

Assisting Minister Guidelines

The priesthood of all believers, as taught in the New Testament (1 Peter 2:5), was vigorously stressed during the Reformation, and still is today. Lutherans recognize that Holy Baptism is an ordination rite of all people of God. This baptismal incorporation into Christ's priesthood gives each Christian the priestly privilege of offering holy worship to God and also gives the priestly appointment of witnessing to Christ in our everyday calling. Each Christian has this calling assured to us in our Baptism.

Every Lord's Day, this priestly family of God in Baptism is called together by the Holy Spirit for worship. Assembling about the family Table to share the family Meal, the Christian followers gather to offer priestly sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God through the church's high priest, Jesus Christ. Each follower comes to receive the nourishment of Word and Sacrament, those indispensable gifts of grace which equip and motivate each Christian to do ministry of being prophet, priest, and servant in the world.

In our liturgy, we wish to express through the use of many persons other than the pastor, who generally serves as the Presiding Minister, the reality that the worship of God is joy and is the opportunity of all of God's people. Therefore, we choose to have lay persons in leadership roles in various portions of our worship service.

The Assisting Minister is to serve and lead the congregation in worship through caring to the details of the worship celebration, the preparing and serving of Holy Communion, the giving of blessing to those not communing, praying the communion prayers, and sharing of information about the parish life.

Before service:

1. You will receive the prayers, along with a reminder of your scheduled service, via email a few days before your scheduled to serve. If you cannot serve, please find a substitute and inform the church office before Friday at noon.
2. On Sunday arrive at the sacristy 15-20 minutes before the service.
3. Retrieve the Assisting ministers microphone before preparing to vest.
 - a. No, your voice isn't loud enough to go without a microphone. All assisting ministers should use a microphone.

4. Vest in an “alb” that reaches to the ankles (or very near). The “albs” are found in the large closet in the sacristy. You will also need a cross necklace.
5. Once you have vested, familiarize yourself with the operation of the microphone, you will need to turn your mic on before you speak or intone the liturgy and off when you are finished and ensure your mic is off during the singing of the hymns.
6. Ensure you have the correct bulletin, a worship hymnal, and a copy of the prayer petitions (which should be on the counter as you enter the sacristy.)
7. Ask the Presiding Pastor if there are additional prayer requests/needs that need to be included at the time of the prayers.
8. Discuss with the Presiding Pastor any details of the service that might be out of the ordinary.
9. Assist the acolytes with their robes and their preparations for the service.
10. Gather with other leaders of the service in the sacristy for opening prayer.
11. Move to the baptismal font for the start of worship.

Procession, Liturgy of the Word, and Prayers:

1. When the procession begins, usually with the entrance hymn, walk to the right of the Presiding Pastor. If there is an associate or liturgist, walk in front of them. Proceed to the center of the chancel area and pause for a moment of reverence facing the altar. Sit in the chair to the right of the altar by the handbell tables.
2. The Assisting Minister normally intones the Kyrie and the opening line of the Hymn of Praise from the altar, depending on which setting of the liturgy we are using. If you do not desire or are not trained to do so, please inform the Pastor and he/she will lead this part of the service.
3. You will lead the congregation in the designated creed of the day by asking them to join you in the words of the Creed. This part of the service will be done after you move to the end of the railing closest to the congregation, outside the altar area.
4. Following the creed, move to the altar (preferably on the choir side) and join the Presiding Pastor in the Prayers of Intercession.
 - a. Moments of silence are acceptable as you determine the best way to deliver each prayer and to let the congregation reflect on that prayer.
 - b. At the appropriate place in the prayers, invite the congregation to join in by saying something like: “And now, let us lift up our individual prayers, spoken aloud or silently in our hearts.”

Offering and Liturgy of Holy Communion:

1. During the passing of the peace, and subsequent song, set the table for Holy Communion. Bring the tray with grape juice, the gluten-free wafers, and the 2nd chalice from the credence table to the altar after setting the table. Wait at the altar until the musical offering is completed.
2. When the offering plate and bread and wine are brought forward by the ushers, you and the designated acolyte move forward to the center edge of the chancel to receive the offerings. You will receive the bread and wine on your right side of the chancel with the acolyte receiving the offering plate on your left side. Returning to the table, give the bread to the Presiding Pastor and holding the pitcher of wine, lead the congregation in the Offering Prayer (usually included in the bulletin). Following the prayer, give the pitcher of wine to the Presiding Pastor and prepare to turn the pages of the hymnal for the Pastor (standing to their right).
3. Following the Lord's Prayer, the Presiding Pastor serves the Assisting Minister and other communion servers. Hand the empty cup to one of the acolytes. The Presiding Pastor will commune after the congregation has been served.
4. The Assisting Minister serves the bread on one side of the altar, saying, "The Body of Christ, given for you." If there are people (usually children) coming to the altar for a blessing, place your hand on their forehead, make the sign of the cross (in memory of their baptism), and offer a brief blessing.
5. When all have been communed, place the chalice, paten of bread, grape juice, and wine pitcher on the credence table. The Presiding Pastor will then give the blessing and a post communion canticle will be sung. Reset the table during the singing of the canticle.
6. After the canticle, lead the congregation in the post communion prayer.

End of Service:

1. During the closing hymn, follow the acolytes and walk out the center aisle while singing the last verse. Give the dismissal from the rear of the church as printed in the bulletin. Greet members and visitors as they leave the sanctuary.
2. Remove your alb in the sacristy, zip up the front zipper, and hang it in the closet. Return your microphone to the bottom shelf of the cabinet, kindly thank the acolytes for their service and help them hang up their albs.

Thank you for your willingness to serve our community of faith as an Assisting Minister.