

## Serving as an Acolyte at Grace Lutheran

Thank you for serving as an acolyte. Acolytes play an important role in worship. Serving as an acolyte is also a way for you to participate as a leader in worshipping God.

### **What is an Acolyte?**

The word “acolyte” has nothing to do with “lighting” something. It comes from the Greek word that means “to follow”. In the church acolytes are those who follow in a procession into the church or who help with worship.

### **Acolytes at Grace – Leaders in Worship**

As part of Confirmation you now assume a leadership role in worship by serving as an acolyte. This is an honor and demands dignity and proper conduct on your part. As an acolyte you are in front of the congregation and you need to act in a way that gives God honor and praise in worship.

### **Serving as an Acolyte – How do Dress and How to Act**

It is important that you dress and act properly while serving as an acolyte. This means:

- Dress nicely with clean clothes and shoes – No jeans or T-shirts for boys. No sweat shirts or anything with writing or designs on them. Girls should wear nice pants or a skirt that is not too short
- Don't show up with wet or messy hair
- Don't chew gum
- Put the cell phone away during worship
- Participate in the entire service. Remember that people will be watching you during the service
- If you are sitting with friends do not talk with them during the service

### **The Acolyting Tutorial on the Grace Website**

We have an illustrated training slide show on our [Grace website](#) to give you a refresher on your duties as an acolyte. It is a good thing to watch this each time before you serve as an acolyte. The pastors will not have time to tell you all you are to do just before the service so make sure you watch the slide show.

## Getting Ready for the Service

Here is what you need to do before the worship service starts. It is important that you do all of these things!

- ***Be here at least 15 minutes before the service begins***
- If you are acolyting at the 8:00 a.m. service put on the robe and tie the cincture (rope) around your waist
- If you are acolyting at 10:30 you do not need to wear a robe, but you need to make sure you are dressed appropriately
- Check the candle lighter to make sure it has a wick that is working properly. If it isn't, let one of the pastors know right away
- You may sit with your family during the service in one of the first rows by the choir area
- Go into the worship center to make sure the offering plates are there
- If it is a communion service that is using individual cups make sure the large silver trays are on the table up by the altar
- If you are taking sermon or worship notes make sure you put the sheet in your seat before the service begins

## Lighting the Candles

Here are the things you need to know about the candles.

- You are to enter the worship center to light the altar candles during the opening song or hymn
- Use the candle lighter with the gold bell
- The ushers will light your candle lighter for you
- Walk down the center aisle and around the back of the altar table. Light the candle on your left first and then the candle on your right
- Extinguish the candle lighter by sliding the wick in and then push it back out so that the wax doesn't harden and the wick gets stuck
- Place the lighter in the stand between the communion table and the window ledge

## Extinguishing the Candles

This is done during the closing song of the worship service.

- One of the pastors will give you a nod as they start to leave during the final song. Pay attention for this because it is your cue to extinguish the candles
- Get your lighter and walk behind the altar table
- Put out the candle on your right first and then the candle on your left (*the reverse order of lighting them*)
- Walk out of the worship center on the aisle to your right, then go back to the robing sacristy, put the lighter away and hang up your robe

## Helping with Holy Communion

Acolytes help with Holy Communion when we use the small cups. *If communion is by intinction, where the people dip the wafers into the cup, you do not need to help with it.*

- After the introduction to the sacrament the pastor will ask the communion assistants and acolytes to please come forward
- Get your cup and step up on the altar area to receive Communion
- After you have communed go get a silver tray from the small table (*It's called the credence table*). Follow about three people behind the communion assistant who is pouring the wine picking up the glasses from the people
- Hold your tray low enough so that people can put their glasses in it
- Make sure you have enough empty spots in your tray for all the people on your side. If you don't have enough spots, put your filled tray inside the door of the credence table and take a new tray

## The Offering

If you are acolyting by yourself on a non-communion Sunday you will hand out the trays. If it is a Communion service the first acolyte listed in the announcements handout sheet will light the candles and the second acolyte listed will hand out the offering plates.

- After the passing of the peace the pastor will ask the congregation to be seated for the offering. This is your cue to get the plates
- The plates may be on the credence table or on the altar table. Make sure you know where they are
- Pick them up and walk to the front of the altar area. The ushers will come down to get the plates
- ***Do not hand the plates to the ushers one at a time. Just hold them out and let the ushers take them from you.***
- You may then be seated. You do not need to collect the plates from the ushers

## Advent and Christmas Candles

On some occasions the acolyte may be asked to light the Advent and Christmas candles. One of the pastors will let you know what to do.

## Your Responsibility to Be Here – **IMPORTANT!**

You will be assigned dates and service times to serve as an acolyte. We try to assign these according to the service time when your family normally worships.

The acolyte schedule is published each week in the weekly "Grace Notes" email and it is also in the church newsletter "The Good News". Both of these are available on the church website.

You will also receive a postcard and an email two weeks in advance of the date you are scheduled to acolyte reminding you.

If you cannot be here on the date when you are scheduled to acolyte is it your responsibility to find another confirmation student to take your place. You are to then call the church office (377-4770) by Wednesday of that week to let the office staff know about the switch.

Should you get sick the day you are to acolyte please call the church and leave a message about this.

***It is very important that you do this. When acolytes don't show up it means that the pastors have to try and find someone at the last minute and they often don't have time to do this just before the service begins.***