

Acolyte Training and Guidelines

From [Worship Matters: A United Methodist Guide to Worship Work, Vol. II](#) by E. Byron Anderson:

"Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world' (John 8:12). The presence of the light reminds us of Jesus' coming into our world and into our lives. The light is carried into the worship service as a symbol of Jesus' coming into the presence of the worshipping community. Many congregations use two candles on the altar to point out that Jesus was both a human being and God. At the end of the service, the light is carried out into the world to show that Jesus Christ is for all people everywhere...The acolyte leaves the worship service at the pastor's direction, carrying out the lighted candlelighter. This symbolizes the light of Jesus Christ going out into the world where believers are to serve."

Church Manners

Remember that You are in God's house.
Sit quietly and listen attentively to the service.
Please, no chewing gum during worship.

Please use your best church manners.
Dignity must be displayed at all times.
Look your best! (No shorts or flip flops, please!)

Important Tips

Crucifer

The cross must always be carried with dignity. The best way is to hold the cross firmly with both hands in the middle of the pole. Please do not touch the brass so it stays shiny! Relax your elbows by your sides. Carry the cross slightly raised from the ground. Where on the pole you hold will depend on your height...just be sure you hold it firmly and that the position looks relaxed and dignified.

Acolytes

When holding the torch - Relax your elbows by your sides. Please be sure that the flame on the torch is not near any person's clothing. (Walk 1 pew behind the Crucifer.) Only hold the torch by the wooden handle to keep the brass shiny. ALWAYS wait for the other acolyte to finish lighting or extinguishing the candelabra before proceeding to the altar candles. Do not rush to light or extinguish candles.



Scheduling

The Acolyte schedule is posted on the website (www.ortegaumc.org) and is e-mailed to the e-mail address provided by your parents when you joined TNT. Please inform the Acolyte Coordinator if your e-mail changes or is down.

If you are unable to serve on your scheduled week, please find a replacement from the list of acolytes. Then e-mail the Acolyte Coordinator and Winslow Colbert (winslow@ortegaumc.org) so that we can be certain there is someone to serve in worship for that service.

*If you are not getting ready by 10:50am, the Acolyte Coordinator will need to find a substitute. Once a substitute agrees to take your place on that day, they will participate in the service for that day even if you arrive before service.

On the Sunday (or special service) when you are scheduled

- ✦ Please report to the Acolyte area by 10:45am*
- ✦ Put on the Cossock (red robe) and the Cotta (white over-robe). Then put on your silver and blue acolyte cross
- ✦ **Walk** through the Sanctuary (you are now a representative of the church and part of the service to come) to the Narthex by 10:50am

Following the Order of Worship

- ⤴ **PREPARE FOR SERVICE** – Retrieve the torches & cross from the Usher Closet.
 - ⤴ Make sure there is enough wick in the torch – have the Acolyte Coordinator check
- ⤴ Wait patiently and quietly in the vestibule until it is time to line up
- ⤴ Line up after the choir arrives
 - ⤴ **Crucifer** first and **acolytes** behind
- ⤴ Torches are lit by the Acolyte Coordinator or an Usher during the Chiming of the Hour
 - ⤴ Once the choir sings the Introit, be ready!
- ⤴ When the music for the first hymn begins, walk down the aisle at a slow pace
- ⤴ **Crucifer** steps up and stops at the second dark square, turns around & raises the cross slightly
 - ⤴ The choir walks past the crucifer on both sides. Please hold the cross still and look forward.
 - ⤴ When the choir & pastors have passed, put the cross in the stand & sit
- ⤴ **Acolytes** continue to the candelabras and light the candles from the lower to the upper.
 - ⤴ Pull down the wick to extinguish.
 - ⤴ Walk to your seat, hang up torch on the wall, and pick up your hymnal and bulletin.
- ⤴ Finish singing the hymn and prepare for the Call to Worship (printed in the bulletin).
- ⤴ Follow bulletin to know what is happening during the service - use your church manners.
- ⤴ Listen for the pastor to call the ushers for the offering
- ⤴ **Acolytes** will wait until the beginning of the Doxology (Praise God From Whom...) then walk to meet the ushers by the altar rail.
 - ⤴ Collect the offering plates and walk together to the altar.
 - ⤴ Face the altar with the plates in your hand and raise them up - you are offering them to God
 - ⤴ When Doxology ends, place plates on the altar & join the children's moment on the altar steps.
- ⤴ **Crucifer** joins the Children's Moment on the altar steps
- ⤴ Return to seats after the Children's Moment and sing with the congregation
- ⤴ Follow the service until the pastor finishes the sermon and calls for the final hymn (or the music begins for the final hymn)
- ⤴ ****COMMUNION SUNDAYS**** Please join your family at the altar rail for communion and then return to your seat. If your family is not in the service, please join with another acolyte's family.
- ⤴ **END OF SERVICE** – Look at the Acolyte Coordinator for your cue to start this process!
 - ⤴ **Acolytes** get your torches and walk together to the candelabra
 - ⤴ Extinguish the candles from the top to the bottom – It is NOT a race. Wait for the other acolyte to finish their side and then proceed to the altar candles.
 - ⤴ Light your torch from the altar candles. (This symbolizes bringing the light of Jesus into the world.)
 - ⤴ Walk to stand behind the Crucifer
 - ⤴ **Crucifer** walk slowly to get the cross and then stand at the first dark square holding the cross slightly raised and still.
 - ⤴ Stand patiently and still while the hymn is finishing.
- ⤴ The pastor will give you a signal to proceed
 - ⤴ Walk at a medium pace down the aisle. **Crucifer** first then the **acolytes** following a few steps behind. Do not rush too much!

After the Service

- ⤴ When you reach the vestibule, put the cross and the torches in the Usher Closet.
- ⤴ **Walk** back to the Acolyte area and hang up the Cossock and Cotta. Put the acolyte cross in the basket.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING IN WORSHIP!