



USHER'S GUIDE

Ushering affects not only the work of the Pastor, but the entire congregation. It may encourage a visitor to become a regular member of the Immanuel Church community or discourage them from returning. You have been invited to serve as a church usher. This guide has been prepared to familiarize and aid you with the responsibilities of the position.

Church ushering differs from ordinary ushering in theatres, stadiums, restaurants, etc., which is done only to serve and please the people. Church ushering is a service rendered to God and an act which plays a part in conducting the worship service, of which you are also a part.

The Goal

- Establish a setting appropriate for worship.
- Maintain order.
- Help everyone feel at ease and a part of the worshipping congregation.
- Work toward evangelism, making our worship attractive and appealing to visitors.
- Promote public relations: To make a good impression on non-members, showing that
- we are a progressive and friendly church and interested in all who come.
- To assist the Pastor(s), Organist, and Choir in the performance of their duties.

Performance

1. It is a sacred duty, an important phase in the work of the church and should not be considered as "just another job".
2. It is a great privilege for it is a service to Christ and the Church; thus, we should feel honored in this task.

3. It is an important job that requires knowledge and skill. It should not be taken lightly, and we should strive to put forth our very best effort.
4. We should carry out our assignment with humility and remember that we are here to serve, not be served.

Conduct

1. Courtesy, quietness and reverence are the primary requirements.
2. Act natural (not arrogant).
3. Always be pleasant, kind and hospitable.
4. No loud talking with anyone during the service.
5. No huddling in a group during the performance of duties.
6. When you are on duty be on your feet. At other times, you should be seated with the congregation and participating in the worship.
7. Ushers will appear clean and neatly dressed. Please wear the Usher's Badge that is provide.
8. Care should be taken not to disturb people who are worshipping.

Techniques

1. Show genuine friendliness through facial expression and actions.
2. Controlling crowds and emergencies
 - a. Be prepared to handle a large number of people who want to enter or leave at the same time.
 - b. Keep calm. If something out of the ordinary occurs, perform your duty with confidence and in a controlled manner so that worshippers will not panic.
 - c. In case of emergency, the First Aid Kits are located in the Ushers' Room and in the Secretary's Office.
 - e. Be familiar with where fire extinguishers are located and evacuation procedures.

Responsibilities

1. If you cannot serve during any given service, you are responsible to for your replacement. Make certain the appropriate people are notified so that the change can be posted.
2. Any schedule conflicts for the month or any given Sunday should be handled in the above mentioned manner.

Before the Service

1. Be on Time: Ushers should arrive 30 minutes prior to the service.
2. Put on an Usher badge. They are located at the Usher's desk.
3. Check the bulletin to see if anything special is taking place (i.e., Baptism).
4. Post the hymn numbers. The hymn numbers are listed in the bulletin.
5. Post the flags on the poles located east of the cemetery.
6. Check with the Pastor to see if anything special needs to be done. This is especially important on days when the regular Pastor is not present.
7. Ring the bell prior to the start of the service. The Pastor will sound a buzzer when it is time. Pull the large rope 5-7 times.

During the Service

1. Ushering and non-ushering periods to be observed.
 - a. Assist worshippers in finding a seat. Respect individual preferences but fill pews in the front when possible. The last three pews on either side are reserved for parents with small children or those arriving late.
 - b. People may be ushered in during the hymn, or any such part when the congregation is singing.
 - c. No one should enter while the congregation is engaged in confession, prayer, when the choir sings or when the Scripture is being read.
 - d. At services with large attendance, one usher should post himself down the center isle and be alert to vacant seats. From this position, he can seat incoming worshippers.
 - e. During the singing of the hymn before the sermon, all ushers, who have not been seated are to sit down and participate with the worship. This is with the exception of one who will remain standing and who will be alert for any emergency or any late comers. This usher should be in plain sight and available to assist the Pastor at a moment's notice.
2. Receiving the Offering (See special notation *)
 - a. This should be accomplished without attracting attention toward the ushers. Do not try to march or parade down the aisle.
 - b. Normally 4 ushers collect the offering from the congregation. Offering Plates are to be retrieved from the balcony and the Chapel and put into one plate that is presented to the Pastor.
 - c. Prior to collecting the offering, allow enough time for the congregation to have their envelopes or money ready.
 - d. Two Ushers bring the offering forward. The Ushers are to wait until the organist begins to play the offertory before going down the aisle. At Services when a congregational hymn is sung during the offering, come down immediately after the offering has been collected.

e. When the offering is brought to the altar, the Ushers will be dismissed by the Pastor and may either post themselves at the first pew where they will stay until ushering the congregation for communion or return to the back of the church.

* NOTE: Beginning June 6, 2021, Offering Boxes will be placed in the rear of the Sanctuary and Parish Hall to minimize contact with the traditional plate passing.

3. Counting

a. The most accurate method of counting the congregation is from the balcony. An alternate method is to conduct the count during the offering.

b. All people are to be counted, including babies, organist, pastor, acolytes, choir, people in the nursery and chapel.

c. The Total Count for the service is to be written on the Attendance Form found in the Usher's Desk and numbers placed on the bulletin board.

d. The Attendance Form will be placed in the Service Folder along with the attendance sheets and put in the Secretarial Box downstairs.

4. Holy Communion

a. The congregation is invited to commune by rows from front to rear.

b. One row at a time is directed toward the front in an orderly manner ensuring that a steady flow is maintained.

c. The usher should end each line with eye contact rather than stepping in front of a worshipper.

d. Those in the balcony usually commune last. In some cases, choir members or musicians may need to commune earlier so be aware of this possibility. Should you be approached by someone from the rear, guide them in after the last person in the pew has been ushered out and before a new row is started.

After the Service

1. At least one usher should be stationed at the top of the stairs to aid anyone who requires help descending the stairs or using the elevator.

2. When the congregation has left the church, the ushers will gather the attendance registration sheets and place the pads back in the pews. If pads are empty, replace them with refills from the Usher's Desk area.

3. Collection is placed in a bag (Usher's Desk) and two ushers place it in the vault located in the basement.

4. Hymnals are to be placed in the bookracks. Remove all bulletins, papers and anything left behind. A Lost and Found is located downstairs in front of the secretarial offices. Make certain that the area is clear of loose paper and pencils are placed in holders.

5. Flags will be taken down after the last service and placed in a box by the Secretarial Office.
6. Normally, all doors are locked after the last service by a council member.

CHAPEL USHERS

The Chapel Ushers' roles and responsibilities are somewhat different from the ushers in the sanctuary.

1. Give special attention to all elderly coming to the chapel, attending to their individual needs.
2. Before the service, light the candles and post the hymn numbers.
3. Before to service, have the offering pate, attendance pad and pencils on the table in the chapel.
4. If there is an unusually large attendance, check the communion tray to make certain there are enough filled chalices (37 chalices in a full tray).
5. Count all present in the chapel and nursery. Give the count to the church usher.
6. Take the offering to the church so it may be included with the rest of the offerings brought to the alter during the offertory.
7. Check for any needs of the Nursery Attendant.
8. If there are any audio or visual difficulties, call the Console Controller in the balcony on the intercom. (Note: the sound control is on the rear wall in the chapel).
9. During communion, either the Pastor or a Communion Assistant will administer communion to those in the chapel. The Nursery Attendant(s) may desire to receive communion so remind the Pastor/Communion Assistant.
10. The Usher will receive the empty chalices after the administration of the Lord's Supper.
11. After the service, extinguish the candles and place the attendance sheet in the Secretary's Office. Place pencils and attendance pads in the chapel table drawer. Return bulletins to the Church Office.

FUNERAL USHERS

There is a separate set of ushers who oversee funerals.

1. When the burial of a member takes place in the cemetery and there is no service in the church, only one or two ushers are needed for the purpose of tolling the bell.
2. When a funeral is held in the church, several ushers will be required.
3. The night before or several hours before the funeral service, the funeral bulletins need to be set out and the heating or air conditioning turned on.

4. Arrive one hour before the service. Funeral Home personnel may require assistance.
5. Flags should be raised to half-mast
6. If the burial is in our cemetery, open the cemetery gates and remove the chain from between the driveway posts.
7. Hymns should be posted on the hymn board and the audio system should be checked.
8. Candles should be lighted by the ushers approximately 15 minutes before the service. After the service, the candles should be extinguished.
9. The bell is rung at the beginning of the service and is tolled as the procession goes to the cemetery.
10. Other specific duties are assigned to the ushers as the need arises.

OTHER ITEMS

1. If you observe anything that is out of order, broken or in need of repair, please make a note and drop it in the Building Committee Box located by the Secretarial Office.
2. Baptisms: When a baptism is scheduled, prior to the service, move the baptismal font to the center in front of the Chancel. After the service, the Altar Guild members are to remove the water and dry the baptismal bowl. The usher shall then move the font back to its regular place. NOTE: Check that the water is out before moving. Do not do this during the service unless events cause it to be in the way.
3. Weddings: Normally, the council or ushers who are appointed are in charge. Usually, only two are required. They are responsible for lighting, heating and cooling, bell ringing, unlocking, locking and the sound system. Candles should be extinguished after the wedding party has finished taking photographs. Note: Use the snuffers and DO NOT BLOW OUT CANDLES.
4. An Usher's Folder is located on top of the file cabinet in the Secretary's Office where information can be placed and relayed.

**The time and effort you have devoted to the service of God and our Church
are most appreciated.**

(Revised 2021)