

ST. FRANCIS LUTHERAN CHURCH
WORSHIP PARTICIPANT FUNCTIONS

Ushers/Greeter

Introduction

When you usher at St. Francis Church, you are the first person a visitor meets when coming in the door. Your greeting of friendship and spirit of helpfulness conveys that very important first impression. Members and friends of St. Francis Church also look forward to your welcome. Whatever you can do to make people feel welcome will support their receptivity to the service of worship. Think of your role as that of a host or hostess welcoming a guest into your home.

Time to Arrive: Be here at least thirty minutes before the service begins. As you read through the duties that follow, I think that you'll see the wisdom in arriving at that time.

Checklist Upon Arrival

- Be certain that the piano is at the rear of the church, unless informed otherwise. If you are uncertain, check with the presiding minister.
- The worship folders should be on the table in the narthex ready to distribute. If they are not there, check in the St. Clare Room and then the church office.
- Make certain that the offering plates are available.
- Check to see that the gifts (the bread and wine) are on the table just inside the nave. If not, check with the sacristan.
- The food basket should be placed on the aisle side of the table with the gifts so people can deposit their food offerings as they enter.
- Make certain that sermons, prayer books, and other literature are available on the table in the narthex.
- Ensure that parking permits for the Safeway lot are available.
- Make certain that the elevator is unlocked and working, and that the light inside is on.
- The following lights should be on and up full: a) the light above the baptismal font, b) the chancel lights, c) the lights at the Jesus statue, and d) the lights in the Nave.
- In the event of hot weather, open the windows on the south side, if needed.
- In the event of cold weather, turn the thermostat up to 68° - 70°. Be certain that all floor vents are open.
- Open the doors between the nave and the narthex.
- Open the doors and gates to the street, and lock them in place.
- Check with the presiding minister if there is anything special or unusual in the liturgy for the day. Make certain that you understand any changes.

Fifteen Minutes Before the Service

- One usher stands in the lower vestibule, greeting people as they arrive, and directing them up to the sanctuary.
- The other usher stands in the Narthex, greeting people and handing out the service folders. Visitors should be especially welcomed. Explain that the complete service is in the folder. Offer parking passes if needed.
- Inform parents of Sunday school and point them downstairs. If children stay in the sanctuary, give a children's basket to each child and ask the parent to return the basket at the end of service.

- If any people are already seated, make certain that they already have a service folder.
- Assist handicapped people from elevator and to their seats. If in wheelchair, ensure that they are placed where they do not block aisles.
- Request one person each to bring up the bread, wine and food basket following the offertory before the service starts.

Once the Liturgy Begins

- Once the procession has entered the church, close the doors between the narthex and nave.
- Ushers are to be seated in the nave on either side of the doors. Once seated, however, keep an eye on the narthex; as people yet may be arriving.
- Hold latecomers in the narthex until after the prayer of the day has been concluded. Show them to seats after the procession heads toward the front of the sanctuary.
- The balcony is closed to all but the director of music, members of the choir, and any other musicians.

At the Offertory

- The offering is usually received following the announcements (or stories to tell). Begin by going up the central aisle and then walking to the rear of the church, passing the plates to those sitting on the central aisle. Repeat the process for the side aisles.
- Ushers, unless summoned by the presiding minister, start the offertory procession once the congregation has begun to sing the offertory hymn. The ushers with the offering plates lead the procession, with the others following.
- When the procession arrives at the altar, the ushers hand the offering plates to the crucifer, and then step aside, still facing the altar.
- The oblation bearers (those with the bread and wine) then hand the flagon and paten to the assisting minister. They then step aside, still facing the altar.
- The basket bearer then hands the basket of food to the crucifer. Then all return to the back of the church or to their seats.

At the Communion

- During the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), the ushers should go up the center aisle to stand facing each other in front of the first pew. People should be directed to come forward, forming a single file on the right and left sides of the central aisle.
- After the ministers of the liturgy have completed their communion, direct the people to the altar rail, beginning on the right side. One usher stands on each side of the center aisle directing people to the chancel. The chancel can usually accommodate only 14 people per session. Ensure that people are not crowded around the chancel during communion and try to avoid lengthy gaps between tables.
- Once people have been communed, they will return to their seats. You should be prepared to direct those who have finished out of the chancel, and those coming to commune to their place at the altar.
- Inform the assisting minister of any persons who requires communion at their pew.
- Once all have proceeded to the altar, then the ushers approach the altar as well.

At the Recession

- At the singing of the recession hymn, open the doors to the narthex so that the procession can leave the church.
- One usher collects service folders at the small table although people are encouraged to take them home.

After All Have Left the Sanctuary

- Turn off all lights in the nave and chancel. Be certain that all switches are all the way down and off. Extinguish any candles on the prayer screen in the back of the sanctuary.
- Return all service folders to the church office.
- Lock the elevator door, and turn off the interior light.
- Turn off the stair lights, balcony lights, and narthex light.
- Lock the door between the narthex and nave from the inside.

© Revised January 2008 Saint Francis Lutheran Church