

Communion Assistant Guidelines

Updated May 2018

1. Please arrive 10 minutes early and check in with the Worship Coordinator (Jessica Robinson) while picking up a cross from the sound booth. This is how we know how many people have arrived without having to look for individuals. And, don't forget to return your cross to the sound booth after the service.

2. While the offering is being taken, all adults should gather at the rear of the church and discuss which person will handle which duty. If there are acolytes they will handle the 2 empty trays. The pastor will be passing out the bread on one side so that leaves one person for bread, 2 for wine and 2 for trays if there are no acolytes. Please decide who will do what at this time.

3. Clean your hands just prior to walking up to the altar. Hand sanitizer can be found in the front rows and at the sound booth. Do not feel rushed, take your time. This action is appreciated. Remember, just shortly before this time in the service was the passing of the peace, where you probably shook the hands of several people who have also greeted several others.

4. Walk to the front center of the church, just below the first step, pause and bow briefly in reverence to the altar, and then step forward to the next to the top step before the altar. The Pastor will be on the top step. For services that have Acolytes they should be the first and last in line. (Normally the 9:30 Sunday service is the only service that has acolytes.)

5. The pastor will serve communion to the assistants first.

6. After receiving the wine, the first person on the right will pick up an empty tray from the altar, putting his/her empty cup in the tray and then pass it down the line toward the left most person to receive the empties from the others. The first adult on the right should then commune the pastor.

7. Words to be used by the communicants;

Bread "The body of Christ broken for you" or "The body of Christ given for you".

Blessings: The bread person makes the sign of the cross on the forehead and says "May the love of Jesus fill your heart", or "Jesus loves you" or something similar.

Wine "The blood of Christ shed for you".

8. Distribution: After the pastor is communed everyone selects either the bread, the wine or the empty cup trays. If there are acolytes it is their duty to carry the trays to pick up the empty cups. As a general guide, the people on each end of the line should handle the empty trays.

Bread: In order to assure that we do not carry over the left over pieces of bread from week to week, use the pieces from the small tray first, before using the newly broken bread. There are 2 kinds of bread offered, normal communion bread which you will carry in your hand and break off a piece no larger than a quarter and hand it to the communicant. The other is gluten free wafers that are kept in small wooden lidded bowls which can be found on either front corner of the Altar. **Note: You are not to touch the gluten free wafers with your hands because you can transfer gluten from the other bread to the wafers and make people sick.** If the communicant requests the wafers you should step up to the Altar, pick up the small wooden bowl, with the lid removed, **allow the communicant to pick up their own wafer** and then

return the bowl to the Altar before proceeding to the next person. Do not rush. It only takes a couple of seconds to do this.

Wine: Pour wine into the small cups to at least half full, holding the drip cloth against the underside of the spout to avoid drips. You can also use this hand to guide their cup if too low or shaky. Grape juice is also on the altar for those who request it or have no cup in hand. If the communicant wishes to have grape juice simply step up to the altar and pick up one of the pre-poured cups in the small tray on the right side of the altar and return to the communicant. Do NOT try to carry the grape juice cups in your bread hand or in the tray that is used to pick up the used cups. Do NOT ask the acolyte to carry the grape juice for your convenience. Their duty is only to pick up used cups. All of these are unsanitary conditions. It only takes a few seconds to step up to the altar.

Other notes:

- ALL are welcome at the altar. If you are uncertain if a child is to receive communion ask the adult that is with the child.
- Never rush the communicant as this is the time for reflection and prayer.
- If you spill on the floor, smile and continue to serve as the AG will clean it up after the service. If you spill on the communicant, smile and use your drip cloth.
- If you notice a shortage of bread or wine, go into the sacristy to obtain more. No rush.
- If you are unable to serve when assigned, please try to exchange with another assistant or contact the schedule coordinator as soon as possible. My contact information is at the bottom of the schedules.
- It is the intent to always have 5 assistants plus one pastor give communion, regardless of whether it is standard communion or intinction.
- Please remember that you are a representative of the church and try to dress appropriately.

Notes for Intinction: Instead of step 8: There are 2 stations at the front of church. All 6 people line up across the front, on the main floor, in front of the altar rail. The two in the middle will be the pastor and one adult giving out pre-cut bread. The next on either side of those will be holding a goblet with the wine and then outside of those will be the acolytes holding the goblets with the grape juice. -The words you use when handing out bread and when they dip into either of the goblets are the same as above for regular communion. -If you run out of bread there should be a small container on the altar or a small covered dish containing extra bread.

Robes: For services using robes, go to the robe room (music closet) and put on a robe, a cross and cincture (rope). I am not aware of any "correct" way to tie the cincture. Just make sure it is knotted in such a way that it does not fall off. Note: robing only occurs at a few services, such as Holy Week and Easter, throughout the year and will be noted on the schedule. Please arrive a little earlier than usual to give yourself time to put on the robe. If you spill on your robe or if it smells, don't hang it back up. Please give it to Jessica Robinson so it can be cleaned.