

ACOLYTE GUIDELINES

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

August 2024

Note: Torch = Candle Lighter

The acolyte plays a critical role during worship, bearing the light of Christ into the congregation and spreading it from one candle to another. The light is a reminder of the Holy Spirit's presence in the midst of worship. Carrying the light back down the aisle then leads the congregation out into the world to serve, to love and serve God.

Schedule:

Scheduling is done by a computer program administered in the church office. The schedule for the month is posted online at <http://gslutheran.org>.

- Check the schedule to see when you are assigned to serve.
- If you know a month in advance that you are unable to serve for a specific date or dates, please do contact the church Office Coordinator (office@gslutheran.org), you will not be scheduled.
- If you cannot serve your assigned time, try first to switch with another acolyte, either scheduled that month or any other acolyte. Contact the church Office Coordinator with your replacement so that the vergers can be informed.
- The church office can help if you can't find a replacement, but please make every effort to find your own replacement.
- You will receive an email reminder.

Before the service:

1. Check in with the Verger and let them know that you are here.
2. (8:30) Go to the sacristy and put on your robe, robe belt, and cross.
3. (10:45) Do not put on a robe but do give some consideration to what you are wearing before you come to church since you will be serving in front of everyone.
4. For the 10:45am service, make sure there is a bulletin at your place in the front left pew. For the 8:30 service, you will be sitting behind the altar in the farthest chair to the left. Make sure there is a bulletin there. It is typically in a binder sitting on your seat.
5. Find the torch that is beside the play area in the entryway. Check the wick. If it needs to be replaced, ask the verger or usher to find the assigned sacristy person to replace it for you. It will need to be replaced when the wick has less than 6".
6. Look through the bulletin or ask the Verger if there is a baptism at the service. If there is a baptism, talk with the pastor about how you can help. The Christ candle will be lit during baptisms, Easter seasons, and may also be lit at other times at the pastor's direction.
7. Stand near the ushers in the entryway before the service starts and be ready to light the candles.

As the service begins:

1. **The order to process is cross, candle, pastor/assisting minister.** The pastor will let you know when the procession is to begin.
2. Follow the crucifer into the sanctuary and **wait at the first pew until the crucifer is finished and out of the way.**

- a. Note: If there is a baptism, it is Easter season, or the pastor has asked specially, light the tall Christ candle by the font on your way down the aisle. Take your time lighting and putting out this candle—it is a little trickier than the altar candles. The bell of the torch must stay over the flame long enough to extinguish it. The pastors will help you with the lighting and putting out if there is an issue.
3. Then bow or nod to the cross to acknowledge God’s presence in the space, and light the right candle first, then the left candle. If there is an extra candle on the altar, pastor will let you know how to handle this (it’s typically the last candle lit)
4. After the candles are lit, walk down off the altar platform, and turn then bow or nod to the cross.
5. As you snuff out the flame, slide the wick down then up again and then place the torch into the torch holder, by the exit door.
6. (8:30) Walk around the left side of the altar to your seat on the left side or (10:45) go and sit down in the pew on the left.

During the service:

1. It’s distracting to those worshipping when you get up and leave, so plan to remain in place for the entire worship service.
2. Remember that your service might be live streamed. If you’re sitting behind the altar, you will be visible to those watching, so keep the wiggling and questionable gestures to a minimum.

Communion:

1. After we say the Lord’s Prayer, there is an Invitation to Communion. When the first hymn or song begins, go to the altar to receive communion or a blessing.
2. After you have received the communion or blessing, you will be handed an empty cup tray.
3. Follow the person holding the common cup and hold the tray low enough so that people can put their empty cups into it. Turn the tray so that empty spaces are facing out. Keep the tray level so that any wine remaining in the cups doesn’t spill. Do not have people stack cups in the trays, and allow only one cup per space. When the tray is full, put it on the altar. The person with the full trays should have emptied theirs and you can switch.
4. When everyone has received communion, return your tray to the altar and you can go back to your seat.

At the end of the service:

1. When the singing begins, watch the Pastor for the cue.
2. The Crucifer will get the cross and begin to recess, carrying the cross, then waiting for you.
3. Pick up the torch. Walk up to the altar, bow, and walk up the steps.
 - a. If there is an extra candle on the altar, put it out first.
 - b. Put out left candle.
 - c. Light your torch on the right candle, then put out the right candle.
 - d. Snuff out the wick on the torch by pushing it down the up again.
4. Walk back down the altar steps. Turn around and bow to the cross and wait for the crucifer on either side of the altar area.
5. The pastor and assisting minister will follow.
6. Return your torch to where you got it.
1. 12. (8:30) Hang up your robe, robe belt, and cross in the sacristy.