

## Words to Know

**Acolyte:** “one who helps” - acolyte brings the symbolic light of Christ into worship.

**Altar:** Table at the front of the church that holds the communion elements, candles, and cross.

**Candle Lighter:** Used to light candles and consists of a wick to light candles and bell for snuffing out the flame.

**Candles:** Signify the presence of Christ among the people. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” and God created light.

**Chancel:** Elevated area in the sanctuary where Pastor leads worship and altar is.

**Communion:** Also called Eucharist which means “thanksgiving” or The Lord’s Supper.

**Narthex:** Is the gathering or entrance area just outside the sanctuary. This is where the mailboxes and candle lighters are found.

**Nave:** Is the section of the sanctuary where the church sits.

**Paschal Candle:** A large white candle symbolizing the risen Christ lit during Easter and when there is a Baptism or a funeral. It is also called the Easter candle.

**Prelude:** Music played before worship service begins at which time acolytes light the candles.

**Postlude:** Music played at end of worship service.

**Reverence:** Bowing before the cross and saying a short prayer or momentarily pausing giving respect to the cross of Christ.

**Sacristy:** Room just off the chancel containing supplies used in worship.



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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## Bethany Lutheran Church

# Acolyte Training Guide



## What is an acolyte?

Welcome! As an acolyte you will perform a very special role as the people of God at Bethany Lutheran gather together to worship God.

The term acolyte is from a Greek word and means to follow or to serve. As an acolyte you will be serving the congregation in worship and glorifying God.

Acolytes at Bethany are ministers of Christ's light



as they bring forth the flame that will light the altar candles, which are a visual reminder of Christ as the light of the world.

Additionally, you are assisting ministers during the sacrament of Holy Communion and throughout the

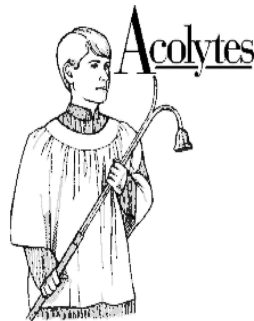
service in various other capacities as needed.

Thus, you have a very important role and we are thankful for your service as an acolyte here at Bethany Lutheran Church.



## Before the Service

1. Try to arrive 10-15 minutes before worship.
2. Go to the small fellowship hall, put on a black robe & stole that matches the color of the day. Ask an usher, pastor or look at the color of the paraments (cloths) on the altar in the sanctuary if unsure.
3. Go up stairs, grab a candle lighter near the mailboxes, & check to make sure there is wick in the candle lighter. If not, tapers are found above the mailboxes. Ask an usher to help if needed.



4. About 5 minutes before worship carefully light the wick on your candle lighters with the lighter found on the ledge below the stained glass windows. Your wick should be out far enough so it will light but not too far that it creates a hazard.
5. As the organist begins playing proceed to the center aisle, face the front of the church, & stand side-by-side with the other acolyte. Hold the candle lighter in front of you tipped slightly forward with the flame pointing ahead & bell pointing down. Slowly walk down the aisle, up the steps and stop when at the railing just in front of the altar.
6. Reverence the altar bending at the waist forward, giving pause, to honor the cross and altar. Walk around the railing with an acolyte on each side.
7. On non-communion Sunday's light only the candelabras found on the highest shelf of the altar. Begin with the candle closest to the cross & work your way toward the outside. Keep an eye on the other acolyte and stay in unison as you light the candles. If you finish ahead of the other acolyte patiently wait for him/her. **Note:** On communion

Sunday's you will light the 2 single candles on the lower altar first. Then move up & light the candelabras as you would on a non-communion Sunday.

8. Extinguish the candle lighters, walk back around the rail, bow before the altar, walk down the steps & place your candle lighter under the front pew on the pulpit side (where pastor preaches). Take a seat & prepare for worship.
9. On some Sunday's we also use the tall candle called the Paschal Candle. Pastor will alert you to those Sunday's you need to light this. This candle is always lighted first and extinguished last.



## During the Service

1. Participate & remember you're a leader in worship.
2. On communion Sunday's acolytes also serve as assistants. After the invitation by the pastor to communion one acolyte will come up, grab the basket in the sacristy (room next to where pastor sits) and wait for pastor to direct you to where to stand. Half way through communion switch places with the other acolyte.
3. At the beginning of the sending hymn grab your lighters, walk up & bow before the altar, go around & extinguish the candles. Hold the bell of the lighter over the candle so it smothers the flame but do not press the bell down on the candle.
4. Put the candles out in the opposite order they were lit. Prior to extinguishing the last candle relight the wick on your candle lighter.
5. Reverence the altar, turn and walk down the aisle. At the back you can extinguish your candles and wait for the service to conclude. Then put away your candle lighters and robes.