

ALTAR GUILD AT ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH
A CUSTOMARY (A.K.A. CHECKLIST)

Purpose

The Altar Guild prepares the altar and the church for worship for every service. The altar vessels, altar missal, Gospel book, lectern Bible, fair linens and frontal cloth for the altar, candles, credence tables, wine and the bread, vessels for the elements, healing oils, vestments, St. Nicholas icon, banners, and processional cross are in the special care of the Altar Guild.

Checklist - Morning Service

Before the Service:

- **Both altar guild members arrive 1 hour in advance and check in with the Verger** (2 altar guild members are assigned for each Sunday).
 - Clergy will have opened the doors and will be preparing for the service in another room (however, they are available to assist, if needed).
- Make sure the altar, lectern, credence tables, and chairs have already been set up.
 - Collect all of the altar guild supplies from the sacristy (the room to the left as you face the altar).
 - Most of the supplies are in the large plastic bins on the rolling cart (these also contain a *seasonal liturgical colors chart, instructions for setting the altar, altar missal, Gospel book, and lectionary Bible*).
 - The clergy vestments (chasauble and stole), altar frontal, and credence table cloths are on hangar to the right as you enter the sacristy.
 - The fair linen is on one of the shelves (rolled around a large tube, with large, clear plastic bags covering it and tied together with a purple ribbon).
- Drape clergy vestments of appropriate seasonal color on a chair behind the clergy altar chairs next to piano.
- Place the frontal is placed on the altar, centered, with the design in front.
- Careful unroll the fair linen along the length of the altar using the two embroidered crosses at the edge to center the cloth on the altar).
- Place the remain altar furnishing with utmost care, donning gloves to handle the candlesticks, altar missal stand, chalices, patens, and lavabo bowl.
- Carry into the kitchen the bin holding the wine, the cruets, and the liquid candles.
- Place bread upon the large silver paten, the cover it with cloths, one underneath and one on top (if fresh bread is not available, take a small loaf out of the freezer to thaw (do not microwave), or if need be run and buy some at the grocery store).
- Set a corporal, two purificators, and a lavabo towel (found in the medium-sized pink bin) per the instructions. Each service will require fresh corporals and lavabo towel, with the exception of the corporal, which may remain, unless there was a spill.
- Now vest (set up and drape) the chalice.
 - Place the chalice is on the corporal with the cross facing the celebrant.
 - Drape a purificator over the top of the chalice.
 - Place the paten on top of the purificator on the chalice,
 - Place the linen pall on top of the paten.
 - Place the veil on top of the pall.
 - Place the burse with purificator inside on top of the veil with the hinge edge facing the congregation.

- Place the candlesticks and liquid candles on the altar at the ends closest to the congregation. Be careful not to tip the candles, the wax is liquid and will spill.
- Place the altar missal stand and the altar missal book to the right side of the veiled chalice, making sure the missal is marked correctly for the day's service.
- Place the LEM kit on the altar on the left side of the chalice (make sure it is freshly stocked first).
- Place the processional cross and its two bases
 - Place one base goes behind the altar near the kitchen.
 - Place the other base at the rear of the church near the rear credence table.
 - Place the processional cross in the base at the rear of the church.
- Place table cloths are placed on the credence tables (one is next to the kitchen door, to the right as you face the kitchen, the other is at the rear center of nave (auditorium)).
- Place the bread and wine on the rear credence table, along with the Gospel Book, marked for the day's reading.
- Place the lectionary Bible is placed on the lectern, marked for the days readings (double check against the bulletin).
- Hang the St. Nick's lectern banner from the hooks on the lectern, then place the St. Nick's icon on the base of the lectern stand and lean it against the lectern banner.
- Set the altar credence table (next to kitchen). Place lavabo bowl and towel side by side, next to it place two stacked collection plates, the candle snuffer and the lighter, an intinction cup, the water cruet, and the small silver tray which holds the water cruet and the healing oil.

After the Service:

- Any leftover bread and wine should be carried outside to feed the birds and animals.
- Dirty linens should be collected near the box in the kitchen.
- The chalices, the bread plate, the cruets should be washed and placed on the credence table ready for the Evening Altar Guild Team to prepare the altar for that service.
- Turn out the lights, return the air-conditioning or heating to the pre-set temperature, make sure the doors are locked, and leave (***allow 30 minutes for post-service cleanup***).

Checklist – Evening Service

Before the Service:

The Evening Altar Guild set up routines for evening are simple. The chalices, patens and bread platters are already washed and waiting to be properly placed and dressed.

- Both altar guild members arrive no later than 30 minutes in advance and check in with the Verger** (2 altar guild members are assigned for each Sunday).
- Vest the chalice. Make sure that the purificator is in the burse.
- Pour the wine in the cruets and put the bread in the bread basket, then place on the rear credence table.

After the Service:

- After the service, the reverse will be done of the morning set-up.
- Take the left-over bread and wine outside and feed spread them on the ground for the birds or other animals to eat.
- Wash the communion vessels and dry them off.
- Collect the dirty linens from both the morning and evening services, and set them aside to be taken home, washed, and pressed.
- Using the altar gloves, place the communion vessels in their soft, black storage bags, and gently return them to the appropriate bins.
- Place the sacred books will be placed carefully in the appropriate bin.
- Place the bins in the rolling cart (which should be in the kitchen).
- Pack the St. Nicholas icon into its black storage bag, and place it atop a bin in one of the lower shelves of the rolling cart.
- Return the rolling cart to the sacristy/storage room.
- Carefully re-roll the fair linen around its cardboard tube, place the tube in the large white plastic bag, close the bag, and tie it with the purple ribbon.
- Remove the frontal from the altar, place it on the appropriate hanger, and re-hang it in the sacristy.
- Collect the processional cross, the two brass cross bases and return them to the sacristy.
- Collect the lectern frontal, the celebrant's chasuble, and any other vestments, and hang them in the sanctuary.
- Make sure the temperature setting on the thermostat is reset, the lights are turned out, and the door is locked, then you may leave. *Allow at least 45 minutes for clean-up after the evening service.*

THE ALTAR GUILD IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR WORSHIP MINISTRY.
MANY THANKS FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SERVE.