



WORSHIP SERVERS' HANDBOOK

Hope Lutheran Church

ABSTRACT

“God calls the church to exercise care and fidelity in its use of the means of grace, so that all people may hear and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and be gathered into God’s own mission for the life of the world.”

The Use of the Means of Grace, principles 1 and 2

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A foundation of faith for everything we do

For Lutherans, worship stands at the center of our life of faith. Through God's word, water, bread and prayer we are nurtured in faith and sent out into the world.

Connected with and central to everything we do, worship unites us in celebration, engages us in thoughtful dialogue and helps us grow in faith. It grounds us in our Christian and Lutheran roots, while demonstrating practical relevance for today's world.

While some of the approaches to worship may differ from one ELCA congregation to another, we hold certain things in common. Central to our worship life is the presence of God through word and sacrament. The **word** proclaimed and the **sacraments** —both Holy Baptism and Holy Communion — are called **the means of grace**. We believe that Jesus Christ is present in these means through the power of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we describe worship as a “gathering around the means of grace.”

There is also a basic pattern for worship among Lutherans. We *gather*. We encounter God's *word*. We share a *meal* at the Lord's table. And we are *sent* into the world. But we do not think about worship so much in terms of what we do. Worship is fundamentally about what God is doing and our response to God's action. Worship is an encounter with God, who saves us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Even though Hope Lutheran Church has three (3) worship sites, there are some procedures common in Hope's worship services.

Rule # 1 – Be Flexible to the needs and concerns of the Pastor(s)

Order of Worship: The Worship Administrator in the office emails the order of worship (bulletin) to the Parish Deacon or Worship Assistant at each site. This is usually emailed on Thursday. If you have not received it by Friday morning, call the church office. Please remember to forward this email to your substitute if you have switched the schedule for your site. This email may also include the communion servers and reader for some of the worship sites.

Lighting the candles in the chancel area:

For the greater part of the year, the Pascal and Christ candles are not used.

- *While the order of lighting the candles is not the most important part, what is important is that you act dignified and reverent as you do this.*
- When approaching the altar, reverence the altar by slightly bowing.
- The Pascal candle is to be used the first time at the beginning of the Easter Vigil. Depending on the structure of the Easter Vigil service, the Pascal candle is carried into the dark sanctuary. At this time the candle is to be placed near the Baptismal Font. During the

following 50 days of Easter, the pascal candle is placed near the altar. On the occasions when it is to be lit, the pascal candle is to be lit prior to people gathering--not when lighting the altar candles. The pascal candle is used until the Ascension (or Pentecost) and at baptisms and funerals.

- The Christ Candle is used during the Christmas season and is in the center of the advent wreath. The advent wreath is to remain in the chancel until Epiphany.
- The altar candles are to be lit approximately 10 minutes prior to the service by the Parish Deacon or Worship Assistant. An usher will light them when a worship assistant is not present.
- When lighting the candles on the altar, light the candle on the right first followed by the one on the left.
- When extinguishing the candles, it is done in reverse order with the Christ candle extinguished last (when in use).

Advent Wreath: During Advent, a candle is lit during the service for each week. After the first week, the previous week's candle is lit prior to lighting the altar candles. At the end of the service, the Advent wreath candles are extinguished last. If there is a pink (or purple) candle in the wreath, it is for the third week of Advent. Do not light it until the third week.

Hand Sanitizer should be used by all worship servers prior to communion.

Microphone: For those with speaking parts in the service, it is important that you have adjusted the microphone for your height. It is also helpful if you check with the sound booth technician to do a sound check.

Reading during the service: It is also important that you have read through your parts even to the point of practicing it prior to the service. There are also sources on-line that help with pronunciations such as www.BibleSpeech.com.

Communion: When the officiating pastor is saying the words to consecrate the communion elements, the Parish Deacon/Worship Assistant is to stand behind and to the side of celebrant—not beside the pastor. Also, the pastor may bow over the host and the wine (either individually or once for both), all those servers in the chancel should bow with them. The communion servers may wish to do this also because it helps them become engaged in the consecration process.

Robes (Albs): If the worship site has a supply of albs, all those assisting in traditional worship may wear a white alb (robe) unless the server sings in the choir. Each worship site may have a location where the white albs are located.

When wearing an alb, a cincture and a cross are also worn. To tie the cincture, fold the cincture in half. Wrap it around your waist with knots on your right side. Grab the end of the loop made by the fold and overlap. Using your right hand, slip loop over left hand, keeping hold of cincture. Grab knotted end with your right hand. Slip knotted ends through loop (where left hand is making

sure that single loop is on top of double cincture.) Feed knotted ends through loop from top to bottom. Drop loop and then tighten around waist. Knot is on left hip.

Emergencies: If you are unable to serve when scheduled, please try to find a sub and phone the scheduler for the service you are assigned. Sometimes this is the worship administrator in the church office. If it is extremely last minute, try to phone your serving partner to alert them that you will be absent.

SERVER DESCRIPTIONS and RESPONSIBILITIES

Parish Deacon:

Prior to the service, the Parish Deacon must check with the Pastor in charge to see if there are any changes in the service not apparent from the printed order of service. This will also include who will perform the parts of the service; i.e., prayer of the day, etc. Also, check to see if there were any deaths in the congregation that should be included in the prayers of intercession.

When a Parish Deacon participates in a worship service, there is no worship assistant, Therefore, those duties assigned to the worship assistant (below) will be performed by the Parish Deacon. *During the sermon, all those seated in the chancel are to be seated somewhere other than the chancel.* At central, this could be a front pew or in the choir loft.

The Parish Deacon performs duties that are not assigned to a worship assistant such as:

- Reading the Lesson of the day unless there is a reader assigned to read it.
- Reading the Gospel unless specifically designated to be read by the preaching pastor
- Uncovering the paten and chalice on the altar for the pastor (celebrant) consecrating the communion elements
- The deacon is to stand behind and to the side of the celebrant when the elements are being consecrated.
- Re-covering the altar communion elements when communion is finished if the celebrant is still serving communion.

Worship Assistant

When there is no Parish Deacon serving during the service, the Worship Assistant is to assume the responsibilities listed in the first two paragraphs of the Parish Deacon job description above. The duties assigned to the Worship Assistant are as follows:

- It is the responsibility of the worship assistant (or parish deacon if serving) to make sure all needed worship servers are present. Also, assist in recruiting last-minute substitutes if a server is not present. There may be a head communion server present who will assist in ensuring an adequate number of servers.

- Lighting the candles (see pages 1 and 2 for instructions).
- Reading the prayer of the day from the altar unless the pastor decides ahead of time that he/she would read it.
- Reading the lesson of the day from the lectern (or designated area) when a reader is not assigned to read the lesson of the day.
- Leading the creed.
- Reading the prayers of intercession. Be sure to include the families of any congregation members who have died.
- Uncovering the ciboriums on the credence table or what serves as a credence table while the celebrating pastor uncovers the paten and chalice on the altar. (Only a parish deacon uncovers the communion elements.)
- Accepting the offering plates from the ushers placing them in the appropriate place for each site.
- After consecration of the communion elements, the worship assistant is to assist the pastor/pastors in distributing the ciboriums to the communion servers. Begin distributing at the pulpit end of the chancel and move to the lectern side of the chancel.
- Serving communion at the station where assigned. The worship assistant serves communion to the pastor if they have not received it from another server.
- Recovering the ciboriums on the credence table after communion.
- Extinguishing the candles during the sending hymn.
- Reading the dismissal; i.e., “Go in peace. Etc.”

Communion Server

Each communion server should be aware of their assigned station prior to the beginning of the service. This helps in avoiding confusion when communion begins. At central, if uncertain, the parish deacon/worship assistant has a chart in their worship folder showing where servers are assigned.

Communion is done by intinction; i.e., the communicant is given the host (wafer) who then dips it into the wine in the ciborium. The communicant then puts the host dipped in wine into their own mouth. For the larger attended services, there are two people assigned to each station, both serving communion.

When serving the host for intinction, you are to say, “This is the body and blood of Christ broken and shed for you.” or “This is the body and blood of Christ given for you.” Try to make eye contact with the communicant while you are saying these words. Make serving communion personal by using their first name when possible.

Gluten Free Communion: There is a gluten free communion station at all three worship sites. The instructions for access to those sites are given by the officiating pastor just after consecrating the elements or during the announcements. If you are serving at one of these stations, say the same words as instructed above. *The communion server for this station must also cover the gluten free elements when communion is finished.* If the communion server for gluten-free is also serving the

regular communion wafers, it is important not to contaminate the gluten-free wafer by touching it. In this case, let the communicant pick up their own wafer and wine. Keep in mind you may have to give instructions for picking up their wafer and wine to visitors.

After your section has all been served, look to see if there is another section that still has congregants to serve. Go to that station keeping in mind too many servers are confusing for those in line. Just one extra server is all that is necessary. After all the congregation has received communion, the ushers may tell you where someone needs communion while seated in their pew. When all congregants are served, the communion servers are then to serve communion to each other.

Serving the Choir: Each worship site has instructions on where this is to be done. See those instructions specific to where you are serving.

If a host (wafer) is dropped, invite an usher to pick it up for you. However, the ushers are usually not close. If it becomes necessary for you to pick it up, use the other hand to pick it up and hold it in that hand until communion is finished. It is to be set aside near where the ciboriums are placed for disposal by the Altar Angels. If someone drops their wafer in the ciborium, leave it and give them another.

Another situation you need to be aware of is when someone taking communion is unfamiliar with the intinction procedure. They sometimes place the wafer in their mouth and realize they need to dip it in the wine. It has happened that they will take the wafer out of their mouth and try to dip it in the wine. You need to be diligent about preventing this either by placing your hand over the ciborium or pulling it away. Assure them it is ok and then give them another wafer.

Children: Usually, a child will be followed by a parent or grandparent. Ask them if the child receives communion. If the answer is “no,” using your other hand (you will have to switch the ciborium to your other hand), lay that hand on the child (head or shoulder) and give a blessing. You can say something like, “the Lord bless you and keep you” or anything that conveys the love of Jesus.

The communion servers are to sit in the spot designated for each worship site. Sitting together makes it easier for the pastor or service leader to see that all servers are present. However, it is okay to sit with family somewhere else in the congregation if you announce your presence to the person responsible for making sure all stations are covered. If the server has a partner at their station, try to sit together.

Reader

Readers are not used at all worship services. However, when assigned, they should be ready to read when the scripture is next in the service. There should be no delay while the reader is walking to the lectern or the microphone for the reading.

Speak clearly, loudly, and slowly directly into the microphone. Refer to the “reading during the service” on page 2 for further instructions.

WORSHIP HOPE CENTRAL

Seating: During worship, the Assisting Pastor sits in the first chair closest to the altar on the lectern side of the chancel. The deacon or worship assistant sits in the second chair. As a reminder from the instructions above, all those sitting in the chancel are to move away from the chancel during the sermon.

Communion servers are to sit in the first pew in station 4 on the lectern side of the sanctuary. As stated previously, you should be aware of your assigned serving station. The servers and assigned stations are in the back of the Worship Assistant’s worship binder. For the 10 a.m. servers, there is a chart on the bulletin board in the robing room with the most up-to-date assignments.

Communion: The communion servers are to stand at the bottom of the chancel steps near their assigned station until they are given a ciborium. When your serving partner is ready, begin serving communion right away. If your station is in front of the chancel steps at central, please keep your heels right up against the step so that worshipers can pass behind each other. After all congregants in your section have been served, serve communion to your fellow server(s). Wait at your station until someone collects your ciborium before returning to your pew. The choir is served communion at the end of the choir loft closest to the altar. Keep in mind that the choir is usually quite large and may need help when your section is finished.

Instructions for individual stations:

Station 1 serves those seated in the section in front of the pulpit closest to the outside wall. This server is also responsible for the Gluten Free and Alcohol-Free station. Before beginning serving communion, this server must first remove the tray cover placing it on the small stand behind and then removing the cloth over the wafers. When a communicant comes for Gluten Free, the server nearest points to the stand holding the elements and gives the blessing. **THE SERVER NEVER TOUCHES OR HANDS ANY OF THE ELEMENTS TO THE COMMUNICANT.** When communion is finished, the server must recover the wafers with the cloth and replace the tray cover.

Stations 2, 3 and 4 are all served in the common manner remembering to keep your heels back against the chancel steps

Station 5 is the Choir and the organist/pianist. There are two stands positioned near the choir. The stand closest to the choir holds the Ciborium with Gluten Free. The server uncovers it but never serves it--only saying the words of “body and blood” when it is taken. The second ciborium is removed from its stand and held by the server who gives the wafer to the choir member being served and gives the words of “body and blood” as the choir member dips the wafer in the wine. It may be necessary to wait to serve the choir and the organist/pianist until the choir is finished

singing. When serving the organist/pianist, dip the wafer in the wine and place it on their tongue giving the words of “body and blood” while they continue to play. When communion is finished, remember to recover the communion elements.

Station 6 is the back section behind station 4 and all the non-ambulatory persons seated across the back of the church. There are 2 servers assigned to this station. Both servers will serve everyone standing in the first row starting with the middle of the row working in opposite directions and serving to the outsides of that row. The server who ends at the organ side will remain there and the usher will direct the remaining rows to that server. The server who ends at the door side will be guided by an usher to all non-ambulatory across the back of the church and to the A/V room. During the summer when the choir is not singing, the server for this station will serve the organist/pianist and any soloists not served at the 8:00 service.

Station 7 is the back section behind station 1 (nearest the Chapel). If no one is assigned to Station 7, communicants will go forward served with Section 1. If there are non-ambulatory in this section, they will also be served by the server from Section 6. At High Season (Christmas and Easter), Section 7 has its own servers assigned and will be served in the same manner as Section 6.

The Saturday 6:00 pm service usually has only one worship assistant/communion server. This requires that server to pick up their own ciborium at the credence table and return it after serving the pastor communion. Usually, another server may serve at the gluten-free station. Make sure this person receives communion and has covered the gluten-free elements.

Robes: At Central, they are located in the choir robing room (hallway to right of choir loft - room on right). During festival worship services such as Easter and Christmas, the pastor may indicate that all servers wear robes.

All albs are numbered and hung in size order and should be returned in the same order with snaps fastened for ease of locating the proper size. When an alb becomes soiled, please place it in the designated basket for laundering. At Central, the basket is located on the floor below or the shelf above the albs.

Emergencies: As stated previously, emergencies do happen when a worship server is unable to be present. Please make every effort to find your own substitute and inform the worship administrator in the church office or the chief scheduler for your service.

Offering: The WA is to receive the offering from the ushers when it is brought forward. Let the ushers place the offering plates into your hands. Turn back to the altar and present the offering plates to God by raising them up in front of the altar before placing them on the stairs of the pulpit or on the credence table. Please use the hand sanitizer after receiving the offering.

Processional: During Festival services, the pastor may ask you to lead the procession (crucifer), with the processional cross, to the altar ahead of the pastors. One of the pastors will direct you when to begin, but usually the procession starts during the first verse of the opening hymn. After arriving at the altar with the cross, turn to face the congregation until all the pastors have ascended

the steps and reverenced. Then place the processional cross in its base located at the back of the chancel.

Sometimes the communion servers join the procession. Please stay seated in your pew until someone comes to tell you its time to line up. The communion servers follow the crucifer and march two by two to the base of the chancel, bow and turn to the right continuing to their pew. It is helpful to line up with your serving partner.

Recessional: As soon as the first note is played for the final hymn, the WA (crucifer) who led the processional should pick up the cross and begin the Recessional. As soon as you descend the stairs, the Communion servers should be already walking toward the bottom of the stairs. Two-by-two they should meet and face the altar, reverence, and then proceed back down the center aisle to the back of the Church. The Pastors will then finish the processions by filing behind all the Communion Assistants.

WORSHIP SOUTHERN SITE

Parish Deacon: Kathy Smith is the Parish Deacon usually serving at the Southern Site. Her contact information is (352) 399-5103; smithkath@aol.com. She prepares the schedule of worship assistants for the Southern site.

Schedulers: Communion servers, readers and ushers are scheduled by Rich and Char Detar. They should be contacted if there is any reason a scheduled server will not be present. Their email address is richard.detar@comcast.net.

The Hope office emails the order of worship to the parish deacon or worship assistant scheduled to serve each Sunday. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the service prior to the beginning of the service.

Emergencies: If you are to be absent when assigned, try to find your own substitute and forward the order of worship to that substitute. If you are unable to arrange a substitute, please notify Kathy Smith.

Pascal/Christ Candles: The instructions of the use of these candles is on page 1.

Robes (Albs): When participating in the service, the parish deacon/worship assistant wears a white alb. Currently, each of these servers has an Alb and brings it with them when assigned to serve. Due to a lack of storage space, communion servers do not wear albs.

Microphone: The microphone stand is positioned next to the choir side of the altar (table). A notebook or clipboard is helpful because there is no place on the altar to place your order of service.

Seating: The parish deacon/worship assistant and reader sits in the front row on either side of the room to easily move to the microphone.

Offering: The Parish deacon/Worship Assistant collects the offering plates from the ushers when brought forward placing them on the edge of the stage.

Communion: Communion is done continuously at all services. Usually there are three communion servers in addition to the presiding minister and deacon/WA. Two servers are positioned beside the altar and one at the credence table on the right side of the room to distribute gluten free and alcohol-free elements. If the ushers don't have people ready to take communion, gesture with your hand to those in the first pew that you are ready to begin. Always serve handicapped at their seats in the front pews before beginning to serve others. Usually, the choir is communed last. Communion is served by intinction as outlined in the general instructions.

LAKE WEIR

Worship Assistant: Worship at Lake Weir has a worship assistant in addition to a Parish Deacon. Like the Parish Deacon and Pastor, the Worship Assistant wears a white alb. The Worship Assistant sits in the front pew when not participating in the service. The Worship Assistant reads the lesson of the day (and the Psalm when included in the service) unless a reader has been assigned. He/she will also lead the creed and the prayers of intercession when the Parish Deacon is not present.

Lighting the Candles: Candles are lit by the Parish Deacon or an usher. The candles lighter is hanging on the wall next to the sanctuary door. There is a lighter on the shelf in this same area.

Offering Plates: After the offering plates are brought forward by the ushers, the Worship Assistant presents them to God and places them on the stand to the back right of the altar

Communion: The Pastor and the Deacon stand on the carpet on either side of the altar opening. The gluten-free alcohol-free ciborium is handed to the Worship assistant after consecration. When the Parish Deacon is present, the Worship Assistant serves the gluten-free alcohol-free elements standing in front of the lectern. When the Parish Deacon is not present, the Worship Assistant stands in the altar opening with the pastor to serve communion and someone else (usually from the choir) will serve the gluten-free alcohol-free communion. The choir usually gets in one of the serving lines to receive communion.

Microphone: At this worship site, only the Parish Deacon and Pastor wears a headset microphone. All parts of the service done by the Worship Assistant are to be read at the microphone on the lectern.

GLOSSARY

Alb — The white robe worn by servers and pastors.

Celebrant – The ordained pastor officiating over the consecration of the communion elements.

Chancel – The raised “stage” area around the altar.

Christ Candle – is used during the Christmas season and is in the center of the advent wreath.

Ciborium – The individual communion chalice containing wine and having a tray on the bottom for holding the communion wafers.

Cincture – The rope belt worn with an alb.

Credence Table – The table behind or adjacent to the altar where the bread and wine sits for communion.

Intinction – The method of serving communion where the server places the bread/wafer in the communicant’s hand/fingers, and communicant dips the bread/wafer in the wine and places it in their mouth.

Lectern – A reading stand where the Old and New Testament lessons are read during the worship service; located to the left of the altar when facing the chancel.

Pascal Candle – Used during the Easter season as described previously. This candle is not used at all services, but when present, it should be lit prior to the serve and extinguished last.

Pulpit – The raised platform where the pastor may deliver his/her sermon.