

# **USHER INSTRUCTIONS AND TRAINING**

*Revised: May 2009*

## **1. Thank You and the Importance of the Role**

The usher's role is very important, particularly to our guests and visitors. You are the image of Good Shepherd which they get as they enter worship. The help and friendliness you provide may make the difference as to whether or not they will return. We are very grateful that you are willing to serve in this important capacity. We also want you to enjoy the experience of ushering at Good Shepherd- so relax, have a good time, and your positive feelings will be contagious among those with whom you come in contact!

## **2. Before the Service**

Please arrive in the Sanctuary 15 minutes before your service to prepare for the ushering tasks.

Magnetic Usher Badges are provided to identify you as someone to whom people can go for help. They are in the sound closet at the back of sanctuary with all other items you will need for ushering. Bulletins are located on the shelves in the closet (remember to have Children's Bulletins handy for kids also). Make sure that you have the bulletins for the proper service, since each one is different. Position one usher by the side door, two at the entrance door, and if needed, one at the balcony entrance. As the sanctuary begins to get full, please escort people to a seat, don't just hand them a bulletin. This is especially important with visitors, or when seating late arrivals. Hearing aids are located on the shelves in the closet, and we make them available upon request. Packets of soft toys are available for families with small children, and are located on the wooden "tree" just outside the sanctuary entrance door. If you have any questions about any of these items, please ask one of the pastors.

## **3. During the Service**

If the ushers need to speak with one another, please go out into the lobby. People seated in the rear of the sanctuary can be distracted by even a quiet conversation.

**Counting:** One usher should count all worshipers present and put the number in the attendance book in the sound system closet. Do not count before the reading of the lessons to ensure that we get the late arrivals in the count. Count everyone in the sanctuary, including the pastors, choir, communion assistants, etc. You will need to stand in the corners of the balcony to be able to see everyone. You will also need to go to the nursery and count the children who are in the nursery, and include anyone in the cry room as well.

**Offering:** Remember to check the balcony for worship attenders. If the Sanctuary is full you may have to select a fifth person to receive the offering in the balcony. There should be two plates setting in the balcony pews. After collecting the offering, have two ushers

bring it forward, beginning when the organist begins to play the offertory (after the choir anthem or special music is over). The acolytes have been trained to come forward to receive the offering when they see you begin walking down the aisle.

**Communion:** Holy Communion is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekends of the month at all services except 9:30 (which has Communion 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> weekends of each month). Following the collection of the offering, two ushers need to retrieve the Communion bread and wine from the table in the lobby. These ushers follow the other two usher (who have the offering plates) forward to the altar. The acolyte (positioned at your RIGHT) will receive the plates and a lay worship leader (at your LEFT) will receive the bread and wine at the altar rail. Two ushers then remain standing by the silver cup trays at the first row of pews to guide communicants in receiving an empty plastic cup. The other two ushers proceed down the center aisle motioning people to go forward to get in line for communion. There should always be a long line of people waiting, to avoid delays in serving communion. Ushers commune at the end of the congregation.

For some special Sundays, such as Easter, Christmas Eve, Pentecost, All Saints, etc., we have a different format for communion, usually continuous flow, which means people don't kneel at the communion rail.

#### **4. After the Service**

Remove your badge for use by the ushers at the next service. Collect bulletins left on the pews or in hymnals, and place them in the recycle bins in the narthex. Restock Communication Cards in pew racks (stock of them kept in Usher closet). If communion was served, get the small battery operated vacuum from the sacristy and vacuum the breadcrumbs under the rail. Please return the vacuum to its cradle so it will always remain charged.

#### **5. In Case of Emergency or for Additional Questions**

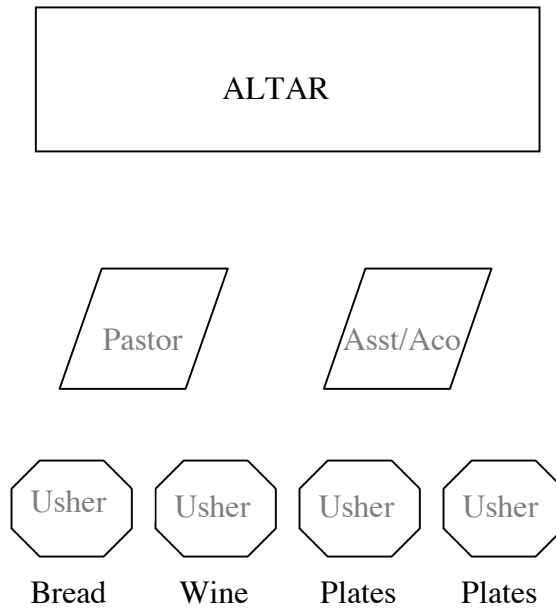
In case of emergency, there is a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit in the sacristy. There is also a telephone on the wall in the hallway by the kitchen.

#### **6. Scheduling**

When you volunteer to be an usher, we put you on our office list. Each quarter we produce assignments for each worship service in that quarter. We then send the schedule to you. If you can't usher on an assigned weekend, please attempt to trade days with other ushers on the list. If you are unable to trade or find a replacement, please call us.

If you have any additional questions about your role as an usher, please feel free to ask any of the pastors. For questions about usher scheduling, please contact Jan Zinnecker at 891-1700 ext 27 or email her at [jjzinnecker@goodshepherd.com](mailto:jjzinnecker@goodshepherd.com).

Diagram Below shows what “positions” Usher should be in when arriving at altar with Bread, Wine and plates



## **USHERS' QUICK CHECK LIST**

### **BEFORE THE SERVICE**

- \* **Wear Lapel Carnation**
- \* **Locate Bulletins**
- \* **Hand out bulletins (& Kids bulletins) and escort people if the Sanctuary is full**
- \* **Provide Hearing Aids and Children's activity bags as needed**

### **DURING THE SERVICE**

- \* **Count Worshipers**
- \* **Collect Offering - including the balcony**
- \* ***Communion Sundays***
  - Bring Communion Elements to the Altar**
  - Direct Worshipers**
  - During Communion**

**AFTER THE SERVICE**

- \* **Close Sanctuary Doors**
- \* **Remove Lapel Carnation**
- \* **Collect left over bulletins  
from the pews and  
restock Communication Card**
  
- \* **Communion Sundays  
Vacuum bread crumbs on  
Altar area floor after  
Communion**