

Acolyte Instructions and Training

(Last Revision: May 2009)

1. Thank You and the Importance of the Role

You are a very important part of the worship experience at Good Shepherd. The people of the congregation look for direction during various portions of the worship service. The Acolyte signals the beginning and the end of each worship service by **lighting and extinguishing the altar candles** (and others depending on events and seasons). The Acolyte also **assists with Communion** when it is celebrated, **and receiving the Offering**. Acolyting is an important job, and we appreciate your help.

2. Before the Service

Acolytes will be scheduled for each service in three-month rotations. You will receive a schedule by mail. Please contact another Acolyte (that volunteers for your service) to switch with you if you are unable to serve on a Sunday you are scheduled. Call the church office (**891-1700 ext 27**) to inform us of the change, or that you were unable to find a replacement.

Please wear nice shoes. They are the only part of your clothing that will show when you are robed. At 9:30 service the acolyte does not wear a robe, so dress appropriately.

Please arrive 15 minutes before the service to allow time to get your **robe** on. You will select a colored cord (cincture) to tie around your waist. This cord should match the color of the paraments on the Altar, which is green half of the year. A pastor will help you get a robe that fits and the right color cord if necessary. Make sure that you get a **bulletin** from the rack by the robing room door.

3. The Beginning of the Service

Light The Candles. One of the pastors will light the “candle lighter” for you. Be sure to keep enough wick extended or it will go out. Light the candles a few minutes before the service begins. **Walk** when you go out to light the candles. If you walk too fast the flame will go out. Walk up the front Altar steps in the center of the Altar. **Light the right Altar candle first, then the left one.** The pastor will tell you when you must light the “Paschal” candle (by bap. font). When lighting candles taller than you, lift the handle of the lighter to touch the wick with fire.

4. During The Service

Offering. Take the offering plates from the bottom shelf of the Communion table and go to center step where the communion rail is open. The ushers will meet you there to receive the plates. Let the Ushers take the plates from you. After the ushers have gathered the offering and when the organist begins to play the “Offertory”, take the large plate and meet the Ushers. They will stack their plates on the large one. Take the plates to the altar, raise them, then put the plates back on the bottom shelf of the Communion

table. Then sit down and get your bulletin to continue participating in the worship service.

Communion. When we have Communion, a worship leader will stand with you (on your right) when receiving the offering. This leader will receive the bread and wine and take it to the altar. After the bread and wine have been consecrated, the pastor will ask the people to be seated. At this time, get up and join the other Communion Assistants at the Communion table. The pastor will then hand you a tall, silver pitcher full of wine. Stand centered in front of the altar. When a Communion Assistant needs more wine in their cup they will come to you. Simply pour wine into their cup. After all the people have received Communion, assemble with the Communion Assistants in a row behind the altar. When handed a piece of bread, retain it until the pastor hold the cup of wine in front of you. Dip the bread in the wine and eat it.

4. The Ending of the Service

After the pastor and worship leader process out, extinguish the altar candles. Extinguish the candles in the reverse order you lit them. Exit to the Sacristy and return your robe to the Sacristy closet.

ACOLYTE'S QUICK CHECK LIST

BEFORE THE SERVICE

- * **Wear nice shoes**
- * **Arrive 15 minutes before the service**
- * **Put on Robe and Cord in the Sacristy**
- * **Get a bulletin from rack by the robing room door.**

BEGINNING OF SERVICE

- * **Light candles - right, then left, then Paschal (if requested by a pastor)**

DURING THE SERVICE

- * **Offering Plates to Ushers**
- * **Receive Plates from Ushers**
- * **If Communion, assist by refilling the cups of the Communion Assistants**

ENDING OF SERVICE

- * **Extinguish candles - Paschal (if lit), then left, then right**
- * **Exit to the Sacristy and put robe away**