

The Acolyte's Handbook

Table of Contents

About Worship.	2
About the Church.	3
Parts of the Building.	3
Why Candles.	8
Instruments and Robes.	9
The Church Year.	10
The Christmas Cycle.	12
The Easter Cycle.	13
Liturgical Colors.	15
On Acolyting.	17
Duties.	18
If the Flame Goes Out.	20
Extinguishing the Candles.	21
Special Services	
Easter and Baptisms.	23
Advent.	24
Lenten and Tenebrae	25
Processions.	27
Notes on Processing.	28
Acolytes.	28
Crucifer.	29
Banner Bearers.	30

The Acolyte's Handbook

One of the responsibilities of being in confirmation is to be an acolyte. The word *acolyte* is taken from an ancient Greek word that means *companion, attendant, or helper*. Churches have had acolytes since ancient times. The earliest record of acolytes we have tells us that in A.D. 251 there were forty-two of them helping in churches in the city of Rome. You will be working with the pastors. You and the other persons who take part in the church service are like members of a team, and your teamwork will help all the people worship God.

About Worship

Psalm 100 says much of what needs to be said about why we gather for worship:

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before Him with joyful songs.
Know that the LORD is God.
It is He who made us, and we are His;
we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.
Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise;
give thanks to Him and praise His name.
For the LORD is good and His love endures forever;
His faithfulness continues through all generations.

For thousands of years God's people have been joining together weekly to worship God and to thank Him for His love and His faithfulness. When we gather for worship, we hear what God Himself said, "Observe my Sabbaths and have reverence for my sanctuary" [Leviticus 19:30].

The Acolyte's Handbook

About the Church

The church building is considered a “sacred” place. Something which is “sacred” means it is set apart from normal use. Church is a sacred place because here we:

- † listen to the Word of God and receive the blessings of faith.
- † make children disciples of Christ in the waters of Holy Baptism.
- † receive Christ’ body and blood in Holy Communion.
- † encourage one another in Christian love.
- † offer prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God.

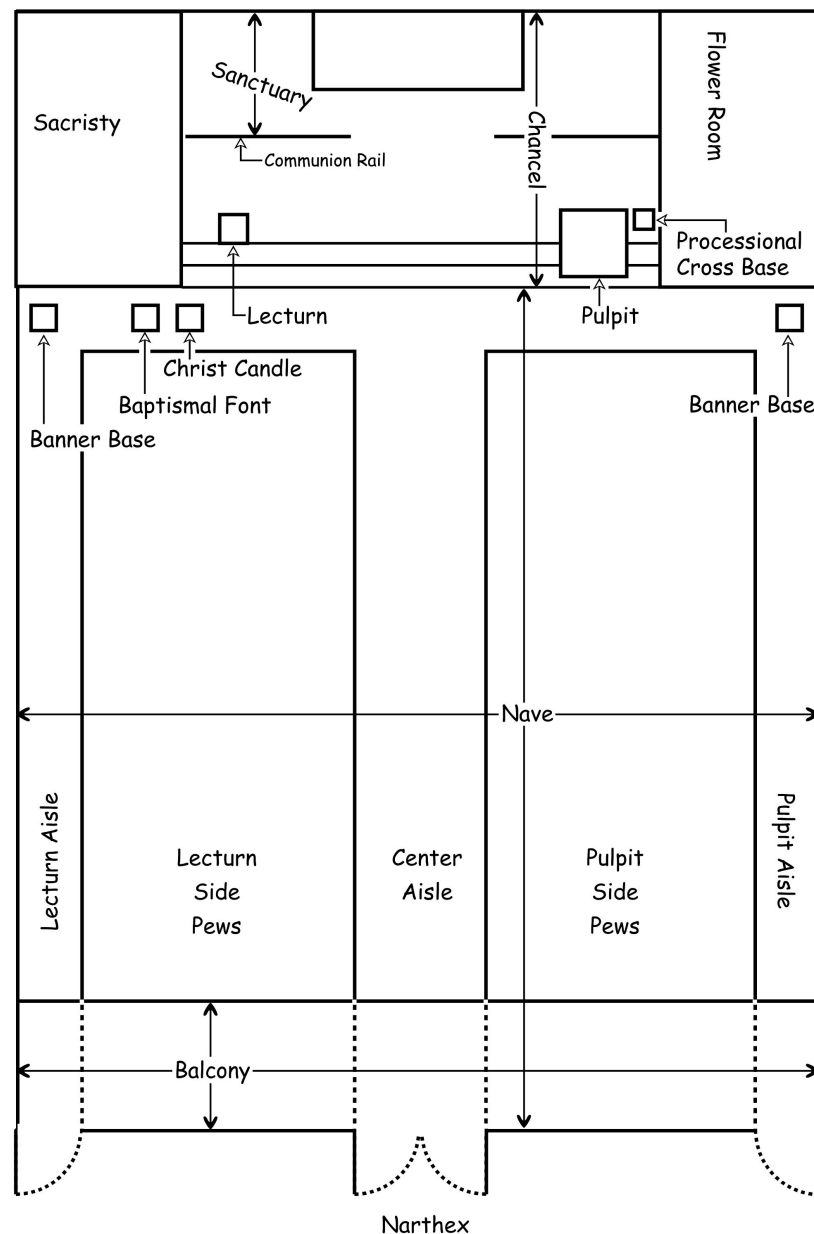
Because of these things, the church building is treated differently from other buildings. We treat the House of God with more respect by doing such things as having men removing their hats, not yelling and screaming, and not running.

Parts of the Building

A church building has two principal parts, the *chancel* and the *nave*.

The *nave* is the main body of the church where we worship. The name comes from the Latin *navis* which means “ship.” The name reminds us of the Ark which saved Noah’s family from the flood.

The chancel is the “room” in which the altar is located. At St. Johns the *chancel* begins at the steps and goes to the front of the church. In times past, the chancel was even larger than ours and held the choir on both sides.



The Acolyte's Handbook

Many places in the Bible talk about worshiping God on a mountain. The steps leading up to the chancel have often been compared to going up the mountain of God.

Within the chancel is the area called the *sanctuary*. Although sometimes the entire church building is referred to as the sanctuary, the sanctuary is technically the altar area defined by the communion rail. Our sanctuary has the altar, the candelabra, and the flags.

The structure of the church with the nave, chancel, and sanctuary reminds us of the Tabernacle that God commanded be built to hold the Ark of the Covenant. The Tabernacle had the courts, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place.

Other areas and items have names as well which are defined below.

Narthex – an entrance hall attached to the nave. Symbolically it is a room providing a transition from the outside world into the church proper

Pews – the fixed seating in the nave.

Banners – Banners have been used for a long time as rallying points. Song of Solomon says, “His banner over me is love.” Banners are a chance to visually present passages from the Bible and symbols of the church. We commonly have two banners displayed at one time.

On Sundays when we have a baptism, we put out another banner with the child’s name and God’s promise in Isaiah 43, “Fear not, I have called you by name, you are mine.”

The Acolyte's Handbook

Christ Candle – also called the Paschal Candle. It is lit every service during the Easter season to symbolize the risen and living Christ. It is also lit at Baptismal services since it is Christ who gives the child new life in Baptism.

Lectern – the stand at which the lessons are read in worship service.

Pulpit – the stand at which the sermon is preached.

Processional Cross – Since Jesus’ death on the cross is at the center of our salvation, whenever we have a formal procession into the church we are lead by this cross. Our processional cross was made by an artist at Concordia College, St. Paul. He worked into the cross some clay to remind us of three things:

- † God’s creation of mankind out of the clay of the earth.
- † that Jesus took on our clay to redeem our bodies.
- † we are clay in the hands of God as He shapes and forms us for service to Him and to others.
- † Jesus healing the blind man by putting clay on his eyes.

Sacristy – the room in which the acolytes and pastor put on the vestments and prepare for the worship service.

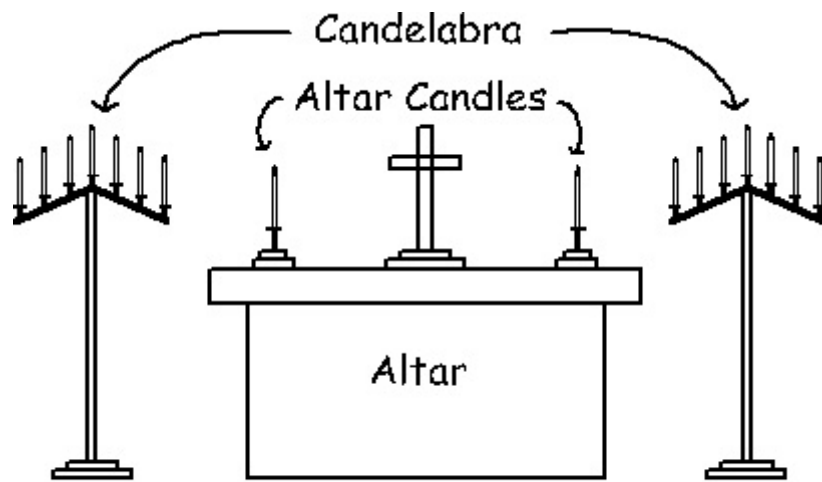
Flower Room – more properly called the Working Sacristy. The vessels for Holy Communion as well as the vessels for Holy Baptism are prepared, cleaned and stored here. The paraments are stored here as well.

Altar – the altar is the center of the church’s worship. It is a symbol of God’s gracious presence in His church. In the Old Testament the altar was where the animals were sacrificed according to the rules

The Acolyte's Handbook

God had laid out. Those sacrifices were a foreshadow of the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for the redemption of the world.

Altars also served as monuments to things God had done. Like the altar of twelve stones made by Joshua when the Children of Israel passed through the Jordan River into the Promised Land.



The Sanctuary

The altar is also in the shape of a table. We even call it the Lord's Table. It is at the Lord's Table that we gather as the family of Christ and share in the meal He has prepared for us – Holy Communion.

Because of all the altar represents, we show proper reverence and honor as to God Himself.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Altar Cross – There is a large, empty cross behind and on the altar. It reminds us that Jesus died on a cross but has been raised from the dead and is with us here and now. On the cross are the letters “IHS.” These are the first three letters of Jesus’ name in Greek.

Altar Candles – also called Communion Candles. These candles are lit only during communion services. The significance of two candles is varied. It reminds us that Jesus is both human and divine. It also reminds us that Christ gives us His body and blood in Holy Communion.

Candelabrum (singular of candelabra) – the set of seven candles at each side of the altar. Why this style? Among the furnishings of the Tabernacle, built according to God's design, was a solid gold lampstand with six branches. This lampstand held seven lamps. Seven is a significant number in the Bible. Among the things we can remember looking at the seven candles are: the seven days of creation, the seven gifts of the Spirit (Isaiah 11:2), and the seven churches of Revelation.

Why Use Candles?

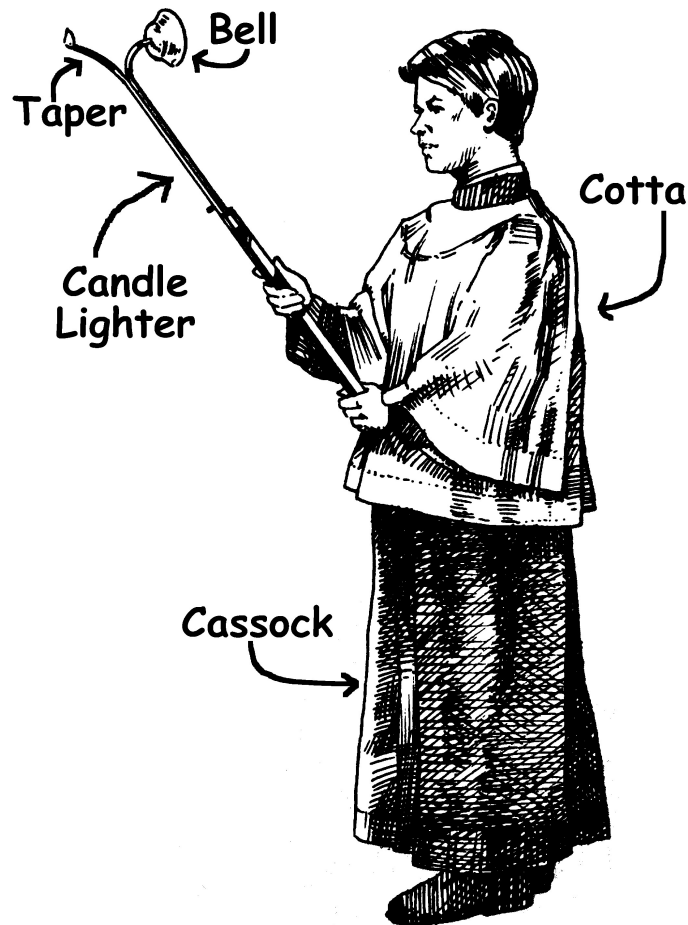
There are a number of reasons for using candles. On the practical side they were simply a light source before the invention of electric light bulbs. But they also served as reminders. It was in the burning bush that God appeared to Moses. It was a pillar of fire that led the Israelites in the desert at night. It was with fire that God consumed Elijah's sacrifice. The Letter to the Hebrews encourages us to worship God with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.[Hebrews 12:28-29]” When Jesus returns, the world will be consumed in fire. But most importantly, lit candles remind us that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world [John 8:12].

The Acolyte's Handbook

The Instruments and Robes

A *candle lighter* is used to light and extinguish candles. There is the *taper* with which the candles are lighted. It also includes a *bell* for snuffing out candles.

Acolytes wear special robes, or vestments, which are called a *cassock* and *cotta*.



The Acolyte's Handbook

A cassock is a long black robe. It is black to remind us of our sins. Over the cassock is a white cotta. The cotta is white to remind us of the forgiveness which Jesus won for us which covers our sin (white over black).

Pastors wear an *alb*. An alb is a long white robe, tied around the waist with a rope called a *cincture*. Albs were everyday clothing in the time of the early Christians, and they remind us of all the other Christians who have worshiped through the ages. Albs also remind us of the robes of the saints which were “made white in the blood of the Lamb” [Revelation 7:14].

Pastors also wear a *stole*. The stole, which goes around the neck is a reminder of the office of the ministry which they have been called to. The color of the stole changes with the seasons of the church year and have different symbols on them to remind people of different teachings, sort of like a banner.

The Church Year - Special Days and Seasons

In the Old Testament, God set a cycle of sacrifices that His people were to celebrate throughout the year. They included such times as Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the Passover, Feast of First Fruits, Feast of Tents, as well as a number of other sacred days. On these days the Israelites stopped working and offered the required sacrifice, sometimes even traveling to Jerusalem.

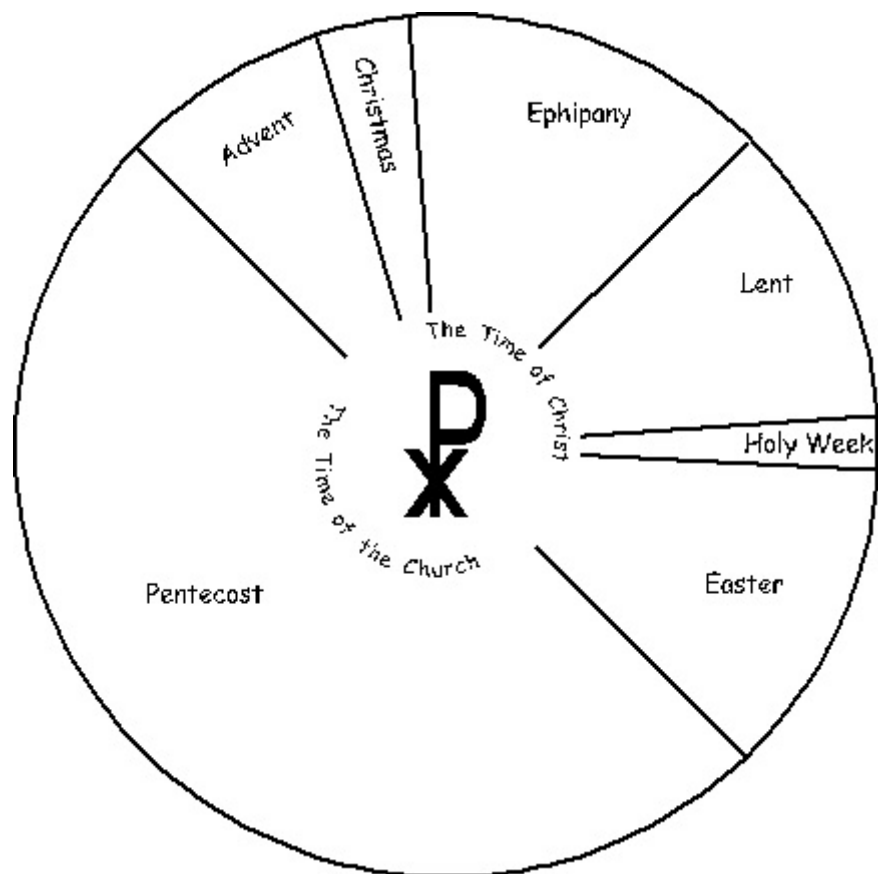
All these feasts and sacrifices were only pointers to Jesus. Since Jesus has come we don't follow the Old Testament calendar, but we do follow the pattern of the Old Testament. While God hasn't set the particular days and celebrations, the church has made a cycle of sacred days – days in which we remember important

The Acolyte's Handbook

events in the life of Jesus and the life of the Church. We call this the *church year*.

The church year has two major parts. The first half of the church year is called the Time of Christ. It begins with Advent and ends with the Eve of Pentecost. Beginning with Pentecost and going to the end of the church year is called the Time of the Church.

The Time of Christ is further divided into two major sections based on the two most important events – Jesus' birth and His death and



The Acolyte's Handbook

resurrection. These divisions are sometimes called cycles. Each cycle is divided into a season of preparation, a season of festivity, and a time of growth.

The Christmas Cycle

Advent is the season of preparation in the Christmas cycle. Advent always contains four Sundays. So it begins the fourth Sunday before Christmas (the Sunday between November 27 and December 3) and lasts until sunset on Christmas Eve.

In Advent we light the *Advent wreath*. The Advent wreath has four candles placed on the circle of the wreath, representing the four Sundays in Advent. The candles also stand for Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love all of which are found perfectly in Jesus our Savior. The candles are a deep blue which is the color of hope and anticipation with one pink candle which is the color of joy. The wreath is decorated with greenery as a symbol of life.

The wreath encircles the Christ candle which is the fifth candle of the wreath and is lit on Christmas Eve.

If Advent is a season of preparation, what are we preparing for? "Christmas!" you say. Yes, of course we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. But we are also getting prepared for the time when Jesus comes again. When He comes it won't be as an infant to redeem us. Rather He will come with all His glory and power and majesty bringing "a new heaven and a new earth – the home of righteousness" [2 Peter 3:13].

The festival season of Christmas begins with Christmas Eve and goes through Epiphany. Epiphany is the day we remember the visit

The Acolyte's Handbook

of the Wise Men, which by the way could have taken place up to two years after Jesus' birth.

Christmas Eve is always December 24 and Epiphany is always January 6. In the Eastern Church (for example in Russia) Christmas is celebrated on January 6. If you count the days between the two dates you will come up with the number twelve. That's the reason we sing about the "The Twelve Days of Christmas," instead of "The Eleven Days of Christmas."

The weeks of Epiphany are the time of growth. Epiphany means "to reveal or make known." The readings for the season focus on the miracles of Jesus which reveal that He is God. Epiphany can be up to nine weeks long, depending on when Easter is celebrated.

The Last Sunday of the Epiphany season is called Transfiguration Sunday. The Gospel reading is always the story of Jesus shining in glory (being transfigured) in the presence of Peter, James, and John. After His transfiguration, Jesus began His final journey to Jerusalem. He knew that this time He would be betrayed, beaten and crucified. The reason we always have the reading of Jesus' transfiguration on the Last Sunday of Epiphany is that Transfiguration Sunday is followed by Ash Wednesday and the start of the season of Lent and the Easter Cycle.

The Easter Cycle

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is the seventh Wednesday before Easter. The season of Lent lasts 40 days, not counting Sundays. The 40 days reminds us of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness and enduring the temptations of the Devil [Matthew 4].

The Acolyte's Handbook

The last week of Lent is called Holy Week. Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem with the crowds shouting "Hosanna!" which means "Save!" and was used as a term of praise.

After Palm Sunday, the next time we gather to worship is on Maundy Thursday. Maundy is Latin for "command" and is taken from the Latin translation of Jesus words, "A new command I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. [John 13:34]" Jesus spoke these words to His disciples the night He was betrayed.

On Maundy Thursday we also remember and celebrate another event of that night. It was at His last meal with His disciples that Jesus established the new covenant with us – Holy Communion.

Good Friday follows in which we remember the suffering and death of our Lord.

The festival part of the Easter Season begins with Easter Day and goes through Pentecost. Easter Day is the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

The way the date for Easter is set related to how Jewish Passover is set. It was during the Passover that Jesus ate with His disciples the last time and instituted the Lord's Supper. Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the first day of spring. It can fall on any Sunday from March 22 to April 25, depending on the year.

The Easter season is six weeks long. During this time we also celebrate the Ascension of Jesus. Since the Bible tells us His

The Acolyte's Handbook

ascension took place 40 days after His resurrection, we celebrate it 40 days after Easter which is always a Thursday.

The Easter season ends on Pentecost. Pentecost was an Old Testament Feast which God commanded His people to observe. It took place 50 days after the Passover and many Jewish people from all over the world would come to Jerusalem to celebrate. It was during that time that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as He had promised to His disciples in a visible and powerful way. The disciples went out and began to speak to all these different Jews in their own native language. That day 3,000 people believed the message of Jesus' resurrection and were baptized. That day marked the beginning of the Church.

In church year Pentecost also marks the transition into the growth cycle of the Easter season, and the other half of the church year – the Time of the Church. This doesn't mean we forget about Jesus Christ, but the focus of the Gospel readings change from what Jesus did (birth, miracles, death, resurrection) to what He taught. We call the entire season Pentecost, and each Sunday is named “___ Sunday After Pentecost.”

Liturgical Colors

On the lectern, pulpit, and altar are pieces of cloth with writing and symbols on them. These are called paraments. The color of the paraments and the pastor's stoles change with the different seasons of the church year. The changing colors are ways to mark the different seasons.

Blue is the color of the Advent season. It represents hope and anticipation.

The Acolyte's Handbook

White symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity, innocence. White paraments are used during Christmas and Easter seasons and on Epiphany.

Purple is the royal color because it was the most costly of ancient dyes. It reminds us of what Jesus suffered to bring us into His kingdom. He received a crown of thorns, a purple garment and “staff” of mockery, and finally the cross as his throne. Purple has also then become a color of sorrow and repentance over our sin, and is used during the season of Lent.

On Good Friday there are no paraments. We “strip the altar” at the end of the second service on Maundy Thursday, removing the common symbols and paraments which remind us of Christ. In doing this we remember that Christ was stripped of His life. The only color on Good Friday is a black cloth placed over the cross. Black is the color of mourning, death, and ashes.

Red reminds us of fire. It is used for the Day of Pentecost when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit visibly in what seemed “tongues of fire” [Acts 2:3] resting on the disciples. Red is also used at services in which we celebrate renewal in the Holy Spirit like Reformation, church dedications, and ordinations of pastors.

Green is the color of growth, leaves, and life. It suggests a time of spiritual growth and is used in the cycles of growth – the season of Epiphany and Pentecost.

Each of the paraments and stoles also have symbols on them which are also meant to teach us and remind us of what God has done for us. The meaning of the symbols will have to be dealt with another time.

The Acolyte's Handbook

On Acolyting

Before you come to acolyte be aware of a few things.

First what you should wear:

A nice button shirt

No t-shirts

A nice pair of pants or slacks.

No blue jeans

Either dress shoes or casual shoes, well-polished and clean.

No tennis shoes

Gentlemen, it would be wonderful and impressive to see you in a tie.

Ladies, you are always more than welcome to wear a nice dress or skirt.

To paraphrase the coach in *Remembering the Titans* “Wear nice clothes and good shoes. If you don’t have nice clothes or good shoes borrow them from your daddy. And if your daddy doesn’t have them borrow them from an uncle or come and see me and we’ll get you fixed up.”

Please also make sure you give yourself plenty of time in the morning to get cleaned up, brushing your hair and the like.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Duties

Arrive **fifteen** minutes before the service.

Put on your vestments.

Check with the pastor for any special instructions.

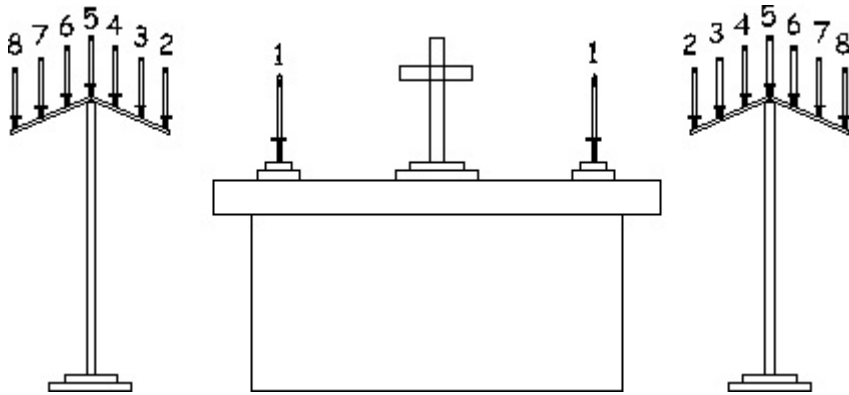
Five minutes before the service:

- Light the candle lighter, and then hold it in front of you with the flame pointing up and the bell pointing down.
- With the lit candle lighter, walk in a dignified and unhurried manner toward the center of the chancel. Keep your head up and your eyes straight ahead.
- When you reach the center, turn toward the altar, pause and bow reverently.
- Step up into the sanctuary side by side, then separate.
- As you reach each candle you are to light, stand directly in front of that candle. Hold the candle lighter so that the taper is nearly horizontal and touches the candle wick. Hold the taper on the wick until you are sure the candle is lit. Watch the other acolyte out of the corner of your eye so that neither of you gets too far ahead of the other.

Remember, this is not a race.

The Acolyte's Handbook

- When it is a communion service, light the two altar candles first.
- When you both have lit your altar candle, step over to your candelabrum and begin lighting from the altar side out to the wall side. (Like opening a book)
- If it is not a communion service step over to the candelabrum and begin lighting from number two to eight.



- After the candles are lit, blow out the flame on your taper, being careful not to blow out the candles.
- When both of you are done with all the candles, come back to the center of the sanctuary, turn to face the congregation and step down the step. Turn toward each other as you turn around to face the altar again. Bow reverently and leave the chancel without talking or giggling.
- Hang the candle lighter on its hook.
- Have a seat in the first pew.

The Acolyte's Handbook

If the Flame Goes Out

- If your flame goes out and a candle is already lit, relight your taper from that candle.
- If your flame goes out before you light a candle relight your taper from the other acolyte's candle lighter.
- If the flame on both of your tapers go out before any candles are lit, the acolyte nearest the door should simply return to get his taper lit while the other acolyte quietly waits at the step.
- In any of these cases, do the relighting without attracting unnecessary attention and as reverently as possible.

You may think that once the candles are lit you have done your duty as an acolyte, but actually it's just starting.

You are to be examples to the children, youth, and even adults on how to behave in worship.

You will be such an example by actively participating in the entire service. This means:

- † you follow the liturgy and responding along with the congregation.
- † your hymnals are open and you are singing during the hymns.
- † you sit or stand when the congregation stands or sits.
- † you keep your eyes on the person who is leading or preaching.

And just as your mother always says, sit straight and don't slouch and don't fidget. Remember, there are plenty of other times you can chat with your friends.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Extinguishing the candles:

- At the beginning of the closing hymn go into the sacristy, pick up the candle lighter, and stand at the chancel door with the bell pointed down.
- On the last verse of the closing hymn, go to the center of the chancel, pause in front of the cross, and bow with reverence.
- Step up into the sanctuary and move to your candelabrum, standing directly in front of the candle nearest the wall (candle # 8). Lower the bell over the candle and hold it there for a moment until the flame is extinguished. Extinguish candles eight to two moving towards the altar. (Like closing a book).
- Watch the other acolyte out of the corner of your eye so that neither of you gets too far ahead of the other.
- If there is communion, wait until both of you have put out all the candelabra candles, then move to and extinguish the candle on the altar.
- When the candles are all extinguished, come back to the center of the sanctuary, turn to face the congregation and step down the step. Turn toward each other as you turn around to face the altar again. Bow reverently and leave the chancel without talking or giggling.
- Hang the candle lighter on its hook.
- Take off your vestments and **carefully and neatly hang them up**. There shouldn't be any vestments on the floor. If they are torn, soiled, or for any other reason not ready to be worn at the next service, tell one of the pastors.

The Acolyte's Handbook

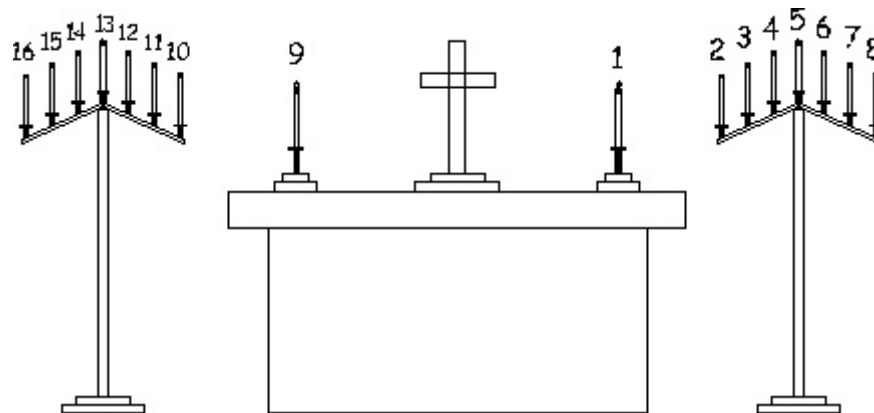
When there is only one acolyte, light the candles in this order:

the candle on the right side of the altar (if there is communion)

the right candelabrum

the candle on the left side of the altar (if there is communion)

the left candelabrum



Extinguish them in the opposite order 16-9, 8-1.

You will want to come out before the last verse of the hymn if you are the only acolyte.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Special Services

Easter and Baptisms

Throughout the Easter Season and whenever there is a baptism, we light the Christ Candle in front of the Lectern. The Christ candle is lit after the other candles are lit.

The acolyte on the lectern side (the left side) should keep his taper lit.

When both acolytes have stepped down and turned towards the altar after lighting the candles, the acolyte on the lectern side (left side) walks down the chancel steps and lights the Christ Candle while the other acolyte waits quietly facing the altar.

After the Christ candle is lit the acolyte returns to the center of the altar. Both acolytes bow with reverence and exit the chancel.

When it is time to extinguish the Christ candle both acolytes walk to the center of the chancel. The acolyte on the lectern side then walks down to the Christ candle and extinguishes it while the other acolyte waits quietly at the altar.

After extinguishing the candle the acolyte returns to the altar, both bow and step up into the sanctuary to extinguish the other candles as normal.

The Acolyte's Handbook

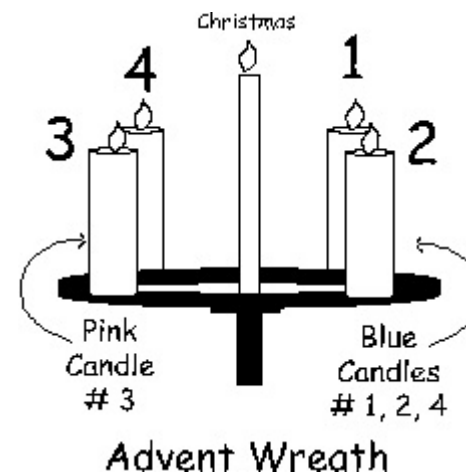
Advent

During the Advent season, the acolytes will be responsible for lighting the Advent Wreath. The Advent Wreath is in front of either the lectern or the pulpit. Since our decorations sometimes change the placement of the wreath also changes. The lighting of the wreath is done after you have lit the other candles at the altar.

The acolyte who is on the same side as the Advent wreath should keep her taper lit

When both acolytes have stepped down and turned towards the altar after lighting the candles, the acolyte on the side of the Advent Wreath walks down the steps and lights the wreath candles while the other acolyte waits quietly facing the altar.

The numbers stand for each week of Advent. So the first week you'd light candle 1. The second week candles 1 and 2, and so forth.



After the Advent candles are lit the acolyte returns to the center of the altar. Both acolytes bow with reverence and exit the chancel.

Sometimes we have had a special ceremony during which we light the Advent candles. In this case they are not lit with the others.

The Acolyte's Handbook

When it is time to extinguish the Advent candles both acolytes walk to the center of the chancel. The acolyte on the side of the Advent wreath then walks down to the wreath and extinguishes the candles in reverse order while the other acolyte waits quietly at the altar.

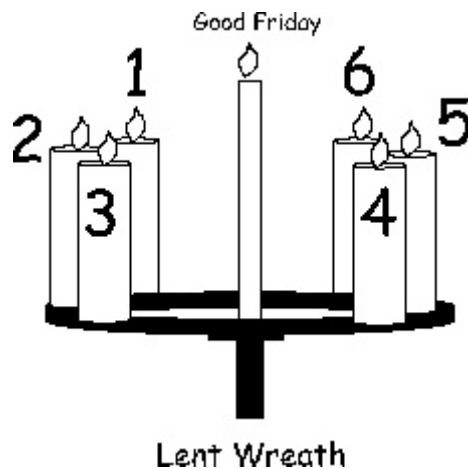
After extinguishing the candles the acolyte returns to the altar, both bow and step up into the sanctuary to extinguish the other candles as normal.

Lenten and Tenebrae Service

Sometimes, but not always, we have the wreath out during the season of Lent. In Advent we light more candles as we get closer to celebrating Jesus coming into the world. During Lent we start with all the candles lit and put one out each week as we draw closer to the time of Jesus' death.

Since there are six Sundays of Lent and only four in Advent we add two candles to the wreath. The candles are a deep red to remind us of the sacrifice Jesus made for us. The green of the Advent wreath is removed and dried grape vine is put in its place to remind us of the crown of thorns.

The acolyte who is on the same side as the Lenten wreath should keep his taper lit.



The Acolyte's Handbook

When both acolytes have stepped down and turned towards the altar after lighting the candles, the acolyte on the side of the Lenten wreath walks down the steps and lights the wreath candles while the other acolyte waits quietly facing the altar.

The numbers stand for each week of Lent. Lighting is the opposite of Advent. We start with the wreath completely lit. So week 1 the acolyte will light all the candles including the Christ candle in the center. Week 2 light candle 2-6 and the Christ candle. Week 3 light candles 3-6 and the Christ candle and so forth. During the service, we will have a responsive reading and toward the end of the reading an acolyte will extinguish the candle of the week.

After the Lenten candles are lit the acolyte returns to the center of the altar. Both acolytes bow with reverence and exit the chancel.

When it is time to extinguish the Lenten candles both acolytes walk to the center of the chancel. The acolyte on the side of the Lenten wreath then walks down to the wreath and extinguishes the candles in reverse order while the other acolyte waits quietly at the altar.

After extinguishing the candles the acolyte returns to the altar, both bow and step up into the sanctuary to extinguish the other candles as normal.

A Tenebrae service is usually held on Good Friday. All the candles will be lit and at certain points in the service the candles are extinguished one-by-one until even the Christ Candle is snuffed out.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Processions

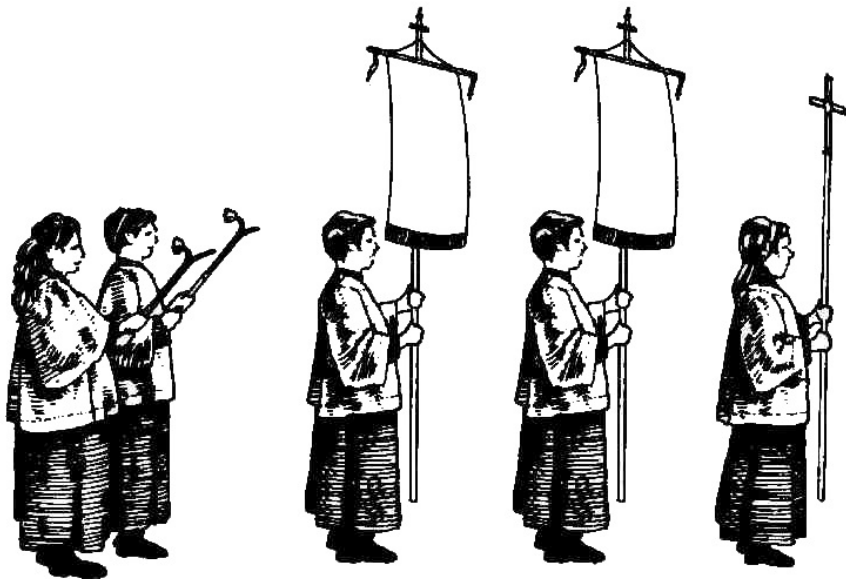
On special occasions we will have a procession at the beginning of the service. Most often we have processions on Easter, Confirmation, and Graduation.

One youth serves as the *crucifer* (cross carrier) and leads the procession, holding the *processional cross*.

Two youth act as *banner bearers*, following the crucifer in the procession.

The two acolytes follow the banner bearers.

The pastors follow the acolytes.



The Acolyte's Handbook

Notes on Processing

Everyone is to be ready and lined up in the fellowship hall **ten** minutes before the service starts.

While in the narthex area and under the balcony, be careful to not bang the cross or the banners on the ceiling – it's easy to do since they are quite a bit taller than the ceiling is high.

The pastors will tell you when to actually begin the procession.

As we enter the church, allow four pews of space between the crucifer, the banner bearers, the acolytes, and the pastors.

Once you are past the balcony, raise the cross and the banners as high as you comfortably can, keeping them as straight up as possible.

Keeping your head up and eyes forward, walk at a reverent pace towards the altar.

Acolytes:

- Put on your vestments.
- Take your candle lighter and the lighter to the fellowship hall.
- Light the candles just as you normally would.

The Acolyte's Handbook

Crucifer:

- Put on your vestments.
- Check to see if the processional cross has been taken to the fellowship hall. If it is not, respectfully remove it from its base next to the pulpit and bring it up the center aisle.
- While in the narthex area, be careful to not bang the cross on the ceiling – it's easy to do since the cross is quite a bit taller than the ceiling is high.
- Please handle the cross with respect, not only for what it represents but also because it is somewhat delicate.
- Hold the processional cross with one hand near the bottom, just above where the wood flares out, and the other hand high enough on the cross to steady it.
- Once you are past the balcony, raise the cross as high as you comfortably can, keeping it as straight up as possible.
- Keeping your head up and eyes forward, walk at a reverent pace up the center aisle.
- Walk up the first three steps and take another stride or two until you are in the middle of the chancel.
- Turn to the right, walk over and place the processional cross in its base by the pulpit.
- Turn and face the altar. When the acolytes have started lighting the candles, go and stand at the communion rail with your hands folded in front of you and wait quietly until the candles are lit.
- Bow reverently along with the acolytes and exit out the chancel.
- Have a seat along with the acolytes in the front row (allowing the acolytes to be next to the aisle).

The Acolyte's Handbook

Banner bearers:

- Put on your vestments.
- Check to see if the banners have been taken to the fellowship hall. If they have not, respectfully remove them from their base on either side of the chancel and bring them up the center aisle.
- While in the narthex area, be careful to not bang the banner staff on the ceiling – it's easy to do since they are quite a bit taller than the ceiling is high.
- Hold the banner staff with one hand near the bottom. The other hand should hold the bottom of the banner against the staff so that the banner faces forward and doesn't flop around.
- Once you are past the balcony, raise the banner as high as you comfortably can, keeping it as straight up as possible.
- Keeping your chin up and eyes forward, walk at a reverent pace up the center aisle.
- When you near the bottom of the stairs, turn towards the side your banner is to be placed and walk over to its base and place the staff in the base so that the banner faces the congregation.
- Watch your partner.
- When both banners have been placed, walk back towards the center aisle, turn and face the altar, walking up the steps and going to the communion rail on your side. Fold your hands in front of you and wait quietly until the candles are lit.
- Bow reverently along with the acolytes and exit out the chancel.
- Have a seat along with the acolytes in the front row (allowing the acolytes to be next to the aisle).