

Usher Duties

Holy Cross Lutheran Church • Indianapolis

Ushering Duties in Preparation for Serving

Usher Team Captain

1. The team captain should assure that any new usher on his team is comfortable with the role of usher and should answer any questions he/she has.
2. During the week prior to the service month, the team captain should call each member of his team to remind him/her that they will be serving as ushers in the following month.
3. The team captain should help any usher who is having trouble finding a replacement. If they cannot together find a replacement, they should contact a member of the Usher Action Team (Mark Acton, Gary Mohr, or Dan Shirley) as soon as possible.

Ushers

1. Ushers are expected to serve every week during their assigned month.
2. If an usher cannot serve during a particular week for whatever reason, he/she should find a replacement and notify the team captain with the replacement's name by Tuesday. Feel free to contact anyone on the usher schedule to serve as a replacement.
3. If the usher has called several people from the usher list and cannot readily identify a replacement, he/she should notify the team captain as early as possible so they can determine next steps.
4. If a last minute situation arises that prevents the usher from serving, he/she should make every effort to notify the team captain.

Ushering Duties during Worship Services

Pre-Service

1. Ushers should arrive at least 15 minutes early.
2. Please dress appropriately, suit or sport coat preferred.
3. The Team Captain should assign duties to the team
 - a. Which door to cover before service
 - b. When to count attendance
 - c. Notify Children's Church that they can return to the sanctuary
 - d. Which aisle to work during offering
 - e. What duty during communion
 - f. Direct clean-up after service
 - g. Make sure the church lights are on and the thermostats are properly adjusted.
4. Ushers should be stationed at each both entry doors into the sanctuary to greet worshipers and to distribute bulletins.
5. As the sanctuary fills, be aware of where the empty seats are located.
6. Be very outgoing! (Christ's Ambassadors) Welcome everyone with a greeting and a smile, be sensitive to peoples' needs - make them feel at home.
7. During the pre-service, the acolyte is to light the candles; however, an usher should light the candles at least 5 minutes before service begins, if there is no acolyte present.

During the Service

1. Close the doors to the sanctuary when the service begins.
2. After the service has started, people may be ushered into church during hymns, the canticles, and other parts of the service when the congregation sings. If someone arrives during periods when the congregation is engaged in confession or prayer, when the Bible is being read, or when Pastor is reading the liturgy, an usher should suggest that it would be appropriate to wait a few minutes that portion of the service is finished before entering. However, in all circumstances, at no time should a confrontation occur between an usher and a worshiper.
3. During the service an usher should walk through the building to check on activities in the halls, great room, the Commons, and school area.
4. As the sermon ends, an usher should be assigned to inform the leader of Children's Church that the children can return to the sanctuary. Ushers should use the same guidelines as described in the preceding paragraph as to when to allow the children to enter.

Offering

Six ushers are needed to collect the offering. The ushers assigned to a service should ask for volunteers as needed. Four ushers should come forward for the offering plates. Two ushers, each with 2 plates for each center section, should remain in the center aisle, and the other two, each with 2 plates for the side sections, should go to the diagonal aisles. Each of the ushers in the center aisle works with the usher in the diagonal aisles to return plates through the center sections. The usher in each diagonal section, also, works with the usher in the side aisles to return plates through the side sections. After the offering is complete, two ushers take the plates to the Pastor at the altar.

Attendance

Sometime during the service before Children's Church, count the number of worshipers. Try to be discreet and unobtrusive, not interfering with the worship. Don't forget the Pastor, organist, and those in the nursery. Record this number in the attendance book located in the cabinet in the Welcome Center.

Communion

1. Four ushers are needed for communion. Two ushers will direct communicants to the center aisle, beginning with the 2 center sections then the right and left side sections. An effort should be made to allow family groups to commune together. The two ushers at the front of the center aisle will direct 10 to 12 communicants both to the right and to the left communion tables. The communicants will return to their seats by using the diagonal aisles.
2. The first communicants should be directed to the tables as the Pastors and the Elders finish communing. Thereafter, each line should be directed to the tables as the preceding group on that side return to their seats. The ushers should keep a queue in the center aisle so that there is a continuous flow of communicants from the pews, to the center aisle, and to the altar.
3. The ushers should commune with the last group.

After the Service

1. Clean the pews. Pick up bulletins and other paper and straighten the hymnals and Bibles.
2. Collect the completed attendance records, return the attendance register books to the ends of each pew, and put full pads in the books as necessary. Pads are in the cabinet in the Narthex.
3. After the service the Team Captain is responsible for transferring each services' offerings into the safe in the teller room in the east hall. The safe key is located in the Teller Supply drawers in that room. The Offerings should be placed in an envelope located in the usher drawer in the cabinets behind the altar. Tellers should return these envelopes to the drawer to be used again.