

## 10 Steps to Taking an Ancestor or Cousin to the Temple (updated 2.11.16)

President Thomas S. Monson stated, ***“The Lord expects you and me to perform our family history work well. I think the first thing we must do if we are to perform our work well is to have the Spirit of our Heavenly Father with us. ... We are going to make mistakes, but none of us can become an expert in family history work without first being a novice. Therefore, we must plunge into this work, and we must prepare for some uphill climbing.”*** ([“Hastening the Work”, June 2014](#)). The First Presidency has also stated ***“Those whose names are submitted for proxy temple ordinances should be related to the submitter”*** ([February 2012](#)). We are related to our direct-line ancestors, our spouse’s direct-line ancestors, and the descendants (and their spouses) of these direct line ancestors. Adoptive, foster, etc. lines are also permitted. However, we aren’t related to the ancestors and siblings of other spouses who marry into the family.

**Take the plunge!** (Complete the following 7 steps)

1. Sign into [FamilySearch.org](#) with your LDS Account, click Family Tree and select the fan chart view (upper left). Family Tree is an amazing collection of multiple databases submitted over many years, but it contains many duplicate records and errors. Its goal is to have one correct record for everyone. See [Family Tree Overview, Part 1](#), and [Part 2](#). To add missing ancestors, use the landscape view (upper left). If someone you add needs ordinances, skip steps 2-3.
2. If your fan chart is full, *prayerfully* select an ancestor born before 1830 who wasn’t an LDS Church member. Click a name to see a Summary Card. Look for “non-Mormon” death places, and check ordinance dates (mouse over ordinances) to see if they were completed after they died. If possible, don’t go back much further than those born before 1800, because records are less available and relationship errors are more common the further back you go.
3. Click Tree on their Summary Card, and change to descendency view (upper left). Click Show on the upper right and uncheck portraits to see more descendants. Check all other options. Expand the descendants as needed, one generation at a time. Look for descendants who weren’t members of the Church; click a name to see a summary card. Look at the colored icons on the right. Temple icons indicate ordinance status. Dark blue=ordinances are reserved. Orange=required information is missing. Green=ordinances may be needed. The bright blue record hints icons identify indexed records that usually refer to the person. The purple research suggestion icons indicate possible missing family members or missing sources. The red data problem icons warn of potential data problems.
4. Review those with green temple icons. Clicking a green temple icon often shows a yellow duplicate warning. This means there are high match duplicate records in Family Tree and the person’s temple work is probably completed. They can’t be reserved until duplicates are resolved. Red data problem warnings must also be resolved before reserving ordinances. *Skip those with yellow duplicate or red data problem warnings until you are more experienced.* They often require more research, and duplicates require merging. Review those with orange temple *and* bright blue record hint icons and you may find the information needed to do temple work. Persons with completed ordinances who have a bright blue record hint icon may also have additional family members that can be found by reviewing the available record hints, especially if they also have a purple icon. Click on bright blue record hint icons to see indexed records for the person. Click Review and Attach to compare the information from the indexed record to the information already in Family Tree. If there is an image available, view it. Images often contain additional important information. If the indexed record pertains to your ancestor (record hints are >95% but not 100% accurate), attach the indexed record to their Family Tree record, and add missing information and missing family members to Family Tree. New persons added to Family Tree often need temple ordinances. If there are many descendants and you have trouble finding orange or green temple icons with no warnings, log into [Puzzilla.org](#) with your LDS account. A birds-eye view helps you find areas in your tree where descendants are missing. See [Finding Those That Are Missing](#).
5. Request ordinances for those with green temple icons if they have no yellow duplicate or red data problem warnings. *Until you are more experienced, only request those who lived after 1850* because records are more available to verify information and Family Tree relationship errors are more common for those who died before 1850—see [Am I Related to Those I Find?](#) *Don’t print ordinances until you complete step 6.* To request ordinances, click a green temple icon (landscape view works best), *read the policy*, and check the box at the bottom. Then click Add to Temple Ordinance list. You need permission from a closest living relative (undivorced spouse, child, parent, or sibling) for those born less than 110 year years ago. Click Request Permission and fill out the form. You will be notified when approved.
6. Review and attach all correct record hints for each person you request and for each family member you add to Family Tree. *Limit your efforts to one family or just a few persons at a time. If possible, find at least three records for each person* (“In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established”, [2 Cor 13:1](#)), *and more records* (see [The Blind Men and the Elephant](#)) *if they are easily available*. More information helps assure that ordinances are done for the right person, helps prevent research and ordinance duplication, and makes Family Tree more accurate. It may also lead to finding additional relatives. The Search Records feature on the right side of a person's details page may find additional records (click the FamilySearch logo underneath Search Records). If needed, modify the automatic

search criteria (left side of the Search Records page). Consider using other Internet sites (see [Using FamilySearch to Find Additional Sources](#)) if you can't find multiple records at FamilySearch. Attach all additional historical records you find to the person's Family Tree record.

7. Once you have performed a reasonably complete record search (let the Spirit guide), go to your Temple List (click Temple on the FamilySearch toolbar—top right center). Check the names and ordinances you want to perform and print the temple cards. Take the cards to the temple and perform the ordinances.

**The uphill climbing!** If you completed steps 1-7, congratulations on a great job! Keep up the good work! *However, you will make fewer mistakes if you learn to do the uphill climbing.* With steps 1-7 only, you will sometimes climb the wrong tree and submit those you aren't related to, especially if you go back on your lines further than about 1850. You will also perform more ordinances that have previously been done or otherwise not needed, i.e. only sealing ordinances are needed for those who die before age 8. After you have taken your first few names to the temple, improve your skills by completing steps 8-10. Before printing ordinance cards, consider printing your "not printed" temple list. Check off each person after completing steps 8-10. Once all have been checked, print ordinance cards.

8. Before printing ordinance cards, review each ancestor between you and those you reserved. If you aren't certain you are related to each person, look at the attached sources to confirm the links between each generation. If sources don't confirm each relationship, find additional sources to verify. See [Am I Related to Those I Find](#) and [Using FamilySearch to Find Additional Sources](#). Consider reviewing and attaching more sources to those you know are your ancestors. Reviewing and verifying your relationship helps you feel a connection and helps ensure you are really related.
9. Get to know your ancestors better by reviewing Memories that others have added to Family Tree. You may also add additional photos, stories, etc. (see [Adding Memories to Family Tree](#)). *Before printing ordinance cards try to find a birth, marriage, and death record (especially try to verify that they didn't die before age 8) and all available census records for each person. Do this for each family member before moving on to the next generation.* You may find additional records not available at FamilySearch by searching Ancestry, Findmypast and MyHeritage (access from Search Records on the details page; sign up for free at <https://familysearch.org/partneraccess>). However, *don't accept online family trees as being correct--they're just clues. Find original historical records.* Attach the records you find to the person's Family Tree record. Correct any errors you find (see [Editing in Family Tree](#)). Finding and attaching multiple sources and correcting errors helps make Family Tree more accurate and more "worthy of all acceptance" ([D&C 128:24](#)). Use a Research Log--when you look for a record but don't find it, write down where you looked to avoid looking in the same place over and over (you may use Family Tree Discussions or Notes to record your searches). Google and the [FamilySearch Wiki](#) (access by clicking Search in the middle of the top toolbar and selecting Wiki) can also help you find more online records. See [Using FamilySearch to Find Additional Sources](#).
10. Learn to find and merge duplicate records. *Duplicate records often show completed ordinances and are frequently missed by the automatic duplicate warning.* Performing duplicate ordinances *delays ordinances for those who need them. It is better to spend an hour finding and merging records than many hours (about 10 man-hours per person) duplicating ordinances. However, it is better to duplicate ordinances than to merge incorrectly. Know what is correct before merging, don't guess.* The possible duplicates search on the details page (right, under Tools) may find more duplicates, but it still misses many. Additional duplicates can also be found using the FIND feature (mid-upper left). You can also modify the FIND search criteria. Consider adding the names of parents, spouses, and children. *Before you print ordinance cards, check for duplicates with the possible duplicates search and the FIND feature.* See [Finding and Merging Duplicate Records in Family Tree](#). Temple work has usually been completed for LDS Church members and their close relatives, famous persons, persons with extracted records (often "no image" records—especially in the British Isles, Mexico, Germany, and Scandinavia), and many ancestors of LDS pioneers. *If you don't find completed ordinances for these persons with the other searches, search the IGI.* The IGI is an index of everyone with completed temple ordinances through 2008. Many persons have been incorrectly merged in Family Tree, incorrectly combined in new.FamilySearch (nFS-the precursor to Family Tree) or were submitted with only minimal data. *Their ordinances are hidden in Family Tree.* Persons with hidden ordinances may be found in the IGI. You can't see ordinances in the IGI, but all primary IGI persons have had ordinances (usually all) completed. Search the IGI as follows: Click "Records" under "Search" (FamilySearch toolbar). In the "Collection Title" box (under "Find a Collection" under the map), type IGI. Select International Genealogical Index (IGI) from the drop down list. Fill in the search fields and modify the search if needed. *Look at both Contributed IGI and Indexed IGI records (Indexed IGI=extracted IGI).* Click a name for details. There are two options if you find an IGI record for the ancestor you requested ordinances for. **Option 1:** *Reserve the original person's ordinances, but don't print or do them.* Wait until hidden ordinances are able to be matched with the right Family Tree record (this is a planned enhancement). **Option 2.** (Advanced) see [Finding Hidden Ordinances in Family Tree](#). Merging can be difficult. Get help if needed.

This [online course](#) offers a step by step approach which integrates taking the plunge and the uphill climbing.