

Acolyte Information Sheet

2009-2009

At Emmanuel Lutheran Church, we believe that Youth are the Church of Today, not just the Church of Tomorrow. This is one reason why we have the confirmands participate in a leadership role in our worship services as acolytes. Acolytes light the candles in the worship space, assist the pastors in the offering and communion, and lead the congregation in the reading of the Psalm for the worship services. Serving as an acolyte is an important part of the worship service; therefore, below is information that you need to know.

Acolyte Schedules: All confirmands will be scheduled to serve as an acolyte approximately every six weeks. The acolyte scheduler will attempt to honor requests for preferred services; however, there will be times when a confirmand will be scheduled for a service other than their preference. It is the confirmand's responsibility to know when they are scheduled to serve as acolyte and to find a substitute when unable to serve and notify Katherine in the church office of any changes in the schedule so that the Sunday bulletin reflects the proper names. The schedule can be found in the News Notes and on the website at elcbethesda.org/leaders.shtml. You can contact the Acolyte Scheduler, Katie Guild, at 301-320-6055 if you have any questions.

Preparation: For those who are scheduled to be an acolyte, please review the Psalm for that worship service prior to arriving at the church. If there are words or phrases that you are unsure about the pronunciation, please contact one of the pastors. We also highly recommend that you practice reading the Psalm with a loud, clear voice at a speed that is slow enough for each syllable to be clearing understood.

Arrival: Please be at the church fifteen (15) minutes before the worship service in order to get dressed and receive any additional instructions for the day from the pastors.

Attire: Acolytes are worship leaders; therefore, they should be dressed appropriately. Since you are also putting on an alb over your clothes, do not dress too warmly or you may get over heated will on the altar. Examples of appropriate clothing for a young man would be a collared shirt, long pants (not jeans), socks and dress/casual shoes (no athletic shoes please). Examples of appropriate clothing for young women would be a nice blouse, slacks or a skirt, dress/casual shoes. For all acolytes, please do not wear flip-flops, sandals, "Crocs" or any other of those types of shoes, and T-shirts. The church is heated and air-conditioned; therefore, you do not need to wear shorts or sweaters and sweatshirts.

Etiquette: As worship leaders, acolytes are either seated or standing in front of the congregation for most of the service. There is no reason to be nervous, for if you follow some simple etiquette, you will not draw attention to yourself. Also remember, when you are drawing attention to yourself during parts of the service when you are not activity leading, some may be distracted from worship.

When you are sitting up in the altar space, please sit up right and keep "fidgiting" to a minimum. The same is true when you are standing, stand straight and try not to shuffle your feet. During the singing of hymns, and readings, have the hymnal, or bulletin, open and sing or follow along. Please do not chew gum while in the altar space.

Brief Instructions: We will have a few training sessions during confirmation class, but here are a few brief instructions that will help you prepare to serve as an acolyte. When you are walking with the lighter, walk slowly so the flame does not blow out. There are two candles on the altar and a Christ Candle. When the Christ Candle is to be lighted, it should be the last one and the first one to be extinguished. The two candles on the altar are the Epistle and Gospel candles. The Gospel candle is the closest to where the pastors sit. This candle should never be left burning on its own. The candles are to be lighted during the Prelude.

At the time of offering, bring all the brass plates out to the ushers and let them decide how many to take. When you go to collect the plates, bring the other plates for them to stack their plates on top.

During communion, bring out the communion cup trays to the front pew on the right side. Hold one tray at a time, and switch the trays out as you see fit. The pastor may give you instructions as to how many of the trays to bring out.

At the end of the service, the candles are to be extinguished at the end of the last hymn. Remember to extinguish the Christ Candle first if it is lit. Then the Gospel Candle, followed by the Epistle candle. Once the candles are extinguished, walk out of the sanctuary at a normal pace.

If you have any questions, you can contact Pastor Lewis.