

DOCUMENTING OUR MINISTRIES

MINISTRY: USHERS

DATE OF THIS DOCUMENTATION UPDATE: JAN2009

MINISTRY DESCRIPTION:

The primary ministry of an usher is *hospitality*. Prior to each worship service, they greet people and hand out bulletins. If it is hard for people entering to see available seats, the usher assists them

Once the liturgy has begun, they are responsible for a series of tasks:

- Welcome latecomers, give them a bulletin, and ask that they wait for an appropriate time in the liturgy to enter the worship space
- Count attendance during the hymn before the Gospel (from side aisles).
- After the Peace is exchanged
 - Guide those selected to present the Bread and Wine (which are placed directly on the altar)
 - Come forward (behind those presenting Bread and Wine) to collect offering.
 - Once the offering is collected, place in two dark red velvet bags.
 - After the Offertory music (hymn or anthem), two ushers bring up the offering and place it in the alms basin on the altar; then return to the back of the worship space

At Communion

- After “The gifts of God for the people of God,” all four ushers come up the center aisle
- First pair moves the kneeling cushion into place and help the banner carrier close the gate; they then move to the front of the side aisles and keep an eye on the entire Nave.
- Second pair of ushers invites worshippers to come forward to the communion rail.
- The ushers receive communion last
- Last two ushers to receive communion help open gate and slide the kneeling cushion aside.

At the End of the liturgy:

- Welcome worshippers, collect bulletins and invite people to sign the Guest Book
- Once the worshipers have left, ushers clean up the pews
- When extra seating was added, these chairs are removed at this time
- The attendance form for the particular service is filled in.
- If this is the last liturgy of the day, turn off the lights, lock the Red Doors and close any windows that have been opened.

Safety and Security

Ushers are also responsible for providing the first level of security for those in the worship space. To this end

- They should keep a sharp eye for potential problem people.
- If intruders harass people, walk off with food or money, musical instruments and other valuables, or are drunk, and rude, get help! (Our Facilities Assistant is available for just this situation.)
- If someone needs medical help,
 - Quickly determine the nature of the health emergency
 - If severe
 - Notify the clergy leading the service
 - Call 911 (The Fire Department is very close.)
 - Begin CPR if called for
 - See if there are health care professionals present, who can assist the ushers
 - In case of fire,
 - Call 911 (The Fire Department is very close.)
 - Notify the clergy leading the service
 - Direct worshipers to leave the building in a quiet and orderly fashion
 - Then use fire extinguishers on fire, if appropriate

(For more detailed Ushers' Instructions, see the Ushers' Manual in the Parish Database.)