Personal Ministries Leaflets

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The Office

The work of the personal ministries secretary is of the utmost importance to the church. Being closely associated with the personal ministries leader, the efficient church personal ministries secretary is a valued assistant in the successful development of the missionary work of the church. Much of the life and prosperity of the church depends upon the manner in which the church personal ministries secretary's duties are performed. It is advisable for all church personal ministries secretaries to obtain a complete set of Personal Ministries Leaflets, the books Christian Service and Welfare Ministry. All this missionary literature should be thoroughly and carefully studied.

Relation to Church Members

The church personal ministries secretary is to assist the church personal ministries leader in devising and carrying out plans for enlisting the talents and capabilities of every member of the church in some line of missionary endeavor in harmony with the following instruction: “Those who have the oversight of the churches should select members who have ability, and place them under responsibilities, at the same time giving them instruction as to how they may best serve and bless others.”—An Appeal to Our Churches, p. 10.

Church Missionary Committee Meetings

General Conference action provides that each church have a personal ministries council, which should meet at least once each month. The church personal ministries leader is chairman, and the personal ministries secretary is secretary of the council. The church personal ministries secretary should keep the minutes of actions taken relative to the missionary program of the church, and furnish a duplicate copy to the church elder or pastor and the church personal ministries leader. Brief minutes should also be kept of the first-Sabbath (monthly) missionary service, the weekly ten-minute missionary service, or other missionary meetings. The minutes should include subjects considered, plans adopted, work reported, and other items of interest.

Offerings for Church Missionary Work

In order to purchase literature supplies for the church, it is necessary that an offering be taken in connection with the first-Sabbath personal ministries service. This plan is endorsed by General Conference action, and should be carried out in every church. This offering, together with such other offerings as will be taken up from time to time for local missionary work, should be placed in the hands of the church treasurer.

The following statements are from the Church Manual, 1995 edition, pages 87-90, and should be carefully studied, since the instructions given concern the handling of money and orders:

“Funds of Auxiliary Organizations—Auxiliary organization funds include such funds as church missionary, welfare, AY, Dorcas Society. . . . All moneys received by and for these organizations are turned over promptly to the church treasurer by the secretary of the organization, or by the deacons. These funds belong to the auxiliary organizations of the church. They may be disbursed only by order of the auxiliary organization to which they belong. . . . The Personal Ministries Council authorizes disbursement from the church missionary fund and the welfare fund. . . .

“Money for Personal Literature Order—Moneys for personal orders of literature, books, pamphlets, magazines, and subscriptions for periodicals should be placed in an envelope, with the order properly filled out, and handed to the
personal ministries secretary. He then remits both order and payment for all such literature to the Adventist Book Center or, where there is no Adventist Book Center, to the publishing house. At the close of each quarter the personal ministries secretary will make a report to the church at its quarterly business meeting, of the standing of its account with the Adventist Book Center, and shall provide a copy for the church treasurer."

The church personal ministries secretary may do a good work building up the missionary offerings of the church. Some churches follow the plan of encouraging the church members to give something each month for local missionary work. In one conference every church is following the plan of asking each member to give a certain amount each toward the general literature fund.

**Reporting**

Untiring efforts should be made to encourage church members not only to work but also to keep a record of what they do. Faithful reports, carefully prepared, glorify God and become a source of encouragement to others. In order that the church may know how the work for which it is responsible is progressing, reports are absolutely essential. They are needed, too, so that the conference office may compile correct statistical reports and know how to plan its field work to the best advantage. The Christian is admonished against being "slothful in business," and when the officers of the church request the members to make note of the literature they distribute and the other missionary work they do, it becomes the duty of each one to regard this request.

The church personal ministries secretary should put forth earnest effort to secure a missionary report from every member each week. The Personal Ministries Leaflet Why Report? contains suggestions on reporting. It would be helpful for every church member to have a copy.

The individual reports may be collected each week during the ten-minute personal ministries service. If the ten minutes needed for this service are not allowed, then the reports should be taken at the time of the regular church service or in connection with the weekly missionary meeting. The church’s ten-minute service offers by far the best opportunity for gathering reports, and each band leader should be enlisted to assist in this work. In case the ten-minute service has not become established in the church, we suggest that the reports be gathered up with the offering at the time of the preaching service.

All the individual reports should be received weekly, and the total for the church entered on the church personal ministries secretary’s work sheet. At the end of the quarter the totals from the work sheet will be entered on Personal Ministries Blank No. 2, and sent on to the conference/mission personal ministries director, according to printed instructions on the blanks. The report of the Dorcas Society activities as a whole should be kept by the secretary of the society week by week (individual report cards may be used for this purpose), and turned in to the church personal ministries secretary on the last Sabbath of the month or quarter, before the missionary report for the entire church is sent to the conference/mission personal ministries director. Other items not called for on this individual report card (Personal Ministries Blank B) will be summarized by the Dorcas secretary and included in her special report to the conference/mission personal ministries director on Community Services Blank No. 11, according to instructions printed on the blank.

The report of the missionary work done by the Adventist Youth Society should be secured from the secretary of the Adventist Youth Society each month or quarterly as directed and included in the regular missionary report of the church. This is done because the members of the Adventist Youth Society are also members of the church, and no report of the missionary work of the church is complete without their report.
The combined report should be sent to the conference/mission by the twentieth day of the new quarter. A duplicate copy should be retained in the secretary's record book, and another copy furnished to the pastor or the personal ministries leader of the church and shared with the interest coordinator. Faithfulness in this matter is important. Neglect on the part of one church personal ministries secretary may result in holding up the report of the personal ministries work for the entire world.

If the church personal ministries secretary expects the members to take an interest in reporting, he or she must likewise show personal interest in this matter, and should study how to present missionary reports in a varied and interesting manner. This may be effectually done by placing a comparative report of the month's activities on a blackboard, where all may see; or a report, written up in an interesting manner, may be read in connection with the first-Sabbath missionary service.

**Business Agent for the Church**

The church personal ministries secretary sustains much the same business relationship to the church as does the Adventist Book Center secretary to the conference. In a very essential way this office supplies the direct medium through which the Adventist Book Center communicates with the church. Frequently, the church personal ministries secretary becomes the channel through which the conference/mission itself, the publishing houses, and other organizations communicate important matters to the church members. Plans are constantly being developed by general workers for the benefit of our churches and for the advancement of the truth. Since particulars concerning these plans are sent out from time to time, it is very important that they lose none of their force in passing through the hands of the church personal ministries secretary, but rather that they receive a new impetus.

The circulation of all classes of literature in the church falls under the direct supervision of the church personal ministries secretary. Literature circulation in the church may be included in two divisions: Literature for personal use, and literature for missionary work.

**Literature for Personal Use**—The church personal ministries secretary should endeavor to see that every member subscribes to the Review and Herald or Union paper. Perseverance, coupled with suggestions for earning the subscription price of this paper where necessary, will bring success. The members should also be encouraged to subscribe to as many of our papers and magazines as personal finances will permit, and to build up a personal library of our denominational books, such as the volumes of Testimonies for the Church, *The Ministry of Healing*, and *The Conflict of the Ages* Series.

**Literature for Missionary Work**—In addition to ordering literature for their own homes, church members should use a large quantity of missionary literature. This will include magazines and periodicals, such as the *Signs of the Times* and *Message* Magazine; also tracts, small books, Sabbath school supplies, foreign literature, and young people's books. Arrangements should be made whereby a reasonable quantity of tracts may be kept on hand in every church in order to supply the missionary needs of the church members. Many churches are now following the plan of operating a literature depository in the church. In order to encourage our churches to establish these literature depositories, the General Conference has taken the following action:

"We recommend, That our churches, in consultation with the conference Lay Activities secretary, be encouraged to maintain displays of literature, to be carefully selected by the church Lay Activities council, the business to be conducted on a cash basis; and that, rather than overload, the churches make the beginning of their literature depository small, selecting an adequate variety and ordering new supplies from time to time as may be necessary;
also that in the development of this plan our churches be cautioned against the conduct of business on the Sab-
bath.” (Fall Council, September, 1922.)

If it is not possible to arrange for a depository, then the church personal ministries secretary should arrange for a
table on which to display the literature. Although literature should always be available for examination, all sales
should be conducted at times other than the Sabbath services.

**Supplying Literature on the Sabbath**

Special attention is called to the following recommendation by the General Conference Committee regarding
“Sabbath Services and Promotion Work,” with which the church personal ministries secretary should be familiar:

Recognizing the need of presenting to our congregations on the Sabbath plans whereby the church members may
take an active part in giving the truth to others, “We recommend, That appeals for specific missionary objectives,
either home or foreign, be so presented as to afford food for spiritual development, and that care be exercised not
to allow such specific appeals to take the place of worship and instruction from the Word of God. . . . The follow-
ing plan shall be adopted:

“1. After a brief, spiritual presentation of the matter, those who desire to make pledges to pay for such literature
shall write out their pledges, with names and addresses, on paper furnished, and pass them in, so that the church
Lay Activities secretary may have them for record. Each person making such a pledge shall at the same time be
given a Church Order Envelope, with instructions to make out the requisition, and enclose the necessary money
during the week, the envelopes to be placed in the offering basket on the next Sabbath.”

For the convenience of church members in ordering supplies, envelopes are provided with printed information on
the outside, whereby the church members may designate the literature they wish to secure, specifying quantity,
language, binding, et cetera. The amount of money covering the cost of literature they are ordering may be put in
the envelope during the week, and placed in the basket at the time the regular offering is received. At the close of
the service the church treasurer places the envelopes in the hands of the church personal ministries secretary, who
after the Sabbath gives the orders prompt attention. This eliminates any spirit of commercialism that might come
into the church, and places in the hands of the church personal ministries secretary orders in the individual’s own
handwriting, thus safeguarding against any mistake in ordering what is desired.

**Relation to the Conference/Mission Personal Ministries Director**

It is the duty of the church personal ministries director to keep in close touch with the conference/mission personal
ministries director concerning the progress of the work and the missionary experiences of the members. We would
recommend that each church personal ministries secretary make it a practice to write to the conference/mission
personal ministries director as often as once a month, and more often when occasion demands. A few encouraging
items of information, with any questions on which help is needed, should be included in the letter with the monthly
report to the conference personal ministries director.

**Business Relations with the Adventist Book Center**

It is the duty of the church personal ministries secretary to order all literature supplies, keep accounts, collect
payment for supplies, send remittances to the office, et cetera.
All orders sent to the Adventist Book Center should be made out in duplicate, thus providing a copy from which to check the Adventist Book Center bills when they come. Orders should be written on the church personal ministries secretary's order blank, never a part of a personal letter.

Care should be taken to write the orders clearly, with the full name and address, how the goods are to be sent, and other necessary instructions. If books that are bound in more than one binding are ordered, the binding desired should be designated, and languages noted, if not in English.

Remittances should always be made payable to the Adventist Book Center rather than to any individual worker.

The church personal ministries secretary should be careful to order all regular supplies in time to ensure arrival for distribution when the proper time comes. This includes such items as Sabbath School quarterlies, church school books, Christian Home Calendars, Morning Devotional Calendars, and Ingathering supplies.

**Handling Finance**

Much of the financial prosperity of the missionary activities of the church depends upon the way in which the church personal ministries secretary keeps accounts. The cash system should be faithfully followed. Periodicals and books ordered by church members for their own use should be paid for when ordered. Exceptions to this rule should be very few and far between, and when they are made they should not be for more than thirty days, and care should be taken to collect as soon as the bills become due.

Church members who use large quantities of magazines regularly, or who work regularly with the home workers’ or Crisis books, should deal directly with the Adventist Book Center; but they should report on the individual report blanks the number of books or papers sold, that the church may receive proper credit for the work done by its members.

Receipts should be given for all amounts of cash received, large or small. (Order receipt pads from the Adventist Book Center.) It often happens that failure to produce a receipt means that money must be paid again, and in such a case receipts become as valuable as cash. The stub of the receipt book enables the church personal ministries secretary to see just how much money has been receipted and from whom received, and often saves much trouble. These stubs should be preserved until there is no possibility of their being needed for reference.

Care should be taken to see that the income from all sources is sufficient to pay for everything that is ordered. The Adventist Book Center account should be paid promptly each month.

**Keeping Accounts**

A new form of the church personal ministries secretary's record book is now available, which is much more simple and convenient than the record book that has been in use for years. The size of this new book is about 8 ½ by 11 inches. It provides a permanent record for the year on missionary activities, cash, educational units, Dorcas Society, and Ingathering. The following description of contents and instructions for using the new record book are important.

*Report Blanks No. 2—* Four copies of this report should be made out. The first copy should be mailed to the conference personal ministries secretary before the tenth day of the new quarter; the second copy handed to the personal
ministries leader; the third copy to the pastor; and the fourth, or last, copy should be retained by the church personal ministries secretary for the permanent file.

Cash Record Blanks.—Twelve large sheets in the personal ministries secretary’s record book are ruled for “Cash Received” and “Cash Paid Out,” and enable the secretary to keep accurate records with the Adventist Book Center and the individual church members.

Work Sheets.—These sheets from the record book may be used for quarterly tabulation of total efforts in literature, campaigns, Bible work, Community Services, et cetera. Faithfulness in recording these items will help in maintaining a thoroughly organized church and will serve as a guide in future years.

Blank Sheets.—A dozen blank sheets in the record book are provided for the minutes of the personal ministries council meetings, monthly missionary reports, statistics, memorandums, et cetera.

The church personal ministries secretary should have a cupboard or depository, which may be locked, in which to keep record books, report blanks, and other supplies. In all cases a careful record should be kept, so that in the event a new secretary is elected, there will be no difficulty in transferring records, et cetera.

Quarterly Business Meeting

At this meeting a report of the financial standing of the missionary activities of the church should be read. With this should also be given a report of the missionary work done during the past quarter.

Assistants

The suggestions contained in this leaflet, outlining the duties and responsibilities of the church personal ministries secretary, cover a line of work that, in many instances, will require more than one person. In churches where there is an Adventist Youth Society, it is an established plan for the secretary of this society to act as assistant to the church personal ministries secretary.

Wherever the church is of sufficient size, and the magnitude of the work warrants, another assistant secretary may be chosen to assist in the many details attending a live and growing work.
The Church Personal Ministries Secretary’s Outline of Duties

- **Cooperates With**
  - Pastor
  - Church Personal Ministries Leader
  - Personal Ministries Council
  - Church Members
  - Adventist Youth Society

- **As Church Business Agent**
  - Obtains Literature Supplies
  - Takes Care of General Literature Fund of the Church
  - Pays Bills to Adventist Book Center

- **Keeps Minutes of**
  - First-Sabbath Personal Ministries Service
  - Ten-Minute Personal Ministries Service
  - Weekly Missionary Meetings
  - Personal Ministries Council Meetings

- **Corresponds With**
  - Conference/Mission Personal Ministries Director
  - Adventist Book Center Secretary
  - Isolated Church Members

- **Collects Reports From**
  - Adult Sabbath School Faculty Once a Week
  - Adventist Youth Society Secretary Once a Quarter
  - Dorcas Society Secretary Once Each Quarter
  - Isolated Members Once a Month

- **Reports to**
  - The Church on the First Sabbath of Every Month
  - The Conference Personal Ministries Director

- **Helps Provided**
  (To be ordered through Adventist Book Center)
  1. Record Book
  2. Order Book
  3. Receipt Book
  4. Order Envelope