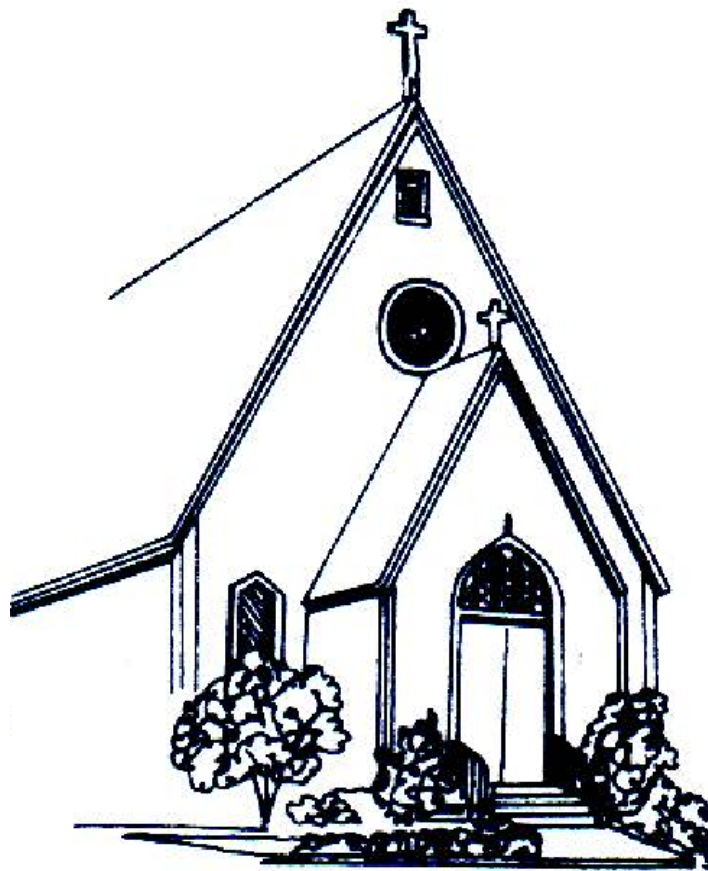


SERVICE MINISTRY

ASCENSION MEMORIAL CHURCH

A Parish of the
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

Flourishing - Family - Community



P.O. 547, 31 County Street, Ipswich, MA 01938
e-mail: amcipswich@verizon.net 978-356-2560 www.amcipswich.org

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A word from our Rector:

The service you offer shapes the experience of every person who comes to worship. Your service ministry is a gift to others. The more present you are, the more you make people feel honored, safe and unguarded, the more you help them be available to God—whose presence we yearn to enjoy through worship. Thank you muchly for your gift of ministry. Find joy in being of service to God and neighbor.

Thank You for Serving!

Scheduling Instructions:

1. Service schedules are prepared in 7-week blocks by Service Ministry scheduler, Frank Corbin. Please respond promptly to draft schedule requests. You can choose the services that fit your schedule by responding to the schedule planning email.
2. Final schedules are distributed by email, posted on the church website, and available for pick up in the foyer.
3. For assistance or questions, or in the event of an unplanned absence, please email or call the Service Ministry scheduler: Frank Corbin, frankcorbin9@gmail.com 508-450-0209

SECTION I – GREETERS

Fundamentals for Effective Greeters

1. **“Welcome!”** One simple word that says so much! The position of church greeter is one of the most fun and important positions in the church. First impressions are everything! Our goal is to share a kind word, open a door, offer a handshake or just lend a helping hand to people who enter our church. Simple acts of kindness say a lot about our church and the people inside.
 - a. It shows that we care about people.
 - b. It tells people that the church is there to meet their needs.
 - c. It communicates that we are willing to serve.
 - d. It shares the grace and love of Jesus.
2. **SMILE!** A bright smile communicates more than any words.
3. Have **FUN!** Be yourself and enjoy the experience, our visitors will pick up on your joy.
4. Don't be embarrassed if you are greeting a member and don't know the person's name, or be offended if someone doesn't remember yours. Our purpose is to offer grace to each other, just as we do to new people.

Our Process

Greeters are front line ministers of welcome, and often the first official point of contact with the congregation. Your role as a greeter is important in creating a welcoming tone in the congregation.

This position is especially important in inclement weather conditions. We need to be out there so that no one falls or gets hurt. Umbrellas, brooms and snow shovels can be found in the Narthex.

Things to do:

1. Arrive on time, at least 20 minutes before the service
 - a. Check the handicap entrance upon arrival to ensure the door is unlocked and that the ramp is clear
2. Shake hands and smile; these fundamental greetings say “welcome”
3. Welcome each person who enters the worship area
 - a. Watch for newcomers (visitors), introduce yourself, ask their names, answer their questions, and introduce them to an usher
 - b. If they have worshipped with us before, thank them for coming back
 - c. Mention that there will be a coffee hour following the service and that are most welcome to join us
 - d. Introduce newcomers by name to one of the ushers
4. Leave the doorway only to assist people when necessary
 - a. Inform someone on the hospitality staff if you need to leave your position
5. Remain at your station until after the chorus begins down the aisle.
 - a. If you have no other duty, such as a lector, stay on until after the first lesson to greet any members and visitors who arrive late and might need assistance or directions.
6. Following the service, try to find any visitors that you greeted at the beginning and help them to find their way to the post service reception, Sunday school class, child care, etc.

Things to avoid:

1. Getting caught up in lengthy conversations
2. Interrogating newcomers or keeping them too long at the doors, especially if your conversation keeps others outside
3. Leaving people hanging while waiting for an answer or assistance with a problem
4. Kissing and hugging; some people (regulars and newcomers alike) feel awkward about being touched in such a personal way by an acquaintance
5. Leaving your assignment unattended, especially close to the start of worship when newcomers are likely to arrive

Coffee Hour Ambassadors

Greeters assigned as post service reception ambassadors on Sunday morning will welcome people, help visitors to get a coffee or refreshment, and collect any visitor cards.

Be purposeful and look out for visitors, and help them to meet the pastoral staff.

Visitor Assistance

1. As a greeter, your main job is to make visitors feel welcome
2. Visitors will be looking to gather as much information as possible to make their decision about our church, so give them a visitor's welcome pack and invite them to the post service reception
3. Help visitors with directions to the sanctuary, parlor, Sunday school class, child care, etc. Walk visitors to where they need to go, or arrange for them to be escorted by an usher. Don't just point in a direction as the building can be confusing and it is easy to get lost.
4. Whenever possible, introduce visitors to church members and staff, especially the Rector, members of the Vestry, Sunday School teacher, etc.

Dress Code

Well dressed and neatly groomed greeters make a good impression, and communicate that we care about visitors and respect the Lord's house

Suggested dress is business casual on Sunday morning, and weekend casual for other events.

SECTION II – USHERS

Fundamentals and Process for Effective Ushers

1. Arrive at church at least **15 minutes** before the service and position yourself at the back of the church where people enter the church. Watch for people entering the church and with sincere warmth offer them a Service Bulletin. You will find the bulletins on the table at the rear of the church. Please insert the weekly Tidings newsletter into the service bulletin, if necessary. Locate yourselves as ushers on either side of the center aisle and bring a bulletin to anyone who may slip by without receiving one.
2. Count ALL in attendance and record number on small, blue, square sheets of paper provided; please include date, time of service and your initials. Place in offertory plate (or leave on counter in the sacristy after the service). Remain at the back of the church after the start of the service to watch for late arrivals, then feel free to be seated for the service.
3. At the time of The Exchange of Peace, return to the back of the church. You and your ushering partner will pick up, from the Ushers Table, the cruet of WINE and the silver BREAD box and wait to bring these down the aisle to hand to the acolyte who will meet you at the opening of the communion rail. This is one at the conclusion of The Announcements, walking forward as the Offertory Hymn (or Choral Anthem) begins.
4. As you and your ushering partner hand the WINE and the BREAD to the acolyte, he or she will in turn offer you each an offertory plate needed for the collection of the Offering. Working in unison, begin the collection from the front pews and move pew by pew to the back of the church being mindful of staying abreast of your partner. A pleasant acknowledgment, be it a thank you, smile, or nod when moving to the next pew gladdens hearts.
5. Wait together in the aisle at the back of the church until the start of the singing of the Doxology (Praise God from whom all blessings flow...) during which time you both come forward to present the offertory plates to the acolyte at the communion rail.
6. Then put in place the kneeler cushion and wooden section of communion railing across the opening of the communion rail. Now return to the back of the church until the time comes for people to receive communion.
7. The choir will come to the rail first. As they do, come forward down the aisle to the first pew at the front of the church. After the choir members return to their seats, begin to invite people to exit their pews and come to the communion rail. This can be done with a simple hand gesture. Please be sensitive that some may choose not to take communion.
8. Work your way toward the back of the church pew by pew and try to keep the flow moving so neither the communion rail is empty nor people are waiting in the aisle. Come to the rail yourselves as the last to receive.
9. Then place the kneeler cushion and communion rail section back where they were, off to a side. Return to your seat for the remainder of the service. When service is complete and people are filing out please go through the pews to collect any bulletins and Tidings to recycle as well as straighten out hymnals and kneelers.

SECTION III – LECTORS, “THE WORD OF THE LORD”

What an honor and privilege to read God’s word aloud in our Sunday service of worship. Serving in this ministry allows us the opportunity to draw closer to God through the study and reading of the appointed Scriptures for the day, to “read, mark, learn and inwardly digest” as the Collect (Proper 28) states. Reading the lessons with clarity and understanding is a gift both to the congregation, and to the homilist who will most likely refer to these readings in the Homily.

Here are some preparation suggestions:

1. As soon as Frank emails you the lesson, read through the text for any unfamiliar words. If in doubt about pronunciation, there are on-line resources under Biblical Pronunciations.
2. Next, read through the text slowly to better understand. Who is speaking? To whom is the text directed? What is the context? Again, the internet is a good resource. Just type in “Commentary on the Revised Common Lectionary.”
3. Ask God to help in understanding the text. Review several times, in the morning and evening, if possible.
4. Practice reading the text aloud to friend or family member...or even your dog or cat! Read slowly, enunciating each word clearly. Note the phrasing and the commas, pause at the appropriate places. Keep your voice strong and clear throughout. Read with authority!

Remember, you are reading The Word of the Lord for the edification of Gods’ people!

Sunday morning “mechanics.”

1. Move forward when it is time for your reading. The 1st reader reads the 1st lesson and also the Psalm. Begin by saying, “A reading from....” Then “Let us read Psalm .. responsively by half verse.” If you are reading the 2nd lesson, move forward as soon as the 1st Lector moves away from the Lectern.
2. Reverence the altar as you approach it (a small bow before the baptismal font) before and after.
3. Check to see if microphone needs adjusting for your height.
4. It may be helpful to keep a finger under the line you are reading, so as not to lose your place. No need to say “excuse me” or “sorry” if a mistake is made.
5. Throughout the reading, make eye contact with the congregation (if you feel comfortable)
6. At the end of the reading, pause, before saying “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.”

SECTION IV – ACOLYTES, 8 AM SERVICE

Fundamentals and Process for Acolytes

1. Arrive **15 minutes** before service to put on vestments (black cassock and white surplice), light altar candles (in Advent and after Easter, find out about Advent wreath or Paschal candle). Make sure the Gospel book is on the altar. Check readings and intercessions on the lectern. Read them over. Check Prayers of the People for pronunciation of names; ask for help if necessary. Make sure Processional Cross is in the Sacristy.
2. Meet with Rector while holding Processional Cross outside his office five minutes prior to service for a prayer. Then proceed together to Church entrance. After Tower Bell is rung to start service, lead the procession with Cross.
3. Pass through rail opening, up the steps, pause in front of altar, then proceed to the right of altar to place Crucifer (cross) in its holder. Use seating next to Cross. As the congregation is invited to be seated, go to the lectern.
4. Begin the first reading with “A reading from.....” and end with “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.” Begin the second reading with “A reading from Psalm.....” And end with “Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.” Go to the altar, pick up the Gospel Book, proceed to the third or fourth pew down the aisle, turn and hand to the Celebrant for the reading. Return Gospel Book to altar after the reading and take seat to the right of the altar.
5. After the Homily, during the last few lines of the Nicene Creed, move to the lectern to be in place at the conclusion of the Creed to lead the Prayers of the People.
6. Exchange the Peace with the Rector. Feel free to join with the congregation for the Exchange of Peace. Return to your seat for announcements. After the Offertory sentence, take the offertory plates from the Credence table behind the altar and pass them to the usher at the communion rail. They will hand you the cruet of wine and bread box. Present these to the Rector behind the altar.
7. After offertory collection, return to rail opening, receive offertory plates from usher, then present to the Rector. He will return them to you and you will place back on the credence table behind altar. Return to your seat. (Usher will place kneeler and rail in place.
8. After the Eucharistic Prayer conclusion, (“The gifts of God for the people of God”) come forward to receive communion from the Celebrant. He will hand you the chalice and purificator to serve as chalice bearer. Follow the Rector to the communion rail and offer the chalice to each person at the rail, saying “The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.”
9. Please finish remaining wine in chalice before returning it to the Rector. Hand him the water cruet (or pour a little in the chalice if he holds it out to you); place cruet on credence table. Return to your seat for closing prayer, blessing and dismissal.
10. As Celebrant proceeds to the back of the church, enter the Sacristy to retrieve candle snuffer, and extinguish candles, pausing at center of altar, and make small bow before and after extinguishing candles.
11. PLEASE never feel rushed. This is a gift you have offered in service to our Lord. Thank you!

Word Meanings

1. Crucifer – Cross
2. Celebrant – Rector/ Priest
3. Procession – walk, in line, with priest
4. Credence table – small table behind altar
5. Cruet – glass container of water and wine
6. Chalice – silver goblet that will hold wine
7. Purificator – small, white folded cloth to wipe edge of chalice during communion

SECTION V – ACOLYTES, 10:15 AM SERVICE

Word Meanings

1. Crucifer – Cross
 2. Celebrant – Rector/Priest
 3. Procession – walk, in line, with other acolyte and priest
 4. Credence table – small table behind altar
 5. Cruet – glass containers of wine and water
 6. Chalice – silver goblet that will hold wine
 7. Doxology – “praise God for whom all blessings flow” song
 8. Vestments – Black, full length robe and white mid length top
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1. Arrive at church **20 min. before service** to dress in vestments, light altar candles and proceed to St. Matthews Parlor for prayer with Rector prior to heading into the church.
 2. **Crucifer Acolyte** leads procession carrying the cross. **Gospel Book Acolyte** follows in front of the Rector and behind the choir.
 3. **Crucifer Acolyte** proceeds to front of altar, pauses briefly (no need to bow), then places cross in holder to the right of altar and takes seat.
 4. **Gospel Book Acolyte** holds book reverentially with both hands, then proceeds to altar, pauses, places Gospel book at front of the altar, in the middle with binding of the book facing outward, then takes seat next to Crucifer Acolyte.
 5. For Gospel reading, **Crucifer Acolyte** waits for signal from priest, retrieves cross, proceeds to front of altar and walk down the aisle. **Gospel Book Acolyte** waits to allow **Crucifer Acolyte** to move ahead with cross to front of altar. When **Crucifer Acolyte** is prompted by Rector to turn and walk down steps, **Gospel Book Acolyte** retrieves book and follows **Crucifer Acolyte** down the aisle. **Crucifer Acolyte** walks to fourth or fifth pew before stopping, turning back toward altar. After the reading of the Gospel, Priest and **Gospel Book Acolyte** step aside, allowing **Crucifer Acolyte** to lead procession back toward altar. **Gospel Book Acolyte** returns book to front of the altar. **Crucifer Acolyte** will return cross to its holder, then both return to again be seated to the right of the altar.
 6. After the Peace and Announcements, while choir sings, **Crucifer Acolyte** retrieves Offertory Plates from stool in front of the credence table and brings them to communion rail opening to present to ushers. Ushers will offer **Crucifer Acolyte** cruet of wine and bread box to be brought behind altar and presented to Rector. **Crucifer Acolyte** remains present to serve Rector by handing him second chalice, water cruet, etc.
 7. After Doxology is sung, **Crucifer Acolyte** returns to communion rail opening to receive Offertory Plates from Ushers, takes them to the Rector and remains present with **Gospel Book Acolyte** and Chalice Bearer during the Eucharistic Prayer. After receiving communion, Acolytes may be seated.
 8. At the close of the service, the **Crucifer Acolyte** waits for cue from Rector, retrieves the cross, proceeds to front of the altar and walks down the aisle. **Gospel Book Acolyte** waits and allows **Crucifer Acolyte** to move ahead with cross to front of altar. Once **Crucifer Acolyte** is prompted by Rector to turn, **Gospel Book Acolyte** retrieves Gospel Book and follows down the aisle. (If the choir is present, wait and follow them.)
 9. PLEASE never feel rushed. Stand to sing. Sit to listen. Kneel to pray. When in doubt, do as the congregation does. This is a gift you have offered to serve our Lord. Thank you.

SECTION VI – CHALICE BEARERS, 10:15 AM SERVICE

Preparation for the Service

Arrive 20 minutes before the service and vest. Normal vestment for the chalice bearer is a black cassock with white surplice. There are wooden crosses on a hanger in the vesting area that can also be worn. Vestments are kept in the vesting area just off the sacristy. Each chalice bearer should find a cassock that fits and then place a nametag on the cassock to make it easy to locate for vesting before services. Once vested, gather with the choir and acolytes in St. Matthew's Parlor for a prayer with the rector five minutes before the service.

During the Procession

Gather with the choir at the back of the church prior to the start of the service. As tower bell rings and opening hymn begins, fall into procession behind the choir (paired with the other chalice bearer), just ahead of the Gospel Book acolyte. Process to the communion rail, step up and through the rail opening, reverence the altar, then turn to the right and take your place at one of the seats to the right of the altar.

During Communion

After the celebrant has completed the Eucharistic Prayer and is ready to offer communion to the chalice bearers and acolytes, move to the altar and be ready to receive communion.

After you receive communion, the celebrant will hand you the chalice and a purificator. Be sure to wipe the chalice with the purificator after you drink and after each communicant drinks. Wipe thoroughly and carefully (to avoid spilling wine). As you wipe, rotate the chalice so that the next person does not drink from the same place on the chalice as the previous person.

Follow the priest to the altar rail.

As the priest offers a wafer to each communicant, follow behind, leaving a brief space before offering the chalice to communicants.

Offer the cup with the words prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer: "The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation."

If you need additional wine, refill the chalice from the cruet on the altar.

After all have received communion, take the chalice and purificator to the altar. Offer it to the priest or place on the corporal. Then return to your place at the right side of the altar. The priest may ask you to consume some of the bread and/or wine. Stand at your place on the right side of the altar for the post communion prayer and blessing.

Closing Procession

The order to process out is the same as the order to process in. After the last two members of the choir have left the choir seating area around the organ to join the procession, move to the front of the altar, reverence the altar, turn and follow the choir in procession out of the church.

SECTION VII – TELLERS

Procedure for Sunday morning Plate Collections:

1. There are two tellers assigned for each service.
2. Retrieve the contents of the offertory plate: cash, pledge envelopes, loose checks and the attendance sheet.
3. Sort and count the contents and fill in the blanks on the white envelope provided.
4. Seal the envelope, sign your name and place in the safe in the sacristy.

On Monday, the Parish Accounting Steward and the Parish Administrator will retrieve the envelopes from the Sacristy safe and process the Sunday morning collection, along with receipts that arrive in the mail or are hand delivered to the office during weekday hours of operation. (Receipts that are hand delivered or arrive in the mail are kept in the locked file cabinet in the parish office until processed.)

1. Parish Accounting Steward opens cash envelope and verifies amount entered on envelope by Sunday morning tellers.
2. Parish Accounting Steward signs cash envelope, which is retained for Parish records.
3. Parish Accounting Steward informs Parish Business Administrator of cash amount who enters date into QuickBooks.
4. Parish Accounting Steward then opens each pledge envelope and informs Parish Administrator of each amount who enters data on Collections Counting Form to be entered into QuickBooks.
5. Same process is repeated with any loose checks.
6. Once all entries and documentations are complete, Parish Accounting Steward makes out deposit slips.
7. Parish Accounting Steward makes copy of deposit slip for parish records and verifies with Parish Business Administrator.
8. Parish Accounting Steward and Parish Business Administrator take deposits to bank.
9. Bank deposits are reconciled monthly by the Parish Business Administrator.