

Partnering with Interpreters at Church

The following tips will help you reach a broader audience as you speak in a church meeting, teach a class, or otherwise work with an interpreter as part of an assignment or calling. The sooner in your preparation process you follow the advice below, the better you and your interpreters will be able to help fulfill the prophecy that everyone shall hear the fulness of the gospel in their own language (see Doctrine and Covenants 90:11).

GIVING A TALK

Contact your interpreters and tell them about yourself. Share with them your thoughts and testimony about the topic of your talk. Creating connections with your interpreters can help you and them be in better tune with each another and with the Holy Ghost.

When possible, seek to learn more about and meet the people who will be listening to your talk through interpreters (you might invite the interpreters to help you with this). Ponder their circumstances and pray about how to reach them as you prepare your talk.

While preparing your talk, consider whether any analogies, acronyms, cultural references, or jokes might be difficult to interpret. Consult with your interpreters to see what they think, or at least notify them of your plans. Try to use references that are relatable across languages and cultures.

If your talk is written out, give the interpreters a copy of it at least two days before you speak. Provide them an outline, keywords, quotes, list of scriptures, or stories you plan to use in your talk so they can better prepare to interpret your message. With enough time, the interpreters might be able to translate some of the printed materials you provide them as part of their preparation process.

While giving your talk, speak clearly and moderate your pace. Let your words resonate and give your interpreters time to do a good job. This can also give the Spirit more time to testify to more members of your audience that what you have said is true as they ponder your words. If you normally speak quickly, practice giving your talk at a more moderate speech rate.

TEACHING A CLASS

When teaching a class, follow the advice listed above. Additionally, think of ways to involve class members who will be participating through interpreters. If you know of people who do not attend class because they need interpretation, work with your unit leaders and interpreters to arrange for interpretation in your class and invite those who need it to come. You might want to work with and introduce one or more of your interpreters to those you are inviting to your class as part of your invitation.

While teaching, engage with class members who need interpretation by speaking to them directly. Ask them and your interpreters for feedback after the class. Work with your leaders and interpreters to improve class communication. Doing so can be a powerful means of inviting the Spirit. Always remember that the language of the Spirit is universal. Prepare well and you can expect the Holy Ghost to help you as you seek to do your best at reaching and engaging everyone in your class.

