

Cantor 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 Cantors, your gift helps to equip the people to go out and do "liturgy."

"The CANTOR must be singer, proclaimer, liturgical minister and spiritual leader, a singer of lullabies and victory songs, a true-story-teller and a person of prayer..." Diana Kodner, Handbook for Cantors.

"...the intent of music is to clothe the liturgical text..." Pope Pius X

The cantor:

- provides visual leadership by allowing the congregation to be guided by your physical presence, posture, and movement
- leads worship with solo and group singing
- proclaims the Word of God
- teaches the congregation songs by singing introductory verses
- animates the singing of the congregation by cuing congregational entrances and leading them throughout the singing

Guidelines (These are *guidelines* only, and are meant to assist you in defining your own degree of comfort and style.)

1. Meet with John Elmquist to review and rehearse music.
2. Practice the music so it is familiar to you – to avoid any distraction from your leadership and the expression of the texts.
3. Arrive early on Sunday morning to rehearse with the choir and note any special parts of the worship service.
4. Select a robe that hangs close to your ankles. Select a cincture (belt) that does not interfere with going up and down the altar steps.
5. Gather in the narthex (choir room if no procession) with other worship leaders for prayer right before worship.
6. Sit in the end chair before the service begins. The cantor does not process or recess.
7. Lead the opening hymn from the lectern.
8. Stand at the lectern during all congregational singing (hymns, psalm, liturgy).
9. You may either stand at or step back from the lectern during the spoken liturgies.

10. Raise both hands to invite the congregation to rise before all hymns and Gospel reading. (Be prepared to cue the congregation to stand throughout the worship at appropriate times.)
11. Use one or both hands to cue the congregational singing. It isn't necessary to keep hand(s) raised during the congregational singing, only to get them started.
12. During communion hymns, be conscious of a balance of sound between you and the congregation – it is more desired to have a balanced sound than a single voice (you!), even if that means decreasing your volume.
13. After congregation communes, receive communion with other worship leaders
14. Enunciate clearly in order to let the text come through.
15. Use eye contact with the congregation as often as you are comfortably able to draw them into being an active part of the worship. You may prefer to direct your gaze toward the balcony.
16. Move away from the lectern any time another minister needs to be there (e.g., for the book bearer at the beginning of the Gospel procession, for the presiding pastor if he/she speaks from the lectern).
17. As preparation for worship, you may want to read the lessons and psalm during the week. (You can find the lessons in the previous week's bulletin or on the ELCA website - <http://www.elca.org/dcm/worship/default.asp>.)

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