

# Ministering Principles

## MINISTERING THROUGH SACRAMENT MEETING

*Sacrament meeting provides opportunities to connect with and minister to others.*

**S**acrament meeting is a time for spiritual nourishment and personal reflection on the Savior and His Atonement. As we partake of the sacrament each week, we are edified together (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:110). But some in our wards and branches bring with them heavy burdens or aren't there at all.

Here are a few opportunities for how we might use that sacred hour to minister to others and make a difference in their lives.

### **Help Make Sacrament Meeting Better for Those You Minister To**

The first step in learning how to minister is getting to know the individuals or families and their needs. There may be ways you can help make their sacrament worship experience better simply by learning more about them.



For Mindy, a young mother of twin toddlers, the simple efforts of her ministering sister made a huge difference in her sacrament meeting experience every week.

“Because of my husband’s work schedule, I take our twin daughters to church by myself every week,” Mindy explains. “It’s really overwhelming to try to make it through all of sacrament meeting with two



busy toddlers, but my ministering sister has taken it upon herself to help me.

“She sits with us and helps me take care of my girls every week. Just having her next to me means so much and really

eases my anxiety in their moments of tantrums or fussiness. I don’t think she’ll ever know how much her actions have impacted me at this time in my life. She saw my need as a young, anxiety-filled mother, and she helps make church a peaceful and happy place for all of us.”

#### IDEAS TO HELP THOSE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

- Counsel with elders quorum and Relief Society leaders about the needs of members.
- Leaders plan sacrament meeting talks to help meet members’ needs. If those you minister to would benefit from hearing a certain message, share the idea with your leaders.
- If you know that someone has a disability or food allergy that prevents them from enjoying the blessings of the sacrament, ask them for details and what accommodations could be made to improve their worship experience. Share this information with your leaders.<sup>1</sup>
- If someone you minister to or know about is homebound, either permanently or temporarily, ask your bishop if the sacrament can be given to them at home. You could even take notes during sacrament meeting and share them over the phone, through email, or in person.
- If someone you minister to has young children, you can offer to help them during sacrament meeting.
- If those you minister to don’t often come to sacrament meeting, try to understand and consider ways you can help. If they need transportation, you could offer them a ride. If they feel unsupported by their family, you could invite them to sit with you. You could make special invitations to help them feel welcome and wanted at sacrament meeting.

#### Remember, Simple Gestures Go a Long Way

Speaking about ministering, Sister Jean B. Bingham, Relief Society General President, taught: “Sometimes we think we have to do something grand and heroic to ‘count’ as serving our neighbors. Yet simple acts of service can have profound effects on others—as well as on ourselves.”<sup>2</sup>

In a small ward in Belgium, Evita often offers to translate for Spanish-speaking visitors and members during Church meetings. One time, Evita was introduced to someone from the Dominican Republic who was learning about the Church. He did know some English, but Spanish was his native language. So Evita offered to quietly translate for him in sacrament meeting so he felt more comfortable.

“Translating can sometimes make my Sabbath a little more hectic,” Evita says. “But following promptings to ask others if they need an interpreter definitely gives me a feeling of joy and warmth in knowing that I’m able to help them feel the Spirit and enjoy their meetings.”





## IDEAS TO HELP THROUGH SIMPLE GESTURES

- Talk to your leaders to see who might need a little extra service during sacrament meeting. Or if you know of someone who does, make sure your leaders are aware of them.
- Sit quietly as you wait for the meeting to start. This will help “the other broken hearts and sorrowing spirits that surround us”<sup>3</sup> who need the peace that can come through reverence in a holy place.
- On fast Sunday, consider dedicating your fasting and prayers to someone you minister to who may need extra comfort.
- Pray to know if there is somebody who could benefit from you sitting next to or near them during sacrament meeting or if there is some other way you can help.

*It's important to make sure that all who attend sacrament meeting feel welcome and spiritually fed.*

## Sacrament Meeting Can Be a Welcoming Place for All

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) taught, “Sacrament meeting is the most sacred, the most holy, of all the meetings of the Church.”<sup>4</sup> In which case, it's important to make sure all who are attending sacrament meeting feel welcome and spiritually fed—especially new members or members who have not attended for a while.

Merania from New South Wales, Australia, befriended a woman who was learning about the Church in her ward. “She has become one of my dear friends now,” Merania says. “I love sitting with her in sacrament meeting every week, and I always ask how she's doing and if there is anything I can do to help her.” After a while, Merania's friend was baptized. The efforts of ward members, as well as the welcoming atmosphere in sacrament meeting, played a huge part in her decision.

## IDEAS TO MINISTER TO RETURNING OR NEW MEMBERS

- When you are going to be speaking in sacrament meeting, you could invite friends, family, and others to come hear your message.
- You can look for and welcome those who are alone or who may need help. Ask if you can sit by them or invite them to sit with you.
- When the meeting ends, you could invite those you minister to and others to upcoming Church activities, to the temple, or to a social event.
- If someone you minister to attends sacrament meeting but hasn't been for a while, you can ask them if they had any questions about what was taught. Tell them they're always welcome to approach you if there was a term, story, or piece of doctrine they didn't understand. You can look up the answers together if necessary. ■



### NOTES

1. Consider reading “4 Ways to Serve Families with Disabilities” (digital-only article), *Ensign*, June 2018; or “Managing Food Allergies at Church” in this issue on page 40.
2. Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” *Ensign*, May 2018, 104.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Behold the Lamb of God,” *Ensign*, May 2019, 46.
4. Joseph Fielding Smith, in Conference Report, Oct. 1929, 60–61.