

# Acolyte Guidelines

## Overview:

### *Definition: Merriam Webster Dictionary*

- Main Entry: ac·o·lyte
- Pronunciation: \ˈa-kə-,līt, -kō-\
- Function: *noun*
- Etymology: Middle English, from Anglo-French & Medieval Latin; Anglo-French, *acolit*, from Medieval Latin *acoluthus*, from Middle Greek *akolouthos*, from Greek, adjective, following, from *a-*, *ha-* together (akin to Greek *homos* same) + *keleuthos* path
- Date: 14th century

1: one who assists a member of the clergy in a liturgical service

Fork Church youth members are eligible to serve as Acolytes upon transition from Godly Play to the Youth Group - 6<sup>th</sup> through 12 grades.

Acolytes serve as worship leaders who perform the work of the people on behalf of the people and as such, the "people" of Fork Church are looking at you and to you for beauty and reverence.

Acolytes should respect their positions by not only performing the specific tasks outlined in this guide but by listening, watching and participating throughout the service.

Acolytes represent teamwork and commitment while making the service more interesting and meaningful for them.

## **Responsibilities:**

- 1. Dress appropriately - NO t-shirts with dark writing or designs that can be seen through your robe and no flip-flops or crocs.**
- 2. Arrive on time at 9:45 - Upon arrival, robe immediately and light candles. After you are robed and the candles are lit, it is acceptable to talk quietly until time to pray.**
- 3. When Anne goes upstairs to check with the choir, acolytes should come into the hallway and line up ready to process as soon as congregation starts singing. (Crucifer in center; 1<sup>st</sup> Torch on Crucifer's left; 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch on Crucifer's right) 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch should be standing slightly behind Crucifer.**
- 4. Process in and stop directly in front of step leading to the altar. All three acolytes (1<sup>st</sup> Torch, Crucifer, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch) should be standing side-by-side with toes approximately 3 inches from the altar step.**
- 5. After a slight pause, Crucifer turns to the right. With the 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch leading, 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch and Crucifer process to wooden stand, put torch and cross away and stand with LEM. 1<sup>st</sup> Torch processes to the left side wooden stand, puts torch away and stands at the side bench.**
- 6. When there are three acolytes present, there will be a procession for the gospel. Watch the clergy to know which verse to leave on. Sing until that verse, then retrieve cross and torches. Crucifer should stop at the 5<sup>th</sup> pew. Torches should stand, NOT LEAN, with their backs to the pews.**
- 7. Acolytes should participate - singing hymns, speaking/responses, prayers, listening reverently to readings and sermon. NO TALKING.**
- 8. Offering - After bread and wine are brought forward, Crucifer gives plates to ushers. 1<sup>st</sup> Torch should close and lock the gate and replace the pillow once the ushers have brought the plates forward.**

9. Communion - Come forward to rail for communion as priest and Eucharistic minister receive communion. 1<sup>st</sup> Torch should open gate and remove pillow when the last person blocking the gate has received communion and stepped away from the rail.
10. Final Hymn - 2<sup>nd</sup> Torch should extinguish candles when the music begins for the final hymn.
11. At signal from Clergy, retrieve cross and torches for exit procession. (Acolytes should sing final hymn until time for procession)
12. Process out in the same order as the entrance procession.
13. Remain standing in the church entryway, facing forward until the congregation says "Thanks be to God" and the service has ended.
14. Hang up robes closing all buttons and snaps and replace cross/torches.

#### Scheduling and Substitutions:

- Acolytes will be given a pre-assigned schedule at least every three months.
- The schedule will be posted in the vesting room, on the bulletin board in the church entryway and on the bulletin board in the parish hall.
- Acolytes are responsible for finding their own substitutes in the event they are unable to serve on their assigned Sunday(s). While it is understandable that last minute substitutions are sometimes unavoidable, it is expected that substitutions will be made as far in advance as possible.
- While each Acolyte is responsible for making the arrangements related to substitutions, an e-mail should be sent to Cari Overby at [cari.overby@suntrust.com](mailto:cari.overby@suntrust.com) as notification of the substitution/replacement so the updated schedules can be posted and re-distributed.
- In the event of an unavoidable absence without a substitute the following applies:
  - Only 2 Acolytes present - serve as torch bearers w/ LEM as Crucifer
  - Only 1 Acolyte present - serve as Crucifer w/ no torch bearers.

## Responsibilities Summary

<b>Crucifer</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Torch</b> (on Crucifer's left during procession)	<b>2nd Torch</b> (on Crucifer's right during procession)
Vested and ready by 9:55	Vested and ready by 9:55	Vested in ready by 9:55 (Before the service, light the candles)
Lead the procession in.	Process in.	Process in.
Lead Gospel procession	Gospel procession.	Gospel procession
Offering - give plates to ushers.	Close and lock gate and replace pillow after ushers bring plates forward.	
Communion - Come to rail for communion as priest and Eucharistic minister receive communion.	Communion - Come to rail for communion as priest and Eucharistic minister receive communion.  Open gate and remove pillow after the last person blocking the gate receives communion and steps away from the rail.	Communion - Come to rail for communion as priest and Eucharistic minister receive communion.
		Extinguish candles when music for final hymn begins.
Lead exit procession.	Process out.	Process out.
Thanks be to God.	Thanks be to God.	Thanks be to God.
Hang up robe and put cross away.	Hang up robe and put torch away.	Hang up robe and put torch away.