

Acolyte Handbook

Updated June 7, 2016

by

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NOTE: At this printing, Acolytes are only schedule for the 9:30 services. We are also NOT wearing robes for any service at this time, except for special services like Christmas and Easter. Acolytes should pick up one of the crosses at the sound booth and then return it at the end of the service.

1. When you are scheduled to acolyte at a service, arrive 10-15 minutes before the service starts.
2. Report to Mr. Jecker immediately upon arrival so he knows you are there.
3. If this is a “robing” service, go directly to the robe closet behind where the piano sits and find a robe that is the correct length, just above your shoes, put it on and get a cincture (rope belt) and a cross. The Acolyte robes are in the rack on the left side.
4. If this is NOT a robing service, take a cross from the sound booth and put it on. Remember to return it after the service.
5. Then go report to the ushers in the narthex area.
6. If there are two acolytes scheduled to serve, decide between the two of you who will light the candles and who will extinguish. If you are not lighting the candles, you may proceed to the pew near the pulpit. Take a bulletin for yourself and one for your partner.

Remember, during the service, you are serving in front of the congregation where they can see all your actions and reactions. This is a time for us all to worship our Lord together. Your attire, personal grooming habits and behavior should be such that they do not detract from the sacrament. (Please don't chew gum while serving!) Use this time reverently, by being attentive to the service, the sermon, and any instructions given to you by the pastor. You have been called to serve.

Lighting the Candles

1. The ushers will light your candle lighter and send you into the sanctuary as the congregation sings the opening hymn.
2. Walking down the aisle, you will stop at the communion rail, bow very deliberately, giving reverence to the altar.
3. Start by lighting the candle on the LEFT side of the altar. Next, light the candle on the right side of the altar.

4. If the Christ candle or (Pascal candle) is present, members of the Altar Guild will light it as they prepare the altar for worship. They are also responsible for extinguishing it when they complete their tasks. You, as the acolyte, will not be responsible for lighting that candle unless you are specifically requested to before the service starts.

5. After the last candle is lit, extinguish the flame on your candle lighter, go back down the steps, turn and bow again very deliberately to the altar and then take your seat.

Note about extinguishing your candle lighter;

To extinguish the flame on your candle lighter, use the thumb lever to pull the wick back down just enough so that the flame goes out, then push it back out so that the burnt part is slicking out just far enough to see the white unburned part of the wick. This is done to keep the wick from sticking inside the tube as the hot wax cools off.

Baptism Service.

As things stand right now, acolytes are not asked to assist with baptisms. If that policy changes you will be instructed what to do before the service starts.

Offering

1. You go with the pastor to the front of the altar after the offering has been collected, and receive the offering bags from the ushers.
2. Place the offering bags on the shelf behind the altar. (Place the bags on the floor if there are too many flowers on this shelf. Do not place the money bags on the altar.)

The Sacrament of Holy Communion (Using regular bread)

1. When it is time for communion, follow the communion assistants to the altar area where you will receive communion. **One acolyte should stand on the left and one on the right of the communion assistants.**
2. **After you have communed, the acolyte on the right end of the line takes an empty cup tray and hands it to the first communion assistant in line who will pass it down the line, ending up in the hands of the acolyte at the other end of the line. That same acolyte on the right then picks up the other empty cup tray and keeps it. Each acolyte will then follow after one assistant who is giving the communion wine and collect the empty cups from those at the communion rail. Hold the tray at your waist so it is easy for people to put their cup in the holder. **Note: Do NOT take any filled grape Juice cups from the altar and carry them in your hand or in your cup tray for the communion assistant to use. The only thing you handle is the tray for the empty cups. If one of them asks you to do that, kindly tell them that you were told to not do that.****

3. When the tray is full, turn and put your full tray near where it was originally sitting on the altar. Then get another empty tray from the altar and continue collecting empty cups.
4. When you have finished collecting all the cups, put your tray on the altar and take your seat.

Intinction: (they get a wafer and dip it into the cup)

1. When it is time for communion, follow the communion assistants to the altar area where you will receive communion. One acolyte should stand on the left and one on the right of the communion assistants
2. After you have communed, the 5 assistants and the pastor will all take their places on the main floor, in front of the communion rail, 3 people on each side of the center. The first person on either side should be an adult who will be handing out the wafers, the 2nd person on each side should be holding the wine goblet and the 3rd person on each side should be an acolyte, holding the goblet of grape juice. The communicant will each be given a wafer and they will choose to dip it in either the wine or the grape juice. If they dip it into the grape juice that you are holding, you should say “The blood of Christ, shed for you”. Otherwise you just hold the goblet as they pass by.
3. When communion is over you will return the goblet to the center of the altar and return to your seat. If you go down the center, through the middle of the communion rail, you should pause, face the altar, bow as mentioned before, and then walk to your seat.

Extinguishing the candles

1. As the congregation starts to sing the last hymn, go to the front of the altar, bow deliberately, walk up and extinguish the candle on the right first.
2. Before extinguishing the candle on the left, extend the wick on your lighter and light the wick. (This lighted wick symbolizes the Light of Christ that we, as Christians, take with us out into the world.) Then, extinguish the last candle. Remember the candle on the left is extinguished last!
3. Walk down the steps, turn and bow deliberately toward the altar, turn and walk back to the narthex, extinguish the wick, push it back out as explained above, and replace the candle lighter in its place
4. Return your robe to its hanger in the closet.

There is also a copy of the schedule posted on the ushers cabinet door in the narthex and another one laying on the sound booth that you can check when you arrive at church.

The latest version of these instructions can be found on the church website, Desertcross.org.

Hover your cursor over the “Connect” tab, then move straight down and hover over “Volunteer”, then move directly to the right and click on “Worship Assistants”. Links to all the sets of instructions can be found at the bottom of the page.