

**A GUIDEBOOK FOR**

# **ACOLYTES**

**&**

# **CRUCIFERS**

**AT**

**NEW HANOVER**  
**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**



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# WELCOME

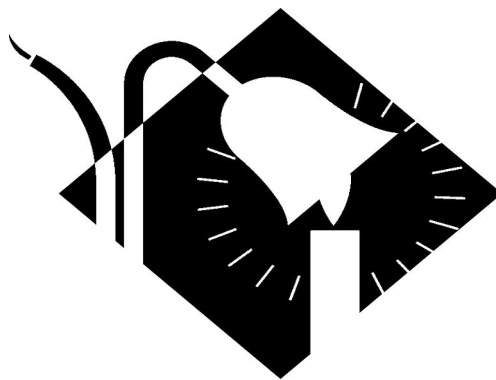
When you serve God by serving as an acolyte and crucifer, you are doing more than lighting the altar candles. You are symbolically bringing the light of Christ's spirit into the worship service. I hope that by serving as an acolyte and crucifer, you will be filled with a sense of spiritual meaning and fulfillment. You will make new friends, have fun, and through your commitment, grow in service to our church.

I hope this manual will provide a quick reference for you as you begin your journey as an acolyte and crucifer. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Acolyte Coordinator, Andy Van Dyke. He is always ready and eager to assist you.

You have made an important promise to the New Hanover Evangelical Lutheran Church by agreeing to serve as an acolyte and crucifer. I welcome you and thank you for helping in these very significant positions.

In Christ,

Pastor Tom Lang



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## ***Acolyte's Prayer***

*Be present, Lord Jesus, that I may faithfully and loyally  
serve you in love and through my service proclaim,*

*"The Lord is my Light."*

*Amen*

## LOOKING GOOD!

- ❖ Boys should wear slacks with dark socks and appropriate shoes.
- ❖ Girls should wear skirts/dresses or slacks and appropriate hosiery and shoes.
- ❖ Please avoid wearing shorts or jeans, running shoes, athletic shoes, sandals, Crocs, or flip flops.
- ❖ Hair should be neatly combed, regardless of length or style.

## REMEMBER THE THREE PS:

- ❖ **Punctuality** is important. When you arrive on time, everything flows more smoothly.
- ❖ **Pay Attention**. Take a few minutes before the service to familiarize yourself with the order of worship found in the bulletin. This will help you stay on top of things and know where you are in the service so that you will be prepared; it will also help you anticipate any last-minute changes. You may want to use a pencil to check off each section of the service to help you follow along.
- ❖ **Participate**. Most importantly, don't forget to worship God. That's why we are here! As a leader in the service, you are a role model to others, especially younger children in the congregation.

# GETTING READY

- ❖ Please be **PUNCTUAL**. Being on time will allow you to get ready in a calm and organized manner. Things will run much more smoothly.
  - ✦ For the 7:30 a.m. service, report to the sacristy by 7:15 a.m.
  - ✦ For the 10:15 a.m. service, report to the sacristy immediately following Sunday school at 10:00 a.m.
  - ✦ For all other services, such as evening services or Thanksgiving, please report to the sacristy at least 15 minutes before the service is scheduled to begin.
- ❖ Select and put on the acolyte gown that best fits you. Be sure both pieces of the gown are straight and look nice.
- ❖ Select and wear one of the crosses.
- ❖ Review the service detail chart for the current week so you know which candles to light and what to expect during the service.
- ❖ Meet the Acolyte Advisor and review any last minute changes to the service.

## WHAT IF I AM ALSO SUPPOSED TO SING IN THE CHOR OR PLAY AN INSTRUMENT DURING THIS SERVICE?

- ❖ If you are scheduled to sing in a choir or play an instrument during a service that you are also scheduled to be an acolyte, you should wear an acolyte gown, not a choir gown.
- ❖ At the appropriate time during the service, take your place with the choir.
- ❖ When finished, return to your acolyte seat.
- ❖ If you are to sing or play during a time you would normally help as an acolyte, discuss this with the acolyte advisor to be sure your acolyte duties are covered.

# AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE

## When the Paschal Candle /S lit:

- ❖ Just before the service is about to begin, meet with the acolyte advisor at the top of the ramp. If you have any questions about the service, now is the time to ask.
- ❖ When the prelude music begins, enter into the sanctuary; walk around to the front and center of the chancel, and step up to the Paschal Candle.
- ❖ Light the taper on your candle lighter from the flame on the Paschal Candle and then turn and walk to the altar. Be sure you have enough wick raised out to have enough flame, but not too much.
- ❖ Walk carefully into the sanctuary. Watch where you are walking, don't only look at the flame.
- ❖ Before lighting the altar candles, pause to give reverence to the cross by bowing your head and saying a short prayer, such as, "I light these candles as a service to God. Amen."
- ❖ Light the candle on the right first, bring the candle lighter back to the center and pause then light the candle on the left.
- ❖ Turn back to the center of the altar and lower the taper to put out the flame on your candle lighter.
- ❖ Sit down in the first pew on the right side, near the ramp.

## WHAT IF THE FLAME ON THE CANDLE LIGHTER GOES OUT?

- ❖ **DON'T Panic!!**
- ❖ If the Paschal Candle is lit, re-light the taper from the Paschal Candle.
- ❖ If the Acolyte Advisor lit the taper for you and it goes out before you light any candles, go back to the Acolyte Advisor and he or she will re-light your taper.
- ❖ If you have already lit the altar candle on the right side of the altar, re-light your taper from that candle.

# AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE

## When the Paschal Candle *IS NOT* lit:

- ❖ Just before the service is about to begin, meet with the Acolyte Advisor at the top of the ramp. If you have any questions about the service, now is the time to ask.
- ❖ When the prelude music begins, the Acolyte Advisor will light the taper in your candle lighter. Be sure you have enough wick raised out to have enough flame, but not too much.
- ❖ Walk carefully into the sanctuary. Watch where you are walking, don't only look at the flame.
- ❖ Walk around to the front and center of the chancel and step up to the altar.
- ❖ Before lighting the candles, pause to give reverence to the cross by bowing your head and saying a short prayer, such as, "I light these candles as a service to God. Amen."
- ❖ Light the candle on the right first, bring the candle lighter back to the center and pause then light the candle on the left.
- ❖ Turn back to the center of the altar and lower your taper to put out the flame on your candle lighter.
- ❖ Sit down in the first pew on the right side, near the ramp.

## THE CANDELABRA

- ❖ On Sundays when the Candelabra are to be lit, light them after you light the two altar candles.
- ❖ Start with the candelabrum on the right side and light the candle closest to the altar and work towards the outside.
- ❖ Then walk around to the other side and again light the candle closest to the altar and work towards the outside.
- ❖ At the end of the service, extinguish the candelabra first.
  - ✦ Start with the candelabrum on the left side and extinguish the candle farthest from the altar and work towards the altar.
  - ✦ Then walk around to the right side and extinguish the candle farthest from the altar and work towards the altar.

## THE PASCHAL CANDLE

- ❖ The Paschal Candle is a special candle that is used during the season of Lent, the season of Easter, the day of Pentecost, and when there are baptisms or during a service of affirmation of baptism.
- ❖ During service when the Paschal Candle is used, it will be lit by an usher before the service begins and you will light your taper from the flame on this candle.
- ❖ If lit, the Paschal Candle is not to be extinguished at the end of the service.

## DURING ADVENT

On the Sundays during Advent, you should light the appropriate number of candles on the Advent Wreath at the beginning of the service. Check the service detail chart for the number of Advent Wreath candles to light:

- ❖ First Sunday: Light no candles on the Advent Wreath
- ❖ Second Sunday: Light one candle on the Advent Wreath
- ❖ Third Sunday: Light two candles on the Advent Wreath
- ❖ Fourth Sunday: Light three candles on the Advent Wreath

**Pay Attention!** If the family who reads the Advent passage does not light the next candle on the wreath, you should light it with your candle lighter after lighting your taper from the altar candle on the right side.

The candles on the wreath should not be extinguished at the end of the service.

## BAPTISMS

- ❖ If someone is to be baptized during the service, be prepared to assist the Pastors.
- ❖ The help you provide will usually be to hold the Pastor's service book during the washing portion of the Baptism.

## THE OFFERING

- ❖ When it is time for the offering, do the following:
- ❖ Pick up all six plates from the Credence Table, walk to the center of the Chancel, and face the congregation.
- ❖ When the Ushers arrive, offer a plate to each Usher by moving down the line. Note that at the 7:30 a.m. services, there are usually only four Ushers, so you should have two plates left in your hands.
- ❖ Go back to the Credence Table and place the large plate on the table. If you only gave four plates to the Ushers, place the two extra plates inside the larger plate.
- ❖ Sit down in your pew until the Offering music ends and the Pastor walks to the altar. At that time, go to the Credence Table for the large offering plate and walk to the center of the Chancel, and face the congregation.
- ❖ Collect the offering plate from each Usher.
- ❖ Turn and give all of the offering plates to the Pastor at the right side of the altar. He or she will raise and bless the offerings and return the plates to you. Return offering plates to the Credence Table.
- ❖ Return to your seat.

## THE PRAYERS

- ❖ When the Pastor invites the congregation to kneel for the prayers, you should kneel at the altar step until the prayers have been concluded.
- ❖ Remember to fold your hands, bow your head, and be still.

# COMMUNION

- ❖ If you have had your first communion, you will take communion at the altar with the Pastors and other Communion Assistants.
- ❖ Be prepared to help.
- ❖ When Communion is by intinction, watch the amount of wafers in the plate being handed out by the Pastor or Communion Assistant. Be ready to exchange it with a full plate.
- ❖ When regular Communion is offered (with cups), you will have to watch the amount of wafers in the plate being handed out and the amount of wine in the chalice being poured by the Pastor or Communion Assistant. Be ready to exchange either one.
- ❖ When handed an empty plate or chalice, immediately fill it so that it is ready again, if needed.
- ❖ While you are standing at the altar you should fold your hands, stand still, and pay attention so that you are ready to help when needed.

# AT THE END OF THE SERVICE

- ❖ During the first verse of the last hymn begin to extinguish the appropriate candles.
- ❖ With the candle lighter/snuffer, walk to the front and center of the chancel area and step up to the altar, bow your head, and pause.
- ❖ If the candelabra are lit, extinguish those candles first.
  - ✦ Start with the candelabrum on the left side and extinguish the candle farthest from the altar and work towards the altar.
  - ✦ Then walk around to the right side and extinguish the candle farthest from the altar and work towards the altar.
- ❖ Walk to the center of the altar, bow your head, and pause.
- ❖ Extinguish the candle on the left side of the altar.
- ❖ Pause at the center again.
- ❖ Light your taper from the candle on the right side of the altar.
- ❖ Extinguish the candle on the right side of the altar.
- ❖ Turn to face the congregation and pause.
- ❖ When prompted by the Pastor, walk ahead of the Pastors, with your lit taper, to the Narthex down the up the aisle to the left. This symbolizes Christ's light going out into the world.
- ❖ Extinguish the taper as soon as you arrive at the Narthex.
- ❖ Return to the Sacristy and hang up your gown and cross, and place your candle lighter in its stand.

# THE CRUCIFER

- ❖ The Crucifer is the person assigned to carry a cross in a procession into the Church.
- ❖ To be a crucifer, you should be strong enough to carry the cross the proper way for an extended time.
- ❖ When carrying the cross, you must wear white gloves.
- ❖ Carry the cross so that it is above your head and in such a manner that your elbows are extended outward, not downward. This should be done by gripping the staff with the palms of both hands facing ahead of you.
- ❖ During the first hymn the Crucifer will lead the procession in front of the choir to the altar. Walk at a slow pace with the cross held higher than your head.
- ❖ When you reach the front of the center of the chancel area, turn and step up toward the altar, then turn and face the congregation.
- ❖ The choir will then process past you. When the choir has passed, carry the cross to the Pulpit (up the steps on the right side, and place it in its stand).
- ❖ Then sit down with the acolyte.
- ❖ At the end of the service:
  - ✦ During the first verse of the last, when the Acolyte begins to extinguish the candles, retrieve the cross from the pulpit and stand at the front and center of the chancel area facing the altar. The Pastors will also join you at the front of the chancel area facing the altar.
  - ✦ When the acolyte has finished extinguishing the candles, he or she will turn to face the congregation.
  - ✦ The Pastors and you should then turn towards the congregation, and you will lead the acolyte and Pastors down the left-side aisle to the Narthex.

# GLOSSARY

**Acolyte** - means "companion" or "one who helps". An acolyte helps the Pastor perform various tasks in the worship service.

**Advent** - means "coming". It is the first season of the church year. It's the time before Christmas when we prepare for the coming of Jesus. There are four Sundays in Advent.

**Alb** - is a white robe with a cincture around the waist.

**Altar** - is the table at the front of the Church. It is a reminder of the family table. God's family gathers around this table. It also recalls the sacrifice of God's Son.

**Candle Lighter** - is used by the acolyte to light candles. It consists of a taper from which the candles are lighted and a bell for snuffing out the flame.

**Chancel** - it is the area in the church building where the Pastor leads the worship service. The Altar is in the Chancel.

**Church Year** - is a 12-month cycle of Christian celebration. The first season is **Advent** which prepares us for **Christmas**, when Jesus was born. **Epiphany** is the next season, beginning when the three Wise Men see the Christ Child and including Jesus' Baptism and the beginning of his ministry. **Lent** follows Epiphany and recalls Jesus' suffering for us. It is a time to think about Baptism and rebirth in preparation for **Easter**, a seven-week festival which starts when Jesus rises from the dead. **The Day of Pentecost** and the Sundays in Pentecost are celebrations of the Holy Spirit active in the life of the church.

**Cincture** - is the rope worn around the waist over the Alb. The rope is a symbol of the rope used to bind Jesus when he was brought before Herod.

**Credence Table** - is the table we use to hold the offering plates.

**Crucifer** - is the person who carries the cross, leading the procession into and out of the church.

**Font** - is the bowl or basin from which water is taken during the Sacrament of Baptism.

**Intinction** - is the dipping of the bread of the Eucharist into the consecrated wine, so that the person can receive both together.

**Nave** - is the section in the church building where the congregation sits.

**Offering** – The time of the service when the ushers collect the gifts presented by members of the congregation in the form of money.

**Paschal Candle** - is the large white candle symbolizing the risen Christ. It is lighted during Lent and during Easter through Pentecost Sunday. After that it is lit only when there is a Baptism or a Funeral.

**Postlude** - the music played at the end of the worship service.

**Prelude** - the music played before the worship service begins.

**Reverence the Cross** - means to say a short prayer or pause momentarily in respect for the Cross.

**Sacraments** - are Church Rites (ceremonies) which use earthly elements and God's Word to bring His blessing. The two Lutheran Sacraments are Baptism and Holy Communion. The earthly element in Baptism is water and in Holy Communion it is the bread and wine.

**Sacristy** - is the room where the Acolyte and Crucifer prepare for the service.

**Taper** - is the long wick in a candle lighter, used to light the candles.

# ACOLYTE & CRUCIFER TEAM LEADERS

## **Andy Van Dyke, Acolyte Coordinator**

610.473.8930 – agvandyke@dejazzd.com

Mr. Van Dyke coordinates the acolyte and crucifer recruiting, training, procedural changes, and general issues related to these positions. Call or email Mr. Van Dyke if you have any questions about how certain parts of this service are to be done.

## **Carolyn Fleming, Worship Assistant Scheduler**

610.970.7099 – qcmommy@comcast.net

Mrs. Fleming schedules the acolytes and crucifers which is then published in the Church newsletter and on the Church website. If you know of dates in advance (before the schedule is made) that you are not available, email or call Mrs. Fleming and she will make sure to not schedule you for service on those dates. Please do not call or email her for changes after the schedule has been made and distributed.

## **Sheila Eddinger, Acolyte Advisor (7:30 am service)**

610.754.0742

## **Tim Mutter, Acolyte Advisor (10:15 am service)**

610.323.0140

Mrs. Eddinger and Mr. Mutter are the regular Acolyte Advisors who will help you get ready before the service and who will light your taper before entering the sanctuary. If you are ill on a day you are scheduled, call one of them at home as soon as you know you cannot make it.

### **If you are not available on a day you are scheduled:**

- ✦ It is your responsibility to call other Acolytes or Crucifers to find a replacement. Offer to switch to another date when you are available.
- ✦ Call the Church Office *and* Mrs. Fleming on or before the Monday prior to the day you are to serve.

## **Church Office**

610.326.1335