

THE MINISTRY OF USHERING

No matter how great the music or how helpful the sermon, what happens upon arrival and departure makes a lasting impression on the stranger who visits a church.

Two groups, ushers and greeters, have primary responsibility for helping persons feel welcomed, “at home,” and part of the congregation.

“Let people know they matter to God by showing them they matter to you.”

Ushers have four primary responsibilities:

1. Seating people
2. Distributing bulletins
3. Receiving the offering
4. Assisting at Communion

Some “Don’t’s”

1. Don’t be late—be at your post 30 minutes before the service begins
2. Don’t bunch up—“birds of a feather like to flock together” but your responsibility is to those arriving for the service
3. Don’t ask, “Where would you like to be seated?”—it may not be possible!
(Ushers generally know the seating habits of regular worshipers.)
Say, rather: “We have available seats near the front, on the side aisles, or in the balcony. Which would you like?”
4. Don’t interrupt the service—the ideal time for latecomers to be seated is during the singing of a hymn
5. Don’t distract others—ushers should sit together at the rear of the sanctuary, thus being better positioned in case of emergencies or other needs
6. Don’t be exclusive—make newcomers, women, youth, etc. a part of the ministry of ushering

Some “Do’s”

1. Do get training—it is good to have everyone on the same page
2. Do be helpful in giving directions—
when visitors ask directions to the nursery, restroom, etc., personally show them where to find it
3. Do keep the bulletin until the worshiper is seated—
once directed to a seat, hand the bulletin “right side up”
4. Do fill up the pews—give attention to filling the near front pews first
5. Do fill in the ranks—if you are unable to be at the service, secure a replacement
6. Do learn your part in receiving the offering--
 - a. the offering is an act of worship
 - b. walk in a manner that is orderly
 - c. the leading ushers need to stay together in the center when receiving and returning the offering plates; the ushers who follow them go, one to the right, one to the left

7. Do learn your part in ushering for communion--
 - a. be sure to "fill" the communion rail if communion is received kneeling, or when communion is by intinction, keep the "line" moving, without gaps, if possible
 - b. be sure to let the Pastor know if someone needs to be served in the pew
 - c. help people center attention on the Communion, not on the ushering
8. Do your part at other times--special services, funerals, weddings
9. Do be prepared for emergencies--
 - a. know the location of first aid supplies
 - b. be prepared to call for emergency personnel, if necessary
 - c. be prepared to evacuate the building, if necessary
10. Do pay attention to what's going on in the service--
 - a. once the service has started, pay attention to what's being said up front by the Lay Speaker or Pastor
 - b. stay focused on your ministry