

Abundant Harvest Church



Usher Handbook

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Ushers Manual

The Holy Helps

Thank you for your interest in serving as an usher here at Abundant Harvest Church. As an usher you will have the opportunity to impact the lives by working hand in hand with the pastor or speaker. An usher's performance could make or break the outcome of the service.

The responsibility of an usher is an important part of our church ministry team and therefore demands wholehearted attention and faithfulness. Not everybody can fulfill the call of an usher. Some responsibilities are as follows:

- Sets the spiritual climate of the service by pre-service prayer and having a joyful attitude
- Makes sure that everything is in proper order so the service may flow with no interruptions
- Helps make a visitor feel welcome and comfortable
- Acts in authority that has been delegated to him

The Ushers motto is Teachability, Thoughtfulness, Tactfulness, Timeliness and Teamwork!

Galatians 5:13-You my brothers were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love.

1 Corinthians 4:1 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The following chart displays the "CHAIN OF COMMAND". It is important that as an usher you respect the chain of command. Chain of commands are designed for the proper flow of information, accomplishment of duties, and for the delegation of responsibilities. When you have questions as to your duties, go to the person above you. Use the Chain of Command that follows:

Pastor
Executive Pastor or Speaker
Head Usher
Control Usher
Usher

HEAD USHER:

As the leader of the Usher Corp, the head usher has the following responsibilities.

- Receive instructions from the Pastor
- Delegate individuals within the corp. to carryout those instructions
- Brief pre-service prayer before every service
- Teach and train ushers how to fulfill delegated responsibilities
- Be able to show appreciation to those under their charge often and in various ways
- Keep open communication with the ushers under your care
- The Head Usher or in his absence the Control Usher should stand at the sound room door and monitor who comes and in out during the entire service and also check the hallways and office

section for wanderers. Suspicious people should be confronted to determine if they are a threat, if they are not direct them to the sanctuary.

- Don't overwork ushers. Have a rotating schedule to prevent burn-out
- Develop and maintain a watertight system of removing offerings from the sanctuary. Don't allow your ushers to set down offering bags for a second.
- Deal with all disturbances prayerfully, firmly and quickly with least amount of disturbance possible. If the situation is beyond your control see the Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor whichever is available.
- Develop a system for taking attendance that is invisible and non-distracting
- Develop and instruct usher how overflow seating will be handled

To complete the above responsibilities, the head usher must be an individual who earns the respect of delegated individuals. The head usher must be a dedicated servant of the Lord. He must be loving, kind, compassionate, dependable, devout to responsibility and authoritative. He must be able to discern attitudes of people, be consistent in decision and wise in council. He must be a motivator of people. As the Administrator of the Ushers, it is important that he continually seek the guidance of God when making decisions.

CONTROL USHER

A Control Usher is one who works directly with the Head Usher. He is second in charge. The Head Usher picks the Control Usher. When selecting a Control, the Head Usher is to look for persons that are TRUSTWORTHY, FAITHFUL, AND ABLE TO EXERCISE AUTHORITY. The primary responsibility of each control is to carry out the desires of the Head Usher. Many of the Head Usher's duties also apply to the control in their specific area of responsibility. A Control Usher needs to be one who has confidence in their ability to perform many tasks. When the Head Usher is absent the Control Usher takes charge.

USHER

The Head Usher or the Control Usher issues an usher's assignments and positions. Ushers responsibilities:

- Attendance – Expected to be present when scheduled. If an usher cannot fulfill their commitment they should notify the Head Usher as soon as possible. A no call, no show without notification or habitual tardiness may result in being removed from monthly schedule.
- Don't get so personally involved during the service that you are distracted from your responsibilities. You are to maintain constant surveillance.
- Greet visitors and those you come in contact with the same warmth and love as the Pastor would himself.
- During offerings pass the offering bags in a cheerful manner. After collection the Head Usher will develop procedures for securing the offering
- Required to be present when scheduled. If you are not able to be at assigned service call the Head Usher. A no show without notification may result in being removed from the schedule.
- Be 30 minutes early for service
- Before each service the Usher Corp. will have a time of prayer together. During this time the usher will help the ministry staff set the spiritual atmosphere. Always remember, *"The atmosphere of expectancy is the birthing ground of miracles"*
- It is important that the usher stays in his or her position. Even though you think you are helping, overlap creates confusion. If not assigned to a position, remember to be ready to serve if asked to replace someone else

- Only female ushers will place and remove modesty clothes
- Special needs individuals should be asked if they need help and if they refuse stay nearby to ensure their safety.
- In the event an individual comes in late and there are no seats available in the back of the sanctuary an usher should escort them to any available seats. Do not allow people to argue over seating.
- Your mission is clear: *Preserve Godly order and protect the weak, needy and infirmed. Be sensitive, but don't be intimidated.*

DRESS CODE

- The following ministries are First Impression ministries and therefore have a different standard of attire than the other ministries: Pastors, Ushers, Greeters, Children Church Workers and Worship Team Members. First Impression ministries are required to be neat and clean in appearance when scheduled to serve. They should be well groomed, clean cut and wear nice casual clothing. The dress code is as follows:
 - Suits are permitted but not required
 - Jeans are allowed but should be in very good condition, not faded with no holes or strings
 - Only Christian T-shirts are permitted and they should be in very good condition not severely wrinkled, torn or faded
 - Body piercing will not be permitted with the exceptions of ear rings and small studs. If you are not sure ask your coordinator for further direction
 - Men are not permitted to wear tank tops, shorts, sweat pants or flip flops.
 - Women should be tastefully dressed. No mini skirts, shorts, tank tops, sweat pants or revealing shirts should be worn. Skirts should be at or below the knees. Women are permitted to wear decorative open footwear
 - It is important that you have fresh smelling breath. A breath mint is acceptable but we ask that you do not chew gum since it is annoying to the person you are speaking with and you may also inadvertently spit on them.
 - Do not wear too much perfume or cologne as some people are allergic to them.

** If an usher arrives and does not meet the above guidelines they will not be permitted to usher that service.*

CATCHER

The Job of a catcher is very important. Although we don't like to talk about it, it is important to remember that it is legally possible for a person who receives any injuries during a fall, to sue the church.

- Catchers should support the head and small of the back when catching. Do not try to carry their weight to the floor. Let the individual lay backward but not hit their head on the floor. The usher is not catching the person he is simply breaking the fall. Two ushers should catch any persons with a larger than normal stature.
- Ushers should remember that during a move of the Spirit they must be alert keeping their attention focused on the minister and the Head or Control Usher.
- After a catcher has successfully broken the fall he should then leapfrog around to the other side of his neighboring catcher so that he can catch the next person. This process (The Leapfrog) should be used as much as possible.
- The catcher will work in conjunction with the Control Usher concerning adding people to the front line. When setting up the healing line, keep enough room in front of the people for the minister to move freely and behind the people to lay them down backward.

- And last but not least it is vital for a catcher to be sensitive to the move of the Spirit. The catcher is directly involved with the move of the spirit. The catcher should continuously be praying in the spirit under is breathe at all times.
- It is of great importance that the catcher does not physically touch the person that is being prayed for until they begin to fall or the minister says otherwise. The anointing is tangible and we as ushers don't want to draw the anointing to ourselves and away from the person being prayed for. For this reason it is also important that we don't make physical contact with the minister.
- A modesty cloth should be placed on women wearing a dress that fall down under the power of the Spirit. An appointed woman should place and remove the modesty cloth. Male ushers are to never do this.
- Due to the repetitive strenuous duties of catchers only men will serve as catchers.

FLOW

The responsibility of the flow is to regulate the amount of people crowding the healing line. If too many people are crammed in the front then it is impossible for the catchers and the minister to have room enough to operate correctly.

- The flow is the valve that turns on and off the stream of people crowding the front line. It is the flows responsibility to keep the pray line separate from the crowd.
- It is important for the flow to keep good eye contact with the one who is instructing him to release more people or hold them.
- The flow should be direct but not overly forceful or rude.

PICKUP

The pickup is to pick up the people and move them on; this gives room for new people to be placed in the line.

- The pickup should be sensitive to when to pickup the person.
- If there is plenty of room on the ministry line, do not rush the person. However at times there will not be enough room to allow the person to remain. It is important that the spot they are taking be filled with one who has not been placed in the healing line.
- When helping someone who has gone down under the power of the Holy Spirit, the usher should stand facing the person not in back of them. With their right hand, the usher should take their right hand, while placing their foot at the bottom of their foot. The usher should then lift gently, pulling steadily towards themselves. Ushers should try not to put their hands around a person or under their arms unless it is someone who is crippled or needs personal assistance.
- Obese individuals should be assisted up, but ushers should not attempt to PULL, as they may find themselves injured or embarrassed.

DISTURBANCES AND DISTRAUGHT INDIVIDUALS

Mentally distraught or demonically controlled people are often by rhythmic rocking, rolling eyes, irrational movements and constant mumbling or talking to ones self. But whether dealing mental or spiritual problems, such people are extremely unstable and should be handles immediately. Contact the head usher and agree in prayer immediately for God's power to manifest itself. Then ask the person to leave. If the person refuses notify the Senior Pastor or Executive Pastor whichever is available for further direction.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Clear emergency procedures and quick action can mean the difference between life and death. In the event of a medical emergency use the following established guidelines:

- Always assign one person to call 911
- Station one or more person outside the building to direct paramedics to patients location
- Keep one usher with the afflicted person at all times. Pray for the persons recovery in faith and don't allow a crowd to cluster around the person
- When the service is in progress please remove the person from the sanctuary if possible
- Assign one person to stay with family or friends
- All ushers need to know who the people are in the congregation with medical training

OTHER EMERGENCIES

The safety of church members in the event of any emergency is every usher's responsibility. They should maintain order to the best of their ability and be the last ones out of the building.

FIRE

- Always assign one person to call 911. When in doubt call. The longer you wait the greater the risk.
- Verbally inform crowd to exit the building at the nearest exit. Direct people away from the fire and outside to safety.
- Immediately start verifying that the building is evacuated and that all persons are accounted for, checking all accessible rooms.
- If possible assign ushers to put the fire out with fire extinguishers unless your personal safety is at risk.

Conclusion

The primary purposes of an usher are to protect the anointing and the people. The way to be sure to do this is to follow the Head Usher and his commands. If you have any questions please ask the Head Usher.

Note: As Abundant Harvest Church grows these guidelines are subject to change.