Worship Assistant Serving Description

**The purpose of the Worship Assistant is to assist the Pastor in leading the congregation in worship.**

**Attire**:

* Dress better than an average worshipper (i. e. you do not have to wear a suit, but no shorts in the summer time). Wear clothes that you feel comfortable in.

**Arrival:**

* Plan to arrive about 15 minutes before the service to allow time to go over things for any last-minute instructions or questions with a Pastor or Cynthia Skaalen, Director of Worship & Traditional Music.

***BEFORE THE SERVICE:***

**Get ready**

* Find the red service folder (should be up front by your seat). This folder should contain a copy of the bulletins for all of the worship services and a page of the prayers and other matters that will be used at your worship service.
* Double check with the Pastor as to what parts you are expected to lead so you can be prepared. The copy in the red service folder is specific for your worship service - feel free to use cue notes for your comfort level.

**Announcements** will be on the lectern since the same copy is used for all services.

* The Pastor reads the announcements.
* It is good idea to note who the lay reader is. If you do not see the person, be familiar with the readings so that you can fill in if necessary.
* Also, note who is scheduled to be communion assistants, and if someone is absent, be prepared to ask someone from the congregation to be a substitute.

Find your **bulletin** and mark any sections that you will be leading, adding any cue words that would be helpful. Look at the prayers - they are the last page in your folder and review them.

**Lighting of candles**

* Ushers primarily light the candles from left to right if an acolyte is not serving and extinguish them following the service. They also light the large votive candle by the prayer candles in the back of the Sanctuary. *If the altar candles are not lit by the ushers, and no acolyte is scheduled,* the worship assistant should light the candles 5 minutes prior to the worship service. A candle lighter is located on the Welcome Center or in the sacristy.

**Microphone**

* All of your speaking parts are done at the lectern. The microphone stays on and is controlled by the Sound Board volunteers.

***AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE:***

**1. Enter the place of worship**

* Unless the Pastor indicated otherwise, enter at the beginning of the opening song (the first one the congregation sings), walk into the sanctuary with the acolyte and crucifer, (and in front of the choir at 8:30 a.m.), going down the center aisle, and pausing to briefly reverence the altar.
* You then go to the left and sit in one of the worship leader chairs to the left of the altar.

**2. Lead the confession**

* The microphone stays on and is controlled by the Sound Board volunteers. Go to the lectern during the last verse of the opening hymn or song. You want to be ready to speak as the music fades to keep things on a smooth pace.
* Lead the order of confession, introducing it by saying, *“Let us together confess our sins, using the words in our bulletin or on our screen.”*
* You then read the first section. Pastor will read the ending section (the declaration of forgiveness).
* After this, return to your seat.

**3. Lead the Creed**

* Go to lectern. Introduce it by saying, *“Let us celebrate our common faith, using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.”*

**4. Lead the Prayers of the People**

* Compose and lead the prayers from the lectern, using the words printed on the prayer sheet.
* Stay at lectern while the *Pastor says the conclusion to the prayers.* Return to your seat.

**5. Prepare Altar for Communion**

* If the ushers collect the offering, this is the time the Pastor and worship assistant prepare the altar and credence table for communion.
* When communion is by intinction, remove the linen veil from the patens and take the covers off the small containers of gluten-free wafers located inside the paten. Place the covers on the table or under the container inside the paten.
* For communion at the rail, remove the linen veil and top cover of stacked communion trays, and place them on the table.
* *Note:* In the event that the Pastor is not preparing the altar, the worship assistant takes the paraments off of the chalice, stacking them neatly on the altar.
* Bring the extra chalice and wafers from the credence table and place them on the altar.

TERMS: *Credence table-small table behind altar; Paraments-Chalice veil, decorative cloth over chalice; Pall-white “board”; Purificator–white cloth*

**~~7. Receive the Offering~~**

* ~~When the ushers have finished collecting the offering, they will bring it down the aisle, along with the gifts, and hand both to you.~~
* ~~You will receive the gifts by standing at the front of the altar.~~
* ~~Each gift should be elevated – take the communion gifts first and present to the Pastor; then the offering should be presented for thanks and tucked under the bookstand.~~
* ~~Return to seat.~~

**6. Help Serve Communion**

* If we are doing intinction, you will be serving the bread for one of the communion stations.
* The words are *“The body of Christ given/broken for you.”*
* Bless the small children by placing a hand on their head and saying *“May God fill you with grace.”*  If you are unsure about communing a child, ask the parent.
* *When giving the blessing on the head to young children, dedicate the hand that is not distributing wafers for this purpose for hygienic reasons.*
* If we are doing communion at the altar rail, you will be serving the wine, following the Pastor.
* The words are *“The blood of Christ is shed for you.”*
* When your tray is empty, one of the other communion assistants will exchange it for a full one.

**7. Special Services**

* **Baptism** – Follow the lead of the Pastor, holding the worship binder being read from and lighting the taper candle on the font, lighting it from the large, lit Baptismal candle and handing to a member of the family.
* **On Holidays or other special services**, any changes to the order of worship or the responsibilities of the Worship Assistant role will be communicated prior to serving.

**8.** **Help Clean up after Communion**

* Stand at the credence table, put the extra chalices, etc., on it, and cover with linen veil.

**9. Process to the Rear of the Sanctuary**

* Near the end of the closing hymn, walk out of the sanctuary with Pastor.
* The acolyte and crucifer go first; if the choir is processing out, they go next and then the worship assistant and Pastor.
* While leaving, pause briefly to reverence the altar, walk down the center aisle, and stand by the baptismal font.
* Turn and face the front of the church.

**10. Dismissal**

* Say the dismissal in a REALLY LOUD voice: ***“Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!”***

**11. After Worship**

* Go to a place just outside the office and greet any people who leave before the Pastor gets there to greet. You may then continue to greet worshippers or go and mingle.
* After most have exited, the Pastor often goes to the conference room to meet the Prayer team and those who want prayers.
* Double check to make sure the altar candles are out.

*Your service is very valuable to creating a sense of flow and giving focus to our worship. Your leadership also shows that worship is the work of all of God’s people, and not just the Pastor.*

REV/dr 5/2021