

# Usher's Instructions (updated February 2024)

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*(Underlines indicates the latest additions to the instructions.)*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
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## **BEFORE THE SERVICE**

1. Be available 20-30 minutes before the service begins.
2. Check lights. Light switches are at the back of the sanctuary near the main doors.
3. Check for items to be distributed: Hand out bulletins. Everything will be on the table at the back of the sanctuary, including any special instructions.
4. Post the hymn numbers. The "number box" is in the pulpit. The hymn numbers are listed in the Order of Worship in the Sunday bulletin and /or on a special information sheet for the ushers located with the bulletins and Scripture sheets.
5. Light the altar candles when there is no acolyte. Light candles 15-5 minutes before the service begins. The candle lighter is found on the post by the piano. Matches should be available on the sink counter in the sacristy if the lighter doesn't work.
  - a. Approach the altar through the center opening.
  - b. Pause a few seconds at center of the altar giving honor and reverence to God.
  - c. Light the right candle first, then the left.
6. Ushering:
  - a. Welcome people to worship and assist them as needed.
  - b. Seat people only when:
    - i. the sanctuary is well filled.
    - ii. worshipper is a visitor or appears uneasy.
  - c. Try to reserve the back pews on each side for parents with little children, and for latecomers.
  - d. Seat latecomers only during singing – never during prayers or scripture reading.

## **DURING THE SERVICE**

1. Count attendance. Count everyone present (including babies, organist, singers, pastors, kitchen workers, yourself) during the service when everyone is seated. Recommended time: during the reading of the First and Second Lessons. Record attendance on the record sheet posted at the back of the sanctuary.
2. Keep sanctuary doors open to promote good air circulation and air quality.
3. Check the hallway for roaming children. Encourage them to return to their parents. Monitor unlocked exterior doors.

4. Take the offering at the designated time as printed in the Order of Worship.
  - a. If four ushers, two ushers down center aisle and one down each side aisle. If there are only two ushers, both go down the center aisle. Begin at the front pew and proceed to receive offering, moving toward the rear of the church.
  - b. After the offering has been received, two ushers bring the plates to the Pastor at the gate in the communion rail.
  - c. After Pastor has received the offering, the ushers return to the front pew on the south side (window side) until the close of the service to usher the congregation out.
5. Ushering for Holy Communion.
  - a. Communion elements are on the usher table in the back of the sanctuary. They need to be brought to the altar along with the offering plates.
  - b. After bringing the offering plates and the communion elements up to the altar, place insert in communion rail before leaving the chancel area.
  - c. All ushers return to the front pews on the south(window) side.
  - d. At the beginning of communion, one or two ushers stand near the front of the pews. When on the north side stand beside or behind the livestream camera ready to assist communicants who may need help in moving up and down the steps. The remaining usher(s) are to be in position to usher the communicants from the pews. Normally, 24 people can commune at a table at one time.
  - e. While the assistants commune first, this shouldn't prevent or slow down the flow of communicants coming forward. When there is a choir, they will come to the rail first. Fill the remainder of the table with communicants from the south pews immediately.
  - f. Communicants come to the rail up the center aisle and return to the pews by the side aisles.
  - g. Ushers, if communing, go to the last table.

#### **END of THE SERVICE & AFTER**

1. If there is no acolyte, extinguish the candles during the last hymn. This should be done as soon as Pastor leaves the Altar area. Usually, at the beginning of the last stanza of the hymn. Stop for a few seconds out of reverence to God in front of the altar. Extinguish the right candle, then the left.
2. Two ushers be ready to usher worshippers out after the final hymn and after the candles are extinguished.
3. Pick up misc. paper, garbage, etc. in the pew areas.
4. Straighten and replace hymn books in the racks.
5. Put completed communion cards in the basket with the left-over bulletins.
6. Turn off lights and close windows after each service.
7. Before leaving, close the outside gate.

**Thank you for being kind, friendly, and welcoming.  
You are the best P.R. committee at the Service!**

***Thank you for your service to St. Paul's and to the Lord!!***