



CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED

Acolyte Customary

Thank you for your ministry in leading the worship of our community. Come prepared to worship God, serve with the clergy, and assist the congregation.

These instructions are for the 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM Sunday services of Holy Eucharist and for Evensong. For special occasions, most of these apply, but there may be special processions or other changes. Acolytes are to report to the vesting room at least **15 minutes before** the time of service.

Before you leave home, ensure your clothing and footwear are appropriate for service:

- Light-colored shirts/tops with no dark graphics
- Dress slacks, khakis, or skirts/dresses – no jeans
- Shoes should be dress or dress casual, dark in color
 - Preferably not colorful sneakers (and definitely not at Christmas and Easter)
 - Avoid high heels and hard soles that make noise on the tile floor
 - In the summer, sandals are acceptable but not flip-flops

Silence cell phones and leave them in the vesting room.

No chewing gum, please.

Remember, as a leader of worship, people observe your movement and posture. Please sit up straight with both feet on the floor, keeping your body still so that you are not a distraction for others: **remember that you are visible and may be on camera**. Don't spin the end of your cincture (rope) or play with your hair.

Pay attention and participate in the service using the bulletin and hymnal. This will help you know when it's time for your next action.

8:00 AM (one acolyte)

Processional (Going In)

- Move as soon as the bell rings! **Move reverently**, only slightly slower than a typical walking pace.
- Lead the clergy up the center aisle carrying the cross. Always go to the right when moving around the altar.
- Place the cross in the stand located on the right side of the upper sanctuary and then stand at a seat.
- For most of the service, sit and stand at the same time as the congregation.

Gospel

- Bring the Book of Gospels to the priest, then stand slightly behind and to the side of the altar during the reading. After it, the priest will hand you the Gospel book on their way to the pulpit. Carry it (no need to elevate it above your head) to the high altar.

Unveiling & Preparation for Communion

- As soon as the Peace is spoken, go to the altar and unveil the chalice.
 - Take the burse (square flat thing) off first and lay it down to the right.
 - Then lift the veil (from the back), step to the side, and drape it into thirds (lengthwise then widthwise) onto the burse.
 - Third, lift off the pall (white square) and add to the pile.
 - Take the pile to the credence table near the choir.

- During preparation
 - Assist the clergy with getting the elements to the table. Give the ciborium with bread, cruets of wine and water, and anything else asked for, and return anything to the credence table.
 - **NEW—stay near the credence table** to balance the priest standing near the choir.

Offering Plate

- The usher has the plate and will bring it forward when you move to the altar rail to receive it from them. Bring it to the side of the altar to the Celebrant. **NEW—they will leave it on the altar.**

During Communion

- When the Celebrant says, “Gifts of God for the People of God,” create a semi-circle with the other ministers to receive communion.
- Once you have received, go to the credence table and assist in bringing the chalice and large patens and the consecrated elements to the altar.
- While the congregation is receiving communion, stand on the lowest step near the lectern with the ciborium and cruet from the altar so that if the clergy or EMs run out, you are close and can refill them.
- **Always watch for cues.** If something unexpected happens, we may need help to lead worship around it.
- As soon as the last person receives communion, return to the altar to assist the clergy in clearing the altar. Everything is cleared; consecrated elements are placed back in the aumbry and **NEW—everything else is cleared to the sacristy, including offering plates.**

Recessional (Going Out)

- After the Dismissal, retrieve the cross and process out with a reverent pace.
- Hang up your robe. If it has stains or wax on it, place it in the basket.

10:30 AM (one, two, or three acolytes)

Processional (Going In)

- If there is only one acolyte, they will carry the cross (crucifer is the name for this role). If there is a second acolyte, they will carry the Gospel book (if this is not already placed in the acolyte vesting room, retrieve it from the high altar before the service). If there are three, then torches are carried in procession behind the cross.
- When the bell rings, the crucifer takes position in the center of the aisle, about two pews up from the back, while a clergy person makes the announcements.
- **Start processing when the singing begins.**
- Walk reverently, a little slower than your daily pace, but don’t creep.
- The second acolyte, if there is one, follows the choir, walking ahead of the clergy. **Carry the Gospel book above your head, with the spine in your right hand, straight up and down** (not at an angle).
- **Always go to the right** when moving around the altar solo. If you have a partner, split and walk together on either side of the altar.
- Place the cross in its holder on the right side of the upper sanctuary. Place the Gospel book in the center of the high altar. Place the torches in their stands, making sure they are completely in the base before you and your partner walk away.

- Stand at a seat on the left side of the upper sanctuary. If there are more acolytes, they should sit on both sides of the sanctuary.
- For most of the service, sit and stand at the same time as the congregation.

Gospel

- At the beginning of the last verse of the Gradual hymn (or during the next-to-last verse if the verses are very short), one acolyte retrieves the Gospel book from the high altar. **Carry the Gospel book above your head, with the spine in your right hand, straight up and down** (not at an angle). Walk through the upper gates, to your right around the altar and down the center aisle to pew 6, turn around, and hand the book to the priest, then stand to the side so that the priest is on camera for the reading. If there are torches, they follow the Gospel, leading the priest.
- After the reading, the priest will raise the book, hand it back to the acolyte, and step to the side. Passing the priest, return the book to the high altar in the same manner you carried it down (over your head, spine to the right, straight up and down). Return to your seat and wait for the priest's invitation to be seated for the homily.

Offering Plates, Unveiling, & Preparation for Communion

- When the Peace is spoken, go to the sacristy and wash hands (if necessary).
- One acolyte unveils at the altar.
 - Take the burse (square flat thing) off first and lay it down to the right.
 - Then, lift the veil (from the side away from you), step to the side, and drape it into thirds, then fold in thirds onto the burse.
 - Third, lift off the pall (white square) and leave on corporal on the left.
 - Next, take the paten (plate) off and place it between you and the chalice in the center, then the purificator, and place it to the right on the corporal.
 - Take the pile to the credence table by the choir.
- One acolyte (usually the crucifer) assists the clergy in preparing the table.
 - Bring the ciborium (with wafers) and pyx with gluten-free wafers to the altar.
 - Bring the cruets of wine (right hand) and water (left hand) and place them on the altar. Take back to the credence table anything given by the priest, then return to your seat for the end of the choir's anthem.
- Listen for the offertory anthem to finish and the music to change to the Presentation hymn ("Praise God from whom all blessings flow..."). One or two acolytes return to the lower gates to receive the plates from the ushers. Bring them to the Celebrant at the side(s) of the altar. **NEW—the plates stay on the altar.**
- Return to the sanctuary and to your seat, remaining standing.

During Communion

- When the Celebrant says, "Gifts of God for the People of God," come to stand behind the altar in a semi-circle with the other ministers to receive communion.
- Once you have received, go to the credence table and assist in bringing the chalice and large patens and the consecrated elements to the altar.
- While the congregation is receiving communion, one acolyte will stand on the lowest step near the lectern with the remaining consecrated wafers (gluten and gluten-free), and if another acolyte is present, they will hold the wine so that if the clergy or EMs run out, you are close and can refill them.

- **Always watch for cues.** If something unexpected happens, we may need help to lead worship around it.
- As soon as the last person receives communion, return to the altar to assist the clergy in clearing the altar. Everything is cleared; consecrated elements are placed back in the aumbry, and **NEW—everything else is cleared to the sacristy, including offering plates.**

Recessional (Going Out)

- As the music begins, retrieve the item you processed in with (cross, torches, or Gospel book). The crucifer moves to the open gate of the high altar, torches stand behind, and the acolyte with the Gospel stands to the side.
- With the second verse, the crucifer starts the procession, going to the right around the altar, then torches, then choir following. As you make the turn to walk in front of the altar, check the progress of the choir coming out of their pews and adjust your speed so that there is not a huge gap between you and them. Process out slightly slower than the pace you processed in with to enable the choir to keep up.
- The acolyte with the Gospel book follows the choir with the book held high, and the clergy follow them.
- Place the cross in its place in the acolyte room, and leave the torches clipped in the rack at the top of the steps. The Gospel book should be returned to the upper sacristy after your vestments are off, going through the undercroft and up the spiral stairs, then back down and out the side door of the church.

Evensong (one acolyte)

Processional (Going In)

- When the cue is given by the clergy or the Director of Music, begin the procession up the aisle. **Move reverently**, slightly slower than a typical walking pace.
- When you're carrying a cross, always go to the right when moving around the altar.
- Place the cross in the stand located on the right side of the upper sanctuary and then stand at a seat.
- For most of the service, sit and stand at the same time as the congregation.

Phos hilaron

- A few minutes into the service, the Phos hilaron begins. At this time, light the candles using the taper hanging next to the high altar. Light the candles in this sequence:
 ③ ② ① [cross] ④ ⑤ ⑥
- Blow out the flame on the taper before sliding it back into the holder (do not extinguish it by sliding it down—that traps melted wax in the opening).
- There is no Gospel procession or Communion at Evensong.

Recessional (Going Out)

- After the dismissal, retrieve the cross and process out with a reverent pace.
- After placing the cross back in the vesting room, re-enter the sanctuary from the sacristy to extinguish the candles during the organ voluntary. Extinguish the candles in the same order that you lit them (above). Then return to the acolyte room and hang up your robe.

Thank you for your ministry!