

## Acolyte Guidelines

LITURGY is "the work of the people." Worship on the weekend prepares us for our "liturgy" during the week in job, home, and all interactions with others. Good worship draws on the gifts of all the assembled people, and as Acolytes, your gift helps to equip the people to go out and do "liturgy."

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### Preparation

1. What if I can't be at church on the day I am assigned?
  - Check the schedule well in advance to know when you are assigned.
  - Try to find a replacement by contacting one of the other acolytes. Notify the church office and the worship leader scheduler of your unavailability and whether or not you have round a replacement.
2. What do I wear?
  - Regular Sunday church clothing and school clothing are appropriate. Remove hooded and bulky tops, "jingly" jewelry.
  - Shoes – casual shoes, gym shoes, sandals, and dress flats are all acceptable. Girls - best to keep heels on the low side.
3. When should I arrive at church?
  - Be at church 15 minutes before the service begins.
  - You should be "robed and ready" 10 minutes before worship.
  - The crucifer is the "go to" person for guidance or questions regarding your responsibilities. He or she can provide you with any special instructions for the day (anointing, baptism, lighting the Christ Candle or Advent wreath, etc.). Check-in with the crucifer as soon as you arrive. If you are unsure as to whom the crucifer is or he or she has not arrived, check with one of the pastors.
  - Check wicks on the candle lighters.
  - Bring torches to the back of church. When there is only one acolyte serving, the acolyte will not participate in the procession and you should not bring the torches back.
  - Put a worship bulletin on the front pew for your use in the service.

### Beginning of Service

4. Join the pastors and assisting ministers in the narthex (choir room if no procession) for a pre-worship prayer. Then, wait in the sacristy and have candle lighters ready to light.

5. At the beginning of the Prelude, light candle lighters and enter the church, closing the sacristy door. Walk between the front and the back altar and reverence the front altar toward the congregation.
6. Light the candles on the back altar and put out candle lighters (if there is only one acolyte, light the torches also).
7. Reverence the front altar again. Place candle lighters under the front pew and go to the back of the church for the procession. Walk, do not run. Do not worry if the prelude has already finished. The procession will wait for you.

### **Procession**

8. The crucifer will lead the procession with the torchbearers following behind forming a “triangle”. Behind the crucifer and the acolytes will follow, in order, the choir, the assisting ministers and the ministers.

If there is a banner bearer (typically only during festival services), the banner bearer will be between the torch bearers and the choir.

9. The procession begins when the congregations starts singing.
10. The crucifer and torchbearers turn and face the congregation in front of the front altar (crucifer on step higher than acolytes – form a “triangle”) until all in the procession have passed. If the communion rails are closed, the crucifer and torchbearers will stand in front of the communion rail until the procession has passed. The crucifer will place the cross in its floor stand while you place the torches in their floor stands. Then the crucifer and acolytes will reverence the altar (the acolytes should stand on either side of the crucifer) and sit down.

### **During Service**

11. Gospel Procession. At the “*Alleluia Verse*,” the crucifer (carries Bible) and torchbearers lead the procession down the center aisle. The torchbearers face each other on either side of the crucifer during the reading of the Gospel. After the reading, the procession returns - crucifer, torchbearers, pastor. Replace the torches and sit down. There is no need to reverence the altar.
12. During the passing of the peace, one acolyte lights the front altar candles (light candle lighter from a candle on the back altar).
13. After the offering, one acolyte receives the offering plates from the ushers, brings them to the presiding minister for a blessing, puts the offering on the back altar and sits down.
14. Communion. After congregation communes, the crucifer and acolytes receive communion with other worship leaders.
15. Anointing. On the first Sunday of every month, individual anointing is offered. After communing, acolytes take oil vessels, prayer cards and purificators (napkins) to the back of the church to assist with anointing by holding the oil. Replace vessels, prayer cards and purificators on the back altar at the conclusion of the anointing. Then return to your seat
16. Other. You might be asked to assist one of the ministers by holding a hymnal or prayer book.

**End of Service**

17. The crucifer will cue you as to when it is time to begin the recessional. When he or she indicates, reverence the front altar, then exit with cross and torches. (form a “triangle”)
18. Before beginning down the aisle, pause for a few seconds to insure that all are in place (crucifer, torchbearers, banner bearers, choir, assisting minister, ministers), then recess.
19. Turn at the baptismal font and face the congregation, crucifer behind font, acolytes on either side.

**After Service**

20. Extinguish all altar candles. Be careful not to “squish” the wick as it will make it difficult to light the candle.
21. Be sure candle lighters are hung up in the sacristy.
22. Neatly hang up your robe on the appropriate hook, hang cincture on the “cincture hanger.”

\*\*\*\*\***IMPORTANT NOTE**\*\*\*\*\*

- ⇒ When lighting the torches, REMOVE the glass deflectors
- ⇒ When extinguishing the torches DO NOT REMOVE the deflectors as the glass will be hot.
- ⇒ Just lower torch and blow them out.

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