

**Procedures for Altar Serving
St. Luke the Evangelist Church
Morgantown, WV**

“Serving the Lord is our Privilege”

August 2015

As Altar Servers (AS) you are role models in the community with regards to your behavior. This applies in Church as well as at other times when you are looked upon as representatives of the St. Luke community. You have been blessed with an opportunity to serve our Lord and should act accordingly.

The Church is a holy place of worship and requires your utmost respect and reverence at all times.

Requirements for Altar Serving Candidates

- Candidates must have made their First Holy Communion.
- Candidates should know how to bow and genuflect correctly. Bowing shows reverence. It can be a simple nod of the head or a bow of the body made from the waist. AS should always show respect to the altar by bowing when passing in front of it. Genuflecting involves touching your right knee to the floor. This is done whenever the AS passes in front of the tabernacle, as a sign of respect for the Eucharist.
- Candidates should know how to make the sign of the cross.
- Candidates can be male or female and must have completed the second grade.

Schedule Integrity

AS should always make their best effort to fulfill their commitment to the AS schedule. If, however, you are unable to serve at Mass when you are assigned, **you are responsible to ensure coverage by another qualified AS.**

Don't forget to get a good night sleep first and remember that during Mass people are watching you.

Prior to Mass

- 1. Attire:** You are viewed by your appearance. Please respect God's house with appropriate dress and personal grooming. For safety reasons do not wear flip-flops or shoes that can cause you to fall. Remember that you are attending Mass to worship and give thanks to our Lord.
- 2. Time to Arrive:**
 - Arrive at Church at least 20 minutes prior to the start of Mass.
 - Be sure to remove any gum or candy from your mouth.
 - No food or drink other than water one hour before receiving holy communion

3. Where to Dress/Prepare for Mass:

- Go to the closet in the back of the Church that holds the AS albs, cincture (rope), and wooden crosses. Try to wear the albs at around the same length as the other AS. **Remember to choose an alb that fits you, coming down to your shoes.**
- The proper color cincture is to be worn at waist level. Please refer to the bulletin board in front of the restrooms for the proper color cincture.
- Wear a wooden cross around the neck.
- Light the four candles (two on both sides of the Altar and two on both sides of the ambo) prior to the start of the Mass. When lighting candles, keep the flame away from your vestments and hair. **If you have long hair, please tie it back or wear it in a ponytail so that it does not get caught in anything or accidentally catch on fire.**
- Remember to mark the pages of your song book before Mass.
- When you are finished getting ready return to the Gathering Space to greet and welcome people.
- Five minutes until mass begins lined up for the Entrance Procession. AS should decide who will be doing which jobs. Don't allow one AS to do all of the work. If there is only one AS, he/she must perform all of the duties of the AS.
- Cross bearer should bring the cross from the front of the Church to the back of the Church prior to the Entrance Procession.
- Please keep the doors to the back of the Church closed until the procession is ready to begin.

Introductory Rite

4. Procession into the Church

Line-up



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B

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- Once the procession starts, there should be no talking during Mass unless you are giving instructions during Mass to help out another AS.
- AS should always have their **hands joined in prayer position**, unless you are carrying something or when you're seated.
- AS process into the Church. One AS is the Cross Bearer and the other AS should be behind the Cross Bearer.
- Once the **Cross Bearer** reaches the foot steps of the Sanctuary, pause for a count of two, then precede to put the Cross on the stand. Then walk behind the Altar, **bow to the Altar**, and go to your seat.
- AS process directly to the foot of the steps at the front of the Sanctuary **genuflect together** and go to seat. **Remain standing and singing the opening hymn.**

5. Gloria

- All AS should stand in front of their designated seats and **sing the Gloria**. Towards the end of the Gloria, one of the AS should get the Sacramentary or three ring binder from the Priest with opening prayer and closing prayer and be prepared to hold the Missal or three ring binder for the Priest during the Opening Prayer.

6. Opening Prayer

- AS takes the Sacramentary, crosses behind the Altar, bows to the Altar and holds the Sacramentary for the Priest. If a younger AS performs this duty they will hold the three ring binder for the Priest. (The Priest has the binder by his chair).
- At the conclusion of the Opening Prayer, AS returns the Sacramentary to the table next to the AS designated seats.
- AS sit when the Priest sits down.

Liturgy of the Word

- AS sit for the First reading, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Second reading.
- AS stand when the Priest stands for the Gospel acclamation. AS remain standing during the Gospel acclamation.
- AS sit during the Homily and listen attentively to what the Priest has to say.
- AS stand when the Priest stands for the Profession of Faith and recite the Nicene Creed.

***Remember to bow at *“and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.”*

- AS stand for the General Intercessions
- One AS crosses behind the Altar, bows to the Altar, and holds the three ring binder for the Priest.



Offertory Line-up



basket

Bread Wine

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- As the ushers start to take up the collection two **AS should begin preparing the Lord's table while the cross-bearer should remaining stand seated with minimal movement.**
- The two AS should leave their designated seats and go to the Credence table and take the Corporal (square white linen cloth), all chalices, and three purificators from the Credence table and place them on the right side of the Altar. Two of the purificators should be placed on the right side and one in the center (See picture).
- The book-bearer typically takes the Sacramentary and wooden stand from the table next to the AS designated seats and places it on the left (back) side of the Altar. After the two AS finish preparing the Lord's table, they return to their seats.
- Just prior to finishing the collection, the Cross Bearer walks behind the Altar, stopping only to **bow to the Altar**, then continues to get the Cross. Cross Bearer carries the Cross to the back of the Church to process the gifts to the Altar.
- **The two remaining AS go with the Priest to the foot of the step in front of the Altar and patiently wait to receive the gifts.** The AS should have their **hands joined in prayer position** while waiting to receive the gifts.
- One AS on the left side of the Priest and one AS on the right side.
- Cross Bearer processes to the front of the Church and places the cross back into the stand. (If there are only two AS the Cross Bearer should help with the gifts) If there are three AS, the Cross Bearer goes back to their designated seat.
- The first AS takes the Collection Basket from the Priest to place it in front of the Altar and then goes to the Credence table to get the water cruet (removes the stopper and leaves it at the Credence table so that it will not roll around) and goes to stand at the right side of the Altar with the water cruet.
- The other AS takes the wine flagon (pitcher) from the Priest and goes to the right side of the Altar holding the wine flagon. The AS will remain at the right side of the Altar standing with the other AS to receive the empty wine flagon from the Priest. **Remember to hand the Priest the wine flagon and the water cruet with the handle free for the Priest to grab.**
- AS should stand at the right side of the Altar and give the Priest the water and wine from the cruet. Then with the water cruet, Lavabo dish and towel, all three AS stand in the same place to allow the Priest to wash his hands. After the Priest washes his hands, the **AS bow** and return the Lavabo dish, water cruet, and finger towel to the Credence table.
- AS remain standing in front of their designated seats.
- **If there are only two AS, the above responsibilities will have to be equally shared.**

Concluding Rite

- One AS takes the Sacramentary, crosses behind the Altar, bows to Altar and holds the book for the Priest. (If a younger AS performs this duty they will hold the three ring binder for the Priest. The Priest has the binder by his chair).
- **After the blessing and dismissal, the Cross Bearer waits until the second verse of the Closing Hymn and/or watches for the Priest to head towards the Altar.**
- At this time the Cross Bearer walks behind the Priest, **bowing to the Altar**, gets the Cross and lines up.
- The AS leave the Sanctuary and line up for the recessional.
- When the Priest genuflects, the **AS genuflect at the same time (except for the Cross Bearer).**
- Then the Cross Bearer turns and all process out of the Church.

Line-up

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x x



Duties after the Mass

- AS should **NOT** re-enter the Church until the singing of the recessional hymn has stopped and a majority of the congregation has left. After the recessional hymn and departure of the congregation, the AS should return to the Altar area.
- Extinguish candles at the Altar either by carefully blowing out the candles or by using a candle snuffer to extinguish the candles.
- Remove albs and neatly put the albs back on the hangers and return them to their respective places on the rack.
- **DON'T FORGET TO MAKE THIS AN ENJOYABLE AND PRAYERFUL EXPERIENCE. THANK YOU FOR SERVING THE LORD!**