

# Church and Pulpit Etiquette Training for the Ecumenical Church

## Pulpit Basic Training

The first Pulpit Etiquette post was on “Seminary did not Teach Me this..”. Well today I have another post. As I was sharing with some brothers and sisters coming into ministry we talked about the do’s and don’t about the pulpit. While I was thinking about this topic, I was reminded of a book Dr. Patricia A. Gould-Champ at STVU (The Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University) had us read. The book was titled, Riding in the Second Chariot by Rev. K. Edward Copeland, J.D. The book has some good information in the chapters.

He pointed out in Chapter 2 of the book that, “There are certain items of protocol and etiquette that every minister ought to know.....it boils down to common sense”. Yes common sense. We all grew up in a home where it was expected to have the proper home training before we went to visit others. Our parents wanted to make sure we did not bring shame to them when they allowed us to visit friends and relatives. We were taught to be respectful and say “Yes/No, ma’am/sir, please, thank you, excuse me and may I. Also, when you encounter a situation your parents did not teach you, use common sense. So when we visited people would say that’s so and so child and they are so well manner and respectful.

This type of home training is applied to the pulpit from the same angel and a lot of common sense. Many people believe by growing up in church we will have all the pulpit basic training needed. Well, not true. There are some pastors and seasoned associates who will take the time to explain pulpit etiquette, but then there are those who may think you already know what to do. So before you charge into the pulpit here are some basic taken from Copeland’s book (added "her" or "she" to make gender inclusive):

### **How am I to conduct myself when visiting another church?**

Always wait for an invitation from the minister in charge before you take a seat in the pulpit  
If you are visiting another church and have not had the opportunity to speak to the pastor or the minister in charge before service begins, sit in the congregation

Always acknowledge the pastor who allows you to preach in her/his pulpit  
The pastor is showing trust and confidence in you by allowing you to minister the Word to her/his congregation

Always encourage the pastor who allows you to preach in her/his pulpit  
Give the pastor some encouragement publicly or privately. Send a thank you card or note to the pastor who invited you.

### **Always do what you have been asked to do**

If asked to pray during altar call, do not sing your favorite song  
If asked to read scripture, do not try to adlib or provide a mini-sermon

### **Always support the preacher**

Good preachers support the preacher while she/he is preaching.

### **Always treat the pulpit area with the utmost respect**

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While the worship service is in progress, you should be concentrating on worship, demonstrate good posture and countenance the congregation is watching you.

Always speak audibly and distinctly

Learn how to use the microphones properly

Adjust the microphone to the proper height

Speak directly into the microphone, but do not swallow it

Listen carefully to how the microphones are set when you are in an unfamiliar setting

Keep the microphone between you and the direction you are facing while you speak

## **How am I to conduct myself at my home church?**

Be attentive to the needs of your pastor and visiting preachers

Make sure that the preacher has the proper liquids available (an usher or pastor aid will handle this)

For the guest preacher find out before hand the prefer water temperature

Familiarize yourself with you pastor's post-sermon routine (i.e., cape, coat or scarf around the neck) to avoid the affects of a draft after preaching. You may travel with your pastor and would be responsible

If the pastor or guest pastor needs to change out of their wet clothes after service, gently usher them to the pastor's study

## **Be Punctual**

Arrive to church at least 15 minutes before worship service

If running late call the church to inform the pastor

If you are late and worship started sit in the congregation not the pulpit

Be attentive to the flow of the service

Do not disrupt the flow of the service by offering unauthorized commentary or adding elements without pastoral permission

## **Be a catalyst for worship**

Participation in the elements of worship can do a lot to set the tone in the congregation

Learn how to leave your worries, problems and negative emotions out of the pulpit

Remember the congregation watches your demeanor and your attitude

## **Prayerfully Support the Preacher**

Preaching is hard work. The preacher is a representing God and is in constant spiritual battle.

Use prayer to uplift the preacher while preaching

Whether your pastor or another associate is preaching have a guaranteed "amen" from you

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## Platform and Pulpit Manners

Merle L. Mills

### The Platform

Decorum on the platform and in the pulpit can do much to set the tone and establish the mood for the church service. It is important that the ministry as well as others who participate in such services observe the ethical conduct that should prevail under such circumstances.

Because those who are on the platform are under constant observance, their mannerisms should be such as not to offend the worshiper or to detract from the service. While an ostentatious display is to be deplored, one's conduct before the public should not be considered lightly.

Let us consider some of the essential points of this subject and ascertain whether we are doing all that is expected of us to inspire a reverential atmosphere and to establish a setting that will contribute to the efficacy of the service of worship.

Those who are to go on the platform should meet in a designated place, usually the pastor's study, in sufficient time to become acquainted with the order of service, the arrangement of seating, and the part each one is to have on the program. Such a practice will avoid confusion, embarrassment, and awkwardness. It should be made certain in advance that there are a sufficient number of platform chairs, that they are properly arranged, and that the right number of church hymnals is available.

The pastor can plan with the organist or pianist to be given a signal when the prelude is about to be concluded, which, incidentally, should not infringe upon or delay the worship service. If there is no choral introit, the ministers at the close of the prelude should step onto the platform and bow in unison for silent prayer. This genuflection of the ministers on the rostrum should be done in order and with grace. The austere and clumsy way in which some kneel for this part of the service is to be deplored. Each should kneel on both knees and at the same time. It would be well if the one in charge of the service would say Amen just loud enough for the platform group to hear if there is no choral Amen. This is a signal for all to rise together with grace and dignity. If the ministers kneel toward the platform chairs, as in some places they still continue to do, it should have been agreed before that all turn in unison either to the right or to the left in facing the congregation.

If the congregation has been seated during the silent prayer and it is the plan to rise to sing the doxology, either the choir director or the pastor may make a gesture for them to rise for the song. The one designated to offer the invocation prayer should be in the pulpit by the time the singing is completed and should either gesture with the uplifted hand or say, "Let us pray." Many times one begins to pray without informing the congregation. This encourages irreverence on the part of the stranger or those unfamiliar with the order of service, and they are not properly prepared to enter into the prayer.

The platform chairs should be so arranged that the speaker's chair will be directly behind the pulpit. The platform chairman is seated next to the speaker. The one who is chosen to speak

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should occupy the center chair regardless of what responsibilities or positions are occupied by any who might be invited onto the platform for the service.

Inconspicuous and conservative dress is essential to good platform etiquette. Bright-colored ties, socks, and suits, and sports apparel are definitely out of order. "Carefulness in dress is an important consideration. The minister should be clothed in a manner befitting the dignity of his position."—Gospel Workers, p. 173. A mirror in the pastor's study aids one in making a check of his personal appearance before going onto the platform.

Proper dress for local church officers who are called upon to participate in the services can be stressed by having a meeting with your elders and deacons at the beginning of the year in which is discussed with them the importance and necessity of dressing on the Sabbath day in an attire that would be in keeping with the dignity of the service. Even then there may be times when an officer will come to church without a coat or tie, or be attired in a suit and loud tie that make him conspicuous and out of order on the platform. In a few cases I have refused to take a person dressed in this manner onto the platform, and have in a kind way explained to him the reason. Another suggestion that has been helpful in solving this problem, especially if there are a number of elders, is to give them advance notice of the time they are to go onto the platform and the part they are to perform. Not only does this alert them as to how they should be dressed, but it enables them to be prepared for what is required of them. This is especially important for the one who is to offer the public prayer. He should be notified beforehand.

Posture is also an important factor to be considered with platform manners. One should sit erect with both feet on the floor. To sit in a slouched position with the legs crossed is a gross impropriety. To encourage interest in and attention to the speaker, the eyes of all those on the platform should be kept on the speaker. To allow the eyes to wander about the auditorium, sizing up the beams, scrutinizing the light fixtures, looking out of the windows, et cetera, during the preaching is a breach of good platform manners. The same can be said of closing the eyes and dozing. No matter how soporific the sermon might be, this is inexcusable.

It is indecorous for anyone on the platform, including the pastor, to whisper. This can no more be condoned there than in the congregation. Whispering and talking on the platform are disrespectful and irreverent.

The speaker and those who share the platform with him should sing with the congregation. Singing is as much a part of worship as praying and preaching. How strange that people go to church for the ostensible purpose of worshiping the Lord and yet refuse to do so while there, by not singing with the congregation!

All those on the platform should participate in the offering. This too is a significant part of Our worship to God. It may be true that the pastor or the visiting ministers have contributed earlier that day in another church they have visited. But this cannot be explained to the congregation. Even if it means that one must divide his offering, or sacrifice more, in order to give when he is required to be on the platform several times in one day, he should give willingly.

Those seated behind the speaker can set a good example of supporting him. As the pastor makes a solid point or enunciates a solemn and pregnant truth, why not express approbation by a hearty Amen! It is to be lamented that in many of our churches this practice has become almost extinct, and the Amen corner of the church has become silent. It is recognized that this could be carried to excess, but a few Amens during the sermon will not give cause for offense and could do much to contribute to the inspiration and fervor of the speaker.

Admittedly, one of the prevailing sins in our churches today is irreverence. What is seen and heard oftentimes in the house of prayer is an insult to God and must cause the angels to hide their faces. We stand indicted, and as conference workers and leaders we ourselves have been guilty of contributing to this laxity by our personal example. Realizing our solemn obligation, could we not improve our platform manners and by example help to develop an atmosphere that

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will dignify our church services so that they will inspire awe and reverence in all who come to worship God in His sacred presence?

### The Pulpit

The pulpit is the most sacred and exalted place in the church. He who occupies this position stands as the representative of Christ. This is the minister's first line of offense. From this honored and dedicated place he boldly denounces sin and courageously challenges the devil. From the sacred desk are heard the truths of God, which cut as a two-edged sword, bringing both conviction and contrition to the worshiper. Words of life and death flow from this fount. To this vantage point the penitent looks for the heavenly balm of Gilead. Is it not important then that one's comportment in the desk give no cause for needless offense and bring no reproach against the name of Christ?

Here are a few suggestions that should be followed as we stand in the pulpit:

The occupant of the desk should have good posture. He must not stand in a slouched position, leaning over or on the desk. He should stand erect, with both feet on the floor. To stand first on one foot, then the other, and to lean on the desk does not impress the congregation that the speaker has any fire and enthusiasm or that his message is of any great import. Nor should we be guilty of pounding the desk or the Bible in order to be emphatic. There are other ways of expressing emphasis.

It is both repugnant and a violation of pulpit etiquette to introduce one who is to occupy the desk in a protracted and flattering manner. The pulpit is not to be desecrated by indulging in superlatives and hyperboles. To introduce someone as the "world's greatest preacher," a "nationally" or "internationally known figure," et cetera, is to exaggerate as well as to flatter and ought not to be—of all places—in the pulpit. A true minister of God does not appreciate such remarks and becomes embarrassed. If a speaker of some repute is introduced, a few modest statements concerning his position and work are sufficient.

The pulpit is not a place to boast of or to praise the members of the speaker's family. There may be occasions when it would be fitting to refer to the family in the pulpit, but to exalt them and talk frequently of their merits meets with the disapprobation of the congregation. To say publicly that your wife is the best and most beautiful woman in the world is not the subject or language to be heard from the desk. Tell your wife in private as often as you wish how beautiful and wonderful she is.

Jesting, joking, and telling gruesome stories are out of order in the pulpit. It is not the place to display one's humor and make people laugh. There is a time and place for wit and genuine humor, but seldom should it be used in the pulpit. If done at all, it should be with moderation and restraint. To tell funny stories, paint word pictures, and describe repulsive scenes is to degrade the pulpit and weaken its influence.

Announcements that are made from the desk should be in keeping with the spirit of the service. Those who make the announcements should do so briefly and concisely. The worship service is robbed of its dignity when an announcement is made and someone speaks up from the congregation to make a correction, or when the pastor or local elder who makes the announcement speaks directly to someone in the congregation, requesting a clarification or additional information.

Prayer offered in the pulpit is formal in style. To use the personal pronoun—you, your, et cetera—in addressing God certainly sounds disrespectful. Our prayers need not be stereotyped or flowery, nor should they be informal or crude. They should be simple and uttered in true prayer form, addressing God in the solemn style as Thee, Thou, Thine, et cetera.

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Public prayer need not be long. The invocation prayer should consist of but a few sentences. This is also true of the offertory prayer and the benediction. The main prayer is longer, but even that should not be protracted. There are few occasions when the main prayer should exceed two or three minutes in length. Long public prayers are an abomination unto the Lord, are unacceptable to the children, and do little good for the adults. "The prayers offered in public should be short and to the point. God does not require us to make the season of worship tedious by lengthy petitions. . . . A few minutes is long enough for any ordinary public petition."—Ibid., p. 175. "Long prayers are tiring to those who hear, and do not prepare the people to listen to the instruction that is to follow."—Ibid., p. 176. "Prosy, sermonizing prayers are uncalled for and out of place in public. A short prayer, offered in fervor and faith, will soften the hearts of the hearers; but during long prayers they wait impatiently, as if wishing that every word might end it."—Ibid., p. 179. Most of our ministers pray too long. This should be corrected. Our church elders should also be cautioned in regard to this matter. Not only should prayers be brief, formal, and simple, but they should also be reverent, free of vain repetition and any profanation of the name of God. "Our Father," "Jesus Christ," "God," and "Lord" should not be repeated too frequently in prayer, and when used, should be spoken in reverent tones. "Some think it a mark of humility to pray to God in a common manner, as if talking with a human being. They profane His name by needlessly and irreverently mingling with their prayers the words 'God Almighty,'—awful, sacred words, which should never pass the lips except in subdued tones and with a feeling of awe."—Ibid., p. 176. Let us also eliminate the organ music during prayer.

An error of which some ministers as well as local elders are guilty is to begin the offertory prayer before the pianist or organist has been given the courtesy of completing the offertory number. The offertory is a part of the worship service, and should not be considered unnecessary or an unimportant part even though the deacons have received the offering before it has been completed. In all probability the musician has spent considerable time practicing and preparing for the number, and the pastor or local elder should not feel it his prerogative to stand up as soon as the offering has been received and cut off the music for the offertory prayer or begin praying as the offertory number is continued. This is a discourtesy to the musician and an insult to God. The offertory number should not be long, and the musician may be so instructed, but it should be played in its entirety before the offertory prayer is given, provided it is the practice to have this prayer after the offering, which would seem the most logical place for it.

The call for the offering from the desk can be done with dignity. To resort to lightness and humor in calling for the offering is sacrilegious. We stand in dire need of solemnizing, beautifying, and embellishing this part of our church service. A few appropriate remarks are in order, stating clearly what the offering is for that day and quoting a brief statement from the Spirit of prophecy or the Bible that would encourage and inspire the people to participate in this phase of the service. The deacons are then asked to wait upon the congregation as they worship the Lord with their tithes and offerings. The call for and the receiving of the tithes and offerings are as sacred and essential a part of the service as the prayer, and should be done with as much thought and care.

Our denomination does not believe in or follow a liturgical form of church service. This is as it should be. God is to be worshiped in spirit and truth. We are not required to follow a punctilious ceremony in approaching God. The supreme Sovereign of the universe is quick and eager to respond to the faintest cry of the sinner. But we must not go to the other extreme and permit the church service to degenerate into an informal, ill-planned, and undignified service. When we come into God's holy temple and He speaks through His servants in the pulpit to the people, it is an awesome and solemn occasion. We should therefore beautify and exalt the service and conform to an accepted standard of ethics and procedure where His name is wont to be proclaimed and praised.

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Our attitude, mood, and demeanor in His house, especially on the platform and in the pulpit, will have its influence on the degree of reverence and inspiration that will prevail in the service. Let us, as ministers and conference workers, be exemplary in our manners and behavior, both on the platform and in the pulpit, ever remembering that whatever impression we make by our deportment will tend either to elevate or to offend the worshiper in the pew.

God holds His ministers responsible for the influence that the pulpit exerts over the pew. Let us then be conscious of that responsibility and make certain that the ethics, manners, and procedures we follow in our church services will exalt Christ and do credit to His name.

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## Church Etiquette

The Church is perhaps one of the last social institutions where dignity, protocol, respect, and reverence are maintained. This is primarily because when we come to the church and its services we are entering the Kingdom of God on earth, His habitation, and we choose to honor this sacred place by our attentiveness to what is proper and ordered. We have the opportunity to reflect the image of Christ within us by our actions. "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). This class is meant for personal reflection, not as a means of judging others. Keep in mind that there are different traditions even among the Christian faithful. We come to church to pray and worship God above all else, and that should be our only focus. During this class I have listed some of the things worshippers need to know about respectful and reverent behavior while in Chapel Service. I encourage all congregation members, couples and families to make use of this valuable resource.

## Definition of Etiquette

Church etiquette is a set of rules that govern behavior in the house of God. It comes from the same principle as the etiquette that governs behavior in polite society. With that said let's look at some basic rules of etiquette.

Prepare your heart for Sunday. Don't schedule your Sundays so that you are holding God to the clock. We run harried all six days, on Sunday we need to put your clock and calendar to rest on Sunday. Rest – Plan nothing Do nothing.

Give yourself time. Plan Saturday night to leave on time Sunday morning. Don't be in a mad rush cursing your children, frothing at your mate, violating the law. Let nothing abscond with your Sundays.

Come on time ~ Punctuality is consideration of another man's schedule. Even though we start on time, those who come late can create a distraction. And remember that worship involves learning but it also involves all of the life of the body of Christ. The emotional experience of singing and worship is as vital to us as the intellectual experience of learning and the volitional experience of obeying. Be in place when the service begins.

Be respectful of others if you have a crying child. A child who screams at the top of his lungs is no problem as long as the mother takes him out. But a continually fretful, whining child becomes a constant drip unto frustration and insanity. Don't let your child be a distraction. You can go to the fellowship hall near the bathroom. We are working to have a TV feed of the service in this room. While your child's voice is precious to you, he's probably not to others wanting to hear the service.

Once you come into the sanctuary and the service begins, do not talk; especially in the back. In a sanctuary as large as ours you may think that you are not being heard but to those in your vicinity, it sounds like a Rangers game. Don't be a distraction to those around you.

If you should come in late for some reason, sit in the back and don't parade down front. All eyes will turn from the Bible to the entrance of the royal train.

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- ☒ Do not “fiddle” with wrappers on a piece of candy or gum. That drives people around you nigh unto violence at the continual crinkling of cellophane. Stick candy in your yapper prior to the service. If you need a lozenge during the service, then be quick.
  - ☒ Our morning services last about 2 hour. From 11:15-1:00. Leave when the Pastor says, “You are dismissed.” Leaving early takes the edge off of the finality of a service. Staying brings closure to all of the time together. Be respectful.
  - ☒ If a child (not a baby) is brought to service then the child must behave. If a child is brought to church it is to train them in adult ways. Playing a computer game defeats the purpose as well as being disrespectful. It also teaches a child to be irreverent. Doodling is one thing. Playing a game is quite another.
  - ☒ Respect the building. Do you know that on Monday mornings our C/A has to pick up the mints that are spit out and have stuck to the carpet or floor? Clean up after yourself as your mama taught you. And you know what? Our bathrooms are nastier after Sunday than the Carolina Panthers football team stadium bathrooms are after a game. Habits build character. Respect the property of others.  
Church Building ~ The Sanctuary  
Our Lord said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”(Matthew 18:20)
  - ☒ Arrive on time for service. That means at least five minutes early. Late arrivals should enter quietly and stand in the back until an appropriate break in the ceremony allows them to enter.
  - ☒ A church clean ~ This is a way to honor God. Remember the outside of the church reflects the inside of the church. Make certain that trash is picked up, that the flowerbeds are tended, and that nothing unsightly mars the look of God’s house.
  - ☒ Pulpit ~ Only the minister or invited speakers are allowed to speak from the center pulpit. Only the minister, or persons authorized by the minister should ever be in the pulpit. All other speakers taking part in the worship service should use side lecterns and podiums. Children should be taught at young ages that this is a sacred spot and can never be used as a play area.
  - ☒ Communion Table ~ The Communion table is used for one of two holy sacraments (ceremonies or rites). Ministers and others who are in charge of the Communion service are the only persons permitted to use it. Personal items should never be placed on the Communion table.
  - ☒ Church Bibles and Hymnals ~ Bibles and Hymnals that are placed in pews are to be treated with care and respect. They should not be written on or used to dispose of gum. The bindings should be cared for; the spines of Bibles and Hymnals should be protected. They are the property of the church and should not be taken home by parishioners. Parishioners should let the church leadership know if Bibles and Hymnals are in need of repair.
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- ☒ Talking during Church ~ Personal conversation with friends and family should be avoided during the service. This is a time to comune with God. It just isn't appropriate to have a conversation with others during the services. Besides being disrespectful towards God, it is rude towards the other people in the church who are trying to worship. Talk to God while in church through your prayers, hymns, and thanksgiving, and to your friends in the hall afterwards. If it is life and death, then go to church early and talk beforehand. If it isn't.....wait. It is rude and inconsiderate to those around you. They have not come to hear your personal business conversations - keep it that way.
  - ☒ Don't make unnecessary noises. Tear off your check before church. Unwrap your cough

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drops beforehand. Put the children's snacks into a ziploc bag. Adjust the velcro on your shoes after church. It is the little things that are loud and disruptive. Take a moment and prepare for a respectful and meaningful time.

### LITTLE ONES

Taking restless little ones out is a different matter. If a child is disruptive, take him/her quickly and quietly out of church, just long enough to settle him down, then return to the Service. Follow the rules for entering late: not during readings, sermons.

Children in Church ~ Christ said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14). . It is never appropriate to allow a child to run down the aisles, play loudly, or carry toys that make noise. It is possible for young children to remain in church throughout a service if they are taught to be quiet and respectful. We have a cry rooms or nurseries for those who are too small to be quiet throughout the whole Service. Please be respectful to those around you if your child becomes fussy or out of control, and remove him from the Service quickly. Don't get me wrong, we love children, but sometimes they have needs that must be addressed immediately. Go address them - in the nursery. Everyone loves a child, but they should not be a distraction in church. Eventually, children will be able to spend longer times in the Service. That is where they should be, but remember the reason for coming to church is to pray and worship. Plan to have your children use the restroom and get a drink before church begins, and don't allow them to come and go continually. Consider bringing your children into the church at a time when the Service is finished to "practice" church behavior. Teach them that they are visiting God's very special house, and they will need to have very special manners there.

Snacks for Children ~ You can always tell where young children have been sitting in the church. The tell-tale signs are graham cracker crumbs, Cheerios, and animal crackers. Parents often bring snacks and a cup of fruit juice along for children during church. And for young children (0-2 years old), this is fine. But by the time children are 3-4 years old, they should be able to make it through Service without eating anything, and by the time they reach seven, they should be fine. For those children who get snacks, try to keep the snack mess down to a minimum. The floor shouldn't be covered with Cheerios! If a very young child needs a snack, please clear away any leftover pieces

Leaving Before Dismissal ~ Leaving church before the Dismissal - besides being rude - deprives us of a blessing. Worship has a beginning ("Blessed is the Kingdom...") and an

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end ("Let us depart in peace..."). We live in a fast-paced world where we seem to be hurrying from place to place. But in God's presence, we need to make every attempt to fight this pressure to move on to the next thing on the day's agenda. We deprive ourselves of blessings by not being still and participating in God's holiness. (Leaving to quiet an infant or other emergencies are acceptable exceptions.)

### Leaving Church

Typically, you are not supposed to leave the sanctuary during prayers, the reading of the Scripture or the Sermon. You are to remain in church until the benediction (final prayer of the service) has been said.

However, there will be times when a person really needs to leave the sanctuary. When this occurs, please do so as discreetly as possible, with the least amount of disruption to the service and the least amount of distraction to your fellow brothers and sisters who are worshipping. If you must leave the sanctuary during church service, do not pass in front of the pulpit. The following times are usually good if one has to leave or re-enter the sanctuary:

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- During a hymn.
- During the collection of the offerings.

### **If at all possible, a person should not leave or re-enter the sanctuary:**

- During the opening of the worship service.
- During the reading of God's Holy Word.
- During a prayer.
- During the sermon.
- During the Lord's Supper.

There are, of course, a number of exceptions to all of the above.

### When is an appropriate time to eat in the sanctuary?

You should never eat in the sanctuary. If you have a medical condition which requires you to eat at a specific time, leave the sanctuary and go to the fellowship hall and eat. Remember this is another way of respecting the sanctity of God's house. Use of these items is too casual in church and runs the risk of ruining church property and wasting tithes made to God on repairs that would not otherwise be necessary. While the chewing gum rule is sometimes broken, its use should be kept to a minimum, and it should always be disposed of properly (not under pews, in Bibles or on other church property).

Communion is reserved for believers who wish to partake.

Standing ~ We stand for....

Call To Worship because this the opening of the worship experience. We are participation in a call and responds activity. It allows us to participate in the purpose of our coming together

Opening Hymn because this a song of praise to God; We are praising God in song  
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Doxology because the doxology is our hymn of praise to God: (The doxology is song in is some church at the beginning and the end of the worship service). We should always stand in reverence to God when the Doxology is played

Offertory not only requires that you stand but you should also participate in giving. Many times people sit during the offering. You should only sit if the church you are attending is passing a tray to collect the offering, but if you are asked to bring your offering you should get up and take it to the table, plate or place it in the box. Giving is a part of worship. If you don't have anything still get up and walk around, this allows for the flow of the offering to move quickly. It is difficult walking over people during the worship experience. It could even quench some people's spirit during giving.

The Invitation of Christian Discipleship is a time when individual are invited to come and be a part of the household of faith.

Refrain from reserving seats. Allow others to sit as they come into the church, and especially make room for visitors so they will feel welcome. Avoid claiming the outside seat in an empty pew. Claiming the outside seat forces others to climb over you in order to take a seat for worship. For those of you who just can't handle sitting in the middle of the pew (or those with small children who may need to make a fast exit -], take the outside aisle spot and graciously allow those coming after you to go past (by moving out for them so they can get by). Also be nice to our Pews - We should treat them respectfully.

Language that Honors God - Part of your commitment to God is to use language that honors God. Swearing in the sanctuary or any other part of the church is forbidden.

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- Walking
- Never walk in front or across the front of the altar and/or the pulpit area during worship
- Never walk when individuals are reading the scriptures or during prayer
- If you are walking and someone begins to read the scripture or begins to pray, STOP and stand until they are finish
- Sitting ~ When is the appropriate time to sit
- Prelude
- If not at the altar, during prayer
- Announcements
- Greeting of Visitors
- Offering ~ When and where is the appropriate place and time, to prepare your offering (Get money from your parents, fill out the offering envelops etc...)?
- It is appropriate You should take care of all business before entering the sanctuary (use the restroom, write out your offering envelope, get funds from parents if needed ect..) Once you have entered the sanctuary, you should regard it as time spent with God. You should not talk, walk, chew gum, text message or write notes during the worship experience.

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- Christian clothing ~ Sunday Dress
- Dress for church in a manner that shows respect. Whenever we are preparing to come to church, we should remember that we will be entering the House of God. This requires that we dress modestly and with reverence. We are not just spiritual creatures. Our bodies outside reflect what we feel inside. Your dress reflects your heart. Be neat and properly attired. You are going to church to fellowship with and honor God. We should dress modestly, not in a flashy way that would bring attention to ourselves. Our dress should always be becoming of a Christian - especially at church. A woman cloth should not be too low, too high or too tight (clothing that expose the breast, very low cleavage, upper thigh, and midriff are a no go). A man should not be sloppy (Male pants which hang below the buttock ~ No Go). A young person should not draw attention to themselves (T-shirts with inappropriate slogans and symbols~ No Go). Church is to look upwards. Remember; use your best judgment and good taste when dressing for church. After all, you don't go to be seen by everyone else - you go to meet and worship God.

Come as you are???

This invitation, "Come as you are," has unfortunately evolved over the years into an invitation to literally roll out of a cave and come as you are. The above list of church etiquette tips is intended to serve not as a rule of protocol but as a gentle reminder to worshipers that good manners and proper etiquette are important in the house of God.

- The Benediction ~ Why is it important to stay in the worship service until the benediction is given?

At the end of the worship experience, the pastor or preacher will administer the prayer of benediction. It is important to receive the benedictional prayer. The benediction is a prayer that God may bestow certain blessings on His people. In Old Testament times, a regular part of the Temple service was pronouncing the benediction. The form of the priestly benediction was prescribed in the law "The Lord bless you and keep you; / The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; / The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, And give you peace" (Num. 6:24–26).

## Church and Pulpit Etiquette Training for the Ecumenical Church

☒ The benediction many call the “Apostolic Benediction” is often used at the conclusion of a Christian worship service “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen” (2 Cor. 13:14).

☒ When is an appropriate time to use your cell phone?

Cell phones and texting are never allowed in the church. If you have a situation that requires you to keep your electronic device on, turn it on silent or vibrate and answer it outside if needed.

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remember, sometime In a quiet of church a phone on vibrate can be heard). Therefore, try to sit near the exit so that leaving for an emergency will not be a distraction to others. Otherwise, turn off your phone before entering the sanctuary. NEVER answer the phone in worship or in meetings and begin a full conversation with your head lowered. (WE HEAR YOU)

Texting is not only distracting to those around you, but it is downright sacrilegious. We are to “in humility receive the word implanted” and “as newborn babes long for the pure milk of the word.” Texting when one should be listening is a sinful and dishonoring thing in the presence of the explanation of Holy Scripture. In a court of law if one’s cell phone rings or one is seen texting, they will be fined for contempt. How much more disrespectful is it to Him who is the very source of law? Texting and talking should be saved for outside of the church. If you are anticipating an emergency call, sit on the aisle near the back and quietly slip outside and answer the call.

☒ Don't fall asleep in church. If you are that tired, stay home. Better yet, go to bed earlier on Saturday night and it won't be an issue! If you absolutely struggle to stay awake, it is rude to the speaker or pastor. You can make an effort to stay awake by doing small things to keep your mind awake. Sit up straight. Take notes. Wiggle your toes. Chew gum. Consider the principles presented and how they would apply to your life. These keep your mind moving and help to keep sleep at bay.

☒ Church Banquets ~ Often, in order to serve a large group of people at the same time, caterers will preset the banquet tables with the first course. Before beginning to eat it's important to remember to wait for everyone to be seated and for the blessing of the food.

If there is a program, please remember to listen politely instead of having side conversations that will distract others from hearing. Remember the context in which this banquet is being held; since it is a parish event, dress respectfully and modestly.

Ultimately, we might mess up some of the above. But I think if we did, God would say the same thing we say at our house when somebody spills something: “No big deal.” Because it's not about receiving the bread properly or leaving church early to get to work, it's about Christ.