

GUIDELINES FOR USHERS
The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist
Milton, Delaware

The rector and people of the Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist are most grateful for your willingness to serve the Lord Jesus, your fellow members at St. John the Baptist, and all visitors seeking Christ, as an usher. We pray you find these guidelines helpful.

- 1) Please plan to arrive one-half hour before Mass. Go to the name badge board in the parish hall and put on your name badge and one of the "Usher" badges.
- 2) Since two ushers are scheduled, one should be in the front vestibule (narthex) of the church and the other in the side entryway (opposite the parking lot). It is important that an usher be in the narthex since, typically, visitors use the front entrance. When you arrive at the narthex, make sure the inner and outer doors are unlocked.
- 3) Greet each member or visitor with a cheery "Good Morning! Welcome!" It's good to welcome even our members. You are our greeter as well as the usher! Smiles work wonders! Then hand them a bulletin. Remember, you are extending the hospitality of Christ to all who enter our doors.
- 4) If you think the worshiper might be a visitor, greet them with a cheery "Good Morning!" Then add: "I'm (your first name). Have we met before?" The response might be, "No, this is my first time here." Then you might say, "I'm so happy you have come. Welcome! Please come to our fellowship gathering in the parish hall after the worship service." Ask if there are questions you might answer. Ask their first name and then write it, using the blue pen, on one of the visitor name tags in each vestibule. Then hand them a "Welcome" packet, also in each vestibule, and invite them to fill out the visitor information card that is in the packet. If there are young children, mention there is a Sunday School during worship, for children 4 to 12 yrs. If they seem interested, ask a member who might be standing nearby to get Jill Malloy, the Sunday School teacher, so she can meet the child(ren). If the child(ren) will be staying with the adult(s) during worship, hand each child, six years old and younger, one of the bags containing activities to occupy the child during Mass. These bags are also in each vestibule. Remember, most likely you are the first face a visitor sees when coming to our church. You are the face of Jesus for them! The first impression of visitors will be that we are a welcoming church if you are welcoming.

5) Once the opening hymn begins, take your place in your pew. If someone is late for Mass and they go to their pew without a bulletin, take a bulletin to them. The usher who was at the side entryway covers those entering from there and the usher who was in the narthex covers those entering from that direction.

6) After the Passing of the Peace, go to the back of the nave. The two of you will present to the acolyte the gifts of wafers and wine in the vessels on the stand to the right of the entrance. After handing the vessels to the acolyte, you will receive the offering plates from the acolyte and will collect the offering. Going down the center aisle, one usher on each side, let the plate go down each pew (no need to keep hold of the plate). The last person in the pew will then hand the plate back to the center aisle. After the offering has been received, the organist will introduce the Doxology. When the congregation begins singing the Doxology ("Praise God from whom all blessings flow..."), you will take the plates to the altar, handing them to the acolyte. Then return to your seat.

7) At the time for distribution of the Holy Eucharist, direct worshipers to the altar rail trying to keep the rail filled (10-12 people can kneel at the rail), but not keeping too long a line in the center aisle. This might take some practice. No problem!

8) After Mass, check all pews, picking up any bulletins left and placing any books on the pew seats back into the book racks. Make sure the outer and inner front entry doors are locked and take any bulletins left in the narthex to the side entry table. Place the top for the baptismal font (on the table next to the font) on top of the font. If the sanctuary lights and overhead fans are still on, turn them off or notify the senior warden. The senior warden can show you where the light and fan switches are.

Again, thank you for your dedicated service!

March 2019