



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201, U.S.A.

PHONE (718) 625-3600

October 12, 1993

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Re: Kingdom Hall Construction and Financing

Dear Brothers:

We are pleased to provide you with updated information to assist you with Kingdom Hall development and in working with the Regional Building Committee for your area. Several adjustments are being made in the procedures to process Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaires (formerly Kingdom Hall Construction Worker Questionnaires), to assign congregations to Regional Building Committees, and to help process loan papers. This letter updates what was stated previously in letters to the elders dated July 18, 1990, and August 15, 1990. It would be good for the body of elders to read this letter in its entirety upon receipt and for it to be consulted thereafter whenever you contemplate undertaking a Kingdom Hall construction project, either for a new building or to renovate an existing Kingdom Hall. If questions arise about the processing of Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaires, likely the needed direction will also be found herein. If you have other questions, feel free to contact the Regional Building Committee for your area or to write to the Society.

REGIONAL COMMITTEE TERRITORY ASSIGNMENTS

Whereas previously entire English-speaking circuits were assigned to a single Regional Building Committee, adjustments have been made so that each congregation in the United States is now assigned directly to a regional committee. Each congregation will receive an assignment letter showing the name, address, and telephone number of the chairman of the committee for its area. This should be retained in the congregation's file. If there is a change in assignment, a new letter will be sent. When new congregations are formed, they will be assigned to a regional committee and will be notified accordingly. Congregations should contact the chairman of the regional committee for their area whenever they begin thinking about the possibility of undertaking a Kingdom Hall construction project. This should be done well before property is purchased --actually when the elders first conceive the idea. The Regional Building Committee has been provided with guidelines from the Society that will help congregations avoid possible pitfalls. They also have Society-provided Kingdom Hall designs which can aid in initial planning. They have experienced volunteers working with them who can help with property evaluation, accounting procedures including taking initial congregation surveys of financial assistance, aggressive negotiation in behalf of the congregation's best interests for sale and/or purchase of property, and so forth.

VOLUNTEERS

~~There is a continuing need for more capable volunteers to as-~~
sist with Kingdom Hall construction. The elders are a vital link in encouraging those who qualify to volunteer and in promptly processing the necessary paperwork. Previously, the volunteer questionnaires were submitted through the circuit overseer. No record was kept locally. Each congregation is being sent a supply of the revised Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaire with a printing date of "10/93." These will be consigned to each congregation and sent with the congregation's literature shipment for November. All older copies of this form should be destroyed when the new ones are received, and all volunteers--whether they have completed forms before or not--should fill out two copies of the new form. When the revised forms are received from the Society, an appropriate, enthusiastic announcement should be made to the congregation by one of the elders as to this adjusted procedure. All who qualify should be encouraged to complete two questionnaires. The carbon copy will be retained by the congregation so you will have a record of all publishers you have approved. After completing the form, the original should be mailed directly to the chairman of the Regional Building Committee. It would be appreciated if all the questionnaires for those currently volunteering could be completed and mailed to the Regional Building Committee for your area no later than December 15, 1993. Regional committees will thus be assisted in updating their personnel lists so they will be using only approved personnel.

Who qualify to volunteer as Kingdom Hall construction workers? Basically, there are two categories: (1) Elders and ministerial servants--brothers having potential for oversight who can be trained even though they may not have skills at present. (2) Skilled or experienced baptized brothers and sisters who are in good standing in the congregation, including skilled elders and ministerial servants. Experienced personnel are needed for construction and non-construction departments. These include such fields as real estate, building codes, property inspection and evaluation, fire codes, engineering, architecture, safety, attorneys, purchasing or business management, traffic control, first aid, food preparation and service, crowd control, traffic management, accounting, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, painters, roofers, sound installation mechanics, wall vinyl installers, carpet layers, masons, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning technicians. All who volunteer should be willing workers who will readily cooperate with the appointed overseers.

D A wonderful Christian spirit has been manifest by the tens of thousands of those with skills and professions who volunteer their talents without charge to the congregations to assist with needed Kingdom Hall development.--Matt. 22:39.

D Other baptized and unbaptized publishers may be "willing workers" but are unskilled and not serving as elders or ministerial servants. These should be commended for their desire to assist but should be encouraged to support the preaching activity of their local congregation rather than to fill in volunteer questionnaires.

If a local congregation, or nearby congregation, undertakes a construction project, however, they may work thereon as part of the needed general labor force. They are thus used on a one-time basis.

Some of the general workers who apply themselves and show good ability may thereafter be asked by the Regional Building Committee to complete a Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaire as they will have thus gained qualifying experience. This would be a decision to be made by the regional committee, and not by the individual. If there is any question, the elders can contact the chairman of the regional committee. Good communication is always needed, and especially between local elders and the Regional Building Committee.

When there are adjustments in a volunteer's status, such as when one moves or is appointed as a ministerial servant or elder, two new Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaires should be completed promptly and submitted in the same manner. The congregation secretary should remain alert to see that adjustments are reported promptly. If a volunteer no longer qualifies or moves from the area, the elders should write immediately to the Regional Building Committee and advise the committee of that fact. Confidential details regarding the individual need not be shared with the regional committee. When that one again qualifies, the Regional Building Committee can be notified in the normal manner with the individual completing two new copies of the volunteer worker questionnaire.

When additional copies of the Kingdom Hall Volunteer Worker Questionnaire are needed, congregations may now order these directly from the Society when submitting the monthly literature request.

LOCAL CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURE

As emphasized above, when congregations contemplate undertaking either a new construction or renovation of a Kingdom Hall, the chairman of the Regional Building Committee should be contacted immediately. This should be done when the congregation first begins to develop the concept and well before any property is purchased. The regional committee will suggest a time when the local elders may meet with the Regional Building Committee to discuss their proposal. Thereafter, the regional committee will provide suggestions and direction. They can aid in deciding whether it would be best to remodel or enlarge an existing Kingdom Hall or whether new property should be obtained in another location. Generally, they know of capable volunteers who have made themselves available without charge to assist in locating property, negotiating aggressively for the most favorable deal, caring for the necessary legal and other paperwork, and so forth. If the congregation is in an urban area, a meeting should be arranged of the Regional Building Committee along with the elders from the involved congregation(s), some elders from nearby congregations, the circuit overseer(s), and the city overseer. This can assist in determining where to look for property that will not only care for present needs but also future needs in the area. In urban areas, a single-auditorium Kingdom Hall is often used by three or more congregations. Even in less densely populated

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areas, with good property selection, a Kingdom Hall may be used by two or more congregations. This makes for efficient use of the facility and reduces costs for all concerned.

If a Kingdom Hall construction project is thereafter undertaken, the Regional Building Committee can aid you in all aspects of the work from planning until the final finishing work is done. They have other elders working under their direction who are trained and available to oversee the various construction and non-construction departments. You may have brothers available locally who can assist in each of these departments, and that is good. By their working with and being trained by the selected overseers, they too can prove valuable in assisting other congregations in the future.

The Regional Building Committee has been provided with purchasing leads which may also prove valuable. The purchasing overseer and those assisting him will be able to share these with you, and local prices may be compared to make sure the congregation is getting favorable prices for the quality of the materials ordered.

FINANCING

It is good to check with the Society regarding financing that may be available before approaching outside financial institutions. First take the survey outlined in paragraph 20 of the memorandum "Information Regarding Ownership of Kingdom Halls" (T-36) and in paragraph 12 on page 4 of the February 1992 *Our Kingdom Ministry* to determine what contributions and loans are available locally from publishers within the involved congregation(s). (Luke 14:28-30; Phil. 2:4) The Regional Building Committee can assist you in taking these steps and has available copies of the Kingdom Hall Loan Survey form (formerly Kingdom Hall Project Survey form) which is thereafter used to apprise the Society of your plans and to receive initial consideration as to whether financing might be available for your proposal. (Previously this form was obtained from the circuit overseer.) After you complete two copies of the survey form, send them immediately to your circuit overseer who will add his comments before forwarding both copies to the Regional Building Committee. The regional committee completes both forms and sends the original to the Society, keeping the carbon copy for its records.

We are pleased to notify you of these adjustments that have been made, and it is hoped that these will assist the congregations in caring for their Kingdom Hall construction needs in a fine manner. All are to be commended for the attention given to building and maintaining our places of worship to Jehovah's praise.

Your brothers,

Nathaniel B. S. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.

cc: Regional Building Committees
Traveling overseers

TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION WORKER PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

The Temporary Construction Worker Program began in 1984 to fill a need at Bethel for skilled construction workers. In view of the worldwide expansion of Bethel facilities, there will be an ongoing need for volunteers for this program. The following information is provided to answer some of the questions most commonly asked about this program.

HOW TO APPLY Applications are available through the congregations. When needed, they can be requested on the Congregation Literature Request form. The length of the assignments are from one to four weeks. Assignments are based on the space available and the trades that are needed at the time.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR THIS PRIVILEGE? Brothers who are recommended should be English-speaking, in good health, between 19 and 55 years old, and baptized at least one year. (Occasionally, some over 55 who have the needed skills have been approved.) All must be fine examples in Christian living, and be working closely with their congregation in the field ministry. Preference is given to brothers who are appointed as servants or pioneers. Because of limited facilities, we are not accepting wives or children on this temporary assignment of one to four weeks.

IS CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE REQUIRED? The purpose of the program is to raise the skill level of our Bethel crews, so skilled workers are always preferred. Brothers without construction skills are invited as space is available. They must be strong and willing to work at any task that is assigned.

WHAT CONSTRUCTION TRADES ARE NEEDED? The scope of our work allows us to use nearly every building trade at one time or another. Engineers and draftsmen should include a resumé and samples with their application. Brothers are used in their trade unless they are needed more in another area. Regarding work assignments, it is good to imitate Isaiah's example when he said, "Here I am! Send me." (Isa.6:8)

WHAT OTHER OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE? Having served as a temporary worker opens up the opportunity for construction work at foreign branch projects. In addition, there is now a long-term program for three months. Wives can accompany their husbands. More information about these programs will be provided while at Bethel.

WHAT PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO BETHEL WORK? Brothers who apply should have the full support of their family. Their absence should not create a hardship on the family. Many brothers who serve as temporary workers are also involved in Kingdom Hall construction projects. How much of their time they can devote to Bethel service is left up to their own judgment.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO SERVE AS A TEMPORARY WORKER? It is truly educational to see how Jehovah's organization functions. Attending programs like morning worship, the Bethel family Watchtower Study, and other special meetings is spiritually stimulating. The work is hard and the schedule is busy, but there is much satisfaction in knowing that the work being done benefits the worldwide association of brothers.