

New Goshenhoppen

United Church of Christ

Guidelines for Church Leaders, Greeters, & Ushers



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NGUCC - Guidelines for Church Leaders, Greeters, & Ushers

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What is Expected of Our Church Leaders

In a congregationally governed church, lay leadership shapes the direction and quality of communal church life. The congregation selects its own members to serve in leadership capacities. Members “take turns” in serving the whole church in specific ways. The following are minimal expectations of what good church leaders do.

Congregational Attendance

A good church leader must be present with the congregation when it gathers. Church leaders should be present at Sunday morning worship, regularly called and special congregational meetings, and church fellowship events. Presence is one of the requirements of church leaders. You cannot be part of a community, much less a leader, when you are absent.

Financial Support

The congregation depends on the generosity of its members for its structural support and covenant fulfillments. We teach proportional giving or tithing which is a fixed percentage of your income, donated exclusively to the church. In proportionate formula, the church prospers when you do; it receives less when you receive less. Your personal stewardship is essential to the welfare of the church you lead.

Responsible Performance

This is a volunteer organization. The volunteer leaders set the tone of the organization. Church leaders are expected to know what their duties are, to think about them with compassionate imaginations, to attend scheduled meetings, and to inform others when you can not be present.

Personal Growth

One of the privileges of serving the church is your own opportunity to grow as a Christian. You will come to see the larger dimensions and full scope of your church. You will come to understand why we do what we do and what the needs of the church are. You are encouraged to ask questions about that which you do not understand.

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What Church Leaders Expect from their Church

Serving your church is not without its personal rewards. Those who have been chosen for leadership in a church have the right to expect some satisfactions from their efforts.

Importance

You have the right to expect that what you do is important. When you consider the important mission of your church you realize that the church is not like any other organization of which you are a part. The church's mission is complex and comprehensive, touching many lives in many different ways. Your contribution is essential to the total performance of the church. You never waste your time when you see the large scope of what we are trying to accomplish.

Fellowship

Church leadership is always collective, never solo. You will be part of a group that works together. Take the time and make it a purpose to come to know the others with whom you serve. You will do that best when you open your own self to the group. You will make friends with persons of differing ages, or understandings, or hopes. These can be resources for your own growth. Further, the people you meet in service are people you will know when the church gathers in other contexts.

Skill Development

Many musicians credit the church with where they first learned to perform in public. Similarly, many organizations benefit from people who learned how to accomplish things through church leadership. Often, employees of 'for-profit' organizations need to learn how 'not-for-profit' organizations function. Procedures are different when the bottom line is not financial gain but compassionate services.

Frustration

It is not uncommon for church leaders to feel frustrated. Often, the source is complexity. The task was more difficult than you assumed it would be. Leaders learn from their frustrations. Be patient. Take the time to analyze why what you thought would be simple is complicated. Undoubtedly, you will learn an important lesson: not everyone sees things the same way.

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Committees

Our church has several committees where committed volunteers meet to do the work of the church. Elders serve on the Church and Ministry committee. Trustees serve on the Buildings & Grounds committees. Elders, Deacons, and Trustees serve on Resources, Church Life, & Spiritual Growth committees. These committees serve the congregation, the Consistory, and the community.

| Board/Committee | Purpose | Frequency |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| Consistory | Governing Body | Monthly |
| Church & Ministry (Elders) | Membership/worship | Monthly |
| Deacons | Mission & outreach | Monthly |
| Nursery School | Administration | As needed |
| Personnel | Administration | Monthly |
| Altar Guild | Worship | Quarterly |
| Music | Worship/Choirs | Monthly |
| Christian Education | Education for all ages/youth groups | Monthly |
| Outdoor Ministries | Education/Camps | As needed |
| Friendship | Outreach/hospitality | Monthly |
| Health & Welfare | Community Service | Monthly |
| Mission Outreach | Community Service & Outreach | As needed |
| Visiting Ministries | Service the Elderly | Quarterly |
| Grief Support | Guidance/Healing | Monthly |
| Wits End | Outreach & Healing | Monthly |
| Property | Maintenance/Grounds | Monthly |
| Cemetery | Maintenance & Administration | Quarterly |
| Park | Maintenance/Utilization | Quarterly |
| Land Use | Environmental/Conservation | Monthly |
| Finance | Financial | Monthly |
| Planned Giving | Estate Planning/Oversee Investments | 6x a year |
| Stewardship | Stewardship/Education | Monthly |
| Garden Tour Committee | Fundraiser & Fellowship | As needed |
| Historical | Heritage/Education | Quarterly |
| Scholarship | Outreach Support for Higher Education | As needed |
| Women's Fellowship | Service/Fellowship | Monthly |

Figure 1; Committees

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Greeting & Ushering

Introduction

A greeter or usher is usually the first person the worshipers meet when they come upstairs to enter the Sanctuary and have a vital part in the worship service. Pastors lead the flock, but greeters & ushers direct the congregation. **You** set the mood and spirit for those who have come to worship. If you recognize a worshiper, smile and nod, shake their hand. A friendly smile or a cordial greeting will invite people to return to our church. After the service, greeters & ushers are encouraged to attend the coffee hour in the Library where they can reach out to persons they don't know.

Greeters & ushers should always move in an easy and unhurried manner, speaking softly and respectfully to foster an atmosphere of worship. Ushers should always lead the worshiper; never follow, when directing them to a particular pew. Once at the pew, the usher should wait there until the worshipers are seated. Whenever possible, usher worshipers to pews at the front of the Sanctuary. It is easier to seat latecomers in the back. When giving directions, ushers always "suggest" a direction to the worshiper, they never "tell" and never argue or become irritated with the worshiper.

Greeters and ushers should arrive at church at least 30 minutes before the service begins to greet worshipers and hand out bulletins. Your promptness is important to minimize confusion and allows others to attend to their appropriate duties.

General Ushering/Greeting Guidelines

Before the Service

Greeter & usher names are listed in the bulletin in their assigned order (first name listed under ushers is Usher 1, second name listed is Usher 2, etc.). When switching assigned Sunday or order, contact the Church office by the Wednesday before the service so names can be listed correctly.

Usher badges are kept in the Literature table drawer and are worn to identify those on duty. The badge color corresponds to the color of the chancel paraments.

Throughout the year after the Early service, ushers need to open the balcony windows when air-conditioning is not being used – especially when the service was well attended. The windows should be opened for 5 to 10 minutes to allow fresh air to circulate in the Sanctuary. Fresh air and good ventilation are important. Ushers should be mindful of changing ventilation requirements during the service and respond accordingly. The Memorial Parlor door leading to the Library should be opened whenever ventilation is required.

Recording of the church service is not an ushering responsibility; however, all ushers should be familiar with the operation of the recording equipment, microphones, and speaker system. When in doubt, check with the Sexton.

Ushers 3 and 4 operate the chair lift using the buttons located at the top and bottom of the stairs.

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Greeters and ushers should inform parents bringing small children to the Late service of the nursery. This is especially important for new members or guests who are not familiar with our church. The nursery is located on the lower level near the breezeway and is for infants through pre-school.

The center aisle pews in the Sanctuary can comfortably seat 6 adults. The side aisle pews can comfortably seat 4 adults (except for the pew near the radiator which can only seat 3). The balcony pews can seat 10 adults. If pew overcrowding is observed, ushers should suggest one or two worshipers move to a specified pew, and usher them accordingly.

All greeters and ushers should be mindful of the special concerns of persons with disabilities. Refer to Assisting Persons with Disabilities for detailed information.

In case of an emergency, the ambulance telephone number is posted near the telephone downstairs in the Social Room.

It is important that all ushers periodically scan the Sanctuary for ill worshipers, emergencies, etc. Refer to Emergency Guidelines for detailed information.

Lead Usher

Usher 1 is lead usher for the day and directs the activities of the other ushers.

Usher 1 should be aware of any requirements for reserved seating and for whom seats are reserved (Baptism, New Members, Confirmation Class, etc.). This information should be passed to the other ushers on duty along with any special instructions. When in doubt, check with the ministers.

Usher 1 should place extra bulletins on the Literature Table in case a worshiper does not receive one downstairs.

Service Guidelines

Before the Service

Greeter 1 greets on the 1st floor of the elevator entrance and assists people getting into the elevator as appropriate.

During the early service Usher 1 ensures that special floral arrangements are placed according to listing in the bulletin. Any question regarding flower arrangements should be referred to the Sexton. Normally, an identification card will be with each flower arrangement.

Usher 1 should verify that the correct number of plates are up front. There should be 4 plates when the balconies are closed (typical service) and 6 if the balconies are being used (special service).

Usher 1 should check for proper ventilation, complete an attendance card, and place 5 to 10 bulletins on the Literature Table. Place a fresh glass of water on the shelf of the pulpit. Usher 1 should place "Closed" signs at the foot of the balcony stairs to indicate that the balconies are closed (unless a special service is being held where extra seating is needed – Easter, Christmas). Usher 1 helps to seat persons entering from the back of the church.

Usher 2 will oversee the church sanctuary entrance coming from the elevator. Before the service, make sure the 2nd floor door to the sanctuary is propped open. Help seat persons entering from the 2nd floor of the connector building. Usher 2 serves as greeter on the 2nd floor and distributes bulletins to those entering directly from the Christian Ed building. Usher 2 also assists individuals coming off the elevator as needed.

Usher 3 operates the chair lift from the bottom of the stairs in conjunction with usher 4 who is upstairs. Usher 3 will also greet whenever a greeter is not present (when usher 5 returns to the parlor).

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Usher 5 will place a small offering plate and some bulletins in the Memorial Parlor. Usher 5 will serve as greeter at the main staircases to the church until shortly before the service begins (when announcements are being read). Usher 5 will then go to the parlor to assist worshipers as needed.

If an usher 6 is on duty (during 2nd service or at special services), they should be upstairs to oversee the seating of and assistance to worshipers.

During the Service

Usher 1 sits at the Literature Table, oversees the Sanctuary, and controls any loud talking or noises, which may disrupt the service. During the late service, shortly after the service begins usher 1 proceeds to the Infant and Preschool Nurseries to collect offering and count attendance. Upon returning, usher 1 counts the members of all Choirs participating in the service.

Usher 2 makes sure the 2nd floor doors connecting to the Christian Ed building are closed to minimize noise. The door to the sanctuary leading to the elevator should remain open. Usher 2 sits at the front of the church, adjacent to the elevator entrance and assists people using this entrance as needed.

Usher 5 operates the TV and camera control panel in the Memorial Parlor (see Camera Control Panel section). After collecting offering in the parlor, usher 5 proceeds upstairs to oversee the Narthex during the Offertory. Usher 5 then returns to the Parlor when the ushers return from the Chancel.

See Offertory Responsibilities section for Offertory duties.

After the Service

Ushers 1 and 2 will go to the Chancel and empty the offering plates into the offering suitcase. In preparation for the late service they will then:

- Wipe the brass offering plates.
- Add/remove hymn numbers to/from the hymn board.
- After early service:
 - Place reserved pew signs where required for late service.
 - Check ventilation. Throughout the year, when air conditioning is not being used, the balcony windows should be opened for 5 to 10 minutes to allow fresh air to circulate in the Sanctuary. During hot weather when air-conditioning is not being used, check that all appropriate windows are opened.
- Ensure Offertory signal light is off.
- Take suitcase (found under table in Narthex) with collection offering to office and place in closet.

Ushers 3 and 4 should operate the chair lift. The usher at the top of the stairway will assist with handout distribution as required.

Usher 5 should remain in the Memorial Parlor to assist worshipers as they are leaving.

If handouts are being distributed, usher 6 will be posted at the top of the left hand stairway.

When all duties are completed, the ushers should attend the coffee hour in the Social Room.

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Offertory Responsibilities

Ushers should proceed to the Chancel to receive Offertory plates when the preaching pastor has sat down after the sermon.

Ushers will count the worshipers they collect from in their assigned area (plus themselves) and report total to Usher 1 before offering is brought to the Chancel.

Yellow Visitor cards are given to Usher 1 to be handed to the pastor separate from the offering.

Usher 1 gives yellow Visitor cards to the preaching pastor following the Lord's Prayer after the offering is received. This will give the pastor additional time to review the names before greeting visitors after the service.

Ushers collect offering from the front of the Sanctuary and work to the back. Usher offertory responsibilities are as follows (also shown in Figures 2 and 3):

| Usher | Responsibility |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Collects offering on left side of Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. |
| 2 | Collects offering on right side of Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. Turns on Offertory signal light when ushers are ready to bring offering to the Chancel. Turns Offertory signal light off when returning from Chancel. |
| 3 | Balconies Closed: Collects offering on left side of center aisle in Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. Balconies Open: Collects offering on left side balcony and counts worshipers collected from. |
| 4 | Balconies Closed: Collects offering on right side of center aisle in Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. Balconies Open: Collects offering on right side balcony and counts worshipers collected from. |
| 5 | Balconies Closed: Collects and counts worshipers in Memorial Parlor and proceeds upstairs. Oversees Offertory suitcase in Narthex and then returns to Parlor when other ushers return from Chancel. Balconies Open: Collects and counts worshipers in Memorial Parlor and proceeds upstairs. Collects offering on left side of center aisle in Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. |
| 6 | Balconies Open: Collects offering on right side of center aisle in Sanctuary and counts worshipers collected from. |

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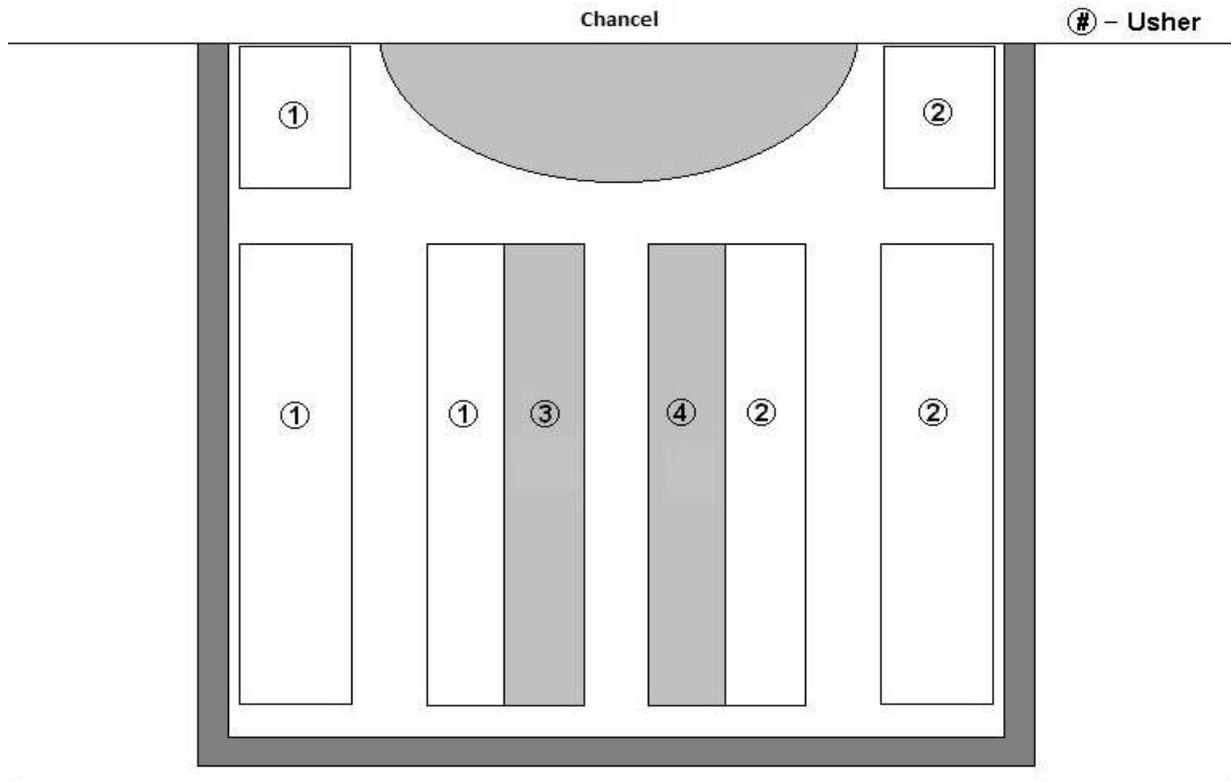


Figure 2; Offertory Responsibilities – Balconies Closed

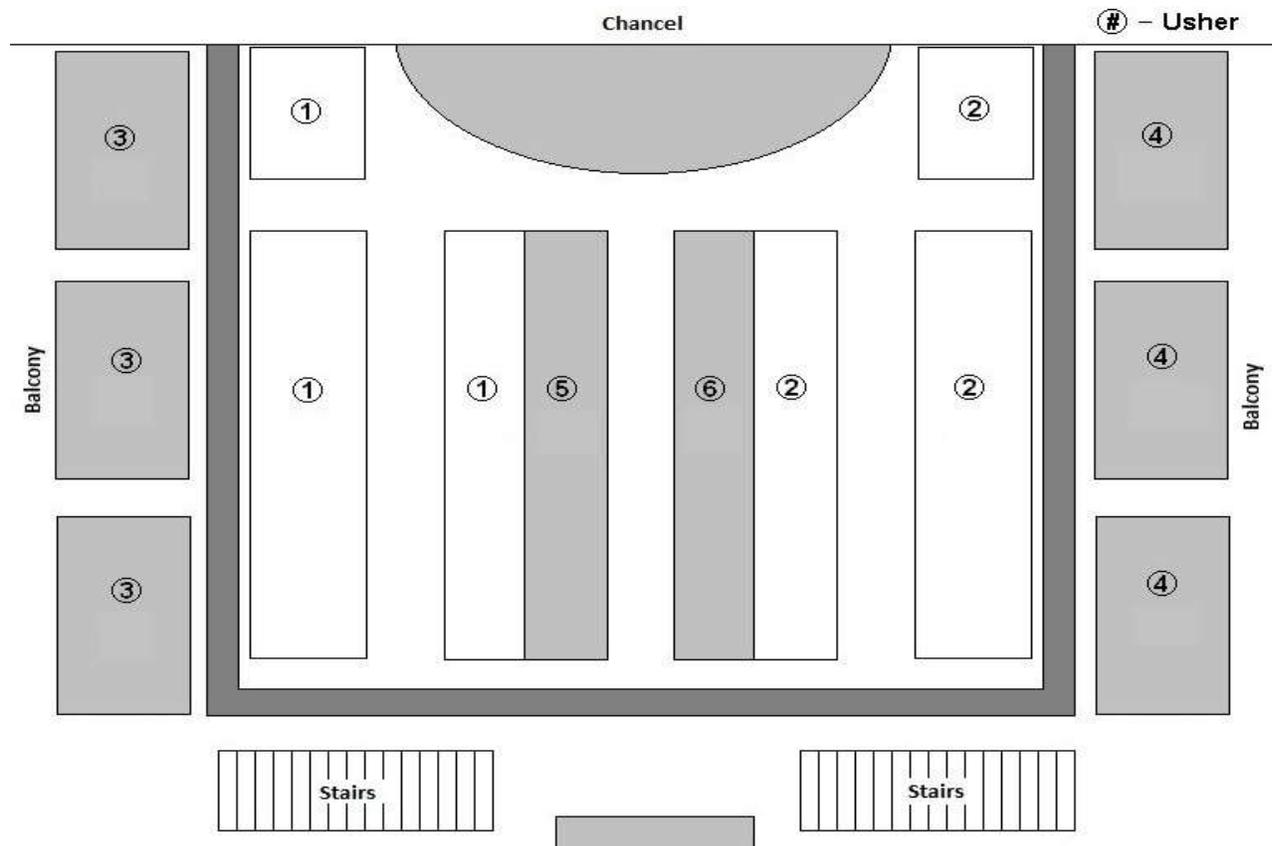


Figure 3; Offertory Responsibilities – Balconies Open

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Camera Control Panel

The camera control panel is located on the wall behind the door leading to the Library. This panel is used to control which area of the Sanctuary is displayed on the television. The television must be set to the appropriate video input in order to receive the broadcast from the Sanctuary. Typically the TV is set to the proper video input and simply needs to be turned ON. See Video Instructions posted in the Parlor for troubleshooting or ask for assistance.

| Control | Purpose |
|------------------------------|---|
| Button 1 – Overall Sanctuary | Used during all parts of service except those described below (unless someone is at the Lectern, or a Choir is singing upstairs). |
| Button 2 - Lectern | Used when speaker is at Lectern (i.e. during reading of Old Testament/Epistle lessons, moment of concern, announcements). |
| Button 3 – NOT USED | This button no longer functions. Do not use. |

Special Service Guidelines

Baptismal Service

Baptisms are usually scheduled during the Late service. Usher 1 is responsible for ushering parents, spouses, and family members to the reserved pews on the right side of the Sanctuary.

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday requires six ushers (one extra) to help distribute the palms at the Early service.

Mother's Day

Mother's Day will require six ushers (one extra) at the Early service and ten ushers (four extra) at the Late service to help distribute flowers. If Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of the month, the youth ushers can be utilized as two additional ushers.

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Communion Services

At the present time there are two Communion services held at New Goshenhoppen; Standard and Chancel (Communion by Intinction). In the Standard service the congregation is served the elements by Consistory while they are seated in their pews. During the Chancel service, the congregation comes forward to receive the elements at the altar.

Element Preparation

The preparation of the bread and wine elements for Communion services usually takes place the day before the service is to be held and is done by Consistory members (spouses may help). On the day of the service, only those Consistory members not assigned as ushers will be available to assist with bread and wine duties.

General

- For normal Sunday services - 10 wine & bread trays are prepared (one tray is an extra that remains in the Narthex). Additionally 1 silver plate with a roll is prepared.
- The electric knife and trays are stored in the closet in the small room up the stairs located next to the Choir room.
- Stroehman Bread square loaves result in least waste after cutting off the crust.
- Precut the Kaiser roll $\frac{3}{4}$ way through the roll. Hold the roll on the side and cut from top to bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way.
- Store rolls in a plastic bag on the silver plate. Place it on the tray and store with wine in the Narthex. Remove roll from bag before service.
- Prepare one bread & wine tray with a lid for 4:00 pm Parlor communion when appropriate.
- Place a small amount of cut bread in a plastic bag and a small container of wine, store in the refrigerator for pastor visitation communions.

Confirmation Sunday

- Use pita bread instead of regular bread.
- Use 35 pitas total for both services. Thomas's pitas work well.
- The bread tray lids cannot be used because the lids do not fit on tight.
- If setting up the night before, cover the pitas with foil or plastic wrap.
- Arrive early Sunday to remove wrapping.
- After Early service, remove any partially used pitas and refresh tray with whole pitas.

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Communion Services Preparation

| Service | # of Services | Rolls\Loaves\Trays |
|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| January | 2 | 2 rolls, 10 trays |
| Easter | 2 | 2 rolls, 10 trays |
| Confirmation Sunday | 1 | <p><u>Early Service:</u></p> <p>1 tray with 3 pitas for Elders to serve parlor, nurseries, and those who will take communion while seated.</p> <p>2 trays with 6 pitas on each of them.</p> <p><u>Late Service:</u></p> <p>2 trays with 3 pitas for Elders to serve parlor, nurseries, and those who will take communion while seated.</p> <p>2 trays with 7 pitas on each of them.</p> |
| Summer Communion | 2 | 2 rolls, 10 trays |
| Men's/Boy's Breakfast | 1 | 1 roll, 4 trays |
| World Wide Communion | 2 | 2 rolls, 10 trays |
| Christmas Eve | 3 | <p>1 roll, 12 trays (3 extra trays in Narthex)</p> <p>4 trays (Family Service)</p> |

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Standard Communion Service

Consistory will be seated in the Sanctuary as a group unless front pews are required due to a standing room only service (i.e. Christmas Eve service). Consistory will receive Communion at the altar.

Before the Service

If unable to serve at a Communion service, contact the ushering chairperson well in advance to fill your position.

Usher 1 will reserve the first row on either side of the center aisle for the Consistory (space permitting). Consistory will relinquish their pews when no other seating is available.

The ushering chairperson will acquire a volunteer to operate the camera control in the Parlor since the Consistory will be seated in the Sanctuary.

While the Nurseries are normally not staffed for the Christmas Eve service they remain open for family use. As such, the person responsible for serving Communion to the Nurseries should still check to see if anyone will be taking Communion in the Nurseries.

During the Service

Ushers will collect offering in the standard manner according to their assigned position 1-6. Instead of proceeding from the back of the church, during standard communion ushers will proceed from their seats at the front to the chancel rail.

After collecting offering in the Memorial Parlor, the parlor volunteer will return to the parlor to assist the worshipers until the end of the service.

See Communion Procession & Line-Up instructions for Communion details (next page).

After the Service

The person overseeing the Narthex during Communion will:

- Bring Offertory suitcase to altar via right hand Amen pew stairway.
- Place Communion cards on table in Pastor's room.

Ushers 3 and 4 will proceed to the Narthex via side aisles after Communion to take up their respective positions at the chair lift.

If distribution of handouts is required Usher 6 will also proceed to the top of the left hand stairway in the Narthex.

After Early service, Bread and Wine committees refill trays appropriately, empty & clean wine cup.

Consistory collects communion glasses after the service, and proceeds to the kitchen for cleanup (washing of Communion glasses). Spouses and other volunteers are welcome to assist.

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Communion Procession & Line-Up

There are two procession orders used to enter the Sanctuary from the Narthex during the Standard Communion services – one at the beginning of the service, and the other after distribution of the elements.

The following order of procession is used when entering the Sanctuary at the start of the service:

| Left Side | Right Side |
|---------------|---------------|
| 05 | 10 |
| 04 | 09 |
| 03 *(usher 5) | 08 *(usher 6) |
| 02 *(usher 3) | 07 *(usher 4) |
| 01 *(usher 1) | 06 *(usher 2) |

* - Indicates Ushers for Communion Service

After processing in, the Consistory will sit as shown in Figure 4.

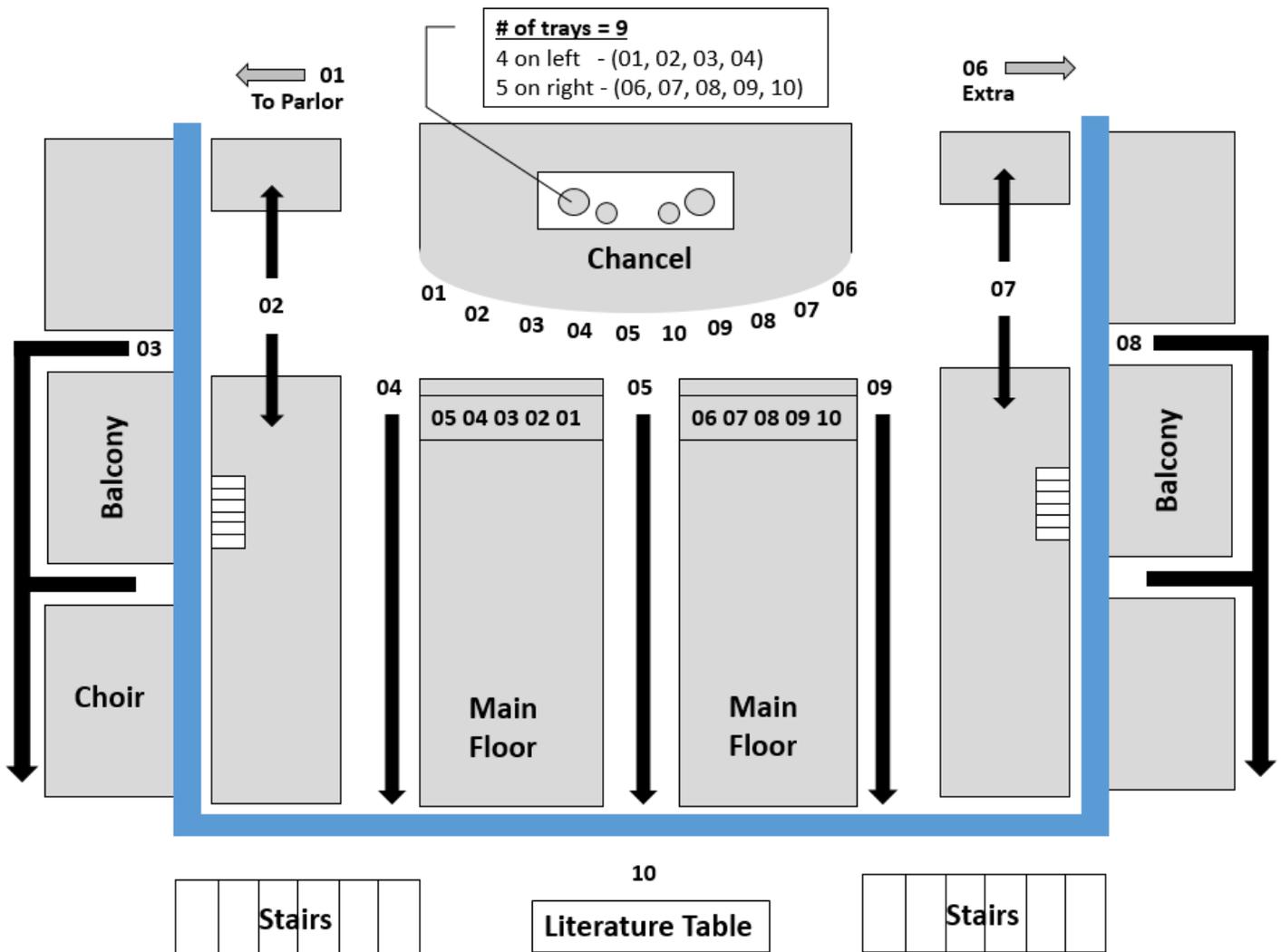


Figure 4; Seating and Communion Station Locations for Standard Communion

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One person will be assigned to remain at the Literature Table (10) overseeing the Sanctuary and is responsible for counting the persons in the Choir(s) and nursery. This person will collect offering in the nurseries at the beginning of the service. During Communion this person will join the Consistory at the Chancel rail (as shown in Figure 4).

During the offering, a designated Elder will follow the ushers bringing in the offering to the Chancel. The Elder will bring forth the wine flagon and pita bread placed in the Narthex.

During the Communion service, the Consistory will proceed to the Chancel and receive Communion. The person at the Literature Table (10) will join the Consistory at the Chancel rail for Communion. After taking Communion, the Consistory will proceed to their assigned stations to serve the elements – as shown in Figure 4.

The following order of procession will be used when entering the Sanctuary after distribution of the elements (this order will be used twice):

| Left Side | Right Side |
|-----------|------------|
| 01 * | 06 * |
| 02 * | 07 * |
| 03 * | 08 * |
| 04 | 09 |
| 05 | 10 |

* - Indicates Ushers for Communion Service

After distribution of the wine, glasses should be re-arranged to the outside of the tray to insure all trays will stack properly when returned to the altar. When re-arranging wine glasses, please keep grape juice glasses in the eight center holes to avoid mixing of wine and juice.

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First Sunday Communion by Intinction

On the first Sunday of each month, unless a scheduled "Pew Communion" service is occurring, communion will be served by intinction. The congregation will be asked to come forward to take communion at the Chancel rail.

During the presentation of offerings to the Chancel, elder #1 will bring forward the elements. The pastors will place the elements on the altar and dismiss the ushers and elder #1.

The pastors will receive communion, and then proceed to the stations outside of the Chancel rail. One pastor will serve the bread just off each side aisle (marked B in diagram below). One pastor will invite persons to partake the wine, dipping the consecrated bread into the blessed cup of wine or receiving a communion glass (marked W in diagram below).

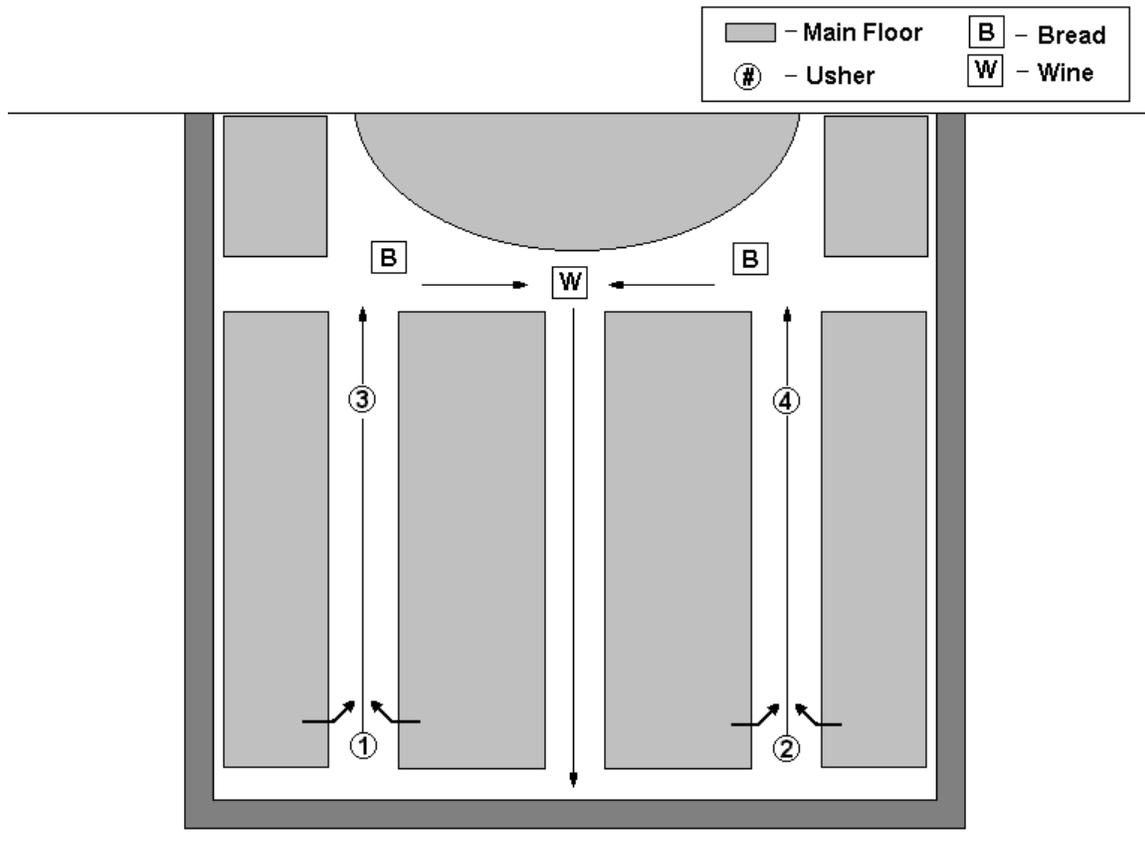


Figure 5; First Sunday Communion by Intinction

Once pastors are in positions outside the chancel, ushers 3 & 4 will come to the chancel rail down the side aisles and receive Communion. After receiving Communion, the pastors will give ushers 3 & 4 a tray of elements (wine and bread) to serve members unable to come forward for Communion. Ushers 3 & 4 will return down the center aisle to go to the parlor to serve Communion. When ushers 3 & 4 offer Communion, they will invite one to take with words like "Take – the body and blood of Jesus Christ".

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After ushers 3 & 4 proceed to the Chancel rail, ushers 1 & 2 will start inviting people forward to receive Communion. Ushers 1 & 2 will invite people starting from the back of the church, instructing people from both the center and side pews to go down the side aisles. The congregation will receive Communion and proceed down the center aisle to return to their seats.

At the late service, ushers 5 & 6 will also invite people to come down from the balconies to receive Communion. They will proceed down the side aisles and return down the center.

At the late service Ushers 3 & 4 will proceed to the Nursery to serve Communion. Ushers 3 & 4 will then return to the Sanctuary to serve any persons there who are unable to come forward, including the organist.

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Emergency Procedures

Introduction

Ushers/Consistory members and/or Health Care Providers should assist worshipers becoming ill before, during, or after the service. Health Care Providers can immediately assess the patient's condition and determine the next course of action. One usher/Consistory member should remain with the patient and the provider at all times to provide assistance. The current list of Health Care Providers in the congregation is posted on a bulletin board outside the Sanctuary

General Guidelines

Ushers should scan the congregation to ascertain which Health Care Providers are in attendance and note their location to facilitate locating them in an emergency.

Ushers should check with any worshiper who leaves church during the service. They may need assistance (telephone, water, rest rooms, etc.).

When a worshiper leaves the service for other than a normal reason, a Health Care Provider should be contacted immediately to avoid an emergency situation.

If a person faints or otherwise becomes unconscious, ask the people around the stricken person to move so that they can lie down on the pew seat. Summon a Health Care Provider from the attending congregation.

When necessary, two or three ushers should remove the patient from the Sanctuary, with the wheelchair/litter, to the Narthex and await further instructions. After further assessment, if warranted the patient should then be moved to the lower level and into the Social Room or Parlor where more complete care can be given along with adequate ventilation.

Ammonia inhalants kept in the First Aid kits in the Narthex should be made available to the patient.

If an ambulance is required the telephone number is posted by the Social Room telephone. An usher should telephone for an ambulance and request the ambulance driver not use a siren when approaching the church. Two Consistory members should be stationed outside the church to direct the medical team to the patient and/or assist the family of the patient.

Health Care Equipment

The health care equipment is located as noted:

| Equipment | Remarks |
|-------------------|---|
| Stair Chair (1) | Upstairs by Choir loft behind door into Sanctuary. |
| First Aid Kit (3) | All locations are well identified. <u>Locations:</u> Church: Outside the Sanctuary door to the elevator in the closet. Education Building: Kitchen near hallway door Park: Dining Hall kitchen (during season). |