

St. Philip's Episcopal Church

Customary for Ushers

The purpose of this customary is to establish a basic framework and guide for people who serve as ushers at services at our church. Duties assigned to ushers are intended to allow the service to run smoothly and with consistency from service to service.

Services in the Main Sanctuary

- ❖ Please arrive 30 minutes prior to the service.

- ❖ The “Head Usher” (as designated by an asterisk on the monthly schedule) should:
 - Check that bulletins are stacked in each Narthex for the appropriate service (in general 8:00 bulletins are beige in color, 10:30 are white)
 - Check bulletins to determine hymnal to be used (If LEVAS or WLP are called for assign ushers to pass them out with bulletins)
 - Verify that usher red name tags are worn; recruit additional usher if necessary from the congregation.
 - Assign duties to ushers.
 - Stand in the back of the Nave prior to the service to assist with seating.
 - Complete counter card for attendance and place with elements to be processed forward to the altar.
 - Receive communion last. Notify and escort priest to those receiving communion in their seats if necessary.
 - Open Narthex doors, and outside doors, weather permitting, during closing hymn.
 - Be at the Moore Street exit to greet parishioners as they leave and to encourage participation in the coffee hour in the Narthex.

- ❖ Usher Duties (to be assigned by head usher)
 - Direct any questions or concerns about your duties to the head usher.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

- 2 ushers at each Narthex entrance to **WARMLY GREET** parishioners as they enter.
- Pass out Bulletins (and supplemental hymnals if needed) as parishioners enter.

- Encourage visitors to sign the “Visitor Book” and to wear a “Visitor Nametag” and invite them to introduce themselves to the priest on their way out and/or to attend coffee hour to meet members.
- Open Nave doors for parishioners as they enter and close them to contain the noise in the Narthex from entering the Sanctuary.
- Assist parishioners with food donations by placing them in the food basket. (remove items from plastic or paper bags if possible)
- Assist parishioners (especially visitors) with finding a seat. If the Nave is crowded invite arrivals to sit upstairs in the balcony.
- Assist late-comers with feeling welcome and finding a seat.

OFFERTORY

- As soon as the announcements are finished, replace the center section of the altar rail and kneeler to prepare for the offertory and communion.
- 4 ushers process, 2x2, with the first pair carrying the elements and attendance card forward to the altar at the signal from the priest (wine on the left, bread on the right);
- Standing at the altar rail, four across, receive the collection plates from the EM and proceed down center and side aisles for offertory collection. Coordinate with side aisle usher to pass the plates to each row alternately.
- If present, a 5th usher should take the plate from the back of the Nave and collect the offering from the balcony.
- Gather offering in the back of the Nave and at the signal from the priest during the Doxology, 2 ushers, with one plate each, and 2 other ushers following with the food basket (if appropriate), process to the communion rail. Remain at the altar rail until the Doxology is complete.

○ COMMUNION

- At communion, 2 ushers (“Gatekeepers”) stand at the center front aisles in front of the first pews, to direct worshipers to the communion rail. At 10:30 service, choir and acolytes receive first, then balcony and left side worshipers that have lined up down the center aisle. **BE AWARE** – Watch for open spaces at the rail, try to keep couples together, keep it flowing.
- Once they have received the Sacrament, members should return to their seats via the side aisles.
- 2 ushers (“Herders”) Position yourselves on the left and right of center aisle following the balcony and far left side worshipers. Once the center aisle is cleared, begin releasing rows from the front to receive communion.
- Communion for services without acolytes or choir (usually 8:00 AM): Far left side worshipers may proceed directly up to left side communion rail. Proceed directly to front rows and release worshipers toward gatekeepers.

- Notify Head Usher if you notice someone wishing to receive communion but is unable to proceed to the altar and who may need communion brought to their seat.

❖ AT THE END OF THE SERVICE - for ALL ushers

- Greet worshipers as they leave the Nave and invite them to coffee hour for food and fellowship.
- Collect all leftover bulletins and place in trash.
- Replace books (Hymnal, BCP, BCP, Hymnal) in book racks.
- Be sure to check upstairs in the balcony area to pick up and straighten up as well.

Services in the Chapel of the Cross

- ❖ Services held in the Chapel of the Cross (usually 8:00) use Rite I. Most of the procedures described previously remain the same. The major difference is that there are only 2 ushers. These two people are responsible for the following:
 - Greet worshipers warmly outside of the Chapel. Invite them in and give them a bulletin.
 - The doors between the Chapel Narthex and Nave should remain closed whenever possible to maintain the quiet and temperature of the Chapel.
 - The elements and collection plates are located in the back of the Nave and should be processed to the altar by the ushers at the appropriate times during the service.
 - During the offertory collection, 1 ushers should pass the plate on each side.
 - At communion, 1 usher should be on either side of the center aisle to release rows to receive communion.

Please remember, each service is unique and alternations/accommodations may need to be made. Be flexible and be welcoming to all!!!!

Smile and remember : God Loves You! Pass it On! Invite them Back!!!!