

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
APOSTOLIC OF FT. LAUDERDALE

# USHER'S TRAINING MANUAL

**2025**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The definition of an usher means door keeper, but most churches depend on other services that the ushers are capable or required to provide. The usher can impact the lives of new and existing people in the church and should be viewed as an extension of the pastor's hand. In most cases, they provide the first impressions of the church and ministry of the pastor.

Most pastors believe that an usher's performance can make or break the outcome of the service as well as bring a true reflection of how friendly and loving their church really is. Ushers set the spiritual climate of the service by presenting a joyful attitude, making others feel welcome and comfortable, providing information regarding the church and each department, and make sure that everything is flowing in proper order so that everyone is free to worship without interruption.

Some congregation isolate the Ushers from the ushers with different tasks, whilst some congregations have the Ushers greeting and performing all other tasks of the Ushers a well. . Typically, a usher's role is confined to greeting people while coming into the church and foyer areas. The usher's role is usually confined to help inside of the sanctuary with seating, offerings, assist the pastor with communion, discipline or noise interventions, as well as safety.

### **THE USHER'S MANTRA -THE FIVE "T's"**

Teachable, Thoughtfulness, Tactfulness, Timeliness, and Teamwork

1. **Teachable.** A true usher should have the servant spirit ..... to serve people. Every usher should be willing to be taught and learn ways to improve. Ushers who are ever-learning can greatly enhance the church, its outreach, and vision of their pastor.
2. **Thoughtfulness.** Ushers should be constantly looking for ways to serve and help others. Opening doors, assisting visitors, being courteous, and providing information about the church. Help visitors to know where the church's amenities are. Be sure to let them know of the rest rooms, children's church, or any other services they may need. Looking for ways to help others, along with their other duties, can bring a positive reflection of the church.
3. **Tactfulness.** Ushers/ should present themselves in being able to communicate well and have a keen sense of knowing what to say, what to do, and where to direct others as a way to maintain good relations and prevent distractions in the service.
4. **Timeliness.** (Punctual) Ushers should be on time and timely in bringing assistance to others. An effective usher does not wait to be asked or wait for others to help but is keenly

aware of what is going on in the church and allows the flow of the service to continue without distractions.

5. **Teamwork.** Ushers should work as a team, each one working together as a whole. Ushers should work uniformly in receiving offerings, communion, bring order and consistency to the service and providing a warm and courteous welcome for everyone.

### **THE GREETING TASK**

The task of greeting, is unique but important to the viability of the church. This task may be the first performed to visitors and church members when entering the church. This role is not to be minimized. It is an extremely important role of the church, one of providing the first impression, greeting everyone with a handshake and a smile, and making every guest feel welcome. Whether a visitor returns for a second visit is often determined by how well a person has been greeted. The first 4 minutes of any human contact is critical to whether a person returns for a second visit.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE USHER ARE LISTED BELOW**

#### **Before the Service and Self-preparation:**

1. Be mindful in prayer, asking God to help you relate well with others and helping you to bring a positive reflection of the church.
2. Attire should be appropriate, neat and clean.
3. Before each service, every usher should check for cleanliness of the foyer and any other entry area.
4. Ensure that the doors are unlocked.
5. Ensure that there is clear communication given regarding the days proceeding.
6. Make sure your breath is fresh as well as body odor.

#### **Welcoming People**

1. The Usher should make everyone feel welcome, as evidenced by your sincerity, smile, and good eye contact. It is a good practice to use your name in introducing oneself and asking, "Are you new?" You may state, "I haven't met you before. Is this your first visit at our church?"
2. Be aware of one's personal space and touch. A handshake is permissible but touching elsewhere or with both hands may be offensive.
3. Each usher should greet everyone, avoiding clicks and other conversations or interests with friends while others are coming into the church.
4. Be pleasant. Make any visitor feel at home and important. Don't assume that they will fit in automatically.

5. Be sure to take a “special” time with each visitor, making them feel welcome, as well as providing information on other services, such as restrooms, and children’s church.
6. Other ushers should make a “special” attempt to shake hands and introduce oneself to every visitor they have not personally welcomed, whether they are entering the church, if they are seated in the sanctuary, or sometime after the service has concluded.
7. All ushers should keep the foyer open and flowing, especially to “regular” church members who wish to use this area as a gateway to visit. Too often, visitors see others in small groups or clicks and feel they are not wanted or welcome.
8. If the service is crowded or dark, the usher or usher should help assist that person to a seat. Ask, “Does it mind where you sit?” They may want to sit by a friend or towards the back of the church. Your desire should be to make those feel welcome and comfortable. If the visitor does not want to record their name do not force them. Politely respect their wishes, and make them feel comfortable.

After the Service:

1. Keep the flow of traffic moving in the foyer and door areas. The doors should be opened wide enough to prevent a “bottle neck” and encourage others to exit. It is also a good practice to have multiple people outside of the doors thanking everyone for coming.
2. It is always a good practice to check back with every visitor at the conclusion of the service to ask them how they liked the church and invite them back to church next week. Ask if they have any questions about the church or need further information about your programs. Be sincere.
3. Every usher is to serve, which means helping others inside or outside of the sanctuary helping if needed. This may be in a form of escorting one to their vehicle, and opening doors.

### **HEAD USHER**

If you have the capability to have multiple ushers/ushers, a church can assign a head usher/head greeter to carry out and train new people who wish to serve. They would be in charge of their areas and make sure that every requirement or responsibility is carried out.

1. Receive special instructions from the pastor.
2. Oversee and direct operations of ushers during the assigned time frame. Make sure special instructions from pastor is followed through.
3. Conduct pre-service prayer. (optional)
4. Provide teaching and training for all ushers which includes, greeting others, how to handle emergencies, how to assist congregational needs, offering duties, and provide courteous and thoughtful attitude in their role.
5. Maintain open communication with all ushers/ushers.

6. Rotate ushers to avoid usher-burnout and allow others to be involved in providing services to the church.
7. Make sure to evaluate the offering procedures to have an air-tight system of removing offerings from the sanctuary to the time it is placed in the church safe.
8. Develop and train ushers how to handle overflow seating situations.

### **USHER'S CONDUCT**

1. An usher should always display a positive warm smile to everyone who comes into the church or anyone they may assist.
2. An usher must display a servant's heart, willing to always serve anyone, no matter how big or small the request.
3. An usher must avoid long conversations that could overlook providing a handshake, smile, and greeting to everyone who is in attendance.
4. An usher must never place his/her hands on the opposite sex other than a friendly handshake or helping someone at their request. Ask before touching.
5. An usher's conduct should be above reproach and should reflect a gentle Godly spirit to all they serve.
6. Ushers should be ready to place and remove modesty cloths on women around the altar.

### **OFFERING PROCEDURES**

1. Have enough ushers for each isle of the church.
2. All ushers will proceed together, walking in unison from the back of the building to the front,
3. Each usher will bow their head in reverence when prayer is given for the offering.
4. Each usher will go to their section and stand at the end of each row to direct the procedure. Avoid giving back change in the offering line.
5. Do not allow congregation members to take out money from the offering plate, for change. .
6. Each usher will hand their offering plates to the head usher once they are out of the sanctuary or to the individuals designated to count the offering.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of an emergency, the safety of the church members is every usher's first responsibility. Most emergencies are for medical attention or some kind of disturbance with an individual. In these cases, please follow the instructions listed below.

1. Clear the area to allow assistance.
2. Always assign one person to call 911.
3. Check for breathing and heartbeat.
4. Station one person to help emergency personnel to the person who needs help. Have another usher make sure the isles are clear for emergency personnel.
5. Keep either an usher or experienced medical person from the church, next to the afflicted person at all times.
6. Encourage others to pray.
7. Assign one person to remain close to the family members and friends.
8. Monitor and make sure the area is not crowded by on-lookers.

### **EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

Ushers should maintain order to the best of their ability in the event of any kind of evacuation. In this case, the ushers should start with the last pew or row in the sanctuary and proceed to usher people out to a nearby exit. If the church has front exits, an usher will escort people from the front rows while others are going out the back rows.

Ushers should be assigned to help others in the building at the same time, such as children church, youth department, checking the bathrooms and nurseries, etc. to ensure an evacuation is conducted in a safe and timely manner. It is good for all ushers to check remaining rooms to make sure everyone has evacuated. Once outside, the ushers can determine with others whether anyone is missing.

It should be also emphasized that the evacuation groups should congregate away from the church building in case of a fire or other dangers. It is good for the ushers to have a plan to take people to a place of safety prior to any kind of emergency.

In cases of fire, it is always best to call 911 when in doubt. The longer the delay, there is a greater risk to the building and others. On a very small fire that can be put out with an extinguisher, put out the fire, and monitor it. Determine whether it was an extremely small fire to not disrupt the service but in most cases, evacuations are the best solution. Again, safety comes first, and it is always best to be safe.

In putting out a small fire, do not place your safety or the safety of others at risk! If the fire grows too large or aggressive to control by an extinguisher, time and safety are compromised. Exit the building immediately.

## **DISTURBANCES**

Disturbances by mentally ill, distraught persons, or people who wish to disturb the service to gain something else other than respecting the house of God, require discernment on the part of the head usher and other ushers present. In some cases, the pastor may deal with issues but for the most part, it will be the responsibility of the head usher and other ushers to carry out the procedures.

1. Determine whether a person needs to be taken out of the sanctuary.
2. Determine how you wish to do this. Most of the times, it can be handled through a gentle but yet firm statement to come with the usher. If the disturbance is overbearing and causing further trouble, it may take a couple of ushers, one on each side, to gently encourage the person to another place. If they still refuse to be removed, then contact a senior elder or senior pastor for further assistance.
3. Determine a safe place to deal with this person and firmly state this type of behavior is not wanted or accepted in our services. Please distinguish between the person and the behavior.
4. Determine whether the person will stop or will have to be asked to leave the building. If they refuse, you may have to call the police department for help to remove this person.
5. If an individual is distraught due to grief, ask the grieving person, “How can we help?” or “We have someone who will pray with you.” Do this in a loving and tactful manner. Have another usher to recruit senior elders to come pray with them.
6. On disturbances of custody battles where one person attends church and another comes into the church to see their children or spouse, please escort the troubling person out of the sanctuary or area where the spouse or children are. In today’s times, there are so many legal issues of restraining orders, custody battles, etc. and unfortunately, there are times when others will try to take advantage of picking up a child they could not previously see or have a setting they think they can freely talk to their spouse.

Escort this person to a safe area to discuss the matter and quietly try to solve the issue. Explain that the sanctuary is not the place to conduct personal business. If there are restraining orders against such person, you must be very clear to explain to them this is a personal issue, not a church issue, and as such, they will have to leave. If they do not wish to leave, call the authorities to have this person escorted off your property. Tactfully state that this is not what the church wishes but has no other alternative but to call for assistance. Tactfully state that this is not a function of the church and personal matters have to be settled outside of the church. This is why they have courts and other agencies to do so.

Be sure to explain to the spouse who is inside of the church what has happened and at all costs, do not have children leave with the disgruntled bio parent. Church leaders should



be aware who brings the children to church and only those who bring them should be allowed to pick them up unless there are prior arrangements made. If a parent is inside the church and another parent, that is unknown to church leaders, wants to pick up their child, please ask the person inside of the church to step out of the sanctuary and asked them whether it is okay for the other parent to pick up their child. In some cases, another parent who has lost custody privileges has found out where the child is and wants to take advantage of church or setting thinking that others will not know their situation. Use wisdom, love, and tactfulness in the delicate matters.

END OF TRAINING

### **Evaluation Questionnaire**

#### **Instructions**

- Write out the questions and provide your answers on a separate sheet of paper.
- Include your name and date that the test was completed on the answer sheet

- A score of below 75 will not allow you to obtain a certificate of valid training.
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1. What is the main purpose of the usher in the church.
2. What should an usher do if a visitor takes a dog to church?
3. What should the usher do if someone has a nose-bleed?
4. Rain is falling how should the usher manage persons who are not visiting the church service and wish to shelter in the church foyer?
5. What should the usher do if someone needs to obtain change from the offering plate?
6. What should the usher do if someone is dressed inappropriately for service (no shirt, no shoes, ladies wearing topless garments)
7. What should the head usher do if an usher is late?
8. Should the usher sit in the foyer during worship sessions?
9. When should the usher leave the assigned post?
10. What is the recommended period of time that an usher should serve?
11. A visitor has a medical situation, such as a
  - heart attack
  - sugar spike
  - Blood pressure increase
12. When should the usher ask a senior member of the clergy to intervene in a situation?

FOR AN EXTRA 5 POINTS , HOW DID THE TRAINING INFORMATION HELP YOU?

END OF TEST