

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USHERS

### 1. SCHEDULE

The schedule for all worship assistants appears each month on the church's web page (<http://www.mountcross.com/worship-assistant.html>). You will also receive a reminder email during the week before you are supposed to serve.

**If you are unable to serve on your assigned date, first try to trade places with someone.**

You can use the schedule on the website to do this. If you succeed, please notify the church office of the change. If you can't find someone with whom to trade, call the church office (482-3847) to let us know, even if it is early Sunday morning and you only get the answering machine.

### 2. BEFORE THE 1<sup>ST</sup> SERVICE BEGINS

- Make sure the doors are unlocked and the lights are turned on. See Appendix for instructions.
- NOTE: in windy weather it may be necessary to lock one or both of the center wooden doors for safety's sake.
- Roll onto the patio the information kiosk, the L.S.S. and Food Pantry bins, and the "senior parking" sign.
- As needed, pick up any debris that may have blown into the Sanctuary.

### 3. BEFORE ALL SERVICES BEGIN

- Ushers should also make a point of moving the collection plates from the low shelf of the stand to an easier place to reach them early in the service, if not before.
- Check to make sure the worship registration books are at the aisle ends of the pews (with a working pen).
- Straighten (and restock as necessary) the items in the pew racks. Also see that there are pens and/or sharpened pencils in the pew racks.
- Ushers should stand near the columns leading in to the Sanctuary. As people begin arriving, hand people a worship folder and direct them to seats. Important: Try not to seat people you know to be visitors in the back rows so they are not called upon to lead the way to and from Communion - they may not know what to do. Also, if you seat anyone in the front row, be sure to point out the location of the hymnals (under the seat).

### 4. AS THE SERVICE BEGINS

- Close the doors when the pastor begins the introduction to the service. NOTE: if it is warm, leave them open if it's not too noisy on the patio.
- Latecomers may be seated during the announcements, during the Entrance Hymn, or when the children are coming up or going back from the Children's Message. After this, use your best judgment. Please try your best to send them down the side aisles.
- Counting the Attendance: Try to get a count of those in the choir loft before the day's musical offering begins (so as not to be distracting). After the Children's Message, take attendance in Sanctuary and then in the Nursery. Record the information on the form on clipboard in Narthex (taking attendance after children's message gives a better indication of nursery usage).
- Receive the Offering at the **Traditional Services**: Two ushers will work the center aisle; two ushers will work the side aisles. Remember "Center lead, side follow." The usher in the center will start sending the plates and the ushers on the sides should take their cue from the usher in the center to know down which aisle to start their plate. Usher on the side by the piano will receive offering from those seated in those chairs. Keep an eye on the plate as it moves across the back

row of pews; sometimes the pillar in the middle of the row confuses folks and you may have to help it along.

- Receive the Offering at the **Contemporary Service**: One usher usually does it all and relies on the people in the pews to pass the plate to the row behind. NOTE: Younger children are welcome to assist as ushers. However, it is expected that they will be closely accompanied by their parent as they serve.
- When offering has been received, you may consolidate it into one plate.
- At the **Traditional Services**, one usher brings the offering plates forward to the altar and one will bring the cruet of wine and ciborium of wafers. Bring these forward at the start of the Offertory ("Let the vineyards be fruitful Lord," for example). Come forward all the way to the step in front of the altar rail forcing the acolyte to stand on the first step. The Acolyte has been instructed to FIRST take the cruet of wine, the wafers second, and the offering plates last. Please offer the gifts to the Acolyte in this order. After you have delivered the wine, bread and offering plates, you may return to the Narthex.
- At the **Contemporary Service**, the usher may enlist the help of someone to bring the gifts of bread and wine to the altar to hand them to the Acolyte.

## 5. COMMUNION

**Communion At The Rail**, one usher can go down to the center front, two ushers can direct persons down the center from the back and the fourth usher can direct persons from the chairs at the far right of the sanctuary.

- Ushers should be aware that the Pastors have asked that we create lines of people on both sides while the Pastors and those assisting with communion are taking communion. Start sending people to the rail as soon as the pastors and communion assistants are done taking communion and are at the altar securing their assigned elements. The usher up front will direct them starting with the left side. Waiting until the pastor is standing to give communion to the first person at the rail is too late. Members of the congregation should have sufficient time at the rail and not be rushed if they are first.
- It is also not necessary to have the people on the far right (chairs) be the first in line. The usher handling the center right should send people down at the same time as the left side. People from the far right can fall in line as they arrive.
- Maintain a line of waiting congregants at all times throughout the communion so that there is no pause in the administration for people to make their way to the altar. Again, this is important to give each person a moment at the altar prior to receiving communion. The ushers working forward from the center back need to stay conscious of this.
- It is also the responsibility of the ushers creating the lines to inquire of anyone remaining in the pew if they wish to have communion brought to them in their seat and to inform the front center usher so that is communicated to the Pastor.

**“Walk-by” communion**, the ushers should again get the initial people lined up before the pastor(s) is out front to give the offering of bread. There is no center front usher during this form of communion.

- Having a fourth usher allows the ushers to be more proactive in **seating assistance** during crowded services and allow coverage at **all 3 exits** when distributing the **“Taking Faith Home”** fliers following the service along with completing the duties of securing the offering and clearing the pews.
- **Special instructions** --- If there are any unusual plans for distribution of Communion, you will be alerted in advance of the service and/or asked to come a little earlier for instructions.

- During the singing of the last hymn, open the doors to the outside (weather permitting).

## 6. AFTER EVERY SERVICE

- Straighten up the Sanctuary by picking up all papers and bulletins left in the pews and in the hymnals, return hymnals neatly to racks, and straighten pew racks.
- Take the offering plates into the Sacristy and place that service's offering into one of the bags kept in the drawer. These bags will be locked in the safe after the last service.

## 7. AFTER THE LAST SERVICE

- Make sure the lights, sound system and projection system are turned off. See Appendix below.
- Replace the plastic dust cover on the baptism font. Replace the dust cover on the piano.
- Bring in the Kiosk and roll its 'parking place' on the west side of the Narthex. Bring in the L.S.S. & food pantry bins and roll them into the alcove on the other side of the Narthex. Bring in "senior parking" sign leave it inside the door, near the stairs to the choir loft.
- Check & lock the doors: 1) the upstairs door to the choir loft, 2) the door to the outside in the Sacristy, 3) the two doors to the outside in the sanctuary (near the pulpit and near the flags; they are sometimes propped open in warm weather), 4) the side doors to the Sanctuary (a screwdriver is needed to release the panic bar (see instructions in the front of the prayer notebook), 5) the main wooden doors to the Sanctuary (the hex wrench for this is on the pink ruler, hanging near the stand where the prayer notebook is kept).

## 7. APPENDIX

### APPENDIX A – DOORS & LOCKS

There are seven (7) entrances to the Sanctuary, some of which need to be unlocked before worship and all of which should be checked afterward.

- **Main Wooden Doors.** These are unlocked by pushing and holding the panic bar in and turning the hex key clockwise. They are locked by turning the hex key counter clockwise.
- **Side Doors (2)** (to the patio and parking lot). These doors are unlocked by pushing down and holding the panic bar and using a screwdriver to turn the screw head one quarter turn counter clockwise (there are illustrated instructions in the front of the prayer notebook. They are locked by turning the same screw head one quarter turn counterclockwise, and the panic bar should pop back into locked position.
- **Choir Loft.** This door doesn't get opened too often, and when it does it is usually propped open with a rock by someone in one of the choirs or the organist. Before leaving, a quick look upstairs will usually tell you if you need to go up and pull it shut.
- **Sanctuary Side Doors (2)** (on either side of the chancel). These doors have no handles on the outside and no locks. They are often opened in warm weather and should be pulled shut at the end of the last service.
- **Sacristy.** This door opens onto the playground. It is not usually opened, but should be checked at the end of the day.

### APPENDIX B – LIGHTS

Most of the lights in the sanctuary are controlled by two panels of slider switches and an on/off button. One is located in the sound room, the other in the sacristy. When the little red lights on a panel are lit, it means that is the panel that has control – the other will do nothing until its on button is pushed. The various sliders control various lights in the room, as marked. A push of the off button will turn off all of the lights.

In addition, there is a switch for the Narthex lights in the sound room (marked #7).

In addition, there are two switches above the sound board (marked #8) that control the in the halogen bulbs that shine up toward the ceiling.

### **APPENDIX C – HEAT**

As present, only one furnace is being used. It is on an automatic thermostat. Instructions for it are on the inside of the electrical room door just to the right of the thermostat.

### **APPENDIX D – SOUND SYSTEM**

Ushers are not expected to operate the sound system. However, if the system starts to feedback and whistle and whine, it is usually an usher who is closer to the room than one of the pastors. If the system starts to feedback, go into the sound room and on the big control board with all the switches and buttons, on the very far right there is a slider switch marked MASTER GAIN. Sliding that switch down a bit should correct the problem.

There may also be occasions when the pastor asks one of you to mute or unmute a certain microphone's circuit. You will be briefed on this before the service.

### **APPENDIX E – PROJECTION SYSTEM**

Again, ushers are not expected to operate the PowerPoint presentations. Once in awhile, however, you may be asked to assist by simply hitting the SPACEBAR to advance a slide or slides in a presentation.

### **APPENDIX F – EMERGENCIES**

We have had occasions when 9-1-1 needed to be dialed to summon emergency assistance for a health emergency. There is a phone on the wall in the Narthex (east side). Pick up the receiver and press the button next to our phone number (482-3847) and dial. No need to dial 9 to get an outside line.

There is a basic first aid kit on the wall, in between the phone and a fire extinguisher.

There is a wheelchair in the alcove by the telephone.