

## Guidelines for Ushers

In the Augsburg Fortress handbook for ushers, ushers are referred to as ministers of hospitality. Their task is to serve all those who have come together to worship; to serve them with quiet efficiency and hospitality. Many times ushers are the first representatives of the church that people meet upon their arrival for worship. Ushering is one of the evangelism ministries of the church.

1. Show hospitality toward all in attendance. Greet people and give to them items they will need to participate in the service.
2. Provide information to visitors. When and where appropriate, offer them information on the locations of the nursery and restrooms, be sure they have signed our guest book and assist them in finding a seat inside the nave.
3. When needed, attend to special needs such as wheelchairs and walkers, or people using canes.
4. If we are having a special service which will begin in the narthex, inform everyone.
5. Ushers should arrive 30 minutes before the service.
6. Those ushering at the 8:15 service should unlock doors, put on lights (this includes the restrooms and nursery). Make sure the guest book is opened and in place and that it is equipped with a pen that writes.
7. Check to see that the bread and wine are on the table in the Narthex. Be sure you have bulletins.
8. At the 10:30 service and all special services, one usher will be designated as head usher. He will be in charge for the service.
9. One usher should be inside the nave and may ask, "May I help you find a seat?"
10. During the service, one usher should sit out in the Narthex. Sound is piped out there so you will be able to hear the service but you will be available to late comers, able to help anyone who must leave during the service and be on the lookout for any problems that may occur.
11. Late comers should never be seated during times of silence, confessional, prayer, and while the lesson and Gospel are being read. Therefore, latecomers may be seated during the Prelude, Announcements of the day, Hymns, and Liturgical songs.
12. The ushers at the 10:30 service may have to encourage people to go in and be seated so the service can start on time.
13. During the entrance Prelude, the attendance pads should be distributed to each row.
14. As the entrance Hymn concludes, close the doors between the narthex and the nave.
15. The ushers will go to the altar rail to receive the offering plates.

16. At the 8:15 service, the two ushers begin collecting the offering on the center aisle seats and if necessary collecting on the outside aisles.
17. At the 10:30 service, there are four ushers using four plates. At this service the plate is passed from the center aisle along the whole row of chairs to the usher on the outside aisles. This is reversed with the alternate plate. It will then be returned to the center or side aisle along the next alternate row. There may be a few short rows where that won't be necessary.
18. As offering is collected the ushers should not turn their backs to the altar or visit with worshipers.
19. Ushers are responsible for taking the attendance count. All persons are to be counted: members, visitors, children, the choir, acolytes, ministers, and ushers. Be sure to record this number on the provided sheet in the basket with the programs
20. After all the gifts are gathered, the ushers form in procession in the rear of the center aisle, carrying the plates of offerings and the gifts of bread and wine. You will come forward in pairs as the offertory is sung.
21. At the altar, the offering plates are handed to the acolyte. Then the ushers who carried the plates forward step aside, allowing the bread and wine to be presented to the assisting minister at the altar. Following the presentation of gifts, the ushers reform in procession, bow their heads toward the altar, turn and return to the rear of the nave.
22. As the *Lamb of God* is being sung, two ushers will come forward to help direct the communicants. At this time, the usher on the left side will go and close the communion rail and place the kneeling cushion in place. The other usher will begin to direct the choir to the communion rail. Following the choir, the congregation will commune. Inform pastor if there is anyone wishing to commune but can't come to the altar. If necessary, lead pastor and the communion assistant to the person(s) needing to receive communion. The ushers will be at the last communion table.
23. Before the ushers leave, the usher the farthest to the left will remove the kneeling cushion and open the altar side rail so the communion assistants can leave the altar. Two of the other ushers will move the center kneeling cushion and open the center of the communion rail.
24. During the final hymn, open the back doors to the narthex.
25. After the congregation has left, collect attendance pads, discarded bulletins, replace any hymnals left out and in general clean the worship space.
26. Before leaving the church, be sure the count of worshipers has been recorded and turn off any unnecessary lights.