

The Homer Congregational Church Handbook for the Board of Deacons

These policies are guidelines only and have no authority. See the Constitution of the Homer Congregational Church (HCC) for detailed governing rules and authorities. The structure and activities of the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer, New York (FRS) are specified by their by-laws. The FRS and HCC are separate, but interdependent entities.

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The following documents are contained in the Handbook of the Board of Trustees and can be obtained through the church's website: Wedding, Funeral and Memorial Services Policies, Employee Job Descriptions, Reduce the Risk Policy and Procedures, and Emergency Information.

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Authority of the Board of Deacons:

As specified by the Constitution of the Homer Congregational Church (HCC), the Board of Deacons has the authority to conduct the business of the HCC such that the responsibilities outlined below are fulfilled. The voting members of the HCC endowed the members of the Board of Deacons with the ability to identify issues and problems associated with the mission and effective function of the HCC, develop solutions to those problems, and implement those solutions. The Board of Deacons may act without the need of full HCC meetings, but the governing body (the church members) may call a special meeting by petition to the Board of Deacons.

Purpose:

- To provide for the worship of God; The Deacons shall assist the pastor(s) of the HCC in leading and supporting all worship services. The Board of Deacons shall attend to the supply of the pulpit during the absence of the Pastor and during interim periods between pastorates. Where a special Pastoral Search Committee is not provided, the Deacons have the responsibility of locating and recommending to the church membership a candidate for the pastorate. The Board shall also be responsible for arranging speakers during the year as needed, or desired.
- To provide for the religious education of the children and adult members of the HCC; and extending educational opportunity to the wider community.
- To initiate, manage, and execute mission programs designed to address the needs of HCC members, the local community and our church's wider mission. The Members of the Board of Deacons shall assist the pastor(s) in ministry to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress, in accordance with the Scriptural duties of the office.
- The Board shall prepare the proposed budget for the Homer Congregational Church and Our Church's Wider Mission, which is presented at the Annual Meeting, and has oversight of its implementation.

Board of Deacons Responsibilities:

The duly elected members of the Board of Deacons have the responsibility to conduct business and make decisions that are in the best interest of the Homer Congregational Church and First Religious Society in the Town of Homer, New York, such that the FRS and HCC may continue to prosper and carry out God's mission according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Any HCC member who has the best interest of the HCC and FRS at heart can serve as a member of the HCC Board of Deacons. All that is required is that each member does their best, with the help of God, to work with the other members of the board and other church leaders to make decisions that are in the best interest of the HCC and FRS.

- The Board shall approve the membership of all persons wishing to join our ministry and fellowship. With the pastor(s), the Board shall provide a program of introduction and welcome to prospective members prior to the date of joining. Such a program may take the form of introductory meetings and/or an informal gathering for the Board to meet with the candidates. The Board shall provide a reception for new members after the

service during which they are received, in cooperation with the church's SOS team. A member of the Deacons shall extend the Hand of Fellowship during the service of Reception of New Members.

- The Board shall work with the pastor(s) in the education, nurture and welcome of Confirmands desiring membership in the congregation. The Deacons shall provide a time of fellowship for Confirmands (most recently, a dinner) prior to the day of Confirmation (Pentecost Sunday).
- The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for reviewing the membership rolls; encouraging inactive members to fuller participation, and accepting letters of transfer. Periodically, the Board may need to take action, dropping persons from the rolls. This should be done prayerfully and with sensitivity.
- The Deacons have traditionally given flowers to persons being baptized. A single red rose (ordered by the church administrator) is placed on the communion table for each person to be baptized. The Deacons assist in delivering flowers to home-bound church members around Christmas and Easter.
- The Board shall appoint one of its members to serve on the Memorial Committee.

General Responsibilities of each Board Member:

- Know and follow the Constitution of the HCC.
- Always behave and make decisions that are in the best interest of the HCC and the FRS. After the best interest of the HCC and FRS has been considered, always attempt to accommodate the needs and interests of the Homer-Cortland community and governments.
- Always respect the Call of the Minister(s) of the HCC. Always show respect for the Church Pastor(s), and other church leaders, and give serious consideration to their advice and guidance. The pastors should provide the primary guidance within the context of the HCC Constitution. However, the HCC is the ultimate authority and must make decisions that are in the best interest of the HCC and FRS, regardless of other urgings (if those other urgings are contrary to the best interest of the FRS).
- Meet regularly, at least bi-monthly (typically monthly) at a definite time and place, to deal with routine and unusual problems and accept reports from each of the committees and any comments and advice from the Minister(s) and other religious leaders, staff, volunteers, and HCC/FRS members. Special meetings shall be held whenever requested by two of its members, or the Pastor. Only Clergy and duly elected board members should routinely attend Board of Deacons meetings. The FRS staff or other interested parties may attend at the invitation of the Chair to provide reports of important information to the Board; they will usually withdraw from the meeting after providing that information. Nominated board members likely to be elected at the next Annual Meeting of the HCC are encouraged to attend at least one board meeting before assuming official duties as a duly elected member. The Board shall hold an orientation meeting on or near the first Saturday of February each year to rehearse procedures for preparing and serving communion, for serving as Deacon of the Day, to clean and otherwise maintain the Communion Service, and to address any other needs or questions which may arise regarding the smooth operation of the Board.
- Participate in the Annual meetings of the FRS and HCC and all other HCC meetings

- Foster effective communications between the Board of Trustees for the FRS and the Board of Deacons of the HCC, other boards, committees, and missions of the HCC and FRS; the general congregation of the HCC; and the Homer-Cortland community.
- All members of the board are to be available to the general membership of the HCC to provide information and accept issues and concerns to be brought to the board for discussion and potential action. The chair has a special responsibility to represent the Board of Deacons.
- Work with the Board of Trustees and others to support the Stewardship Committee, encourage stewardship of the HCC and FRS, and foster volunteers to serve on the boards, committees, and missions.
- Each year prepare a fiscally responsibly budget, while recognizing that faith in God and the HCC members is required to sustain the church and its facilities, staff, and missions. Maintain fiscal discipline while sustaining worship, education, and missions, such that the HCC may prosper.
- Take advantage of the talents and resources available to achieve the goals and maintain the missions of the HCC.

Board Organization and Officers:

The Board of Deacons consists of twelve (12) members – seven (7) Board members are required for a quorum. Each member serves a three (3) year term with the option to renew once. A member may serve again after a minimum hiatus of one year. Terms are staggered as to leave two thirds of the Board continuing each year (4 ending their service & 4 new members being elected each year). New Deacons will be commissioned during worship as soon after the Church Annual Meeting as possible. Each year the Board elects: a Chair, Vice-Chair, and a Secretary from among its members. In addition, the following HCC Officers serve the Board of Deacons for three year terms: Moderator, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, and Stewardship Chair.

Chairperson's Responsibilities:

The Chairperson shall act as Moderator of the Board, developing the agenda and presiding over monthly Board of Deacon meetings and any special meetings called by the Board; generally following Robert's Rules for conduct, but fostering discussion and debate (attempting to balance the discussion on both sides of the issue). In addition the Chairperson shall:

- Raise issues that need the Board's attention. Communicate frequently with the pastor(s), other members of the Board and other members of the HCC.
- Serve as the spokesperson for the Board of Deacons. The Chairperson is the representative of the Board to the Church Council and should participate in all Church Council meetings. If unable to attend, should find another Deacon to attend.
- Work with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Moderator to conduct annual reviews of pastor(s).
- Serve on the Personnel Committee.
- Assist the pastor and Personnel Committee with an annual review of all paid staff.
- Compose and send official correspondence, as needed. Sign legal documents for the HCC and in the absence of the Financial Liaison, sign checks.
- Provide orientation and mentoring to new Board members (in conjunction with the pastor(s) and other Deacons).

- Extend the Hand of Fellowship on the following occasions: Confirmation, Baptism, Reception of New Members and the giving of Bibles.
- Assist the pastor during the Sacrament of Holy Baptism by giving a rose, cradle cross, and Certificate of Baptism to the family, making certain that there is water in the font, uncovering the font at the appropriate time, and extending the Hand of Fellowship.
- Request Board action in the appointment of members to the following committees, as needed: Worship & Music, Memorial Committee, and Christian Education Ministry.
- Write and present a report of the activities of the Board to the Annual Meeting of the HCC. Including details of income and expenses and a proposed budget for the following year.
- Must work with the Church Clerk and Church Administrator to update the official copy of the Constitution as soon as possible, whenever an amendment is made to the Constitution by an affirmative vote during an official meeting of the HCC membership.

Vice-Chairperson's Responsibilities:

- Serves as Chairperson at all official Board meetings in the absence of the Chair.
- Attend all Church Council meetings.
- Assist Chairperson, Trustee Chair and pastor in annual review of all paid staff.

Secretary:

- Keep a thorough and accurate record of the Board's proceedings, including minutes from each meeting.
- Write a monthly newsletter article updating the congregation on Board progress.
- Keeping a record and complete description of each official vote is critical for legal, as well as historic reasons.
- Distribute minutes to all Board members for review before the next monthly meeting.
- Assures minutes are added to the HCC Archives (provide to HCC Church Administrator).

Treasurer:

- The Treasurer (a non-Deacon) shall keep a record of all funds at the Board's disposal and their distribution, and shall submit records for approval at least once per year, and at other times upon request. The Treasurer shall prepare and present a report for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

Moderator:

- Moderates annual meetings of the First Religious Society in the Town of Homer and the Homer Congregational Church. The Moderator also convenes Church Council meetings at least twice annually.

Auditor:

- Provides official independent auditing of the financial accounts of the HCC, working with the Board of Deacons as needed, and reports those findings to the full Homer Congregational Church at the Annual Meeting.

Stewardship Chair:

- Maintains a sense of the stewardship needs of the HCC throughout the year. Convenes meetings of the Stewardship Committee, works with the committee to develop informative stewardship activities, and executes those activities.

Ministries and Committees of the Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall form and approve such committees as will serve to further the purpose of the church. The following committees are suggested by the Constitution: Worship and Music; Ushers; Hospitality and Visitation; Student Loan; Christian Education; and Mission (Global Connectors was instituted in 2008). The Board may form and dissolve ad-hoc committees as needed.

Budget and Finance:

- Work with the Chairperson and Treasurer to develop a budget for the next fiscal year.
- Work with the Treasurer to generate and present reports of the income and expense status for each monthly meeting and Annual Meeting.
- Work with other members of the Board to adjust spending and enhance income to follow the established budget as closely as is practical.

Christian Education:

- Purpose is to provide Christian educational opportunities to all members of the congregation and their children.
- Should meet regularly (currently monthly) to administer programs for children & adults, for example: Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Youth Fellowship, Adult Bible studies, etc.

Worship and Music:

- The W&M committee shall act as a sub-committee of the Board of Deacons.
- The committee shall evaluate and suggest changes in regular Order of Worship to the Pastor(s) and Deacons.
- Will work with the Pastor(s) and Deacons in planning and coordinating special services of worship.
- The committee shall help the Board of Trustees in the matter of evaluating the performance of the paid staff of the Ministry of Music. Final decisions on personnel matters will be the responsibility of the two administrative boards.
- The committee shall consist of seven voting members, elected on a rotating basis for an unspecified number of three year terms. Two of these members shall be representatives of the Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees. A member who is elected Chairperson may serve as chair for two consecutive three-year terms, but may then continue as a regular member of the committee. The Director of Music, Organist, and Pastor(s) shall be considered ex-officio members. Should a vacancy occur before the annual meeting, the Chairperson shall appoint a person to serve until the next annual meeting, at which time that person may be elected to the committee.

Deacon (Worship & Music) Responsibilities:

- The Board should be trained and organized so that each member will know what is expected during the service and help ensure that the service proceeds with ease, order, and dignity. Deacons are responsible for preparing and serving the elements of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. White tablecloths for the Communion Table are kept in the closet in the board room. Linen napkins for the communion plates, plates for bread and trays for communion cups are in the Deacons' cabinet in hallway outside the kitchen. Ceramic/Pottery Communion Elements are kept in the display case at the back corner of the sanctuary. All members of the Board should assist in clean-up of

communion elements following the service. Instructions for serving Communion are on separate handouts given to Deacons. It is the custom of the Board to receive and administer the funds collected (loose-plate offerings) at Communion Services on Sunday mornings plus when held at other times. The Deacons will also receive the loose plate offerings on the first Sunday of those months when Communion is not celebrated. These offerings provide a source of income for the annual budget of the Board.

- The Deacons will take turns by month in leading worship as "Deacon of the Day" and for recruiting and scheduling ushers for each month. The Deacon of the month will recruit four ushers from the membership for each Sunday in the assigned month and for special services, when necessary. (See Job Descriptions for Deacon of the Day attached).
- A representative of the Deacons shall assist the Pastor in worship when new members are received, in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, or Rite of Confirmation is administered, or when Bibles are distributed, extending the Hand of Fellowship.
- The Board, in conjunction with the Pastor, shall take responsibility for the structure, quality and Spirit of the worship life of the congregation through the establishment of a Worship and Music Committee. Although the committee *is* elected by the congregation, the Deacons shall have direct jurisdiction over the committee, receiving regular reports and acting upon committee requests and recommendations.
- The Board of Deacons shall take responsibility for promoting the spiritual welfare of the membership of the congregation.

Missions/Global Connectors:

- Shall organize and conduct active missions of appropriate value and scope within and beyond the local community.

Comparisons and Contrasts with the Board of Trustees

- Responsibilities shared jointly with the Board of Trustees
The boards share the general responsibility for the well-being of the Homer Congregational Church and to further the church's mission.
- Specific responsibilities shared by the boards include, stewardship; effective cooperation and coordination of board activities; communication of concerns from church members to the appropriate board, mission, or committee; and wise and compassionate treatment of all clergy, staff, and church members; present an appropriate, respectful image to the larger Homer-Cortland Community.
- Relationship to the Church Council
The Moderator, the Chair of the FRS Board of Trustees, the Chair of the HCC Board of Deacons, the Clergy, and the leaders of each major Ministry are members of the Church Council.
- The Pastoral Relations Committee deals confidentially with the HCC Clergy, providing a forum to wisely and compassionately discuss any issues associated Clergy status or behavior. Any member of either board (any other member of the FRS or HCC) made approach a member of the Pastoral Relations Committee with concerns about the Clergy and Clergy may choose to address difficulties with either board through the Pastoral Relations Committee.

Communications

There is a great need for regular communication with the full church (HCC). Communication mechanisms include, but are not limited to: person-to-person word of mouth, Annual Meeting Report, special meeting presentations and discussions, monthly newsletter, weekly bulletin, and announcements associated with the weekly worship service (as needed). Communication with the Board of Deacons and the major ministries is critical. One or two joint meetings annually are recommended. Representation on the Church Council and attendance of all Church Council meetings called by the Church Moderator is also important to maintain open communications of activities and problems being addressed. Work with Board of Deacons to help the FRS and HCC members appreciate the need to support FRS and HCC both financially and with other personal resources.

Communicate (both Trustees and Deacons) with the larger Homer-Cortland community about the facilities and missions of the HCC and FRS. This communication is critical to the continued sustenance and growth of the HCC.

Electronic Mail Voting Policy

The Board of Deacons may take action by electronic mail provided the following conditions are satisfied:

1. all members of the Board shall have been provided with the opportunity to vote by electronic mail,
2. each member will receive confirmation by return communication that their votes were received and recorded, and
3. all decisions of the Board by electronic mail shall be by unanimous vote; if the decision is not unanimous or any member requests in-person discussion, then the issue will be deliberated at an official Board meeting instead of by email.
4. Electronic voting should only be used when it is impractical to call an in person meeting.
5. AND it is a simple vote.

The Church Council

The Church Council is a body of church leaders, representing both governing boards and the church clergy. The Church Council meets periodically throughout each year to foster communications among the boards and with church staff. The Church Council has no governing authority, but is an important mechanism for effectively using the human resources of the church to solve church problems. The core members of the Church Council consist of the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Senior and Associate Pastors, Church Moderator, and Church Clerk. These members determine Church Council meeting times and places, as well as the agenda for each meeting. These people should attend each Church Council meeting or provide a representative substitute. Any issue (and possible solution) may be brought to the attention of the Church Council core membership. However, final debate about the best solution to church problems (particularly for sensitive issues) occurs during Board of Trustees or Board of Deacons meetings. The FRS staff is encouraged to attend Church Council meetings to help inform the boards of problems they are familiar with and offer potential solutions to other problems presented at these meetings

Appendix A: Calendar

January - Prepare for Annual meeting: make any last minute changes to upcoming year's budget. Conduct "exit" interview with outgoing deacons. Invite incoming board members to attend January meeting. Prepare/schedule orientation for new deacons. Update duties/responsibilities in *Deacon Handbook*. Attend Annual meeting and give summary of events/accomplishments. Look ahead to prepare for Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday & Good Friday worship services, Palm Sunday, Easter, One Great Hour of Sharing offering (March). In consultation with the pastor, plan Lenten programs.

February – Welcome new Deacons. Conduct new deacon orientation. Identify major issues/plans for the year. Elect Executive Committee (Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary). Appoint/review committee liaisons. Review: Worship Leader schedule, Communion Teams & schedule. Plan Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday & Good Friday, Easter (order flowers & flowers to home-bound), One Great Hour offering (March).

March – Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule for April. Last minute plans for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter (flowers to home-bound). Look ahead to Mother's Day, Softball, Pentecost & Strengthen the Church offering (May). Review membership rolls and contact those whose HCC participation has been infrequent.

April –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule for May. Plan for Mother's Day, Pentecost, Strengthen the Church offering & confirmation class reception. Look ahead to Children's Day, Dads & Grads, Music Sunday, Softball, Canoe trip, and Holiday in Homer.

May –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule for June. Identify high school & college graduates & plan appropriate gifts. Plan for Children's Day, Dads & Grads, and Music Sunday. Look ahead to summer schedule (announce beginning of summer schedule 9:30), Holiday in Homer, Canoe Trip, Chautauqua and VBS. In conjunction with the pastor, determine if a Confirmation Class will be offered in the fall.

June –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule for July. Announce beginning of summer schedule. Plan for Holiday in Homer, Chautauqua, VBS and Canoe trip. Look ahead to the fall schedule, Rally Day, Church School, Youth Group. Plan *mission lunches* for fall.

July –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Last minute plans for VBS, Chautauqua, and Canoe Trip. Look ahead to fall schedule (announce fall schedule date), Rally day, Youth Group, Church School, other small groups?

August –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Plan for Rally Day & beginning of Church School year. Look ahead to Stewardship, Member Recognition Sunday, Crop Walk, and Neighbors in Need offering (October). Review schedule for coffee hour, nursery & Acolytes.

September –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Plan Member Recognition Sunday, Crop Walk, and Neighbors in Need offering. Look ahead to Stewardship Sunday,

Advent, and Hanging of the Greens. Last minute plans for Member Recognition Sunday.

October –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Plan Stewardship Sunday, Advent/Hanging the Greens. Look ahead to poinsettias, Christmas Pageant, Christmas Eve, deacon’s budget, annual review of clergy & staff. Review the membership rolls and contact those whose HCC participation has been infrequent.

November – Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Conduct annual review of clergy & all paid staff (with trustees). Plan Christmas Eve, poinsettias (deliver to home-bound), Christmas Fund offering. Look ahead to Budget, Deacon Roster for the New Year, Annual Meeting, and Striking of the Greens.

December –Review Worship Leader & Communion schedule. Plan last minute Christmas Eve details, Annual Meeting/Budget, Deacon roster/nominations, and Striking of the Greens.

Appendix B: Deacon of the Day Duties

- Recruit a list of ushers (4 ushers needed each week) for assigned month. Provide the names of the ushers to the church office no later than the 15th of the month prior to the month for which the ushers are designated so that the instructions can be mailed (e-mailed) and the names can be published in the newsletter & bulletin.
- Arrive at church at least 30 minutes before the service begins.
- Make sure all lights are on in the sanctuary (fans in the summer).
- Make sure the flowers for the service are in place (plastic flowers are in the “chair” closet (north side of the Russell Fellowship Room)).
- Check the candles on the communion table and in the candle stands. Replace if necessary.
- Make sure there are bulletins at RFR entrance and front door entrance.
- Make sure there are prayer request sheets available at both entrances.
- Check in with the pastor for any last minute instructions regarding announcements, readings, etc.
- Ask one usher to count (from the balcony) all those present during the Children's Moment. Write the total in the book on the pulpit in the back of the sanctuary (near recording equipment).
- Ask one usher to bring both prayer request lists to you during the first hymn.
- Pick one “greeting” and one “offering invitation” from the three-ring-binder under the pulpit.
- At the beginning of the worship service read the pre-selected “greeting” and welcome everyone. Make announcements. Ask about additional prayer requests. Ask if there are other announcements.
- During the first hymn retrieve the prayer request sheets from the usher and place them on the pulpit for the pastor.
- After the service, the pastor will usually greet those exiting the narthex (front door). The Deacon of the Day should greet those exiting to the RFR.
- After Coffee Hour pick up any remaining bulletins or other trash, make certain all lights are turned off and lock all external doors (throughout the building), before leaving the building.

Appendix C: Greeting and Ushering

Two to four greeters are usually assigned for regular church services.

- A. Attire should be appropriate and not of a casual nature.
- B. One greeter will be stationed just inside the front door; the second one will take a position inside the door leading to the Russell Fellowship Room on the south side of the choir.
 1. Front Door Greeter:
 - a. Will not hand out bulletins.
 - b. Weather permitting, the front doors will be left open; otherwise, use peep-hole and open the door for those entering.
 - c. Assist handicapped and infirm people up the steps.
 - d. A friendly smile, handshake, and a warm welcome should be extended to all those entering.
 - e. Close Sanctuary doors after the choir has proceeded up the aisle. Leave both sets of side doors ajar so that latecomers can come. Unless extremely warm, outside doors should be closed to reduce street noise.
 - f. Remain in the Narthex at least until the first hymn is finished. Tactfully prevent members from entering the Sanctuary in the middle of prayers.
 2. Sanctuary (RFR) Greeter:
 - a. Welcome all those entering from the Russell Fellowship Room. After a warm greeting and a friendly handshake, offer a bulletin and any other inserts that may need handing out. There are special, large print bulletins as well as children's bulletins available each week.
 - b. Take a count of all people in the nursery and crib rooms during the First Hymn and report to the Captain of the Ushers.
 - c. Remain through the Children's Moment and assist the children back to the nursery. Watch the Russell Fellowship Room; greet late arrivers and all others who may enter the building.
 - d. Assist the nursery children to the nursery when dismissed from worship.
3. Volunteers from the Church membership may also serve, if approved by the Board.
4. Dates and greeters will be assigned by the Board Chairman annually and will be published in the following month's newsletter, and the weekly worship bulletin.
5. If not able to serve on an appointed date, arrangements should be made by the assigned Deacon to exchange dates with another member of the Board.
6. The Church office should be notified so the change can be made in the church bulletin if time permits; Wednesday noon is the deadline.
7. Both greeters should be at their posts one-half hour before services; earlier for special services such as Easter, Christmas Eve and other services as needed.

NOTES FOR USHERS:

1. Please be on time; be ready to usher 30 minutes before church starts.
2. Get bulletins from the box near Fellowship Room entrance.
3. Take any of the four "stations," but please make sure that early ushers take the center aisle.
4. As persons approach your aisle, smile, greet them, offer a genial handshake and if you know where they care to sit, show them to their seat, or say, "May I show you to your seat?" Follow a positive answer with, "Where would you care to sit this morning?"
5. Usher should escort the worshipper down the aisle to the indicated pew. Hand bulletins out as the worshipper enters the pew. Wait by the pew until the worshipper enters the pew before returning to your station. Ushers in the center aisle should take turns showing worshipers to a seat in either section, as the persons prefer, or as available space permits. Unless a person shows a decided preference for the rear of the church, show him/her to a seat near the middle or front of the church. Try to keep the two sides of the church somewhat balanced as to the number of worshipers.
6. Pass bulletins out at the rear of the church only to those who do not wish to be escorted to their seat.
7. After the service starts, usher persons to a seat only during hymns. Do not show them to seats during anthems, prayers, responsive readings, etc. The greeters and ushers should all cooperate in asking latecomers to wait for the proper place to be shown a seat.

TAKING THE OFFERING:

1. Look for "Offering" in the bulletin, and when the worship leader begins the offering invitation, four ushers line up *two by two* at the rear of center aisle. Begin walking up the aisle when the worship leader finishes the invitation with words like, "we will now receive the morning offering ... " You do NOT need to wait for the music to start walking to the front.
2. Walk fairly slowly, not too fast, to keep it dignified. Look ahead, and not at the floor.
3. Stop when you reach the worship leader. The two back ushers step to each side and forward, so all four stand side-by-side in front of the worship leader, who will give you the offering plates.
4. On a nod from the worship leader ALL USHERS TURN OUT to take the offering: the two outside ushers going to outside aisles, and the two inside ushers taking center aisle.
5. Each usher presents the plate to the first person sitting in each pew at about the same time as the other usher opposite him or her. Ushers may move from pew to pew at a natural pace, when the plates reach the end of the pews. Ushers on either side of the sanctuary may move independently of the opposite ushers in the collection process. If one pair of ushers finishes far ahead of the other pair, they may go to the rear of the pews on the opposite side of the sanctuary to assist their fellow ushers.
6. Carefully place the offering plate in front of the person in the end seat of each pew at a convenient height. This means that a tall usher will have to lean over a bit.
7. If there are persons sitting in the seats along the side of the sanctuary, you may take collection from them as you move along the regular pews.
8. When finished collecting, all four ushers line up at the rear of the church, and wait for the finish of the offertory music. At the start of the "Doxology" the worship leader will step to

the head of the aisle and you should start walking up the aisle.

9. Line up 4 across at the head of the aisle, as in the beginning. Pass each plate to the worship leader, who then leads the prayer of dedication. After the prayer the ushers turn and return to their seats.
10. After the service please help the Deacon of the Day put the sanctuary back in order - Pick up odd bulletins, place hymnals in racks correctly, replace envelopes and pencils ...