**USHERING GUIDELINES**

Thank you for ushering in the upcoming Shabbat. This document explains details about ushering.

**The tradition:** Ushering fills the mitzvah of *haknsasat orchim* – welcoming guests. This mitzvah began when Abraham and Sarah welcomed guests into their tent. You will continue this tradition by welcoming guests into our synagogue community.

**Set up:** Please arrive at 8:40am. Remove tallitot from the closet and place them in a neat pile on the main entry table. Some families have kippot and pamphlets. Please put these out, too. After this is ready, take some time to familiarize yourself with places in the synagogue you might not use when you are here (Youth Lounge/unlocked classroom downstairs where families with young children can spend some time if they to leave the service or room upstairs for nursing moms, coat area, bathrooms, etc.)

**Welcome:** People’s first experience with our community will be how you greet them as they come in the door. Your greeting will make them feel comfortable and help them participate in the traditions occurring today. Please smile and say something along the lines of “Shabbat Shalom! We’re glad you are here this morning” or “Shabbat Shalom. Welcome.”

**Guidance:** This might be someone’s first time in a synagogue. At the GRJC we expect every man to wear a kippah and we encourage women to cover their heads also. We expect every Jewish man to wear a tallit and encourage every Jewish woman, too. *Conveying these expectations can feel awkward*. It is also hard to determine who is required to wear a tallit and who is not required. Please start with this guidance. For a man please try: “Here is a kippah for you, would you like a tallit?” For a woman: “Can I help you with a head covering this morning? Would you like a tallit?” Please remind everyone to turn off his/her cell phone.

**Prayer Books**: Siddurim (prayer books) are available under each seat. Chumashim (Big red Torah books) are located on the book carts in the hallway outside the sanctuary.

**Help the Usher Coordinator:** During the service you may be asked by a Ritual Committee-appointed “usher coordinator” to assist in the following:

* Help guests find seats
* Distribute/collect Chumashim
* Close/open doors at appropriate times so as not to interrupt the service
* Bring grape juice/challah and hand washing station into sanctuary at appropriate time

**End of service:** At the end of the service please greet people with a “Shabbat Shalom!” If set-up time is required to prepare the kiddush, please direct guests to the lobby.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask any member of the ritual committee or the rabbi and they will be more than happy to help you. Rabbi: rabbi@grjc.org

**Thank you! Shabbat Shalom!**