

Ushers

The usher's opportunity

- Your sincere greeting and careful attention to tasks make visitors and members feel comfortably at home at Immanuel.
- Please dress appropriately for the occasion and the season as a way to show respect to God and those you greet. You should identify yourself as an usher by wearing a colored jacket pocket insert (to match the color of the altar hanging) or a pendant cross.
- When remodeling is complete, the above items will be found in the Vestry (now the Ministry Coordinator's office), as will the other items needed in your job as usher. Until that time, look for the things you need in the church office and/or hall cloakroom.

Before the service

- Please arrive 30 minutes before worship.
- Turn on all lights at least 20 minutes before worship begins. On Sunday mornings, use button #1 on the switch at the rear of the sanctuary near the south door. For other services, check with the Pastor. During Advent, light any candles placed on window stands.
- Check the pews for neatness and hymnal, envelope and pencil order. Refill these items if you have time to do so. There may have been an event such as a wedding or recital the evening before.
- Be sure the offering plates are in the narthex and balcony.
- Bulletins can be found in the Church office. Please check to make sure you take bulletins for the correct service time, as the two services differ. For the 10:30 service usher captains put a supply of bulletins on the window ledge in the Narthex and on the stand halfway up the stairway to the balcony.
- Read the order of service to note departure from usual practices. Obtain any special instructions from the Pastor. You can determine whether 10:30 Communion is at the rail or Pilgrim style by checking the bulletin or asking the Pastor.
- Sanctuary doors remain closed to cut down on noise from the Narthex and allow those already in the sanctuary to prepare for worship.
- Ushers greet worshipers at each door in the Narthex with a bulletin and a friendly, quiet greeting. Offer a children's bulletin as appropriate if one is available.
- Be familiar with the location and function of the Hearing Assist system. Check the unit to make sure it is working before giving it out. Remind users they need only turn on/off and adjust volume.
- Seat latecomers during the opening hymn rather than during the confession.

During the service

- Verify that the church office is locked.
- At the 10:30 service, lock the Bell Street door at 10:45 (the North Bell Street doors remain locked) with the key found in the Vestry. Also lock the doors to the rear parking lot by the elevator and to the playground on the east.
- Be alert for any disturbances or unusual occurrences.
- During the first or second reading, two ushers in the outside aisles unobtrusively count those present,

including worship leaders, choir, balcony and nurseries. Adults and children are counted separately. Attendance record cards are in the Vestry (cloakroom, prior to renovation). Leave complete cards on office secretary's desk.

- Make needed temperature adjustments. Gently open or close the stained glass windows. Make sure the two switches on the bottom of the thermostat are set to "Auto".
- Render assistance to worshipers who are ill or have other special needs. Get to know the medical personnel in the congregation to call on in an emergency: Paula Simonich, Mark Meyer, Daniel Dickerson, Joan Anderson, Carmen Norris, Stacia Peters, Dorothy Carlson and Cece Atherton. The Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) hangs in the elevator entrance to the Narthex.
- Do the best you can to join in worship despite tasks and distractions. You may sit in the narthex or in one of the back pews.
- Remove Worship Attendance cards from unused bulletins for re-use.

Offering

- At 8:15, come forward to collect the offering when the organist plays the first note of the Sermon hymn. Bring the offering forward after the Passing of the Peace as soon as the ministers approach the Table.
- At 10:30, ushers collect in the nave and the balcony during the offertory music. If no one is available to take the bread and wine forward, two ushers should do so and then return to the narthex. When the congregation rises for the Offering Song, two ushers carry the offering plates down the center aisle, following those carrying the bread and wine. These ushers hand the plates to the assisting minister. When Communion is at the rail, install the rail insert (remove at end of communion) and remain forward for communion.

Holy Communion

- *Special Needs Communion:* Watch for individuals sitting in the designated wheelchair spaces and for others who might need to commune in their seats. If necessary, point the Pastor or Assisting Minister to these individuals. Be aware that they should receive communion first and keep the aisles clear so that the Pastor can have access. During regular communion, ushers may need to assist persons in wheelchairs to release the handbrake and move the chair to allow others access to the center aisle.
- *For 8:15 Communion,* one usher releases worshipers from the aisle and the other directs them to the rail. Because there is only one group of servers at this service, they offer Communion starting at the organ end of the rail and ending at the pulpit. Direct those sitting on the organ side of the church to begin filling the rail at the organ; those sitting on the pulpit side fill the rail, starting at the center and filling in to the pulpit. Individuals may also stand in the opening at the rail. Communion at the railing is always continuous communion, meaning that when one person leaves the railing another takes their place.
- *For 10:30 Pilgrim Communion,* only two ushers are needed. These ushers release worshipers from pews on each side as the line permits. Direct those seated in the balcony to the pulpit side so that the choir can commune at the same time on the organ side.
- *For 10:30 Communion at the railing,* one team of servers communes the choir while the other offers special needs Communion in the pews. Because there are two teams serving Communion at this service, each half of the rail is served separately. The usher Captain stands at the center of the aisle and directs those communing to fill the rail from the center out. Remaining ushers release worshipers from the pews.

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After the service

- Open the doors and greet people as they exit.
- Check pews, pick up loose papers and return hymnals to racks. Remember the balcony.
- Remove unused attendance cards (return them to the Vestry) from left-over bulletins and put the bulletins in the recycle container.
- Leave pocket badges and/or pendants in the Vestry.

Safety concerns

- Watch for strangers in the building who do not come for worship and also for any out-of-the-ordinary situations that may develop during worship.
- Be prepared to take the initiative in the event that an individual's disruptive behavior disturbs worship in some significant fashion. While this may imply a difficult judgment call, the congregation depends on ushers to take appropriate action if a serious problem arises. Ushers are responsible to call on other members and/or to call 911 as needed to ensure that the congregation is as safe as possible and that worship can continue.

Assistance for those in need

- Individuals occasionally come in on Sunday morning requesting money or with other special requests. Inform these individuals that they may speak with the Pastor after the service when the receiving line is finished. Welcome them to join in worship and be courteous and respectful. They are not to ask individual members for handouts and should be repeatedly referred to the Pastor, if necessary.
- It is not unusual for individuals to come with auto or other financial emergencies that coincide with the worship hour. If people have exceptional requests, suggest that these are best handled when the church office opens on Monday at 9:00 am. Do not hand out money, as this does not answer deeper problems and tends to encourage repeat visits for this purpose.
- Ushers should be aware that for those in genuine need, the church does provide vouchers for assistance. These will be offered by the Pastor or other staff.
- David Allen can be helpful in assisting with these situations.

Arranging for a replacement

- If you are unable to usher when scheduled, please find a replacement by consulting the substitute list. Let your Captain or Terry Kueker (913)-522-8305 know who is filling in for you or if you have been unable to find a replacement.