

USHER GUIDE 2021



Helping provide a safe and
welcoming environment at
worship

OVERVIEW

Ushering is an activity that allows the participant to be a part of worship services at UPC. As the initial point of contact for those attending church services, the usher plays a critical role in providing a welcoming, safe and relaxed atmosphere conducive to worship. This document aims to serve as a general guide for those who serve as ushers at UPC.

There is an established routine to the worship service itself that provides a rhythm and consistency that all who attend services appreciate and expect. To begin familiarizing yourself with the role of the usher, first read The Usher Captain Checklist (attached), which lists the tasks ushers are expected to accomplish before, during and after the worship service. There are separate checklists for the 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM services. The Usher Captain is primarily responsible for oversight and the coordination of ushers to ensure that each task is completed.

In addition to familiarizing oneself with the Usher Captain Checklist, it is expected that each usher be familiar with the general layout of the church in order to assist worshipers and guests in wayfinding. Common requests include, but are not limited to: restrooms, elevators, stairwells, the Parlor, the Fellowship Hall, the Nursery, Dunham Hall and the various classrooms (for both children and adults).

Ushers should also know the location of the four AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) stations in the church complex.

They are located:

1. In the hall adjacent the Sacristy
(near the Music Director's office)
1. On the Fellowship Hall landing
2. On the ground floor of Dunham Hall
3. In the Church Office near the hall leading to the Henderson St entrance.



8:30 CHECKLIST

PRIOR TO SERVICE:

- Turn on Sanctuary lights. The switches are located in three different places:
 - In the hallway on pulpit side of Chancel, turn on lights marked "Chancel, House" and "Flour, Left and Right." It is not necessary to adjust the dimmer. Do not turn on spotlights at this time.
 - The switch for the Chancel fluorescent cove lights is just inside the door behind the piano on the baptismal font side of the Chancel.
 - The switch for the lights behind the organ is located in the Sacristy next to the door on the facing wall marked "Lights behind organ."
- Make sure the pitcher, cup and plate are on the Communion Table. [stored in Sacristy]
- Make sure all Ushers wear name tags. Make aisle assignments.
- Cordon off balcony.
- Check for proper date on bulletins. [May be in church office beside volunteer desk]
- Make sure children's bulletins and worship bags are in the Narthex.
- Put some children's bulletins in the front right window area.
- Make sure offering plates are in the Narthex and baskets for Pennies for Hunger.
[Plates are in the Sacristy. Baskets are in the Narthex closet.]

15-20 MINUTES PRIOR TO SERVICE

- Light Chancel candles
- Turn on Chancel and Pulpit spotlights [switches located on the pulpit side of the Chancel marked "Lectern pulpit" and "Lectern flowers."] Take care to align arrows on both rheostats to avoid overheating of lights

AFTER MINISTERS HAVE ENTERED, CLOSE DOOR TO THE SANCTUARY.

DURING SERVICE:

- At least two Ushers should remain in the Parlor/Narthex area through the service.
- Take a walk through the church for security purposes.
- Take up offering [also Pennies for Hunger on the last Sunday of each month].
- At end of service, open outer doors.

AFTER SERVICE:

- Clean pews; put hymnals in sideways; put used bulletins in the recycling box in the Narthex.
- Snuff candles in Chancel.
- Check to make sure wireless hearing units have been returned and are plugged into charger.
- Turn off pulpit and Chancel spotlights. Leave all other lights on.

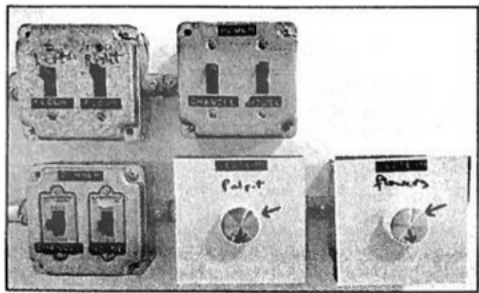
11:00 CHECKLIST

TUESDAY PRIOR TO SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE:

- The Worship Committee Chair will email the names of your usher team members by 11:00 a.m. to communications@upcch.org so they can be included in the bulletin.

30 MINUTES PRIOR TO SERVICE:

- Confirm that the two Chancel spotlights ("Pulpit" and "Flowers") are turned OFF to cool between services. Switches are in the Pulpit side hallway. Arrows on dials should be pointing to 6 o'clock.



Spotlight switches (rheostats) are located in the Pulpit side hallway. To turn OFF, rotate dials counterclockwise until you feel a click. When turned OFF, the arrow on the dial will be pointing to 6 o'clock.

- Greet team members as they arrive and distribute their printed name tags (stored in lectern table). Be certain ushers are acquainted with one another and with the greeters, who are often new members.
- Confirm that the offering plates are in the Narthex. Additionally, on the last Sunday of the month, take three baskets from the Narthex storage closet (on the Robertson Lane side) to use for collecting "Pennies for Hunger."
- If any attendees need umbrellas and emergency assistive devices (wheelchairs, canes, and crutches). Those are also stored in the Narthex storage closet.
- Indicate to ushers their designated locations for distributing bulletins at the three entrances to the Sanctuary. Review with them their aisle assignments for the offering collection (4 ushers in Sanctuary; 2 ushers in balcony) and the "Pennies" collection (2 ushers in Sanctuary; 1 usher in balcony). Assign two ushers to return the two offering plates to the ministers in the Chancel during the Doxology.

15-20 MINUTES PRIOR TO SERVICE:

- Light the two Chancel table candles (candle lighter hangs from shelf located behind the Chancel table).
- Turn on "Pulpit" and "Flowers" spotlights by rotating dials clockwise to align arrows at 2 o'clock).
- At 10:55 am, as the clergy enter the Sanctuary and walk down the aisle, close the four doors between the Narthex and Sanctuary.

DURING SERVICE:

- Record today's attendance count (congregation & choir)
- At least two ushers should remain in the Narthex throughout the service.
- One usher should be assigned to the Henderson Street entrance to greet people as they enter, to lock that door at 11:10 am (to encourage people to enter from the Franklin St. entrance) and to stand by the alarm panel in case of an emergency.
- If the Sexton is not present, take a walk through the church for security purposes,
- Collect the morning offering and on the last Sunday of each month, also collect "Pennies for Hunger."
- Members of the offering counting team will meet the usher captain in the Narthex at the end of the offertory.

AFTER THE SERVICE:

- All ushers should assist the usher captain in collecting sheets and cleaning pews.
- Tidy the pews, placing hymnals/Bibles sideways in the racks, and collect debris and used bulletins (for recycling bin in Narthex).
- Collect attendance sheets from the blue record books in pews and place the record books on the hymnal racks at the end of the pews along the center aisle.
- Snuff the two Chancel table candles, using the snuffer on the end of the candle lighter.
- Return silver plate, cup, and pitcher on Chancel table to the Sacristy; store them in their flannel bags. (Sacristy is the small room across from the stairway leading down to the Preschool wing.)
- In the Sacristy, turn off audio system "master switch" and "lights behind organ" switch.
- Turn off Chancel cove lights (switch is located outside of door on baptismal font side of Chancel).
- Turn off "Pulpit" and "Flowers" spotlights, the two "Chancel House" power switches, and the "Left Flou" and "Right Flou" power switches. The "Dimmer" switches always remain at mid-position.
- Turn off all lights in Sanctuary and Narthex after worshipers have left.
- Leave on one lamp in Parlor. Close doors to Sanctuary and between Narthex and Parlor.
- Lock the four Narthex doors (2 single, 1 double) that lead to the outside, the single automatic door that is next to the Parlor and leads to the breezeway, and the double doors that lead to Henderson Street. Keys for locking doors are located on chains to the left or right of the door frames. To set each door's exit device in "locked mode," insert key in hole on door's exit device, push the touch bar in slightly, and turn the key counterclockwise until touch bar is fully released and springs back to its out position. When touch bar is in out position, exit device is in locked mode. [Note: Exit device for the automatic door next to Parlor cannot be placed in locked mode until the automatic opening mechanism above door is turned off. A rocker switch, located on right side of the mechanism, has three positions (door OPEN-door OFF-door CLOSED). Place switch in MID position to turn off mechanism.]

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

DURING SUNDAY SERVICES

In the event of a medical emergency during Sunday Services, the following plan should be activated:

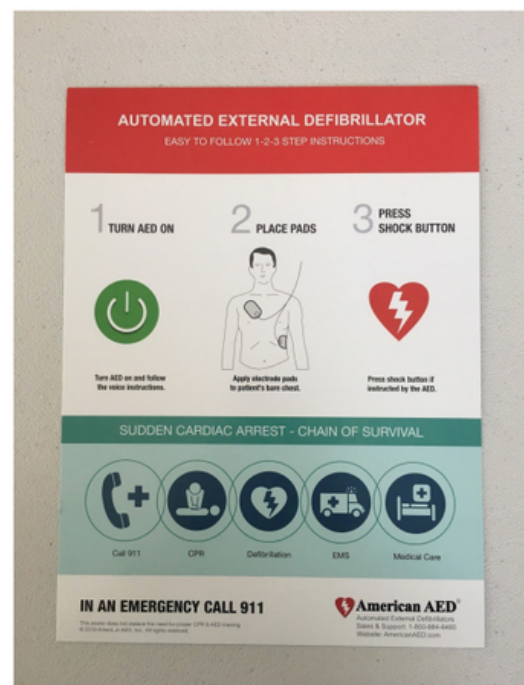
1. The head usher is responsible for seeing to it that 911 is called if needed, and that the caller knows the address: **University Presbyterian Church, 209 E. Franklin Street**. That information is critical for the 911 dispatcher.
2. If the patient is sufficiently stable, and it is possible to do so, he/she should be removed to the parlor area. Medical personnel in attendance at church are anticipated to self-identify and offer assistance. If medical personnel in attendance are not aware of an ongoing medical emergency, the worship leader may need to request medical assistance for the medical emergency. If the patient is a choir member or other service leader at the front of sanctuary, he/she will be removed through the choir door into a room or office adjacent to the sacristy rather than the parlor. In that case, the 911 dispatcher can be advised for EMS to access via the Dunham Hall entrance on Robertson Ln. An usher is to be posted at the appropriate entrance to assist arriving EMS personnel.
3. It is critical that appropriate care begin immediately. If it appears to be a possible cardiac event, a person should be sent for nearest AED (Automatic External Defibrillator), and another for a second AED in event of a problem with first. AEDs are located:
 - In the hall adjacent to the Sacristy, close to the Music Director's office
 - On the landing leading to the Fellowship Hall
 - In the Church Office near the hall leading to the Henderson St entrance.
 - On the ground Floor open area of Dunham Hall

If the problem appears to be a cardiac event, the AED should be opened, turned on, and voice prompts followed, including application of AED pads and CPR. Personnel trained in CPR should direct assessment and care of the individual pending arrival of the Emergency Medical Services team.

Additional resources in AED cabinets include **fingertip pulse oximetry devices, a stethoscope (only in the cabinet by the Music Director's office), and a Stop the Bleed kit.**

4. In the event that the patient is transported to the hospital, ushers will attend to family members if present at UPC, and identify a means of getting family members to the hospital. If the patient is not accompanied by a family member at UPC, and is able to say who they wish to be contacted, an usher or other UPC member attending to the patient will pass along that information to the UPC Pastoral or Program Staff.

5. In the event of AED deployment and pad use, Scott Buck or Kim McNeill will be contacted to order pad replacement.



MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

DURING THE WEEK

In the event of a medical emergency not during Sunday Services, the following plan should be activated, realizing the likelihood of fewer people in immediate proximity to help compared to during Sunday Services.

1. If a medical emergency is apparent, 911 is called with an address, **University Presbyterian Church, 209 E. Franklin Street**. That information is critical for the 911 dispatcher.

2. The patient need not be moved to the parlor or other room, but rather care should be initiated where the individual is. It is critical that appropriate care begin immediately. If it appears to be a possible cardiac event, a person should be sent for nearest AED (Automatic External Defibrillator), and another person, if possible, for a second AED in the event of a problem with first. AEDs are located:

- In the hall adjacent to the Sacristy, close to the Music Director's office
- On the landing leading to the Fellowship Hall
- In the Church Office near the hall leading to the Henderson St entrance.
- On the ground Floor open area of Dunham Hall

If suspicion of cardiac event, the AED should be opened, turned on, and voice prompts followed including application of AED pads and CPR. Personnel trained in CPR should direct assessment and care of the patient pending arrival of the Emergency Medical Services team. Additional resources in AED cabinets include fingertip pulse oximetry devices, a stethoscope (only in the cabinet by the Music Director's office) and a Bleeding Control kit.

3. UPC Pastoral or Program Staff will contact a family member; or if the medical emergency occurs at a non-UPC function held at UPC, the program or event director will contact a family member.

4. In the event of AED deployment and pad use, Scott Buck or Kim McNeill will be contacted to order pad replacement.

WEATHER RELATED EMERGENCIES

The object of this evacuation plan is to **get everyone from the sanctuary safely downstairs and into the hallways from the Stephen Ministry room to the Youth Center and away from windows**, closing doors to classrooms along the way. We may be successful in accommodating everyone into the hallways only or there may be some spillover into the youth center or Stephen Ministry room. We also may need to avoid the parlor elevator in the event of a power outage and will need to rely on members and ushers to help our physically disabled members get to the lower floor of the church.

The evacuation plan for a weather emergency during the Sunday school hour should be similar in that we want everyone to move toward the downstairs internal hallways. The mechanism to implement the evacuation plan during Sunday school – other than relying on the NWS announcement and instructing teachers to use that as their cue to move to the hallway.

Reacting to notifications that will undoubtedly flash on our phones, the Usher Captain will go to the pulpit to notify the staff of the weather event officially (as opposed to everyone reacting to the NWS announcement on their phones). An announcement by a staff member from the pulpit will put the evacuation plan in motion.

The staff announcement will instruct the first 14 rows (there are 26 rows of pews in the lower part of the sanctuary) in attendance to move toward the doors on either side of the pulpit then evacuate to the internal stairwell leading downstairs. We want to make sure to NOT evacuate towards Dunham Hall due to the large windows there. Two ushers will be in position to guide this effort.

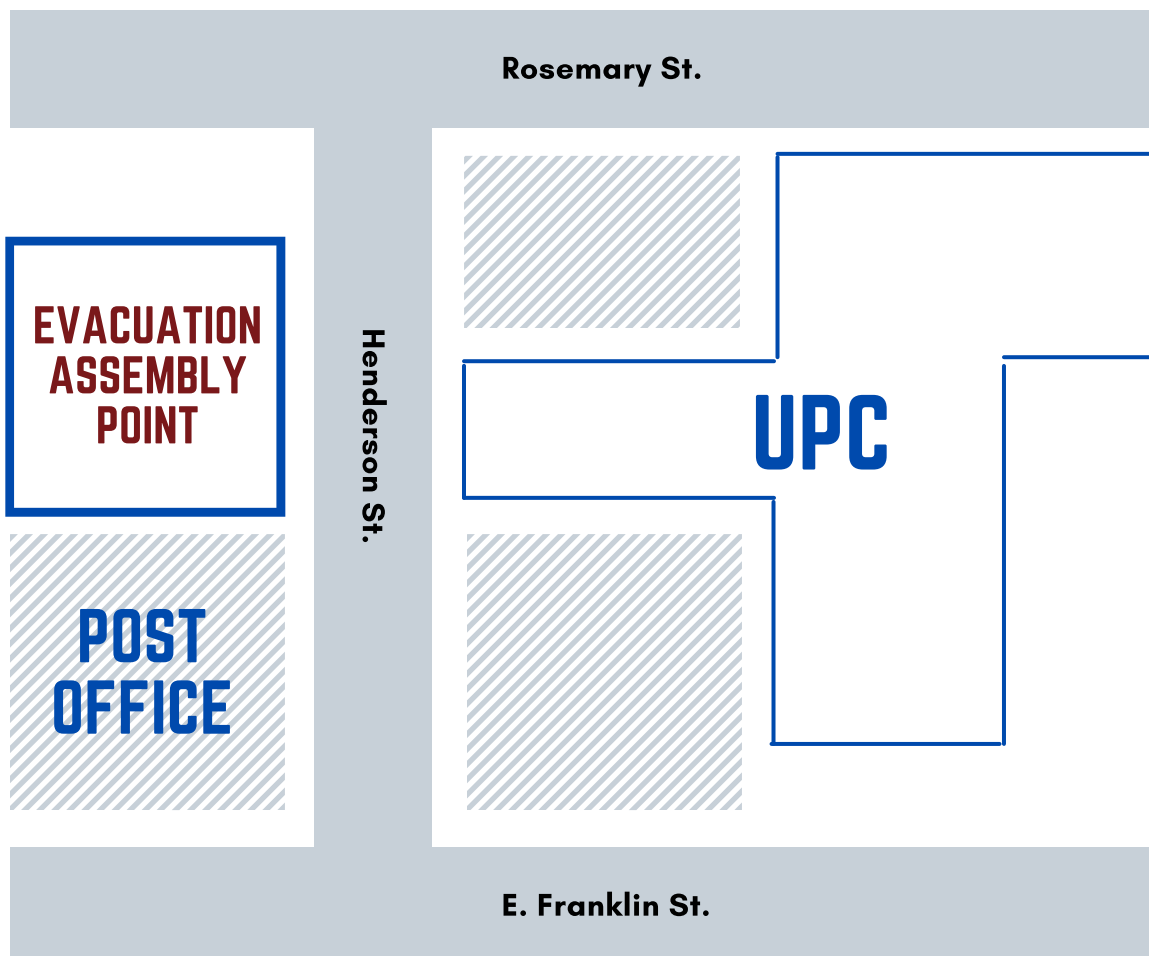
The staff announcement will instruct the back 12 rows and the balcony to move through the parlor, down the stairs, through the fellowship hall, and into the hallways. Four ushers will be in position to guide this effort.

EVACUATION EMERGENCIES

Should a fire alarm sound during the service while most of the congregation is in the sanctuary, the evacuation plan will be announced from the pulpit. Likely the majority of those in the sanctuary will exit through the front door and the side door on the east side of the narthex. The main goal will of course be an efficient and calm evacuation.

Should the alarm sound during the Sunday School hour, all Sunday School teachers will be responsible for evacuation of their classes. All teachers and their class should move quickly and calmly to the nearest exit and proceed across Henderson Street to the parking area behind the Post Office. All adult classes should also move to the nearest exit and proceed across Henderson Street to the parking area behind the Post Office. {See also the Evacuation Plan under the UPC Classroom Emergency Plan.]

Parents and their children will reunite at the designated spot of the parking lot behind the Post Office.



DISRUPTIVE PERSONS

Two of the more visible duties of an usher involve the greeting of people entering the church and the handing out of church bulletins as people prepare to enter the sanctuary. This provides an excellent opportunity to gauge the mood of people as they come in. The vast majority of people are arriving at church simply to worship in our sanctuary, hear the sermon and participate in the musical offerings. Occasionally, you may encounter someone who wishes to speak to the pastor about something – either a financial hardship or perhaps some other assistance that the church may be able to offer. This, by itself, is no cause for concern. Explain that the Pastor will not be available until after the service at the earliest. If appropriate, explain that the Pastor reserves Tuesday afternoons for discussions regarding financial assistance. If the person does not wish to sit in the sanctuary during the service, the parlor is a good alternative.

On very rare occasions UPC may have a person attend Sunday services who is confused or agitated and who may through their actions disrupt the church service. As an usher you may have an opportunity to help head off or mitigate such events simply by talking with the person in an effort to calm him/her down. The usher captain should not hesitate to call 911 to report any incident involving someone acting aggressively in the church, remembering to give the proper location – **University Presbyterian Church at 209 E. Franklin St** – as well as a description of what is occurring. The usher captain should attempt to stay on the line to give updates and also designate another usher to stand by the front door to direct the police response when they arrive. Should the situation deescalate prior to police arrival, notify the 911 operator. You have the option, if things are sufficiently calm, to cancel the response. The police do not mind. Better safe than sorry.

If the person's agitation seems to be focused on one of the worship leaders and the service is being disrupted as a result, that worship leader should exit the sanctuary using one of the exits at the front of the church, both for his/her personal safety and as a way to help defuse the situation. Ushers or staff should try to engage the person to keep him talking until police arrive.

Unfortunately, it has become a fact of American life to have to consider the possibility of an armed intruder at a public gathering. Nationally, these occurrences are rare and the chances of an event like this happening at UPC are quite remote, but not zero.

If someone enters the church displaying a weapon, one of the ushers should immediately absent themselves from the area and call 911, giving the proper location – 209 E. Franklin St – and the nature of the emergency, then remain on the line to give updates as available.

If the intruder enters the Sanctuary and begins firing a weapon the scene will become immediately dynamic. Initially, people can be expected to start streaming for the exits in an effort to escape. This is a normal reaction. The instinct to survive is strong. Current best practices in the event of an active shooter recommend running to a place of safety if you possibly can as a first choice. If that is not an option, hiding is your second-best choice (i.e. the shelter in place protocol for classrooms). Hiding in the Sanctuary may work for a small number of people, but not for the congregation as a whole on a Sunday morning. The third option is to fight the intruder. Members of the congregation would have to overwhelm and subdue the intruder. **How an individual responds in an active shooter situation is a personal decision based upon a person's self-assessment, individual capabilities and the specific situation presented.** An individual may decide to fight first rather than flight or hiding.

Once the threat is neutralized, members of the congregation with medical backgrounds will be asked to help triage any injured persons in the Sanctuary. Ushers or staff will be directed to bring first aid supplies to the scene by bringing the AED units to the Sanctuary. As first responders arrive, we must be mindful that they will be dealing with a possible Mass Casualty incident as well as a Crime Scene. Police, Fire and EMS personnel will take the lead once they arrive and direct the action from that point forward.

CLASSROOM EMERGENCY PLAN

In the event that some event occurs at the church during the Sunday School hour (or in the case of the nursery, whenever the rooms are occupied) that could impact the safety of the people inside, it may become necessary to either Shelter in Place or Evacuate.

Though the steps outlined here are generally aimed at the children's classes, adult classes will also need to heed the call to either Shelter in Place or Evacuate.

Shelter in Place for Those in Classrooms

- After being notified of the need to shelter in place, adults should ensure that all children are accounted for. Quickly check the hallway and bring anyone into the classroom.
- Adults should lock the door using a key located inside the room and to the left of the door and make sure it is closed. If there are blinds in the room, close them.
- Move all children to an area of the room where they cannot be in sight of the door or window. You may use furniture or other objects in the room to block doors or hide people from view.
- REMAIN CALM. Children will take their lead from the adults around them, so be as calm and reassuring as you can.

Evacuation From Classrooms

If instructed to evacuate the building, follow these steps.

- Take the sign with your class name with you (it is taped beside your door).
- Have one teacher lead the class out while any other adults follow behind the group to ensure everyone stays together.
- Walk to the nearest exit and lead your class across Henderson St to the parking lot behind the Post Office.
- One adult should hold up your class name sign so that family members can easily find your group.

Prepared by the Safety & Security Committee:

Brian Curran, *Chair*

Jarrett McLaughlin, *Co-Pastor and Liaison to the committee from the Program Staff*

Mike Edmiston

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Lawrence Sizemore

Scott Buck, *Medical Advisor and Consultant on AED Equipment*

Dennis Dallke, *Property Manager of UPC and Building/Equipment Consultant*

