

Strengthening New and Returning Members

May 12, 2022

BACKGROUND

In 2019, approval was given from executive councils to

- consolidate, simplify, and improve tools used to keep track of and minister to new and returning members;
- consider ways to help new members have vital covenant path experiences; and
- improve coordination between the missionaries, ministering brothers and sisters, and stake and ward leaders.

My Covenant Path and *Covenant Path Progress* reflect these directives.

JOHN 15:16

Ye have not chosen me,
but I have chosen you,
and ordained you, that
ye should go and bring
forth fruit, and that *your
fruit should remain*,
emphasis added.



PRINCIPLES

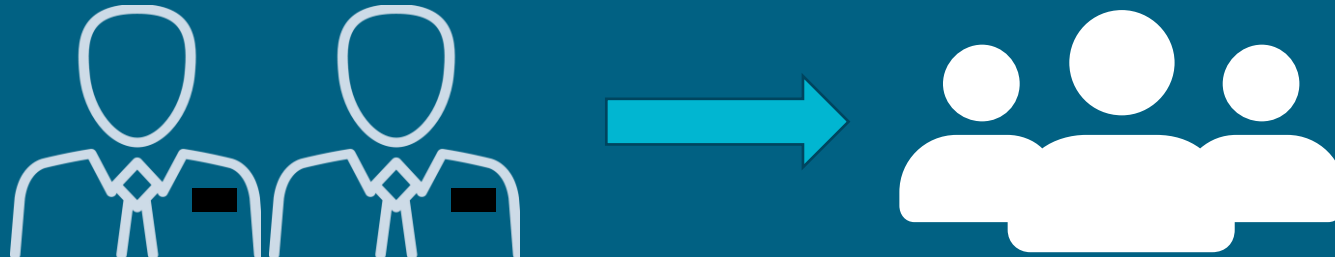
The work of helping new and returning members stay on the covenant path is based on the following principles:

- **Belong:** Build lasting, nurturing friendships with faithful members.
- **Believe:** Have experiences that build faith in Jesus Christ and help with keeping covenants.
- **Become:** Grow in the attributes of Christ and feel a closeness to the Savior.

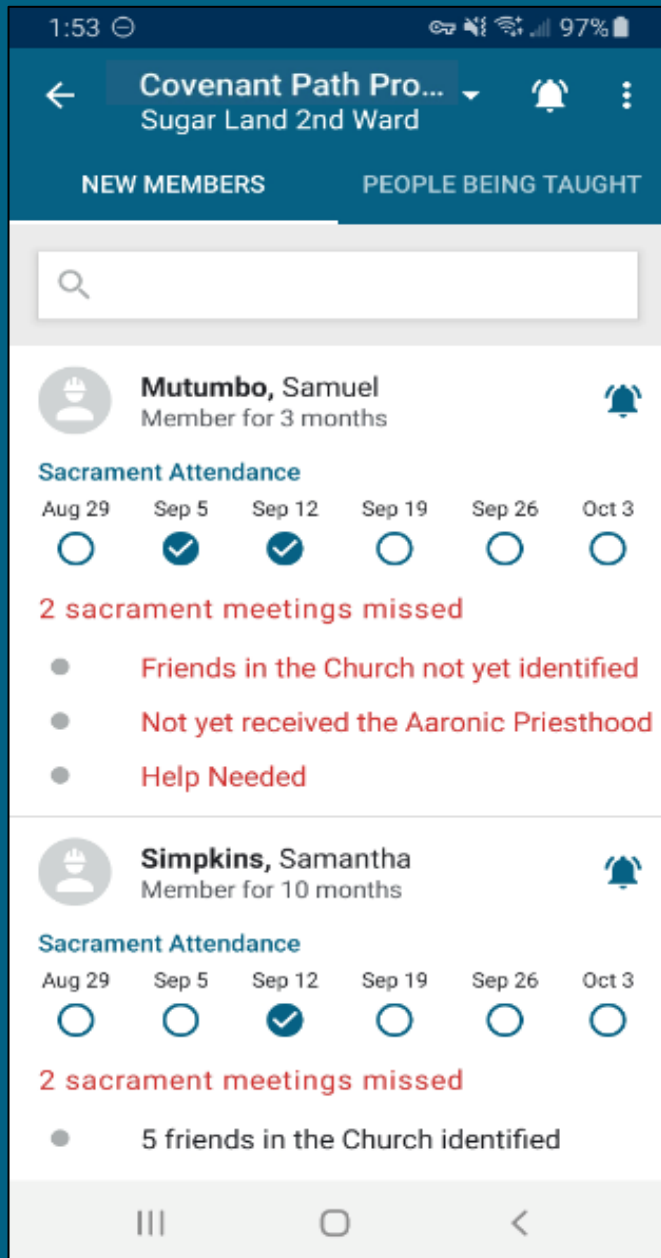
NEW MEMBER RECORD CREATION PROCESS

Missionaries Complete and
Submit the Baptism Form
through Area Book Planner

Local Leaders Create the
Membership Record in Leader
and Clerk Resources



Within a week of a new member's confirmation, if the new member is of the appropriate age, the bishop interviews him or her for a temple recommend and, if the new member is male, to receive the Aaronic Priesthood (see Handbook 23.5.1). Therefore, it is essential that new membership records are created promptly.



Android Phone Screenshot

COVENANT PATH PROGRESS

- Used by ward leaders to track the progress of new members on covenant path experiences
- Allows ward leaders and new members to enter progress information
- Provides an in-app message to leaders when critical experiences are missed
- Located in Member Tools and Leader and Clerk Resources
- Integrated with Area Book Planner

WHO HAS ACCESS

Covenant Path Progress

Ward—Editing Ability

- New member
- Bishopric (including clerks and secretaries)
- Elders quorum presidency
- Relief Society presidency
- Ward mission leader (including assistant ward mission leader)
- Ward missionaries

Ward—View Only

- Ward temple and family history leader
- Primary presidency
- Young Women presidency
- Sunday School presidency

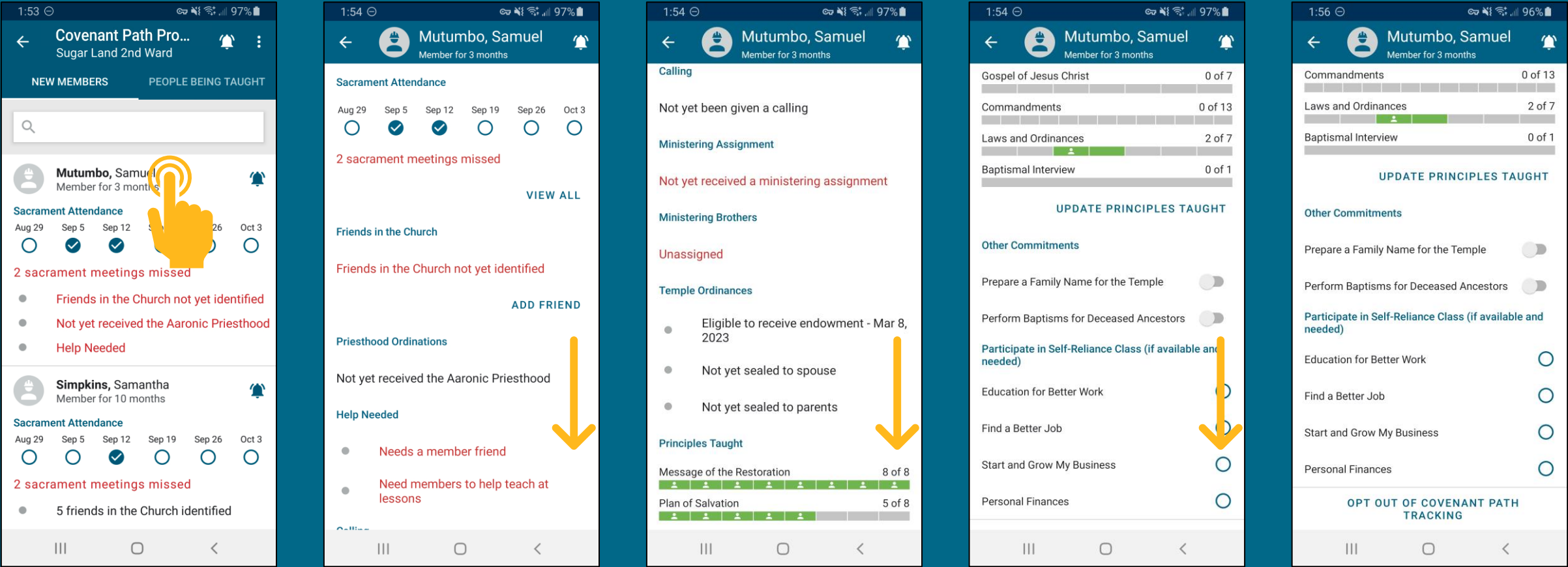
Stake and Mission—View Only

- Stake presidency (including clerks and secretaries)
- High councilors
- Stake Relief Society presidency
- Mission presidency, including companion, clerks, and secretaries (through LCR only)

My Covenant Path

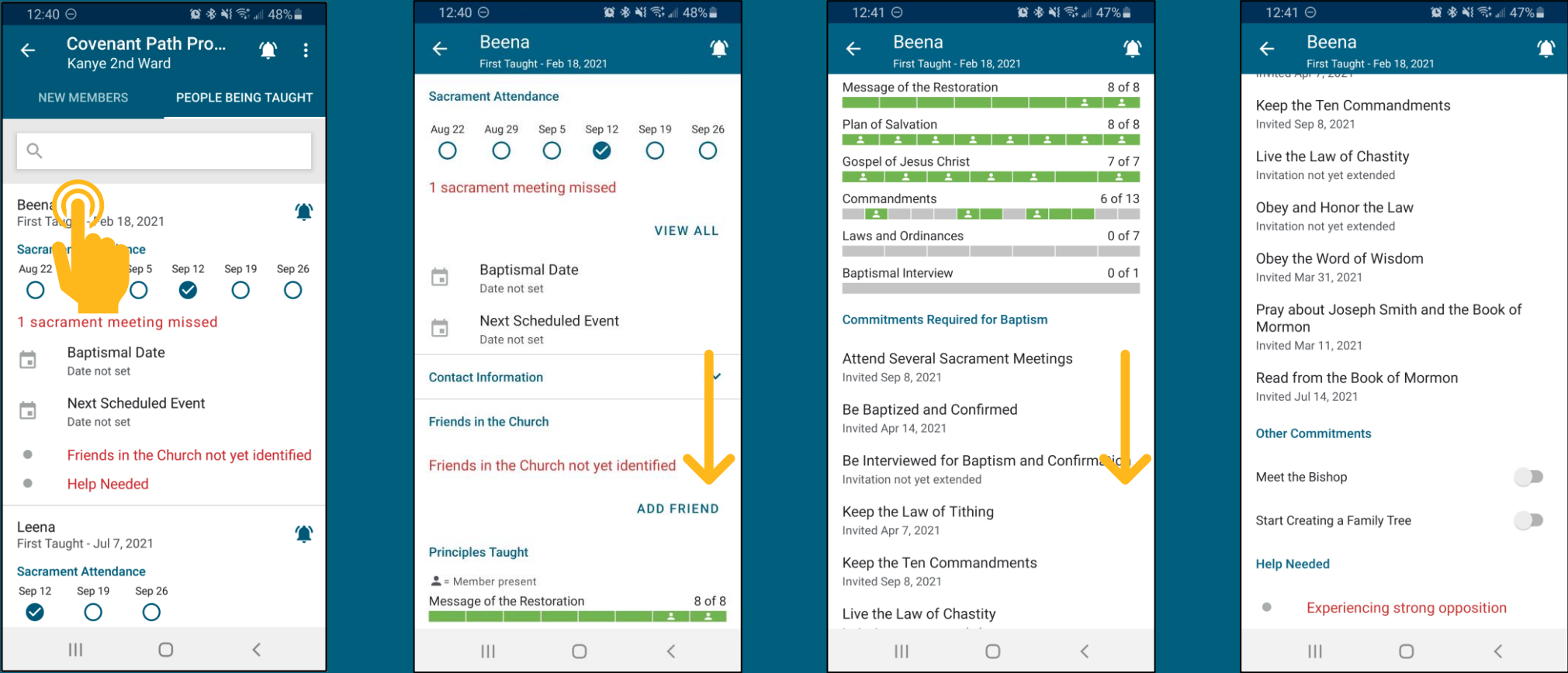
Publicly available to everyone

COVENANT PATH PROGRESS: NEW MEMBERS



Android Phone Screenshots

COVENANT PATH PROGRESS: PEOPLE BEING TAUGHT



Android Phone Screenshots

MY COVENANT PATH



Help Ancestors Receive Sacred Ordinances

Heavenly Father loves your family members who have passed away and has prepared a way for them to receive the blessings of the gospel through the temple.

☐ Learn about the importance of families and temples.

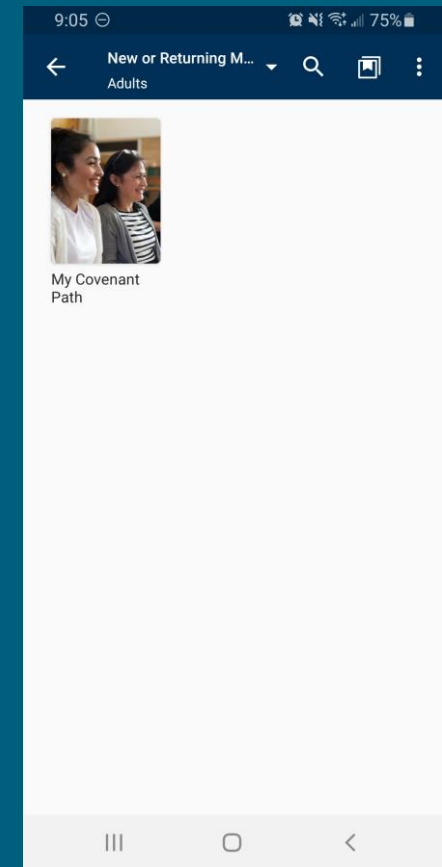
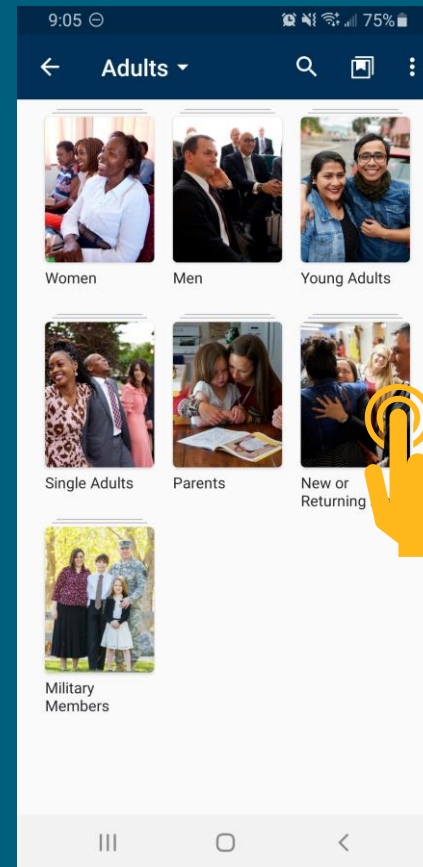
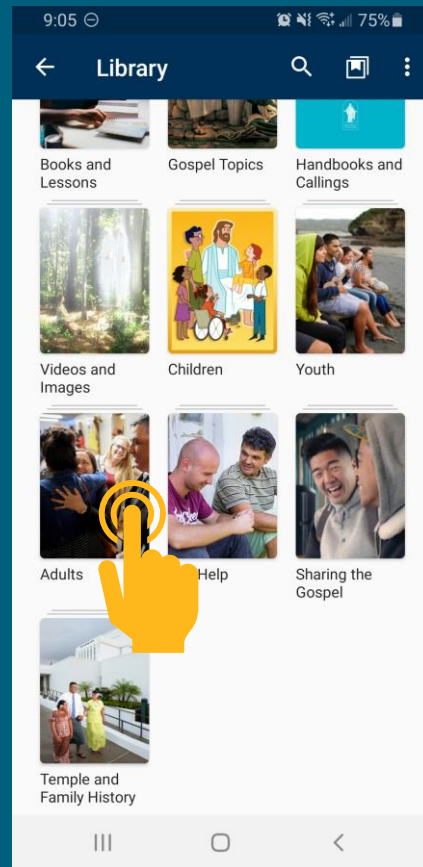
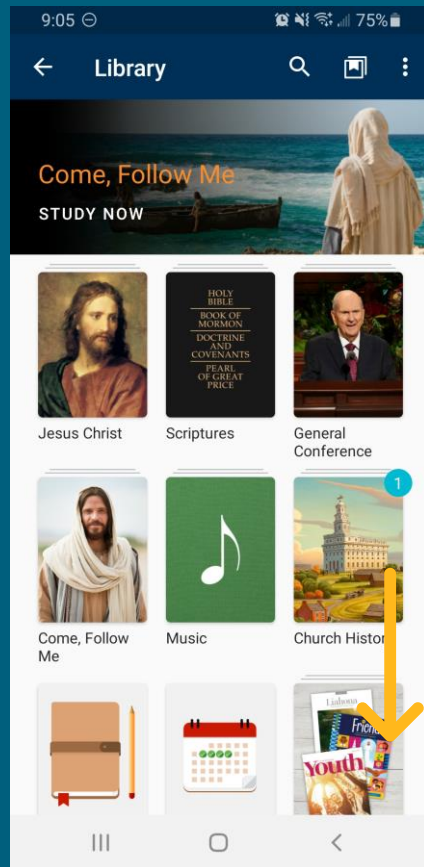
Consider using:

- “What Is Family History?” “How Can I Start My Family History and Temple Service?” and “My Ancestor” in *Families and Temples*, 15–19.

☐ Prayerfully identify one or more ancestors of your same gender whom you would like to serve in the temple.

- Simple resource used by new and returning members (and their member friends) as a guide to having covenant path experiences
- Includes 19 experiences
- Order, pace, and how many experiences they have are directed by the new or returning member over a two-year period
- Located in Gospel Library
- Each experience linked to relevant, approved Church content

MY COVENANT PATH



Android Phone Screenshots

LEADER TRAINING RESOURCES

HELPING NEW MEMBERS STAY ON THE COVENANT PATH

BEFORE BAPTISM	SOON AFTER BAPTISM	WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have they established friendships with members?• Have they shared their needs with members? Have they joined a self-reliance class if needed?• Are they learning and praying about the gospel of Jesus Christ?• Have they learned about temples and eternal families and started working on family history?• Have they set a date to perform baptisms for their deceased ancestors?• Are they meeting the qualifications for baptism?• Are they attending sacrament meeting consistently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do they feel accepted by the ward?• Have their ministering brothers or sisters begun to care for them?• Do they regularly attend sacrament meeting?• Have male members received the Aaronic Priesthood?• Have they received a limited-use recommend and participated in baptisms for their deceased ancestors?• Are they continuing to pray and study the gospel of Jesus Christ with the support of members and missionaries?• Do they have a Church responsibility or ministering assignment?• Have they participated in a self-reliance class if needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have they developed lasting friendships with ward members?• Have they strengthened their faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and consistent gospel study?• Have male members received the Melchizedek Priesthood?• Do they perform service for those in need? Do they have a Church calling?• Have they set a date to receive their own temple ordinances? Do they continue to do temple and family history work?

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

© 2020 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved. Version: 5/20. PD60006509 000. Printed in the USA

A simple package has been created for ward and stake councils to provide instruction. It includes

- a training outline;
- a chart: **Helping New Members Stay on the Covenant Path**; and
- five video segments describing the experience of the Bush family (new members).

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Full-time missionaries can update Area Book Planner data and merge “People Being Taught” and “New Member” records (where needed).
- Stake and ward leaders can
 - provide follow-up training, discuss who will update Covenant Path Progress and how often (preferably weekly);
 - discuss how to use Covenant Path Progress in ward council and coordination meetings; and
 - determine which members will help new members with My Covenant Path and how to train and follow up with these members.

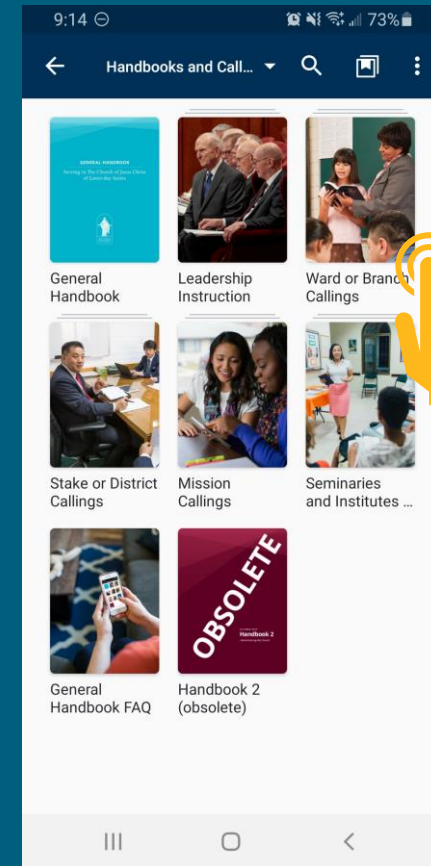
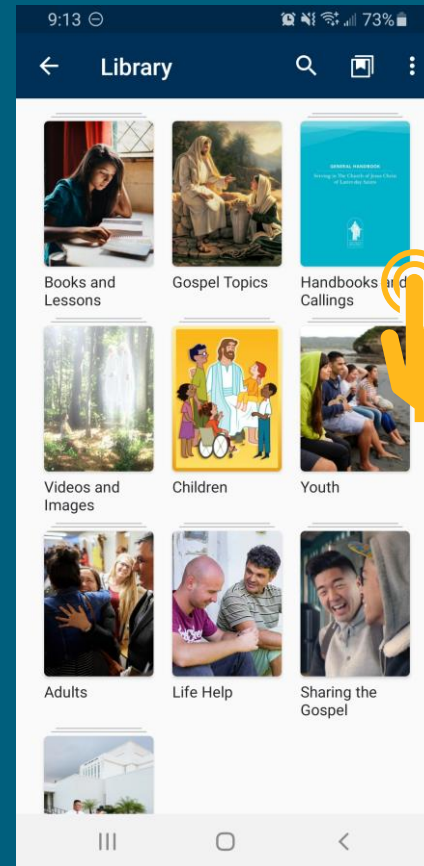
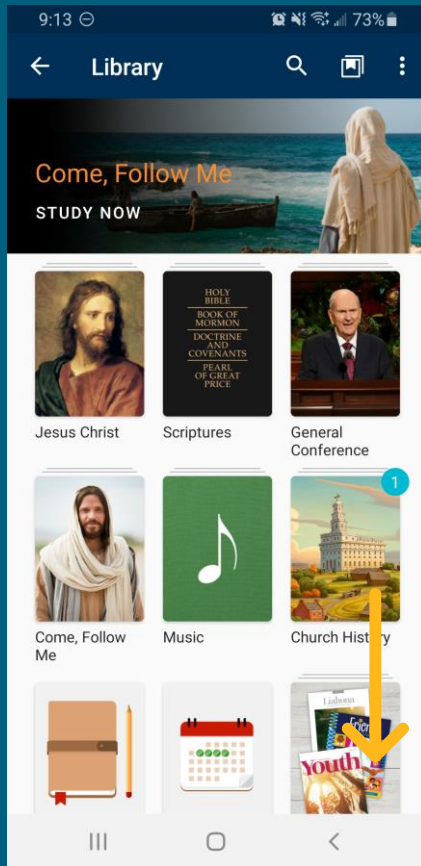


LEADER TRAINING RESOURCE SUMMARY

To locate leader training resources, open the Gospel Library App and follow this path from the main screen: Handbooks and Callings > Ward or Branch Callings > Strengthening New Members. In this collection, you will see four resources as described below:

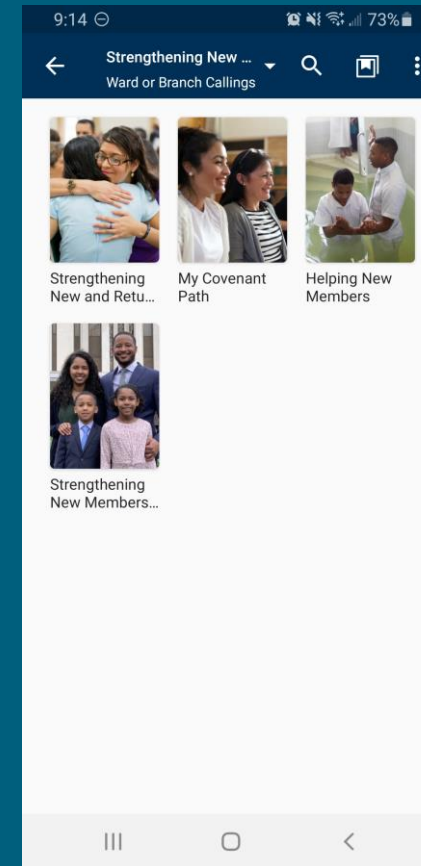
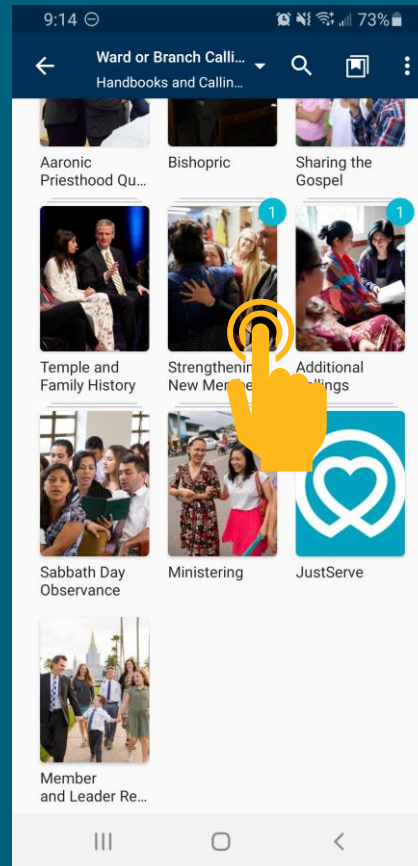
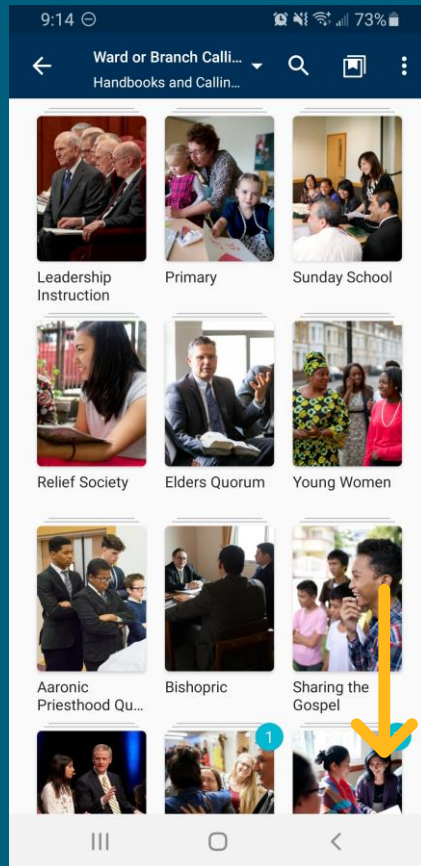
- **Strengthening New and Returning Members:** This is the training outline for these tools. Read through this outline and look up the linked resources.
- **My Covenant Path:** This is the My Covenant Path resource. Read the introduction and tap on a few of the experiences.
- **Helping New Members:** This is a chart or teaching aid used in the training that suggests key things that should happen before baptism, right after baptism, and within the first year.
- **Strengthening New Members:** These are five videos used in the training. They show how the principles for My Covenant Path were applied with a family that was found, taught, baptized, and that attended the temple.

LEADER TRAINING RESOURCES



Android Phone Screenshots

LEADER TRAINING RESOURCES



Android Phone Screenshots

FAQs

- **What is the difference between the “Missionary Progress Record” and “Covenant Path Progress”?**
 - The “Missionary Progress Record” is the old, view-only version; the new editable version is called “Covenant Path Progress.” If you are seeing the Missionary Progress Record, you need to update your Member Tools. If that doesn’t solve the problem, trying signing out and signing back into Member Tools. If the problem persists, trying uninstalling and reinstalling Member Tools.
- **As a stake leader, how can I see a dashboard progress summary view of all the new members or people being taught across the stake?**
 - In Member Tools, you can select the stake as the unit and see all new members or people being taught at once. In LCR, you can’t select the stake and can only view one unit in the stake at a time. A more enhanced dashboard for stake leaders is being considered for the future.
- **Can the missionaries or the leaders see who made updates to Covenant Path Progress?**
 - Currently, missionaries just see “Covenant Path Progress” as the updater of the data in Area Book. Showing the updater of the data in Member Tools & LCR is being considered for the future. If the same data is updated multiple times, the latest data to be recorded is shown.

FAQs

- **Which Church friends can be added to Covenant Path Progress?**
 - Currently, only Church friends who live in the stake can be added to Covenant Path Progress. Allowing the recording of Church friends outside of the stake is being considered for the future.
- **Who is responsible to track sacrament meeting attendance for new members?**
 - While there are multiple people with access, the ultimate responsibility resides with the elders quorum and Relief Society presidents.
- **How do I access Covenant Path Progress through LCR?**
 - To access Covenant Path Progress through LCR, navigate to: <https://lcr.churchofjesuschrist.org/one-work/progress-record>.
- **As a secretary, I track the attendance. Could I have access to edit sacrament meeting attendance?**
 - Allowing the secretary to track sacrament meeting attendance is being considered for the future.

FAQs

- **Does the sacrament meeting attendance recorded for the new member on Covenant Path Progress update the Quarterly Report?**
 - No, but this is being considered for the future.
- **Are high councilors able to see Covenant Path Progress for the entire stake or just their assigned ward?**
 - High councilors can see Covenant Path Progress for the entire stake.
- **Do the full-time missionaries have access to Covenant Path Progress?**
 - Because it contains sensitive ordinance data about members, missionaries don't have access to Covenant Path Progress. However, most of what is included on Covenant Path Progress in Member Tools, missionaries have access to on the person's "Progress" tab in Area Book Planner.
- **Why do new members have access to their own Covenant Path Progress?**
 - Allowing new members to access their own Covenant Path Progress in the directory section of Member Tools allows them to more actively engage in and track their progress along the covenant path.

FAQs

- **Do new members see the help needed tags added by the missionaries when they view Covenant Path Progress?**
 - No, new members don't see the "Help Needed" tags added by missionaries; only leaders who have access to Covenant Path Progress see them.
- **How long do new members show on Covenant Path Progress?**
 - New members show on Covenant Path Progress until two years after their confirmation date.
- **Why don't returning members show on Covenant Path Progress?**
 - Including returning members in Covenant Path Progress is being considered for the future.
- **Who decides if the new member has a Church friend, and who that friend is?**
 - The focus is to add those who are genuine friends with the new member. The new member sees and can add or update Church friends when they view the "Covenant Path Progress" section on their directory profile in Member Tools.

FAQs

- **Why are new members able to opt out of covenant path tracking on Covenant Path Progress?**
 - To respect people's privacy, if they'd prefer to not have their progress tracked, they can opt out or a leader can opt them out, and their progress will no longer be tracked. The new member can choose to opt in again if they'd like.
- **Are there any notifications or alerts when a new member isn't progressing?**
 - Yes, there is a "Messages" section in Member Tools that provides alerts. For example, a message will be sent if an eligible brother hasn't yet received the Aaronic Priesthood or a new member has missed four consecutive sacrament meetings.

