Each one's taking a few moments to be careful will be appreciated by all.

Young folks are a welcome sight at the Kingdom Hall. They should be right alongside their parents in receiving instruction from Jehovah's Word and in learning how to be effective young praisers of Jehovah. But being at the Kingdom Hall is not the same as being at home or in one's backyard. The responsibility rests upon parents to keep an eye on their children and control them while at the hall. Unnecessary trips to the rest rooms or playing before or after meetings should be discouraged. Disorderly children when "let on the loose" cause shame. (Prov. 29:15) When elders speak to you about these matters, be responsive and thankful, as they are interested in keeping the Kingdom Hall fully representative of Jehovah's pure worship in the community.

Planning for Expansion

With the steady increase in attendance at the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses, the time inevitably comes when consideration must be given to arranging for a new Kingdom Hall. Already many halls are filled to overflowing. This emphasizes the need to avoid short-range planning that could result in Kingdom Halls that are too small and outgrown almost before they are finished. There is the danger also of waiting too long before exploring the possibility of getting a new Kingdom Hall, and laying the groundwork for future expansion. We have to look ahead. While we know that we are deep into the time of the end and the "great tribulation" is near, we do not know just how near, and we should plan to be going full-speed ahead when the end of this system arrives.

Different situations exist in each case and current needs and those anticipated will vary. Some may find it more convenient to rent, but in many countries congregations have found it more practical to purchase property and to build a Kingdom Hall suited to their needs.

Who will do the planning? All the elders should feel this responsibility. When they meet, this matter should periodically be on their agenda. How are we preparing to take care of anticipated expansion? Already the Kingdom Hall may be used

by two or three congregations. Is a new hall needed? When? It should not be a case of one congregation having a hall and viewing the getting of a new hall as the problem of the one or two other congregations meeting in the hall. This would be a narrow and shortsighted view. Rather, the concern of all should be, What can we all do to care for the grand increases with which Jehovah is blessing his organization today?

The elders or others designated by them will take the initiative in locating land on which to build, but all can be on the lookout for possibilities. Sometimes suitable land is donated. Obviously more is involved than getting land donated or buying it. In what type of neighborhood is the lot located? Land may be cheaper in one area, but will it be in the best interests of the congregation to build a hall there? Zoning laws must be taken into consideration, and at times there are restrictions running with the land as to what can be built on the property. What is required in the way of off-street parking? What about drainage, water supply and other utilities? The congregation should be sure that it is possible to build on the property a Kingdom Hall of the type and size needed and that it is possible to get clear title to the land.

Sometimes congregations have found it practical to purchase an existing building and remodel it to suit the needs of the congregation while conforming to building codes. However, be sure to inspect such buildings and equipment therein thoroughly.

Financing the Kingdom Hall

When the congregation is discussing the possibility of obtaining a Kingdom Hall, you personally may find it possible to make a donation to the project or to loan funds that you may not need presently. In addition, you may wish to determine how much you feel you can regularly contribute each month, with Jehovah's blessing. While this is not a tithe or assessment, it being entirely voluntary, the elders may seek this information from those associated to help them in making plans. Unsigned slips with the amount thereon would suffice to give this estimate.

After determining the funds that are available locally, the congregation may find that it needs help with additional funds. Many congregations arrange for a loan through the Society. If this arrangement is desired, a letter of inquiry may be sent to the Office of the Secretary of the Watch Tower Society, and information will be sent.

As an example of what has been done successfully in planning for additional facilities and financing, three neighboring congregations in a city in the United States had cooperated in building a Kingdom Hall, most of the publishers being part of one congregation originally. It seemed advisable to plan for a Kingdom Hall in another part of the city, in the territory of one of the

congregations. What could be done to assist this congregation?

All together the elders looked into a number of possibilities. Not much money was available in the congregation funds for use as an outright contribution toward the new hall. But the mortgage on the present Kingdom Hall was almost paid off. All had assisted in this. So why not borrow additional funds? This is what they did, and a fine contribution was thus made to the congregation that was making plans to build a new hall. This kept the mortgage payments on the new hall down to a level where the congregation that would occupy it could manage them. And the two remaining congregations in the first hall willingly and lovingly carried the payments on the new loan rather than merely paying off the original mortgage and feeling no more obligation to help with Kingdom Hall financing. This experience is typical of many congregations that are progressively looking ahead and planning for the steady increase in their communities.

In other places, congregations have succeeded in completely paying off all mortgages on their halls and then have been able to open a bank account, perhaps a savings account, for a "building fund" and put any excess contributions into the bank, anticipating the time ahead when the funds will be needed to build another Kingdom Hall nearby. Or, until the money contributed for this purpose is needed, the congregation may wish to have the Society make use of such funds temporarily in advancing the Kingdom work by the "conditional donation" arrangement.

Building a New Kingdom Hall

Careful thought should go into planning the building. Often it is advisable to use the services of an architect in drawing up plans and in working with the regulatory agencies of the city or county in getting plans approved. It may be required by law in some localities. Looking at other halls and inspecting their plans, if available, may prove very beneficial. Suggestions by brothers and sisters may be made to the elders, and in making their decisions it is wise on the part of the elders to consult brothers inside and outside the congregation who have had experience in buying property and in construction. The Society has a few sample designs that may be borrowed, if desired, and these can be obtained from the Office of the Secretary.

The approximate cost of the project can be estimated in accord with the type of building the congregation desires and can afford. Spending money wisely should always be in mind, but an economy building may cost more to maintain in the long run than if a little more was spent to make it enduring or large enough to begin with or to get a little better equipment. Also to be considered is not placing an *unreasonable* financial burden on the congregation. We want the King-

dom Hall to be attractive, but it is not practical wisdom to spend liberally to make it beautiful while skimping on equipment that must serve adequately and reliably week after week. For example, good lighting, sound equipment, heating, ventilation and seating are essential if those attending are to benefit fully from the meetings.

The elders will often find it advisable to select a building committee to oversee the construction work, designating one as coordinating chairman. It is important to select brothers for this committee who have had some building and business experience, if at all possible. General decisions on construction in harmony with the plans and wishes of the congregation can be made by the building committee on a day-by-day basis. However, there should be good cooperation with the body of elders, to whom the building committee is responsible, and who will be consulted. The elders will make decisions on any major changes felt necessary or unusual developments they should know about. It is understandable that some variation may occur in original estimates as construction gets under way due to fluctuating costs and unforeseen problems encountered.

When two or more congregations decide to cooperate in buying land and building a hall, or remodeling an existing building, there should be thorough discussion by all the elders of what is proposed and an agreement should be reached on type of building, approximate costs, financing, and so forth. The respective congregations should clearly know, through their body of elders, what is recommended, so a final decision can be made by each congregation on the basis of sound information. The general agreement to cooperate on the project and the basic understanding should be set down in writing and signed by all the elders after approval by the respective congregations. We cannot emphasize too strongly the need for good cooperation between the bodies of elders and the congregations involved.

The body of elders may decide that the construction work can be done entirely by the brothers or circumstances may make it advisable to hire a contractor. Or perhaps some work can be done by brothers, with certain installations being done by subcontractors. Are you skilled in carpentry, masonry, plumbing or one of the other trades? If so, likely you can help immensely. But you need not be a skilled worker to volunteer. There will be much work to be done, such as preparing the site, bringing supplies, installing certain things, cleaning and so forth. And sisters may volunteer for lighter tasks and for preparing food for the workers. Making good use of the voluntary efforts of those in the congregation and in neighboring congregations follows the example of the tabernacle construction in the wilderness and the building of Solomon's temple, when fine craftsmen from among Jehovah's people were used.—Ex. 35:34, 35; 2 Chron. 2:11-16.

It is desirable to complete the Kingdom Hall as quickly as possible so it does not unduly interfere with the preaching work. The body of elders should be sure that definite arrangements are made for regular service opportunities in the field. Some who are limited in what they can do in the construction work may find they can increase their field service during this time. Care should be exercised, of course, that none work so hard on the Kingdom Hall that their families are neglected. A good schedule will assist in this regard so that family study, meetings and field service are included, even though somewhat limited during the construction period. Long hours of hard work may be needed to finish the project, but Jehovah blesses those who serve him whole-souled.—Col. 3:23, 24.

As you work together building the Kingdom Hall, there will be many occasions to demonstrate the fruits of the spirit, particularly love, patience, mildness and self-control. (Gal. 5:22, 23) There are usually good reasons why things may not be done exactly as you think they should be done. Having this in mind and remembering that there is often more than one way to do things will help you to cooperate with the ones appointed to supervise the work.

When the building is finished, it is fitting to arrange a dedication program. The body of elders can decide what is appropriate. A weekend might be selected for this occasion. Many congregations arrange a few hours for "open house," when people in the community can come and see the new building and get acquainted. It is optional as to whether invitations are printed for this purpose, setting forth the program. Printed programs would be arranged locally, as these are not printed by the Society. Preliminary to the discourse on dedication, some congregations arrange to hear a few experiences on the building of the Kingdom Hall and the history of the congregation. If the dedication program is held on Saturday, arrangements might be made for a special public talk on Sunday along with the *Watchtower* study.

Operation of the Kingdom Hall

Who owns the Kingdom Hall? Actually no one congregation should feel that it "owns" the Kingdom Hall. It is dedicated to Jehovah's worship. The congregation that builds or rents a building has committed into its care a trust in connection with the hall, and the body of elders has the responsibility to manage wisely the Kingdom Hall's operation so that Kingdom interests are best served.

Before property is bought, it is strongly recommended that the congregation either appoint trustees or form a legal corporation to hold title to the property. If the decision is to form a corporation, officers can be elected from among the mature brothers associated, according to the bylaws of the corporation. The trustees or cor-

poration officers do not manage the Kingdom Hall but the elders have responsibility of oversight. It is not required that the officers be changed from year to year but only as this becomes necessary due to moving, deaths and so forth. (Helpful suggestions are available on request to the Society for its letter entitled "Information Regarding Ownership of Kingdom Halls.")

In many instances several congregations use the same Kingdom Hall in order to get full use of the facilities and to keep down expenses. The Society deals with only one of the congregations as far as loans, insurance and things of this nature are concerned, and this congregation is usually the one holding the territory in which the Kingdom Hall is located. But while the Society corresponds with only one congregation and the title may be in the name of this congregation, such handling of these physical responsibilities does not provide a basis for this congregation to decide unilaterally when meetings shall be held by all the congregations meeting in the Kingdom Hall, nor how much money each should pay on any mortgage and operating expenses.

How can these matters be decided with loving consideration for all? Some congregations have found it best, where more than one congregation uses the hall, for all the elders in the congregations involved to meet and to decide Kingdom Hall matters. In this way problems resulting from lack of communication or representation are kept to a minimum. Thus, there is a common sharing of the building dedicated to Jehovah's service and there is common responsibility to take good care of it. Under this arrangement no one congregation dominates while others become mere "tenants." It would be well that such agreement be in writing, with a copy for each congregation's file, since elders may move and subsequent elders may not be aware of any oral understanding.

When there is only one congregation meeting in a Kingdom Hall, the elders can consider what they feel will be the best times for the meetings and present their recommendations to the congregation for discussion, possible alteration and final decision (by majority vote of the dedicated publishers), making them as convenient as possible for the majority. However, when more than one congregation meets in the hall, in line with what is stated above, the elders of all the congregations may wish to meet and discuss meeting-time preferences and work out the best arrangements for all concerned. Where there is a choice to be made in times of meetings, of course, the matter rests not simply with the elders, but with each congregation to decide.

Some congregations find that rotating times of meetings, or offering to do so every year or so, is desirable. Good communication and cooperation contribute to mutual understanding and contentment, without the feeling developing that one

congregation has certain advantages all of the time. Good cooperation is also needed in connection with meetings during the circuit overseer's visit, weddings, etc.

Similarly, all elders may meet initially and set up a committee of knowledgeable elders for day-to-day operation and maintenance of the hall. This will prevent the entire body or bodies of elders (if there is more than one congregation) from having to meet often to decide on ordinary matters having to do with general operation and maintenance, and the paying of bills incidental thereto. Guidelines could be established, such as a cut-off point on how much might be spent on normal operations without special approval.

Under this arrangement, if there are difficult questions or unanticipated major expenditures, these could be referred to the whole group of elders for determination. If the elders felt that a major expenditure was advisable, their joint recommendation could be submitted to the respective congregations, setting forth the facts, including the anticipated costs. Then the congregations could make a final decision.

Each congregation could supply an agreed-upon amount regularly for Kingdom Hall operation. To arrive at this, all the elders in the congregations meeting in the hall could discuss together what is needed on the average each month for the mortgage payment and other expenses. On the basis of this, the elders in the respective congregations can decide what recommendation they will make to their congregations. Each congregation will then make a decision on what payment will be made each month. As necessary, and as seems advisable, adjustments can be made in the amount sent to this fund by each congregation.

Funds may be handled through the congregation that sends the mortgage payments to the Society, if that is being done. A separate accounts sheet could be maintained just for the operation of the Kingdom Hall. And if it will assist with the bookkeeping, a separate bank account could be opened by this congregation. Periodically, reports on the operation could be made to the elders and arrangements would be made for a quarterly audit of the accounts.

The Kingdom Hall is one of Jehovah's provisions that enables us to meet together. The happy and rewarding activities arranged at the Kingdom Hall are part of the provisions of Jehovah's spiritual paradise. The provisions are there for all to share. But it is not wise to take them for granted. We should appreciate them and look well to the care of the Kingdom Hall. King David said: "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: 'To the house of Jehovah let us go.' " (Ps. 122:1) Let us all imitate David and other faithful servants of old in how they viewed the construction and use of buildings dedicated to the true worship of Jehovah.

We Want to Help People (Cont'd)
an interested person. Remembering that our desire is to help people, let's take advantage of that opportunity to answer questions, even starting a study then and there if advisable.

5 The desire to reach and help people has moved some publishers to adjust their schedule for field service. In certain areas they have reported that Saturday has proven to be a very fine time to make the regular offer and start Bible studies, instead of just offering magazines.

6 People can be helped by our direct use of the Bible. Why? It gives the public a more accurate impression of our work. One brother wrote the Society, stating: "After encouragement was given to use the Bible more, I found it very easy to work with the Bible in hand and, after a greeting and introduction about local problems, open the Bible to a text and discuss it with the householder. How surprised I was when nearly every person I spoke to paid attention, some even taking literature! Previously I had had little response in that territory; it was the *open Bible* that seemed to open their hearts to the message of truth."

7 In addition to the field service, we all have other contacts with people. By tact and friendly interest in people, we can take advantage of these opportunities to help people appreciate God's Word of truth and its message of salvation. Our fine course of Christian conduct every day also helps people, for it recommends to them the truth by which we live. By sharing in tract distribution, offering the *Truth* book and starting Bible studies where possible during the month of May, we draw attention to the wonderful love that Jehovah God and Jesus Christ have for mankind and fulfill our sincere desire to help people.—2 Cor. 5:20.

FEBRUARY SERVICE REPORT

	Pubs.	Av. Hrs.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.	Av. Mags.
Sp'l Pios.	681	148.3	57.9	5.4	144.6
Pios.	17,498	94.7	36.3	3.2	96.6
Temp. Pios.	4,681	78.8	23.7	1.4	80.9
Pubs.	521,748	8.8	4.0	.4	13.0
TOTAL	544,608				

Newly Dedicated Ones Baptized: 4,223

UNITED STATES GOAL FOR 1976
588,242 Publishers

HOW DID WE DO IN FEBRUARY?

February was another excellent month for acquainting others with the truth through the new booklets. This year we placed 1,262,032, compared with 247,521 booklets last February. Excellent, indeed! As we follow through in helping people, undoubtedly we will have the joy of starting many more Bible studies.

Do You Really Want a Bible Study?

1 Many more Bible study teachers are needed to teach those who may yet become disciples of Christ in the time remaining. This work is important, in view of what Jesus commanded.—Matt. 28:19, 20.

2 Some of us may, for various reasons, feel inadequate to share in Bible study work. But even if you are new in the truth and relatively inexperienced in field service, a sincere desire will move you to reach out and help people. One young man, himself still studying, happily shared what he was learning. An elderly woman was so interested in what he told her while he was working in her home that he started a Bible study with her. Imagine his joy to witness her baptism, just a few months after his own!

3 Can you younger ones share in Bible study work? Yes. Many of school age are now conducting studies with schoolmates, often doing so during a school lunch hour or free period.

4 Are you a family head with many responsibilities? Some have

Announcements

◆ Offer for May: *Truth* book for 25¢; June: *New World Translation and God's "Eternal Purpose"* Now Triumphant for Man's Good on a contribution of \$1.25; July: any pocket-size book on a contribution of 25¢ or four for \$1.00; August: *True Peace and Security* for 25¢.

◆ There are still congregations unable to cover their assigned territory regularly. We request that publishers or pioneers whose circumstances would allow them to go elsewhere for a few weeks or on a permanent basis write the Society, supplying the information requested on page 135 of the *Organization* book. Mention the distance you can travel. Give your letter to the presiding overseer. He along with the other committee members will review it and they will probably recommend that the branch office consider your availability. However, if anyone does not qualify, the service committee will kindly inform the applicant of the reason why they cannot recommend him and they will not send the letter to the Society's office. (Same basic procedure as outlined for pioneers, on page 137 of the *Organization* book.)

◆ A copy of the insert appearing in *Our Kingdom Service* this month is to be placed in the file of the congregation for future reference in connection with Kingdom Hall construction or operation.

◆ Pioneers, be sure to take to the district assembly your United States Pioneer Identification card for the 1976 convention for use in obtaining food tickets as well as literature at pioneer rates. Treat it as carefully as cash.

◆ Available Again in U.S.A.: *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* —English, French, Spanish *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* —Romanian, Vietnamese *"Look! I Am Making All Things New"* —Vietnamese

started studies with fellow employees, conducting them during a lunch or coffee break. Or are you a busy housewife with smaller children? A number have been successful in cultivating the interest of a neighbor, often by talking over a cup of coffee or at the clothesline, thus leading to a Bible study.

5 If you wish assistance, why not ask your book study conductor or the Bible study overseer. When the circuit overseer and his wife visit your congregation, they also will be glad to aid you in Bible study work.

6 Jesus commissioned his followers to do more than just preach. He urged them to make disciples. Are we doing that? Do we sincerely desire to do so? It is good to ask ourselves, "Do I really want a Bible study?" Jehovah has provided much to aid us in fulfilling this lifesaving commission.

WILL YOU PLEASE?

All of us like to receive our magazines. But some new subscribers complain that the magazines do not start coming for months after subscribing. What can we do to avoid this?

Publishers, please turn in your subscriptions at the first meeting after you obtain them. Please make them out in duplicate.

Congregations, please send in all subscriptions each week. (*Organization*, p. 152) Some congregations have held them for from two to four weeks, but that should never happen. Always send a remittance form with the subscription slips.

Whenever you send in any subscriptions, even if there may be other items in the envelope, please write the word MAGAZINE on the envelope. All envelopes marked MAGAZINE will be opened quickly so we can give better service to subscribers.

The Society is ready to do its part. Presiding overseers, please help us to give good service to all subscribers.

"This Good News of the Kingdom"
—Vietnamese

◆ New Publications Available:
The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life —Oshindonga, Palauan, Pampango

◆ District assembly lapel cards in English and Spanish and also celluloid holders should be ordered on the Literature Order Blank. These are cash items. Lapel cards will not be available at the assembly.

◆ For your information, the Memorial date (Nisan 14) for 1977 will be Sunday, April 3, after sundown.

PRESENTING THE GOOD NEWS

THEOCRATIC NEWS

By Arousing Interest in God's Word

¹ Do you find it a problem to arouse interest in the Bible when you share in field service? Many of us do. To assist us, two field-tested presentations that have been used effectively are here provided. Remember, our goal is to start a Bible study, which could be done in the *Truth* book after making either of these presentations. The wording of the presentations is given as a guideline; thus, feel free to adjust the wording to fit you and/or the territory where you work.

² (1) 'We all face many problems today, don't we? We've been asking our neighbors this question: If you had the power [or ability], what problem [or wrong] existing in the world today would you like to correct? [Allow for response; if necessary, perhaps suggest a problem.] Interestingly, the Bible informs us here at Revelation 21:3, 4 that God is going to remove all of the problems and wrongs that man faces, all that cause him pain. [Read.] Notice this illustration on page 4 of this Bible handbook. [Comment appropriately.] On page 5 we are asked: "If you had the power to do so, would you not bring to an end the conditions that cause so much sorrow? Of course you would! Should we think that the Creator of mankind will do any less? The Bible tells us that

'God is love.' " God certainly has the power, hasn't he? [Allow for comment.] But wouldn't you like to know how and when he will do it? [Follow through in offering the book.]

³ (2) 'We're calling to share information that will help to strengthen family life and happiness. Do you feel there is anything that would help to build a stronger bond of family love? [Allow for response.] Here at Matthew 19:5, 6 Jesus said something very interesting about the family. [Read.] So God purposed for married people to be "one flesh," bonded together by love. Note how nicely this Bible handbook applies the principle so we can use it in our lives. [Read last sentence on page 170.] This can be achieved by following the Bible's counsel for building a happy family life. That is the title of this chapter [direct attention to title on page 170] in this publication. It discusses the raising of children and the settling of family difficulties in God's way, the way the Bible teaches.' [Follow through in offering the book.]

⁴ Have you recently prepared a presentation with someone else? Practice one or both of these presentations, with someone else acting the part of a householder. By doing so, you will become familiar with the presentations and feel comfortable and confident in using them.

A Loving Provision (Cont'd)

⁵ Additionally, you benefit indirectly in many ways from the help he gives to the elders. Profitable discussion on a variety of congregation matters makes his meeting with them beneficial to the elders. This, in turn, will radiate out to the other publishers in practical, loving ways. He has much to share from the experience he has gained in working with other congregations that have needs similar to yours. The elders will find him ready to offer practical suggestions on problems that concern them, including judicial matters, if needed. Like Paul, he will not hold back good counsel, tempered with mildness and kindness, that will help them to 'pay attention to the flock of God.'—Acts 20:27, 28.

⁶ Jesus' example of "preaching and declaring the good news of the kingdom of God" is copied by the circuit overseer daily during his week with the congregation. (Luke 8:1) He will be there each

day, Wednesday through Sunday, to take the lead and perhaps to work with you personally. Accompanying him (or his wife, if he is married) at a few doors may give you some new ideas, a fresh approach or a more effective way to reach those not inclined to listen. Do you have a Bible study? He will be glad to go with you on the study and even conduct it if you like. Such a week of vigorous activity can be most rewarding to you personally, as you can readily appreciate.

⁷ Can you take greater advantage of this provision made to help us? After considering the benefits, look forward to the next visit with heightened anticipation and interest. Surely such a provision is something to be grateful for and is designed to help you to become stronger and more firm in faith. If we all take advantage of this loving provision, then the traveling overseers will be able to report that "our visit to you has not been without results."—1 Thess. 2:1.

◆ Commencing Friday, February 27, and over the weekend, Brother E. C. Chitty, a member of the governing body, shared in the dedication of a fine assembly hall in North London, England, that holds over 1,600 with extra seating. There was a total attendance of 6,229 for the five meetings with a repeat program, all showing a grand spirit of appreciation and enthusiasm. Work has just started on a fourth assembly hall in the British Isles.

◆ For the first time since 1953 a large supply of Bible study aids was officially permitted entry into Ethiopia. The 1,782 publishers were overjoyed to receive over 41,000 books.

◆ Despite inflation, Italy was able to report a peak of 57,310 publishers.

◆ Ghana reported 18,900 Bible studies—over 700 more than previously. Studies are being started in the new booklets.

Question Box

• Who is authorized to perform marriages or to officiate at funerals?

The December 1, 1975, *Watchtower* explained that in our congregations only elders and ministerial servants fit the term "ordained ministers" as generally used and understood. If the law of a state, city or community provides that marriage ceremonies may be solemnized only by ministers (whether "licensed," "registered" or "ordained"), then only brothers who, according to the Scriptures, are "ordained" (appointed) to serve in the congregation (elders or ministerial servants) would properly perform such marriages in the future. (There is no need to be concerned about who performed marriages in the past.)

It is necessary to check locally to find out what the legal requirements are and then to comply with them. Please do not write the Society for such information, for we do not have available the various state laws on marriage requirements.

If a couple in the congregation desire to have the marriage talk given by a brother in good standing (not serving as an elder or ministerial servant), arrangements could probably be worked out for such brother to give the marriage talk, after which one of the congregation's qualified elders or ministerial servants who meets the legal requirement to perform a marriage could administer the marriage vows. It is the administering of the vows that is customarily recognized as solemnizing the marriage.

Arrangements for the use of a King-Dom Hall for marriages should be approved by the service committee of the congregation. (See June 1975 *Kingdom Ministry* "Question Box.")

Giving a funeral talk is quite a different matter from officiating at a marriage. There is no law in the United States that determines who will give a talk at a funeral. In general the family of the deceased would choose a brother in good standing to give the funeral talk. It is their personal choice and arrangement. The one selected would not have to be one who is viewed as an "ordained minister," or, in Scriptural terms, an "assigned or appointed servant" of the congregation.