

Communion Assistant 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. We commune several hundreds of worshipers each Sunday we celebrate Communion. Thank you for volunteering to help distribute the elements during Communion.

2. Before the Service

Please arrive in the sacristy 10 minutes before the service. Communion Assistants helping with the 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. services should put on a zippered robe. Get a bulletin from the plastic rack on the wall by the door of the robing room. Enter the sanctuary and be seated on the organ side, or you may sit in one of the front pews by yourself or with family members.

If you would like some practice, you can ask a pastor to show you how to pour wine out of a chalice. You will find that the pouring spout is small, which allows you to control the flow of wine into a little Communion cup.

3. During the Service

After the presiding pastor has completed the liturgy for Communion, assemble at the table containing the bread and wine (usually next to the organ). The presiding pastor will hand you a chalice and tell you which side of the altar rail to commune.

Distribution of Bread

On some occasions you may be asked to distribute the bread. If so, begin at the middle of the communion rail. Tear off a small piece of bread for each person, place it in their hand, and say the words,

“The body of Christ, given for you”. For children less than communion age, put your left hand on their head and offer a blessing, such as

“God bless you and keep you”.

Distribution of Wine

Most of the time you will be asked to distribute the wine. A pastor will hand you a pouring chalice with wine in it and a white napkin. Follow the person distributing the bread. Each person receiving Communion will have an empty plastic cup. Pour wine into their cup; about two thirds full. Hold the napkin below the pouring lip to catch any drips of wine. While pouring, say the words,

“The blood of Christ, shed for you”.

If you run out of wine, simply go up to the acolyte (standing if front of the altar). The acolyte will have a pitcher full of wine with which to refill your chalice. Some worshipers will have grape juice already in a cup. If so, just say the words “The blood of Christ shed for you” without pouring any wine.

4. After the Distribution

After all worshipers have received Communion, assemble behind the altar in a line facing the altar. The pastor will commune you by intinction. This means the pastor will hand you a piece of bread, then hold the chalice of wine in front of you. Dip your bread in the wine (no need for a plastic cup). Then be seated.

After the service concludes, return to the sacristy to put your robe away if you are wearing one.

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS’ QUICK CHECK LIST

BEFORE THE SERVICE

- * **Arrive 10 minutes before the service**
- * **Robe in the Sacristy (8 & 11)**
- * **Get a bulletin by the robing room door.**
- * **Practice pouring from a chalice if you would like to.**
- * **Take a seat on the organ side of the Sanctuary or in a front pew.**

DURING THE SERVICE

- * **Assist with Distributing Communion.**

AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION

- * **Assemble behind the altar in a row facing the altar and receive Communion via intinction.**

- * **Return robes to the robing room closet after the service has ended (8:00 & 11:00).**