

2023 Conference of Restoration Elders

HIGH PRIEST REPORT

Greetings to all the Saints of the Most High God, and welcome to the 2023 CRE.

The office of High Priest has been in operation from before the beginning of time since Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the Great High Priest. There are numerous references in the Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants.

A call to the office of High Priest must come through the proper channels as designed by God. There are two main offices in the Melchisedec Priesthood; High Priest and Elder. Within the office of High Priest there is a variation of other duties such as Apostle, Bishop, Patriarch, and Prophet. There is no difference in the priesthood though there are differences in the offices in which one is called to act. Inasmuch as high priests are especially designated as standing ministers to the church under the direct oversight of the First Presidency all such nominations/calls should be presented to the First Presidency directly or through other administrative officers for consideration and presentation to the General Conference or appropriate high council.

Since 1984 when many Saints withdrew from participating in the Institutional Church there has been no provision for calling high priests as within the Restoration Branch Movement there is no prophet or First Presidency. Those factional groups that have ordained men to High Priest, Apostle, Bishop, Patriarch or Prophet are considered "out of order," since they did not follow the procedure as God designated for His Church.

Some might say, "What about the Seventy?" The office of Seventy is a special office within that of the Elder and not that of the High Priest. All references can be found in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Priesthood Manual 1972 edition.

The following information is from recent meetings of the High Priests in preparation for the CRE and future ministry.

The High Priests of the Restoration, who have been able to attend, have met in recent months to discuss the needs of the priesthood, the people, and our ministry. We have gathered to pray for the CRE conference and discuss our opportunities to provide ministry. We have also shared together concerning the larger vision of God's work today. In so doing, it seems of value for the High Priest report to contain some of the items from our meetings leading up to this conference.

We feel the Good Spirit has led us to provide ministry at the conference by presiding at the All-Priesthood Prayer Services each morning. The presiders are:

Wednesday, Marlin Guin;
Thursday, Paul Gage;
Friday, Steve Bohall;
Saturday, Milo Farnham

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HIGH PRIEST REPORT, *Cont'd.*

Instead of meeting in our own quorum at the conference, it was requested and agreed upon, that at least one High Priest would attend each of the Elder meetings and at least one Bishop attend the Aaronic meetings. This would allow us to more fully participate with all the brethren.

We always pray about the needs of church and seek the Lord's guidance on how we can provide ministry to the priesthood and the people. Here are a few ministries we felt would be beneficial to them.

- Visit other branches to worship and fellowship even when we aren't scheduled to preach or teach. Just be among the people with the ministry of presence and let them know we love them and care about them.
- Diligently pray for the church and the needs of the people.
- Focus our ministry, preaching, teaching, testimony, and conversation on the relationships of the people with each other and the Lord. Try to avoid emphasis on church organization. Help them to see and participate in God's larger vision of His great and marvelous work.
- Pray about and remember the importance of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the House of Israel in the last days. Pray for direction and understanding of God's covenants to them and our role in His promise to recover them.
- Meet together as High Priests from time to time and continue to strengthen our fellowship.

We want everyone to know their great worth in the sight of God. He loves you! We also want everyone to know there are great things coming upon the earth. Jesus said those things would come in the form of both blessings and judgements. We are seeing them unfolding even now. Our prayer is for all of us to prepare ourselves for His service and be ready to hear His voice when the Lord's call is sent forth. May the Lord bless and keep you is our prayer.

High Priests currently active in the Restoration Branches are:

Mike Ballantyne (Patriarch) Oak Grove, MO,
Steve Bohall Wellington, MO,
Joe Burkart (Bishop), Lee's Summit, MO,
Cloyce Coffman Stewartsville, MO
Bill Curtis, Sublimity, Oregon
Ron Davies, (Bishop) Lee's Summit, MO
Milo Farnham Independence, MO
Paul Gage Independence, MO
Marlin Guin Lee's Summit, MO
Dale Smith Sloan, Iowa