

Guide for Servers

November 2023

Before the service

- Arrive about 30 minutes before the service, so you can prepare everything without time pressure.
- Put on alb (white robe) before lighting candles (or earlier, if you wish). Dress simply beneath the alb, preferably with dark trousers/pants/skirt and shoes.
- Apply hand disinfectant.

Prepare credence table (cover with a cloth from the drawer)

- glass cruet filled with water
- carafe of wine with stopper (make sure these are not sticky from last use)
- second chalice covered with purificator and pall
- ciborium (cup for communion wafers with lid): if unsure about the number of wafers, ask the president. (On an ordinary Sunday - 60 wafers)
- small ciborium with gluten-free wafers: five for a regular service
- square box with extra wafers, filled up
- hand disinfectant
- brass collection plate (placed nearby, where convenient)

Set up altar

- In the vestry prepare the main chalice as per instruction (drawing in cupboard door).
- Once you have set up the chalice according to the drawing, you need to add the veil (floppy decorated cloth) and burse (stiff coloured square board) both in the appropriate liturgical colour for the time of year.
- If unsure, check the liturgical colour with the president.
- Check corporal (white cloth) inside the burse (envelope of stiff board) for any spots; if necessary take a fresh one.
- The veil goes on top first, and finally the burse with the corporal (white cloth) inside.
- Place chalice as prepared on the altar.

Light candles

- Trim wicks if necessary (see "How to care for candles"([candles](#))).

Get ready

- Join the president and any other ministers for prayer in the vestry.
- Take the cross to the porch and wait for the beginning of the service.

During the Service

Procession and Preparation

Wait in the porch until the first hymn has been announced and the congregation has started to sing (check quickly with the president for confirmation). Process slowly with the cross towards the sanctuary. Line up before the step between the president and any other minister to reverence the altar. Bow only with your head, not with the cross. Continue into the sanctuary, place the cross into its stand and go to your seat beside the credence table. (Note that the cross always leads any procession in the sanctuary.) Stand or sit along with the congregation throughout most of the service.

During the service

Should you be scheduled to read or lead intercessions, bow to the altar as you move to the lectern and when you return to your seat.

After the sermon, stand and turn to face the cross to say the Creed. Sit for the intercessions; stand for the Peace.

Depending on the president (Helen, David, or a guest priest), you may leave the sanctuary and share the Peace with the front rows; then return to the sanctuary with the priest. Put the middle kneeling cushion into place after the ministers have returned to the sanctuary, then return to your place. Or, depending on the president, begin the actual serving as follows.

Preparing for communion

The sidesperson should communicate the number of people expected to take communion (preferably during the Peace); inform the president accordingly.

First offer the hand disinfectant to the president and any other ministers present.

After the president has prepared the altar, hand him/her from the credence table

- wafers (ciborium), gluten-free wafers, and if needed, the box with the extra wafers
- the second chalice, the wine and the water (or they may hold out the chalices for you to pour)
- wine and water are then returned to the credence table.

Use collection plate to receive collection as it is brought to the front at some convenient moment, before the Eucharistic Prayer begins. (Never interrupt the

Eucharistic Prayer). Hold it up to the president for the blessing and put it aside where convenient.

Receive communion, possibly together with a second chalice bearer who may have joined you at some time after the Peace.

During communion, if you are not assisting with the chalice, remain standing in the corner and observe the proceedings in order to be ready if any help is needed. Should more wine be required; take the water and wine from the credence table for the president to replenish and consecrate the chalices. (As long as any wine is left in the chalice, it is permissible to simply add more as needed.)

After communion

Offer the president the hand disinfectant.

The president will then clear the altar, while the congregation is singing the last hymn. He/she will hold out one of the chalices and the paten (silver plate) for you to pour a few drops of water on to the paten and other vessels. The second chalice and everything else is then returned to the credence table. Only the veiled main chalice should remain on the altar.

Blessing and Procession

Once the president has given the blessing and the dismissal, retrieve the cross from its stand. Move out of the sanctuary, turn around and reverence the altar standing between the president and any other ministers. (Again, bow only with your head!). Then slowly process out. Wait in the porch and join them in the concluding prayers, then return to the sanctuary via the hall door with the cross. Wait until the organ voluntary has finished before re-entering the church.

After the Service

Take off robe only after the altar and credence table have been cleared (or after taking care of the candles).

First extinguish and tend to the candles:

- For the altar candles, use a matchstick to dip the wicks into the melted wax, then straighten them again. This is to ensure they can be lit again easily for the next service (see also "How to care for candles ([candles](#))").
- For the candles in the corners use the candle snuffer.

Then remove all items from the credence table to the vestry. Check the credence tablecloth for stains; if stained put it in the laundry bag on the door of the wardrobe. If not, fold it and put it in the drawer.

Return all items from the altar to the vestry, and also the Gospel Book from the window ledge. The big red Book of Common Worship should be placed horizontally to protect the spine. Check corporal for spots; if stained put it in the laundry bag; if not, fold carefully and put it back in the burse.

Place dirty purificators in the laundry bag.

Apart from the silver and the cruets, put everything back into the cupboard.

Washing up

If there is any wine left in one of the chalices, it is to be poured out in the garden.

The items used in the Eucharist are taken to the sink in the corridor or the kitchen for washing.

- Take along the special towel from the door of the vestry wardrobe for drying (kitchen towels could be greasy and leave traces on the silver).
- Use very hot water for silverware. If the tap water is not hot, use the electric kettle to boil water, and a bowl from one of the kitchen cabinets.
- Turn chalices around under the running water or in the bowl, especially where lips have touched. Do not rub inside with towel, just pat to dry to avoid the gold plate wearing off.
- Make sure everything is clean; check especially the cruet with left-over wine and the stopper.

Finish cleaning up

Put everything else away in vestry cupboard so it is ready for the next service.

Take any empty wine bottle to the kitchen for recycling (there is a box behind the door) and replace with full bottle from bottom cupboard on the right. Spare packets of wafers are kept in the second cupboard on the left. Notify the church administrator, or whoever is responsible for the vestry*, if we are running low on wine or wafers (regular, gluten-free or priest's wafers).

Before you leave, make sure that the sanctuary and vestry are tidy. Turn off lights in the sanctuary as you are leaving.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING!

* At the time of writing it is Mary Mead

02.11.2023 RF

This page was last modified on 19 November 2023