

DESERT CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

USHERS MANUAL

Revised
September 24, 2016

By
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The latest version of these instructions can be found at the churches website, desertcross.org.

Hover your cursor over the “Connect” tab, then move straight down and hover over “Volunteer”, then move directly to the right and click on “Worship Assistants”. Links to all the sets of instructions can be found at the bottom of the page.

● GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS ●

SECURITY SYSTEM

The security system is set to automatically activate late at night and it automatically deactivates at 5:38 AM. The security system should not impact the usher activities. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Jacque Jecker or to the Desert Cross Lutheran Church office.

ARRIVAL TIME

Team ushers should **arrive no later than 20 minutes ahead of time to greet worshipers and hand out bulletins**. Certain services (like Christmas and Easter) may require an earlier arrival time.

DRESS

Ushers are expected to be appropriately attired - good taste and judgement should prevail.

USHERS CLOSET

Located on the north wall of the narthex, the usher's closet consists of right and left sides of the upper closet. Miscellaneous materials are in the lower portion of the closet.

Right Door

- ★ Lighters to light acolyte taper (watch supply - notify the Worship Coordinator of needed replenishment)
- ★ Friendship Pad clip boards in a holding box
- ★ Boxes for completed and unused friendship pad sheets
- ★ Six (6) Offering Bags (use the ones that are in best shape)

Left Door:

- Bulletins for each service
 - ★ Allen Key to open the narthex and fellowship hall. Push "crash bar" in and hold while inserting Allen Key to lock open. Reverse process to close/lock. Doors are open when crash bar is "in" and locked when "out"

FRIENDSHIP PADS

1. Be sure each pad has a useable pen and blank sheets.
2. Distribute 1 to each pew.
3. Place filled/used sheets in the "completed sheets" box in the right side Usher Closet.
Be sure to check behind the pad for completed sheets.

OFFERING

1. Retrieve offering bags from right side of Ushers Closet.
2. Ushers move to front and begin with first occupied rows.
3. Collection proceeds from front to back (see diagram in Ushers Closet)
4. Return with bags to the narthex and prepare for presentation (along with the Communion elements).
5. Put all of the offering, envelopes and loose offering, into one bag.

NOTE: At the 9:30 service the ushers will give the money bags to Jacque at the sound booth. They will **NOT** take them forward. This removes the hurried process of trying to get the money into one bag and get to the front before the singing stops.

PRESENTING OFFERING AND COMMUNION ELEMENTS

5:00 P.M. and 8:00 A.M.

1. As soon as the offering has been consolidated into one bag, 3 ushers should take their places just inside the sanctuary doors, with **the first person carrying the offering bag, followed by two people carrying the wine and bread**, which will be found on the small table located near the sanctuary doors. Unless directed otherwise, wait there until the Offertory music begins. At that time proceed to the front where the pastor will be waiting. Be sure to hold the decanter so that the pastor can grasp it by the neck.
2. The usher with the offering bag is to carry it around the right side of the altar and place it on the ledge behind the altar, then return to where the other ushers are standing. If there is no room on the ledge, then place the offering on the floor below the ledge.
3. After presenting the communion elements, ushers turn and depart from the front to the rear of the sanctuary and wait there until after the blessing of the elements.

9:30 A.M.

At this service, only the communion elements will be take forward. As soon as two ushers have completed their task, they will give the offering bags to Jacque at the sound booth and immediately pick up the communion elements and wait just inside the doors at the rear of the sanctuary. As soon as Jane sees you are ready she will start singing the offertory. As soon as you hear her start to sing, you will take the communion elements forward, hand them to the Pastor and then return to the rear. When the third usher completes taking up the offering, probably in "the cave", he will hand that offering bag to Jacque at the sound booth.

COMMUNION

When Pastor and assistants are at the altar, ushers process to front of Sanctuary:

1. Put communion rail in place.
2. Move the music stand and microphone from the right side of the open area over to the wall and move the stool with the stack of trays from that wall to the head of the isle.
3. Bring cup table to the center.
4. One usher will stand between the cup table and the altar. The other 2 will stand in the aisle by the first 2 pews.
5. **All face the altar.**
6. **After the Pastor has communed, the usher by the cups will turn toward the congregation as a sign for the other 2 ushers to begin releasing the communicants.** Note; Refer to the diagram inside the right side door of the ushers cabinet in the narthex for the correct communion flow.

7. The usher near the cups will hold the top tray at an angle toward the communicants to make it easier for them to remove an empty cup.
8. If someone seems hesitant, this usher should direct that person to their proper place at the altar rail.
9. When the top tray is empty that usher should take it forward, via the opening on the right side of the rail and place it on the right side of the altar and then return to the stack of trays. If there is a 4th usher, that usher should sit in the front pew on the right side and would then handle that duty.
10. The ushers should follow the end of the line to be communed.
11. Make a mental note of anyone who is unable to go forward to receive communion and inform the pastor of that person so that communion can be taken to them.
12. After you have communed, 2 of the ushers should remove the center rail and place it on the step just to the right of the center aisle and the other usher should move the stack of cup trays to the right wall.
13. All ushers should come to the center, bow toward the altar and return to the Narthex.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Special / extra services (example: Easter / Christmas seasons) are scheduled throughout the year. The size of the usher teams depends on expected attendance.

INTINCTION

At Christmas and Easter, intinction is used for communion because of the higher than usual attendance. Ushers release communicants to the altar where they receive the communion wafer and dip (intinct) the wafer in the wine before eating, and then returning to their pew. This is a continuous flow process requiring a speedier release of communicants. No cups are used for intinction, therefore only 2 ushers are needed to release communicants.

COMMUNICANT FLOW

To improve flow during communion after all from the center pews have communed, those coming from the far right or choir may move to the shortest line. To improve flow at heavily attended services, an usher who has completed releasing people from the left side should be stationed near the rear to direct people into the shorter line. The usher releasing from the right half of the sanctuary should increase the rate of release to allow worshipers time to walk the greater distance to the altar.

HANDLING OVERFLOW

Chairs are available in the Fellowship Hall to handle overflow seating. Place the chairs in available spaces in the sanctuary and then in the narthex. Extra seating should only be provided AFTER seated worshipers have been urged to sit closer together and all available regular seating is exhausted. If it is necessary to seat people in the narthex, make sure the sound from the speakers in the ceiling is at a sufficient level for them to hear. The control is located on the wall near the right rear entrance to the sanctuary, just before the hallway that leads to the restrooms.

CANDLE LIGHTING

It is the responsibility of the ushers to make sure the two candles on the Altar are lit during the first song. We presently have Acolytes scheduled at the 9:30 service, so the usher will light his candle lighter at the start of the opening song. At 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM one of the Ushers will light the candles at the beginning of the first song. Light the one on the left first and the one on the right, then extinguish the lighter and return to the Narthex.

NOTE:

It is preferable to have an adult usher stay in the Narthex when not busy with other usher duties in order to assist late comers or those who have other needs.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING DESERT CROSS AND HELPING TO KEEP OUR WORSHIP RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

• 5:00pm SATURDAY EVENING •

BEFORE THE 5:00pm SATURDAY SERVICE:

1. Unlock narthex doors using the Allen Set Key found in the ushers' closet.
2. Turn on lights in sanctuary, hallways, and restrooms.
3. Renew the Eternal Candle.
 - ★ Get the stepladder from the closet in the Fellowship Hall and a filled candle canister from the sacristy. (If the Altar Guild did not leave a refilled canister, oil refill bottles are located to the right side of the sink in the sacristy).
 - ★ Remove glass cover from the candle, (grasping it only by the outside) replace the empty canister, light the filled canister and replace the glass cover.
 - ★ Return the stepladder to the closet and the empty canister to the Sacristy.

Note: Items 1, 2 above are normally completed by the Worship Coordinator before your arrival.

4. Check sanctuary. Remove papers and trash. Return hymnals and bibles to racks.
5. Distribute Friendship pads prior to the start of the service.
6. Prop open the doors to the sanctuary and distribute bulletins at doors on either side of the Welcome Table. As people begin to gather in the narthex before the service begins, make an attempt to keep the talking to a minimum. **Sound from extraneous conversations carries directly into the sanctuary through the open doors, disturbing those who are preparing for worship. You can invite them to move their conversations into the fellowship hall or outside, as appropriate.**
7. Check to assure that communion elements are present on the small table mentioned in the general instructions. They are placed there by the Altar Guild.
8. Usher people to seats as required.
9. Close doors from narthex to sanctuary approximately 5 minutes prior to service start time.

DURING THE 5:00pm SATURDAY SERVICE:

1. Keep doors between narthex and sanctuary closed during the entire service.
 - ★ Handle the door for worshipers leaving and returning to the service
 - ★ **Keep doors from the narthex to Fellowship Hall and restroom hallway closed.**

2. Greet late arrivals, hand out bulletins, and usher them into the service with as little disruption as possible. If a prayer is being said, attempt to keep them in the narthex until it is finished.
3. Count all attendees including adults and children, pastors, choir, ushers, and nursery. Do not count people in the fellowship hall. Record the count on attendance sheet taped to inside right door of Usher Closet.
4. Collect the offering. Bags are in the Ushers Closet. Collection moves from front to rear.
5. Take offering and communion elements to the front of the sanctuary as described in the general instructions.
6. Execute communion as described in the general instructions.
7. The two candles on the Altar should be extinguished as soon as the closing hymn starts. Extinguish the one on the right first, then light the wick in the candle lighter from the candle on the left and extinguish the candle. Lighting the candle lighter wick is symbolic of carrying the light of Christ into the world as you take it to the narthex. Once in the narthex you can extinguish the lighter.
8. As the closing hymn is being sung, open the doors from sanctuary into narthex as Pastors approach.

AFTER THE 5:00pm SATURDAY SERVICE:

1. Check sanctuary. Remove papers and trash. Return hymnals and bibles to racks.
2. Save usable bulletins and Newsletters for the Sunday services.
3. Collect Friendship Pads from pews. **Remove any sheets that have any lines filled out and put into the "completed sheets" box in the Usher Closet. Be sure to check for completed sheets that may have been placed underneath the blank ones.** Refresh supply of sheets on pads.
4. **Extinguish any votive candles that are still burning at the Betty Redmond memorial.**
5. Turn off all the lights in the sanctuary, hallways, and restrooms, UNLESS some activity is scheduled after the service (which is rare).
6. Leave the sanctuary and narthex neat and orderly. Close doors between narthex and sanctuary in preparation for Sunday services.
7. Close and lock all the doors - narthex, and fellowship hall.

● 8:00 am SUNDAY SERVICE ●

BEFORE THE 8:00am SUNDAY SERVICE:

1. Unlock narthex and fellowship hall doors using Allen Key found in the ushers closet.
2. Turn on lights in sanctuary, fellowship hall, hallways and restrooms.
3. Distribute Friendship pads prior to the start of the service.
4. Place white “order of worship” inserts inside bulletins for this service only.
5. Prop open the sanctuary doors and distribute bulletins on either side of the Welcome Table. **As people begin to gather in the narthex before the service begins, make an attempt to keep the talking to a minimum. Sound from extraneous conversations carries directly into the sanctuary through the open doors. You can invite them to move their conversations into the fellowship hall or outside, as appropriate.**
6. Usher people to seats (or use “spotters”) when appropriate.
7. Close doors from narthex to sanctuary 5 minutes before the start of the Service.

DURING THE 8:00AM SUNDAY SERVICE

1. **At the start of the opening hymn light the 2 candles on the altar only.** There are typically no Acolytes at this service.
2. Keep doors between narthex and sanctuary closed during the entire service.
 - a. Handle the door for worshipers leaving and returning to the service.
 - b. Keep doors from the narthex to Fellowship Hall and hallway closed.
3. Greet late arrivals, hand out bulletins, and usher them into the service with as little disruption as possible. If a prayer is being said, attempt to keep them in the narthex until it is finished.
4. Count all attendees including adults and children, pastors, choir, ushers, and nursery. Do not count people in the fellowship hall. Record the count on attendance sheet taped to inside right door of Usher Closet.

5. Collect the offering. Bags are in the Ushers Closet. Collection moves from front to rear.
6. Take offering and communion elements to the front of the sanctuary as described in the general instructions.
7. Execute communion as described in the general instructions.
8. The two candles on the Altar should be extinguished as soon as the closing hymn starts. Extinguish one of the candles, then light the wick of the candle lighter, then extinguish the other candle. Lighting the candle lighter wick is symbolic of carrying the light of Christ into the world as you take it to the narthex. Once in the narthex you can extinguish the lighter.
9. As the closing hymn is being sung, open the doors from sanctuary into narthex as Pastors approach.

AFTER THE 8:00am SUNDAY SERVICE:

1. Check sanctuary. Remove papers and trash. Return hymnals and bibles to racks.
2. Check the Friendship Pads in the pews. Remove all sheets that have any names on them and put into the "completed sheets" box in the Usher Closet. **Be sure to check for sheets that may have been put underneath the rest on the clipboard.** Refresh supply of sheets on pads. Put pads and holders back in their box and return box to Usher Closet.
3. Save usable bulletins and Newsletters for the next service. Leave them on the Welcome Table.
4. Leave the sanctuary and narthex neat and orderly.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING DESERT CROSS AND HELPING TO KEEP OUR WORSHIP RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

• 9:30 am SUNDAY SERVICE •

BEFORE THE 9:30am SUNDAY SERVICE

1. Prop open the sanctuary doors and distribute bulletins on either side of the Welcome Table. **As people begin to gather in the narthex before the service begins, make an attempt to keep the talking to a minimum. Sound from extraneous conversations carries directly into the sanctuary through the open doors. You can invite them to move their conversations into the fellowship hall or outside, as appropriate.**
2. Usher people to seats (or use “spotters”) when appropriate.
3. Close doors from narthex to sanctuary 5 minutes before the start of the Service.

DURING THE 9:30 am SUNDAY SERVICE:

1. Light the candle lighter for the acolyte and send him down the center aisle during the opening song.
2. Keep doors between narthex and sanctuary closed during the entire service.
 - a. Handle the door for worshipers leaving and returning to the service.
 - b. Keep doors from the narthex to Fellowship Hall and hallway closed.
3. Greet late arrivals, hand out bulletins, and usher them into the service with as little disruption as possible. If a prayer is being said, attempt to keep them in the narthex until it is finished.
4. Count all attendees including adults and children, pastors, choir, ushers, and nursery. Do not count people in the fellowship hall. Record the count on attendance sheet taped to inside right door of Usher Closet.
5. Collect the offering. Bags are in the Ushers Closet. Collection moves from front to rear.
6. **Give the offering bags to Jacque in the sound booth as described in the General Instructions.**
7. Execute communion as described in the general instructions.

8. As the closing song is being sung, open the doors from the Sanctuary into the Narthex as the acolyte approaches with the lit candle lighter. Be sure when extinguishing the candle lighter that they push the tip of the extinguished wick up and out of the lighter so it doesn't stick to the hot wax inside.

AFTER THE 9:30 am SUNDAY SERVICE:

1. Check sanctuary. Remove papers and trash. Return hymnals and bibles to racks. Dispose of bulletins.
2. Extinguish any votive candles that are still burning at the Betty Redmond memorial.
3. Place bulletins in the recycle bin.
4. Collect Friendship Pads from pews. Remove all sheets that have any names on them and put into the "completed sheets" box in the Usher Closet. **Be sure to check for sheets that may have been put underneath the rest on the clipboard.** Refresh supply of sheets on pads. Put pads and holders back in their box and return box to Usher Closet.
5. Turn off the lights in the fellowship hall, hallways, restrooms and nursery. Typically, the band practices after the late service, so you can leave the lights on in the sanctuary. Use your good judgment. If the band is obviously not staying, turn the lights off.
6. Leave the Sanctuary and Narthex neat and orderly. Close doors between the Narthex and Sanctuary.
7. Do one final check of all the facilities to assure that everything is in order. Exit facilities. The worship coordinator will also be double checking all doors and lights.

THANKS FOR VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME IN SERVICE TO HELP KEEP OUR WORSHIP RUNNING SMOOTHLY.