



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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October 1, 1999

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

The urgency of our times is reflected in our current yeartext: "Look! Now is the day of salvation." Recognizing that this is "the especially acceptable time" to work for the salvation of others, many of God's people have arranged their lives to share in the Kingdom-preaching work full-time. As we begin a new service year, it is fitting to consider how you, as elders, can assist and encourage the pioneers in this lifesaving work.—2 Cor. 6:1, 2.

New Pioneers: With the reduction in the hour requirement, many have recently taken up the regular pioneer work. Likely this is the case with some in your congregation. We encourage you to help these new ones get their pioneer service off to a good start. How can this be done?

The service overseer should make sure that meetings for field service are being handled properly. If several in the congregation recently started pioneering, he should consider whether additional meetings for field service are needed to accommodate their schedules. (om 77, 96-7; km 2/89 2-3) The secretary should keep the elders informed of any problems the pioneers are experiencing so that needed assistance can be given without delay.—km 10/98 7.

Many new pioneers need training to develop skill in the ministry. Without this training, they may not get good results from their efforts and may become discouraged. To the extent possible, arrange to work with these pioneers in the ministry to help them improve their skills and to give them encouragement. In addition, each elder can show his interest in the new pioneers by regularly taking time to talk with them.

Of course, all the pioneers deeply appreciate the sincere personal interest you show in them. One pioneer who received help to cope with stressful circumstances wrote: "I'd like to let you know how much I appreciate the 'older men' of my congregation. The brothers have *always* made themselves available. It seems that at the time I needed their support and encouragement the most, Jehovah gave them the words of wisdom I needed to hear. Their loving concern *really* made me feel that they cared about me. I thank Jehovah for the men who make themselves available for this work." May you likewise support the pioneers in your congregation.

Pioneers Assist Others: This program has been in operation for over a year now, and good results are being obtained. A key to the continued success of the program is the keen interest of the service overseer, who is assigned to take the lead. To keep the program current, he should periodically review the direction provided in the Society's January 20, 1998, letter to all bodies of elders and in the September 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, page 4. In particular, he should give attention to the following matters:

- *He should keep an up-to-date record of those being assisted in the program.*
- *He should monitor how each pioneer/publisher assignment is working out.* He may enlist the assistance of the book study conductors to do this, if needed.

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- *When visiting the book study groups, he should make a special point to work with those being assisted in the program.*
- *At each quarterly elders' meeting, he should provide the body of elders with a brief report on the program.*
- *He should take the lead when it is time to make new assignments.* Assignments in the program are for a period of six months; they do not last indefinitely. Therefore, the service overseer should arrange for the service committee to meet with the book study conductors approximately every six months to discuss new assignments. Thereafter, he should make sure that the book study conductors follow through appropriately. (The book study conductor of each one selected to receive assistance should inquire privately to make sure that the publisher and the pioneer are agreeable to working together in the program. When that has been confirmed, the conductor should meet briefly with the pair to inform them of the assignment and to explain how the program works. At this meeting, it may be helpful for the conductor to provide a few suggestions, such as a specific objective for them to work on.)
- *Have any regular pioneers in the congregation recently attended the Pioneer Service School, thus qualifying to be used in the program?* Before such ones are given an assignment, the service overseer should take a few minutes to consider with them the main points of the outline that accompanied the Society's January 20, 1998, letter to all bodies of elders.
- *Have all the publishers been included who could benefit from the program and who are willing to participate?* The program is not just for those who lack experience in the ministry. Some who are proficient in placing literature but who have difficulty making return visits or starting Bible studies could benefit from working with a pioneer who is effective in these features of the ministry. Those who have the potential to pioneer might be encouraged to do so if they had an opportunity to work with a pioneer more often. Publishers who have already been assisted in the program may be selected to receive further assistance if the elders feel this would benefit them. When making assignments, it is essential that the elders exercise good judgment, taking into account the personalities and circumstances of those being considered. In congregations where only a few publishers are participating in the program, it may not be possible for each pioneer to receive an assignment every six months.—See also the Society's October 1, 1998, letter to all bodies of elders (S-201), paragraphs 8, 9.

We pray that Jehovah will richly bless your self-sacrificing efforts to care for the flock entrusted to you.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

Your brothers,

Nathan Tower B. & J. Society

OF NEW YORK, INC.

Note to the Congregation Service Committee: Accompanying this letter is an outline for the December meeting with the regular pioneers. Please arrange right away for two elders to conduct this meeting. The elders should be well prepared so that the meeting is truly encouraging to the pioneers. Other elders may attend.