

Glossary of Mormon Terms

Organizations

Congregations

Ward—A congregation with geographically defined boundaries. Wards usually have between 350-500 members.

Branch—A small congregation with fewer members.

Stake—An administrative organization that includes five or six wards.

Auxiliaries—Church organizations created to help Church members.

Young Men and Young Women Mutual Improvement Association—Church organizations for teenagers ages 12 to 18. In 2006 the organizations are referred to as Young Men and Young Women.

I abbreviate this organization as Mutual or YMMIA and YWMIA.

Relief Society—Church organization for women.

Primary—Church organization for children 3 to 11.

Sunday School—Until the 1980s Church organization for all members. Primary was a weekday activity. In 2006 Primary is held on Sunday and is the Sunday School program for children 3 to 11.

Teenagers and adults attend Sunday School classes.

Priesthood Quorums—All worthy male members over the age of 12 have the priesthood and belong to quorums. Young men belong to the Aaronic Priesthood and are divided into deacons, teachers, and priests. The ages for these groups have changed over the years, but they are usually teenagers.

Adult men belong to the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Leadership

Church President—The leader of the Mormon Church selected by God. In practice the senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles becomes the president.

First Presidency—The church president and two men who assist him referred to as counselors.

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—Twelve men who work as church leaders following the pattern of Jesus Christ's twelve disciples.

General Board—A group of men and/or women who direct the programs for each auxiliary on a general church level.

Bishop—The lay minister who presides over a congregation.

Stake President—The lay minister who presides over a stake.

High Council—A group of twelve men who make stake decisions and direct stake activities.

YMMIA and YWMIA stake boards—Groups of men and women who supervise activities for the organizations on the stake level.

Meetings

Sacrament meeting—the weekly worship service for all church members.

Sunday School—an instructional class on Sunday for all church members.

Mormon Terms

Angel Moroni—A Book of Mormon prophet who appeared to Joseph Smith. A statue of Moroni appears on many Mormon temples.