

St. Peter's Church, Salisbury, MD
CUSTOMARY FOR ACOLYTE AT SUNDAY 11 AM

Before the Service:

1. Arrive at least 20 minutes before the service
2. Prepare the thurible 15 minutes before the service.
 - a. Enter the sanctuary and move to the altar. Bow at the altar then go up the steps to the right side and retrieve the thurible which is hanging from a hook above the credence table.
 - b. Return to the sacristy; do not bow at the altar while carrying the thurible. Place the thurible on the small counter.
 - c. Open the lid of the thurible and place 2-3 round charcoal briquettes in the bottom of the thurible. The charcoal briquettes are located in the right-hand drawer below the counter. Additional briquettes can be found under the cabinet.
 - d. Holding one of the briquettes with a pair of tongs, use a candle lighter to light the briquette. Once lit, return the briquette to Thurible; light additional briquettes if necessary then close the lid.
 - e. Pick up the Incense Boat which is located on top of the tall cabinets next to the Oil Aumbry and place it on the small counter.
 - f. Open the boat to see if there is enough incense. If not, raw incense can be found in the right-hand drawer under the counter.
 - g. Pick up the mortar and pestle from under the cabinet, place them on the counter, then pour raw incense in the mortar. Using the pestle, ground up the incense into smaller pieces. The incense should be small enough for sprinkling on top of the charcoal, so they turn to smoke and release their fragrance.
 - h. Pour the ground incense into the incense boat, close the lid while leaving the spoon handle sticking out through the notch of the lid. Place the boat near the thurible..
 - i. Leave the thurible and incense boat on the small counter until the Offertory.
3. Vest in red cassock (black cassock during Lent). Do not wear cotta when lighting candles.
4. Ten (10) minutes before the service, light candles as follows:
 - a. Enter the church and at the communion rail, bow at the altar. Retrieve the candle lighter from its stand on the right near the chairs, return to the sacristy to light it. (Exception: During Eastertide, candle lighter should be lit from the flame of the Paschal Candle at the altar).
 - b. Return to the altar. Bow, then move up the steps to light the Eucharistic Candles: epistle side first (right) then gospel side second (left).
 - c. Light the Office Candles (candelabras) on the altar: epistle side (right) branch inner to outer (as if you are opening a book); then gospel side (left) branch, inner to outer.
 - d. Finish by lighting the credence table candles (right then left).
 - e. Extinguish the flame and place the candle lighter back in its stand.
 - f. Step down at the communion rail, bow to the altar.
 - g. Return to the vesting room.
5. Vest in cotta and place acolyte cross around neck.
6. Assemble with the altar party five minutes before the service begins.

7. At the direction of the Celebrant, the altar party moves to the back of the church. The acolyte in procession follows the Eucharistic Minister(s) and precedes any ordained clergy (such as the Deacon, Celebrant and/or Preacher).

During the Service:

1. Process towards the altar with the altar party.
2. At the communion rail, bow before the altar, and move to chairs at epistle (right) side of the altar and stand in front of chair next to the credence table. Pick up worship bulletin from chair and follow the service.

Acclamation (stand)

Gloria in excelsis, Kyrie, or Trisagion (stand)

Old Testament Lesson (sit)

Psalm (sit)

Epistle (sit)

Sequence Hymn (stand)

3. During the Sequence Hymn the Gospel Reader (usually the Deacon or Celebrant) comes to take the Gospel Book from the altar. Once the Gospel Reader bows before the altar and moves toward the Gospel Book, proceed to the communion rail and stand in the aisle at the choir pews, back facing the congregation. Keep your hands folded. The torch bearers (if present) will take their torches and stand outside the communion rail between you and the rail.
4. When the Gospel Reader has reached the bottom step with the book, bow before the altar, turn and slowly lead the Gospel procession down the aisle to the nave, hands folded. The torches will be behind you on either side of the gospel book bearer.
5. Stop at the second pillars, turn and face the altar. The Gospel Reader will open the book and hand it to you to hold at eye level.
6. When the reading is finished, the Gospel Reader may take the book, then close the book and hand it to you. After the Gospel Reader steps to one side, hold up the Gospel Book and proceed up the aisle, the torch bearers walking on either side of you. Continue up the steps to the altar and lay the book on the cushion at the altar. Do not bow while you are holding the book.
7. After the gospel book is placed, move the Altar Book and Stand from the epistle (right) to the gospel (left) side of the altar, to the left of the veiled chalice.
8. Come back down the steps in the center, bow and go to your seat on the epistle (right) side.

Sermon (sit)

Nicene Creed (stand)

Prayers of the People (kneel)

Confession (kneel)

Peace (stand)

Announcements (sit)

Offertory Hymn (stand)

9. At the beginning of the Offertory Hymn, when the congregation stands, proceed with Crucifer who is holding the alms basin past the Communion Rail, turn and bow with the Crucifer before the altar, then walk side by side to the top of the Chancel Steps. Your hands should be folded. Wait for the ushers to present the gifts (bread and wine). You should stand on the left with the Crucifer on your right.
10. When the ushers arrive, take the ciborium (holds the bread) in one hand and the wine cruet in the other hand from the usher (the Crucifer will take the offering plates from the other usher).
11. Return to the altar with the Crucifer. Since you are carrying the elements, do not bow, but proceed directly to the credence table.
12. Place wine next to water. Loosen top of ciborium.
13. Hand ciborium to Celebrant/Deacon with right hand. Lift the top with left hand and return to credence table. If additional bread is needed the Celebrant/Deacon at this time will ask for the Bread Box. Hand Celebrant/Deacon the Bread Box. Celebrant/Deacon will return it to you to place back on the credence table.
14. Place wine cruet in right hand, handle facing away from you. Hand wine to Celebrant/Deacon. Celebrant/Deacon may give you back the wine cruet – take it with your left hand, or the Celebrant/Deacon may keep it on the altar for the consecration (this will be the case if there are two or more ministers administering the chalice). If additional wine is required, the Celebrant/Deacon will ask for it at this time. Additional cruet(s) of wine would be found on the Credence table. Hand them to the Celebrant/Deacon only if requested.
15. INCENSE: If the Celebrant will be censuring the altar at the Offertory, go to the sacristy to retrieve the thurible and incense boat.
 - a. Hold the thurible in one hand and the boat in your other hand. Go back and stand at the communion rail gate. The Celebrant will come to you.
 - b. Hand the boat to the Celebrant. Raise the thurible up a few feet, and using the round piece at the top of the chain, pull the chain to open the chamber; continue holding the chain until the Celebrant is finished.
 - c. The Celebrant will place some incense on the coals and bless the incense. Lower the chamber by lessening the tension on the chain.
 - d. The Celebrant will hand you back the incense boat and then you hand the thurible to the Celebrant. Stand to the side as the Celebrant censes the altar.
 - e. After the Celebrant is finished censing the altar, move back to the center and receive the thurible from the Celebrant. Bow and then take the thurible and incense boat back to the sacristy.
16. Quickly return to your station at the credence table to continue assisting the preparations for communion.
17. Place water cruet in right hand, handle facing away from you. Hand water to Celebrant/Deacon. Retrieve water with your left hand and place it on credence table.
18. Pick up the hand sanitizer and squirt some on the hands of the Celebrant. Return hand sanitizer to the credence table.
19. Take lavabo towel from credence table, drape over left forearm, hold lavabo bowl in your left hand. Open lid to water cruet and hold open with your thumb as you take the cruet in your right hand. With the lavabo bowl in your left hand, shift your body so the Celebrant can put his/her fingers over the lavabo bowl. Pour a small amount of water over Celebrant's fingers and shift your body if needed so the Celebrant can reach the lavabo towel. Celebrant will take the

20. towel to dry hands and then drape towel over your left forearm. Bow and then place water cruet, lavabo bowl, and towel (straighten towel and drape over lavabo bowl), on the credence table.
21. Take worship bulletin and stand in front of your chair.

Great Thanksgiving (stand)

Sanctus "Holy, Holy, Holy" (stand)

22. When the congregation starts to sing the words, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord," move down to the bottom step in front of the altar before the Sanctus bell, facing the altar.
23. After the Sanctus is finished, kneel on the cushion.

Lord's Prayer (kneel)

Fraction (kneel)

24. If there is more than one minister administering a chalice, rise from your place when the Fraction Anthem begins and go to the Credence Table. Hand the additional chalice(s) to the Celebrant. Return to your place. (Exception: when the Deacon is present, she will retrieve the additional chalice to place on the altar. Remain kneeling on your cushion.)

Words of Invitation

25. At "The Gifts of God for the People of God," Rise and move the Sanctus bell and cushion to the side so they are not in the way of the clergy and other ministers. Turn toward the communion rail and with the crucifer move the central communion rail and cushion into place. Kneel at rail to receive communion. Be sure to end up outside the altar so you can kneel at the rail to receive communion.
26. After receiving communion, put your gloves back on, move down the center aisle an appropriate number of rows and turn to face the altar. Invite the congregation to receive communion. Move row by row in order to keep the rail full, but not have communicants standing on the choir steps (for safety) or for the communicants to block the view of the choir (when present) from seeing the organist.
27. When the last communicants are at rail, move towards altar. As soon as last communicants have left rail, move cushion and center rail.
28. Move back to credence table. Celebrant/Deacon may ask for water to cleanse the vessels (ablutions). Take cues from Celebrant/Deacon.
29. When Celebrant/Deacon is vesting the chalice, move the Altar Book and stand from the gospel (left) side to epistle (right) side.
30. After completing post-communion tasks, kneel facing altar on the epistle (right) side for post-communion prayer.

Post-Communion Prayer (kneel)

Closing Hymn (stand)

31. At beginning of Closing Hymn, rise and retrieve the candle extinguisher from its stand, bow at the altar, and then snuff candles in this manner:
 - a. Gospel (left) side Office Candles (candelabras): outside to center (as if you are closing a book)
 - b. Epistle (right) side Office Candles: outside to center.
 - c. Gospel side Eucharistic Candle
 - d. Epistle side Eucharistic Candle
 - e. Left Credence Table Candle
 - f. If there are torch bearers: using the lighter, light the candle lighter from the remaining right Credence Table Candle. (If there are no torch bearers, skip this step.)
 - g. Extinguish right Credence Table candle
 - h. Using the fire on the lighter, light the torch bearers' candles. (If there are no torch bearers, skip this step.)
 - i. Extinguish the flame on the lighter, bow to the altar, and return the candle lighter to its stand.
 - j. Note: During Eastertide, DO NOT extinguish the Paschal Candle.
32. Return and stand at your place until the conclusion of the Hymn.
33. After the Blessing and Dismissal, follow the Eucharistic Minister(s) in procession down the aisle, first bowing at the altar.

After the Service

1. Proceed to vesting room.
2. If incense was used, see that the coals and ashes are extinguished and placed in the proper container. Return thurible to its hook on the Gospel side of the altar and the boat to its place by the oil ambry.
3. Neatly hang up cassock and cotta return acolyte cross to its proper place.
4. Thank you for your ministry!

Updated: August 2023