

ALTAR CARE

The work of the Altar Care members is more than housekeeping. The Altar Care members assist in the important task of creating and maintaining a space for worship by the congregation. Preaching, liturgy, the offering, administering the Sacraments – each of these serves to communicate the message of the Gospel and provides a way for the worshipper to respond to it. The communication is two-way: from God to worshipper and from worshipper to God.

Membership in Altar Care should be regarded with a deep sense of responsibility, humility and gratitude. The spirit of Altar Care service includes loyalty, faithfulness and graciousness. It is a service to God.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ALTAR CARE MEMBERS

1. Prepare the Sanctuary for public worship
2. Care for the Altar and other appointments in the Sanctuary
3. Supervise cleaning of the chancel
4. Keep the appropriate altar paraments and gowns in repair and readiness
5. Occasionally assist the pastors as requested
6. Altar Care is a self-directing ministry under the guidance of the pastors

MEMBERSHIP

1. 24 members each year – 12 teams of 2 members
2. Each team serves for one month each year
3. Recruitment for the next year's servers occurs in November
4. Occasions may arise when volunteers may be needed to assist the team scheduled
5. It is the responsibility of the member to find a substitute if needed. Sundays may be swapped with another team member or you may contact someone from the substitute list.

CONTACT JACKIE CUNNINGHAM, ALTAR CARE LEAD POSITION WITH QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS AT 320-212-2689.

MONTHLY SERVICE DUTIES

1. **SACRISTY SUPPLIES:** Check to make sure that all communion and baptism supplies are sufficient. Order new supplies when the numbers fall below recommended levels.

- A. **Baptism**

- a. 5-10 towels Ask Office to order
- b. 5 medallions. Call Ron Nordby 235-0083
- c. 5-10 Baptismal Candles. Ask Office to order

- B. **Communion**

- a. Wine: 1-2 cases. Ask Office to order
- b. Grape juice: 1 case. Ask Office to order
- c. Bread in freezer: 2-5 bags. Call Betty Underthun 235-3797
- d. Wafers: 1-2 boxes. Ask Office to Order
- e. Gluten Free Wafers: ½ to 1 box. Ask Office to order
- f. Communion cups: 1-2 cases. Ask Office to order
- g. Prayer Cards and Visitor cards: 500 . Ask Office to order
- h. Short pencils: 1-2 boxes. Ask Office to order

2. **PARAMENTS**

- A. Paraments should be changed according to the Liturgical Calendar which is posted in the sacristy.
- B. White paraments include two Pulpit Cloths
- C. Rungs on the pulpit are marked for hanging cloths
- D. Drape cross in black cloth on Ash Wednesday thru Good Friday
- E. Drape cross in White cloth for Easter season. Remove white cloth for Pentecost Sunday
- F. Paraments are located in the Sacristy
- G. Currently the custodian is changing the paraments, but please be available to help if needed

3. **DUSTING – WEEKLY**

- A. Sanctuary: Altar, communion rails, front pews, usher's cabinet. Do not use furniture polish on the Grand Piano.
- B. Keep the Sacristy dusted and clean
- C. Choir Loft: Piano, organ, railings, etc. Do not use furniture polish on organ or piano benches.
- D. Sound Booth

4. **CANDLE HOLDERS, CANDLES AND CANDLE LIGHTERS**

- A. When being used, keep the Brass candle holders clean, use brass cleaner when necessary

- B. Check the wicks on the Candle lighters and replace when needed. They are stored in the Sacristy hallway closet
- C. Supplies are located in the Sacristy closet.

5. HYMN BOOKS AND BIBLES

- A. Remove extra papers from the hymn books
- B. Straighten each week. Books are placed lengthwise into the holder, with the bottom of the book remaining visible. Alternate ELW hymnals and Bibles.
- C. Be sure each pew has sufficient hymnals and Bibles.

6. ACOLYTE AND COMMUNION SERVER GOWNS

- A. Stored in the Sacristy Closet
- B. Steam if needed
- C. Take to Nelsen's Cleaners when needed for cleaning

7. PRAYER REQUEST CARDS AND VISITOR CARDS

- A. Both of these are placed in the pews. Make sure there are adequate supplies
- B. Make sure there are adequate pencils in each pew. They should be placed with the point end up. If pencils need to be sharpened, sharpen them in the Sacristy
- C. Request more cards from the office when supplies run low.

8. GENERAL CLEANING

- A. Sweep and generally straighten Sacristy each Sunday
- B. Take towels and dish cloths to the kitchen for laundering. Bring back supplies of towels and dish cloths for the following Sunday.

COMMUNION SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Two Altar Care members are responsible for assisting with Holy Communion. You will assist the Communion Servers by having the Communion vessels clean and ready for use. You may be needed to assist with refilling the glasses if there are a large number of communicants and it's necessary to refill glasses. Glasses are filled 2/3 full of wine. The trays with handles should be stored with glasses in, as they are always placed on top of the handle-less trays and used first. Plastic glasses are used. The five silver trays that have a hole in the center are left empty and used as pickup trays as they do not stack well with the others. If there is a very large group for communion you may need to use these for filled glasses.
- B. The Communion elements – the bread and wine – are taken care of by the Communion servers. They will fill the glasses and put the bread on the paten. However, it is the responsibility of the Altar Care members to make sure there are sufficient supplies in the Sacristy for their use. There is a supply of bread in the freezer in the kitchen and the other supplies are either in the sacristy or in the storage cabinets outside of the pastors' offices.
- C. Be in the Sacristy during the communion service. You may need to help fill glasses and patens if supply runs low.
- D. Work very quietly.
- E. Close the door to the sanctuary after communion is served.
- F. Following the 2nd service, wash and sterilize all equipment used in service. The plastic glasses do not need to be rinsed or counted. They just go into the recycling waste basket. The wine from the chalice and any partially full glasses should be emptied into a glass and poured on the ground outside of the church. Any full glasses may be poured back into the bottle of wine. Discard the white grape juice.
- G. Remove the rings from the trays when washing. Communion trays with the hole in the center should be left empty. Clean trays should be filled with clean empty glasses in preparation for the next Sunday's communion service.
- H. When the silver appointments are used, they should be kept clean and polished using silver polish and a soft cloth. The trays and patens are stored in protective covers in the sacristy cabinets after washing and drying. Do not put the patens or any other silver elements in bleach water. Remove the inserts from communion trays when washing as wine may have spilled inside them. Also be sure holders in the trays with handles are wiped dry or they will stick during serving.

BAPTISM SERVICE

Baptisms are scheduled with the Pastors and the schedule is shared with the staff and office secretaries.

The Baptismal towels should be re-ordered when there are 5 remaining. The office takes care of this.

Baptismal candles are stored in the Sacristy cupboards. The Altar Care should notify the office when there are 5 or less.

The Baptismal medallions are provided by Ron Nordby. There is a box of them in the cupboard in the Sacristy. When there are 5 or less, an Altar Care member should call him to replenish.

The Altar Care team should check with the church office each week to see if there is a baptism.

THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE SERVICE

Prior to the Service of Baptism, the altar care team fills the Ewer (silver pitcher) with very hot water. The water cools rapidly in the font.

The Baptismal towel is placed on the table at the font to the pastor's right in front of the Ewer. The towel can be found in the office or in the sacristy Sunday morning. The wood Baptismal carving is placed on the blanket.

The Baptismal Candle is taken out of the box and placed on the brass lip of the Christ candle.

After the Service of Baptism, the water is sponged out of the font into a plastic basin and poured on plants or on the ground outside of the church.

Check with the church office each week prior to Friday at 1:00 p.m. to learn if there is a baptism scheduled.

LENTEN/HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Ash Wednesday: Holy Communion Services are at noon and in the evening

Maundy Thursday: Holy Communion Services are at 2:00PM and in the evening. 4 members will be needed if the Pastors wish for the Altar Care members to strip the altar at the conclusion of the service. If this is the case, members should wear black robes.

Good Friday: Black Paraments may be placed on the chancel furniture and if that's the case, they should be pressed/steamed prior to Maundy Thursday. Check with the pastors to see if this is something they wish for you to do and follow their direction.

Easter Sunday: Additional stations for communion may be needed so verify with the Pastors and prepare the necessary Chalices and Patens per their direction. If communion service is not by intinction, an additional sacristy may be set up in the small kitchen. This will allow the elements to be readily available for the stations at the back of the sanctuary. Two small tables with tablecloths should be placed in the back of the sanctuary.

Easter Sunday Paraments: White Paraments should be placed on the altar. Again, please consult with the Pastors for their preferences.

A Final Word: This guide is meant to be just guidelines. You will be instructed by the Pastors of any additional duties.