

Thanks for helping to make Aurora United Church a Welcoming Place

A Manual for the Worship Support Team

This team is largely responsible for making the church a welcoming place during services. We warmly and genuinely greet people as they enter the church, answering their questions and guiding them to the sanctuary, Sunday school, washrooms, coat racks, etc. We invite visitors and long standing attendees to join us afterwards for coffee time or to participate in upcoming events.

Greeters are often the first point of contact to this congregation, the “first impression” they give is critical to leaving a lasting positive impression to those coming to share our worship and other events. This impression is not just “put on” for the visitor or church shopper, the goal of the Worship Support Team is to encourage a welcoming atmosphere to our honoured guests and equally to our long standing attendees.

“In disguise” visits to United Churches have shown that some congregations fail to respond to the needs of a guest in their presence. Even long standing members can feel left out during coffee time, as they sit in the pew before service or during other social times at the church.

Ushering and Greeting, preparing coffee and serving all play roles in creating a welcoming atmosphere at Aurora United Church. We thank you for helping to make this a welcoming place.

Worship Support Team Monthly Leader

Each month a leader will recruit and guide the support team through the various tasks.

- Volunteers will be called to fill the positions several weeks in advance- this builds a team that hopefully can be re-built in subsequent years or months as required – the church database (ask at the office) contains lists of people who have volunteered for the roles of coffee set-up, greeter, usher – the call lists can be obtained there
- New volunteers will be briefed on the role to be played
- Team members will be given a reminder call in the week leading up to the service
- The Leader will play a key role at each service guiding volunteers to their respective roles and explaining any special needs for that service
- Leaders should familiarize themselves with the church calendar before they take their post. The church website, www.auroraunitedchurch.ca, and various bulletin boards around the church will assist with this. This helps them prepare for baptisms (more people), communion (additional preparation), special services and answer questions about upcoming events
- The Leader will call or email the Ministerial Team well before the start of the month to request if there are any special requirements for the month

- *Communion:* on Communion days, it will be expected that the entire Worship Support Team assist with this event. The communion leaders should probably be contacted by the Worship Support Team Leader in the weeks leading up to the service to confirm their needs and offer them your assistance.
- The church website has a calendar page which is useful to planning the needs of the month, especially communion, special services, etc.

The Roles to be filled by the Worship Support Team

Ushers

- The Worship Support Team Leader will act as head usher, assuring that posts are filled, recruiting last minute volunteers in the event of a “no-show”, or an unexpectedly large turn-out where extra hands may be necessary.
- Ushers should familiarize themselves with the church calendar before they take their post. The church website, www.auroraunitedchurch.ca, and various bulletin boards around the church will assist with this. This helps them prepare for baptisms (more people), communion (additional preparation), special services and answer questions about upcoming events
- The following materials should be available for Ushers:
 - ◆ Bulletins and other hand-outs
 - ◆ Generic Collection Envelopes for visitors (it might be useful to have these in-hand)
 - ◆ Fire Procedure Manual (read it in the Narthex)
 - ◆ Collection plates at the back of the church
 - ◆ “I give with PAR” cards, it might also be useful to have these in-hand
- Blue coloured buttons are available in the Narthex – “Worship Support Team”
- We suggest that all Ushers and Greeters wear nametags. These are available at the Welcome Centre or by calling Steve Falk
- 4 on the main floor, 2-4 on the balcony depending upon the size of the service
- hand of bulletins and answering questions as people enter the sanctuary
- assure that enough bulletins are on the tables on the entries to the balcony
- In the event of a fire, the ushers help evacuate the building. Ushers may recruit people to assist in carrying the elderly or “mobility challenged” out the front doors and down to street level. They also secure windows, make final check of washrooms and report to the fire panel at the north-west entry where fire fighter will be attending to the emergency. Details are available in the binder in the Narthex . The Worship Support Team Leader will take a lead role in this exercise
- Collection of Offering. 4 Ushers on the main floor – in pairs and at least two in the balcony. Two Ushers process up the main central aisle once they are given the nod by the minister, with all of the collection plates
- *Communion:* on Communion days, it will be expected that the entire Worship Support Team assist with this event. The communion leaders should probably be contacted by the Worship Support Team Leader in the weeks leading up to the service to inquire of their needs and offer them your assistance.

Greeters

- Greeters should familiarize themselves with the church calendar before they take their post. The church website, www.auroraunitedchurch.ca, and various bulletin boards around the church will assist with this. This helps them prepare for baptisms (more people), communion (additional preparation), special services and answer questions about upcoming events
- Blue coloured buttons are available in the Narthex – “Worship Support Team”
- We suggest that all Ushers and Greeters wear name tags. These are available at the Welcome Centre or by calling Steve Falk
- A slightly different posture is taken by a Greeter. Your role is to welcome people to the church with an eye for the newcomer or person who may have questions. Additionally, you have an eye out for the long-standing member who may need companionship, a warm smile and a few kind words.
- Common queries by newcomers include:
 - ◆ Where are the washrooms?
 - ◆ Is there an elevator?
 - ◆ Where are the coat racks?
 - ◆ Where is the Sunday School?
 - ◆ Where do the Baptismal service participants meet?
 - ◆ Is there a guest book?
 - ◆ Can you have the minister call me?
- Familiarization of the elevator would be helpful to any Greeter at the north-west doors. You may have to leave your post for a moment to assist someone new with the elevator or quickly recruit someone to aid some requiring elevator assistance.
- Greeters are pro-active to the needs of visitors and avoid long conversations with friends as they may be missing the needs of people entering the church
- Pro-active gestures may include:
 - ◆ “I don’t believe we have met, my name is...”
 - ◆ “Please join us for coffee after service, can I walk down with you?”
 - ◆ “Can I help you find the Sunday School classroom when the time comes for your child to go to class?”
 - ◆ “Can I point out our Welcome Centre where you can get further information about the church, what we do in the community”
 - ◆ “Can I suggest you come to the concert... (or other upcoming event)”
 - ◆ “May I introduce you to (someone standing close by), maybe they could help you find a seat today...”
- Greeters keep in mind that congregations can be all too good at serving their own regular “in” members to the exclusion of newcomers and often to the exclusion of members whose potential *deeper* involvement has not yet been inspired. The Greeters role requires self-awareness in order that the needs of others comes first.
- *Communion:* on Communion days, it will be expected that the entire Worship Support Team assist with this event. The communion leaders should probably be contacted by the Worship Support Team Leader in the weeks leading up to the service to inquire of their needs and offer them your assistance.

Welcome Centre

- You should familiarize themselves with the church calendar before you take your post. The church website, www.auroraunitedchurch.ca, and various bulletin boards around the church will assist with this. This helps you prepare for baptisms (more people), communion (additional preparation), special services and answer questions about upcoming events
- Blue coloured buttons are available in the Narthex – “Worship Support Team” or Usher or Head Usher as you prefer
- We suggest that all Ushers and Greeters wear name tags. These are available at the Welcome Centre or by calling Steve Falk
- This Welcome Centre display booth is stored in the table and chairs room on the main floor. A card table will be required also. They are in the same room
- A selection of brochures is available in the Narthex but we keep a small selection with the booth. If they run short, you can re-stock in the Narthex.
- We should set it up in the Narthex 30 min before a service or special event and also during coffee hour
- A card table is covered with a blue table cloth and a variety of brochures are made available.
- A sign up sheet for name tags is made available and returned to Steve Falk so that name tags can be made for the following week. - the easiest way to return it is to leave it in Steve’s mail slot on the 2nd floor and call him to alert him that it is there. -905-726-2608 home
- This is a pro-active position like a Greeter.
 - ◆ Draw people into conversation about the church, ask them if they would like a name tag.
 - ◆ Suggest they attend a future event – check the various church calendars around on bulletin boards to see if there is a new course, family event, soup lunch, concert or other activity that you could suggest.
 - ◆ Suggest they look over one of the brochures that are laid out on the table
 - ◆ Introduce people to other people around you
- *Communion:* on Communion days, it will be expected that the entire Worship Support Team assist with this event. The communion leaders should probably be contacted by the Worship Support Team Leader in the weeks leading up to the service to inquire of their needs and offer them your assistance.

Coffee Set-Up

- One or two people can easily prepare the coffee, tea and juice for the coffee-time in about 45 minutes
- Membership committee members assure that there is enough supplies in the fridge, freezer and cupboard – please inform the church office if you see a shortage in supplies so that they can be re-stocked
- ***Milk is not supplied in advance. It is requested that the coffee set-up person buy a 2L carton of milk (re-imbursed by the porcelain “hands”) and bring it with them on Sunday morning***
- Instructions for setting up coffee are in the Membership cupboard in the north-east corner of the kitchen. If there are any shortages in supplies or questions, the church morning caretaker can usually steer you in the correct direction.

Coffee time – serving and Clean-Up

- It requires about 4 people to serve the coffee, tea and juice and clean-up easily
- The more the merrier however. “Fellowship through dishwashing”, as we say !
- Instructions for serving, using the dishwasher and cleaning up are on a sheet in the Membership cupboard, in the north-east corner of the kitchen
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