

Crucifer Guidelines

LITURGY is "the work of the people." Worship on the weekend prepares us for our "liturgy" during the week in job, home, and all interactions with others. Good worship draws on the gifts of all the assembled people, and as Crucifers, your gift helps to equip the people to go out and do "liturgy."

Guidelines (These are *guidelines* only, and are meant to assist you in defining your own degree of comfort and style.)

Preparation

1. Be at church 15 minutes before the service begins. You are the leader of the procession. The acolytes will look to you for guidance and instruction. Therefore, it is your responsibility to check with the pastors and find out if there are any special instructions for the day for the crucifer or the acolytes (anointing, baptism, lighting Christ Candle or Advent wreath, change in procession, etc.).
2. Bring the cross to the back of the church. Make certain that the acolytes have brought the torches to the back of the church.
3. Put a worship bulletin on the front pew before the service begins, as you will not be able to carry it in with you.

Beginning of Service

4. Gather in the narthex (choir room if no procession) with other worship leaders for prayer right before worship. Then, go to the back of the church to wait for the procession.
5. During the prelude, have someone help you light the torches so that they are ready for the procession when the acolytes come back from lighting the candles.

Procession

7. The crucifer will lead the procession with the torchbearers following behind forming a "triangle". Behind the crucifer and the acolytes will follow, in order- the choir, the assisting minister, preaching minister and presiding minister.

If there is a banner bearer (typically only during festival services), the banner bearer will be between the torch bearers and the choir.

8. You may rest the cross on the floor during the musical introduction of the entrance hymn. The procession begins when the congregations starts singing.
9. The crucifer and torchbearers turn and face the congregation in front of the front altar (crucifer on step higher than acolytes – form a "triangle") until all in the procession have passed.

If the communion rails are closed, the crucifer and torchbearers will stand in front of the communion rail until the procession has passed. The crucifer will place the cross in its floor stand while the acolytes place the torches in their floor stands. Then the crucifer and acolytes will reverence the altar. The crucifer should be in the center as you reverence the altar, but don't make a commotion to

achieve it – the key is a smooth flow of movement. After reverencing the altar, the crucifer and acolytes will sit down on the front pew.

During Service

10. **Gospel Procession.** At the “*Alleluia Verse,*” the crucifer (carries Bible) and torchbearers lead the procession down the center aisle. The torchbearers face each other on either side of the crucifer during the reading of the Gospel. After the reading, the procession returns - crucifer, torchbearers, pastor. Replace the book and torches and sit down. There is no need to reverence the altar.
11. **Communion.** At the “*Lamb of God,*” go to the altar to distribute the grape juice.
12. After congregation communes, the crucifer and acolytes receive communion with other worship leaders.

NOTE ABOUT DISTRIBUTING THE GRAPE JUICE:

Although the purificator (napkin) is not intended to keep the chalice sterile, it is adequate in providing a clean surface for each communicant who chooses to drink wine from the chalice. To wipe the chalice completely without displaying the “lipstick stains” to the congregants, put the purificator over your index finger and hold it between your other fingers, which will enable you to wipe both the inside and outside of the chalice at the same time. Rotate the chalice after each person drinks. Shifting the position of the purificator periodically will allow for using the cleanest portion of cloth.

When communicants partake of the meal by intinction (dipping the bread in the wine), it is sometimes unavoidable that pieces of the communion bread remain in the chalice. Use the small spoon to remove the bread from the chalice and place the pieces in the bowl.

End of Service

12. The crucifer will determine when it is time to begin the recessional. The goal is to allow enough time for everyone to reach the back of the church by the conclusion of the recessional song. The point at which you need to begin will depend on the length of the song and the number of people in the procession. When you think it is time, indicate to the acolytes, reverence the front altar, then exit with the cross and torches (form a “triangle”).
13. Before beginning down the aisle, pause for a few seconds to insure that all are in place (crucifer, torchbearers, banner bearers, choir, assisting minister, ministers), then recess.
14. Turn at the baptismal font and face the congregation, crucifer behind font, acolytes on either side.

After Service

15. Return the cross to its stand and assist acolytes as needed.

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