

# Customary for ACOLYTE

(Acolyte Instructions & Processes, October, 2024)

*("O God, bless the acolytes of your Church that they may so serve before your earthly altar in reverence and holiness, that they may attain, with all your saints and angels, the joy of serving you and worshiping you before your Heavenly Altar; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen)*

*As an ACOLYTE, you will never be a perfect, but nobody expects you to be perfect, but they love you and are pulling for you. Thank you for Serving as an Acolyte!*

## **Schedule Coordinator Contact Information**

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## ACOLYTE ROLES & PREPARATION

**IMPORTANT: *Substitutions:*** *Scheduled Acolytes are requested to find substitutes if they can not attend their assigned service.*

### **ACOLYTE Roles for Sanctuary Services, assigned by the AC at start of service:**

**Crucifer** bears the Processional Cross, leading the procession at the beginning and end of the service and to the 6th row in the center aisle for the Gospel reading.

**Torch Bearer** lights Altar Candles prior to Service, extinguishes after service, and bears lit torches during the Procession and Gospel Reading. There should be 2 Torch Bearers. LEMs can serve if less than 3 Acolytes are present.

**GOSPEL BOOK CARRIER** carries the “silver-covered” Gospel Book, provided by Presider from the Altar. This Carrier accepts the book at the center foot of the Chancel, turns and proceeds down the Center Nave Aisle to the blue taped area for Gospel reading and turns around to hold the book for the following Presiding Priest. After the reading the Carrier hands the Priest the Gospel Book, who returns it to the Altar, while the Carrier proceeds to the center foot of the Chancel, bows to the cross, and returns to Acolyte seating.

**Alms Basin Bearer** retrieves Alms Basin (collection plate) from Cross-side Credence Table and steps to the center front of the Chancel to distribute Alms Basins to Ushers. The Alms Basin Bearer then stands beneath Altar Cross, awaiting Usher return with the collection. The Alms Basin Bearer delivers the stack of Alms Basins nested in the larger Alms Basin plate to the Choir-side front of the Altar Table for Priest blessing.

**Cruet Bearer** holds the pitcher containing additional consecrated wine. During Communion the Bearer stands ready to refill Chalices as Communion occurs, and also assists Priests, Bread Bearers, & Chalice Bearers, as directed.

**Banner Bearer(s)** may be assigned on High Holy Day, St Matthew’s Day and Pentecost. This Bearer carries a banner during the procession and recession, swinging it during the procession, and at other designated times.

### **20 minutes before start of Service, Acolytes arrive at church**

1. Acolyte alerts the Altar Coordinator (AC) to their presence, confirms their assignment with the AC, who is vested and near the Baptismal Font in Lobby (previously called Commons or Narthex).
2. Acolytes proceed to Acolyte Vesting Room (basement, midway between Women & Men Restrooms) to vests, including knotting of the cincture (white waist cord). After vesting, Acolytes return to the Lobby. See **Full Vesting Procedure Section**.
3. Torch Bearer lights Altar candles with Lighter/Extinguisher located in the Priest Vesting Room with matches. Altar Candle Lighting Order: Nearest to Altar Cross to furthest.  
**Caution:** Ensure the torch does NOT traverse over Fiar Linen (Altar cloth) to avoid ash

droppings. Use a “reach-out-and-swing-to-the-side” motion then back to center. After Altar Candles are lit, the Lighter/Extinguisher is returned to the Priest Vesting Room. Note: If Acolyte is late then wearing vestments are optional when lighting Candles.

4. The Crucifer transfers the Processional Cross from its holder at the rear of the Chancel, Cross-side, to near the center Nave entrance.
5. The Torch Bearers retrieve lit candles from the back of the chancel, Choir-side & Cross-side, and proceed to the center Nave entrance in preparation for the Procession.

**5-10 minutes before start of Service: Assemble in Lobby for PROCESSIONAL:**

1. The processional party, including Acolytes, assemble at Baptismal Font in Lobby, and acknowledge their role to Presiding Priest (ex: Crucifer). The Presiding Priest provides last minute instructions and a prayer.
2. The AC releases the Crucifer and then Torch Bearers, who lead the Procession from Lobby into the Nave and to the center foot of the Chancel. The Crucifer and Torch Bearers do NOT bow to the Altar Cross. The Crucifer and Torch Bearer for the Cross-side lit candle, but turn right, and return the cross & lit candle to holders, and takes a seat, leaving the seat vacant in the front row, nearest back wall for the AC. The Torch Bearer for the Choir-side lit candle, turns left, return the lit candle to its holder, and takes a temporary seat behind the Choir, in anticipation of the Gospel Reading.,

## **CRUCIFER**

### **Preparation & Processional into Nave:**

1. 15-20 minutes before the start of service, the Crucifer relocates the Processional Cross from its holder, located at the back of the Chancel, Cross side, near LEM seating, to the center aisle Nave entrance from the Lobby (Suggestion: Hold it or carefully, lean it against inside glass wall at the center door to the Nave).
2. The Crucifer is the first person in the processional party to be released by the AC, followed by the 2 Torch Bearers.
3. The Crucifer holds the processional cross high with its cross facing the Altar. Suggestion: Clasp the cross with one hand near waist (in front of cross, palm toward waist) and the other hand near chin (behind the cross, palm facing forward.) Be cautious of low hanging objects (door entrances, etc.).
4. The Crucifer walks unrushed to the foot of the Chancel (red carpeted platform) and pauses, but does NOT bow. The Crucifer then turns right (Cross-side), proceeds to the back of Rail 4 (Cross side) and then to the back edge of the Chancel to return the cross to its holder, and then takes an assigned Seat.

### **Gospel Reading:**

5. The Crucifer retrieves the Processional Cross from its holder, during the last verse of the Sequence Hymn. After the Hymn, Crucifer proceeds to the front center of the Chancel, facing Altar, pivots and proceeds to the 6<sup>th</sup> row in the Center Nave aisle, followed by Torch Bearers Gospel Book Bearer, and the Gospel Reader.
6. Crucifer pivots to face Gospel Reader
7. After Gospel Reading and Response, Crucifer returns to the foot of the Chancel, turns right, and returns the Processional Cross to its holder, and takes a seat.

### **Recessional & Dismissal:**

1. At the end of the "SENDING FORTH OF EUCHARISTIC VISITORS," the Crucifer retrieves the Processional Cross from its holder (back of the Chancel, Cross-side).
2. At the beginning of the DISMISSAL HYMN, the Crucifer, holding the cross high, proceeds unrushed to the Center aisle at the foot of the Chancel (red carpeted platform), facing the Altar, but does NOT bow.
8. When signaled by Presiding Priest, AC or before the last verse of Hymn, the Crucifer turns and recesses, unrushed, down Center Nave Aisle, followed by Choir, LEVs, LEMs & Priests.
9. The Crucifer does NOT enter the Lobby, but before this exit, turns right toward Choir-side, and pauses at the back between Section 1 & 2, until Priest's Dismissal words are delivered. The Crucifer then proceeds to the foot of the center Chancel, and on to return the Processional Cross to its holder.

## TORCH BEARER

Torch Bearers light & extinguish Altar candles, prior to and after the Service, and follow Crucifer for the Gospel Reading.

Altar candles are lit 15-20 minutes before service & extinguished at the end of Service.

**LIGHTING ALTAR CANDLE:** 15-20 minutes before start of Service, Torch Bearers retrieve the Lighter/Extinguisher to light Altar candles. If late, Torch Bearers do not have to be vested for lighting Altar candles.

1. Lighter/Extinguisher & matches are located left of the door inside Priest Vesting Room
2. Torch Bearers ignite Lighter/Extinguisher in the Priest Vesting room, proceed to the foot of the Chancel at the Center Aisle, bow to Altar Cross, before stepping onto the Chancel to light candles.
3. Candles are lit, starting with the candle nearest to the Altar Cross and then to the furthest candles, symbolizing that the light of Jesus shines from the cross to the world.
4. Typically 4 candles are lit: 2 beside the Altar Table and 2 at the rear of the Chancel.
5. After lighting the Cross-side candle, and each time the Torch Bearer crosses in front of the Altar, the Torch Bearer bows to the Altar, before proceeding to light the Choir-side candle. **CAUTION:** Ensure the Torch does NOT travel over the altar cloth during lighting or extinguishing of candles, so ash doesn't drop on Altar cloth. Suggestion: Use an exaggerated "reach-out-and-swing-to-the-side & back to center" movement.
6. When all candles are lit, the Torch Bearer returns to the foot of the Chancel, bows, returns the Lighter/Extinguisher to its stand in the Priest Vesting Room
7. The Torch Bearers then retrieve the lit candles at the rear of the Chancel (Choir-side & Cross side), and proceed to the Lobby for the Processional.

**EXTINGUISHING ALTAR CANDLES:** After the Priest's Dismissal, the Torch Bearers retrieve the Lighter/Extinguisher from the Priest Vesting Room to extinguish Altar candles.

1. The Torch Bearer proceeds directly to the Center Aisle, foot of Chancel and bows to the Altar, before stepping onto the Chancel.
2. Candles are extinguished in the reverse order as lit - Choir-side (outermost) candles and then Cross-side candles, using the bell-shaped snuffer on the end of the Lighter/Extinguisher to extinguish the candles.
3. **CAUTION:** Ensure the Torch does NOT travel over the altar cloth during lighting or extinguishing of candles, so ash doesn't drop on Altar cloth. Suggestion: Use an exaggerated "reach-out-and-swing-to-the-side & back to center" movement.
4. After extinguishing the Choir-side candles, and as the Candle-lighter crosses in front of the Altar, the Torch Bearer bows to the Altar, before extinguishing Cross-side candles.
5. Torch Bearers hold the Torch's bell down over the top of the candle until seeing smoke escape. Caution: Do not push the snuffer down on top of the candle as it ruins its wick.
6. After all candles are extinguished, the Torch Bearer steps off the Chancel, center front, bows to the Altar, and returns to the Priest Vesting Room to place the Lighter/Extinguisher in its holder.
7. At this point, the Torch Bearer can proceed to the Lobby or downstairs to the Vesting Room to de-vest.

## **TORCH BEARERS FOR GOSPEL READING**

1. During the last verse of the Sequence Hymn, Torch Bearers retrieve their respective lit candles (Choir-side & Cross-side) and follow the Crucifer to center foot of Chancel, pivot in unison and follow Crucifer to center aisle to blue taped area and face the Gospel Book from opposite sides of the aisle.
2. After the Gospel is read, Torch Bearers follow the Crucifer to the center foot of the Chancel and then return lit candles to their respective holders at the back of the Chancel, and take seats in the Acolyte seating area..
3. Note: Choir-side Torch Bearer leaves the temporary seat behind Choir and proceeds down the Alcove to the Lobby, behind the congregation and then up aisle 4 to the Acolyte seating area, rejoining the other Torch Bearer and Crucifer.

## LIGHTING PASCHAL & ADVENT WREATH CANDLES

**Paschal & Advent Wreath:** On a typical Sunday, 4 candles are to be lit on the Altar, before start of service: 2 on each side of the Altar Table, and 2 at the rear of the Chancel on the Cross-side and Choir-side. However for high holy days and baptisms, additional candles will be found on the Altar. Below are additional steps for the Torch Bearers for these services.

### **Paschal Candle**

The Paschal candle is used at Baptisms and Easter. It is on a tall stand underneath the Altar Cross.

This tall white candle is to be lit first before other candles, and extinguished last at end of service.

It represents the work of Christ to us, our light in the darkness through his birth, life, death, and resurrection.

### **Advent Wreath**

The 5-candle Advent Wreath is used during Advent, signifying that in the middle of the darkness, the Advent candles glow bright, reminding us that Jesus came as Light into our dark world. The wreath is on a tall stand underneath the Altar Cross.

- Its candles are to be lit in sequence on successive Sundays, and before other Altar candles, and extinguished last at end of service.
- The Wreath consists of 5 colored candles: 3 Purple & 1 Rose surrounding 1 White.

The Advent Wreath is lit in progression (example: by 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 3 candles are lit)

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent: Purple candle closest to cross, called the "Prophecy" candle when we ask Christ to come to our aid
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent: Purple candle next closest to cross, called the "Bethlehem" candle, when we ask Him to move us to action, so that we can prepare ourselves for both His coming at Christmas and His Second Coming.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent: Rose candle closest to cross, called the "Shepherd" candle for rejoicing & celebrating His coming.
4. 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent: Purple candle furthest from cross, called the "Angel" candle.
5. Christmas Eve & Day: White candle at center, called the "Christ Candle."

Note: Previously lit Advent candles are re-lit on progressive Sundays, such that all 5 candles are lit on Christmas Eve.

**ALMS BASIN BEARER** distributes & receives the Alms Basins

1. The Alms Basin Bearer distributes empty Alms Basins (sometimes called the Collection or Offering Plates) to Ushers and receives filled Basins.
2. At the beginning of The Offertory (immediately after The Peace), and as the Ushers approach the Altar Table, center aisle, the Alms Basin Bearer stands at Cross-side back edge of Chancel, bows to Altar Cross, and steps onto the Chancel.
3. The Bearer retrieves all empty Alms Basins from the Cross-side Credence Table shelf. The Bearer follows the Communion Element Receivers to the front center of Chancel. After the elements are taken from the Ushers, then the Basin Bearer distributes empty basins to the Ushers. The Bearer keeps the larger Alms Basin.
4. The Bearer then stands underneath the Altar Cross with the larger basin, which the Usher basins will be nested within, and awaits return of the Ushers with collection.
5. As the Ushers approach the Chancel with filled Alms Basins, the Bearer proceeds to the first step of the front center Chancel to accept, and nest the filled Alms Basins into the larger Alms Basin, kept by the Bearer.
6. The Bearer turns to and approaches the Altar, placing the nested basins on the front edge of the Altar (Choir-side) for blessing by the Presiding Priest.
7. After blessing, the Bearer returns to the Front Center Aisle, steps off the Chancel, bows to Altar Cross, and then returns to the assigned seat.

### **CRUET BEARER: Acolytes may serve as Cruet Bearer on rare occasions**

1. At the BREAKING OF THE BREAD” prayer, an Acolyte may be directed to follow the AC to the Chancel, bow to the Altar Cross, and step onto the Chancel and follow the AC to receive Communion behind the Altar Table.
2. The Acolyte designated as Cruet Bearer then receives the Cruet with Purificator. The Bearer steps up near the Altar and monitors the Communion Teams. The Bearer replenishes Chalices from the Cruet, as needed.
3. The Bearer returns the Cruet with Purificator to the AC at the end of Communion and steps off Chancel, bows to Cross, and returns to their seat

### **RECESSIONAL & DISMISSAL**

1. Before the beginning of the “SENDING FORTH OF EUCHARISTIC VISITORS,” the Crucifer retrieves the Processional Cross from its holder at the back side of the Chancel, Cross-side. During the DISMISSAL HYMN, the Crucifer, holding the cross high, proceeds unrushed to the foot of the Chancel (red carpeted platform) at the Center Aisle, facing the Altar, but does NOT bow. When signaled by the Celebrant or at the last verse of the Hymn, the Crucifer pivots and recesses down the Center Nave Aisle with Choir, LEVs, LEMs & Priests following. Just before exiting the Sanctuary into the Lobby, the Crucifer turns right toward Choir-side, and holds until the Dismissal Hymn is completed and then returns to the Chancel and re-inserting the Processional Cross into its holder.
2. The Torch Bearers do not process out with lit candles, but follow the AC, and just before exiting Sanctuary, proceed to the Priest Vesting Room to retrieve the Lighter/Extinguishers, and then proceed to the center foot of Chancel. Bow to the Cross, before stepping onto Chancel. Altar Candles are extinguished in reverse order as lit - First, the Choir-side outermost candle is extinguished and last the Altar’s Cross-side candle. Torch Bearers use the bell-shaped snuffer on the end of the Lighter/Extinguisher to extinguish candles. The Torch Bearer holds the bell down over the top of the candle until seeing smoke escape. Do not push the snuffer down on top of the candle as it ruins the wick. After all candles are extinguished then Torch Bearers step off the Chancel at the Center, bow to the Altar, and return to the Priest Vesting Room to re-insert the Lighter/Extingjisher into the holder. Torch Bearers can proceed to Lobby or to the downstairs Vesting Room to de-vest.

## VESTING & DeVesting

### Full LEM Vesting Procedure:

After alerting the AC of an Acolyte's arrival, the Acolyte proceeds to the Acolyte Vesting Room, vests, and return to the Lobby, at least 10 mins prior to start of service

- Vestments can be found in the Acolyte Vesting rooms, located in Sanctuary basement between the Women's and Men's restrooms.
- Use the restroom, if needed, before vesting.
- Clean hands: Wash hands thoroughly in Restroom or, if available, use sanitizer (liquid or wipes. located on the vesting room table..
- Select a suitable ALB (white plain robe in a range of sizes, and CINCTURE (white cord in short to long lengths). Tie the CINCTURE, so its knot is on your left-side. Hint: Ask another Acolyte for help or view this following Youtube recording (minutes 2:40-4:00) for a general idea: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdUGsvIirFA>
- Once vested in Alb & Cincture, the Acolyte should return to the Lobby and remain visible to the AC.
- **Note:** Vestments of various sizes are located in the Vesting Rooms. Ideally the alb would reach to the Acolyte's ankles and the cincture would reach to the shin (Photos pending).
- **Note:** The Monthly Schedule is posted in this Vesting Room and in the Lobby

### De-Vesting in the Vestment Rooms

1. Return alb & cincture to same hangar & hook and to the same area
2. Consult with AC for any concerns or observations.
3. At this point the Acolyte is released from service.

**Note: As an Acolyte please be flexible.**

## SCHEDULING

1. A typical 10:30 Sanctuary Service has 3 Acolytes
2. Availability requests are issued by the Acolyte Coordinators through email and a Google Shared document link. Availability requests are issued mid-month of the preceding month for the pending month to be scheduled.
3. Please ensure Coordinator EMAILS are accepted in incoming email, not routed to spam.
4. Typically, Acolytes are scheduled twice a month, but for a 5 Sunday month may be scheduled a 3<sup>rd</sup> time.
5. Availability requests for non-Sunday Services, such as Easter & Christmas, will occur.
6. Please respond to these availability requests as quickly as possible. If unsure sure of availability during the month, then provide specific dates that you know that you will NOT be available to serve. Not responding by the requested date will indicate you have no conflicts and you may be scheduled as needed.
7. Monthly schedules are distributed via email prior to the first Sunday of each month.
8. Schedules may also be posted. Bookmark the St. Matthew's web site link of <http://www.stmattsAustin.org/About/lem-lector-and-evening-prayer.html>
9. Updates are published as needed.
10. Weekly reminders are sent via email several days prior to the assigned service date to only those scheduled to serve on that date.
11. If you are unable to serve your assigned date, please seek your own substitute. Open the monthly Acolyte schedule assignments email, and REPLY ALL to request a substitute. Then inform the Coordinator and assigned AC for that service date with the name of the substitute. Reminder: Do not assume coverage by others.

## LITURGICAL DEFINITIONS

### Definitions and Expansion of acronyms to full form (listed alphabetically)

- AC: Altar Coordinator
- Alb: A long white sleeved garment worn by acolytes. Encircling the outside of the Alb at or above the waist is a Cincture, which is tied with a specific knot.
- Altar - "The Lord's Table," "the Holy Table," or "the Table," positioned at the Center of the Chancel where the offerings are presented, and the elements of bread and wine are consecrated.
- Altar Cross: The large wooden cross to the east (right) side of the Altar.
- AMBO: The lectern on the Chancel with a microphone and readings.
- Advent Wreath – 5 candle set, placed under Chancel Cross for Advent/Christmas
- Alms Basin: Plates used to collect and present the alms (money & checks) given by the congregation during the Collection.
- Candle lighter/snuffer (Torch) used by Torch Bearer, for lighting/extinguishing Chancel Candles; The torches and matches are located in Priest Sacristy , left side entrance.
- Chalice – silver "cup" filled with wine used by the Chalice Bearer when serving Wine to communicants. Note: the Vested or Veiled Chalice refers to the "cup" on the Chancel
- Chancel - The "red-carpeted" raised platform set apart from Nave (congregation) seating, where the Altar, Altar Cross, Ambo (lectern), Credence Tables (rear of Chancel on Cross-side, Choir-side, & Center behind Altar), and seats for Officiates.
- Chancel Rails: Low railing separating the chancel from the nave, where choir & congregation are seated.
- Ciborium, a chalice with lid, containing consecrated wafers and located in the Tabernacle.
- Cincture: (white cord) encircles the outside of the Alb at or above the waist of an Acolyte. The Cincture comes in short to long lengths and is tied with a specific knot on the Acolytes left front side.
- Colatorium – a small strainer device used to retrieve Bread/Wafers unintentionally dropped into the Chalice. The Colatorium is generally located atop a small crystal dish on the cross-side small credence table.
- Collection Plates: See Alms Basin.
- Commons: See Lobby.
- Corporal: The Linen Corporal is a small square linen placed on the Altar on top of the Fair Linen, which communion vessels are placed.
- Credence Table - The Center Credence table is behind the Altar and contains elements for Eucharist. Two smaller Credence Tables are located at the Choir-side & Cross-side back of the Chancel. The Choir side table is used to place the collected alms basin offering and the Cross side table, where the topc is used for the Piscina, Purificators, and sanitizer, and its shelf is used for empty alms basins
- Crucifer is the person appointed to carry the cross during processions at the beginning and end of the service.
- Cruet is a pitcher used for unconsecrated wine or water.
- Dual Porridge Bowl (DPB) – glass dish with a divider that separates standard wafers

from gluten free (GF) wafers used by the Bread Bearer when serving communicants. Do not touch the GF wafers.

- Fair Linen is the large cloth covering the Altar and has an embroidered cross at its center.
- Lavabo, a small silver dish on Credence Table and Lavabo towel for use when cleansing Celebrant's hands prior to Eucharist.
- LEM: Lay Eucharistic Minister is either a Lay or Ordained person who administers Communion (consecrated bread and wine) to communicants during the Eucharist.
- LEMALT: Alternate Lay Eucharistic Minister, who is on standby in case a scheduled LEM is absent.
- LEV Kits: These are "visiting" Eucharist kits. Clean kits are in Priest Sacristy. The 8am LEM prepares kits with consecrated wafers from the Ciborium and with consecrated wine after the 8am Service and places under Credence Table for 10:30 blessing.
- Lighter and Extinguisher: See Torch.
- Lobby: (Narthex or Commons) The entry space between the sanctuary building's outer doors and the inner doors into the Nave. This is where Greeters are, & Ushers distribute Service Leaflets, and where the Processional party gathers at the Baptismal Font before the Procession into the Nave to the Chancel.
- LR: Lay Reader, is a person who reads the assigned Bible passage or Intercessory Prayer, during the Service.
- Missal & Missal Stand: The Missal contains The Order of Service book used by the Priest and which is placed on the Cross-side of Altar within reach of the priest. The Stand holds the Missal in place for the priest.
- Narthex: See Lobby.
- Nave: The location of congregation & choir seating in the sanctuary, between the Chancel & Lobby.
- The Order of Service, usually for the 8:00am service, references the Rite to be used from the Book of Common Prayer and also includes the readings and Intercessory Prayers. The Service Leaflet, usually for the 10:30am service, is similar, but contains the actual prayer and creed content.
- Paten – small metal plate filled with wafers used by the Bread Bearer when serving Bread to communicants.
- Piscina – a covered, stainless sink in the Altar Guild Sacristy used to properly dispose of consecrated wine.
- Porridge Bowl – small pewter bowl filled with wafers used by the Bread Bearer when serving Bread to communicants. Note: Dual Porridge Bowl – glass dish with a divider that separates standard wafers from gluten free (GF) wafers used by the Bread Bearer when serving communicants. Do not touch the GF wafers.
- Purificator is a small cloth used by the Chalice Bearer to wipe the chalice lip.
- Service Leaflet, usually for the 10:30am service, provides the actual prayer and creed content. The Order of Service, usually for the 8:00am service, references the Rite and pages to be used from the Book of Common Prayer.
- Schedule Coordinator: Provides instructions, monthly schedules, weekly reminders to AC, Acolytes, LEM & LR. The Coordinator also trains new candidates, and incorporates them into the schedule.
- Tabernacle – a small cedar box on the Altar Guild Sacristy counter, containing consecrated elements, in particular, the Ciborium and votive candle.

- Thurible: A metal censer (vessel) in which incense is burned. It is suspended from chains, and is burned during Christmas Eve and other High Holy Days worship services.
- Thuriber: Person who wields the thurible. The Thuriber precedes the Crucifer and Torch Bearers in the procession.
- Torch: The brass Torches light and extinguish Altar Candles. These are located in Priest Sacristy with matches, to the left side entrance.
- Torch Bearer: Acolyte or LEM that carries the Torch to light/extinguish Altar Candles.
- Vestments consist of a Cassock, Surplice, and Lanyard. Cassock is a close-fitting, ankle-length black robe; Surplice is a loose-fitting, broad-sleeved white vestment, worn over the cassock; Lanyard is a cloth strap worn around the neck with a cross hanging from it. Lanyards come in different colors to match the liturgical calendar color (See Reminder for the appropriate color.)

# ADVENT WREATH, a Christmas Tradition

The following describes the Advent Wreath, including the lighting order. Acolytes are responsible for Advent Wreath lighting. Unlike other Altar candles, the Advent Wreath lighting occurs as part of the processional, not before the service. Also there is a specific candle lighting order, which is described for each week during Advent. For 2024, the 1st candle is lit on Dec 1st.

## The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath, near the Altar & Cross, is a circular garland of evergreen holding five candles, each representing an aspect of spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ at Christmas. The circular shape of the wreath represents eternity and the unending cycle of God's love. During the Advent season, one candle on the wreath is progressively lit each Sunday, so that on Christmas Eve all 5 candles are lit.

## Advent Wreath - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent “Prophecy Candle”

The “**Prophecy Candle**” (purple in color, nearest the Cross) is lit in remembrance of the prophets, primarily Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ and representing hope and anticipation of the coming Messiah: “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

## Advent Wreath - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent “Bethlehem Candle”

The **Bethlehem Candle** (purple in color, second nearest the Cross after the Prophecy Candle) is lit after the Prophecy Candle is lit, to represent love, symbolizing Christ's manger: *"This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:12)*

## Advent Wreath - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent “Shepherds Candle”

The **Shepherds Candle** (rose in color) is lit, after the Prophecy & Bethlehem Candles are lit, representing joy: *“...the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. (Luke 2:8–11)*

## Advent Wreath - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent “Angels Candle”

The **Angels Candle** (purple in color and third nearest the Cross) is lit after the Prophecy, Bethlehem & Shepherds Candles are lit, representing peace: *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (Luke 2:13–14)*

## Advent Wreath – Christmas - “Christ Candle”

The Christ Candle (center, white candle for purity) is lit, after the Prophecy, Bethlehem, Shepherds, & Angels Candles are lit, representing the life of Christ, our Savior, who has come into the world, sinless & pure. *"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." (Isaiah 1:18)*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS & TRAINING

## **WORSHIP COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT: Acolytes**

Acolytes represent the next generation of church leaders coming of age to assist the congregation's broader worship. During services, acolytes support our Priests by performing roles such as Crucifer, Torch Bearer, Gospel Book Bearer, and Alms Basin Bearer. While many of the acolyte movements have been seen by youth at every service they've attended, training and instructions give a better understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and the "why" in the processes. Additionally, there is always a Lay Eucharistic Minister Altar Coordinator present during services to assist and support. Many of the acolytes attest to preferring to serve instead of sitting in the pews, as it is both engaging and a tangible way to serve. And here's a bonus - they don't need to wear church clothes since they wear the white robes! Confirmed youth, mostly in middle or high school, and those en route to confirmation are eligible to serve as acolytes. Please contact [Doug](#) or [Don](#) with any interest or questions. *Submitted by Doug Webster and Don Neely*

## **LAYOUT**

**Layout of Altar & Seating - PENDING INSERTION**

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