

GUIDELINES FOR USHERS

YOU ARE IMPORTANT!! PREPARE YOURSELF TO SERVE.

- Dress appropriate for our church context.
- Fresh Breath (mints or gum are helpful, or those spray things)
- Deodorant - particularly if you like to hug those whom you know. NOTE: Hug only if the other person initiates.
- Prayer - ask God to help you greet everyone and that all who visit may discover God.

Ushering is an important part of the worship service, a privilege and a responsibility.

Ushering is a ministry of hospitality and care. Ushers are often the first people visitors meet. How an usher greets them will help set the tone for their worship experience. Ushers provide direction for seating, taking communion and giving their offering. The following are some things that will be helpful when ushering.

TEAM CAPTAINS

- * Check with the pastor for any special needs for the service, such as reserving seats for a Baptism.
- * Check that offering plates, bulletins or other handouts are at the Ushers' Station.
- * Meet with your ushers and give them any necessary instructions or information.
- * Assign your ushers to one of the 3 aisles in the church – left, right, or center.

ALL USHERS

BE ON TIME! Arrive at church at least 20 minutes before the service starts – earlier for special services.

If you cannot be in attendance at the service for which you are scheduled, please find a replacement by calling another team member to exchange assignments. This applies to team captains as well. Notify the Team Captain and the church Secretary about these changes (763-6570).

ATTIRE

Be sure your appearance is neat and appropriate. In warmer weather, more informal, yet still presentable dress is acceptable. Remember: What you wear should not distract from the Worship service.

The Ushers' Crosses should be worn for identification. They are located at the Ushers' Station.

USHERING PRIOR TO AND DURING THE SERVICE

Ushers for all services should check the refrigerator for any flowers to go on the altar or credence tables. An Usher should be at each aisle distributing bulletins and other handouts, to early arrivals as well as late comers to the service. Offer "Busy Bags" to parents with children, and show them where they are, if desired.

Greet worshipers and escort people in need of assistance to appropriate seating.

Make sure Mission, Ministry, & More sheets, hymnals, etc. are available to those in the balcony or in the overflow area. Before services, make sure pews are neat and organized.

Worshipers arriving after the service has begun should be ushered to their seats during hymns or breaks in Worship, but not during readings or prayers, or the sermon.

Chairs may be added to the overflow area, if necessary, for large attendance. Chairs should be returned to the proper place following the service.

When the Pastor begins the Welcome to begin worship at the 5pm and 8am worship, proceed to the Sound Tech Area to turn off the announcements on the screen. This is done by hitting B on the computer keyboard.

Ushers should count all people at every service and record the number on an attendance slip. Blank attendance slips can be found at the Ushers' Station in a plastic bin mounted on the wall, and completed attendance slips can be returned to the bin marked "completed attendance slips". Be sure to include pastors, children, members assisting in the service, as well as those in the nursery, balcony and overflow area.

Do not engage in unnecessary conversation during worship, as this can be distracting and/or annoying to worshipers.

Ushers should remain in the church proper, or overflow area for the entire service. The reason for this is two-fold. First, they are there to worship the Lord as much as the other worshipers, and they need to be available to respond to unexpected needs or requests of the pastor, or emergency requests of worshipers.

MAIN LIGHTS

The main lights in the church are NOT to be dimmed at any time before or during a regular service UNLESS instructed to do so by the pastor.

BALCONY FAN

The ventilating fan in the balcony should only be on HIGH prior to the service, but it may be on LOW at any other time, even during the sermon. See electric panel at Usher's Station.

NO CHAIRS IN THE AISLES

NEVER put chairs in any of the aisles for people to sit on during a service. This is a Fire Department regulation.

USHERING DURING THE OFFERING – THE OFFERTORY

Assign ushers to the three aisles, placing one in the left, one in the center left and right, and one in the right aisle.

Wait until the pastor announces that it is time for the offering before moving up the aisles to the front to start the collection. This gives worshipers time to get their money or envelopes out, write checks, etc.

Start at the front of the sanctuary, working toward the back, passing plates back and forth. Do not collect from the pastor or choirs.

After you finish the pews in the sanctuary, check with those sitting in the overflow area (if any).

You might also check the collection plate in the balcony if others, choir members or overflow worshipers, have been sitting there.

Ushers wait at the back of the church until the pastor moves to the center of the altar, turns and raises his/her hands for the congregation to rise. At that point, ushers walk to the front of the church and give the plates to the acolyte. (Occasionally there is a special service, at which point the plates are to be kept at the Ushers' Station and taken to the sacristy after the service).

Ushers remove the silver lid and the linen covering the communion glasses.

At the conclusion of the service, the Team Captain or assigned usher, should collect the offering plates from the altar and empty them into a bank deposit bag found in the bottom cupboard at the Usher's Station. Offering plates are then returned to the Ushers' Station for the next service. Place deposit bags in the safe, located in the main office and shut door.

USHERING DURING COMMUNION

Ushers are to direct the congregation for communion starting with the front most pews and working back through the church. Ushers need only be in the center aisle. Have people form two lines. Please collect Mission, Ministry, & More sheets from people as they come forward for communion. Put the Mission, Ministry, & More sheets on the counter in the church office.

Ushers should make sure the pastor is aware of anyone who cannot come forward, and would like communion served in their pew seat. This is very important! Please stand by the pew where such persons are sitting so that no one is missed.

If one side of pews completes before the other, the ushers should work together to direct the remaining people to fill in to balance the two lines.

USHERING DURING BAPTISM

Check the bulletin when you arrive to see if there is a baptism during the service you will be working.

To ensure a pew is available for the parents and sponsors of a baptism, put 'reserved' signs on one pew before the service begins. If the baptismal family arrives early enough, simply ask how many pews will be needed.

AFTER THE SERVICE

After most worshipers have left the church, ushers should collect bulletins or other material left in the pews as well as straighten up pew racks. Put the bulletins in the recycling bin and throw away debris. Place hymnals or Bibles in the pew racks.

Pick up and empty collection plates from the altar as indicated under 'Offertory' (page 2). Again, put offering deposit bags in the safe, located in the main office/closet.

If you have the last service, it is a courtesy to assist the pastor by closing doors, turning off lights, etc. as needed. Also check with the pastor before you leave. Make sure all windows are closed and locked after the last service.

USHERING FOR SPECIAL SERVICES

When ushering for special services (Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.), ushers should arrive at least 30 minutes early, in order to check with the pastor for any special instructions pertaining to the service.

HEARING AID DEVICES

Hearing aid devices are available at the Ushers' Station, for use by worshipers on request. Ushers should make them available, instructing in their use as necessary. Remember to collect those hearing aids, turn them off and place them back in the cabinet after the service.

FIRST AID

A first aid box is available on the kitchen wall by the phone. Smelling salts are available at the Ushers' Station. The nearest telephone is available in the kitchen just inside the hallway entrance on the counter to the left.

Rescue Squad & Fire Dept.: 763-3537

Police Dept.: 763-2406

A first-aid stretcher board is located behind the door in the storage room off Luther Hall.

In the event someone gets sick in church, cleaning materials are available on the bottom shelf of the cabinet at the Ushers' Station.

A wheelchair is available under the balcony and parking lot entrance.

An AED is located at the back of the sanctuary, to the right of stairs to balcony.

Please keep this information handy so you will be able to refer to it. Make sure there is always one at the Ushers' Station, and if one isn't found, inform the Team Captain that a new copy is needed.