

# Administering the sacrament at home

The bishop holds the keys for administering the sacrament during weekly sacrament meetings. With these keys, a bishop is also able to authorize worthy priesthood holders who hold the appropriate office (all Melchizedek Priesthood holders and priests in the Aaronic Priesthood) to administer the sacrament in their homes and other settings to their families and others under extraordinary circumstances. Members wishing to administer the sacrament in their own or others' homes should individually seek the bishop's authorization each week they wish to do so.

**⚠ These guidelines are solely for members of the Jamaica 1st Ward. If you are not a member of our ward, please ask your own bishop or branch president for guidance for where you live.**

## Instructions for administering the sacrament

Instructions for administering the sacrament are found in the [General Handbook, section 18.9](#). Those administering the sacrament in their homes should be familiar with the instructions found in the handbook, but with the following adaptations.

- **Those administering the sacrament should wash their hands thoroughly, and clean plates and cups should be used for the bread and water. Priesthood holders and other family members who are sick, especially those exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19, should not administer or handle the sacrament.**
- A reverent environment, similar to what would be found in the chapel during the administration of the sacrament on Sundays, should be created as much as possible. This includes turning off TVs, radios, and other media. If desired, a family may pray, sing, bear testimony, read scripture, and teach each other together to create a reverent atmosphere, though this is not required for administering the sacrament. While families should strive still to keep the Sabbath day holy, they are not expected to re-create sacrament meeting in their own homes.
- Those administering the sacrament should be worthy and perform the ordinance in a dignified manner. Consider the questions asked in temple recommend interviews as guidelines for determining your worthiness. (If you have questions about your worthiness, please contact the bishop; contact information is below.) Dress and grooming should be neat; administering the sacrament while wearing sleeping or athletic clothes is inappropriate.
- If there are two or more priesthood holders in a home, they may perform the elements of the sacrament that pertain to their priesthood office. For example, we have some homes with both high priests and teachers or deacons; the high

priest may bless the sacrament while the deacon passes it or the teacher prepares it.

- A tablecloth, either under or over the bread and water, is not necessary when administering the sacrament at home.
- A few small pieces of bread — enough for all family members and others present to partake — should be broken by the priest or Melchizedek Priesthood holder immediately before saying the blessing on the bread. It is not necessary to sing a hymn while this is being done, but a family may choose to do so.
- If possible, the priesthood holder administering the sacrament should kneel while saying each sacrament blessing.
- Water should be placed on the table in individual glasses or cups for each person partaking of the sacrament. All cups with water being blessed for the sacrament should be on the table when the blessing is said.
- In contrast to sacrament meeting, when the bishop or other presiding officer should receive the bread and water first, while administering the sacrament at home the bread and water may be passed to those present in any order. The person saying the blessings is responsible for saying them accurately.
- When the sacrament has been administered, bread and water used for it may be kept and used for food.
- Priesthood holders who plan to administer the sacrament in their home should notify the bishop, and should also report to the bishop afterward that it was administered. The bishop's contact information is below.

The blessing on the bread is found in [Doctrine and Covenants 20:77](#), and the blessing on the water is found in [Doctrine and Covenants 20:79](#) (though use the word "water" instead of "wine").

# COVID-19 pandemic guidelines and other reminders for administering or receiving the sacrament in others' homes

**Practice physical distancing:** Stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) from other people, especially those outside your own household.

**Wear a mask or face covering:** All present should wear a mask or face covering over their nose and mouth throughout the entire ordinance, except when they are partaking of the emblems of the sacrament. Priesthood holders may wear their masks or face coverings while saying the sacrament prayers.

**Wash hands thoroughly:** If possible, all those participating in the ordinance of the sacrament should wash their hands beforehand using soap and water. If for some reason soap and water are unavailable, they may use hand sanitizer. In any case,

some sort of hand washing by all involved, and especially by those priesthood holders administering the ordinance, should take place beforehand.

**Limit your time in others' homes:** Those who travel to others' homes either to administer or to receive the sacrament should try to limit their stays in others' homes to just the time it takes to reverently administer the ordinance.

**This authorization is valid only in the boundaries of the Jamaica 1st Ward:** Ward members should not travel outside of ward boundaries to administer or receive the sacrament, and they should not ask priesthood holders who are not members of our ward to administer the sacrament to them.

## Additional questions

### **My family and I attended sacrament meeting in person today. Can we still administer the sacrament at home?**

You should not administer the sacrament at home if you attended sacrament meeting in person that day. However, you may administer the sacrament to family members who were not able to attend in person, and you may administer it to other ward members who were not able to attend and who do not live with a priesthood holder with the appropriate office. Likewise, you may administer the sacrament to yourself and your family on Sundays you were not able to attend in person and on Sundays the ward has only online meetings.

### **If I have already administered the sacrament to my own family and partaken of the bread and water then, when I help administer it to another family, should I partake of the sacrament again?**

Yes, partake of the sacrament yourself each time you administer it.

### **I live alone. Should I just administer the sacrament to myself?**

Yes, if you are alone, and you hold the appropriate office in the priesthood and are worthy, administer the sacrament just to yourself. We will arrange to administer the sacrament to families and individuals without priesthood holders in their households.

### **No one with the appropriate priesthood office lives in my home. What can I do?**

You may contact a worthy priesthood holder in the ward and ask him to administer the sacrament to you. He may come to your home or you may go to his home. Additional reminders and instructions are above.

Beyond that, in [instructions](#) issued 16 April 2020, the First Presidency noted: "In unusual circumstances when the sacrament is not available, members can be comforted by studying the sacrament prayers and recommitting to live the covenants members have made and praying for the day they will receive it in person, properly administered by the priesthood."

### **I have another question that isn't answered here. What do I do?**

Please forward all other questions directly to the bishop personally:

- [bishop@jamaica1stward.org](mailto:bishop@jamaica1stward.org)

If you don't get a response in time, do your best. The Lord will bless you for your best efforts, especially under these circumstances.