

# Melchisedec Credentials Guidelines

Adopted April 1997

Amended April 6, 2005

Amended April 3, 2007

The following guidelines will serve as a basis for seating all elders in the current assembly and in other CRE activities, and continue in effect unless, or until altered through future conference action.

1. A Restoration Branch has been organized under the legal authority granted by the Articles of Incorporation of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. (1872) and in accordance with the directions in A Manual of Practice and Rules of Order and Debate for Deliberative Assemblies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, compiled by Joseph Smith and Thomas W. Smith, and approved by General Conference action in 1876 and 1891. A Restoration Branch has three primary characteristics:

It has been organized by one or more priesthood members who trace their authority to the Reorganized Church.

Its membership is composed of six or more members who are in good standing and are under the pastoral charge of an elder, priest, teacher, or deacon. (“Elder” includes the offices of high priest, seventy and bishop.)

It preaches and practices the original tenets and doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints originally founded April 6, 1830, by Joseph Smith, Jr., and perpetuated in the Reorganized Church by his son, Joseph Smith III, April 6, 1860.

A Restoration Branch has certain rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

The right to elect its leadership;

The right to identify and qualify its membership;

The right to administer in the ordinances of the gospel as traditionally administered by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints;

The right to approve priesthood calls and ordain men limited to the offices of elder, priest, teacher, and deacon;

The right to conduct business relative to its particular area of operation;

The right to associate (or disassociate) in secondary and governmental organizations; and

## **The right of representation at conferences.**

2. A Restoration Branch does not practice such doctrines as the ordination of women to priesthood offices, the serving of the sacrament to persons without authoritative baptisms, the ordaining of men to priesthood offices other than elder, priest, teacher, or deacon. Any branches previously associated with an organization which participated in such practices are required to renounce the same in order to function as an independent Restoration Branch.”

3. Participation shall be extended to all Melchisedec priesthood accepted by Restoration branches whose office and ordination have been recognized by the same.

4. Participation shall be extended to all Melchisedec priesthood who, while not joined with a branch, have been authoritatively ordained and who have continued faithful to their calling by supporting the ‘Restoration Position’ and have been approved by the Credentials Committee of said conference or the Coordinating Council between conferences.

5. Participation shall be extended to all Melchisedec priesthood who were authoritatively ordained and who, for reasons of conscience or physical location, have continued to minister within the framework of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but who have not subscribed to nor participated in divergent practices or doctrine.

6. Participation shall be extended to all Melchisedec priesthood who were authoritatively ordained in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints or a restoration branch—but who may have since affiliated with one or more of the factional movements—who are willing to renounce said affiliation and repent of any participation in divergent practices or doctrines; including, but not limited to the rejection of any subsequent ordinations.

a. As ministers representing the Church of Jesus Christ are charged with the personal responsibility of maintaining the highest standards of Christian conduct, verified failure to maintain such standards may constitute grounds for denying or revoking one’s right to voice, vote, and participation in CRE activities. Unchristian conduct includes but is not limited to any of the following:

1. Lying, backbiting, adultery, and kindred sins, as well as contracting bad debts, drunkenness, other substance abuse, willful failure to preserve or maintain a shared confidence, misuse or abuse of priesthood privileges, and such other disregard for the standards of Christian conduct as may result in loss of power to minister effectively. Briefly stated, the facts are that he membership should at all times and in all places remember that the standards of the church are the standards of Jesus Christ. Should doubt arise in the mind as to the legitimacy of certain acts or procedures, reference to the life and pattern of the Master will give all the necessary answers that may be discipleship.
2. It cannot be over-emphasized that any such disciplinary action which may be taken by the CRE is in no way punitive, but in all cases it is to reclaim the fallen, but where willfulness is evidenced in continuing in wrongdoing, the CRE has no option but to act to preserve its good influence in the community.
3. The church is jealous of its name as the Church of Jesus Christ and is bound morally and spiritually to ensure that it is held high by all who enter into its privileges. At no time should a member of the church give way to temptations that will place in jeopardy the high and holy privileges of sainthood or priesthood. (Sources: Church Member's Manual, Chapter Four, The Standards of Sainthood, Herald Publishing House, 1947 and GCR 1158, 1980.)
4. Upon the written statements of two or more credible witnesses to conduct on the part of any Melchisedec priesthood member that is unbecoming to that priesthood member or conduct that is detrimental to his ministry or the ministry of others, the Credentials Committee - or Coordinating Council between Conferences, should advise the Restoration Branch and request the branch to investigate and take appropriate action according to church law, and to report back to the conference on his status. Priesthood members who are not affiliated with a Restoration Branch would be reviewed individually by the Credentials Committee - or Coordinating Council between Conferences-and may, if necessary, refuse or remove the person's authority to participate.
7. Circumstances not covered in the above may be reviewed and acted upon by the Credentials Committee on an individual basis. Effective application of the above is contingent upon a close, cooperative working relationship between branches in sharing of information, records, and decisions.
8. Appeals of the decision of the Credentials Committee for seating shall be made in writing and submitted to CRE Coordinating Council for review, consideration and action. If the appeal is denied, and one of the parties involved desires to appeal the decision of the Coordinating Council, a com-

mittee of elders, two from each of the quorums meeting in conference, will be selected to review and consider the appeal. The selected representatives will consider the appeal during the convening conference, and render a decision that shall be final. In this way, the rights of the individual and the rights of the body to consider matters pertaining to the conference will be preserved and protected.

**Administrative:**

Restoration Branches may apply for recognition to the CRE secretary by submitting: (1) a brief history of the branch which identifies the founding officers, (2) a copy of the branch's by-laws and (3) a list of qualifying elders. Branch applications shall be reviewed by the Elder's Council and a list of qualifying branches shall be published in the Tidings annually.

## Conference of Restoration Elders Treasurer's Report, 12/31/2008

As we have just finished 2008, I feel it is necessary to share with the Saints the financial condition of the Conference of Restoration Elders. Over the past 10 months with the continued decline in the economy the CRE has been hit hard.

The various Missionary Boards have continued to push the work forward in new areas as well as sustaining existing membership. However, our Evangelism Council Fund for missions abroad has been reduced to only \$9005 down from \$26,000 at the beginning of March. SEAAM is down to \$1613 from \$8472.

One of our biggest concerns is in the General fund which includes the publishing of the Tidings of Zion; it is down to \$3630 down from \$17,916. This year the Evangelism Council had to cover the cost of one of the issues of the Tidings and if it wasn't for the gracious support of a few branches funds would not have been available to send this issue out.

One of the reasons the General fund has reduced so much was because of the modified April Conference, we had \$5466 more in expenses than income. So we ask you to consider your financial support of the Conference of Elders so the work might not be hindered. If you should have any questions I can be contacted at [bmundy@munlake.com](mailto:bmundy@munlake.com).

Your Brother in Christ  
Elder Brian Mundy  
Treasurer