

Duties of the Ushers

St. George's Church – 2008
ushers@stgeorges-maplewood.org

*Enter the gates with thanksgiving in your heart.
Come into God's presence with praise.*

On Arrival

Ushers are expected to serve as scheduled or to arrange for an exchange of dates with a substitute from the Roster.

You should arrive about 20 minutes before the service. If needed, turn on the lights (just to left as you go up the left stairs). Check the pews to see that kneeling benches are up. See that offering plates, counter and bulletins are in place. Take the plastic traffic figurines outside and place along the curbside at the top of the steps. If the day is particularly windy, be watchful that they are not blown into the street. (Remember to bring them back inside at the end of the service.)

Ask two persons to carry the elements to the altar. If this is overlooked, two ushers are to do it.

General Information

1. Before the service, the person holding the door open will greet people with a handshake and by name, if possible. The usher with the counter should be able to see and include in the count all those entering through the choir door, but it may be easier to begin counting after most are seated, rather than count as they arrive. Weather permitting please fasten both doors open.
2. Greeting Newcomers – If someone is new to St. George's, please show him or her to a seat and explain the use of the bulletin. The bulletin is now printed to include all prayers, readings and hymns planned for the service. We are currently not using the prayer book and hymnals during the services.

Additionally, ask the new people to sign the attendance book found in the small red binder at the end of the pew.

3. Hold latecomers at the rear during confession, absolution, or any kind of prayer. Seat them during the reading of the lessons or singing.
4. At communion services, count everyone – including people in chancel: choir, acolytes, etc. Post the attendance number on the nails inside the left narthex door; here it faces the altar so that the celebrant who will prepare the Eucharist can see it. The counter is returned to the drawer.
5. The Collection of Offerings is taken during the Offertory. When passing the plates, move back together, if possible, but avoid obvious waiting. It is not critical that both ushers finish at the same time. Offering plates should be passed to everyone - baptism families and all visitors included. If four ushers are needed due to a large attendance, the second pair should begin their collection at the pews that have metal buttons at their base, facing the aisle – these pews are

midway back in the sanctuary. If it appears that four ushers are needed, but two are serving, ask for help with the collection from anyone, presumably other ushers are in attendance.

6. Offering is made at the altar: At communion – the ushers bring the plates forward before the elements have been presented. After offering plates to the Crucifer, ushers bow, then depart by way the side aisles – left usher to left, right to the right. The parishioners carrying the elements should be behind the ushers about ten feet and they will hand the elements to the crucifer. They will return down the center aisle.
7. During Communion ushers move down the aisles, inviting worshippers to join the line waiting for communion. Please keep the waiting line (in front of the choir) full, so that gaps do not occur at the altar rail. Do not keep the celebrants waiting for communicants to arrive at the railing.
8. After services, one usher should remain near the door to be available for introductions, questions, directions to coffee hour or other assistance. All ushers should pay particular attention to any unfamiliar people. Introduce them to the ministers, and invite them to coffee hour.

Please check the pews, restoring order: bulletins or scraps picked up for re-cycling (the recycling bin is inside the office, on the floor by the copier.) Lost items should be left on the table in the narthex. Take down the numbers. Be sure the lights and fans are turned off. Bring back inside the plastic traffic figurines.

The front doors should be locked after ushers have neatened the pews. Other doors are responsibility of counters or others who are remaining on the property.

Emergencies

Use common sense should an illness that you can cope with occur. There may be someone in attendance that is trained with CPR. Do not perform first aid that is beyond your capability. **Do not move a patient. Remain calm. Call 911.**

The nearest **telephones** are near the stairs in the Flower room, in the office, and just inside the kitchen door, off the parish hall, downstairs.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.