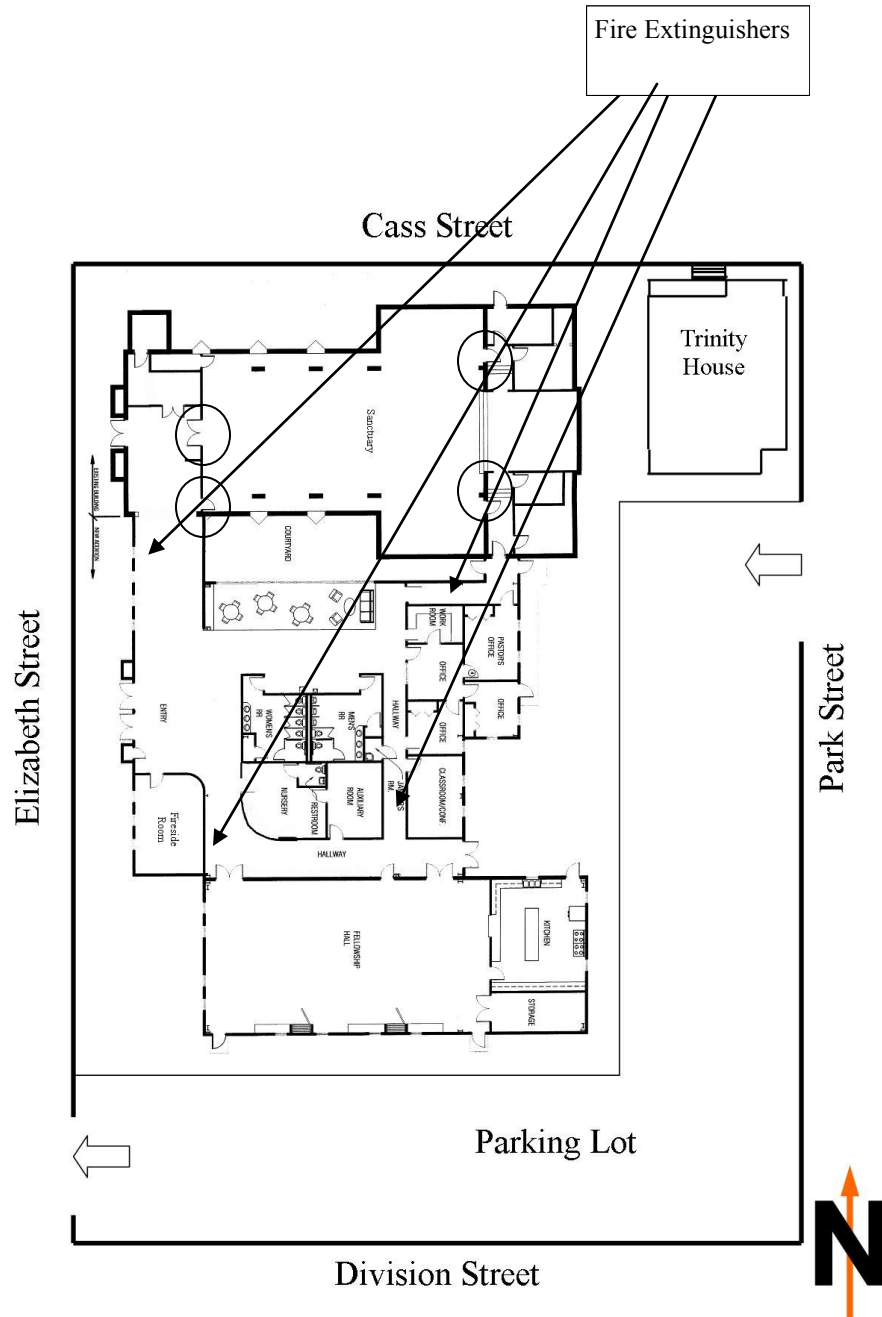


Usher Ministry Orientation and Training Handbook 2012



TRINITY

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
708-672-8125

Welcome

Welcome to Trinity's Usher Ministry! We are so glad you are a member of this ministry. The Usher Ministry is one of the few ministries that has direct contact with many members of our congregation. Thank you for being part of it! This handbook is meant to help you and serve as a reference throughout your service as an Usher.

As an usher, you serve as a host for Christ. You are one of the first people who interact with guests and members. Ushers serve a vital role in the evangelism ministry of the church. Serving God's people is your number one priority.

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, a family of believers, shares the Gospel of Jesus Christ to nurture God's people and to reach out to bring others to Christ all to the glory of God.

Ushering Ministry Mission Statement

The ushers of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church serve members and guests attending worship services through warm, welcoming, and helpful attitudes as they distribute materials, assist with seating, gather offerings, and direct and assist members partaking of Holy Communion, all to glorify God.

Odds and Ends

- Ushers do not use the temperature controls or turn the fans off or on. If someone is either hot or cold and comes to you, let the Pastor know after the service.
- There is a Lost and Found drawer in the credenza.
- Church members and guests should not sit in the Choir Loft. It is only used for choir members and the organist.

Team Leader Responsibilities

- Assign responsibilities to members of your ushering team.
- Check the bulletins/boards that the hymn numbers are correct.
- 8:00 Team Leader rings the bells at 7:30 am.
- Make sure the lights are turned on.
- Carry out any Pastoral instructions and communicate them, if needed, to the next Team Leader.
- Team Leader is the contact person for visiting Pastors.
- Change the input source on the TV in the coffee court to "Church" prior to the beginning of the service. Change the source back during the last hymn.
- Put "Reserved" signs on pews when instructed by the Pastor.

- door by the wheel chair.
- If you need an ambulance, you can use the office phone to dial 911. Pick up the receiver. Push Line 1 and then dial 911.
- In case of Power Outage
 - The church is equipped with emergency lighting
 - If needed, a flash light is located in the “Flash Light” drawer in the credenza.
- If there is a disruptive person in the church
 - Be courteous
 - Try to walk the person out of the sanctuary and church building.
 - Call the police if needed.
- Fire Extinguisher Locations
 - In entry/gathering area near where the Pastor greets people after church
 - In the back hallway which leads from the boiler room to the coffee court
 - In the side hallway by the back double doors near the kitchen.
 - Outside the main entrance to the Fellowship hall under the coat rack.
 - See map on back page.
- Animal Intrusions
 - Try to remove a bird after the service.
- Tornado/severe weather
 - Gather everyone in the church sanctuary—laying under the pews.
- Emergency Exits
 - Emergency exits are marked with circles on the map on the back page.
 - In case of an emergency where we need to have people leave, be sure to direct people to ALL the exits.

Scheduling

Ushers serve at all services. Services offered include:

Sunday Mornings: 8:00 am; 9:30 am; and 11:00 am

Tuesday Evenings: 7:00 pm

Advent and Lenten Services (“Special Services”): 3:30 pm and 7:00 pm

Ushers also serve at Funerals

- Ushers serve once a month for one of the above services plus a 5th Sunday on a rotating basis. You will always usher on the same Sunday at the same service.
- You can request a certain service or Sunday to serve.
- Each service has an Ushering Team (“Team”). Each Team has a Team Leader and 3 or 4 other ushers serving.

Example: Team 1 ushers the 1st Sunday of every month at the 8:00 am service.

- A Worship Schedule is available that includes the Usher Schedule. This schedule is available via:
 - Email to all ushers with an email address on file in the church office.
 - Online at www.trinitycrete.org under the “Member Resources” section.
 - A copy is in the drawer of the credenza outside of the sanctuary or
 - A hard copy can be mailed to you upon request.

- If you are unable to serve on your Team's day and time you should:
 - Find a replacement
 - Notify your Team Leader that you will not be there and who your replacement will be.

Dress

- 8:00 am service: Formal (example: shirt and tie)
- 9:30 am, 11:00 am and Special Services: Formal or Business Casual
- Tuesday evenings: Business Casual

Arrival

- Team Leaders should arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the church service.
- 8:00 am Team Leader should arrive 40 minutes early.
- Ushers should arrive 20 minutes prior to the start of the church service

The only Way to be On-Time is to be Early!!

- Doors will already be unlocked
- Team Leader for 8:00 am and Special Services will need to turn on lights in the Sanctuary.
 - Fuse box is located by the credenza outside of the sanctuary
 - All **BLACK** switches should be turned on. DO NOT turn on the white switches.

- If someone comes late, make sure you pay attention to them and help them find a seat.
- Remember you are serving as an usher, but you are also here to worship.
- Keep small talk to a quiet minimum prior to the service. Worshipers are coming into church and will likely hear what you are saying. You need to be actively available to those you serve.
- Don't create roadblocks. Keep the entryway open and clear so everyone can come in and find a seat.
- Please do not talk during the service. If you need to talk, step out of the sanctuary.

Questions or Concerns

If at any time you have any questions or concerns about your Team or the Ushering Ministry in general, please feel free to let us know. We welcome and encourage any and all feedback from ushers or the congregation as a whole. You can talk to your Team Leader, a member of the Board of Worship or the Church Staff.

Emergency Procedures

- If someone is ill or needing assistance:
 - The wheel chair is located in the 1st closet outside of the sanctuary.
 - Broom and dust pan is located in the 1st closet.
 - Vomit powder is located in the credenza.
 - A listing of our congregation's EMTs and Nurses is located inside the closet

- Attendance cards and pens are filled by the office staff. If needed, extra cards and pens are located in the credenza.
- 11:00 am and Special Service ushers extinguish the candles and turn off the lights. Be sure to check the balcony lights as well.

Leaving

- Once the above procedures are done, the ushers are free to leave.
- For Sunday services, the Team Leader stays until the next service's Team Leader arrives. Any special instructions can be given at that time.

General "Ushering" Etiquette

- We can't stress enough the importance of first impressions. Ushers are likely the first people our members and visitors will come into contact with. It is key that we are welcoming and inviting to all those coming to worship.
- Remember to be friendly!! Smile!
- Greet children at their level if possible.
- Please try to greet members by name when possible. If you do not know someone, greet them with: "Hi, I'm not sure we've met. My name is _____." Make an active effort to learn the names of guests. People are very pleased if you greet them by name.
- As people arrive, watch their body language. Does this person know where he / she are going or are they in need of assistance?

Candles

- Candles are lit prior to the 8:00 am service, 3:30 pm service, and 7:00 pm service.
- Lighting of the candles will be demonstrated to all new ushers.
- Candles are extinguished after the completion of the 11:00 am service, 3:30 pm service and 7:00 pm service.
- Extinguishing the candles will also be demonstrated to all new ushers.

Greeting

For many congregation members and visitors, their first interaction is with the Ushers. First impressions are very important. We want all of our worshipers to feel welcome upon entering church.

- Two ushers stand outside of the sanctuary handing out bulletins.
 - If you are running low on bulletins - notify a Pastor or the church secretary;
 - Hand out fewer bulletins per family and ask them to share
 - If you run out of bulletins – notify Pastor and he will make an announcement asking worshipers to pass extra bulletins to the center. You can then collect those and hand them out as needed.
- One usher will stand at the wood door

- One usher should be standing in the sanctuary assisting with seating.
- Hearing devices are located on the credenza outside of the sanctuary. There are 3 devices available for use.
 - Replacement batteries are located in the credenza drawer marked “Flashlight”
- Large print hymnals for use during the 8:00 am service are located on the credenza
- Large print bulletins for use during the 9:30 am and 11:00 am services are included with the other bulletins inside the church.
- There are also 2 sets of children’s bulletins for ages 3 – 6 and 7 – 12. One usher should hand these out as requested by children or parents.

Assisting with Seating

- If the sanctuary is getting full or you notice someone trying to find a seat, please help them. Feel free to ask:
 - Where would you like to sit?
 - Are you looking for someone?

There also may be times when it is necessary to walk down the aisle and help find available seats and ask worshipers to move in to make room. This will help those trying to find seats feel more comfortable. Remember, we are there to help!! Just remember to be polite and friendly when asking others to move down.

- If the pews are full, chairs are located in the storage room inside the A/V room.
 - 1 chair per pew on each side of the sanctuary

- Usher pulpit (right) pews before moving to the lectern (left) side of the Sanctuary.
- Usher lectern (left) wings and then lectern pews.

Tuesday night

- No kneeler or rail is used.
- Usher 3 people per side.

Blended Services – 9:30 and 11:00 am

- Make sure the communion cup baskets are out prior to the start of the service. They are located in the boiler room. The baskets need to be emptied after each service and put away after the 11:00 am service.
- 1 usher on each side of the sanctuary releases communicants at the same time.
- Usher 12 at a time.
- Singers are first, followed by pews and then wings.

After Service Procedures

- 2 ushers take the offering to the safe located in the boiler room. Tuesday night ushers should take the Pastor with them.
- Putting the offering into the safe will be demonstrated to all new ushers.
- Check the pews for extra bulletins, any objects left behind, trash or food on the floor.
- Worship Folders
 - 8:00 am folders are placed under the usher’s pew after the service.
 - Put 9:30 bulletins out.

- Number is recorded on the Attendance List located in the top left drawer of the credenza.
- In the event that there is more wine or wafers needed, the Pastor will notify the ushers.

Traditional Services – 8:00 am, Special Services and Tuesday Evenings:

- Rail and Kneeler are located in the Altar Guild room. Put these items out in front of the altar on the pulpit side prior to the start of the service. Make sure the blocks are removed from the railing and placed in the Altar Guild room prior to the start of the service.
- Rail and Kneeler are put into place after the Pastor says the Words of Institution.
- Make sure the disposal container is moved out next to the handrail by the steps.
- At the conclusion of communion, move the rail and kneeler back to the front of the altar on the pulpit side.
- After the service, put the rail and kneeler back in the Altar Guild room and put the blocks back in the rail at the altar.

Usher Stationed at the Foot of the Stairs

- Stands in the center 2 steps back from the first stair.
- This usher is responsible for helping communicants up and down the stairs if needed.
- Make sure you notify the Pastor if you know of someone that needs communion brought to them.

Ushering Communicants to the Altar

- Start in the wing on the pulpit (right) side.
- Usher 10 at a time.

- If needed, but not recommended, 1 chair in the center aisle
- When planning for a large service, Pastors will also arrange for seating in the Coffee Court area.

Ringling Bells

Bells are rung during Traditional services. These include the 8:00 am service, Special Services and Tuesday night services.

- Team leader is responsible for ringing the bells 30 minutes prior to the start of the service. This is done by pushing the button on the Carillon.
- Bells are rung again at the start of the service by pushing the button on the Carillon.
- During the Lord's Prayer, the usher opens the door to the bell tower and pulls the rope with the knot at the designated times to ring the bell.
- Bell is rung when Pastor says "Father", "bread" and "Amen" during the Lord's Prayer.
- Please make sure to close the door when you are finished.

Offering

- When the Pastor turns to get the offering plates, 2 designated ushers walk up to the altar.
- Usher on the right takes the top 2 plates.
- Both ushers turn to the outside and turn around to leave the altar. Make sure you leave at the same time.
- Plates are passed through wings first, if necessary.

- The 2 ushers holding the plates then start at the first pew in the center. 2 other ushers will be waiting at the first pew on either side of the sanctuary.
- Plates are passed through each pew.
- 1 usher will go into the balcony if needed for the offering.
- 2 ushers hold all plates at the back of the church when finished collecting.
- When the Pastor turns around, the 2 ushers take the plates back up to the altar.
- The Pastor will lean toward 1 usher first to take the plates.

Collecting Attendance Cards

- Once the offering has been collected, the 2 ushers that took the offering to the altar will then walk to the back of the church picking up the attendance cards at each pew.
- 2 other ushers collect the collection cards from the wings if necessary.
- Once collected, a designated usher collects all of the cards, wraps them in a rubber band (located in the credenza) and writes on the back of the stack the
 - Date
 - Service Time
- The stack is then placed in the top left drawer of the credenza.

Counting Number of Worshipers

- This may be done by the Team Leader or assigned to another usher.
- During the 2nd hymn, the usher goes into the balcony and counts the number of worshipers.
- Everyone is counted for every service (example: Pastors, organist/keyboardist and/or praise band as well as usher team).
- Also remember to count those in the wings.
- Worship attendance is recorded on the “Attendance List” located in the top left drawer of the credenza.

Communion

- It is impossible for every usher to know all of the members of Trinity. For this reason, anyone that wishes to go up for communion will be allowed to do so.
- If someone asks about communion prior to the start of the service, direct them to a Pastor or Staff Minister.
- The number of those communing needs to be counted. The Team Leader assigns which usher is responsible for counting.
 - Communicants can be counted using the cups after the service for the 9:30 and 11:00 am services.
 - For the 8:00 am service, the designated usher stands in the back of the Sanctuary to count communicants.
 - All communicants are counted.