A Message from the Pastor

The ministry of the church usher is essential to the worship experience of all who come into the house of God. The church usher helps to create and establish a positive atmosphere for all who enter into the church sanctuary. It is important that ushers are taught the unique techniques of church ushering. Through this handbook, those who want to serve in this most special and unique ministry will receive the information needed in order to develop them physically and spiritually into effective servants of God and others.

I want to give special thanks to the committee that gave of their time and talents to put this ushers handbook together. This handbook will help to inform and guide the present and future generations of ushers that will serve in the capacity of “church ushers” for the New Providence Missionary Baptist Church family.

To God be the glory for all the great things He will accomplish through the use of this ushers ministry handbook in the lives of those who are trained by it.

With the love of Christ,

Pastor Nathaniel J. Wood
Greetings from our President

Greetings,

At New Providence Missionary Baptist Church, we value the contributions of the faithful servants who serve as ushers, and this guide is provided as guidance for those serving in this ministry. I thank the committee for devoting their time and knowledge in the creation of this Ushers Guide.

As an official representative of the church and of Jesus Christ, the usher has an enormous spiritual responsibility to help lead people into readiness for learning, worshipping, and evangelism. The attitude in which the usher communicates to church members, friends and visitors helps set the spiritual tone for everything else that happens during the church service.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Ushers at New Providence Missionary Baptist Church for the services they carry out each week. I consider our ushers to be the best ushers in the “whole wide world” from the youngest to the more seasoned, from the least experienced to the most experienced. It is such a blessing for me to be a part of such a wonderful group of Believers as we serve GOD by serving HIS people.

May GOD continue to pour HIS blessings on each of you.

“Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” HEBREWS 13:1-2

Gollon M. Umphrey
President
Our Mission

The mission of the Usher ministry is to serve the Lord through serving His people. Ushers welcome disciples and guests into the sanctuary with a warm smile and a spirit of love. Ushers provide church bulletins, assist with seating, keep the sanctuary in an orderly fashion, ensure envelopes are available and provide comfort and information to disciples and guests. Ushers are committed and serve in whatever capacity is required and believe “a true servant is loyal and obedient to the Master—even when it’s not convenient.”

The ushers serve the congregation of New Providence Missionary Baptist Church to help ensure that the service flows in a decent and orderly manner. This enhances the worship experience of individuals attending the service and hearing God’s word.

Purpose of the Ushers Guide

The guide is a training tool which educates the ushers on servicing the congregation. This guide will provide information that will clarify rules and regulations for the Ushers Ministry and to anyone who has an interest in serving in the ministry. This guide serves as a resource for new and experienced ushers to support the mission and vision of the church.

The Ushers Ministry Structure
The Chain of Command

It is important for an usher to respect the chain of command. The chain of command shows the direction that information flows going from the leader(s) to the followers. This is very important in the delegation of responsibilities, the checking on status of jobs, and determining the end results.

Each person in the chain of command has a duty to perform and reports to the person directly above him/her in the chain.

When you have questions as to your duties, go to the person immediately above you in the chain of command. See the Chain of Command below.

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  Pastor

  ↑

  Usher Ministry President

  ↑

  Usher Captains

  ↑

  Ushers
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Duties of the Officers and Ushers

The President
The President serves under the direction of the Pastor.

President should be an active usher in good standing in the church who possesses leadership qualities and ushering experience.

Responsibilities of the President
- Communicate with the Pastor
- Facilitate meetings
- Supervise training
- Select candidates to fill vacancies in the usher's ministry teams
- Provide the church administrative assistant with information concerning the usher ministry
- Demonstrates to new ushers how to carry out their responsibilities
- Attend state and local activities

The Vice President
The Vice President serves under the direction of the Usher President.

The Vice President should be an active usher with leadership qualities and ushering experience.

Responsibilities of the Vice President
- Carry out all the responsibilities of the President in his/her absence

The Secretary
Responsibilities of the Usher Secretary
- Record the minutes of the usher’s ministry meetings
- Update the usher’s ministry roster
- Update the usher’s ministry contact information
- Distribute the minutes to the usher’s ministry members


Duties of the Officers and Ushers – (cont’d)

Team Captain(s)
A Team Captain should be an experienced active usher with leadership qualities. The Team Captain(s) shall be head of their team and report to the President.

Responsibilities of the Team Captain(s)
- Responsible for maintaining order and crowd control, the Team Captain(s) is in charge of the ushers, taking his/her direction and authority from the President
- Team Captain(s) will assign the posts
- Team Captain(s) will provide assistance necessary to the individual ushers to enable them to carry out their assigned duties
- Team Captain(s) will assist in the training of ushers in the execution of their duties
- Assign ushers so that there is at least one Usher at each of the rear three entrances
- Team Captain(s) are responsible for communicating any changes to their team ushers
- Retrieve bulletins from church office if necessary
- It is the responsibility of the Team Captain(s) to contact the President in the event of his/her absence
- Team captain should arrive 30 minutes before the beginning of Praise and Worship

The Usher
The ministry of ushering is a crucial part of worship because it is one of the most visible Ministries in the Church.

Responsibilities of the Usher
- The Usher should be available no later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Praise and Worship
- Have another Usher look you over to make sure your uniform is in order
- The Usher should make sure the sanctuary is organized and in order for the worshipers
- The Ushers will welcome the worshipers as they arrive, pass out bulletins and fans if requested
- The Ushers should attend worship services, bible study, and Sunday school
- The Ushers are expected to attend all meetings
- The Ushers are expected to serve during their scheduled times. This includes holidays or worship services that you are scheduled to usher
- The Usher is responsible for notifying their team captain if they are unable to attend service when scheduled.
**Expectations**

- Usher Ministry Meetings and Attendance

- Ushers are expected to attend scheduled meetings

- Ushers are expected to participate in meetings, obtain information and discuss concerns or problems.

- Ushers are expected to participate in practice

- Ushers are expected to be familiar with the various positions on the floor

- Ushers are expected to be present to usher on their assigned Sunday on time in the proper attire

- Ushers are expected to be pleasant to worshipers and be attentive to their needs

**The Dos and DON’Ts of Ushering at NPBC**

- Ushers should not eat or chew gum while on duty.
- Usher should not engage in casual conversation inside the Church.
- Ushers should avoid unnecessary movement during the service.
- When seating a worshipper use the appropriate hand signal.
- Ushers should position themselves on the floor standing straight with arms at their side or hands folded in the front or back
- Don't slouch or lean on a pew while on the floor
- Don’t usher into another usher’s area of responsibility, pass off to the next usher
- Don’t cross from one side of the church to the other in front of the pulpit, go around
- Don’t go onto the floor without talking with the captain first
- Don't usher if you do not feel well
- Don’t allow anyone into the sanctuary during prayer and scripture reading
- Don’t take anyone into the pulpit unless told to do so by the pastor
- Do attend each Usher Ministry meeting
- Do attend each Usher Ministry practice session
- Do wear the proper ushers uniform when you are scheduled to usher
- Do clean-up the sanctuary after the benediction
- Do participate in the usher’s group prayer before taking the floor
**Pre-Service Duties**

- Be available to anyone in need of assistance
- If someone gives you a prayer request, make sure it gets to the Pastor

**During the Service Duties**

- An usher will remain at or near each rear door during the entire service.
- If worshippers arrive after the sermon has started, ushers are to escort them to the nearest empty seat while causing as little disturbance to the service as possible.
- Ushers are to assist in the collection of the offering(s).

**After the Service Duties**

- Ushers will make sure the sanctuary has been left in an orderly fashion.
- All Sunday Programs and trash are to be thrown away.
- All fans will be returned to the containers in the back of the church, located under the last pew.
- Hymnals and Bibles are to be put in place as shown on page 9.
- Replenish the tithing envelopes; put four envelopes into each slot as shown on page 9.
- Clean choir stand, fans may be placed in the choir room.
- Hymnals may be stacked on the floor near the wall on the last row.
- Check choir room for any leftover items.
- Give lost and found items to Administrative Assistant or a Trustee.
- Team Captain will inspect sanctuary and dismiss usher from duty.
**Placement of Bible, Envelopes, & Hymnals in Pews**

(Worship Aids)

*While facing the back side of the pew*

(See diagram below)

Place the **hymn book** on the **left side**.
Place the **Bible** on the **right side**.
Place **four envelopes** in the slot **between the two books**.

(See diagram below)
The Dress Code

Ushers are to be properly dressed at all times. The uniform must be neat and clean and pressed. The uniform must never fit too tightly nor should it be too short. Questions about what is appropriate should be addressed with the captain of the group.

Each usher group has two uniforms: a formal and a casual. The captain and ushers of each group should be dressed in the same uniform. The Formal uniform is to be worn in the months of January, February, March, April, September, October, November, and December.

The casual uniform is to be worn in the months of May, June, July, and August. The dress code for each group is described below. There are also pictures showing the formal and casual uniforms for each group. The president and the captain determine which badge should be worn by the group ushering on a given Sunday or at a special event. The dress code may be changed by the president when deemed necessary. Hats and scarfs are not part of the ushers uniform and are not allowed.

**Formal - Adult Ladies - 1st Sunday**
Black suit (knee length), white blouse (tucked in), white camisole, dark or off black hose, black closed toe heels/shoes, pearl/stud earrings, white gloves, belt black- optional

**Formal - Young Adult/Youth Female - 2nd and 3rd Sunday**
Black skirts (knee length), white blouse with white camisole, dark hose, and dark shoes

**Formal - Young Adult/Youth Male - 2nd and 3rd Sunday**
Black Suit/ black slacks, white shirt, black tie, dark shoes, dark belt

**Formal - Adult Men - 4th Sunday**
Black Suit, white shirt, black tie, dark shoes, dark belt, white gloves

**Casual - Adult Ladies - 1st Sunday**
White Uniform (knee length), white hose, white undergarments, white closed toe shoes, pearl/stud earrings, white gloves

**Casual - Young Adult Ladies and Youth – 2nd and 3rd Sunday**
Jeans, white blouse (tucked in), white camisole, white tennis shoes (clean)

**Casual - Young Adult Men and Youth - 2nd and 3rd Sunday**
Jeans, white shirt, white tennis shoes (clean)

**Casual - Adult Men – 4th Sunday**
Golf shirt, black slacks, black belt, black socks, black shoes

5th Sunday grouping and attire will be determined by the president
Dress Code
Pictures

Ladies Formal Attire
Dress Code
Pictures

Ladies Summer Attire
Dress Code Pictures

Men's Formal Attire
Dress Code
Picture

Men’s Summer Attire
Dress Code
Picture

Lady Teens Formal Attire
Dress Code

Picture

Lady Teens Summer Attire
Dress Code

Picture

Teen Male Formal Attire
Dress Code

Picture

Teen Male Summer Attire
Formal Badge
- to be worn during special events, funerals and at the direction of the usher ministry President

Informal Badge
- to be worn at all other occasions
**Monthly Schedule**

First Sunday .................................Adult Women

Second Sunday ............................ Young Adult

Third Sunday .................................Youth

Fourth Sunday ............................... Adult Male

Fifth Sunday .................................President selects group

**Age Groups and Transitioning Schedule**

Youth group.................................Kindergarten – 6th grade

Young Adult group.........................7th grade – 12th grade

Adult group.................................Post graduation from high school

Ushers will move to next level during the month of August

**Schedule of Annual Events**

Usher Youth Appreciation Event

Usher Anniversary

Usher Family Fellowship
Special Events

All special events such as Homecoming, Revival, Spring Institute, Evening Services, and traveling with the Pastor will be under the leadership of the Chairperson or his or her designee.

Funerals

Funerals will be handled according to the request of the family with the instructions for the ushers coming from the Chairperson or his or her designee.

Education and Training

As our church grows and changes, so does the Ushers Ministry. In order to stay abreast of these changes, we must train and educate our ushers on a regular basis. This training should be done at least four times a year, with special “called” practice sessions as deemed necessary by the ministry leadership.

A special training session should be scheduled for new ushers within 30 days of their joining the ministry. These sessions should be led by the Team Captains with the President and Vice President as advisors when necessary. Training for both adult men and women ushers should be done at the same time for consistency purposes. The youth advisors along with the teen team captains will be responsible for scheduling those groups along the same guidelines with the approval of the President.

The practice sessions schedule is as follows: January, March, June, and September.

All ushers are encouraged to attend at least two of the four scheduled practice sessions. Failure to attend two of the four sessions will result in an usher being declared inactive.

All ushers are also requested to attend usher training sessions on the county and state level as well.
Preparing Ourselves to Usher

To be effective ushers we must prepare ourselves well: Spiritually, physically, personally and emotionally. Good preparation leads to our ushering with confidence on the floor.

**Spiritual Preparation**

We must feed our spirit with spiritual food. Take time to have your daily personal devotion early in the morning, before you go to work. If it is possible, have a family devotion. Always pray and seek God’s face, guidance and direction before taking on any important job.

Sing and listen to spiritual songs of praise instead of the secular song heard on the radio. Have moments of Christian fellowship with friends, family members and/or coworkers during the day.

Give yourself enough time to rise, dress, eat, have your devotion, and travel to church on time for the Sunday morning worship service.

Attend your weekly Bible study sessions.

Attend Sunday School on Sunday mornings.

**Physical Preparation**

In order to do the standing and walking required when ushering an usher must be physically well prepared.

Get the proper amount of rest and sleep on the days before your day of service. The physical body responds to the amount of rest and sleep that you give it. A tired body is slow to respond, slumping posture occurs, yawning occurs, and then one becomes restless.

Do exercises that include walking and standing to build up your body and its stamina.

Eat properly because you are what you eat. The body will not perform at its peak if it has been fed a steady diet of fast foods. Good nutrition is a must for the usher.
Personal Preparation

Personal appearance and hygiene are very important to the usher; he/she must be neat and well-groomed. The items listed below may be used as a guide to help the usher be personally well prepared:

- Hair must be neatly trimmed and worn in a modest hair style
- Facial hair must be short, clean and neatly trimmed
- Shoes must be clean and polished
- Shirt/blouse must be clean, pressed, and tasteful
- Uniform must be clean, pressed and not too short or tight
- Breath should smell fresh
- Jewelry should be small and short

Emotional Preparation

An emotion is a strong feeling, a complex reaction with both a mental and physical manifestation, such as love, hate, anger and fear. As you can see, some emotions are good and some are bad. The usher must be able to handle all of these emotions.

To be emotionally ready, the usher must leave his/her own bad emotions at home or at the door of the sanctuary. The usher must clear his/her mind of petty envies, jealousies, backbiting in order to deal with these problems in others.

Personal problems must be worked through so they do not affect an usher’s ability to perform on the floor of the sanctuary. Emotional problems that do affect our ability to serve as ushers may be resolved with the assistance of the pastor and/or the President.
How Does the Usher Handle Exceptions?

Exceptions are situations that may occur during a service that usually is not part of a regular church service. Try to keep the situation from being a distraction of the worship service.

Do your best to remain calm and to be of service, not part of the act. For any situation that an usher feels they need assistance, please notify the Captain of your group.

Captains are always watching the entire floor and should already be aware their intervention is needed. Never feel that you are alone.

Your captain is only a glance away. (Examples: medical emergencies, unruly people, distasteful comments etc.)
Hand Signals and Communications

Question

What is the signal for usher needs team captain?

Answer

Right Hand to chest; fingers extended
Hand Signals and Communications -cont

Question

What is the signal for usher needs relief?

Answer

Right Hand to chest; finger extended
Hand Signals and Communications - cont

Question

What is the signal for the numbers of seats available?

Answer

Fingers extended to show the numbers of seats
Hand Signals and Communications - cont

**Question**

What is the signal to request envelopes and programs?

**Answer**

Right hand up to chest, first and second fingers extended
Hand Signals and Communications -cont

Question
What is the signal to request fans?

Answer
Right hand to chest first three fingers extended
Hand Signals and Communications -cont

**Question**
What is the signal for the Ushers to take their seat?

**Answer**
Arms extended at 45 degree angle from body
Affiliations with External Organizations

New Providence Baptist Church (NPBC) is a member of the Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) and the General Baptist State Convention (GBSC). The WMBIA has approximately 50 Missionary Baptist churches spread throughout Wake County in its membership whereas the GBSC has several hundred Missionary Baptist churches in its membership.

Each of these Missionary Baptist churches has an ushers ministry. NPBC and its Usher Ministry provide physical and financial support to the WMBIA and the GBSC. The WMBIA and the GBSC in turn provide education and training to the member churches.

Within the WMBIA there is an Ushers Union. This Ushers Union consists of the usher ministries of each Church in the WMBIA. The NPBC Ushers Ministry is a member of the Ushers Union. The charge of the Ushers Union is: (1) to provide ushering education through training sessions and Workshops to its members and (2) to provide ushers for activities conducted by the WMBIA.

Ushering at WMBIA Events

The Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) sponsors several events during the year: the Mid-year Session, the Annual Session, and the Unified Banquet and for The Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) Union Settings. The Ushers Union provides the ushers for these events. If an event is held at a member church, the member church may supply the ushers, the Ushers Union may supply the ushers, or the two may combine to supply the ushers. The Ushers Union makes the decision on who provides the ushers. New Providence Baptist Church (NPBC) has hosted The Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) events several times.

At the Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) events, the ushers are directed by the Wake County Chief Usher. The Ushers Union determines the uniforms, the hand signals, usher placement and procedures on the floor. The Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) events may be held at a member church or at a non-church location, the Wake Missionary Baptist Association (WMBIA) makes that decision.
Ushering at WMBA Events - (cont’d)

When New Providence Baptist Church (NPBC) ushers are needed to usher at a WMBA event the Wake County Chief Usher will contact the NPBC president and make the request for ushers. The New Providence Baptist Church (NPBC) president selects the ushers then responds to the Wake County Chief Usher.

In Case of Emergencies

- Notify captain on duty.
- Captain should notify the Pastor or his associate and trustee as soon as possible.
- In case of a major emergency: Call 911. Phones located in the kitchen and all offices.
- If the fire alarm goes off: Quickly and calmly assist everyone out of the building. Call 911 immediately.

Notes

The National United Church Ushers Association of America, Inc.

National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. Online location: www.nationalbaptist.com/index/
Front-line Ambassadors
written by Delois Lee

There they are posted at each door
and more mending the floor
Attired white, black or blue
laced and shined at the shoe.
Badges resting left of chest
Programs, envelopes and fans in their hand
as they serve upon command.
Serving man
for he knows there's a plan:
eleven until instituted by man.
This is truly an usher!
But God needs front-line ambassadors
attired in righteousness
compassion within their chest.
One who knows that the greater plan is of God
as he mands the door and trods the floor
on a wilderness mission
that cries:
Repent ye:
for the Kingdom of God is a hand.
Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
So be careful your attitude, position or strut
for the plan of salvation is at hand.
Decrease that God may increase
so Jesus Christ is seen in you.
Smile the smile of love
Walk the walk of light
Even though your feet and back may hurt
Stand and endure
Don't grumble or complain
over such minor pain.
For we know that we serve a master
who on the cross suffered and was slain.
remember it's not about you

So let's not be the slothful or the super usher
but servants
Servants of God - Front-line Ambassadors
standing ready
Ready on the battlefield for the Lord.

To God be the Glory
Acknowledgements

In the Fall of 2012, the New Providence Baptist Church Ushers Ministry selected a committee of ushers and charged them with the task of producing an Ushers Ministry Guide. The committee took the charge, worked very hard and produced the manual you are now reading.

This manual does the following things for the Ushers Ministry: (1) documents the ushering procedures currently used at New Providence Baptist Church (NPBC), (2) illustrates new procedures being implemented, (3) serves as the text book for training new ushers, (4) serves as a refresher for seasoned ushers, (5) serves as a source of information for the parents of our junior ushers, (6) provides pictures and diagrams, where appropriate, to supplement the printed text, and (7) serves as a study guide that each usher can take home to study at his/her leisure.

As chairman of the Ushers Guide Committee I give a hearty thank-you to the committee members for the hard work and energy you put into the production of this document. Each member provided good information and insightful opinions for the various topics covered in this manual. I give a special thank-you to Miyoshi Harris for transcribing the input into a working document that we were able to use throughout this process. Also I thank Sister Portia Brandon for her assistance in the editing and formatting of this document. A special thank-you goes to the ushers modeling their uniforms in the pictures. Thanks to President Umphrey for serving on the committee and providing us with his special input. The committee members are listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold Booker

Committee

Harold Booker – Committee Chairman
Gallon Umphrey – Usher Ministry President
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Enoch Turner
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