

Announcements and Reminders

April 2020

FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL ELDERS

1. **Revised *Shepherd* Book:** We are pleased to inform you that a revised version of the *Shepherd* book will soon be posted on jw.org. Please be aware that revisions to the text in the JWPUB and EPUB versions of *Shepherd* may affect the location of highlights, notes, and bookmarks made by the user in the previous version. For example, in the JWPUB version, where a paragraph has been deleted or a new paragraph has been inserted, any highlighting, notes, or bookmarks on subsequent paragraphs within the associated chapter will appear in the wrong paragraph. The revised version of *Shepherd* contains updated references to the *Organized* book. Listed below is an overview of the significant textual changes along with additional direction:

Chapter 9

- Pars. 6-7: When a pioneer transfers to another congregation, elders should transfer the congregation person record using the Congregation Persons feature, following the direction in *Instructions for Congregation Use of JW.ORG* (S-135), paragraphs 12-14. By doing this, the pioneer record will be transferred to the new congregation automatically, even if the pioneer transfers to another branch territory. There is no longer a need for the former congregation to delete the pioneer on jw.org. When the new congregation accepts the transfer, the person will be added automatically to the list of pioneers. This direction will be included in a future revision of *Shepherd*.
- Par. 13: Inserted direction on pioneer hour credit received for attendance at a theocratic school or class.

Chapter 11

- Par. 16 pt. 4: Inserted direction that the circuit overseer should be informed when private baptisms are performed.

Chapter 12

- Par. 43: Inserted direction that if the elders learn of an accusation of serious wrongdoing against a temporary volunteer at Bethel, a construction volunteer, an occasional commuter, or a temporary special pioneer, two elders with knowledge of the circumstances should contact the Service Department immediately.

Chapter 20

- Par. 1: Inserted paragraph on qualifications of public speakers.
- Deleted previous paragraph 3 on reading scriptures during public talks since this direction will be included in a revised version of *Reminders for Those Assigned Public Talks* (S-141).
- Par. 24: Inserted updated direction on use of broadcasting systems. Congregations should not use a broadcasting service that stores the audio or video files, that subjects users to commercial advertisements, or that allows users to post comments.
- Par. 24 pt. 1: Congregations should transmit meetings live rather than record them for future distribution.
- Par. 24 pt. 3: Broadcasting systems with video capabilities should show only what transpires on stage, along with any approved media. Those commenting from the audience should have only their voices transmitted.—As an

exception to what is stated in *Shepherd*, please note that sign-language broadcasts may show video of those commenting. Also, those attending meetings held via *Zoom* or other videoconferencing systems in any language may allow their video to be displayed.

Chapter 21

- Par. 33: Inserted direction on holding two weekend meetings due to overcrowding.

Chapter 22

- Pars. 29-31: Adjusted direction on processing of applications.

Chapter 23

- Pars. 2-3: Inserted direction on the congregation's territory assignment.

Chapter 26

- Par. 6: Inserted direction regarding the annual part about disaster preparedness that will be included in the schedule for the midweek meeting. As previously announced, it will no longer be necessary to schedule a local needs part on this subject each year.

Chapter 28

- Par. 15: Adjusted direction to state that the circuit overseer rather than the Service Department should be informed when baptisms are performed in prisons.

Chapter 29

- Par. 9 pt. 5: Inserted direction to indicate that before elders contact the Legal Department on behalf of a publisher involved in a lawsuit over child custody and visitation matters it should be confirmed that the publisher is in good standing in the congregation.

FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH BY THE SERVICE OVERSEER

1. ***Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored At Last!***: With the help of the literature servant, please verify the number of requests for printed copies of the *Pure Worship* book that could not be filled from existing congregation stock. This number should then be conveyed to the language-coordinating congregation. Language-coordinating congregations should submit requests for the total quantity needed by the congregations in their language group. A few additional copies may be requested for stock. Requests should be submitted to the branch office **before May 1, 2020**.

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FOR THE CONGREGATION

1. ***Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored At Last!***: Beginning the week of November 16, 2020, the *Pure Worship* book will be considered at the Congregation Bible Study. In anticipation of this study, production of printed copies will begin in the next few months. Since the book has been released for some time, many publishers already have a copy of the book that can be used for the study. However, if you need a printed copy, please inform your literature servant at the end of this meeting.

2. ***Local Design/Construction Volunteer Application (DC-50)***: As announced in January, publishers who previously submitted a *Local Design/Construction Volunteer Application* and who still desired to make themselves available for local theocratic construction projects or disaster relief were required to reapply by March 31, 2020, using the new online features or, if that was not possible, using a printed application. We encourage all who wish to volunteer to submit the application as soon as possible if they have not already done so. Please approach the congregation secretary if you need assistance.

3. **Theocratic Schools**: Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, all theocratic schools have been suspended until further notice. This includes the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the School for Congregation Elders, the Kingdom Ministry School, the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives, the Pioneer Service School, and the Bethel Entrants' School. Additionally, the Governing Body has decided to postpone the start of the 149th Class of Gilead until later in 2020, conditions permitting. Thus, the Gilead graduation program scheduled for September 12, 2020, has been canceled.