

GUIDELINES FOR USHERS: Shabbat and B'nai Mitzvah Services

The usher ensures that the service, whether for Shabbat evening, Shabbat morning, or holidays, runs without disruptions. It is crucial that the usher be an active and diligent monitor throughout the service.

For Friday night Shabbat services, one usher, who stands at the foyer, usually suffices.

- The lift functions the same way as the front door, with a coded keypad.
- Wear the emergency panic button on your person. The panic button is kept in the Rabbi's office in a box that has a key attached to it.
- Greet worshippers as they enter, make sure that the men take a kippah, and help worshippers move into the sanctuary so that they do not congregate in the foyer.
- Ask guests to sign the guest book, if there is one (this would be for bar/bat mitzvah).
- As people enter, try to notice if they have a camera. If they do, instruct the individuals that no photographs, flash or otherwise, may be taken during the service.
- Guide guests into the sanctuary. **Fill the front rows first. Ask people politely to comply with your request.** This is a security matter, as well as one of politeness and convenience. We don't want people tripping over each other nor do we want the front rows empty. Do what you can to encourage people to take their seats quickly and quietly. **Do not permit a crowd to build up in the foyer.**
- Help worshippers to find prayer books in other rows, as necessary.

For a large crowd during the High Holy Days, at other holidays and at a bar or bat mitzvah, there should be *at least* two, and sometimes three, ushers. It is essential that at least one usher remain close to the front door to greet arriving worshippers. The usher by the front door should wear the emergency panic button. The second usher should be *in* the sanctuary, helping people to find the seats pointed out to them by the first usher.

Do not seat anyone at the following times:

- When the congregation is standing and singing—e.g., during the *Barchu*, the *Shema*, the *Amidah*, etc.;
- During the Rabbi's sermon or when the cantor is singing;
- When the Ark is open;
- During blessings; and
- During the reading of the Torah.

Keep lobby area clear and quiet. *No one is to stand in the lobby area during the service except the ushers.* This is another security measure.

If people leave the sanctuary (especially with children), find out if they are returning. *Children should not be out of the sanctuary unless accompanied by an adult.* However, a child may leave to go to the bathroom alone; he/she must then return to the sanctuary.

In general, keep an eye on things, be visible and available if you are needed, and answer visitors' questions.

Keep people from walking in and out of the Rabbi's office. During the service, keep the door to the rabbi's office closed so that if the phone rings, it does not disturb the service; answer the phone if you hear it.

If there is disruption during the service, especially during the sermon, from a crying or talking young child, please approach the parent(s) and say: "I'll help you out with your child" and then do so.

Be watchful that no food or drink goes into the sanctuary. This includes bottles and other nourishment for babies. If a child needs to be fed, that should take place downstairs in the *simcha* room—not in the classroom or in the lobby.

Opening and locking the building. *Temple members have an individual code for the lock box.*

To open the building:

- Punch in your code and then hit the star (*) button; the front door should click and then you can open it; *immediately* turn off the alarm in the entryway (call a board member if you don't know the alarm code).
- Turn on the lights in the hallway and stairwell.
- Test the elevator: After disarming the alarm, go outside and punch in your code; then hit the black button to call for the lift. (You do not need the key.)
- Place the handicapped parking cones and signs outside.

To lock the building:

- Take in the handicapped parking cones and signs, and the elevator key.
- Turn out all the lights: downstairs, sanctuary, yahrzeit lights, stairwell, halls.
- Remember to re-set the alarm before leaving; use the same code that you used to turn off the alarm. All contact-point doors must be closed before the alarm can be set: front door, sanctuary door, furnace-room door, and ground-floor back door.
- ***Don't forget: after you turn on the alarm and leave, you must close the front door. Check to make sure it has automatically locked.***

Thank you very much for your cooperation. If anything is amiss with the lights, elevator, or anything else, please report it to the House Chair, Jeff Berkowitz, at (610) 217-1662.