

Dressing appropriately for church & the temple

An overview for members of the Jamaica 1st Ward

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have a long tradition of dressing in their “Sunday best” when gathering each week to worship. This is particularly true when we serve in a leadership position in our ward, when we give a talk or present a lesson, and especially when we participate in or administer a priesthood ordinance such as the sacrament. Dressing appropriately for these occasions both shows respect and reverence for our Heavenly Father and the Savior and helps us feel more worshipful and focused on our purposes at church — setting apart Sunday church meetings as different from the other meetings and activities we may participate in throughout the week.

While everyone is invited to “come as they are” to our Sunday meetings, we want members of our ward, especially new members, to have an understanding of how and why Latter-day Saints still dress up when they go to church.

Clothing for Sunday meetings

The *General Handbook* of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints instructs: “... for sacrament meeting, individuals wear their best available Sunday clothing to show respect for the sacrament ordinance. ... Disciples of Jesus Christ will know how best to dress and groom themselves.”¹

Church leaders and missionaries are good examples to look to when considering what to wear to church. For example, what do men and women church leaders wear when speaking in general conference? What do the full-time missionaries, elders or sisters, wear to church each Sunday? What does the bishop, Relief Society president, or other leaders of our ward wear to church?

You will notice that leaders in our church, unlike those in other denominations or religions, do not wear vestments or other ceremonial clothing. Rather, all members, regardless of their calling or length of time in the church, are invited to wear their Sunday best.

Recommended clothing²

Clothing should be modest at all times of year, regardless of the weather. If possible, avoid clothing with words and sports teams’ insignia and other logos. Clothing may be adjusted to accommodate changes in weather and temperature, individual health needs, or your cultural background. Here’s a general idea of what is meant by “Sunday best”:

- **Men:** Button-up shirt (does not have to be white, even if you are blessing or passing the sacrament), tie, and slacks; blazer or suit jacket if available³
- **Women:** Dress; blouse and skirt; or blouse and slacks
- **Children:** Usually dress up as well

Questions

What if I see someone who isn't wearing their “Sunday best”?

Members and leaders should not judge others based on dress and appearance. They should love all people, as the Savior commanded (see Matthew 22:39; John 13:34–35). All should be welcomed at church meetings and activities.⁴ It is *never* appropriate to make critical comments to someone about what they are wearing to church.

What if I don't have Sunday clothes or can't afford Sunday clothes?

You are still welcome to come in the best clothes you have. You can also speak with a member of the elders quorum or Relief Society presidency, and they may counsel with the bishop on using church funds to purchase Sunday clothes for you.

What do I wear when I go to the temple?

When going to a temple, members should wear the type of clothing they typically wear to sacrament meeting. They should avoid wearing clothing that is casual.⁵ In short, you should also wear your Sunday best when attending the temple.

² ComeUntoChrist.org gives this advice to people thinking of attending our church for the first time: “Most men wear suits or button-up shirts and ties, women typically wear dresses or skirts, and children usually dress up too.” (ChurchofJesusChrist.org/ComeUntoChrist/belong/sunday-services)

³ The *General Handbook* provides this specific instruction for priesthood holders blessing and passing the sacrament: “Those who administer the sacrament should be well groomed and clean. They should not wear clothing or jewelry that might detract from the worship and covenant making that are the purpose of the sacrament.” (18.9.3 [May 2024 edition])

⁴ *General Handbook* (May 2024 edition), 38.8.14

⁵ *General Handbook* (May 2024 edition), 27.1.5

¹ 38.8.14 (May 2024 edition)