

Communion Guidance for Ministers and Deacons

Communion is an important part of worship at First Baptist Church of Asheville. In recent years, we have often made it a practice of coming forward to receive communion. This allows Deacons and Ministers to serve more directly, invites a more personal moment of receiving these gifts, and affirms our collective need to remember God's work in Jesus. Generally, we will set up eleven stations: six downstairs on the main floor including one for the Broadcast Room, Childcare, and Atrium Security/Greeters and one in the Narthex for Security/Greeters in front of the Sanctuary; one in the choir; and four in the balcony. This can vary based on needs.

FOR ALL COMMUNION VOLUNTEERS

- Arrive in time to find and reserve a seat in the Sanctuary near where you will serve. Check in with your serving partner, or if you are ushering, the other ushers assigned to your floor in the Sanctuary to make sure everyone is present. We all know life happens. If we can notice a problem before the bells chime, that's better!
- To enhance this time of remembrance, we want to minimize movement during the words of institution. Please do not move about the room to prepare for communion while Mack is speaking at the table. If you need to move to a different floor, as in the case of choir members and ministers who may not be able to sit where they will serve, please move during the organ/piano playing following the sermon. Everyone else, please wait in your seat through the words of institution. Mack will move from the table down to the floor; that will be everyone's cue to move to assigned spots.
- If you need to cancel your time to serve, please contact your own replacement from the list of alternates provided for this week, or any ordained deacon (past or present) who is available that day. Make **Barry Gold (828-429-7598)** aware of the replacement or contact him for assistance with finding a replacement.

SERVERS

Before the service, make it a point to find the person you are serving with and check in. We have no set rules on which person serves the Bread or Wine. You may decide on your own. Sanitize your hands when you arrive at your station, and be sure to station yourselves where congregants will naturally come to the basket before they reach the cup.

Speak plainly and loud enough for the person to hear your words when you are serving. If you are able, consider using the person's first name as the blessing is offered. If someone comes forward with arms crossed (often a child), offer a blessing to them. Ex: "You are a beloved child of God. May God bless you and keep you this day and forevermore."

Note – The servers assigned to the balcony, right above the organ, will go to the children's Bible Study hall and serve the volunteers in the preschool classroom AFTER serving all those in the organ side balcony section. The preschool classroom is the first door on the right in that hallway. If no one is there, it means they only had a small number of children for worship time and they moved downstairs with the younger children. In that case, they will be served by the person assigned to the broadcast room and downstairs childcare, so there is no need to go looking for them. Only that one classroom in that hall should have volunteers during worship. **A key card is needed for entry.**

The Bread - The person serving the bread will take a piece of bread from the tray and place it in the hands of the congregant as they offer one of the following words of blessing:

❖ The body of Christ, broken for you. ❖ The bread of life for you.

The Cup - The congregant will dip the bread in the juice and then eat the bread. If they drop it, give them another piece of bread. The person serving the cup will offer one of these blessings:

❖ The blood of Christ, shed for you. ❖ The cup of salvation for you.

Serving one another - After all persons have been served, take the time to serve one another. Each server will take both elements and offer to the other.

Cover the elements - After serving one another, return the elements to their original location and cover them as they were.

Serving the broadcast room, outside security/greeters, and childcare - The persons serving the volunteers in these locations outside the sanctuary will take the bread and cup from the main level, piano side, near the door. Go to the broadcast room first and then through the atrium to serve security/greeters on the atrium side and our members helping in the childcare rooms. There should be TWO rooms with children and volunteers across the hall from each other. **A key card is needed for entry.**

USHERS - MAIN LEVEL

Ushers are needed to maintain and support a more orderly process of coming forward and maintaining physical distance. The ushers will assist people with getting to the aisles and back to their seats.

- Begin at the front of the sanctuary and ask each row to go forward in order.

- Manage the flow of members so that the aisles do not become congested. **The center aisle usher will manage the flow of both the right and left center pew sections.**
- Assist persons who are entering the aisles and may have trouble.
- Assist ministers in identifying those who cannot move forward but would like to be served.
- Ushers on side aisles will serve security/greeters on duty in front of the sanctuary. Once you have ushered your last row, you will go into the narthex where on the piano side you will find a table with a basket and goblet for serving those on duty and then yourselves before returning the elements to the table.

USHERS - BALCONY

There are special instructions for each section of the balcony.

- Central sections: The entire row will move toward the center, up the stairs, across the top of the balcony, receive the elements, and return to the seats by the stairs at the opposite side of your section. The two sections nearest the piano should flow to the aisle they share.
- Section in front of sound board: Usher this section after the larger central sections have returned to their seats. Depending on where the congregants are sitting, ushers will work together to direct the flow of each row.
- Back row: Congregants will remain seated where they will receive communion from the servers.

Feel free to contact me with any questions!

Barry Gold

(828) 429-7598

barry@pfcfoothills.org