

## Acolyte Customary

For any service, arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled service and robe immediately, including gloves. Check in with either the acolyte warden or the vergier for any last minute instructions.

If you are the crucifer, carry the processional cross out the doors by the sacristy and over to the liturgical doors.

9 o'clock service procession (line up is for both processions, at the start of the service and at the end of the service):

Crucifer  
(Torchbearers)  
Choir  
Banners  
LEM's  
Someone carrying Gospel Book  
Celebrant  
(Bishop Chaplain)  
(Bishop)

A "routine" Sunday service will not have all the members listed above but the order stays the same. If you are working alone, ask the acolyte warden or vergier to assign someone to carry the Gospel Book.

The priest or the vergier will signal the crucifer when to start the procession. Lift the cross high and walk up to the altar. Pause slightly at the altar, turn slowly to your right and lead the choir to their seats. Place the cross in the holder and remain standing until the reading of the lessons. Participate in the service.

On "routine" Sundays, at the 9am service, after the psalm, there will be a Gospel procession during the singing of the sequence hymn. Pick up the processional cross, and proceed to stand beside the lectern so you can see the deacon. The deacon or vergier will nod to you when to start. Lift the cross high and walk to the center aisle. Turn right and pause, acknowledging the altar. Turn around and proceed out the center aisle for 4 pews. Stop and turn so you are facing the altar. Rest the cross on the floor while the Gospel is read. When the hymn starts again, either follow everyone else, acknowledging the altar with a pause, or if they step to the side, lead them back to their seats.

After replacing the cross in it's holder, sit down for the sermon. Stand up for the Creed and Prayers of the People. Join in the Peace. Be seated for announcements, birthday prayers, wedding anniversary blessings. The celebrant will say something like: Remember it is more blessed to give than to receive.

If there are two acolytes, the youngest starts the offering plates. Stay in the center, in front of the altar, until the oblationers bring up the elements, the bread and the two cruets. The youngest acolyte should stand on the left and receive the bread. The older acolyte should be on the right and take both cruets. If the oblationers line up the other way, just receive whatever is in front of you. A slight bow to the oblationers is their sign to return to their seats. Take the elements to the deacon, on the side of the altar closest to the organ. They usually take the bread and the sheet of paper with the head count on it first. Then they usually take the wine and the water, do the preparations and usually hand the water back to you.

The oldest acolyte will take the water to the credence table, place the towel over your wrist, and pick up the lavabo bowl.

Pour a small amount of water on the celebrants fingertips. They will remove the towel to dry and then place it back on your wrist. Their nod to you will be your sign you can put everything down. Remain standing behind the altar until you receive communion. Then you can return to your seating area.

Again, if there are two acolytes, the youngest will be watchful of the ushers and the offering plates and the celebrant. Be ready to retrieve the offering plates from the ushers. After the celebrant has acknowledged them, return the offerings plates to their original spot, and remain standing behind the altar with the other acolyte until you receive communion with the altar party. Then you can return to your seating area.

At the 9 o'clock service, on a "routine" Sunday, there is a procession out of the church that should be exactly like the one into the church. As soon as the final hymn starts, the crucifer should pick up the processional cross and carry it to the end of the second choir pew (the one the women sit in). They will start towards you. If the celebrant or vergier signals you with a nod to go sooner, start toward the center aisle, slowly. Acknowledge the altar, turn, and lead the procession out the center doors.

Bring the processional cross over to the sacristy doors. Return the cross to its holder and you are done. Hang up your robe carefully, return gloves to their basket, and thank you for serving.

At the 11:15am service, the procession in and out of the church is much simpler. Still, walk slowly and hold the cross high. Acknowledge the altar with a slight pause, both entering and exiting the church. There is no Gospel procession. Altar service is the same as noted above.

The vergers will be available to help you with any questions before, during, or after the service. If you are acolyting alone, the verger may step forward to help you move the elements to the altar, but the acolyte would still do the offering plates. The verger will try to anticipate anything unusual in the service prior to the start of the service and will talk to you about it. Feel free to ask questions of the verger, and/or ask them to actually walk you through any changes before the service starts. The verger is there to increase everyone's comfort level in knowing and anticipating what needs to be done to have a meaningful worship service for everyone.

Thank you for being an acolyte. You are a significant part of the worship of the Episcopal Church and we hope it is important to you.