

Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church

LEM Manual



The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

-1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Thank you for answering a call to serve the Church. As LEM or Server at Trinity on the Hill, you are an integral part of the worship of the Church and a leader in the community. You will be one of the most visible participants in the worship of the church, assisting the clergy and the laity in making sure that God is worshipped in the liturgy. You are the Light of Christ!

General Guidelines

-Arrive on Time: On the days you are scheduled, please arrive at least **15 minutes** before the start of the service so you can vest and be in position before the service starts.

-Arrive at least **30 minutes early** for special services like funerals and Holy Days (examples are Easter, Christmas Eve, Epiphany).

-Wear Appropriate Attire for Easter, Christmas, and Funerals: Because what we wear can sometimes be a distraction, please do not wear bright colors under your robe. As your shoes will be visible, please wear solid black or brown shoes. Tennis shoes with bright colors or flip flops are not appropriate on these days.

-Participate in the Worship: You are a model for the congregation. Be attentive, follow the liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer, and sing the hymns.

-Be Deliberate: Move slowly and gracefully. There is no need to rush as we worship God.

-When **mistakes** happen (and they probably will), there is no need to panic. God doesn't expect perfection. Just move on from the mistake without laughing. We can laugh in the sacristy afterwards!

-**Follow the lead of the clergy:** The clergy will give you directions if they need you, or you can look to them if you are lost.

Checklist before the Liturgy

1. Arrive early.
2. Please, no chewing gum.
3. Put on your alb (or cassock and surplice), and make sure the bottom of the alb or cassock rests on the top of your feet and isn't too short.
4. At 8am, the server must light the altar candles (lectern side, then pulpit side). Remember: bow to the altar before and after you light the candles.
5. Take a moment to say a simple prayer regarding your ministry. Here's an example:

Lord, Grant that I may faithfully and loyally serve you in love, and through my service proclaim "In all things, God be glorified!" Amen.

Procession Into the Church (8am)

1. The server will carry the cross. The order is as follows: Server, Lay Minister, and Clergy. Begin walking at the direction of the priest.
2. When passing the baptismal font, the server will pass on the left and the LEM will pass on the right of the baptismal font.
3. The server carries the cross past the altar rail and places it in the stand. The LEM and the Clergy stop before the altar rail, bow together, and the LEM heads to the seat on the epistle side.

Procession Into the Church (10:30am)

1. Line up behind the server. The order is as follows: Crucifer, Torchbearers, Choir, Server, Lay Ministers, and Clergy.
2. When passing the baptismal font, the LEM's will pass on the left and the right of the baptismal font.
3. The server approaches the altar and waits for the LEM's and Clergy to get in place. After all bow, the LEM's head to the left and the right of the altar. Remain standing until all others sit.

Gospel Procession (10:30am)

1. The crucifer and torchbearers assemble in front of the altar, outside of the altar rail, with the crucifer facing the altar and the torchbearers facing inside towards each other. Once the acolytes are in place, the LEM will approach the altar, bow, and pick up the book and stand, facing the altar. The cleric reading the gospel will then approach as well. The crucifer, once cued by the bowing of the priest, will direct the acolytes to turn and walk towards the baptismal font.
2. The crucifer stops behind the font in the center aisle and turns around with the cross facing the priest. The LEM will turn and open the Gospel book for the priest at this time.
3. When the cleric has finished reading the Gospel, the LEM should shut the book and step aside to allow the acolytes to begin the procession.
4. Once the crucifer has passed the torches, the torchbearers will follow the crucifer. The LEM and the cleric will follow.
5. The crucifer and torchbearers approach the altar and walk towards where the cross and torches shall be placed. The LEM should place the book upon the altar, reverence, and walk towards his/her seat and remain standing until all others sit.

Distribution of the Eucharist

1. At the 8am service, the Server should step away from the chair towards the pew. This allows the LEM to get in place to receive communion with greater ease.
2. After the priest has invited the congregation to communion, and begins to commune his/herself, the LEM should approach the altar, nearest to the backside, and wait below the final step. The priest will offer you the bread, then the wine, and will set the elements on the front of the altar.
3. The LEM should step aside, and once they see the priest walking to approach the front of the altar, they will follow the priest. The LEM's and the clergy will stand at the step and, when cued by the priest, will step up and, once again waiting for the cue, will reverence the altar together.
4. The LEM will then retrieve the chalice from the altar and begin the communion. When there is only one LEM, they will commune everybody. When there are two LEM's, they will commune **every other** person. The words to be used are, 'The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.' To prevent some communicants from feeling slighted, please do not add a personalization to those who are receiving the chalice.
5. From time to time, the priest will need the assistance of a LEM to commune mobility challenged individuals. Please be ready to assist the priest when called upon.
6. Once all are communed, the LEM's and the clergy will stand before the altar on the final step and, when cued by the priest, will reverence the altar and transport the elements to the sacristy.
7. After the elements are placed in the sacristy, the LEM's return to their seats with reverence and grace.

Final Procession (8am)

1. Following the priestly blessing, the server will retrieve the cross. The server, LEM, and clergy will form a line in front of the altar, outside of the communion rail. Together, they reverence the altar.
2. The server will begin the procession towards the baptismal font. Once at the font, the server, LEM, and clergy will stop. The priest will give the dismissal. At this time, the server and LEM are free to return to the sacristy, and the server can now extinguish the candles.

Final Procession (8am)

1. The LEM should watch for the priest to begin walking towards the altar rail after the final choir member has revered. With the clergy in the middle, the LEM's will stand next to the clergy persons, with the server on the right hand of the LEM on the right. Once cued, all will reverence the altar together.
2. The server will turn and begin walking towards the baptismal font. The LEM's should turn and walk side by side behind the server. The clergy will follow.
3. The server and LEM will then exit the sanctuary and be ready to assist the clergy with books and vestments if necessary.

Additional Notes for LEM's

1. All those in the Altar Party should follow the bodily movements of the priest when appropriate (i.e stand when the priest stands, bow when the priest bows)
2. When praying or processing, please either have your hands folded in a prayer posture near your chest or hold a Hymnal or the Book of Common Prayer. How we carry our bodies is important in ritual worship, and as worship leaders, we model best practices for the congregation.
3. When presenting the Chalice for communion, please give everybody the opportunity to either receive from the chalice or reverence it in their own way. Don't simply walk by people who have their arms crossed.
4. Cassock and Surplice are preferred over off-white cassock-albs. New LEM's will be fitted for cassock and surplice, and current LEM's are invited to be fitted for this vestment combination if they so desire.
5. Younger acolytes may, from time to time, need assistance with following the liturgy. Please be prepared to offer your nurturing assistance.
6. Sacred ritual is not magic. God doesn't prefer one ritual over another. However, doing ritual with care and conviction communicates to the congregation that we take this seriously, and we are inviting them to take it seriously as well.

Notes for Lay Readers

1. Prepare ahead of time. The readings are sent out prior to Sunday. Read several times on Saturday night, taking note of unusual or strange phrases. We do have a pronunciation guide in the sacristy for more unusual words.
2. If need be, adjust the microphone to your height prior to the beginning of the service. This will eliminate the strange, crackling noises the microphone often makes when being adjust. It should also be nearly a foot from your mouth to prevent overloading the microphone with excess audible force.
3. Once you are in place to read, take a full, deep breath. This will help slow down your breathing for the reading.
4. Pay attention to what you are reading. It is up to you to make the words come alive. Is the author asking a question? Is this text supposed to be an admonishment or a praise? Is this a story or a parable? You are the 'actor' here. Use your voice to convey meaning instead of just reading words off a page.
5. Slow down. The biggest mistake that people who aren't used to public speaking make is to read too fast. Chances are if you think you are speaking slowly, you still aren't speaking slowly enough. When you are reading out loud in a large room, it should not feel like normal speech. It should feel like you are reading a bit too slowly. Don't worry. It won't sound bad to the congregation. Take the time to savor each word.

Glossary of common terms

Alb: A long, white garment that covers from the neck to the feet and is tied at the waist with a cincture.

Cassock: A plain black robe worn by servers and LEM's.

Celebrant: The priest officiating at or in charge of a Eucharist

Chalice: A large, stemmed cup that holds the wine during communion

Cincture: A long rope with knots in the ends that is tied around the waist.

Credence Table: The small table, usually on the lectern side of the altar, that holds vessels and items for the Eucharist.

Crucifer: The acolyte that carries the cross and leads the procession.

Cruet: A small, covered pitcher used to hold wine or water.

Elements: The bread and wine used for Holy Communion.

Glossary, continued

Flagon: A large, covered pitcher used to hold wine or water.

Lavabo Bowl: A small bowl used to wash the hands of the celebrant.

Liturgy: Public worship services of the church.

Nave: The large part of the church where the congregation sits.

Reverence the Altar: Stopping and bowing from the waist towards the altar as a sign of reverence.

Sanctuary: The area inside the communion rail surrounding the altar.

Server: The person that is dedicated to assisting the priest or deacon with setting the altar for the Eucharist.

Surplice: the white garment that is worn over a cassock.

Torch Bearer: One or two acolytes who carry a torch and accompany the crucifer.

Vestment: Any of the garments worn by those participating in a liturgy.

“You left us Yourself in the Sacrament of the Altar, and you opened wide your mercy to us. There is no misery that could exhaust You; You have called us all to this fountain of love, to this spring of God’s compassion.”

-St. Faustina



Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church
Los Alamos, NM