



## **AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH**

2100 New Hampshire Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009

Updated September 28, 2011

### **Guidelines for Ushers**

#### **HISTORY**

In many denominations of the Christian Church, a **Church usher** is the first official representative seen when entering the church. The role of the usher in church is a volunteer position, and is often considered one of honor.

The concept of an usher is not new. In the Old Testament, there were positions addressed as "Doorkeepers" or "Gatekeepers" and their roles were very similar. <sup>(2 Kings 22:4) (1 Chronicles 9:17-27)</sup>  
(Psalms 84:10)

- Jesus' disciples can be considered ushers, in the sense that they:
  - Prepared the way for Jesus.
  - Kept order among those listening to Christ.
  - Served food to the audience.
  - Cleaned up after a service, such as the Feeding of Five Thousand.

In modern times, the church usher has many duties. Ushers may perform all, some, or a few of the following.

- Greet people entering the service
- Seat attendees (though it is common for attendees to seat themselves)
- Collect the tithes and offering
- Keep order at the entrance
- Clean and prepare the Church
- Count people in service
- Distribute and collect surveys (such as visitor pamphlets)
- Distribute bulletins and service programs

Ushers are required to be punctual and time conscious as they are required to be in the church far earlier than the rest of the congregation.

The following are procedures that are used to make ushering at Augustana as uniform as possible. The activities to fulfill the many tasks of an usher are as follows:

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **Before the Service**

Come Early (10:00 am is the expected time of arrival for ushers for the regular service and at least 30 minutes before all other services)

Check the Red Door to New Hampshire Avenue at 10:30 am to make sure that it is closed and locked

Put out the visitor/attendance books

Put out the name tags box and the appropriate children's work pages

Review the bulletin to make sure that you know what is going to happen and when

Speak with the Pastor to point out if there are any concerns or seek answer to questions

Ask if communion is at the crossing or rail

Turn side lights "on"

### **During Service**

Greet all worshipers with a smile

Remain at the door or in the back pews at all times

Handout bulletins and game sheets to children

Check volume level of sound to assure comfort (The control is above the door to the sound room.)

Assist congregants in finding seats if Nave is crowded

Point out to "late comers" as to where we are in the service

Count the number of worshipers, including the nursery

Notes:

1. Keep worshipers in the Narthex until the procession is halfway down the aisle and ask them to use the side aisles for seating.
2. No one is seated during the reading of the lessons and Gospel. Congregants may be seated during the psalm and after the procession has returned.
3. Congregants may be seated during the sermon but are encouraged to use the side aisles.

### **During Peace/Offering**

Four people are needed for collecting the offering

Two people go down the middle and two on the sides (one on either side)

The ushers hold on to the plates at all times and will do one half of each pew

Remember that there are people in the balcony as well

### **After collecting the offering**

The ushers should line up with two in front and two in the back

The two in front should carry the bread (right side) and wine (left side)

The two in back should carry the plates

On the last Sunday of the month a basket of food will be carried forward as well. You will need to recruit someone to carry the basket.

The procession begins at the introduction of the offertory hymn

The team stays together, moves to the first step of the chancel area and remains there until after the elements are presented. The group bows and then leaves ...two on each side

### **During Communion**

If communion is at the crossing

Check and see if anyone needs assistance

Make pastor aware if a person wants to receive communion in his/her seat

If communion is at the rail

Two ushers move to the front of the aisle

After choir is done with communion, the congregation goes to the rail

An average of 17-18 congregants can fit at the rail (eight (8) on the organ side; Nine (9) on the lectern side. Ushers should send congregants to the left on the pulpit side (8) and to the middle on the lectern side.

Please be mindful of those who need help going up and down the steps

Make pastor aware if a person wants to receive communion in his/her seat

### **After Church**

An usher should go down and open the New Hampshire door

Be sure that all hymnals are back in place and are facing the same way

Remove bulletins and trash from pews

“Lost and found” items should be turned into the church office

Remove attendance forms from books

Return attendance books to closet

Complete office form, sign and return it, attendance forms and extra bulletins to office