

Acolytes

What is an Acolyte?

An Acolyte is a person who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and who, in service to Christ, helps the pastor in the worship service. The word acolyte is taken from the Greek word *akolouthos* which means follower, companion, attendant or helper.

Acolytes have been part of church services since ancient times. In fact, there are records showing acolytes helping in Roman churches as early as 251 A.D. It is your role to show the joy and reverence of worship and to give glory and praise to God.

What is an acolyte for?

- To represent the presence of God in the sanctuary;
- To carry the light of Jesus Christ into and out of the sanctuary;
- To remind people by the lighted candles that God is always with us, both in worship and when we leave the church building;
- To Assist with the Offering;

Some basic Guidelines:

- Look neat; wear clean clothes and shoes; do not chew gum.
- Acolytes should wear the cotta during the months when the choir and the pastor wear their robes. During the summer the cotta is optional. The cotta is not required for adult acolytes.
- Relax and smile. Your role as an acolyte is a very important part of the worship service.
- Participate in the worship service. Be attentive. Say the creed and sing the hymns and responses.
- Move naturally and directly from one place to another. Don't rush.
- When mistakes happen (and they will), don't panic. Just do it again. People will sympathize with you.
- If you don't know what to do, look to the pastor or the acolyte director for help.
- Remember God loves you just the way you are!!!

What Does An Acolyte Do?

Get Ready

- By **10:50 am** at the latest, go to the Acolyte area and get your Candlelighter and cotta.
- Check the Candlelighter to make sure there is enough taper (wick).
- Go to the narthex and let the pastor know you are ready.

Light the candles

- At the pastor's signal walk up the center aisle. Hold the Candlelighter with the flame pointing ahead of you and the bell (the part you use to snuff the candle) pointing back towards you. As you reach the end of the pews, enter the area containing the Lord's table from the right.

- Light the candle on the right first, then the candle on the left. Step between the communion rail and the Lord's table to light the candle on the left. YES, you will turn your back on the congregation when you do this and that is just fine, even if it feels awkward.
- Go back to the first pew to sit. Extinguish the flame as you go by drawing down the taper. After checking that the flame is out, extend the taper again just a little bit, this will avoid wax building up in the Candlelighter. Place the Candlelighter on the floor under the pew.

Assist with the offering

- When the liturgist calls the ushers for the offering, you will assist.
- Join the ushers outside the alter rail when the liturgist calls for the offering. **STAND ON THE RIGHT SIDE.**
- When the liturgist says "Amen" at the end of the offertory Prayer, take one of the Offering Plates, go to your right to the first step of the choir, hand it to a choir member and wait until it is returned.
- Once the offering has been collected from the choir, have a seat on the first choir bench until the Doxology begins.
- When the Doxology ("Praise God from whom all blessings flow . . .") begins go to the front of the Communion Table, **BETWEEN THE RAIL AND THE TABLE** if possible, turn to receive the offering Plates from the ushers, stack them and offer them to the cross then place them on the Communion Table.
- Remain facing the cross until the Doxology is finished.
- When the Doxology is finished, go back to your seat in the first pew.

Extinguish the Candles

- During the last verse of the final hymn, move forward to the Lord's Table and extinguish the candles.
- Extinguish first the one on the left and then, first lighting your Candlelighter from the one on the right, extinguish the one on the right.
- Walk around the rail to the front with the pastor.
- Walk forward toward the narthex, carrying Christ's light back into the world.
- Pause at the door while the pastor says the final benediction, and after she says "AMEN", go through the doors into the narthex. Go to the Acolyte Area to return the Candlelighter and cotta.
- Remember to extinguish the flame and then extended the taper so the wax doesn't build up.

What if I know I can't be there on the Sunday I'm scheduled?

If you know ahead of time, please arrange to switch your date with one of the other acolytes. Then email the change to the acolyte director Mrs. Jennifer Wisniewski at lawmomathome@bellsouth.net and to the church secretary, Diane Gilbert, at diane@pgchurch.org .

Thanks for serving God in worship!