

Usher Policy/Training Guide

Drafted 10 July, 2010

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

Usher Policy/Training Guide

I. PURPOSE

The ushers serve the congregation of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church so that the service can flow in decency and order, thus enhancing the worship of individuals attending and the hearing of God's word.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. To be an usher at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, one should:

1. Be active and faithful in his/her attendance.
2. Be active in Bible study and Christian Education classes.
3. Maintain an overall lifestyle, character, and reputation that are above reproach.

B. The Elders will work closely with the ushers in providing oversight, instruction, and supervision.

C. Ushers are to conduct themselves with the attitude of a Servant.

1. Exercise a spirit of teamwork and cooperation.
2. Avoid the temptation of developing an authority complex of seeking the spotlight, and of doing things to draw attention to one self.

D. Ushers are to be very warm, friendly and hospitable in:

1. Opening doors.
2. Greeting the people.
3. Helping them find seats.
4. Answering basic questions that people might have.

E. Smile.

F. Treat members and visitors like Royalty.

G. Good hygiene, proper dress and common courtesy should be observed in representing Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church as an usher.

H. Every usher should know his/her specific responsibilities and duties, pre-service duties, offering, welcoming visitors, and post-service duties, etc. Ushers should become knowledgeable about as many areas and functions of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church as possible. Some of the things which an usher should familiarize themselves with are:

- 1) The schedule of services.
- 2) The location of restrooms, water fountains, phone, etc.
- 3) The location of the nursery.
- 4) The location of all adult and children's class rooms.
- 5) The location of fire extinguishers and the first aid kit.
- 6) Current announcements and events happening at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church.

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- I. It is necessary for ushers to be punctual in arriving at the church and be in place at least 15 minutes before start of the service. Also, you should remain at church until you are dismissed. (Times will vary for special events/services.)
 - J. In the event that an usher will not be able to attend one of his/her assigned services, it is his/her responsibility to **arrange their own replacement**.
 - K. Commitment
 - 1. Attendance and commitment by all ushers are essential. Individual commitment directly impacts the effectiveness of our services.
 - 2. Becoming an usher is a calling and is not to be taken lightly.
 - 3. Ushers are a vital part of the overall operation of church services and events. The congregation relies on ushers to provide essential tasks and services with excellence.
 - 4. Put your usher responsibilities first, as unto the Lord. Execute your duties with a glad heart. It is a high honor to serve others.
 - 5. Be ready and willing to take any assignment given and perform it with excellence. Don't allow personal offenses to steal your joy.
- III. **USHER ATTIRE**
- A. Ushers should, at all times, present themselves with excellence in appearance, demeanor, and in a manner that honors the position.
 - 1. Suggested attire would be coat and tie for men and dress for ladies, although it also includes business casual attire such as "docker-style" pants, dress shirt or polo golf-type shirt for men and pants suit for ladies. Do your best (jeans are acceptable if nice).
 - 2. Other than on special occasions and outdoor events, ushers should not make it a practice to wear blue jeans, T-shirts, sandals or athletic shoes.
- IV. **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**
- Prior to Service**
- A. Changes may be necessary depending upon special events or conditions. Always follow your directions.
 - 1. Arrive at least 15 minutes before the service.
 - 2. Remain in your area to greet people and assist them in any way possible.
 - 3. Greet people with a sincere smile and a warm handshake.
 - 4. Ushers should be aware that they can set a spiritual attitude in the church sanctuary prior to the beginning of the service by their attitude.
 - 5. Spot-check the sanctuary and fellowship areas.
 - 6. Make sure that old bulletins and other litter have been discarded and that the areas are clean and neat.
 - 7. Straighten the rows of chairs in the sanctuary.
 - 8. Be confident in everything you do.
 - B. Do not congregate with other ushers and talk. You are there to be of service to those attending worship.

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1. Work together.
2. Visually scan the sanctuary area for any potential problems.
- C. Make sure every attendance book has a usable pencil or pen and at least 5 blank sheets.
- D. Assist the Acolyte with matches or lighters. As soon as the acolyte is ready, light the acolyte's candle lighter.
- E. Tactfully remind individuals that noise and loud talking prohibits some people from quietly prepare for worship.
- F. Handicapped persons should be directed and assisted to their seating.
- G. Beverages are not allowed in the sanctuary during all services.
- H. Tactfully ask all gentlemen to remove their hats upon entering the building.
- I. Be willing to correct, move and address kids or adults acting in an inappropriate manner.
- J. Seating in the Sanctuary.
 1. Be aware of available seats in the sanctuary in anticipation of filling them. If availability is questionable, it is advisable to ask someone on that row whether the seats in question are taken or available.
 2. Try to escort people to their seats rather than just pointing .
 3. Attempt to fill the unoccupied seats near the front early, saving the back seats for latecomers.
 4. If possible, ask latecomers to sit near the rear to minimize disturbing others.
 5. Visitors should be seated near members so that they will feel more comfortable. Avoid seating visitors on the front rows if possible. Also, please do not seat parties with children on the first couple of rows of the sanctuary. This will assist in your control of those leaving the sanctuary and not being able to return to their seats once service has begun.
- Q. No printed material of any type is to be distributed on the premises of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church without prior approval from the church council. This includes pamphlets left on vehicles, as well as company or multi-level marketing-type business cards.
- R. When receiving offerings, make sure you know your responsibility ahead of time. Ask if you are not sure.

During Service

- S. All ushers are to keep their eyes open at all times during the service.
 1. Ushers are worshipers and should participate fully and actively in the celebration of the liturgy.
 2. Be reverent.
 3. Stay alert

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4. Be watchful of the sanctuary in case someone requests assistance or desires to give you directions.
5. Seat people during portions of the liturgy that will cause the least commotion. Refrain from seating people during times of **silence, prayer, confession, or gospel readings.**
6. Take the worship attendance during the service. Count everyone, including those in the nursery, and in other parts of the facility.
7. Continuously monitor the temperature inside the sanctuary. Watch the congregation for temperature clues. If people are fanning themselves or putting on coats, the temperature needs adjusting.

Offering

1. Two ushers should use the center aisle, walk to the front and receive the offering plates from the pastor.
2. Immediately begin collecting the offering.
3. Begin passing the plates in the first row. The person at the end of the row will pass it to the row behind them.
4. The ushers proceed up the center aisle, going from row to row, front to back.
5. After all the gifts have been gathered, the ushers form at the rear of the center aisle. When the pastor is ready, one usher takes the offering plates forward.
6. At the altar, the offering plates are handed to the pastor.
7. All ushers return to the back of the sanctuary.

Communion Distribution

1. After the Words of Institution the ushers should move to their positions.
2. People performing duties during the service should commune during the first table.

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3. People seated in the main seating section beginning at the front should follow.
4. The usher should indicate the appropriate time for the next group of 8 to 10 communicants to prepare to approach the altar.
5. The communicants will approach the altar by the center aisle and return to their seats by the side aisles.

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Usher Checklist

Before the Service

- 1) Set the thermostats in the fellowship and sanctuary.
- 2) Check the sanctuary for trash and old bulletins.
- 3) Make sure the rows of chairs are straight.
- 4) Ask about any special instruction.
- 5) Ensure attendance books are ready.
- 6) Ensure bulletins and inserts are ready.
- 7) Bulletins should be handed to each worshiper.
- 8) Welcome everyone as you pass out the bulletins.
- 9) Assist the acolyte.

During the Service

1. Seat latecomers – Only during portions of the liturgy that will cause the least commotion.
2. Take attendance and include on form.
3. Continuously monitor the temperature.
4. Gather the offering.
5. Assist with communion.

Following the Service

1. Pick up the offering and put it in a bank bag. Place bank bag in the safe.
2. Straighten chairs and pick up around the sanctuary.
3. Return all attendance booklets.