



Usher Guidelines

This is the longer reference version for the 10 a.m. Service.
The quick version is on page 9

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Are the Usher Guidelines the same for the 8 a.m. Service?

Almost, but there are some differences so please check in with Mary Hastings (see cover) who coordinates at 8 a.m.

When should the ushers arrive?

- When 2 ushers are scheduled, the first should be in place 30 minutes prior and the second 15-20 minutes prior to the service or special occasion. If only one, stick with $\frac{1}{2}$ hour prior arrival.

How dressed up do ushers need to be?

- Look your best. Most important is the impression we project as our visitors enter the Cathedral. We are the front line. Optional blank clip-on name tags should be near the blue Lay Schedule folder on the left table in the Narthex.

What should the ushers do before the service begins?

- Be sure that the Narthex and entry area are lit. There are two switches on the wall to the left of the Narthex and just to the right of the main door.
- Be sure that our East Fayette St. doors are open, the ramp is in place and the parking signs are positioned if this hasn't been done.
- Offering plates (2) can be found in Sacristy cabinet. The food basket should always be on the bench in the Narthex.
- Take a moment and choose your future ushering preferences or changes using the form in the blue lay schedule folder on the left table in the Narthex. These assignments will appear in future leaflets.
- Note that a first aid kit 2 flashlights are in the storage manager in the Narthex.
- Note that a defibrillator is in a cabinet on the wall near the courtyard door and fire extinguishers are in several places.
- Note where our exits are located; there are 4.

What is the best way for ushers to greet incoming members of the congregation and visitors?

- SMILE, be positive and welcome those entering the Cathedral for the service or special occasion. If needed, hold or open any doors.
- Be sure everyone receives the leaflet and any related inserts.
- Offer assistance to a pew for those that need it.
- For those who may find it physically difficult to receive Communion at the altar, inquire/offer to have the sacraments brought to them. Make note of these parishioners and inform clergy ahead of the procession if you can. This can be quickly updated during the peace or when delivering the offering.
- Encourage all to attend hospitality after the service. You might even mention the host's name and snack description as a further incentive.
- Ask 2 incoming parishioners to carry the elements and 1 to carry the food basket in procession to the altar during the offertory hymn.
- Be sure visitors know the route to hospitality, the restrooms and baby changing station (in nearest bathroom).
- Be sure visitors reserve a quick moment to complete our new welcome form. These are located in each pew and on the left table in the Narthex.

What should ushers do while the service is in progress?

- Just before the procession, please be sure to check the kitchen door and pull it to a latched position.
- Be sure that the route is clear for the procession from the Sargent Foyer to the aisle access point. It's best to move the table with the elements out of the way and then return to its position after the procession.
- It is strongly recommended that at least 1 usher be present in the Narthex for the duration of the service or special occasion.
- Soon after the service begins, 1 usher should complete a walk through the Sargent Foyer, kitchen, Hansen Dining Room, Brewster Room, reception, Hadley Chapel, Sacristy and choir hallway. If any individuals are discovered and we haven't seen them before, they should be invited to worship or asked to leave. If they give you a hassle, call 911. The other usher does a preliminary count of all parishioners, choir, children and clergy.
- Please follow along with the service. You may be an usher today, but you can and should worship as well.
- Please be encouraged to share the peace with congregation and clergy. This offers another chance to review who wishes to receive communion at their pew and remind those you have asked to carry the elements and food

basket during the presentation hymn. Make a special effort to connect with visitors.

- Immediately following the Peace and during the Offertory anthem, ushers carry the plates and process forward to the first pew, bow turn toward their side of the Cathedral, gather offerings and return to the Narthex.
- At the conclusion of the Offertory anthem, those from the congregation you have recruited to carry the elements and food basket should be ready. Form a procession, led by the elements followed by ushers with offerings and food basket last. During some services, a vergier may appear and they should lead the procession.
- When clergy sends the signal (arms up, hands out), processes to the altar in order. Those carrying the elements bow after they present them, split and move left or right, making room for the ushers who present the offering, bow, split and move left or right making way for the person carrying food basket. Provide an update to clergy about those wishing to receive communion at their pew.
- When all have been presented, recruited members of the congregation return to their pews. Ushers return to the Narthex, unless see below *.

What should ushers do during Holy Communion?

- If communion is to be administered at the altar rail, ushers close and lock the gates, position the kneeling cushions and return to the Narthex.
- If communion is to be administered at both the main and peace altar or from the floor, ushers leave the gates open and return to the Narthex behind recruited congregation after the offering.
- After the Lord's Prayer and while clergy begins receiving their communion, both ushers move forward, face the altar and pause. When it appears that clergy communion is nearly finished, one usher releases the congregation in a manner which avoids traffic jams while the other either moves to the Sacristy or remains in front providing assistance to those that need it. Ushers receive communion after the congregation, usually with the choir. During some services, the choir may not receive communion. If ushers are not in place, we miss receiving communion.
- * Ushers open the gate and move the cushions, close the Sacristy door to the Cathedral and return to the Narthex unless.

What do ushers do as the service draws to a close?

- Be sure that the route is clear for the exiting procession and move away, making room for clergy who will greet members of the congregation.
- Do a quick preliminary check of the pews looking for any valuable personal items left behind. If items are found, make an attempt to return these or see that they are stored in the office.
- Enter the service counts on the Attendance Count Form which is in the table drawer in the Sargent Foyer.
- Clarify the route to hospitality and encourage those you encounter to enjoy this informal gathering.
- Assist those who need it exiting the Cathedral.

What needs to be done with the offering?

- The offering must be removed from the altar and delivered to the Sacristy, counted, recorded and placed in the safe. Both ushers must complete this process together. If there is only one usher, another individual must be recruited.
- Members of the Altar Guild will deliver the offering in the collection plates from the altar to the Sacristy. Once received, both ushers must count the bills by denomination and coins only. Currency and coin totals are recorded on the pledge form. Both ushers must sign the form placing all in a deposit bag which is also in the cabinet. Both ushers transfer the counted offering in the deposit bag and drop into the safe. The safe is located around the corner behind the door to the Cathedral. The emptied collection plates are returned to the cabinet.

What are the final steps that the ushers must complete?

- Check the pews once more, this time to straighten up hymnals, prayer books, collect visitor forms and remove any tissues, wrappers, etc. Visitor forms should be in the office mail box.
- After hospitality concludes, bring the ramp and parking signs inside and latch the main doors to East Fayette Street. There may be occasions where we leave these in place especially when a new event is setting up.

To what degree should ushers be involved with special occasions such as diocesan confirmations, baptisms, weddings, funerals, performances?

- Extra ushers are usually needed and these assignments should be made in advance.
- Our regular duties blend into most of the special occasions. Specific parts may create changes, omissions or additions. A meeting usually occurs in advance with those planning these occasions. Ushers are identified and any changes are addressed. If you become part of these, be sure to ask for any clarification you feel is needed ahead since this becomes awkward as the occasion unfolds.
- Most important is the impression visitors form while attending the occasion. Once again, ushers are the front line, and our efforts reflect our character, fellowship, outreach and worship.

What about usher assignments and last minute changes?

- Ieva Doyle creates an usher schedule for the 10:00 a.m. service once each quarter. Please advise her if there are any known dates when you will not be available.
- If you must make a change to your scheduled service, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Note the list of active ushers listing with telephone #'s and email.

How should the ushers handle unusual happenings during regular worship and special occasions?

- The most common happening is the appearance of individuals from the street asking for money. Ushers must stick to this rule; under no circumstance do ushers ever hand out money, and we mustn't allow them to approach the congregation. If we do, this sets the stage for others to do the same. Encourage a visit to the Samaritan Center. Remember 911 if needed.
- If anyone needs water, direct them to the water pitcher and plastic cups.
- Our first aid kit contains band aids, antibiotic ointment and Benadryl.
- If a person faints, provide assistance, returning them to a seated position with their head down between their knees. Call 911.
- If a person is experiencing a seizure, do not attempt to move them. Call 911.
- In the event of a possible heart attack, immediately call 911. There is a defibrillator in a cabinet on the wall near the courtyard access. This is only

to be used by trained people. If a physician is among the congregation, solicit their assistance.

- Should a small interior fire develop, immediately call 911. We have several fire extinguishers in the Cathedral. There are additional units in the choir hallway and in the Sacristy. If you are comfortable handling these, give it a try or solicit assistance.
- If the fire alarm sounds, all must immediately exit the Cathedral through the main doors out to East Fayette Street. Ushers should hasten this evacuation. Within minutes fire trucks will arrive. Ushers should complete a quick walk through the Cathedral and the first floor of all connecting buildings noting any smoke, fire or individuals. Open and prop the Montgomery Street door. One usher remains at this position while the other joins the group outside on East Fayette Street. Ushers should communicate any updates to clergy and arriving firefighters. Use cell phones to check in with the other usher and clergy when separated. Wait until the alarm ends and it is declared safe to re-enter.
- If there is a power failure, especially at night, work with clergy and provide assistance as needed. There is a flashlight on the rear bench in the Narthex, Cell phone lights and interior exit lamps can be a big help. Call National Grid, (315) 474-1511.
- It is very rare that ushers are asked to arrange ground transportation or connections to nearby locations. If needed, you can refer to the list of nearby locations on page 8. It is your choice how involved you wish to be. This extra touch of service could be considered valuable to a visitor and surely adds some class to our ministry.

Is there a quick version of these guidelines?

- Yes! There is a separate one page quick version. See page 8.

Usher Guidelines, 10 a.m. Service, Quick Version

- One usher arrives 30 minutes before and the other, 15 - 20 minutes ahead of the service or special occasion. Be sure there is a cell phone within reach.
- Be sure 2 collection plates reside on the bench in the Narthex. Collection plates are stored in the Sacristy cabinets.
- Greet parishioners warmly, hand them leaflets provide any assistance and inquire about those wishing to receive communion at their pew. Visitors will need directions to bathrooms and encourage hospitality.
- Ask 2 incoming parishioners to be chalice bearers.
- Just after procession, one usher completes a quick walk through our connected areas. If you encounter anyone you don't know, invite them to worship or ask them to leave. Remember 911. The other usher completes a count of parishioners, clergy, choir and children (preferably after the Gospel).
- Ushers should mix during the peace, verify communions at the pew and remind those recruited about the Offertory procession.
- During the Offertory anthem, Ushers process forward and gather the collection.
- As the Offertory hymn begins, a procession to the altar is led by the vergers (if assigned), chalice bearers, followed by the ushers. All deliver these items to clergy with a bow, communicate special needs to clergy, move left or right returning to the pews or the Narthex as a group.
- While clergy begin receiving the sacraments, ushers slowly process to the first pew and wait. One releases the congregation while the other assists either near the altar steps or in the Sacristy. Ushers receive communion before the choir returning to the Narthex.
- Immediately following the service, both ushers count and record the collection on an offering pledge form, place in a deposit bag and together drop this in the chute to the safe.
- Ushers complete a walk through the Cathedral noting any items left behind; arrange cushions, hymnals and prayer books.
- Write the final count for the service on the form in the Sargent Foyer.
- As hospitality concludes, bring the ramp and parking signs inside and latch the main doors. If you cannot do this, please arrange for another member of our parish to complete this important final step.

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