

Bethel United Methodist Church

Ushering and Greeting Ministry

Thank you for offering yourself in service as an usher or greeter at Bethel UMC. This is an important ministry of hospitality and you have an important role and responsibility. You will be one of the first people visitors will see. You are the first impression of our church. How you meet them and what you say to them will help set the tone for their worship experience here.

Ushering and greeting calls for patience, courtesy and discernment. Almost like entertaining friends, you are the host or hostess and each person coming to worship is your special guest. Your warm greeting and pleasant smile will help foster a sense of belonging, even for a newcomer.

In addition to greeting people, your service as an usher is essential to the worship of our congregation. People cannot take their seats, follow the order of worship, receive communion, or give their offerings to God without you. Your service, performed in a quiet, reverent and unobtrusive manner, helps create a meaningful atmosphere for sacred worship.

Our Ushering and Greeting ministry is coordinated by our Head Usher Rick Putnam. Rick will also oversee the training and scheduling (*beginning October 1, 2007*) for our ushers.

Bethel United Methodist Church Usher Guidelines

Dress – We ask that our ushers dress in such a way to reflect the reverence and dignity of the worship setting. Clothing needs to be clean and pressed. For men, suits, sport coats, shirt and tie or even a conservative sport shirt are appropriate. For women, conservative dresses, skirts and blouses, dress slacks and sweater are appropriate. Casual clothing such as jeans, shorts, t-shirts would not be appropriate.

Specific Duties of the Day

1. Arrive at the church 30 minutes prior to your assigned service.
2. Greet people and hand out bulletins. Give Children's Bulletins to the young ones.
3. One usher should be available to help seat people especially when it gets crowded.
4. Help visitors find seating – *together* – even if you need to ask some regular attenders to move or change seats. Be prepared to ask people to “swoosh” or move over to accommodate more folks in a row. To help with this, the back row of chairs will be removed and be kept folded in the bell tower to be used when needed to seat people together.
5. Hearing Devices. We have hearing assisted devices located on the window sill.
6. Welcome Bags. During the announcements, be prepared to hand out gift bags – **one per household group – not one per person** – when visitors are recognized as the announcements begin. (The bags are under the table in the narthex.)
7. Latecomers. Wait to be seated until after the first hymn is finished. Stay in the narthex area to greet latecomers and help them be seated. Be sure to help them find a seat and give them a bulletin and help them find a hymnal if needed. When you take your seat, sit in the back row center where there are two chairs marked “Reserved for Ushers” (perhaps even in the narthex on crowded days). This is very important to make sure we are extending hospitality to all who come, even latecomers.
8. Gatekeeper. The rear door of the sanctuary should be kept closed during the worship service. Because the door is old and the latch no longer works, this can be a difficult task. If someone needs to leave the service at any time, please open the door for them and then close it behind them. This is most important when the children return from Children's Church. It is your responsibility (along with the Children's Church leader for the day) to make sure the children return to the service in a quiet and orderly manner. Please help to keep them in the narthex area until after Joys and Concerns. Think about the reverence of the moment before opening the door or allowing the door to be opened. Reinforce the need for them to enter silently so as not to disturb the worship service.
9. Offering. The offering is a very important part of our worship. It is our time to respond to God's grace with thanksgiving. The offering is usually received after the Joys and Concerns. Be aware of when it is scheduled so you will be in your seat when called to come forward. Come forward when called to receive the offering. There will be a short prayer before you move to receive the offerings. Collect the offerings from the sides first – from front to back; and then come to the front and collect the offerings from the center section – from front to back. Always keep an eye on your fellow usher so you stay together. Some ushers prefer to receive the offering from half the row at a time; others prefer to do it by alternating rows. The important detail about receiving the offering is that you communicate and watch your fellow usher. Stay together and make sure you

have given everyone the opportunity to make an offering. One usher should go up to the balcony to receive those offerings if there are people seated there. There is a basket up there for that purpose. Wait in the back until the Offertory is completed and bring the offerings forward once the Doxology begins.

10. Communion. The sacrament of Holy Communion is a most sacred occasion in our church. Sacred, not somber. As you usher people to communion, it is perfectly appropriate to smile. We typically celebrate communion via intinction with one or two stations. When the pastor indicates that the table is set the ushers should be in place to get folks started coming forward.
 - a. One usher sends the choir first to the front left side. The other usher – gets the folks from the balcony if there are people up there. If not, wait for the other usher to finish with the choir so you can start the sides together.
 - b. Start then from each side section **back to front**.
 - c. Then start the middle section **front to back** one row at a time – stay together with the other usher.
 - d. Tell the servers if there are persons who were unable to come forward so they might be served at their seats.
11. Emergencies. There may be a time when an emergency arises. Someone becomes ill or something happens to cause an immediate reaction or excitement. Your first duty is to remain calm, but to summon aid as quickly as possible. That may mean a call to 911 or simply helping someone leave the service to find a restroom. A first aid kit – with rubber gloves and other supplies is located on the shelf of the coat room.

If a child needs to find a parent, or if the nursery calls a parent on the pager system, you should assist in helping as needed.

12. After worship
 - a. Go through each pew and gather any trash or old bulletins. Bulletins from the early service which are left in tact should be re-used for the late service.
 - b. Replace hymnals in the racks or on the pews. In each pew rack, there should be a hymnal on one side and then a Faith We Sing and a Bible on the other side. The Faith We Sing goes BEHIND the Bible. In the middle pews, there should be a hymnal and a Faith We Sing in each corner of the pew. In the side pews, there should be a hymnal and a Faith We Sing in the corner next to the aisle. In both cases, the hymnal goes on top.
 - c. Collect the sheets from the Friendship registers and give them directly to Pat or put them in the “M” cubby hole for Pastor Marty or Pat.
 - d. Turn off the lights. (Not while people are still visiting, and only after the late morning service.

Ushering and greeting is an important ministry in our church. We are glad you have chosen to serve God and Bethel Church in this way. Like the pastor and other worship leaders, you are expected to exhibit courtesy and discernment. Your attitude and demeanor, will be noticed by all who come to worship. There is much information here for you to consider. Please review it periodically to remind yourself of the duties and responsibilities. Using good judgment and treating people as you would want to be treated are necessary in being a good usher and greeter. You provide a tremendous service to Christ and His church. Thank you for your commitment.