

Ushering Responsibilities

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

THANK YOU for ushering! Following are some instructions to help make the service run smoothly for you.

Please arrive 20 minutes before the service.

Before the service

- Please wear your nametag (located in the nametag cabinet in Fellowship Hall).
- Make sure the front doors facing Main St are unlocked. Please open, if warm.
- Check that collection plates are at the altar.
- Gather bulletins from the basket in the usher's closet. They are separated between first & second service.
- For services which are being streamed, people who do not want to be on the livestream should sit in the back few pews or balcony.
- Assist or direct people to pews. Most people know where they would like to sit.
 - Ask members to make room in their pew if the service is crowded.
 - Avoid seating latecomers during prayer or when choir is presenting.
- Just before the service begins, ensure the doors on either side of the pulpit are closed.
- Help Deacons as needed.
- Available resources to attendees:
 - Headsets for people who are hard of hearing. These headsets are on a self in the narthex. When turned on, they are connected directly to the microphones. There is an on/off /volume switch on each headset. The red-light glows when the device is turned **on**.
 - Age-appropriate items that children can take into worship including children's bulletins, crayons, pencils, clipboards, beanie babies, quiet books.
 - Reading glasses- available to share from a bin in the narthex.
 - Tissues- there are tissues in the pews, extra available in the Usher's Closet

*If no acolytes/ bell ringers are assigned/arrive at your service:

- Light candles before the service using the wand and matches from the Ushers Closet.
- 15 minutes before the service starts, ring the church bell 7-10 times. It's in the balcony at the back on the right side of the mirror. Don't pull the tan rope, it's the whole bell. Instead pull the yellow rope (the clapper). Pull the rope to the floor.

During Service

- Recording attendance:
 - There is an attendance sheet found in the narthex. Use the directions there to count and record the number in attendance at each service.
- Offering
 - If only one usher is assigned, you may recruit assistance from other members of the congregation to do the offering with you (before the service starts).

- Move forward to get the plates and collect the offering as soon as the pastor is finished with the introduction of the offering.
- Begin collection in center pews from front to back and then the side pews from front to back. Many people give online and will not have an offering for the plate. Move along past people not donating at this time.
- Balcony: Typically, someone will take charge of passing the plate and bringing it down. If not, please be sure the plate is passed.
- Stand at the doorway at the back when you are ready to bring the offering forward. This is the signal for the organist to begin the Doxology.
- Bring forward the offering as soon as the Doxology begins and place the plates on the altar. The financial secretaries will collect the donations after the service.

After the Service

After 1st Service

- Recycle used bulletins or loose papers, and put hymnals back in pew racks.
- Bulletins that were not handed out for the service should go back in the basket, so the administrator knows how many extra were printed.
- Ensure all (7) assisted hearing headsets are collected, turned off (i.e., red light is **off**) and placed in the narthex.
- Extinguish the candles after the service during the final hymn.

After 2nd Service

- Recycle used bulletins, loose papers and put hymnals back in pew racks.
- Bulletins that were not handed out for the service should go back in the basket, so the administrator knows how many extra were printed.
- Take bulletin basket and the attendance sheets to office. Place outside door if it is locked.
- Ensure all (7) assisted hearing headsets are collected, turned off (i.e., red light is **off**) and stored back in the Usher's Closet.
- Close the front door facing Main Street, shutters, and interior doors of the Sanctuary and the first floor between Fellowship Hall and the stairs.
- Extinguish the candles after the service during the final hymn if there is not a designated acolyte.

EMERGENCIES

- **In case of emergency dial 9-1-1**
- First Aid Kits are in Usher's closet and kitchen of Fellowship Hall.
- Fire blankets (for use with candle emergencies) are in the lectern.
- If someone is in distress, check to see if assistance is needed.
- Wheelchairs are located in the foyer, if needed.
- If you need call for an ambulance, tell them at which door you will meet them (Main door, Parking lot) to help direct them to the person in distress.
- In case of fire in the building, assist with evacuation.
- With all emergencies, please be sure the pastor is notified.